

Duluth WPAN Area Wide Plan Community Engagement Plan (REVISED DRAFT)

June 15, 2016

Prepared for:
City of Duluth and EPA Region 5

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Stay up to date with WPAN Area Wide Plan by going to the project website:

<http://www.duluthmn.gov/community-planning/western-port-area-neighborhood-plan>



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Table of Contents

1.0	Project Background.....	1-2
1.1.	Community Engagement Plan Overview	1-2
1.2.	Community Engagement Goals.....	1-3
2.0	Committee Structure and Decision-Making Process.....	2-3
2.1.	Project Management Team.....	2-4
2.1.1	Purpose, Conduct and Values.....	2-4
2.1.2	Time Commitment.....	2-5
2.2.	Project Advisory Team	2-5
2.2.1	Purpose, Conduct and Values.....	2-5
2.2.2	Time Commitment.....	2-6
2.3.	Stakeholder Group.....	2-6
2.3.1	Purpose, Conduct and Values.....	2-6
2.3.1	Time Commitment.....	2-7
2.3.2	Meeting Guidelines	2-7
2.4.	Sub-award Agreements.....	2-8
3.0	Other Constituent Groups.....	3-8
4.0	Potential Issues and Opportunities.....	4-9
5.0	Community Engagement Coordination.....	5-9
5.1.	Project Messages	5-9
5.2.	Community Engagement Activities.....	5-10
5.2.1	Public Meetings.....	5-10
5.2.2	Targeted Outreach.....	5-10
5.2.3	Traveling Displays.....	5-10
5.2.4	Organization Meetings.....	5-11
5.2.5	Electronic Communications.....	5-11
5.3.	Print Communications.....	5-11
5.3.1	Fact Sheet.....	5-11
5.3.2	Display Boards.....	5-12
5.4.	Engagement of Under-Represented Populations	5-12
5.5.	Media Notifications.....	5-12
5.6.	Presentations to Elected Officials	5-12
6.0	Project Contacts.....	6-13
7.0	Community Engagement Documentation.....	7-13

1.0 Project Background

The Western Port Area Neighborhoods (WPAN) are comprised of the two adjoining neighborhoods of Fairmount and Irving on the western side of Duluth. They have been adversely affected by a lack of connectivity as road, rail and traffic usage on existing infrastructure separates the neighborhood from a major commercial district. Both neighborhoods exhibit similar infrastructure, connectivity, and demographic challenges, which are exacerbated by the presence of numerous high priority brownfield sites.

This Area Wide Brownfield Plan for the WPAN will help these communities confront local, environmental, and public health challenges. This work is being done under an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant for brownfield re-use planning. It is designed to benefit underserved or economically disadvantaged communities. The activities and information of this project will be done in a manner that facilitates subsequent assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of brownfield sites.

The plan must fit with the community's vision and be responsive to the needs and desires of the WPAN's residents, business community, and overall City objectives of improved health and livability. Community engagement is a critical element of understanding existing needs and crafting plans that will deliver these outcomes for the affected communities, neighborhoods, and businesses.

1.1. Community Engagement Plan Overview

Effective community engagement is essential for good public decision making and will be critical to understanding needs, developing land use plans, and building support for the WPAN Area Wide Plan. The Community Engagement Plan (CEP) will serve as a guide for the engagement of WPAN stakeholders, residents, and businesses during the planning process. The purpose of the CEP is to document the tasks related to stakeholder and public engagement that will be undertaken during the preparation of the plan. In general, the intent of the community engagement process will be to be proactive rather than reactive, and to work closely with local communities to build on their successes and to empower people to engage in this as well as other future public initiatives.

Community engagement will consist of a team led by City staff with support from the consultant team and specific stakeholder groups with resources to assist in community engagement. Team members will be engaged in staffing events and on-street activities and, depending on individual skills and specific engagement strategies, may be asked to assist in the following: provide interpretation services, assist individuals in using filling out surveys, assist with hands-on activities at public events, welcome people to public meetings, hand out information through door knocking or at public events, and assist in other ways to create a welcoming environment and engage people in the planning process.

