

# Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah Linear Park Master Plan

Autumn 2020

Prepared for the City of Ukiah,  
by Walk & Bike Mendocino



Adopted December 2, 2020

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## Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah Linear Park Master Plan

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## Introduction

In June 2020, what previously had been known as “The Rail Trail” was officially designated a park by the Ukiah City Council and renamed The Great Redwood Trail – Ukiah (GRT-Ukiah). The GRT- Ukiah is currently built at 1.8-miles long; this unique linear park that runs alongside the trail spans the city limits of Ukiah at 3 miles long and roughly 100 feet wide.

With the new designation in place, the City of Ukiah, working with Walk & Bike Mendocino, began the process of developing a Master Plan for the GRT- Ukiah. The Master Plan will serve as a guiding document for the park and help determine the current and future needs of the GRT- Ukiah. As funding becomes available, the Master Plan will also help guide decisions regarding what facilities and amenities, from benches and murals to dog parks and pollinator gardens, are added as the park develops.

Today, the trail is used by pedestrians, joggers and cyclists for exercise and recreation, and by office professionals on a lunchtime stroll. It is already the centerpiece of a growing active transportation network throughout Ukiah, that will in the coming decade connect to Sonoma County to the South and Humboldt County to the North.

## Vision

An inclusive and connected linear park, recreation, and active transportation trail system that encourages opportunities for health and wellness, building community, and joy to the Ukiah Community and Mendocino County.

## Goals

### Goal 1: Gather Public Input from a Diverse Cross Section of the Community

*Create a Process that captures the current state of the trail and Build a Plan that envisions its future*

- Assesses how the community currently uses the GRT-Ukiah through Advisory Group input, a community survey, and public workshops.
- Establishes a GRT-Ukiah Park Master Plan Advisory Group that convenes numerous times, in person and/or on bike on the trail to adequately envision the future park.
- Organizes multiple public workshops online or in-person.
- Conducts in-person outreach on the GRT-Ukiah.
- Conducts a bilingual community needs online survey open to all.
- Assesses what the community likes about the GRT-Ukiah, improvements they would like to see and concerns they have.

## **Goal 2: Revitalizing & Developing Community Spaces along the GRT-Ukiah Linear Park**

*Supporting and maintaining park and recreation amenities for future generations and climates*

- Develops and enhances shade throughout the linear park.
- Identifies high use areas and evaluate cost effective options to install permanent restrooms and drinking water facilities.
- Identifies high-traffic areas in need of additional parking (including ADA parking spots) to increase accessibility and usability.
- Implements projects that expand capacity and increase usability for existing facilities.
- Provides guidance on incorporating low impact, sustainable and green building practices in the development of park and trail facilities.
- Increases community access to nature.
- Commits to utilizing and exploring regenerative landscaping practices.
- Identifies areas for creek and habitat restoration

## **Goal 3: The GRT-Ukiah as a centerpiece of a regional Active Transportation Network**

*Envisioning a sustainable future by developing trails and building community connections*

- Continues to incorporate and grow sustainable best practices, including solar-powered infrastructure, grey-water irrigation, utilizing recycled and local materials.
- Utilizes adequate signage to promote sense of security, safety, and wayfinding.
- Assesses safety and visibility at crossing intersections, especially at high-traffic roads.
- Expands funding for programs and facilities through donations, grants, and alternative sources.
- Explores ecotourism potential and possibilities when the Great Redwood Trail is complete, ultimately connecting to Sonoma & Marin, and Humboldt Counties. The trail will bring in a diverse range of individuals from throughout the state and potentially from other states to travel to and experience the beauty of the wilderness in our region.
- Encourages usership for commuting as a main north-south active transportation route that will connect with Orr Creek Greenway and other future east-west corridors and routes.

## Public Engagement Process

### Community Needs Assessment Survey

Online and printed surveys in English and Spanish invited community input for the GRT-Ukiah Linear Park and sought to understand existing and potential trail usership, distance of residents and employees from trail, demographics, and needed recreational programs and facilities. From June 15 to September 7, 2020, 215 participants filled out the survey and shared their feedback. Analyzed results from this survey are integrated into the Recreation Programming Recommendations and the Park System Recommendations on the following pages. **See addendum for full survey results and comments.**

Bi-lingual informational survey flyers were designed and delivered via directly to businesses adjacent to the proposed Great Redwood Trail- Ukiah at Plant Rd: C & S Waste Disposal, City of Ukiah Animal Shelter, Mendocino Transit Authority, Ukiah Valley Athletic Club business outreach, in-person and via email, and through Walk & Bike Mendocino's email newsletters. Flyers were created and distributed at community businesses and on community boards and along the Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah

Printed surveys in English and Spanish were distributed to neighboring businesses to the trail: Ukiah Valley Athletic Club and Dave's Bike. These two community businesses served as sites for community members to fill out surveys on the spot and as a place to collect physical copies of the survey. Social media outreach was through the Walk & Bike Mendocino and City of Ukiah Facebook pages, and shared in community groups and forums to reach a diverse demographic.

### Linear Park Advisory Group

An advisory group composed of 12 participants: stakeholders, community leaders, and organizations was formed and met twice: via zoom call on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and via two group bike rides on the GRT-Ukiah, on June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. The group represented the Parks and Recreation Committee, Open Space Committee, the Community Foundation, NCO's Walk & Bike Mendocino, Ukiah Vecinos en Acción, Ukiah Police Department, Mendocino County Arts Council, Ukiah City Council and City Staff.

### Community Forums

Two online community forums were held via video conference, and one in-person on-trail outreach event, had residents and local officials in attendance.

Outreach for these forums was conducted through online social media and e-mail newsletter. **See addendum for forum feedback and notes.**

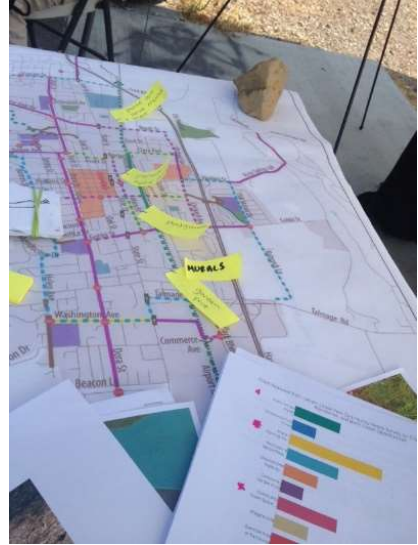


*Advisory group bike ride at the future Phase 4 of GRT-Ukiah.*

- **A Community Input Forum** held online July 6, 2020 via video conference encouraged questions, comments, and dialogue with community members with discussion topics including existing and potential trail usage, the need for shade and suggested facilities along the potential trail and

greenway, wayfinding and directional signage, safety concerns, additional trail connections, and suggestions for improved crossings.

- **A Park Planning Forum** held online on August 26<sup>th</sup> discussed preliminary survey results, initial recommendation for facilities and amenities, addressed participant concerns, and included discussions with Ukiah Police Department and Ukiah City Council. Participants were encouraged to also add their feedback for the placement of recommended facilities using an online mapping system. An outreach event on August 22<sup>nd</sup> on the Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah also sought feedback from the public and trail users for the placement and recommendations for facilities and amenities on printed maps.



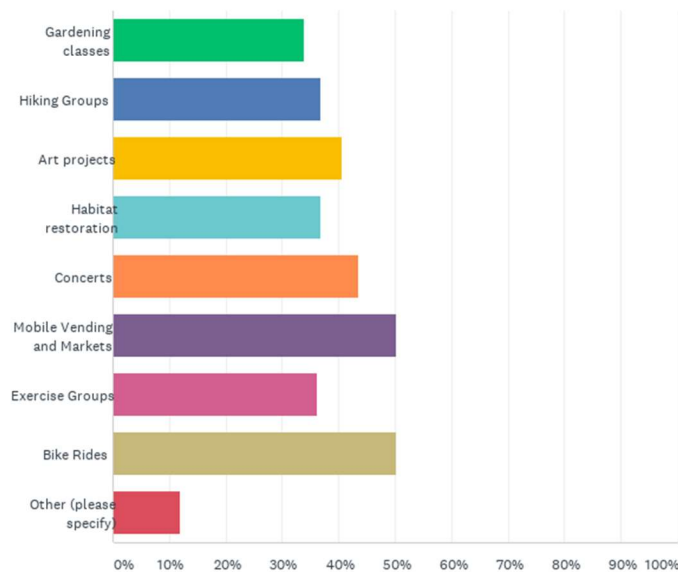
*Annotating maps with amenities at the GRT-Ukiah Park  
Planning on the trail.*

## Recreation Programming Recommendations

The community identified many programming ideas as part of the Community Needs Assessment process. This input revealed numerous directions to make City of Ukiah Parks & Recreation programming even more innovative.

