Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map presents a geographic representation of the City's preferred future land use scenario. The map summarizes the community's discussion of how development, preservation, and public realm investment should play out over the next twenty years. Being able to see a picture of the end result is helpful in directing the myriad large and small decisions and investments over the next twenty years. While the map does not identify the implementation process or interim results it does show the end point, sometimes called the 'desired future condition,' of the next twenty years of development activity and land use decisions.

The land use map is intended to be used in conjunction with the written content of the Plan. The map shows the geographic layout of Duluth's preferred land uses in twenty years, but does not capture the full detail of Comprehensive Plan policies, identify the full range of recommended strategies, or present any staging of development priorities. The governing principles, the Plan's land use policies, and the strategies recommended in the Implementation section provide additional direction on staging of growth, on priorities within land use categories, and on implementation preferences.

The following section includes:

- Identification of the Comprehensive Plan future land use map components and land use categories;
- Summary statistics for land use categories;
- Description of the appropriate use of the map;
- Description of the limitations of the map;

Map Components

The future land use map shows three discrete elements of Duluth's preferred future: land uses, resource overlay districts, and future study areas. Other characteristics of the landscape, such as natural features, existing development, and infrastructure are not shown on this map.

Desired Future Condition

An explicit description of the physical characteristics of a specific area believed necessary to meet the community's principles and policies.

Since adoption of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 2006, the City Council has approved amendments to the Future Land Use Map. Click below to view them:
Amendment #1
Amendment #2
Amendment #3
Amendment #4
Amendment #5
Amendment #6
Amendment #7

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

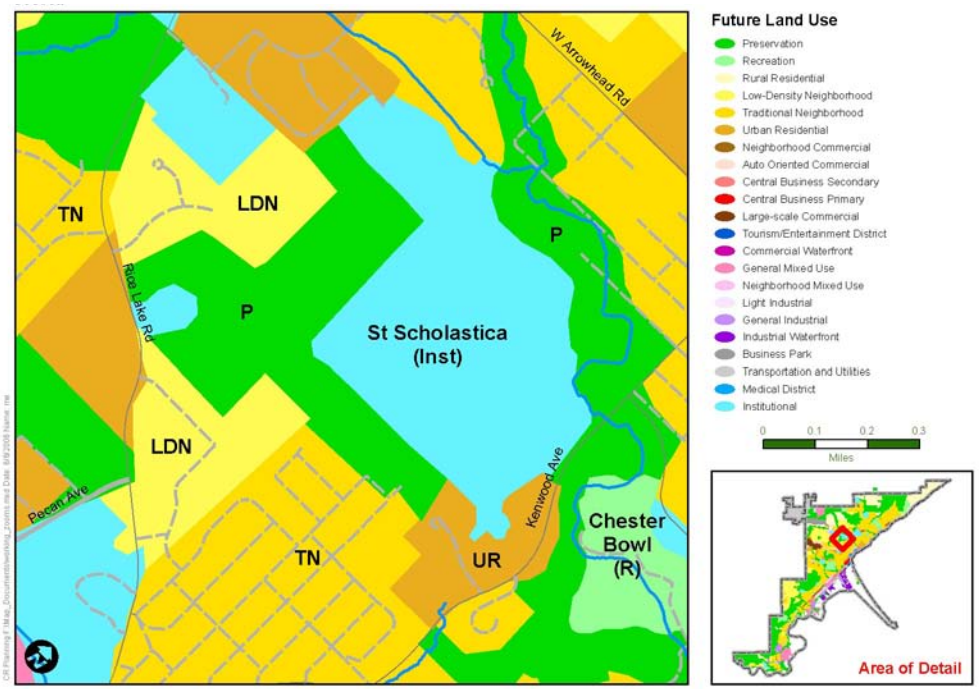
Map Components

Preferred land uses

The preferred land uses, represented by the distinct blocks of colors, represent different mixes of land uses rather than single category land uses. Land use areas are fairly general, not getting any more detailed than a city-block; map users should think of the map as showing the City land uses from a perspective of 30,000 feet over the City.

For example, several areas shown in Figure LUM-1 are identified on the land use map as Traditional Neighborhood residential use (the darker yellow color labeled "TN"). This area is planned, within approximately twenty years, to have primarily residential land uses with interconnected streets, three to six units per acre typical density, and typically including some lots with other land uses such as multi-family and commercial buildings, in addition to open space, parks, and trails. The land use map shows Traditional Neighborhood areas in currently undeveloped or partly undeveloped areas, and in fully developed existing traditional neighborhoods.

Figure LUM-1: Future Land Use



Understanding the Future Land Use Map

The Comprehensive Plan uses several overlay districts that identify special considerations for development or preservation activities that relate to Duluth's physical form and physical assets. The overlay districts are not land uses, but indicate that the underlying land uses must address special opportunities and risks associated with the overlay.

Sensitive Land Overlay

For clarity, only one of the overlay districts is shown on the future land use map – the Sensitive Land Overlay (SLO). The same area from Figure LUM-1 is shown in Figure LUM-2, this time partly covered by the Sensitive Lands Overlay. The overlay does not change the mix of land uses that are preferred for the area. The overlay does indicate a preference for a development pattern that clusters buildings and impervious surfaces away from sensitive natural resources, incorporates more open space than would normally be found in the base land use category, preserves more of the existing tree cover, uses more innovative storm water management, or incorpo-

rates other methods that preserve natural qualities of the land or other important assets while allowing development. The overall density may be lower than otherwise found in the base land use area, and the street pattern may be altered to accommodate natural resources protection or impervious surface limitations. The mix of land uses and many of the building form characteristics, however, will match the base land use description.

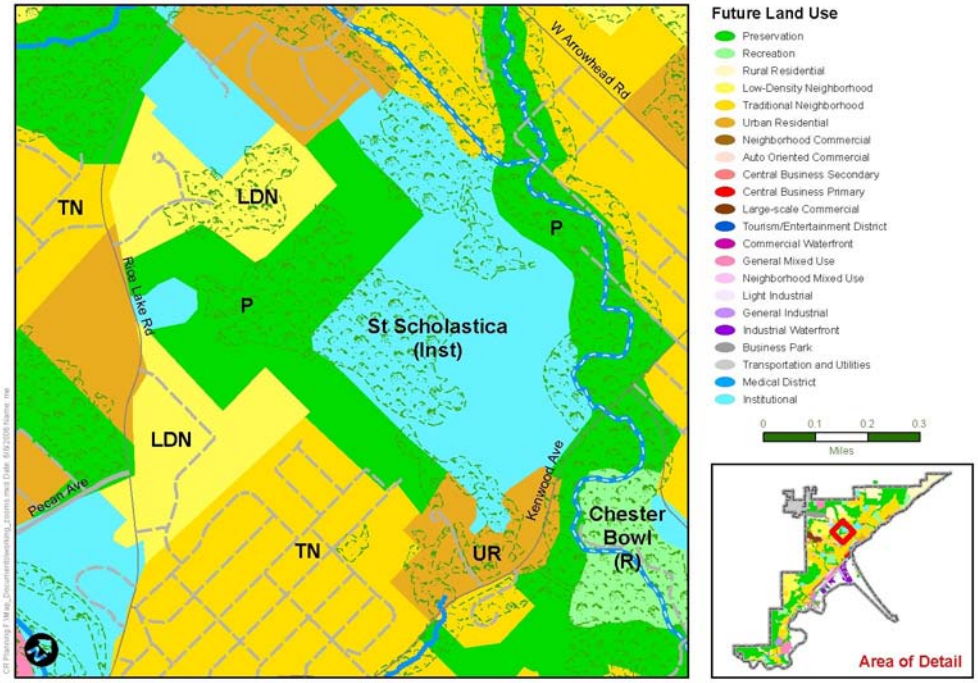
The Comprehensive Plan policies also refer to two additional overlay districts - the Higher Education and Historic (HEO and HISTO). These areas are represented on maps that follow the Future Land Use map.

Higher Education Overlay

With almost 20,000 students enrolled in higher education in Duluth, there are clear institutional impacts, both negative and positive, from this presence in the community. This is a significant new "industry" in Duluth and **Principle #4, Support emerging economic growth sectors**, makes clear reference to the economic, cultural and social benefits of this presence. However, traditional neighborhoods are being dramatically altered by conversion of single family homes to what are essentially rooming houses, with multiple, unrelated occupants. In most cases, these are business enterprises, the owner is not a resident. Houses constructed at a time when one car per household was the norm are now surrounded by cars parked in yards and on the street. New housing, catering to students, is also being constructed, often times remote from campuses.

These trends give rise to the Higher Education Overlay. These are areas where the presence of the educational institution 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. In addition, and related to student housing, city-wide standards should be considered regarding the density of rental properties in residential zone districts. The preservation of neighborhoods and support of student populations is both a supply and demand process. It would not be appropriate to regulate alone, without encouraging provision of alternatives.

Figure LUM-2: Sensitive Land Overlay



Historic Overlay

Duluth is fortunate in having an inventory structures; residential, commercial and industrial, built during periods which were significant in the history of the community and the region. Plan principles speak to the treatment of these resources. With Principle #1, **Reuse previously developed lands,** reuse applies to buildings as well as sites, and Principle #6, **Reinforce the place specific,** speaks directly to securing the future of structures which define Duluth. Many of these are physical representations of Duluth's reason for being. They provide an identity that other contemporary cities have lost to freeways, urban development, rapid growth and changing economics.

