HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
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DATE: August 21, 2025
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Brendan Byrd, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Regional Transportation Plan Update 2026: Discuss Plan Objectives, Update Approach and Development Schedule; Update on 2022 Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:
- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- *VROOM* Plan Goals & Objectives (current Regional Transportation Plan)
- Draft 2026 RTP Update Development Schedule
- Final Draft Safe and Sustainable Transportation Target Baseline Data Collection

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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 direct staff on updating goals, performance measures, schedule, policies, public outreach, and/or other content, as applicable.

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Staff Summary:

As the Board is aware, HCAOG staff are currently working on the 2026 update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is called *Variety in Rual Options of Mobility* (*VROOM*). The RTP is HCAOG's guiding transportation planning document, and through goals, policies and objectives sets forth the region's overarching vision for local/regional transportation projects and investments. RTPs are required by California law and have to be updated every four (4) years. Local agency projects are required to be included in RTPs to be eligible to receive certain funding

sources like the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). HCAOGs current RTP was last updated in 2022, and the next update is due to Caltrans by January 2026.

HCAOG staff will acknowledge that the development of the RTP update for this cycle is behind schedule. In previous years, especially when major document updates are proposed or required, update planning would begin 12-18 months prior to the required adoption date. With the current RTP requiring update by January 2026, HCAOG currently has approximately 6 months to complete the work. Over the past month staff have been working to prepare and plan for the update. The intent of this staff report and subsequent discussion is to make sure that staff have clear direction from the Board regarding the 2026 update, so the RTP update can be completed in a timely and efficient manner. Staff will note that as there are no major changes to the RTP checklist requirements over the past four years (developed by Caltrans), and due to the fact that the 2022 update was quite comprehensive in its visioning, public outreach, and content changes, a more minor update is likely warranted in 2026.

To guide this discussion, there are four items that staff are seeking Board discussion and direction on. These include the documents **Goals and Objectives**, the **Draft RTP Update Development Schedule**, the **Draft Public Outreach and Engagement Plan**, and **Updates on the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets**. Each of these items and the direction that staff are seeking are discussed in further detail below.

Lastly, staff will also note that this same discussion item is planned to be brought to the SSTAC and the TAC at their meeting in early September. Any specific comments or recommendations received from either of those committees will be shared with the Board at the September meeting.

VROOM 2022 Plan Goals and Objectives
The RTP is built from a foundation of Goals and Objectives. There are 12 chapters within the RTP, each having a minimum of one goal or objective. Each of these goals and objectives have been extracted from the 2022 version of *VROOM* and are included as an attachment to this staff report. Staff would like to discuss the goals and objectives from the 2022 RTP at the Board meeting and receive Board input on any proposed modifications (if any).

Draft 2026 RTP Update Development Schedule
Included as an attachment to this staff report is a RTP and Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) schedule. As this is a STIP funding programming year, the regional RTIP for 2026 will also be developed concurrently with the RTP update. As discussed in the following section, specific public engagement activities are still under development and as such are not included in this schedule. Key components of the proposed schedule are summarized below:

- **Board, TAC, and SSTAC provide initial direction/recommendations on RTP update-** August 21st – September 4th
- **Public outreach materials and events finalized, scheduled, and posted** – September 2nd
- **Board RTP update and discussion as needed** – September 18th
- **Board RTP update and discussion as needed** – October 16th
- **SSTAC, TAC, and Board consider publishing Public Review Draft of the RTP** – November 5th - 20th
- **2026 RTP Public Review period** – November 21st - December 21st
- **Board to consider certifying EIR Addendum** – December 18th
- **Board to consider adoption of the 2026 RTP** – January 15th

Staff will note that currently all planned Board meeting dates are regularly scheduled. However, it may become necessary to consider special Board meetings given the short timeline, should any unexpected items arise. Staff will continue to track and provide any updates to the Board regarding meeting dates or times. One other change for this update cycle is how the document will arrive to the Board for review. In previous updates with more time available, it has been custom to bring several chapters at a time and as they are ready for Board review. Given the timeline for this update, staff are currently planning to bring the entire update to the Board (and the SSTAC and TAC) as a single agenda item at the November 20th meeting. In an effort to provide Board members more review time, staff will try to publish the Board meeting packet as early as feasible.

