



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Luce Line
Trail**
Minnesota



Luce Line Trail

Minnesota

The Luce Line Trail occupies the former railbed of the Electric Short Line Railroad, started in 1908. The tracks continued to be



The Luce Line Trail occupies the former railbed of the Electric Short Line Railroad, started in 1908. The tracks continued to be expanded into the late 1920s, when the rail line became known as the Minnesota Western. Passenger service stopped in 1947, and in 1956 the Minneapolis and Saint Louis Railway took over. The corridor became inactive by 1970, and the Luce Line Trail was born. Today, the former railroad corridor accommodates biking, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing.

The 9-mile section of paved trail between Theodore Wirth Regional Park and Plymouth and Golden Valley in the western suburbs of Minneapolis is part of the Three Rivers Park District trail system, and that segment is

designated as the Luce Line “Regional” Trail. Along the route, Medicine Lake forms the backdrop to wooden bridges that overlook the Bassett Creek marshlands.

As trail users enter Theodore Wirth Regional Park, the path becomes part of the Minneapolis Grand Rounds Scenic Byway trail network, and the view expands to include the skyline of downtown Minneapolis. Nearby connections, just west of I-394 and Bryn Mawr Meadows Park, link to several Minneapolis trails, including the Cedar Lake Trail and Midtown Greenway. This section of the Luce Line Trail is routed along the old Bassett’s Creek Trail but, as of 2012, is included in the Luce Line Trail system.

The Luce Line Trail leads from urban Minneapolis west through Minnesota’s rural landscape, traveling through suburbs and wooded stretches, across wetlands, near lakes, through tallgrass prairie remnants, and into the countryside over varying surfaces. Between Plymouth and Winsted, the trail has a limestone surface with a parallel treadway for equestrians. Between Winsted and Hutchinson, the trail is paved for about 19 miles; between Hutchinson and Cedar Mills it is crushed granite; and between Cedar Mills and Cosmos you’ll find mowed grass. Snowmobiles are allowed on the trail west of Stubb’s Bay Road in Maple Plain.

Certain areas are not maintained regularly and can be a challenge following instances of severe weather, when the surface becomes muddy or otherwise impassable. Wildlife encountered along the way may include deer, foxes, minks, owls, pheasants, and many species of duck and geese. From Hutchinson westward, the Big Woods eastern forests give way to remnants of the tallgrass prairie, with many prairie plants still visible along the trail.



Luce Line Trail

Minnesota

States: Minnesota

Counties: Carver, Hennepin, McLeod, Meeker

Length: 72.9 miles

Trail end points: Theodore Wirth Park
(Minneapolis) to Thompson Lake near Rt. 7
(Cosmos)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone, Grass

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Fishing, Wheelchair

Accessible, Horseback Riding, Mountain

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the eastern endpoint at Bryn Mawr Meadows Park:
From I-394 take Exit 7 for Hennepin County Road 2/Penn Ave.
Head north on Penn Ave., and immediately turn right onto
Oliver Ave. In 0.1 mile turn right again onto Morgan Ave. S. In
0.3 mile turn right into the park.

To begin at Schaper Park, near the eastern endpoint outside
of Minneapolis: From I-94 W., take Exit 230 for MN 55 toward
Olson Memorial Hwy./Seventh St. N. (There is no Exit 230
from I-94 E.) Turn left onto MN 55 W.; after 2.7 miles, turn
right onto Schaper Road, where parking is available in
Schaper Park.

