



# CITY OF DULUTH

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES  
Community Planning Division

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TO: Planning Commission

FROM: John Kelley, Planner II

DATE: November 28, 2018

**RE: Imagine Duluth 2035 Future Land Use Map Amendment  
Lake Superior College Institutional footprint**

## **BACKGROUND:**

The City is proposing changes to the Imagine Duluth 2035 Future Land Use Map to support changes to the Lake Superior College (LSC) campus, which may include the addition of new student housing within the campus footprint. The area under consideration for a future land use map amendment is currently designated as Open Space. The Open Space land use category is for lands with natural resource, scenic, or recreational attributes, including lands with development limitations. The existing campus area is designated as Institutional and is applicable to university and college and public school campuses, large religious facilities or governmental campuses, or cemeteries. This land use category applies primarily to existing facilities. The Institutional land use category typically translates into Mixed Use-Institutional zoning.

The area proposed for the map amendment is a city owned parcel approximately 12 acres in size and is located immediately south of the existing LSC campus. Today the parcel is mainly used for the Miller Creek Disc Golf Course. The parcel was previously considered for development of student housing. In 1993 the City approved a Special Use Permit (SUP) for the then Duluth Technical College for the construction of up to 103 units. The City Council approved the sale of the parcel to ISD 709 contingent upon the site being developed for student housing within 5 years of approval. In 1997 the SUP was amended and approved by the City for Lake Superior College (formerly Duluth Technical College) to allow for a fewer number of units (24 total) for student housing. The approval was again contingent upon the sale of the parcel and construction of the housing within 5 years.

## **Land Use Categories**

### Open Space

High natural resource or scenic value, with substantial restrictions and development limitations. Primarily public lands but limited private use is anticipated subject to use and design controls. Examples include: city parks and recreation areas, primary viewsheds, shorelands of the lake and streams, wetlands and floodplains, and high-value habitat.

- Low intensity uses such as trails and recreation
- Viewshed protection and access
- Water access, with some parking and supporting facilities

## Institutional

Applicable to medical, university/college, public school, religious, or governmental campuses. Can include adjacent areas that support them, with related commercial, office uses, and residential uses in the fringe areas of the district.

- Relationship to institutional master plans, which should guide expansions and ancillary land uses in adjacent areas
- Density increasing from fringe to taller buildings in core

Pedestrian-oriented design, transit facilities, and parking

## **PROCESS:**

Based on discussions with LSC and their need for student housing, staff began a review of the campus layout at LSC and this site for potential land use changes and development considerations. A public meeting was held on November 27, 2018, with seven attendees and LSC representatives. This was an open house where staff shared information and asked for questions and comments about the proposed land use change from Open Space to Institutional. Comments/concerns from attendees included the following:

- Lighting with the existing college buildings and any proposed new structure lighting
- Possible homes within the adjacent neighborhoods becoming college student rentals
- Noise and police calls
- Impacts to wildlife and streams
- Property values
- Build housing on north side of campus

## **FINDINGS:**

### ***Existing Land Use***

The site is currently vacant land that is primarily utilized for the Miller Creek Disc Golf Course. The northwest corner of the parcel contains a portion of an existing paved parking lot used by LSC and disc golfers.

### ***Transportation***

The parcel has street frontage along Trinity Road and along Lake Superior Drive, which is a private access road for the college. The property is located at the controlled intersection of Lake Superior College Drive, South Arlington Avenue and Trinity Road. Access to the site would be from the private road.

### ***Natural Resources***

As stated above, the parcel is approximately 12 acres in size and is mainly flat and open terrain with some steeper sloped areas in the southwest corner. The site has forested areas on the east and western portions of the property. Two cold-water streams, Miller Creek and Coffee Creek, are located in proximity to the parcel. Staff reviewed the site to confirm the Unified Development Chapter's (UDC) shoreland setback requirements. The majority of the parcel is outside of the UDC shoreland setbacks for structures.

### ***Utilities***

Existing water, gas, and sanitary sewer lines are located along Trinity Road. This parcel could effectively be served by existing utilities; other sites within the LSC institutional footprint could not be served as effectively by all required utilities.

## *Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Land Use Plan*

### **Principle #11**

#### **Consider education systems in land use actions.**

There is a connection between land use patterns and all level of educational facilities. School locations and housing opportunities for students and families require consideration of impacts on transportation and infrastructure systems, housing densities, parking, and non-student uses.

- For higher education, housing opportunities that integrate students into the larger community are generally desirable; however, impacts of poorly integrated student housing can result in negative impacts to neighborhoods.

### **Economic Development Chapter**

Policy #1— Invest in people to increase employees' skills, ensure workforce availability for employers, and promote income self-sufficiency

S3 - Collaborate with K-12, higher education, business, and other partners to develop an improved understanding of career paths to maximize opportunities for young people in the city.

