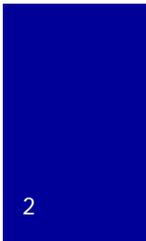


# HIGHER EDUCATION

## SMALL AREA PLAN





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## **Thank You ...**

... to all residents, students, business owners, landlords, college staff, and numerous other stakeholders who provided invaluable input and assistance throughout this planning process.

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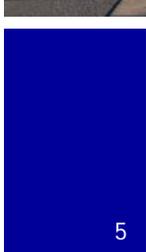
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With three colleges and over 20,000 students, Duluth is a college town. And as with other college towns, the growth of the student population and the changing characteristics of colleges have influenced the city's neighborhoods and economy. In light of these changes, the Higher Education Small Area Plan looks at ways to make Duluth an even more successful college town by balancing the needs of the colleges, students, businesses and residents. It examines land use, transportation, demographics, and environmental considerations in the study area, which covers approximately six square miles of the city and includes the areas with highest concentrations of students living near the colleges.

The planning process included extensive advisor, stakeholder, and public input. Early in the process, a consultant was hired to conduct a residential and commercial market analysis for the study area. As a result of background research, an assessment of the study area, the market study, and public input, the following five goals were created:

1. Strengthen single-family neighborhoods through appropriate zoning tools and neighborhood stabilization efforts.
2. Minimize impacts on single-family neighborhoods from noise, light pollution, and visual impacts of student housing.

3. Promote mixed-use development and student housing along transit corridors and within walking distance of campus.
4. Increase use of alternate modes of transportation.
5. With leadership from The University of Minnesota Duluth and The College of St. Scholastica, integrate the colleges and students into the community.

Each goal has specific recommendations. Many require ongoing partnerships between the colleges, City, non-profit organizations, businesses, and neighbors. The recommendations continue the City's policy of strengthening neighborhoods through land use changes, neighborhood stabilization, and code enforcement. The plan supports the transition of the Woodland Avenue corridor to a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area providing student housing, stores, restaurants, and neighborhood services. It also identifies social and physical ways to integrate the colleges and the community. An important part of this planning process was identifying win-win recommendations such as bike trails and increased neighborhood retail. Importantly, the plan also finds that Duluth has already achieved success with such tools as the Duluth Transit Authority's UPASS program and the Social Host Ordinance. In recognition of efforts already underway, this plan's recommendations identify ways to build on these successes and increase collaboration across the city.



# ASSESSMENT

## Background

The history of higher education in Duluth goes back more than a century. The College of St. Scholastica (CSS) was started in 1912 by the Benedictine Sisters, and offered courses to six women. The University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) has its roots in the State Normal School, founded in 1895 and later renamed the Duluth State Teachers College (DSTC); in 1947 it was named a branch of the University of Minnesota and shortly after moved from the DSTC campus to its current location. (A third college in Duluth, Lake Superior College (LSC), is outside of the study area boundaries.)

While these colleges have a long history in Duluth, recent years have seen a dramatic rise in the number of students. Student population at these institutions has climbed to 20,000, and campuses have grown with the number of students. Colleges are now a major economic driver, directly creating hundreds of faculty and staff jobs and indirectly fueling restaurants, stores, and other student services as well as companies that employ students. Colleges and students contribute to the energy, vitality, and cultural amenities of Duluth.

In recent years the number of students living off-campus (often in single-family houses in traditional neighborhoods) and the number who bring cars to school have increased as well. These trends have led to increased conflicts with long-time residents, who are affected by associated impacts such as noise, garbage, and on-street parking, and who are concerned about the stability and investment potential of their neighborhoods. In 2007, this led to the "300 Foot Rule," an ordinance that restricted rentals in a protection area from being within 300' of each other. This rule was repealed in

2010, at the same time new rental restrictions regulating conversions of single family homes to multi-tenant rentals (as well as adding new standards for parking and the number of tenants in a rental unit) was enacted. Other recent ordinances, such as the Social Host Ordinance and Crime Free

Multi Housing, are directed at some student behaviors. As the City continues to balance the needs of residents and students, it has become apparent that these efforts need to be guided by a long-range plan guiding land use decisions in the area. Duluth is not alone in facing these challenges. College towns across the country grapple with town-gown issues, and there are numerous articles and web sites devoted to the topic. The 2006 Comprehensive Land Use Plan recognized the need for a study in this area. In 2010, Planning Commission recommended and City Council adopted a resolution calling for a Higher Education Small Area Plan.

A 2010 report by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Gallup, "Knight Soul of the Community 2010," adequately captures the importance of and feelings towards Duluth's colleges. It showed that Duluth residents have a positive view of the colleges and universities in the area, ranking them higher than K-12 public education. The same report, though, shows that Duluth underperforms against other comparable cities in terms of its openness to other groups, including young

## Town-Gown

"Town-gown" is a term as old as universities themselves, and refers to the relationship between a college and its community. For more information on this topic, see the article on town-gown partnerships in Appendix D.



adults without children and college graduates. As Duluth seeks to grow its economy and maintain a strong sense of community, it will become increasingly important to attract young professionals and retain talented college graduates. Providing a more welcoming environment for students and reducing neighborhood tensions will contribute to this goal, as it will position Duluth as a city these college students want to build a future in. At the same time, addressing concerns in single-family neighborhoods will continue to make them attractive places for all Duluth residents.

## Purpose of the Plan

The following purpose statement was created in Spring 2011 to guide the planning process for this small area plan:

This small area plan includes the areas surrounding the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the College of St. Scholastica. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan, adopted in 2006, recognized that areas near Duluth's colleges are impacted, both positively and negatively, from student presence in the community. Between 2001 and 2010, the student population increased by 30%, making higher education a major economic driver in Duluth. Because of this increase, a small area plan was warranted in order to study those areas where the presence of these educational institutions affects land use, transportation, and the local economy. The purpose of the Higher Education Small Area Plan is to balance the needs of this signifi-



## Small Area Plan

A small area plan is a plan that is developed for a clearly defined area and gives more detailed recommendations than would be provided in a comprehensive plan. A small area plan does not replace the comprehensive plan but rather serves to augment it. The small area plan builds on the goals, policies and implementation strategies in the comprehensive plan to provide a finer level of detail.

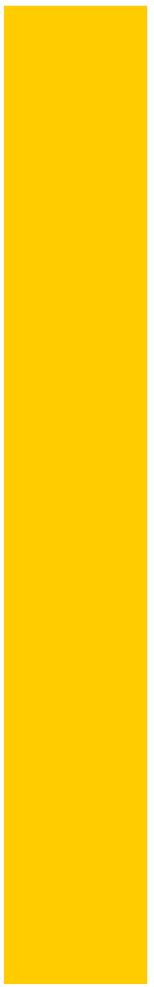
cant industry in Duluth with the needs of surrounding neighborhoods. The plan aims to:

1. identify areas and strategies for residential and commercial development that meets market demand and includes places for students to dine and shop and
2. identify strategies to alleviate pressures on established neighborhoods and to maintain their residential character.

## Study Area

With college students comprising such a large percentage of the city's population, areas where students live are not confined to neighborhoods immediately adjacent to campus. Students live throughout the city, including West Duluth, Lincoln Park, Downtown, and Lakeside. However, because a small area plan by its nature focuses on a defined geography, the study area includes the two college campuses and surrounding areas with the highest student concentrations. A variety of sources were used to determine the study area, including homestead/rental data, locations of student housing developments such as Boulder Ridge on Rice Lake Road, and input from committees and other stakeholders. The study area can be seen on page 9. It covers approximately six square miles, the largest small area plan conducted by the City to date. It is bordered on the north by Hartley Park and residential neighborhoods, on the east by Congdon, on the south by Central Hillside, and on the west by Duluth Heights, including the commercial corridor of Central Entrance (see map on page 10).

# Higher Education Small Area Plan Study Area







## Plan Process

This plan followed a process similar to the ones used successfully in the City's previous two small area plans. A Plan Committee representing a range of perspectives met monthly and served as the main advisory group to staff. Because of the large geographic area and inclusion of two college campuses, two subcommittees were formed: a city council subcommittee, which included three councilors representing districts included within the study area boundary as well as one at-large councilor, and a student subcommittee, which included students from both college campuses. Members of each subcommittee also attended the Plan Committee meetings. Technical advisors—agency and city contacts such as the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) and Police Department—also provided input on the plan.

Public meetings were held in July 2011 (152 attendees), October 2011 (34 attendees), and January 2012 (65 attendees). A plan web site was updated regularly with meeting presentations and project updates, and provided a place for people to submit comments and sign up for meeting notices. Eighteen comments were received via the web site, and over 200 people signed up on the email list. Two surveys were conducted: one sent to students at UMD and CSS (1205 responses), and another placed on the City's web site (93 responses).

The process included a market study, conducted from August to October, that analyzed residential and commercial demand within the project area as well as the availability and size of vacant, underdeveloped, and undeveloped sites to meet the demand. The market study consultants conducted focus groups with residents, developers, and students.

See Appendix B for comments and survey results, and Appendix A for the full market study.

## Previous Planning Efforts

### 2009 UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment

This multimodal assessment recognizes that the transportation infrastructure in the area has not kept pace with users' demand and proposes methods to improve capacity, access, safety, and modal options. Short- and long-term recommendations range from restriping and adding crosswalks to installing medians and roundabouts. Suggested trail corridors are also identified.

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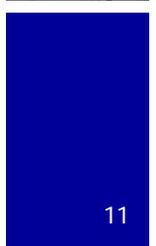
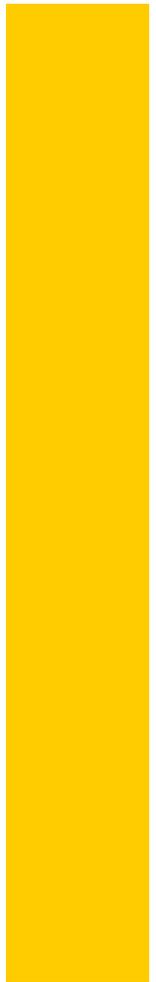
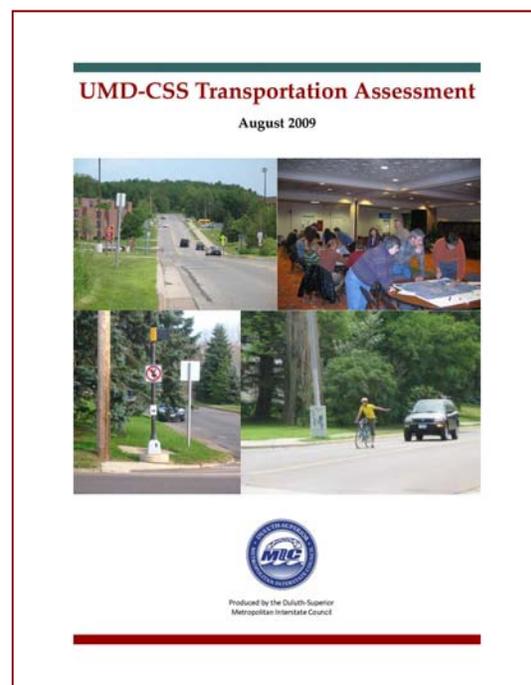
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### Endion Land Use and Transportation Plan

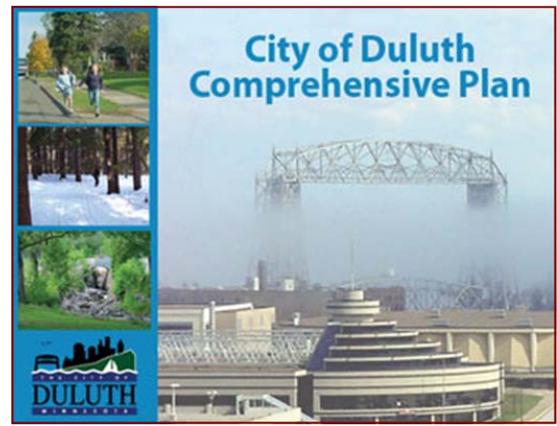


**Study Area**  
 A portion of the corridor of this plan is London Road cutting a wide swath through Duluth's Eastern Hillside, near along the Endion and East Hillside neighborhoods (DDE) from businesses, recreational areas and the railroad on to homes that cross Interstate 35 (I-35) and provide connection to the Lakeshore.

April 2008



Produced by the Duluth Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

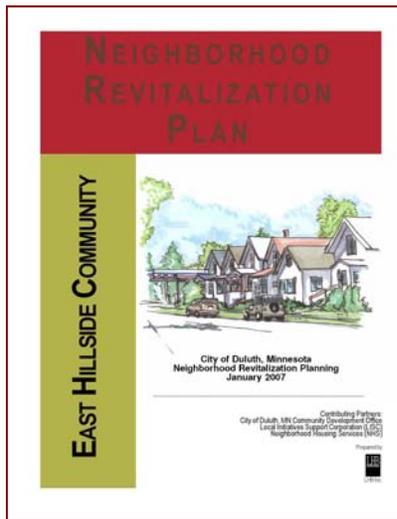


### 2008 Endion Land Use and Transportation Plan

This plan examines traffic patterns along London Road between 10<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Avenues East, throughout the Endion/East Hillside neighborhood, and around the adjacent St. Luke's medical campus, assessing transportation needs and recommendations given existing and future land uses in the area.

### 2007 East Hillside Community Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Part of the At Home in Duluth Initiative, this plan aids local agencies in applying for funding to be used in revitalization efforts throughout the East Hillside neighborhood. It identifies economic, housing, and community opportunities and strategies. At Home in Duluth conducted a 2011-2012 update of this plan concurrently with this small area plan.



### 2006 Duluth Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan sets forth the vision, principles, policies, and recommended strategies to guide development and preservation of land over the next 20 years. A key part of the document is the Future Land Use Map (page 13). Key Future Land Use categories in the Higher Education Study Area include:

- **Institutional** is the designation for college and public school campuses, large religious facilities, or governmental campuses.
- **Central Business – Secondary** includes mixed regional and neighborhood retail, employment centers, public spaces, and medium-density residential uses.
- **Neighborhood Mixed Use** includes residential and commercial uses and is a transitional use between more intensive commercial uses and purely residential neighborhoods. Commercial uses are oriented to neighborhood or specialty retail markets.
- **Neighborhood Commercial** calls for small- to moderate-scale commercial serving primarily the adjacent neighborhood.
- **Urban Residential** includes medium- to high-density residential developments located adjacent to activity centers and allowing limited commercial uses to serve the neighborhood.
- **Traditional Neighborhood** is characterized by a grid or connected street pattern, with one- or two-family homes and limited townhomes.
- **Low-Density Neighborhood** areas are intended to include single-family housing in suburban-style neighborhoods.
- **Preservation** includes lands with high natural resource or scenic value, with substantial restrictions on development of land.
- **The Sensitive Lands Overlay** indicates a preference for a development pattern that clusters buildings, preserves open space or tree cover, or otherwise protects sensitive natural resources.



In addition to the Future Land Use categories above, the Plan outlines a Higher Education Overlay, areas where the presence of educational institutions is strong and related commercial, entertainment, service, and housing functions would benefit from regulations and incentives specific to the student and young professional market base being served. It calls for buffering owner-occupied areas from higher-intensity commercial and residential uses. This overlay includes the Mount Royal and “St Marie Triangle” area, the commercial node at the intersection of Kenwood and Arrowhead, and the London Road corridor, all of which are included in the study area for this plan.

### 2004 Proposal for Development of Young Professional Housing Districts

This proposal identifies several potential areas for student and young professional housing, promoting the development of mixed-use areas near transit. Areas identified in the proposal that are within the study area for this plan include East Hillside, London Road, Kenwood, and Mount Royal.

## Demographics

### Population & Persons Per Household

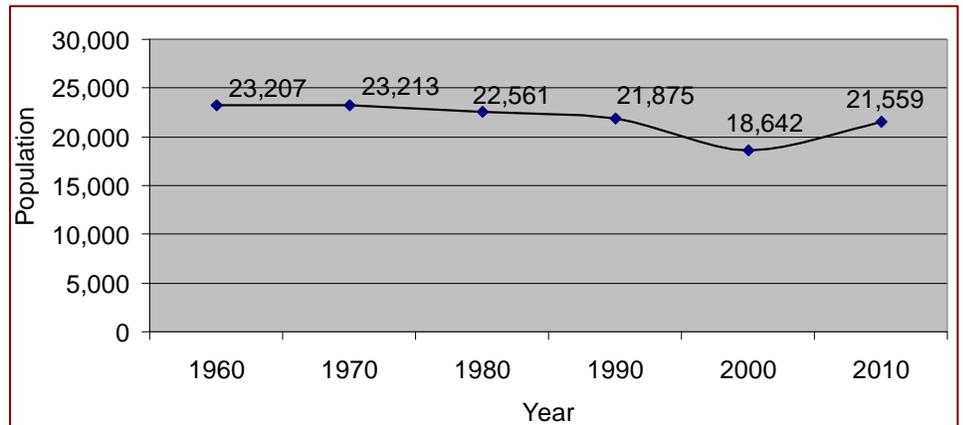
Data from the U.S. Census Bureau for Tracts 5 and 8-14 (those tracts that are more than half in the study area) shows how population has changed over time. While Duluth’s population declined by 19.6% from 1960 to 2010, population in these tracts declined by only 7.1% (Figure 1). Over the same timeframe, the average persons per household in Duluth went from 2.9 to 2.2, with a steady decline. Persons per household in Tracts 5 and 8-14 showed more variability from 1960-2010, but now mirrors the city as a whole at 2.4 persons per household (Figure 2).

## Age

Boundaries for Census Block Groups more precisely match the study area boundaries than Census Tracts and allows a detailed comparison of age distribution. Figure 3 shows how age distribution has changed over the past twenty years. Notably, percentages in every category except 18-24 year olds have declined, while the population of 18-24 year olds increased 42% over 20 years. This increase in 18-24 year olds kept the population of the study area stable. The same holds true at the city level; the increase in the college-age population has mitigated losses in other age groups, helping to prevent population decline.

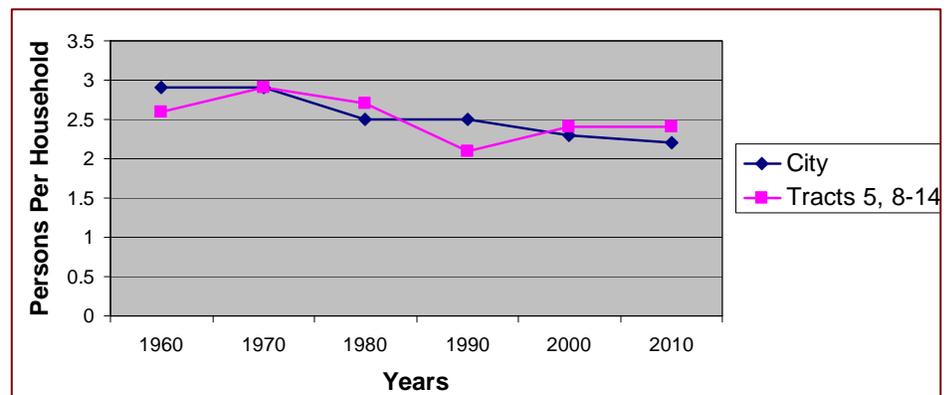
Persons age 18-24 increased from 26% of the total population in these block groups in 1990 to 41% in 2010. The distribution of this age group across the study area can be seen on page 16. The block groups immediately around UMD have the highest percentage of 18-24 year olds, followed by the block group that includes the student housing developments along Rice Lake Road as well as those in the lower East

**Figure 1: Population of Census Tracts 5 and 8-14, 1960–2010**



Source: U.S. Census

**Figure 2: Persons Per Household in Census Tracts 5 and 8-14, 1960–2010**



Source: U.S. Census

Hillside. Of those block groups in the study area, those in the northeast portion show the lowest percentage of 18-24 year olds. The block group that includes St. Scholastica shows a low percentage of 18-24 year olds; this may be due to students being counted at permanent home addresses rather than on campus.

