



**City of Duluth  
Planning Division**

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 1, 2014

**TO:** Planning Commissioners

**FROM:** John Judd, Senior Planner

**SUBJECT:** Report from Planning Department Staff, regarding  
The recommendations in the Park Point Small Area Plan.

The February 11, 2014 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission tabled until April's planning commission meeting the decision on the recommendations contained in the Park Point Small Area Plan (Plan). This was done in order to allow Staff and the sub-committee of the Planning Commission to conduct additional research to address two minority reports from the Plan Committee, the Commission member's questions and additional concerns expressed by residents.

This also provided staff with an opportunity to meet with the Canal Park Business Association, and at their regular March meeting present and discuss how the Canal Park area might be impacted by some of the proposed recommendations included in the Park Point Small Area Plan. That meeting took place on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

During this hiatus, planning staff consulted with Councilor Gardner, the members of Commission appointed sub-committee, the City traffic engineering department, the Duluth Parking Commission and the private consulting engineer from SEH who conducted the Park Point traffic alignment alternatives and traffic study.

At these meetings we addressed the elements of the Plan recommendations that appeared to be the most controversial with some of the Canal Park residents, as well as members of the Planning Commission. We re-examined the future impact of the movement of the "S" curve on the neighborhood (including Canal Park). We also reviewed the effect of proposed improvements along Minnesota Avenue on adjacent properties and the access and flow of bike and pedestrian as well as vehicle traffic. In

addition, we revisited the Two Tier Public Park improvement concept and access recommendations including the opening up of existing Rights-of-Way (R-O-W) and the consideration of future concurrent use permit or vacation applications.

We have concluded that the Plan's recommendations Goal 4, regarding short, intermediate and long range changes to the Bike, Pedestrian and Vehicular traffic alignments will result in safer access to, and utility, of the improved and natural public facilities on Park Point for both the resident and the visitor. (Please see attached Memorandum from Matt Bolf/SHE dated March 31, 2014) Also, with the inclusion of the minority reports, the Plan Committee also supported these recommendations.

The other major point of contention was Goal 5 of the Plan, to define public access/use of improved and unimproved R-O-W and Street-Ends. The Plans recommendations were modified rather than declare specific street ends as "vacatable" to note that they would be Subject to Further Research (STFR) if a change in their status was proposed in the future. Also, in order to encourage and support the enforcement of Park regulations all along the Park Point, where feasible, designated, controlled and enforced parking facilities are now included in the recommendations for Tier 2 access points.

### **Alternative 3**

(Please see attached illustration)

If the relocation of the "S" curve, as well as the one-way pairs, alternative is rejected by the City Council the City Staff are recommending the following alternatives for vehicular traffic patterns and Bike/Pedestrian circulation

- A. Due to current and future development in the area, during the summer months, parking would only be allowed on the Lake (East) side of Lake and Minnesota Avenues. This would greatly improve the sightlines for vehicles leaving the facilities on the Bayside of Minnesota Avenue and those moving from Minnesota Avenue via 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets onto Lake Avenue by turning left (North) towards Canal Park.
- B. Bikes and Pedestrians crossing the lift bridge would have the option of staying on the west side of Lake Avenue until they reach the intersection at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Minnesota Avenue, at which point they can continue South on Minnesota Avenue or enter the Bayside of Franklin Park to the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> street and the proposed new Bike/Pedestrian trail extending to 19<sup>th</sup> Street, located within the existing St. Louis Avenue easement. Curb extensions (bump outs) would be on both sides of Minnesota Avenue at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street intersection along with user activated crossing signs. The curb extension would provide shorter crossing distance and improving sight distance which places pedestrians in a position to better view motorists and vice-versa.
- C. The area around the controlled intersection of 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Minnesota Avenue and St. Louis Avenue includes Tier 2 access points to the Lake and Bay as well as the Sand Point bird observation area. Traffic counts reveal a nearly 50% decrease in vehicles continuing south on

Minnesota Avenue from 19<sup>th</sup> Street and it is therefore an safer point to reintroduce Bikes and Pedestrians to Lake Avenue.

