

— LUVERNE LOOP TRAIL —

MASTER PLAN

12.08.2015

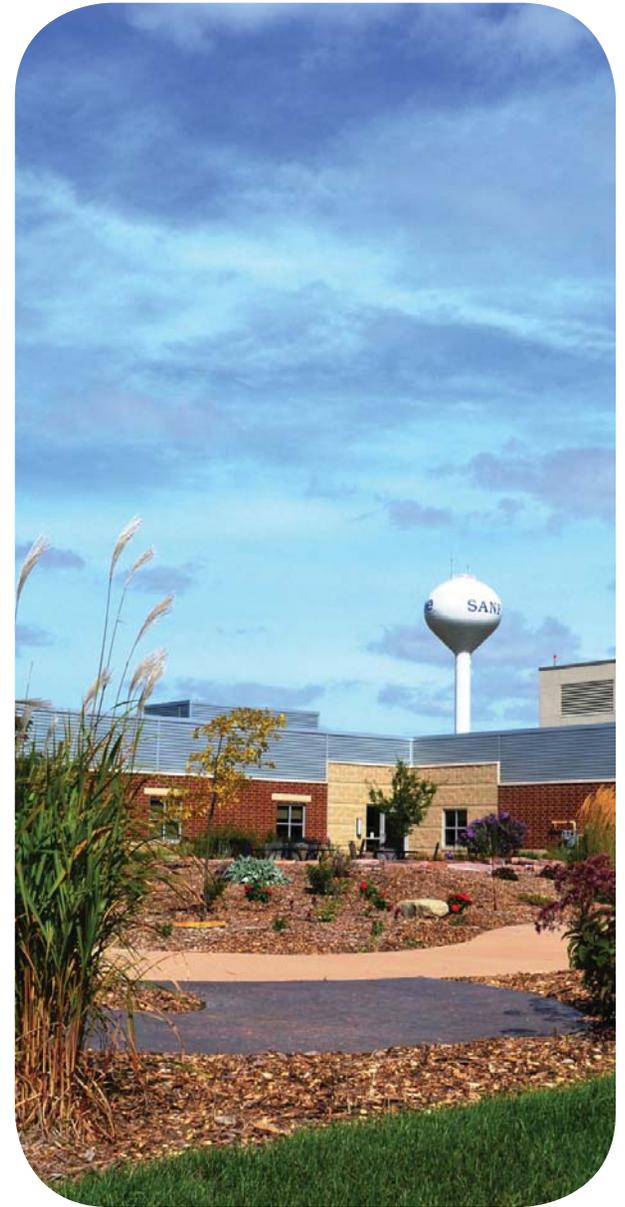
NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE
CITY OF LUVERNE, MINNESOTA

CONFLUENCE

“Trails consolidate and connect communities,
rather than encourage them to expand and fragment.”

David Burwell, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 1997.

Several Luverne Area Businesses have
expressed support in the development
of the Luverne Loop Plan.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This trail master plan could not have been completed without the intellectual, informational, strategic, operational, financial, creative, and timeless ongoing energy and support of the following people and groups.

This list is by no means exhaustive, as the master plan is a constantly evolving project with a rapidly expanding support network, but is meant to convey gratitude to the people, businesses, and entities that have shaped this plan into the form it is today.

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Rock County Ministerial Association
Rock County Historical Society
Prairie Rehabilitation
Papik Motors
Rock County Fair Association

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Loop
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MINNESOTA
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This Master Plan serves several purposes. It:

- Guides the development of the Luverne Loop trail;
- Guides the improvement of parks that will serve as trailheads and rest stops;
- Creates a prioritized action plan for trail development, management and promotion;
- Identifies strategies to connect the Luverne Loop to state and regional trails; and
- Meets master plan requirements for regional trail designation.

PURPOSE OF THE TRAIL

The purpose of the Luverne Loop Trail is to improve the quality of life for Luverne residents by increasing recreational opportunities, and to increase Luverne's appeal as a visitor destination.

BACKGROUND

This trail project grew out of the City's 2010 strategic visioning process and

a more recent grassroots effort to develop a trail along Poplar Creek that connects to the Blue Mounds Trail. A team of bicycle enthusiasts, city staff, County staff, the Chamber of Commerce, the school district, LIFT representatives and other citizens has been working to develop the trail and this plan since 2013.

VISION STATEMENT

The Luverne Loop Trail, by linking to the Blue Mounds Trail, provides residents and visitors of all ages with a safe, natural place for healthy recreation and transportation that connects areas of interest throughout Luverne and Rock County, and promotes community development.

GOALS

The nine goals for the Luverne Loop Trail project are:

1. Trail development: Develop a multi use, hard surfaced trail, the Luverne Loop, that circumnavigates the city and incorporates the city portion of the existing Blue Mounds Trail.
2. Trail Design: Design and develop the Luverne Loop Trail as a safe facility

for non-motorized recreation and transportation, to serve multiple uses for residents and visitors of all ages, and to meet the criteria and standards for trails of regional significance, as specified in the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails System Plan and the Strategic Plan, and in MN Statute 85.536, Subd. 6.

3. Trail Destination: Provide high quality, scenic and natural setting for the trail that offers a "destination" trail experience.

4. Trail Amenities: Provide trail users with a high quality, unique experience by developing a trailhead and trail waysides, improving existing parks along the trail, and by providing interpretation and wayfinding information.

5. Health Promotion: Encourage health and wellness among Luverne and Rock County residents by promoting trail use.

6. Trail Destination: Develop Luverne into a trail destination through trail promotion and trail related community development.

7. Economic Development: Use the trail as a catalyst for tourist-related economic development.

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8. Management, Maintenance and Monitoring: The City of Luverne will manage and maintain the Luverne Loop Trail and the portion of the Blue Mounds Trail that is within the City limits and forms part of the Luverne Loop for a minimum of 20 years from the trail's opening date.

9. Funding: Utilize a variety of funding sources, including local, regional, state, federal and private grants and donations to develop and manage the Luverne Loop Trail and the related strategies in this Plan.

PLANNING CONTEXT AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

If all planned trails in the region are built, Luverne will be a hub for a regional trail system connecting three states. The Luverne Loop will connect:

- Seven city parks, the school, the medical center, and multiple other public interest destinations in Luverne;
- Directly to and partially overlap with the 6-mile Blue Mounds Trail, which leads from Main Street to the heart of Blue Mounds State Park;
- To the planned 100+ mile Casey Jones State Trail,

- To a proposed regional trail from Sioux Falls to Jackson;
 - To Sioux Falls' trail and bikeway system via the regional trail above, and
 - To a proposed trail to natural areas on the Big Sioux River in Iowa.
- These trails are depicted in the Southwest Regional Trail Corridor Plan.

BENEFITS

The benefits of trails are many; some highlights are:

Health: Increased physical activity, better health

Recreation: For people of all ages and abilities, open all seasons, all daylight hours

Transportation: Low-cost, safer places for commuting or running errands

Economic: Efficient use of park & rec funding per user hour; tourism attractor

Quality of Life: Another way to "Love the Life!" in Luverne

Conservation: Connect people with the land; Provide passageways for wildlife

RESOURCES INVENTORY

In order to assess the need, feasibility, and best location for the trail, a

resources inventory was conducted. Park, Recreation & Tourism Resources: The City park system consists of 12 parks totaling 67 acres. Redbird Field, the planned Luverne Loop trailhead, is part of the park complex that also includes City and Riverside Parks, totaling over 50 acres.

Recreational facilities in or near Luverne include: the aquatics and fitness center, ice arena, Redbird Field, Joe Roberts Field, the school sports complex, Blue Mounds State Park, and Schoeneman County Park. Tourism infrastructure, historical features, and other places of interest are listed.

Natural Resources: Existing data on several natural resource characteristics of the trail corridor were gathered and assessed. The area in which it is most difficult to find a suitable trail corridor is the Phase 3 area east of the fairgrounds to the Rock River. This area contains several wetlands, a pond, designated conservation lands, and a large 100 year flood zone. The Rock River is also an "impaired water" and its corridor is of moderate biodiversity

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significance. This area needs additional analysis before determining the most feasible trail corridor.

Other major findings that will affect trail development include: wetlands & floodplain in Phase 2 area; floodplain near Creamery Pond; and a new State law that requires natural buffers along waterways. Rock Creek & tributaries are habitat for the endangered Topeka Shiner minnow, likely limiting the construction season.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PLANNING PROCESS

The community is overwhelmingly in support of this project. Adjacent landowner concerns have been addressed as much as possible through negotiations with either route changes or design alterations. Highlights are:

- Diverse trail committee with citizen members working on trail plan and projects since 2013
- 240+ signature petition in support of trail vision & goals--2013
- County Fair displays—2013-15
- City Council IDs Luverne Loop as

#1 priority; allocates \$220,000 per year to the project for 5-10 years until completion. Funding from sales tax exemption savings and an increase in Local Government Aid--2013.

- Project updates at City Council, County Commission & School Board meetings
- Meetings with property owners: several agreements have been reached
- Project displays on Main St. & 2014 LIFT Community Forum
- Presentations to several community groups
- Articles & Notices in Star Herald & Daily Globe

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

The 7.1 mile, asphalt Luverne Loop Trail, for non-motorized uses, will encircle the city, incorporating the part of the Blue Mounds Trail that is within the City limits (see maps in the Plan). Development is planned in 4+ phases:

Phase 1: Veterans Memorial Pond west across Highway 75/Kniss Ave., through Tonto Park, then west to the top of the existing berm west of the city. The

trail then will turn south, running west of the school ballfields to Dodge St. This segment is about 1.5 miles, and includes crossing signal at Highway 75. State and city funding is secured, landowner agreements and design is nearing completion, and construction is scheduled for 2016.

Phase 2: This 1.6 mile segment will run south of Dodge St. from Phase 1 to Hatting St., then turn east past the ice arena to Highway 75. Federal funding is programmed for 2017, with construction planned for 2017-18. City match \$ planned.

Phase 3: This segment will cross Highway 75, travel north along the highway, turn east at Hatting St., north on Freeman Ave., then head east to the Rock River, then north to the planned trailhead at Redbird Field. The exact alignment is not yet determined, and funding is not yet secured.

Phase 4+: The first part of this phase will extend north from the Redbird Field trailhead across Main St., with

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crossing improvements. It will then join the existing Blue Mound Trail. The existing trail will be widened to the current trail standard of 10 feet, asphalt or concrete surface. Construction is anticipated in 2020. No funding is secured. The second part of this phase will upgrade the existing sidewalk along 131st St between Blue Mound Ave. and Highway 75, and the sidewalk heading south on the east side of Highway 75 to join the Phase 1 trail. These will be widened to 10'. No funding is secured. Construction is anticipated in or beyond 2020.

TRAIL AMENITIES

Redbird Field: A trailhead is planned at Redbird Field. The concept plan offers a possible layout for improvements, which could include: a trailhead sign, an information kiosk, drinking fountain, bike rack, a small shade structure, benches, and a bike repair station. Other possible improvements include: landscaping, a picnic shelter, restroom expansion, additional parking, and a play structure. Construction is anticipated in 2017-18.

Creamery Pond: A concept plan

is included in the master plan to create a park at Creamery Pond. The design includes: an entrance sign, additional trees, landscaping, parking, playground, entrance plaza, shelter, boardwalk/fishing docks, seating, bike rack, and water fountain. Construction is anticipated in 2017-18. Other amenities: The trail will pass through Kolbert, Hawkinson, Tonto, and Veterans Memorial Parks, as well as the existing Blue Mounds Trail trailhead. Concept designs for possible improvements in these parks, or in new “wayside rest areas” along the trail may include trail signs, bike racks, shaded benches, maps, information kiosks, and landscaping.

TRAIL GRAPHIC STANDARDS

A trail logo has been designed to coordinate with the “Luverne—Love the Life!” brand. Graphics standards are in the Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation chapter includes objectives and detailed, prioritized strategies to meet all of the goals in the Plan. The responsible party and target

completion date are included for each. The trail development phasing is described above. Other important strategies include:

- Trail is to meet accessibility guidelines
- Trail routed through several natural areas
- Information kiosks, maps & directional signs to direct visitors to businesses/ points of interest
- Interpretive panels at trail rest stops about city history and nature
- A coordinated design style for trail-related amenities
- Trail events targeting locals and visitors, in partnership with Sanford Health, School District, Community Education and others
- Creative & targeted trail marketing through traditional & social media
- Cross promotion with other tourist attractions
- Consider other bicycle & pedestrian improvements in the city
- More bike racks around town
- Encouragement for trail related businesses
- Trail operation policies (trail open dawn to dusk, no motorized vehicles other than mobility devices, etc.)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Trail management and monitoring strategies
- Grant application timeline

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

This chapter includes charts of trail maintenance and trailhead maintenance tasks, and target levels of frequency.

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trails, when considered together, are regionally significant because these trails meet several of the criteria specified in state documents.

Criteria 1: A high quality, “destination” trail experience

Criteria 2: Well-located to serve regional population or tourist destination

Criteria 3: Enhances connectivity to regional destinations

Criteria 4: Fill a gap in recreational opportunity within a region

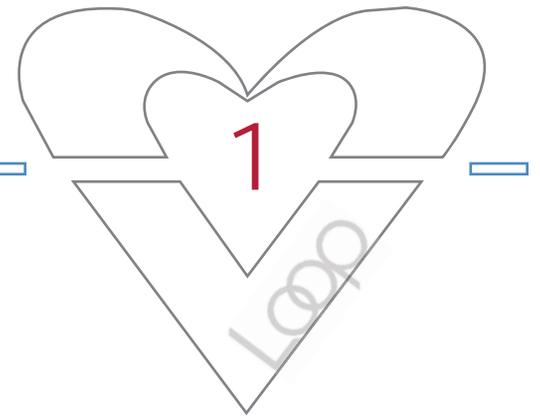
APPENDIX

Included are government and private funding source charts, and natural resource maps.



LUV
Love the...

CHAPTER
PURPOSE, VISION & GOALS



Vision Statement: The Luverne Loop Trail, by linking to the Blue Mounds Trail, provides residents and visitors of all ages with a safe, natural place for healthy recreation and transportation that connects areas of interest throughout Luverne and Rock County, and promotes community development.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This Master Plan is both a strategic plan and a comprehensive plan to guide not only the short-term development of the Luverne Loop Trail, but also the long-term management of the trail and related amenities, programs and promotions to achieve the City of Luverne's goal of becoming a trail tourism destination.

This Master Plan serves several purposes. It:

- Guides the development of the Luverne Loop Trail;
- Guides the improvement of the parks that will serve as trailheads (starting points) and trail waysides (rest stops), including a new trailhead at Redbird Field and a new park at Creamery Pond;
- Creates policies that direct City actions for the design and

construction, as well as for the management and promotion of the trail;

- Identifies strategies for coordination between the City and other government agencies, organizations and individuals to connect the Luverne Loop to regional and state trails, and to promote trail use and trail tourism; and
- Meets the master plan requirements for a trail to be designated as a regional trail by the Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails Commission, as described in its [Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan](#).

This plan has been created for the purpose of fostering coordination between public and private groups and individuals involved in the creation and maintenance of a network of non-motorized trails that connect key

resources and destinations in Luverne and the surrounding area.

This plan reflects input from residents and partnering agencies. Implementation of the Plan will require cooperation from citizens, government, and both for-profit and non-profit organizations.

Additionally, The Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) requires a master plan to be completed in order to determine if a given trail meets the basic requirements for being designated as regionally significant.



PURPOSE OF THE LUVERNE LOOP TRAIL

The people who call Luverne home have banded together in many great civic endeavors to maintain and enhance the feeling of community.

The community visioning and planning efforts in Luverne have identified the need for a trail system within the City of Luverne that connects points of interest.

While Luverne is located in an area with a wealth of recreational opportunities, it was identified that the community has not been able to leverage its location and assets as much as might be possible.

Development of that trail system - the Luverne Loop - along with clear connections to downtown, parks, and various other points of interest, and other marketing efforts would create public awareness and interest, as well as recreational opportunities, in

Luverne's environmental resources and assets.

Perhaps just as important as creating recreational opportunities with the completion of the trail loop is the chance to develop an economic attraction for the community of Luverne—bringing more visitors to existing businesses and providing opportunities for more and diverse businesses to locate and thrive within and around the community.

The trail will also provide opportunities to connect to other existing and future trail systems, and will give citizens and visitors the opportunity to explore new routes throughout the region.

This plan is viewed as an important rural economic development project which will improve the quality of life, increase recreational infrastructure, and increase Luverne's appeal as

a visitor destination. It is the result of careful analysis of the needs of trail users within the City of Luverne and Rock County and coordination with adjacent communities' plans and those of the region.

The creation of the The Luverne Loop will help to elevate the City of Luverne into a premier destination in southwest Minnesota.

BACKGROUND

The Luverne Loop trail project was initiated primarily as a result of a community-led revitalization effort. In 2010, over 170 citizens participated in a strategic visioning process, which identified outdoor recreation activities as a key to improving the quality of life and business in the city of Luverne.

Southwest Minnesota and Luverne, in particular, benefit from Blue Mounds State Park as a tourism destination and local recreation asset, and the community desires to leverage its location as much as possible to generate additional economic development opportunities through outdoor recreation and tourism.

Preston VerMeer led the initiative with a vision to develop a trail along Poplar Creek that connects to the Blue Mounds Trail. After a significant amount of research and planning, he shared his vision with City staff. The City

of Luverne applied to the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and received expert assistance in the planning and development of the trail.

In conjunction with trail development, The Strategic Vision for Luverne was prepared by LHB, Inc. in order for the community to have a core understanding of its future so that energy and resources can be directed in the most effective way possible.

The document is intended to summarize Luverne's vision, objectives, initiatives, and paths to implementation for community revitalization.

In order to fulfill this vision, five objectives were created. The Luverne Loop trail and this Master Plan furthers the City's efforts in achieving Objectives 1, 2 and 4. They are:

Objective 1: Improve aesthetics in order to appear more family-friendly, authentic, outdoorsy, and creative

Objective 2: Create vitality in order to capitalize on being family-friendly, enterprising, educated, outdoorsy, and creative

Objective 4: Enhance marketing in order to tell others that Luverne is family-friendly, enterprising, authentic, educated, outdoorsy, and creative.

To increase vitality, the Strategic Vision document identifies the strategy to increase outdoor recreation opportunities within a 3 - 5 year time frame.

Although the Strategic Vision suggests that a canoe and kayak route along the Rock River should be the City's first

effort in this area, further analysis has revealed strong public support for a land-based trail. Both the Luverne Loop project and the paddling route are the primary priorities of outdoor recreation improvements.

Because this Master Plan also addresses trail-related amenities such as wayfinding signs, interpretive signs, landscaping and other improvements to the trail corridor as well as existing parks that will serve as trailheads and trail waysides, the Luverne Loop will also help the City achieve Objective 1, improving aesthetics.

Marketing and promotion of the Luverne Loop is addressed in this Master Plan, so the trail will further Luverne's efforts to achieve Objective 4, to enhance marketing. The trail-related marketing efforts identified in this plan will especially enhance Luverne's image as "family friendly"

and "outdoorsy." A strategy identified in the Strategic Vision for Objective 4 is to "develop a consistent identity" or brand for Luverne. This Master Plan creates a Luverne Loop logo consistent with and complementary to the City's branding efforts.

THE LUVERNE LOOP TRAIL: VISION STATEMENT

VISION STATEMENT:

'The Luverne Loop Trail, by linking to the Blue Mounds Trail, provides residents and visitors of all ages with a safe, natural place for healthy recreation and transportation that connects areas of interest throughout Luverne and Rock County, and promotes community development.'



Image credit: Lori Sorenson, Rock County Star Herald



THE LUVERNE LOOP TRAIL: GOALS

The nine goals for the Luverne Loop Master Plan involve three key components: trail development, trail design, and trail amenities. For the master plan to successfully thrive, all components must work in cohesion.

See Chapter 9 , Implementation Plan, for a more detailed breakdown of specific trail master plan goals and strategies.

The nine goals are as follows:

GOAL ONE: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Develop a multi-use, hard-surfaced trail, the Luverne Loop, that circumnavigates the city and incorporates the city portion of the existing Blue Mound Trail.

GOAL TWO: TRAIL DESIGN

Design and develop the Luverne Loop Trail as a safe facility for non-motorized recreation and transportation, to serve multiple uses for residents and visitors of all ages, and to meet the criteria and standards for trails of regional significance, as specified in

the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails System Plan and the Strategic Plan, and in MN Statute 85.536, Subd. 6.

GOAL THREE: TRAIL DESTINATION

Provide a high quality, scenic and natural setting for the trail that offers a “destination” trail experience.

GOAL FOUR: TRAIL AMENITIES

Provide trail users with a high quality, unique experience by developing a trailhead and trail waysides, improving existing parks along the trail, and by providing interpretation and wayfinding information.

GOAL FIVE: HEALTH PROMOTION

Encourage health and wellness among Luverne and Rock County residents by promoting trail use.

GOAL SIX: TRAIL DESTINATION

Develop Luverne into a trail destination through trail promotion and trail-related community development.

GOAL SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Use the trail as a catalyst for tourist-related economic development.

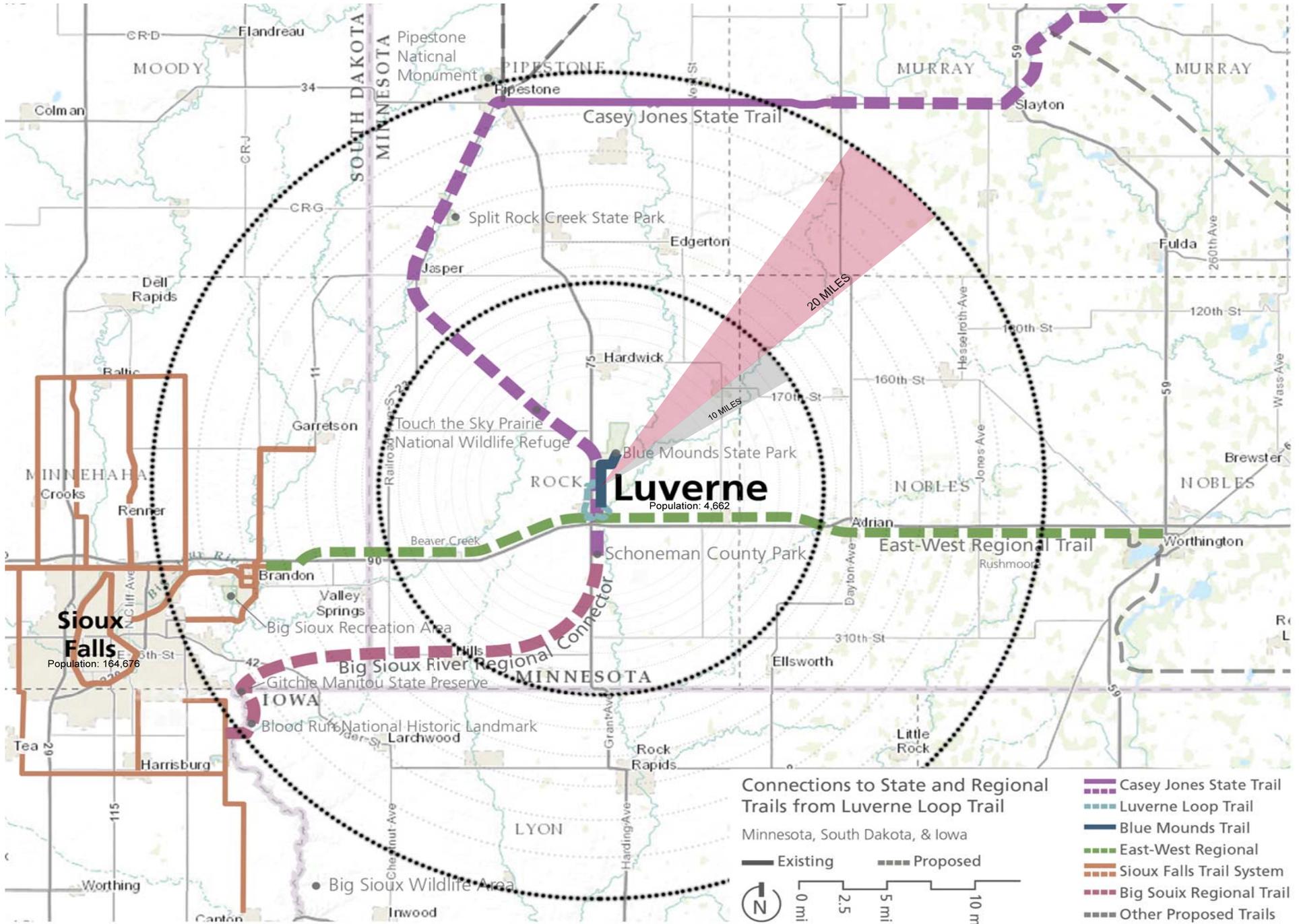
GOAL EIGHT: MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND MONITORING

The City of Luverne will manage and maintain the Luverne Loop Trail and the portion of the Blue Mounds Trail that is within the City limits and forms part of the Luverne Loop for a minimum of twenty years from the trail’s opening date.

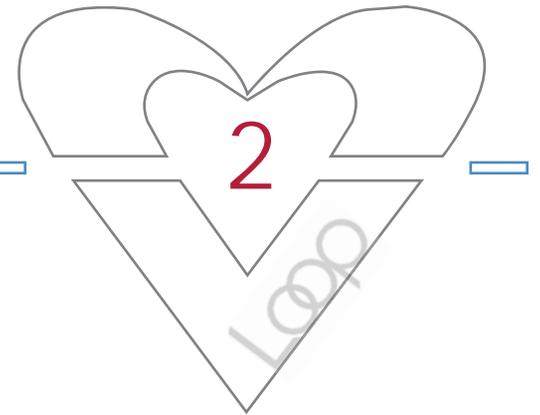
GOAL NINE: FUNDING

Utilize a variety of funding sources, including local, regional, state, federal and private grants and donations to develop and manage the Luverne Loop Trail and the related strategies in this Plan.

LUVERNE'S VISION AS A REGIONAL TRAIL HUB



CHAPTER
PLANNING CONTEXT &
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



“A connected system of parks and parkways is manifestly far more complete and useful than a series of isolated parks.” Report to the Portland Park Board, 1903. Frederick Law Olmstead.

STATE AND REGIONAL PARK AND TRAIL PLANNING IN MINNESOTA

Prior to the development of a major new capital improvement project like the Luverne Loop Trail, it is important to consider the goals, policies and projects identified in previous local and regional official documents.

Planned state and regional trails that will pass through or near Luverne will influence the location, surfacing, demand, and trail user types for the Luverne Loop Trail. Intersections between the regional and state trails and the Luverne Loop should be strategically located to maximize the tourism benefit for Luverne businesses, while considering safety, traffic, and other impacts for city residents. Public expenditures can be reduced by taking advantage of existing public land and park facilities for trail corridors and trailheads.

As depicted on the map on p.9, Luverne is at the crossroads of several planned or proposed regional and state trails. Luverne is strategically

located to become a regional trail hub for trails connecting Minnesota, Iowa and South Dakota. Luverne is within 30 miles of Pipestone, the terminus of the existing Casey Jones State Trail; and of Worthington, a major regional employment and commercial center of 11,000. Perhaps most importantly, Luverne is also within 30 miles of Sioux Falls, a rapidly growing metropolitan area of over 230,000.

One important connector trail already exists: the 6-mile Blue Mounds Trail, which runs from the heart of Luverne to Blue Mounds State Park. Other trails proposed in the Luverne area are:

- the Casey Jones State Trail
- the Luverne—Sioux Falls Trail
- the Big Sioux River Regional Connector, and
- the East—West Regional Trail

All of these trails are included in the Southwest Regional Trail Corridor Plan, described on the following pages. This

chapter also takes a closer look at the proposed regional trails, what planning documents say about them, and how they relate to the Luverne Loop.



Children hiking the Lower Cliffline Trail at Blue Mound State Park in Summer 2015.

STATE AND REGIONAL PARK AND TRAIL PLANNING IN MINNESOTA

The landscape of parks and trails planning and funding has changed dramatically since the legacy amendment to the State Constitution was passed by public referendum in 2008. The legacy amendment established a new 3/8th cent sales tax to generate funding for five categories of projects related to the environment and the arts, including parks and trails.

Since then, a number of efforts have been underway to more comprehensively plan for the future system of state and regional parks and trails in Minnesota. The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Coalition was formed in 2010, and adopted their Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan in 2013. The Coalition continues mainly as an advocacy and educational organization for member local governments. Luverne would benefit from joining and coordinating with this Coalition.

In the omnibus legacy bill of 2013 the State Legislature created the

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission “to undertake system planning” and provide grant recommendations for Legacy funding outside the 7-County metro area “for parks and trails of regional significance.” Minnesota Statute 85.536 offers a broad definition of regional significance, charges the commission with determining a merit-based evaluation process, and establishes six regional parks and trails districts in greater Minnesota to assist with evaluation. The Commission is comprised of 13 appointed members, two from each district and one at-large. Luverne and Rock County lie within District 5. The Commission adopted their Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan, based on the Coalition’s plan, in June 2014, and adopted their first annual Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails System Plan and Work Plan in December 2014.