Outreach activities will be focused around the three major stages of the planning process:

- Project Initiation and Background Analysis
- Developing Brownfield Reuse Plans
- Developing an Area Wide Plans and Implementation Recommendations

The specific outreach activities and the outreach tools that will be used will be customized for the WPAN. This CEP will provide direction for outreach activities, and many of the tools described in this report will be used at each of the three stages of the planning process. However, other strategies may be used as well if they have been found to be particularly effective in a given community, neighborhood and/or cultural group.

1.2. Community Engagement Goals

The goal of the CEP is to ensure that the concerns and issues of those with a stake in the WPAN (whether impact or benefit) are identified and addressed. To achieve this goal, the following will need to occur:

- Identify stakeholders, including populations not traditionally involved in neighborhood decision making.
- Engage all stakeholders, including residents and businesses, in meaningful and accessible ways.
- Solicit early and continuous involvement.
- Seek collaborative input on alternatives and evaluation criteria.
- Provide transparency during the planning process.
- Build understanding of redevelopment opportunities and build support for the plan that evolves from the planning process.

2.0 Committee Structure and Decision-Making Process

The Duluth WPAN Planning Study is led by the City of Duluth with input and direction from the following committees:

- Project Management Team (PMT)
- Project Advisory Team (PAT)
- Stakeholder Group (SG)

The roles, responsibilities and make-up of these committees are summarized here. The PMT will direct the day-to-day work of the WPAN planning study. The SG will provide guidance on the overall planning process as well as technical and non-technical input. The PAT will work more closely with the PMT advising on key technical decisions, plan processes, and the incorporation of critical plan elements, such as health impact assessments, affordable housing, and community engagement. Ultimately, approval authority for the WPAN Plan rests with the Duluth Planning Commission and City Council.

2.1. Project Management Team

The PMT will consist of key staff from the City of Duluth. Periodically, stakeholders with technical knowledge of the study area will be invited to participate in the PMT by providing information and feedback on draft plans. The PMT is intended to be actively involved in the day-to-day management of the WPAN Plan to guide the study and facilitate team coordination. The PMT is responsible for facilitating coordination among the partner agencies and the consultant team. The PMT is responsible for oversight of all technical work, the project schedule, and staff recommendations regarding invitations to other stakeholders not represented on the PMT. For the duration of the study, the PMT will meet internally on a weekly basis, monthly with the PAT and the consultant team, and quarterly with the PAT, the consultant team, and key stakeholders. Although membership of the PMT does not need to be stagnant throughout the WPAN Plan process, it is recommended for purposes of continuity due to the high level of involvement of the PMT in day-to-day activities. The following is a list of PMT membership by contact name and city department.

NAME	CITY OF DULUTH DEPARTMENT
Heidi Timm-Bijold	City of Duluth, Business Development
Adam Fulton	City of Duluth, Community Planning
Josh MacInnes	City of Duluth, Business Development
John Kelley	City of Duluth, Community Planning
Ben VanTassel	City of Duluth, Community Planning
Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth, Public Works/Engineering
Judy Gibbs	City of Duluth, Parks and Recreation
Lisa Luokkala	City of Duluth, Parks and Recreation

2.1.1 Purpose, Conduct and Values

The role of the PMT is to help direct of the consultants' work, allocating and utilizing resources in an efficient manner to help the oversight of the planning process.

- Participate actively in weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings.
- Work with consultants and other agency staff to complete the WPAN Plan providing insight on adopted plans, non-adopted plans, zoning, planned capital improvements, other infrastructure needs, and development plans.
- Coordinate discussions with other consultants working on concurrent planning and design efforts impacting WPAN Plan design decisions.
- Managing coordination of the stakeholders and advisory groups engaged in the WPAN Plan efforts.
- Resolving cross-agency issues at project level.
- Assessing project scope and change control and escalating issues where necessary.
- Approving strategies, implementation plan, project scope and milestones.
- Resolving strategic and City/Agency policy issues.
- Driving and managing Community-based change through the duration of the study.

