

# Central Entrance Steering Committee Meeting Summary

Friday August 13, 2021 | 10:00 AM–Noon

## Invitees

Ron Chicka, MIC\*  
Mike Wenzholz, MIC  
Rondi Watson, MIC\*  
Bryan Anderson, MnDOT\*  
Michael Kalnbach, MnDOT\*  
Duane Hill, MnDOT  
Doug Kerfeld, MnDOT  
Adam Fulton, City of Duluth

Kris Liljeblad, City of Duluth  
Cari Pederson, City of Duluth  
Chris Belden, Duluth Transit Authority  
Brad Hamilton, WSB  
Eric Zweber, WSB  
Austin Hauf, WSB  
Samantha Lorenz, Terra Soma

## \*Not in attendance

- Welcome (Austin)
  - Jody Martinson has left WSB. Austin Hauf will be primary WSB contact for the project going forward.
- Summary of July 27th Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting (Brad)
  - See slides.
  - Note, the City is opposed to one-way pairs option.
  - Roundabout education will be especially important for walking and biking navigation though roundabouts.
- Zone concepts discussion (Austin)
  - City comments/feedback (will provide feedback document via email):
    - Opposition to one-way pairs
    - Back of curb to sidewalk needs a buffer. The more boulevard the better in general.
    - What kind of sustainable hardscape can be used that still provides environmental advantage?
    - Agree with need for medians and crossing refuge.
    - City concerned over maintenance and capabilities to maintain additional facilities, sidewalks, widths of sidewalks, etc. Needs to be carefully considered. More maintenance demands are not equal to resources. Are there creative ways to address maintenance?
    - If landscape is added and City will be maintaining, they should be involved in decisions. Involve city forester if adding trees.
    - How can we introduce more traffic calming? Need to focus around DTA stops.
  - MnDOT comments:
    - Desire to improve multi-modal movement in corridor. Sidewalks – connections and ways to support BRT.
    - Will provide more consolidated feedback.
  - DTA comments:

- Economic development may spur resources for maintenance
  - Not envisioning full-blown station(s) on CE. Some will be just small standard shelters. Some “medium” amenity stations similar to Metro Transit C Line in Twin Cities.
  - Opposed to one-way pairs.
  - More connections for pedestrians needed.
  - Will provide further consolidated feedback.
  - Corridor needs to be conducive to transit and DTA hopes to consolidate stops.
  - Land use will be important factor.
- Additional discussion of Zone 5
  - Crossing opportunities and safety, especially near affordable housing (Pecan Ave).
  - Mid-block crossing less of a need in this zone due to land use. Some areas of concern for crossing. Some intersections are not safe for pedestrians including E Village Drive near Harbor Highlands. Needs to be addressed. Support pedestrian safety improvements.
  - MnDOT does not utilize driveway at E Village Dr - possible modifications in future.
  - This functions like a freeway. Dangerous to cross.
  - Continuous parallel bike facilities through corridor pose maintenance issues. City would like to see that elsewhere.
  - Current signal operations produce platoons and gaps. Need to consider that by adding better traffic flow will increase need for safer crossing for pedestrians.
  - We have plenty of ROW in this zone but are somewhat constrained by land features and slope.
  - Need alternative mode provisions - give people an alternative to having to walk along the roadway. City would like to have continuous off-street path on south side.
- Update on traffic modeling (Austin)
  - See slides.
  - What is level of modeling? How far out are we looking at traffic diversion?
    - Regional model will look at broader impacts to some degree.
- Update on Central High School site (Adam)
  - School district will have buses stored on site and will build a new administrative building. Continue to access via Courtney Dr.
  - Development agreement not finalized. Once finalized, will have 45 days to submit master plan.
  - City is requiring developer to deal with underlying plat issues.
  - ROW will be dedicated for public streets. Will be sidewalk on new public road.
  - Required to tear down old high school within 2 years.
  - Gondola transit? Current land use does not warrant.
  - Development will likely provide for new easements and trails. Need to construct last segment of Duluth Traverse Trail, Superior Hiking Trail discussed as well.
  - Anticipate EAW for site development.
  - School intends to keep Blackman Ave access closed for now, but developments on site may result in requirement for two access for EMS, etc.
  - Possible access opened to Blackman. Will be a community discussion.
  - Potential for sports dome or amphitheater as part of development.
  - Additional road down to Harbor Highlands had been discussed in the past.
  - What is estimate of commercial and residential use? At this time very hypothetical.
- Land use concept updates and discussion (Eric)
  - Political history here that led to status quo.

