

Chapter 4: Preferred Trail Route Plan



THE PLAN CHAPTER

includes the following information:

- The **Preferred Trail Route Plan** identifies the generally recommended alignment of the future trail.
- **Primary Trail Users** identifies the non-motorized activities that are targeted for this regional trail.
- **Trail Corridor Design and Features** describes the destinations, access points, and environment/experience of the preferred trail corridor.
- **General Trail Design Guidelines & Engineering Specifications** describes pavement width, clearance zones, drainage, steep slopes/grades, water (creek/wetland) crossings, and road/rail crossings.
- **Trail Corridor Segments** identifies the key features of each of the trail segments of the preferred alignment.

OVERVIEW

The Proctor-Hermantown Munger Trail Spur will be a regional destination trail linking the communities of Proctor and Hermantown to the Munger State Trail and Duluth's trail system. This 16-mile, 10-foot wide paved trail will be a unique regional recreational resource as there are no paved trails above the ridge line today. The trail will connect numerous recreation destinations and activity centers within the communities of Proctor, Hermantown, and Duluth, including schools, parks, city halls/community centers, and downtown

business areas. In addition to the Munger State Trail, the trail will connect to the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area, 300-mile Superior Hiking Trail, Duluth's Lakewalk, Cross City, and Duluth Traverse trails, creating a variety of recreational loop opportunities. The trail route will highlight the communities' natural features, including four creeks, northern hardwood forests, wetland areas, and a variety of natural and active parks.

This chapter describes the features of the recommended trail route in terms of general trail alignment, trail users, trail corridor features (destinations, access points, trail corridor environment/experience), general trail design guidelines, and general engineering specifications.

Due to the significant length of the planned trail corridor, the approximately 16-mile trail corridor is also defined as seven (7) segments:

Segment 1: Central Hermantown - Hermantown Schools to Stebner Park/Hermantown Marketplace

Segment 2: Southeastern Hermantown - Stebner Park/Hermantown Marketplace to Keene Creek Park

Segment 3: Northern Proctor - Keene Creek Park to 9th Street

Segment 4: Downtown Proctor - 9th Street to Kirkus Street

Segment 4a: Proctor School Conector - Along 2nd Street

Segment 5: Southern Proctor - Kirkus Street to I-35

Segment 6: Spirit Mountain Recreation Area - I-35 to Cross City Trail

Segment 7: Keene Creek Corridor - Keene Creek Park to Cross City Trail

PREFERRED TRAIL ALIGNMENT

Overall

The preferred trail route generally travels from central Hermantown, starting at the Hermantown Schools campus, through the southeast residential, commercial, and industrial areas of Hermantown, then north-south through the entire community of Proctor, crossing under I-35 at Ugstad Road, and then traversing down the ridge through the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area to connect to Duluth's planned Cross City Trail and the existing Munger State Trail.

Hermantown

In central Hermantown, the preferred trail alignment connects from the Hermantown Schools campus and future Arrowhead Regional Health and Wellness Center east to the Hermantown City Hall area, Lightning Drive industrial area, then Stebner Park and Hermantown Marketplace. From there, the trail alignment travels south to Keene Creek Park and then west along the Hermantown/Proctor municipal border to St. Louis River Road.

Proctor

In Proctor, the trail alignment heads south to the future North Proctor Park, then south to Downtown Proctor, the Proctor Schools, and Proctor Community Center. From there, the trail goes through south Proctor to Spirit Mountain via the Kirkus Street bridge over the rail line and the Ugstad Road underpass of I-35, then down the ridge through the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area to Duluth's Cross City Trail and the Munger State Trail.

An interim alternative route has been identified in the South Proctor segment that utilizes existing City of Proctor easements on private land and the Westgate Boulevard bridge over the rail line.

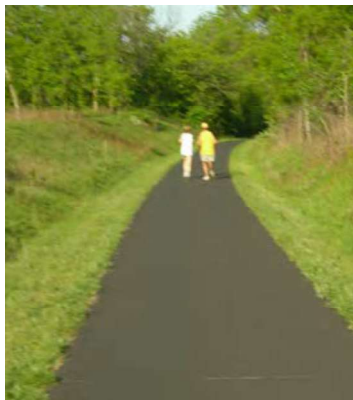
Duluth

In addition, a potential future trail connection between Keene Creek Park and the Cross City Trail, generally running along Keene Creek, would provide a more direct trail connection down the ridge between Hermantown and Duluth's trail system.

