Sacramento Region Trail Network

Action Plan

SACOG

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The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Board of Directors approved the prioritization and implementation strategy of the *Sacramento Region Trail Network Action Plan* on August 18, 2022. The *Sacramento Region Trail Network Action Plan* was funded by Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant from the California Department of Transportation. SACOG appreciates Caltrans' support through the identification of the regional trail network and developing the Action Plan.

A Vision of Connectivity

Connected trails create potential. The potential to change a car trip to a bike trip by increasing safe active transportation connections. The potential to develop and support local economy by enabling young adults to stay in their community and create entrepreneur or other job opportunities. Potential through designing a more inclusive economy that addresses racial and income-based disparities. The potential to improve mental and physical health through increased access to green space and creating safer transportation connections. The potential to support increased quality of life by creating the connections that define our region. To achieve this potential, we need to coordinate across boundaries and identify a unifying vision for the region. To consciously design how the region connects and grows, the trail network aims to benefit the 2.4 million people that call this region home, and to serve future generations.

The Sacramento Regional Trail Network will spark a new wave of walking, biking, and rolling to daily destinations throughout the region. Imagine a network of trails that makes it easy for families to ride to their favorite park, provides a safe route for children to get to school, and offers a simple way for residents to explore new corners of their neighborhoods and cities.

Establishing our Baseline

The Sacramento region is home to many inspiring trail efforts such as the American Discovery Trail, the Great California Delta Trail, the Western States Trail, the National Park Services' California National Historic Trail, and the Pony Express National Historic Trail. But a closer look was needed to understand what was important for the Sacramento Region Trail Network.

Existing Conditions

The three-year planning effort started with staff reviewing close to 80 local, regional, and state plans addressing trails and active transportation throughout all six counties. The goals of safety, all ages and abilities networks, economic vitality, environmental justice, health, and recreation were universally present throughout these plans. Planning partners from cities, counties, and other invested organizations emphasized the potential for environmental justice, economic vitality, and health goals to deliver community and regional benefits as our region recovers from prolonged shutdowns and pandemic-related societal impacts.

Trails in the region

To understand the existing trail access and connectivity in the region, updated information about existing and planned trails in the region was gathered from cities, counties and invested partners. A new component as part of this update was to gather information about informal trails—trails that served important connections within the region but did not meet Caltrans design specifications for Class I multiuse trails. This could be due to surface type (e.g., gravel trails) or inadequate width, and was limited to trails that were not looking for future improvements to meet Class I design specifications.

This data collection revealed 498 miles Class I trails and 64 miles of informal trails.

Understanding where trails are

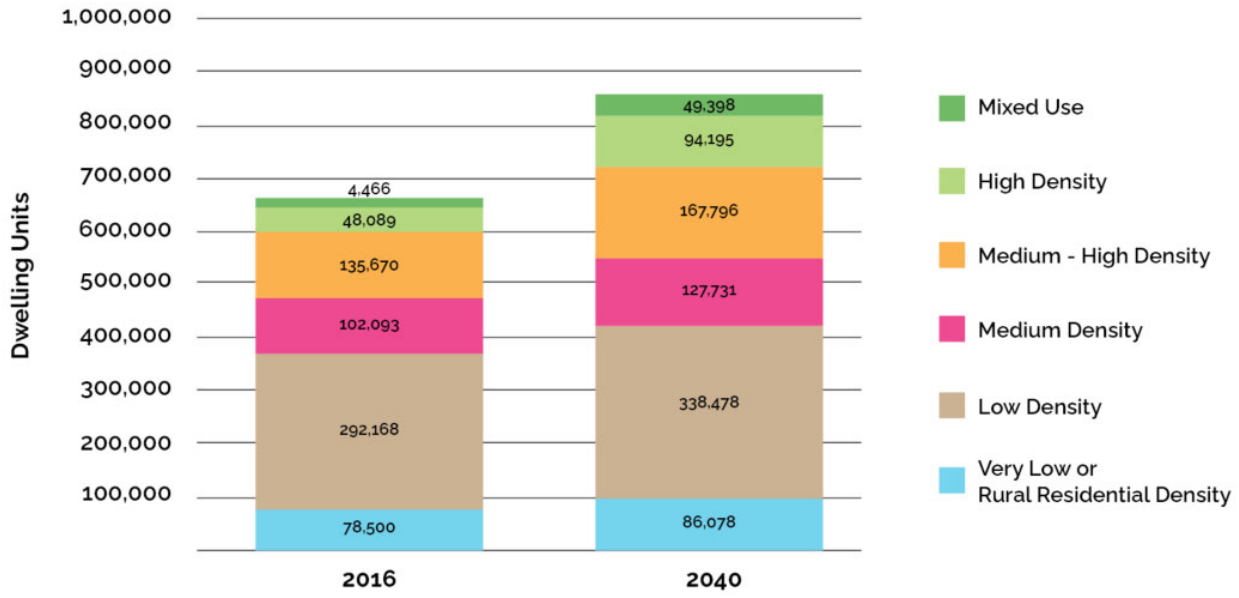
The majority of existing trails are in existing communities, the mature suburban communities or new suburbs that hold three quarters of the region's dwelling units. Developing communities have a slightly higher amount (four percent) of existing trails than dwelling units (two percent), in part due to how trails are frequently designed into new development. Meanwhile, Centers and Corridors—the higher density mixed areas, including historic downtowns, main streets, commercial corridors, rail station areas, central business districts, and town centers—hold a slightly lower percent of trails compared to the dwelling units they hold. Lands not identified have a larger than population share due to county-led efforts to connect people between existing communities.

Percent of Trail Mileage in Community Types

COMMUNITY TYPE	PERCENT OF CLASS I MULTIUSE TRAILS	PERCENT OF ALL TRAILS (CLASS I AND INFORMAL)	PERCENT OF DWELLING UNITS (BASE)
Center/Corridor	10.79%	9.54%	12.36%
Established	77.04%	70.54%	77.30%
Developing	3.71%	3.28%	2.26%
Rural Residential	1.74%	6.3%	8.08%
Ag/Not identified	6.72%	10.35%	N/A

The largest percent of existing trails are near low-density housing (44 percent), with the next highest share near medium-high density housing (21 percent). As the region's housing mix changes and becomes denser, more housing types are expected to be brought into range of these trails. Mixed use housing types would increase from one percent to six percent within a mile of existing trails, and high-density housing within a mile of trails would increase from seven percent to eleven percent.

Housing Types within 1-mile of Existing Trails (20-minute walk)



Definitions of Housing Types

- **Rural Residential –** Single-family housing that is typically one to two stories, built at a density less than or equal to one unit per acre.
- **Very Low Density Residential –** Single-family housing that is typically one to two stories, built at a density between two and four units per acre.
- **Low Density Residential –** Single-family housing that is typically one to two stories, built at a density between four and eight units per acre.
- **Medium Density Residential –** Single-family or multi-family (attached) housing that is typically built at a density between 9 and 12 units per acre. Typical building heights are one to two stories.
- **Medium-High Density Residential –** Single-family or multi-family (attached) housing that is typically built at a density between 13 and 24 units per acre. Typical building heights are one to three stories.
- **High Density Residential –** Multi-family (attached) housing that is typically built at a density greater than 24 units per acre. Typical building heights are between two and six stories, with taller buildings in the more urban areas.

However, the analysis also showed that the region is trying to divide a pie that is too small for everyone to have a piece. Less than half of the region has a trail within a 10-minute walk, with 448,108 dwelling units 2016 within a half mile of a trail, 49% of the region's housing. Similarly, 48 percent of the jobs are within a half mile of a trail (512,195 jobs). A quarter of Class I multiuse trails and informal trails are in census blocks identified as regional disadvantaged communities, compared to 37 percent of the population that is identified as a member of a

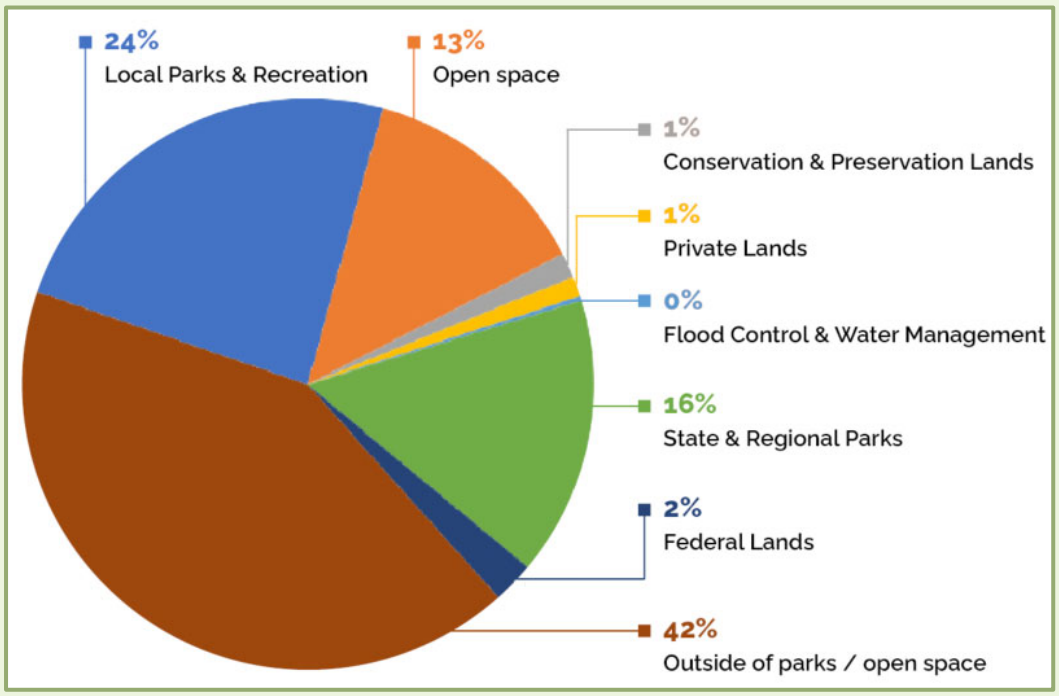
regionally identified disadvantaged community. This is also coupled with the transportation and mode data from the long-range plan that establishes that residents living in regionally identified disadvantaged communities walk, bike, and take transit at a higher rate than the rest of the population. Access to infrastructure and how well it supports the needs of these communities can be a significant factor in their ability to access jobs, schools, and services. Without trails to serve the community, these residents may have no choice but to use on-road networks that may be uncomfortable or unsafe.

Trails and Open Space

The examination of all parks and open space in the region showed that of the near 2,000 square miles of parks and open space, almost 89 percent is in preserved areas such conservation lands, dedicated open space, and federal lands. Roughly nine percent of this space is local, regional, and state parks and recreation space. Two percent of the land is flood control and water management, which presents a unique opportunity as trails can expand access to these areas for more people to enjoy them, while also knitting our region together.

Current trail distribution showed that over half of the existing trails in the region are located in parks and open spaces in the region. This pointed to the past efforts to develop trails along natural resources and develop linear parks, such as the effort to develop the American River Parkway.

Land Uses Around Existing Trails



Connecting Trails in the Region

A closer look at existing trails showed that, while 48 percent of the population lived within a half mile of trails, the actual connectivity provided by these trails may be weaker. Numerous instances of tiny trails could not provide meaningful transportation or health benefits to people around them. Furthermore, many of these trails did not have potential to be expanded into longer trails. Connectivity could be better understood by examining only the longer trails, or trails that were a half-mile or longer. A half-mile distance from trails was used as the regional measure, which could translate as aligning with the Ten-Minute Walk, a park access campaign identified by the Trust for Public Land, Urban Land Institute, and National Recreation and Park Association.

After filtering out smaller disconnected trails from the inventory, the regional trail mileage decreased by 30 miles (seven percent). However, the impacts to trail access for residents was significant--76,000 fewer households had access to existing trails with potential for connectivity. The next step was to identify if individual access to trails was different based on socioeconomic statuses and race. Using the regional thresholds developed through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, the longer trail access analysis showed that residents with lower income levels (less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level) were 30 percent less likely to have a connecting trail within a half mile of their homes.

