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County of Humboldt  
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MIKE WILSON  
County of Humboldt

HTA Board Staff  
GREG PRATT  
General Manager  
CONSUELO ESPINOSA  
Secretary to the Board



**Humboldt Transit Authority  
Governing Board of Directors  
HTA Conference Room - 133 V Street Eureka  
AGENDA**

Public Participation In-person or Teleconference

Microsoft Teams

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

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Meeting ID: 213 534 824 793

Passcode: BKGW33

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**November 6, 2024**

**9:00 AM**

**Regular Board Meeting**

**A. Call Meeting to Order**

**B. Roll Call & Introductions**

**C. Community Members Communication**

Members of the community are invited to comment on items or issues not on the agenda.

**D. Special Presentation**

**E. Consent Calendar**

By motion, recommend the approval of the following items considered to be routine and enacted in one motion. Items may be removed from the consent calendar upon request and will be heard separately.

1. Minutes from August 7, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.

Staff: Consuelo Espinosa

**Action Recommended: Approve Minutes**

Page 03

**F. Items Removed from Consent Calendar**

**G. Reports**

1. Draft June and August 2024 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA.

Staff: Katie Collender

Enclosed

## H. New Business

### 1. Unmet Transportation Needs Public Hearing for FY 2023/24

Page 07

Staff: [HCAOG Staff](#)

State law requires the Regional Transportation Agencies and their composite communities address unmet transit needs on a yearly basis. This item provides the opportunity for the public to identify unmet needs and the Council to forward such needs to the RTA for consideration

Action Recommended:

**Action Recommended:**

1. ***Open a public hearing to allow citizens to comment on transit needs in Humboldt.***
2. ***Close the public hearing and direct staff to forward a summary of the meeting to the Humboldt County Association of Governments.***

### 2. Recommendation of Award for Project 24-01 Design of Maintenance Bay Retrofit to Support Fuel Cell Electric Buses

Page 15

On September 24, 2024 HTA staff released an RFP/RFQ for the Maintenance Bay Retrofit Project 24-01 and received on proposal from LDA Partners, Inc. This project is funded through the Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program that was awarded to HTA from Cycle 5.

**Action Recommended: Approve award to LDA Partners, Inc. for Project 24-01 and authorize the General Manager to execute a contract for a not-to-exceed price of \$412,573.**

### 3. HTA Projects Update

Page 18

Staff: [Jerome Qiriaz](#)

Staff will update the Board on current and future projects.

**Action Recommended: Review, Discuss, and Make Recommendations if Necessary.**

## I. Board Communications

## J. Staff Communications

## K. Closed Session

None

## L. Adjournment

*Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) is committed to a policy of non-discrimination pursuant to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Persons who require special accommodations, accessible seating, or documentation in alternative formats under the American with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact HTA at least two days prior to the meeting.*

*Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) se compromete a una norma de no discriminación de acuerdo a los requisitos del Artículo VI del Acto Derechos Civiles de 1964. Las personas que requieren alojamiento especial de acuerdo con el American with Disabilities Act, o personas que requieren servicios de traducción (libre de cargo) deben comunicarse con HTA al menos dos días antes de la reunión.*

**MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**October 2, 2024**

**9:00 am**

**PRESENT**

Board Members

Alex Stillman, City of Arcata  
Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell  
Steve Ladwig, City of Trinidad  
Tami Trent, City of Fortuna  
Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka  
Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt

**ABSENT**

Natalie Arroyo, County of Humboldt

Attended Via Teams

Vance Law, City of Arcata; Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities; and Steve Madrone, County of Humboldt.

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager  
Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager  
Katie Collender, Finance Manager  
Carolann Aggeler, Admin & Finance Assistant  
Jerome Qiriaz, Transit Planner  
Andi Evans, Bookkeeper

Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance

Also in attendance were Tasha Ahlstead, Caltrans; Sieska Rymer-Burnett, Caltrans; and Joanne McGarry, Member of the Public.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Alex Stillman called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

**ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS**

Introductions were made.

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION**

Joanne McGarry inquired about the RCX bus service for those who live in the bay area and inquired about the best place for transit riders to park their vehicles when arriving in Mendocino. Additionally, she shared that it would be helpful for the public if HTA could place signage on the back of the buses indicating the direction that the bus is traveling. She also shared that the window wraps are less appealing and that they obstruct the outdoor views. Colin Fiske with CRTP reminded the board and staff about the week without driving and that the bus stop audits would take place on Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> with the meeting location at 5<sup>th</sup> & D Streets in Eureka.

