



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 6c
HCAOG Board Meeting
February 19, 2026

DATE: February 12, 2026
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Brendan Byrd, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Certification of Addendum #3 to the Final Environmental Impact Report
and Adoption of Regional Transportation Plan**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Final Draft of *VROOM 2026-2046*
 - All RTP chapters
 - Maps
 - Appendices A – E
 - Caltrans RTP Checklist
- Resolution 26-03 (to certify Addendum #3 to the Environmental Impact Report)
- Resolution 26-04 (to adopt the RTP update, *VROOM 2026-2046*)

Staff's Recommended Action:

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. Direct staff as necessary or consider making the following separate motions,

“I move that the PAC recommend that the HCAOG Board adopt Resolution 26-03 certifying Addendum #3 to the Final Environmental Impact Report Prepared for the Humboldt Regional Transportation Plan 2013-14 Update”

and;

“I move that the PAC recommend that the HCAOG Board adopt Resolution 26-04 adopting the Regional Transportation Plan *Variety in Rural Options of Mobility 2026-2046*.”

Staff Summary:

The full draft of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update, *Variety in Rural Options of Mobility (VROOM) 2026-2046*, is included in this packet for review. Additionally, the Appendices listed above are included as attachments. Lastly two resolutions are included, the first to certify Addendum #3 to the 2013-14 Environmental Impact Report (Resolution 26-03), and the second to adopt the 2026 RTP (Resolution 26-04).

Both the SSTAC and TAC reviewed the final draft RTP and Addendum #3 to the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and recommend the HCAOG Board adopt the Addendum to the Final EIR and approve the RTP. Both Addendum #3 and the final draft RTP are discussed further below.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Addendum #3:

The Board will consider certifying an updated EIR Addendum (per California Environmental Quality Act) and adopting *VROOM 2026-2046* on February 19, 2026. For the update to the Regional Transportation Plan in 2013 (three cycles ago), the HCAOG Board certified a Program Environmental Impact Report (including an Initial Study) before adopting the RTP Update. For the subsequent RTP updates in 2017 and 2021, the HCAOG Board adopted EIR Addendum #1 and #2 to the Final Program EIR. Briefly stated, an addendum is appropriate where the changes to the project or plan “will not result in any new or substantially more severe significant effects than were identified in the certified EIR” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164).¹

The 2017 addendum added information and analysis to environmental topics: Air Quality, Biological Resources, Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change, Transportation/Circulation, and Long-Term Effects. Both the 2017 and 2021 addendum found that the policies and projects included in the RTP updates did not induce impacts that were more significant and did not require additional mitigation measures to what was included in the original Final EIR.

Due to time and staffing constraints in mid-2025, HCAOG staff contracted with Planwest Partners to complete EIR Addendum #3, which included a programmatic environmental assessment, data updates, and updates based on the revisions proposed in the 2026 draft RTP. Similar to previous RTP updates, HCAOG’s consultant found that:

“...the updates and revisions to policies and programs in the 2026 RTP do not impose and new significant environmental efforts or increase the severity of identified effects” and;

“Based on the above, no new significant adverse environmental impact nor a substantial increase in previously identified significant impacts would occur as a result of the proposed 2026 RTP Update. Therefore, a subsequent or supplemental EIR is not required, and this Addendum to the previously certified FEIR fulfills the requirements of CEQA.”

Staff will note that conditions of the regional transportation system have not changed substantially since the Final EIR was adopted. Likewise, the 2021 update, *VROOM 2022-2042*, proposed policies and actions within the scope and intent as that envisioned in the Final EIR. The *VROOM 2026-2046* update maintains the emphasis on transportation’s role in addressing issues of climate change, housing, safety, and equity and establishes greenhouse gas emissions-reduction targets and performance measures into the elements.

The current environmental impact assessment concludes that the proposed plan update, *VROOM 2026-2046*, (1) is not anticipated to result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in

¹ Section 15164 also allow that “(c): An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the Final EIR.”

the severity of previously identified significant effects; and (2) would not require major revisions to the previously certified FEIR; therefore, impacts are deemed consistent with those in the FEIR. The proposed *VROOM 2026-2046* plan will not result in more significant impacts; neither changes to nor new mitigation measures are required.

Based on these findings, HCAOG staff recommend that the Board adopt the addendum, and by extension, the Final EIR. As noted above, both the TAC and SSTAC have reviewed the draft EIR addendum and also recommend that the HCAOG Board adopt EIR Addendum #3.

Following discussion and any final recommendations, staff is asking the PAC to recommend the Board certify the updated EIR addendum #3 via Resolution 26-03.

Final Draft RTP

On November 20th, 2025, the Board approved the release of the administrative draft 2026 RTP. On January 15th, 2026, staff presented to the Board the comments receive during the public comment period, which included 41 written comments on the draft RTP, written review comments from HTA and Caltrans, and the results of the public outreach campaign. Based on the discussion from the January 15th meeting, the following discussion highlights the revisions to the final draft RTP as a result of the public comment period.

Of particular note, based on the discussion and direction from the Board on January 15th, the final draft RTP restores the use of ‘climate crisis’ throughout. In addition, the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Target on the location of new permitted housing units (page 2-16) keeps the target date of 2022 rather than moving the target out to 2030. Staff notes there is additional analysis needed to quantify this target, especially with relation to transit travel times and service area coverage. There was no consensus from the Board on the revised Finance Policy F-1, so the revision is carried forward. Lastly, as discussed at the Board meeting and subsequently requested by the County, the Hiller Road and US 101 interchange project was added to the project list in RTP Chapter 7.

