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Humboldt County Rural Transportation & Access Partnership (RTAP)

Community-Driven, County-Supported Transportation Projects

Program Overview

The RTAP program was created to help rural communities overcome transportation challenges and improve access to goods, services, employment, education and/or recreation via all modes of surface transportation. RTAP is a matching program through Humboldt County Department of Public Works to help address unfunded transportation needs through community partnership. The types of projects eligible for the program could include street/road improvements, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, enhancement of sites for access to public or community transportation services, and so forth, in County jurisdiction. A 'match' provided by residents or community organizations could potentially encompass a range of options including materials, funding, services and labor, and would depend on the context for each project and how much support (most often in the form of staff and equipment time) the County has available to see the project through to completion.

The RTAP program works in several phases, starting with an application submitted by a community organization or resident/s. If the application is accepted, a full proposal will be solicited by County staff. Each year, one to a small number of priority projects meeting RTAP criteria will be selected for implementation, depending on available County support. The program will be designed to allow a flexible approach tailored to the needs of each community and project and existing or available resources.



PHOTO: BOB WICK, BLM

Eligibility

Any individual or group of County residents, property owners, Tribes, Community Service Districts, or non-profit organizations may apply. Proposed projects must:

- Address a significant, demonstrable transportation need.
- Be in County jurisdiction and 'right-of-way' or 'right-of-entry' or have willing landowners if adjacent lands are involved.
- Have substantive community support.
- And, preference will be given to projects that:
 1. Support priorities in local and/or regional plans;
 2. Serve communities with fewer transportation options (such as those identified in the Humboldt County Transportation Disadvantaged Populations Report, including children, elderly, low-income, minority and mobility-challenged populations);
 3. Improve community access to goods, services, employment, education, and/or recreation;
 4. Increase safety and advance 'complete streets' for all modes of transportation; and
 5. Enhance environmental, social, economic or other objectives.

The following 'Guide', Application and Proposal forms are all designed to address a wide variety of potential project types. Consequently, some questions and background information will not be applicable to some projects. Information about the program, including the Application and Proposal forms are available at <http://co.humboldt.ca.us/pubworks/>. For more information contact RoadsDispatch@co.humboldt.ca.us or call (707) 445-7205

Funding to develop the RTAP was provided by the Caltrans Environmental Justice program to DPW and Redwood Community Action Agency.

RTAP is a matching program through Humboldt County Department of Public Works to help address unfunded transportation needs through community partnership.

RTAP Application & Proposal Guide

PROCESS

Step 1: Submit an initial **Application** to County Department of Public Works (DPW) at 1106 Second Street, Eureka, CA 95501 attn: RTAP application. Contact the Public Works Land Use Division (707) 445-7205 to schedule a meeting to discuss the project concept. If DPW staff determines the project application is a good fit with the RTAP criteria and invites a project proposal, proceed to the next step. If DPW staff note that the project application needs refinement, address their documented concerns and submit the project applicant/s response in writing. If the project concept submitted in the Application is determined to be an inappropriate fit, DPW staff will notify applicant in writing that the concept does not meet program requirements.

Step 2: Complete and submit **RTAP Project Proposal** and supporting materials for evaluation.

Step 3: DPW staff will evaluate the proposal and reply to the

project contact within six weeks to share results or ask for more information.

Step 4: If the proposed project is selected for award by the Board of Supervisors (BOS), the project applicant/s will enter into an agreement with DPW and project scheduling can commence as matching resources are confirmed to be sufficient and DPW resources are available. Matching funds provided by the project applicant/s will be held in a trust account by DPW. Commitments of materials, services, easement donations and other community matching resources will need to be documented in writing.

If a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis by County staff indicates the project requires an Environmental Impact Report, that effort will need to be funded by the project applicant/s. If the project is not awarded, applicants will either be encouraged to improve low-ranking components and resubmit, or will otherwise be notified that the proposed project is not a good fit for the RTAP program.



Information about the program, including the application and proposal forms, is available at <http://co.humboldt.ca.us/pubworks/>

STEP I: APPLICATION

To be completed by program applicant/s (attached, include another page if additional space for responses is necessary)

Location & Map: A basic description of the proposed project area and site, project length, and so forth; attach a map with the project area clearly delineated.

Intended Project Outcomes: Describe the expected improvements, such as safer access for pedestrians/bicycles; reduced drive time, speed or wear and tear on vehicles; improved access to public transportation services; and so forth. This is important to help DPW engineers ensure that the proposed project will truly achieve the intended outcomes.

Project Need: Describe how the proposed project will serve community needs; note how needs are documented or well known. Provide specific description of the tools used to assess the project needs. Include detail about the number of people directly served or services with improved access. Refer to Step 2, #3, below.

Project Description: Describe the proposed improvements.

Contact & Team: List the primary contact person, other project teammates and their contact information. While individuals can apply, it is encouraged that the applicant be some type of community organization or special district that has some experience in seeing projects that may take more than a year or two through to completion (see project case studies for examples of community-driven projects that have taken a number of years to take from vision to completion).

