

## Executive Summary

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) are engaging stakeholders and the public to develop a corridor vision and an implementation plan that will identify and prioritize maintenance needs, investment strategies, and improvements for all users along and across I-35 from County Road 61 in Midway Township to 26th Avenue East in Duluth.

The initial engagement phase, focused on listening and discovery will wrap in January 2023. Concepts and improvement designs were developed for community feedback in summer 2023, and the final plan will be completed at the end of 2023.

### KEY FINDINGS

Engagement reveals a vision for a more pedestrian-friendly, environmentally conscious, and economically vibrant Duluth. Key themes include the importance of connectivity, balancing tourism with local needs, prioritizing people and the environment, and emphasizing sustainability. Respondents desire improved access to the waterfront and express concerns about the current I-35 layout.

The data highlights a shared desire for transformative changes to transportation infrastructure in Duluth, aligning with the overarching vision for a more people-centric, sustainable, and connected city. Finding a balance between catering to tourists and meeting local needs, while considering the impact on industries, safety, and the environment, will be crucial in shaping the future of transportation in the area.

**Vision for the Future of Duluth:** The sentiment is hopeful, with a focus on creating a more livable, environmentally conscious, economically vibrant, and accessible city. Respondents envision improved connectivity, better waterfront access, and a shift towards people-centric infrastructure. Concerns include traffic congestion, safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and potential impacts on businesses and neighborhoods.

**Connectivity:** There is a recurring theme of creating a connected community with improved bike/pedestrian infrastructure and public transport options. Participants envision a city where destinations are easily accessible without heavy reliance on cars.

**Emphasis on People:** Respondents prioritize people, the environment, and alternative transportation modes over cars. They want a human-centered city that encourages walking, biking, and public transit.

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**Balancing Tourism and Local Needs:** Tension between catering to tourists and meeting the needs of local residents. Some feel that current initiatives prioritize tourism over local well-being.

**Sustainability and Environmental Considerations:** Many emphasize the importance of green spaces, sustainable architecture, reduced emissions, and preserving natural resources in the city.

**Economic Growth and Diversity:** There is a focus on economic growth, job opportunities, and maintaining a diverse economy beyond relying on tourism.

**Access to Waterfront:** Improved access to Lake Superior with an emphasis on pedestrian-friendly connections, is desired.

**Concerns about the Current Interstate:** Concerns about the negative impacts of the current I-35 layout on the environment, safety, local businesses, and community cohesion.