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**AGENDA ITEM 6a**  
TAC Meeting  
May 7, 2026

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DATE: April 30, 2026  
TO: Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)  
FROM: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner  
SUBJECT: **Presentation of Level of Traffic Stress and PlaceMix Results**

### **DISCUSSION ITEM STAFF REPORT**

#### **Contents:**

- Staff Summary
- Enclosure 6a-1: Community maps with PlaceMix scores
- Enclosure 6a-2: PlaceMix Overview Review slide deck

#### **Staff Summary:**

As part of the Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning Project, HCAOG contracted with GHD to help analyze the level of traffic stress (LTS) for pedestrians and bicyclists in the Greater Wigi/Humboldt Bay area. GHD augmented the LTS analysis by applying their internally developed Place Mix tool, which they use to show how or where “Smart Growth” factors can contribute to increased walking and biking. PlaceMix analyzes land use as a primary indicator, if not precursor, of walkable and bikeable places. As factors, PlaceMix uses inputs on the diversity and density of housing and jobs, and the proximity of origins and destinations to each other.

GHD briefly describes their tool in the following:

#### **How Does PlaceMix Work?**

- We define the basic unit of analysis as a comfortable half-mile walkable radius. How many jobs and services can people walk to? With the commute trip commonly being the longest daily household trip, we often focus primarily on the commute trip as a target for VMT reduction.
- Based on the number of homes, jobs and services that are walkable, we can estimate a place’s potential to minimize car trips: is the existing or proposed land use plan conducive to walking?
- Beyond walking we also look at bicycle connectivity, extending the number of accessible jobs and services based on access through the low stress bicycling network.
- Outputs of the Place Mix tool include indices that measure land use balance, which identifies community walkability and bikeability, as well as sustainable development opportunities.

For this project, “GHD will take their results of the Level of Traffic Stress analysis, using their Place Mix tool to assist jurisdictions to identify areas where investment and infill will support growth where residents can get around without relying on driving their private cars for most trips.” GHD consultants, Todd Tregenza and Paige Peel, will present the PlaceMix results at the TAC meeting and can answer questions.

The following briefly describes the contents of the two enclosures.

- **Enclosure 6a-1:** the set of maps shows the outputs of the PlaceMix platform for communities across the Wigi area. For each community area, the following maps are included:
  - total score and trips by hexagon
  - the three diversity scores driving the total score by hexagon: jobs-housing diversity, job mix diversity and retail housing diversity
  - four destination accessibility indices by hexagon: accessible schools, fresh food, transit stops and parks

The total score is shown on a 0 to 100 score in terms of quality of active transportation design, land use diversity and density, and access to regional destinations (0 being the “worst” and 100 being the “best”). Each of the three diversity scores show a -1 to +1 scale; -1 indicates land use leaning in one direction and +1 indicates land use leaning in another direction. For example, a score of -1 for the jobs-housing score indicates more jobs, while a score of +1 indicates more housing.

Each of these maps also show the trips associated with a given hexagon. This helps the reader understand how much “stuff” is located within a hexagon, which is important because a hexagon may be relatively balanced in terms of the land use mix in that area, but there may be very little land use determining this relatively balanced ratio. The destination accessibility indices measure the destinations accessible for a given hexagon for each of the four categories.

- **Enclosure 6a-2:** the PlaceMix Results slide deck also explains in more detail what drives the PlaceMix analysis framework.

Please consider how the LTS and PlaceMix assessments (and results, as applicable) could be used in your community, or applied in the near future. Public engagement for sharing this information is part of the Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning project.