

Board of Directors
NATALIE ARROYO
County of Humboldt
LESLIE CASTELLANO
City of Eureka
DEBRA GARNES
City of Rio Dell
ALEX STILLMAN
City of Arcata
TAMI TRENT
City of Fortuna
JACK TUTTLE
City of Trinidad
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

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 258 851 465 789

Passcode: QT26zy2B

June 4, 2025

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

None

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 May 7, 2025, Regular Board Meeting and Minutes from the May 23, 2025 Special Board Meeting.

Page 03

Staff: Consuelo Espinosa

Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

2. Humboldt Transit Authority Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

Page 12

In 2020, HTA established a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan to increase the safety of its drivers and passengers and to strengthen the agency's safety and risk management program. The program has been a success and Staff has made a few minor edits for the 25/26 fiscal year's plan.

~PTASP Enclosed

Action Recommended: Approve the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for the Humboldt Transit Authority by adopting Resolution 25-08.

F. Items Removed from Consent Calendar

G. Reports

1. Caltrans District 1 Report
Caltrans Staff: Saskia Rymer-Burnett & Tasha Ahlstrand
No Action Required
2. Draft March 2025 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA. Handout
Staff: Katie Collender
No Action Required

H. New Business

1. Preliminary Budget for Humboldt Transit Authority FY 2025/2026. Page 15
Staff: Katie Collender
Staff has prepared a preliminary budget for the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency, operating the Redwood Transit System, the Eureka Transit Service, the Arcata & Mad River Transit System, Willow Creek, North State Express Route 299, Southern Humboldt Intercity Systems, and the North State Express Route 101.
Action Recommended: Review the draft budget packet as proposed by staff and reviewed by the Finance and Operations Committee. Make changes if necessary. If approved, direct staff to publish a notice requesting public input on the proposed budget at the next meeting.

I. Board Communications

J. Staff Communications

1. Week Without Driving 9/29-10/5

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

May 7, 2025

9:00 am

PRESENT

Board Members

Alex Stillman, City of Arcata

Jack Tuttle, City of Trinidad

Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna

Natalie Arroyo, County of Humboldt

ABSENT

Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt

Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell

Attended Via Teams

Jerome Qiriaz, Humboldt Transit Authority; Oona Smith, HCAOG; and Colin Fiske, CRTP.

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager

Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager

Carolann Aggeler, Admin & Finance Assistant

Andi Evans, Bookkeeper

Katie Collender, Finance Manager

Jerome Qiriaz, Transit Planner

Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance

Also in attendance were Nancy Diamond, HTA Legal Counsel; Saskia Rymer Burnette, CalTrans; Michelle Nielson, HCAOG, and Joanne McGarry, Member of the Public.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Natalie Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION

Joanne McGarry shared her recent experience attending a Eureka City Council meeting that ran late into the evening. She emphasized that she was only able to attend the full meeting because she had access to a friend's vehicle, highlighting how limited transit options, especially after hours, can hinder public participation. Joanne expressed appreciation for the work of local bus drivers but raised concerns about safety, particularly on rainy days along the Highway 101 corridor. She urged that drivers prioritize safety over staying strictly on schedule, as speeding in adverse conditions can be especially dangerous for passengers.

Joanne also addressed the recent closure of the Arcata Transit Center, noting that it currently lacks staff and has lost its former vitality. She stressed the importance of revitalizing the center and suggested forming a volunteer group, such as "Friends of Humboldt Transit Authority", to support its upkeep and function. She mentioned her own efforts to monitor the Crescent City bus for individuals released from Pelican Bay, ensuring they are not left without guidance or support upon arrival.

Colin Fiske echoed Joanne's concerns and expanded on the issue of the Arcata Transit Center. He pointed out that the City of Arcata is considering a six-month lease for part of the transit center and suggested that, in the long term, it would be beneficial to seek tenants or services that directly support transit riders. Colin proposed that even if the city or Humboldt Transit Authority lacks the resources to fully staff the center, a public-private partnership could help maintain its operations and ensure it remains a useful and vibrant space for the community.

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 Alex Stillman, second by Councilmember Leslie Castellano to approve Item 1 of the consent calendar (Minutes from April 2, 2025) and to pull Item 2 to discuss the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS). Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes from April 2, 2025, Regular Board Meeting.

[Staff: Consuelo Espinosa](#)

Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

The Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) Authorized User

[Staff: Greg Pratt](#)

To use the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS), a resolution designating the authorized representative is required.

Action Recommended: Designate the General Manager as the authorized representative for TrAMS by adopting Resolution 25-05.

Items Removed from Consent Calendar

The Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) Authorized User

[Staff: Greg Pratt](#)

To use the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS), a resolution designating the authorized representative is required.

Chairperson Natalie Arroyo asked for an explanation of the Transit Reward Management (TRAM) system to ensure the board was informed. It was explained that the system has been in use since around 2000, when the agency received its first federal construction grant. Looking ahead, the hydrogen fueling station project is expected to receive approximately seven million dollars in federal funding, contingent on approval. The TRAM system facilitates the processing, reporting, and management of such federal grants through the Federal Transit Administration's website. To comply with federal requirements, the board must formally designate the General Manager as the authorized representative to manage the TRAM system, which will require passing a formal resolution.

Motion by Councilmember Alex Stillman, second by Supervisor Steve Madrone to Designate the General Manager as the authorized representative for TrAMS by adopting Resolution 25-05. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Unmet Needs Report of Findings

[HCAOG Consultant: Michelle Nielson](#)

Michelle Nielson provided an overview of the Unmet Transit Needs report. She explained that many requests were reviewed and found not to qualify as unmet transit needs. However, several needs were identified as reasonable to meet but currently cannot be funded due to limited and temporary funding sources. These included requests for more frequent regional and local transit services, express routes, later night and weekend service, Sunday service, and potential micro-transit options. The main obstacle across all these needs was insufficient long-term funding, despite some routes meeting farebox recovery standards. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council reviewed and recommended the draft report, which was unanimously approved by the HCAOG board, concluding that there are unmet transit needs reasonable to meet but unfunded at this time. Michelle invited any questions from the board.