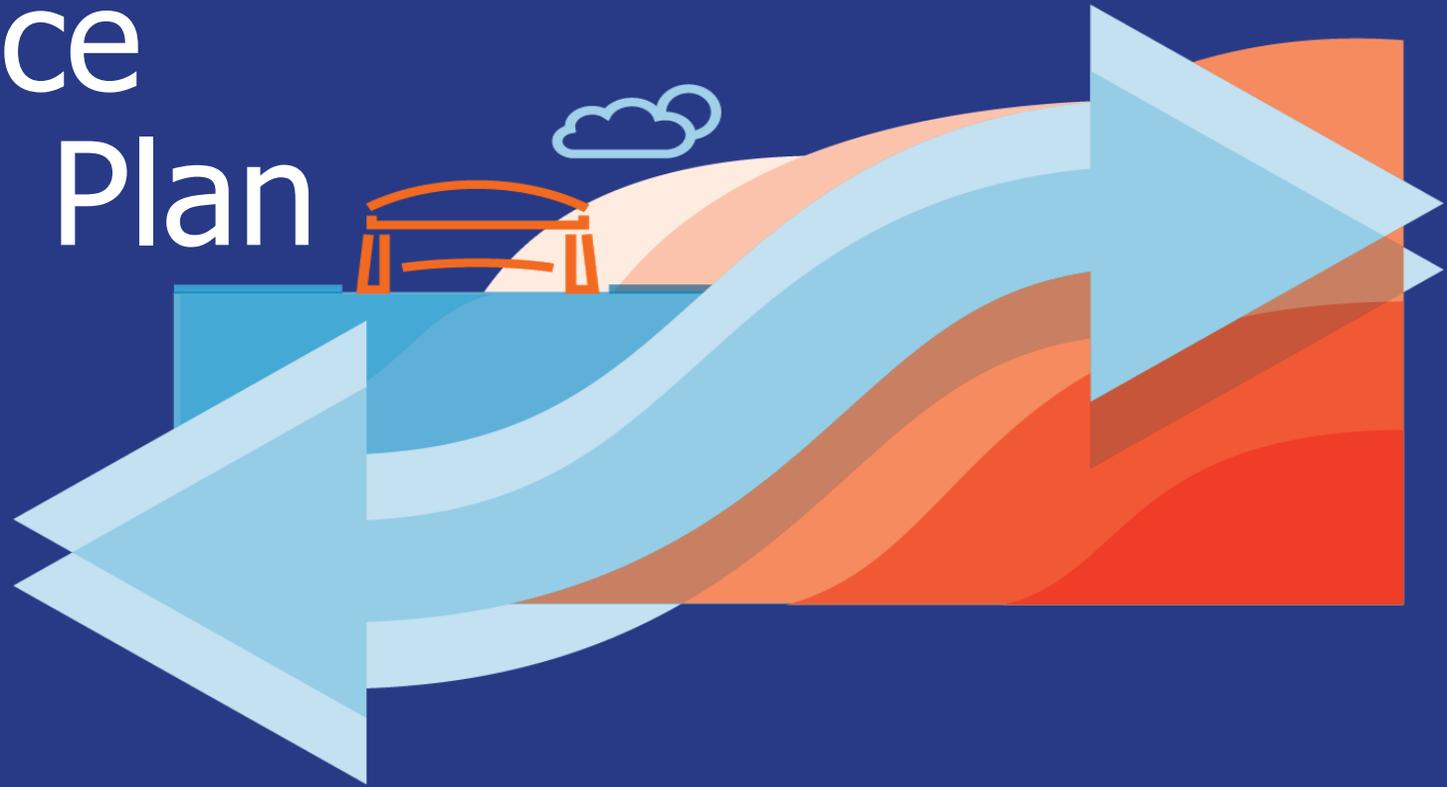
- Approach for scenario analysis: At logical locations, spend time to look at possibility for increased density to support transit use.
- Look at Mall Dr., Anderson, Arlington, Blackman, Pecan, and Mesaba. Identify size of lots and take a high-level look at density. What could be added under existing ordinance.
- Identify places where development could help improve continuity and support BRT.
- Keep in mind this is a vision – look at it broadly. Future small area plans will likely be required to determine details.
- City and DTA agree with this approach for land use component of plan.
  