- Culturally Responsive and Appropriate Programming.** Ukiah's diversity provides an opportunity to honor its Native American and Latino Heritage and for a more diverse set of recreation programs and events. By engaging with under-represented communities, the City of Ukiah can gather programming ideas that encourage and empower these groups. Heritage signage can be incorporated into appropriate areas along the Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah Linear Park.
- Neighborhood-Scaled Events.** Outreach results show a need for more community event spaces and opportunities to connect with neighbors in localized and small-scale events, such as: kids activities, organized (5k) runs, gardening classes, mural painting and public art projects, habitat restoration, hiking groups, dog-walking groups, group bike rides, mobile vending and pop-up markets, and concerts.
- Promoting Volunteerism as a Program Area.** More people are looking to engage and become more connected in their communities. Volunteering fosters a sense of place and provides ways of meaningful involvement, skill sharing, and connecting with those of similar interest. Develop volunteerism opportunities for diverse interests and formats, such as native plants gardening, mural painting, public art projects, and trash clean-up days.

Q9 What community events, activities and volunteer opportunities would you participate in along the Great Redwood Trail - Ukiah Linear Park?



## Park System Recommendations

Recommendations and Area-Specific Recommendations for the City of Ukiah Parks and Recreation system provide direction based on community needs assessments.

## Addressing Safety Concerns

Safety can be a barrier to more usership along the current Great Redwood Trail-Ukiah. Community concerns are focused on the lack of visibility and high vehicular speed and traffic at the trail crossings of busy intersections, such as Perkins St., Gobbi St., and Talmage Rd. Personal safety concerns stem from homeless encampments set up along the former railroad lines and the accompanying alcohol and drug use, and trash. Homelessness continues to be a challenge in many cities, and as long as the root of mental illness within a society is not properly addressed, people being forced into homelessness will continue. The recommendations below and on the following pages are some possible solutions that have been derived from surveys, community forums, and discussions to alleviate tensions surrounding the negative stigma of homeless people, to encourage an environment of positive mental health and human morale, increase the number of users on the trail for walking and biking for exercise, transportation, and recreation, and ultimately to create a feeling of belonging and safety in the community.

Q13 Any other comments for improvement for the Great Redwood Trial - Ukiah?

love along trail Ukiah drive issue feel will must community adding  
bike north homeless Please trail safe use go  
walking better people camp need well great nice feel safe walk bike  
Thank

Word Cloud from the Community Needs Assessment Survey

### Sample of Community Comments Regarding Homelessness, Safety, and Crossings:

*"Homelessness seems like it will be the biggest issue. While I haven't used the trails (at all really) the unknown about the homeless is a huge reason why it will take a long time before I would consider using it."*

*"This was a great concept, but until something is done to make people feel safe, many like my family and I will not use it."*

*"Crossing Gobbi, or Perkins are both dangerous, drivers do not pay attention, or stop. Any improvements to the crossing would be appreciated."*

*"Trail crossings at Perkins, Gobbi and Talmage are unsafe. When I drive my car, there are so many signs in the vicinity of the crossings that I can't focus on whether there are pedestrians trying to cross the street. They rely on me to stop, but I may not see them in time."*

## Safe Access to the Park

More connections and more users will ultimately lead to a greater sense of safety. Potential solutions to increase safety include:

- Utilize tactile concave circular bumps or rumble strips, to slow down traffic and get drivers attention by making noise and vibrations when cars drive over.
- Paint the trail crosswalk a bright or distinctive color.
- Crossing signals to be placed in the same direction as pedestrian or bicycle traffic.
- Improve accessibility of connection at Cherry St. and Washington / Hastings.
- Add park and trail access to Waugh Lane: Access will increase usership by inviting a whole neighborhood to the park and trail.
- Restore Creeks and access along GRT-Ukiah Park, such as Orr and Doolan Creeks. Create hiking trails along the creeks that connect with GRT-Ukiah.
- Explore potential to integrate with MTA bus routes and stops.

