



# City of Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update

*December, 2016*

*"In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is a growing, well connected and exciting community with a great business climate; providing opportunities for visitors and residents to live, work, shop, and dine. It is a safe, walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents proudly call home."*



Prepared for: City of Mountain Iron  
Prepared by: Arrowhead Regional Development Commission  
(ARDC)  
[www.arrowheadplanning.org](http://www.arrowheadplanning.org)

## Acknowledgements

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## Mountain Iron Vision Statement and Goal Statements

### Vision Statement

***“In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is a growing, well connected and exciting community with a great business climate; providing opportunities for visitors and residents to live, work, shop, and dine. It is a safe walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents proudly call home.”***

### Goal Statements

**Housing Goal Statement:** The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownerships opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing options with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

**Transportation Goal Statement:** The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron's citizens.

**Utilities and Community Facilities:** The City of Mountain Iron will stay committed towards providing its residents with effective infrastructure to city structures, water and sanitary systems, recreational facilities, and other public facilities and services, through a systematic short-range planning process to ensure the health and equitable transfer of resources to the citizens of Mountain Iron.

**Economic Development:** The City of Mountain Iron will promote and seek partnership opportunities with new and existing businesses by advocating for manageable growth and retaining an aesthetically pleasing environment while reducing conflict between residential and commercial uses. Mountain Iron will promote and economic environment that supports the health of its residents and visitors to the City.

**Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources:** The City of Mountain Iron will utilize and preserve its cultural, historical, and natural resources to provide a deeper connection of a sense of place to its citizens and travelers in the area while addressing local agricultural and mining efforts, considering resources that contribute to a sustainable future and support the health of the City's environment and people.

**Recreation, Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Arts:** The City of Mountain Iron will strive to enhance the recreational and cultural facilities/opportunities available by utilizing public input, planning proactively, and implementing projects and programs to provide an array of opportunities to residents and travelers of all ability levels. The City will provide equitable access to facilities that promote the health and well-being of every member in the community.

**Land Use:** The City of Mountain Iron will utilize policies that promote sustainable land use by activity assessing future needs and promoting the most effective use of each property while balancing cost efficient public services. Mountain Iron's land use policies will be clear, concise and easy to administer, contributing to the creation and sustenance of an equitable and healthful environment.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation:** The City of Mountain Iron will work cooperatively with St. Louis County, neighboring communities and other public and private entities to provide high quality, cost effective, public services to residents throughout the community on issues of economic, equitable, social, health, environmental, and cultural significance.

**Implementation:** The City of Mountain Iron will work as an entity and with stakeholders to complete the strategies and projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan Update and will review and update implementation priorities and status annually.

## **Introduction and Background**

The following is the City of Mountain Iron's Comprehensive Plan Update, adopted by the Mountain Iron City Council on **(INSERT DATE)**. The plan was created to guide development of the City for future economic growth, population expansion, and preservation of resources. The Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update addresses strategies and action steps to resolve key issues and preserve valued assets of the City.

### **Comprehensive Plan Description**

A comprehensive plan is the policy framework that communities use to guide development and land use activities. The development of a comprehensive plan is based on a process of engaging the public in local decisions, articulating the sort of community they would like to live in and leave behind for the next generation. A comprehensive plan is a tool to help a community identify their long-term choices and goals, and to create strategies and action steps to work towards accomplishing their vision.

### **Legal Foundation of Comprehensive Planning**

The State of Minnesota gives its cities the legal authority to regulate land use. The State does not require the creation of comprehensive plans for cities outside the seven-county metropolitan area. However, it is recognized that a comprehensive plan is a valuable tool that a city can use to express its vision and develop strategies, guiding decision making into the future. The Municipal Planning Act (Minnesota Statutes Sections 462.351 to 462.364) creates a single procedure that applies to all cities. The comprehensive plan provides the legal foundation to enact land use controls and other municipal actions to implement long-term growth and development strategies and regulations. The City's land use (zoning) ordinances and official zoning map should be updated to conform to the Comprehensive Plan pursuant to adoption.

### **Health in Comprehensive Planning**

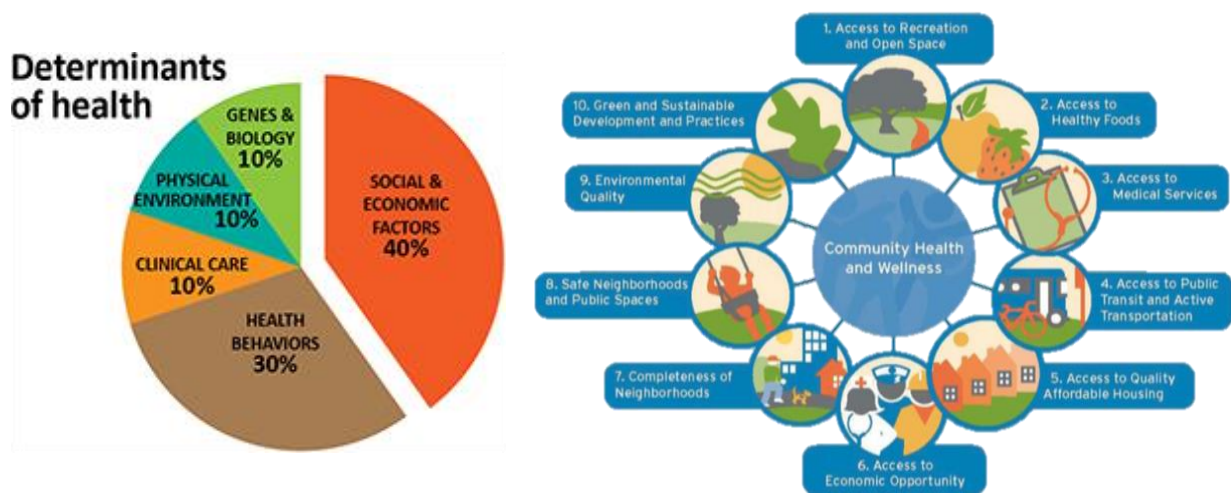
Health has become an increasingly important topic for local communities to consider in their planning efforts. Recent increases in chronic diseases have led to a trend in healthier diets and active living. ARDC and the Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis Community Healthy Board (CHB) have joined forces on a pilot project to incorporate health specific goals into comprehensive plans. The City of Mountain Iron was identified as a pilot community to discuss health and the impact of social determinants such as food access and active living.

Hundreds of studies have emerged linking the relationship between the built environment and our cumulative public health. CHB uses the 'public determinants' of health to guide their focus. As demonstrated below (left), social and economic factors are considered to have the largest input on our overall wellness. Examples of these and other 'built' or physical environment factors are demonstrated in the picture below (right). Active transportation (walking, biking, and transit) and healthy food access are two of the largest impact areas urban planners are incorporating into their work to help



curtail escalating public health costs associated with preventable diseases, including heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and others.

The primary goal of the pilot project is to identify assets, issues, and opportunities within communities that affect the overall health of its residents. Things such as healthy food markets, farmer's markets, community gardens, and other food access points were identified as priority areas for communities to plan that help residents identify healthier food options. Improving the walkability and bicycle friendliness of a community is also a priority. Creating a more accessible and safe network of sidewalks, bike lanes, and walking and biking path allow residents of all mobility levels an opportunity to consider living a more active life style.



## Update Process

In 2014, the City of Mountain Iron received a grant to update their comprehensive plan from the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) and partnered with the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission to conduct the update process. The update focused on emerging issues and updating the status of projects which have been acted upon since the extensive 2008 planning process. An outline of the 2016 planning process has been provided below; while new goals, objectives, and strategies have either been encompassed into existing chapters or designated new chapters of their own.

## Planning Process

- **January 13, 2016: Kick-off Meeting** – ARDC met with the Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Planning Committee to outline the scope of work, process, and timeline of the project. The Committee also provided insight on emerging trends and issues of concern that have arisen since the last plan, to provide context for the plan update.
- **February 10, 2016: Public Visioning Session** – The public visioning session was advertised and promoted by the City with assistance from ARDC, in order to obtain good attendance and incorporate public input into the priorities set forth



in the plan. At the meeting, ARDC provided brief overview of the planning process, while Annie Harala from the Community Health Board provided information to the meeting participants such as factors that influence health and well-being; social and economic factors to be addressed to achieve health equity; and etc. The meeting attendees were also led through multiple public engagement exercises to identify local assets to protect/preserve, potential barriers, the City may face in the future, provide feedback on investment priorities, and also help mold the vision statement to guide the City into the future.

- **April 28, 2016: Public Visioning Review Meeting** – The third meeting of the process analyzed key demographics and summarized results from the visioning session exercises. The Planning Committee also provided further discussion focused on key issues and assets for the City of Mountain Iron. Additionally, recommendations and projects identified from previous plans were examined extensively to identify which projects have been implemented as well as to determine if projects that haven't been included should be carried over into the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- **July 11, 2016 & September 14, 2016: Recommendation Review Meeting I & II** – Initial recommendations of goals and strategies were reviewed with the Planning Committee to provide feedback on the extent and inclusion of each. Additional discussion took place regarding additional analysis of other potential recommendations or areas to explore. Revisions were made available to the Planning Committee digitally after the meeting.
- **October 27, 2016: Public Review/Hearing Meeting** – A public review meeting was conducted to take comments on the draft version of the completed plan. The plan was made available online and at City Hall prior to the hearing. Comments and revisions were documented and summarized for the Planning Committee's review.
- **December 6, 2016: Final Planning Committee Meeting** - A final Planning Committee meeting was held to review comments expressed at the Public Review/Hearing meeting and make necessary changes. Additionally, the implementation table to determine the timeline (short-term, mid-term, long-term, ongoing) to implement each identified recommendation/project and who should take the lead on the project completion process.
- **(Insert Date): Plan Adoption**

## Community Profile and Background

The City of Mountain Iron is located in west central St. Louis County. The total area of the City is 71.31 square miles (76 km<sup>2</sup>). 68.52 square miles (177.47 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 2.79 square miles (7.23 km<sup>2</sup>) is water. The City had a 2010 Census population of 2,869 and a 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) estimate of 2,847. U.S. Trunk Highway 169 runs through the community, and links the City with U.S. Trunk Highway 53 which provides service south to Duluth. Mountain Iron's residents value their community's location and character. Along with the cities of Virginia, Eveleth, and Gilbert, Mountain Iron is Part of the group of cities commonly referred to as the Quad Cities.

### Community History

The northeastern region of Minnesota was forested and mainly populated by Native Americans until the discovery of iron ore in the late 1890s. By 1900, the Minnesota iron ranges, including the Mesabi Range, led the North American iron ore industry. The rapid establishment of a major raw materials industry in a relatively remote region populated and industrialized the region quickly with over 100 town sites and mining locations being established. Immigrant populations from the northern and southern areas of Europe provided the bulk of a labor needed for underground and open pit mining operations. These pioneering towns were either established independently or by mining companies.



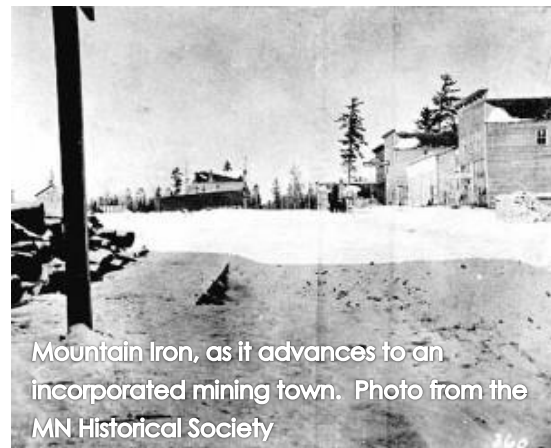
One of these early town sites was Mountain Iron which is centrally located on the Mesabi Range. In 1890, iron ore was discovered in Mountain Iron by the Merritt brothers and has been known as the birthplace of iron ore mining on the Mesabi Iron Range. The following are excerpts from the "History of Mountain Iron, Minnesota (through 1922)", which can be found at [Zenith City Online](http://www.zenithcityonline.com):

*Through the Merritts, it was at Mountain Iron that the first iron ore mine of the Mesabi Range was brought into operation; the first Mesabi mine reached by railway was the Mountain Iron, entirely through the dogged persistence of the Merritts; and Mountain Iron will always hold the unique position as being the place where at the first shipment of ore from the Mesabi Range was made. When the railway was brought to the mines, it seemed to be the triumphant consummation of an almost hopeless undertaking, and one can well imagine how proud those seven sons were when, after overcoming all obstacles and bringing the railway to the mines in 1892 they had taken their aged mother to the iron mines, and in their strong arms carried her to the top of the mound that she might look down to see the work of her children.*

*The first development work on the Mountain Iron mine was done in 1891-1892, by Captain A. P. Woods. A shaft was sunk, and from this in 1892, the first ore for*

shipment was raised. At the Biwabik mine, which had been subleased by the Merritts to Kimberly and Jones, a steam shovel had been introduced in the spring of 1892, with indifferent success, at first, and although it was early decided by Captain Cohoe, who succeeded Captain Woods at Mountain Iron, that stripping was to be done there, the work was given out to Donald Grant, a railway contractor. He began the stripping at Mountain Iron early in 1893, using scrapers, teams, and dump cars. This equipment soon gave way to a steam shovel, Mr. Grant having brought one he had used in the construction of the Missabe Road.

During 1889 and 1890, Mountain Iron was, of course, but a "prospector's camp in a bleak wild spot," almost "beyond the fringe of civilization." Wilbur Merritt was entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the camp store, and in 1891, when the Merritts were exploring at Biwabik, two townships to the eastward; he had charge of that store and office also. And all the supplies they needed had to come in from Tower, or from Mesabi station, a week's trip over an Indian Trail. Albert Merritt wrote: "No one who has not gone through the hardships and discouragements of keeping a camp going, so far from the base supplies, can realize what one has to contend with". However, no matter what the discouragement, the principal explorers were resolved to bear them, as they were confident they were going to find the ore; and the Mountain Iron camp soon lost its temporary aspect, settling into a permanency. In 1890, of course, they discovered ore, and thereafter the little community constantly swelled in size and in importance.



Mountain Iron, as it advances to an incorporated mining town. Photo from the MN Historical Society

Still, the residents of Mountain Iron were bent more upon the mining of iron than the planning of a village. Other communities, of later establishment than Mountain Iron, had gone ahead of that place in the matter of incorporation. Mesaba Station, the nearest point on the railway (D. & I. R.) to the new mining field, had grown almost overnight into a place of fifteen hotels and some very active and comprehensive general stores, which endeavored to supply the demand of the countless bands of explorers delving into the range into the range 422 to the westward, had been granted the dignity of corporate government in July, 1891; and the village of Merritt, at which place no prospectors had started operations until 1891, became an incorporated place almost before Mountain Iron town site had even been platted. And the villagers of McKinley and Biwabik had both held their initial elections upon the question of incorporation before a petition for incorporation of Mountain Iron had been passed upon by the county commissioners.

A town site of 80 acres was platted in April, 1892, the territory embraced in the town site of sw.-sw. of section 3, 58-18, and the nw-nw. of section 10, 58-18. The plat was marked as "Plat of Grant," and filed with the Register of Deeds, at Duluth, on April 16, 1892. In October, 1892, a petition was circulated among the residents of the town site. It was addressed to the St. Louis County Commissioners," and asked "that a time and place be set when and where the electors residing upon lands described as sw.-sw. section 3, t. 58 n., r. 18 w., and nw.-nw. section 10, t. 58 n., r. 18 w., might vote for or against the incorporation of such lands into the Village of Mountain Iron," under the authority of chapter 145 of Laws of Minnesota 1885 compilation. The petition came before the county commissioners on October 26, 1892, and met their approval. They ordered an election to be held, to decide the question of incorporation, on November 28, 1892. A majority of the electors having voted in favor incorporation, an election of officers for the village of Mountain Iron followed, that event occurred on December 13, 1892, establishing the first village administration. The village was administered under the charter granted in 1892 until 1913, when the residents sought to be brought under the powers and privileges of the Revised State Laws, 1905, compilation. An election was held on June 2, 1913. 27 of 36 votes cast then being in favor or re-incorporation.

In April 1909, a petition was presented the village council by residents upon certain land contiguous to Mountain Iron, the signers being mainly employees of the Iroquois mine. They wished their location brought within the village boundaries. It was resolved to hold an election on May 1, 1909. The election showed that a majority of the electors were in favor of the proposed annexation, sixty-five of the seventy-two votes cast being in favor of the proposition. Then in 1918, a petition signed by C.M. Van Pelt and others sought to bring within the village limits an immense acreage in townships 58 and 59 n., r. 18 w., in all 7,368.23 acres. An election held on January 31, 1918 brought only 22 voters to the poll, but all votes cast were in favor of annexation.

At one time, it was expected that Mountain Iron was destined to become the metropolis of the Mesabi Range. When the railway project was crystallized, it was expected that Mountain Iron would be the northern terminus of the road, the Duluth Missabe and Northern.

### **Population Demographics**

The City of Mountain Iron demographics were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau and the ACS. Information about the City of Mountain Iron was gathered in the following categories: Population, Housing, Employment, Income, and Transportation with specific tables/information found in their respective chapter. The Census data is both from the U.S. Decennial census, which is collected every ten years, and the American Community Survey, which provides estimates from the interim years (provided 1-5 years,

varying on community size). More information about the census data can be found online at <http://www.census.gov/>.

## Mountain Iron Population Key Findings (U.S. Census 2010 and ACS 2012)

- According to the 2010 Census, the City of Mountain Iron had a population of 2,869.
- There is a slightly higher population of females (50.2%) than males (49.8%).
- The City is predominantly Caucasian (98%) with the next largest racial groups of people that are two or more races (2%) and American Indian and Alaska Native (0.7%).
- Since the 2000 U.S. Census, Mountain Iron's previous population was 2,999 and has decreased by 4.3%.
- The median age is 45.4 years old (Males – 43.6 and Females – 47.3)
- The top four largest age groups in Mountain Iron:
  - 55 to 59 years of age (11.1% of population)
  - 50 to 54 years of age (8.4% of population)
  - 60 to 64 years of age (6.9% of population)
  - 45 to 49 years of age (6.6% of population)

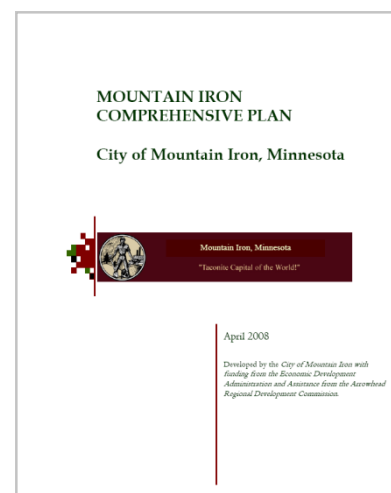
## Past and Relevant Plans

As previously mentioned in regards to the City of Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update process, ARDC reviewed existing documents and plans that are relevant to the City. Primary documents that were reviewed included:

- 2008 Comprehensive Plan
- 2010 Mountain Iron Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- 2012 Mountain Iron Strategic Plan Update

## 2008 Comprehensive Plan

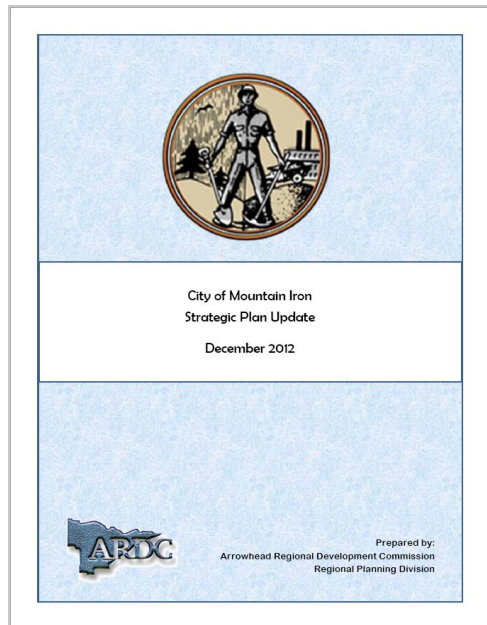
In 2008, Mountain Iron and the ARDC produced the 2008 *Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan*, which too was an update of a previous plan. At the time, the City needed a new comprehensive plan to drive the community's land use and development goals in a direction that was more reflective of current prospects. Issues that drove the plan included: New housing developments in the City; changing conditions of the local and regional economy related to taconite mining and processing; and several large industrial projects. Ultimately, the plan addressed land use decisions as they affected transportation and community and economic development. Also addressed were procedures for the implementation and administration of the Plan's recommendations and everyday responsibilities of the City's Planning and Zoning Commission.





## **2010 Mountain Iron Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

The *Mountain Iron Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* was completed in 2010 with assistance from ARDC. The Plan combined local non-motorized trail planning with a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) element. Overall, it focused on expanding existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the City of Mountain Iron to provide a safe, well-designed network that connects popular destinations and is accessible to everyone in Mountain Iron, especially students. Also addressed was walking and bicycling education and promotion to the Mountain Iron-Buhl School District students.



## **2012 Mountain Iron Strategic Plan Update**

In 2012, the City of Mountain Iron and ARDC undertook an initiative to update the City's Strategic Plan which was last completed in May 2002. That document was complimentary to some of the other existing plans at the times, such as the *2002 Old Town Plan*, *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, *2010 Economic Development Strategy*, and *2012 Mountain Iron Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*. The updated plan addressed the areas of Housing, Economic Development, and Community Infrastructure and Service's Needs, and recommends strategies and action steps for implementation of prioritized projects.

## **2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Completed in 2013, the *St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan* was developed to determine how

to reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property damage resulting from natural and human-caused hazards. The plan was first adopted in 2005 and was reviewed and updated in 2012 in preparation for approval by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2012. The plan encompasses all natural, technological, and human-caused hazards rather than only focusing on one type of hazards. St. Louis County followed the guidelines and handouts that FEMA has created and any resources provided by Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM). Local governments, including representatives from the City of Mountain Iron, participated in the planning process by attending meetings and providing feedback towards the development of the plan.

## **Public Participation**

### **Public Visioning Session**

ARDC staff worked with the Planning Committee and the City of Mountain Iron to hold a Public Visioning Session at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the Mountain Iron Community Center/City Hall.



The Public Visioning Session provided the residents of Mountain Iron as well as public health attendees a chance to participate in the process by helping to set community goals. The meeting included a review of the planning process, key health information and statistics, and public engagement exercises. Citizen participation in the Visioning Session is critical to the success of the Comprehensive Plan. Residents, elected officials, and other stakeholders from the community were encouraged to attend and healthy refreshments were served to over 11 meeting attendees.

After a brief presentation on both comprehensive planning and health indicators, ARDC led the meeting attendees through a pair of exercises to gather input on community values and priorities. First the attendees were asked to work as small groups at tables to mark assets and community issues on a map. Each table then reported their findings, which were documented by ARDC. A brief description of the captured is below:

- Physical Assets: For example, attractions, gatherings places, city sidewalks and campground.
- Other Assets: For example, an asset not seen on the map could include annual community events, friendly atmosphere, etc.
- Future Assets: Desired assets in the future.
- Concern Identification:
  - Identify Physical Concerns/Threats/Issues
  - Identify "Unseen" Concerns/Threats/Issues
  - Identify Future Concerns/Threats/Issues to be avoided



The second exercise focused on crafted a Vision Statement for the City of Mountain Iron. Keeping the list of newly created assets in mind, participants were asked to think about how they would finish the statement below.

### ***"In the future, the City of Mountain Iron..."***

For example:           *...has a good business environment*  
                                  *...is well connected to area recreational assets*

These 'Vision Nuggets' were documented by ARDC, and then utilized with the Planning Committee in crafting the community Vision Statement associated with this plan. The Vision Statement projects the values the community would like to see preserved into the future of the City.

### **Community Survey**

To further engage the Mountain Iron community during the comprehensive planning process, ARDC suggested administering a community survey. Developed by the Planning Committee and ARDC, it was made available both online and in paper format. The survey was answered by 36 respondents between February and July 2016. A few results of important qualities/assets and issues and opportunities are listed below:

| Important Qualities and Community Assets  | Current/Future Issues and Opportunities  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place to live, work, retire, and raise children</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road repairs needed within the City. County Highway 102 and Mineral Avenue is not a good design</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sense of Community and opportunities to participate in community matters and issues</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decline of mining. Need for different industries and new business opportunities in Mountain Iron</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educational opportunities</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve and maintain green space for recreation opportunities</li> </ul>                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to markets, farms, health and affordable food</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe biking and walking paths. More trails and sidewalks. Public transportation options</li> </ul>          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street and sidewalk/maintenance</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for a new main street. Where will the new city center be at due to the decline of Old Town?</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to affordable quality health and child care</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preservation of Old Town</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Openness and acceptance towards people with diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mountain Iron-Buhl School District should build a school that is centrally located</li> </ul>               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snow removal</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loose animals. Need leash enforcement</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of paths, trail and sidewalks that connect to destinations</li> </ul>             |  |

For a thorough summary of survey responses, a full break-down of survey questions and responses, refer to the *City of Mountain Iron Community Survey Results Summary* and *City of Mountain Iron Community Survey Results* in Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively.

## Housing

Housing is an important part of Mountain Iron's community development and economic development efforts. Challenges include protecting existing neighborhoods, stimulating new housing construction, increasing the customer base for local utilities, balancing natural resource protection with desired development, and providing quality and affordable housing across the range of residential needs. Providing quality, affordable housing for the workforce and an aging population will become especially important over the next decade.

The Center for Disease Control defines "aging in place" as the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, and income, or ability level. Design elements including single level homes with ADA accessibility, shared maintenance services and opens space, and smaller lots/homes within close proximity to services and transit options should be included when making decisions on future housing to assist with the City's/region's aging population and to allow residents to spend their entire life within the community they love and cherish.

### Housing Indicator Report

A Housing Indicator Report is an ongoing process to track current and past housing marketing trends within the city and provides a snapshot of existing conditions. The report provides information to private businesses, housing developers, property owners, banking institutions and private and public community decision makers.

Statistics/Indicators can include population trends/projections building permits issued, number of foreclosures, median sales price, rental rates, rental vacancy rates, affordable housing rates, home/rental property surveys, among others.



### Housing Demographics

The following Housing Key findings were developed using data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS). According to the 2010 Census, the City of Mountain Iron had approximately 1,442 total housing units. Other key findings from the review of housing are listed below.