## PROCLAMATION

Week without driving September 30, 2024, through Sunday October 6, 2024, encouraging the region to join in on the special observance to better understand how to improve the transportation system and to better meet the needs of citizens.

## SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

## CONSENT CALENDAR

By motion, recommend the approval of the following items considered to be routine and enacted in one motion. Items may be removed from the consent calendar upon request and will be heard separately.

***Motion by Councilmember Garnes, second by Supervisor Wilson to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously.***

Minutes from August 7, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

***Action Recommended: Approve minutes.***

Amendment to Humboldt Transit Authority's Classification Plan and Salary Schedule

Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

Board authorization is required for all changes to the Salary Schedule, Classification Plan, and Job Descriptions.

***Action Recommended: Approve the Amendment to Humboldt Transit Authority's Salary Schedule, Classification Plan, and Marketing & Finance Intern Job Description by Adopting Resolution 24-07.***

Amendment to Humboldt Transit Authority's Drug and Alcohol Policy

Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

Due to regulation changes from the Federal Transit Administration, an amendment is required to HTA's Drug and Alcohol Policy to stay in compliance.

***Action Recommended: Approve amendment to Humboldt Transit Authority's Drug & Alcohol Program by adopting Resolution 24-08***

Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None

## REPORTS

Caltrans District I Report

Tasha Ahlstead and Sieska Rymer-Burnett with Caltrans District I gave the board a presentation on the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants funding programs designed to support local and regional governments in developing and implementing transportation plans that promote sustainability. These grants aim to encourage projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve public transportation, enhance walkability and bikeability, and integrate land use and transportation planning.

Draft June and July 2024 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA

Staff: [Katie Collender & Carolann Aggeler](#)

Finance Manager Katie Callendar gave the board an update and shared that HTA has a full year of reports showing an 8% growth in ridership. She also shared that the fare revenue is up by 6% with an overall fare box ratio of 17.66%. HTA's Finance & Administrative Assistant Carolann Aggeler, gave the board an update for the July stats and stated that all systems were showing an increase. Additionally, she shared that the Willow Creek system on average showed growth in ridership and that the RCX bus service had improved its fare box revenue since 2023 to 7.27% in 2024.

## Free Fares Report

Staff: [Katie Collender](#)

Finance Manager Katie Collender shared that the summer youth free bus fares included seniors this year. Additionally, she shared that in 2023 we had a total of 15,000 rides and that for 2024 the reports came in with a total of 39,000 rides, showing an 11% increase in ridership. She also added that the AMRTS system had an increase in ridership.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Humboldt Transit Authority Fare Consolidation (Public Hearing)

[Katie Collender](#)

The Finance Manager Katie Collender shared that members of the public were invited to comment on the proposed fare structure changes, and that in August HTA received a total of thirty-two responses that were submitted online and by social media. Additionally, she shared that the complete surveys revealed that 70 % of the rider's ride once per month and that 40% ride weekly or more. RTS & ETS were the most utilized systems, gaining positive feedback overall.

#### ***Open Public Hearing: 9:45 am***

Opportunity for Member of the Public to Comment on the Proposed Fare Structure.

#### ***Board Comments***

None

#### ***Public Comment***

Joanne McGarry shared that the consolidation of the fare structure would be more affordable and equitable if the bus service were free for everyone. She also shared that it would be easier for the bus drivers if HTA simplified the fare structure by color coding the passes and recommended that HTA advertise where the public can obtain bus passes.

Colin Fiske with CRPT stated that he appreciated the change with the consolidation and simplification of fares for all users. Additionally, shared that he looks forward to full integration with AMRTS and the different systems.

#### ***Public Hearing Closed: 9:50 am***

***Motion by Councilmember Garnes, second by Councilmember Castellano to Approve Staff to begin implementation of the new fares for RTS, Willow Creek, Southern Humboldt, and the North State Express immediately, and implement changes to ETS and AMRTS effective November 1, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.***

## Letter for Jurisdictions Regarding Draft Regional Climate Action Plan Implementation Measures that Require

### HTA Participation

Staff: [Jerome Qiriaz](#)

HTA's Transit Planner Jerome Qiriaz announced that several jurisdictions have requested a letter from HTA regarding the implementation measures in Draft RCAP that involve HTA and how this agency is already engages in efforts as outlined in HCAOG's Regional Transit Plan.

