



**City of Duluth  
Planning Division**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 4, 2014

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** John Kelley, Planner II

**SUBJECT:** Gary-New Duluth Small Area Plan & Health Impact Assessment Draft Recommendations

The Small Area Plan (SAP) process began in June of 2013 with a joint meeting of the SAP steering committee and the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Both Committees held monthly meetings to discuss the plan objectives. Public meetings were held in November 6, 2013 and January, 2013. At the February 11, 2014 Planning Commission meeting staff gave an update on the Gary-New Duluth SAP process and members reviewed the plan's draft recommendations. At the February 26, 2014 Annual Planning Commission meeting, Kelly Muellman of the Minnesota Department of Health reviewed the HIA process and some of the draft recommendations from the assessment of the SAP.

Complete documents of both the SAP and HIA are being assembled along with the draft recommendations. The attached SAP and HIA recommendations are the culmination of the data, information and input analyzed during the planning process. Also attached please find comments received via email regarding the plans recommendations.



# DRAFT

## **Gary-New Duluth Small Area Plan**

### **Draft Recommendations List**

#### **Goal 1.**

**Guide new development opportunities that complement existing development while minimizing potential negative impacts.**

#### ***Rationale***

The Gary-New Duluth neighborhood area has been in a state of transition for a number of years since the closure of the US Steel and the Cement Plant. The facilities were two of the largest employers of the study area and the region. Commercial and residential development activity has been slow over the years to return to the area. The commercial corridor along Commonwealth Avenue contains existing businesses that are long standing in the community but the corridor is lacking in shopping and services that will promote and foster a vibrant neighborhood. The former cement and steel plant sites have available development area that is currently being marketed for new industry.

The surrounding residential neighborhoods are stable with well-maintained homes and the potential for infill housing. The anticipated commercial and industrial development will prompt the need for additional residential workforce housing. A mix of housing types will be needed to meet the income level and living needs of residents.

#### ***Recommendations***

##### **Commercial**

- A. Local Businesses should establish an Association and evolve into a business improvement district.
- B. Establish a working relationship with economic development groups such as Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) to recruit business and industry to the area.
- C. Compile available land inventory for commercially zoned property.
- D. Revitalize blighted properties including renovation of existing structures and/or removal of blighted buildings, and the site prepared for new development.
- E. Establish entry monument features at entry points into the neighborhood:
  1. North end features should be located at Becks Road and Commonwealth Avenue and designed to face Becks Road and Grand Avenue. (see Map 1)
  2. South end features should be located at Commonwealth Avenue and State Highway 23 and East McCuen Street and Commonwealth Avenue. (see Map 1)
- F. Encourage building designs and storefronts to be consistent with the existing building character of the commercial corridor along Commonwealth Avenue.

## **Residential**

- A. Encourage residential infill on vacant lots within the developed portions of the neighborhood and available lands for housing within the study area. (see Map 2)
- B. Identify housing needs for current population and for future workforce.
- C. Encourage a mix of Market Rate housing stock including single-family and multi-family.
- D. Tax forfeited properties to be sold at fair market value.

## **Goal 2.**

**Change zoning map designation to better reflect existing land use while minimizing potential negative impacts to surrounding area.**

### ***Rationale***

The Gary-New Duluth neighborhood contains one of two manufactured housing communities in Duluth. The site currently has split zoning with four zoning districts Residential Traditional (R-1), Urban-Residential (R-2), Mixed-Use Business (MU-B) and Industrial-General (I-G). The use as a manufactured housing community is not a permitted use in any of the current zone districts and is considered to be a legal non-conforming use. The use can continue but not be expanded.

### ***Recommendations***

A. Rezone that portion of the Vintage Acres manufactured housing community zoned MU-B and I-G to a zoning designation that is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The future land use for this area is traditional Residential which could support a rezoning to R-1 or R-2 zone districts. (see Map 3)

## **Goal 3.**

**To improve and enhance the natural environment.**

### ***Rationale***

The Gary-New Duluth neighborhood area has significant natural features including creeks, forested area and open space that make up its physical environment. These natural features are part of the fabric of the neighborhood and are what attracts people to the area. As new development occurs within the study area it will be important to preserve and protect these natural features.

### ***Recommendations***

- A. Minimize adverse impacts on the natural environment through leadership and policy, and address impacts of past practices where feasible.
- B. Motivate individuals, businesses, and community organizations to protect the environment, and provide opportunities for the community and visitors to practice stewardship and enjoy Gary-New Duluth's natural features.
- C. Require conservation design for any residential developments occurring in areas covered by the

Sensitive Lands Overlay designation in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

D. Encourage individuals, businesses and community organizations to work with the St. Louis River Alliance to protect, restore and enhance the health of the St Louis River through public awareness and community action.

