

## **CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE & RECREATION ELEMENT**

### **A. Introduction**

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Statutory Requirements**
- 3. Background**

### **B. Water Resources**

- 1. Principles for Water Protection**
- 2. Goals and Policies**

### **C. Biological Resources**

- 1. Principals for Biological Resource Protection**
- 2. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**
- 3. Plants and Animals**

### **D. Other Natural Resources**

- 1. Timber**
- 2. Soils**
- 3. Minerals**

### **E. Open Space Resources**

### **F. Recreation**

- 1. Public Recreation**
- 2. Public Access**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Purpose**

The Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element of the Coastal General Plan combines two State-mandated elements, Conservation and Open Space. It also includes policies and programs addressing Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA), threatened and endangered species, water quality, public access and recreation.

### **2. Statutory Requirements**

California Government Code § 65302 (d) states that the requirements of a Conservation Element is: *“for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The conservation element shall consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction, as described in the land use element, on natural resources located on public lands, including military installations”*. Its requirements overlap those of the open-space, land use, safety, and circulation elements. The conservation element is distinguished by being primarily oriented toward natural resources.

The purpose of an Open Space Element is to develop a plan for comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space land. Open-space land is

defined in statute as *any parcel or area of land or water that is devoted to open-space use.*” (Government Code §65560(h)) The Legislature found that preservation of open space land serves several important purposes and is a matter of public interest (Government Code §65561). Open space lands can be ‘for the preservation of natural resources’, ‘used for the managed production of resources’, ‘for outdoor recreation’, ‘for the public health and safety’, or for protection of cultural and historic resources. The Open Space Element has specific statutory requirements, but is generally broad in scope and so is often combined with other elements, such as Conservation.

Recreation is not a required General Plan Element. Recreational and park facilities are appropriately discussed in the Land Use and Conservation Elements, and in particular, the Open Space Element (OPR General Plan Guidelines, 2003). Trinidad has included recreational facilities under its own heading due to its importance in Trinidad and the fundamental protection of public coastal access by the Coastal Act. Coastal Act §30500 requires that each LCP contain a specific coastal access component to “*assure that the maximum public access to the coastal and public recreation areas is provided.*” The recreation component of this element meets these requirements.

### 3. Background

The City of Trinidad and its Planning Area contains ample natural resources and open spaces ~~in and around its borders~~. These include, but are not limited to, a beautiful coastline, scenic offshore rocks, sheltered Trinidad Bay and harbor, coastal streams, rugged headlands, bountiful trails, viable timber stands, and rare, threatened and endangered plants and animals. The kelp beds around Trinidad Head are designated as a State Water Quality Protection Area (SWQPA) – Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) and Critical Coastal Area, and the City has been established as one of five California Coastal National Monument Gateways. The natural resources of the Trinidad area are described in more detail in Background Report: Biology and Environment of the Trinidad Area dated October 2009. In 2008, the City also prepared an Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plan that addresses a variety of water quality concerns and watershed management strategies. The following sections incorporate information and recommendations from these background reports among other sources.

The City wishes to create a sustainable environment by identifying and conserving natural resources. The City also wishes to preserve as much open space as feasible to provide habitat for native species of plants and wildlife, minimize sprawl, maintain the aesthetic benefits of undeveloped land, and provide its residents with a full range of recreational opportunities. The goals, policies and programs of this Element address these aims by establishing the framework for the protection and enhancement of natural resources, protection of water quality, enhancement of open space, and providing for coastal access and recreational opportunities for Trinidad residents and visitors.

## **B. WATER RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY**

The Trinidad Planning Area is 15.5 square miles (9,924 acres) in area and contains the watersheds of 13 coastal streams (See Figure 6). The major coastal streams that flow through City boundaries are Mill Creek, McConnahas Mill Creek, and Parker Creek. ~~However,~~ Trinidad's Planning Area has always been watershed-based, and includes several coastal watersheds to the north and south of Trinidad. In 2008, the City Completed the Trinidad-Westhaven Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plan. That process included water quality testing and public outreach, resulting in the creation of the Trinidad Bay Watershed Council. Three primary threats to water were identified through that watershed planning effort, which are: sediment, OWTS, and stormwater. Trinidad State Beach, where Mill Creek empties, has been listed on the State's 303(d) list as impaired for indicator bacteria and the TMDL is scheduled for completion in 2019.

The most sensitive watershed in the Planning Area is Luffenholtz Creek as it is the City's sole source of drinking water. Luffenholtz Creek is located entirely outside of City boundaries. Therefore, the City has developed policies that should be utilized by regulatory agencies in protecting this watershed and has designated both Luffenholtz and Mill Creeks (the City's undeveloped secondary water supply) as "Critical Water Supply Areas". For more information please see Section C—"Development Outside City Limits"—in the Land Use Element, and Section H—"Public Services"—in the Circulation Element.

The water quality and quantity in the Luffenholtz Creek watershed above the City's water withdrawal point warrant strict protections. Through the analysis for the Moss subdivision (County File No. 515-131-32 and 515-291-46; Case No. PMS-03-14), it was determined that Luffenholtz Creek is at least 95% allocated in terms of water rights in a dry year. In order to protect its water supply, the City opposes any further subdivision in the Luffenholtz Creek watershed. According to the Trinidad GIS, almost eighty-percent of the Luffenholtz watershed is in timber production. The City also opposes the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides in timber management practice within this watershed area and supports improvements to roads to reduce sediment delivery. Commercial cannabis production has the potential to negatively impact both the water quality and quantity of coastal streams, and Luffenholtz is particularly sensitive due to its status as a Critical Water Supply. The City needs to work closely with the County to monitor and comment on projects within the Luffenholtz Creek Watershed. Trinidad's fishing/crabbing, tourism/recreation industries and drinking water supplies are susceptible to non-point source (NPS) pollution. It is therefore in the best interest of the community to improve and safeguard its water resources in streams and the ocean. Also, the City must adhere to the strict water quality standards of the CA Ocean Plan due to the presence of the Trinidad Kelp Beds SWQPA/ASBS. The CA Ocean Plan prohibits any discharges into a SWQPA/ASBS. The water quality in streams and seeps within the City's planning area impact the ocean water quality as the streams and seeps empty into the ocean. Therefore, nearshore and offshore water quality issues are related.

According to the Climate Change Vulnerability Report and Adaption Response (GHD, 2016) prepared for the City, climate change modeling data suggests that total

precipitation in the Trinidad area are likely to decrease slightly. However, the intensity of those events is predicted to increase, while the frequency may decrease. This has implications for both water supply and stormwater runoff. An increase in runoff volume during storm events can impact water quality and the capacity of the City's stormwater system. This issue needs to be taken into account when planning infrastructure repairs and improvements. Because Trinidad Bay is designated as an ASBS (see next section), the City is subject to the State Water Resource Control Board MS4 waste discharge requirements that regulate stormwater runoff.

Aquatic hazards, including floods and tsunamis, are discussed in the Open Space and Safety Elements.

### **1. Principles for Water Resource Protection**

When interpreting and implementing the policies and programs of this section, the following principals shall be adhered to.

Watershed approach: Because the water quality of a body of water impacts other water bodies in the planning region, the City has adopted a watershed based approach for the protection of its water resources. The watershed approach accounts for the impacts of human activities to the water resources of the planning region, not just on an individual parcel. Because most of the watersheds in the City's Planning Area extend outside City limits, it is important for the City to respond to County application referrals based on watershed impacts and to encourage the County to do the same for City projects. (LU-9.1.1)

Pollution targets: Three main types of pollutants have been identified that impact water resources in the City's Planning Area. These are sediment, OWTS pollution, and urban pollution in stormwater runoff. Other pollution concerns include runoff from forestry activities, harbor operations, and stream/riparian alteration.

Education and Regulation: Primary methods for protecting water resources are the implementation of public education programs and the creation of ordinances to regulate activities that cause pollution.

Water Conservation: Efforts to conserve water will be focused on, but not limited to, reviewing and implementing a progressive rate structure to reduce water consumption, improving infrastructure to increase water reserves, implementing a capital improvement program to reduce water leakage, adopting regulatory mechanisms to reduce consumption, exploring and encouraging alternatives such as grey water irrigation and rainwater catchment, and utilizing public education to encourage overall water conservation.

Best Management Practices Policies: Incorporate Site Design and Source Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable in all development. Select BMPs to mitigate both construction-phase and post-construction water quality

impacts. Where appropriate, supplement Site Design and Source Control BMPS with structural Treatment Control BMPs, as necessary, to protect coastal water quality.

## **2. Goals and Policies for Water Resource Conservation**

### **Goal CONS-1: Actively protect and improve the quality and quantity of water in streams and seeps and the quality of ocean water within the City's planning area.**

Public Outreach Policies: Public education can be a very effective means of achieving the goals of reducing pollution, waste and disposal reduction and water conservation.

*CONS-1a.1* Develop and implement an effective public outreach and education program for issues that impact the quality and quantity of the City's water resources. Coordinate this effort and seek participation with relevant local groups and agencies, including the Trinidad Bay Watershed Council, HSU Marine Lab, Trinidad Rancheria and Trinidad Elementary School, BLM, State Parks and the RWQCB.

*CONS-1a.2* Use public education programs to promote environmentally responsible building designs and construction practices, including, but not limited to: a) creation of permeable surfaces and more natural hydrology through the use of LID technologies and techniques; b) use of low-flow appliances and alternative landscaping methods to reduce water consumption and the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, c) sustainable materials and appropriate technology.

Policies to eliminate/reduce major pollution targets: Sediment, OWTS, and Stormwater runoff.

*Sediment reduction:* The main causes of sediment formation are land disturbance from activities such as construction, road work and timber harvest and transportation, as well as man-made or naturally occurring erosion.

*CONS-1b.1* Minimize land disturbance activities from construction (e.g., clearing, grading, and cut-and-fill), and design sites to mitigate development and avoid erosion, steep slopes, unstable areas, and highly erosive soils. (CONS-4.2)

*CONS-1b.2* Minimize disturbance of natural vegetation during construction, including mature trees, native vegetation, and root structures, to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

*CONS-1b.3* Address erosion and sedimentation during construction, as well as other potential pollutants from construction sites (e.g., paint, solvents, vehicle fluids, and debris). Such measures include controls on timing of grading, BMPs for storage and disposal of construction materials, and/or design specifications for sedimentation basins.

*Program CONS-1b.3.1* Develop an inventory system for construction projects to track sediment and erosion control plans in accordance with SWRCB Water Quality Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ and / or the City's current MS4 Permit requirements.

*CONS-1b.4* Prohibit grading during the rainy season (from October 15<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>) in areas with slopes of 15 % or greater (as indicated on Figure 9), except in response to emergencies. Grading on slopes ~~less~~more than 15% is discouraged during the rainy season, but may be allowed on a case-by-case basis as long as any areas that are disturbed incorporate appropriate BMPs and monitoring to prevent water quality impacts. (CONS-4.3)

*CONS-1b.5* Incorporate soil stabilization BMPs on disturbed areas as soon as feasible, including, but not limited to, re-vegetation of graded or disturbed areas. (CONS-4.5)

*-OWTS management*: The entire City and surrounding community utilize OWTS for wastewater disposal, but dense development, older systems and some soil limitations warrant careful regulation and oversight of OWTS.

