

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
KATIE COLLENDER
Deputy 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: 234 271 049 372 3

Passcode: RZ37YT78

February 4, 2026

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 January 7, 2026, Regular Board Meeting](#)

Page 03

Staff have prepared the minutes from the prior meeting.

[Staff: Consuelo Espinosa](#)

Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

F. Item Removed from Consent Calendar

G. Reports

1. [Caltrans District 1 Report](#)

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

No Action Required

2. [Draft November 2025 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA](#)

Handout

[Staff: Carolann Aggeler](#)

No Action Required

3. [HTA Projects Update](#)

Page 07

[Staff: Jerome Qiriazi](#)

No Action Required

4. [Deputy General Manager Report](#)

Page 09

[Staff: Katie Collender](#)

No Action Required

H. New Business

1. Paratransit Update

Staff: Katie Collender

Staff will update the Board with a review of paratransit since HTA started direct operation.

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

2. Redwood Transit System Streamlining and Increased Frequency Concept

Page 10

Staff: Katie Collender

Staff have prepared a concept of a streamlined Redwood Transit System, with increased frequency and reduced travel time between key destinations.

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 HUBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

January 7, 2026

9:00 AM

Present

Absent

Board Members:

Tami Trent – City of Fortuna
Alex Stillman – City of Arcata
Natalie Arroyo – County of Humboldt
Leslie Castellano – City of Eureka
Mike Wilson – County of Humboldt
Jack Tuttle - City of Trinidad
Debra Garnes – City of Rio Dell

Attended via Teams:

Charlotte Merkel, Humboldt County Public Works; and Althea Christensen, Member of the Public.

Staff:

Greg Pratt – HTA General Manager
Consuelo Espinosa- Human Resources Manager
Katie Collender – Deputy General Manager
Carolann Aggeler – Finance Manager
Andi Evans – Finance and Administration Assistant (via videoconference)
Trisha Anderson – Bookkeeper (via videoconference)
Jim Wilson – HTA Director of Maintenance
Cody Ferreira – HTA ADA & Safety Coordinator (via videoconference)
Jerome Qiriazi – Transit Planner
Stephanie Groves – Operations Manager
Aaron Lagasse – Transportation Supervisor

Also present:

Nancy Diamond, HTA Legal Counsel; Saskia Rymer-Burnett, Caltrans District 1; and Joanne McGarry, Member of the Public.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Natalie Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATIONS

Joanne McGarry shared a personal experience from her bus ride, noting that she missed her stop and had to walk back, which she described as an interesting but manageable situation. She expressed strong appreciation for local bus drivers and acknowledged the daily challenges they face, including dealing with ill-prepared riders and malfunctioning equipment. Looking ahead, she proposed the idea of forming a “Friends of Humboldt Transit Authority” group to involve community volunteers in supporting and promoting transit use, emphasizing her desire to help make bus travel easier and encourage more people to ride.

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.

Minutes from December 3, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

Staff have prepared the minutes from the prior meeting.

Staff: Consuelo Espinosa

Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

General Counsel Contract Amendment

Staff: Katie Collender

Staff presented a contract amendment for HTA General Counsel through December 31, 2029.

Action Recommended: *Approve the Amendment Between the Law Offices of Nancy Diamond and the Humboldt Transit Authority and Authorize the General Manager and Board Chair to Execute the Amendment*

Whitchurch Engineering Contract Amendments

Staff: Katie Collender

The scope of the interior office remodel and bus stop sign installation projects has expanded and requires contract amendments to continue.

Action Recommended: *Approve the Amended Agreements Between Whitchurch Engineering and the Humboldt Transit Authority and Authorize the General Manager to Execute the Updated Agreements*

Amendment to the Humboldt Transit Authority Personnel Policy, Classification Plan and Salary Schedule

Staff: Katie Collender

Board authorization is required for all changes to the Personnel Policy, Classification Plan and Salary Schedule amendments. Staff recommend adding a full-time Marketing Coordinator (funded by the TIRCP grant) and a full-time mechanic.