E. Encourage redevelopment of Brownfields identified in the study area.

#### **Goal 4.**

#### **Provide safe and convenient motorized and non-motorized transportation options throughout the study area.**

##### **➤ Rationale (Motorized)**

Vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and other modes of travel utilize the existing streets and sidewalks in Gary-New Duluth. The primary routes for vehicular travel are on Neighborhood Streets and along Commonwealth Avenue. Future growth and development in the area will warrant the need for increased efforts to ensure safe vehicular transportation. Long term solutions require changing the behavior of motorists. This may be done by effectively reminding drivers to slow down, changing travel patterns, or instituting physical changes which limit the speed at which a motorist may comfortably drive.

#### **Recommendations**

A. Promote safe and comfortable travel in the neighborhood.

- Establish a neighborhood traffic safety group to monitor traffic speeds and driving behavior.
- Consider lowering posted speed limits in school zones and on local streets throughout the neighborhood area.

B. Work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to install warning signage for the narrowing of Grand Avenue onto Commonwealth Avenue at the CN railroad bridge.

- Signs alerting drivers to the changing road ahead.
- Warn drivers to Slow Down and look around for other cars.

C. Encourage the use of traffic calming treatments along Commonwealth Avenue and neighborhood streets including changes in street alignment, installation of barriers, and other physical measures to reduce traffic speeds and improve street safety.

- Evaluate bump-out configuration at the intersection of West Stowe Street and Commonwealth Avenue.
- **Improve street design and install barriers to reduce traffic speed and turning movements from 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue West (in front of Stowe Elementary School), West Carterett Street and 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue West to House Street.**
- Consider the installation of a landscaped center median/boulevard along Commonwealth Avenue from Reis Street to McCuen Street.

D. Encourage streetscape features, such as trees, landscaping, and street furniture that will contribute to the livability and unique character of Commonwealth Avenue and the entire neighborhood.

- As discussed in Goal 1, the recommended Business Association should work with business owners and the City to install interpretive display boards along Commonwealth Avenue promoting the natural and cultural history of the area.
- Install flower planters, in conjunction with City planting program, in front of businesses along Commonwealth Avenue.

- Improve appearance of street frontage along Commonwealth Avenue with benches and street art.

E. City Council adopted Resolution 13-0602R requesting City staff to review the feasibility of opening City trails for All-Terrain Vehicle Use.

F. Where potential trail corridors are planned and not located on City property, work with adjacent property owners to secure appropriate easements.

➤ **Rationale (Non-motorized)**

Pedestrian and bicycle travel can be enhanced by improving the existing sidewalk conditions, providing safe and well signed bike routes, and creating a neighborhood recreational trail system to facilitate multi-use pedestrian and bike pathways. Sidewalk installation and the linking of pedestrian routes to transportation stops and major corridors should always be a priority. Trail systems create vital connectivity, sustain property values and enhance tourism business. Additionally, trails provide common space for social interactions, improve overall community safety, and encourage healthy lifestyles.

**Recommendations**

A. Encourage the City to establish a sidewalk repair program.

- Work with residents on cost share for sidewalk repair.

**B. Implement recommendations from the 2002 Duluth Sidewalk Inventory identified for the Gary-New Duluth neighborhoods.**

C. Improve existing sidewalk conditions to create a comprehensive safe and convenient network.

- Work with City Engineering to allow for alternative walking surfaces/design in problematic areas to preserve the integrity of a natural or cultural feature.
- Focus sidewalk repair and reconstruction in priority areas: Stowe Elementary School, Neighborhood Streets, Commercial corridor along Commonwealth Avenue

D. Establish a network of recreational trails within the neighborhood to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel.

E. Encourage Minnesota Department of Transportation to consider installing a designated bike lane along Commonwealth Avenue.

F. Create opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle linkages to the St. Louis riverfront to provide greater access to this community amenity.

G. Link trails to adjacent neighborhoods, community facilities such as community centers, parks, schools, and the commercial and retail activity along Commonwealth Avenue.

H. Where potential trail corridors are planned and not located on City property, work with adjacent property owners to secure appropriate easements.

I. Improve pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding throughout the study area.

- Install directional signage for bike and pedestrian wayfinding throughout the study area as trail and bike routes are established. The directional signage will be part of a larger sign program that will be used throughout the City. Directional signage will be aligned with information provided city wide bicycle and pedestrian trail map.

- Directional signage and pamphlets shall include information on community facilities such as the Gary-New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area and the Veterans Memorial, parks, schools, and the commercial and retail activity along Commonwealth Avenue.

