



Walking Plan Presentation

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For St. Helena City Council, June 23rd, 2026

Walking

- Healthy
- Low impact on its immediate environment
- A great way to meet people, talk, and make friends
- Safe for both young and old alike
- Available to everyone
- Builds community



Napa Valley and St. Helena

- Traditionally had limited open space access
- Fewer walking opportunities compared to other Bay Area locales
- Under-investment in public amenities for locals and visitors
- But... we're catching up! With efforts by both public and private entities including:
 - Land Trust of Napa County
 - Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District
 - Napa Valley State Parks Association
 - Napa Valley Vine Trail
 - Sustainable St. Helena



Walking ad hoc sub-committee

- Founded by the Parks & Rec Commission, Jan '19
- To deliver on the goals and implementing actions of the General Plan and Housing Element
 - Protect existing walking paths
 - Expand walking opportunities
 - Enhance this legacy in the future
- And create a world-class rural walking town



General Plan and Housing Element

- Contains a very large number of pedestrian-focused goals and implementing actions
- In the Circulation, Community Design, Open Space and Conservation, Climate Change, and Parks and Recreation elements
- Intended to improve walking access, pedestrian connectivity, and passive recreation
- *Sub-committee focus: create a course of action to enact them*

single-occupancy vehicle trips, as well as reflect trends in how St. Helena residents move around the city and larger Napa Valley region.

- St. Helena's senior population is expected to increase substantially by 2040. Planning for and developing a pedestrian network that accommodates the city's most vulnerable users, such as seniors, children, and individuals of

implementation of the best route for the trail through St. Helena. The City has established a Trails Committee and a Trails and Open Space Plan to promote pedestrian connectivity has been drafted and is expected to be adopted by the City Council in 2023. Finally, it is anticipated the comprehensive zoning code update, will include additional requirements for bicycle parking.

CR2.L Enhance the pedestrian environment within the commercial area, and support the development of walking paths, multi-use trails, and bicycle trails throughout St. Helena with the goal of connecting to a countywide system.

Implementing Actions

CC1.A Adopt and implement pedestrian and bicycle networks within St. Helena that may connect to a countywide multi-use trail that extends from Calistoga to American Canyon.

5-Year Estimates for the City of St. Helena , approximately 6 percent of St. Helena residents walk to work. This is a higher rate than the countywide average of 4 percent and reflects the City's continuing efforts to create and preserve safe walking environments and a pedestrian-friendly community. At the same time,

Participants

- Staff sponsors
 - Mark Prestwich, City Manager (to Feb '22)
 - Andre Pichly, Parks & Rec Director (to Nov '21)
 - Maya De Rosa, Community Director (from Dec '21)
- Sub-committee members
 - Anne Cottrell
 - Michelle Deasy*
 - Bob Frescura
 - David Knudsen*
 - Richard Seiferheld*
 - Pam Smithers*
 - Rebekah Weeman

Also started St. Helena Striders, Jan '24

- Parks & Recreation Commission '19
 - Matthew Demchuk, Chair
 - Rebekah Weeman, Vice Chair
 - Michelle Deasy
 - Susan Kenward
 - Tye Taylor
- City Council '19
 - Geoff Ellsworth, Mayor
 - Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor
 - Anna Chouteau
 - David Knudsen
 - Mary Koberstein