- Prioritizing project goals on behalf of the City and/or agency they represent.
- Making final recommendations based on consensus-based input.
- Briefing your elected officials as necessary on the planning process progress and recommendations.
- Support and promote WPAN Plan project to elected officials, the business community, and constituents/community members.
- Providing input/feedback on community engagement framework led by City of Duluth
- Helping form project advisory committees
- Conducting direct outreach on WPAN planning activities
- Facilitating, hosting or sponsoring engagement events

2.1.2 Time Commitment

Committee members can expect to spend a minimum of four to five hours per month attending meetings and reading and commenting on documents. Additional time may be required to resolve planning related issues.

2.2. Project Advisory Team

The Project Advisory Team (PAT) consists of agencies that either have jurisdiction over some part of the WPAN study area, through implementation and/or regulatory authority, or have a direct role in one or more elements of the planning process. Members of the PAT include EPA Brownfields, St. Louis County Health Department, Duluth Superior Port Authority, Duluth LISC, St. Louis River Alliance, and Minnesota Brownfields. The PAT will meet monthly with PMT and the consultant team to review progress, advise on key decisions, and coordinate activities on which they may be directly involved. Other partner agencies may be identified as the WPAN Plan is developed. A list of current membership with contact names the agencies they represent are as follows:

NAME	AGENCY
Rosita Clarke	EPA Brownfields (Region 5)
Deb DeLuca	Duluth Superior Port Authority
Pam Kramer	Duluth LISC
Josh Gorham	St. Louis County Health Department
Kris Eilers	St. Louis River Alliance
Martha Faust/Natalie Brown	Minnesota Brownfields

2.2.1 Purpose, Conduct and Values

The role of the PAT is to advise the PMT on key decisions related to the consultants' work, allocating and utilizing resources in an efficient manner to help the oversight of the planning process, and to participate in strategic activities.

- Participate actively in monthly meetings with PMT and consultant team.

- Work with PMT and consultant team to complete the WPAN Plan by providing insight on any relevant plans (adopted or non-adopted) of their agency that pertain to the WPAN.
- Review draft technical and planning content prior to community workshops or open houses; help to resolve any holes or issues from an agency perspective
- Communicate agency concerns and perspectives to city staff and project consultants
- Provide guidance on how best to resolve any cross-agency issues at project level.
- Help resolve any strategic and City/Agency policy issues.
- Prioritizing project goals on behalf of the agency they represent.
- Providing input/feedback on community engagement framework led by City of Duluth
- Conducting direct outreach on WPAN planning activities

2.2.2 Time Commitment

Committee members can expect to spend a minimum of four to five hours per month attending meetings and reading and commenting on documents. Additional time may be required to resolve planning related issues and attend community meetings or other outreach activities.

2.3. Stakeholder Group

A Stakeholder Group of citizen, business, and non-profit organization representatives will be established for the WPAN Plan. The Stakeholder Group will work closely with City staff, the PAT, and the consultant team, to develop and evaluate WPAN planning alternatives, and make recommendations on a preferred plan. Members of the Stakeholder Group will also be asked to provide advice and assistance to the project team for broader community outreach to residents and businesses in the study area, as they are able and willing to do so. The SG will meet at key milestones during WPAN plan development, and more frequently if needed. Membership of the SG is not stagnant and can be expanded or contracted per the PMT. Stakeholders will represent residents and neighborhood organizations, neighborhood business owners, governmental agencies and elected officials.

2.3.1 Purpose, Conduct and Values

The role of the SG is to advise and guide project planning efforts, review project deliverables, assist with community outreach and engagement efforts, provide community expertise, insight on issues and priorities throughout the process from a community standpoint. Stakeholders will be representative of a range of views and/or experiences that include Economic, Infrastructure and Urban Design.

The SG as a whole is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring community engagement in the WPAN Plan process.
- Assisting in the establishment of project priorities.
- Evaluating project options and alternatives.
- Creating ad hoc working groups to work on specific projects.
- Sharing project information and obtaining feedback from the community.

