



McKinleyville Multimodal Connections Project
Project Task Force (PTF) Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 17th, 2021 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Participants

- Nic Collart, McKinleyville High Principal
- Bonnie Oliver, Community member
- Mitchell Higa, Humboldt Bay Bike Commuters Association
- Alexis Kelso, Caltrans
- Mary Burke, McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee
- Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities
- Consuelo Espinoza, Humboldt Transit Authority
- Sandra Rosas, Community member
- Tom Mattson, Humboldt County Public Works
- Ben Winker, Area 1 Agency on Aging
- Elaine Hogan, DHHS Public Health
- Tiffany Maher - Morris Elementary School Principal
- Suresh Ratnam, Caltrans
- John Miller, Humboldt County
- Kelly Garrett, Community member
- Lisa Hockaday, Caltrans
- Amada Lang, Two Feathers
- Pat Kaspari, McKinleyville Community Services District
- Stevie Luther, Humboldt County Association of Governments
- Supervisor Steve Madrone, Humboldt County Supervisor
- Oona Smith, Humboldt County Association of Governments
- Jenny Weiss, Redwood Community Action Agency
- Carla Avila, Redwood Community Action Agency
- Paul Martin, Mark Thomas & Associates
- Jae Riddle, Mark Thomas & Associates
- Maya Kulkarni, Mark Thomas & Associates
- Alex, Mark Thomas & Associates

Icebreaker: What interests/ excites you about the project?

Nic Collart is a lifelong McKinleyville resident excited about creating transportation connections to help support the tight knit community and provide options for exercise.

Bonnie Oliver is a 30 year McKinleyville resident looking forward to seeing more biking and walking connections in McKinleyville.

Mitchell Higa is a 23 year McKinleyville resident excited to share ideas for better connections.

Alexis Kelso is interested in proposing improvements to the State Highway System.

Mary Burke is co leading the ad hoc Active Transportation Committee for the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee and pointed out that this project is important and necessary because it is in the unincorporated area where by design goals can be harder to achieve.

Colin Fiske is excited about the project because he lived in McKinleyville for 8 years and did not always feel safe walking and bicycling there.

Consuelo Espinoza is a transit planner for HTA and is interested in working towards creating different modes of transportation between McKinleyville and Arcata.

Sandra Rosas is a cyclist and member of the MMAC ad hoc committee. She is excited to see the project progress to this stage and is interested in seeing more connectivity and improvements at the 'gateway' of McKinleyville for safer biking.

Tom Mattson is excited about the process and working with Caltrans for better connections

Lt. Kevin Miller is with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office and works on operations in McKinleyville. He sees this project as a great opportunity.

Ben Winker N/A

Bonnie Oliver is a 30 year McKinleyville resident and on the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee. She is interested in improved walking and bicycling connections in McKinleyville.

Elaine Hogan is excited to see design concepts that are developed and how infrastructure improvements can get more people walking and bicycling.

Tiffany Maher is the principal of Morris Elementary and is especially interested in increasing safe routes to school and fixing spots where the sidewalk ends. There are lots of walkers at her school and safety is important to her.

Suresh Ratnam is excited to get real work done that creates meaningful change and increases non vehicle transportation choices for people.

John Miller is working on pedestrian and bicycle safety and access for the proposed Town Center Development is excited to tie in and take advantage of the outcomes of this project.

Kelly Garrett lives on North Bank Road near the Highway 101 interchange and is interested in cycling improvements on Central Avenue in conjunction with the Town Center Development efforts.

Lisa Hockaday is the Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator for caltrans and is excited to give input for non motorized transportation in McKinleyville.

Amada Lang is with Two Feathers and shared later during the meeting she is excited to serve as liaison for this project to represent native youth through an existing bike club in McKinleyville.

Pat Kaspari is the General Manager for McKinleyville Community Services District and is excited to see any new infrastructure improvements installed in McKinleyville.

