



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 2, 2026

TO: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner, Humboldt County Association of Governments

FROM: Dan Burden, Josh Meyer, and Sarah Bowman, Blue Zones Project Team

SUBJECT: Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning, **Hoopa Nation Walk Audit Recommendations**

INTRODUCTION

Hoopa Nation was selected to participate in the *Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning Project*. The project was funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant awarded to the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) in partnership with the County of Humboldt and other local jurisdictions that contributed to the grant's required matching funds. This document summarizes the findings of a one-day field visit by Hoopa Valley Tribe staff and Tribal Council members, Humboldt County and HCAOG staff, and the Blue Zones team of Dan Burden and Josh Meyer to create safe and comfortable walking and bicycling routes for residents and visitors and ultimately improve safety for all modes of travel. The process, outcomes and recommended improvements are summarized in the report below.

A walking audit is a special lens for seeing and developing an understanding of what is working and what is not to achieve a more livable, walkable, multimodal, and healthy neighborhood. Where the walking audit reveals several bold initiatives underway in a community, it also shows what is not being done. In many cases, an engineering study must follow the recommendations of an assessment. Not all the needed data is available to the evaluators. For example, where an Edge Lane Road or a raised crossing may be an ideal solution to reduce speeds, increase courtesy among drivers, and increase walking, an additional study is often appropriate. A temporary pop-up demonstration, or another short-term solution, can often be beneficial.

WALKING, BICYCLING AND DRIVING ROUTE ASSESSMENT

The Blue Zones team visited Tish Tang and Airport Roads with Hoopa Nation leaders including, but not limited to, staff and management from K'ima:w Medical Center, Hoopa Fire Department and Office of Emergency Services, and Hoopa Roads Department. Also participating were staff from Humboldt County Public Works, HCAOG and the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP). Walking portions of both Tish Tang Road and Airport Road, the group observed and discussed conditions.

Activities in the field included:

- Assessing infrastructure conditions on Airport Road and Tish Tang Road, including the intersection of Tish Tang and Airport.
- Observing the daytime arrival and departure at the medical clinic.



- Interviewing medical clinic and emergency services staff and tribal leaders to learn more about daily operations and safety and access issues at the medical clinic, as well as for travel routes from surrounding areas.

Approximately 15 people participated in some or all of the walks and discussions.



Left to right: Tom Matson—Humboldt County Public Works; Jeff Hodge—Hoopa Valley Tribe DOT; Ryan Zumalt—K’ima:w Medical Center CEO, Supervisor Steve Madrone—Humboldt County Board of Supervisors; Councilmember Jordan Hailey—Hoopa Valley Tribal Council-Mesket Field; Tony Segheti—Humboldt County Public Works; Staff crew and Harley Smith, Projects Manager—K’ima:w Medical Center; Josh Meyer—CivicWell; Rod Johnson, Paramedic/Ambulance Director; Oona Smith—HCAOG; Colin Fiske—Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (and Dan Burden—Blue Zones, not shown/taking photo).

Image: Map of Walking Audit Route



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Airport Road is forested and well-shaded, paved, 20-feet wide, with swales on each side of the 3,400-foot-long road. There are no continuous, demarcated spaces to walk or ride bikes. There is limited night lighting. There are a handful of driveways to adjacent properties and nearby residences.

Tish Tang Road to Airport Road is forested, paved, 20-feet wide, 7,400 feet long, with short hills and curves and steep side slopes in some portions, especially where the road runs next to the Trinity River. The posted speed is 35 mph. Participants in the walk reported that many motorists exceed the speed limit. There is no street lighting, but plenty of utility poles and swales on both sides. Informal paths are worn alongside portions of the road where space allows. There are periodic driveways to adjacent properties and nearby residences.

Tish Tang and Airport Road Intersection has forested surroundings, poor lighting, a very wide layout, and a high-speed right-turn lane from Tish Tang Road to Airport Road.

The Blue Zones team reviewed and distilled findings, and prepared the following preliminary recommendations based on observations and analyses of traffic operations and infrastructure conditions. This included discussions with Humboldt County Public Works and Hoopa Valley Tribe staff.

- Consideration of an Edge Lane Road treatment on both Tish Tang and Airport Roads.



- Temporary installation of a pop-up demonstration of a neighborhood mini-circle, curb extensions and crossing islands at the intersection of Tish Tang and Airport Roads.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are summarized in the table below.