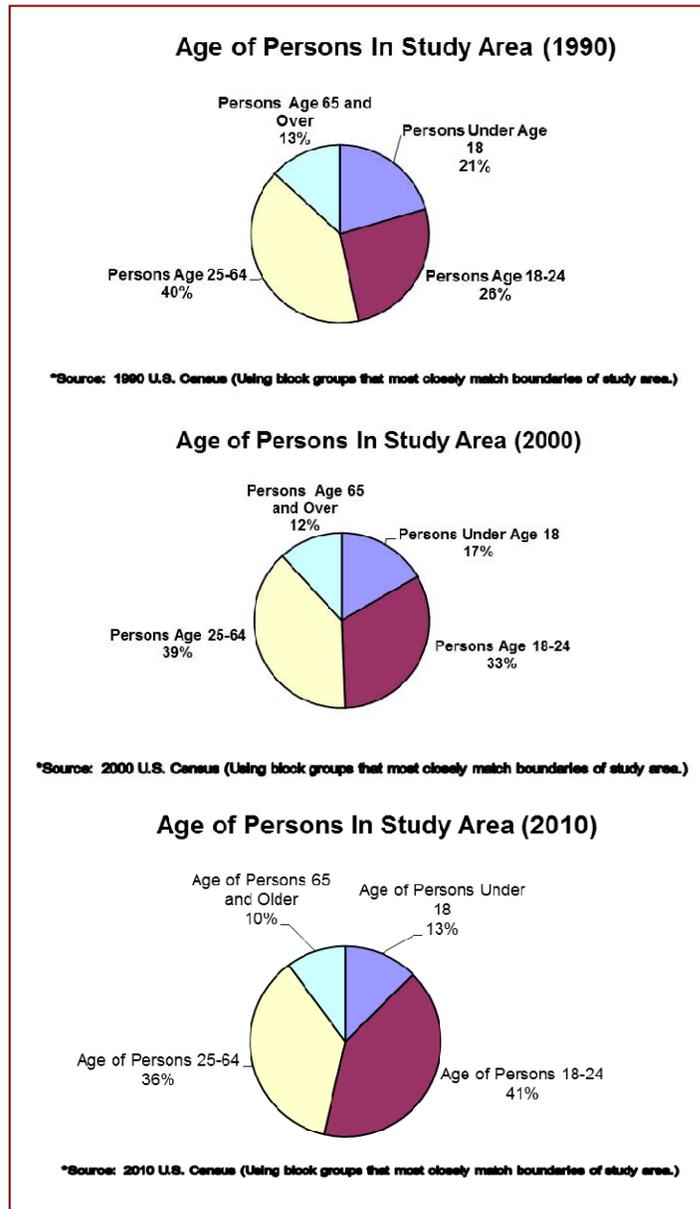
### Students

The population of college students attending Duluth institutions (UMD, CSS, LSC) has increased 30% in the last decade (Figure 4). The increase was most dramatic in the early part of the decade and leveled off at the end of the decade, suggesting a plateau at a student population of around 20,000. UMD and CSS report that future enrollments are not anticipated to have the rapid growth seen in the past. The portion of students that are full-time and the portion that live on-campus has remained relatively steady (Figures 5 and 6, next page). In 2010, over 16,000 were full-time students. Just over 4,000 students lived on-campus, with approximately 16,000 living off-campus between the three colleges. Although LSC lies outside the study area, its students are included in these numbers since some likely live in the study area; it also demonstrates the magnitude of college and student impact on the city as a whole. The DCI Market Study zeroed in on student population from the two colleges in the study area. This resulted in an estimated 13,572 students living within the study area, with 9,376 living off-campus (details can be found in the market study in Appendix A). Some of those living off-campus may be local students living with family or non-traditional students, but an exact estimate of this number is not available.

### Housing

U.S. Census data from Tracts 5 and 8-14 illustrates how housing characteristics have changed in the area over the previous decades. As seen in Figure 7 (next page), housing has changed from being predominantly owner-occupied to predominantly rental.

**Figure 3: Age Distribution 1990-2010**



**Figure 4: Total College Students in Duluth**

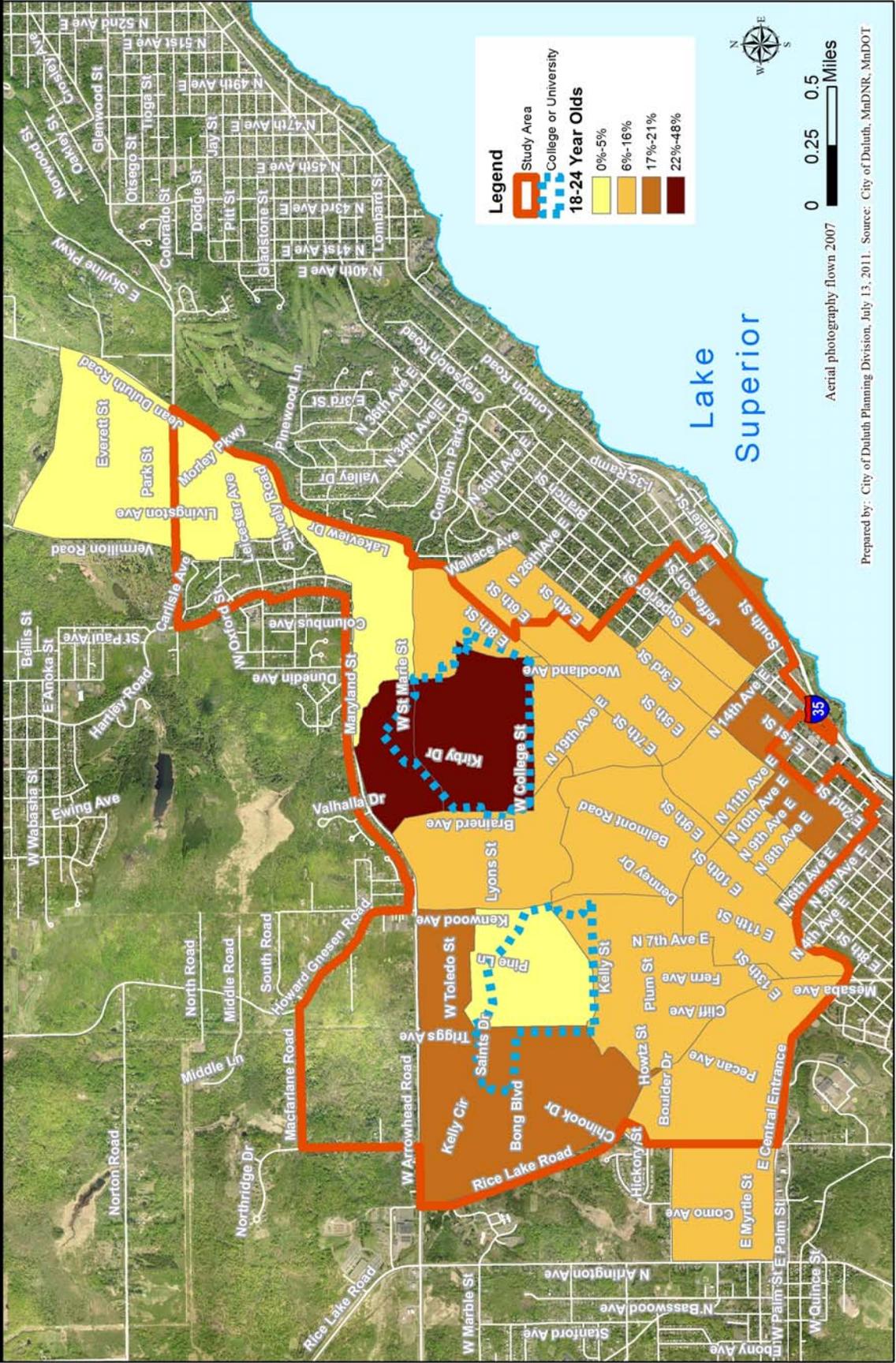
	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Lived on Campus
<b>2000</b>			<b>15,113</b>	
<b>2001</b>	11,903	3,616	<b>15,519</b>	3,300
<b>2002</b>	12,718	3,969	<b>16,687</b>	
<b>2003</b>	12,946	4,220	<b>17,634</b>	
<b>2004</b>	13,984	4,283	<b>18,267</b>	
<b>2005</b>	14,217	4,481	<b>18,698</b>	4,090
<b>2006</b>	14,787	4,540	<b>19,327</b>	4,145
<b>2007</b>	14,780	4,664	<b>19,444</b>	4,048
<b>2008</b>	15,299	4,721	<b>20,020</b>	4,025
<b>2009</b>	15,535	4,624	<b>20,159</b>	4,141
<b>2010</b>	15,949	4,893	<b>20,842</b>	4,230

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education; Lived on Campus data from City of Duluth Community Development Division

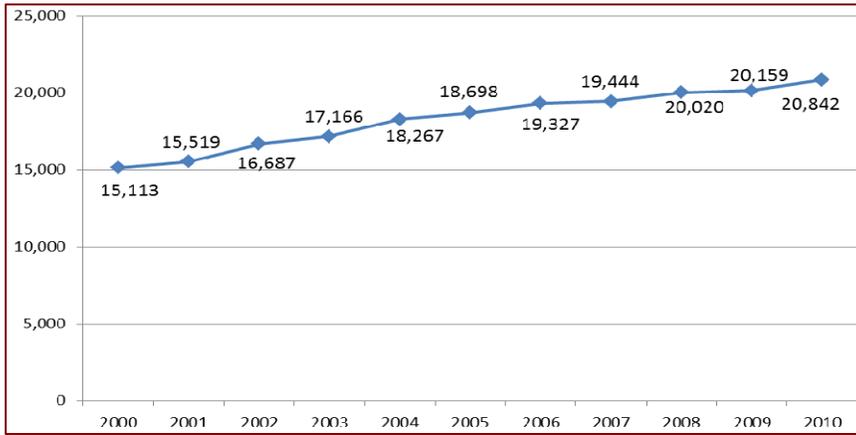




# Higher Education Small Area Plan College-Age Population

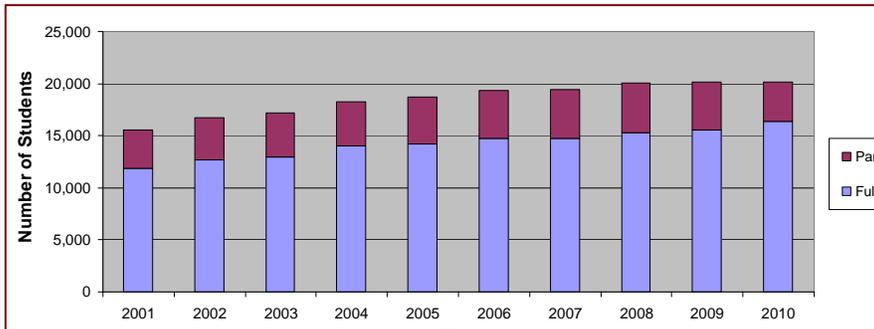


**Figure 5: Total College Students 2001-2010**



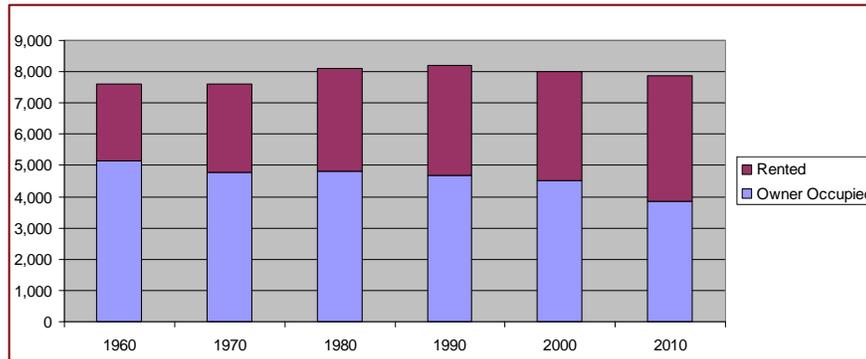
Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

**Figure 6: Full- and Part-Time College Students**



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

**Figure 7: Owner-Occupied and Renter-Occupied Housing**



Source: U.S. Census

**Figure 8: Family Households in Duluth**

Year	Family Households (% of total)	Family Households with Children Under 18 (% of total)
2000	56%	27%
2010	52%	23%

Source: U.S. Census

The study area (defined by block groups on page 16) contains 8582 housing units, which is 23% of the city's total 36,994 housing units.

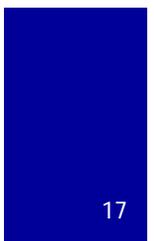
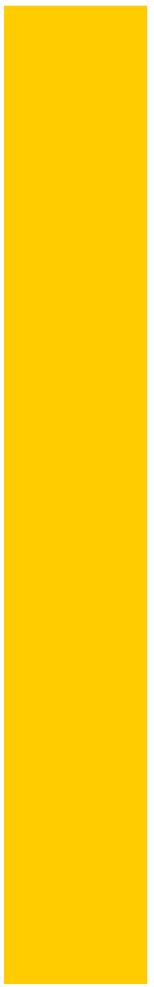
The distribution of rental properties can be seen on p 18. Rental properties typically have a "non-homestead" status, which is shown in dark blue. The majority of rental housing is concentrated in the East Hillside, with other concentrations at Boulder and Summit Ridge, along Kenwood Avenue near St. Scholastica, and in the Mt. Royal/St. Marie Triangle area.

Part of the reason for the increase in rental housing is due to changing population characteristics. In 2010, single-unit housing made up 66% of the housing stock in Duluth, while the number of families in the city had dropped to 52% of all households, as seen in Figure 8. This suggests lower demand for single-family housing than has existed in the past. At the same time, homeownership preferences have been changing (a shift seen nation-wide), with fewer people placing importance on owning a home, particularly among groups such as young professionals and aging baby boomers. Age cohort shifts that further illustrate changing housing preferences can be seen in the market study in Appendix A.

Age of housing stock in the study area can be seen on page 19. In general, older housing is located in the south and east of the study area, stretching from East Hillside to Morley Heights. The newest housing is concentrated in the north and west, largely between Kenwood Avenue and Rice Lake Road.

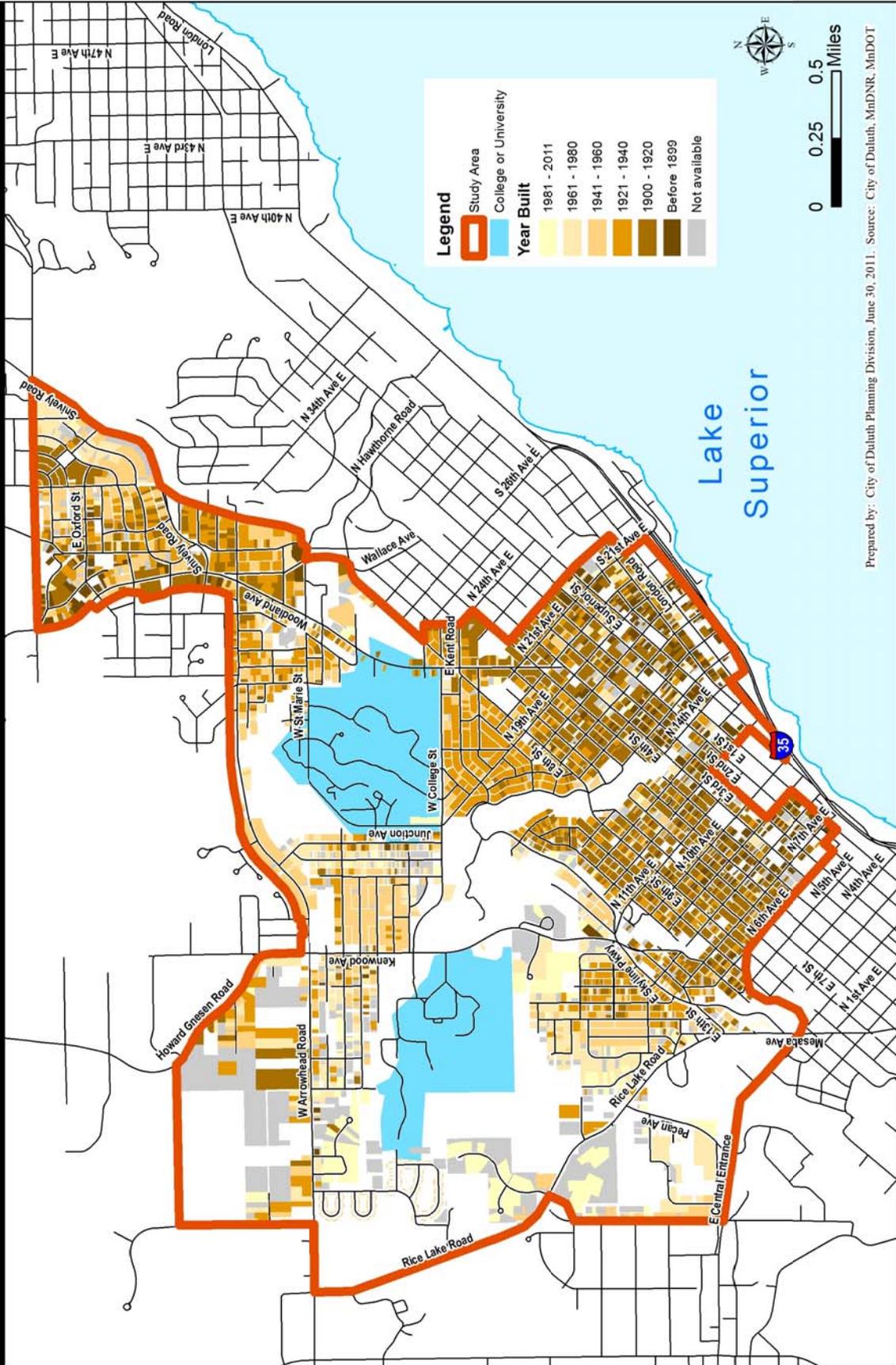
The DCI Market Study, found in Appendix A, contains additional demographic and housing data for the study area, including:

- Population
- Age groups
- Income
- Employment
- Housing characteristics
- Housing demand





# Higher Education Small Area Plan Age of Housing Stock





Single-family residential comprises the greatest existing land use in the study area.