Identifying the Foundation: What is Important to our Region?

SACOG staff reviewed 78 planning documents for cities and counties in the region to understand the goals and policies for active transportation, trails, and parks. The plans reviewed include General Plans; Active-Transportation related plans (active transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, trails, etc.); regional or local trail-specific plans; and climate action plans. Refer to Chart A below for a breakdown of the number of plans reviewed by plan type, and Appendix B for the list of all the plans reviewed.

Number of Plans Reviewed by Plan Type

PLAN TYPE	# OF PLANS REVIEWED
City or County General Plans	29
Active Transportation-related Plans	36
Regional or local Trail-specific Plans	11
Climate-related Plans	2
Total Plans Reviewed	78

Understanding the Context for Trails in the Region

Plan sections related to active transportation, trails, and parks for mission, vision, policy, goals, and relevant destinations to connect via trails and parks were most instructive for guiding the regional trail network. General Plans also provided useful guidance through relevant elements, such as Transportation, Parks, Open Space, and Introductions to provide the overarching vision. Overall goals and policies of indirectly related plans rounded out the analysis to identify how trails overlapped with other policy areas, such as climate action. State and federal plans were also considered to ensure the Plan goals respond to the current planning paradigm as newer policies and requirements relate to planning active transportation, trails, and parks.

During the review, staff identified common policies, goals, and locations in each of the plans and calculated the number of agencies in the SACOG region who adopted similar goals or policies. This provided an overview of the goals and policies that were most important to agencies in the region. (See Appendix B)

Goals of the Trail Network

The following six goals were used to guide the process for the Plan and the adoption of the Regional Trail Network and implementation strategies (refer to the "Trail Network Action Plan" section). A description of the ways cities, counties, and additional partners described policies and vision related to each of these goals further below.

Safety

The goal of improving safety through the development of active transportation and trail networks was the most common policy goal for SACOG agencies based upon plan review. The term safety is often included in overall plan mission/vision/purpose statements and a primary focus for the plans. Collision history and safety considerations are a common focus in active transportation-related plans across the region, with many projects and programs aimed specifically at reducing the number, rate, or severity of collisions that involve people walking and bicycling. Local agency plans also noted how improving safety for people walking and bicycling is supportive of increasing options and network connections for people to access trails and parks, as well as throughout the community, city or county, and region.

State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

By 2040, people in California of all ages, abilities, and incomes can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk and bicycle for their transportation needs.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is a primary goal for developing the Regional Trail Network given the income-based trail access disparities in the region, as well as through the review of local plans and state goals and policies. The goal of reducing disparities for environmental justice communities was expressed in several local plans and will be a required element in General Plans for all agencies in California moving forward. The state has further shown that environmental justice and social equity are important priorities, in adopted planning documents such as the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Several state transportation grant programs include equity-focused metrics. This is particularly the case for the state's Active Transportation Program, which is recognized as one of the primary sources of active transportation funding in the state.

SACOG local agency plans include environmental justice goals and policies, recommend project prioritization, and even include equity analyses to inform plans overall. It is important to note that environmental justice was recognized in multiple contexts in the review of local plans, including based on race, income, age, gender, and pollution vulnerability. Several agencies noted specifically the need to respond to inequitable barriers and lack of access to the transportation system, reliable transit, or even owning a vehicle for many communities and individuals.

Health

SACOG local agencies regularly include references to active transportation supporting both healthy living and transportation options through physical activity. The health goal is often included in active transportation plan mission/vision/purpose statements. Several plans noted the importance of promoting walking and bicycling as necessary to a healthy daily lifestyle.

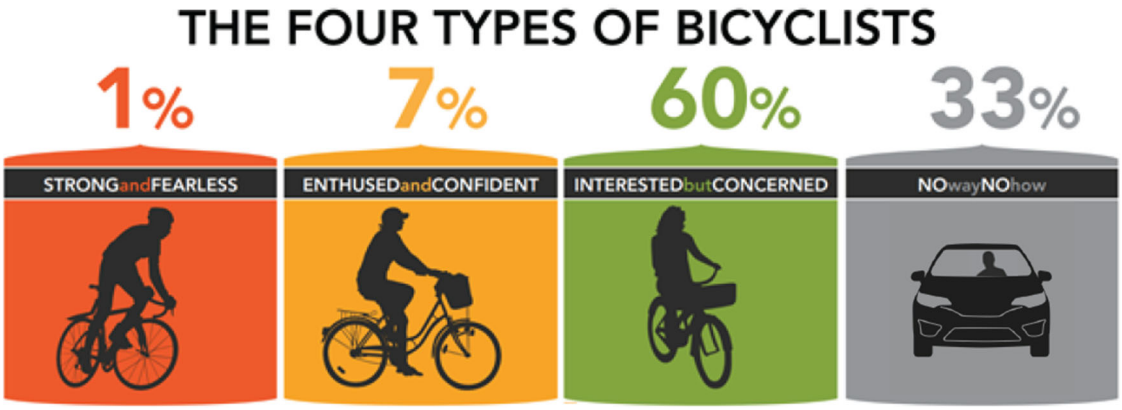
One plan included a policy goal around creating healthy communities that recognized the health benefits of communities that have a network of parks, trails, open space, and green spaces for people to enjoy. Outside of the region, recent plans also note the potential for trails to support health through increasing positive outcomes related to not only physical, but also mental health. Access to parks, open space, and trails is associated with decreased stress, hypertension, and heart disease.

Economic Vitality

The goal of economic vitality leverages policy language in local plans recognizing the ways trail connections and access improve residents' quality of life by connecting to community gathering spaces such as local business districts. Multiple plans also include policies related to ensuring new developments include trails and connect to local destinations. Several agencies further recognized the opportunity to support tourism and generate economic development through the development of a trail system connecting to recreational opportunities and natural lands.

All Ages and Abilities

The concept of all ages and abilities has become an increasingly important method for describing the needs to improve active transportation planning over the past decade in local area plans. Plans describe the need to provide low stress facilities, or facilities that reduce the interaction with automobiles, to meet the news of all people regardless of their abilities. There is a specific focus on providing facilities that meet the needs of people aged "8 to 80", noting that children and seniors are not as physically capable as the advanced riders.



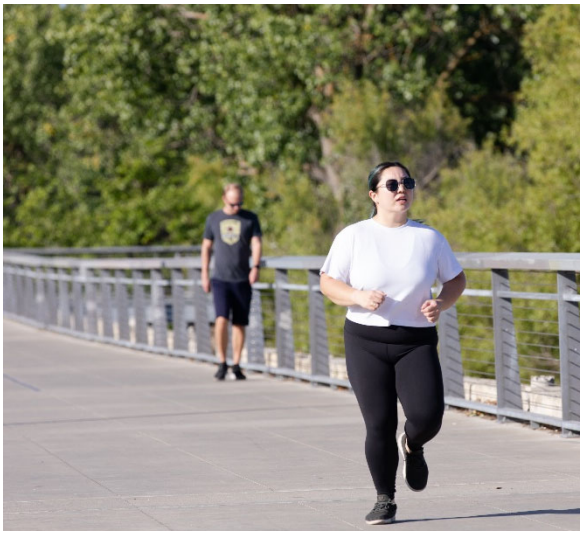
Studies suggest that there are four different categories of riders:

- **"Strong and fearless"** riders who will ride in any condition regardless of bikeway facility and automobile speed and volume;
- **"Enthused and confident"** riders who enjoy taking regular bicycling trips, but have more concerns for safety;
- **"Interested but concerned"** riders who would like to ride more, but are afraid to ride due to car speeds and volumes;
- And **"no way no how"** non-riders who aren't as interested in bicycling.

In these studies, a majority of respondents actually fell in the “interested but concerned” category. Within the active transportation planning profession, there is currently a focus on providing a network of separated bike and pedestrian facilities that would ensure these this group is able to travel to community destinations and for recreation.

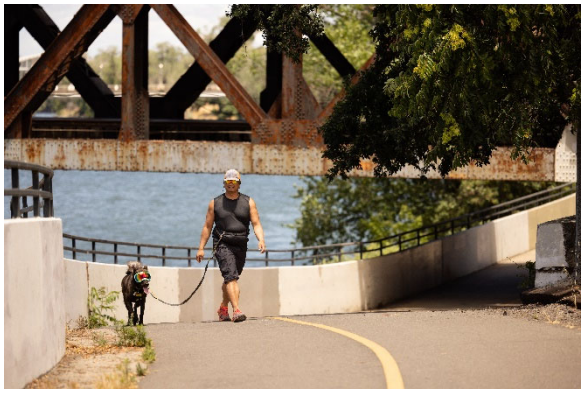
Recreation

Unsurprisingly, an overwhelming majority of cities and counties expressed the importance of providing recreational active transportation options and trails as a primary goal in the plans reviewed. Several agencies specifically mentioned the importance of providing recreational connections to parks, green space, rivers, open space, natural lands, etc. Multiple plans noted the importance of coordinating with flood control or levee districts to develop bike or trail projects to provide access to recreational areas in a way that has minimal impact on the natural areas. Finally, there are many specific recreational destinations throughout the region that were noted in plans and confirmed in our survey and interviews with local agency staff. These destinations will be described further below.

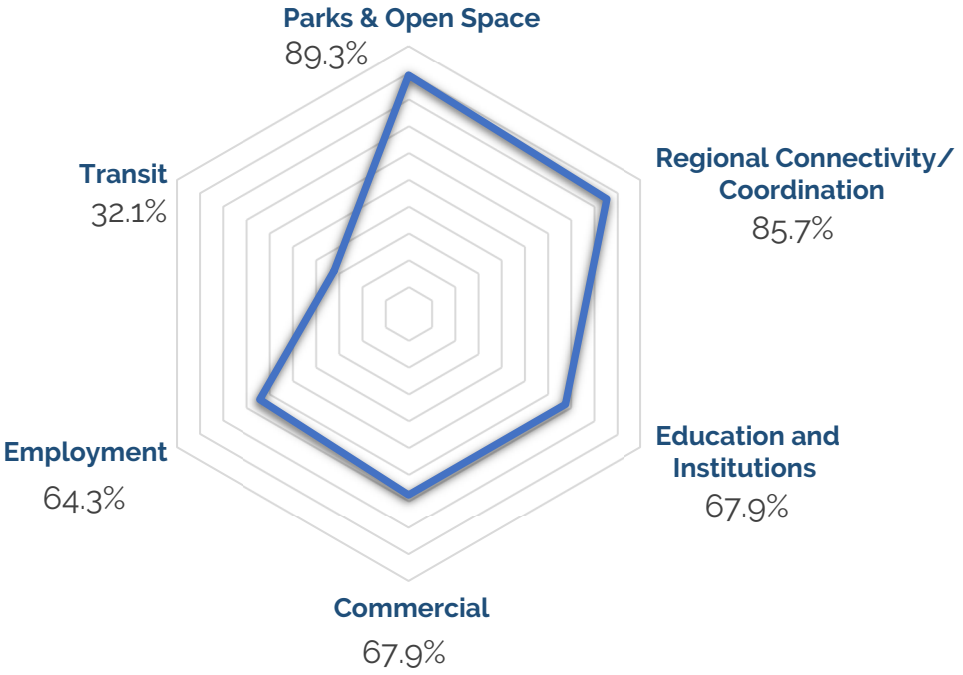


Important Destinations from Local Plans

The local planning documents included policy language noting the importance of connecting active transportation networks to general destinations within the community. Chart Z below shows the percentage of SACOG jurisdictions that included goals around connecting to these destinations.

