

PATH TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP

Participants & Results

May 1, 2006

This is a summary of the Planning for Active Transportation and Health (PATH) Workshop, the third of three Humboldt County, California transportation stakeholder participation events to discuss needs, multi-disciplinary collaboration and potential strategies to address improving transportation equity and community access to services, employment and education. These efforts informed the creation of a PATH planning model and reporting on transportation-disadvantaged populations in Humboldt County. The forum was held at the Eureka Women's Club on Monday, May 1, from 2:45 to 5:00 p.m.

This document includes:

- A list of invitees and participants;
- A summary of workshop results;
- Workshop agenda (attached);
- Workshop handout materials (group materials attached; by reference: Section 5 of the *PATH Best Practices Report*); and
- Results of December Forum group discussion.



INVITED GROUPS & PARTICIPANTS

Participants are marked with an 'X'. Where there were more representatives of an agency or organization, the number of those participants is indicated.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arcata and Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> K/T Net (Klamath Trinity Non Emergency Transportation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arcata City Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Karuk Tribe |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Area 1 Agency on Aging | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LatioNET |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria | <input type="checkbox"/> Lighthouse of the North Coast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Lake Rancheria | <input type="checkbox"/> Manila Community Services District |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bridgeville Community Resource Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Mary Bendle Health Resource Center |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Caltrans District 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Medical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Health Alliance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newcomer Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eureka Adult School | <input type="checkbox"/> North Coast Clinic Network |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eureka City Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> North Coast Nutrition & Health Collaborative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eureka Transit Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern CA Indian Development Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Even Start | <input type="checkbox"/> One Stop/ Job Market |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family Resource Centers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open Door Clinics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ferndale "Bridge the Gap" Van Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Orick Community Resource Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Five Humboldt | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Planwest Partners (Regional Transportation Plan Update) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food for People | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Redwood Community Action Agency (Community Planning) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fortuna Senior Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> RCAA Multiple Assistance Center (Multiple Assistance Center) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HCAOG Citizens' Advisory Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> RCAA (Youth Services Bureau) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoopa Tribe | <input type="checkbox"/> Redwood Region Economic Development Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HSU CA Rural Health Policy Institute | <input type="checkbox"/> Redwoods Rural Health Clinic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt Area Foundation | <input type="checkbox"/> Redway Family Resource Center |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center (HCAR) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Joseph's Hospital Eureka Resource Center |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt Council of the Blind | <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Valley Bulb Farm |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tri-County Independent Living |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Board of Supervisors | <input type="checkbox"/> Trinidad Rancheria |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County CalWorks | <input type="checkbox"/> Two Feathers Native American Family Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Economic Development Dept. | <input type="checkbox"/> United Indian Health Services, Inc. (UIHS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Office of Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> United Way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Public Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Willow Creek Family Resource Center |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Public Works | <input type="checkbox"/> Women In Crisis - Southern Humboldt (WISH) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humboldt County Workforce Investment Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Wiyot Tribe - Table Bluff Reservation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humboldt Senior Resource Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Yurok Tribe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) | |

WORKSHOP PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

During development of the *Humboldt County Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations Report* – one of the PATH reports – the project team interviewed dozens of representatives from and attended scheduled meetings of stakeholder organizations that experience challenges providing respective health/social/community/workforce development services due to public access constraints. Nearly unanimously, those groups are providing or have tried to provide some sort of transportation assistance or think it would be very beneficial. Most of them feel inefficient and ineffective about their ‘stop-gap’ transport efforts and/or face a large need that cannot be met with minimal resources. Also nearly unanimously, they were very interested in gathering with other organizations and agencies to discuss improving:

- 1) Coordination of service-based transportation efforts;
- 2) Transport of rural clients and constituents into the population center; and
- 3) Marketing and information about available transit services.

As one of the last project tasks, a workshop was convened to bring diverse group representatives together to confirm interests, identify potential strategies to meet needs, and determine potential next steps. The focus will be on opportunities to address community needs that will support efficient, cooperative transport efforts and perhaps establish a justification for leveraging additional funding to the region for these efforts. A precursor discussion of these issues was facilitated in a small group at the December Forum.

WORKSHOP GROUPS

Initial presentations were made by the project team summarizing *Report* findings and by several local transportation service providers summarizing the state of public and community transit efforts and resources. After these presentations, participants gathered into three groups, each to address a different realm of transportation service needs in Humboldt County, noted below. Participants in each group were provided with related draft problem statements, simple background information and considerations to review (attached). They were asked to identify and prioritize strategies to address the issue and to consider potential next steps for action. The varied discussions and outcomes are summarized below.