***Motion by Supervisor Wilson, second by Councilmember Garnes to Authorize the General Manager to draft and sign a letter describing how the Draft RCAP implementation measures that involve HTA align with the 2022 – 2042 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and that HTA supports implementation measures that align with the current RTP.***

## HTA Projects Update

HTA's Transit Planner Jerome Qiriaz gave the board an update on future projects:

- There is an open bid for a permanent Hydrogen Fueling station that is due on October 8<sup>th</sup>, that will be placed on the agenda for review in November.
- HTA will be attending the CalPoly Fair and looks forward to participating in more public events.

### Recommendation of Award for Temporary Hydrogen Fueller

Transit Planner Jerome Qiraizi announced that in August 2024, staff released Request for Proposals for a temporary hydrogen fueling station to fuel hydrogen fuel cell buses in the interim until the permanent station was completed. Jerome also shared that HTA released an RFP for the Project and received six responses. Four of the six were deemed responsive and were scored on by the evaluation committee. Also, he shared that the evaluation committee assessed the proposals and that Celly and ZEI were close in total score, but Linde's proposal was the highest. Finally, Jerome asked for board approval for Linde Services to contract with HTA.

- 1. Motion by Councilmember Garnes, second by Councilmember Castellano to approve a conditional award to Linde Services, Inc. and authorize the General Manager to enter contract negotiations subject to:**
  - a. Review of final contract terms by legal counsel, and by the TIRCP Ad-Hoc Committee.****Motion carried unanimously.**
- 2. Motion by Vice Chair Alex Stillman, and second by Supervisor Wilson to approve a conditional award to Zero Emission Industries and authorize the General Manager to enter into contract negotiations subject to:**
  - a. Failure to execute a contract with Linde Services, Inc. within 10 days after receiving the contract by HTA staff.**
  - b. Review of final contract terms by legal counsel and by the TIRCP Ad-Hoc****Motion carried unanimously.**

### North State Express

Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

Staff gave the board an update on the coordination efforts in the North State and received directions on next steps. General Manager Greg Pratt shared that HTA is looking to add a second service trip to Ukiah. Additionally, he shared that Caltrans and Amtrak would like HTA to consider providing service seven (7) days a week and expressed that HTA also needs to improve connections between RABA and HTA.

Councilmember Debra Garnes made mention that there is a gap between Eureka and Garberville excluding service to Rio Dell. General Manager Greg Pratt shared that HTA's Southern Humboldt Routes services the Davis Street off ramp, two trips going southbound and three trips going northbound.

Supervisor Mike Wilson shared the idea of adding an express route from Bishop, CA to Redding and back. Colin Fiske with CRTP stated that he appreciates all the efforts and expressed concern about guaranteeing connections across the systems.

### **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilmember Castellano shared that upon Natalie Arroyos' return they would plan a strategic planning meeting.

### **STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Finance Manger Katie Collender announced that the Legislative Platform meet quarterly seeking ways to promote initiatives to make transit more accessible for all. She also shared that there will be more information to come once they meet.

General Manager Greg Pratt gave the board an update about the Earth Center and that meetings are being held with Danco Builders to discuss the next steps.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

10:29 am



133 V Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

*A Public Entity Serving Humboldt County Since 1976*

Office: (707) 443-0826  
Fax: (707) 443-2032  
[www.hta.org](http://www.hta.org)

TO: Chair Arroyo  
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Greg Pratt, General Manager

DATE: November 6, 2024

SUBJECT: Unmet Transportation Needs Public Hearing for FY 2025/26

**Unmet Transit Needs are then subject to the adopted criteria to determine if the need is “reasonable to meet”:**

1. To be considered reasonable to meet, a service must be operationally feasible and financially sustainable, as defined below:
  - a. To be considered operationally feasible, the service must have adequate running time, adequate roadways, and must be safe to operate.
  - b. To be considered financially sustainable, enough money should be available from identified sources of funding to pay for the marginal operating cost of the service continuously for three years.

For instance, comments that request transit 24 hours, seven days a week is not considered financially sustainable in Humboldt County.

2. Additionally, to be considered “reasonable to meet” 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 newly introduced services.
3. Pursuant to the requirements of Transportation Development Act (TDA) Statutes (Public Utilities Code Section 99401.5 (c)), 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 within 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.



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After considering all available information compiled pursuant to the Unmet Transit Needs public participation process, the SSTAC forwards a recommendation to the HCAOG Board to one of the following findings:

- (1) there are no unmet transit needs;
- (2) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; or
- (3) there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet.

