

Trinidad Trails Plan

Administrative Review Draft

Revised April 24, 2001

OVERVIEW:

The City of Trinidad is a small community overlooking the Pacific Ocean in northern California. This Trails Plan describes the many trails within City limits and is based on the 1976 General Plan Circulation Map (Figure 1). There are several other nearby State and County managed trail systems surrounding Trinidad; these are not discussed in this Plan. The City recognizes the importance of maintaining unhindered public access to the trails system since these trails are a significant feature of life in Trinidad.

The City's General Plan (1976) Policy 64 States:

“A formal pedestrian trail system shall be marked out around Trinidad. The system should include the beaches, the existing Trinidad Beach State Park trails, and ascend the bluff at Galindo Street to provide convenient pedestrian access from Edwards Street to the harbor, the Old Wagon Road from Wagner Street to Parker Creek Trail, the private road extending from Scenic Drive along the east branch of Parker Creek to the beach, and the beach extending southeasterly from Parker Creek to the city limits. (Refer to the Circulation Plan map for delineation of the trail system.) The system should be advertised in visitor information and mapped at the visitor information center”.

The development of this Plan is intended to partially implement this general plan policy by formalizing and marking the City's trail system in a simple, unobtrusive and uniform theme.

The first component of the Trails Plan includes a historical perspective of each trail within the main trail system and a description of its conditions. There are four main trail systems in Trinidad. One group of trails loops around Trinidad Head. Another trail system leads to Trinidad Beach State Park. A third trail heads to the Harbor Area - Launcher Beach and a fourth trail system leads to Indian Beach.

A map highlighting the trails and locations of signs that mark trails is another aspect of the Trails Plan (See Figure 3). Currently brass-like plaques attached to low rocks identifies trailheads to several City trails. The designs for two additional types of signs have been proposed to identify trails. The first type of sign is called a “Primary Trail Marker” (See Figure 5). It is a small sign identifying the beginning of trails and provides additional information. The second type of sign is simply a trail marker. (See Figure 6) These markers subtly identify where a trail turns a corner, connects to street side pedestrian access or where sections of trails might otherwise be missed. The combination of these with information kiosks and brochures will encourage appropriate use of Trinidad's gifted resources.

The second component of the Trails Plan includes a description and map of existing bicycle paths, and the placement of benches and bike racks (See Figures 3 and 4). Axel Lingren and the California Conservation Corps constructed the benches on Trinidad Head through private donations. Many of the benches and some of the bike racks elsewhere in town have been placed with funding made available through a grant from the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management Board and private donations. The Trails Plan provides a priority listing for additional benches and bike racks should additional funding sources become available.

PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

TRINIDAD HEAD TRAILS

TRINIDAD HEAD:

History:

Historically significant, the Head was discovered in 1595 by Cermeno, captain of a Spanish Galleon from the Philippines. For the next 255 years, the “roadstead on its lee side” was the only known anchorage in northern California. On June 9, 1775, the Head was officially claimed for Spain and named Trinidad by Spanish captains Don Bruno de Hezeta and Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra who erected a wooden cross near the top of the Head. In 1913 a granite cross was placed on the Head by the Club Women of Humboldt County commemorating this event. The lighthouse on Trinidad Head (on Coast Guard property with no public access) has been in continual operation since 1871.

Trail Conditions:

The trailhead begins at the foot of Trinidad Head from the south side of the beach parking area up to the private roadway that leads to the Coast Guard Housing. The trail follows the roadway to the overlook point where it turns up towards a gravel road just before the Coast Guard Station gate. Follow this trail up to the granite cross. Just west of the cross is an unimproved trail that takes you on the south side of the head and loops back down to the first bend in the paved road. Benches are available along this route. The trail, about 1 mile in length, has an elevation gain of about 300 feet.