The Strategic Plan outlines the criteria that parks and trails must meet to be deemed of “regional significance”

and thus become eligible for Legacy funding, as well as receive some marketing benefits. To be considered, a local government must apply to the Coalition through their annual process, new in 2015. The Strategic Plan requires, among other criteria, that a park or trail must have an adopted master plan that includes several specific elements before it can be considered.

Luverne submitted an application for regional significance in 2015 for the Luverne Loop/Blue Mound Trail, and was given a “moderate” rating. Trails in the “high” category are eligible to submit applications for funding for specific projects. Cities may resubmit their applications for regional significance in future years, and Luverne should do so. Luverne should continue to monitor the activities of the Commission to ensure that parks and trails in the area are part of state and regional park and trail planning.

BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL AND STATE PARK

BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL

The existing 6-mile, paved Blue Mounds Trail connects downtown Luverne to Blue Mounds State Park. Its southern terminus is a small trailhead at the northeast corner of Main St. and Blue Mound Ave, across Main St. from Redbird Field. The trail extends north along the east side of Blue Mound Ave. beyond the City limits to County Highway 8, then crosses the highway to the southern boundary of Blue Mounds State Park. North of Co. Hwy. 8, the trail extends west ¼ mile to the entrance road to the Park's visitor center, and east and north past the Sioux quartzite cliffs to a parking lot in the heart of the park. From there it connects to internal park trails and roads to reach the campground and other park features.

The Blue Mounds Trail was constructed as a joint project between the City and Rock County, in partnership with the State Park. The southern 1 ½ miles are managed by the City, and the remaining 4 ½ by the County. The City's segment of the Blue Mounds Trail, between Main St. and 131st St.,

will become part of the Luverne Loop Trail.

Most of the City segment of the trail is 6' wide concrete, which then changes to 8' feet wide asphalt near the northern edge of the City. Six feet is not an adequate width for a multi-use paved trail. Current standard multi-use trail width is 10 feet. The City's trail segment is proposed to be widened (see p.73). As trail traffic volumes increase in the future, or at least when the existing County segment of the trail is in need of rehabilitation, that segment should be widened to 10 feet.

The existing Blue Mounds trailhead consists of a sign with a map, picnic table, bench, trash can, and landscaping, but no parking. The area is not large enough to add on-site parking. Since Redbird Field has ample parking as well as public restrooms and a water fountain, the trailhead for the Blue Mounds Trail and the new Luverne Loop Trail will be developed at Redbird Field (see p.59).



BLUE MOUNDS STATE PARK

Luverne is the gateway community for Blue Mounds State Park, an existing park 4 miles north of the City of Luverne. The State Park is one of the top 10 tourist attractions in all of southern Minnesota, by number of visitors. The site is home to one of the last remaining remnants of tallgrass prairie, and is also the site of quartzite

BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL AND STATE PARK

stone outcroppings and a striking 1-1/2 mile long, 90 feet tall quartzite cliff, visible from the Blue Mounds Trail and the northern part of the planned Luverne Loop. The park is also home to a genetically pure bison herd, and holds significance to the Plains Indians.

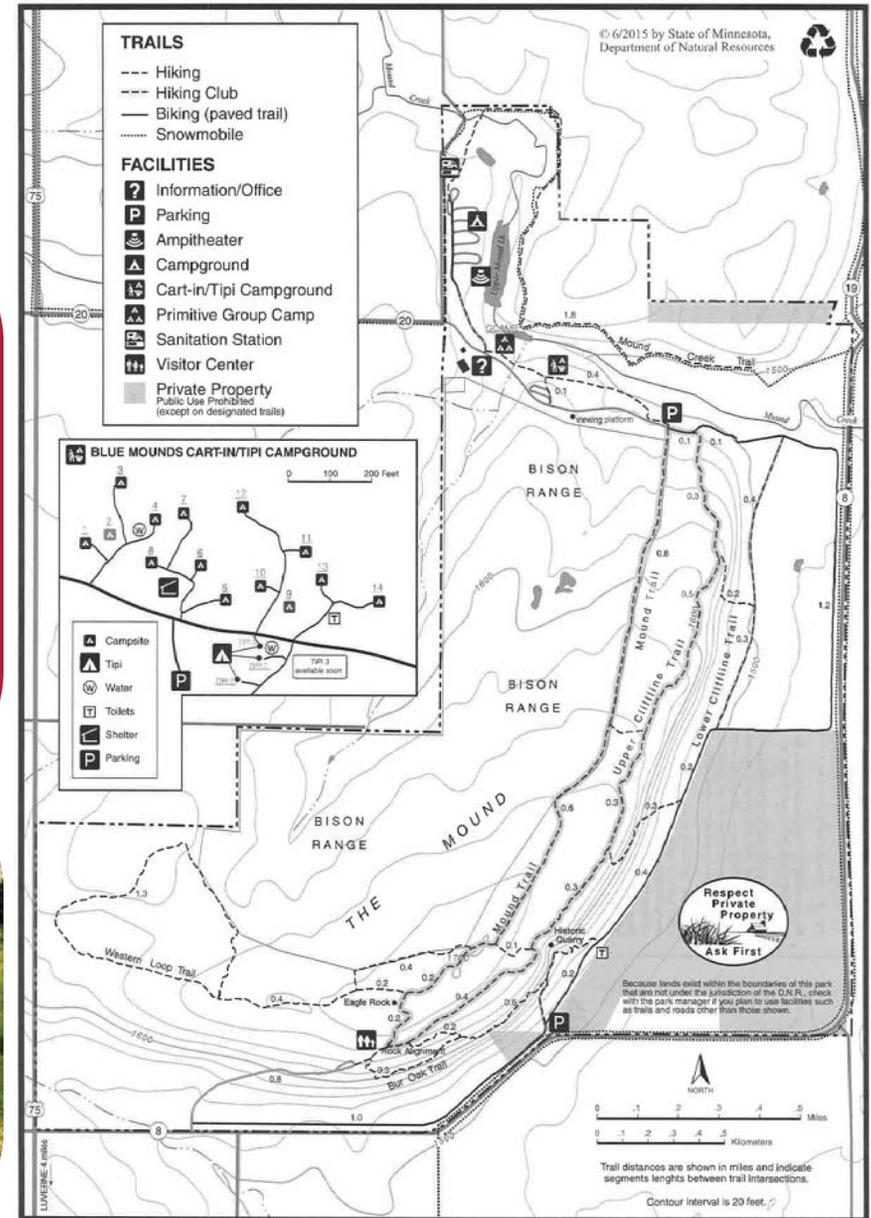
The Luverne Loop Trail will connect more of the city's amenities, including local parks, the hotels and restaurants along Highway 75, the school campus, and neighborhoods to the State Park and make the State Park more accessible for city residents. The completion of the Luverne Loop will provide an opportunity to increase both tourism and Park visitation by local residents through intensified City/ Chamber/State Park collaboration on marketing and joint events.

STATE PARK FEATURES

- 71 Semi-Modern Campsites
- 40 Sites with Electrical Hookups
- 14 Cart-In Campsites
- Primitive Group Camp
- 2 Tipis
- Travel Trailer Sanitary Dump Station
- Lake Fishing and Canoeing
- 15 Miles of Hiking Trails
- 4.5 Miles of Hiking Club Trail
- 2 Miles of Snowmobile Trails
- 2.8 Miles of Bike Trails
- Rock Climbing on the 1.5 Miles of Quartzite Cliffline



Image of MN DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr (from left), Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith, and Gary Sjoquist with Quality Bike Parts on the 2015 DNR Commissioner's Prairie Pedal Bicycle Tour. The Blue Mounds Cliffline is in the background.



SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL CORRIDOR PLAN

The vision for trails in the 9-county Southwest Minnesota region is to establish a network of state, regional and local trails for multiple users. The Southwest Regional Development Commission (SWRDC) has been working with communities in the development of regional trail corridor plans since 1999, as an opportunity to enhance tourism and economic development in Southwest Minnesota.

The first Southwest Regional Trail Corridor Plan was developed by SWRDC staff and a committee of representatives from each of the counties in the region, and was adopted by the Commission in 2000. It has been updated twice, in 2008 and 2014.

The 2014 Plan Update examines alternative non-motorized transportation modes; recommends actions to improve access and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians; and includes a regional prioritization of projects. The potential corridors for the regional and state trails are depicted on the Plan's map on p.16.

On the map, the Casey Jones State Trail, the East-West Regional Trail, the Luverne—Sioux Falls Trail and the Big Sioux River Regional Connector Trail (labeled Gitchie Manitou/Blood Run on the map) all pass through Luverne.

In the project ranking, the Casey Jones State Trail ranks highly. The Luverne Loop Phase 3 ranks near the bottom. The East—West, Luverne—Sioux Falls and Big Sioux River Regional Connector Trail have not been ranked. Ranking highly in the Regional Plan should increase a project's chances of receiving grant funds.

EAST-WEST REGIONAL TRAIL

A proposed trail connecting the planned 70-mile Des Moines River Valley State Trail in Jackson, MN to Luverne, currently envisioned as paralleling Interstate-90 to its south.

- Timeline: 2025 or after
- Approx. 60 miles
- Would pass through Worthington, a regional population and employment center of 11,000, 30 miles from Luverne
- Would connect to the Casey Jones Trail in Luverne, likely south of I-90
- Would likely connect to the Luverne Loop Trail via the Casey Jones Trail

PROPOSED REGIONAL TRAILS

LUVERNE TO SIOUX FALLS

A proposed trail connecting Luverne to the Sioux Falls metro area, pop. 230,000. See pages 17-18 for more information.

- Timeline: 2025 or after
- Approx. 25 miles (13 miles in MN)
- Would connect to Sioux Falls' 20 miles of existing bike trails and more planned
- Would increase bicycle tourism potential to Luverne from Sioux Falls for day or overnight trips
- Would likely connect directly to the Luverne Loop Trail

BIG SIOUX RIVER REGIONAL CONNECTOR

A proposed aggregate surfaced trail from Luverne south through the City of Hills in Rock County and Larchwood, IA to several public recreational lands along the Big Sioux River on the Iowa/South Dakota border: Gitchie Manitou (Iowa) State Preserve, Blood Run National Historic Landmark (SD & IA), and the 844 acre Big Sioux Wildlife Area (SD & IA).

- Timeline: 2025 or after
- Approx. 30 miles
- Gitchie Manitou is noted for its ancient Native American burial mounds and Sioux Quartzite outcroppings.
- Could connect to the Sioux Falls trail system planned for the west side of the Big Sioux River
- Would connect to the Casey Jones Trail in Luverne, likely south of I-90
- Would likely connect to the Luverne Loop Trail via the Casey Jones Trail

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN

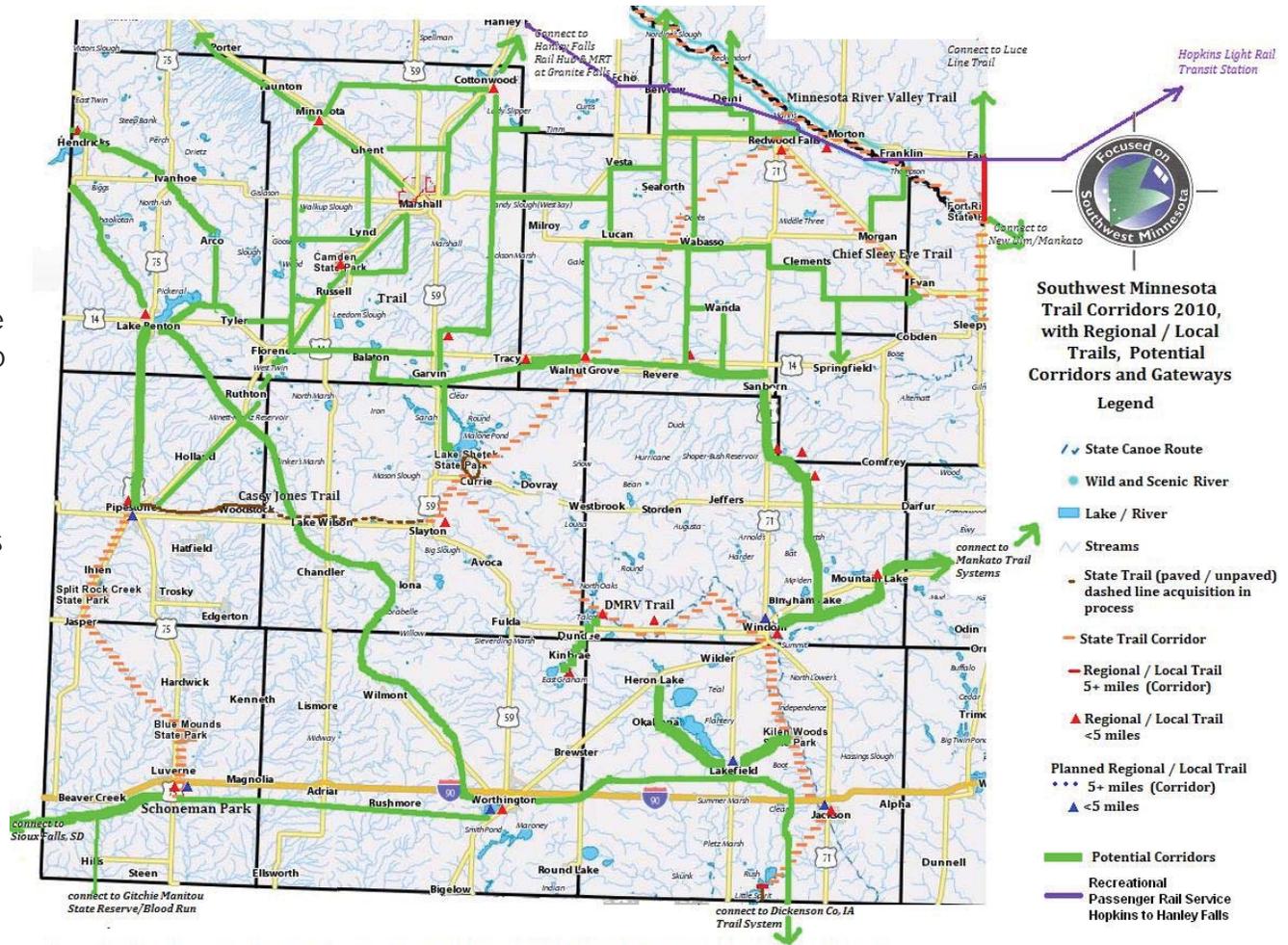
However, being listed and ranked as a “regional trail” in this 9-county Trail Corridor Plan does not guarantee that a trail will be designated a “trail of regional significance” by the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC), which allocates the State’s Park and Trail Legacy funding. As the process currently stands in 2015, a local government will have to apply to the GMRPTC for that designation.

It is important that this Regional Plan reflects the current priorities for Luverne and Rock County, and that it is kept up to date.

The City and County should continue to take part in the Regional Plan Updates. In addition, the Plan includes a method for adding trails to the plan, or changing a project’s ranking based on changed conditions in between updates.

As the planning for Phase 3 of the Luverne Loop progresses, the City and County should work together to submit a change request to the SWRDC to recalculate the priority ranking for

the project. As planning progresses on other trails through Luverne, those projects should be added to the Regional Plan and the regional ranking.



SIoux FALLS MPO BICYCLE PLAN

The Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Bicycle Plan (December 2009) refines the recommendations of the 2005 Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Area's Long-Range Transportation Plan, and provides the goals, objectives and guidelines for the bicycle trails, improvements, facilities and programs associated with bicycle transportation in Sioux Falls.

Sioux Falls has approximately 20 miles of recreational bicycle trails which loop throughout the city following the Big Sioux River and Skunk Creek Greenway.

The City's namesake Falls Park is located along the trail, as well as the Farmer's Market and several City Parks and Recreational Facilities. Bike routes throughout the city have also been identified and designated along vehicular streets.

As depicted on the Sioux Falls Bicycle Trail Master Plan map on p. 18, the

MPO expects to extend its trail system with a trail along the Big Sioux River to the northern end of the Big Sioux Recreation Area near the northwest corner of the city of Brandon within the 2019 – 2024 time frame. Another trail, along 264th St./E. Maple St., is expected to reach the southern end of the Recreation Area near the southwest corner of Brandon within the same time frame.

In or after 2024, the system is expected to be extended through Brandon to the Brandon and Hidden Valley Golf Courses along Split Rock Creek, on the east side of the city. The Luverne—Sioux Falls Regional Trail described on p.15 would connect to the Sioux Falls trail system at this point, providing a connection to the city of Luverne, the Luverne Loop Trail, and the other regional and state trails described in this chapter.

Linking Luverne to Sioux Falls will be an important connection; the 60-mile round trip from the heart of Sioux Falls

is within day-trip range for advanced recreational bicyclists, and within overnight range for more moderate recreational bicyclists.

MPO Bicycle Trails
September 3, 2009

Bike Trail

- Existing Sioux Falls Trail
- Future
- Other Municipality
- Rail with Trails
- Future Sidepath

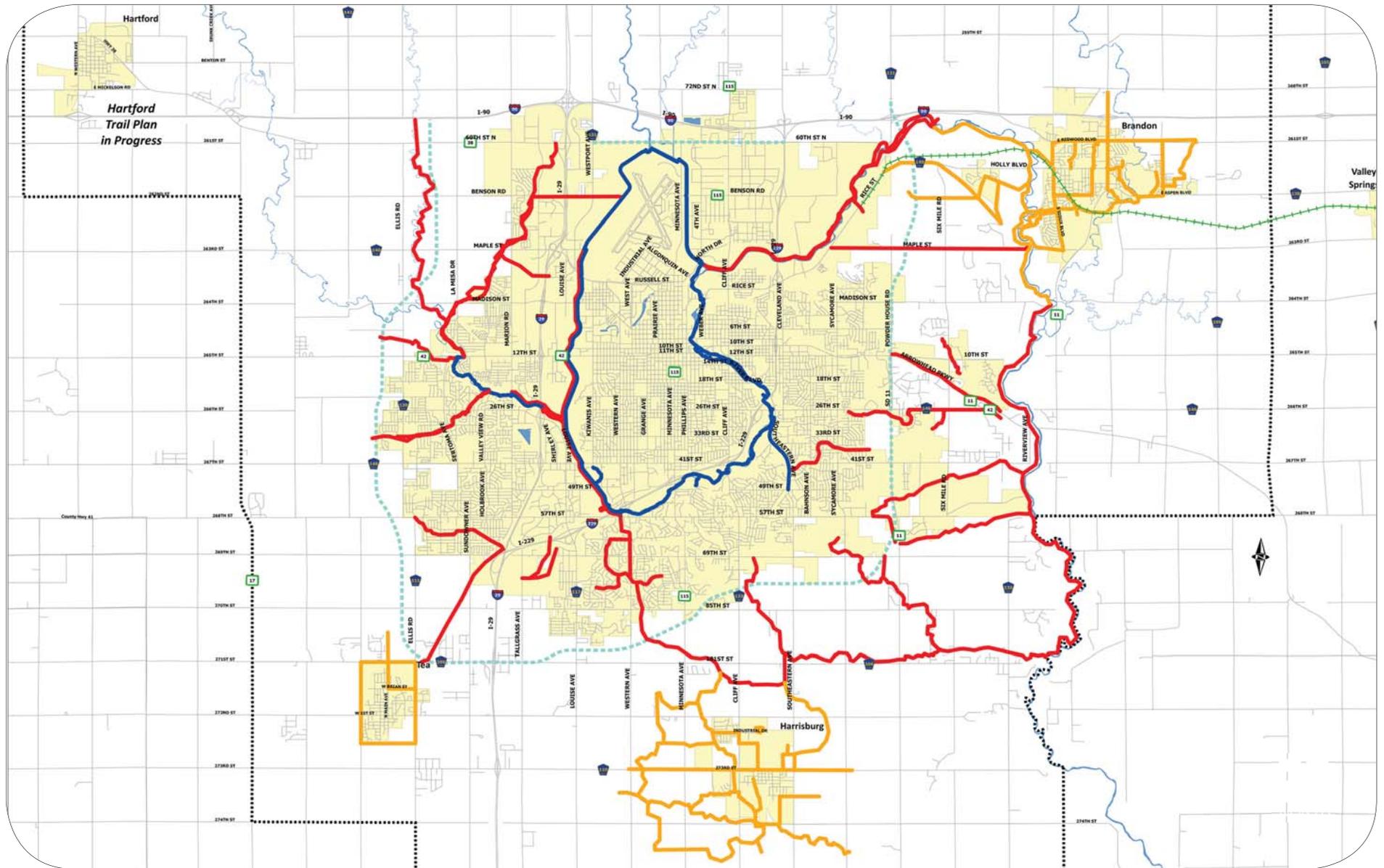
Current MPO Boundary

Municipal Boundary

Highway Type

- Federal
- County
- State

SHIOW FALLS BICYCLE TRAIL MASTER PLAN



CASEY JONES STATE TRAIL

Luverne and Schoeneman County Park will be the southern terminus of the planned 100-mile Casey Jones State Trail.

Once complete, it will connect Luverne to three state parks, a national monument, two county parks, a National Wildlife Refuge, and ten communities in four Southwest Minnesota counties before connecting to the planned Minnesota Valley State Trail in Redwood Falls. State Trail plans are coordinated and approved by DNR with local community input. State trails are developed and managed by MN DNR staff.

The Casey Jones Trail was the first State Trail to be authorized in the late 1960's by the Minnesota Legislature, but only three trail segments are developed as of this writing: 13 miles near Pipestone, 1.5 miles in near Lake Wilson, and a 6 mile loop at Lake Shetek State Park (see map on page 20).

Three issues affect the development of this segment that the City of Luverne can influence:

1. The Casey Jones State Trail Master Plan was completed in 2005, but does not include the Pipestone to Luverne segment, which was added later, as was the segment from Walnut Grove to Redwood Falls.

Because DNR cannot construct trail segments for which there is no Master Plan, the City of Luverne should advocate for an update to the Master Plan to include the missing segments.

2. In many cases, local communities have been responsible for planning the state trail segments within their city limits. Text boxes on the following page describe the City's current intentions for the State Trail as it passes through Luverne.

3. Hundreds of miles of State Trails are authorized but not developed in Minnesota, and the process for securing state funding and DNR staff time is highly competitive.

Trails with strong community support and activism get built. This trail needs more involvement from the Luverne area to advocate for the development of this segment.

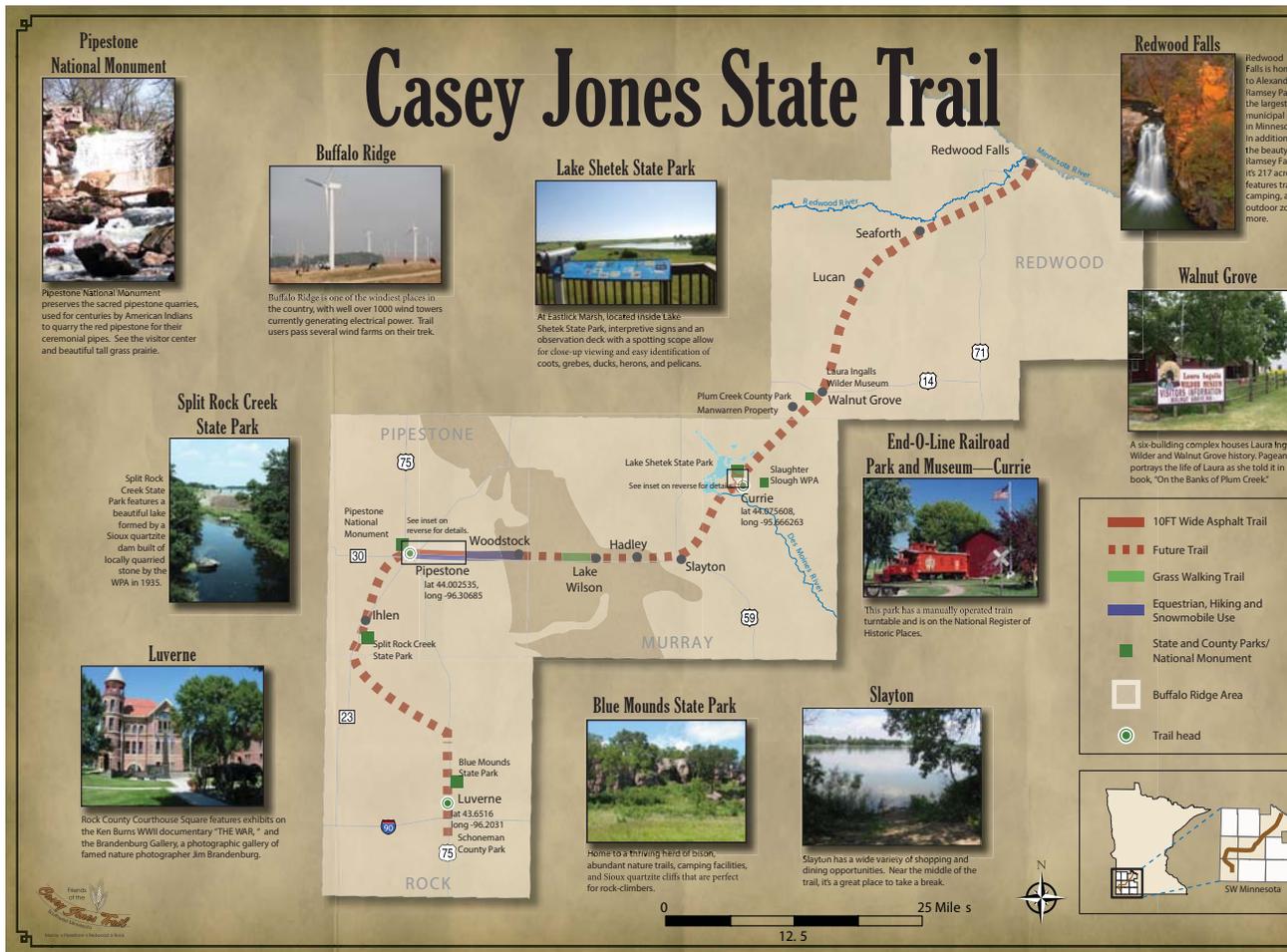
NATURAL SURFACE CASEY JONES TRAIL

- The state legislation calls for a second treadway, a natural surface one for equestrians and snowmobilers.
- Because the City of Luverne does not allow snowmobiles within the city limits and horse trail demand is low within the city, the City prefers that the natural surface state trail bypass the city, connecting to Schoeneman Park via a trail outside the city limits.

CASEY JONES STATE TRAIL THROUGH THE CITY OF LUVERNE - PAVED TRAIL

- The City intends that the city portion of the existing Blue Mounds Trail, from 131st St. south along Blue Mound Ave. to Main St. be designated as the Casey Jones Trail. Phase 4 of the Luverne Loop project will widen this segment (see page 55-56).
- South from Main St., the Luverne Loop Phase 3, past the planned trailhead at Redbird Field to Highway 75 should be designated as the Casey Jones Trail (see page 55).
- This route connects directly to the Main St. and I-90/Highway 75 commercial areas to encourage tourist spending.

CASEY JONES STATE TRAIL



LUVERNE TO SCHOENEMAN PARK

- Schoeneman County Park is ½ mile south of I-90, just outside the city limits, and will be approximately one mile south of the Luverne Loop.
- Two routes have been identified as potential routes, but further study is needed:
 1. Follow the Highway 75 right-of-way corridor across I-90. Coordination with and approval by MnDOT will be necessary to ensure the safest possible design.
 2. Cross under I-90 at the Rock River bridge, east of Highway 75. This would require purchase of trail easements from private landowners, and coordination with MnDOT, DNR, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Soil & Water Conservation District. Potential flooding must be considered.

LUVERNE TO BLUE MOUNDS STATE PARK - PAVED TRAIL

- The County-owned portion of the Blue Mounds Trail from Blue Mounds State Park's internal park trails to the City limits at 131st St. should be designated as part of the Casey Jones State Trail.
- Widening may be desired.



CHAPTER BENEFITS OF TRAILS



“There are many benefits of trails and greenways that planners, funders, and the public need to know about: they make our communities more livable; improve the economy through tourism and civic improvement; preserve and restore open space; and provide opportunities for physical activity to improve fitness and mental health.”

www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits

BENEFITS OF TRAILS

Health

Health Risks

- Physical inactivity & diet are the 2nd leading cause of preventable death & disease in the US
- An inactive lifestyle increases your risk of heart disease, cancer & other conditions
- Obesity and diabetes rates in adults & children keep increasing
- Public & insurance company funding contribute to treating diseases avoidable by increased physical activity

Health Benefits

- Any increment of physical activity is beneficial to health
- Trails close to home reduces common barriers to outdoor recreation—time, money, distance
- Access to places for physical activity increases the level of physical activity
- People exercise more after a trail is built

Recreation

- Can be used by all ages and abilities
- Trails offer a place to do the most common forms of physical activity among American adults: walking, jogging, running, and bicycling
- Used for a variety of activities

Transportation

- Safer place than busy streets or highways
- Easy, convenient, low cost recreation & exercise
- Easier access to public/ natural areas that may be otherwise difficult to access
- Reduce gas costs by biking/walking
- Avoid chauffeuring the kids!
- Safe Route to work (for those without motorized transportation)

Economic

- Efficient use of park funding — low construction & maintenance costs per user hour
- Increase business to existing businesses
- Encourage local business start-ups
- Bring in tourism money from outside the county
- Increase lodging or other city taxes
- Attract new businesses & workforce
- Positive impact on property values

Quality of Life

- Bring longtime & new residents & businesses together
- Build community pride
- Challenge young people
- Provide for non-motorized access to existing parks

- Provide a biking/walking route to school
- Learn about & enjoy the outdoors
- Meet your neighbors—beyond the window wave
- Be enticed to stay in town
- “Love the Life!”

