

2018

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 Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation  
 VIVA Connects  
 Youth Conservation Corps

# TAOS HEALTHY PATHWAYS GUIDE



*Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation*



## TAOS LAND TRUST

410 La Posta Road \* Taos, New Mexico 87571  
 (575) 751-3138 \* [taoslandtrust.org](http://taoslandtrust.org)

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# PATHWAYS INTRO

Parks and pathways provide invaluable support to overall health and wellbeing of individuals and the community. Access to walkable space can help increase residents' physical activity, support mental health, and foster community and social interactions.<sup>1</sup> In Taos, we are lucky to have an abundance of options to get outside and enjoy the benefits of doing so. Taoseños expressed a strong desire for more close-to-home access to nature, which echoes recent research findings that show enormous mental, social, and physical benefits from spending time outdoors.<sup>2</sup> With this community priority in mind, this guide is meant to provide information and resources about easy, close to home trail access to encourage our community to increase both physical activity and time spent outside. Enjoy!

1. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Mid-course Report: *Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Youth*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012.

2. Taos County Community Conservation Plan, 2017.

## **How much activity should a person get?**

### **The Mayo Clinic has a great guideline:**

“As a general goal, aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day. If you want to lose weight or meet specific fitness goals, you may need to exercise more. Want to aim even higher? You can achieve more health benefits, including increased weight loss, if you ramp up your exercise to 5 hours a week.

Reducing sitting time is important, too. The more hours you sit each day, the higher your risk of metabolic problems, even if you achieve the recommended amount of daily physical activity. Short on long chunks of time? Even brief bouts of activity offer benefits. For instance, if you can't fit in one 30-minute walk, try three 10-minute walks instead. What's most important is making regular physical activity part of your lifestyle.”

**TAKE A FRIEND OR A FAMILY MEMBER WITH YOU AND CATCH UP ON TIME GONE BY.**

# TRAIL TIPS

## **A few tips to help you on your “path” to improved health! Before you start:**

- ✿ If you have a medical condition, have had a recent injury, are recovering from surgery, or have not been physically active recently, start slowly, and please check with your doctor about your walking program.
- ✿ Wear comfortable clothing, drink lots of water, and maybe invest in some good walking shoes. Comfortable shoes make all the difference, and you are worth it!
- ✿ A pedometer, while not necessary, can be a fun thing to take along with you to track your steps and measure your improvement. Start a friendly competition with your friends, family, or co-workers!
- ✿ Be environmentally friendly while you walk with pets — please pick up pet waste to prevent stormwater pollution.

## **While you walk:**

- ✿ Start slow and continue a steady pace.
- ✿ For some extra fitness, try swinging your arms or taking quicker steps.
- ✿ Exercise smartly, keep it fun and enjoyable, and increase your exercise gradually over time.
- ✿ Build activity slowly – start with a 20-minute walk then increase gradually.

## **When you are finished:**

- ✿ Cool down – make sure you cool down after a long fast walk.
- ✿ Do a few stretching exercises.
- ✿ Drink some water.
- ✿ Use the walking log in this guide to show how far you have walked.

**PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK!!!  
YOU DID IT, AGAIN!!!!!!**

# GRADES

We have assigned grades to each trail according to their level of difficulty. Please see below for a general description of each grade.

## **GRADE 1 = Fully accessible to all users**

Grade 1 trails are flat, paved pathways, easily accessible and suitable for wheelchairs.

## **GRADE 2 = Mostly accessible**

Grade 2 trails may have uneven paving, crusher fines, and/or dirt pathways that may have a slight slope in parts of the trail.

## **GRADE 3 = Slightly challenging**

Grade 3 trails may be natural dirt, crushed rock, or otherwise uneven surfaces with steeper grades in parts or all of the trail.

## TRAIL KEY:

EASY

MODERATE

HARD

**Disclaimer:** The pathways in this guide are not always maintained and may have cracked pavement, tripping hazards, and other risks to users. Use at your own discretion, and always tell someone where you plan to walk.

# FRED BACA PARK LOOP

**Loop distance:** 0.25 mile

(x4 = 1 mile)

**Grade 1:** Universally accessible

**Park Hours:** Summer 8 am–8 pm,  
Winter 8 am–5 pm

**Description:** The loop walkway begins from the eastern side of the basketball courts and goes around the grassy field. Enjoy mountain views from the entire loop. **Watch for cracks in the pavement** at the southern end of the loop. For a nice resting spot, the pavilion by the basketball courts provides shade and seating.

**1 restroom** located along north-western edge of the park with trash receptacles, benches, and picnic tables leading up to the playground and walking loop. **Drinking fountains are not working** so be sure to bring plenty of water.



# FRED BACA PARK NATURE TRAIL

MODERATE

**Nature Trail distance:** 0.2 mile one-way

**Grade 2**

**Park Hours:** Summer 8 am–8 pm,

Winter 8 am–5 pm

**Description:** For a quiet escape, try the nature trail, which can be started from the western side of the basketball courts. Cross the bridge and stay right as you enter the wetland area. Trail ends at a wonderful lookout to the wetland where there are benches to rest.