If HCAOG adopts a finding that there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet, then the unmet transit need shall be funded before any allocation is made for other (non-transit) uses within the jurisdiction. Local jurisdictions may decide to voluntarily fund needs that are determined not to be “reasonable to meet” from the jurisdiction’s TDA funds or other revenue sources.

- 1. Open a public hearing to allow citizens to comment on transit needs in Humboldt.***
- 2. Close the public hearing and direct staff to forward a summary of the meeting to the Humboldt County Association of Governments.***



**RECOMMENDATION:**

Provide the public with the opportunity to give input on unmet needs. Consider unmet needs and direct staff to forward the unmet needs to the RTA worded as one of the three choices: (1) there are no unmet transit needs; (2) there are no unmet transit needs, which are reasonable to meet; (3) there are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet.

**BACKGROUND:**

Please see the definitions of "Unmet Transit Needs" and "Reasonable to Meet" provided on the following pages from HCAOG.

State law requires the Regional Transportation Agencies and their composite communities address unmet transit needs on a yearly basis. This item provides the opportunity for the public to identify unmet needs and the Council to forward such needs to the RTA for consideration.

During the spring of each year, the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) conducts an unmet transit needs public hearing process within the jurisdictional area of Humboldt County. As part of the annual process, each jurisdictional area within the county is encouraged to conduct its own public hearing.

The decision of the public hearing must use specific terms during the decision to be able to receive the money from HCAOG. The three choices are:

1. There are no unmet transit needs.
2. There are no unmet transit needs, which are reasonable to meet.
3. There are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet.

In the event of finding that there are no unmet transit needs or that there are no unmet transit needs which are reasonable to meet, entities may expend TDA resources for non-transit purposes if excess funds remain. Finding that there are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet, delivers a mandate to the respective entity to set aside funds, given that they are available, to implement a program to meet those needs deemed "reasonable to meet."

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Unknown.

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## Transit Needs Assessment Annual Process – Public Hearings

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From Michelle Nielsen <michellen@planwestpartners.com>

Date Wed 10/16/2024 2:48 PM

To City Manager's Office <CityMgr@cityofarcata.org>; Amanda Mager <citymanager@bluelake.ca.gov>; Mslattery@ci.eureka.ca.gov <Mslattery@ci.eureka.ca.gov>; Jay Parrish <citymanager@ci.ferndale.ca.us>; anilsen@ci.fortuna.ca.us <anilsen@ci.fortuna.ca.us>; Kyle Knopp <knoppk@cityofriodell.ca.gov>; Dan Berman <citymanager@trinidad.ca.gov>; tdamico@co.humboldt.ca.us <tdamico@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Greg Pratt <greg@hta.org>; mconley@co.humboldt.ca.us <mconley@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Cc Beth Burks <beth.burks@hcaog.net>; Rvarley@cityofarcata.org <Rvarley@cityofarcata.org>; cityclerk@bluelake.ca.gov <cityclerk@bluelake.ca.gov>; Kristene (Kris) Hall <cityclerk@ci.ferndale.ca.us>; semmons@ci.fortuna.ca.us <semmons@ci.fortuna.ca.us>; Karen Dunham <dunhamk@cityofriodell.ca.gov>; Gabe Adams <cityclerk@trinidad.ca.gov>; ppowell@eurekaca.gov <ppowell@eurekaca.gov>; Amber Chung <amberc@planwestpartners.com>

 1 attachments (263 KB)

FY 25-26 UTN Synopsis.pdf;

To: City Managers/County Administrative Officer  
North Coast Tribal Transportation Commission  
McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee  
Humboldt Transit Authority

Good afternoon everyone. 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 assist in identifying transit needs in the region. This process is required prior to allocations of TDA funding in the following fiscal year. All comments deemed to meet the definition of an unmet transit need will be analyzed and reviewed by HCAOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to determine if the need is "reasonable to meet." Comments that are operational in nature are forwarded to transit operators. The attached document includes a summary of the TDA rules, use of Local Transportation Funds, role of the citizen participation process, and adopted definitions and criteria used to determine if a need is reasonable to meet.

The HCAOG Board of Directors will hold a public hearing on Thursday, December 19, 2024. Though not required, we encourage your agency to also conduct a public hearing in November or December 2024. Please provide your meeting date to Amber Chung, Assistant Planner, at [amberc@planwestpartners.com](mailto:amberc@planwestpartners.com) by **Friday, October 25, 2024**, to allow us to meet publishing and posting requirement deadlines. All public comments received by December 31, 2024 will be discussed by the SSTAC and a Report of Findings brought to the HCAOG Board in 2025.