PRIMARY TRAIL USERS

The Proctor-Hermantown Munger Trail Spur will be designed as a recreational trail for non-motorized users including walkers, hikers, runners, recreational and commuter bicyclists, rollerbladers, and cross-country skiers. The preferred trail corridor is intended to offer a high quality natural, scenic, and non-motorized trail experience. Where the preferred trail alignment is located within existing trail corridors for other types of trail users, the trails will be separated as much as possible to accommodate the unique needs of the various trail users.

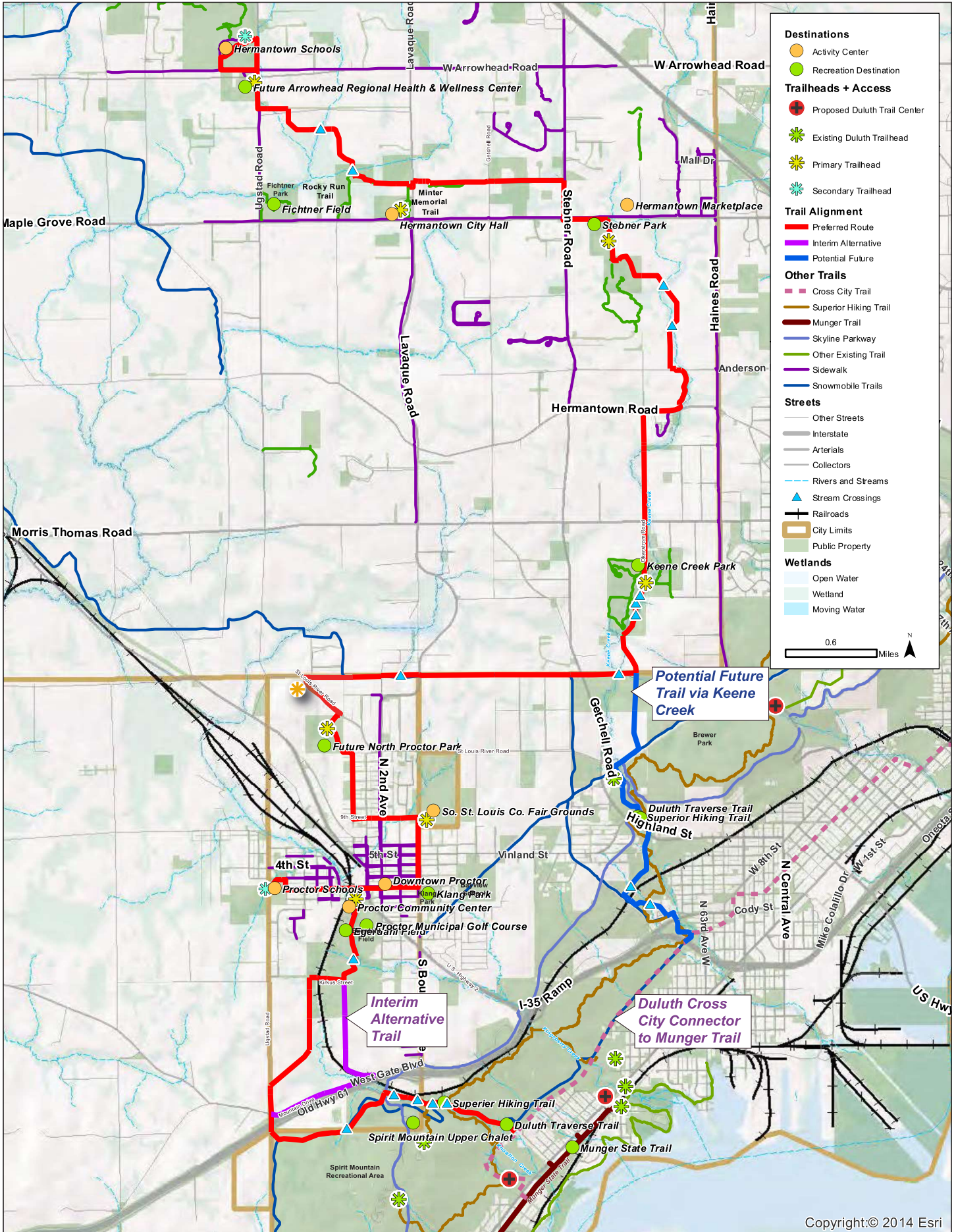
This regional trail will be designed as a fully accessible ADA-compliant trail. The paved trail corridor and all trail access points are located and planned for universal accessibility to provide all trail users with a meaningful experience. In addition, this planned trail corridor provides a prime opportunity to improve non-motorized ADA access to the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area, as well as other recreation destinations and activity centers along the corridor.