Many areas of dense housing are zoned R-2.

## Land Use & Zoning

### Existing Land Use

The study area is approximately 6 square miles and accounts for 11% of the city's total land area. The map on page 21 shows existing land use in the study area. An analysis of these land uses can be seen in Figure 9. It shows that the greatest amount of land is currently single-family residential (33%). The two second-largest land uses are roads (17%) and undeveloped land (17%). Undeveloped areas are largely areas with sensitive landscape features such as wetlands and streams.

### Zoning

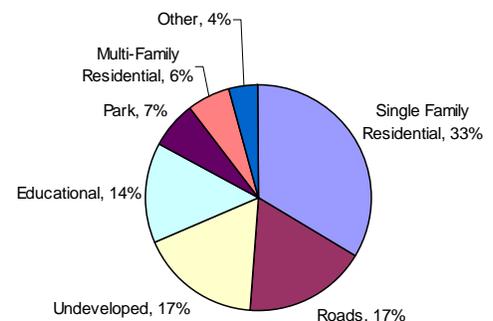
Zoning is a form of land use regulation that specifies how land may be used and developed. The map on page 22 shows zoning currently in place. The majority of the study area is zoned Residential-Traditional (R-1). Areas of denser housing, such as Aspenwood, Boulder and Summit Ridge, and lower East Hillside are zoned Residential-Urban (R-2). Commercial nodes such as Mt. Royal, Kenwood, and the Plaza are zoned Mixed Use-Neighborhood (MU-N). The College of St. Scholastica is zoned Mixed Use-Institutional (MU-I). The City of Duluth plans to rezone UMD to MU-I as well; its current R-2 designation is a hold-over from the city's previous zoning code.

Two other zone districts in place are F-2, Low-Rise Neighborhood Mix, and F-4, Mid-Rise Community Mix. These are form districts, which are comprised of specific building

types and are designated in walkable shopping areas of the city. The F-2 and F-4 districts are found around the Plaza/Armory area and along London Road.

Another type of zoning in the area is the Natural Resources Overlay (NR-O). The NR-O regulates wetlands, flood plains, shoreland, and stormwater. Two of these—flood plains and shoreland—are shown on page 23. All flood plains in the area are associated with stream corridors and are encompassed by the shoreland boundaries. Chester Creek and Tischer Creek are Cold Water (trout) streams. To protect the fragile ecosystems of these streams, stricter standards and larger setbacks are associated with this shoreland classification.

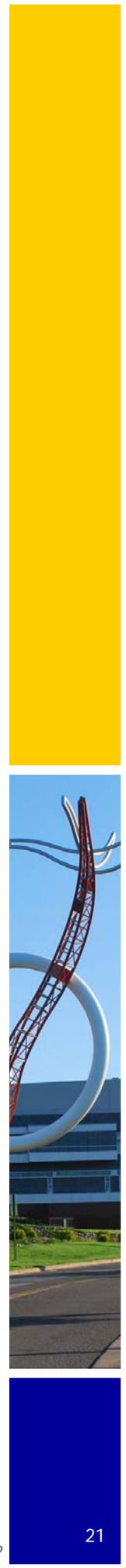
**Figure 9: Existing Land Use**



# Higher Education Small Area Plan Existing Land Use

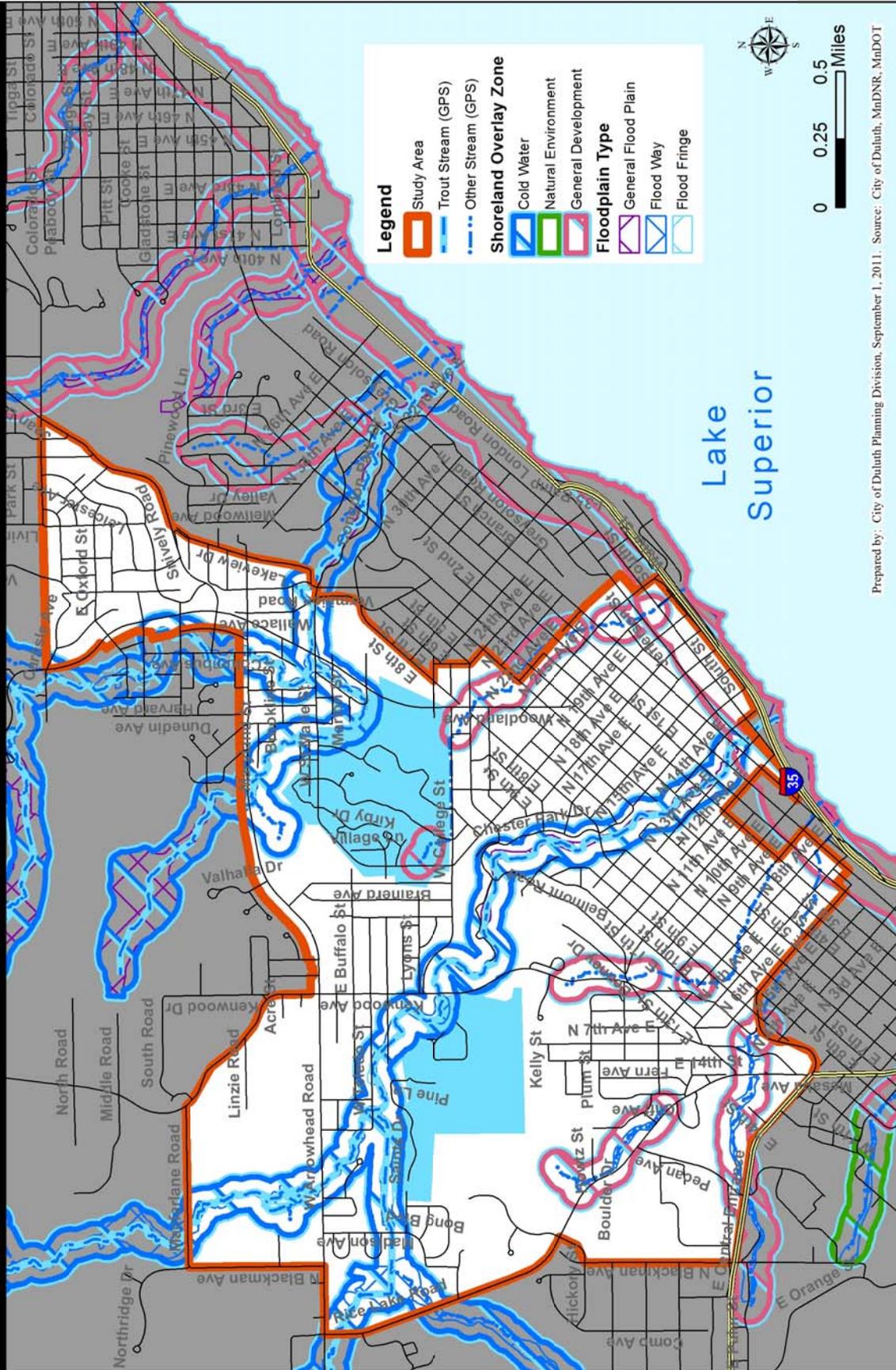


Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, July 13, 2011. Source: City of Duluth, MnDNR, MnDOT





# Higher Education Small Area Plan Shorelands & Floodplains



Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, September 1, 2011. Source: City of Duluth, MnDNR, MnDOT

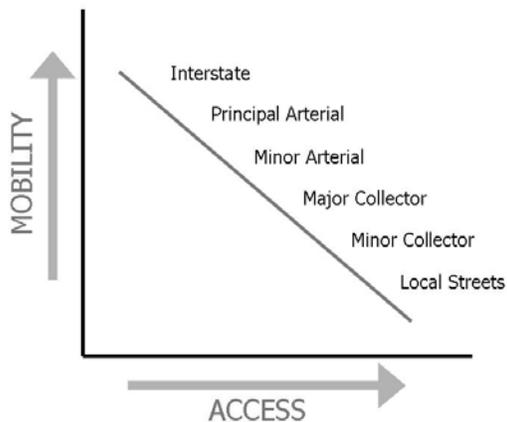


## Transportation

### Roadways

An analysis of the roadway system provides information on how transportation patterns have affected land use and where roadway improvements are needed. Roadways function in different ways according to the amount of through-vehicle mobility they provide and the amount of access they provide to adjacent properties. This system of organizing roadways is called “functional classification” and is illustrated in Figure 10.

**Figure 10: Functional Classification of Roadways**



The functional classification of roadways in the study area can be seen in the map on page 25. Interstate access is provided via an exit at 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue E., and a system of minor arterials carries the bulk of the traffic in the study area. Near the UMD campus, Woodland Avenue is a minor arterial that was reconstructed in 2010. Other key arterials near the colleges include Arrowhead Road, Kenwood Avenue, and College Street. Designing these roads to accommodate large volumes of automobile traffic has resulted in cars being the predominant form of transportation. This in turn has resulted in an auto-oriented pattern of development with large parking lots between buildings and streets and little to no pedes-



Woodland Avenue is a minor arterial that was reconstructed in 2010.

trian access to properties.

Detailed assessments of roadways can be found in the two plans by the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), noted on pages 11 and 12: the UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment and the Endion Land Use and Transportation Plan. These plans identified the following characteristics of selected roadways:

- On neighborhood roadways immediately south of the UMD campus, cut-through traffic accounts for 60-80% of total traffic (although total traffic volumes are very low).
- A crash analysis in the UMD/CSS study area identified “locations of concern” at the intersections of Arrowhead Road and Kenwood Avenue; College Street and Junction Avenue; Cleveland Street and Kenwood Avenue; and Woodland Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue E. A similar crash analysis in the Endion area identified 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue E at 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue E at London Road as locations of concern.
- Changes in transportation patterns and volumes, largely due to the construction of I-35, have led to conversions of one-way streets to two-way streets in the Endion area.
- Changes in transportation patterns and volumes also indicate a need for London Road to become less suburban/auto-oriented in nature, including narrowing the roadway from a four-lane to a three-lane facility.

City engineering staff were consulted regarding characteristics of the major roadways near the colleges. They identified the following intersections as ones needing to be reviewed for functional analysis: College Street and Junction Avenue, Kenwood Avenue and Arrowhead Road, and College Street and Woodland Avenue.

Public input also provides information on roadways. In addition to cut-through traffic as mentioned above, area residents are concerned with high speed limits/drivers traveling too fast and congestion at intersections such as Kenwood Avenue and Arrowhead Road.

### Transit

Transit can be a key factor affecting land use patterns and development locations, especially in this area of the city where transit is heavily utilized by students. The DTA provides bus service in the city, operating Routes 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 18 in the study area. Most of these routes service the Transit Center at UMD. Routes 10 and 20 run along the southern boundary of the study area. The developer of Boulder/Summit Ridge and Campus Park also runs private buses to both campuses during peak times.

# Higher Education Small Area Plan Roadways



In 2000, faced with increased parking pressures on campus, the UPASS program began to provide free bus service to students. Since then, ridership has skyrocketed—for example, DTA buses now make 140 stops on UMD’s campus every day providing over 600,000 rides per year to UMD and CSS. This translates to thousands fewer automobile trips to campus every day. DTA buses use a concept called interlining, where one bus, upon completion of a route, can instantly begin another route, in ef-



A bus stops outside the UMD Transit Center.

fect combining two routes. This can be convenient for some riders who can change routes without actually having to transfer; however, this feeding of one route into another can place limitations on route adjustments and timing. The DTA reports that its pending construction of a transit center in downtown Duluth (2013) will allow it increased options regarding route scheduling, as buses will have a place to “hold over” if needed.

The term “transit oriented development” is used to describe the types of mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development that occurs at transit stops. This typically is associated with modes that are perceived as being more permanent in nature such as light rail or bus rapid transit, and usually is seen in larger metropolitan areas. However, transit can also influence development in a community the size of Duluth, particularly when there is a large population traveling to common destinations, as occurs with the thousands of students traveling to UMD and CSS every day. Public input supports increased use of transit, and students indicate it is an important consideration in choosing housing. Results from the student surveys show that while walking to campus is slightly preferable, over 50% of respondents consider transit when deciding where to live.

Student surveys indicate appreciation of the free bus service and a desire for more convenient service to destinations such as Target and grocery stores, as well as a need for more frequent buses that better coincide with class times. Some students also report lack of bus service near housing; however, it should be noted that

because the former city policy was to disburse rentals throughout neighborhoods, student housing could not congregate near transit lines.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are an important transportation component in areas around college campuses. Bike routes in the study area consist of local streets with bike route signage; these can be seen in the map on page 28. Along Kenwood Avenue, a painted “sharrow” denotes a shared car/bike lane. There are no dedicated bike lanes or off-street bike trails in the study area.

Trails in the study area consist of hiking trails in Chester Park and the Superior Hiking Trail.

The City of Duluth’s Trail and Bikeway Master Plan addresses the lack of connectivity and the “largely bike unfriendly on-road environment” in the city. In the study area, this plan identifies the following future trail and bikeway improvements:

- A multi-use natural surface trail that would cross the city and link Rice Lake Road to St. Scholastica and Hartley Nature Center.
- A trail corridor that would connect from the Lakewalk through the college area to Arrowhead Road and the mall area.
- Consider adding bike lanes and sharrows to Woodland Avenue, 7th Avenue E, and Arrowhead Road.

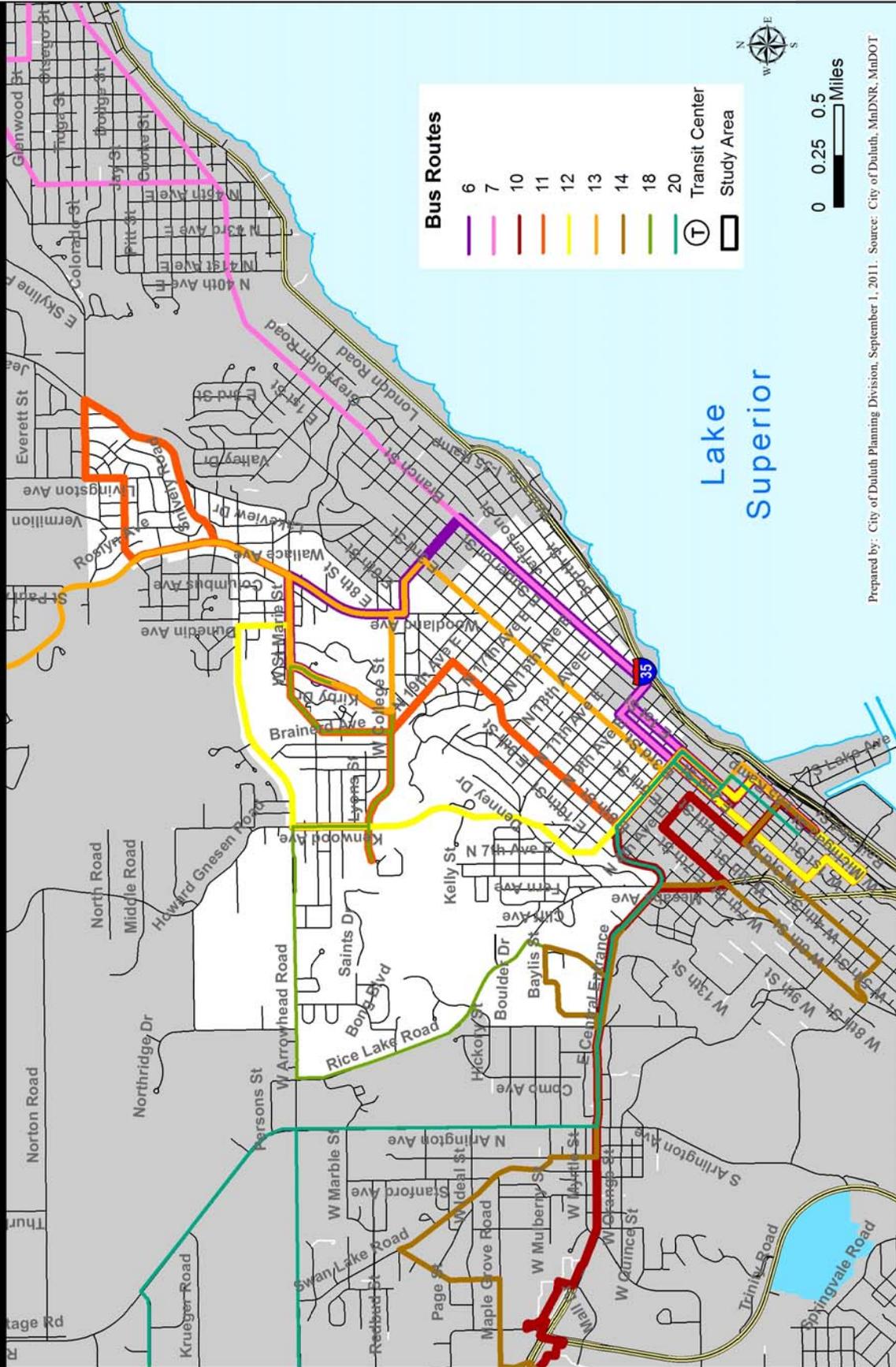
Pedestrians use existing streets and sidewalks to access the campuses. Transportation research uses ¼ mile or ½ mile as the distance people will typically walk to reach their destinations—depending on such factors as condition of pedestrian facilities, weather, and barriers such as intersections with major roadways. The map on page 28 shows ¼ mile and ½ mile distances from campus; however, it should be noted that because most roadways dead-end before reaching campus, and because the campus buildings themselves are located in the middle of campus and not near adjacent streets, the circu-



The City of Duluth paints a sharrow—designating a shared bike/car lane—on Kenwood Avenue

itous routes most pedestrians would take are in reality much longer. Under existing conditions, the ¼ mile distance is the more accurate depiction of walking distance. Even this, however, is dependent on factors such as timely snow removal.

# Higher Education Small Area Plan Transit



Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, September 1, 2011. Source: City of Duluth, MnDNR, MnDOT





# Comprehensive Land Use Plan Principles

The twelve Governing Principles adopted in the 2006 Comprehensive Land Use Plan provide the fundamental concepts guiding all of the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations. They provide direction when details of the plan itself are insufficiently clear to resolve issues or make decisions. These principles also served as a framework and guide during the development of the Higher Education Small Area Plan. The Governing Principles are:

1. Reuse previously developed lands
2. Declare the necessity and secure the future of undeveloped places
3. Support Duluth's traditional economic base
4. Support emerging economic growth sectors
5. Strengthen neighborhoods
6. Reinforce the place-specific
7. Create and maintain connectivity
8. Encourage a mix of activities, uses, and densities
9. Support private actions that contribute to the public realm
10. Take sustainable actions
11. Include considerations for education systems in land use actions
12. Create efficiencies in delivery of public services

Input from stakeholders frequently identified snow removal and crossing of major streets as barriers to walking. Comments from students and residents overwhelming favored increasing opportunities to walk and bike for both transportation and recreational purposes, suggesting a latent demand for these types of facilities.

