

REDWOOD PATHWAYS STRATEGY: AN ACTION PLAN FOR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT



CHAPTER 4. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PROJECTS



Every project concept was recorded in a “Project Description Form.” The project team clarified each proposal—speaking again to the person who proposed the idea, as necessary. Each project concept received a preliminary review whereby possible impacts and benefits were identified. Photographs were taken and site visits were made to as many proposed sites as possible. The large number of ideas prohibited identification of all property boundaries and ownerships, but initial ownership information was recorded where known or suspected.

All of the proposed projects were reviewed with applicable management entities. Comments of the entities, including State Parks, Caltrans, and the County of Humboldt, are documented on the bottom of the Project Description Forms. Copies of the Project Description Forms are available in Chapter 9 Next Steps.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

The following is a brief description of the 32 projects proposed by the public (as credited) or the Redwood Pathways team (if not credited to a member of the public.) The following short descriptions credit the individuals who proposed projects in order to show participants in the public input process how their ideas were incorporated. Many projects were proposed by more than one individual. The first person to propose a idea to the project team is credited, although the project team wishes to acknowledge the input and efforts of all those who suggested ideas.

Proposed projects are listed from north to south, with those that are area-wide listed last. A comprehensive map of the projects can be found on the next page. Numbers refer to the map.

AVENUE OF THE GIANTS AREA

1a. Avenue Traffic Safety

This project is proposed by members of the Avenue Trails Committee. This is a general concept that involves many relatively small measures that would address both traffic speeds and safety all along the Avenue. Proponents would like to see: the speed limit lowered, more enforcement, and additional signs that post the speed limit, park boundaries and each community. Residents in many communities along the



Proposed Project map here

Avenue support the idea.

The residents along the Avenue feel that the speed limits are generally too high, that there is little enforcement of the speed limits between or within the communities, that locals themselves use excessive speed, and that there are too few pull-outs for tourists to pull over to enjoy the trees, causing them to stop in the road.

1b. Avenue Traffic Calming



In response to the community-proposed Avenue Traffic Safety project, Caltrans expressed skepticism that “small measures” would affect change. They recommended more significant traffic calming measures be used, such as roundabouts, chicanes, and gateways placed along the Avenue of the Giants and designed to slow traffic. This project could also include Community-based items suggested in Potential Project 1a, as well as more formal traffic calming improvements.

2a. Giants’ Pathway

Although for many years there has been strong community support for this idea, it was formally proposed during the Redwood Pathways Project by Thomas Lasbury. It is overwhelmingly supported by responses to the Redwood Pathways questionnaire, as well as during previous community organizing efforts.

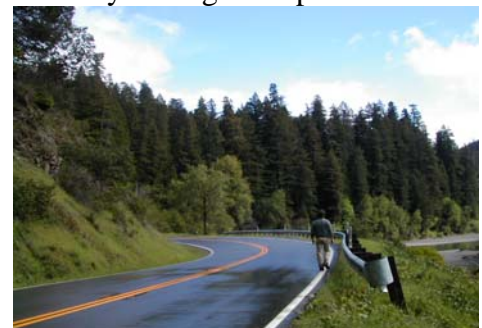


This project proposes alternatives to the roadway wherever possible for the non-motorized traveler, and would run the length of the Avenue. Bike lanes would be created where it is not possible to make a trail separate from the Avenue. It also proposes more signs to educate drivers including solar powered flashing lights to alert drivers of the presence of cyclists where the roadway is not wide enough to create bike lanes (i.e.; bridges, cliffs, etc.).

This project could be made up of many smaller projects linked together to ultimately create a whole Avenue length pathway. Residents and visitors would benefit by having safer portions of the Avenue on which to walk or cycle.

2b. One Way Auto Traffic on the Avenue of the Giants

This concept originated during a meeting with Caltrans District 1 staff. One of the Caltrans representatives replied to the Redwood Pathway overall description, “Oh, I thought you were proposing to close down part of the Avenue to



auto traffic and have a 32 mile multi-use trail...” The concept of limiting auto traffic in order to enhance opportunities for other users was repeated during the scoping of this project, although skepticism regarding the practicality of the idea was just as frequently repeated.

This proposal is a highly conceptual one, requiring substantial further assessment. There are potentially many impacts and benefits to converting the Avenue of the Giants to one way motorized traffic, adding a median, and using the existing second lane for non-motorized multiple use. For this idea to be seriously considered, all of the potentially affected property owners and residents should be contacted, and feasibility of the idea determined based on community support.

