

The Clay County Heartland Trail

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are you wanting to build a trail?

As seen in the adjacent map, northwest Minnesota does not have the opportunities of nearby state trails as does the rest of the state. Today residents of Clay County are missing out on the benefits and quality of life that such a trail would have to offer.

This trail would provide a designated route for those seeking a variety of recreational opportunities in Clay County. The trail would link cities, towns, and parks along the route and would provide residents of Clay County with a safe and scenic recreational corridor.



Will land be condemned to build this trail?

No. No land will be condemned for the purposes of this trail. Any land needed for the construction of this trail will be purchased or an easement will be set up on a voluntarily basis by the adjacent landowners.

Who will use this trail?

This trail will be designed for all types of users. Runners, walkers, bicyclists, in-line skaters, etc. In the winter cross country skiers and snowmobiles will be allowed to use the trail. If sufficient corridor width is available a separate treadway may be made available for horseback riding. This treadway may also be the best option for snowmobiles and/or cross country skiers. ATVs will not be allowed on the trail.

It is expected that users will come from all parts of Clay County and beyond. With the trail connecting to the Fargo-Moorhead area, many residents from Fargo-Moorhead are expected to use the trail. A mix of users ranging from families to long-distance bicyclists are expected to enjoy this amenity.

As a landowner, how will this affect my privacy? Should I be concerned about the trail users?

With nearly 600 miles of state trails in Minnesota, many of the trails travel through lands adjacent to private properties. There have been little to no complaints from such landowners about the users of the trails. Many users of these trails are using the trails to enjoy the outdoors and as such are responsible stewards of the land and respectful of adjacent properties.

When will the trail be built?

At this stage it is hard to say exactly when the entire Clay County Heartland Trail will be built. Smaller segments of the trail may be built through towns such as Hawley and Glyndon with the larger segments being built further in the future. This is all contingent on funding for the trail.

How much will the trail cost?

The cost of this trail is still being evaluated. We are working on further studying the trail alignment which will help us determine a better cost estimate. Costs will vary based on terrain, wetlands, and many other factors. In addition to these costs, possible easements and property purchasing could also incur costs to the trail building effort.

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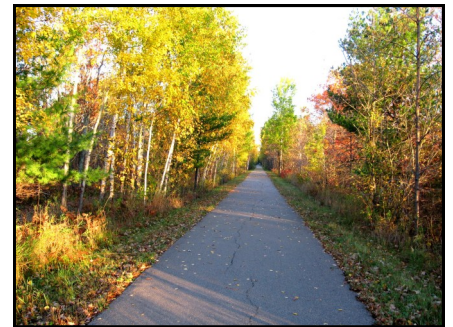
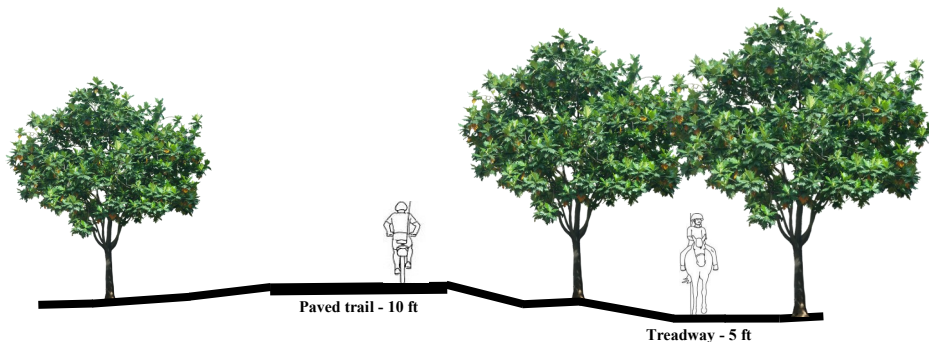
Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

How will the trail be paid?

A variety of funding sources will be used to pay for the trail. For example, funding was awarded to the Heartland Trail through the City of Glyndon by a Federal grant in 2018. Such grants will continue to be sought-out for construction of the trail. State bonding dollars will also be sought-out throughout each MN state legislative session. Local agencies (Moorhead, Dilworth, Glyndon, Hawley, Clay Co.) may also choose to provide funding for the trail, specifically the trail portions that are within their jurisdictions.

What will the trail look like?

The trail will be a paved 10 ft wide shared use path. There is the potential of a parallel treadway to be used for horseback riders and possibility snowmobiles or cross country skiers in the winter. Shown below is a potential cross section of the trail as well as a picture of the current Heartland Trail between Park Rapids and Walker.



The trail is adjacent to my farmland. What if I'm spraying crops or doing other farming activities that could accidentally interfere with trail users. Am I liable?

The Minnesota Right to Farm law (MN Statute 561.19) protects farmers from farming operations and aren't held responsible for nuisances associated with their farming operations. It's important to note that it's common for trails to be directly adjacent to active farmland, no cases of farming operations interfering with adjacent trails have been reported.

If I allow the trail on my property, am I liable for injuries associated with the trail?

Minnesota's Recreational Use Statute (MN Statute 604A.20 - 604A.27) provides liability protection to landowners who allow the public to enter their land for recreational purposes.