## Environmental Characteristics

Duluth is known as a city with an urban wilderness. As noted under "Land Use and Zoning" on page 20, portions of the study area contain sensitive environmental features such as streams, wetlands, flood plains, and steep slopes. Two trout streams, Chester Creek and Tischer Creek, along with their tributaries, cross the study area. The trout stream designation from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources means that the streams are, or have been in the past, able to support populations of trout. Other streams in the study area include Brewery Creek, Grey's Creek, and Oregon Creek. The flood plains in the study area are associated with these streams. Many of the wetlands in the area are also associated with the streams, often at the headwaters. Stream water quality is linked to wetland quantity and quality because wetlands give rainwater a place to slow down and cool off before being discharged into streams.

Undeveloped areas, parks, and stream corridors can provide important wildlife habitat as well. Connections between open spaces are important for wildlife movement, and larger open spaces provide more opportunities for core habitat than would fragmented open spaces. Likely areas of habitat in the study area include Chester Park/Chester Bowl and the Chester Creek corridor, Bagley Nature Center, undeveloped areas to the west of St. Scholastica, and the undeveloped areas north of Arrowhead Road and west of Howard Gnesen Road. Just north of the study area is the 660-acre Hartley Park.

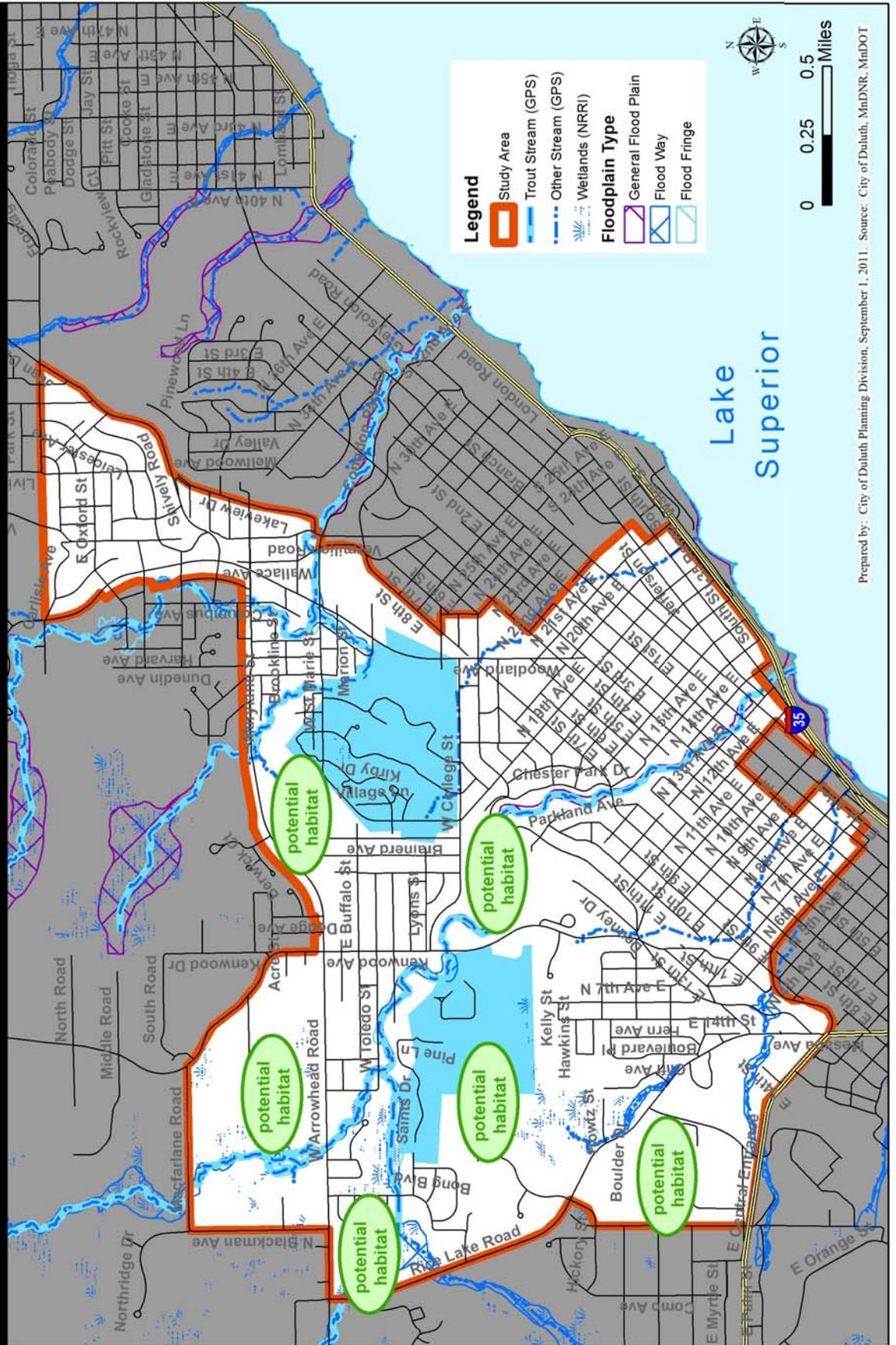


Adjacent to campus is Tischer Creek, a coldwater trout stream.





# Higher Education Small Area Plan Environmental Characteristics



Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, September 1, 2011. Source: City of Duluth, MnDNR, MnDOT

## Market Analysis

**It is important for a land use plan to be grounded in reality concerning the supply and demand for each type of land use in the marketplace. Early in the planning process, a request for proposals was distributed and DCI was chosen to conduct a market study for the study area. They were tasked with conducting a market evaluation and development feasibility analysis that would identify potential residential and commercial demand within the project area as well as the availability and size of vacant, underdeveloped, and undeveloped sites to meet the demand. The complete market study can be found in Appendix A, with the executive summary excerpted below.**

The Higher Education Area has some of the most interesting dynamics in all of Duluth. The study area encompasses two of the region's major institutions of higher education, is seeing growth in health care uses - the region's largest employment sector and is home to some of the city's oldest neighborhoods. The development opportunities within the study area - by way of market and economic trends - are based in large part on the major institutions and destinations that are located within and in proximity to its boundaries.

These are also not based solely on the inevitability of market forces. While there are some short-term development opportunities that can take advantage of existing demand, there are other opportunities that will manifest themselves only if certain hurdles can be overcome.

Following this, there are also a number of needs within the Higher Education Area that should be addressed along with "growth" opportunities.

Potential neighborhood disinvestment and decline, students awkwardly juxtaposed with owner occupants and haphazard development patterns are threats that the City and its part-

ners can address by understanding and guiding market forces towards stabilization and improvement initiatives.

### Key Market Findings

This report presents four primary "takeaways" from its assessment of market/economic conditions:

#### **Health Care drives the regional economy, making it integral to understand the study area's location next to the St. Luke's and Essentia Health campuses**

The Health Care sector makes up 28% of the regional economy and it is one of the few sustained areas of employment growth. Approximately 50% of this employment base is found within 1/2 mile of the St. Luke's and Essentia Health campuses, located just to the south of the study area. Growth in ambulatory health services jobs, such as doctors offices, are already impacting the lower sub area. As an established and growing regional employment center, this informal medical district is likely to drive opportunities for additional health care employment, as well as residential and commercial/retail development.

#### **Opportunities for new and improved retail/dining options within the Higher Education Area exist, but may not occur without redevelopment.**

There appears to be sufficient potential for as much as 50,000 - 65,000 square feet of new retail and dining within the Higher Education Area. However, there are limited sites available for easy development, and the regional retail market generally serves the residents of the Higher Education Area - it just requires them to drive farther to reach various convenience and luxury items. Existing centers like Kenwood and Mount Royal or potential development sites near the schools offer opportunities for new or expanded retail offerings to capture the student market, but only if those sites are reconfigured or redeveloped to accommodate such uses.

**Figure 11: Projections for Key Markets**

Higher Education Area (HEA)	
MARKET	5+ YEARS
Commercial Office	26,000 - 130,000 sq. ft. of office, almost all in the form of physician's offices, outpatient centers, etc. New development will most likely focus near hospitals and London Road Corridor.
Retail	75,000 - 100,000 sq. ft. of retail, including 28,000 - 33,000 sq. ft. of food & dining, primarily in convenience and daily goods such as groceries and general merchandise. Demand is unlikely to be met without redevelopment of existing sites.
Housing	City / regional dynamics unlikely to generate housing demand of any scale, but niche markets that take advantage of proximity to the two medical centers and the lakefront could generate 5 year demand of several hundred units for medical professionals, seniors, and empty nesters.
Student Housing	About one-third of all off campus students expected to be interested in higher quality housing located closer to the university, equal to 800-900 units of potential housing. Total demand weakens in areas farther from the university, unless tied to improved transit connectivity.
Hospitality	Existing market suggests that new hotel product is unlikely within HEA in the short term.



**Student housing offers the best existing real estate development opportunities, perhaps within the entire city. Providing development guidance to ensure optimal results for both public and private sectors are reached is an important objective.**

- Enrollment at the University of Minnesota - Duluth and the College of Saint Scholastica has collectively increased by 44% - or 4,100 students - over just the past decade. Despite the fact that the majority of students must live off campus, the lack of overall population growth in the region has allowed this student growth to absorb into neighborhoods surrounding the universities, dispersing the student population throughout the Higher Education Area. General demand for housing within close proximity to each campus, a lack of high quality student focused housing development and increasing tensions between student and owner occupied households creates a notable opportunity for new student housing.



*Student housing is by far the best real estate market opportunity within the HEA. Special steps are necessary to ensure that demand is met with supply that generates positive outcomes.*

**Market / economic indicators suggest that investment is required to keep areas of the Higher Education Area from declining due to disinvestment -**

The lower sub-area, comprised of the East Hillside neighborhood and pockets within the Endion neighborhood, is predominantly comprised of lower income households, including both students and residents, a particularly aged housing stock that is showing visible signs of disrepair, and has high concentrations of extremely low valued property. These indicators, among others, generally suggest a climate of disinvestment that must be arrested and improved before the level of distress falls further and it becomes exponentially harder to bring back.

## Development Hurdles

This study identified eight key hurdles to successful planning, development, and redevelopment within the Higher Education Area:

**(1) Limited regional growth** - The Duluth region has seen limited overall population or employment over the past two decades. This lack of natural growth means that an understanding of demand from individual sub-markets must be balanced with an existing supply of buildings and land which, due to topography and market forces, can be difficult to redevelop.

**(2) Quality and condition of housing stock** - East Hillside's concentration of historic housing combined with limited income levels (and concentration of renter occupied units) can carry the potential of widespread disrepair if unchecked. As it stands now, deteriorating property dissuades investment unless it is for student rental purposes.

**(3) Interaction with students and residents** - One of the major issues is the number of students who live in otherwise low density single family neighborhoods. Ongoing tension between students (and their landlords) and residents has the potential to result in a downward spiral of investment within the Higher Education Area.

**(4) Demographics / preponderance of low income households/ perception of hillside neighborhoods** - These neighborhoods have median household incomes indicative of concentrations of poverty. While student households whose income is not tracked are likely to contribute to this phenomenon, it is unlikely that they are solely responsible. East Hillside is also dominated by renter occupied units, a younger age group (median age = 28.5) and a high percentage of non-family households. This is not troublesome in and of itself other than an indication of a mobile resident population and the potential impacts that has on the overall quality of housing stock.

**(5) Lack of amenities that appeal to students** - Despite a large concentration of college students within parts of the Higher Education Area, there is a lack of student-oriented amenities such as retail, services and housing accessible for convenient use. The combination of limited student oriented destinations and the dry campus status of UMD may be directing students to socialize off-campus where parties and other gatherings create tension between residents and students.

**(6) Increases in housing vacancy** - While considering any opportunity to provide additional housing units - particularly student housing units, it is important to consider how a shift in the supply of housing might impact existing conditions. Duluth has a history of slow growth and low (though rising) housing vacancy. A shift in the most mobile of housing sub-markets – students – could potentially have a more negative impact on neighborhoods than anticipated.

**(7) Connectivity / auto dominated travel** - A common complaint related to accessing either UMD or CSS was the lack of convenient bus service available to students. Since so many students live off campus, many of whom are outside of easy walking distance, non-automotive access to campus is an important issue. This issue impacts the ability to realize new student housing in areas outside of easy walking distance from campus, as the development will be generally seen as less desirable.

**(8) Potential for unplanned, haphazard student housing**—Student housing development is one of the few markets that show promise in Duluth, with preferences clearly supporting higher quality housing that is within easy walking distance to campus. Pressure has already been applied to the City to allow for more student housing, but there is a need to be careful that new student housing development occurs in an efficient manner that supports the development goals.

## Recommended Development Strategies

The recommended development strategies are intended to respond to both the market findings and the development hurdles.

**Leverage Existing Assets** - understand how the key economic drivers of the universities and medical centers will drive the majority of development opportunity within the HEA.

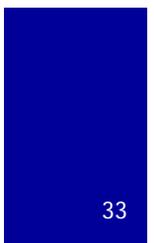
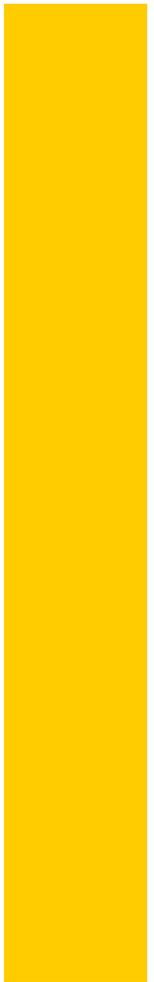
**Target Student Related Development** - guide the construction of student housing in a manner that reflects thoughtful development that interacts positively with surrounding areas and serves as a driver for economic development.

**Neighborhood Stabilization** - An initiative designed to revitalize hillside neighborhoods and arrest decline. Investment is targeted so that the private sector responds in a manner that generates sustainable investment and upkeep in the area.

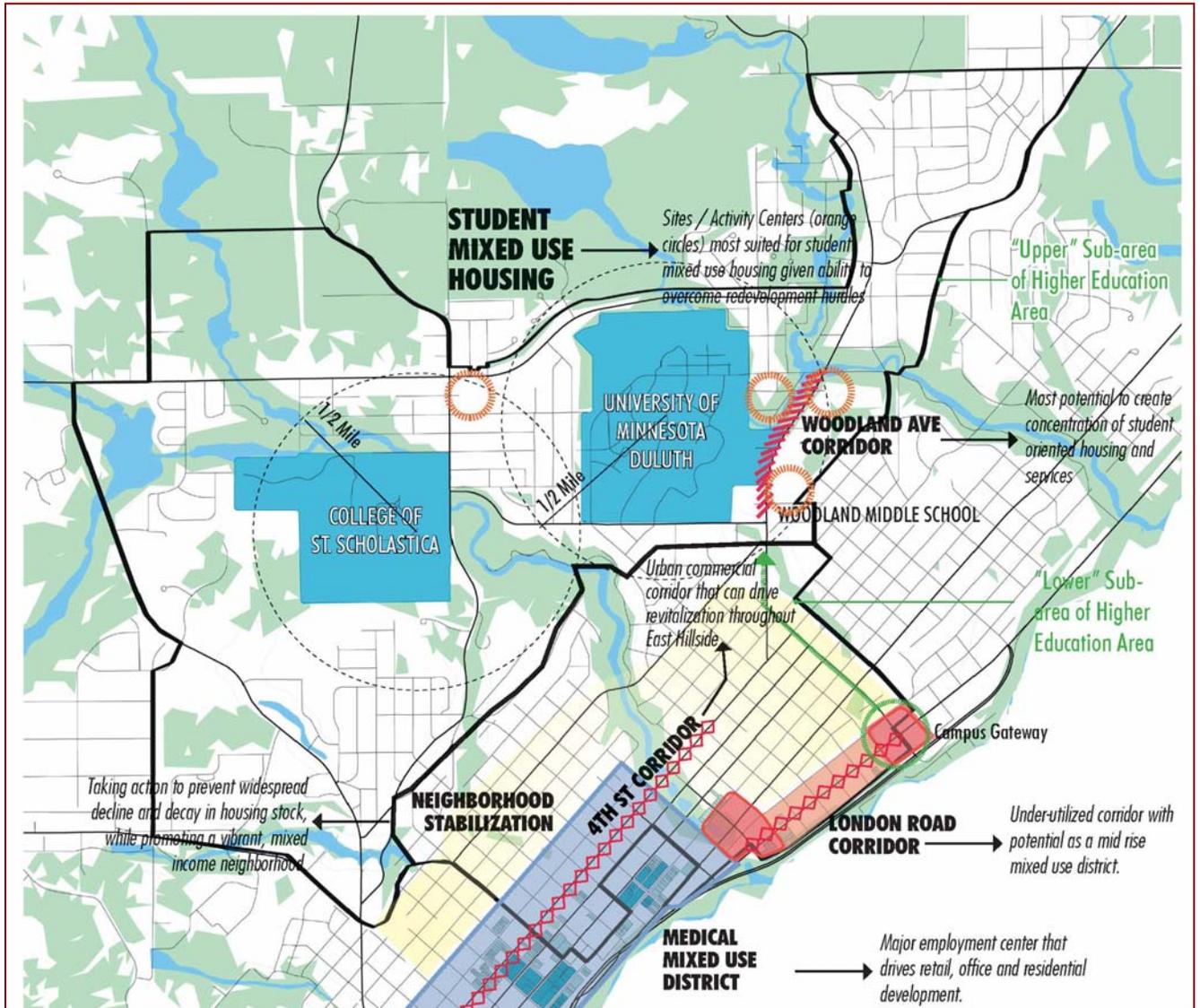
**Improved Transit Access** - As efforts increase to develop higher intensity, mixed use projects to spur more walking and less driving, the use of transit should be weighed in equal importance relative to students' accessibility to campus and to retail and services.

**Figure 12: Strategic Development Plan**

Higher Education Area (HEA)		
DEVELOPMENT HURDLES	STRATEGIC RESPONSES	DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS
Limited Regional Growth	Leverage Existing Assets	Woodland Avenue Corridor
Quality and Condition of Housing Stock	Targeted Student Related Development	St. Marie Triangle
Interaction with Students and Residents	Neighborhood Stabilization	Medical Mixed Use District
Demographics / Low Income Households	Improved Transit Access	4th Street Corridor
Lack of Amenities that Appeal to Students	Faciliate and Leverage Partnerships	6th Avenue and 4th Street
Increases in Housing Vacancy	Establish Visions for Development Districts	London Road and 12th Avenue
Connectivity / Auto-Dominated Travel		Kenwood / Mount Royal Shopping Centers
Potential for Unplanned, Haphazard Student Housing		



**Figure 13: Market Study Development Framework**



**Facilitate and Leverage Partnerships** - The most important component of partnership facilitation is the realization that the City of Duluth needs to be proactive in engaging community partners. This is the only way to yield successful outcomes that benefit multiple parties.