The Historic Overlay identifies concentrations of structures to be inventoried, surveyed or evaluated for significance and possible designation at the federal or local level. The overlay was applied to areas representing one or more of the following criteria:

1. It has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of Duluth, Minnesota or the nation.
2. Its location is the site of a significant historical event.
3. It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural development of Duluth, Minnesota or the nation.
4. It embodies a distinguishing characteristic of an architectural type.
5. It is identified as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of Duluth or Minnesota.
6. It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship which represent significant architectural innovation.
7. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics represent an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or City as a whole.

In addition, there are many worthy individual structures. The map does not attempt to locate every significant structure.

Future study areas

Finally, the future land use map shows a number of future study areas, denoted by dashed lines that surround 12 distinct areas on the map. Future study areas acknowledge the sometimes high level of uncertainty about long term, or even short term, land use preferences. Where uncertainty about market conditions, ownership patterns, or infrastructural capacity is particularly high, the Comprehensive Plan recommends additional study to guide possible modifications to the future land use map. The studies take one of two general forms, as described in the Plan policies and implementation recommendations: master planning areas and study areas.

Master planning areas are recommended in the policies as being areas where development or redevelopment should be planned, coordinated and phased for a single large area. Study areas can also be master planned as a single site, but generally have a broader range of ownership and building form issues. Study areas are more likely to need site specific decisions on preferred forms, design themes, and resolving transitions between the study area and adjacent land use areas and between existing land uses and the preferred land uses.

Figure LUM-3 shows the western port future study area. The goal is to master plan this area and integrate a wide range of land uses (hence the general mixed use designation) into the final form. The uncertainties about coupling brownfield mitigation with future industrial potential, solving infrastructure issues as discussed in the Implementation section, expanding Duluth's shore housing areas, and restoring natural systems leads to the designation of this area for future master planning.

Land Use Categories

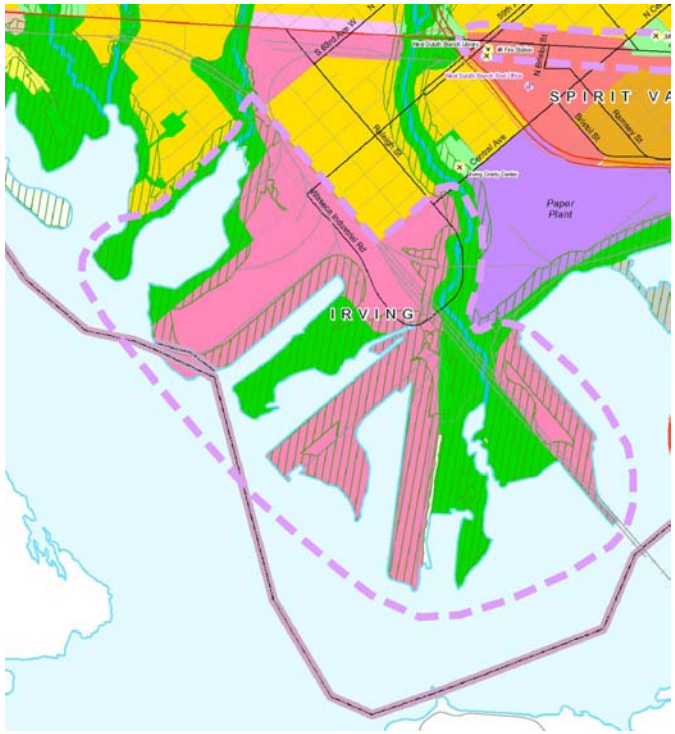
Each land use category is described on the following pages including the following descriptive information for each land use category:

- The preferred primary and secondary land uses and approximate mix of uses that could be found within the district;
- The approximate or typical density and intensity;
- The relationship to transportation infrastructure; and
- The type of performance standards or design considerations that may apply to particular land uses in that district.

Future Study Areas Designated on Land Use Map

Study Areas	Master Plan Areas
Oneota Industrial Park	Antennea/Tower Farm
Airpark Business Park	U.S. Steel Site
Eastern Port Area	Western Port Area
London Road (10th-26th)	
Central Entrance	
Grand Avenue	
Superior Street (Lincoln Park)	
Superior Street (Lakeside-Lester)	
Commonwealth Avenue (Gary-New Duluth)	
Arrowhead Road and Rice Lake Road	

