

September 11

2024

# Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter

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Resolution Update

# History

- Scott Pilate - ISD 709
- Tracie Clanaugh - YMCA
- Jessica Schiff (*Peterson*) - Woodland Hills
  
- Parks Commission motioned support of Charter July 8, 2015
  
- Accepted by Duluth City Council as a resolution 2015

(Adapted from the Ontario Children's Outdoor Charter)

As a city with exceptional outdoor amenities, Duluth can be at the forefront of providing its youth opportunity to discover and learn through outdoor experiences. The Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter aims to encourage children, families, and the organizations that support them to explore the outdoors, master skills and discover the wonders of the natural world.

Spending time outdoors is an invaluable component of every child's learning and development. Children who spend time outdoors develop lifelong qualities as critical thinkers, effective communicators, successful students, and healthy adults. Research consistently indicates the importance of providing meaningful, worthwhile opportunities for children and families to connect and grow together in nature.

The people, organizations, government agencies, and neighborhoods that support the Charter recognize that time outdoors is important for children's health and wellness. We believe that all children should experience the outdoors in multiple ways, such as:

- ❖ Following a trail
- ❖ Exploring a park
- ❖ Harvesting something to eat
- ❖ Swimming in a lake
- ❖ Paddling a canoe
- ❖ Playing in the snow
- ❖ Climbing up hills and rocks
- ❖ Visiting a farm
- ❖ Camping under the stars
- ❖ Fishing on a lake or river
- ❖ Observing plants and wildlife
- ❖ Or creating a new adventure!

**Vision** - In Duluth, our vision is that all children have opportunities to:

- ❖ **Develop** a connection with nature that inspires a sense of caring and conservation
- ❖ **Experience** active free-time in the outdoors and have regular contact with nature
- ❖ **Master** skills and knowledge that allow them to fully participate in outdoor adventures
- ❖ **Learn** about Duluth's ecosystems, natural history and cultural heritage

**Principles** - To achieve this vision, our community must promote:

- ❖ **Access**- All children should have access to nature in their neighborhoods and in the broader community. Preservation and creation of parks and protected areas, networks of trails, recreation areas and other public natural spaces enables this access.
- ❖ **Discovery**- Children should have formal and informal opportunities to discover and learn about nature through outdoor play and exploration.
- ❖ **Connections**- Families, communities and decision-makers across Duluth will be aware of the many personal and societal benefits of connecting children with nature. Increased collaborations and community involvement will result in increased opportunities.
- ❖ **Stewardship**- Children develop a deep personal understanding of and care for the natural world through outdoor experiences, and should learn how to take action to protect biodiversity and use resources sustainably.



# Youth Outdoors-Duluth

A Community Collaborative

Youth Outdoors-Duluth emerged early in 2016, because Youth Serving Agencies, Outdoor Providers, the Minnesota Land Trust, and the Northland Foundation recognized a disparity in access to Duluth's abundant outdoor adventure amenities. Today Youth Outdoors-Duluth, with leadership from the Duluth Area Family YMCA, cultivates a wide network including the City of Duluth Parks and Recreation. Youth Outdoors-Duluth ensures that all youth have access to a progression of nature-based experiences through community wide coordination of resources and expertise.



Community Events  
Fun Free Events Near You!

Gear and Curriculum Library  
Gear For Your Explorations

Adventure Series  
Sign Up For lessons & Try Something New

Training and Support  
Outdoor Education, Diversity & Inclusion Workshops



Visit us online at [youthoutdoors-duluth.org](http://youthoutdoors-duluth.org) or Facebook at YouthOutdoors-Duluth

# DULUTH CHILDREN'S OUTDOOR CHARTER

EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS, MASTER SKILLS & DISCOVER  
THE WONDERS OF THE NATURAL WORLD!

A VISION



## Our Community Must Promote:

- Access for all children to nature in their neighborhoods and in the broader community.
- Discovery through formal and informal opportunities to learn about nature through outdoor play and exploration.
- Connections. Families, communities and decision-makers across Duluth will be aware of the many personal and societal benefits of connecting children with nature.
- Stewardship. Children develop a deep personal understanding of and care for the natural world through outdoor experiences, and should learn how to take action to protect biodiversity and use resources sustainably.

