



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
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AGENDA ITEM 5a
SSTAC Meeting
August 2, 2023

DATE: July 26, 2023
TO: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
FROM: Stephen Luther, Associate Planner
SUBJECT: **Discuss Triennial Performance Audit Recommendations to Update Unmet Transit Needs Definitions and SSTAC Membership and Meeting Schedule**

INFORMATIONAL REPORT

Contents:

- Humboldt County Association of Governments Fiscal Years 2019-20 through 2021-22 Triennial Performance Audit

Staff Summary:

HCAOG retained the consultant services of LSC Transportation Consultants Inc. (LSC) to conduct its Transportation Development Act (TDA) Performance Audits for Fiscal Years 2019-20 through 2021-22. As a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), HCAOG is required to prepare and submit an audit of its performance on a triennial basis to the California State Department of Transportation. HCAOG's performance audit describes how well HCAOG is meeting its administrative and planning obligations under TDA, and organizational management and efficiency.

Two recommendations from HCAOG's performance audit apply directly to the SSTAC. The first recommendation is to review the unmet transit needs reasonable to meet definitions. Although farebox ratio is still part of TDA requirements, the state has begun to shift focus away from this metric as it partially measures how much people are willing to pay for a transit service. This focus on farebox conflicts with efforts to attract riders with low fares. LSC recommends a more effective method of evaluating the potential productivity and cost effectiveness of a proposed unmet transit need would be to look at one-way passenger-trips per vehicle service hour and operating cost per one-way passenger trip. These performance measures can better identify the public subsidy per passenger needed for a new service. Updating the reasonable to meet definition would require the HCAOG Board to adopt revised TDA Rules and Regulations. This process could occur concurrently with outreach and public hearings for this year's Unmet Transit Needs process as discussed in the proposed UTN timeline.

The second recommendation is for HCAOG to reconsider the meeting frequency and the membership composition of the SSTAC. At the beginning of the audit period, both the SSTAC and the Service Coordination Committee (SCC) met periodically to advise HCAOG and the transit operators. These two committees were combined around the time of COVID as there seemed to be redundancies between the two committees and not sufficient participation for both. A third Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) had previously been consolidated into the SSTAC. The audit notes that the SCC or a similar type of group could be reconvened to promote coordination between all transit operators and social service agencies. In response, HCAOG has initiated a Transit Operator quarterly meeting to serve as an informal service coordination venue.

The purpose of the SSTAC per TDA law is to provide advice on unmet transit needs in the region. Per the statutes, the SSTAC is only required to meet once a year. In recent years, the SSTAC has met every other month to discuss and provide recommendations to the HCAOG Board on various transit plans. One option is for the SSTAC to revert to the required membership and to meet less often, perhaps twice a year as needed to guide and make recommendations on the UTN process. A second option could be to complete the basic duties of the SSTAC but layer in additional citizen advisory elements in order for the Council to provide input more proactively on transit and mobility issues.

Statutorily required SSTAC membership:

- One (1) representative of potential transit users who is 60 years or older.
- One (1) representative of potential transit users who is handicapped.
- Two (2) representatives of the local social service providers for seniors, including one representative of a social service transportation provider
- Two (2) representatives of local social service providers for the disabled, including one representative of a social service transportation provider
- One (1) representative of a local social service provider for persons of limited means
- Two (2) representatives from the local consolidated transportation service agency (CTSA)

This item does not require a vote, but rather that the SSTAC engage in dialogue about the findings and provide direction to staff. For additional performance audits for Fortuna Transit, Arcata & Mad River Transit Service, Humboldt Transit Authority, and an Additional Task Memo please visit the [HCAOG website](#).