

Trail Recommendations

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Examples of trail types and trail users

Introduction

After taking into consideration the needs of trail user groups, the overall ecological restoration goals of the Park, and public input, several themes emerged to guide trail recommendations. These include:

- » Provide a high quality experience for multiple user groups
- » Create better connections to the surrounding neighborhoods
- » Improve trail sustainability through the use of advanced trail building techniques
- » Provide accessible trails

- » Create a comprehensive wayfinding system throughout the Park
- » Develop a comprehensive trail plan for the Park, collaborating with all trail user groups
- » Conduct all future trail design in close partnership with Hartley Nature Center and the City of Duluth
- » Maintain the natural character of the Park

Accessibility

While Hartley Park has a robust existing trail system, most trails are difficult or impossible to access for those in wheelchairs, with strollers, or otherwise needing wide, hard surface trails. While there is desire to keep the

Park's wild, natural aesthetics in place, it is important to create an accessible experience for all Park users. With sensitivity to material selection and trail design, effects to the Park's natural quality can be mitigated while still providing an improved experience for all users.

Recommendations to increase accessibility include:

- » Improving trail access and surfacing to encourage a broader spectrum of Park users
- » Use materials that balance place-appropriate aesthetics, environmental sustainability, accessibility, durability, capital costs, fundability and maintenance



Examples of trail types and trail users

- » Provide accessible trails to serve the needs of seniors, wheelchair or walker users, bikers, joggers and families with strollers

Recommendations have been made for each trail system as follows.

Ski Trails

There are approximately five kilometers of existing ski trails on the eastern side of Hartley Park. They are typically 10-14 feet wide and are groomed for classic skiing. Recommendations are for the City of Duluth and Hartley Nature Center to work in partnership with the Duluth Cross-Country Ski Club to implement:

- » Modest alignment changes to improve flow and sustainability
- » The addition of a 1.5 km beginner ski trail loop and practice area extending from Hartley Nature Center north into the adjacent School District property
- » Reduction of visual overlap

Superior Hiking Trail

Two miles of the 296-mile Superior Hiking Trail pass through the Park as it winds its way to the Canadian border. Recommendations are for the City of Duluth and the Superior Hiking Trail Association, in partnership with Hartley Nature Center, to work to:

- » Examine potential for modest improvements to flow, access, and sustainability
- » Improve access to overlooks
- » Study the trail's potential realignment through the Woodland Recreation Area

Natural Surface Multi-Use Trails

There are approximately 4.4 miles of existing natural surface multi-use trails in Hartley Park concentrated in the western portion of the Park and around Hartley Nature Center. Primary user groups include mountain bikers, trail runners, hikers, walkers and Nature Center program participants. The trails were originally user



defined trails that developed over the course of decades. More recently, Hartley Nature Center and the Cyclists of Gitchee Gumees Shores (COGGS), a local cycling club, have been making trail upgrades for sustainability and user enjoyment. Recommendations are for the City of Duluth to work in partnership with COGGS and Hartley Nature Center to:

- » Investigate potential for reducing conflicts and collisions by improving sightlines and/or creating one-way trail segments
- » Improve multi-use access from eastern neighborhoods to the multi-use system by improving routing and/or surfacing of existing Fairmont Road connector to the Old Hartley Road and improving

signage and surfacing of connector trail from the end of West Lewis Street to Hartley Place

- » Ensure that all future trail changes and improvements be designed to best accommodate the broad spectrum of trail users
- » Correct trail out-slopes that are excessively steep
- » Complete restoration of closed trail sections
- » Install wayfinding on all trails
- » Implement two-option route for the Duluth Traverse Trail with the Old Hartley Road providing a beginner level trail from Arrowhead Road to Woodland Avenue and a western option utilizing existing trail from Arrowhead Road through the Root Canal to the Pines and a short segment of new pur-

pose-built trail running from the Pines east along the northern slope of Rock Knob across Old Hartley Road to the Hartley Nature Center parking lot. This route will be confirmed on the ground by the City of Duluth, COGGS, and Hartley Nature Center

- » Study the Duluth Traverse Trail's potential entry through the Woodland Recreation Area

