

3.2 Gateway & Unifying Theme

The Trinity River plays a major role in the Hupa culture. The name "Trinity" had its origins in the discovery of Trinidad Bay (Puerto de la Trinidad) on Trinity Sunday back in 1775. Mistaken geography on the part of early trappers and miners assumed that the Trinity flowed into Trinidad Bay resulting in Pearson Reading naming the river Trinity (English equivalent of Trinidad).

According to the Hupa dictionary, the Hupa called the river "hun" which particularly refers to the Trinity River but also translates simply as "river." It may seem odd that the river did not receive a "proper" name, but the Hupa did not use elaborate names for the things closest and most important to them similar to the using the term "mom" rather than calling mothers by given names (*In Hoopa Territory: A guide to natural attractions and human history of the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation and Surrounding Areas*, Sabra Steinberg, Jeffrey Dunk, TallChief Comet, Hoopa Valley Tribe, 2000).

A Gateway is a physical or geometric landmark on a road or street which indicates a change in environment from a major road and higher speeds. Gateways may involve a combination of street narrowing, medians, signs, arches over the roadway, roundabouts, or other identifiable features (Burden, 2000).

Caltrans defines a "Gateway Monument" as any freestanding structure or sign, non-integral or non-required highway feature that will communicate the name of a city, county or township. A Gateway Monument may include the officially adopted seal or slogan of a local community.

A unifying them is often employed to create or enhance a "sense of place" or area that is special or different from its surroundings.



The town of Rio Dell welcomes visitors with this gateway sign.





The historic village of Me'dil-ding with traditional xhontas nestled among the oaks and grass along the river terrace.

Existing Conditions: As one enters the Hoopa Valley along Highway 96 from both the north and south directions, the dramatic views and vistas welcome the visitor and tell them that they are arriving at a new and special place. Beautiful entry signs further announce that the traveler is entering the home of the Hoopa Valley Tribe.



Beautiful entry signs welcome travelers to the Hoopa Valley.

As the Highway enters the Valley from the south, the traveler is presented with glimpses of the Hoopa culture: a vista point reveals a view of the historic village of *Me'dil-ding* with traditional xhontas nestled among the oaks and grass along the river terrace.

Further north, modern views are revealed in the form of the modular home enterprise and the wildland fire department. Passing Hoopa Valley High School and Elementary School, the presence of children and youth suggests a sizeable and active community that strongly supports education and athletics.

Crossing the Trinity River Bridge, the traveler arrives at the economic heart of the valley (downtown Hoopa) in a sudden and almost surprising manner: suddenly there are more cars, more people (some on horses and bicycles). The congestion of people and cars results in slower speeds as traffic moves through the downtown to their local destination or points further north. The experience is similar coming into downtown from the north.

"Where is downtown Hoopa?" and "Is this downtown Hoopa?" may be common questions in the travelers mind.

Lighting and landscaping are relatively absent from Pine Creek Road south of the Trinity River Bridge (where sidewalks provide connections to the elementary and high school and Tribal offices), across the Trinity River Bridge through downtown Hoopa to Hostler Field Road. The daytime view is of an environment dominated by gas-powered vehicles that is noisy, hot and dusty. At night, visibility for both pedestrian and driver is limited by lack of street lighting.

Discussion: Results from focus group interviews as well as public input during the community meeting suggested that a formal sense of arrival and welcome to the downtown area was needed. There was also consensus that a theme composed of cultural icons could unify the area in ways that each area or element could be perceived as part of a common whole. Through the focus groups, downtown business and property owners suggested that "beautification" could improve the business climate and property values by making the area more inviting. Others expressed the need for reinforcing a "sense of place" – that you have just arrived somewhere - that you are in a different place than the main highway and will need to "behave differently"; and, clearly define the town - the "beginning as well as the end."

Many design teams felt that vehicle traffic should be slowed before the Trinity River bridge when entering town from the south. The narrowing of the travel lane over the bridge appears to result in reduced vehicle speed to some extent, especially if pedestrians are on the bridge.

Community design tables proposed adding a gateway or entry way to the



Crossing the Trinity River Bridge and entering "downtown Hoopa!"



People and cars in downtown Hoopa.



downtown area in the preparation of their conceptual plans. Traditional basket designs or other cultural icons would present a powerful symbol of the Hoopa culture and serve to announce the arrival and to welcome people to the downtown area.

One group suggested statues of "golden salmon" as an entry gateway icon similar to the "golden bears" that adorn the bridge across the Klamath River along State Highway 101.



Highway 96 approaches the Trinity River Bridge northbound.



Northbound Highway 96 near the Trinity River Bridge and downtown Hoopa.

Chapter 3. Conceptual Plan Elements—Gateway & Unifying Theme
Traffic Calming & Safety Enhancement in the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation



Highway 96 northbound approach to the Trinity River Bridge and Downtown Hoopa with possible locations of Gateway features.

Landscaping

According to Caltrans, there is no specific list of plant materials required for state highways. Species that drop large or heavy fruit or that might create hazards for pedestrians or vehicles should be avoided.

