



Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

DRAFT for Public Review and Comment
August 1—30, 2024



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
221 West First Street
Duluth, MN 55802

dsmic.org/planning/long-range/



Key Elements of the Duluth-Superior Multimodal Transportation Network

Sustainable Choices 2050

Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Duluth, MN-Superior, WI Metropolitan Area

DRAFT for Public Review and Comment

August 1—30, 2024

To view this plan online and for more information about its development, please visit
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Prepared by the
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council



Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

Duluth and Superior urban area communities cooperating in planning and development
through a joint venture of the

Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission



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Table of Contents

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

CHAPTER 1	Introduction	1-2
	About Sustainable Choices 2050	1-2
	What’s New for the 2050 MTP	1-3
	How This Plan Was Developed	1-4
	MIC-Area Transportation Improvements since Sustainable Choices 2045	1-5
CHAPTER 2	Vision, Goals & Objectives.....	2-1
	Introduction.....	2-2
	Vision.....	2-2
	Goals, Objectives, & Strategies.....	2-2
	Incorporating Strategies & Tactics	2-9
CHAPTER 3	Key Takeaways	3-2
CHAPTER 4	Performance-Based Planning.....	4-1
	Introduction.....	4-2
	Summary of Approach	4-2
	Results — MTP Priority Projects List.....	4-6
	Summary	4-10
CHAPTER 5	Multimodal Network.....	5-1
	Transportation Systems.....	5-3
	MIC Area System Profile.....	5-8
	Functional Classification.....	5-21

Table of Contents

	Network Performance.....	5-23
	Performance Measures	5-26
	System Performance Report Summary	5-36
CHAPTER 6	Projects and Funding.....	6-1
	Transportation Projects Overview	6-3
	Financial Assessment	6-8
	Financial Analysis and Fiscal Constraint.....	6-13
	2025-2050 Duluth-Superior Area Transportation Project List.....	6-16
	Fiscal Summary	6-44
	Project Impact Assessment	6-45
	Highlighted Projects.....	6-54
CHAPTER 7	Emerging Trends.....	7-1
	Introduction.....	7-2
CHAPTER 8	Planning & Policy	8-1
	Planning and Policy Framework	8-2
	Federal Guidance	8-8
	State Guidance.....	8-11
	Local Coordination	8-17
CHAPTER 9	Participation.....	9-1
	Engaging the Public in Transportation Planning.....	9-2
	Public Participation Initiatives for the MTP	9-2
	Stakeholder Engagement Goals and Objectives.....	9-3
	Stakeholder Engagement Activities	9-5
	Release of Draft Plan for Public Comment	9-7
CHAPTER 10	Action Steps to Implement	10-1
	1. Incorporate Performance-Based Planning.....	10-2

Table of Contents

Appendix A	Federal Planning Factors & MTP Objectives	A-1
Appendix B-1	Demographic Trends and Projections	B-1
Appendix B-2	Short Trip Analysis.....	B-2
Appendix C	Public Participation Summary.....	C-1
Appendix D	Comments Received on Draft MTP & MIC Responses	D-1

MAPS

Maps Disclaimer

The information in these maps is a compilation of data derived from various federal, state, county, regional, and municipal sources. Geographic information has limitations due to the scale, resolution, date, and interpretation of the original source materials. Maps and data are to be used for reference purposes only and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC)/Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. No responsibility is assumed for damages or other liabilities due to the accuracy, availability, use, or misuse of the information herein provided.



1. Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Duluth-Superior area.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

- About Sustainable Choices 2050 1-2**
 - Map 1.1: Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area..... 1-2
- What’s New for the 2050 MTP..... 1-3**
 - Performance-Based Planning 1-3**
 - Project Prioritization 1-3**
 - Short Trip Generator Analysis 1-3**
 - Combined Jurisdictional Consultations..... 1-4**
 - Focus Groups with Targeted Stakeholders 1-4**
- How This Plan Was Developed 1-5**
- MIC-Area Transportation Improvements Since Sustainable Choices 2045 1-6**
 - Minnesota DOT..... 1-6**
 - Wisconsin DOT 1-6**
 - St. Louis County 1-7**
 - City of Duluth 1-7**
 - City of Superior..... 1-8**
 - City of Hermantown 1-8**
 - City of Proctor 1-8**
 - Duluth Transit Authority 1-9**
 - Duluth Seaway Port Authority 1-9**
 - Duluth International and Sky Harbor Airports 1-9**

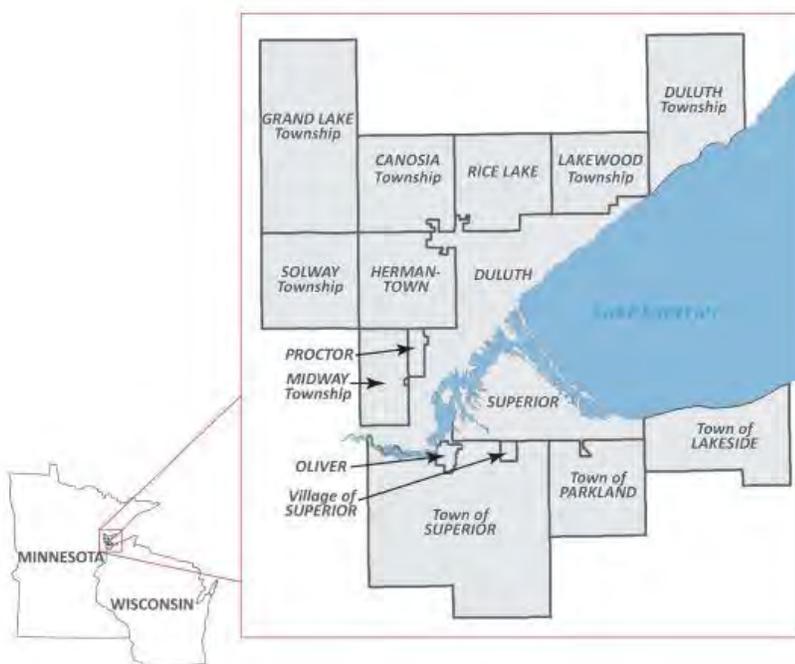
About Sustainable Choices 2050

Sustainable Choices 2050 is the MIC's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Duluth, MN—Superior, WI planning . It identifies a community-supported vision for how our transportation network will look, feel, and function in the future. It covers a twenty-five-year planning horizon and to keep pace with changing priorities, opportunities, and challenges is updated every five years.

Developing a transportation system that meets the changing needs of Duluth-Superior area residents, businesses, and visitors supports the region's development and provides a range of safe, efficient multimodal options for everyone. The plan is also an important element in supporting local and regional economic development and contributes to the region's quality of life. The purpose of the 2050 MTP is to evaluate potential existing and future conditions that affect regional access and mobility and to evaluate potential transportation improvements to address existing and emerging issues.

Sustainable Choices 2050 addresses all modes of transportation within the Duluth-Superior metropolitan planning area (Map 1.1), encompassing multiple state, county, and city jurisdictions.

Map 1.1: MIC Planning Area



The Vision of Sustainable Choices 2050

Develop a transportation system that:

- Is community-supported
- Multimodal
- Supports the needs of both people and commerce
- Is fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time

Three aspects of Sustainable Choices

To achieve the overall concept of *Sustainable Choices*, we should ask if any new policy, project, or decision related to our regional transportation network:

- Promotes *fiscal* sustainability
- Promotes *social* sustainability
- Promotes *environmental* sustainability

A key goal of *Sustainable Choices 2050* is to encourage infrastructure investments and policy decisions that will contribute to the attainment of an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that provides a high level of access and mobility for all people and goods, improves safety, preserves infrastructure, and provides economic activity consistent with available environmental and fiscal resources.

All of the MIC's planning activities embody the [cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive \("3-C"\) framework](#) for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas as reaffirmed in the federal legislation, the Infrastructure [Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#) aka the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#).

What's New for the 2050 MTP

Sustainable Choices 2050 builds upon the holistic approach of the 2045 plan, to consider and plan for all users of the transportation system, which includes commercial and freight entities as well as the people who live here, of all ages, incomes, and abilities.

In the 2050 plan, new and notable elements of the plan and our planning process include:

Performance-Based Planning

The development of *Sustainable Choices 2050* involved the MIC's first true use of a performance-based planning approach to identify priority projects within our MTP.

The purpose of applying this framework was to better align the short-, mid-, and long-range projects included in Chapter 6 with the MTP's vision, goals, and objectives.

Project Prioritization

The performance-based process included a structured evaluation of the approximately 250 non-transit proposed projects listed in the MTP, resulting in a shorter list of 40 priority projects that are expected to best carry out the vision of *Sustainable Choices 2050* and implement its goals and objectives.

Short Trip Generator Analysis

For the first time, Replica, a data mobility model generated from multiple sources, was utilized to identify key zones that could be targeted for future bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety improvements. Many short (i.e., one-mile and three-

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The MIC is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior area and produced this long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

MIC-Area Jurisdictions include:

Minnesota – St. Louis County

- Canosia Township
- City of Duluth
- City of Hermantown
- City of Proctor
- City of Rice Lake
- Duluth Township
- Grand Lake Township
- Lakewood Township
- Midway Township
- Solway Township

Wisconsin – Douglas County

- City of Superior
- Lakeside Township
- Parkland Township
- Town of Oliver
- Village of Superior

mile) automobile trips are currently made in these zones and represent areas where opportunities for a higher level of bicycle and pedestrian utilization. Not only could more sustainable modes of transportation be encouraged in these areas, they also include higher populations of people with special transportation considerations, who could be better supported with improved biking and walking facilities. This is discussed in further detail in the Bicycle and Pedestrian sections of Chapter 5, and the original data analysis is shown in Appendix B-2).

Combined Jurisdictional Consultations

As described in Chapter 9 (Public Participation) and Appendix C (Engagement Activities and Stakeholder Input), instead of meeting separately with each jurisdiction, for the first time these consultations were held as group sessions (Minnesota jurisdictions and Wisconsin jurisdictions).

This format served as a productive opportunity for discussion for jurisdictions to share their transportation wants, needs, and short– mid– and long-range projects to be considered for inclusion within the MTP.

Focus Groups with Targeted Stakeholders

As described in Chapter 9 (Public Participation) and Appendix C (Engagement Activities and Stakeholder Input), focus group discussions were held to better understand issues that were highlighted in the survey results, and on because the public survey respondents did not fully represent the diversity of the MIC region’s population in terms of race and ethnicity, income, age, and ability. These stakeholder groups included:

- Pedestrians
- Sustainable transportation
- Equity and environmental justice
- Older adults
- People with disabilities

This was the first time the MIC used a facilitated discussion format to develop a better understanding of issues and opportunities. Much of that input is reflected in the Key Takeaways (Chapter 3).

Planning for All Modes of Transportation

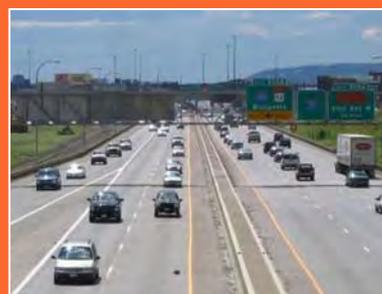
Transportation systems are multi-modal. This plan addresses both motorized and non-motorized (or “active”) modes of travel, including:



Pedestrian



Harbor/Port



Highways



Transit

How This Plan Was Developed

Sustainable Choices 2050 is an update of the 2045 long range plan, a major planning initiative conducted over 18 months in accordance with ‘update’ as it’s defined in 23CFR: *to make current a metropolitan transportation plan through a comprehensive review...with public review and comment and a 20-year horizon.*

As described in the previous section, several new processes were utilized. General start-to-finish process steps included:

- Identifying transportation issues and opportunities in the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area through early engagement efforts that included a public survey, consultations with representatives of area jurisdictions and focus group discussions with targeted stakeholder groups.
- Reviewing and updating the 2050 Goals and Objectives in Chapter 2;
- Analyzing the most recent data available, including traffic volumes, level of service estimates, socioeconomic and demographic trends, and existing transportation assets;
- Working with MIC-area jurisdictions to determine proposed short-, mid-, and long-term projects, and estimating projected revenues to determine fiscal constraint;
- Presenting and discussing the MTP at monthly meetings of the MIC Policy Board and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC);
- Conducting intensive discussions with TAC members to introduce our performance-based planning process and gain their input into a structured evaluation process to prioritize the projects proposed by the jurisdictions to better align them with the MTP’s vision, goals, and objectives;
- Coordinating with current federal and state policies and building upon the MIC’s recent plans as well as local area plans and policies;
- Making the draft MTP available for public review and comment and holding two open house-style public meetings;
- Incorporating the comments received into the final MTP and demonstrating where in the plan those changes were made. if applicable.
- Presenting the final MTP to the TAC for its recommendation for approval and to the MIC Policy Board for adoption.

Planning for All Modes of Transportation



Roadways



Air



Bicycle



Rail

MIC-Area Transportation Improvements Since Sustainable Choices 2045

Many improvements to the Duluth-Superior area transportation system have been made in the five years since the 2045 update of the MIC's MTP, contributing to the attainment of its long-range vision of *developing a community-supported multimodal transportation system that supports the diverse needs of people and commerce.*

This section highlights key improvements to the Duluth-Superior area transportation system, as shared by local jurisdictions during jurisdictional consultations.

Minnesota DOT

Key improvements made to MnDOT jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Redesign and reconstruction of the Twin Ports Interchange where I-35, I-535, and US 53 intersect. This large-scale project is regionally significant, especially for freight movement through the Port of Duluth-Superior. Portions of the project have been delayed one year due to an unanticipated discovery, but much of interchange has been completed. The completed project eliminates blind merges and left exits, replaces aging infrastructure and better accommodates freight movements through the interchange.
- US 53 southbound through the Pike Lake area.
- Roundabouts on MN 194 (safety improvement).
- Safety improvements at the MN 194/US 53 intersection.
- Trunk Highway 39 in Oliver.
- Lake Avenue Bridge over Interstate 35 was resurfaced with improvements to sidewalks and crossing signals and the addition of bike lane.

Wisconsin DOT

Key improvements made to WisDOT jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Redesign and reconstruction of Belknap Street (US 2 through the City of Superior). This project incorporated many pedestrian and bicycle improvements.
- Roadway and sidewalk improvements along US 53 within the City of Superior.

St. Louis County

Key improvements made to St. Louis County jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Led a multijurisdictional effort to significantly improve signal timing along several key corridors. Several of the jurisdictions mentioned the value of these improvements.
- Some intersection safety improvements, including installing J-turns.
- Resurface and maintenance of Woodland Avenue north of Anoka Street.
- Resurface, maintenance, and addition of turning lane on Woodland Avenue between Arrowhead Road and Snively Road.
- Redesign and installation of a roundabout at the Snively Road, Glenwood Street, and Jean Duluth Road intersection.
- General sidewalk and bike facility improvements.
- Reconstruction of the French River Bridge.
- Implementing the County Transportation Fund which has directly led to a heavy investment into transportation system improvements within the MIC area. More than \$87 million has been invested by St Louis County, with \$68 million being St Louis County funds, including those directly from the County Transportation Fund.

City of Duluth

Key improvements made to the City of Duluth jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Completed the East Superior Street project downtown. This included pedestrian and handicap accessibility improvements.
- Implementing the local voter-approved levy increase dedicated to street improvements, which has helped reduce the backlog of roadwork needs.
- Improved signal timing has increased performance along the Central Entrance corridor. This was part of the effort led by St. Louis County.
- Segments of the Campus Connector Trail have been completed.
- The City recently received two federal RAISE grants. One is

to support a multimodal redesign of West Superior Street from the M&H gas station to 34th Street, including the section through the Lincoln Park Craft District. The other is to support improvements to the Lakewalk from Lake Avenue to 26th Avenue East.

City of Superior

Key improvements made to City of Superior jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Intelligent lighting has been installed.
- Belknap Street (US 2) redesign and reconstruction (City partnership with WisDOT)
- A traffic signal was installed at the intersection of Tower Avenue (Highway 35) and 61st Street (Highway 105).
- The condition and longevity of East 2nd Street (Highways 53 and 2) have been improved.
- The City's Active Transportation Plan has spearheaded improvements.
- The City continues to implement a policy that all new roadway projects include significant space specifically for bike and pedestrian facilities.

City of Hermantown

Key improvements made to the City of Hermantown jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Improved signal timing has increased performance along several trunk, county, and MSA roadways. This was part of the effort led by St. Louis County.
- Federal aid reconditioning of Ugstad Road and Arrowhead Road that included the following improvements and additions: new sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use trails, stormwater control, and restriping.

City of Proctor

Key improvements made to the City of Proctor jurisdiction roadways over the past five years include:

- Completed the Proctor Transportation plan, which has been very useful and helped secure some funding.
- Starting a roadway condition plan to better maintain quality roadway conditions.

Duluth Transit Authority

Key improvements made to the DTA over the past five years include:

- Rollout and implementation of Better Bus Blueprint, a bold full-scale reassessment, and prioritization of the entire transit system routing and timing. Significant improvements have been achieved.
- Major facility upgrades, most notably at DTA's operations center.

Duluth Seaway Port Authority

While not a typical transportation jurisdiction, the DSPA does directly support maritime shipping, a significant mode of transportation in the Duluth-Superior area. The Duluth-Superior port is the largest on the Great Lakes and supports both Great Lakes and ocean-going vessels carrying a variety of cargoes. Additionally, DSPA facilitates and houses intermodal freight operations. Key improvements DSPA has made over the past five years to support the Duluth-Superior area transportation system include:

- Rehabilitation of dock walls and slips along Rice's Point to greatly improve the shipping of large cargo, primarily windmill blades and parts to date.
- Redesign and reconstruction of the DSPA property to create an expanded intermodal facility.
- Co-led the revision of the Erie Pier Management Plan (EPMP) in 2021. Erie Pier is the local confined disposal facility (CDF) for placing federal shipping channel dredged materials. The EPMP provides local and state perspectives on the operations of the Erie Pier facility, with the shared goal of prolonging the life of the facility through processing and beneficial use of dredged material placed in the facility. Proper and efficient operation of Erie Pier is very important to maritime transportation in the Duluth-Superior port.
- Numerous recommendations of the updated EPMP have been implemented, some of which have led to physical improvements at the Erie Pier facility.

Duluth International and Sky Harbor Airports

While an MPO has limited influence on airport operations, the Duluth-Superior area has three airport facilities that are important for the movement of people and goods.

Key improvements and efforts Duluth International Airport has made over the past five years to support the Duluth-Superior area transportation system include:

- Reconstruction of Taxiway A is currently ongoing and includes replacement of deteriorating asphalt with concrete, new edge lighting, and improved drainage.
- Construction of a new general aviation hanger complex, which includes a 5-bay heated and insulated ranch hanger.
- Secured grants and other funding for significant near-future improvements including a new air traffic control tower (to replace the current 70-year-old unit) and a new corporate hanger.
- Key improvements Sky Harbor Regional Airport has made over the past five years to support the Duluth-Superior area transportation system include a new realigned runway to reduce conflicts of the approach over an old-growth forest.
- New airport terminal replaced a 50-year-old terminal.
- New snow removal equipment storage facility.
- The key improvement made at Richard I Bong Memorial Airport in the City of Superior over the past five years to support the Duluth-Superior area transportation system was a crack sealing effort on the runways. There are plans to construct a parallel taxiway in the future.



2. Vision, Goals & Objectives

This chapter identifies and explains the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies of Sustainable Choices 2050

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

- Introduction 2-2**
- Vision 2-2**
- Goals, Objectives, & Strategies 2-2**
 - Goal 1: Health of People and the Environment..... 2-4**
 - Goal 2: Livable Communities and Equity 2-5**
 - Goal 3: Safety and Security 2-6**
 - Goal 4: Moving People and Goods 2-7**
 - Goal 5: Economic Vitality 2-8**
- Incorporating Strategies & Tactics..... 2-9**
 - Example: Goal—> Strategy—> Tactic 2-9**

Introduction

Sustainable Choices 2050 - the MIC's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) - defines an overarching vision for the future Duluth-Superior transportation system. This vision is based on community and stakeholder input and values, local data and analysis, and generally known planning perspectives. The vision guides strategic direction carried out through a performance-based transportation planning process.

Vision

Sustainable Choices 2050 is guided by the following overall vision:

Develop a community-supported multimodal transportation system that not only supports the diverse needs of people and commerce, but is also fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time.

This vision is carried forward from the 2045 MTP and is the central tenet of *Sustainable Choices 2050*. It is based on current and future needs in combination with input from the community, including input from public surveys and discussions with key stakeholders.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics are associated with specific actions that can be implemented to achieve the vision. For the purpose of this plan, the following definitions are used:

Goals are broad statements that define the desired results, or outcomes, needed to achieve the overall vision. They are successful endpoints an organization is striving for, and should help clarify an organization's vision. Goals are more general than objectives.

Objectives support the goals by providing additional details and defining characteristics of each one. More specifically, objectives are specific, measurable statements that are used to measure the success or failure of a plan, policy, or organization. The key word here is "measurable." A good objective should include (or lead to) the development of strategies that can be measured and tracked over time and can be used to assess alternatives. There may be multiple objectives linked to each goal.

**The Vision of
Sustainable Choices 2050
is to develop a
transportation system that:**

- Is community-supported
- Multimodal
- Supports the needs of both people and commerce
- Is fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time

**Three aspects of
*Sustainable Choices***

To achieve the overall concept of *Sustainable Choices*, we should ask if any new policy, project, or decision related to our regional transportation network:

- Promotes *fiscal* sustainability
- Promotes *social* sustainability
- Promotes *environmental* sustainability

Strategies and Performance Measures provide actionable ideas about how each objective may be achieved. They are actions or metrics used to assess progress toward meeting an objective – in other words, “how” to meet objectives. They can be used to compare different plans, policies or investment alternatives, as well as track actual performance over time. Strategies are not as specific as tactics or targets.

Sustainable Choices 2050 includes the five goals from 2045 MTP survey results indicating a community desire to achieve a balance among these five planning perspectives within the Duluth-Superior area transportation system, which represent basic, important aspects of a community that transportation directly and indirectly impacts. The surveys used to gather input and priorities from the public were largely developed around these five planning perspectives. *Sustainable Choices 2050* also includes 26 objectives that support the goals.

While achieving a relative balance of all five goals within all transportation projects and across the transportation network is desired, it is understood that it may not be possible or necessary to achieve this balance in every project.

Tactics and Targets

While not included within *Sustainable Choices 2050*, **tactics** — specific actions to implement strategies — and **targets** — specific levels of performance to be achieved within a defined timeframe — may also be used to measure progress over time, and both are an integral part of an implementation strategy.

Goal 1: Health of People and the Environment

Promote public health, protect and enhance the environment, and facilitate energy conservation throughout the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 1-1

Design and maintain infrastructure across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system to support and encourage a physically active everyday routine.

Objective 1-2

Improve energy conservation related to the use and operation of the local and regional transportation system for both environmental and public health benefits.

Objective 1-3

Avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the negative environmental impacts of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Planning Perspective

It's important to protect and enhance the environment and promote energy conservation through responsible transportation system policies and design.

Ignoring these can lead to significant future costs in terms of human health, property damage, and environmental remediation.

Goal 2: Livable Communities and Equity

Develop and maintain a reliable year-round Duluth-Superior area transportation system that equitably enables people of all ages, incomes, and abilities to engage in our community's civic, economic, and social opportunities and access needed services.

Objective 2-1

Ensure that investments in the Duluth-Superior area transportation system lead to improved and reliable transportation options for people of all ages, incomes, and abilities across all modes.

Objective 2-2

Ensure early and ongoing opportunities exist for the public to engage in two-way discussion about planned or proposed transportation improvements to the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 2-3

Appropriately scale transportation-related projects across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 2-4

Make information about the Duluth-Superior area transportation system available to the public in a variety of ways.

Objective 2-5

Build and maintain Duluth-Superior area transportation system infrastructure in a manner that expands and/or enhances connectivity with key community resources (e.g., schools, parks, community centers, community gardens, the lakewalk, etc.).

Planning Perspective:

A livable and equitable community is a safe and connected place where people can live independent, healthy, and meaningful lives.

These places have a diverse and resilient local economy, transportation options that access needed services, and provide opportunities and choices for people of all ages and ability to engage in the community's civic, economic, and social life.

Goal 3: Safety and Security

Ensure the safety and security of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all users and modes.

Objective 3-1

Ensure emergency response, disaster preparedness, risk mitigation, and other security measures are implemented and maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 3-2

Ensure evidence-based, data-supported safety design is incorporated into transportation projects.

Objective 3-3

Improve safety for all users of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system, especially prioritizing its most vulnerable users.

Objective 3-4

Meet all adopted safety-related federal and state performance measure targets., including any transit safety targets.

Objective 3-5

Maintain Duluth-Superior area transportation system infrastructure to minimize or mitigate risk for both people and freight.

Objective 3-6

Use technology to improve the safety and security of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Planning Perspective:

Continually improving the safety of the Duluth-Superior transportation system for all users and modes is obviously important.

A part of system safety is ensuring we are prepared to handle emergencies and disasters. Additionally, a well-functioning system is secure, helping people feel free from danger or fear.

Wisconsin's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)

The following Emphasis Areas in the Wisconsin SHSP are consistent with objectives 3-2 through 3-5, and will be incorporated into the MIC's Safety Action Plan, a new planning initiative to be undertaken in 2025-2026 (see Ch.6, 'For Study Projects' on p. 59):

- Improve Safety Culture. Safety Data, Safety Technology
- Increase Occupant Protection
- Reduce Diver Distraction/ Improve Diver Alertness
- Reduce Alcohol & Drug Impaired Driving
- Improve Safety of Intersection
- Reduce Lane Departure Crashes
- Reduce the Incidence and Severity of Motorcycle Crashes
- Improve Work Zone Safety
- Improve Non-Motorist Safety
- Curb Aggressive Driving/ Reduce Speed-Related Crashes
- Improve Driver Performance (Teens, Older, and Competent)

Goal 4: Moving People and Goods

Ensure the Duluth-Superior area transportation system is developed and maintained as an integrated multimodal network that efficiently gets people and goods where they need to go.

Objective 4-1

Provide reliable and efficient travel options for the movement of people and goods across the entire Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 4-2

Address inefficiencies in the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all modes.

Objective 4-3

Improve real-time travel across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all modes.

Objective 4-4

Ensure that direct travel connections between modes of transportation for people exist and are maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 4-5

Ensure that direct travel connections between modes of transportation for goods and services exist and are maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Objective 4-6

Meet all adopted federal and state performance measure targets for National Highway System (NHS) infrastructure (PM2), system performance on the NHS (PM3), and transit asset management (TAM).

Planning Perspective

Ensuring that people and goods can get where they need to go is an essential purpose of a local transportation system.

Factors such as how easy it is for people and goods to move from one place to another, how well-connected primary destinations are, and ensuring all modes of transportation operate as one seamless network, are all important.

Goal 5: Economic Vitality

Develop and maintain the Duluth-Superior area transportation system to support economic productivity and competitiveness.

Objective 5-1

Ensure the Duluth-Superior area transportation system provides access to and connection between key population and employment centers.

Objective 5-2

Improve access and mobility across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for the movement of freight.

Objective 5-3

Promote Duluth-Superior area transportation system decisions and investments that enhance the regional and global competitiveness of the Duluth-Superior Port.

Objective 5-4

Promote Duluth-Superior area transportation system decisions and investments that stimulate neighborhood and regional economic activity.

Objective 5-5

Make it easier to travel to tourist destinations and events.

Objective 5-6

Integrate existing economic development plan recommendations when making decisions about Duluth-Superior area transportation system projects.

Planning Perspective

Local and regional transportation systems are critical to a healthy economy. It is important to develop and maintain our transportation system to support economic productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness.

As visitors contribute significantly to our local economy, it is important our transportation system enhance travel and tourism.

Incorporating Strategies & Tactics

Sustainable Choices 2050 does include the federally-required performance measures (see pages 5.24-33) and uses one of them in two of the MTP project scoring metrics. While *Sustainable Choices 2050* does not specify any strategies, performance measures certainly can be used as strategies.

Strategies may be used to better achieve goals and objectives in implementing the vision of this plan. Given the wide variety of needs and project types across the transportation network, it would be impossible to generate a complete list of appropriate and useful strategies. It makes sense that project-specific strategies (and at times tactics or targets) will be generated as part of early project planning to aid in better scoping and post project progress reporting. It is anticipated that some strategies will be or be based on comments from public engagement, key stakeholder consultations, and/or the input of jurisdictional planners and engineers or consultants.

Example: Goal—> Strategy—> Tactic

Goal 5

Develop and maintain the Duluth-Superior area transportation system to support economic productivity and competitiveness.

Objective 5-1: Ensure the Duluth-Superior area transportation system provides access to and connection between key population and employment centers.

- **Strategy 1a:** Ensure consistent transit route options exist in all primary neighborhoods.
- **Strategy 1b:** Ensure consistent transit route options exist for all primary employment centers or employers.
- **Strategy 1c:** Ensure transit options exist to and from key employment centers or employers at times that allow employees to arrive before common shifts and use transit following common shift end times.

Tactic 1c-1: Ensure DTA bus route 8 includes at least one service leaving the Miller Hill Mall after 11:15 PM.

Tactic 1c-2: Same as c-1 for DTA bus route 5.

3. Key Takeaways & Comments

This chapter describes the key takeaway points to consider in making sustainable choices for the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Key Takeaway Points	3-2
1. Many Needs and Wants, Limited Resources	3-2
2. Integrated System-Wide Focus	3-2
3. Investment Priorities	3-2
4. Balance of Multiple Goals	3-3
5. Equity & Accessibility	3-3
6. Multi-Modal Choices	3-3
7. Sidewalk/Pedestrian/Bikeway Connectivity	3-3
8. Public Transportation	3-4
9. Historically Stagnant Population Growth.....	3-4
10. Aging Population.....	3-5
11. Low Levels of Traffic Congestion	3-5
12. Commuters	3-5
13. Poverty & Low Income	3-6
14. Ambulatory Difficulty	3-6
15. Evidence-Based Decisions.....	3-6
16. Safety.....	3-7
17. Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure.....	3-7
18. Environmental Sustainability.....	3-7
19. Public Health Impacts.....	3-8
20. Policy Development	3-8
21. Geographic Challenges	3-8
22. Unknown Impacts of Emerging Technologies & Trends.....	3-8
23. Cost & Funding Concerns.....	3-9

Figure 3.1: Increase of Highway Construction Costs, 2003-2023..... 3-10

Key Takeaway Points

The following are the key points considered in *Sustainable Choices 2050*. They come from both summaries of all data sources and analyses used in this plan, as well as key points heard through public surveys and stakeholder group meetings held during plan development. The data sources are detailed within numerous chapters and appendices throughout this plan.

1. Many Needs and Wants, Limited Resources

The Duluth-Superior area has a significant amount of large and/or aging transportation-related infrastructure. Overall, funding the many transportation system needs, especially given continuously increasing costs within the context of a generally stagnant population and decreasing tax base, is not attainable using current approaches and will require more long-term sustainable approaches to be implemented. The unknown but anticipated continued costs due to climate change impacts on the MIC area's transportation infrastructure add to this challenge. Changes in approach and mindset are likely, including improved regional asset management and prioritization of transportation system needs.

2. Integrated System-Wide Approach

In considering all the needs, wants, aspirations, concerns, and issues associated with the Duluth-Superior area transportation network, it is clear that many, if not most of the key takeaways are connected and intertwined. As such, simply trying to address each on its own will not produce the desired vision for the MIC area transportation network. To truly implement the vision, an integrated, holistic, system-wide approach is required. While this is not easy, it should be carried out to the extent possible.

3. Investment Priorities

The investment priorities of *Sustainable Choices 2050* are to realize the plan's vision by implementing the goals and objectives identified in Chapter 2, which are integrated into the performance-based planning process and the plan's priority projects, as described in Chapter 4. These priority projects are to be the highest investment priorities within the region's transportation system.

4. Balance of Multiple Goals

Past surveys clearly indicated people want all five goals of this plan to be achieved in a relatively balanced manner. While nothing indicates this desire has changed, comments received during the development of this plan do demonstrate a more intense call for safety to be prioritized.

Achieving this will require a continued shift from traditional transportation priorities, including new, broader, more integrative, and holistic approaches that include a more diverse group of interests and professionals within project planning and decision-making teams from the beginning.

5. Equity & Accessibility

Comments from stakeholder focus groups and survey responses suggest a community desire for a more equitable transportation network that ensures affordable and accessible transportation options for all people. People desire a network that enables them to move from one place to another efficiently and safely no matter their economic status, age, health, or physical condition.

6. Multi-Modal Choices

Although driving and riding in automobiles is the primary mode used in the MIC area (97% of survey respondents use an automobile), other modes of travel are also used, desired, and in some cases necessary for people to travel within, through, and to and from the MIC area. It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to establish livable and equitable communities that meet the multiple goals of this plan without prioritizing true multi-modal options as legitimate transportation routes. The following are related suggestions received:

- Create safer, people-focused corridors that better accommodate pedestrians and bikes.
- Specifically allocate more budget for non-car infrastructure.
- Reallocate right-of-way width for non-motorized travel.

7. Sidewalk/Pedestrian/Bikeway Connectivity

It has been a common request to continue to improve connectivity for modes other than vehicles. There are gaps in sidewalks throughout neighborhoods. Similarly, there are gaps in bikeways that prevent continuous riding on dedicated bikeways.

8. Public Transportation

The Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) implemented the Better Bus Blueprint in 2022 with the goal of creating a better experience for current and future bus riders. Despite the improvements that were made, we heard many comments expressing concerns about the safety and reliability of transit service, requests for more frequent and expanded bus service, and interest in more amenities to encourage ridership and to counteract the negative stigma that persists about public transportation.

However, a persistent issue for the DTA is that it has been difficult to hire enough bus drivers to fully realize the Better Bus Blueprint improvements. Limited housing within the Duluth-Superior area, especially affordable housing options, was cited as one reason for the difficulty in hiring drivers.

Additional concerns about sidewalk condition, connectivity, and maintenance (especially concerning lack of snow/ice removal) are issues not limited to or necessarily caused by the DTA, but that people repeatedly stated make bus travel difficult, especially for those with ambulatory difficulties.

STRIDE, a paratransit dial-a-ride transportation service for qualified individuals with disabilities and managed by the DTA, is another public transportation option in the MIC area.

Comments received noted that the drivers are friendly and helpful, but that the service needs better consistency, reliability, and use of technology, such as real-time tracking for riders. We heard that the service has left riders stuck at home or elsewhere on short notice (or with no warning), an especially difficult situation for people who have a disability.

9. Historically Stagnant Population Growth

The MIC area's stagnant population trend of the past 40+ years presents real potential challenges to our transportation system. The lack of population growth, along with the increase in the aging portion of our population and the decline in the percentage of people of working age, results in a decreased tax base. Thus, there is generally less money over time to fund the many transportation system needs we face, which are getting more expensive over time. It is estimated this trend would be the case should historic population and aging trends continue.

That said, the last one-year data available for the development of this plan indicated a slight increase in population across much of the MIC area from 2020 to 2021. It is likely this slight increase is due to (1) the rise of remote work during the COVID pandemic enabling people to move to the Duluth-Superior area (an area many like to vacation to) and still be employed and/or (2) the fact that Duluth has recently been labeled nationally as a “climate refuge” city meaning people are moving here from other parts of the country more directly and harshly impacted by climate change. As a one-year observation, it is too early to know if this increase in population is the start of a trend or simply an aberration. This is a trend to follow in the future that is influenced and complicated by a known, problematic housing shortage in the Duluth-Superior area.

10. Aging Population

The MIC’s population trend shows an increase in the proportion of older adults (same as the national trend) and a smaller proportion of people aged 18 and younger (fewer than the national trend). The projected increase in the proportion of older adults within the MIC area population presents a real challenge to our transportation system. It is expected this will require expanded and/or different transportation options than currently exist, with an anticipated increased demand for more accessible transportation options. Some of the anticipated needs for an aging population overlap with the needs of others, including disabled people and children.

11. Low Levels of Traffic Congestion

Current and future Level of Service (LOS) projections from the MIC’s travel demand model (TDM) show little traffic congestion and few areas/corridors of concern. There are only a few select locations to consider for expanding infrastructure, which helps promote and fund the maintenance of existing infrastructure.

12. Commuters

More than twice as many people commute into the MIC area for work as commute outside it. The total number continues to increase since the 2045 MTP. This indicates the demand for roads and other transportation infrastructure is increasing despite the loss of tax base.

Data also shows an increase in the number of employees living within the MIC area with work addresses outside of the MIC

area. This supports the likely rise of remote work during the COVID pandemic enabling people to move to the Duluth-Superior area while keeping their jobs elsewhere, as noted in #9 above.

Finally, data shows an increase in the number and percentage of employees traveling more than 25 miles to their jobs since 2015. This could support either of the above.

13. Poverty & Low Income

The federally defined poverty threshold ranges from an annual income of \$13,788 for a family of one to \$52,386 for a family of nine or more (US Census Bureau, 2022). The MIC defines “low-income” as a household whose income is less than or equal to twice the poverty level. Little has changed over the past several decades regarding poverty and low-income populations in the MIC area, with 6.4% of households at the poverty level and 18.6% low-income. While the percentage of MIC area households at poverty and low income levels are below national averages (9.1% in poverty, 23.5% low income), they are above Minnesota and Wisconsin percentages. This is most prevalent in the Cities of Superior (10.4% poverty, 25.7% low income) and Duluth (7.2% poverty, 19.9% low income).

People in poverty or of low income are often limited in their options for transportation due to cost or other access barriers, which increases the importance of maintaining an equitable transportation network that offers multiple safe and accessible transportation options for all people, regardless of income. This plays a real role in our transportation system decision-making.

14. Ambulatory Difficulty

More than 8000 people (5.6% of the MIC area population) have an ambulatory difficulty, meaning they have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. The transportation needs of these people need to be considered within our overall network in order to implement the vision of this plan and to provide an equitable and accessible system for all.

15. Evidence-Based Decisions

Past surveys indicated people want and expect decisions about our transportation system to be based on data and evidence, and not on political or other factors.

16. Safety

Safety was frequently identified as a significant concern, especially for bicyclists, pedestrians, and those with ambulatory difficulties. The prioritization of cars and a lack of direct pedestrian and/or cycling routes associated with the design of many roadways make them uninviting and unsafe for non-motorized users. The general lack of network connectivity and maintenance in numerous areas adds to safety concerns, especially for children and those with ambulatory difficulty. Snow and ice-covered pedestrian and bicycle lanes and paths exacerbate these concerns. Several roadway corridors and crossings identified for safety concerns noted above are within the priority project list of this plan, including 6th Avenue East/Central Entrance and West Superior Street, among others.

17. Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure

Maintenance of our existing transportation system is strongly desired, with a specific focus on critical infrastructure rather than on the entire system. This includes maintenance of all aspects of our infrastructure (not simply road surfaces), as well as addressing inefficiencies within the system (such as right-sizing or road diets). A specific point heard repeatedly is to prioritize and greatly improve maintenance of sidewalks and bike lanes/paths. This has two forms. One is the physical condition of the surface including uneven surface, significant cracks, and crumbling pavement. The other is consistent removal of snow and ice from these surfaces, on par with vehicle surfaces, to enable year-round multimodal options for travel.

18. Environmental Sustainability

Building, maintaining, and operating our transportation system in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner is desired. A wide range of comments support this, including reducing vehicle miles traveled and prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle options to reduce emissions, implementing greenway systems for both environmental and health benefits, and improving electric vehicle (EV) charging options. Further, it is likely that achieving environmental sustainability will be increasingly important to help lessen the impacts of climate change on the transportation system.

19. Public Health Impacts

The design of our transportation system can have multiple positive impacts on public health, including providing active transportation options, supporting air quality improvements, reducing toxic emissions, and reducing noise and light pollution. Survey respondents (both in the past and for the development of this plan) support transportation options that benefit and improve the overall health of the community.

20. Policy Development

It is clear that policy changes are needed to fully meet the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan. Simply implementing infrastructure and/or maintenance projects will not be sufficient. Two existing policy examples helpful to the MIC area transportation system are the St Louis County Transportation Fund leading directly to improved roadway condition and the City of Duluth specific tax for pothole and street repairs. Policy recommendations expressed during the development of this plan include:

- Prioritize long-term budgeting for transportation planning beyond typical short-term budget cycles.
- Establish a transportation commission.
- Prioritize vulnerable users of the transportation system.
- Prioritize improving pedestrian and bike experiences, especially in areas identified as short trip generators.

21. Geographic Challenges

Geography within the MIC area, including steep hills and numerous water features, presents real and significant challenges and barriers to our transportation system, and to achieving the goals of this plan. And while geography should not be used as an excuse, it does need to be considered in finding viable solutions.

22. Unknown Impacts of Emerging Technologies & Trends

There are many “unknowns” in regard to our future transportation system: we do not know exactly what or how future trends may change what is common practice today. Connected and autonomous vehicles (CVs, AVs), ride-sharing apps, real-time transit apps, micromobility options, on-demand and shared mobility services, national data that suggest younger

adults have different priorities in terms of vehicle ownership, and other trends may significantly alter costs, funding needs, and funding mechanisms.

23. Cost & Funding Concerns

The following demonstrates the significant concerns associated with the costs and funding of the transportation system:

Rising Costs

Sustainable Choices 2045 noted highway construction costs rose 66% between 2003 and 2016 (Long, Elliott. 2017. *Soaring Construction Costs Threaten Infrastructure Push*. Progressive Policy Institute, Washington DC. 13 pp). This data came from the US DOT Federal Highway Administration's National Highway Construction Cost Index (NHCCI). Updated NHCCI data (see Figure 3.1) show the increase in highway construction costs continues to rise, and increasingly so. The increase in costs between 2016 and 2022 rose approximately 73%, including a 50% increase between 2020 and 2022 alone. Overall the increase in costs across the entire timeframe (2003-2022) was approximately 179%. These data demonstrate a significant obstacle in maintaining and improving the MIC area transportation network, and why making sustainable choices in the future is important, if not vital to being able to implement the vision of this plan.

ASCE Infrastructure Report Card

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) *2018 Twin Ports Area's Infrastructure Report Card* graded our roads D+, ports C+, aviation B-, and bridges B-. This report has not been updated since then; however, the ASCE report cards for the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin were updated in 2022 and 2020, respectively, and the scores for roads, ports, aviation, and bridges were similar to those in the 2018 Twin Ports report.

Thus, it remains clear that the quality and condition of transportation infrastructure in and adjacent to the MIC area are in need of improvements. The continually rising costs noted above complicate this problem. Both state ASCE reports call for increased funding through multiple approaches, most requiring policy initiatives at both the state and federal levels. This plan supports such policy development. Additionally, the State of Minnesota ASCE report calls for local jurisdictions and

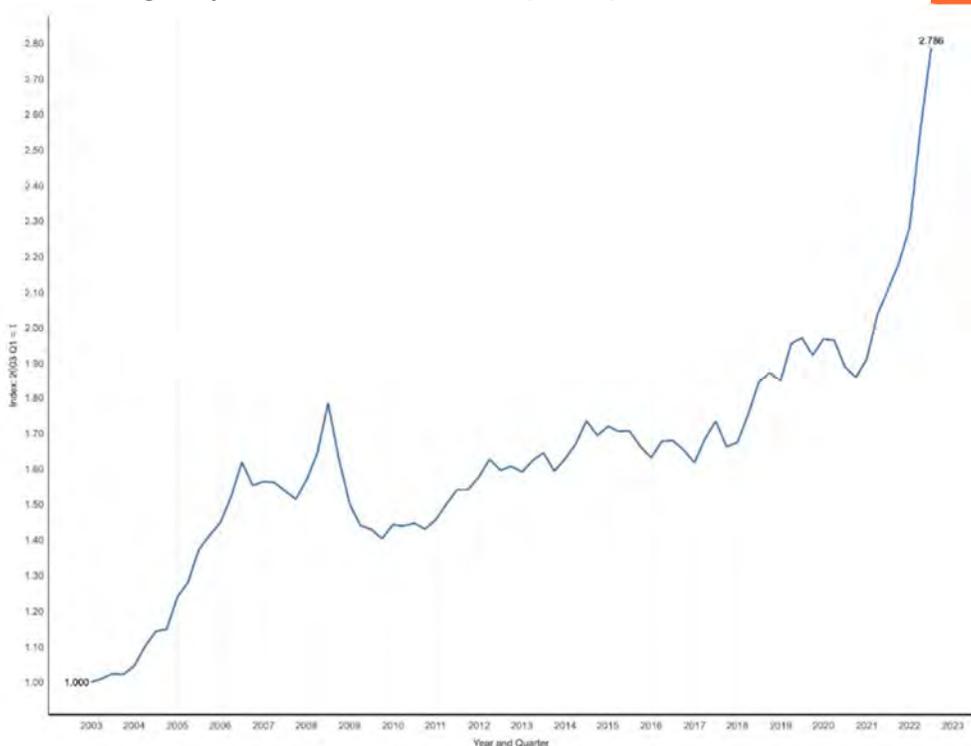
agencies to adopt asset management approaches similar to those implemented by MnDOT to aid in prioritizing needs and making better funding decisions., a recommendation supported in this plan (see section 7 of chapter 10, Coordinated Regional Asset Management).

Fiscal Constraint

The fiscal analysis in this plan shows fiscal constraint. Yet one of the plan’s main premises is that there is not enough revenue to cover the existing transportation infrastructure expenses within the MIC area. The summary explanation for this apparent contradiction is two-fold: one, the MIC area will continue to have very large and expensive infrastructure projects that are anticipated to take place within this 25-year planning horizon but are not fully scoped at this time, thus their associated cost estimates are not yet known. Two, not all publicly funded transportation system costs are federally eligible and considered regionally significant, and thus not all projects in the MIC area are included in this plan’s project lists and fiscal analysis.

A full explanation of how fiscal constraint is demonstrated within this plan is provided in Chapter 6.

Figure 3.1. Increase of Highway Construction Costs Over Time— National Highway Construction Cost Index (NHCCI), 2003-2023



(Source, Fig. 3.1: US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration)

4. Performance-Based Planning

This chapter describes the performance-based transportation planning approach, newly incorporated by the MIC in the development of *Sustainable Choices 2050*.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Introduction	4-2
Purpose	4-2
Summary of Approach.....	4-2
Figure 4.1. MTP Project Prioritization Framework.....	4-2
Step 1: MTP Project Scoring Metrics.....	4-3
Figure 4.2. Project Scoring Metrics—Methods Summary.....	4-3
Figure 4.3. Project Scoring Metrics—Analysis Summary	4-4
Step 2: Post-Scoring Reality Check	4-4
Step 3: MTP Project Final Review Questions.....	4-5
Figure 4.4. Project Final Review Questions.....	4-6
Fiscal Constraint Question.....	4-6
Results—MTP Priority Projects List.....	4-6
Figure 4.5. Priority Projects List by Jurisdiction	4-7
Map 4.1. Priority Transportation Projects	4-8
Map 4.2. Priority Transportation Projects—Fiscally Constrained.....	4-9
Summary.....	4-10

Introduction

23 CFR 450.306(d)(1) requires MPO's, within their transportation planning processes, to establish and use a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making. This chapter identifies and summarizes the performance-based transportation planning approach used in *Sustainable Choices 2050*, the MIC's first MTP to fully incorporate performance –based planning.

Purpose

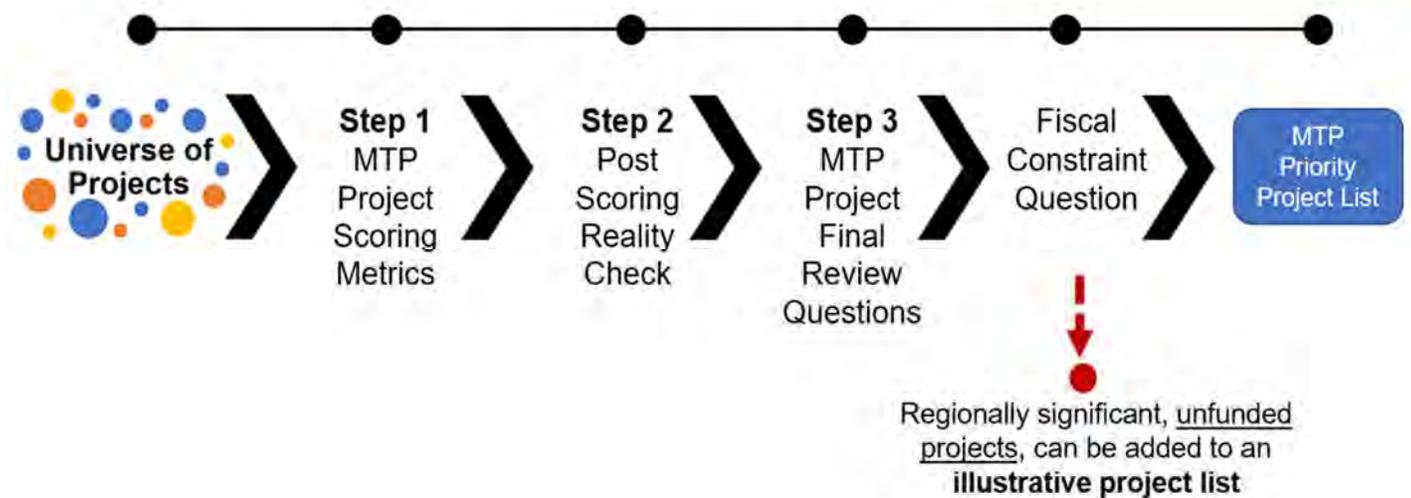
The purpose of the performance-based planning process used within *Sustainable Choices 2050* is to evaluate all proposed projects listed in the MTP and provide a shorter list of priority projects that are expected to best carry out the vision of *Sustainable Choices 2050* and implement its goals and objectives.

Summary of Approach

The performance-based planning approach used within *Sustainable Choices 2050* incorporates a multi-step MTP project prioritization framework. This framework supports and incorporates the MTP's goals and objectives and is used to inform MTP project evaluation and prioritization of the entire submitted list of proposed projects from the MIC-area jurisdictions. The result is a priority list of projects to consider for funding and implementation.

The framework is depicted in Figure 4.1. Each step of the framework is summarized below:

Figure 4.1. MTP Project Prioritization Framework



Step 1: MTP Project Scoring Metrics

Step 1 uses eight metrics in a data-driven, spatially-based scoring approach. Metrics selected align generally with the plan’s vision, as well as some of its specific goals and objectives. Additionally, all metrics have spatial datasets available in order to run the analyses. Figure 4.2 lists the 8 metrics and summarizes the basic methodology used for each metric. Figure 4.3 summarizes each metric analysis, including identifying thresholds used and scores associated with each threshold.

All projects submitted by MIC area jurisdictions were scored for all 8 metrics. Cumulative score (the sum of all 8 metric scores) was calculated for each project. All projects were ordered from highest score to lowest score, and this list of scored projects was presented to jurisdiction staff to review and conduct Step 2. A natural break in the scores that included approximately 30-40 projects was used as the starting point cut-off of priority projects.

Figure 4.2. Project Scoring Metrics—Methods Summary

ID	MTP Project Scoring Metric	Quantification / Threshold	Methodology Notes
1	Number of Bike/Pedestrian Crashes (supports a PM1 target)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 15 points)	200-foot buffer around each project; count all bike and ped crashes within each buffer
2	Fatal and Serious Injury Vehicle Crashes (supports a PM1 target)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 15 points)	200-foot buffer around each project; count all severe and fatal crashes within each buffer
3	Existing Level of Service (LOS) (identify current areas within the MIC area that are experiencing operational deficiencies - <50% means that road is at 50% or less of its total capacity) LOS is determined by comparing model results and AADT to the total capacity of the road segment	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 10 points)	100-foot buffer used around each project. Use baseline existing year travel demand model run to determine level of service being addressed by project (MIC V/C ratios used in previous plan would be used).
4	Future Year (2050) LOS (identify future areas within the MIC area that are projected to be experiencing operational deficiencies)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 10 points)	100-foot buffer used around each project. Use 2050 E+C travel demand model run to determine level of service for the project.
5	Community Connectivity (identifying community resources in close proximity to the project; connecting people with community resources)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 10 points)	Use community layer to compute number of schools, churches, parks, community centers within a 600-foot buffer of the project
6	Multimodal Connectivity (identifying existing dedicated pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options in close proximity to the project)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 15 points)	Use mapped bicycle, transit and pedestrian infrastructure/routes to compute number of existing dedicated pedestrian ways, bicycle lanes/ways, and transit routes within a 100-foot buffer.
7	Short-Trip Analysis (number of 1-mile or less short trips per TAZ, identifies areas where there is latent demand and opportunity for increased bicycle and pedestrian trips)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 10 points)	Use existing replica/short trip data by TAZ to compute number of short trips within TAZ of proposed project. Higher density of <u>short-trips</u> receives a higher score.
8	Challenging Areas (helps identify whether a project is likely to impact or be impacted by floodplains, historical areas, outstanding or exceptional resource waters, and wetlands)	Range of thresholds with scores (Max = 15 points)	Use 100-foot buffer around each project; count all cases of challenging areas within each buffer.

Figure 4.3. Project Scoring Metrics—Analysis Summary

ID	MTP Project Scoring Metric	Analysis	Thresholds	Score
1	Number of Bike/Pedestrian Crashes	Calculated raw number of crashes within 200-foot buffer of project location. Range: 0 - 13	0 1-3 4-7 >8	0 5 10 15
2	Fatal and Serious Injury Vehicle Crashes	Calculated raw number of crashes within 200-foot buffer of project location. Range: 0 - 10	0 1-2 3-6 >7	0 5 10 15
3	Existing Level of Service (LOS)	Calculated maximum existing LOS within proposed project area. Range: 0 – 1.8	<0.8 0.8 – 0.99 1.0 – 1.19 1.2 – 1.39 1.4 – 1.69 > 1.7	0 2 4 6 8 10
4	Future Year (2050) LOS	Calculated maximum future LOS within proposed project area. Range: 0 – 1.8	<0.8 0.8 – 0.99 1.0 – 1.19 1.2 – 1.39 1.4 – 1.69 > 1.7	0 2 4 6 8 10
5	Community Connectivity	Calculated number of community facilities within 600 feet of proposed project area. Range: 0 - 33	0 - 1 1 - 14 >15	0 5 10
6	Multimodal Connectivity	Projects were assigned a point for presence of sidewalks, bike facilities and transit route. Range: 0 - 3	0 1 2 3	0 5 10 15
7	Short-Trip Analysis	The number of short trips was totaled for each TAZ and split into quartiles. Points are awarded based on the quartiles. Range: 0 - 2900	0 - 200 (1) 201 - 400(2) 401 - 700 (3) 701 – 2900 (4)	0 3 7 10
8	Challenging Areas	One point was given to a project for each occurrence of a challenge or sensitive area. Range: 0 - 3	0 1 2 3	15 10 5 0

Step 2: Post-Scoring Reality Check

The purpose of Step 2 is to ensure the priority project list generated under Step 1 makes logical sense — that the list truly includes the MIC area’s most regionally significant projects that best carry out the vision of *Sustainable Choices 2050* and implement its goals and objectives. Step 2 is more qualitative in nature and includes making sure the highest scored projects included in the priority project list are deemed regionally significant, and offer the opportunity for a jurisdiction to make the case that a project scored lower than the priority project cutoff under Step 1 should be included in the priority project list. A jurisdiction was able to accomplish this by answering yes to one or more of the following and explaining why:

- The project is within a corridor or intersection of significant importance to freight movement through or within the MIC area.

- The project is within a corridor or intersection of significant importance to regional connectivity within the MIC area.
- The project will significantly improve safety within the MIC area transportation network.
- The project is of significant importance to the transportation network within the MIC area.

Step 2 was completed by bringing forward any of the above submitted by a jurisdiction and asking the MIC's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) if they supported the inclusion of the particular project into the priority project list.

Step 3: MTP Project Final Review Questions

The purpose of Step 3 is to provide one additional layer of scoring for those projects within the priority project list following Step 2 that more specifically aligns with the plan's goals and objectives. For each project the appropriate jurisdiction answered 18 yes/no/unknown questions covering a wide variety topics to more precisely determine how well the project would help meet the plan's goals and objectives, and thus be able to help implement the plan's vision. Five points were scored for each "yes" answer, while zero points were scored for a "no" or "unknown" answer. Figure 4.3 lists the 18 Step 3 final review questions and associated scores per threshold.

The total points for Step 3 for each project (a possible maximum total of 90 points) were summed and then added to the total points calculated under Step 1 to calculate a final priority project score. The final scores were ordered from highest to lowest to produce a final rank of the priority projects. TAC members decided for this first time to not list the ranks in this plan, and instead leave the list as an unranked priority project list. However, should any jurisdiction want to use the rank in reporting, grant application, or general planning they can do so. Regardless, Step 3 did confirm the priority projects do align well with the plan's goals and objectives, and as such do represent regionally significant projects.

Figure 4.4. Project Final Review Questions

ID	MTP Project Final Review Question	Threshold [®]	Scores
1	Will the project include a robust public engagement component/opportunity from its onset?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
2	Does the project improve or maintain critical infrastructure to ensure good condition and performance?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
3	Does the project help build or expand resiliency within the transportation system?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
4	Does the project design specifically incorporate snow storage for year-round use and maintenance?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
5	Does the project include an enhanced stormwater management feature, rain garden, or other "green infrastructure" in addition to or beyond what is typically installed?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
6	Does the project directly include additional or improved pedestrian facility integration or connection within the transportation system?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
7	Does the project directly include additional or improved bike and/or micromobility facility integration or connection within the transportation system?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
8	Does the project help meet a specific local bike plan, pedestrian plan, and/or Safe Routes to School plan goal(s)?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
9	Does the project intentionally improve connection between transit and other modes of transportation through sidewalk extension to bus stops, additional and/or improved bus stops, bike parking options near transit stop, park and ride associated with transit, etc.?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
10	Does the project intentionally improve accessibility for older adults, children, and/or persons with disabilities?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
11	Does the project expand and/or improve transportation options for disadvantaged populations?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
12	Will the project have a direct or indirect benefit on the human health, environmental, social, and economic components of minority populations and/or low-income populations?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
13	Does the project directly address a known safety problem?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
14	Does the project include technology designed to intentionally improve efficient use and/or safety of the system?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
15	Does the project intentionally help meet a goal(s) of a local or state transportation safety plan, and/or incorporate FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
16	Does the project intentionally help meet a goal(s) of a local small area plan or similar type plan?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
17	Does the project intentionally help meet a goal(s) of a local economic development or strategic plan, including the D-S Port Land Use Plan or other port economic development or strategic plan?	Y/N/U	5/0/0
18	Does the project intentionally improve access, mobility, and travel connections for the movement of freight throughout and across the system?	Y/N/U	5/0/0

*: Y = Yes, N = No, U = Unknown

Fiscal Constraint Question

The appropriate jurisdiction was asked to answer one question to indicate whether each project in the priority project list was fiscally constrained. The question was, *“Are all funds necessary to complete this project currently in hand or specifically allocated (fully fiscally constrained)?”* This was a direct way to know if the priority project list was fiscally constrained or not.

