



General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Last Update

19 Apr 2021 01:16:36

Park or Trail Name	District
WAABIZHESHIKANA THE MARTEN TRAIL	1

Location Description

The existing Waabizheshikana starts at approximately 63rd Ave West & Fremont Street and terminates at approximately 94 Spring Street in the Riverside neighborhood of west Duluth.

Latitude 46.72726 N, Longitude -92.17040W - Latitude 46.70791 N, Longitude -92.20471 W

Park/Trail Address
411 West 1st Street

City
Duluth

Park/Trail State
Minnesota

Zip
55802

Latitude
46.783738

Longitude
-92.104384

Map of Park/Trail

Description: Location Map

[Marten trail location_b29aa3.pdf](#)

Description: Relationship of water and land trails

[Water and land trails_ed634e.pdf](#)

Facility Website

<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-listing/waabizheshikana-the-marten-trail-western-waterfront-trail/>

Organization
City of Duluth

Lead Contact Person
Cliff Knettel

Title
Senior Parks Planner

Mailing Address
411 West 1st Street

City
Duluth

State

Minnesota

Zip

55802

Phone

2187304309

Email

cknettel@duluthmn.gov

Joint Applicants**Joint Applicant #1**

City of Duluth

Upload Resolution[Resolution for Waabizheshikana_f3c39f.pdf](#)**Joint Applicant #2****Joint Applicant #3****Joint Applicant #4****Other project supporters**

St. Louis River Alliance, Fond du Lac Band, MN DNR

Description

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Regional Significance Statement

Waabizheshikana: regional significance

The St. Louis River estuary is the largest freshwater estuary in the U.S.

The trail connects to local trails and neighborhoods and regional trails and destinations. Provides access to the National St. Louis River Water Trail.

Secures access and protection of unique upland habitats along the St. Louis River.

Interprets the historical utilization of the river by indigenous and immigrant cultures.

Supports alternate modes of transportation.

Classification

Regional Trail (Motorized and Non-motorized)

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Overview

Waabizheshikana is a 3.3-mile multi-use recreational trail that traces the shore of the St. Louis River Estuary in Duluth. Constructed in the 1980s, the Trail was based on the 1979 City of Duluth plan that envisioned a ten-mile riverfront trail extending to Jay Cooke State Park. The remaining seven miles of trail are in planning. The river was highly degraded with industrial pollutants: federal/state clean-up of the St. Louis River is approaching completion. Public access to the riverfront is limited. The time is right to finish the trail and reconnect Duluth residents and visitors to the restored river. The northernmost 3.3 miles were recently restored to its original accessible 10-foot-wide gravel condition. The next 4.5 miles are accessible only via an excursion train service and is not open to pedestrians or bicycles. The majority of the southernmost 2.5 miles of riverfront lack any improved or designated access.

Groups served

The Waabizheshikana Master Plan will enhance public access to the river via a ten-mile riverfront

bike/pedestrian trail, improve existing water access sites, and provide new water access sites tailored specifically for paddlers, including for a national audience that travels to access the St. Louis River Estuary National Water Trail. Facilities will be as accessible as practically possible regardless of income or physical ability.

Facilities

Existing:

Trail: 3.3 miles. The trail was widened, regraded, and resurfaced in 2016. The green corridor around the trail was cleared of invasive plant species and replanted with natives.

Tailheads: (3) Indian Point Campground, Riverside Park, and Chambers Grove Park

Proposed: seven miles of accessible interpretive trail starting just north of Riverside park and ending at Chambers Grove Park.

Trail Heads: seven new trail heads at Spirit Landing, Munger Landing, Blackmer Park, Slag Point, Mud Lake, Boy Scout Landing, and Perch Lake Landing.

Water Access:

Existing: at Spirit Landing, Munger Landing, Blackmer Park, Slag Point, Mud Lake, Boy Scout Landing, and Perch Lake Landing.

Proposed: Slag Point Park (Morgan Park) and Lower Spirit Mt. Riverside Park

Programs

Existing: St Louis River Alliance (Alliance) builds connections between community members and the river through education, outreach and events. The Alliance assists Minnesota and Wisconsin state agencies to implement the Remedial Action Plan for the St. Louis River Area of Concern.

Future: In draft form at the time of this application, the Waabizhesikana Heritage Interpretative Plan developed in collaboration with the Fond du Lac Band will provide an experience that highlights the ecology, history, and cultures of the trail corridor and St. Louis River estuary.

