

Duluth Ultimate Community (DUC)



Ben Nicklay - Board President

3/12/2025

What is Ultimate Frisbee?

- ▶ Field dimensions: 110 yards x 40 yards
- ▶ 7 players per team
- ▶ Men, women, & mixed teams
- ▶ Youth, college, national, professional formats
- ▶ Master, grand master, great grand master divisions
- ▶ Over 10 million players worldwide, 3+ million in US



Spring League at Heritage Center

Who is DUC?

- ▶ Ultimate frisbee community active in Duluth since at least the early 2000's
- ▶ Nonprofit corporation created in 2019
 - ▶ Created due to expensive, poorly run leagues
- ▶ Over 200 active players



Our programming

- ▶ Leagues
 - ▶ Spring, summer, fall
 - ▶ Partner with City of Duluth
 - ▶ 33 registrants in summer 2021
 - ▶ 84 in summer 2024
- ▶ Pickup
- ▶ Club Team
 - ▶ Travels to regional tournaments
- ▶ Border Battle
- ▶ Freedom Fest
- ▶ Social gatherings
- ▶ Volunteering at Chester Bowl



Halloween Tournament

Come play with us!

- ▶ Great exercise
- ▶ Easy to learn
- ▶ Low equipment cost
- ▶ Welcoming community
 - ▶ Instant friends!
- ▶ Options for your level of commitment
- ▶ It's fun!



Summer League Champions

DUC Goals

- ▶ Continue increasing league participants
- ▶ Expand # of league teams
- ▶ Host larger tournaments
- ▶ Build a youth program
- ▶ Improve playing surface at Chester Bowl



How can the City support DUC?

- ▶ Support equitable allocation of current field space
 - ▶ Arlington Soccer Complex
- ▶ Improve existing fields
 - ▶ Irving & Chester Bowl
 - ▶ Lighting
- ▶ Add additional full-size fields
- ▶ Large indoor turf
- ▶ Athletic Venues Reinvestment Initiative (AVRI) Action Plan

Fall League Championship -
Chester Bowl

Thank You!

Ben Nicklay
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Join the Duluth Ultimate Community on Facebook and Instagram

2024 Review: Permitting & Reservations



Chris Severson – Parks Permit Coordinator

PARKS - PRIVATE EVENTS

PRIVATE EVENTS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Permits Issued	137	91	302	288	273	286
Attendance	8,200	3,016	12,799	14,934	14,089	15,092
Revenue	\$11,720	\$7,685	\$28,115	\$27,120	\$24,260	\$23,575

PARK	2023	2024
Chambers Grove	53	61
Park Point Pavilions	85	69
Lester Park	80	60
Enger Park	33	26
Lincoln Park <small>(Additional 8 rentals for the indoor pavilion)</small>	0	27
Other Parks	22	43

PARKS - WEDDING EVENTS

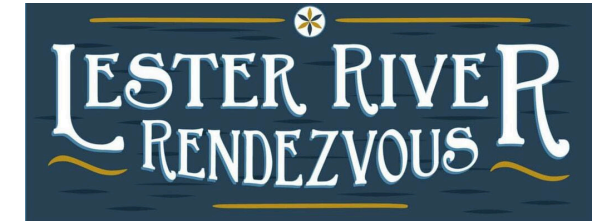
WEDDING EVENTS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Permits Issued	95	67	107	100	83	89
Attendance	8,129	2,910	11,347	6,675	5,202	5,277
Revenue	\$29,510	\$21,320	\$43,947	\$34,330	\$28,570	\$28,860



PARK	2023	2024
Enger Park	35	32
Rose Garden	24	35
Other Parks	24	22

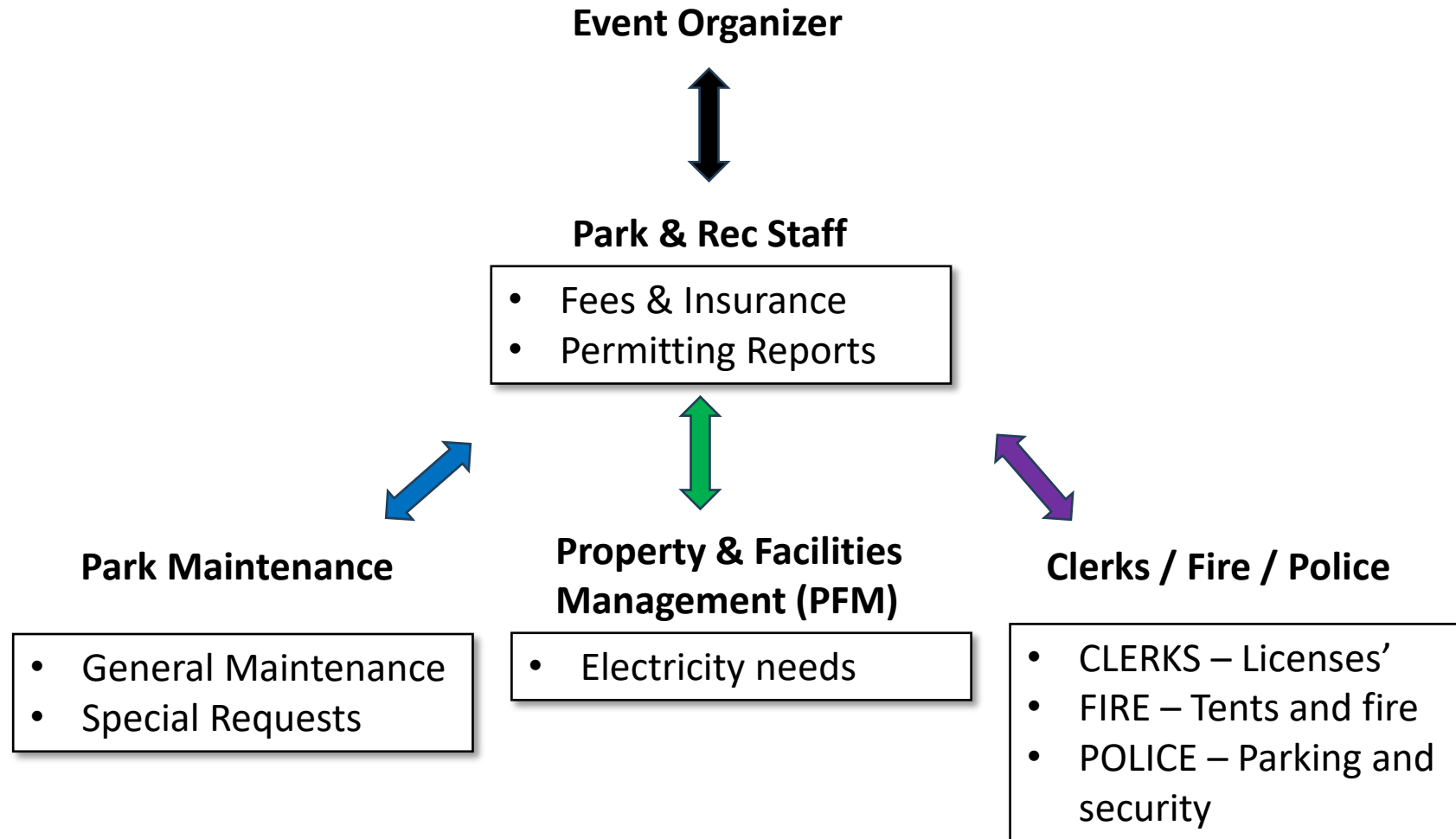
PARKS - SPECIAL EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Permits Issued	83	16	136	138	174	171
Attendance	46,470	2,835	29,125	45,103	47,348	63,752
Revenue	\$20,122	\$3,606	\$16,673	\$23,247	\$23,118	\$25,248



PARKS - SPECIAL EVENTS

HOW ARE ALL THESE SPECIAL EVENTS SUPPORTED?



New Special Events in 2024



Piedmont2024

White	1.2 km	20 m	
221	Y		Start:
222	Y		Path junction
223	m	L	Foot of cliff
24	X		Path crossing
25	Y		Path junction
6	▲	○	SW side of t
	X		Path and str
280 m		○	Navigate 28



A LOOK BACK AT PARK RENTALS

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Permits Issued	339	183	579	573	530	546
Anticipated Attendance	70,059	10,141	62,886	79,617	66,639	81,501
Revenue	\$61,352	\$32,611	\$88,735	\$84,367	\$75,948	\$77,683



