

Economic Development-Policies and Strategies

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

Policy 2: Foster growth of existing employers and strategically recruit new employers to Duluth.

Policy 3: Build on Existing Economic Strengths & Competitive Advantages

Policy 4: Embrace the Outdoors as an Economic Engine and Source of Community Wealth

Policy 5: Effectively Coordinate Marketing, Communication, and the City's Image

P1: Invest in people to increase employees' skills, ensure workforce availability for employers, and promote income self-sufficiency.

S1: Enhance programs to provide job training for historically disadvantaged residents, while continuing to identify and understand employment barriers and new opportunities for collaboration.

S2: Coordinate resources and partnerships to develop new employment pathways in existing and emerging employment sectors; seek opportunities for new business incubators.

S3: Collaborate with K12, higher ed, businesses, and other partners to develop an improved understanding of career paths to maximize opportunities for young people in the City.

S4: Establish new mentorship programs more closely aligned with high school and higher education; foster opportunities for apprenticeships and entry-level job training.

S5: Encourage entrepreneurship by high school and college graduates seeking to remain

in Duluth following graduation; aggressively market local job opportunities through partnerships with the schools. Consider incentives to help young people strengthen their roots to the community.

S6: Create new housing to meet the needs of the City's workforce, in locations to minimize the complexity and length of commute and maximize access to amenities and services. Promote the value of the high quality of life provided to employees by living in Duluth.

S7: Coordinate priorities with the Duluth Workforce Development Board to implement strategies that strengthen the workforce development system.

P2: Foster growth of existing employers and strategically recruit new employers to Duluth.

S1: Prioritize redevelopment efforts in the Core Investment Areas (MAP). Encourage collaboration between existing businesses in individual Core Investment Areas to support increased business activity overall and to improve its aesthetic and social environment. Recognize Core Investment Areas as hubs of the sharing and remote-work economy.

S2: Develop a strategic list of infrastructure investments anticipated to maximize opportunities and spur new private sector investment within Industry and Commerce Priority Areas.

S3: Evaluate standards for micro-enterprise around new and emerging technology, including businesses that start in homes and garages; collaborate to expand financial tools to assist such businesses seeking growth opportunities.

S4: Conduct site assembly strategically, whether advancing specific city policy goals or

assisting businesses with expansion or relocation.

S5: Seek further funding for cleanup of contaminated sites to enhance brownfield redevelopment in the city; prioritize brownfield sites close to or in Core Investment Areas or adjacent to significant infrastructure.

S6: Ensure high-speed broadband availability citywide to foster growth of existing and new employers, with initial priority in Core Investment Areas.

S7: Promote opportunities for easing travel for employees to and from Duluth, especially via initiatives such as the Northern Lights Express and through air service to key Great Lakes regional destinations like Chicago or Toronto.

P3: Build on Existing Economic Strengths & Competitive Advantages

S1: Promote employer expansions that include job growth, as well as new commercial and industrial development, to support and enhance the level of activity in the Industry & Commerce Priority Areas.

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.

S3: Support the work of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority and Duluth Airport Authority to maximize opportunities for economic growth on and around port and airport properties, and consistent with their respective priorities.

S4: Create a menu of options and next steps to encourage redevelopment of short-term priority sites (MAP).

S5: Collaborate with partners to publicize and regularly update inventory of available land, sites, and buildings.

S6: Support re-emerging economic opportunities for Duluth, including craft-related industry, in appropriate locations.

S7: Analyze commercial market demand and best practices to determine options for expansion of neighborhood serving uses in nodes accessible by transit, as well as in the city center where skyways create two levels of potential commercial activity.

S8: Plan for access between key transportation corridors and Industry and Commerce Priority Areas, including through preservation or use of currently vacant or underutilized rights-of-way.

S9: Encourage expansion of the city's tourism economy through efforts to expand in areas of current activity, such as in Canal Park, but also through marketing and investment in destination neighborhoods and iconic tourism experiences unique to Duluth.

P4: Embrace the Outdoors as an Economic Engine and Source of Community Wealth

S1: Promote and develop access to parks and open space by employers and employees.

S2: Clearly delineate and publicize the federal navigation channel; encourage recreational use of Lake Superior and the Estuary when appropriate in coordination with partners.

S3: Identify growth sectors of the tourism economy, such as bird watching, fall colors tourism, and cold-season outdoor community events. Preserve and promote the economic benefits of both passive and active recreational tourism opportunities.

S4: When considering sale of public lands for economic development purposes, first consider economic value of such lands as an outdoor asset.

S5: Give consideration and support to new tourism and recreation related industries and businesses.

