

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

REGIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN PURPOSE

The main purpose of the 2010 Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan is to promote the development of a regional active transportation system. The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) funded this plan in response to a growing and intensified interest on the part of Humboldt County residents for enhanced development of a non-motorized, hereafter referred to as ‘active’, transportation facility network. A regional active transportation system is of particular interest in this region because there are limited options for active travel between north coast communities, other than small narrow two-lane county roads and/or highway shoulders.

HCAOG is a Joint Powers Agency (JPA) comprised of the seven incorporated cities (Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Trinidad), the County of Humboldt, and through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has tribal, Caltrans and local transit provider representation. As a result, the Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan is a long-range coordinating and resource document that provides the framework to guide the planning and implementation of a regional active transportation system that ensures safe and equitable access for non-motorized users. This plan was not an effort to document previously unidentified trail needs, but rather to compile existing trail and active transportation planning information.

The Regional Trails Master Plan is designed to promote active transportation facility connections *within* and *between* communities. While the focus is primarily off-street trail development, on-street bikeways are included in order to develop a comprehensive and seamless active transportation system. Relatively little data exists for pedestrian facilities, therefore these important connections are not included in this effort. Integral to the Regional Trails Master Plan is the development of a regional trails vision, an outline of the existing and proposed active transportation system, tools to strengthen regional coordination and trail implementation, and the codification of ‘Humboldt People Powered Pathways’.

Regional Trails Vision

Creating a regional trails vision is critical for community buy-in and for our rural region to prioritize, finance, and implement active transportation improvements. Active transportation projects and programs are receiving more state and federal transportation funding priority, and these funding sources remain competitive. The Regional Trails Master Plan presents a unified vision for a safe, comprehensive, and interconnected active transportation system in Humboldt County that demonstrates local community support and jurisdiction readiness. Completion of this system will make accomplishing shorter trips by active modes of travel more appealing, and travel between communities safer and more feasible, for people of all ages, abilities and financial means.

Existing and Proposed Active Transportation System

Previous trails and bikeway planning efforts have been developed by independent entities and HCAOG members with a localized project focus. The Regional Trails Master Plan consolidates these planning efforts and further defines the existing and proposed active transportation system in Humboldt County. Developing an interconnected and active transportation system will allow residents and visitors to move safely and efficiently within and between communities.

Strengthen Regional Coordination

The involvement of multiple jurisdictions, with differing trail- and active transport-related goals and strategies, make planning an active transportation system more complex. There is a great deal of disparity between the trail development foundations laid by jurisdictions; a few jurisdictions are actively engaged in trail planning and development, whereas others are not. The situation is further complicated by a lack of funds and staff necessary to support trail development. Strengthening coordination and collaboration between local entities (i.e., the County of Humboldt, the seven incorporated cities, tribal governments, special districts, and advocacy groups), as well as state agencies (e.g., Caltrans, Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, etc.) is necessary to develop and prioritize regionally significant trail and bikeway facilities. This plan is the first step towards developing an active transportation framework that will strengthen regional capacity to seek and secure funding for implementation.

Trail Development Tools

The Regional Trails Master Plan provides tools to assist municipalities in the development of a regional, uniform and consistent active transportation system. The tools include: a prioritized list of trail projects; local, state, and federal active transportation and recreation funding options; and trail design guidelines to assist in the development of a uniform and consistent active transportation system.

Humboldt People Powered Pathways

The current Federal Transportation legislation, the Safe Accountable Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) authorized \$244 billion nationwide for transportation between 2005 and 2009. SAFETEA-LU established a new Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program, authorizing a total of \$100 million through 2009 for four communities to fund pilot projects to construct non-motorized transportation infrastructure.

In conjunction with other cities and counties across the nation, the County of Humboldt, the seven incorporated cities and tribal governments developed a ‘case statement’, called the Humboldt People Powered Pathways (or HP3), for the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation. The 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation is a national effort aimed at the inclusion of a program that provides funding for non-motorized systems (vs. singular projects) as a permanent program in the federal transportation legislation reauthorization. This campaign was introduced in February 2010 as the ‘Active Community Transportation Act’ marker bill, proposed to be included in the transportation legislation reauthorization.

The HP3 case statement was developed to demonstrate the diversity and depth of Humboldt County’s non-motorized transportation culture, identified needs and readiness to meet those needs. HP3 included preliminary maps of existing and proposed trail and bicycle infrastructure and infrastructure construction cost estimates. HP3 garnered support from the jurisdictions involved in proposal development, as well as Caltrans, the State Coastal Conservancy, and local advocacy groups. The Regional Trails Master Plan builds upon the HP3 framework to increase local jurisdiction eligibility for state and federal funds.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Regional Trails Master Plan content development involved four-steps: literature review, stakeholder interviews, active transportation system map development, and community outreach. These four steps are summarized below.

Literature Review

Review of more than forty existing plans and other background information provided insights into prior trail and active transportation planning efforts. This review covered federal, state and local plans and regulations that relate to trail planning, design and construction.

Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders responsible for trail system stewardship and oversight. The planning team met with planning and public works staff from local jurisdictions to discuss how they are facilitating trail development and to define trail development opportunities and constraints.

Active Transportation System Maps

Extensive countywide maps illustrating existing and proposed non-motorized facilities that comprise the active transportation system were compiled. Local and regional trail and bicycle facility data was collected to construct the maps. The municipalities were asked to review the maps to ensure they reflect proposed plans. The maps are a visual tool that jurisdictions and community members can use to develop, refine and prioritize non-motorized connections within and between communities.

Community Outreach

A series of community workshops were conducted to solicit public input. Community workshop participants were asked to provide their regional trails vision and discuss trail development priorities. Preliminary maps illustrating the existing and proposed active transportation system were available for participants to review. Public input was also obtained from residents that could not attend the workshops via email and mail.

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

The 2010 Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan is comprised of seven chapters as described below.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction describes the Regional Trails Master Plan purpose, and provides an overview of the planning process and document organization.

Chapter 2: Planning Context

Chapter two includes a description of Humboldt County's regional characteristics, active transportation system benefits, goals and policies, and literature review.

Chapter 3: Community Input

Chapter three is an overview of the format, goals and outcomes of the community workshops held to solicit resident input for the Regional Trails Master Plan. This chapter also includes the community's vision for an active transportation system.

Chapter 4: Active Transportation System

Chapter four addresses trail system classification framework and outlines the existing and proposed active transportation system at a local and regional level.

Chapter 5: Implementation

Chapter five includes a constraints analysis and trail implementation strategies. Prioritization criteria are utilized to rank proposed trail projects for the region. Information is provided about non-motorized funding sources and proposed trail projects are evaluated relative to their ability and readiness to leverage funding.

Chapter 6: Design Guidelines

Chapter six includes design guidelines for trails, trailheads, trail crossings, and a variety of trail support facilities.

CHAPTER 2

PLANNING CONTEXT

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Humboldt County is a geographically diverse region located in the north coast of California. The County encompasses nearly 3,500 square miles (or 2.3 million acres) of forested mountains, river valleys, coastal terraces, and agricultural lands. The county is bordered by Del Norte County to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the west, Siskiyou and Trinity Counties to the east, and by Mendocino County to the south.