The board discussed the value of hearing public input on unmet transit needs despite funding limitations. Concerns were raised about the lack of upfront communication to the public regarding what needs could realistically be met, as repeatedly unmet requests may cause frustration. It was suggested that future reports or board updates include information on recent transit improvements and ongoing efforts to address needs, helping to show responsiveness and progress. The idea of adding an addendum or summary highlighting completed projects was proposed to improve public awareness and transparency. Suggestions also included issuing a press release to share unmet needs alongside current and planned service enhancements, particularly relating to new funding sources like Measure O. The group recognized the importance of the unmet needs report for grant applications and emphasized continuing to identify needs for future funding opportunities.

Colin Fiske noted that the unmet transit needs process is a state-mandated procedure primarily focused on funding requirements, which limits its ability to fully address broader community feedback. He highlighted that while the process is essential for collecting rider input, it often falls short in meeting all transit needs. Fiske suggested that the agency has some discretion to revise the process and encouraged exploring additional or expanded approaches—such as an annual, more comprehensive needs assessment incorporating demographic data—to better capture and respond to community transit needs in the future.

Caltrans District 1 Report

[Caltrans Staff: Saskia Rymer-Burnett & Tasha Ahlstrand](#)

Saskia shared that Caltrans is working on a two- to three-year process to develop the Director's Transit Policy and District Transit Plans, which will guide transit-supportive infrastructure along state highways. The draft policy is expected soon, followed by implementation. She's involved in internal committees focused on integrating transit with Complete Streets and advancing equity for underserved communities. Saskia also highlighted ongoing transit grant work, staff participation in trainings, and upcoming engagement at the HTA symposium.

Draft February 2025 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA

[Staff: Katie Collender](#)

Katie reported that overall farebox recovery is over 14%. Since the fare structure change, there's a trend of riders shifting toward using cash and credit cards, which is positive. Store value cards are declining due to costs and staff time involved in distribution. The week-pass has grown in popularity, likely because it now covers multiple systems, making it more convenient and encouraging riders to try it out.

A question was raised about a noticeable increase in operating cost per passenger, which was explained as a change in accounting methods to show more consistent and accurate costs, rather than previous fluctuating figures. The board appreciated the clarity and noted the costs are still lower than alternatives like cabs. Overall, despite February being a typically slow month, ridership remained strong with nearly 40,000 passengers. No public comments were received.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Allocation for Deputy General Manager

Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

General Manager Greg Pratt highlighted that due to the growing workload from HTA's expanding operations, including big projects, regional efforts, and successful grant management, staff recommended creating a Deputy General Manager role to assist with increased responsibilities. This role would also support succession planning and provide backup leadership. The new position would be funded by reallocating existing administrative costs, not creating new positions, and it is necessary to handle the expanding scope of services and operations effectively.

Public commenters expressed strong support for adding the Deputy General Manager position, highlighting the complexity of the organization and the need for additional support. Praise was given for the small staff's accomplishments and successful grant efforts that enable innovation and staffing. The process for filling the new position was clarified: it will be offered internally first, with hiring authority resting with the General Manager.

Motion by Councilmember Alex Stillman, second by Councilmember Leslie Castellano to Approve the Amendment to Humboldt Transit Authority's Salary Schedule, Classification Plan, and Deputy General Manager Job Description by Adopting Resolution 25-06. Motion carried unanimously.

Redwood Transit System (RTS) Express Schedule Concept

Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

Greg Pratt presented a conceptual transit restructuring plan focused on improving express service and increasing frequency. The plan is in early stages and will involve phased implementation, starting with outreach and research to address community needs. Areas such as Trinidad and Manila may see earlier benefits, while Fortuna may require more time to adjust. The plan uses data and routing software to optimize service.

Funding concerns were raised due to current farebox recovery challenges and the cost of adding buses and drivers. Pratt noted statewide efforts to revise farebox metrics, which may affect future funding. The plan seeks to balance faster service with coverage for low-demand rural areas, using microtransit and dial-a-ride services. Phased implementation is targeted for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

Discussion on microtransit options included app-based services, fixed-route smaller buses, or hybrids. A fixed microtransit loop was suggested as a transitional strategy. Fortuna's acceptance of microtransit was questioned due to resistance to change. Overall, the group commended staff efforts and recognized the plan will require ongoing adjustments to best meet community needs.

Public Comment:

Joanne McGarry expressed enthusiasm for improved express service and collective transit but stressed the need for simplicity and accessibility, especially for those preferring low-tech options. She highlighted the importance of promoting transit for both commuters and tourists, envisioning group travel to local destinations without reliance on cars.

Colin Fiske discussed the balance between coverage and ridership, emphasizing microtransit as a tool to serve low-density areas while increasing service frequency on core routes. He stressed the importance of seamless, convenient transfers and suggested using data to optimize stop placement and trip times. He also questioned ridership differences between areas north and south of McKinleyville.

Oona Smith from HCAOG supported the transit strategy and noted its alignment with past plans and ongoing grant-funded projects. She highlighted a new collaborative planning effort (PACT) focusing on balancing frequency and coverage based on community needs and geographic differences, encouraging coordination among jurisdictions. Discussions acknowledged challenges in balancing route efficiency, coverage, and rider convenience, especially in more complex areas like Fortuna. Phased implementation and scheduling adjustments were proposed to maintain service reliability while making incremental improvements.

There was consensus on the need for better coordination, outreach, and communication with the public about upcoming changes, including potential use of mailers or digital messaging. Overall, the board expressed openness to gradual changes that improve service while recognizing the importance of community engagement and managing the pace of change to ensure rider acceptance.

HTA Project Update

Staff: [Katie Collender](#)

HTA's Finance Manager Katie Collender gave the board an update on HTA projects. Upcoming events include a symposium on July 16-17 being held at the Riverlodge in Fortuna, the 50th Anniversary, Free Fair in July, and youth and senior outreach programs in August. A hydrogen bus ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned for May 29, 2025. Purchase orders for an additional 10 hydrogen buses have been placed, and the new fueling station is operational with permits still under negotiation. Maintenance bay upgrades are progressing in partnership with the city. Full operation of AMRTS and its data systems will begin on July 1, with staff working closely to ensure a smooth implementation.

Nancy Diamond, HTA's legal counsel, provided a brief update on the contract negotiations with Linde Engineering North America for the hydrogen station design. Negotiations have been ongoing for several months and are close to finalizing, pending a few remaining exceptions. The contract is expected to be presented to the board for formal approval at the special meeting on May 23.

2023/2024 Fiscal & Compliance Audit

Staff: [Katie Collender](#)

Finance Manager Katie Collender provided the board with an update on the recent audit for fiscal year 2023-24. She reported that this marks the third consecutive year with no findings and no excess Transportation Development Act (TDA) operating funds received. The farebox recovery ratio, although not required, was a strong 12.52% overall. Katie noted that the agency's net position increased by nearly \$2 million, driven by a \$1 million increase each in current assets—primarily grants receivable from TIRCP, STA, SB 125, and SGR—and long-term assets related to work-in-progress projects like the hydrogen station and bus pilot. Cash flow improved compared to prior years when there were concerns about balances, and this update does not yet include recent funding.

Motion by Councilmember Tammy Trent, second by Councilmember Leslie Castellano to approve the 2023/2024 Fiscal & Compliance Audit. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Natalie Arroyo shared that she, Leslie, and Greg form the strategic planning subcommittee and are working to schedule a strategic planning session, aiming for a three- to four-hour block including a meal. The preferred date is July 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., to be held likely at the current location for convenience and technology access. The session will be interactive, focusing on the agency's bigger-picture strategic goals, with the transit symposium scheduled soon after.

Councilmember Alex Stillman reported meeting with the Cal Poly student body president, noting student hesitancy about traveling off-campus. She suggested incorporating transit information into next year's student orientation to raise awareness. She also mentioned discussions regarding transit services for new dorms, with plans for hourly transit runs and ongoing coordination with Katie Collender on routes and contracts.

Leslie Castellano from the City of Eureka updated that the South Eureka Complete Streets project includes improvements to bus stops. She highlighted Project Rebound as a resource for addressing concerns related to Pelican Bay and suggested outreach opportunities with local senior ride-sharing services like the Humboldt Senior Resource Center and Area 1 Volunteer Driver Program. Leslie emphasized the importance of reducing vehicle miles traveled while supporting volunteer transit services.

Lastly, Chair Arroyo noted progress on the strategic planning framework and upcoming scheduling for the May 23rd special meeting, with preparations underway to coordinate Finance and Operations Committee meetings to review the budget.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Schedule Special Meeting:

The Finance and Operations Committee meeting to review the FY 25/26 budget is scheduled for May 23rd at 9:00 a.m.

Humboldt Transit Authority Symposium:

Katie Collender provided details about the upcoming Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) Symposium, the fourth annual event for transit agencies from Northern California's 16 counties. The symposium will feature participants from key organizations including the California Air Resources Board, Caltrans headquarters, CalSTA, and the Federal Transit Administration, with attendees coming from across California, including Southern and Central regions. The event highlights transit innovations and offers valuable networking opportunities, especially focused on rural transit.

The symposium is scheduled for July 15th–17th at the Fortuna River Lodge. Activities begin on July 15th with a tour of the hydrogen fueling station, a vendor meet-and-greet, and a mixer, followed by educational sessions on July 16th and 17th. Katie encouraged board members to attend one or more sessions to gain insight into Humboldt Transit's initiatives. Flyers and further information will be distributed via email.

CLOSED SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

11:05 am

MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

May 23, 2025

9:00 am

PRESENT

ABSENT

Board Members

Alex Stillman, City of Arcata

Jack Tuttle, City of Trinidad

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna

Natalie Arroyo, County of Humboldt

Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell

Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka

Attended Via Teams

Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt; and Charotte Merkel, Deputy Director County of Humboldt.

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager

Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager

Carolann Aggeler, Admin & Finance Assistant

Andi Evans, Bookkeeper

Katie Collender, Finance Manager

Jerome Qiriazzi, Transit Planner

Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance

Also in attendance were Nancy Diamond, HTA Legal Counsel; and Saskia Rymer Burnette, CalTrans.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Natalie Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION

None

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.

5311 FTA Regional Apportionment & FTA 5311(f) Grant Funds

Staff: Greg Pratt

Board authorization is required to submit an application for Section 5311 and 5311(f).

Motion by Councilmember Alex Stillman, second by Councilmember Debra Garnes to adopt Resolution 25-06 Authorizing Application for FTA Section 5311 Grant Funds and authorize the General Manager to Sign the Grant Agreements. Motion carried unanimously.

Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None

Reports

None

New Business

Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC); Transit Service Agreement for Eureka Sunset Heights Housing Development
[Staff: Greg Pratt](#)

Greg Pratt announced that the Rural Communities Housing Development Corporation (RCHDC) is collaborating with HTA and the City of Eureka on an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program application. The proposal seeks substantial funding for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure and operations, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, while supporting disadvantaged communities.

HTA Transit Planner Jerome Qiriazhi noted that the project at the Sunset Heights property is similar to the previous Link Housing development. Transit-related improvements proposed in the application include: eight bus stop upgrades along Harris and Henderson Streets, Transit Signal Priority on Harris Street, six years of operating assistance for an additional ETS bus, and three years of annual transit passes for each apartment resident.

The City of Eureka has held public meetings on the project. The application is due May 28, 2025, with award notifications expected later this year.

Public Comment

None

Motion by Supervisor Natalie Arroyo, second by Councilmember Garnes to approve the Agreement between the City of Eureka and Humboldt Transit Authority and Authorize the General Manager to Sign the Agreement. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Hydrogen Fueling Station: Response to Submitted Proposal
[Staff: Jerome Qiriazhi](#)

HTA's Transit Planner, Jerome Qiriazhi, provided an update on the hydrogen fueling station project funded through HTA's successful Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 5 grant. The project includes construction of a hydrogen fueling station and procurement of eleven fuel cell electric buses.