In September of 2024 half of the Enger pergola collapsed and was rebuilt

MISCELLANEOUS PERMITS

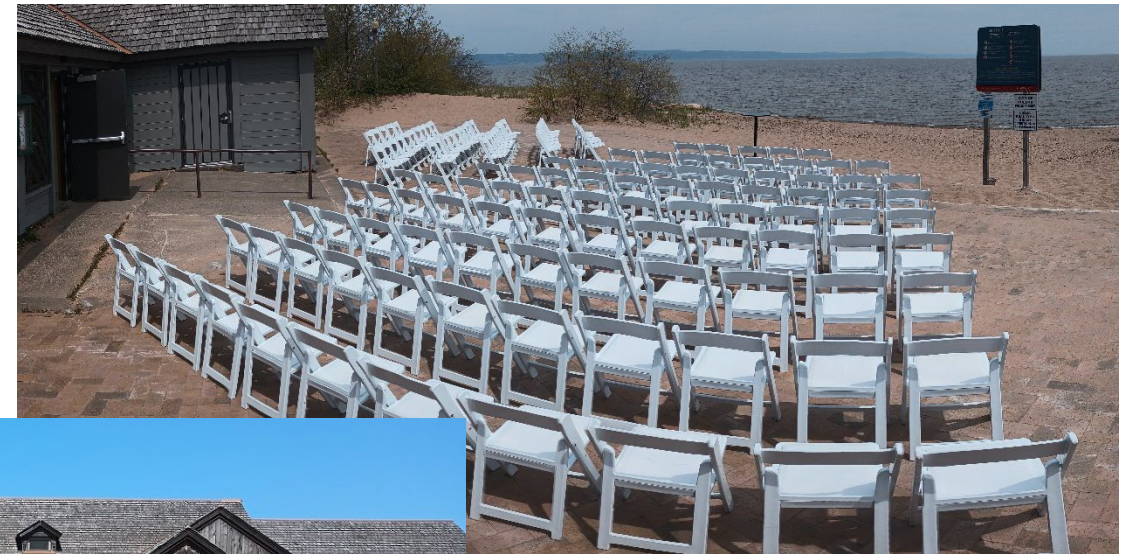
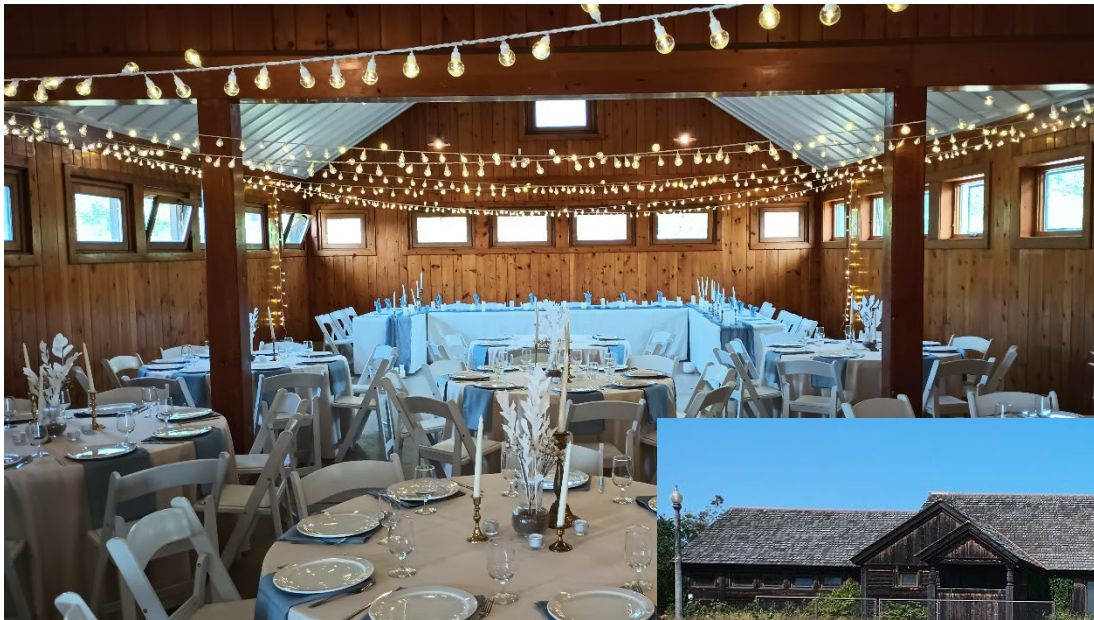
- Alcohol Consumption Permits – 97
- Busking Permits – 26
- Park Point Boat Rack Rental
 - Will add Brighton Beach in 2025
- Commercial Operator Permits – 25
 - Swift Martial Arts moved to a brick and mortar after running in parks for 3yrs.



Buskers on the Lakewalk

PARK POINT BEACH HOUSE

BEACH HOUSE	2021	2022	2023	2024
Reservations	45	65	72	80
Attendance	4,624	6,345	7,701	8,615



COMMUNITY CENTER RENTALS

PRIVATE RENTALS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Rentals	244	32	146	344	353	452
Attendance	10,721	1,777	4,169	11,724	14,718	18,796
Revenue	\$29,787	\$3,100	\$15,436	\$30,855	\$33,205	\$43,382

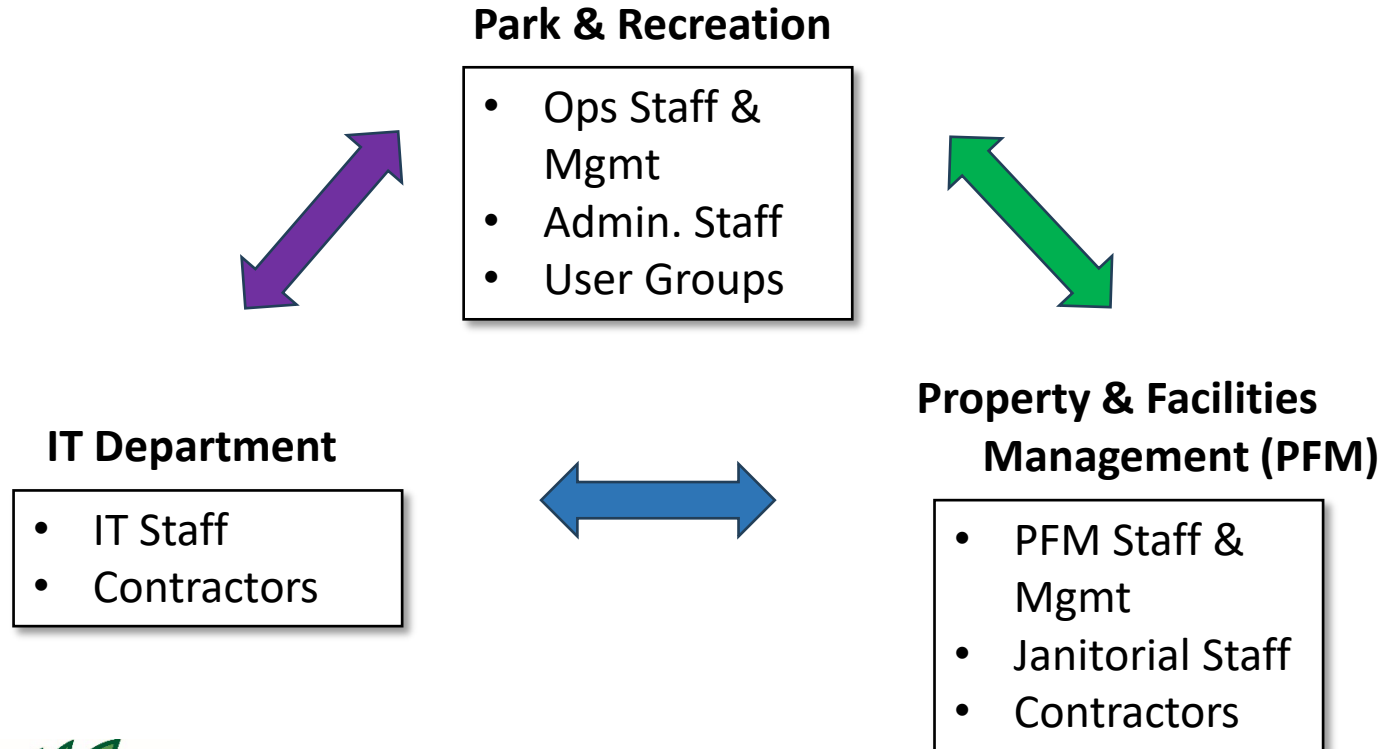


Morgan Park Community Center

LOCATION	2022	2023	2024
Morgan Park	91	106	96
Harrison	89	101	134
Lafayette	58	54	87
Evergreen	56	22	24
Portman	56	70	105
Piedmont	0	0	6

COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATES

WHO IS INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATES?



LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER



LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER



LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER



LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER



HARRISON COMMUNITY CENTER



EVERGREEN COMMUNITY CENTER



EVERGREEN COMMUNITY CENTER



PORTMAN COMMUNITY CENTER



MORGAN PARK CONFERENCE ROOM



MORGAN PARK COMMUNITY CENTER



MORGAN PARK COMMUNITY CENTER



FACILITIES MANAGED BY PARTNERS



Gary New Duluth
Rec Center



Lester Lakeside Park
Community Center



Central Hillside
Community Center



Lester Amity Chalet



Woodland Community Center



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



Brighton Beach



Morgan Park

QUESTIONS



Birthday Party at Harrison Community Center

Norton Park

PROJECT INFORMATIONAL UPDATE

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION ON MARCH 12, 2025

ALLISON BROOKS, PARKS PROJECT COORDINATOR



Tonight's Presentation

- St. Louis River Corridor Initiative
 - History
 - 2016 Neighborhood Park Plans
- Community engagement summary
- Building assessment results
- Project goals
- Implementation timeline

St. Louis River Corridor Initiative

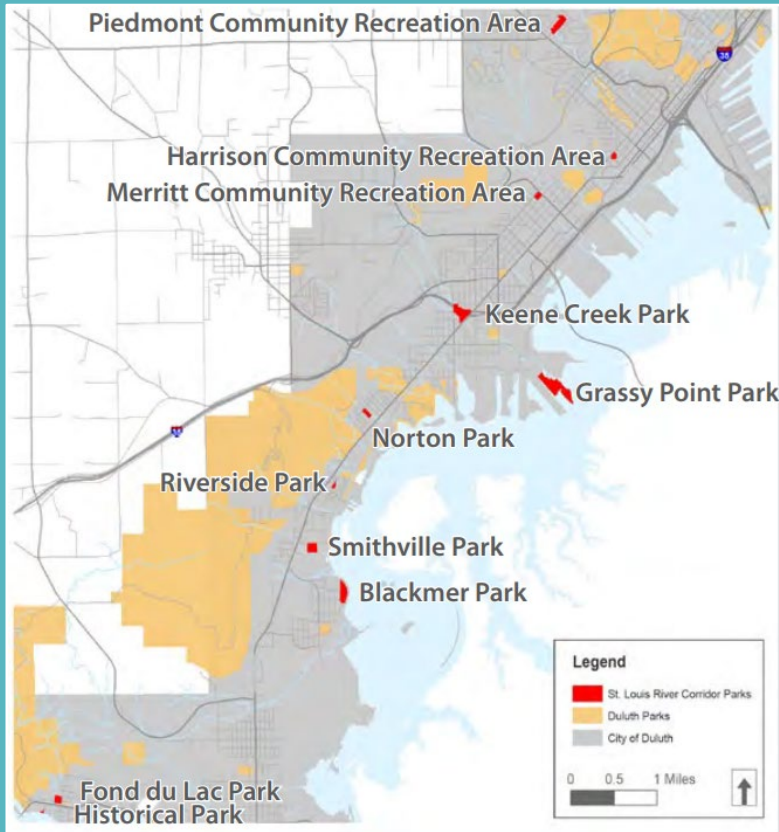


- Initiative authorized in 2014
- Funded through Half-and-Half Tax
 - 0.5% tax on food and beverage + 0.5% tax on lodging
- Focused investment in Corridor to:
 - Support natural environment
 - Enrich neighborhood quality of life
 - Stimulate development
- St. Louis River Corridor Parks Mini-Master Plans adopted in June of 2016