Humboldt County experiences moderate coastal temperatures, with higher summer and colder winter temperatures inland. Precipitation ranges from 35 inches in the Humboldt Bay area to over 100 inches per year in southern Humboldt's coastal King Range. Ninety percent of the region's annual precipitation falls from October through April. The region experiences relatively little ice and snow.

Humboldt County is rural in nature and has a population of approximately 132,700 persons (California Department of Finance, 2009). In addition to several unincorporated communities, Humboldt County has seven incorporated cities: Arcata, Eureka, Blue Lake, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Trinidad. City populations range from 300 to 26,000 residents. The greater Humboldt Bay area, which consists of the cities of Arcata and Eureka serves as the region's population center and economic focal point.

The relatively flat topography on the coastal terraces from Trinidad to Rio Dell is best suited for trail development. River valleys and highway corridors also provide relatively accessible alignments for active transportation infrastructure. Forested lands, both in public and private ownership, account for 80 percent of the county's land area; public parklands attract visitors for their open space values and are suitable for trail development, particularly for hiking and equestrian routes.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM BENEFITS

An active transportation system is a region-wide network of on-street and off-street trails, bikeways and walkways that allow people to move within and between communities by foot, bicycle, or other non-motorized means. Humboldt County residents and visitors would benefit from expanded non-motorized transportation options that connect to neighborhoods, schools, jobs, parks, natural areas, commercial centers, and neighboring communities. Ideally, the active transportation system would eventually be integrated with public transit and promoted through educational programs.

An active transportation system can address many objectives proactively, including improved accessibility, transportation options, public health, economic vitality, and air quality. The most compelling benefits of an active transportation system are discussed below.

Accessibility

Humboldt County communities are connected primarily by state highways and rural two-lane roads. Often, high motor vehicle speeds and the lack of non-motorized transportation facilities discourage bicycling or walking. A balanced transportation environment can significantly increase levels of bicycling and walking and enhance a community's livability.

There is a growing movement to “complete the streets”. Complete streets are streets designed with all users in mind, including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Complete streets provide safe transportation options and access to daily needs and destinations for all users, appropriate to the local context.

In urbanized areas of the county, complete streets could accommodate wide sidewalks for pedestrians and marked street shoulders for cyclists. In rural areas of the county without wide shoulders and sidewalks, or between communities, adding trail facilities would “complete the street.”

In 2008, California adopted the Complete Streets Act (AB 1358), which requires cities and counties plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan. Beginning January 2011, substantive revisions of local general plan circulation elements are required to include complete streets provisions.

Transportation Equity

Transportation options are limited for those who cannot or prefer not to drive. According to the *2006 Humboldt County Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations Report*, estimates from around the county suggest that approximately 30 percent of the population does not drive. Transportation-disadvantaged populations include low-income households, carless households, ethnic minority populations, seniors, mobility-impaired, youth, and geographically isolated.

The California Department of Finance projects that, from 2020 - 2050, the number of people ages 50 - 79 in Humboldt County will increase by 13 percent and the population of those over 80 will increase by 151 percent. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 20 percent of Humboldt County households (in some Census Block Groups, as many as 91 percent) are considered low-income. These residents would benefit from an active transportation system that provides greater access to important destinations, such as public transportation, schools, residential neighborhoods, shopping, employment, and outdoor recreation.

Public Health

Trails, bikeways, and walkways provide opportunities for physical activity and promote healthy lifestyles. Physical activity health benefits discussed in the *2008 Humboldt County General Plan Update Health Impact Assessment* include decreased risks for heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and colon cancer, as well as an increased sense of well-being. For children, benefits include strengthening bones during critical growth periods, increased confidence and self-esteem, and decreased childhood obesity risks. According to the California Department of Public Health, 21.7 percent of Humboldt County adults are considered obese, which is higher than California's rate of 19.1 percent.

Walking or bicycling to work or school helps people meet their daily requirements for physical activity. According to the 2000 Census, eight percent of all commute trips in Humboldt County are made by walking or bicycling. For students in Humboldt County, three percent walked to school in 2006-07, and 14 percent biked.

Improving the safety of active transportation infrastructure, which includes public education, will reduce injuries and fatalities resulting from pedestrian- and bicycle-auto collisions. Strategic investments in the active transportation system would promote walking and bicycling to work or school by improving the attractiveness and safety of the non-motorized facility network.

Economics

Trails and robust active transportation systems not only enable residents to live more actively and economically in a healthier environment where travel costs are reduced, but also benefit both adjacent landowners and the local business community. Humboldt County is an increasingly sought after eco-tourism destination, due to its vast abundance of natural, scenic, and cultural resources. A well planned and designed regional trail network is a key eco-tourism component that can increase the number and length of visits and benefit local businesses by attracting active outdoor enthusiasts. These quality of life amenities also attract relocating businesses.

Trails and bicycle facilities are also desirable community amenities for residents as they provide inexpensive transportation options and increase property values. In a 2002 survey of recent homebuyers sponsored by the National Association of Home Builders and the National Association of Realtors, trails ranked as the second most important community amenity among eighteen choices (second only to highway access). This could be attributed to the recreation, transportation, property, and aesthetic values trails can bring to a community.

Investments in infrastructure support job development through construction activities and materials purchases. The FHWA estimates that for every \$1 million spent on trail development, a local economy gains 65 jobs. For construction of the most recent segment of the Hammond Coastal Trail in 2007, nearly one half million dollars went to local purchase of materials, and a roughly equal amount to payroll for local firms and organizations.

Linking Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality

Planning for an active transportation system is one of the most effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the local level. State legislation has been passed that aims to reduce GHG emissions by promoting coordinated regional land use and transportation planning that results in a reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). In addition, funding streams tied to transportation are responding to this legislation by supporting projects that implement VMT reduction targets.

Established transportation and land use patterns in Humboldt County are automobile-oriented. Approximately 49 percent of Humboldt County residents live in “non-urban” or rural areas (HCDHHS, 2008). In 2000, annual VMT in California was 2.7 times higher in rural areas as compared with urban areas (FHA, 2002). Humboldt County’s rural areas offer fewer public services compared to urban areas; residents therefore depend on motor vehicles to access childcare, grocery stores, employment, and medical services.

Studies from across the nation illustrate that moderate to higher density development that provides a mix of residential, employment, and shopping opportunities encourages walking and bicycling. Increased access to safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities (e.g. sidewalks, trails, and wide shoulders on non-urban roads) promotes higher levels of physical activity and lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. Vehicle emissions are the largest source of mobile air pollution.

In 2006, the California legislature passed AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which requires the state to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels no later than 2020. AB 32 set the stage for SB 375, passed by the California legislature in 2008. SB 375 (Steinberg) aims to cut vehicle emissions by encouraging more compact development patterns that support transportation alternatives. To achieve this goal, SB 375 establishes new linkages between transportation funding, GHG reduction targets, and regional land use planning.

An active transportation system that provides a high level of accessibility to goods, services and transit will increase the number of short trips made by non-automobile means and reduce VMT. A safe, reliable, intuitive and attractive regional trail network in Humboldt County would increase the region’s transportation efficiency, reduce automobile dependence and congestion, and improve regional air quality and health.

GOALS AND POLICIES

This section outlines the Regional Trails Master Plan goals and policies that will guide active transportation system planning and development in Humboldt County. The purpose of these goals and policies is to:

- Provide HCAOG and member agencies with decision-making direction to support active transportation system development;
- Facilitate a participatory and collaborative approach between HCAOG and member agencies to achieve efficient non-motorized transportation development and implementation; and
- Identify priorities for ongoing development of the active transportation system.