P5: Effectively Coordinate Marketing, Communication, and the City's Image

S1: Publicize city business retention practices and outcomes, including through annual reporting to the community. Continue collaborations with local and regional partners to prioritize and publicize such efforts.

S2: Promote businesses in the city's overall wayfinding effort to encourage commerce, especially to neighborhood business nodes within Core Investment Areas.

S3: Expand partnerships to promote the arts and additional cultural offerings.

S4: In coordination with the Duluth Indigenous Commission, encourage multi-lingual signage, particularly in the Ojibwe language, at local businesses interested in participating.

S5: Evaluate neighborhood centers with a unique cultural heritage, such as Duluth's "Little Italy" for greater historical recognition and as places of economic opportunity.

S6: Publicize the attributes of Duluth's redevelopment and opportunities for business growth. Provide emphasis on the city's competitive advantages, such as its access to regional transportation, climate-resilient location, well-educated workforce, and high levels of amenities.

S7: Catalogue condition and classification of commercial and industrial buildings in the city. Craft partnerships with development organizations to promote the

value of energized buildings in industrial areas. Work with property owners and businesses to consider overall community aesthetics. Incentivize blight removal, even in industrial areas, and building/site maintenance.

S8: Consider opportunities to develop neighborhood-oriented Business Improvement Districts (also called Special Service Districts) in Core Investment Areas with leadership provided by neighborhood business leaders.

customers. The highest efficiency measures are upgrading equipment, such as replacing boilers or hot water heaters.^{xix} The state mandated Conservation improvement Program mandates energy savings for gas utilities.^{xx} Other City driven policies, such as enabling increased use of multimodal transportation options, are also effective ways to meet emissions reduction goals. These types of policies are found in the Transportation chapter of this plan.

Increase community resiliency by planning and preparing for extreme weather, adapting to changing climate conditions, and fostering stronger community connectedness and social and economic vitality.

Mitigation strategies that increase the efficiency of energy use and reduce emissions can help to lessen the severity of future climate change,

but in addition, adaptation strategies are needed to deal with the impacts of climate change that are already happening. The City can prepare for extreme weather events that have the potential to interrupt supply chains or debilitate energy sources by encouraging increased local production and diversification of essential supplies including food and energy sources.

An important component of resiliency is a sense of community and connection to place. We all do better if we are looking out for one another, especially in times of natural disasters. Social support networks help individuals be more resilient. The policies in this chapter encourage community ownership of the challenges we face with a changing climate and weighing the values of potential energy decisions and the impacts they might have on all community members.

Energy and Conservation Policies and Strategies

Using significant findings and best practices from the research, City staff developed draft Energy & Conservation policies. These policies were presented back to the focus group that helped develop the research questions and to the public and community partner organizations. Using an iterative process of regular discussion with partners, City staff incorporated feedback from the community and experts in the field to develop the final set of policies and strategies for the Energy & Conservation chapter.

Policy 1: Increase community involvement in decisions about energy and infrastructure investments.

Strategy 1: Annually benchmark and publish citywide energy use and emissions by source (ex: residential, commercial, industrial, healthcare, higher education, etc.) and type of utility including a metric to track change over time, such as total energy use per resident.

Strategy 2: Educate the community about the financial, social, and environmental costs and benefits of different energy sources, and how energy use relates to land use patterns.

Strategy 3: Organize an annual forum to engage surrounding municipalities and nearby tribes regarding regional resiliency and to share innovative projects and best practices for energy and conservation policies.

Strategy 4: Acknowledge Indigenous Peoples' sacred and longstanding ties to the earth and their role as protectors of the environment and consult with tribal leaders and the Indigenous community about our shared energy future.

Policy 2: Provide incentives for developers to encourage green buildings and renewable energy use in new residential and commercial buildings.

Strategy 1: Establish clear guidelines for green building and solar ready development in all zoning districts where solar is a permitted use, including guidelines for solar easements.

Strategy 2: Revise the sustainability points system in the UDC by increasing the minimum point value requirements and adjust the point values of individual actions to encourage more green buildings and more buildings built solar ready or with solar, or other renewable energy sources, already installed.

Policy 3: Incentivize commercial, anchor institution, and large residential building/facility owners to reduce energy use and increase energy efficiency in existing buildings/facilities and community gathering spaces.

Strategy 1: Incentivize building owners to voluntarily benchmark and publish building energy use by establishing a city-wide recognition program to promote energy efficient buildings/businesses and buildings/businesses that significantly increase energy efficiency over time.

Strategy 2: Update the UDC to offer incentives for cool surfaces like reflective roofs, green roofs, cool pavement and ground surfaces.

