

## SWOT Summary for Valley West

>Based on input gathered by City 2010-present

- Economic Development Strategic Plan-Valley West Recommendations, 2010-2014
- Notes from Valley West Business Survey, 2015
- Notes from Valley West Visioning, February 2017
- Business Visioning Workshop, May 2017
- Summary document of Valley West Engagement 2017-19
- Carlson Park Community Planning Questions, April 2018
- Synopsis of Community Input Process for Valley West Park-versions 1 and 2, 2018
- Community Bike/Ped Safety Workshop-notes and polling data, June 2018
- Public Safety Task Force – Final Report, 2018; Recommendations to Improve Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety for the Valley West Community in Arcata, October 2018
- Valley West CPBST call notes, June 2019
- Infill Market Study Engagement, December 2019
- Annie and Mary Trail Connectivity Project Outreach Summary-April and May 2019
- Carlson Park survey of Latinx residents and Laurel Tree School, December 2020

### Primary Challenges

#### Unsafe/uninviting conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians and lack of connectivity

- Traffic Focus Areas: Giuntoli Lane to West End Road, over the highway to Janes Road; Boyd Road; Valley West & Valley East; East on Giuntoli Lane to SR 101 [and beyond to Janes Rd.]
- 2 confirmed bicycle accidents 2012-2016 within Valley West, 5 within a 0.5 mile radius. 2 confirmed serious pedestrian accidents, one at the intersection of Valley East and West, respectively
- Students leaving school leads to traffic congestion, Students riding bike to school need safe routes (Laurel Tree Charter-roughly 100 students; Pacific Union School- [around 565 students] highly attended by VW residents). Students are bussed in and out of school. Traffic [and high speed limits] on Giuntoli Lane [and Janes Rd.] prevents students from walking and biking to and from school. Residents fear bicycles being stolen
- Driver Education needed- Helmet wearing low among college students and children. Bike share added on campus, opportunity for education with bike share
- VW community is concerned that Humboldt State students travel at higher rates of speed during school year, used to traveling in larger cities
- Bike/ped study participants noted a number of unsafe road user behaviors, including drivers traveling at speeds above the posted speed limits and failing to share the road with bicyclists; pedestrians crossing mid-block outside of marked or unmarked crossings; and bicyclists riding on the sidewalk and failing to yield at stop signs and marked crosswalks.
- Need physical barriers separating bike/ped from vehicles
- Many areas in the community lack sidewalks, most notably, sections of Giuntoli Lane. Participants also noted that where sidewalks exist, the widths and maintenance conditions of the sidewalks varied throughout the community, creating accessibility concern.

- Though sidewalks do not exist on Giuntoli Lane or West End Road near the SR 299 on- and off-ramps, participants of bike/ped survey shared that residents regularly walk in this area. Accordingly, participants expressed that they would feel safer walking in the area with marked crosswalks as a short-term improvement, while the City, County, and Caltrans work toward installing sidewalks in the long-term. Participants also supported the addition of a high-visibility marked crossing across Giuntoli Lane with enhancements, such as pedestrian refuge islands and rectangular rapid flashing beacons to increase the visibility of pedestrians.
- Accessibility to South Arcata (trail that connects to Pacific Union)
- not easy to get to school in off hours - road is not safe to walk or bike there from Valley West
- Participants in bike/ped survey shared that overgrown bushes and low hanging tree branches block visibility and access for pedestrians using the sidewalk along Giuntoli Lane, Valley West Boulevard, and Valley East Boulevard.

#### Individuals Experiencing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity

- Bike/ped survey participants noted that the number of individuals experiencing homelessness is increasing in the community, particularly in empty lots and Neighborhood Park.
- Participants shared that community members experience housing insecurity often live in recreational vehicles (RVs) that are parked along the Valley West loop, which limits visibility between motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians along Valley West Boulevard and Valley East Boulevard.
- Participants on Route 1 shared that there are Humboldt State University (HSU) students living in the community who are experiencing housing insecurity. As of April 2018, 19% of HSU students reported being housing insecure at least once in the last twelve months.
- homeless population - needs direction/resources/support/food/showers with respect and dignity
- Latinx community notes challenges with finding apartments in Valley West, and concerns re: mobile home parks taking advantage of low-income people with poor credit. Often issues with housing-leaks, etc.-do not get fixed

#### Inappropriate/Illegal/Unsafe Activity

- Prostitution at Hotels
- Loitering/panhandling; cleanliness of the shopping center
- Public drinking, smoking in shopping center
- Aggressive dogs
- Rat infestations
- Ecosystems disturbed and removal of feral cats
- Litter and needles at parks
- RVs, vans, people waiting to get enough money for motel, stay close by and live in bushes and vehicles, human poop and pee in every grass area
- grass needs to be mowed to show hidden dangerous trash items
- No safe place for children to play
- People driving over the speed limit especially on Guintoli Lane