Individual SG members have the following responsibilities:

- Serve as stewards of the WPAN planning process to the community
- Engage thoughtfully in the issues brought before the SG.
- Represent and advocate for the interests of his/her constituency as well as the interests of the Study Area as a whole.
- Share relevant information (historical, background) with the SG.
- Assist in informing constituencies about the WPAN Plan project.
- Recommend appropriate avenues for cost effective engagement with the community.
- Work to identify solutions to issues that arise, and openly/objectively discuss and evaluate those options.
- If members discuss the project with the media, they should be clear that they are representing their own views and are not speaking for the SG or the WPAN project.
- Attend all meetings and review meeting agenda packet materials prior to the meeting.
- Communicate community concerns and perspectives to city staff and project consultants
- Help “staff” community engagement events, such as open houses, workshops, etc., attend project events, and host/sponsor engagement opportunities in the community

2.3.1 Time Commitment

Members should be committed to attending approximately four meetings with project consultant team. The SG should anticipate additional meetings and/or working sessions with City staff to review additional information and project background. The SG should also anticipate additional discussion sessions among members as needed to provide concise project recommendations and meet community goals. Meetings will be held in the afternoon and last no longer than two hours. The only exception to this will be public input meetings; they would be scheduled for the early evening. Committee members should also commit time to reviewing meeting material prior to the meeting and to assisting with any public meetings related to the project.

2.3.2 Meeting Guidelines

Members of the consultant team and City planning staff will guide each SG meeting. SG meetings will be conducted as follows:

- Begin and end meetings on time.
- Provide agendas in advance of each meeting with an opportunity to adjust the agenda at the beginning of each meeting.
- Provide adequate information to best prepare SG members for productive and collaborative meetings.
- Prepare meeting summaries, including ACTION ITEMS, after each meeting. Meeting summaries will be amended, if necessary, after review at the subsequent meeting.
- Provide follow up on questions or additional research requested by SG members in a timely manner.
- Although all are welcome, only SG members will participate in group discussions.
- Reserve ten minutes at the end of each meeting for an open forum to provide comments.

SG's commitment to a productive and collaborative meeting should follow the following rules:

- Prioritize project goals and focus on meeting outcomes
- Respect other points of view by being open to others' ideas
- Be active, listen, participate, and advocate for your position at the meeting.
- Do not interrupt other speakers.
- Do not conduct side conversations.
- Keep your commentary brief and allow everyone to participate.
- Be creative – creativity is aided by freedom, openness, and fun.
- Review and understand existing information; limit divergent discussions that require bringing in new information.
- Be prepared before each meeting.
- Turn off electronic devices during meetings.

2.4. Sub-award Agreements

The City of Duluth has two organizations with EPA grant sub-award agreements as part of the community engagement plan. The first organization, St. Louis River Alliance, will be responsible for reserving venues for the three community engagement meetings during the project and promoting meeting attendance by directly advertising and promoting to WPAN residents and organizations. The second organization, MN Brownfields, will be responsible for providing formal training on Brownfields to PMT, PAT, SG, and WPAN residents and organizations. MN Brownfields will also be available for Brownfield technical assistance to the Project Management team throughout the WPAN project.

3.0 Other Constituent Groups

The study area for the WPAN includes the City of Duluth and is fully within St. Louis County. One of the initial and ongoing tasks of the study will be to identify key organizations and demographic groups to ensure that these constituents are fully represented in the study process and that a means of regular communication is identified for each one. Additional business, educational, social service, health care and advocacy groups may be added as additional constituent groups are identified. The following constituent groups are examples of those that will be engaged in the process:

- 1) Federal, State, and Regional Agencies
- 2) Study Area Businesses not already participating in the Stakeholder Group
- 3) Non-Profit Community Organizations, Institutions, and Advocacy Groups
- 4) Public Stakeholders: for example:
 - Residents (owners and renters) within the study area
 - Under-represented and under-served populations (including persons with low-incomes, limited English proficiency, or disabilities)
 - Senior housing developments within the study area
 - Public and private landowners within the study area

- Employees
- Walkers
- Bicyclists
- Motorists
- Transit riders
- Commuters

4.0 Potential Issues and Opportunities

The primary purpose of community engagement during the WPAN Planning Study is to understand and respond to barriers, challenges, benefits and opportunities associated with changes in land use, access, transit services and other facilities around key brownfields sites and throughout the study area, as well as to work with local stakeholders to develop visionary plans for both key sites and the study area as a whole.