**Establish Visions for Development Districts** - It is important to collectively establish a vision for each development district so that the actions of various parties, including the City, are put into focus and given a direction. Over time, markets can shift and development related opportunities can shift with them, but if there is a compelling vision for each of these districts, the only decisions that should change along with those shifts should be short-term projects and initiatives that continue the progress towards long-term goals and objectives.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Placemaking in the Higher Education Area

“Placemaking” describes a development approach increasingly used around the country. Two main trends contribute to its success: 1) the current economy requires cost-efficient solutions to economic development, and 2) preferences among certain demographic groups—such as empty nesters and young adults—are changing, calling for new strategies to keep Duluth competitive.

With placemaking, the focus is on creating attractive, vibrant, walkable places where people want to be. Studies point to placemaking efforts in such places as Detroit and Cleveland as leading to a direct growth in jobs, residents, and private money spent on new development. Placemaking builds on existing assets to maintain a unique sense of place, while being resourceful in the ways public dollars are spent.

As an example of the importance of this effort, 65% of young adults categorized as “Generation Y” will first choose a city they love, then find employment. Cities perceived as being unique, attractive, and welcoming include identifiable features such as urban commercial centers; “mixed use” neighborhoods with housing, shopping, and dining; local restaurants and retailers; and great public spaces.

This plan recommends several placemaking efforts, which are highlighted in boxes throughout this section.

### Look for This Box!

*Placemaking Ideas Are In Blue Boxes Throughout This Section.*

In order to be successful, placemaking needs to be driven through citizen engagement. As placemaking is implemented, working with people who live and work in the area is important to create a sense of community ownership.

*“As we dug deeper, we found that ‘talent’ (young, college educated, creative people, often entrepreneurs) demands great places. To them, an absolute prerequisite is a vibrant urban center that appeals on an emotional level. They want to live and work where they feel something — connected, challenged, inspired, excited, free and effectual. These are 21st century communities.”*

*– Dan Gilmartin, Michigan Municipal League*

## Marketing and Communication

Throughout this planning process, citizens and stakeholders shared that the study area has many existing assets and programs—some of which could be highlighted to a broader audience. For example, directing people to nearby parks could increase their use among residents. Highlighting the city’s current successes and strengths is indicated throughout the recommendations.

### Look for This Box!

*Marketing and Communication Ideas Are In Red Boxes Throughout This Section.*

## Goal 1.

**Strengthen single-family neighborhoods through appropriate zoning tools and neighborhood stabilization efforts.**

### Rationale

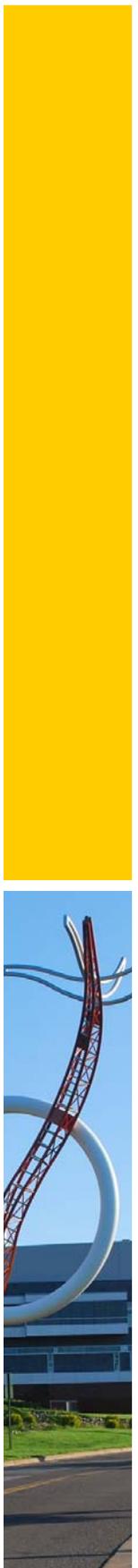
While the value and age of housing varies across the study area, one thing is clear regardless of neighborhood: this amenity-rich area provides desirable and affordable housing for Duluth residents. This is demonstrated in public input received and the DCI Market Study. Located near the medical district and colleges, close to parks and green space, and within a short commute to employment centers, neighborhoods in the study area have many advantages. It is important to keep these neighborhoods strong and vibrant for all Duluth residents.

*“We love the neighborhood and the urban conveniences, being close to UMD, Chester Bowl, Whole Foods Co-Op, walking to Sara’s Table, etc.”*

*– Resident*

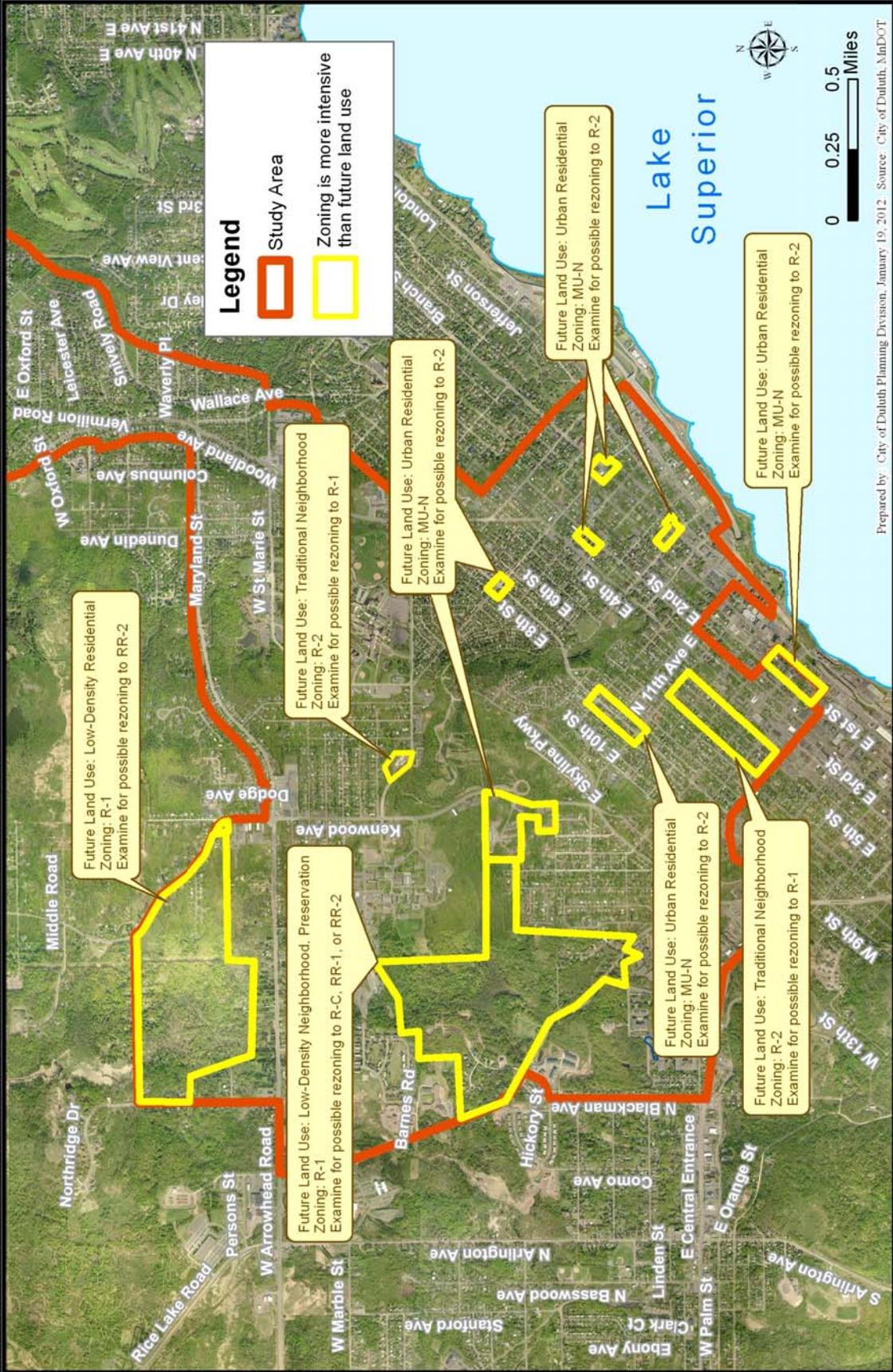


At Sara's Table/Chester Creek Cafe

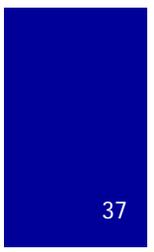
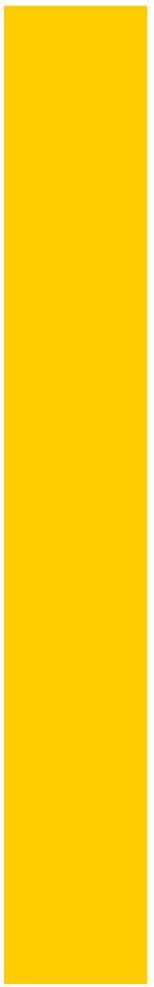




# Higher Education Small Area Plan Potential Areas for Less Intensive Zoning



Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, January 19, 2012. Source: City of Duluth, MnDOT



## How do all neighborhoods benefit?

The City of Duluth has recently enacted several ordinances that, together with recommendations in this plan, benefit all neighborhoods in the study area:

- Recent changes to the rental ordinance regulate occupancy, parking, and conversion of homes into rental properties.
- The Social Host Ordinance and Crime-Free Multi Housing Ordinance address behaviors such as noise and disturbances.
- Making sure that zoning is consistent with the community's vision ensures that uses are appropriate for neighborhoods (Rec. 1-A, 1-B).
- Tracking indicators such as foreclosures and crime rate is being done throughout the city (Rec. 1-C).
- Financial incentives to hospital and college employees to purchase homes is recommended in all neighborhoods adjacent to hospitals and colleges (Rec. 1-C).
- The proposed Higher Education Overlay District minimizes impacts of student-oriented development on surrounding neighborhoods (Rec. 2-A).
- Supporting development of new student housing alleviates pressures to convert single-family homes into rental properties (Rec. 3-A, 3-B, 3-C, 3-D).
- Trails and sidewalks provide recreational amenities and transportation options for residents (Rec. 3-B, 3-D, 3-E).
- An ongoing committee will provide a forum for collaboration and problem-solving (Rec. 5-A).
- Working with students as they transition to off-campus life will allow them to learn about being a good citizen and connect them with community service opportunities (Rec. 5-D).
- Encouraging entrepreneurship and partnerships with businesses and corporations promotes economic development in the City (Rec. 5-E).
- College trails and sidewalks can be used by all community members (Rec. 5-F).
- Expanding on furniture and debris removal improves appearance of neighborhoods (Rec. 5-G).

The following points are recommended as components of neighborhood stabilization:

- **Market the assets of the Hillside to potential home buyers and renters.** Initiate a marketing campaign that highlights the historic, urban character of the neighborhood, its lake views, and proximity to employment centers, entertainment, and recreation. This should include direct marketing to hospital employees. As noted in the Center for Community Progress's memo in Appendix C, selected areas could be marketed to "urban pioneers." Interactive online marketing tools suggested in the memo could be used in other areas of the city to highlight each neighborhood's unique attributes.
- **Track key indicators such as foreclosures and crime rate.** The Blight and Nuisance Collaborative is currently engaged in this type of tracking. In 2011, the Collaborative engaged the Center of Community Progress to assess its current efforts and provide recommendations for improvement; the resulting memo is attached in Appendix C. Efforts to improve the Collaborative and allow it to become more proactive are a key component in reducing the scale of vacant properties as students move from single-family rental property to new student housing.
- **Targeted rehabilitation of vacant rental properties that have fallen into disrepair, so that they become attractive to new buyers.** These properties would then be sold to a mix of incomes, in order to achieve the vision of the area as a thriving urban neighborhood; attracting market-rate buyers and renters is key to encouraging private investment in the neighborhoods. Historic properties could also tap into the many historic preservation tools and tax credits available.
- **Targeted demolition of blighted properties to improve the quality of life for neighbors.** As with the bullet above, this is a focus of the Blight and Nuisance Collaborative, which tracks and ranks many factors before moving

### Marketing and Communication

Initiate a marketing campaign that highlights the amenities of the East Hillside.

### Marketing and Communication

The city should highlight to citizens the results and success stories of the Blight and Nuisance Collaborative.

### Placemaking Recommendation

Historic buildings are an already-built placemaking feature. Historic preservation can enhance a neighborhood's character.

## At Home in Duluth Collaborative

### Core Group

- Center City Housing Corporation
- Churches United in Ministry
- City of Duluth
- Community Action Duluth
- Duluth LISC
- Ecolibrium 3
- Entrepreneur Fund
- Healthy Duluth Area Coalition
- Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Duluth

- ISD 709
- Lincoln Park Business Group
- One Roof Community Housing
- United Way of Greater Duluth
- West Duluth CDC (SVCNDA)

### Coordinating Members

- American Indian Community Housing Organization
- Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

- Central Hillside Community Club
- Duluth Transit Authority
- East Hillside Community Club
- Harrison Community Club
- Life House
- Morgan Park Community Club
- NAACP
- St. Louis County
- Residents of East Hillside, Central Hillside, Lincoln Park, West Duluth, & Morgan Park

The At Home in Duluth collaborative is a group of 25 nonprofit, neighborhood, and government organizations. The collaborative coordinates activities and provides services and expertise related to challenges neighborhoods might face.

Building Sustainable Communities is LISC's nationwide strategy to support neighborhood revitalization. In Duluth, it is implemented by residents of Morgan Park, West Duluth, Lincoln Park, and the Hillside in partnership with the At Home in Duluth Collaborative. There are five core program objectives: 1) to invest in housing and other real estate; 2) to build family income and wealth; 3) to stimulate local and regional economic activity; 4) to improve access to quality education; and 5) to develop healthy environments and lifestyles. The goal is to build positive environments for neighborhood residents to live, work, raise families, and thrive.

forward with a demolition. The Collaborative should consider adding criteria that reflects how a demolition could contribute to making adjacent properties more marketable—many properties in the Hillside have small lots, and some of

these do not allow for garages or yards, which are two factors often considered desirable to prospective buyers and renters. The intent here is not to encourage converting the Hillside to a large-lot neighborhood, which would be out of character and detract from the urban characteristics of the area. Rather, adding this criteria to the list of other factors would help highlight lots where public investment could make an adjacent property more appealing, thereby triggering private investment.

- **Promote redevelopment in the investment zones shown in Figure 15, which are areas with important hubs of activity, concentrations of different land uses, and considerable existing assets, including the hospitals, commercial areas, and proximity to the waterfront.**

#### Marketing and Communication

Market the investment zones as a location for investment and redevelopment to businesses and developers.

*The best way to influence investment choices is not to get rid of problems but to identify what people want and provide it.”*

– David Boehlke, *Great Neighborhoods Great City*

As investment occurs in these zones, it has the potential to generate higher confidence and investment in other areas. Redevelopment should implement the vision of the East Hillside as a

mixed-use, mixed-income urban neighborhood. Partnerships with the hospitals will be a critical tool in this effort.

- **Explore the possibility of creating a local land bank or using the current land assembly abilities of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and the Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) to acquire land in the investment zones that would have redevelopment potential if a larger site was assembled.** As noted in the Center for Community Progress memo, a local land bank could also help with acquisition of vacant properties outside the investment zones.

#### Land Bank

Land banks are typically entities created to acquire and hold property in anticipation of future development.



Figure 15: Investment Zones



- **Use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for redevelopment within the investment zones and a scattered-site TIF district for rehabilitation of vacant/abandoned homes.** TIF districts are administered by the HRA for residential projects and DEDA for commercial and mixed use projects.
- **Incentives for local businesses to get established or make improvements, particularly in the investment zones and along 4<sup>th</sup> Street, which is envisioned as a unique mixed-use urban corridor.** Expanding the City of Duluth's storefront loan program along 4<sup>th</sup> Street would support and encourage businesses. Creative incentives such as the retail space giveaway recently conduct-

### Placemaking Recommendation

Create an identity for places such as the 4<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. Banners, signs, landscaping, public art, and way-finding can make the street a unified destination. To attract customers and businesses to the investment zones, public spaces should be included as part of the redevelopment efforts.

ed in downtown Duluth would provide a unique marketing opportunity to bring new businesses to the area.

- **Improvements to the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue East corridor to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians and provide a gateway that reflects the neighborhood's pride in the area.** This roadway is one of the main entry points to the area, and the speed of traffic and auto-oriented nature detract from welcoming people to the Hillside. Improvements in the area should include sidewalks with boulevards, bike lanes, transit stops, pocket parks or other urban amenities, and support for attractive redevelopment along the corridor. This aim is supported by the 2011 6th Avenue East Schematic Redesign Study Report, which laid out a similar vision for the 6th Avenue E roadway. The Safe and Walkable Hillside Coalition's

### Marketing and Communication

Creative initiatives such as a retail space giveaway would provide a unique marketing opportunity.

### Marketing and Communication

6<sup>th</sup> Avenue East could become a marketing tool for the Hillside if roadway and corridor improvements are completed.

Action Plan, compiled in 2010, also reflects the desire for elements such as a gateway sign, water fountains, benches, and public art. These types of corridor improvements and placemaking initiatives are very important to achieving the goals for East Hillside.

- **Financial incentives to hospital and college employees to buy homes not just in the East Hillside, but in any neighborhood close to where they work.** The Hillside Homeowner Incentive Program (HHIP) is currently in place for hospital employees, and a similar program should be put in place for college employees. Because the HHIP's funds are not fully utilized, employees should be solicited for input and feedback to determine if there are additional or alternative incentives that would attract more buyers. Expanding this program to employees living in these neighborhoods and who want to refinance may be an incentive to retain current homeowners.
- **Amend the Unified Development Chapter (UDC) to allow for additional off-street parking in Hillside neighborhoods where existing parcels are too small, narrow, have limited access, or have other constraints to providing on-site parking.** Vacant or blighted properties provide a good location for additional parking, but should be designed so that this parking contributes to the character of the neighborhood; lots should be small-scale, landscaped, and limit/treat stormwater runoff. Since these parking lots would be "primary use" parking lots which are not currently allowed in residential districts, use-specific standards should ensure that parking lots do not mimic the large expanses of impervious surface seen in commercial areas .

**Placemaking  
Recommendation**

Treat residential "primary use" parking lots as a neighborhood space by providing landscaping, sidewalks, decorative elements, or other public amenities.

## Goal 2.

### Minimize impacts on single-family neighborhoods from noise, light pollution, and visual impacts of student housing.

#### Rationale

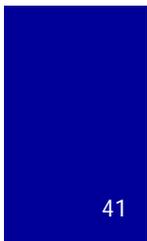
The area surrounding the colleges is primarily residential, with single-family neighborhoods. Areas close to campus also are in demand by college students. Given this development context, any new student development must be carefully designed to minimize impacts to adjacent neighborhoods. Existing student housing is regulated by city ordinances and rental regulations, and consistent enforcement of these contributes to quality of life for all neighborhood residents.

*"I think it is important to try to keep student housing close to the campus, but not disrupt the quiet, family neighborhoods surrounding the University. Would be nice to see it developed in areas where there are already businesses."*

- Resident

#### Recommendations

**A. Amend the UDC to include a Higher Education Overlay District.** The purpose of this overlay district is to minimize the impacts of potential student use on adjacent residential neighborhoods and to encourage the development of pedestrian-friendly neighborhood destinations. It would apply to any property zoned R-2 or MU-N, as these zone districts allow multi-family residential and commercial developments. It would apply to all development or redevelopment in these zone districts, except for (1) one-family or two-family dwellings, and (2) any residential development where all of the dwelling units are restricted by development agreement or covenant for occupancy by those aged 50 or over or for affordable housing development projects funded by federal or state funding, or funding with similar restrictions. This overlay district would replace the development standards currently in place in the R-2 and MU-N zone districts.