Core Accessible Trail

The Core Accessible Trail will be a ten-foot wide path winding its way along the Old Hartley Road corridor connecting Hartley Nature Center to the Hartley Road trailhead. Primary trail users will include seniors, people with mobility challenges, Nature Center program participants, youth bikers, walkers, hikers, joggers and families with young children and strollers. The Core Trail



will encourage a broader spectrum of use in the Park by improving trail access and surfacing. Alignment will be adjusted from that of a straight road to a meandering trail with spur connections to overlooks and educational waypoints. For the purposes of determining trail surface, the Core Accessible Trail may be broken into three segments:

- » First, the Hartley Nature Center/Hartley Pond loop, including the northern quarter of the Old Hartley Road will be surfaced with durable, permeable pavers to prevent storm run-off to Tischer Creek and provide a fully accessible (smooth, hard, stable, and firm) surface that fits unobtrusively into the natural environment. If an affordable paver product cannot be found that meets high standards of environmental sustainability, durability and accessibility, a

crushed aggregate selected to fit unobtrusively in the natural environment of Hartley will be used

- » Second, the quarter of the Old Hartley Road that traverses intermittently flooded wetland will consist of boardwalk on pilings to allow free flow of water and wildlife
- » Third, the remainder of the Old Hartley Road will be surfaced with permeable pavers as long as an affordable paver product can be found that meets high standards of environmental sustainability, durability and accessibility and fits unobtrusively in the Park. If an affordable product that meets those standards cannot be found, the remaining half of the Old Hartley Road will be surfaced with a crushed aggregate selected to fit unobtrusively in the natural environment of Hartley.

Crushed Stone Accessible Trail

The Crushed Stone Accessible Trail is comprised of several loops that can primarily be accessed from the Core Trail. It will be six feet wide and surfaced with a crushed aggregate. Primary user groups will include hikers, school groups, seniors, people with mobility challenges, youth bikers, joggers, Nature Center program participants and families with strollers. Loops will eventually link Hartley Nature Center, Hartley Pond, Rock Knob and the Woodland Recreation Area with the Core Trail and with adjoining neighborhoods. The trail through the Woodland Recreation Area will be routed in a manner that precludes any removal of, or damage to, the area's white pines which have been shown to be unusually resistant to blister rust and thus represent an important tool in the regional effort to conserve white pines.



