

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Trails Master Plan is to develop specific goals and objectives for the implementation of a Village-wide trails network. It includes a map of the existing and future trail routes, as well as a framework for executing the trail development objectives, and a ten year development prioritization list.

BACKGROUND

This plan supports and builds on the Village's goal, objectives, and policies for trails outlined in its Comprehensive Plan (2008 Draft). Development trends continue to endanger the connectivity of long-used pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle trails and routes in the Village. The creation of a Trails Master Plan for the identification, preservation, and augmentation of the Village's trail system is an important step in actively shaping the future character of the Village in the face of these issues.

VISION

The Village of Corrales envisions a system of trails utilizing public and private property to link a wide range of uses and users in a safe manner that supports alternative transportation and recreation.

The Trails Master Plan will address the preservation, protection, and construction of trails; improved safety; improved connectivity; and the encouragement of healthy, outdoor activity.

The Trails system will be implemented in partnership with multiple agencies and will be founded on consensus and sensitivity to the diverse viewpoints within the community.

PLANNING GOALS

Project goals were derived from community and Village staff input. Goals and objectives address the following key themes:

- Connectivity and Access
- Safety and Visibility
- Education and Awareness
- Implementation

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Public input was gathered through a variety of means throughout the planning process. A public open house, mayor-appointed advisory committee meetings, focus group meetings, a second public presentation and discussion, and individual key-person interviews all provided opportunities for stakeholder input and guidance on the process and outcome of the Trails Plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

PHYSICAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The Village has many unofficial trails and routes that are well-used by pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. A Geographic Information System (GIS) database has been developed to document the existing conditions of the in-use routes, access points, and proposed trail corridors. The database includes information on the specific conditions that would influence development of each facility, including length, development status, right-of-way width, obstructions, easement status, ownership, and maintenance responsibility. Results of this inventory indicate that there are over 85 miles of in-use trail routes identified by users and Village Commissions and 13 access points along the Bosque Preserve in the in-use trail route network. There are four existing fire service access points to the Bosque, with an additional planned access at Andrews Lane. MRCOG Long-Range Bikeways Map identifies 5 miles of bicycle lanes, 2.5 miles paved trail (Thompson Fence Line Trail), and 31 miles of unpaved trails (in the Corrales Bosque Preserve) in and around the Corrales area. This plan proposes an additional 47 miles of trail improvements.

KEY ATTRACTIONS AND DESTINATIONS

The following facilities were identified through the public involvement process as key destinations and connections for the trail system.

- Corrales Bosque Preserve
- Thompson Fence Line Trail (Rio Rancho)
- Paseo del Bosque Trail (Albuquerque)
- Corrales Community Recreation Center/Equestrian Center
- Commuter access to Rio Rancho and Albuquerque (via Meadowlark, Corrales Rd, Loma Larga)
- Schools, Commercial Center, Churches, Municipal Offices

EXISTING POLICY

Existing ordinances and codes protect the rights of pedestrians within the Village of Corrales. The Corrales Village Code, the Uniform Traffic Code, and the Corrales Comprehensive Plan all provide guidance on the rights and responsibilities of pedestrians, equestrians, and cyclists. The Village has adopted ordinances that require trails within the commercial zones of Corrales, as well as in all new subdivisions.

ISSUES AND NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

Community issues and needs were identified and documented through the public involvement process outlined above. Citizen input led to the identification of the following key opportunities and constraints to trail system development.