St. Louis River Corridor Initiative

Neighborhood Parks

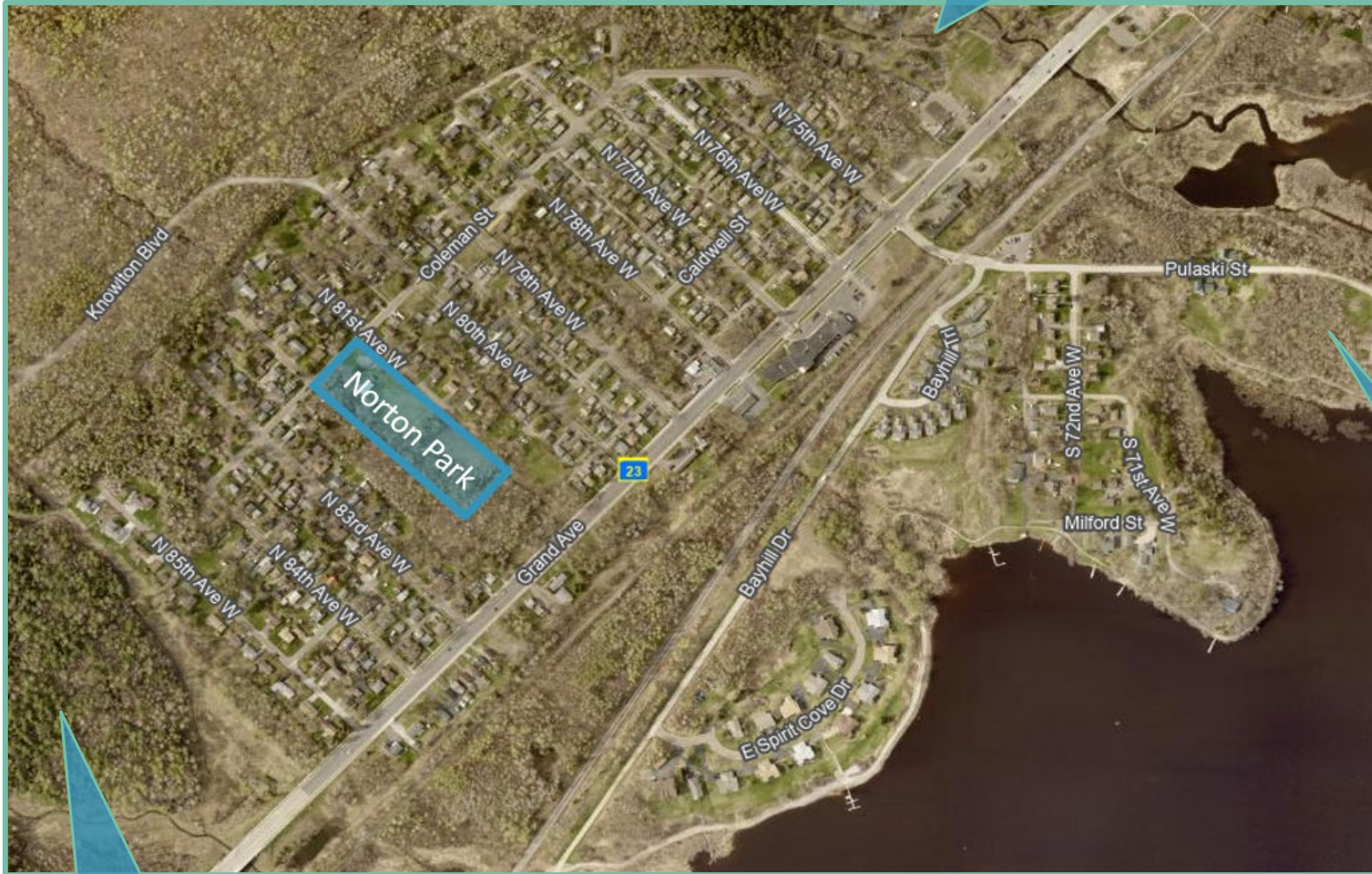


- St. Louis River Corridor Parks Mini-Master Plans included 11 neighborhood parks
- Plans were informed by public engagement between 2015-2016



- Implementation Complete:
 - 2017: Harrison
 - 2018: Riverside
 - 2021: Keene Creek, Merritt, Piedmont, Grassy Point
- Planned Implementation:
 - 2025-2026: Blackmer Park
 - **2026: Norton Park**

Lake Superior Zoo



Norton Park

- Located at 431 N 81st Ave W
- Neighborhood park

Indian Point
Campground

Spirit Mountain
Recreation Area

2016 Norton Park Plan Recommendations

- Signage
- Replace playground
- Improve connections
- Sports facilities
- Stormwater management
- Stream restoration
- Invasive species control





Current Layout



Existing Conditions

Community Meeting April 30, 2024

- Given time since plan was adopted, additional community engagement to renew conversations
- Shared background, hosted small group discussions, large group Q&A
- Purpose was to hear feedback and identify park priorities





Building Assessments



CITY OF DULUTH, MINNESOTA
NORTON PARK COMMUNITY CENTER
BUILDING ASSESSMENT REPORT
OCTOBER 4, 2024
 ARCHITECTURE
ADVANTAGE



Multiple third-party assessments completed between May – October 2024

- Twin Ports Testing – Mold, asbestos, and regulated waste
- ServPro – Mold remediation inspection
- Architecture Advantage – Architectural
- Northland Consulting Engineers – Structural
- CMTA – Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems

Full report was compiled by Architecture Advantage, and is available on the project webpage:

<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-planning/st-louis-river-corridor/norton-park/>

Norton Park Building



In summary:

- **Third-party recommendation is demolition**
 - Ongoing water damage
 - Multiple major systems are beyond useful life
 - Mold has infiltrated all porous materials (insulation, ceiling, etc.)
 - Structurally compromised
 - Entire park is within floodway
-
- Let's go through some excerpts from the report

Architectural Assessment

Section 2



Erosion along thickened edge slab foundation has exposed the underside of the structure.



Deteriorated T1-11 siding has notable moisture intrusion.

Architectural Assessment

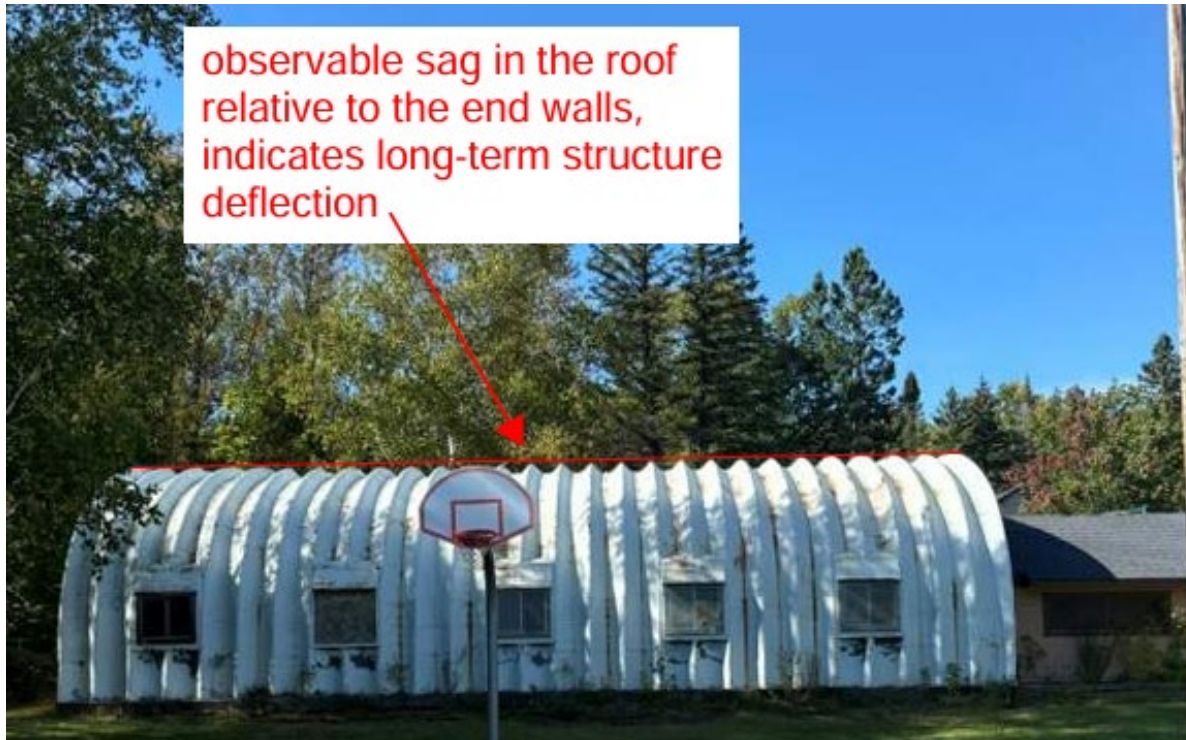


Asphalt shingles missing and delaminated - in need of replacement. Condition of substructure not assessed.



Painted wood soffits and fascia are beyond their useful life and in need of replacement.

Structural Assessment



The steel corrugated structure / roof appears to have been patched in localized areas with tar and rubber patches. We observed mold/mildew on the interior and water staining, indicating that the roof is indeed at the end of its useful life.