DPW Staff Contact: Provide the name of the DPW staff member who has been consulted about the project.

Other Agency Contacts: Provide name/s and contact information for representatives of other project-related agencies that have been consulted (for instance Tribal government, Caltrans, State or National Parks, Community Services District, or Volunteer Fire Department).

Neighborhood Support: Since RTAP is a program to support community-driven projects, it will be necessary to show significant neighborhood support. The standard for documenting support is the County's 'Speed Hump' installation policy (https://co.humboldt.ca.us/pubworks/Speed_Hump_Policy.pdf), where a petition must be signed in support of the proposed project by legal residents of at least 66% of the residential dwelling units or owners of businesses on the street/road and adjacent streets/

roads that may be impacted as determined by the Department of Public Works. If, at the application phase, more consultation with DPW staff is necessary about project design – because the project is complex or non-standard and necessitates more steps – before seeking initial public support, indicate the types of public support that currently exist and the planned means to obtain documentation of this support.

County Right-of-Way: If the project is not located completely within County ownership (see Step 2, #A, below), along an existing road or other facility, the applicant/s will need to secure and provide documentation of commitments to donate or sell easements or title from affected landowners. Letter/s of willingness to donate or sell easement/s should accompany the application, based on the template provided in Appendix A.

Supporting Local/Regional Plans: The project should either be listed in a planning document (such as the Regional Transportation Plan, Pedestrian Plan or Bicycle Plan by Humboldt County Association of Governments, hcaog.net) or should help to achieve the goals laid out in these or other community planning documents such as the General Plan, Economic Development Plan, Transit Plan, and so forth. A list of related plans – and websites if they are available online – are provided below in Step 2, #5.

Involving Multiple Jurisdictions: If the project will involve other federal, tribal, state or local government agencies – or other County departments such as Community Development, Environmental Health or Public Health – provide a summary of their role/s or involvement and communications about the proposed project. Local government entities include Cities, Community Services, School and Water Districts, and Fire Departments.

Involving Community Groups: If the project involves community stakeholder organizations (such as road associations, non-profit organizations, existing community collaboratives and watershed groups), list and provide a brief description of their involvement and support.

Opportunities & Challenges: List project assets (such as matching funds/materials/services or willing landowners) and challenges (such as uncommunicative landowners, costs, drainage problems, environmental impacts, problematic timing, etc...).

While individuals can apply, it is encouraged that the applicant be some type of community organization or special district that has some experience implementing projects.

STEP 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL

To be completed by project applicant/s (form attached)

The following serves as a guide to help applicants develop successful proposals, assuming fundamental information in the Application is already addressed – if information in the Application needs to be updated at the time the Proposal is submitted, applicants should submit an updated Application form.

The Proposal has two sections that determine:

1. Feasibility Score: if the project is ready to partner with the RTAP program ('make or break' criteria):

- Two categories have a 10-point maximum each, for a total of 20 possible points. If evaluation of these criteria results in:

14-20 points = Proceed to project evaluation for project ranking.

6-13 points = Evaluate project criteria and determine whether to recommend the project for other funding or additional support.

5 points or less = not recommended to proceed with RTAP program; with a zero in either category, evaluation cannot proceed.

2. Project Score: 10 categories have a 10 point maximum each, for a total of 100 possible points designed to determine:

- If the project is well designed to meet the needs of the community; and
- If the project is aligned with the goals of the RTAP program in the program description at the beginning of this document.

Feasibility Score

A. County Right-of-Way (ROW)

- Determine whether the project is in the County ROW or if the project sponsors have commitments to sell or donate necessary ROW. In many cases, the County owns the road ROW between fencelines, but this is not always a good indicator, nor are fence-lines always accurate reflections of the location of the Right-of-Way easements. Consult DPW staff about ROW ownership in the project area. It may help to email photos of the project area if it is distant from Eureka for initial input from DPW.

- The RTAP program is community-driven and -oriented. If there is significant opposition to the project by any property-owners whose cooperation is necessary, or eminent domain is required to complete the project, it is not appropriate for the RTAP program.

B. Funding - Cash Match

- The RTAP program is designed to be a partnership and collaboration between community partners and the County, specifically to expedite implementation of transportation infrastructure projects that may not receive federal, state or county funding for many years, but that are important to the local community.
- For projects awarded County support, the County is committed to providing what it can at the time the project is 'programmed' into the Department's implementation schedule, which depends on annual funding levels, but will primarily be limited to staff time and equipment time. County resources are limited and applicants must demonstrate that the project has the necessary community resources to proceed without major cash contributions from the County.
- Use the format of the sample project budget provided in Appendix B to indicate estimated costs for project labor, materials and equipment. Indicate source/s of funding or in-kind (donated) services or materials and what is needed from the County for project completion.



The RTAP program is designed to be a partnership and collaboration between community partners and the County.

Project Score

1. Community/neighborhood support

Purpose: Determine whether the project has opposition that will impede implementation.