To support the project, the Board formed the TIRCP Ad-Hoc Committee in October 2022 to advise on the initiative and approve expenditures of over \$150,000. The Board also authorized a design-build procurement approach, including the release of Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

Following multiple RFP iterations and feedback from qualified vendors, HTA received a final proposal from Linde Engineering North America, LLC (Linde) in response to RFP 23-01 Version 2. An Evaluation Committee scored the proposal at 92.8%. An Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) was completed and

found the proposal's capital and operations costs to be reasonable. Proposal deviations were reviewed and deemed minor, with corrective actions proposed or already negotiated.

HTA staff concluded that the proposed contract amount of \$13.4 million for design and construction of the hydrogen station, and \$2.76 million for two years of transitional fuel, operations, and maintenance, is fair and reasonable. Funding will be provided through a combination of TIRCP Cycle 5, FTA Carbon Reduction Funds, and future operational budgets.

Staff recommended approval of the proposed contract to ensure HTA remains compliant with the Innovative Clean Transit Regulation and meet grant deadlines.

Motion by Councilmember Alex Stillman, second by Chairperson Natalie Arroyo to Approve the revised contract terms and adopt Resolution No. 25-07 to award a contract for the design and construction of the hydrogen fueling station to Linde Engineering North America, LLC (LENA) in the amount of \$13,400,000 for capital costs and \$2,760,000 for two years of transitional fuel, and operation and maintenance services; and authorize the General Manager to sign all documents necessary to execute a contract with LENA, subject to approval by HTA General Counsel of the final contract terms and conditions. Motion Carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

None

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

General Manager Greg Pratt announced that HTA will host an event on Friday, May 30 to showcase the new hydrogen fuel cell bus. He expressed appreciation to the Board for their continued dedication and support for the agency. Finance Manager Katie Collender reminded staff and Board members to wear their *Ride Humboldt* t-shirts for the event.

CLOSED SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

9:48 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

TO: Chair Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Greg Pratt, General Manager

DATE: June 4, 2025

SUBJECT: Humboldt Transit Authority Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

On July 19, 2018, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Final Rule, which requires certain operators of public transportation systems that receive federal funds under FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grants to develop safety plans that included the processes and procedures to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS). The PTASP rule became effective on July 19, 2019, with a compliance deadline of July 19, 2020.

The rule applied to all operators of public transportation systems that are recipients and sub-recipients of federal financial assistance under the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. § 5307); recipients of FTA's Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Program (Section 5310) and/or Rural Area Formula Program (Section 5311) are currently excluded. Therefore, the Authority who only receives financial assistance via Section 5310 and Section 5311 and is not required to have a PTASP. However, the Authority's senior management understands that establishing the program strengthens the Authority's safety and risk management program, thus providing increased safety for the public who use the Authority's services and the safety of the Authority's employees while also reducing operating costs through improved safety and risk management. The Authority's Board approved the first HTA PTASP in July 2020.

Each year the Authority's PTASP plan reviews the plan and the accomplishments of the current year to develop a revised plan that contains amended goals for continuous improvement. Specific goals for system reliability are required as part of the plan. The chart below shows the accomplishments of the 2024/2025 PTASP Safety Performance goals.

Mode of Transit Service	Fatalities Goal	Fatalities Experienced	Injuries Goal	Injury Experienced	Safety Events Experienced	System Reliability Goals	% of System Reliability Goal Achieved
Commuter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.0	8,500	110.5%
Dial-A-Ride	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	20,000	254.7%
Fixed Route	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	6,500	80.0%
Intercity	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	33,000	118.0%
AMRTS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	3,000	265.4%



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2025/2026 HTA PTASP Safety Performance goals are illustrated in the table below. The distance between the need to remove a bus from service (reliability) Milage has been decreased for the Commuter and Dial-A-Ride systems and increased for the fixed route and intercity runs due to an aging fleet and other factors considered such as trends over the last two years. Now that HTA has several systems to monitor with buses that run on different routes, staff felt it best to cover all systems under one umbrella.

25/26 Goals

System Wide	Fatalities	Injuries	Safety Events	System Reliability
Humboldt Transit Authority	0.0	0.0	0.0	12,000

The past year's projections on the PTASP are taken from quarterly rates totals and adjusted to reflect a probable goal to achieve. This year's projections are relying on the same information that has been used in the past with adjustments that are reflective of an achievable goal narrative based on last two year's data included in the PTASP. In addition to the projections, we have implemented training for all drivers involved in an at fault accident.

The PTASP Committee - HTA is voluntarily meeting the new FTA requirements for large bus transit agencies to include the agency's safety team in the in the Agency's PTASP review process. Attached to this report is the draft for the 2024/2025 Humboldt Transit Authority PTASP for the Board's approval.

Action Recommended: Approve the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for the Humboldt Transit Authority by adopting Resolution 25-08.

Appendix A – Resolution to Re-Certify and Approve the HTA PTASP

RESOLUTION NO. 25-08,

**APPROVING THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP) FOR THE
HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the Humboldt Transit Authority directly operates, oversees safe, friendly, and reliable public transportation in the County of Humboldt; and

WHEREAS, the Redwood, Eureka Transit and AMRTS are local fixed-routes and Willow Creek, Paratransit, and the North State Express and Southern Humboldt are intercity systems operated by the Humboldt Transit Authority.

