



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 8a
HCAOG Board Meeting
November 16, 2023

DATE: November 6, 2023
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Beth Burks, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Resolutions 23-23 and 23-24
- 2024 Draft Regional Transportation Improvement Program

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 the HCAOG Board approve Resolution 23-23 amending the Regional Transportation Plan to include the Hubbard Lane Rehabilitation Project and approve Resolution 23-24 adopting the 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and direct staff to submit the RTIP to Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission."

Staff Summary:

Each Regional Transportation Planning Agency, including HCAOG is required to submit a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) by December 15 of every odd numbered year for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The STIP is a biennial five-year plan adopted by the CTC for future allocations of state transportation funds for road and transit improvements. The CTC provides an estimate of STIP shares for each region. The Draft 2024 RTIP attached to this staff report follows the CTC provided RTIP template and includes all RTIP required elements.

The CTC identified new programming capacity of Fund Estimate identified a new programming target for the Humboldt County Region of \$9,297,000, which includes \$285,000 of Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) funding, with a maximum programming limit of \$34,882,000. Regions may request programming beyond the target, but within the maximum limit. Any programming beyond the target comes out of future STIP cycles. PPM funding comes to HCAOG for regional transportation planning, RTIP preparation and monitoring and program development.

After subtracting for PPM there is \$9,012,000 available for regionally significant projects. HCOAG’s process includes soliciting project programming requests from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). HCAOG issued a call for projects and received 8 requests from 5 jurisdictions. The projects, funding levels, and priority of projects presented in the Draft RTIP have been unanimously recommended by the TAC.

The requested projects, programming amounts and priority are as follows:

Agency	Priority	Project	Total
HCAOG	1	Planning, Programming and Monitoring	\$ 285,000
Arcata	2	US 101& Sunset Ave Interchange Project	\$ 1,400,000
Fortuna	2	Kenmar Interchange Improvement Project	\$ 2,600,000
Eureka	1	Bay to Zoo Trail	\$ 1,582,000
County	4	Hubbard Lane Surface Rehabilitation	\$ 800,000
County	3	Central Avenue Surface Rehab and Overlay	\$ 1,189,000
County	2	Redwood Drive Complete Streets	\$ 1,300,000
Eureka	2	Myrtle Avenue Improvement 5th to Harrison Ave	\$ 600,000
Trinidad	3	Main Street Patricks Point Dr. and Westhaven Pavement Rehabilitation	\$ 800,000
			\$ 10,556,000

The programming requests exceed the target by \$1,259,000. This would come from future STIP cycles and is well below the maximum target.

All projects that are funded in the RTIP must be included in and consistent with the current Regional Transportation Plan, *VROOM 2022-2042* (VROOM). The Hubbard Lane Rehabilitation project proposed by County of Humboldt is not included in VROOM. To include this project in the RTIP, VROOM 2022 would need to be amended.

Project Priority

Each RTIP must be based on the regional transportation plan (VROOM) and a region-wide assessment of transportation needs and deficiencies.

VROOM includes a list of regionally significant capital projects (presented in Table *Streets-4* Complete Steets Projects for Cities, County, Tribes, Short-Term & Long-Term). This table is

developed by collaborating with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Each TAC member submits a list of regionally significant projects within their jurisdiction that they would like to advance in the next 20 years. Short term (1-5 years) and long-term (5-20 years) projects that are constrained (known funding source) and unconstrained (unknown funding source) are included. Each entity indicates which objectives of the RTP the project supports.

The objectives include:

- Mode shift to active transportation;
- Lowering vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from cars and trucks;
- Access to essential destinations by walking, biking, and/or public transportation;
- Vision Zero, the goal to eliminate all traffic deaths and severe injuries; and/or
- Fix-It-First priority for keeping existing investments in a “state of good repair” over building new infrastructure.

VROOM 2022 states that *“Generally speaking, we expect that projects that will meet the most objectives/targets will be the top priorities.”*

For the priority ranking included in the RTIP, projects have been bundled in a 1-4 priority ranking. The priority takes into consideration the number of complete street objectives the project met, and if the project was already initiated and waiting on funding to move to the next phase. The Planning, Programming and Monitoring funds set aside for HCAOG administration are included with the highest priority ranking consistent with how it applied throughout the state.

Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets

There is a Safe and Sustainable Transportation Target to:

- i) Increase by 10% by 2023, and by 25% by 2028, regional discretionary funding set aside for permanent infrastructure, pop-ups, pilots, or other projects for active transportation.

The STIP is the largest source of discretionary funding that HCAOG is responsible for programming. From 2008-2022 forty-three percent (43%) of STIP funds were spent on projects that included significant complete street improvements that supported active transportation. This round, 82% of the funds requested are for projects that benefit mode shift to active transportation.

This summary of historic and current projects that include active transportation as a major feature of the project is encouraging in satisfying the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Target, but it does not speak directly to whether HCAOG has increased by 10% regional discretionary funding set aside for permanent infrastructure, pop-ups, pilots, or other projects for active transportation.

It is difficult to gather the baseline data on past projects that would accurately portray how much STIP programming has been devoted to the active transportation components of a project. Most projects have multiple benefits and although we know which projects included active transportation improvements, we don't have historical information on what portion of the funding went towards those specific improvements. For this STIP cycle we requested this information as part of the project request package. Moving forward, our information will be more accurate.

Further complicating the issue is that many times STIP funding is used for project phases that do not include construction. Earlier project phases such as environmental studies and permits (E&P), plans specifications and estimates (PS&E), or right of way (R/W) are often applied for and frequently used to show a “shovel ready” status when applying to various programs for construction funding. For projects with multiple benefits, it can be difficult to isolate the costs specifically devoted to the active transportation components of a project.

Staff recommends using the 2024 STIP as a baseline year, and beginning now moving forward, collecting the information needed measure progress towards the target. Prior to the next STIP cycle, staff can work with the TAC and the Board on a methodology related to non-construction components of a project.

TAC discussions and Public Comments

The TAC reached a unanimous decision on the suite of projects included in their recommendation after taking public comment and significant deliberations.

The County of Humboldt requested funding for all stages of the Redwood Drive Complete Street Project. Several members of the Garberville community spoke at the TAC meeting to express support for including the full project and the benefits it would bring to revitalizing the area. Ultimately the TAC did not recommend including the construction phase of the project but did support including all earlier phases. The main concern was that construction was a \$9,500,000 request. By funding earlier stages the TAC felt the County could seek other funding sources for construction and if unsuccessful request construction funding at a future STIP Cycle.

Other public comments were received related to the overall RTIP process for including projects into the program and requesting that we have a more standardized process for evaluating projects and their benefits. Written comments received are included with this staff report. The TAC continues to hold the position that collaboration such as has been the practice is more effective at meeting regional needs than a more rigid ranking system would allow.

RTIP Schedule

After Board approval, staff will collect Project Programming Request forms from the proposing jurisdiction which will be added to the RTIP appendices and compile the final RTIP to submit to the CTC prior to the December 15 deadline. After several hearings, the CTC is scheduled to adopt the STIP in March 2024. Once adopted, the 2024 STIP will be effective starting Fiscal Year 2024-25.

Requested Action

Staff recommends that the PAC recommend the HCAOG Board amend the Regional Transportation Plan (*VROOM 2022-2024*) to include the Hubbard Lane Rehabilitation Project and adopt the 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.