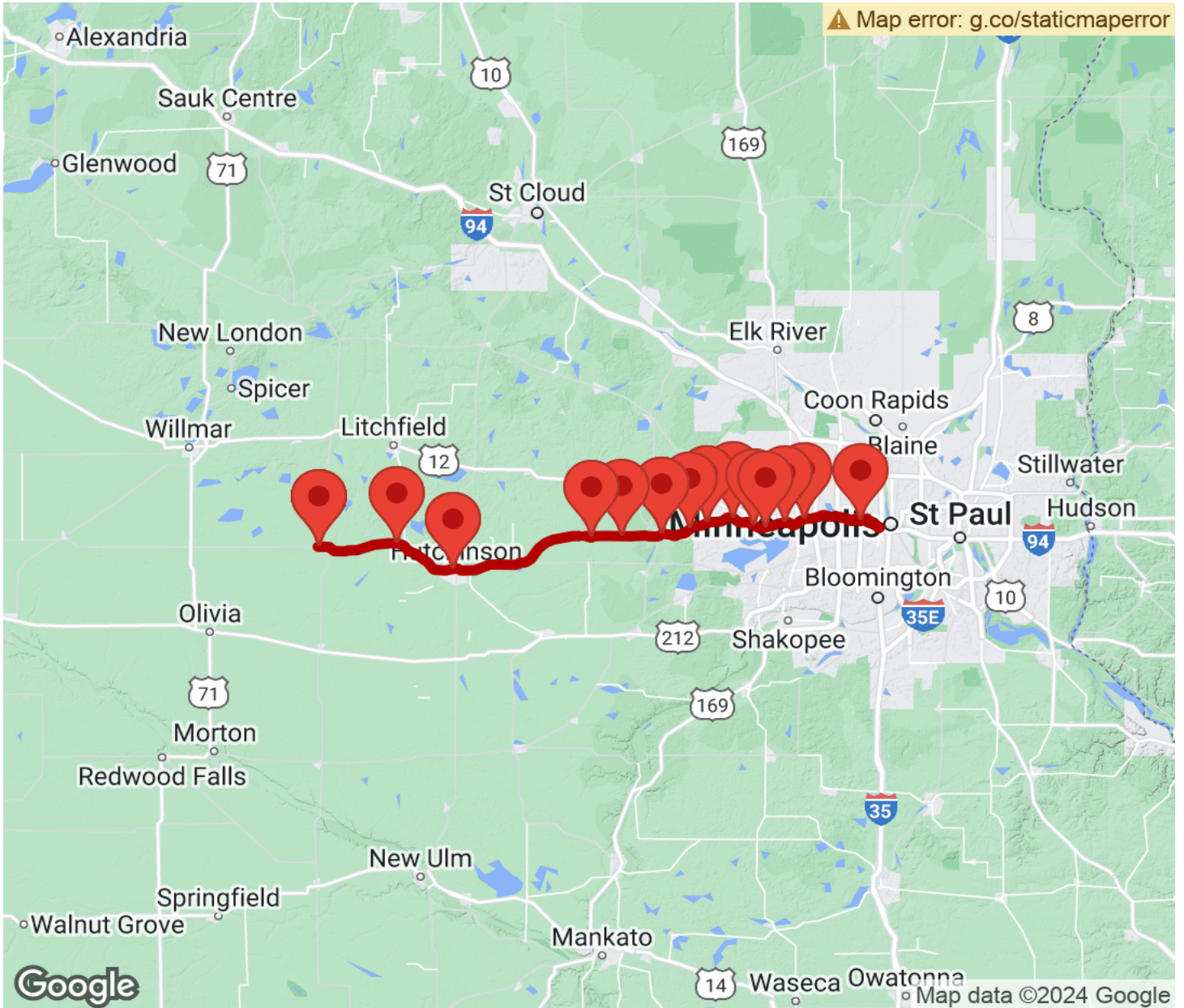
To reach the western trailhead in Cosmos, from I-494, take
Exit 16B. Head west on MN 7, and go 65.5 miles. Turn right
onto 525th Ave. and then left again on 525th Ave. Look for
parking ahead to your right.

Parking is also available in the following communities:
Plymouth, off 10th Ave. and Vicksburg Lane; Long Lake, off
Stubb's Bay Road; Lyndale, off CR 92; Carver, off CR 127, south
of CR 20; and in Watertown, Winsted, and Hutchinson.



Luce Line Trail

Minnesota



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com