The goals and policies support the planning and development of an active transportation system or network of on-street and off-street trails, bikeways and walkways that allow increased non-motorized travel for transportation and recreation purposes. They address non-motorized transportation needs and trends discussed throughout the master plan. Goals are aimed at HCAOGs desired outcomes, while policies are more specific statements that define ways to achieve the goals. The goals and policies should be used by HCAOG to advance the development of an active transportation system in Humboldt County.

Goal 1: Active Transportation System

Develop an active transportation system for Humboldt County that provides connectivity *within* and *between* communities.

Policies

- 1.1 Create a cohesive network of regional and local trails, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities for transportation and recreation by facilitating regional trail development discussions with HCAOG members.
- 1.2 Focus funding and planning efforts on gaps in the active transportation system, thereby linking and improving access to key community destinations such as schools, residential neighborhoods, employment centers, commercial districts, transit stops, recreational areas and cultural uses.
- 1.3 Increase non-motorized transportation facilities by at least 10 percent by 2020 in Humboldt County.
- 1.4 Consolidate the Humboldt County Regional Pedestrian Plan, Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan, and Regional Trails Master Plan into one Active Transportation Plan as opposed to updating the plans independently of one another.

Goal 2: Health and Equity

Encourage active transportation and recreation options for residents and visitors.

Policies

- 2.1 Promote walking and bicycling as healthy transportation choices, which enhance the physical, social and environmental well-being of the community.
- 2.2 Consider the needs of transportation-disadvantaged populations (i.e. low income or carless households, elderly, youth, minorities, and persons with disabilities) when planning and prioritizing transportation projects and funds.
- 2.3 Promote the consideration of transportation-disadvantaged populations in land use planning.

Goal 3: Safety and Education

Improve the safety of active transportation facilities.

Policies

- 3.1 Encourage the separation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities from vehicular traffic whenever feasible.
- 3.2 Encourage member agencies to identify regional Safe Routes to School priorities in coordination with schools and school districts to improve local competitiveness for funding.
- 3.3 To promote safe walking and bicycling conditions for area schools, inform HCAOG members when Safe Routes to School funds are available and provide members with successful grant application examples and best practices information when applying for funds.
- 3.4 Support the development of bicyclist, pedestrian and motorist safety programs to improve safety for all active transportation and road network users.
- 3.5 Prioritize investments in the active transportation system that will significantly reduce bicycle and pedestrian related collision rates on a per capita basis over the next 20 years.

Goal 4: Trail Design and Support Facilities

Encourage consistent trail design and the development of trail amenities and support facilities.

Policies

- 4.1 Encourage member agencies to adopt the trail design guidelines into local plans.
- 4.2 Encourage the inclusion of trail amenities (e.g., benches, water fountains, bicycle parking, lighting, and trash receptacles) where feasible in local jurisdiction trail projects.

- 4.3 Provide regular updates to local jurisdictions about funds available (e.g., Transportation Enhancements funds) for trail amenities and support facilities.
- 4.4 Facilitate member agency coordination with the Humboldt Farm Bureau and the local agricultural community to develop best management practices and design standards for trails, to ensure a high level of compatibility with the farms and ranches they pass by.
- 4.5 Develop a countywide Regional Trails Signage and Amenities Plan to establish a recognizable and consistent identity for the active transportation system. The plan would develop a regional trail name and logo, establish distinct designs for regional trail facilities and amenities, and include strategies for promoting the trail. Trail facilities would be developed to reflect Humboldt County's unique natural and cultural resources.

Goal 5: Maintenance

Maintain the quality and condition of the active transportation system.

Policies

- 5.1 Encourage local jurisdictions to coordinate a volunteer trail clean-up and maintenance program, such as adopt-a-trail program.
- 5.2 Schedule time quarterly at regular HCAOG Technical Advisory Committee meetings to discuss potential funds and strategies for long-term trail maintenance and operation.
- 5.3 Encourage HCAOG member agencies to develop and implement long-term trail maintenance and operation strategies.

Goal 6: Coordination

Support regional trail planning and coordination efforts to ensure successful active transportation system development.

Policies

- 6.1 Encourage the local jurisdictions to provide local and regional trail connections and access.
- 6.2 Promote public-private-tribal partnerships for trail development, operations, and maintenance.
- 6.3 On a quarterly basis invite planning staff from HCAOG member agencies to attend a regularly scheduled Technical Advisory Committee meeting to discuss regional trail development, planning, and coordination.

Goal 7: Funding

Encourage the pursuit of active transportation system funding to implement priority trail projects identified in this plan.

Policies

- 7.1 Encourage multi-jurisdictional funding applications to increase funding competitiveness in order to implement the regional active transportation system.
- 7.2 Encourage the local jurisdictions to include trail development and improvements in their Capital Improvement Plans.
- 7.4 Encourage jurisdictions to target projects and complete the necessary environmental and engineering studies necessary to improve project readiness and competitiveness for state and federal funds.
- 7.3 Develop a transportation funding formula that gives priority to projects that incorporate active transportation system facilities into project design.

LITERATURE REVIEW RESULTS

Significant efforts to improve non-motorized transportation have already been made at the local, regional, state, and federal level. These prior efforts developed goals and policies; identified on- and off-street active transportation improvements; addressed support facilities; and developed educational and promotional programs. The plans listed below summarize the planning efforts that seek to improve non-motorized transportation in Humboldt County.

Local Plans and Studies

Avenue of the Giants Community Action Plan (1998)

The *Avenue of the Giants Community Action Plan* is a planning and resource document for nine rural communities in southern Humboldt County. These communities are linked by the Avenue of the Giants (SR 254), a 32 mile scenic drive along the Eel River that passes through over 50,000 acres of redwood groves, mostly in National and State Parks. For each community planning area, the plan provides: characteristics and trends; community vision; planning themes, goals and priorities; and community action projects for implementation. Community residents identified ‘a safe multi-use path along the Avenue and a more independent relationship with Humboldt Redwoods State Parks’ as a high priority goal for implementation.

City of Arcata General Plan: 2020 (2000)

The *Arcata General Plan: 2020* contains policies that support bicycle and pedestrian facilities in several General Plan elements. The Land Use Element encourages walking and bicycling by emphasizing mixed-use neighborhoods and infill developments. The Transportation Element

promotes transportation choices, striving to de-emphasize dependence on the automobile. The Open Space Element supports developing trails and other non-motorized corridors that link to open space, recreation areas, and coastal access. The Resource Conservation and Management Element recommends foot trails leading to and along the Humboldt Bay.

City of Arcata Parks and Recreation Plan (1994)

The *Arcata Parks and Recreation Plan* was developed as a separate document, but is an element of the Arcata General Plan and an update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted in the late 1970s. The plan encourages adequate pedestrian, bicycle, and bus transportation to all recreational facilities and programs. The City of Arcata is nearing the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update, which recommends improvements for an interconnected, multipurpose trail system with regional linkages.

City of Arcata Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (2010)

The *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan* evaluates existing conditions and needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the City of Arcata and identifies a citywide system of improvements and coherent implementation strategies for walking and bicycling facilities. The plan includes mapping of the proposed bikeway network and identifies priority and conceptual bikeway corridor improvement projects. The plan's goal is "to achieve 50 percent of all trips that begin and end in Arcata being made by non-motorized modes by the year 2020."