Access to Health & Social Services

Progress

- The recent expansion of Dial-a-Ride is helping to meet many needs

Service Gaps

- Areas that still need services are: Rio Dell and Trinidad/Westhaven
- Ferndale still has problems in that services are only for seniors
- Getting access for rural people to services is a big challenge

Priority - Better utilization of existing services

- While rural access is definitely a big issue, there is so much that could be done for better utilization of existing services.

Barriers and Possible Solutions

- Fees are a barrier – at any amount
 - Explore potential for no-fee services
- Having correct change, or not, is a barrier
- Three different public transit providers, ticket prices, routes – the complexity is a barrier

- It's even difficult for social service agencies to deal with the paperwork and complexity in order to provide vouchers
 - Need a Humboldt County-wide transit map that shows all services on one map.
 - Establish a "swipe" card for all bus services
 - Develop a funding stream to support those who cannot pay for a "swipe" card
- Language is a barrier: Transit information is generally only available in English
- There is a lack of transit information and materials in general
 - Simpler and more universal graphics/ languages
 - Better online information

Marketing

- Market transit as a "choice" rather than a last resort -- riding the bus is seen as undesirable (compared, say, to some urban areas where it's just how many people get around)
- More marketing on expanded Dial-a-Ride
 - More radio and television advertising
 - Target specific radio stations for target populations
 - Churches are good for outreach
- Use existing social services database to outreach on any new transit services
- Get more information about existing service out to broader public
 - Make information much easier to understand/use

Next Steps

- The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee (SSTAC) could be a good forum for further discussion
 - But it needs to be revitalized – including meeting more regularly
- Go to SSTAC to discuss and clarify funding options for vouchers.

Access to Employment & Skill Development Opportunities

Transportation Services Clearinghouse

- Priority: develop a transportation services clearinghouse for information and coordination of services, including carpooling, specialized subscription employer and social/health services
- County needs to support coordination of services i.e. more parking structure for carpooling
- How do you make process of organization painless?
- Government as a role model for other transportation users
- Individual small organizations can't really compete for funding based on hours and miles of service, but coordinated service efforts can
- Interest in San Luis Obispo 'Ride On' organizational and service format
- Research existing carpooling systems and how they work
- Consider opportunities for linkages between shuttles, vanpools and transit

Employee Transport Services

- Priority: Research employers' transportation needs: start with large and medium size employers
- Use industry clusters in *Prosperity!* to begin gathering information
- Could employers/workforce development programs help fund specific public transit services that contribute to employee access for entry-level/low income jobs that tend to be during weekends and evenings when there are very limited/no transit services available?

- If services provided by a ‘clearinghouse’, employer service might need to be tailored, not same as services for social/health service providers
- Pick a pilot project: focus on either a geographic area (e.g. Loleta or Eel River Valley) or employer (e.g Bulb Farm or north Arcata) to form carpooling network and/or vanpooling services

Other Issues

- CR transit access: CR relies upon parking fees; to reduce that income with more transit riders might be a contradiction for them
- A lot of meetings are held when/where transit does not run
- Help agencies/businesses plan events to accommodate transit schedules: e.g. some employment trainings are at a time that is inaccessible by transit
- Employ more parking meters (generate revenue) to fund transit
- Shouldn’t just be about people who have extreme needs, but about conveniently moving more people to needed services/employment without autos

Access to Humboldt Bay Area and/or to Public Transit from Rural Areas

Rural Access Challenges

- K/T Net
 - Trinity and Humboldt Counties (access/ coordination among rural transit providers)
 - Existing service from Weaverville to Hayfork (Trinity Transit)
 - K/T Net looking into providing service between Willow Creek and Weaverville
 - Trying to coordinate services between Weaverville and Willow Creek, with connections to Redding
 - Considering operating costs of providing services to Weaverville and access to Orleans
 - K/T Net - \$1.70/ mile (Willow Creek – Hoopa?)
 - Redwood Transit Service - \$3.00/mile (Arcata – Willow Creek)
- Funding
 - How do transit providers calculate/track costs?
 - Could Caltrans provide representative costs and maintain a database to assist transit providers?
 - TDA funds are so limited – how to allocate?
 - For example, A&MRTS spent all of their allocated TDA money but then got other funding from Rural Assistance. Otherwise, unallocated TDA money can sometimes be used for road maintenance, etc...
 - HCAR, through the Unmet Needs Process public input, decided how to use available funds for certain areas and extended new services
- Marketing
 - Senior Resource Centers and other organizations can get transit info out to constituencies and physically get people to transit stops
 - Marketing is costly and does not really give a ‘product’, so is difficult to fund
 - Need people out and about talking about programs and services
 - Create pamphlets similar to A1AA to help define transport services