Figure LUM-3: Future Study Area, Western Port Area



Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

Land Use Categories

CBD Land Use Categories	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
a. Central Business Primary **Code – CBP**	Encompasses a broad range of uses and intensities: • Governmental campus • Significant retail • Entertainment and lodging • Opportunities for high-density housing • Central plaza, public/open space • Public parking facilities	• High height and density limits • Protection of historic buildings or building groups • Form-based guidelines • Pedestrian-oriented design • No off-street parking required, but loading required • Avenue lake views are protected
b. Central Business Secondary **Code – CBS**	An area adjacent to and supporting the primary central business area or a stand-alone area providing a similar mix of destination land uses but at a lower intensity than the primary CB area. Includes mixed regional and neighborhood retail, employment centers, public spaces, medium density residential, and public parking facilities.	• Medium densities; multi-story and mixed-use buildings are encouraged. • Form-based guidelines • Pedestrian-oriented design • Limited off-street parking required, loading facilities required
c. Medical District **Code – MD**	An area encompassing the medical campuses and adjacent areas that support them, with related commercial, office uses and residential uses in the fringe areas of the district.	• Density increasing from fringe to taller buildings in core • Form-based guidelines to transition between core and fringe, preserve viewsheds • Pedestrian-oriented design, transit facilities, and parking • Relationship to institutional master plans
d. Tourism/ Entertainment **Code - TE**	Retail, entertainment and lodging facilities, meeting facilities, waterfront-related uses, open space uses.	• Medium densities and building heights • Design standards and design review

Commercial Land Use Categories	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
a. Neighborhood Commercial **Code – NC**	Small- to moderate scale commercial, serving primarily the adjacent neighborhood(s). May include specialty retail; community gathering businesses such as coffee shops or lower intensity entertainment; offices; studios or housing above retail (storefront retail with vertical mixed use). Typically situated in or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. May transition to neighborhood mixed use.	• FAR: 0.3 to 0.5 • Building footprints generally less than 20,000 sq. ft., individual storefronts as small as 3,000 sq. ft. • Larger stores with liner buildings • Parking is less prominent than pedestrian or bicycle features • Generally a 'node' rather than strictly a corridor • Edge or buffer standards along residential areas
b. Auto-Oriented Commercial **Code - AOC**	Commercial and office development focused primarily on needs and convenience of the motorist, without losing pedestrian access and connection. No residential uses. Situated along arterial roads. Can include a mix of auto- and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses or transition into neighborhood commercial.	• FAR: 0.2 to 0.3 • Building footprints less than 50,000 sq. ft. • Site design includes landscaping of parking areas, pedestrian walkways, buffering of adjacent residential • Parking requirements
c. Large-Scale Commercial **Code - LSC**	Mall, shopping center and big box retail development, with associated surrounding retail and service uses, but only ancillary office uses and no residential uses. Oriented primarily to the motorist, with planned internal circulation patterns while still accommodating pedestrian movement. Requires access to regional transportation routes. May include regional green infrastructure for watershed protection.	• FAR: 0.2 to 0.3 • Building footprints exceed 50,000 sq. ft. • Site design includes generous landscaping of parking areas; • Buffering of adjacent residential, improved pedestrian connections to and through sites

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

Land Use Categories

Mixed Use Categories	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
a. General Mixed Use **Code - GMU**	The broadest mix of uses, including light industrial, office, commercial, and residential use, with performance standards to ensure compatibility. Includes areas that are in transition from industrial uses and large redevelopments that require master plans and phased development. General or heavy industrial can be included when a large site is master planned to allow appropriate separation of uses.	• FAR: 0.3 to 0 • Pedestrian circulation and open space amenities should be provided for larger sites • Master planning for large sites
b. Neighborhood Mixed Use **Code - NMU**	A transitional use between more intensive commercial uses and purely residential neighborhoods. Includes conversions of houses to office or live-work spaces. May include limited commercial-only space oriented to neighborhood or specialty retail markets.	• Site design should maintain a largely residential building character • Commercial-only uses should be adjacent to non-residential or other mixed use areas
c. Commercial Waterfront **Code - CW**	Waterfront-dependent commercial uses, sometimes mixed with residential or adjacent to higher density residential. Includes tourist- or recreation-oriented uses. Commercial areas can be adjacent to industrial waterfront. Abuts other commercial uses and recreation areas, preservation areas. Access to regional arterial traffic and water access.	• Variable densities • Performance standards, including buffer between residential and non-residential uses • Design standards protect water quality, shoreland areas, adjacent preservation areas

