

Location: Metro COG Office

Client: Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Date: March 19, 2024

Subject: Heartland Trail – Clay County Segment Route Analysis Study Review Committee (SRC) Meeting #1

Attendees: Dan Farnsworth and Chelsea Levorsen, Metro COG; Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health; Forrest Steinhoff, City of Moorhead; Lonnie Neuner, City of Hawley; Peyton Mastera, City of Dilworth; Justin Sorum, Clay County; Kent Skaar and Jeff Fjested, DNR; Cleone Stewart, Detroit Lakes; Colin Harris and Tom Natwick, Alta Planning + Design; Zakcq Lockrem and Olivia Halsne, Mend Collaborative; Stacy Johnson, Jonathan Fillmore, Mike McGarvey, and Stewart Crosby, SRF

Summary of Meeting

- Discussion around calling it "Heartland Trail" vs. "Heartland State Trail" - Metro COG would like flexibility at this point (spurs, additional alignment options may be presented); DNR supports this, but they would be secondary if it's not a State trail.
- Be sure to identify both the Paul Bunyan and the Heartland State Trail on context maps and in text and be clear on the relationship of these trails to the current segment in this study.
- There is a large parcel of land south of Buffalo River State Park that is owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy. The Bluestem Prairie Scientific and Natural Area is also south of the state park.
- Existing State Plan for Heartland State Trail is within the 'shaded' area of the 2023 Clay Co Heartland Tr (as long as we stay within that 2 mi buffer then the State trail master plan remains valid).
- State Trail would be a 'straight line' - if considering spurs to connect to interpretive areas, etc., then state would not support those (85.015 - check Statute).
- The team shared an overview of the Engagement Plan and the group discussed locations for engagement events.
- PartnerSHIP 4 Health has a newsletter that would be good for sharing events. Patrick is happy to coordinate getting events in the newsletter.
- Other potential events include the Hawley Rodeo and Greater Moorhead Days. Minnesota State University Moorhead Earth Day, which is on April 25 is an event that Patrick Hollister will be attending, and he has offered to provide outreach materials.
- It was noted that all public-facing materials need to be provided to Patrick by September 30, as PartnerSHIP 4 Health is a funding partner.
- We confirmed that Buffalo River State Park is a stakeholder in the project.

- Hwy 10 reconstruction in Dilworth in 2029 (D4 has consultant working on design right now) [SRF engaged as sub on that project].
- Some areas of east Moorhead may have some reconstruction coming up as well.
- Clarification that this process may create additional route options that aren't part of the previous master plan. If the 2-mi shaded area is still overlapping, then no DNR master plan amendment would be required.
- There was interest in splitting the difference, going to 15th Ave N and Buffalo River South Branch east of Hwy 336 (15th Ave provides better 'spurability').
- Park Ave S in Glyndon has been constructed as a shared use trail, near the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton High School.
- North of Dilworth, 28th Ave is Co Rd 18. This is a typical 'road biking' route, but otherwise may not make sense to go that far north out of the way.
- There aren't many ways to get into Buffalo River State Park (RR is on 30' berm); snowmobiles wouldn't be allowed in (but some secondary corridor around the park may be allowed for motorized use (secure/same permanency as non-motorized section); it would still count as one route from the State's perspective); however, this is one of the areas that Dan would like the Team to explore options for increasing access; Science Center/educational opportunities; there are some existing bridges that get into the park (may accommodate future trail); Nature Conservancy property is to the south of the park (keep in mind that it's nearby, could be opportunity).
- The Heart of the Lakes Trail is being constructed in Maplewood State Park. The DNR is leading this effort. It will follow roads in the park, but also cross-country.
- A subdivision near 12th Ave S was approved (east of Buffalo River State Park). This may have some right-of-way set aside for a trail.
- Hawley has a new development with a trail crossing of Hwy 10. There is interest in an alignment that gets near to businesses. The city of Hawley would prefer having the trail travel east-west on Main St rather than on Hobart St
- East of Hawley there are two railroad crossings that may be constrained.
- Many roadways are assumed to have a 66' ROW. Dan will check to see what ROW maps are available.
- Clay County has good maps of existing snowmobile trails that can be added to our mapping efforts.