Recommendations	Proposed Time Frame
Airport Road	
Reduce the posted and target speed to 30 mph. Provide an Edge Lane Road the length of Airport Road (from Tish Tang to the airport). An Edge Lane Road applies a skip-dash marking, keeping the motorist centered in a 9-foot to 11-foot lane, leaving space for walking and bicycling within the remaining paved surface. Sight distance needs will need to be evaluated in the vicinity of curves.	6-12 months
Provide new street lighting on one side of the road. Consider motion sensor activation. Motion sensor streetlights are energy-efficient, adaptive lighting solutions that automatically increase brightness upon detecting pedestrians, cyclists, or vehicles. They typically utilize PIR (passive infrared) sensors (https://tvilight.com/products/street-light-motion-sensor) for accuracy or radar sensors for wider coverage, reducing light pollution and power consumption when areas are inactive.	1-2 years
Tish Tang Road	
Reduce the posted and target speed to 30 mph Provide an Edge Lane Road the length of Tish Tang Road (from The Trinity River Highway junction to Tish Tang to Airport Road). An Edge Lane Road applies a skip-dash marking, keeping the motorist centered in a 9-foot to 11-foot lane, leaving space for walking and bicycling within the remaining paved surface. Sight distance needs will need to be evaluated in the vicinity of curves.	6-12 months
Provide new street lighting on one side of the road and consider motion sensor activation. Motion sensor streetlights are energy-efficient, adaptive lighting solutions that automatically increase brightness upon detecting pedestrians, cyclists, or vehicles. They typically utilize PIR (passive infrared) sensors (https://tvilight.com/products/street-light-motion-sensor) for accuracy or radar sensors for wider coverage, reducing light pollution and power consumption when areas are inactive.	1-2 years
Tish Tang and Airport Road Tee Intersection	
Provide a temporary modified intersection to include a tighter corner radius and quick-build mini-circle. Run a 6-month pilot and evaluate the results to determine whether to either make the changes permanent, modify them, or remove them.	6-12 months
Other Locations	
Consider additional traffic calming and crossing improvements at the intersection of Trinity River Highway (96) and Tish Tang Road.	1-3 years



Acknowledgements

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following individuals for their valuable insights and active participation in developing these recommendations. Their expertise and contributions will continue to be instrumental in advancing outcomes from this walking audit:

- Oona Smith, HCAOG, Senior Regional Planner
- Tom Mattson, Humboldt County Public Works, Director
- Tony Seghetti, Humboldt County Public Works, Deputy Director
- Jeff Hodges, Hoopa Roads Department
- Ryan Zumalt K'ima:w Medical Center, CEO
- Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities, Executive Director

APPENDIX A – Background Materials

Additional materials and deliverables regarding the *Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning Project* can be accessed at: www.hcaog.net/programs-projects/bike-walk-roll, under “Highlights.” Specific to the Walking/Biking Audits, this webpage provides photos, workshop presentations (slides and video recording), and a “Humboldt Toolkit & Walking Audits Reports,” which includes photos that illustrate examples of the traffic-calming measures that are recommended in this technical memo.

APPENDIX B – Additional Resources

There are many high-quality resources available to support multimodal transportation needs assessments and to help identify improvements and develop projects, policies, and programs that enhance mobility options, improve safety, and strengthen connected communities.

Active Transportation and Traffic Safety Resources

- [A Systematic Safety Study of Pedestrians in Tribal Areas](#)
- [Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks](#)
- [Local and Rural Road Safety Program](#), USDOT Federal Highway Administration
 - Includes [link](#) to page with training, tools, guidance and countermeasures for local practitioners.
- [Narrow Lanes Save Lives: A Way to Make to Make Our Communities Safer and Healthier](#)
 - Extensive study showing that narrower lanes can reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities.
 - Includes policy recommendations for lane width reductions.
- [City Limits: Setting Safe Speed Limits on Urban Streets](#)
 - See also: [City Limits: Quick Guide on Conducting a Safe Speed Study and Using the Risk Matrix](#)
- [California AB 1014](#)
 - Modifies the traditional 85th percentile rule by allowing Caltrans and local authorities to set speed limits lower than prevailing traffic speeds.
- [Improving Intersections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists: Information Guide](#), USDOT Federal Highway Administration