Any serious assessment should include: an in depth traffic study, identification of which direction of motorized traffic would have the least impacts on residents, some characterization of the tourism and/ or economic benefits, and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) concerns. This concept should also assess the interest of Caltrans and DPR in transferring management of the roadway to DPR.

3. Eel River Mill Recreation Center

This project is proposed by Becky Coulombe of the Redcrest Market. This conceptual project proposes that the former Eel River Sawmill building and site be converted into a recreation center for skateboarding and bicycling for the youth in surrounding communities. This project would increase recreational opportunities for area youth as well as bring economic



development to a community that lost a large source of employment when the mill closed. **It is viable only if the most recent use of the mill (lumber) is determined to be permanently ended.**

Further research is necessary to determine the likelihood of the sawmill re-opening and the interest of the current owners. The site is located .4 miles from the Redcrest General Store.

4. Burlington Trail Upgrade

This project proposes diverting users onto the 4 mile long State Park Bull Creek Trail (or Burlington on some maps) which roughly parallels the Avenue. The Bull Creek Trail currently begins at the Big Trees Area and ends at Lower Bull Creek Flats (Rockefeller Loop). It would need to be upgraded from a seasonal to an all-season trail and if users other than hikers are to be allowed on the trail, State Parks restrictions on dogs, bicycles, and equestrians would need to be changed and potential additional impacts dealt with.

The trail is on the opposite side of the Eel River than the Avenue, and would require two bridges across the Eel River to be converted to all season availability. Otherwise, the trail section could remain seasonal, but would receive greater promotion, so that potential users would know of its existence.

5. Robinson Grove Trail

This proposed trail is an existing paved road (Nelson Road) at mile marker 12.0, that intersects with the Avenue of the Giants immediately south of Myers Flat, adjacent to Robinson Grove. To utilize this existing road segment as a trail would require some signs, trail construction in one section, and clearing of brush. The abandoned section of road loops down near the river, crossing the Hidden Springs Trail, and then back up to the Avenue of the Giants. It provides river access and is approximately 1.5 miles in length. It would be a small section of the larger South Fork High Trail that is proposed from Miranda to Myers Flat.



6. South Fork High Trail

This proposed trail was selected as a priority project, see Chapter 5 for more information.

This trail is proposed by the residents of Miranda due to the danger that their students face when participating in training for athletics. The track, cross country, wrestling, and soccer teams run along the Avenue because it is the only level surface for athletes training in the immediate vicinity of the High School. There is no shoulder in many places along the Avenue. Students are often forced to jump off the road to avoid traffic. The proposed trail would parallel the Avenue north from Miranda for approximately 6 miles. The land in the proposed area is owned by State Parks. The community would benefit from increased safety and visitors would utilize a non-motorized pathway to enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings.

7. Sylvandale River Trail

Doug Fir and Nora Wynne propose transforming this existing county-owned frontage road into a trail. The road travels parallel to the 101, south from the southbound 101 Hooker Creek exit (or the Sylvandale Nursery) to a dead end. It has several river access points. An existing



volunteer trail currently provides a cycle and pedestrian connection to southbound 101. This section of road is 1.1 miles from the Hooker Creek Exit.

The frontage road needs improvements to provide bicyclists suitable north and south bound connections to the 101, however an existing culvert-underpass may present an opportunity to connect cyclists going northbound on 101 with the frontage road. The underpass may be privately owned.

REDWAY-GARBERVILLE-BENBOW AREA

8a. Redwood Drive Bike Route



Although there is wide support for this idea, Jared Rossman and Jane Wilson formally proposed it. This project would create a commuter trail or bike lanes that link the two most populated communities in southern Humboldt County. Redway and Garberville lie 3 miles apart, and residents expressed a great need for safer non-motorized commuter access.

The project would begin at the Highway 101 Dean Creek exit, and continue through Redway and Garberville to the intersection of Redwood Drive and the Highway 101 Garberville exit (at the south end of town). The project includes installation of signs and bike racks in both communities. It would ideally also include bike lanes with in each town center, as well as widening of the road shoulders and bridge between the two communities. In some areas, widening the shoulder would be difficult, however, bridge construction on the County of Humboldt Public Works project schedule to begin in June 2002. (The bridge widening project includes enough width for bikes (although not full bike lane widths.)

8b. Downtown Garberville Traffic Calming



This project is proposed by Chris Turner. The project proposes pedestrian friendly downtown changes in Garberville, including medians on Redwood Drive with benches, landscaping, lights, and kiosks. The project also includes bike lanes and cross walks in both Garberville and Redway. More research into parking possibilities is proposed in order to change downtown diagonal parking into parallel parking. The project area would be defined with input from each community.