Relationship to other parks and trails

Connects the Lake Superior Zoo, Spirit Mountain Recreation Area, and the Indian Point Campground to each other and to area neighborhoods. Existing trail connects to the Willard Munger State Trail, which connects to the Duluth Traverse and Superior Hiking Trail. Proposed expansion connects to Riverside Park, Chambers Grove Park and several new trail heads and water access points.

Total Acreage or Mileage

10

Acquisition and Development Status

Existing Park or Trail

In process

Acquisition Land ownership is primarily the City of Duluth or along existing trail easements granted to the City of Duluth. The City will need to secure easements or acquire land from US Steel, as well as secure easements from private property owners.

Development status

Some development, but more proposed

Facility Listing

This section provides an overview of existing and proposed site facilities and general site characteristics .

Existing Facilities

- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Swimming
- Lake Access for power boats
- Canoeing Facilities
- Fishing Piers
- Roads and Parking Areas

Proposed Facilities

- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Swimming
- Lake Access for power boats
- Canoeing Facilities
- Fishing Piers
- Nature Center/Interpretation Trails
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Roads and Parking Areas

General Site Characteristics

The St. Louis River, the largest U.S. tributary to Lake Superior, becomes a 12,000-acre freshwater estuary as the river approaches Duluth and Superior. The section along the trail is characterized by wilderness-like areas. A freshwater estuary is ecologically unique: providing habitat for a rich variety of fish, aquatic invertebrate, bird, and other wildlife species.

Erosion of the high bluffs and irregular shorelines above the river are composed of volcanic rock with exposed veins of minerals in the cracks which formed when the volcanic basalt cooled. Seventeen streams cascade down these volcanic ravines providing breathtaking waterfalls and rock formations.

Acquisition and Development Status

The Master Plan for the development of the trail extension and trailhead was approved by the Duluth City Council in March 2020. The Trail Interpretation Plan is in draft form and is being routed to stake holders. Approval by the City Council is expected in late March.

Acquisition

Land ownership is primarily the City of Duluth or along existing trail easements granted to the City of Duluth. The City will need to secure easements or acquire land from US Steel, as well as secure easements from private property owners. Once the Interpretive Plan is complete, it will be implemented in phases in conjunction with other cleanup and/or parks-related or private development projects.

The Duluth Natural Areas Program is a city program that designates certain lands with environmental value as permanently protected natural places. The St. Louis River Natural Area is comprised of 1200 acres along the shoreline of

the St. Louis River between Chambers Grove Park and the Irving neighborhood through which the trail will travel. Much of this acreage is tax forfeit and managed by St. Louis County. The City is partnering with the EPA GLRI and St. Louis County to acquire these acres for permanent protection.

Site characteristics upload

Description: Site Characteristics

[Site Characteristics_77f6ba.pdf](#)

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:

Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

Additional Supportive Information:

St. Louis River Estuary National Water Trail (Estuary Trail). Development of Waabizheshikana is integral to the development of the Estuary Trail. The Estuary Trail connects the St. Louis River State Water Trail and Lake Superior State Water Trail. The Estuary Trail was designated in 2020 and is a unique opportunity to recognize a premier paddle destination that appeals to a wide range of skill levels and interests. Representatives from the Duluth and Superior, WI, St. Louis and Douglas counties, state regulatory agencies, economic development & tourism groups, and user groups provided input for the concept. A National Water Trail will target and capture segments of the National and regional recreation and tourism markets. The Estuary Trail is a unique opportunity to explore one of the world's largest wild and scenic freshwater estuaries. Routes include backwaters and bays, white water rapids, wide open water, and wetlands and sloughs all providing scenic views surrounded by accessible public lands. The trail extends 16.5 miles from Fond du Lac Dam to Lake Superior and sports 11 distinct routes that provide up to 73 miles of exploration, most of them in loops. Visitors can immerse themselves in landscapes ranging from the working port to complex, diverse, wild ecosystems. Users can do as long or as short a paddle experience as they want. The urban nature provides exceptional access to information, both hazards and opportunities. Visitors can access accommodations, outfitting, guides, food and beverages, shopping, museums, equipment rental, and even health care via water access on Waabizheshikana. The Estuary Trail connects people to the river. The Water Trail and proposed Waabizheshikana Heritage Trail creates a platform for river stakeholders to collaboratively enhance recreational and educational opportunities, support restoration and conservation projects, increase community support and stewardship for the River, and create river management techniques that enrich river user experiences and preserve the river's natural and cultural environment. The full range of access points allows paddlers to put in and take out approximately every two miles at varied points on both sides of the river. These put-in and take-out points in many cases allow access to other experiences as well. Access points are accessible via public transportation as well as cycling paths. On the Minnesota side, many access points allow access to either the Munger Trail or the Waabizheshikana for walking and cycling. On the Wisconsin side they allow access to the Superior Municipal Forest, a great place for walking, hiking, and cycling as well. Waabizheshikana Heritage Interpretation Plan The St. Louis River holds cultural memory and spiritual meaning for indigenous people going back thousands of years. It's been home to European and American migrants seeking livelihood and a place to start anew. It's also been a sustaining habitat for plants and animals in and out of the water. Today, everything visitors see along Waabizheshikana has a history and holds a story worth hearing. Since no one narrative can hold these many legacies, the interpretive plan presents many cultural perspectives on the river, its past, present, and future. The plan incorporates a heritage interpretation experience for a range of audience interests and backgrounds along Waabizheshikana. By integrating artworks, historical accounts, and highlights from the natural world, this plan aims to cultivate new ways of seeing the landscape from diverse and sometimes unexpected perspectives. Proposed experiences draw attention to the wildlife, geography, and ecology of the river landscape that have made this an attractive destination for people and wildlife for millennia. The plan identifies and overlays a flexible and connected network of places and experiences onto the seven proposed Waabizheshikana trail segments. Since the segments will be built over time, as implementation resources allow, the interpretive elements and content have been organized in a way that they will be ready for implementation concurrently with trail construction. Interpretive features have been organized around a series of River Places, landmarks comprised of trailheads, overlooks, and pause points— each of which could host art, gathering spaces, or nature play areas. A set of interpretive elements—story poles, cairns, freestanding signs, and concrete inlays—have been designed from a materials palette

drawn from the natural estuary and from products of the industries that made the City of Duluth. By telling the stories of the estuary with materials that are of the location, the interpretive elements are both true to their place and durable. The combinations of materials, fabrication techniques, and cultural content described promise to further enrich storytelling along Waabizheshikana. When people on the trail see Ojibwe plant and animal names engraved into steel, for example, they are seeing different cultures juxtaposed and joined together at the same time. This and other techniques will illustrate ways of sharing stories and ideas that go beyond words and images. Likewise, the merging of these forms respects the gifts of the natural world and the hard work and cultural contributions of Duluth's many residents through time—a vision that honors the past while presenting a bold challenge for the future. Budget: Estimated costs are provided in the Mini-master Plan and are based on preliminary designs. Costs could vary extensively depending on results from additional analysis including but not limited to geotechnical investigation, survey data, shoreline stability, as well as design details that will be developed as part of the final design. Further onsite analysis will be necessary before proceeding into the design phase. The opinion of probable cost has been prepared on the basis of the design team's experience, qualifications, knowledge of the site and understanding of the project. It also takes into account constructability as well as site access challenges. The Mini-master Plan includes a breakdown of trail construction costs as well as the costs of the water access sites. Phasing: Waabizheshikana construction, Heritage Plan elements and the Estuary Trail will be phased concurrently in seven segments as resources allow. Please see Other Attachments for the Heritage Master Plan and the Estuary Trail Master Plan

Classification Details

Regional Trail (Motorized and Non-Motorized) Classification

Provides a High-Quality "Destination" Trail Experience

Well-located (i.e., Convenience of Access/Adequate Length) to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Site Map Upload	Martin Trail Maps	Martin_Trail_Maps_6389df.pdf
Maintenance Operations Budget Upload	Maintenance Budget	Maintenance_budget.docx_19a634.pdf