- Revised schedule (Austin)
  - See slides.
  - September steering committee meeting moved to the 17th.
  
- Next steps (Austin)
  - See slides.

#### ATTACHMENTS

- 08/13/2021 Steering Committee Slides

# Central Entrance Transportation Plan

Steering Committee Meeting  
August 13, 2021



# Agenda

- Welcome
- Summary of July 27th Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting
- Zone concepts discussion
  - Agency feedback (MnDOT, City of Duluth, DTA)
  - Additional discussion of Zone 5
- Update on traffic modeling
- Update on Central High School site
- Land use concept updates and discussion
- Revised schedule
- Next steps



# July 27<sup>th</sup> CAC Summary

## Attendees

Teresa Johnson - Resident, Director of Bridging Hearts

David Schafroth - We Walk in Duluth

Judy Gibbs - MIC Bike Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Dr. Pam Harrington - Business Owner, Harrington Endodontics

Kelley Raisanen - Resident

Steve King - Pastor, North Star Baptist Church & Bus Driver

# Concepts - Polling Summary

## Zone 1

**Would you prefer a wider center median or wider boulevards between the roadway and the sidewalk/trail in this zone?**

Wider center median – **1 out of 5**

Wider boulevards – **4 out of 5**

**If there is not room for a shared use path on both sides of Central Entrance, would you prefer a two-way shared use path on one side or a one-way separated bikeway (“cycle track”) on both sides?**

a two-way shared use path on one side – **2 out of 5**

a one-way separated bikeway on both sides – **3 out of 5**

# Concepts - Polling Summary

## Zone 2 – 4

If there is not room for a shared use path on both sides of Central Entrance, would you prefer a two-way shared use path on one side or a one-way separated bikeway (“cycle track”) on both sides?

a two-way shared use path on one side – **2 out of 5**

a one-way separated bikeway on both sides – **3 out of 5**

Previous plans have proposed three different locations for mid-block crossings in this area. Where do you think a mid-block crossing is most needed? (Check all that apply)

Ebony Ave (near Lakeview Christian Academy) – **3 votes**

Kissell Ave (between McDonald’s and Burger King) – **2 votes**

Harding Ave (near Enterprise Rent-A-Car) - 0

Some other location - please share - 0

Should boulevards be included between the roadway and the sidewalk/trail?

Yes (concrete, grass, plantings) – **4 out of 5**

No – **1 out of 5**

# Concepts - Polling Summary

## Zone 5

Would you prefer a wider center median or wider boulevards between the roadway and the sidewalk/trail in this zone?

Wider center median – **1 out of 5**

Wider boulevards – **4 out of 5**

If there is not room for a shared use path on both sides of Central Entrance, would you prefer a two-way shared use path on one side or a one-way separated bikeway (“cycle track”) on both sides?

a two-way shared use path on one side – **2 out of 5**

a one-way separated bikeway on both sides – **3 out of 5**

## General Feedback (items noted stated by multiple members)

- Roundabouts are confusing for drivers and difficult to understand for pedestrians.
- Concerns about center median maintenance, especially in winter. General concern over effective snow removal solutions.
- Very intrigued by one-way pairs – would like to explore more. More uncertainty in follow up comments.
- Wider boulevards and separation for people and traffic is important to make this corridor safe and walkable.
- Wheelchair and pedestrian use (especially in Zone 1-2) should be considered.
- Safety - speed of traffic.