Conservation

- Preserve & pass on your history
- Add natural improvements
- Add environmental education opportunity to learn about the outdoors
- Connect with the land
- Erosion control
- Habitat preservation or restoration
- Drainage improvements
- Wildlife corridors

Information this page, and next, cited from the Southwest Minnesota Trail Corridor Plan (Draft 2014). Access online at [http://swrdc.org/content/files/transportation/draft Trail Plan 2014.pdf](http://swrdc.org/content/files/transportation/draft%20Trail%20Plan%202014.pdf).

BENEFITS OF TRAILS

The benefits of trails are both abundant and diverse - from health betterment and recreational opportunities, to transportation and safety improvements, to environmental conservation, economic gain and improved quality of life.

With physical inactivity and diet the second leading cause of preventable death and disease in America right now, the development of an accessible trail network for both Luverne and regional residents is a high priority for our region. Inactivity can increase the risk of heart disease, cancer, obesity, and diabetes in both children and adults.

Trails can be used by a wide range of ages and abilities to perform the most common of physical activities - biking, running, jogging, walking, skating, or cross-country skiing. See table at right for more information on trail user preferences by type. Trails can connect a pedestrian to work

or school, or be used to gain access into educational native habitats or conservation areas in the community. Educational opportunities develop concurrently with trail improvements - allowing for historical and native habitat interpretation of the local community.

Any increase in physical activity is beneficial to one's health, and access to trail opportunities close to one's home reduces the cost, time, and distance barriers that commonly prohibit people from outdoor physical activities.

Economic and quality of life benefits of trails for the Luverne community may include increased community pride, strengthened connections between new and existing residents, and renewed connections to the regional native habitat and environment. Trails will bring increased tourism visitors, and in turn, monetary funds into the community.

TRAIL USERS

BICYCLISTS

Basic adult bike riders travel 6 - 20 mph for five to forty miles while experts average a speed of 25+ mph and travel an average of 20+ miles. Bicyclists want smooth, hard surfaces clear of obstructions with clear sight lines. Basic adult riders and children prefer flat or rolling terrain without steep hills and safe road crossings.

IN-LINE SKATERS

Typical roller skaters travel at an average of 8-12 mph, while experts can reach speeds of 20+ mph. Roller skaters want smooth paved surfaces with no seams or large cracks, trails wide enough for bicyclists to pass without breaking stride. They avoid steep hills, especially at intersections.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIERS/SNOWSHOERS

The average cross country skier travels 1-9 mph over distances of three to nine miles. Snowshoers average 2-4 mph and travel three to five miles.

PEDESTRIANS

Walkers travel an average of 1-4 mph for distances of 2-15 miles. Joggers/runners travel 6-7 mph for 3-15 miles. People using wheelchairs/scooters travel 1-6 mph for shorter distances. All want a firm and stable surface and operating space clear of hazards. Some prefer paved and unpaved options. Groups of walkers are looking for the educational value of trails, observation areas, and road crossings.

HANDICAP-ACCESSIBILITY

People using wheelchairs/scooters want low grade hills, railings, wheel stops, turning space, and no large surface gaps.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TOOL

The primary goal of trail development beyond the outdoor recreational and educational benefits is the incitement of resulting community development. Trails bring people and opportunities; social interaction and monetary funds.

The development of the Luverne Loop has the ability to link Luverne to a regional population center in Sioux Falls, SD, and to bring in tourists off the interstate to stimulate growth and development in Luverne.

Building a more walkable community and connecting destinations with trails can increase the quality of life in the community and is an economic development strategy.

Communities can be physically tied together with trail systems - linking residential areas to schools, commercial areas, water bodies and parks. A social interconnectedness can develop by linking towns or areas of a town together.

When southern region residents were surveyed, they identified the following

top three reasons for participating in recreation: to view the scenery, to get away from the usual demands of life and to be close to nature.

The recreation activities in which southern Minnesota residents most frequently participate are walking/hiking, boating, and swimming. Biking has the seventh highest participation rate at 26%. Trails would thus satisfy the outdoor recreation preferences of a majority of southern region residents.

Community recreation can build strong families and promote cultural and ethnic harmony. Relationships between communities can become closer as people work together to secure funding for acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails, and in producing marketing or tourism publications.

TRAIL DESTINATION

It has been shown that communities that support trails and respond to the needs of trail users have seen stimulation in their local economies.

Tourists that are attracted to the trails may go into the towns to eat, shop, and stay overnight. The newly revitalized economy can create jobs for residents and increase public revenue. Economic benefits can also be seen by the increased property values of homes near trails. When bicycles are substituted for car trips, the social, health, and environmental benefits can translate into large economic benefits.

An economic report on recreation trail use in Minnesota, published in November 2009, identified walking/hiking as by far the most common activity on trails, with an estimated 134 million person-days spent on ten trails studied in 2008.

Bicycling was the second most common activity, with 30 million person-days, and running was third with 27 million.

In the 38-county Southern region, walking/hiking was the most popular trail activity with 26 million person-days, bicycling second (6.5 million)



and running third (5.7 million). Among the ten trail user groups studied, walkers/ hikers accounted for the highest consumer spending level, with an estimated \$1,425 million spent statewide.

A summary of economic benefits in a National Bicycling and Walking Study by the Federal Highway Administration indicates the annual cost of operating a car is \$9055 and can account for 18% of a household's income. Owning and operating a bicycle is \$120 annual and walking is free.

The report further states "Many communities are even using bicycle and walking facilities to revitalize businesses and bring new economic life to downtown areas."

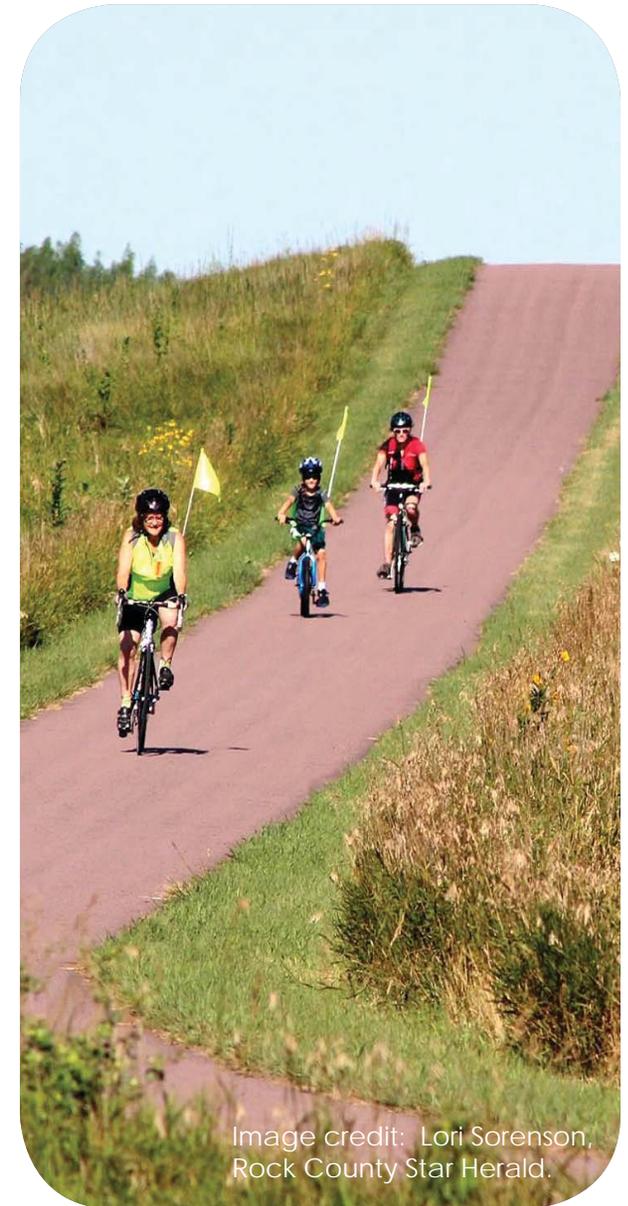
There are two scenic byways in southwest Minnesota, the King of Trails (KT) and the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway.

The King of Trails (KT) crosses the entire United States, beginning in Winnipeg, Canada and ending at the Gulf of Mexico in Galveston, Texas.

The Minnesota portion stretches 414 miles along the state's western border. See <http://www.highway75.com>.

The King of Trails is just as important for its history. Once a Native American trail used to gather food and seek shelter, the trail was eventually paved and made into a part of America's highway system.

Today, locals and travelers alike find the unique beauty of the surrounding prairies as beautiful as the lakes and mountains in other parts of the state.

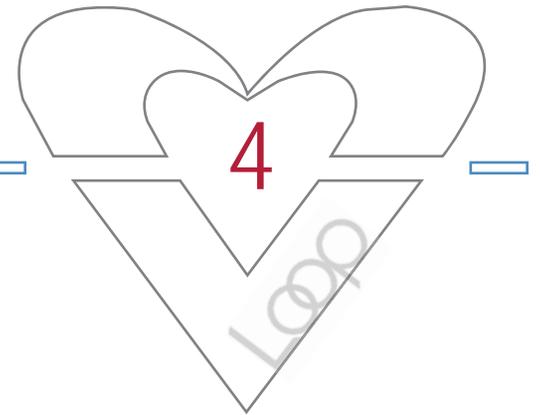


Bicyclists enjoying the trails near Luverne on the DNR Commissioner's 2015 Prairie Pedal Bicycle Tour.

Image credit: Lori Sorenson, Rock County Star Herald.



CHAPTER RESOURCES INVENTORY



Parks contribute to public health by helping to mitigate air pollution, noise and other environmental stressors, and by acting as green buffers between industrial areas and residential neighborhoods.

The Case for Urban Open Space, 1993.

RESOURCES INVENTORY

CITY OF LUVERNE

Luverne is the county seat of Rock County with a population of 4745. Luverne lies at the crossroads of two major federal highways. Interstate 90 and Highway 75 (the King of Trails Scenic Byway) are main routes through the city, carrying travelers from coast to coast and border to border across the United States.

Iowa borders Rock County to the south and South Dakota to the west. The regional center of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, population 230,000, is 30 miles west on Interstate 90.

CITY PARKS

The City park system consists of twelve parks with a total area of 67 acres. This quantity of public parks is consistent with per capita standards established by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NPRA). The Parks in the municipal system are listed in the chart at right.

CITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Additional City recreational facilities include the Luverne Area Aquatics & Fitness Center, the Blue Mound Ice Arena, and Redbird Field.

The Luverne Area Aquatics and Fitness Center:

- Renovated in 1992
- Open seven days a week
- Olympic-size pool
- Weight rooms
- Cardio fitness room

The Blue Mound Ice Arena:

- Used year-round by local hockey and figure skating clubs and teams
- Maintained by the Luverne Hockey Association
- Dryland training room added in 2013

Redbird Field:

- City's premier ball diamond facility
- Located at City Park

OTHER JURISDICTION RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Joe Roberts Field:

- Located adjacent to the Blue Mounds Trail
- Youth baseball fields (2)

Luverne Public Schools Sports Complex:

- USTA tennis courts (8)
- Football field & Track
- Baseball(2) & Softball(2) fields
- Soccer fields (4)
- Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom (2014)

Blue Mounds State Park:

- One of largest prairies in MN with 13 miles of trails
- 87,800 annual visitors
- Rare plants, birds & bison herd
- Campground, interpretive center and rock climbing areas

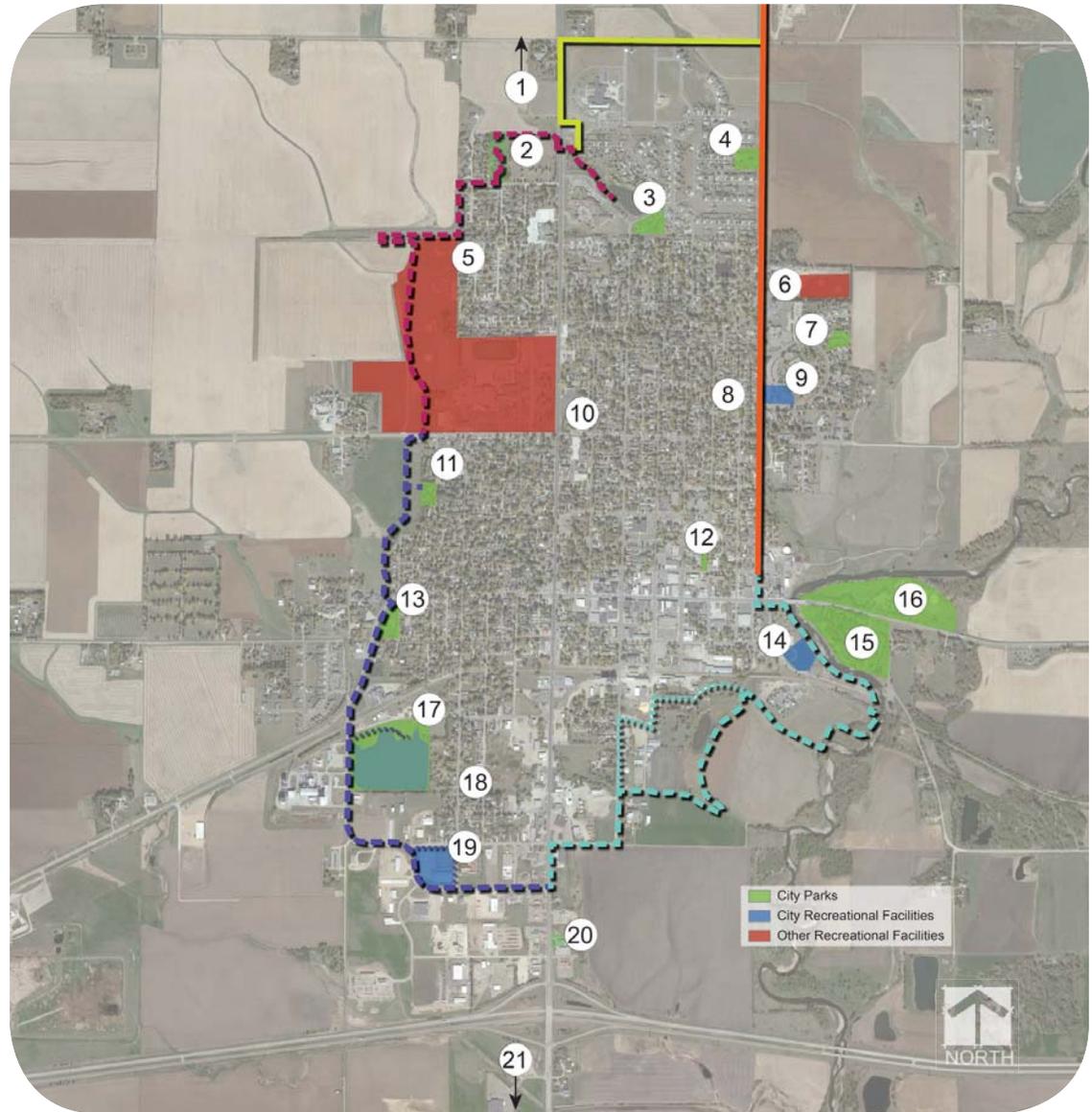
Schoeneman County Park:

- Picnic areas, fishing, and walking trails

MAP OF CITY PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

CITY PARK KEY

- 1) Blue Mounds State Park
- 2) Tonto Park
Playground; 3 acres
- 3) Veterans Memorial Park
Neighborhood Park; 8 acres
- 4) Evergreen Park
Neighborhood Park; 2.25 acres
- 5) Luverne Public Schools Sports Complex
- 6) Joe Roberts Field
- 7) Prairie Moon Park
Playground; 1 acre
- 8) Longhorn Park
Mini Park; 0.1 acres
- 9) Luverne Area Aquatics & Fitness Center
- 10) Sitting Bull Park
Mini Park; 0.2 acres
- 11) Hawkinson Park
Playground; 1 acre
- 12) Moccasin Park
Mini Park; 0.2 acres
- 13) Kolbert Park
Playground; 1 acre
- 14) Redbird Field
- 15) City Park
Community Park; 30 acres
- 16) Riverside Park
Community Park; 20 acres
- 17) Creamery Pond
- 18) Buffalo Bill Park
Mini Park; 0.2 acres
- 19) Blue Mound Ice Arena
- 20) Schoeneman County Park
- 21) Rotary Park



RESOURCES INVENTORY

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The map on page 33 highlights State highways and County roads in Luverne.

Highway 75 (Kniss Avenue) is part of the federal highway system, and acts as the primary north-south corridor through Luverne. Highway 75 also provides the only interchange with Interstate 90 (I-90). MnDOT is responsible for the management of this highway.

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

Tourism in Luverne is stimulated by several key landmarks and destination points. See the list to the right and on the following page for a more detailed listing of common tourist landmarks.

A couple highlights of tourist destination points include:

- The Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce
- Herreid Military Museum
- Brandenburg Gallery
- Verne Drive-In Theater
- Sky Dive Adventures
- Carnegie Cultural Center
- Historic Palace Theatre
- Touch the Sky Prairie
- Rock County Community Library
- Rock County Museum

HISTORY/HISTORICAL FEATURES

- Rock County Courthouse
- Rock County Veterans Memorial
- Hinkly House
- Historic Architecture
- Cemetery Tours

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

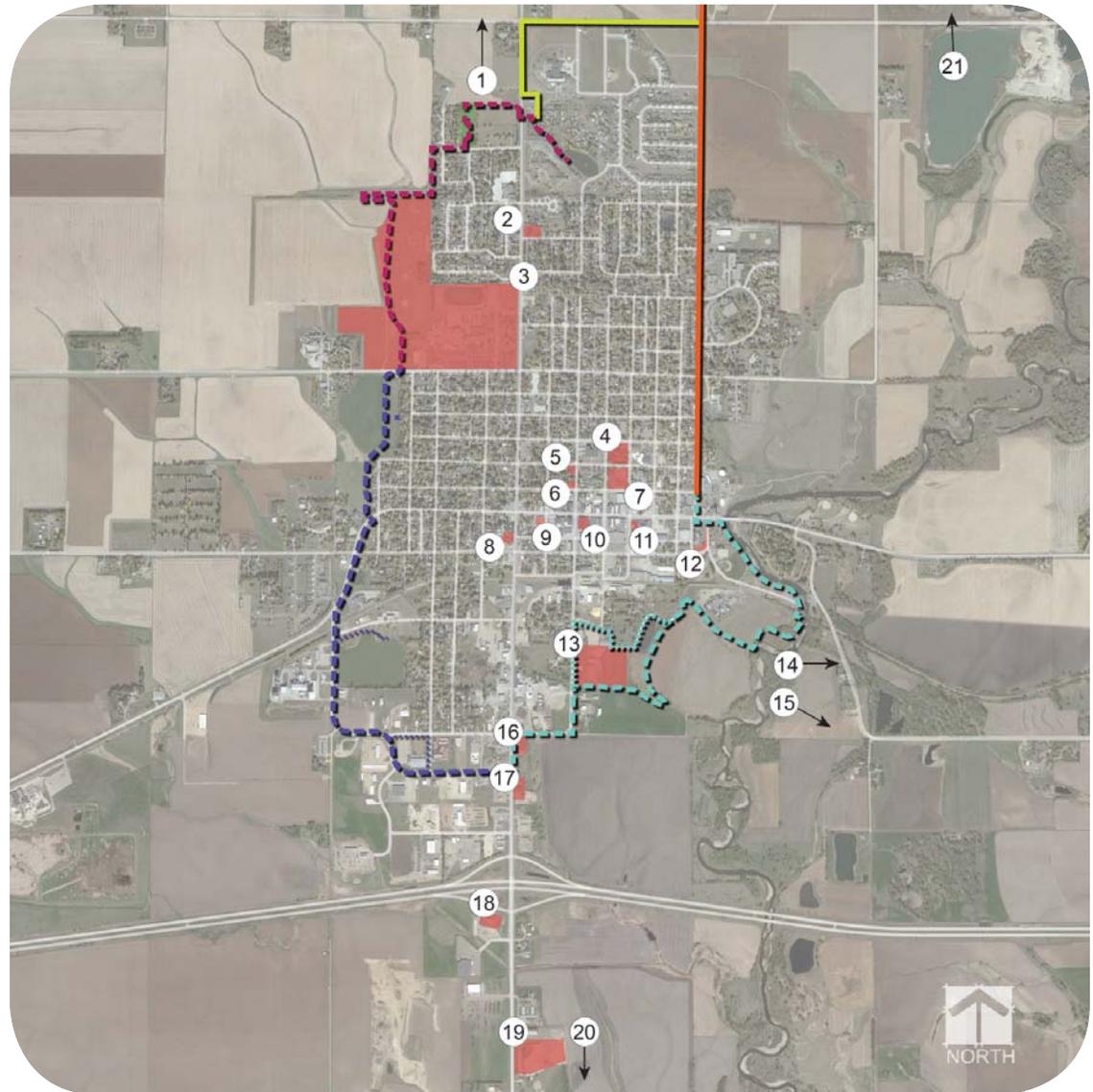
- Farmers Market
- Green Earth Players Community Theater
- Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
- Rock County Fairgrounds
- Luverne Country Club
- Luverne Gun Club

MAP OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCATION KEY

- 1) Touch the Sky Prairie
- 2) Hillcrest Motel
- 3) Luverne High School
- 4) Courthouse Square;
Luverne Area Chamber,
Rock County Courthouse*,
Herreid Military Museum*,
Rock County Veterans Memorial*,
Brandenburg Gallery,
- 5) Hinkly House*
- 6) Carnegie Cultural Center*
- 7) Holy Trinity Church
- 8) Cozy Rest Motel
- 9) Rock County Community Library
- 10) Historic Palace Theatre*
- 11) Rock County History Center*
- 12) Farmers Market
- 13) Rock County Fairgrounds
- 14) Luverne Country Club
- 15) Luverne Gun Club
- 16) Quality Inn
- 17) GrandStay Hotel & Suites
- 18) Super 8 Motel
- 19) Verne Drive-In Theater
- 20) Skydive Adventures
- 21) Blue Mounds State Park

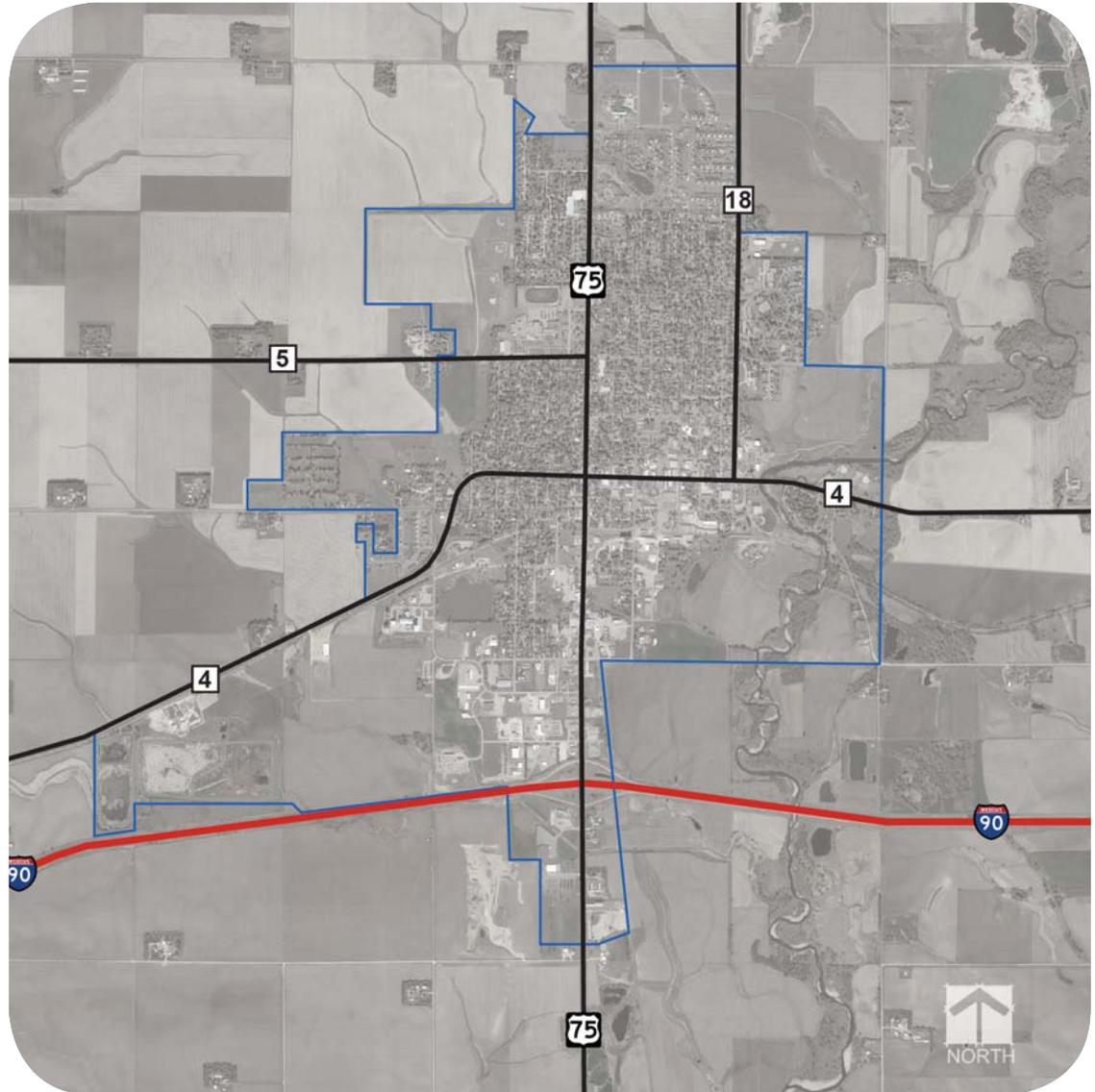
* Historic Site/Building of Interest



TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

LUVERNE HIGHWAYS

- CSAH 4 - Main Street through Luverne
- CSAH 18 - Blue Mound Avenue from Main Street north through city
- CSAH 36 - Blue Mound Avenue from Main to Warren Street
- CSAH 5 - Dodge Street from Kniss Avenue west through city
- CSAH 31 - Dodge Street from Kniss to Blue Mound
- CSAH 30 - Barck Avenue from Kniss to Blue Mound
- CSAH 32 - Luverne Street from Kniss to Blue Mound
- CSAH 33 - Lincoln Street from Cedar Street to Blue Mound
- CSAH 34 - Warren Street from Cedar to Blue Mound
- CSAH 26 - Warren Street from Sunshine Avenue to Donaldson/Donaldson from Warren to Edgehill Street/Edgehill from Donaldson to Kniss
- CSAH 22 - Warren Street from Donaldson to Cedar/Cedar from Warren to Main
- CSAH 37 - 131st Street from Kniss to Blue Mound



NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

Natural resource characteristics need to be considered early in the planning process when locating a trail route. Data gathering and analysis of the topography, soils, wetlands, hydrography, native plant communities, animal habitat, and conservation land designations of a site can identify areas to avoid with trail development, as well as indicate areas that could be fascinating and unique natural highlights along a trail.

ECOLOGICAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

Luverne lies within the Prairie Parkland Province in the MNDNR's Ecological Land Classification System, which encompasses the former tallgrass prairie area of extreme western and southwest Minnesota. Luverne is in the Inner Coteau subsection of the North Central Glaciated Plains section. The Inner Coteau is comprised of the high plains west of the Buffalo Ridge that

drain southwest into the Missouri River, including all of Rock County and parts of surrounding counties. It consists of highly dissected moraines of glacial till capped by a thick layer of silt (loess).

Because 99% of the region is either pastureland or planted with row crops, the primary conservation concerns in this region are preserving the remaining prairie and wetland remnants and river habitats. Trail construction should not disturb these areas, although locating close to natural areas increases the scenic quality of the trail corridor, and provides an opportunity for prairie, wetland or shoreline restoration between the trail and the natural feature.

TOPOGRAPHY

Luverne is relatively flat, with slightly higher land along the western edge of the city, especially the northwest corner, and lower land along Redbird

Field and south along the Rock River. The land around Poplar Creek and Veterans Pond is also lower. The flat landscape makes it easier to build ADA – compliant trails with slopes of 5% or less, but draining water off of trails in low lands is an issue that must be addressed with adequate drainage structures.