Strategy 3: Develop a policy for energy efficient outdoor lighting, such as LED, on public and private property and streets, while ensuring lighting doesn't negatively impact the aesthetics and quality of life of the city.

Strategy 4: Identify and promote opportunities and incentives for commercial building owners, commercial tenants to affordably invest in renewable energy.

Policy 4: Incentivize households and landlords to reduce energy use and increase residential energy efficiency.

Strategy 1: Partner with local utilities to encourage residential customers to reduce energy use by providing information about how customers' utility use compares to their neighbors' utility use.

Strategy 2: Prioritize residential energy efficiency retrofit programs and projects for low to moderate income residents with housing rehabilitation funds.

Strategy 3: Work with community partners and water, gas, and electric utilities to compile and widely publicize a list of energy efficiency resources for residents such as, rebates, low interest loans, and affordable energy retrofit programs, and update annually.

Strategy 4: Identify and promote opportunities for landlords, residential tenants, and homeowners to affordably invest in renewable energy.

Policy 5: Encourage community-wide investment in appropriate local renewable energy sources, including solar, wind, and biomass.

Strategy 1: Develop City-owned renewable energy resources to offset consumption and invest in renewable energy sources whenever feasible, seeking out opportunities to invest in partnership with private and nonprofit sector institutions and businesses.

Strategy 2: Identify wind and solar energy resources within the City, and revise the UDC and zoning code to enable development where land uses and natural resources do not conflict with other land uses, including otherwise unusable locations such as brownfield, closed landfills, and rooftops, and limit development where wind and solar resources are insufficient for capture or land use conflicts too great.

Strategy 3: Prioritize diversifying energy sources when considering energy investments, including supporting local energy production and storage, and community owned power as much as possible.

Strategy 4: Work with utility providers, local low income community members, and low income services providers and coalitions to identify how to better provide reasonable access to clean

energy and relief of energy burdens for low to moderate income community members.

Policy 6: Adopt energy efficiency and energy saving targets for City owned facilities and City operations.

Strategy 1: Finalize and adopt a corporate City energy plan, including an annual City of Duluth GHG emissions reduction of at least 2.5%.

Strategy 2: Require annual public reporting of corporate city energy use and emissions.

Strategy 3: Develop a policy that explicitly prioritizes energy efficiency upgrades and repairs in the course of maintenance and operations of City owned properties and City operated facilities, including energy conservation measures such as low flow faucet aerators and LED light bulbs.

Strategy 4: Develop criteria for continued investment in City owned facilities that prioritizes energy efficiency as well as community use and social value, in order to equitably manage City owned facilities and have transparency in decisions to disinvest in facilities.

Policy 7: Increase efficiency of utilities and services.

Strategy 1: Work with the Comfort Systems gas utility to increase energy efficiency to 1.5% annually from the 2007 state mandate of 1% and report annually on its progress.

Strategy 2: Regularly assess and repair water system leaks with the newest technologies and upgrade old pumps and motors with newer, more efficient versions during planned replacements, in order to reduce the amount of water lost through leaks to less than 10%.

Strategy 3: Conduct a study to determine the best investment in the Steam Plant, which considers options such as retrofitting for the use of cleaner fuel sources and decommissioning, and adopt a plan to reduce emissions from the Steam Plant by at least 50% over 30 years.

Strategy 4: Work with Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) to implement a curbside pickup composting program and sell the resulting compost using a sliding scale fee structure to increase low to moderate income community member's access to food growing resources.

ⁱ Minnesota and Climate Change: Our Tomorrow Starts Today - Minnesota Environmental Quality Board:
<https://www.egb.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/documents/EQB%20Climate%20Change%20Communications.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://seagrant.umn.edu/climate/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Minnesota and Climate Change: Our Tomorrow Starts Today - Minnesota Environmental Quality Board:
<https://www.egb.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/documents/EQB%20Climate%20Change%20Communications.pdf>

^{iv} Megan Day Presentation APA NYC, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

^v <http://mn.gov/commerce-stat/pdfs/mn-e2025-finalreport.pdf>

^{vi} Minnesota and Climate Change: Our Tomorrow Starts Today - Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

^{vii} 2008 City of Duluth GHG Inventory

^{viii} 2008 City of Duluth GHG Inventory

^{ix} Megan Day Presentation APA NYC, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

^x Megan Day Presentation APA NYC, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

^{xi} Local Governments for Sustainability icleiusa.org

^{xii} 2008 City of Duluth GHG Inventory

^{xiii} 2016 Housing Indicator Report

^{xiv} <https://www.starenergypartners.com/blog/energy-efficiency/out-with-the-old-why-older-homes-are-less-energy-efficient/>

^{xv} 2016 Housing Indicator Report

^{xvi} <http://www.ecolibrum3.org/student-rental-efficiency-study/>

^{xvii} <http://umd-cla-gis04.d.umn.edu/duluthshines/>

^{xviii} <http://investor.allete.com/releasedetail.cfm?releaseid=1029451>

^{xix} NATURAL GAS ENERGY EFFICIENCY © ACEEE

^{xx} Minnesota and Climate Change: Our Tomorrow Starts Today - Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

Housing Policies and Strategies

The following draft Housing Policies and Strategies were developed using the information from the Housing Data, Needs, Study, Input and Framework sections. They apply uniformly to all of Duluth.