Wayfinding signage examples

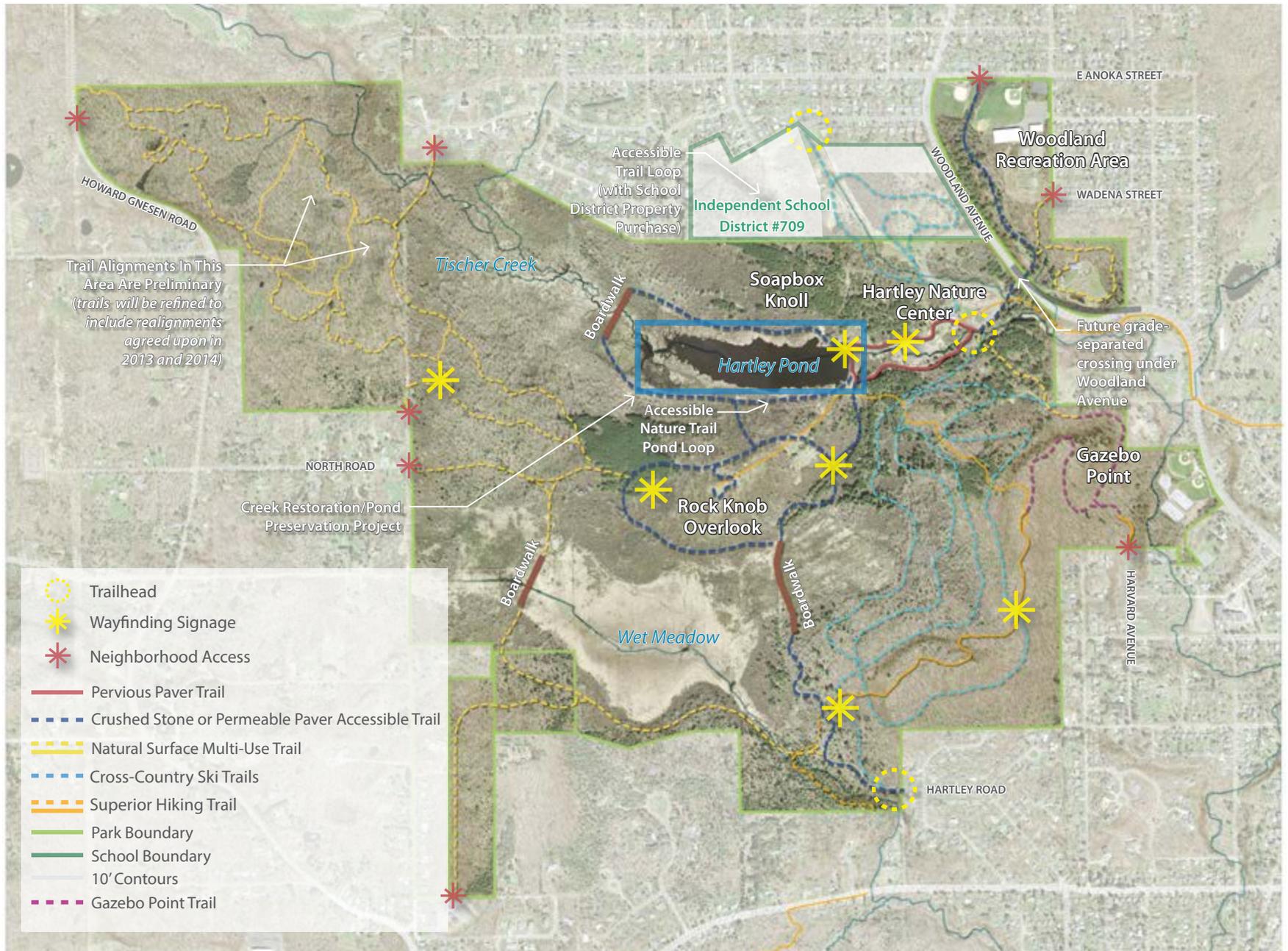
Wayfinding

Due to the size of Hartley Park and the complexity of its trail system, trail users often get lost in the Park. Too many trail intersections makes the trail system confusing and there is a need for wayfinding.

Wayfinding recommendations include:

- » Implement wayfinding signage and 'you are here' map locations at all trail intersections
- » Identify trail distances on wayfinding signage for the Duluth Traverse Trail and on Ski maps
- » Designate names for loop trail segments to easily identify trail layout
- » Include degree of difficulty of each trail segment

