

Agenda Item No: 12.a.MEETING DATE/TIME: 9/17/2025ITEM NO: 2025-1013

City of Ukiah

## AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Conduct a Public Hearing and Consideration of the Lookout Peak Trail Project Including the Adoption of a Resolution Adopting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (ISMND) Prepared for the Lookout Peak Trail Project; and Authorize the City Manager to Negotiate a Donation of Trail Construction by the Ukiah Valley Trail Group.

**DEPARTMENT:** Community Services**PREPARED BY:** Neil Davis, Community Services Director**PRESENTER:** Neil Davis, Community Services Director and Katherine Schaeffers, Planning Manager**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Comments in Favor
2. Comments Opposed or Concerned
3. Lookout Peak Trails Draft ISMND9\_9Clean
4. Staff Responses to Comments
5. Road Maintenance Plan
6. Draft Resolution Adopting the Lookout Peak CEQA ISMND

**Summary:** Council will consider adoption of a resolution adopting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (ISMND) prepared for the Lookout Peak Trail Project; and consider authorizing the City Manager to negotiate a donation of trail construction by the Ukiah Valley Trail Group.

**Background:** The City of Ukiah's 2040 general plan, in both the Public Facilities Element and Environment and Sustainability Element, speaks to the goals of ensuring residents have access "to recreational facilities and trails" and opportunities for "the enjoyment of scenic beauty and recreation." In pursuit of these goals and others, the City acquired over 700 acres of western hills property (Attachment B of the ISMND) now known as the Western Hills Watershed Protection Area (WHWPA). Subsequently, in February of 2024, the City adopted the WHWPA Management Plan, which under the Public Uses and Access section established objective 13a to provide public trails for passive use recreation.

Additionally, the Public Spaces Commission has consulted with staff and the public regarding the potential development of recreational access in the Western Hills Watershed Protection Area (WHWPA) for more than two years. These discussions have taken place during the development of a 'Baseline Assessment of the Area' (8/2/2023), the review and approval of the WHWPA Management Plan (2/7/2024), during the Community Forum on development of Ukiah as an Outdoor Recreation Hub (3/12/2024), and during the discussion of designating the WHWPA as a community forest (1/14/2025).

The City has a long and fruitful history of collaboration with the Ukiah Valley Trail Group (UVTG) (Attachment D of the ISMND). The UVTG designed, funded, constructed, and maintains both the City View Trail and Sol y Sombra Trail on City-owned property at Low Gap Park. The UVTG donated fifty thousand dollars to the City to help with the acquisition of a property in the WHWPA to provide a link to a public section of Doolin Canyon Rd to open the opportunity for public access to the area. In early 2024, the UVTG hired Jacobszoon & Associates Inc. to conduct a Biological Assessment of the WHWPA. Later in 2024, the City of Ukiah hired Jon Schubbe Consulting to map conceptual trail alignments for a trail system to be built in the WHWPA. In February 2025,