

Community Trails Plan Process

How Communities Developed their Plans

The Community Trails Master Plan (CTMP) will be utilized to develop a system of interconnected regional and community trails and pathways, also known as multi-use, non-motorized public facilities. These trails and pathways are intended to address an established public need to provide recreation, transportation, health and quality of life benefits associated with hiking, biking, and horseback riding throughout the County’s biologically diverse environments.

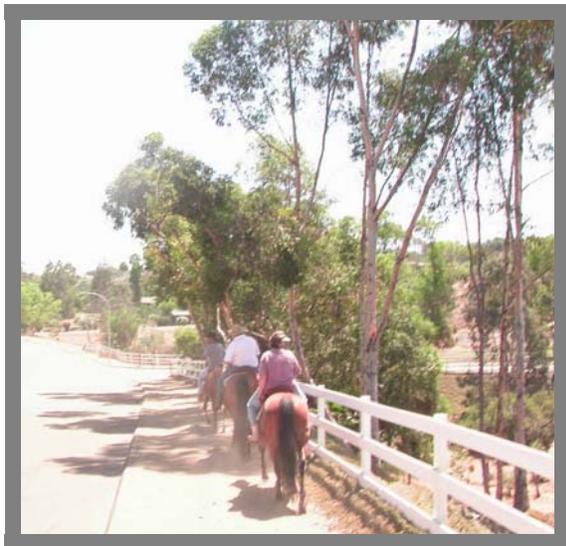
While this CTMP provides an overview of the whole County Program, its main focus is on development and management guidelines that can be applied to community level trail systems. Community trails serve a different function than regional trails, which are focused on the provision of long linear distances. Instead, community trails are

local public facilities in close proximity to residents, intended for multi-use passive recreation and alternative modes of transportation. These guidelines were developed with the assistance of the CPSGs. In some cases, special community guidelines were developed to supplement the countywide guidelines to provide greater flexibility in recommending specific trail characteristics that reflect the needs and desires of the communities. The County has established two forms of non-motorized facilities that serve both transportation and recreational needs called “Trails” and “Pathways”. For purposes of brevity when the general term “trails” is used it shall apply to both trails and pathways unless otherwise specified.

Trails are typically away from vehicular roads that are primarily recreational in

nature but can also serve as an alternative mode of transportation. They are soft-surface facilities for single or multiple uses by pedestrians, equestrians, and mountain bicyclists. Trail characteristics vary depending on location and user types.

Pathways are non-motorized transportation facilities located within a parkway or road right of way. A riding and hiking trail located in the road right of way is considered a pathway. They can range from a separated, soft-surface, single track adjacent to a rural road to a widened decomposed-granite shoulder intended for biking, hiking, and equestrian uses. Pathways are intended to serve both circulation and recreation purposes. They provide a different experience from trails and are not an equivalent substitute; however, pathways help make critical connections and are an integral part of a functional trail system.



Popular Pathway - Blossom Valley/Lakeside

11.1 Community Planning and Sponsor Groups

These community trails not only provide needed recreation but also become an important component of the local circulation systems, providing safe bicycle, and pedestrian and equestrian access. In communities where there is substantial residential development the primary beneficiaries of these trails are the local residents.

The CTMP includes individual sections for each CPSG. Each group has the option to actively participate in the CTMP or not. Communities that have not prepared local trail plans and are not participating in the CTMP may have existing trails or proposed regional trails in their area. Since the scope of this master plan includes the entire unincorporated area, these existing and/or regional trails are included on maps contained in these sections for coordination and future planning purposes.

An elected planning group (**Figure CTP-1**) or an appointed sponsor group (**Figure CTP-2**) represents all but a few areas in the unincorporated County. Since CPSGs function as representatives of their communities, their recommendations relative to the need, location, and character of local trail systems is essential to the structure and success of this master plan.