*CONS-1b.6* Develop and maintain an OWTS Management Program, consisting of an ordinance and guidelines, in compliance with the CA OWTS Guidelines and the North Coast Basin Plan, that includes requirements for regular monitoring, maintenance, and pumping to assure that State and federal water quality standards are met. (CIRC-11.1 / LU-1c.8)

*Program CONS-1b.6.1* Require accurate and current septic information as part of any development application, including subdivisions. OWTS upgrades may be required based on the proposed development. Uses with large quantities or high strength discharges are subject to more stringent reviews and requirements. Encourage the County to adopted a similar program in the Trinidad-Westhaven area.

*CONS-1b.7* Base foundation and OWTS requirements on site specific soils studies to ensure that development and sewage disposal systems will not create direct or cumulative adverse impacts on soil or water resources. (CONS-6.3)

*Stormwater management*: Stormwater occurs when precipitation falls on impervious surfaces. A number of pollution constituents can be mobilized in stormwater. Of particular concern in Trinidad are sediment, bacteria, oils and heavy metals.

*CONS-1b.8* Develop a comprehensive stormwater management program to minimize the volume and loading of stormwater-related constituents of concern entering Trinidad Bay. Drainage paths may be elongated to reduce erosion potential and decrease sediment carrying capacity. Pipes may be replaced with meandering open ditches to increase infiltration and for attenuation and bioretention opportunities for constituents of concern. (CIRC-8.1)

*CONS-1b.9* Encourage Low Impact Development techniques to preserve hydrologic function and maximize on-site infiltration of runoff to the extent practicable. In development where infiltration is precluded by site conditions, implement appropriate treatment control BMPs, such as filtration to reduce the discharge of polluted runoff. (CIRC-9.2)

*Program CONS-1b.9.1* Develop policies and educational materials that provide guidance to residents about appropriate LID that increases infiltration in a manner that does not negatively impact bluff stability or leachfields.

*Program CONS-1b.9.2* Utilize the most recent version of the Humboldt Low Impact Development Stormwater Manual to determine the most appropriate LID options for each site.

*Program CONS-1b.9.3* Require the use of BMPs for construction projects that meet established parameters such as the size of the project, the distance to waterways, the season of construction and unique features of the site.

*CONS-1b.10* Limit the use of curb and street storm drains to avoid conveying runoff directly to the City's stormwater conveyance system. (CIRC-9.3)

*CONS-1b.11* Minimize impervious surfaces in new and existing development to the maximum extent practicable.

*CONS-1b.12* To help protect water quality, site development in order to:

- a. Preserve or improve the infiltration, purification, and retention functions of natural drainage systems that exist on the site, to the maximum extent practicable.
- b. Protect areas that provide important water quality benefits, areas necessary to maintain riparian and aquatic biota, and/or that are susceptible to erosion and sediment loss.
- c. Analyze the natural resources and hazardous constraints of planning areas and individual development sites to determine locations most suitable for development.
- d. Preserve and protect riparian corridors, creek channels, wetlands, and buffer zones.
- e. Minimize disturbance of natural areas, including significant trees, native vegetation, and root structures.
- f. Ensure adequate setbacks from creeks, wetlands, the Pacific Ocean, and other surface waters.
- g. Promote clustering of development on the most suitable portions of a site, taking into account geologic constraints, sensitive resources, and natural drainage features.

*CONS-1b-13* Periodically reevaluate the capacity of the City's storm drainage system to ensure that capacity is adequate to accommodate potential increases in rainfall intensity during storm events due to climate change.

Policies to eliminate/reduce other or multiple pollution targets:

*CONS-1c.1* Incorporate fundamentals of low-impact-development (LID) technologies into the requirements of the City's implementation plans and provide education and/or incentives to property owners to incorporate LID alternatives into new and existing development where it will not negatively impact any OWTS. (LU-1c.3)

*CONS-1c.2* Incorporate storm water runoff, erosion and sediment control, and water quality considerations into the staff recommendations or implementation regulations for all Coastal Development or other discretionary permit application reviews. Applicants shall be responsible for any required monitoring. Specific water quality goals include, but are not limited to (CIRC-9.1):

- (1) Limit erosion and sediment loss resulting from construction.
- (2) Limit the extent and duration of land disturbing activities.
- (3) Limit removal of existing vegetation to only what is necessary to construct projects
- (4) Upon project completion, replace non-native and invasive species as soon as possible, preferably with native plants.
- (5) Maintain natural drainage conditions.
- (6) Conform, wherever possible, to the natural topography of the area.

*CONS-1c.3* The selection of appropriate BMPs to protect water quality shall be guided by the most recent version of the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) *Stormwater BMP Handbooks*, or an equivalent BMP manual that describes the type, location, size, implementation, and maintenance of BMPs suitable to address the constituents of concern generated by the development. A site specific infiltration rate may be required of the designer to assist with stormwater quality mitigation design and to facilitate the City's review of the proposed development. (CIRC-9.4)

*Program CONS-1c.3.1* Implement appropriate protocols to manage BMPs (including ongoing operation, maintenance, inspection and/or training) in all development, to protect water quality for the life of the development.

*CONS-1c.4* Develop regulations and/or public educational materials to discourage the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

*CONS-1c.5* Continue to support monitoring of Trinidad Head ASBS with a focus on constituents that have shown previously elevated levels.

*CONS-1c.6* As funding allows, monitor water quality in and around Trinidad. Focus sampling efforts on identified constituents of concern in coastal streams, seeps and

nearshore ocean waters. Ensure sampling meets applicable protocols, including quality control.

#### Water Conservation Policies:

*CONS-1d.1* Promote an active, on-going water conservation program to minimize water consumption. Extend the City's conservation program to properties outside the City that are connected to the City water system. Encourage the County and/or Watershed Council to provide water education. Encourage the County to implement a similar program in the Trinidad-Westhaven area (CIRC-12.3)

*Program CONS-1d.1.1* Pursue implementation of a progressive water rate structure to encourage water conservation. Periodically review and amend the water rate structure to ensure that it promotes water conservation. (CIRC-12.3.1)

*Program CONS-1d.1.2* Identify where losses are occurring in the City's water distribution system and pursue infrastructure improvement to reduce water leakage and increase storage capacity in the system. (CIRC-12.3.2)

*Program CONS-1d.1.3* Adopt a water efficiency landscape ordinance in accordance with AB 1881 and Dept. of Water Resources requirements. (CIRC-12.3.2)

Policies dealing with areas and development of special concerns: Water resources of significant value require special protection. Similarly, development that has a greater potential impact to the City's water resources needs special policies and additional requirements.

*CONS-1e.1* Area of Special Biological Significance: Ocean areas in and around Trinidad Head are designated by the State of California as an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) / State Water Quality Protection Area (SWQPA) and a Critical Coastal Area (CCA). The State Ocean Plan imposes special protection standards for the water quality in this ocean area and prohibits any discharge into this body of ocean water, and the City must comply with this plan and any conditions of an exception to the discharge prohibition granted to the City by the State

*Program CONS-1e.1.1* Implement a comprehensive program to reduce / eliminate discharges into the Trinidad Head ASBS that have been identified by the State Water Resource Control Board.

*Program CONS-1e.1.2* Consistent with the California Ocean Plan and the City's Discharge Exception, implement a comprehensive water quality monitoring plan for Trinidad Bay and its tributary streams as necessary to assess and reduce nonpoint source pollution entering the Trinidad Head ASBS and track improvements over time (CIRC 8.3).

*Program CONS-1e.1.3* Continue to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System MS4 Permit requirements.

*CONS-1e.2* Development of Special Concern: A development in one or more of the following categories is considered a Development of Special Concern. Specify additional requirements and standards for such projects in the City's zoning and grading ordinances as necessary to protect water quality:

- (1) any development that results in 5,000 sq. ft. or greater impervious surfaces;
- (2) any development that will result in higher densities than called for in this General Plan;
- (3) any development that produces high amounts or strengths of wastewater such as restaurants, laundromats, service stations, etc.
- (4) any development that results in direct discharges to a waterbody.
- (5) any development occurring within ### feet of a coastal bluff (or in the area(s) identified as inappropriate for LID).

*Program CONS-1e.2.1* Adopt and implement grading / zoning ordinance standards that require applicants for any Development of Special Concern to provide the following:

- a. Submit a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), certified by a California Registered Civil Engineer, Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC), or Certified Professional in Stormwater Quality (CPSWQ);
- b. Estimate increases in pollutant loads and runoff flows resulting from the proposed development, if any, and;
- c. Detail the BMPs that will be implemented to minimize both construction and post-construction water quality impacts. Require, at a minimum, site Design and Source Control BMPs, and require treatment Control BMPs where appropriate to address the particular pollutants of concern based on the specific land use.

*CONS-1e.3* Critical Water Supply Areas: Protect Luffenholtz Creek as a Critical Water Supply Area. (see LU-9.4)

*Program CONS-1e.3.1* Ensure the County maintains the status of Luffenholtz Creek as a Critical Water Supply Area pursuant to Humboldt County General Plan Policy WR-P4.

*Program CONS-1e.3.2* Maintain and ongoing request for notification from the County for any development projects within the Luffenholtz Creek watershed.

*Program CONS-1e.3.3* Review and comment on applications for new development within the Luffenholtz Creek watershed to ensure protection of both water quality and quantity.

CONS-1e.4 The City does not support commercial medical and recreational cannabis cultivation and production within the Trinidad Planning Area due to factors such as limited water supply, steep slopes and lack of agricultural land.

### **C. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The Trinidad Planning Area, and even the small area of the City itself, has a relatively high diversity of habitat types. Habitats vary considerably from conifer and hardwood forests to coastal scrub and sandy beaches, to kelp beds and offshore rocks that include both intertidal and subtidal areas. There are a number of special status habitat types and plants and animals within the Planning Area. Riparian vegetation is located along portions of all thirteen of the coastal streams in the planning area. This vegetation protects the quality of the water, minimizes soil erosion and sedimentation, and provides valuable habitat for a wide variety of animals.

Kelp beds to the east and west of Trinidad Head, including Trinidad Bay, are a biological resource important to the local fisheries and the State, demonstrated by its CCA, ASBS, and SWQPA designations. Offshore rocks, inter-tidal areas, and beaches provide habitat for marine plankton and invertebrates, seabirds and marine mammals. Areas that are accessible during low tide are susceptible to predators and curious beachcombers. Offshore rocks are now protected as part of the California Coastal National Monument, sections of the coast managed by the BLM. Management will coincide with the regulations enacted by the MLPA.

With respect to the land use regulations, the City's Open Space (OS) and Special Environment (SE) designations encompass the City's major creeks, wetland, riparian, shoreline, and other Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). Because development in OS and SE areas is very restricted, land use designations help to protect these sensitive coastal resources. Smaller areas may not be specifically designated OS or SE or even identified on resource maps, but will be protected by policies contained in this section when identified during development proposals.

Plans for navigational aids and harbor improvements should take into consideration possible impacts to near-shore habitats. The Harbor Area is discussed further in the Land Use Element.