Residential Categories	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
a. Rural Residential **Code - RR**	Areas of single-family lots of at least five acres. Limits the extension of municipal utilities for new development. Includes existing rural density areas with lots as small as an acre now served by municipal utilities but not planned for further subdivision.	• 1 unit/5 or more acres (may vary depending on soils) • Conservation development encouraged or required • Undeveloped areas of large lots are used to complement open space patterns (viewsheds, buffers)
b. Low-density Neighborhood **Code - LDN**	Single-family housing with urban services. Typified by curvilinear streets, houses with longer side parallel to street, and attached garages. Includes a range of house sizes and lot sizes. Non-residential uses are mainly uses such as schools and churches. Parks and open space are located within or adjacent to the neighborhood.	• 3-4 units/acre • Conservation development an option, required with SLO • Limited number of secondary/ granny flats
c. Traditional Neighborhood **Code - TN**	Characterized by grid or connected street pattern, houses oriented with shorter dimension to the street and detached garages, some with alleys. Limited commercial, schools, churches, and home-businesses. Parks and open space areas are scattered through or adjacent to the neighborhood. Includes many of Duluth's older neighborhoods, infill projects and neighborhood extensions, and new traditional neighborhood areas.	• 4-8 units/acre • Form standards and conservation development an option • Mix of housing types (i.e. town homes and 4-plexes) at corners • Limited commercial uses (i.e., 'corner store') serving neighborhood market
d. Urban Residential **Code - UR**	Greatest variety of building types, medium to high densities. Applicable to larger infill areas close to downtown, entertainment or activity centers, and waterfront residential areas. May include student housing areas, live/work units, and limited neighborhood retail. Connected or adjacent to parks and open space.	• 8 units/acre and up • Form standards ensure pedestrian orientation and mix of housing • Commercial uses that serve neighborhood market • Waterfront areas with access to docks or landings

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

Land Use Categories

Industrial Categories	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
a. General Industrial **Code - GI**	Areas for manufacturing, processing and other activities that may have off-site impacts and are generally isolated from other uses or buffered from them. Sites should have direct access to major regional transportation facilities and other infrastructure.	• Larger parcels • Variable densities • Performance standards for environmental effects and nuisance mitigation
b. Light Industrial **Code - LI**	Areas for manufacturing, warehousing and distribution; uses that have few outside impacts, and can be located in relative proximity to non-industrial uses.	• Variable densities • Performance standards
c. Business Park **Code - BP**	Primarily office and light industrial areas developed in a unified manner, with standards for site design and circulation patterns, signage, landscaping and building design.	• Variable densities • Performance standards
d. Industrial Waterfront **Code - IW**	Waterfront- or port-dependent industrial uses. May co-exist in proximity to other waterfront-related uses. Should have access to regional roads or rail.	• Variable densities • Performance standards for environmental effects and nuisance mitigation
Transportation/Utilities	**Description**	**Density / Intensity / Design**
Transportation and Utilities **Code - TU**	Applicable to airports, the Port terminals, large highway rights-of-way and similar uses.	• Will apply primarily to existing facilities • Low densities

Institutional	Description	Density / Intensity / Design
Institutional **Code - INST**	Applicable to university and college and public school campuses, large religious facilities or governmental campuses, cemeteries, etc. Applies primarily to existing facilities.	• Relationship to institutional master plans, which should guide expansions and ancillary land uses in adjacent land use areas • Based on current land use pattern
Open Space Categories	**Description**	**Density / Intensity / Design**
a. Preservation **Code - P**	Lands with substantial restrictions. High natural resource or scenic value, or severe development limitations. Primarily public lands but limited private use is anticipated subject to use and design controls. Examples include: most city parklands and primary viewsheds; shorelands of lake, rivers, streams; wetlands and floodplains; high-value habitat; low-intensity private or public uses.	• Low intensity uses such as trails predominate • Viewshed protection and access • Water access for passive use (fishing, canoe/kayak with limited parking)
b. Recreation **Code - R**	Park and open space areas dedicated to active recreation, such as neighborhood parks, community centers, downhill ski areas, playgrounds, ball fields, water recreation, and associated facilities such as parking.	• Higher human impacts than preservation areas • Water access with parking, supporting facilities

Overlay Categories	Description An overlay modifies the underlying land uses to emphasize characteristics of resources inherent in the land, buildings, or character of the geographic area.	Density / Intensity / Design Policies specific to the overlay area guide implementation decisions.
a. **Sensitive Lands Overlay** **Code - SLO**	High resource value lands or natural resources that may be developed under conservation design standards, transfer of development rights program designs, or low-impact performance standards.	• Varying densities and land uses • Intensity is concentrated where natural carrying capacity is sufficient, or moved to other parcels via TDR-type program • Conservation subdivision and design • Natural resource performance standards.
b. **Higher Education Overlay** **Code – HEO**	Institutional expansion or ancillary commercial or residential development is accommodated, regulated, and balanced with Plan preferences. Includes institutional planning areas and larger impact zone of land uses associated with university or college markets.	• Varying densities and land uses • Commercial, residential higher intensity uses are regulated to buffer owner-occupied areas • Related to institutional master plans.
c. **Historic Resources Overlay** **Code - HISTO**	High resource value cultural/ historic areas and buildings. Redevelopment focuses primarily on adaptive reuse and new development is based on design standards.	• Adaptive reuse standards • Design review

Summary Statistics of the Future Land Use Map

The draft future land use map shows the preferred future mix of land uses for the City of Duluth, looking out approximately 20 years. Duluth's total land base, approximately 43,000 acres, is divided into the 22 future land use categories described in the previous section. Figure LUM-4 shows the approximate distribution of land by land use category.