**1 restroom** located along north-western edge of the park with trash receptacles, benches, and picnic tables leading up to the nature trail. **Water fountains are not working** so be sure to bring plenty of water.



## Birds seen on this trail:

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| American goldfinch  | Red-tailed hawk      |
| Yellow warbler      | Northern flicker     |
| Song sparrow        | Red-winged blackbird |
| Black-billed magpie | Mallard              |
| Belted kingfisher   | Violet-green swallow |



# KIT CARSON PARK LOOP

**Distance:** 0.35 mile (x3 = approx. 1 mile)

**Grade 1 + 2**

**Park Hours:** Summer 8 am–8 pm, Winter 8 am–5 pm

**Description:** This pathway begins across from the playground at the main park entrance and loops around the big grassy field with the pavilion. **Park** in the main lot at park entrance or metered lot near the Taos Community Auditorium. This loop can go around the big field or extended around the baseball diamonds and playground.

**Restrooms** near the playground and along the loop. **Drinking fountains and trash cans** near the playground and throughout the park. Dog waste bag station located at park entrance off Civic Plaza Drive. There is a **bench** located within this walking loop on the field that is nice for resting.



# TAOS ECO PARK LOOP

**Distance:** 0.37 mile (x4 = 1.5 miles)

**Grade 1**

**Park Hours:** Summer 8 am–8 pm, Winter 8 am–5 pm

**Description:** Loop can be started from east or west side of the soccer field. The loop is universally accessible, but watch out for the crack in the pavement on the northern edge. The soccer field may also be used for walking when not in use for a sporting event but is not suitable for wheelchairs or walkers.

**Restrooms and water fountain** located at the eastern side of the field and open during the day. **Dog waste bag station** located on eastern trail entrance. The **bleachers and benches** within the soccer field are great for taking a break.



# TAOS PUBLIC LIBRARY LOOP

**Distance:** 0.2 mile (x5 = 1 mile)

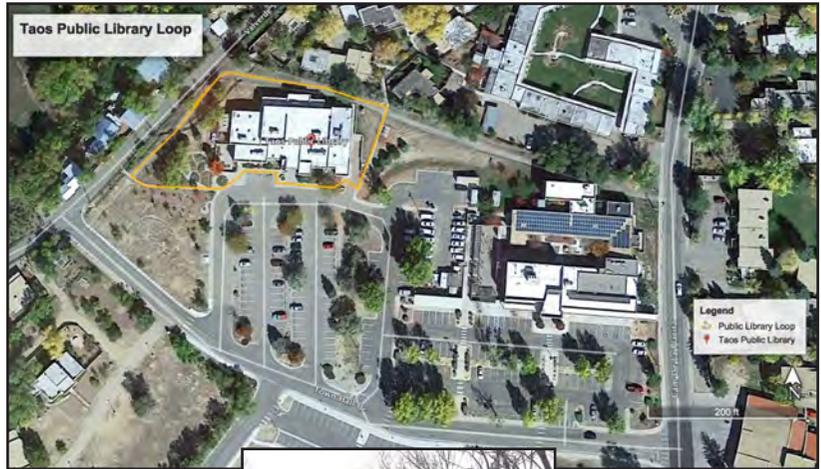
**Grade 1:** Pavement has some cracks

**Best time to use:** **Sunrise to sunset**, to use library facilities walk between **10-6**

**Monday-Friday and 10-5 on Saturdays**

**Description:** Park at the Taos Public Library and start from eastern side of library. This pathway is suitable for those with walkers and wheelchairs, but look out for the rough patch in the pavement on the section behind the library. On the western side of the library there is a **safe area for kids to play**, but it is not visible from the entire pathway.

On the first stretch of the path there is a **picnic table** that is great for resting or enjoying a healthy snack. **Restrooms and water fountains** are located inside the library. **Dog waste bag station** at eastern side of the parking lot.



# RIO FERNANDO PARK LOOP

**Loop distance:** 0.25 mile (x4 = 1 mile)

**Grade 2:** Some slope and uneven ground

**Park Hours:** Monday–Thursday, 8:30 am–5:30 pm

**Description:** This loop is located at 410 La Posta Rd. The loop walkway begins from the eastern side of the Taos Land Trust office and goes through the trees with endless opportunities to view birds and other wildlife. This 20 acre property has other loop options for exploring and finding a quiet place to walk.

**Water and restroom** available inside the Taos Land Trust office during business hours Monday through Thursday. There is a bench behind the office at the end of the loop.

**No dog-waste stations** so bring your own if you plan to walk your dog here. **Please keep dogs on a leash here and only on the main loop to protect the wetlands and wildlife.**



# TAOS GUADALUPE CHURCH LOOP

**Distance:** 0.65 mile (x2 = 1.3 miles)

**Grade 2:** Some cracks in pavement

**Park Hours:** N/A

**Description:** This “urban” trail is in the middle of Taos, starting at the historic Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. There are no street crossings (although there is one entrance to public parking), allowing for a safe and enjoyable walk in the heart of downtown Taos.