## All children must have opportunities to:

- Develop a connection with nature that inspires a sense of caring and conservation
- Experience active free-time in the outdoors and have regular contact with nature
- Master skills and knowledge that allow them to fully participate in outdoor adventures
- Learn about Duluth's ecosystems, natural history and cultural heritage

## Get outside:

- Follow a trail
- Explore a park
- Visit a farm
- Swim in a lake
- Paddle a canoe
- Play in the snow
- Climb up hills & rocks
- Harvest something to eat
- Camp under the stars
- Fish on a lake or river
- Observe plants and wildlife
- Or create a new adventure

*Children who spend time outdoors develop  
lifelong qualities as critical thinkers,  
effective communicators, successful  
students, and healthy adults.*



# Adventure Gap Committee

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Committee of the Duluth Area  
Outdoor Alliance

- Duluth Parks and Recreation – Adam Fornear
- Fred Sproat
- Duluth Climbers Coalition – Dave Pagel
- Northern Paddlers Alliance – Scott Pilate
- COGGS – Ansel Schimpff
- Spirit Mountain – Jon Regenold
- Hartley Nature Center – Matt Willey
- DXC – Jonathan Rova
- Northern Adaptive Recreation – Melissa Toso

# Actions Taken

## 2023 Duluth Youth Outdoor Programming Opportunities

The Duluth Area Outdoor Alliance and the Adventure Gap Committee is contacting outdoor recreation and youth serving organizations throughout Duluth to assess the current level of outdoor programming available to the city's youth that supports and advances the [Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter](#).

The information gained from this survey will help all of us understand -  
1) what outdoor recreational opportunities currently exist for youth throughout the city,  
2) where and what kind of additional programming is needed  
3) the number and demographics of Duluth youth currently participating in outdoor recreational programming.

When completing this survey please answer each question as completely as possible and as it applies to your organization and work.

aformear@gmail.com [Switch account](#)

Not shared

Organization Name

Your answer

Primary or best contact at your organization and their preferred Email/phone

Your answer

Within the last year, what types of outdoor recreational programming or activities did youth get to experience through your program?

Biking

Rock climbing

- Monthly Committee Meetings
- Created survey to send out to different youth serving agencies to acquire data
- Continue to create outdoor experiences for all youth in Duluth
- Presenting at the Great Lakes Outdoor Summit – 350+ anticipated attendance
- Adventure Gap Brainstorming at Boathouse – 50 people in attendance.

# Teamwork

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## Facilitation:

- Day 1 & 2: climbing indoors with 30 Lincoln Park Middle School students
- Day 3: 14 students climbing at Ely's Peak
- Group effort of DCC, Teacher from ISD 709, UMD RSOP
- COGGS/Ski Hut/Continental Biking at Harbor Highlands, rafting & climbing w/Boys & Girls Club, St. Scholastica Pursuit and Swiftwater Adventures
- 4-week mtn. biking program w/Lincoln Park Middle School & connecting groups with teachers organizing ISD 709 Middle School Outdoor Skills classes
- Many more examples that are happening



# Partnerships In Action





Valley Youth Center	Boys & Girls Club	ISD 709
Gary New Duluth Rec	Hartley Nature Center	Chester Bowl Summer Camp
UMD RSOP	Spirit Mountain Camps	St. Scholastica Outdoor Pursuit
Duluth Parks and Recreation	Northland Adaptive Recreation	Mentor North
Family Freedom Center	Duluth Climbers Coalition	Northland Paddlers Alliance
COGGS	Duluth XC Ski Club	Duluth Police Fishing Program
Duluth Rowing Club	Duluth-Superior Sailing Association	DEVO
The Ski Hut	Continental Ski & Bike	Northern MN Track Club
Swiftwater Rafting	Northshore SUP	Duluth Folk School

# Youth Programming Providers

All are providing programs to get youth outdoors.

Note, Duluth is home to many high-quality service providers! This is a sample of those closely involved with this initiative.