### Mountain Iron Housing Key Findings (U.S. Census 2010 and ACS 2014)

- The City has 1,442 total housing units, which include 1,336 (92.6%) occupied units
- There is an estimated 106 vacant housing units (7.4% of total, comprising of most of these units that are categorized "all other vacant" (2.5%); while the next highest percentage is "for rent" (2.1%)
- Of the total amount of occupied units, approximately 67.8% are owner occupied, while approximately 32.2% is renter occupied
- The average household size is 2.14 while the average family size is 2.72

## Housing Goal and Recommendations

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownership opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing options with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

### Recommendations:

- H 1: Address the elimination of blighted or problematic structures.
  - H 1.1: Inventory properties throughout the City that are considered as blight or problematic (beyond city scope of restorative efforts) and enforce the City's blight ordinance.
  - H 1.2: Research and apply for IRRRB Commercial Redevelopment and/or Residential Redevelopment grants as appropriate (<https://mn.gov/irrb/grant-resources/community-programs.jsp>). If blighted properties and historic structures, the Minnesota Historic Society's funding may be applicable for restoration efforts.
  - H 1.3: Review and update the City's existing blight ordinance every 6-12 months.
- H 2: Maintain and improve the quality of safe and affordable housing throughout the neighborhoods in Mountain Iron.
  - H 2.1: Promote rehab and preservation of public and subsidized housing stock. This provides stability to lower-income families by ensuring their access to quality and safe, affordable housing.
  - H 2.2: Investigate and pursue development of new senior-friendly housing opportunities throughout the City.
  - H 2.3: Conduct a housing survey of the community to determine current numbers and demographics of residents who own their home or rent in Mountain Iron.
- H 3: Promote maintenance of the existing housing stock in Mountain Iron.
  - H 3.1: Advertise existing loan/grant programs for homeowners' improvements through the use of social media (and local newsletter), the website, or other means as a way to promote additional improvements to celebrate successes by other homeowners throughout the community.
  - H 3.2: Collaborate with existing organizations/grants programs to create incentives for home maintenance.
    - Potential resources include: Community Development Block Grant, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) Housing Department, St. Louis County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and others for a variety of improvements including home maintenance, energy efficiency, exterior improvements, and others.
- H 4: Maintain the existing character of established neighborhoods.

- H 4.1: Ensure that new commercial and industrial development is buffered from residential areas and will minimally impact commercial/industrial traffic in Mountain Iron's residential neighborhoods.
- H 5: Explore the feasibility of creating and annually reviewing a 'Housing Indicator Report' which utilizes annual statistics regarding housing to provide a snapshot of where the community is currently, and indicators of trends moving forward to help spur private sector development and new housing.
  - H 5.1: Components of a 'Housing Indicator Report' can include: demographics (past and projected); employment/labor force trends; homeownership trends; rental indicators (survey). The Survey should address:
    - Rental rates
    - Vacancy rates
      - Derive: average rent (# of bedrooms/utilities paid vs. not paid)
      - Housing production (\*amount and costs of sales/\*foreclosures)
    - Number of building permits issued (new builds, additions, plats approved)
      - Affordability analysis
      - Annual income necessary to afford particular rent/buy a dwelling
      - % of income designated to take care of housing costs
- H 6: Research and consider adopting housing development and/or subdivision incentives to encourage design for future residential units and lots that encompass lifestyles for users of all ages and abilities (including vacation and short-term housing), as well as 'Age in Place Principles'. Aging in Place is a tool designed to help local governments plan and prepare for their aging populations (<http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/plan/planning/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments-aarp.pdf>).
  - H 6.1: Design elements may include: development of smaller, affordable housing units in compact multi-house developments or allowing accessory dwelling units, supported by facilities (commercial, pharmacy's, etc.) accessible by walking/biking or transit.

## Transportation

### State and Local Roads

The City of Mountain Iron's transportation system consists of State, County, and local street networks, a regional non-motorized transportation corridor of the Mesabi Trail, and a Class One railroad. The City is located along the intersection of Minnesota State Trunk Highways 169 and 53. These two highways are the busiest roads in Mountain Iron and provide residents with connections to neighboring cities and the region at large. They also bring most of the City's visitors and commercial traffic evidenced by



the concentration of most commercial activities within the Highway 169 and 53 corridors. Both highways are four-lane and have wide shoulders through the City. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) places a priority on US and State Highway sections with high traffic volumes. The City should participate in corridor and District planning processes in order to lobby for continued maintenance and improvements to both highways.

One of the main transportation routes through the City is St. Louis County Road 102. The road provides an east-west route that runs from its southern terminus at County 7 to U.S. Highway 53, near the northern terminus of U.S. Highway 169. Since the completion of the 2008 Plan, a section of the County road was rerouted to provide easier access to MinnTac to account for high traffic flow, including heavy truck traffic, generated by the company due to expansion of mining operations.

Overall, there 94.1 miles of roads located in Mountain Iron consisting of U.S. Trunk Highways, County State-Aid Highways, County Roads , and Municipal Streets. The mileage and percentage by jurisdiction is found in the chart below.

| Breakdown of Road Mileage by Jurisdiction |               |            |
|---|---------------|------------|
| Road Type/Jurisdiction                    | Total Mileage | Percentage |
| US Trunk Highways                         | 16.25         | 17.2%      |
| County State-Aid Highways                 | 22.32         | 23.7%      |
| County Roads                              | 24.19         | 25.6%      |
| Municipal Streets                         | 31.35         | 33.2%      |
| Total                                     | 94.10         | 100.0%     |

Of the 94.1 miles of roadway in Mountain Iron, 33.2% of all the roads are required to be maintained by the City. St. Louis County oversees 49.3% of the roadways (County



Roads and County State-Aid Highways) in the City. The County State-Aid Highways make up 23.7% of the City's roads, which are eligible for state and federal funding.

## Mesabi Trail

Still under construction, the Mesabi Trail will eventually stretch 132 miles from Grand Rapids to Ely in Northeast Minnesota. The trail will connect to over 25 communities. Partially built on old railroad beds, the Mesabi Trail has a 10-foot wide asphalt surface (wider in some areas). The trail follows a winding route past taconite tailings and through stands of pine. Uses include inline skating and walking as well as bicycling. Along the trail there is access to swimming, canoeing, camping, and fishing. Winter activities on the trail include cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and winter hiking. Once completed, the Mesabi Trail will be longest paved trail in the United States.

The Mesabi Trail is a product of the foresight of regional residents led by the St. Louis and Lake County Regional Railroad Authority (RRA). The planning began nearly twenty years ago with the Regional Rail Authority striving to preserve former railroad beds and transforming them into recreational trail routes.



## Transportation Demographics

The following key transportation data was gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau and the ACS. Key findings from the review of transportation data are listed below.

### Transportation Key Findings (US Census 2010 and ACS 2014)

- The most common most common commute mode to work is by driving a motor vehicle (93.2%). Of that percentage 87.6% drive alone to work, while 5.5% carpool
- 2.6% of Mountain Iron residents walk to work
- The mean travel time to work is 18.2 minutes

## Transportation Goals and Recommendations

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options and promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron's citizens.

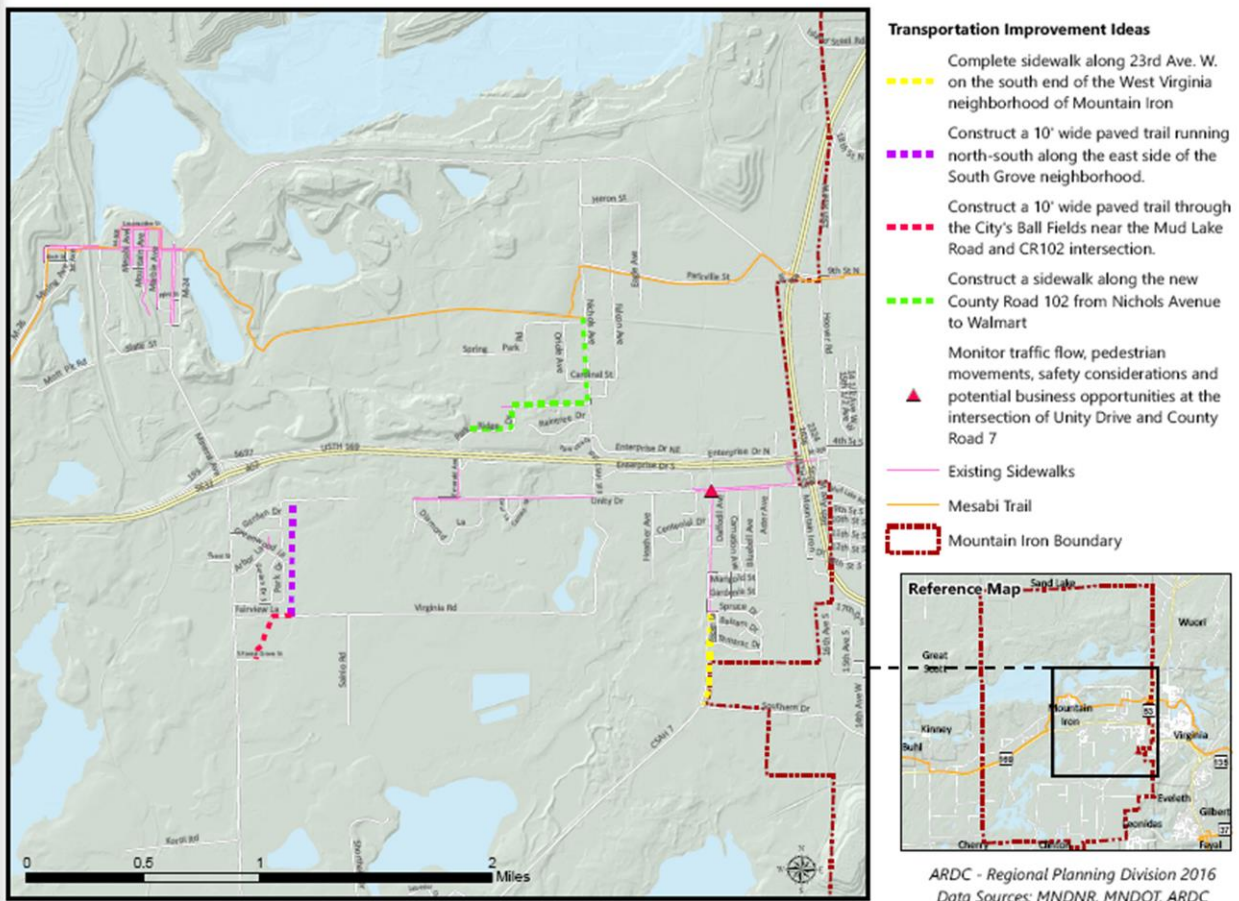
### Recommendations:

- T 1: Participate in corridor and MnDOT District 1 planning processes in order to lobby for continued maintenance and improvements to Trunk Highways 169 and 53.

- T 2: Participate in the St. Louis County 5-year road and transportation planning process.
- T 3: Support the Mesabi Trail and regional bicycle connections projects.
- T 4: Support and work to complete the City Bike Connections Route. There is a designated and signed route between access points, which goes through the older section of the City. Much of residential Mountain Iron is situated south of Highway 169 and could use better connections to Mesabi Trail rather than using narrow, busy roadways.
- T 5: Connect existing and planned community destinations by expanding and filling gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail system.
  - T 5.1: Construct a 10' wide paved trail running north-south along the east side of the South Grove neighborhood.
  - T 5.2: Construct a 10' wide paved trail through the City's ball fields near the Mud Lake Road County Road 102 intersection.
  - T 5.3: Construct a 10' wide paved trail connecting the Mesabi Trail to the Rock Ridge Retail Center.
  - T 5.4: Complete sidewalk along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue W. on the south end of the West Virginia neighborhood of Mountain Iron.
  - T 5.5: Construct a sidewalk along the new County Road 102 from Nichols Avenue to Walmart.
- T 6: Collaborate with St. Louis County to designate potential ATV routes within the City to connect to St. Louis County roads that allow ATV operation.
- T 7: Monitor traffic flow, pedestrian movements, safety considerations and potential business opportunities at the intersection of Unity Drive and County Road 7.
- T 8: Promote and support public transit opportunities such as Arrowhead Transit.
  - T 8.1: Review transportation options, specifically for those in wheelchairs and with limited mobility, and collaborate with potential partners to enhance available services.
- T 9: Evaluate creating a Living Streets Policy to provide for sustainable, ADA-compliant, multimodal street designs when completing improvement projects. The general nature of a Living Streets Policy is to enhance biking and walking conditions; improve safety and security of streets; calm traffic; create livable neighborhoods; and improve stormwater quality and neighborhood aesthetics.
- T 10: Support the Iron Range Regional Rail Initiative which is a public/private collaborative effort focused on improving rail infrastructure and access to Northeast Minnesota. More information can be found at:  
[http://www.senate.mn/committees/2015-2016/3071\\_Transportation\\_and\\_Public\\_Safety\\_Budget\\_Division/SF2697%20Handout%20-%20Iron%20Range%20Regional%20Rail%20Initiative.pdf](http://www.senate.mn/committees/2015-2016/3071_Transportation_and_Public_Safety_Budget_Division/SF2697%20Handout%20-%20Iron%20Range%20Regional%20Rail%20Initiative.pdf)

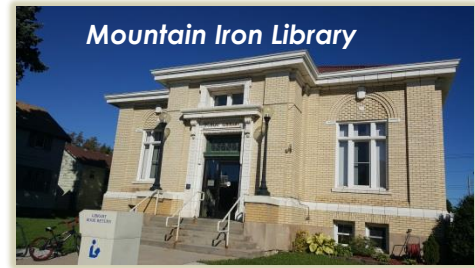


## Transportation Improvement Ideas in Mountain Iron, MN



## Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities are public services and infrastructure that the City of Mountain Iron develops and maintains. Utilities include the water, stormwater, sewer, communications, and waste collection infrastructure. Community facilities include buildings such as City Hall/Community Center, the Library, and parks/recreational facilities, (although recreational facilities may also be addressed specifically in other sections of the plan) among others. Maintaining these facilities regularly can help minimize costs of major repairs in the future while ensuring quality of life standards for residents both current and future.



The City of Mountain Iron has been working with internet providers and agencies to bring broadband service to the community. The word "broadband" describes an internet signal of high bandwidth or capacity. No one type of high-speed Internet can be labeled as broadband because nearly all types of high-speed internet connections can be referred to as broadband connections. Types of broadband internet can include cable, satellite, DSL, fiber-optic or wireless.

### Complete/Living Streets

Complete Streets typically refers to street design that provides for multiple modes of transportation. Green Streets typically refers to street design that reduces environmental impacts by reducing impervious surface, managing stormwater, and providing shade. Living Streets is a combination of the two. Living Streets combines the concepts of complete streets and green streets, and also puts additional focus on quality of life aspects for City residents.

*Provide economic benefits:* Lower initial costs; lower maintenance costs; increase property value; economic revitalization.

*Build community:* Improve public health; increase safety; enhance neighborhood beauty; strengthen sense of community; provide positive impact upon children.

*Provide environmental benefits:* Improve water quality; improve air quality; reduce the urban heat island affect; reduce materials and energy used in street construction; promote the planning of trees.

It is recommended the City investigate a Living Streets policy for the community, or integrate design principles into regular road construction or reconstruction decisions.

### Utilities and Community Facilities Goal and Recommendations

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will stay committed towards providing its residents with effective infrastructure to city structures, water and sanitary systems, recreational



facilities, and other public facilities and services through a system short-range planning process to ensure the health and equitable transfer of resources to the citizens of Mountain Iron.

## Recommendations:

- UC 1: Identify and prioritize all City utility and infrastructure improvements and secure funding for implementation.
  - UC 1.1: Research and apply for IRRRB Development Infrastructure Grant Program and the St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant as appropriate.
- UC 2: Create a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process that annually implements and reviews priorities to provide adequate infrastructure (including roads, sidewalks, water/wastewater facilities, etc.) to the community while balancing financial constraints in a systematic process.
- UC 3: Incorporate the Mountain Iron recommendations from the [2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) into the planning process to reduce potential damage costs due to natural disasters.
  - UC 3.1: Annually address, implement, and monitor projects and mitigation strategies identified in the *2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
  - UC 3.2: Include infrastructure and other mitigation improvements into the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process when addressing annual maintenance/improvements.
- UC 4: Explore opportunities to consolidate services and save costs when possible.
- UC 5: Explore permeable alternatives to traditional curb and gutter projects, which can be incorporated in the development of a 'Living Streets Policy'. This allows for air and stormwater filtering through the alternative permeable material to the soil below as opposed to the use traditional concrete.
- UC 6: Address opportunities to redevelop and reinvigorate the vacant Mountain Iron-Buhl High School building.
- UC 7: Explore opportunities for improved internet and Wi-Fi connection.
  - UC 7.1: Research the Blandin Foundation's Community Broadband Program for potential grant and technical support opportunities. More information about the Community Broadband Program can be found on the following website: <http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/>.



## **Economic Development**

Economic development can be defined as the sustained, concerted action of policy makers and communities that promotes that standard of living and economic health of an area. Economic development efforts can include business or industry recruitment, retention, and expansion, and building or site availability through property acquisition and infrastructure development. Economic development efforts happen both in private business efforts and policy actions. Along with physical projects, the City understands the value for their residents of supporting social clubs, service organizations and community celebrations.

Mountain Iron has existing commercial economic areas along Trunk Highway 169 and Highway 53 with a variety of hotels, restaurants, automotive repair shops and retail shopping center establishments such as Plaza 53, Walmart and others. The City has an Economic Development Authority (EDA) is responsible for commercial, industrial and residential development within the City. Currently, the EDA administers a number of Tax Increment Financing Districts and various forms of development bonds. The Authority is very aggressive in pursuing and accommodating commercial and industrial development throughout the City.

### **Employment and Income Demographics**

The following key employment findings were developed using data from the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS). Key findings from the review of employment data are listed below.

#### ***Employment Key Findings (US Census 2010 and ACS 2014)***

- In 2014, the City of Mountain Iron had an unemployment rate of 6.2%
- The City has an estimated 1,411 employed residents that are at least 16 years of age or older in the labor force
- Top occupations in the City of Mountain Iron:
  1. Sales and office occupations (30.8% of population)
  2. Management, business, science, and arts occupations (29.8% of population)
  3. Production, transportation, and materials moving occupations (15.6% of population)
- Top employment industries in the City of Mountain Iron:
  1. Educational services, and health care and social assistance (24.8% of population)
  2. Retail Trade (11.2% of population)
  3. Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental leasing (10.1% of population)
  4. Transportation and warehousing, and utilities (9.1% of population)



## ***Income Key Findings (US Census 2010 and ACS 2014)***

- The City of Mountain Iron median household income is \$49,570
- The City of Mountain Iron median family income is \$79,345
- 15.4% of households have annual incomes between \$50,000-\$74,999 & \$75,000-\$99,999 and 14.7% of households have an annual income of \$35,000-\$49,999 & \$100,000-\$149,999
- The majority of families have an annual income of \$100,000-\$149,999 (23.4%)

## **Economic Development Goal and Recommendations**

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will promote and seek partnership opportunities with new and existing businesses by advocating for manageable growth and retaining an aesthetically pleasing environment while reducing conflict between residential and commercial uses. Mountain Iron will promote an economic environment that supports the health of its residents and visitors to the City.

### Recommendations:

- ED 1: Continue to develop Trunk Highway 169 as a commercial corridor destination.
  - ED 1.1: Map all available land and infrastructure existing or planned along Highway 169 to support new commercial development.
  - ED 1.2: Identify and pursue potential commercial opportunities for "big box" retailers to locate on Highway 169.
  - ED 1.3: Secure property and necessary infrastructure to available City-owned retail sites.
  - ED 1.4: Evaluate potential for a section of Highway 102 to be used as a frontage road for development.
- ED 2: Strategically identify and plan for new tourism and recreation resources opportunities.
  - ED 2.1: Inventory and map potential locations for a new scenic overlook to the mine (i.e. Energy Park, new dump, across from City garage). As appropriate, hold discussions with U.S. Steel to request support for creation of a new overlook to the mine with the loss of Wacootah Overlook.
- ED 3: Identify and secure outside funding for tourism-related initiatives.
  - ED 3.1: Develop a grant application for IRRRB's Culture and Tourism Grant to support planning for an appropriate tourism project.
- ED 4: Improve EDA (Economic Development Administration) cooperation with the Planning Commission.
- ED 5: Evaluate and implement an Old Town Revitalization Plan which can include: urban design elements, storefront changes, public art, wayfinding signage, ongoing programming, partnership funding, and other related components.

- ED 6: Continue supporting existing businesses and encourage them to participate in local business organizations, seize opportunities for growth, and foster local talent.
- ED 7: Continue the awareness and communication of local community events, activities, and amenities on a local, regional, and statewide level.
  - ED 7.1: Continue to update information on the City's website, monitor upgrade possibilities, and explore other information that can enhance site's effectiveness.
  - ED 7.2: Create a formalized process for providing information about recreational opportunities and community events to the public, via multiple modes of a communication (online, newspaper, tourism organizations, etc.).
- ED 8: Work to restore and revitalize the Plaza 53 West area as a prime commercial location for the community.

## Land Use

The purpose of this section is to briefly outline current land use patterns and policies in Mountain Iron, describe concerns, identify goals, and map out desired land use outcomes. The Comprehensive Plan is primarily a land use document and is intended to allocate land among industry, commerce, residencies, public facilities, parks and recreation, open and natural spaces, and other public and private uses. Changes to the economy (local to global), housing patterns, transportation needs, and quality of life concerns require that the City review existing allocations and adjust accordingly. Many of the goals and actions described in this section will be referenced or repeated elsewhere in the document.



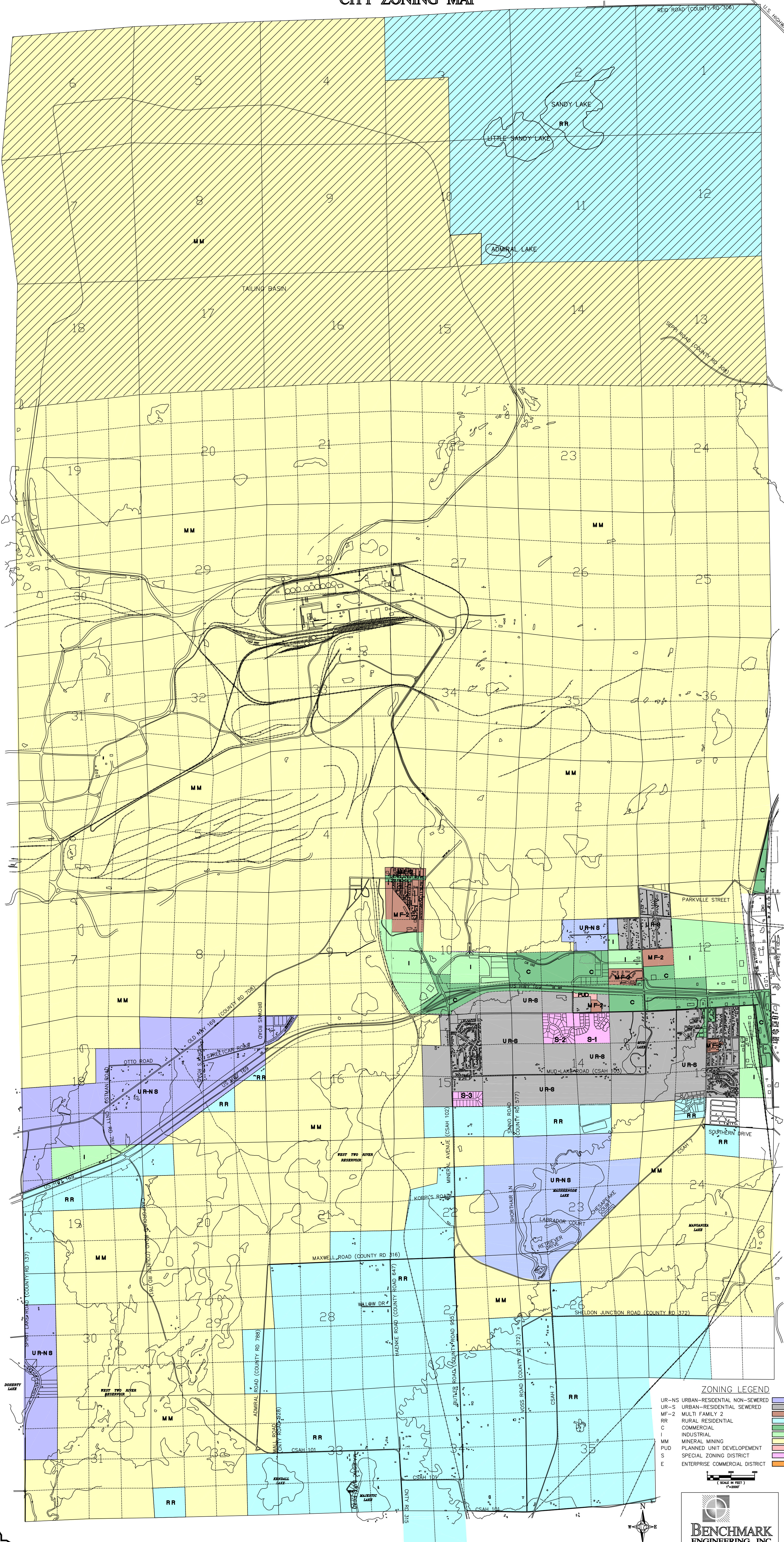
Developing zoning regulations is one of the most basic roles a city plays in the development of the community. The City's zoning map and ordinances are closely related to existing and desired land uses. One type of code highlighted in this chapter is form-based code, which is defined by the Form Based Codes Institute as "a land development

regulation that fosters predictable built results and high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle." Cities are widely adopting this system for its ties to aesthetics, economic development, and equitable transportation.

Zoning can impact health in a variety of ways, ranging from developing residential and commercial uses in close proximity/high density, enhancing accessibility for community members of all mobility levels, and allowing community gardens and other agriculture within the community, among others. The City endeavors to make the development and permitting process straight forward, responsive, and fair for all residents.



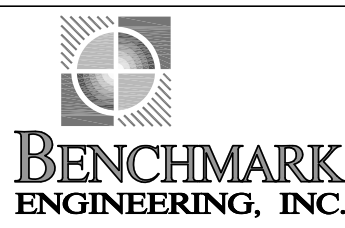
CITY OF MOUNTAIN IRON, MINNESOTA  
CITY ZONING MAP



ZONING LEGEND

- UR-NS URBAN-RESIDENTIAL NON-SEWERED
- UR-S URBAN-RESIDENTIAL SEWERED
- MF-2 MULTI-FAMILY 2
- RR RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- C COMMERCIAL
- I INDUSTRIAL
- MM MINERAL MINING
- PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT
- S SPECIAL ZONING DISTRICT
- E ENTERPRISE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

SCALE IN FEET  
1"=200'





## Land Use Goal and Recommendations

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will utilize policies that promote sustainable land use by activity assessing future needs and promoting the most effective use of each property while balancing cost efficient public services. Mountain Iron's land use policies will be clear, concise and easy to administer, contributing to the creation and sustenance of equitable and healthful environment.