**Goal 5.**

**Facilitate a park planning process for park improvements.**

***Rationale***

The revitalization of the Gary New Duluth Recreation Area into a fully functioning Community Center and Recreation Area will provide a activity hub for people from "5 to 95". The revitalization is an integral component of the overall Small Area Plan. The values provided by a functioning park include, but are not limited to:

- Strengthening the "sense of community"
- Effective use of currently designated park property for the benefit of the community
- Improvement in health
- Reducing impacts of stormwater
- Improvement in property values
- Increased tourism

***Recommendations***

- A. City to develop an agreement with GND Development Alliance for park operations.
- B. GND Development Alliance to follow City sanctioned process for review of the proposed plan.
- C. City to support the GND Development Alliance on grant opportunities.
- D. City to provide guidance and expertise to the GND Development Alliance project team
- E. Promote the project on the City's website and by other appropriate means.





City of Duluth  
 Gary-New Duluth  
 Small Area Plan  
 Entry Monument Locations  
 Map 1

1:15,840  
 1 in = 0.25 miles  
 0 0.125 0.25 Miles

- Study Area
- Trout Stream (GPS)
- Other Stream (GPS)

Prepared by: City of Duluth  
 GIS Office and Planning Division  
 Printed: September 29, 2013  
 Aerial Photo: May 2013













Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan & Health Impact Comments

Sandra Timm

[stimm@centurylink.net](mailto:stimm@centurylink.net)

218-626-3582

I question the North boundary as Becks Road – I think the North boundary should include the cement plant site along with the current Duluth Brass site. They have always been considered part of Gary.

Goal 1:

Commercial

- A. Agree all business should be involved with their own association – having input from only one or two businesses does not represent the neighborhood.
- B. Agree business and community club should be involvement with bring new businesses to the neighborhood.
- C. Agree
- D. Agree
- E. Agree
- F. The current building are all different – not really important

Residential

- A. Allow current houses with only one lot to purchase open lots next to their home or split lot between two homesteads if they are both single lot homes. Require all new homes to at least have two lots prefer three depending on if the lot is 25 feet or 30 feet. Most homes benefit the area if they have additional sized lots.
- B. We currently have a variety of housing options in the neighborhood. More home ownership will improve the neighborhood in the present and well as future.
- C. I think we already have that in our neighborhood but I could be mistaken.
- D. Agree – also review the current fair market value.

Goal 2:

Rezoning sections of Vintage Acres to match current land use. I agree

Goal 3:

Agree but involve area residents who have been involved with our natural resources for more knowledgeable solutions. The scouting leadership family in our neighborhood knows more about the St Louis River issues than most people – not using them as a resource is extremely harmful to the protection of all resources.

Goal 4:

- A. These concerns have already been fixed with change to directional single lane traffic and bump outs at the school crossing areas.
- B. Disagree – I do not see an issue there – traffic already flows nicely
- C. Disagree – there are no traffic issues on Commonwealth or other main streets in the neighborhood. The single lane already reduces speed and further reduction

would be problematic for traffic flow especially with the goal of increasing homesteads and business in the area.

- D. This is confusing – Commonwealth was designed to allow for easy snow removal access – the light pole location assist this. Now you want to change this and plant trees – I disagree. Placing removable items like benches or planters would be agreeable.
- E. This would be something that could be beneficial to members of our community. Some city trails should be open to all modes of transportation.
- F. Agree

#### Recommendations

- A. Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Agree
- D. Disagree – already have major trail in neighborhood
- E. Disagree – this is a state highway and major traffic corridor – bicycle traffic currently rides within the traffic lanes along with vehicles but with the parked vehicle lanes with help our businesses and single traffic lanes adding a designated bike lane would be confusing and unnecessary.
- F. I believe that there is access currently but not in areas of private ownership – it would be pocket of access between the privately owned areas – difficult to open the whole shoreline for public access.
- G. Disagree – currently I do not see a need to add to the trail systems in the neighborhood.
- H. Disagree – currently I do not see a need to add to the trail systems in the neighborhood – private property trails are not very helpful to the owners.
- I. Disagree – same as G. H.

#### Goal 5:

I totally agree with all park improvements – this park will enhance the neighborhood better than any of the recommendations for bike or trail extensions. This will allow residents a central location for meeting and activities that will strengthen our neighborhood. Give our children a central location for activities that many of us used when we were raised in the neighborhood. My generation used the Stowe school skating rink shack in winter along with the Good Fellowship Club in Morgan Park – both locations were a gathering place for children and adults.