#### **1. Principles for Biological Resource Protection**

Identify sensitive or important habitats and special status species. Figure 7 (a and b) serves to identify those areas generally known to or that potentially contain ESHAs within the City and within the Planning Area respectively. There is always the potential for ESHA's to exist that are not currently mapped, or for areas that are mapped as ESHA's to not actually contain any ESHA's. A biological report may be required, consistent with Policy CONS-2a.11, to substantiate the presence or absence of ESHAs

on prior to any development. The following areas are ESHAs that are known to occur in the Trinidad area:

- a. Creeks, drainages, sloughs, and associated riparian habitats including but not limited to: Mill, Parker and McConnahas Mill Creeks;
- b. Wetlands, estuaries, bays and associated riparian and / or shoreline habitat, including Trinidad Bay ASBS, beaches and the offshore rocks;
- c. Other unique habitat areas: rare or sensitive habitats, waterbird or marine mammal rookeries; shorebird concentration sites; habitat for all rare, threatened, or endangered species on federal, state lists or CA Native Plant Society; and vegetated bluffs and dunes;
- d. Public Trust lands such as beaches and tidelands.

Limit development and habitat alteration within ESHAs and where special status species are found. Most ESHA's and special status species are protected by various laws, and the policies found herein are intended to implement and comply with those laws.

Maintain appropriate buffers to protect ESHAs and special status species from impacts from adjacent development. Appropriate space between ESHA's or special status species and adjacent development helps to limit and mitigate any impacts from development on these important resources.

Protect and improve native habitat and minimize impacts to native species. Native habitat and species are the ecological backbone of Trinidad and are afforded special considerations to protect and restore their natural form and function.

## **2. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs)**

An Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area is an "area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments" (PRC Division 20 CCA § 30107.5). Protection of ESHAs is one of the essential aspects of the Coastal Act. Trinidad has several ESHAs including, but not limited to, portions of coastal bluffs, biologically rich tide pools, nesting grounds, kelp beds, streams, riparian habitats, and rare, threatened, or endangered plants or plant communities. The City will recognize and utilize ESHA definitions and designations in accordance with current Coastal Act regulations, CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife requirements and CA Native Plant Society policies and recommendations.

Areas that may contain ESHAs include, but are not limited to, areas indicated by Figure 7a and 7b: Open Space and ESHAs, a – inside the City, and b – in the City's Planning Area. The ESHAs shown on Figure 7 are based on the best information available at the time mapping was done. The boundaries of ESHAs identified this map are not intended to be definitive, but to identify the general location of sensitive environmental resources.

Detailed locations and boundaries of these resources shall be verified and refined by the preparation of Biological Reports for individual development projects.

**Goal CONS-2: Preserve and Enhance the City's Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs).**

a. Policies to limit development in ESHA's or near special status species.

*CONS-2a.1* Only permit Diking, Filling, and Dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, creeks and other bodies of water where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects.

*Program CONS-2a.1.1:* Ensure that Trinidad's Grading and / or Zoning ordinance contain provisions and standards regulating these types of activities and that they are limited to specific uses and situations.

*CONS-2a.2* Incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible for channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of coastal streams, and limit them to:

- a. Necessary water supply projects, or
- b. Alternative energy projects such as micro-hydro power, or
- c. Developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, and
- d. Projects that are consistent with all applicable regulations and permit requirements of other agencies.

*CONS-2a.3* Protect environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) against any significant disruption of their habitat values, and allow only uses dependent on and compatible with maintaining those resources, as defined in the City's Zoning Ordinance, within ESHAs.

*CONS-2a.4* Condition all development located within or adjacent to ESHAs to require all landscaping to be from native stock to the extent feasible. At a minimum, prohibit the use of plants listed by CNPS or DFG to be invasive, problematic or noxious , and remove any existing such plants. Maintenance requirements may also be included.

*CONS-2a.5* Maintain up to date resource information regarding special status species. The General Plan defers to state and federal regulations associated with rare, threatened, and endangered species.

*CONS-2a.6* Minimize development in areas where rare plants have been identified to protect the habitats located there. Require the identification and location of rare plants as part of the application for any major new developments or improvements.

*CONS-2a.7* Prohibit new land divisions creating new parcels located entirely within an ESHA or Buffer Areas unless the parcel to be created is restricted at the time of its creation solely for open space, public recreation, or conservation.

*CONS-2a.9* Require the preparation and approval of a drainage and erosion control plan for permissible development on all properties containing environmentally sensitive habitat, including but not limited to those areas identified as ESHAs on Figure 7.

*Program CONS-2a.9.1* Require review of any changes in runoff volume, velocity, or duration that may affect sensitive plant and animal populations, habitats, or Buffer Areas for those populations or habitats, by a qualified biologist to ensure that there will not be adverse hydrologic, erosion, or sedimentation impacts on sensitive species or habitats. Identify and adopt mitigation measures and compliance monitoring standards to minimize potential adverse runoff impacts.

*CONS-2a.10* Preserve, enhance and restore vegetation within ESHAs, including riparian corridors.. Locate new structures and activities outside ESHAs to project vegetation. unless it would prevent the establishment of all permitted uses on the property. Ensure that areas that must be disturbed due to special circumstances be kept to a minimum, be carefully reviewed by the City, and be replanted with appropriate native vegetation.

*CONS-2a.11* Require permit applications for development within or adjacent to ESHAs, including areas identified in Figure 7 or other sites identified by City staff, either through a site visit or other evidence, which have the possibility of containing environmentally sensitive habitat, to include a Biological Report prepared by a qualified biologist which identifies the resources and provides recommended measures to ensure that the requirements of the Coastal Act and LCP are fully met.

*Program CONS-2a.11.1*      *Revise the zoning ordinance to include the specific requirements for the content of the Biological Report.*

b. Policies for development in buffer areas.

*CONS-2b.1* Site and design development in areas adjacent to ESHAs to prevent impacts that would significantly degrade such areas, and to be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas.

*Program CONS-2b.1.1:*      Limit development in buffer areas to certain compatible uses as defined in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

*Program CONS-2b.1.2:*      Require a setback separating all permitted development from adjacent sensitive habitat areas and special status species. The minimum width of ESHA and special status species setbacks shall be at least 100 feet, unless otherwise defined in the City's Zoning Ordinance, and unless the designated setback would eliminate all reasonable use of the property.

*Program CONS-2b.1.3:* Analysis by a qualified professional may justify a reduced setback based on specific findings as long as it can be demonstrated that the ESHA quality and function will not be negatively impacted.

*CONS-2b.2* Prohibit native vegetation removal in Buffer Areas except for:

- a. Vegetation removal authorized through coastal development permit approval to accommodate permissible development,
- b. Removal of trees for disease control,
- c. Vegetation removal for public safety purposes to abate a nuisance consistent with Coastal Act Section 30005, or
- d. Removal of firewood for the personal use of the property owner at his or her residence to the extent that such removal does not constitute development pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30106.
- e. Minor vegetation maintenance to preserve existing yards and viewsheds.
- f. Vegetation removal to restore or enhance habitat values as recommended by a qualified professional.
- g. Such activities may be subject to additional standards or restrictions to protect sensitive habitat.

*CONS-2b.3* Ensure that exterior lighting (except traffic lights, navigational lights, and other similar safety lighting) be minimized, restricted to low intensity fixtures, and shielded so that no light or glare shines beyond the boundary of the property or into Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. (CD-5.1)

### **3. Plants and Animals**

Humboldt County is home to a variety of rare, threatened and endangered (RT&E) plant and animal species. The Background Report on Biology and Environment of the Trinidad Area describes the biological resources more thoroughly. The RT&E species list changes year to year, and an updated list from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNNDDB) should be generated and kept on file at City Hall. However, each developer or applicant is responsible for assuring they have the most current information. In addition to the CNNDDB, the California Native Plant Society has created five lists in an effort to categorize degrees of concern for plant species. Plants on lists 1 and 2 are considered “special status” species in California for the purposes of development reviews. Within the Trinidad Planning Area there are a number of special status plants, several bird species, three amphibians, two fish and two mammals with known occurrences.

**Goal CONS-3: Identify and protect Special Status plants, animals and their habitats in and around the City.**

Policies to protect and improve native habitat and minimize impacts to native species.

CONS-3.1: To the extent feasible, preserve, protect, and restore streams and riparian areas to their natural state.

CONS-3.2: Work with organizations and private property owners to enhance the City's watercourses for habitat preservation and recreation.

CONS-3.3: Develop additional guidelines for the maintenance of watercourses to further assure that native vegetation is not unnecessarily removed and that maintenance minimizes disruption of wildlife breeding activities and wildlife movement. Incorporate these guidelines, where appropriate, into the City's maintenance procedures.

CONS-3.4: Seek Federal and State funding for the repair of stream bank erosion, planting of riparian vegetation to stabilize creek banks, and removal of debris obstructing waterflow.

CONS-3.5 To the extent feasible and balanced with permitted use, require that site planning, construction, and maintenance of development preserve trees and native vegetation on the site.

CONS-3.6 Require site planning and construction to maintain adequate open space to permit effective wildlife corridors for animal movement between open spaces.

*Program CONS-3.6.1:* Timing of construction may be limited by the wet season as well as nesting and breeding seasons of sensitive species.

*Program CONS-3.6.2:* The City may require open space or conservation easements to protect open space and ESHAs as a condition of development approval.

CONS-3.7 Place and maintain signs prohibiting the collection of marine life from tide pools, inter-tidal rocks, or other near shore environments without the necessary permits or license, on all City trails leading to and from the beach. This would allow only activities such as fishing for game fish with proper fishing licenses or authorized Native American use.

CONS-3.8 Pursue development of a management plan for aquatic and marine recreation throughout the watershed to minimize the ecological impacts of those activities.

CONS-3.9 Support efforts to restore and improve salmonid habitat throughout the Planning Area.

**CONS-3.10** Some non-native species, such as pampas grass (*Cortaderia jubata*), Himalaya berry (*Rubus discolor*), Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster sp.*), are invasive exotics that can and do displace native species, reducing the area's natural diversity, biological integrity and aesthetics. Use only native species, or species demonstrated to be non-invasive, in public landscapes and strongly encourage their use in private landscapes.

*Program CONS-3.10.1:* Provide public information materials that explain why invasive species are a problem. Maintain a program that recommends effective but non-toxic eradication measures, and eradicates non-native species on public lands where they are displacing native species.

*Program CONS-3.10.2:* Condition development projects that require discretionary approval to prohibit the planting of any species of broom, gorse, pampas grass, ivy, cotoneaster or other species of invasive non-native plants deemed undesirable by the City.

*Program CONS-3.10.3:* Request that Caltrans, PG&E, and the County of Humboldt remove pampas grass broom, and any other plants rated as “high” on the California Invasive Plant Council’s *California Invasive Plan Inventory Database* from their rights-of-way.

*Program CONS-3.10.4:* Work to remove plants rated as “high” or “medium” on the California Invasive Plant Council’s *California Invasive Plan Inventory Database* from City-owned rights-of-way.

**CONS-3.11** Develop policies for permitting “major vegetation removal” that protect both habitat values and viewsheds.

*Program CONS-3.11.1:* Ensure that major vegetation removal occurs outside the nesting season (March 1 – August 15) or that an appropriate survey occurs prior to vegetation removal if work occurs during the nesting season.

## **D. OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **1. Timber**

Within Trinidad City Limits, there are no viable commercial timber stands. However, most of the upper areas of Trinidad’s Planning Area watersheds are commercial timberland. These timberlands, if appropriately and sustainably managed contribute to the City’s viewshed, provide habitat for native plants and animals and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. If improperly managed or overharvested, there are impacts to aesthetics, habitat, water quality and air quality. The County is encouraged to preserve economically viable timber stands for sustainable commercial use. Additional related policies can be found in section D.3 – Planning Area – of the Land Use Element.