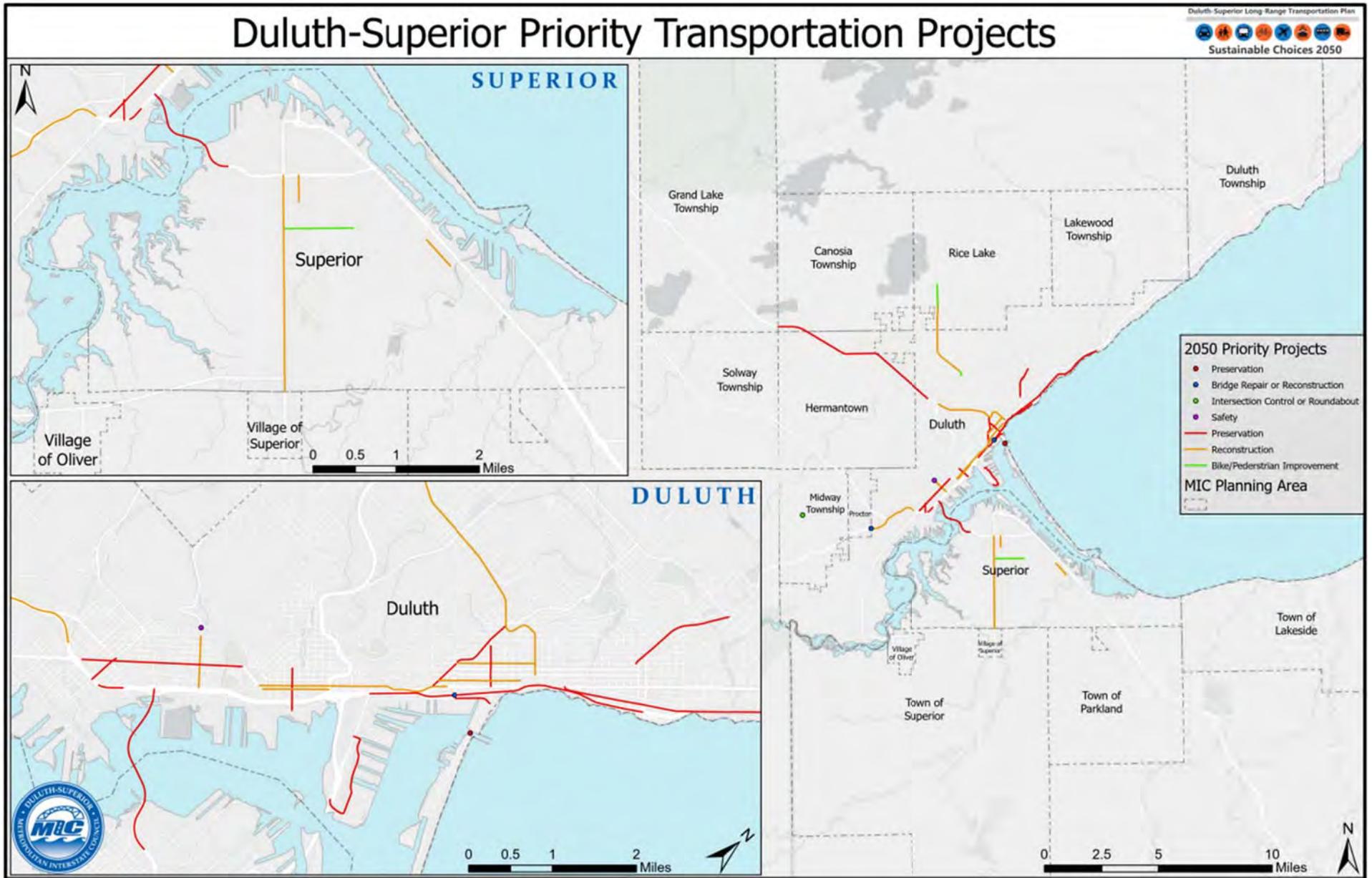
Results—MTP Priority Projects List

The final *Sustainable Choices 2050* Priority Projects List, ordered by jurisdiction, is shown in Figure 4.4. Of the 40 included projects, 25 are fiscally constrained. Map 4.1 depicts the priority projects by project type. Map 4.2 depicts which priority projects are fiscally constrained and which are not. This represents the MIC’s first true performance-based planning (PBP) approach to project selection within an MTP. The PBP approach resulted in reducing the total list of 254 projects in the MTP (see pages 6-17—6-43) to a final list of 40 priority projects that are confidently expected to best carry out the vision of *Sustainable Choices 2050* and implement its goals and objectives.

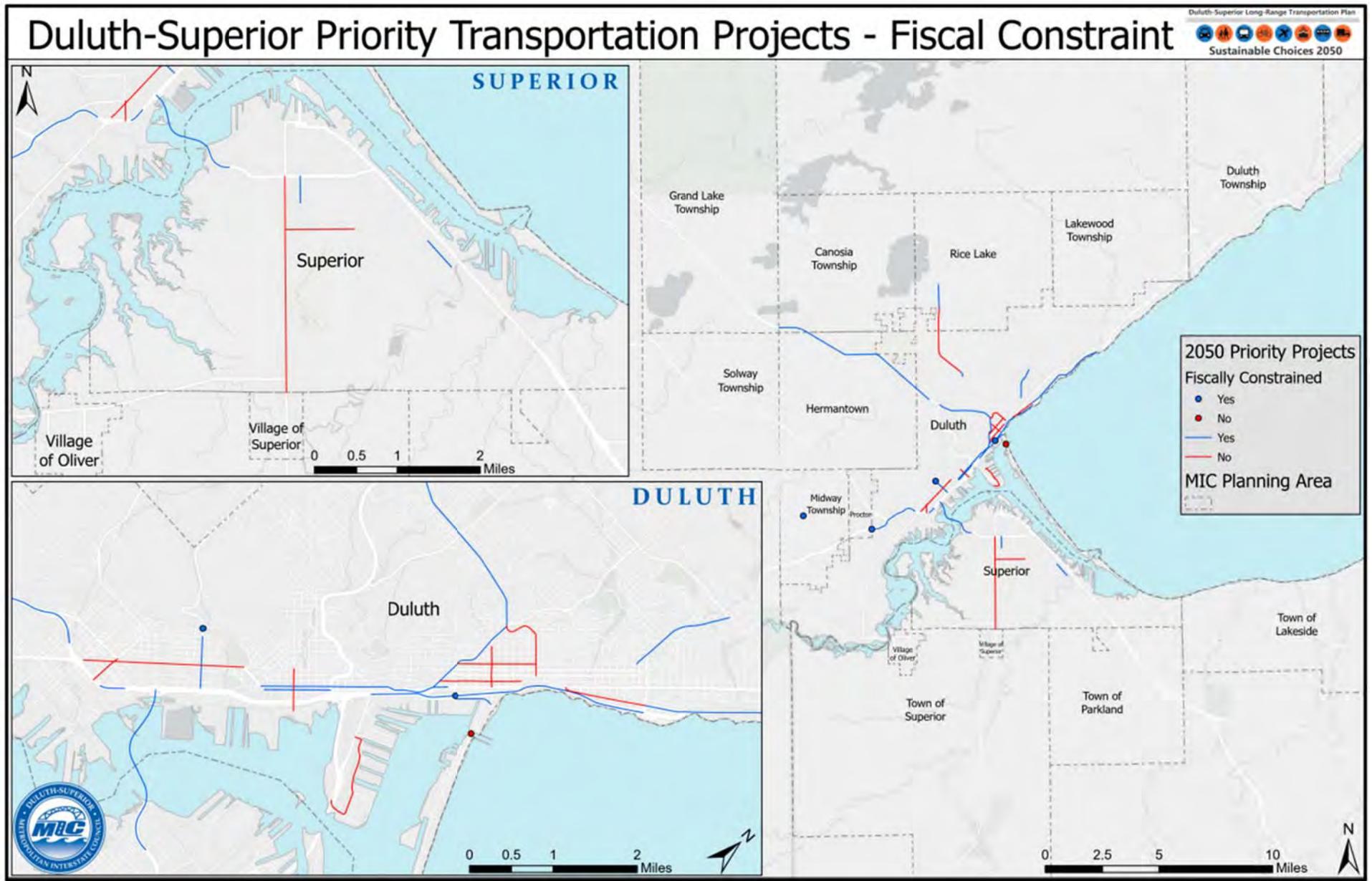
Figure 4.5. Priority Projects List by Jurisdiction

Project ID	Project Location	Project Description	Project Type	Fiscally Constrained?	Jurisdiction
MN-03-91	W Superior St	Michigan St to 6th Ave W	Reconstruction	Y	Duluth
MN-03-11	40th Ave W	Grand Ave to I-35	Reconstruction	Y	Duluth
MN-03-07	W Superior Street	Carlton St to Michigan St	Reconstruction	Y	Duluth
MN-03-29	Grand Ave	Carlton St to 59th Ave W	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-25	6th Ave East/Central Entrance	2nd Street to Mesaba Ave	Reconstruction	N	Duluth
MN-03-13	London Road	21st Ave E to 26th Ave E	Preservation	Y	Duluth
MN-03-28	4th Street	Mesaba Ave to 6th Ave E	Reconstruction	N	Duluth
MN-03-51	Woodland Ave	4th Street to Arrowhead Rd	Preservation	Y	Duluth
MN-03-73	Central Ave	I-35 to Cody St	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-89	1st Street	Mesaba Ave to 4th Ave E	Reconstruction	N	Duluth
MN-03-42	27th Ave W	Courtland St to 3rd St	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-35	London Rd	Superior St to 21st Ave E	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-84	Lake Ave	Superior St to 7th St	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-90	W Michigan St	TH 53 overpass to Carlton St	Reconstruction	Y	Duluth
MN-03-02	Railroad Street	Lake Ave to 5th Ave W	Preservation	Y	Duluth
MN-03-01	Aerial Lift Bridge	Structural & Mechanical maintenance, paint top span & lift span, sidewalk and deck replacement	Preservation	Y	Duluth
MN-03-37	Aerial Lift Bridge	Structural Rehabilitation and Painting	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-18	Port Terminal Rd	Garfield Ave to Helberg Dr	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-03-20	Helberg Dr	Garfield Ave to Port Terminal Dr	Preservation	N	Duluth
MN-01-06	London Rd	26th Ave E to 60th Ave E Roundabouts at 26th Ave E and 40th Ave E	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-05	Central Entrance Corridor	Partial Reconstruction & Multi-Modal Improvements Mesaba to Trinity	Reconstruction	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-01	I-35	Lake Ave to 21st Ave E Concrete Repair and Intersection Ramps	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-43	I-35/I-35 Tunnels	Segment(s) to be determined	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-42	Hwy 194	Segment(s) to be determined	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-39	Hwy 53	Segment(s) to be determined	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-08	I-35	Under 5th Ave W Bridge and MN 23 to 50th Ave W	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-35	5th Ave	5th Ave Bridge #69870 Over I-35	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-17	Haines Rd/40th Ave W RR Crossing	RR Crossing improvements DOT #251887W	Safety	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-30	I-35	Boundary Ave to Bridge over Grand Ave/Replace Bridges	Reconstruction	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-38	Boundary Ave Interchange	I-35 at Boundary Ave	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	Y	MnDOT
MN-01-37	Bong Bridge	Redecking	Preservation	Y	MnDOT
MN-02-30	40th Ave W	Grand Ave to 8th St	Reconstruction	Y	Saint Louis Co
Unfunded-2	Rice Lake Road	Technology Dr. to N. Tischer Rd.	Reconstruction	N	Saint Louis Co
MN-02-71	Rice Lake Road	Separated Bike and Ped Trail	Bike/Pedestrian Improvement	Y	Saint Louis Co
MN-02-39	Midway Rd.	Midway Rd at N Cloquet Rd	Intersection Control or Roundabout	Y	Saint Louis Co
WI-03-03	Hammond Ave	Belknap St to 21st St	Reconstruction	Y	Superior
WI-03-11	Tower Ave	South of Belknap	Reconstruction	N	Superior
WI-03-05	E 5TH ST	24th Ave E and 31st Ave E	Reconstruction	Y	Superior
WI-03-06	28th St	Paved Trail	Bike/Pedestrian Improvement	N	Superior
WI-03-01	Tower Ave	South of Belknap	Preservation	N	Superior

Map 4.1.



Map 4.2.



Summary

Given this is the MIC's first true use of a performance-based planning approach to identifying priority projects within an MTP, the following is a MIC perspective summary on this significant new tool.

In short, the Priority Project List and rankings generally make sense. While it is possible that the case could be made that some project in the MTP list should also be included in the Priority Project List, the Step 2 (Reality Check) offered that opportunity. That said:

- The final priority project list and ranking show the performance-based planning process generally worked, as the projects that scored high in Step 1 that MIC staff and TAC members felt should not be the highest ranked, fell down the rankings following Step 3, and vice versa, while others remained at relatively the same ranking. Also, the Step 2 reality check included regionally-significant projects that did not score high during Step 1. In fact, 12 of the 40 projects in the final list were added during the Step 2 reality check.
- The Step 3 questions really did help to provide a much more robust ranking that incorporated MTP goals and objectives. They are the most direct way we are going to be able to show progress in connecting the project list (now focused on a priority list of projects) with the MTP's goals and objectives.
- The Priority Project List seems to cover projects that one would logically say, "yes, those are regionally significant transportation projects in the MIC area." And they are projects that can incorporate many of the MTP's goals and objectives, and thus help to implement the MTP's vision — which is the point!
- The Priority Project List includes a variety of project types. None are for roadway capacity expansion projects. Most are for preservation or reconstruction, but the list also includes projects dedicated for bike/pedestrian trails, an intersection control or roundabout, safety, and bridges.

Thus, the MIC is confident that the new performance-based planning approach described in this chapter is useful and worked well in the development of used in *Sustainable Choices 2050*.



5. Multimodal Network

This chapter discusses the existing multimodal transportation system in the Duluth-Superior area, its performance and its challenges and opportunities.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

- Transportation Systems 5-3**
 - Re-Thinking the System..... 5-3**
 - Map 5.1: Duluth-Superior Area Transportation Assets.....5-4
 - Map 5.2: Short Trip Generating Areas5-5
 - Today’s Multimodal System 5-6**
 - Nature of Travel in the Twin Ports 5-7**
- MIC Area System Profile 5-8**
 - Active Transportation – Walking 5-9**
 - Active Transportation – Bicycling5-10**
 - Active Transportation – Transit5-11**
 - Figure 5.1: DTA/STRIDEI Ridership (2013-2023) 5-13
 - Air Transportation.....5-14**
 - Rail Transportation.....5-15**
 - Surface Transportation.....5-16**
 - Figure 5.2: MN MIC Area Interstate Pavement Condition Targets (2025) 5-18
 - Figure 5.3: MN MIC Area Non-Interstate Pavement Condition Targets (2025)..... 5-18
 - Figure 5.4: MIC Area Bridge Condition—by State (2018) 5-18
 - Waterways—Harbor/Port5-19**
 - Figure 5.5: Dredged Shipping Channels in D-S Harbor..... 5-20
- Functional Classification5-21**
 - Map 5.3: Duluth-Superior Area Functional Classification 5-22

5. Multimodal Network *continued*

Network Performance	5-23
Traffic Volume	5-23
Level of Service	5-23
Map 5.4: 2050 Level of Service, Duluth-Superior MPO	5-25
Performance Measures	5-26
MIC Area Performance Measures.....	5-28
Adopted Performance Measure Targets	5-28
PM 1: Safety—Minnesota Targets	5-29
PM 1: Safety—Wisconsin Targets	5-30
PM 2: Infrastructure—Minnesota Targets.....	5-31
PM 2: Infrastructure—Wisconsin Targets.....	5-32
PM 3: System Performance—Minnesota Targets.....	5-33
PM 3: System Performance—Wisconsin Targets.....	5-34
PM 4: Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan Targets – Duluth Transit Authority	5-35
System Performance Report Summary	5-36

Transportation Systems

Over the next 25 years, the challenges borne by urban areas and the burdens placed upon the urban transportation system are anticipated to multiply in quantity and complexity. With this look to the future, understanding where the system is today is important in order to move forward.

The transportation system is the foundation of the urban economy. In this urban context, the transportation network must meet the needs of the people that it serves. Of the modes of transportation, this long-range plan covers airways, railways, roadways, and waterways. In the past 25 years, the region has made a significant investment, in both planning and construction, into right-sizing the system while also creating a viable multimodal system.

As traffic patterns have changed due to changes in infrastructure, technology, and land use patterns, the configuration of the system has changed as well. A number of roadways have been reduced from 4-lanes to 3-lanes or 2-lanes, because some of those solutions are the result of “right-sizing” the public space we all share, creating space for other uses and modes. In addition, converting one-way streets to two-way, removing traffic signals where they are no longer warranted, installing technology to improve traffic signal operations, and installing roundabouts are all measures that have been taken to adapt the transportation system to meet present-day demands. Map 5.1 displays the MIC area’s transportation assets.

In addition, as a part of a comprehensive understanding of the current roadway transportation system there should be a consideration of the current functional classification system, referenced here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/hwy-functional-classification-2023.pdf>

Re-Thinking the System

Cities have existed for 1000’s of years as primarily walkable, human centered spaces. However, for the past 100+ years, we have been living with the presumption that our roads and public spaces should, primarily, be allocated to transportation by privately-owned, single-occupancy (mostly) automobiles, and this must change.

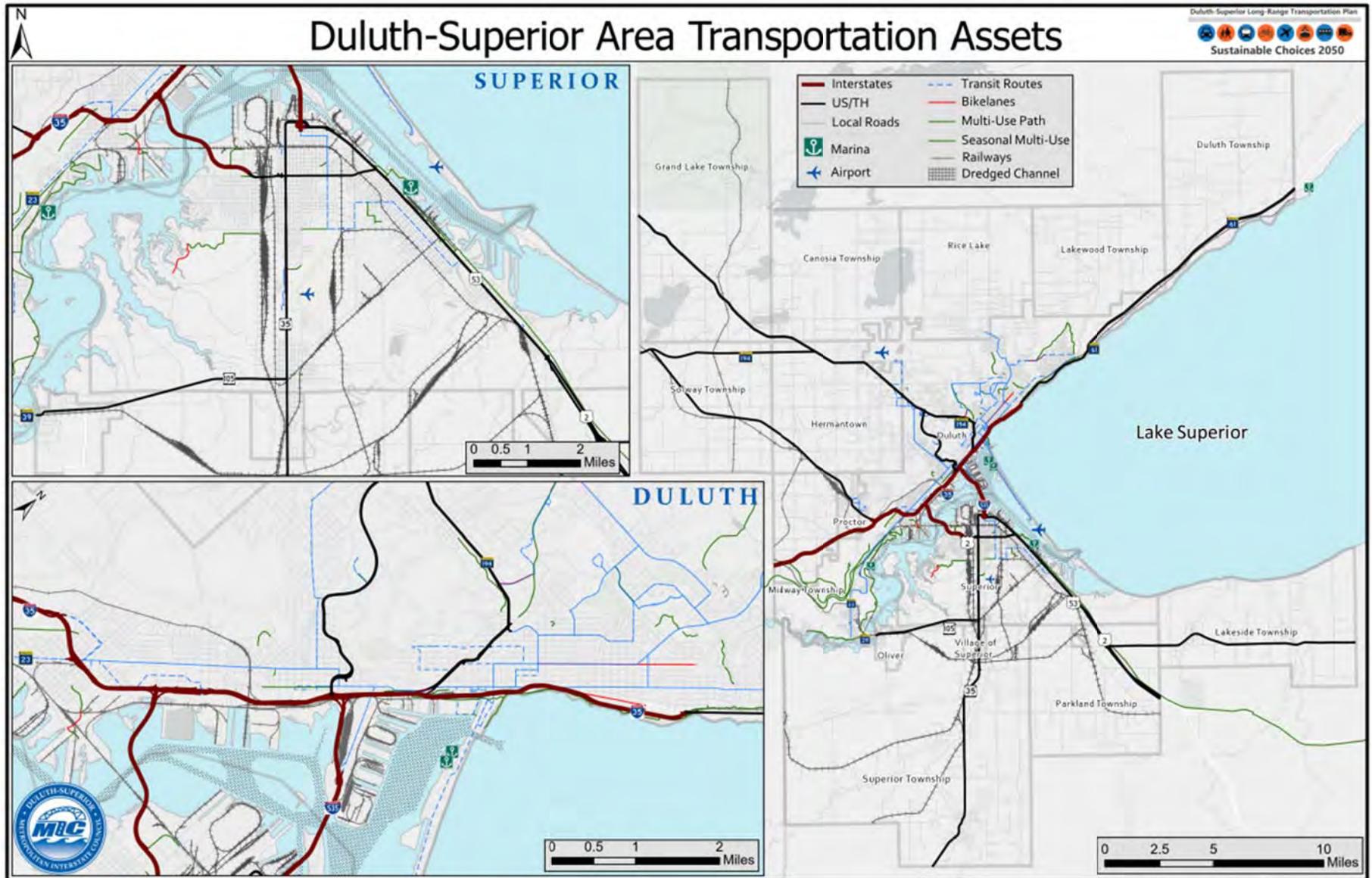
Currently, cities are finding themselves in an unenviable

Re-Thinking the System

With stagnant transportation revenues available to cover infrastructure costs and growing long-term needs and impacts, there is a critical need to do more than preserve the system “as is”, so it is imperative to re-think the system to get more out of the future infrastructure investments:

- More independent mobility for all, regardless of age, ability or income.
- More access to housing, education, healthcare, and jobs.
- More economic returns on infrastructure investment for jurisdictions and for citizens to be able to build wealth.
- More infrastructure designed to accommodate large freight movements thru the Twin Ports and the intermodal needs at the Port.
- More environmental benefits, reducing costly mitigation of impacts later.
- More human health and social connections creating stronger communities in the long run.
- More understanding of the dynamic nature of human travel behavior and the interplay between modes as people travel around the urban area.

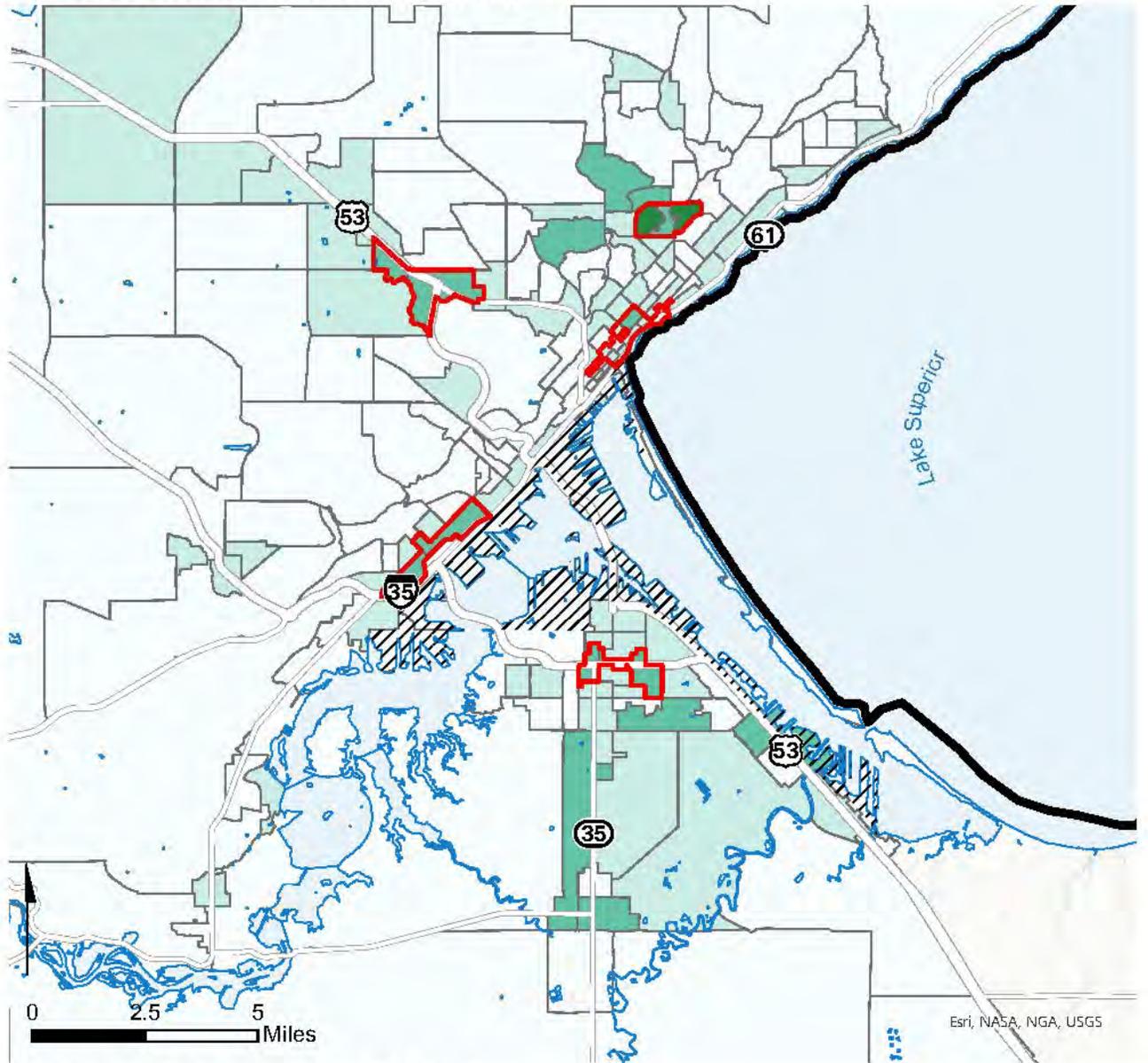
Map 5.1



Map 5.2

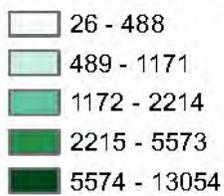


Sustainable Choices 2050



Short Trip Generating Areas

Number of trips shorter than 1 mile



Short Trip Generators



situation where the general public is demanding potholes be filled as well as expressing their desires for better transit, sidewalks, and bike facilities. Although, at the same time, revenues to build and maintain the existing transportation system is stagnant and shrinking in some cases. As such, it is time to re-think the transportation system to meet the needs of today while at the same time working towards a vision of a more sustainable and livable future.

In addition, there should be a consideration of

Today's Multimodal System

There has been consideration of how the I-35 corridor will work and/or be aligned through downtown Duluth. This effort will be addressed through a planning process funded by the Reconnecting Communities federal funding grant. Ideas were and continue to be explored and implemented with the reconfiguration of the roadways as well as land use changes from highway commercial to more urban along these corridors.

While much has been changed and reconstructed over the years on these corridors, remnants from the old highway corridors remain with opportunities for positive change. Looking into how these streets and this transportation system can be safer, better for moving people and goods, more livable, environmentally friendly, better for human health and better for the local economy. Figuring out the right balance for these corridors and the overall system is the central theme to this MTP. The development of, and regularly carrying out an implementation strategy will be a vital step towards being able to work toward this Plan's goals.

Currently, the Duluth-Superior area has made many improvements to both the built environment as well as complementary educational, encouragement and evaluation efforts. The development of the primary east-west trail corridor along the waterfront in Duluth with the Lakewalk and Cross City Trail, bike lanes on Tower Avenue, London Road, Hwy 23, and 4th Street, improved highway connections to the Miller Hill area, construction of a new access road to Port facilities and dockwall stabilization, the building of new University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and Downtown transit centers, construction of a new DLH airport terminal and runway reconstruction are key examples.

Re-thinking the Streets

- Road Diets/Right Sizing/ Complete Streets
- Streets where their role has changed in the system.
- Reconfiguring these streets has been undertaken or being considered.

Road Diets Undertaken

- 21st Ave E—London Rd to Woodland Ave
- London Rd—10th—21AE
- Grand Ave—Carlton Ave to 59AW
- Tower Ave—52nd to 69th
- Hammond Ave—Belknap St to 21st St.

Road Diets Under Project Development

- 6th Ave East—2nd St to Central Ent
- Woodland Ave - Snively Rd to Anoka St, with Bike Lanes
- 40th Ave West—Superior St to Haines Rd

In addition, there are numerous programs in place, such as the DTA's U-Pass program (allowing students enrolled at UMD to ride DTA transit free of charge) and the bicycle and pedestrian count program, land use and built environment policies that encourage multimodal-friendly development, as well as educational and encouragement activities to promote and support the multimodal system. Urban street design, parking policies, green infrastructure, return on investment (ROI) economic policies are all key focus areas in the future.

Finally, it should be noted that, as a regional system, we often rely on transportation systems that range beyond our own local region. These include Jefferson Lines as a primary transit mode to the Twin Cities and beyond, as well as options through Arrowhead Transit across the larger Northern Minnesota Region.

Nature of Travel in the Twin Ports

The Duluth-Superior Urban Area is the regional trade center of the Northeast Minnesota-Northwest Wisconsin region. It is the primary regional hub for retail, trade, employment, education, healthcare, entertainment and tourism. This urban area draws people from a wide area and a large amount of daily trips are coming into the urban area from across Minnesota, Wisconsin and the larger region.

Due to distances, particularly those 2 miles and greater, the most viable and logical transportation mode currently available is the motor vehicle. Ensuring mobility into and access across this urban region is important. Though, this is not without impacts, particularly to the Duluth and Superior city neighborhoods that have traffic and parking needs that come with the longer distance trips. There are an increasing number of alternatives to driving, including inter-regional/state bus service, shuttles, and micromobility options. Additionally, a rail passenger service is planned, as well, such as the Northern Lights Express (NLX) line planned for travel between the Twin Ports area and the Twin Cities.

While accommodating longer distance trips is important, the majority of all trips taken within an urban area are of shorter distances. These trips are typically less than 2 miles and are made frequently throughout each day.

A problem not unique to urban areas

Older cities in the United States are facing financial challenges with covering the cost of fixing their infrastructure.

Newer cities will face this reality in time as well, as their new infrastructure ages.

All infrastructure must be maintained and eventually rebuilt in time.

Sustainable Framework

Developing a model where the infrastructure put in place is sustainably covered by revenues generated.

- Maximize return on public infrastructure investments
- Minimize undermining these investments
- Reduce externalities, costs and impacts that come from these investments and will have to be mitigated later.
- Understand the cost burdens placed on jurisdictions as well as citizens.
- Maintaining and rebuilding critical infrastructure.

Within shorter distances, options for mode choice including combining modes to make a trip is more practicable. A combination of walking, cycling, ride-sharing, taking transit, and driving are all viable multimodal options available each day depending on the trip purpose and geographic location.

Tourism

Tourism is placing increasingly more traffic demands on the system today. Trips up the North Shore create congestion through Duluth on the weekends and at Glensheen Mansion on London Rd. Special events like Grandma’s Marathon, Bentleyville, concerts at Bayfront Park, and other events in the Waterfront District create predictable backups even onto the major thoroughfares. Major events at UMD as well as good weather Summer “beach” days, particularly on Saturdays create traffic congestion that can last for hours.

Security and Emergency Preparedness

Additional measures have been taken to improve security and emergency preparedness for major events, including both those that are planned community events, such as Grandma’s Marathon as well as the unplanned, unexpected disasters such as the refinery explosion in 2018 in Superior, Wisconsin which created an evacuation.

MIC Area System Profile

Because the Duluth-Superior Urban area serves as a regional hub, it also has a major advantage and gives the Twin Ports both challenges and opportunities. Within the urban area the regional destinations are largely in close proximity to each other. Distance is the key variable in determining mode share in an area. Quality of infrastructure is important, as well, and weather and topography play a role. But where the distances are shorter there is more mode choice available. Where distances are longer the single mode use of the automobile is widely prevalent.

Challenges

- Auto-centric system that prioritizes private motor vehicle use.
- Climate change impacts in this region, bigger and more frequent storm events, impacting culverts, bridges, and waterfront infrastructure.
- Old infrastructure is coming due for replacement.

Re-thinking one-way streets

The one-way system was designed and implemented largely in the 1950s as a response to a massive increase in private motor vehicle usage, coupled with a commercial (retail & office) development pattern that was primarily located in densely developed areas including the downtowns of Duluth and Superior and a few other activity nodes including the West End, West Duluth and the Belknap corridor in Superior. These areas became congested and difficult to access by motor vehicle and the solution arose to create a system of one-way streets to move motor vehicular traffic more efficiently. Since that time, commercial (retail and office) and institutional (schools and churches) have largely moved out of the central business districts and into outlying areas and therefore, the density of uses has spread out and the traffic demand by motorists has greatly diminished in these areas.

Re-thinking the continual need of each of the various segments of one-way system has been taking place over the past 20 years, with some streets converted back to two-way and others currently under consideration.

- More infrastructure per capita, larger size and scale.
- Struggle to maintain the existing system, including more striping for cyclists and pedestrians and more maintenance, sweeping and snow clearing, all the while improving traffic flow, filling potholes, rebuilding streets, and more.
- Demographics—more seniors, more students and more people in poverty particularly those with children.
- Environmental, historical and cultural impacts, creating long term costly mitigation.

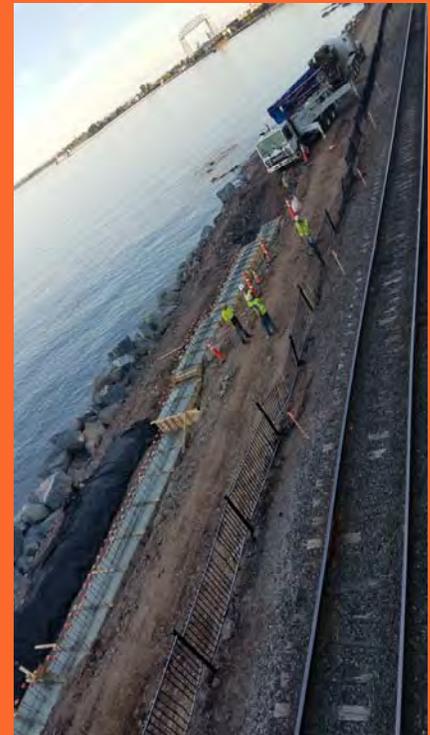
Opportunities

- Designing streets with boulevards that allow for snow storage, and provide a buffer distance from motorized traffic.
- Infrastructure reconstruction is coming due—opportunity to re-think.
- Technological changes in how people interact with each other (less in person) and order transportation through apps on their phone.
- Changing public attitudes/desire to driving, including teenagers delay in getting driver’s licenses.
- Public health benefits extend beyond physical activity, including social cohesion, safety, stress reduction, improved environmental health and more.
- Public support for transportation investment.
- Willingness to try new approaches.
- Real-time data & messaging.
- New micro mobility/light individual transport vehicles.
- Growing sharing economy—ride share, e-scooters, car share, etc.

Active Transportation – Walking

A pedestrian is defined as a person who walks or rolls with the use of a wheelchair or other mobility assistive device. This mode is essential to transportation and is key for the economy and for public health.

The key infrastructure element of the pedestrian network is sidewalks. Sidewalks provide necessary walking connections to homes, businesses, transit services, and other activities. The MIC region has an extensive network of public sidewalks and stairways in place. While most public streets in the region have sidewalks, there are gaps in the sidewalk network.



New concrete barrier being installed in 2019 to provide higher level of protection from anticipated bigger storm-events.

Unlike public streets and trails, sidewalk maintenance is largely the responsibility of the adjacent property owners. This can create challenges, as property owners can vary greatly in their ability or desire to maintain sidewalks.

The design of sidewalks plays an important role in extent of their use. Design elements that encourage pedestrian usage include curb extensions, enhanced street crossing, and reduced vehicle lane width.

Challenges & Opportunities

- Sidewalk condition (snow clearing, repair, brush removal/clearance).
- Vehicle yield for pedestrians crossing issues.
- Vulnerable users—reducing exposure to risks.
- Sidewalk network continuity (gaps).
- Steep topography, especially when snow/ice is on streets and sidewalks there is no hill climbing alternative.
- High usage of sidewalks by cyclists.
- Increasing use of sidewalks by motorized devices, for example e-scooters and segways.

Active Transportation – Bicycling

The bicycle mode of transportation continues to be underdeveloped in the MIC area, as there is currently not a fully viable interconnected bikeway system in place. However, national, state and local policy support for developing the bikeway networks does exist. Federal transportation policy clearly states that it is the responsibility of every transportation agency in the United States to improve conditions for bicycling and to integrate bicycling into their transportation system. Agencies are encouraged to not just meet minimum requirements of providing bicycle facilities, but to go beyond minimum standards to provide the safest and most convenient bicycle facilities practicable.

Much planning has been conducted in the Twin Ports over the past 25 years to address this issue. Following these planning efforts, bike route maps were developed, wayfinding signage was put up, bike racks at K-12 public schools were installed, and in the last 10 years, major off-street multi-use paths and bike lanes have been constructed. In addition, educational, encouragement and evaluation programs have been put into place including bike to school and work days, Bus,



Active Transportation

Pedestrians and cyclists are the most important users of the transportation system, particularly because these are users who do not, or cannot depend on a motor vehicle.

In shared spaces with motor vehicles, it is important to limit exposure to risk. Strategies to reduce exposure risks include:

- Reducing pedestrian crossing distances (rate of exposure)
- Reducing vehicle speed with traffic calming measures.
- Create buffer zone between sidewalks and multi-use paths and motor vehicles.
- Installing dynamic signage (RRFB's, bike signals, etc.)
- Creating separated bikeways

Education, Encouragement & Evaluation—Annual Efforts

- Winter Bike to Work Day—February
- Bus, Bike, Walk Series—April-June
- Bike to Work Day—May
- Building Great Places event—May
- Walk/Bike to School Day—October

Bike, Walk Month series of activities and the establishment of the Bike & Ped Count program.

Challenges & Opportunities

- Lack of a fully interconnected bikeways network.
- Limited options for people of all ages and abilities, particularly those who not the “Strong & Fearless” cyclists.
- Bikeway maintenance (sweeping and snow clearing), cracks and potholes and iterative improvements.
- Steep/hilly topography.
- Traffic signals that do not recognize bicyclists.
- Bikeway wayfinding signage on the Minnesota is largely in place, but not on the Wisconsin side.
- Bike share—dock vs dockless systems.

Active Transportation – Transit

Transit service comprises a mix of public and private systems which provides access across the urban area as well as to other cities, including the Twin Cities, the Iron Range, and Fargo. Two main transit providers serve the Twin Ports, DTA and Arrowhead Transit. The region also has several smaller agencies that provide rides to specific groups such as the elderly or disabled and a private commuter bus service from Cloquet.

The DTA is the municipal transit authority for the Twin Ports, has fixed regular routes across Duluth, Hermantown, Proctor and Superior, and serves approximately 3 million rides per year. DTA provides paratransit service, known locally as STRIDE, which is a dial-a-ride service for qualified individuals with disabilities. DTA has several new low emission electric buses, and has established transit hubs in Downtown Duluth, UMD Kirby Center and the Miller Hill Mall. The Duluth Transportation Center (DTC) is a multimodal center which provides indoor passenger waiting, a Jefferson Lines ticket counter, bike parking and has future capacity to accommodate passenger rail. The DTA also has a successful college service to UMD, CSS, LSC and UWS, has incorporated new technology tools to improve service, has a trolley service in Downtown and Canal Park, and is planning for bus rapid transit (BRT).

There are a number of transit options in addition to the DTA. Arrowhead Transit serves Hermantown and the larger Arrowhead Region of Minnesota. Jefferson Lines serves destinations across Minnesota with direct connections from



Trunk Lines are a transportation system handling long-distance through traffic. A main supply channel. The major trunk lines for the active transportation modes in the MIC area include:

Waterfront trunk line

- Munger Trail
- Cross City Trail
- Lakewalk
- Osaugie Trail

Hill climbing trunk lines

- Hermantown/Proctor Trail
- Lincoln Park Drive
- Congdon Park Drive

Possible Future Trunk Lines

- College of St. Scholastica/ University of MN Duluth Corridor (Campus Connector)
- Hammond Corridor
- Miller Hill/Central Ent Corridor
- Blatnik Bridge Corridor

Duluth to the Twin Cities, the Iron Range, St. Cloud, and Fargo. Indian Trails bus serves destinations across Wisconsin with direct connections from Duluth to Ashland, Iron River and Milwaukee. Groome and Land Line provide shuttle and bus service respectively to the MSP airport. Groome also provides services to select destinations along the I-35 corridor, including Hinckley and a stop at the state capitol in St. Paul.

From 2020 to 2022 the DTA has worked towards a comprehensive re-work of its network, branded as the “Better Bus Blueprint”, focusing on consolidating the transit network, and prioritizing main route frequency. From the start of COVID in 2020, transit ridership declined, but has since rebounded (see Fig. 5.1), and continues to increase. Additionally, the implementation of the Better Bus Blueprint has been beset by challenges related to hiring shortages, that the DTA is continuing to address. However, ridership trends are currently positive, and, in all likelihood will continue in the same positive direction, given the current demographics of the region and societal trends away from car ownership.

Challenges & Opportunities

- High level of use (compared to similar size urban areas).
- High level of regard and support for transit by the public.
- ADA sidewalk improvements are happening.
- Encourage & ensure viable interconnections between transit and all other active transportation modes (walk, bike, etc.).
- Technology—rider access to real time data.
- Connected and Autonomous vehicles (CAV) development.
- Sidewalk condition—limits access to transit buses due to overgrown vegetation, lack of snow clearing, minimal maintenance, major gaps in sidewalk network including along bus routes.
- Lack of shelters, including warming devices in shelters.
- Land use developments happening without a full consideration of transit needs make it difficult to serve via fixed transit route system.
- On-demand—growing expectation for trips.
- Technology providing more real-time information (smart phone).



Transit Service in the Duluth-Superior Area

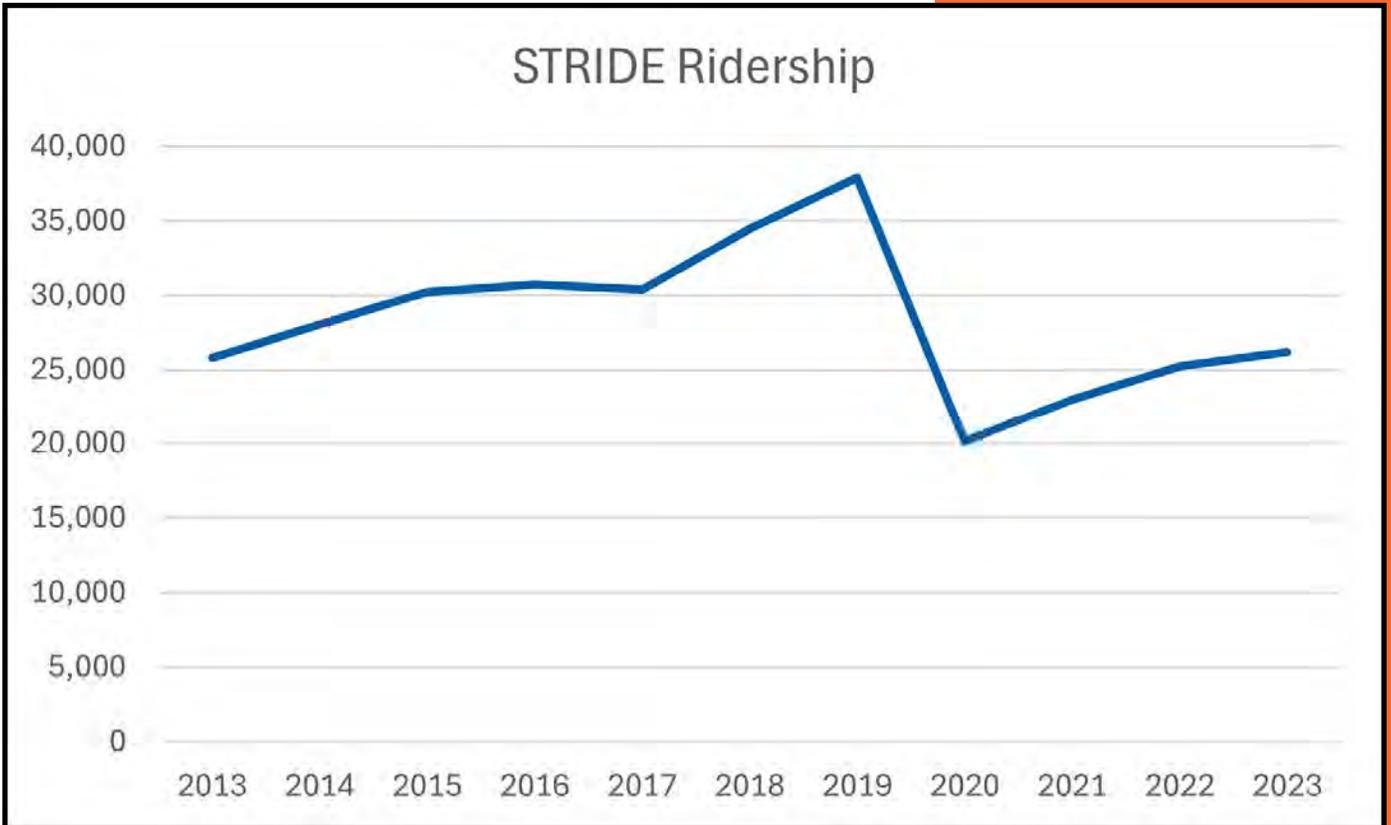
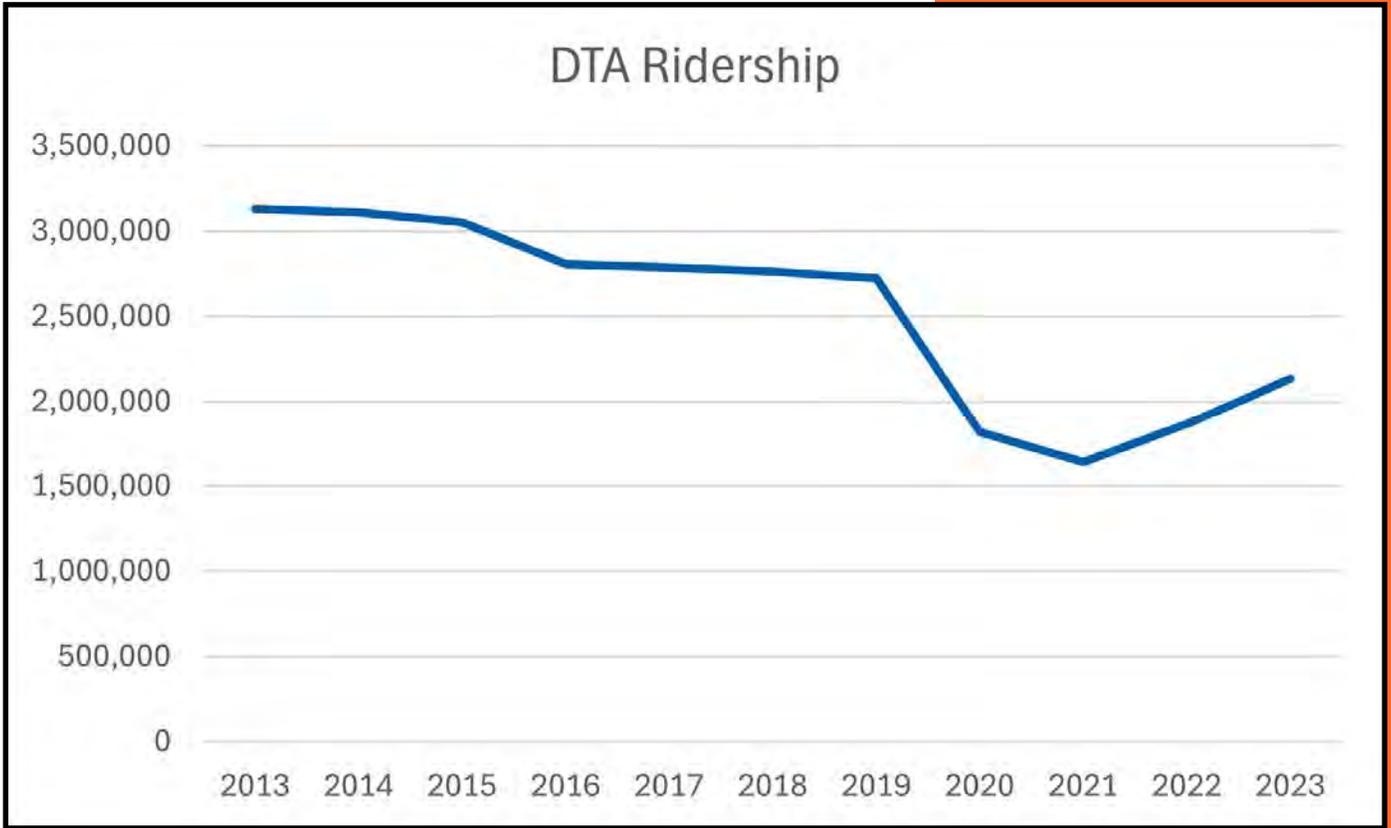
Urban Transit Service

- Duluth Transit Authority
- STRIDE
- Arrowhead Transit
- Employer/School shuttles/ buses (Essentia & Boulder Ridge)
- Human Services shuttles/vans
- Major Events shuttles for Grandma’s Marathon, Bentleyville, Glensheen Winter Village, Inline North Shore Marathon, Dragon Boat Festival, etc.

Inter-City Bus & Shuttle Service

- Jefferson Lines—to Twin Cities, St. Cloud, Fargo, & Iron Range
- Indian Trails—to Ashland, Iron River & Milwaukee
- Groome Shuttle (formerly known as Skyline Shuttle) - to Twin Cities and MSP Airport
- Land Line Shuttle—DLH to MSP

Figure 5.1: DTA Annual Ridership & STRIDE Ridership (2013-2023)



Air Transportation

The Duluth-Superior area has three primary, publicly-owned airports that provide a wide range of services for both general aviation, commercial passenger flights (only available at the Duluth International Airport), and freight transport. Together, the area's airports provide the greater area, the Arrowhead region of Minnesota, northwest Wisconsin and the Thunder Bay, Ontario region with commercial air service, air freight service, general aviation services and float plane capabilities.

The Joint Airport Zoning Board, comprised of representatives of communities surrounding airports, imposes a variety of restrictions on land use through safety zones. This creates challenges for communities, as the regional benefit of the airports and the local community need for tax revenue to cover services can at times conflict.

Air-based transportation is undergoing challenges as well. The Duluth Airport Authority worked to meet post 9-11 security requirements by building a new terminal at Duluth International Airport, and is replacing aging infrastructure by reconstructing runways at Duluth International and Sky Harbor Airports.

For more information on the infrastructure replacement plan at the Duluth International Airport please visit the master plan website at: <https://duluthairport.com/master-plan/>.

Challenges & Opportunities

- Increased access to national and international destinations particularly with direct service to MSP and to Chicago O'Hare Airports.
- "Leakage"—passengers utilizing MSP instead of DLH.
- Extending cross-runway at DLH.
- Building complementary services around the airport grounds, including lodging, restaurants, day-care, automobile services, etc.).
- Development pressures within airport safety zones.
- Noise impacts on surrounding land uses associated with unconstrained military operations at DLH.



Duluth International Airport (DLH)

- 2 runways (one of which is 10,165 feet in length—2nd longest runway in Minnesota)
- Designated as a Airport of Entry for Customs (24-hour service)
- Approximately 300,000 passengers per year
- 3 commercial passenger airlines (Delta, Sun Country & United)
- Daily flights to Minneapolis-St. Paul & Chicago

Sky Harbor Airport

- 1 runway (rebuilt 2018)
- 2 sea lanes

Richard I. Bong Airport (Superior)

- 2 Runways
- Approx. 50 flights per day

Rail Transportation

Rail lines in the Duluth-Superior area have enjoyed increasing freight loads, as well as renewed efforts to create high(er)-speed passenger rail systems, all while creating safer and quieter crossings in urban areas, improving reliability, and upgrading widespread aging infrastructure.

Freight Rail

Four Class 1 railroads operate within the Duluth-Superior area offering connection to rail lines across North America. For example, Canadian National (CN) offers freight transport from Duluth-Superior to the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and the Gulf of Mexico. Container shipping of freight via rail has increased in the area with the start of Duluth Cargo Connect, an intermodal operation partnership between the Duluth Seaway Port Authority and Lake Superior Warehousing.

Freight rail movement between Duluth and Superior takes place on two bridges, the Grassy Point Draw near the Bong Bridge and the Oliver Bridge along MN Hwy 39/WI Hwy 105.

Passenger Rail—Northern Lights Express (NLX)

Efforts are underway to bring passenger rail service back to the Duluth-Superior area. As the regional trade center and a center for tourism the urban area has growing potential to support and benefit from this planned new service.

Challenges & Opportunities

- Rail line crossing safety restrictions.
- Increased use likely to spur increase in public investment.
- Preserving and/or re-using under-used and/or abandoned rail corridors.
- In Superior, WI numerous rail lines create challenges for crossings, including roadway blockages, motor vehicle traffic delays and barriers to walking and bicycling with limited crossing and/or long distances between crossing points.
- Reliability challenges with passenger trains sharing tracks with freight trains.
- The passenger rail line would add system redundancy and increased safety factors.



Freight Rail

4 “Class 1 Rail” Companies in the Duluth-Superior Area. “Class 1 Railroad” is defined as having annual carrier operating revenues of \$250 million or more.

- BNSF
- CN
- CPKC
- UP

Passenger Rail (proposed)

Northern Lights Express (NLX)

- Service from Minneapolis to Duluth
- Stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley & Superior.
- Would share use of existing freight rail lines
- Planning for NLX has concluded
- Pursuing funding to upgrade tracks, build/update stations and purchase train cars.

Surface Transportation

The predominant part of the transportation system in the MIC area, as is in much of the United States, is the network of streets, roadways and highways that primarily carry automobiles and trucks. This includes two very large bridges connecting the communities on each side of the St. Louis River. These roadways accommodate the travel needs of residents, businesses, and travelers as well as freight needs.

The Duluth-Superior area has an extensive and well-connected network of federal, state and local roadways, including major bridge crossings. The system has a significant amount of redundancy giving the system good connectivity for the movement of motor vehicles with few gaps.

Streets serve as corridors for the conveyance of people, goods, and services and must accommodate an ever-expanding set of needs. They must be safe, sustainable, resilient, multi-modal, and economically beneficial, all while accommodating traffic and serve as community gathering spaces.

Challenges & Opportunities

- Network connectivity—issue of major thoroughways are disjointed.
- Climate change impacts—bigger storm events, that will necessitate a need for larger culverts and bridges, and improved street stormwater management.
- Pavement condition—lack of resources to maintain and reconstruct local roadways.
- Short but intense peak hours.
- Much of the system has available capacity.
- Real time data available—congestion on Google Maps.
- Intersection controls—roundabouts and improved signal timing.
- Connected and autonomous vehicles—passenger and truck.
- Major infrastructure maintenance, repair, and reconstruction coming due.



Major thoroughfares designed for the quick and efficient movement of motor vehicles:

- I-35 & I-535
- WI Hwy 35
- US Hwy 2 (in MN & WI)
- US Hwy 53 (in MN & WI)
- MN Hwy 23
- MN Hwy 194
- WI Hwy 105
- 2nd & 3rd Street pair (Duluth)
- Midway Rd
- Martin Rd
- Lower Michigan St
- Central Entrance
- Becks Road
- Woodland Avenue
- Arrowhead Road
- Arlington Road
- Maple Grove Road

Areas of Congestion

- Lake Ave at Superior Street
- London Rd at 40th Ave East
- 24th Ave West at Piedmont Ave

Major Network Gaps

- Kenwood Ave to 6th Ave E
- Martin Rd to MN Hwy 61
- Joshua Ave to Arrowhead/Rice Lake Rd

Pavement and Bridge Condition

Figures 5.2–5.4 display aspects of local pavement and bridge condition. Federal transportation legislation has placed emphasis on maintaining the National Highway System (NHS) in good condition, which in turn resulted in less federal funding for the other roadways. While the largest amount of traffic travels on the NHS system, the vast majority of roadway mileage is the non-NHS system.

In addition to maintaining miles of roadways, the area’s jurisdictions maintain 300+ bridges. Bridge structures are some of the most expensive infrastructure assets and while the majority of the bridges are less than 60 years old, as they age increasing investment will be needed for repairs and full replacement of some in the future. Removal of many of the bridges associated with the Twin Ports Interchange project will help alleviate part of this problem in the long term.

For comparison and tracking purposes, pavement condition data is not readily available at this time across all roadway authorities. Work is underway, however, to develop a process where pavement conditions are routinely collected in a comparable and trackable format.

Figure 5.3: MN MIC Area Interstate Pavement Condition Targets (2025)

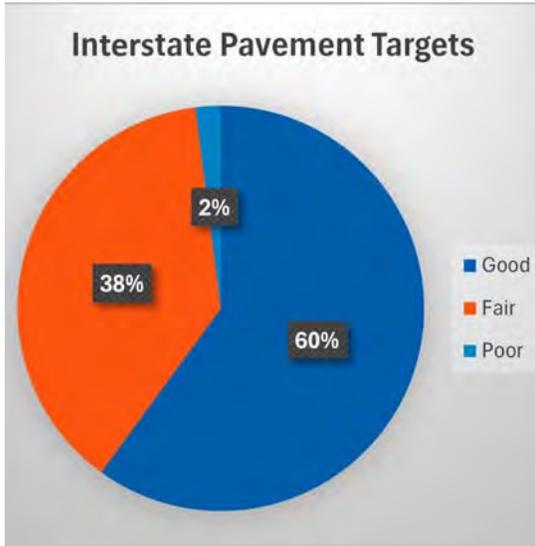


Figure 5.4: MN MIC Area Non-Interstate Pavement Condition Targets (2025)

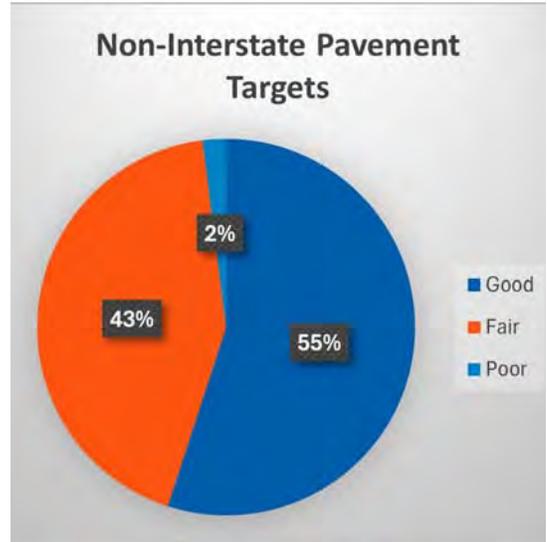
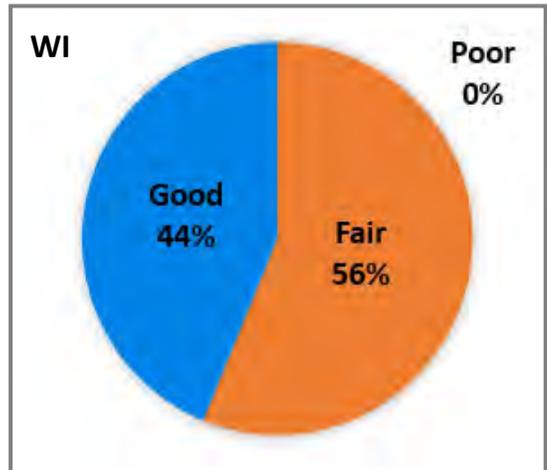
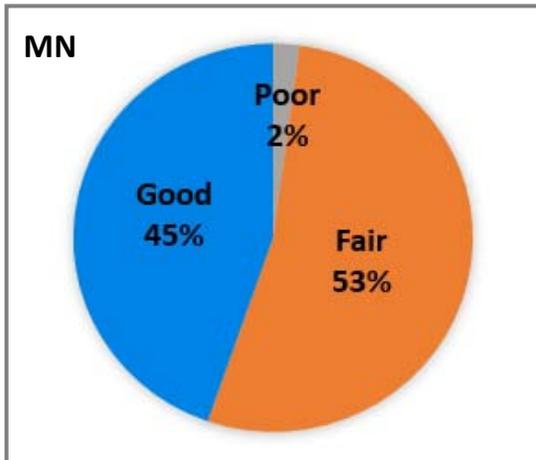


Figure 5.5: MIC Area Bridge Condition—by State (2018)



Data Source for Figures 5.2 and 5.3:
Mn DOT

Data Source for Figure 5.4: MnDOT
and WisDOT

Waterways—Harbor/Port

The Port of Duluth-Superior serves as a full-service, multimodal hub for domestic and international trade. It is the busiest and largest (by tonnage) port on the Great Lakes, and is consistently ranked amongst the top 20 ports in the U.S. Further, the port is a major link to world markets for North America's heartland. A portion of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's Clure Public Marine Terminal property is designated as a Foreign Trade Zone, which can provide attractive advantages to international shippers. Overall the port remains a significant component of the region's economy, and supports a significant number of good paying and technical jobs.

The movement of freight by water is the most efficient and environmentally friendly way of moving heavy cargoes long distances. Primarily a bulk, natural resources port, docks in the "twin ports" of Duluth and Superior, handle a diversified commodities base ranging from coal, iron ore, grain, and limestone to cement, salt, wood pulp, steel coil, wind energy cargo, other heavy lift/dimensional equipment, containers, and break bulk cargoes.

Integral to the functioning of the port is 19 miles of dredged navigational channels maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These dredged channels are a largely unseen but essential component of the region's transportation network. Figure 5.5 displays the shipping channels.

At the crossroads of three major highway systems and four Class I railroads - BNSF, CN, CPKS, and UP - the port is situated well for moving cargo in and out of the Midwest. These rail lines directly connect the port to multiple ports on the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and the Gulf of Mexico.

Harbor-related tourism, including harbor cruises, the William Irvin and SS Meteor ship museums, airplane and helicopter flights offering aerial views of the area, and numerous tourist-based companies offering paddle-based tours of the harbor, estuary, and lake are all examples of tourism business in the harbor. Additionally, multiple cruise lines offering Great Lakes itineraries have called on Duluth on a regular basis since 2022. All of these tourism services require transportation infrastructure, including dock walls and dredged shipping channels, in and adjacent to the harbor to connect people with these opportunities.



Primary Commodities

- Iron Ore/Taconite
- Coal
- Grain
- Limestone
- Cement
- Salt
- Wood pulp
- Steel coil
- Wind energy cargo
- Break bulk cargo & containers

Infrastructure

- 33million short tons of cargo
- 775 vessel visits
- 19 miles of dredged shipping channels
- 21 cargo docks

Transportation Improvements with Port-related Benefits

- Helberg Drive
- Twin Ports Interchange
- Blatnik Bridge

Past port-related transportation projects include the building of Helberg Drive to provide improved access to the docks on Rice's Point in Duluth, especially for over-sized loads out of the port and improved access to the state and U.S. highway system. Major area interstate reconstruction projects that are currently underway (Twin Ports Interchange) and in planning stages (Blatnik Bridge) have been designed with improved port access in mind.

