

RESOLUTION

Supporting Work to Advance the Recommended Code and Policy Amendments from the City of Duluth Green Infrastructure Code Audit

WHEREAS, University of Minnesota Sea Grant and Natural Resources Research Institute partnered with the City of Duluth and other neighboring communities to conduct an audit of local codes and ordinances, with the purpose of supporting resilience through broader use of green infrastructure (“Green Infrastructure Code Audit”); and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth participated in the Green Infrastructure Code Audit by providing matching funds through staff time to support the effort; and

WHEREAS, the Green Infrastructure Code Audit identified four areas of focus within the City of Duluth’s Unified Development Code, supporting policies, Engineering Standards, and practices, where amendments could promote greater environmental resilience, greater use of green infrastructure, and healthier landscaping; and

WHEREAS, as part of the Strategic Lands Realignment Project, the City acquired a number of parcels that were meant to be preserved for drainage or storage of stormwater; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth does not currently have a protective designation for lands to be preserved for drainage or storage of stormwater in its zoning code; and

WHEREAS, the Green Infrastructure Code Audit provided to the City options for amendments to codes and policies that would enhance the potential for broad use of green infrastructure throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, these recommendations from the Green Infrastructure Code Audit were presented to and discussed with City staff throughout 2023 and 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Green Infrastructure Code Audit presented findings and options developed through the Green Infrastructure Code Audit to the Natural Resources Commission in December, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations and options developed through the Green Infrastructure Code Audit provide the City with a recommended set of actions that, if adopted, would advance use of green infrastructure and overall resilience; and

WHEREAS, the recommended changes to the City’s codes and policies, if adopted, would provide a regulatory and policy framework incentivizing greater use of green infrastructure and healthier landscapes in the City; and

WHEREAS, making changes to the City’s codes and policies requires coordinated work by City staff, and affirmative decisions of the Planning Commission and the City Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

The Natural Resources Commission supports broader implementation of Green Infrastructure as a component of building the City's overall environmental quality; and

The Natural Resources Commission commends the work of City staff who have participated in and supported the Green Infrastructure Code Audit process; and

The Natural Resources Commission strongly recommends the Planning Commission commit to a full and prompt discussion of the recommended code and policy changes developed through the Green Infrastructure Code Audit process, with the intent to advance any changes that are found to be in the best interests of the City and its environmental quality; and

The Natural Resources Commission commits to supporting the work of Staff and the Planning Commission throughout the process of review and adoption.

Signed this 5th day of February, 2025

City of Duluth Natural Resources Commission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Streitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Andrew Streitz, Chair