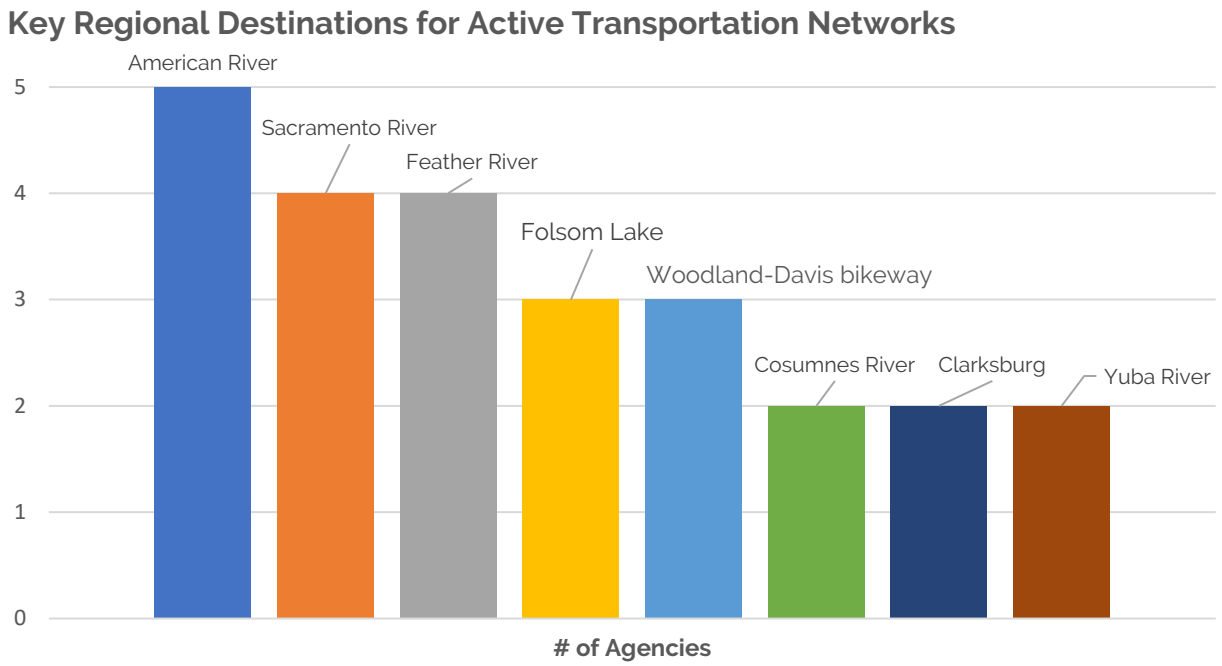


Active Transportation Network Priority Connections
% of 28 SACOG jurisdictions



The highest proportion of SACOG jurisdictions discussed connecting active transportation opportunities to Parks & Open Space, as well as described the importance of regional connectivity and coordination to develop the regional active transportation and trail systems. A large proportion also discussed connecting to utilitarian destinations such as schools, stores, and jobs. Interestingly, less than half of the agencies recognized the importance of connecting active transportation and trails to transit stops and stations.

Local agency plans also included policies or goals related to connecting to key regional destinations. Chart AA below shows the number of SACOG jurisdictions that adopted language related to connecting to each destination. These destinations clearly show a preference for providing connections to the major rivers and lakes in the region.



Ground Truthing with Partners

To ensure these foundational elements were accurately interpreted, cities, counties, public health officials, community-serving organizations, and civic-minded groups were invited to share their local expertise and understanding of how these goals, destinations, and local interpretations took shape.

Partners shared how, given how some of the planning documents were adopted more than a decade ago, environmental justice was supported and a higher priority than is expressed in the existing active transportation documents. They also discussed the different ways in which safety manifests in a trail project—it could relate to physical safety with enhanced trail design or the parallel connections it creates to avoid high-crash roadways, but it could also be perceived safety to create a public space where people feel safe from bodily harm and feel welcome to use the trail.

Trails can provide a family-inviting, all ages-friendly network, and an opportunity to re-think car trips in favor of biking or walking. However, the existence of a trail isn't enough – it needs to be considered relative to what access it provides to residents, such as connecting to businesses they want to visit, resources they need. Importantly, they emphasized any project meant to strengthen and enhance a disadvantaged community must include meaningful community engagement that directly affects the project development and final recommendations. These projects must be tailored to the community's needs and meet residents where they are at.

Trails need to be accessible and an easy choice to use to provide health benefits, since safe and comfortable biking and walking connections are lacking, especially in more rural counties. Access to safe walking and biking is especially important to more vulnerable communities such as the elderly and youth. Partners also noted how health had been elevated by the pandemic—more people were turning to outdoor activities like biking and walking, and trail networks supported this movement.

To frame benefits of connecting the regional trail network, partners agreed that economic vitality was an important tool for framing the benefits of connecting the regional trail network. Examples of economic vitality intersecting with trails took different shapes across the region, from creating an attractive environment for potential businesses making siting decisions and retaining talent, to supporting affordable transportation for residents and increasing access to job centers, to encouraging tourism opportunities and supportive businesses. Partners also noted how trail segments included with new development could emphasize closing gaps and connecting to existing trails instead of developing stand-alone trails constrained by neighborhood boundaries.

An important challenge shared were the barriers facing trail implementation. Infrastructure barriers (freeways, railroads, rivers, canals, or even a lack of access points) inhibited trail access for underserved communities, especially when considered alongside historic inequitable planning decisions, transportation investments, and redlining practices that created and perpetuated racial disparities in health, wealth, education, transportation, housing, and other aspects of life. Institutional barriers, such as multijurisdictional projects or partnering with

federal or state agencies or large partners such as railroads, added time, complexity, and cost. Thus, many projects are never pursued by individual agencies setting priorities because the project is deemed too expensive to pursue, even if there would be great benefits.

Uncovering resident priorities

The local plan review established a strong base of goals on which a regional trail network could grow. Planning partners and key collaborators provided a stronger understanding of the potential avenues trails could explore to embody those goals locally and regionally. The next step to refine what a connected trail network could bring to the region was to reach out to people who would use the trail network.

This phase was delayed many times due to uncertainty and safety concerns of different engagement techniques, and vacillating restrictions on public gatherings. The final method to reach people in the region worked to reach a broad and diverse audience in ways that adhered to the public safety ordinances meant to protect the region's most vulnerable residents.

All materials from the public engagement survey are in Appendix C.

Reaching residents

From March 13 to May 3, 2021, residents in the region were asked to share where they would want to bike, walk, or scoot to illustrate what they value in their trail connections. Residents were able to share information about their favorite trails and identify places they wanted to go by trail using a map-based questionnaire. The questions were simple, direct, and insightful to help identify guiding values for the identification of a regional trail network.

Survey responses: Why is this your favorite trail?

Elk Grove: Laguna Creek Trail
"It has large oak trees, a creek with ducks and wildlife."

Placerville: El Dorado Trail
"I love every section of the El Dorado Trail and my 7-year-old can easily bike on it."

Roseville: Dry Creek / Miners Ravine / False Ravine Trail System
"Has a lot to do — library, cool bridges, creek, baseball field, playground, close to downtown restaurants & shopping."

Yuba City: Sutter Bike Trail
"I like the beautiful view of the Buttes and the many people you can encounter having a good time!"

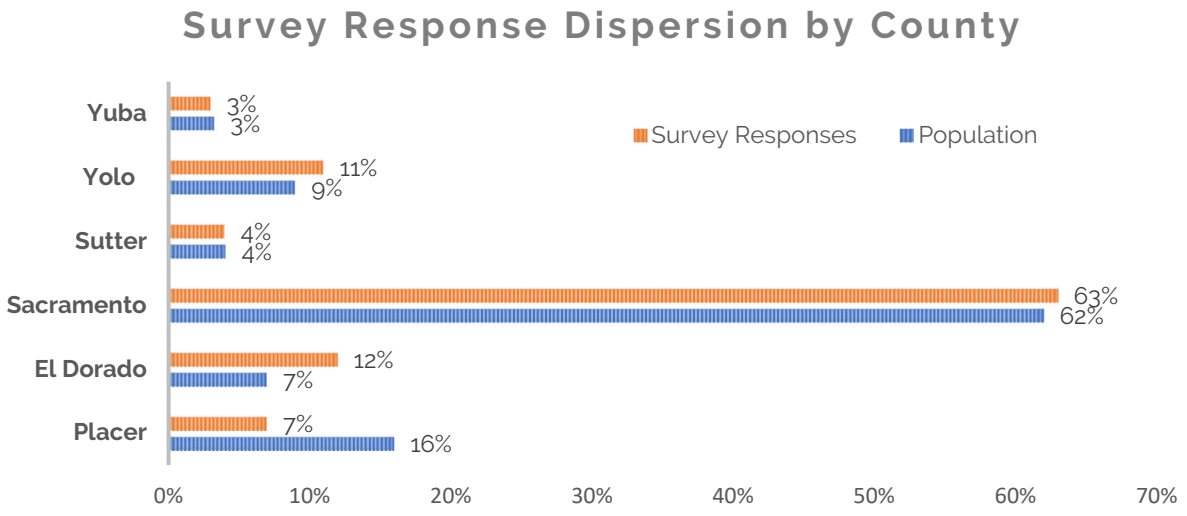
Davis: Bike Loop
"The Davis Bike Loop is easy to get to, a nice distance (approx. 8 miles) and easily expandable or shortened if I want to go more or less miles."

While efforts were made to ensure diverse survey responses from the six-county region, survey respondents self-selected, and the results are not a scientific sampling of the population.

Exclusively online surveys can limit access, either due to a person's discomfort using web-based tools or unreliable internet connections. Furthermore, online map-based questionnaires are inaccessible for people who use screen readers as an accessibility tool. People wishing to answer the survey outside of the online platform were able to call to provide survey responses. The survey was available in English and Spanish. A community-serving partner also offered to help by distributing and gathering bilingual paper copies of the survey at a community COVID vaccination event.

Surveys (both the online and paper versions mentioned above) were only offered in Spanish and English. The survey could be translated into other languages through browser settings, but it was unlikely for such a tool to be used since the survey was primarily shared on English-focused websites. These limitations could have a cascading effect on the information and values identified through the survey that were used to guide the network identification.

The engagement survey received input from 6,577 respondents across all six counties, with roughly 70 percent identifying a city as their home. To support a broad regional response, SACOG asked partners throughout the six counties to help spread the word about the surveys. Weekly monitoring of response rates helped identify areas where targeted social media outreach would help garner more responses from geographic areas and communities that were under-responding. The final survey response rate by county was close to population dispersion across four of the six counties.



2016 Population data, SACOG 2022

To acknowledge the limitations of the self-selecting groups and language barriers, there are areas with notable differences between the region's population characteristics and the self-reported demographic data.[1]

- *Older*: Almost half of respondents who answered the age range question (4,606 total) were between 25 and 44 years old (45 percent), while another 37 percent were between 45 and 64 years old. This is older than the regional population, which is 27 percent between the age rand of 25 to 44 years old and 25 percent between 45 and 64 years old.
- *More male:* Slightly more than half (51 percent) of the survey respondents that answered the gender identify question (3,493 total) identified as male. This is skewed more male than the reported population (49 percent male). Note that five percent of respondents preferred not to share their gender identity and 0.3 percent self-identified, which is not represented in general population data.
- *Wealthier:* Eleven percent of survey respondents who answered the income question (3,606 total) reported an income of less than $50,000 a year and 57 percent reported incomes higher than $100,000 annually. This is skewed wealthier compared to 38 percent of the regional population that reports incomes less than $50,000 annually and 33 percent with incomes higher than $100,000.

While these differences in demographic representation would seem to negate the usefulness of the information collected, the survey response rate was high across the region. The strong response rate allowed that sub-groups could be cross-analyzed for meaningful differences in their priorities compared to responses from different sub-groups. Using this approach to examine survey responses by demographic groups, we saw the values were shared across incomes, gender identifies, ethnicities, and age groups. This is notwithstanding the possible impacts of language barriers noted above.