Issues, concerns, opportunities and constraints that are submitted through the public involvement efforts will be tracked and documented by the City of Duluth or the consultant team, depending on who is responsible for particular engagement activities or events. This documentation will provide a means of ensuring that there is public input in the study process and that issues raised by stakeholders are addressed as appropriate throughout the WPAN Planning Study process and beyond. Issues identified by stakeholders will be summarized in a Community Engagement report and incorporated into the technical analysis conducted for the study.

It is important to note that a key deliverable of this Area-Wide Planning project is the vetting of feasibility of identified remedies, to include potential financing sources, with an implementation plan.

5.0 Community Engagement Coordination

The following public engagement techniques will be used to reach a wide range of stakeholders and members of the public. Some public engagement techniques may be targeted to specific stakeholders or geographic areas in order to create welcoming opportunities for participation in the study process. Because of the wide variety of strategies that could be employed to engage the community, collaboration between the consultant team, PMT, SLRA, and SG will be critical in order to determine who is responsible for leading a particular engagement effort or activity.

5.1. Project Messages

The consultant team will work with the PMT to develop consistent messages regarding the WPAN Planning Study. This is critical to providing the public with a good understanding of the study and the decision-making process as well as ongoing motivation to participate in the study. Working with the PMT, several messages will be developed for consistent use in project materials and communications.

5.2. Community Engagement Activities

The following public outreach activities will be used to engage residents and businesses in the WPAN planning process. These activities will take project information into the community where people routinely gather to potentially reach those who are not likely to attend a public meeting. The Communication Tools described in section 5.4 will be used to provide notification and promotion of all public meetings.

5.2.1 Public Meetings

Three public meetings will be held for the WPAN at key points in the planning process. These meetings will be organized and led by the consultant team with assistance from the City of Duluth and other project partners. The first meeting will introduce the project with opportunities to solicit issues and concerns to be addressed in the plan. The second meeting will present Brownfield Reuse alternatives and comments on those plan alternatives will be solicited. Interactive exercises will be used to help engage people in discussion about the alternatives. The third public meeting will be to present an Area-Wide plan for the WPAN and engage people on possible changes.

1st. Public Meeting: Late September 2016

2nd. Public Meeting: Late February 2017

3rd. Public Meeting: Late June 2017

5.2.2 Targeted Outreach

Working with the SG, the City of Duluth will determine if one or more small group meetings will be held to target specific audiences that may not be easily engaged through a broader public meeting or to gain input from a particular population group. For example, a targeted event (or staffed display) may be held at a study area apartment building to gain input from renters or other hard-to-reach population groups. These meetings will allow project information to be shared where people are already gathering. Tablets may be used at these events to provide access to the project website and MySidewalk (a possible web-based community planning tool). A concerted effort will be made to identify targeted locations to engage historically underserved populations. Unless resources are directed from other tasks, the consultant team will be limited to assisting the City in the development of display materials and will not participate in the actual meetings.

5.2.3 Traveling Displays

Traveling displays (not staffed) will be provided at libraries, community/recreation centers, social service centers, neighborhood/business organization offices, and/or other key destinations in the study area during key time periods of the WPAN, such as when alternative concepts have been released for review. These displays would also be timed to help publicize the public meetings as well as to provide people with information about the project and access to a project website or MySidewalk website if these strategies are considered appropriate. Opportunities will be provided for people to provide their feedback through written comment forms, and links to any possible websites. The location, placement, and printing of the displays will be the responsibility of the City of Duluth. The consultant team will be available to design and create the displays.

5.2.4 Organization Meetings

Members of the project team, led primarily by City staff, will be available to meet with existing neighborhood, business, non-profit, social service, and/or cultural groups, or just impromptu neighborhood groups, to have facilitated discussions or presentations about the WPAN planning study.