Action Recommended: *Approve the Amendments to Humboldt Transit Authority's Personnel Policy, Classification Plan and Salary Schedule by Adopting Resolution 26-01*

Motion by Councilmember Leslie Castellano and Second by Mike Wilson, to approve the consent calendar. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONCENT CALENDAR

None

REPORTS

Caltrans District 1 Report

Caltrans Staff: Saskia Rymer-Burnett & Tasha Ahlstrand

Saskia Rymer-Burnett, representing Caltrans District 1, provided a brief update on current activities. She reported that work on the district transit plan is in a short lull, with Phase 2 public outreach expected to resume and intensify in February. In addition, she noted that Regional Planning and Transit staff are currently evaluating applications for the 2026–27 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant cycle, with six applications under review.

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

Staff: Carolann Aggeler

Carolann Aggeler, HTA's Finance Manager, presented the October 2025 statistical and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA. She noted that October marked one full year since the fare structure change and highlighted trends observed over that period. Cash payments have continued to increase and remain the most popular fare option, with open-loop fare payment emerging as the second most used method. Additional discussion highlighted significant growth in Jack Pass usage across all systems, attributed not only to new housing but also to expanded outreach efforts and Cal Poly's recent extension of the Jack Pass to all routes, including RTS, AMRTS, ETS, and North State Express 101.

NEW BUSINESS

Accept General Manager's Retirement, Appoint New General Manager

General Counsel: Nancy Diamond

Natalie Arroyo, Chairperson, introduced the agenda item regarding the acceptance of General Manager Greg Pratt's retirement on May 18, 2026 and the appointment of a new General Manager, Katie Collender beginning May 19, 2026. Natalie expressed confidence in Katie's leadership and anticipated a seamless transition.

Greg Pratt expressed gratitude for the experience, noting that while he will miss the organization, he is also looking forward to the next chapter. Board members and staff commended Greg for setting a positive, approachable, and consistent leadership tone that has contributed to the organization's longevity, innovation, and strong reputation statewide.

Katie Collender expressed appreciation for the organization and acknowledged the responsibility of continuing Greg's legacy while managing a growing number of projects and maintaining HTA's important role in the community. Board members voiced strong support for her appointment and confidence in her leadership.

A suggestion was also raised to explore a formal agreement that would allow Greg to remain available in a compensated, transparent advisory capacity during the transition if needed. The Chair noted that this could be discussed further in the coming months.

Motion by Councilmember Alex Stillman and second by Supervisor Mike Wilson to accept the retirement of HTA's General Manager, Greg Pratt, and to appoint Katie Collender as the new General Manager. The motion carried unanimously.

Side Letter Agreement Between Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO

Staff: Katie Collender

HTA and AFSCME have been meeting and conferring in good faith regarding a modified work schedule for represented personnel. Katie Collender reported that, although the side letter was not included on the agenda, a handout was distributed to the board regarding the proposed Side Letter Agreement between the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO. She explained that in 2024, HTA and AFSCME successfully negotiated a labor contract extending through the 2026/27 fiscal year. To support the recruitment and retention of Drivers and Shop Personnel, the HTA Governing Board proposed a reduced work schedule combined with a wage increase that would maintain weekly pay at reduced hours equivalent to current wages based on a standard 40-hour work week.

Motion by Supervisor Mike Wilson, second by Councilmember Alex Stillman, to approve the Side Letter Agreement between AFSCME and HTA and authorize the General Manager to sign the agreement. The motion carried unanimously.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Charter Service Regulations

