

CALABASAS TRAILS MASTER PLAN



Prepared by:
City of Calabasas
*Community Development Department with
Assistance from the Community Services and Traffic
and Transportation Departments*

June 20, 2007

Table of Contents

	Page
I. Introduction	4
Purpose of the Plan	4
Authority for the Plan	4
Plan Objectives	5
II. Setting and Existing Conditions	5
Existing Local and Regional Plans	6
Activity Centers	7
III. Proposed Trail System	9
Description of the Trail Plan Map	9
Existing Trails	9
Trail Users	11
Trail Locations	11
New Trail Construction Priorities	11
Motorized Vehicles	11
Daylight Hour Trail Use	12
Trail Easements	12
H-101 Crossings	12
Trail Naming	13
IV. Design and Construction Guidelines	13
Design and Construction Policies	13
Design Guidelines	15
Types of Trails	19
Construction Guidelines	19
Trailheads	19
Street Crossings	21
Switchbacks	21
Trail Signage	21
Vegetation	24
Creek/Drainage Crossings	24
Environmentally Sensitive Sites	25
Fencing/Gates	25
V. Maintenance and Management Policies	25
Trail Maintenance	25
Trail Management	26
VI. Implementation	27
Implementation Measures	27
Funding and Other Implementation Resources	28

Figures:		Page
Figure 1 -	Activity Centers	8
Figure 2 -	Trail Sign for Regional Trail System	13
Figure 3 -	Trail Alignment Planning	15
Figure 4 -	Improved Trail	17
Figure 5 -	Natural Trail	18
Figure 6 -	Typical Trailhead Sign	20
Figure 7 -	Trail Signage	23
Figure 8 -	Wet Crossing	24

Appendix

Exhibit 1 -	Trails Map
Exhibit 2 -	Trails Map with Regional Trails

Introduction

The Calabasas Trails Master Plan provides a blueprint for the development of community trails over the next 10 years. Trails in Calabasas will accommodate a broad variety of interests and abilities, from hiking, mountain biking, horse riding, jogging, or simply walking. The Plan identifies a trail network in the City serving virtually every neighborhood, and providing local and regional connections.

Trails are an essential part of the urban pattern. The role that trails play is becoming increasingly important as we expand our recreational activities and explore alternative forms of transportation. In Calabasas, trails have a tremendous potential to connect the City's population to the natural open space areas surrounding the City, recreational activities, schools, places of employment, shopping and other community points of interest.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a continuous pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle trail system that will incorporate trail connections to open spaces, public facilities, and nearby regional parks. The Plan will be used in fostering and guiding the creation of a citywide trail network. It is intended to provide guidance for the location and construction of trails in the City. Further, the Plan is intended to improve the operation, design and utilization of the City's off-street trail system, allowing equal and safe use for pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.

The Plan will identify existing trails and alignments for future trails which will guide land use and site planning. The Plan is intended to complement the General Plan Circulation Element, the Calabasas Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Calabasas Bicycle Master Plan, and various other land use and corridor plans that have been prepared for specific parts of Calabasas. In addition, the Plan reflects trails identified by the National Park Service (Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area), the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority), California State Parks, and Los Angeles County. Once adopted by the Calabasas City Council, the Plan will provide the vision and policy guidance for the City's trail planning efforts.

Proposed trail alignments shown in the Master Plan are conceptual in nature and are for planning purposes only. The trail alignments are shown at a corridor level which means the trail will be located anywhere within approximately 100 feet of the location shown on the map. The final trail alignments are subject to further analysis of geologic, topographic, environmental, hydrology, property ownership, and other factors.

Authority for the Plan

The authority for the preparation and implementation of the Trails Master Plan is the City's General Plan. State law requires that each city adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the city. Although the Trails Master Plan is not specifically mandated by state law, Government Code Section 65560(b)(3) stipulates that the General Plan address

“open space for outdoor recreation including, but not limited to, ... areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails and scenic highway corridors.”

Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Plan are to:

1. Create safe multiple-use trails within the City that provide alternative transportation and recreational opportunities for a wide variety of user groups.
2. Develop trails to promote the health and well being of citizens and visitors.
3. Design an integrated trail system that connects activity centers and neighborhoods within and around Calabasas.
4. Provide connections to regional trails surrounding the City.
5. Provide trail construction and maintenance guidelines.
6. Locate trails in a manner that does not cause environmental degradation and protects environmentally sensitive areas.
7. Establish a protocol and standards for trail identification.

II. Setting and Existing Conditions

The City of Calabasas is located along the Highway 101 corridor between Los Angeles County and Ventura County, in the western part of Los Angeles County. It occupies approximately 12.5 square miles of land composed of rugged hills up to 1,900 feet above sea level, bisected by canyons and seasonal creeks. The City has developed along the Highway 101 Corridor in two separate valleys separated by a ridgeline (known as the Calabasas Grade along Highway 101). The City is strategically located in the proximity of Highway 101, Las Virgenes Road, and Mulholland Highway, connecting to Malibu and nearby recreational destinations.

The City is fortunate to be surrounded by open space and park land owned by a variety of national and state agencies including the National Park Service (NPS), State of California, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. This open space and park land is part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The land includes the State owned 7,553 acre Malibu Creek State Park, located directly south and west of the City; and the Chesebro, Palo Comado and Liberty Canyons, owned by the National Park Service located north and west of the City. MRCA owns the 5,533 acre Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve located directly north of the City and the 652 acre Summit Valley – Edmund D. Edelman Park located adjacent to the southeastern City boundary. The 588 acre Gillette Ranch, located at the intersection of Mulholland Highway and Las Virgenes Road was recently acquired by a collaboration of park agencies including the California State Parks, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, the National Park Service and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. These properties are shown on the Trails Map (Exhibit 1).

In addition to the publicly owned open space surrounding the City, the City has approximately 2,684 acres of protected open space within it's boundaries including land

owned by the City of Calabasas, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, and many of the Homeowners Associations in the City. Except for the land owned by the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, which is zoned Open Space (OS), the other parcels are zoned Open Space-Development Restricted (OS-DR) which prohibits any development except for trails and trail related amenities. OS-DR properties include publicly owned parcels and parcels that have been development restricted through the use of deed restrictions, conservation easements or dedications of common open space as part of an approved subdivision.

The following existing conditions in the City can be cited as promising opportunities for shaping the City's future and helping realize its trail planning goals:

- Calabasas exists in a natural setting of rugged hills and open space areas, much of which is publicly owned;
- Residents enjoy an extensive and expanding system of neighborhood, community and regional parks;
- Calabasas is located adjacent to the Santa Monica National Recreation Area which includes miles of trails, abundant wildlife and a State park;
- An existing regional bikeway through Calabasas will serve to enhance the trail system;
- The development community in Calabasas realizes the many benefits trails provide to future residents and has worked closely with the City to provide trails.
- A segment of a National Historic Trail (Juan Bautista de Anza) exists in the City. The Juan Bautista de Anza Trail follows the trail of the historic 1774 and 1775-76 expeditions which established an overland route from New Spain to its missions in California.