For reference, the table below summarizes the final RTP updates, as compared to the administrative draft that was presented to the Board in November 2025:

Element/chapter	Changes made since Public Draft
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minor corrections e.g. Cal Poly Humboldt designation.
2. Renewing Our Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated crash and serious fatality data (Figure Renew-1) ● Added summary of public outreach/engagement program (pages 2-6, 2-7) ● Adjusted ZEV Charger goals in Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets to line up with 2024 CEC report. ● Added note that SSTT targets were set during Covid-19 and the transit ridership goals reflect the need to restore riders to pre-pandemic levels.
3. Global Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restored the word “crisis.” ● Added more recent light-duty ZEV sales in Humboldt County data (3-12)
4. Tribal Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Addition of Karuk Tribal Transit program.
5. Emergency Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated quotes.

Element/chapter	Changes made since Public Draft
6. Land Use-Transportation	● None
7. Complete Streets	● Added Hiller Road / US 101 long-term project.
8. Commuter Trails	● Added Samoa to Arcata Trail project along GRTA Corridor
9. Public Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated pictures. ● Corrected route names (North State Express 101, 299). ● Added Ride Humboldt description. ● Addition of Karuk Tribal Transit.
10. Aviation	● Updated projects that have been completed.
11. Goods Movement	● Minor updates related to Caltrans letter.
12. Financial	● Responded to Caltrans comments
Maps/Figures	Addition of Figure 2.4 Disadvantaged Communities

Major Transit Stops

During public comment for the public review draft considered at the November 20th Board meeting, HCAOG received feedback from the HTA PAC member and City of Eureka staff that the designation of major transit stops in the RTP was a useful planning tool and encouraged HCAOG to consider designating additional stops. Designating major bus stops in an RTP qualifies those locations as a 'major transit stop' for the purposes of state infill-encouragement legislation. This designation has real land-use implications as it prohibits local governments from enforcing minimum parking requirements and applying higher traffic impact fees for most developments within **1/2 mile** of a major transit stops. The designation of a major transit stop can also help streamline CEQA review of VMT impacts.

Staff reviewed the data previously used for designating major transit stops. There is a clear cut-off of stops that serve over 150 daily average boardings/alightings which were the original seven locations designated as major transit stops in 2024 (via Board Resolution 24-01). Staff identified another logical cut-off point which is stops that serve a minimum of 1% of the total daily boardings/alightings, or 50 average daily boardings/alightings. This method identifies an additional fourteen stops, and the resulting potential additional stops are shown in the table below. Note that in the table the purple cells denote existing designated major transit stops, and the orange cells denote proposed stops.

2023 Boarding and Alighting Data

Sent to HCAOG from HTA on 2026-01-27

All Unique Stop IDs	All Unique Stop Names	Jurisdiction	Sum of Avg Day Total Across All		Cumulative %
			Systems	%	
1262	HSU LIBRARY CIRCLE	Arcata	565	10.74%	10.74%
1252	BAYSHORE MALL	Eureka	344	6.54%	17.28%
1260	ARCATA TRANSIT CENTER	Arcata	316	6.01%	23.29%
1367	F ST AND HARRIS ST	Eureka	282	5.36%	28.66%
1250	COLLEGE OF THE REDWOODS	County	231	4.39%	33.05%
1415	EUREKA TRANSIT CENTER	Eureka	210	3.99%	37.04%
1264	VALLEY WEST BLVD. (MCDONALD)	Arcata	175	3.33%	40.37%
1286	G AND 5TH- ARCATA	Arcata	87	1.65%	42.02%
1261	14TH AND B ST. ARCATA	Arcata	77	1.46%	43.49%
1254	4TH AND B - CO-OP EUREKA	Eureka	77	1.46%	44.95%
1287	H AND 6TH- ARCATA	Arcata	72	1.37%	46.32%
1246	FORTUNA/11TH AND N STREETS	Fortuna	71	1.35%	47.67%
1283	WILLOW CREEK	County	63	1.20%	48.87%
1266	SCHOOL ROAD- MCKINLEYVILLE	County	61	1.16%	50.03%
1275	5TH AND D EUREKA	Eureka	60	1.14%	51.17%
2750755	4TH AND U STREETS- EUREKA	Eureka	58	1.10%	52.27%
1279	5TH AND U STREETS- EUREKA	Eureka	58	1.10%	53.38%
1267	MCKINLEYVILLE SHOPPING CENTE	County	57	1.08%	54.46%
1278	5TH AND O STREETS- EUREKA	Eureka	56	1.06%	55.52%
3987	BROADWAY ST AND HAWTHORNE S	Eureka	52	0.99%	56.51%
1462	VALLEY EAST BLVD. AND VALLE	Arcata	50	0.95%	57.46%

While staff included these new stops in the final draft for SSTAC and TAC review, after discussion with regional planning representatives staff are proposing to pull this addition from the current final draft RTP for consideration by the Board. Staff feel that a bit more research may be necessary to substantiate a ‘defensible’ methodology to define a major transit stop, and staff also feel that a more formal local agency review and comment period is warranted for this revision (given the real land use implications). With Board concurrence to continue moving forward in designation more stops as ‘major transit stops’ HCAOG staff will send out a formal transmittal to agencies with the proposed stops and methodology, which will allow more time for formal review and comment at the local agency level. Staff would bring the list of additional major stops back to the Board to consider adding via amendment to the adopted RTP, likely within the next six months.

Following discussion and any final recommendations, staff is asking the PAC to recommend the Board adopt the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan via Resolution 26-04, and provide feedback or direction as necessary on the continued work of defining major transit stops in the RTP.