Note – very little feedback regarding aesthetics

# Zone Concepts

## Input Pre-Concept Development

- Steering Committee Meetings
- Better Central Entrance Event
- Virtual Workshops (June 24<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>)

## Feedback on Concepts

- Steering Committee (July 9<sup>th</sup>)
- Community Advisory Committee (July 27<sup>th</sup>)

# Zone Concepts

## What have we heard?

- Gateway – inviting corridor for multiple modes
- Address missing pedestrian connections
- Safe places to cross the street (mid-block and intersections)
- Winter road maintenance impact on sidewalks
- Importance of center median and boulevard spaces
- Bike facilities along Central Entrance
- Intersection improvements (possible roundabouts)
- Evaluate number and width of lanes

# Zone Concepts

## Key Takeaways/Considerations

- Additional education needed on roundabouts
- Needs/desires relative to available space
- Need for additional business involvement
- Corridor that supports future BRT service
- Accessibility for vulnerable populations in the corridor
- Roundabout locations – each intersection needs to be evaluated

# Zone Concepts

Agency feedback – additional comments on draft concepts?

- MnDOT
- City of Duluth
- DTA

# Zone Concepts

## Additional Comments

- Zone 5

# Update on traffic modeling

## Regional model – evaluate regional travel impacts on the corridor

- Existing Year 2018 (Pre-COVID)
- 2045 No Build
- 2045 Build: Three-lane roadway from Anderson Rd to Pecan Ave

## Intersection and roundabout analysis

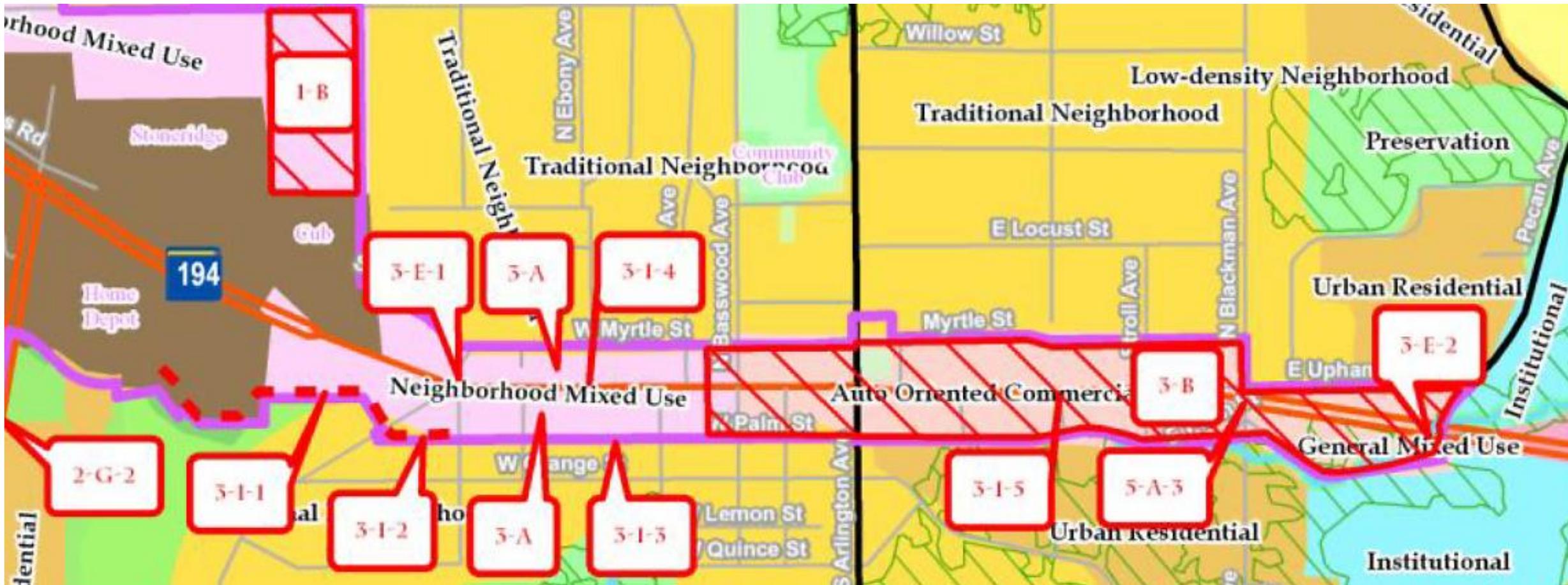
- Baseline existing year and 2045
- Three-lane roadway from Anderson Rd to Pecan Ave, signalized intersections
- One-way pair: Central Entrance and Palm St. between Anderson Rd and Pecan Rd, signalized intersections
- Roundabout analysis
  - Three-lane roadway, roundabouts at Anderson Rd. and Pecan Ave
  - One-way pair, roundabouts at nine locations