Existing Local and Regional Plans

Local Plans. The Trails Master Plan incorporates policies and guidelines specified by several plans that the City has already adopted. These include:

- General Plan (1995)
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2005)
- Bicycle Master Plan (1997)

Regional Plans. Regional planning efforts and trail plans prepared for adjacent cities and areas have also been considered in the Trails Master Plan. These include:

- Santa Monica Mountains Area Recreational Trails Coordination Project -SMMART (1997)
- The Interagency Regional Trail Management Plan, National Park Service (Pending)
- California State Parks Recreational Trails Plan (2002)
- Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan (2000)
- Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Plan (1986 – currently under review)
- Caltrans 101 Valley Circle Interchange Plan (Trail Crossing)
- Simi Hills Comprehensive Design Plan, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, NPS (1996)

The Rim of the Valley Trail. Rim of the Valley Trail encompasses the entire upper Los Angeles River watershed area within the Angeles National Forest and portions of the Upper Santa Clarita River watershed. The Trail is 150 miles long and approximately 60% complete. Trails connecting into the Rim of the Valley trail are the Backbone Trail, Pacific Crest trail, De Anza Trail, and the Los Angeles River Parkway. Responsible jurisdictions are Los Angeles County, Ventura County, City of Los Angeles, US Forest Service, National Park Service and California Department of Parks and Recreation. The Corridor was created to form an interlinking system of parks, trails, open space, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities within and between the Santa Monica, Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. Trails located in the City of Calabasas should be designed to connect to of the Rim of the Valley Trail system where appropriate.

Activity Centers

The identification of “activity centers” in Calabasas is important to ensure that the City’s planned trail routes connect the population of Calabasas to the surrounding open space. An “activity center” is defined as any place that can attract trail users, including recreational, civic and educational centers. Existing and future activity centers in Calabasas are listed below and shown on Figure 1.

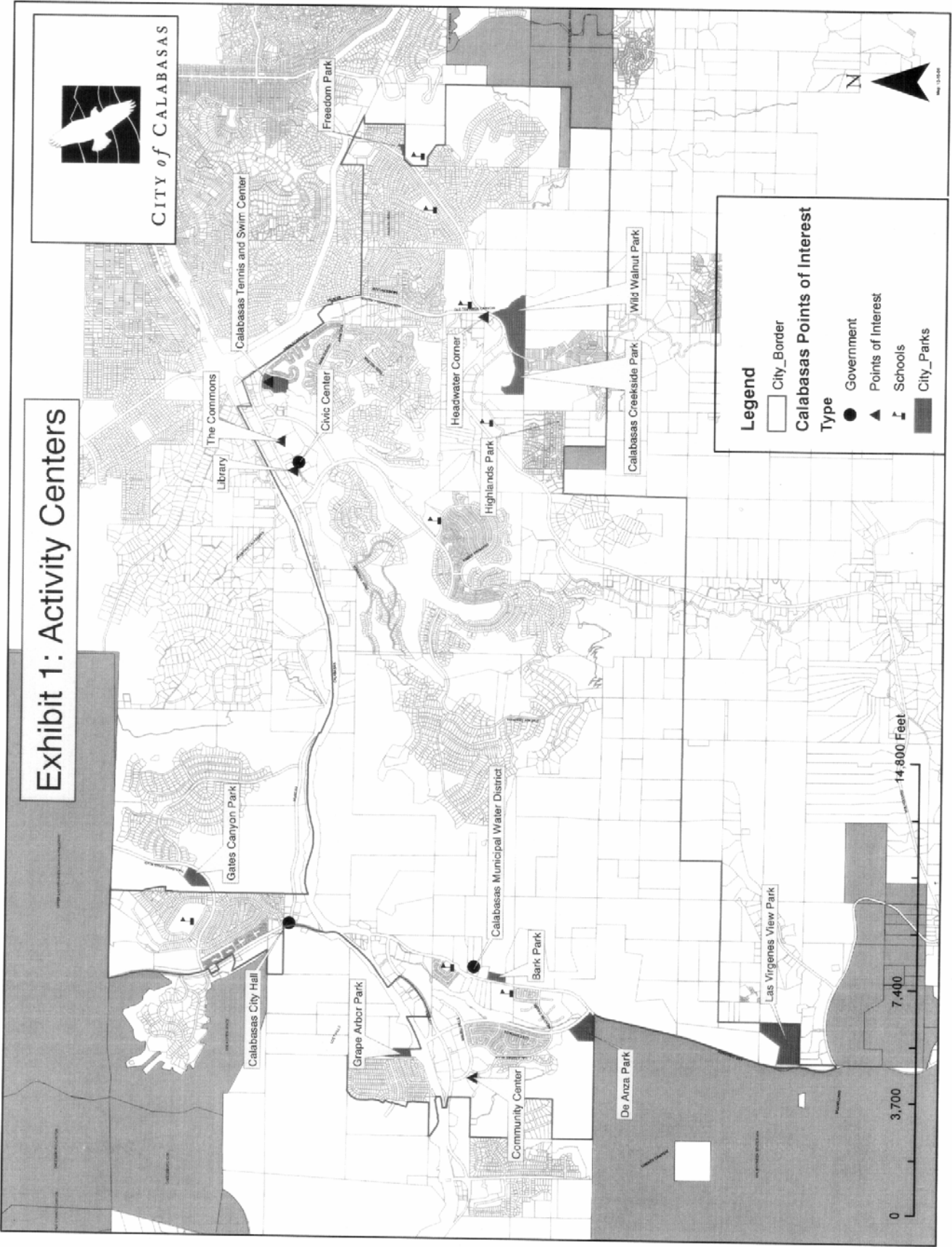
Community Centers

The Calabasas Tennis & Swim Center is the primary focal point of community recreational activities on the east side. The Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center is the primary recreational center on the west side. Tennis, swimming, aerobics, and other activities are accommodated at these facilities.

Parks

The City of Calabasas owns and operates seven (7) neighborhood parks and one (1) dog park consisting of approximately 41.5 acres. In addition, the following parks and open space areas owned by other public agencies, as described above in the “Settings and Existing Conditions” section, are adjacent to the City: the Chesebro/Palo Comado/Liberty Canyons, Malibu Creek State Park, Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve, Summit Valley – Edmund D. Edelman Park, and Gillette Ranch.