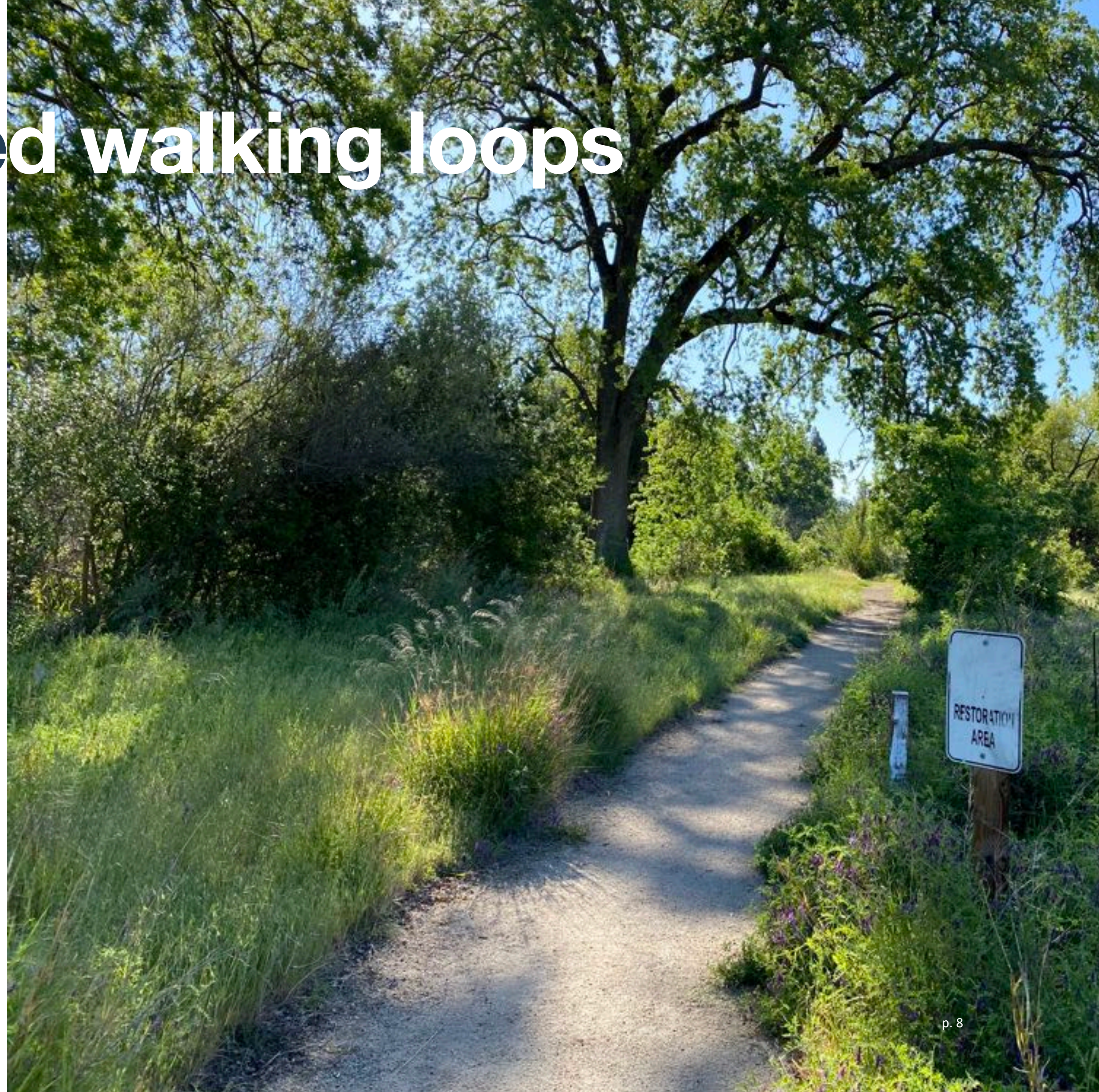
Activities 2019-22

- Met frequently with city staff, elected and appointed representatives, residents, and business owners
- Reviewed best practices in other municipalities in California and the US, and discussed with Napa County staff, for ideas, approach, and reference materials
- Identified plan elements and key locations in St. Helena for walking opportunities
- Presented to city boards, local paper's editorial board, and non-profit and service organizations in St. Helena and Upper Napa Valley
- *Completed comprehensive walking plan for approval by the city, Jan '22*



