October 6, 2026

Rob Holmlund, Executive Director
Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG)
611 "I" Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501
Email: rob.holmlund@hcaog.net

Dear Rob,

The City of Eureka is pleased to support the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) application to the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant program for the Manila Community Rail to Trail project. The project will develop plans for approximately 2 miles of proposed Class I trail along the Great Redwood Trail corridor, designated for trail development. This project will bring us closer to closing the multimodal transportation gap by developing plans for a safe, active transportation alternative to State Route 255 along a spur of the Great Redwood Trail corridor. The project, done in partnership with the Peninsula Community Collaborative, will include a robust community engagement process, to identify the route that best balances community needs and minimizes environmental impacts.

Walking and biking along SR 255 is dangerous and intimidating, which greatly limits the mobility options for Manila residents and visitors from Arcata and beyond wishing to access public beach and dune areas. The high-speed traffic on State Route 255 presents a barrier to safe active transportation between Manila and Arcata. Truck and auto traffic, often exceeding the 55-mph speed limit, bisects the community and is classified as a high stress (Level of Traffic Stress 4) facility for pedestrians and bicyclists meaning that it is a level of friction and danger acceptable only to the most fearless travelers.

This is an opportune time to begin planning for this section of trail. The Manila Community Rail to Trail project will complement the City of Arcata's rail to trail planning project within the Great Redwood Trail Agency railroad right-of-way north of SR255 from Arcata to the Mad River Slough bridge. The proposed Manila Community Rail to Trail project will connect to Arcata's trail planning project to meet the mobility needs of residents and visitors of the Samoa Peninsula, as well as providing a critical recreational facility for the region. In addition, the Caltrans 2025 SR255 Corridor management plan update recognized the need for this trail stating that the District supports the development of the Great Redwood Trail (GRT) spur on the Samoa Peninsula. Caltrans is also in the process of developing a plan for a pedestrian crossing at Lupin Avenue and SR255, further enhancing active transportation by creating a safe crossing for accessing trails, public lands, a local school, store and park facilities.

The City of Eureka was the first government agency in the region to initiate the development of the Humboldt Bay Trail back in 2008. Eureka has and continues to be heavily invested in alternative modes of transportation, climate resilience and outdoor recreation.

Eureka enthusiastically supports HCAOG's application for funding the Manila Rail to Trail Project to plan for a much-needed transportation facility to provide safe walking, rolling, and bicycling connections from Manila to Arcata.

Sincerely,

Kim Bergel
Mayor

THE CITY OF
EUREKA
OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

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