### New this year

HCAOG staff requests time prior to opening the hearing to provide a brief presentation on the state of our regional transit systems, exciting new developments that are making our transit systems more convenient, transit performance measures such as operating subsidy per passenger and passengers per hour, and potential modifications to the adopted reasonable to meet criteria. In addition, we ask that the agenda item be described as a "Transit Needs Assessment."

Please contact us with any questions. Thank you!

--

Michelle Nielsen  
Contract Planner  
Humboldt County Association of Governments  
[michellen@planwestpartners.com](mailto:michellen@planwestpartners.com)  
Planwest Partners Inc.  
707-825-8260



## 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  
(707) 444-8208  
[www.hcaog.net](http://www.hcaog.net)

### **Citizen Participation Process for Transit Needs Assessment**

#### **Transportation Development Act**

The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is responsible for allocating Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds within the region. The TDA provides two major sources of funding, Local Transportation Funds (LTF) derived from a ¼ cent of the general sales tax and State Transportation Assistance Funds (STAF) derived from a tax on diesel fuel. Together, these TDA funds provide a significant revenue source for public transit in Humboldt County. The “Unmet Transit Needs” process is carried out annually to identify and evaluate the adequacy of existing public transportation services. HCAOG is required to assess transit needs prior to allocating LTF money for non-transit purposes, while STA is programmed to the Humboldt Transit Authority and Arcata and Mad River Transit.

Each jurisdiction has their own LTF account. Eureka and Arcata use the entirety of their LTF allocation for transit purposes. The County of Humboldt, Cities of Fortuna, Rio Dell, Blue Lake, and Trinidad have funds remaining after paying their share for eligible transit uses. In these cases, the TDA allows LTF to be applied to local streets and roads budgets, including pedestrian and bicycle projects. In Ferndale, there are no eligible public transit services and the LTF allocation is applied to non-transit purposes.

#### **Public Process to Make a Finding**

HCAOG’s Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) leads the process. Although only one hearing is required, public meetings are held to ensure residents in each jurisdiction are heard. The SSTAC considers all public testimony and input, determines if the suggestions meet the adopted definition of an unmet transit need and applies adopted criteria to determine if the need is “reasonable to meet”. Public comments are accepted throughout the year and close on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The SSTAC will consider the draft Unmet Transit Needs report and forward one of the following findings to the HCAOG Board for consideration:

- (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”

#### **Potential Impacts to Local Transportation Funding**

If HCAOG adopts finding (c), then the unmet transit needs shall be funded before any allocation is made for non-transit purposes (i.e. streets and roads) within the jurisdiction. Funds for new or expanded transit services can be set-aside from sources other than TDA funds. For instance, in 2018 the HCAOG Board voted to set aside Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds for late-night weekday service on the Redwood Transit Service. The service was found based on ridership at that time to be an unmet transit need reasonable to meet, but could not be funded due to insufficient Local Transportation Funds available to all required entities. When COVID hit and ridership fell dramatically, these LCTOP funds were repurposed to support free fares.