See Photos – The Corrugated roof appears to be permanently deflected in the middle relative to the end walls. This is evidence of overloading and again confirms that the structure is at the end of its useful life.

Norton Park Building



In summary:

- **Third-party recommendation is demolition**

Replacement of the building is not currently feasible

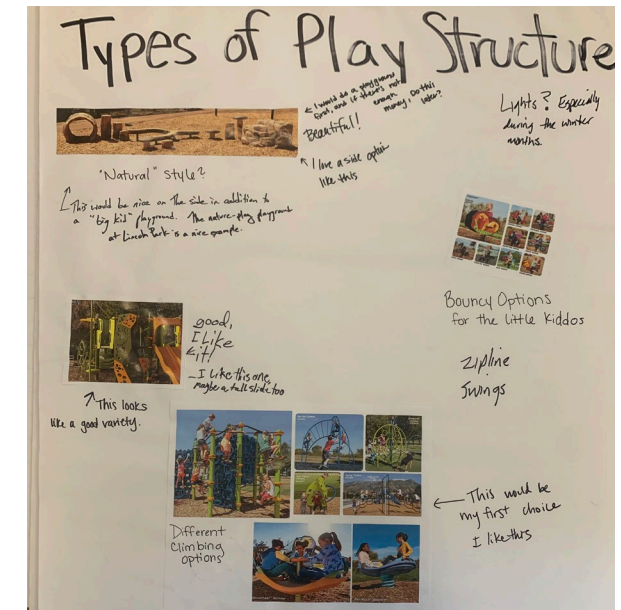
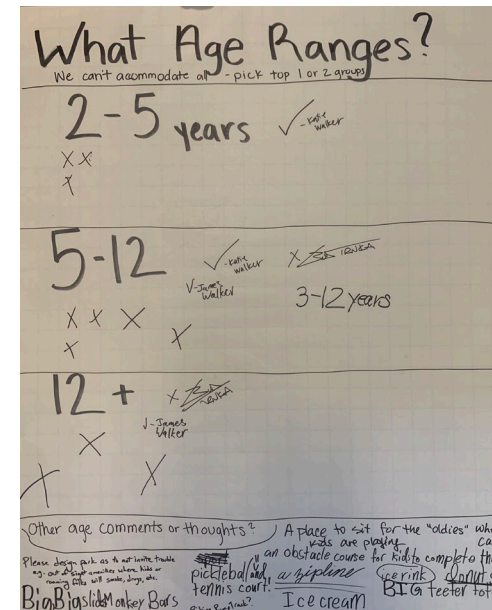
Instead, revisited feedback from Mini-Master Plan & April 2024 meeting.

Identified the following key deliverables:

- **Replace building with picnic pavilion**
- New playground
- More useable (drier) multi-use field
- New pathways, picnic tables, benches

Community Meeting January 16, 2025

- Shared overview of feedback from April 2024 meeting
- Provided building assessment results & large group discussion
- Playground feedback
- Purpose was to identify a path forward to implement improvements that align with community feedback



Planned Park Improvements



Project Goals

- Address deferred maintenance
- Create a high-quality neighborhood park
- Inclusive, accessible, and family friendly



Community Identified Priorities

- Replace playground
- New pavilion for community gathering
- Useable open greenspace



Funding the Improvements



- Approximately \$500,000 allocated from St. Louis River Corridor Initiative and Parks Capital
- Applying for grant funding from the MN DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program






If awarded, grant will allow for:

- Larger pavilion
- Bigger playground
- Project completion in 2026 (instead of a phased approach)

If not awarded, still going to accomplish key deliverables, but size of facilities and timing of implementation would adjust

Implementation Timeline



March 13, 2024		Informational presentation to Parks & Recreation Commission
April 30, 2024		Community meeting
Summer 2024		Completed additional building assessments
January 16, 2025		Community meeting
March 12, 2025		Informational presentation to Parks & Recreation Commission
Spring 2025		Prepare park designs
April 1, 2025		Submit Outdoor Recreation grant application
Fall 2025		Notification if awarded grant funds Community meeting to review designs Finalize park designs based on available funding
Winter 2026		Put project out for bid
Summer – Fall 2026		Project implementation

Thank you!



Duluth Parks
& Recreation

Contact Information:

Allison Brooks, Project Coordinator

Abrooks@DuluthMN.gov

(218) 730-4304

For more information and to view materials for the project, please visit the Norton Park Project page:

duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-planning/st-louis-river-corridor/norton-park/

Or scan the QR code:

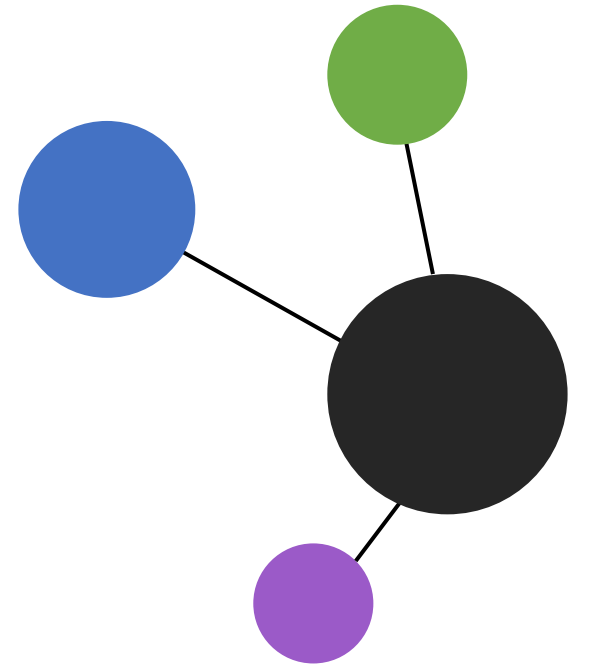


Parks and Recreation: Maintenance and Capital

Erik Birkeland

Jessica Peterson

Presented to Parks and Recreation Commission on March 12, 2025

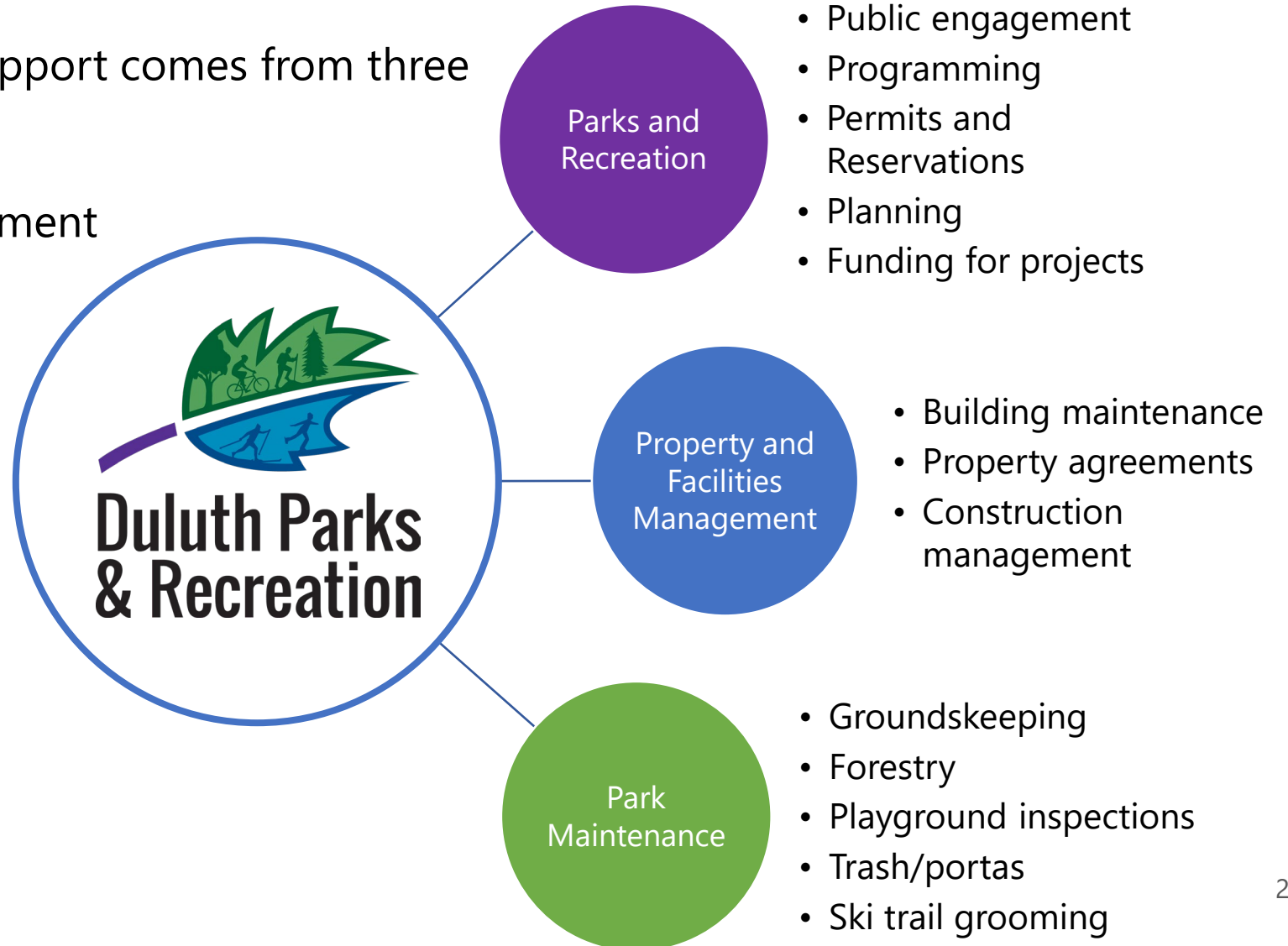


**Duluth Parks
& Recreation**

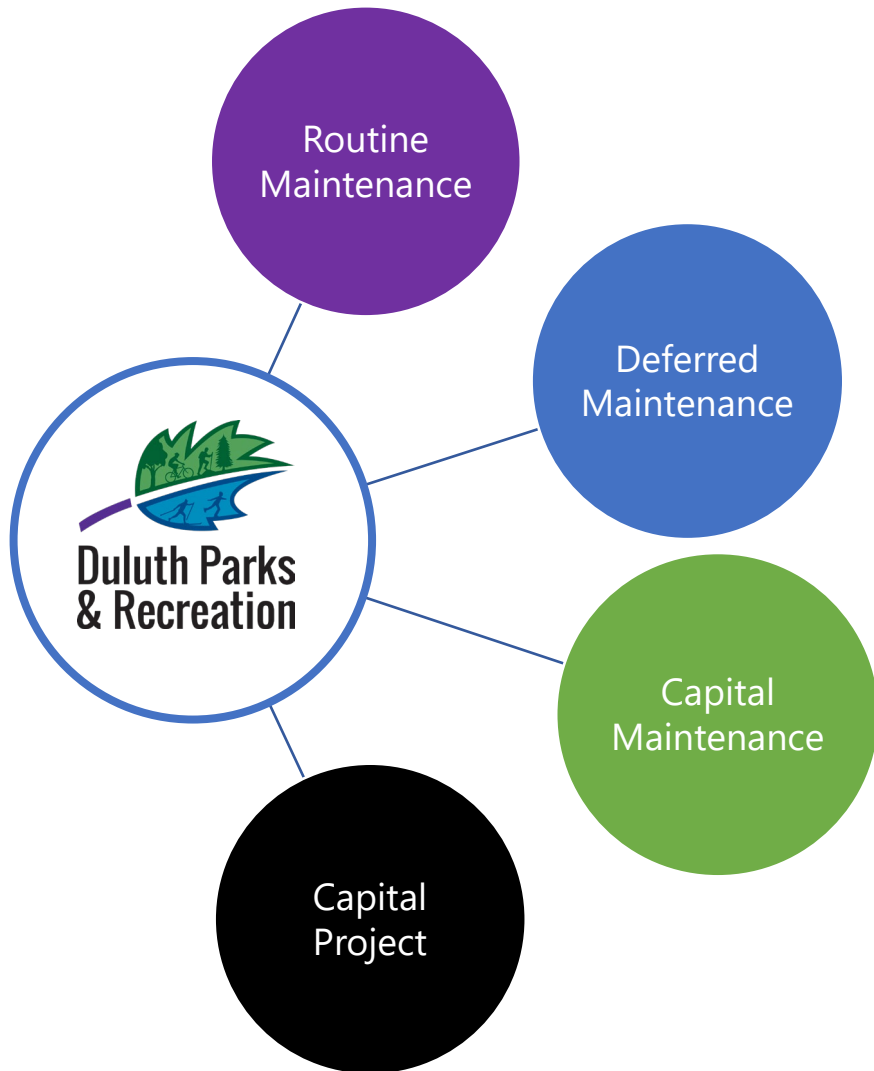
Background: Org Chart

The Duluth Park System's core support comes from three City Divisions

- Property and Facilities Management
- Park Maintenance
- Parks and Recreation



Parks Capital: Definitions



Routine Maintenance: Maintenance activities performed at regular, time-based intervals to keep systems in good operating condition to prevent large-scale failures

- Grass mowing, snow removal, trash removal, playground inspections, gardening, benches, picnic tables, plumbing, electrical

Deferred Maintenance: Repairs to infrastructure and assets that get delayed and backlogged because of budget limitations and lack of resources. Typically performed by City maintenance crews

- Remove aged fencing, sidewalks internal to parks, crack seal sport courts

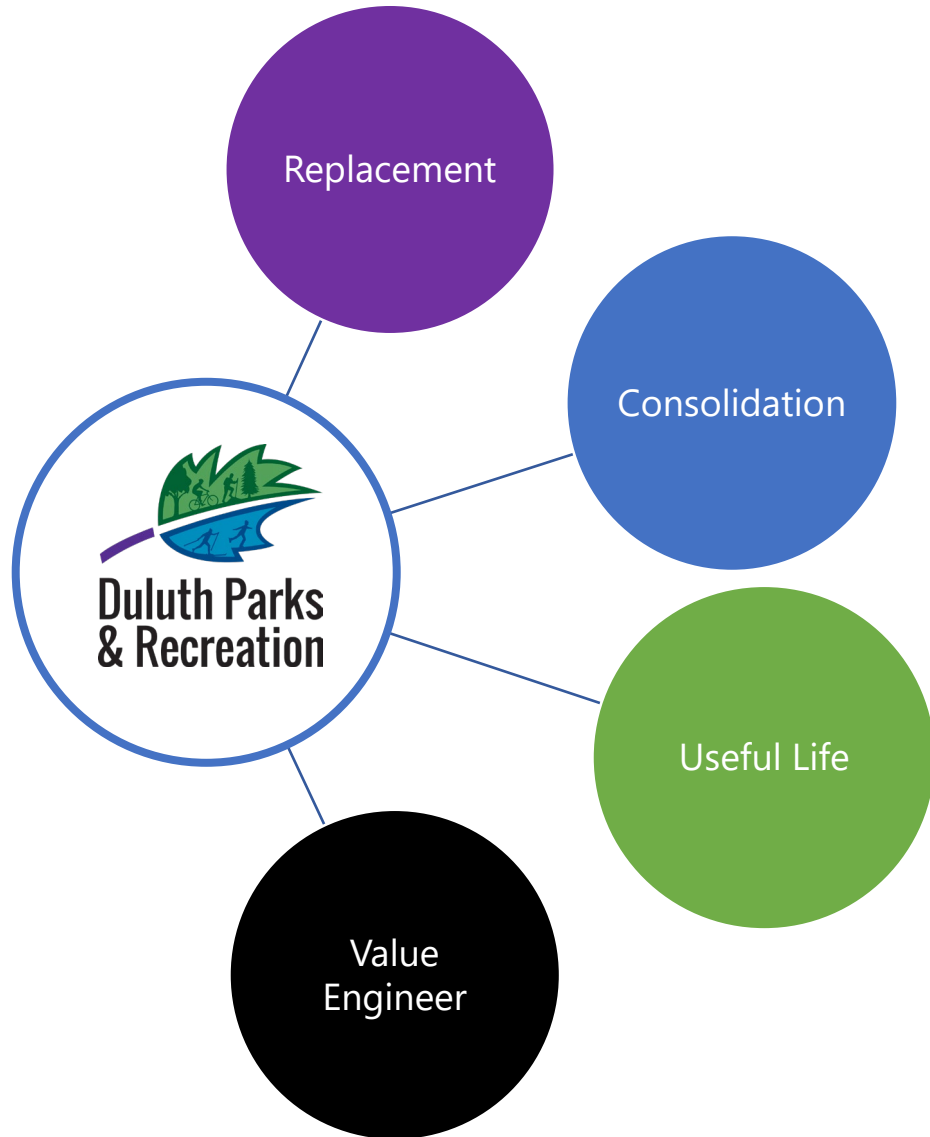
Capital Maintenance: Pick up in existing operating budgets, typically \$10K or less. What gets done is chosen based on the **worst first**, political pressure, reactive repair/replacement. May contract out the work.

- Replace windows, a small patch on a roof, replace large section(s) of fencing

Capital Project: More than \$10K for full project scope, many elements or one expensive element, often requires specialized services, plans, and/or community engagement

- Boiler replacement, full roof replacement, park reset, playground replacement

Definitions, continued



Replacement – the act of replacing a removed asset with a similar or same new asset in the same general location

Consolidation – the act of removing assets that have surpassed their useful life and replacing them with fewer, newer and more functional assets without significantly compromising overall experience

Useful Life – Estimate of the number of years an asset will remain in useable condition

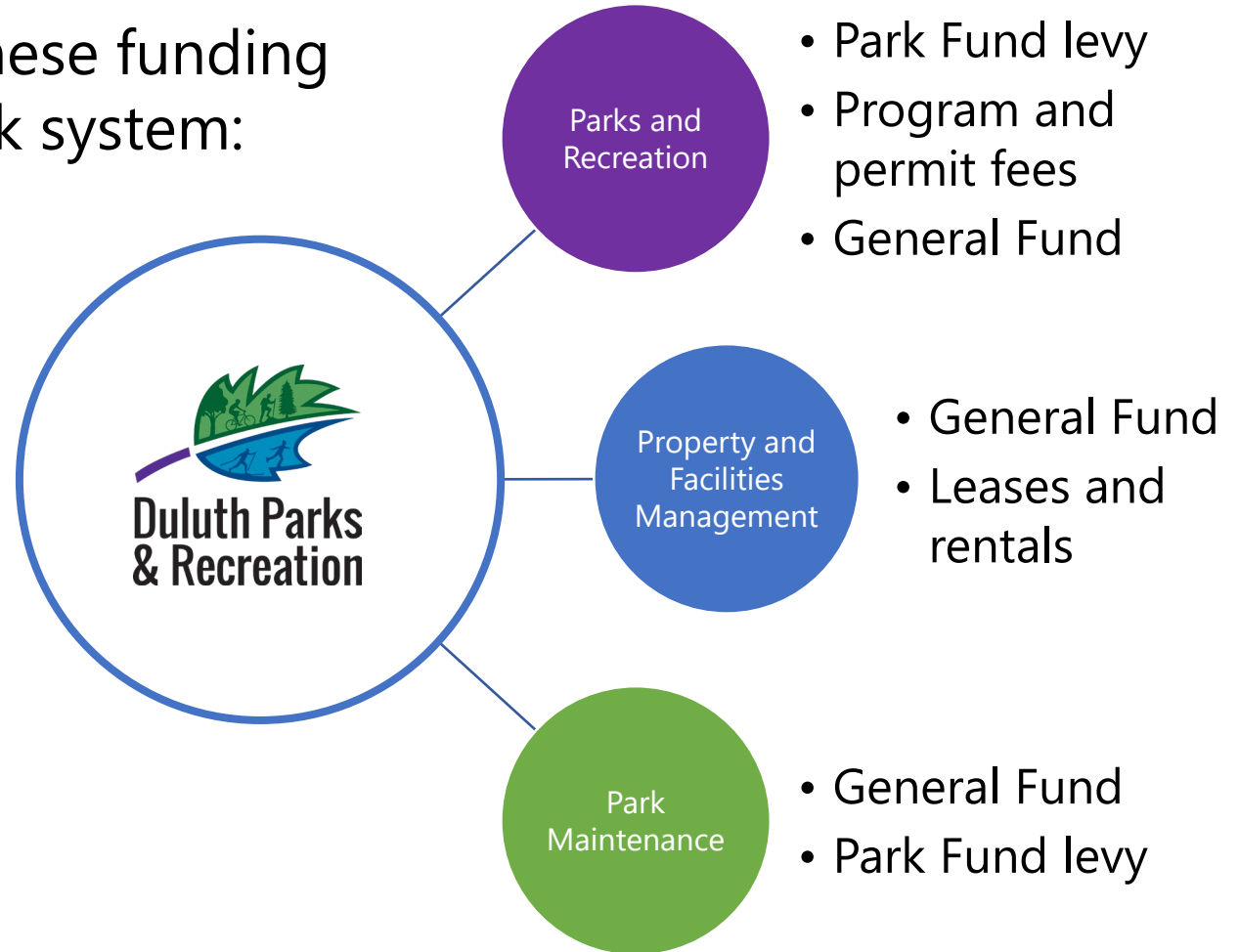
- a. Life span is shortened when routine maintenance is not performed. Set it and forget it = shorter life span.
- b. Examples: Playground = 20 years, eventually access to replacement parts on old playgrounds is not possible