Most of the trees within the town are within the State Park, Open Space lands or exist as private landscaping. Within the City, the balance of the value of trees is often in conflict with the important coastal views they may block. The City has adopted a Views and Vegetation ordinance that addresses these issues. The ordinance allows for the protection of important “heritage trees” if so designated by the City Council.

**Goal CONS-4: Preserve economically viable timber stands for use as sustainably harvested commercial timber while protecting water quality, special status species and sensitive habitats.**

### Timber Policies

**CONS-4.1** The sustainable management of timber resources, and related uses, is encouraged, so that the long term economic return from productive timber production will provide sufficient incentives to prevent urban conversions. Urban conversions are discouraged within the Urban Services Boundary.

**CONS-4.2** In cooperation with California Department of Forestry, request review of all Timber Harvest Plans (THP) within the Planning Area. Review THPs for measures that protect water quality, control erosion and flooding, and preserve the City viewshed. Recommend that THPs which do not include these measures not be approved.

**CONS-4.3** Encourage the management of private timberlands to use current principles of sustainable forestry for all aspects of forest use and function: recreation; timber production; biodiversity; air and water quality; and carbon storage. Timber owners are encouraged to apply for conservation easements, certified forestry, or compensation for carbon storage.

**CONS-4.4** City and County Zoning Ordinances should require a use permit for timber harvesting (as defined by the Forest Practice Act) within or nearby unstable lands or lands of questionable stability. (SAF-1.8)

**CONS-4.4** Continue to work with Green Diamond, and other larger timber land holders, on protecting and restoring planning area watersheds from negative impacts of timber harvest past and present.

## **2. Soils**

Soils are a resource essential to raising timber, crops and forage. There are few areas of prime soils for crops or forage in the planning area, but much of the land in the planning area is prime timberland. Some prime timber soils have been converted to residential development and others are located so near to development that they are no longer manageable timber sites. Because of the importance of the regional economy, prime timber soils in manageable units should be protected from development. Due to

the small amount of prime soils for crops and forage, these areas should be protected as well.

Soils also act as constraints on development when they will not adequately support structures or other improvements including OWTS. For long range planning purposes, development may be able to occur in areas with soils limitations without degradation of water quality and public health if land divisions and developments are only allowed after thorough site investigations and necessary design and maintenance standards are enforced. Soil limitations are not in themselves a sufficient constraint to justify development prohibitions. In areas with soil limitations more specific site analysis is needed to determine how a foundation or OWTS can be designed to work and how much land area is needed to accommodate the system and proposed development, and to provide necessary protective buffers. Related factors such as hydrology, stability and topography must also be considered. It is expected that this site specific evaluation process in areas with soils limitations will result in a lower average density of development than can be expected in areas with only slight soils limitations.

Refer to Figure 9 for existing soils limitations information. Because available soils information is much generalized, studies should be undertaken to confirm the degree of limitation in any area proposed for intensive development. Soils suitability for OWTS varies throughout the planning area. Since OWTS are to continue to serve as the long-range wastewater disposal system, each development and its wastewater disposal system will have to be conformed to the capabilities of the site. Regular maintenance monitoring and pumping is required by the City's OWTS Management Program in order to protect public health, water quality and property values.

Where developable areas have a high percentage of soils with OWTS limitations, the areas are designated Rural Residential, Resource Production (County designation), or Special Environment to allow development appropriate to the soil limitations of each development site. Areas with slight limitations are designated Suburban Residential or Urban Residential to allow higher density development consistent with the preference of neighborhood residents and the density constraints identified in soil suitability studies.

Note that soils are closely related to geology, but geology has its greatest impact in terms of public safety. Therefore, a discussion of Trinidad's geology and limitations are included in the Public Safety Element.

### **Goal CONS-5 Protect and preserve soil as a natural resource.**

#### Soil Conservation Policies

**CONS-5.1** Minimize soil erosion to prevent loss of productive soils, prevent landslides, protect water quality, and maintain infiltration capacity and soil structure.

**CONS-5.2** Minimize land disturbance activities from construction (e.g., clearing,

grading, and cut-and-fill), and design sites to mitigate development and avoid erosion, steep slopes, unstable areas, and highly erosive soils. (CONS-1b.1)

**CONS-5.3** Prohibit grading during the rainy season (from October 15<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>) in areas with slopes of 15 % or greater (as indicated on Figure 9), except in response to emergencies. Grading on slopes less than 15% is discouraged during the rainy season, but may be allowed on a case-by-case basis as long as any areas that are disturbed incorporate appropriate BMPs and monitoring to prevent water quality impacts. (CONS-1b.4)

**CONS-5.4** Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control in construction and road maintenance throughout the Planning Area in order to reduce the impacts of erosion, sedimentation and stormwater runoff. Provide developers and other interested citizens with educational materials regarding BMPs as part of application materials or upon request.

**CONS-5.5** Incorporate soil stabilization BMPs on disturbed areas as soon as feasible, including, but not limited to, re-vegetation of graded or disturbed areas. (CONS-1b.5)

**CONS-5.6** Update the City's Grading Ordinance as necessary to ensure that it incorporates the latest available Best Management Practices as recommended in the Trinidad-Westhaven Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plan.

**GOAL CONS-6: Protect landscapes and waterways based on necessary soil studies for development and landscape modification.**

Soil Limitations Policies

**CONS-6.1** Require detailed studies of soil characteristics and hydrology for developments in areas with soil limitations (such as instability, clay content or high groundwater) to ensure that the lot size, foundation requirements and OWTS design are adequate to prevent direct or cumulative adverse impacts on soil stability or water resources.

**CONS-6.2** Specify OWTS design prior to any intensification or addition to existing uses.

**CONS-6.3** Base foundation and OWTS requirements on site specific soils studies to ensure that development and sewage disposal systems will not create direct or cumulative adverse impacts on soil or water resources.

**3. Mineral Resources**

The Conservation Element is "required to include policies to address the conservation and development of identified mineral deposits designated by the State as being of

Statewide or regional significance.” Humboldt County has not yet been so designated by the State. There are no mining operations within the City limits. The only nearby activities include hard rock quarries: one exists off Quarry Road (Mercer, Fraser Co.); several others are located on Simpson Timber land to the East. These quarries provide a source of jetty-quality rock, which is in short supply along California’s coast. The Trinidad quarry has provided jetty materials from Fort Bragg to Crescent City and North to Oregon.

Land use conflicts can occur from these quarries particularly since they are operated on an intermittent basis. Years of inactivity may suddenly be followed by a season of intense activity to meet a particular contract need. Such activity can produce noise (from both blasting and operations) and truck traffic. The surrounding neighborhood, particularly new residents, can grow accustomed to the inactive periods and can be frustrated by new activity. This activity subsides again after a period of time. Eventually these quarries diminish on-site supplies and are closed. State law requires that each mine site have a mining and reclamation plan identifying the final reclaimed use and requirements for achieving it. The City supports the County’s designation of the majority of the quarry site as “Resource Production.” Policies related to mineral resources near the City can be found in section D.3 – Planning Area – of the Land Use Element.

**Goal CONS-7: Ensure existing quarries within the Trinidad Planning Area are protected from incompatible land uses, permitted and operated to prevent significant environmental impacts and to satisfy long-term demand for mineral resources and construction materials.**

*CONS-7.1* Encourage the County and mine operators to minimize the impact of mineral extraction activities on the surrounding natural and built environment through the application of appropriate management practices including, but not limited to, minimizing surface disturbance, air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, vibration, and traffic impacts.

## **E. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES**

Trinidad’s Open Space areas provide a variety of benefits such as: 1) preservation of natural resources; 2) managed production of natural resources; 3) outdoor recreation; 4) viewshed protection; and 5) public health and safety.

Open Space issues are addressed throughout this General Plan document, as well as being discussed in the various background documents. Open Space related policies are contained in the Land Use, Conservation, Safety, Recreation, Community Design and Historic and Cultural resources Elements. The reader is referenced to discussion and policies in those sections for additional information.

The coastal bluffs behind the beaches are generally unstable and provide a scenic backdrop for the beachfront environment. Except for a few residences located on small benches or behind the bluff tops, these beachfront areas have been kept in a natural

state. Protection of open space areas and retention of scenic and natural characteristics along the Trinidad shoreline is a matter of continuing public concern. With few exceptions, these lands and unstable bluffs are unsuitable for intensive park development or intensive public recreational use.

Sea level rise, an increase in mean sea level (MSL), is the result of global warming and is an important factor when considering the conservation of public open spaces. Current climate modeling data suggests a small to moderate amount, up to 30 cm, of sea level rise is possible in Trinidad in the next 50 years (GHD 2016). This could potentially affect beach widths and erosion on beaches and along bluffs. More intense management strategies to stabilize the coastline and maintain open space and public access may be necessary.

Government ownership is one means for protecting these natural hazard and scenic beachfront areas; this places the burden of management and maintenance within the public sector. There are other effective means of gaining the desired protection, such as open space easements, which would reduce public costs and eliminate the potential for inappropriate intensive public use.

Trinidad Bay and the bay bordering Trinidad on the west, including all their islands, offer two of the most uniquely beautiful views, combining ocean, islands, bay and rugged, timber shorelines that can be found no where else along the California coast. The islands provide habitats for marine organizations and serve as refuges or rookeries for birds and marine mammals, including sea lions and harbor seals. They are also protected as part of the California Coastal National Monument.

Areas in the City designated Open Space include: a portion of the Tsurai Study Area, Trinidad Head, Little Head, near-shore and off-shore rocks, beaches, Trinidad State Beach, Trinidad School playing field,. Areas north of the City include Trinidad State Beach at College Cove/Elks Head, Simpson Demonstration Forest. South of the City includes Baker Beach, and County Parks (Houda Point, Luffenholtz Creek Parks). Cultural resources are discussed in the Cultural Resources Element.

### **GOAL CONS-8: Protect the open space and its environment and natural resources of Trinidad, Trinidad Head and the surrounding areas**

#### Open Space Policies

**CONS-8.1** Preserve the beaches and sea cliffs which border the southern and western sides of the City (identified as Open Space) from development and allow them to remain in their essentially natural state. Passive recreation and vegetation management for habitat or scenic vistas are allowable uses.

**CONS-8.2** Keep development on Trinidad Head to a minimum to protect the resources located there. Passive recreation such as hiking trails and vista points are allowable uses. (CIRC-10.5)

*Program CONS-8.2.1* Develop and adopt a Management Plan for Trinidad Head that addresses trails, benches and interpretive elements and their maintenance, management of federally-owned parcels, reduction of impacts of existing uses, and eventual phase-out of commercial uses.

*CONS-8.3* Preserve Trinidad Bay and the bay bordering Trinidad on the west, including all their islands, in their essentially natural state. Encourage near shore developments to be unobtrusive and visually compatible with the bay vista.

*CONS-8.4* Require open space easements or similar agreement to protect the natural character of Open Space, Special Environment areas and ESHAs when approving permits for allowable development.

*Program CONS-8.4.1* Revise the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that such agreements cover the portions of the lot that need not be disturbed by proposed structures and appurtenant uses or designated for protection in geologic reports.

*Program CONS-8.4.2* If funds are available, obtain such agreements on already developed lots in the Special Environment area to obtain the degree of public control over lands designated as Open Space and Special Environment needed to protect scenic, cultural and natural resources.

*CONS-8.5* Ensure that the lands designated as Open Space lying seaward of Edwards and Van Wycke Streets remain entirely undeveloped and managed such that the unparalleled views to the south are restored and maintained.