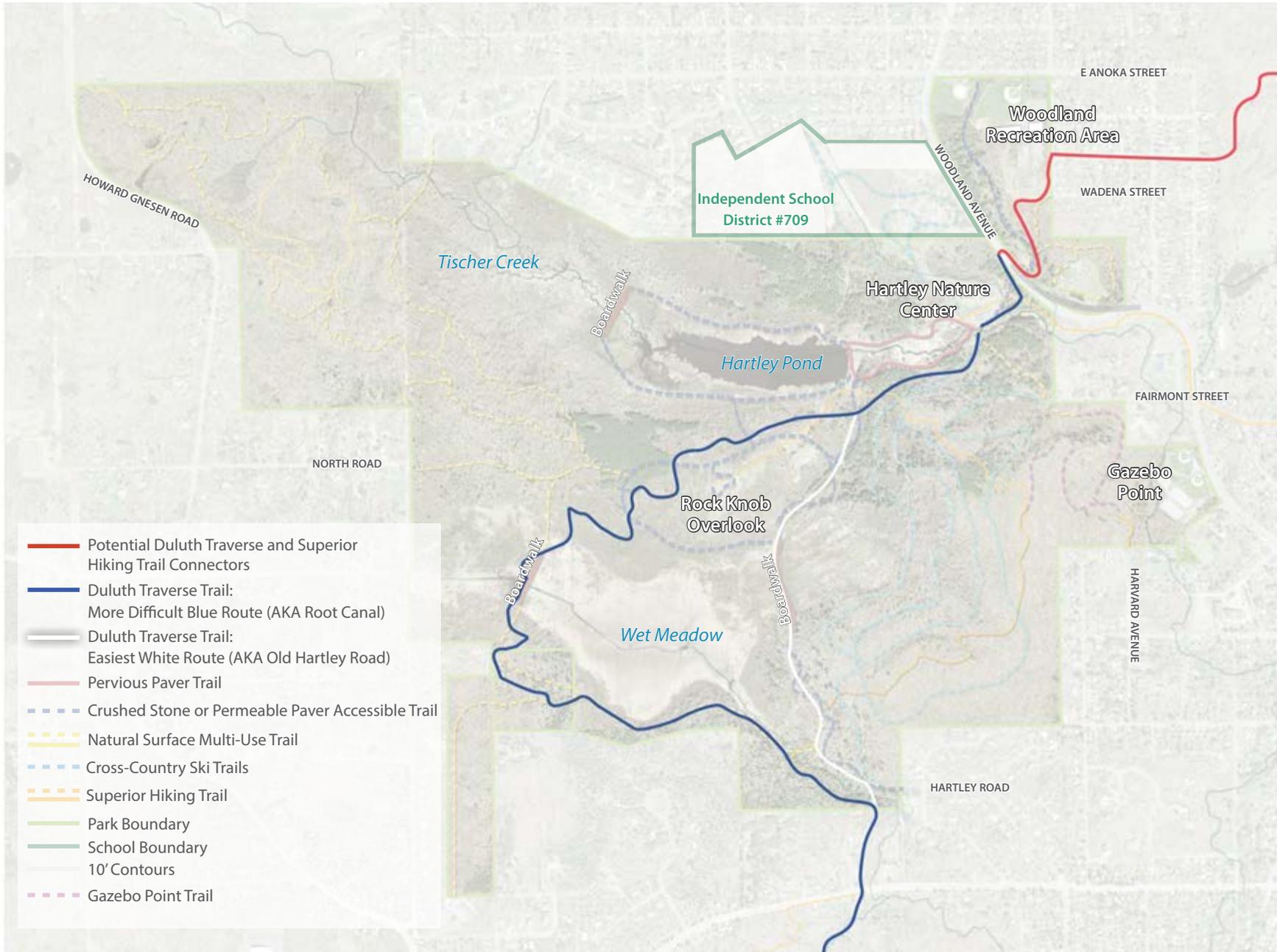
- » Clearly identify each trail segment's intended user group
- » Provide accurate kiosk maps at all entrances to the trail system
- » Identify key 'Points of Interest'