The 2001 existing land use map showed that approximately 15,400 acres of the City (36%) was undeveloped. Undeveloped lands included both public and private ownership. The draft future land use map identifies land use categories for the entire City, including the existing undeveloped land. No land in the future land use map is designated as 'undeveloped.'

Figure LUM-5 shows the approximate assignment of undeveloped lands into the proposed land use categories. Assignment of undeveloped land into developable land use categories does not indicate that these lands will be developed in the next 20 years. Given market trends, demographic projections, and the City's stated preference for infill, redevelopment, and neighborhood extension, some of the land assigned a 'developed' category will likely remain undeveloped over the next 20 years.

Figure LUM-4: Total Land Base by Land Use Category

Future Land Use Category	Total Acres
Central Business Primary	104
Central Business Secondary	235
Medical District	81
Tourism/Entertainment District	95
Neighborhood Commercial	276
Auto Oriented Commercial	168
Large-scale commercial	404
Neighborhood Mixed Use	624
Commercial Waterfront	45
General Mixed Use	1,503
Rural Residential	3,868
Low-density Neighborhood	4,183
Traditional Neighborhood	10,103
Urban Residential	1,184
Business Park	557
Light Industrial	159
General Industrial	600
Industrial Waterfront	705
Institutional	1,465
Transportation and Utilities	2,525
Recreation	1,834
Preservation	12,485
Total	**43,217**

Figure LUM-5: Undeveloped Land Base by Land Use Category

Future Land Use Category	Undeveloped Areas (2001)
Central Business Primary	2
Central Business Secondary	20
Medical District	0
Tourism/Entertainment District	2
Neighborhood Commercial	41
Auto Oriented Commercial	31
Large-scale commercial	61
Neighborhood Mixed Use	101
Commercial Waterfront	11
General Mixed Use	312
Rural Residential	1,945
Low-density Neighborhood	2,083
Traditional Neighborhood	2,049
Urban Residential	316
Business Park	285
Light Industrial	13
General Industrial	216
Industrial Waterfront	111
Institutional	178
Transportation and Utilities	1,307
Recreation	48
Preservation	6,234
Total	**15,364**

Figure LUM-6: Undeveloped Land with SLO

Future Land Use Category	Undeveloped With SLO
Central Business Primary	0
Central Business Secondary	0
Medical District	0
Tourism/Entertainment District	0
Neighborhood Commercial	14
Auto Oriented Commercial	10
Large-scale commercial	32
Neighborhood Mixed Use	21
Commercial Waterfront	7
General Mixed Use	199
Rural Residential	1,386
Low-density Neighborhood	935
Traditional Neighborhood	983
Urban Residential	189
Business Park	15
Light Industrial	1
General Industrial	39
Industrial Waterfront	46
Institutional	118
Transportation and Utilities	378
Total	**4,376**

Sensitive Land Overlay

A critical element of land use planning is setting aside the community's 'green infrastructure' before identifying where development is preferred. Green infrastructure includes a variety of natural systems, such as groundwater recharge and storm water infiltration; habitat for unusual or desirable plant and animal communities; passive and active recreation areas; and viewsheds and open space that sustain quality of life and help maintain property values of adjacent developed lands. Duluth has identified areas where natural functions and systems need to be preserved or restored, yet can also sustain some development. Over these areas the future land use map shows a sensitive land overlay. The overlay lies on both developed and undeveloped lands, covering almost half the City's land base (21,283 acres, or 48%), including all Duluth's shoreland (streams, rivers, and Lake Superior).

Approximately 60% of the City's undeveloped lands are assigned the SLO designation. Figure LUM-6 shows the breakdown of undeveloped lands that have been assigned a 'developable' land use category, but also have an SLO designation. Figure LUM-7 shows the proposed breakdown of undeveloped lands by developed land use categories, undeveloped (preservation and recreation) land use categories, and the land that is assigned both a developed and SLO designation.

Figure LUM-7: Undeveloped Land Base

Existing Undeveloped Land	Acres	% of Total
Total	**15,364**	**100%**
Assigned a Developed LU Cat.	9,082	59%
Assigned a Pres./Rec LU Cat.	6,282	41%
Assigned an SLO overlay	9,376	61%
Assigned as Developed and SLO	4,376	28%

Using the Land Use Map

Understanding and using the land use map requires an understanding of the difference between comprehensive planning and other land use planning activities, such as zoning, that helps move Duluth toward the Plan's goals, or master planning, that prescribes parcel specific development patterns. A land use map must not be confused with a zoning map, even though the two are inextricably linked.