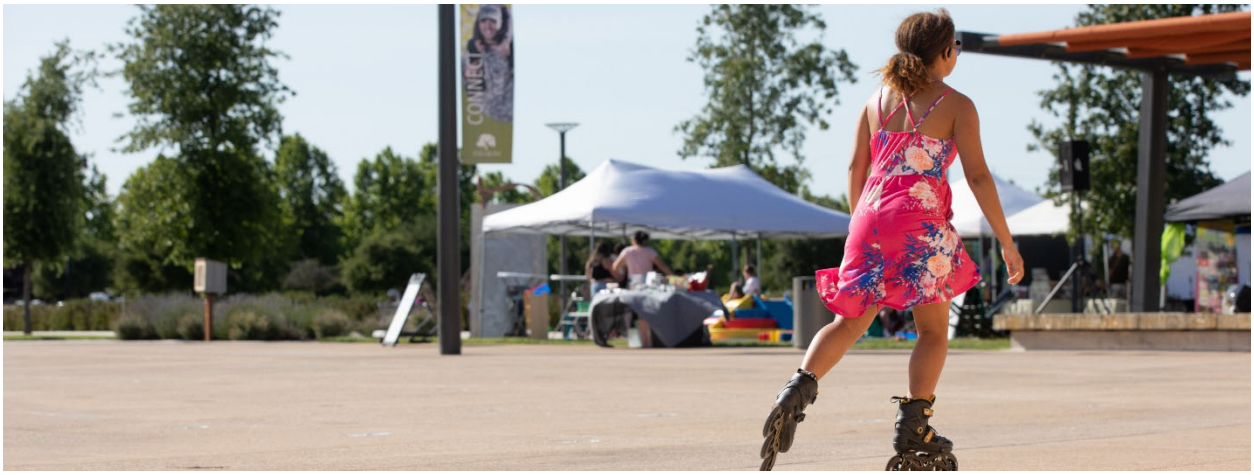
Trails in our region

Survey respondents identified over 3,000 favorite trails and shared what made that trail their favorite. Of the trails located within the six-county region, access to nature (rivers, trees, wildlife, etc.) was cited for roughly 50 percent of the favorite trails. However, many noted that they needed to drive to safely access those trails. Close to 40 percent of the favorite trails were in a neighboring jurisdiction or other place outside of the respondents' "home" jurisdiction, indicating strong potential for multi-jurisdictional connections.

Respondents appreciated proximity and ease of access with their favorite trails, with one fifth identifying their favorite trail as the trail that was closest to their home or otherwise easily

[1] Differences in reporting race and ethnicity at the regional level complicated drawing direct comparisons to the 4,551 survey responses to the question "Most people think of themselves as belonging to one or more racial or ethnic groups. Please select all the groups you identify with."

accessible. The separation from car traffic was noted for an additional one-fifth of respondents as why a specific trail was their favorite. While these responses show a deep appreciate for the existing trails and quality trail design in each person's hometown, fewer than ten percent of the favorite trails could also be used for connections to important destinations, such as work, school, errands, or transit stops.

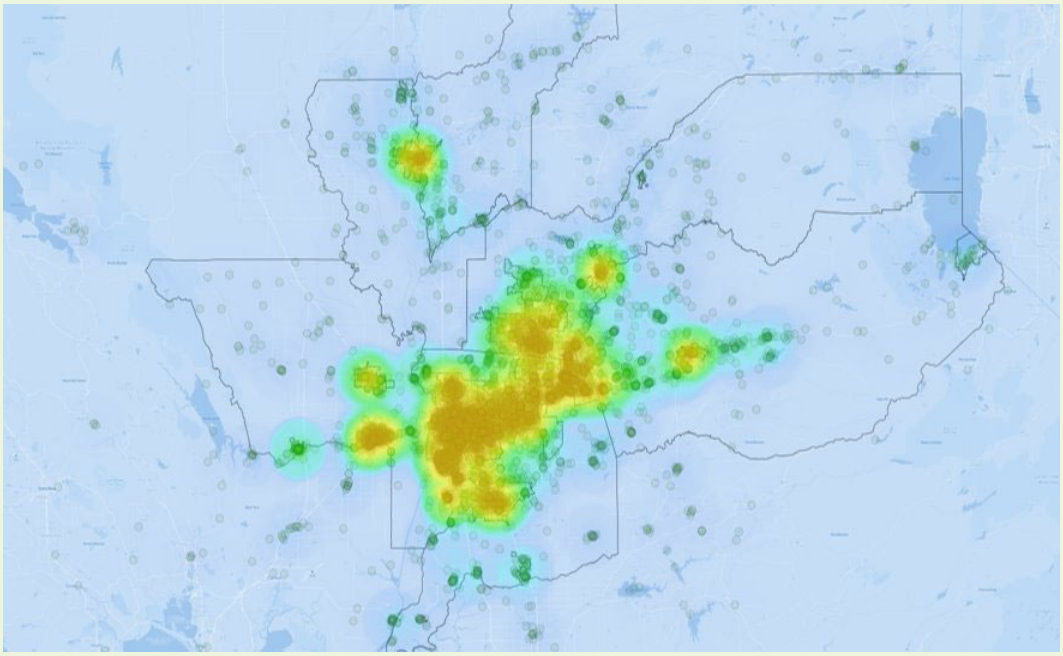


Connections in our region

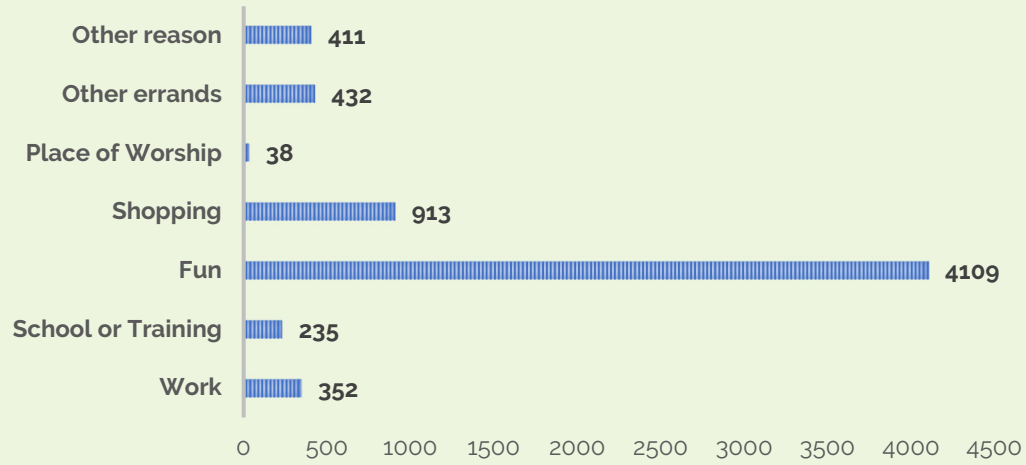
Almost 12,000 responses for "where would you like to go on a trail?" were shared; respondents could also select all their related reasons for going to that destination, with options including work, school/training, fun, shopping, exercise, place of worship, other errands, and other reasons. Respondents also shared that 60 percent of the destinations they wanted to go to were not easily or safely accessible today. An additional 14 percent shared they were not sure if the destinations could be easily or safely accessed with the existing infrastructure and connections. Respondents could also select multiple ways they would like to use trails to access these destinations—93 percent wanted to bike, 29 percent wanted to walk, seven percent wanted to skateboard, skate, or use a scooter, and four percent wanted to use their mobility device, such as wheelchairs or walkers.

Shopping was a popular reason for wanting to access specific destinations by trail, representing 25 percent of identified destinations. “Work” was comparatively less frequently mentioned, connected to just 14 percent of the requested destinations; “school/training” was also less frequently mentioned, connected to six percent of the requested destinations. While exercise was frequently mentioned as a reason to want to go somewhere by trail (47 percent of

11,950 responses to “Where would you like to go?”



Responses to “Why would you like to go here?”



responses), it was usually paired with at least one other trip reason, showing that people viewed trails as a healthy option to get to the places they wanted to access.)

"Fun" was easily the most common trip purpose and was listed as why people wanted to go to over half of the highlighted destinations. Geocoding and analysis of the desired destinations uncovered that people sought destinations where community and social events were held, and places like historic downtowns and riverfront activity centers. Comments connected with these locations highlighted each person's appreciation of the opportunity to socialize with friends and family while capitalizing on beautiful outdoor spaces and places unique to their communities.

Identifying the network

What we aim for

The regional trail network is comprised of many different trails identified through local planning and implementation efforts. The promise of the regional trail network was that by connecting these locally identified trails, the completed network would become more than the sum of its parts and collectively provide regional benefits. Through analyzing local and regional plans, the six goals of the network were established—increase safety, support economic vitality, ensure equitable benefit, provide recreational opportunities, create all ages and abilities connections, and support positive health outcomes. The next step was to identify how the region could measure progress towards these goals.

Starting from the assumption that the trail network would connect communities across the region, the performance targets built on the local plan analysis, values shared through the public survey outreach results, partner input, and board guidance. Each trail in the network would contribute to the significance of the regional asset by supporting one or multiple envisioned goals and performance metrics:

Safety

All transportation facilities must factor in safety into their design and construction. Trails provide an opportunity to deliver safety benefits not only in the project-level design, but by providing safer alternative routes to dangerous roads that complete an active-modes network.

Desired Safety Performance Metrics:

- Identify 30 miles of future parallel trail connections to bypass roadways with high crash occurrences.

Environmental Justice

Trails in the Sacramento region unevenly benefit residents. Connected trail access for lower-income residents is 30 percent less than connected trail access for average- and higher-income

residents in our region. This trail network would identify the trails needed to provide equitable access across income levels and race.

Desired Environmental Justice Performance Metrics:

- Create equitable trail access across households regardless of income level or race.
- Connect lower-income communities divided by physical barriers (e.g., state highways).

Health

Of the 500 miles of trails in the region, roughly 30 miles are from fragmented segments less than a half mile long. These shorter trails may serve local needs but have limited potential to provide opportunities for active living or connect to a regional network. Increasing residential access to connecting trails will increase the ability of residents to make "two-fer" trips, where they can live actively (exercise) while making a trip they want or need to make.

Desired Health Performance Metrics:

- Increase the percentage of dwelling units within a half-mile of connecting trails by twenty percent (41 percent to 61 percent, using 2020 accessibility analysis).

Economic vitality

Economic vitality and trail networks intersect at many points, depending on the needs of the community and their travel patterns. For the Sacramento region, trails can support economic activity through increasing comfortable access to community gathering spaces such as local business districts. Well-designed and integrated trails also serve as public spaces, supporting a new, vibrant public realm where residents can gather and form community.

Desired Economic Vitality Performance Metrics:

- Connect to social gathering centers (e.g., downtowns, eateries/other gathering places) in all communities in the region.
- Identify the network of trail access to all landmark geographic features (e.g., rivers and waterways, mountains, regionally significant parks) in the region.

All Ages and Abilities

For several decades, bikeway planning and project construction has been about fitting in bikeways where they could easily fit but not considering the experience of using the bikeway once it was built. Sidewalks were sporadically implemented, leaving incomplete access along most corridors. This approach provided biking access for very confident bikers and walkers, and few others. The trail network will expand access to a greater swath of people: people who do not feel comfortable traveling in the same right-of-way with people driving high speeds, or with many people driving cars, and people who use mobility devices with needs that have previously

been under-considered. It will also expand access to new audiences exploring bicycle trips using tools such as electric bicycles, allowing people to make trips previously thought to be too far.

Desired All Ages and Abilities Performance Metrics:

- Identify 30 miles of future parallel trail connections to bypass high-traffic / high-speed roadways.

Recreation

Access to green space and open space supports improved mental and physical health in our communities, while also providing an economic draw for rural communities. Trails are also regionally recognized and loved because of the access to natural beauty they provide.

Desired Recreation Performance Metrics:

- Double the mileage of connecting trail access to regionally significant parks, open space, and landmark features from the 2020 trail network.