Exhibit 1: Activity Centers



Freedom Park
 Calabasas Tennis and Swim Center
 The Commons
 Library
 Civic Center
 Headwater Corner
 Highlands Park
 Calabasas Creekside Park
 Wild Walnut Park
 De Anza Park
 Las Virgenes View Park
 Community Center
 Bark Park
 Calabasas Municipal Water District
 Gates Canyon Park

Civic Facilities

The current City Hall is located on Mureau Road in a rented office building. The City is presently constructing a new civic center which will include City Hall and a community library on a 7.7 acre lot adjacent to the Commons on Park Sorrento.

Headwaters Corner is an environmental and cultural interpretive center developed by the public/private partnership of the City of Calabasas and Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT). The 12 acre center is owned by the City of Calabasas and managed by MRT. The center is located at the intersection of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Mulholland Highway.

Schools

In addition to four (4) elementary schools (Bay Laurel, Chaparral, Lupin and Round Meadow), the City has one (1) middle school (A.E. Wright) , two (2) high schools (Calabasas High and Indian Hills), one (1) preschool (Calabasas Klubhouse) and one private school (Viewpoint School). One middle school (Alice C. Stelle) is located directly adjacent to the City.

III. Proposed Trail System

Description of the Trail Plan Map

The Trails Master Plan Map (Exhibit 1) depicts the long-range plan for trail construction in Calabasas. Exhibit 2 depicts the regional trails adjacent to Calabasas. The Trails Master Plan describes off-street improved trails and unpaved hiking/equestrian trails. In addition, the Plan includes staging areas which provide parking, information and access to the system.

Trail locations shown in Exhibit 1 are strictly conceptual in nature. Alignments may change in the implementation/construction phase. Many of the proposed trails will require easements across private land.

Existing Trails

The following trails as shown on the Trails Map exist in Calabasas today:

- Juan Bautista De Anza Trail. This trail is a 1.4 mile multi-use trail that starts at a trailhead at the western end of Calabasas Road and ends at Las Virgenes Road. This trailhead provides a variety of educational features including maps and kiosks that discuss the historical significance of the trail. Interpretative panels are located along the length of the trail. The City secured grant funds for the construction of this trail. The trail is located on property owned by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). MRCA is responsible for maintenance.

- New Millennium Loop Trail. This trail is an 8 mile multi-use loop trail that traverses the perimeter of The Oaks subdivision. The trail can be accessed at the following points: the western end of Calabasas Road, Rondell Road east of Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas Bark Park on Las Virgenes Road, and Parkway Calabasas near the entry gates to the subdivision. The trail can be accessed but there is no parking available near the entry gates. The majority of the trail is located on property owned by MRCA; however, some trail segments are located on private property. Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT) has an easement on the trail segments located on private property. Maintenance responsibilities will be shared by MRCA and MRT.
- Las Virgenes View Trail. This 2.4 mile trail is an unpaved multi-use trail starting at the northeast intersection of Las Virgenes Road and Mulholland Highway. The trailhead is marked by an informational kiosk and the trail runs north parallel to Las Virgenes Road. The trail is located on property owned by the City of Calabasas, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District and MRCA. MRCA has maintenance responsibilities.
- Secret Trail/Calabasas-Cold Creek Trail. This multi-use trail starts at Mulholland Highway and runs west of the Mountain Park community. The trail is located on private property and was completed under an agreement with Los Angeles County as part of a subdivision. The trail is maintained by volunteer efforts. There are future plans for the property on which the trail is located to be dedicated to a public agency.
- Bark Park Trail. This multi-use trail begins at the Bark Park dog park on Las Virgenes Road. The majority of the trail is on property owned by the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District. A portion of the trail is located on property owned by MRCA. The trail is maintained by MRCA.
- Wild Walnut Loop Trail. This trail is a loop trail located within Wild Walnut Park. The trail is about 0.5 miles in length. The trail is maintained by the City of Calabasas.

Portions of the following trails, as shown on the Trails Map, exist in Calabasas today:

- El Canon Trail. This multi-use trail starts at the end of El Canon in the Old Town area of Calabasas and terminates at Mulholland Highway. The trail is a unit of the Calabasas-Henry Ridge Trail.
- Topanga-Henry Ridge Trail. There are three “spurs” of this trail that run through the area between the communities of Old Topanga and the Mulholland Heights. Two of the trails are proposed new trails and portions of one trail exists but is not officially designated.

In addition to the above trails, many earthen trails exist in open space areas that surround Calabasas. Some of these trails were developed as fire access and maintenance roads. Most of the existing trails in Calabasas are considered multi-use trails. A multi-use trail is

defined as a shared use trail intended for use by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Trail Users

It is preferable to design all trails for multi-use providing opportunities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. However, the City will determine if an individual trail will be a multi-use during the design and construction phase taking into consideration the steepness of the trail, available right-of-way, safety, user frequencies, and other conditions.

Should conflicts arise on specific multi-use trail segments in the future, the City may restrict the use on certain segments to avoid environmental degradation, conflicts with property adjacent to the trail, or trail user conflicts.

Trail Locations

Many of the existing trails in the City are located on land owned by other public agencies (Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, etc.), local homeowners associations or private land owners. Typically the City, or where appropriate, the Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT), in consultation with the City, will hold a trail easement on privately owned properties. A trail easement is defined as a nonpossessory interest of the City or other public agency in real property for the purposes of creating and maintaining a trail for use by the general public.

For existing and planned trails across land owned by other public agencies, the City will work with these agencies to determine maintenance and management responsibilities.

Portions of some of the proposed trails shown on the Trails Map are outside of the Calabasas city limits. These trails are included on the map because they are within the City's planning area and connect to trails within the City.

New Trail Construction Priorities

When determining trail construction priorities, the following criteria should be used to prioritize a specific trail project:

- **Gap:** Trails segments that fill missing links in a larger trail system.
- **Connectivity:** Trails that connect two or more trail systems.
- **Safety:** A trail project that corrects a problem on an existing trail.
- **Easement:** Trails on public land or where public access easements have already been acquired.
- **Use:** Trails with heavy potential use.
- **Destination:** Trails that link an existing trail to an activity center or neighborhood.
- **Land Use Conflicts:** Trails that present minimal land use conflicts.

Motorized Vehicles

Except for authorized maintenance and emergency vehicle access needs, the trail system is for non-motorized use only. All motorized vehicles of any type are prohibited. Trail entry points will be designed to discourage motorized vehicle use. Trail signage, barriers, fences, and active trail management will help restrict use by motorized vehicles.

Daylight Hour Trail Use

Evening use (after sunset) of a trail will be restricted on trails managed by the City. Trail signage will indicate this restriction. The evening closure serves several purposes:

1. Reduces the impact of the trail on neighboring private properties by limiting hours of use, and
2. Allows law enforcement personnel to take corrective action against violators on the trail who may have criminal intent.