WHEREAS, the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan formalizes safety programs and procedures in place at the Humboldt Transit Authority and improves the safety risk management, safety assurance, and safety oversight processes; and

WHEREAS, the safe operation of public transportation for Humboldt Transit Authority is the top priority of the Authority and the Governing Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Board of the Humboldt Transit Authority does hereby approve and accept the agency's 2025/26 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 4th day of June 2025 by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Name: Natalie Arroyo

Title: Chair of the HTA Governing Board of Directors

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Attest:

Secretary to the Board



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

TO: Chair Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Katie Collender, Deputy General Manager

DATE: June 4, 2025

SUBJECT: Draft Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget, Draft Financial Forecast, and Draft Budget Narrative

Staff have completed the annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Through the budgeting process HTA examines its transactions closely, identifies service changes, gathers funding estimates, and considers economic forecasts to produce a balanced budget draft that anticipates how the agency will meet financial obligations in the upcoming year while striving towards its operational goals. This year, a five-year financial forecast and expanded narrative have been added to strengthen HTA's ability to plan for future needs.

HTA is committed to rebuilding the ridership base lost during the pandemic, this year RTS is on track to hit 70% of peak ridership. Recovery will continue through enhanced marketing campaigns, expanding outreach, simplifying processes, listening to community needs, and continuing to build public and private partnerships. Investment in technology will further this goal while increasing comfort and streamlining processes for riders. An accessible, convenient, affordable transit system benefits all residents of Humboldt County, and these priorities are embedded in next year's budget.

Action Recommended: Review the draft budget packet as proposed by staff and reviewed by the Finance and Operations Committee. Make changes if necessary. If approved, direct staff to publish a notice requesting public input on the proposed budget at the next meeting.

DRAFT 2025-26 BUDGET BY SERVICE

	Redwood Transit System	Eureka Transit Service	Arcata & Mad River Transit System	Southern Humboldt Intercity	North State Express 299	North State Express 101	Paratransit	Flex Microtransit	Total
Planned Miles	42%	8%	9%	11%	7%	6%	9%	8%	100%
Planned Hours	36%	15%	11%	6%	4%	3%	13%	12%	100%
Resources									
Operating Resources									
Fares & Passes	\$ 723,000	\$ 231,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 48,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 48,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 1,179,500
Contract Transportation	\$ 120,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 341,500	\$ 500	\$ 31,700	\$ 50	\$ 925,156	\$ -	\$ 1,431,906
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 843,000	\$ 244,000	\$ 411,500	\$ 48,500	\$ 63,700	\$ 7,550	\$ 973,156	\$ 20,000	\$ 2,611,406
Non Operating Resources									
Advertising	\$ 68,400	\$ 28,500	\$ 20,900	\$ 11,400	\$ 7,600	\$ 5,700	\$ 24,700	\$ 22,800	\$ 190,000
Interest/Miscellaneous	\$ 16,200	\$ 6,750	\$ 4,950	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,350	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,400	\$ 45,000
Federal Formula 5311	\$ 750,000	\$ 308,125	\$ -	\$ 300,000	\$ 209,132	\$ 215,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,782,857
JPA Member Assessment	\$ 2,059,957	\$ 202,027	\$ 305,003	\$ 626,803	\$ 303,944	\$ -	\$ 141,361	\$ -	\$ 3,639,095
State Transit Assistance	\$ 610,000	\$ 240,000	\$ 114,876	\$ 222,121	\$ 166,650	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 28,026	\$ 1,581,673
State of Good Repair	\$ 90,000	\$ 79,728	\$ 62,580	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42,000	\$ -	\$ 274,308
Low Carbon Transit Ops Prgm	\$ 156,856	\$ 46,253	\$ 40,220	\$ 34,187	\$ 22,121	\$ 18,099	\$ 44,242	\$ 40,220	\$ 402,198
Transit Intercity Rail Capital Prgm	\$ 117,000	\$ 48,750	\$ 35,750	\$ 19,500	\$ 13,000	\$ 9,750	\$ 42,250	\$ 39,000	\$ 325,000
SB125 Formula Transit Intercity	\$ 325,557	\$ 189,371	\$ 102,260	\$ 117,002	\$ 152,410	\$ 65,299	\$ 51,824	\$ 190,690	\$ 1,194,413
Measure O	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 460,000	\$ 561,964	\$ 107,906	\$ 21,059	\$ 269,706	\$ 479,365	\$ 100,000	\$ 3,600,000
Regional Early Action Planning 2.0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,190,250	\$ 1,190,250
Total Nonoperating	\$ 5,793,970	\$ 1,609,504	\$ 1,248,503	\$ 1,441,619	\$ 897,716	\$ 785,504	\$ 831,592	\$ 1,616,386	\$ 14,224,794
TOTAL RESOURCES	\$ 6,636,970	\$ 1,853,504	\$ 1,660,003	\$ 1,490,119	\$ 961,416	\$ 793,054	\$ 1,804,748	\$ 1,636,386	\$ 16,836,200
Operating Requirements									
Payroll	\$ 2,226,886	\$ 803,158	\$ 630,115	\$ 423,657	\$ 278,062	\$ 218,392	\$ 723,200	\$ 663,530	\$ 5,967,000
Employee Costs	\$ 569,502	\$ 205,400	\$ 161,146	\$ 108,346	\$ 71,112	\$ 55,852	\$ 184,951	\$ 169,691	\$ 1,526,000
Retirement	\$ 363,498	\$ 131,100	\$ 102,854	\$ 69,154	\$ 45,388	\$ 35,648	\$ 118,049	\$ 108,309	\$ 974,000
Contract Transportation	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Insurance	\$ 498,960	\$ 95,040	\$ 106,920	\$ 130,680	\$ 83,160	\$ 71,280	\$ 106,920	\$ 95,040	\$ 1,188,000
General Operating	\$ 227,880	\$ 94,950	\$ 69,630	\$ 37,980	\$ 25,320	\$ 18,990	\$ 82,290	\$ 75,960	\$ 633,000
Facilities	\$ 132,300	\$ 25,200	\$ 28,350	\$ 34,650	\$ 22,050	\$ 18,900	\$ 28,350	\$ 25,200	\$ 315,000
Technology	\$ 184,800	\$ 35,200	\$ 39,600	\$ 48,400	\$ 30,800	\$ 26,400	\$ 39,600	\$ 35,200	\$ 440,000
Vehicles	\$ 861,000	\$ 164,000	\$ 184,500	\$ 225,500	\$ 143,500	\$ 123,000	\$ 184,500	\$ 164,000	\$ 2,050,000
Total Operating	\$ 5,064,826	\$ 1,554,048	\$ 1,323,115	\$ 1,078,367	\$ 699,392	\$ 568,462	\$ 1,467,860	\$ 1,336,930	\$ 13,093,000
Capital Requirements									
Capital Purchases	\$ 113,400	\$ 21,600	\$ 24,300	\$ 29,700	\$ 18,900	\$ 16,200	\$ 24,300	\$ 21,600	\$ 270,000
Facility Maintenance	\$ 244,944	\$ 46,656	\$ 52,488	\$ 64,152	\$ 40,824	\$ 34,992	\$ 52,488	\$ 46,656	\$ 583,200
Vehicles	\$ 1,213,800	\$ 231,200	\$ 260,100	\$ 317,900	\$ 202,300	\$ 173,400	\$ 260,100	\$ 231,200	\$ 2,890,000
Total Capital	\$ 1,572,144	\$ 299,456	\$ 336,888	\$ 411,752	\$ 262,024	\$ 224,592	\$ 336,888	\$ 299,456	\$ 3,743,200
TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	\$ 6,636,970	\$ 1,853,504	\$ 1,660,003	\$ 1,490,119	\$ 961,416	\$ 793,054	\$ 1,804,748	\$ 1,636,386	\$ 16,836,200
Revenue Less Requirements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