There continues to be tension between competing waterfront land uses along the waterfront. While redevelopment of industrial waterfront properties to commercial, residential, and recreational uses has occurred for decades and this pressure continues, positive data highlighting the importance of the industrial sector to Duluth's economy has been helpful in tempering this tendency. Transportation must be addressed in relation to any of these potential redevelopment scenarios.

Following many years of water quality improvements, contamination removal, and habitat restoration, increased numbers of people are recreating in the river, harbor, and Lake Superior (e.g. motor boat, sailing, personal watercraft, fishing, canoe, kayak, paddle board, etc.). Given the increase in use, efforts continue to improve awareness of hazards of recreating in these waters and to strive for safe experiences for all users, whether recreational, commercial, or industrial.

Figure 5.5: Dredged Shipping Channels in Duluth-Superior Harbor



Port and Harbor-Related Challenges & Opportunities

- Beneficial re-use placement of dredged materials
- Water level fluctuation
- Long-term sustainability
- Dock wall maintenance and replacement
- Legacy pollution clean-up
- Land use redevelopment pressure for commercial, residential, and recreational uses
- Major bridges (Blatnik, Bong, Oliver, Grassy Point)
- Accommodating cruise ships
- Continuing to grow and expand cargo diversity
- Potential for short sea shipping
- Potential for Great Lakes container shipping
- Potential for expanded multi-and inter-modal freight movement
- Loss of total cargo tonnage and vessel visits as coal use and shipments continue to decline

Functional Classification

Functional Classification describes roadways based on the type of service they provide. Roadways provide two basic types of service: land access and mobility. The degree to which a roadway provides access and/or mobility determines its functional classification. The key to planning an efficient roadway system is finding the appropriate balance between mobility and accessibility. Map 5.2 displays roadway functional classification across the MIC area.

Principal Arterials roadways primarily serve a mobility function with minimal land access. The primary purpose arterials serve is the rapid movement of people and goods for extended distance. Principal arterials are high capacity, high speed roadways with restricted access.

Minor Arterials interconnect with and augment principal arterials. Minor Arterials within urban areas serve inter-community trips of moderate length. Although the primary use of the minor arterials is mobility, this functional class provides more land access than a principal arterial.

Collectors channel trips between the local street system and the arterials. Collectors serve a balance between mobility and land access. Parking and direct driveway access to the street are typically allowed on collectors. Collectors are usually wider, have higher capacity, and permit somewhat higher speeds than the local street network. Collectors are broken down into two categories Major Collectors and Urban Minor Collectors.

Locals primarily provide local land access and offer the lowest level of mobility. Characteristics of local streets include uncontrolled intersections and few restrictions on parking. Local streets are not a significant consideration in metropolitan planning and this plan does address them in any systematic fashion.

The Federal Highway Administration uses functional classification to determine if a roadway is eligible for federal (gas tax) funds. Federal-aid eligible routes include: Principal Arterials, Major Arterials, Minor Arterials, and Major and Urban Minor Collectors. Local Streets and Rural Minor Collectors are not Federal-aid eligible.

Hierarchy of Roads

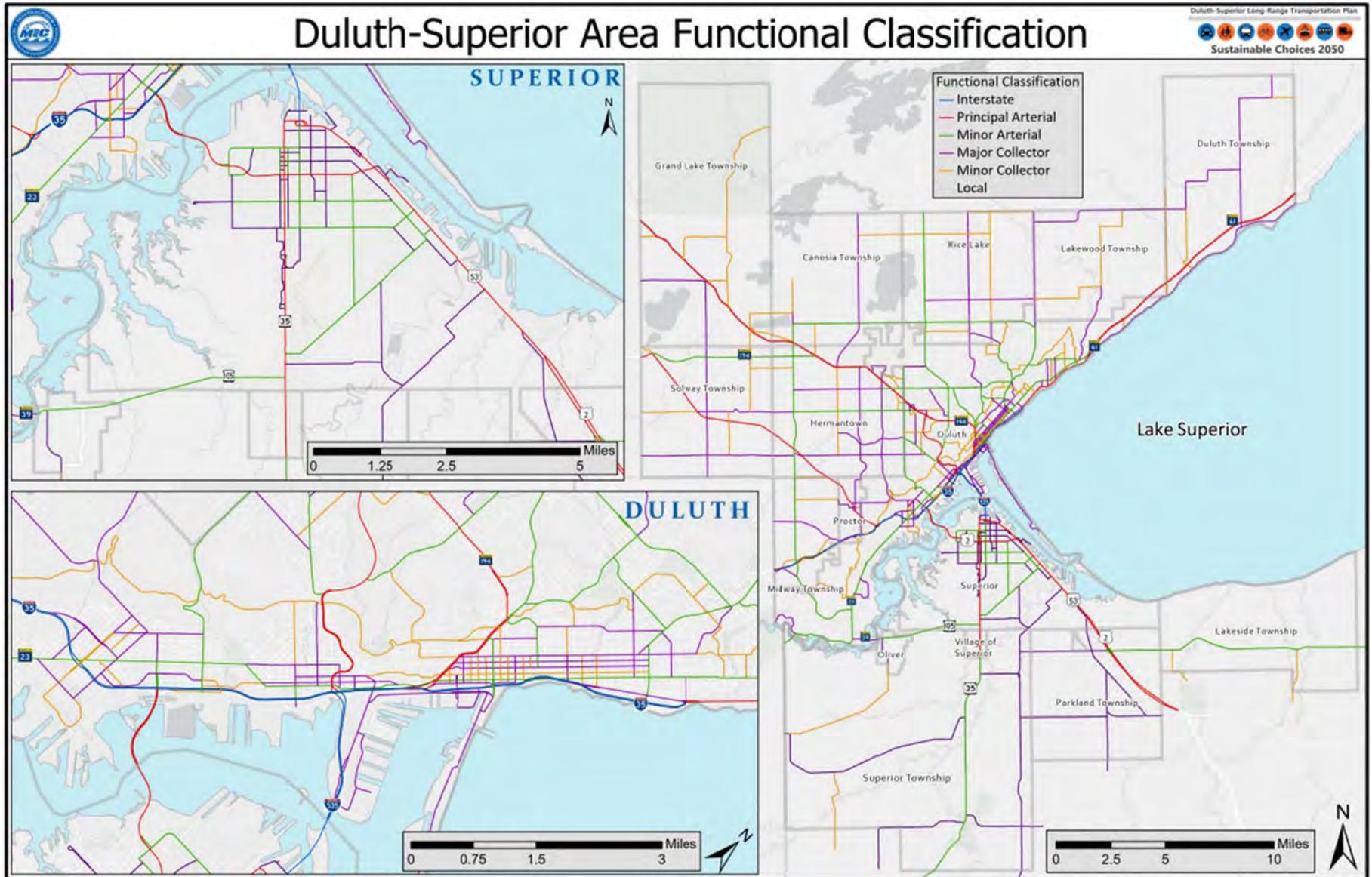
- **Local**—low volume, low speed (paved or unpaved).
- **Collector**—collect traffic from local roads, and distribute it to arterials. Traffic using a collector is usually going to or coming from somewhere nearby.
- **Arterial**—major through roads that are expected to carry large volumes of traffic.

Access = refers to the ability to reach desired goods, services, activities and destinations Access is the ultimate goal of most transportation, except a small portion of travel in which movement is an end in itself (jogging, horseback riding, pleasure drives), with no destination.

Mobility = refers to the movement of people or goods. It assumes that “travel” means person- or ton-miles, “trip” means person- or freight-vehicle trip. It assumes that any increase in travel mileage or speed benefits society.

In general, as mobility increases, access decreases, and vice versa. In order to promote increased mobility access has to be limited. To increase the amount of access, mobility has to be limited.

Map 5.3



Network Performance

In order to improve the transportation system, gaining a greater understanding on the return of public investment, the cost-benefits, the lessons learned from past projects, what worked and what did not, the transportation system is regularly evaluated. Key measures of transportation network performance are traffic volumes, level of service and performance measures, including pavement and bridge condition and crash analysis.

Traffic Volume

Traffic volume counts for all modes are regularly collected. For motor vehicles, transportation planners use average annual daily traffic (AADT) and/or peak hour volumes to measure the use of the roadway system. AADT is an annualized measure of traffic volume on a road segment. AADT numbers are based on traffic counts that local and DOT engineers periodically collect on area roads. Traffic counts provide onetime “snapshot” views of traffic on area roads that traffic engineers then extrapolate into an annualized daily average using a mathematical process.

Traffic volumes for air, cyclists, motor vehicles, pedestrians, ports and transit are also being collected. In the last few years, there has been a shift in methodology for the MIC away from longitudinal studies at various locations, towards a methodology of counting bike and pedestrian traffic at strategically specific locations to capture data before-and-after projects have been completed and implemented. This is to leverage the MIC’s limited resources to focus on project-specific data, rather than collect data network-wide, simply for the sake of collecting data.

In addition to these concerns, it is noted by the MIC that the MIC organization is anticipating changes in traffic flow and volumes due to the anticipated closure of the Blatnik Bridge during construction. There will be further studies and conversations with the MIC’s constituent jurisdictions as to the what the most effective and appropriate measures will be to take regarding these traffic flow changes.

Level of Service

Level of service (LOS) is a measure describing conditions within a motor vehicle traffic stream, based on speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, and convenience. LOS is determined by calculating the Volume to

Street Network Congestion happens during the routine AM and PM weekday peak time periods and at times during off-peak special events or recreational based trips during off-peak times.

- 23 (or more) hours of the day are largely congestion free.
- “15-minute” rush in AM and PM work-related.
- Around schools as parents are increasingly driving their children to and from school, creating congestion immediately around school sites, particularly during the afternoon school dismissal times.
- Tourism/event/recreational congestion during major events in the Downtown waterfront area, Summer “beach” days along Lake Avenue through Downtown Duluth and Canal Park and along the North Shore Scenic Drive, particularly on the Sunday drive back to the Twin Cities.

Capacity ratio, where the traffic volume, observed or forecasted, is divided by the estimated capacity of the roadway. LOS A represents complete free flow of traffic, allowing traffic to maneuver unimpeded. LOS F represents a complete breakdown in traffic flow, resulting in stop and go travel. With LOS, Level “D” is acceptable traffic conditions. However, expectations in the Duluth-Superior Urban Area are generally higher.

LOS is used to study and better understand congestion; eliminating congestion on all roads is not necessarily a desired goal in the big picture. For example, in high-performing economic districts congestion is a by-product of a strong business district and a place where people want to spend time.

Having a better understanding what type of congestion exists is critical to planning congestion reduction strategies on specific road corridors. Strategies to reduce predictable congestion taking place that is impacting a small part of the network during a limited period of time, due to regular special events, schools, sports, recreation activities, etc. should take into account ways to improve operations, through traffic signal timing, parking and other non-roadway expansion solutions, including shifting trips to non-peak times.

Map 5.3 demonstrates there are very few LOS and congestion problems projected in the MIC area in 2050. That said, the model that projects the LOS does not necessarily capture congestion at intersections. There are intersections in the MIC area that do have congestion problems during peak hours or during significant events. With limited congestion in the Twin Ports, and the vast majority of regular roadway congestion taking place over small time periods (approximately 15 minutes or less) or happening due to isolated or infrequent events or activities, focus should be placed on design and operation improvements and inducing the type and location of the appropriate multimodal demand where the system capacity exists and efficiency can be maximized.

It is important to recognize that LOS is an important factor but has limitations as well. In the MIC area, LOS does not consider those traveling the system via other modes, quality of life factors, or the revenue generated for roadway jurisdictions to cover long-term costs of infrastructure investments. It is generally not cost-effective to expand capacity for short-term

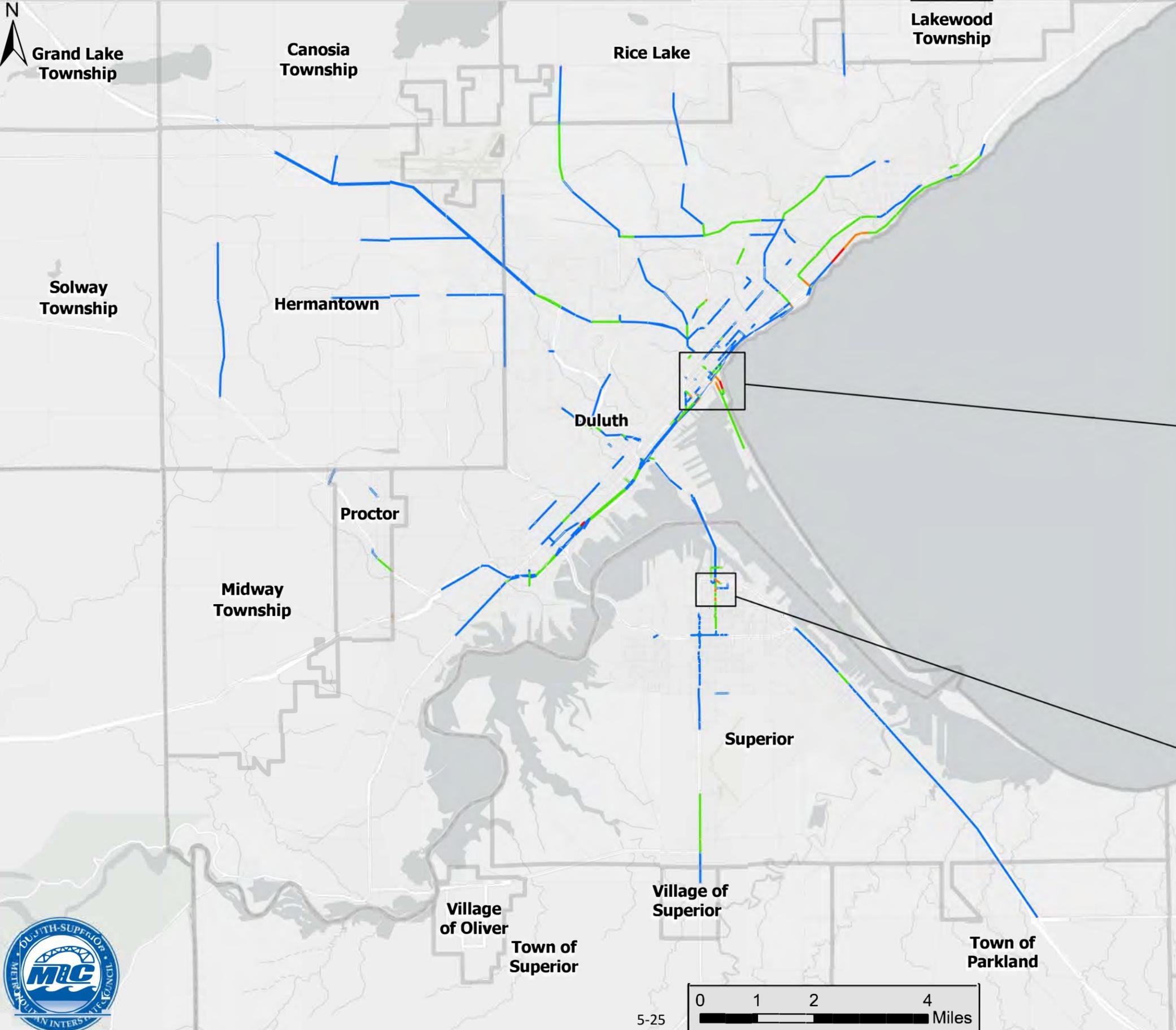
Non-Capacity Expansion Operational Improvements

- Dynamic signal timing
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings, including dynamic pedestrian crossing warning signage, curb extensions to reduce crossing distances, which reduces both motor vehicle delay.
- Placing major motor vehicle parking facilities directly adjacent to car thoroughfares.
- Re-striping /configuring existing roadways.

Twin Ports Congestion Spots

- Lake Ave—Downtown Duluth/ Canal Park
- London Rd—26th Ave E to 40th Ave E
- 1st Street—Downtown Duluth
- Hammond Ave—near Blatnik Bridge
- Kirby Dr on UMD campus
- 24th Ave W—at Piedmont Ave

2050 Level of Service — Duluth-Superior MPO

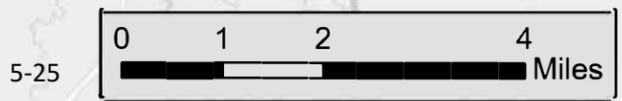
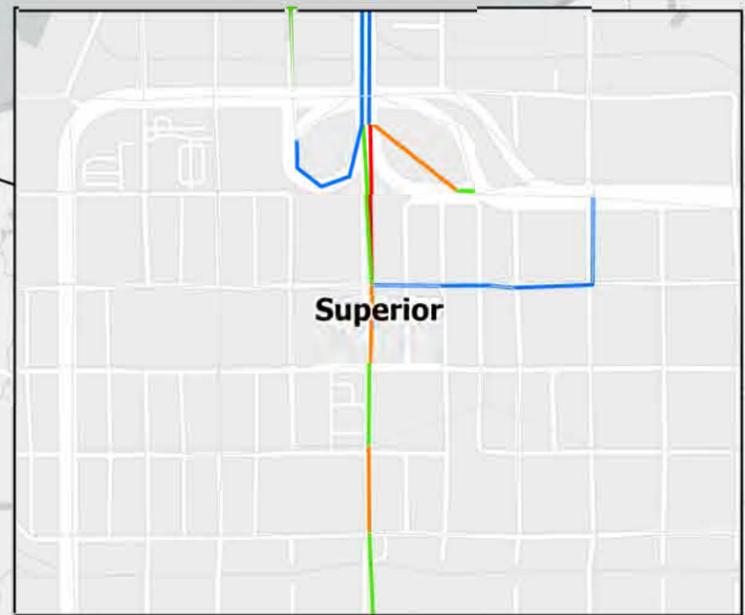
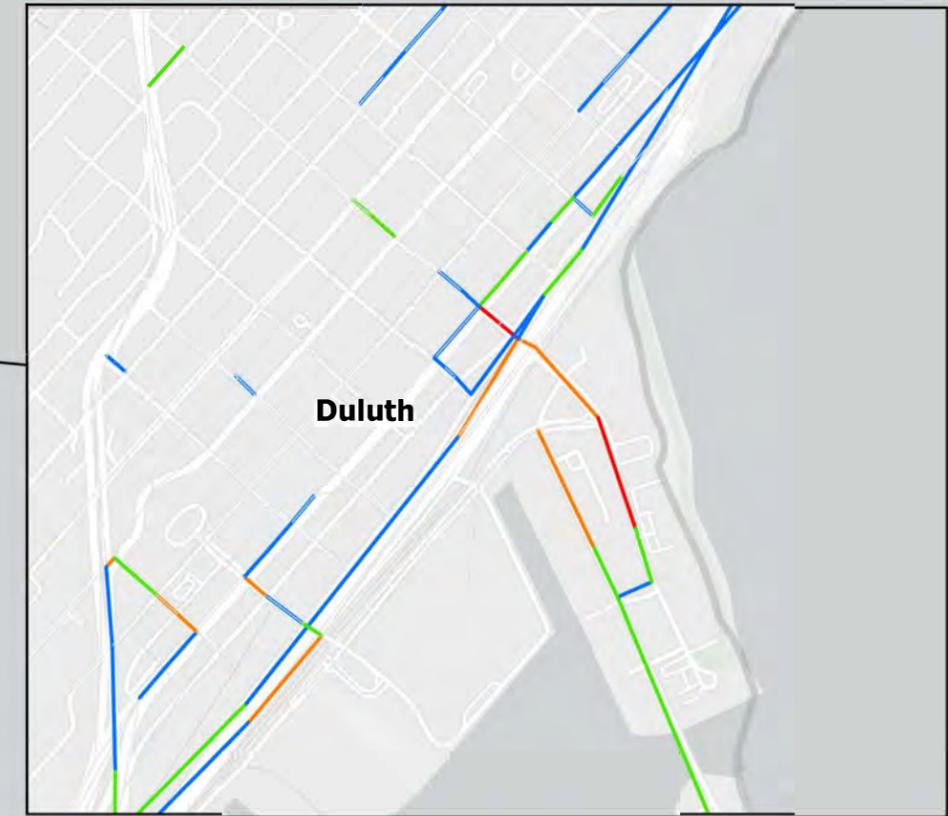


- <50 % means that road is at 50% or less of its total capacity.
- Level of Service is determined by comparing model results and AADT to the total capacity of the road segment.

Legend

A-F LOS 2050

A-B	<50%
C	<70%
D	<90%
E	<110%
F	>110.1%



peak conditions, given that the resulting capacity is unused for a majority of the time.

Other measures are being developed to determine LOS for other modes to more fully incorporate the varying differences between the modes and other important factors when making transportation decisions. For example, Level of Traffic Stress for bicyclists has been developed as a more appropriate alternative measure to LOS.

Performance Measures

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and must establish and use a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support national goals. MPOs are to integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures and targets from other performance-based plans and programs into their transportation planning processes.

The most recent federal transportation acts (the BIL, and the IIJA) included Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) requirements in the development of this long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP—*Sustainable Choices 2050*) and the Duluth and Superior area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).

National Performance Measures Goals

Safety—to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

Infrastructure Condition—to maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair.

Congestion Reduction—to achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System.

System Reliability—to improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system.

Freight Movement and Economic Vitality—to improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development.

Environmental Sustainability—to enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Performance Measures

(3) A description of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system in accordance with § 450.306(d).

(4) A system performance report and subsequent updates evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets described in § 450.306(d), including -

(i) Progress achieved by the metropolitan planning organization in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports, including baseline data; and

(ii) For metropolitan planning organizations that voluntarily elect to develop multiple scenarios, an analysis of how the preferred scenario has improved the conditions and performance of the transportation system and how changes in local policies and investments have impacted the costs necessary to achieve the identified performance targets.

Reduced Project Delivery Delays—to reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies’ work practices.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)/Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJA) Acts—Federal Transportation Legislation Performance Measures

Performance Measures as established by the IIJA are:

PM 1—Safety

- Number of fatalities
- Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled
- Number of serious injuries
- Serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled
- Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

PM 2—Infrastructure (National Highway System—NHS Pavement and Bridge Condition)

- Percentage of pavements of the Interstate System in good condition.
- Percentage of pavements of the Interstate System in poor condition.
- Percentage of pavements of the non-Interstate NHS in good condition.
- Percentage of pavements of the non-interstate NHS in poor condition.
- Percentage of NHS bridges classified in good condition.
- Percentage of NHS bridges classified in poor condition.

PM 3—System Performance on NHS (NHS Performance and Freight Movement on the Interstate System)

- Interstate travel time reliability measure: percent of person-miles traveled on the Interstate that are reliable.
- Non-interstate travel time reliability measure: percent of person-miles traveled on the non-Interstate NHS that are reliable.
- Freight reliability measure: truck travel time reliability (TTTR) index.

Transit Asset Management (TAM)

- Rolling Stock: the percentage of revenue vehicle (by type) for that exceed the useful life benchmark (ULB).
- Equipment: the percentage of non-revenue service vehicles (by type) that exceed the ULB.

- Facilities: the percentage of facilities (by group) that are rated less than 3.0 on the Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) Scale.

MIC Area Performance Measures

The MIC's planning and programming contribute to the State of Minnesota's and the State of Wisconsin's performance targets and the DTA's transit targets. As part of implementation of this Plan, the MIC will be fully integrating performance measures into plans, studies and processes and linking investments to targets. To the extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP projects toward achieving targets will be provided. Revising the TIP project selection process and project status reports will be a key component to achieving this.

The MIC's approach at this time, to adopt and contribute toward the statewide targets for safety, pavement, bridge, reliability, and freight was deemed appropriate based on the limited MIC staff resources to develop, maintain and refine performance measures and targets for the MIC area.

At this time, the MIC has decided to adopt the states' (Minnesota & Wisconsin) performance targets instead of developing MPO based measures. The MIC's performance measures and related planning information can be found at:

dsmic.org/study/performance-measures/

Adopted Performance Measure Targets

Each state has established performance targets for each of the above federal performance measures. The MIC, as the MPO for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area, was also required to establish performance targets, and has done so by adopting the targets established by each state and agreeing to plan and program projects so that they contribute to the accomplishment of the targets.

The performance measure targets adopted by the MIC for each state are listed below. A brief description of how projects in the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets is also provided.

PM 1: Safety—Minnesota Targets

Measure	Baseline *1	2024 Targets
Number of Traffic Fatalities	414.2	352.4
Rate of Traffic Fatalities	0.725 per 100 million VMT *2	0.582 per 100 million VMT *2
Number of Serious Injuries	1676.2	1463.4
Rate of Serious Injuries	2.930 per 100 million VMT *2	2.470 per 100 million VMT*2
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries	282.4	258.4

**1 Baseline = 2018-2022 adopted targets*

**2 VMT = Vehicle Miles Traveled*

Progress in Meeting Minnesota PM 1 / Safety Targets

The following projects in the Minnesota portion of the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- Various St. Louis County highway safety measures including rumble strips.
- Removal of unwarranted traffic signals in Downtown Duluth.

PM 1: Safety—Wisconsin Targets

Measure	Baseline	2024 Targets
Number of Traffic Fatalities	556.1	588.8
Rate of Traffic Fatalities	0.914 per 100 million VMT *2	0.915 per 100 million VMT *2
Number of Serious Injuries	3023.9	3033.7
Rate of Serious Injuries	4.997 per 100 million VMT *2	4.726 per 100 million VMT*2
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries	343.3	371.8

Progress in Meeting Wisconsin PM 1 / Safety Targets

The following projects in the Wisconsin portion of the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- Installation of roundabout at Belknap Street and US Hwy 2.
- Belknap Street full reconstruction with dedicated left turn lanes.

PM 2: Infrastructure (NHS Pavement and Bridge Condition) – Minnesota Targets

Measure	Baseline *1	2-Year Target	4-Year Target
% of NHS * Bridges in Good Condition	31.8	30	35
% of NHS * Bridges in Poor Condition	5.8	5	5
% of Interstate Pavement in Good Condition	70.9	60	60
% of Interstate Pavement in Poor Condition	0.6	2	2
% of Non-Interstate NHS *2 Pavement in Good Condition	61.4	55	55
% of Non-Interstate NHS *2 Pavement in Poor Condition	0.5	2	2

*1 *Baseline = 2021 data*

*2 *NHS = National Highway System*

Progress in Meeting Minnesota PM2 / Infrastructure Targets

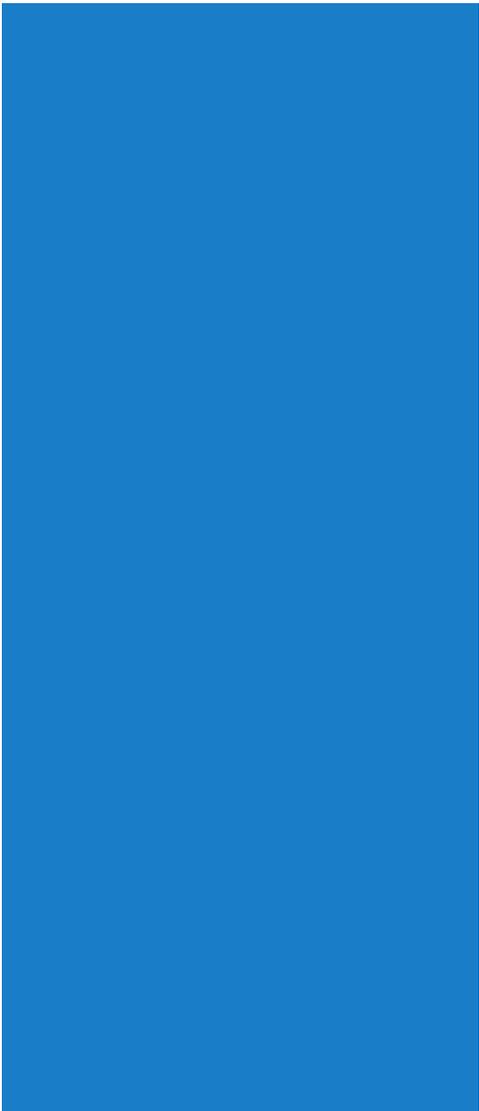
In 2018, on the NHS the MIC area had 2 of 94 (2%) bridges rated in poor condition, 50 of 94 (53%) bridges rated in fair condition, and 42 of 94 (45%) bridges rated in good condition. Thus the bridge targets were met.

In 2018, 36.80% of MIC-area interstate was in good condition and 1.56% was in poor condition. Without improvement, the “Good” condition 4-year target will not be met.

In 2018, 35.62% of MIC-area non-interstate was in good condition and 1.33% was in poor condition. While improvement was observed from 2017 (only 25.06% was in good condition), additional improvement will need to be made to meet the “Good” condition 2-year and 4-year targets.

The following projects in the Minnesota portion of the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- Blatnik Bridge preservation.
- Bong Bridge redecking and preservation.



PM 2: Infrastructure (NHS Pavement and Bridge Condition) –Wisconsin Targets

Measure	Baseline	2-Year Target	4-Year Target
% of NHS *2 Bridges in Good Condition	51.3	> 49	>48
% of NHS *2 Bridges in Poor Condition	2.6	< 3	< 3
% of Interstate Pavement in Good Condition	65.9	> 60	> 60
% of Interstate Pavement in Poor Condition	0.3	< 4	< 4
% of Non-Interstate NHS *1 Pavement in Good Condition	36.3	> 30	> 30
% of Non-Interstate NHS *1 Pavement in Poor Condition	4.2	< 10	< 10

*1 NHS = National Highway System

Progress in Meeting Wisconsin PM2 / Infrastructure Targets

The following projects in the Wisconsin portion of the MIC area have contributed towards eventually fully meeting the performance measure targets above:

- Blatnik Bridge preservation.
- Bong Bridge redecking and preservation.

Pavement condition data was not provided so a baseline was unable to be identified at this time.

In 2018, 44% of MIC-area NHS bridges were in good condition and 0% were in poor condition. Additional improvement will need to be made to meet the “Good” condition 2-year and 4-year targets, while continuing to meet the “Poor” condition targets.

PM 3: System Performance (NHS Performance and Freight Movement on the Interstate System) – Minnesota Targets

Measure	Baseline *1	2-Year Target	4-Year Target
% of Reliable Person Miles on the Interstate	94.4	82	82
% of Reliable Person Miles on the Non-Interstate NHS *2	96.1	90	90
Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) Index	1.24	1.4	1.4

**1 Baseline = 2021 data*

**2 NHS = National Highway System*

Progress in Meeting Minnesota PM3 / System Performance Targets

The following projects in the Minnesota portion of the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- Repaving of I-35 from tunnels to 26th Ave East
- Miller Trunk Highway Traffic signal coordination.
- ITS signage usage.

PM 3: System Performance (NHS Performance and Freight Movement on the Interstate System) – Wisconsin Targets

Measure	Baseline	2-Year Target 2023	4-Year Target 2025
% of Reliable Person Miles on the Interstate	96.4	92.5	93
% of Reliable Person Miles on the Non-Interstate NHS *1	93.9	91	89.5
Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) Index	1.20	1.3	1.3

**1 NHS = National Highway System*

Progress in Meeting Wisconsin PM3 / System Performance Targets

These can be measured against the baseline targets described in the 2045 Sustainable Choices document published by the MIC. The following projects in the Wisconsin portion of the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- ITS signage usage.
- Installation of roundabout at Belknap Street and US Hwy 2.

Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan Targets – Duluth Transit Authority

Asset	4-Year Target
Rolling Stock	<10% of active Fixed Route vehicles and <20% of Paratransit vehicles have reached their useful life.
Equipment	<35% of equipment (i.e. service vehicles) have reached their useful life.
Parking/Pedestrian Facility	<10% of parking/pedestrian facilities have a condition rating below 3 based on FTA's TERM scale.*
Administrative/Maintenance Facility	<20% of facility elements within the Administrative & Maintenance Facility have a condition rating below 3.

* FTA = Federal Transit Administration

Progress in Meeting TAM Performance Measures

The following projects in the MIC area have contributed to accomplishing the performance measure targets above:

- Buses are replaced on regularly set schedule.
- Transit facilities and equipment are regularly maintained.

While DTA is clearly meeting its “Administrative/Maintenance Facility” target, additional improvements will need to be made to meet the “Rolling Stock”, “Equipment”, and “Parking/Pedestrian Facility” targets.

System Performance Report

Since the approval of the last MTP five years ago, resources have been focused on maintaining and improving the operation of the transportation system with a focus on improving year-round reliability of all aspects of the transportation network, including bicycles, micromobility, the pedestrian network, and on-going maintenance of the motor-vehicle network. This also includes improving transit operations and passenger amenities, improving pedestrian infrastructure and improving the under-developed bikeway network.

Arterial Roadways: Maintaining and improving the MIC area arterial roadways has been a major focus, including the NHS and non-NHS arterial system, to ensure these roadways and bridges remain in good condition. More regular re-surfacing and more extensive reconstruction work on I-35, Blatnik Bridge, Bong Bridge, Hwy 53 (Minnesota side), Minnesota Hwy 23 has taken place over the past 5 years.

Intersections: Intersections are now all reviewed through an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) study for roundabout potential and other potential safety and operations improvements. The address of intersections by the regional MPO is also being addressed by the MIC-area Safety Action Plan, looking at thousands of intersections, in a variety of contexts across the region.

Transit: Transit has several new low emission electric buses, conducts regular maintenance of transit facilities and equipment, has a successful loop serving UMD, has incorporated new technology tools to improve service, and is planning a bus rapid transit (BRT) study. There are a number of transit service options within the Duluth-Superior area in addition to DTA, including Arrowhead Transit and other local bus service, Jefferson Lines and other inter-city buses and shuttles to and from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Effort is being made to maintain and improve good connections between neighboring services.

In addition to these efforts, the DTA has made significant progress in rolling-out their Better Buses Blueprint group of improvements, which include their Blue and Green GO lines. These are high-frequency lines that are intended to be a potential proxy for a future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line system.

This DTA system improvement includes new signage for over 700 bus stops and dedicated buses (distinguished with new bus wraps). This also includes the roll-out of the DTA's "Where's My Bus" tool for users to get real-time information about where the bus they might be waiting for is. This high-frequency line change is a significant move in the positive direction for the DTA to provide reliable, and rapid service.

Pedestrians: Pedestrian improvements have taken place in a variety of ways, including updates to the pedestrian infrastructure condition inventory, creation/updates to the jurisdiction's ADA transition plans and the upgrade of pedestrian infrastructure. Specifically, improvements to pedestrian crosswalks, including utilizing pavement markings more visible to motorists and longer-lasting crosswalk markings, the high-visibility ladder instead of the standard parallel pavement markings, installing Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs) at intersections and locations that are difficult and/or uncomfortable for pedestrians to cross, installing countdown timers and pro-actively improving curb ramps that line up with direction that pedestrians are to walk or roll.

In addition, separated multiple use paths have been installed to provide a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians, including multi-use paths along West Superior Street, College Street and Rice Lake Road in Duluth and paved shoulders on Martin Road and Arlington Avenue.

Bicycles: The bicycle mode of transportation continues to be under-developed as there is not a fully viable interconnected bikeway system currently in place. With that said, significant improvements to the bikeways network have begun. Prior MTP's discussed the implementation of bike route wayfinding signage and guide maps. More recently both on-street bike lanes and off-street multi-use paths have seen increased use, improving the conditions for bicycling and integrating bicycling into the transportation system.

NHS: Due to additional required focus on NHS routes there has been less focus on the non-NHS system, particularly the collectors and local streets. While these roadways carry less traffic, they include the largest number of miles and receive the least resurfacing and reconstruction dollars.

Furthermore, the NHS system in the Duluth-Superior area has

many massive highway and bridge structures that present long-term maintenance and eventual reconstruction liabilities, particularly for the population and size of the Twin Ports.

The **Blatnik Bridge** is one of the three largest bridges in Minnesota, and I-35 within the City of Duluth has a series of bridge and tunnel structures that will all consume large funding amounts for maintenance and eventual reconstruction. While the timeframe for reconstructing the Blatnik Bridge is being determined, likely starting demolition and reconstruction in the late 202's, moving into the 2030's.

Much progress has been made to meet the general goal of a local and regional multimodal transportation system, but much work remains. Ongoing and future needs include:

- Full integration of an interconnected multimodal system, with an emphasis on building out the under-developed bikeway system;
- Improvements to transit service, including STRIDE; and
- Maintenance and improvements to harbor infrastructure, such as dock walls and shipping channels.
- During the update to this plan many constructive comments were received with ideas to improve the transportation system. Many of these comments have already been shared with the appropriate agencies, advisory committees, and board, and will be regularly used as they relate to the implementation of the plan.



6. Projects & Funding

This chapter identifies planned surface transportation projects:

- To be implemented in the next 25 years to help realize the vision of this plan;
- That are eligible for federal funding and/or are regionally significant;
- Including financial estimates

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Transportation Projects Overview	6-3
Fiscal Sustainability	6-3
Project Types	6-4
Figure 6.1: Distribution of Non-DTA Projects by Project Type	6-5
Figure 6.2: Distribution of DTA Projects by Project Type	6-6
Project Implementation	6-7
Financial Assessment.....	6-8
Forecasting Future Revenues	6-8
Forecasting System-Level Needs.....	6-9
Figure 6.3: 2024 MIC Area Roadway Pavement Condition by Jurisdiction.....	6-10
Figure 6.4: Cost Estimates For Maintaining or Improving Local Functional Classified Roadway Pavement Condition by Jurisdiction.....	6-11
Figure 6.5: Financial Capacity for Transit Projects	6-12
Financial Analysis & Fiscal Constraint	6-13
Methodology—Financial Analysis	6-13
Methodology—Fiscal Constraint	6-13
Figure 6.6: Estimated Annual Transportation Revenues Available to MIC Area Jurisdictions.....	6-13
Figure 6.7: Financial Capacity of Planned Projects (25 Years)	6-14
2025-2050 Duluth-Superior Area Full Project List.....	6-16
Transportation Projects—Minnesota	6-17
MnDOT	6-17
St. Louis County.....	6-20

6. Projects & Funding

City of Duluth	6-26
City of Hermantown	6-31
City of Rice Lake	6-33
Duluth Transit Authority	6-34
Duluth Seaway Port Authority	6-35
Transportation Projects—Wisconsin	6-36
WisDOT Projects.....	6-36
Douglas County	6-38
City of Superior	6-39
Wisconsin OCR - Railroads	6-40
Projects Identified as ‘For Study’	6-41
Projects Identified as ‘Unfunded’	6-43
Fiscal Summary	6-44
Project Impact Assessments	6-45
Community Impact & Environmental Justice	6-45
Map 6.1: Duluth-Superior % Households – Without a Vehicle	6-47
Map 6.2: Duluth-Superior % Population – Ambulatory Difficulties ...	6-48
Map 6.3: Duluth-Superior % Population – Low Income.....	6-49
Map 6.4: 2050 Project Impact – Environmental Justice Analysis	6-50
Cultural, Historical & Environmentally Sensitive Areas	6-51
Map 6.5: Environmental Sensitivity Analysis	6-52
Highlighted Projects	6-54
Large Transportation Projects.....	6-54
Significant Unfunded Projects	6-57
Transportation Projects—For Study.....	6-58
Regionally Significant Corridors	6-60

Transportation Projects Overview

This chapter identifies future transportation projects in the Duluth-Superior area. Some of the projects listed are fiscally constrained and are planned to be completed in the next few years, while others are not fiscally constrained and are proposed or require additional study before moving forward.

A subset of the projects are priority projects identified through a performance-based planning approach detailed in Chapter 4. These priority projects have been identified as regionally significant and/or the best projects to help carry out the vision of this plan and implement the goals and objectives identified in Chapter 2.

This chapter also summarizes financial considerations by providing an estimation of the revenues and costs of those projects, and summarizes potential social, environmental, and cultural impacts of the projects.

Finally, this chapter highlights significant planned and future proposed projects. The short-, mid-, and long-term projects listed on pages 6-18—6-44 reflect the wide range of transportation infrastructure the Duluth-Superior area both needs and desires over the next 25 years. The projects listed were submitted by all local jurisdictions as those that would receive federal funding and/or are deemed regionally significant.

Fiscal Sustainability

It is a significant challenge to pay for all of these projects. Existing tax revenues are not meeting the needs to fully maintain, operate, and reconstruct the Duluth-Superior area transportation system. Increasing and accelerating transportation infrastructure construction costs, declining gas tax revenues, and stagnant to modest local population and economic growth all contribute to this funding challenge.

This is why fiscal sustainability is an integral part of the plan's vision. We simply cannot continue to expect to receive outside funding to cover all the projects that cannot be fully funded locally. There are several ways to help achieve fiscal sustainability in our transportation system, including:

- Prioritize projects that best help carry out the vision of this plan and implement the goals and objectives identified in Chapter 2.

Short-Range Projects (2025-2029)

Projects already planned and being programmed in either the Duluth Area or Superior Area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). These documents identify federal, state, and local funding sources and amounts to be applied to the projects listed with in them.

Mid-Range Projects (2030-2034)

Projects identified by jurisdictions and already part of their ten-year capital improvement programs. Local funding sources have already been identified for many of these projects.

Long-Range Projects (2035-2050)

Projects that jurisdictions anticipate doing beyond 10 years out, but are currently not part of any capital improvement program. Federal, state, and local funding sources have not yet been identified for these projects, though such funding is reasonably expected to be available for them.

- Identify appropriate opportunities to reduce or “right size” some of the local transportation infrastructure.
- Build a transportation system that helps maximize the community’s ability to create and build sustainable wealth.
- Ensure our transportation investments are not undermined but are working towards greater returns on investment creating win, win, win situations (i.e. investments that simultaneously create improved traffic operations, generate increased revenue, and are safer for all users).

Project Types

The projects listed on pages 6-18—6-44 have been categorized according to the “type” descriptors listed below. The distribution of listed projects in this plan by the defined project types is displayed in Figure 6-1. Similarly, Figure 6-2 displays the types of Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) projects listed in this plan. Figures 6-1 and 6-2 on the next two pages graphically identify the area’s transportation investment priorities.

Projects Addressing Known Issue Areas

- **Pavement Conditions** — improve critical infrastructure (highways, shipping channels, bridges, etc.) to “good” condition.
- **Forecasted Congestion Areas** - address problem areas, noting that the goal is not to alleviate all congestion, as congestion is a sign of a strong, economic area but to improve traffic operations where possible.
- **Modal Infrastructure Gaps** — identify and closing existing major gaps in the system for bikeways, rail lines, roadways, sidewalks, trails and transit.

Critical infrastructure are assets that are essential for the proper functioning of the transportation system, including the U.S. and state highways, bridges that provide connections with limited or no alternatives, shipping channels, active rail lines, and the mainline transitways.

Non-DTA Project Type Definitions

Preservation—projects that retain or restore the condition of existing facilities through repaving or similar activities.

Reconstruction—projects that rebuild or rehab existing facilities without adding more capacity or change roadway alignment.

Safety—projects with a focus on improving safety of the system.

Intersection Control or Roundabout—projects that are focusing on improving the traffic control at intersections.

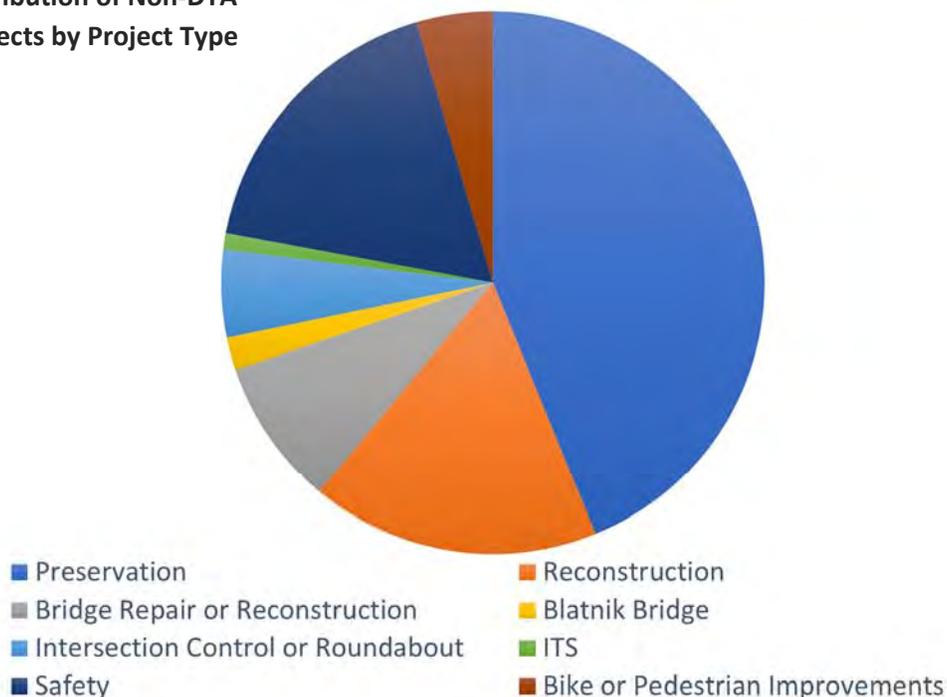
Bike or Pedestrian Improvement—stand alone projects focused on bike and pedestrian improvements.

Bridge Repair or Reconstruction—projects that are focused on bridges.

ITS—Intelligent Transportation System is a project utilizing technological improvements to improve operations of the transportation system.

Blatnik Bridge—encompasses multiple project types that are a part of the I-535 bridge replacement over the St. Louis River and Twin Ports shipping channel.

Figure 6.1: Distribution of Non-DTA Projects by Project Type



DTA Project Type Definitions

Operations & Maintenance—projects that are solely focused on transit operations and maintenance of buses facilities.

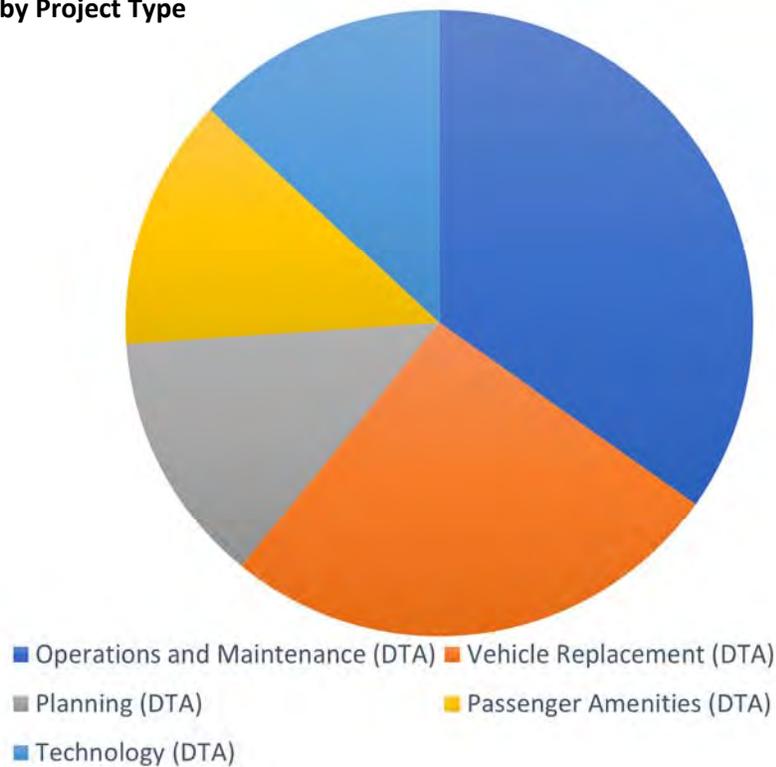
Vehicle Replacement—projects that include the regular replacement of regular route and paratransit vehicles.

Planning—projects that involve DTA planning activities, Operational Analysis, BRT and various studies.

Passenger Amenities—projects that are focused on improving the riding experience on DTA buses.

Technology—projects that improve or replace technologies used for public transit.

Figure 6.2: Distribution of DTA Projects by Project Type



Project Implementation

The projects listed in pages 6-18—6-44 are implemented through the Duluth and Superior Area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). The TIPs list all MIC area federally funded and/or regionally significant transportation projects. As noted in Chapter 9, it is anticipated the TIP process will be updated to incorporate aspects of the new performance-based planning approach used to prioritize the projects and more objectively ensure projects that are implemented will contribute to realizing the long-term vision of this plan and meeting its goals and objectives.

Unfunded Needs

It is very obvious there is insufficient funding to pay for the complete list of projects currently needed, desired, and being planned for in the MIC area. Because federal regulations require the MTP to be fiscally constrained to only the sources of revenue that can be clearly identified and reasonably expected to be available, some projects had to be relegated to a status of “Unfunded Need” and are listed on page 6-44. Even though the area’s jurisdictions will continue to plan for them, the future implementation of these projects will be contingent upon sources of funding that cannot be identified at this time.

Projects Identified as “For Study”

In addition to the projects identified as “unfunded need”, other potential projects were identified, for which appropriate solutions have not yet been determined. The feasibility of such projects requires additional study and it is too early to know size, extent, or scope of such projects. Projects like this are classified as being “For Study” and are listed on pages 6-42 and 6-43. Because the extent of the work required for these projects has not yet been determined, there are no cost estimates associated with them at this time.

The MIC’s Work Program, along with local jurisdiction work programming sets the schedule for undertaking the studies necessary to consider and potentially advance the projects listed as “For Study”.

Financial Assessment

Transportation infrastructure is an asset with known long-term financial liabilities that require continual funding to construct, operate, maintain and reconstruct.

As previously mentioned, revenues earmarked for transportation infrastructure have generally diminished, which means cities, counties, and states are increasingly relying on sales and property taxes, and general funds to pay for transportation infrastructure. This puts transportation in competition with all other societal needs and generally results in fluctuating funding levels over time. This creates challenges for maintenance activities that are needed to extend infrastructure life with the least overall expenditure over time.

NOTE: A recent exception to the diminishing transportation revenues described above has been an unprecedented appropriation of dedicated federal funding for transportation infrastructure projects to the Duluth-Superior area and is considered a once in a generation-type situation.

This includes nearly one billion dollars for the planned Blatnik Bridge reconstruction, along with several other projects in the MIC area that have received funding through the [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity \(RAISE\)](#) grant program, the [Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhoods \(RCN\)](#) grant program, and the [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) grant program.

Forecasting Future Revenues

The MIC consulted with staff from all jurisdictions within the MPO Planning Area and the DTA to develop estimates of the federal and state dollars that will be available to those agencies over the next 25 years. For estimates of local revenues, information was provided by the jurisdictions, based on prior years, regarding the amount of “capital outlay” that the area’s cities and counties have historically directed to highway improvement projects. In all cases, these estimates represent a mix of federal, state, and local funding sources.

Public revenues are subject to the effects of inflation over time. To model these realities the Revenue Inflation Rate ranged from 2%-3.5%, as determined by each jurisdiction

Financial Limitations

Funding of local roadway system needs often falls short. One key reason is that fuel (gas) tax revenues have been in decline because:

- Increased fuel efficiency
- Federal Gas Tax has remained unchanged since 1993 (18.4 cents per gallon)

To counter this state gas and sales tax revenues for transportation are increasing to make up the shortfall. Both Duluth and St. Louis County have enacted local transportation sales taxes to help pay for infrastructure.

Also, alternative transportation funding studies are underway:

- Mileage-based user fee
- Transportation Company taxes
- Vehicle Registration fees (reflect fuel efficiency)

(see the sidebar to the right). The Revenue Inflation Rate was applied to the revenue estimates beginning in 2024 and projected out 25 years. This resulted in the revenue forecasted in Figure 6.4.

Revenues are not increasing at the same rate as expenditures. With expenditure inflation rates of at least 2.5%, and transportation infrastructure construction costs greatly increasing over time (see section 23 of Chapter 3), jurisdictions, including US DOT, are having to rely on other federal, state and local funds to help offset the project costs. These include sales tax, general funds, and one-time discretionary grants.

Generating and/or maintaining sufficient revenues to pay for the transportation infrastructure needs in the MIC area is a continuous and significant challenge that has been identified and discussed at jurisdictional consultations and during Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Discussions included prioritizing transportation investments in the MIC area (see chapter 4) and developing policy initiatives to help achieve and sustainably fund the goals and objectives of this plan.

Forecasting System-Level Needs

Once revenue forecasts were developed, an effort was made to estimate system-level needs for comparison. The purpose for doing this was to determine the potential costs of maintaining the existing system, in addition to any construction projects (system expansion) that might be identified.

Estimates were derived by gathering information about the existing condition of road pavements and the annual operating costs of maintaining current levels of transit service in the area. The future costs of addressing these needs were projected out to the year 2050 and were adjusted to account for the effects of inflation over those 25 years.

Estimating Future Roadway Needs

Understanding the needs of future roadways is an exercise of looking at the life-cycle of the roadway. Work to pull this information together is ongoing and a process to streamline this data collection effort is still being developed. Currently, each roadway authority undertakes their own process for estimated roadway needs, which is largely focused on pavement condition, or rideability.

Jurisdictional Revenue Inflation Rates

- MnDOT - 3.4%
- St. Louis County - 3.5%
- Duluth - 2%
- Hermantown - 4%
- WisDOT - 2.5%
- Douglas County - 2.5%
- Superior - 2.5%

Since the method of rating pavements differs among the jurisdictions, each jurisdiction was asked to provide ratings according to the way they rate them categorized as a percentage of three condition classes: “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor” (see Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3: 2024 MIC Area Roadway Pavement Condition by Jurisdiction*

Jurisdiction	% Good	% Fair	% Poor
MnDOT	61	33	5
St Louis County	82	14	4
City of Duluth	32	0	68
WisDOT	83	7	10
City of Superior	19	68	13

* Note for Figure 6.3: The other MIC area jurisdictions did not provide pavement condition percentages when requested so the MIC was not able to include them.

Cost Estimates

Cost-per-mile estimates (see “Typical Cost Per Mile” at right) were then applied to these totals to represent what it would cost to maintain the miles of “Good” pavement and convert the miles of “Fair” and “Poor” pavements to a “Good” condition within the 25-year timeframe of this plan.

These per-mile estimates were based on average costs-per-mile of recent projects in the MIC area and were vetted by jurisdiction staff. Figure 6.4 displays the total cost estimates to maintain or improve local roadways.

The costs displayed in Figure 6.4 are a gross estimate of the long-term needs that each jurisdiction faces, but may not reflect total costs for the following reasons:

1. The estimates assume that each mile is alike in terms of its dimensions and the cost of its materials;
2. The estimates are based on data that does not sufficiently speak to the potential needs that may exist with the road base and any infrastructure needs that may exist beneath the pavement; and
3. The estimates do not account for the even greater costs that may be associated with the maintenance or reconstruction of bridges, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, intersection controls, lighting, etc.

Typical Costs per Mile

Costs to build an urban road and trail per mile, based on recent project costs in the MIC area combined with the estimates provided by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, are:

Road Resurface =
\$1 million/mile

Road Reconstruction =
\$4 million/mile

New Road Construction =
\$5-10 million/mile

New Trail Construction =
\$500,000/mile

Figure 6.4: Cost Estimates For Maintaining or Improving Local Functional Classified Roadway Pavement Condition by Jurisdiction**



****Notes for Figure 6.4:**

Cost for roads in “Good” condition (defined as needing maintenance) was estimated at \$500,000 per mile.

Cost for roads in “Fair” condition (defined as needing resurfacing/preservation work) was estimated at roughly \$1 million per mile.

Cost for roads in “Poor” condition (defined as needing full reconstruction) was estimated at roughly \$4 million per mile.

While the estimates provide values for objective comparison, that are informative and illustrative, it is unrealistic to assume all roads will have “good” pavement quality. As such, achieving this status is not a direct goal or objective of this plan. Rather, it emphasizes prioritizing the maintenance of critical transportation infrastructure. (see Goal 4 Objective 4).

Estimating Future Transit Needs

To estimate future needs for Duluth-Superior’s public transit system, the current annual cost of operations and costs of bus replacements were forecasted out over 25 years.

The forecasted future revenues and expenses cover planned operational, maintenance and capital project costs out to 2050. Although this may seem like the DTA does not have a deficit, they in fact do. This is because the DTA relies heavily on state funds and tax levies to make up the difference. It is anticipated that the DTA will adjust the transit system in response to anticipated available funding, and/or meet long-term future capital needs on a yearly bases depending on available funds. DTA determined that a 5% inflation rate for expenses was necessary to show how transit costs are rising.

As with the roadway system, the operations and maintenance costs of transit are outpacing increases in revenue. This issue is addressed with changes in routes to create more cost efficiencies, coupled with possible future revenue increases through taxes and fares.

Annual Transit (DTA) Spending

To ensure compliance with FTA regulations and meet its own objectives for operational efficiency and passenger safety and comfort, the DTA maintains a vehicle replacement schedule of 10 regular route buses every other year and alternates between 3 and 6 new STRIDE vehicles in the intervening years.

Annual Transit (DTA) Spending

- \$24.6 million on operations and maintenance.
- \$500,000 per replacement vehicle for its fleet of regular route buses.
- \$145,000 to replace a 30-foot STRIDE bus
- \$65,000 to replace its smaller size STRIDE vehicles.

Figure 6.5: Financial Capacity for Transit Projects

Source	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	EXPENSES	REVENUES
						5 Yr Total	Avg. Expend. (5 years)
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 15,400,000	\$ 21,900,000	\$ 22,000,000	\$ 22,675,169	\$ 23,808,928	\$ 90,384,097	\$ 22,596,024
Capital Outlay	\$1,400,000	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000	\$250,000	\$3,020,000	\$10,170,000	\$2,034,000
Bus Purchases	\$4,700,000	\$5,200,000	\$5,200,000	\$865,000	\$0	\$15,965,000	\$3,193,000
TOTAL	\$21,500,000	\$29,850,000	\$29,950,000	\$23,790,169	\$26,828,928	\$116,519,097	\$26,383,819

Short Term 2024-2028						EXPENSES	REVENUES
Source	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	5 Yr Total	Avg. Expend. (5 years)
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 22,675,169	\$ 23,808,928	\$ 24,999,375	\$ 26,249,343	\$ 28,804,968	\$ 126,537,783	\$ 25,307,557
Capital Outlay	\$250,000	\$3,020,000	\$10,349,684	\$2,513,461	\$2,500,000	\$ 18,633,145	\$ 3,726,629
Bus Purchases	\$865,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,424,600	\$4,578,000	\$ 6,867,600	\$ 1,373,520
TOTAL	\$23,790,169	\$ 26,828,928	\$ 35,349,059	\$ 30,187,404	\$ 35,882,968	\$152,038,528	\$30,407,706

Mid Term 2029-2033						EXPENSES	REVENUES
Source	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	5 Yr Total	Avg. Expend. (5 years)
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 26,572,934	\$ 27,901,581	\$ 29,296,660	\$ 30,761,493	\$ 32,299,568	\$ 146,832,237	\$ 29,366,447
Capital Outlay	\$5,355,156	\$5,622,914	\$5,904,060	\$6,199,263	\$6,509,226	\$ 29,590,620	\$ 5,918,124
TOTAL	\$31,928,091	\$33,524,495	\$35,200,720	\$36,960,756	\$38,808,794	\$ 176,422,857	\$ 35,284,571

Long Term				EXPENSES	REVENUES	EXPENSES
Source	2034-2038	2039-2043	2044-2048	15 Yr Total	Avg. 5 Year Expend. (15 years)	25 Yr Total
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 187,399,277	\$ 239,174,242	\$305,253,675	\$ 731,827,194	\$ 243,942,398	\$ 1,005,197,214
Capital Outlay	\$37,765,963	\$48,200,002	\$61,516,773	\$ 147,482,738	\$ 49,160,913	\$ 202,574,103
TOTAL	\$225,165,240	\$287,374,244	\$366,770,448	\$ 879,309,932	\$ 293,103,311	\$ 1,207,771,317

Financial Analysis & Fiscal Constraint

The financial capacity of planned projects in the MIC area over the next 25 years is provided in Figure 6.7. An assessment of the potential system-wide needs, MIC area plan recommendations, and consultation with the jurisdictions and the Duluth Transit Authority guided the development of the full 25-year planned project lists on pages 6-18—6-44. The total cost of projects was vetted against the levels of revenue reasonably expected to be available over the next 25 years.

Methodology—Financial Analysis

To conduct a reasonable financial analysis of the federal aid eligible and/or regionally significant planned projects, expenditures (project costs) were calculated and balanced with reasonably expected revenues. Project costs were determined from a variety of sources including estimates provided by the jurisdictions and typical costs for project types.

To estimate final costs over time, current revenues were adjusted to reflect a revenue inflation rate of 2% and current expenditures were adjusted to reflect an expenditure inflation rate of 2.5%. Transit project expenditures were factored for a 5% rate of inflation. Table 6.5 displays the results of this analysis for transit projects, and Figure 6.7 displays the results of this analysis for non transit projects.

