

# City of Duluth – Council Strategic Work Session Discussion 2/23/18

In attendance:

Nancy Harris – Mayor  
Marsha Anderson Bomar – Council Member  
Kirkland Carden – Council Member  
Billy Jones – Council Member  
Kelly Kelkenberg – Council Member  
Greg Whitlock – Council Member  
Rob Froehbrodt – Facilitator  
Department Directors/Staff

Meeting began at 8:30 a.m. and concluded at 4:00 p.m.

## I. VISION

- Attractive Destination
- Quality Community
- World-class Government
- Sustainable economic environment

Mayor Harris presented the City's current Vision Statements adopted in November 2016. She explained that the Vision Statement document paints a picture of what the particular city will look like in the future (2025-2030). Duluth is a metropolitan city, competing regionally and globally. Our diverse population, recovering economy, myriad cultural assets and attractive lifestyles makes us a destination for all generations. We are achieving this vision through collaboration which honors and leverages the uniqueness of our community. These served as a creativity starter for discussion about Duluth's future picture and asked that everyone review for updates.

Council identified some additional key characteristics and asked that the following be implemented into the Vision Statement.

Foster Thinking ----focus on outside the downtown district  
Succession planning  
Upgrade to City's Technology

Council and Staff will review and provide to Mayor Harris updates for inclusion.

## **II. PERCEPTIONS – DISCUSSION ON STRATEGICE PLAN FOR THE 2015 COMP. PLAN - COMMUNITY AGENDA TARGET AREAS**

Bill Aiken, Director Planning and Development presentation included a comprehensive overview of Duluth's Character Areas as well as current zonings. The presentation was primarily focused on the vision of the following areas:

1. Buford Highway Corridor from Brock Road to Davenport
2. Hall Circle
3. The Hill Community
4. Pinecrest

Following presentation, he requested the Mayor and Council's direction on development opportunities. He also spoke on potential under-developed/undeveloped properties and focused specifically on the future of the 112 acre known as the Hudgens property.

1. Staff to develop a strategy for blighted buildings along Buford Highway.
2. Staff to research uses allowed inherently in the HC-R zoning district for appropriateness in the downtown area, specifically the Downtown Overlay District. Uses not appropriate in the downtown should be amended to be allowed by Special Use only.
3. Staff to consider incorporating the Hall Circle, Hill Community and Pinecrest neighborhood areas as Targeted Community Development Character Areas in the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Staff to provide recommendations for appropriate land uses within the Targeted Community Development Character Areas.
5. Staff to research Infill overlay and other redevelopment concepts that may provide incentives to developers interested in investing in the Targeted Community Development Character Areas.
6. Staff to see how work force housing may fit into a strategy for redeveloping the Targeted Community Development Character Areas.
7. Staff to create marketing opportunities to share the City's vision and increase interest in the Targeted Community Development Character Areas.
8. Staff to continue to pursue executive housing opportunities where it makes sense, specifically on larger, undeveloped or underdeveloped tracts of land.
9. Staff to continue to think about where a transit stop near downtown would be appropriate.
10. Staff to consider amending the Character Area for the Hudgens property from Community Activity Center to a Special Plan Area that would fit Council's vision for the development of this parcel in the future. Specific components may include medical uses, class A mid-rise office, retail/commercial along Peachtree Industrial and western portion of Pleasant Hill and an executive housing component near the existing single-family residential. Staff to meet with the Hudgens real estate team and share the vision after Council has had an opportunity to provide feedback.

### **III. FINANCIAL UPDATE – Finance Mgr. Ken Sakmar**

Ken Sakmar presented an overview of the City current financial status. He explained the anticipated loss of projected revenues which may leave the City FY18 yearend revenue projections in a deficit of just over \$500,000. The City Manager then noted the actions being taken now to hopefully reduce the loss.

### **IV. LEGISLATIVE – UNDER THE GOLD DOME**

City Manager James Riker discussed several House and Senate Bills being considered this session that may affect city operations/revenues and requested action responses. He noted those bills that the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) opposes and supports.

- 1. SB 426**
- 2. SB 2**
- 3. HB 518**
- 4. HB 876**
- 5. HB 930**
- 6. SB 469**

City Manager to prepare a written response with Mayor's signature to be sent to all Duluth's State Representatives.

### **V. MASON VILLAGE TARGET AREA OPPORTUNITY**

Strong story and clear list of benefits will be developed for future discussions about ideas for this area

### **VI. COUNCIL TOPICS**

#### **1. ANNEXATION**

Concern over bad publicity and perceptions generated from properties outside the City limits that are assumed to be in Duluth. Primary goal of an annexation would be to clearly define the City's boundaries

Staff to come back to Council with a prioritized list of areas to consider for annexation

#### **2. HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Councilmember Kirkland Carden expressed a strong desire to develop a comprehensive plan to preserve and protect Duluth's historic structures

Staff to provide Council with information on the previous Historic Structure Overlay and which properties were included.

Staff to compile an inventory of possible structures. Additionally, City Manager James Riker will get a quote for a full project to inventory, organize and document historic properties.

Powerpoint presentations attached.