### Recommendations:

- LU 1: Maintain a modern, up-to-date zoning ordinance, zoning map, official map, and permitting documents.
  - LU 1.1: Update the City Zoning Ordinance Code and procedures to include modern developmental concerns, and streamline administration. Make amendments to the code as needed in order for alternative energy infrastructure to be implemented.
  - LU 1.2: Update existing identified permit, variance, and other application forms to enhance user friendliness and improve administration.
  - LU 1.3: Make zoning ordinance, map, applications, and related materials available online via City website for citizens and potential developers alike.
- LU 2: Update the City's Sign Ordinance to regulate dynamic signs. (Dynamic signs are signs that appear to have movement or that appear to change, caused by any method other than physically removing and replacing the sign or its components, whether the apparent movement or change in display, the sign structure itself, or any other component of the sign. This includes a rotating, revolving, moving, flashing, blinking, or animated display that incorporates rotating panels, LED lights manipulated through digital input, "digital ink" or any other method or technology that allows the sign face to present a series of images or displays.)
  - LU 2.1: Adopt the following items:
    - 1) Dynamic displays may occupy no more than 35% of the actual copy and graphic area. The remainder of the sign must not have the capability to have dynamic displays even if not in use. Only one, contiguous dynamic display area is allowed on a sign face.
    - 2) A dynamic display may not change or move more often than once every 20 minutes, except one for which changes are necessary to correct hour-and-minute, date, or temperature information. Time, date or temperature information is considered on dynamic and may not be included as a component of any other dynamic display. A display of time, date, or temperature information must remain for at least 20 minutes before changing to a different display, but the time, date, or temperature information itself may change no more than once every three seconds.

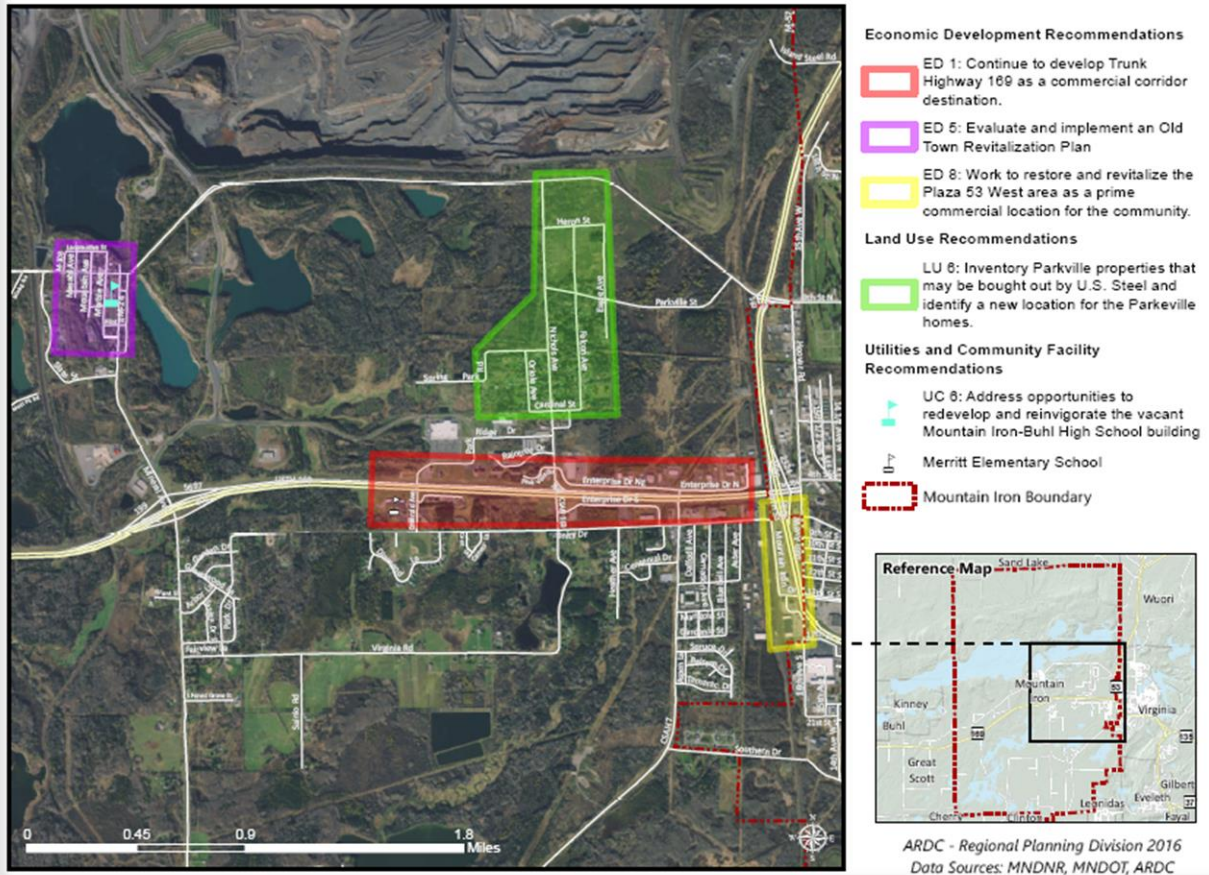
- 3) The images and messages displayed must be static, and the transition from one static display to another must be instantaneous without any special effects.
- 4) The images and messages displayed must be complete in themselves, without continuation in content to the next image or message or to any other sign.
- 5) Every line of copy and graphics in dynamic display must be at least seven inches in height on a road with a speed limit of 25-34 miles per hour, nine inches on a road a speed limit of 35-44 miles per hour, 12 inches on a road with a speed limit of 55 miles per hour or more. If there is insufficient room for copy and graphics of this size in the area allowed under clause 1 above, then no dynamic display is allowed.
- 6) Dynamic displays must be designed and equipped to freeze the device in one position if a malfunction occurs. The displays must also be equipped with a means to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions, and the sign owner must immediately stop the dynamic display when notified by the City that it is not complying with the standards of this ordinance.
- 7) Dynamic displays must comply with the following brightness standards:
  - a) No sign may be brighter than is necessary for clear and adequate visibility.
  - b) No sign may be of such intensity or brilliance as to impair the vision of a motor vehicle driver with average eyesight or to otherwise interfere with the driver's operation of a motor vehicle.
  - c) The person owning or controlling the sign must adjust the sign to meet the brightness standards in accordance with the City's instructions. The adjustment must be made immediately upon notice of non-compliance from the City. The person owning or controlling the sign may appeal the City's determination through the following appeal procedure:
    - o After making the adjustment required by the City, the person owning or controlling the sign may appeal the City's determination by delivering a written appeal to the City Clerk within 10 days after the City's non-compliance notice. The written appeal must include the name of a person unrelated to the person and business making the appeal, who will serve on the appeal panel.



- Within five business days after receiving the appeal, the City must name a person who is not an official or employee of the City to serve on the appeal panel. Within five business days after the City names its representative and the two of them must appoint a third member to the panel, who has no relationship to either party.
  - The appeal panel may develop its own rules of procedure, but it must hold a hearing with five business days after the third member is appointed. The City and the sign owner must be given the opportunity to present testimony, and the panel may hold the hearing, or a portion of it, at the sign location. The panel must issue its decision on what level of brightness is needed to meet the brightness standards within five business days after hearing commences. The decision will be binding on both parties.
- 8) All signs installed after adoption of the amendments that will have illumination by a means other than natural light must be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness in response to ambient conditions. These signs must also be equipped with a means to immediately turn off the display or lighting if it malfunctions, and the sign owner or operator must immediately turn off the sign of lighting when notified by the City that it is not comply with the standards in this section.
- 9) Dynamic displays existing as of adoption of the amended ordinance must comply with the operational standards listed above. An existing dynamic display that does not meet the structural requirements in clause 1 may continue as an allowed non-conforming use subject to restrictions place upon such uses.
- LU 3: Ensure that green space and recreational opportunities are available to the existing and newly-developed neighborhoods.
- LU 4: Ensure buffers are set between commercial/industrial development and existing and future residential properties in order to preserve neighborhood intrinsic qualities desired by the community.
- LU 5: Ensure land use practices within the City make the best use of available land while also ensuring it's compatibility with current and future surroundings.
  - LU 5.1: Work with nearby agencies to ensure land use and developments within the City are compatible with current and future mining activities.
  - LU 5.2: Consider minimal to low impact development (i.e. open space, recreational trails, etc.) in areas in close proximity to establish mining deposits/interest areas.

- LU 6: Inventory Parkville properties that may be bought out by U.S. Steel and identify a new location for the Parkville homes.

## Land Use & Economic Development in Mountain Iron, MN



## **Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources**

The City of Mountain Iron is located on the Mesabi Range, and iron ore and taconite producing formation within the greater Iron Range area of Minnesota's Arrowhead. The Mesabi Range iron formation slices through Northeastern Minnesota from Grand Rapids to the Canadian border paralleling the North Shore of Lake Superior about 50 miles to the north and west. Much of the City, north of the residential areas include portions of iron bearing formation and a number of abandoned and active mines that area located within the City's boundaries and in nearby areas. Mining, described earlier, has been an important factor in the history, culture and economy of the City since its early stages of establishment. In addition to its location on the Iron Range, the presence of an abundance of lakes within the City adds a rich history of culture as an area full of natural resources.








Working to preserve and improve the natural, cultural and historical resources of a community can positively influence the quality of life for local residents, improve community character, attractiveness and raise property values, and increase recreational opportunities for tourism. The natural setting of the City of Mountain Iron provides excellent quality-of-life for its residents and helps serve as an outdoor recreation destination.

### **Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Goal and Recommendations**

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will utilize and preserve its cultural, historical, and natural resources to provide a deeper connection of a sense of place to its citizens and travelers in the area while addressing local agricultural and mining efforts, considering resources that contribute to a sustainable future and support the health of the City's environment and people.

#### Recommendation:

- MNAC 1: It is recommended that the City examine any proposed developments against future mining potential and how that might impact development.
  - MNAC 1.1: Several organizations are involved in mining industry in Minnesota. More information about mining can be gathered from the following organizations and websites:
    - Laurentian Vision Partnership: <http://www.lvpmn.org/>. The Laurentian Vision Partnership is an active coalition that provides information about mining on the Iron Range.

- MnDNR, Minerals Division: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands\\_minerals/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/index.html)
  - IRRRB Mining Impact Grants: <https://mn.gov/irrb/grant-resources/mining-programs.jsp>
- MNAC 2: It is recommended that a copy of this plan be sent to the MnDNR Minerals Division, area mining companies and area mineral rights owners. IRRRB and MnDNR can help contact the appropriate people.
  - MNAC 2.1: Mining interests recommend that no new developments occur over the known iron formation (red  area on map). This is because any area within the iron formation has the potential to be mined in the future, which would displace development.
    - Some areas of the iron formation are likely to be mined sooner than others, but for the purpose of long-term planning, the entire formation needs to be considered.
    - Interim, easily removed used could be considered for some portions of the iron formation.
  - MNAC 2.2: It is recommended that new development not occur within one quarter (1/4) mile of the north edge of the iron formation (shown as light red buffer ). This buffer is for blasting and other safety reasons.
  - MNAC 2.3: It is recommended that new development not occur within half (1/2) mile of the south edge of the iron formation (also shown as light red buffer ). This buffer is for blasting and other safety reason, but wider to account for the depth of the iron formation on the south edge.
  - MNAC 2.4: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around iron bearing rock stockpiles (shown in dark red ). These stockpiles have the significant potential to be processed for iron production.
    - Interim, easily removed used could be considered for some stockpiles.
  - MNAC 2.5: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around fine tailings basins from natural ore processing (shown in blue with hashes ). The stockpiles have the significant potential to be processed for iron production.
    - Interim, easily removed used could be considered for some basins.
- MNAC 3: Support community-oriented agriculture and the development of community gardens, farmers market, or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites within the City.
  - MNAC 3.1: Use public meetings to identify the need and/or potential sites for a community garden, Farmer's Market or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites.
  - MNAC 3.2: Address and revise land use zoning where necessary to make allowable use.



- MNAC 3.3: Work with local interest group(s) to develop maintenance, distribution, and use partnership(s) prior to establishing a garden or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites, or Farmer's Market.
- MNAC 4: Encourage the preservation of the City's history and culture.
  - MNAC 4.1: Continue supporting the preservation of the City's mining history through the identification, preservation, and displaying of historic places and artifacts.
  - MNAC 4.2: Seek federal and state grants and support local, grass roots efforts for historic preservation and renovation projects.
  - MNAC 4.3: Consider developing a "Mountain Iron History Walk", which is a community history and wellness initiative that encourages knowledge of place-based history by bringing stories of the past to the streets through the use of interpretive signage that highlights place and sights of historical significance. See an example of the Proctor History Walk (<https://proctorhistorywalk.org/>).







## Cultural & Historical Assets in Mountain Iron, MN



## Recreation, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts

Mountain Iron offers many recreational amenities including city parks with playground equipment, outdoor hockey rinks, tennis and basketball courts, ball fields, and an archery range. The City provides numerous access points to the Mesabi Trail, which connects to neighboring communities in the region. Mountain Iron is also home to the Mesabi Family YMCA which focuses on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility that empower people and communities to learn, grow and thrive. Annually, the City hosts events and celebrations such as the Taste of Mountain Iron, Fourth of July Events, Merritt Days Festival, and other community gatherings.



Mountain Iron has a Park's and Recreation Board which is responsible for the operation, maintenance and planning of the Mountain Iron parks and the various recreation programs conducted by the City. The Parks and Recreation Board is made up of seven members who each serve a three year term and are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Providing recreational amenities and a healthy environment can benefit a city in many ways: property values can increase; costs from erosion will be minimized through greenspace; spending on recreational activities by local residents will increase; parks and open space influence the quality of life and location decisions of families and businesses; and community attractiveness and recreational opportunities for tourism may increase.



### Recreation, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts Goal and Recommendations

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will strive to enhance the recreational and cultural facilities/opportunities available by utilizing public input, planning proactively, and implementing projects and programs to provide an array of opportunities to residents and travelers of all ability levels. The City will provide equitable access to facilities that promote the health and well-being of every member in the community.

#### Recommendations:

- RC 1: Continue to support and make improvements to local playground and recreational areas.
- RC 2: Evaluate opportunities for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) activities, which provide healthy food options available within the community.
  - RC 2.1: Provide open space for activities to take place if organized and requested by local organization(s)/individual(s).

- RC 3: Encourage the maintenance and expansion of the recreational trails and parks system throughout the City.
  - RC 3.1: Inventory and document the existing condition of City parks and trails. Examine them for deterioration, maintenance needs, and infrastructure improvements.
  - RC 3.2: Develop action priorities and cost estimates of improvements.
- RC 4: Continue to support the organization of community events, celebrations, and festivals such as Merritt Days, the Taste of Mountain Iron, and Annual Easter Egg Hunt, etc.
  - RC 4.1: Continue to support new and ongoing community events and festivals to provide residents with community engagement, networking, and volunteering opportunities as a way to stay engaged with the community.
- RC 5: Continue to identify and explore recreational facilities, programs, and opportunities for all ages and abilities.
- RC 6: Support and partner with the community YMCA in regards to programs, possible expansion, general improvements, and other activities.



## **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The cities on the Iron Range each have a distinct incorporation history with ties to mining and timber. Cities in the early 1900s built village halls, schools and maintained streets. Later cities offered water and sanitary services and police and fire protection. Today the City of Mountain Iron, like its neighbors, often works with neighboring communities and organizations to share services and costs. The City of Mountain Iron understands the importance of working cooperatively to provide better solutions to issues which affect all Iron Range cities. The City will work towards achieving and implementing the strategies and action steps described in this section.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal and Recommendations**

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will work cooperatively with St. Louis County, neighboring communities and other public and private entities to provide high quality, cost effective, public services to residents throughout the community on issues of economic, equitable, social, health, environmental, and cultural significance.

#### Recommendations:

- IGC 1: Collaborate with neighboring communities to enhance capacity, strengthen regional relationships, and address consolidation of services when possible.
- IGC 2: Collaborate with St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota, and other entities, and their respective officials.
  - IGC 2.1: Proactively collaborate with and inform St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota officials of the needs in Mountain Iron regarding resources, housing, economic development, transportation, and other issues as they arise.
- IGC 3: Collaborate with regional entities, like Healthy Northland, local Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) coordinators, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and other stakeholders, to implement active living public health, and other related improvements and programming to promote healthy lifestyles in the community.
- IGC 4: Work cooperatively with nearby mining agencies, MnDNR, and other interests regarding future land use and opportunities arise.



## Implementation

Implementation of the objectives laid out in the plan may be the most critical step for the City moving forward. The City of Mountain Iron is committed to following through with the plan's recommended actions. Annual review and status updates of ongoing activities laid out in the comprehensive plan assist in keeping the City on track to completing objectives outlined in the planning process. Additionally, regular review can allow the City to incorporate new or emerging issues that may have not been prevalent during the planning process along with revising priorities due to unforeseen circumstances.

A project implementation checklist has been included in Appendix A and is a resource for conducting an annual review of the goals, objectives, and action steps outlined in this plan. Additionally, up to date technical and financial assistance resources are maintained by ARDC to enhance community capacity for implementation. This 'Community Planning Toolkit' can be accessed at <http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/communityplanningtoolkit>.

### Implementation Goal and Recommendations

Goal: The City of Mountain Iron will work as an entity and with stakeholders to complete the strategies and projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan Update and will review and update implementation priorities and status annually.

Recommendations:

- IMP 1: Annually review the implementation checklist at a public meeting to determine each step's implementation status and re-determine each step's current priority level.
  - IMP 1.1: Utilize the meeting as a public hearing/engagement session to continue incorporating public priorities in the investment decisions.
  - IMP 1.2: Change, update, or end actions that need alterations or have been completed or new project priorities emerge.
  - IMP 1.3: When appropriate, or whenever half of the finite objectives are completed from the existing plan, begin discussion of identifying next steps for a plan update process.
- IMP 2: Monitor available grant opportunities to leverage funds to implement projects identified within this plan.
  - IMP 2.1: The City should remain informed of funding opportunities through continued communication with its partnering agencies such as St. Louis county, IRRRB, MnDOT, MnDNR, ARDC, and others.
  - IMP 2.2: Utilize ARDC and other entities to help provide technical assistance for project applications, management, GIS mapping and other services offered when deemed necessary.

- IMP 2.3: Review the Community Planning Toolkit that is hosted on ARDC's website (<http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/communityplanningtoolkit>). The Community Planning Toolkit is a resource bank that was developed to help communities achieve the goals outlined in their comprehensive plans. Information on programs range from housing, transportation, land use and zoning, utilities and facilities and more.

## Appendices

Appendix A, B, C, D, and E



**Appendix A: Implementation Table**

**Mountain Iron 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update Implementation Table**

|         | Goal   | Recommendation  | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                                      | Timeline               | Notes   | Status |
|---------|--|---|---|---|------------------------|---|--------|
| Housing | The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownership opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing options with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. | H 1: Address the elimination of blighted or problematic structures.   |   | Health & Safety, Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 1.1: Inventory properties throughout the City that are considered as blight or problematic (beyond city scope of restorative efforts) and enforce the City's blight ordinance.  | Health & Safety, Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Short-term/<br>Ongoing |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 1.2: Research and apply for IRRRB Commercial Redevelopment and/or Residential Redevelopment grants as appropriate.  | City Staff  | Ongoing                | IRRRB Commercial Redevelopment and/or Residential Redevelopment Grants website ( <a href="https://mn.gov/irrrb/grant-resources/community-programs.jsp">https://mn.gov/irrrb/grant-resources/community-programs.jsp</a> ) .  |        |
|         |  |   | H 1.3: Review and update the City's existing blight ordinance every 6-12 months.  | Health & Safety, Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  | H 2: Maintain and improve the quality of safe and affordable housing throughout the neighborhoods in Mountain Iron.   |   | Health & Safety, Planning & Zoning, City Staff, EDA | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 2.1: Promote rehab and preservation of public and subsidized housing stock. This provides stability of lower-income families by ensuring their access to quality and safe, affordable housing.  | EDA   | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 2.2: Investigate and pursue development of new senior-friendly housing opportunities throughout the City.   | EDA, Planning & Zoning                              | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 2.3: Conduct a housing survey of the community to determine current numbers and demographics of residents who own their home or rent in Mountain Iron.  | City Staff  | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  | H 3: Promote maintenance of the existing housing stock in Mountain Iron.  |   | EDA, City Staff                                     | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 3.1: Advertise existing loan/grant programs for homeowners' improvements through the use of social media (and local newsletter), the website, or other means as a way to promote additional improvements to celebrate successes by other homeowners throughout the community. | EDA, City Staff                                     | Ongoing                | Potential resources include: Community Development Block Grant, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) Housing Department, St. Louis County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and others for a variety of improvements including home maintenance, energy efficiency, exterior improvements, and others. |        |
|         |  |   | H 3.2: Collaborate with existing organizations/grant programs to create incentives for home maintenance.  | EDA, City Staff                                     | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  | H 4: Maintain the existing character of established neighborhoods.  |   | Planning & Zoning                                   | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 4.1: Ensure that new commercial and industrial developments is buffered from residential areas and will minimally impact commercial/industrial traffic in Mountain Iron's residential neighborhoods.  | Planning & Zoning                                   | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  | H 5: Explore the feasibility of creating and annually reviewing a 'Housing Indicator Report' which utilizes annual statistics regarding housing to provide a snapshot of where the community is currently, and indicators of trends moving forward to help spur private sector development and new housing. |   | EDA, City Staff                                     | Ongoing                |   |        |
|         |  |   | H 5.1: Components to a Housing Indicator Report can include: demographics (past and projected); employment/labor force trends; homeownership trends; rental indicators (survey).  | EDA, City Staff                                     | Ongoing                | The survey should address: rental rates, vacancy rates, number of buildings permits issued (new builds, additions, plats approved).   |        |



|                | Goal   | Recommendation  | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                                    | Timeline               | Notes  | Status |
|----------------|--|---|---|---|------------------------|--|--------|
| Housing        | The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownership opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing options with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.   | H 6: Research and consider adopting housing development and/or subdivision incentives to encourage design for future residential units and lots that encompass lifestyles for users for all ages and abilities (including vacation and short-term housing), as well as 'Age in Place Principles'.   |   | EDA, City Staff                                   | Ongoing                | Aging in Place is a tool designed to help local governments plan and prepare for their aging populations ( <a href="http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/plan/planning/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments-aarp.pdf">http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/plan/planning/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments-aarp.pdf</a> ) . |        |
|                |  |   | H 6: Design elements may include: development of smaller, affordable housing units in compact multi-house developments or allowing accessory dwelling units, supported by facilities (commercial, pharmacy's etc.) accessible by walking/biking or transit. | EDA, City Staff                                   | Ongoing                |  |        |
| Transportation | The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options and promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron's citizens. | T 1: Participate in corridor and MnDOT District 1 planning process in order to lobby for continued maintenance and improvements to Trunk Highways 169 and 53.   |   | City Staff, Planning & Zoning, Streets & Alley    | Ongoing                |  |        |
|                |  | T 2: Participate in the St. Louis County 5-year road and transportation planning process.   |   | City Staff, Planning & Zoning, Streets & Alley    | Ongoing                |  |        |
|                |  | T 3: Support the Mesabi Trail and regional bicycle connections projects.  |   | Parks & Recreation, City Staff, Planning & Zoning | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  | T 4: Support and work to complete the City Bike Connection Route. There is a designated and signed route between access points, which goes through the older section of the City. Much of residential Mountain Iron is situated south of Highway 169 and could use better connection to Mesabi Trail rather than using narrow, busy roadways. |   | Parks & Recreation, City Staff, Planning & Zoning | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  | T 5: Connect existing and planned community destinations by expanding and filling gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail system.   |   | Parks & Recreation, City Staff, Planning & Zoning | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  |   | T 5.1: Construct a 10' wide paved trail running north-south along the east side of the South Grove neighborhood.  | Planning & Zoning                                 | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  |   | T 5.2: Construct a 10' wide paved trail through the City's ball fields near the Mud Lake Road County Road 102 intersection.   | Planning & Zoning                                 | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  |   | T 5.3: Construct a 10' wide paved trail connecting the Mesabi Trail to the Rock Ridge Retail Center.  | Parks & Recreation                                | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  |   | T 5.4: Complete sidewalk along 23rd Ave W. on the south end of West Virginia neighborhood of Mountain Iron.   | Parks & Recreation                                | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  |   | T 5.5: Construct a sidewalk along the new County Road 102 from Nichols Avenue to Walmart.   | Parks & Recreation                                | Mid-term               |  |        |
|                |  | T 6: Collaborate with St. Louis County to designate potential ATV routes within the City to connect to St. Louis County roads that allow ATV operation.   |   | Parks & Recreation, Streets & Alleys              | Short-term/<br>Ongoing |  |        |
|                |  | T 7: Monitor traffic flow, pedestrian movements, safety considerations and potential business opportunities at the intersection of Unity Drive and County Road 7.   |   | City Staff, Law Enforcement                       | Ongoing                |  |        |

|                                    | Goal   | Recommendation  | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                            | Timeline | Notes  | Status |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|----------|--|--------|
| Transportation                     | The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options and promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron's citizens. | T 8: Promote and support public transit opportunities such as Arrowhead Transit.  |   | Health & Safety, Council, City Staff      | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  |   | T 8.1: Review transportation options, specifically for those in wheelchairs and with limited mobility, and collaborate with potential partners to enhance available services. | Health & Safety, Council, City Staff      | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | T 9: Evaluate creating a Living Streets Policy to provide sustainable, ADA-compliant, multimodal street designs when completing improvement projects.   |   | Streets & Alleys, Safety & Health         | Ongoing  | The general nature of Living Streets Policy is to enhance biking and walking conditions; improve safety and security of streets; calm traffic; create livable neighborhoods; and improve storm water quality and neighborhood aesthetics.  |        |
| Utilities and Community Facilities | The City of Mountain Iron will stay committed towards providing its residents with effective infrastructure to city structures, water and sanitary systems, recreational facilities, and other public facilities and services through a system short-range planning process to ensure the health and equitable transfer of resources to the citizens of Mountain Iron.     | UC 1: Identify and prioritize all City utility and infrastructure improvements and secure funding for implementation.   |   | City Staff, Public Works                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  |   | UC 1.1: Research and apply for IRRRB Development Infrastructure Grant Program and the St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant as appropriate.                      | City Staff, Public Works                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 2: Create a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process that annually implements and reviews priorities to provide adequate infrastructure (including roads, sidewalks, water/wastewater facilities, etc.) to the community while balancing financial constraints in a systematic process.            |   | City Staff, Public Works                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 3: Incorporate the Mountain Iron recommendations from the 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan into the planning process to reduce potential damage costs due to natural disasters.  |   | Health & Safety, City Staff               | Ongoing  | 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan ( <a href="http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/Portals/0/library/law-n-public-safety/emergency-operations/hazard-mitigation/St-Louis-County-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-2013.pdf?timestamp=1467733265423">http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/Portals/0/library/law-n-public-safety/emergency-operations/hazard-mitigation/St-Louis-County-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-2013.pdf?timestamp=1467733265423</a> ) |        |
|                                    |  |   | UC 3.1: Annually address, implement, and monitor projects and mitigation strategies identified in the 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan.                           | Health & Safety, City Staff               | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  |   | UC 3.2: Include infrastructure and other mitigation improvements into the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process when addressing annual maintenance/improvements. | Health & Safety, City Staff, Public Works | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 4: Explore opportunities to consolidate services and save costs when possible.   |   | All Committees & City Staff               | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 5: Explore permeable alternatives to traditional curb and gutter projects, which can be incorporated in the development of a 'Living Streets Policy'. This allows for air and storm water filtering through the alternative permeable material to the soil below as opposed to the use traditional concrete. |   | Streets & Alleys                          | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 6: Address opportunities to redevelop and reinvigorate the vacant Mountain Iron-Buhl High School building.   |   | EDA, Planning & Zoning                    | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  | UC 7: Explore opportunities for improved internet and Wi-Fi connection.   |   | City Staff                                | Ongoing  |  |        |
|                                    |  |   | UC 7.1: Research the Blandin Foundation's Community Broadband Program for potential grant and technical support opportunities.  | City Staff                                | Ongoing  | More information about the Blandin Foundations Community Broadband Program can be found at <a href="http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/">http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/</a>   |        |