TRINIDAD STATE BEACH TRAILS

STATE PARK TRAIL:

History: The State Park Trail provides a connecting link between Trinidad Beach, adjacent to Trinidad Head and Trinidad Beach State Park, adjacent to the elementary school. Humboldt State University Marine Lab is located adjacent to this link. The trail continues on State property to College Cove and Elk Head.

Trail Conditions: The trailhead begins at the paved parking lot adjacent to the Humboldt State University Telonicher Marine Laboratory on Ewing Street. Traveling north there is a paved road for 200 feet. From there the unimproved trail proceeds along the paved road north, past the Underwood Avenue Trail, eventually leading to the State Park. Proceeding south from the Marine Lab the trail leads to Trinidad State Beach, Trinidad Head and the harbor via Edwards Street. From various secondary trail access points proceeding west one can reach the Trinidad State Beach.

UNDERWOOD TRAIL:

History: The name Underwood comes from a pioneer family of the area who lived next to the present day Humboldt State University Telonicher Marine Laboratory.

Trail Conditions: The trailhead begins on Underwood Avenue, where parking is available on the street. There is a narrow unimproved right-of-way from Underwood Avenue between two fences that proceeds west to the State Park Trail. (See above description of the State Park Trail).

HARBOR AREA

HARBOR TRAIL:

History: The portion of the trail from Galindo Street to the harbor area used to be the main street from town to the sea. It provided access to Launcher Beach, which was the main landing place for town. At one point the harbor area provided access to a whaling station. The trail now connects the top of the bluff with the pier, restaurant, and bait shop.

Trail Conditions:

The trailhead begins near the Memorial Lighthouse, where parking is available along Edward's Street. Traveling west, it veers off Edwards Street at the Historical Marker and traverses down Van Wycke Street to Galindo Street. Additional parking is available off Galindo Street. The Trail extends south to the bluff's edge and then down a stairway to Launcher Beach, the harbor area, fishing pier and Trinidad Head.

INDIAN BEACH TRAILS

PRIMARY ACCESS

AXEL LINDGREN MEMORIAL TRAIL:

History: The Tsurai people have historically used this trail for centuries. The City completed trail improvements in 1997 in conjunction with a court settlement agreement entered into between the City, the State and a private resident (Frame vs. Trinidad et. al, Humboldt County Superior Court # DR920104) with approvals from the State Coastal Conservancy and Coastal Commission. The trail was constructed by the Yurok tribe and funded by the Coastal Conservancy and private funds. It was originally named the Hogback Trail or Lighthouse Trail until August of 1999 when the City Council renamed it the Axel Lindgren Memorial Trail. The name change was in honor of a local Native American and long-time resident of Trinidad who provided care for the Tsurai Village Site and educated the public about his native Tsurai people that lived in Trinidad.

Trail Conditions: This trail has been designated the primary access to Indian Beach. The trailhead begins just west of the Trinidad Memorial Lighthouse where parking is available to the east and west of the Memorial Lighthouse. It is one of the most challenging trails in the city following the bluff down to Indian Beach. Stairs, cable steps, handrails and benches are provided along the trail. The bottom of the trail is prone to wash outs by winter waves. Caution should be used. Secondary trail access up the bluff is available 900 feet to the southeast.

SECONDARY ACCESS

OLD WAGON ROAD TRAIL:

History: This trail (formerly referred to as the "Wagner Street trail") was an official Humboldt County road into Trinidad called Old Wagon Road and served as the main access into town from Scenic Drive (old highway) until an alternative access was provided from Highway 101. The North Coast Land Trust was deeded a fifteen-foot easement just prior to 1980, in exchange for development that affected the original road/trail alignment. The realigned trail proceeds alongside a paved driveway on private property for public access to the trail from Wagner Street (private road). This trail is identified in the City's 1976 General Plan Circulation Map.