See Step 1, above – much of this work would already be documented in the Application. Use the County Speed Hump Policy: https://co.humboldt.ca.us/pubworks/Speed_Hump_Policy.pdf. Obtaining documentation of support may be a challenge in rural areas due to heightened privacy issues, skepticism of partnership with government, or concern about providing a signature. Because the intent of the program is to provide partnership to community-driven projects, it will be critical to demonstrate majority support.

2. Serving Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations

Purpose: Ensure that communities which are currently underserved or that have fewer resources have opportunities to utilize the RTAP program.

Review maps of transportation disadvantage – illustrating high concentrations of overlapping carless households, low-income households, disabled, youth, seniors and minorities. Use the County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) website (<http://gis.co.humboldt.ca.us/>) and click on the RTAP link to determine what level of 'transportation-disadvantage' is experienced in the project area (very low, low, medium, high or very high) and how the project will serve one or more disadvantaged populations, particularly at a local level.



3. Demonstrate the community's transportation needs

Purpose: Evaluate both qualitative and quantitative information regarding how this project addresses the community's particular need for improved access or safety.

Project applicants should select one or more of the following recommended standard tools, as appropriate, for evaluating and documenting project need. Estimate and try to demonstrate the actual numbers of those who will be served. Applications with clear documentation of need will rank highest.

Many resources are available to help demonstrate the need for access and/or safety improvements. Depending on the type and location of the project, the applicant may want to address safety, walking or bicycling conditions, Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility, or access to services. Many of the tools listed below may require some professional assistance to formally complete the process. However, they provide good background on the type of information that should be gathered to demonstrate the specific transportation needs in the project area.

- **Roadway Safety:** A complete roadway safety audit may require professional assistance, but the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides background on the type of information that should be gathered to demonstrate the roadway safety needs of a particular community: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rsa/>.
- **Pedestrian Safety:** The Pedestrian Road Safety Audit Guidelines and Prompt Lists document provides detailed guidelines on how to evaluate pedestrian conditions. Pages 103-109 in Appendix A provide a list of questions to address when evaluating a roadway: <http://drusilla.hsra.unc.edu/cms/downloads/PedRSA.reduced.pdf> (PDF). Additional pedestrian audits, including ones specifically for transit, schools, and accessibility, can be found at www.walkinginfo.org: <http://www.walkinginfo.org/problems/audits.cfm>. A helpful overall guide to improving pedestrian safety is the Resident's Guide for Creating Safe and Walkable Communities <http://drusilla.hsra.unc.edu/cms/downloads/residentsguide.pdf>.
- **School Site Safety:** A School Site Assessment can be used to evaluate the pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety conditions near a school. Sample forms can be found from states of New Mexico and Florida: http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/upload/images/Safe_Routes_to_School/All3Assessments.pdf (PDF), http://drusilla.hsra.unc.edu/cms/downloads/Florida_School%20Site%20Assessment.pdf (PDF).

Many resources are available to help demonstrate the need for access and/or safety improvements.

- *Bicycle Safety*: There are a number of tools available from www.bicyclinginfo.org for measuring bicycling conditions, including audits, checklists, Level of Service (LOS), and other scores and indices: <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/problems/concerns.cfm>.
- *Safe Communities*: The National Highway Safety Administration has developed a series of resources in their Safe Communities Program to help guide concerned individuals and community groups who are committed to reducing the motor vehicle injury problem in their community. Their primer, *Safe Communities: The First Six Months*, is a guide intended to help get the process started and assist communities in organizing the effort to prevent and reduce injuries at the local level: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.404f848a3e46fc67ba8e5f8dcba046a0/.
- If the project does not relate to any of the listed tools for assessing need, discuss the appropriate tool or method with DPW staff.

4. Match project outcomes to community need

Purpose: *Evaluate whether the specific project design will in fact substantially solve the challenges and meet the need presented in the needs statement.*

The project description should clearly outline how the intended project outcomes meet needs identified in the Application and above. Be as specific as possible in the description of how the recommended project design addresses community need/s.

5. Establish relationship to relevant transportation, land use, economic development, and/or other plans in the project area

Purpose: *Determine whether there has been long-term public discourse about and support for the project or the goals of the project.*

Proposed projects identified as a priority in community planning documents will rank highest, followed by those mentioned as future considerations and by those that generally meet established goals. If a project is not listed in any planning documents, the applicant must clearly demonstrate how the project is consistent with documented community goals. Examples of community planning documents that address transportation needs include the most current versions of:

- Humboldt County Regional Transportation Plan, Bicycle Plan, Pedestrian Plan and Trail Plan (to be released in 2010) (www.hcaog.net)

- Community Infrastructure & Services Technical Report (2008) (<http://co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/Genplan/Framework/index.htm>)
- Humboldt County General Plan Circulation Element (<http://co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/Genplan/Framework/index.htm>)
- Local Coastal Plans (http://co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/Local_Coastal_Plans/LCP%20PlanIndex.asp)
- Prosperity!, Humboldt County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (www.northcoastprosperity.com/localeconomy/prosperitystrategy) and related reports (www.northcoastprosperity.com/local-economy/workplans)
- Others as appropriate: including localized trail plans, watershed plans, fire plans, and so forth. Please cite.