Elevating Local Trails and Destinations

Local partner agencies were engaged through an iterative and collaborative process to identify a network that met the goals and provided regional connectivity. In the first phase, local partners identified their local economic hubs, opportunity connections, upcoming project priorities, as well as any challenging areas. A GIS-webtool was used to nominate trail connections into the regional network, document destinations of interest and pertinent information for trail network implementation and share information back with project partners. These conversations also enabled the identification of how specific trail segments contributed toward regionally identified performance metrics. The work served to identify trails with regional potential, such as: connecting to highlighted destinations consistent with the regional goals and resident values; crossing jurisdictional boundaries; leveraging existing built trails to connect communities to each other; and providing unique access opportunities across the region.

Key information from these meetings was shared back with city and county staff. Each bike path or trail segment shown in the map included inputs for staff to add it to the regional network, and to identify the regional goals that each segment would help to support. When selecting trail segments to include in the regional network, the focus on maximizing existing trails was balanced with identifying the alignments with greatest potential for growth and connections to the regional trail network. The segments that provided regional-serving connections would be selected while more neighborhood-serving were not added to the network to reduce redundancy in the network and to focus on the local priorities, important regional destinations from the survey and plan review, and improving plan goals.

SACOG staff shared the proposed network to local agency staff for their review and comment. This review process led to changes in the network until the local agency staff approved the network for their jurisdiction.

Draft Regional Trail Network

After meeting individually with cities and counties to discuss local trails and potential connections and their potential for contributing to regional performance metrics, a preliminary draft network was identified and released in December 2021. The majority of trails in the draft regional trail network were sourced from local planning documents, but this approach left close to 100 miles in regional connectivity gaps.

Key collaborators and community partners were invited to critique the draft trail network with respect to meeting regional goals and relevancy to their experiences in communities and accessing important destinations. Regional and state partners were also invited to review the draft trail network and discuss how it might relate to or overlap with their initiatives. Public comments on the draft trail network were gathered from December to February and collected through a public webinar discussing the draft trail network identification process. (Appendix D)

Trail study corridors grew to include 50 miles of planned Class IV separated bikeways.

Class IV separated bikeways, especially in conjunction with pedestrian facilities, can expand the reach of the trail network to areas where there are not opportunities to build trails.

Cities, counties, and special districts were able to discuss solutions that would address the 100 miles of connectivity gaps, areas for improvement identified by key collaborators, and public input about additional connections for the final trail network. Their solutions culminated in the final regional trail network that was analyzed to determine if the holistic trail network achieved the desired performance outcomes.

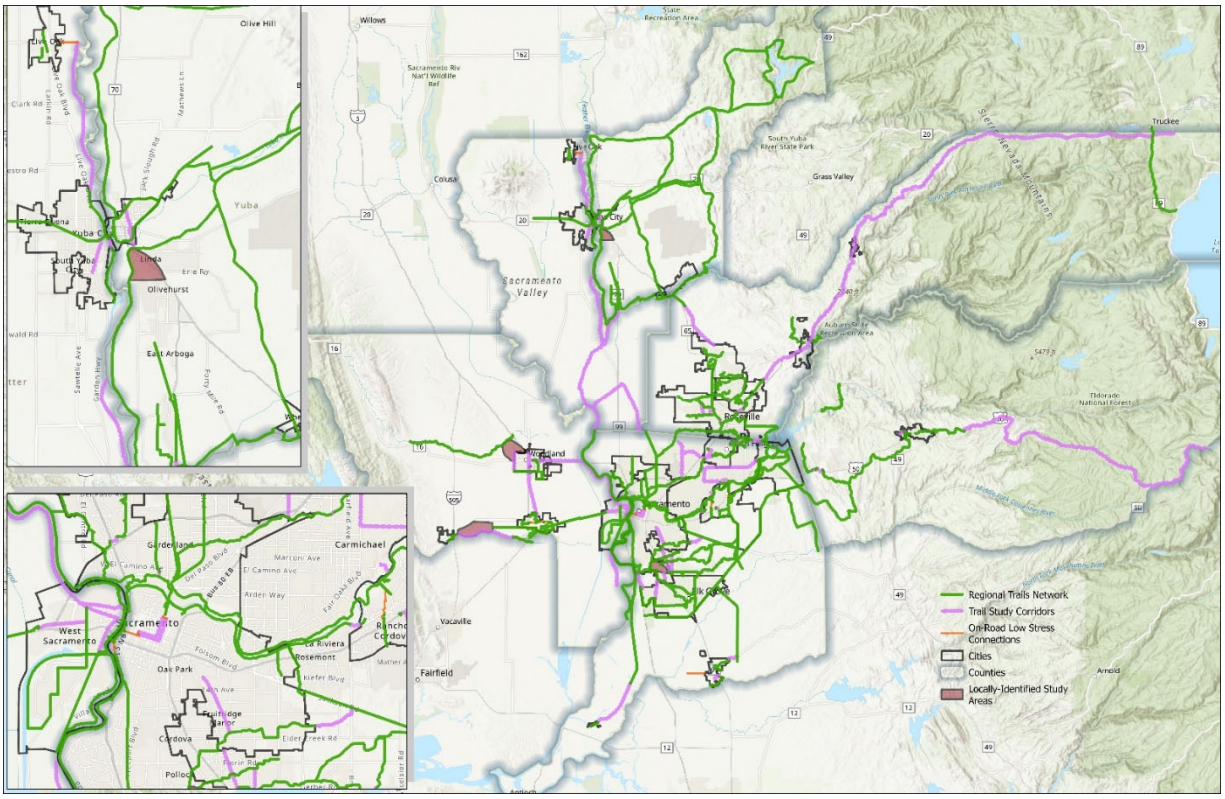
The Sacramento Regional Trail Network

The final regional trail network relies on two types of connections to create a regionally beneficial trail network that serves the needs of residents and fulfill the regional vision of connectivity.

- **Regional Trail Network** – 293 miles of existing trails and 564 miles of planned trails identified from locally approved planning documents, such as Bicycle Master Plans and Circulation Elements from General Plans.
- **Trail Study Corridors** – 308 miles of corridors that are supported by the local agency to study for their potential to help complete the regional trail network.
  These segments are not identified in local planning documents as future trails but may be flagged for future study or consideration in an upcoming local trail plan or similar transportation plan.

The final regional trail network also shows seven locally-identified study areas that do not have a clear best option for a trail or trail-like connection. These areas cover 15.5 square miles and are identified for further study to identify the best connections to complete the trail network. The final network sparingly identified fewer than ten miles of low-stress/on-road facilities, such as bike boulevards, to make critical connections between trails or to needed destinations.

In areas where informal or unpaved trails are identified or exist next to planned paved trails, only the planned paved trail is shown in the trail network mileage. Unpaved trails can serve specific needs for the communities they serve, such as walking trails parallel to high-volume biking trails that create space to avoid conflicts between different users.



Sacramento Region Trail Network (approved April 21, 2022)

Trail Network Performance

Safety

Safety is a critical component of every new connection and every improvement a local agency makes to the transportation network. The trail network embodied strong potential to increase safety by providing separated facilities away from traffic violence while providing similar access to what the roadway would access. The final trail network will provide 60 miles of parallel trail or trail-like connections to avoid high-crash roadways.

Environmental Justice

The analysis of existing trails showed the extent of trail access disparities. Residents of lower income communities in the region are 30 percent less likely to have a connecting trail within a half mile of their home. There was also a growing discussion of how California highways had historically and purposefully divided and destroyed communities of color and lower income neighborhoods. The regional trail network reduced the inequitable access to 0.6 percent (46.3 percent likelihood of longer trail access for lower income residents compared to 46.9 percent likelihood of longer trail access for other residents) and connected 16 communities divided by highways.

Health

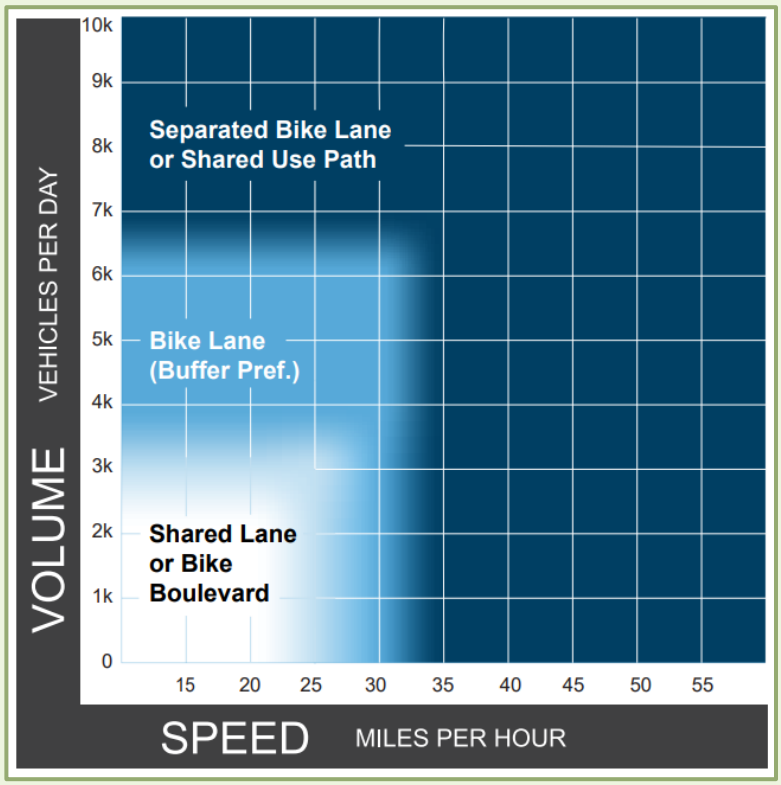
The envisioned network worked to bring more people into proximity of a trail to increase their use of one, supporting healthy lifestyles by making the healthy choice the easy choice. Trail access was measured using isochrones to represent a 0.5-mile network distance following streets and incorporating natural and infrastructural barriers around each trail segment. This approach allowed a finer-grained analysis of which households could have trail access from regional trail

network implementation. The regional trail network would increase access for 406,720 people that did not have access to longer trails as of February 2022, or a 17 percent increase.

An additional 30,000 people live in the locally identified study areas and may have expanded access as part of the trail network, but more local vetting is needed to determine possible connections and pinpoint exactly how many people would have new access.

Economic vitality

The trail network worked to enhance the livability by creating access to the places that support the community and their needs. By learning what the vital local destinations are from key partners and identifying trends from the survey, the trail network could bolster economic activity through increasing comfortable access to community gathering spaces such as local business districts and social hubs for residents. Further, a landmark trail system could serve as draw for visitors and businesses, supporting a vibrant region. The trail network connects to gathering centers across all six counties, from downtown Sacramento to Plumas Street in Yuba City. The trail network also connects a diverse and regionally representative system of rivers and waterways, mountains, and regionally significant parks.



Federal Highway Administration: Bikeway Selection

Preferred Bikeway Type for Urban, Urban Core, Suburban and Rural Town Contexts

1. Chart assumes operating speeds are similar to posted speeds. If they differ, use operating speed rather than posted speed.

2. Advisory bike lanes may be an option where traffic volume is <3K ADT

All Ages and Abilities

The trail network aimed to expand access to people who do not feel comfortable traveling in the same right-of-way with people driving cars at high speeds and on corridors where many people drive cars. The network also aimed to serve people who use mobility devices whose needs have previously been under-considered. Over 100 miles of alternate access were identified to provide similar access to what these higher stress roadways would access.

Recreation

From the engagement results, existing trails to natural resources are among the favorite trails in the region. The allure of additional trails that would access regionally significant parks, open space, and landmark features would draw even more people onto the network, serving as a gateway to biking and walking for a multitude of reasons. These connections support improved health at the individual level and potential economic draws at the regional level. The regional network would increase the mileage to these regional assets from the existing 130 miles to 378 miles.

Prioritizing the Regional Trail Network

What are the Regional Trail Network Tiers?