DRAFT 2025-26 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL FORECAST

	FY 23-24 Actual	FY 24-25 Budget	FY 25-26 Budget	FY 26-27 Forecast	FY 27-28 Forecast	FY 28-29 Forecast	FY 29-30 Forecast
Resources							
Operating Resources							
Fares & Passes	\$ 1,014,981	\$ 1,097,800	\$ 1,179,500	\$ 1,238,475	\$ 1,300,399	\$ 1,365,419	\$ 1,433,690
Contract Transportation	\$ 1,833,664	\$ 1,905,469	\$ 1,431,906	\$ 1,474,863	\$ 1,519,109	\$ 1,564,682	\$ 1,611,622
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 2,848,645	\$ 3,003,269	\$ 2,611,406	\$ 2,713,338	\$ 2,819,508	\$ 2,930,101	\$ 3,045,312
Non Operating Resources							
Advertising	\$ 161,349	\$ 185,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 195,700	\$ 201,571	\$ 207,618	\$ 213,847
Interest/Miscellaneous	\$ 302,969	\$ 39,500	\$ 45,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,440	\$ 22,889	\$ 23,347
Federal Formula 5311	\$ 1,666,341	\$ 1,752,270	\$ 1,782,857	\$ 1,818,514	\$ 1,854,884	\$ 1,891,982	\$ 1,929,822
JPA Member Assessment	\$ 2,982,417	\$ 3,248,551	\$ 3,639,095	\$ 3,748,268	\$ 3,860,716	\$ 3,976,537	\$ 4,095,833
State Transit Assistance	\$ 1,631,783	\$ 325,573	\$ 1,581,673	\$ 1,613,306	\$ 1,645,572	\$ 1,678,483	\$ 1,712,053
State of Good Repair	\$ 222,784	\$ 250,435	\$ 274,308	\$ 279,794	\$ 285,390	\$ 291,098	\$ 296,920
Low Carbon Transit Ops Prgm	\$ 375,914	\$ 385,676	\$ 402,198	\$ 410,242	\$ 418,447	\$ 426,816	\$ 435,352
Transit Intercity Rail Capital Prgm	\$ 1,488,227	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 341,250	\$ 358,313	\$ 376,229	\$ 395,040
SB125 Formula Transit Intercity	\$ -	\$ 1,358,307	\$ 1,194,413	\$ 1,567,408	\$ 2,203,129	\$ 2,890,465	\$ 3,633,506
Measure O	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 3,600,000
Regional Early Action Planning 2.0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,190,250	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Nonoperating	\$ 8,831,784	\$ 7,870,312	\$ 14,224,794	\$ 13,596,482	\$ 14,450,462	\$ 15,362,117	\$ 16,335,720
TOTAL RESOURCES	\$ 11,680,429	\$ 10,873,581	\$ 16,836,200	\$ 16,309,820	\$ 17,269,970	\$ 18,292,218	\$ 19,381,032
Operating Requirements							
Payroll	\$ 3,818,216	\$ 4,629,300	\$ 5,967,000	\$ 6,265,350	\$ 6,578,618	\$ 6,907,549	\$ 7,252,926
Employee Costs	\$ 1,031,655	\$ 1,123,394	\$ 1,526,000	\$ 1,602,300	\$ 1,682,415	\$ 1,766,536	\$ 1,854,863
Retirement	\$ 986,513	\$ 832,000	\$ 974,000	\$ 1,022,700	\$ 1,073,835	\$ 1,127,527	\$ 1,183,903
Contract Transportation	\$ 955,939	\$ 852,078	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Insurance	\$ 763,688	\$ 930,700	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,283,040	\$ 1,385,683	\$ 1,496,538	\$ 1,616,261
General Operating	\$ 446,328	\$ 372,361	\$ 633,000	\$ 658,320	\$ 684,653	\$ 712,039	\$ 740,521
Facilities	\$ 273,349	\$ 277,099	\$ 315,000	\$ 330,750	\$ 347,288	\$ 364,652	\$ 382,885
Technology	\$ 327,414	\$ 354,500	\$ 440,000	\$ 462,000	\$ 485,100	\$ 509,355	\$ 534,823
Vehicles	\$ 1,117,270	\$ 1,502,149	\$ 2,050,000	\$ 2,255,000	\$ 2,480,500	\$ 2,728,550	\$ 3,001,405
Total Operating	\$ 9,720,371	\$ 10,873,581	\$ 13,093,000	\$ 13,879,460	\$ 14,718,092	\$ 15,612,746	\$ 16,567,587
Ongoing Capital Requirements							
Capital Purchases	\$ 87,953	\$ -	\$ 270,000	\$ 283,500	\$ 297,675	\$ 312,559	\$ 328,187
Facility Maintenance	\$ 1,262,819	\$ -	\$ 583,200	\$ 612,360	\$ 642,978	\$ 675,127	\$ 708,883
Vehicles	\$ 780,997	\$ -	\$ 2,890,000	\$ 1,534,500	\$ 1,611,225	\$ 1,691,786	\$ 1,776,375
Total Capital	\$ 2,131,769	\$ -	\$ 3,743,200	\$ 2,430,360	\$ 2,551,878	\$ 2,679,472	\$ 2,813,445
TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	\$ 11,852,140	\$ 10,873,581	\$ 16,836,200	\$ 16,309,820	\$ 17,269,970	\$ 18,292,218	\$ 19,381,032
Revenue Less Requirements	\$ (171,711)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Draft Budget Narrative

