

# El Cerrito Paths, Trails and Public Stairways

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A guide to publicly owned paths and privately owned paths that are in general use, and paths that are currently impassable.

The level of agreement with private land owners about the public use of trails on their property varies.

The numbers are keyed to a map produced in a partnership between El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and the National Park Service's Rivers & Trails Program.

**Key:** *Italics indicate trail is impassable.* Underlined trails are privately owned.

Trails are numbered roughly north to south and are grouped for easy reference.

- 1. La Honda Way.** Short connector between El Cerrito and East Richmond Heights. Trailhead in EC is between 6417 and 6511 Alta Vista, where La Honda hits Alta Vista.
- 2. Francisco to Tulare Path.** Two legs. Heads downhill between 2637 and 2641 Francisco, near Carquinez, as concrete steps, emerging between 2621 and 2625 Mira Vista; crossing Mira Vista the path becomes an asphalt grade, ending between 2626 and 2628 Tulare.
- 3. Tassajara Trail** between Alva and Barrett avenues. Trailhead on Alva is between numbers 2529 and 2531. Runs downhill to Barrett along south side of Tassajara Park.
- 4. Tassajara Park Trail.** Runs downhill from Tassajara Avenue near its intersection with Alva Avenue into Tassajara Park, ending by the recreational center. Grading and treads are needed at bottom.
- 5. Barrett to Tassajara Trail.** Steps descend from Barrett (between numbers 6434 and 6500) ending a block away at Tassajara (between numbers 2548 and 2550) by Tassajara Park. Walkway levels off as it nears Tassajara.
- 6. Poinsett Park Walk.** Small trail bisects Poinsett Park between Poinsett and Rosalind avenues. Along Rosalind Avenue, sidewalk provides nice view of Poinsett Creek, with a mosaic-decorated bench for taking one's ease.
- 7. Lagunitas to Edwards Path. Two legs.** *Trailhead appears to belong to be the driveway at 2367 Carquinez but is really a public right of way. Right-of-way emerges between 2444 and 2502 Mira Vista. **Leg two right-of-way** is between 2445 and 2501 Mira Vista and emerges between 2448 and 2500 Tulare.*
- 8. Highland Walk.** Grassy alley starting by 2201 Harvard Street, Harvard Walk ends at 2212 Scenic. Erroneously shown on city maps as a street.

**9. Tamalpais to Arlington Path.** Steps between 2036 and 2040 Tamalpais emerge north of 1849 Arlington.

**10. Canyon Trail.** Trail starts at the park entry near 6462 Conlon Avenue. Exits to north on Crescent Way **between 5936 and 6006 Jordan Avenue** and to the south onto Canyon Trail Road **at intersection of Hagen Boulevard and Mira Vista Drive**. Another exit is onto Gatto, reaching Prospect Sierra School via a crosswalk.

**11. Gatto Trail.** *From between 6637 and 6641 Gatto to 6462 Conlon, near 2150 Junction and Canyon Trail Park. Very steep trail, requires treads and railing.*

**12. Knott Trail. Two legs.** Potential pedestrian link from Del Norte BART to Prospect Sierra School. **Leg one** is a steep trail starting north of 6501 Hagen. Steps needed. **Leg two** continues uphill from between 2052 and 2056 Harper. It emerges by 2063 Tapscott Street at the school. Short portion of Harper Street connects the two legs.

**13. Del Norte to Ohlone Way.** Paved walkway in Del Norte Plaza (a residential and retail complex). Connects San Pablo Avenue and Ohlone Greenway. Trailhead at 11800 San Pablo Avenue at Wall Avenue.

**14 Snowden Way.** Between 1768 and 1800 Ganges Avenue is this paved, pedestrian-only section of Snowden Avenue. At the end of Snowden is the site of the former EBMUD tank, now city owned. Would make a great bike park or picnic ground. Trails from here could tie into the Hillside Natural Area.

15. Lower **Snowden Trail** links Snowden Way to a spot near the base of Motorcycle Hill Trail.

**16. Upper Snowden Trail** will run roughly parallel to Lower Snowden, linking the former EBMUD tank site to an uphill portion of Motorcycle Hill Trail.

**17. Motorcycle Hill Trail.** In the Hillside Natural Area. From the intersection of Blake Street and Navellier, between 1636 Navellier and 7255 Blake, this trail switchbacks its way to the summit of Motorcycle Hill, and continues to Potrero Avenue between numbers 7701 and 7705. The first trail to be built by Trail Trekkers; named for popular motorcycle hill climbs that happened here in 1920s.

**18. Julian Steps.** Two legs. Starts between 1520 and 1524 Madera Circle, downhill on steps to between 1614 and 1618 Julian Drive, downhill again between 7704 and 7708 Potrero; crosses to 7701 and 7705 Potrero Avenue to Hillside Natural Area North, connecting to Motorcycle Hill Trail.