9. Redway-Garberville Hike and Horse Route

Sungnome Madrone proposed this highly conceptual project. The proposed trail would travel south out of Redway, crossing the Eel River onto easements secured from private property owners and utilizing private logging/ranch roads. Alternately, the route could utilize the river channel in low flow seasons, if easements could not be secured. The proposed route would then return across the river with the existing bridge at Bear Canyon Road, at the northern end of Garberville. One permanent or seasonal bridge would be required.

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10. Briceland Road Bike Lane Spur



Lynn Ryan proposes to have bike lanes and/or sidewalks included on Briceland Road when it is repaved. The county is paving the road in Redway, from The Iguana restaurant west to the bridge over the Eel River. The road is very wide in the residential and industrial areas, but then becomes narrow as it begins the descent to the river with many sharp curves. Residents would benefit from this project, as well as cyclists who are traveling to the Shelter Cove area or Whittemore Grove.

11. Garberville-Benbow River Trail

This proposed trail was selected as a priority project, see Chapter 6 for more information.

This project is proposed by Doug Fir. It is a route that offers an alternative to the 101 from Garberville to Benbow, which is both scenic and relatively flat. From Garberville, it follows Sprowel Creek Road down the hill. The Sprowel Creek section just out of Garberville is the most challenging part of this route-- narrow, winding, and steeply descending toward the river with steep banks above and below the roadway. Once the road levels out, the route would pass Tooby Memorial Park to Kimtu Road and continue on Kimtu Road to the Kimtu subdivision. This section of road would be easy to widen for cyclists, and developers of the Tooby Community Park project have expressed interest in constructing a trail within the park's property.

From the Kimtu subdivision, a trail easement would be necessary to cross a short section of private property before returning to publicly owned land. With an easement across the privately-owned section and some relatively minor improvements to the existing trail within the Benbow State Recreation Area, the trail could be improved to allow year-round non-motorized travelers, potentially even cyclists. The trail within the recreation Area connects to a service road. When trail users reached the service road, they could continue along it to the Benbow State Recreation Area campground.

12. Benbow - Twin Trees Route



This project is an alternative to Highway 101 between Benbow and Richardson Grove. Using Benbow Drive, a low- traffic volume roadway, this route is scenic and crosses the river on historic bridges. It is approximately 3.5 miles long with several points of river access as well as a boat ramp and campground. An unstable slope at the northern end of the roadway deposits material onto the roadway each winter, closing it to traffic most seasons. Residents noted that the roadway is rarely impassible to pedestrians or cyclists, however. Unless a permanent solution to this ongoing slide

could be found, this route could be subject to seasonal closures. Proposed improvements include signs at either end identifying the route and noting closures, as well as maintenance.

Northbound traffic would have easy access to the road from Route 101. Southbound travelers would access the route using existing Highway 101 on and off ramps, but would need to cross Highway 101 at the south end of the proposed route segment near Richardson Grove.

HIGHWAY 271 AREA

13a. Hartsook Inn Seasonal Bridge



This project is proposed by Sungnome Madrone. The project proposes putting in a seasonal bridge at the southern end of Richardson Grove State Park to connect the Hartsook Inn to the Highway 101. (Currently, State Parks maintains a seasonal bridge near the center of the park, which brings visitors across the river to additional campground facilities.) Adding a second bridge at the northern end of the park, near the Hartsook Inn, would allow cyclists to detour around a substantial portion of the busy, tree-lined and shaded, Richardson Grove area of Highway 101. This section of roadway is particularly narrow and has sharp curves. Because it is bordered on either side by wider roadway, many vehicle attempt the curves at speeds in excess of the posted limit. There is very little shoulder area for non-motorized users.

13b. Richardson Grove Bike Route



Eric Carter and Nora Wynne worked together to identify a route that would safely detour cyclists through Richardson Grove by way of the Park's trails and roads. Cyclists would detour from the 101 at the northern end of the Park, using the exit on the right, (known as Singing Trees.) A route would be developed connecting existing park and private roads to enable cyclists to avoid Highway 101 where it is narrow and windy.

This project could potentially be linked with the Hartsook Inn seasonal bridge, connecting back to the 101 at the southern end of the Park. Signs to make cyclists aware of the alternative would also be needed.