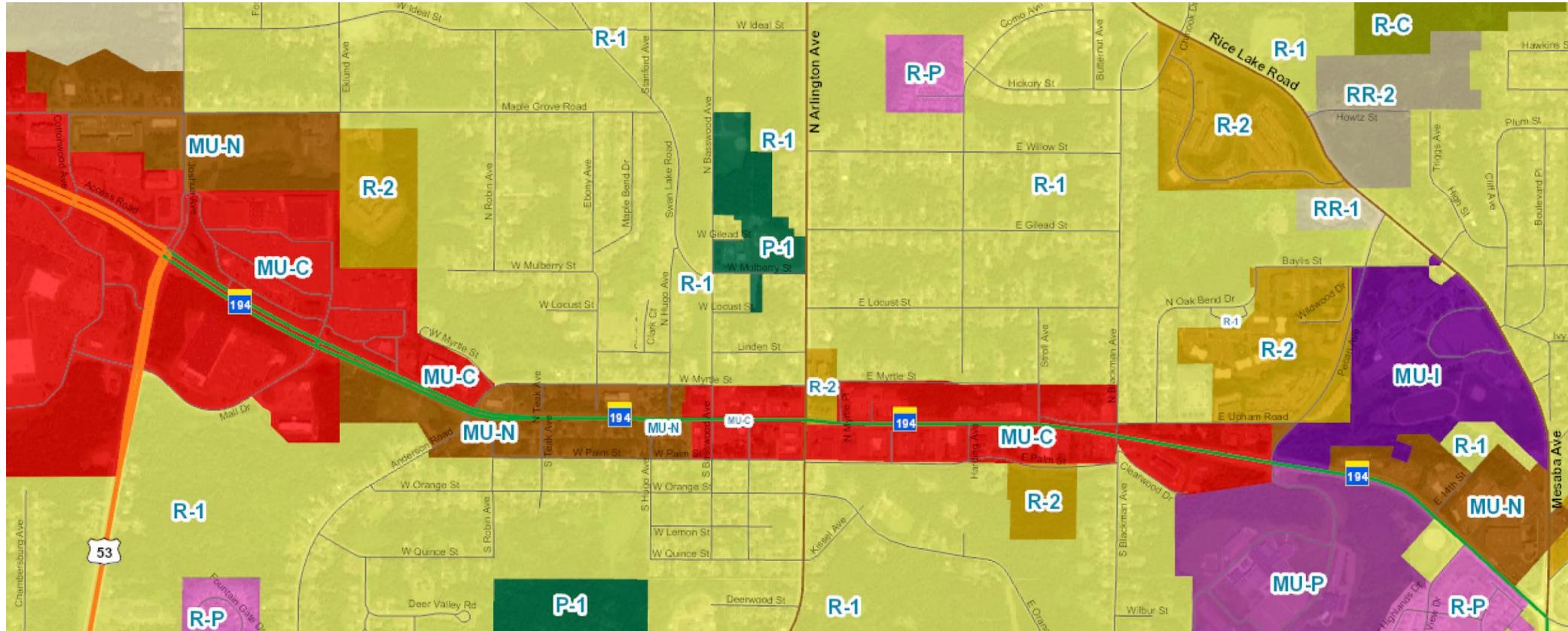
# Update on Central High School site

Adam Fulton, City of Duluth

# Central Entrance – Miller Hill Small Area Plan



# Zoning



## MU-C (Mixed Use Commercial)

- A mix of community & regional commercial uses

## MU-N (Mixed Use Neighborhood)

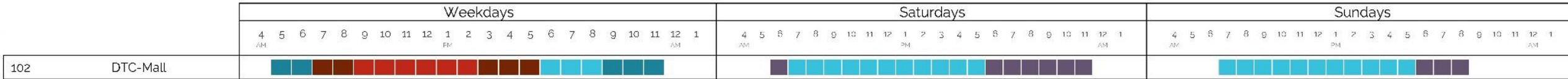
- Neighborhood serving, non-residential uses
- Horizontal & vertical mixed use