## John Kelley

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**From:** Jennifer Moses  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2014 2:54 PM  
**To:** John Kelley  
**Subject:** FW: Planning - GND SAP was submitted

**From:** [noreply@duluthmn.gov](mailto:noreply@duluthmn.gov) [mailto:[noreply@duluthmn.gov](mailto:noreply@duluthmn.gov)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2014 2:52 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Moses  
**Subject:** Planning - GND SAP was submitted

Planning - GND SAP was submitted

**First Name:**

Kara

**Last Name:**

Lee

**Email:**

[karal81@yahoo.com](mailto:karal81@yahoo.com)

**Message:**

Things I would love to have in Gary New Duluth; A nice park, or even a dog park. A classier pub/restaurant. The bars here are VERY undesirable to go to. Hugo's is disgusting inside and would like for them to clean it up. A small shopping area would be nice as well being we have to drive all the way to Miller Hill for ANYTHING. Kmart is a disgrace. Lets clean up the western end of Duluth. It has so much potential!!!

**Sign Me Up for the Mailing List Too:**

Yes

**Enter Text Below:**



## John Kelley

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**From:** Jennifer Moses  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2014 8:20 AM  
**To:** John Kelley  
**Subject:** FW: Planning - GND SAP was submitted

I still need to reconfigure this to send to you instead ... but in the meantime will forward ...

**From:** [noreply@duluthmn.gov](mailto:noreply@duluthmn.gov) [mailto:[noreply@duluthmn.gov](mailto:noreply@duluthmn.gov)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2014 8:15 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Moses  
**Subject:** Planning - GND SAP was submitted

Planning - GND SAP was submitted

**First Name:**

Bonnie

**Last Name:**

Besvold

**Email:**

[bonniebesvold@yahoo.com](mailto:bonniebesvold@yahoo.com)

**Message:**

So many great ideas! Most importantly to myself are the ideas of healthy food access and pedestrian/bicycling trails and safety. I live in Morgan Park and would love to be able to safely bike to Gary; unfortunately, Grand Ave is quite dangerous to bike on between MP and Gary. I know that grand is being redone soon (this summer I heard?!) but a paved trail running somewhere from the end of 88th (or anywhere one could avoid Grand) through to Gary would be ideal to allow access for residents of MP.

Great work, all!

Thank you :)

**Sign Me Up for the Mailing List Too:**

Yes

**Enter Text Below:**



# GARY/NEW DULUTH SMALL AREA PLAN HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT: PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

## THE SMALL AREA PLAN

From June 2013 to February 2014, the City of Duluth has been working with community members on a small area plan (SAP) for the neighborhood of Gary/New Duluth. The SAP builds on the goals, policies, and implementation strategies in the City's comprehensive plan in five specific areas: Commercial Development, Residential Development, Natural Environment, Transportation, and Park Planning. For a list of final SAP recommendations, go to the [Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan webpage](#) for the Recommendations under the Documents subheading.

## THE HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Minnesota Department of Health has been conducting a health impact assessment (HIA) on the SAP in collaboration with City staff and a Technical Advisory Committee made up of community members and representatives from St. Louis County Public Health, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging, Parks and Recreation, Metropolitan Interstate Council, and St. Luke's Hospital. The purpose of the HIA is to explore how the SAP will impact the community's health, positively and negatively, and make recommendations to the SAP to promote positive impacts and reduce negative impacts.

Based on community input, the HIA Technical Advisory Committee selected three areas of focus for the HIA: **Social Cohesion**, **Physical Activity** and **Access to Healthy Food**. This document provides a summary of the HIA findings and draft recommendations, and solicits public comment (see yellow box).

## HIA FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The HIA findings are based on extensive literature review, conducting analysis of local data using geographic information systems (GIS), summaries of data and analysis from existing local studies, and input from community members and topic area experts from local agencies and organizations. In order to promote the positive impacts of the SAP and reduce the negative effects, the HIA proposes a number of recommendations which have been grouped by social cohesion, physical activity, and access to healthy food. Each group is then subdivided by the sections of the SAP (commercial, residential, natural environment, transportation, and park planning). Each recommendation includes a priority level (low to high) that was identified by the HIA Technical Advisory Committee based on a combination of the recommendation's significance

### What is Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?

HIAs bring together scientific data, stakeholder input and public health expertise to identify the potential health effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on a population.

### 6 Steps of HIA:

1. **Screening:** Is an HIA feasible and likely to add value?
2. **Scoping:** Identify health effects and populations to consider.
3. **Assessment:** Analyze baseline conditions and the effects of the proposed plan on health.
4. **Recommendations:** Suggest changes to the plan to promote positive health effects and/or minimize adverse health effects.  
~ We are here ~
5. **Reporting:** Present results and recommendations to stakeholders and decision-makers.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Determine the effect of the HIA on the decision.

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The public is asked to provide comment on the draft Small Area Plan and HIA recommendations by March 14, 2014.

Go to the [Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan webpage](#) for the Small Area Plan and HIA summary and submit your comments in the comment form.



Minnesota Department of Health  
Health Impact Assessment  
Health.hia@state.mn.us

for health impacts and feasibility the recommendation based on the City's activities and priorities.