Native species that could be considered include:

Fraxinus latifolia (F. oregona), Oregon Ash

Quercus agrifolia, Coast Live Oak

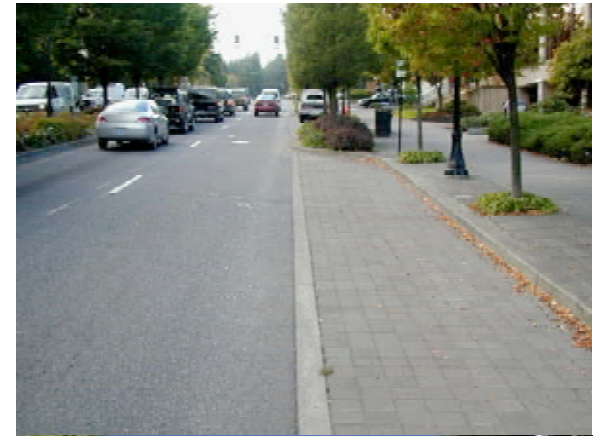
Quercus chrysolepis, Canyon Live Oak

There are others including many small and medium-sized tree species that somewhat reduce the potential for conflicts with adjacent land uses and the complexities of life-cycle maintenance. Installation of landscaping will require an encroachment permit from Caltrans and must comply with Chapter 500 (Landscaping) of the Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual.

Street Lights & Banner Poles

If proposed lighting meets the conditions for safety lighting as contained in sections 9-08.1, General, and 9-08.2, Warrants, of the Traffic Manual, then Caltrans may participate in intersection safety lighting.

Caltrans does not participate in "continuous" street lighting, neither maintenance nor energy costs. "Continuous" lighting may be installed by the local agency or utility company, or in this case, The Hoopa Valley Tribe.





Light poles can also liven up the day serving as banner poles.

If intersections don't meet the lighting warrants, or if "continuous" lighting is desired, then the Tribe can install their own lighting, as covered in section 9-09.6, Lighting by Local Agencies or Others. This is normally done by getting an encroachment permit from Caltrans. If the local agency owns and operates the lighting, then the primary issues that Caltrans might be concerned about is clear recovery zone, and possibly breakway-type poles required for high speed areas (over 40 mph) that are not in sidewalk or pedestrian areas.

Caltrans does not have a preference for decorative poles or lighting fixtures (including style, lighting fixtures and lamp size, pole height and spacing). These poles would not need engineered shop drawings or need to be approved by Caltrans.

Installation of street lights and permanent banner poles for stringing banners advertising special events across the highway will require an encroachment permit from Caltrans.

Underground Utilities

Underground utilities are preferred in most neighborhoods to maintain open street canopies and uncluttered spaces. Underground utilities can be expensive but funds may be obtained through cost savings from storm damage. Many European cities use paver stones for sidewalks and place utilities under walkways. When new connections or repairs are needed, pavers are easily lifted and staked.



Example light fixture. Attractiveness adds to slowing effect Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC

Street lighting should be human in scale and reflect local heritage.

Recommendations:

Gateways

The Conceptual Plan recommends entry gateways at the south end of Trinity River Bridge and near the Hostler Field Road that inform the traveler on Highway 96 that they have arrived in Hoopa. The gateway could include public art in the form of traditional basket designs or "golden salmon" (similar to the golden bears on the bridge crossing the Klamath) or other cultural elements. Local artists could sponsor a "competition" for designing an appropriate entryway icon.

Landscaping and signage could further frame the public art to reinforce the sense of arrival and welcome.



Traditional geometric pattern



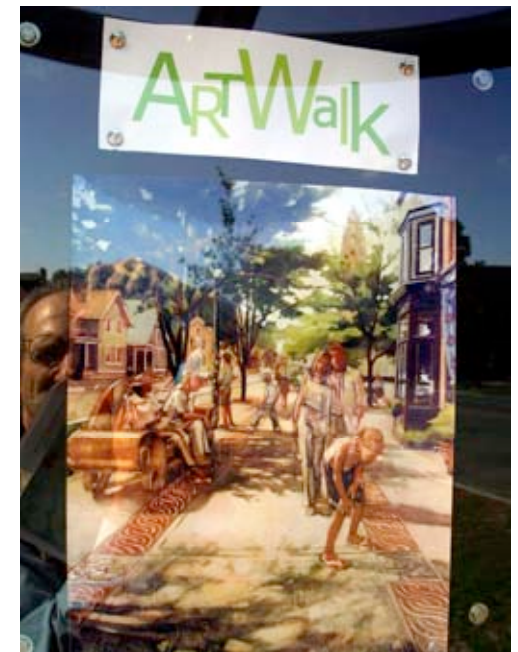
Trinity River Bridge—Before



Trinity River Bridge—After

Unifying Theme

Cultural motifs could be used in other ways to unify the downtown area. Ideas presented by design tables included traditional geometric patterns along edges of sidewalks, cultural features incorporated into signage, and public art placed in public spaces, murals, structures, and building facades.



Cultural motifs could be used to unify the downtown area.



Traditional design incorporated into baskets.

Landscaping with street trees and flowers within the grass planting strips and medians could further create a sense of place by unifying the downtown area. Similarly, pedestrian scale light poles could provide safety and security at night as well as serving as a unifying element.

Many examples of cultural motifs are already present in downtown Hoopa and elsewhere on the Reservation:



This decorative tree grate comes from Coquitlam, B.C., Canada



Traditional Building Styles & Materials.



Sign at Vista Point for traditional village site.



Sign for Tsewenaldin Inn



This mural depicts the creation story of the Hoopa people.



A sign and mural direct visitors to Tish Tang Campground.

The point to be made is that "You are in Hoopa Territory!" as distinct from Willow Creek, or Weaverville or some other community. This is home to the Hoopa People, a sovereign, self-sufficient and independent nation.