|                      | Goal   | Recommendation   | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                 | Timeline | Notes | Status |
|----------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Economic Development | The City of Mountain Iron will promote and seek partnership opportunities with new and existing businesses by advocating for manageable growth and retaining an aesthetically pleasing environment while reducing conflict between residential and commercial uses. Mountain Iron will promote an economic environment that supports the health of its residents and visitors to the City. | ED 1: Continue to develop Trunk Highway 169 as a commercial corridor destination.  |   | EDA                            | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 1.1: Map all available land and infrastructure existing or planned along Highway 169 to support new commercial development.  | EDA, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 1.2: Identify and pursue potential commercial opportunities for "big box" retailers to locate on Highway 169.  | EDA                            | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 1.3: Secure property and necessary infrastructure to available City-owned retail sites.  | EDA                            | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 1.4: Evaluate potential for a section of Highway 102 to used as a frontage road for development.   | Planning & Zoning              | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 2: Strategically identify and plan for new tourism and recreation resources opportunities.  |   | Parks & Recreation             | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 2.1: Inventory and map potential locations for a new scenic overlook to the mine (i.e. Energy Park, new dump, across from City garage). As appropriate, hold discussions with U.S. Steel to request support for creation of a new overlook to the mine with the loss of Wacootah Overlook. | Parks & Recreation             | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 3: Identify and secure outside funding for tourism-related initiatives.   |   | City Staff                     | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 3.1: Develop a grant application for IRRRB's Culture and Tourism Grant to support planning for an appropriate tourism project.   | City Staff                     | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 4: Improve EDA (Economic Development Administration) cooperation with the Planning Commission.  |   | EDA, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 5: Evaluate and implement an Old Town Revitalization Plan which can include: urban design elements, storefront changes, public art, wayfinding signage, ongoing programming, partnership funding, and other related components. |   | EDA, City Staff                | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 6: Continue supporting existing businesses and encourage them to participate in local business organizations, seize opportunities for growth, and foster local talent.  |   | EDA, Council, City Staff       | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 7: Continue the awareness and communication of local community events, activities, and amenities on a local, regional and statewide level.  |   | City Staff, Parks & Recreation | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 7.1: Continue to update information on the City's website, monitor upgrade possibilities, and explore other information that can enhance site's effectiveness.   | City Staff                     | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  |  | ED 7.2: Create a formalized process for providing information about recreational opportunities and community events to the public, via multiple modes of communication (online, newspaper, tourism, organizations, etc.).   | City Staff                     | Ongoing  |       |        |
|                      |  | ED 8: Work to restore and revitalize the Plaza 53 West area as a prime commercial location for the community.  |   | EDA                            | Ongoing  |       |        |

|   | Goal  | Recommendation  | Strategy/Action Step   | Lead Committee                        | Timeline | Notes   | Status |
|---|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|----------|---|--------|
| Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources | The City of Mountain Iron will utilize and preserve its cultural, historical, and natural resources to provide deeper connection of a sense of place to its citizens and travelers in the area while addressing local agricultural and mining efforts, considering resources that contribute to a sustainable future and support the health of the City's environmental and people. | MNAC 1: It is recommended that the City examine any proposed developments against future mining potential and how that might impact development.  |  | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  | Information about mining can be gathered from the following organizations and websites:<br>- <b>Laurentian Vision Partnership:</b><br><a href="http://www.lvpmn.org/">http://www.lvpmn.org/</a> . The Laurentian Vision Partnership is an active coalition that provides information about mining on the Iron Range<br>- <b>MnDNR, Minerals Division:</b><br><a href="http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/index.html">http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/index.html</a><br>- <b>IRRRB Mining Impact Grants:</b><br><a href="https://mn.gov/irrb/grant-resources/mining-programs.jsp">https://mn.gov/irrb/grant-resources/mining-programs.jsp</a> |        |
|   |   | MNAC 2: It is recommended that a copy of this plan be sent to the MnDNR Minerals Division, area mining companies and area mineral rights owners. IRRRB and MnDNR can help contact the appropriate people. |  | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 2.1: Mining interests recommend that no new developments occur over the known iron formation. This is because any area within the iron formation has the potential to be mined in the future, which would displace development. | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 2.2: It is recommended that new development not occur within 1/4 mile of the north edge of the iron formation.  | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 2.3: It is recommended that new development not occur within 1/2 mile of the south edge of the iron formation.  | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 2.4: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around iron bearing rock stockpiles.  | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 2.5: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around fine tailing basins from natural ore processing.   | City Staff, Planning & Zoning         | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   | MNAC 3: Support community-oriented agriculture and the development of community gardens, farmers market, or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites within the City.                             |  | Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 3.1: Use public meetings to identify the need and/or potential sites for a community garden, Farmer's Market or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites.   | Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 3.2: Address and revise land use zoning where necessary to make allowable use.  | Planning & Zoning                     | Ongoing  |   |        |
|   |   |   | MNAC 3.3: Work with local interest group(s) to develop maintenance, distribution, and use partnership(s) prior to establishing a garden or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites, or Farmer's Market.                     | Planning & Zoning                     | Ongoing  |   |        |

|  | Goal  | Recommendation   | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                      | Timeline | Notes  | Status |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------|--|--------|
| <b>Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources</b> | The City of Mountain Iron will utilize and preserve its cultural, historical, and natural resources to provide deeper connection of a sense of place to its citizens and travelers in the area while addressing local agricultural and mining efforts, considering resources that contribute to a sustainable future and support the health of the City's environmental and people. | MNAC 4: Encourage the preservation of the City's history and culture.  |   | Council, Library Board              | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | MNAC 4.1: Continue supporting the preservation of the City's mining history through the identification, preservation, and displaying of historic places and artifacts.  | City Staff                          | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | MNAC 4.2: Seek federal and state grants and support local, grass roots efforts for historic preservation and renovation projects.   | City Staff                          | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | MNAC 4.3: Consider developing a "Mountain Iron History Walk", which is a community history and wellness initiative that encourages knowledge of place-based history by bringing stories of the past to the past to the streets through the use of interpretive signage that highlights place and sights of historical significance. | Parks & Recreation, Library Board   | Ongoing  | See an example of the Proctor History Walk ( <a href="https://proctorhistorywalk.org/">https://proctorhistorywalk.org/</a> ) |        |
| <b>Recreational, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts</b>        | The City of Mountain Iron will strive to enhance the recreational and cultural facilities/opportunities available by utilizing public input, planning proactively, and implementing projects and programs to provide equitable access to facilities that promote the health and well-being of every member in the community.  | RC 1: Continue to support and make improvements to local playground and recreational areas.  |   | Parks & Recreation                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   | RC 2: Evaluate opportunities for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) activities, which provide healthy food options available within the community.                          |   | Health & Safety                     | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | RC 2.1: Provide open space for activities to take place if organized and requested by local organization(s)/individual(s).  | City Staff                          | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   | RC 3: Encourage the maintenance and expansion of the recreational trails and parks system throughout the City.   |   | Parks & Recreation, Health & Safety | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | RC 3.1: Inventory and document the existing condition of City parks and trails. Examine them for deterioration, maintenance needs, and infrastructure improvements.   | Parks & Recreation                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | RC 3.2: Develop action priorities and cost estimates of improvements.   | Parks & Recreation                  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   | RC 4: Continue to support the organization of community events, celebrations, and festivals such as Merritt Days, the Taste of Mountain Iron, and Annual Easter Egg Hunt, etc. |   | Special Events, Parks & Recreation  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   |  | RC 4.1: Continue to support new and ongoing community events and festivals to provide residents with community engagement, networking, and volunteering opportunities as a way to stay engaged with the community.  | Special Events, Parks & Recreation  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   | RC 5: Continue to identify and explore recreational facilities, programs, and opportunities for all ages and abilities.  |   | Special Events, Parks & Recreation  | Ongoing  |  |        |
|  |   | RC 6: Support and partner with the community YMCA in regards to programs, possible expansion, general improvements, and other activities.                                      |   | Special Events, Parks & Recreation  | Ongoing  |  |        |



|                               | Goal  | Recommendation  | Strategy/Action Step  | Lead Committee                     | Timeline                           | Notes                                    | Status |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------|
| Land Use                      | The City of Mountain Iron will utilize policies that promote sustainable land use by activity assessing future needs and promoting the most effective use of each property while balancing cost efficient public services. Mountain Iron's land use policies will be clear, concise and easy to administer, contributing to the creation and sustenance of equitable and healthful environment. | LU 1: Maintain a modern, up-to-date zoning ordinance, zoning map, official map, and permitting documents.   |   | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 1.1: Update the City Zoning Ordinance Code and procedures to include modern developmental concerns, and streamline administration. Make amendments to the code as needed in order for alternative energy infrastructure to be implemented. | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 1.2: Update existing identified permit, variance, and other application forms to enhance use friendliness and improve administration.  | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 1.3: Make zoning ordinance, map, applications, and related materials available online via City website for citizens and potential developers alike.  | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | LU 2: Update the City's Sign Ordinance to regulate dynamic signs.   |   | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 2.1: Adopt the items listed on pages 34-36 in the plan document.   | Planning & Zoning, City Staff      | Ongoing                            | See pages 34-36 within the plan document |        |
|                               |   | LU 3: Ensure that green space and recreational opportunities are available to the existing and newly-developed neighborhoods.   |   | Parks & Recreation                 | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | LU 4: Ensure buffers are set between commercial/industrial development and existing and future residential properties in order to preserve neighborhood intrinsic qualities desired by the community.   |   | Planning & Zoning                  | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | LU 5: Ensure land use practices within the City make the best use of available land while also ensuring its compatibility with current and future surroundings.   |   | Planning & Zoning, EDA             | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 5.1: Work with nearby agencies to ensure land use and developments within the City are compatible with current and future mining activities.   | Planning & Zoning, EDA, City Staff | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 5.2: Consider minimal to low impact development (i.e. open space, recreational trails, etc.) in areas in close proximity to establish mining deposits/interest areas.  | Planning & Zoning, EDA, City Staff | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | LU 6: Inventory homes properties that may be bought out by U.S. Steel and identify a new location for those homes to go to.   |                                    | Planning & Zoning, EDA, City Staff | Ongoing                                  |        |
| Intergovernmental Cooperation | The City of Mountain Iron will work cooperatively with St. Louis County, neighboring communities and other public and private entities to provide high quality cost effective, public services to residents throughout the community on issues of economic, equitable, social, health, environmental, and cultural significance.  | IGC 1: Collaborate with neighboring communities to enhance capacity, strengthen regional relationships, and address consolidation of services when possible.  |   | All Committees                     | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | IGC 2: Collaborate with St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota, and other entities, and their respective officials.  |   | City Staff                         | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   |   | IGC 2.1: Proactively collaborate with and inform St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota officials of the needs in Mountain Iron regarding resources, housing, economic development, transportation, and other issues as they arise.      | City Staff                         | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | IGC 3: Collaborate with regional entities, like Healthy Northland, local Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) coordinators, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and other stakeholders, to implement active living public health, and other related improvements and programming to promote healthy lifestyles in the community. |   | City Staff                         | Ongoing                            |  |        |
|                               |   | IGC 4: Work cooperatively with nearby mining agencies, MnDNR, and other interests regarding future land use and opportunities arise.  |   | City Staff                         | Ongoing                            |  |        |

## Appendix B: Community Survey Results Summary

The Mountain Iron community survey was uploaded online via Survey Monkey. A total of 37 surveys were completed between February and July. 43% of the survey respondents were between 35-44 years of age, while 21% were between 55-64 years of age. Most respondents owned a home (88.9%); worked or shopped (70.3%); and/or owned a business (11.1%) in Mountain Iron. Also, 50% of the survey respondents have lived in the City for 20 years or more, 39% have lived in the City between 6-20 years.

Overall, the survey respondents generally believed that a number of qualities were somewhat to very important to them in regards to living in Mountain Iron. A few of them included:

- Place to live, work, retire, and raise children
- Sense of community and opportunities to participate in community matters/issues
- Openness and acceptance towards people with diverse backgrounds
- Access to markets, farms, health and affordable food
- Educational opportunities
- Access to affordable quality health and child care
- Housing-lot size/condition/housing options
- Rental housing management
- Attend cultural activities
- Recreation opportunities and access to public parks
- Street and sidewalk
- Availability of paths, trails and sidewalks that connect to destinations
- Snow removal
- Street cleaning and lighting
- Air and water quality
- Preservation of natural resource and open space
- Tourism, mining, and forestry industry
- Business or industry recruitment, retention, promotion, expansion
- Animal control
- Police, fire services, emergency medical services
- Land use planning, zoning, code enforcement
- Services for youth and seniors

condition/maintenance

Comments regarding future issues and opportunities that should be addressed included:

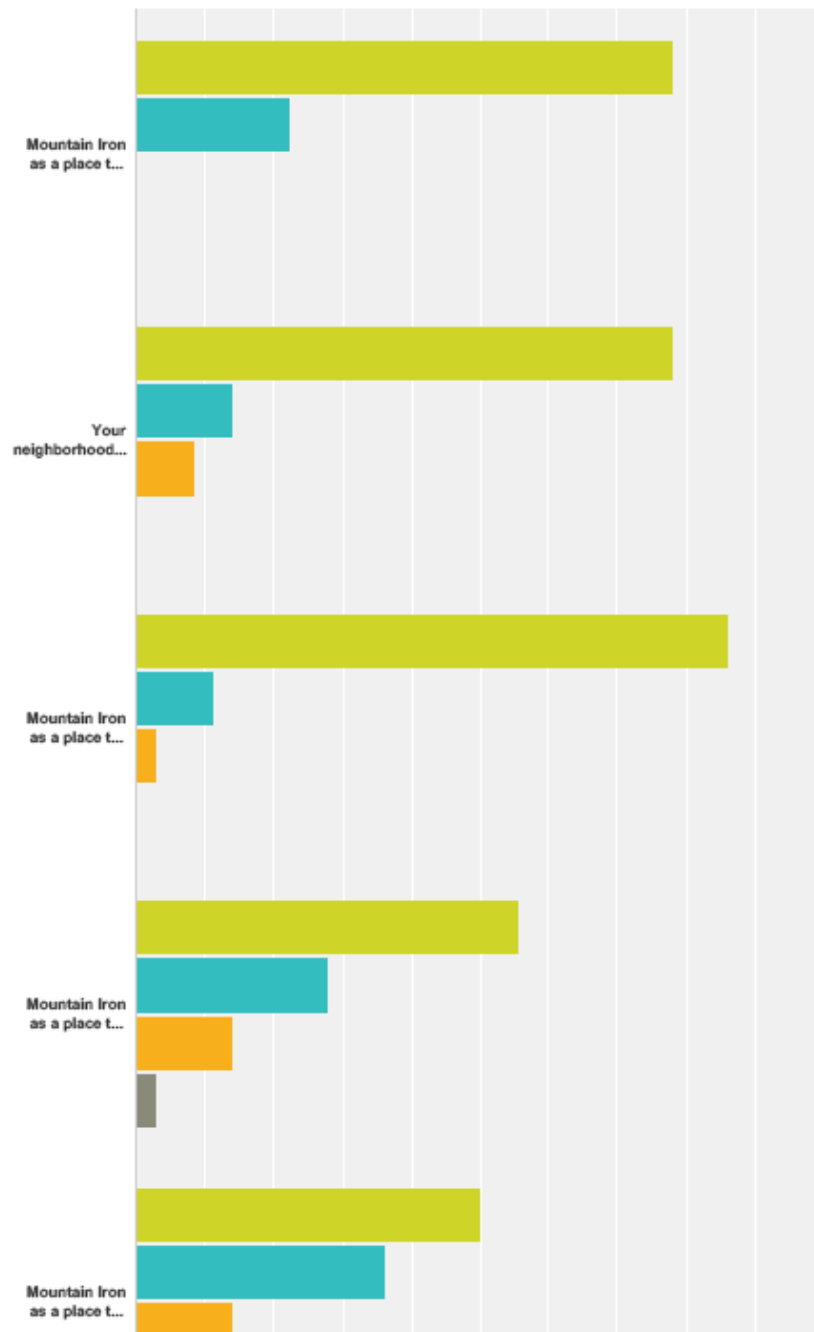
- Road repairs needed within the City. County Highway 102 and Mineral Avenue intersection is not a good design
- Decline of mining. There's a need for different industries and new business opportunities in Mt. Iron
- Preserve and maintain green space for recreation opportunities
- Creation and promotion of healthy activities. Partnering with the YMCA and local clinics
- Development of Farmers Market to sell locally grown products
- Consider rentals, condos, or twin homes
- Concerns about Minntac: buying old houses, closing their doors, air and water quality
- Addressing blight and blight enforcement
- Safe biking and walking paths. More trails and sidewalks. Public transportation options
- Need for a "new Main Street". Where the new city center will be at due to the decline of Old Town? Preservation of Old Town.
- Mountain Iron-Buhl School District should build a school that is centrally located
- Loose animals. Need leash enforcement

## Appendix C: Mountain Iron Community Survey Results Data

City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

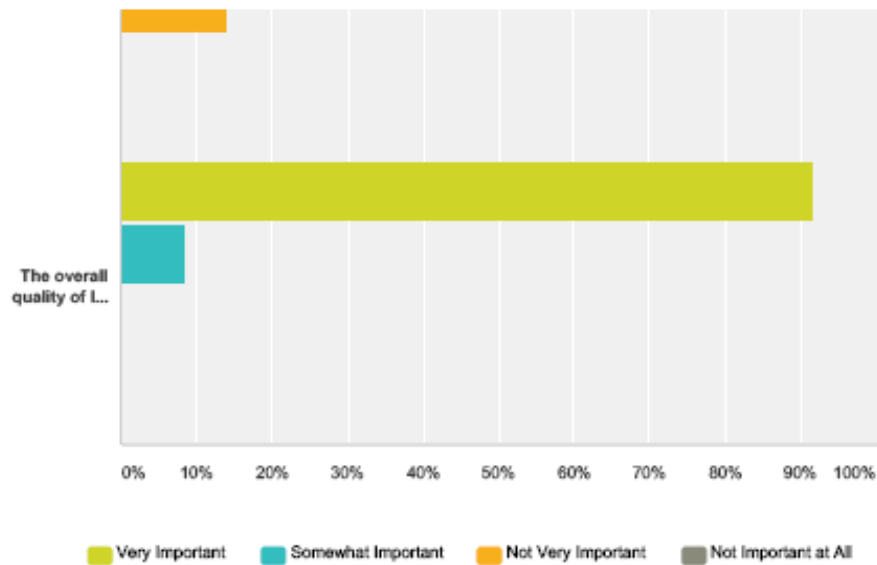
**Q1 Please rate the importance of the following quality of life factors.**

Answered: 36 Skipped: 1





City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

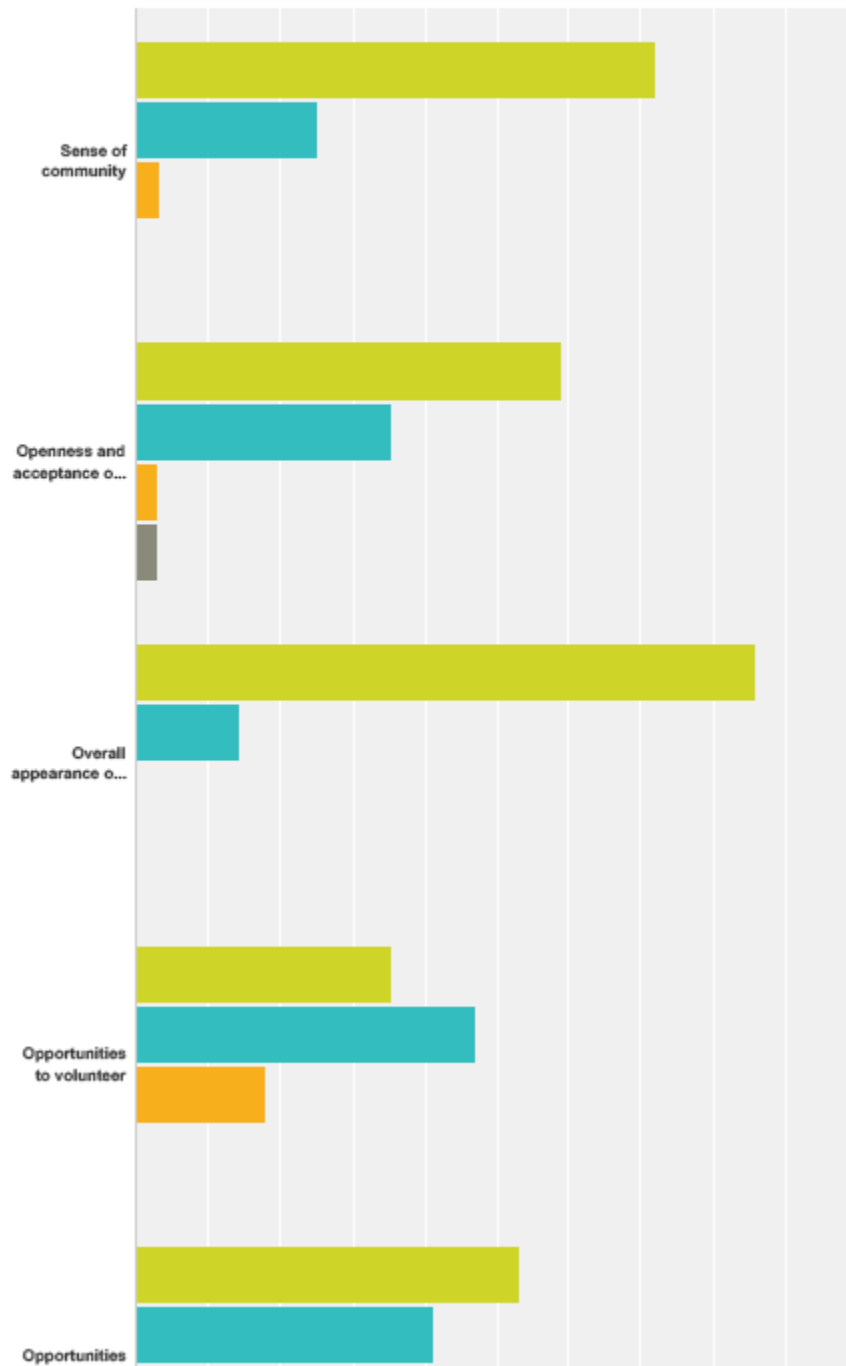


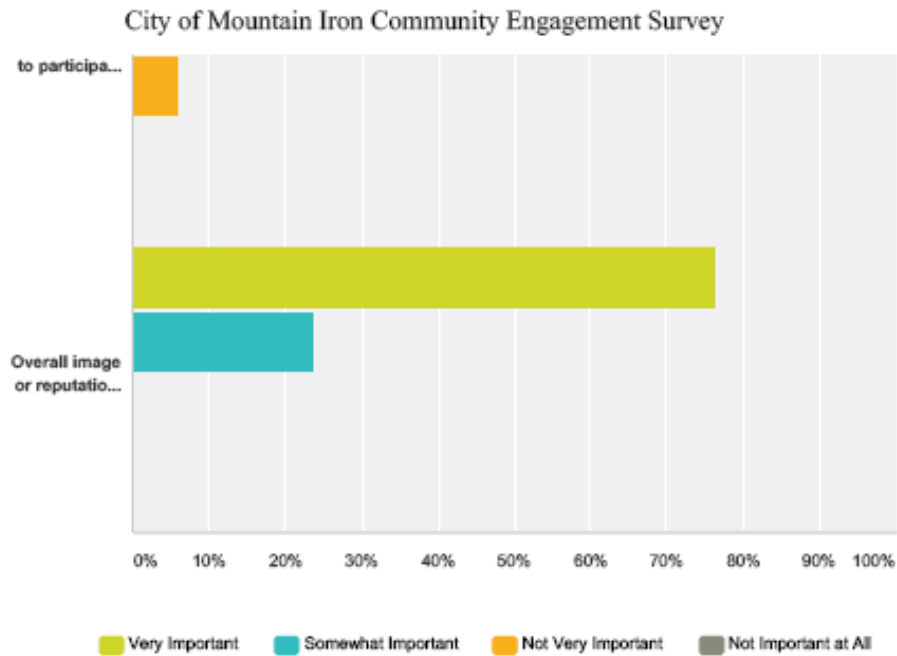
|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Mountain Iron as a place to live             | 77.78%<br>28   | 22.22%<br>8        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 36    |
| Your neighborhood as a place to live         | 77.78%<br>28   | 13.89%<br>5        | 8.33%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0           | 36    |
| Mountain Iron as a place to raise children   | 86.11%<br>31   | 11.11%<br>4        | 2.78%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 36    |
| Mountain Iron as a place to work             | 55.56%<br>20   | 27.78%<br>10       | 13.89%<br>5        | 2.78%<br>1           | 36    |
| Mountain Iron as a place to retire           | 50.00%<br>18   | 36.11%<br>13       | 13.89%<br>5        | 0.00%<br>0           | 36    |
| The overall quality of life in Mountain Iron | 91.67%<br>33   | 8.33%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 36    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

