

Mike Downey

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On occasion my wife and I will take our bicycles to the Herrick park and ride and access the coastal path known as Hikshari trail. This paved, well cared for trail has been in the works for many years and we have witnessed the transformation from theory and initial development to what I believe is completion through the City of Eureka.

One of the major hurdles for the City of Eureka was to reclaim the land behind the Bayshore Mall, known as Devils Playground. With much effort and continued maintenance it appears that they have been successful in the clean up and relocation of those displaced. If you walk, run or bike through the area now you will find that it is free of encampments, discarded hypodermic syringe needles and those under the influence hanging around.

The progress on this trail has been methodical and consistent with new portions of the trail added routinely focused on providing a safe environment for all to enjoy. The final portion of the trail was recently completed linking the Herrick Park and Ride all the way to an area behind Target, about an 12 mile loop out and back.

The trail has a fresh asphalt road base with a number of new bridges designed for foot and bike traffic. At one point a series of bridges are incorporated to continue the path over a

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wetlands behind Target. The trail is free from all traffic except for a stretch through Old Town, which we have found to be easily navigated.

I believe the plan is to continue the trail north from Eureka and link up with existing trails in Arcata. This will enable bicyclists to safely navigate the corridor between the cities, which has been needed for years. I would also encourage a link south to College of the Redwoods as well. By developing these routes I believe we will see increased use by bicyclists and long distance runners.

Also kudos must be given to the Eureka Police Department for their efforts in keeping the trail open to those who want to enjoy the solitude and beauty of the area. On almost every occasion that I have biked the Hikshari trail I have seen officers in the four wheel gator out checking the area for illegal encampments, criminal activity and providing a safe environment. They also remove trash and other items that may be a hazard to those recreating in the area.

So if you haven't had a chance to enjoy this area please do so and again congratulations and kudos to the City of Eureka for providing such an area to enjoy for all of Humboldt County. This has been Mike Downey for Community Comment.