



**CITY OF DULUTH**  
Planning Division

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Phone: 218/730.5580 Fax: 218/723-3559

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>File Number</b>	PL 14-063	<b>Contact</b>	Jenn Reed Moses, jmoses@duluthmn.gov	
<b>Application Type</b>	UDC Map Amendment	<b>Planning Commission Date</b>	June 10, 2014	
<b>Deadline for Action</b>	<b>Application Date</b>	May 13, 2014	<b>60 Days</b>	July 12, 2014
	<b>Date Extension Letter Mailed</b>	June 3, 2014	<b>120 Days</b>	September 10, 2014
<b>Location of Subject</b>	800 E Central Entrance (former Central High School site)			
<b>Applicant</b>	ISD #709	<b>Contact</b>	218-336-8907	
<b>Agent</b>	Kerry Leider	<b>Contact</b>	Kerry.Leider@duluth.k12.mn.us	
<b>Legal Description</b>	See attached			
<b>Site Visit Date</b>	June 4, 2014	<b>Sign Notice Date</b>	May 27, 2014	
<b>Neighbor Letter Date</b>	May 22, 2014	<b>Number of Letters Sent</b>	32	

**Proposal**

Applicant is proposing to rezone the former Central High School site from Residential-Urban (R-2) and Mixed Use-Business (MU-B) to Mixed Use-Planned (MU-P).

	<b>Current Zoning</b>	<b>Existing Land Use</b>	<b>Future Land Use Map Designation</b>
<b>Subject</b>	MU-B, R-2	Former school (vacant)	Business Park, Urban Residential, Recreation
<b>North</b>	MU-C, MU-N	Commercial	Central Business Secondary, General Mixed Use
<b>South</b>	R-1	Residential, antenna farm	Traditional Neighborhood
<b>East</b>	R-P	Residential	Urban Residential
<b>West</b>	R-1	Residential	Urban Residential

**Summary of Code Requirements (reference section with a brief description):**

UDC Sec. 50-37.3.A: Any property owner may petition the planning commission to amend the district boundaries in which the property is located.

UDC Sec. 50-37.3.B: Planning commission shall review the application, conduct a public hearing ... with public notice ... and make a written recommendation to council.

UDC Sec. 50-37.3.C: The planning commission shall review the application, and council shall approve the application or approve it with modifications, if it determines that the application:

1. Is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan;
2. Is reasonably related to the overall needs of the community, to existing land use, or to a plan for future land use;
3. Is required by public necessity, convenience, or general welfare, or good zoning practice;
4. Will not create material adverse impacts on nearby properties, or if material adverse impacts may be created they will be mitigated to the extent reasonably possible.

III. B-1

**Comprehensive Plan Findings (Governing Principle and/or Policies) and Current History (if applicable):**

- Principle #1 - Reuse previously developed lands
- Principle #5 - Strengthen neighborhoods
- Principle #6 - Reinforce the place-specific
- Principle #7 - Create and maintain connectivity
- Principle #8 - Encourage mix of activities, uses, and densities

Future Land Use - Business Park: Primarily office and light industrial areas developed in a unified manner, with standards for site design and circulation patterns, signage, landscaping and building design.  
Future Land Use - Urban Residential: Greatest variety of building types, medium to high densities. 8 units/acre and up, commercial uses that serve neighborhood market.  
Future Land Use - Recreation: 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.

**Discussion (use numbered or bullet points; summarize and attach department, agency and citizen comments):**

Staff finds that:

- 1.) In 2011, Central High School closed. Site was rezoned to R-2 and MU-B in 2013. To prepare for future development, ISD #709 has prepared a concept plan for the site and now proposes to rezone it to Mixed Use - Planned (MU-P). The MU-P district was established to provide a flexible development option for mixed use projects.
- 2.) The Minnesota Planning Act provides that zoning (an "official control") should implement the general objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and appellate courts have issued decisions that zoning must comply with the Comprehensive Plan or else be considered arbitrary and capricious. The future land uses on the site support mixed use development, and current zoning makes this area eligible for rezoning to MU-P.
- 3.) The Concept Plan identifies areas of Residential, Mixed Use, and Open Space, as well as the uses, densities, and heights for these areas. Under the MU-P district, areas more than 200' from an R-1 or R-2 district are allowed a 20% increase in height. Applicant is proposing an increase in densities in the core of the site, in exchange for significant open space along the periphery.
- 4.) Concept Plans in the MU-P district must show that the development would provide a greater level of public benefit than would be required under the existing zone district. The Concept Plan utilizes the excellent views from the site to Lake Superior and preserves public views from trails, parks, and streets. Two areas of active recreation total approximately 7.5 acres. A network of trails and passive recreation spaces will be publicly accessible, and trails will enter the site from all directions, including a COGGS trail connection along the eastern edge of the site. Under the proposal, 28% of the area would remain undeveloped (light green on concept map), and an additional 11% would be used for parks (dark green on concept map).
- 5.) Following rezoning, MU-P districts must submit a detailed Regulating Plan for approval by the Land Use Supervisor. Requirements of the Regulating Plan are listed in UDC Section 50-15.7.E and 50-15.7.F. The Regulating Plan must be consistent with the Concept Plan and must be approved before any building permits can be issued for the property.
- 6.) The land uses proposed as part of the Concept Plan are not anticipated to result in material adverse impacts. Open space on the periphery of the development will provide a buffer to adjacent properties. Two additional roadway access points are provided to accommodate additional traffic.
- 7.) A neighborhood meeting was held on May 7, with 8 people in attendance. Questions and comments are attached to this report.
- 8.) One phone call was received from a neighbor. No other citizen, agency, or City comments were received.

**Staff Recommendation (include Planning Commission findings, i.e., recommend to approve):**

Based on the above findings, Staff recommends that Planning Commission recommend approval of the UDC Map Amendment, for the following reasons:

- 1) This proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
- 2) The proposed MU-P zone district is consistent with the future land use category of Traditional Neighborhood.
- 3) Material adverse impacts on nearby properties are not anticipated.