Staff: Katie Collender

Deputy General Manager Katie Collender presented the Section 511 Charter Service Identification Flow Chart and explained the challenges associated with providing charter services due to HTA's status as a federally funded agency. She noted that federal regulations prohibit HTA from competing with private charter operators, except under specific and limited exemptions. Katie further explained that charter service requests must be reviewed through the Federal Transit Administration's Charter Registration website, which identifies private operators within the service area. She emphasized that regulatory requirements create significant constraints on HTA's ability to provide charter services and underscored the importance of compliance with federal rules.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Debra Barnes of Rio Dell shared a personal experience while on a walk, noting that as she approached a bus stop, a citizen waiting with a suitcase expressed positive feedback about public transit. Natalie Arroyo, HTA Chairperson, reported that she would be unavailable for the January HCAOG meeting and requested that a staff member attend in her absence. She highlighted several topics on the upcoming agenda, including a discussion with the DAR consultant. Councilmember Leslie Castellano shared that she had enjoyed the Holiday Light Tour and thanked HTA's Operations Manager for their close coordination in making the event a success.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Deputy General Manager Katie Collender shared that HTA would be hosting an Employee Appreciation Dinner on January 25th and extended an invitation to the board. She also announced the promotion of HTA's Transportation Supervisor, Aaron Lagasse, and recognized Marketing Coordinator Maria Vahkid for her efforts in creating extensive behind-the-scenes content.

CLOSED SESSION

None

MEETING ADJOURNED

10:02 AM



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TO: HTA Chair Natalie Arroyo
All Governing Board Members
FROM: Jerome Qiriazi, Transit Planner
DATE: February 4, 2026
SUBJECT: Humboldt Transit Authority Project Updates

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.

- Hydrogen Fueling Infrastructure
 - a. Design is progressing on schedule. Construction start date is solidified for late June / early July.
 - b. The Cedar House is planned for demolition in May. Additional staff office space is being constructed to accommodate the loss of office space.
- Eureka Transit Center
 - a. Design is progressing on schedule.
 - b. Additional TIRCP Cycle 7 funding allocation approved by CTC last week
- Production Buses
 - a. All ten buses are through production. They are undergoing commissioning and final inspection. Delivery for the first two will start at the end of the month.

TIRCP Cycle 7 Grant

This project funds the planning and capital infrastructure for 15-minute service, adds additional budget to the intermodal transit station, installs art installations at transit infrastructure, and procures additional fuel cell electric buses.

- Funding allocation was approved last week for starting the environmental phase of designing the new bus stops that will serve the new 15-minute service and serve as a model for a planned Bus Stop Design Guide.

Partnering Assets and Authorities for Comprehensive Transit (PAACT) Project

This is a planning project lead by HCAOG to support regional coordination around transit, active transportation and land use planning needs for achieving the Safe and Sustainable Transportation (SST) Targets in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

- The project held its kick off meeting last week with the selected consultants and members of the Project Steering Working Group. The Working Group is comprised of tribes and jurisdictions in Humboldt County.

Next Generation Facility Project

This project seeks to fund the design and construction of a new administration and maintenance facility for HTA that accommodates current needs and anticipated future growth.

- The first draft of facility space needs is being finalized. Staff will be reviewing the results with consultants and assessing the suitability of our current site for planned future growth.

Miscellaneous

This covers various other projects

- Repaving of W Street: this effort will officially bring both sides of the yard together by bringing W St up to the same elevation as both sides of the yard. This will increase bus parking and improve vehicle circulation.
- HTA has fully taken in-house management of General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data feed. This will allow HTA to be much more responsive and proactive with communicating changes to routes, schedules, and infrastructure to the public through Google Maps, Transit App, etc.
- HTA Staff are working with the City of Eureka to improve red curb markings at bus stops across the City. This helps ensure there is sufficient space for buses to access bus stops and will improve ADA access to transit.

No Action Required

TO: Chair Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Katie Collender, Deputy General Manager

DATE: February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Deputy General Manager Report

- Legislative Update
 - April 8th presentation on legislation of interest
- Community Transportation Association of America Legislative Fly-In
 - March 5th in Washington D.C.
 - Our attendance requested and sponsored by CalACT
- Microtransit
 - Two dedicated vehicles have been added M-F between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm
 - Additional stops added to system in areas with limited existing stops (see figure to the right)
 - New code "FlexUp" two free rides per account
- Trinity Transit
 - Reduced westbound travel times between Arcata and Redding by three and a half hours
 - Travel between Redding and Arcata via public transit is now possible in just over four hours

No Action Required



Figure 1: Additional stops added to microtransit.