*CONS-8.6* Coastal bluff management considerations address vegetation management, scenic vistas, trail maintenance, and unauthorized activities such as 'piped discharges' of stormwater runoff, disposal of grass and yard wastes over the bank, carving into bluff faces and trespass onto sensitive areas. Public education in combination with ordinance provisions are the best methods for addressing these concerns.

*CONS-8.7* For the entire Planning Area including within City Limits, the areas generally within 100 feet of the centerline of perennial streams and 50 feet from the centerline of intermittent streams are placed in the Open Space or Special Environment designations and by definition are to be designated as a Riparian Protection Zone. These zones may vary in width depending on site specific criteria and the existence/absence of naturally occurring (not artificially manipulated) riparian habitat. Similarly designate riparian habitat along streams in timber management areas.

*CONS-8.8* Adopt a public education program that educates residents and visitors how and why to minimize impacts on Open Space resources. This includes, but is not limited to, landscaping and chemical use, water use, OWTS maintenance, tide pool etiquette, etc.

CONS-8.9 Monitor beach and bluff erosion for impacts from sea level rise...

## **F. RECREATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

### **1. Public Recreation**

Activities available to local residents include recreational and educational programs at the elementary school, social events, sport fishing, hiking, beachcombing and a myriad of other activities. Tourists primarily come to Trinidad to enjoy the coastal resources and the local lifestyle. Visitors are able to enjoy sport fishing shopping, sightseeing, berry picking, eating out, beachcombing, hiking, picnicking, visiting the marine lab, whale or bird watching, and just relaxing at their lodgings or campsites.

Publicly accessible recreation areas, other than beaches and coastal trails (see Public Access section), include the Trinidad Elementary School and its playground and track areas, the Town Hall (which is used for social and fraternal functions), and the adjacent tennis court, Trinidad Cultural Center, which includes the Museum (the BLM has chosen to locate their Offshore Rocks National Monument information here), Library and Saunder's Park, the Memorial Lighthouse, the pier, Trinidad Head and the Harbor Area.

In addition, there are several areas nearby the City where people can enjoy coastal recreation. Luffenholtz Beach County Park, Houda Point, Baker Beach, Moonstone Beach, and Clam Beach County Park are located south of the City. The College Cove/Elk Head area is located a few miles to the North. Patrick's Point State Park is seven miles north of the City. Trinidad State Beach is located partially within City limits and continues north of the City.

Certain aspects of public safety and environmental protection are affected by public recreation. There are a number of hazards that can impact public recreation and access, including large wave events, tsunamis, steep slopes and unstable bluffs. In addition, public recreation can affect plants and animals and habitat, including riparian areas, coastal bluffs, bird and wildlife use/activities, rare plants and intertidal zones.

**Goal CONS-9: Provide a variety of quality public recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors.**

#### **Public Recreation Policies**

CONS-9.1 Public restrooms are encouraged to be available in the harbor area, Saunder's Shopping Center, near the Trinidad Cultural Center, and at Trinidad Town Hall.

CONS-9.2 Continue to cooperate with the local Chamber of Commerce and the Humboldt County Convention & Visitors Bureau in providing visitor service information at City Hall and other appropriate locations.

**CONS-9.3** Continue to provide adequate litter control programs, including dog waste stations in areas open to the public, particularly at the beach parking area(s).

**CONS-8.4** Maintain Town Hall as a center for community functions.

**CONS-9.5** Trinidad Head will be maintained with hiking trails, benches and vista points. Public vehicular access will be controlled by a locked gate and vehicles will only be allowed on Trinidad Head with permission from the City or the Federal Government.

**CONS-9.6** Encourage the State to improve the restrooms at the College Cove/ Elk's Head parking area.

**CONS-9.7** Connect State Park Trails (and related signs) to the City's Trail System.

**CONS-9.8** Monitor and maintain parking at recreation areas to ensure fair access.

**CONS-9.9** Maintain public viewsheds in scenic areas.

**CONS-9.10** Ensure the safety of recreationalists by providing readily accessible information regarding the dangers of large waves, tsunamis and steep slopes in the form of signage, brochures, etc. as needed.

**CONS-9.11** Ensure that the impacts of public recreation on ESHAs is minimized by providing information to the community and the public about avoiding and protecting key resources.

## **2. Public Access**

Public access to the shoreline is guaranteed by the California Constitution and is further defined by standards established by the Coastal Act to recognize the shoreline as a public resource which is available for viewing, recreation, and scientific research at the water's edge and along tidal rivers. Access to the shoreline is dependent on the right of the public to cross public and private land. Access across private land is generally obtained through purchase of an easement, or obtained as a condition of development approval.

There are a variety of public access points in Trinidad. The California Coastal Trail runs along Scenic Drive and then through town to the Harbor Area and then up through Trinidad State Beach. Trinidad Beach State Park maintains a variety of trails, including some in City limits. Trinidad City trails include connections to the Trinidad State Beach trails from Underwood and the Harbor Area. The Trinidad Head Trail loop is accessed from the Harbor Area. The Galindo and Van Wycke Street trails connect Edwards Street and the Memorial Lighthouse to the Harbor. The Axel Lindgren Memorial Trail provides access to Old Home Beach (formally known as Indian Beach) from the Memorial Lighthouse and CA Coastal Trail. The Parker Creek Trail provides access to Old Home

Beach from behind the Saunders Shopping Center. The Old Wagon Road (Wagner Street) connects the CA Coastal Trail and Edwards Street to the Parker Creek Trail, and the Groth Lane Trail provides a connection to the Parker Creek Trail from Scenic Drive.

For the most part, here is ample public coastal access in Trinidad. Together these trails provide a variety of public access points to and from the coast, all within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of each other. The one exception is the southeastern part of town; there is more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile between the southeastern City limits and the nearest trail access at Groth Lane. And the nearest public access south of the City limits is at Baker Beach, another 0.7 miles to the south. Although Scenic Drive is not particularly safe for pedestrians due to very narrow stretches and sharp curves, is part of the officially designated CA Coastal Trail. The City has proposed an additional access from Scenic Drive to the coast along McConnahas Mill Creek to help fill this gap. The Trinidad Coastal Land Trust has also expressed an interest in developing a trail from Scenic Drive that connects to the Parker Creek Trail between Groth Lane and Main Street through a parcel they own. These are the only additional accesses proposed at this time. There are no known informal, unmapped accesses currently being utilized.

In accordance with the Coastal Act, the City requires dedication of access easements along and adjacent to designated trails and beaches as a condition of approval of coastal development permits. These easements are granted in the form of Offers To Dedicate (OTDs), and the Trinidad Coastal Land Trust (TCLT) has been the entity that has accepted most of those easements, with the City holding a few as well. The TCLT has expressed a willingness to continue to accept these easements, and the City will continue to maintain the ones that are designated public trails. .

The City also has a responsibility to ensure that public access is not impeded or discouraged by private development. There is not much potential for additional development along or near the shoreline in Trinidad, but impediments can also include discouraging signage, lack of signage, and vegetative growth. Trail signage has been a controversial topic in Trinidad in several locations due to concerns of private property owners as well as impacts to unstable slopes and cultural resources from pedestrian traffic.

The portion of Trinidad Head not needed by the Coast Guard was transferred to the City of Trinidad and annexed within the City limits in 1984. [Amended Ord. 166; 12-12-84]. Trinidad Head Trail provides a view to the Trinidad Harbor and the Pacific Ocean. The Trinidad Trails Plan is available with the City Clerk at City Hall. The U.S. Coast Guard recently transferred its ownership of 13 acres of the southern portion of Trinidad Head to the BLM. The land was added to the California Coastal National Monument in January 2017.

**Goal CONS-10: Maximize public access to and along the coast consistent with sound resource conservation principles and the constitutionally protected rights of property owners.**

## Public Access Policies

*CONS-10.1* The public shall have access to trails and coastal resources; existing and proposed trails are shown on Figure 10. Advertise the trail system, including connections to State Park trails, in visitor information and current maps that will be kept on file at City Hall and made available to the public at a Visitor Information Center and / or the Chamber of Commerce kiosk.

*CONS-10.2* Provide maximum access and recreational opportunities consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse. Provide public open space and shoreline access in the Coastal Zone.

*Program CONS-10.2.1* Provide shoreline access in the Coastal Zone along the vertical and lateral access routes as shown on Figure 10.

*Program CONS-10.2.2* Acquire additional public access to the shoreline by:

- a) requiring public access as a condition of development consistent with the Coastal Act, the Coastal Commission's Statewide Interpretive Guidelines, and the findings required to support an Offer to Dedicate (OTD);
- b) accepting, or facilitating acceptance of, Offers To Dedicate (OTDs) that will increase opportunities for public access and recreation; and
- c) create partnerships with the community, agencies, and organizations to maintain and improve public access to and along the coast.

*Program CONS-10.2.3* Acquisitions of coastal land and easements for public access purposes shall not preclude the potential development of necessary infrastructure to support coastal-dependent uses.

*CONS-10.3* Development in the Coastal Zone shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation. Protect public prescriptive accesses wherever they exist.

*CONS-10.4* Require formal access offers of dedication where necessary and feasible to assure continued public use of designated trails.

*CONS-10.5* Require public access easements or similar agreement to assure public use of both proposed and existing designated trails when approving permits for allowable development. Such agreements on beaches shall cover the area from the high-tide line to either the base of the bluff or to the first line of vegetation. Interior trail easements shall include enough area to provide for adequate public access, appropriate improvements and maintenance while minimizing the amount of private land encumbered.

*CONS-10.6* Require public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast, as shown in Figure 10, in new development except where it is inconsistent with public safety, other LCP policies, or the protection of fragile coastal resources and environmentally sensitive habitat areas.

*CONS-10.7* Require access easements along designated trails, consistent with the California Coastal Act and the City's Zoning Ordinance, as a condition of approval of applicable development projects, in order to mitigate the project's impacts on public access.

*Program CONS-10.7.1* Revise the Zoning Ordinance to provide specific regulations for public access easements and OTDs.

*CONS-10.8* Implement mitigation measures required for impacts to public access and recreational opportunities prior to or concurrent with construction of the approved development. Mitigation is not a substitute for implementation of a feasible project alternative that would avoid impacts to public access.

*CONS-10.9* Public accessways and trails to the shoreline and public parklands are a permitted use in all land use and zoning designations. Where there is an existing, but unaccepted and/or unopened public access Offer to Dedicate (OTD), easement, or deed restriction for lateral, vertical or trail access or related support facilities (e.g. parking), construction of necessary access improvements shall be permitted to be constructed, opened and operated for its intended public use.

*CONS-10.10* Dedicated accesses are not be required to be opened for public use until a public agency or private association agrees to accept responsibility for maintenance and liability of the access. Open the easement to the public as soon as is feasible and accept the responsibility for operation and maintenance of the accessway for easements to the City, or grant the easement to a private nonprofit association that is willing to accept, maintain and operate the accessway.

*CONS-10.11* For all grants of easement from the City to a private non-profit association, the Executive Director of the Commission must review and approve a management plan submitted by the private non-profit association that indicates that the association will open, operate, and maintain the easement in accordance with terms of the recorded grant of easement, and that the association will open the easement to the public as soon as is feasible.

*Program CONS-11.11.1* Work with the Trinidad Coastal Land Trust and other organizations and agencies to accept liability for and maintain public accesses.