City of Eureka General Plan (1997)

The *Eureka General Plan* provides goals and policies that support the development of the continuous Waterfront Trail and other active transportation facilities throughout the city in Section 3: Transportation and Circulation, Section 5: Recreation and Cultural Resources, and Section 6: Natural Resources.

Elk River Access Project Recommendations (2002)

The *Elk River Access Project* report was prepared for the City of Eureka to provide trail development recommendations for the Elk River Wildlife Sanctuary and adjacent City of Eureka property north of the Sanctuary and south of Truesdale Avenue. The proposed trail will connect and be a segment of the Eureka Waterfront Trail. The report addressed trail layout and design, access facilities and amenities, project funding, and project planning and implementation management.

Humboldt Coastal Nature Center Trails Plan (2010)

The Friends of the Dunes prepared the *Humboldt Coastal Nature Center Trails Plan* to assess existing access routes and determine which trails should be included in its trail system. The plan contains public access trail policies, trail maps, and visitor guidelines. The Humboldt Coastal Nature Center consists of 113 acres of coastal dune property that is dedicated for the purposes of public access and outdoor recreation, open space and habitat conservation, and the development of a coastal dune interpretive and visitor center.

Manila Community Transportation Plan – Phase II (2005)

The *Manila Community Transportation Plan* addresses traffic safety concerns on State Route (SR) 255, which runs through the center of the community of Manila. A number of SR 255 improvements were recommended to reduce traffic speeds, provide enhanced pedestrian crossings, and increase the accessibility of local streets. Recommended non-motorized trail improvements included a multi-use trail utilizing the NCRA rail corridor through Manila and new pedestrian paths that provide connectivity to important community facilities.

McKinleyville Community Plan (2002)

The *McKinleyville Community Plan* (Humboldt County General Plan Volume II) provides Circulation Plan policies that include new roadway and intersection design standards that incorporate provisions for bikeways, and funding priorities favoring safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools.

McKinleyville Parks and Recreation Plan (2008)

The *McKinleyville Parks and Recreation Plan*, prepared by McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD), describes existing and proposed trail facilities within the community of McKinleyville including trails maintained by the County of Humboldt and the MCSD. The plan includes policies and objectives that support the development of non-motorized transportation facilities and encourage collaboration with other agencies to maximize recreational opportunities.

Willow Creek Community Action Plan (2003)

The *Willow Creek Community Action Plan* is a strategic planning and community improvement implementation guide. Although the plan was intended primarily as an economic development tool, it also touched on issues related to recreation, transportation, and land use.

Regional Plans and Studies

Annie and Mary Rail-Trail Feasibility Study (2003)

The *Annie and Mary Rail-Trail Feasibility Study*, prepared for the State Coastal Conservancy, documents the opportunities and constraints relative to the development of a multiple-use trail on the Arcata and Mad River (or Annie and Mary) rail corridor, which stretches from the Arcata to Korbel. The study explores trail alignment alternatives, design, costs, and management and maintenance issues, and develops trail alignment recommendations based on adjacent land use conflicts.

Annie and Mary Trail – Next Steps (2008)

The *Annie and Mary Trail – Next Steps* report was prepared for Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) to identify the “next steps” in the development of the Annie and Mary Trail project. The report summarizes the ownership history of the corridor and the process of “railbanking” the corridor in order to preserve it for future railroad or trail use.

Eureka Waterfront Trail and Promenade Recommendations (2005)

The *Eureka Waterfront Trail and Promenade Recommendations*, prepared for the City of Eureka Trails Committee, provides recommendations about the location and specifications of a contiguous non-motorized recreation and transportation facility along the City of Eureka’s Humboldt Bay waterfront. The plan provides a Waterfront Trail and Promenade vision, describes existing and proposed trail segments, reviews regional trail connections around Humboldt Bay, and considers trail design specifications and directional signage facilities.

Hammond Coastal Trail Extension Analysis – Trinidad to Fortuna (2001)

The *Hammond Coastal Trail Extension Analysis – Trinidad to Fortuna* was prepared for the County of Humboldt to identify and prioritize potential trail routes for Hammond Trail extension. The study analyzed two priority trail route alternatives for the “Hole in the Hammond” (a missing segment of the Hammond Trail that was constructed in 2007) and identified conceptual trail routes for northward and southward trail extension to Trinidad and Fortuna, respectively.

Hammond Coastal Trail – South Implementation Strategy Report (2005)

The *Hammond Coastal Trail – South Implementation Strategy Report*, prepared for the State Coastal Conservancy, provides a detailed analysis of potential trail route options in southward extension of the Hammond Trail from the Mad River Bridge to the Arcata City Limits. The study analyses route alternatives on county roads, railroad corridors, and river levees and addresses best management practices relative to existing agricultural operations and trail surfacing.

Hammond Trail Extension – Next Steps (2008)

The *Hammond Trail Extension – Next Steps* report was prepared for HCAOG to identify the “next steps” in the development of the Hammond Trail project. Alternative routes were considered to extend the Hammond Trail from its southern terminus at the Mad River Bridge to downtown Arcata. The study described private property, management and environmental issues that would need to be addressed to implement alternative routes.

Humboldt Bay Trails Feasibility Study (2001)

The *Humboldt Bay Trails Feasibility Study* was prepared for the State Coastal Conservancy to encourage non-motorized access to and around Humboldt Bay. The study identified priority, potential and conceptual trail projects around Humboldt Bay, along with specific route alternatives for the California Coastal Trail. In addition, the plan addresses trail development standards, funding techniques, and regional trail planning.

Humboldt Bay Trail Feasibility Study (2007)

The *Humboldt Bay Trail Feasibility Study: Eureka to Arcata* was prepared for HCAOG to analyze the feasibility of developing a Class I facility between Arcata and Eureka on the eastern edge of Humboldt Bay. The study provides a needs analysis, trail design guidelines, opportunities and constraints by each trail segment, and estimated costs of implementation. Additionally, the study evaluates five trail route options and contains alignment alternative maps.

Humboldt County Bicycle Facilities Feasibility Analysis (1997)

The purpose of the *Humboldt County Bicycle Facilities Feasibility Analysis* was to research possible alternatives for improvement to and expansion of bicycle facilities within and between communities in the central coast of Humboldt County. The study found substantial demand for a Class I facility between the cities of Arcata and Eureka and analyzed alternative routes on Old Arcata Road, State Route 255, and NCRA rail corridors. Additionally, the study identifies advantages and disadvantages of improving other bicycle connections within the county and contains existing and proposed bikeways maps.

Humboldt County General Plan, Energy Element (Final Draft, 2005)

The *Humboldt County General Plan Energy Element* contains objectives, policies, standards, and implementation strategies that support integrated energy, land use, transportation, and air quality planning. The Energy Element supports land use patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), such as bicycle- transit- and pedestrian-oriented developments, and provide clear, safe, and convenient linkages between all modes of travel.

Humboldt County General Plan, Health Impact Assessment (2008)

The *Humboldt County General Plan Health Impact Assessment* examines how the various land use and development scenarios under consideration for the General Plan Update would affect health. The Health Impact Assessment brings together evidence for decision-makers to understand how their decisions on programs, projects, plans, or policies affect health, positively or negatively. The assessment also offers recommendations to enhance the positive health impacts of policy-making and development projects and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate negative impacts.