Primary Rural Access Priorities

- 1) Create business plans for small rural services
 - Use realistic figures and projections to help strategize grant monies and contracts
 - Cost per mile, hour logs, gas and other costs

- 2) Improve community outreach techniques and marketing (standard advertising is not the best tool in rural areas)
 - Many networks already exist, and they need to be accessed (examples include Granges, post offices, community stores, etc...)
 - Get information out to the public (Google delivery sources, local websites, emails, etc.)
 - Go to the people
- 3) Develop an organizational chart for what funding is available and how it is distributed
 - Where is the money?
 - What [sources to involve](#) and who to coordinate with?
 - What are the layers of process?
 - Who will [maintain](#)?
- 4) [Reframe transportation infrastructure for employment access and education](#)

Next steps

- Identify social service agencies and clients regionally, and any opportunities to consolidate/coordinate:
 - If there are not 15 willing agencies, maybe there are 3 willing to consolidate, or at least coordinate services
 - Beyond social service agencies, organizations and employers should work together to develop opportunities for consolidated/coordinated services
- It is possible to have more than one CTSA in a region – research this idea more
- Research exactly where the geographic needs are in Humboldt County
- Develop an online resource guide transportation services in Humboldt County
- CDBG funding appropriate to take next steps for research and planning
- State Planning and Research Partnership Planning sources
- HCAR – may not necessarily be the umbrella leadership, but they have resources
- State Transit Assist monies
 - [Transit providers agree to have HCAR serve certain areas beyond fixed routes](#)
- Develop [HSU transportation committees](#)

SUMMARY

The groups reconvened to share priorities and discuss next steps.

- Overall priority: **research and work toward development of a ‘clearinghouse’ or ‘umbrella’ transportation services program** or organization (either through an existing or new organization) that can provide:
 - Coordination of transportation services for health and social services organizations
 - Provision of employee vanpool and carpool services
 - Provision (potentially) of other transportation services (similar to San Luis Obispo’s ‘Ride On’ program)
 - Education, marketing and other services that promote non-automobile transportation
- Conduct research with key major employers regarding their interest in and demand for transport services
- Revitalize the Social Service Technical Advisory Committee (SSTAC)
- Transit services should be better marketed, particularly to those that do not know of them:
 - Universal symbols/ language
 - Humboldt County Transit Map

- Non-English speaking materials
- Visual impairment materials
- Many folks can't use services at any price:
 - Develop a debit or "swipe" card to be used as a monthly pass for transport vouchers.
 - Expand upon the HSU pass to include non-students.
 - Develop a Social Services card (similar to EBT – Food Stamps card) for transport that is useable for different transit operators.
- Establish a carpooling system for night and weekend employment access
- Develop an easier process for organizations to get transit vouchers from multiple transit providers.
 - One challenge is the hardware (swipe card), which costs thousands of dollars to install on individual buses
- Humboldt Community Switchboard has the basis of a database for stakeholder groups and organizations that provide transportation assistance or services; they will need to add that level of information to their database

ATTACHMENTS

- Workshop agenda
- Small group handouts

Transportation Solutions Workshop

Agenda

Monday, May 1, 2006

2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Eureka Women's Club, 1531 J Street

www.nrsrcaa.org/path



Sign In, Get Settled, Review Materials

Welcome & Project Background

Summary of Needs & Opportunities from PATH Project

- *Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations Report*
- *Opportunities to Improve Transportation Equity in Humboldt County* available this month
- Other current planning efforts: RTP, GPU, TDP, Unmet Transit Needs

Overview of Existing Transportation Services: The Current Reality

- Public transit services
- Community-based efforts
- Examples from other regions

Q & A

Break to Focus Groups

Focus Groups (see reverse for challenges, talking points and ideas for your group)

- **Group 1: Health/social-related transportation services**
How can people's access to medical care, social services, and healthy food be improved?
- **Group 2: Workforce development and job access transportation services**
How can people's access to employment, training and skill development opportunities be improved?
- **Group 3: Rural transportation services**
How can access to services and employment for rural disadvantaged populations be improved?