SOILS

In general, soils in this region, where the bedrock is not exposed, are 6 to 15 feet thick of loess. They are loamy, well drained, mostly moist prairie soils. Detailed soil maps can be found at the Rock County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD). Hydric and highly erodible soils are not stable and should be avoided, when possible. Along the trail corridor, these are likely to be found between Highway 75 and Veterans Pond, along the tributary of Rock Creek on the school athletic complex and south, along Poplar

NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

Creek, and in the Rock River area.

HYDROLOGY

The Coteau complex is the only area of the state that drains into the Missouri River. Water in Luverne generally flows from northwest to southeast from drainage ditches, tributaries and Poplar Creek to the Rock River, then to the Big Sioux River, then to the Missouri. Along the trail corridor, the trail will parallel a drainage ditch from Highway 75 to Veterans Pond, then will parallel the unnamed tributary of Poplar Creek on the west edge of the city, will likely cross Poplar Creek and some drainage ditches, and then parallel the Rock River.

WETLANDS

The National Wetlands Survey (see Appendix) indicates several freshwater emergent wetlands within the trail corridor. In Phase 1 (see Chapter 6 for

the trail development phase areas), two small ones are indicated near the school ballfields, but apparently these were eliminated in the construction of the athletic complex. In Phase 2, a larger wetland extends south for almost 3 blocks starting south of Dodge Street. In Phase 3, freshwater emergent wetlands lie between Main Street and the pond northwest of the fairgrounds, and between the Pond and Poplar Creek. Another lies along Poplar Creek between private fields. A large curved wetland is indicated between the treatment plant and the river.

These wetlands should be confirmed by a professional if the trail alignment is proposed near them. It is best to obtain a professional opinion of the wetlands during the planning process instead of waiting until time and money has been spent on engineering a trail alignment that may not be allowable, and certainly before any land is acquired.

For Phase 3, a site visit with SWCD staff should be undertaken before a final alignment is selected. The SWCD has wetland permitting authority within and outside of City limits. By law, wetlands are to be avoided. If no other routes are feasible, then disturbance is to be minimized. As a final resort, if disturbance is necessary, then it must be “mitigated.”

The entire Luverne Loop Trail corridor should be able to avoid all of the wetlands in and around Luverne. If the trail is proposed to disturb any wetlands then they will need to be officially “delineated” by a certified delineator before trail construction plans can be approved.

FLOODPLAIN

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps from 1982 (see Appendix) indicate that several areas of the trail corridor are in flood zones.

NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

In the Phase 1 area, a narrow corridor along the tributary of Poplar Creek within the school athletic complex is within Zone A, the hundred year flood zone. More accurately, there is a one in 100 chance that the area will be flooded in any given year. The hydrology of the area, however, changed when the athletic complex was built and the flood berm installed north of the ballfields.

In the Phase 2 corridor, a large area of low ground around Creamery Pond, and a narrow corridor around Poplar Creek are in zone A, with a narrow band of Zone B surrounding it. Zone B means that the area has a one in 500 chance that it will be flooded in any given year.

The Phase 3 trail corridor contains a large Zone A floodplain, including most of the land east of Freeman Avenue and south of Main Street, including the County Fairgrounds, the pond

northwest of the fairgrounds, and parts of Redbird Field. The ballfields and parking lot at Redbird Field, which are built on fill, are in Zones B and C. Zone C is an area of minimal flooding. Between Freeman Avenue and Highway 75 the floodplain is limited to a corridor around Poplar Creek. The FEMA maps may have been updated by local flood studies.

Trails are frequently built in the floodplain, often because the land is less suitable for housing and thus becomes park land. The trails are often raised above ground level on fill material, however, there is a limit to how much fill can be placed in a flood zone.

The Phase 1 and 2 trail development should be able to avoid the flood zones. Portions of the Phase 1 and 2 trail corridor are outside of the Luverne City limits, and the SWCD has permitting authority there, so

will need to be consulted. Within the City limits, the City government regulates development in floodplains, and the Zoning Administrator will need to be consulted. All of Phase 3 is within the City limits; the City's Zoning Administrator should be consulted before the phase 3 trail route is finalized regarding permitting restrictions. The Creamery Pond park development will be within flood zones as well.

For trails within floodplains, concrete has been found to withstand flooding better than asphalt, but asphalt provides a smoother surface preferred by trail users, and is usually cheaper. Constructing a deep base and a turn down below finished grade may improve its durability.

Trails parallel to a riverbank seem to withstand flooding better than trails built perpendicular to the bank. However, there is always risk when

NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

building in a floodplain that damage may occur.

IMPAIRED WATERS

The Luverne area segment of the Rock River has been designated as “impaired” for warm water aquatic life due to turbidity. It has not been assessed for its suitability for aquatic recreation or aquatic consumption.

Stormwater runoff contributes to turbidity. For this reason it is best to retain vegetated buffers between waterways and the trail, restore the buffers when possible, and take care to retain any required silt fencing during trail construction as well as during the construction zone reseeding process.

A new State law was passed in 2015 requiring perennial vegetation buffer strips along public waters to increase

water quality, but there are exceptions for public water access or recreational use areas. This law is to take effect in 2017-18, and is to be implemented by the County SWCDs. It is unknown at this time how the new law will affect trail development plans. The City will need to consult SWCD regarding this new law.

CONSERVATION LANDS

There are several government programs which administer conservation easements on private lands. Some of these programs do not allow trail construction on the land in their programs. Some government lands, including wildlife management areas, do not allow paved trails. There are also private organizations which hold land, such as Pheasants Forever and the Nature Conservancy, which usually don't allow paved trails. A land trade with these agencies or

organizations can sometimes be negotiated to assemble a trail corridor.

There are some conservation easements west of the city near Phases 1 and 2; the trail corridor has avoided these lands. A final route has not been selected yet for Phase 3 because the floodplain, wetland, river corridor and conservation lands near the Rock River must be further considered. A land trade may be an option.

BIODIVERSITY

There are no areas documented as high quality natural areas along the trail corridor.

The Rock River corridor, including the Phase 3 trail corridor, is listed by DNR as being of moderate biodiversity significance. This floodplain forest is the most natural area in Luverne. The final alignment for Phase 3 should limit

NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

destruction of native vegetation near the river while allowing trail users to experience the birds, mammals, fish, and native plants along the riverbank.

RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

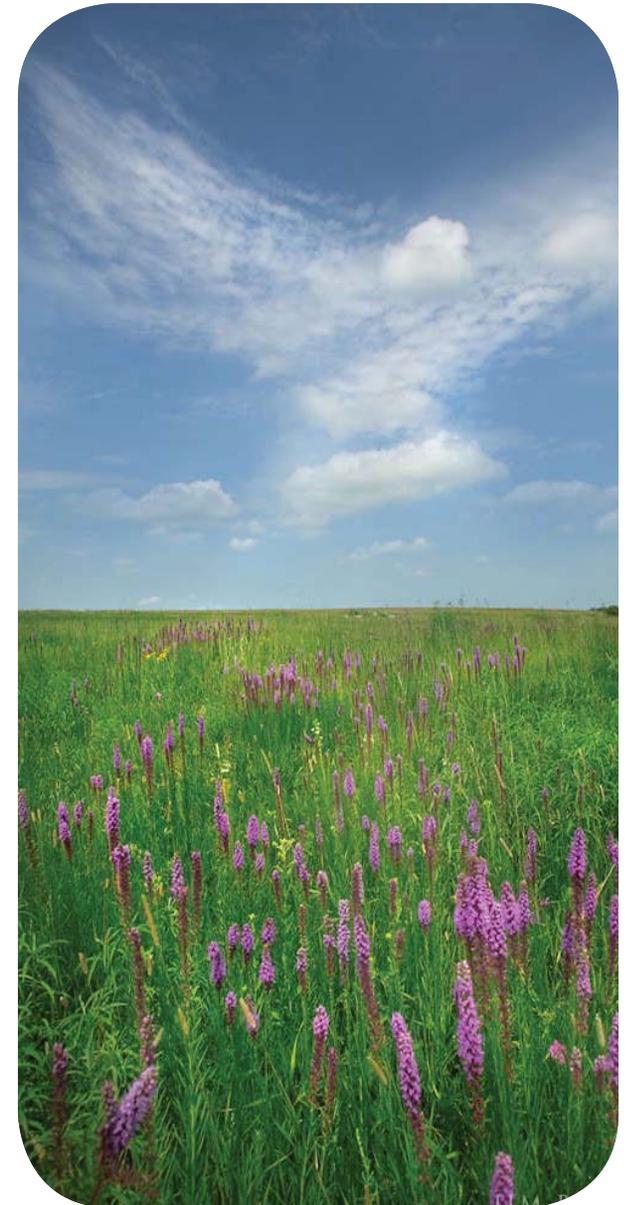
The Inner Coteau region in Minnesota includes 33 species of flora and fauna that are listed on the federal or state Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern List.

The best-known species present in Luverne is the federally endangered Topeka Shiner minnow (see Appendix for Fact Sheet).

The Rock River, Poplar Creek and tributaries appear to be within the designated critical habitat area. Construction in or near waterways, potentially trail development Phases 2 and 3, needs to be reviewed with the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Any necessary measures to avoid disturbance must be taken including the restriction of the allowable months for construction, if applicable. Prior to selecting a final Phase 3 route, the Rock County Biological Survey maps and data from DNR Ecological Services should be consulted to avoid any other protected habitats.

Touch the Sky Prairie.



As of July 2014, over \$550,000 in grant funding has been awarded to aid in the development of the following LuVerne Loop Phases:

2015 - 2016	2017 - 2018	2019 - future
<p>Phase One</p> <p>Phase One consists of 1.7 miles of trail connecting the LuVerne Loop to the existing trail network. This phase includes the construction of a 1.7-mile trail, a 1.7-mile trail, and a 1.7-mile trail.</p> <p>Estimated \$400,000 Grant Funding</p>	<p>Phase Two</p> <p>Phase Two consists of 1.7 miles of trail connecting the LuVerne Loop to the existing trail network. This phase includes the construction of a 1.7-mile trail, a 1.7-mile trail, and a 1.7-mile trail.</p> <p>Estimated \$400,000 Grant Funding</p>	<p>Phase Three</p> <p>Phase Three consists of 1.7 miles of trail connecting the LuVerne Loop to the existing trail network. This phase includes the construction of a 1.7-mile trail, a 1.7-mile trail, and a 1.7-mile trail.</p> <p>Estimated \$400,000 Grant Funding</p>

LuVerne Loop
hike • bike • explore

Luverne Loop Phasing Project Timeline
Design and Engineering by Neil Scott

Love the recreation

Vision for Trailhead At Redbird Field
estimated construction 2017-2018

LuVerne Loop
hike • bike • explore

Redbird Field, situated perfectly along the Red 350 on County Road 4, is envisioned to be the visitor center and hub, ending point to the LuVerne Loop trail network. Redbird Field also conveniently connects Main Street, The Blue Mountain trail, and the beautiful City Park. It nearly 13 acres, with access to nearly 1.3 miles of trail, Redbird Field will house trailhead amenities such as a bike pump, repair station, a park shelter, utility parking, site furnishings, bike-recycling workshop, restrooms, and a site way finding map and interpretive signage program.

With over \$200,000 grant funding now in place for construction of the trail, planning and design work for the Trailhead at Redbird Field will begin soon!

Love the nature

Vision for Outdoor Recreation At Creamery Pond
estimated construction 2017-2018

LuVerne Loop
hike • bike • explore

Creamery Pond, located near County Road 4 and Edgemoor Street, is envisioned to be the outdoor recreation hub located right within the city. At nearly 22 acres, amenities of an outdoor recreation area - including picnic tables, a large canoe launch, park shelter, parking and handicap accessibility, site furnishings, bike-recycling workshop, restrooms, and a way finding and interpretive signage program. By connecting to the LuVerne Loop, the possibilities for outdoor fun are endless.

With Phase Two grant funding in place, construction of the 2nd phase Creamery Pond is estimated to take place in 2017-2018. The development of Creamery Pond is anticipated to run concurrent with the trail project.

LuVerne Loop
hike • bike • explore
Proposed Route
LuVerne Loop Trail

CHAPTER PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Through a Strategic Visioning process, citizens of Luverne have identified outdoor recreation as a way to create vitality in order to capitalize on being family-friendly, enterprising, educated, outdoorsy, and creative.

PLANNING PROCESS

In 2013, in conjunction with the City of Luverne and the NPS RTCA program, a project team was established to further develop the vision, goals, objectives, strategies, and preferred and alternate route options of the Luverne Loop. The project team also began developing public and political support and researched funding strategies.

The Luverne City Council expressed support for the trail project by ranking the Luverne Loop as the number one priority during its 2013 goal setting session and by allocating \$220,000 per year for the next 5-10 years until completion. This allocation is made possible through \$70,000 in sales tax exemption savings and a \$150,000 increase in Local Government Aid.

It is the Trail Committee's collaborative goal to strategically create a trail that contributes to both the quality of life for residents and economic vitality of Luverne as a destination for visitors.

The Luverne Economic Development Authority (LEDA) hosted a booth at the 2013 Rock County Fair to promote the trail initiative and introduce the concept of the proposed Luverne Loop to create awareness.

This was a successful way for committee members to distribute information about the trail planning process and solicit comments from the residents as to where they would like to see the trail. Brochures were handed out that included the vision, goals, and benefits of the trail along with a map depicting the points of interest that the trail will connect.

Over 240 fairgoers signed a petition card in support of the vision and goals of the trail project. The response from the booth at the fair indicated overwhelming excitement and support for the trail project.

In August 2012, city staff applied for and was awarded a grant of technical assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS RTCAP). The NPS RTCAP assists community-led conservation and recreation projects and provided planning assistance and support for planning and development of the Luverne Loop. Holly Larson, NPS RTCAP, offered tremendous technical support and contributed to the overall progress with the trail initiative.

WHO'S INVOLVED

- Holly Sammons, EDA Director
- John Call, City Administrator
- John Stoffel, Public Works Director
- Gary Kurth, City Engineer (DGR)
- Mark Sehr, County Engineer
- Jane Wildung-Lanphere, Chamber of Commerce
- Gary Fisher, Luverne Public Schools
- Ryan Johnson, Luverne Public Schools
- Craig Oftedahl, Luverne Public Schools
- Darci Pap, Sanford Health
- Nancy Drenth, Sanford Health
- Marilyn Bloemendaal, LIFT
- Gene Ashby, Trail Enthusiast
- Preston VerMeer, Trail Enthusiast
- Eugene Marshall, City Councilman
- Holly Larson, NPS RTCAP
- Mike Davis, Luverne Area Chamber
- Confluence

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY



Landowners adjacent to the trail along Phase 1 voiced their concern about the proximity of the proposed trail to their private property lines near Veterans Memorial Pond and the berm area. A public meeting was held and property owners located along Veterans Memorial Pond and the berm were invited to attend. Following the meeting it was suggested to have the trail only on the south side and not around the pond entirely. Homeowners in this area seemed pleased with this resolution.



Residents living near the berm also shared their concerns with the trail near their property lines. Alternative routes were analyzed, but other constraints did not offer any other feasible solution for this portion of the route. A homeowner on James Street also requested to have a segment of the trail on the street since no sidewalks were installed on their private property.

Landowners along Phase 3 have preliminarily agreed to the trail as proposed. Verbal agreements have been reached with affected

Rock County Fair displays

landowners. It is unknown whether the trail can stay in the ROW or if an easement will need to be acquired; final engineering and design will make this determination.

The LEDA hosted another booth at the 2014 Rock County Fair and unveiled a map with the preferred and alternative routes. Following the fair, the presentation boards were staged in a vacant storefront on Main Street for the public to review and discuss. The vision was also shared at the 2014 LIFT Community Forum, a public open house to highlight all of the progressive happenings as a result of a grassroots effort to revitalize the community.

The vision of the trail has also been shared with a number of community groups. The LEDA also hosted a booth at the Home, Health and Living Show. The trail concept has been presented at public meetings with the City Council, Rock County Commissioners, and the school board meetings for LuVerne Public School.

TIMELINE SUMMARY

2012

- Summer 2012 - Begin preliminary discussion with Preston VerMeer
- September 2012 - Awarded NPS RTCA Technical Assistance
- November 2012 - First Public Meeting at the Public LIFT Forum

2013

- January 2013 - Begin formal trail committee meetings
- July 25-27, 2013 - Rock County Fair
- July 16, 2013 - City Council COW Meeting (Introduction, Budget/Funding Request)
- August 20, 2013 - City Council Tour & Approval for \$220,000 per year
- October 8, 2013 - City Council COW Presentation: Phase 1 Legacy Grant
- September 3 & 5, 2013 - Public Meetings with Landowners
- November 19, 2013 - County Board Presentation: Phase 2 TAP Grant Application

2014

- January 7, 2014 - County Board: Resolution to be Sponsoring Agency for Phase 2 TAP Grant Application
- January 14, 2014 - City Council Presentation: Phase 2 TAP Grant
- March 11, 2014 - City Council COW Presentation: Phase 1 LTC Grant
- July 2014 - Awarded \$150,000 Local Trail Connections Grant for Phase 1
- July 2014 - Rock County Fair
- July-September 2014 -Main Street Window Display
- August 2014 -Trail tour with Student Council
- August 2014 -Trail Based Tourism Meeting with Regional Partners
- August 2014 - The Luverne Loop Phase 2 Project was selected by MnDOT District 7 ATP for \$400,000 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding in 2017
- October 23, 2014 - Luverne Public School Board Meeting
- November 2014 -LIFT Community Forum (Public Open House)

On-Going

- Informational Meetings for Community Groups:
 - July 16, 2013 & March 18, 2014 - Rotary Club
 - September 24, 2013 - Over 60s Group at First Presbyterian Church
 - September 25, 2013 - Sanford
 - November 25, 2013 - Lions Club
 - September 22, 2014 - Chapter Di P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization)
 - October 23, 2014 - Luverne Public School Board Meeting
 - 2015 Window Display and Home Health & Living Show
 - July 2015 - Rock County Fair

Letters of Support have been garnered from the following individuals and organizations:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Mounds State Park • Luverne Area Chamber & CVB • LIFT • Luverne Elementary School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luverne High School • Rock County Opportunities • County of Rock • Rotary Club • Sanford • Southwest Health & Human Services • Senator Bill Weber | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Representative Joe Schomacker • Shops on Main • Minnesota Veterans Home • Minnesota Southern Railway • MnDOT • Resident/Councilman Aaker • Luverne Hockey Club |
|---|---|--|



PUBLICATIONS SUMMARY

Numerous articles in the Rock County Star Herald and the Worthington Daily Globe newspapers have publicized the vision of the trail to the community.

The Star Herald produced several articles featuring the Luverne Loop, discussing the opportunity the trail system has to connect areas of interest to neighborhoods and pocket parks throughout the city.

Also featured in these articles were grants received from various organizations including the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program through the National Park Service as well as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The Star Herald has also interviewed the director of Luverne's Economic Development Authority, Holly Sammons, regarding the potential of a good public trail system to improve the quality of life for the community.

The Daily Globe has also published articles featuring the progress of the Luverne Loop. Trail enthusiast, Preston VerMeer was interviewed and shared his vision for the trail system and his involvement.

Additional articles feature a grant received by the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) as well as construction start dates for the summer of 2016.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

STAR HERALD

- "Luverne Loop seeks \$"
- "Luverne Loop secures grant"
- "Dec. 12th meeting to start bike path project"
- "DNR Commissioner, Lieutenant Governor Join Prairie Pedal Tour"

DAILY GLOBE

- "VerMeer sees a diamond in the rough"
- "TRAIL: 'If you build it, they will come' to Luverne"
- "LOOP"
- "Luverne Loop construction to begin this summer"
- "Prairie Pedal kicks off in Luverne"

OTHER

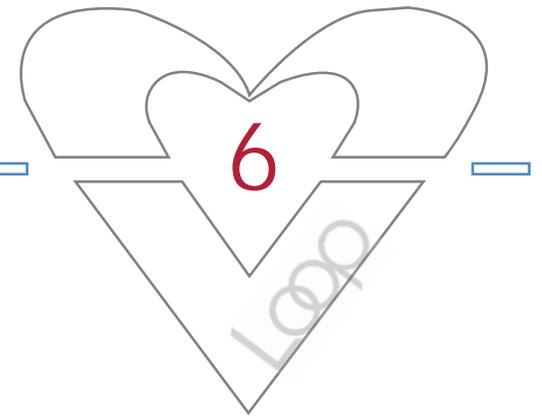
- "Cyclers propose Poplar Creek Trail to connect Luverne's parks with existing bike path"





Image credit: *Touch the Sky Prairie Wildlife Refuge.*
Tom Molstad Photography, 2014.

CHAPTER TRAIL DEVELOPMENT



The Luverne Loop is anticipated to be completed in five phases. See the proposed trail routes map on the following pages of this chapter for the preliminary construction timeline and details about each phase of trail construction.

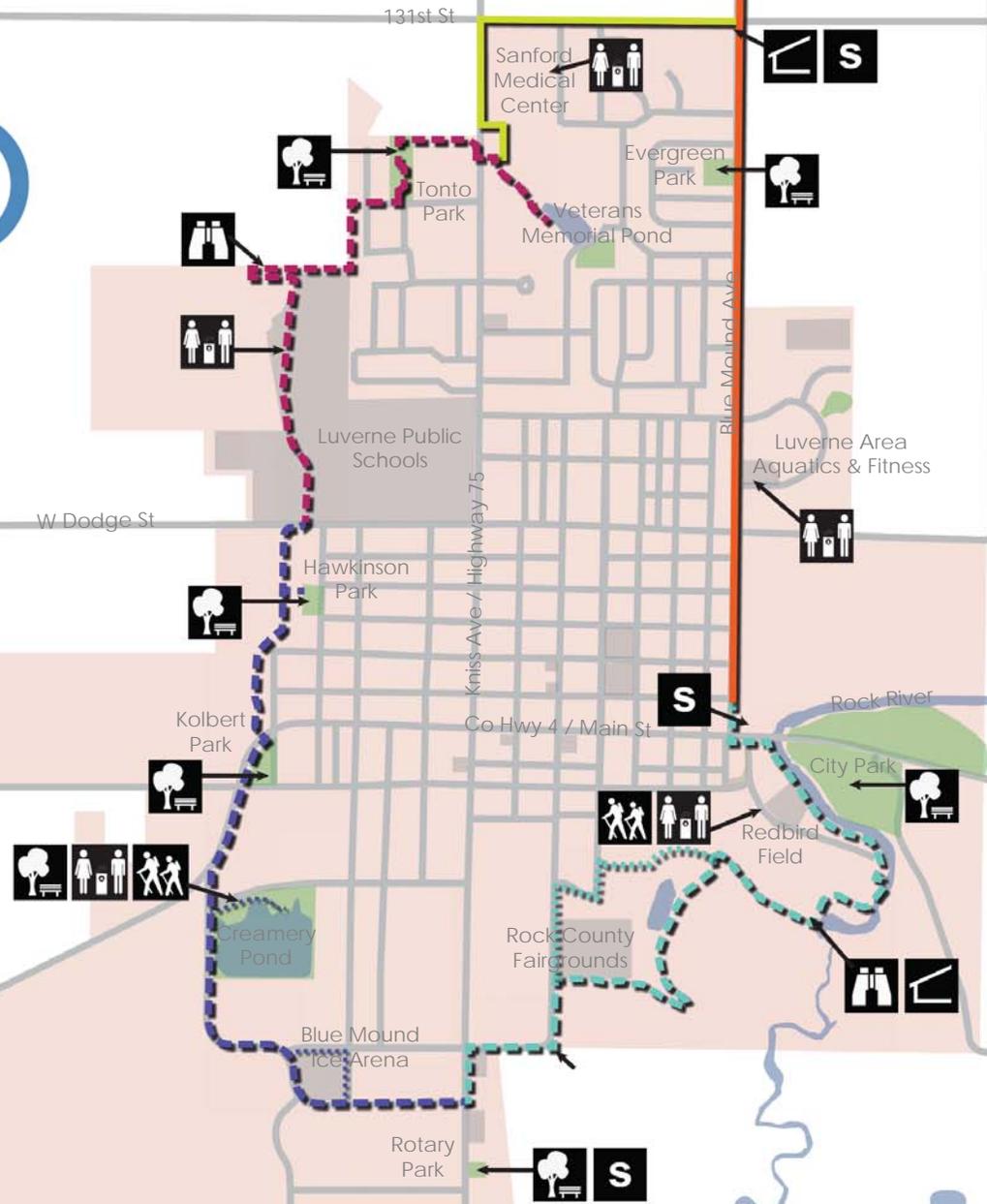
Luverne Loop

hike • bike • explore

- PHASE 1
- PHASE 2
- PHASE 3
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING SIDEWALK
- ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

- Rest Stop
- Signage
- Restroom
- Trail Head
- Outlook
- Park

Phase	Mileage
Phase 1	1.5
Phase 2	1.6
Phase 3	1.9
Blue Mounds	1.3
131st St	0.8
Total	7.1



Luverne Loop: Proposed Trail Routes

PROPOSED TRAIL ROUTES

The Luverne Loop is a proposed 7.1 mile trail that encircles the City of Luverne. The trail traverses the outskirts of Luverne, connecting points of interest along the way and ultimately connecting to the Blue Mounds Trail. See Chapter 4, Resources Inventory, for more information on points of interest and a list of city parks.

This connection will provide residents and visitors of all ages and abilities a safe and natural place for recreation and active transportation between destinations along the trail that include: the school, hospital, veterans home, city parks, recreational facilities, two ponds, residential areas, Rock County fairgrounds and the Rock River.

Connecting these destinations with pedestrian scale infrastructure will also promote community development in Luverne and Rock County. See Chapter 3, Benefits of Trails, for more information on community development. The Loop will cross

Highway 75 at the north and south ends of Luverne. The entire trail will be constructed at less than a 5% grade, making it accessible to all potential users.

The Loop could potentially link up with the planned Casey Jones State Trail that would begin in Schoeneman Park (which is south of Luverne) and further connect to the Blue Mounds State Park via the Loop (north of Luverne). See Chapter 2, Planning Context & Regional Connections for more information.

- PHASE 1
- PHASE 2
- PHASE 3
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING SIDEWALK
- ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

-  Rest Stop
-  Signage
-  Restroom
-  Trail Head
-  Outlook
-  Park

Phase	Mileage
Phase 1	1.5
Phase 2	1.6
Phase 3	1.9
Blue Mounds	1.3
131st St	0.8
Total	7.1



Planned Route for Phase 1
Luverne Loop: Proposed Trail

W. Dodge St.

Luverne Public School

Tonto Park

James St.

Kniss Ave.



Minnesota Veterans Home

Veterans Memorial Pond

Veterans Memorial Park

Barck Ave.

N. Freeman St.

N. Cedar St.

E. Dodge St.

PHASE ONE

Phase One consists of a 1.5 mile multi-use, paved trail from Veterans Memorial Pond to the Luverne Public School campus at Dodge Street. This trail will connect the existing Blue Mounds Trail and Sanford Medial Center to the Minnesota Veterans Home, Tonto Park, and the outdoor recreation facilities near the school. This trail segment offers a beautiful glimpse of the countryside and an exclusive view overlooking the city from a unique, new perspective.

PRELIMINARY CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE: 2015-2016

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

This segment begins at the Veterans Memorial Park fishing pier, and crosses Highway 75 near the Sanford Luverne Medical Center to allow for a unique photo opportunity at the Welcome to Luverne sign on the north end of town.

The trail then passes through Tonto park - a pocket park with benches, picnic table, playground equipment, and a water fountain that can serve as a trailside rest area.

Then, the trail runs along James Street with a two-way, 10' painted lane on the north side of the road and traverses a man-made earthen berm providing interesting views.

The trail will then pass through the school's outdoor recreation area and eventually link up to a sidewalk that reaches the school facility. This segment of the trail will terminate at Dodge St.

Users can also connect to the Blue Mounds Trail via the existing sidewalk past Sanford Medical Center and Healing Garden on Highway 75 and 131st St., intersecting the Blue Mounds Trail at Blue Mound Ave and 131st St. It is anticipated that this sidewalk will be replaced with a 10' wide trail in a later phase of the Luverne Loop Trail development.

PUBLIC NEEDS MET

This segment of the trail will increase opportunities for exercise and family recreation. Walkers, runners, bikers, and skaters will benefit by having a smooth asphalt surface to use for recreation and transportation.

This trail passes the largest employers in the city: the schools, hospital, clinic and Veterans Home, which, combined, employ over 600 people. Employees and students will be able to use the trail for exercise or recreation from the school campus past scenic views, to the Veterans Pond, a public park. They will benefit from increased safety of the planned new crosswalk across Highway 75 and the planned motion-activated signal.

Employees and residents of the Veterans Home and Medical Center, especially people with disabilities, will have an accessible trail that offers off-road travel to several significant destinations in the northwest part of the city.

LAND USE & OWNERSHIP

Easements needed: 1. MnDOT crossing, 2. St. Catherine's Catholic Cemetery Board, 3. Luverne Public School, and 4. Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation.