5.2.5 Electronic Communications

The following electronic communications tools will be used to provide notification of project milestones and to maintain a continuous dialogue on the WPAN Planning Study among community organizations, stakeholders and the general public.

5.2.5.1 Project Website

A project web page will be developed as part of the City of Duluth website. The website will be maintained by City of Duluth staff but the consultant team will provide content for updating the site periodically. Content will be updated at least monthly and more frequently when public events occur or major milestones are passed. The website should include the following:

- Study area map
- Project news
- Sign-up for project updates
- History/Background
- Info about the WPAN Planning Study
- Committee overviews and members
- Notice of public meetings and other events
- Project reports
- List of Frequently Asked Questions
- Project contact information (staff, email phone)
- Ability to submit comments

5.2.5.2 Email Notifications

The City's email notification system will be used to send out email notifications. Email notifications will be sent to the Stakeholder Distribution List, which will be compiled and maintained by the consultant team for the WPAN Planning Study and will be updated periodically. This distribution list will include all committee members, all identified stakeholder organizations, all individuals who sign up to receive the email updates either at public meetings or via the City's website, and any other organizations, media outlets and individuals that wish to be on the list. This e-mail distribution list will be used to distribute periodic project updates and to announce public meetings, events and milestones.

5.3. Print Communications

5.3.1 Fact Sheet

A factsheet or other printed marketing piece will be created to promote the WPAN planning activities and will include a description of the project, key messages about benefits, and links to the website and other social media sites. The piece can be used by all project team members and

partner agencies for outreach and education and will be updated as needed as the WPAN area wide plan is developed and completed.

5.3.2 Display Boards

Display boards will be prepared by the consultant team for public meetings and other outreach activities as needed to clearly illustrate the concepts and alternatives that will be discussed at those meetings. The display boards may also be used as a travelling display as opportunities are available.

5.4. Engagement of Under-Represented Populations

Effective and meaningful engagement of under-represented populations will be instrumental to the success of the WPAN Planning Study. A concerted effort will be made to include people with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency, ethnic minority groups and organizations, immigrant groups and seniors. Strategies that will be used to reach under-served populations include:

- Engage members of the SG that represent underserved populations in their respective communities.
- Utilize organizations such as CHUM, AICHO, Arc Northland, and Human Development Center to identify specific groups and methods for outreach. If necessary, consider including or more of these organizations to be part of the SG.
- Provide public meeting notices in ethnic neighborhood-level media publications for communities represented in the study area.
- Translate meeting notices and project information for any non-English speaking populations concentrated in the study area
- Provide interpretation services and/or staff for any non-English speaking populations concentrated in the study area
- Attend meetings of established organizations that serve specific cultural/ethnic groups or business communities in the study area.
- Provide food and child care at all public engagement events.

5.5. Media Notifications

Draft news releases for the media will be prepared at project milestones by the consultant team and provided to City of Duluth staff for review and distribution to the media.

5.6. Presentations to Elected Officials

The consultant team with support from City of Duluth staff will provide a briefing of the WPAN Plan at a to-be-determined milestone during the study to the Duluth City Council and other elected officials. The presentation about the recommended WPAN area wide plan will include a summary of the community engagement activities and will emphasize the ways in which community engagement informed each stage of plan development.

6.0 Project Contacts

For all project communication, materials, and media requests, the following City of Duluth staff will be listed as the project contact:

Heidi Timm-Bijold
Business Resources Manager
City of Duluth
411 W First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
Phone: 218-730-5324
Email: htimmbijold@duluthmn.gov

Adam Fulton
Manager, Community Planning Division
City of Duluth
411 W First Street
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 218-730-5325
Email: afulton@duluthmn.gov

7.0 Community Engagement Documentation

At the end of the WPAN planning study, the community engagement efforts will be documented and included as a part of the study. This documentation will describe the processes used for engagement, both formal and informal, and the ways in which public input was integrated into, and influenced the outcomes of the WPAN planning study.