

Evaluation Criteria for the El Dorado Trail Extension Project

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are based on Chapter 1000 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual.

Class I Trail: Designated bicycle path that is paved, a minimum of eight feet wide, and designed for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians.

Class II Trail: Designated bicycle lane that is incorporated into an existing road, on both sides of the road.

Class III Trail: Bicycle route that is signed on the ground utilizing shared road surface that serves both bicycle rider and vehicle traffic; no designated lanes for exclusive bicycle use.

SAFETY

The trail will be located, to the extent feasible, as a separate route not associated with existing roads (e.g., Class I). Design standards for Class I trails contained in Chapter 1000 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual will be utilized (i.e., trail width, curve radius, design speed, grades and signage).

A segment will be determined unsafe if any of the following conditions exist:

- Heavy vehicle traffic on a Class 3 route;
- Multiple road crossings (relative to other segments);
- Flumes;
- Unsafe vertical and horizontal alignment; or,
- Natural or manmade hazard that cannot be mitigated.

GRADE

For Class I segments of the trail, a maximum 5% grade will be considered acceptable. Sustained grades will be limited to 2% grade. Steeper grades can be utilized for short segments not to exceed 150 meters. For native surface portions of the trail, vertical and horizontal alignment and design speed will dictate the allowable grade.

SOUND

To the extent feasible, the trail will be isolated from sights and sounds of the urban environment. However, because it is desirable that the trail utilize existing federal, State and county easements, the avoidance of urban sights and sounds may be difficult until the trail passes east of Pollock Pines. Although sound will be considered in the analysis of

each segment, other considerations such as safety, cost, and easement acquisition may weigh more heavily in segment selection.

CREEK CROSSINGS

The number of creek crossings will affect construction as well as maintenance of the trail. In general, segments with fewer creek crossings will be considered more desirable.

ROAD CROSSINGS

Road crossings will be limited. Roads with an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 6,000 or less (e.g., Pony Express or Sly Park Road) should not present a hazard as long as proper sight distance can be maintained and the locations can be signed and marked according to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Road crossings with ADT exceeding 10,000, such as Highway 50, will require special consideration (e.g., overpasses or tunnel).

NUMBER OF LANDOWNERS AND LANDOWNER RECEPTIVITY

One of the key elements to consider is the number of private properties crossed and the willingness of landowners to provide the County with an easement. In order to reduce costs, some segments may be eliminated in favor of segments with existing federal, State or county easements.

SECURITY ISSUES

The potential for vandalism of electronic facilities, water storage, transportation areas, and private property will be examined as part of the analysis. It is expected that potential security issues can be mitigated with fences, barricades or barriers; however, in the event that the risk of vandalism is considered high, the segment may be eliminated from further analysis.

EFFECT ON USER SATISFACTION

The criteria for user satisfaction are difficult to project. It is anticipated that user satisfaction with scenic quality, route safety and sounds will be critical to overall user satisfaction. Adverse environmental conditions such as dust and extended exposure to the sun may also affect user experience.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

We may need to define our own set of criteria for Class IV trails (native surface) to be used in this analysis. We are working with the USFS to obtain guidelines for Class IV trails.