- 2022 resource informing the state of the practice on intersection planning and design to help eliminate fatalities and serious injuries while also making roads better places for walking and bicycling.
 - Supplements FHWA's series of intersection informational guides and makes direct connections to other FHWA bikeway and pedestrian facility selection guides.
- Edge Lane Roads:
 - <https://www.edgelaneroads.com/>
 - [Safety Considerations for All Road Users on Edge Lane Roads](#)
 - <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/db68f2a2260c4efaa827d77bc84f1a3c>
 - <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/designing-bikeways-for-all-ages-and-abilities/bikeways-on-low-speed-low-volume-streets/advisory-bike-lanes/>
- Street Lighting:
 - [Street Light Motion Sensors](#)
 - [FHWA Roadway Lighting Resources](#)
- [Active Transportation Resource Center](#) (ATRC)
 - Webinars, trainings, events, resource library, and projects and programs to support active transportation initiatives.
- [Active Transportation Programs Design Guide](#), Washington State Department of Transportation
 - Helpful reference published in 2024 with engineering standards and preferred treatments to create safer, connected and low-traffic stress environments.
- UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) [Transportation Injury Mapping System \(TIMS\)](#):
 - Features the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Mapping tool that provides pedestrian and bicycle crash maps within ½- mile radius of public schools in California.
 - Also features the ATP Maps & Summary Data mapping tool that provides pedestrian and bicycle facility hot spots within specified project and/or community limits.
- [Street Story: A Platform for Community Engagement](#):
 - A community engagement platform provided by UC Berkeley SafeTREC in English and Spanish that allows residents, community groups, and agencies to collect information about transportation crashes, near misses, general hazards, and safe locations to travel. The tool is free to use, anonymous, and publicly accessible.
- [SafeTREC Complete Streets Safety Assessments](#):
 - SafeTREC provides free technical assistance to communities across California, creating safe spaces for people to walk and bike. Specific eligibility varies by program and includes cities and public schools/colleges with a population greater than 2,500, all counties, and all Federally Recognized Tribes.
 - The Complete Streets Safety Assessments home page also includes a number of on-line and downloadable resources:
 - [California Safe Speeds Toolkit \(2023\)](#)
 - [Complete Streets and their effect on increasing safety for all road-users \(2018\)](#)
 - [A Technical Guide for Conducting Traffic Safety Assessments for California Communities \(2015\)](#)



- [A Technical Guide for Conducting Pedestrian Safety Assessments for California Communities \(2013\)](#)
- [A Technical Guide for Conducting Bicycle Safety Assessments for California Communities \(2014\)](#)
- [Active Transportation Resource Center](#) (ATRC) Resource Library [Evaluation and Data Tools Page](#):
 - Includes tools and resources for data collection and analysis to assist with active transportation needs assessments and identifying options for improvements.

Tools and Resources for Walking and Bicycling Audits

- [California Center for Physical Activity Walk to School Walkability Checklist](#)
- [AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit](#) (available in English and Spanish)
- [AARP and League of American Bicyclists Bike Audit Tool Kit](#) (available in English and Spanish)
- SRTS National Partnership [Let's Go For A Walk: A Toolkit for Planning and Conducting a Walk Audit](#)
- Active Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) Resource Library [Walk and Bike Audits Page](#) and Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) [Audit Tools](#) Page:
 - Include additional guides, tools and checklists for planning and conducting audits to gather information about street conditions, engage community members, and inform planning and traffic safety projects.

Tools and Resources for Pop-up Demonstrations and Quick-build Projects

- [Planning for the Future: Quick-Build Pedestrian Improvements in Indian Country](#)
- [Quick-Build Projects for Small Towns, Rural and Suburban Contexts](#)
- AARP [The Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit](#)
- Team Better Block [Recipes](#) for temporary installations and longer duration quick build projects.
- Transportation for America [State of the Art Transportation Planning: A Do-it-Yourself Toolkit](#)
- Tactical Urbanist [Guides](#) web site and downloadable resources for planning, design, implementation and materials for art, bike lanes, crosswalks, parklets, transit stops, enhanced public spaces, open streets and more.
- People for Bikes [Quick Builds for Better Streets: A New Project Delivery Model for U.S. Cities](#)
- California Bicycle Coalition [Quick Build Guide: How to Build Safer Streets Quickly and Affordably.](#)
- Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) [Demonstration Project Implementation Guide](#)
 - See also MnDot Demonstration Project Engagement and Evaluation Toolkit which can be downloaded from link to the home page above.
- Washington Department of Transportation [Active Transportation Programs Quick Build Guide](#)