Methodology—Fiscal Constraint

As part of the performance-based planning approach used to develop this plan’s Priority Project List (see Chapter 4 and Table 4.4), each jurisdiction with projects in the Priority Project List was asked to answer one question to indicate whether each project in the priority project list was fiscally constrained. The question was, “*Are all funds necessary to complete this project currently in hand or specifically allocated (fully fiscally constrained)?*” This was a direct way to know if the priority project list was fiscally constrained or not. As one can see in Table 4.4, 25 of the 40 priority projects are currently fiscally constrained. This approach allows jurisdictions to highlight the priority status of projects to improve the chances of receiving funding in the future to bring those projects into fiscal constraint.

Figure 6.6: Estimated Annual Transportation Revenues Available to MIC Area Jurisdictions

MnDOT Dist. 1 ^a	\$21,700,000
St. Louis County, MN ^b	\$13,500,000
City of Duluth, MN	\$11,400,000
City of Hermantown, MN	\$370,000
WisDOT NW Region ^a	\$7,900,000
Douglas County, WI ^c	\$2,900,000
City of Superior, WI	\$1,250,000
DTA ^d	\$26,000,000

Source: Based on financials from Table 6.4.7

a - 25% of MnDOT District 1 revenues; 16% of WisDOT NW Region revenues.

b - Estimating availability of 22.5% of county's highway expenses (based on portion of road miles w/n the MIC).

c - Estimating availability of 100% of county's highway expenses.

d - DTA revenues represent FHWA funding available for bus purchases, FTA funding available for operations and capital improvements, plus local and state revenue sources.

Expenditure Inflation Rate = 2.5%

Revenue Inflation Rate = 2.00%

Figure 6.7: Financial Capacity of Planned Projects (25 Years)

MPO Jurisdictions	Revenues				Expenditures			
	Federal \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Revenues	Planned Projects	Surplus/ Deficit	Unfunded Needs	Operations & Maintenance
MnDOT	\$ 368,700,000	\$ 368,700,000	\$ -	\$ 737,400,000	\$ 1,612,121,000	\$ (874,721,000)	\$ 55,400,000	\$ 177,800,000
WisDOT	\$ 166,900,000	\$ 103,800,000	\$ -	\$ 270,700,000	\$ 956,106,500	\$ (685,406,500)	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 138,000,000
Douglas County	\$ 62,300,000	\$ -	\$ 38,200,000	\$ 100,500,000	\$ 22,553,000	\$ 77,947,000	\$ -	\$ 186,600,000
St. Louis County	\$ 56,800,000	\$ 258,200,000	\$ 210,800,000	\$ 525,800,000	\$ 172,064,000	\$ 353,736,000	\$ 71,200,000	\$ 324,800,000
City of Duluth	\$ 48,600,000	\$ 146,200,000	\$ 170,400,000	\$ 365,200,000	\$ 228,065,332	\$ 137,134,668	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 416,500,000
City of Hermantown	\$ 25,200,000	\$ 93,100,000	\$ 42,800,000	\$ 161,100,000	\$ 8,600,000	\$ 152,500,000	\$ -	\$ 34,200,000
City of Proctor	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 19,700,000	\$ 9,950,000	\$ 9,750,000	\$ 100,000,000	\$ 12,500,000
City of Superior	\$ 21,000,000	\$ -	\$ 13,200,000	\$ 34,200,000	\$ 62,000,000	\$ (27,800,000)	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 161,100,000
Total	\$ 751,700,000	\$ 975,000,000	\$ 487,900,000	\$ 2,214,600,000	\$ 3,071,459,832	-\$856,859,832	\$ 301,600,000	\$ 1,451,500,000

Figure 6.7 Notes:

General Note—the project expenditures in this fiscal constraint analysis only include the federally eligible and the regionally significant projects. While these roadways include all of the state DOTs and many of each county’s roadway system, this analysis excludes the local/residential roadway system, which for the cities comprises a large percentage of their roadway network. In the short and mid term, the projects fall under fiscal constraint.

Going forward in the foreseeable future, MnDOT may be showing a surplus or deficit, depending largely on the funding strategy and dynamics of MnDOT/ WisDOT and the Blatnik Bridge project. Additionally, the funding structure is such that, because MnDOT is the lead on the bridge project, payments will be made to MnDOT from WisDOT, so MnDOT will show more significant outlay, with the expenses compensated by WisDOT.

This analysis only covers the federal aid eligible and/or regionally significant project costs. The pavement and roadway needs of the local functionally classified roads (residential streets) are excluded from this analysis.

Figure 6.7 Label Definitions

- Financial Capacity -the ability to fund the federal aid and regionally significant projects.
- MPO Jurisdictions - governmental organizations within the Duluth-Superior Urban Area that are eligible to receive federal surface transportation funding.
- Revenues - reasonably expected funding from fuel (gas) taxes, related motor vehicle fees, and sales taxes dedicated to transportation. Does not include revenues for ALL transportation projects.
- Expenditures - for projects listed in this MTP, includes only federally aid eligible and regionally significant surface transportation projects. Does not include ALL transportation projects.
- Planned Projects - the list of projects that are eligible for federal surface transportation funding and/ or are regionally significant.
- Surplus/Deficit - revenues minus expenditures. Does not include additional (unique, one time) funding for individual, budget-busting projects (Twin Ports Interchange, Blatnik Bridge, etc.).
- Unfunded Needs - projects that are eligible for federal funding, but have no current funding identified for them.
- Operations & Maintenance - reasonably anticipated funding amount devoted to O&M. Can be allocated through general fund budgets and not fully reliant on transportation related taxes.

It is reasonably anticipated that each agency will receive additional funding, through grants and/or bonding in the future, to cover deficits. It is also important to reiterate that the project lists in this plan do not reflect the entire transportation needs of each jurisdiction.

Only federal aid eligible surface transportation and/or regionally significant projects are included in the project lists of this plan. All other transportation projects, including, but not limited to projects for local residential streets, are NOT included in this plan's project lists. Therefore, the costs of those projects are not factored into this financial analysis. It is reasonable to state that there is presently not enough funding to cover all transportation needs for the MIC Area. Evidence of this can be found with the adoption of local transportation sales taxes by the City of Duluth and St. Louis County to add available revenue and reduce the gap in needed funds.

Late in the development of the Priority Project List, the MIC determined the process it used in the past to develop a fiscally constrained project list in the MTP needs to be modified in the future. The MIC will be meeting with MnDOT to improve the approach moving forward. That is why, for this plan, the fiscal constraint question noted above and in Chapter 4 was included as a supplementary part of the performance-based planning process.

2025-2050 Duluth-Superior Area Full Project List

The full 25-year planned project list submitted by the MIC area jurisdictions are listed on pages 6-18—6-44. The projects are organized by jurisdiction.

NOTE: Figure 4.4 lists the 40 projects that have been identified as this plan’s Priority Project List following application of the performance-based planning approach identified in Chapter 4.



Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-01-01	I-35 <i>Lake Ave to 21st Ave E Concrete Repair and Intersection Ramps</i>	Preservation	\$3,265,000
MN-01-02	US-2 <i>Replace Box Culvert 8016, 8017, 9280</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$3,100,000
MN-01-03	MN 61 (Two Harbors Expressway) <i>Superior St to McQuade Rd</i>	Preservation	\$2,700,000
MN-01-04	I-35 <i>Leif Erickson Tunnel to JCT London Rd/26th Ave Upgrade fiber optic cable and traffic cameras in Duluth.</i>	ITS	\$700,000
MN-01-05	Central Entrance Corridor <i>Partial Reconstruction & Multi-Modal Improvements Mesaba to Trinity</i>	Reconstruction	\$15,000,000
MN-01-06	London Rd <i>26th Ave E to 60th Ave E Roundabouts at 26th Ave E and 40th Ave E</i>	Preservation	\$14,300,000
MN-01-07	Trinity Rd <i>N of Piedmont to S of Mall Drive</i>	Preservation	\$4,300,000
MN-01-08	I-35 <i>Under 5th Ave W Bridge and MN 23 to 50th Ave W</i>	Preservation	\$1,400,000
MN-01-09	US 2 <i>Hwy 194 to Midway Rd/Midway Rd to Boundary Ave</i>	Preservation	\$17,000,000
MN-01-10	MN 61 (Two Harbors Expressway) <i>MN 61 and CSAH 42 (Homestead Rd) Reduced Conflict Intersections</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,875,000
MN-01-11	MN 23 <i>5th St to 121st St</i>	Preservation	\$2,000,000
MN-01-12	Blatnik Bridge <i>Minnesota Portion - Pile Load Testing/Footing Design and Location Investigation</i>	Preliminary Engineering	\$5,000,000
MN-01-13	MN 194 (Mesaba Ave) <i>Repair Bridge #69840 and #69839/Repair Watermain in Vicinity</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$2,900,000
MN-01-14	MN 61 (Two Harbors Expressway) <i>MN 61 and CSAH 33 (McQuade Rd) - Reduced Conflict Intersection</i>	Safety	\$555,000
MN-01-15	I-35 <i>Traffic control devices/safety striping</i>	Safety	\$1,900,000
MN-01-16	Canosia Rd <i>RR Crossing improvements DOT #251909U</i>	Safety	\$400,000
MN-01-17	CSAH 91 (Haines Rd/40th Ave W) <i>RR Crossing improvements DOT #251887W</i>	Safety	\$400,000
MN-01-18	MN 23 <i>Howard Rd to Becks Rd - Replace signs at various locations.</i>	Safety	\$900,000
MN-01-19	I-35 <i>Repair Bridges and Ramps over Mesaba Ave.</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$9,900,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

MN-01-20	I-35 27th Ave W to Garfield Ave, Twin Ports Interchange Landscape Project	Landscaping	\$300,000
MN-01-21	MN 23 St. Louis River to 121st. Mission Creek area highway landscaping.	Landscaping	\$350,000
MN-01-22	MN 23 and STH 210 Construct Ceremonial Structure and Gathering Space for Historic Fond Du Lac Cemetery	Landscaping	\$1,500,000
MN-01-23	STH 53 Maple Grove Rd to STH 194	Preservation	\$2,500,000
MN-01-24	I-35 Hinckley to Hwy 53 - Repair Concrete Various Locations	Preservation	\$2,500,000
MN-01-25	Blatnik Bridge Preliminary Engineering Minnesota Portion	Preliminary Engineering	\$16,333,000
MN-01-27	ITS Improvements I-35 Multisectioned between Spirit Mnt Area and Leif Erikson Tunnel	ITS	\$37,000,000
MN-01-28	Blatnik Bridge Minnesota Portion	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$900,000,000
MN-01-44	Bong Bridge Bridge Repair and Lighting Replacement	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,700,000
MN-01-45	NEVI Charging Station Project Charging Station and Infrastructure at 1 Location along I-35 Corridor in Duluth/Proctor	ITS	\$843,000
Total:			\$1,050,621,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-01-29	Hwy 61 60th Ave E to just north of N. Superior St	Preservation	\$1,100,000
MN-01-30	I-35 (Thompson Hill) Boundary Ave to Bridge over Hwy 23/Replace Bridges	Reconstruction	\$51,000,000
MN-01-31	Hwy 23 (Commonwealth Ave) McCuen St to Becks Rd/CR 3	Preservation	\$3,400,000
MN-01-32	Hwy 210 CR 61 in Carlton to Hwy 23 in Duluth	Preservation	\$8,000,000
MN-01-33	Safety set aside	Safety	\$4,000,000
MN-01-34	System Support set aside (signals, signing, striping, lighting)	Preservation	\$1,500,000
MN-01-35	5th Ave Bridge over I-35 Bridge 69870	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
MN-01-46	I-535 Reconstruct from Twin Ports Interchange to Garfield Ave Interchange	Reconstruction	\$5,300,000

MN-01-47	40th Ave W <i>Replace Bridge over I-35</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$5,100,000
MN-01-48	Hwy 2, Hwy 33, Hwy 194 <i>Resurface multiple bridges in Saginaw Area</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$3,900,000
Total:			\$89,300,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-01-36	I-35 <i>Grand Ave/West Duluth Interchange Bridges 69879, 69879A-E</i>	Preservation	\$241,000,000
MN-01-37	Bong Bridge <i>Redecking</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$15,600,000
MN-01-38	Boundary Ave Interchange	Reconstruction	\$15,600,000
MN-01-39	Highway 53 <i>Segment(s) to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$25,000,000
MN-01-40	Highway 2 <i>Segment(s) to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$25,000,000
MN-01-41	Highway 61 <i>Segment(s) to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$25,000,000
MN-01-42	Highway 194 <i>Segment(s) to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$25,000,000
MN-01-43	I-35/I-35 Tunnels <i>Segment(s) and bridge(s) to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$100,000,000
Total:			\$472,200,000

* Projects shown beyond the year 2034 are not identified in MnDOT's current 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan, 2025-2034. Although the financial capabilities analysis used in Sustainable Choices 2050 shows that the estimated cost of these projects is fundable under future revenue projections, MnDOT does not necessarily share these assumptions and considers these projects unfunded at this time. MnDOT is studying the future needs of I-35 through the City of Duluth which will more clearly define the actual long term future costs of this infrastructure.

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-02-01	Slope stability repair N. Shore Drive <i>0.05 miles to 0.40 miles E of Jct TWP 2501 (Nording Rd)</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
MN-02-02	New bridge on CSAH 34 (Howard Gnesen Rd) <i>2.2 m W of CSAH 7</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$750,000
MN-02-03	Munger Shaw Road <i>US-53 at Munger Shaw Road (CSAH 15/CR 223)</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$950,000
MN-02-04	US 2 <i>US 2 at Munger Shaw Rd</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$925,000
MN-02-05	Munger Shaw Road <i>Bachelor Rd to Taft Rd</i>	Preservation	\$800,000
MN-02-06	CR 696 St. Louis River Rd <i>CSAH 98 to CSAH 13</i>	Preservation	\$1,100,000
MN-02-07	Maple Grove Road <i>TH 2 to Midway Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,600,000
MN-02-08	CSAH 6 Maple Grove Rd <i>TH 33 to TH 2</i>	Preservation	\$1,750,000
MN-02-09	Two Harbor Expressway and Homestead Rd <i>Reduced Conflict Intersections/Construct Left Turn Lanes Multiple Locations</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$722,000
MN-02-10	Bridge 93073 on CSAH 6 (Maple Grove Rd) <i>0.2 miles west of CR 889</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$500,000
MN-02-11	CR 859 Caribou Lk Rd <i>TH 194 to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$500,000
MN-02-12	CR 898 Lindahl Rd <i>Hermantown city limits to CSAH 9</i>	Preservation	\$400,000
MN-02-13	CR 571 S. Pike Lake Rd <i>W terminus to CR 889</i>	Preservation	\$200,000
MN-02-14	CR 889 Solway Rd <i>CR 890 to S. Pike Lake Rd.</i>	Preservation	\$700,000
MN-02-15	CR 694 Seville Rd. <i>CR 859 to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$900,000
MN-02-16	CR 888 S. Shore Dr. <i>W terminus to CR 892</i>	Preservation	\$200,000
MN-02-17	CSAH 11 2nd St. <i>5th Ave. to CSAH 14</i>	Preservation	\$800,000
MN-02-18	CSAH 54 Piedmont Ave. <i>Chambersburg Ave. to 24th Ave. W.</i>	Preservation	\$950,000
MN-02-19	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective epoxy edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$230,000
MN-02-20	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy - various county highways</i>	Safety	\$200,000
MN-02-21	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy - various county highways</i>	Safety	\$450,000

MN-02-22	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy</i>	Safety	\$331,000
MN-02-23	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy</i>	Safety	\$310,000
MN-02-24	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch paint edgelines in a groove</i>	Safety	\$71,000
MN-02-25	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective epoxy edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$437,000
MN-02-26	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$196,000
MN-02-27	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective epoxy edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$441,000
MN-02-28	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective epoxy edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$543,000
MN-02-29	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch wet reflective edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$68,000
MN-02-30	40th Ave. W. <i>Grand Ave to 8th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,785,000
MN-02-31	CSAH 10 W. Tischer Rd. <i>CSAH 37 to Strand Rd.</i>	Preservation	\$1,100,000
MN-02-32	CR 241 Maxwell Rd. <i>Oak St. to CSAH 10</i>	Preservation	\$350,000
MN-02-33	CR 252 Medin Rd. <i>CSAH 37 to CR 241</i>	Preservation	\$600,000
MN-02-34	CR 246 Eagle Lake Rd. <i>CSAH 10 to CSAH 2</i>	Preservation	\$350,000
MN-02-35	CSAH 12 Lester River Rd. <i>CSAH 10 to CR 818</i>	Preservation	\$1,100,000
MN-02-36	Lavaque Road <i>Boundary Avenue to Morris Thomas Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,100,000
MN-02-37	Canosia Rd <i>St Louis River Rd to Industrial Rd</i>	Preservation	\$3,600,000
MN-02-38	CR 696 St. Louis River Rd <i>CSAH 48 to 0.25 miles east</i>	Preservation	\$100,000
MN-02-39	CSAH 13 Midway Rd. <i>Intersection CSAH 13 and CSAH 45 - LTL and grade correction</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$2,200,000
MN-02-40	Mcquade Road <i>MNTH-61 at McQuade Road (CSAH 33)</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$555,000
MN-02-41	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$550,000
MN-02-42	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch grooved in wet reflective epoxy - various county highways</i>	Safety	\$175,000
MN-02-43	Pavement Markings <i>6-inch paint edgeline - various county roads</i>	Safety	\$75,000

MN-02-44	CSAH 91 40th Ave. W. <i>RR Crossing improvements DOT #251887W</i>	Safety	\$400,000
MN-02-45	CSAH 98 Canosia Rd <i>RR Crossing improvements DOT #251909U</i>	Safety	\$400,000
MN-02-46	CSAH 32 Arrowhead Rd. <i>New Sidewalk from Menard Dr. to CSAH 91</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$600,000
MN-02-47	Stark Rd. <i>Midway Rd to 4th St.</i>	Preservation	\$850,000
MN-02-48	CSAH 19 St. Louis River Rd. <i>CSAH 13 to TH 2</i>	Preservation	\$400,000
MN-02-49	CSAH 45 N. Cloquet Rd. <i>CSAH 13 to CR 284</i>	Preservation	\$650,000
MN-02-50	CSAH 73 Old Hwy 61 <i>CR 898 to CSAH 45</i>	Preservation	\$300,000
MN-02-51	Jean Duluth Rd. <i>Jean Duluth Rd at W Tischer Rd - Left Turn Lanes (LTL)</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$800,000
MN-02-52	CSAH 54 Piedmont Ave. <i>Intersection CSAH 54 and 24th Ave. W.</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,000,000
MN-02-53	CSAH 28 Strand Rd. <i>New bridge 0.35 miles west of CSAH 2 over Lester River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,000,000
MN-02-54	Morris Thomas Road <i>Crosby Road to Canosia Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,600,000
MN-02-55	Midway Road <i>Martin Road to N. Pike Lake Road</i>	Preservation	\$900,000
MN-02-56	Midway Road <i>TH 53 to Martin Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,300,000
MN-02-57	CR 982 Old Miller Tr. <i>CSAH 13 to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$300,000
MN-02-58	CSAH 9 W Pike Lake/Helm Rd. <i>TH 53 to CR 999</i>	Preservation	\$700,000
MN-02-59	CSAH 13 Midway Rd. <i>Intersection Midway Rd. and Rose Rd. - Turn lanes</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$750,000
MN-02-60	CSAH 3 Becks Rd. <i>Intersection CSAH 3/13/CR 899 - Turn lanes</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,000,000
MN-02-61	CSAH 61 North Shore Dr. <i>Duluth city limits to Lake Co. - Lake Superior shoreline stability</i>	Reconstruction	\$10,000,000
MN-02-62	CR 222 Stoney Point Rd. <i>CSAH 61 to CSAH 61 - Lake Superior shoreline stability</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,000,000
MN-02-63	Old Miller Trunk Highway <i>Munger Shaw Rd to Midway Rd</i>	Preservation	\$1,000,000
MN-02-64	CSAH 9 Woodland Ave. <i>Snively Rd. to Anoka St.</i>	Preservation	\$3,100,000
MN-02-65	Hartley Park Storm Water Treatment <i>Hartley Park</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,000,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

MN-02-66	BRIDGE 69845 ON CSAH 14 (W Skyline Parkway) <i>0.06 Miles N of Mountain Dr over railroad tracks</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$3,200,000
MN-02-67	New bridge on CR 283 (McDonnell Rd) <i>0.4 miles west of Lakewood Rd over Talmadge River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$500,000
MN-02-68	Bridge 88789 on CR 893 (Stark Junction Rd) <i>0.5 miles north of Stark Rd over Midway River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$700,000
MN-02-69	Bridge R0872 on CSAH 61 (Scenic 61) <i>0.4 miles north of Ryan Rd. over stream</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,200,000
MN-02-70	Bridge 8754 on CSAH 61 (North Shore Drive) <i>1.0 miles south of Homestead Rd. over stream</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$650,000
MN-02-71	Rice Lake Road <i>Separated Bike and Ped Trail</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$3,000,000
Total:			\$79,964,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-02-72	Midway Road <i>Interstate 35 to TH 2</i>	Preservation	\$1,600,000
MN-02-73	Midway Road <i>Highway 2 to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$1,800,000
MN-02-74	CSAH 32 W. Arrowhead Rd. <i>Intersection CSAH 13 and CSAH 32</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,200,000
MN-02-75	CR 889 Solway Rd <i>Intersection TH 53/CR 889</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,000,000
MN-02-76	CSAH 9/CR 859 <i>Intersection TH 53/CSAH 9/CR 859</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,000,000
MN-02-77	CSAH 48 Taft Rd <i>CR 223 to CSAH 48 Lavaque Rd.</i>	Preservation	\$1,500,000
MN-02-78	Scenic 61 <i>McQuade Rd to Lake County Line</i>	Preservation	\$2,500,000
MN-02-79	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) <i>Implementing projects from the County Road Safety Plan</i>	Safety	\$2,400,000
MN-02-80	Federal Railroad Safety Program <i>County wide railroad safety crossing improvement projects</i>	Safety	\$3,600,000
MN-02-81	Arrowhead Rd. <i>Haines Rd to Rice Lake Rd</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$1,200,000
MN-02-82	CSAH 48 Lavaque Rd. <i>Sidewalk along CSAH 48 from Johnson Rd. to CSAH 56</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$700,000
MN-02-83	BRIDGE 93586 ON CR 245 <i>1.4 Miles N of Jct W Tischer Rd and over unnamed Stream</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$600,000
MN-02-84	BRIDGE 7702 ON CSAH 40 <i>1.7 Miles N of Jct E Pioneer Rd and over Sucker River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,200,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

MN-02-85	BRIDGE 8755 ON CSAH 61 <i>0.56 Miles E of Jct Homestead Rd and over Little Sucker River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,000,000
MN-02-86	BRIDGE 3597 ON CSAH 61 <i>0.3 Miles E of Jct McQuade Rd and over Talmadge River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,800,000
MN-02-87	BRIDGE 8753 ON CSAH 61 <i>0.4 Miles E of Jct Ryan Rd and over Schmidt Creek</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,200,000
MN-02-88	BRIDGE 88584 ON CSAH 34 <i>0.6 Miles N of Jct Norton Rd and over Tischer Creek</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$600,000
MN-02-89	BRIDGE 90657 ON CSAH 13 <i>0.3 Miles S of Jct St. Louis River Rd and over Midway River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,500,000
MN-02-90	BRIDGE 88655 ON CR 280 <i>0.7 Miles W of Jct Jean Duluth Rd and over Amity Creek</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$700,000
MN-02-91	BRIDGE 88560 ON CSAH 12 <i>0.24 Miles S of Jct Lavis Rd and over Talmadge River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$700,000
MN-02-92	BRIDGE 88546 ON CSAH 9 <i>0.03 Miles NW of Jct Caribou Lake Rd and over Pine Creek</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$700,000
MN-02-93	BRIDGE 69501 ON CSAH 50 <i>0.12 Miles S of Jct Old N Shore Rd and over French River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$1,500,000
MN-02-94	St. Louis River Road <i>Midway Road (CSAH 13) at St. Louis River Road (CR 696)</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$500,000
MN-02-95	Ugstad Rd <i>CSAH 6 to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$1,500,000
MN-02-96	Homestead Road <i>TH 61 to W. Knife River Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,800,000
MN-02-97	CSAH 4 Rice Lake Rd. <i>CSAH 2 to CR 589</i>	Preservation	\$1,800,000
MN-02-98	CSAH 36 Arnold Rd. <i>CSAH 10 to CSAH 43</i>	Preservation	\$1,500,000
MN-02-99	Safe Routes to School (SRTS) / Transportation Alternatives (TA) <i>Implementing existing SRTS, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plans</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$1,200,000
Total:			\$38,300,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-02-100	Lavaque Road <i>Martin Road to W. Lismore Road</i>	Preservation	\$3,100,000
MN-02-101	CSAH 14 2nd St. <i>CSAH 11 to CSAH 14</i>	Preservation	\$2,000,000
MN-02-102	W. Tischer Road	Preservation	\$2,100,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

MN-02-103	Howard Gnesen Road <i>Arrowhead Road to Martin Road</i>	Reconstruction	\$10,000,000
MN-02-104	Lavaque Road <i>Morris Thomas Road to Maple Grove Road</i>	Preservation	\$1,800,000
MN-02-105	Industrial Road <i>TH 53 to 3.5 miles West</i>	Preservation	\$3,100,000
MN-02-106	Arrowhead Road <i>TH 53 to Arlington Avenue</i>	Preservation	\$3,400,000
MN-02-107	Haines Road <i>Railroad to Morris Thomas</i>	Preservation	\$3,100,000
MN-02-108	4th Street <i>6th Avenue East at 4th Street (CSAH 9)</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$1,200,000
MN-02-109	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plans</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$5,000,000
MN-02-110	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) <i>Implementing projects from the County Road Safety Plan</i>	Safety	\$10,000,000
MN-02-111	Federal Railroad Safety Program <i>County wide railroad safety crossing improvement projects</i>	Safety	\$5,000,000
MN-02-112	Munger Shaw Rd <i>TH 53 to Bachelor Rd</i>	Preservation	\$2,000,000
MN-02-113	Bergstrom Rd <i>Munger Shaw Rd to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$1,000,000
MN-02-114	Arrowhead Rd <i>Ugstad Rd to TH 53</i>	Preservation	\$1,000,000
Total:			\$53,800,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-03-01	Aerial Lift Bridge <i>Structural and Mechanical maintenance, paint top span and lift span, side walk and deck replacement</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$11,000,000
MN-03-02	Railroad Street <i>Lake Ave to 5th Ave W</i>	Preservation	\$1,718,000
MN-03-03	Cross City Trail <i>59th Ave W to Zoo</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$915,000
MN-03-04	Campus Connector Trail <i>Vermillion Rd to Carver Ave</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$670,000
MN-03-05	Campus Connector Trail <i>London Rd to 1st Street</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$955,000
MN-03-06	Campus Connector Trail <i>Carver Ave to College St</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$500,000
MN-03-07	W Superior Street <i>Carlton St to Michigan St</i>	Reconstruction	\$33,000,000
MN-03-08	Canal Park Dr <i>Railroad St to Morse St</i>	Preservation	\$910,000
MN-03-09	Lake Ave <i>Railroad St to Lift Bridge</i>	Preservation	\$1,430,000
MN-03-10	Buchanan St <i>Canal Park Dr to Lake Ave</i>	Preservation	\$260,000
MN-03-11	40th Ave W <i>Grand Ave to I-35</i>	Reconstruction	\$1,160,000
MN-03-12	Kenwood Ave <i>Martha/Skyline Pkwy to Arrowhead Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$4,560,000
MN-03-13	London Road <i>21st Ave E to 26th Ave E</i>	Preservation	\$843,750
MN-03-14	Junction Ave <i>College St to St Marie St</i>	Preservation	\$343,750
MN-03-15	St Marie St <i>Junction Ave to Vermilion Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$4,400,000
MN-03-16	College St <i>Junction/19th Ave E to Woodland Ave</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,400,000
MN-03-17	Garfield Ave <i>Railroad St to Port Terminal Rd</i>	Preservation	\$280,000
MN-03-18	Port Terminal Rd <i>Garfield Ave to Helberg Dr</i>	Preservation	\$275,000
MN-03-20	Helberg Dr <i>Garfield Ave to Port Terminal Dr</i>	Preservation	\$450,000
MN-03-21	Transit Amenities <i>City Wide</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$640,000
Total:			\$66,710,500

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-03-22	Cody Street <i>68th Ave W to Central Ave</i>	Preservation	\$1,112,500
MN-03-23	4th Ave East <i>Superior St to 4th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$1,080,000
MN-03-24	Central Ave <i>I-35 to Raleigh St</i>	Preservation	\$200,000
MN-03-25	6th Ave East/Central Entrance <i>2nd Street to Mesaba Ave</i>	Reconstruction	\$7,200,000
MN-03-26	College Street <i>Kenwood Ave to Junction/19th Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$1,960,000
MN-03-27	Campus Connector Trail <i>Rice Lake Rd to Kenwood Ave</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$650,000
MN-03-28	4th Street <i>Mesaba Ave to 6th Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,720,000
MN-03-29	Grand Ave <i>Carlton St to 59th Ave W</i>	Preservation	\$2,387,500
MN-03-30	East Superior Street <i>4th Ave East to 21st Ave East</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
MN-03-31	East 2nd Street <i>12th Ave E to 21st Ave East</i>	Preservation	\$487,500
MN-03-32	East 3rd Street <i>12th Ave E to 21st Ave East</i>	Preservation	\$487,500
MN-03-33	East 4th Street <i>Wallace Ave to Hawthorne Rd</i>	Preservation	\$162,500
MN-03-34	11th Ave East <i>9th Street to Kenwood Ave</i>	Preservation	\$187,500
MN-03-35	London Rd <i>Superior St to 21st Ave E</i>	Preservation	\$1,250,000
MN-03-36	Safe Routes to School (SRTS) / Transportation Alternatives (TA) <i>Implementing existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$1,200,000
Total:			\$28,085,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-03-37	Aerial Lift Bridge <i>Structural Rehabilitation and Painting</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$7,800,000
MN-03-38	46th Ave W <i>I-35 to 8th St</i>	Preservation	\$762,500
MN-03-39	Carlton St <i>Grand Ave to Michigan St</i>	Preservation	\$225,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

MN-03-40	West 3rd St 21st Ave W to Carlton St	Preservation	\$687,500
MN-03-41	24th Ave W Michigan St to Piedmont Ave	Preservation	\$681,250
MN-03-42	27th Ave W Courtland St to 3rd St	Preservation	\$312,500
MN-03-43	Waseca Industrial Road Extension 59th Ave W to 63rd Ave W to Raleigh St	Reconstruction	\$3,570,000
MN-03-44	Railroad St Garfield St to 5th Ave W	Reconstruction	\$4,320,000
MN-03-45	Garfield Ave Superior St to Port Terminal Rd	Preservation	\$1,800,000
MN-03-46	Joshua Ave Extension Maple Grove Rd to Arrowhead Rd	New construction	\$7,000,000
MN-03-47	13th St Skyline Parkway to Rice Lake Rd	Preservation	\$875,000
MN-03-48	Skyline Parkway 24th Ave W to 19th Ave E	Reconstruction	\$19,000,000
MN-03-49	19th Ave E Superior St to College St	Preservation	\$631,250
MN-03-50	E 8/9th St 6th Ave East to Woodland Ave	Reconstruction	\$5,960,000
MN-03-51	Woodland Ave 4th Street to Arrowhead Rd	Preservation	\$1,625,000
MN-03-52	40th Ave East London Rd to Superior St	Preservation	\$168,750
MN-03-53	43rd Ave East London Rd to Glenwood St	Preservation	\$775,000
MN-03-54	47th Ave E London Rd to Crosley Ave	Preservation	\$625,000
MN-03-55	60th Ave E London Rd to Glenwood St	Preservation	\$187,500
MN-03-56	Glenwood St Snively Rd to 43rd Ave E	Preservation	\$575,000
MN-03-57	Idaho St TH 23 to 88th Ave W	Preservation	\$443,750
MN-03-58	88th Ave W Idaho St to TH 23	Preservation	\$643,750
MN-03-59	East Superior Street 21st Ave E to 60th Ave E	Preservation	\$2,368,750
MN-03-60	Lake Ave Lift Bridge to 12th Street S curve	Reconstruction	\$1,720,000
MN-03-61	Minnesota Ave 12th Street S curve to Sky Harbor Airport	Reconstruction	\$15,520,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

MN-03-62	Wade Stadium Trail 34th Ave W to Grand Ave	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$200,000
MN-03-63	Lincoln Park Middle School Trail 40th Ave W to LP Middle School Dr	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$300,000
MN-03-64	W 8th St 40th Ave W to 59th Ave W	Preservation	\$656,250
MN-03-65	Ramsey St Central Ave to Mike Colalillo Dr	Preservation	\$187,500
MN-03-66	Bristol St Central Ave to 52nd Ave W	Reconstruction	\$800,000
MN-03-67	Mike Colalillo Dr 46th Ave W to 52nd Ave W	Preservation	\$356,250
MN-03-68	W 1st St 42nd Ave W to 46th Ave W	Preservation	\$450,000
MN-03-69	W Superior St Michigan St to 42nd	Preservation	\$537,500
MN-03-70	W Superior St/Jenswold St/Michigan St Carlton St to 37th 1/2 Ave W	Preservation	\$312,500
MN-03-71	W Michigan St 37th 1/2 Ave W to 46th Ave W	Preservation	\$500,000
MN-03-72	Gary St TH 23 to Becks Rd	Preservation	\$718,750
MN-03-73	Central Ave I-35 to Cody St	Preservation	\$225,000
MN-03-74	Central Ave Cody to 8th St	Preservation	\$275,000
MN-03-75	Munger Trail Spur Bayview Heights Connection	New construction	\$1,000,000
MN-03-76	Cross City Trail Spirit Mountain Spur Cross City Trail to DWP	New construction	\$170,000
MN-03-77	Cross City Trail Zoo Spur Cross City Trail to DWP	New construction	\$175,000
MN-03-78	6th Ave W Michigan St to 2nd Street	Reconstruction	\$680,000
MN-03-79	5th Ave W Michigan St to 1st Street	Reconstruction	\$360,000
MN-03-80	4th Ave W Depot Rd to Mesaba Ave	Reconstruction	\$1,520,000
MN-03-81	3rd Ave W Depot Rd to 4th St	Reconstruction	\$1,360,000
MN-03-82	2nd Ave W Michigan St to Mesaba Ave	Reconstruction	\$1,480,000
MN-03-83	1st Ave W Michigan St to 4th St	Reconstruction	\$1,240,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

MN-03-84	Lake Ave <i>Superior St to 7th St</i>	Preservation	\$312,500
MN-03-85	2nd Ave E <i>Michigan St to 4th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,920,000
MN-03-86	3rd Ave E <i>Michigan St to 4th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$1,200,000
MN-03-87	5th Ave E <i>3rd St to 5th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$560,000
MN-03-88	10th Ave E <i>5th St to 9th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$1,080,000
MN-03-89	1st Street <i>Mesaba Ave to 4th Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,840,000
MN-03-90	W Michigan St <i>TH 53 overpass to Carlton St</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,160,000
MN-03-91	W Superior St <i>Michigan St to 7th Ave W</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,400,000
MN-03-92	2nd Street <i>Mesaba Ave to 6th Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$4,320,000
MN-03-93	7th Street <i>Mesaba Ave to 6th Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,400,000
MN-03-94	Vinland St <i>Boundary Ave to Highland St</i>	Preservation	\$937,500
MN-03-95	Chambersburg Ave <i>Piedmont Ave to Anderson Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,240,000
MN-03-96	Mall Dr <i>Central Entrance to Trinity Rd</i>	Preservation	\$200,284
MN-03-97	Mall Dr <i>Decker Rd to Haines Rd</i>	Preservation	\$494,318
MN-03-98	Swan Lake Rd <i>Basswood Ave to Arrowhead Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,400,000
MN-03-99	Basswood Ave <i>Central Entrance to Swan Lake Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$893,939
MN-03-100	Anderson Rd <i>Trinity Rd to Central Entrance</i>	Preservation	\$584,398
MN-03-101	Airport Rd <i>Cirrus Dr to Airport Approach Rd</i>	Preservation	\$412,050
MN-03-102	Airport Approach Rd <i>Airport Rd to US Hwy 53</i>	Preservation	\$433,593
MN-03-103	Transportation Alternatives (Ta) / Safe Routes To School (Srts) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$5,700,000
Total:			\$133,269,832

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-04-01	Munger Trail Connector <i>Numerous segments from Hermantown school campus to and along St Louis River Rd</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$4,600,000
MN-04-02	Hermantown Rd <i>Haines Rd to Okerstrom</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,350,000
Total:			\$6,950,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-04-03	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$312,500
Total:			\$312,500

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-04-04	Arrowhead Rd/Ugstad Rd <i>Roundabout</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$400,000
MN-04-05	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$937,500
Total:			\$1,337,500

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-05-01	Westgate Blvd Frontage Road Improvements <i>Boundary Ave to Ugstad Rd</i>	Preservation	\$1,000,000
Total:			\$1,000,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-05-02	Munger trail connector through Proctor <i>Address Boundary Ave ROW and utility pole issues for 3 blocks</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$7,700,000
MN-05-03	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$312,500
Total:			\$8,012,500

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-05-04	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$937,500
Total:			\$937,500

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-06-01	Rice Lake Road And Martin Road <i>Upgrades to this intersection</i>	Intersection Control or Roundabout	\$400,000
MN-06-02	Frontage Road Along Rice Lake Road <i>Install a frontage road between Martin Rd and W Calvary Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$3,100,000
Total:			\$3,500,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-07-01	Transit Operations: Regular Route	Operations & Maintenance	\$123,690,527
MN-07-02	Transit Operations: Paratransit	Operations & Maintenance	\$7,153,306
MN-07-03	Transit Capital Assistance	Vehicle Replacements	\$10,500,000
MN-07-04	Transit Capital Assistance	Technology	\$250,000
MN-07-05	Transit Capital Assistance	Passenger Amenities	\$4,800,000
MN-07-06	Bus Purchase: Paratransit Vehicles	Vehicle Replacements	\$1,490,000
MN-07-07	Planning: Operations	Planning	\$225,000
Total:			\$148,108,833

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-07-08	Transit Operations: Regular Route	Operations & Maintenance	\$146,905,545
MN-07-09	Transit Operations: Paratransit	Operations & Maintenance	\$8,495,883
MN-07-10	Transit Capital Assistance	Operations & Maintenance	\$4,000,000
MN-07-11	Transit Capital Assistance	Technology	\$1,000,000
MN-07-12	Transit Capital Assistance	Passenger Amenities	\$5,000,000
MN-07-13	Bus Purchase: Regular Route	Vehicle Replacements	\$21,000,000
MN-07-14	Bus Purchase: Paratransit Vehicles	Vehicle Replacements	\$4,000,000
MN-07-15	Planning: Operations	Planning	\$300,000
Total:			\$190,701,428

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-07-16	Transit Operations: Regular Route	Operations & Maintenance	\$682,331,075
MN-07-17	Transit Operations: Paratransit	Operations & Maintenance	\$39,460,766
MN-07-18	Transit Capital Assistance	Operations & Maintenance	\$40,000,000
MN-07-19	Transit Capital Assistance	Technology	\$4,000,000
MN-07-20	Transit Capital Assistance	Passenger Amenities	\$3,000,000
MN-07-21	Bus Purchase: Regular Route	Vehicle Replacements	\$77,000,000
MN-07-22	Bus Purchase: Paratransit Vehicles	Vehicle Replacements	\$19,000,000
MN-07-23	Planning: Operations	Planning	\$1,000,000
Total:			\$865,791,841

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MN-08-01	Rebuild Garfield Dock (Berth 11) and Clure Terminal	Preservation	\$24,000,000
Total:			\$24,000,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-01-01	US 53/E 2nd St <i>2nd Ave E to Hughitt Ave/Blatnik Bridge</i>	Preservation	\$3,237,000
WI-01-02	US 53/E 2nd St <i>E Street Intersection Safety Improvements</i>	Safety	\$1,262,000
WI-01-03	US 2 <i>STH 13 Bridge Rehab</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$875,000
WI-01-04	STH 105 <i>MN/WI State Line to STH 35</i>	Preservation	\$4,761,000
WI-01-05	Marina Drive <i>Marina Drive N to Barkers Island</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,210,000
WI-01-06	STH 105 <i>Culvert Replacement - Unnamed Tributary to Pokegama River</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$2,955,000
WI-01-07	US 13 <i>Engdahl Rd to US 53</i>	Safety	\$58,000
WI-01-08	US 2 <i>53rd Ave E to CTH C</i>	Preservation	\$9,800,000
WI-01-10	Tower Avenue <i>69th Street to 64th Street</i>	Preservation	\$701,000
WI-01-11	STH 35 (Tower Ave) & STH 105 (Central Ave) <i>Intersection Signal Insall & RR Signal Interconnection</i>	Safety	\$800,000
WI-01-12	STH 13 between Superior and Port Wing <i>Four Bridge Rehab Projects B-16-014,- 015, 016 & 023</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$3,500,000
WI-01-13	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project <i>Ogden Ave Crossing 852857P</i>	Safety	\$7,500
WI-01-14	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-01-15	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-01-16	CTH C <i>W of STH 35 - BNSF Crossing 086402V - Warning Devices</i>	Safety	\$252,500
WI-01-17	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-01-18	CTH C <i>MN State Line/STH 35 - BNSF Crossing 067768H - Signal Replacement</i>	Safety	\$353,500
WI-01-19	CTH C <i>MN State Line/STH 35 - BNSF Crossing 067768H - Preservation</i>	Safety	\$101,000
WI-01-20	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-01-21	Blatnik Bridge <i>Wisconsin Portion - Pile Load Testing/Footing Design and Location Investigation</i>	Preliminary Engineering	\$5,000,000

WI-01-22	Blatnik Bridge Preliminary Engineering <i>Wisconsin Portion</i>	Preliminary Engineering	\$16,333,000
WI-01-23	Blatnik Bridge <i>Wisconsin Portion</i>	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$900,000,000
Total:			\$952,606,500

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-01-24	Tower Ave <i>Segment to be determined</i>	Preservation	\$3,500,000
Total:			\$3,500,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-02-01	CTH C <i>MN State Line to Barnes Rd</i>	Reconstruction	\$4,653,000
WI-02-02	CTH UU <i>CTH U to STH 13</i>	Preservation	\$1,200,000
WI-02-03	CTH E <i>E City Limits Rd To CTH K</i>	Preservation	\$1,100,000
WI-02-04	CTH Z <i>S Lyman Lake Rd - Hwy 13 Overpass</i>	Preservation	\$3,800,000
WI-02-05	CTH U	Reconstruction	\$2,200,000
Total:			\$12,953,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-02-06	CTH Z <i>Rail Road Bridge</i>	Safety	\$8,100,000
WI-02-07	CTH E <i>CTH K to CTH C</i>	Preservation	\$1,500,000
Total:			\$9,600,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-03-01	Tower Ave	Preservation	\$2,000,000
WI-03-02	Bus Shelter Replacement	Safety	\$750,000
WI-03-03	Hammond Ave <i>Belknap St to 21th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
WI-03-04	Hammond Ave <i>21st St to 28th St</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
WI-03-05	E 5TH ST <i>24th Ave E and 31st Ave E</i>	Reconstruction	\$2,300,000
WI-03-06	28th St <i>Paved Trail</i>	Bike or Pedestrian Improvement	\$700,000
WI-03-07	AWOS (Automated Weather Observing System)	Airport	\$250,000
WI-03-08	Parallel Taxiway	Airport	\$3,000,000
WI-03-09	Runway	Airport	\$3,000,000
WI-03-10	Blatnik Bridge <i>Superior Traffic Management</i>	Safety	\$1,000,000
Total:			\$25,000,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-03-11	Tower Ave <i>South of Belknap Reconstruction/Road Diet/Bike/Peds</i>	Reconstruction	\$10,000,000
WI-03-12	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing existing SRTS, Bike, Ped, Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$1,200,000
Total:			\$11,200,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-03-13	N 28th Street <i>Viaduct</i>	Reconstruction	\$20,000,000
WI-03-14	Transportation Alternatives (TA) / Safe Routes to School (SRTS) <i>Implementing projects within existing SRTS, Bike, Ped, Trail and Active Transportation Plans.</i>	Safety	\$5,800,000
Total:			\$25,800,000

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
WI-04-01	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-04-02	CTH W (Chicago Ave) <i>WLC Crossing 251873N Preservation</i>	Safety	\$353,000
WI-04-03	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
WI-04-04	Rail-Highway Crossing Safety Level of Effort Project	Safety	\$100,000
Total:			\$653,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
Total:			

Projects Identified as "For Study"

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Jurisdiction
	East Calvary Road - Howard Gnesen Rd to Woodland Ave <i>Multi-Model Needs Study between Homecraft Elementary and the Woodland business district</i>	Study	City of Rice Lake
	West Calvary Road -Rice Lake Rd to Howard Gnesen Rd <i>Corridor Study</i>	Study	City of Rice Lake
	US Hwy 2 Railroad Crossing Study	Study	MnDOT
	US Hwy 2/53 and Moccasin Mike Rd Interchange Study	Study	WisDOT
	US Hwy 53 - Belknap St to Blatnik Bridge <i>Corridor Study</i>	Study	WisDOT
	Douglas County Hwy C and WI Hwy 35 <i>Reduce Intersection Conflicts</i>	Study	Douglas County
	Miller Trunk Hwy Study - Maple Grove Rd to Midway Rd <i>Reduce Conflict Intersection</i>	Study	MnDOT
	Midway Rd Corridor Study - I 35 To US Hwy 53	Study	City of Hermantown
	Maple Grove Rd Corridor Study - US Hwy 53 To Lavaque Rd	Study	City of Hermantown
	Hermantown Transit Study <i>Ridership Needs and Stop Locations</i>	Study	City of Hermantown
	Proctor Transportation Plan <i>I-35 Interchange/Munger Trail Spur/Boundary Ave and Active Transportation Routes</i>	Study	City of Proctor
	Proctor Transit Study <i>Especially for the older population and in connection with assisted living facilities</i>	Study	City of Proctor
	Transit Transfer Point Study <i>Consider stop, centers, park and ride locations, level of use, and economic benefits.</i>	Study	Duluth Transit Authority
	New South Superior thoroughfare between US Hwy 2/53 to <i>Would include an examination of the future role of East 2nd Street thru Superior.</i>	Study	City of Superior
	Winter Street Truck Route Corridor between US Hwy 53 and <i>Include an examination of the future role of Belknap Street thru Superior.</i>	Study	City of Superior
	Superior Railyard Crossing Study - Winter St, Belknap St, 21st St <i>Viaducts, Bridges and At-Grade Crossings</i>	Study	City of Superior
	Superior Urban Railroad Crossings <i>The railroads significantly divide the neighborhoods in numerous places</i>	Study	City of Superior
	Superior Transit Study	Study	City of Superior
	7Th Ave West Incline - Historic Pedestrian Way	Study	City of Duluth
	Traffic Signal Management Study <i>Connected and Dynamic Signals and CAV Readiness</i>	Study	MIC Area
	CSAH 13 Midway Rd. <i>RR Crossing and intersection of CSAH 13/US 2 intersection</i>	Study	St. Louis County
	CSAH 13 Midway Rd. <i>RR Crossing and intersection of CSAH 13 and CR 696</i>	Study	St. Louis County
	CSAH 13 Midway Rd.	Study	St. Louis County
	N28th Street Viaduct Feasibility	Study	City of Superior

Blatnik Bridge Superior Traffic Management	Study	City of Superior
Spirit Valley/West Duluth Small Area Plan	Study	MnDOT
Downtown Duluth Area Plan <i>Downtown and Canal Park Area Market Study</i>	Study	City of Duluth
I-35 Corridor Study Update	Study	MnDOT/MIC
Downtown I-35 Corridor Concepts Feasibility Study	Study	MnDOT
Ugstad Road/I-35 Interchange <i>Reevaluate justification for Interchange Should Future Land Use Change Significantly</i>	Study	MnDOT/MIC
21st Ave Traffic Control <i>Multi-Modal Improvements</i>	Study	MnDOT
Garfield Ave <i>Multi-Modal Crossing Improvements</i>	Study	MnDOT

Projects Identified as "Unfunded Needs"

Short-term Projects (2024-2028)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
DTA	Bus Purchase: Regular Route	Vehicle Replacements	\$17,500,000
DTA	Bus Purchase: Paratransit Vehicles	Vehicle Replacements	\$1,280,000
St. Louis County	CSAH 4 Rice Lake Rd. <i>Technology Dr. to N. Tischer Rd.</i>	Reconstruction	\$40,000,000
St. Louis County	Slope stability repair N. Shore Drive <i>0.05 miles to 0.40 miles E of Jct TWP 2501 (Nording Rd)</i>	Reconstruction	\$6,000,000
Total:			\$64,780,000

Mid-term Projects (2029-2033)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MnDOT	Bridge #69826 on MSAS 110 (40th Ave W) - Over I-35	Bridge Repair or Reconstruction	\$5,100,000
MnDOT	I-535 - Twin Ports Interchange to Garfield Interchange	Reconstruction	\$5,300,000
Proctor	Ugstad Road Interchange	New Construction	\$100,000,000
Total:			\$100,000,000

Long-term Projects (2034-2049)

Proj. No.	Project Description	Type	Total Cost
MnDOT	NLX Infrastructure <i>Rail Station for NLX Line at Depot in Duluth</i>	NLX	\$25,000,000
WisDOT	NLX Infrastructure <i>Rail Station for NLX Line at Depot in Duluth</i>	NLX	\$25,000,000
City of Duluth	NLX Infrastructure <i>Rail Station for NLX Line in Superior</i>	NLX	\$25,000,000
City of Superior	NLX Infrastructure <i>Rail Station for NLX Line in Superior</i>	NLX	\$25,000,000
MnDOT	US 2 <i>CN Railroad Bridge replacement (MnDOT District 1 Freight Plan, Project D42)</i>	Freight	\$20,000,000
St. Louis County	Martin Road Extension <i>Jean Duluth Rd to MN TH 61</i>	Construction	\$31,200,000
DTA	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT along mainline & Central Entrance)	Service Expansion and Capital	\$50,000,000
Total:			\$201,200,000

Fiscal Summary

As can be determined from Figure 6.7 (p. 6-14), the fiscal analysis shows an overall deficit of approximately \$840 million over the 25-year life of the plan.

This plan recognizes there is insufficient revenue to cover the existing transportation infrastructure expenses within the MIC area (see the Key Takeaways of Chapter 3), and bolsters this understanding through its vision to achieve fiscal sustainability. (see Chapter 2).

The short explanation is that the MIC area has very large and expensive bridge and highway projects that will take place within this 25-year planning horizon. The longer explanation includes three key factors to consider:

- The project lists in this plan only cover federally funded and regionally significant urban transportation projects—not the entire publicly funded transportation system in the Duluth-Superior area.

While these roadways include all of the state DOT roads and much of each county’s roadway system within the MIC area, this fiscal analysis excludes the local/residential roadway system needs, which for the cities in the MIC area comprises a large percentage of their roadway network.

Therefore, the surpluses shown for the respective cities are nowhere near the revenues needed to cover the expenses of their local roadway system, and thus the costs of these projects are not factored into this financial analysis.

It is reasonable to state that there is presently not enough funding to cover ALL transportation needs for the Duluth-Superior area. Evidence of this is the recent adoption of local transportation sales taxes by the City of Duluth and St. Louis County to add available revenue and reduce the gap in needed funds.

- While ideal for planning purposes, it is difficult to fully and accurately project long-term revenues and expenditures over a 25-year timeframe, largely due to the fact that none of the roadway jurisdictions program their revenue or projects past a 10-year timeframe.

In the short and mid-term timeframes, the project lists are largely based on expected revenues and lists of projects

The focus of this plan and the project list is not to preserve the entire transportation system “as is,” but to re-shape it to meet future needs, consistent with the vision of this plan, by implementing its goals and objectives.

identified in capital improvement programs that generally look out 10 years. Projecting out further than 10 years and then selecting projects for that timeframe is an exercise of estimates and best guesses and is limited in its overall usefulness.

In reality, the list of projects in the long term does not reflect the entirety of transportation work that will take place in those 15 years and therefore results in the identified surpluses.

- Initial environmental review and alternative selection for the Blatnik Bridge reconstruction project in the MIC area has been completed. Preliminary planning, fieldwork and design are being conducted, and construction is anticipated to begin in 2026. This is a joint project between MnDOT and WisDOT and will address aging infrastructure, improve safety and better accommodate oversize and overweight loads. Majority of the \$1.9 billion estimated cost has been funded through a federal INFRA grant under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Project Impact Assessments

In addition to determining the capability of jurisdictions within the MIC area to finance the transportation projects listed in this plan, the potential for the planned projects to negatively impact area communities socially, environmentally, or culturally must also be considered.

Community Impact & Environmental Justice

Communities with environmental justice concerns have been historically underserved and/or disproportionately adversely impacted by transportation policy and system development. These communities typically include people of low income as well as those that are racially and ethnically diverse.

The 2020 Census and American Community Survey (2021) were used to consider environmental justice factors, such as income, race, ethnic origin, ambulatory difficulties, persons speaking English less than ‘very well’ or not at all, family access to vehicles, and more. These data and figures are in the Demographic Trends Report in Appendix B.

For our EJ analyses, the MIC defines “low income” as 200% of the federally-defined poverty level.

Environmental justice populations have unique transportation needs and preferences that must be understood when planning

Environmental Justice (EJ) Definition

Environmental Justice is the public policy goal of ensuring that low-income or minority populations do not bear disproportionately high or negative impacts as a result of the policies, programs and activities of federal, state, or local agencies.

For our EJ analyses, the MIC defines “low income” as 200% of the federal poverty level.

for public transportation projects, such as those listed in this plan. Specific transportation-related challenges of these communities include:

- Statistically more likely to have limited or no access to a vehicle. (See Map 6.1).
- More likely to be dependent on public transit, walking, and/or biking as the primary means of transportation.
- People with limited proficiency in English may have difficulties attaining drivers' licenses or navigating transit systems.
- People with ambulatory difficulties (those having difficulty walking or using stairs) face additional transportation barriers, especially in the MIC area given the topography. (See Map 6.2).
- Of particular concern is that 18.6% of MIC area families are considered low income, in accordance with the MIC's definition (see Map 6.3).

Map 6.4 utilizes some of the data in the Demographics Trends Report to display the relative proximity of future planned projects to areas of minority and low income populations.

The purpose of this map is to help identify planned projects that have potential to result in negative impacts and which should be further assessed to determine the likelihood, severity, and specific types of environmental justice impacts as part of the project's early scoping and planning, prior to any construction. Some of the planned projects are within areas that should be considered for environmental justice concerns, and are listed in the sidebar to the right.