Policy #3—Build on Existing Economic Strengths & Competitive Advantages

S2 - Coordinate with major institutions, including hospital and university campuses, to plan for their growth, minimize development impacts, and provide for stability and livability for the campuses, their employees, and surrounding neighborhoods.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The proposed land use change is consistent with the Governing Principles and the Policies and Strategies of the Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan update. Staff has evaluated the property and determined it is suitable and presents an appropriate expansion of the Lake Superior College campus.

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map change to City Council.





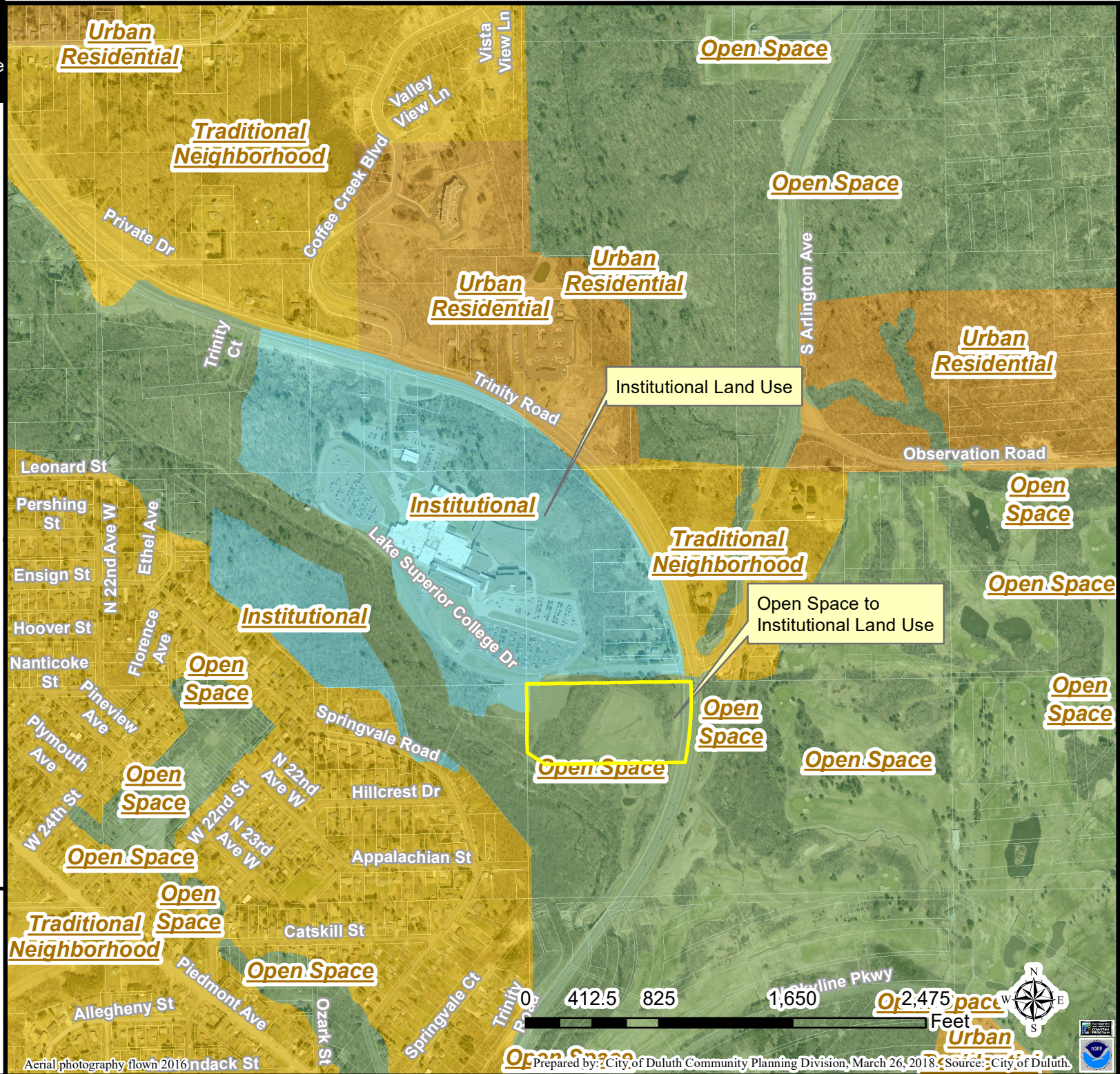
PL 18-152

# Future Land Use Map Change Open Space to Institutional

**Legend**

- Open Space
- Open Space/Outside Duluth
- Rural Residential
- Low-density Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Urban Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Central Business Secondary
- Central Business Primary
- Large-scale commercial
- Tourism/Entertainment District
- Commercial Waterfront
- General Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Industrial Waterfront
- Business Park
- Transportation and Utilities
- Transportation and Utilities/Outside Duluth
- Medical District
- Institutional