6. Demonstrate partnerships and community collaboration

Purpose: *Evaluate the extent to which the project is community-driven and designed based on collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders.*

Projects that demonstrate collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders in the project area will receive the highest points. Applicants should clearly outline who is involved and what role they have had and will have in the process. County staff will note whether a potential critical stakeholder is omitted in this description.

Establishing strong collaboration among stakeholders is a key element in project success and County partnership. The resources below provide tools and ideas for how to effectively engage community partners in the proposed transportation project:



PHOTO: LGC

Projects that demonstrate collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders in the project area will receive the highest points.

- The FHWA offers a guide to public involvement techniques for transportation planning: www.fhwa.dot.gov/REPORTS/PITTD/cover.htm
- The FHWA and the FTA also offer the “Planning Assistant,” an online tool that suggests reasonable public involvement techniques for a particular situation based on answers to an electronic questionnaire. www.planning.dot.gov/publicinvolvement/pi_tool/getting-started.asp
- The Process Planner is another online tool, available from a public involvement organization, for choosing public participation methods: www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/ProcessPlanner/Home
- For more general assistance with public involvement processes, the International Association for Public Participation offers a downloadable Public Participation Toolbox with strategies for sharing information, compiling and providing feedback, and bringing people together to address an important issue: http://iap2.affiniscape.com/associations/4748/files/06Dec_Toolbox.pdf

7. Increase safety - reduce crash risk

Purpose: *Determine whether measures in the project design will substantially reduce crash and injury risk.*

Proposed projects will be evaluated on whether they incorporate proven safety measures, when applicable. Guidance for improvements in safety is provided below. When non-standard measures

are used, the applicant should describe why they are the best solution to address the proposed outcomes and document sources of information that indicate such. Reducing the number and severity of crashes in underserved areas is a priority for the RTAP program. The following resources provide well-documented tools that improve safety in specific contexts:

- *Roadway Safety:* The FHWA provides a list of nine proven roadway safety ‘countermeasures’ with detailed guidance documents for each: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/memo071008/>. A website with safety information pertaining specifically to rural roads was recently developed for a rural county in Washington state: www.saferuralroads.com/.
- *Pedestrian Safety:* FHWA’s PEDSAFE, the Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System, provides a variety of online tools for evaluating pedestrian safety and choosing appropriate countermeasures: www.walkinginfo.org/pedsafe.
- *Bicycle Safety:* A Bicycle Countermeasure Selection System is also available online: www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikesafe/.
- *Transit Safety:* The *Pedestrian Safety Guide for Transit Agencies* addresses safety concerns related to transit stops: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped/ped_transguide/
- *Intersection Safety:* The FHWA’s Safety Program offers information about improving intersection safety: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/>.
- *Traffic Calming:* Learn more about implementing community traffic calming measures that can reduce speeds, increase safety, and improve livability: www.transalt.org/resources/streets4people, www.trafficcalming.org, www.ite.org/traffic/.

8. Improve multi-modal access - build ‘complete streets’

Purpose: *Ensure that proposed projects consider all modes of travel and prioritize those that create viable and attractive options for more than just travel by automobile, where appropriate.*

‘Complete streets’ are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a ‘complete’ street. Applicants should specifically outline how the project addresses walking, bicycling and access to transit, if possible and appropriate.



Reducing the number and severity of crashes in underserved areas is a priority for the RTAP program.

- The National Complete Streets Coalition provides fundamentals for understanding what constitutes a complete street, including photos, FAQ, fact sheets on complete streets issues, and other resources: www.completestreets.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/.
- Americans with Disabilities Act Technical Assistance: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/

9. Enhance environmental and human health

Purpose: *Evaluate the extent to which the project aligns with County goals for improved air and water quality and improved options for physical activity.*

Demonstrate how the project enhances environmental or human health. Applicants should include estimates of impact for applicable enhancements. Note, for instance, if the project will:

- Reduce car trips in an area – give an estimate of the reduced automobile trips;
- Remove salmonid migration barriers – explain documented need and recommended solution;
- Reduce impacts to wetlands, salmonid habitat, or other threatened or endangered species habitat (see information resources below);
- Improve stormwater pollution prevention (see information resources below); and/or
- Increase opportunities for physical activity (providing or improving access to active modes of transportation or recreational opportunities) or access to healthy foods (improved access to a market with fresh foods).

Fish passage at road/stream crossings: The North Coast of California is home to many salmonid species that require freshwater streams for spawning. Replacing or retrofitting culverts under stream crossings may greatly improve stream habitat and fish passage.

- National Marine Fisheries Service: <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/hcd/NMFSSCG.PDF> (PDF).
- FishXing software for planning fish passage through culverts: www.stream.fs.fed.us/fishxing/.
- California Department of Fish and Game Stream Habitat Restoration Manual: www.dfg.ca.gov/fish/Resources/HabitatManual.asp.