*19. Madera-Julian Trail. Trail will wind along the top of Madera Open Space to connect with the Julian Steps.*

**20. Madera to Ridge Trail.** Starts between 1540 and 1560 Madera Circle. Stairs lead to the 8-acre Madera Open Space, which is being acquired by the city. Trail leads downhill to one arm of the Ridge Trail in the Hillside Natural Area South. Passable but needs significant improvement.

**21. Rifle Range Road Trail.** Trailhead and trail are both in Richmond, at the end of Rifle Range Road past Vista Heights Road, but as this is the closest El Cerrito has to a passable trail into Wildcat Canyon Regional Park – for now! -- here it is.

**22. Blake to Manor Path.** One-block walk, useful for neighbors, trailhead between 6703 and 6803 Blake to between 1728 and 1732 Manor Circle.

*23. Eastshore Trail. Large swath of Caltrans-owned green space between Potrero Avenue and Cutting Boulevard running alongside I-80. Potential trail, picnic grounds, even playing fields, in an under-served part of our community. Downhill from Interstate so it's quiet. It's all fenced off. A portion of the property, near Cutting, is in Richmond.*

**24. St. John's Way.** Path alongside St. John's School playground; probably owned by the school; connects Ohlone Greenway to Kearney Street. Starts between 11090 and 11100 San Pablo Avenue.

**25. Gayle Way.** Eight short paces connect two residential courts, Gayle Court and Noble Court. Together, Gayle Way and the two courts link Manila and Donal avenues. Find this route between 7123 and 7201 Manila, and between 1331 and 1332 Donal Avenue.

*26. Brewster Trail. From 1311 and 1319 Brewster Court downhill to 1334 Contra Costa Drive. City-owned right-of-way is blocked on the Brewster end by private fences. On Contra Costa the remains of treads can be seen, showing it has been used.*

#### **Hillside Natural Area South Trails:**

We list the main trails, skipping some “social trails” that are dangerous or environmentally destructive.

**27. Douglas Trail.** Trailhead at 1524 Douglas Drive, connects to Navellier Trail.

**28. Wildwood Creek Trail.** Short, fairly level trail along the partially channelized Wildwood Creek, trailhead from Navellier trail right above the church.

**29. Navellier Trail.** Trailhead is a paved road between 1432 and 1440 Navellier, turning into a steep dirt fire road soon. Connects to Ridge and Live Oak trails

**30. Ridge Trail.** Connects Regency Court and Madera Open Space to King Court. The main ridgeline trail in the Hillside Natural Area.

**31. Live Oak Trail.** From the Navellier Trail, runs south, roughly parallel to the Ridge

Trail above but through a beautiful live oak forest, connecting to Forest Brown Trail.

**32. Forest Brown Trail.** From its main, signed entrance on Schmidt Lane, climbs to the Ridge Trail. “Forest Brown Trail” is a historic name, recognizing former owner of Brown and Hutchinson Quarry which donated land for this open space.

**33. The Lower Trail.** Takes off from the Forest Brown Trail about 100 yards into the park and runs along the fence line of neighboring homes till it joins the Live Oak Trail. Portions pass through private property but have been in public use for decades.

**34. The Ken Smith Trail.** From the Ridge Trail just before it reaches King Court, the Ken Smith Trail takes you through a eucalyptus grove, also known as the Ken Smith Memorial Grove. Historic name recognizing city manager who oversaw El Cerrito’s park expansion in 1950s and early 1960s.

**35. The Duke and Earl Trail.** *A proposed path from near Earl Court alongside Duke, Baron and King courts to the Ken Smith Trail.*

**36. Betty Lane Path.** *City right-of-way runs from between 1141 and 1145 Contra Costa Avenue, downhill to King Drive between 1140 and 1146. Blocked by plantings but could be made passable; would need treads.*

**37. Shevlin to Arlington Park Path.** Attractive, three-tiered walkway, from 1102 Shevlin to 1024 and 1145 King, from 1021 and 1101 King to 1085 and 1103 Contra Costa, and between 1080 and 1108 Contra Costa and 1095 and 1099 Arlington Boulevard, connecting to Arlington Park and Arlington Park Trail. At the bottom, Shevlin Place, Shevlin Drive and King Court connect this trail to the Ridge Trail in the Hillside Natural Area. Earl Court connects to the Great Western Power Trail and the Duke and Earl Trail.

**38. Arlington Park Trail.** Runs along creek in beautiful park. Could connect to Camp Herms Boy Scout camp but gate blocks.

**39. Camp Herms Trails.** Privately owned by Boy Scouts, with entrance on Thors Bay Road. Maon trail runs in a loop through the upper reaches off the park, offering views into Wildcat Canyon and of the camp’s spectacular, former swimming pool, with WPA-built stone walls. One trail enters Camp Herms from Villa Nueva Drive.

**40. Ivy Court to Camp Herms entry.** Short stretch of trail accessing Camp Herms Trail from end of Ivy Court between 1150 and 1151.