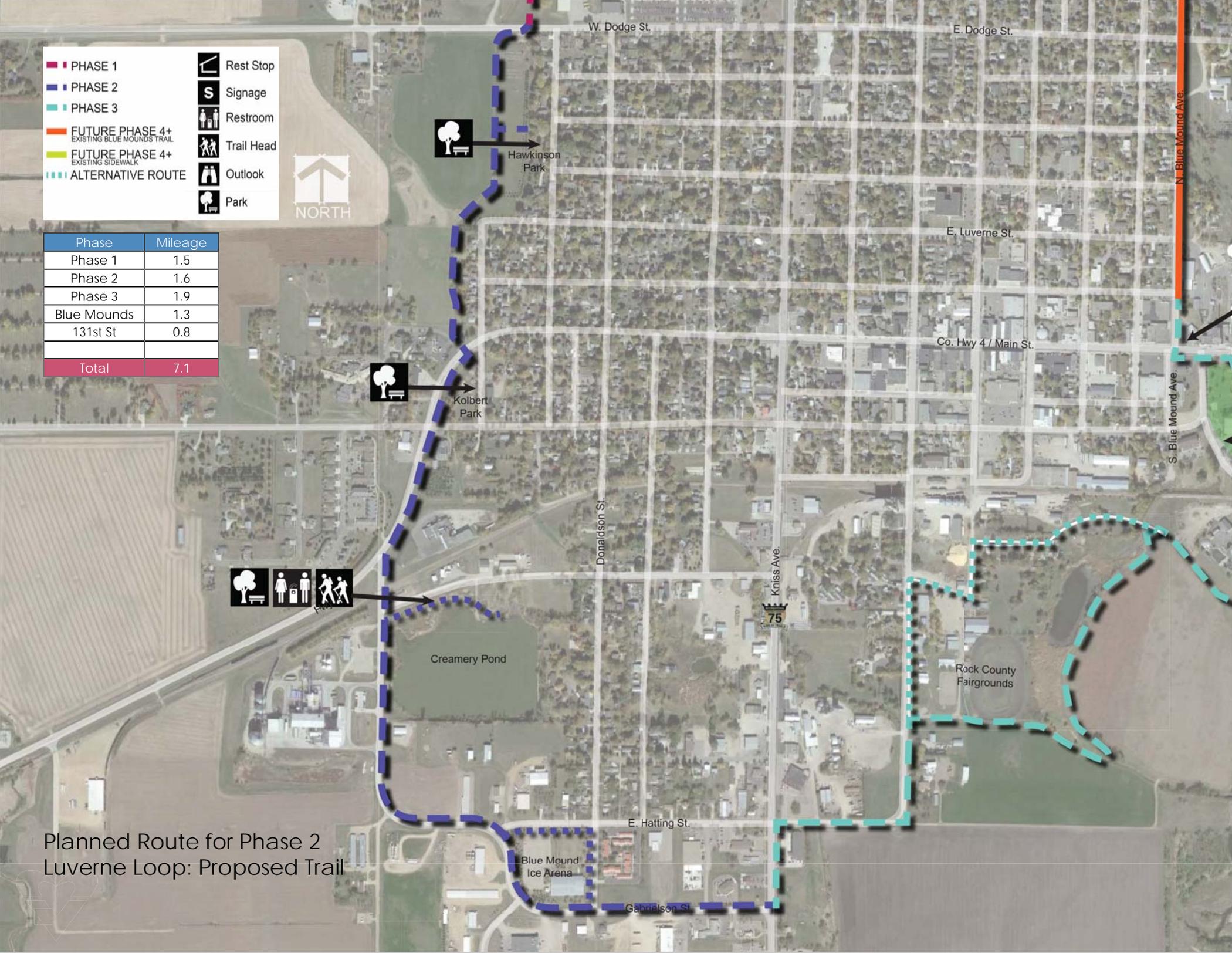
FUNDING

\$150,000 DNR Local Trail Connections Grant.

- PHASE 1
- PHASE 2
- PHASE 3
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL
- FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING SIDEWALK
- ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

- Rest Stop
- Signage
- Restroom
- Trail Head
- Outlook
- Park

Phase	Mileage
Phase 1	1.5
Phase 2	1.6
Phase 3	1.9
Blue Mounds	1.3
131st St	0.8
Total	7.1



Planned Route for Phase 2
Luverne Loop: Proposed Trail

PHASE TWO

Phase Two consists of a 1.6 mile trail from the Luverne Public School Campus at Dodge Street around the southwest quadrant of the city to the I-90/Highway 75 commercial corridor. This phase will connect the school to two pocket parks, a water feature, the Blue Mound Ice Arena, and the restaurants, shops, and hotels along the I-90/Highway 75 commercial corridor.

This segment will pass by Creamery Pond, which is envisioned to be an outdoor recreation destination along the trail for people of all ages to stop by and enjoy. See Chapter 7 for more information on Creamery Pond.

**PRELIMINARY CONSTRUCTION
TIMELINE: 2017-2018**

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

This segment picks up where Phase One left off at Dodge Street near the school and continues south along Poplar Creek to County Road 4.

The trail will cross County Rd 4 and enter Kolbert Park, a pocket park with

a small bridged creek crossing and playground equipment. The trail then ventures south along the County Rd 4 right-of-way, crosses the railroad tracks, passes by with a spur trail link into Creamery Pond recreation area and eventually connects to the Blue Mound Ice Arena via the Gabrielson Rd right of way.

From there, the trail will continue along a line of trees in the right-of-way and reach the Highway 75 King of Trails Scenic Byway and I-90 Commercial district. This phase terminates at Highway 75 and Gabrielson/Hatting Road.

PUBLIC NEEDS MET

The Phase Two project will connect the 1200 students and 200 employees on the public school campus to two existing City parks and the proposed Creamery Pond site; the City ice arena; and the restaurants, shops and three hotels in the I-90/Highway 75 commercial district, an employment center in the city.

Residents in the city's southwest

quadrant, students and tourists will be able to use this trail to access these locations. Commuters may use both segments as a traffic free alternative to busy Highway 75.

Visitors staying in the hotels along Highway 75 are also expected to use the trail to access these destinations.

The trail will primarily be used by bicyclists, walkers, runners, and people with disabilities who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

LAND USE & OWNERSHIP

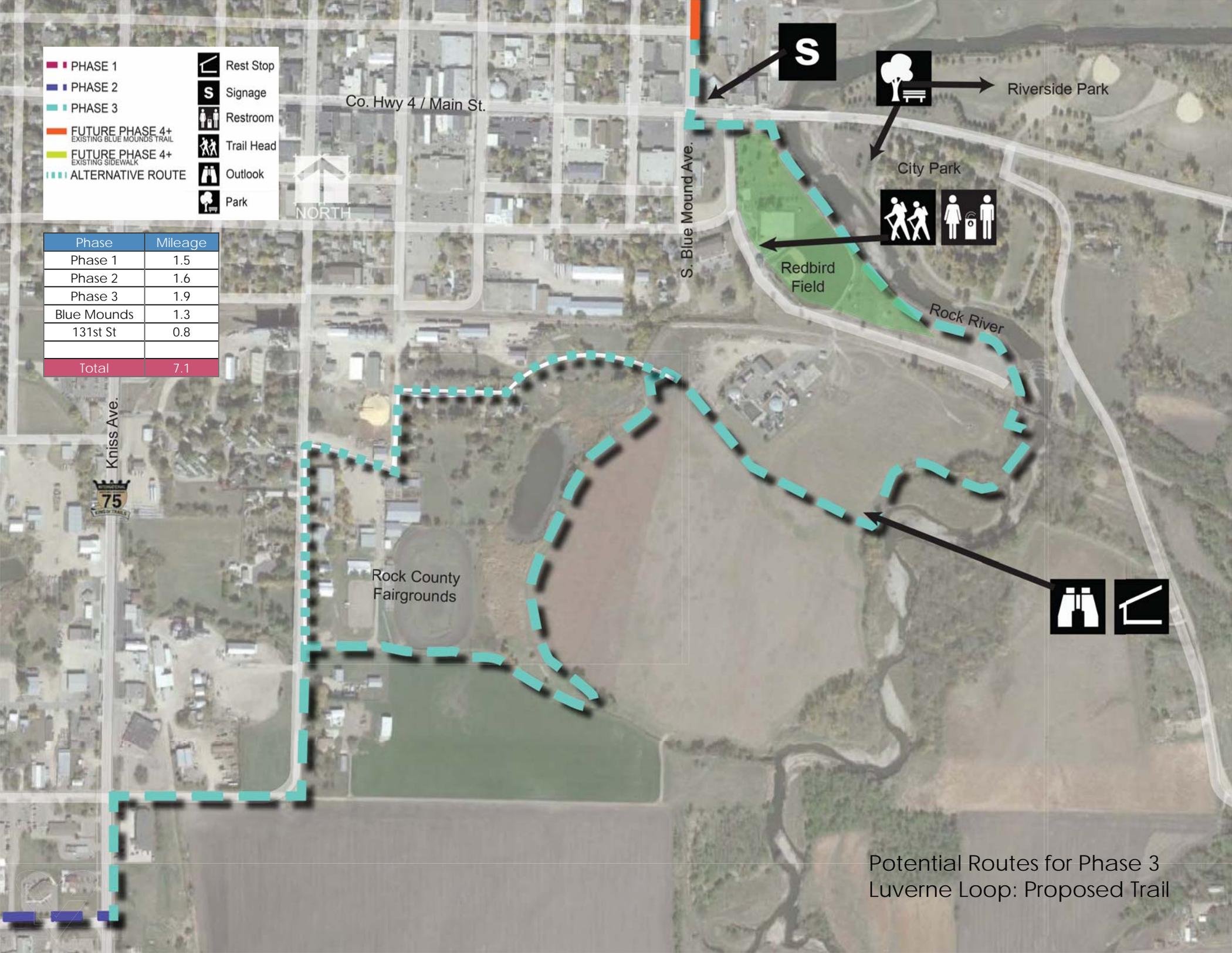
Easements needed: Good Samaritan Society, MN Southern Railway, MnDOT Highway 75 Crossing, and Right-of-Way along 8 additional properties.

FUNDING

This segment is programmed for \$400,000 in the STIP for 2017 utilizing TAP funds through the MnDOT.

- PHASE 1
 - PHASE 2
 - PHASE 3
 - FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL
 - FUTURE PHASE 4+
EXISTING SIDEWALK
 - - - ALTERNATIVE ROUTE
-  Rest Stop
 -  Signage
 -  Restroom
 -  Trail Head
 -  Outlook
 -  Park

Phase	Mileage
Phase 1	1.5
Phase 2	1.6
Phase 3	1.9
Blue Mounds	1.3
131st St	0.8
Total	7.1



S



Riverside Park

City Park



Redbird Field

Rock River

Co. Hwy 4 / Main St.

S. Blue Mound Ave.

Kniss Ave.



Rock County Fairgrounds



Potential Routes for Phase 3
Luverne Loop: Proposed Trail

PHASE THREE

Phase Three consists of a 1.9 mile trail that meanders from Highway 75 to the planned future trailhead at Redbird Field. This phase will offer a fantastic view of the Rock River and complete the Loop by connecting to the Blue Mounds Trail at the intersection of Main Street and Blue Mound Avenue.

PRELIMINARY CONSTRUCTION
TIMELINE: 2018-2019

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Phase Three begins at Highway 75 and Gabrielson/Hatting St., connects to the Rock County Fairgrounds, meanders along the Rock River and terminates at Redbird Field (next to City Park) at the intersection of Main Street and Blue Mound Avenue (Blue Mounds Trailhead).

This phase includes a new trailhead and improvements at Redbird Field, which is envisioned to be the visitor center and kickoff/ending point to the trail network. See Chapter 7 for more information on Redbird Field.

PUBLIC NEEDS MET

The Phase Three segment will connect the residential and commercial areas of Luverne with the nature elements of a hidden piece of our community.

Additionally, the trail will present breathtaking views of the Rock River and create a tranquil experience along the water's edge. Connecting to the Blue Mounds Trail will offer users more than an hour of outdoor recreation and offer varied experiences as the trail travels throughout both populated and native habitat areas in Luverne.

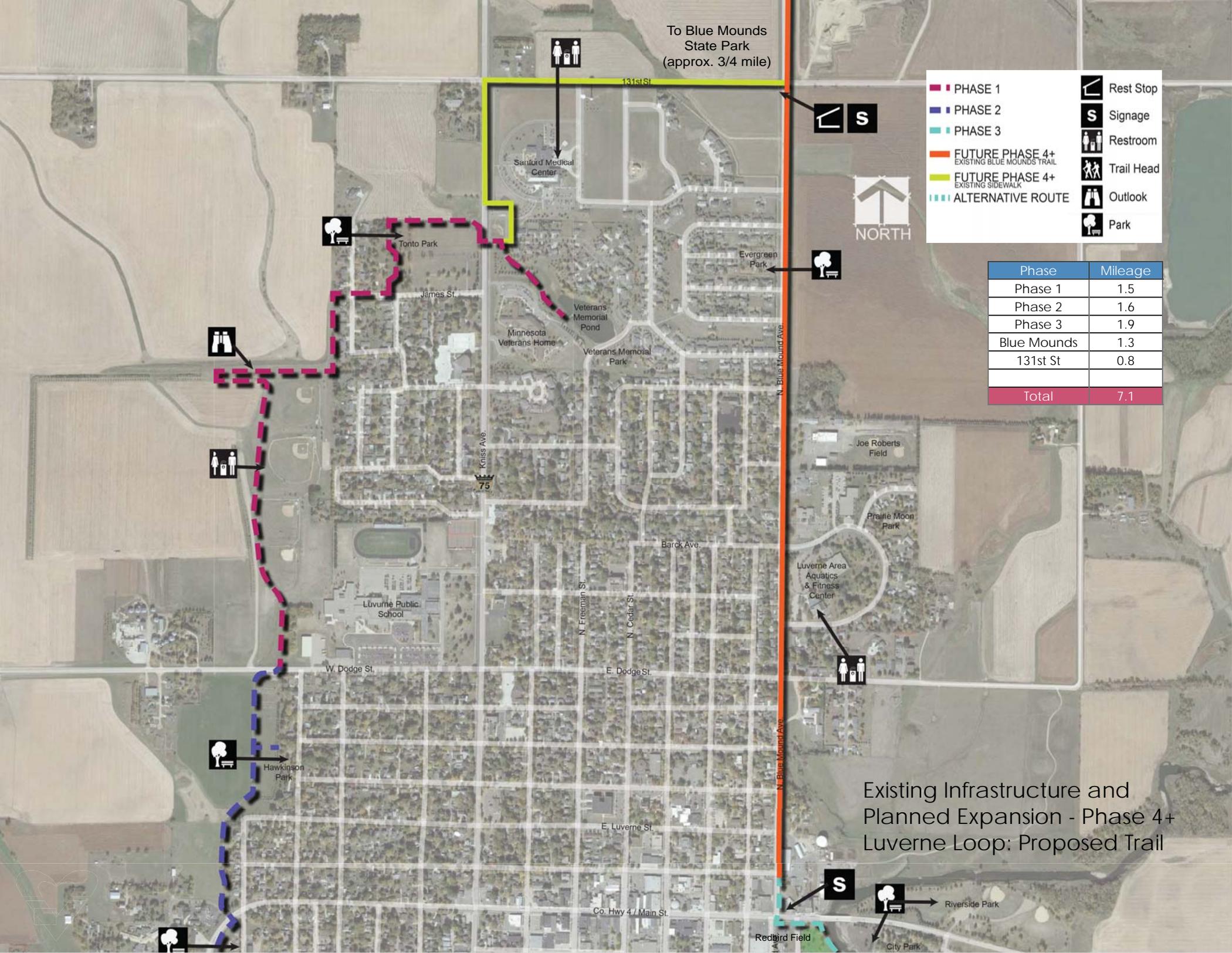
Moreover, the trailhead development at Redbird Field strategically pulls visitors through the community and showcases our historic Main Street, which is within walking distance from the trail.

LAND USE & OWNERSHIP

Easements needed: Rock County Agricultural Society Fairgrounds and Warren Baker - RIM Property.

FUNDING

Apply for Legacy funding, if eligible, or Local Trail Connections funding, and match with City or other non-state funds. See Objective 9A, Strategy 3 on page 96 and the Appendix for potential funding sources.



To Blue Mounds State Park
(approx. 3/4 mile)

— PHASE 1		Rest Stop
— PHASE 2		Signage
— PHASE 3		Restroom
— FUTURE PHASE 4+ EXISTING BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL		Trail Head
— FUTURE PHASE 4+ EXISTING SIDEWALK		Outlook
- - - ALTERNATIVE ROUTE		Park

Phase	Mileage
Phase 1	1.5
Phase 2	1.6
Phase 3	1.9
Blue Mounds	1.3
131st St	0.8
Total	7.1



Existing Infrastructure and
Planned Expansion - Phase 4+
Laverne Loop: Proposed Trail

PHASES FOUR+

Phase Four+ consists of two phases, of a timeline that is yet to be determined following construction of phases one through three. Both phases expand existing trails or walks to a width of 10'. Wider trails will increase safety and accommodate additional users.

One phase consists of widening the city portion of the existing Blue Mounds trail that travels north from Redbird Field past 131st St to connect to Blue Mounds State Park. The length of this trail segment is 1.3 miles.

The other phase consists of widening the existing walk that runs along 131st St and then turns south past the Sanford Medical Center and Healing Garden to complete the Luverne Loop at the Veterans Memorial Pond. The length of this widened walk segment is 0.8 miles.

**PRELIMINARY CONSTRUCTION
TIMELINE:** 2020.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

This phase includes the existing Blue Mounds Trail and sidewalk along 131st Street.

PUBLIC NEEDS MET

Phases Four+ will complete the trail loop, as well as link the loop to the Blue Mounds State Park north of town. These phases are unique in that they consist of improvements to existing walks and trails.

LAND USE & OWNERSHIP

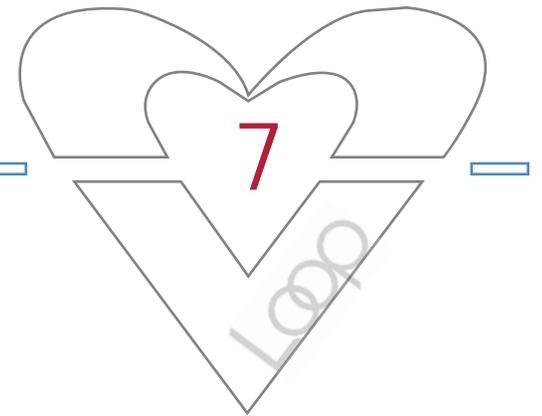
None known.

FUNDING

Apply for Legacy, Local Trail Connections or Transportation Alternatives funding, and match with City or other eligible funds. See Objective 9A, Strategy 5 on page 96 and the Appendix for potential funding sources.



CHAPTER
TRAIL AMENITIES



Everybody needs beauty as well as bread,
places to play in and pray in,
where nature may heal and cheer
and give strength to the body and soul.

John Muir

REDBIRD FIELD TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT



REDBIRD FIELD TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT

Redbird Field, situated perfectly along the Rock River on County Road 4, is envisioned to be the visitor center and kickoff/ending point to the Luverne Loop trail network.

Redbird Field also conveniently connects Main Street, The Blue Mounds trail, and the beautiful City Park.

At nearly 13 acres, with access to nearly 13 miles of trails, Redbird Field will house trailhead amenities such as a bike pump/repair station, a park shelter, trails, parking, site furnishings, litter/recycling receptacles, restrooms, and a site way finding map and interpretive signage program.

The anticipated construction of Redbird Field is preliminarily set to begin in 2017 or 2018.



Context Map (far left) and Existing Site Images (middle, and above right) of Redbird Field Site

REDBIRD FIELD TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT - CONCEPT 1



REDBIRD FIELD TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT - CONCEPT 1 ZOOM



CREAMERY POND DEVELOPMENT



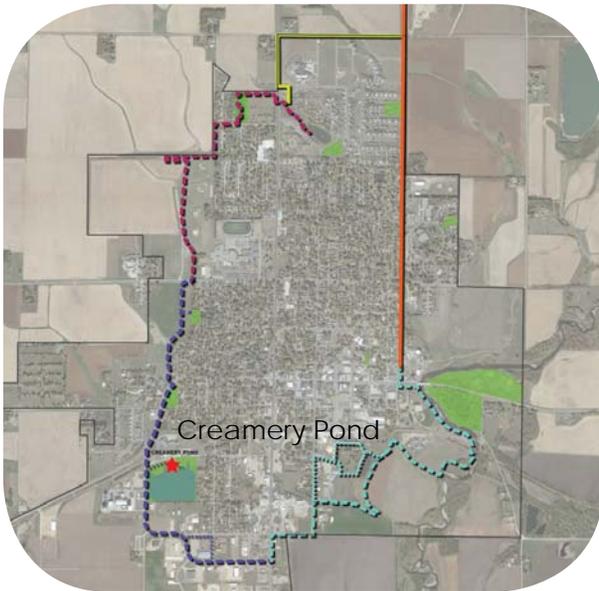
CREAMERY POND DEVELOPMENT

Creamery Pond, located near County Road 4 and Edgehill Street, is envisioned to be the outdoor recreation hub nestled right within the city.

At nearly 22 acres, with a 12 acre permanent pond, Creamery Pond has the potential to house many amenities of an outdoor recreation area - with fishing piers, a kayak/canoe launch, park shelters, parking and handicap

accessibility, site furnishings, litter/recycling receptacles and a site way finding and interpretive signage program.

The anticipated construction of Creamery Pond is preliminarily set to begin in 2017 or 2018.

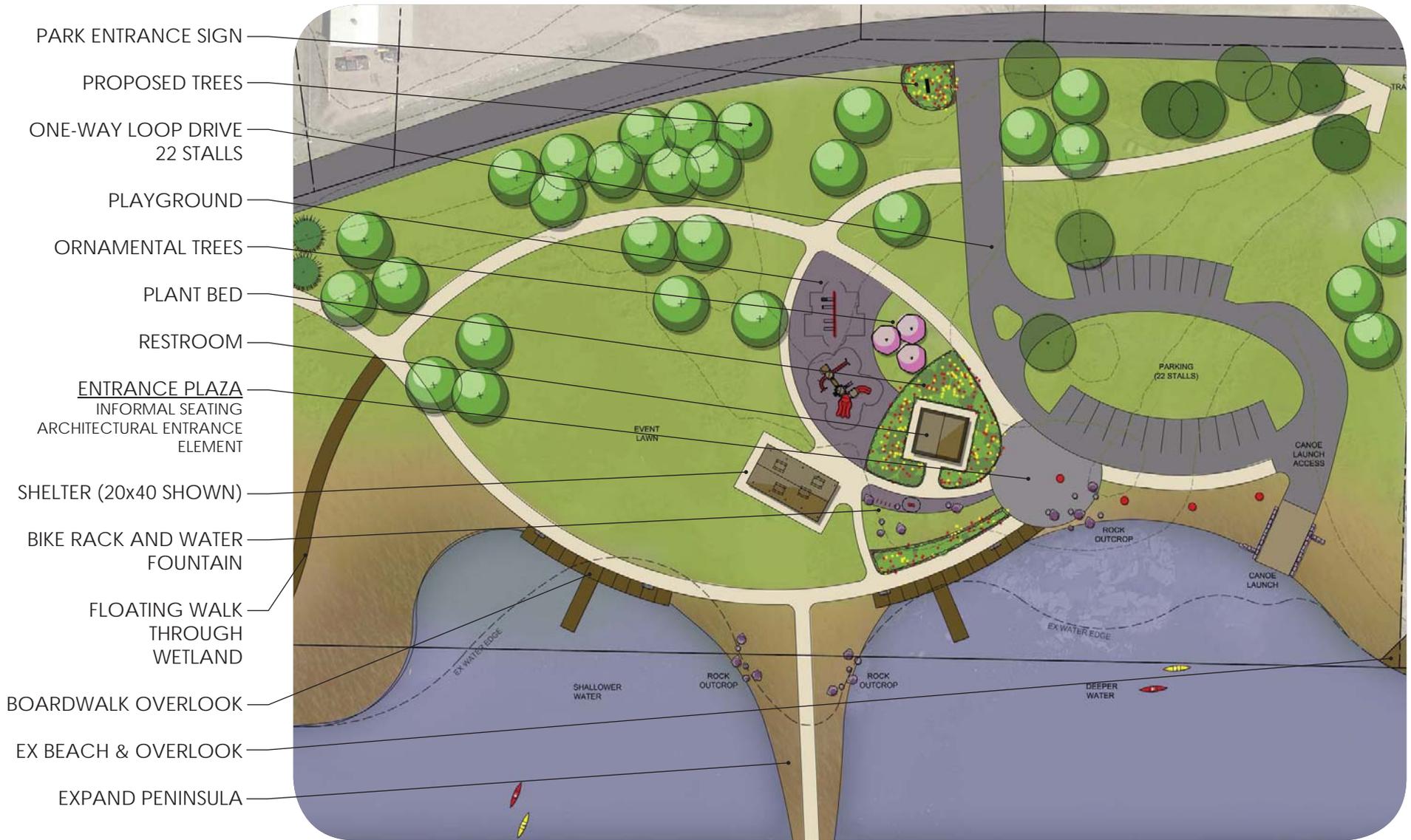


Context Map (far left) and Existing Site Images (middle, and above right) of Redbird Field Site

CREAMERY POND DEVELOPMENT - CONCEPT 1



CREAMERY POND DEVELOPMENT - CONCEPT 1 ZOOM



WAYSIDE REST AREAS

Wayside rest areas will be interspersed at semi-regular intervals throughout the trail length.

Providing shade, seating elements, directional signage, and in some cases water fountains or bike repair stations, the stops will be constructed

of durable, aesthetically pleasing, continuous materials palette to match signage and wayfinding elements throughout the Luverne Loop trail.

See the following pages for preliminary design concept options and inspiration materials.



TRAILHEAD NODE

WAYSIDE REST AREAS



WAYFINDING / TRAIL ID SIGNAGE



PARK / TRAILHEAD SIGN

INSPIRATION & MATERIALS

The Luverne Loop will provide multiple trail access points and resting spots/ trailheads that are accessible by users of all abilities. Trail signage will be not only directional, but also interpretive and educational in nature. Shelters, shade structures, and gateways will be used to shape these resting spots and trail heads.

A similar line of site furnishings will be used throughout the corridor to reinforce the trail's identity, and a plant and materials palette can be found on following pages. Special consideration will be given to all users in the design of trail amenities and access points, as well as restrooms, picnicking facilities, and interpretation programs.

Trail surfacing and signage will be both functional and safe, meeting all local and national ADA codes and traffic safety standards. Care will be taken to ensure maximum slopes are reduced whenever possible for ease of use for mobility impaired pedestrians.

The design inspiration for trail features arose from the key objectives of the Strategic Vision for Luverne (see Background on pages 5-6 for more information). By improving aesthetics and enhancing marketing efforts, the Luverne Loop will create vitality for the City of Luverne.

Inspiration adjectives to which trail design strives to achieve include:

FAMILY-FRIENDLY
AUTHENTIC
OUTDOORSY
CREATIVE
ENTERPRISING
EDUCATED

NATIVE PLANT PALETTE & QUARTZITE STONE



PICNIC SHELTER

POSSIBLE LOCATION:
REDBIRD FIELD

Park shelters will be constructed of long-lasting, low-maintenance materials, in natural color tones or with accents to match Luverne's branding standards. Primary lumber trusses and framing will consist of gluelam wood, with durable asphalt shingles or a metal standing seam roof.

See images at right for picnic shelter design intent.



Possible Source: Poligon Wood Shelters
www.poligon.com; 1(616)399-1963
Rectangle WLG 20x36 TGAS (at right, top left)
Northern Skyline NSL 30x34TG (top right)

SHELTER



SITE FURNISHINGS

POSSIBLE LOCATION:
THROUGHOUT TRAIL LOOP

Site furnishings will also be constructed of long-lasting, low-maintenance materials, in dark colors to match Luverne's dark bronze historic light poles and proposed downtown district bench designs. Furnishings will be primarily powder coated, surface mount, recycled steel or ductile-iron casting.

See images at left for site furnishings design intent.

Possible Source: Victor Stanley
www.victorstanley.com; 1(800)368-2573
 Bench - Framers Modern FMBF-324 (at left)
 Litter Receptacle - Ironsites SD-42 with Rain Bonnet (top right)
 Bike Rack - Cycle Centry BRHS-101 (top left)



CHAPTER

TRAIL MARKETING & DESIGN STANDARDS



A trail is not a route from here to there. It is a place to reconnect. What does the trail look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like, taste, and sound like? Does the experience challenge the mind? Challenge the body? Does it touch a chord that resonates the soul? A good trail will do that!

Robert Stearns, Urban Edges Inc., 2001.

LOGO & DESIGN STANDARDS

The Luverne identity was created to unify the city's brand - embracing the community's progressive thinking to move us into the future.

Our branding success depends on the consistent and frequent use of key identifying elements, producing a positive and lasting impression to those we serve.