Threatened and endangered species habitat: Conducting a project within the habitat of a threatened or endangered species may present both an opportunity for habitat enhancement and a challenge for project permitting.

- List of threatened and endangered species in Humboldt County: www.dfg.ca.gov/ospr/spill/nrda/sutyvesant%20DARP/appendix-a.pdf (PDF).
- The California Department of Fish and Game provides resources for environmental review and permitting processes associated with the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and California Environmental Quality Act: www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/.

Road and trail design and maintenance: Planning the project with sediment reduction methods on roads and trails may improve water quality and wetland and stream habitat for aquatic species.

- Pacific Watershed Associates Handbook for Forest and Ranch Roads: www.krisweb.com/biblio/gen_mcrd_weaveretal_1994_handbook.pdf (PDF).
- Rural Roads: A Construction and Maintenance Guide for California Landowners: <http://ceeldorado.ucdavis.edu/files/40828.pdf> (PDF).
- Reducing sediment transport during trail design: www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/NHerosioncontrol.html www.foothill.net/fta/work/maintnotes.html.

Conducting a project within the habitat of a threatened or endangered species may present both an opportunity for habitat enhancement and a challenge for project permitting.

Stormwater management: The project can improve conditions for runoff by reducing impermeable surfaces on the landscape and providing functional drainage systems. Some resources include:

- North Coast Stormwater Coalition: www.humboldtstormwater.com.
- Caltrans Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan guide: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/construc/stormwater/SWPPP_WPCP_PreparationManual_2007.pdf (PDF).
- Street Edge Alternatives Project of the City of Seattle, WA, integrating traffic calming with stormwater runoff management techniques: www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/Drainage_&_Sewer_System/GreenStormwaterInfrastructure/NaturalDrainageProjects/StreetEdgeAlternatives/

10. Evaluate if project facilitates access to services and other key destinations (10a) or improves access along a connecting corridor (10b).

Purpose: *Assess whether the project will help to solve challenges related to rural access to transportation and services.*

The applicant should determine whether the project will predominantly address a travel corridor or an area that provides access to key destinations:

- 10a) Destination Access: if the project is located within three miles of and facilitates improved access to key destinations such as a school, community center, shopping area and/

or service center. Describe which destinations will be have improved access by the proposed project.

- 10b) Connecting Corridor: if the project is located more than three miles from the amenities listed above, describe how the project will improve access along an important corridor.

STEP 3: PROPOSAL EVALUATION

To be completed by DPW staff

DPW staff will score responses to proposal questions and reply to the project contact within 60 days to share results or ask for more information.

Scoring on criteria 1-10:

- 70-100 pts = recommend for consideration. Develop boilerplate agreement for commitments/finances of both parties.
- 50-69 pts = work to improve ranking and resubmit.

STEP 4: PROPOSAL AWARD & AGREEMENT

If an award is made by the BOS, the project applicant/s will enter into an agreement with DPW and project scheduling can commence as DPW resources are available and matching resources are sufficient. If review by County staff indicates the project requires an Environmental Impact Report, that effort will need to be funded by the project applicant/s. If the project is not awarded, applicants will either be encouraged to improve low-ranking components and resubmit, or will otherwise be notified that the proposed project is not a good fit for the RTAP program.



Assess whether the project will help to solve challenges related to rural access to transportation and services.

RTAP Case Studies: Successful, local community-driven transportation projects

Garberville Town Square

The Garberville Town Square project, located at the corner of Church and Locust Streets one block off of Main Street, grew out of a recognized need for a shared civic space for activities, festivals, and the Southern Humboldt farmer's market. A volunteer effort took place over nearly ten years to turn an unpaved de facto parking lot that attracted abandoned vehicles and other problems into an accessible and landscaped public space in downtown. David Dickinson, longtime leader and participant in the effort, notes that the partially completed Square "fits into the overall rural character of the town while creating a centerpiece and springboard for future improvements and renovations to the business district." He notes that when adjacent Church Street is closed, it takes on a lively and vibrant festival-like atmosphere, and that potential future uses could include craft markets, art and music, and town functions among many others. While not a traditional transportation project, this effort is a successful example of a community-driven project that fosters pedestrian activity in Garberville's downtown.

Timeline

- 1999-2000:** A group of residents begins discussing the idea with community members and researching their options for funding and successful strategies for implementation.
- 2001:** A group of residents focuses the planning and fund-raising effort by forming Garberville Town Square, Inc.
- 2002:** The Town Square Committee begins assessing and soliciting funding from a variety of sources.
- 2004:** Purchase of the site was initiated, and a local architect is retained to design the square.
- 2006:** A public meeting and a number of design charrettes are convened in order to inform the design process.
- 2007:** Collaboration and planning begins with County of Humboldt and civil engineers. They worked closely with the Planning Department to find a strategy that would work for the project while avoiding the difficulties of a zoning change.
- 2009:** First phase of construction ends; the Garberville Town Square opens to the public in November.
- 2010:** Additional landscaping and decorative shade structures are anticipated to be completed.