## SOCIAL COHESION

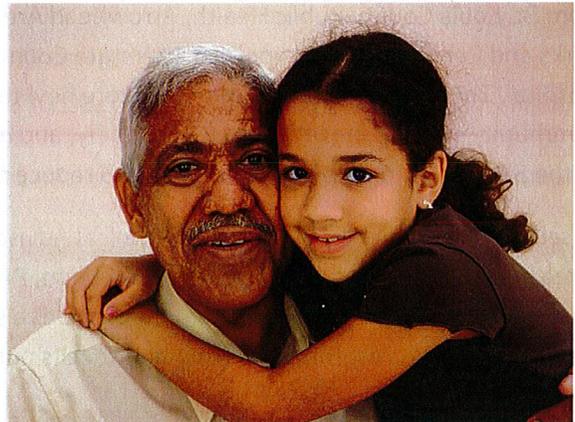
Social cohesion describes the strength of the relationships of a community; areas with high social cohesion are characterized by trust, participation and mutual support. People with higher levels of perceived social connectedness have lower blood pressure rates, better immune responses, lower levels of stress hormones, and live longer.

In the **Commercial Development** section, the SAP may promote social cohesion by strengthening relationships among business owners; offering new business and recreation amenities that act as informal gathering spaces for residents; increasing employment opportunities; increasing the sense of identity and belonging with signage and wayfinding; and decreasing crime and improving safety through the removal and redevelopment of blighted properties and appropriate lighting and streetscape improvements. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote social cohesion in Commercial Development:

#C1. The proposed Gary/New Duluth Business Association should network with West Duluth Business Group or other appropriate business groups, and add LISC as networking partner and investigate becoming an [At-Home Neighborhood](#), if possible. Priority level: High

#C2. The City's public information coordinators and the Gary/New Duluth Community Club should coordinate to increase media connections to promote the identity of Gary/New Duluth, including connecting the City's Wikipedia page to Gary/New Duluth, Tweeting, and connecting with Perfect Duluth Day to ensure Gary/New Duluth events are publicized on the Duluth events blog. Priority level: Low/Medium

#C3. Duluth Workforce Development should connect residents with training opportunities and workforce development resources (such as, [Duluth at Work](#), the Duluth Talent Database, etc.) to ensure that residents have the appropriate training for new jobs in the City and community. To increase access, trainings and/or neighborhood job fair should be held in the community at Stowe School or new Community Center. Priority level: High



#C4. The Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) and Community Development should focus recruitment on high jobs-density businesses to catalyze economic development, and prioritize development on the sites identified by the Gary/New Duluth blighted property list. Priority level: Medium/High

#C5. The community should work with the City and other partners to develop a comprehensive wayfinding system that welcomes people to Gary/New Duluth. The Canadian Northern (CN) bridge could be one of four sign points and gateways into Gary/New Duluth (similar to Superior's branding across Blatnik Bridge). If CN does not want a sign on the bridge, then a new sign could replace the existing basic green metal sign with white letters. Priority level: Medium/High



In the **Residential Development** section, the SAP may promote social cohesion by introducing new residents into the community increasing opportunities for new social ties. Additionally, social cohesion can be promoted by ensuring housing stock remains affordable to current residents, thereby reducing residential turnover and maintaining social networks. However, the Residential recommendations could decrease social cohesion if new residential infill housing

units cost more and as a result property values and taxes increase, displacing existing residents and breaking their social ties; and if income inequality between new and current residents increases. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote social cohesion in Residential Development:

#R1. The Gary/New Duluth Community Club and Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance should coordinate a community organized “welcome wagon” to welcome new residents. Priority level: Medium

#R2. The SAP should include a recommendation to support more diversified housing stock to meet the needs of all citizens in all neighborhoods for all incomes, all ages, and all family groupings. Develop a map of residential properties identified for residential construction as part of implementation. This work could be done as a partnership between private sector (realtors, developers) and the City, including the Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and DEDA. Priority level: High

#R3. The SAP should include a recommendation to work with HRA to support transitional housing, such as single-level housing for seniors and persons with disabilities. Priority level: Medium

#R4. The SAP should consider including a recommendation for bringing in an in-home care service or develop a residential-care home for seniors or those with disabilities, which could provide jobs in the community, as well as transitions for people who live in the community and want to remain there. Priority level: Medium



In the **Natural Environments** section, the SAP may promote social cohesion by preserving natural and well-vegetated areas and incorporating natural features into future development; increasing access to parks, trails and natural areas; and promoting development and programming that would preserve the environment and/or bring the community together to promote social bonding. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote social cohesion in Natural Environment:

#N1. Include a SAP Natural Environment Recommendation to define an urban tree canopy goal and strategy to further increase Gary/New Duluth’s commitment to preserving and improving the natural environment. Consider fruit trees to increase access to healthy food. Priority level: Low