Proposed trail recommendations



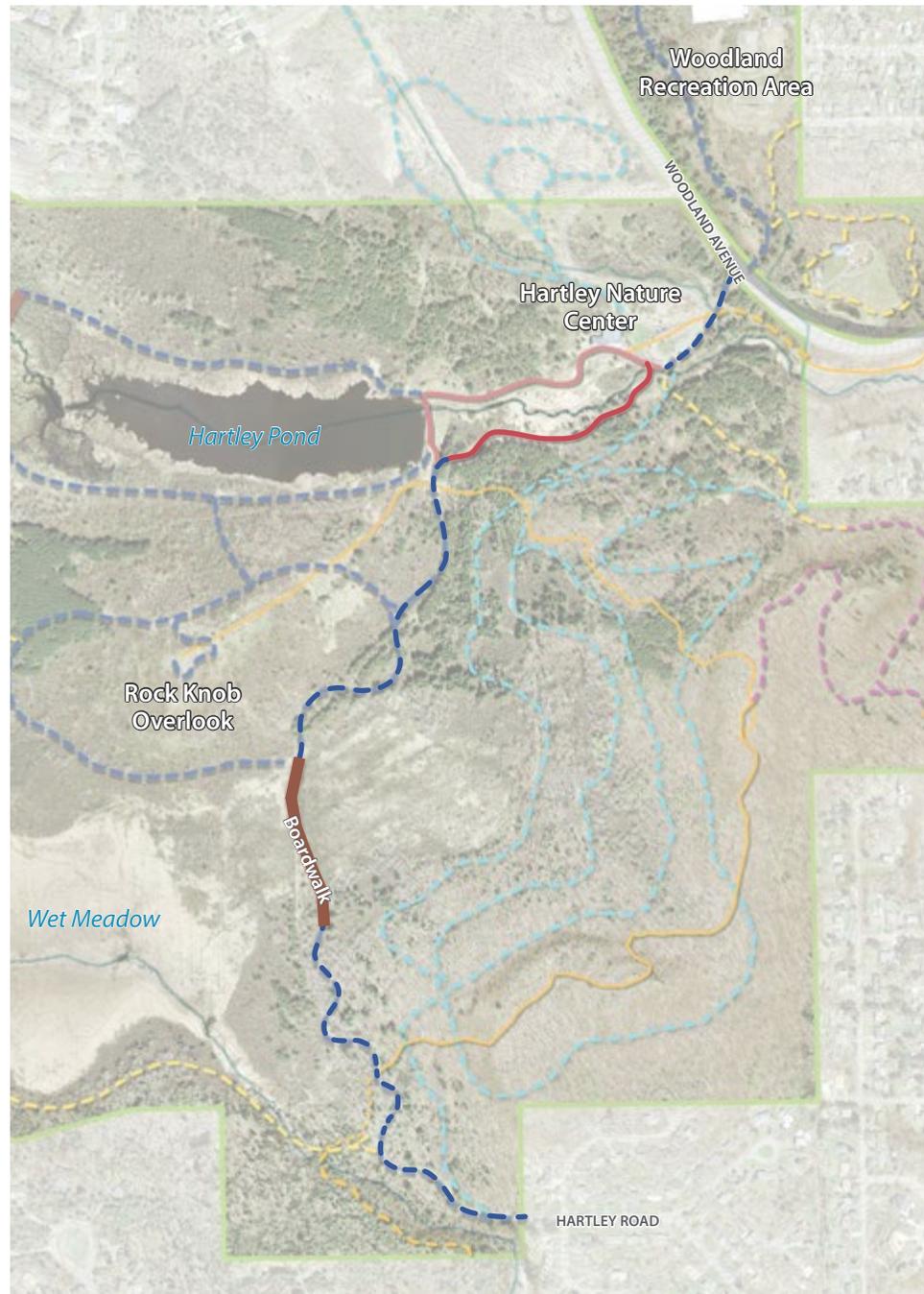
Trail Recommendations



- Potential Duluth Traverse and Superior Hiking Trail Connectors
- Duluth Traverse Trail: More Difficult Blue Route (AKA Root Canal)
- Duluth Traverse Trail: Easiest White Route (AKA Old Hartley Road)
- Pervious Paver Trail
- - - Crushed Stone or Permeable Paver Accessible Trail
- - - Natural Surface Multi-Use Trail
- - - Cross-Country Ski Trails
- - - Superior Hiking Trail
- Park Boundary
- School Boundary
- 10' Contours
- - - Gazebo Point Trail