Trail Easements

All trails that are open to the public should be located on publicly owned or dedicated property. There are a variety of mechanisms for this to occur. Dedicated easements are the most common and acceptable form of public access rights.

Often liability concerns are raised in the process of acquiring trail easements. Public agencies have immunity from liability for injuries caused by a condition of any unpaved road or any trail, per California Government Code 831.4. Government Code Section 831.4 states that a public entity, public employee, or grantor of a public easement to a public entity for specified recreational purposes cannot be held liable for injuries caused by the condition of certain roads, paths, and trails that provide access to recreation. While there are always circumstances that could nullify this immunity, typically courts have liberally construed this immunity in favor of public agencies.

California law (Government Code Section 846) also protects private individuals from liability to persons injured after entering private property for a recreational purpose. However, in cases where public easements are dedicated, or lease agreements are negotiated for public use with private landowners, the jurisdiction or public agency would typically assume general liability responsibility. As noted above, a public agency would have immunity from liability for injuries caused by a condition or any unpaved road or any trail.

Highway 101 Crossings

As shown on Exhibit 1, the Trails Master Plan proposes two off street crossings of Highway 101. The first would be located immediately west of Las Virgenes Road at the current Las Virgenes Creek under-crossing. This is the most convenient crossing of Highway 101 for trail users, and would allow pedestrians/equestrians and bicyclists to avoid the on and off ramps at the Las Virgenes Interchange. The other proposed off street crossing is located at an existing underpass along the Juan Bautista De Anza Trail.

In addition to the two off-street crossings, one on-street crossing across the Mureau Road Bridge is proposed. There is an existing on-street crossing on the Valley Circle overpass where the Valley Circle Scenic Trail connects with the El Canon /Calabasas Henry-Ridge Trail.

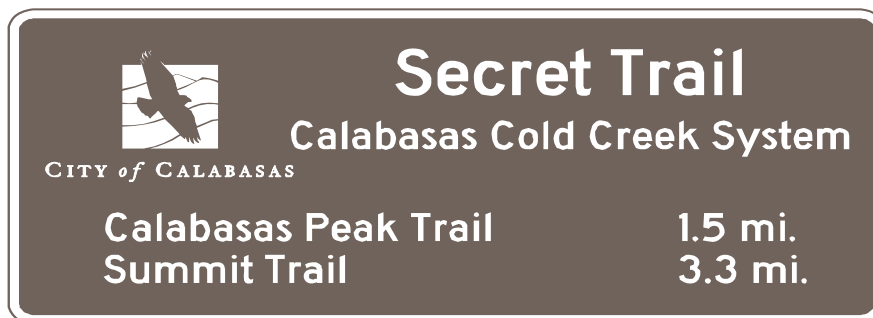
These proposed freeway crossings will need to be fully evaluated from a cost-benefit standpoint and in terms of engineering design before specific construction projects could be pursued.

Trail Naming

The naming of trails should utilize existing regional trail names where appropriate. All trails should include trail signs that provide the local name of the trail along with the name of the regional trail system as shown on Exhibit 2. Local trails could be named for a natural landmark, natural feature or habitat in the vicinity of the site.

After soliciting public input, the Community Services Department will present the suggestions to the Parks, Recreation and Education Commission who will recommend a name to the City Council. The Council will confirm the trail name by resolution.

FIGURE 2



V. Design and Construction Guidelines

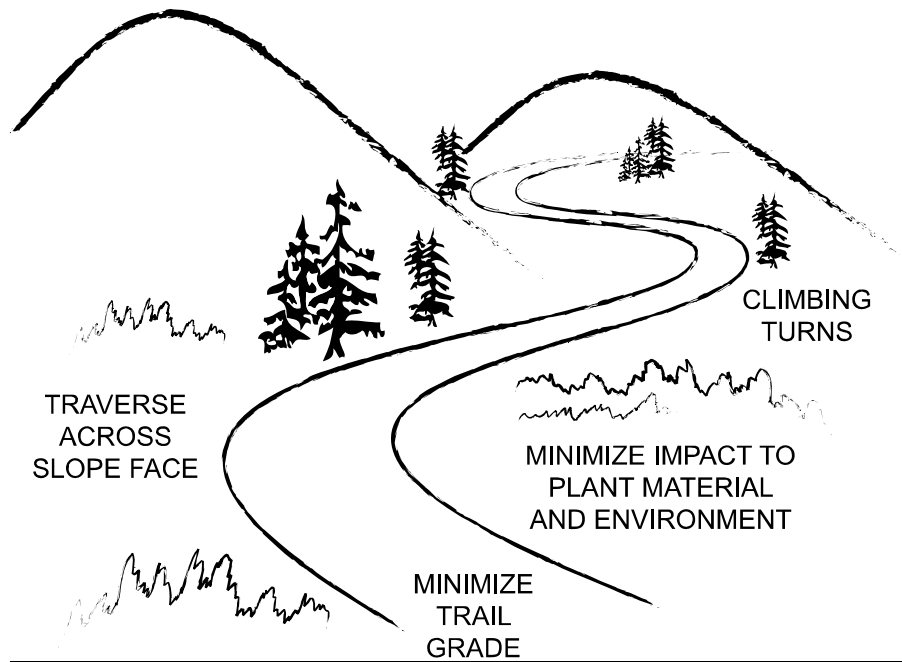
These design and construction guidelines are intended to assist city staff with implementation of the Trails Master Plan, as well as provide the development community with a clear understanding of design standards considered appropriate by the City of Calabasas. The standards in this section are based on a number of factors, including safety, accessibility, and overall appearance of the trail system.

Design and Construction Policies:

- Trails should be located and constructed in such a manner as to minimize maintenance requirements and to maximize access.

- Trails should follow natural contours where possible and respect surrounding land forms.
- Drainage features should be incorporated into the design and construction of trails where appropriate to reduce erosion.
- Wide, gentle curves with good forward sight distance should be utilized.
- Trails and staging areas need to be easily accessible to the public in order for the trails to receive high use.
- Trail systems should connect existing open space areas and community activity centers.
- The Plan should provide a regional approach (linkages).
- When possible, trail systems should offer loops, allowing the individual to return to a starting point without having to back-track.
- Consideration should be given to establishing a mile-maker system for trails to facilitate public safety understanding of user location if rescues or aid is necessary.
- Trail design should be incorporated into plans for natural drainage channels, street rights-of-way, landscape corridors, utility right-of-ways and other open space.
- Trail plans should be incorporated into plans for new transportation structures such as roads, bridges, and overpasses.
- The City should require recreation and trail planning and construction as a condition of approval for future development projects. Plans should provide access to trail heads located on adjacent public lands.
- The City should retain existing city-owned rights-of-way that have potential to assist in the implementation of the Trails Master Plan.
- The City should obtain rights-of-way from other entities (e.g., utility districts) that assist in the implementation of the Trails Master Plan.

