ANALYSIS

Community Analysis

The amenities in Coleraine and Bovey include trails, parks, open spaces, water bodies, wetlands, public buildings, and downtown districts. The analysis not only identified individual amenities it also revealed potential connections between existing amenities. The potential to knit individual amenities into amenity systems informed both the preliminary and final design recommendations for this project.

Trails

- **Mesabi Trail**: When fully complete, the Mesabi Trail will be the longest paved trail in the United States. Managed by the Saint Louis & Lake County Regional Railroad Authority, it links 25 communities from Grand Rapids to Ely.
- **Keystone Trail**: This major snowmobile trail in the area connects to the larger state snowmobile trail system. Coleraine is an important gas stop for riders on this trail.
- **Canisteo Trail**: A local Coleraine trail that connects Longyear Park and Cotton Park.

Water bodies

- **Canisteo Pit Lake**: The Canisteo Pit is a complex of open pit mines that were operated from 1907 to 1985. When mining ceased in 1985, Canisteo Pit began filling with water. Citizens from Bovey and Coleraine are increasingly concerned about the rapid increase in the in the yearly water levels. In response to this concern, The Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board (WMMPB), which is a joint powers board comprised of Itasca County and ten cities and townships along the Itasca County portion of the Mesabi Iron Range, formed an ad hoc task force in 2001 to assist in addressing the issue. Currently designs for an underground siphon from the Canisteo Pit to Trout Lake are being considered.
- **Trout Lake**: “Trout Lake is part of the Mississippi River watershed, draining first through Trout Creek, which empties into the Swan River, and finally the Mississippi River. Trout Lake ranks among the upper 10 percent of lakes in Minnesota in terms of size and depth.” Trout Lake is a popular recreation area for swimming, boating, and fishing. Lately there has been concern about maintaining the fish population. Shoreline restoration efforts currently underway seek to improve the lake’s water quality.

Public Parks

Longyear Park and Cotton Park in Coleraine are the largest of the several parks in the two communities. Longyear Park was created as part of the city beautiful movement and still retains part of this curvilinear paths. Cotton Park contains a beach, playground, and boat launch. Both parks provide access to Trout Lake and are connected by the local Canisteo Trail.

Open Space

There is a potential for a greenway corridor on open land along the old Highway 169 alignment as it leaves downtown Bovey and descends towards Cotton Park in Coleraine. The City of Bovey and Troumbly Development own the majority of this land. Although Troumbly Development has plans to develop its property, the Bovey land is an opportunity.

New Highway 169 Bypass

The bypass is an opportunity for Coleraine and Bovey to come together because the communities physically meet at the bypass. The major intersection and pedestrian crossing connect the communities.

Town Infrastructure

- **Main Streets**: When the Highway 169 Bypass is complete, the commercial centers of Coleraine and Bovey will not be on Highway 169. New entries are needed in order to draw prospective customers off of the highway into the downtowns of these communities. Connections between the main streets and the major recreational amenities would also strengthen the customer base for the retail businesses in the downtown by bringing more visitors into the downtowns.
- **Schools**: Coleraine and Bovey are a part of the Greenway School District. Because the elementary and high schools are located in Coleraine and the middle school is located in Bovey, the new 4-lane highway byway between the two towns makes pedestrian safety a major issue. Safe paths are needed for children to get to school.
A. Downtown Bovey
A change in topography creates a dramatic entry into downtown Bovey from the east. Several small businesses, public buildings, and small open spaces comprise the compact Bovey downtown. There is great potential for creating new public greens and plazas to enhance the character of this main street.

C. Bovey Park
This is an active recreational park with basketball court and playground equipment. It is located near an existing wetland and a forested hillside. Because the City of Bovey owns the land on either side, there are opportunities to expand the park.

E. 2nd Avenue
This section of Highway 169 will be turned back to the county. State funds to enhance this road and right-of-way provide an opportunity to connect Bovey and Coleraine visually and physically.

G. Highway 169 Intersection
Presently, Highway 169 cuts through Coleraine and turns north and then east through Bovey. The new, larger four-lane intersection will separate the two communities physically, visually, and emotionally.

I. Trout Lake Boat Launch
The existing boat launch and adjacent gravel parking lot are well used in the summer months. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is presently working on a plan for a newly re-designed boat launch and paved parking lot. There is great potential to tie this project into the intersection construction and the restoration efforts along the Trout Lake shoreline.

B. Bovey RV Park
This small, city-owned recreational vehicle park with views to Cotton Park and Trout Lake is in the very beginning phases of redevelopment. A developer has expressed interest in enlarging and upgrading this facility.

D. Mesabi Trail
The Mesabi Trail, a major recreational amenity in Northeastern Minnesota, traverses through beautiful forested areas of birch and aspen between the two communities.

F. Downtown Coleraine
Several small businesses, many public buildings, and some residential buildings comprise downtown Coleraine. Presently, angular parking defines the area. More formal plantings and lighting along with defined crosswalks could enhance the pedestrian environment.

H. Entrance into Coleraine
Changes in topography and the large overburden piles from the Canisteo Mine rising in the background create a dramatic entry into Coleraine from the southwest.

J. Cotton Park
Cotton Park is a special place on the Iron Range because it is on a popular fishing lake, has a public a beach, and is located just off Highway 169. Historically, this was the gathering place for the range communities. Currently the frequently used beach is small and the modest beach house is used for storage and is in need of renovation. Shoreline restoration efforts have been started by the DNR. The DNR projects and the intersection construction provide an opportunity to renovate Cotton Park.