**Q2 Please rate the importance of the following community engagement and aesthetics factors.**

Answered: 35 Skipped: 2



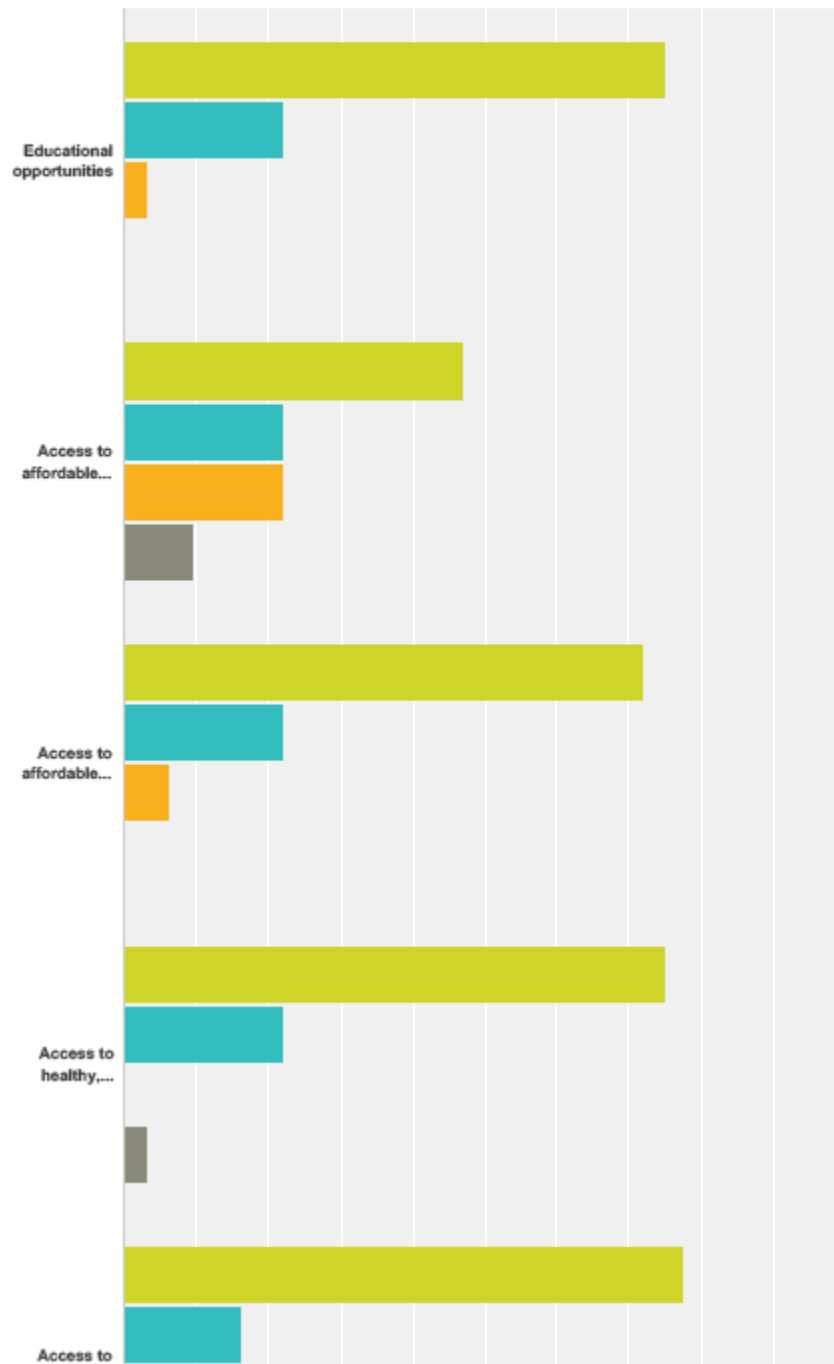


|   | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|---|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Sense of community  | 71.88%<br>23   | 25.00%<br>8        | 3.13%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds | 58.82%<br>20   | 35.29%<br>12       | 2.94%<br>1         | 2.94%<br>1           | 34    |
| Overall appearance of Mountain Iron   | 85.71%<br>30   | 14.29%<br>5        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 35    |
| Opportunities to volunteer  | 35.29%<br>12   | 47.06%<br>16       | 17.65%<br>6        | 0.00%<br>0           | 34    |
| Opportunities to participate in community matters                             | 52.94%<br>18   | 41.18%<br>14       | 5.88%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 34    |
| Overall image or reputation of Mountain Iron                                  | 76.47%<br>26   | 23.53%<br>8        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 34    |

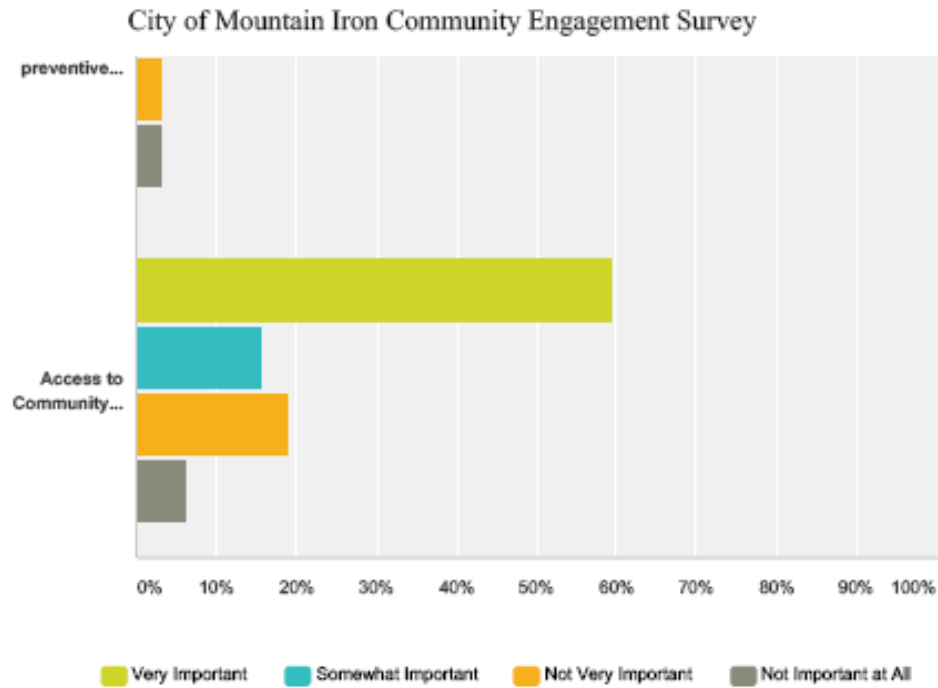
## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q3 Please rate the importance of the following education and access to amenities characteristics

Answered: 33 Skipped: 4





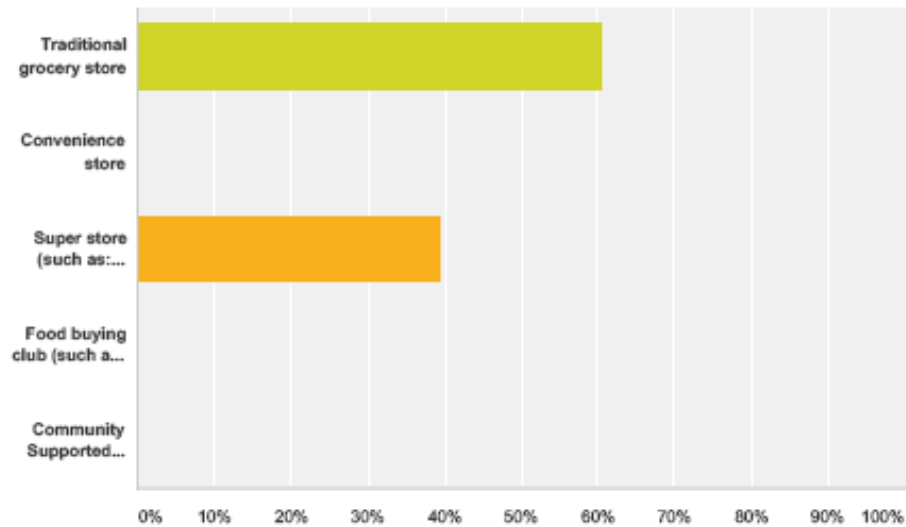


|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Educational opportunities  | 75.00%<br>24   | 21.88%<br>7        | 3.13%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Access to affordable quality child care  | 46.88%<br>15   | 21.88%<br>7        | 21.88%<br>7        | 9.38%<br>3           | 32    |
| Access to affordable quality health care   | 71.88%<br>23   | 21.88%<br>7        | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Access to healthy, affordable, quality food  | 75.00%<br>24   | 21.88%<br>7        | 0.00%<br>0         | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Access to preventive health services   | 77.42%<br>24   | 16.13%<br>5        | 3.23%<br>1         | 3.23%<br>1           | 32    |
| Access to Community gardens, farms, markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) | 59.38%<br>19   | 15.63%<br>5        | 18.75%<br>6        | 6.25%<br>2           | 32    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q4 Where do you primarily shop for food?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 4

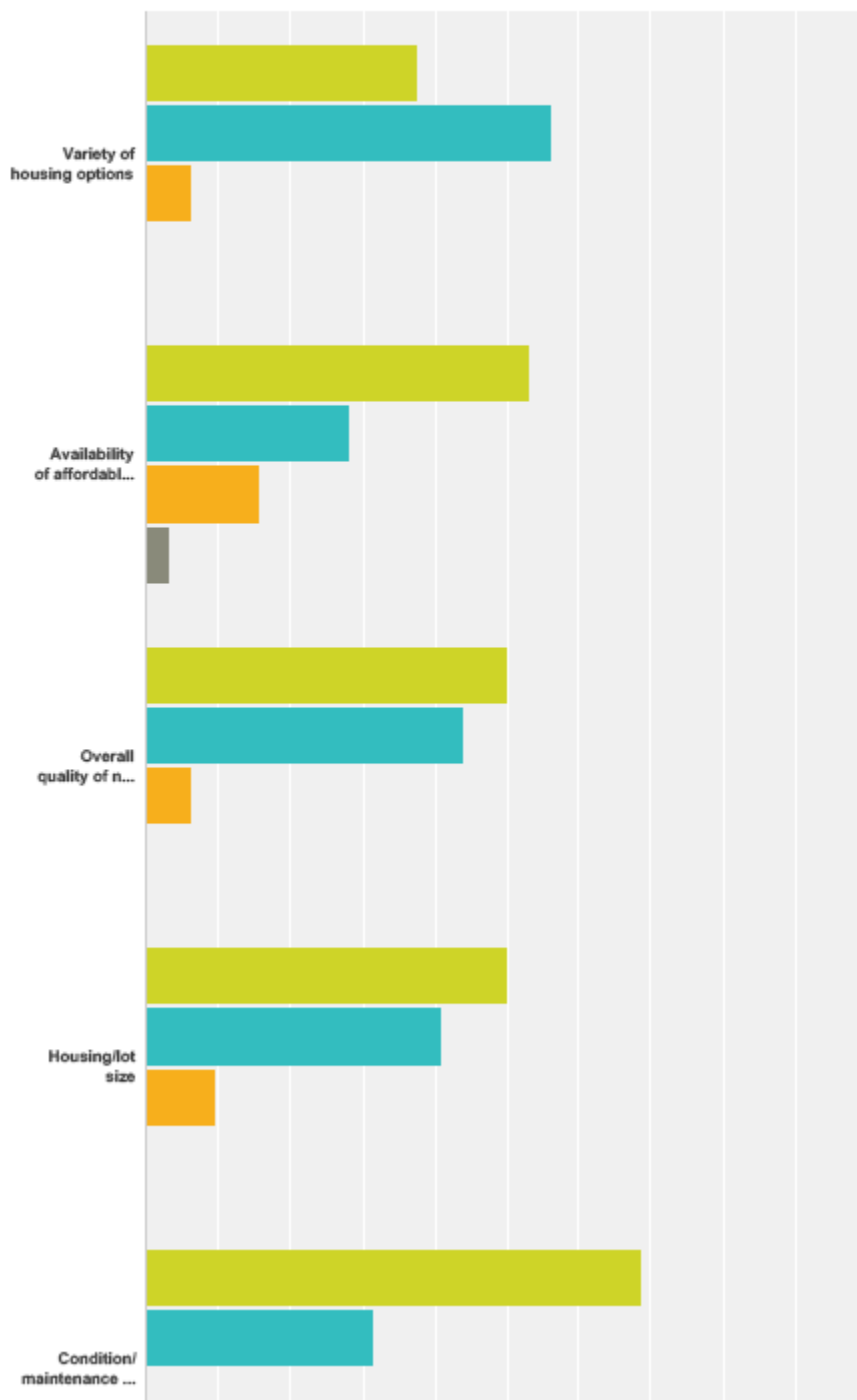


| Answer Choices                         | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| Traditional grocery store              | 60.61% 20 |
| Convenience store                      | 0.00% 0   |
| Super store (such as: Walmart, Target) | 39.39% 13 |
| Food buying club (such as: Sam's Club) | 0.00% 0   |
| Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)  | 0.00% 0   |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>33</b> |

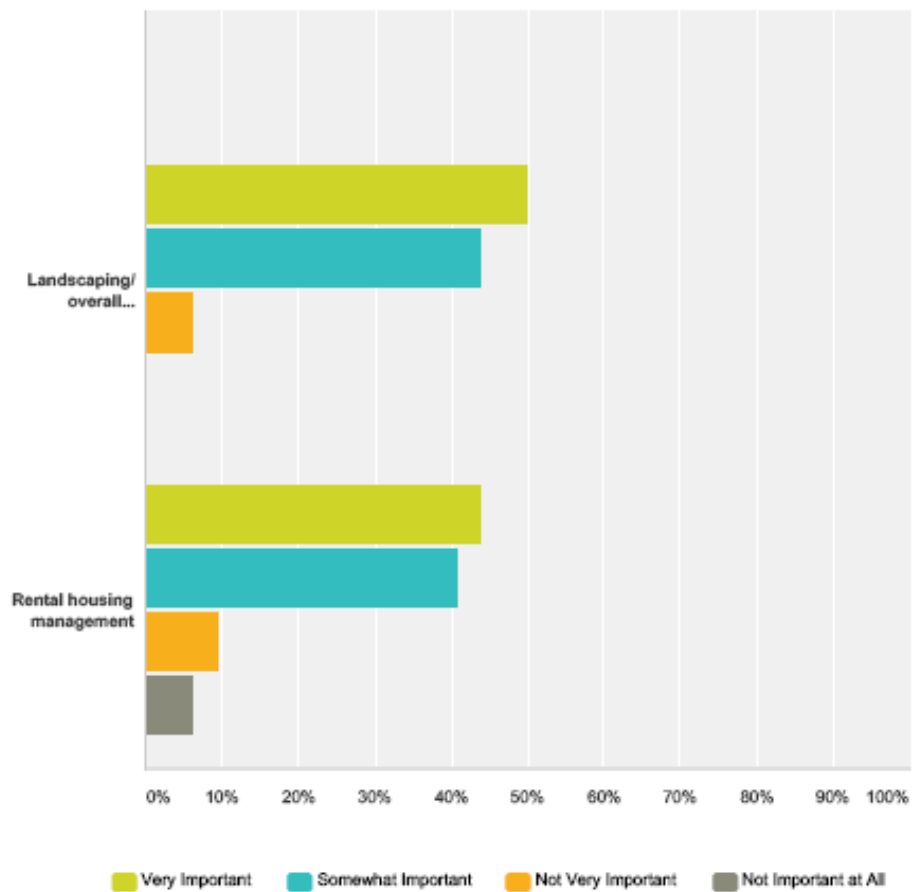
## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q5 Please rate the following housing characteristics

Answered: 32 Skipped: 5



City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey



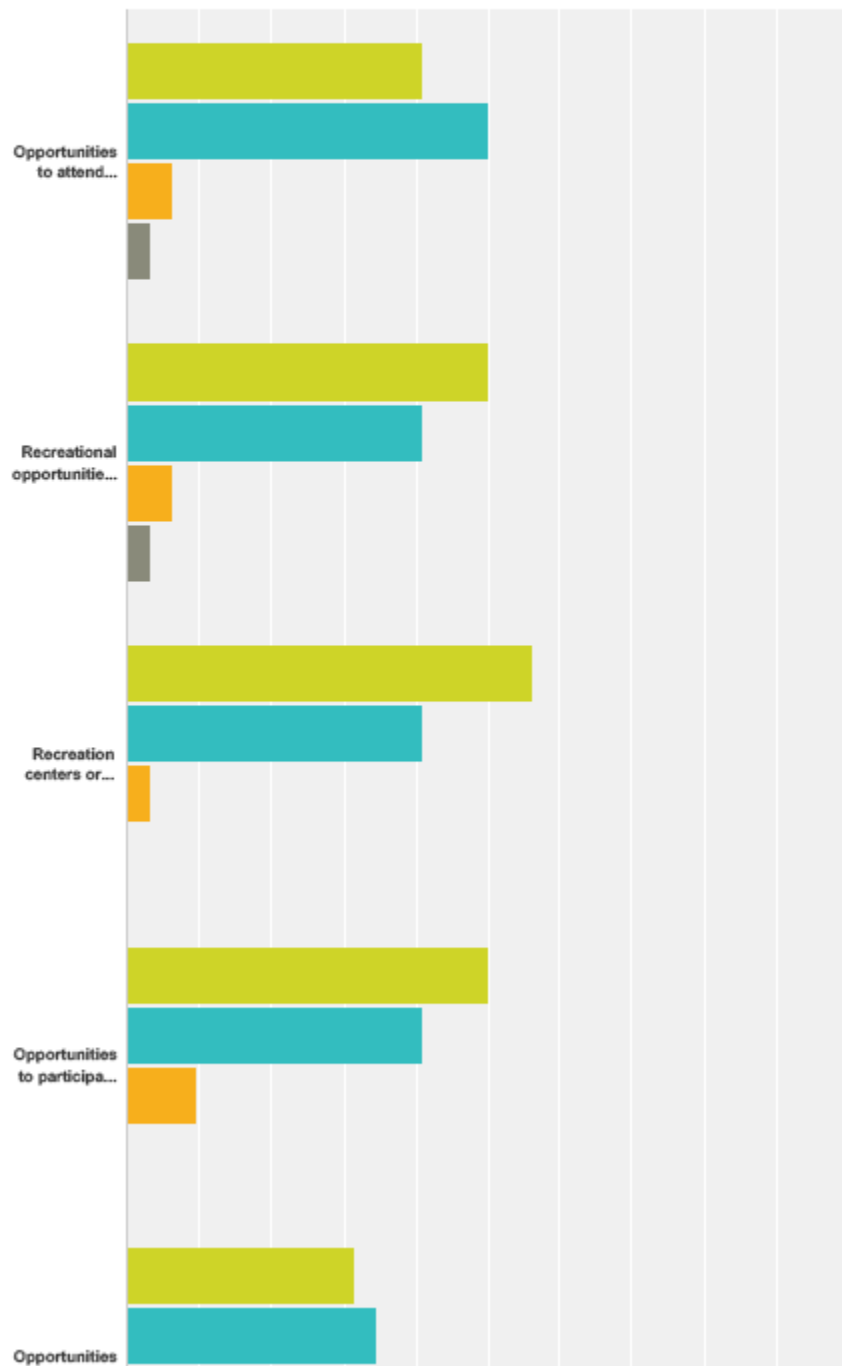
|   | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|---|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Variety of housing options                          | 37.50%<br>12   | 56.25%<br>18       | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Availability of affordable quality housing          | 53.13%<br>17   | 28.13%<br>9        | 15.63%<br>5        | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Overall quality of new development in Mountain Iron | 50.00%<br>16   | 43.75%<br>14       | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Housing/lot size                                    | 50.00%<br>16   | 40.63%<br>13       | 9.38%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Condition/ maintenance of housing                   | 68.75%<br>22   | 31.25%<br>10       | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Landscaping/ overall aesthetic quality              | 50.00%<br>16   | 43.75%<br>14       | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Rental housing management                           | 43.75%<br>14   | 40.63%<br>13       | 9.38%<br>3         | 6.25%<br>2           | 32    |

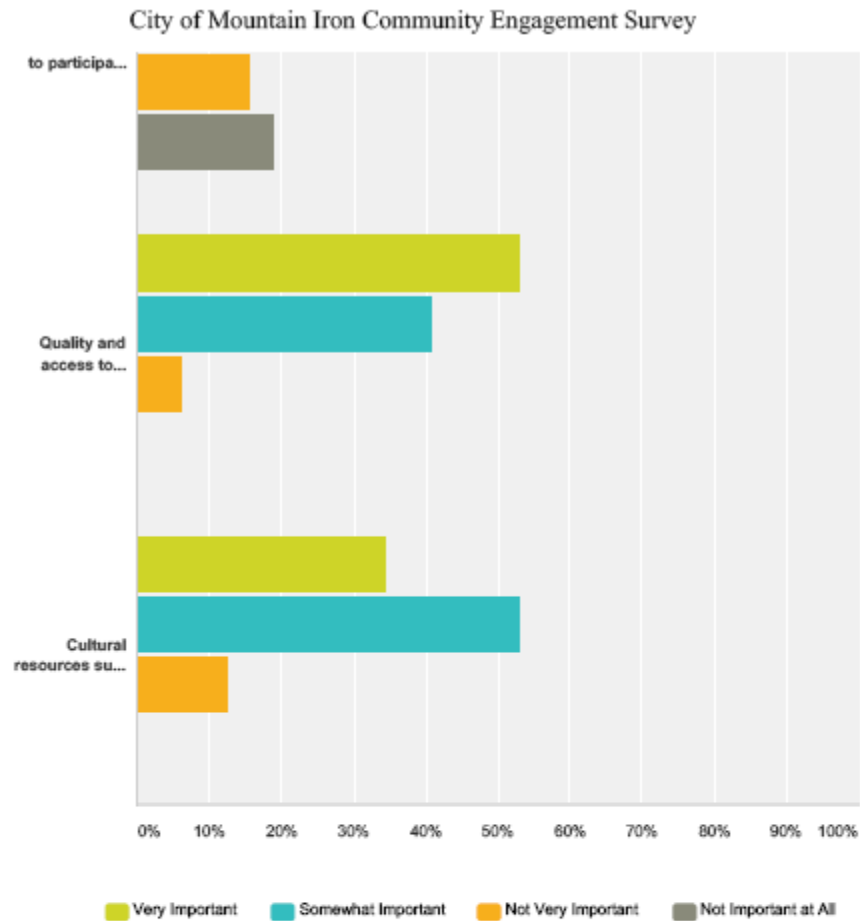


## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q6 Please rate the importance of the following culture and recreation characteristics

Answered: 32 Skipped: 5



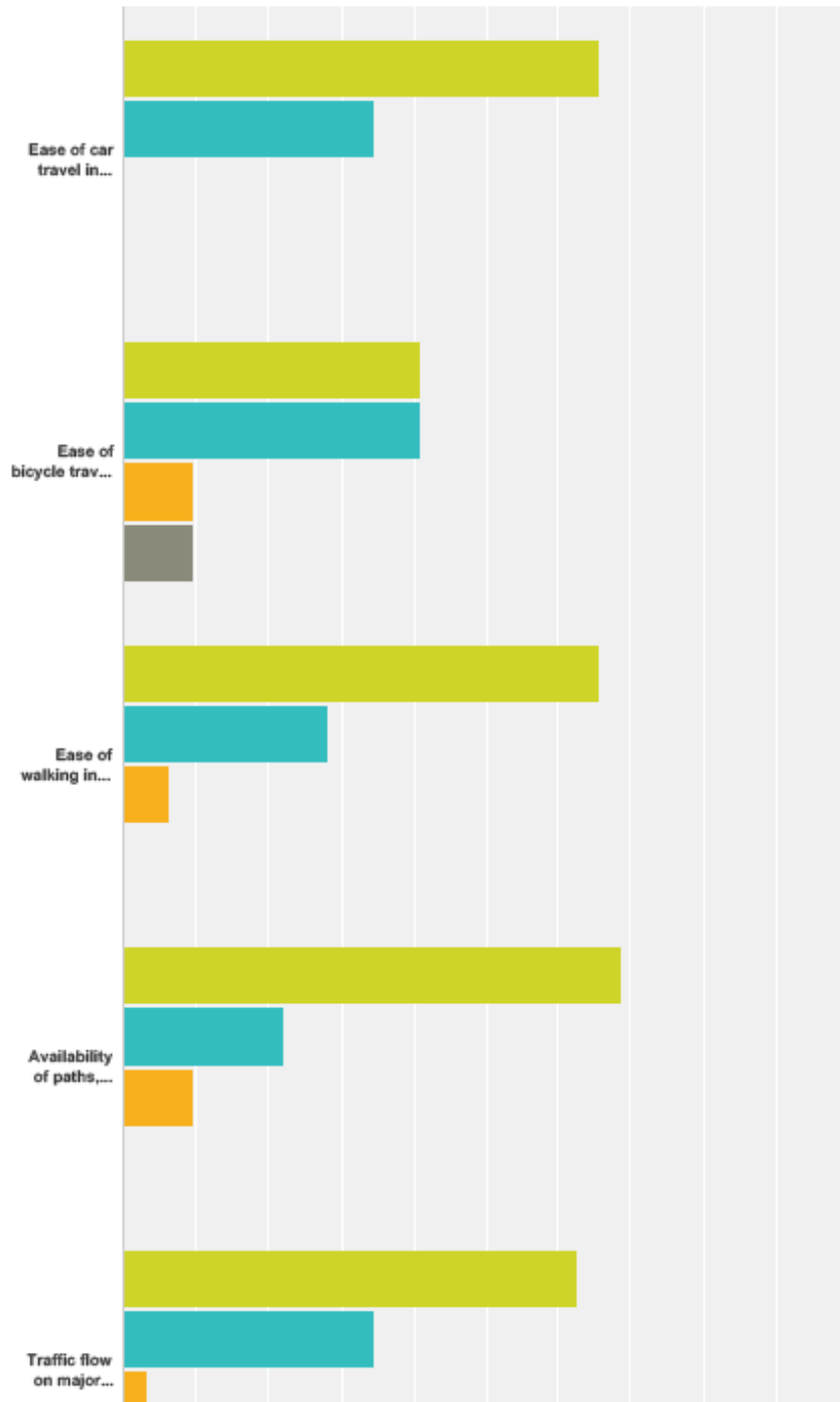


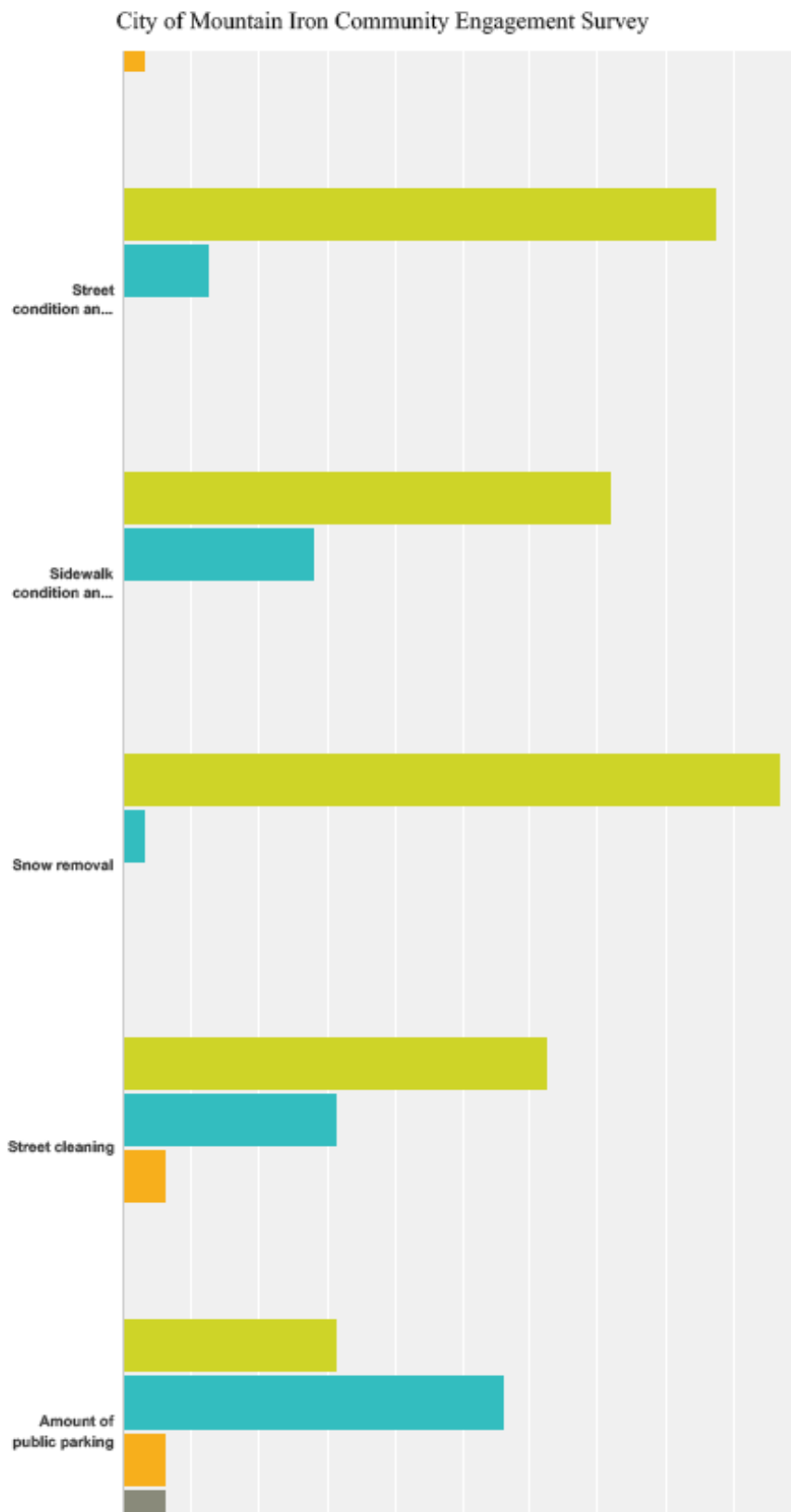
|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Opportunities to attend cultural activities                                  | 40.63%<br>13   | 50.00%<br>16       | 6.25%<br>2         | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Recreational opportunities (Programs and classes)                            | 50.00%<br>16   | 40.63%<br>13       | 6.25%<br>2         | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Recreation centers or facilities   | 56.25%<br>18   | 40.63%<br>13       | 3.13%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Opportunities to participate in social events and activities                 | 50.00%<br>16   | 40.63%<br>13       | 9.38%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities | 31.25%<br>10   | 34.38%<br>11       | 15.63%<br>5        | 18.75%<br>6          | 32    |
| Quality and access to public parks   | 53.13%<br>17   | 40.63%<br>13       | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Cultural resources such as historical sites and landmarks                    | 34.38%<br>11   | 53.13%<br>17       | 12.50%<br>4        | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