FIGURE 3
TRAIL ALIGNMENT PLANNING



Design Guidelines

Types of Trails

The Trails Master Plan incorporates two different types of trails: improved trails and natural trails. Figure 4 provides a graphic illustration of an improved trail and Figure 5 provides a graphic illustration of natural trails.

Improved Trails

Improved trails include those in urbanized areas and would be used to connect activity centers. Improved trails would also serve as a link to off-street natural open space trails in the surrounding open space. Improved trails should be designed as multi-use trails that allow a bicyclist to pass a pedestrian safely. They should be constructed of a hard-packed durable surface (such as decomposed granite) which can drain easily while preventing erosion. Improved trails should be designed to permit at least partial use by persons in wheelchairs.

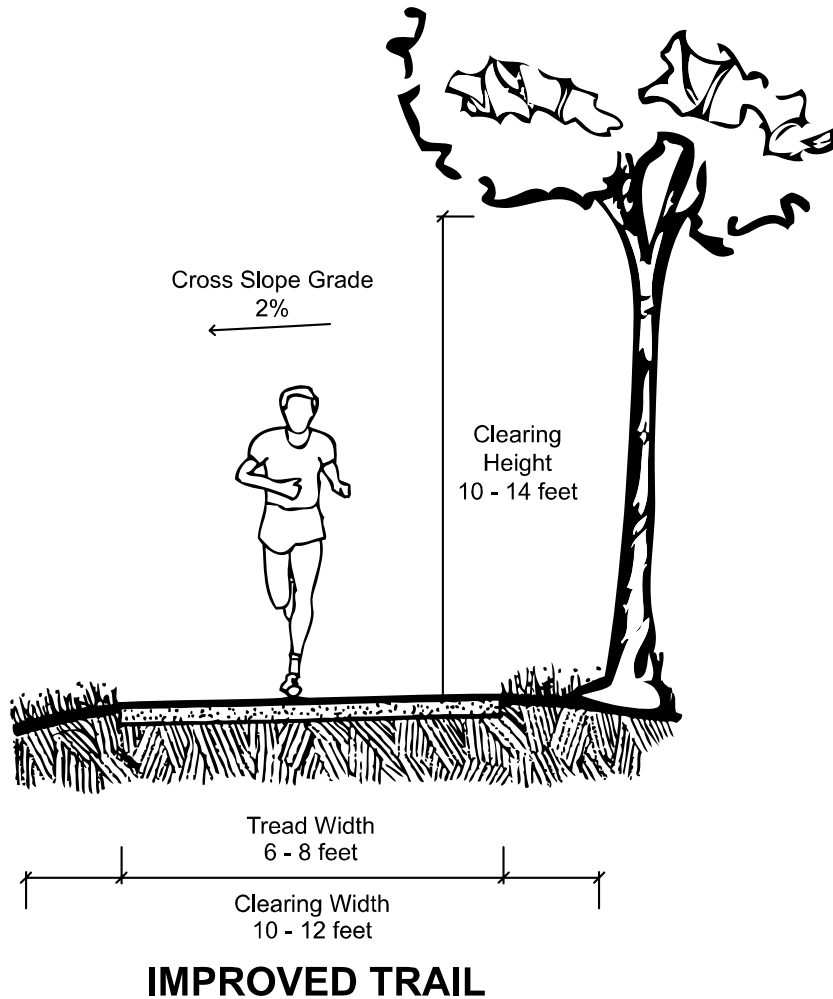
Natural Trail

Natural trails will serve primarily to provide access to open space areas surrounding the City. The trail should be designed to accommodate hikers, equestrians and mountain bicyclists where width and/or slope do not present safety constraints. Whenever possible, natural trails should utilize existing fire roads or other unpaved roads or trails.

Bikeways

When properly designed, bikeways can also provide a safe means of linking off-street trails. The bikeway standards can be found in the Calabasas Bicycle Master Plan.

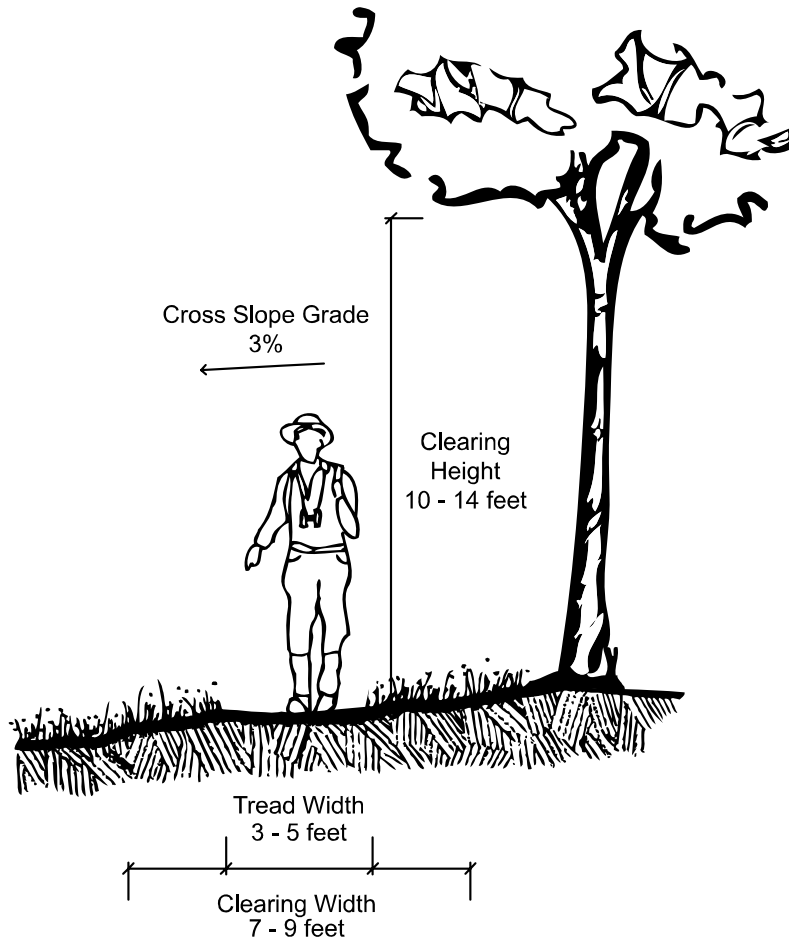
FIGURE 4



Preferred Standards:

Tread Width	6 -10 feet
Clearing Width	10 -12 feet
Tread Surface	Crushed rock, decomposed granite or asphalt
Percent Grade	Grades should not exceed 10 percent <u>Desired Grade:</u> 0 to 5 percent <u>Maximum Grade:</u> 0 to 10 percent (sustained, 15 percent (shorter than 50 yards)
Clearing Height	<u>Cross Slope Grade:</u> 2 percent (maximum) 10 – 14 feet to allow for equestrian use

FIGURE 5



NATURAL (OPEN SPACE) TRAIL

Preferred Standards:

Tread Width	3 – 5 feet
Clearing Width	7 – 9 feet
Tread Surface	Natural/native soil
Percent Grade	Grades should not exceed 10 percent <u>Desired Grade:</u> 0 to 5 percent <u>Maximum Grade:</u> 5 to 10 percent (sustained, 15 percent (shorter than 50 yards) <u>Cross Slope Grade:</u> 3 percent (maximum)
Clearing Height	10 – 14 feet to allow for equestrian use

Construction Guidelines

The following guidelines provide specific recommendations for how trails should be routed and/or constructed to reduce maintenance and environmental impacts. In certain locations where physical or environmental constraints preclude the practical implementation of a trail under the following standards, the City of Calabasas reserves the right to modify the standards in order to preserve the continuity of the system, avoid or minimize environmental impacts, and preserve community character.

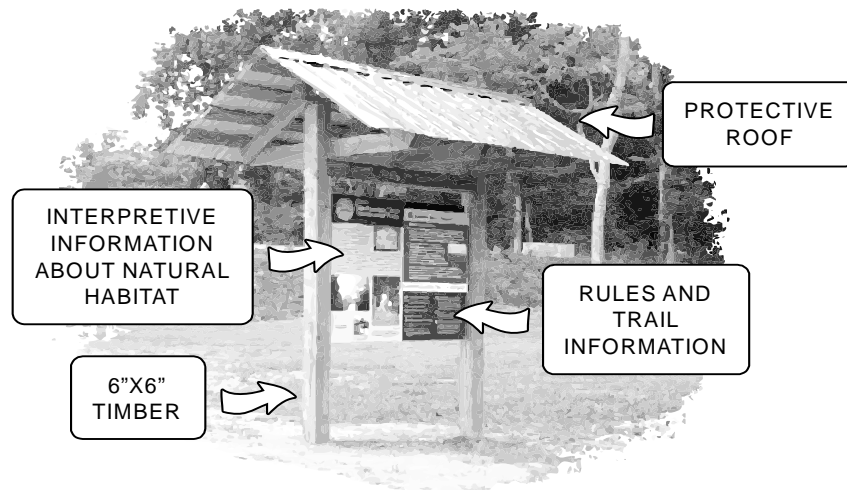
Trailheads

Trailheads should occur where roads intersect trails and a suitable pull-out or curb cut can be attained, especially in rural areas. Some trailheads may consist of little more than a safe parking space or two, and appropriate signage which may include the length and trail difficulty.

Important trailheads should include the following information on the trail sign: a map of the trail, destination and distances, permitted uses, regulations and rules including but not limited to keeping dogs on a leash, no smoking, high fire danger, and how to handle emergencies, information on hazards in the area, trail conditions, trail difficulty, hours of use, and access for the disabled. The sign may also contain interpretive information. In addition to information about mileage, the sign may include information such as whether it is a loop trail or shaded trail. Trailhead signage should generally be designed as shown in Figure 6.

Where greater use is expected, additional improvements can be provided. In addition to automobile parking, a staging area may provide horse trailer and bicycle parking, restrooms, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, trailhead signs and maps.

FIGURE 6



TYPICAL TRAILHEAD SIGN

The following nine (9) trailheads exist in the City as shown on Exhibit 1.

- A trailhead is located at the western terminus of Calabasas Road at the start of the Juan Bautista De Anza Trail. This trailhead provides a variety of educational features including maps and kiosks that discuss the historical significance of the trail. Parking is available on the street. Access to the New Millennium Homes loop trail system is also provided.
- A trailhead that provides access to the Juan Bautista De Anza Trail from the west is available at Rondell Street. Parking is available on the street.
- At the northern terminus of Las Virgenes Road, a trailhead leading into Palo Comado/Chesebro Canyons and the La Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve is available with parking on the street.
- Another trailhead exists on Las Virgenes Road south of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and the existing shopping center. This trailhead provides access to a NPS trail located on open space south of Mont Calabasas. On-street parking is available.
- A trailhead exists at the parking lot for Bark Park on Las Virgenes Road. The parking lot serves both users of the Bark Park (dog park) and adjacent trail (Bark Park Trail).
- De Anza Park is adjacent to and provides access to the Las Virgenes Creek Trail and the Grasslands Trail (aka the Talepop Trail) which runs parallel to Las Virgenes Road as it heads south into Malibu Creek State Park.
- A trailhead located on the northeast corner of Las Virgenes Road and Mulholland

Highway provides several parking spaces in a small dirt parking lot. This trailhead is at the entrance to the Las Virgenes View Trail.

- A trailhead with parking is available at Wild Walnut Park. This trailhead provides access to a trail within Wild Walnut Park and the Topanga-Henry Ridge Trail.
- A trailhead consisting of a small dirt parking lot is located at entrance to the Secret Trail on Mulholland Highway.

Street Crossings

Trails should cross public streets at intersections, in the same place a crosswalk would normally be placed. If there is no intersection within 200 feet of the proposed trail crossing, an at-grade trail crossing, including median break, may be considered. The Department of Public Works, in conjunction with the Department of Community Development, will make the determination as to whether a trail crossing a roadway can be safely achieved. Traffic volumes, times of day, travel speed, sight lines to and at the intersection, and problems unique to the crossing or intersections will be used in making the determination.

Where an intersection with pedestrian crossing exists within 200 feet of where a trail is proposed, pavement, barriers, and landscape features with appropriate signage will be installed to guide trail users to the intersection. Where equestrians are expected, signal-activation buttons should be located at least 6 feet high.

Switchbacks

A “switchback” is any place where the alignment of a trail traverses a slope in one direction and then abruptly “switches back” toward the opposite direction. Switchbacks are often used to run a trail up a steep slope in a constrained location. Although switchbacks are often the only solution to the problems of rock outcrops and steep slopes, they should be avoided where possible. Unless they are carefully designed and constructed, switchbacks present an irresistible temptation for trail users to shortcut the trail and cause erosion over a web of indiscriminately created volunteer routes.

Trail Signage

As new trails are completed, signs should be installed along the major corridors of the trail system with information on direction, safety and trail policy. Typical trail signage is shown on Figure 7. Specific locations of signs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis during the initial trail design.