The land use map, in conjunction with the governing principles, and strategies policies, provides direction to land owners, developers, government staff and elected officials as they make land use decisions. Development investment, preservation activities, infrastructure and regulatory decisions should ideally move the community toward the 'desired future condition' shown on the land use map, and should not conflict or preclude the desired future condition.

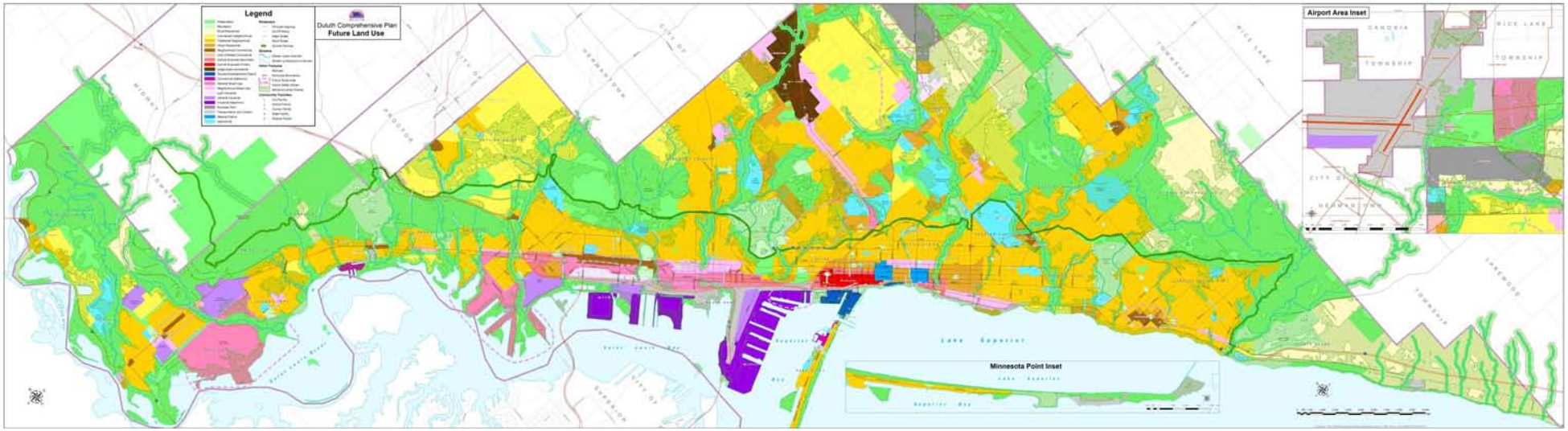
On the following pages are several examples of how the land use map can inform decisions by land owners, developers, City staff, and the general public. The examples are for illustration only and not intended to be recommendations for any action.

Not a Zoning Map . . .

Land Use Map – a 20-year distant snapshot of the community's preferred future mix of land uses. The map shows what the community *prefers* – the map guides land use decisions for the next 20 years.

Zoning Map – a regulatory map for the immediate future. The map shows what the community has already decided to *allow* today.

Figure LUM-8: Illustrative Land Use Map (see pages 39-41 for larger scale)



Situation - Within an area that has been designated Traditional Neighborhood in the Plan, there is an existing land use, such as an office building or a warehouse, that does not fit within the Traditional Neighborhood land use category.

Using the Land Use Map

The City is considering appropriate land use strategies to move toward the desired goal in this area, which is a mix of land uses consistent with the Traditional Neighborhood category. The desired end (a mix of land uses reflecting the Traditional Neighborhood category) could be met under a variety of strategies:

- Regulatory changes through the zoning ordinance, such as making the office or warehouse land use non-conforming;
- Allowing the land use to remain, but offering an incentive for the land or business owner to move to another site;
- Deciding that the market will ultimately convert the inconsistent land use to one compatible with a traditional neighborhood category because the property is more valuable as a residential land use;
- Deciding that the existing land use could remain, but needs buffers or must adhere to performance standards that protect the primary land use (traditional neighborhood residential).

Any of these strategies will move the City toward its desired future mix of land uses. Some of these actions are regulatory, and would show up on a zoning map or in land use regulations. Some are non-regulatory – no change is made to the zoning or land use regulation, and no enforcement actions are necessary.

Both private and public decision-makers use the land use map to identify the end result, but still have to select an appropriate strategy. The map does not dictate the choice of strategy, only the desired end result of the strategy.

Situation - The TN area is currently undeveloped, or lightly developed as large lot residential, and under existing zoning would preclude TN density and land uses. The City is considering zoning revisions that would make the Zoning Ordinance and map consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Using the Land Use Map

The Planning Commission examines the Comprehensive Plan map and the accompanying policies to determine what revisions, if any, are warranted to move the City toward its land use goals. The desired end (a mix of land uses reflecting the Traditional Neighborhood category) could be met under a variety of strategies:

- Rezone the area from large-lot residential to a zoning category that allows 3 -6 units per acre.
- Rezone the area parcel by parcel, as specific development proposals are advanced that have appropriate building forms and site designs;
- Rezone the area after the City has the capital to extend infrastructure into the area;
- Rezone portions of the area as an incentive to entice TN development proposals that include extending public infrastructure into the area;
- Extending infrastructure, and allowing zoning changes, only after infill opportunities in existing TN neighborhoods are fully developed.