Value Engineer – Optimizing project to reducing project cost and maintaining priority project goals, including but not limited to adjustments to quality, value, functionality, performance, safety, aesthetic, ease of maintenance, useful life

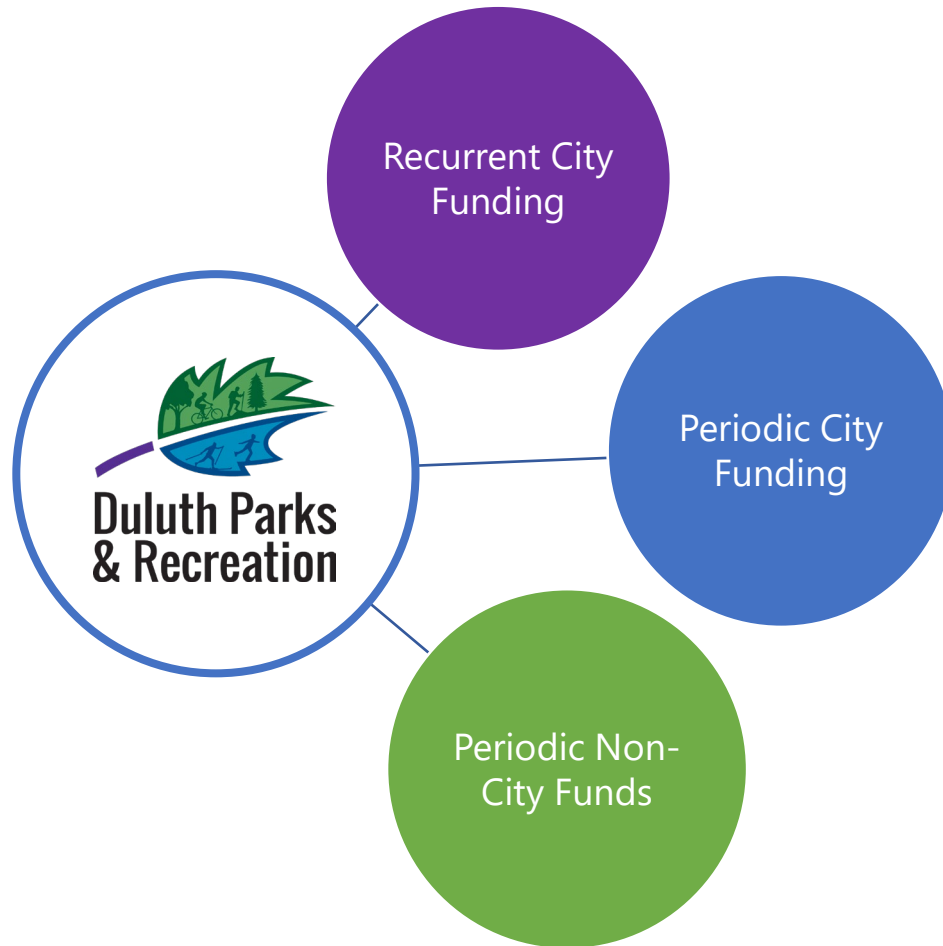
Background: Budget Sources

Among the three City Divisions, these funding sources (revenue) support the Park system:

- Park Fund levy
- General Fund
- Leases and rentals
- Program and permit fees
- State and federal grants



Types of Capital Funding



Recurrent City Funding:

- Park Fund
- General Fund

Periodic City Funding:

- General Fund Underspending within Department
- Proceeds from Asset Sales
- Half and Half Funds
- Tourism Tax Allocation

Periodic Non-City Funding:

- Bonding
- Grants
- Arpa

Background: Essential Spaces Plan – Budget Analysis

- The Essential Spaces comprehensive plan reviewed these funding categories and amounts for a point in time analysis of funding to support the Duluth Park system.

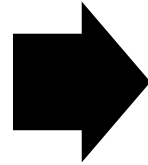
Figure 2: Duluth Park System Funding Categories (2022)

PARKS AND RECREATION		PARK MAINTENANCE		PROPERTY AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT		Total Revenue for General Operating & Maintenance (sum of three budgets)	
Property Tax Levy	\$1,915,000	General Fund	\$2,502,100	General Fund (Utilities)	\$670,750		
General Fund	\$280,000	Property Tax Levy	\$685,000	Leases, Rentals, Other	\$123,400		
Revenue & Other	\$171,800	Tourism Tax	\$200,000				
Fund Balance	\$124,200	Other	\$11,000				
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TOTAL	\$2,491,000	TOTAL	\$3,398,100	TOTAL	\$794,150		\$6,680,250

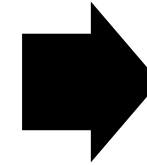
- While the table indicates “Total Revenue for General Operating & Maintenance,” what it fails to explain, is that the total City funding available for Capital investment is also sourced from this amount each year.
- Because the Park Property Tax Levy is capped, General Fund allocations remain generally flat, and operational costs increase, **the amount of Capital funding for the Duluth Park system decreases each year** as the cost to operate and do capital projects increases each year.

Funding Dominos

When routine maintenance is not well-funded, it piles up and creates a backlog, which leads to deferred maintenance.



When deferred maintenance does not have an adequate funding source, deterioration continues, repairs become more expensive, and fixes become capital-size projects.



Without a meaningful capital funding source, spaces become vacant, dilapidated, unsafe, and often difficult to restore, leading to removal without replacement as the most likely solution.

And then, it's too late...

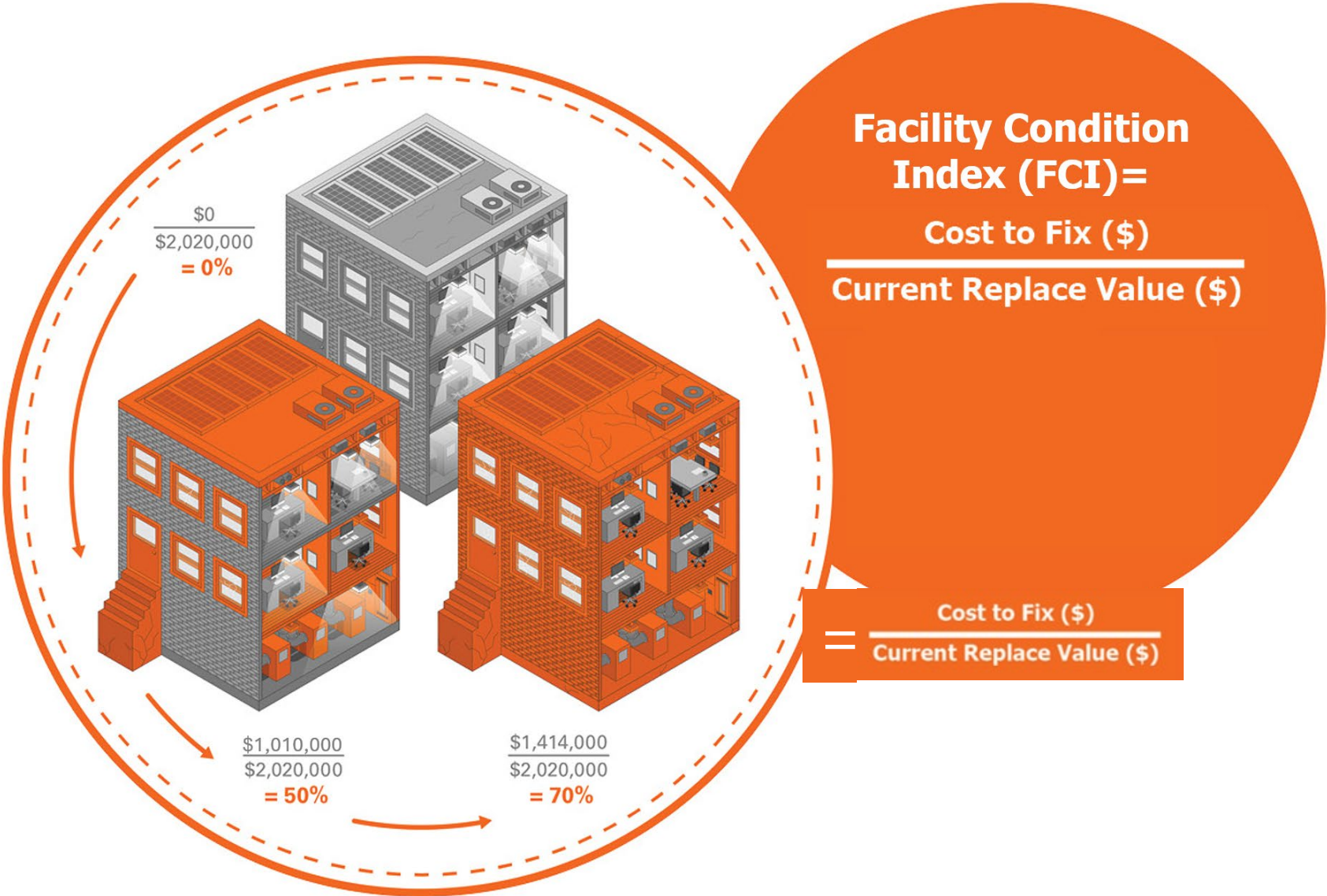
The cost and effort to keep something in place exceeds our collective capacity.