Humboldt County General Plan, Recreation Element (1976)

The *Recreation Element* of the Humboldt County General Plan provides a framework for the provision and maintenance of county parks and recreation facilities. The plan provides policy and an action plan for the county's management of its outdoor recreation facilities.

Humboldt County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan (2004 Update)

The *Humboldt County Bicycle Transportation Plan* was prepared for HCAOG to provide guidance on the development of a unified bicycle system throughout Humboldt County for recreational and commuting bicyclists. The plan illustrates existing and proposed bicycle facilities and prioritizes proposed projects using ranking criteria for each local jurisdiction. The plan meets Bicycle Transportation Account guidelines and is therefore eligible for state funding.

Humboldt County Regional Pedestrian Plan (2008)

The *Humboldt County Regional Pedestrian Plan* was prepared for HCAOG to provide a comprehensive assessment of pedestrian needs within Humboldt County. The plan aims at making walking an integral transportation mode in Humboldt County by proposing regional and local pedestrian improvement projects. Additionally, the plan includes maps illustrating proposed improvements to the pedestrian network, and information on public awareness and education programs, funding sources, accessibility guidelines and design treatments.

Humboldt County Regional Transportation Plan (2008 Update)

The *Humboldt County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* was prepared for HCAOG as a long-term transportation planning document which aims to maintain a balanced transportation system, increase transportation capacity where population growth occurs, and integrate bicycling and walking as integral transportation modes within the county. The plan includes a bicycle and pedestrian needs assessment, figures illustrating existing bicycle facilities for Humboldt County communities, an action plan for proposed non-motorized projects, and funding sources available for project implementation.

Humboldt County Trails Plan (1979)

The *Humboldt County Trails Plan* was developed as a sub-element to the Humboldt County General Plan Recreation Element. It focuses primarily on developing both transportation and recreational community trails for bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians. Regional, state, and national trails and bikeways are also a part of the County Trails Plan.

Humboldt County Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations Report (2006)

The *Humboldt County Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations Report* was prepared for the County of Humboldt Public Works Department to identify who, where, and generally how numerous Humboldt County populations have their lives restricted by the current level of transportation services and options. The report describes how these ‘transportation-disadvantaged’ populations suffer from transportation challenges that have significant impacts on individual and family access to daily needs and services.

Humboldt People Powered Pathways (2009)

Humboldt People Powered Pathways (HP3) is a vision to improve active transport options within and between Humboldt communities “to get more people traveling by healthy, environmentally beneficial means.” The HP3 vision and ‘case statement’ was crafted by a coalition of the County of Humboldt, cities, tribes, Caltrans, and community organizations to demonstrate Humboldt County’s active transportation needs and readiness to meet those needs.

The HP3 case statement was submitted, along with 49 other communities across the nation, as part of the ‘2010 Campaign for Active Transportation’. The aim of the campaign was to compel the federal government to reauthorize and expand non-motorized transportation funding in the next federal transportation bill.

Pacific Coast Bike Route Study (2003)

The *Pacific Coast Bike Route Study*, prepared for HCAOG and funded by a State Planning and Research Grant, provides recommendations regarding facility improvements and route alternatives for the Pacific Coast Bike Route (PCBR) through the county regions of Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino. The study addresses signing, ‘Share the Road’ educational programs, agency coordination, and cooperative management of the PCBR.

Particulate Matter (PM10) Attainment Plan (1995)

The North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (consisting of Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity Counties) is classified as a nonattainment area for particulate matter under 10 microns (PM10). Under the California Clean Air Act, air quality districts must develop control measures to achieve and maintain ambient air quality standards. Among the control measures mentioned in the Attainment Plan are programs to accommodate bicycle use and land use development practices that enable people to walk to more destinations and reduce automobile use.

Redwood Pathways Implementation Strategy (2002)

The *Redwood Pathways Implementation Strategy* was developed to evaluate the overall feasibility of developing multi-use trails along the Avenue of the Giants. The plan identified 32 conceptual projects and further analyzed two priority projects, which included: the South Fork High School Trail and the Garberville-Benbow River Trail. Preliminary environmental analysis was completed and next steps of project development were addressed for both priority projects.

Trail Projects on the NWP Line Rights-of-Way (2009)

Trail Projects on the NWP Line Rights-of-Way: Design, Construction, Safety, Operations, and Maintenance Guidelines was adopted in 2009 by the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA). The trail guidelines are intended to provide minimum standards and general requirements for the design, construction, safety, operations, and maintenance of trails on the NWP rail rights-of-way in a manner that is compatible with the safe operation of NCRA's owned and used railroad rights-of-way and with the current rail capacity needs and future rail capacity expansions envisioned for those rights-of-way.

Federal and State Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel (2000)

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) adopted a policy entitled, *Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach*, which provides direction for States and local agencies involved in improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

California Blueprint for Bicycling and Walking (2002)

The *California Blueprint for Bicycling and Walking* report, prepared by Caltrans in 2002, sets goals towards increasing bicycling and walking trips by 50 percent, decreasing bicycle and pedestrian fatality rates by 50 percent by 2010, and increasing funding for bicycle and pedestrian-related programs. The report influences the integration of non-motorized transportation in transportation planning by emphasizing the fact that the maximization of "opportunities for bicycling and walking, shifts the focus from safely moving the maximum number of passenger vehicles to safely moving the maximum number of people."

California Complete Streets Act (2008)

AB 1358 (Leno), the California Complete Streets Act, was adopted in 2008. The Complete Streets Act requires that the “legislative body of a city or county, upon any substantive revision of the circulation element of the general plan, modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, defined to include motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation, in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan. By requiring new duties of local officials, this bill would impose a state mandated local program.”

California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006)

Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations and market mechanisms that will ultimately reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020 and to 20% of 1990 levels by the year 2050. Increasing trips made by foot and by bicycle and decreasing trips made by motorized vehicles reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (2008)

California Senate Bill (SB) 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, is the first bill to link transportation and land use planning with global warming. SB 375, which is part of AB 32's implementation strategy, aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by discouraging sprawl development, fostering land use patterns that reduce the need to drive, and by promoting more alternative transportation options. The bill directs that housing planning be coordinated and integrated with Regional Transportation Plans.

On August 13, 2008, the Senate amended the bill so that it applies only to federally-designated metropolitan planning areas, thus eliminating some small counties. As such, the bill only requires the 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in California to prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in their respective regions and demonstrate the ability for the region to attain ARB's targets.

California Transportation Plan 2025 (2006) & 2030 Addendum (2007)

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is the State's long-range transportation plan. The plan has a vision of “The 3 E's of Sustainability”:

California has a safe, sustainable, world-class transportation system that provides for the mobility and accessibility of people, goods, services, and information through an integrated, multimodal network that is developed through collaboration and achieves a Prosperous Economy, a Quality Environment, and Social Equity.

The current CTP 2025 is now being updated for a 2035 planning horizon. The CTP 2035 “addresses transportation as a focal point for sustainability and quality of life.” It is slated to be approved in September 2010.