#N2. The University of Minnesota (UMN) Duluth and Extension should conduct an Ecosystem Services Assessment to quantify the benefits of the local urban forest and waterways in Gary/New Duluth. Priority level: Low



#N3. The SAP should include a recommendation to encourage high-efficiency building design and operation for future construction and existing buildings. Priority level: Medium



In the **Transportation** section, the SAP may promote social cohesion by decreasing traffic speeds, increasing use of traffic calming treatments, encouraging streetscape features, and improving sidewalk conditions which will all improve the pedestrian environment to encourage more walking and neighborly interaction, especially for older adults and youth who rely on active forms of transportation to get to social activities. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote social cohesion in Transportation:

#T1. The SAP should consider recommendations for street lighting, marking unmarked street crossings, maintaining short blocks and frequent street crossings, orienting any new development to face the street, and increasing window coverage on street-facing commercial buildings. (See Commercial Development HIA Recommendation #C6.) Priority level: Medium

#T2. In the spirit of accessibility and creating a welcoming/usable neighborhood for all, streets should be designed and maintained with all users in mind. The City Council should approve the adoption and implementation of a [Complete Streets Policy](#) in Duluth. Priority level: Medium

#T3. The SAP Multi-Modal Transportation Recommendations should address lighting and vegetation along sidewalks and trails to enhance safety. Priority level: Medium/High

In the **Park Planning** section, the SAP may promote social cohesion by developing the Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area which may enhance residents' sense of belonging or identity with the neighborhood and provide activities where residents interact with each other and build social networks. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote social cohesion in Park Planning:

#P1. The City should approve and tangibly support implementation of the Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area concept plan. Priority level: High

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity refers to any activity that encourages the movements of one's body, including walking, bicycling, weight-lifting, skateboarding, stretching, or even working around the house or in the yard. Positive health effects of physical activity include: lower mortality rates; decreased risk of cardiovascular disease mortality in general and of coronary heart disease mortality in particular; decreased risk of colon cancer; lower risk of developing non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus; lower rates of obesity; relief of symptoms of depression and anxiety and mood improvement; and improvement of health-related quality of life by enhancing psychological well-being and by improving physical functioning in persons compromised by poor health.

In the **Commercial Development** section, the SAP may promote physical activity by attracting new businesses for residents to walk to and improving the pedestrian environment; increasing the number of jobs within walking or bicycling distance; and reducing crime through the development and removal of vacant and blighted properties and increasing the number of people out and about in the community. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote physical activity in Commercial Development:

#C6. The Business Association should work with appropriate City departments to develop Commonwealth Ave commercial corridor design guidelines. Could start by piloting a Streetscape Greening Program for the Gary/New Duluth Business Association. Priority level: Medium

#C7. When new commercial development occurs in the community, City Planning and Engineering should ensure that the development promotes pedestrian access, for example by including sidewalks to the new development if sidewalks do not already exist. Priority level: Medium/High

In the **Residential Development** section, the SAP may promote physical activity by increasing the number of households within walking distance of recreation opportunities. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote physical activity in Residential Development:

#R5. The City Planning Department and Parks and Recreation should work together to ensure that new housing is connected to recreation amenities and/or include privately-owned green space built into the development to

promote physical activity and social cohesion. This may include, but is not limited to, supporting the SAP Natural Environment Recommendation C for conservation design. Priority level: Medium

#R6. The HIA Technical Advisory Committee strongly encourages the Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance to implement the proposed community garden in the Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area concept plan. Priority level: High



In the **Natural Environment** section, the SAP may promote physical activity by increasing recreation opportunities, such as trail extensions and access to natural areas and the St. Louis River through sidewalks and trails; and providing active and engaging opportunities for the community and visitors to practice stewardship and enjoy Gary-New Duluth's natural features. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote physical activity in Natural Environment:

#N4. The City Parks and Recreation, Community and Business Development and DNR should individually or in partnership identify potential scenic natural sites for scenic overlooks and seating areas from existing natural amenities like the St. Louis River. Additionally, they should locate passive recreation features like seating areas or even walking paths identified sites, and increase pedestrian access points from sites in the area to the regional trail system outside of Gary-New Duluth. Priority level: Medium