Duluth-Superior MIC Area Population Demographics

- Total Pop = 146,771 people **
- Low Income= 18.6% of families*
- White Population = 90.8% *
- Minority Population = 9.2% *
- African-American = 1.9% *
- American-Indian = 1.6% *
- Ambulatory Difficulties = 5.6% *
- Speak Other than English = 5% *
- Older than 65 = 16.1% **

*Source: 2021 American Community Survey

**Source: 2020 Census

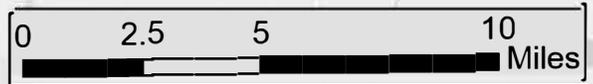
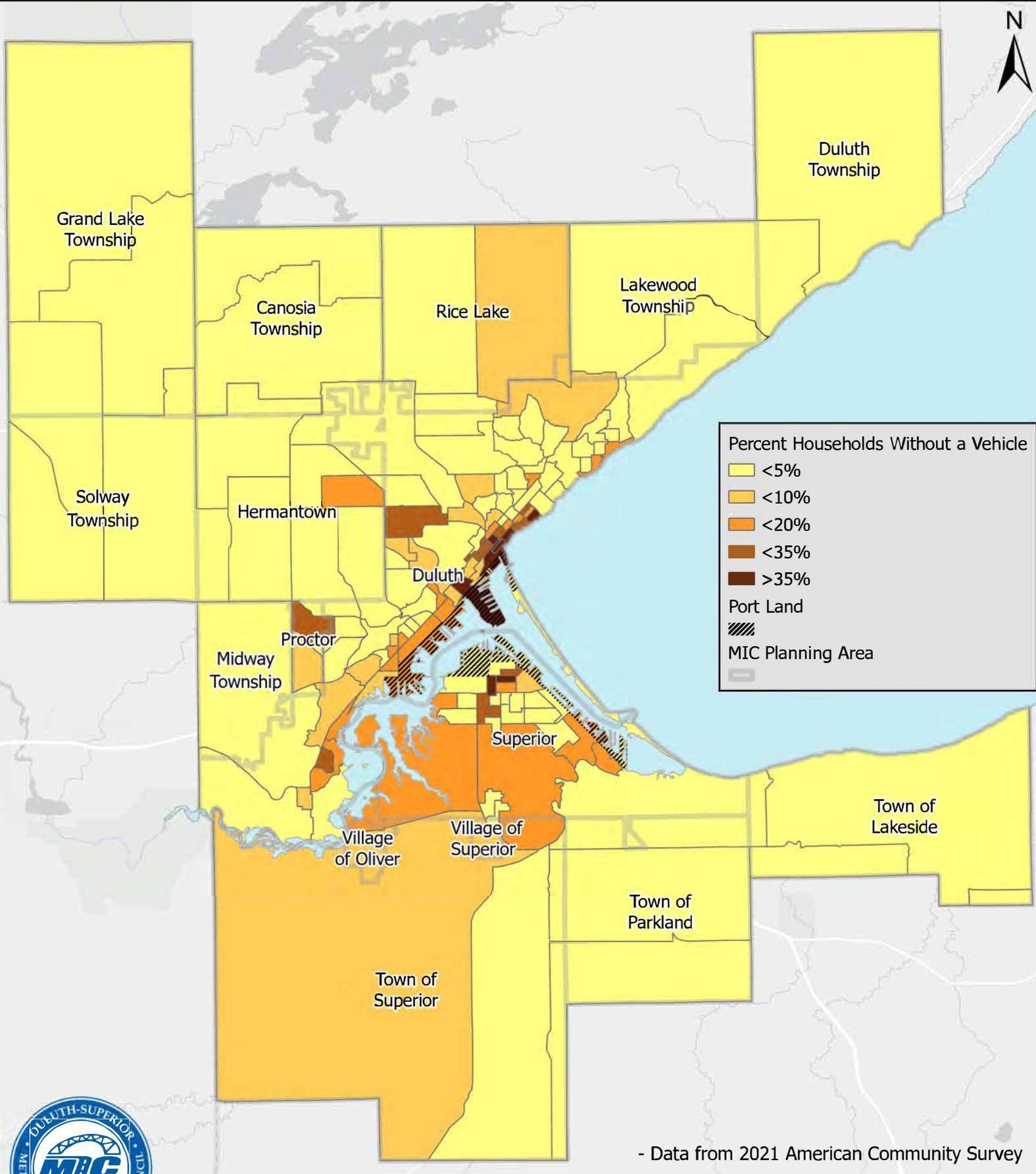
Planned Projects with Potential Environmental Justice Concerns

- **6th Ave East**—2nd St to 9th St
- **East 2nd Street**—Superior—Moccasin Mike Rd to Nemadji River
- **Tower Ave**—Belknap St to 21st Street
- **West Superior Street**

Map 6.1 Duluth-Superior % Households without a Vehicle per Block Group

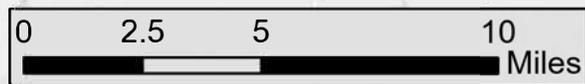
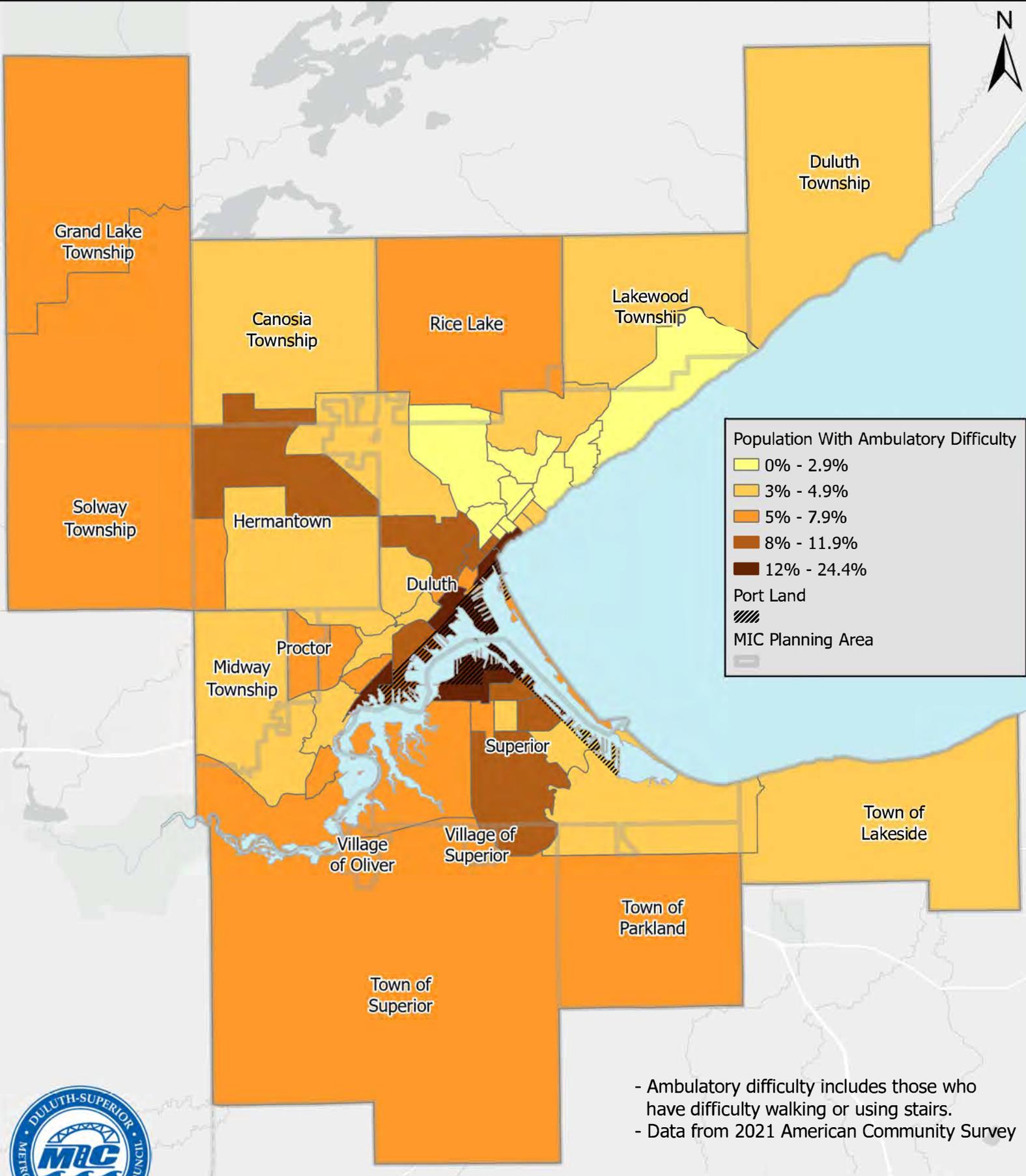


Sustainable Choices 2050



- Data from 2021 American Community Survey

Map 6.2 Duluth-Superior % of Population with Ambulatory Difficulties per Census Tract

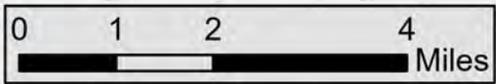
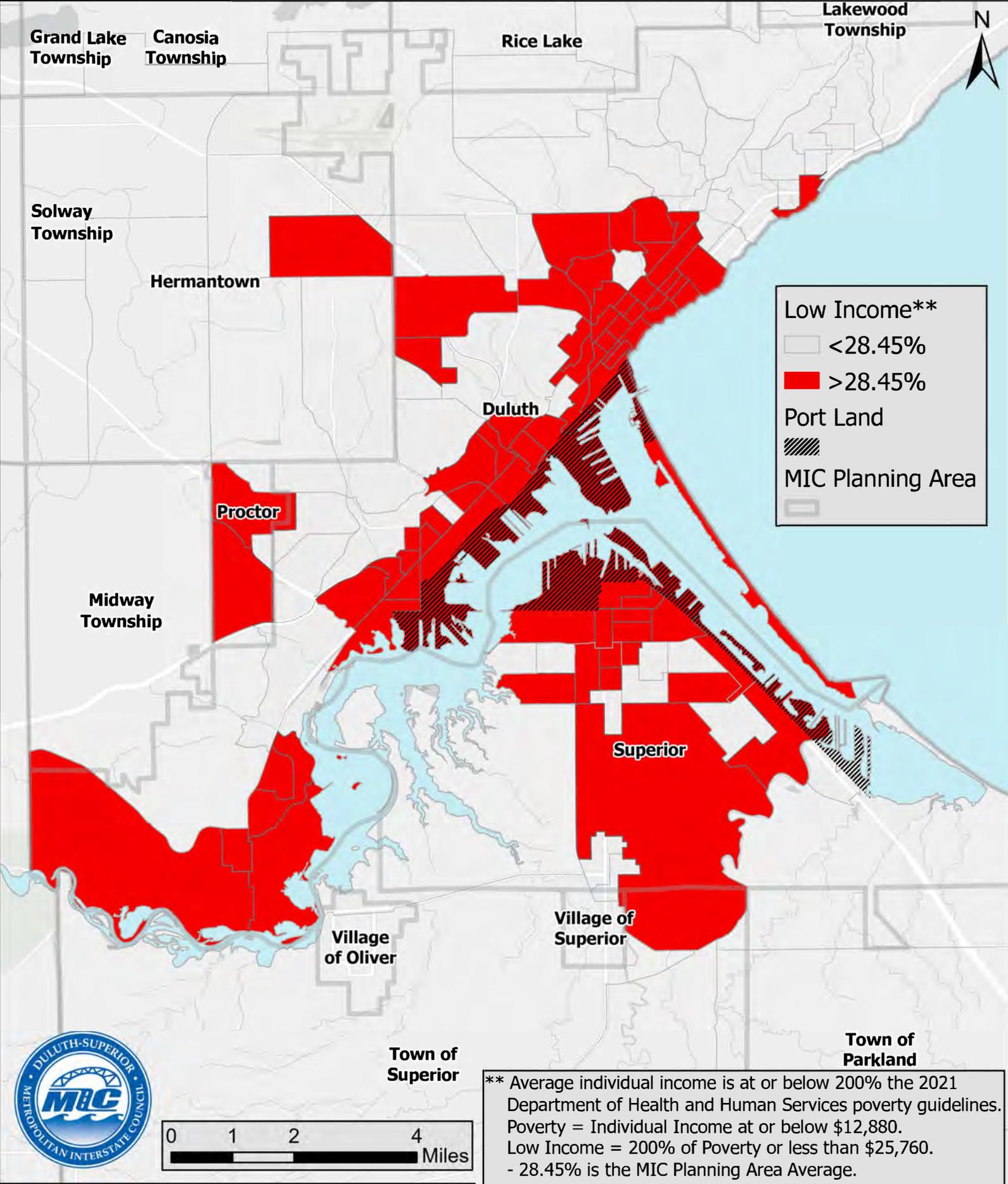


- Ambulatory difficulty includes those who have difficulty walking or using stairs.
 - Data from 2021 American Community Survey

Map 6.3 Percentage of Single Households Considered Low Income per Block Group



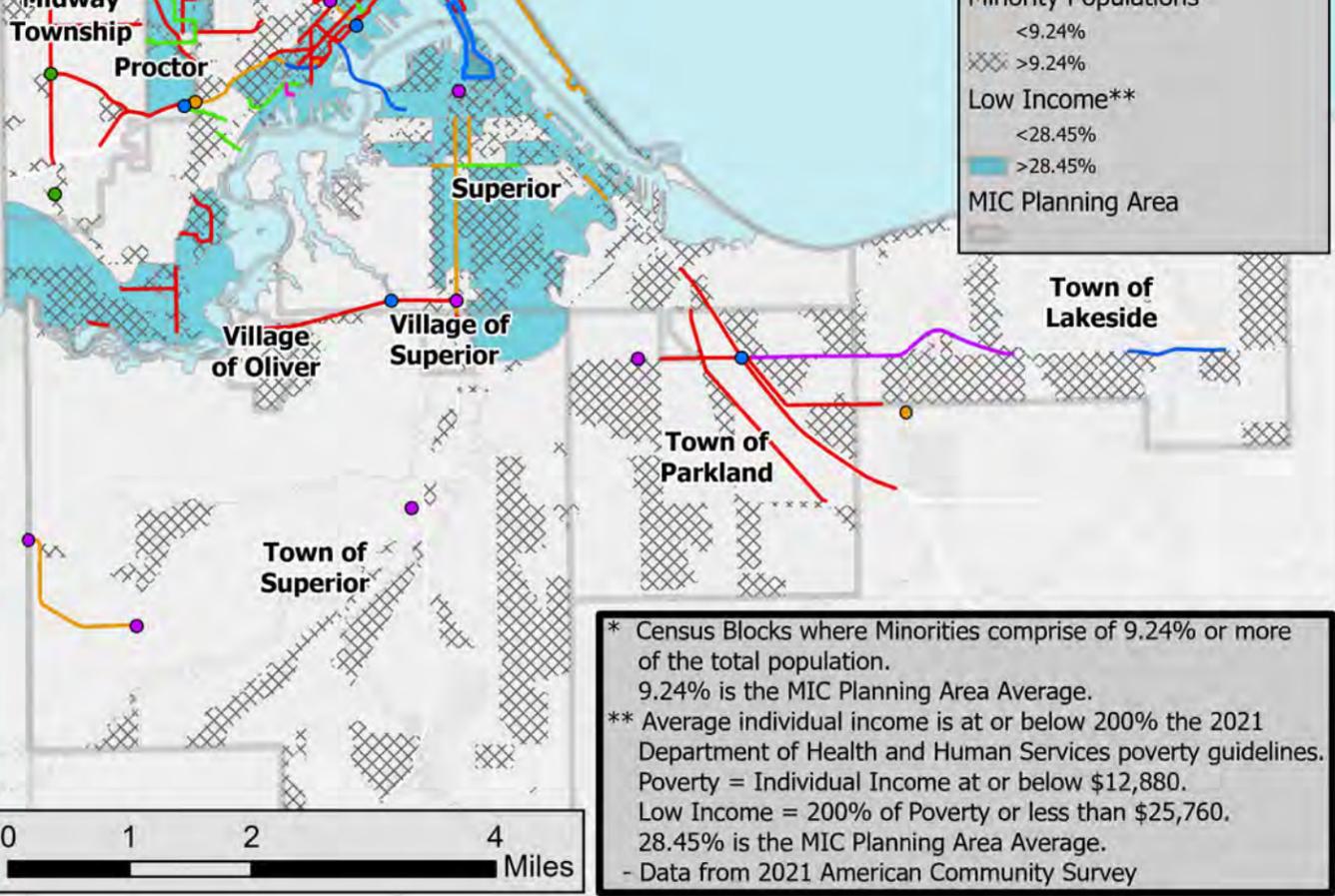
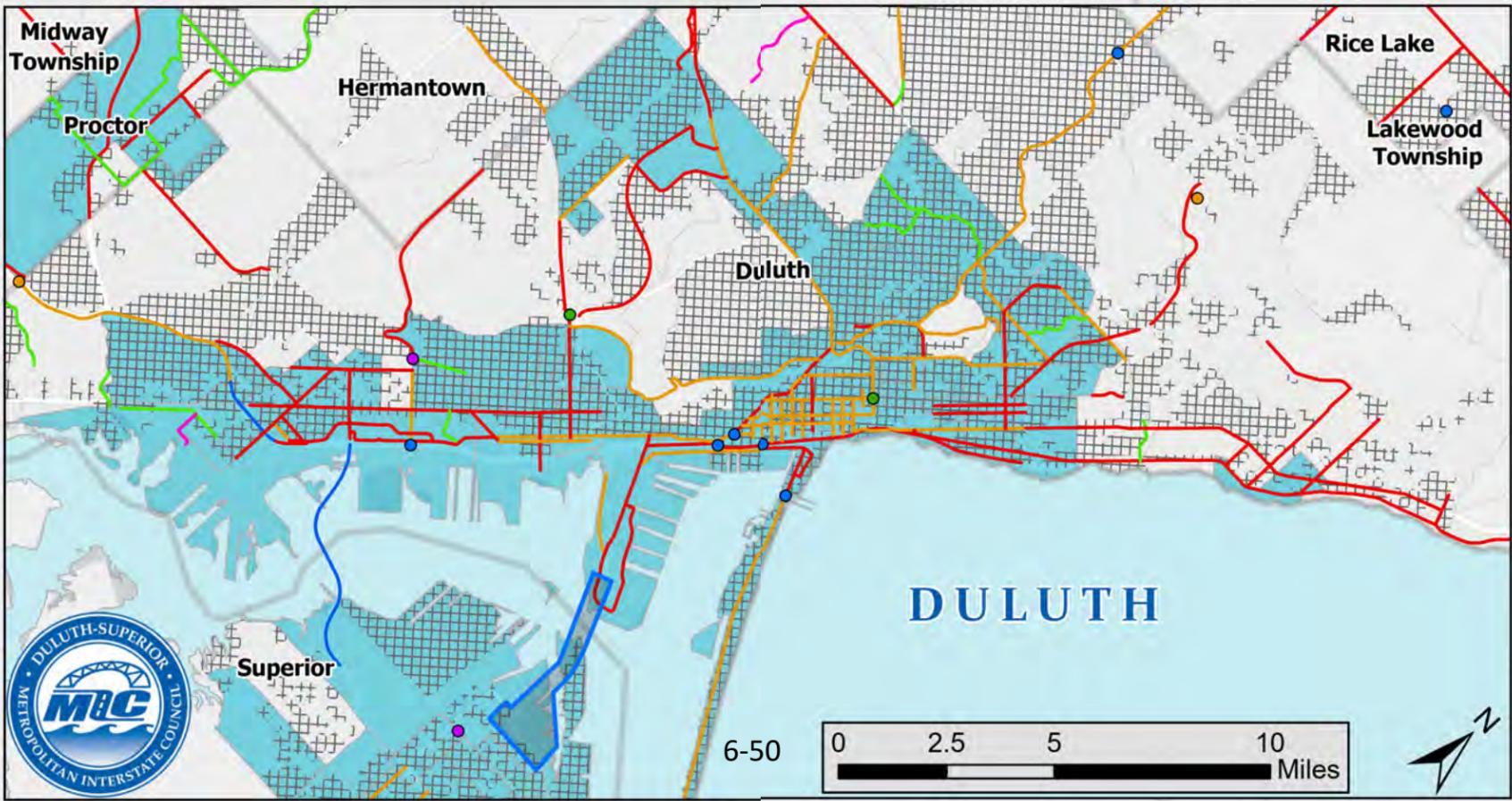
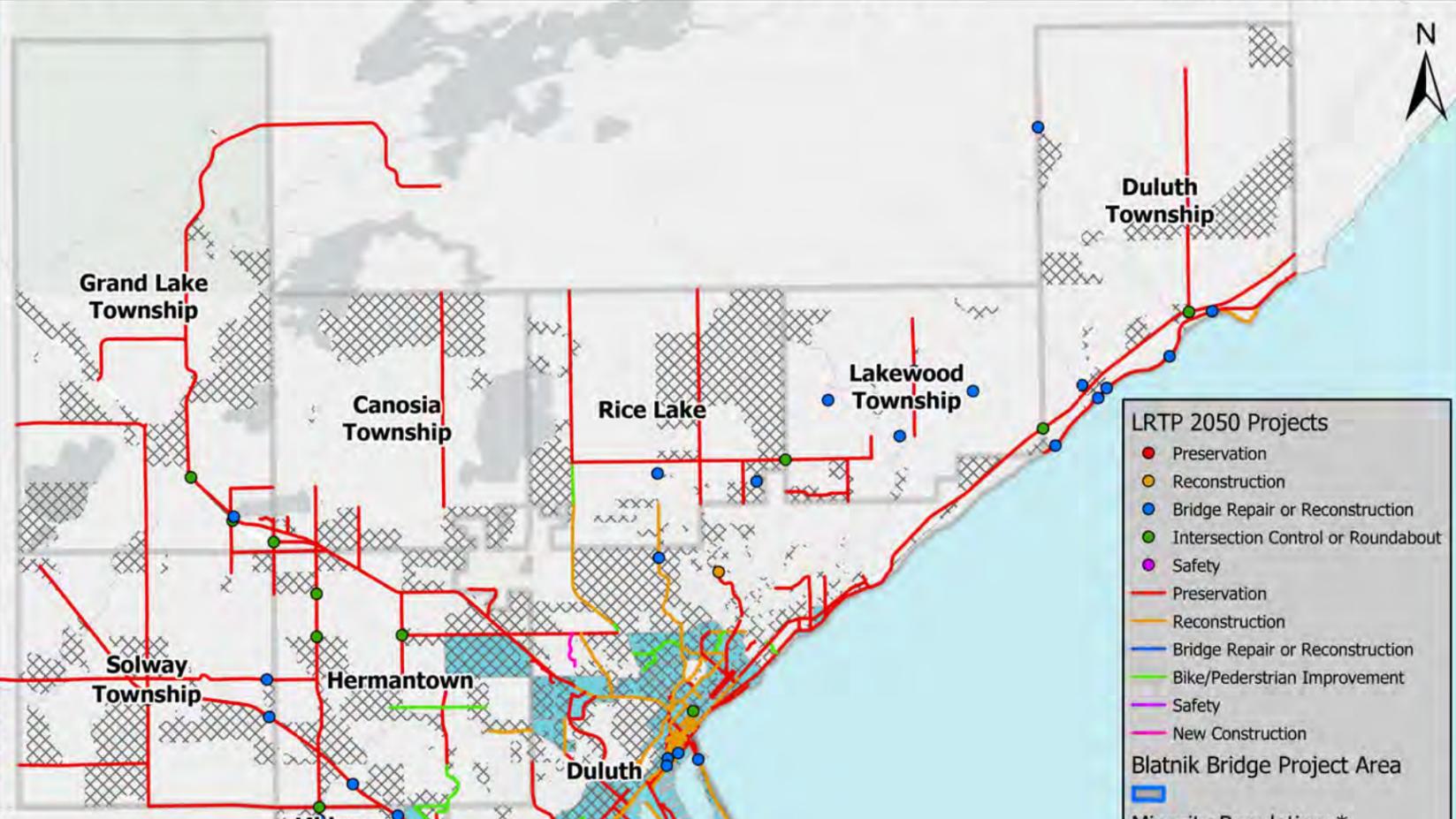
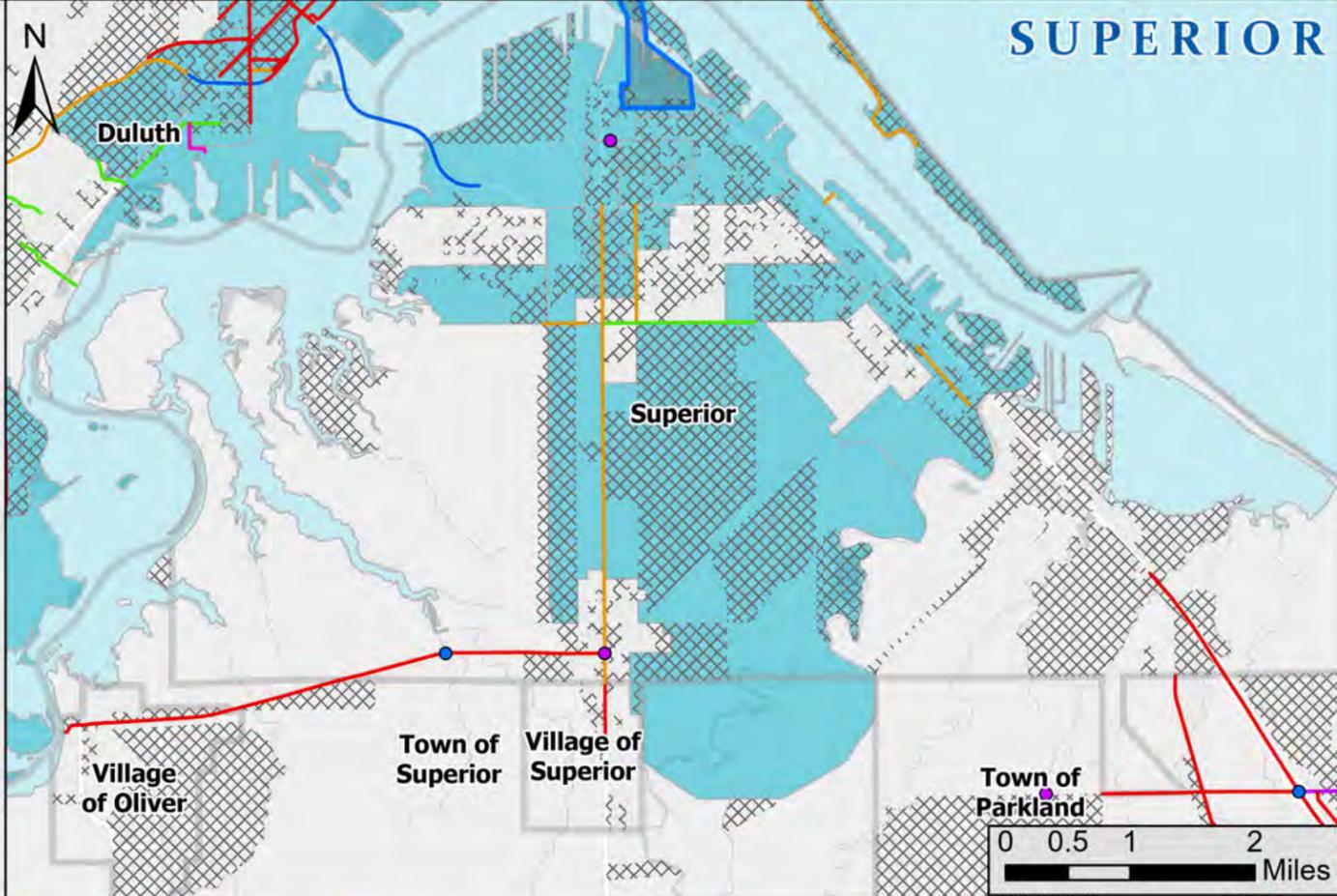
Sustainable Choices 2050



** Average individual income is at or below 200% the 2021 Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. Poverty = Individual Income at or below \$12,880. Low Income = 200% of Poverty or less than \$25,760.
 - 28.45% is the MIC Planning Area Average.
 - Data from 2021 American Community Survey



Map 6.4 2050 Project Impact Assessment: Environmental Justice Analysis



L RTP 2050 Projects

- Preservation
- Reconstruction
- Bridge Repair or Reconstruction
- Intersection Control or Roundabout
- Safety

Blatnik Bridge Project Area

Minority Populations*

- <9.24%
- >9.24%

Low Income**

- <28.45%
- >28.45%

MIC Planning Area

* Census Blocks where Minorities comprise of 9.24% or more of the total population. 9.24% is the MIC Planning Area Average.

** Average individual income is at or below 200% the 2021 Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. Poverty = Individual Income at or below \$12,880. Low Income = 200% of Poverty or less than \$25,760. 28.45% is the MIC Planning Area Average.

- Data from 2021 American Community Survey



Cultural, Historical & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Map 6.5 represents the MIC area environmental sensitivity analysis. The map includes all the planned projects of this plan (see pages 6-18—6-44), as well as environmentally, culturally, and/or historically sensitive areas identified via data provided by the Minnesota and Wisconsin DNRs, or listed on the national, or state historical preservation registries. Thus, the map identifies the relative proximity of future planned projects to environmentally, culturally, and/or historically sensitive areas.

The map was developed in preparation for the interagency consultations that are necessary to satisfy the MIC's requirements regarding the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and was used for both a Natural Resources and Environmental Consultation and a Historic Resources and Historic Preservation Consultation.

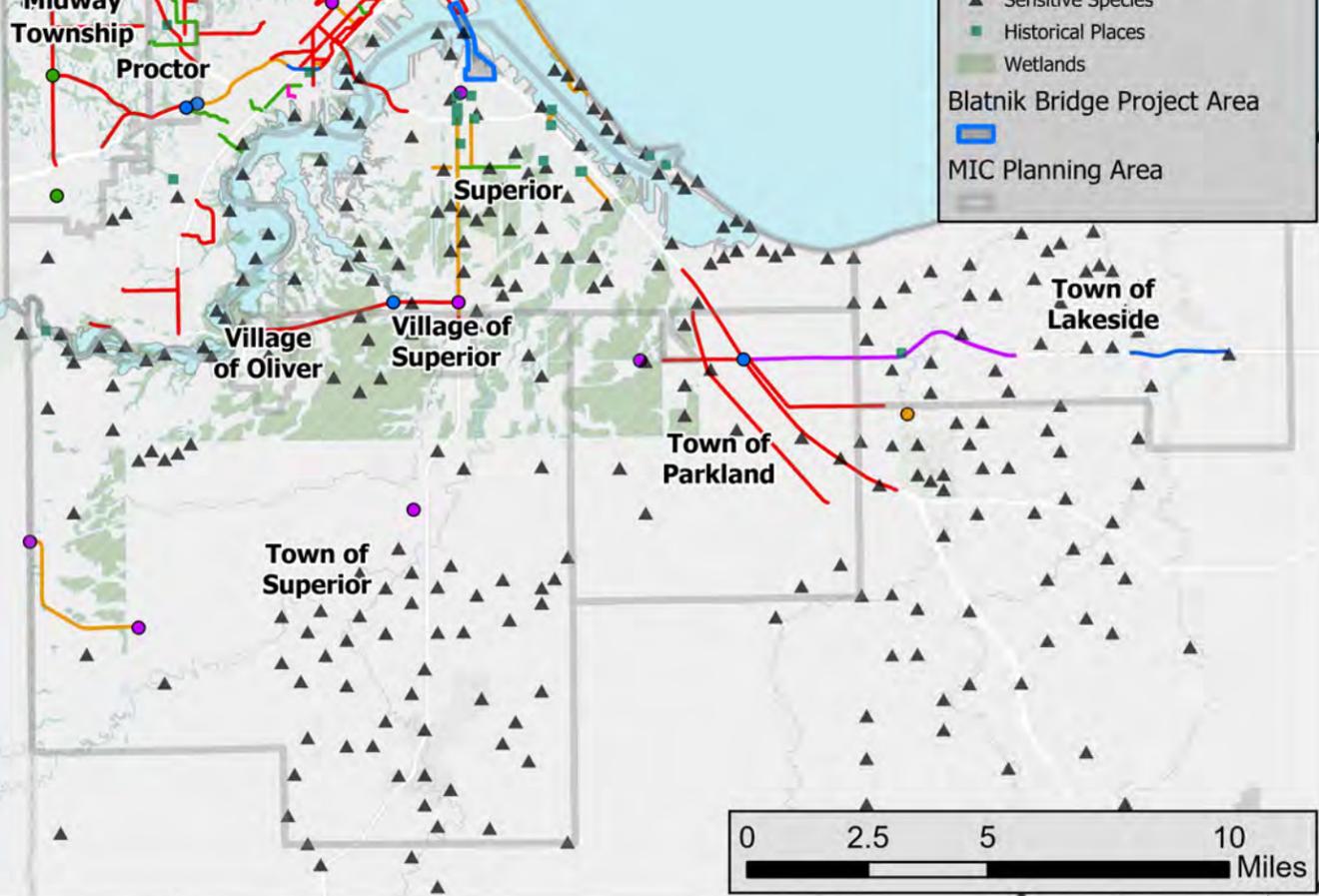
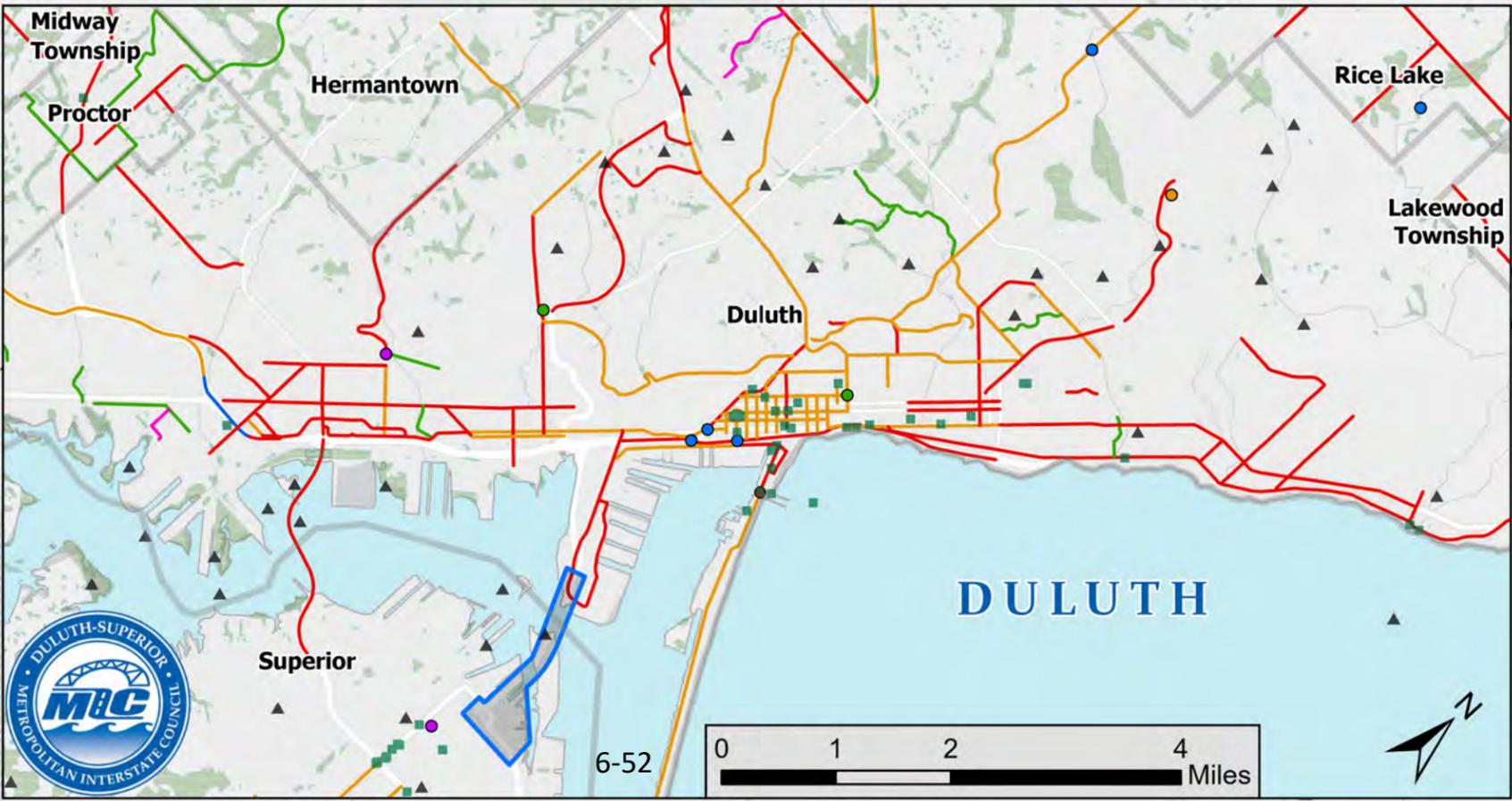
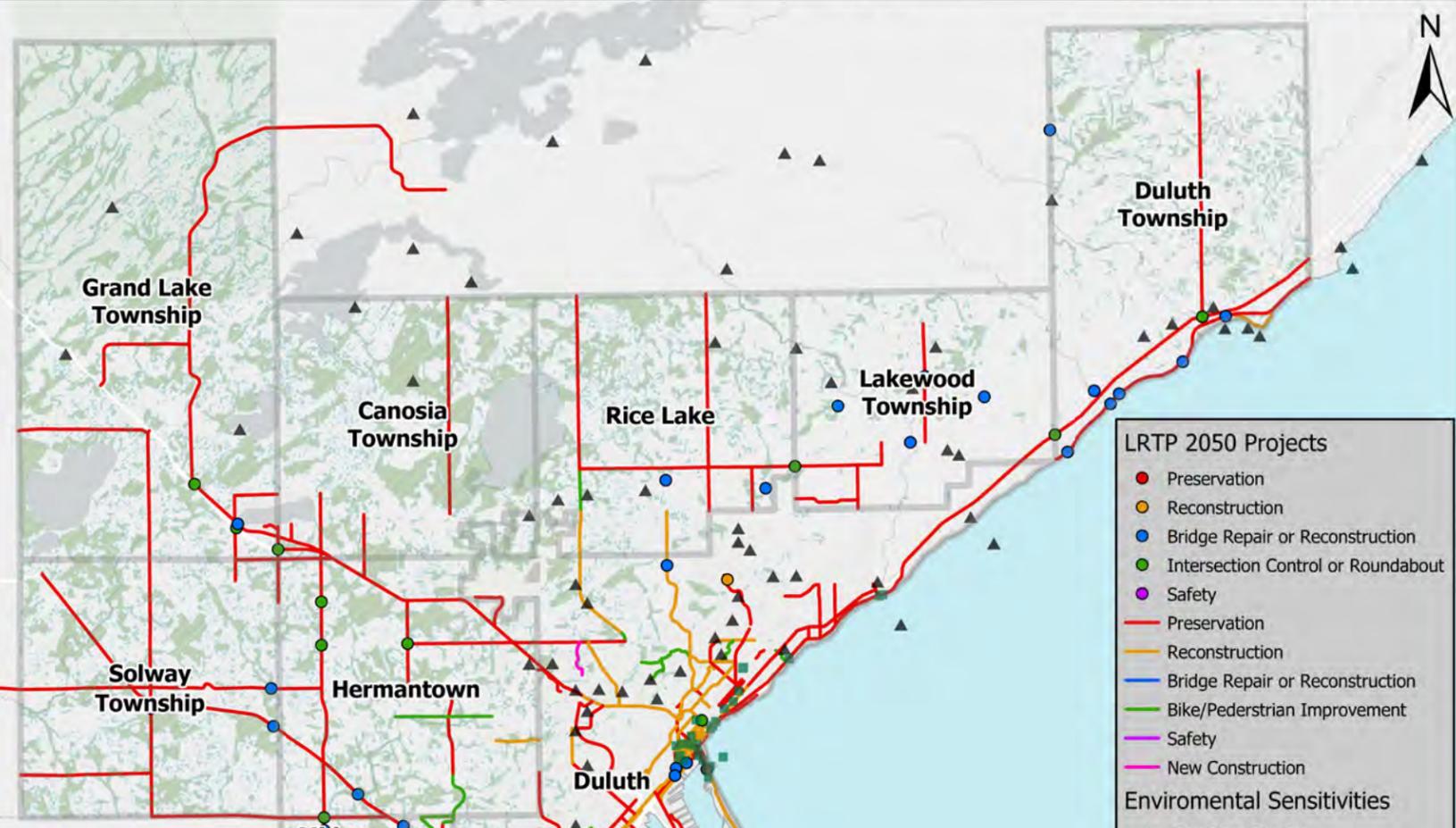
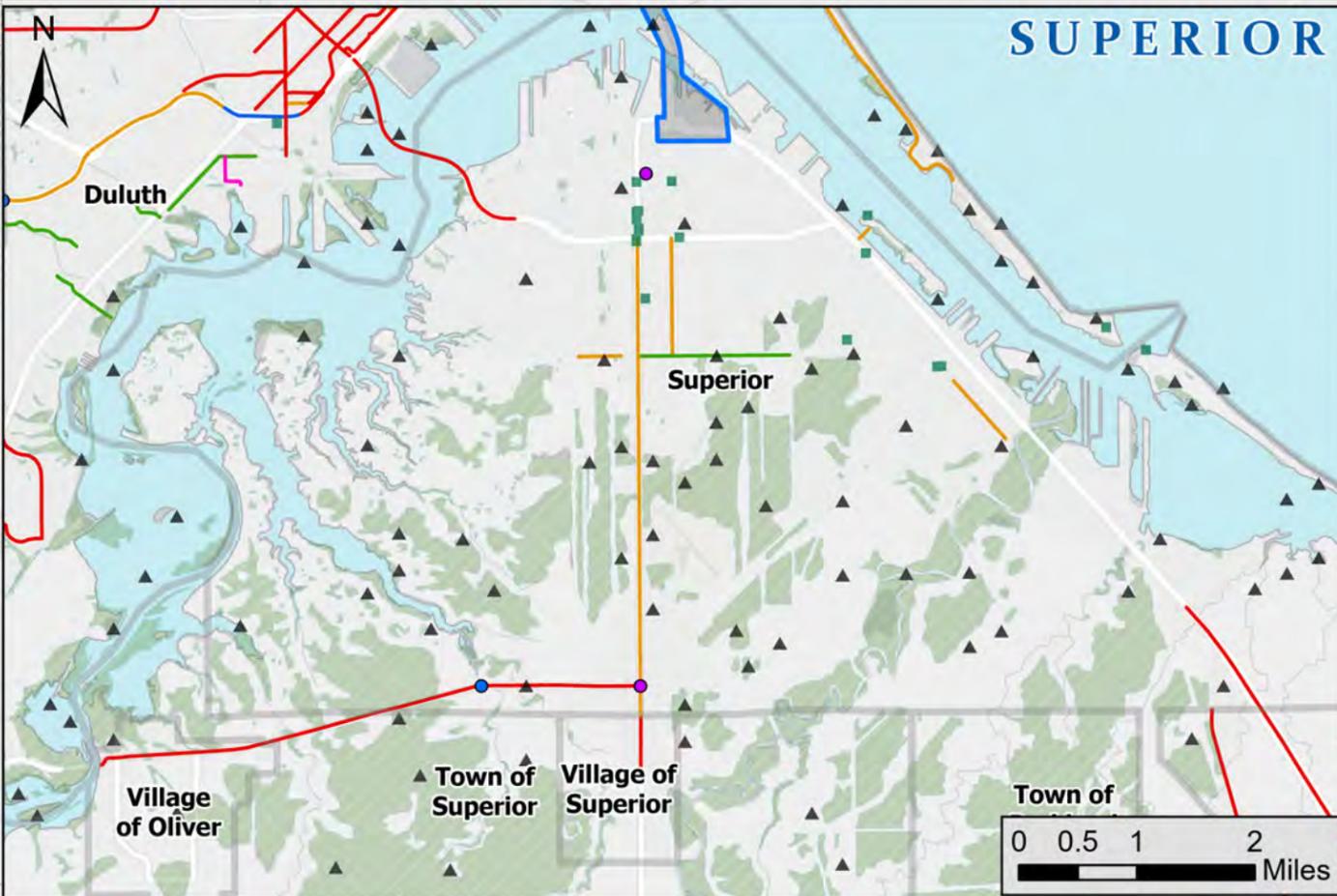
Natural Resources and Environmental Consultation

The MIC notified relevant agencies, including the Fond du Lac Tribe of the proposed projects, provided a version of Map 6.5 and requested the following:

As local staff addressing environmental issues please provide short high-level input, concerns, and recommendations in regard to location of the proposed transportation projects within the MIC area to natural resources and environmental factors, Specifically, please:

- 1. Review the map of projects and determine if any of the projects within your area of jurisdiction have realistic potential to negatively impact any environmental resources, such as wetlands, surface waters, exceptional or outstanding resource waters, floodplains, habitat protection areas, runoff concerns, and/or public properties. Note that the attached map of projects does include layers of sensitive species and wetlands that our GIS staff was able to find. If it is easier to overlay the map of projects within a GIS that has these environmental layers, please let me know and I can get you the shapefile. Please note which of the projects (using the Project ID) have realistic potential to have negative environmental impacts.*
- 2. For each of the projects you identified or marked in question 1 what is the concern? This can be a short, general description.*
- 3. For each of the projects you identified or marked in question 1 do you have a recommendation that should be considered/ followed? Alternatively, is there a regulation that pertains that*

2050 Project Impact Assessment: Environmental Sensitivity Analysis



L RTP 2050 Projects

- Preservation
- Reconstruction
- Bridge Repair or Reconstruction
- Intersection Control or Roundabout
- Safety
- Preservation
- Reconstruction
- Bridge Repair or Reconstruction
- Bike/Pederstrian Improvement
- Safety
- New Construction

Enviromental Sensitivities

- ▲ Sensitive Species
- Historical Places
- Wetlands

Blatnik Bridge Project Area

MIC Planning Area



you can share/reference? These can be a short, general descriptions.

Please note that if applicable and easier, you can provide the same answers to questions 2 and/or 3 to cover multiple projects.

The MIC received responses from four individuals. The comments are included within Appendix D. The only comments of concern were to ensure work on Blatnik bridge does not disturb the St Louis River Area of Concern restoration work at Interstate Island; and that work on Bong Bridge ramps does not disturb the St Louis River Area of Concern restoration work at the Ponds behind Erie Pier.

Historic Resources and Historic Preservation Consultation

The MIC notified relevant agencies, including the Fond du Lac Tribe of the proposed projects, provided a version of Map 6.5 with only the “historical places” displayed, and requested the following:

As local staff addressing historic resource and historic preservation issues please provide short high-level input, concerns, and recommendations in regard to location of the proposed transportation projects within the MIC area to historic resources/historic preservation factors, Specifically, please:

- 1. Review the map of projects and determine if any of the projects within your area of jurisdiction have realistic potential to negatively impact any historic resources or properties. Note that the attached map of projects does include a layer of “historical places” that our GIS staff was able to find. If it is easier to overlay the map of projects within a GIS that has these historic resources layers, please let me know and I can get you the shapefile. Please note which of the projects (using the Project ID) have realistic potential to have negative impacts on historic resources.*
- 2. For each of the projects you identified or marked in question 1 what is the concern? This can be a short, general description.*
- 3. For each of the projects you identified or marked in question 1 do you have a recommendation that should be considered/followed? Alternatively, is there a regulation that pertains that you can share/reference? These can be*

a short, general descriptions.

Please note that if applicable and easier, you can provide the same answers to questions 2 and/or 3 to cover multiple projects.

The MIC received a response from one individual. The comments are included within Appendix D. The primary concern noted:

“Misaabekong or Duluth and its surrounding areas include many cultural and sacred sites of the Fond du Lac Band and other nations. Some of these sites include, but are not limited to cemeteries, villages, locations for ceremony, traditional harvesting locations, trails, and other properties in which the Band has significant interest in preserving. Not all of these records and places are known by the Office of the State Archaeologist, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, State Historic Preservation Office, or other entities. Coordination with the Fond du Lac Tribal Historic Preservation Office is crucially important, and we encourage early, meaningful, and ongoing consultation with the Band throughout every aspect of a project. The first step should be to reach out to the Fond du Lac Tribal Historic Preservation Office. Consultation with the Fond du Lac Tribal Historic Preservation Office is a requirement of the Section 106 process as outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act. If a project receives federal funding, a consultation with the Tribe under Section 106 is required.”

Highlighted Projects

Over the life of this plan a number of major transportation projects will be implemented. These projects have long-term impacts, setting in place key components of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for decades to come.

Significant Large Projects

The following are short descriptions to highlight some of the major projects in the Sustainable Choices 2050 Project List that are to be completed during the coming years, well within the life of this plan.

Twin Ports Interchange

This project was delayed one year but is nearing completion.

Once completed, this project will provide safer conditions for motorists, improve access to the Port of Duluth-Superior, reduce neighborhood impacts due to freight traffic, and improve movement of over-sized, overweight loads (OSOW) through the MIC area. An elevated highway system will remain in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, and it has been designed to provide usable spaces under the highway to reduce negative impacts associated with the project.

Blatnik Bridge

Blatnik Bridge is a key transportation corridor in the MIC area that links the cities of Duluth and Superior via I-535 and US Highway 53 across the St Louis River. It provides connection for locals, as well as regional and national commerce and tourism. Following a thorough assessment of the condition of the Blatnik Bridge, it has been determined the bridge will be completely reconstructed on the same alignment, although the approach/exit in Superior will be a new configuration. The new bridge will include a pedestrian and bike facility. Significant federal and state funding has been earmarked, and a federal Finding of No Significant Impact has been determined. Construction of the Blatnik Bridge is anticipated to begin in 2026, and the bridge will be closed for 4-5 years. Motorists will have to use alternative routes, primarily the Bong Bridge. Modeling and planning have been ongoing to determine appropriate route options and needed mitigation to improve safety for all users and maintain efficient traffic movement. Preliminary planning and design, as well as numerous stakeholder group discussions are ongoing.

London Road

London Road is a significant corridor within the City of Duluth. This approximate 3.5-mile portion of London Road serves as Highway 61 through the east side of Duluth, connecting I-35 with the expressway to Two Harbors and the North Shore. London Road is to be resurfaced with the addition of numerous safety and connectivity improvements including two roundabouts and multiple left turn lanes. The corridor runs through a busy neighborhood and will include marked pedestrian crossings with refuge islands and bike lanes.

West Superior Street Reconstruction

West Superior Street between 6th Avenue West and Carlton

Street is an important corridor connecting downtown Duluth to and through the popular regenerated Lincoln Park Craft District and adjacent Lincoln Park neighborhood and west Duluth. The City of Duluth received a federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant to fully reconstruct 1.65 miles of this roadway and the aging utilities below it, from Carlton Street to West Michigan Street.

This project is a unique opportunity to redefine its look, feel, and function from a former highway thoroughfare (old U.S. Highway 61) to an urban commercial street to support and encourage the mixed-use development that is currently taking place and planned for the future. The project will include significant improvements for all users, including facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit operations, vehicle parking, EV charging stations, green infrastructure and stormwater management, seating and outdoor dining, public art, lighting, and wayfinding.

Central Entrance

Central Entrance between Mesaba Avenue and US Highway 53/Joshua Avenue is an important corridor connecting the heart of the City of Duluth to the Miller Hill Mall and retail area, and beyond. The MIC recently coordinated a vision plan for the approximately 2.5-mile corridor, and MnDOT is using that to continue planning for the project. The corridor is a mix of commercial and residential use and has been studied many times over the past few decades. The corridor has safety concerns for all users. Reconstruction of the corridor would include significant improvements for all users, including new multimodal facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as for transit operations. The visioning also called for considering realignments, a road diet, and inclusion of trees along the corridor. Discussions are ongoing and decisions remain to be made about the function and configuration of this corridor. Ultimately it should meet the City of Duluth's Central Entrance Small Area Plan's vision for a transformed urban mixed use walkable corridor.

Hammond Avenue

Hammond Avenue between Belknap Avenue and 21st Street is an important corridor connecting a key residential

neighborhood with two primary thoroughfares within the City of Superior. Reconstruction of the approximately 0.5-mile corridor is ongoing and is intended to create a more livable corridor with placemaking and multimodal facilities and ADA compliant ramps. The project will also improve drainage and mitigate future stormwater and water utility issues.

Significant Unfunded Projects

Many projects listed on pages 6-18—6-44 proposed to be completed by 2050 currently are not fiscally constrained, yet are priority and/or regionally significant projects with long-term impacts, setting in place key components of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for decades to come.

The following are short descriptions to highlight significant unfunded projects in the project list.

I-35 Corridor (MIC Area)

The I-35 corridor is the primary Interstate corridor in the MIC area (I-535 – the Blatnik Bridge and approaches being the other). The northern terminus of I-35 is within the City of Duluth and connects the Duluth-Superior area with Minneapolis-St Paul and beyond. The first round of major reconstruction projects for I-35 have occurred within the past decade or so. A full visionary planning study led by the MIC was recently completed. It is anticipated portions of this important corridor will be reconstructed with some improvements and realignments likely. Some of these improvements may include a truck lane up the steep hill between west Duluth and Proctor, new bridges, new ramp alignments, and better pedestrian and bike connections between neighborhoods divided by the Interstate.

The City of Duluth received a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Planning grant to analyze the Downtown and West Duluth segments of I-35 before reconstruction takes place on this corridor.

Rice Lake Road

Rice Lake Road between Technology Drive and West Tischer Road is an important corridor connecting Rice Lake and other areas north to Duluth. It is the southern portion of a route

that connects with the Range to the north. The corridor is also a key part of Rice Lake’s commercial core. The approximately 4.2-mile segment has been studied and reconstruction plans include significant improvements for all users, including new multimodal facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as a roundabout. St. Louis County recently received a RAISE grant to help support this project.

Northern Lights Express (NLX)

The Northern Lights Express is a proposed passenger rail service that would connect Duluth and Superior with the Twin Cities, providing an alternative to driving, taking a bus, or flying. This service is anticipated to positively impact those who cannot or choose not to drive an automobile.

MnDOT has completed significant planning work on the NLX project, and has received a 20% State match appropriation from the Minnesota Legislature that was needed to receive the additional 80% of federal funding. Additional planning for this service is ongoing. St. Louis County, City of Duluth and City of Superior are conducting station and area planning. Current plans are for the NLX to use the Duluth Depot, a designated historical resource as its northern-most terminal.

The service would run as a shared line on BNSF freight tracks. The project is awaiting funding to begin railroad track and crossing improvements, new and extended sidings, station upgrades, and the purchase of rail cars. The project is beyond any MIC area jurisdiction or state of Minnesota or Wisconsin budget and will most likely require new or special funding from the states and the federal government.

For Study Projects

There are corridors, intersections, and trails/multiuse paths that could potentially be priorities or regionally significant improvements to the MIC area transportation system, but are conceptual at this time. They require additional study or planning work before they can be considered for funding and implementation. The following are short descriptions to highlight potential projects that could be studied and/or funded within the life of this plan.

MIC-Area Safety Action Plan

In an important step toward implementing the Safety and

Security goal and related objectives set forward in this MTP (see Chapter 2, p. 6), the MIC applied for and has received a \$250,000 federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant, as well as a MnDOT state matching grant in the amount of \$62,500, to produce a comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the entire MIC planning area.

Safety Action Plans are a foundational component in improving traffic safety, as they articulate well-defined and measurable strategies to prevent road injuries and fatalities within a community. They require high levels of engagement, processes for data collection, and goal-setting. Its completion, in turn, will allow MIC area jurisdictions to apply for federal Implementation Grants to put the identified projects and strategies into effect. The MIC's planning process for its Safety Action Plan is anticipated to be undertaken in CY 2025-2026.

Non-Motorized Multi-Use Trail System

An active transportation system is currently being developed, perhaps most notably with the development of major non-motorized thoroughfares within the MIC area. These active transportation thoroughfares provide mobility across the urban area for people of all ages, all abilities and all incomes, and encourage positive health, economic, and social benefits to the general public.

More broadly, community members and transportation professionals in the MIC area continue to work together to plan for and implement an improved pedestrian, bicycle, micromobility, and transit network that is reliable, maintained, and interconnected throughout the MIC area, especially within key areas.

Alternative Transit Modes

Over the past several years, potential modes of transit (other than DTA bus service) have been put forward by local stakeholders as options for this area, including a maritime transport service between Duluth and Superior via ferry and/or water taxis; and aerial lift service to traverse the hill, whether it be a tramway, gondola, or funicular (incline).

Bong Bridge

The Bong Bridge is a key transportation corridor in the MIC

area that links the cities of Duluth and Superior across the St Louis River on Highway 2. It provides connection for locals, as well as regional and national commerce and tourism. While the Bong Bridge will undoubtedly need routine maintenance and repairs over time, it is not anticipated to be reconstructed for at least 40 years.

However, it is not too soon to begin to consider real alternatives to its reconstruction. Long-range planning to consider its future purpose and need and/or potential changes to its alignment, size and adjacent land uses will likely take a couple of decades or more for a project of this magnitude. As we have learned from the Blatnik Bridge project, reconstruction of this bridge would entail a huge cost to the public. Given our goal of achieving a sustainable transportation system, it is recommended to start this long-range planning process during the service life of this structure.

Regionally Significant Corridors

Several regionally significant corridors in the Duluth-Superior area have been identified in this plan's performance-based planning approach as priorities for improvements. These corridors include 6th Avenue East between 2nd Street and 9th Street, Rice Lake Road between Technology Drive and North Tischer Road, and Tower Avenue between Belknap Street and 21st Street. Primary goals of these projects are to improve safety for all users, improve multimodal facilities and connections, and provide new infrastructure.



7. Emerging Trends

This chapter summarizes some emerging national and global trends that should be considered in implementing this plan. Some ideas on how to apply the listed emerging trends locally in the Duluth-Superior area are also provided.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

- Introduction7-2**
- Right-of-Way Reallocation / Right-Sizing 7-2**
- Future-Proofing the Transportation Network 7-3**
- Smart Roads..... 7-4**
- Autonomous & Connected Vehicles 7-5**
- Last Mile Deliveries 7-5**
- Shared Mobility 7-6**
- Mobility Hubs 7-7**
- Micromobility 7-8**
- Microtransit 7-8**
- Demand Response Transit 7-9**
- Justice40 Initiative 7-9**
- Zero Emission Vehicles7-11**

Introduction

This chapter summarizes some emerging national and global trends that should be considered in implementing this plan and the projects listed in Table 4.4 and Chapter 6. Some ideas on how to apply the listed emerging trends locally in the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) area are also provided. Application of these emerging trends can help support and carry out the long-range vision of this plan and implement the goals and objectives identified in Chapter 2.

Right-of-Way Reallocation / Right-Sizing

In metropolitan or urban areas with flat or declining traffic volumes, roads may be overbuilt in terms of traffic capacity. To optimize space allocated for roadways to serve all transportation needs, to help mitigate reckless driving, and to reduce induced demand, some communities may have an opportunity to reallocate right of way, or stated another way, right size existing infrastructure.

Reallocating right of way in practice can vary from implementing complete streets principles by reallocating travel lanes into shared-use paths, bus-only lanes, separated bike lanes, or some combination. Applying complete streets principles is also a way to improve multimodal integration. Complete streets not only enhance street design, but also have a positive impact on the community. Pedestrianization, or implementation of pedestrian-only zones promotes walkability, reduces pollution, and contributes to vibrant urban spaces.

While reallocation of right of way can provide opportunities for increased connectivity and multimodal access, it can also reduce the amount of infrastructure a community must maintain, helping to reduce overall maintenance costs. Reallocation of right-of-way could mean reducing the number of existing lanes and potentially selling excess right-of-way to adjacent property owners. As an example, State DOTs often sell excess right-of-way that was acquired as part of a larger project.

Some communities are also considering rightsizing freeways within downtown areas to improve connectivity between neighborhoods. The City of Milwaukee is currently redesigning WIS 175, from a freeway into an arterial that better integrates into the existing street grid. The City of Milwaukee is also considering design concepts involving removing a portion of the

existing elevated I-794 freeway and replacing it with an at-grade arterial.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Stakeholder engagement identified a desire for safer multimodal connections in the Duluth area particularly, including north-south and east-west connections.

Opportunities to reallocate right of way may exist along London Road, 6th Avenue East, Woodland Avenue, and Rice Lake Road. These routes could potentially be enhanced to serve as possible multimodal connections. Intersections such as Superior Street and Lake Street could potentially be redesigned to be more pedestrian and bike-friendly. Looking into the future, additional opportunities could include improvements along the I-35 corridor, allowing for enhanced east-west multimodal connectivity and enhanced accessibility for all users.

Future-Proofing the Transportation Network

To best meet future demand and to promote sustainability, regional planning partners should be looking for opportunities to future-proof transportation infrastructure, and ultimately the transportation network. This involves several elements including dynamic adaptation, smart growth infrastructure, embracing innovation, and planning for evolving norms, travel patterns, and technological advancements. Planning for future transportation in itself could be considered a sustainable activity as we consider adapting our roads for autonomous vehicles requiring narrower roads and reducing maintenance costs over time.

Technology is rapidly evolving and new opportunities are constantly arising that enhance travel safety and more efficiently accommodate the movement of people and goods. Through the year 2050, transportation has the potential to undergo a considerable revolution with continuously improving data and data management. It is essential to integrate digital transformation technologies into transportation operations, leveraging real-time traffic data, the Internet of Things (IoT), and machine learning. By doing so, a region can keep residents informed, reduce incident response times, and direct services to areas with the greatest need.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Technology and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) solutions should be utilized, as appropriate, in the upcoming replacement of the Blatnik Bridge. Given the extended closure of the bridge, it will be important to manage traffic safely and efficiently in the region. It will also be important for first responders to have reliable travel routes to complete their everyday duties, including emergency response. Technology can be used to communicate important travel information and ultimately help mitigate some of the negative impacts from the extended closure.

Snow removal poses a significant challenge in northern states, but through the adoption of technology, improved transparency and response times can occur. Crowd-sourced mapping of transportation barriers during snow events can be used to identify locations where attention is needed. By involving road users, authorities can pinpoint areas that require snow plowing for both roads and sidewalks. This ensures safe and efficient routes not only for motorized vehicles but also for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

Telematic technology can also play a crucial role in snowplow operations gathering statistics about performance, miles travelled, and time spent in motion versus idling while IoT technology provides real-time data on conditions and productivity. This empowers residents to plan journeys more sustainably and improves travel efficiency. By prioritizing viable transportation systems, the region can reduce environmental impacts and offer sustainable choices. With these considerations in mind, the MIC's strategies can create resilient and efficient transportation systems that benefit all users.

Smart Roads

Smart roads are a component of the smart cities concept, which applies to advanced information technologies to facilitate the planning, construction, and management of infrastructure. Smart roads include the roads themselves as well as supporting components like streetlights and traffic signals. Smart roads require extensive sensor networks that collect data on traffic plows, public transit systems, and more. While smart roads are undergoing research, and pilot projects are still evolving, this is

a future concept that could become more prevalent in future updates of the MTP. Converting roadways to smart roads is also consistent with other technology features, such as the availability of real-time traffic management, adaptive signaling, and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication to ensure safer and more reliable traffic operations.

Autonomous & Connected Vehicles

Autonomous vehicles (AVs) and connected vehicles (CVs) represent a paradigm shift in transportation. Autonomous vehicles are advancing steadily and are anticipated to account for around 12% of new passenger cars with gradual integration as technology matures. These vehicles combine sophisticated software and hardware, operating without human control and communicating via short-range radio signals to maintain real-time awareness of nearby vehicles, thereby preventing crashes, reducing congestion, and reducing the space needed for motor vehicles. AVs and CVs generally consume less energy, reduce human error, and contribute to improved safety.

AVs are being piloted across the nation as shuttles and taxis including in Minnesota where an automated shuttle bus pilot project is currently underway in the greater Minneapolis/St Paul area. AV shuttles range in capacity from 4 to 16 passengers, have ramps for ADA accessibility, and are fully electric with ranges of up to 14 hours. Additionally, autonomous trucks are being piloted throughout the US as a means to improve freight movement and increase safety for the traveling public.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Duluth-Superior aims to proactively plan for smart growth, infrastructure, testing, and deploying AVs and CVs on public roads. In the short to mid-term, the primary focus for the region will likely involve addressing the policy and infrastructure requirements. Robust infrastructure, including smart roads, reliable communication networks, and charging stations, is essential for successful AV and CV adoption and will take years to plan for. The replacement of the Blatnik bridge may present an opportunity to consider some new technology features to accommodate AVs and CVs.

Last Mile Deliveries

As e-commerce and online shopping continue to surge, our aging transportation infrastructure faces additional strain,

especially in last-mile logistics. However, our region is at the forefront of innovation, leveraging technology and AI to transform last-mile delivery operations. Our region's adoption of these technologies aims to enhance residents' experiences and foster business prosperity. With our community at the forefront of decision-making, we have the opportunity to prioritize last-mile logistics solutions that minimize adverse effects while ensuring convenience for all residents. These approaches can lead to improved delivery efficiency, reduced traffic impact, optimized logistics, and enhanced service reliability

Applicability to the MIC Area

- 1. Encouraging Route Optimization:** Working closely with stakeholders and leveraging AI algorithms can enhance data analysis, taking into account traffic patterns, weather conditions, and delivery windows. Real-time adjustments based on changing conditions result in faster deliveries and increased resident satisfaction.
- 2. Providing Real-time Data:** Access to real-time data empowers our decision-makers. It serves as an evidence base for robust planning, allowing us to fine-tune operations and enhance sustainability efforts. Businesses benefit from streamlined processes, while our community enjoys a more efficient and eco-friendly delivery system.
- 3. Electrification of Delivery Fleet:** Electric vans and bikes can be used in the context of goods movement. E-Vans combine AI-driven navigation with electric propulsion reducing emissions and noise pollution while cargo bikes, with their eco-friendly design, allow for efficient deliveries in city centers.

Shared Mobility

Shared mobility encompasses transportation services shared among multiple users, including ridesharing, fixed route transit, demand response systems, microtransit, carpooling, bike-sharing, scooter-sharing, and more. The concept aims to provide convenient, efficient, and cost-effective transportation options by allowing multiple users to utilize the same vehicle or mode of transportation at different times or for various purposes.

Shared mobility services are often facilitated through mobile applications, which allow users to locate, reserve, and unlock

vehicles or rides. These services promote sustainability by reducing the need for private vehicle ownership, minimizing traffic congestion, and lowering carbon emissions. Additionally, shared mobility can enhance access to transportation in areas with limited public transit options and provide flexible solutions for short-distance travel.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Regional and state plans in both Minnesota and Wisconsin include goals of reducing vehicle miles travelled. By supporting shared mobility options, like leaf, a local electric scooter and bicycle rental service, the MIC can help achieve those goals leading to lower emissions and improved air quality. However, it is worth acknowledging some of the challenges associated with Shared Mobility, especially winter weather conditions that can make this option less attractive and more difficult to use during certain months.

Mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs serve as central points where users can seamlessly access multiple transportation modes. This growing trend offers integrated facilities such as parking, transit connections (bus and/or passenger rail), bike-share stations, lockers, and shared micro-mobility options (e-bikes, scooters). Real-time transit information and comprehensive wayfinding systems can enhance the utility of mobility hubs. The ultimate goal is to facilitate smooth transitions between travel modes, promoting efficient and sustainable mobility. In a region with an aging population, facilitating mobility for modes other than private automobiles can extend independence for residents.

Mobility hubs are being implemented across the nation in large metro areas and smaller municipalities. One example is Gilbert, AZ where a small-scale mobility hub has been implemented in its downtown Heritage District. Salt Lake City, UT is also developing a mobility hub to serve the North Temple corridor.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Downtown Duluth is a prime opportunity to examine the potential for a future mobility hub. As the Northern Lights Express is extended to the MIC area, the existing transit center could potentially be enhanced to provide seamless connections between trains, bikes, micromobility modes, and buses. In addition, the transit center could potentially be

expanded to include electric chargers making sustainable travel more accessible, enhancing connectivity, and exemplifying a commitment to a greener, more connected, and sustainable future.

Micromobility

Micromobility represents small shared mobility devices such as bicycles, tricycles, cargo bikes and trikes, scooters, mopeds, and others. Micromobility devices can be docked, with devices located and secured to a network of stations, or can be dockless, with devices available to pick up, use, and drop off within a defined service area. These devices can also be human-powered or electrically powered. There is also the potential to include adaptive bicycles or tricycles that would expand access to shared transportation services for people with special needs or disabilities.

Applicability to the MIC Area

A holistic and successful micromobility ecosystem can be achieved through continued collaboration with micromobility providers. The MIC and public sector entities could take the lead in providing strategic vision, policy frameworks, and infrastructure planning. Meanwhile, private providers contribute their expertise, resources, and operational agility. Together, these collaborative efforts could position the region to be successful with the widespread adoption of this sustainable travel option.

Microtransit

Microtransit is an alternative transportation service that offers flexible, on-demand service with dynamic and pooled routing. It can be used best in low-density areas that would not be adequately served by fixed route service. Microtransit is a 'curb-to-curb' service for short and local trips, typically with vans or shuttles. Microtransit also provides flexibility of service including stop types. In some uses, providers choose to use curb-to-curb service similar to paratransit service and in other zones or services "virtual stops" can be implemented. This is when a nearby stop location is provided in the app to allow for more efficient routing. This model directs riders to walk a block or two for pickup to allow for more direct routing for the vehicle operator.

Microtransit allows for first/last mile connections to fixed routes, encouraging the use of an existing transit service. Microtransit is an efficient transportation alternative that can be scaled to the demand. This allows the city to adjust zones based on the market after a trial or set period of time. Microtransit offers an opportunity to fill the gaps that fixed routes cannot fully cover in a convenient and affordable way. It provides a needed alternative to allow vulnerable and underserved populations the chance to connect with the community, have access to employment or education opportunities, and have reliable transportation to appointments.

Demand Response Transit

Demand response transit (DRT) is any system of transporting individuals not on a fixed route. DRTs can be public entities and usually provide rides to users when they call in advance with a specific pick-up and drop-off point. It is different than microtransit in that it doesn't include pooled routing. DRT can adapt to the needs of users offering flexible, affordable, and reliable alternatives to car use reducing the negative environmental impacts posed on the transportation network while ensuring the optimum service utilization if used efficiently.

Applicability to the MIC Area

DRT could be an effective option for the region as it has the potential to enhance services to lower-density neighborhoods, indigenous communities, aging populations, and regions where transit is needed but where it is difficult to support fixed route service, such as Hermantown or Rice Lake. Douglas County's Senior Connections Initiative and Duluth's STRIDE have identified and are working to fix this gap. People in some stakeholder consults supported this type of service.

Justice40 Initiative

The Federal government and state governments are focusing on issues of environmental justice in infrastructure planning. The Duluth-Superior region is fully committed to the Justice40 Initiative, which aims to ensure that 40% of the overall benefits from federal investments reach disadvantaged communities—those that are marginalized, underserved, and

disproportionately affected by pollution. In alignment with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), the MIC will leverage this initiative to strengthen communities through equitable transportation investments. All transportation measures will need to be carefully planned to ensure that underserved groups receive the benefits of both new and existing federal investments.

To achieve this, the MIC and local jurisdictions could employ approaches such as the use of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to identify disadvantaged communities and engaging with the community and consulting stakeholders to determine program benefits and track data related to benefits directed specifically to these vulnerable communities.

The overarching goal is to reduce inequalities across transportation systems, ensuring that all communities benefit from safe, efficient, and sustainable movement of people and goods. The Justice40 initiative not only promotes environmental equity but also contributes to a higher quality of life and economic prosperity for everyone. We want to ensure that access to alternative transportation modes is given to all members of the community and focus on extending services to rural and indigenous communities. Douglas County has been advancing in this stream with a mission to provide cost-effective services, ensuring equal access for all citizens. Moreover, MnDOT's Advancing Transportation Equity Initiative incorporates equity in transportation decision-making and aims to improve access and opportunities for underserved communities and reduce transportation disparities.

Applicability to the MIC Area

The MIC and local jurisdictions should regularly monitor the Justice40 Initiative to determine how best to integrate these key themes into future planning efforts:

- 1. Decrease transportation insecurity:** ensuring that people can reliably carry out their daily journeys.
- 2. Alleviate environmental burden:** We will tackle pollution, exposure to hazardous facilities, water pollution, and challenges posed by the built environment.
- 3. Address social vulnerability:** Identifying high-risk populations based on social conditions.

4. **Mitigate health vulnerability:** Addressing prevalent health conditions such as asthma, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, and mental health issues.
5. **Manage climate and disaster risk burden:** Assessing current and future risks related to climate change and natural disasters, considering potential losses from existing hazard exposure and vulnerability.
6. **Redress the delay of benefits to marginalized communities.** Assessing historic patterns of disinvestment in minority and low-income communities and prioritizing transportation system investments that directly meet the needs of these communities.

Zero Emission Vehicles

The transportation industry is committed to transitioning toward cleaner transportation through the adoption of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs). ZEVs reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, reduce energy dependence, and promote renewable energy. Supporting the adoption of ZEVs is being done by adding capacity to the existing electric grid, creating supporting infrastructure such as charging stations, and replacing fleet maintenance and transit vehicles with zero-emission options when possible.

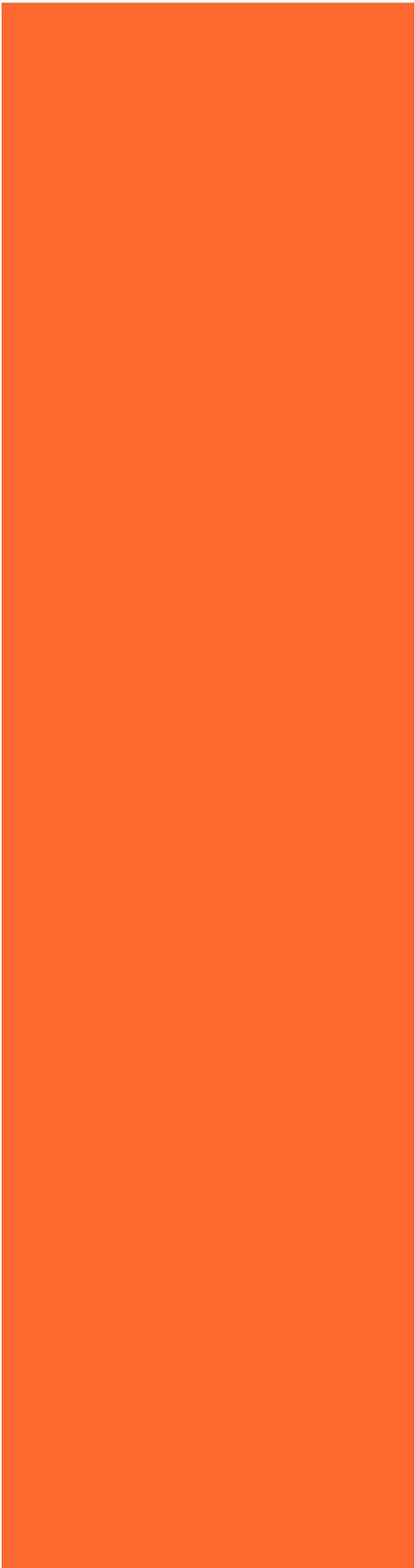
Transit agencies across the country and internationally are implementing strategies to reduce emissions from their fleets by integrating more low- and no-emissions technologies. Zero-emission bus (ZEB) adoption in the United States is anticipated to accelerate due to increased funding availability to support ZEB purchases and increased adoption of emissions-reducing policies by local governments and municipalities. As of September 2022, 5,480 ZEBs are on the road, awarded, or on order, which is a 66 percent growth rate since 2021.¹ California and the West Coast, including Oregon and Washington, account for 41 percent of all ZEBs nationwide. However, nearly every state (except West Virginia and the Dakotas) has at least one ZEB on the road or on order; including Wisconsin, which has 60.

In addition to planning for electrification by adding capacity and charging, as ZEVs and sales of electric vehicles (EVs) continue to progressively grow nationwide, safety and the well-being of residents and community prosperity remain top

priorities. The region can build capacity for emergency responders to effectively handle incidents involving ZEVs. Addressing potential hazards such as battery fires requires comprehensive safety protocols. Taking a holistic approach to safety ensures that ZEVs positively contribute to the transportation system.

Applicability to the MIC Area

Both Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation have electric vehicle infrastructure plans including key corridors where charging stations are needed including along I-35, I-535, US 2, and US 53 in the MIC. The MIC could help support these plans as well as the regional and MN/WI state climate change goals by leading by example and promoting the installation of EV charging stations along these key corridors. Additionally, the MIC could support the adaptation of ZEB by developing a Zero Emission Transition Plan for the DTA. The plan could work to identify key transitions between existing buses and ZEBs including fleet maintenance, charging, and infrastructure.



8. Planning Coordination

This section describes the MIC’s purpose, structure, and core functions as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Duluth–Superior area, as well as the federal transportation legislation and state and local plans that guided the development of *Sustainable Choices 2050*.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Planning and Policy Framework.....	8-2
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council	8-2
The MIC’s Requirements as an MPO	8-2
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area.....	8-4
Map 8.1: Metropolitan Planning Area	8-4
MIC Organizational Structure	8-5
Figure 8.1 Organizational Structure of ARDC, NWRPC and the MIC....	8.6
MIC Board, Staff and Advisory Committees.....	8-6
Figure 8.2 Jurisdictional Representation on the MIC Policy Board	8-7
Figure 8.3 MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committees	8-7
The MIC’s Planning Process.....	8-8
Federal Guidance	8-8
Transportation Legislation: IJA/BIL.....	8-8
Other Federal Requirements	8-9
State Guidance	8-11
Minnesota Transportation Plans.....	8-11
Wisconsin Transportation Plans	8-15
Local Coordination	8-17
Regional Plans.....	8-17
Comprehensive Plans.....	8-18
Specialty, Small Area and MIC Plans.....	8-18

Planning and Policy Framework

Many policy elements form the planning framework for *Sustainable Choices 2050*. These include the federally mandated role of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in combination with other national, state, and regional planning directives, as well as the MIC's established public participation and planning processes.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

As the designated MPO for the [urban area](#) that includes both [Superior, Wisconsin](#) and [Duluth, Minnesota](#), the MIC works to coordinate and harmonize the activities of federal, state, and local agencies in both states.

The MIC's Requirements as an MPO

The establishment of MPOs with the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 was intended to provide elected officials representing urban areas with a greater voice and control over decisions regarding transportation planning and project prioritization.

MPOs are mandated by [23 U.S. Code § 134](#) to conduct a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) planning process as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds in every urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more.

The MIC's principal role is to establish a setting for effective regional decision-making for our community's shared transportation goals and priorities.

In addition, MPOs must use a [performance-based approach](#) to transportation planning decision-making to support national goals and general purposes. As such, each MPO must establish performance targets and integrate them into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The core functions of every MPO, including the MIC, are to:

Maintain a Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The MIC's MTP sets forth a community-supported vision for the area's transportation system with a planning horizon of twenty-five years. It includes strategies to accomplish these goals as well as prioritized projects with short-, mid-, and long

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

MPOs are federally mandated to conduct transportation planning in urban population areas of 50,000 or more.

MPOs establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision-making in the metropolitan area.

MPOs are comprised of a Policy Board of local elected officials and citizens, professional planning staff, and technical advisory committees.

MPOs are funded by a combination of federal transportation funds and state and local matching funds.

MPOs are required to involve local stakeholders and citizens in their planning activities.

MPOs encourage a multi-modal approach to transportation planning and infrastructure investments.

MPOs ensure that expenditures of federal funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a 3-C (continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative) planning process.

MPOs complement and supplement local government activities but are not in themselves units of government—they have no authority to levy taxes or implement transportation projects or policies.

-term timeframes. It also includes a financial plan that demonstrates how these projects can be implemented using the resources that are reasonably expected to be available over the life of the plan.

Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The [TIP](#) is a short-range (four-year) program of the area's transportation improvements and must include all regionally significant projects receiving federal funding. The TIP is a mechanism for allocating limited financial resources among the capital and operating needs of the area, based on the transportation priorities, goals, and projects identified in the MTP.

Within the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area, certain local public agencies and cities or towns over 5,000 are eligible to apply for federal TIP funds. These include the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation (MnDOT, WisDOT), St. Louis and Douglas counties, the cities of Duluth, Hermantown, and Superior, the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and the Duluth Transit Authority.

The MIC maintains two separate TIPs for its planning areas of Duluth, MN and Superior, WI, with separate state processes and timelines.

Implement a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The [UPWP](#) spells out the MIC's transportation planning activities as well as administrative activities, budgets, and funding sources for each project for a two-year period.

Facilitate Public Involvement

Public involvement means that stakeholders are involved in our area's transportation planning and decision-making processes.

"Stakeholders" are individuals or entities that could be significantly affected by the plan recommendations or could significantly influence implementation. Stakeholders include (but are not limited to): the general public, low income, people with disabilities, neighborhood representatives, local transportation providers, local businesses and associations, special transportation interests such as airport and port authorities, freight shippers, advocacy groups for or users of alternate modes such and transit or bicycling, local officials

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)

Mission:

*Guiding the future of
transportation and planning
for the Twin Ports Area*

The MIC is the designated MPO for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan planning area.

The MIC is one of eight MPOs in the State of Minnesota, one of fourteen MPOs in the State of Wisconsin, and one of approximately 450 Metropolitan Planning Organizations across the country.

The MIC provides guidance and leadership on transportation and land use planning issues in the Duluth-Superior metropolitan planning area.

The MIC works to focus the area's limited transportation funding on projects that yield the greatest benefit and integrate with the existing transportation system.

The MIC conducts studies, develops plans, models the transportation system, and programs projects for federal funding in the metropolitan area.

and jurisdictional representatives, and federal and state transportation agencies.

Public involvement is a two-way process. It allows the community to provide input and also serves as a mechanism to provide information and answer questions. This exchange leads to better decisions and gives the public a sense of ownership of the resulting plans and recommendations.

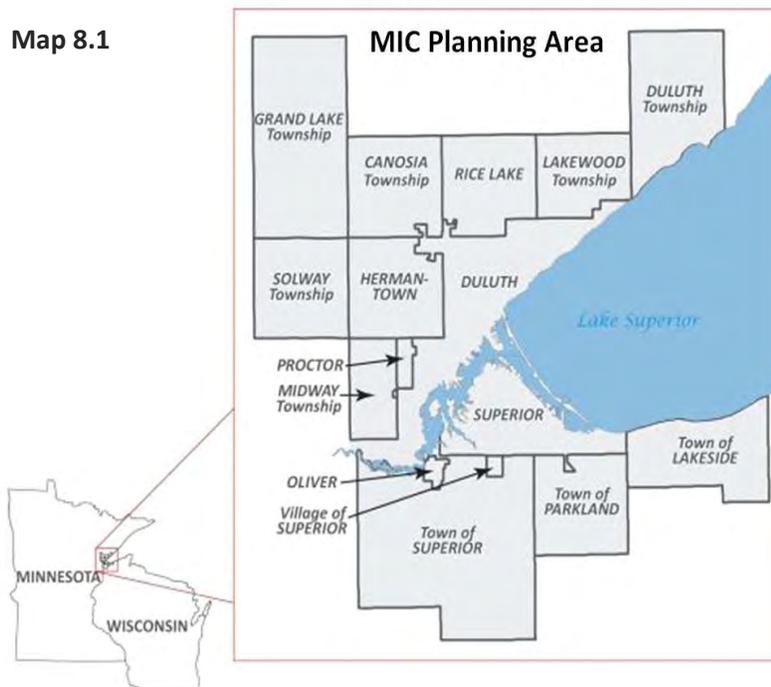
The MIC worked to secure participation from stakeholders throughout the development of *Sustainable Choices 2050*. The public involvement process for this Plan is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 and an overall guide to public involvement activities is outlined in the MIC's Public Involvement Plan, last updated October 2013.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area

The population of the Duluth-Superior area has remained relatively flat for many years: 145,166 in 2000, 147,628 in 2010, 146,771 in 2020, and is projected to grow to 152,587 by 2050 (see Figures 4.8, 4.9, and Table 3 of Appendix E).

The MIC's planning jurisdiction encompasses 641 square miles within St. Louis and Douglas counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively (see Map 8.1). It extends from the census-defined Duluth-Superior Urban Area out to the first ring of non-urban townships. This includes:

Map 8.1



Minnesota/St. Louis County

[City of Duluth](#)

[City of Hermantown](#)

[City of Proctor](#)

[City of Rice Lake](#)

[Canosia Township](#)

[Duluth Township](#)

[Grand Lake Township](#)

[Lakewood Township](#)

[Midway Township](#)

[Solway Township](#)

[St. Louis County](#)

Wisconsin/Douglas County

[City of Superior](#)

[Douglas County](#)

[Town of Lakeside](#)

[Town of Parkland](#)

[Town of Superior](#)

[Village of Oliver](#)

[Village of Superior](#)

MIC Organizational Structure

The organizational arrangements of MPOs vary throughout the country —some are free-standing entities, some are set up as a division within city or county offices, while others, like the MIC, are housed within regional planning and development organizations.

ARDC, NWRPC, and the MIC

The MIC was formed in 1975 under a joint agreement between [the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission](#) (ARDC) in Duluth, Minnesota and the [Northwest Regional Planning Commission](#) (NWRPC) in Spooner, Wisconsin, and is housed as a division of ARDC (Figure 8.1).

Regional Development Commissions and Regional Planning Commissions

Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) in Minnesota and **Regional Planning Commissions** (RPCs) in Wisconsin are multi-county planning and development districts that, like MPOs, encourage cooperation between local, state, and federal agencies, elected officials, the private sector, and citizens.

Each is governed by a policy board consisting of elected officials from each jurisdiction within the region.

Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC)

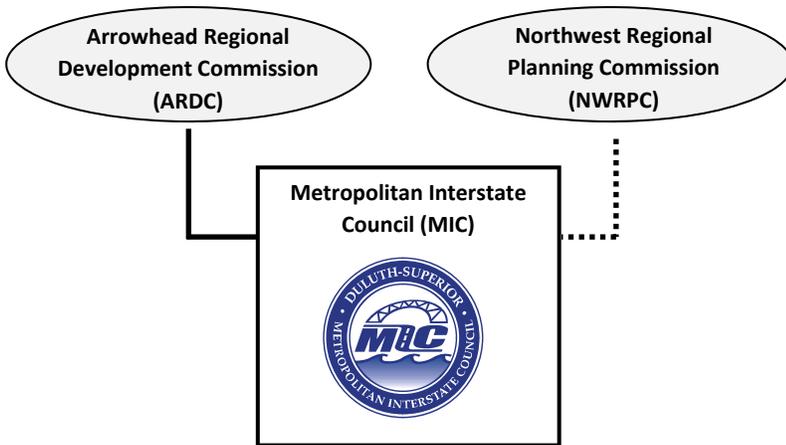
(ARDC), the first of nine multi-county regional development organizations in Minnesota, was established in 1969 based on the state Regional Development Act (1969). ARDC serves 7 counties, 180 townships, 70 cities, and 3 reservations in northeast Minnesota.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) was created in 1959 by local units of government of northwest Wisconsin. It is the oldest planning commission in Wisconsin and one of the first multi-county planning commissions in the nation. The NWRPC is a cooperative venture of 10 counties and 5 tribal nations in the northwest corner of the state.

MIC Board, Staff, and Advisory Committees

The MIC includes a top-level policy board, specialized advisory

Figure 8.1 Organizational Structure of ARDC, NWRPC and the MIC



committees, and professional planning staff.

MIC Policy Board

The [MIC Policy Board](#) is comprised of 18 elected officials and appointed citizen representatives (nine from Minnesota and nine from Wisconsin) who represent all local units of government within the planning area (Figure 8.2). The Policy Board considers and determines key MPO actions as well as the policies and recommendations in its plans and studies. It is

Figure 8.2 Jurisdictional Representation on the MIC Policy

Minnesota (9 representatives)	Wisconsin (9 representatives)
4 City of Duluth (2 city councilors, 1 Duluth Transit Authority Board member, 1 citizen)	4 City of Superior (1 citizen, 3 city councilors)
1 City of Hermantown (elected official)	5 Douglas County (4 county board supervisors, 1 suburban township elected official or citizen)
1 City of Proctor (elected official)	
3 St. Louis County (1 county board member, 1 suburban township elected official and 1 suburban township citizen)	

The MIC Policy Board provides cooperative leadership to meet the following objectives:

To address major transportation issues and solve problems that affect multiple jurisdictions or agencies within the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area.

To develop detailed transportation information that will encourage decisions to enhance livability and optimize the movement of people and goods throughout the metro area.

To improve the comprehensive transportation network so that it is safe and fully integrated.

To gain the maximum benefit from each public transportation investment.

To establish an effective area-wide transportation planning process that is inclusive and responsive to the needs and interests of the area's residents, interest groups, units of government and affected agencies.

also responsible for prioritizing projects for inclusion in the four-year Transportation Improvement Programs of federally-funded projects in Duluth and Superior.

MIC Planning Staff

The [MIC’s professional planning staff](#) conducts ongoing planning and administrative activities, including research, data collection and analysis, mapping, facilitating public input and feedback, consulting with area jurisdictions, and bringing plans and recommendations forward to the Policy Board for final approvals. Staff members include a director, administrative assistant, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist, and three transportation planners.

Advisory Committees to the MIC

Three formal advisory committees advise the Policy Board on technical matters and interact with the MIC’s professional staff for consultation, analysis, and other project work (Figure 8.3). All three committees meet regularly to consider, discuss, and forward recommendations for Policy Board consideration.

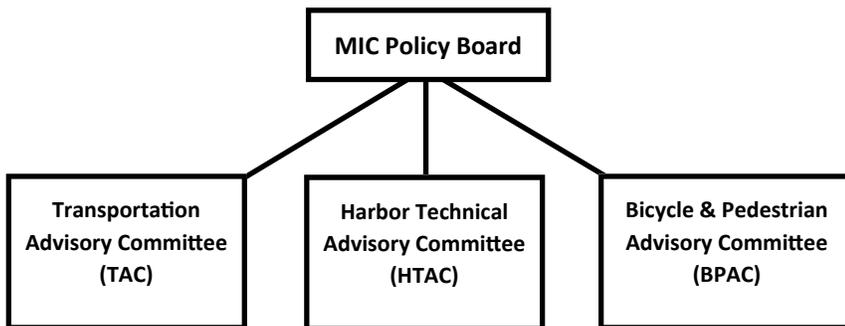


Figure 8.3 MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committees

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

The [Transportation Advisory Committee](#), or TAC, is comprised of staff-level officials, planners, and engineers from local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies. It also includes modal representatives (bike/pedestrian, transit, port, and airport).

Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC)

The [Harbor Technical Advisory Committee](#), or HTAC, provides guidance on decisions affecting the Duluth-Superior harbor. It also serves as an interstate forum for the development of recommendations relevant to the private, local, state, and

Harbor Technical Advisory Committee

The HTAC’s voting members include a broad range of area stakeholders:

City/County/Regional

- City of Duluth
- City of Superior
- St. Louis County
- Douglas County
- MIC
- NWRPC
- Western Lake Superior Sanitary District
- Duluth Seaway Port Authority

State/Federal

- MnDNR
- WisDNR
- MnDOT
- WisDOT
- MN Pollution Control Agency
- MN Sea Grant Program
- WI Sea Grant Program
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Coast Guard
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Industry and Environmental/Citizen

- Coal sector
- General Bulk sector
- General Cargo sector
- Grain sector
- Harbor Engineering sector
- Harbor Services sector
- Iron Ore sector
- Pilots/Vessel Operations sector
- Recreation sector
- Save Lake Superior Association
- St. Louis River Alliance
- Isaak Walton League

federal stakeholders who are directly involved with or impacted by their planning, programming, and implementation.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

The [Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#), or BPAC, was formed in early 2010 to provide citizen input into the planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and to assist with data collection and developing recommendations for a variety of MIC projects including an area bike map and events such as the annual Bike to Work Day.

The MIC's Planning Process

Transportation planning is a cooperative process designed to foster involvement by all relevant stakeholders. Federal, state, and local guidelines are integrated into a planning process utilized by the MIC for all its planning projects, including *Sustainable Choices 2050*.

The MIC's transportation planning process is not a "one size fits all" approach but rather recognizes that different projects call for customized approaches and may vary in the types and frequencies of stakeholder participation.

All of the MIC's planning activities (MTP, TIPs, and short-range plans and studies) offer several opportunities for key decision-making points during the planning process, as specified in the MIC's Public Involvement Plan.

Federal Guidance

MPOs are charged with providing regional-level coordination and planning for transportation investments in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner (the 3-C planning process). *Sustainable Choices 2050* incorporates the most recent federal legislative mandates.

The following regulations identify additional federal requirements that impact the MIC's planning and programming activities:

Transportation Legislation: IJJA/BIL

The [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IJJA\)](#) aka the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#) is a funding and authorization bill to govern United States federal surface transportation spending. It was passed by Congress in 2021.

In the IJJA/BIL, the metropolitan and statewide transportation

Federal Legislation and the Role of MPOs

The MPO role in transportation planning has become more robust as national transportation policy has evolved through a series of federal legislative initiatives:

- 2019** Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IJJA) aka the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (IJJA/BIL)
- 2015** Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act
- 2012** Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)
- 2005** Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)
- 1998** Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)
- 1991** Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)
- 1962** Federal-Aid Highway Act

planning processes established in prior transportation authorizations are continued, including requirements for a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and a short-term Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Performance measures and targets are used to assess system performance and progress, and focus greater attention on areas critical to transportation agencies, such as safety, connectivity, freight, asset management, and performance measurement. Public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process.

Federal Planning Factors

The federally required planning factors of 23 CFR 450.306(b) are addressed in detail, along with a discussion of how they are addressed in this plan, in Appendix A.

Other Federal Requirements

The following regulations identify additional federal requirements that impact the MIC's planning and programming activities:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act](#) ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969

The [National Environmental Policy Act](#) (NEPA) requires all Federal agencies to systematically assess the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and consider alternative ways of accomplishing their missions that are less damaging to the environment. To ensure the public's interests are protected, proposed actions involving Federal resources may not take place until all NEPA and agency requirements for environmental analysis are met.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act of 2008

The [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) requires that disabled populations be assured access to employment, public services, and private facilities through improved transportation services. The MIC will identify actions necessary to ensure that the local transportation planning process

involves the entire community, particularly those with disabilities, in the development and improvement of public transportation facilities and services. The local process must also ensure that physical locations for such activities, as well as the information presented, shall be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990

The [Clean Air Act Amendments](#) require greater integration of transportation and air quality planning, and assign a greater responsibility to transportation plans and programs for reducing mobile source emissions. They allowed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for various pollutants. NAAQS standards have been developed for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, lead, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide.

Environmental Justice Executive Order (12898) 1994

[Environmental Justice](#) is the public policy goal of ensuring that low-income or minority populations do not bear “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities.” Adverse human health effects include air and noise pollution, divided neighborhoods, loss of access to opportunities and jobs, property value changes, safety, and aesthetics.

Title VI & Limited English Proficiency

[Title VI](#) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination by federal government regarding public assistance. Since MPOs receive federal funds, they are required to have a Title VI Plan. Under Title VI and Executive Order 13166, agencies receiving federal funds must also meet requirements to improve [limited English proficiency](#) (LEP).

Federal Transit Act (FTA) of 1997

The [Federal Transit Act](#) requires any urban area with a population of 50,000 or greater to undertake a process to develop transportation plans and programs based upon transportation needs. Additionally, these plans and programs will consider transit elements in comprehensive long range land use plans, development objectives, and social, economic, environmental and energy conservation goals.

MnDOT's

Complete Streets Policy

[Complete streets](#) is an approach to road planning and design that considers and balances the needs of all transportation users. It's about the basics: improving the transportation system's safety and functionality for all users. Its main premise is nothing more than for people to get around safely and efficiently from point A to point B, using whatever mode of travel they choose.

The complete streets approach helps to maximize the use of public roadways and right-of-way to provide a comprehensive and connected multimodal transportation system.

State Guidance

Both Minnesota and Wisconsin statewide plans were also used as framework for developing goals and objectives for this plan. Key state plans are summarized below.

Minnesota Transportation Plans

Minnesota GO / 50-Year Vision for Transportation

In 2012, MnDOT completed the [Minnesota GO visioning process](#) to better align the transportation system with what Minnesotans expect for their quality of life, economy and natural environment.

The Minnesota GO vision and guiding principles are intended to be used by all agencies responsible for transportation planning, construction and delivery in Minnesota, including within the MIC planning area, to inform their investment and service decisions by:

- **Leveraging public investments to achieve multiple purposes:** The transportation system should support other public purposes such as environmental stewardship, economic competitiveness, public health, and energy independence.
- **Ensuring accessibility:** The transportation system must be accessible and safe for users of all abilities and incomes. The system must provide access to key resources and amenities throughout communities.
- **Building to a maintainable scale:** Consider and minimize long-term obligations—don't overbuild. The scale of the system should reflect and respect the surrounding physical and social context of the facility. The transportation system should affordably contribute to the overall quality of life and prosperity.
- **Ensuring regional connections:** Key regional centers need to be connected to each other through multiple modes of transportation.
- **Integrating safety:** Systematically and holistically improve safety for all forms of transportation. Be proactive, innovative, and strategic in creating safe options.
- **Emphasizing reliable and predictable options:** The reliability of the system and predictability of travel time is frequently as important (or more important) than speed.

Prioritize multiple multimodal options over reliance on a single option.

- **Strategically fixing the system:** Some parts of the system may need to be reduced while other parts are enhanced or expanded to meet changing demand. Strategically maintain and upgrade critical existing infrastructure.
- **Using partnerships:** Coordinate across sectors and jurisdictions to make transportation projects and services more efficient.

Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan

MnDOT's 20-year [Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan](#) articulates policies, strategies, and performance measures as a framework to help achieve the Minnesota GO vision over the next two decades. The Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan serves as the framework plan for MnDOT's modal plans, as described below.

Modal Plans

The long-range outcomes for transportation in the state, as articulated in the Minnesota GO vision, may take up to 50 years to be fully realized and extend to an entire family of plans that provide direction for different modes of transportation (aviation, bikes, freight, highways, pedestrians, ports and waterways, rail and transit).

[State Aviation System Plan](#)

This plan identifies the goals, minimum system objectives, and performance measures that serve as a guide to meet the demands for airport facilities throughout Minnesota to ensure safety and economic competitiveness nationally and internationally while managing available funding options.

[Statewide Bicycle System Plan](#)

The 2016 Statewide Bicycle System Plan (scheduled for an update in 2024) presents MnDOT's vision and goals for bicycle transportation, implementation strategies, and performance measures to evaluate progress toward achieving this vision. The plan is one of Minnesota GO's modal plans.

[District 1 Bicycle Plan](#)

This 2019 plan identifies bicycle investment routes for targeted improvements in bicycle facilities throughout the

MnDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions

[Context Sensitive Solutions](#)

is "the art of creating public works projects that meet the needs of the users, the neighboring communities, and the environment."

It integrates projects into the context or setting in a sensitive manner through careful planning, consideration of different perspectives, and tailoring designs to particular project circumstances.

CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting.

entirety of District 1.

[Statewide Freight System and Investment Plan](#) One of the Minnesota GO family of modal plans, the purpose of this 2018 plan is to provide an integrated system of freight transportation in Minnesota – highway, rail, water, air cargo, and intermodal terminals – that offers safe, reliable, and competitive access to statewide, national, and international markets.

[District 1 Freight Plan](#)

This 2019 plan was developed with local governments, private businesses, and members of the public to better understand the multimodal freight system and industry needs and issues so policy and programming decisions can be better informed throughout the 8-counties in this District.

[Statewide Pedestrian System Plan](#)

The 2021 Statewide Pedestrian System Plan guides MnDOT to maximize its role in making walking safe, convenient, and desirable for all. It establishes project development and investment planning approaches to create better places to walk in every part of the state.

[Statewide Port and Waterways Plan](#)

This plan provides the current state as well as the historical development of Minnesota’s waterways. Financial support, economic benefits, and opportunities for the future are described in the plan. It also maintains the strategies for preserving Minnesota’s ports and waterways.

[Statewide Rail Plan](#)

The 2015 update of this plan identifies priority rail corridors, programs, and projects that offer effective improvements or expansion for passenger and freight travel in and out of Minnesota.

[Greater Minnesota Transit Plan 2010-2030](#)

This is a 20-year strategic plan that sets forth directions for the future of public transportation in Greater Minnesota (outside the seven county metro area). It describes current challenges, examines future transit service needs and estimates future levels of funding that would be required to meet that need and establishes policies to guide future transit investments in Greater Minnesota.

Investment and Asset Management

[Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan \(MnSHIP\)](#)

The 20-Year Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP) directs capital investment for Minnesota's state highway system.

[District 1 10-Year Capital Highway Investment Plan \(CHIP\) 2024-2033](#)

Each district CHIP includes an overview of the district, planned investments, and list of planned projects over the next ten years. The district CHIPs also highlight district investment strategies and projected 10-year outcomes based on the 10-year list of projects.

[Transportation Asset Management Plan](#)

This 2019 plan informs capital and operations planning efforts and serves as a planning tool to help MnDOT evaluate risks, develop mitigation strategies, analyze life cycle costs, establish asset condition performance measures and targets, and develop investment strategies.

[Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan](#)

This 20-year strategic plan provides direction for the future of public transportation in Greater Minnesota. The plan describes current challenges in the state, examines future transit service needs and analyzes future levels of funding to meet that need.

[Greater Minnesota Mobility Study](#)

This 2018 study considers vehicle and freight mobility investment needs on the National Highway System (NHS) throughout Greater Minnesota. Its primary goal is to identify locations with the greatest mobility or reliability issues and low-cost, high-benefit solutions for future investment consideration.

Safety

[Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#)

This plan was created to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roadway as part of the Towards Zero Deaths initiative.

Other

[Minnesota Statewide Regional ITS Architecture Plan](#)

This 2018 plan provides a common framework for the planning, design, implementation, integration and operation of ITS throughout the state. It reflects the state’s compliance with the National ITS Architecture and support system integration and coordination between different transportation stakeholders.

[Resilience Improvement Plan 2024](#)

The Minnesota Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) provides opportunities to make our transportation system more resilient to climate change using regional approaches to mitigate risk.

[Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan 2023](#)

The plan identifies investments in fast charging along Minnesota’s existing Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs) — I-94 and I-35. Initial focus will be on light-duty EV charging needs.

[Connected and Automated Vehicle \(CAV\) Strategic Plan](#)

The MnDOT CAV Strategic Plan will help the agency prepare for changes in transportation, by identifying short, medium and long-term strategies to help the agency plan for advancing technology and mobility trends.

[Carbon Reduction Strategy](#)

The Minnesota Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) provides opportunities to make our transportation system more resilient to climate change using regional approaches to mitigate risk.

[Statewide Corridor Planning Initiative](#)

Develop a new statewide corridor planning process to evaluate infrastructure and transportation needs in a corridor, promote consistency and set shared expectations for corridor planning.

Wisconsin Transportation Plans

Long Range — Connect 2050

[Connect 2050](#) is the long-range transportation plan for the state of Wisconsin, addressing all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. WisDOT officially adopted *Connections 2050* in May 2022.

Connect 2050: Wisconsin’s Vision for Transportation

- WisDOT envisions an integrated multimodal transportation system that maximizes the safe and efficient movement of people and products throughout the state, enhancing economic productivity and the quality of Wisconsin’s communities while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.
- *Connect 2050* is organized and guided by eight goals:
 1. Pursue sustainable long-term transportation funding
 2. Focus on partnerships
 3. Pursue continuous improvement and expand data-driven decision-making processes
 4. Increase options, connections, and mobility for people and goods
 5. Maximize technology benefits
 6. Maximize transportation safety
 7. Maximize transportation system resiliency and reliability
 8. Balance transportation needs with those of the natural environment, socioeconomic, historic, and cultural resources

Modal

Numerous plans, reports, and studies are considered and reflected in Connections 2030, including:

[State Airport System Plan 2030](#)

This plan provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet the current and future aviation needs of the State of Wisconsin.

[Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020](#)

WisDOT encourages planning for bicyclists at the local level, and this plan provides guidelines for accommodating travel by bicycles when roadways are reconstructed, or new roads are built.

[State Freight Plan](#)

This 2023 plan focuses on the needs of state highways and local roads, freight rail, aviation, harbors, and intermodal connections. It overviews the current multimodal freight system, assesses statewide freight needs and issues, guides statewide investments, and aligns policies and recommendations with Connect 2050.

[Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020](#)

This plan provides a long-range vision to address existing and emerging pedestrian needs through 2020, with recommendations to meet those needs.

[Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan 2050](#)

WisDOT is updating the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan and Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan and combining them into the Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan. This will be a statewide long-range plan focused on human-powered modes of transportation, and is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

[Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020](#)

This is a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety.

[Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050](#)

This plan establishes a vision for rail transportation through 2050, sets state rail policy, and presents priorities and strategies for investment.

[Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#)

This plan provides background and information about highway safety in Wisconsin and lays out strategies for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and its many safety partners to address key safety issues.

Local Coordination

Many of the MIC's member jurisdictions develop and maintain a number of planning documents to help guide coordinated development and investment decisions.

Regional Plans

Several planning initiatives from in and around the MIC area are relevant to the development of this document. While *Sustainable Choices 2050* does not include specific recommendations from individual community plans, it does incorporate community-level concerns into the MTP's policies, goals and objectives. Current region-wide plans include:

[Northern MN and Northwest WI Regional Freight Plan](#)

This is a multimodal transportation planning effort that includes highway (commercial vehicle operations), rail, waterway, air cargo, pipeline, and intermodal transportation, and recommends improvements to freight movements specific to the region.

[Douglas County Comprehensive Plan 2020-2040](#)

The transportation element of the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan reviews the existing types of transportation choices in the county, and identifies applicable local, state, and regional transportation plans affecting Douglas County.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans

These plans assess transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes, inventory available services, and develop strategies to address the identified gaps in service for more efficient utilization of resources. Two of these plans have been developed in the MIC Planning Area:

[Northeast MN and the Duluth Metro Area](#)

[Douglas County, WI and the City of Superior](#)

Wisconsin's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)

The following Emphasis Areas in the Wisconsin SHSP are consistent with objectives 3-2 through 3-5, and will be incorporated into the MIC's Safety Action Plan, a new planning initiative to be undertaken in 2025-2026 (see Ch.6, 'For Study Projects'):

- Improve Safety Culture. Safety Data, Safety Technology
- Increase Occupant Protection
- Reduce Driver Distraction/ Improve Driver Alertness
- Reduce Alcohol & Drug Impaired Driving
- Improve Safety of Intersection
- Reduce Lane Departure Crashes
- Reduce the Incidence and Severity of Motorcycle Crashes
- Improve Work Zone Safety
- Improve Non-Motorist Safety
- Curb Aggressive Driving/ Reduce Speed-Related Crashes
- Improve Driver Performance (Teens, Older, and Competent)

Comprehensive Plans

MIC-area Comprehensive Plans provide an overall guide for growth while maintaining or improving quality of life for its residents by identifying future land use, utilities, green space and transportation needs. Current comprehensive plans include:

[Imagine Duluth 2035](#)

[City of Superior Comprehensive Plan 2040](#)

[City of Proctor Comprehensive Plan](#)

[City of Rice Lake Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Canosia Township Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Duluth Township Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Lakewood Township Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Midway Township Comprehensive Plan](#)

Specialty, Small Area, and MIC Plans

Several recent local planning initiatives that are relevant to the MIC's planning outlook include:

MIC Plans and Studies

[Canosia Township Trails Plan](#)

[Duluth-Superior Area Truck Route Study](#)

[Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bikeways Plan](#)

[Duluth-Superior Port Land Use Plans](#)

[Duluth Township Trails Plan](#)

[Highway 23/Grand Avenue Corridor Study](#)

[I-35/Bayfront Area Traffic Modeling and Special Event Traffic Control Plan](#)

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Assessment of MIC Roadways in [Minnesota](#) and [Wisconsin](#)

City of Duluth Plans

[Bayfront District Small Area Plan](#)

[Central Entrance - Miller Hill Small Area Plan](#)

[Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan](#)

[Gary/New Duluth Health Impact Assessment](#)

[Higher Education Small Area Plan](#)

[Lincoln Park Small Area Plan](#)

[Lincoln Park Small Area Plan Health Impact Assessment](#)

[Miller Hill/Central Entrance Small Area Management Plan](#)

[Park Point Small Area Plan](#)

[Riverside Small Area Plan](#)

[Skyline Parkway Corridor Management Plan](#)

Other Local Area Plans and Studies

[Northern Lights Express Passenger Rail](#)

[St. Louis County Union Depot Passenger Rail Terminal Study](#)

9. Participation

This chapter details the MIC’s process for ensuring timely and substantive public participation during the development of the MTP.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Engaging the Public in Transportation Planning	9-2
The MIC’s Planning Process	9-2
Sidebar: Federal MTP Outreach Requirements	9-2
Public Participation Initiatives for the MTP	9-2
Phase 1—Issues and Opportunities	9-2
Draft and Final MTP	9-3
Stakeholder Engagement Goals and Objectives	9-3
Stakeholder Identification	9-3
Figure 9.1: Stakeholder Groups	9-4
Environmental Justice, ADA, and Other Groups with Specialized Transportation Needs	9-4
Stakeholder Engagement Activities	9-5
Develop a Brand.....	9-5
Sustainable Choices 2050 web page	9-5
Stakeholder Survey	9-5
MTP Advisory Committee	9-6
Jurisdictional Consultations	9-6
Targeted Stakeholder Focus Groups	9-7
Release of Draft Plan for Public Comment	9-7

Engaging the Public in Transportation Planning

A major theme of this Plan is that the cost of needed improvements to the transportation system far exceeds the funding available to address those needs. Difficult choices must be made regarding the use of scarce transportation dollars.

The long term effect such decisions will have means that public engagement and stakeholder involvement are critical elements of the MTP process.

The MIC's Planning Process

The MIC is committed to reaching out to and engaging diverse community members throughout the transportation planning process. All of the MIC's planning activities embody the [cooperative, continuous and comprehensive \("3-C"\) framework](#) for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas as reaffirmed in the federal IJA legislation.

The MIC aims to ensure that all stakeholders are given ample opportunity to have a real influence throughout the planning and decision-making processes and thus help to shape the transportation policies, programs and projects in the Duluth-Superior area. Throughout the process, MIC staff followed its Public Involvement Plan which incorporates the public participation requirements of 23 CFR 450.316.

Public Participation Initiatives for the MTP

As detailed in Appendix C, more than two years prior to the completion of *Sustainable Choices 2050*, MIC staff conducted or participated in numerous public participation activities with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders. The first step was to devise and document a public participation process specific to the MTP, in keeping with federal regulations and the MIC's Public Involvement Plan. The PEP structured engagement in two phases:

Issues and Opportunities

The process of identifying and reaching out to key stakeholders, to identify key transportation issues in the planning area.

Draft and Final MTP

This phase of direct outreach will feature opportunities for the MIC's oversight agencies (FHWA, FTA and Minnesota and

FEDERAL MTP OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS

Throughout the process, MIC staff followed its [Public Involvement Plan](#) which incorporates the public participation requirements of 23 CFR 450.316:

- Provide reasonable public access to information.
- Incorporate the use of electronic methods and visualization techniques.
- Provide early & continuous opportunities for involvement.
- Offer timely information to citizens, affected agencies, private entities and other interested parties.
- Give adequate notice of public involvement activities and ample time for public review and comment at key decision points.
- Hold public meetings at convenient times and accessible locations.
- Ensure the inclusion of non-motorized users, the disabled, the elderly, minority, low-income and other traditionally "underserved populations".
- Include the consideration of the potential impacts of decisions on social and natural resources and reach out to relevant agencies and stakeholders.
- Develop and regularly review a public participation plan.

Wisconsin DOTs) as well as members of the public and area stakeholders to review and comment on the transportation system solutions identified in the draft 2050 MTP.

Stakeholder Engagement Goals and Objectives

The goal of stakeholder engagement activities is to improve and facilitate decision making and create an atmosphere of understanding that actively involves stakeholders in a timely manner, and that these groups are provided sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns so that they may influence project decisions.

The key objectives of the public engagement activities are:

- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement such that it incorporates best practices as well as meets MIC requirements;
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected by or able to influence the plan;
- Identify the most effective methods and structures through which to disseminate study information and accomplish regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute to plan outcomes;
- Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the PEP and periodic reviews of the PEP based on findings, and;
- Establish formal concern/resolution mechanisms and outline methods to incorporate input into the planning process and report back to stakeholders regarding the use of their input.

Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders are persons or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by a proposed action, as well as those who may have interests in the MTP process or the ability to influence or contribute to its outcomes.

Identify Stakeholders and Develop Contact List

An extensive effort was made to obtain and verify current email addresses for a broad range of organizations and individuals, in keeping with federal requirements and the MIC's commitment to seek out and consider the needs of

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION TOOL

The MIC's Stakeholder Identification Tool translates the requirements of CFR 450.316 into a detailed listing of local organizations and individuals potentially interested in and/or affected by the transportation policies and projects included in the MIC area MTP. Briefly, those interested parties included:

- Citizens/General Public
- Government and Public Agencies
- Public Transportation Operators and Users
- Private Transportation Operators
- Multimodal Freight Providers and Customers
- Non-Motorized/Active Transportation Advocates
- Human Services Providers and Recipients
- Natural and Historical Resource Preservation and Protection Groups and Agencies
- Business and Economic Development Interests
- Educational Institutions
- Tribal and Federal Lands Agencies

In addition to those identified by MIC staff, visitors to the Sustainable Choices 2050 website were invited to submit their email address if they were interested in receiving updates.

those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems.

A comprehensive mailing list was compiled that included interested parties (agencies, groups and individuals) as well as traditionally underserved groups and individuals as identified in the MIC’s Title VI plan.

Identified stakeholders also included current MIC Board and committee members as well as participants in MIC plans and studies over the past several years.

Example stakeholder groups are shown in Table 9.1.

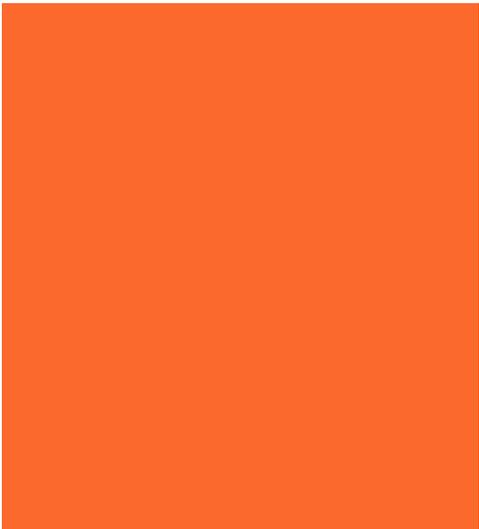
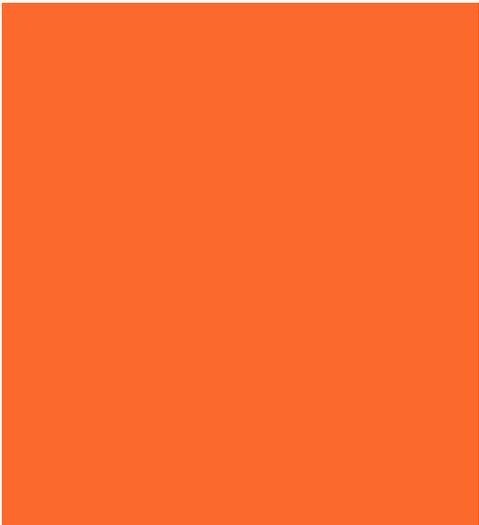


Figure 9.1 Example Stakeholder Groups

Traveling Public, Residents and Employees	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commuters
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visitors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residents within the MPA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Workers employed within the MPA
Government Officials	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Municipal elected and appointed officials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County elected and appointed officials
Transit Agencies	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Duluth Transit Authority
Special Interest Groups and Agencies	
	Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce
	Duluth Business Association
	West Duluth Business Club
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Emergency service providers
	School District Transportation Officials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sierra Club or other Environmental Organization
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bicycle Organizations

Environmental Justice, ADA, and Other Groups with Specialized Transportation Needs

Federally funded projects may not generate disproportionate adverse impacts on communities of environmental justice concern. By executive order, these groups include certain racial minorities, ethnic groups, and low-income persons. Similarly, the Americans with Disabilities Act requires transportation facilities be designed to adequately serve disabled persons. Other populations may also have specialized needs, such as young people and the elderly. The PEP recognized that



effectively engaging these persons in the planning process requires culturally sensitive outreach and developing partnerships with organizations serving environmental justice populations. The study team worked with MIC to determine appropriate organizations for consultation, relying on input from regional stakeholders.

Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Details about specific engagement activities are provided in Appendix C. Key activities included:

Develop a Brand

A project brand and logo was developed for use throughout the project to consistently identify the MTP for use across all print and electronic media and during public engagement activities.

Sustainable Choices 2050 web page

The project web page <https://dsmic.org/planning/long-range/> was developed and maintained as the primary resource for current information about the MTP. including:

- Background info and scope of work
- Link to online public survey
- Notifications of upcoming public meetings
- Links to draft plan chapters

Public Survey

The study team developed an online survey during the existing conditions and needs assessment phase of the MTP. The survey was publicized via a link to be distributed through the outreach contact list, MIC mailing lists, partner organization distribution,

Figure 9.2 Facebook Ad—MTP Public Survey



and via MIC social media. The survey allowed participants to describe their vision for the region’s transportation system, key areas of concern, and ideas for the future. Survey results were used to complement technical analyses in confirming the MTP goals and objectives and will also identify key transportation issues to be addressed through project development and evaluation. Over the course of the first phase of planning, 422 survey responses were received. A summary of survey outcomes is included in Appendix C.

MTP Advisory Committee

The MIC’s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of Duluth and Superior area planners, engineers and modal representatives, as a voice of many key stakeholders, was enlisted as the primary advisory group for the MTP.

Its purpose was to provide input on all aspects of the MTP during its development, by reviewing the vision and goals, providing feedback on chapters as they were drafted, and assessing key take-aways from data collected and public comments.

The MIC Board also received much the same information as the MTP Committee at several of its monthly meetings, and was appraised of primary comments and suggestions of the Advisory Committee.

Jurisdictional Consultations

As part of developing of the transportation project list and fiscal constraint components of the Plan , MIC planning staff met with officials from every MIC-area jurisdiction. For the first time these consultations were held as a group (Minnesota and Wisconsin) instead of individually.

The purpose of the consultations was for our jurisdictional partners to learn about the vision and goals of the MTP, and to share the key takeaways from our public involvement efforts to date.

It also served as an opportunity for a group discussion among the jurisdictions to share their transportation wants, needs and short– mid– and long-range projects to be considered for inclusion within the MTP.

They were also asked to share any known project ideas or

Who Was Involved

Public involvement is integral to good transportation planning. Key participants and opportunities included:

Advisory Committee—The MIC’s Transportation Advisory Committee was consulted on a nearly monthly basis during all phases of the Plan’s development.

MIC Policy Board—The MIC Policy Board was updated on a nearly monthly basis during all phases of the Plan’s development.

Public Survey—The online survey platform Survey Monkey was utilized in the early development of Sustainable Choices 2050.

Agency & Modal Consultations—MIC staff held 13 meetings with representatives from MIC-area jurisdictions and multimodal stakeholders to discuss key issues and gather information specific to each.

Focus Groups—AECOM & MIC staff facilitated 5 group discussions.

suggestions for future additional study within the next 25 years, and to identify which of the five planning perspectives/goals of *Sustainable Choices 2050* would be key drivers of each project idea or suggested study. Detailed information about the results of these consultations are presented in Appendix C.

Targeted Stakeholder Focus Groups

To develop in depth understanding of issues and opportunities, the MIC's consultants from AECOM conducted individual focus groups with leaders of stakeholder groups with special interests in regional transportation. These groups were identified with MIC staff based on key transportation issues indicated in the issues and opportunities analysis. AECOM and MIC staff, conducted three individual focus groups with leaders from stakeholder groups who have special interests in regional transportation in December 2023. These stakeholder groups were identified based on the key transportation issues highlighted in the issues and opportunities analysis:

- Pedestrian issues
- Sustainable transportation
- Equity and environmental justice
- Port and freight interests
- Older adults
- People with disabilities

Detailed information about the results of these consultations are presented in Appendix C.

Release of Draft Plan for Public Comment

The first draft of the document was submitted for initial review and comment by the FHWA, FTA, MnDOT and WisDOT on July 10 and 16. After incorporating many of those comments, the draft was released for the required 30-day public review and comment on 8/5/2024. A formal agency consultation will be held on August 8 and two public open houses will be held on August 14 and 15, at locations in Duluth and Superior, respectively. Public comments received, as well as the MIC's responses, will be included in the final plan.

Focus Groups

The stakeholder focus groups complement the MTP's public engagement effort in two ways:

First, it allowed a more in depth exploration of stakeholder values and perceptions in two focus areas that are important to the region's residents and elected and appointed officials.

Second, it allowed the plan to reflect the multiple viewpoints and voices of the Duluth-Superior region. As with the results of the public survey, findings from the focus groups were used in conjunction with analysis of transportation system performance to develop recommendations for long-term improvements to serve all travelers in the region.

10. Action Steps to Implement

This chapter identifies primary action steps to be taken by the MIC over the next five years—prior to the 2055 MTP update—to work toward achieving the vision, goals, and objectives of *Sustainable Choices 2050* across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan



Sustainable Choices 2050

Primary Action Steps to Implement	10-2
1. Incorporate Performance-Based Planning	10-2
2. Improve Safety	10-2
3. Prioritize an Integrated Multimodal System	10-3
4. Maintain System Infrastructure	10-4
5. Strive For An Equitable & Accessible System	10-5
6. Policy Development	10-5
7. Coordinated Regional Asset Management	10-6
8. Prepare for Blatnik Bridge Reconstruction	10-6

Primary Action Steps to Implement

The following are primary action steps recommended and anticipated to help realize and implement the vision of *Sustainable Choices 2050*, by ensuring its goals and objectives (identified in Chapter 2) are met. These action steps integrate updated local socioeconomic and travel demand data, public and stakeholder comments, input from the local jurisdictional consultations, and other planning factors received and used throughout the development of this plan.

This list is a more conceptual level, as development of each Action Step will result from continued partnership and discussion with appropriate key stakeholders moving forward.

1. Incorporate Performance-Based Planning

Now that a performance-based planning approach for prioritizing all proposed projects in this plan has been established (see Chapters 4 and 6) elements of this approach should integrate across relevant MIC planning processes. Most notably here are the anticipated updates to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.

2. Improve Safety

Summary Context

Safety is a significant concern for all users of our transportation system, especially for bicyclists, pedestrians, older adults, children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable users. Prioritizing cars along with the lack of safe, direct, and four-season pedestrian and/or cycling routes associated with the design of many roadways makes them uninviting and unsafe for non-motorized users. General lack of network connectivity and maintenance in numerous areas adds to safety concerns, especially for children and those with ambulatory difficulty. Snow and ice-covered pedestrian and bicycle lanes and paths exacerbates these concerns.

Safety Action Plans are a foundational component in improving traffic safety, as they articulate well-defined and measurable strategies to prevent road injuries and fatalities within a community. They require high levels of engagement, processes for data collection, and goal-setting.

Action Steps

- Develop a comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the entire MIC planning area (anticipated to be led by the MIC in CY 2025-2026).
- Completion of the Safety Action Plan will allow MIC area jurisdictions to apply for federal Implementation Grants to put the identified projects and strategies into effect.
- Ensure the roadway corridors and crossings within the priority project list of this plan identified for safety concerns (including 6th Avenue East/Central Entrance and West Superior Street, among others) include necessary safety improvements.
- As was recommended during a Focus Group discussion form an active group of appropriate stakeholders that explore safety concerns within our transportation network in a holistic, systemwide, all-user manner that considers the vision and safety-related goals of this plan.

3. Prioritize an Integrated Multimodal System

Summary Context

Certainly, many steps have already been taken to include more multimodal options within the MIC area. This action step is intended to continue this effort by exploring this topic in a more holistic, systemwide, all-user manner that considers the vision and numerous multimodal-related and livable community goals of this plan.

One way to prioritize a multimodal system is to keep in mind that while there is no doubt the majority of people regularly drive and ride in automobiles as a primary mode of travel in the MIC area, this does not mean all people do. Other transportation modes are also used, desired, and in some cases necessary for people to travel within, through, to, and from the MIC area, with people often using more than one mode in their door-to-door travel. Active transportation infrastructure enables other modes such as transit. It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to establish livable, connected, and equitable communities that meet the vision and multiple goals of this plan without prioritizing true multi-modal options as legitimate transportation routes.

Multimodal Freight Network

It should be noted that there is another version of a multimodal system that does not get considered as often with typical transportation planning discussions, and that is multimodal freight movement. The Duluth-Superior area has many multimodal options for freight movement that are essential for and support the local economy. However, sometimes the overall transportation network limits or is not able to integrate some of these multimodal freight options.

Action Steps

- Actively promote and support an integrated multimodal intermodal transportation system that functions well for all users.
- Prioritize vulnerable users of the transportation network.
- Complete updates to the MIC-area Bike Plan and Pedestrian Plan.
- Ensure implementation of the MIC area Bike Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Port Land Use Plan, and various local plans that help s prioritize an integrated multimodal transportation system.

4. Maintain System Infrastructure

Maintenance and preservation of the existing MIC area transportation system is a part of local jurisdictional work plans and budgets. Maintenance of our existing transportation system is strongly desired, including maintenance of all aspects of our transportation infrastructure (not simply road surfaces), as well as addressing inefficiencies within the system (such as right-sizing or road diets). This is important to all users, including the movement of both people and materials and goods, supporting both personal lives and the economy. A specific point heard repeatedly in survey responses and during focus groups is to prioritize and greatly improve the maintenance of sidewalks and bike lanes/paths. This has two forms. One is the physical condition of the surface (especially for sidewalks) including uneven surface, significant cracks, and crumbling pavement. The other is consistent removal of snow and ice from these surfaces, on par with vehicle surfaces, to enable year-round multimodal options for travel. It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to establish livable,

connected, and equitable communities that meet the vision and multiple goals of this plan without continually considering how to prioritize the whole-system maintenance needs of the MIC area transportation system for all its users.

5. Strive For An Equitable & Accessible System

Summary Context

At the core of *Sustainable Choices 2050* is ensuring equity and door-to-door accessibility for all users, whether public or private, for personal or business/commerce use. Equity and accessibility are intertwined within nearly all goals and objectives of this plan. Comments from stakeholder focus groups and survey responses suggest a community desire for a more equitable transportation network that ensures affordable and accessible transportation options for all people. People desire a network that enables them to move from one place to another efficiently and safely no matter their economic status, age, health, or physical condition.

Action Steps

- Ensure a fully equitable and accessible MIC area transportation network is considered in a holistic, systemwide, all-user manner that simultaneously considers the vision and all goals of this plan.
- Prioritize equity and accessibility within the MIC area transportation network when updating plans.
- Ensure the MIC's performance-based planning approach continually includes equity and accessibility metrics or review questions.
- Prioritize projects that include equity and accessibility improvements.