Draft 2026 RTP Update Outreach and Public Engagement Plan

As shown in the draft schedule discussed above, staff are currently working on the public engagement plan and engagement materials. The draft plan and materials were not ready at the time this staff report was published, however updates will be shared with the Board at the time of the meeting. The anticipated public outreach events and materials are summarized below:

- Project page on HCAOG website
- RTP public engagement online and print surveys (English and Spanish versions)
- Social media/press releases
- Schedule of community engagement/tabling events
- Hosted community meeting focused on RTP update
- Direct outreach to key stakeholders
- Informational Flyers that include QR codes for project website, RTP survey, and meeting/outreach event schedule

Staff are seeking any input the Board may have on the list of public outreach efforts noted above or detailed further in the meeting presentation.

Final Draft Safe and Sustainable Transportation Target Baseline Data Collection

The Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets were formed through an ad-hoc committee as part of the 2022 RTP update. The purpose of the targets is to develop policy goals aimed at diminishing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions in Humboldt County. These targets include ten different performance measure categories each containing a number of regional targets, the metrics for those targets, and the available data resources to track those targets. These targets encompass a broad range of categories such as Vision Zero, Efficiency and Practicality in Locating New Housing, and Mode Shift.

This past year Noah Sary, the CivicSpark Fellow serving with HCAOG, has been collecting and creating data for the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets (SSTT). Attached as a PDF to this staff report is the baseline data collected for all the metrics in Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets. These baseline data figures and tables will be further contextualized and explained in the culminating *Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets Report*, authored by the Fellow.

Lessons Learned in Data Collection and Creation

Through the procurement of data for the SSTT targets, there were many reliable sources for the majority of the targets. Data sources were chosen that were either identified by the ad-hoc committee under the Available Data Sources section, or sources that more closely track the intent of the target. Careful research on alternative data sources was conducted to best capture the range of potential sources for a specific target. As the Fellow went through the data collection/creation

process, he made sure to be aware of the difficulty of measuring and gathering this data over time for the next staff member who will be tracking these targets.

Unfortunately, for a few of the targets, reliable and consistent data sources were either unavailable or too complex to measure efficiently over time. Since baseline data and future progress must be collected and tracked periodically to assess overall performance, these targets will require new data collection efforts and the Fellow wanted to ensure this process was most effective over the long term.

After speaking with staff, there was an agreement that there are metrics that should be revised to streamline the data tracking process over time due to the challenge in collecting said data. These metrics include:

Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure
- Revision of metric concerning number of chargers per household without off-street parking

Percentage of Zero Emission School Buses & Public Fleet Vehicles
- Potential revision of metric to be consistent with HTA's current fuel conversion plan which extends to 2032 (Humboldt County Transit Development Plan (2023-2028)
- Potential revision of metric concerning jurisdictions municipal fleet conversion to be based on % of ZEVs for new purchases

Efficiency & Practicality in Locating New Housing
- Potential revision of metric concerning estimated VMT per capita from new housing

Active Transportation Education
- Revision of metric language suggested for percentage of classrooms receiving multi-modal transportation safety education
- Potential revision of metric language concerning number of programs that actively promote and incentivize multi-modal travel

Invest in Complete Streets
- Potential revision of metric suggested by staff concerning percentage of regional discretionary funding.

Staff are seeking guidance on whether the Board believes there is a need to direct staff to revise the specific SSTT metrics that have been identified as having unreliable and/or inconsistent data sources or were too complex to measure efficiently over time. These potentially revised SSTT metrics are outlined in the Data Comments portion of the SSTT Table (attached).