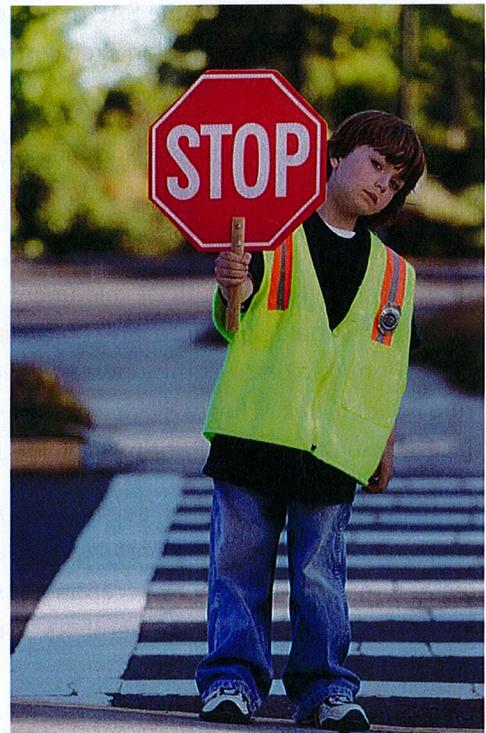
In the **Transportation** section, the SAP may promote physical activity by decreasing traffic speeds, increasing use of traffic calming treatments, encouraging streetscape features, and improving sidewalk conditions will all improve the pedestrian environment to encourage more walking and active transportation; improving sidewalk network and overall conditions will improve safety conditions for residents by not having to walk in the street; and designating a bicycle lane, which also may improve safety for bicyclists and enhance safety for all road users. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote physical activity in Transportation:

#T4. The SAP Motorized Transportation Recommendation B should be modified to acknowledge there are "lane ends" signs on the road now, but they are not adequate or visible enough. Consider recommending flashing lights to grab drivers' attention. Priority level: Low/Medium

#T5. The SAP should include a recommendation to update the Gary/New Duluth sidewalk survey. Focus should be around Stowe School and other high foot traffic areas. Priority level: High

#T6. Implementation of the SAP Non-motorized Recommendation B should be done in conjunction with SAP Non-motorized Recommendation A so that the entire burden of sidewalk improvement, which benefits many, does not fall on a few individual property owners. Priority level: High

#T7. To quantitatively monitor the impact of these recommendations, the Gary/New Duluth Community Club, MIC, and City Planning Division could conduct a walking survey of residents, either by counting pedestrians or providing residents with a questionnaire to understand their walking habits, before and after recommendations are implemented. Priority level: Low



#T8. The proposed road improvement to Boy Scout Landing should be designed with rest areas for pedestrians on the steep hill, for example a couple of benches on the hill. Priority level: Medium

#T9. For traffic calming recommendations, City Engineering, Planning and Public Works, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) should focus specifically on 1) the business area and in front of Stowe School on Commonwealth (traffic calming could involve stop signs, center medians or line redesign), and 2) the immediate vicinity of Stowe School and the Gary/New Duluth Recreation Area along 101st Ave West, Carterett St and 102 Ave West to House Street. Priority level: High

#T10. The SAP should add a Multi-Modal Transportation Recommendation to ensure that any new subdivisions or residential developments include sidewalks. Priority level: Medium

#T11. The SAP should include a statement about working with City of Duluth Public Works, MnDOT, and neighborhood organizations to prioritize routes and coordinate snow removal efforts on sidewalks in the area. Priority level: High

#T12. The City's Master Trail System Plan should include trail connectivity to schools and recognize the importance of school connectivity to new developments with the provision of sidewalks and trails. This should be a key principle in the Duluth Comprehensive Plan and zoning codes should be revamped accordingly. Priority level: High

#T13. The SAP should further qualify the recommendation for a bike lane on Commonwealth Ave. by revising as "Encourage Minnesota Department of Transportation to work with City of Duluth officials to consider how to install a designated bike lane along Commonwealth Avenue that works well with the parking needs in the area and minimizes safety conflicts between cyclists and parked cars." Priority level: High

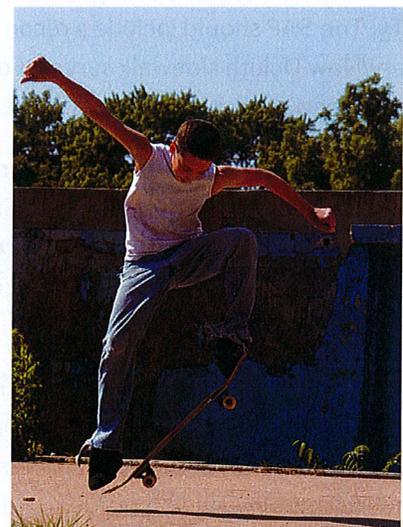
#T14. Include a recommendation in the SAP to increase bicycle infrastructure, such as parking near bus stops and commercial and recreational destinations, to encourage bicycle riding and transit ridership. Priority level: Medium

In the **Park Planning** section, the SAP may promote physical activity by developing the proposed Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area concept. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote physical activity in Park Planning:

#P1. The City should approve and tangibly support implementation of the Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area concept plan. Priority level: High (*Repeated*)

