



Trail Implementation Guide

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Approved By: 
Parks, Recreation & Community Services Director

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Date: 3/16/2021

Purpose

This guide is established to provide information to Parks, Recreation & Community Services and Public Works staff who are involved in the planning, design, and construction of trails that will be operated and maintained by the Town of Sahuarita.

Background

In 2015, the Town Council adopted “Aspire 2035: Sahuarita’s General Plan” and also adopted, by reference, a trails map included as Appendix A in the “Pima Regional Trail System Master Plan” (PRTSMP). However, the Town Council did not adopt other aspects of the PRTSMP, so we were without definitions and detailed design standards to guide the development of Town trails implemented by Town departments. In 2020, Parks and Recreation drafted definitions for several commonly used trail terms and recommended using trail standards from the PRTSMP that are the most applicable to the Town’s anticipated trail system. These definitions and excerpted standards were reviewed by Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC). The PRC recommended that Town departments/staff use the trail definitions and excerpted trail standards. The directors of the Public Works Department and the Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department agree with this approach.

Standards

The Town of Sahuarita, along with the other jurisdictions in our region, use the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) Transportation Standards in order to have a coordinated approach to transportation capital improvement projects. The standards are found at <https://apps.pagnet.org/standardspecifications/> The PAG transportation standards do not provide detailed specifications for trails, paths, and trail corridors, therefore staff will also use the excerpted standards from the PRTSMP, included with this guide as Attachment 1. This combination of PAG and PRTSMP standards provides the baseline for our trail design and construction. Proposed trail improvements are also subject to review and approval through Town processes; it is understood that there may be site constraints or other issues unique to each trail improvement project that could require design modifications.

Trail Terminology – Common Definitions

The following terms and definitions are established:

At-Grade Crossing – Crossing a roadway on the same elevation.

Boundary Access Point – A narrow (four feet wide +/-) gap in a boundary fence with a low cross bar or a bollard to prohibit access by motorized vehicles.

Double Track Trail – A trail that accommodates side-by-side travel or a four-wheel vehicle.

Entry Node – A developed access area along trail and path corridors, with signs but typically few other amenities.

Path - A paved facility offering a smooth and consistent surface for multiple user groups and

located in a variety of improved sites.

Pedestrian – Any person traveling by foot, or any mobility-impaired person using a wheelchair, whether manually operated or motorized.

Shared-use Path – A facility designed for travel by a variety of non-motorized users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, skaters, runners, and others.

Single Track Trail - A narrow trail with width for one user or single file travel. Often located within preserved open space, washes, mountainous areas, or wherever a narrow trail is desired.

Trail - A soft, natural surface facility suitable for multiple user groups and located in all types of situations.

Trail Head - A facility that provides parking spaces and non-vehicular access, serving as a jumping off point for the trail and path system.

Trail Corridors

Trails and paths occur within a particular setting, such as a corridor. Corridor standards are used to identify spatial relationships of paths and trails to each other as well as to roadways, buildings, river edges, walls, fences, property lines, etc. Common trail corridors include:

Greenway - A greenway is a park typology that, due to a linear nature, is used to link parks, schools, residential areas, town centers, and commercial areas with each other. Greenway corridors often feature both a path and a trail.

River Park - A river park features a separated and divided path and trail on both sides of a river, offering maximum opportunities for non-vehicular transportation. Grade separated street crossings (underpass or overpass, such as culvert or bridge) are highly desirable design elements for this park typology and corridor.

Roadway/Street - Roadways often have significant rights-of-way (ROW) width located parallel to the pavement where shared-use paths, separated from but alongside the street, can be located. Shared-use paths typically feature a width of 10+/- feet which provides two-way use and conforms to American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards.

Wash - The banks along washes and smaller riparian corridors provide locations for low-impact trails and paths.

Trail System

The Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department and the Public Works Department (Departments) have responsibility for trails located, or that will be located in the future, on properties assigned to their respective stewardship and oversight.

The overall success of our trail system depends on how safe people feel when using the trails and the ease with which people can access the trails, either by walking, riding, or biking, or by

driving to convenient, well-equipped trailheads.

Where not constrained by safety or technical limitations, our trail system should strive for shared, non-vehicular use.

While bicycle lanes and sidewalks can and do contribute to creating overall connections for non-motorized mobility, bicycle lanes and sidewalks are not defined as trails, rather, they are transportation elements.

The Departments will work in a coordinated manner to plan and implement the Town's shared-use path and trail network.