### Specific standards would include:

- Required resident parking spaces shall be provided at the ratio of 0.7 space per bedroom, with a minimum of one space per dwelling unit.
- Visitor parking spaces shall be provided at the rate of 15% of required resident parking spaces.
- At least one bicycle or motorized scooter parking space per five parking spaces shall be provided, which shall not be located in any required yard or between the principal dwelling and the street.
- Bicycle and motorized scooter parking incentive. A development that provides an enhanced shelter with space dedicated solely for bicycle or motorized scooter parking shall be granted a reduction in the off-street parking requirement of 5% if the shelter complies with the following standards:
  - The enhanced shelter shall not be located in any required yard setback.
  - The enhanced shelter shall not be located between the principal building and a public street.
  - The enhanced shelter shall be enclosed on at least three sides and covered to adequately protect bicycles from the elements.
  - The enhanced shelter shall utilize primary exterior materials that match the primary exterior materials of the principal structure.
- If the residential development or residential redevelopment is determined to have mitigated the impacts of potential student use in the adjacent residential neighborhood, the development or redevelopment may adjust the parking requirements as provided in either UDC section 50-24.3.A (proximity to transit) or UDC section 50-24.3.B (sharing of parking spaces) if eligible, but may not utilize both adjustments.
- No residential balcony, patio, or deck shall be located on any side of the property facing and within 200 ft. of an R-1 district.

### Build-to Zone

Build-to zones are a tool currently used in the City's form districts but which can also be used outside of the form districts. It specifies an area on the lot where the front of the building must be placed. For example, with a build-to zone of 0'-5,' the front of the building can fall anywhere between 0 feet and 5 feet back from the lot line.

- Vehicle ingress and egress shall be located in a manner that avoids or minimizes impacts to residents in adjacent R-1 districts and that reduces the potential for pedestrian-vehicular conflicts.
- Commercial development shall be concentrated on major roads, not on streets intended primarily for neighborhood traffic.

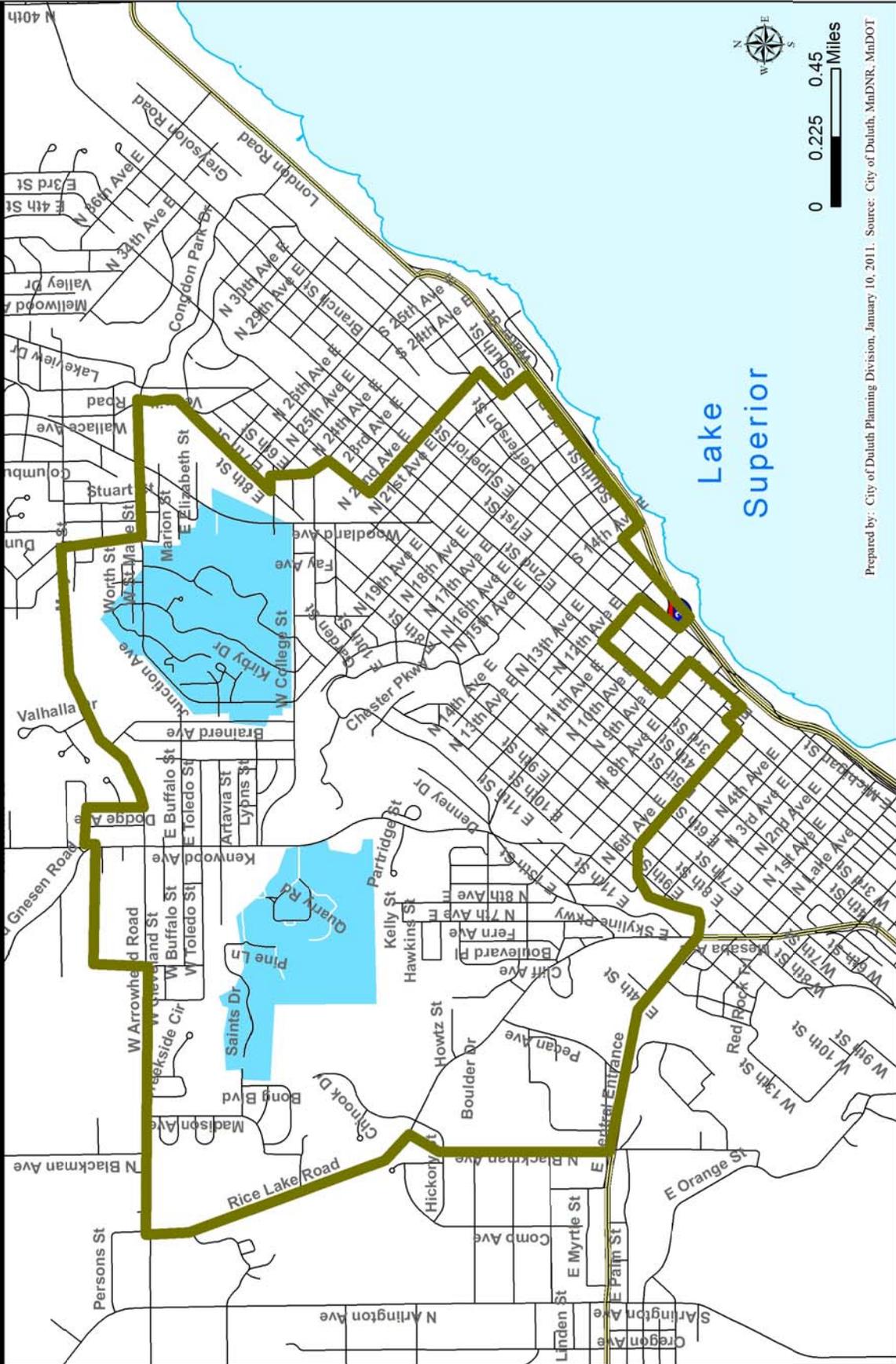
- To ensure sites are designed with pedestrians in mind, commercial and mixed-use developments shall adhere to a build-to zone of 0'-20' along primary streets (see left). Alternatively, if the Land Use Supervisor determines that site conditions such as existing buildings or topography make this unfeasible, pedestrian walkways can be used to connect people from public sidewalks along primary

streets to businesses. These walkways should:

- Include pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Be raised or otherwise designed to encourage run-off and limit ponding during wet weather
- Be visually recognizable to both pedestrians and motorists
- Include trees and other landscaping along the length of the walkway; this landscaping can also be used to meet parking lot landscaping requirements in Section 50-25.4 (Parking Lot Landscaping) of the UDC.
- Be at least 5 feet wide
- Include well-marked crossings where the walkway intersects with private vehicle drives.
- If multiple buildings are constructed on the same lot, walkways meeting the above standards should also be used to allow pedestrian connections between buildings.
- Unless lighting meets exception criteria in Section 50-31.1.B of the UDC, the maximum height of any light pole is 20'.



# Higher Education Small Area Plan Proposed Higher Education Overlay



Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning Division, January 10, 2011. Source: City of Duluth, MnDNR, MnDOT



**B. Provide strong code enforcement for existing city ordinances relating to noise disturbances, litter, and property maintenance.** Many of the conflicts between students and other residents, as evidenced by the comments received, stem from noise disturbances, often related to parties and other social activities. Two recent pieces of legislation, the Social Host Ordinance and Crime Free Multi Housing Ordinance, target underage drinking by penalizing, respectively, those who host a party (tenants) and those who own the property (landlords). Fines enacted as part of these ordinances have proved such a deterrent that neighbors report far fewer parties, and police calls are down in Fall 2011 compared to the previous year.

*“Cars parked in front yards, uncut grass, garbage not picked up, these are the main sources of blight in the area.”*

*- Arrowhead Road resident*

When it comes to property maintenance, the real issue isn't the fact that college students are living there, but a lack of maintenance from the property owner. All properties in Duluth are required to maintain properties to standards in the Housing Maintenance Code and Solid Waste Ordinance. Because property appearance and its effect on a neighborhood is an issue in neighborhoods around campus, these standards should be enforced to maintain quality of life and residents' investments in their neighborhoods. Lack of property maintenance can also endanger renters, as many comments suggested questionable living conditions in some properties. When property maintenance falls below a certain threshold, it may become a neighborhood blight. The City's Blight and Nuisance Team, a network of multiple entities including several City of Duluth departments, works collaboratively to prioritize actions relating to blighted properties. The increase in communication between groups

leverages multiple resources to target a problem. Continued and improved support of this team's efforts will enable it to address problems faster.

In short, many ordinances and rules already exist and can improve neighborhoods through continued and improved enforcement.

**C. Utilize the rental code to ensure rental housing is maintained properly and suited for the number of tenants.** In many instances, especially in neighborhoods closest to campus, extra bedrooms have been created in small single-family homes, and parking areas created in yards. Changes to the rental code were enacted in 2010 to address occupancy and parking, including changes to the definition of tenants and increased parking requirements. Additional fees for rental licenses and for conversion of a single-family house into a multi-tenant rental are being used to fund rental inspectors.

The recent changes to the rental code will take time to reach full effectiveness. If future problems arise relating to rental properties, the rental code can be reexamined for potential changes.

### Marketing and Communication

The city can track and highlight successes of its efforts to address problems through rental regulation changes and enforcement efforts.



### Goal 3.

**Promote mixed-use development and student housing along transit corridors and within walking distance of campus.**

#### Rationale

Students and residents expressed a desire for neighborhood centers with more shops and restaurants. In addition, creating student housing will alleviate pressures for single-family houses to be converted to rental properties, and expanded housing choices would appeal to a wider variety of residents, ranging from medical professionals to empty nesters. Locating development near transit and within walking distance of places to dine, shop, and work limits auto use and encourages redevelopment rather than sprawl-style development

*“We have lived on Lawn St. for 2 years and love it. We have students around us but very few problems other than a lot more foot and auto traffic. I would like to see more business around the area, a bar, coffee house, used clothing, bakery, etc.”*

- Resident

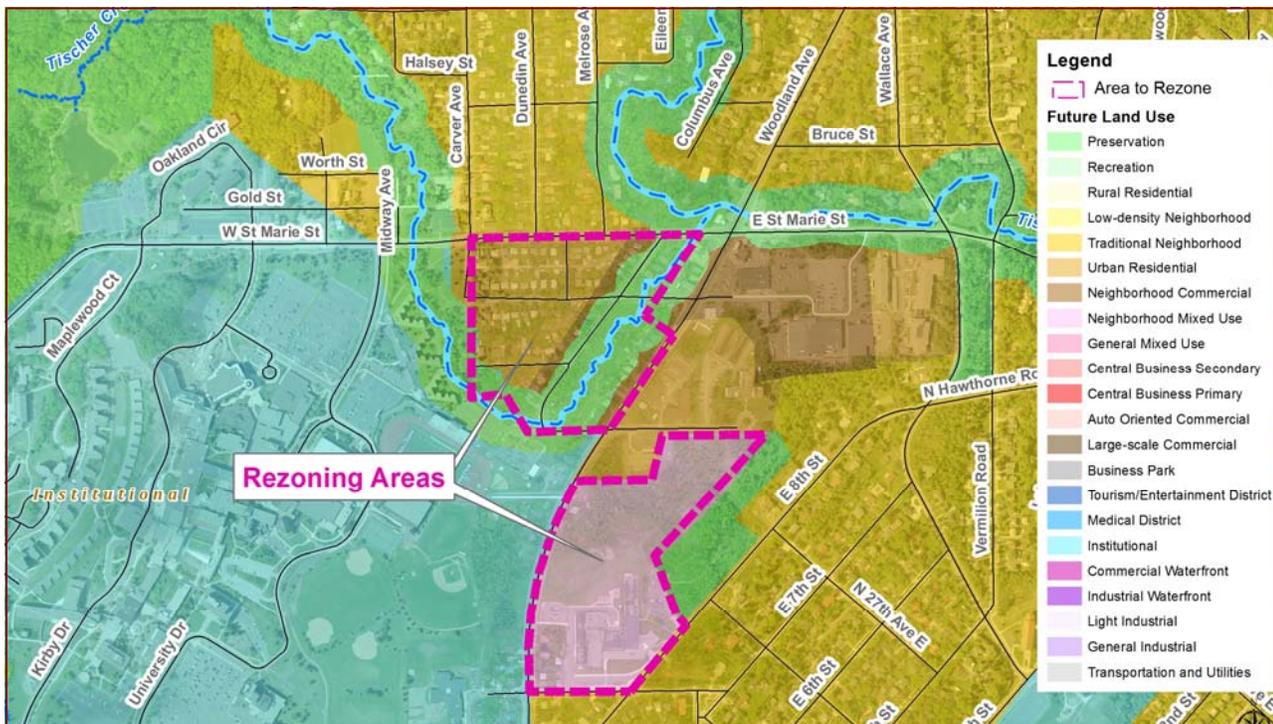
*I would rather walk to campus but with the limited number of houses/apartments near campus, I could not get into one.”*

- Student

#### Recommendations

**A. Rezone land along the Woodland Avenue Corridor and in the St. Marie Triangle, as shown in Figure 16, to match future land use designations and support the creation of a mixed-use student district.** As indicated in the DCI Market Study, this is the ideal corridor for this type of neighborhood, having development-ready sites and many market advantages. The study confirms the land uses in the 2006 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which designated Urban Residential in the St. Marie Triangle and abutting Elizabeth Street, and Neighborhood Commercial at Mt. Royal and along the west side of Woodland Avenue. The Woodland Middle School site was changed to future land uses of Mixed Use-Neighborhood and Preservation after analysis and public input in 2010 showed it would be an ideal location for student housing that would be located close to campus and provide dining and shopping as well. Important natural features on the site include a white pine grove and large area of exposed bedrock; as these are located in the area indicated as preservation on the future land use map, it will be important to preserve this area when the site is developed.

**Figure 16: Rezoning — Woodland Avenue and St. Marie Triangle**



## Placemaking Recommendation

Each area should have its own characteristics and identity, building on its existing assets and following a common vision for the area.

### Woodland Avenue

Woodland Avenue is teeming with students on their way to class, crossing the street at a well-marked pedestrian crossing to the tree-lined entrance to UMD or boarding the bus for a quick ride to St. Scholastica. A group of neighbors gathers for lunch at a new locally-owned restaurant, and a couple with kids in tow stops at the near-



by market. A cool fall breeze whispers through the pines, encouraging folks to stop for a hot latte on their way home—the coffee house is a great place for studying and conversation this autumn afternoon.

### St. Marie Triangle

Students cross the foot bridge over Tischer Creek on their way home from class. Through apartment windows, students can be seen studying, while across the street a group relaxes on their townhouse porch before heading to the neighborhood plaza, where friends are setting up for an evening barbecue ... one person lights the grill, and a few head off on foot to the grocery store at Mount Royal for food and drink. People stroll along the creek trail and past rain gardens, and in the Community Involvement House, students plan their next volunteer project, helping to make Duluth a better community.

### Medical District

It is another busy morning. Doctors, nurses, and staff are on their way to work, getting off buses outside the hospital or walking from their Hillside homes. The new apartment building on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> is full of graduate students, drawn here because it's close to the hospital and on the bus line to campus. Across the street is a residential development for adults over 55; seniors too enjoy the amenities of this area. Beyond that, tree-lined streets showcase renovations and improvements. The Hillside has become an attractive neighborhood for young professionals and young families, who love the parks, lake views, and historic character. The diner is the gathering place, and today the neighbors—students and doctors, families and seniors—have filled every table.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Street

As the buses roll down 4<sup>th</sup> Street, customers and employees visit businesses that have sprung up in old homes and commercial buildings—the vintage store, art gallery, tailor shop, antique store, and neighborhood pub all contribute to the unique urban vibe of this street. Crowds gather at bus stops, students heading east to the colleges and others heading west to the hospitals and downtown. Signs everywhere are announcing this weekend's block party at Portland Square, something everyone is looking forward to.

### London Road

Commuters cruise bike lanes, enjoying glimpses of Lake Superior on their way to work. Tourists at the Rose Garden stop at a sidewalk café, deciding over coffee whether to continue along the Lakewalk or embark on the historic walking tour of the Endion neighborhood. Parents visiting their college-age daughter shop at stores they had seen from the freeway, and daydream about living in the apartments with the stellar lake view. New buildings intermingle with old on this bustling main street.

### Kenwood

All the neighborhood's trails lead to Kenwood, a favorite destination for shopping and dining. A family with a stroller pushes their way to the popular ice cream shoppe for an after-dinner treat, and on an adjacent patio diners are enjoying a glass of wine. The new shopping center, with its tree-lined sidewalks and inviting benches, has even attracted a movie theater. As the evening wanes, the walkers, joggers, and cyclists head home, and students board the Campus Circulator for the short ride back to campus.

### Boulder Ridge

Busloads of students are returning to Boulder Ridge after their morning classes, and more students are waiting to board. Conversations break out between friends as they head to the new coffee shop to study. Other students head to the fitness center or to the market to pick up some groceries. Another bus waits to start its route to the mall, a popular destination for students to shop, hang out with friends, or find jobs to help pay for college.



**B. Amend the Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map from Urban Residential to Neighborhood Mixed Use along Hickory Street west of Rice Lake Road, as shown in Figure 17.** Located adjacent to Boulder/Summit Ridge, this site is an excellent candidate for some commercial uses to serve the nearby student population as well as area residents. This would minimize the number of automobile trips students would need to take and support the continued viability of this as a desirable student housing option.

**C. Conduct an analysis of those areas where existing zoning is less intensive than future land use, as shown on page 48, and rezone land where appropriate.** The zoning on these properties could be changed from a less intensive use to one that is more intensive – for example, residential to commercial. Some of the locations include the 4<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, which has been envisioned as a mixed-use, urban corridor, and a parcel along Kenwood Avenue, which currently has a commercial use but is zoned R-1. This analysis needs to take a detailed approach to consider existing uses and conditions. A public process that includes meetings in each area to gather input from area residents, such as that used by the Planning Division in its UDC Rezoning efforts, would be appropriate.

**D. Amend the Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use from Institutional and Traditional Neighborhood to Urban Residential north of St. Marie Street and south of Worth Street, between Midway Avenue and Oakland Circle, as shown in Figure 18.** This area has potential for multi-family development as it is buffered from nearby neighborhoods by Tischer Creek and by required shoreland buffering, is immediately adjacent to UMD, and is owned by relatively few property owners.