#P2. The Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance, MnDOT, and Parks and Recreation should partner to direct bicyclists to the Gary/New Duluth Recreation Area off of Commonwealth Ave as a rest spot when biking to or from Fond du Lac. There will be a picnic area and also concession stand in the Community Center. Priority level: Medium

#P3. The Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance should consider providing equipment for rental at the Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area, possibly by accepting donations of used sporting equipment from community members. Priority level: Low/Medium



## ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

Access to healthy food can include access to reliable transportation, or proximity to healthy food retailers, such as grocery stores, community gardens, meal delivery services, such as Schwans and Coburns, or programs like Meals on

Wheels. Studies have found that residents with greater access to supermarkets or a greater abundance of healthy foods in neighborhood food stores consume more fresh produce and other healthful items, while lack of access to grocery stores is linked to serious health concerns, such as higher rates of obesity and increased risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

In the **Commercial Development** section, the SAP may increase access to healthy food by recruiting new businesses if they include a grocery store or new restaurant, and increasing the number of jobs and households in the community to support a grocery store. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in Commercial Development:

#C8. A partnership between Gary/New Duluth Community Club, Local Business Association and Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance should consider conducting a market study on the potential of a food market in the community and identify options to provide fresh food, such as mobile markets, food hubs or farmers' markets. Then obtain zoning/permitting from City Planning for the desired option. Priority level: Medium

#C9. The City in partnership with St. Louis County should develop an urban agriculture plan that includes guidance and resources for individuals and organizations that want to acquire or lease underutilized properties for urban agriculture, and minimizes the financial burden and red tape for obtaining leases and permits. Priority level: Medium

In the **Residential Development** section, the SAP may increase access to healthy food by increasing the number of households within walking distance to existing markets and transit stops with service to grocery stores. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in Residential Development:

#R7. The Gary/New Duluth Community Club should partner with not-for profit organizations, such as Seeds to Success, to conduct a study to determine how many residents have residential gardens, how many rely on gardens as important food source, and determine demand for more gardens (community gardens). Priority level: Low

In the **Natural Environment** section, the SAP may increase access to healthy food by enhancing and preserving the environment to support pollinators, improve soil health and reduce contamination in fish. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in Natural Environment:

#N5. The Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance, UMN Duluth, UMN Extension and the School District should partner to implement community education programs around beekeeping and gardening to promote local food production and lifelong environmental stewardship. (Example: a young naturalist/young gardeners program in partnership with Stowe.) Priority level: Medium

#N6. City Parks and Recreation, Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD), and UMN Extension should work together to explore the feasibility of a neighborhood or city-wide composting/mulching program. Priority level: Low/Medium

#N7. City Engineering and Park Maintenance should increase native planting and natural landscaping that absorbs water, requires less maintenance, and can support pollinators. Priority level: Low/Medium

In the **Transportation** section, the SAP may increase access to healthy food by improving the pedestrian environment through traffic safety measures, streetscape enhancements and sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure to existing markets. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in Transportation:

#T15. Add an additional focus area to Non-motorized Recommendation B to include sidewalks from neighborhood streets to bus stops. Additionally, the Gary/New Duluth SAP could make a recommendation for the City to improve the pedestrian environment in West Duluth between the bus stop and grocery store(s). Priority level: Medium/High

#T16. Add a SAP Recommendation for an educational campaign through Duluth Transit Authority on the benefits of riding public transit (cost savings) and develop colorful, high quality materials that show transit connections to major destinations, such as grocery stores. Priority level: Low

In the **Park Planning** section, the SAP may increase access to healthy food by developing the proposed Gary/New Duluth Community Center and Recreation Area concept, which includes a community garden and could be used for a farmers' market or food hub. The HIA proposes the following draft recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in Park Planning:

#P4. The Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance could consider partnerships with established organizations working on access to healthy food, including Community Action Duluth's [Seeds of Success](#) and the [Duluth Community Garden Program](#). Priority level: Medium

#P5. A partnership between the Gary/New Duluth Development Alliance, Gary/New Duluth Community Club and Local Business Association should consider using the updated Community Center for a farmers' market or mobile produce truck (refer to HIA Commercial Development recommendation #C8). Priority level: Low/Medium

## NEXT STEPS

Community members and the public are encouraged to provide input on these recommendations until March 14, 2014. On March 11, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing for the SAP and HIA. This is another great opportunity for the community to learn about the project and provide feedback. On March 24, the SAP and HIA will be presented to the City Council for approval. Following the City Council hearing, the SAP and HIA will become official City documents that will guide the future of development in Gary/New Duluth. These documents will eventually be incorporated into the update to the City's Comprehensive Plan in 2015-2016.

**To provide comments on these recommendations go to the [Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan webpage](#) and or contact Kelly Muellman or John Kelley (see information at right) by March 14, 2014.**

### CITY OF DULUTH

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