



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 9b
HCAOG Board Meeting
August 21, 2025

DATE: August 13, 2025
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner
SUBJECT: **Bike and Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Assessment: Public Review & Comment Period**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff Summary
- “Methodology for Calculating & Mapping Bicycle and Pedestrian Levels of Traffic Stress (LTS) in the Greater Humboldt Bay Area,” amended July 18, 2025 (enclosure)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian LTS draft results. (URL links below)

1. Introduce the item as a discussion item.
2. Allow staff to present the item.
3. Receive public comment.
4. Discuss item.

Staff Summary:

The Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) assessment is part of the “Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning” project, funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant and local matching funds from HCAOG member agencies and other partners. The LTS project assesses roads and streets in the greater Humboldt Bay/*Wigi** Area.¹ We will assess other Humboldt areas in a second phase, after phase one is accomplished and lessons learned.

See below for a brief recap of the LTS concept and methodology.

In the past year, both HCAOG committees (Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and Technical Advisory Committee) have reviewed, and helped refine, an LTS methodology for Humboldt, and the draft results as mapped in the ArcGIS online application. The dominant

¹ Eureka (*Jaroujiji**), Arcata (*Goudi'ni**), Bayside, McKinleyville (*Dalhagali**), Fortuna (*Vutsuwitk Da'l**), Manila, Samoa, Fairhaven, Cutten, King Salmon, and Loleta (*Gudurwalha't**) including the Wiyot Tribe Table Bluff Reservation (*Rraloughu'w**). *Place name in Wiyot language, Soulatluk.

limiting factor for assessing LTS is the infeasibility of collecting all the data for comprehensive conditions on existing streets, roads, and sidewalks. For this project, HCAOG and CRTP (Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities) have worked extensively to compile, collect, and enter data. Nonetheless, there are data gaps (e.g. the width of all sidewalks). Where data is unavailable, we have used assumptions (defined in the Humboldt LTS methodology) to fill in the data (for example, that streets in downtown and neighborhood business districts are at least 6 feet wide at the narrowest point).

Initial feedback from some SSTAC and TAC members was that the draft results have some unexpected results, which might appear to be inaccurate. Two main recommendations were to: (i) in outreach materials, explain why areas would have high LTS (3 or 4); and (ii) Explore redefining some of the assumptions in the methodology. Staff will be working with our project team to determine if there are any methodology assumption revisions that could result in modelled conditions that are more consistent with conditions on the ground.

The pedestrian and bicycle LTS results are open (as of August 1) for public review.

Go to the project website: <https://www.hcaog.net/programs-projects/bike-walk-roll>
Scroll to “Highlights” for Bicyclist & Pedestrian Levels of Traffic Stress (LTS).

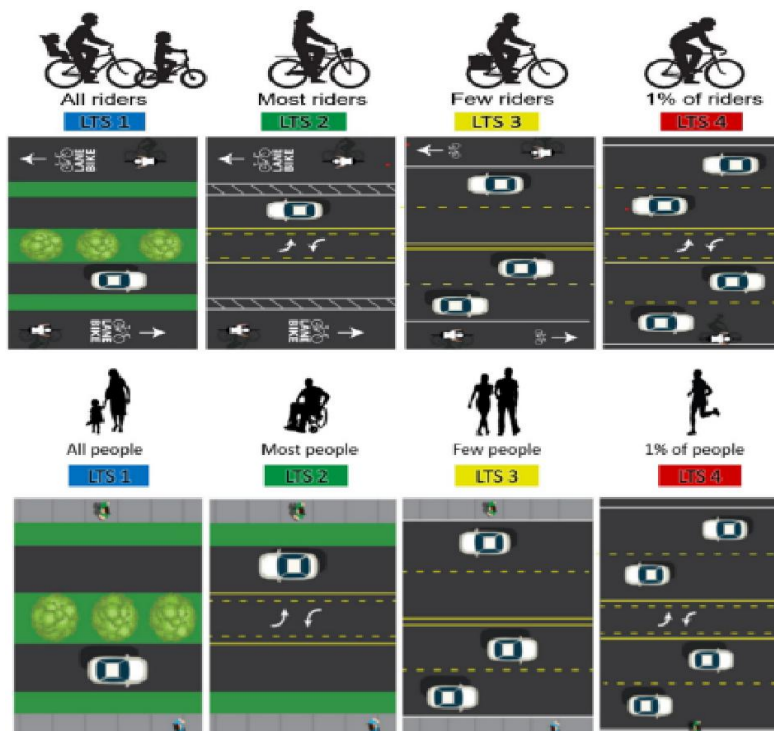
Or, link directly to the interactive mapping and the table of existing conditions data.
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/29aded4d95ee445c901178002e576357>

The current review and comment period continues to September 1, 2025. In addition to commenting at meetings, people can submit comments to HCAOG by phone, post, and email (info@hcaog.net).

Below is a short refresher on “What is Level of Traffic Stress?”

LTS is a metric for assessing the level of comfort or stress that people would feel when they are bicycling and/or walking on streets/roads. LTS categorizes travel facilities by the level of discomfort or stress different kinds of users will, or will not, tolerate.

Typically, LTS ratings use a scale of 1 to 4, where LTS 1 “is meant to be a level that most children can tolerate,” LTS 2 can be “tolerated by the mainstream adult population,” and LTS 3 and 4 represent levels of stress that a minority of users will tolerate.



Example from Washington State DOT

To briefly recap the Methodology, the following summarizes the existing conditions that determine the “level of stress”:

Bicycle LTS:

- Whether bicycling where there is/is not a bike-only facility;
- Whether the existing bike lane is adjacent to a parking lane;
- Whether the crossing (intersection) has a traffic signal, stop sign, or roundabout;
- Traffic speeds and volumes of motorized vehicles.

Pedestrian LTS:

- Sidewalk conditions such as width, curb ramps, physical buffers, and number of adjacent traffic lanes;
- General land use;
- Whether the crossing (intersection) has a traffic signal, stop sign, or roundabout;
- Whether the crossing has painted crosswalks, a median refuge, or other crosswalk enhancements;
- Traffic speeds and volumes of motorized vehicles.

Refer to the Methodology (attached) for the details on assumptions and the basis of scores.