

BOARD COMMUNICATION: YOLO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT
350 Industrial Way, Woodland, CA 95776---- (530) 661-0816

<p>Topic: Approve Resolutions 2024-29 and 2024-30 Evaluating Woodland Transit Center Gateway Shopping Center Option, Affirming Intent to Partner with Yolo County Housing Authority on Grant Application for Yolano-Donnelly Housing Site</p>	<p>Agenda Item#:</p> <p>Agenda Type:</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Action</p>
<p>Prepared By: B. Abbanat / A. Bernstein</p>		<p>Attachments: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>Meeting Date: December 9, 2024</p>

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve Resolution 2024-29
 - a. Authorizing staff to execute an add-service to existing Kimley-Horn professional services agreement for a feasibility analysis of relocating the Woodland Transit Center from County Fair Mall to the Gateway Shopping Center for an amount not to exceed \$10,000.
 - b. Directing staff to return to the Board with a Gateway Transit Center relocation strategy upon completion of feasibility study

2. Approve Resolution 2024-30
 - a. Affirming YoloTD’s intent to partner with the Yolo County Housing Authority’s (YCHA) funding application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development’s Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program for the Yolano-Donnelly redevelopment site conditional upon execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Woodland supporting routing of intercity bus routes into the downtown upon completed construction of a new Woodland Transit Center at the site.
 - b. Authorizing staff to collaborate with YCHA and the City of Woodland to develop transit center and street design concepts in support of YCHA’s AHSC grant application.

BACKGROUND:

Woodland Transit Center Relocation Process

Overview

Yolobus operates or jointly operates a transit center in each of the three major cities in Yolo County. Each transit center serves as the central hub for local and intercity buses. Transit centers are usually located close to a key destination or cluster of destinations, such as a central business district or major employer. They are a place to facilitate transfers from one bus route to another. Transit Centers are situated in a location that allows for several buses to stop simultaneously, which generally requires a larger footprint than a typical bus stop.

In Woodland, the transit center is located at the County Fair Fashion Mall, a declining mall at the southern end of town. The transit center is isolated in the southwest corner of the mall parking lot, with no open businesses other than Walmart. Staff frequently receive unsolicited feedback regarding safety issues at the current location. Finally, several serious incidents have occurred in recent months including a homicide that several of our drivers witnessed, one of our interns being physical threatened while conducting outreach, and a similar experience occurring to our Executive Director.

In December 2023, staff conducted a qualitative survey of Yolobus riders to learn their perspectives of the current Woodland transit center location and their receptiveness to a potential relocation. Almost 500 responses were submitted, with only 4% having a “negative” or “very negative” perspective about relocating the transit center.

The concerns noted above were historically uncommon and result from the County Fair Mall no longer serving as a major destination center.

Today, the largest concentration of trip attractors in Woodland is the greater downtown area – including professional office, retail, dining, and most of the social, health and human services that many transit-dependent Yolo County residents rely on. Furthermore, SACOG estimates approximately 3,500 jobs exist in the downtown area between East Street, West Street, Lincoln Ave and North Street. Currently, Yolobus flagship intercity Route 42 buses do not serve downtown Woodland. Thus, passengers from West Sacramento, downtown Sacramento or Davis must travel to the County Fair Mall and then transfer to Route 211 or 212 (West & East Woodland locals, respectively), which operate once per hour. Of the three largest Yolo county cities, only Woodland’s downtown central business district (CBD) is not served by Route 42. A longtime YoloTD service objective has been to provide an single-seat intercity fixed route option to downtown Woodland via Route 42.

Prior Studies & Analysis

2019 Off-Street Transit Center Study

In late 2019, Kimley-Horn prepared a draft project development report for an earlier iteration of the Woodland Transit Center project. The draft report identified and evaluated seven potential off-street sites for a new transit center based on a multi-year project process, zeroing in on a downtown site at 3rd & Court

and between Armfield Ave & Main Street. Since then, several factors changed the facility requirements and siting priorities for the transit center including the desire for an on-street transit center which can accommodate a move more quickly in response to deteriorating conditions at the County Fair Mall.

2023 Phase 1: On-Street Alternatives Analysis

In April 2023, YoloTD contracted with Kimley Horn Associates to update and revise their prior study of possible new locations for the Woodland Transit Center. The scope of the contract included identifying multiple site locations in downtown Woodland that meet facility requirements without requiring private right-of-way and preparing initial concept layouts for feasible options.