Priorities & Next Steps

- Present priorities from each focus group
- Discuss next steps
- Evaluation/Comment forms
- Closure

Group 1: Access to Health & Social Services

Major Challenges

- Many clients face significant difficulty accessing care/basic needs. Some health/social services provide some form of transport assistance (vouchers, van service, staff drivers) that (most staff feel) are inefficient and uncoordinated.
- Many of these programs have either a vehicle, a driver or money to pay for service, but rarely more than one of those (and more rarely: insurance).
- Many Spanish-speaking families have one car: often dad takes it to work, mom is left at home with no access to health/social services or ESL classes.
- Helping seniors and mobility-impaired folks remain independent as long as possible means improved transportation services.

Talking points

- A sampling of service organizations that provide some transport:
 - Open Door Clinics (bus vouchers for most extreme cases)
 - Paso A Paso (taxi service charged to an individual's credit card, ~\$100/month)
 - Mobile Medical (have an old vehicle and a driver to take clients to specialists)
 - Even Start (pays roughly \$12K/year in taxi fees for ESL class access)
 - NCIDC (bus vouchers)
 - UIHS (vouchers and transport services)
 - Homeless Education Project (vouchers, staff transport)
 - County Mental Health (staff/personal transport; has a van, can't afford to operate it)
 - Women in Crisis in Southern Humboldt (van and a driver)
 - Mary Bendle Resource Center in SoHum (has a van, can't afford to operate it)
- Transporting clients to services -- or services to clients -- is a critical issue to service providers... but is not the main objective of any of these organizations, many of which are often in crisis mode and resource-poor. Are there a few key organizations that have the staff time/ability/money to put into improving coordination?
- Is there a singular coordination 'format' that could both improve services in the Bay region and also help bring clients in from outlying areas?
- Would it make the most sense for the existing 'Coordinated Transit Service Agency', HCAR, who expands to fill these needs, or a new 'Community Transportation Association'? Or someone else?

Ideas

- Expand the Social Service Technical Advisory Committee (SSTAC) at HCAOG, charged with communicating about coordinating transit services, to include some of these organizations?
- Develop a county plan for transport service coordination?
- Can health/social service organizations help transit agencies *market* existing transit services to their constituencies? Especially for new/trial services?
- Is there funding out there for health/social services to contribute to these efforts? Organizations who could take a lead role?

Group 2: Access to Employment and Skill Development Opportunities

Major Challenges

- Workers aren't employable if they can't get to work (or to job training).
- Many entry level and low-income jobs are during evenings and weekends, when public transit doesn't run for a clientele who really needs it during those times (youth, low-income households).
- Unemployed rural residents oftentimes cannot claim state CalWorks benefits because they can't get to town; it is so expensive to get to town, getting a low wage job and driving or catching a bus means less income than unemployment.
- Land use planning: affordable housing close to employment centers and accessible by transit is key.
- Youth: work opportunities are critical to their success as adults; low-income kids need transport assistance.

Talking Points

- Sun Valley Floral Farm has an interest in discussion of a Transportation Management Association. They've worked with transit operators in the past and adjusted schedules, but it didn't work (workers' days are too long, too many transfers from Eel River Valley). They could see a 'subscription' vanpool service working well, though.
- Lots of examples of employer-based transit services...

Ideas

- Would it be possible for workforce development programs to pool resources (do they exist?) to invest in weekend and evening transit service; and/or increased frequency in key places? E.g. HSU/A&MRTS model.
- Are there other employers who might be interested in dialogue about a subscription transport service; in a pilot effort?
- Interest in developing a "Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan"?
- Are there grants or funding sources out there for any of this? Organizations willing to consider a lead role?

Group 3: Access to Humboldt Bay Area or to Public Transit from Rural Areas

Major Challenges

- Disadvantaged rural residents face enormous challenges accessing basic needs, particularly those centralized in the Humboldt Bay region. Health/social/legal services in Humboldt Bay region experience great difficulty in providing services to rural residents who can't make it to town.
- Humboldt Bay region housing expense, remote location of many ancestral lands, and other issues mean that there will continue to be (perhaps increasing numbers of) disadvantaged populations in outlying areas who need access.
- It is expensive to bring health/social services *to* rural areas and there is also limited employment opportunity.
- Rural transport services have limited access to funding, high costs, and difficulty finding resources for operational expenses.