The City of Luverne logo is hand-designed and should be reproduced with great care. It should appear on all communications and be used in compliance with the standards shown in the Luverne Graphic Standards Guide dated 04.08.2013. See aforementioned guide for more information and guidance on correct usage of logo color and type.

City of Luverne Color Logo



City of Luverne Black/White Logos



Luverne, Minnesota, Color Logo



Luverne Trail System Logo



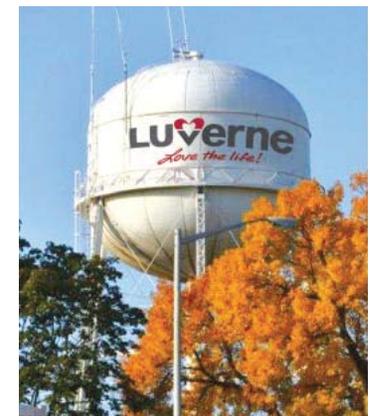
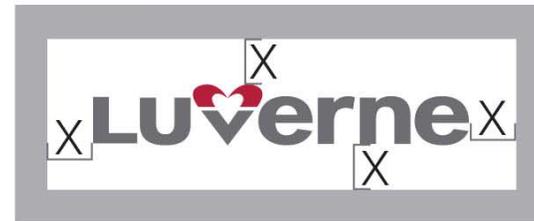
Luverne Trail System Black/White Logos



Logo examples from the Luverne Graphics Standards Guide

LOGO & DESIGN STANDARDS

X =  height and width of the logotype



100% Black

100% Black 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 0 R: 35
M: 0 G: 31
Y: 0 B: 32
K: 100

PMS 646

PMS 646 Blue 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 72 R: 83
M: 43 G: 129
Y: 16 B: 172
K: 1

PMS 7407

PMS 7407 Gold 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 20 R: 204
M: 38 G: 156
Y: 84 B: 74
K: 1

Pantone 7427 4-color Equivalent

PMS 7427 Red 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 0 R: 156
M: 100 G: 19
Y: 65 B: 46
K: 28

PMS 512

Pantone 512 Purple 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 60 R: 120
M: 100 G: 37
Y: 24 B: 111
K: 9

PMS 424 Gray

PMS 424 Gray is the color equivalent for 70% black and the RGB and Hex equivalents:

R: 108 Hex #: 6c6
G: 111
B: 112

PMS 5835

PMS 5835 Green 4-color process, RGB and Hex equivalents:

C: 39 R: 161
M: 30 G: 156
Y: 77 B: 90
K: 4

Logo Colors

Brand Accent Colors

Clear Space Surrounding Logo

Sign Examples



CHAPTER IMPLEMENTATION



"The future belongs to those who prepare for it."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882

"The three ingredients: Plans, Action, and Money are essential to the success of any trails program."

G. Douglas Hofe, *American Trails - Rediscovered, Parks & Recreation*, 1971

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Luverne Loop trail will be completed over five phases, as outlined in Chapter 6, Trail Development Plan.

Trail management, however, is more than just construction. To realize the full benefits of the trail, such as community health and tourism benefits, and to ensure its sustainability into the future, it is necessary to prepare for comprehensive trail management.

Trail management starts as soon as the first phase is open to the public, and includes not only trail maintenance, but also staffing, programming, special events, promotion, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as life cycle planning for trail and trailhead infrastructure.

The following charts detail how the City of Luverne will construct and manage the Luverne Loop trail. They contain the objectives and detailed strategies that will accomplish the vision and goals, listed below, that are introduced on p. 7-8 of Chapter 1.

To achieve the vision and goals of this Master Plan, a cohesive group of responsible parties must complete these strategies in a timely, orderly manner. A target completion date for each strategy is therefore included. Successful implementation will require coordinated efforts and investments of many project supporters.

The Responsible Party identified in the charts will take the lead on implementing each strategy, although

other agencies and organizations may be involved.

MASTER PLAN GOALS

1. Trail Development
2. Trail Design
3. Trail Destination - Scenic
4. Trail Amenities
5. Health Promotion
6. Trail Destination - Tourism
7. Economic Development
8. Management, Maintenance, Monitoring
9. Funding

GOAL ONE: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Develop a multi-use, hard-surfaced trail, the Luverne Loop, that circumnavigates the city and incorporates the city portion of the existing Blue Mounds Trail.

Objective 1A: Provide better access between the city and Blue Mounds State Park and its campground			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Maintain curb cuts and road crossings along the Blue Mounds Trail, upgrading where necessary to meet current standards	On-going	City
2	To better accommodate multiple uses, upgrade the existing Blue Mounds Trail between its southern terminus and 131st St. to meet current trail standards as specified in Objective 2A Strategy 1, including widening the trail to 10 feet minimum. This segment of the Blue Mounds Trail will form part of the Luverne Loop Trail	2020	City
Objective 1B: Connect residential areas of Luverne to the school campus			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Route the trail through the school athletic field area, coordinating with the school district on route selection and design to encourage bicycling and walking to school, and offer opportunities for school use of the trail, while minimizing disturbance to school athletic activities	2015	City & Luverne Public Schools
2	Coordinate with the school district to provide trail or sidewalk connections from the Luverne Loop Trail to the school campus' sidewalks and parking area	2015	City

GOAL ONE: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

Objective 1C: Encourage tourism spending by connecting the trail to commercial areas: Main Street, the Highway 75 corridor, and Blue Mounds State Park			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Coordinate with MnDOT to allow bike lanes along Highway 75 in conjunction with road improvement project from I-90 to Sanford	2015	City
2	Route the trails to cross Highway 75 within the I-90/Highway 75 commercial corridor to provide trail access to hotels, restaurants and other tourist-related businesses	2017	City
3	Draw tourists to Main Street by routing the trail from Redbird Field across Main St. to the existing Blue Mounds Trail trailhead	2018-2019	City
4	Widen and upgrade curb cuts and the pedestrian crossing of Main St. along the trail route to accommodate trail traffic	2018-2019	City
Objective 1D: Connect the Blue Mounds Trail to city parks, and provide safe access to city parks for pedestrians and bicyclists			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Develop a spur trail to Veterans Park and the Minnesota Veterans Home	2015	City
2	Route the trail through Tonto Park, siting the trail to retain the tree canopy and to connect the playground area with the main trail	2015	City
3	Develop a spur trail from the Luverne Loop to the planned Creamery Pond Park	2017	City
4	Route the trail through Kolbert Park	2017	City & Rock County
5	Provide a spur trail from the Luverne Loop to Hawkinson Park	2017	City
6	Provide for bicycling and walking access between the Blue Mounds/Luverne Loop Trail and Evergreen Park	2020	City

GOAL ONE: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

Objective 1E: Locate and design the trail to allow for future connections to Sioux Falls, the planned regional East – West trail, and the Casey Jones State Trail			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Route the trail to cross the County-owned railroad corridor, a possible location of the East-West regional trail	2017	City
2	Since Blue Mounds State Park, Luverne and Schoeneman Park are specified as destinations for the Casey Jones State Trail, the circular design of the Luverne Loop Trail offers two routes to travel around the city from Blue Mounds State Park to Schoeneman Park	2017	City, Rock County, DNR, & the Friends of the Casey Jones Trail
Objective 1F: Divide the trail development into four phases to take advantage of state and federal grants, and to better manage the project workload			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Acquire necessary land and easements, and design Phase 1: From Veterans Memorial Pond west then south to Dodge Street	2015	City
2	Construct Phase 1 (2015)	2015-2016	City
3	Secure funds, acquire any necessary land and easements, and begin design for Phase 2, from Dodge St. south then east to Highway 75 (2016)	2015-2016	City
4	Finalize design and construct Phase 2 (2016)	2016	City
5	Finalize route planning, secure funds, and acquire any necessary land and easements for Phase 3, from Highway 75 east to the Rock River, then north to the Blue Mounds Trail's southern terminus north of Main Street	2016-2017	City
6	Finalize design and construct Phase 3	2018-2019	City
7	Plan, design and construct a widening of the Blue Mounds Trail from its southern terminus north to 131st St. and widen 131st St. sidewalk from the Blue Mounds Trail to Veterans Memorial Pond	2020	City

GOAL TWO: TRAIL DESIGN

Design and develop the Luverne Loop Trail as a safe facility for non-motorized recreation and transportation, to serve multiple uses for residents and visitors of all ages, and to meet the criteria and standards for trails of regional significance, as specified in the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails System Plan and the Strategic Plan, and in MN Statute 85.536, Subd. 6.

Objective 2A: Design and manage the Luverne Loop Trail to safely accommodate multiple uses, including bicycling, walking, running and rollerskating, as well as use by people using strollers and wheelchairs			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Locate and design the trail to meet the width, turning radius, slope, cross slope and other guidelines in the current version of the ASHTO Guide to Development of Bicycle Facilities and the MnDOT Bikeway Facility Design Manual, Chapter 5, Shared Use Paths, to the extent feasible	2015-2020	City & Rock County
2	Coordinate with MN DOT and Rock County to locate, design the trail's road crossings to maximize safety and accommodate all intended types of trail users	2015-2020	City & Rock County
3	Monitor the trail/road crossings periodically for safety and functionality, especially the Highway 75 crossings, and adjust the crossing facility when necessary	2015-2020	City & Rock County
4	To better accommodate multiple uses, install an asphalt surface. Where preferred for aesthetic reasons, concrete may be substituted	2015-2020	City & Rock County

GOAL TWO: TRAIL DESIGN CONTINUED

Objective 2B: Design the trail to meet the needs of residents and visitors of all ages, including rehabilitation patients and the elderly as well as running teams and physical education classes			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for trails and Street crossings, to the extent practicable, in order to better accommodate people with mobility and other impairments	2015-2020	City
2	Provide facilities such as parking, drinking fountains and restrooms that meet accessibility guidelines at Redbird Field Trailhead, as well as accessible paths between the trail and these facilities	2015-2020	City
3	To the extent feasible, follow Accessibility Guidelines in the design and installation of interpretive signs, information kiosks and wayfinding signs	2015-2020	City
4	Provide interpretive information in alternative formats to accommodate people with hearing and sight impairments, where practicable	2015-2020	City
5	To accommodate groups, design the trail to a width of 10 feet minimum, with graded shoulders. Provide space for groups in the design of parking, and trail head and trail wayside amenities	2015-2020	City
6	Provide shoreline fishing access for pedestrians from the trail to the Rock River at one or more locations (mow path)	2019-2020	City

GOAL THREE: TRAIL DESTINATION

Provide a high quality, scenic and natural setting for the trail that offers a “destination” trail experience.

Objective 3A: Locate the trail, to the extent feasible, outside of road rights-of-way and through or near natural habitat and scenic views, and minimize road crossings			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Route the trail along 131st St. to take advantage of the views of Blue Mounds State Park	2015	City
2	Traverse the top of the man-made berm near the public school property to offer views of the city, athletic fields, and farm and conservation land	2015	City & Rock County
3	Pass near the Poplar Creek tributary, Creamery Pond, the pond northwest of fairgrounds, the Rock River, and other conservation lands, to the extent feasible	2017-2019	City & Rock County
Objective 3 B: Restore native habitat at natural areas along the trail corridor, where possible, to enhance opportunities for enjoying nature and wildlife watching along the trail			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Coordinate with MnDNR, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other agencies to consider removing invasive species and restoring native shoreline and emergent habitat along water bodies within the trail corridor, including the Poplar Creek tributary, Creamery Pond, Poplar Creek, and the Rock River corridor, to improve habitat for waterfowl, birds and pollinators	On-going	City, Rock County & Luverne Public Schools
2	For habitat restoration projects, coordinate with schools and youth and community groups, when possible, to provide service learning opportunities	On-going	City, Rock County & Luverne Public Schools
3	When developing the trail through or near natural areas, reseed the trail construction zone with native species instead of turfgrass, when not incongruous with adjacent land uses	2015-2020	City

4	At Creamery Pond and within the trail corridor along the Rock River, work with DNR and other agencies to consider water quality improvements for human contact and fish habitat	2017-2020	City, Rock County & DNR*
5	Between the County Fairgrounds and Redbird Field, route the trail as much as possible near natural areas, conservation lands, and the Rock River, and away from Redbird Field's active recreation area	2018-2019	City
6	If the trail passes near the pond northwest of the fairgrounds, coordinate with appropriate agencies to enhance wildlife watching opportunities by removing invasive plants, restoring with natives, and maintaining a viewshed into the pond	2018-2019	City

GOAL FOUR: TRAIL AMENITIES

Provide trail users with a high quality, unique experience by developing a trailhead and trail waysides, improving existing parks along the trail, and by providing interpretation and wayfinding information.

Objective 4 A: Create a system of trailheads and trail waysides at destinations along the trail or at scenic locations in order to provide parking and rest areas, and to encourage use of the trail for transportation

STRATEGIES		Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Develop a new, primary trailhead for the Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trail at Redbird Field by adding an information kiosk, bicycle parking, a bicycle repair station, and possible benches and landscaping, as depicted in the Redbird Field Concept Plan in this document	2016-2019	City
2	Create a trail signage wayside at the northern end of the city, near the intersection of the existing Blue Mounds Trail and the Luverne Loop, in the vicinity of Blue Mound Avenue between East Christenson Drive and 131st Street. Install an information kiosk and wayfinding signage to orient trail users from Blue Mounds State Park (and the future Casey Jones State Trail to the City)	2016-2019	City
3	Develop the Creamery Pond area into a new city Park, as depicted in the concept plan in this document. Consider including: fish stocking, a fishing pier, shoreline fishing access, a picnic area, parking, open areas, restrooms, an information kiosk and bicycle parking	2017-2018	City, Rock County & DNR*
4	Provide trail and tourist information at the new Rotary Park in the I-90/Highway 75 commercial corridor, focusing on orienting visitors to the city who are staying in lodging establishments in this corridor	2018-2019	City

*DNR = Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

GOAL FOUR: TRAIL AMENITIES CONTINUED

Objective 4B: Encourage bicycling and walking to parks, and enhance the trail experience by installing amenities in existing city parks along or near the trail			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Provide temporary or permanent restrooms at either Kolbert, Tonto or Hawkinson Park	2017	City
Objective 4 C: Create and install a wayfinding system of signs and maps to inform visitors of and direct them to places of interest, and to encourage residents to use the trail for transportation			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Develop a trail map that depicts the Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trail, the trailhead and trail waysides, spur trails, and key points of interest in the area. Post the map at information kiosks (see Objective 4D), and make available through electronic media	2018-2020	City, Rock County, & CVB*
2	Coordinate with road managers to create and install safety signs along the trail	2015-2020	City
3	Coordinate with road managers, the Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce, and LIFT to create and install signs to direct visitors to the trailhead and parking, and to direct people from the trail to Main Street and other commercial areas, historic sites, and public facilities, such as the hospital, Veterans' Home and the ice arena	2019-2020	City & The CVB*
4	Install mile markers along the Luverne Loop main trail	2017-2020	City
Objective 4 D: Create a unique trail experience, increase interest in Luverne, and enhance the educational value of the trail by creating and installing interpretive signs and kiosks along the trail at historical and natural sites and other points of interest			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Design and install information kiosks at the Redbird Field trailhead, the northern trail wayside (Blue Mounds Trail/Luverne Loop intersection), Creamery Pond Park, and Rotary Park	2017-2020	City

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau

GOAL FOUR: TRAIL AMENITIES CONTINUED

2	The information kiosks may include the trail map in Strategy 4C(1) above, and information and/or maps on:	2017-2020	The CVB*
	a. Destinations on and off the trail in Luverne and how to bicycle or walk to them, such as the ice arena, medical center, Veterans Home, and shops and restaurants		
	b. Biking and walking routes to and information about destinations outside of Luverne, including Blue Mounds Trail, Blue Mounds State Park, Schoenemann Park, Touch the Sky Prairie, and Sioux Falls		
	c. A guide to historic sites and the location of the History Center		
	d. A bulletin board for temporary announcements		
3	Develop and install interpretive signs, at significant trailhead and trail wayside locations. Possible locations and subjects include the following:	2017-2020	City & LIFT*
	a. Redbird Field – Primary Trailhead: historic sites in Luverne, city history		
	b. Creamery Pond – Trailhead: history of the pond; pond life; waterfowl, fish and their habitats		
	c. Rock River Trail Wayside: the river, River watershed, history of floods and floodplain, shoreline habitat, fauna, paddling and fishing opportunities		
	d. Vet’s Pond, existing park along Spur Trail: Veterans Home history and significance		
	e. The Berm, Trail Wayside (County Property): purpose of the berm, floodplain, Poplar Creek tributary and its connections to the Rock River		
	f. The Pond Northwest of the Fairgrounds, Trail Wayside: ecological function of pond, wildlife, birds and their habitat		

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor’s Bureau
LIFT = Luverne Initiatives for Tomorrow

GOAL FIVE: HEALTH PROMOTION

Encourage health and wellness among Luverne and Rock County residents by promoting trail use.

Objective 5A: Keep the community informed of trail construction progress and trail events and activities through a variety of media			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Include the trail on the websites of the City of Luverne and Blue Mounds State Park	On-going	City
2	Write and distribute trail-related news releases locally and regionally	On-going	City
3	Use social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, to market the trail	On-going	City
4	Post announcements on bulletin boards on trailhead kiosks	2017-2020	The CVB
Objective 5B: Promote trail use through events and activities for local residents			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Partner with Sanford Health to encourage trail use for health, such as “park prescriptions”—doctor recommendations for physical activity, or event sponsorship	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB*
2	Coordinate with public school physical education and coaching staff to encourage trail use for classes or training	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB
3	Coordinate with Luverne community education staff to offer activities and classes on the trail	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB*
4	Partner with community organizations to host an annual family day on the trail	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB
5	Coordinate with community organizations and the Southwest State Health Improvement Program to offer special events on the trail. Ideas include: family trail rides, glo rides/walks (night), bike and outdoor movies, geocaching along the trail, bird watching tours, incentives or contests, community monthly rides, a student biking group, bike rodeos (children’s bike safety and skills workshop)	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB
6	Coordinate with public school staff to encourage walking and biking to school via the trail. Ideas include: participate in the national Walk/Bike to School Day, create walking school buses, incentives/contests for walk/bike miles	2019-2020	Chamber & the CVB

*Chamber = Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce
CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor’s Bureau

GOAL SIX: TRAIL DESTINATION

Develop Luverne into a trail destination through trail promotion and trail related community development.

Objective 6A: Increase tourism to Luverne by marketing the Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trail to bicyclists and walkers beyond Rock County			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Create articles for the Minnesota Trails statewide trail magazine, Explore Minnesota's annual biking publication and e-magazine, and other printed and e-publications, such as HaveFunBiking.com	On-going	Chamber & the CVB
2	Promote the trail to television stations in larger markets, such as Sioux Falls and the Twin Cities	On-going	Chamber & the CVB
3	Market the trail and Luverne area to the Sioux Falls metro area, targeting bicyclists and other outdoor recreation enthusiasts	On-going	Chamber & the CVB
4	Develop trail tourism packages and market to outdoor recreation and bicycling clubs as well as through traditional methods	On-going	Chamber & the CVB
5	Include the trail in Luverne's tourism book	2017	Chamber & the CVB
Objective 6B: Cross promote the Luverne Trails with other tourism destinations and businesses			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Coordinate with Blue Mounds State Park staff to cross promote the Park, the Blue Mounds Trail, the Luverne Loop, and Luverne through websites, information kiosks, maps, other media, and joint events	On-going	The CVB*
2	Pursue cross promotion with Main Street businesses and other tourist-related businesses in Luverne	2018-2019	The CVB
3	Partner with area communities on tourism marketing, including the King of Trails Scenic Byway communities	2018-2019	The CVB
4	Coordinate with Sioux Falls trail staff to explore cross promotional opportunities	2018-2019	The CVB

*Chamber = Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce
CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau

GOAL SIX: TRAIL DESTINATION CONTINUED

Objective 6C: Coordinate with community organizations to organize and host weekend events to attract trail tourists			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
4	Develop an annual biking or trail event to attract trail tourists; ideas include: guided trail tours, art/trail events, and pedal powered electricity demonstrations	On-going	City
Objective 6D: Improve on-road bicycling and walking conditions in Luverne, especially between the trail and key destinations, to increase safety and business traffic			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan to better accommodate non-motorized traffic between the trail and primary destinations, including downtown and the I-90/Highway 75 business corridors. Accommodations may include bike lanes, bike routes, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, and curb cuts	2020 and Beyond	City
2	Create and pass a City Complete Streets policy	2018-2019	City
3	Coordinate with MnDOT's bicycle/pedestrian office or the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota to work toward achieving Bicycle Friendly Community status	2020 and Beyond	City
4	Continue to install bicycle racks at primary commercial and recreational destinations around the city	On-going	City
5	Coordinate with hotels to provide secure overnight bicycle storage	2018-2020	The CVB*

*Chamber = Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce
CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau



Objective 6E: Include unique and high quality trail enhancements to increase Luverne’s attraction as a trail “destination”

	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Work with LIFT and local artists to create or select a design style for the trail and trailhead amenities, including benches, bicycle racks and landscaping, that complements Luverne’s branding	2015 On-going	City & LIFT*
2	Engage local artists to assist in developing designs for information kiosks, interpretive signs and sign stands, mile markers, and other elements at trailheads and trail waysides so that they reflect Luverne’s community character and combine art and nature	2020	City
3	Consider installing other amenities that improve convenience or enhance enjoyment. Ideas include: bike-related art along the trail or at trailheads, dog waste stations, an outdoor amphitheater at a trailhead, fire pits, and rain shelters	2020	City

GOAL SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Use the trail as a catalyst for tourist-related economic development.

Objective 7A: Improve tourist related public infrastructure through public capital investments or public/private partnerships

	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Collaborate with the MnDNR; the Friends of the Casey Jones Trail Association and other affected communities to accelerate the development of the Casey Jones State Trail, especially between Pipestone, Split Rock Creek State Park, Blue Mounds State Park and Luverne	On-going	City & Rock County
2	Collaborate with the Southwest Regional Development Commission, the City of Sioux Falls, affected Counties, the Sioux Falls Area Bicyclists and other interested parties to support the development of the East-West regional trail, especially between Sioux Falls and Luverne	On-going	City & Rock County

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor’s Bureau
LIFT = Luverne Initiatives for Tomorrow



GOAL SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

3	Join and support the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota and the Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails Coalition in their trail advocacy efforts, and monitor the activities of the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission	On-going	City
4	Coordinate with MnDNR water trail staff to explore the possibility of developing a water trail on the Rock River to complement the land-based trail	On-going	City, CVB & LIFT*
5	Research the feasibility and viability of a City- or County-owned campground to generate park and trail maintenance income	On-going	City, CVB & LIFT*
6	Coordinate with Blue Mounds State Park staff to work toward enlarging the parking area at the Quarry entrance to the State Park	2020	Rock County & DNR
7	Encourage the establishment of a private bicycle rental concession at the Redbird Field trailhead	2020	LIFT*
Objective 7B: Coordinate with the SWRDC, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), and other agencies to foster the establishment or expansion of tourist-related businesses in Luverne, emphasizing opportunities for local residents			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Encourage the establishment of a sports store or stand	2020	LIFT*
2	Recruit a bicycle repair business, or work with high school or Minnesota West Community and Technical College staff to train students in bicycle repair as a possible entrepreneurial opportunity	2020	LIFT
3	Encourage the establishment of a café or sandwich shop overlooking the trail	2020	LIFT
4	Recruit a bed and breakfast business	2020	LIFT

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau
DNR = Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
LIFT = Luverne Initiatives for Tomorrow

GOAL EIGHT: MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND MONITORING

The City of Luverne will manage and maintain the Luverne Loop Trail and the portion of the Blue Mounds Trail that is within the City limits and forms part of the Luverne Loop for a minimum of twenty years from the trail's opening date.

Objective 8A: Manage the trails for the uses specified in this plan			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	The City will commit to funding the trail management and maintenance through City funds, supplemented when possible with other public or private grants and donations	On-going	City
2	Rules and regulations that apply to City parks shall also apply to the trail corridor, trailheads, and trail waysides, including but not limited to:	On-going	City
	a. The trail shall be open from dawn to dusk		
	b. No snowmobiles or other motorized vehicles will be allowed on the trail, except for motorized wheelchairs or other necessary mobility devices		
	c. Large group activities, such as races, shall require a city permit		
	d. No alcohol is permitted, unless allowed by permit		
	e. No dogs off-leash		
3	Trail management shall be led by the Public Works Director, or other City staff, as directed by the City Administrator	On-going	City
4	Monitor trail easements and coordinate any issues with landowners	On-going	City
5	Monitor trail road and railroad crossings and coordinate with road/railroad managers (i.e. Rock County or MnDOT) regarding crossing maintenance and safety issues	On-going	City

GOAL EIGHT: MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND MONITORING CONTINUED

Objective 8C: Monitor trail use to optimize visitor use and enjoyment, and for the efficacy of management policies			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Participate in Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission research initiatives, such as visitation counts and use profiles	On-going	CVB*
2	Periodically query residents, trail users, or trail event participants through County Fair surveys or other methods, regarding issues such as trail condition, management, and amenities	On-going	City
3	Periodically monitor trail programming and special events, and adjust management strategies when necessary	On-going	CVB*

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau

GOAL NINE: FUNDING

Utilize a variety of funding sources, including local, regional, state, federal and private grants and donations to develop and manage the Luverne Loop Trail and the related strategies in this Plan.

Objective 9A: Fund trail development			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	In coordination with Rock County, apply for Regional Trail status for the Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trail, through the Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trails Commission in order to be eligible for Trail Legacy funding (2015)	2015	City
2	Utilize City funds supplemented with a previously secured DNR Local Trail Connections grant to fund Phase 1 development (2015)	2015-2016	City
3	Apply for Legacy funding, if eligible, or Local Trail Connections funding for Phase 3 development, and match with City funds or other non-state funds	2016-2017	City
4	Leverage City funds to match a previously secured Federal Transportation Alternatives grant to fund Phase 2 development (2017)	2017	City & Rock County
5	Apply for Legacy, Local Trail Connections or Transportation Alternatives funding for Phase 4, and match with City or other eligible funds	2019	City
Objective 9B: Fund the development of trailheads and trail waysides			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Coordinate with DNR staff to apply for state funding to develop Creamery Pond. Possibilities include the following grant programs: Outdoor Recreation, Water Recreation Cooperative Acquisition and Development, or Conservation Partners Legacy	2016	City
2	Apply for Trail Legacy funding, if the trail is found to be regionally significant, for the improvements to Redbird Field for the trailhead. If ineligible, apply for a DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant	2016-2017	City
4	Apply to the Historical Society for funding of interpretive signs and other materials that are history-related	2018-2019	City

GOAL NINE: FUNDING CONTINUED

Objective 9C: Fund habitat improvements within the trail corridor			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Utilize free assessment and project planning assistance from DNR, the Army Corps of Engineers, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to assess possible projects to remove invasive exotic species and restore native habitat along portions of the trail corridor, such as Creamery Pond and adjacent to the Rock River	2020	City
2	Partner with public schools or other community educational or service organizations and cooperatively develop service learning projects to broaden the eligibility for grant programs	2020	City
3	Apply for DNR's Conservation Partners Legacy, or Project Learning Tree service learning grants	2020	City

GOAL NINE: FUNDING CONTINUED

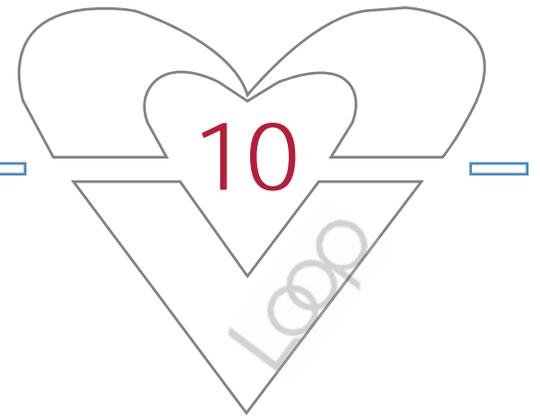
Objective 9D: Fund the other amenities and initiatives in this plan, and ensure the sustainability of the Luverne Loop Trail through long term funding for operations and maintenance			
	STRATEGIES	Target Completion Date	Responsible Party
1	Initiate a trail fundraising program, to be administered by the City or a charitable organization, to solicit private individual and corporate donations of cash, in-kind services, or materials, to match government grants and to fund amenities and operations that are ineligible for government grants	On-going	LIFT*
2	Continue to monitor regional, state and federal grant sources for parks, trails, recreation, non-motorized transportation, tourism and habitat restoration, and apply as needed(See grant chart in Plan)	On-going	City
3	Research and apply for applicable private and corporate foundation grants, such as People for Bikes grants, (see Appendix for more) to match government funding	On-going	City
4	Consider initiating one or more annual trail-related events as fundraising events	On-going	City
5	Consider Scenic Byways corridor plan with the other Minnesota communities along the King of Trails Scenic Byway (Highway 75), in order to become eligible for federal Scenic Byways funding	2020	Chamber & the CVB*
6	Consider coordinating with Luverne Public Schools staff and parents to create a Safe Routes to School initiative, in order to be eligible for Safe Routes to Schools federal funding	2020	Luverne Public Schools

*CVB = Luverne Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau
LIFT = Luverne Initiatives for Tomorrow



Image credit: Brian Peterson, "State of Wonders: The Rock Climber"
Star Tribune [Minneapolis] 22 April 2015. www.stateofwonders.com

CHAPTER OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE



A well-maintained trail is fun to hike on. With a broad, well-marked path free of debris, hikers can concentrate more on their surroundings and less on the footpath.