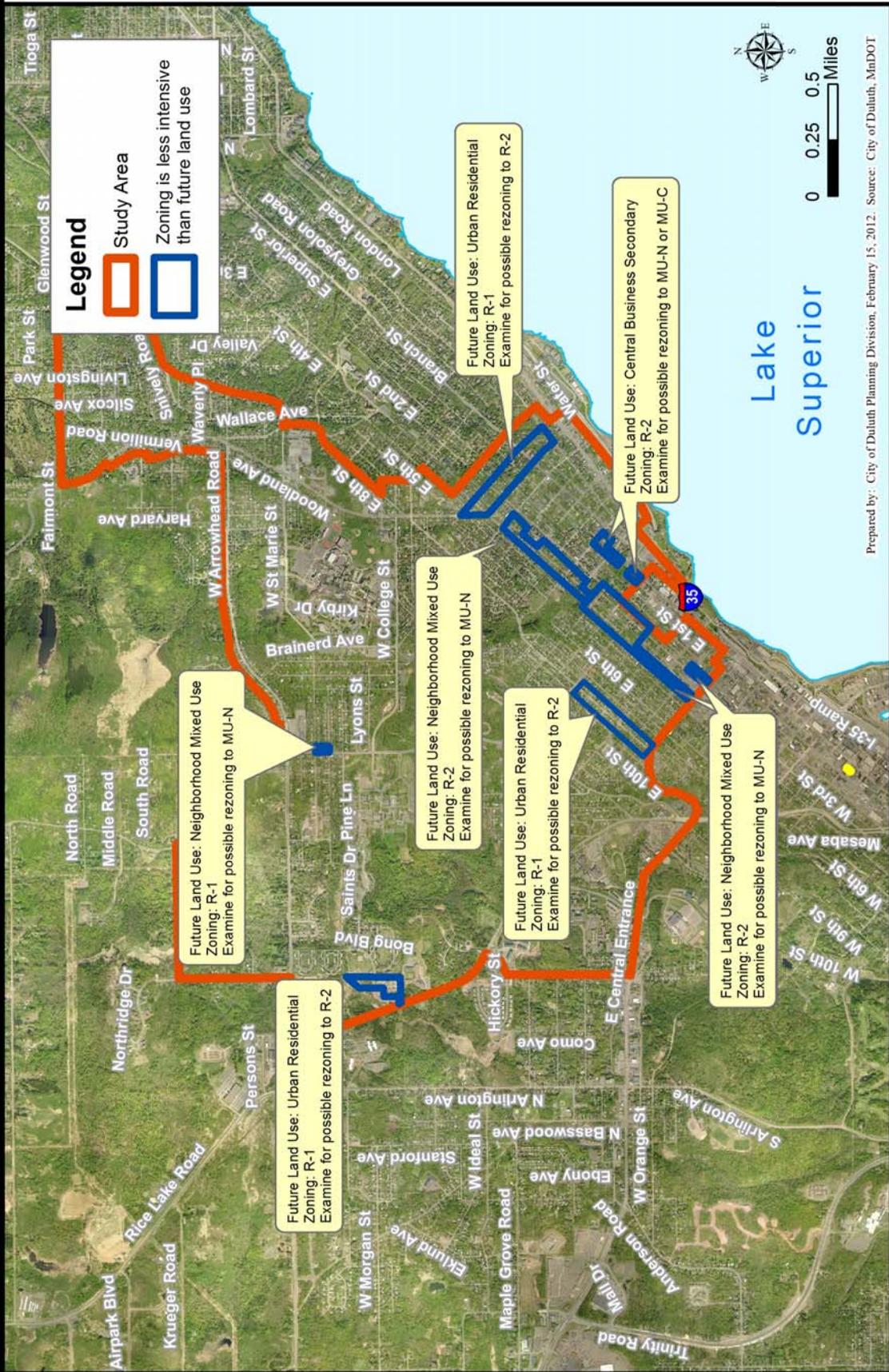
**E. Establish a Commercial-Planned district.** A Commercial-Planned district would provide a flexible development option for commercial projects that integrate creative site design, provide unique on-site amenities, increase pedestrian connectivity, or otherwise result in a final product that provides a greater level of public benefit than would be required under the existing zone district. This would be appropriate for those areas indicated in the comprehensive plan as Central Business Secondary, Neighborhood Commercial, and Large-Scale Commercial. To pursue a C-P district, a property owner would apply for a rezoning and submit a regulating plan. Dimensional and development standards would be established on a per-project basis similar to the current R-P district. Suggested requirements for the C-P district include:

**Figure 17: Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Change—Boulder Ridge**

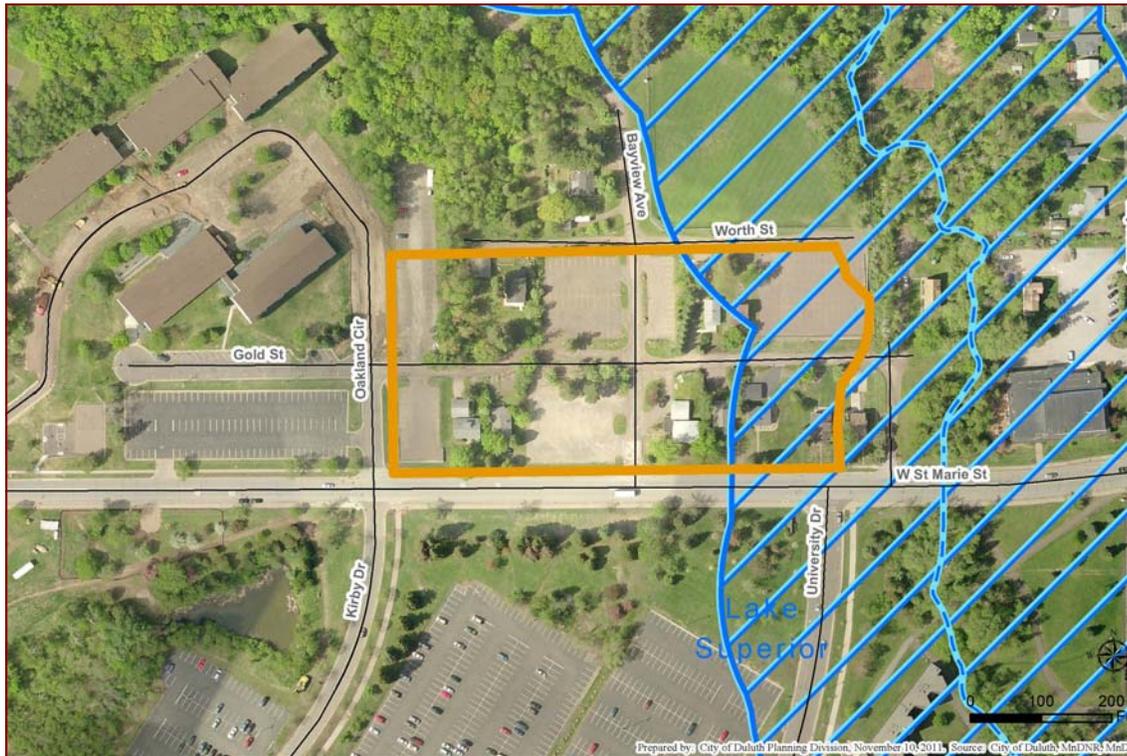




# Higher Education Small Area Plan Potential Areas for More Intensive Zoning



**Figure 18: Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Change—St. Marie Street**

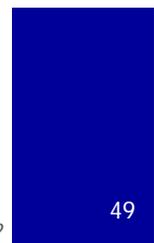


- Property must currently be zoned MU-N or MU-C.
- Minimum lot size of 2 acres
- Maximum building height within 200' of an R-1 district: 35'
- Maximum building height within 200' of an R-2 district: 50'
- A traffic impact analysis would be required

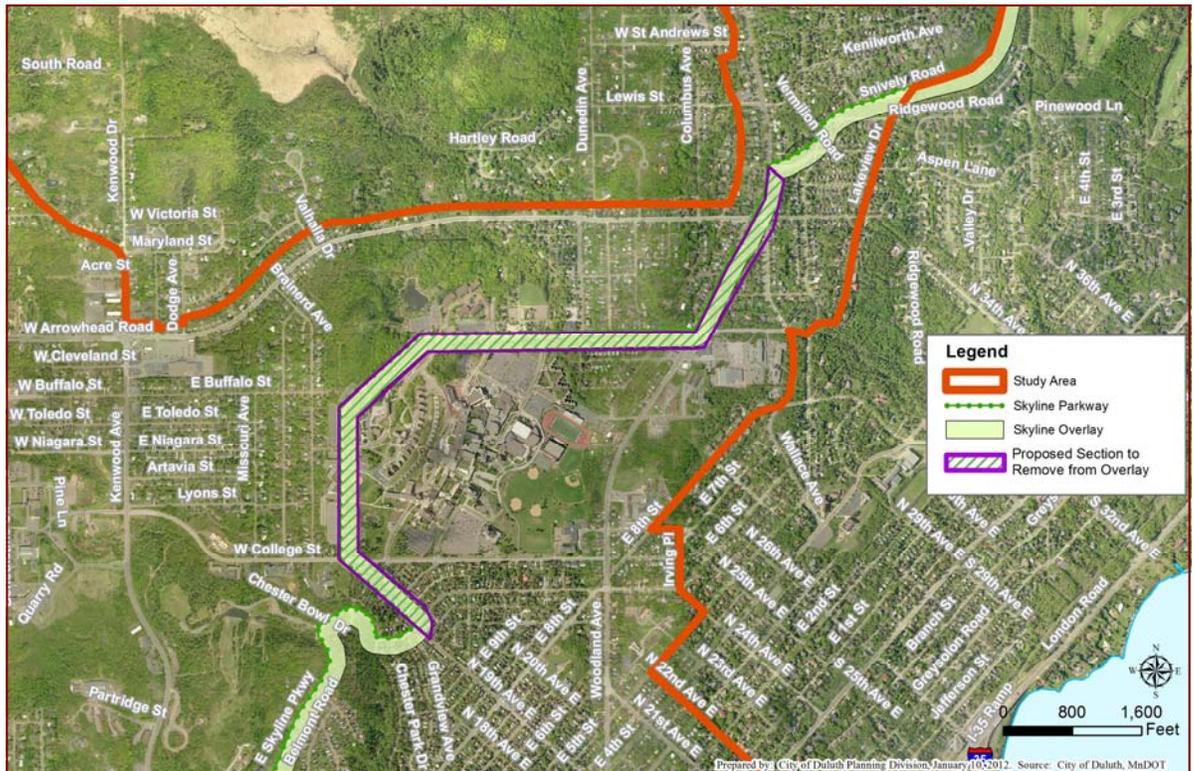
Permitted uses would include:

- Dwelling, multi-family
- Dwelling, live-work
- Residential care facility/assisted living (7 or more)
- Bus or rail transit station
- Club or lodge (private)
- Government building or public safety facility
- Museum, library, or art gallery
- Park, playground, or forest reserve
- Religious assembly
- Business, art, or vocational school
- School, elementary
- School, middle or high
- University or college
- Medical or dental clinic
- Nursing home
- Veterinary or animal hospital
- Indoor entertainment facility
- Convention or event center

- Restaurant (no drive-in/drive-through)
- Restaurant (with drive-in/drive-through)
- Theater
- Hotel or motel
- Bed and breakfast
- Bank
- Office
- Data center
- Preschool
- Day care facility, small
- Day care facility, large
- Funeral home or crematorium
- Personal service and repair, small
- Personal service and repair, large
- Garden material sales
- Grocery store, small
- Grocery store, large
- Retail store, small
- Retail store, large
- Automobile and light vehicle repair and service
- Filling station



**Figure 19: Skyline Parkway Overlay District Amendment**



**F. Reduce the minimum lot area per family required in the R-2 district to 750 square feet.** This is more compatible with other urban zone districts, such as MU-N, and allows for smaller units to be built (i.e. a development could more easily build a mixture of 1-, 2-, or 3-bedroom apartments instead of 4- or 5-bedroom apartments).

**G. Amend the Skyline Parkway Overlay District to remove restrictions along the portion of the Parkway between Snively Road and Chester Park, shown in Figure 19.** This portion of the parkway is part of the “UMD Gap,” which was not originally built as part of the Parkway and which has no opportunity for views along the lower side of the parkway.



## Goal 4.

### Increase use of alternate modes of transportation.

#### *Rationale*

Public input received throughout the planning process regarding congestion, traffic speed, and parking indicates that the growth of UMD and CSS has resulted in increased trips to and from the campuses, putting pressure on the transportation network. This is supported by the findings of the UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment. As noted on page 24, the DTA's UPASS program has grown exponentially; however, many trips to campus are still made with single-occupant vehicles. Negative impacts on the campuses and in surrounding neighborhoods include increased traffic, cut-through traffic from drivers looking for shortcuts, speeding and other dangerous driving, large surface parking lots, and crowded parking on streets around campus. Part of the solution to these problems is reducing the number of trips made to campus by car. Based on feedback received from students and residents in public meetings, focus groups, online surveys, and other comments, alternative modes such as walking, biking, and transit receive overwhelming support for transportation as well as recreation; trails and sidewalks are among the amenities most frequently requested by residents. In addition to reducing the negative impacts mentioned above, alternative transportation is often more cost-effective than building bigger roads or parking structures to accommodate cars.

The recommendations below are informed by two main sources:

- The 2009 UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment, conducted by the MIC, includes in-depth primary research such as a crash analysis, cut-through traffic counts, online surveys at UMD and CSS, and a sidewalk snow removal analysis and ordinance comparison. Recommendations from the assessment that meet the goals of the small area plan have been carried forward after discussions with MIC staff and the Small Area Plan Committee, and were prioritized.
- Input from public meetings, focus groups, plan committees, and online surveys and comments aided in identifying gaps in the system and priority areas for improvements.

Because transportation infrastructure is connected to areas beyond the study area, the City's upcoming comprehensive plan update should include a transportation element to provide a basis for informed decision-making when transportation affects land use.

The MIC also expects to complete a citywide sidewalk study in early 2012. While not finished in time for inclusion in this small area plan, priority recommendations from the sidewalk study should be taken into account when implementing transportation improvements in the higher education area.

The recommendations below are divided into two sub-groups. The priority recommendations are those that will have the greatest contribution to the plan's goals.

#### *Priority Recommendations*

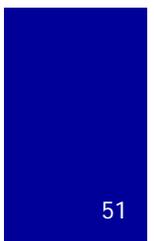
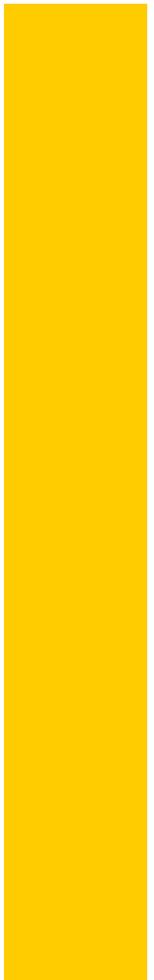
##### **A. Priority: Woodland Avenue Corridor Improvements**

As discussed under Goal 3 above, the Woodland Avenue corridor has a high potential for development. Redevelopment of the Woodland Middle School site and St. Marie Triangle will result in a change in traffic patterns; pedestrians and bicyclists will need to cross Woodland Avenue and travel to locations along the corridor. Paramount to providing pedestrian accommodations is the creation of a new main entrance to UMD along Woodland Avenue, as shown in the college's 2009 campus plan and supported by stakeholders during this planning process. Improvements along the corridor should include:

- A new main entrance to UMD on Woodland Avenue, located at the intersection with the new development on the Woodland Middle School site.
- As UMD and CSS develop campus plans, they should include good bicycle and pedestrian access from campus to residential and commercial destinations. For UMD, this may include multiple bicycle/pedestrian paths to connect with the Woodland School development, Mt. Royal, and concentrations of off-campus student housing.



Pedestrian accommodations across Woodland Avenue are needed to provide a safe transportation alternative.



## Placemaking Recommendation

Woodland Avenue developments and street improvements should use a comprehensive approach to give the street a unified feel. Identifiable features could include a gateway arch, landscaping, signage, and public art.

- Bike lanes or trails providing a viable transportation alternative along the Woodland Avenue Corridor. A bike lane on the UMD campus that parallels Woodland Avenue should be considered.
- Strategies to slow traffic to the posted speed limit of 30 mph, in order to improve safety for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists in the study area. One way to do this is to add traffic control mechanisms at intervals along the corridor, such as stoplights or signalized pedestrian crossings. Developments currently planned for the area (Woodland Middle School site, expansion of St. Luke's clinic) may warrant addition of new stoplights between St. Marie Street and College Street.
- Careful timing of the lights along Woodland Avenue should be done to still allow peak traffic to proceed with minimal slowing.
- Safe and effective pedestrian and bicycle crossings at multiple locations along Woodland Avenue between St. Marie Street and College Street. Key locations include:
  - Between development at the Woodland Middle School site and UMD. It is anticipated that several hundred students will live in new student housing at this site.
  - At Elizabeth Avenue. This mid-block location with good sight distances is currently a transit stop and is where many students already cross Woodland Avenue. Surveys conducted as part of the UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment show that many UMD students, faculty, and staff use the clinic at this intersection; people who currently drive to the clinic because of safety concerns crossing Woodland Avenue indicated a desire to walk if safer accommodations were provided.
- Methods to prevent Woodland Avenue traffic from cutting through adjacent neighborhoods.

## B. Priority: Sidewalks and Trails

Many UMD and CSS students live within walking distance to campus, but the sidewalks and trails that would enable them to regularly walk to campus are either not provided or not maintained through the winter. Improving pedestrian accommodations also provides desired recreational amenities to neighborhood residents. Students and campus area residents alike need better access to destinations such as grocery stores, restaurants, and services. From a long-term planning standpoint, increasing the number of walking trips directly reduces the number of automobile trips, bringing down the number of cars on the road and improving congestion and safety issues at intersections such as Kenwood and Arrowhead. Priority recommendations are:

- Encourage snow removal through innovative approaches such as volunteer groups and coordinating resources with UMD and CSS. Focus on priority sidewalk routes that meet transportation needs.
- In addition to the Sidewalk Snow Removal Hotline, include a place on the City's web site to report uncleared sidewalks.
- Develop a trail from the Boulder Ridge area to Kenwood Avenue. This recommendation is supported by the findings of the UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment, and a similar trail is indicated in the City's 2011 Trail/Bikeway Master Plan. Both these reports, however, suggest a natural-surface trail. This type of trail precludes biking as a viable alternative, and would likely be impassable for over half the school year because of snow. For the trail to meet the goals of this small area plan, it needs to be a paved multi-use trail that could be plowed in the winter to address year-round transportation needs. Note that the MIC is working with stakeholders to identify a trail alignment for this area that would ultimately connect to the Lakewalk, providing an important recreational amenity as well as transportation need.
- Develop pedestrian connections to and within the shopping centers at Mt. Royal and Kenwood.
- Along Kenwood Avenue, complete the sidewalk on the east side of the road from Arrowhead Road to College St.
- Examine ways to utilize existing pedestrian easements and sidewalks to connect the Kenwood neighborhood to the Kenwood Shopping Center, college campuses, and recreational amenities such as parks and trails.
- Develop a safe, identifiable pedestrian route from Woodland Avenue to Mt. Royal Fine Foods. The site's

driveways and parking lots contribute to high speeds and poor site distances, resulting in unsafe conditions for pedestrians.