2024 Phase 2: 30% Design for 2nd & Court Street

In April 2024, staff presented the findings of the downtown transit center analysis, which included two sets of three alternatives. Operational benefits and drawbacks of each location were presented, with the YoloTD Board affirming the 2nd & Court Street location as the “Preliminary Preferred Alternative” pending additional analysis. The Board authorized staff to proceed to 30% design to better understand traffic impacts, infrastructure improvements, relocation costs, and timing.

Findings of 30% Design & Traffic Analysis

Since April 2024, staff and consultants Kimley-Horn have worked collaboratively with the City of Woodland to assess any traffic impacts, address safety concerns on Court Street, and identify infrastructure improvements needed and incorporate them into the 30% design drawings. Entering this work phase, the below issues were a primary concern:

- **Data:** What are the intersection turn movement volumes at Court Street intersections?
 - Outcome: Resolved. Traffic study concluded additional bus volumes do not have a tangible effect on downtown traffic circulation.
- **Needs:** Are traffic signal upgrades, “protected” left turns needed, what are the priorities?
 - Outcome: Resolved. Traffic study concluded additional bus volumes do not trigger traffic signal upgrades.

“The intersections are expected to continue to operate at acceptable levels with delay changes of less than one second... none of the intersections are projected to experience significant adverse impacts as a result of the implementation of the new transit center.”

-2024 Traffic and Safety Analysis Memorandum

- **Cost:** What exactly is needed to facilitate the relocation and how much will it cost?
 - Outcome: Analysis Complete.
 - Kimley-Horn’s original planning level cost estimate, excluding required ADA ramp improvements at select intersection corners is approximately **\$415,000**.
 - Revised cost estimates including City of Woodland safety and street improvements requests is approximately **\$1,200,000**.

- **Timing:** Based on above analysis, when could the downtown Woodland Transit Center relocation be implemented?
 - Outcome: Unresolved (see next section)

Reception Towards Downtown 2nd & Court Street Location

Throughout this process staff and consultants have worked diligently and in close coordination with City of Woodland staff to analyze several downtown alternatives that meet the minimal siting and operational criteria. Upon YoloTD Board direction and with City of Woodland staff awareness, YoloTD proceeded to 30% design of the “Preliminary Preferred Alternative” location at 2nd & Court Street. Upon addressing all outstanding questions, traffic analysis, and incorporating City infrastructure improvements, YoloTD staff began socializing this location with local elected officials, including City of Woodland councilmembers and Yolo County supervisors.

City of Woodland

In October 2024, in response to the traffic analysis and draft 30% design, the City of Woodland made several requests for infrastructure improvements which YoloTD accommodated in the revised 30% design drawings and cost estimates. These include:

- Safety improvements at 2nd Street intersection (reconstruct north side curb lines to reduce crossing distance/improve sightlines, demolish and reconstruct intersection with enhanced crosswalks, install flashing crossing beacons, construct center refuge islands);
- Ramp reconstruction for ADA compliance;
- Upgraded street lighting;
- Bicycle improvements included green-painted bike lanes and bicycle parking.

These requests raised the expected relocation cost from approximately \$415,000 to almost \$1.2 million.

Presentations to Elected Officials

In October and November, at the request of Woodland city staff, YoloTD staff presented downtown transit center relocation findings at two separate meetings consisting of less-than-quorum elected officials. At best, their responses to this proposal were mixed without any members voicing strong support.

The first presentation on October 9, 2024 was with Yolo County Supervisors Angel Barajas and Mary Sandy. The second and most recent presentation occurred on November 13, 2024 at the Woodland/Yolo County 2x2 meeting which was attended by Woodland Councilmembers Vicky Fernandez, Rich Lansburgh, Yolo County Supervisor Angel Barajas and Deputy Yolo County Supervisor, and City Councilmember-Elect David Moreno (on behalf of Supervisor Mary Sandy). Concerns raised by members of this group included:

- Traffic congestion concerns due to platoons of passengers crossing the street to transfer between buses;
- Public safety concerns, particularly loitering;
- Concerns about darkness;

- Relocation to Court St location could make AHSC application for Yolano-Donnelly redevelopment less competitive because the Court Street location would not have the same safety and crime concerns as the County Fair Mall;
- Narrowing the pedestrian crossing distance at 2nd Street would make it impossible for eastbound through traffic to cut into the bike lane to pass cars turning left on 2nd Street. This would improve pedestrian and bicycle safety but may increase delay for drivers;
- Desire to see more than one viable alternative;
- Request for additional analyses at Court & College Street and south of Main Street near 6th Street (both locations evaluated and excluded in prior analysis).