In unincorporated areas not represented by a planning or sponsor group (**Figure CTP-3**),

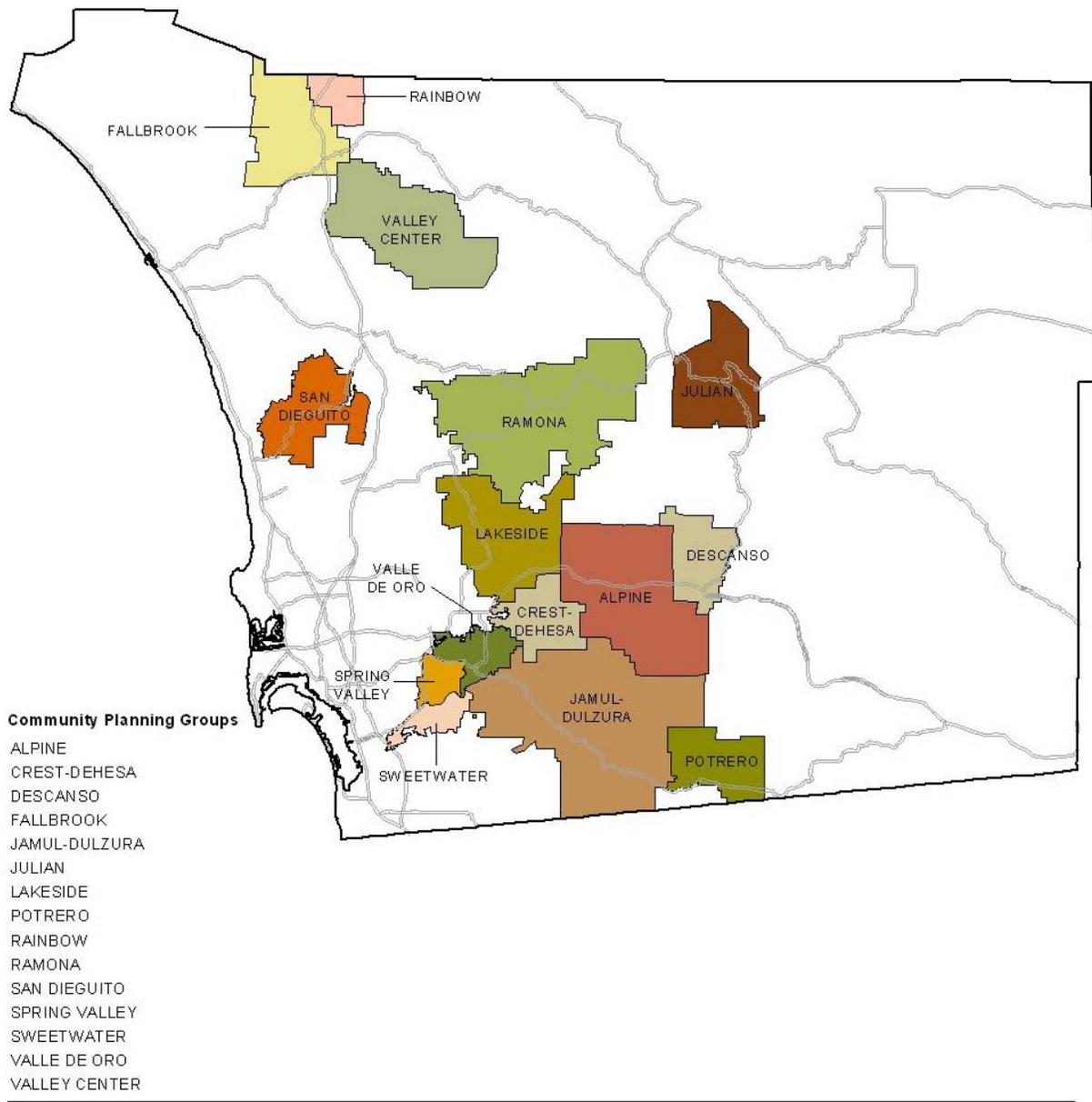
the County will still consider establishing community trails. In these cases, organized individuals or groups may approach the County with specific proposals or requests and the County will strive to determine the level of support from residents and make appropriate decisions regarding their inclusion in the CTMP.