Planned trail projects from the Regional Trail Plan are sorted into tiers based on their potential to: **achieve trail network goals** of transportation safety, health, environmental justice, economic vitality, all ages and abilities, and recreation; and **further regional goals** of crossing infrastructure boundaries, collaborating with partners, supporting critical connections, and filling in trail network gaps. The complete prioritization framework is available in Appendix A. Tier 1 projects were weighted between 60 and 100 points through the prioritization framework, Tier 2 projects between 41 and 59 points, and Tier 3 projects with 40 or fewer points.

Tier 1

Tier 1 includes trail projects that demonstrate strong potential to move the region closer to the Regional Trail Plan performance metrics, such as increasing household access to longer trails and providing safe parallel connections to avoid high-crash roadways. These projects also frequently show strong potential to fill in trail network gaps and overcome physical barriers to biking and walking. These projects are at different stages of development based on local efforts.

Regional coordination efforts focus on these projects in the zero to five and five to ten-year timeframe to help them either advance to the next stage of development or construction.

Tier 2

Tier 2 projects also demonstrate potential to achieve trail network goals such as creating all ages and abilities active modes networks and creating access to social gathering centers but

may not support all the regionalism goals from the prioritization framework. Projects in Tier 2 may, alternatively, show high potential for meeting the region's goals of crossing infrastructure boundaries and providing critical access to job centers, but only further trail plan goals of increasing recreational opportunities and creating all ages and abilities networks.

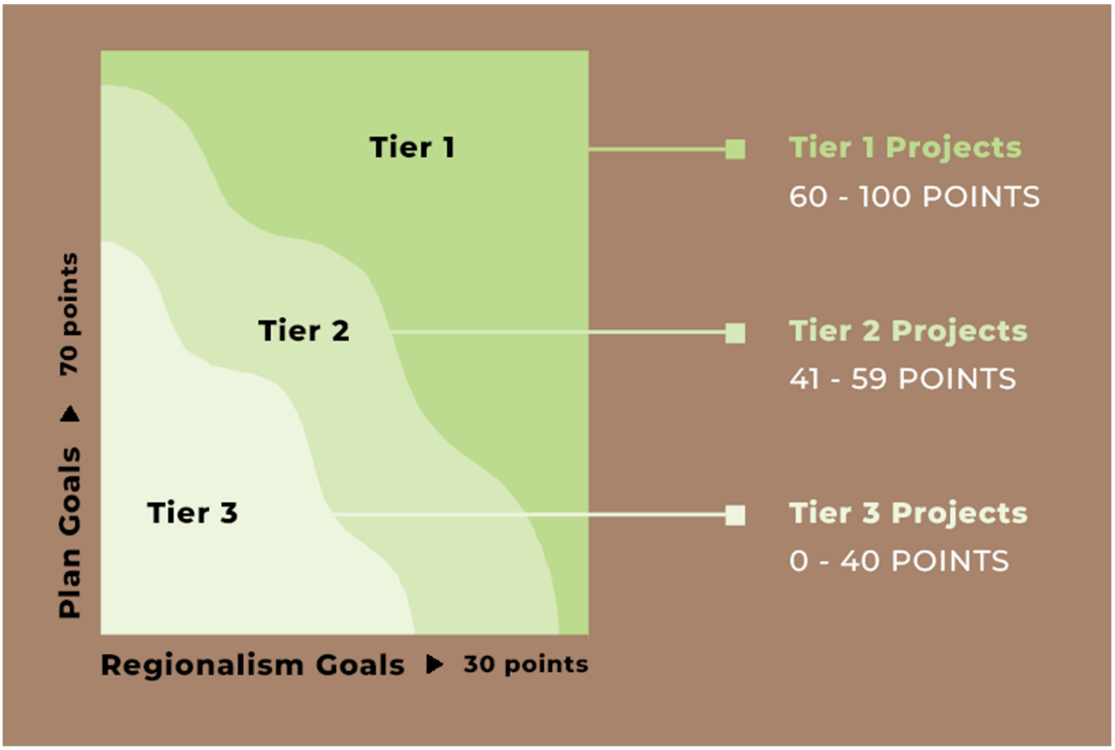
Regional coordination efforts include Tier 2 projects in the five- to ten-year timeframe and the ten-year-and-beyond timeframe. This is to help set the next generation of trails in motion as in-progress Tier 1 projects are implemented. However, locally driven efforts may get these projects underway or built independent of SACOG coordination.

Tier 3

Tier 3 projects represent the push to complete the planned regional trail network. These projects serve a critical role of connecting the network, stitching communities together, and providing trail connections to the places that make our region a desirable place to live. They also fulfill local needs and desires by providing transportation connections, in addition to their role in the regional trail network.

Regional coordination efforts include Tier 3 projects in the ten-year-and-beyond timeframe. This contributes to the sustained effort to implement the regional trail network and make a regionally significant transportation and quality of life asset. Locally driven efforts may get these projects underway or built independent of SACOG coordination.

Figure: Dispersion of trail connections into Tiers



Top Tier study corridors

Top Tier study corridors were weighted between 75 and 100 points through the prioritization framework and demonstrate similar performance potential as the Tier 1 planned trail network connections. However, study corridors are often more conceptual connections that need local assessment and vetting to be included in approved local planning documents. Study corridors may also be on-road study corridors that could provide a trail-like experience (typically a Class IV separated bikeway) and access in areas where there is no option for a trail connection.

Top Tier study corridors are grouped with Tier 1 projects for recommendations in the zero to five-year timeframe, and recommended for additional local-level discussion and vetting to determine their viability to fill a role in the regional trail network.

Lower Tier study corridors

Lower Tier study corridors were weighted with 74 or fewer points through the prioritization framework and demonstrate similar project performance to the Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects. Study corridors serve a vital role in connecting communities and creating access to important destinations in the region. However, study corridors are more conceptual connections that need local assessment and vetting to be included in approved local planning documents.

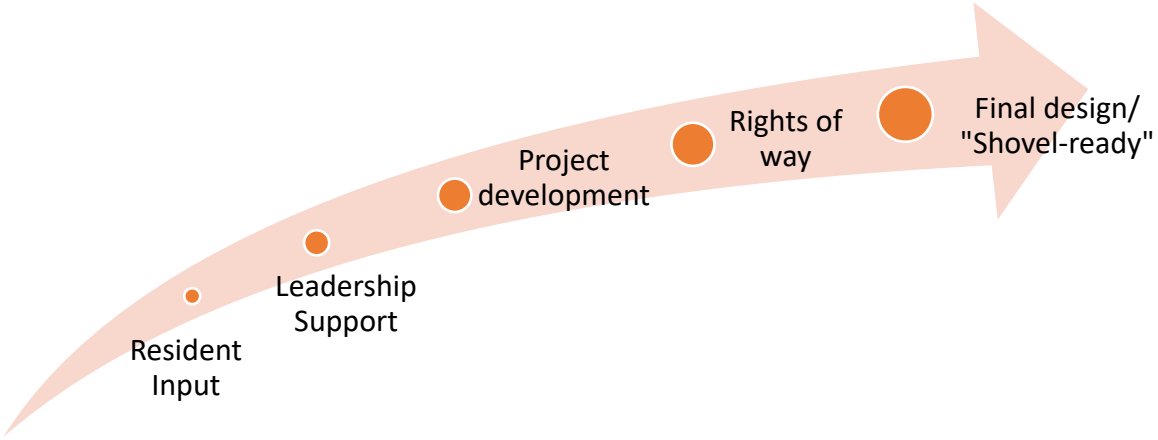
Lower Tier study corridors are recommended for additional local-level discussion and vetting to determine if they will be able to fulfill their potential connecting role in the regional trail network.

Evaluating readiness of projects

Each tier of projects was assessed for their readiness to move forward based on the local efforts to-date. With the focus on trails serving residents, project sponsors first share the level of meaningful engagement conducted with communities where the trail would be located and whose residents would potentially use the trail. Support from local leaders is also critical to determine if a project would be able to move forward and clear logistical obstacles that face many trails in their implementation.

With continued conversations to collaborate and co-create with communities and local leaders, projects were then assessed on their completed steps to move towards project development and final design. Most trails can take more than ten years to implement, so the regional coordination efforts can support a sustainable future where trails can serve as critical connections to daily destinations.

By assessing trail projects through this process, SACOG and its partner agencies can identify the next steps needed to move planned trails forward to implementation. This process also supports stronger coordination between agencies, as it can uncover when different trail projects are at similar stages in their development – which can highlight opportunities for collaboration in clearing project development hurdles or securing competitive grant funding.



Implementing the Regional Trail Network

This section of the plan is designed to guide agencies as they work towards trail project implementation. Strategic actions for each Tier are based upon a specific project's current phase and anticipated regional impact. These recommended next steps can guide agencies in addressing common challenges that arise in Regional Trail Network implementation: institutional barriers, meaningful community engagement, infrastructure barriers, and siloed local planning efforts and development.

SACOG's Commitment

Each timeframe of action plan has localized recommendations for agencies and for SACOG. SACOG also recognizes its potential leadership role in implementing the Regional Trail Network and the need for efforts that can support all projects regardless of tier or timeframe. SACOG commits to the below outlined best practices to maximize each of its partner agencies' efforts to bring the Regional Trail Network to fruition, regardless of project tier.

- **Interagency coordination:** Lead coordination efforts between cities and counties in the SACOG region, and with Caltrans, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), water agencies, and other federal or state agencies to identify and address major infrastructure or institutional barriers, implement trail projects, and preserve the trail network.
- **Regional convening:** Share trail project ideas and updates with agency staff throughout the region to contribute to the Regional Trail Network narrative and maximize its buildout and resulting impact; provide as-needed guidance to agencies such as conflict resolution, community engagement, and next steps. Engage with regional leaders on the potential of the fully implemented Regional Trail Network.
- **Public information campaign:** Execute a focused campaign on the Regional Trail Network to increase support among elected officials, local staff, and civic leaders. The campaign will provide an overview of the Regional Trails Network through public-facing materials and resources (e.g., webpage content, social media posts, informational

videos, fact sheets), and provide tools and information needed for partners to promote, encourage, and fund new trail construction.

- **Monitor and update the Regional Trail Network:** Track the implementation of the Regional Trail Network every two to three years; update the trail network prioritization to account for changing land uses, updated demographic information for the region, and newly opened trails. This monitoring will also provide an opportunity to celebrate progress in support of completing a trail network for the region.
- **Data and GIS:** Provide data and GIS mapping support to partners in support of Regional Trail Network implementation. Maintain an interactive map of all planned and built trails in the region that serve the Regional Trail Network.
- **Grant technical assistance:** Provide support with funding application development, including letters of support, application review, other technical assistance as needed specific to competitive funding programs.
- **Track and share funding sources:** Identify and promote federal, state, and regional grant programs that agencies could apply to for trail project planning and implementation activities. (Appendix E)
- **Support new funding opportunities:** Seek greater flexibility from state and federal sources to support ongoing maintenance investments for trails. Support local agencies in pursuing options to implement new local fees and taxes dedicated to trails.

Partner recommendations

Implementing the Regional Trail Network involves regional coordination and support, but each piece of the Regional Trail Network is first and foremost a local trail connection. To further the efforts identified for project-specific recommendations, partners also can also use best practices to maximize Regional Trail Network benefit while serving residents:

- Maintain and improve existing Regional Trail Network segments, including considerations for safety and security, and new or improved trail access points.
- Improve or establish high-comfort at-grade and grade-separated crossings to connect existing disconnected Regional Trail Network segments.
- Invite neighboring jurisdictions and special districts to have a seat at the table during planning discussions, trail plan updates and feasibility studies, and regional trail implementation efforts.
- Coordinate internally to and ensure regional trail connections are discussed as potential components of changing land use discussions and transportation investments.
- Cultivate partnerships with community groups and social service providers that can help holistically identify approaches for trail safety concerns.
- Work with residents and community groups to define expectations and benefits of trails in their neighborhoods; work proactively to design trails that will meet their needs and serve their desired uses of the trail.