Introduction

Staff have completed the annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Through the budgeting process HTA examines its transactions closely, identifies service changes, gathers funding estimates, and considers economic forecasts to produce a balanced budget draft that anticipates how the agency will meet financial obligations in the upcoming year while striving towards its operational goals. This year, a five-year financial forecast and expanded narrative have been added to strengthen HTA's ability to plan for future needs.

HTA is committed to rebuilding the ridership base lost during the pandemic. This year RTS is on track to hit 70% of peak ridership. Recovery will continue through enhanced marketing campaigns, expanding outreach, simplifying processes, listening to community needs, and continuing to build public and private partnerships. Investment in technology will further this goal while increasing comfort and streamlining processes for riders. An accessible, convenient, affordable transit system benefits all residents of Humboldt County, and these priorities are embedded in next year's budget.

Current Services:

Redwood Transit System (RTS)
Eureka Transit Service (ETS)
Arcata & Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS)
Southern Humboldt Intercity (SHI)
North State Express 299 (NSE 299)
North State Express 101 (NSE 101)
Paratransit or Dial-a-Ride (DAR)
Flex Microtransit (Flex)

Key Items:

Addition to the Budgeting Model

The traditional single-year budgeting model focuses on maintaining current programs without addressing their long-term implications. To achieve sustainable growth, it is essential to assess what decisions on service levels and expenses in the current year mean for the agency's future. The resource projections in this plan allow the Board to play a critical role in shaping these decisions and ensuring the agency's lasting viability. The budget showing costs by route is also included, with expected cost distributions based on contracts, allocations by miles, hours, or a combination of factors.

Prior annual budgets focused on an operating cash flow model and did not include regular capital costs. These include large equipment purchases, facility and bus stop costs, and vehicle replacement. Larger capital projects are not included and are budgeted with their corresponding grants. Because these capital amounts were not in the budget last year, there appears to be a greater increase when comparing this upcoming budget to the current year. Moving forward, the method used will show consistency and allow for continued comparison after the 24/25 fiscal year closes.

Draft Budget Narrative

Funding Updates

Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 5

HTA has made significant progress under the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 5, advancing its commitment to zero-emission transit and regional connectivity. With this \$38.7 million grant awarded in 2022, HTA is deploying 11 New Flyer fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs), constructing a hydrogen fueling station, retrofitting service bays to safely work on hydrogen buses, and building an intermodal transit center in downtown Eureka. The station will also offer public fueling options, supporting the broader adoption of hydrogen vehicles on California's North Coast. These initiatives align with HTA's Zero Emission Bus Rollout Plan, targeting a 100% zero emissions fleet by 2040, and reflect a concerted effort to reduce emissions, improve transit accessibility, and foster sustainable transportation solutions in the region.

Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7

Staff applied for the TIRCP Cycle 7 competitive grant in July of 2024 and were awarded their full request of \$18.7 million. This grant will support a range of transformative transit projects across the North State region. It will enable the launch of a new 15-minute headway express service to address an identified Unmet Transit Need and boost ridership. The grant also supports new standardized bus stop designs to improve the passenger experience, safety, and enhance Ride Humboldt brand recognition. At the Eureka Intermodal Transit Center, additional indoor and outdoor infrastructure improvements include interactive lighting, art, and additional sitework. Public art installations at bus stops and the Transit Center will further foster community pride and engagement with transit. The grant will also fund Phase 1 of the North Coast Zero Emission Training Center, which will support regional workforce development, enhance systemwide safety through better operator and mechanic training, and reduce training-related travel and other costs. Lastly, the continued expansion of HTA's hydrogen fleet will increase the number of zero-emission miles operated and hopefully reduce fuel prices by leveraging a greater volume of hydrogen fuel.

Senate Bill (SB) 125

Senate Bill (SB) 125 will distribute \$4 billion from the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program to regional transportation planning agencies over the next few fiscal years. This money is highly flexible and can be used for operations or capital improvements. The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is administering these funds for Humboldt County. SB 125 also establishes a Transit Transformation Task Force led by the California State Transportation Agency to develop policy recommendations on how to grow transit ridership, improve the transit experience, and address the long-term operational needs agencies face.

Measure O

The citizens of Humboldt County have memorialized their support for public transportation with a new sales tax. On November 6, 2024, Humboldt County voters passed a 1% sales tax known as "Measure O" to bring local funds to road repair and bus services. This new tax is estimated to bring over \$24 million to the county each year to improve road infrastructure and to maintain and enhance local public transit. On April 22, 2025, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution that named HTA as the appropriate agency to represent local transit and receive 15% of the total amount collected starting on July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2030. Each year, HTA will bring its

Draft Budget Narrative

Work Plan to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council for review and input. HTA will then finalize the plan as they deem appropriate and bring it before the HTA Board of Directors for adoption. Staff will then submit quarterly reports to the County Administrative Office to receive payment. An annual report will be submitted to the Humboldt County Audit Committee by the end of December following each fiscal year.