Participating CPSGs may customize their individual community trail plans by creating or adding community-specific trail maps (**Figure CTP-4**), character statements, goals, policies, implementation strategies or design and management guidelines and submitting their requests to the County for review and approval. The groups were encouraged to consider and record any unique trail-related influences in their area. Community-specific trail needs, population demographics, community character, historical occurrences,

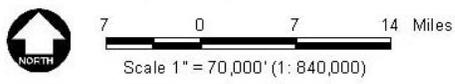
trail related events, and trail conditions in neighboring communities have an influence on the number and type of trails needed in a particular community. Such conditions may ultimately effect how trails are planned and implemented in certain areas. These kinds of justifications for needing more trails will be considered case-by-case and addressed by the County's implementation plan as it progresses.

However, the CTMP emphasizes the importance of establishing a minimum level of service, currently identified at 0.8 mile of trail per 1,000 population, especially for those areas severely underserved, so as to bring all participating communities up to a baseline level. The baseline level of service is a starting point for determining the amount of trails needed within each community.

Figure CPSG-1: Community Planning Groups of San Diego County

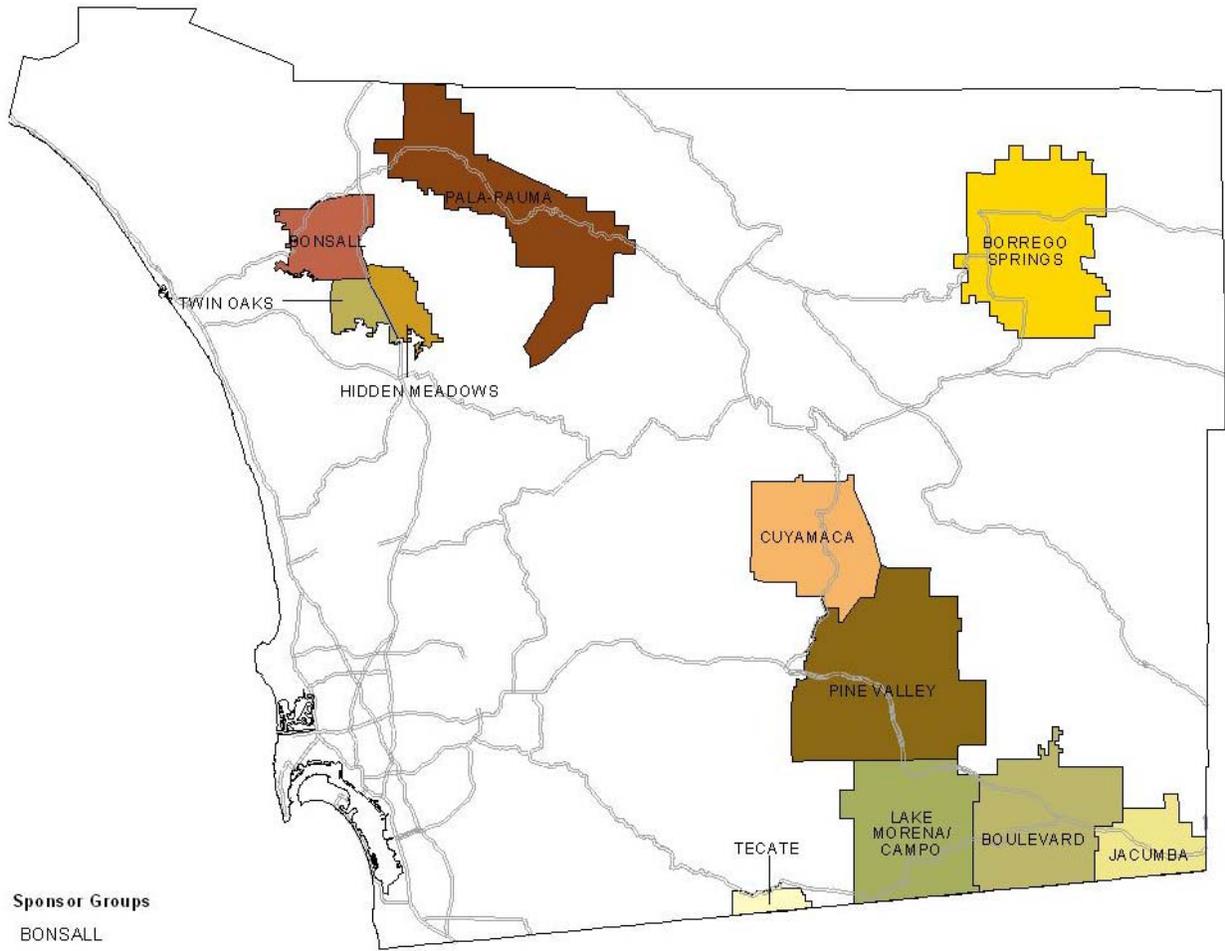


Source: County of San Diego (Plan Areas), SANDAG (Base Layers)



**Community Planning Groups
 of the County of San Diego**

Figure CPSG-2: Community Sponsor Groups of San Diego County



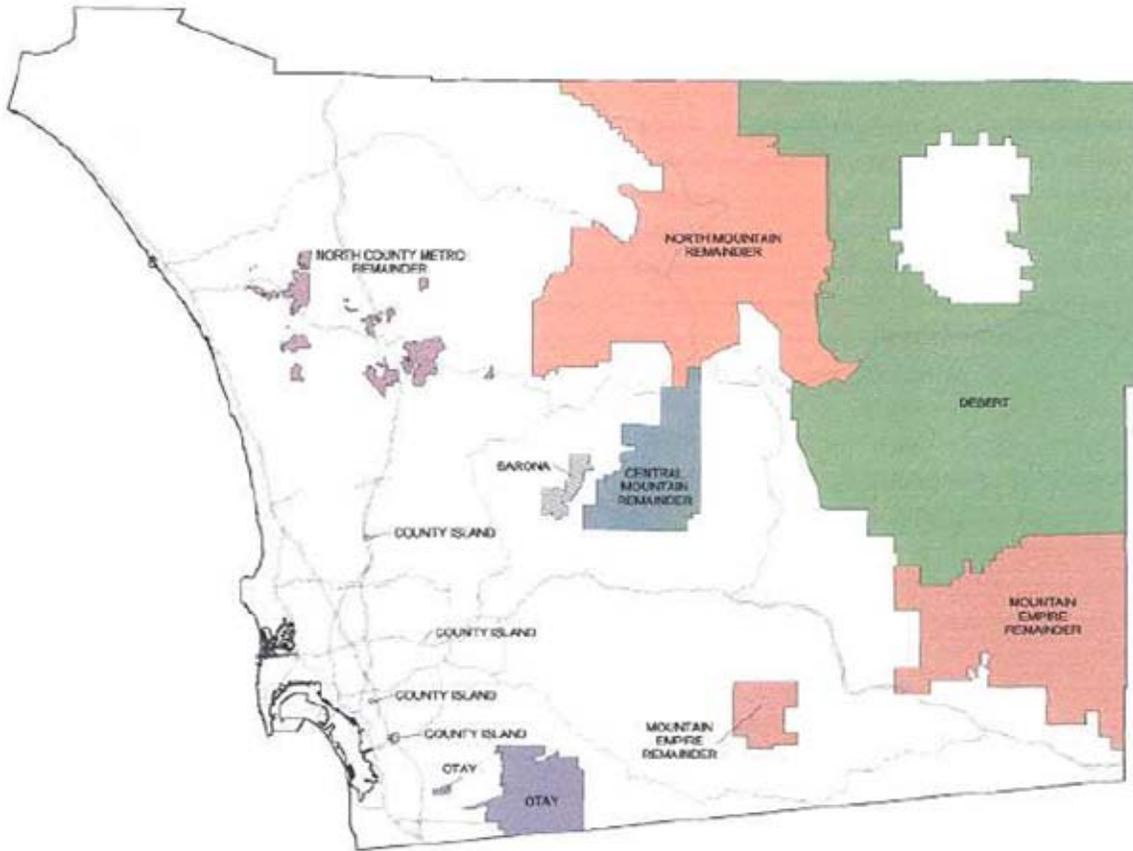
- Sponsor Groups**
- BONSALL
 - BORREGO SPRINGS
 - BOULEVARD
 - CUYAMACA
 - HIDDEN MEADOWS
 - JACUMBA
 - LAKE MORENA/CAMPO
 - PALA-PAUMA
 - PINE VALLEY
 - TECATE
 - TWIN OAKS