Opportunities

- Favorable administrative climate
- Growing public interest and volunteerism

- Existing subdivision and pedestrian access code
- Potential for prescriptive and agricultural easements to protect in-use routes.
- Potential easements across undeveloped lots
- Joint use of MRGCD and SSCAFCA facilities

Challenges

- Lack of public right-of-way on Corrales Road (prescriptive easement only)
- Private encroachments (walls, mailboxes, etc) & utilities (power poles, etc) in the public right-of-way
- Frequent driveway crossings
- High traffic volumes on many roadways
- Roadway drainage / erosion & sediment build up
- Steep slopes in the western escarpment
- Private property where roads do not connect to the edge of the Village
- Private roads limit potential for public access

ANALYSIS

IN-USE ROUTE IDENTIFICATION

In-use routes were identified through public input. At the September 2008 Public Open House, community members were given the opportunity to identify historic routes, currently used routes, desired routes, and potential easement locations. This data was supplemented by informal maps produced by the Safe Routes to School program and by the Corrales Horse and Mule People (CHAMP) non-profit organization. From this input, a composite map was created identifying all of the in-use routes in the Village. This data informed subsequent fieldwork and evaluation of potential trail routes.

SUITABILITY ANALYSIS AND PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Based on public input and feedback from the advisory committee, RTI developed a set of evaluation criteria and a ranking system to determine the suitability of individual trail routes for implementation. A small sampling of potential trail corridors was evaluated using the ‘initial’ criteria, and adjustments were made based on Steering Committee feedback and internal evaluation before applying the final criteria to the entire proposed trail network.

PLAN ELEMENTS

The trail system in Corrales is comprised of three trail components: Paved Multi-use Trails, Soft-surface Multi-use Trails, and On-Street Bike Lanes. The ability to combine these components in a variety of configurations according to right-of-way conditions and regional significance provides a flexible system for addressing the needs of various user groups, while maintaining desired Village character. The Trails Map (on p. X) shows the location of these proposed facilities.

PAVED MULTI-USE TRAILS

14.5 miles - These trails will provide regional linkages, have the widest trail width, and provide opportunities for trail amenities such as educational signage and benches. This plan proposes the construction of 12.0 miles of new paved trails.

SOFT-SURFACE MULTI-USE TRAILS

21.9 miles - These trails will provide the most frequently-spaced east-west connections within the Village and are primarily local in nature. This plan proposes the construction of 21.9 miles of new soft-surface trails.

BIKE LANES

15.5 miles - These facilities will provide separate, designated corridors for fast-moving bicycle commuters and other serious cyclists. This plan proposes the construction of 10.2 miles of new bicycle lanes.

Illustrations of each component are included on pages X and X of the Plan.

BRIDGES/LINKAGES

These include ditch crossings and access points to the bosque or other key destinations. They are critical components of the system which should be evaluated in conjunction with related trail facilities in determining feasibility and priorities.

ROADWAY CROSSINGS

Key crossings of arterials have been identified on the Trails Plan Map. Maximizing safety of trail users at these crossings is critical to the success of the trail system. Options investigated include raised crosswalks, pedestrian/equestrian actuated signals, and increased and updated signage.

TRAILHEADS

The proposed trail system includes four formally designated trailheads with limited parking, although additional informal access points have been identified on the Trails Plan Map.

CORRALES ROAD COMMERCIAL CORE

The proposed commercial core pathway along Corrales Road is the one exception to the three trail-type components listed above. A paved pathway is recommended, but may consist of colored concrete or colored asphalt rather than the standard asphalt paving recommended for the Paved Multi-Use Trails. Additionally, the commercial core pathway may be as narrow as 3-4' in some places due to physical constraints and may include a low roll curb for pedestrian safety and drainage management.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation of the Trails Master Plan will be accomplished by the Village Administration in concert with trails users and stakeholders. This section makes recommendations for organizational structures for

trail project administration and project management. The Village will be able to use the Trails Master Plan as guidance for securing funding and building trail improvements. The Action Plan is a step by step guide for implementing this Plan. This section of the Plan also includes a summary of the Trail Development Process, Program Recommendations, Trail Development and Use Policies, and Measurement of Success.

TOOL KIT

The Trail Development Tool Kit, under separate cover, is a resource to guide the development of trail related processes and legal agreements. The Tool Kit includes information on permitting and regulatory requirements; explains strategies for developing trails on private property; provides model agreements; and includes information on relevant state trail legislation and legal opinion. This Tool Kit also addresses trail liability issues for the Village of Corrales.