Victoria Logue, Backpacking: Essential Skills to Advanced Techniques, 2000

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Trails and trailheads need periodic maintenance in order to remain a safe and enjoyable place for people to recreate.

The following tables are common maintenance tasks that are performed by trail staff on existing hard surface trails, based on examples from across the U.S.

The amount of maintenance that a trail receives depends on many factors, including usage type and amount, terrain conditions, trail design and construction, weather, and budgets.

The Luverne Loop Trail will be maintained by the City of Luverne's Public Works Department.

See following pages for common maintenance tasks, and the target level of maintenance for the Luverne Loop Trail. Actual maintenance schedules may vary, depending on factors such as a high level of usage, storm events, or damage due to illegal uses.

HARD SURFACE TRAIL MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Maintenance Needs	Target Frequency
Mow Shoulder: If Grass If Planted With Natives:	Every 7-15 Days Annual
Reseed Shoulder, Repair Damage	As Needed
Pick Up Litter	During Mowing
Inspect Trail: (Condition of Surfaces, Bridges, Railings, Signage, Hazard Trees, Downed Limbs, etc.)	2-3 Times Per Month in High Season, As Soon As Possible After Storms OR Annually In Spring or After Major Storms
Remove Downed Trees/Limbs	Remove As Soon As Possible
Sweep Trail Surface	Once In Spring, Once In Fall, & After Major Storms
Trim/Remove Encroaching Vegetation	Annually In Spring or Late Fall
Maintain/Update Signs & Maps	As Needed; Inspect Annually
Repaint Pavement Markings (Center Lines, Safety Warnings, Mile Markers, etc.)	Annually or As Needed
Inspect & Clean Culverts/Drainage Structures	Annual Inspection & Cleaning
Maintain Lighting, If Applicable	As Needed (No Specific Trail Lights are Planned As of This Writing)
Remove Graffiti	Within 24 Hours if Offensive, 10 Days if Not Offensive

HARD SURFACE TRAIL MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Maintenance Needs	Target Frequency
Maintain Trailhead/Access Point Amenities	Monthly Inspections, Repair As Needed
Maintain Bridges, Boardwalks, Fences & Railings	Annual Inspection & After Major Storms, Repair/Replace As Needed
Repair Flood and Rain Damage	As Needed
Maintain Trees In Trail Corridor (Tree health, Hazard Tree Removal)	As Needed
Minor Repairs: Repair or Patch Minor Cracks & Edge Damage, Fill Potholes, etc.	Inspect In Spring, Repair As Needed
Seal Coat (Asphalt)	After 6-9 Years
Major Rehabilitation: Repave Asphalt (Usually Added to Capital Improvements Budget)	As Needed
Minor Resurfacing & Fill (Crushed Stone Surface)	As Needed
Major Resurfacing or Regrading (Crushed Stone or Similar Surface)	As Needed
Winter Snow Removal or Winter Trail Grooming	None

COMMON TRAILHEAD MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Maintenance Needs	Target Frequency
Maintain Parking Lot (Surface, Striping, Lighting, etc.)	As Needed
Clean Restroom/Portable Toilet	Daily
Maintain Restroom Lights, Water, etc.	As Needed
Upkeep & Update Information Kiosk & Other Signs	As Needed; Inspect Annually
Trash Receptacles	Daily
Water Fountain/Spigot	Daily Cleaning
Picnic Tables & Benches	Annual Inspections
Vending Machines	Weekly
Access Control (Bollards, Gates, etc.)	As Needed
Landscape Planting, Seeding, & Maintenance	Monthly or As Needed

Please Note: The trail maintenance schedule included here within is a suggested outline for maintenance. Needs and frequency are an approximation and are subject to change at the discretion of the City of Luverne.

ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

The Luverne Loop Master Plan will execute ecological stewardship and attain sustainability in all phases of the design and construction of the trail project.

Whenever possible, care will be taken to not disturb patches of native vegetation and habitat, and to build connections between smaller pocket parks and remnant habitats as possible to link wildlife networks and increase viability of plant and animal species.

Materials for the construction of trails, signs, and trailhead elements will be constructed of sustainably grown and/or local wood and concrete/asphalt sources.

Metals will be chosen in stainless or powder-coated varieties to eliminate premature rusting and decay.

Materials will also be durable and long-lasting, keeping needless disruption and additional waste from entering the landfill unnecessarily.

Planting materials for the trail will be of similar native plant varieties that are regional and native to the area, and not requiring additional irrigation or excessive chemical fertilizers or weed suppression.

Whenever possible, tree plantings and grass seeding will be done in the optimal planting time windows as to best maximize the chance of planting success.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The maintenance schedules on the preceding pages address monitoring the condition of the trail. The programming, amenities, marketing and management policies should also be periodically monitored and evaluated for their efficacy in achieving the Master Plan vision and goals. Objective 8C in Chapter 10 addresses this.

The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission or the Coalition may organize regional or statewide research on trail use and impacts, in which Luverne will likely be required to participate if the Luverne Loop/Blue Mound Trails receive regional status.

To optimize trail use and benefits, the City should also periodically conduct research on the trail's effects, evaluate the results, and consider whether modifications to trail management or infrastructure are warranted.

Below are some examples of trail research methods that have been used on other trails across the country:

Trail User Counts: Automatic traffic counters (infrared, ultrasonic, video imaging, or sensor tubes)—good for longer term counts; voluntary sign-in at trailheads, and in-person user counts along trail—can distinguish bicyclists from pedestrians and collect basic demographic information without direct contact with trail users

Trail User Profiles: In-person surveys at the trailhead—direct contact with trail users, mail-in surveys, questionnaire

included with registration for trail events, and surveys of local or visiting trail user clubs such as bicycle or hiking clubs

Trail Use by/Attitudes of Locals: On-line surveys (such as Survey Monkey), student surveys in school, verbal/hand count surveys at community meetings, surveys included in utility bills, written or online surveys at community events such as the County Fair, focus groups, informal citizen trail committees, and formal trail advocacy organizations

Economic Impact: Written questionnaires at hotel or campground check-out, receipt tallies collected from visiting tour group organizers, surveys of Chamber of Commerce or Convention & Visitors Bureau members, and interviews with local tourism-related business owners

Assistance in developing evaluation methods and materials and in tabulation and analysis may be found through the University of Minnesota's Tourism Center, or from professors at other colleges and universities, especially in the fields of statistics or economics. For assistance in conducting surveys, college classes, high school students, running teams, outdoor clubs or other trail users may be willing to volunteer.



Image credit: Brian Peterson, "State of Wonders: Single Tree"
Star Tribune [Minneapolis] 22 April 2015. www.stateofwonders.com

CHAPTER
REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE



The Luverne Loop and the Blue Mounds Trail will combine to create a regionally significant trail where users can experience a variety of attractive, unusual, and representative landscapes.

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trails are regionally significant because these trails meet several of the criteria for regional significance specified in the State's 25-year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan; in the State Statutes (85.536), and in the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

For the regional non-motorized classification, the primary emphasis is on providing high quality recreational trail experiences that are readily accessible from an already populated or rapidly growing regional center or tourist destination. Priority is given to "destination trails" located in a designated trail corridor or other park or open space separated from vehicular traffic. Connectivity to regional and state parks is also a priority. A minimum of 10 miles in planned length is desired, 20 or more is preferred. Below are the criteria for regional significance in the GMRPT Strategic Plan, and a description of how the Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trails meet the criteria.

CRITERIA 1: PROVIDE A HIGH QUALITY "DESTINATION" TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Highly scenic or natural setting:

The Luverne Loop and the Blue Mounds Trail will combine to create a regionally significant trail where users can experience a variety of attractive, unusual, and representative landscapes. The existing Blue Mounds Trail leads directly from the State Park, winds around its southwest boundary for 3½ miles, past rolling farm fields for 1 mile, and past residential and commercial properties for 1½ miles to reach Main Street, the heart of the city. The Blue Mounds, the 1½ mile long, red Sioux quartzite cliffs that rise over 90 feet above the plains, are visible from the northern 4½ miles of trail. The Blue Mounds are also visible from the first ½ mile of the Luverne Loop Trail, which intersects the Blue Mounds Trail at the northern end of the city. This popular state park is one of the largest prairie parks in the state and includes rare plants and birds, a bison herd, a campground, interpretive center and rock climbing areas.



View from Blue Mounds Trail
Image credit: © 2015 Brian Peterson/Star
Tribune, www.stateofwonders.com.

The landscape around Luverne is unique in that it is the only part of the state in the "Inner Coteau" ecological subsection, consisting of dissected moraines capped by thick loess deposits, with exposed bedrock outcrops, of which Blue Mounds is a prime example.

Because the Luverne Loop Trail will circle the edge of the city, primarily on

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

park lands and open spaces instead of road rights of way, it will be much more scenic than typical park-to-city connections. Approximately two-thirds of the Luverne Loop Trail will be off of the street grid. It will pass by several attractive landscapes, including several local parks and recreation areas. The trail will traverse the top of a 20' man-made berm, offering a unique bird's-eye view perspective of conservation and farm lands.

With no natural lakes in the county, the trail will offer water experiences with trailheads and rest/interpretive stops at three public ponds, along Rock River, and along a tributary of Poplar Creek. The Rock River corridor through Luverne is listed by DNR as being of moderate biodiversity significance. A highlight of the Loop will be a ½ mile segment through park and conservation land along the river, where future shoreline and habitat restoration between the trail and the river is planned.

Destination unto itself:

The community of Luverne has a goal of becoming a trail destination for the tri-state area at the corner

of Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa. The Blue Mounds/Luverne Loop Trails will be a primary attraction. The parkland, open space, rivers and ponds along the route will provide enjoyable features around almost every turn. Luverne has an abundance of parks for a city of its size, and plans to add more recreational amenities at trailheads and parks with trail access. Interpretive trailside exhibits will be added at key locations, describing natural & historic highlights.

Luverne has great potential to attract trail and park visitors for day trips from the 250,000-population Sioux Falls metro area, 30 miles away. Sioux Falls is larger than all Minnesota cities except Minneapolis and St. Paul, and is among the top 50 fastest-growing cities in the U.S.

Sioux Falls has 32 miles of trails/ bikeways, but they offer an urban experience, and since no rural areas surrounding Sioux Falls have bike trails, Luverne can fill that need. Once the regional trail to Sioux Falls is built, the Luverne Loop/Blue Mounds Trails can be the destination for long distance bicycling from Sioux Falls.

Separation between trail and roadway, trail experience, visual impacts, traffic:

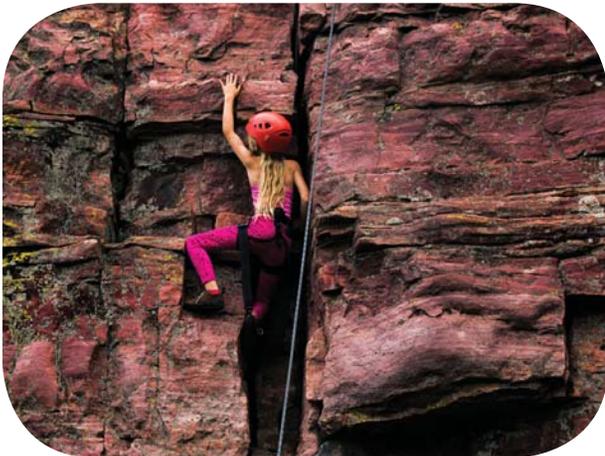
The existing 6-mile Blue Mounds Trail is within the road right of way of Blue Mound Avenue/Co. 18 and Co. 8. The southern 1½ miles in the city is separated from the road by 5 feet. The northern 4½ is separated by 50 feet. Outside of the city the trail is bordered by farm fields and the state park, offering striking views. Most of the north-south traffic through Luverne is along Highway 75 1/2 mile to the west, so these roads receive mostly local and Park traffic.

The Luverne Loop Trail will have three scattered segments within road rights of way, with no segment more than ½ mile long. In these segments, the trail will be separated by at least 5 feet. The segment along 131st St. on the northwest corner of the city abuts the expansive Medical Center lawn to the south, and views of agricultural fields and the Blue Mounds to the north. A ¼ mile segment along Walnut Ave. is across the road from agricultural fields. The segment along Gabrielson Road passes the wide lawns of commercial buildings. These segments are along low volume roads.

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Minimal roadway crossings:

The Luverne Loop Trail will have seven road crossings along its 7.1 miles. MnDOT has approved new rectangular rapid flash beacons (RRFB's) at the two crossings of Highway 75. The rest of the crossings are of low speed, moderate volume roads, including one dead end. The Blue Mounds Trail is on the eastern edge of the city to minimize crossings. It crosses seven streets in 6 miles; most are in the mile within the city limits. These include three dead-end streets, four low volume streets, and Co. Rd. 8. All road



Rock Climber at Blue Mounds State Park
Image credit: © 2015 Brian Peterson/Star Tribune,
www.stateofwonders.com.

crossings will be of current design, with highly visible markings and signs, and ample staging space to wait to cross. The trail width, shoulders, clear zones, and crosswalk staging areas will help avoid user conflicts, and the flat terrain will provide good visibility.

CRITERIA 2: WELL-LOCATED TO SERVE REGIONAL POPULATION OR TOURIST DESTINATION

Close proximity to regional population center:

The Luverne Loop Trail/Blue Mounds Trail System is in the City of Luverne, which is a population center for the surrounding small cities, towns and rural areas in multiple counties. Luverne, population 4745, is the county seat for and is by far the largest city in Rock County, population 9520. It is the commercial, employment, educational and entertainment center for the county. The public school campus in Luverne includes Rock County's only middle school and high school. Luverne is also a population and tourist center for a multi-county region. Luverne is the 2nd largest city

in the four Minnesota county area surrounding Luverne; only Worthington is larger, 33 miles away. This 4-county area, about 2400 square miles, has a population of approximately 49,000. Luverne is also larger than any city in the two counties in Iowa that border Rock County to the south. These two Iowa counties, Lyon and Osceola, have a combined population of about 18,000 in 987 square miles. Luverne draws a regional clientele for its Medical Center and the Minnesota Veterans' Home, and as the gateway city to popular Blue Mounds State Park and its strategic location on I-90, Luverne receives tourists from many states.

High concentration of population residing within 3, 5 or 10 miles of the trail access points:

Because the Luverne Loop Trail will circumnavigate the city and 50% of the County population resides in Luverne, half of the County's residents will live within approximately 1 mile of the trail.

At least 5 miles of stand-alone length: When complete, the 7 mile Luverne

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Loop and the existing 6-mile Blue Mounds Trail combined will offer 13 miles of paved, non-motorized trails. In addition, the Blue Mounds Trail connects directly to 2.8 miles of paved trail in Blue Mounds State Park. The trail also connects to 13 miles of hiking trails and 2 miles of snowmobile trails. This is likely enough miles to draw regional visitors from surrounding cities and counties for day and overnight trips, considering other area attractions and the connection to Blue Mounds State Park.

CRITERIA 3: ENHANCES CONNECTIVITY TO REGIONAL DESTINATIONS

Connects to state trails or other regional trails:

State Trails: The closest existing state trail to Luverne/Blue Mounds is the Casey Jones State Trail that runs west from Pipestone, 25 miles north of Luverne. The paved portion of the Casey Jones Trail is 5 miles long. The next nearest state trail is the 6-mile paved loop of the Casey Jones Trail near Currie, about 60 miles to the

northeast. Schoeneman County Park, about 1 mile south of Luverne, is the legislated southern terminus of the planned 100+ mile Casey Jones State Trail, and the trail will pass by Luverne. The Luverne segment of the route has not yet been planned, but the Luverne Loop/Blue Mounds Trails is intended to form a regional connector for the state trail. An important destination on the Casey Jones Trail will be Touch the Sky Prairie, a Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, 6 miles northwest of Luverne. It features 1000 acres of restored prairie, a mile-long Sioux quartzite ridge line, waterfalls (rare in Southwest Minnesota), and over 167 native plant species.

Regional Trails: There are as yet no trails classified as regional by the Greater MN Regional Park and Trails Commission in the southwest quadrant. However, several regional trails are being planned. Luverne is in an ideal location to be a trail hub, and the Luverne Loop/Blue Mounds Trail will be a key link in the regional, statewide, inter-state trail system. A regional east-west trail from Sioux Falls, SD through Luverne to Worthington, Jackson and

the Des Moines River Valley State Trail is depicted in the Southwest MN Trail Corridor Plan Update of 2014. In Luverne, this trail would follow an active but low volume, County-owned, railroad corridor two blocks south of Main St. The Luverne Loop Trail will cross and connect to this regional trail. Another trail segment will connect the existing 32-mile trail system in Sioux Falls to Luverne, 25 miles away. The Luverne Loop Trail will also connect to a proposed regional trail to run south of Luverne to Gitche Manitou (Iowa) State Preserve, Blood Run National Historic Landmark (SD & IA), and the 844 acre Big Sioux Wildlife Area (SD & IA), all within about 30 miles of Luverne.

Connects to multiple local, regional and state parks, rec facilities, and natural resource areas:

The Luverne Loop/Blue Mounds Trails will connect directly to Blue Mounds State Park and several other recreational facilities and natural areas. The existing Blue Mounds Trail leads directly into Blue Mounds State Park, where it continues as a paved, 2.8 mile park trail into the campground, interpretive center and lakes. The

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paved trail connects as well to 13 miles of hiking trails and a 1 mile interpretive trail in the state park. This state park is the 9th most visited tourist attraction in all of southern Minnesota, with about 88,000 annual visits and 15,000 annual overnight visits. It is unique in Minnesota for its resident buffalo herd, and its stunning 90' tall quartzite rock outcrops, which are an attraction for climbers. Luverne, only a mile from the State Park border, is the gateway community for the park.

The Luverne Loop Trail will pass through 7 existing local parks and the school district's outdoor recreation complex. It will pass by two fishing ponds, and will run adjacent to the scenic Rock River, and a tributary to Poplar Creek. It will also pass by the Blue Mound Ice Arena and the County Fairgrounds, and connect to the Medical Center's Healing Garden. The existing Blue Mounds Trail passes the indoor Aquatics and Fitness Center. The trails will also connect with the 90 miles of groomed snowmobiling trails throughout rural Rock County countryside.

Connects to multiple public interest

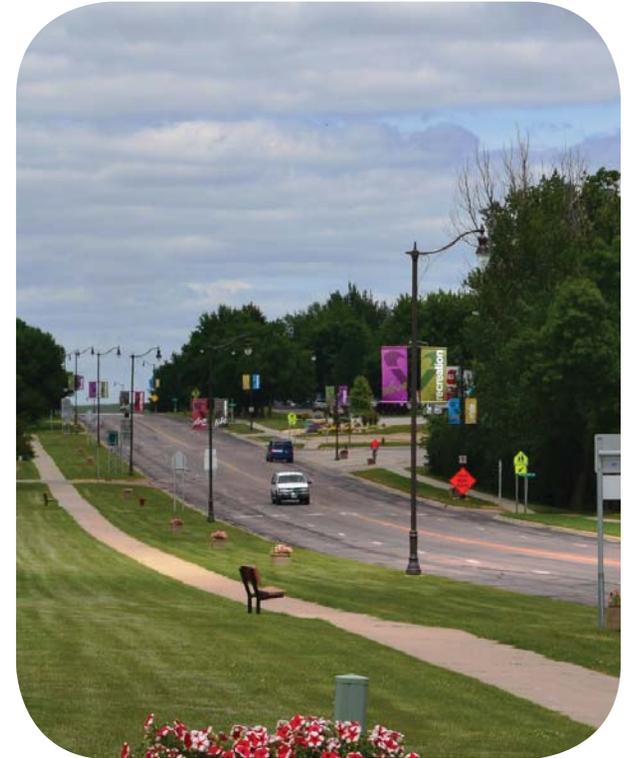
destinations:

The Luverne Loop/Blue Mounds Trails will link the hotels and restaurants in the Highway 75 commercial corridor near I-90, the Main Street business district, the regional Medical Center, the Minnesota Veterans Home (one of only 5 in the state) and the 1200 student school campus to Blue Mounds State Park. The hospital, school and Veterans' Home are the three largest employers in the city. The Trails will also be in the vicinity of several National Register historic sites in Luverne, and the Jim Brandenburg Gallery, which houses photos from the world class photographer who grew up outside of Luverne.

CRITERIA 4: FILLS A GAP IN RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY WITHIN A REGION

No regional or state trails exist:

The southwest quadrant of the state offers very few state or regional level trail or park experiences. There is not much of an existing trail network to connect. The existing trails are short, and the gaps large. Only a few small segments of the Casey Jones and



Highway 75 through Luverne

Minnesota Valley State Trails exist in the area southwest of the Minnesota River valley and west of Mankato (about 20 counties). Only 3 state trails are authorized for this large area, and they are taking decades to be developed. The five paved miles of the Casey Jones State Trail are near Pipestone,

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

25 miles to the north. The state trail corridor extends east from the paved trail, and is a rugged, 8-mile hiking and snowmobile trail unsuitable for road bicycles. The southwestern-most nine county region in Minnesota lags behind most of the rest of the state in the development of hard surface trails, with about 85 miles of city and county trails in total. These trails are scattered across 9-county area, mostly in 1 to 6 mile segments, with none over 11 miles. There is only one paved trail in Rock County: the Blue Mounds Trail. The adjacent counties in Northwest Iowa have only a few short trails as well. The Sioux Falls metro area, with its 32 mile trail system, draws many Rock County and Southwest Minnesota residents there to use the trails. Without a better, more extended trail system in Southwest Minnesota, Minnesotans will continue to have to leave the region and state to find recreational opportunities, and Minnesota will lose trail-related tourism to South Dakota.

Photo at Blue Mounds State Park
Image credit: © 2015 Brian Peterson/Star
Tribune, www.stateofwonders.com.



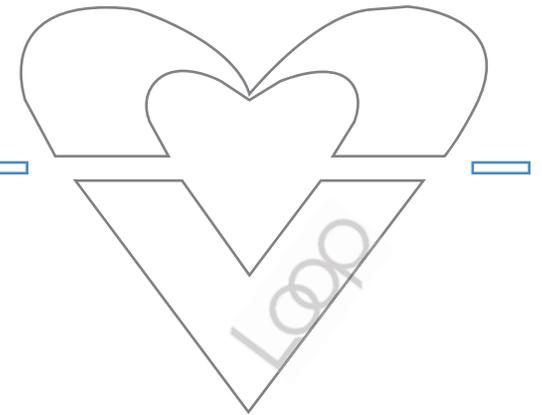
Luverne
Love the life!

**WELCOME TO
REDBIRD
FIELD**

FARMERS MARKET
THURSDAYS ~4-7 p.m.
June - October



APPENDIX



“Recreation trails are for people. They allow us to go back to our roots. Trails help humans make sense of a world increasingly dominated by automobiles and pavement. They allow us to come more closely in touch with our natural surroundings, to soothe our psyches, to challenge our bodies, and to practice ancient skills.”

Woody Hesselbarth, *Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook*, 1999

FUNDING

GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES

There are three primary sources of government funding that are commonly used for trail development in Minnesota: state grants, federal grants, and state bonding. Depending on the program, these funding sources can pay for 50 - 100% of trail corridor acquisition, trail development and major rehabilitation costs. It is possible to match federal grants with state grants, but most grant programs want to see some local investment. Some grant programs require a “cash” match, but some allow “in kind” donations of labor and materials to make up all or part of the local match. Communities often commit staff time from Public Works, Parks or Highway Departments, use of construction equipment, and/or materials such as gravel to make up their in kind match. Some grants allow volunteer time to count as match.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

To raise local funds, communities sometimes work with a private foundation or non profit organization to launch a capital campaign, during which they solicit donations from corporations, private foundations, businesses, philanthropic organizations, and individual donors. A list of potential non government funding sources is included in the Appendix.

Consider that in Minnesota in 2012, 72% of total charitable giving came from individuals, 10% came from private foundations, 13% from corporate foundations and giving programs, and 5% from community/public foundations. Given these statistics, it is wise to devise a fundraising campaign for your trail project that includes solicitations from individuals.

Common Government Funding Sources for Trail Acquisition & Development

DNR Administered Reimbursement Programs:

1. **Regional Trail Grants:** For greater MN only, must be of regional or statewide significance, \$5000-\$250,000 grant awards, 25% non state cash match, shares \$1.005 mil total w/Local Trail Connections program, lottery & Trust Fund \$, due the end of March
2. **Local Trail Connections:** For short trail links, \$5000-\$150,000 grant awards, 25% non state cash match, shares \$1.005 mil total w/Regional Trail Grant program, lottery & Trust Fund \$, due the end of March
3. **Parks & Trails Legacy Grants:** For greater MN only; regional or statewide significance reqd.; \$20K min, no max. grant award; no match required, but desired; \$7.5 mil total; sales tax \$, 1st step--regional significance application due June; if accepted, project applications expected to be due late Aug/Sept.
4. **Outdoor Recreation Grants:** For facilities in local parks, including internal park trails; \$35K - 65K average grant awards, 50% cash or in kind match; Fed. LAWCON & State \$, \$379K total, due the end of March
5. **OHV, Snowmobile & Cross Country Skiing Grant-In-Aid:** primarily for maintenance by clubs, but some trail development funded; small grants; gas tax & license fee \$, due the end of Nov.

MnDOT Administered Programs:

6. **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grants (formerly Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements & Safe Routes to School):** programs were combined; trail projects now compete with some types of road projects; Fed. Hwy. \$, For MnDOT District 8, 1st step--Letter of Intent due Oct; if invited, applications due Jan.
7. **Safe Routes to School:** New State-funded grant source, 2015-17: \$350K total available for Planning Assistance Grants, due Jan 2016; \$100K available for for Mini Grants and Bicycle Fleets, due winter 2016; amount available for Infrastructure grants unknown. SRTS projects also eligible for TAP, above.

State Bonding:

8. **State Bonding:** For all types of capital improvement projects; has primarily funded State Trails, but also some regional & local trails; usually passed in even years; no match; \$18 mil for State Trails, \$4 mil for metro trails, and \$100K for Greater MN trails in 2014; need Senate & House Bill sponsors & widespread legislative support

POTENTIAL NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES FOR TRAILS & PARKS IN SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA (UPDATED 2015)

In Minnesota in 2012, 72% of total charitable giving (non-government) came from individuals, and 28% from non-government grant givers. Among the grantgivers, 36% of the grant dollars given in Minnesota came from private foundations, 47% from corporate foundations and giving programs, and 17% from community/public foundations. Given these statistics, it is wise to devise a fundraising campaign for your trail project that includes solicitations not just from government grants, but from a variety of sources. Below are private, corporate and community foundations that may fund trail or park development projects or trail related programs.

Nationwide Trail/Bike-Pedestrian Specific Funds

Foundation/Company Name	Funding Category or Program(s)	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
American Hiking Society	National Trails Fund, for foot trails only	www.americanhiking.org	\$500-\$5,000 per project
The Conservation Fund	Kodak American Greenways Program	Nationwide solicitation Due annually, mid-June. Program was inactive in 2014 &15, but may be reinstated in 2016. Check website: www.conservationfund.org	\$500-1500 typical grants \$2500 maximum
International Mountain Biking Association	Trail Tune Up Grants; Clif Bars for Trail Work Days	www.imba.com	\$2,000 per project & help from IMBA trail crew for mountain bike trails only; also donates Clif bars for volunteer work days
People for Bikes (formerly Bikes Belong)	Community Grants, For bicycle facility development and advocacy	Coalition of bicycle suppliers and retailers. 1-2 grant cycles/yr. Letters of Interest due late Jan & early Sept. www.bikesbelong.org	Up to \$10,000 grants
Specialized Bike Dealers	Wellness on Bikes, Youth on Bikes, Access for Bikes, Bikes as Sustainable Transportation	www.specialized.com	Event, program or project support. Specialized dealer applies in partnership with local group

Foundations That Have Funded Trails in the US

Foundation/Company Name	Funding Category or Program(s)	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
3M Foundation	Environment	http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/CommunityAffairs/CommunityGiving/	Limited to 3M communities (Fairmont); past award: \$1,000 "North Country Trail Association, MI")
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota)	Community Contributions Program	http://www.shakopeedakota.org/donations.html	Preference is given to requests from tribes of the Northern Plains and MN.

Foundations That Have Funded Parks or Playgrounds in MN

Foundation/Company Name	Funding Category or Program(s)	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Bremer Foundation	Community/economic development	www.ottobremer.org	Funding mostly limited to communities served by Bremer Bank
McKnight Foundation	Region and Communities program. Foundation also supports the Southwest Initiative Foundation	www.mcknight.org	Stated goal: create livable communities
Minnesota Twins Community Fund	Community Donations	http://minnesota.twins.mlb.com/min/community/donations.jsp	To help non-profits raise money, the Twins donate autographed memorabilia for non profits to auction. Mainly funds ball fields.