P1: Increase density in and around the designated Core Investment Areas.

S1: Promote infill development with a mix of densities appropriate to the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

S2: Encourage and incentivize live/work opportunities.

S3: Explore opportunities to increase amenities to create livable and walkable neighborhoods.

S4: Focus on creative housing options of a non-traditional neighborhood design, such as homeownership through dense attached or detached single family housing development fronting a pedestrianized street.

S5: Create walk-to-work incentives for employers to support housing near employment centers.

P2: Provide affordable, attainable housing opportunities.

S1: Establish new parameters and a framework for communication and collaboration for financing new rental housing and additional homeownership in the community.

S2: Align funding, resources, and zoning to implement Reinvestment Area goals.

S3: Develop a cost-effective housing replacement and reinvestment strategy that includes a variety of housing types that encourage homeownership.

S4: Catalogue available lots and develop a schedule for development phasing. Bring new development sites online only as existing lots are finally developed.

S5: Foster opportunities for creative housing types and concepts, including tiny houses, townhomes, housing for individuals in Duluth on a temporary basis, and passive energy homes.

S6: Continue to adjust applicable UDC criteria for housing development to encourage innovation and to simplify and accelerate the development process.

P3: Prioritize inclusive housing policies to reflect the city's social, cultural, economic, and historic diversity and development patterns.

S1: Plan for a mix of housing types in all neighborhoods, available to a variety of income levels, including a prioritization for housing with ADA accessible design.

S2: Actively enforce anti-discrimination laws and act to promote fair housing practices in coordination with the Human Rights Officer.

S3: Promote housing and neighborhood design that encourages safety, interaction between neighbors, fosters a sense of community, and reduces social isolation.

S4: *Prioritize opportunities for permanent affordability, including affordable homeownership programs, in neighborhoods throughout the City.*

P4: Improve the quality of the city's housing stock and neighborhoods.

S1: *Reduce slum and blight conditions by promptly addressing vacant structures, strategically razing blighted buildings, and promoting the use of high quality materials in new construction.*

S2: *Promote and curb appeal of neighborhoods, with consideration of elements such as lighting, trees and boulevards, streets and sidewalks, and well-maintained structures*

S3: *Seek new sources of funding to increase resources dedicated to construction of new housing and renovation of existing housing throughout the city.*

S4: *Continue to expand enforcement of the adopted housing and property maintenance codes, with a focus on rental housing. Evaluate measures to expand penalties for non-compliant properties.*

S5: *Encourage healthy and safe housing that provides high indoor air quality, noise protection, and is free of hazardous materials and conditions.*

S6: *Consider programs to support contractors, including contractor capacity-building programs to encourage business growth that will be supportive of new housing options.*

P5: Expand the cohesiveness of “One Duluth” by expanding a variety of housing opportunities throughout the city while maintaining unique community characteristics within distinct individual neighborhoods.

S1: *Proceed with implementation of neighborhood plans and other neighborhood initiatives previously adopted.*

S2: *Continue collaboration between neighborhoods and the Duluth Police Department using the community policing model to enhance safety within the community.*

S3: *Support platforms, whether physical and public or private, electronic, institutional that encourage neighborhood events, activities, and communication.*

S4: *Expand opportunities for temporary and permanent installations of art of all types in neighborhoods.*

S5: *Expand partnerships with St. Louis County to evaluate and develop tax-forfeit lands in appropriate locations for housing.*

Open Space Policies and Strategies:

Policy 1. Improve Duluth's resiliency to flooding and natural disasters.

Policy 1 Strategies:

- a. Continue to support coordinated planning efforts for surface water management among jurisdictions through participation with the multi-jurisdictional Duluth Urban Watersheds Advisory Committee and the Regional Storm Water Protection Team.
- b. Once Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood plain maps are updated in 2019 the City should conduct a storm water infrastructure assessment to determine where improvements are needed to reduce flood risks and where additional resources should be sought to purchase flood-prone properties.
- c. Retain in City/State ownership or preserve through conservation easement those tax forfeited lands needed for storm water management purposes including important wetlands, flood plains, and stream corridors.
- d. Promote retention of storm water above the bluff line to reduce flooding risks through land development controls and establishment of watershed-based storm water detention measures.
- e. Assess Duluth's wildfire risks and encourage existing rural residents and businesses to implement National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) *Firewise* principles to make their properties more resilient to wildfire.
- f. The City should employ property and right of way management practices that limit the spread of and promote the removal of invasive species.