## Signage

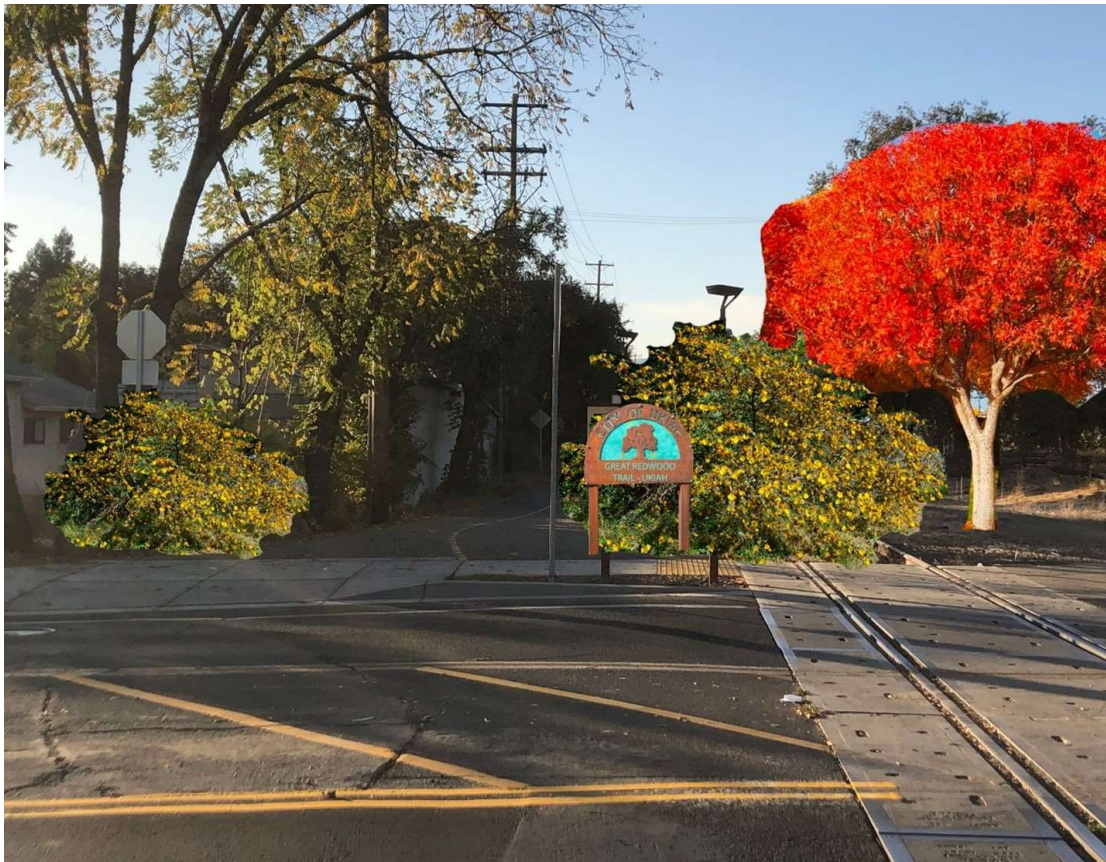
Appropriate signage will help locals and tourists alike to feel safe by knowing where they are and where they need to go.

- Add signage on the trail with the crossing street name.
- Remove unnecessary sidewalk /street signage and infrastructure associated with the non-operational railroad at trail crossings.
- Creatively repurpose obsolete railroad crossing infrastructure as GRT-Ukiah signage.
- Add signage for trail etiquette:
  - Pedestrians / slower traffic stay to right, bicyclists /faster traffic pass on the left.
  - Pick-up litter / no littering signs.
  - Signs posting non-emergency police number.
- Additional Landmark Signage: where on the trail users are located, how far from Ukiah destination points, shopping areas, milestones, and landmarks.
- Create maps and designated routes within the City of Ukiah where people can bike or walk safely. Create a community awareness campaign to share these routes.

## Branding

Consistent branding of signage, amenities, and features will help with the marketing of the trail and the City of Ukiah.

- Utilize consistent “style sheet” with fonts and colors for future trail and park signage.
- Prioritize the landscaping and signing of road crossings.
- Flannel Bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) planted at trail entrances requires little maintenance and water while staying green through the summer with bright yellow flowers late into the summer.
- Where room is available plant Chinese Pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*) to provide a consistent landscape with the School Street.
- Paint Crosswalks with City of Ukiah Style Sheet color and write in Bold Letters “Great Redwood Trail.”
- Utilize the rusted metal style signs to mark trail entrances to maintain consistency with other City of Ukiah Parks.



## Parking

The provision of additional parking should be kept to a minimum. One function of the Park corridor is to encourage the use of active transportation modes. Additional parking is counterproductive to this goal. Additionally, there is ample on street parking within one to two blocks of most of the trail. Emphasizing adding safe, accessible sidewalks from these neighborhood, on-street parking locations as opposed to adding parking spaces makes better use of scarce land within the City limits and is generally consistent with the recreational objectives of trail users.

Accessible parking, consistent with Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines should be located near gathering places and at access locations that lack on-street parking. ADA parking should be placed at Norton St., Talmage Road, and Norgard Lane. ADA parking should be considered in the future when gathering spots are developed.