- As the Woodland Middle School site redevelops, include connections from the site to Mt. Royal.
- On Arrowhead Road, implement traffic calming measures and provide a signalized pedestrian crossing as warranted in the section from Dodge Avenue to Kenwood Avenue.



A sharrow along Kenwood Avenue

### C. Priority: Transit Improvements

- Conduct an assessment of how well transit schedules meet student needs, and make adjustments accordingly. Many student comments indicate problems both with timing and frequency of buses.
- Add a route from UMD's Transit Center to the Central Entrance/Miller Hill area. While the transit center serves as a hub to and from area neighborhoods, apartment complexes, and downtown, many students report that they need to have a car in Duluth to access locations such as the mall and Target. The current method of transferring either downtown or at Central Entrance/ Pecan Avenue results in a long travel time. Reducing this travel time would encourage more students to use buses for these types of errands.
- As redevelopment occurs in the area, add a campus circulator that would serve the two campuses and nearby destinations (Mt. Royal, Kenwood Shopping Center, Woodland Middle School site). A frequent circulator would allow students, faculty, and staff at the colleges to access stores, restaurants, banks, and clinics nearby without needing to drive. This route could follow Woodland Avenue, Arrowhead Road, Kenwood Avenue, and College St.



The western portion of College Street should be restriped to reduce automobile lanes and incorporate bicycles.

- Extend Route 13 to include CSS. This would allow students who live in the East Hillside and attend CSS to use transit to get to campus.

### Additional Recommendations

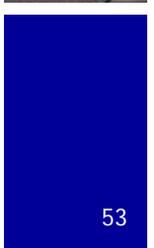
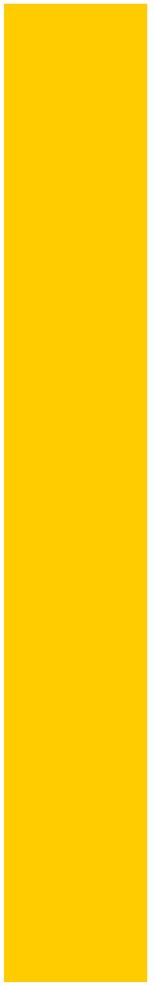
These additional recommendations will contribute the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the campus area:

#### D. Bike Lanes

- On Arrowhead Road, encourage use of the existing bike route by installing bike symbol decals to existing shoulders from Kenwood Avenue to Woodland Avenue. Consider narrowing the driving lanes at the intersection with Carver Street to add additional width to the through bike lanes on Arrowhead Road.
- Reduce the western portion of College Street from four lanes to three or two lanes. Install striped bike lanes or sharrows on College Street from Kenwood Avenue to Woodland Avenue.

#### E. Additional Sidewalks and Trails

- As mentioned above, the MIC is in the process of finalizing a city-wide sidewalk study. Recommendations from that study should be considered when prioritizing sidewalk improvements in the higher education area.
- In the St. Marie Triangle area, secure a pedestrian easement along Tischer Creek at the time of any future street vacations or redevelopment.
- Complete the sidewalk on the east side of Kenwood Avenue from College St. to 13<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Complete the sidewalk network on both sides of College Street.





Uncleared snow deters people from walking.

- Examine options for a signed/signalized pedestrian crossing from Bagley Nature Center to Hartley Nature Center across Arrowhead Road.

#### F. Additional Transit Improvements

- As redevelopment occurs along London Road, expand transit along the corridor.
- Promote car and bike sharing as a feasible transportation alternative for students. These can work in tandem with public transit, providing access to areas not served by transit. Because the model is dependent on a dense population within walking distance, this is most feasible on or directly adjacent to the college campuses.

**G. The College of St. Scholastica should establish a program similar to UMD's "Bulldog Taxi,"** which offers rides for reduced rates, to cut down on students driving or walking home after drinking

#### H. Roadway Improvements

- Examine the feasibility of installing a roundabout at College, Lyons, Kenwood intersection. If a roundabout does not work, reconfigure the intersection by removing the Lyons Street leg of the intersection and adding a right turn lane for westbound College Street traffic turning north on Kenwood Avenue. Also examine the feasibility of installing a roundabout at the intersection of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue E, Junction Avenue, and College Street. The MIC plans to conduct a comprehensive roundabout study for the City in 2012.
- College Street: Prevent cut-through traffic on Lawn Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue E by installing medians or other facilities to prevent traffic from accessing UMD campus roads.

## Goal 5.

**With leadership from The University of Minnesota Duluth and The College of St. Scholastica, integrate the colleges and students into the community.**

*"I like the proximity to UMD. Students bring life to the neighborhood."*

*- Campus neighbor*

### Rationale

Historically, colleges around the country were self-contained communities, with campuses that often had physical obstacles between themselves and surrounding neighborhoods. Over time, and for a variety of reasons, colleges and communities have become increasingly integrated, both socially and physically. This nationwide trend is being felt in Duluth as well, as more students live, shop, work, and recreate off-campus. Integrating the colleges into the community looks at ways to design buildings and spaces to bring the communities together, as well as programs and resources that encourage interaction on a social level. Making sure that the interaction between college and community is positive benefits students and residents, giving students a better college experience and inviting neighbors to embrace the opportunities colleges bring to their community. Integrating students into the community on a social level helps build attachment to Duluth. Research shows that those who are attached to a place are more likely to stay longer (including after graduation) and more likely to be entrepreneurial, positioning college students as an asset to Duluth. Students who love their city also show increased attachment to their college. This recommendation has the goal of making students feel that Duluth is a community they are a part of and are invested in—rather than simply a spot to spend four years—which also contributes to students being "good neighbors" while here.

*"Welcome us into your community and allow us to share the beautiful city of Duluth. This will encourage the best and brightest to consider staying around and raising a family, building and expanding on the current industries."*

*- Student*

## Recommendations

**A. Establish a formal committee to coordinate activities of the colleges, city, neighborhoods, and area businesses.** The core committee should meet regularly and include representatives from the following entities:

- University of Minnesota Duluth
- College of St. Scholastica
- City of Duluth
- Campus Neighbors
- East Hillside Community Club
- Duluth LISC
- Landlord Association
- APEX
- UMD Student Association
- St. Scholastica Student Senate
- Community Police Officer
- Tri-Campus and Community Coalition on Student Drinking
- Fuse Duluth, Chamber of Commerce

Subcommittees could be established to work on specific initiatives and could include additional members. For example, an initiative on furniture and debris removal could include the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD), the City's Solid Waste Coordinator, Blight and Nuisance Collaborative, college sustainability staff, and environmental student groups.

**B. Welcome students to Duluth in a comprehensive manner that includes neighbors, businesses, and city representatives.**

- Following the example of St. Cloud, the mayor and college leaders could walk through student areas on move-in weekend to welcome them to the city.
- Create welcome signs and distribute them to city residents to put on neighboring lawns.
- Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and Greater Downtown Council on signs and radio ads inviting students to patronize local businesses.

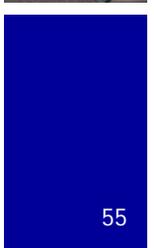
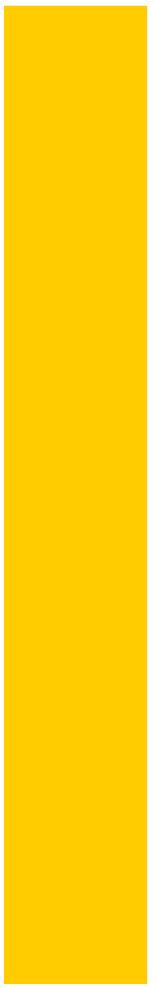


**C. Build attachment by highlighting Duluth's many amenities and encouraging city exploration, starting at freshman orientation and continuing throughout the freshman year and beyond.**

- Partner with the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, sponsor of the 2011 Knight Soul of the Community Report, on ways to improve community attachment.
- One example is a scavenger hunt similar to the Phreshman Philly Phind at LaSalle University; it could incorporate civic education (meeting with the mayor or neighborhood groups) and cultural education (highlight Duluth's history or venues for local bands).
- Wayfinding strategies would connect college students to landmarks and recreation. The Parks Department is planning to conduct a wayfinding project in 2012 and should include college campuses in the project.
- Assistance from businesses and Visit Duluth would strengthen this effort.

**D. Provide support, education, and resources as students transition to off-campus life.** A comprehensive program could bring together and strengthen existing initiatives.

- Create a "Welcome to the Community" program, targeted towards freshmen and sophomores at UMD and sophomores and juniors at CSS, that would transition students to off-campus life, share information about Duluth, and educate about citizenship in a local community.



- Enhance established volunteer/community service programs to build relationships between college students and the community. For example, students could shovel sidewalks as part of a “snow angels” program, a local accountant could answer students’ tax questions, or a team of students and neighbors could rehab a blighted property. UMD and CSS already have volunteer programs that have led to thousands of hours of volunteering in the community. These programs could be built upon to identify opportunities that would help make college students good neighbors in the community.

### Marketing and Communication

Highlight the successes of existing volunteer programs by sharing stories with the Duluth community about the benefits students have brought to the city.

- Assist students and parents in finding quality, safe off-campus housing. Many students expressed uncertainty over how to find a place to live, anxiety over whether rentals are safe, and difficulties with leases. A renters resource center should be established that would:

### Marketing and Communication

UMD’s Kirby Student Center has an online source for information about housing options. This resource can be better publicized to students and shared with St. Scholastica students as well.

- Provide information on neighborhoods, including their unique characteristics and amenities.
- Share expectations of an off-campus community member and educate about how to be a good renter (UMD’s Better Neighbors program could be integrated).
- Teach students what to look for in looking at rental options, including what questions to ask landlords, factors to consider, and what the building code requires for safety.
- Provide links to rental listings (i.e. on HousingLink or Craigslist), and a place for reviews of landlords and housing options. The City’s Life Safety Division plans to build a database in 2012 to track any rental issues and violations; this could also be a resource for students looking for housing.
- Educate about leases and renters rights.
- Educate landlords about city ordinances and regulations, and provide information on how to foster good neighborhood relationships.

**E. Work with Duluth’s business community to create networking and entrepreneurial opportunities that will benefit students and the regional economy.** This can create a win-win situation, where Duluth’s businesses benefit from the resources and partnerships of local colleges, while students benefit from a hands-on approach to solving real-world problems. Business incubators and entrepreneur magnets such as Michigan’s SmartZone Network and MIT’s fab labs spark innovation, and can be powerful growth generators when a college’s specialty, such as engineering, fills local business needs in terms of training, technology, and skills. This synergy between businesses and the college community can strengthen existing internship and mentorship programs as well, allowing students to build positive relationships in the community, learn about future career opportunities and gain job experience.



## Placemaking Recommendation

Ensuring high quality development in targeted areas, as discussed under Goal #3, and making sure public amenities are included, helps create places where students and community members can gather.



### F. Physically integrate the campuses into the community.

- Create an off-campus/edge of campus presence, such as a welcome center, arts venue, or bookstore, that would integrate the colleges and students with the surrounding area. Such presence could also include community education options for non-students, as many area residents indicated interest in taking classes or otherwise accessing University resources. One location for this would be along Woodland Avenue, where UMD already owns land.
- Encourage the colleges to complete bike and pedestrian plans that would tie into existing city trails, bikeways, and sidewalks, and to collaborate with the City, MIC, and other groups on developing and maintaining bike/pedestrian facilities.

**G. Expand on existing furniture/debris removal and pick-up programs to ensure waste is not abandoned in front yards or in parks and green space.** This can be done by bringing together the colleges, City (Solid Waste Coordinator, Blight Team), WLSSD, organizations such as Goodwill, environmental student groups, and those involved in sustainability efforts at the colleges and City.



# IMPLEMENTATION

Plan Recommendation		Lead	Partners	Timeline
<b>GOAL 1: Strengthen Single-Family Neighborhoods Through Zoning &amp; Neighborhood Stabilization</b>				
1-A	Amend the Comprehensive Plan—Future Land Use Map from Traditional Neighborhood to Urban Residential along 9th Street	City Planning		March 2012
1-B	Conduct an analysis of those areas where existing zoning is more intensive than future land use, and rezone where appropriate	City Planning		2012, as part of the UDC rezoning efforts
1-C	Implement a targeted Neighborhood Stabilization program in the East Hillside to generate new development, redevelopment, new/expanded businesses, and investment in homes and properties	At Home in Duluth Collaborative	UMD, CSS, Essentia, St. Luke's	Ongoing
<b>GOAL 2: Minimize Impacts on Single-Family Neighborhoods from Student Housing</b>				
2-A	Amend the Unified Development Chapter of the City of Duluth Legislative Code to include a Higher Education Overlay District	City Planning		2012, as part of annual UDC code maintenance
2-B	Provide strong code enforcement for existing city ordinances relating to noise disturbances, litter, and property maintenance	City Police, Fire Departments	Blight and Nuisance Collaborative	Ongoing
2-C	Utilize the rental code to ensure rental housing is maintained properly and suited for the number of tenants	City Life Safety Division		Ongoing
<b>GOAL 3: Promote Development Along Transit Corridors, Walking Distance from Campus</b>				
3-A	Rezone land along the Woodland Avenue corridor and in the St. Marie Triangle	City Planning		Spring 2012
3-B	Amend the Comprehensive Plan—Future Land Use Map from Urban Residential to Neighborhood Mixed Use along Hickory Street west of Rice Lake Road	City Planning		March 2012
3-C	Conduct an analysis of those areas where existing zoning is less intensive than future land use, and rezone where appropriate	City Planning		March 2012
3-D	Amend the Comprehensive Plan—Future Land Use from Institutional and Traditional Neighborhood to Urban Residential north of St. Marie Street and south of Worth Street, between Midway Avenue and Oakland Circle	City Planning		March 2012
3-E	Establish a Commercial-Planned district	City Planning		2012, as part of annual UDC code maintenance
3-F	Reduce the minimum lot area per family required in the R-2 district to 750 square feet	City Planning		2012, as part of annual UDC code maintenance
3-G	Amend the Skyline Parkway Overlay District to remove restrictions along the portion of the Parkway between Snively Road and Chester Park	City Planning		Spring 2012



	Plan Recommendation	Lead	Partners	Timeline
<b>GOAL 4: Increase Alternate Modes of Transportation</b>				
<b>4-A</b>	<b>Priority: Woodland Avenue Corridor Improvements</b>			
	New main entrance to UMD on Woodland Avenue	UMD	Developer of Woodland Middle School site, City Engineering	2012-2013
	Bicycle and pedestrian access from campus to destinations	UMD, CSS		
	Bike lanes or trails along the corridor	City Engineering, MIC	City Planning	2012-2017
	Strategies to slow traffic to posted speed of 30 mph	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC (ICE Study)	2012-2013
	Careful timing of lights to accommodate traffic	City Engineering	MIC	2012-2013
	Safe and effective pedestrian and bicycle crossings	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	2012-2013
	Methods to prevent traffic from cutting through neighborhoods	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	As needed
<b>4-B</b>	<b>Priority: Sidewalks and Trails</b>			
	Innovative approaches to snow removal	University committee (Rec. 5-A)		2012-2013
	Sidewalk snow reporting on City's web site	City Public Administration	UMD, CSS	2012
	Trail from Boulder Ridge to Kenwood Avenue	City Parks & Recreation	City Engineering, City Planning, MIC	2012-2014
	Pedestrian connections to and within shopping centers: On public property/right of way	City Engineering	City Planning	When funding available
	On private property	City Planning	City Engineering	As redevelopment occurs
<b>4-C</b>	<b>Priority: Transit Improvements</b>			
	Conduct an assessment of transit schedules and needs	DTA	UMD, CSS, MPIRG	2012
	Add a route from UMD to mall area	DTA	UMD, CSS	When Joshua Ave. extension completed
	Add a campus circulator	DTA	UMD, CSS	As redevelopment warrants
	Extend Route 13 to CSS	DTA	UMD, CSS	2012-2013
<b>4-D</b>	<b>Additional Recommendations: Bike Lanes</b>			
	Install bike symbol decals on Arrowhead Road	City Engineering	MIC	2012
	Convert the western portion of College Street from four lanes to three lanes. Add bike lanes and sharrows on College Street	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	2013-2014
<b>4-E</b>	<b>Additional Recommendations: Sidewalks and Trails</b>			
	Implement recommendations from city-wide sidewalk study, complete the sidewalk on the east side of Kenwood Avenue	City Engineering	MIC	Package sidewalks for project to be submitted for federal funding
	Secure a pedestrian easement along Tischer Creek	City Planning	City Engineering	As redevelopment occurs
	Complete the sidewalk network on both sides of College Street	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	When College Street is reconstructed
	Install a pedestrian crossing on Arrowhead Road from Bagley Nature Center to Hartley Nature Center	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	2012-2013



Plan Recommendation		Lead	Partners	Timeline
<b>4-F</b>	<b>Additional Recommendations: Transit Improvements</b>			
	Expand transit along London Road	DTA	City Planning, MIC	As redevelopment occurs
	Promote car and bike sharing as a reasonable transportation alternative for students	UMD, CSS	Student housing developers, businesses	2012-2017
	Establish a taxi program for CSS students	CSS		2012-2013
<b>4-G</b>	<b>Roadway Improvements</b>			
	Examine feasibility of roundabouts on College Street	MIC (ICE Study)	City Engineering, City Planning	Spring 2012
	Install medians on College Street at intersections with Lawn Street and 20th Avenue E	City Engineering	City Planning, MIC	When College Street is reconstructed
<b>GOAL 5: Integrate Colleges and Students Into the Community</b>				
<b>5-A</b>	<b>Establish a formal committee to coordinate activities of the colleges, city, neighborhoods, and area businesses</b>	UMD	CSS, City of Duluth	2012
<b>5-B</b>	<b>Welcome students to Duluth in a comprehensive manner that includes neighbors, businesses, and city representatives</b>	University committee (Rec. 5-A)	Chamber of Commerce, APEX, Visit Duluth, City of Duluth, Fuse Duluth, Greater Downtown Council, Campus Neighbors, At Home in Duluth Collaborative, businesses and residents	Start of fall semester, ongoing
<b>5-C</b>	<b>Highlight Duluth's many amenities and encourage city exploration, starting at freshman orientation and continuing throughout the freshman year and beyond</b>	University committee (Rec. 5-A)	City of Duluth, Visit Duluth, Fuse Duluth, Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
<b>5-D</b>	<b>Provide support, education, and resources as students transition to off-campus life</b>	University committee (Rec. 5-A)	City of Duluth, At Home in Duluth Collaborative	Ongoing
<b>5-E</b>	<b>Work with Duluth's business community to create networking and entrepreneurial opportunities</b>	UMD, CSS	Chamber of Commerce, Fuse Duluth, APEX, Greater Downtown Council	Ongoing
<b>5-F</b>	<b>Physically integrate the campuses into the community</b>	UMD, CSS	City of Duluth	2012-2017
<b>5-G</b>	<b>Expand on existing furniture/debris removal and pick-up programs to ensure waste is not abandoned in front yards or in parks and green space</b>	University committee (Rec. 5-A)	UMD, CSS	When Joshua Ave. extension completed