**41. Great Western Power Trail.** Fire road and trail, with several parallel paths, winds way uphill from Navellier beneath the PG&E (former Great Western) power lines. It ends at Shevlin Drive. It could be extended to serve as a connector with Wildcat Canyon Regional Park. Recent sidewalk installation along Moeser way helps provide that connection; the trail could continue through the PG&E open space between Arlington and Terrace Drive. It could then join up with the Terrace to Wildcat Trail, once that trail becomes passable, to reach Wildcat Canyon Regional Park.

**42. Leneve Place.** This sidewalk connector provides grand views into Wildcat Canyon and serves as an important connection between a potential trail into Wildcat Canyon Regional Park (the Terrace-to-Wildcat Trail) and the Hillside Natural Area, using trails in Camp Herms, Arlington Park, and the Shevlin-to-Arlington Park Path.

**43. Cerrito Vista Park Trail.** Trail from Avis Drive, across from Prospect Sierra School, winds down into park through a grove of trees. Also, a stairway off Avis leads into park.

**44. Ohlone Greenway** popular asphalt bike and pedestrian route runs length of city along former rail tracks, now BART.

**45. Liberty to Ohlone Path.** Short dirt path to Greenway, starting across the street from 712-716 Liberty; treads would be useful. Both this and the Eureka Bike Ramp overlook important habitat for the Pacific chorus frog.

**46. Eureka Bike Ramp.** Asphalt bike ramp descends to the Ohlone Greenway from just east of 6602 Eureka, where Eureka intersects Liberty.

**47. El Cerritto Historic Cultural Trail,** also known as the sidewalk on San Pablo Avenue or the Lincoln Highway. The route takes walkers to 28 historic-culture pavers that tell the story of the city and to many historic sites.

**48. Fast Food Way.** Paved path leads past Kentucky Fried Chicken, 10175 San Pablo Avenue to the dead-end of Avila Way.

**49. Stockton-King Trail and Terrace Cutoff.** A well-used path with trailhead between 894 and 900 Shevlin. Trail emerges on King between numbers 929 and 933. *Halfway up hikers can take the Terrace Cutoff trail that leads to Terrace between 8231 and 8239. Trekkers is currently improving this path.*

**50. Terrace to Wildcat Regional Park Trail.** *Trail at very end of Terrace at 1089 Terrace Drive and 382 Kensington Road leads into Wildcat Canyon Regional Park. Barely passable and only in dry weather. City's only direct access to Wildcat. Owned by East Bay Regional Park District.*

**51. Terrace Creek View.** Between 8106 and 8118 Terrace, just above Shevlin, a broad grassy area between two side yard fences proceeds 100 yards for a view of a creek. Trail should be signed, improved, and provided with interpretive signage and a bench.

**52. Contra Costa to Arlington Trail.** A three-leg trail with only one segment passable. Leg one: Steps start from 836 Contra Costa and emerge between 737 and 763 Bay Tree Lane. At Bay Tree, the walk appears to be a private driveway but is not. *Leg Two: Runs*

*from between 840 and 744 Gelston, to Bates. Leg Three: The above trail continues on to Arlington, as a city owned trail, though it is impassable. From between 830 and 840 Bates it emerges between 829 and 845 Arlington.*

**53. Bay Tree Lane to Contra Costa Dr.** *Blocked by plantings and structures. The right of way goes along border with Kensington, starting at the end of the driveway at 810 Contra Costa Drive. It heads uphill and emerges at the end of Bay Tree lane, at number 731.*

**54. Huber Park Trails and Terrace Drive and Park Way to Huber.** **The Upper Huber Trail** runs north of the creek, a woodland trail. Two trails enter Huber from above, on Terrace Drive. One starts between 8037 and 8045 Terrace, the other between 7991 and 8001 Terrace.

**55. Fairmount-to-Rockway Path.** Pedestrian sidewalk goes one block from the commercial district on Fairmount, between 7445 and 7519 to residential Rockway, emerging between 7444 and 7454.

**56. Colusa Path.** Privately owned dirt trail runs down a hill in a lot that is owned by and used in part as parking for Sunset View cemetery. Trail runs from San Carlos Avenue to the intersection of Fairmount and Carmel avenues. Widely used for walking dogs.

**57. Harding Path.** *Runs one block along playground and school of Harding School and Harding Park Clubhouse, from Fairmount Avenue to Avenue C. It is unusable because it is gated. Owned by school district.*

**58. Behrens Way.** Tiny, well landscaped earthen barrier blocking Behrens where it crosses from El Cerrito to Albany.

**59. Cerrito Creek Trail.** Runs in two segments, one along the section that goes through El Cerrito Plaza, from Talbott Avenue to Kains Avenue. A walkway through El Cerrito Plaza connects to the Ohlone Greenway. Several crossings of the creek allow access to a trail along the Albany side. It starts up again across San Pablo Avenue where it runs past Creekside Park in El Cerrito and Albany Hill in Albany. Here the creek, restored over the years by Friends of Five Creeks, becomes one of the loveliest spots in the city. A parallel path runs along the creek on the Albany side. Trail Trekkers has a long-term goal of connecting the trails to the Bay Trail by advocating for a pedestrian bridge over I-80 and I-580. Wish us luck