



Memo

To: Duluth Economic Development Authority, Natural Resources Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Planning Commission

From: Jenn Moses, Manager of Planning and Community Development

Date: July 7, 2026

Subject: Lester Park Golf Course Land Use Study – July 2026 Update

Last Month's Activity

Last month, we finished the second round of public involvement for this study:

- Held an Open House on May 27 (150 people) and three small group meetings with focus group participants (15 attendees).
- Concluded the survey (184 responses) and interactive map input (132 comments and hundreds of likes/dislikes etc).
- The summary of input includes:
 - Public comments showed a strong preference for keeping the Lester Park Golf Course site largely as open space with recreation offerings.
 - One scenario, the "Base Camp," emerged as the most supported due to its minimal footprint, lower anticipated public infrastructure costs, and strong emphasis on protecting natural resources. However, some respondents felt this scenario does not go far enough to address housing needs.
 - Respondents said any development should be affordable, dense, and carefully integrated with the landscape. Public preference is that development should stay limited, connected to existing infrastructure capacities, and explicitly include an attainable mix of housing options for a wider range of residents.
- Among those open to development, the strongest preference was for compact, denser housing arrangements.

Development Scenario & Future Land Use

Based on the existing conditions analysis earlier this year, conversations with the Technical Advisory Committee and other stakeholders, and significant public input, the project team is working towards a development scenario that will illustrate a balance of complementary development, outdoor recreation, and natural resources in a way that aligns with priorities identified during the land use study process. This scenario will build on the “Base Camp” option and seek to support compact, dense housing that is connected to existing infrastructure, maximizes the amount of preserved open space, and maintains the possibility of future recreation offerings.

This illustrative development concept will be used to inform recommendations related to changes in the Future Land Use designation in the City’s comprehensive plan and zoning map. These recommendations will be included in the final land use study that is presented to city council.

What’s Next?

The project team will be giving presentations at various City boards and commissions, as well as hosting a final open house:

- Public Open House #3: July 30th, 4:00–6:00 pm, Duluth East High School
- Natural Resource Commission: August 5th, 6:00 pm, Room 330 at Duluth City Hall
- DEDA Brown Bag: August 11th, 12:00 noon, 3rd floor Council Chambers at Duluth City Hall
- **Public Hearing** at Planning Commission: August 11th at 5:00 pm, 3rd floor Council Chambers at Duluth City Hall

Following the public hearing on August 11, the plan will go to City Council for final approval.

As a reminder, all meeting materials, existing conditions data, and public input is available at lpgcstudy.com.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 218-730-5328 or jmoses@duluthmn.gov.