## MU-P (Mixed Use Planned)

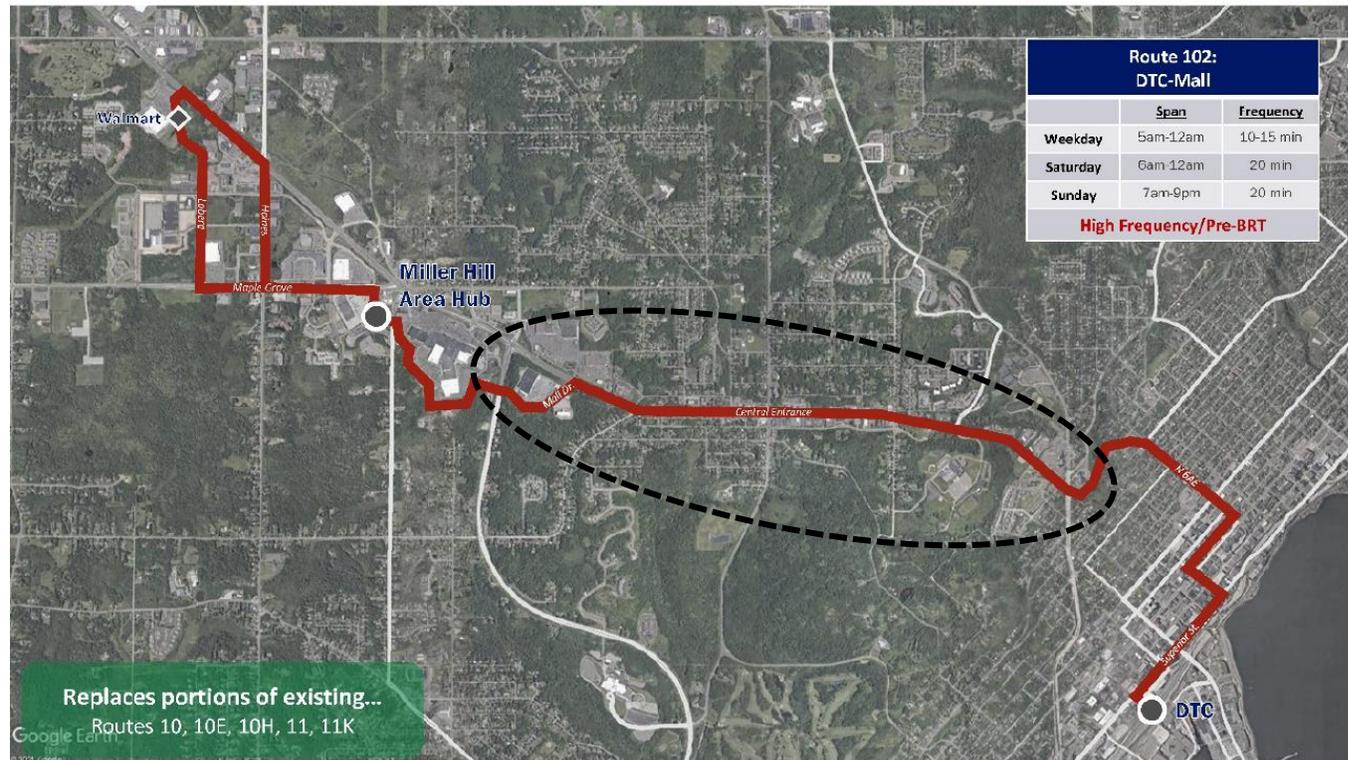
- Flexible development for mixed use projects to address goals of the community & incorporate unique design

