



Before: The High Trestle Trail has no direct connection to Madrid's downtown district.



Before: Since the High Trestle Trail used to be a railroad, some of the neighboring properties have exposed industrial equipment and storage yards. Screening these properties from the trail enhances the experience of trail-users.



After: By connecting the High Trestle Trail to Jensen Park, trail-users have the opportunity to enter into the heart of Madrid's downtown district. This benefits businesses by increasing pedestrian access downtown. The hillside will be graded to approximately a 3:1 slope with a 10-foot wide trail bench running from Jensen Park to near the South State Street Bridge. It is possible a small retaining wall, two to three feet high may be needed to absorb some grade and allow a safety bench on the downhill side of the trail. The wall would be located on the uphill side and could be constructed of dry stacked stone or segmental precast block.



After: Adding low shrubs and overstory trees provides screening of adjacent properties. The trees can also provide shade for the trail.

Due to the popularity and success of the High Trestle Trail, people are passing through Madrid more frequently than ever. The trail is an example of the successful "Rails to Trails" program which converts abandoned railroad corridors to multi-purpose trails. Often, the corridors pass near industrial sites the rail lines once served, which may be less than attractive to trail users. Screening these properties from the trails not only improves the view, but provides additional shade and an overall improved experience along the trail. The safest way to create this screening is by planting trees and low growing shrubs or grasses near the trail. The City of Madrid owns between 7 and 20 feet of land on either side of the trail, depending on the area. This allows for enough room to plant overstory trees for screening and shade, while also keeping the trees far enough away so that they do not cause safety hazards.

Despite the need for screening adjacent properties, maintaining visibility along the trail is paramount. Maintaining safe viewing distances and keeping vegetation back from the edges of the trail at least five feet is necessary to create a feeling of safety for users. Design plantings to fit the context of the area in terms of formal and informal layouts as well as promoting species diversity.

Aging railroad lines are a recreational boon for many communities in Iowa. As railways are no longer used for transporting freight, they can be turned into trails connecting communities many miles apart. The High Trestle Trail is one such "rails-to-trails" program success story.

This multi-use trail has vastly increased the pedestrian and cyclist traffic going through Madrid. Limited access to the trail from downtown and surrounding amenities such as Jensen Park, Edgewood Park, and the library are a missed opportunity for Madrid. Improving such connections may encourage visitors to stop and get ice cream or visit other downtown businesses or stop and enjoy a rest in a city park. A proposed trail connection from the High Trestle Trail to Jensen Park would alleviate this gap in access. Alternatively, the 3rd Street access could be improved and signage indicating directions to various amenities would clear up any confusion about this waypoint because in its current form, it can be perceived as entering onto private property.

# Madrid

## Multipurpose Trail Connections and Improvements

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Summer 2011