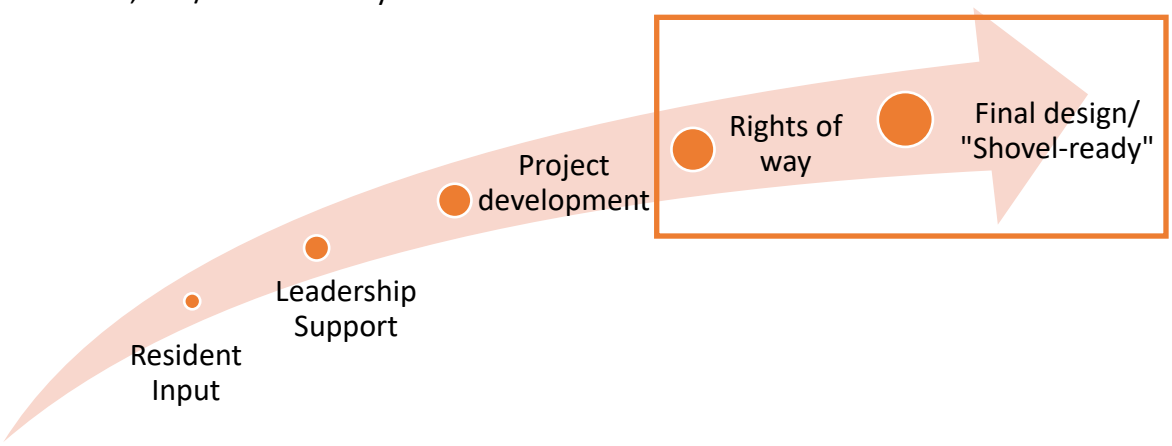
- Work with community groups to plan and execute social events on the regional trail network, or accessible by the regional trail network, to introduce residents to the trail network and increase their comfort and knowledge using the trail.
- Monitor use of the Regional Trail Network to identify local usage trends and support acquiring funding for future trails.

High Regional Impact [2022-2027]

SACOG efforts in the 0–5-year span focus on advancing the projects in Tier 1. Each project in Tier 1 is at a different stage in its implementation based on local efforts to date. The recommendations reflect the next needed steps to get connections closer to implementation.

"Go"

Your project is shovel ready; the community has demonstrated support through targeted outreach efforts and local elected officials are champions of the project. The project has a completed feasibility study and creates an important connection to key activity centers, employment hubs, and/or community destinations.



Partner recommendations

- **Final design:** Finalize the trail design plans and specifications with staff and/or consultant team.
- **Right-of-way acquisition:** Coordinate with appropriate state agency to obtain right-of-way easements and/or work with residents / businesses to clear encroachments on the trail corridor.
- **Permit coordination:** Secure all required environmental, railroad, and/or utility permits or relocations.
- **Natural habitat conservation:** Collaborate with local environmental groups to mitigate anticipated environmental impacts such as preparing a draft tree planting plan.
- **Funding:** Secure grant funding for construction.
- **Community engagement:** Continue providing updates and information to community members and collaborators about work to implement the trail project.

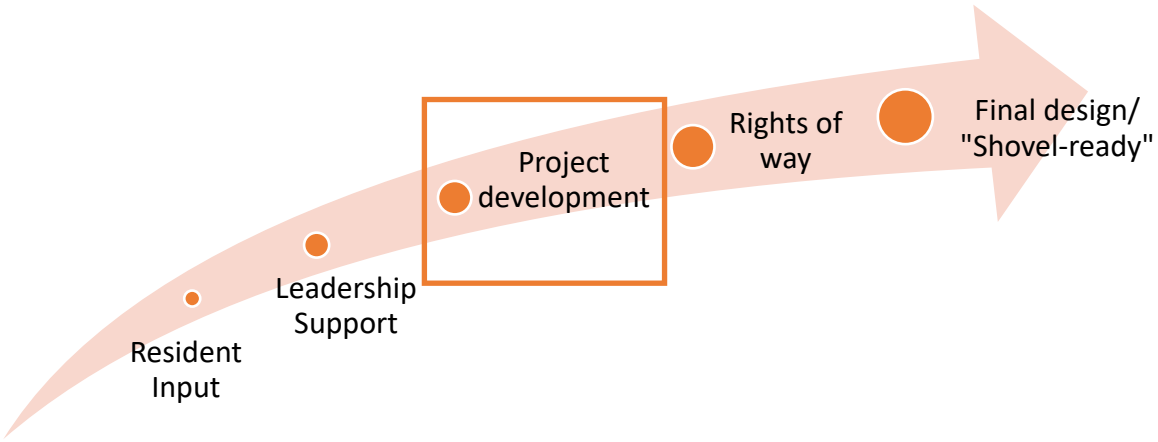
Include opportunities for further collaboration where possible, such as the development of a wayfinding signs, input on design options, fine-tuning needed and desired support infrastructure and trail amenities, and other areas of input that may be specific to your community.

SACOG recommendations

- **Leverage regional planning efforts to ensure equitable trail access:** Look for potential opportunities to add a public transit stop, park-and-ride area, and/or rideshare pick-up and drop-off zone to increase access to the project.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop project-specific fact sheets to promote benefits of trail projects seeking construction funding or other forms of support.
- **Identify coordinated funding opportunities:** Work with partners to identify joint funding opportunities for projects at similar development stages or sharing geographic areas.

"Get Set"

Your project is not quite ready to start construction, but you're setting it up for the final planning phases. Your agency could be developing a feasibility study for the project, or midway through preliminary planning and environmental clearance. Either way, these phases are critical to move the project closer to implementation and public use.



Partner recommendations

- **Feasibility study:** Begin developing a feasibility study for the trail project to evaluate existing conditions along your proposed trail project's alignment, identify potential opportunities and constraints, determine a preferred trail route, and engage community members.

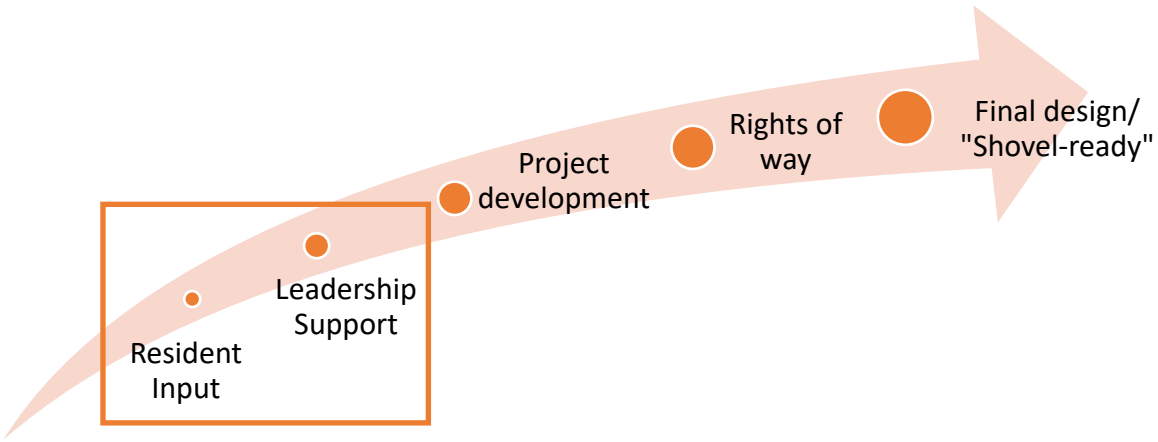
- **Environmental technical studies:** Initiate environmental analysis for the trail project as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the project's potential environmental impacts.
- **Right-of-way acquisition:** Coordinate with your agency's local public works department, utility company, and/or state agency to determine right-of-way easements needed.
- **Project funding:** Identify and pursue grant funding for the trail project.

SACOG recommendations

- **Multi-partner project coordination:** Coordinate planned / proposed trail projects with city and county master plans, general plans, and local planning activities.
- **Leverage regional planning efforts to ensure equitable trail access:** Look for opportunities to expand access via mobility hubs, public transit stops, park-and-ride areas, and/or rideshare pick-up and drop-off zones to increase access to the project.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop project-specific fact sheets to promote benefits of trail projects seeking construction funding or other forms of support.
- **Identify coordinated funding opportunities:** Work with partners to identify joint funding opportunities for projects at similar development stages or sharing geographic areas.

"On Your Mark"

Your project may be in the early planning stages and in the Tier 1 category based on strong potential to enhance much-needed connections in the region. If your project would serve an established community or connect established communities, now is the time to identify whether and how a trail would serve their needs. While these trails are identified for their potential to provide regional benefits through strengthening communities, the trail needs to be wanted by residents and local decision makers if it is going to be built, maintained, and well-used.



Partner recommendations

- **Community engagement:** Identify community groups and potential project collaborators the trail would serve and develop a scope of work for community outreach efforts. Conduct targeted community engagement efforts specific to your trail project. This can include both in-person and virtual outreach opportunities including but not limited to focus groups, community meetings, pop-up workshops, online surveys, booths at community events, coordination with neighborhood associations / community-based organizations, media relations, and guided site visits.
    - Depending on your agency's current relationship with residents where the potential trail is located and communities the trail could serve, your engagement efforts may start with building a relationship of trust and mutual respect.
- **Reassess the planned project:** Using what you learned from residents, community groups, and other key collaborators, evaluate if the planned trail or trail-like connection aligns with their needs and desires. The engagement may have uncovered other pressing community needs aside from the planned trail, or the community may not want the envisioned trail/connection.
- **Assess study corridors:** Vet Trail Study Corridors through local planning processes to ensure they are feasible and well-received by residents.

SACOG recommendations

- **Creating partnerships and enhancing connections:** Identify potential local and regional connections the trail project can provide, and shepherd partnerships between the agencies that can make the connections happen.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop information/handouts that relay the potential and benefits of projects in this tier.
- **Engagement support:** Assist with identifying potential partners and community groups the agency should connect with early on the trail planning process.

Focused Impact [2027-2032]

In the five-to-ten-year span, SACOG coordination efforts work to support the continued progress of Tier 1 projects while setting Tier 2 projects in motion, if locally driven efforts have not done so already.

Your Tier 1 project you were vetting during the first five years of the action plan is ready to start project development. Your Tier 2 projects that were also being discussed with community groups and key collaborators are also looking to take the next step towards implementation. Your agency is pursuing critical steps to implement the trail project, by developing a feasibility study for the project, or conducting preliminary planning and environmental clearance.

"Go"

Your projects from Tier 1 that were in the "Get Set" stage for the first five years of this action plan are likely ready to construct now. Additionally, your projects from Tier 2 that have been working on environmental clearances through locally driven efforts for the past few years are also ready to secure implementation funding by now. Your community has continued to support and champion the project, as have local leaders.

Partner recommendations

- **Final design:** Finalize the trail design plans and specifications with staff and/or consultant team.
- **Right-of-way acquisition:** Coordinate with appropriate state agency to obtain right-of-way easements and/or work with residents / businesses to clear encroachments on the trail corridor.
- **Permit coordination:** Secure all required environmental, railroad, and/or utility permits or relocations.
- **Natural habitat conservation:** Collaborate with local environmental groups to mitigate anticipated environmental impacts such as preparing a draft tree planting plan.
- **Funding:** Secure grant funding for construction.
- **Community engagement:** Continue providing updates and information to community members and collaborators about work to implement the trail project. Include opportunities for further collaboration where possible, such as the development of a wayfinding signs, input on design options, fine-tuning needed and desired support infrastructure and trail amenities, and other areas of input that may be specific to your community.

SACOG recommendations

- **Leverage regional planning efforts to ensure equitable trail access:** Look for potential opportunities to add a public transit stop, park-and-ride area, and/or rideshare pick-up and drop-off zone to increase access to the project.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop project-specific fact sheets to promote benefits of trail projects seeking construction funding or other forms of support.
- **Identify coordinated funding opportunities:** Work with partners to identify joint funding opportunities for projects at similar development stages or sharing geographic areas.