Liability stacks up.

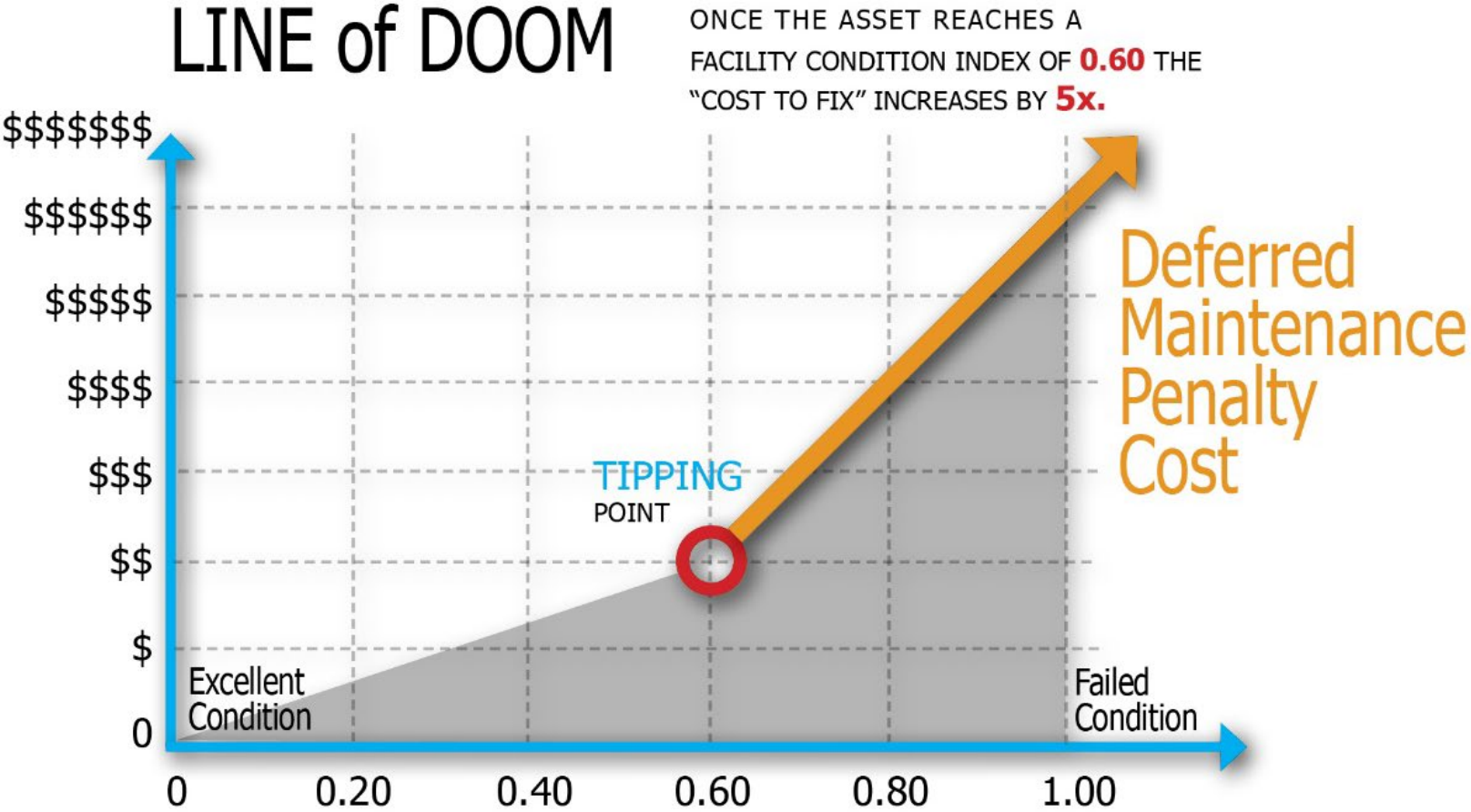
Risk for injury increases.

Assets get removed without replacement.

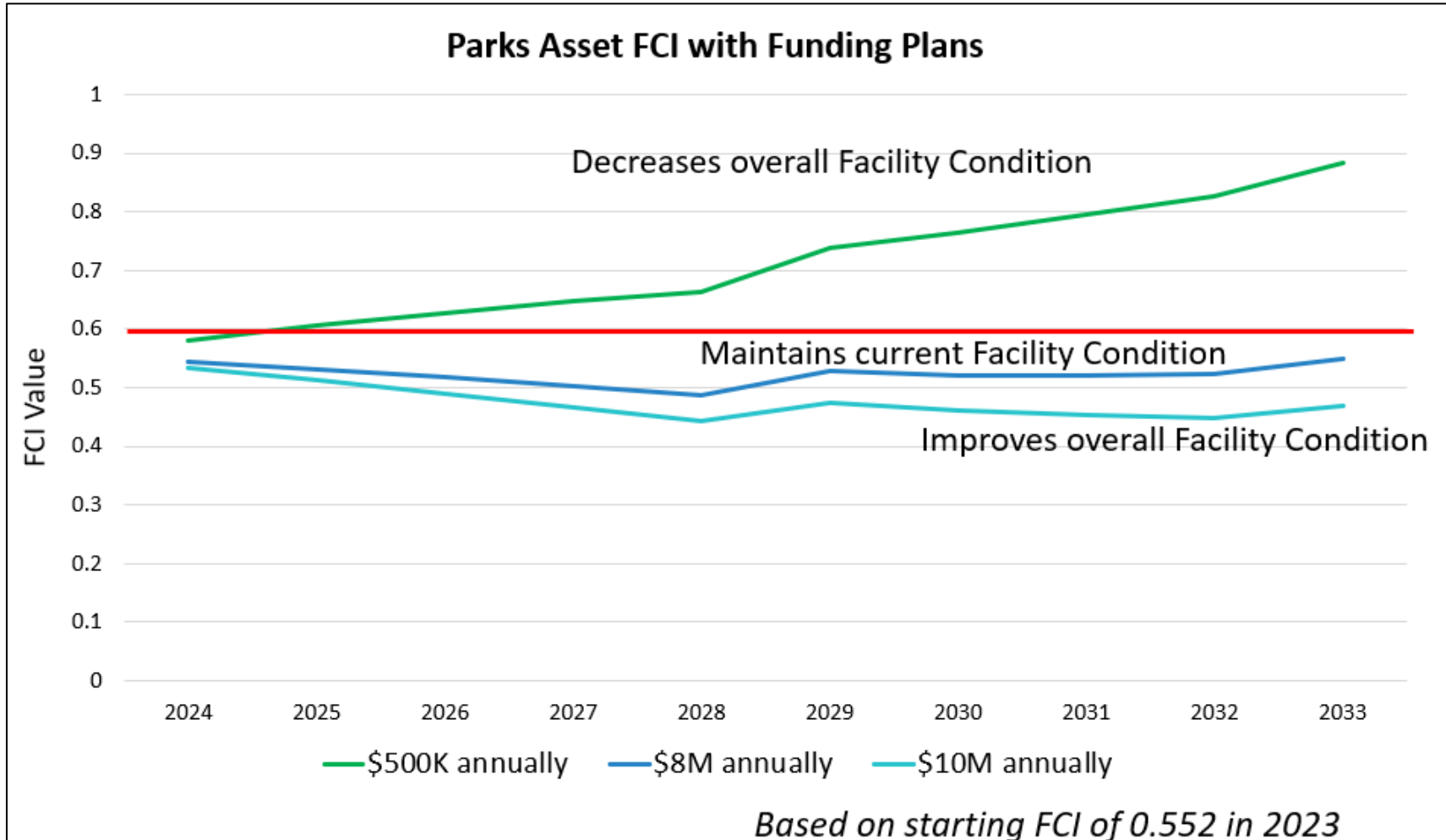
What is FCI?



