



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
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Eureka, CA 95501
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AGENDA ITEM 7c
HCAOG Board Meeting
September 17, 2020

DATE: September 8, 2020
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Oona Smith, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: **HCAOG Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan Final**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- "HCAOG Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan" final
- Written public comments received in June 2020

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 to recommend that the HCAOG Board adopt the
"HCAOG Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan."

Staff Summary:

The HCAOG Board, at the regular June meeting, approved the draft "Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan," pending (1) an edit to eliminate the potential pilot project of replacing 10 of Fortuna's 15 fixed-route bus stops with a Personal Mobility on Demand service, and (2) adding the public engagement write-up. Staff and the consultant have made the directed changes. The Public Engagement section is included in Appendix C.

The formal public comment period for the draft extended to July. HCAOG received public comments at a virtual public meeting and received written comments (enclosed). The comments were discussed at the public meeting, are a part of the project record, and will continue to be considered as HCAOG continues to try to bring MOD pilot projects forward in the region.

PUBLIC WRITTEN COMMENTS (3) ON DRAFT FINAL

From: **Dana Boudreau** <DBoudreau@redwoodenergy.org>
Date: Mon, Jun 22, 2020 at 6:45 PM
Subject: Quick note from today's presentation
To: Oona Smith <oona.smith@hcaog.net>

Hi Oona, thanks for hosting the Clean Mobility presentation today. One thing I wanted to capture is mobility hubs. Not sure where these are best to address, but I think they have some interesting potential:

- Although our weather is mild compared to many regions, shelter is pretty important. That shelter needs to be safe and well protected from the elements. Of course this often leads to people sheltering more than desired, or vandalism, so it's a balancing act.
- Where possible, amenities can really help make transit hubs relevant. For example, the Amtrak stop is effectively useless for anything other than boarding a bus. This misses an opportunity to provide ancillary shopping, refreshment, and so on. In a nod to Amtrak, there stops are frequently in the wee hours so not much to do about that.
- A good (multimodal) hub can create neighborhood synergy. For example, they can host a small coffee shop, a bike rental, bike/possession lockers, a park and ride, ebike/ev charging, and so on. A transit layout that integrates well with various daily functions can help shape a workable alternative lifestyle. This might work well with encouraging cities to develop a sense of place/pride/ownership with their transit.

[Dana Boudreau](#)
Operations Director | Redwood Coast Energy Authority



July 3, 2020

Oona Smith
Senior Planner
Humboldt County Association of Governments
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501

via email: oona.smith@hcaog.net

Oona,

Please accept the following comments from the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) on the Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan Draft Final Report ("report"):

- We support the report's recommended Redwood Transit System (RTS) route modifications, including both "short-turning" the route at the north and south ends and eliminating the identified low-ridership deviations, under the following conditions:
 - The changes are accompanied by an increase in the frequency of RTS fixed-route service. We recognize that the recent rejection of the southern short-turning by the HCAOG Board of Directors may present an obstacle to achieving this objective in the short term. However, if mobility-on-demand solutions are not eventually used to increase fixed-route frequency, the effect will likely be to damage rather than support the transit system, to everyone's detriment.
 - The replacement service in areas formerly served by RTS fixed-route service operates in a flexible carpool mode rather than a single-passenger-per-ride mode, in order to reduce additional vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
 - The replacement service has the same fare as RTS fixed-route service and includes fare-free connection to that service.
 - The replacement service is accessible to people with wheelchairs and other devices/mobility limitations.
 - Connection points between the replacement service and the RTS fixed-route service are located at weather-protected bus stops.
 - The replacement service is publicly operated, such as in the proposed "Humboldt e-Ride" service, rather than privately contracted, and uses electric rather than internal-combustion engine vehicles.
- We support pursuing the modern hitchhiking concept, but believe it needs to be developed in further detail with accompanying public input before it can be implemented.
- We support the recommended expansion of bikeshare, bike parking, and other bike-serving infrastructure. In addition, we note the following:

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- The departure of previous bikesharing service Zagster was not a result of Humboldt County-specific problems. Rather, it was the result of the company's entire national operation going out of business.
- Bikeshare should be looked at as an extension of public transit. It is likely that in order for it to be affordable, extensive and well-maintained and managed, it will need to be subsidized and regulated, not just "facilitated." This isn't unique to Humboldt County or other rural areas. Even in big cities, bikeshare companies regularly fail to make a profit or fail to provide high-quality and equitable service, or both, if not heavily regulated and subsidized.
- A community the size of McKinleyville needs more than one bikeshare station. In addition to the one proposed, there should be a station at the McKinleyville Shopping Center, and likely other locations as well.
- Just as the current availability of widespread free car parking facilitates driving, we need a future availability of widespread free, high-quality bike parking to facilitate biking. Bike parking should be prioritized at transit stops, but there must also be a significant expansion in all commercial areas, along with abundant, secure, weather-protected short and long-term storage should be required in all future development.
- The report notes that there are many opportunities for personal mobility-on-demand services to fill existing public transit gaps beyond what is identified in the recommendations. We agree. We also believe that it would be unwise to assume that private companies will exploit those opportunities in our rural and relatively low-income area if left to their own devices. Regulations and incentives for e-hailing companies should be considered to ensure that they provide accessible vehicles, serve populations with the highest needs at reasonable rates, minimize environmental impacts by using electric vehicles, operate in carpool mode to minimize VMT, etc. We strongly encourage HCAOG to use the report as a jumping-off point for the development of a plan for implementing this kind of regulation, as well as for addressing likely future developments at the intersection of mobility-on-demand, smart infrastructure, and autonomous vehicles.
- The report dismisses the idea of local pedicab service because of assumed insufficient local demand. This may or may not be true from a commercial perspective. However, we encourage HCAOG to reconsider pedicabs as an extension of public transit to address first/last mile problems (similar to bikeshare), rather than as private enterprises.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Colin Fiske
 Executive Director
 Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities
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June 24, 2020

Estelle Fennell, Chair
Humboldt County Association of Governments
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501

Re: Mobility on Demand Strategic Plan – Removal of Rio Dell and Scotia from Potential Pilot Projects

Dear Chair Fennell,

The City understands that the Humboldt County Association of Governments is undertaking a planning effort to assess new mobility technologies and methods to serve our region and how they could supplement or replace existing transportation services to give people “more convenient and more sustainable transportation options.”

During this process a list of potential pilot projects was identified, including the Redwood Transit Service route from Fortuna, through Rio Dell and Scotia. In an effort to streamline the RTS route alignment, reduce the total route run time, and increase service frequency, service to Rio Dell would be replaced by an on-demand Personal Mobility on Demand (PMoD) service that would provide connectivity to Fortuna and then to the existing system.

The City of Rio Dell specifically requests the removal of the Fortuna – Rio Dell – Scotia services from the proposed PMoD pilot project. Additionally, the City affirms its support for, and the continued maintenance of, existing transit services at existing levels.

Sincerely,

Debra L. Garnes

Debra Games
Mayor
City of Rio Dell

Page 1 of 1