"Get Set"

Your Tier 1 project you were vetting during the first five years of the action plan is ready to start project development. Your Tier 2 projects that were also being discussed with community groups and key collaborators are also looking to take the next step towards implementation. Your agency is pursuing critical steps to implement the trail project, by developing a feasibility study for the project, or conducting preliminary planning and environmental clearance.

Partner recommendations

- **Feasibility study:** Begin developing a feasibility study for the trail project to evaluate existing conditions along your proposed trail project's alignment, identify potential opportunities and constraints, determine a preferred trail route, and engage community members.
- **Environmental technical studies:** Initiate environmental analysis for the trail project as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the project's potential environmental impacts.
- **Right-of-way acquisition:** Coordinate with your agency's local public works department, utility company, and/or state agency to determine right-of-way easements needed.
- **Project funding:** Identify and pursue grant funding for the trail project.

SACOG recommendations

- **Multi-partner project coordination:** Coordinate planned / proposed trail projects with city and county master plans, general plans, and local planning activities.
- **Leverage regional planning efforts to ensure equitable trail access:** Look for opportunities to expand access via mobility hubs, public transit stops, park-and-ride areas, and/or rideshare pick-up and drop-off zones to increase access to the project.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop project-specific fact sheets to promote benefits of trail projects seeking implementation funding or other forms of support.
- **Identify coordinated funding opportunities:** Work with partners to identify joint funding opportunities for projects at similar development stages or sharing geographic areas.

"On Your Mark"

Your project may be in the early planning stages and in the Tier 2 category based on the potential benefits the connection would offer. Your project is more likely to achieve these perceived benefits if it is wanted by the residents it is meant to serve. Local leader and resident support is also critical to help the project overcome obstacles down the road. This is the first step towards creating the next generation of trails.

Partner recommendations

- **Community engagement:** Identify community groups and potential project collaborators the trail would serve and develop a scope of work for community outreach efforts. Conduct targeted community engagement efforts specific to your trail project. This can include both in-person and virtual outreach opportunities including but not limited to focus groups, community meetings, pop-up workshops, online surveys, booths at community events, coordination with neighborhood associations / community-based organizations, media relations, and guided site visits.
- **Reassess the planned project:** Using what you learned from residents, community groups, and other key collaborators, evaluate if the planned trail or trail-like connection aligns with their needs and desires. The engagement may have uncovered other pressing community needs aside from the planned trail, or the community may not want the envisioned trail/connection.
- **Assess study corridors:** Vet Trail Study Corridors through local planning processes to ensure they are feasible and well-received by residents.

SACOG recommendations

- **Consider alternate trail connections:** Work with partners to identify alternative routes or connections for Trail Study Corridors and Tier 1 trails that were studied and determined infeasible or lacked community support from the residents they were meant to serve.
- **Creating partnerships and enhancing connections:** Identify potential local and regional connections the trail project can provide, and shepherd partnerships between the agencies that can make the connections happen.
- **Leverage data tools to augment trail narrative:** Use regional in-house data and analysis analytic tools in conjunction with qualitative data to develop information/handouts that relay the potential and benefits of projects in this tier.
- **Engagement support:** Assist with identifying potential partners and community groups the agency should connect with early on the trail planning process.

Network Completion [2032+]

SACOG coordination efforts in the ten-plus time span include supporting the start of Tier 3 projects that have not already started from locally driven efforts to create transportation connections. Regional coordination efforts will also support continuing Tier 2 projects from the five-to-ten-year phase, and concluding any support needed for projects that were initiated in the zero-to-five-year phase. This will also serve as a point for a revisiting and potential re-envisioning of how residents want to be served by a regionally connected trail network.

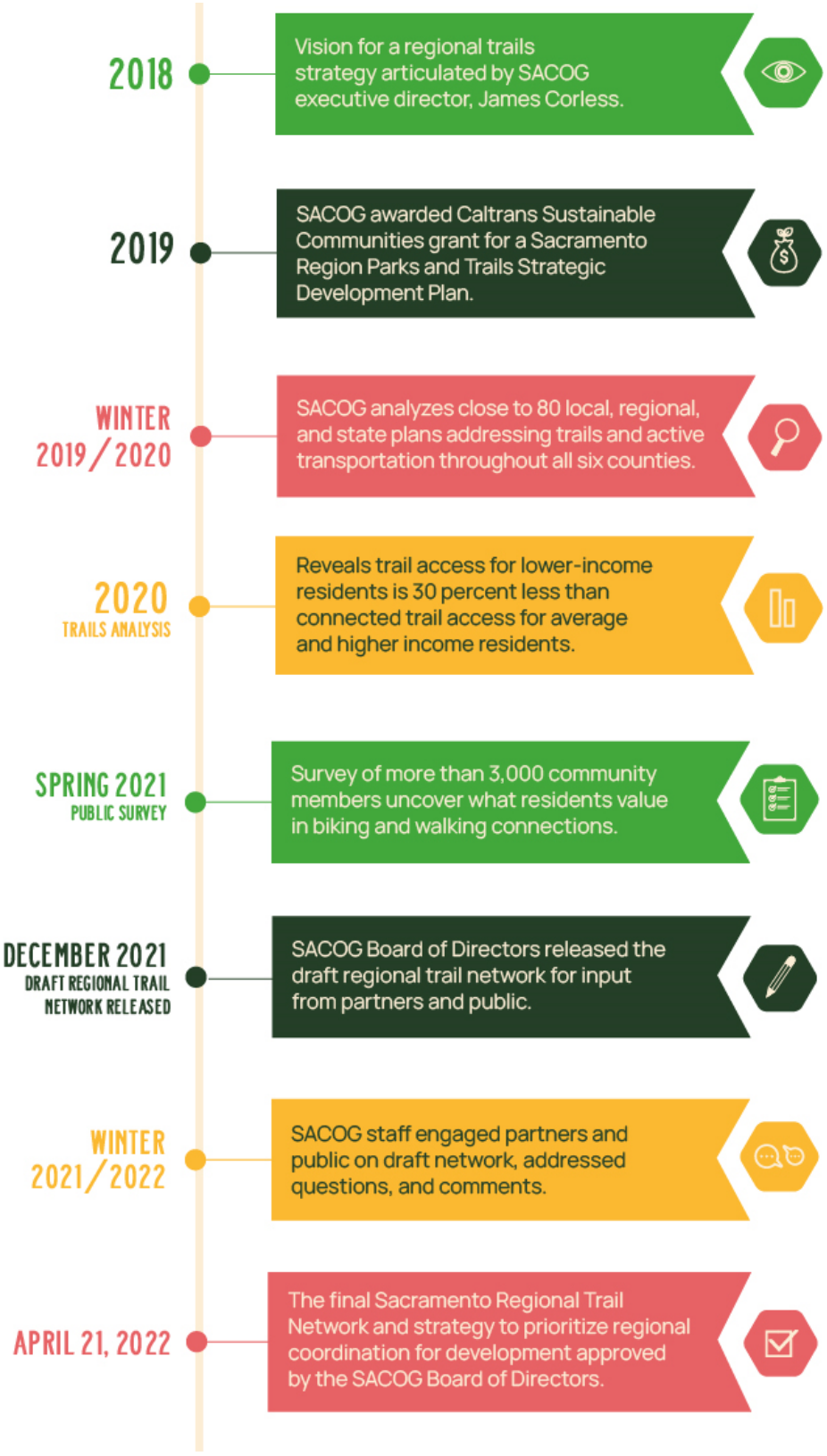
Partner actions

- **Agency coordination:** Coordination with utilities and local public works departments to determine if there are critical barriers along or nearby the proposed trail project that may make the project infeasible.
- **Funding:** Develop a high-level cost estimate for the trail project's planning, design, and construction. Then, begin identifying potential funding sources your agency is eligible to apply to.
- **Update local plans:** work with residents and community groups to update local planning documents and discuss new opportunities for trails that could connect to the Regional Trail Network or serve as potential trail expansions for the Regional Trail Network.

SACOG actions

- **Support Tier 3 and Tier 2 projects in implementation:** Leverage regional data, tools, and convening opportunities in support of project implementation and development.
- **Create partnerships and enhance connections:** Identify potential local and regional connections the trail project can provide, and shepherd partnerships between the agencies that can make the connections happen.
- **Re-visit Regional Trail Network goals and outcomes:** Lead (or support alternate project leads) in re-visiting the plan goals, outcomes, and connections identified through this Action Plan to ensure the Regional Trail Network will meet the needs of residents.
- **Community engagement support:** Assist with the identification of potential partners and community groups who would have input early un the trail planning process.
- **Project visioning:** Provide a high-level overview of the Regional Trail Network's goals and vision to help guide the agency's trail project development.

Here, Then, & Now: Where the Trails are Headed



Gratitude / Acknowledgements

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Our special gratitude to La Familia for partnering to help distribute paper surveys at their COVID-19 vaccination event.

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Glossary of terms

Active transportation: Active transportation is human-powered mobility, such as biking, walking, or rolling. Active transportation directly replaces motor vehicle miles traveled, so these modes are effective at conserving fuel, reducing vehicle emissions, bridging the first- and last-mile gap, and improving individual and public health. Bicycles, electric bikes, wheelchairs, scooters, and even walking are all considered active transportation.

Class I bikeway: Class I bikeways, also known as bike paths or shared-use paths, are facilities with exclusive right of way for bicyclists and pedestrians, away from the roadway and with cross flows by motor traffic minimized. Class I bikeways support both recreational and commuting opportunities. Common applications include along rivers, shorelines, canals, utility rights-of-way, railroad rights-of-way, within school campuses, or within and between parks.

Class II bikeway: Class II bikeways are bike lanes established along streets and are defined by pavement striping and signage to delineate a portion of a roadway for bicycle travel. Bike lanes are one-way facilities, typically striped adjacent to motor traffic travelling in the same direction. Contraflow bike lanes can be provided on one-way streets for bicyclists travelling in the opposite direction.

Class III bikeway: Class III bikeways, or bike routes, designate a preferred route for bicyclists on streets shared with motor traffic not served by dedicated bikeways to provide continuity to the bikeway network. Bike routes are generally not appropriate for roadways with higher motor traffic speeds or volumes. Bike routes are established by placing bike route signs and optional shared roadway markings (sharrow) along roadways.

Class IV separated bikeway: A Class IV separated bikeway, often referred to as a cycle track or protected bike lane, is for the exclusive use of bicycles, physically separated from motor traffic with a vertical feature. The separation may include, but is not limited to, grade separation, flexible posts, inflexible barriers, or on-street parking. Separated bikeways can provide for one-way or two-way travel. By providing physical separation from motor traffic, Class IV bikeways can reduce the level of stress, improve comfort for more types of bicyclists, and contribute to an increase in bicycle volumes and mode share.

Feasibility study: Early engineering studies begin with the identification of transportation problems and reasonable alternative solutions. Early feasibility studies use sources such as a transportation concept report, district system management plan, regional transportation plan, Congestion Management Program, and initial engineering studies to serve as the basis for a project initiation document. They address questions such as: What is the problem? What are the possible solutions? Can significant environmental impacts be avoided? What is the cost?

Final design: Any design activities following preliminary design. These activities expressly include the preparation of final construction plans and detailed specifications for the performance of construction work.

Jurisdiction: A local government jurisdiction or "local jurisdiction" means any city, county, or special district.

Regionalism: The emphasis on cooperative plans and actions with potential to benefit the residents of the six-county region more so than if each partner only worked in their self-interest.

Right-of-way acquisition: Right-of-way engineering can generally be defined as the phase of transportation engineering and surveying which involves the determination of existing right-of-way lines and property boundaries, the preparation of maps and descriptions for the appraisal, acquisition, and disposal of real property rights, and the maintaining of records relating to the State's right-of-way.

Transportation infrastructure: Physical and organizational structures and facilities needed for the operation of a transportation network, such as buildings, roads, and power supplies.