



**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 7b**  
**HCAOG Board Meeting**  
**January 20, 2022**

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**DATE:** January 10, 2022  
**TO:** HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)  
**FROM:** Beth Burks, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** **Partner with the Humboldt Transit Authority in applying for a Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant**

**STAFF REPORT**

**Contents:**

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Resolution 22-05

**Staff's Recommended Action:**

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
5. Consider making the motion,  
"I move that the PAC recommend that the Board adopt Resolution 22-05 approving HCAOG to partner with the Humboldt Transit Authority in applying for a Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Grant and find that the project would further *VROOM* 2022–2042 policies adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

**Staff Summary:**

The Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) is pursuing a federal grant to purchase zero-emission hydrogen buses, install a hydrogen fueling station, and build an intermodal transit center in downtown/Old Town Eureka, in conjunction with a mixed-use housing project (the Center). HTA is collaborating with the City of Eureka to locate the proposed Center on City-owned property currently operated for metered parking (between G and H Streets and 3rd and 4th Streets, behind the Lost Coast Brewery restaurant).

The Center's expected benefits include:

- Enhanced and expanded access to public transit for residents, employees, shoppers, business owners, and visitors. It will provide a centralized transit hub for Eureka Transit Service, Redwood Transit System, Southern Humboldt Intercity, Amtrak, and Greyhound Lines.

- The Center will provide convenient connections to bikes, scooters, carshare and rideshare, plus electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, all which will further encourage the transition away from reliance on fossil-fuel single-owner vehicles.
- In addition to use for the transit hub, there will be space for offices, retail, multi-modal services, and housing.

The project partners intend that this Center will be an attractive, welcoming addition to the downtown Eureka environment and a point of pride for the community for many years to come.

With the grant funds, HTA would also purchase ten hydrogen-fuel-cell powered buses, and construct a hydrogen fueling station (the county's first) at its existing corporation yard on V Street in Eureka. HTA proposed to make hydrogen fuel available for sale to large public and private vehicle fleets (e.g., for Tribes and other rural transit providers, Caltrans, County Public Works, FedEx, UPS, etc.). Compared to electric battery buses, fuel cell buses can travel the longer ranges required for several bus routes in Humboldt. This investment will facilitate replacing diesel buses with zero-emission buses, helping reduce carbon emissions.

If HTA is awarded the 2022 federal grant (Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program), a robust public engagement program would commence, and the transit center could potentially be completed between 2024–2026.

The project would further the policies of our Regional Transportation Plan (*VROOM* 2022-2042). Specifically, the following Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets which have been adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing vehicle miles traveled:

- 100% of public busses are zero-emission by 2030,
- 100% of public fleet work vehicles are zero-emission by 2036,
- Double transit trips by 2025, and again by 2030, and again by 2040,
- There is sufficient hydrogen fueling infrastructure in Humboldt County by 2030 to enable inter-county travel of medium and heavy-duty fuel cell vehicles,
- Reduce vehicle miles travelled per capita by at least 25% by 2030 and 40% by 2050, and
- Starting by 2022, 80% of all new permitted housing units are in places with safe, comfortable, and convenient access to employment, shopping, and recreation by walking, biking, rolling or transit.

HCAOG staff have been assisting with preparation of the grant application through the Overall Work Program's Work Element 5: Project Delivery and Oversight which includes a task to assist local partners and transit agencies with grant applications.

Humboldt Transit Authority is requesting that HCAOG be a project partner in this application. Other project partners include Schatz Energy Research Center, and the Center for Transportation and the Environment (a national non-profit). Staff is in support of partnering with HTA in applying for the TIRCP grant.

As a project partner, if the grant is awarded, HCAOG tasks would include assistance with grant management and reporting, assisting with solicitations for consultant services, and public outreach and education. HCAOG staff time would be funded by the grant.