Line of Doom



Ten Year Investment Analysis



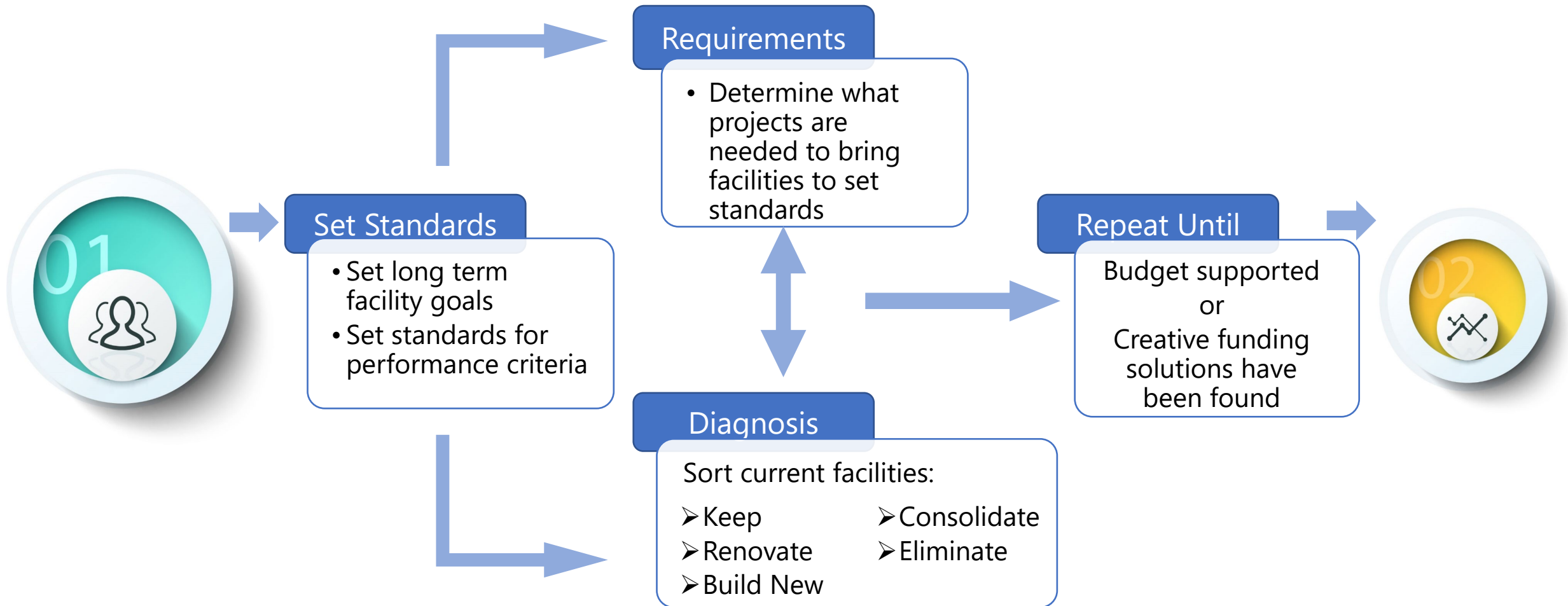
Includes buildings and site amenities for 75 parks across Community, Destination, Neighborhood, and Special Use Parks

An investment of \$80M over ten years is necessary to maintain the current FCI.

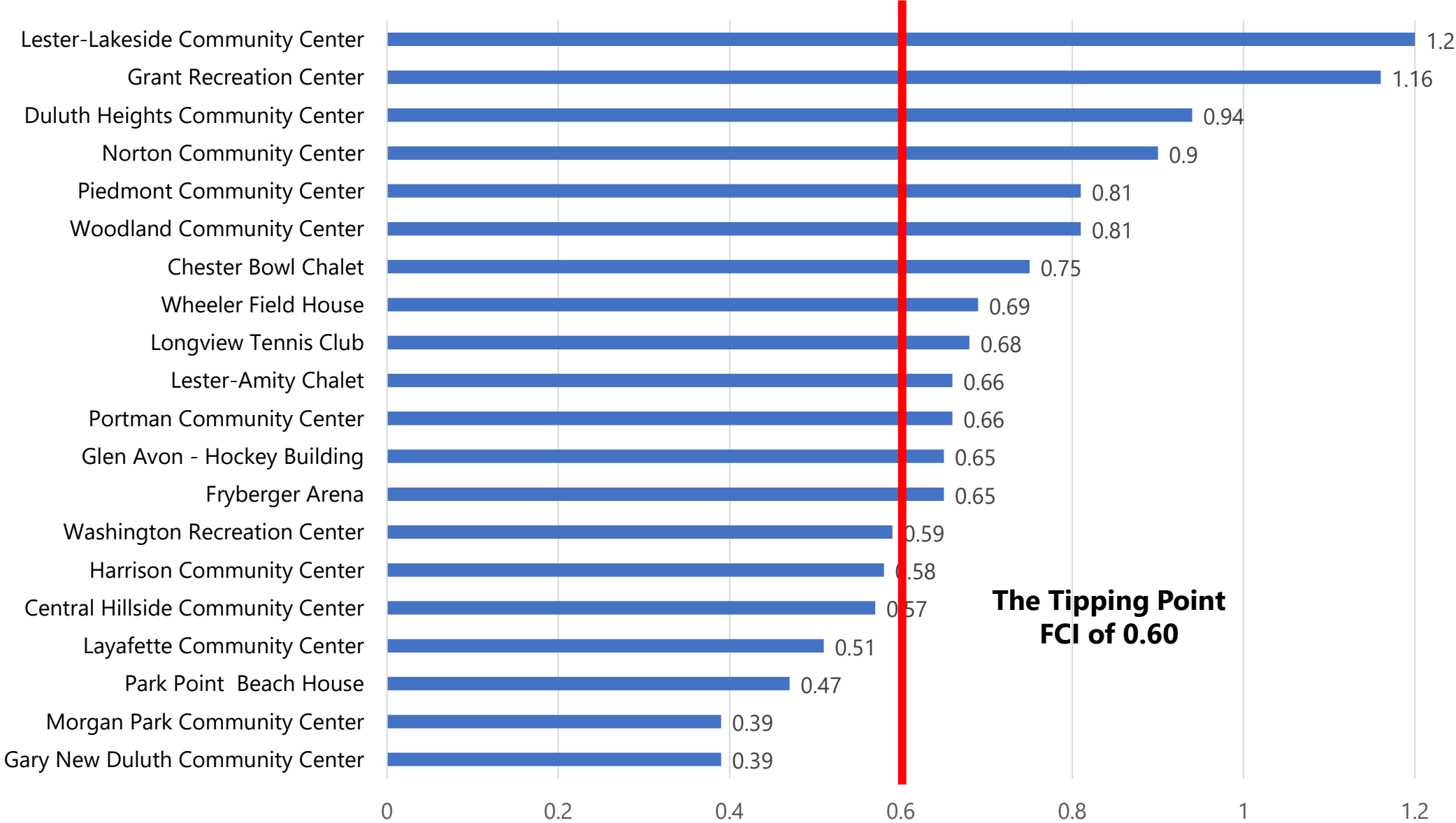
Ongoing Strategic Planning Process



The Decision-Making Cycle



Parks Buildings FCI Ranking



Parks Buildings

- Aggregate FCI – 0.53
- Total Renewal Cost – \$47.6M
- Deferred Maintenance – \$34M

*Based on current data for 102 populated buildings of 367 total parks assets.



Norton Park

- Current Campus FCI – 0.89
 - *Current Community Club FCI – 0.90*
- Plan of a \$500,000.00 investment into park
 - Replacement of existing building with a picnic pavilion
 - Playground replacement
 - Site amenities and improvements
- Estimated Campus FCI after improvement - 0.18





Portman Park

- Current Campus FCI – 0.78
 - *Current Community Club FCI – 0.66*
- Total Renewal Cost – \$1.62M
- Deferred Maintenance - \$668,818





Playgrounds

- Current Aggregate FCI – 0.44
- ≈\$250k-\$500k per site to replace

*Based on data from 34 of 42 playgrounds

Playground Examples

Lincoln Park

Playground Renewal
FCI reset to 0



Hillside Sport Court

Playground – End of useful life at 27
years old

Planned replacement in 2026/2027





Bridges

- Aggregate FCI – 0.72
- Total Renewal Cost – \$21.8M
- Deferred Maintenance – \$2.9M

- Additionally, each bridge needs to be inspected every 1-4 years depending on condition.

- *Based on current data

Bridge Examples

Lester River Snowmobile Bridge

- FCI – 1.24
- Critical Condition, needs to be removed or replaced



Chester Bowl Bridge Replacement

- FCI – 0
- Replaced temporary bridge in 2023
- Flood damage in 2012 destroyed previous bridge



Park Example: Brighton Beach

- Current FCI – 0.0
- Investment of \$3.25M necessitated by storm damage, but campus was failing before that
- Renewed park amenities, increased accessibility, improved programming options



Table 9: Park Amenities

Amenity	Quantity
Park Pavilions & Gazebos	18
Soccer Fields	11
Baseball / Softball Fields	18
Multiuse Fields	23
Basketball Court Sites	24
Tennis Court Sites	8
Pickleball Court Sites	3
Multiuse Court Sites	2
Playgrounds	39
Toddler Playgrounds	5
Accessible Playgrounds	9
Hockey Rinks/Pleasure Rink Sites	7
Pleasure Skating Only Sites	2
Skate Parks	6
Restrooms	11

Source: Design Workshop Analysis 2021, City of Duluth GIS data & inventory assessment

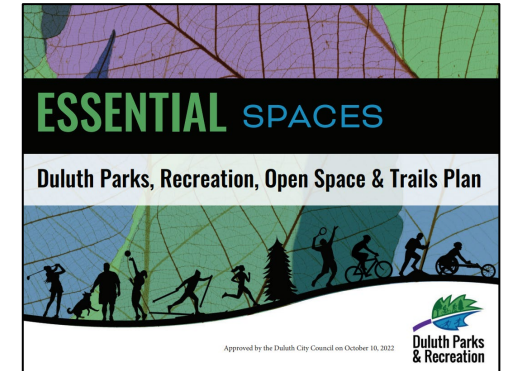
Types and Quantities of Park Amenities and Assets

- Table 9 – Essential Spaces Master Plan
- Additional assets to consider:
 - Buildings
 - Memorials
 - Ex: Angel of Hope
 - Parking Lots
 - Bridges
 - Flagpoles
 - Specialty structures
 - Ex: Leif Erikson Stage
 - Boat landings/Water accesses



Future Content: Costs and Expenses

- Park Amenities with associated repair and/or replacement costs
- Impact of different levels of recurrent and periodic funding on:
 - Maintenance
 - Capital Projects
- Correlation to Essential Spaces Plan
 - Suggestion: Review Chapters 2 and 4 for system evaluation, levels of service guidelines, funding opportunities
 - <https://duluthmn.gov/media/14188/10-10-22-essential-spaces-plan-for-council.pdf>
- Links to 2025 City Budgets:
 - <https://duluthmn.gov/media/qkypd3p0/2025-september-book.pdf>
 - <https://duluthmn.gov/media/ssyfyl2a/2025-capital-book.pdf>



Q&A