Proposed Traverse Trail



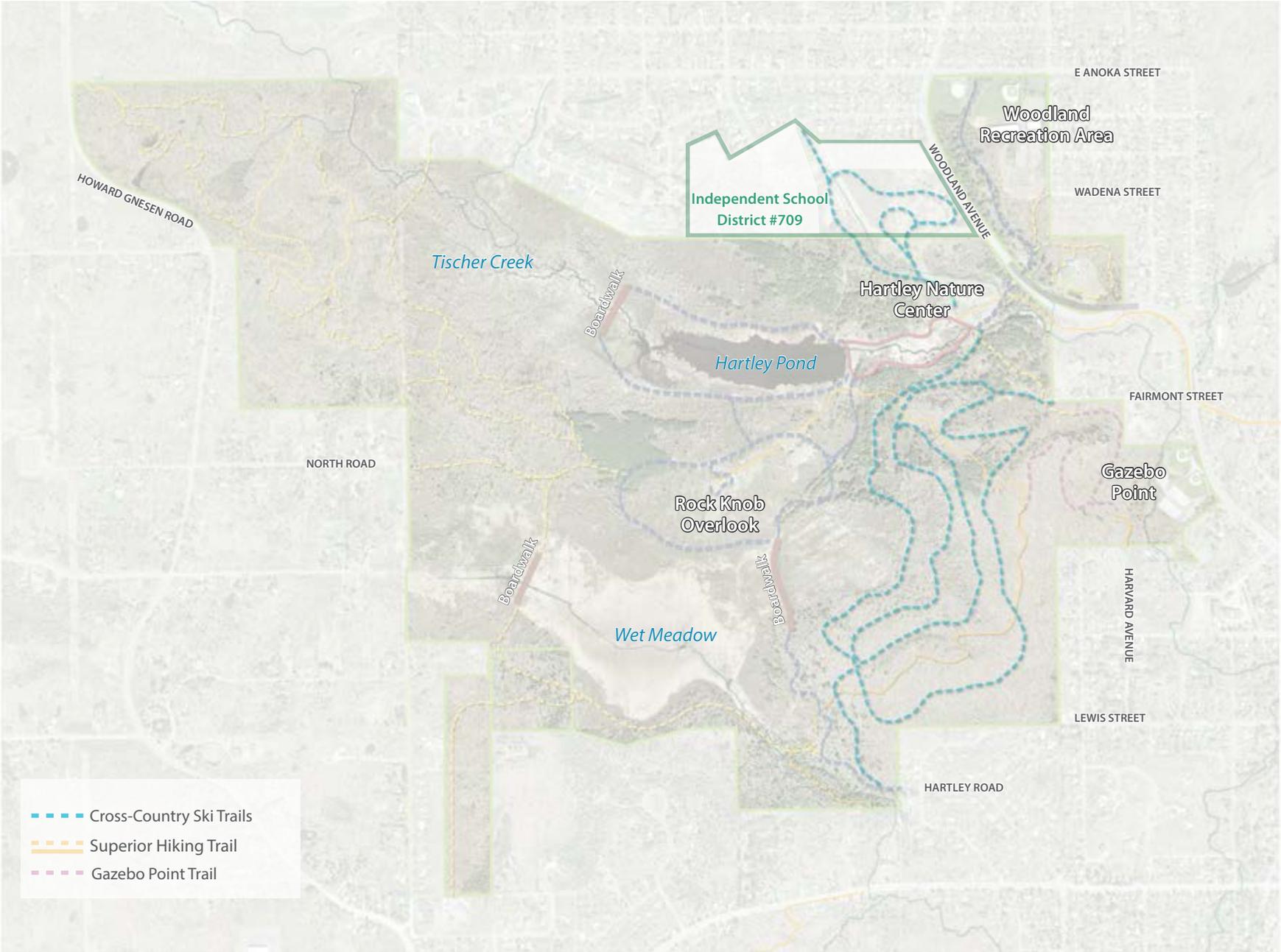


- Pervious Paver Trail (Old Hartley Road)
- - - Crushed Stone or Permeable Paver Accessible Trail
- Pervious Paver Trail
- - - Natural Surface Multi-Use Trail
- - - Cross-Country Ski Trails
- - - Superior Hiking Trail
- Park Boundary
- School Boundary
- 10' Contours
- - - Gazebo Point Trail

Old Hartley Road Surface Considerations



Trail Recommendations



- - - Cross-Country Ski Trails
- - - Superior Hiking Trail
- - - Gazebo Point Trail

Proposed Ski Trails



Natural Surface Multi-Use Trails

- » 18" wide, 4.4 miles long
- » Develop a comprehensive trail plan for the entire Park collaborating with all trail user groups
- » Create a one way trail system to minimize conflicts
- » Primary user groups include mountain bikers and trail runners



Proposed Natural Surface Multi-Use Trail



10'

Proposed Core Accessible Trail

Core Accessible Trail

- » 10 feet wide, 1.5 miles long
- » Surface materials will be chosen that balance place-appropriate aesthetics, environmental sustainability, accessibility, durability, capital costs, fundability and maintenance
- » Surface materials could include a specialized crushed stone aggregate, permeable pavers and elevated boardwalks
- » Trail will encourage a broader system of use in the Park by improving trail access and surfacing
- » Alignment will be adjusted from that of a straight road to a meandering trail with spur connections to overlooks
- » Primary trail users include seniors, people with mobility challenges, youth bikers, joggers and families with strollers

Crushed Stone Accessible Trail

- » 6 feet wide, 1.9 miles long
- » Surface materials will be a crushed stone aggregate
- » Several loops will link Hartley Nature Center, Hartley Pond, Woodland Recreation Area and potential future development of the School District property with the core trail and with adjoining neighborhoods
- » Primary user groups include hikers, school groups, seniors, people with mobility challenges, youth bikers, joggers and families with strollers



Proposed Crushed Stone Accessible Trail