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Policy 2. Examine the value and need for all of Duluth's publicly owned open space.

Policy 2a: Strategies for open space land that is in the public's interest to preserve:

- a. Review all government-owned land in the city and prioritize lands according to ecological importance and other public uses (i.e. recreation, transportation, infrastructure) for more permanent protection. Areas to be protected include forested areas, wetlands, stream courses, and bluff areas as well as lands important in forming the green belt as part of Duluth's urban form.
- b. Identify a means to hold and maintain those ecologically important lands that are not needed for active park purposes and lands that are



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needed for natural disaster resiliency (i.e. flood plains and wetlands). Options to consider include a private nonprofit entity or a City land classification system.

- c. Encourage the use of the Duluth Natural Areas Program to more permanently protect high-quality self-sustaining ecosystems where resource protection is prioritized over human use of the land similar to the States Scientific and Natural Areas Program.
- d. Increase efforts to streamline management of public lands within the City's borders.
- e. Work with tribal leadership, archaeologists, the State Historic Preservation Office and other resources to identify open space sites, districts, and structures of historic and cultural significance and utilize the Duluth Heritage Preservation Commission and Duluth Indigenous Commission to designate these structures and areas as landmarks.
- f. Partner with groups, public and private, with a mission of preservation and restoration of the Saint Louis River and Lake Superior.

Policy 2b: Strategies for open space land that is in the public's interest to relinquish:

- g. Amend the Unified Development Chapter (UDC) to require more permanent protection of ecologically significant lands (including wetlands, important forested areas, streams, etc.) during the development process.
- h. Review studies that have analyzed City-owned and tax forfeited land and prioritize lands according to ecological/ recreational/cultural/historic importance and infrastructure availability. Lands not needed for protection should be made available for development after further ecological truthing, including on-the-ground analysis.
- i. Utilize City authorities such as the Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to package lands for sale or strategic development to implement housing, economic development, and transportation policies in the Comprehensive Plan.
- j. Create a viewshed plan to identify the most important signature "Duluth views" and establish appropriate tools to protect the views to and/or from these features.

Policy 3. Remove barriers to accessing parks and open space.

Policy 3 Strategies:

- a. Implement the *City's Gate, Wayfinding, and Signage Final Design Plan* to better identify parks and the resources within parks and potentially expand to general wayfinding throughout the entire city.
- b. Create a wayfinding system directing residents and visitors to regional, community, and special use parks from within neighborhoods and business districts as well as outside the community. This should include roadway and pedestrian-scale signage, as well as Internet resources.
- c. Enhance the physical connections from neighborhoods and business districts to nearby parks, including wayfinding signage, improved pedestrian connections, larger trail systems, and enhanced street crossings.



- d. Provide access to recreation equipment and instruction at community recreation centers. Including activities for all ages; including playgrounds for all ages (including adults in play – see Copenhagen trampoline plaza example)
- e. Utilize public/private partnerships (YMCA at Woodland Community Center model) to expand programming in parks.
- f. Work with community partners to develop a parks ambassador program for outreach to people of all neighborhoods encouraging the use of parks and recreation facilities and programs. Partnerships should promote the safe and appropriate use of parks to ensure new users understand potential dangers, but also help improve recreational experience.
- g. Ensure existing connections to Lake Superior and the Saint Louis River are protected and new connections are established to the waterfront, that avoid user conflicts.

Policy 4. Improve the delivery of parks and open space services to the community.

Policy 4 Strategies

- a. Update the 2010 Parks & Recreation Master Plan to reflect environmental, economic, demographic and recreation trends, to incorporate parks and trails project completed, and shifts in recreation center hub status.
- b. Return Parks funding in the City budget to the level approved by the voters in 2011 (\$2.6 million), when adjusted for inflation, and continue the inflation-adjusted funding level in the future while implementing planned facility reductions.
- c. Investigate the costs and benefits of regional coordination for delivery of parks and open space services through a regional parks district.
- d. Provide resources for the urban forestry management function within the City’s organizational structure to implement and enhance forest resources throughout the City according to the urban forest management plan.

Policy 5. Encourage urban food growth.

