The Strategic Public Lands Realignment Project

City of Duluth & St. Louis County Lands Project

Public Information Presentation, June 29 and 30, 2021
Presentation Overview

1. The unique importance of public open space in Duluth
2. The state of Duluth’s public open space system
3. The Open Space chapter of the Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan
4. Project organization: parcel selection, guiding documents and phases
5. Funding mechanisms
6. Preliminary parcel selections
7. Public review process and timeline
The Unique Importance of Open Space to Duluth
The Unique Importance of Open Space to Duluth

The best community assets in Duluth (according to residents):

1. Proximity to Lake Superior
2. Natural scenery/great views
3. Parks and open space
4. Trails

*From survey of residents conducted in association with development of Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan*
The Unique Importance of Open Space to Duluth
What is Open Space

Open spaces are more than undeveloped land. They provide places for people and wildlife to breathe, literally and figuratively. They are part of the character of the city, including the green hillside of western Duluth, wetland areas of Duluth Heights and Piedmont Heights, sheltered bays of the Saint Louis River, the ribbons of Skyline Parkway and the creek corridors that weave open space areas together. They are formal parks such as Bayfront, Lester, Enger, and Chambers Grove, the plazas of Downtown, the Lakewalk, and the neighborhood parks found throughout the city. Some of these open space areas were deliberately created, while others are the “left behind” areas of yesteryear. Source: Imagine Duluth 2035
The State of Duluth’s Open Space System

- More than 15,000 acres
- 16 designated trout streams
- 27 miles of public shoreline
- Diversity
The State of Duluth’s Open Space System
GOVERNING PRINCIPLES FOR OPEN SPACE

- Declare the necessity and secure the future of undeveloped places
- Reinforce the place-specific
- Take sustainable actions
- Develop a healthy community
POLICIES RELATED TO OPEN SPACE

Policy #1: Improve resiliency to flooding and natural disasters

• Strategy #3: …preserve those tax forfeit lands needed for stormwater management purposes…

Photo credit: John Thomas
Policies Related to Open Space

Policy #2: Examine the value and need for all of Duluth’s publicly owned open space

- Strategy #1: …review government lands according to ecological importance and other public uses for more permanent protection
- Strategy #3: …protect high-quality ecosystems over human use
- Strategy #4” …streamline management of public lands
Policy #2: Examine the value and need for all of Duluth’s publicly owned open space

- Strategy #8: …Lands not needed for protection should be made available for development…
Parcel Selection

- Supports Land Use Plan
- Protects ecosystems
- Ensures for recreation
- Minimizes flood risk
- Encourages development
Parcel Selection

Lands Under Review
(Approximately 15,315)

- City Protect: 39%
- TF Protect: 27%
- TF Develop: 9%
- Other: 39%

Lands in Sensitive Lands Overlay & Trail Buffers
(Approx 25,111 acres)
Tax forfeit parcel selection guidelines
Approved by City Council Aug 17, 2020
Project Organization: City/County Agreement

**Agreement with St Louis County** - Approved by City Council and County Board December 2020, establishing the process by which the parties will negotiate and transact the conveyance of specific parcels to the City.
Project Organization (Phases)
Funding Mechanisms: Transaction #1
EPA-funded acquisition of sensitive St Louis Riverfront
Funding Mechanisms: Transaction #2
## Preliminary City Parcel Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Parcels</th>
<th>Market Value</th>
<th>Value per Acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Protection</td>
<td>2,576</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>$8,132,100</td>
<td>$3,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County to Sell for Development</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>$5,873,500</td>
<td>$14,017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This phased work focuses on:
  • Lester/Amity
  • Hartley/Downer
  • Piedmont
  • Mission
  • St. Louis River
EMVs $4,010,100 (does not include large parcels at Grassy Point, mostly water)
20% EMV $684,680
~524 acres

St Louis River Project Area
Proposed Tax Forfeiture Lands for Preservation
- Parks
- Proposed Parkland
- Public Lands Project Areas
- TF Lands for City to preserve
- City Owned
- TF Lands for County to sell for development
Lester Project Area

- EMVs $1,240,700
- City proposed acquisition $36,525
  - (484 acres proposed park)
- ~493 acres
- EMVs ~$1,240,700
- City proposed acquisition ~$36,525
  - (484 acres proposed park)
- ~493 acres
Hartley/Downer Project Area

- EMVs ~$961,700
- City proposed acquisition ~$37,510
  - (179 acres proposed park)
  - ~272 acres
- EMVs $961,700
- City proposed acquisition $10,270
  - (271 acres proposed park)
- ~272 acres
Piedmont Project Area

- EMVs ~$1,442,400
- City proposed acquisition ~$39,690
  - (578 acres proposed park)
- ~650 acres
• EMVs $1,442,400
• City proposed acquisition $39,690
  • (578 acres proposed park)
• ~650 acres
Mission Project Area

- EMVs ~$476,500
- City proposed acquisition ~$0
  - (all proposed park)
- ~637 acres
- EMVs ~$ 476,500
- City proposed acquisition ~$0
  - (all proposed park)
- ~637 acres
### Virtual Public Meetings Addressing the Strategic Lands Realignment Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Public input meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>12 pm</td>
<td>Public input meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Comment Period Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Natural Resource Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 11</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Parks Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Study the Maps and Provide Comments

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Public Lands Realignment Project

The City will host two public information meetings on June 29th at 5:00 pm and June 30 at noon. Both sessions will be held virtually. A link to the public information meetings can be found at https://duluthmn.gov/live-meeting/.

Link to map tool that shows tax forfeited parcels proposed for permanent city protection, and those being considered for future development: Public Strategic Lands Mapperysky.com

The future ownership, management, and use of these lands is subject of a partnership between the City of Duluth and the National Park Service. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Duluth and the Duluth Public Lands Realignment Project are key components of this effort to develop a sustainable and equitable plan for the public lands.

Encompassing more than 4,000 separate parcels, the parcels in the City of Duluth is too great to list. To get a better understanding of the City and the County's lands within the City, visit the City of Duluth's website at citizenportal.duluthmn.gov and search for the City of Duluth Land Resources.
How to Study the Maps and locate Parcel #
QUESTIONS