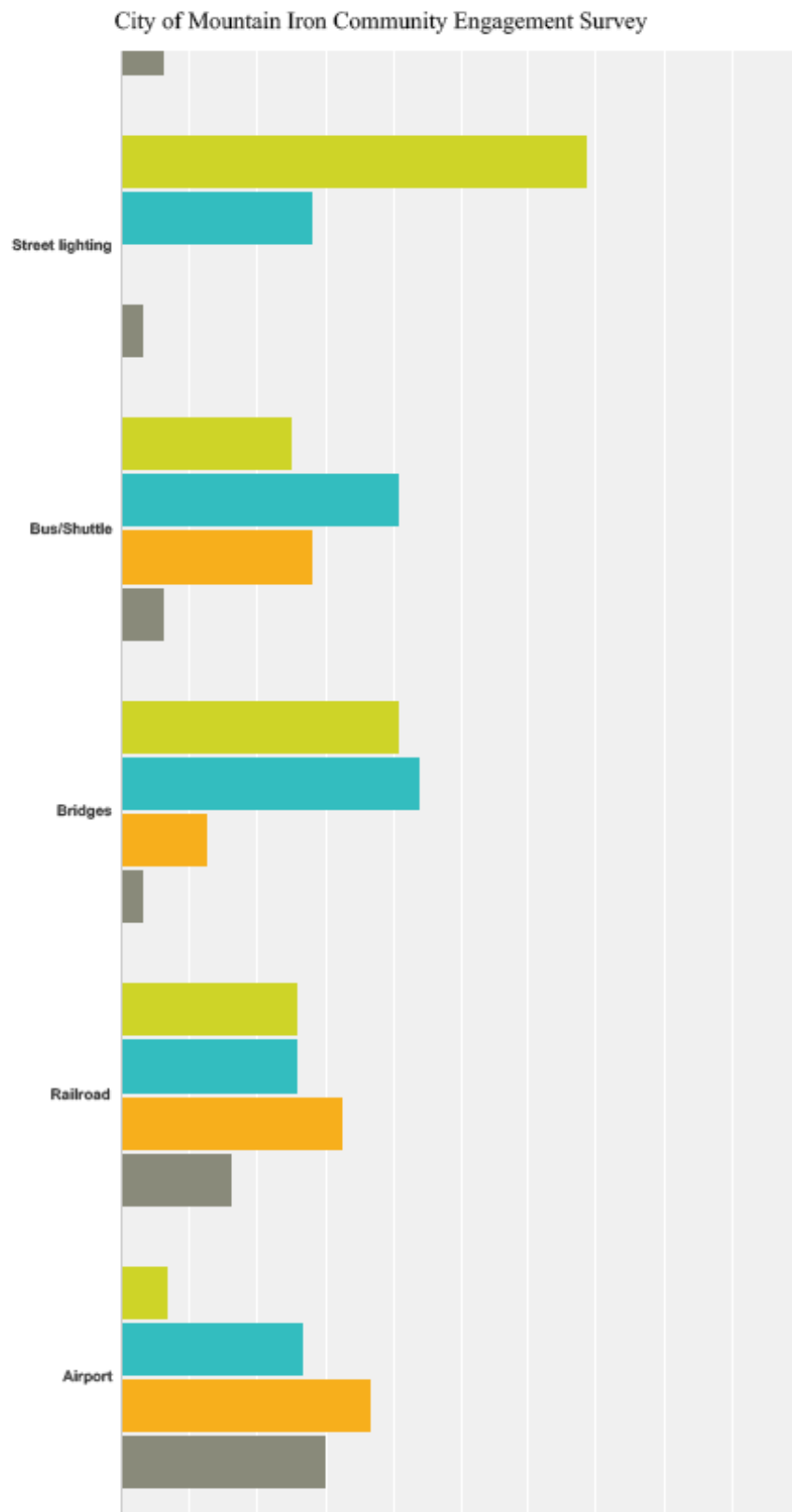
### Q7 Please rate the importance of the following transportation factors

Answered: 32 Skipped: 5









## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

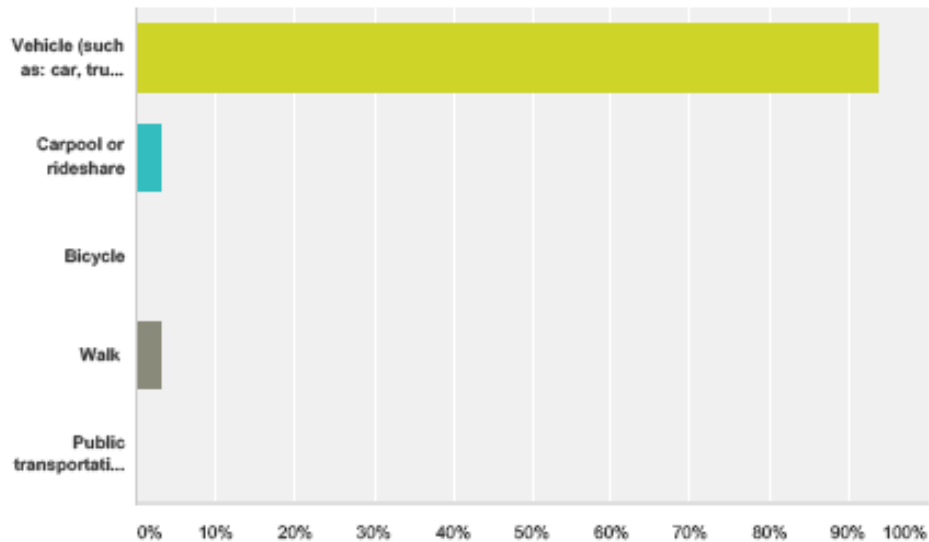
Very Important Somewhat Important Not Very Important Not Important at All

|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Ease of car travel in Mountain Iron  | 65.63%<br>21   | 34.38%<br>11       | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Ease of bicycle travel in Mountain Iron  | 40.63%<br>13   | 40.63%<br>13       | 9.38%<br>3         | 9.38%<br>3           | 32    |
| Ease of walking in Mountain Iron   | 65.63%<br>21   | 28.13%<br>9        | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Availability of paths, trails, sidewalks that connect home, school, work, and other destinations | 68.75%<br>22   | 21.88%<br>7        | 9.38%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Traffic flow on major streets  | 62.50%<br>20   | 34.38%<br>11       | 3.13%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Street condition and maintenance   | 87.50%<br>28   | 12.50%<br>4        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Sidewalk condition and maintenance   | 71.88%<br>23   | 28.13%<br>9        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Snow removal   | 96.88%<br>31   | 3.13%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Street cleaning  | 62.50%<br>20   | 31.25%<br>10       | 6.25%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0           | 32    |
| Amount of public parking   | 31.25%<br>10   | 56.25%<br>18       | 6.25%<br>2         | 6.25%<br>2           | 32    |
| Street lighting  | 68.75%<br>22   | 28.13%<br>9        | 0.00%<br>0         | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Bus/Shuttle  | 25.00%<br>8    | 40.63%<br>13       | 28.13%<br>9        | 6.25%<br>2           | 32    |
| Bridges  | 40.63%<br>13   | 43.75%<br>14       | 12.50%<br>4        | 3.13%<br>1           | 32    |
| Railroad   | 25.81%<br>8    | 25.81%<br>8        | 32.26%<br>10       | 16.13%<br>5          | 31    |
| Airport  | 6.67%<br>2     | 26.67%<br>8        | 36.67%<br>11       | 30.00%<br>9          | 30    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q8 How do you most often travel to work?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 5

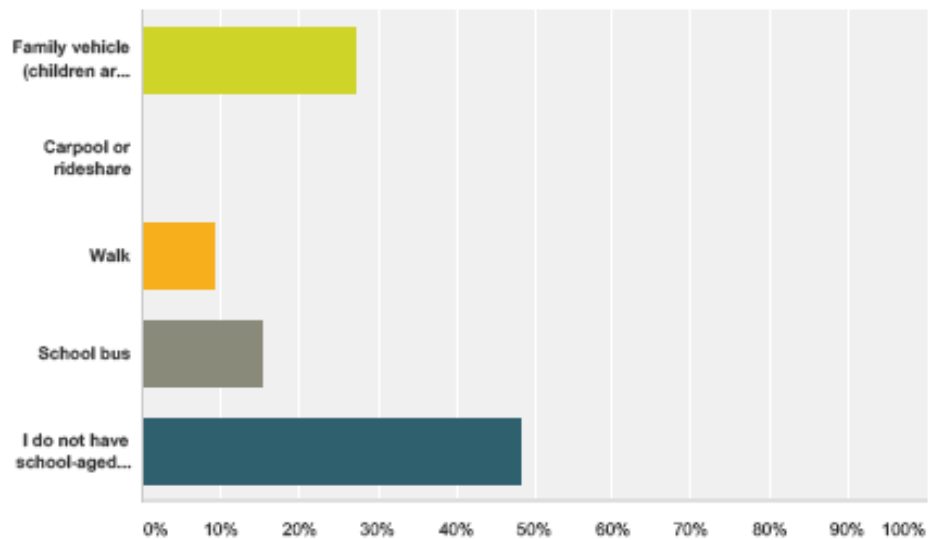


| Answer Choices                                      | Responses |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Vehicle (such as: car, truck, van, etc.)            | 93.75%    | 30        |
| Carpool or rideshare                                | 3.13%     | 1         |
| Bicycle   | 0.00%     | 0         |
| Walk  | 3.13%     | 1         |
| Public transportation (such as: bus, shuttle, etc.) | 0.00%     | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>  |           | <b>32</b> |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q9 How do your school-aged children most often get to school?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 4

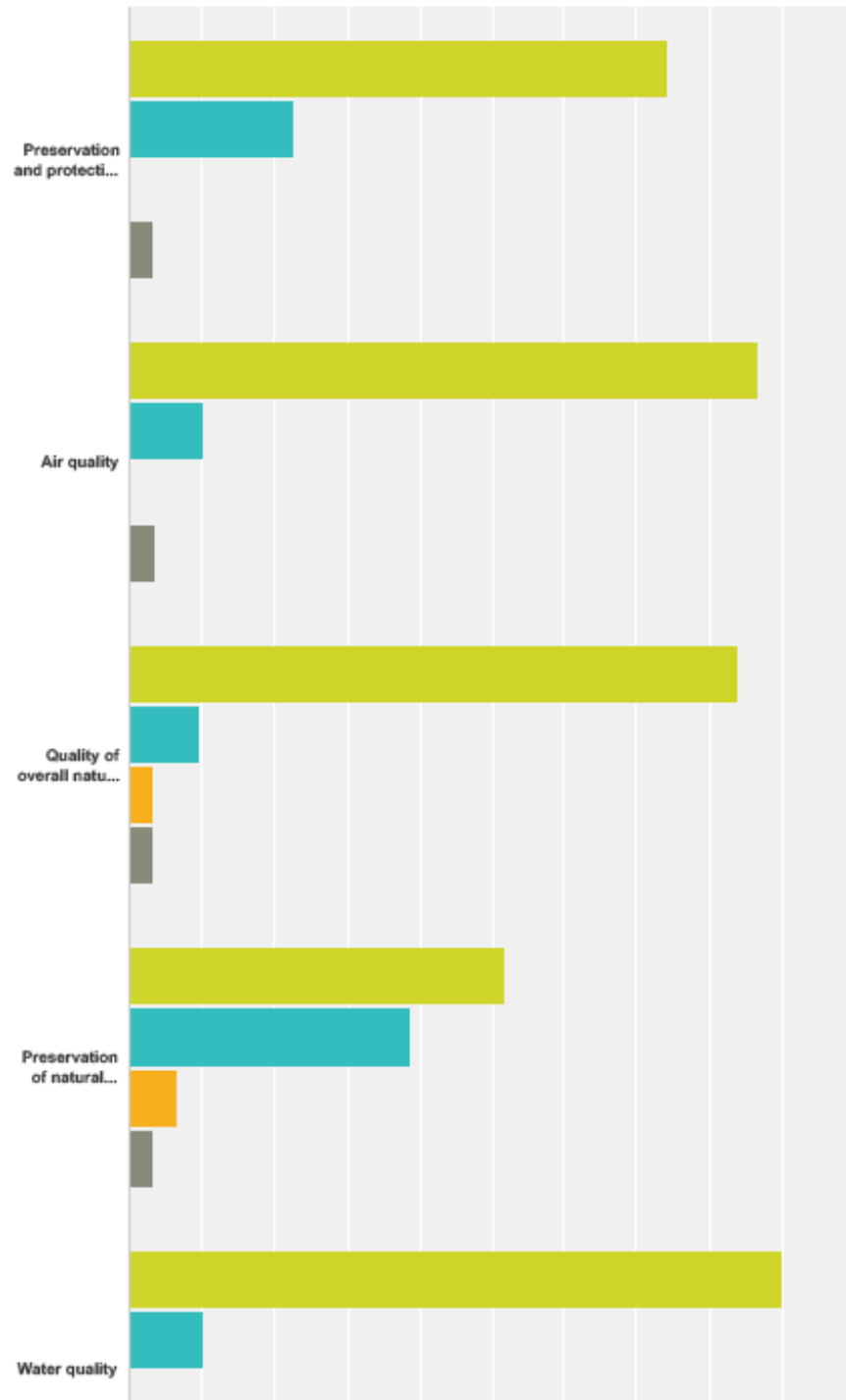


| Answer Choices  | Responses |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Family vehicle (children are driven in family car, truck van, etc.) | 27.27%    | 9         |
| Carpool or rideshare  | 0.00%     | 0         |
| Walk  | 9.09%     | 3         |
| School bus  | 15.15%    | 5         |
| I do not have school-aged children                                  | 48.48%    | 16        |
| <b>Total</b>  |           | <b>33</b> |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

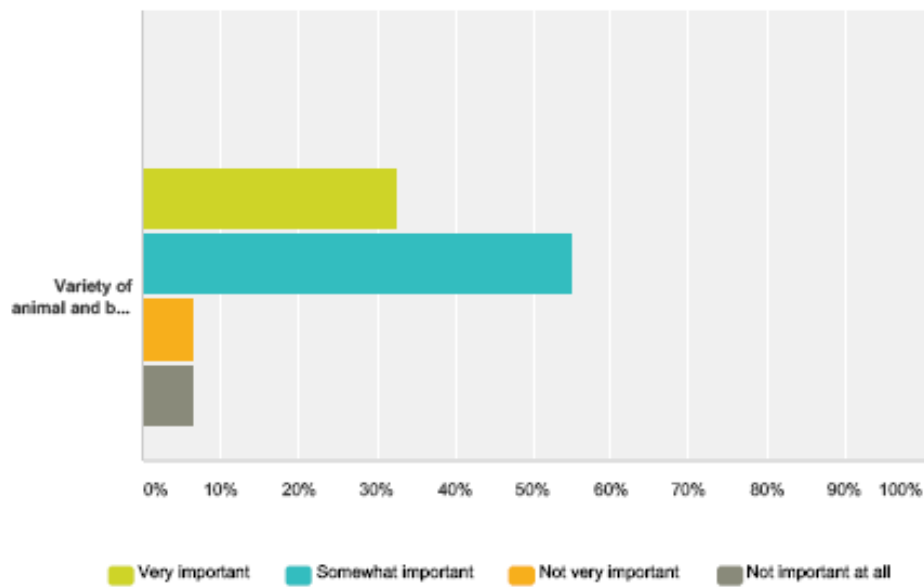
### Q10 Please rate the level of importance of the following natural environment factors

Answered: 31 Skipped: 6





City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

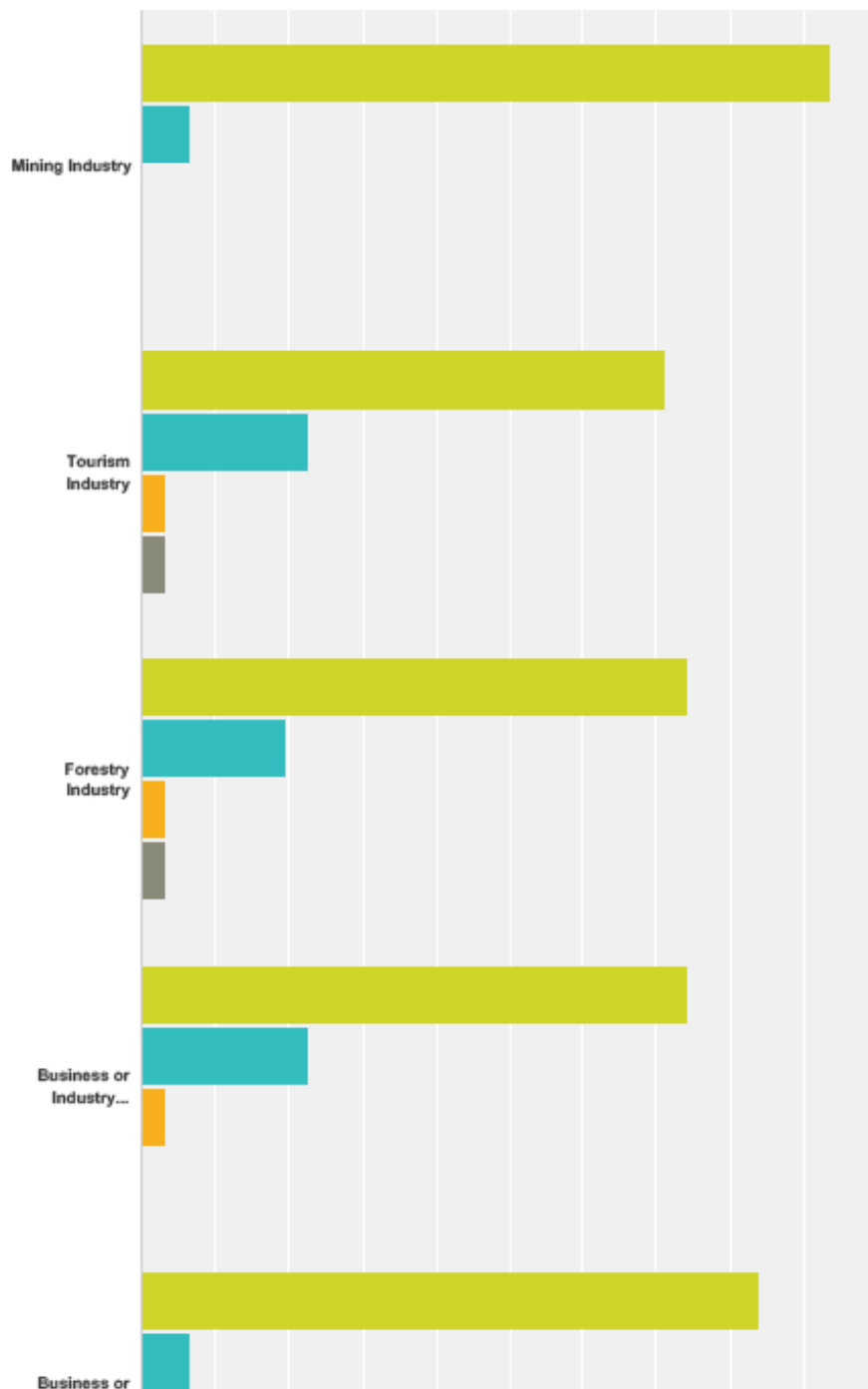


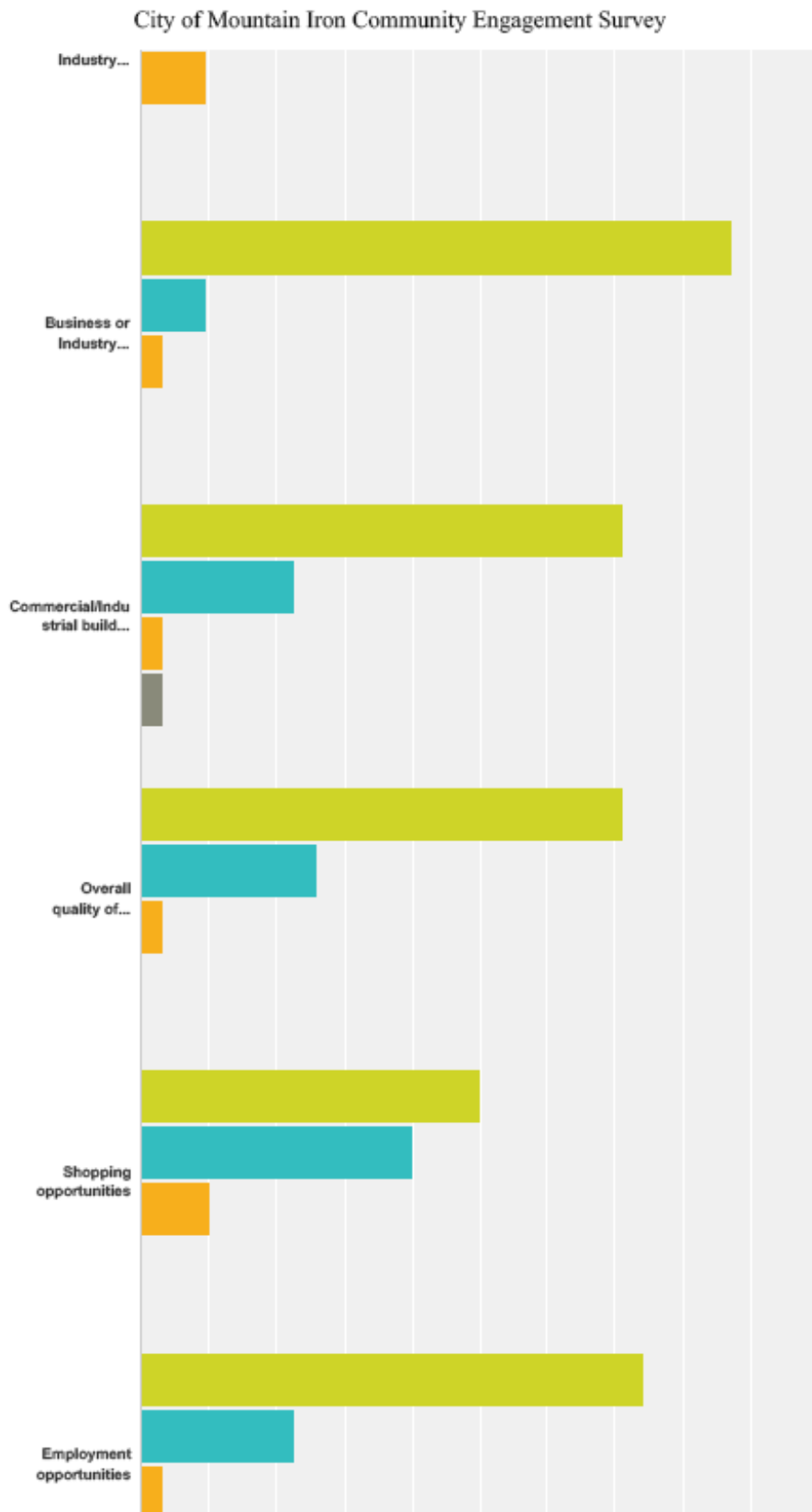
|  | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not important at all | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Preservation and protection of natural resources (such as: rivers, lakes, public lands, rock outcroppings, or geological features) | 74.19%<br>23   | 22.58%<br>7        | 0.00%<br>0         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Air quality  | 86.67%<br>26   | 10.00%<br>3        | 0.00%<br>0         | 3.33%<br>1           | 30    |
| Quality of overall natural environment   | 83.87%<br>26   | 9.68%<br>3         | 3.23%<br>1         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmland, and greenbelts   | 51.61%<br>16   | 38.71%<br>12       | 6.45%<br>2         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Water quality  | 90.00%<br>27   | 10.00%<br>3        | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 30    |
| Variety of animal and bird species   | 32.26%<br>10   | 54.84%<br>17       | 6.45%<br>2         | 6.45%<br>2           | 31    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