14a. Piercy Bike Lanes



The existing frontage road, Highway 271, is used primarily by approximately 40 residents. The project proposes signs and bike lanes added for cyclists. It gives non-motorized travelers 3.7 miles of scenic river view and an alternative to the 101. It leaves the 101 at the county line and passes a private campground and the Krishnalaya Retreat Center (once a thriving hunting lodge catering to tourists.) It offers river access. Both northbound and southbound non-motorized travelers will benefit from the opportunity to be off of the 101. Its

southern end is in the community of Piercy.

14b. Piercy Bike Route



This is a proposed bike *route* with signs from the northern terminus of Highway 271 to the southern terminus at the “Snake Pit” north of Confusion Hill. It encompasses three sections of Highway 271 and allows cyclists to be off the 101 for approximately 7.7 miles. There is river access and State Park land along the route, as well as a relatively low volume of traffic. This project also proposes improving the access from the frontage road to Highway 101 at Bear Pen, utilizing a private access road and

Highway 101 under crossing, for northbound travelers and access at Snake Pit for southbound travelers.

15. Piercy-Reynolds Wayside Bike Lanes



This project proposes bike lanes and signs along Highway 271 from the Piercy Post Office south to the next 271 exit from the 101, 2.4 miles away. Highway 271 is an existing alternative to Highway 101 that is used by approximately 100 residents. It has river access and provides the primary access to BLM’s Red Mountain Road. It also passes Reynolds Wayside State Park that has old growth groves.

16. Snake Pit Bike Lanes



This project proposes bike lanes on Highway 271, a frontage road to Highway 101. The project proposes signs detouring cycle traffic onto the frontage road which is used by approximately 30 residents. From the Southern Piercy exit, traveling south along the 271 frontage road, there are stunning river views. Cyclists currently use this route, which has access to the 101 at the northern end and dead ends at the southern end with a chain link fence that blocks access to the 101. (The fence has been cut and there is an obvious path for cyclists' access.)

Beginning at the northern end of the proposed route, this route would provide northbound cyclists access to the 101 at Bear Pen Road (.9 miles south) if improvements were made to a private access road crossing under Highway 101. It also provides river access at the Snake Pit (at 1.2 miles) and ends approximately 1.6 miles south where improvements could allow cyclists to connect to Highway 101 southbound. Visitors and cyclists would benefit from this project by having an alternative to the 101.

17. Confusion Hill Bypass



Sungnome Madrone proposes this conceptual project that would build two suspension bridges over the Eel River. Topographic and historic air photos show old logging roads on the opposite side of the Eel River between the communities of Redway and Garberville. This proposal would locate the remnants of those roads and adapt them to create a pathway for hikers and equestrians to use. (The project team could find no recent knowledge of active logging or ranch roads in the proposed area.)

One bridge would be located at the southern end of the 271 which would cross the South Fork Eel River and connect to historic (remnant) ranch-logging roads. The second bridge would then cross back over the Eel to the south of Confusion Hill. This would provide cyclists, walkers and equestrians a safer and more scenic river route than the existing narrow, winding, slide-prone roadway section commonly referred to as Confusion Hill.

18a. Historic 101 Bike Camp (proposed as “Cement Slab”)

Berk Snow proposes this Historic 101 Bike Camp project, pictured on the next page. The project proposes primitive campsites for cyclists to be developed along an abandoned section of the old 101 south of Confusion Hill, .3 miles north of mile marker 97.47. The project would require assessment



of the long-term stability of the structure, signs directing cyclists to the area, some method of protecting campers from falling rock, a management entity willing to operate the facility as a primitive environmental camp, and periodic maintenance. There is no water available near the site, except for the Eel River many feet below.

The area is known historically as “the slab.” Ownership of the facility is unknown, as roadway facilities constructed in the 1920’s were often not on land owned by the state. Caltrans, which bypassed the historic section of roadway in the 1970’s, refers to it as the “Bridges Creek Sidehill Viaduct.”

18b. Historic 101 Bike Route



As proposed, this project would only be accessible to southbound cyclists and motorists. It proposes opening and maintaining the historic 1.5 mile, abandoned section of Highway 101 as a bike route. It provides a quiet and scenic alternative to Highway 101. The area could also be improved as a Vista Point with limited parking for southbound auto users. Required improvements to implement this proposal include signs, minor grading of the parking area, stop blocks for autos, and periodic maintenance of the sidehill viaduct facility.

19. Red Mt. Creek-Dora Creek Bike Lanes & Primitive Camp

This project would establish bike lanes from Highway 271's southern terminus at mile marker 96.42 to Dora Creek in Smithe Redwoods State Park (mile marker 100.16.) It also proposes buying a flat piece of land by the river to make a campground for cyclists below the historic 1.5 mile abandoned section of Highway 101 known as the Bridges Creek Sidehill Viaduct.