Minor access points along a trail should have signs that provide general information, such as mileage, directions and warning signs. Trail signs may also include small scale location maps and the city logo. All signs should be designed and built with high quality materials that will be vandal resistant and weatherproof. The City should coordinate with the various agencies that maintain trails in the City to ensure consistency for trail users. All signs

should be consistent through the city-wide trail system and complement the existing sign system.

Appropriate warning signs should be installed to detail hazards, limited sight distance or where the slope exceeds the recommended standard or where the trail width or vertical clearance is less than the recommended standard. Signs identifying private property should be installed to ensure that the trail user does not trespass on private property.

FIGURE 7



Vegetation

Native vegetation along all natural open space trails shall be preserved to the greatest extent possible to protect the aesthetic quality of the trail. Clearing of vegetation for trails, especially along creek banks, should be minimized.

Native and/or self-sustaining plant materials should be used for re-vegetation of all disturbed areas to prevent erosion or for screening purposes. Construction techniques to preserve vegetation and trail routing techniques should be used to minimize visual intrusion.

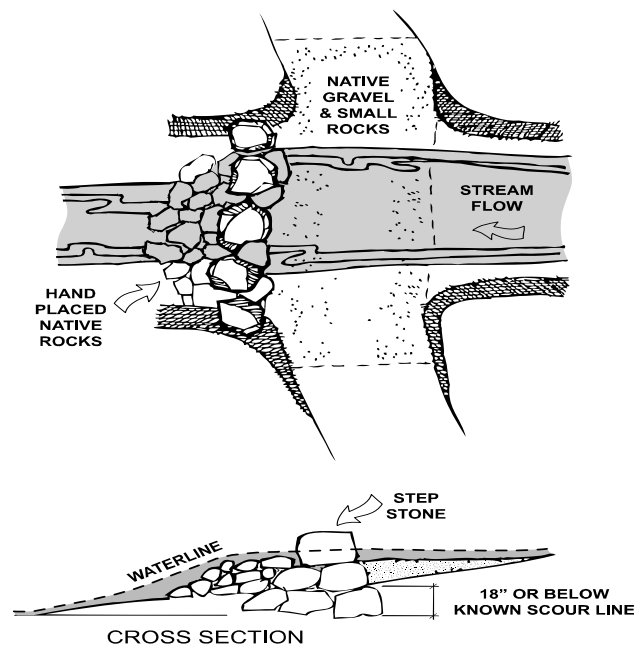
Creek/Drainage Crossings

Trails that cross creeks and drainage areas should be designed for minimal impact. If possible, natural materials such as flat rocks/stepping stones should be utilized to traverse slow moving streams (See Figure 8). Trails crossing creeks and drainages may require a bridge or culvert. Culverts should be as wide as the active stream channel so that they do not limit the ability of debris to pass.

Bridge designs will vary depending on the length and height of the crossing and on type and amount of trail use. On open space trails, a simple wooden bridge may be used. Professional assistance should be sought to assist in designing and installing bridge and culvert crossings.

FIGURE 8

WET CREEK CROSSING



Environmentally Sensitive Sites

Special location or construction methods may be necessary to reduce impacts and minimize disturbance in environmentally sensitive areas. Examples of visually or environmentally sensitive sites include: wetlands, highly visible hillsides, significant vegetation areas, highly erodible soils, unstable slopes, and ridgelines.

Techniques, such as site specific trail routing, erosion control measures, site specific adjustment of construction standards, and site specific construction practices should be implemented to minimize environmental, visual, or construction impacts. Construction methods that should reduce impacts include installing retaining walls to reduce cut and fill slopes on a visually prominent hillside, hand construction of the trail, or installing a tree well around a significant tree to be preserved.

Fencing/Gates

Any proposed trail fencing shall be constructed of material subject to approval by the City. As a general rule, fencing will not be necessary or desired where the trail is located in open space areas except as needed for safety (steep switchbacks). Fences in natural open space areas could be visually obtrusive to the natural environment or impede wildlife. Fencing and signage may be necessary to prevent trail users from trespassing onto adjacent private lands. In areas where a proposed trail will abut residential properties, privacy may be a concern and a fence may be appropriate. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

A motorcycle barrier can be placed at the foot of a trail gate to prevent motorcycles from encroaching trails, while allowing hikers, equestrians and bicyclists to pass. This type of barrier should not be used on open space trails accessible to persons using wheelchairs.

V. Management and Maintenance Policies

Trail Maintenance

The Community Services Department will be responsible for the management of trails owned or managed by the City. Trails, when properly maintained, should last indefinitely. The following are maintenance principals that should be incorporated in planning and post construction.

Determine Maintenance Responsibilities

Before constructing a trail, establish how often the trail should be maintained and identify the party who will be responsible for maintenance. Trail maintenance in residential areas will typically be funded through landscape and lighting districts.

Design trail to minimize maintenance

The City should plan ahead to anticipate potential problems and minimize them through appropriate design and quality construction.

Schedule design and maintenance reviews

The Community Services Department will prepare an annual Trail Maintenance Program and Budget. Any public comments on the trail should also be reviewed at this time. Problems identified should be corrected at this time.

All trails should be inspected at least twice a year and busy trails once every twelve weeks throughout the usage season. Detect and fix problems while small and repair vandalism immediately. Inspections will be the responsibility of the Community Services Department.

Trail Management

The following policies will provide an effective framework for trail management.

Consider possible trail management issues and draft a concise trail management plan for new trails.

Prior to trail construction, seek the participation of adjacent property owners and jurisdictions, and general public in preparing a long-term management plan for trails and trail corridors. The Community Services Department will be responsible for preparing and administering the management plan. At a minimum, the plan should address the following issues:

- Public education about trail usage and respecting the rights of adjoining properties.
- Identification of user groups, potential conflicts and solutions to conflicts.
- Rules for public use and safety, who will oversee enforcement and distribution of rules to trail users (posting of rules at trail heads, including them on trail maps and brochures, etc.)
- Accountability for implementation of the management plan. Assignment of specific trail management responsibilities to volunteer and service groups.
- Risk management issues and identification of a strategy to reduce trail injuries.
- Education of trail users in trail safety.

The Community Services Department will determine whether or not a management plan is needed on particular trails. Trails that present minimal management issues may not require a plan.

Inform the public in advance, when possible, of trail closures. The City may close any trail for maintenance or safety purposes. The public should be notified of trail closures at trailheads and at the points of closure. Notification should include dates and reason for closure.

Collect feedback from trail users and others

Public comments concerning trails will be retained by the Community Services Department. Comments should also be solicited from the public through trailhead surveys, comment cards and other appropriate means. These comments should be periodically reviewed to identify management issues, improvements and user satisfaction.