## Primary Recommended Amenities and Facilities

- Shade and Planting Trees for Shade
- Community Event Spaces
- Pollinator and Native Plants Garden
- Public Art and Murals
- Playgrounds, Exercise Areas and Parcourse

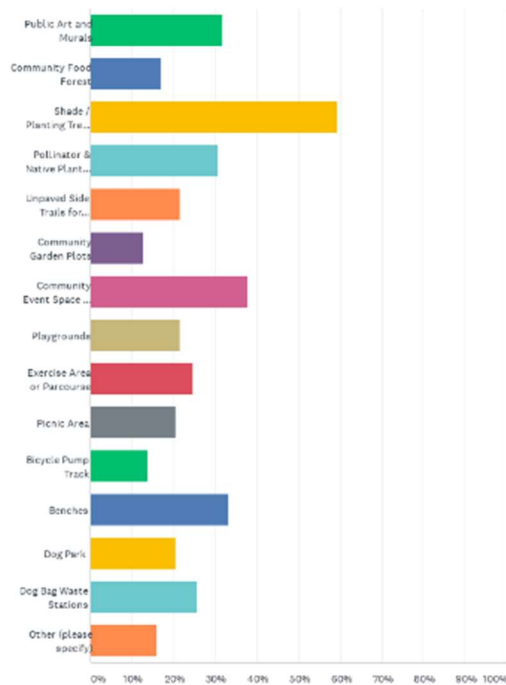
## Supplementary Recommended Amenities

- Benches
- Drinking Fountains, Bottle Refill Stations, Water for Animals
- Dog Bag Waste Stations
- Bike Parking



*An artistic bike rack in Gilroy, CA adds color, fun, and a sense of civic pride.*

Q7 As funding becomes available, the park may expand to include amenities such as benches and water fountains and facilities ranging from parcourse exercise courses to dog parks. From the following list, what are the top three amenities or facilities are needed along The Great Redwood Trail - Ukiah? Click here to see inspiration photos at the Walk & Bike Mendocino page or visit <http://walkbikemendo.org/great-redwood-trail-ukiah/linear-park>



*Amenities and Facilities Question from the Community Needs Assessment Survey*

## Shade and Planting Trees for Shade

- **Trees: Established trees provide habitat, shade, and beauty for generations.**
  - Plant Native and Drought Hardy Trees: Valley Oaks, Live Oaks, and Big Leaf Maples.
- **Solar Panels can provide shade, energy, and structural beauty.**
  - Utilize as part of a structure to provide shade
  - Provides electricity, allow park users to recharge electronics, especially during PSPS outages, and allowing for Wi-Fi access with time limit.
  - Installation and purchasing of solar panels could be provided through extensive grant funding sources, including disaster preparedness, community resiliency, and regenerative energy grants, which are available to promote solar energy. Solar panels as recharge stations along the trail adds a much needed and sensible form of resiliency during wildfire season. As wildfires cause evacuations in the region, with people relocated and floating to different areas in the county, in addition to the uncertainty of energy stability due to the City of Ukiah PSPS occurrences. Having a recharge area would take pressure off government resources and evacuation centers, who provide those services in downtown areas.



*An example of a sculptural solar panel shade structure.*

## Community Event Space

- Outdoor event spaces can host events such as pop-up marketplaces with vendors, farmers markets, live music, dances, and concerts.
- LatinX communities voiced a need for more family and community gathering areas.
- Will need ADA parking, electricity, bathroom facilities, and shade nearby.

## Pollinator & Native Plants Garden

- A diverse pollinator garden using native and naturalized plants creates habitat for butterflies, bees, and birds.
- Can use graywater and purple pipe irrigation.
- Incorporating regenerative design systems ensures a thriving and blossoming environment for future generations. An example of this is following the 3 Ethics (Earth Care, People Care, Fair Share) and 12 Principles of Permaculture Design: observe and interact, catch and store energy, obtain a yield, apply self-regulation and accept feedback, use and value renewable resources and services, produce no waste, design from patterns to details, integrate rather than segregate, use small and slow solutions, use and value diversity, use edges and value the marginal, and creatively use and respond to change.



*The native pollinator garden integrates public art in the recently redesigned Central Park, City of Davis.*

## Public Art and Murals

- Using public art can promote a sense of pride and belonging in the community.
- Studies show that murals with faces/ eyes can help people feel seen and connected. Murals with faces can also discourage vandalism and illicit behavior.
- Art can display community values and heritage.
- Incorporating encouraging quotes can have a positive impact on mental health.
- Creating public art through volunteerism encourages community building.



*Native American Heritage mural, City of Davis, CA.*



*Motivational bilingual YOU ARE LOVED/ERES AMADO murals by Alex Cook. Left: Division St, Chelsea, MA. Right: Elmhurst Park, Boston, MA [Youarelovedmurals.com](http://Youarelovedmurals.com)*

## Playgrounds, Exercise Areas and Parcourse

Over 50% of the survey respondents use the trail for exercise. Incorporating a variety of play and exercise structures will encourage a healthy and active community.

The following recommendations take into consideration the uncertain future regarding health guidelines, and a need to promote positive mental health.