Stevie Luther grew up in McKinleyville and rode his bike to school. He would like it to be possible for more kids to bike to school and is excited about a seamless connected trail system.

Supervisor Steve Madrone is glad to be part of the effort and has been involved in McKinleyville improvement projects for 35 years.

Jenny Weiss is excited to work with the community to increase safety and options for more walking and bicycling.

Carla Avila is excited to work with the McKinleyville community and learn about their vision for McKinleyville in regards to safer transportation

Paul Martin is the project manager with Mark Thomas & Associates and is looking forward to learning more about McKinleyville.

Jae Riddle is a Planner with Mark Thomas & Associates focusing on pedestrian and bicycle transportation and is excited to work with eager community members.

Maya Kulkarni is an intern with Mark Thomas & Associates and is excited to be a part of the process and learn from the McKinleyville community.

Alex is a consultant with Mark Thomas & Associates and is looking forward to working on the project.

Project Background, Goals, and Roles

Background :

- There has been interest for a long time to take a closer look at multimodal connectivity between McKinleyville and Arcata.
- This proposed project was conceived by an informal McKinleyville Trails Group looking to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with McKinleyville's south end 'gateway' becoming the focus of the effort.
- The project has also been shaped by prior Complete Streets planning efforts by the County of Humboldt and the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) as components of this project are priorities listed in both HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan VROOM, (2017) and in the Humboldt Regional Bicycle Plan (2018). The proposal was also informed by outcomes of a walkability assessment in the project area (along Hiller, Central and Railroad) in May 2019 conducted by County Public Health, McKinleyville Middle School, and RCAA. The final scope of proposal was determined through public meetings of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee in summer 2019.
- The County, RCAA, residents and an informal McKinleyville Trails group put together a proposal for the Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program a couple years ago that was not funded. After review from Caltrans the effort was brought to the MMAC and publicly noticed there through an ad hoc committee. The final scope of this proposal was determined through public meetings of the MMAC in summer of 2019. The application was resubmitted and successfully awarded.

Timeline:

- The project started in March with a Team Kick Off meeting and will continue through December 2022.

- Mark Thomas & Associates have been reviewing local planning docs pertaining to walking, biking and they are working on gathering multimodal data to set baselines and measure impacts. They will be doing field reconnaissance and conducting an opportunities and constraints analysis for walking/biking connectivity and traffic calming.
- RCAA has been working on developing a website, survey and outreach materials and will be starting to solicit public engagement in the project this summer with the first series of public engagement activities including a public workshop.
- Draft concept designs for improvements will be developed by Mark Thomas & Associates as public input continues to be gathered through a second series of engagement activities in early 2022 when the draft concept designs will be shared at a second public meeting.
- Concept designs will also be reviewed by the Project Task Force at subsequent meetings then finalized.
- PTF Meetings will be held again in the Fall of 2021 and Spring of 2022
- A draft report will be created followed by a final report wrapping up the project by December 2022.

Goals:

- Integrate existing transportation and housing planning efforts such as the planned McKinleyville Town Center Development.
- Engage the community to create a plan with concept designs for enhanced safety and connectivity for walking and bicycling between McKinleyville and community destinations to the south around Humboldt Bay to reduce GHG emissions and encourage more non-motorized transportation between McKinleyville and Arcata.

Objectives:

- We will create a plan for safer walking and biking within Mck and between Mck and Arcata with appropriate concept designs.
- We will be engaging the community as robustly as possible to receive meaningful input from diverse community members. We have also set outreach performance targets to ensure we are receiving participation by vulnerable populations and will measure our progress.
- Equity and Environmental justice are a strong consideration in this planning process.
- We will quantify potential greenhouse gas emission reductions through improved safety and encouragement of walking, bicycling and active transportation.
- We will ensure participation by local youth in the outreach process
- We will be using best practices for street designs that are appropriate to our rural community
- We will plan for enhanced safety for walking, biking, and transit
- We will identify project priorities for further study and implementation
- ID implementation funding sources
- Develop a plan that increases commuting by active transportation within and from McKinleyville to Arcata