Policy 5 Strategies

- a. Study the demand for community garden lots throughout the city and utilize existing public land where additional space is needed.
- b. Investigate the need for a coordinating body that maximizes efficiencies and assists in the development of community gardens, urban agriculture, and small-scale value-added food production.
- c. Study where the keeping of animals for food production fits into urban agriculture as well as rural areas and amend the Unified Development Chapter (UDC) accordingly.
- d. Work with the Parks and Recreation Division and community partners to incorporate edible landscapes in parks where appropriate.



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Transportation Policies & Strategies

Policy #1 – Improve street conditions to function better for everyone

Streets are used for almost all modes of transportation in the city. Deferred maintenance and lack of investment impact automobiles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists. This policy focuses on maintenance, reconstruction, and incremental improvements of the street network.

S1. Continue the City’s asset management plan to extend the life of pavement.

S2. Seek to maintain a minimum Pavement Quality Index of 70 for streets, particularly along transit lines, high-traffic areas, and bike routes.

S3. Prioritize implementation of the ADA Transition Plan, with a focus on ADA Priority Areas, Core Investment Areas, and pedestrian connections in the mall area.

Asset management is a system of planning for street maintenance and reconstruction to make the best use of resources. Activities can range from simple maintenance such as chip sealing and crack sealing, to targeted reconstruction.

S4. Develop a funding source dedicated to installation and maintenance of sidewalk networks.

S5. Whenever conducting resurfacing or reconstruction activities on city streets, identify opportunities for installing pedestrian and bike facilities, including on-road bike lanes, for all locations identified in the City’s adopted bikeway system plan.

S6. Ensure that sidewalks and crosswalks are rapidly cleared of snow (and continuously cleared, in Core Investment Areas), to ensure ease of system use by all residents.

S7. Continue to develop, improve, and implement recommendations of Safe Routes to Schools plans to enhance safety for children around schools and throughout the community.

S8. Ensure utility repairs are conducted to restore roadway surface to a preferred condition, and when possible seek to locate new or improved utilities outside the driving surface.

S9. Adopt measures to reduce vehicular travel speed and improve intersection safety, especially in busy areas, to improve safety conditions and reduce or eliminate injuries and deaths.

S10. Monitor and adopt best practices for self-driving vehicles.

S11. Because use of electric vehicles is increasing, plan for necessary infrastructure to support their use.

Policy #2 – Reduce infrastructure costs through innovation and wholesale design change

The existing infrastructure needs far exceed reasonably foreseeable funding. This policy aims to reduce costs in the long term through strategic reductions in width and linear miles of city streets.

S1. Evaluate city street design standards to reduce replacement costs and on-going maintenance and plowing needs by allowing or requiring narrower street widths whenever possible and appropriate.

- S2. To reduce speeds, increase safety, and lower costs, ensure the use of appropriate urban or rural design metrics for new or reconstructed streets depending on the applicable area of the City. Use updated engineering standards such as NACTO Urban Street Design Guide whenever possible.
- S3. Develop options for eliminating alternate-side parking requirements, such as through the use of “snow emergencies,” to allow for a reduction in street width where the city need not provide on-street parking on both sides of a particular street.
- S4. Evaluate streets in low density areas that could be replaced, reduced, removed, or made private to more effectively utilize maintenance budgets and long-term capital replacement funds.
- S5. Consider maintenance burdens resulting from street use by trucks and waste haulers, and options to reduce such street use through citywide policy changes.
- S6. Improve long-term infrastructure effectiveness through strategic use of green infrastructure, especially to support urban boulevard trees, transportation-adjacent wetlands, streams, and Lake Superior.

Comparisons of City Road Widths



N 47th Avenue E and Otsego Street. 47th Ave E is wider than needed.



N 24th Avenue W and W 6th Street. 24th Ave W is wider than needed.



Chambersburg Avenue and Ensign Street. The west side of Ensign is wider than needed.

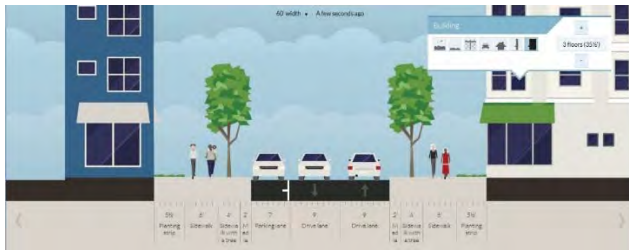
On local residential streets, start design with a lane width of 9' (curb-to-curb distance 20'):



Without sidewalks



With sidewalks



With sidewalks



Without sidewalks

Policy #3 – Add to the transportation network by systematically enhancing multi-modal options