*Program CONS-10.11.2* Facilitate the acceptance of Offers to Dedicate (OTDs) as a means of obtaining additional public access.

*CONS-10.12* Develop and promote a continuous trail system throughout the City which connects to the California Coastal Trail system.

*CONS-10.13* Require an amendment to the Local Coastal Program for the permanent closure of any existing public accessway. Temporary closures due to emergencies or to perform necessary maintenance and repairs shall be the minimum duration necessary, and alternative access shall be provided where feasible.

*CONS-10.14* Develop ordinances and policies to ensure unobstructed public access to all Trinidad Trails, including restrictions on vehicles, vegetation, or other obstructions so they aren't allowed to block or hinder pedestrian access to trails.

*CONS-10.15* Pursue opportunities to provide transportation corridor linkages for pedestrian trails and bike routes as well as scenic recreational routes. Consider linkages to the California Coastal Trail, Hammond Trail and Pacific Coast Bicycle Route (CIRC-4.7)

*CONS-10.16* Develop policies and requirements for temporary events to ensure that adequate public access, including parking, is maintained.

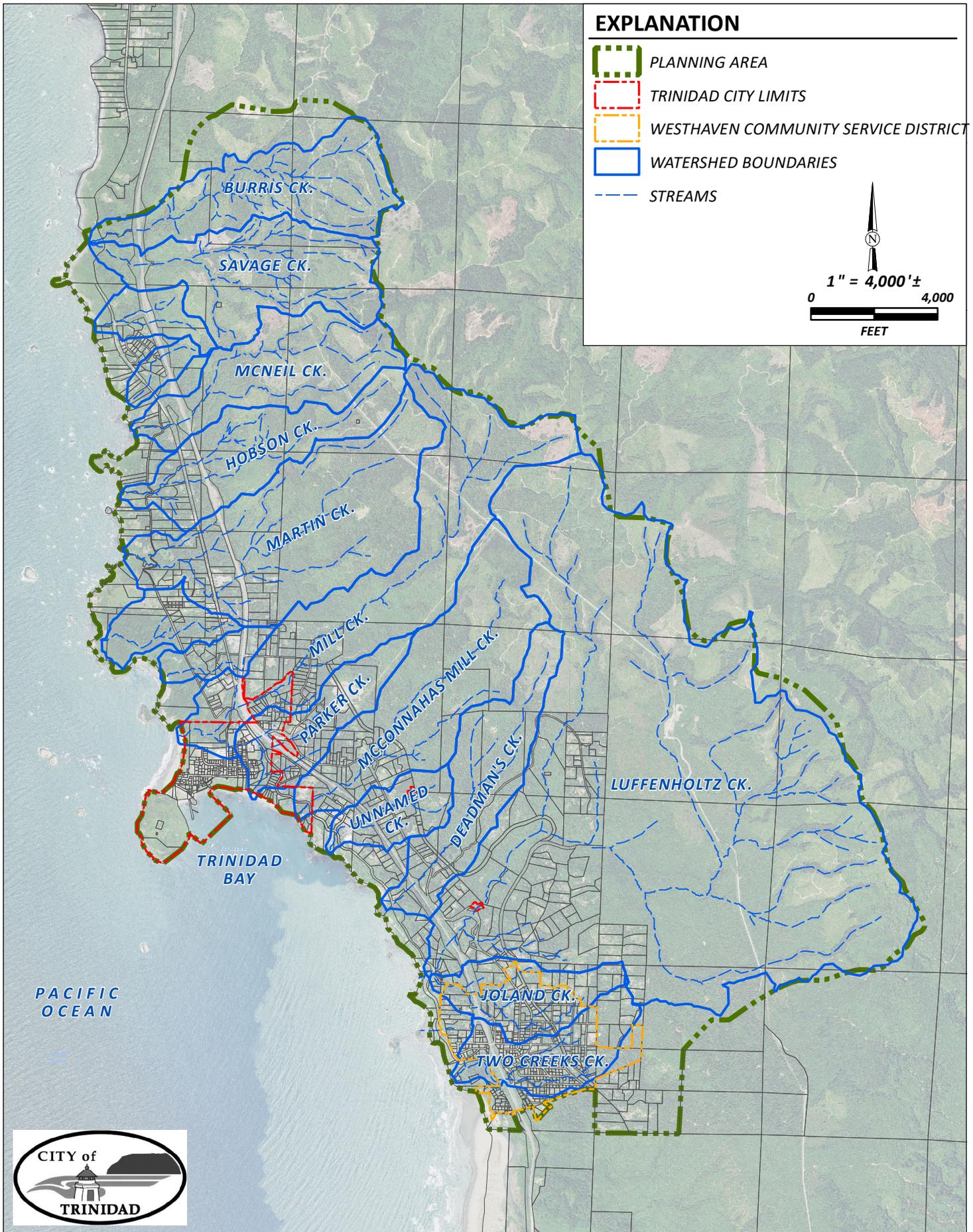
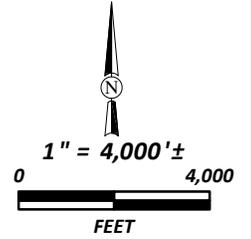
*CONS-10.17* Retain public access easements as part of any street abandonment or property transfer where public access currently exists.

*CONS-10.18* Prohibit posting of misleading signs, markings and other structures that discourage appropriate use of legal public accessways.

*CONS-10.19* Public parking areas with 2-hour parking limits should be provided, when found necessary, along the South side of Edwards Street to ensure visitor access to trails and vista points. (CIRC-2.3)

**EXPLANATION**

-  PLANNING AREA
-  TRINIDAD CITY LIMITS
-  WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY SERVICE DISTRICT
-  WATERSHED BOUNDARIES
-  STREAMS



City of Trinidad  
 General Plan  
 Trinidad, California

Watersheds  
 Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)  
 SHN 016105.006

August 2018

GP2018\_Fig6\_Watersheds

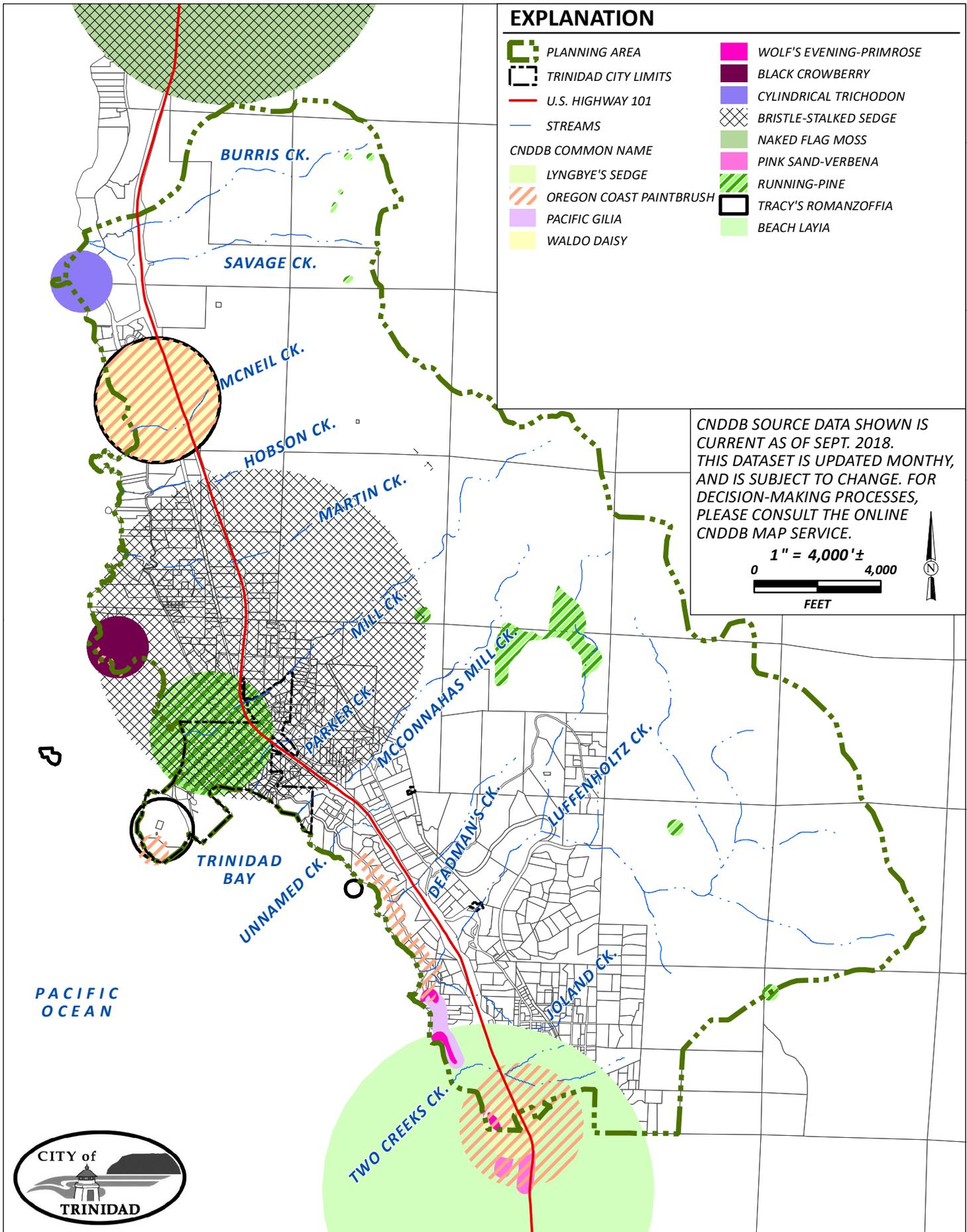
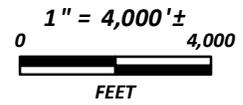
Figure 6

\\Arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER: jsousa DATE: 10/11/18, 3:55PM

# EXPLANATION

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  PLANNING AREA            |  WOLF'S EVENING-PRIMROSE |
|  TRINIDAD CITY LIMITS    |  BLACK CROWBERRY        |
|  U.S. HIGHWAY 101        |  CYLINDRICAL TRICHODON  |
|  STREAMS                 |  BRISTLE-STALKED SEDGE  |
| CNDDDB COMMON NAME  |  |
|  LYNGBYE'S SEDGE         |  NAKED FLAG MOSS        |
|  OREGON COAST PAINTBRUSH |  PINK SAND-VERBENA      |
|  PACIFIC GILIA           |  RUNNING-PINE           |
|  WALDO DAISY             |  TRACY'S ROMANZOFFIA    |
|   |  BEACH LAYIA            |

CNDDDB SOURCE DATA SHOWN IS CURRENT AS OF SEPT. 2018. THIS DATASET IS UPDATED MONTHLY, AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES, PLEASE CONSULT THE ONLINE CNDDDB MAP SERVICE.