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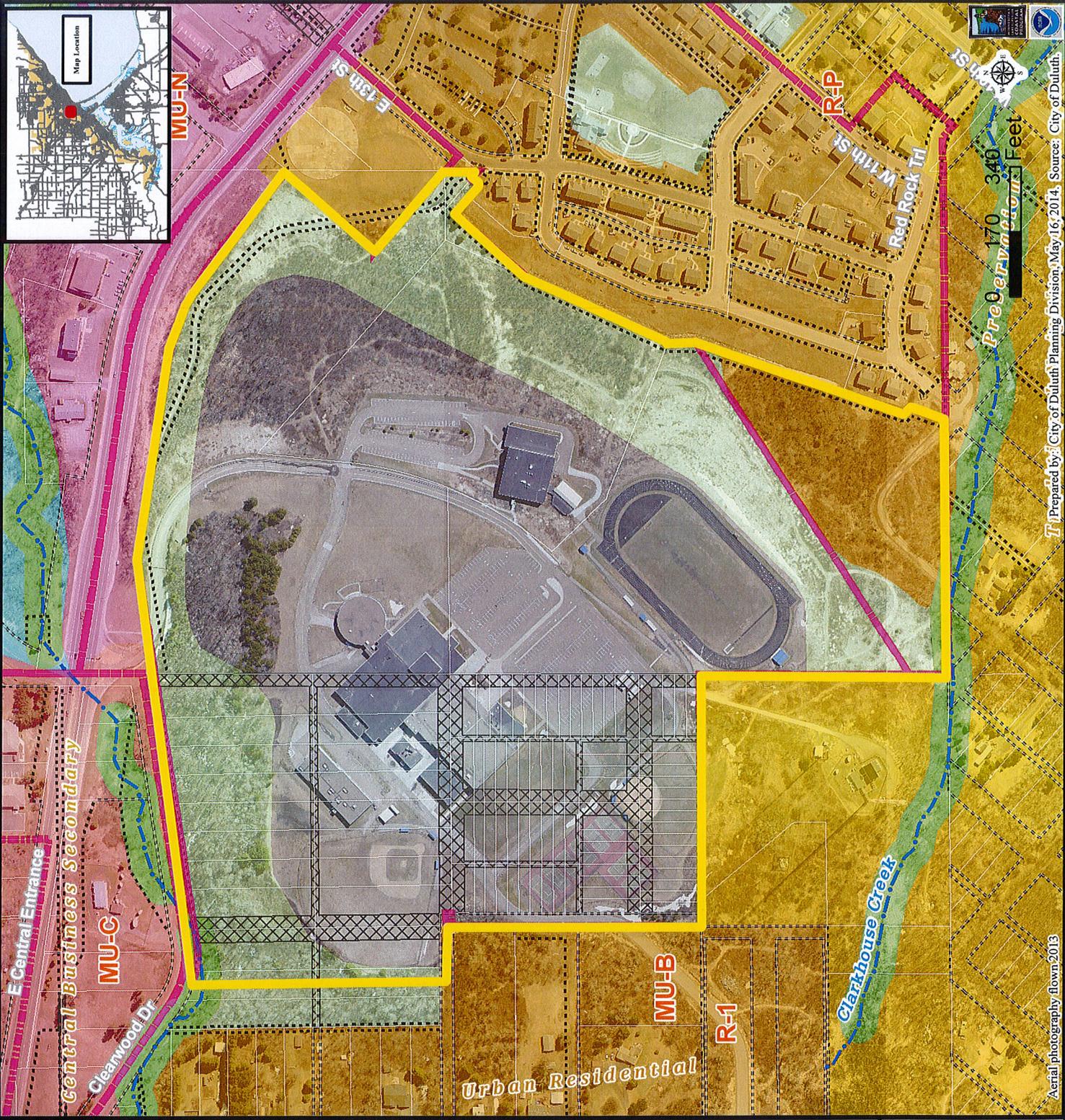
**Attachments (aerial photo with zoning; future land use map; site plan; copies of correspondence)**



**City Planning**  
 PL 14-063  
 UDC Map Amendment  
 Central High School Site

**Legend**

- Zoning Boundaries
- Stream Type**
  - Trout Stream (GPS)
  - Other Stream (GPS)
- Right-of-Way Type**
  - Road or Alley ROW
  - Vacated ROW
- Future Land Use**
  - Preservation
  - Recreation
  - Rural Residential
  - Low-density Neighborhood
  - Traditional Neighborhood
  - Urban Residential
  - Neighborhood Commercial
  - Neighborhood Mixed Use
  - General Mixed Use
  - Central Business Secondary
  - Central Business Primary
  - Auto Oriented Commercial
  - Large-scale Commercial
  - Business Park
  - Tourism/Entertainment District
  - Medical District
  - Institutional
  - Commercial Waterfront
  - Industrial Waterfront
  - Light Industrial
  - General Industrial
  - Transportation and Utilities



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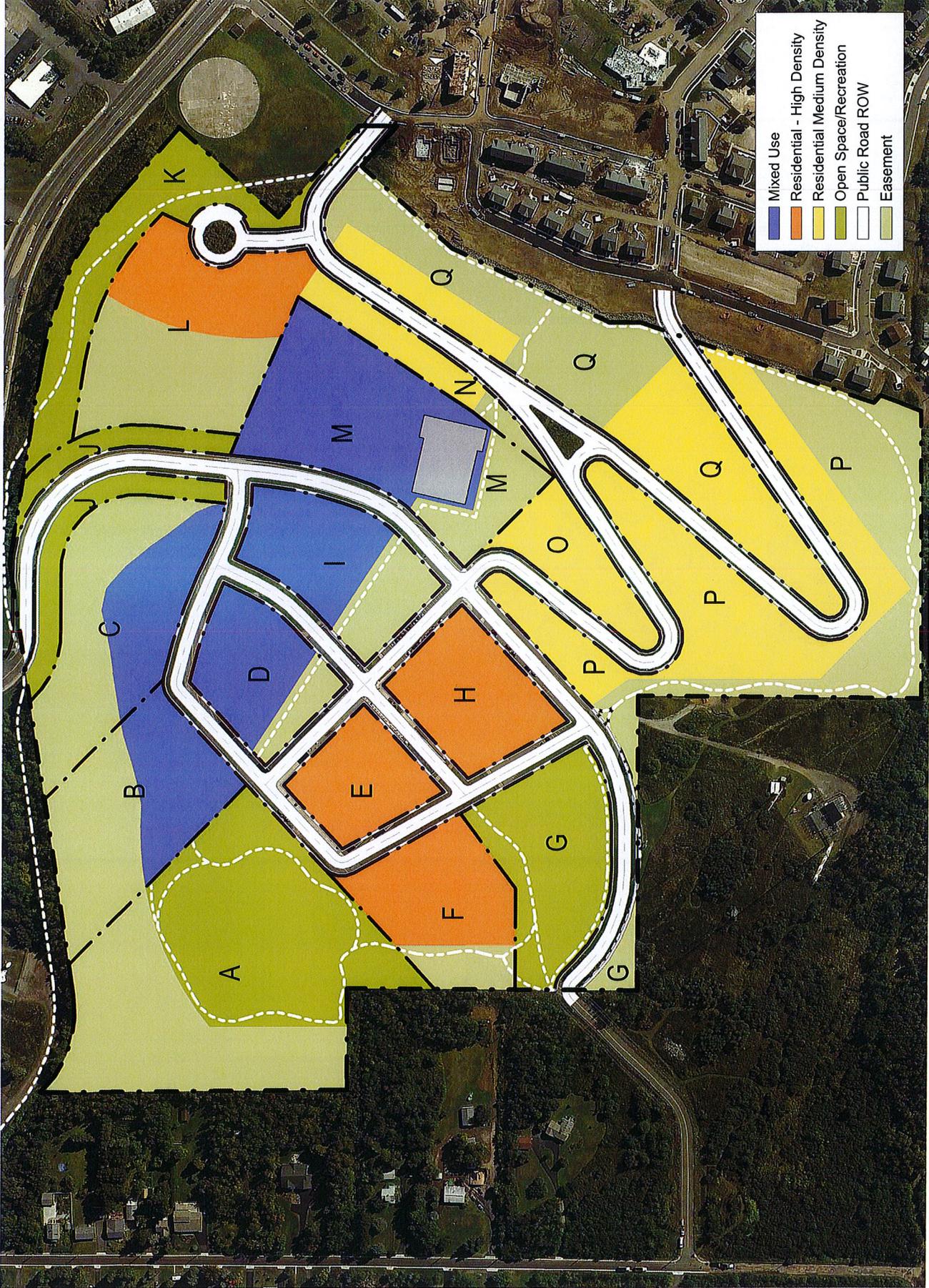
Revisions	No.	Date	Descriptive

Date:	
Comm. No.:	
Drawn By:	AJ
Checked By:	CHK
PIC/AC:	
Document Phase:	

**Project Title**  
DULUTH  
CENTRAL HIGH  
SCHOOL MASTER  
PLAN

**Sheet Number**  
L001

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## Parcel Allocation

Parcel	Gross Acres	Easement Acres	Developable Acres	Park Acres	Permitted Uses	Maximum Density	Max Height	notes
A	8.6	3.7		4.9	Open / Rec	n/a	n/a	active recreation and community uses
B	3.5	1.9	1.6		Mixed Use (see following pages for detail)	160 units or 140,000 sf office 15,000 sf retail	72'	
C	3.9	2.4	1.5		Mixed Use (see following pages for detail)	158 units or 135,000 sf office	72'	
D	2.0	.5	1.5		Mixed Use (see following pages for detail)	225 units or 135,000 sf office 15,000 sf retail	72'	
E	1.5	0	1.5		multi-family residential	220 units 5000 sf retail	72'	
F	2.4	.5	1.9		multi-family residential	240 units 5000 sf retail	48'	
G	3.0	.2		2.8	Open / Rec	n/a	n/a	active recreation and community uses
H	2.0	0	2.0		multi-family residential	250 units	72'	
I	2.5	.9	1.6		Mixed Use (see following pages for detail)	200 units or 125,000 sf office 15,000 sf retail	72'	
J	1.6	0	0		Open	n/a	n/a	
K	2.5	0	0		Open	n/a	n/a	
L	4.3	2.4	1.9		multi-family residential	52 units	60'	
M	4.7	.9	3.8		Mixed Use (see following pages for detail)	125 units 130,000 sf office 15,000 sf retail	60'	
N	1.0	.2	.8		Residential	12 units	48'	
O	1.3	0	1.3		Townhouses and small multi-family residential (,24 units/ bldg)	20 units	48'	
P	8.5	3.6	4.9		Residential	72 units	48'	
Q	6.3	3.0	3.3		Residential	48 units	48'	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>				

note: any buildings within 200' of an R1 will be restricted to 35' in height.

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## Permitted Uses in Mixed Use Parcels (B,C,D, I, M)

### Household Living

- multi family
- live work

### Community and Cultural Facilities

- Bus or rail transit station
- University or College
- Government or Public Safety Building
- Museum, library or art gallery
- Park, playground or forest reserve
- Religious assembly ( less than 50,000)

### Educational Facilities

- Business, art or vocational school

### Health Care facilities

- Medical or dental clinic

### Agriculture and Animal related

- Agriculture, urban
- Veterinary or animal hospital

### Food Beverage and Indoor Entertainment

- Convention or event center
- Indoor entertainment facility
- Restaurant (no drive-in/drive-through, up to 5,000
- Theater

### Lodging

- Hotel or motel
- Bed and Breakfast

### Offices

- Bank
- Offices

### Personal Services

- Preschool
- Day care facility small (14 or fewer)
- Day care facility large (15 or more)
- Personal service and repair, small (less than 10,000 sf)
- 

### Retail

- Grocery store, small (less than 20,000 sf)
- Retail store not listed, small (less than 1r,000 sf)

### Accessory Uses

- Accessory Day care facility
- Accessory Sidewalk dining area
- Minor utilities and accessory wireless antennas attached to existing structures
- Accessory home occupation, solar or geothermal equipment, vacation dwellings, agriculture roadside stand,

### Temporary Uses

- Temporary construction office or yard
- Temporary event or sales
- Temporary real estate sales office

## Site Acreage

Overall Site	acres	% of total
Road ROW	13.5	18%
Parcels A-Q	59.6	82%
<b>total</b>	<b>73.1</b>	<b>100%</b>

Parcels A-Q	acres	% of total
Easements	20.2	28%
Developable	31.7	43%
Parks	7.7	11%
<b>total</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## Narrative of Public Benefits

The Concept Plan for redevelopment of the Central High School Site is intended to preserve many of the existing public benefits of the site while also creating new public benefits.

### Public Views

The site is owned by the School District and publicly accessible and it offers spectacular views of Lake Superior. Students, parents, staff, visitors, and neighbors have long been able to access and enjoy these views. Whereas the site will be redeveloped by private developers, and much of the property will eventually be in private hands, the Concept Plan seeks to ensure these views are preserved and accessible into the future. Public views are preserved in the following ways

- The STC building is proposed to be used for public or community use.
- A ravine/stormwater trail will cut through the site, from high point to low. This will become a passive park with trails as well as a view corridor. Views down the hill will be created from within the common open spaces and along the bridges cross the ravine.
- The Concept Plan locates the larger buildings at the top of the hill and the smaller ones at the bottom of the hill. In doing so, many of the public streets will afford views down the hill, over the houses to the lake beyond.

### Stormwater

The Concept Plan proposes managing as much stormwater on site as possible. The site is sloped and bedrock is near to the surface. Therefore water tends to exit the site relatively quickly - sometimes with damaging impacts downstream. The Plan gently directs

surface water flows towards created ravines and sets aside land in strategic locations towards the low points of the site to capture site runoff, slow it down and or allow it to infiltrate.

### Public Open Space

The Concept Plan creates two areas for active recreation for a total of approximately 7.5 acres. These areas are relatively flat and can be used for sports and organized recreation.

A network of trails and passive recreation spaces will be publicly accessible to residents and visitors of the site as well as to those in adjacent communities. Trails will enter the site from all directions. The COGS trail connection will be created along the eastern edge of the site.

### Retail and Community Uses

The Plan is well connected to the surrounding neighborhoods and therefore will provide the option for surrounding residents to access several activities of daily life (food, recreation, retail, work) by foot or bicycle. This will reduce traffic on surrounding roads and provide more choices for residents of the development and surrounding neighborhoods.

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# Meeting Minutes

To: ISD#709  
From: Jeffrey Schoeneck  
Project: Central High – Concept Master Plan  
Project Number: 14-0046  
Subject: Neighborhood Meeting  
Location: Lower STC Building – Central High Campus  
Meeting Date: May 7, 2014 | 6:00PM  
Meeting Number: 01  
Issue Date: May 13, 2014  
Attendees: Sign-in Sheet Attached  
Copy To: File



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01 *Meeting Intent*  
Kerry Leider, Property and Risk Manager, with ISD#709 opened the by stating the intent of the meeting was in to solicit neighborhood feedback for the Concept Master Planning work to date per city process requirement.

It was noted that feedback would be collected, documented and included with any revisions to planning efforts made in response to the feedback received, in the application to be made next week.

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02 *Introductions*  
It was noted that ISD#709, in coordination with Duluth Economic Development Authority have retained the services of Cunningham Group, who is responsible for design of the plan, along with LHB who is providing the infrastructure analysis related to the plan.

03 *Presentation*  
Following are salient notes from the presentation that was made by Cunningham Group about development of the master plan:

Project Vision

Create a complete and connected hillside neighborhood.

Goals

Four primary goals were established as frame work for guiding decisions and outcomes for the proposed Concept Master Plan.

1. Celebrate the Hill and the unique natural amenity
2. Provide connection to and from the site for pedestrians.
3. Take in the View and provide public access to view

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4. Look taste and smell like Duluth, a place of extremes.

Precedent Images

A slide of precedent images were used for inspiration to capture the essence of Duluth; including stepped hill sides, mix of open space and buildings, rocks and landscape features and local architectural style.

Site Analysis

A series of three slides were shown to reflect the site specific conditions that impact development of the planning.

**Views** from the site area unparalleled and became an important driver in how the site allows public access to this amenity. Long view corridors on the site were implemented to provide these opportunities.

Views were noted to be predominantly downhill of the hill, city and lake, but also in 360 degrees once up a couple levels in buildings.

**Access and Trails** exist in and around the site. The entrance off Central Entrance was noted as the predominant vehicular access point given it has a controlled, signaled intersection. Two additional access points are proposed at the bottom of the east side of the site to connect to lower density development below. This also provides equity and access to the greater site.

Bike trail access is also connected on the site as well as expanded throughout the site to help strengthen the amenity of the trail system, provide access to public and reduce vehicular load on the site.

A re-routing of Blackman access drive was proposed to discourage traffic from using this route. A connection is still available, but is thought to be less attractive given the lack of signal at the intersection of Central Entry.

**Hydrology and Topography** are increasingly important to the larger systems given a recent history of flooding that has occurred. The development proposes a series of ravine signatures that are used to collect and manage storm-water into collection ponds distributed through the site. It was noted that master plan assumes a level of stewardship as the

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'top of the hill' resident.

Site Development Strategies

1. A large portion (approximately half) of the site has been altered from its natural state. Development strategy is proposed in a manner to utilize **previously disturbed site** and minimize impact on undisturbed, natural features such as hill slope, vegetation, etc. One concept is to work toward **restoration of the hill** toward its original grade.
2. **Storm water management** has been increasingly problematic for the city of Duluth. The strategy of handling as much storm water runoff as possible is important in keeping pressure off the bottom of the hill. A series of natural ravine signatures are intended to facilitate conveyance of storm water through the site with storage opportunities throughout.
3. The proposed site also seeks to **coordinate land use with natural topography and access opportunities**. E.g. vehicular entrance off Central Entrance is more conducive for non-residential uses. Bike trail access could occur at various points on the site which also correlates to open space, or easement locations.

Additional Plan Notes:

4. Proposed open space system was developed to allow the storm water ravines noted above, to become organizing elements for the available development parcels that also allow view corridors throughout the site.
5. Active recreational sites toward the west end of the site have been connected to provide some public use of the space and provide a buffer to the back sides of nearby Blackman Avenue residents.
6. Connection to Blackman has been redirected to produce a less direct route and works in conjunction with the two additional traffic portions.
7. Switchback plan toward bottom of the hill is a more walkable approach to building connections to the neighborhood below.
8. The current proposal assumes the re-use of the Lower

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04	STC Building. <i>Questions and Answers</i>		
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***Q1. How many homes are planned here?***

A1. Approximately 600

***Q2. You mentioned 600 units. That seems dense. How many people live here?***

A2. That really depends on the demographics. For an estimate, assume two per housing unit.

***Q3. Who pays for this?***

A3. The school district's intent is to sell all of the parcels as development opportunities. A regulating plan will be done for each parcel to determine the specifics of each parcel development on an as needed basis.

***Q4. Central High School and Upper STC are gone?***

A4. Through a process of advertising and socializing this property, it has become clear that their ability to be reused is unlikely. The district will continue to occupy and use the Upper STC building until that parcel is sold. Interest has been shown in Lower STC on a lease basis, but not sold, which is not an objective of the district's.

***Q5. Are you taking out all existing active fields and courts?***

A5. The proposed plan removes some of the outdoor amenity and replaces some. The exact composition will have to be determined in a future regulatory plan.

***Q6. What is happening along the west side of the site behind Blackman?***

Q6. The leg inboard of the development to Blackman has been blocked off to reinforce us of the main entry at the north end of the site. The current buffer is still in proposed to remain in place. The current ball field is proposed as a soccer field for maintenance and greater

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public use.

*Q7. A Shortage in housing, specifically in the 150 to 200K range has been identified. Is that your understanding, and does this meet this qualification?*

A7. Development on this site is proposed to be market-rate.

*Q8. We have a street that is under-built and is overused in Blackman. Parking on-street at Blackman is problematic. Access from Blackman to Central Entrance can be difficult in rush-hour. Can we utilize a different road at the northwest corner of site?*

A8. An entry from Palm was investigated at the time that the Blackman access point was developed. It was explored and deemed a costly location to move forward on due to grade and also had a high natural environmental impact in its construction. It may still present an opportunity in addition to the two existing and two proposed access points, but at high cost.

End of Meeting

The foregoing is believed by the author to be an accurate and materially complete reflection of the discussions described. Requests for any corrections or additions to this document should be forwarded to the author within five business days. Thereafter, this document shall be deemed the official record of the discussions described herein.

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# SIGN-IN SHEET

Community Meeting

Central High School Property Re-zoning

held at STC - Main on the Central High School Campus

May 7, 2014

6:00 p.m.

Name

Address

Chris Deovdal

1011 E. Central Ent.

Jackie Bruenjes

1011 E. Central Ent.

DEB: Tim Melvin

312 S. Blackman Ave

Connie Rode

122 S. Blackman Ave

RICHARD SMITH

204 S BLACKMAN AV

Chris Fry

DEDA

Doug Johnson

407 S. Blackman AV

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