- **Natural Playgrounds** can use local and free materials, allows for adequate space for children (and adults!) to play, and inspires deeper connections with nature.
- **Labyrinth Mazes** can be integrated into playgrounds for kids, or into other parts of the park for adults / mixed use. Labyrinths are meditation tools used for centuries by many societies and cultures, to help people find calm and become more relaxed.
- **Parcourses and Exercise Areas** are easy to integrate into small spaces and promotes community health.

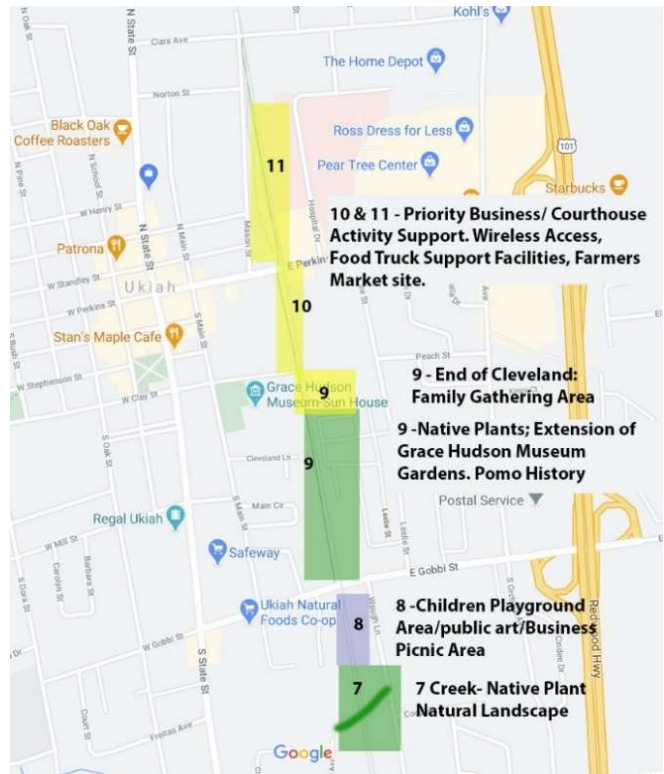
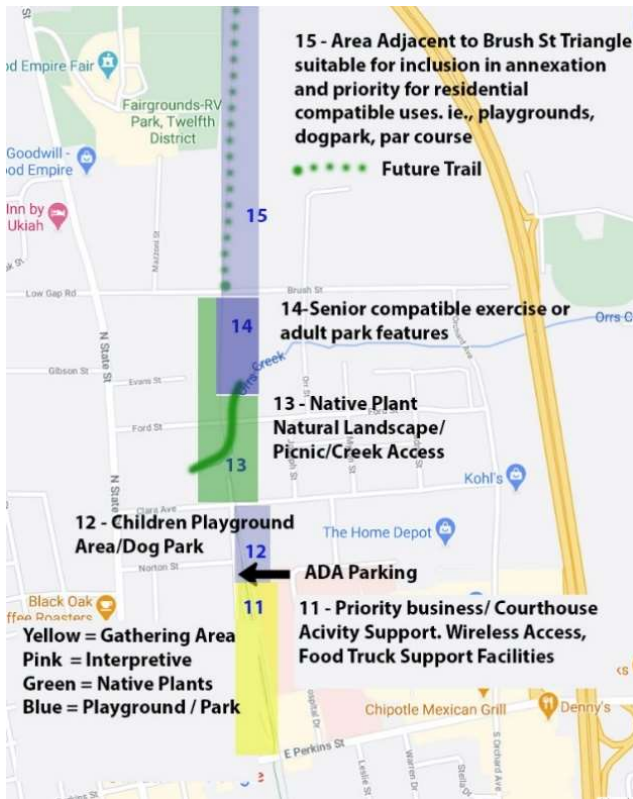