Town Square Lessons Learned

Community participation increases interest and support. During the design process, the committee included community businesses, residents, and other stakeholders by holding informative public meetings and inviting creative input through the design charrette process. By including interested stakeholders, the committee made the design of the Town Square a public process, which increased community interest and support for the project.

Although media outreach through interviews on community radio, news articles and information booths at the major festivals in the Southern Humboldt area was important in educating the community about the town square project, it was direct contact between project advocates and their neighbors that built a groundswell of public support. Person-to-person outreach was time-consuming, but rewarding in building committed support for the project.

Perseverance through a long process may be necessary. From beginning to end, the Garberville Town Square took nearly a decade to complete. The team overcame political and bureaucratic challenges and a significant challenge of raising funds in several ways: 1) by selling food at Reggae on the River, 2) by securing no-interest loans from supporters to purchase the property, which were repaid, and 3) paying a grantwriter to secure funds. It took three attempts, but the group was able to secure a grant from the Headwaters Fund with the help of the current Supervisor.

When we started this project nine years ago we all thought that it was a no-brainer and it would take us one, maybe two years tops to get the project built! What we have all learned in the process I think, is that persistence is what really makes it happen, and taking whatever heat may come

Garberville Town Square, continued

your way, because there will always be people who will tell you it can't be done [...] having a strong organizational structure is important, because members will come and go, but if your foundation is solid then the project will keep going. – David Dickinson, Garberville Town Square Inc.

Enlist the creativity of neighbors to ensure a meaningful project outcome. Creativity in addressing public concerns was instrumental in building support for the town square. Two primary concerns for project neighbors – particularly business owners – was the removal of parking and possible issues with vagrancy in the square. Town Square Committee members alleviated the parking concern through measurement of existing parking capacity and comparing it to projected parking needs after the completion of the square. This study resulted in an action plan to accommodate parking needs after the square's completion. A concern about loitering concern was addressed in two ways: via case studies and cooperation with law enforcement. Case studies revealed that an active, vibrant square was less likely to draw loitering activity than one that was underutilized by the public. Also, the committee secured an agreement with the Humboldt County Sheriff's department to develop a policing plan for the square.

Design charrettes gave individuals in the community an outlet to express their own vision of what the town square should be; in doing so, good ideas were generated and incorporated into the final design. Community participation made the town square a focal point of civic pride and creativity.

Sources:

- Dickinson, David. 2010. Personal communication, January 6, 2010.
- www.garbervilletownsquare.org

Willow Creek 'SHADE'

Though this project is in Caltrans, not County, jurisdiction (which means a much higher level of bureaucracy and complexity), it is an excellent example of a successful, community-driven project.

The Willow Creek Scenic Highway and Downtown Enhancement (SHADE) Project grew out of the recognition that improvements to the aesthetics and walkability of Willow Creek's downtown area were essential to the health and vitality of the community. Prior to the SHADE project, Willow Creek's downtown was bisected by five lanes of State Route (SR) 299 (four travel lanes and one turn lane). As a 'main street', the highway was not optimal for attracting travelers to slow down or stop, nor for pedestrian or bicycle transportation – because it was one of the few places with multiple lanes, it was known as a place to pass slower vehicles. The Willow Creek Community Services District (CSD) recognized that the existing highway could be redesigned in a way that would

accommodate motorized traffic at slower speeds while providing for pedestrian, bicycle, and merchant needs, and led the efforts to vision and then pursue improvements for approximately a decade.

The CSD enlisted several local consultants for more than five years of support drafting plans, seeking funds, pursuing approvals and designing final project plans. The original proposal included three phases; only the first phase has been funded so far. The completed SHADE project incorporates roadside trees, traffic calming measures, and wider sidewalks. Although the final outcome did not include all the design elements initially desired, the impact of the new design on the walkability and aesthetics of the downtown area have been significant. Joan Briggs, Willow Creek-based architect and project manager for SHADE, noted increased pedestrian traffic downtown as well as increased ease-of-use for disabled community members.

Timeline

- 1997-98:** Initial planning and grantwriting based on several years of visioning about 'main street' improvements. HCAOG funds supported this process.
- 1999:** HCAOG reviewed proposal for Enhancements funds and ranked it eleventh out of a list where ten projects were funded.
- 2001-02:** State funding, championed by California State Senator Chesbro and Caltrans District 1 leadership, was awarded to the project. Engineering and Landscape Architecture support was retained to develop the project design. Community education and outreach efforts took place.
- 2003:** Caltrans performs road resurfacing and re-striping through the Willow Creek downtown project area. Willow Creek CSD requests striping in accordance to the project specification; Caltrans agrees.



PHOTO: CALTRANS DISTRICT 1

SHADE, continued

2005-06: Initial project construction takes place. Bike lanes, sidewalks, traffic calming measures and landscaping, including large trees, are installed.