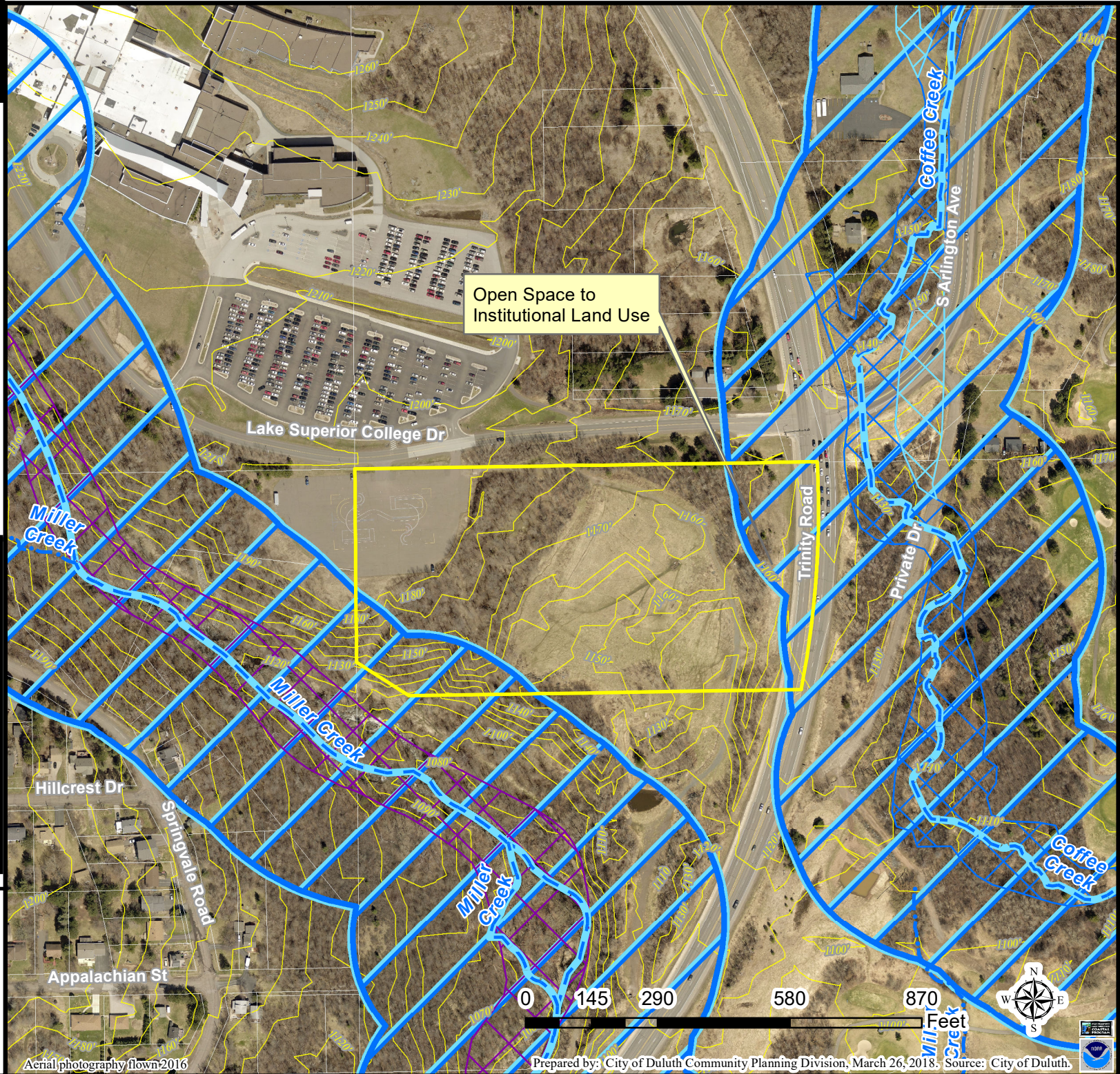
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Aerial photography flown 2016

Prepared by: City of Duluth Community Planning Division, March 26, 2018. Source: City of Duluth.





Open Space to  
Institutional Land Use

**Legend**

- 10' Contour (elev. change)
- Floodplain (UDC)**
  - General Flood Plain
  - Flood Way
  - Flood Fringe
- Shoreland (UDC)**
  - Cold Water
  - Natural Environment
  - General Development
  - Trout Stream (GPS)
  - Other Stream (GPS)
  - Wetlands (NRR1)

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