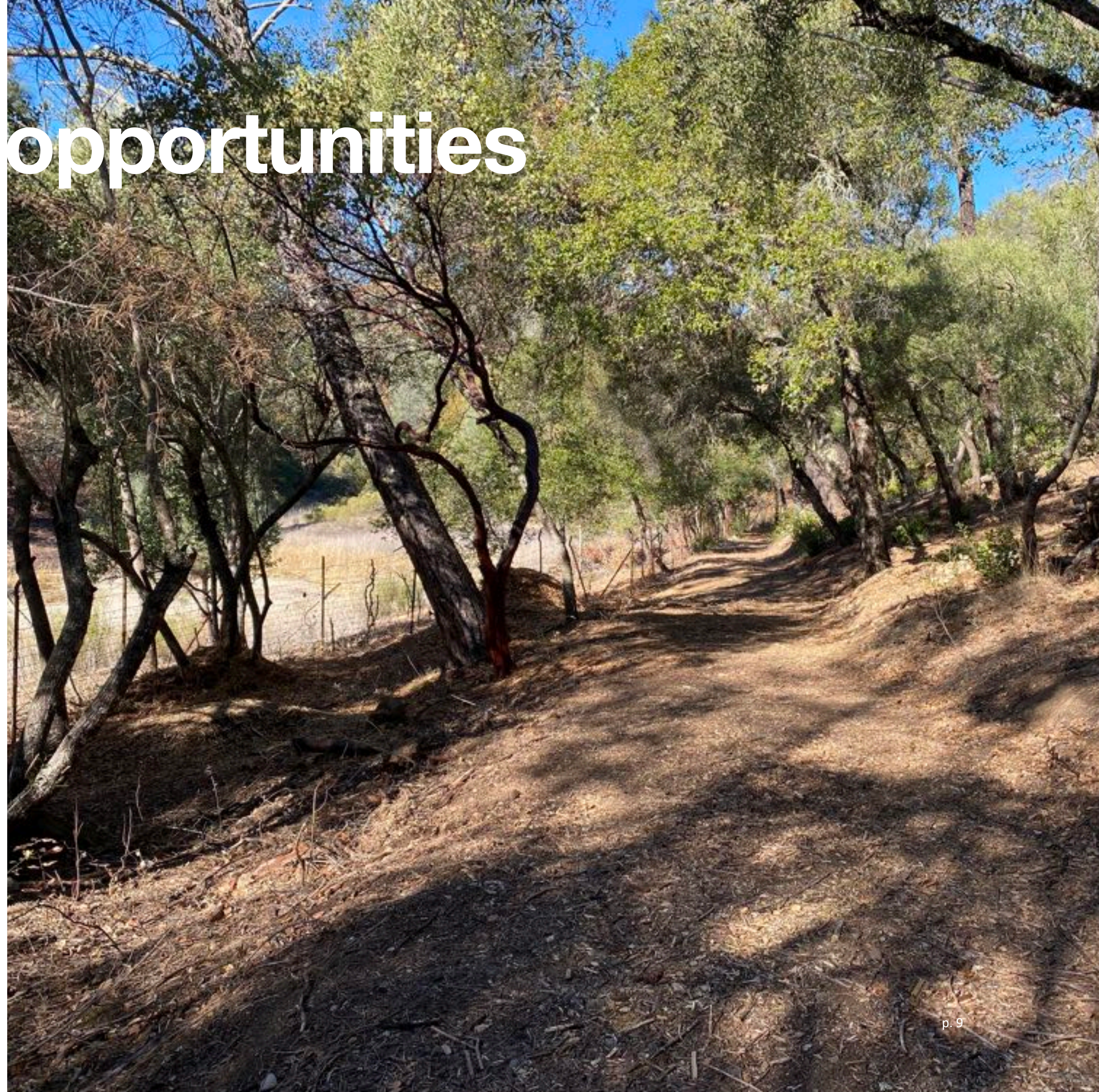
Section 1: Published walking loops

- For visitors, to enhance their experience of St. Helena
- GPS smart phone maps and physical maps, benches and trash cans, possible signage
- Various lengths out of downtown—and all easy routes
- Show waypoints, and historic and cultural landmarks



Section 2: Existing opportunities

- For locals, to give them walking access
- On city-owned property and easements, including
 - Bell Canyon Reservoir
 - Lower Reservoir
 - Pope St Bridge view
 - Valley Floor and Community Forest
 - Former York Creek Dam
- On trails that mostly already exist



Section 3: Voluntary easements or access

- For property owners who would like to open a path on the edge of their property
- Extend city general liability insurance
(investigated: no extra cost to city)
- Model agreement is 899 Adams St path
- Suggested rules
 - Walking only on existing dual-track trails
 - Sunrise-to-sunset only
 - Temporary closures during harvest or other times
 - Dogs on leash
 - No smoking



Section 4: Development agreements

- For developers, as part of the development check-list and permitting process
- Require either
 - Public path access
 - Pedestrian easements
 - Or, for smaller projects, other walkway opportunities funded by mitigation fees