YoloTD staff believe that many of these concerns reflect misperceptions about the scale of the transit center and its likely impacts or a lack of awareness about analysis that has already been completed. As these concerns could not be assuaged over the course of these two meetings, staff conclude the level of support for this proposal from key decision-makers at the City of Woodland and Yolo County is less than needed to effectuate a downtown transit center relocation. YoloTD staff have not been invited to present the proposal to the full Woodland City Council, and a planned outreach event to engage downtown businesses and stakeholders has also been on hold pending these discussions.

Need to Shift Approach

Changing Circumstances

With the lukewarm response to the Court Street proposal, combined with the request from the City of Woodland for over \$1 million in infrastructure improvements, staff do not see a clear path to a successful and cost-effective downtown transit center relocation. Specifically, unclear is whether any downtown location that meets YoloTD's operational and budget constraints would be supported by key decisionmakers. Given the resources invested to date, staff believe we have exhausted all possibilities that meet our siting criteria, operational needs, budget constraints and meet City requirements. Further downtown analysis will add cost and delay without a predictable outcome.

For these reasons, staff recommend considering an alternative, two-pronged approach to meeting YoloTD's needs for a safe, functional transit center in Woodland over the short term and long term.

Long Term Opportunity: Yolano-Donnelly Redevelopment site (East Street & Lemen Ave)

Informal conversations over the past six months have resulted in a potential opportunity for a purpose-built, long-term transit center associated with Yolo County Housing Authority's intended redevelopment of their Yolano-Donnelly affordable housing site. The site is located at the intersection of East Street and Lemen Ave, on the eastern edge of downtown Woodland. Redevelopment of this site is both a City and County priority. YoloTD was invited to partner on an approximately \$15 million funding request from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program. The project will provide a substantial net increase in affordable housing units.

The AHSC program requires that applications include significant VMT-reducing transportation

improvements benefiting the project’s affordable housing residents. The capital improvements for VMT reduction projects are grant-eligible expenses. The Yolano-Donnelly AHSC grant application, due in late April 2025, will be uncompetitive without a significant VMT-reducing transportation project. The transit center, if included in the application, would fulfill that requirement. If funded, all housing and infrastructure improvements must be completed within five years of award.

The emergence of the Yolano-Donnelly partnership, if successful in winning AHSC grant funds, would achieve many of the project goals at a fraction of the cost, while leveraging the pre-existing political support for the redevelopment project. However, shifting the long-term focus to Yolano-Donnelly is not without risks. These include:

- **Contingent on grant funding:** The transit center would be contingent on the overall Yolano-Donnelly project receiving grant funds from a highly competitive and oversubscribed state funding program;
- **Slower timeline:** In the best of circumstances, a new transit center at Yolano-Donnelly is at least five years away;
- **Peripheral location:** Compared to the Court Street location, Yolano-Donnelly provides less convenient access to key destinations in the downtown core.
- **Routing constraints:** To serve the Yolano-Donnelly site, our buses would need to reroute along streets the City has previously deemed undesirable for buses. YoloTD would need guarantees from the City that we can make routing decisions between the new transit center and existing bus stops and key destinations that are operationally preferable.

Short-Term Opportunity: Gateway / Costco Shopping Center

While it has been the longstanding direction of the YoloTD Board to relocate to a downtown location, the challenges lead staff to propose a radically different option for the short-term: the Gateway/Costco shopping center located on the eastern edge of Woodland. While not a preferred location, staff suggest conducting a feasibility study for this site to serve as an interim transit center for the next 5-10 years. Some advantages of the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center are:

- **Location:** A thriving retail, dining, and health services center
- **Infrastructure:** An existing bus pullout on Veterans Drive with three bus bays, shelters, and lighting.
- **Safety:** During the daytime, substantial pass-by traffic provides “eyes on the street”.
- **Cost:** significantly lower relocation costs are expected than the Court Street site.