Measure O priorities for the upcoming fiscal year include but are not limited to support for Southern Humboldt Intercity, North State Express 299, and North State Express 101, Dial-a-Ride, and the restoration of late-night and early-morning service on Redwood Transit System. Although HTA is committed to the transition to zero emissions, with no local redundancy for hydrogen fuel, it is essential to retain a diversified fleet. With 76.4% of the RTS fleet past its useful life, as defined by the FTA and Caltrans, HTA plans to purchase two diesel buses to strengthen its ability to provide reliable transportation to the county.

Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 Grant

The HCAOG applied for the California Department of Housing and Community Development Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 grant on behalf of HTA and “We are Up” in late 2022. The original grant amount for HTA was \$2.19 million, but it was reduced to \$1.47 million with a delayed start date. Due to changes to the grant term and award, services will now only be available for one fiscal year. This initiative aims to provide on-demand transportation options that connect residents to essential services and fixed route transit, serving as a model for other rural communities with similar needs. The REAP 2.0 program supports sustainable, equitable, and climate-friendly infrastructure projects in underserved communities.

Service Changes

Arcata & Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS)

Starting July 1, 2025, the Arcata & Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS) and its assets will be transferred to HTA and fully integrated into its operations. The City of Arcata has managed A&MRTS independently since its inception in 1975, the same year HTA was founded. Since 2001, HTA has provided bus maintenance and parking for Arcata. After the pandemic, A&MRTS experienced driver staffing shortages, which led to HTA becoming the operations contractor starting July 1, 2023. This consolidation will allow better coordination and streamlining of the fixed route network in Humboldt County. Cal Poly Humboldt funds extended hours on the Orange line and the Green and Gold line, and now HTA will contract with them directly for these services.

Paratransit “Dial-a-Ride”

HCAOG contracts with HTA to serve as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency for Humboldt County, responsible for ensuring paratransit services are provided to populations unable to be properly served by traditional transit. Paratransit operations, often called “Dial-a-Ride” (DAR), have been performed by a contractor, CAE Transport, for many years. Costs have continued to rise across the transit industry, including in the paratransit space. Continuing the theme of consolidation and efficiency through operations and utilizing the structure of HTA to manage these programs will result in overall cost savings. Expenses that were under Contract Transportation in the prior year’s budget are now reflected in Payroll and other direct costs.

Draft Budget Narrative

Ride Humboldt Flex Microtransit

Ride Humboldt Flex is an on-demand shared ride service that operates between bus stops, including both existing and newly designated virtual stops. The service is designed to complement HTA's fixed-route bus systems by offering additional connectivity options within the existing service areas. Riders can plan customized journeys by choosing optimal times and selecting the most convenient bus stops or other approved locations as both their pick-up and drop-off points. The REAP 2.0 grant will enable the expansion of transit choices throughout McKinleyville by piloting a program for on-demand microtransit in that area.

General Service Changes

For the new fiscal year, the Humboldt Transport Authority (HTA) is implementing several service adjustments designed to better align with rider needs and improve overall efficiency. Staff are assessing methods to attract more riders by reducing travel time and increasing frequency on RTS and ETS. Due to high ridership on SHI trips, a rider survey is underway. The results of this survey will inform the timing of new runs. An additional trip on the NSE 299 will reduce connection times to Redding by half, taking the total travel time from 8 hours to 4 hours. These strategic changes will enhance travel options and reduce wait times during peak hours. Service modifications with Measure O funding will be through the prioritization process that includes the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and the HTA Board.

Other Items

Staffing and Recruitment

Challenges with driver recruitment across the transit industry required HTA to make changes to attract qualified applicants and retain valuable employees. Human Resources sought feedback from current and resigning drivers on how to improve the desirability of the position. HTA was able to both increase the driver's salary scale and curtail the number of split shifts that required employees to work mornings and evenings on the same day and detracted from their work life balance. These measures have reduced vacancies and given HTA the ability to maintain the exceptional growth seen in the past few fiscal years. Since 2023, HTA has increased its staffing by 22%, with projections reaching a 41% increase by the start of the 2025/26 fiscal year. HTA will now be operating DAR with its own drivers rather than contract labor and has planned service increases in the upcoming year, which means a significant addition to driver allocations.

Insurance

HTA is a member of the California Transit Indemnity Pool (CalTIP), a Joint Powers Authority insurance pool. By joining with other agencies to establish a pooled program layer and to purchase reinsurance, members are slightly insulated from the volatile insurance industry. CalTIP provides general liability, and vehicle physical damage. For the next fiscal year, there were changes to the lowest starting amount of what reinsurance partners were willing to offer in the general liability program. This meant that CalTIP was required to fund its self-funded layer at \$2.25 million rather than \$2 million per incident. The cost share between pool members is based on loss history and revenue miles. HTA's service increases in the coming year combined with this self-funded layer change equates to a \$550,205 contribution to the general liability program. This is 49.5% higher than the prior year.

Draft Budget Narrative

Upcoming Capital Projects

Large capital projects were not included in this operationally focused budget, which is centered on the annual costs related to sustaining transit services and improving efficiency for riders. Including large projects in the operations budget would create inconsistencies from year to year, as these one-time or infrequent expenses can significantly skew annual comparisons and planning. While funding for major infrastructure investments falls outside the scope of this budget, HTA remains committed to long-term improvements and system upgrades. A list of planned or upcoming large capital projects is provided below to keep the public informed about future enhancements that will support the agency's broader goals.

Project	Cost	Funding
Hydrogen Fueling Station	\$15,370,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 5- Federal Highway Infrastructure Program
10 Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses	\$12,751,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 5
Maintenance Bay Hydrogen Retrofit	\$1,197,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 5
Eureka Intermodal Transit Center	\$12,331,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 5- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7
5 Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses	\$7,959,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7
Bus Stop Redesign and Branding Pilot	\$2,492,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7
North Coast Zero Emission Training Center: Phase 1	\$846,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7
Facility Redesign and Replacement	\$65,000,000.00 (Estimated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unfunded
TOTAL PROJECTS	\$117,946,000.00	