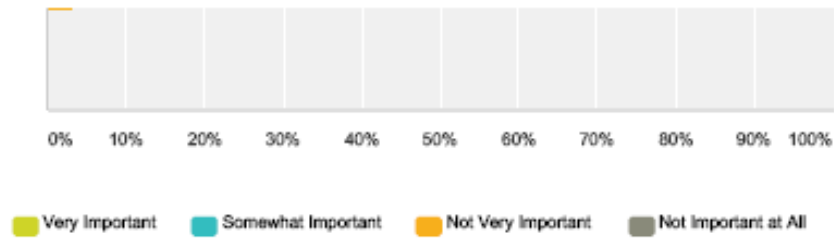
### Q11 Please rate the importance of the following industries and economic development factors

Answered: 31 Skipped: 6





## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

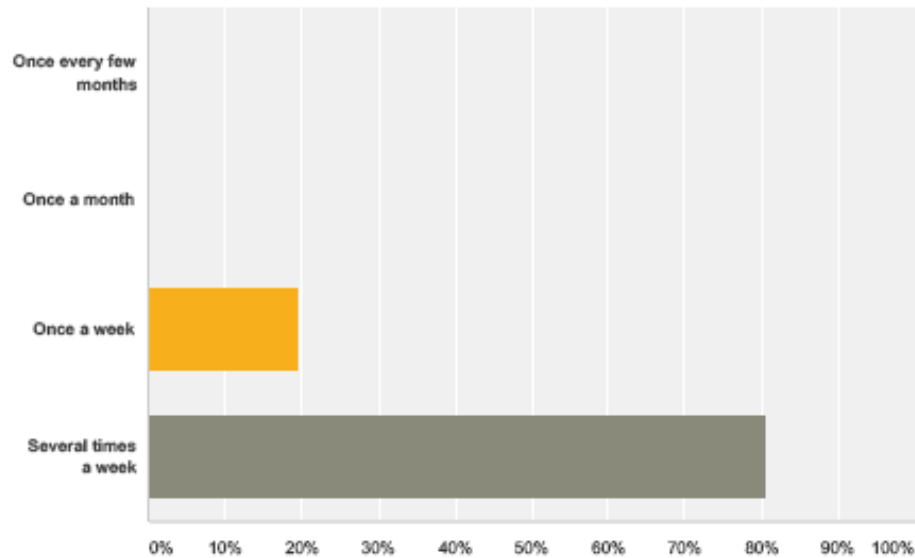


|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Mining Industry  | 93.55%<br>29   | 6.45%<br>2         | 0.00%<br>0         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |
| Tourism Industry                                       | 70.97%<br>22   | 22.58%<br>7        | 3.23%<br>1         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Forestry Industry                                      | 74.19%<br>23   | 19.35%<br>6        | 3.23%<br>1         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Business or Industry recruitment                       | 74.19%<br>23   | 22.58%<br>7        | 3.23%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |
| Business or Industry retention and promotion           | 83.87%<br>26   | 6.45%<br>2         | 9.68%<br>3         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |
| Business or Industry expansion                         | 87.10%<br>27   | 9.68%<br>3         | 3.23%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |
| Commercial/Industrial building and site availability   | 70.97%<br>22   | 22.58%<br>7        | 3.23%<br>1         | 3.23%<br>1           | 31    |
| Overall quality of business and service establishments | 70.97%<br>22   | 25.81%<br>8        | 3.23%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |
| Shopping opportunities                                 | 50.00%<br>15   | 40.00%<br>12       | 10.00%<br>3        | 0.00%<br>0           | 30    |
| Employment opportunities                               | 74.19%<br>23   | 22.58%<br>7        | 3.23%<br>1         | 0.00%<br>0           | 31    |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q12 How often do you patronize businesses in Mountain Iron?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 6



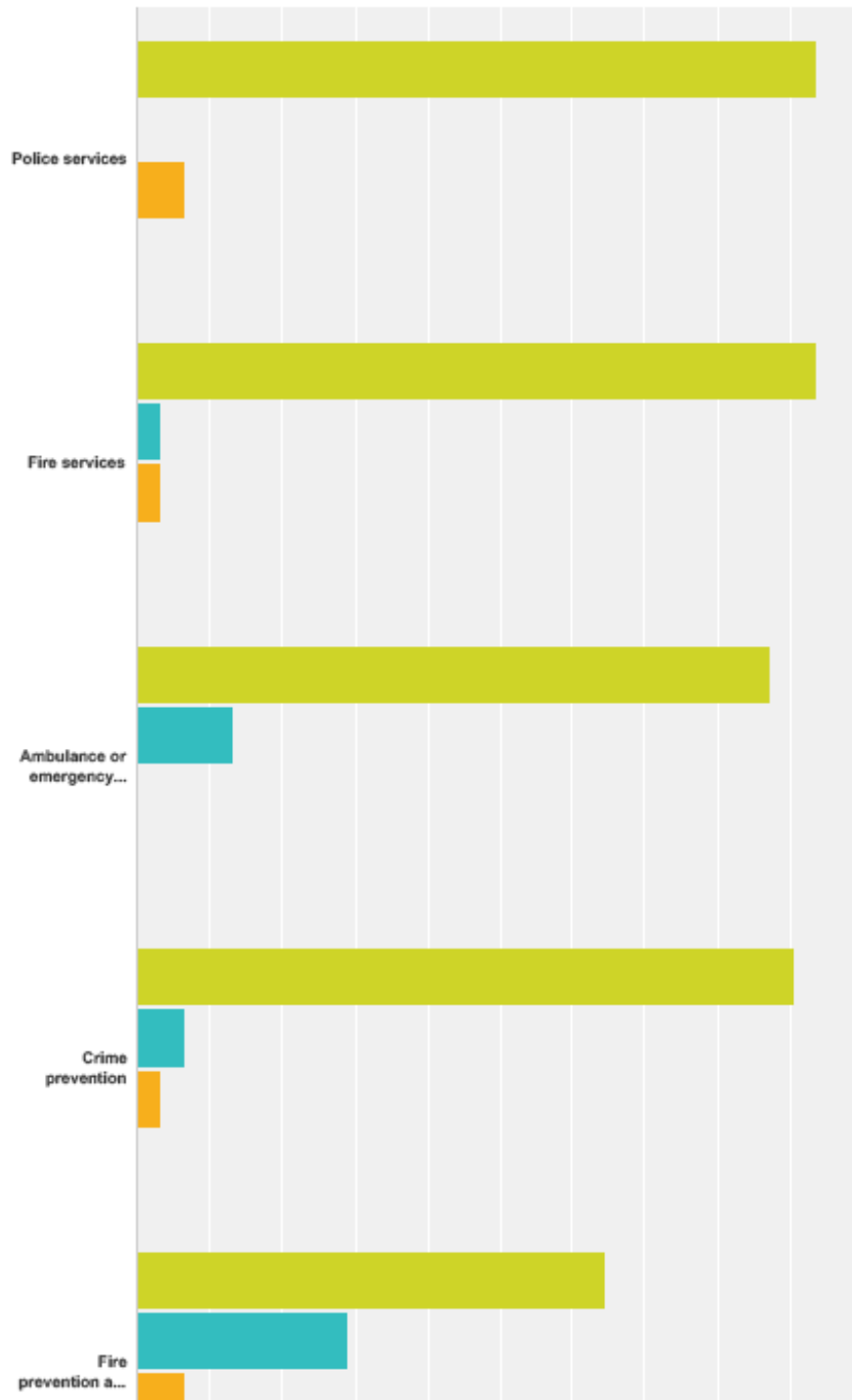
| Answer Choices        | Responses |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Once every few months | 0.00%     | 0         |
| Once a month          | 0.00%     | 0         |
| Once a week           | 19.35%    | 6         |
| Several times a week  | 80.65%    | 25        |
| <b>Total</b>          |           | <b>31</b> |



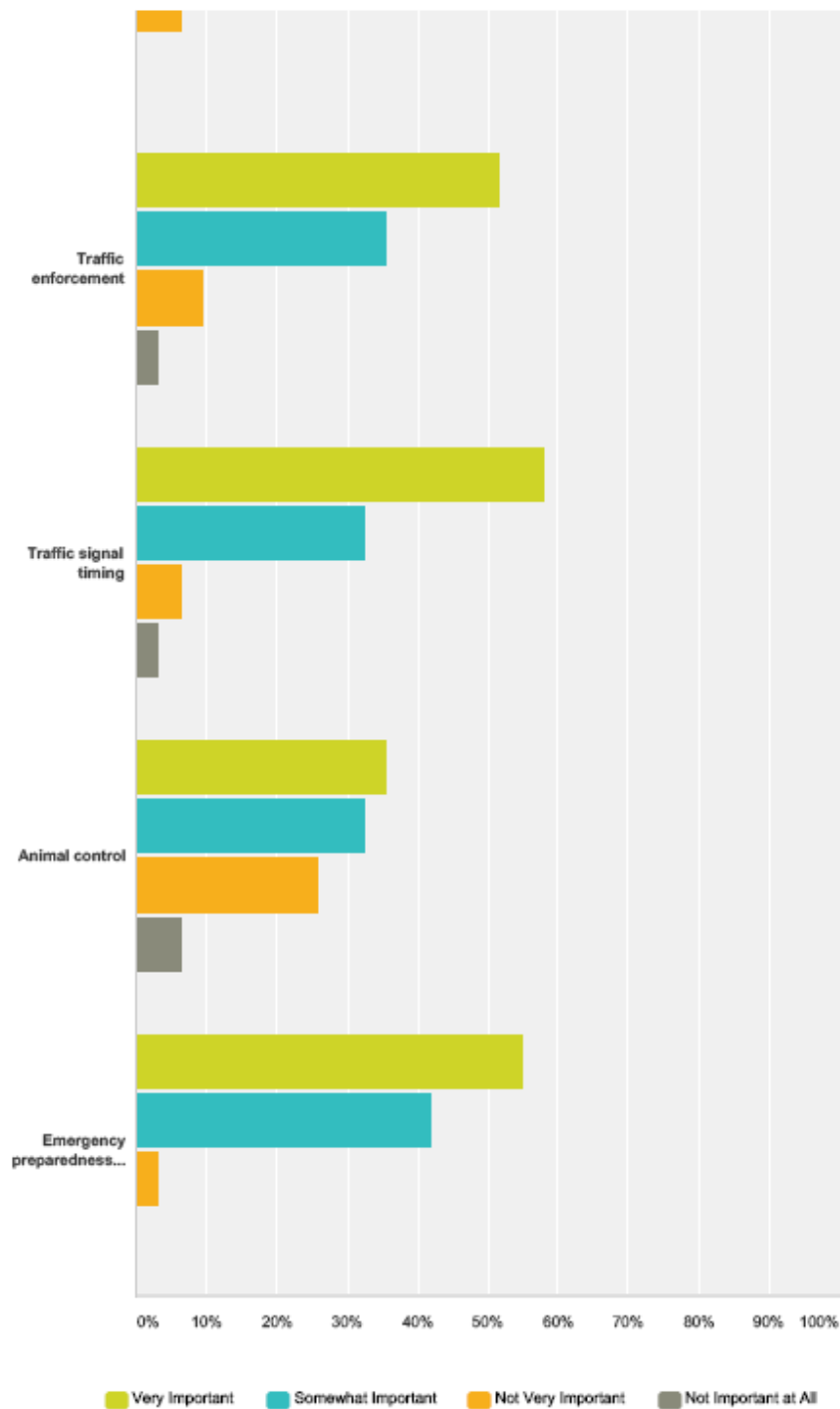
## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q13 Please rate the importance of the following public safety services.

Answered: 31 Skipped: 6



City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey



|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|

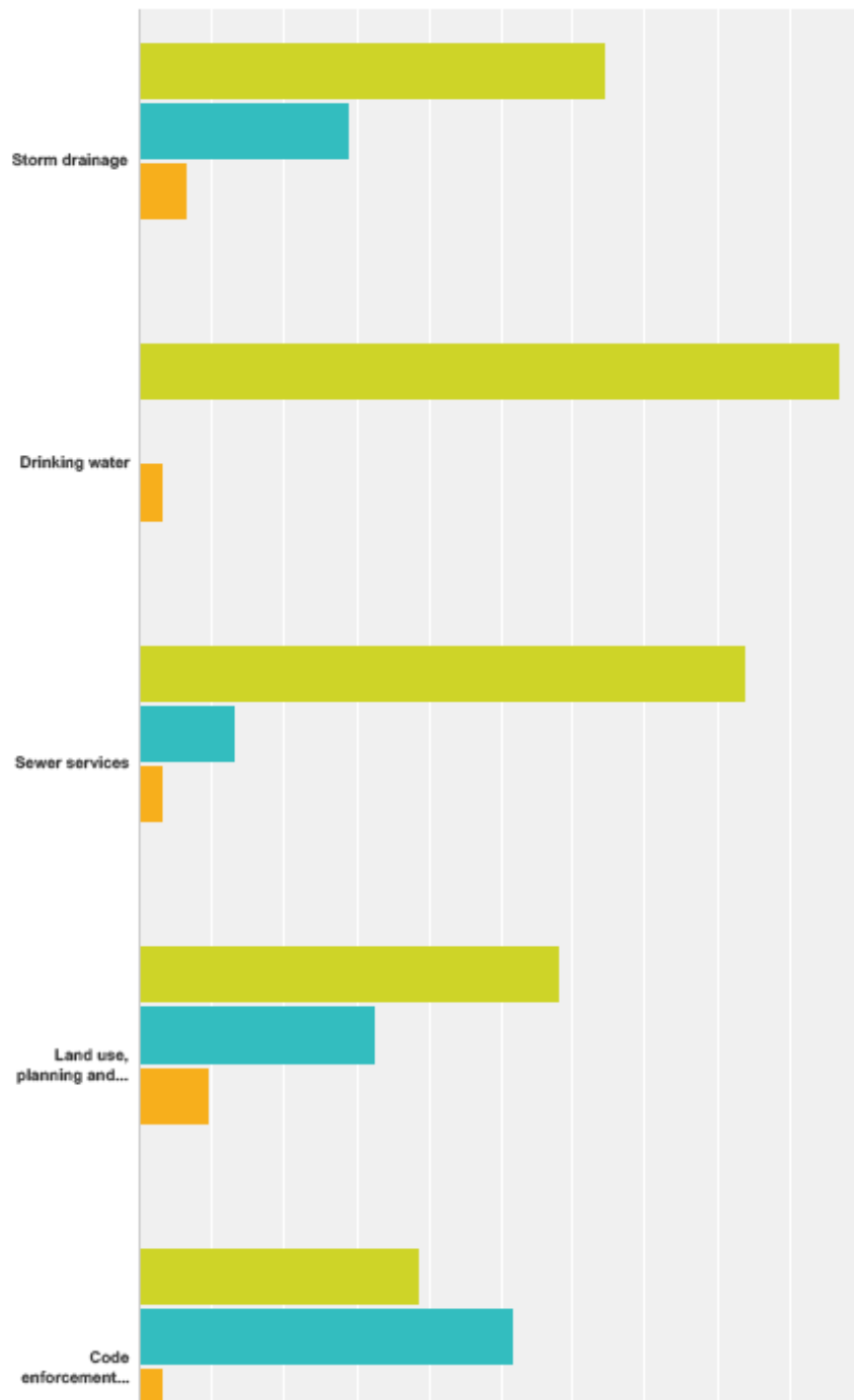
## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

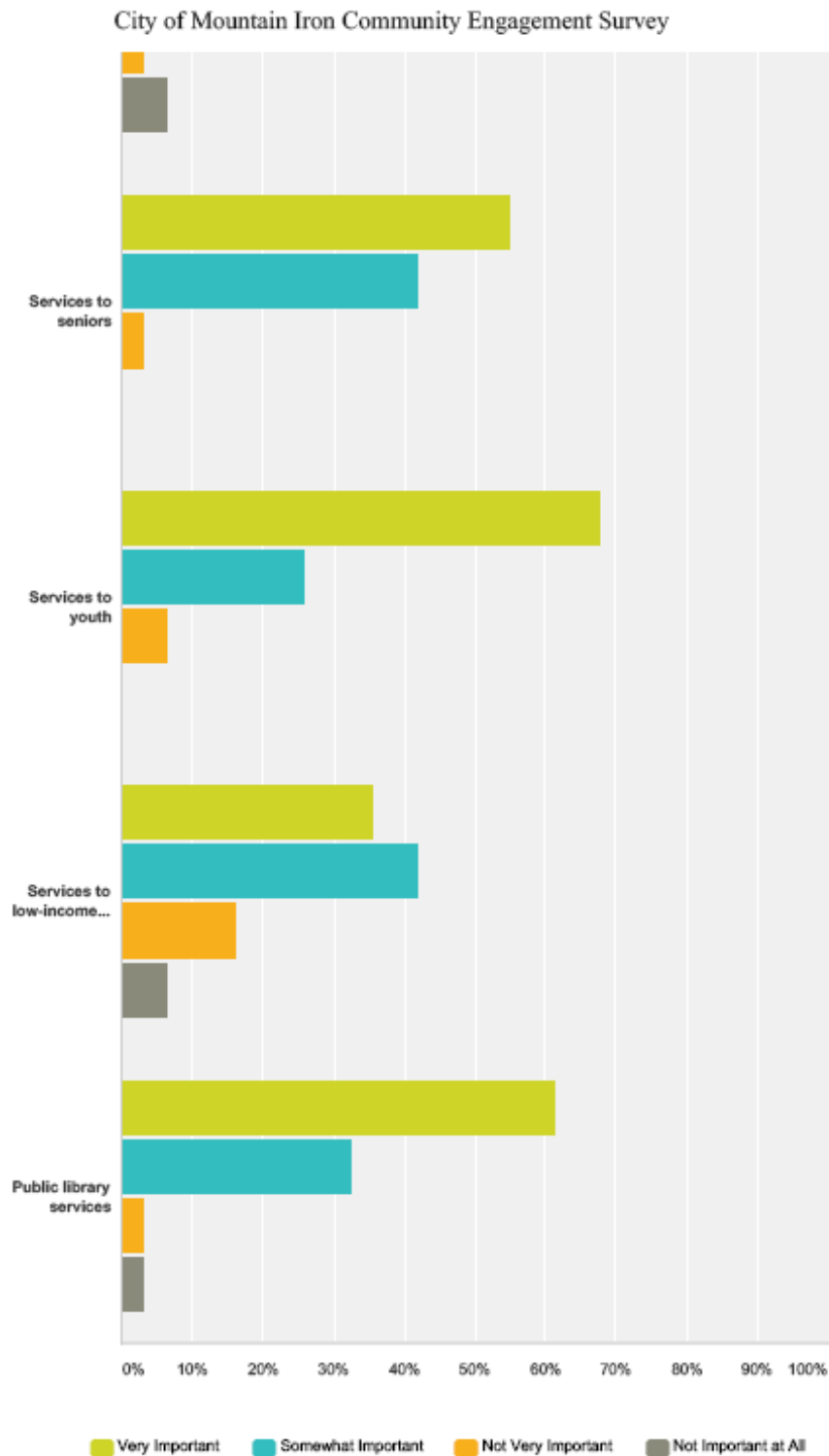
|  |              |              |             |            |    |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|----|
| Police services  | 93.55%<br>29 | 0.00%<br>0   | 6.45%<br>2  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Fire services  | 93.55%<br>29 | 3.23%<br>1   | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Ambulance or emergency medical services  | 87.10%<br>27 | 12.90%<br>4  | 0.00%<br>0  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Crime prevention   | 90.32%<br>28 | 6.45%<br>2   | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Fire prevention and education  | 64.52%<br>20 | 29.03%<br>9  | 6.45%<br>2  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Traffic enforcement  | 51.61%<br>16 | 35.48%<br>11 | 9.68%<br>3  | 3.23%<br>1 | 31 |
| Traffic signal timing  | 58.06%<br>18 | 32.26%<br>10 | 6.45%<br>2  | 3.23%<br>1 | 31 |
| Animal control   | 35.48%<br>11 | 32.26%<br>10 | 25.81%<br>8 | 6.45%<br>2 | 31 |
| Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) | 54.84%<br>17 | 41.94%<br>13 | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q14 Please rate the importance of the following Community services

Answered: 31 Skipped: 6





|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not Important at All | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|



## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

|  |              |              |             |            |    |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|----|
| Storm drainage   | 64.52%<br>20 | 29.03%<br>9  | 6.45%<br>2  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Drinking water   | 96.77%<br>30 | 0.00%<br>0   | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Sewer services   | 83.87%<br>26 | 12.90%<br>4  | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Land use, planning and zoning                                | 58.06%<br>18 | 32.26%<br>10 | 9.68%<br>3  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Code enforcement (such as: weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.) | 38.71%<br>12 | 51.61%<br>16 | 3.23%<br>1  | 6.45%<br>2 | 31 |
| Services to seniors  | 54.84%<br>17 | 41.94%<br>13 | 3.23%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Services to youth  | 67.74%<br>21 | 25.81%<br>8  | 6.45%<br>2  | 0.00%<br>0 | 31 |
| Services to low-income people                                | 35.48%<br>11 | 41.94%<br>13 | 16.13%<br>5 | 6.45%<br>2 | 31 |
| Public library services                                      | 61.29%<br>19 | 32.26%<br>10 | 3.23%<br>1  | 3.23%<br>1 | 31 |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

**Q15 List assets unique to your community (i.e. Community park, engaged citizens committees, etc.) which you would like to see preserved, capitalized on, or utilized by the City.**

Answered: 19 Skipped: 18

**Q16 List issues that may face your community in the future or you'd like to see addressed now.**

Answered: 21 Skipped: 16

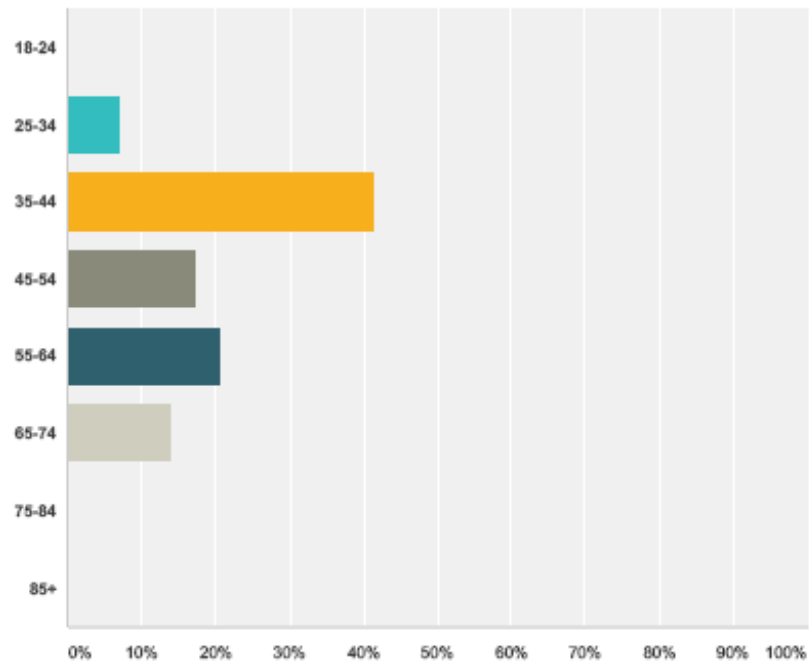
**Q17 Please include any further comments you have regarding current or future issues and opportunities within the community.**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 27

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q18 What age group are you in?

Answered: 29 Skipped: 8

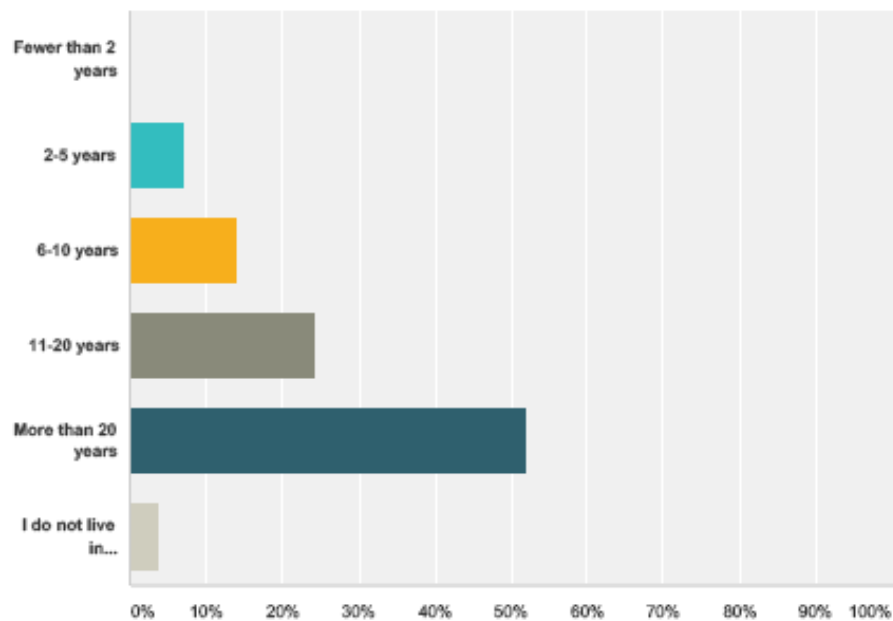


| Answer Choices | Responses |
|----------------|-----------|
| 18-24          | 0.00% 0   |
| 25-34          | 6.90% 2   |
| 35-44          | 41.38% 12 |
| 45-54          | 17.24% 5  |
| 55-64          | 20.69% 6  |
| 65-74          | 13.79% 4  |
| 75-84          | 0.00% 0   |
| 85+            | 0.00% 0   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>29</b> |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q19 How long have you lived in Mountain Iron?