Examples of multi-use paved trails in different contexts



FIGURE 4-1. PROCTOR HERMANTOWN MUNGER TRAIL SPUR PREFERRED ALIGNMENT



TRAIL CORRIDOR DESIGN AND FEATURES

The design and features of the trail corridor encompass a broad range of considerations, including: the actual trail surface; the relationship of the trail to the larger natural or street corridor; the ability to connect to recreation destinations and activity centers; crossings of water and roadways and rail lines; trailheads and supporting amenities; other trail access points; and wayfinding signage. High quality and consistent design of the trail corridor will enhance users' trail experiences above that of a utilitarian trail to one of a first class regional recreation destination.

Trail Surface

This regional trail will be a continuous multi-purpose, 10-foot wide bituminous trail designed in accordance with the *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines* of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR). The trail will have a horizontal clear zone of at least three (3) feet on each side, consisting of two (2) foot shoulders plus an additional one (1) foot clearance beyond the shoulder. Where the trail is located adjacent to a roadway, there will be a minimum separation between the trail and the roadway that will vary depending upon the roadway's design (curb vs. no curb) and speed limit.

Trail Destinations

Inherent to a regional destination trail is its ability to link to recreation destinations and activity centers. The preferred alignment of the Munger Trail Spur will serve as the connector trail between the communities of Proctor and Hermantown, and West Duluth. In addition, it will connect to most of the major destinations within these communities, including the following:

Recreation Destinations

- Keene Creek Park and Stebner Park in Hermantown;
- Future North Proctor Park, South St. Louis County Fairgrounds, Egerdahl Field, and Klang Park in Proctor;
- Spirit Mountain and the Lake Superior/St. Louis River waterfront in Duluth.

Activity Centers

- Hermantown Schools campus, future Arrowhead Regional Health and Wellness Center, Hermantown City Hall, Hermantown Marketplace;
- Downtown Proctor, Proctor Schools, Proctor Community Center.



The Munger Trail Spur will travel through natural areas and parks as much as possible, but some segments will travel alongside roadways.



Trail Access

The main access points for the Munger Trail Spur will be the primary trailheads. These sites will typically be located at community destinations, where existing facilities can be shared with the trailhead. Primary trailheads should minimally include the following amenities:

- motor vehicle parking
- bicycle parking
- wayfinding signage, such as a kiosk with multiple sign panels

The following additional amenities should be included as opportunities exist:

- public restrooms
- water fountain
- benches
- lighting
- picnic area and picnic tables
- interpretive artwork
- food vendors
- shelter
- local and regional trail connections

At community destinations where space is limited or if located close (within a half to one mile) to a primary trailhead, secondary trailheads will provide some of the above amenities.

Trailhead Locations

Primary Trailheads will include the following:

- Future Arrowhead Regional Health & Wellness Center
- Hermantown City Hall
- Stebner Park
- Keene Creek Park
- Future North Proctor Park
- South St. Louis County Fairgrounds
- Proctor Community Center

Secondary trailheads will include:

- Hermantown Schools campus
- Proctor Schools campus

Other Public Access Points

Intersections with existing roads and other trails will provide locations where bikers and walkers can access the Munger Trail Spur. These locations will include directional signage identifying the trail.