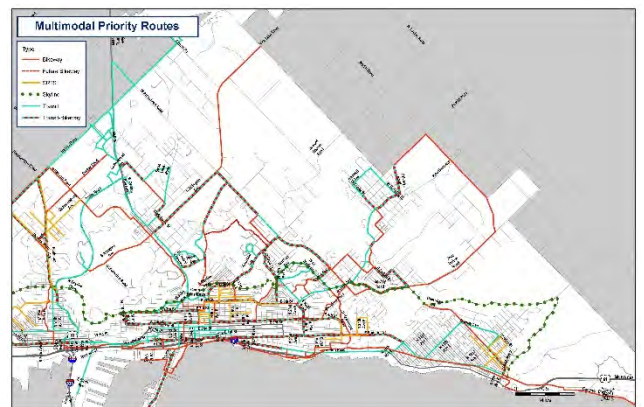
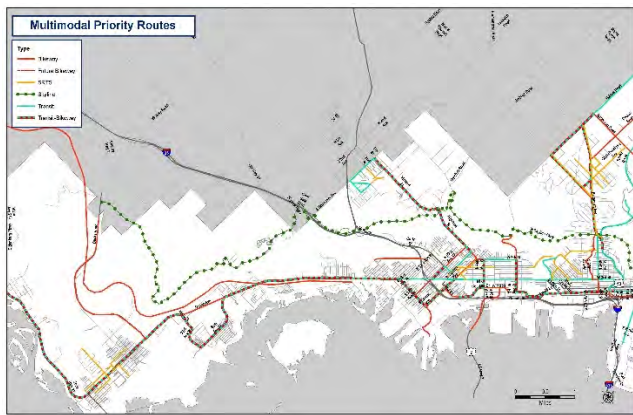
Multimodal options allow for efficient, equitable, healthy transportation. This policy identifies improvements needed to effectively extend these options to a wide range of Duluthians.

- S1. Recognize that people are pedestrians at some point in their daily travels, even if walking is used in conjunction with other modes, and prioritize pedestrian safety and comfort in transportation improvements.
- S2. Update development policies to ensure new development includes appropriate supporting infrastructure, including the full suite of transportation options in Core Investment Areas.
- S3. Update the UDC to include best practices for vehicle parking, bicycle parking, pedestrian connections, and transit stop requirements. Such requirements should be standardized for all modes.
- S4. Minimize or eliminate use of angled or perpendicular parking to improve safety conditions for bicyclists, except where perpendicular parking is necessitated or required due to steep topography.
- S5. Consider options for parking meter revenue being expended near where it is collected, and manage pricing to increase on-street cost vs ramps.
- S6. Develop programmatic actions to promote rideshare, carshare, and bikeshare programs. Incentivize employers' support for biking and transit use.

Multi-modal transportation covers transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel, as well as automobile travel – including car sharing, carpooling, and rideshare. Important enhancements in multi-modal transportation include wayfinding, sidewalks connecting to destinations, space dedicated for bike racks, and connections between modes.

- S7. Conduct analysis of options for improving uphill/downhill connections in areas of high housing, job, and tourist density, especially between key destinations and areas where people seek to travel without use of a personal vehicle. The analysis should include an evaluation of a mode’s capital and operational investment and requirements.
- S8. Maintain existing public stairways and add new stairways where appropriate. Add bike rails where appropriate. Consider naming stairways using unique identifiers and install signage, to add to the level of public awareness and enjoyment.
- S9. Identify study area and multi-modal needs for the future Northern Lights Express station.
- S10. Standardize regulatory requirements for installation of bike racks for ease of maintenance and security of bikes against theft.
- S11. Complete planned trails and bike lanes to connect gaps in the bicycle route network. Prioritize protected bike lanes over unprotected bike lanes. Increase bicycle parking, both public and private, in coordination with partners.
- S12. Prioritize transit route service and expansion between areas of the greatest population and employment densities in coordination with the Duluth Transit Authority. Seek to establish a network of specific routes with rapid frequencies, such as between downtown and Lincoln Park.
- S13. Improve transit amenities and transit stop conditions, creating a prioritized strategy for capital investment to reflect continuous incremental improvements in partnership with the DTA. Focus initially on such investments in and around Core Investment Areas.
- S14. Increase bike capacity on buses and identify ways for non-traditional bikes to travel by bus.
- S15. Minimize transit system route changes that negatively impact service to transit-dependent people in the City.
- S16. Develop implementation actions to prioritize snow removal at transit shelters and along sidewalks serving transit stops.
- S17. Collaborate with the DTA to improve transit branding and marketing, including user-friendly tools such as smartphones, and updates to bus stop signage and design.
- S18. Improve ‘park and ride’ design and marketing.
- S19. Work with the DTA to consider system improvements such as creation of a Bus Rapid Transit corridor (or similar); alignment of route schedules with schools, airport, and businesses; and access to grocery stores.

