

ACTIVE LIVING



ISANTI COUNTY

CONNECTING BIKE ROUTES WITH CITIZEN LANDSCAPE PREFERENCES

As discussed previously as a component of the project process involved engaging with the citizens of Isanti County to clarify their environmental and aesthetic preferences throughout the county. These preferences identify their experiential and emotional connections to the landscape of the county as a whole and to places of special interest within the county. Identifying suitable biking opportunities that provide access to these special places enhances the goals of ALBD and the Isanti County Park Plan in a reciprocal fashion - bicycling opportunities encourage an active living life style while, at the same time, they connect people with the landscape and places in the county they enjoy the most, strengthening their appreciation for preserving the rural character of Isanti County.

The Biking Suitability classifications identified on the map in Figure D3 were overlaid on a map of the county's Natural Environment and Habitat Resources (Figure D5) and a map of the county's Intrinsic Scenic Value (Figure D6). Both of these maps were used in the public participation process as the basis for identifying citizen values related to the landscape of the county.

The Natural Environment and Habitat Resources map encompasses all of the Isanti County Parks and MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas as well as other areas of significant environmental value. As illustrated in Figure D5, almost all of the identified significant environmental resources in the county can be accessed on at least one side by roads rated as suitable to highly suitable for bicycling.

The map of Intrinsic Scenic Value (Figure D6) combines the scenic value of both the natural areas of the county and the cultural landscape - farms, farmsteads, small communities - into what is broadly defined as 'rural character'. While the natural areas in the county can provide enjoyable destinations for bicycle trips, the scenic value of the overall 'rural character' of Isanti County makes the trip to and from destinations a pleasurable experience. As illustrated in Figure D6, many of the roads rated as highly suitable for bicycling travel through some of the most scenic areas of the county.