Source: County of San Diego, SANDAG (Base Layers)

 7 0 7 14 Miles
Scale 1" = 70,000' (1: 840,000)

**Sponsor Groups
of the County of San Diego**

Figure CPSG-3: Unrepresented Areas of San Diego County



Non-Represented Groups

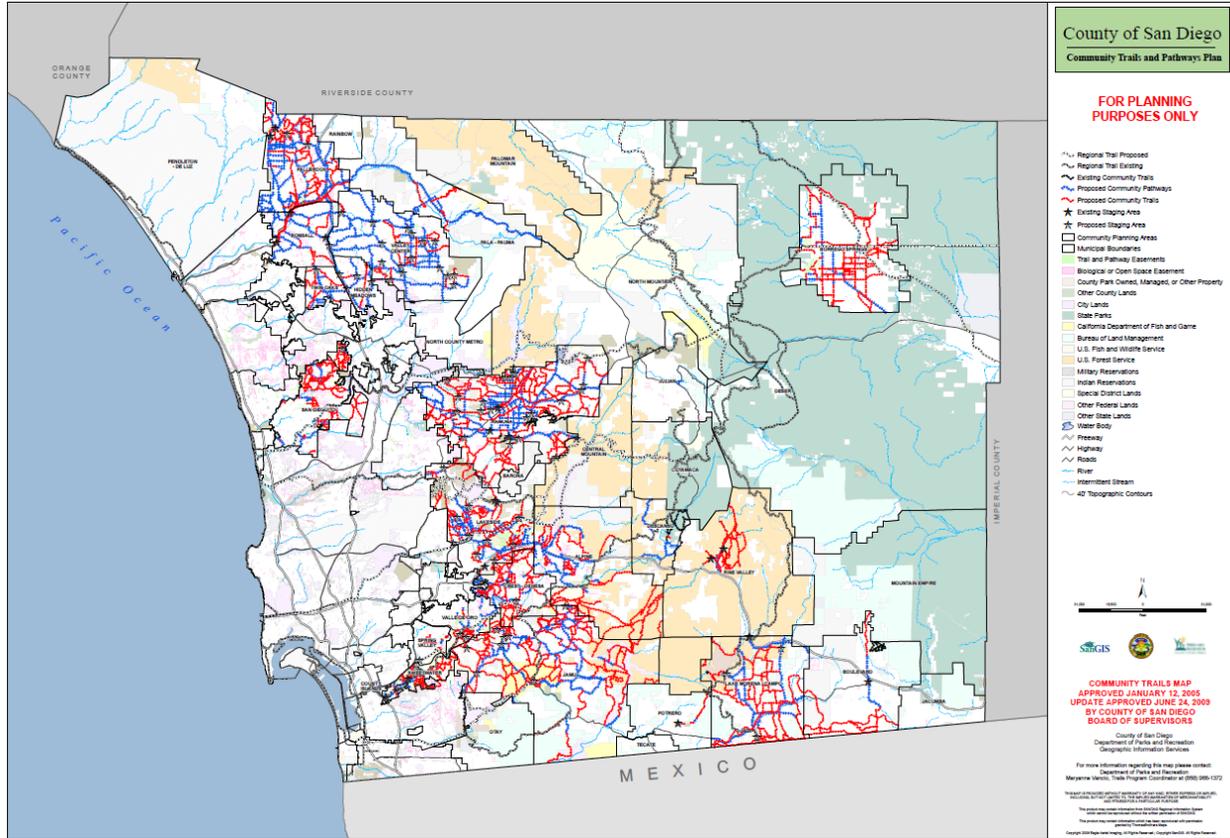
- BARONA
- CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REMAINDER
- COUNTY ISLANDS
- DESERT REMAINDER
- MOUNTAIN EMPIRE REMAINDER
- NORTH COUNTY METRO REMAINDER
- NORTH MOUNTAIN REMAINDER
- OTAY