## Community Needs (bold signifies most commonly identified)

### Priority Projects as Identified by Community in 2017

- Benches in bus stations [installed]
- Working with McDonalds for a trash can [this trash can installed, not at other bus stops]
- Acquire Carlson Park and hosted a community walk (*complete*)
- Design for a BBall Court / cost estimate (*complete*)
- Clean up volunteer day – scheduled for April 7th – looking for volunteers [ongoing]
- Initial trail delineation to the River
- Planning for a Movie in the Park [cancelled due to concerns over nearby encampments]

### Infrastructure Improvements

- Traffic lights or **cross walks for crossing busy streets**
- **Improve Playground**
- Improve bus stops- Participants in bike/ped survey who travel by bus shared that some transit stops are in disrepair with trash adjacent to them and missing lighting and benches.
- Improve lighting - Boyd and Giuntoli, Town and Country Entrance and shopping center. Increase lighting of bus stops (perhaps solar). Limited nighttime visibility for and of pedestrians and bicyclists is a major safety challenge
- Basketball Court
- Portland Loo/ public bathroom
- Trash cans and **benches at bus stations**
- Beautification (trees, flowers)
- Rain friendly covered spaces
- Disc Golf Course
- **Dedicated space for kids, families and senior and/or a Youth Recreation Center**
- Transportation (kids and elderly); need safer walking and biking paths to schools and activity hubs.
- Additional Roadway and Wayfinding Signage- lack of signage in the community, including pedestrian crossing signage, bicycle lane and bicycle wayfinding signs, and landmark signs identifying the Valley West community and VW Park. Advanced pedestrian crossing warning signage at Boyd Road may help signal to motorists to expect pedestrians in the marked crosswalk on the south side of Giuntoli Road.
- Improve 101 roundabout for bicyclists and pedestrians. When pedestrians cross at the designated marked crosswalks, drivers generally tend to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. However, this has the unintended consequence of causing drivers to come to a full stop in the roundabout. Because roundabouts are generally designed to facilitate free-moving traffic, drivers are not expecting other drivers to stop in roundabouts, and participants shared that during peak traffic times, many rear-end collisions occur. Current roundabout design is inconsistent for westbound bicyclists who must bike along the north side of Giuntoli Lane with no bike lanes and navigate through the roundabout as a driver would. Though a bike lane exists on the south side of Giuntoli Lane, the eastbound bike lane abruptly ends as it approaches the roundabout.

### Services

- More police presence-various feedback including: outreach and programs for transient communities, rehabilitation versus policing, less focus on criminalization; better utilize police resources to protect businesses from victimization; enforce no loitering and panhandling laws/ordinances; more rapid response from police
- **Neighborhood Clean ups**
- Food pantry; summer lunch program for kids
- Medical, Vision and Dental services (permanent and/or mobile). Dental Clinic only available in Eureka, very hard to get there and get appointments there, Pacific Union School should ask for this - parents should ask /advocate to bring it in as there is a mobile Dental Clinic; eye doctor also needed
- Book mobile
- Services to assist those currently experiencing homelessness
- Use St. Joseph's model; use City property for a homeless camp where people can be safe and sheltered
- Shuttle transport to downtown
- Public Wi-fi
- community services center i.e., parenting, "know your rights", etc. with a place for police to locate to
- have more control about zoning in our community

#### Private Businesses

- Place to just sit and have coffee
- **Business /Neighborhood Watch Group**
- Wellness Center
- Improving Playgrounds at private mobile home parks

#### **Strengths/Opportunities**

##### Updates

- Change of ownership of the large field between the shopping center and Hampton
- Construction of Tractor Supply Co. and some housing
- Plans for Valley West Trailer Park to improve the meeting place and add a bball court,
- Working with the school on joint use agreement [unclear for which school and for use of which park]
- High Visibility Crossing is funded and scheduled for installation [crosswalk already installed on Giuntoli Lane]
- Acquired Carlson Park
- BBall Court installed
- Monthly Clean up volunteer day – scheduled [ongoing] (on hold during COVID)

##### Diverse Demographics

- Largest Latinx Spanish-speaking population in the area
- Humboldt State University students live in the area
- United Indian Health Services serving Native population near VW

Existing Resources that are meaningful to VW Community [“What important resources currently exist in this neighborhood that could be better utilized to support you and your family’s health and wellness?”]

- UIHS
- Activities at Courtyard Apartments
- WIC Programs [WIC center in the shopping center has been replaced by a cannabis dispensary]
- Little Learners Preschool
- Extreme Weather Shelter
- Pacific Union open campus - make secure
- Early Headstart Preschool
- Mad River Hospital
- Parks at Town and Country Mobile homes and dog parks
- Grocery center
- Dr. Office
- Doula Program
- \$Tree
- Places to walk
- Bus station
- Daycares

**Specific Ideas for Priority Topics**

Specific Ideas for Activities/Services

- Community Classes such as financial planning, family planning, culture, self-esteem; programs for the Latinx community in the neighborhood; group exercise
- Afterschool programming for youth
- Community gardening space
- Use local hotels for swim lessons
- There used to be a Wellness Center but it is gone, it used volunteers to help children with homework
- Rec Center for youth and Teens - Boys & Girls Club - active, non-tech activities
- Drug and Alcohol Rehab access locally
- Programs for Latino community in Arcata - Paso a Paso, Zumba, Open Door classes
- Community classes/workshops - financial planning, family planning, culture, self-esteem; talking to children about difficult topics
- Family planning Resources for teens
- After School program
- Music venue - all ages
- utilize Red Roof pool - swimming classes; group exercise;
- Breakfast all day collective
- Neighborhood watch/patrol, volunteers
- Disc Golf course
- activities with United Indian Health Services
- Americorps Services

- Sports - scholarships to help support use of programs, also local programs in this neighborhood; family programs and reading programs;
- library come to this area and do reading programs (KEET and library) mobile Book Mobile (HCOE);
- STEM classes/events for youth - could happen in parks
- after school programs
- Utilize hotel conference rooms for playgroups, senior lunches, etc.
- Utilize Laurel Tree > community building for playgroups, recreational, seniors, etc.
- more community information about facts and information on what's happening in our community
- food bank here in Valley West
- Mobile Intervention Support Team (MIST) - "white bird" Portland
- Neighborhood Block Grant - \$2000 from City
- Transient Occupancy Tax towards city improvements
- Community Space/Park especially for "bad weather".
- Valley West Festivals
- Food Truck Festival

#### Specific Ideas for Improvements for Valley West Park

- Picnic tables
- Benches and trails along the flooding areas
- Disc golf - parinfinity.net
- Boat races in the spring in the flooded areas
- Gyms and exercise buildings
- Suspended field for soccer/futsal court in Valley West Park
- Food for People lunch program in this neighborhood for children at the city park

#### Specific Ideas for Improvements to Carlson Park (2 or more votes, most common noted first)

- River access - kayaking and fishing, inner tubing, swimming
- Picnic/BBQ area
- Trails and benches
- Fenced playground for kids - 5-5/6 years old and 6-12 year olds
- Bathroom/shower area
- Dog Park
- Multi game court-tables-chess, checkers
- Bright colors that reflect water-teal, green
- Activity areas, soccer, basketball, gym equipment, etc.

#### Specific Idea for Improvements for Bike/Pedestrian Safety and connectivity

- Bicycle Educational Campaign- creating a comprehensive bicycle education program targeting youth and their parents, adults, and college students as a means to improve bicyclist behaviors in the community and create a safer environment for bicyclists and drivers.
- Neighborhood Speed Watch and Education Program- implementing a neighborhood speed watch and education program utilizing handheld speed radar devices and roadway speed feedback signs as a strategy to reduce high vehicle speeds in the community.

- Crossing Enhancements and Temporary Demonstrations- improving crossings in the neighborhood, particularly at intersections that currently lacked any marked crossings. Participants identified geographic proximity to parks, mobile home parks, bus stops, schools, and commercial developments (e.g. along Valley East Boulevard) as criteria for prioritizing the installation of new crosswalks. Additionally, this group identified some specific locations that sorely needed marked crosswalks, including all legs of the Wymore Road/Valley West Boulevard/Giuntoli Lane intersection and across Giuntoli Lane at the intersections east of Valley East Boulevard. Consider hosting a temporary demonstration of crossing enhancements in May 2019 as a way to build momentum and sustain engagement with residents.
- Expand Zagster Bikeshare to the Valley West Neighborhood-Participants during the workshop repeatedly communicated that Valley West neighborhood is isolated from the rest of the City and felt that many Arcata residents do not view Valley West as part of the larger Arcata community. The Project Team recommends that the City of Arcata explore the feasibility of expanding the existing Zagster Bikeshare system to the Valley West Neighborhood. Expansion of the current bikeshare system beyond its current focus around HSU and Downtown Arcata can help to foster a shared sense of community identity, while also encouraging more travel between Valley West and the other neighborhoods of Arcata.
- Lighting Assessment-The Project Team encourages and recommends the Planning Committee and workshop participants to collaboratively conduct a community-wide street lighting assessment focused on pedestrian and bicycle lighting needs around Giuntoli Lane, Valley West Boulevard, Valley East Boulevard, and Valley West Park. Proper streetlights provide safety and security as well as improve the overall well-being of road users. A lighting assessment can be used to identify and inventory nighttime pedestrian-scale lighting needs in areas of high nighttime pedestrian activity.
- Valley West Park Wayfinding and Additional Signage-Residents participating in the workshop were unaware of Valley West Park, a linear park located along Valley East Boulevard behind the apartment complexes from Poplar Drive to Valley West Boulevard and bisected by Hallen Drive. The park has a community playground along Hallen Drive. Although the park is listed on the City of Arcata, Arcata Parks and Playground map, participants did not see any entrance signage identifying the park. The Project Team recommends the addition of an entrance sign at Hallen Drive near the park parking lot (at Poplar Drive) and interpretative signage explaining the park floods during rainy season.
- Better connectivity between Valley West and Arcata for ped/bike; public transportation from here to South Arcata - add more accessible trails for families, bikes
- bus/van service to community center for multi-age events
- more busses specific to community activities, direct shuttle to downtown
- Speed bumps, especially near the 299 onramp/ Giuntoli Lane

#### Specific Idea for Improvements for Businesses/Economic Development

- Develop a gateway plan for Valley West
- Develop a corridor plan for Giuntoli Lane
- More advertising up on the road, billboard, etc.
- Eliminate all illegally parked vehicles
- Eliminate panhandling

- Trash pickups
- Improve paving and sidewalks
- Beautification of Valley East to improve look of back of shopping center, interest in natural/edible landscaping and gardens/play spaces
- More diverse businesses-restaurants, shops, light industrial with lots of jobs; big corporation like home depot, fun shops like library, coffee shop to hang out in
- Need police substation
- Work with parcel owners near MRCH and UIHS to encourage planning and development of commercial facilities and housing that would synergistically interact with the existing health care service centers.
- Revitalize the Valley West neighborhood commercial center and integrate this commercial center into the gateway and corridor plan above.
- Improve the pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle linkage to other Arcata neighborhoods. Develop a multi-use trail system providing connectivity to HSU via LK Wood Boulevard and Valley West Boulevard and to Downtown via Spear Avenue.
- Consider annexing the industrial and commercial parcels adjacent to Giuntoli Lane and Boyd Road that lie within Arcata's urban services boundary.
- Improve access to nearby natural resource amenities available to residents and visitors to the Valley West neighborhood. Develop Carlson Park and access to the Mad River as a significant recreational and tourist serving amenity
- Attract businesses to this area by encouraging industrial and commercial development
- Encourage development of the diversified health care industry
- Promote more tourist visitation to this area.
- Start a dialogue with the HSU nursing program and MRCH to better understand the demand for student/employee housing needs.
- Valley West businesses to submit a proposal to the Humboldt Lodging Alliance (of which one Valley West hotel owner is a one of the members) seeking funds to improve the district, perhaps focusing on beautification.

#### Misc.

- lighting - Boyd and Town and Country Entrance; maybe solar?
- trash can at bus stops and signs for "no smoking" area
- Sharps containers - Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction;
- Kaboom Grant for park space
- community gardens on both sides of highway
- buy lot behind Carl's Jr./Rays
- transparent sound barriers
- repurpose fire station near Mad River
- flowers, streetscape improvements
- public bathroom

#### **Identified Local Partners (based on previous engagement)**

- Miha Tomuta, Wendy Ortiz, Danny Gonzalez; Cal Walks
- Katherine Chen, UCB SafeTREC
- Robin Baker, McKinleyville Family Resource Center
- Netra Khatri, City of Arcata Engineering
- Lucy Salazar, Valley West Citizen Advocate
- Areli Cupp, Humboldt County, Health and Human Resources PH SRTS
- Janine Mahoney, Valley West Resident and Neighborhood Watch Captain
- Melissa Lazon, Public Safety Task Force/Committee
- Emily Sinkhorn, Redwood Community Action Agency
- Jennifer Weiss, Redwood Community Action Agency
- Jayne McGuire, Parks and Recreation Committee
- Camellia Preciado, The Court Yards
- River Community Homes, Neighborhood Watch
- Elaine Hogan, Humboldt County Health and Human Resources
- Areli Cupp, Humboldt County, Health and Human Resources,
- Michael Reardon, Humboldt County, Health and Human Resources
- Debora Jacobsen, Six Rivers Montessori
- Anita Scarfia, Manager, Valley West Mobile Estates
- Brenda Sutter, Administrator, Laurel Tree School
- Patty Larson, Town and Country Mobile Villa
- Clayton Macintosh from Macintosh Country Store
- Chuck Giannini from NAPA
- Happy from McDonalds
- Hampton Inn owner and wife
- Carol and Russ at TP Tire
- Zanski Family-local business owners
- Humboldt Depot
- CCCU
- Grossman MD
- Arcata Chamber