2006-2010: Project continues to shape downtown and surrounding infrastructure, including and more tree planting (some funded by private business in accordance with County permitting procedures) and planning for pedestrian-friendly routes on SR 96. Pedestrian use of the downtown area has increased, and a number of local businesses have landscaped in compliment to the SHADE project.

SHADE Lessons Learned

Watch for opportunities that can influence project outcomes and advancement. In 2003, the CSD learned that Caltrans would be resurfacing and re-striping SR 299 in downtown Willow Creek. The CSD contacted Caltrans and requested that the re-striping be done in accordance to the SHADE project plan; this completed a significant component of the project prior to installation of sidewalks, landscaping and traffic calming.

Have a local organization lead the project and hire experienced professionals to do some of the work. Willow Creek CSD led the project through a number of years of dealing with a variety of local and state agencies. They used their funds and HCAOG funds to hire a team of consultants as the de facto project manager, grantwriters, planners and engineers for SHADE, which helped to navigate the often-complex bureaucratic and long-term process.

Build relationships with decision-makers. Leaders in Caltrans and at the state level were integral to the successful funding and completion of the SHADE project. Support from these decision-makers at critical bottlenecks was key in getting the project through from inception to completion.

Perseverance through a long process may be necessary. The SHADE project took approximately a decade from the initial concept fostered by CSD Boardmember and staff to Phase I project completion. This is not uncommon for transportation projects. Like many rural projects, funding was not awarded on the first try. SHADE had a committed network of partners (both individuals and organizations) that focused on seeing the project through from beginning to end.

Source:

- Briggs, Joan. 2010. Personal communication, January 7, 2010.



Application for Initial Department of Public Works Consultation

Review the RTAP Guide and Evaluation form to assist with development of this application.

Date Submitted: _____

Project Information

Proposed Project Name: _____

Proposed Project Location (also attach a map): _____

Intended Project Outcomes: _____

Project Need: _____

Conceptual Project Description: _____

Primary Project Contact

Name/Phone/Email: _____

Project Team

Names/Contact Info: _____

Other Agency Contact(s)

Agency: _____ Name: _____

Ph/Email: _____

Agency: _____ Name: _____

Ph/Email: _____

Please circle the answer to the following questions and provide supporting materials as noted:

Does/Is The Proposed Project:	Yes?	No?	Detail
Have early indications of neighborhood support?	Consult with DPW about means of documenting	Project must have significant public support to proceed	Note indications of support or opposition
Exist in County Right-of Way (ROW)?	Proceed	Discuss with DPW staff	
Need additional ROW?	Indication of likely offer/s to dedicate or sell: proceed	If other properties included, must have landowner support/ willingness	Attach list of parcels and/or easements related to project
Noted as priority in or supports local/regional plan/s?	Proceed	Discuss with DPW staff; illustrate how it meets goals if not listed as priority	Attach list of transport or other plans, reference pages
Involve multiple jurisdictions?	Provide a summary of communications	Proceed	List other jurisdictions, contacts, above

List Project Opportunities

List Project Challenges

Describe early indications of financial or material project support that will be required to succeed

Note other community goals that are addressed by this project concept

Project Proposal

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: _____

Project Location: _____

APPLICANT INFO

Name _____ Contact Info _____

Date: _____ Date Application Submitted: _____

Attach original application form to this package.

PROJECT QUALIFICATION

A. Project location - County ROW

B. Funding - Cash Match

Feasibility score: two preliminary questions to determine if the project is ready for RTAP.

If the project scores zero in either category it cannot be recommended for the RTAP program; five or less points and it will not likely be recommended to proceed. Between 6-13 points, an evaluation will be made in #s 1-10 to determine whether or not the project ranks well enough to be recommended for other funding opportunities. Between 14-20 points and evaluation of #s 1-10 will proceed.

A. Does the proposed project exist within County-owned right-of-way (ROW)? If it requires some or total use of other ROW, is/are the landowner/s supportive and willing to donate/sell ROW?

Note: if the project is not within County ROW and landowner/s are not willing, the project cannot proceed. (10 points)

B. Does the project have the in-kind donations or cash match necessary to complete it and bring project funding to 100%? If the match along with County support (staff/equipment time) is high but not complete, if awarded, the project may either be suspended until enough funding is available or used to apply for grant funding.

Note: If the project match is not addressed or insufficient, the project cannot proceed. (10 points)

DETAILED PROJECT SCORING

1. Neighborhood support

2. Serving the transportation disadvantaged

3. Demonstrate need - audit/analysis

4. Projects outcomes serve the need

5. Complement existing plans

6. Partnerships/Collaboration

7. Increase safety - reduce crash risk

8. Improve multi-modal access

9. Enhance environmental and human health

10. Improve access to key trip generators OR Improve access to key corridors and connections

Complete 10 questions with total possible score of 100.

Select project context for final question: destination access or corridor access.