# Better Blue Blueprint - Route 102

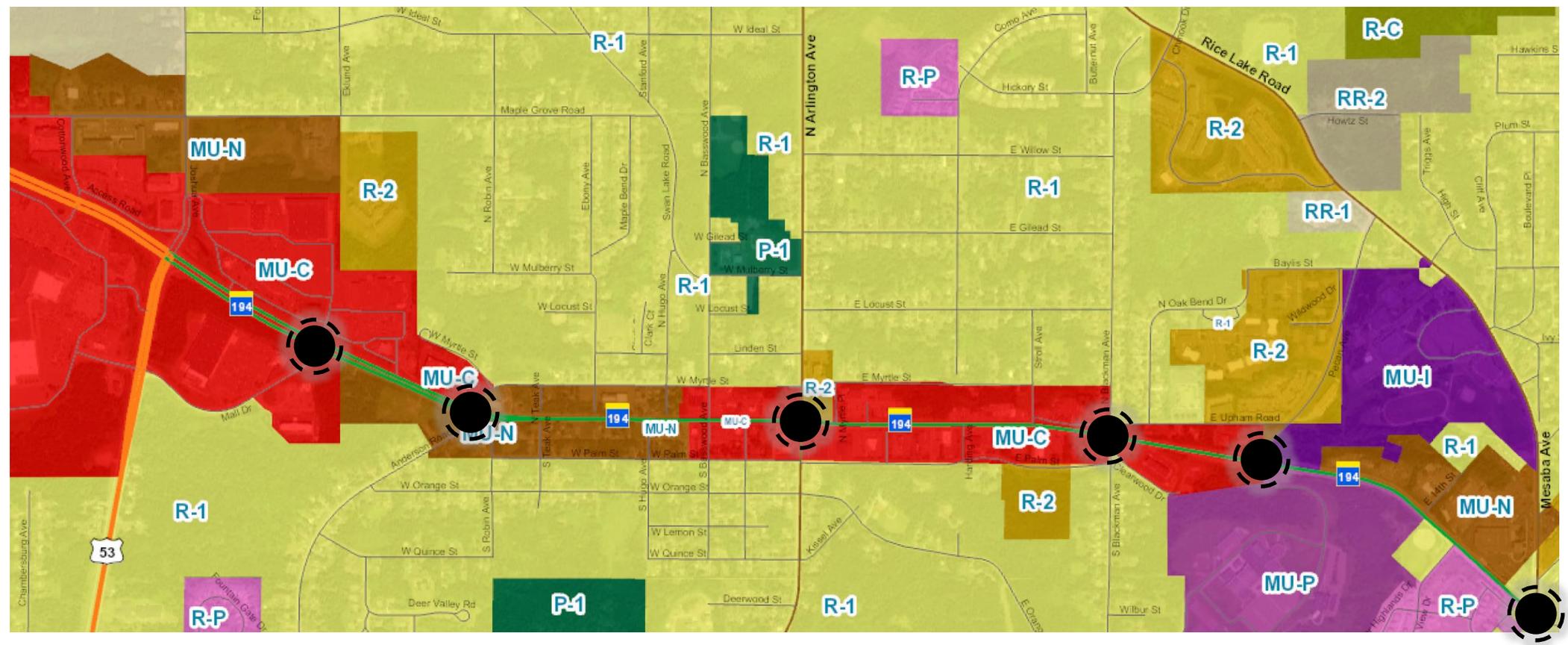
Frequency



	Span	Peak Frequency	Midday Frequency	Early/Late Frequency
Weekday	5am-12am	10 min	15 min	60 min
Saturday	6am-12am	20 min	20 min	60 min
Sunday	7am-9pm	20 min	20 min	60 min



# Land Use Scenarios



## Option 1

- Based on current bus stops
- Current market densities

## Option 2

- Land use plan with more density at arterial stops
- Aspirational level of density

## Revised Schedule

Event	Date
Steering Committee Meeting	September 17th
Second CAC Meeting	Late September–Early October
Steering Committee Meeting	October 8th
Steering Committee Meeting	November 12th
Draft Report Due	November 12th
Comments on Draft Report Due	December 8th
Steering Committee Meeting	December 10th
Final Report Due	December 31st

## Next Steps

- Data collection to support traffic modeling efforts
- Traffic modeling
- Land use scenario development
- Concepts on project website for additional feedback



# Contacts

Mike Wenholz, Senior Planner, Duluth Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

[mwenholz@ardc.org](mailto:mwenholz@ardc.org)

(218) 529-7573

Austin Hauf, Transportation Planner, WSB

[ahauf@wsbeng.com](mailto:ahauf@wsbeng.com)

(763) 762-2827

Thank you



# central entrance

DULUTH, MN