6. Policy Development

Summary Context

While improvements to the regional transportation system can be made directly through completing physical infrastructure projects, such as those listed in Chapter 6 of this plan, other improvements will be made through, or at least funded under, new or modified policies. Several policy development ideas to improve the MIC area transportation system have been identified during the development of this plan. It is recommended the MIC along with appropriate partners

consider these ideas, prioritize those that are viable, and determine the best pathways for assisting in developing these ideas into future policy. The importance of good policy in meeting goals is exemplified in two existing local examples. Both the St Louis County Transportation Fund and the City of Duluth specific tax for pothole and street repairs have led directly to improved roadway condition, improving the MIC area transportation system.

Action Steps

Some of the policy recommendations expressed during the development of this plan that can be considered include:

- Prioritize long-term budget for transportation planning beyond the current two-year cycle.
- Establish a transportation commission focus group in the region.
- Prioritize vulnerable users of the transportation system.
- Prioritize improving pedestrian and bike experiences, especially in areas identified as short trip generators.
- Prioritize transit as a primary means for meeting objectives, and reducing vehicle trips, miles travelled, and emissions.

7. Coordinated Regional Asset Management

Striving for fiscal sustainability is a key component of *Sustainable Choices 2050*. Given the significant rise in the cost of transportation infrastructure and the other regional challenges noted in this plan, conducting a coordinated regional asset management of the MIC area's transportation infrastructure seems prudent and an important step towards being able to plan for and prioritize a MIC area transportation system that is fiscally sustainable and helps implement the vision. This effort will require coordinated partnerships with and among all local jurisdictions. Perhaps focusing on primary corridors and/or infrastructure would be a useful way to begin implementing this action step.

8. Prepare for Blatnik Bridge Reconstruction

It is known that well-established local and regional traffic patterns will be disrupted during the estimated 4-5 years of closure of the Blatnik Bridge during reconstruction.

It is recommended that as the MPO for the Duluth-Superior

area, the MIC and appropriate partners and stakeholders invest time and resources to consider how best to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of the full closure of the Blatnik Bridge on the MIC area transportation system, including modeling anticipated adjusted traffic patterns, considering options, and implementing mitigative actions.

Further, it is recommended to work with, listen to, and inform both the public and business communities to prepare all users of the greater impacted system as early as possible in advance of the start of construction.

Appendix A

Federal Planning Factors

This appendix summarizes how Sustainable Choices 2050 considers and addresses the federally-required planning factors of 23 CFR 450.306(b).

The following are the federally-required planning factors of 23 CFR 450.306(b):

- 1) Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area [MIC area], especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- 2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- 3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- 4) Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- 6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- 7) Promote efficient system management and operation.
- 8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- 9) Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
- 10) Enhance travel and tourism.

Which Federal Planning Factor(s) Does Each Objective of *Sustainable Choices 2050* Address?

The following tables represent an index of 23 CFR 450.306(b) federal planning factors each plan objective addresses:

Goal 1 *Promote public health, protect and enhance the environment, and facilitate energy conservation throughout the Duluth-Superior area transportation system.*

	Objectives	Planning Factor(s) Addressed
1	Design and maintain infrastructure across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system to support and encourage a physically active everyday routine	2, 4, 5, 6, 9
2	Improve energy conservation related to the use and operation of the local and regional transportation system, for both environmental and public health benefits	5
3	Avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the negative environmental impacts of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	2, 5, 7, 8, 9

Goal 2 *Develop and maintain a reliable year-round Duluth-Superior area transportation system that equitably enables people of all ages, incomes, and abilities to engage in our community’s civic, economic, and social opportunities and access needed services.*

	Objectives	Planning Factor(s) Addressed
1	Ensure that investments in the Duluth-Superior area transportation system lead to improved and reliable transportation options for people of all ages, incomes, and abilities across all modes	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10
2	Ensure early and ongoing opportunities exist for the public to engage in two-way discussion about planned or proposed transportation improvements to the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	
3	Appropriately scale transportation-related projects across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	2, 5, 6, 7, 8
4	Make information about the Duluth-Superior area transportation system available to the public in a variety of ways	
5	Build and maintain Duluth-Superior area transportation system infrastructure in a manner that expands and/or enhances connectivity with key community resources (e.g., schools, parks, community centers, community gardens, the lakewalk, etc.)	4, 5, 6, 9, 10

Goal 3 *Ensure the safety and security of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all users and modes.*

	Objectives	Planning Factor(s) Addressed
1	Ensure emergency response, disaster preparedness, risk mitigation, and other security measures are implemented and maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10
2	Ensure evidence-based, data-supported safety design is incorporated into transportation projects	2, 3, 5, 7, 9
3	Improve safety for all users of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system, especially prioritizing its most vulnerable users	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
4	Meet all adopted safety-related federal and state performance measure targets	2
5	Maintain Duluth-Superior area transportation system infrastructure to minimize or mitigate risk for both people and freight	1, 2, 3, 8, 9
6	Use technology to improve the safety and security of the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	2, 3, 7

Goal 4 *Ensure the Duluth-Superior area transportation system is developed and maintained as an integrated multimodal network that efficiently gets people and goods where they need to go.*

	Objectives	Planning Factor(s) Addressed
1	Provide reliable and efficient travel options for the movement of people and goods across the entire Duluth-Superior area transportation system	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10
2	Address inefficiencies in the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all modes	1, 4, 6, 7, 10
3	Improve real-time travel across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for all modes	4, 7
4	Ensure that direct travel connections between modes of transportation for people exist and are maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10
5	Ensure that direct travel connections between modes of transportation for goods and services exist and are maintained across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
6	Meet all adopted federal and state performance measure targets for NHS infrastructure (PM2), system performance on the NHS (PM3), and transit asset management (TAM).	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10

Goal 5 *Develop and maintain the Duluth-Superior area transportation system to support economic productivity and competitiveness.*

	Objectives	Planning Factor(s) Addressed
1	Ensure the Duluth-Superior area transportation system provides access to and connection between key population and employment centers	1, 4, 5, 6
2	Improve access and mobility across the Duluth-Superior area transportation system for the movement of freight	1, 4, 5, 6
3	Promote Duluth-Superior area transportation system decisions and investments that enhance the regional and global competitiveness of the Duluth-Superior Port	1, 5, 9, 10
4	Promote Duluth-Superior area transportation system decisions and investments that stimulate neighborhood and regional economic activity	1, 5, 6, 9, 10
5	Make it easier to travel to tourist destinations and events	1, 4, 6, 10
6	Integrate existing economic development plan recommendations when making decisions about Duluth-Superior area transportation system projects	1, 5

Appendix B

2050 Demographic Trends & Regional Travel Analysis Report

This update of demographic trends & regional travel analysis report for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area was prepared by AECOM for the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC).

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

2050 Demographic Trends & Regional Travel Analysis Report

Summary of Findings

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) is a federally designated MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization). The MIC is a bi-state MPO comprised of four cities, six townships, and one county in Minnesota and one city, two villages, three towns, and one county in Wisconsin, comprising a total MIC area of 641 square miles. As part of the development of the MIC's 2050 long range transportation plan a thorough review of demographic trends and regional travel patterns was completed to understand the existing conditions and current transportation needs in the MIC area. The results of the demographic trends and regional travel patterns influence the long-range transportation plan through identifying stakeholders, identifying transportation project opportunities, transportation project development, and project scoring.

An update to the demographic trends was completed utilizing the most recent available 2020 US Census and ACS (American community survey) 2021 data. There have been few changes to the population and demographics within the MIC area for many decades. In fact, regional population has been stable since at least 1980. Still, after reviewing the 2020 Census and 2021 ACS data there are some fluctuations in population that tell a story. The overall MIC area population from 2015 – 2020 decreased, however more recent 2021 data shows an increase in population between 2020 and 2021, leading to an overall rise in regional population from 2015 – 2021. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this population increase could be due to remote workers moving away from larger cities and/or retirees moving into the region.

In addition to the population shift, the MIC area is becoming more diverse with 10% of the population identifying as racially diverse, 2% identifying as ethnically diverse, and 10% of the population identifying as speaking English less than very well. Income percentages remain consistent at 5.7% of families living below the poverty level within the MIC area.

To better understand transportation needs, a review of existing regional travel patterns was conducted using the Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data and Replica, a data mobility model. Commuter patterns to the MIC area, within the MIC area, and out of the MIC area were compared to 2015. The results showed significantly more commuters traveling to the MIC area from elsewhere or traveling outside the MIC area from within the MIC area. These results indicate more commutes are being made to and from the MIC area. There are also a larger number of commutes at a distance of 25 miles or greater. It is reasonable to assume at least a portion of these commutes represent remote workers who aren't making daily commutes in and out of the MIC area, but who are commuting further on fewer occasions.

Finally, Replica was used to assess short trip patterns within the MIC area. Most short trips start and end in five key areas or zones including Downtown Duluth, Downtown Superior, University of Minnesota-Duluth, West Duluth, and the Miller Hill mall commercial area. Understanding travel patterns in these zones can be helpful in encouraging future projects that would help bring the MIC area's long range transportation vision to life.

Demographic Trends Update

An assessment of the current and future transportation needs in the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area begins with a look at the existing demographics. The size, makeup, and characteristics of the population exhibit a wide range of demands throughout the transportation system. Together, these characteristics influence travel patterns and preferences. An update to the demographic trends was completed utilizing the most recent available 2020 US Census and ACS (American Community Survey) 2021 data.

Population Trends

While the 2020 Census data shows an overall decrease in population in the MIC area, anecdotal evidence supports that there may be a slight influx in population since 2020 from other cities due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of remote work¹. Despite the potential COVID-19 migration, the population changes remain small and relatively stable. In addition to the anecdotal evidence, American Community Survey (ACS) 2021 shows an increase to the population, up 1,586 from 2020 and up 816 from 2015.

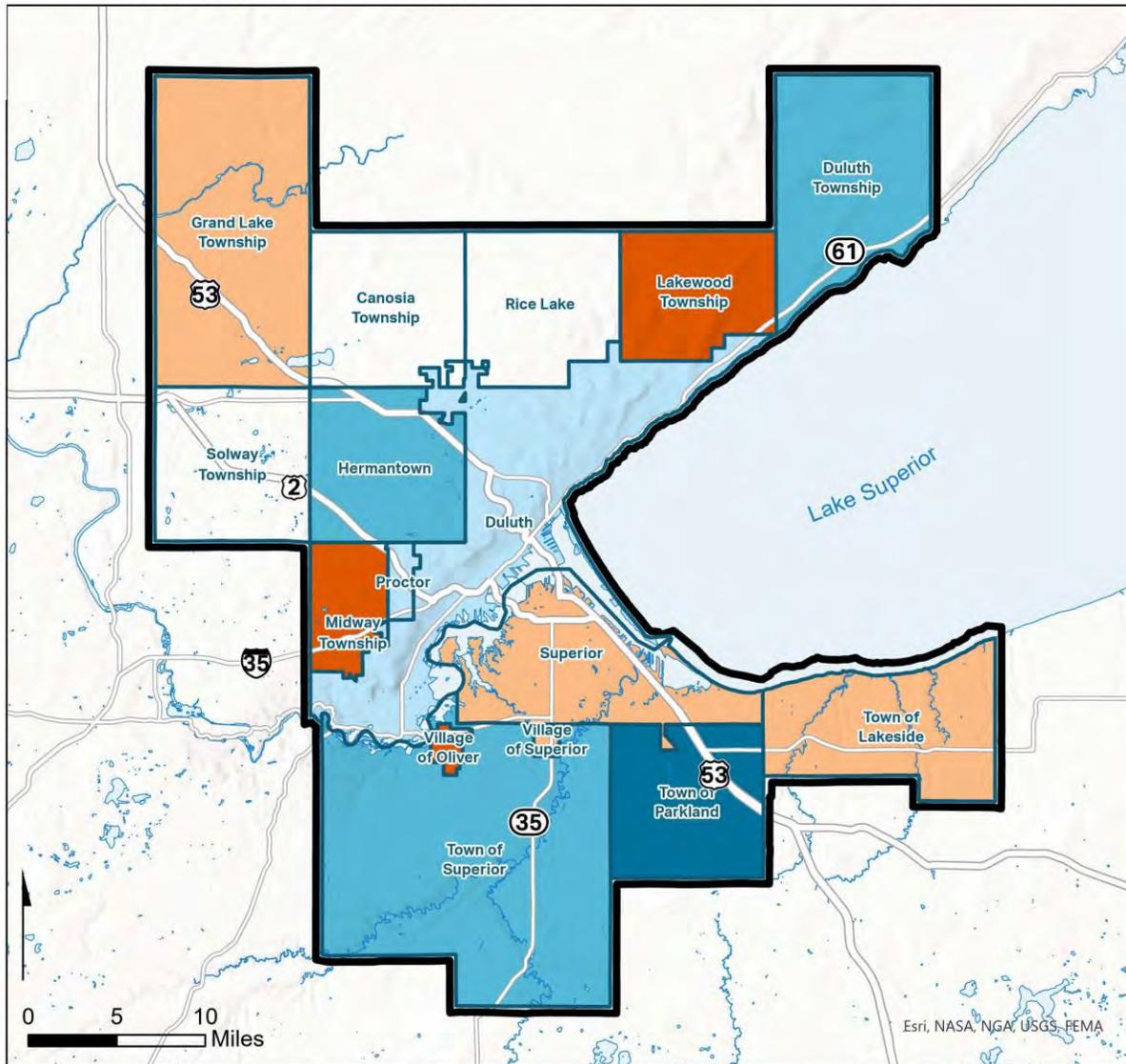
Much of the growth continues to occur outside of Superior, which has continued to lose population between 2015 and 2020. The growth is concentrated on the Minnesota side of the harbor with the Wisconsin side losing population overall between 2015 and 2020 (although the 2021 data show a slight increase over 2015). The areas of growth are varied, with the Township of Superior, Township of Duluth and Township of Parkland seeing the highest increases in population between 2015 and 2020, and the Cities of Duluth and Hermantown and the Town of Parkland showing the greatest growth when accounting for the 2021 population change.

¹ 'The Places Most Affected by Remote Workers' Moves Around the Country'. Emily Badger, Robert Gebeloff and Josh Katz. The New York Times. June 17, 2023.

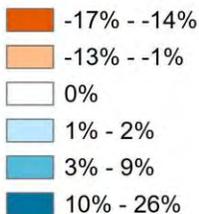
Figure 1: Change in population by Municipality



Sustainable Choices 2050



Percent Change in Population 2015 - 2021



Source: American Community Survey 2015, 2021 Table B01003

Table 1. Historic Population Trends

		2000	2010	2015	2020	2015-2020	2021	2015-2021
1	United States	281,421,906	308,745,538	316,515,021	331,449,281	14,934,260		
2	Minnesota	4,919,479	5,303,925	5,419,171	5,706,494	287,323		
3	Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,742,117	5,893,718	151,601		
7	St. Louis County, Minnesota	200,528	200,226	200,506	200,231	(275)		
8	Douglas County, Wisconsin	43,287	44,159	43,799	44,295	496		
9	MIC (MN)	113,033	115,242	115,719	115,316	(403)	116,352	633
10	Duluth city	86,918	86,265	86,178	85,852	(326)	86,711	533
11	Hermantown city	7,448	9,414	9,627	9,577	(50)	10,128	501
12	Proctor city	2,852	3,057	3,060	3,039	(21)	3,113	53
13	Rice Lake city	4,139	4,095	4,119	4,136	17	4,114	(5)
14	Grand Lake township	2,621	2,779	2,789	2,793	4	2,728	(61)
15	Lakewood township	2,013	2,190	2,449	2,177	(272)	2,117	(332)
16	Canosia township	1,998	2,158	2,213	2,328	115	2,210	(3)
17	Solway township	1,842	1,944	1,919	1,995	76	1,924	5
18	Duluth township	1,723	1,941	1,872	2,061	189	2,040	168
19	Midway township	1,479	1,399	1,493	1,358	(135)	1,267	(226)
20	MIC (WI)	32,133	32,386	31,822	31,455	(367)	32,005	183
21	Superior city	27,368	27,244	26,817	26,260	(557)	26,601	(216)
22	Superior town	2,058	2,166	2,035	2,103	68	2,167	132
23	Parkland town	1,240	1,220	1,330	1,553	223	1,670	340
24	Lakeside town	609	693	581	552	(29)	574	(7)
25	Superior village	500	664	700	709	9	696	(4)
26	Oliver village	358	399	359	278	(81)	297	(62)
27	Total MIC	145,166	147,628	147,541	146,771	(770)	148,357	816

Source: Census 2000, 2010, 2020 Table DP1, American Community Survey 2015 Table B01003

Population Projections (2050)

The historical population trends, as displayed in table 1 above, serve as the basis for developing the population projections that were used to model future year conditions for the LRTP scenarios. According to the 2020 US Census the population of the MIC is 146,771, a more recent population estimate from the American Community Survey five-year estimates is 148,357. Table 2 below shows a project population of 152,587 in the MIC, an increase of 2.8% from the 2021 ACS population. The biggest increases in projected population are in the Cities of Proctor, Hermantown and Superior.

Table 2. Projected 2050 Population

		2020 US Census Population	2021 ACS Population	2050 Projected Population	Change 2021-2050	Percent Change 2021-2050
9	MIC (MN)	115,316	116,352	120,053	3,701	3.1%
10	Duluth city	85,852	86,711	89,126	2,415	2.7%
11	Hermantown city	9,577	10,128	10,672	544	5.3%
12	Proctor city	3,039	3,113	3,400	287	9.2%
13	Rice Lake city	4,136	4,114	4,119	-	-
14	Grand Lake township	2,793	2,728	2,789	-	-
15	Lakewood township	2,177	2,117	2,449	-	-
16	Canosia township	2,328	2,210	2,213	-	-
17	Solway township	1,995	1,924	1,919	-	-
18	Duluth township	2,061	2,040	1,872	-	-
19	Midway township	1,358	1,267	1,493	-	-
20	MIC (WI)	31,455	32,005	32,534	529	1.6%
21	Superior city	26,260	26,601	27,529	928	3.4%
22	Superior town	2,103	2,167	2,035	-	-
23	Parkland town	1,553	1,670	1,330	-	-
24	Lakeside town	552	574	581	-	-
25	Superior village	709	696	700	-	-
26	Oliver village	278	297	359	-	-
27	Total MIC	146,771	148,357	152,587	4,230	2.8%

Source: Census 2020 Table DP1, American Community Survey 2021 Table B01003, MIC Travel Model

Population Characteristics

Age

The Duluth-Superior MIC's population continues to follow nationwide trends, with the proportion of older individuals increasing as the baby boomer generation ages. As shown in Figure 1, the area with higher concentrations of populations above 65 include the City of Duluth and the City of Superior.

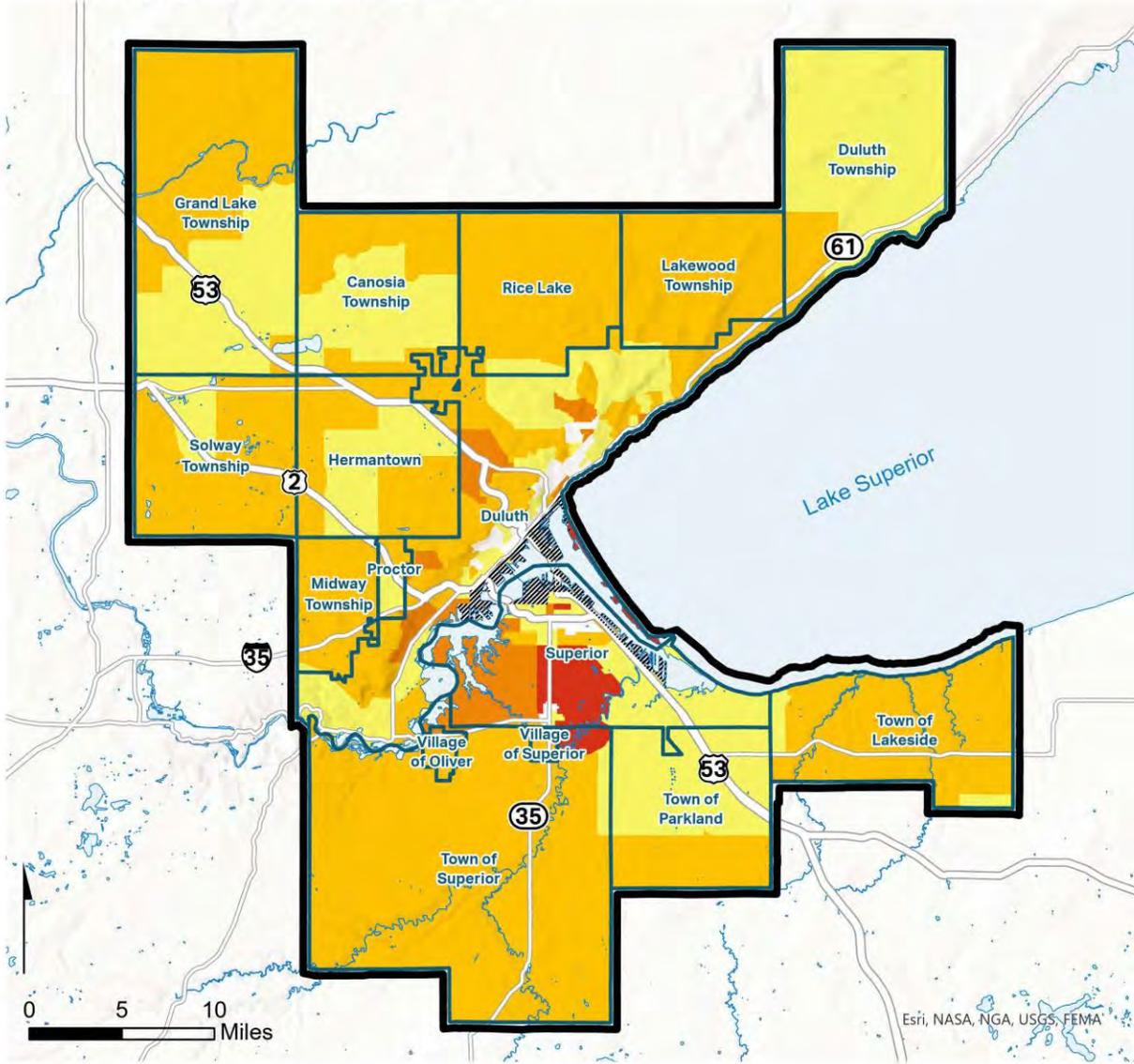
A variation between the Duluth-Superior region and the nation is the number of young people (18 and younger). The MIC area has fewer persons in this age group compared to the nation, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. However, due to presence of the the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the University of Wisconsin-Superior, there is a large population of 18-24 year olds.

Both younger and older populations represent unique transportation needs and preferences. Young people tend to prefer walking, biking, transit and other modes of transportation and travel by car less. The aging population will also continue to increase the demand for more accessible transportation options in the MIC area.

Figure 2: Age Distribution 2021



Sustainable Choices 2050



Population 65 and Over

Population Over 65

- 0% - 9%
- 10% - 18%
- 19% - 26%
- 27% - 35%
- 36% - 44%

Port Land



Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table B01001

Table 3. Population Aged 18 and Under and 65 and Over (2020)

Geography	Total:	Under 18 years of age	%	Over 65 years of age	%
United States	326,569,308	73,296,738	22.4%	52,362,817	16.0%
Minnesota	5,600,166	1,299,284	23.2%	887,576	15.8%
Wisconsin	5,806,975	1,274,321	21.9%	982,799	16.9%
St. Louis County, MN	199,499	37,883	19.0%	38,652	19.4%
Douglas County, WI	43,497	8,587	19.7%	8,079	18.6%
MIC (MN)	115,316	22,084	19.2%	18,536	16.1%
<i>Duluth city</i>	85,852	15,381	17.9%	13,412	15.6%
<i>Hermantown city</i>	9,577	2,543	26.6%	1,493	15.6%
<i>Proctor city</i>	3,039	685	22.5%	676	22.2%
<i>Rice Lake city</i>	4,136	698	16.9%	815	19.7%
<i>Grand Lake township</i>	2,793	605	21.7%	380	13.6%
<i>Lakewood township</i>	2,177	497	22.8%	382	17.5%
<i>Canosia township</i>	2,328	519	22.3%	385	16.5%
<i>Solway township</i>	1,995	448	22.5%	369	18.5%
<i>Duluth township</i>	2,061	482	23.4%	377	18.3%
<i>Midway township</i>	1,358	226	16.6%	247	18.2%
MIC (WI)	31,455	6,297	20.0%	5,160	16.4%
<i>Superior city</i>	26,260	5,305	20.2%	4,133	15.7%
<i>Superior town</i>	2,103	320	15.2%	504	24.0%
<i>Parkland town</i>	1,553	379	24.4%	221	14.2%
<i>Lakeside town</i>	552	104	18.8%	88	15.9%
<i>Superior village</i>	709	146	20.6%	154	21.7%
<i>Oliver village</i>	278	43	15.5%	60	21.6%
Total MIC	146,771	28,381	19.3%	23,696	16.1%

Source: 2020 Census Table S0101

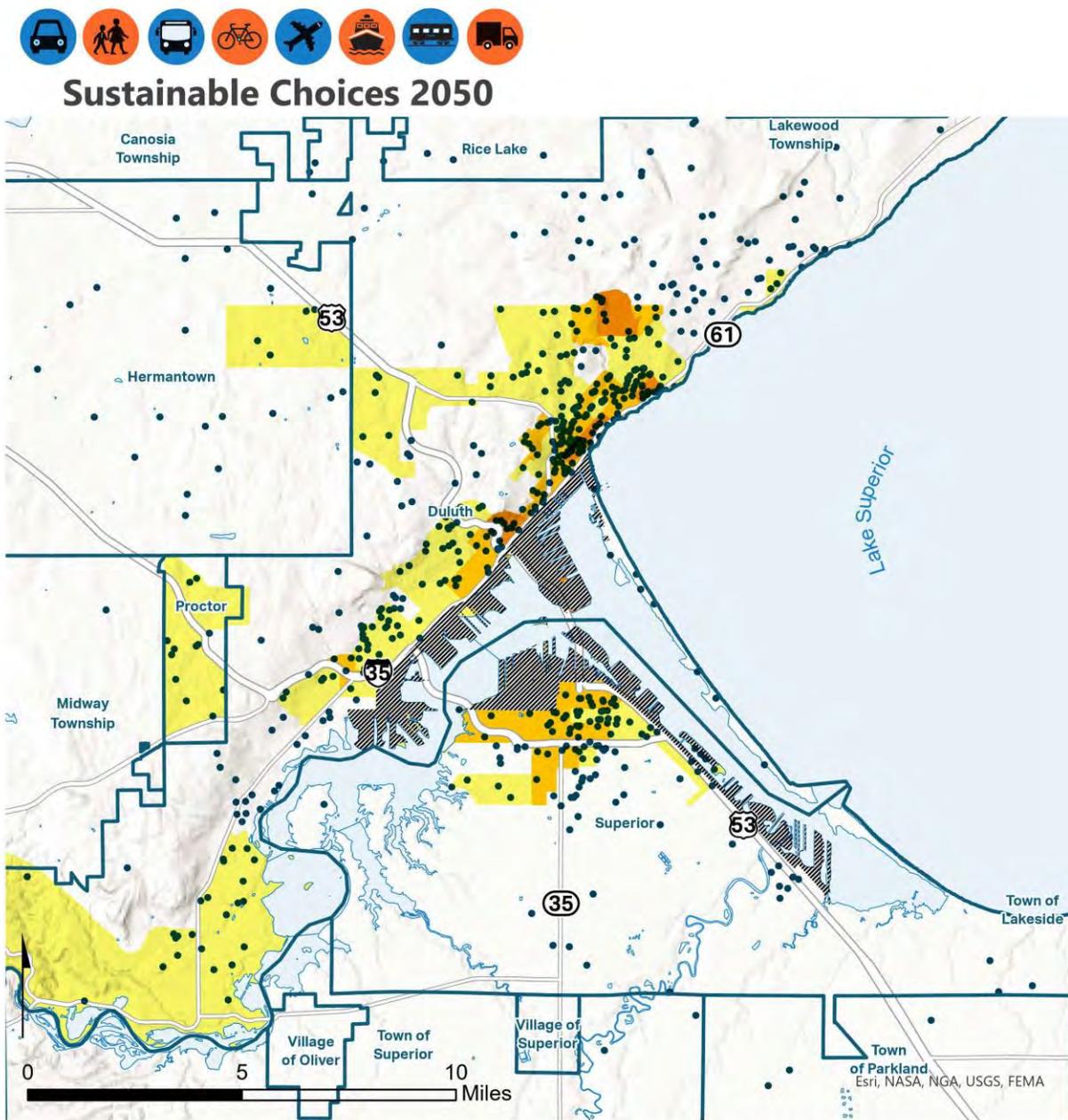
Populations of Special Transportation Concern

In addition to younger and older people, some additional populations in the MIC area exhibit particular needs in terms of the region's transportation system, including persons with disabilities, communities with environmental justice concerns including low income persons and those who are racially and ethnically diverse. Communities with environmental justice concerns are those that have been historically underserved or adversely impacted by transportation policy and system development. Environmental justice populations have unique transportation needs and preferences that must be understood when planning for public transportation projects.

Communities of environmental justice concerns are statistically more likely to have limited or no access to a vehicle and be dependent on public transit. They may also be more likely to walk or bike to destinations. People with limited proficiency in English may have difficulties attaining drivers' licenses or navigating transit systems. Finally, all persons with ambulatory difficulties face additional transportation barriers. These populations in the MIC area were identified using the 2020 Census and American Community Survey (2021) for population race, ethnic origin, poverty, income, ambulatory difficulties, persons speaking English less than 'very well', and vehicle access.

Tables 3 - 8 and Figures 3 - 5 describe the presence, magnitude, and home locations of these populations in the MIC area. Low-income populations, as defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), are those living with income less than 200% of the poverty level and makes up nearly 20% of the population in the MIC area. There is also a significant population without access to a vehicle within the MIC area. Finally, diversity of race and ethnicity in the region is on the rise.

Figure 3: Minority and Low-Income Populations



Presence of Protected Populations in the Study Area

- Low Income* Population**
- 0% - 30%
 - 31% - 50%
 - 51% - 70%
 - 71% - 90%
 - 91% - 100%

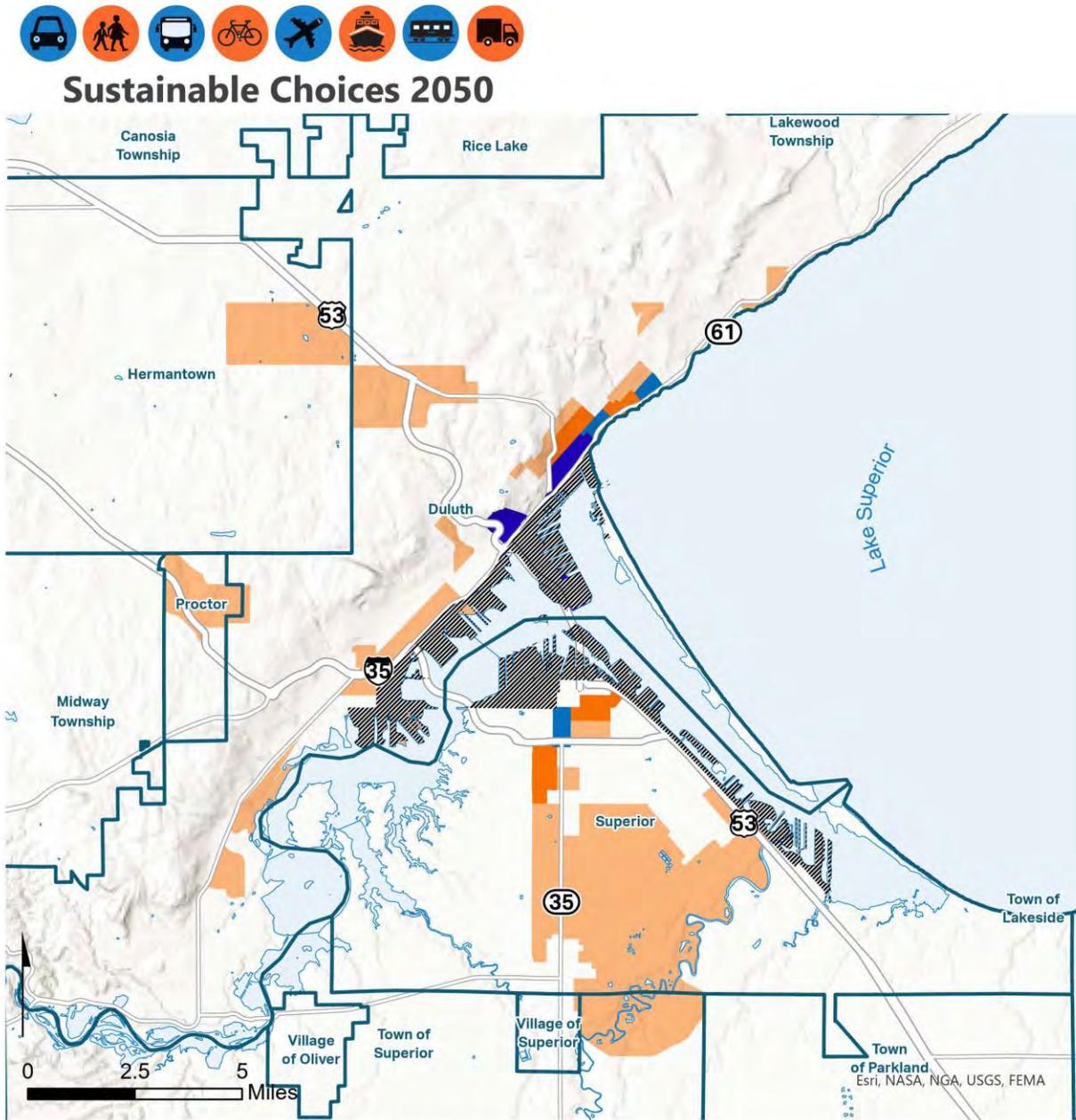
- Minority Persons**
- 1 dot represents 5 people of color

- Port Land**
- ▨

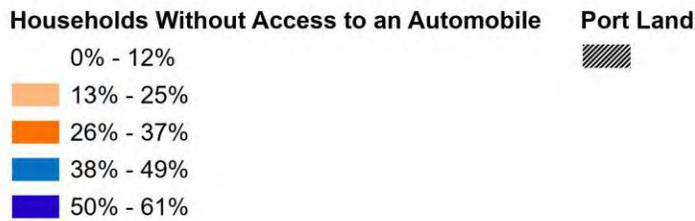
*Less than 200% of the poverty level

Source: ACS 2021 Various Tables

Figure 4: Automobile Access



Low Access to Automobiles



Source: ACS 2021 Table B25044

Race and Hispanic Origin

While gradual, the MIC area is trending more racially and ethnically diverse. Even since 2015, the population has become more diverse. In 2015 individuals identifying as 'white alone' made up 92% of the MIC area's population and in 2020 this population is down to 90.7%, with two or more races making up 4% of the total population. Hispanic or Latino individuals account for 2% of the MIC area's population, consistent with 2015. Additionally, the proportion of the population who report low proficiency with English has also grown in the region. In 2015, 9% of the MIC area's population spoke English less than 'very well', in 2020 that has increased to 10%. While these numbers aren't as high as other metropolitan areas in the nation, they make up an important and growing population within the MIC area with unique transportation needs.

Table 4. Population Race (2020)

Geography	Total:	White	Black or African American	American Indian & Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races:	% Minority Excluding White Alone
1 United States	333,287,562	202,889,017	40,603,656	3,205,331	19,696,980	665,807	24,444,482	41,782,289	39.12%
2 Minnesota	5,717,184	4,415,751	398,326	54,420	295,892	2,821	167,186	382,788	22.76%
3 Wisconsin	5,892,539	4,737,427	352,022	44,394	173,310	2,732	115,296	467,358	19.60%
7 St. Louis County, MN	199,532	179,813	3,431	3,604	1,578	0	956	10,150	9.88%
8 Douglas County, WI	43,497	40,071	546	798	543	0	239	1,300	7.88%
9 MIC (MN)	115,316	104,366	2,344	1,758	1,384	39	540	4,885	9.50%
10 Duluth city	85,852	76,475	2,057	1,462	1,193	30	488	4,147	10.92%
11 Hermantown city	9,577	8,786	233	92	60	9	30	367	8.26%
12 Proctor city	3,039	2,849	2	59	93	0	0	36	6.25%
13 Rice Lake city	4,136	3,999	0	22	6	0	22	87	3.31%
14 Grand Lake township	2,793	2,616	40	24	16	0	0	97	6.34%
15 Lakewood township	2,177	2,105	1	20	10	0	0	41	3.31%
16 Canosia township	2,328	2,328	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
17 Solway township	1,995	1,924	0	56	0	0	0	15	3.56%
18 Duluth township	2,061	1,979	11	0	6	0	0	65	3.98%
19 Midway township	1,358	1,305	0	23	0	0	0	30	3.90%
20 MIC (WI)	31,455	28,840	450	567	519	0	55	1,024	8.31%
21 Superior city	26,260	23,775	447	519	507	0	50	962	9.46%
22 Superior town	2,103	2,076	0	7	5	0	0	15	1.28%
23 Parkland town	1,553	1,493	0	35	3	0	0	22	3.86%
24 Lakeside town	552	549	0	0	0	0	2	1	0.54%
25 Superior village	709	678	3	4	0	0	3	21	4.37%
26 Oliver village	278	269	0	2	4	0	0	3	3.24%
27 Total MIC	146,771	133,206	2,794	2,325	1,903	39	595	5,909	9.24%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table P9

Table 5. Population Hispanic Ethnicity (2020)

Geography	Total (2020):	Hispanic or Latino (2020)	%
United States	333,287,562	63,553,639	19%
Minnesota	5,717,184	333,830	6%
Wisconsin	5,892,539	447,022	8%
St. Louis County, MN	199,532	3,906	2%
Douglas County, WI	43,497	730	2%
MIC (MN)	115,316	2,736	2%
<i>Duluth city</i>	85,852	2,206	3%
<i>Hermantown city</i>	9,577	191	2%
<i>Proctor city</i>	3,039	145	5%
<i>Rice Lake city</i>	4,136	22	1%
<i>Grand Lake township</i>	2,793	24	1%
<i>Lakewood township</i>	2,177	92	4%
<i>Canosia township</i>	2,328	17	1%
<i>Solway township</i>	1,995	35	2%
<i>Duluth township</i>	2,061	4	0%
<i>Midway township</i>	1,358	-	0%
MIC (WI)	31,455	577	2%
<i>Superior city</i>	26,260	543	2%
<i>Superior town</i>	2,103	-	0%
<i>Parkland town</i>	1,553	19	1%
<i>Lakeside town</i>	552	4	1%
<i>Superior village</i>	709	10	1%
<i>Oliver village</i>	278	1	0%
Total MIC	146,771	3,313	2%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table P9

Table 6. Population speaking English less than ‘very well’

Geography	Total:	Speak English less than "very well":	Speak Spanish:	Speak other Indo-European languages:	Speak Asian and Pacific Island Languages:	Speak other languages:
United States	306,919,116	66,093,076	40,537,337	11,270,634	10,800,470	3,484,635
Minnesota	5,249,062	622,132	203,634	104,185	179,091	135,222
Wisconsin	5,475,909	475,226	254,258	102,875	94,786	23,307
St. Louis County, MN	189,486	6,586	2,070	1,863	1,014	1,639
Douglas County, WI	41,410	1,143	304	318	398	123
MIC (MN)	108,972	976	1,619	1,453	632	809
<i>Duluth city</i>	81,122	870	1,368	1,219	608	685
<i>Hermantown city</i>	8,952	18	110	94	-	24
<i>Proctor city</i>	2,901	45	7	61	13	12
<i>Rice Lake city</i>	3,971	-	49	15	2	49
<i>Grand Lake township</i>	2,614	12	30	15	-	6
<i>Lakewood township</i>	2,027	9	20	10	4	4
<i>Canosia township</i>	2,204	11	11	14	-	-
<i>Solway township</i>	1,915	3	10	3	-	2
<i>Duluth township</i>	1,961	4	5	17	5	14
<i>Midway township</i>	1,305	4	9	5	-	13
MIC (WI)	29,928	457	230	258	386	96
<i>Superior city</i>	24,938	434	217	225	376	78
<i>Superior town</i>	2,043	11	7	10	5	-
<i>Parkland town</i>	1,489	5	4	16	3	18
<i>Lakeside town</i>	521	-	2	2	-	-
<i>Superior village</i>	680	3	-	3	-	-
<i>Oliver village</i>	257	4	-	2	2	-
Total MIC	138,900	1,433	1,849	1,711	1,018	905

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table S1601

Poverty and Income

The MIC area has seen little change in poverty for the last several decades. The proportion of families living in poverty is less than the national average. However, any family living in poverty

faces additional challenges including those related to transportation. Table 6 below shows the number and percentage of families living in poverty by municipality within the MIC area in comparison to the United States and Minnesota and Wisconsin. The threshold for poverty varies based on family size with \$13,171 at the low end (family of one person) and \$53,905 at the high end (families of nine or more persons). Families living below 200% of the poverty level are still considered 'low income'.

Table 7 shows household income within the MIC area by municipality in comparison to the United States and Minnesota and Wisconsin. Despite the MIC area having fewer families living below the poverty level, the median household income for low-income households is less, on average, than the United States and Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Table 7. Poverty by Families

Geography	All Families	Percent Below Poverty Level:	Families of 3 or 4 People	Percent Below Poverty Level:	All Families with Income Below 200% of the Poverty Level	Percent Below 200% of the Poverty Level
United States	79,849,830	9.1%	32,207,636	9.5%	18,793,647	23.5%
Minnesota	1,404,798	5.6%	536,202	5.5%	230,260	16.4%
Wisconsin	1,479,364	6.8%	541,985	7.5%	287,447	19.4%
St. Louis County, MN	48,309	6.9%	16,350	7.5%	9,254	19.2%
Douglas County, WI	11,423	7.8%	739	12.6%	2,380	20.8%
MIC (MN)	25,951	5.7%	9,506	4.9%	4,488	17.3%
<i>Duluth city</i>	17,944	7.2%	6,465	6.1%	3,566	19.9%
<i>Hermantown city</i>	2,414	3.4%	1,088	5.6%	256	10.6%
<i>Proctor city</i>	756	0.9%	300	0.0%	126	16.7%
<i>Rice Lake city</i>	1,199	2.3%	377	0.0%	197	16.4%
<i>Grand Lake township</i>	752	3.9%	318	2.5%	51	6.8%
<i>Lakewood township</i>	677	1.5%	186	2.7%	70	10.3%
<i>Canosia township</i>	605	0.7%	250	0.0%	95	15.7%
<i>Solway township</i>	618	0.5%	216	0.0%	66	10.7%
<i>Duluth township</i>	615	1.1%	188	0.0%	47	7.6%
<i>Midway township</i>	371	1.6%	118	0.0%	14	3.8%
MIC (WI)	7,905	8.8%	2,895	7.0%	1,814	22.9%
<i>Superior city</i>	6,315	10.4%	2,306	8.7%	1,625	25.7%
<i>Superior town</i>	697	1.9%	271	0.0%	90	12.9%
<i>Parkland town</i>	442	1.4%	155	1.9%	52	11.8%
<i>Lakeside town</i>	169	5.3%	44	0.0%	13	7.7%
<i>Superior village</i>	190	2.6%	89	0.0%	19	10.0%
<i>Oliver village</i>	92	5.4%	30	0.0%	15	16.3%
Total MIC	33,856	6.4%	12,401	5.4%	6,302	18.6%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table S1901

Table 8. Household Income

Geography	Total households:	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	Median income (dollars)
United States	122,354,219	5.8%	4.1%	8.5%	8.6%	12.0%	17.2%	12.8%	15.6%	64,994.00
Minnesota	2,207,988	4.1%	3.4%	7.0%	7.5%	11.5%	17.4%	14.1%	18.3%	73,382.00
Wisconsin	2,377,935	4.6%	4.1%	8.6%	9.0%	13.0%	18.9%	14.1%	16.3%	63,293.00
St. Louis County, MN	86,229	6.8%	4.5%	9.9%	9.8%	13.3%	18.5%	12.5%	15.9%	57,480.00
Douglas County, WI	18,994	5.2%	5.5%	9.9%	10.8%	13.2%	18.1%	14.3%	15.9%	56,855.00
MIC (MN)	48,035	6.4%	4.2%	9.6%	9.7%	12.5%	18.3%	12.5%	16.0%	
Duluth city	36,526	7.5%	4.8%	10.8%	10.1%	13.5%	19.0%	11.3%	13.7%	54,084.00
Hermantown city	3,546	3.0%	0.8%	8.4%	13.3%	9.8%	13.7%	12.5%	17.9%	80,500.00
Proctor city	1,222	2.5%	5.2%	8.1%	12.0%	10.4%	16.6%	12.4%	25.4%	61,176.00
Rice Lake city	1,814	5.8%	2.4%	4.5%	5.7%	10.0%	16.9%	17.2%	25.9%	78,795.00
Grand Lake township	1,026	3.1%	4.0%	3.6%	4.1%	5.8%	11.2%	19.8%	27.3%	98,583.00
Lakewood township	832	1.6%	2.6%	4.1%	3.1%	9.5%	15.7%	23.8%	24.0%	90,692.00
Canosia township	866	0.0%	1.5%	2.9%	6.7%	5.9%	27.1%	18.8%	28.9%	81,806.00
Solway township	804	2.6%	1.0%	4.4%	7.1%	15.2%	13.1%	19.8%	28.4%	85,625.00
Duluth township	812	0.2%	2.3%	4.4%	7.0%	7.6%	17.1%	14.4%	21.3%	91,875.00
Midway township	587	1.2%	0.7%	4.4%	5.5%	9.5%	24.5%	20.4%	22.1%	78,083.00
MIC (WI)	13,904	5.3%	6.2%	10.8%	11.7%	13.1%	17.7%	13.3%	14.9%	
Superior city	11,726	5.4%	7.0%	12.0%	12.7%	13.8%	16.7%	13.0%	13.8%	48,830.00
Superior town	907	4.0%	1.7%	5.1%	6.4%	6.6%	18.2%	16.8%	21.3%	88,309.00
Parkland town	587	4.6%	1.2%	1.0%	6.5%	11.1%	27.1%	11.1%	28.1%	73,988.00
Lakeside town	252	11.5%	0.0%	8.3%	1.6%	9.5%	27.0%	18.7%	15.9%	67,500.00
Superior village	293	3.4%	5.1%	3.4%	7.2%	12.6%	26.3%	16.7%	15.7%	68,162.00
Oliver village	139	3.6%	1.4%	3.6%	16.5%	15.8%	28.8%	12.2%	11.5%	54,464.00
Total MIC	61,939	6.1%	4.6%	9.9%	10.2%	12.7%	18.2%	12.7%	15.8%	

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table S1910

Ambulatory Difficulty

The census defines an ambulatory difficulty as those who have ‘serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs’. Since 2015, the proportion of the MIC population reporting an ambulatory difficult has decreased from 7% to 5.6%. Despite this reduction, this population’s mobility needs are vital to consider when making transportation planning decisions.

Table 9. Population with ambulatory difficulty

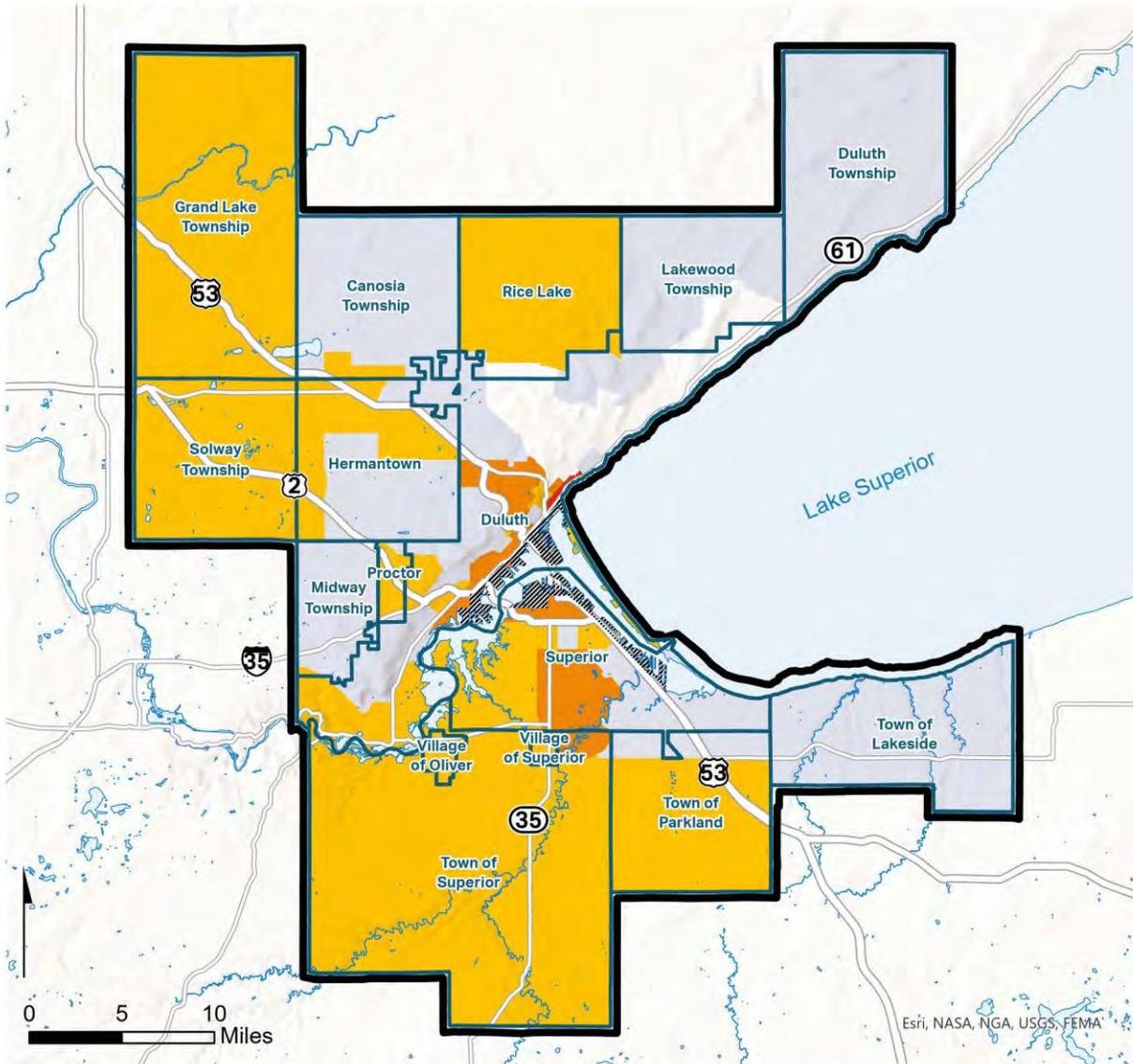
	Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	With an ambulatory difficulty:	Population under 18 years	Population 18 to 34 years	Population 35 to 64 years	Population 65 to 74 years	Population 75 years and over
United States	321,525,041	20,630,366	318,839	947,468	8,369,443	4,453,604	6,541,012
Minnesota	5,541,421	260,240	4,608	12,175	98,594	53,588	91,275
Wisconsin	5,735,703	319,970	4,673	14,877	127,307	68,291	104,822
St. Louis County, MN	196,204	11,879	165	652	5,114	1,999	3,949
Douglas County, WI	42,921	2,571	5	115	1,166	644	641
MIC (MN)	112,785	6,113	87	478	2,572	917	2,059
<i>Duluth city</i>	84,257	4,382	41	227	2,008	679	1,427
<i>Hermantown city</i>	8,931	564	-	200	117	48	199
<i>Proctor city</i>	2,907	252	35	11	99	37	70
<i>Rice Lake city</i>	4,124	283	-	-	85	29	169
<i>Grand Lake township</i>	2,665	83	-	10	45	4	24
<i>Lakewood township</i>	2,177	133	-	5	36	51	41
<i>Canosia township</i>	2,325	133	4	-	95	8	26
<i>Solway township</i>	1,984	146	7	16	34	37	52
<i>Duluth township</i>	2,057	64	-	4	28	14	18
<i>Midway township</i>	1,358	73	-	5	25	10	33
MIC (WI)	30,993	1,925	4	89	871	508	453
<i>Superior city</i>	25,821	1,662	4	89	759	432	378
<i>Superior town</i>	2,103	72	-	-	18	37	17
<i>Parkland town</i>	1,550	83	-	-	37	18	28
<i>Lakeside town</i>	552	44	-	-	26	5	13
<i>Superior village</i>	689	49	-	-	28	13	8
<i>Oliver village</i>	278	15	-	-	3	3	9
Total MIC	143,778	8,038	91	567	3,443	1,425	2,512

Source: American Community Survey 2021 Table S1810

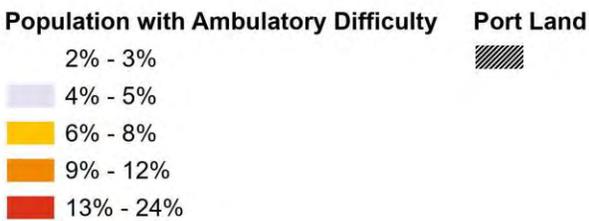
Figure 5: Ambulatory Difficulty



Sustainable Choices 2050



Individuals Reporting Ambulatory Difficulty



Source: ACS 2021 Table S1810

Regional Travel Patterns

The Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data is one of the most comprehensive datasets available regarding employment and worker flow. The data is drawn from state unemployment insurance (UI) earnings records that provide a link between home location and job location. In some cases, the UI records may link employees to a payroll location they do not actually commute to. Additionally, more employees are working remotely and not commuting than ever before. For these reasons, the data may overrepresent how many employees are commuting outside of the MIC area. Finally, it should be noted that work trips account for only a portion of the overall travel in the region.

We know that since the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 census data shows a slight increase in the total MIC area population. This population increase could represent an influx of remote workers from larger cities like Minneapolis. The LEHD data supports this by showing an increase in the number of employees living within the MIC area with work addresses outside of the MIC area and the number of employees traveling more than 25 miles since 2015.

Table 10. MIC Employment

	Employed in the MIC Area	Employed and Living in the MIC Area	Employed in the MIC Area but Living Outside	Living in the MIC Area but Employed Outside
2015	87,360	56,203	31,157	14,764
2016	88,112	55,456	32,656	14,620
2017	88,671	55,085	33,586	15,890
2018	87,582	52,891	34,691	15,977
2019	90,915	54,770	36,145	15,334
2020	84,482	50,354	34,128	14,542
2021	82,817	48,672	34,145	15,159
Change 2015-2021	(4,543)	(7,531)	2,988	385

Source: On the Map 2021

Table 11. MIC Travel Distance to Jobs

	Total Jobs	Jobs less than 10 miles	10 to 24 Miles	25 to 50 Miles	Greater than 50 Miles
2015	70,076	71.7%	11.5%	1.3%	15.3%
2021	63,831	68.8%	11.7%	1.5%	18.0%

Source: On the Map 2021

Appendix B-2

Short Trip Analysis

Short Trip Analysis

Using Replica, a data mobility model generated from multiple sources, the project team looked at origins and destinations for all short automobile trips within the MIC area by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), a Census geography used for transportation planning. Short trips were defined as trips one mile or less and trips three miles or less. One-mile and three-mile trips were used as they represent opportunities for trips that could potentially be pedestrian and bicycle trips. The results of the one-mile and three-mile trips were very similar, with concentration of origin and destination of both trip types in five key zones within the MIC area. The zones include downtown Duluth, downtown Superior, University of Minnesota-Duluth campus, West Duluth, and the Miller Hill Mall commercial area.

Characteristics of the zones were considered to understand why short trips were concentrated in these areas. The commonality amongst four of the five zones is the presence of dense commercial activity. The fifth zone, University of Minnesota-Duluth area, is an outlier in that it doesn't have much commercial land use. Still, it can be assumed the university is a generator on its own, with a high number of visitors, students, faculty, and staff that live in proximity to the university.

The areas of concentrated short trips are areas of opportunity for future bicycle or pedestrian trips. To support short car trips being replaced with walking or biking trips, an analysis was completed to understand how the zones perform in terms of safety, transit access, and more.

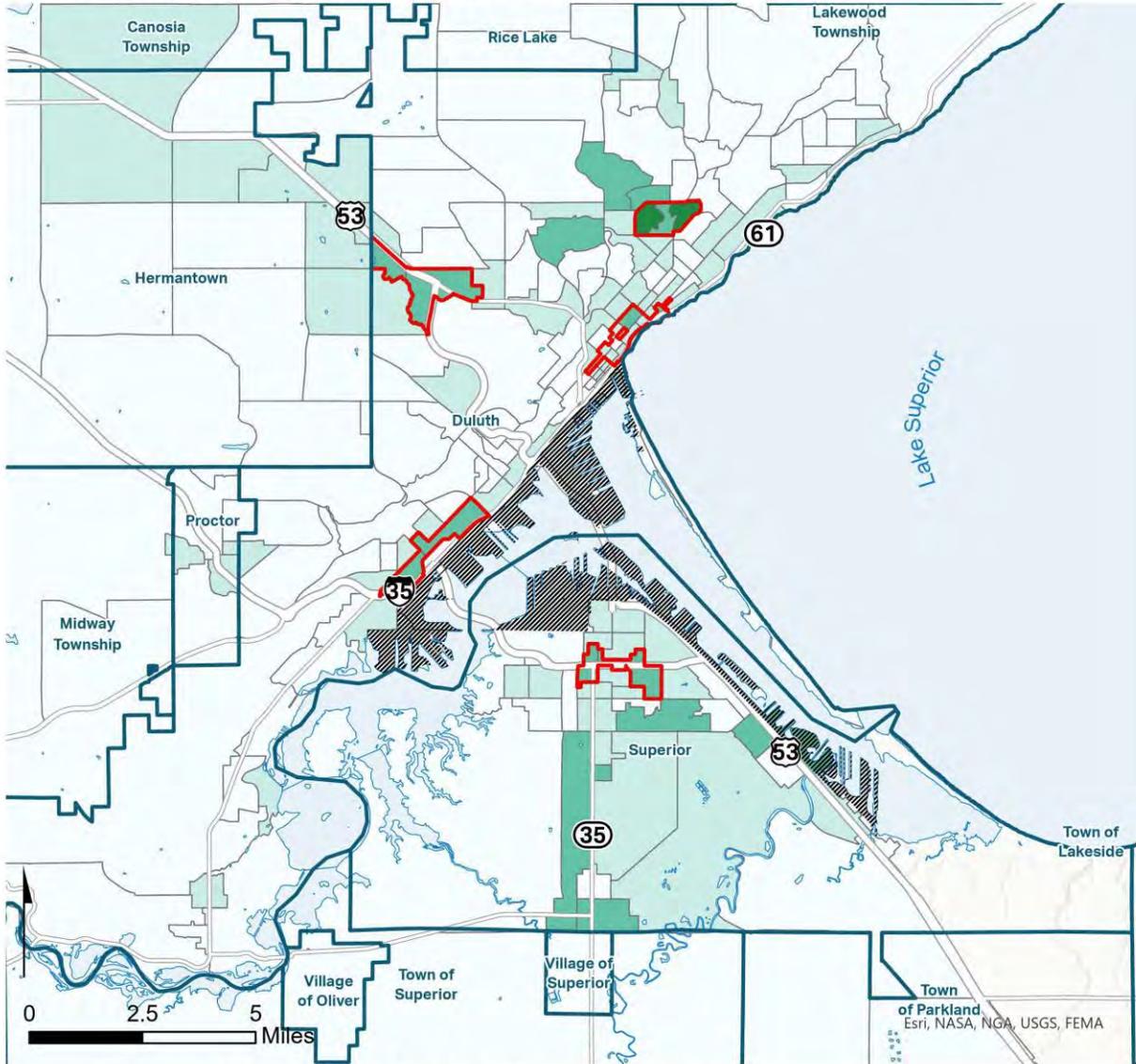
Zones that are well served by transit but have a significant number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes represent an opportunity for safety improvements and the addition of dedicated bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Finally, the short trip zones are in areas of populations with special transportation concern, i.e. low income, racially diverse, and those with ambulatory difficulties.

These represent key zones within the MIC area for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety improvements for a multitude of reasons. Many short trips are currently made in these zones and more bike/ped infrastructure could help support more sustainable short trips being made. These zones also represent a high population of those with special transportation consideration, which could rely on biking and walking more than other populations in the MIC area.