# The Future

- Keep the programming sustainable
- Identify where the gaps are located
- Create master calendar of programs
- Meet the needs of the community
- Get Every Kid in Duluth Outdoors!
- Active participation in the Great Lakes Summit on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - <https://www.duluthaoa.org/great-lakes-outdoor-summit>

# THANK YOU

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From the Adventure Gap Committee  
of Duluth Area Outdoor Alliance

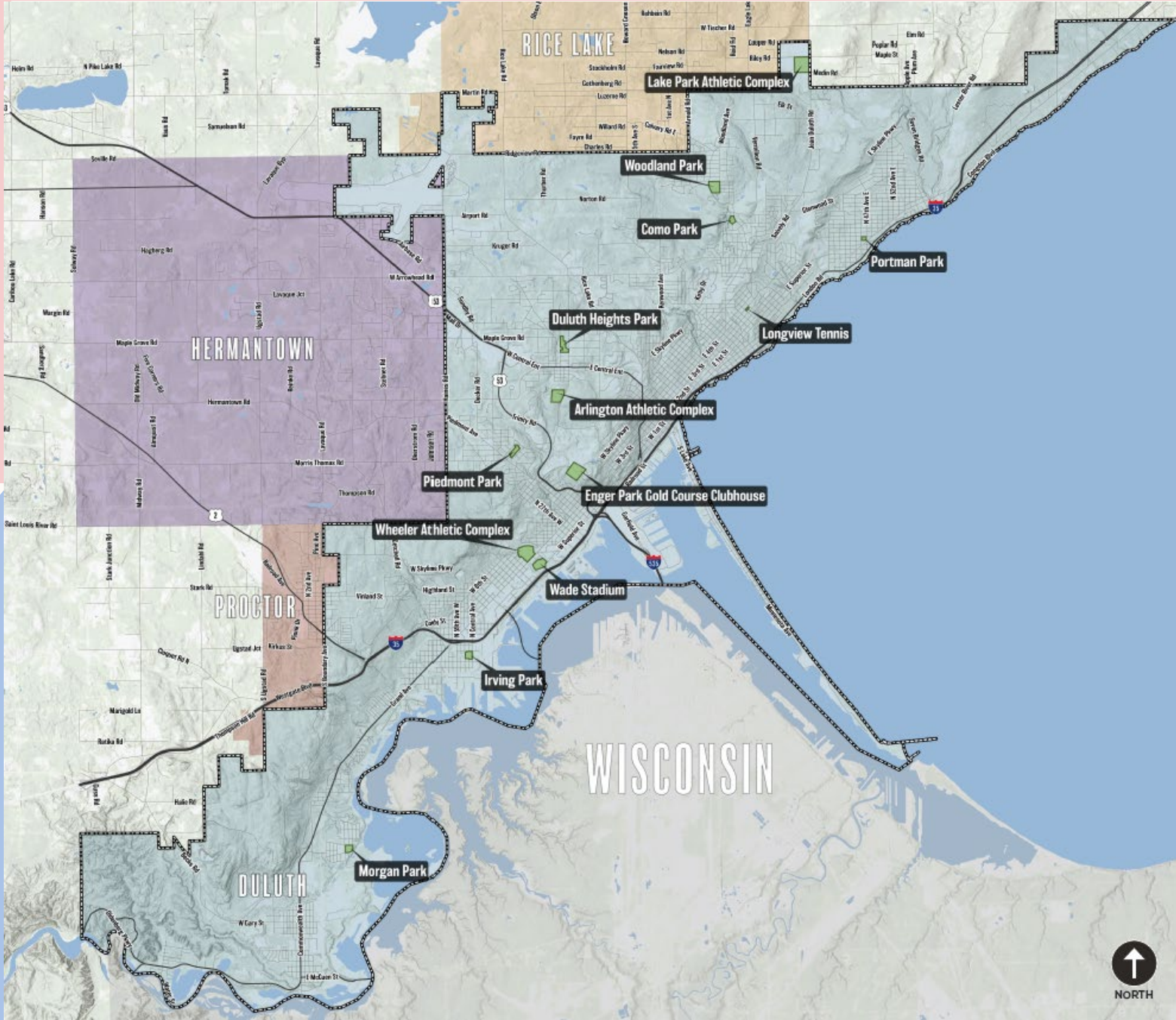
# **ATHLETIC VENUES REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE**

