



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

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AGENDA ITEM 7a
HCAOG Board Meeting
August 20, 2026

DATE: August 12, 2026
TO: Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Stephen Luther, Senior Regional Planner
SUBJECT: **Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Director Feasibility Study Report**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff Summary
- SRTS Feasibility Study Report

Staff's Recommended Action:

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. Discuss item and consider making the motion:

"I move that the PAC recommend that the HCAOG Board accept the Safe Routes to School Director Feasibility Study Report and to submit the report to Caltrans as part of the program deliverables for the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant."

Staff Summary:

This report evaluates the feasibility of funding a regionwide, full-time Safe Routes to School (SRTS) staff position on a permanent basis. HCAOG, member agencies, schools, Redwood Coast Action Agency (RCAA), and more stakeholders have been successful in bringing grant-funded Safe Routes programs to Humboldt County for years. Appendix C of the report documents 15 pages worth of Safe Routes to School planning and program history in Humboldt County dating back to 2006. The work has been effective in promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety for youth and improving safe routes planning and infrastructure that benefits everyone in the community. However, programs have been piecemeal and lacked continuity due to the short-term grant-funded nature. Given that other jurisdictions in California and many states have SRTS Director positions, HCAOG wanted to investigate the potential for a permanently funded SRTS Director.

This task, which originated through the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Grant (STPG) Vibrant Neighborhoods and Land Use Transportation Connection project in the previous overall work

program, originally called for a consultant, however HCAOG staff decided to take on preparation of the report in-house. County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provided assistance in conducting stakeholder interviews and preparing the history of SRTS work. Melanie Williams of BikesThere, a long-time active transportation educator, provided assistance on remaining interviews and documenting SRTS success stories.

The report includes a history of SRTS accomplishments in Humboldt County based on findings from key stakeholder interviews, and a review of comparable positions.

Key findings from the report include:

- Estimated minimum of \$100,000 annually to support full-time SRTS Director.
- Identified potential recurring funding commitments of \$75,000 (\$25,000 from the City of Arcata, \$30,000 County of Humboldt, up to \$5,000 from 2% Bike/Ped Set-aside, and estimated \$15,000 in HCAOG staff support hours funded by Rural Planning Assistance monies);
- Current funding is not feasible to hire a full-time Director, but could support a 0.5 FTE position to begin to provide program services while seeking additional permanent funding;
- Boys and Girls Club of Redwoods could offer in-kind office space;
- Humboldt Health Foundation could be a potential philanthropic source of funding;
- State funding is limited to the Active Transportation Program (ATP) non-infrastructure program, which is highly competitive and time-limited;
- Continued challenge of engaging with schools for long-term Safe Routes to School work.

Next steps: HCAOG staff will continue coordinating discussions regarding the SR2S Director position, including how costs could be shared among partner agencies. Final recommendations will be brought back to the Board at a later date following an opportunity for the Technical Advisory Committee to review and take action.

The PAC is asked to make a motion recommending the Board accept the feasibility report and to submit the report to Caltrans as part of the program deliverables for the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant.