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Environmental Services
707-822-8184

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Recreation
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Community Development
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Finance
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707-825-2128

Transportation
707-822-3775

February 25, 2022

Mr. Jack Ainsworth
Executive Director
California Coastal Commission
North Coast District Office
1385 8th Street, Suite 130
Arcata, CA 95521

RE: Humboldt Bay Trail South Project (Coastal Development Permit No. 1-20-0560)

Dear Mr. Ainsworth:

The City of Arcata strongly encourages the Coastal Commission to approve the County of Humboldt's application for a coastal development permit to construct the Humboldt Bay Trail South project along the Highway 101 corridor between Eureka and Arcata. This project will deliver "The Final Four" miles of trail to connect the Arcata portion of the California Coastal Trail, the "North Bay Trail", and the Eureka Waterfront Trail to create a continuous network of 14 miles of coastal trail around the north portion of Humboldt Bay.

The City of Arcata can share how valuable trails are for public safety, quality of life, and transportation equity. Arcata has nearly 40 miles of trails that range from major transportation corridors to serene recreation spaces. All are accessed free of cost and available 365 days per year. Visiting Arcata's four-mile North Bay Trail, you will see people of all ages, incomes, and abilities; parents bonding with children; friends maintaining connections; dog-owners caring for their companion animals; and people using the trail for many purposes including exercise, personal renewal, social interactions, nature study, and transportation. Trails that are separated from roadways enable people to travel safely and comfortably away from vehicles. The Arcata North Bay Trail has connected several neighborhoods with the Arcata Bay and the rich Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary that borders the Bay. The importance of these trails has never been more apparent than during the pandemic. We have seen record use of the trails during the past two years and are experiencing a large demand to expand the system. The Humboldt Bay Trail South project secures the backbone for the regional trail system.

Connecting the two largest cities in Humboldt County with a trail separated from Highway 101 has been a community goal for nearly 25 years. For much of this time, the idea seemed out of reach. The City of Arcata, City of Eureka, the County of Humboldt, and many other agencies and community organizations have collaborated together to make the Humboldt Bay Trail dream a reality. The County of Humboldt has designed a trail project that carefully integrates with the existing railroad and highway infrastructure and accounts for the sensitive environmental conditions along the Humboldt Bay shoreline. We especially appreciate that the County of Humboldt has emphasized public safety in the design, including the addition of a cable barrier between the trail and Highway 101; removal of the

northern section of Eucalyptus trees; and measures to reduce flooding hazards and adapt for sea level rise. The completion of the Humboldt Bay Trail between Arcata and Eureka has been identified as the region's top non-motorized transportation infrastructure project for more than a decade.

The Humboldt Bay Trail South project is a high priority for the City of Arcata and the Humboldt Bay region, and Arcata looks forward to the connections and many benefits that will result from its completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stacy Atkins-Salazar".

Stacy Atkins-Salazar, Mayor
City of Arcata

Cc:

Senator Mike McGuire, Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov

Congressman Jared Huffman, John.Driscoll@mail.house.gov, Ciara.Emery@mail.house.gov

Assembly Member Jim Wood, Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov

Sara Sanders, League Regional Public Affairs Manager, sanders@cacities.org

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