September 11, 2024

Presented to Duluth Parks & Recreation Commission  
by Katie Bennett, Senior Parks Planner

# FUNDING

- “Half-and-half” tourism tax funding
  - 0.5% increment food and beverage tax
  - 0.5% increment lodging tax
- Up to \$36 million over 10 years
- Support sports tourism in parks-based athletic facilities



## EXISTING FACILITIES

- Arlington Athletic Complex
- Como Park
- Duluth Heights Park
- Enger Park Golf Course
- Irving Park
- Lake Park Athletic Complex
- Longview Tennis
- Morgan Park
- Piedmont Park
- Portman Park
- Wade Stadium
- Wheeler Athletic Complex
- Woodland Park



# PROJECT PHASING

Phase 1: Time-sensitive, on-going projects and Action Plan process for future project phases (\$4.8M)

Phase 2: Primary outdoor athletics venues (\$14.2M)

Phase 3: Indoor athletic venue(s) (\$8M, leverage additional)

Phase 4: Additional outdoor athletic venues (\$9M)



# **PHASE 1: TIME-SENSITIVE, ON-GOING PROJECTS**



# ENGER GOLF COURSE

- AVRI Funding: \$1.7 million
  - Total project cost: \$6.3 million
- Scope: Purchase and install modern irrigation system for all 27 holes and driving range
- Status: Irrigation installed on all 27 holes
- Next steps: Systems updates, replacing irrigation on driving range

Photo Credit: Duluth Golf

# GND REC SKATE PARK

- AVRI Funding: \$300,000
- Total project cost: \$1 million
- Scope: Complete skateable surface
- Status: Concrete installation complete
- Next steps: Install remaining railings;  
grand opening



Photo Credit: Damage Boardshop

# SPIRIT MOUNTAIN – NORDIC



Photo Credit: DXC

- AVRI Funding: \$1.2 million
- Scope: Nordic trail with snowmaking (additional 0.5km), lighting installation (1.5km)
- Status: Snowmaking trail nearly complete
- Next steps: Lights delivery and installation

# WADE STADIUM

- AVRI Funding: \$1.2 million
- Scope: Building envelop repairs with focus on structural and life safety concerns
- Status: TKDA prepared construction documents
- Next steps: Bid project work this fall, spring construction



# **ACTION PLAN PROCESS**

# AVRI ACTION PLAN

- RDG Planning & Design
  - Existing conditions analysis
  - Sports tourism-focused market analysis
  - Facilities gaps and niche market identification
  - Site selection and economic impact study for new indoor venue(s)
  - Vetting of public-private partnership opportunities
  - Conceptual plans, cost estimating for site investments
  - Project financing, operations and maintenance models
  - Community engagement

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Round 1: Discovery & understanding

- In-person focus group meetings
- In-person community open houses
- On-line community survey

## Round 2: Concept development

- Presentation of findings and multiple concept options
- Virtual meetings with focus groups

## Round 3: Concept refinement

- Presentation of refined concepts
- In-person community workshops

## Round 4: Finalize the Action Plan

- Formal presentation of Draft Action Plan
- Draft Action Plan for public comment
- Final Action Plan to Parks & Recreation Commission and City Council for adoption

Note: Public comment form open and available at all times throughout process:

<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-planning/progress-in-the-parks/athletic-venues-reinvestment-initiative/>

# ROUND 1: DISCOVERY & UNDERSTANDING



WE ARE HERE

August 27 – 29, 2024

- 3 community-wide workshops (east, central, west)
  - 100+ participants
- 6 focus group meetings
  - City staff
  - Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force members
  - User groups by facility type: Courts, Rinks, Diamond Fields, and Rectangular Fields
  - 50+ participants, informative conversations

COMING SOON – September 2024

- On-line community survey





# **SOME EMERGING THEMES**

- Ready for change
- Extend sports seasons
- Indoor and outdoor turf and ice
- Multi-use, flexible spaces
- Reduce maintenance burdens

# NEXT STEPS

1. Share additional information from focus groups and community workshops
2. Community survey distribution
3. Continue Phase 1: On-going, time-sensitive projects
4. Present initial findings and conceptual plan options and approaches





**THANK YOU!**

Katie Bennett, Senior Parks Planner

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