Examples of some primary trailhead amenities

Connecting Trails

- Hermantown Schools campus trails
- Rocky Run Trail at Hermantown City Hall
- Stebner Park planned trails
- Keene Park Creek trails
- Munger State Trail
- Duluth Cross City Trail
- Superior Hiking Trail
- Duluth Traverse Trail
- Designated On-Road Bike Routes, including Ugstad Rd, Arrowhead Rd, Maple Grove Rd (portion), Stebner Rd, Getchell Rd, Highland St, Anderson Rd (portion), Morris Thomas Rd, Haines Rd, Lavaque Rd/2nd Ave (portion), Boundary Ave, 5th St/Vinland St, and 2nd St



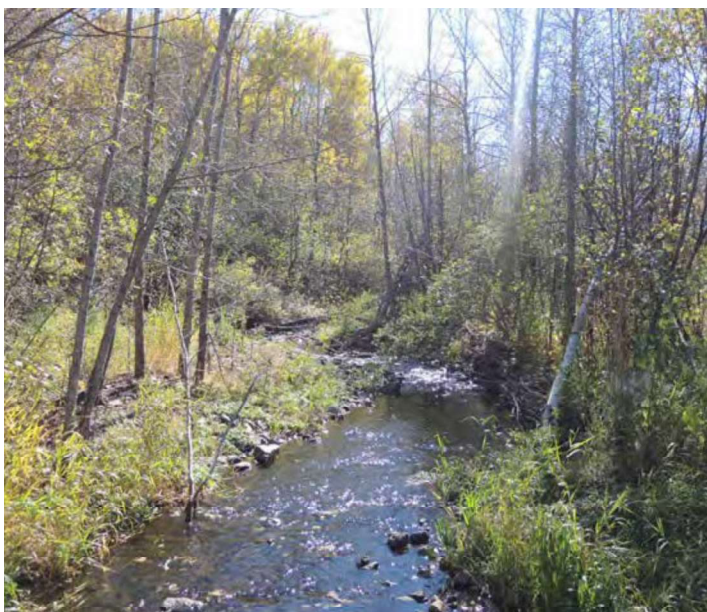
Trail Corridor Environment

Natural Segments

The preferred alignment of the Munger Trail Spur is intended to provide a high quality regional recreational trail within a natural environment as much as possible. Key natural areas of the trail corridor are the Rocky Run branch of the Midway River and a major wetland area, Keene Creek, Keene Creek Park, future North Proctor Park, Kingsbury Creek, Knowlton Creek, Spirit Mountain Recreation Area, and wooded power line corridors.

Roadway Segments

Where it will be prohibitively challenging to acquire public access to property, the trail alignment travels along roadways. These trail segments will be sufficiently separated from the adjacent roadway. Roadway segments include Ugstad Rd (at Hermantown Schools and at I-35), Lavaque Junction Road, Lightning Drive, Stebner Rd, Maple Grove Rd, Anderson Rd, Hermantown Rd, Okerstrom Rd, St. Louis River Rd, Pionk Drive, Kirkus Street, and downtown Proctor streets. Many of these road segments are fairly short in length.



Hermantown

Within Hermantown, the trail corridor environment will consist of a large wetlands area near the City's northernmost trailhead, which is actually part of the Rocky Run branch of the Midway River; the Keene Creek corridor; two City parks - Keene Creek Park and Stebner Park; wooded power line corridors; and along roadways.

Proctor

Within Proctor, the trail corridor environment will include wooded areas on public land (owned and easements), including the future North Proctor Park; wooded power line corridors; the City's Community Center and outdoor recreation area - Egerdahl Field and the municipal golf course; small portion of the Kingsbury Creek corridor; the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area and Knowlton Creek corridor; and along roadways, both rural and downtown Proctor.

Duluth

Within Duluth, the preferred alignment will travel through the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area and Knowlton Creek corridor. The future potential trail segment that would connect Hermantown and Duluth will travel along the Keene Creek corridor.



FIGURE 4-2. ON-ROAD OR OFF-ROAD TRAIL ALIGNMENT