**Free parking** across from church, paid parking at Plaza and church lots, but free on Sundays.

**Public restrooms** near Bent Street parking lot. Nearby school playground, Fire and Police stations nearby, close to the Plaza, other path options within the area allow for more loops!



# DOS ARROYOS TRAIL

**Distance:** .75 mile (one-way)

**Grade** 3

**Park Hours:** N/A

**Description:** Park at the Taos

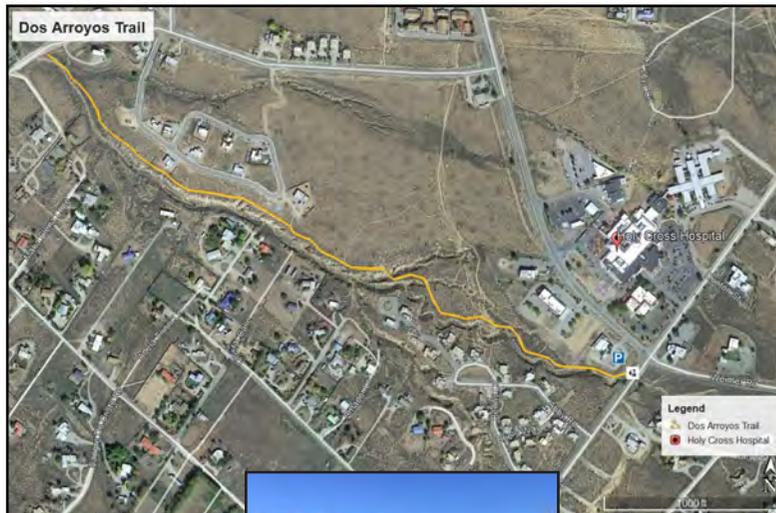
**Public Health office** at the

intersection of **Weimer Rd. and Maestas**

**Rd.** Trail begins from the east side of parking lot and goes to Morgan Rd. along the arroyos in the area. **There is no parking on the other end of the trail at Morgan Rd.**

so plan to either do an “out-and-back” or arrange a pick-up from Morgan Rd. This trail weaves through a residential area but is a nice walk with mountain views.

**Restrooms and water fountains** located in the Taos Public Health Office or across Weimer at Holy Cross Hospital. No facilities along the trail so plan your stops. **No dog-waste bag stations** on this loop so bring your own bag if you plan on walking your dog.



# WEIMER/MAESTAS LOOP

**Distance:** 3.35 miles

**Grade** 3

**Park Hours:** Sunrise  
to Sunset

**Description:** Park at the Taos Youth and Family Center and begin trail from west side of building. **You will have to cross Paseo de Cañon at the roundabout** to get to the rest of the trail that follows along Weimer Rd.



Follow the trail until you go through the 4-way stop sign, and the road turns to dirt. Keep an eye out for cars as you begin on the dirt road. There is no separation of the trail from the road for this part of the loop. At the end of Weimer, you will have to **cross Paseo de Cañon** again to get on the last part of the trail leading back to the Youth and Family Center.

**Restrooms and water fountains located at the Youth and Family Center.** No facilities along the trail but there are businesses along the way that you may be able to use. **No dog-waste bag stations** on this loop so **bring your own** bag if you plan on walking your dog.

# UNM KLAUER TRAIL

**Distance:** Outside Loop: 0.75 mile (x2 = 1.5 miles)

Internal Loop: 0.40 miles (x3 = 1.2 miles)

**Grade 2 + 3**

**Park Hours:** N/A

**Description:** Scenic loop located behind the UNM-Taos Klauer Campus. Trail has **some slopes, especially in the "outside" loop**. This is a crushed gravel trail with some erosion, so pay attention to your footing. The elevation of the trail provides incredible views of sunsets, sunrises, and summer thunderstorms as they roll in.

**Restrooms and water** available in campus buildings during business hours. Lots of parking, trail is **ADA accessible for first 500 feet**. Highly recommended views.



# EMERGENCY INFO

Police and Fire Emergencies Should Call: **911**

Police and Fire Non-Emergencies Should Call Taos  
Central Dispatch: **(575) 758-3361**

Sheriff's Department: **(575) 737-6480**

Behavioral Health Crisis Line: **(505) 272-2920**

Suicide Crisis Line: **(855) 662-7474**

NM Rape Crisis Line: **(505) 266-7711**

Poison Control: **(800) 222-1222**

Nursing 24-hour Hotline: **(877) 725-2552**

Voice/TTY: **(800) 659-1779**

Adult Protective Services: **(866) 654-3219**

Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD):  
**(800) 797-3260**

To Report Child Abuse and Neglect in New Mexico:  
**(855) 333-7233** or text **#SAFE** from your cell phone

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner: **(575) 751-8990**

Community Against Violence 24-Hour Hotline:  
**(575) 758-9888**

Narcan/Naloxone Opiate Overdose Prevention Helpline:  
**(855) 364-6663**

Taos County Animal Control: **(575) 758-3361**

Taos County DWI Program: **(575) 737-3857**

Taos County Facilities Management: **(575) 737-3860**

Road Conditions: **(800) 432-4269**