Caltrans Deputy Directive 64-R1 (2008)

Effective October 2008, Caltrans revised Deputy Directive 64 (DD-64-R1), entitled “Complete Streets – Integrating the Transportation System.” DD-64-R1 explicitly embraces Complete Streets as the policy covering all phases of state highway projects, ensuring that Caltrans routinely plans, programs, designs, constructs, operates and maintains the entire right-of-way to enable safe access for all users.

Caltrans Director’s Policy 22 (2001)

In November 2001, Caltrans adopted a policy on *Context Sensitive Solutions* (Director’s Policy No. 22) to support an approach towards managing the transportation system by balancing transportation needs with community goals. The policy will ensure accommodation of community goals for non-motorized transportation needs in the transportation planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations processes.

Caltrans Highway Design Manual (2006)

Caltrans Highway Design Manual - Chapter 1000, ‘Bikeway Planning and Design’ discusses minimum planning and design criteria for bikeway facilities. This chapter defines bikeway facility types (Class I, II, and III), bikeway facility selection applications, and design criteria for bikeways and multipurpose trails.

Caltrans Project Development Procedures Manual (1999)

Caltrans Project Development Procedures Manual - Chapter 31, ‘Nonmotorized Transportation Facilities’ outlines pertinent statutory requirements, planning policies, and implementing procedures regarding nonmotorized transportation facilities. The manual discusses existing nonmotorized routes severed by freeways, new corridors where nonmotorized facilities do not exist, cooperative and state projects, nonmotorized planning and design guidelines, and project approvals.

Completing the California Coastal Trail (2003)

Completing the California Coastal Trail, prepared by the State Coastal Conservancy, analyzes opportunities and constraints associated with the State’s objective to complete a continuous public multi-use trail along the California coastline. The study assesses land acquisition and trail construction costs, describes trail development challenges including private ownership and public recreational access, and provides recommendations for creating a coordinated signing program and for implementing coastal trail projects.

Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (1999)

The *Guide for the Development of Bicycle facilities*, prepared by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), provides information to help accommodate bicycle traffic in most riding environments. The document provides an overview of planning considerations for bicycles; describes the various bicycle facilities types; presents design guidelines to follow when constructing, improving, or designing highways and bicycle facilities; and provides recommendations for the operation and maintenance of bicycle facilities.

Main Streets: Flexibility in Design and Operation (2005)

Main Streets: Flexibility in Design and Operation was prepared by Caltrans to identify Context Sensitive Solutions and Livable Community concepts that can assist communities and Caltrans in balancing community values with transportation concerns for safe and efficient operations for all users. The booklet discusses traffic calming measures that may be used in the planning and design of community main streets on state highways.

Rails with Trails: Lessons Learned (2002)

The *Rails with Trails: Lessons Learned* report was prepared for the USDOT for the purpose of examining safety, design, and liability issues associated with the development of shared-use paths and other trails within or adjacent to active railroad rights-of-way. The report explores lessons learned from the experience of completed rails-with-trails and suggests practices to enhance safety and security for railroads and trail users

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY INPUT

The community is the largest active transportation stakeholder. As a result, the community’s input was sought in order to construct a well-rounded Regional Trails Master plan. This input is presented in a separate chapter, to highlight the community’s active transportation system vision and priorities.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

A series of community workshops were held to solicit input for the 2010 Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan. The workshops were held at the Wharfinger Building in Eureka, the Monday Club in Fortuna and Azalea Hall in McKinleyville prior to the draft plan release.



The community workshop format consisted of two presentations and two participant exercises. The first presentation provided an overview of the plan purpose, content and methods used to collect plan data. The second presentation reviewed the concept of a Humboldt County active transportation system, and trail classification and development guidelines. For the workshop exercises, participants were asked to provide an active transportation system or trail vision and participate in a trail development fund prioritization exercise. The workshop closed with small group discussions, a show of hands survey, and a description of next steps in the planning process.

Public Service Announcements (PSA) were distributed to local print and radio media, community based organizations and advocacy groups, stakeholders, and agency staff. The PSAs identified workshop locations, dates and times, and contact information. Community members that could not attend the meetings, but wished to provide Regional Trails Master Plan input, were able to submit written comments (see Appendix A) via email or the regular mail service.



The following workshop goals guided community workshop format development:

- To provide an understanding of the 2010 Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan content;
- To clarify the criteria being used to delineate and classify Humboldt County trails;
- To develop an active transportation system community vision; and
- To understand how the community would prioritize trail development funds.



It is important to note that the information in this chapter represents the views of the Humboldt County residents that submitted written comments and attended the community workshops and not necessarily the views of all Humboldt County residents. It can be assumed that the workshop attendees comprise residents with a great interest in the development of an active transportation system. Although the input received is not representative of the overall population, it does provide valuable insights and is worth considering with respect to trail development funding priorities at both a regional and local level.

Visualization Exercise

For the visualization exercise, participants were asked to provide an active transportation system or trails vision that focused on: 1) the areas of the community connected by active transportation facilities, 2) the desired types of facilities to include in the active transportation system and 3) the systems users. Workshop participants were given a few minutes to develop a vision and then asked to write their vision on one to three, five by three inch sticky notes, and to post the notes at a designated location.

The sticky notes were grouped into categories in order to provide a visualization summary as part of the workshop. It is interesting to note that the majority of the visualization comments from all three workshops pertained to multipurpose trail connectivity between communities.

The following is a summary of the community's Humboldt County active transportation system vision. Appendix A contains a complete list of the comments received at the community workshops.



Active Transportation System Vision

The active transportation system is envisioned as a complete and seamless network of trails throughout and between all Humboldt County communities. The trails would be a combination of contextually appropriate facilities that are well maintained thus providing incentives to utilize non-motorized transportation. Multipurpose trails and Class I bike paths would provide regional connectivity between communities as far north as Trinidad and as far south as Rio Dell. The multipurpose trails and bike paths would be separated from the road network, providing safe and convenient access for a variety of people (e.g., old, young, urban, and rural) and users (e.g. walkers, bicyclists, runners, equestrians). Trail connections would also be established within communities and to adjoining recreational facilities and destinations.

Well established local trail networks between neighborhoods and community centers would provide community connectivity. The local trail connections within communities would be a combination of footpaths, bicycle facilities, and multipurpose trails. Community trails would link open space corridors and provide safe access to transit stops.

To support users, thus making trails inviting, support facilities would include covered bike parking, bathrooms with changing tables, night lighting, picnic tables and benches, exercise stations, and directional or way finding signs indicating “best routes”. Where appropriate and applicable, it was envisioned that trails could be located adjacent to shops, lodging and restaurants.

Prioritization Exercise

For the workshop prioritization exercise, participants were asked to indicate their trail preference financially using Humboldt Trails Bucks. The prioritization exercise included the use of Humboldt Trails Bucks in order to obtain quantitative data and provide workshop participants with something tangible to express their trails preference. A comprehensive understanding of the community’s desires for an active transportation system is achieved by juxtaposing the qualitative vision and quantitative prioritization data.

The prioritization exercise began with an explanation of the exercise, an overview of what the Humboldt Trails Bucks represented, and instructions about completing the exercise. The Humboldt Trails Bucks were distributed to and spent by participants at two prioritization stations. Participants were informed that 1) the Humboldt Trails Bucks represented funds specifically allocated for trail development, operations and maintenance and not monies allocated for other forms of transportation (e.g., roads and highways), and 2) that Humboldt Trails Bucks distributed at prioritization two should not be spent at prioritization one.