## Examples of Past Public Input and Findings

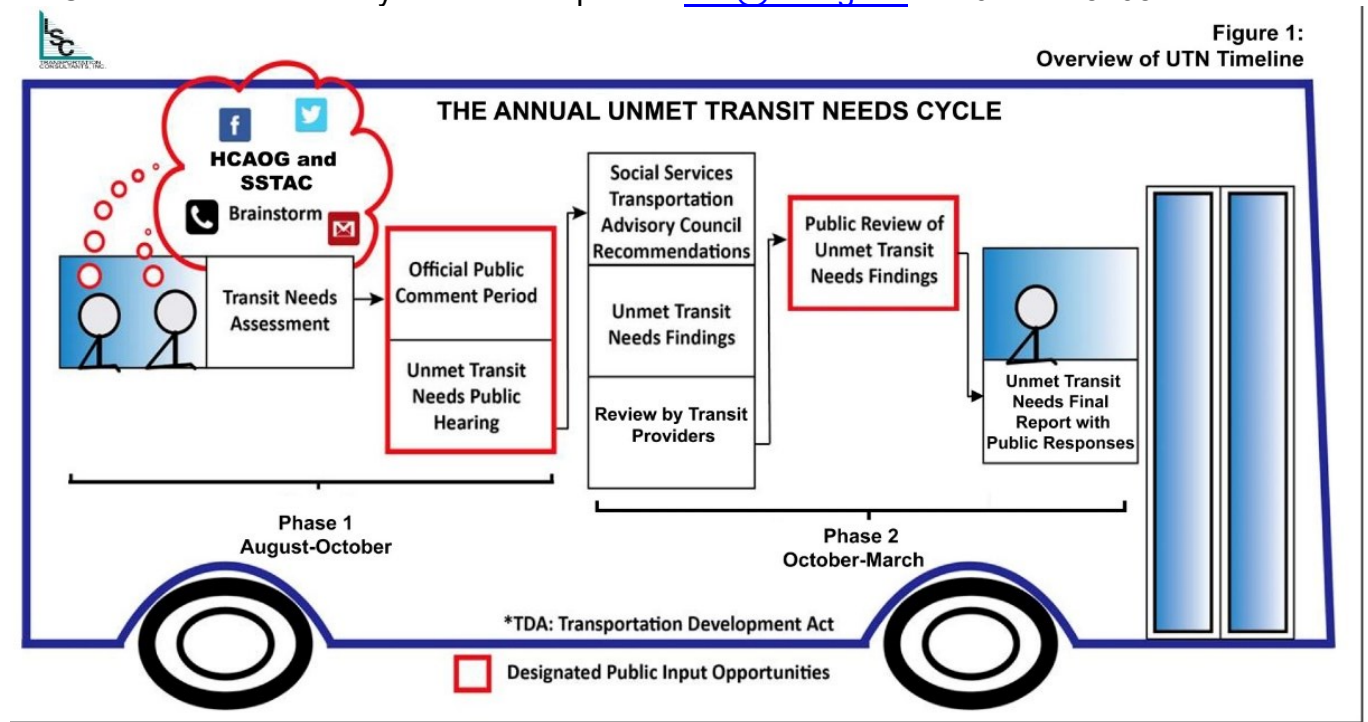
The FY 24-25 transit needs process resulted in a finding that Redwood Transit System (RTS) increased frequency to every 30 minutes during peak hours between McKinleyville Airport and Cal Poly Humboldt Library Circle is an unmet need that is reasonable to meet. HCAOG is working with HTA, the County and Cities to develop an operational and funding plan to meet this need. The unmet need must be funded prior to allocating any FY 24-25 Local Transportation Funds (LTF) to streets and roads.

Previous findings led to new transit services to Tish Non-Village (Bear River Rancheria) and Old Arcata Road. Both services were discontinued after two years because not enough people used them. In 2024, the SSTAC modified the “reasonable to meet” criteria to include an analysis of performance measures such as operating subsidy per passenger and riders per hour. These metrics provide other ways to consider the cost and projected performance of new transit service, with the intention to avoid starting new services that will not be viable. Other unmet needs including Sunday service on RTS and ETS, Saturday night service on RTS, and later evening service on ETS were not reasonable to meet based on projected farebox returns and very low estimated ridership that would result in a high operating subsidy.

Comments received through this annual process can provide valuable feedback to transit operators. Not all operational requests can be accommodated, but agencies make every effort to respond. In addition, public comments are beneficial as a record of community need and can help to secure competitive grant-funded opportunities such as first-last mile mobility solutions to expand access to transit.

## Opportunities for Public Comment on Unmet Transit Needs

- Navigate to the project page at <https://www.hcaog.net/programs-projects/public-transportation> or find the survey at [bit.ly/UTNSurvey2025](https://bit.ly/UTNSurvey2025)
- At one of the advertised public meetings;
- Written comments and/or feedback gathered from staff during direct outreach;
- Comment submittals by email or telephone: [info@hcaog.net](mailto:info@hcaog.net) or 707-444-8208.



## UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS DEFINITION & REASONABLE TO MEET CRITERIA

**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 identified in the following, but not limited to: a Transportation Development Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan.
- (3) Sufficient broad-based community support exists, meaning that persons who will likely use the service on a routine basis demonstrate support with at a minimum two requests for general public service and for disabled service.

Additionally, unmet transit needs do not include:

- ❖ Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the next fiscal year. Two potential new services that will be reevaluated this year are:
  - Express bus service between McKinleyville and Eureka during peak hours
  - Late Night Weekday Service on the Regional Transit System
- ❖ Minor operational improvements or changes such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes. Minor operational improvements are changes to service which do not affect the operating cost of the transit service either by requiring additional staff and/or additional vehicle hours of service or miles of service.
- ❖ 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. Performance measures including estimated subsidy per passenger trip and passengers per vehicle hour of service will also be considered. For new service, ridership and farebox-return-ratio thresholds will be considered.
- (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-return-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.