Trail Conditions: The trailhead begins at the intersection of Ocean Avenue and Wagner Street. Parking is available on Edwards Street. From Ocean Avenue the trail can be accessed through a driveway access between the first and second houses on the ocean side of Wagner Street. It proceeds easterly until it meets up with the Parker Creek Trail and the Groth Lane Trail, all of which lead to Indian Beach. Note: no parking is available on Wagner Street. Per the 1994 Settlement Agreement, this trail is for daylight use only and excludes dogs.

PARKER CREEK TRAIL:

History: This trail was once a roadway connecting to the Old Wagon Road after it crossed Parker Creek and provided an access into town. In 1998 Bill Devall gave property to the City for additional trail easement for public access along this pathway. This trail is identified in the City's 1976 General Plan Circulation Map.

Trail Conditions: The trailhead begins at the intersection of View Avenue and Parker Creek Road, which is parallel to Main Street behind Murphy's Market. Parking is available along View Avenue. This trail begins off Parker Creek Road down a gravel roadway between fenced properties. At the end of this roadway the trail enters a vegetated area and follows along Parker Creek. It joins the Groth Lane Trail and is another way to get to Indian Beach. Note: no parking is available on Parker Creek Road.

GROTH LANE TRAIL:

History: The trail was dedicated and improved with minor trail improvements during the Groth/Iverson subdivision in the 1970's. It is also part of the Old Wagon Road access onto Scenic Drive. This trail is identified in the City's 1976 General Plan Circulation Map.

Trail Conditions: The trailhead begins on the west side of Scenic Drive just north of the Lanford Road intersection. No designated parking is available adjacent to the trailhead or on Scenic Drive. The trail, which is generally unimproved, proceeds downhill where it meets up with the Parker Creek Trail after it crosses Parker Creek. This trail provides another way to get to Indian Beach.

OTHER TRAILS:

Many of the trails described above can be linked by walking along sidewalks and unimproved sections of roadways in the City or utilizing State Park trails. In this manner a larger loop can be formed. For instance one can leave City Hall, walk north to Stagecoach Road, enter Trinidad State Park, take Mill Creek Trail (State) to Trinidad State Beach. From here one can travel south until reaching Trinidad Head. Proceed towards the harbor. Return by climbing the stairs by Launcher Beach that takes you to Galindo Street, up Van Wycke Street to Edwards Street. Travel east until reaching the Memorial Lighthouse. From here one could return to City Hall via Trinity Street or go down to Indian Beach via the Axel Lindgren Memorial Trail, walk south along the beach to the trailhead and return on one of the three Indian Beach secondary trails listed above.

TRAIL REGULATIONS:

The City as well as State and County Parks have developed Ordinances restricting certain activities. Some of the trails are adjacent to residences and therefore the City requests that users be considerate of those adjacent property owners. More specific information on trail regulations is available at City Hall.

BICYCLE TRAILS

Redwood Community Action Agency published a bike trails Plan/ Map for Humboldt County which included several paths through town. These are not designated with separate bike lanes. Ocean Avenue has also been designated as a bicycle path. Due to busy tourist traffic, the presence of children and inclement weather, caution is urged when riding through town. Bicycle racks are provided in several places in town (See Figure 3) to provide for parking while walking in town or on the trails.

TRAIL MARKERS

Several designs of trail markers have been incorporated or are proposed to be incorporated to formalize and mark the City's trail system in a simple, unobtrusive and uniform theme. These markers define locations and directions of trails and minimize confusion and property conflicts with adjacent landowners. These trail markers are intended to be similar in size, material and content in a manner that helps direct traffic to and from existing trails in and adjacent to the City. The general locations for placement include the trailhead, portions of the trail, or at a nearby location where visible to the public.

FIGURES THAT FOLLOW

1. Trinidad General Plan Circulation Map, 1976 (Figure 1)
2. Location of Trinidad Trails and Markers (Figure 2)
3. Trails Plan Map showing bicycle pathways, bike racks and benches (Figure 3)
4. Location of Benches on Trinidad Head (Figure 4)
5. Primary Markers (Figure 5)
6. Secondary Markers (Figure 6)