1. Does the project have a high level of community/ neighborhood support? Indicate the level of support by immediately adjacent and other community landowners/businesses and attach supporting documentation. (Note question #6 is about partnerships and collaboration.) (10 cumulative points)
2. Does the project serve a community with limited transportation options? Low-income and/or carless households? Disabled? Isolated population? Youth and/or seniors? Minority population? (10 cumulative points)
3. Does the project have a documented safety or access need? Has the project sponsor performed a detailed assessment to determine specific needs? Can the project sponsor provide quantitative and qualitative measures of need? (10 points)
4. Does the project design clearly provide outcomes that meet the needs identified in the assessment process? (10 points)
5. Does the project complement relevant planning documents and community goals (e.g. transportation, land use, economic development, restoration) in the project area? Is the project specifically listed as a priority or identified in existing plan? If not listed in a plan, does the project clearly support documented community goals/objectives (if so, which)? (10 points)
6. Does the project substantively involve community partners? Are all relevant stakeholders engaged in the process? Is there documentation of collaboration throughout the planning and design? (10 points)
7. Does the project utilize proven Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) countermeasures to address safety? Note which measures are addressed (see RTAP Guide for references), listed below. (10 points)
 - Road Safety Audits
 - Median Barriers
 - Roundabouts
 - Yellow Change Intervals
 - Walkways
 - Rumble Strips and Rumble Stripes
 - Safety Edge
 - Left and Right Turn Lanes at Stop-Controlled Intersections
 - Medians and Pedestrian Refuge Areas in Urban and Suburban Areas
8. Does the project improve/address safety and access for multiple road users? Does the project build ‘complete streets’ with safe access for motorists, pedestrians (including transit users and the disabled), and bicyclists? (10 points)
9. Does the project enhance environmental & human health objectives? Note which categories below are addressed and how they are addressed. (10 points)

Environmental & Human Health Outcome Categories

1. Enhance Threatened and Endangered species habitat or migration
2. Reduce vehicle miles traveled and subsequent emissions
3. Restore or improve wetland
4. Increases options for physical activity
5. Reduce erosion and/or sedimentation potential
6. Provide better stormwater management

Answer **either 10a or 10b** to indicate if the proposed project provides access to a key destination or a connecting corridor:

- 10a. (Destination Access) Does the project improve access to key commercial, social or recreational services? For example: Will the project provide a new route or safe crossing to a shopping area, school, park or critical medical facility? Is the project within the ½ mile to 1 mile of important destinations in your community? (10 cumulative points)
- 10b. (Connecting Corridor) Does the project improve access or safety along a key connecting corridor between communities or services? Does the project provide a critical connection within a community or to other communities/services? Does the project remove barriers to access along a key corridor? (10 cumulative points)

Appendix A: Example of Agreement for Acquisition of Real Property for Right-Of-Way Purposes

(1) The County of Humboldt is sponsoring the following project:

Examples:

- Adding a 5 foot wide sidewalk along the south side of Main Street from 1st Street to 2nd Street, Contract No. 12345678.
- Adding a 4 foot wide shoulder along the east side of Main Street from 1st Street to 2nd Street, Contract No. 12345678.

(2) The County of Humboldt desires to acquire the property described in the attached Exhibit A for the following purpose:

Examples:

- an easement for public road purposes
- an easement for public sidewalk purposes
- an easement for public utility purposes

(3) (hereafter "OWNER/s") is the fee owner of the property described in the attached Exhibit A and desires to deed to County of Humboldt, at no cost to the County, an interest in said property. The interest to be granted to the County is described as: _____ [e.g. fee title; an easement].

(4) Based on the foregoing, County of Humboldt and OWNER/s agree as follows:

Within _____ months following funding approval by the County of Humboldt of the project, OWNER agrees to grant to the County of Humboldt clear title to the property described in the attached Exhibit A., for the purpose of carrying out the above-described project.

The County of Humboldt will not offer any payment or compensation for the property; the sole consideration for this agreement is the benefit to Owner and the general public from County's sponsorship of the project.

This agreement is valid for five (5) years. If the County of Humboldt is unable to secure funding for the project within five (5) years from the date of this agreement, then this agreement shall be null and void.

(5) This agreement is hereby entered into this _____ day of _____, by the County of Humboldt and OWNER.

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT:

Thomas K. Mattson
Director of Public Works

BY _____
(signature)

OWNER:

BY _____
(signature of owner)

(print name of owner)

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Assessor Parcel Number APN):	
Record Owner(s) Name:	

Legal Description of property to be acquired by the County of Humboldt: _____

The Rural Transportation Access & Partnership can help rural communities overcome transportation challenges.

RTAP is a matching program through Humboldt County Department of Public Works to help address unfunded transportation needs through community partnership.

Proposed projects should:

- Address a significant, demonstrable transportation need.
- Be in County jurisdiction and ‘right-of-way’ or ‘right-of-entry’ or have willing landowners if adjacent lands are involved.
- Have substantive community support.



INSIDE: Information about applying to the program in your area, including detailed information about the application and proposal process.

Humboldt County Department
of Public Works
1106 Second Street
Eureka, CA 95501