City process 2022-

- Sub-committee delivered plan, Jan '22
- Metropolitan Planning Group completed CEQA determination, May '22
- Parks & Rec Commission approved plan 5-0, Nov '22
- New staff brought up to speed, taken on walking tours, and conducted planning meetings, Jan-May '23
- City manager personally commits to placing on Planning Commission and City Council agendas, June '23



St. Helena Trails and Open Space Plan

WALKING ROUTES, TRAILS, AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE

Addendum to the City of St. Helena General Plan 2040
Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2010042001)

LEAD AGENCY:

CITY OF ST. HELENA
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT
1480 MAIN STREET
ST. HELENA, CA 94574

PREPARED BY:



METROPOLITAN PLANNING GROUP
499 HUMBOLDT STREET
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404

MAY 2022

The checklist for each environmental area demonstrates that implementation of the Trails Plan is within the scope of the General Plan 2040 EIR, which was certified by the City of St. Helena in May 2019. In summary, no new significant impacts or more severe significant impacts would result from implementation of the Trails and Open Space Plan that were not previously identified and mitigated in the General Plan 2040 EIR, and no substantive new mitigation measures would be required for implementation of the Plan. For all environmental topics addressed in the checklist, there have been no substantial changes in environmental circumstances that would result in new or more severe significant environmental effects than were identified and evaluated in the General Plan 2040 EIR. Furthermore, the proposed project is required to implement all applicable mitigation measures identified in the EIR as well as policies and implementation measures contained in the City's adopted General Plan. Therefore, no subsequent or supplement EIR or other CEQA evaluation is required to adopt the proposed Trail Plan.

Walk St. Helena 2025-

- A grass-roots 501(c)(3) nonprofit, May '25
- Board members
 - Sandra Archibald McCorkle (funding, public-private)
 - Linda George Brown (volunteers, community)
 - David Knudsen (chair)
- Mission
 - Create a vibrant walking community, and promote and sponsor walks
 - Open and maintain existing and new walking trails and routes to create safe, scenic places to walk for visitors and residents of all ages
- Updated the Ad Hoc Subcommittee plan, Oct '25
- Through the initiative process, board members placed plan on the City Council agenda, May '26



**Walk
St.
Helena**

Implementation

- 4 year original plan, but will accomplish in 3 years, to be completed by mid-2029
- No city funding, only staff time, coordination, tweaks
- Entire budget to be raised from individuals, foundations, and grant support
- Volunteers to do work
 - Cleanup, maintenance, and monitoring of pathways
- Overall budget (less volunteer activity)
 - Marketing activities: \$20k
 - Pathways: \$284k
 - Elements
 - Signage
 - Benches/picnic tables
 - Fencing and gates



Next steps

- City Council adopts Walking Plan as an ordinance
- City Manager, Mayor, Council, and staff work with Walk St. Helena (and others) to implement
- Walk St. Helena continues to fund raise from
 - Individuals
 - Foundation opportunities, such as
 - AARP Community Challenge
 - Blue Shield of CA Foundation
 - Clif Family Foundation
 - REI Cooperative Action Fund
- Start implementation with
 - Section 1: published walking loops



Thank you

Star editorial: Trail plan is a slam dunk

STAR EDITORIAL BOARD Feb 22, 2023

There's no easier way to unite St. Helenans than by promoting nature, outdoor activity and good health.

That's why the trail plan being promoted by a subcommittee of local citizens is such a slam dunk. The plan is heading to the Planning Commission and City Council in the next few months. ...

The St. Helena Trails and Open Space Plan envisions walking routes that showcase notable sites like the churches in the Oak Avenue area, the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, and Vintage Hall.

It proposes that new development includes walking amenities for the general public (the Farmstead hotel plan already does), and that the city take on liability for pedestrians who use designated walking routes on private property, with the owners' permission.

Most notably, it calls for the city to use existing trails to allow public access to scenic city property near Bell Canyon Reservoir, the Lower Reservoir, and the spray fields and forest adjacent to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The trails are already there, and some walkers use them without authorization. The plan merely calls for the city to welcome that use and provide minimal amenities like benches and signs.

Promotion would be low-key — just loud enough to get the word out to locals without turning the trails into another Napa Valley Vine Trail. The walking routes closer to Main Street, on the other hand, could be promoted to visitors. ...

The plan is rooted in St. Helena's rural values. It would make St. Helena a more walkable, family-friendly and healthy community.

Who could be against that?