*Natural Playground, Woodbriar Park, Greeley, Colorado*

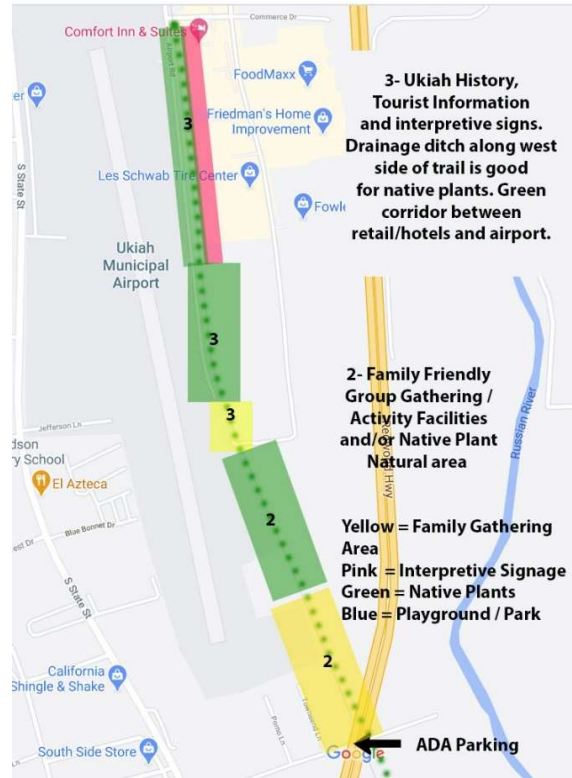
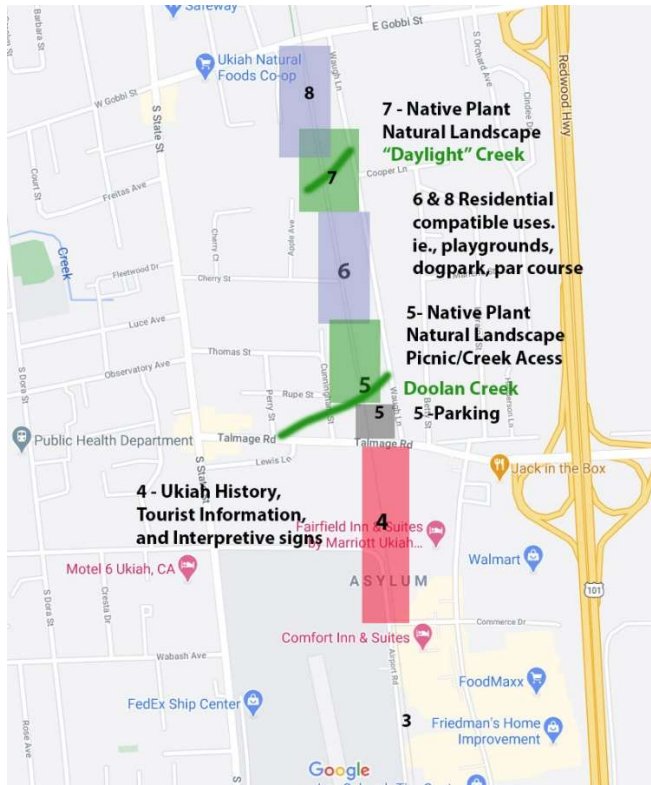


*An example of a labyrinth maze in a playground.*

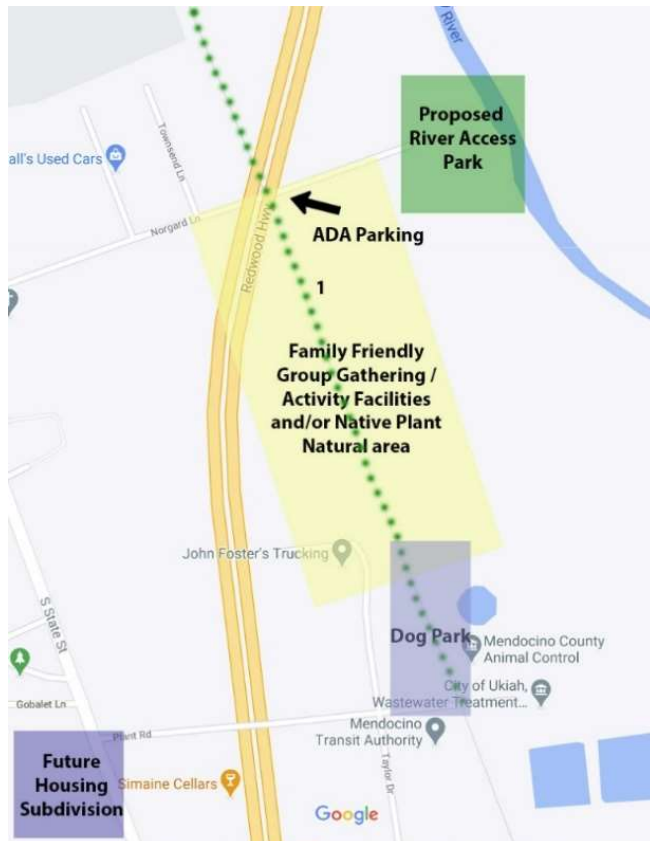
## Planning the Park: Amenities along the GRT-Ukiah Linear Park



Left: GRT-Ukiah North Trail, Brush to Perkins, Right: Perkins to Gobbi



Left: GRT-Ukiah Trail, Gobbi St to Commerce Dr, Right: Commerce to Norgard St.  
 Below: Norgard St. to Plant Rd.