Talking Points

- Existing rural area services (there might be more):
 - K/TNet (fixed route between Willow Creek and Hoopa; paratransit from Orleans and Johnson's Hunting Ground... to town?)
 - Quail (SoHum, only for seniors and disabled)
 - Ferndale Bridge the Gap (curb-to-curb van service for anyone in Ferndale area; funded by local foundation)
 - Bridgeville (seven-person van goes to town Fridays)
 - Blue Lake (not so rural, but a fixed route and paratransit system)
 - Redwood Coast Transit (\$20 per day, \$30/week r/t Arcata to Crescent City; \$2 r/t Arcata to Orick; daily... weekends?)
 - Dial-A-Ride services: Humboldt Bay region; Fortuna; Blue Lake; Klamath/Trinity areas
- Trinity County has a reimbursement program: if you're rural and disadvantaged and can't get yourself to medical appointments, a family member or neighbor can drive you and be reimbursed for mileage when they walk into the clinic (because transit isn't really feasible in Trinity County, this is where they put some of those dollars).

Ideas

- Could a coordination effort provide needed support to rural services? Could something like this work... several large vans/small buses available and scheduled to serve rural portions of the county on different days? Orick T/Th, Redway/Garberville/Avenue MWF, etc...?
- Joan, K/TNet, pulled together a bunch of service providers and found funding for Dial-A-Ride service. Would this type of effort be the next step for a larger coordination effort?
- Develop a county plan for transport service coordination?
- Is there funding for any of this? Operational funding... how do other rural services do it?

DECEMBER FORUM: RURAL ACCESS TO SERVICES

Problem Statement

It is challenging for non-driving/transportation disadvantaged residents outside the Humboldt Bay population center to access services and activities concentrated in the population center, particularly when those services are provided at a minimum in rural areas, if at all. Many of these issues include:

- There are free ride days and education at fairs, but many people still do not know what is available – language is often a barrier for access to services.
- There are stigmas and stereotypes associated with public transit: Is it safe? Is it for everybody?
- There is a large segment of the population who have never used public transportation, so it is tough to introduce them to unfamiliar territory.
- People who cannot get to the bus and/or fixed route services, but do not qualify for door-to-door services fall through the cracks.
- In (places like) Manila, there are not enough bus services, and the times are not convenient.
- The distances to bus stops can be a disincentive, particularly when carrying things.



Goals

In order to achieve Humboldt County's economic development goals and promote a high quality-of-life for all residents:

- Improve non-automobile access to services in the Humboldt Bay population center from outlying areas. Access, however, is not just about transit routes – it is about ADA, language, affordable fees, and connections to other services;
- Improve provision and/or sustainability of services outside the population center; and
- Reduce the need for travel.

Potential Programs & Policies (*prioritized*)

1. Coordination of Services
 - Look at who has what – finances, vehicles, services.
 - Humboldt County needs to establish a Transportation Management Agency/CTSA. Look at other counties to see how they coordinate services (Fresno model).
 - Integrate land use and transit planning – appropriate sites for bus turnarounds and routes, and also where facilities and services are located.
 - Use public finances to pay for insurance and use of vehicles from private organizations.
 - Develop a rider registry (such as HSU) – a way to screen riders so that safety is addressed.
2. 'Feeder Systems'
 - Outside and connecting to the established transit system, develop feeder systems (like Ferndale's Bridge-the-Gap program) to collect riders and take them to regional transit centers. This would likely require facilitation from a Transportation Management Agency or similar.

3. Provide Efficient and Flexible Services

- Within the mass transit system, evaluate the use of large busses versus vans – some routes are full but others have very low ridership – need a plan for maximum occupancy (and cost savings?).
- Develop other services – van-pooling, car-pooling, designated pick-ups and ridesharing.
- Establish a volunteer program – drivers are given incentives and/or a system of reimbursement (K/T Net is trying this in the Willow Creek/Orleans area).
- Seek federal/state and other funding sources (grants?) to develop a pilot ‘car-share’ program. Prove that it works and make it sustainable.

4. Bring Services to Communities

- Reduce the need for travel by developing ways to bring services to the communities (doctors, food, medicine, veterinarians, etc.).
- Provide incentives for businesses to provide these services (mobile veterinarian model and ideas such as shopping days, where businesses, such as the Mall, sponsor pre-arranged transportation services).
- Use technology to allow for virtual services (doctors give diagnosis through video-conferencing).
- Home health – coordinate more house calls.