Source: County of San Diego, Sangis



Figure CPSG-3
Unrepresented Areas
of the County of San Diego

Figure CPSG-4: Community Trails Master Plan



11.2 Community Based Approach

Countywide Implementation Strategy CIS 2.4

Community Planning and Sponsor Groups interested in developing or expanding their local trail system will work closely with the County to develop their community trail maps. The County will coordinate workshops, organize input and document the trails for approval and adoption of their maps by Board of Supervisors action into the Community Trails Master Plan.

In September of 2000, the Board of Supervisors recognized trails as a necessary public facility and endorsed a new countywide trails program. At the same time, the Board gave direction that this trails program will be aimed at satisfying the expectations of all San Diego County communities by implementing a “bottom-up approach” to community trail planning.

This approach allows individual communities to determine their level of involvement or non-involvement in the CTMP. Representatives of each Community/Subregional Plan Area interested in establishing local trail networks, are asked to recommend trail locations as well as a variety of community-specific information relative to design guidelines, special policies and unique trail opportunities that might exist. These community trails not only provide needed recreation but also become an important component of the local circulation systems, providing safe bicycle, and pedestrian and equestrian access. In communities where

there is substantial residential development the primary beneficiaries of these trails are the local residents.

In order to implement this community-based approach, the County decided to conduct a community trails outreach process. The purpose was to provide each community with the opportunity to officially participate or to decline participation in the CTMP process. Community Planning and Sponsor Groups (CPSG) that wished to participate were invited to attend an outreach workshop to receive assistance from the County to create their individual community section of the CTMP. Through this outreach, the County assisted each participating CPSG with a process to review and comment on draft countywide trail design guidelines and an opportunity to create individualized community specific trail maps and trail design guidelines. The result was the creation of an individual section consisting of detailed trail maps, any implementation features unique to the community, any additional community-specific goals, policies or guidelines; or a statement of endorsement of the generic countywide guidelines.

Some communities have chosen not to participate in the CTMP and the County will recognize that these communities may have a demand for trails that is not being met. However, that demand can be met at some future time, when a community changes their mind and request to participate in the CTMP and the County identifies adequate support, resources and funding to include them in the Trails Program. While the County will take a

“hands off” approach to communities not wishing to participate in the program, any regional trails that traverse these communities will still be implemented since they are of regional importance and considered high priority (see Regional Trail Plan).

Soon after communities officially made requests to participate or decline participation in the trails program, the County initiated a community trails outreach process. The outreach included a series of County facilitated workshops. Each participating community group was presented with trail related materials and a step-by-step demonstration to explain “how” to complete a series of exercises necessary for a community’s inclusion in the CTMP.

The County actively encouraged and invited all participating CPSGs, as well as a group of resident trail enthusiasts from an unrepresented area, to attend one of the workshops it conducted over a three-week period. Each community sent one or more representatives to a scheduled workshop, and most attending were members of various planning group trail subcommittees.

11.3 Outreach Tasks

Participating Community and Sponsor Group (CPSGs) were asked to customize their individual community trail plans by creating or adding community-specific trail maps, character statements, goals, policies, implementation strategies or design and management guidelines and submitting their requests to the County for review and

approval. The groups were encouraged to consider and record any unique trail-related influences in their area. Community-specific trail needs, population demographics, community character, historical occurrences, trail related events, and trail conditions in neighboring communities have an influence on the number and type of trails needed in a particular community. Such conditions may ultimately effect how trails are planned and implemented in certain areas.