Roles:

- Caltrans is the funder. Specifically this project is funded through a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant. This funding program was created to support Caltrans' mission of providing a safe, sustainable integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. The program is focused on encouraging local and regional planning that furthers state goals. SB 1 the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 – also known as the Gas Tax bill – is providing funding to integrate the state's multimodal transportation system and achieve the State's greenhouse gas reduction targets (of 40 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 2050 respectively).
- Hum Co Public Works is the applicant
- RCAA is sub-applicant and will be leading the outreach
- Mark Thomas & Associates are the experts in trail and multimodal transportation design and will be gathering and analyzing data, identifying gaps in the multimodal network, creating concept designs and developing the report/plan.
- PTF will be asked to attend 3 meetings (2 more after this), providing feedback on the project approach, insight for community outreach strategies, and guidance for refining concept improvements.

Community Outreach Plan

The purpose of the public engagement will be to solicit feedback on safety concerns and ideas for improved walking and bicycling connectivity in McKinleyville and between McKinleyville and Arcata. This includes the southern entrance to McKinleyville at the Central Avenue/North Bank Road/Highway 101 interchange and connections between Central Avenue and the Hammond Coastal Trail. RCAA will work to include voices typically left out of planning processes including non-English speakers, single parents and carless households. All public outreach strategies will be publicly noticed, include a diversity of local media and distributed in English and Spanish.

Outreach Activities will include:

- Project website: <https://humboldt.gov/2912/McKinleyville-Multimodal-Connections-Pro>
- Outreach flyer with project background info, survey link, event dates, contact info
- Online and print surveys, intercept surveys at key locations
- Direct Stakeholder engagement
- Community Workshop #1 will include:
 - Project goals and objectives
 - Presentation of current transportation issues
 - Invitation to participate in outreach events
 - Facilitated small group discussions to id issues and priorities
- Small Group Walking Tours
- Public Photo/Video Submissions
- Pop Up Infrastructure Demonstration
- Community Workshop #2 will include:
 - Presentation on feedback received, potential improvement alternatives
 - Solicit feedback from community to ID elements for final plan
 - Describe next steps to finalize plan

- Explore implementation opportunities

This project will focus on and prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities and promote solutions that integrate community values, capacity and need with transportation safety. Based on current demographic data from the US Census for the project area, we have selected **outreach targets that** include the percentage of each demographic within the project area and detail the intention of the project team to reach these particular demographics through outreach activities. We will be tracking demographics of community members reached through anonymous survey questions during each of the outreach activities.

Outreach Schedule - We have had our team kickoff meetings and are holding our first PTF now. We will be refining our outreach materials in June and launching the flyers, mailers, PSA's and surveys over the summer, likely July or August. We will share those materials with you to share with your clients and constituents. Our first community meeting will be held in August or September once we have had time to get initial feedback and review existing conditions data. We will be doing intercept surveys with cyclists and pedestrians, and one on one stakeholder meetings over the summer into the fall. And we will be asking the public for photos and short videos with clear descriptions to submit on their concerns around the south gateway area in lieu of a community walk there. It is too dangerous and risky to host a group walking along that area. Prior to a second Community Meeting in the summer of 2022 we will hold a Pop up infrastructure demonstration to provide opportunities for community members to see what potential improvements might look like on the ground.

PTF Outreach Suggestions:

- Horseriders Association
- Valley West
- Native Youth Advocate from Two Feathers
- Low-Vision Support Group
- Tri-County Independent Living
- First Five and outreach to daycare providers to get input from young families

Existing Conditions & Concerns

Project Area Reviewed

What are your concerns as a...