TO: Chair Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Katie Collender, Deputy General Manager

DATE: February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Paratransit Update

In 2017 Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) became the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Humboldt County. As the CTSA, HTA helps coordinate and improve specialized transportation services for seniors, people with disabilities, low-income residents, and other groups with limited mobility and ensures that local transportation resources serve these groups efficiently and effectively. The CTSA is responsible for paratransit program administration, vehicle maintenance, centralized dispatching, equipment purchasing, and training drivers.

Paratransit operations have been performed through a contract for many years. On July 1, 2025, HTA took over direct operations of public paratransit in Humboldt County. Due to the continued increase in costs throughout the transit industry, savings were identified by integrating operations under program administration, alongside maintenance services and within the resources of the HTA driver pool.

Staff have prepared a review of key performance statistics focused on on-time performance, vehicle efficiency, and passenger ride time. The presentation shows a comparison of data from October to December 2024 versus 2025 when operated by HTA. Through direct operation we have maintained or exceeded prior service in these key performance indicators. Future goals for the program include a rebranding from "Dial-a-Ride" to "Plus," assessing ways to streamline service, continuing to grow microtransit ridership to supplement income in the program.

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



TO: Chair Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Katie Collender, Deputy General Manager

DATE: February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Redwood Transit System Streamlining and Increased Frequency Concept

Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) was established in 1975 by Humboldt County and the cities of Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad to provide transit services across their jurisdictions. Redwood Transit System was first route operated by HTA and continues to be the agency's most utilized route. Ridership on RTS was almost 20% higher than the previous fiscal year to date as of the October Board Statistics.

In Humboldt County Transit Development Plan 2023-2028, the most popular service request mentioned by the onboard survey respondents was for increased frequency. The survey found that the public believed RTS service between major destinations takes too long, often taking up to three times longer by bus than by car. For example, the travel time between McKinleyville and College of the Redwoods (CR) is 1 hour and 13 minutes by bus and only 40 minutes of travel time by car. For people with the option to travel by car, this increased time is a significant barrier to transit use.

Staff have worked to refine RTS by eliminating infrequently used stops that require considerable time deviation. In addition, buses will now serve all stops every thirty minutes. Trinidad, which was previously only served every three hours by RTS, will now have service every two hours but by a microtransit vehicle that will fill in between its committed times with microtransit rides. These changes and the fare simplification that occurred in October 2024 are significant improvements to the rider experience.

More frequent service on RTS has been a goal of HTA for some time, with 15-minute headways a commitment of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 7 grant. This concept is the first step in scaling operations towards even more frequent service. The current RTS schedule requires 18 employees to operate, this concept requires 25.

Key destinations by personal vehicle, current RTS schedule, and proposed:

| | Direct by Personal Vehicle | Current RTS Schedule | Current vs. Personal Vehicle | Proposed Schedule | Proposed vs. Personal Vehicle |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Trinidad to Scotia | 57 minutes | 151 minutes | 165% | 119 minutes | 108% |
| Eureka to McKinleyville | 19 minutes | 49 minutes | 157% | 30 minutes | 57% |
| Airport to Scotia | 49 minutes | 137 minutes | 180% | 98 minutes | 100% |



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| | Direct by Personal Vehicle | Current RTS Schedule | Current vs. Personal Vehicle | Proposed Schedule | Proposed vs. Personal Vehicle |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Eureka to Rio Dell | 30 minutes | 84 minutes | 180% | 61 minutes | 100% |
| Arcata to Fortuna | 34 minutes | 74 minutes | 116% | 41 minutes | 20% |
| McKinleyville to College of the Redwoods | 35 minutes | 68 minutes | 95% | 58 minutes | 66% |

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