\\Arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER: jsousa DATE: 10/2/18, 11:24AM



**SH**  
Consulting Engineers  
& Geologists, Inc.

City of Trinidad  
General Plan  
Trinidad, California  
October 2018

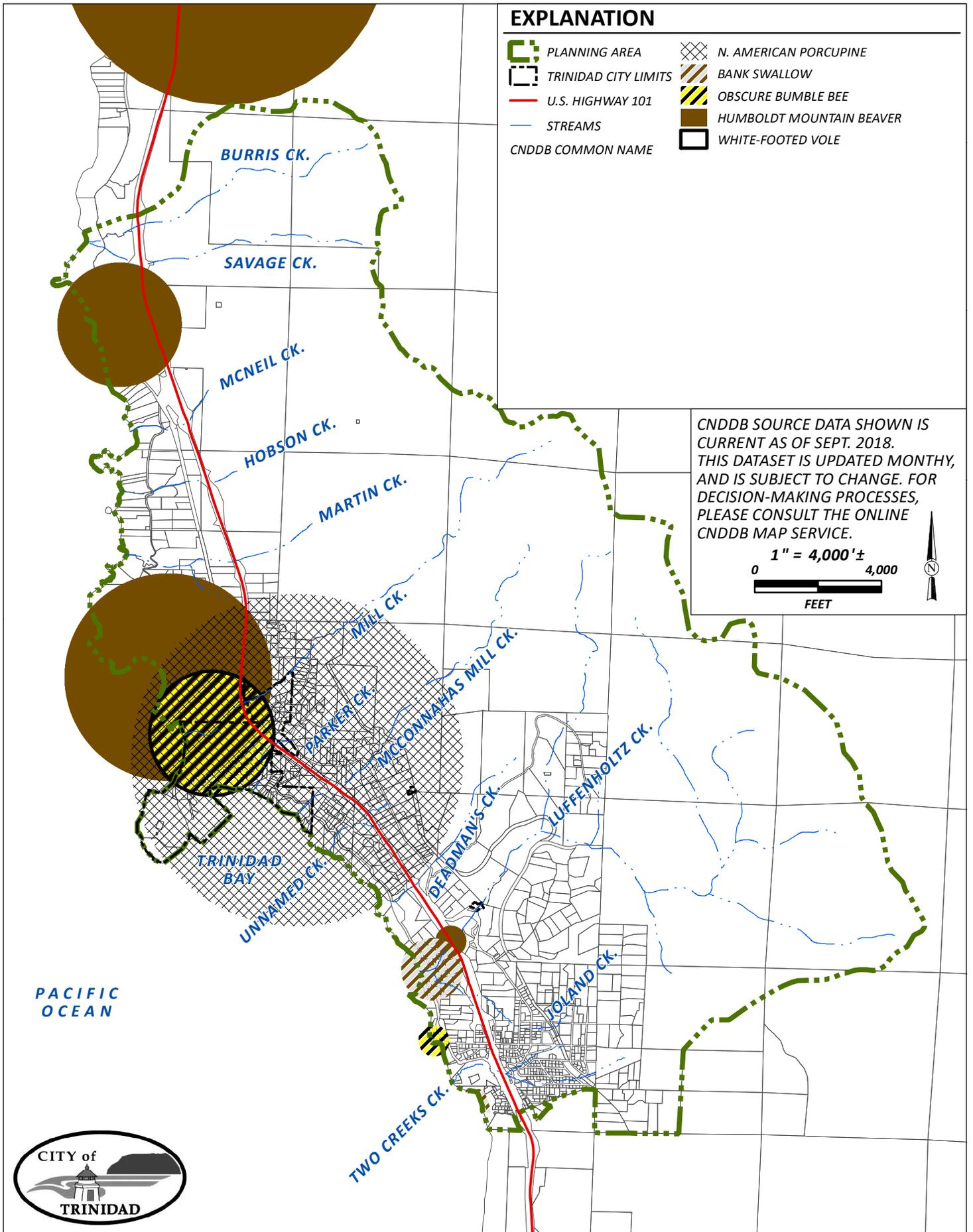
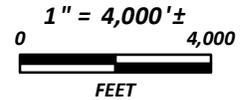
Special Status Plant Species  
Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)  
SHN 016105.006  
GP2018\_Fig8a\_SpecStatPlantSpecies

Figure 8a

# EXPLANATION

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  PLANNING AREA        |  N. AMERICAN PORCUPINE    |
|  TRINIDAD CITY LIMITS |  BANK SWALLOW             |
|  U.S. HIGHWAY 101     |  OBSCURE BUMBLE BEE       |
|  STREAMS              |  HUMBOLDT MOUNTAIN BEAVER |
| CNDDDB COMMON NAME   |  WHITE-FOOTED VOLE        |

CNDDDB SOURCE DATA SHOWN IS CURRENT AS OF SEPT. 2018. THIS DATASET IS UPDATED MONTHLY, AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES, PLEASE CONSULT THE ONLINE CNDDDB MAP SERVICE.



PACIFIC OCEAN



City of Trinidad  
General Plan  
Trinidad, California

Special Status Terrestrial Animal Species  
Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)  
SHN 016105.006

October 2018

GP2018\_Fig8b\_SpecStatAnimalSpecies

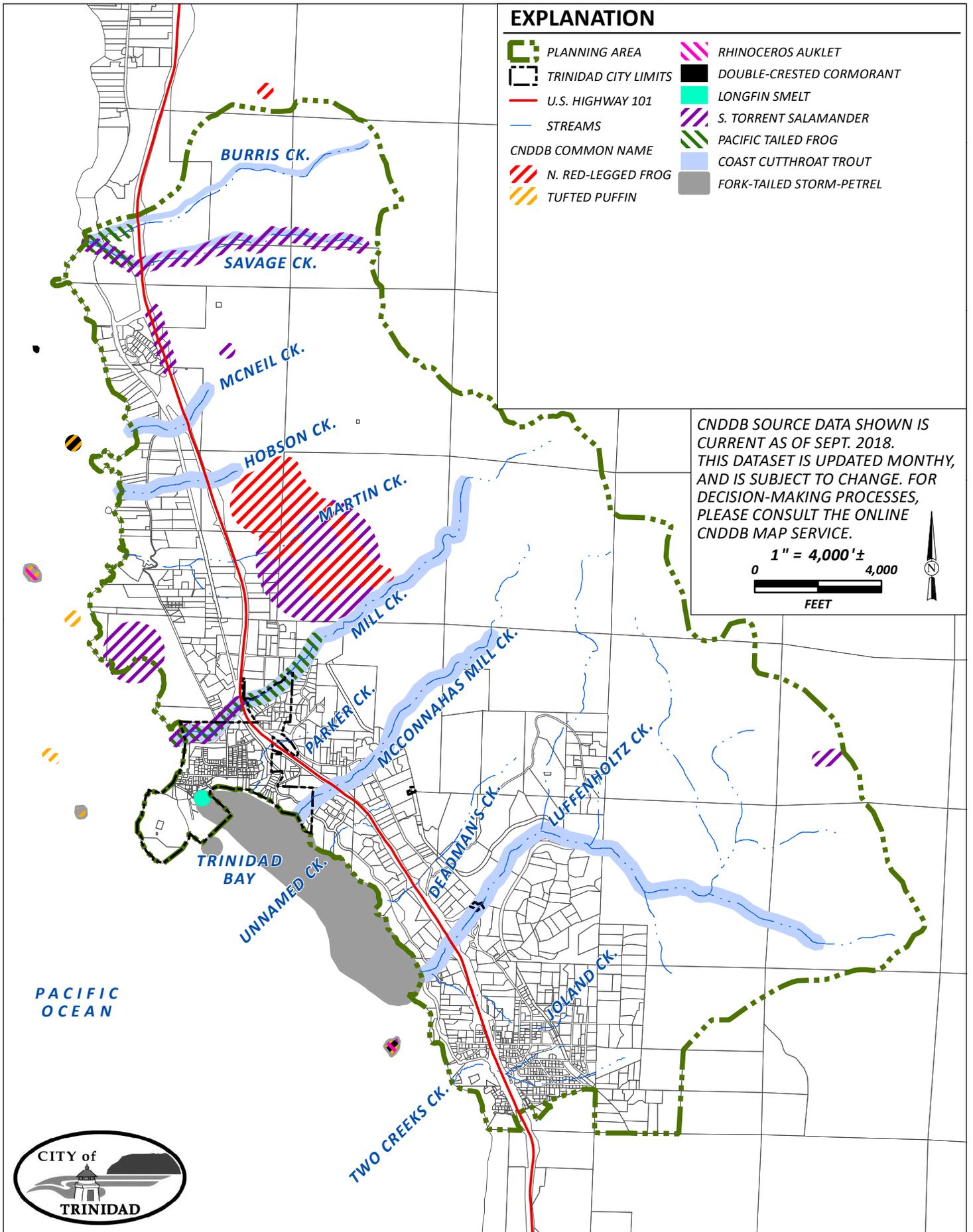
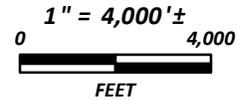
Figure 8b

\\Arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER: jsousa DATE: 10/2/18, 10:27AM

### EXPLANATION

- |   |                      |   |                          |
|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
|   | PLANNING AREA        |   | RHINOCEROS AUKLET        |
|  | TRINIDAD CITY LIMITS |  | DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT |
|  | U.S. HIGHWAY 101     |  | LONGFIN SMELT            |
|  | STREAMS              |  | S. TORRENT SALAMANDER    |
| CNDDDB COMMON NAME  |                      |  | PACIFIC TAILED FROG      |
|  | N. RED-LEGGED FROG   |  | COAST CUTTHROAT TROUT    |
|  | TUFTED PUFFIN        |  | FORK-TAILED STORM-PETREL |

CNDDDB SOURCE DATA SHOWN IS CURRENT AS OF SEPT. 2018. THIS DATASET IS UPDATED MONTHLY, AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES, PLEASE CONSULT THE ONLINE CNDDDB MAP SERVICE.



City of Trinidad  
General Plan  
Trinidad, California

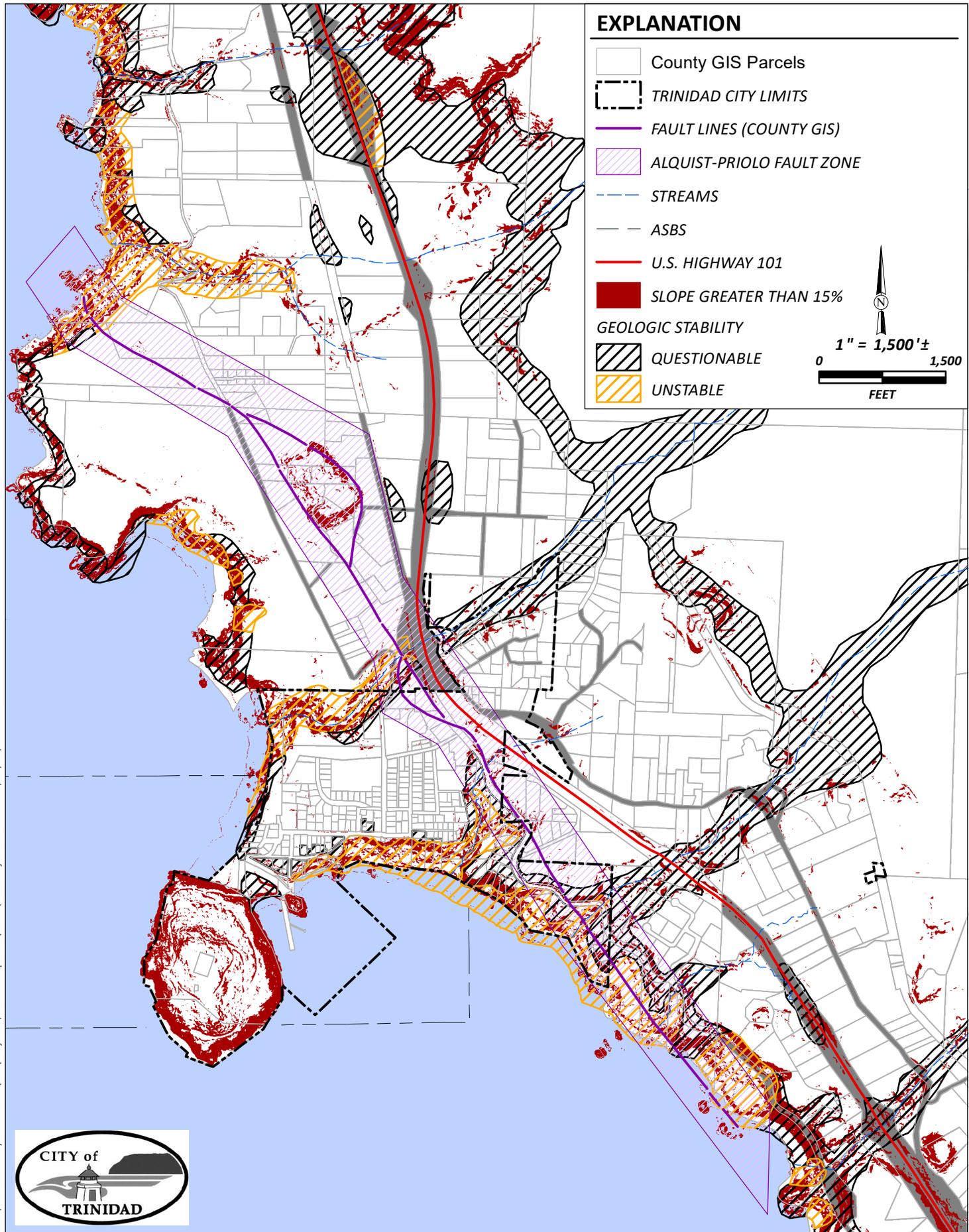
Special Status Aquatic and Pelagic/Marine Species  
Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)