Situation - A development proposal is advanced to build a 50-unit, 4-story, multi-family building in a Traditional Neighborhood land use area. The development would, consistent with the Plan, require a rezoning, variance, or possibly conditional use permit.

Using the Land Use Map

Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council review the proposal, considering whether the proposed land use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. As the Traditional Neighborhood mix of land uses does not include large multi-family land uses, the permit application is not consistent with moving the City toward its land use goals. Decision-makers could take several distinct approaches to the application:

- Reject the application outright
- Require modification of the application to make it conform to TN building and site forms, or
- Consider a Plan amendment, based on new information that justifies such a development, and allow the project to proceed.

Situation - A proposal is advanced to consolidate and permanently protect a large area of undeveloped land as a nature preserve in an area designed Traditional Neighborhood, and not covered by the Sensitive Land Overlay. The proposal does not require rezoning, but does require City sign off, investment, or transfer of City-owned land.

Using the Land Use Map

Staff, Commission, and City Council review would consider whether the proposed land use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Traditional Neighborhood mix of land uses does include open space but only as a secondary land use to single-family residential housing. Decision makers could take several distinct approaches to the proposal:

- Decline to sign off, fund, or transfer City land;
- Work to move the project to an area covered by a sensitive land overlay, and to make the protection area part of a limited development proposal that preserves utility right-of-ways so as to allow development of the remaining Traditional Neighborhood area;
- Amend the Plan, based on new information that justifies preservation, to allow the project to proceed.

In all these examples, the land use map specifies the end result, directing the decisions in regard to interim land uses, staging of development or investment in infrastructure. When land owners look to their development or preservation options, the land use map outlines the kind of options that are consistent with the community's long-range goals. When City staff or elected officials are making implementation choices, and identifying interim development or preservation priorities, the land use map begs the question – is this action leading Duluth to its goals, or does the action detract from the goals?

Moving to implementation

The most immediate ramification of the land use map will be in the review and overhaul of the City's development ordinances (zoning, subdivision, floodplain, shoreland, and others). As noted previously, zoning and land use maps are distinctly different, as are the zoning district descriptions and land use categories. Yet regulatory structures such as zoning must be consistent with the Plan and the Plan's land use map. As the City creates or modifies zoning districts and the zoning map, each decision must be evaluated against the yardstick of the Comprehensive Plan; does the proposed change rationally move the City toward the land use future portrayed in the land use map? Or does the proposed change conflict with the Plan and the Plan map?

Limitations of the Land Use Map

The land use map is a critical component of the Comprehensive Plan. When using the map in decision-making or evaluating potential development or preservation investments, several limitations must be kept in mind:

- The land use descriptions are, as noted earlier, preferred land uses. The descriptions are not regulatory in nature or prescriptive, as distinguished from zoning districts or other regulatory districts. Long range land use maps are necessarily more general than specific area plans, master plans for specific parcels, or regulatory maps such as zoning. The user must keep in mind that the land use map identifies the *preferred* mix of land uses, not the *allowed* mix of land uses.

- The map only shows land uses at a point in time 20-years distant. A similar snapshot of Duluth's land uses at an interim point in time, such as in five years or ten years, would not portray the same mix of uses or extent of development, preservation, or public investment activities. The user must keep in mind that the land use map shows the preferred uses in *20 years*, not necessarily the preferred uses for *tomorrow*.

- The map shows general land use categories that include, in almost every designation, a mix of land uses, building forms, development patterns, and green and gray infrastructure. As noted in Governing Principle #8:

  > *Cities have evolved as a mix of land uses, building types, housing types, and activities. Accommodating choice while protecting investment is a balance to strike in land use regulation. Mixed uses provide opportunity for a diversity of activity that segregated, uniform uses do not provide.*

  Two areas with the same land use designation will not necessary look the same or have the identical mix of land uses. The land use categories are intended to reflect the unique opportunities and assets associated with neighborhoods, natural resources, and public infrastructure. The user must keep in mind that land use designations reflect a *general mix* of land uses, not *specific design* for development or preservation.

- The map shows land use categories. Other qualities of the land such as natural functions, issues of neighborhood character or building design, or policies relating to connectivity (roads and trails) may not be clearly portrayed by land use categories. The user must keep in mind that in implementing the land use map it must be used *in conjunction with* the Plan's governing principles, other maps from the Plan, Plan policies, Plan implementation recommendations, and other data sources and maps.

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