The County asked each group to accomplish several tasks over a 60-day period of time. Outreach tasks assigned to the community representatives included:

- Review of a working draft of countywide trail design guidelines
- Decide to fully endorse, partially endorse, or reject the countywide guidelines
- Suggest modified countywide guidelines or creating specialized community-specific guidelines to be applied to their area
- Provide community-specific implementation information or local mechanisms to assist with implementation of their plan
- Compile a community trails map
- Graphically distinguish between trails and pathways on community maps

- Graphically identify potential staging areas on community maps
- Prioritize trails into three separate categories on community maps

The task of prioritizing trails provided direct community feedback to the County concerning the extent of their desired trail network and the importance of individual trails in that network. The prioritization process involved categorizing community trails into one of three rankings by assigning three-color designations to their map. This prioritization was recorded on the official adopted community quad maps for each community. These trail priorities will provide guidance for future development and management as trails are implemented countywide. When funds are available for acquisition of trail easements outside of the development process, then the priority ranking of trails will be utilized. This prioritization was recorded on the official adopted community quad maps for each community.

In order for communities to complete the outreach tasks the County provided a detailed presentation and a trail workbook reviewing each task step-by-step. The County also provided trail related materials necessary to complete the tasks.

Below is a list of the trail plan preparation materials provided during the outreach process.

- Public outreach meetings to direct each community with creating a preliminary trails map and review trails guideline text.

- Each community's unique baseline level of service indicating the minimum amount of trails based on community population in the year 2020.
- Techniques for estimating and calculating linear trail mileage on base maps.
- Access to a preliminary regional trails map displaying both regional and community trails in the unincorporated areas of the County.
- A community wide preliminary base map displaying existing trails, roads, topography, and land ownership boundaries. Other map items, as needed..
- A community wide aerial photograph displaying existing trails, roads, topography, and land ownership boundaries.
- Detailed USGS quadrangle maps for the entire community.
- Standardized community trails plan materials.
- A timeline for completion of the planning exercise

The County requested that each CPSG review the outreach products of their trail subcommittees and take a formal vote on whether to submit the materials to the County requesting inclusion in the CTMP. After the completed outreach products were reviewed by the CPSG, they were sent to the County for review and any necessary

modification to prepare the materials for inclusion in the CTMP; including production of trail maps using GIS format. The materials were reviewed for consistency with countywide goals and policies, and CTMP format. The County also made appropriate modifications to incorporate community suggestions. Each community received a written response to their outreach submittal package indicating how the County would address each issue, and explaining why certain items could or could not be incorporated into the master plan. Then, County staff used the submitted information to compile individualized community sections for inclusion in each community group that is included in the CTMP.

Countywide Implementation Strategy 2.6:
Provide periodic updates to community-specific criteria and community trail maps and priorities. At that time, participating communities should work with the County to re-evaluate the existing trail network and determine whether modifications, additions, or deletions are needed to reflect current conditions, anticipated future needs, long-term goals, and new opportunities.

11.4 Updating Community Trails Plans

The County will encourage participating Community Planning and Sponsor Groups (CPSGs) to periodically re-evaluate existing trails and determine if additions, modifications

or deletions are needed to reflect current conditions, future needs, long term goals, and new opportunities need to be reflected in their individual sections. The County will allow for periodic updates of the Community Trail Master Plan (CTMP). These will be done on a comprehensive basis and will not be directed at individual discretionary planning applications. When the CTMP is updated or revised, the following process will occur:

- CPSGs will be solicited by the County to provide updated trails information. This may include maps or specific changes to community text.
- For the unrepresented communities, the County will still consider establishing community trails.
- The County will prepare draft CTMP revisions and provide them to the subject CPSG.
- The CPSG will be asked to place the item on their meeting agenda for an affirmative vote requesting the County to incorporate their revised CTMP section into the master plan. If this meeting results in additional changes to the draft CTMP section, the County will be notified (in writing) of the requested changes.
- County staff will incorporate any necessary changes before submitting the revised CTMP to the Board of Supervisors for approval.