At the first prioritization station participants were given \$400 Humboldt Trails Bucks each and asked to distribute the funds between local (i.e., trails within communities) and regional trails (i.e., trails between communities). At the second prioritization station participants were given \$800 Humboldt Trails Bucks each and asked to distribute the funds between Class I bike paths, Class II bike lanes, Class III bike routes, and multipurpose trails.



Of the \$28,400 Humboldt Trails Bucks distributed at the three community workshops, workshop participants indicated a priority for regional and multipurpose trails. A total of \$19,600 or 69 percent of the funds distributed were spent on regional trail development, as opposed to \$8,800 on local trail development. The results of the regional versus local trail development exercise coincide with the visualization comments received (i.e., the majority of the visualization comments pertained to developing trails that connect communities, as opposed to developing trail connections within communities).

A total of \$62,400 was spent on Class I, Class II, Class III and multipurpose trail development at all three workshops; \$40,200 or 64 percent of the funds distributed were spent on multipurpose trail development, \$13,700 or 22 percent was spent on Class I bike path development, \$5,400 or nine percent was spent on Class II bike lane development, and \$3,100 or five percent was spent on Class III bike route development. The results indicate that although participants believe all four facility types are a necessary component of an active transportation system, they would prefer the majority of trail development and maintenance dollars be spent on multipurpose and Class I facilities. As to be expected, the multipurpose and Class I facility prioritization preferences coincide with the visualization comments received.

Participants desire a network of safe, multipurpose and Class I facilities connecting communities, which translates into a network of trails separated from the road network. Table one on the next page provides details on the total amount and breakdown of Humboldt Trail Bucks spent at each workshop.



Table 1: Prioritization Exercise Results

	EUREKA		FORTUNA		MCKINLEYVILLE		TOTAL	
Geographic Prioritization Station								
Total Trail Bucks	\$ 10,000.00	100%	\$ 9,200.00	100 %	\$ 9,200.00	100 %	\$28,400.00	100%
Regional Trails	\$ 6,400.00	64.0 %	\$ 6,100.00	66.3 %	\$ 7,100.0	77.2 %	\$19,600.00	69.0%
Local Trails	\$ 3,600.00	36.0 %	\$ 3,100.00	33.7 %	\$ 2,100.0	22.8 %	\$8,800.00	31.0%
Trail Type Prioritization Station								
Total Trail Bucks	\$ 24,800.00	100%	\$ 19,200.00	100 %	\$ 18,400.00	100 %	\$62,400.00	100%
Class I (Bike Path)	\$ 8,700.00	35.1 %	\$ 2,500.00	13.0 %	\$ 2,500.00	13.6 %	\$13,700.00	22%
Class II (Bike Lane)	\$ 2,500.00	10.1 %	\$ 1,300.00	6.8 %	\$ 1,600.00	8.7 %	\$5,400.00	9%
Class III (Bike Route)	\$ 1,500.00	6.0 %	\$ 600.00	3.1 %	\$ 1,000.00	5.4 %	\$3,100.00	5%
Multipurpose	\$ 12,100.00	48.8 %	\$ 14,800.00	77.1 %	\$ 13,300.00	72.3 %	\$40,200.00	64%

SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT COUNTY FOCUS GROUP

In addition to the workshops described in the prior section, a Southern Humboldt County focus group was assembled in Garberville to gather Regional Trails Master Plan input. Southern Humboldt County is a geographically-isolated region that contains numerous rural communities separated by narrow two-lane county roads and/or State highways. The focus group allowed for facilitated dialog surrounding active transportation facility connectivity within and between Southern Humboldt communities. Members of the Southern Humboldt Working Together and Southern Humboldt Community Park assisted with finding a meeting location and recruiting focus group participants.

The focus group included two presentations and two exercises. The first presentation provided an overview of the plan purpose and content and the second presentation reviewed trail classification and development guidelines. For the workshop exercises, participants were asked to provide a trail vision and participate in identifying priority trail connections within and between Southern Humboldt communities.

Visualization Exercise

The visualization exercise followed the same format as in the community workshops visualization exercise discussed above. Participants were asked to provide an active transportation system or trails vision that focused on: 1) the areas of the community connected by active transportation facilities, 2) the desired types of facilities to include in the active transportation system and 3) the systems users. Workshop participants were given a few minutes to develop a vision and then asked to write their vision on one to three, five by three inch sticky notes, and to post the notes at a designated location.

The majority of the focus group visualization comments pertained to trail connectivity between communities, which coincides with the visualization comments from the community workshops. Below is a summary of the trails or active transportation system vision. Appendix A contains a complete list of focus group and community workshop visualization comments.

Active Transportation System Vision

The focus group envisions a safe and interconnected Southern Humboldt active transportation system. A combination of appealing, accessible and contextually appropriate off-road trails and on-street bike facilities would allow people of all ages, abilities, and financial means safe travel between communities. Multipurpose and developed/improved trails would provide access from Garberville to recreational opportunities at the Southern Humboldt Community Park, South Fork of the Eel River and Benbow. Class I bike paths, Class II bike lanes and Class III bike routes would either separate or designate bicycle travel along county roads and highways providing regional connectivity between communities (e.g., Avenue of the Giants communities, Redway, Garberville, and Benbow). Trail connections would also be established within communities, such as lower Redway (near the Eel River) to upper Redway. Southern Humboldt County residents desire a safe and accessible active transportation system that enables them to live actively and economically.

Trail Identification and Prioritization Exercise

For the trail identification and prioritization exercise, participants were given a worksheet and asked to describe trail connections needed between and within communities. The participants were then given four aerial maps to visually illustrate priority trail routes. The maps covered four southern Humboldt geographic areas: 1) Avenue of the Giants, 2) Redway to Garberville, 3) Garberville to the Southern Humboldt Community Park, and 4) Southern Humboldt Community Park to Benbow Lake State Recreation Area. The aerial maps identified streets, communities, parks and County of Humboldt proposed bikeway projects. Participants were asked to work in small groups and illustrate on the maps priority trail alignments and types (i.e., Class I bike path,



Class II bike lane, Class III bike route, multipurpose trail and developed/ improved trail). The participants identified four priority areas for trail development: 1) the southern terminus of Avenue of the Giants / SR 254 to Redway Rive exit, 2) from Garberville to Redway, 2) from Garberville to the Southern Humboldt Community Park, and 4) improved facilities in the Benbow Lake State Recreation Area.

At the Avenue of the Giants/SR 254 southern terminus, participants identified the need for a Class I bike path or multipurpose trail separated from US Highway 101 connecting to the Redwood Drive / US Highway 101 exit to Redway.

For the Redway to Garberville area, participants identified the need for a Class I bike path or Class II bike lanes to connect Redway and Garberville along Redwood Drive. Additionally, a Class I bike path that routes above the bluffs to the US Highway 101 right-of-way was identified to be an alternative to Redwood Drive.

For the Garberville to the Southern Humboldt Community Park area, participants identified several alignments along Sprowel Creek Road and Camp Kimtu Road. The trail types described for these multiple alignments were mostly shared-use, natural-surfaced trails.

For the Southern Humboldt Community Park to Benbow Lake State Recreation Area area, participants identified the need to improve the existing footpath to developed/improved standards. Currently the existing path only accommodates hikers, yet residents desire to bike and possibly ride horses on this trail.