## Addendum

### **COMMUNITY INPUT FORUM**

July 6, 2020

- **SAFETY:**
  - The crossing at Talmage (and Gobbi, Perkins) is dangerous, drivers are ignoring crosswalks. How to improve the crossing at Talmage, whether with a crosswalk arm, push button, or more street signage?
    - focus signage and remove unnecessary signage and infrastructure associated with the non-operational railroad,
    - utilize tactile concave circular bumps that are installed en masse, to slow down traffic and get drivers attention by making noise and vibrations when cars drive over.
    - Painting the trail crossing a bright or distinctive color
  - Concave mirrors for blind corners, possibility for security cameras?
- **SIGNAGE:**
  - Painted on the trail and/or signs: pedestrians / slower traffic stay to right, pass on the left
  - Horse accessibility: horse hike bike triangle, yield right of way sign
  - Additional Signage for telling people where in Ukiah they are, how far from destination points, shopping areas, milestones, and landmarks
  - Signage on the trail with crossing street name
- **AMENITIES:**
  - bring the purple pipe irrigation into phase 3
  - important that drinking fountains have water bottle refill stations.
  - a prevailing theme that is fitting to the area, such as “Bigfoot”
  - need for community space and stage
  - parcourse throughout the trail park.
  - Multiple playgrounds specific to child age range

### **PARK PLANNING FORUMS, COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

August 22, 2020 & August 26, 2020

- **SAFETY:**
  - Increase overall usership to promote feeling safe using the park and trail
  - More connections and more users will lead to a greater sense of safety.
  - Improve connections at Cherry St. and Washington / Hastings
  - 902 Waugh Lane: Access through this (private) facility will increase usership by inviting a whole neighborhood’s access to the park and trail
  - Graffiti: the more we clean up graffiti, the more time it takes to come back, continue clean-up efforts
  - Use public art to discourage vandalism and promote sense of belonging
  - Studies show that murals with faces / eyes communicates that the place is loved by the community and leads to feeling seen, this could reduce homelessness and mental illness in the community

- The role of Ukiah Police Department enforces behavior on the trail: leash laws, no alcohol, zero tolerance on camping, citizens to call 707-463-6262 for non-emergency dispatch. Since the designated as a park, there are now more enforcement possibilities available, and there will be more compliance the more people are using the area.
- Create maps and designated routes with the City of Ukiah where people can bike or walk safely. Create a community awareness campaign to share these routes.
- **SIGNAGE:**
  - Utilize consistent “style sheet” with fonts and colors for future trail and park signage
  - Having street signs along the trail will help tourists and visitors to know where they are
- **AMENITIES:**
  - Solar panels
    - Utilize as part of a structure to provide shade
    - Provides electricity, allow park users to recharge electronics, especially in times with PSPS outages, and allowing for Wi-Fi access with time limit
    - Installation and purchasing of solar panels could be provided through extensive grant funding sources, including disaster preparedness, community resiliency, and regenerative energy grants, which are available to promote solar energy. Solar panels as recharge stations along the trail adds a much needed and sensible form of resiliency during wildfire season. As wildfires cause evacuations in the region, with people relocated and floating to different areas in the county, in addition to the uncertainty of energy stability due to City of Ukiah PSPS occurrences. Having a recharge area would take pressure off government resources and evacuation centers, who provide those services in downtown areas.
  - Art that displays community values
  - Set up more volunteer mural days. Need for a GRT-Ukiah Murals / Public Art Commission?
  - Pop-up marketplaces (resource “Head West Marketplace”), with vendors, music in community spaces; will need parking, bathroom facilities, and shade
  - More trash cans and water refill stations, water for animals
  - Restore Creeks and access along GRT-Ukiah Park, such as Orr and Dooley Creeks. Create hiking trails to connect with GRT-Ukiah

### **Survey Comments – English Translation of Spanish survey comments.**

1. I do not have children that are mine but I do have brothers and other children that I take care of sometimes. 7/6/2020 7:45 PM
2. More bilingual signs along the trail please, better lighting at night for walk. More garbage and recycling bins available. Public wifi access to read e-books or listen to podcasts during the walk. 6/23/2020 10:42 PM
3. That the homeless drugged or under alcohol are not housed there because we are afraid that they may attack us, we feel fear because we think they may attack us. 6/23/2020 6:15 PM
4. Why don't you want to set up stages to put on marching bands on weekends? 6/22/2020 2:37 PM
5. More safety on the road 6/22/2020 10:39 AM
6. Control more the flow of homeless, better clean the area so that there are no needles and there is danger of children getting hurt when grabbing them, more spaces to rest and shade. 6/22/2020 9:51 AM