Foundations That Support Organization Leadership Training and Capacity Building

Foundation/Company Name	Funding Category or Program(s)	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Blandin Foundation	Leadership	www.blandinfoundation.org/leadership/	Offers funding to train community leaders to work more effectively.
Bush Foundation	Leadership/Community Engagement program	www.bushfoundation.org	Help develop and support leader to work with their communities to solve tough problems
CHS Foundation	Returning Value to Rural Communities	www.chsfoundation.org	This program area is primarily targeted at building leadership capacity in rural America through adult education and leadership initiatives

Utility Companies

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Center Point Energy	Corporate giving—community development, and volunteer outreach	www.centerpointenergy.com	within service area, including Luverne Applications due early July
Sioux Valley Energy	Operation Roundup	Customers elect to round up their utility bills to the next highest dollar, donating the difference to charities www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/operRoundup.php	Over \$1,000,000 has been donated since program inception. Nearly 75% of customers participate. Charities apply for inclusion.
Nobles Cooperative Electric	Operation Roundup	Same concept as above. http://www.noblesce.coop/member-	Over \$219,000 has been awarded to local organizations.

		services/operation-round	
Lyon—Lincoln Electric Cooperative	Operation Roundup	Same concept as above www.lyon-lincolnelectric.coop/Community/Operation_Roundup/index.html	Recent donations \$100 - \$1000. Grants considered 4 times/year
Redwood Electric Cooperative	Operation Roundup	Same concept as above. http://redwoodelectric.com/content/scholarships	Over \$40,000 has been granted since inception
Great River Energy	Sponsorship (events or programs) Contributions: Community Service, Youth or Environment	No capital campaigns, but funds other efforts for public safety, quality of life, youth wellness & youth participation in physical activities; www.greatriverenergy.com	In cooperative service areas only, including several in SW MN
MN Energy Resources	Community & Neighborhood Devt., Dollars for Doers	Donations to projects that their employees volunteer for, and community grants http://www.minnesotaenergyresources.com/company/wpsfoundation	In service area only, including Worthington, Tracy & Windom & surrounding rural areas in SW MN
Xcel Energy	Environment, economic sustainability grants	No capital projects. Operating support & program devt. http://www.xcelenergy.com/	Has helped to fund park & trail systems

Community Foundations

Community Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Website	Amount & Other Info
Lutheran Community Foundation	Creation Care Environmental Initiative	www.thelcf.org	\$10 million/year, all programs
Southwest Initiative Foundation	For projects with local or regional impact, to “meet critical needs”	www.swifoundation.org	Grants generally range from \$1,000 to \$20,000
Community Foundations affiliated with SW Initiative Foundation: Balton, Heron Lake—Okabena, Jackson, Lake Benton, Lismore Marshall, Mountain Lake, Pipestone Tyler, Worthington	Individual community foundations, each with its own guidelines	https://swifoundation.org/give-3/how-to-give/community-foundations/	Grants awarded Inception--2009: Balaton: \$36; Heron Lake—Okabena: \$26,000; Jackson: \$6,800 Lake Benton: \$5,000; Lismore: \$52,000 Marshall: \$33,000, Mountain Lake: \$17,000; Pipestone: \$291,000 Tyler: \$64,000; Worthington: \$8,400

Minnesota Community Foundation	Works together with the St. Paul Foundation.	www.giveMN.org	Donate/fundraise
Community Foundations affiliated with the Minnesota Community Foundation: Walnut Grove Area Foundation Five Star Community Found (Redwood Falls) Springfield Area Foundation Wanda Community Fund Redwood Area Communities		Individual community funds, each with its own guidelines www.mncommunityfoundation.org	

Railroads

Trail groups will often need to work with railroads regarding railroad crossings and sometime railroad right of way. Contact the railroad early in your planning process. Besides the official corporate giving programs listed below, trail groups may also be able to negotiate trail easements, or donations of material or labor for trail railroad crossings. The following are railroads in the 9 county area:

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Website	Amount & Other Info
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Foundation	Community Support	www.bnsffoundation.org	Supports community projects with significant local involvement
Canadian Pacific	Community Investment Program	www.cpr.ca	Supports quality of life improvements. On line application
Dakota Minnesota & Eastern	No corporate giving info on website.	www.dmerail.com	In 2008, DM&E and IC&E consolidated and are controlled by Canadian Pacific
Minnesota Southern Railway 41 mile shortline based in Luverne	No corporate giving info on website	http://www.mnsouthernrail.com/	
Union Pacific Foundation	Environment, Community Development, Health	www.up.com/aboutup/community	Funds quality of life improvements; non profit capacity building
Minnesota Prairie Line 94 mile shortline based in Glencoe	No corporate giving info on website.	www.tcwr.net/mpl	Subsidiary of Twin Cities & Western Railroad

Large Private Employers

Some corporations have formal grant programs, and some may need to be approached through their community relations department or management. Consider approaching employers in your region, not just in your city. These are good sources for matching funds to state or federal grants. Several companies have Dollars for Doers—companies donate to causes for which their employees volunteer, and employee matching gifts—employee donations are matched by the company. Below is a list of some of the major employers in the 9-county Southwest Minnesota area (data from 2009):

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Website	Amount & Other Info
Schwan's Food 2500 employees in Marshall	Marvin M. Schwan Foundation	http://www.theschwanfoodcompany.com/	
Swift & Co 2000 employees in Worthington	No corporate giving info on website. Has donated to local United Ways	www.jbsswift.com	
Toro 660 employees in Windom	Giving Program & employee volunteers, equipment donations	www.thetorocompany.com	For beautification and preservation of outdoor environments
PM Beef 504 employees in Windom	No corporate giving info on website.	www.pmbeef.com	Has wellness & nutrition council
Wal-Mart Stores & Foundation 680 Walmart employees in Marshall	National, state and store giving programs; Health & Wellness, Environmental Sustainability	http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/203.aspx	Apply for local, state or national grants. Community Grant Program. Awarded grants range from \$250 to \$2,500
Archer Daniels Midland 325 employees in Marshall	ADMCares/Strong Communities	www.adm.com	
Pipestone System 300 employees in Pipestone	No corporate giving info on website.	www.pipestonesystem.com	
Daktronics 275 employees in Redwood Falls	No corporate giving info on website.	www.daktronics.com	
Schult Homes Corp. 250 employees in Redwood Falls	No corporate giving info on website.	www.schulthomes.com	
Turkey Valley Farms 400 employees in Marshall	Charitable giving unknown	http://turkeyvalleyfarms.com/	

Environmental/Sustainability Grants

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Tread Lightly!	Protect and enhance recreation access and opportunities	Partners w/govt. to restore rec. facilities into environmentally sustainable areas, help raise \$\$ www.treadlightly.org	Awarded 42 Stewardship grants worth \$26,000.00. Have 3,500 volunteers on hand.
U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)	Programs vary by year. Portions of community development block grants and other programs have been used for park or bicycle/pedestrian	www.hud.gov	Had a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program; no funding in 2015; check website annually

	improvements		
The Conservation Alliance	To protect wild places for their habitat and recreational values	www.conservationalliance.com/grants	Summer & Winter grant cycles. 2015 summer cycle due May 1 st . Winter cycle due November 1 st .
Patagonia	Environmental Grants Program	http://www.patagonia.com/us/patagonia.go?assetid=2942	Accepts one proposal per group, per fiscal year (May 1st - April 30th). Typical Grant Range: up to \$12,000

Tourism Related

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Tourism Cares	Worldwide Grants	Preserves & restores sites of exceptional cultural, historic or natural significance www.tourismcares.org	Grants total nearly \$2.5 million, not including the additional impact of matching funds
National Scenic Byways Program	This grant program has now been combined with the Transportation Alternatives Program (see Government Grants list.)	http://www.dot.state.mn.us/map-21/tap.html	MN River Valley Scenic Byway and Historic Highway 75 "King of Trails" Scenic Byway are State Scenic Byways
Explore Minnesota Tourism	Scenic Byway Marketing Partnership grant	www.exploreminnesota.com	Up to \$2500 for promotion of byway by Byway non profits. Could promote trails along Byway
Explore Minnesota Tourism	Organizational Partnership Grants	www.exploreminnesota.com	For marketing to attract out of state tourists, up to \$10,000
Explore Minnesota Tourism	Innovative Marketing Grants	www.exploreminnesota.com	\$10,000 - \$30,000 for innovative marketing strategies

Health Related

Most hospitals in the 9-county Southwest region are affiliated with either Sanford Health or Avera. Although neither has a community grant program for which trail development would be eligible, encourage your local hospital and physicians' clinics to join your trail effort as a partner, because of the health benefits of physical activity. Local hospitals may provide staff support, event sponsorship, assistance with promotions, and/or funding. Start with the community relations staff, or staff that deal with physical therapy, heart disease, cancer or diabetes (the diseases for which physical activity is a known prevention factor.)

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Sanford Health Foundation	No applicable programs on website. Check with individual hospitals and clinics.	www.sanfordhealth.org	Locations of Sanford affiliates: Adrian, Jackson, Luverne, Slayton, Tracy, Westbrook, Windom, Worthington
Avera Foundation	Community Service Fund	On hold now. Check for updates: www.avera.org	Locations of Avera affiliates: Marshall, Pipestone, Tyler
Communities Putting Prevention to		Through MN Dept. of Health	1 st round awarded. \$373 million for

Work Program, Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention		www.hhs.gov Watch for additional grant rounds	30-40 communities nationwide
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)	Funds for prevention and wellness programs	Through MN Dept. of Health www.health.state.mn.us	
Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)	Grant program to address physical inactivity and other issues.	Access to non motorized transportation and recreation considered. www.health.state.mn.us	Grants awarded in 2009: Cottonwood-Jackson-Redwood—Renville: \$705,000; Lincoln-Lyon-Murray-Pipestone \$488,000; Nobles-Rock \$367,000; Upper Sioux Community \$153,000

No Capital Campaigns—May Fund Programs or Promotions

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Wal Mart Foundation	Wal-Mart Store & Sam's Club	Local stores make decisions	\$250 minimum grants
SmartWool	Advocacy Fund	www.smartwool.com	Supporting active lifestyles for youth; outdoor activity participation. \$500--\$5000

Other

Company/Foundation Name	Funding Category or Program	Description/Website	Amount & Other Info
Shopko (merged with Pamida)	Pamida had a Community Relations Program and Foundation; status of these programs is unknown.	www.shopko.com Funded in Pamida communities	Each Pamida store had a Community Relations Specialist to sponsor community events, etc. Foundation primarily funded youth education
Equine Land Conservation Resource	Land conservation for horses	https://elcr.org	
Recreational Equipment, Inc (REI)	Corporate Giving and REI Foundation Community Partnerships & Grants	Contact stores to become partner for joint service projects, product donations, & opportunity to apply for grants www.rei.com	Donates approx. 3% of its operating profits annually to non profits. Does not accept unsolicited grant applications
Surdna Foundation, NY	Sustainable Environment:	Have funded Midtown Greenway; Rails-to-Trails www.surdna.org	\$10,000 to \$300,000 Funds non profit organizations, mainly in urban areas

Sources for this chart:

Minnesota Grantmakers Online, a searchable database of MN grantgivers available through the MN Council on Foundations., and Foundation Directory Online, a national searchable database. Both are available by subscription or at public libraries with grant research sections. Foundation and Corporate websites and Annual Reports

Other Helpful Fundraising Hints

Courtesy of the American Hiking Society and *Saving America's Countryside**.

Present a Positive Public Image. Develop a positive public image before your organization initiates a fundraising campaign.

Establish Contacts. Use all possible contacts in the community – friends, neighbors, civic groups, second homeowners, officers of local corporations and community boards.

Collect Names. Make sure that your organization has a device to collect the names of those who attend your trail events. People attending trail events may not be prepared to donate funds to your organization at the event, but they will probably do so in the future since they have been exposed to the great benefits that trails provide and the work of your organization. These same people can also be contacted in the future to volunteer with fundraising activities, advocacy mailings and trail maintenance or stewardship projects.

Maintain a Volunteer Time Record. Record volunteer hours in order to show community support for your project. Volunteer time may also be used as an in-kind match for some grant programs.

Communication. Keep volunteers, partner organizations and the community informed of your organization's progress and invite them to events.

Personal Contact. Personally contact prospective donors. Invite them to events and keep them involved and up to date. This type of contact is most effective because it puts a face to a name on a grant application.

Media Coverage. Don't forget to alert the media (TV, radio, and newspapers) about your events. Prepare a press release and submit it to these media outlets. This is an excellent way to reach a larger audience to publicize your trail and organization.

Be Specific. Specify funds or items when making a request. Estimate in advance what a donor may be able to give.

Provide Information and Publications. An information table set-up at a trail event with brochures or publications is extremely helpful to educate the public on the trail and your organization. Post a wish list of items needed by your organization at trail events because someone may be willing to donate these items.

Don't give up. Fundraising can be time consuming with unexpected delays and even rejection. Have patience and your efforts will be rewarded.

* Stokes, Samuel N., and Watson, A. Elizabeth. *Saving America's Countryside: A guide to Rural Conservation*. Baltimore, M.D.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989: p.83.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Threatened and Endangered Species

Topeka Shiner in Minnesota

The Topeka shiner (*Notropis topeka*) is a small fish found in prairie streams in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, and South Dakota. Under the Endangered Species Act it was federally listed as “endangered” in 1998.

The species has been extirpated from about 80 percent of its historical range due to degradation of stream habitats, stream channelization, construction of small impoundments, and introduction of predator fishes that are not native to its small stream habitat, like bass and northern pike. (See below for further details on the species’ life history.)

How does listing the Topeka shiner as “endangered” affect people who live within the range of the species?

It is illegal for anyone to “take” (i.e., kill, harm, harass, capture, etc.) Topeka shiners without special permission (under Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act). This prohibition affects persons whose actions and projects may unintentionally or *incidentally* take Topeka shiners, even if that is not the purpose of their activity. Activities that may incidentally take Topeka shiners include bridge or culvert replacement projects and groundwater withdrawals near streams where Topeka shiners occur.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can issue permits to private landowners, corporations, state or local governments, or other non-federal landowners who want to conduct activities that might incidentally take Topeka shiners. To obtain a permit, the applicant must prepare a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that offsets the harmful effects that the activity may have on the species. The HCP allows development to proceed while promoting listed species conservation.



Photo by ©Konrad Schmidt

Topeka shiners were once found in prairie streams throughout the midwest.

What would a typical Habitat Conservation Plan involve?

The permit applicant would have to offset the take of Topeka shiners that is likely to occur as a result of their project. The applicant would work with the Service to ensure that the mitigation sufficiently offsets the impacts to Topeka shiners. In other words, small impacts would require relatively small mitigation projects and large impacts would require more substantial mitigation. Mitigation could include actions such as fencing to prevent or reverse livestock impacts to streams inhabited by Topeka shiners, streambank restoration, or other habitat practices.

Is critical habitat designated for the Topeka shiner in Minnesota?

Yes. On July 27, 2004, the Service designated critical habitat on 57 stream segments totaling 605 stream miles in Minnesota. This included, more or less, all of the stream segments known to be occupied by the Topeka shiner at the time. Since then, Topeka shiners have been documented in additional stream segments. Therefore, the Topeka shiner is known to occur both within and

outside of stream segments designated as critical habitat.

Do I have to do anything different if my project is within Topeka shiner critical habitat?

The Act only prohibits *federal agencies* from destroying or adversely modifying critical habitat. However, the Act’s prohibitions against “take” of Topeka shiners apply to everyone, not just federal agencies (see the first answer).

Where is Topeka shiner critical habitat?

In Minnesota, Topeka shiner critical habitat is distributed throughout the Big Sioux River and Rock River watersheds. To determine whether a specific area is Topeka shiner critical habitat, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Who do I contact in Minnesota to determine what is required under the Endangered Species Act?

Contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by phone at (612) 725-3548 or by e-mail at Richard_Davis@fws.gov. The Service will answer questions about your specific project and can provide technical assistance to help you



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Wetlands Inventory

Phases 1 & 2 Trail
Areas

Oct 1, 2015



Wetlands

- Freshwater Emergent
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub
- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
- Estuarine and Marine
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine
- Other

This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.

User Remarks:



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Wetlands Inventory

Luverne Loop
Phase 3 Area

Oct 1, 2015

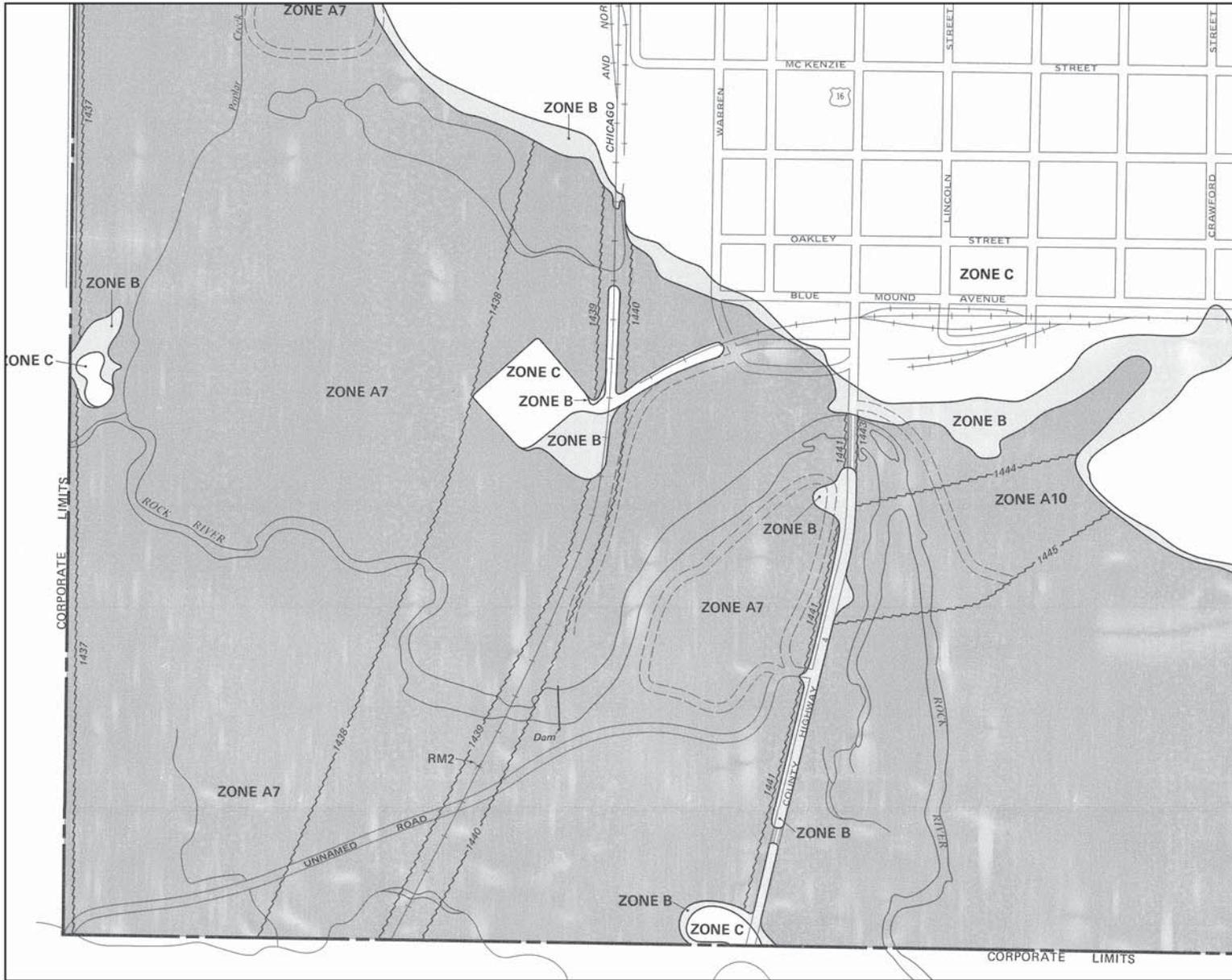


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User Remarks:



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FIRM
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

CITY OF
LUVERNE,
MINNESOTA
ROCK COUNTY

PANEL 2 OF 2
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR PANELS NOT PRINTED)

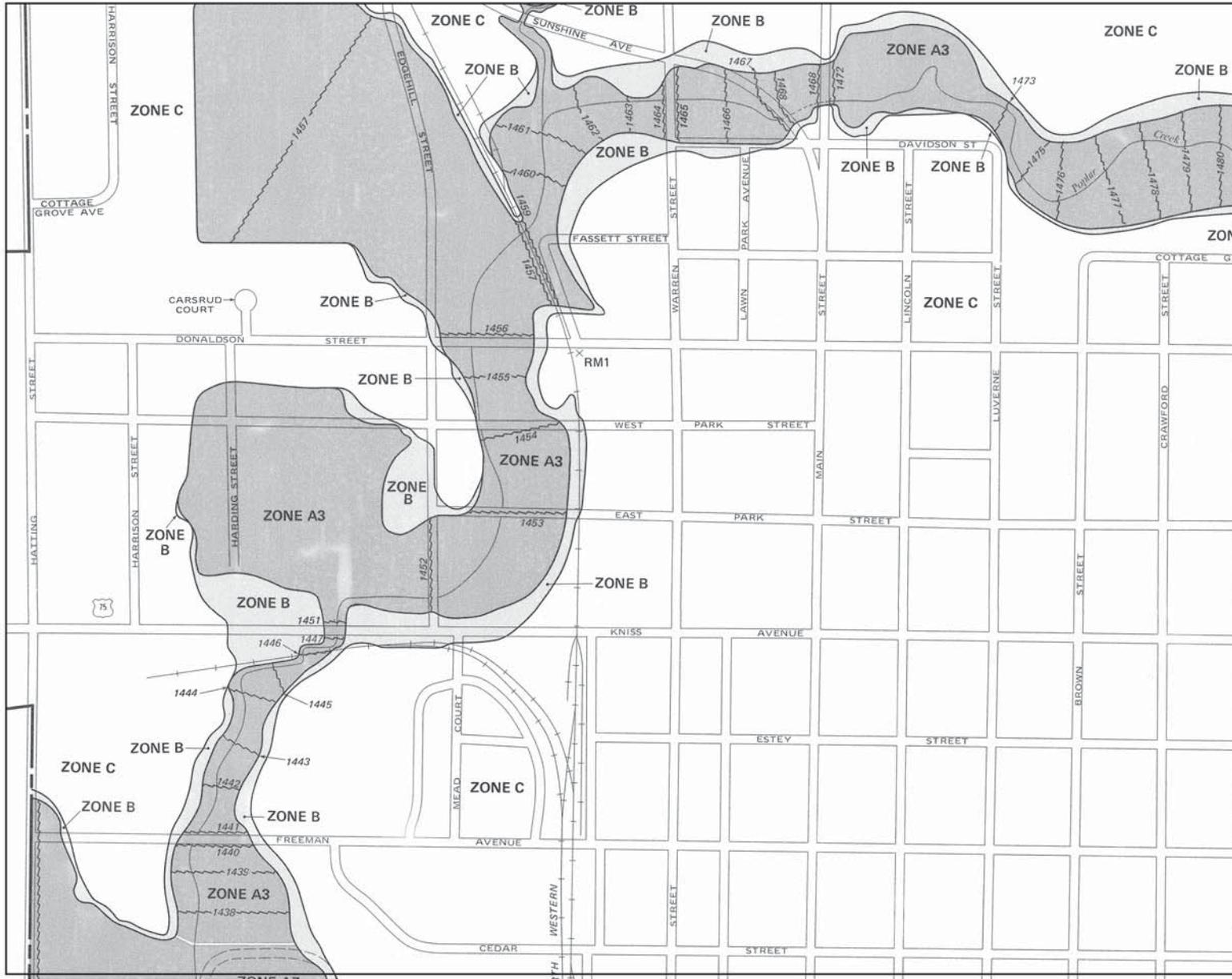
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270411 0002 B

EFFECTIVE DATE:
MAY 17, 1982



Federal Emergency Management Agency

This is an official copy of a portion of the above referenced flood map. It was extracted using F-MIT On-Line. This map does not reflect changes or amendments which may have been made subsequent to the date on the title block. For the latest product information about National Flood Insurance Program flood maps check the FEMA Flood Map Store at www.msc.fema.gov



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FIRM
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

CITY OF
LIVERNE,
MINNESOTA
ROCK COUNTY

PANEL 2 OF 2
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR PANELS NOT PRINTED)

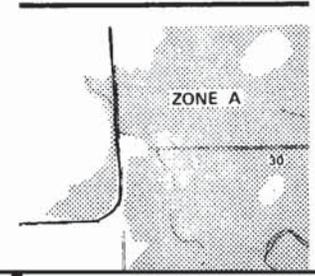
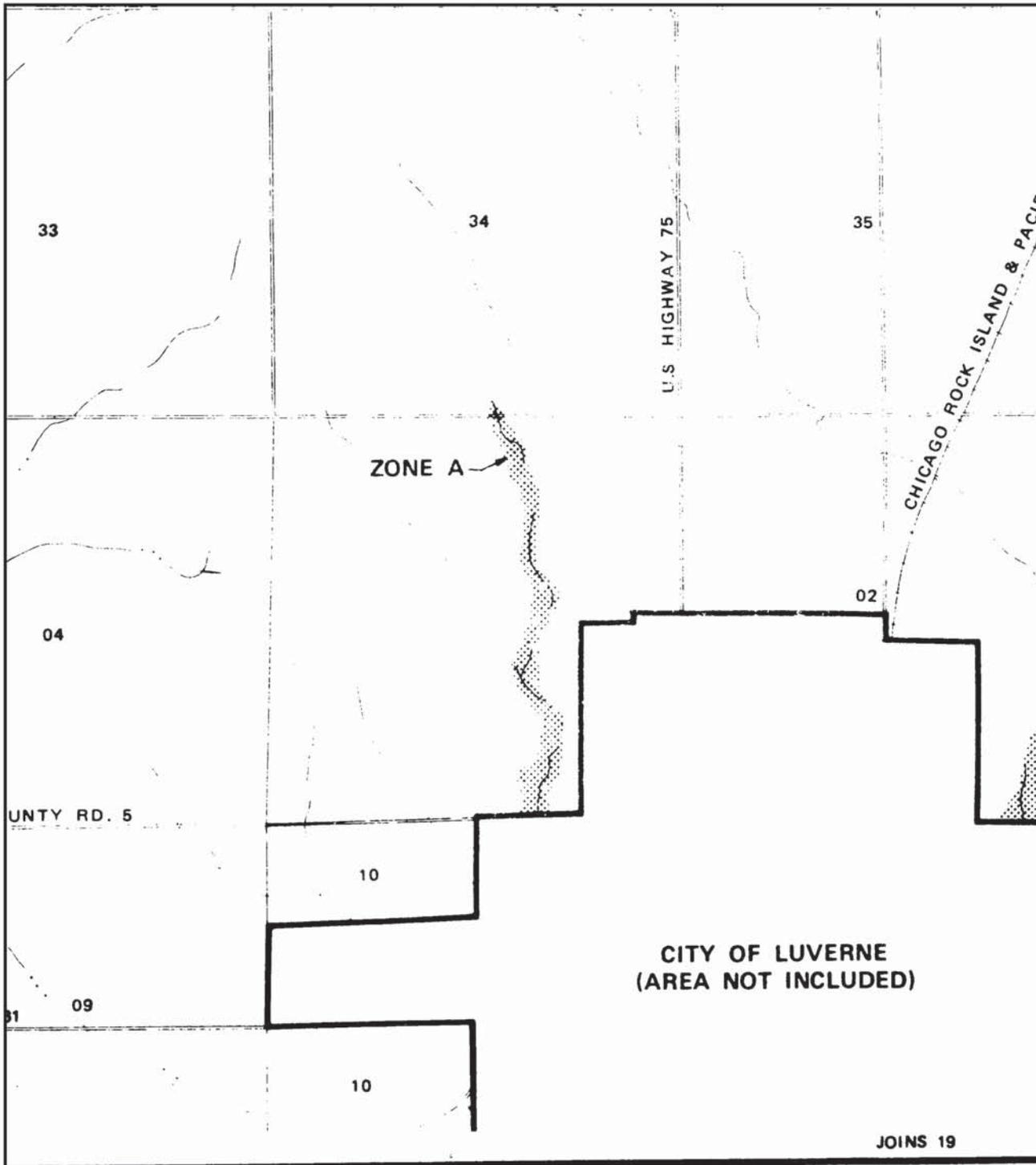
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MAY 17, 1982



Federal Emergency Management Agency

This is an official copy of a portion of the above referenced flood map. It was extracted using F-MIT On-Line. This map does not reflect changes or amendments which may have been made subsequent to the date on the title block. For the latest product information about National Flood Insurance Program flood maps check the FEMA Flood Map Store at www.msc.fema.gov



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
 Federal Insurance Administration

ROCK COUNTY, MN
(UNINC AREAS)

EFFECTIVE DATE
JULY 1, 1977

JOINS 19

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