133 V Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

A Public Entity Serving Humboldt County Since 1976

Office: (707) 443-0826  
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www.hta.org

TO: Chair Natalie Arroyo  
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Jerome Qiriaz, Transit Planner

DATE: November 6, 2024

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Award for Project 24-01 Design of Maintenance Bay Retrofit to Support Fuel Cell Electric Buses

### **BACKGROUND**

As part of HTA's successful grant application to Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 5 HTA is funded to retrofit our existing maintenance bays to accommodate fuel cell electric buses.

At the October 5, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, the Board of Directors formed the TIRCP Ad-Hoc Committee to provide advice and direction on the project, including changes to the cost allocation plan and approval of expenses over the amount of \$150,000.

On June 28, 2023 HTA received approval by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for our allocation request for the first funding phase for the design and engineering of the retrofit to the existing maintenance bays.

On September 24, 2024 HTA staff released an RFP/RFQ for the Maintenance Bay Retrofit Project 24-01, posted at <https://hta.org/procurement-opportunities/rfqrfp-2401/>.

On October 25, 2024 HTA received one proposal from LDA Partners, Inc. (LDA).

### **DISCUSSION AND RATIONAL**

HTA will be getting its first fuel cell electric bus (FCEB) in January. In addition, HTA anticipates the first of the remaining 10 buses to start arriving summer of 2026. To be able to work on fuel cell electric buses maintenance bays must be designed to meet fire code requirements. HTA's current maintenance bays were not designed to accommodate fuel cell electric buses, so retrofit work needs to be done. An overview of the timeline of the various hydrogen projects happening concurrently is shown in Figure 1.

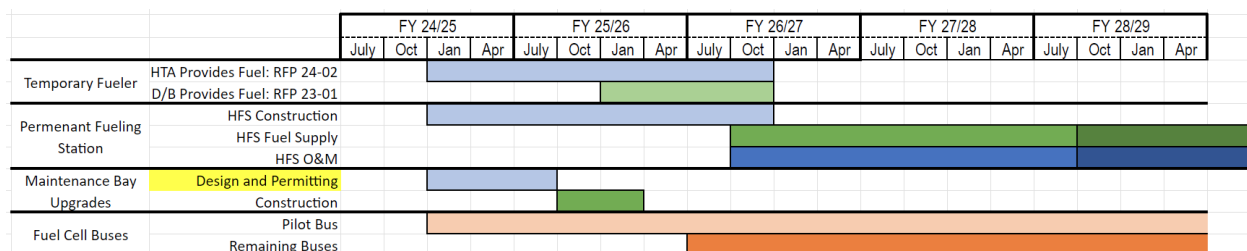


Figure 1: Preliminary schedule of various hydrogen projects. Highlighted project is the topic of this staff report.





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HTA released an RFP for Project 24-01 to procure an architectural and engineering firm and received one (1) response from LDA Partners, Inc. (LDA). As shown in Table 1, LDA's response was deemed responsive and was scored by the Evaluation Committee.

*Table 1: Summary of bidders, responsiveness, and scores.*

Bidder	Responsive	Score	Price
LDA Partners, Inc. (LDA)	Yes	95.3	\$412,573

LDA is an architectural firm with decades of experience designing municipal and fleet facilities, including for transit. LDA submitted a strong proposal. They put together a strong team in partnership with GHD, who will supply engineering services, and J.R. Conkey who will supply cost estimating services. Their proposed scope meets the requirements of the RFP. The Evaluation Committee has confidence in the team to complete the design, engineering, and construction oversight needed for this project.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

TIRCP Cycle 5 funds are allocated for the majority of the costs for the first task order of this project covering design and engineering. LDA's price proposal exceeds the originally allocated budget for the first task order by \$113,382. HTA is confident that the remaining funds can be moved from other components within the TIRCP C5 grant to cover the majority of the additional cost. Additional costs associated with fire hydrant flow testing and project permitting are anticipated to be in the vicinity of \$10,000. Sufficient STA funds are currently allocated to cover additional potential costs over what TIRCP Cycle 5 may cover. HTA is confident any remaining budget not covered by the TIRCP C5 grant and STA funds set aside for this project can be covered by HTA's internal funds.