VI. Implementation

Trails can be implemented in a variety of ways besides fee-simple acquisition of land and use of open space dollars for construction and maintenance. Partnering with other agencies, including federal, state and private developers can stretch limited funds. In addition, grants can be used to plan and construct new trails.

Implementation Measures:

Develop a prioritization plan for trails in the City utilizing the new trail construction priorities outlined in the Plan.

Develop a trail promotion program which includes developing trail brochures, providing information on the City's web page and providing information, at activity centers such as the City's community centers and parks, on the location of trails within the City and connections to regional trails surrounding the City.

Identify and map all existing trail easements in the City.

Once the trail easements are identified, develop a missing linkage map and create a plan to link all the trails shown on the Trails Map.

Create a program to identify and acquire public ownership of trail corridors and access points needed to develop an effective trail network.

Develop a GIS-based trail map with parcel information so that the City can track existing and required easements.

Incorporate off-street trail rights-of-way/easement acquisition and trail development into the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Apply for grants and alternative funding sources for trails.

Establish an "Adopt a Trail" program for ongoing trail construction, maintenance and patrol activities.

Coordinate the City's trail system planning, implementation and management efforts with those of regional jurisdictions and public agencies.

Identify partnership opportunities with neighborhood groups, private individuals and local businesses as a means to acquire various trail amenities.

Ensure that trails and bike lanes are included in plans for new transportation projects such as bridges and overpasses that will cross U.S. 101.

Identify potential tax-related incentives and seek funding for other inducements for private property owners to allow and support public trails.

Work with property owners to educate and inform trail users about trail boundaries (through pamphlets, signage, etc.) in the early stages of trail development in close proximity to private property.

Funding and Other Implementation Resources

Funding is a key element to successfully implement trail-related projects. The following list provides the potential funding sources at the various government levels.

Local Funding Sources

Bonds and assessments

In the past, various state and local agencies have successfully used bonds or assessment districts to fund improvement projects or acquisitions.

General Fund

An annual set-aside in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) could be used to fund trail development. These funds could be leveraged annually by using them as matching funds for grants, for example.

State Programs

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

TDA funds are available for transportation projects, including trails. Funds are allocated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LAMTA).

California Wildlife Coastal and Parkland Conservation Act of 1988

Competitive grants are available for acquiring and developing land and rights-of-way for bicycle riding, horseback riding, hiking and handicapped access trails.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program provides funds to federal agencies and to the states. The money allocated to the states may be used for statewide planning, and for acquiring and developing outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Because Calabasas is located within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and proximate to several NPS and State park facilities and lands, this fund may aid the City's neighboring jurisdictions with regional trail system projects and planning.

This program provides \$20 million annually to cities and counties on a 70 percent state and 30 percent local matching basis. This program is administered by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. The program provides funds for acquisition, development and innovative trail programs. Limited funds would be available from this fund as most of the money has been allocated to other projects.

Habitat Conservation Fund

Cities, counties and districts are eligible to apply for the \$12 million that is available under this program which is administered by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. Trails and recreational programs are new additions to the categories of projects supported by this fund.

Trail Grant Program

Acquisition and enhancement of property for public trails are eligible for this program. Grants are available to local governments and authorized non-profits. The program is administered by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.

Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act (Prop 50)

This program provides grants for the acquisition, restoration, protection and development of river parkways. Providing compatible recreational opportunities, including trails along rivers and streams, is an eligible activity.

Urban Stream Restoration Program

This program provides grants to assist local agencies and organizations with on-site restoration work including erosion control, landscaping and creek channel maintenance.

Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program

This program is administered by the California State Resources Agency and is available for projects that provide mitigation for the environmental effects of transportation facilities. Roadside recreational projects are eligible and may provide for acquisition and/or development of trails, trailheads and parks.

Federal Programs

Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Funds

TEA-21 funds are administered by the California Department of Transportation and were established to fund transportation-oriented projects.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds annually for recreational trails and trails-related projects. The RTP is administered at the federal level by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). It is administered at the state level by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). The purpose of the program is to provide acquisition and development/rehabilitation of trails and support facilities, such as trailhead staging areas. Cities, counties, districts, state agencies and nonprofit organizations with management responsibilities over public lands are eligible. A 20% match is required and can be made in cash or in-kind services. Five percent of the 20% must come from local sources such as a city, county, state or private source.

Federal Highway Administration Funds

These funds are made available based on a three year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prepared by LAMTA, the regional transportation planning agency for Los Angeles County.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program

This program provides funds for bicycling and walking facilities by offering competitive matching grants to cities and counties.

Safe Routes to School Program

The purpose of the Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is to encourage communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. The Program makes funding available for a wide variety of programs and projects, from building safer street crossings to establishing programs that encourage children and their parents to walk and bicycle safely to school.

Other Grant Sources

American Hiking National Trails Fund Awards

To be eligible for an award, applicants must be a nonprofit (501(c) (3) organization and meet one of the following three criteria: 1) building or maintenance of trails which will result in improvement to the environment and enhancement of the hiking experience, 2) acquisition of trail lands including costs associated with acquiring conservation easements, and 3) constituency building surrounding specific trail projects including volunteer recruitment and support. Awards range from \$500 to \$10,000 per grant. The program is administered by American Hiking Society.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

This foundation funds a number of different kinds of projects that deal with its mission to improve the health and health care of all Americans. There are no deadlines. Applications must be received via email.

Public/Private Partnerships

In addition to government sponsored revenue-generating opportunities, other types of public/private partnerships can be considered which would result in the constructing or maintaining of trails facilities, including:

- Donations
- Fundraising
- Contributions commemorating an event or memorializing an individual
- Club or organizations sponsorship (Kiwanis, Boy Scouts, etc.)

Private contributions can be enlisted to adopt a trail, whereby they provide on-going trail construction, clean-up and maintenance in return for on-site public recognition.

California Conservation Corps (CCC)

The CCC may offer an opportunity for State-funded implementation of a trail system. CCC field crews are capable of providing trail construction and maintenance. Members of the crew have moderate and specialized technical skill levels.

Private landowners

Landowners can assist in the acquisition of land for trails. The implementation of the Trails Master Plan offers opportunities for landowners to accrue state and federal tax benefits from whole or partial donations of land for trails. Land donations often generate tax benefits that equal or outweigh the unrealized gain of a conventional market-rate sale.

Citizen involvement

The City of Calabasas, through its Community Services Department, can enlist the help of local citizens to implement the Trails Master Plan. Active citizens can help construct trails or perform periodic clean-up and maintenance.

APPENDIX

Exhibit 1 - Trails Map

Exhibit 2 - Trails Map with Regional Trails

*A large scale map is available for viewing at the City of Calabasas Community Development Department.