“Complete Streets” is a nationally recognized design practice of ensuring that everyone has safe transportation, whether walking, driving, bicycling, or taking public transportation. Many of the strategies in Policy #3 identify specific ways Duluth will accommodate all these modes.



Policy #4 – Improve system condition and connections in and between downtown and Canal Park

This area of Duluth was consistently identified with unique transportation needs compared to the remainder of the city, due to the congestion and volume of commuters and visitors. Mobility to and within this area requires creative strategies for events and peak times as well as consistent and easy-to-understand wayfinding.

- S1. Develop a dynamic parking information system to direct commuters and visitors from regional infrastructure to the most effective available parking opportunity in either downtown or Canal Park.
- S2. Conduct an evaluation of parking demand and potential use in downtown and Canal Park, taking into account the unique walksheds arising due to obstacles and topography.
- S3. Enhance partnerships with Mn/DOT, the DTA, and DECC to improve sidewalk, bike, and road conditions for all users between downtown and Canal Park.
- S4. Expand opportunities for transit circulation and stops in downtown and Canal Park. Consider expansion of the 'downtown fare zone' to locations further east and west, and improve awareness of such transit ridership opportunities by both residents and tourists.
- S5. Improve pedestrian crossings in high-traffic areas through the use of mid-block crossings, bumpouts, and signal phasing.
- S6. Improve alleys downtown and in Canal Park to create new commercial opportunities. Focus first on the alley between S. Lake Avenue and Canal Park Drive, where existing conditions function as a woonerf (shared pedestrian/street area). Consider eliminating one-way alley conditions and creating unique named identifiers for alleys in the downtown.
- S7. Evaluate and update the downtown's streets plan to guide for future improvements, including the eventual likelihood of conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets.
- S8. Improve options for walking in Canal Park through evaluation of changes to Buchanan Street, the Baywalk, and other areas.
- S9. Identify options for downtown plaza areas that serve pedestrians and increase the liveliness and level of activity downtown.
- S10. Complete the skywalk system and enhance wayfinding within the skywalks and between skywalks and street-level accesses and destinations.

Policy #5 – Base decisions about transportation infrastructure primarily in the context of improving city and neighborhood vitality, and not solely on automobile through-put.

Transportation systems impact neighborhoods where people live, work, and play. These networks can either negatively impact the city, through excess noise, speeds, or creating sprawl, or they can positively impact neighborhoods by helping to create identifiable destinations.

- S1. Implement use of traditional elements of the transportation landscape as public art opportunities. Use existing models where cities allow art on utility cabinets, on the street at intersections, and on bike racks and fire hydrants.

- S2. Establish a high standard for transportation infrastructure within all Core Investment Areas, including ample pedestrian infrastructure, well-designed parking areas, a legal structure for shared parking, and an adequate level of bike parking.
- S3. Expand and retain urban trees during street construction and other improvements when appropriate..
- S4. Installation of green infrastructure should emphasize both environmental and aesthetic amenities. Maintenance plans for green infrastructure should be included.
- S5. Incorporate creative placemaking and art into street, transit, and trail projects.
- S6. Appropriate lighting for safe transportation systems i.e. peds, cars, etc.,
- S7. Strengthen connectivity standards to require more pedestrian and bicycle paths through parking lots to increase local access to businesses and services.

Policy #6 – Protect and enhance regional transportation networks, especially for purposes of expanding opportunities for movement of freight

Freight movement is vital for Duluth’s economy and its identity as a port city. Freight has become increasingly intermodal and interconnected, and this policy supports truck, air, water, and rail needs.

- S1. Support the work of the HTAC, DSPA, USACE, USCG, and other stakeholders to ensure continued maintenance of Duluth’s shipping channels and port facilities.
- S2. Promote the use of appropriate regional freight corridors and intermodal facilities for the success of water-borne commerce and shipping by truck and rail.
- S3. Seek to ensure that reconstruction of the Twin Ports Interchange at US Hwy 53 and Interstate 35 meets the competing needs of freight transportation, safety, and neighborhood connectivity and improvements, particularly in Lincoln Park.
- S4. Support infrastructure improvements at the Duluth International Airport, including through development of the 3-21 crosswind runway. Structure economic development policies and opportunities for growth in such a way as to support increased activity at the airport.
- S5. Collaborate with the MIC, DIA, and DSPA to develop a plan for coordinated transportation investments to support the export and mobility of freight by truck, air, and rail.
- S6. Expand public-private partnerships with rail freight companies to maintain, improve, and expand rail infrastructure.