1) Driver

- North Bank Road going north towards Central Avenue and the Central Avenue Exit off the 101 intersection are both concerns. There are often near misses with pedestrians making right turn onto the hill going to Central Avenue
- High speed exits off the 101 and the narrowing roads coming up the hills
- Speed overall at the loop that is on School Rd and goes up to Hiller. This is the only route into that neighbourhood and there is a lot of traffic when people are trying to get to Hiller Park for sporting events. Speed of traffic is a concern for the neighborhood.

2) Ped or mobility device user

- There has been an increase in pedestrian traffic since the beginning of Covid-19 in Mckinleyville

- The County added sidewalks on School Road and they were instantly utilized by the community especially families with strollers and mobility devices
- There is no enforcement of the crosswalks on Central Avenue and pedestrian traffic safety in general. Some drivers do not respect the crosswalk lights and will not stop. Pedestrian traffic has to be extra cautious even with the crosswalk lights. There needs to be more enforcement.
- There are residents that get angry when the crosswalk flashing lights are pressed and don't like to get slowed down on Central Avenue. There needs to be a cultural shift on attitudes towards pedestrians and slowing down.
- There is a lot of resistance to traffic calming measures by some residents in McKinleyville. Changing attitudes towards pedestrians, cyclists, and traffic calming measures should be addressed in the planning.
- Anything south of School Rd on Central Avenue is very difficult for pedestrians especially where the shoulders narrow towards the top of the hill and further down towards North Bank Road
- The School Road 101 overcrossing is dangerous for pedestrians. People speed here to get onto the highway. There is also speeding coming off the highway turning east on School. Drivers often don't look or stop and it's a long crossing distance for pedestrians.
- There has been a lot more pedestrian traffic on North Bank Road. Going up Azalea is very dangerous and there are many more people walking here from the beginning of the Pandemic. People are speeding on Azalea and North Bank Road.
- Coming off of the bridge and approaching that intersection of Central Avenue and North Bank Road is very dangerous
- Overgrown hedges and shrubs push people off sidewalks or out into the street all over McKinleyville

3) Bicyclist

- Cycling on Azalea is dangerous because of drivers speeding and not respecting the 3 feet rule. There are no shoulders and the connection to the Mad River Bridge is scary.
- Going into town is dangerous from North Bank Road because of speeding and narrow shoulder.
- The signal at the School Road and Central Avenue intersection does not seem to be triggered by bikes. The configuration is also not very good because cyclists are guided to the left lane.
- Cyclists have almost been hit in the bike lane because drivers are not paying attention and almost turn into cyclists.
- The roundabout on School Road can be very difficult as a cyclist.
- The grade of the bike lane impacts cyclists. Some types of grade slow down cyclists going up the hill.
- Going downhill through the roundabout on School road is difficult because drivers do not want to let you in front of them.
- Turning left to any business on Central Avenue is sketchy and dangerous for cyclists.
- Installing those posts that bend when you hit them to provide a separation between cars and bikes/peds heading up from North Bank up and merging up Central Ave.

4) Transit rider or operator

- Redwood Transit has a route that stops about once an hour in McKinleyville
 - Comfortable and has wifi
 - There are bike racks but commonly they are full and riders have to wait another hour before the next bus.

Additional Comments:

- Identify all possible routes for multimodal use even if they are on private property. This worked for the Hammond Trail. Do not limit designs to just County ROW. “Don’t narrow ourselves down” Look at the whole picture and identify all possibilities and opportunities. There are benefits for private landowners to collaborate on these types of projects.
 - Levee trail
 - Easements
- There is a lot of momentum for McKinleyville transportation improvements
- The McKinleyville Transit Study will be released soon.

Next Steps

- Review of existing conditions, data, and plans
- Development of opportunities and constraints analysis
- Community Outreach to launch in June with flyer, survey, and small group observations/walking tours
- Community Workshop to be held in August or September
- Please share outreach materials and input opportunities with your organization list when they become available