SHN 016105.006

October 2018

GP2018\_Fig8c\_SpecStatAquaticSpecies

Figure 8c



\\Arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER: jsousa DATE: 10/11/18, 5:14PM



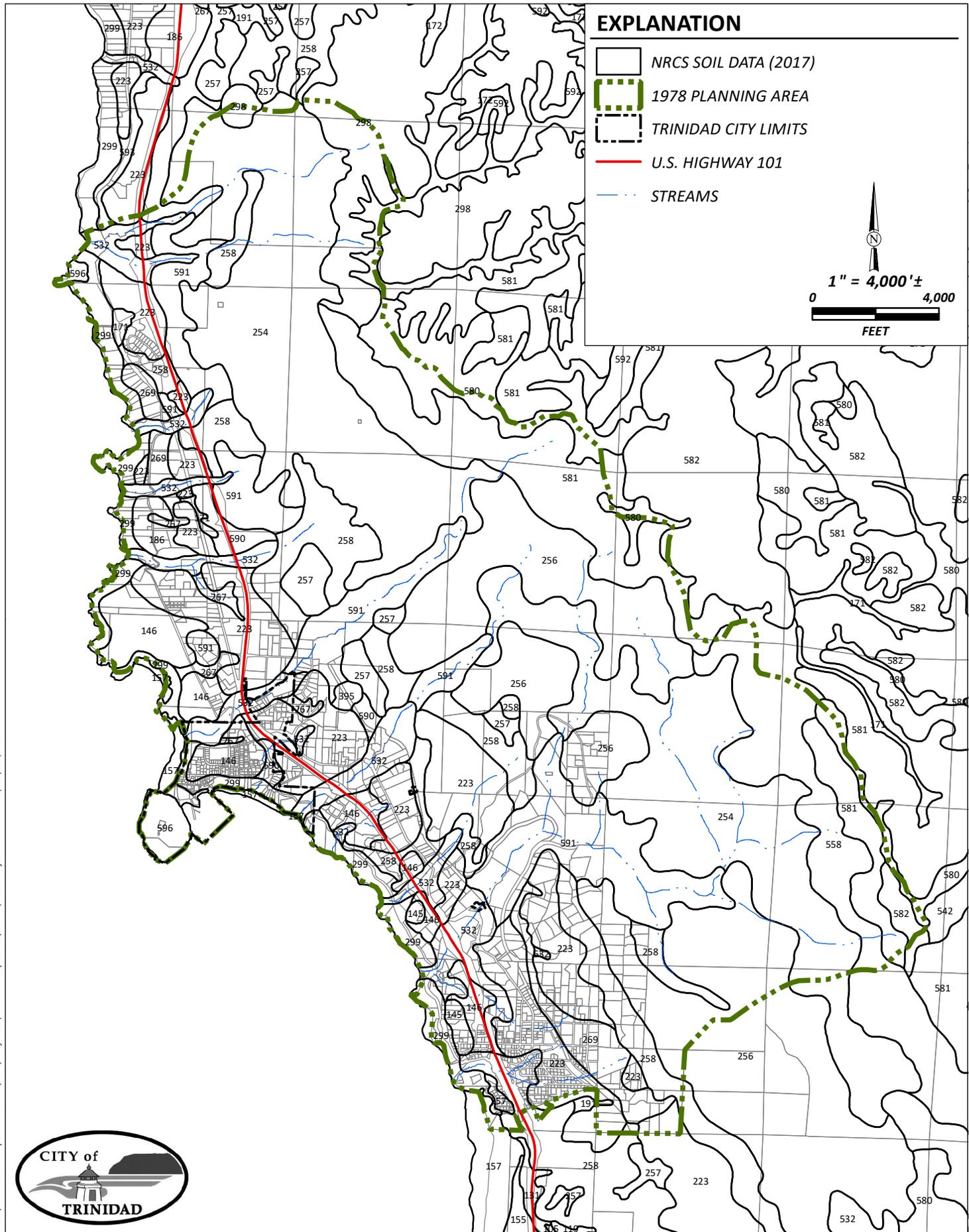
City of Trinidad  
 General Plan  
 Trinidad, California

October 2018

Soil Conditions & Constraints  
 Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)  
 SHN 016105.006

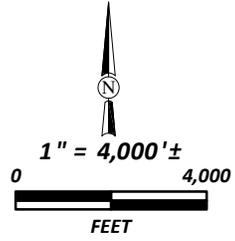
Figure 9a

\\Arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER: jsousa DATE: 9/11/18, 4:30PM



### EXPLANATION

-  NRCS SOIL DATA (2017)
-  1978 PLANNING AREA
-  TRINIDAD CITY LIMITS
-  U.S. HIGHWAY 101
-  STREAMS



**SHN**  
 Consulting Engineers  
 & Geologists, Inc.

City of Trinidad  
 General Plan  
 Trinidad, California  
 August 2018

Soil Limitations  
 Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)  
 SHN 016105.006  
 Figure 9b

**EXPLANATION**

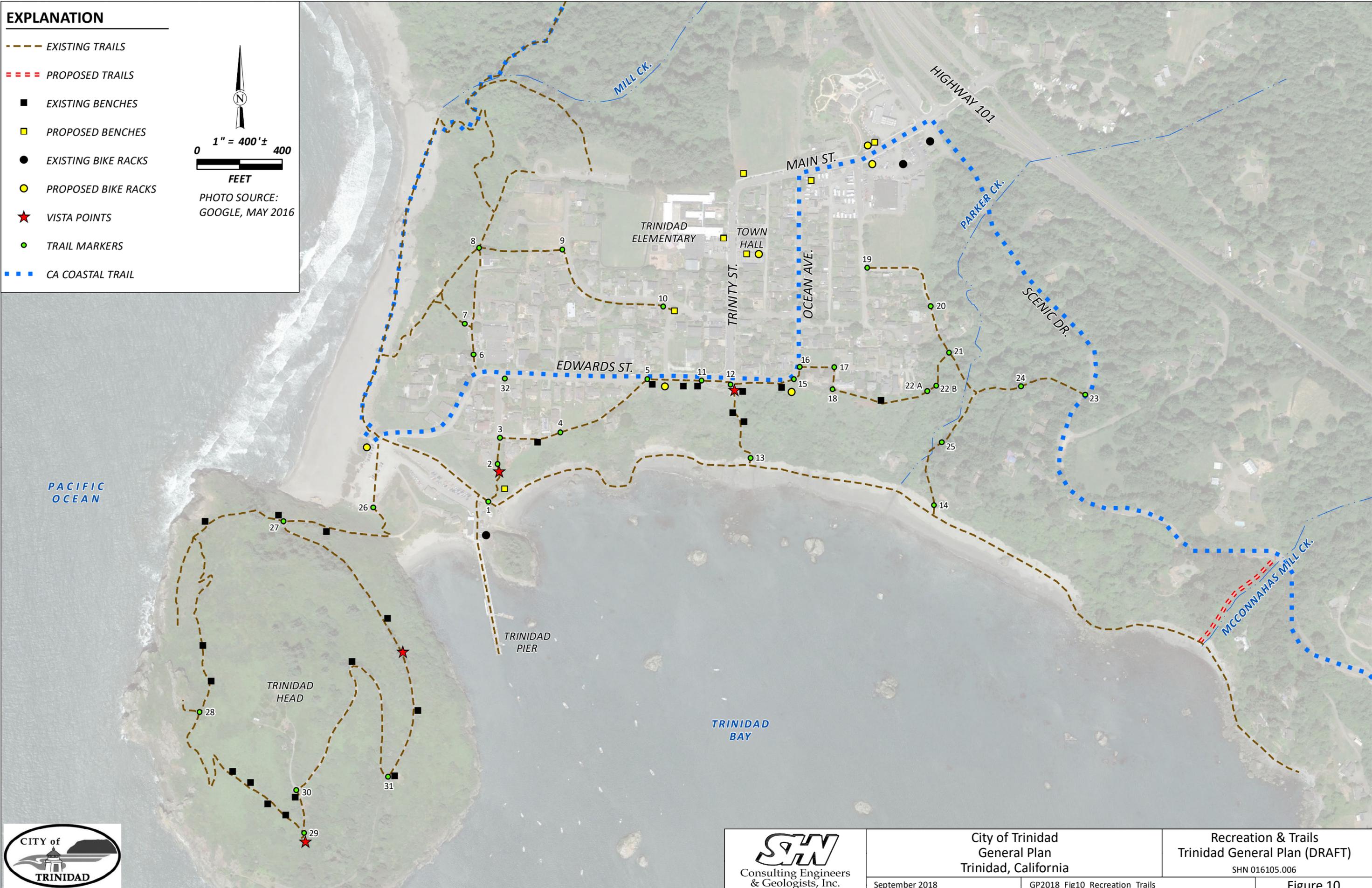
- EXISTING TRAILS
- PROPOSED TRAILS
- EXISTING BENCHES
- PROPOSED BENCHES
- EXISTING BIKE RACKS
- PROPOSED BIKE RACKS
- ★ VISTA POINTS
- TRAIL MARKERS
- CA COASTAL TRAIL

N

0 1" = 400'± 400

FEET

PHOTO SOURCE:  
GOOGLE, MAY 2016



\\arcata\Projects\2016\016105A-CityOfTrinidad\GIS\Projects\GenPlanUpdate\2018\ USER:jsousa DATE:10/2/2018



City of Trinidad  
General Plan  
Trinidad, California

September 2018

Recreation & Trails  
Trinidad General Plan (DRAFT)

SHN 016105.006

Figure 10