This location is accompanied by some noteworthy drawbacks. First, the immediate vicinity parcels are undeveloped and thus, the location is somewhat isolated and may provide a reduced sense of safety, particularly during the evening when the shopping center activity declines. Equally important are the significant routing impacts this location would cause. The most significantly impacted routes would be the Woodland local Routes 211 and 212, the Route 215 (Cache Creek Casino) and the Intercity 42 A/B. Additionally, the 42 A/B would likely continue to bypass

downtown, following its current routing on Main Street and Matmor/East Streets. While additional analysis is needed to fully understand service effects, the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center may be the best candidate to accommodate a timely relocation at minimal cost.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Resolution #1: Woodland Transit Center Relocation

The first resolution focuses on the short-/mid-term relocation from the existing County Fair Mall Transit Center. Staff recommend the Board authorize staff to execute an add-service to the existing agreement with Kimley-Horn to analyze the feasibility of relocating to the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center. This includes identifying any needed infrastructure improvements, operational needs, effects on existing local and intercity bus routing, and planning level cost estimates to understand the financial implications of moving to this location.

The resolution also recommends directing staff to return to the Board with findings from the above analysis, proposed routing changes in response to relocation, provide a schedule/timing for relocation, and develop a community outreach framework for soliciting community input on the proposal.

Resolution #2: YCHA Yolano-Donnelly AHSC Grant Application

The second resolution focuses on a recommendation for the Board to affirm YoloTD's intent to partner with YCHA on their Yolano-Donnelly AHSC grant application. Given the commitment such a partnership entails if funded, the resolution places some conditions on YoloTD's partnership. First, YoloTD needs to better understand any future financial commitments, particularly responsibilities for project cost overruns.

Second, serving downtown Woodland remains a priority, both for our existing local routes (211, 212, 215 and 45) as well as the Intercity Route 42 A/B. New bus routing must be established between the Yolano-Donnelly site and existing bus stops and key destinations in downtown core. Based on staff's experiences with City preferences to avoid certain downtown streets, as well as turning movement challenges due to narrow streets and intersections, the Yolano-Donnelly site could pose some routing challenges to accessing downtown Woodland. To address these concerns, the resolution conditions YoloTD's partnership with YCHA on an MOU with the City to enable YoloTD to serve downtown with local and intercity routes with operationally preferable routing. The absence of an MOU addressing these issues subjects YoloTD to unreasonable risk in committing to this site as a long-term location.

FISCAL IMPACT:

With remaining savings from the downtown Woodland Transit Center budget, which can be applied to the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center analysis staff estimates net new costs at approximately \$10,000. Yolano-Donnelly transit center design concepts are estimated at \$15,000 - \$20,000. Both fall within the Executive Director's signing authority and funds are available within the FY 24/25 YoloTD Budget Professional Services line item.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution 2024-29 (Woodland Transit Center Relocation)
2. Resolution 2024-30 (Yolano-Donnelly Redevelopment Site)
3. 30% Design Drawings and Opinion of Probable Costs
4. Traffic and Safety Analysis Memorandum

YOLO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-29

AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE AN ADD-SERVICE WITH KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC. FOR FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS FOR WOODLAND TRANSIT CENTER RELOCATION TO THE GATEWAY / COSTCO SHOPPING CENTER.

WHEREAS, it is an established priority of the Yolo Transportation District to relocate the existing Woodland Transit Center out of the County Fair Mall in the near-to-mid term, ideally to a location in or near downtown Woodland; and

WHEREAS, in late 2019, YoloTD completed a Draft Project Development Report for the Woodland Transit Center project based on a multi-year project with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc; and

WHEREAS, in April 2023 YoloTD amended the contract with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to reassess the facility requirements and potential siting of the Woodland Transit Center based on current transit plans and priorities; and

WHEREAS, YoloTD collaborated with the City of Woodland to identify and analyze alternatives to update the 2019 study, including two sets of three alternatives each; and

WHEREAS, YoloTD identified a “preliminary preferred alternative” on Court Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets to locate the downtown Woodland Transit Center that meets the operational and service needs while responsive to City of Woodland circulation and compatibility preferences; and

WHEREAS, in April 2024 the YoloTD Board approved the “preliminary preferred alternative” location and authorized additional Phase 2 design and analysis including additional traffic study, 30% design, infrastructure improvements cost estimates, and prioritization and timing of relocating the Woodland Transit Center into downtown; and

WHEREAS, the traffic study, 30% design, and cost estimates were completed and addressed more detailed operational and circulation questions raised by the City of Woodland; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of Phase 2 design and analysis, presentations were given to Yolo County and City of Woodland elected officials on relocating the Woodland Transit Center to Court Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, but support for this option appears to be insufficient; and

WHEREAS, the Gateway / Costco Shopping center is a location with existing transit infrastructure that can prospectively accommodate a near- to mid-term relocation from the County Fair Mall; and