User Metrics Research Plan Upload	Trail Counters	Figure 54. TRAFx Counters 165 0d3.pdf
Park Trail Map	Location Map	Marten trail location b29aa3.pdf
Additional Attachment	National Water Trail Master Plan	St Louis River Estuary Master Plan 8c7416.pdf
Existing Master Plan	Approved Master Plan	Waabizheshikana MMP eb6f2c.pdf
Rgnl Trail Classification1 Upload	Criteria 1 Images	Criteria 1 ac8b26.pdf
Site Characteristics Upload	Site Characteristics	Site Characteristics 77f6ba.pdf
Rgnl Trail Classification2 Upload	Criteria 2 Images	Criteria 2 a9e4e7.pdf
Rgnl Trail Classification3 Upload	Criteria 3 Images	CRITERIA 3 90a469.pdf
Rgnl Trail Classification4 Upload	Criteria 4 Images	Criteria 4 58b4e0.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part I	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part I 25f424.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part III	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part III 9f90f8.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part II-A	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part IIa 3f2399.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part II-B	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part IIb 8eaf49.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part II-C	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part IIc 3ee8c6.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part IV	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part IV 3e2691.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part V	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part V a7ad39.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part VI	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part VI 356fe7.pdf
Additional Attachment	Heritage Plan Draft Part VII	Waabizheshikana Heritage Plan draft. Part VII bf827e.pdf
Park Trail Map	Relationship of water and land trails	Water and land trails ed634e.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Regional Map	Marten trail location 190e11.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Stakeholder workshop	Figure 28 0f0c38.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Stakeholder workshop	Figure 25 69c63f.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Stakeholder workshop	Figure 26 17cecd.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Stakeholder workshop	Figure 27 79c186.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Accessible launch options	Figure 7 84302b.pdf

Regional Map Uploads	Trail Planning Map	Figure 1_56534d.pdf
Regional Demographic Upload	Demographics	Demographics_756675.pdf
Economic Development Tourism Upload	Economic data	Economic Impacts_e2aa40.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Online survey	Figure 29_2fe8ab.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Stakerholder list	Stakeholder_committee_72e1df.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Chapter 5 Cover Page	Chapter 5 Cover Page_75eeb2.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Trail design standards	Figure 31_5998c7.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Train Dynamic envelope	Figure 32_e85c25.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Launch options	Figure 33_4ece4d.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Stakeholder responses	TABLE 1_a18671.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Trail or rail	Figure 34_859b28.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 37_07a7e9.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 38_f1ba4b.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 39_88e68b.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 40_e1a75f.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 41_c6f195.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 42_dfe164.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 43_578588.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 44_4f516f.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 45_e8893a.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 46_854d42.pdf
Development Feature Upload		TABLE 1_34c3b9.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 53_450a3a.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 52_b2a565.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 51_13a137.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 50_f0f122.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 49_de7dbb.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 48_3ad01b.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Figure 47_3630f8.pdf

Public Involvement Summ Upload	Ground truthing	Figure 30_98eb98.pdf
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	Water Trail Access	TABLE 3_a3b4bc.pdf
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	Trail Cost estimates	TABLE 2_6d1893.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Trailhead Sign	Figure 2_1f1a70.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	SLRC map of projects	Figure 3_e63b3a.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Duluth Natural Areas	Figure 4_883781.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	MP Chapter 1 Cover Page	Chapter 1 Cover Page_2ee962.pdf
Regional Demographic Upload	MP Chapter 2 Cover Page	Chapter 2 Cover Page_565be2.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Chapter 3 Cover photo	Chapter 3 Cover Page_eebb24.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	History timeline	Figure 8_a14570.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Map of trail vision	Figure 9_fcc929.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Project limits	Figure 10_3d5425.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Estuary view	Figure 11_e3df1f.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Trail at Kingsbury	Figure 12_e8b4a6.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Tate & Lyle RR tracks	Figure 13_8f79cb.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 1 conditions	Figure 14_f9d024.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 2 conditions	Figure 15_569f31.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 3 conditions	Figure 16_a823fe.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 4 conditions	Figure 17_743b07.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 4 conditions (2)	Figure 18_9f67d4.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 5 conditions	Figure 19_25cd15.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 6 conditions	Figure 20_1d383c.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Segment 7 conditions	Figure 21_a24885.pdf

Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Rail and Trail Precedence	Figure 22_fe9cc2.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Rail to Trail Precedence	FIGURE 23_2c2768.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Existing trail before and after	FIGURE 24_7d188c.pdf
Ad Phasing Plan Upload	Implementation timeline	Figure 36_ba87e8.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Trail Photos	Figure 6_186c83.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Wayfinding	Figure 5_dde0cc.pdf
Public Health Values Upload	Health citations	Health_impacts_d83434.pdf
Recreational Trends Upload	Recreation citations	Recreation_citations_88fc81.pdf