20. Smithe Redwoods-Standish-Hickey Bike Lanes

This project would widen the paving of the 101 between Smithe Redwoods State Park and Standish-Hickey State Park to create shoulders for cyclists. It would also add signs to alert drivers of the presence of cyclists.

21. Leggett Bike Route

Anne Seaquist and Nora Wynne worked together to propose the use of Highway 271 as a bike route. The highway travels through the community of Leggett beginning at the intersection of Highway 1 and Highway 101. This project proposes paving some pieces of the Highway 271 shoulder and adding signs on Highway 101 to inform cyclists of the alternative route. The proposed route follows Highway 271 through the services district of Leggett, crosses historic bridges and ends in the community of Cummings (approximately 6 miles). It proposes bike lanes in the business district of Leggett and directional signs along the whole route. It would serve residents and touring cyclists who are traveling down the 101 past Leggett.

ENTIRE PROJECT AREA

22. Southern Humboldt-Northern Mendocino Recreation Map

This project was developed at the Miranda public meeting by Alan and Christine Aitken, Emily Peterson, and Mary Whitmore. The project proposes creation of a comprehensive recreational opportunities map for the Stafford to Leggett. The map would direct visitors and residents to facilities including; rest rooms, bike shops, lodging, visitor centers, camping, bike routes, trails, phones, food, and river access. It would also include distance information on trails and roads, State Park and BLM land boundaries, seasonal and year round access information, and any logging roads accessible to the public. The map would be available in a typical folded fashion, but also have a format that could be displayed in a kiosk or store window. It would include information for the whole study area, from. There are currently no maps that include all of this information. Visitors as well as residents could benefit from such a map. Visitors could have access to many attractions as well as services while in the area. Used as a marketing tool, the map could facilitate tourism and stimulate the local economy.

23. Sign Improvements Project

The project suggests adding directional signs throughout the project area informing cyclists on Route 101 of existing scenic frontage roads or trail routes whenever those frontage roads provide an alternative route that connects at both ends. Signs could be designed and placed with cyclists in mind and could include alternative route distances and other pertinent information. Short, flexible signs could be utilized to minimize impacts to scenic resources and to motorists, while placement near the outside shoulder of the roadway would alert cyclists. (Similar information could also be painted within the shoulder to notify cyclists while minimizing scenic or motorist impacts.)

24. Development of Bicycle-only Access Ramps between Frontage Roads and Route 101

Currently, there are several sites where existing frontage roads parallel Highway 101. These frontage roads, (described in proposed projects numbered: 7,14b, and 16,) could become safe and scenic bicycle alternatives to Highway 101 with minimal facility construction. What would be required is development of bicycle-only access ramps at one end of the frontage

road. (Most of the examples listed above are currently being used for this purpose, as proven by the holes cut into the Caltrans fencing between the end of the frontage road and Route 101.)

To develop bicycle-only ramp access would require Caltrans' to re-define its definition of controlled access to include bicycles (as it does motor vehicles.) In Caltrans' District 1, bicycles are allowed on all state facilities. Currently, to access a state-owned road, a cyclist must use a facility specifically designed for motorists. To broaden the definition of controlled access to include facilities designed specifically for bicycles, would facilitate use of low volume, frontage roads with vehicle access at one end and bicycle-only access facilities added at the (current) road terminus.

Several of the examples listed may also require access permission to utilize private Highway 101 under crossings.

25. Shoulder Improvements and Improved Maintenance Standards



This proposal requests that the two primary roadway management and maintenance entities within the project area, Caltrans and Humboldt County Public Works, adopt an operational policy of including “best reasonable improvements for pedestrian and bicycle users” in *any* roadway re-paving or re-alignment project. (This proposal includes pedestrians, even though they are not legally able to use state routes, because in very rural areas, pedestrians often have no choice but to use the available roads, and have no choices other than state routes.)

The County of Humboldt Public Works is already applying this guideline in several planned projects. As part of roadway re-paving in the southern Humboldt area they are 1) converting drainage ditches into culverts and grading the resultant shoulder area to facilitate use by pedestrians and bicycles; and/or 2) adding additional paved shoulder width, where possible.

In addition, re-paving projects should consider the evenness of the new surface *within the shoulder of the roadway*. Several levels of asphalt applied within the shoulder reduces the use-able space and presents a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.

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