



HCAOG

*Regional Transportation
Planning Agency*

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August 27, 2018

Ms. Amy Nilsen, County Administrative Officer
County of Humboldt
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Every year, as established by the California Transportation Development Act (TDA), the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is required to conduct a citizen participation process to identify any "unmet transit need" (UTN) that may exist in the region before TDA funds are distributed to local jurisdictions for non-transit purposes. If a UTN is identified, a further determination is needed to establish whether or not that need is "reasonable to meet".

The HCAOG Board of Directors will hold a public hearing on Thursday, October 15, 2018, to provide members of the public, local transit agencies, and local jurisdictions with the opportunity to discuss new or previously identified unmet transit needs.

Though not required, we encourage your agency to also conduct a public hearing between the timeline of September 24, 2018 through the end of October and forward us a record of all comments received.

Please provide your public hearing date to Christie Smith at christie.smith@hcaog.net by Thursday, September 13, 2018. HCAOG will publish an ad in the Times Standard which will include a schedule of all hearing dates, times, and locations.

Enclosed for your information is a synopsis of the UTN process. If you have any questions, or if you would like me or a member of HCAOG's Social Service Transportation Advisory Council to participate at your hearing, please contact me at 444-8208. Thank you for your assistance.

Respectfully,

Marcella Clem
Executive Director

Enclosures

cc: Tom Mattson, Director of Public Works



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501
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SYNOPSIS:

Citizen Participation Process for Assessing Unmet Transit Needs

Transportation Development Act

California's Transportation Development Act (TDA) legislates funding for transit purposes primarily, and for non-transit purposes under certain conditions. TDA funds are distributed through transportation planning agencies throughout the state. HCAOG is required to assess unmet transit needs prior to allocating any TDA funds for purposes *not* directly related to public transit.

Public Process to Make a Finding

Each year, HCAOG conducts a citizen participation process to gather public input concerning transit needs within the region. HCAOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) leads the process to solicit broad input from transportation-dependent and transportation-disadvantaged persons. In consideration of public input, the SSTAC's recommendations, and adherence to HCAOG's adopted definitions, the HCAOG Board is required to make one of the following findings:

- (a) there are no unmet transit needs; or
- (b) there are no unmet transit needs which are reasonable to meet; or
- (c) there are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet.

If a documented unmet transit need is identified within a specific jurisdiction that meets the test of reasonable to meet, the following will occur:

- The jurisdiction's Local Transportation Funds must be used to rectify the identified unmet transit need prior to using these funds for non-transit purposes such as maintenance of streets and roads;
- The addition and/or modification of the existing transit system(s) must be considered to resolve the identified unmet transit need.

Report of Findings

HCAOG's SSTAC considers all public testimony and input, applies the adopted definitions and reasonable to meet criteria and forwards a recommendation to the HCAOG Board in an annual report. The HCAOG Board will consider and adopt the Report of Findings no earlier than February of each year.

Opportunities for Public Comment on Unmet Transit Needs

Public hearings are held in the fall of each year. Comments may be provided at any of the unmet transit needs public hearings or submitted to HCAOG throughout the year via email, Facebook, in person, or telephone through the contact information below.

Email: marcella.clem@hcaog.net
Facebook: www.facebook.com/hcaog
Mail or in person: HCAOG Office
611 I Street, Suite B Eureka, CA 95501
Telephone: (707) 444-8208

UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS DEFINITIONS

Unmet transit needs are, at a minimum:

- (1) Trips requested from residents who do not have access to public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services or resources for the purpose of traveling to medical care, shopping, social/recreational activities, education/training, and employment; or
- (2) Proposed public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services that are identified in the following but is not limited to a Transportation Development Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan.

Additionally, the HCAOG TDA Rules stipulate that, for this process, unmet transit needs do not include :

- ❖ Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the next fiscal year
- ❖ Minor operational improvements or changes such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes
- ❖ Trips for primary or secondary school transportation
- ❖ Sidewalk improvements or street and road needs

Reasonable to meet criteria:

- (1) To be considered reasonable to meet, a service must be operationally feasible and financially sustainable, as defined below:
 - a) The service must have adequate roadways, and must be safe to operate.
 - b) Enough money should be available from identified sources of funding to pay for the marginal operating costs of the service continuously for three years.
- (2) The service must be projected to meet a minimum “marginal farebox return ratio” of 10 percent within two years. If multiple competing services are requested, other factors such as estimated subsidy per passenger trip and passengers per vehicle hour of service may also be considered. Ridership and farebox return ratio thresholds will also be considered for continuing new introduced services.
- (3) Pursuant to the requirements of TDA Statutes (Public Utilities Code Section 99401.5c, a determination of needs that are reasonable to meet shall not be made by comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads, for the allocation of TDA funds.
- (4) Once a service is determined to be "reasonable to meet" and is implemented, it can be expected that the ridership in the first 1-2 years of the new service will be less than the projected optimal ridership. Ridership should be evaluated at 6-month intervals to determine if service is meeting performance standards adopted by the transit provider, and specifically, whether the service meets a minimum 10 percent marginal farebox ratio. If the service is being adequately promoted and fails to be within 60 percent of the identified standards after six months, 90 percent with the first year, or 100 percent within two years, the service may be cancelled and deemed "no longer reasonable to meet." An exception to this rule is when a community or group is willing to participate in sharing the ongoing cost of the new service.