

**From:** Linda Olson [mailto:[lolson0351@gmail.com](mailto:lolson0351@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 31, 2015 5:56 PM  
**To:** Council  
**Subject:** Superior Street Reconstruction Project

To: Duluth City Council

I would like to take this opportunity to support the concept of an expanded pedestrian and bicycle oriented Superior Street. My husband and I have a downtown condo right on Superior Street. We love the ability to walk to everything we want to do and would welcome an even more pleasant experience on Superior Street minus the ever present din and smell of cars, buses, and trucks making their way up and down the street.

The current plan for Superior Street improvements lacks 21<sup>st</sup> century vision. When looking at the plan it is remarkably similar to the current version of Superior Street. In fact, it harkens back to the 1940s and 1950s where the automobile was king and downtown shopping boomed before the construction of our suburban malls. Let's face it, the downtown shopping district will probably never return to what it once was. Rather the further expansion of the successful Canal Park district and Lake Walk is what the downtown needs to embrace and nurture. That means providing a reason for people to come across the freeway from Canal Park and visit the downtown district. It requires a place for folks to browse shops, stop at a restaurant or take in the beauty of the historic area. It means providing an atmosphere which invites people to sit at an outside café or in a park like area without the noise and exhaust which comes with the traffic on Superior Street. It means making more area available for walkers and bikers.

Now that Duluth has rid itself of the Last Place on Earth and its' customers one can see more people coming across from Canal Park to explore the city. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Imagine what foot traffic could be if Superior Street was even more inviting than the current configuration and the redesign which so closely resembles it.

Surely there is a way to minimize traffic on Superior Street and expand its use to more eco-friendly activities which is in keeping with the healthy life style Duluth is striving to achieve. Wouldn't it be wonderful to turn Superior Street into a strictly walking and biking street? This would require reworking the traffic flow to other streets and making better use of the parking ramps. Shuttles to ramps could continuously run from parking ramps in the downtown area and Canal Park. Wouldn't that be more convenient than having to hunt for a parking space!? Think about a trolley service running up and down Superior Street carrying people to shops and restaurants in the downtown and Canal Park. Think about people relaxing on park benches and outdoor cafes along the street. Think about the cleaner air and the quieter street.

Duluth has an opportunity to really step up and do something bold; reinvent its downtown into a destination not just another crowded, vehicle filled urban corridor. Take a look at other cities around the US and Europe for models of how successful a pedestrian and bike friendly cities can thrive (look at Portland, Oregon, for example). Yes, taking a risk and doing something different takes us out of our comfort zone but it as the saying goes “no risk, no reward”. Be bold Duluth. Look forward, not backward.

Sincerely,

Linda Olson

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Duluth, MN