WHEREAS, a planning level feasibility analysis is needed to identify any needed infrastructure

improvements, operational needs, effects on existing local and intercity bus routing, and cost estimates associated with a relocation to the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center site;

NOW, THEREFORE, RESOLVED, ORDERED, AND FOUND by the Board of Directors of the Yolo County Transportation District, County of Yolo, State of California, to:

1. Authorize the YoloTD Executive Director to execute an add-service to the agreement with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for a feasibility analysis of relocating the Woodland Transit Center to the Gateway / Costco Shopping Center; and
2. Direct staff to return to the Board with findings of the feasibility study and relocation strategy to the Gateway / Costco Transit Center.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Yolo County Transportation District, County of Yolo, State of California, this 9th day of December, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Josh Chapman, Chair

Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Janeene Marte, Clerk of the Board

Approved as to Form:

Kimberly Hood, District Counsel

YOLO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-30

AFFIRMING INTENT TO PARTNER WITH THE YOLO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY ON A FUNDING APPLICATION TO THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES (AHSC) PROGRAM FOR THE YOLANO-DONNELLY REDEVELOPMENT SITE CONDITIONAL UPON EXECUTION OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH THE CITY OF WOODLAND SUPPORTING ROUTING OF LOCAL AND INTERCITY BUS ROUTES INTO THE DOWNTOWN UPON COMPLETED CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WOODLAND TRANSIT CENTER AT THE SITE.

WHEREAS, YoloTD has both short-/mid-term (0-7 years) and long-term (7+ years) needs for relocating the existing Woodland Transit Center from the County Fair Mall; and

WHEREAS, in late 2019, YoloTD completed the Draft Project Development Report for an off-street Woodland Transit Center project based on a multi-year project identifying two locations in the vicinity of eastern downtown Woodland; and

WHEREAS, the Yolo County Housing Authority (YCHA) intends to redevelop the existing Yolano-Donnelly public housing site as it has reached the end of its design life cycle; and

WHEREAS, redevelopment of the Yolano-Donnelly site is among the City and County's highest policy priorities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Woodland (City), YCHA, and YoloTD have collaborated over the past year in identifying the Yolano-Donnelly site as a potential location for a purpose-built, long-term Woodland Transit Center; and

WHEREAS, the Yolano-Donnelly site is in close proximity to downtown Woodland and the off-street sites identified in the 2019 study;

WHEREAS, YCHA is preparing an approximately \$15 million application to the competitively awarded California Department of Housing and Community Development's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant program to construct Phase 1 of the Yolano-Donnelly site redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the AHSC requires GHG/VMT-reducing transportation infrastructure and/or transit service improvements accompanying grant applications for constructing affordable housing, which are grant-eligible costs; and

WHEREAS, the City of Woodland and YCHA has expressed their preference to include the transit center component and accompanying street infrastructure improvements in the Yolano-Donnelly affordable housing grant application to make the project competitive; ; and

WHEREAS, YoloTD, YCHA & consultants, and the City of Woodland have coordinated closely on YCHA’s AHSC grant application to date; and

WHEREAS, YoloTD has existing transit stops in downtown Woodland that are served by local and express bus routes which must be connected to any new transit center;

WHEREAS, YoloTD has a longstanding interest in directly serving downtown Woodland with intercity transit service;

WHEREAS, limited options exist to access downtown from the Yolano-Donnelly location that meet operational and service needs for local and intercity transit buses; and

WHEREAS, YoloTD needs assurances that local and intercity bus routes can provide service into the downtown from the future Yolano-Donnelly transit center prior to committing to a partnership with YCHA on their AHSC grant application,

NOW, THEREFORE, RESOLVED, ORDERED, AND FOUND by the Board of Directors of the Yolo County Transportation District, County of Yolo, State of California,

1. YoloTD’s intent to partner with the Yolo County Housing Authority’s (YCHA) funding application to the AHSC program for the Yolano-Donnelly redevelopment site is hereby affirmed, conditional upon execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Woodland prior to AHSC application submittal supporting routing of local and intercity bus routes into the downtown upon completed construction of a new Woodland Transit Center at the site.
2. YoloTD staff are hereby authorized to collaborate with YCHA and the City of Woodland to develop transit center and street design concepts in support of YCHA’s AHSC grant application, incurring budgeted expenses up to the Executive Director’s spending authority.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Yolo County Transportation District, County of Yolo, State of California, this 9th day of December, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Josh Chapman, Chair Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Janeene Marte, Clerk
Board of Directors

Approved as to Form:

Kimberly Hood, District Counsel