TIRCP Cycle 5 funds are also sufficient to cover staff time for this project. Grant funds are also fully covering consultant costs for CTE and the Schatz Center who will support HTA staff in the implementation of this project.

#### **ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES**

This project is necessary to ensure HTA can successfully integrate fuel cell electric vehicles.

#### **ALTERNATIVE BOARD ACTIONS**

The Board could choose to instruct HTA staff to re-evaluate the proposals received or could choose to direct staff to reject all proposals and cancel the project.

#### **PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION / POLICIES**

- Board action on May 5th, 2021, authorizing the GM to apply for grants that provide funding for zero emission bus projects.
- Board action on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 which formed the TIRCP Ad-Hoc Committee.
- Resolution 22-21, adopted October 5th, 2022, which authorized the GM to execute a Master Agreement and Program Supplements for State-Funded Transit Projects.





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- Resolution 23-05, adopted March 29th, 2023, which rescinded and replaced Resolution 22-13 with HTA's current procurement policy.

***Action Recommended:***

- 1) Approve award to LDA Partners, Inc. for Project 24-01 and authorize the General Manager to execute a contract for a not-to-exceed price of \$412,573.***



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TO: HTA Chair Natalie Arroyo  
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Jerome Qiriaz, Transit Planner

DATE: November 6, 2024

SUBJECT: Humboldt Transit Authority Project Updates

#### TIRCP Cycle 7 Grant

HTA was awarded \$18.7M in this last award cycle. This includes capital funding for the following:

- Install infrastructure needed to support Humboldt's first 15-minute frequency service to be deployed on the Redwood Transit System;
- Enhance passenger safety and experience through improved bus stop designs that incorporate real-time arrival and departure information, improved lighting, and security enhancements;
- Develop standard bus stop designs that follow current design best practices, and integrate HTA's new RideHumboldt branding;
- Commission public art installations at bus stops;
- Enhance the planned Eureka Intermodal Transit Center with the addition of state-of-the-art indoor and outdoor real-time arrival and departure information for all transit lines in the County, design and technology features to encourage use of the transit center as a community space, interactive and activating lighting to creatively increase safety, and commissioned public art installations;
- Kick start the first phase of HTA's planned North Coast Zero Emission Training Center that will procure training equipment to advance HTA's driver and mechanic training programs, construct a new training classroom, and facilitate collaboration with local high schools, colleges, and workforce development programs in support of regional zero emission vehicle training programs; and
- Procure five additional fuel cell electric buses to grow HTA's zero emission fleet in support of the new 15-minute frequency service.

#### TIRCP Cycle 5 Grant

This project funds the purchase of fuel cell electric buses, construction of a hydrogen fueling station, upgrades to maintenance bays, and construction of an intermodal transit center.

- At the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved the second tranche of grant funding that supports HTA and HCAOG staff time, marketing efforts, planning for the North State Express, tap-to-pay program, mechanic training for fuel cell buses, etc. This funding will run through the end of the grant period.
- Hydrogen Fueling Station
  - a. Temporary Fueler: staff are finalizing contract negotiations
  - b. Permanent Station:
    - i. HTA received one Proposal by Linde Engineering North America, LLC (Linde)



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- ii. The Evaluation Committee scored the Proposal and recommended entering into negotiations with Linde
- iii. Linde accepted the offer to enter into negotiations
- iv. Consultant Schatz Energy Research Center is closely involved with this process and is supporting HTA staff
- Maintenance Bay Upgrades:
  - a. See agenda item H.2.
  - b. Consultant Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) is closely involved with this process and is supporting HTA staff
- Eureka Transit Center: The developer Danco is planning to submit for design review soon.
- Pilot Fuel Cell Electric Bus:
  - a. The pilot bus entered into the production line last week at New Flyer's manufacturing plant in Anniston, Alabama. Delivery is still set for the end of January
  - b. New Flyer will soon be opening a California-based sales and service center in the Hayward area which will help ensure HTA receives timely support and shipment of parts

#### Regional Projects Coordination

- Continued engaging with CalTrans and the City of Eureka on planned future pedestrian and transit paint work on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> streets in Eureka.
- Continued engaging with the Shast Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) on the development of their North State Intercity Bus to Rail Plan

#### North State Intercity Bus System

- RCX ridership is up. See Agenda Item I.5.

#### Marketing

- HTA will soon be releasing a focused marketing campaign for the North State Express

#### ***Action Recommended:***

- ***Review, discuss, and make recommendations of other items if necessary.***