It should also be noted that participants generally agreed that a Class III bike route along the Avenue/SR 254 is sufficient. However, they believed that certain high traffic and narrow shoulders sections should be considered for Class I bike paths and/or Class II bike lanes to increase bicycle user safety.

The trail identification exercise emphasized that participants desire a continuous network of off-street and on-street trail system facilities for the four priority areas mentioned above.

COMMUNITY PROVIDED TRAIL CANDIDATES

Trail candidate projects were identified by workshop and focus group participants through the visualization exercise and small group table discussions. The trail candidate projects are facilities participants would like to see constructed in the near future. The below table contains the list of community identified trail candidate projects organized by jurisdiction.

Table 2: Community Provided Trail Candidates

City of Eureka
Develop Class II bike lanes on H and I Streets
Construct footpaths at Myrtle, west and north of the County Office of Education
Develop foot and bike paths all thru town
Develop trails connecting gulches and greenways
Develop a multi-use trail connecting Eureka Waterfront with Henderson Center
Provide access for Worthington School to Myrtle off Harris
Develop more signage and space for bicyclists on Walnut, Ridgewood and Elk River Road
City of Ferndale
Develop a sidewalk or trail that continues along Bluff Street to Rose Avenue
City of Fortuna
Develop a pedestrian friendly trail from Downtown to South Fortuna Boulevard
City of Trinidad
Beach access trails
Developed/improved trails connecting neighborhoods
Trail from Indian Beach up Parker Creek to Scenic Drive
County of Humboldt
Complete the Mid-Town Trail through Mill Creek Falls (McKinleyville)
Multi-use trail from Alton to Swains Flat
Develop a bicycle and hiking path from Honeydew to Petrolia
Develop a multi-use trail from McKinleyville to Fieldbrook (Murray Road to Fieldbrook Road)
Mountain biking trail in the Southern Humboldt Community Park
Develop/Improved trails connecting southern Humboldt communities - similar to trails in Salmon Creek
Trail along the South Fork of the Eel River
Class I, II, III facilities on residential roadways in Garberville, Redway, Phillipsville, and Miranda
Developed/Improved trail from lower Redway -Eel River to Upper Redway

Trails connecting topographically adjacent communities that are not connected by roadways (e.g., Salmon Creek and Briceland)
Multipurpose trail from Garberville to the Southern Humboldt Community Park and eventually connecting Kimtu and Benbow
Class II bike lanes along Shelter Cove Road
Trail on old Railroad grade in Westhaven
Developed/Improved trail separate, but adjacent to Westhaven Drive
Remove bridge at Luffenholtz and build a bike/hike/horse bridge that isn't a barrier to salmon and trout
Multipurpose trail from Garberville to the Southern Humboldt Community Park and eventually connecting Kimtu and Benbow
Developed/Improved trails connecting McKinleyville neighborhoods to key destinations
Multiple Jurisdictions
Develop a Class I bike path between the cities of Eureka and Arcata, preferably railbanked on the railroad right-of-way
Develop trails separated from roads that connect Eureka, the College of the Redwoods, Fortuna, and Rio Dell, preferably utilizing the railroad right-of-way and with equestrian access
Develop a multi-use trail system that compliments the railroad (proposed excursion train around Humboldt Bay) between Scotia and Humboldt Bay
Develop Class I bike paths connecting the cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Trinidad and the community of McKinleyville
Develop a multi-use trail connecting Arcata and Manila, using the small existing road between Humboldt Bay and Route 255, then constructing part of it on the levee/railroad right-of-way surrounding the bay
Develop a Class I bike path on the Annie and Mary corridor, between the cities of Blue Lake and Arcata
Route the Annie and Mary Rail-Trail through Fieldbrook to connect to the Hammond Trail
Make improvements to North Bank Road to allow safe bicycle and pedestrian access
Develop a trail, separated from US 101, between Central Avenue/North Bank Road to Valley West
Extend the Hammond Trail north to Trinidad (Patricks Point)
Extend the coastal trail across Little River and up Scenic Drive, to Stagecoach Road and Patricks Point Drive
Construct a trail and bridge over Little River (from Crannel to South Scenic Drive)
Develop a multi-use trail that connects Westhaven (on east side of freeway) to the CA Coastal Trail and beaches
Develop a multi-use trail parallel to / within the Westhaven Drive right-of-way
Pursue cooperative agreements with Green Diamond and Humboldt Redwood Company for recreation access to fishing and swimming locations
Develop a regional bike route from Orick to Piercy

Formalize the trail connecting Highland to Golf Course Road
Develop a trail from Humboldt Hill to Elk River
More accessible trails that link Eureka to outlying communities of Freshwater, Elk River, Humboldt Hill, and Cutten
Construct a Class I bike path along Highway 36, with safe crossings at towns
Develop a Class I bike path along the railroad right-of-way from Alton to Carlotta
Develop a Class I bike path or multipurpose trail along the Eel River levee from Riverwalk area to Alton
Develop a multi-use trail from Rio Dell to Alton
Improve and open old logging roads, such as along Highway 36
Connect Ferndale and Fortuna, via trail from Fernbridge south along the river to the Riverlodge
Develop connections to Ferndale that does not involve riding across Fernbridge
Develop a seasonal bridge for bicycles/pedestrians across the Eel River
Develop multi-use trails, with equestrian access, that link Fortuna and the Headwaters Forest
Develop equestrian trails with large parking areas for trailers and other amenities
Develop an equestrian trail from Fortuna to Eureka
Develop a multi-use trail linking Table Bluff to Tompkins Hill, possibly following railroad right-of-way (except for tunnel)
Develop a trail along Avenue of the Giants
Continue the Lost Coast trail in the King Range north, with equestrian access
Develop a multi-use trail along Avenue of the Giants that connects to Humboldt Redwood State Parks on Honeydew Road to Albee and Cuneo creek
Develop a multi-use trail on the west side of SR 255, between Peninsula Road and Lupin Avenue to the north
Trail between Trinidad and Westhaven, either on old railroad grade, scenic drive, or Westhaven road
Trail connecting McKinleyville to Fieldbrook
Trail connecting Trinidad to Redwood National Park
Trail connecting Trinidad to Big Lagoon either on Stage Coach Road, Paricks Point Drive, or US Highway 101
Connect Arcata to McKinleyville from New Mad River Bridge to west side frontage to cantilver on North Bank Road exit overpass to Turner and then Central Road
Pedestrian/bike/horse cross-over between Trinidad and Westhaven
Class II Bike Lane on State Route 299
Cantilever crossing on Little River Bridge

CONCLUSION

Through a show of hands survey, the majority of workshop participants expressed an interest in doing volunteer work to assist with the development or maintenance of trails, and a willingness to financially support active transportation system development. Although it can be argued that participants are trail and bicycle enthusiasts, it can also be argued that additional research should be conducted to discern if there is enough community support to pursue alternative revenue streams for the construction and maintenance of the active transportation system.

Both the qualitative and quantitative comments indicate a community preference towards regional multipurpose trails that connect Humboldt County communities. Multipurpose trails are preferred because they accommodate a wide variety of users and are separated from the road network, which provides a measure of safety. However, both workshop and focus group participants also expressed the desire for local connectivity, or connectivity within communities, through a variety of facility types. The overarching community message was the desire and overwhelming support for the development of an active transportation system for recreational, commuting and health purposes.

This page is intentionally left blank.