

Our County Supervisors are once again considering the General Plan Update, and wow, has the GPU ever been a hot topic ~~through~~ ^{past few} the years! I am happy to hear that some of the county supervisors have been working to advance the Humboldt Bay Trail, which was recently awarded state funding for engineering and environmental studies; they will soon be making a decision on the proposed community forest in the McKay Tract. If approved, over time this would provide miles of trails among the redwoods in Eureka's backyard—in fact, in my literal back yard! ~~But,~~ ~~there is a time to stop talking and ACT, so all the talking, talking, talking, thinking and planning don't end up, a waste of time.~~

I was glad to hear that a dozen people last Monday stood by for about 3 hours in order to voice their strong sentiments about the need for including trails in the GPU. Trails for bicyclists, hikers and joggers, strike me as a good idea! So I ^{pay my tribute} ~~lost my lot~~ with those who stood out in the ~~cold and~~ lobbied for something near and dear to their heart. Thank you!

In my view the benefits of these trails are five-fold.

#1. Trails put the aesthetic beauty of Humboldt on display. We have a gorgeous landscape ~~around~~ here and more trails make sense if we intend to make our natural beauty accessible: both for tourists and ~~for~~ those ~~of us~~ who live here! #2. Trails that connect to civic areas would cut down on the amount of traffic, because they would actually improve non-motorized access between Eureka, Arcata, McKinleyville, and some day I hope, Fortuna. As it is now, you have to ~~drive~~ ^{drive} to ~~most~~ of our trails and that is self defeating because starting the car and belching out CO2 in order to go down and run or walk on a trail, is not really ^{good} helping our environment. On the other hand, you could gain ~~easy~~ ^{easy} access to those trails by walking or biking to the trail itself, more people would use them; fewer cars would drive to and fro, which is a good thing!

#3. More trails would help those of us who live in Humboldt get fit. The health gurus are always telling us that good clean exercise is needed, ^{to have us in America} and for those who can't afford, or wish not, to get into their ~~big~~ car and drive to Cal Courts or Health Sport, trails would provide an affordable option for fitness. #4. Kids and families ~~and parents~~ would be encouraged to get out and see the natural beauty rather than sit inside and rot their brains with TV and other electronic devices. #5. More trails would result in people meeting one another, seeing eye to eye and having a conversation on the trail... currently we are so wrapped up inside that hunk of glass, tin and plastic called an automobile, we don't look each other in the eye or carry on neighborly conversations. So, ^{while exercising} ~~what's that? Quintuple good.~~ More foot trails in our area would:

1. Show off our natural beauty
2. Cut down on pollution and traffic
3. Keep Humboldt County residents more active and fit
4. Pry the kids ~~(parents and~~ adults too) away from tv-computer-smart phones
5. And build community

That's win, win, win, win, win. Come on, supervisors, I know there are lots of people grabbing for county funds, but an ounce of prevention here is worth a pound of cure. An enhanced trail system in Humboldt would make Humboldt a better place to live and more attractive ~~place~~ to visit!

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment