

Public Engagement Plan for the

DULUTH-SUPERIOR

METROPOLITAN PEDESTRIAN PLAN

April – November 2020

1. Introduction and Purpose

The *Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Pedestrian Plan* will create a framework for action to ensure that walking is a safe, convenient and desirable transportation option for people of all ages and abilities throughout the Twin Ports. The *Public Engagement Plan* will serve as a guide for its development.

Community engagement will be a core aspect in (a) identifying issues and barriers that exist for walking as transportation and (b) developing a range of policy recommendations and investment strategies to improve the pedestrian environment.

NOTE: As input is gained into this Plan from the Advisory Committee (PPAC) and stakeholders, and as the COVID19 guidelines for social distancing evolve over the coming months, other strategies may be added to address a given community, neighborhood and/or cultural group.

2. Public Engagement Plan Goals

The Public Engagement Plan will identify audiences, outreach activities and tools to:

- A. Build awareness of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Pedestrian Plan and its goal of supporting walking as a transportation option
- B. Gain active participation and input from a variety of stakeholders and community members, with special focus on those traditionally underserved
- C. Provide transparency during the planning process
- D. Create a positive acceptance of the plan as being based on a credible and inclusive process

3. Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC)

The Advisory Committee for this plan will be formed at the beginning of the project and will represent a broad array of community interests (see committee list, next page).

Members of the PPAC will meet six times throughout the project to serve as the voice of key stakeholders and to provide input and direction on project priorities. The PPAC will approve the final plan before it is sent on to the MIC policy board for adoption.

Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee Members

Name	Representing		Name	Representing
Broc Allen	Resident - Superior		Holly Kostrzewski	MN Toward Zero Deaths
Carol Andrews	St. Louis Co. Engineering		Kris Liljeblad	City of Duluth Planning
Gary Anderson	Duluth City Council		Ben Margeson	CHUM Center
Eleanor Bacso	City of Duluth Economic Development		Shawna Mullen	Essentia Health - Transportation
Chris Belden	DTA - Planning		Nancy Nelson	Resident - Duluth
Brian Bluhm	St. Louis Co Public Health		Theresa O'Halloran-Johnson	Resident - Duluth
Amy Demmer	Zeitgeist Community Dev		Dena Ryan	WisDOT
Judy Gibbs	Resident - Duluth		Doug Stevens	Resident - Duluth
Ed Gleeson	Business Owner		Tom Szukis	DTA - Board
Susie Green	Community Action Duluth		Rachel Thapa	Duluth Public Schools
Russell Habermann	ARDC, SRTS Planner		Alice Tibbetts	We Walk in Duluth
Phil Huston	Real Estate		Maren Webb	MnDOT

4. Audiences

The following have been identified as key audiences for this plan. *An early task for the Advisory Committee will be to assist in identifying who's missing and providing contacts and serving as liaisons to those individuals or groups.*

A. General Project Stakeholders

1. MIC-area residents, businesses and visitors

B. Targeted Stakeholders

1. Elected officials from the Cities of Duluth and Superior; and St. Louis County and Douglas County
2. Duluth and Superior business communities
3. Transit users
4. Senior citizens and advocacy organizations

5. K-12 and College students
6. People with disabilities and advocacy organizations
7. Pedestrian and active transportation advocacy organizations
8. Health promotion organizations
9. Realtors
10. Public arts organizations

C. Other Stakeholders

Who is missing from the lists, above?

4. Outreach Techniques

The following outreach techniques will be utilized throughout the project. MIC Staff members will meet weekly to evaluate and plan implementation of stakeholder outreach. The techniques and schedule of engagement will be evaluated and modified as needed throughout the project to meet stakeholder needs. A draft schedule/timeline is included in Section 7.

A. In-Person Engagement

1. Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee meetings

As described in #3, above, PPAC members will be the primary source of input and feedback throughout the plan's development and will meet 6 times.

2. Listening Sessions

MIC staff will extend invitations to meet in person (or online) with targeted groups of stakeholders to hold focused conversations on topics pertaining to those groups or interests.

Short presentations addressing specific topics and how they intersect with walkability will be used to initiate the conversation.

Targeted stakeholders may include Economic Development (Chambers of Commerce, business districts and groups, developers and realtors); Public Arts (commissions and organizations); Educational Institutions (K-12 and college students and staff members); Elderly/Aging (groups or individuals); Mobility-impaired (groups or individuals); Low-income (groups or individuals); and Transit users.

3. One-on-One Conversations

MIC staff will extend invitations to meet in person, or online, with individuals who are not part of the usual decision-making processes, to provide updates about the project and gather input.

Examples of stakeholders may include Elderly/Aging (groups or individuals); Mobility-impaired (groups or individuals); Low-income (groups or individuals); Transit users.

4. Community/Stakeholder Hosted meetings

Throughout the project, MIC staff will offer to attend meetings hosted by stakeholder groups to give presentations and take comments. These may include:

- a. Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) Policy Board
- b. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- c. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- d. Duluth Transit Authority Board
- e. Other regularly scheduled meetings

5. Public Meetings

At least two public meetings will be held to provide information to the general public. The meetings will provide project information and solicit feedback from community members.

The location and timing of the public meetings will be determined by the availability of public spaces and the need for continued social distancing.

The option of online meetings via Facebook Live or other online platform will also be considered as options.

a. Pop-Up Displays at Public Events *(if possible)*

The location and scheduling of pop-up events will be determined over the coming months depending on the availability of public spaces and the need for continued social distancing

Pop-up events will be targeted to specific stakeholders or geographic areas in order to create welcoming opportunities for participation. In the past, pedestrian-focused events have included Downtown Duluth Sidewalk Days, Safe Routes to School events, Duluth Transit Center events.

B. Written Engagement Tools

1. Plan Web Page (www.dsmic.org/pedplan2020)

A project-specific page will be hosted on the MIC website to present project information and updates, including project background and goals; project updates and meeting notices; steering committee members and meeting materials; link to online survey; staff contact information; sign-up for project updates and ability to submit comments and questions.

2. Information Sheets

One-page handouts will be created as needed to disseminate project information. The flyers will be topic-specific and utilize a consistent flyer template.

3. Displays

Displays will be developed for public outreach activities (as described in section 4), and will include concise information from the fact sheets as well as a 'call to action' to take the Project survey.

4. Press Releases

At key points during the project, press releases will be used to provide project updates to the general public.

5. Email

An email distribution list will be developed to maintain contacts who wish to be updated on project progress. Email will be used to share project updates, surveys and meeting announcements.

6. Social Media

Social media will be utilized to share project updates, surveys and meeting announcements. The MIC's Facebook page and Twitter accounts will be utilized, and information can also be shared on other local organization's pages if they choose.

7. Executive Summary

An executive summary document will be created to serve as a concise way to understand the Pedestrian Plan recommendations. It will include maps and graphics in an easy-to-read format and will be available in printed and PDF formats.

5. Documentation

Documentation of stakeholder outreach efforts throughout the project will be critical to demonstrate community input into the final Plan. The documentation will provide a history and record of the process and comments received.

A. Meeting Documentation

All meetings will culminate in succinct meeting summaries that document the points of discussion and action items. Meeting summaries will be distributed to all meeting attendees for review, comment and concurrence, and will be posted on the Plan web page.

B. Engagement Summaries (What We Did)

MIC staff will document and summarize key takeaways from each outreach effort in a public engagement log. Public engagement summaries will be presented as updates at monthly Advisory Committee meetings and "Here's What We've Heard" information will be presented at public events and meetings with other groups.

C. Feedback/Comment Documentation (What We've Heard)

MIC staff will document stakeholder feedback and questions throughout the process in a Comments and Questions spreadsheet which will include date,

contact information (if available) and the manner in which the comment or question was responded to or incorporated into the project.

6. Project Messaging

Project information will be created using plain language with minimal use of acronyms or jargon. Easy to understand definitions and explanations will be included for technical terms. The communication tone will be direct, honest, collaborative and welcoming.

7. Public Engagement Timeline

April

- PPAC Meeting
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May

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June

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July

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August

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September

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October:

- Draft Document for review at Public Meeting
- Draft Document Available to PPAC, TAC and MIC
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November:

- PPAC Approval of final document
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December:

- MIC Policy Board adoption of final document
- Distribution of final document to MIC-area jurisdictions

January-March, 2021:

- Presentations about the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Pedestrian Plan to MIC-area jurisdictions
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