D. For vehicular traffic, after crossing the bridge, a right hand turn lane and signage would lead traffic onto 8th Street and down (West) to its intersection with Minnesota Avenue. In an effort to address the needs of all user groups, 8<sup>th</sup> Street from Lake Avenue to Minnesota Avenue and Minnesota Avenue from 8<sup>th</sup> Street to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, under this scenario, incorporates the "complete streets" concept.

E. The typical section used for 8<sup>th</sup> Street from Lake Avenue to Minnesota Avenue from the North to the South side of the right-of-way (R-O-W) includes an 8-foot bike /pedestrian path, a 2-foot reaction shoulder to protect the path from the two 13-foot driving through lanes, and an 8- foot parking lane which includes a 2-foot reaction shoulder. This results in a total pavement width of 44 feet including the reaction shoulders and bike /pedestrian path.

F. The section design for Minnesota Avenue from 8<sup>th</sup> Street, within the existing easement, north to the end of R-O-W, would include a 20- foot vehicle access to the homes and hotel. On the Bayside of the R-O-W, an 8-foot bike /pedestrian path, public parking and enhanced access to the Bayshore would be included. The bike /pedestrian path would continue from the end of the R-O-W to lift bridge south pier. The area between lift bridge south pier and the Corps of Engineers property will be designated a Tier 2 access point and recreation area.

G. The typical section used for Minnesota Avenue from 8<sup>th</sup> Street South to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, moving from the from West (Bayside) to the East (Lakeside) of the R-O-W, includes an 8-foot bike /pedestrian path (the extension of the path running north), a 2-foot reaction shoulder to protect the path from the two 13-foot driving through lanes, and an 8- foot parking lane which includes a 2-foot reaction shoulder. This also results in a total pavement width of 44 feet including the reaction shoulders and bike /pedestrian path.



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for All of Us®

## MEMORANDUM

TO: John Judd, Senior Planner - City of Duluth

FROM: Matt Bolf, PE

DATE: March 31, 2014

RE: Park Point Alignment and Traffic Study  
SEH No. DULUT 124932 14.00

This memorandum serves as a supplement to the final report memorandum provided to the City on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013. As part of that report, two questions have been raised in which the City is seeking additional information.

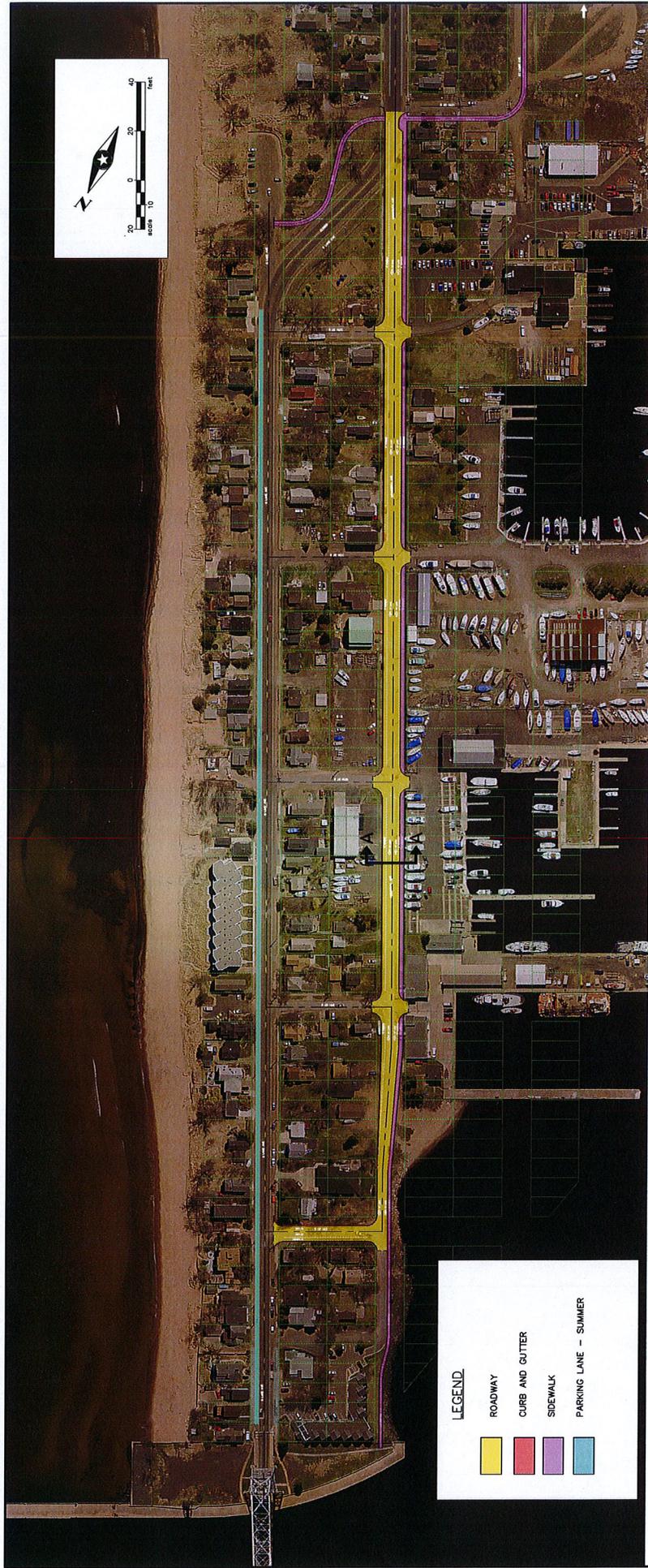
- 1. Impact of relocated S-Curve to traffic backup on the Lift Bridge** – The “S” curve as shown in our Alternative 1 General Layout map, is shown as a street meeting all State Aid standards for travel lane widths and horizontal curves for a 30 mph roadway. The road through the curve would be free flowing with no stop signs. The posted speed limit on the bridge is 15 mph and traffic coming over the bridge towards Park Point is already traveling at a slower speed. It is unlikely there would be any traffic backup caused by motorist slowing down for the “S” curve. Since the curves would be designed to handle speeds of 30 mph, and traffic over the bridge is traveling slower than 30, the driver expectations would not be altered by the 30 mph “S” curves and slowing down due to a feeling of discomfort or lack of safety would not occur.
- 2. Pedestrian/Bike Crossing of Minnesota Ave to Lake Avenue** – The issue of getting bikes and pedestrians who are headed towards Park Point onto Lake Avenue after they get over the bridge was known at the time of our study. Due Minnesota Avenue changing to handle the majority of traffic, it's not recommended to put any stop conditions near the bridge. This does not allow for an ideal option for crossing pedestrians and bikes.

There are two routes that could be used to make this movement. First, there is an existing crossing and walkways under the Lift bridge that could be utilized to get pedestrians to the proposed Lake Avenue roadway and sidewalks. The other option is to promote bikes and pedestrians to follow Minnesota Avenue to 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> Street and allow them to cross in this location at a more perpendicular crossing with better site lines. Bumpouts could be provided in either location to shorten the crossing distance and provide a safer crossing.

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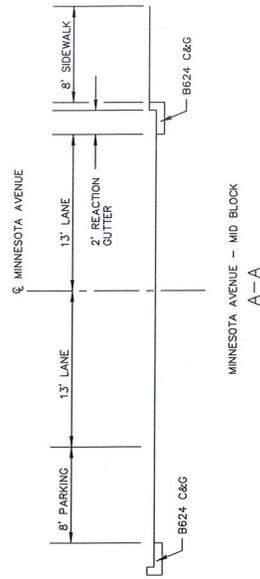
c: Steven Robertson, City of Duluth

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**LEGEND**

- ROADWAY
- CURB AND GUTTER
- SIDEWALK
- PARKING LANE - SUMMER



DRAWN BY: _____ DESIGNER: _____ CHECKED BY: _____ DESIGN TEAM: _____	PRM _____ MJB _____ GCL _____	NO. BY: _____ DATE: _____	REVISIONS: _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>CITY OF DULUTH          PARK POINT TRAFFIC          IMPACT EVALUATION</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE 3          GENERAL LAYOUT</b>	FILE NO. DULUTH24332 PARK POINT	<b>FIGURE          1</b>
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