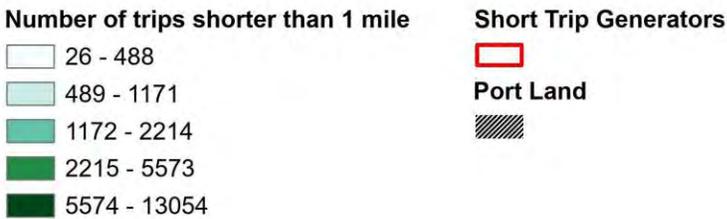
Map B-2.1: Short Trip Generators



Sustainable Choices 2050

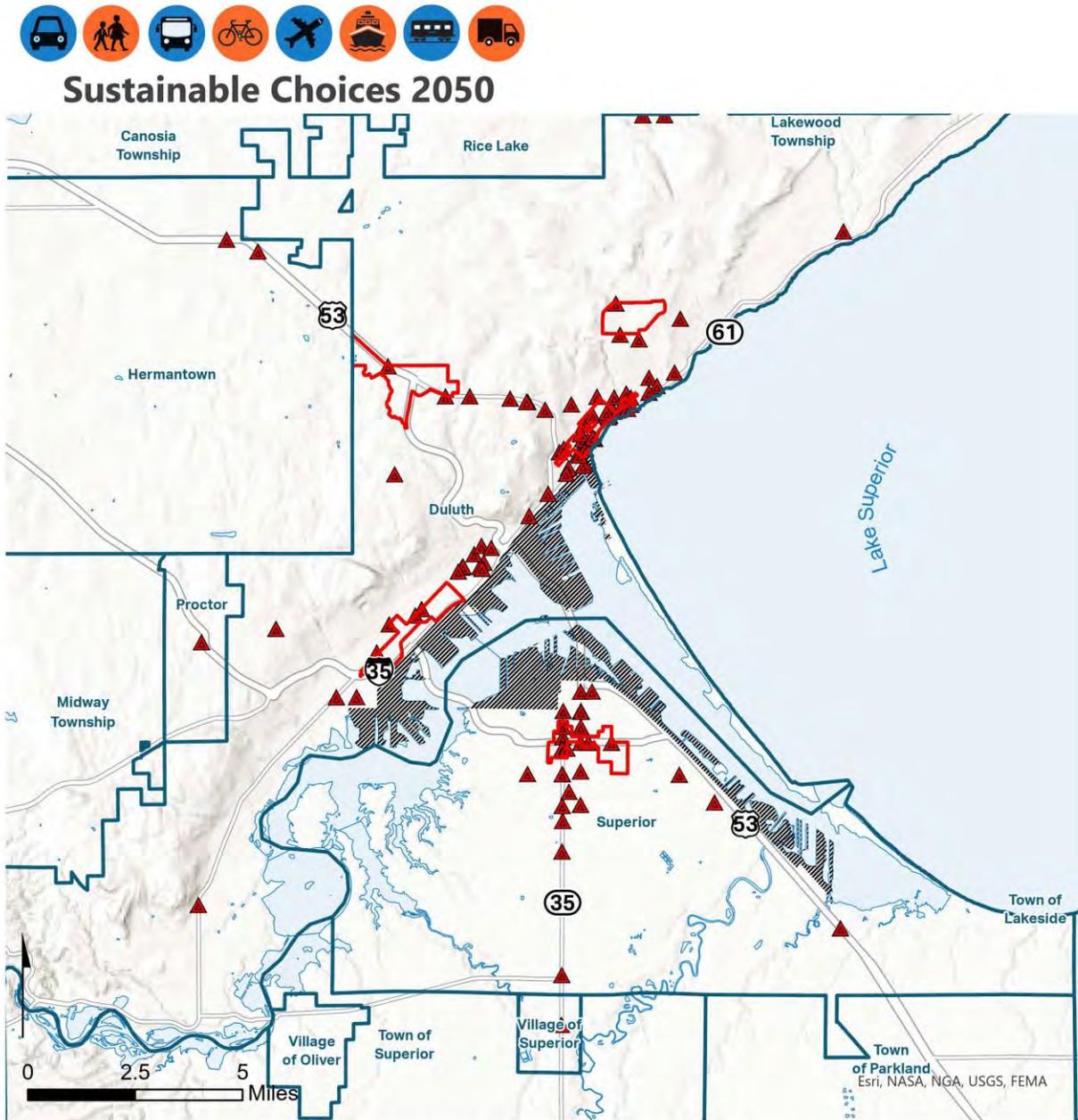


Number of Short Trips by Origin



Source: Replica

Map B-2.2: Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes 2017-2021

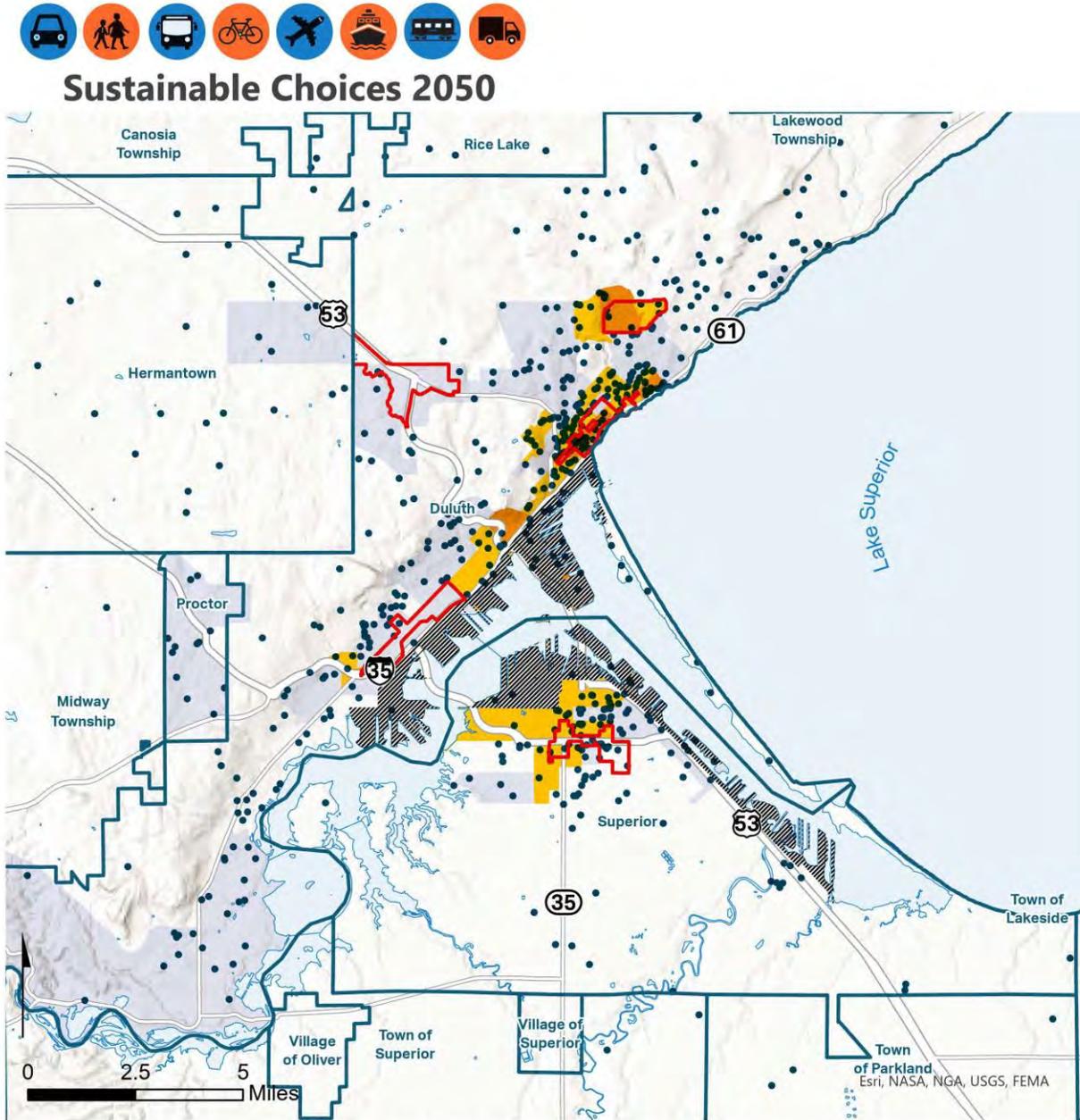


Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Near Short Trip Generators

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes ▲
- Short Trip Generators
- Port Land

Source: MnDOT, WisDOT 2017-2021

Map B-2.3: Populations of Special Transportation Concern and Short Trip Generators



Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Near Short Trip Generators

Low Income* Population

- 0% - 30%
- 31% - 50%
- 51% - 70%
- 71% - 90%
- 91% - 100%

Minority Persons

- 1 dot represents 5 people of color

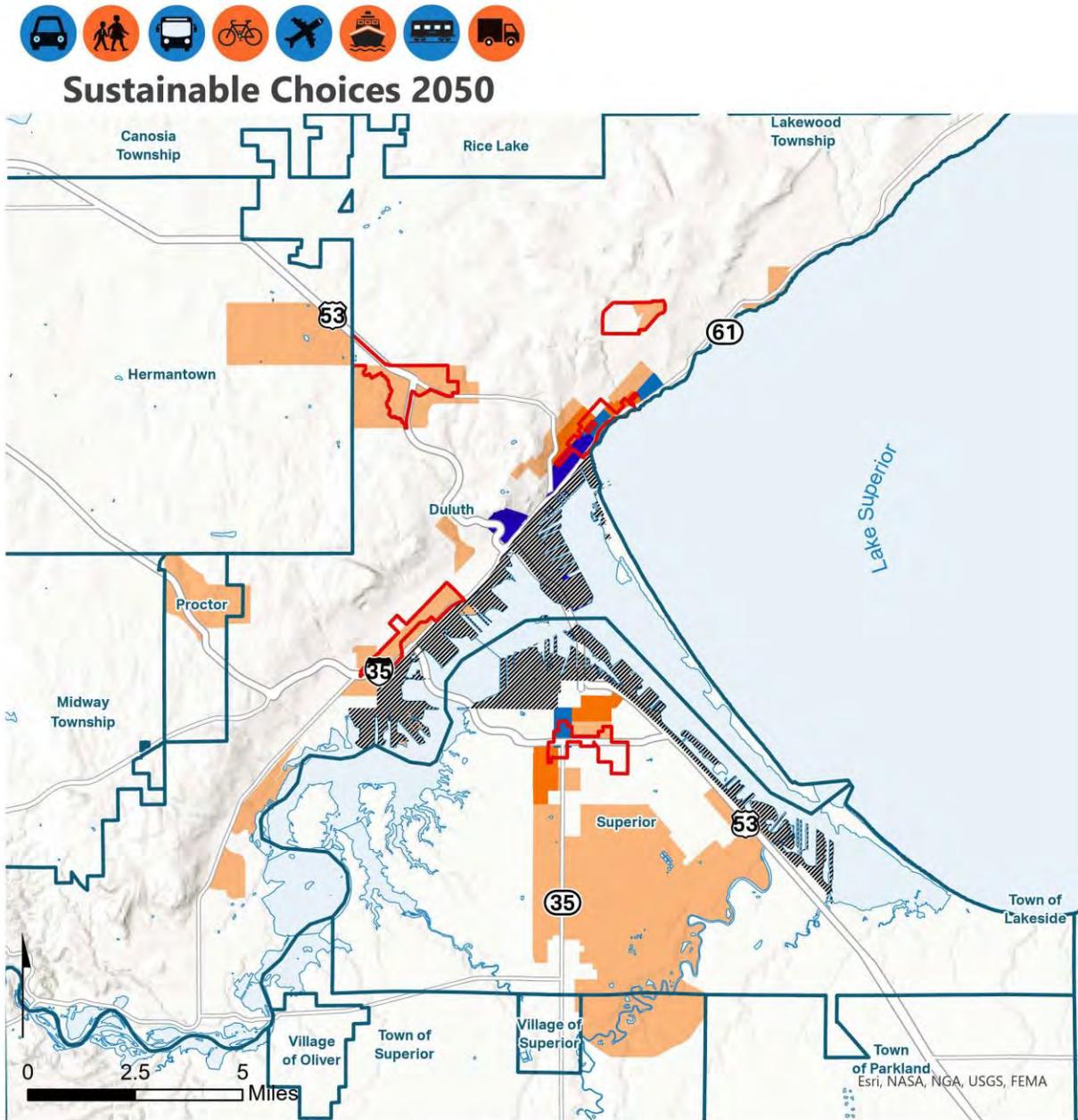
Short Trip Generators

-
- Port Land**
-

*Less than 200% of the poverty level

Source: ACS 2021

Map B-2.4: Vehicle Access and Short Trip Generators



Low Vehicle Access and Short Trip Generators

Source: ACS 2021

Map B-2.5: Bus Routes and Short Trip Generators



Transit Access to Short Trip Generators

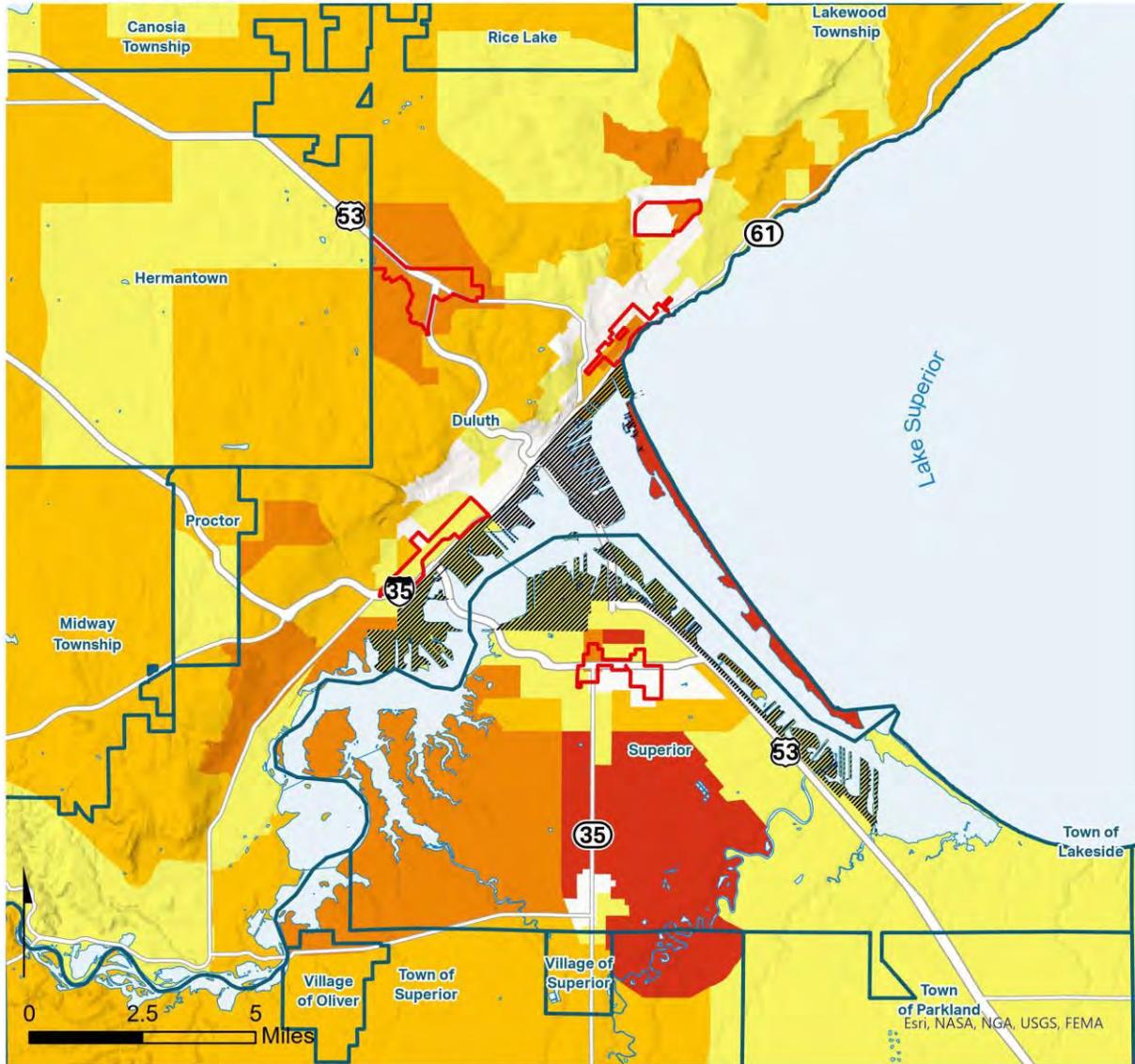
- DTA Bus Routes
- Short Trip Generators
- Port Land

Source: DTA 2022

Map B-2.6: Aging Populations and Short Trip Generators



Sustainable Choices 2050



Aging Population and Short Trip Generators

Population Over 65

- 0% - 9%
- 10% - 18%
- 19% - 26%
- 27% - 35%
- 36% - 44%

Short Trip Generators

- Short Trip Generators
- Port Land

Source: ACS 2021

Appendix C

Public Participation Summary

2023

	Date	Meeting or Group Name	# of Participants	Description
1.	6/20/23	TAC ¹	25	MTP Kickoff Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff introduced the 2050 MTP, including its purpose, scope of work, contents and due dates, and requested ongoing participation and input from this group, as key stakeholders.
2.	6/21/23	MIC ²	25	MTP Kickoff Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff introduced the 2050 MTP, including its purpose, scope of work, contents and due dates, and requested ongoing participation and input from this group, as key stakeholders.
3.	8/23/23	Public Survey Release	422	2050 MTP Transportation Survey released: From August – December 2023, the MIC issued and publicized an online survey for the general public, asking respondents to describe their vision for the region’s transportation system, key areas of concern, and ideas for the future. <i>Consultation Summary, p.4 below</i>
4.	9/19/23	MN Jurisdictional Representatives	10	MN Jurisdictional Consultation #1: AECOM staff held the first of two planned consultations with representatives from the jurisdictions on the Minnesota side of the MIC planning area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.4 below</i>
5.	9/19/23	WI Jurisdictional Representatives	4	WI Jurisdictional Consultation #1: AECOM staff held the first of two planned consultations with representatives from the jurisdictions on the Wisconsin side of the MIC planning area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.5 below</i>
6.	10/17/23	TAC	28	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff presented the vision and goals of the 2050 MTP, discussed how these directly related to the Duluth and Superior Area TIPs and the annual MIC work programs, and invited comments from the group.
7.	10/18/23	MIC	24	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff presented the vision and goals of the 2050 MTP, and discussed how these directly related to the Duluth and Superior Area TIPs and the annual MIC work programs.
8.	12/5/23	Pedestrian Focus Group	10	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on issues and opportunities for pedestrians and walkability throughout the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.7 below</i>
9.	12/6/23	Port/Harbor/Freight Focus Group	42	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion at the regularly-scheduled Harbor Technical Advisory Committee meeting about transportation issues and opportunities related to the Duluth-Superior port/harbor and multimodal freight in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p. 9 below</i>
10.	12/6/23	Sustainability Focus Group	8	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on sustainability issues and opportunities in the MIC area motorized and non-motorized transportation network. <i>Consultation Summary, p.10 below</i>
11.	12/6/23	Equity Focus Group	12	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on equity issues related to transportation in the MIC area, with a focus on historically-underserved areas and populations. <i>Consultation Summary, p.11 below.</i>

¹Transportation Advisory Committee

²Policy Board

³Harbor Technical Advisory Committee

#	Date	Meeting Group or Name	# of Participants	Description
2024				
12.	1/4/24	MN Jurisdictional Representatives	13	Jurisdictional Consultation: MIC staff held the second of two consultations with jurisdictional representatives from the Minnesota side of the MIC planning area.
13.	1/8/24	WI Jurisdictional Representatives	7	Jurisdictional Consultation: MIC staff held the second of two consultations with jurisdictional representatives from the Wisconsin side of the MIC planning area.
14.	1/11/24	MnDOT Passenger Rail Program	5	Modal Consultation – Passenger Rail: MIC staff met MnDOT Passenger Rail Program staff to get a status summary of the proposed NLX passenger rail service.
15.	1/17/24	MnDOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations	6	Modal Consultation – Freight Rail: MIC staff met with MnDOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations staff to get a status summary of state freight rail operations.
16.	2/1/24	BPAC ⁴	24	Modal Consultation – Bike-Pedestrian Advisory Committee: MIC staff provided a status update about the MTP and invited comments from the group about pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.13 below</i>
17.	2/20/24	TAC	24	Presentation & Discussion: Building upon the December 2023 presentation, AECOM and MIC staff presented the proposed process for scoring the projects to be included in the 2050 MTP, highlighting the proposed data-driven metrics along with the planning emphasis areas that will be used to help refine the project scoring, and invited comments for refining the proposed metrics. <i>Consultation Summary, p.14 below</i>
18.	3/14/24	Lincoln Park Business Group	23	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff provided a status update about the MTP and invited comments from the group about business-related transportation issues and opportunities in the growing Lincoln Park area of Duluth. <i>Consultation Summary, p.14 below.</i>
19.	3/19/24	TAC	31	Presentation & Discussion: AECOM and MIC staff reviewed the proposed Step 1 -MTP Project Scoring Metrics and Step 3 - Final Review Questions to be used to score the MTP projects, and asked for input. <i>Consultation Summary, p.14 below</i>
20.	3/27/24	DTA ⁵ Board	9	Modal Consultation – Transit: MIC staff presented an overview of the ongoing development of the MTP and invited comments from the group regarding transit issues, needs and opportunities in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.15 below</i>

⁴Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee

#	Date	Meeting Group or Name	# of Participants	Description
21.	3/29/24	Bicycle Shop Meetup	8	Modal Consultation – Bicyclists: MIC staff attended an impromptu meeting of employees from local bicycle shops to give a brief overview of the MTP and to invite comments about bicycling-related issues and opportunities in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.16 below</i>
22.	4/16/24	TAC	7	Presentation & Discussion: As a follow-up to the MTP project scoring approach discussions during the previous TAC meetings, AECOM staff facilitated a work session focused on the project list scores, giving TAC members the opportunity to offer feedback and ask questions in a work session that directly preceded the TAC meeting..
23.	4/17/24	MIC	27	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff presented a summary of MTP requirements, work accomplished to date, and a general timeline for finalizing the 2050 update of the MIC’s long range plan.
24.	4/22/24	Older Adults Focus Group	4	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: MIC staff facilitated a discussion centered on transportation issues experienced by older adults in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.17 below</i>
25.	4/23/24	People with Disabilities Focus Group	3	Targeted Stakeholder Focus Group: MIC staff facilitated a discussion centered on transportation issues experienced by people with disabilities in the MIC area. <i>Consultation Summary, p.18 below</i>
26.	5/14/24	Superior-Douglas County Area Chamber of Commerce & Travel Superior	1	Presentation and Discussion: MIC staff met with staff from the Superior-Douglas County Area Chamber of Commerce & Travel Superior to discuss their perspective on future transportation issues, needs and opportunities. <i>Consultation Summary, p.19 below</i>
27.	6/18/24	TAC	34	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff presented several chapters of the Draft Long Range MTP 2050 for review and discussion.
28.	6/21/24	Natural Resources and Environmental Consultation	4	Agency Consultation: MIC notified relevant agencies, including the Fond du Lac Tribe, requesting their input (i.e., concerns and/or recommendations) in regard to potential impacts from the proposed MTP transportation projects on natural resources and environmental factors.
29.	6/21/24	Historic Resources and Historic Preservation Consultation	1	Agency Consultation: MIC notified relevant agencies, including the Fond du Lac Tribe, requesting their input (i.e., concerns and/or recommendations) in regard to potential impacts from the proposed MTP transportation projects on historic resources and/or cultural sites.
30.	6/26/24	MIC	16	Presentation & Discussion: MIC staff presented several chapters of the Draft Long Range MTP 2050 for review and discussion.
			857	30 Stakeholder Interactions (1 survey, 6 focus groups, 11 consultations, 12 presentation & discussions)

⁵Duluth Transit Authority

8/23/23 Public Survey

Description: From August – December 2023, the MIC issued and publicized an online survey for the general public, asking respondents to describe their vision for the region’s transportation system, key areas of concern, and ideas for the future.

What We Heard – Summary of Themes:

Transportation System Perceptions

- Most people think traffic congestion is light at middays and weekends and moderate during the morning and evening commutes.
- People perceive transit service in the Duluth-Superior area as average, but few survey respondents are bus riders. Among riders, perceptions are mixed.
- Sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian traffic signals and other amenities for walkers are considered poor to average.
- Bike riders in the region do not feel as though biking is safe or convenient; and even non-cyclists feel that bike infrastructure is poor.

Transportation System Values & Priorities

- People feel that the most critical issues to be addressed in the transportation system are maintaining infrastructure in good working condition, keeping transportation safe, and improving conditions for walking, biking, and transit while connecting all modes of travel for efficiency.
- Transportation safety remains the region’s number one priority.

Transportation Issues and Opportunities

- Nearly everyone feels that snow clearance is a critical issue for the Duluth-Superior transportation system, particularly as it affects walking.
- Spot traffic congestion is an issue on a small number of road segments and intersections.
- In many areas, excess road capacity means there is pavement or right of way that can be reallocated to walking, biking, or transit, or reduced in the future to save costs and minimize environmental impacts, like stormwater runoff.
- Limited funding means that maintenance of an efficient transportation system can be difficult and requires prioritization of initiatives.
- We have to be able to accommodate more oversized trucks on our roads as port activities grow, and a truck bypass would benefit all transportation in the region.
- Creating a reliable, base system for walking should be a key feature of the plan – this includes fixing gaps in the sidewalk system, expanding sidewalks and trails with an eye on basic access, determining how to maintain our sidewalks, and figuring out how to keep sidewalks clear of snow in the winter. This is especially critical as the region’s population ages.
- A continuous, safe east-west greenway or bike lane could dramatically improve cycling.
- The bus system has been improved, but still is considered a “second class” mode.

9/19/23 Minnesota Jurisdictions—Consultation #1

Description: AECOM staff held the first of two planned consultations with representatives from the jurisdictions on the Minnesota side of the MIC planning area, to gain input into observed

and emerging transportation issues. The project process overview and engagement opportunities were discussed and highlighted by AECOM.

What We Heard – Key Themes:

1. Spot Locations and Safety Analysis:

- The plan recognizes spot locations with peak hour congestion.
- Safety analysis will explore opportunities for improvements.
- Local knowledge is vital, as data analysis may not always capture specific problem intersections.

2. Optimizing Existing Facilities:

- Given infrastructure funding primarily relies on sales tax, maintaining and enhancing transportation assets is critical.
- Identifying short vehicle trips (under 3 miles or 1 mile) and upgrading pedestrian and bike experiences will be a priority.

3. Optimizing Existing Capacity for Bike/Ped Safety:

- Utilize excess capacity for bike/pedestrian safety.
- Consider spot locations with peak hour congestion.
- Focus on upgrading pedestrian and bike experiences.

4. Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (EVs):

- Explore EV infrastructure needs.
- Charging stations during reconstruction projects.
- Potential future requirements through zoning and development codes.

5. Preservation vs. Expansion/Reconstruction:

- Prioritize preservation over expansion/reconstruction.
- Maintain consistent pavement markings for emerging technologies.

6. Rural-Urban Divide and Transportation as a Service:

- Rural areas may adopt new tech differently.
- Transportation as a Service could impact trip patterns.

9/19/23 Wisconsin Jurisdictions—Consultation #1

Description: AECOM staff held the first of two planned consultations with representatives from the jurisdictions on the Minnesota side of the MIC planning area, to gain input into observed and emerging transportation issues. The project process overview and engagement opportunities were discussed and highlighted by AECOM.

Key takeaways from the 2045 Plan were discussed and some key topics were identified:

- Aging baby boomers migrating to the region may drive demand for walkability, ADA compliance, and compact community living.
- Job-based growth may not significantly impact the transportation system.
- The housing crisis affects growth prospects.
- Addressing barriers to walking, biking, and transit for shorter trips is crucial.
- Transportation project costs have increased by 20% in the last two years.

Discussions also clarified:

1. Focus on Walking and Sidewalks:

- Prioritize walking infrastructure.
- Gaps in sidewalk systems need attention.
- Multi-use paths and active transportation plans can enhance connectivity.
- Rail lines create isolated neighborhoods, impacting pedestrian access.

2. New Developments:

- Recent development includes hotels and larger apartment buildings.
- Limited developable parcels in Superior.
- Housing construction outside the city primarily focuses on single-family homes.

3. EV Charging and Electrifying Corridors:

- Wisconsin and Superior need to embrace EV charging infrastructure and electrify corridors.
- Private investment in charging infrastructure is preferred.
- The city aims to phase out gas vehicles for the municipal fleet.
- The state is developing an EV corridor plan, but implementation challenges remain.
- Sustainability efforts include stormwater management and reducing impervious pavement.

4. Roadway Redundancy and Detours:

- Lack of redundancy in the roadway system is problematic.
- Shuttling traffic through neighborhoods during closures can be disruptive.
- Detours can be lengthy, especially in rural areas.

5. Impact of Heavy Commercial Trucking:

- Heavy trucks cause significant damage to roadways.
- Long detours for trucks disrupt transportation throughout the region.

6. Traffic Signals and Bridge Project:

- Most traffic signals on state highways in Superior have been updated.
- Completion of the Blatnik bridge project will significantly alter traffic patterns and behavior.

Local Transportation Issues discussed included:

1. Superior Active Transportation Plan:

- Approximately half of the city's sidewalk program is funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)- importance of safety and risk assessment for multi-modal projects.

2. Safety Hotspots and Uncharacterized Locations:

- Safety concerns exist east of the roundabout on US 2.
- The intersection of County C and WIS 35 also needs attention, although the specific problem hasn't been characterized yet.

3. Pavement Maintenance and Practical-Based Approach:

- Pavement condition is a major maintenance issue.

- WisDOT’s practical-based maintenance model focuses on resurfacing and maintaining existing infrastructure.
- The City of Superior owns its own paver for overlaying local roads, ensuring operational efficiency.

4. Enhancing Corridors for Bikes and Pedestrians:

- E 2nd Street and Tower Avenue, both state highways, run through neighborhoods.
- The goal is to create safer, people-focused corridors that better accommodate bikes and pedestrians.

5. Freight Bypass:

- There’s interest in developing a bypass south of Superior specifically for freight transportation.

12/5/23 Pedestrian Focus Group (Targeted Stakeholder Consultation)

Description: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on issues and opportunities for pedestrians and walkability throughout the MIC area.

Key Takeaways:

After discussing this topic with members of the community, it became apparent that the main issues facing pedestrians in the area are safety and year-round access. Most of the region’s roadways have been built primarily for automobiles and leave little space for pedestrians and bicyclists, and even less during winter months when snow and ice cover most of the right of way. Large barriers like Miller Trunk Highway and I-35 separate parts of the city from shopping and recreation but are unsafe for pedestrians to cross. Proposed solutions from participants for these issues included a codified complete streets policy, a snow removal utility, improved collaboration between the city and county on snow removal, and improved pedestrian and bike connections across dangerous roadways.

What We Heard – Comments:

Transportation Issues

- There is a lack of pedestrian lighting throughout the city, it is particularly noticeable on the lakewalk.
- Individual neighborhoods are given power to deny bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- The city has been unwilling to consider rethinking the allocation of right of way width towards prioritizing non-motorized travel.
- Concerned about speeding on 6th Ave East; the wide right of way is difficult to cross to get to school.
- Walkable communities are thriving communities.
- If we had to choose only one pedestrian issue, snow is it. Duluth is terrible at snow management.
- Pedestrian safety in the 6th Ave East area is the most important issue for the Hillside neighborhood because of speeding and reckless driving.
- Left turns on red create a significant safety hazard.
- Crosswalk awareness and yielding protocol is an issue for all users, including cars and bikes.
- I-35 is a barrier between Downtown and Canal Park.
- Transit stops on Arrowhead Rd are far from nearby commercial destinations and lack sidewalk.
- The Miller Hill Mall area is a “deathtrap” for pedestrians.
- 6th Ave East is very unsafe for pedestrians.
- Woodland Ave, Central Entrance, the Lake St and Superior St intersection, and Rice Lake Rd near Marshall School are significant barriers for pedestrians.
- Sidewalk on 11 Ave East needs to be completed to the north of E 11th St.

- Several stops on the BRT route do not have sidewalks; there are also gaps in the sidewalk along Mall Drive.
- Sidewalk repair is not good in some places; people with mobility devices can't get through.
- There is sidewalk on one side only on Kenwood between Arrowhead and UMD and needs to be on both sides.
- The intersection at 21st Ave East and Woodland Ave is unsafe for pedestrians.
- The streetscape is not designed with garbage cans in mind. They often block bike lanes, forcing bicyclists into the car travel lane.
- 26th Ave East is missing sidewalk between Superior and E 1st St.
- There is no sidewalk on the west side of Hill Ave, north of N 28th St, in Superior, which forces apartment residents to walk in the street or over grass to get to the nearest transit stop.
- The City of Duluth has passed a resolution regarding complete streets but has not solidified this into policy. The lack of policy has made neighborhood solutions inconsistent.
- Hermantown prioritizes cars and does not provide bike, pedestrian, or public transit options.
- Central Entrance is under design now by MnDOT. There is concern over whether pedestrians will be represented.

Solutions and Opportunities

- The city needs a complete streets commission, and to look to community expertise.
- A covered walkway up and down the hill based on the example in Thunder Bay would provide protection from the elements for pedestrians.
- Reallocate right of way width; autonomous vehicles need less width.
- Budgeting more for non-car infrastructure.
- Increased and enhanced bike parking.
- Follow Minneapolis's example of a Vision Zero approach to build roadway infrastructure focused on eliminating deaths from car accidents.
- All projects should be evaluated on their impact towards city and state climate goals.
- Flip the transportation project process, planning should come first and engineering second.
- Creating a better and more equitable transportation system; not just auto focused.
- Access to transit and access in general is critical.
- We walk as a part of every trip, improving pedestrian infrastructure benefits everyone.
- Pedestrian network needs to be seen as a legitimate transportation network and needs to be reliable all year round, not an afterthought.
- Pedestrian infrastructure can improve community health by giving people the opportunity to make more trips via active transportation.
- The streetscape should be designed for snow storage to keep snow piles out of pedestrian areas. Downtown setbacks are too close to the street, as a result snow must be hauled out. Snow plowing creates an equity issue when streets are plowed and sidewalks are not, sidewalks should be plowed first.
- Transit should be free for people with disabilities, seniors, people with low income, and youth. All could benefit from the health impacts of active transit.
- Pedestrian infrastructure should be programmed into planning and construction through a formal process.
- Slowing traffic on W Central Entrance would improve safety for pedestrians crossing to Cub Foods from the bus stops on Mall Drive.
- Superior is prioritizing sidewalk repair and snow removal.
- Tower Ave in Superior is a good example for providing pedestrian and bike infrastructure in the area.
- The City could establish a transportation commission.
- Look to the St Joseph, Missouri parkway as an example.
- Shift policy to put most vulnerable travelers at top of the pyramid of needs.
- West Superior Street design gives us hope.

- Improve the pedestrian plan – what is the full map of pedestrian movements? A full map of the pedestrian network would be helpful. Create a base level walking network that is reliable year around.
- A lit pedestrian bridge across I-35. There is a lack of pedestrian level lighting elsewhere.
- 6th Ave East crossing at 4th, 9th. 6th Ave East will be undergoing a road diet from 4 to 3 lanes.
- Remove I-35.
- Free transit for seniors.
- Create a connection between downtown and the mall for bikes and pedestrians.
- The City of Duluth should be responsible for snow removal on the sidewalk, like Toronto, Ontario, and St Paul, Minnesota.
- The City of Duluth and County could collaborate to minimize uncleared roadways and sidewalks. A Snow Removal Utility would eliminate the need for property owners to be responsible for clearing snow from in front of their property.

12/6/23 HTAC (Targeted Stakeholder Consultation)

Description: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion at the regularly-scheduled HTAC meeting about transportation issues and opportunities related to the port, harbor issues and multimodal freight in and through the MIC area.

What We Heard – Comments:

Transportation Issues

- It is important for the economic vitality goals to be met, viable regional partnerships and networks must be created, across states and including Canada, far beyond the Duluth-Superior area. Regarding the port, this means all the way through the Seaway to the Atlantic Ocean. Doing this would vastly increase economic vitality and better use the water-based transportation system.
- Related to that point, the system has choke points throughout that affect freight movement and thus need to be considered in the Minnesota State Freight Plan.
- Concerns were expressed over how much crude oil is being moved via rail and the risk associated with this given numerous rail accidents across the country.
- Important to ensure tribal rights are maintained.
- Consider how traffic patterns in both Duluth and Superior will be significantly disrupted for several years during Blatnik Bridge construction.
- The condition of the docks in the port is a key issue; many of the docks are very old and not up to current standards and need rehabilitation.

Solutions and Opportunities

- Strategies we can consider to better develop these partnerships? Suggestions included:
 - Develop a “short seas shipping” network within the Great Lakes that could alleviate tonnage (and thus wear and tear) on the highway network. Nearly all the freight leaving this port is bulk items, such as taconite; we could utilize the waters to move far more types of items, but this needs coordination.
 - A related objective in the plan could be to develop an integrated freight movement system.
 - Another strategy would be to make the gross tonnage hauled by truck consistent across states. The new Blatnik Bridge should be able to support weight limits that enable transport of heavy loads into and out of the port terminal.
 - A related idea would be to include overweight and high-load corridors to transport the heavy components of the freight system, along economic development corridors, and connected to intermodal terminals.
- It was noted that a good plan needs to have measurable steps to demonstrate whether or not we are making progress towards meeting the goals. We want and need to have measurables

that show we are making progress, identify future needs more clearly, and give us things to celebrate and promote.

Key Takeaways:

- Establishing regional partnerships must be created, across states and internationally (including Canada), is considered key to economic growth of the Duluth-Superior port.

12/6/23 Sustainability Focus Group (Targeted Stakeholder Consultation)

Description: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on sustainability issues and opportunities in the MIC area motorized and non-motorized transportation network.

Key Takeaways:

This discussion focused on environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Interests represented ranged from personal to professional. Members of the group were concerned with the amount of greenhouse gas emissions emitted by gas powered automobiles, as well as a lack of greenspace within the right of way, and additional pollution from cars, like motor oil and solid debris, entering the regions lakes and waterways via stormwater runoff. Participants felt that the current system is not economically sustainable compared to a system that uses narrower roadways and prioritizes lighter vehicles like bicycles or no vehicles at all. It was also noted that single occupancy vehicles isolate us socially. Some solutions as proposed by participants were temporary road diets, the construction of a greenway system or bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfare, and a shift in planning to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure above single occupancy automobiles.

What We Heard – Comments:

Transportation Issues

- Transit systems overseas are much more comprehensive.
- It is time to bring in the future.
- In terms of economic sustainability, we can't afford to maintain existing infrastructure. Heavy vehicles damage roads more than bicycles and pedestrians.
- Our culture of isolation in single occupancy vehicles is not socially sustainable.
- Roads are very wide, but there are no barriers or space for snow storage.
- There is flooding due to wetland fills for transportation infrastructure.
- Too few trees on London Road, and generally in all rights of way.
- Life expectancy is significantly lower in some areas due to air pollution.
- Narrative around speed enforcement; drivers not yielding to pedestrians.
- Bike parking is lacking everywhere.
- The hill is an issue for biking and walking. Transit can fill this gap.
- Aging population will have 10 years before a larger portion are unable to drive.
- Sprawl is not sustainable, there is no need to expand infrastructure beyond existing limits.
- Needing neighborhood buy in for implementation of bike ways can be challenging. A small minority of property owners can kill a good idea in the design phase.

Solutions and Opportunities

- Systems redundancy. People need choices for how to get around no matter the mode.
- To meet MnDOT's climate goals, the number of vehicle miles traveled will need to be reduced.
- The Duluth Citizens Climate Action Plan focuses on reducing emissions and the health impacts of a more integrated transportation system.
- Roadways need snow storage and green space for bike safety.

- The public should be informed about cars' impact on Lake Superior.
- Policy could be established to always incorporate snow storage within the right of way.
- Responsibility for the maintenance of plantings in traffic circles should be decided. The city doesn't want to maintain them.
- There is no Transportation Management Organization in Duluth. Could use one around the arena area. The TMO at the St Paul, Minnesota soccer stadium could be used as an example to help organize traffic around Amsoil Arena and Bentleyville.
- Think long term about budget consideration, beyond the two year budget cycle. Narrow roads are cheaper to build and maintain.
- Cambridge MA is a good example: if it's in the plan, it gets built.
- Consider locating geothermal infrastructure within the right of way with each roadway project.
- The incoming mayor will possibly create a complete streets committee.
- U.S. Department of Energy RACER grants for solar power can reduce the cost of sustainable energy sources.

12/6/23 **Equity Focus Group (Targeted Stakeholder Consultation)**

Description: AECOM staff facilitated a discussion centered on equity issues related to transportation in the MIC area, with a focus on historically-underserved areas and populations.

Key Takeaways:

During the discussion with focus group participants, it became apparent that the region's transportation system has large gaps that contribute to the disenfranchisement of vulnerable populations. For example, participants pointed out that most of the funding and engineering focus goes towards automobile infrastructure even though a large proportion of the population does not own a car. Similarly, during winter months snow is cleared from the roadways by the city and county but sidewalk snow clearance is much less coordinated. As such, participants felt that a more equitable transportation system would be one that treats pedestrians and bicyclists as equal to automobile users by providing an accessible network year-round at a minimum.

What We Heard – Comments:

Transportation Issues

- Downtown transportation infrastructure prioritizes vehicles in an area where a large portion of the population does not have one.
- There needs to be a strong focus on improving transportation in low-income neighborhoods experiencing high health and economic disparities.
- Meyers Wilkins students need safe routes to walk to school.
- Safety and efficiency of transit are major issues facing the community.
- There is a lack of vision and full system planning. For example, there is no non-motorized route through town that is reliably accessible.
- The transportation system is car centric and mostly focused on suburban travelers.
- Snow clearance is not handled well.
- Car centric roadway design and real estate development puts low to moderate income communities in a spiral of disenfranchisement and creates environmental racism.
- Lack of transit in indigenous communities leads to vulnerable people taking unsafe rides.
- Beyond physical needs, there is a need to destigmatize transit users and those without cars.
- Older community members, who are not traditionally considered in transportation planning, need to be considered in future plans without furthering a decline-narrative about aging.

- 95% of the older population live in the community, aging in place. Generally, this group has difficulty accessing transportation.
- In the more rural areas outside of Duluth and Superior, providing transit to the disabled and aging populations is impossible.
- The transportation system needs to be more inclusive. Currently the system has a class bias, prioritizing those who can afford a car.
- There is limited transit access to Hermantown.
- Barkers Island is a major destination, it has a bike trail, but there's a gap across US 2. No transit options will bring you there despite many public events being held there.
- Morgan Park and Spirit Valley are disconnected from transit.
- Lincoln Middle School students do not have any bus options to get to school.
- A tiered transit fare system, specifically lower fares for older people.
- 6th Ave East needs to be reconfigured.
- Electrification is an issue for equity. Electric battery material sourcing exploits native communities.
- Barkers Island is not easily accessible for pedestrians
- Far west neighborhoods feel disconnected and have little access to amenities via transit or other modes of transportation besides cars.

Solutions and Opportunities

- Recognize that everyone is a pedestrian on every trip. (i.e., even when driving, you need to walk to your car, and from your car to your ultimate destination.)
- Car-free areas.
- A Sunday parkway program
- Fix the Duluth-Hermantown connection by extending transit to Hermantown.
- Sidewalk system repair and maintenance.
- A continuous east-west greenway or bike lane.
- Light Rail Transit.
- The city should maintain sidewalks like they maintain roads, and prioritize programs like Safe Routes to School, and transit.
- Prioritize pedestrian infrastructure as an equal member of the transportation system year around.
- Transportation funding allocation should be equity based.
- 6th Ave East needs to be reconfigured.
- The Justice 40 framework should be applied to transportation in the Duluth region.
- Reimagining US 61 is an equity project, to re-connect the downtown and hillside neighborhoods with Canal Park and the lake.
- A bikeshare to provide transportation options for future.
- Northern Lights Express commuters.
- Reliable safe bike parking.
- Attend programs led by community organizations, including:
 - Family freedom center Coffee and Conversations
 - Neighborhood Youth Services
 - YMCA in Superior, Duluth, Proctor
 - Historic St Mark Church – resources for people
 - Interfaith Council – migrant welcome center – Trinity Lutheran

- Higher education institutions
- Loaves and Fishes community. Damiano Center. Unhoused.
- • American Indian Housing Coalition
- • Youth leadership programs at schools

1/4/24 Minnesota Jurisdictions—Consultation #2

Description: MIC staff held the second of two consultations with jurisdictional representatives from the Minnesota side of the MIC planning area, to discuss inter-jurisdictional coordination and potential improvement projects for inclusion in the 2050 MTP’s short-, mid-, and long-term project lists. Staff also requested data regarding transportation revenue and O&M costs.

1/8/24 Wisconsin Jurisdictions—Consultation #2

Description: MIC staff held the second of two consultations with jurisdictional representatives from the Wisconsin side of the MIC planning area, to discuss inter-jurisdictional coordination and potential improvement projects for inclusion in the 2050 MTP’s short-, mid-, and long-term project lists. Staff also requested data regarding transportation revenue and O&M costs.

2/1/24 Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Targeted Stakeholder Discussion)

Description: MIC staff attended the regularly-scheduled meeting of the MIC’s BPAC and provided a status update about the MTP and invited comments from the group about pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the MIC area.

What We Heard – Comments

Top Priorities:

- Year round reliability and access (all season maintenance -- snow and ice clearing)
- Better connectivity/eliminate gaps
- Safer bike options (protected lanes)
- Safer crossings
- Sidewalk repairs needed in Duluth
- Policy options that more formally and directly integrate bike/ped infrastructure.
- Establish a transportation commission in Duluth
- Implement a safe systems approach – undertake a community-wide multimodal Safety Action Plan in accordance with SS4A grant requirements
- Training options
- **Specific locations of concern:**
 - 6th Ave E (Duluth)
 - Miller Hill Mall area
- **Discussion Question: What are your ideas for metrics to evaluate progress toward top priorities and desired outcomes for bicyclists and pedestrians?**
 - Bike/Ped Mode share increase
 - Reduced number of conflict points
 - VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) decrease: e.g., MN legislature trying to reduce VMT by 20%
 - Metric –not sure what-- to evaluate how direct proposed bike routes are

- Metric to evaluate how roadway projects enhance (or create barriers) to accessibility

2/20/23 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Consultation – Proposed Process for Project Scoring

Description: Building upon the December 2023 presentation, AECOM and MIC staff presented the proposed process for scoring the projects to be included in the 2050 MTP, highlighting the proposed data-driven metrics along with the planning emphasis areas that will be used to help refine the project scoring, and invited comments for refining the proposed metrics.

What We Heard – Comments:

Q: How much effort will this process require of jurisdictions?

A: Most of the scoring process is completed by the MPO and the consultant, AECOM. The jurisdictions are first asked for their lists of projects and then the scoring process begins. The MIC will likely be asking some follow up questions of the jurisdictions regarding the projects that make it to Step 3, but other than that, the work should be minimal.

Q: How many projects will be included in Step 3?

A: It has yet to be determined, but 25 has been mentioned. It may easily be determined by a clear line being drawn after the outcome of Step 1 scoring. We want to have narrowed down to a reasonable number.

Q: How often does this process occur?

A: Every five years.

Q: What is the benefit of keeping the project list limited?

A: To determine priority projects to receive federal funding in the Duluth and Superior TIPS, i.e., those that will best contribute toward meeting the long term goals of the MTP.

3/14/24 Lincoln Park Business Group

Description: MIC staff attended the regularly-scheduled meeting of Duluth’s Lincoln Park Business Group, which represents the interests of this fast-growing hospitality, residential and business district.

What We Heard – Comments:

- Concerns about upcoming West Superior Street Reconstruction project:
 - The new street design will put us out of business – no plans to accommodate delivery vehicles.
 - Concerns about sidewalk snow clearing.
 - Planners are forgetting that Lincoln Park is still very industrial, one of the few manufacturing areas in Duluth. Not just entertainment and hospitality businesses, many of them are making things.
- Parking is always a problem. Concerned the project favors bikes over the many more people who drive here.
- The problem for us is not about transportation, it’s about the needles all over the place. Every business owner here will tell you how they have to pick up needles every day. WLSSD is offering to place another sharps disposal unit in the area – looking for a property owner that will allow them to install it.

- The abandoned construction project is another big issue – looks bad and is accommodating the drug users and vagrants.
- Interest in snow clearing

3/19/24 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting - Project Scoring Process Final Review and Consultation

Description: AECOM and MIC staff reviewed the proposed Step 1 -MTP Project Scoring Metrics and Step 3 - Final Review Questions to be used to score the MTP projects. Most of the time was allocated to providing the TAC members an opportunity to share any thoughts, concerns, or recommendations, or to ask any questions.

Key Takeaways:

- This process holds harmless projects that are already programmed in the TIP.
- Step 1 is for high level, measurable data for scoring purposes.
- Step 3 (Final Review Questions) delves deeper into the projects that rose to the top of the 300+ projects that were submitted. It helps to ensure that projects were scored appropriately in Step 1.
- The aim of the scoring metrics is to elevate a list of projects that best represent the goals of the MTP. This process does not eliminate any project from the MTP.

3/27/24 Modal Consultation – Transit

Description: MIC staff attended the regularly-scheduled meeting of the Duluth Transit Authority Board of Directors MIC staff presented an overview of the ongoing development of the MTP and invited comments from the group regarding transit issues, needs and opportunities in the MIC area.

What We Heard – Comments:

- “We have many needs, limited resources – in keeping with the theme of your plan!”
- Expenses are on the rise and funding can be hard to acquire, at federal, state and local levels – in prior year, the DTA’s requested tax levy was the only one on the docket that was reduced.
- Raising fares is not the way to increase needed revenues; the DTA has an ongoing commitment to not raising fares to keep it affordable for users. Increasing fares could actually reduce ridership which would be very detrimental and hard to counteract (“transit death spiral.”
- Would like to see free bus fares offered to senior citizens
- Would like to explore the option of becoming a regional transit authority
- Would like to see better snow removal at bus stops; issues with coordinating with the city
- Supply chain issues with acquiring new STRIDE vehicles – and finding parts to maintain them
- Would like to see positive messaging to counter the generally negative image of public transit; bus seen as a second-class transportation option; “those people” who take the bus;
- Safety for bus rider and drivers is first and foremost concern; interest in the safe systems approach to traffic safety and how it might have positive impacts on transit.
- Interested in the continued buildout of the Go Lines, and introducing bus rapid transit
- Interest in future transit-oriented development – but location and partners TBD.

- Real problems with hiring and retaining enough drivers to maintain the routes and complete schedules of the Better Bus Blueprint. Housing has been an issue for people who are interested in relocating to work for the DTA but unable or uncertain about where they'd be able to live.
- Interest in maintaining and expanding DTA relationship with local schools
- Ridership at local colleges is growing but not to pre-pandemic levels. Might want to market more heavily, e.g., with an emphasis on environmental benefits and affordability.

3/29/24 **Bike Shop Meetup**

Description: MIC staff attended an informal meeting of employees from local bicycle shops to give a brief overview of the MTP and to invite comments about bicycling-related issues and opportunities in the MIC area.

What We Heard – Comments:

- It's always about riding defensively for bicyclists.
- We need a culture shift – in this area, it's 'bikes don't belong on the roads.'
- There's a much stronger culture in Twin Cities – one of the best bicycling networks in the country. What can we learn from them?
- Connections between the commuting cyclist and mountain biking communities here.
- The city prioritizes cars in its roadway projects and transportation expenditures.
- Must make a connected, safe, preferably separated network of bicycling facilities a priority for planning, implementation and funding.
- Roadway shoulders aren't bike lanes.
- Need to be able to safely ride bikes year-round – it's a key part of Duluth's 'Winter City' identity.
- Need public education about 'Idaho Stop'.
- Essentia Health has a Multimodal Transportation Reward program for its employees – a model for other employers?
- Essentia needs better bike lockers, however.
- Is the public bicycle safe storage area at the Duluth Transportation Center (main DTA passenger facility) still a thing?

Ideas and Opportunities:

- Create opportunities to learn from and interact with bicycling advocates, elected officials and city planners about creating a bike-friendly culture and implementing dedicated infrastructure.
- Advocate for city and state-level policies permitting the 'Idaho Stop' for bicyclists (with related education for cyclists)
- Prioritize function of Skyline Drive as a bicycling route, with separated bike lanes, improved traffic calming measures for vehicles.
- Implement 'slow days' for traffic speeds on Skyline and other identified routes.

Key Takeaway:

- It's not the weather, it's not the hills, it's safety and the anti-bike culture that are the primary issues for bicyclists in this community.

4/16/24 **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting**

Description: Workshop, Presentation & Discussion: As a follow-up to the MTP project scoring approach discussions during the previous TAC meetings, AECOM staff facilitated a work session focused on the project list scores, giving TAC members the opportunity to offer

feedback and ask questions in a work session that directly preceded the TAC meeting. At the TAC meeting that followed, Jim Meyer and Mike Wenzel wrapped up that discussion by giving an overview of the MTP Project Final Review Questions in Step 3.

4/22/24 Older Adults Focus Group

Description: A small group discussion was held with people who were older adults or who worked on behalf of older adults living or working in the Duluth-Superior area.

What We Heard – Comments:

- People are living longer, with a variety of circumstances and needs: some retired and some still working; some living by themselves, some in a family unit and some in a care facility; some are comfortable with technology and some are not; some are socially active and some are not, etc.
- “Age 65+” does not accurately define older adults – 65 is considered middle-aged by many these days!”
- “We are active people, and we want to stay active and independent.”
- “More than previous generation, many of us want to work as we age, and maintain our independence.”
- “We have such a car-centric society that it’s easy to overlook people who don’t (or can’t) drive. It seems like they forget about sidewalks when they fix roads or in the winter with plowing.”
- “Crosswalks mean nothing. Cars rule the road, we just get in their way.”
- “Driverless vehicles? Not so much!”
- Income can be a serious limiting factor to an independent lifestyle, in terms of transportation. Hard to afford a vehicle.
- “The NLX passenger train sounds like a great idea as a way to get down to the cities, but I wonder if I’ll be able to afford it.”
- “Losing your drivers license due to physical limitations is a huge change, often hard to accept, which leads to some people being behind the wheel when they probably shouldn’t be.”
- “The so-called Better Bus Blueprint do not seem like an improvement –my closest bus stop was removed (longer walk to and from the bus stop), the new routes are hard to understand, and it doesn’t go where I need to go (Walmart)”
- “Older folks use cabs, not Uber and Lyft – but they are expensive and often unreliable.”
- “I have an unsafe feeling at the Duluth Transit Center at night.”
- “I’ve almost gotten run over, by bikers and skateboarders on the sidewalks. If we can’t have the sidewalks and we can’t have the roads, where are we supposed to be able to walk in this town?”

Key Takeaways:

- Pedestrian safety was cited as a top priority for older adults (also for disabled people and kids).
- Active transportation options – walking and biking facilities -- are desired to maintain physical health and independence as driving may not be an option.
- Year-round accessibility and sidewalk snow removal need to be addressed as a bigger priority in the community, with an increased awareness of how it pertains to older adults and individuals with limited mobility.
- Sidewalk conditions, ease of access to public spaces and transportation, and street design, can significantly impact the daily lives of older adults, individuals with mobility challenges, and the community at large. Age- and disability-friendly transportation facilities should be standard: safe, crossable streets are vital for enhancing safety, ensuring accessible mobility options, and promoting active and healthy lifestyles.

- Older adults are not a single type of person – wide range of abilities and assistance needs, from completely dependent to completely autonomous.
- Resources like matching up services with people’s needs are important, as well as innovative solutions like Community Action Duluth’s Mobile Market.

4/23/24 **People with Disabilities Focus Group**

Description: A small group discussion was held with people who were living with a disability or who work on behalf of disabled people living or working in the Duluth-Superior area.

What We Heard – Comments:

- “It’s about dignity and respect -- sidewalk conditions affect our ability to live in the world as a healthy and whole person. We forget about the humanity of it.”
- “I’m super excited about the NLX (northern Lights Express passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Duluth)
- “I moved to Duluth (from Cloquet) because it has better transportation options for me. But I hate to say it, but STRIDE is really hit and miss. Sometimes they don’t pick me up and also don’t let me know. And people without disabilities don’t have to schedule their trips days in advance, like you have to with STRIDE.”
- “STRIDE is kind of a joke. I stopped using it.”
- “The regular DTA drivers need better training on using wheelchair restraints – they often don’t know how to use them – it’s embarrassing because I’m slowing everything down.”
- “Mobility limitations can have a combination of physical, emotional, and/or financial causes, all of which need to be addressed in different ways.”
- “Limited financial resources and social support are big factors for many people with disabilities.”
- “I often feel like I’m trapped at home during the winter. It’s hard for me to get to the bus because people don’t shovel. And I don’t want to walk in the street, especially on the hill.”
- “Isolation is a serious problem for many people if they don’t have mobility options.”
- “Actually for me in the winter, it’s easier to wheel in the streets than on the sidewalk. But it’s kind of scary, like I’m taking my life in my hands just to go to the grocery store.”
- “It seems like sidewalks are a huge part of our transportation network that’s being ignored. Like the saying goes, build it and they will come.”
- “They also say, move it or lose it. It’s already hard enough because I can’t walk very well without a walker. I need to be able to keep doing that, but it’s hard sometimes. Hard because it doesn’t always feel safe, like just to cross the street. ”
- “Transit-oriented development would be great” – that living situation would make it much easier to use the regular (non-STRIDE) bus service
- “If I’m using my wheelchair, sometimes I can’t reach the pedestrian buttons (at signalized intersections) – they’re placed too high on the pole.”
- “We need to be more intentional and more equitable (in how we design our streets)

Key Takeaways:

- This community of people regards disability-friendly transportation facilities as ultimately being about respect -- for all persons, regardless of age, ability or income.
- Routinely approach all street design from the perspective of people of all ages, abilities and incomes – especially in urban and suburban areas.

- Year-round accessibility and sidewalk snow removal need to be addressed as a bigger priority in the community, especially as it pertains to individuals with limited mobility.
- Desired improvements to intersections and crosswalks include traffic signals that give a leading pedestrian interval, flashing beacons, and placement of pedestrian buttons that are low enough to reach for a person in a wheelchair.

5/14/24 City of Superior Business and Tourism (Targeted Stakeholder Consultation)

Description: MIC staff met with the director of the Superior-Douglas County Area Chamber of Commerce & Travel Superior to discuss future transportation issues, needs and opportunities from the perspective of the business and tourism interests in the City of Superior and Douglas County.

What We Heard – Comments:

Q: What do you believe are transportation issues for business and commerce in Superior (and the Duluth-Superior area) – both now and in the future (through 2050)?

- Make it easy to transport goods and services.
- Incorporating more multimodal options into our transportation system has been good.
- Need to improve mass public transportation.
- Funding is an issue.
- We have a lot of infrastructure per capita thus it's difficult to keep all of it well-maintained.
- Need to increase public/private transportation partnerships.
- Accessibility issues. All people need access to reliable transportation. We must accommodate all needs as much as possible. Accessibility is a significant need for the workforce, and workforce is currently the number one issue/problem/concern for businesses.
- Blatnik Bridge reconstruction concerns.
 - Doubts that most trucks will use the posted truck route down Winter Street due to poor railroad crossings and many stop signs.
 - Where will 1200-1400 workers on the Blatnik live and how will they move around (i.e., adding people and vehicles to the congestion)?
 - Concerned about the response times for emergency response.
 - Concerned businesses will be hurt due to extra travel time, access issues, and Duluthians not coming to Superior.
- All this said, believes the end result should be a benefit, especially in terms of allowing normal truck payloads to cross the bridge.
- EV chargers are needed in the area, especially for tourists.
- Vehicle parking is a need in some areas. In combination with an inadequate public transportation option in Superior, people are not willing to park further than 2-3 blocks away from a destination, and thus businesses are hurt. Inadequate parking is part of the reason the commercial space associated with the Central Flats project did not fill up.

Q: Which of the transportation issues mentioned in “1” do you believe are priority issues?

- Blatnik Bridge reconstruction concerns
- Accessibility issues
- Public transportation being inadequate in Superior – in general, but also specifically in regard to hindering the workforce

Q: What do you believe are potential solutions to the transportation issues mentioned in “1”?

- Sidewalks are valuable infrastructure.
- The Chamber supports the NLX.
- Despite the concerns noted above during Blatnik Bridge removal and reconstruction, the project is funded and the end result of the new bridge will be positive and a significant improvement.
- Expand STRIDE use in Superior.
- Seek and include new, innovative private-public partnerships (such as the current funding to SK Taxi to help fill gaps in STRIDE service).
- Help local businesses by improving and expanding transportation options and access. And ask for their input.
- Keep local transportation dollars as local as possible. This includes hiring local workers to plan, design, build, and maintain local transportation projects.
- Ensure trail systems exist for all types of users (motorized and silent sport). Include options for those with disabilities.
- Include better signage for trails, including using QR codes with valuable information related to using a specific trail.
- Keep our transportation system and trails as simple (to use, understand, and maintain) as possible.