Answered: 29 Skipped: 8

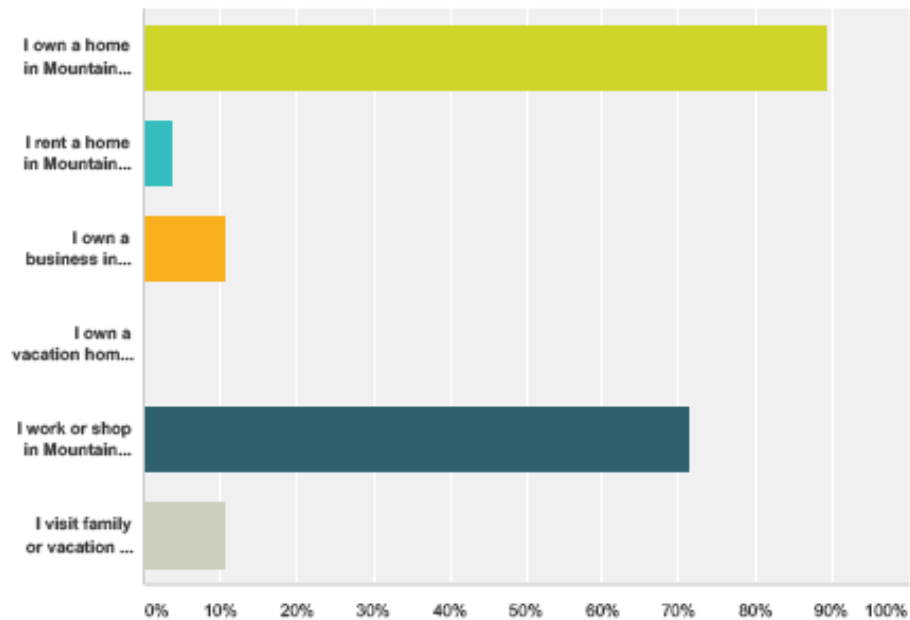


| Answer Choices         | Responses |           |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Fewer than 2 years     | 0.00%     | 0         |
| 2-5 years              | 6.90%     | 2         |
| 6-10 years             | 13.79%    | 4         |
| 11-20 years            | 24.14%    | 7         |
| More than 20 years     | 51.72%    | 15        |
| I do not live in _____ | 3.45%     | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>           |           | <b>29</b> |

## City of Mountain Iron Community Engagement Survey

### Q20 What are your interests in Mountain Iron? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 28 Skipped: 9



| Answer Choices                              | Responses |    |
|---|-----------|----|
| I own a home in Mountain Iron               | 89.29%    | 25 |
| I rent a home in Mountain Iron              | 3.57%     | 1  |
| I own a business in Mountain Iron           | 10.71%    | 3  |
| I own a vacation home in Mountain Iron      | 0.00%     | 0  |
| I work or shop in Mountain Iron             | 71.43%    | 20 |
| I visit family or vacation in Mountain Iron | 10.71%    | 3  |
| Total Respondents: 28                       |           |    |

## Appendix D: Meeting Summaries

### City of Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update Kick-Off Meeting January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – 6:00 p.m. Mountain Iron City Hall/Community Center

#### Introduction/Presentation

The Kick-Off meeting began at 6:00 p.m. in the Mountain Iron City Hall/Community Center, with Jarrett Valdez and Justin Otsea from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) welcoming the Steering Committee members in attendance. Valdez proceeded to inform the Steering Committee about the comprehensive planning process such as the scope of work, tentative timeline, as well as desired outcomes and effects of the project. Additionally, Valdez provided an overview of some demographic information and a summary of the Sidewalk Conditions Map and the Mining Features Map. The Steering Committee members expressed that not all of the sidewalk data was collected for the City. The Old Town neighborhood of the City was only depicted with the New Town neighborhood sidewalk conditions being left out. Valdez will provide a link to ARDC's interactive map ([click here](#)) to review the Mountain Iron's sidewalk conditions.

Justin Otsea also informed the Steering Committee that Mountain Iron was a selected City to take part in the 'Health in Comprehensive Planning' project which is funded by the Center of Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. He explained that the purpose of this pilot project is to learn more about how people access food and assist communities with incorporating food access and health within a local comprehensive planning process. Otsea informed the Committee that a new Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) Coordinator, that was recently hired and based out of Virginia, will help contribute their health expertise to this project. ARDC will follow-up with the new SHIP Coordinator as it gets closer to the Public Visioning Session.

#### Survey Discussion

Near the end of the presentation, discussion centered on how to distribute the community survey as well as planning for the public visioning session. The meeting participants were requested to look through the sample survey and provide any necessary feedback regarding changes, etc... It was suggested that the community survey should be announced to the public at the Visioning Session in February. An idea was mentioned that a survey announcement could be within the City's utility bill which would include an online link. February's utility bill will be mailed out to residents on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, paper surveys will be placed in various buildings throughout the City such as the Library, City Hall/Community Center, Senior Center, and other locations.

The Steering Committee was asked if there were any past planning efforts that ARDC is not aware of that should be reviewed. It was suggested to review the City's 2009 EDA Economic Plan. Also, Valdez and Otsea were informed that Mountain Iron is in the process of becoming a Minnesota Greenstep City, which should be mentioned in the plan update.

#### Next Steps

ARDC will summarize the meeting, email it to those who attended, and also post it to the project's website. The Public Visioning Session is scheduled for **February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 6 p.m.** in the Community Center. ARDC will create a flyer and ad to be released, announcing the Visioning Session. The Steering Committee will strategize ways to promote it and encourage residents to attend. Potential outlets include, the public library, announcing the event at various board meetings; public access television; community sporting events; announcement at the next City Council meeting among others.

Anyone not able to attend/interested in the planning project is encouraged to contact Jarrett Valdez at ARDC at 218-529-7513 or [jvaldez@ardc.org](mailto:jvaldez@ardc.org) or visit [www.ArrowheadPlanning.org/MountainIron](http://www.ArrowheadPlanning.org/MountainIron) for more information as well as an opportunity to provide public comment into the vision of the City.



Insert Visioning Flyer

## **City of Mountain Iron – Comprehensive Plan Public Visioning Session Meeting Summary February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – 6:00 p.m. Mountain Iron City Hall/Community Center**

### **Summary**

The City of Mountain Iron Visioning Session began at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center/City Hall. Jarrett Valdez from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) welcomed eleven meeting participants in attendance and provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan update planning process. A comprehensive plan is a document which sets communities priorities and identifies goals and strategies in an array of fields including housing, transportation, parks and recreation, land use, and other areas and can provide guidance to local decision makers when making community investment decisions. The City of Mountain Iron last completed a comprehensive plan in 2008. The project will involve two phases (*Public Visioning* and *Plan Development*) which consist of six meetings total.

Valdez continued by summarizing the goals of the evening which included using public engagement exercises to gather input/data identifying community/health assets and threats, vision statement ideas, and other community resources. In addition to the documented planning process, drafts of the plan and other reference materials pertaining to the project can be found at <http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/mountainiron>.

Additionally, ARDC has initiated a pilot project to learn more about how people access food and assist communities with incorporating food access and health within local comprehensive planning process. Annie Harala from Community Health Board provided information to the meeting participants such as factors that influence health and well-being; social and economic factors that should be addressed to achieve health equity; the need for changing laws, rules, policy or ordinances to support healthier outcomes. Harala then asked everyone in the room what were some factors that enable and hinder good health within the community. She also inquired the meeting participant's wants and desires throughout the City that would enable good health. Harala also introduced Raymond Jobe, a newly hired Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) coordinator who will be based out of Virginia and be able to coordinate with the City of Mountain Iron on implementing projects identified in the process.

### **Asset & Threat Exercise**

The meeting participants were provided handouts and a map and directions for the Asset and Threat Mapping Exercise. Jarrett Valdez provided instructions for the asset exercise, which resulted in identified physical, intangible and future assets within the City. The next step of the exercise was to identify barriers and issues facing the community currently and potentially in the future. Valdez facilitated the conversation and Justin Otsea recorded the results. Results of the exercise have been summarized on the following list:

#### *Physical Assets*

- Community Center
- Jeremy Carpenter Community Park
- South Grove Recreation Complex
- West Virginia Park
- West Two Rivers Campground Facility
- Plaza 53 (mall)
- Fire Department
- YMCA
- Carnegie Library
- Locomotive Park
- Numerous neighborhoods
- Biking/walking trail
- Historic downtown
- Movie theatre
- Minntac US Steel
- Walmart

- BG's Wing Night
- Retrievers Club
- Senior Center
- Dining and shopping
- Skating park
- Anytime Fitness
- AT&T
- Rockridge Development
- Enterprise North
- Spring Creek Outfitters (Kayak Shop)
- Energy Park
- Churches
- Unity 1-2 Housing
- Town Hall
- Mott Pitt
- School
- Granite Quarry
- UPS
- New hotels
- Anne's Acres
- New county road
- Local restaurants
- Clinics

## *Other "Unseen" Assets*

- Fourth of July Events
- Merritt Days Festival
- Winter Carnival
- Mining history
- Unique neighborhoods
- Summer recreational programming
- Bingo
- Friendly community
- Supportive community
- People come together
- Halloween Carnival
- Annual Easter Egg Hunt
- "Taste of Mountain Iron"
- Iron Ore Discovered in Mountain Iron
- Archery program
- Church activities
- Disc Golf Course
- Green Step City
- Wildlife in the community

## *Health Assets/Enabling Factors to Health*

- Nature
- Fitness clubs
- Rural living
- Less stress
- Friendly people
- Fresh air
- Less traffic congestion

## *Future Assets*

- Complete trail and walking system
- Woodland Estate
- Outdoor pool complex/water park/ mini golf center
- Outlet mall
- New school
- Economic development west of Highway 169, past Walmart
- Crosswalk along Highway 169 (pedestrian crossing)
- Expand the campground
- More housing for middle/ low Income
- Increase tourism
- Revive Old Town
- Restaurants and lodging
- Compete ATV and snowmobile trail system
- New bowling alley
- Library expansion
- Brew pub

## *Future Health Assets/Wants & Desires*

- Community gardens
- Finishing trail connection (SRTS)

## *Physical Concerns/Threats/Issues*

- Disconnect between north and south of Highway 169
- Mining down turn
- Alcohol and drugs
- Increase of hazardous materials via highways and railroads
- Threat of hospital closing
- Land ownership
- Increase in crime
- Deterioration of Old Town
- Deteriorating infrastructure
- Less medical services
- Existing housing stock
- Mining blasts have increased over the last 5 years

## *Other “Unseen” Concerns/Threats/Issues*

- Lack of volunteers for Fire Department and Merritt Days
- Increase of crime
- Community attitudes (perpetual negativity)
- Lack of diversity
- Looking for leadership (engaging all generations)
- Downturn of the mines
- Not enough activities for seniors
- Young children activities/programming

## *Health Concerns/Threats/Issues/Hindering Factors*

- Pollution and blasts from Minntac
- Water pollution
- Access to medical
- Hazardous materials
- Acid rain
- Long harsh winters
- Chemical use
- Availability and expense of fresh foods

## *Future Concerns/Threats/Issues*

- US Steel/Minntac expansion
- Sweet Water Energy (potential business coming to the Community)
- Overall community needs (opportunity for shared services) i.e. can local Fire Department afford a new truck, expand ambulance service, etc... but can a regional approach address this?
- Large scale event (disaster/terrorism) emergency services
- Lack of diversity
- Education (potential consolidation issues)
- Virginia having a fire hall on Highway 53 to serve greater region (opportunity for DOT building?)
- Public land availability

## **Visioning Statement Nugget Identification Exercise**

The next exercise of the meeting asked attendees to develop visioning statement “nuggets” by finishing the sentence, “In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is....” The goal of the exercise is to integrate the vision for the community, form the meeting attendees into an overarching vision for the

future of the City to be discussed at the next meeting. Results of the exercise have been summarized on the following list:

## *Visioning Statement Nuggets*

- A well connected community
- Worth the trip
- Envy of the range and the city to live in
- Able to provide a healthy living environment for its citizens
- Inviting new businesses to join us
- Greenest City in Minnesota
- Community that cares and a place to call home
- Leader in economic development (and industrial environment)
- The place to live, shop, to eat
- Growing and exciting community
- Full of hometown pride
- Cooperation and teamwork in all areas
- A City that people love
- Education center
- Population center
- Tourist attraction
- Preserving past history
- A happy place
- A place of diversity
- A healthy place
- Garbage pick-up
- An area for year-round guests
- Medical center of the area
- Is and will be an accessible community
- Filled with hope
- Walkable/bikeable community supported by safe infrastructure
- An area where people want to live in
- A healthy, inviting community
- Planning and improving trails for walking and biking
- Trying to improve the aesthetics of the City
- A local fresh food/farmers market hub for northern St. Louis County
- Has more recreational opportunities
- Commercial center
- Industrial leader
- Leader in economic development
- Lowest taxes on the Range
- Year-round recreation destination
- A place I am proud to call home
- A place with a great business climate

## **Next Steps**

ARDC will summarize the meeting and email to those who attended along with posting the information to the project's website. ARDC will also develop a categorized list of assets/issues and background information (demographic analysis, community survey data, relevant plans, etc...) for the next meeting. The next meeting is yet to be determined. Please look at the project website for future meeting announcements or contact ARDC.

Anyone not able to attend or is interested in the planning project is encouraged to contact Jarrett Valdez of ARDC at 218-529-7513 or [jvaldez@ardc.org](mailto:jvaldez@ardc.org) for more information as well as an opportunity to provide public comment into the vision of the City.

## City of Mountain Iron – Comprehensive Plan Update Past Planning and Public Visioning Meeting Review April 27, 2016 – 6:00 p.m. Mountain Iron Community Center /City Hall

### Survey and Demographic Summary

#### *Survey*

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. in the Mountain Iron Community Center with Jarrett Valdez and Justin Otsea, from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) welcoming the Planning Committee members in attendance and providing a review of the community survey results. At the time of the meeting, only 14 surveys were completed between February and April. The review included community attitudes and importance of qualities such as: access to markets, farms, and affordable food; sense of community and participation in community issues; availability of paths, trails and sidewalks; business and industry; and etc. Survey respondents identified current and future issues that the City may face as well. It was suggested by Otsea to the Committee, that the survey remain open for an additional period of time so more results can be gathered. It was also suggested that perhaps the survey could be promoted and advertised again to garner more inquiries. Valdez will email Craig the survey so that hard copies can be printed out and placed at designated locations throughout the City.

#### *Demographic Summary*

Valdez proceeded to provide the Planning Committee members with an overview of the City's demographics. Key demographic data such as population, age/race, housing, and industry/income were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS). The Committee members requested that ARDC follow-up to include various demographic data of other nearby cities in comparison to Mountain Iron. It was also requested to see where mining ranks in comparison to other industries within the City. ARDC will research and provide those results to the Planning Committee at the next meeting.

### Vision Statement Development

Prior to the meeting ARDC crafted three vision statements which were developed from an exercise facilitated from the Public Visioning Session. Valdez read the draft statements as followed:

1. ***In the future, the City of Mountain Iron*** is a growing and exciting community focused on providing a healthy living environment for its visitors and residents, while becoming a leader in economic development with many recreational opportunities. It will continue to be one of the greenest cities in Minnesota, a year-round destination for tourists and a place that residents are proud to call home.
2. ***In the future, the City of Mountain Iron*** is a well-connected community with a great business climate, providing opportunities for visitors and residents live, shop, and eat. It is a safe walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational activities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents want to live at.
3. ***In the future, the City of Mountain Iron*** is a happy and healthy community with a great business climate, access to fresh local food, with an abundance of recreational opportunities. It is a growing and exciting community dedicated to cooperation and teamwork, and predicated to becoming a desirable city for tourists to visit and a place that residents are proud to call home.

Discussion soon followed after reading off the vision statements. The Planning Committee members suggested that the vision statement should include some language of business and economics incorporated into the final



version of it. ARDC will make changes necessary to form a single drafted vision statement and seek approval from the Planning Committee for finalization.

## **Past Planning Efforts**

Valdez provided the Committee with a handout of previous planning efforts that have taken place in Mountain Iron within the last eight years. Recommendations and action strategies were reviewed from the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, 2010 Mountain Iron Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, and the 2012 Mountain Iron Strategic Plan Update as a way to gauge which projects have and have not been implemented since each plan was completed. During the review the Committee identified numerous projects that were completed from each plan. Also, there were many projects identified in those plans that still haven't been implemented. Those projects were requested to be carried over to the Comprehensive Plan Update.

## **Categorized Assets, Issues and Goal Identification**

Valdez reviewed the categorized assets, issues, and goals for each plan component required by IRRRB to address within the plan. The Planning Committee provided comments regarding the results that were recorded from the Public Visioning Session. Comments included:

- South Forest Grove Housing is an opportunity and future asset with available lots
- Having a fire hall in Virginia on Highway 53 to serve greater region would be a desire and asset to serve the greater region instead of an issue, barrier, and threat
- The potential business of Sweet Water Energy coming to Mountain could be considered an opportunity due to the fact it would provide jobs and other benefits but also could be a potential concern/threat due to the to the uncertainty of its impact
- It was questioned on how big of a concern that water pollution is within the community and how real of a concern or threat is acid rain is too
- There is a lot happening for young children's activities/programming and that it shouldn't be categorized as an issue or threat
- Volunteerism in general should be included as threats/issues instead of identifying that there is a lack of volunteers just for Merritt Days
- It was suggested that alcohol/drugs and increase of crime should be deleted as a community health issue and threat
- A large scale event such as disaster/terrorism is not much of an issue or threat in Mountain Iron.
- An old state garage on Highway 53 may become vacant which can be considered as an opportunity

## **Next Steps**

ARDC will summarize the meeting and email to those who attended along with posting the information to the project's website. ARDC will also follow-up on the Committee's demographic requests as well as create a finalized vision statement for review. Additionally, the lists of threats will be studied and analyzed determine preliminary course of action that the City can take to address individually. Suggestions and recommendation ideas will be drafted for actions that create desired new assets. The meeting will be a review of the recommended ideas for review and feedback. Please look at the project website for future meeting date announcements.

Anyone not able to attend/interested in the planning project is encouraged to contact Jarrett Valdez at ARDC at 218-529-7513 or [jvaldez@ardc.org](mailto:jvaldez@ardc.org) for more information as well as an opportunity to provide public comment into the vision of the City.

## City of Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update Initial Recommendation Ideas Meeting Summary – Part I July 11, 2016 – 6:00 p.m. – Mountain Iron Community Center/City Hall

### Demographic Update

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. in the Mountain Iron Community Center/City Hall, with Jarrett Valdez from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) welcoming the Planning Committee members in attendance and providing a brief review of the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. At the previous meeting, the Planning Committee requested that ARDC follow-up with various demographic information of Mountain Iron in comparison to other nearby cities. Valdez shared those results with the committee members in the following tables below:

| Mountain Iron Demographics Update |                                       |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------|------------------------------------|---|-------------|--------|-------------|---------|-------|-------------|--------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|---------------|--|-------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|---|----------|-----------|------------------------------------|------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------|---------|----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------|
|                                   |                                       | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Population<br/>(US Census)</th></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>969</td></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>1,000</td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>1,682</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>1,799</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>2,017</td></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>2,869</b></td></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>3,718</td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>4,976</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>8,712</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>200,226</td></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>5,303,925</td></tr></table>   | Community | Population<br>(US Census)          | Biwabik                                     | 969         | Buhl   | 1,000       | Aurora  | 1,682 | Gilbert     | 1,799  | Hoyt Lakes         | 2,017      | <b>Mountain Iron</b> | <b>2,869</b> | Eveleth     | 3,718      | Chisholm   | 4,976      | Virginia             | 8,712        | St. Louis County     | 200,226 | State of Minnesota | 5,303,925     | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Median Age<br/>(US Census)</th></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>37.4</td></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>39.6</td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>40.7</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>40.8</td></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>42</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>44.7</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>44.9</td></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>45.4</b></td></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>46.8</td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>48.4</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>49.3</td></tr></table>   |       | Community     | Median Age<br>(US Census)             | State of Minnesota | 37.4          | Eveleth          | 39.6     | Chisholm       | 40.7               | St. Louis County | 40.8              | Buhl  | 42       | Gilbert   | 44.7                               | Virginia         | 44.9     | <b>Mountain Iron</b> | <b>45.4</b> | Biwabik              | 46.8            | Aurora   | 48.4     | Hoyt Lakes         | 49.3     |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Community                         | Population<br>(US Census)             |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | 969                                   |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | 1,000                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | 1,682                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | 1,799                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | 2,017                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>2,869</b>                          |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | 3,718                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | 4,976                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | 8,712                                 |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | 200,226                               |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | 5,303,925                             |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Community                         | Median Age<br>(US Census)             |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | 37.4                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | 39.6                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | 40.7                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | 40.8                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | 42                                    |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | 44.7                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | 44.9                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>45.4</b>                           |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | 46.8                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | 48.4                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | 49.3                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
|                                   |                                       | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Unemployment Rate (2014 ACS)</th></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>3.6%</b></td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>4.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>4.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>4.5%</td></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>4.5%</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>4.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>5.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>5.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>7.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>9.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>9.4%</td></tr></table>  | Community | Unemployment Rate (2014 ACS)       | <b>Mountain Iron</b>                        | <b>3.6%</b> | Aurora | 4.2%        | Buhl    | 4.5%  | Gilbert     | 4.5%   | State of Minnesota | 4.5%       | St. Louis County     | 4.9%         | Chisholm    | 5.3%       | Hoyt Lakes | 5.7%       | Virginia             | 7.0%         | Eveleth              | 9.1%    | Biwabik            | 9.4%          | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Median Household Income<br/>(2014 ACS)</th></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>\$32,432</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>\$33,143</td></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>\$37,091</td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>\$41,185</td></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>\$41,250</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>\$44,821</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>\$47,138</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>\$49,545</td></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>\$49,570</b></td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>\$58,333</td></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>\$60,828</td></tr></table> |       | Community     | Median Household Income<br>(2014 ACS) | Biwabik            | \$32,432      | Virginia         | \$33,143 | Eveleth        | \$37,091           | Aurora           | \$41,185          | Buhl  | \$41,250 | Gilbert   | \$44,821                           | St. Louis County | \$47,138 | Hoyt Lakes           | \$49,545    | <b>Mountain Iron</b> | <b>\$49,570</b> | Chisholm | \$58,333 | State of Minnesota | \$60,828 |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Community                         | Unemployment Rate (2014 ACS)          |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>3.6%</b>                           |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | 4.2%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | 4.5%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | 4.5%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | 4.5%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | 4.9%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | 5.3%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | 5.7%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | 7.0%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | 9.1%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | 9.4%                                  |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Community                         | Median Household Income<br>(2014 ACS) |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | \$32,432                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | \$33,143                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | \$37,091                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | \$41,185                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | \$41,250                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | \$44,821                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | \$47,138                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | \$49,545                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>\$49,570</b>                       |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | \$58,333                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | \$60,828                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
|                                   |                                       | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Total Housing Units<br/>(US Census)</th><th>Total Occupied Housing Units<br/>(US Census)</th></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>496</td><td>430 (86.7%)</td></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>543</td><td>469 (86.4%)</td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>877</td><td>777 (87.6)</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>937</td><td>835 (89.1%)</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>1,016</td><td>885 (87.1)</td></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>1,442</b></td><td><b>1,336 (92.6%)</b></td></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>1,942</td><td>1,682 (86.6%)</td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>2,524</td><td>2,256 (89.4%)</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>4,738</td><td>4,242 (89.5%)</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>103,058</td><td>84,783 (82.3%)</td></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>2,347,201</td><td>2,087,227 (88.9%)</td></tr></table> | Community | Total Housing Units<br>(US Census) | Total Occupied Housing Units<br>(US Census) | Buhl        | 496    | 430 (86.7%) | Biwabik | 543   | 469 (86.4%) | Aurora | 877                | 777 (87.6) | Gilbert              | 937          | 835 (89.1%) | Hoyt Lakes | 1,016      | 885 (87.1) | <b>Mountain Iron</b> | <b>1,442</b> | <b>1,336 (92.6%)</b> | Eveleth | 1,942              | 1,682 (86.6%) | Chisholm   | 2,524 | 2,256 (89.4%) | Virginia                              | 4,738              | 4,242 (89.5%) | St. Louis County | 103,058  | 84,783 (82.3%) | State of Minnesota | 2,347,201        | 2,087,227 (88.9%) | <table><tr><th>Community</th><th>Median Family Income<br/>(2014 ACS)</th></tr><tr><td>Eveleth</td><td>\$42,217</td></tr><tr><td>Virginia</td><td>\$47,318</td></tr><tr><td>Aurora</td><td>\$49,271</td></tr><tr><td>Buhl</td><td>\$51,429</td></tr><tr><td>Gilbert</td><td>\$52,750</td></tr><tr><td>Biwabik</td><td>\$53,938</td></tr><tr><td>Hoyt Lakes</td><td>\$58,214</td></tr><tr><td>Chisholm</td><td>\$58,333</td></tr><tr><td>St. Louis County</td><td>\$64,088</td></tr><tr><td>State of Minnesota</td><td>\$76,190</td></tr><tr><td><b>Mountain Iron</b></td><td><b>\$79,345</b></td></tr></table> |          | Community | Median Family Income<br>(2014 ACS) | Eveleth          | \$42,217 | Virginia             | \$47,318    | Aurora               | \$49,271        | Buhl     | \$51,429 | Gilbert            | \$52,750 | Biwabik | \$53,938 | Hoyt Lakes | \$58,214 | Chisholm | \$58,333 | St. Louis County | \$64,088 | State of Minnesota | \$76,190 | <b>Mountain Iron</b> | <b>\$79,345</b> |
| Community                         | Total Housing Units<br>(US Census)    | Total Occupied Housing Units<br>(US Census)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | 496                                   | 430 (86.7%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | 543                                   | 469 (86.4%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | 877                                   | 777 (87.6)  |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | 937                                   | 835 (89.1%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | 1,016                                 | 885 (87.1)  |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>1,442</b>                          | <b>1,336 (92.6%)</b>  |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | 1,942                                 | 1,682 (86.6%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | 2,524                                 | 2,256 (89.4%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | 4,738                                 | 4,242 (89.5%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | 103,058                               | 84,783 (82.3%)  |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | 2,347,201                             | 2,087,227 (88.9%)   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Community                         | Median Family Income<br>(2014 ACS)    |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Eveleth                           | \$42,217                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Virginia                          | \$47,318                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Aurora                            | \$49,271                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Buhl                              | \$51,429                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Gilbert                           | \$52,750                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Biwabik                           | \$53,938                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Hoyt Lakes                        | \$58,214                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| Chisholm                          | \$58,333                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| St. Louis County                  | \$64,088                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| State of Minnesota                | \$76,190                              |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |
| <b>Mountain Iron</b>              | <b>\$79,345</b>                       |   |           |                                    |   |             |        |             |         |       |             |        |                    |            |                      |              |             |            |            |            |                      |              |                      |         |                    |               |  |       |               |                                       |                    |               |                  |          |                |                    |                  |                   |   |          |           |                                    |                  |          |                      |             |                      |                 |          |          |                    |          |         |          |            |          |          |          |                  |          |                    |          |                      |                 |

| Mountain Iron employed population 16 years and over: 1,411 (100%)<br>(2014 American Community Survey) |                           |             |
|---|---------------------------|-------------|
| Industry  | Total Number of Employees | Percentage  |
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance   | 350                       | 24.8%       |
| Retail Trade  | 158                       | 11.2%       |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing   | 142                       | 10.1%       |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities   | 129                       | 9.1%        |
| Manufacturing   | 116                       | 8.2%        |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services                              | 102                       | 7.2%        |
| <b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, and mining</b>  | <b>96</b>                 | <b>6.8%</b> |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services            | 93                        | 6.6%        |
| Construction  | 75                        | 5.3%        |
| Public administration   | 57                        | 4.0%        |
| Other services, except public administration  | 53                        | 3.8%        |
| Wholesale Trade   | 40                        | 2.8%        |
| Information   | 0                         | 0.0%        |

### Community Survey Update

Valdez informed the Planning Committee that since the April meeting, the amount of survey respondents more than doubled. Currently there are a total of 36 surveys that have completed between the months of February and July. Generally, the survey respondents felt that qualities such as educational opportunities; place to live, work, retire, and raise children; availability of trails and sidewalks; and etc. was somewhat to very important them. Valdez also shared survey comments with the Planning Committee which consisted of desires to maintain and repair roads within the City, having blight enforcement, having more biking and walking paths, and development of a Farmers Market to sell local grown products. The Planning Committee members made comments in regards to participation from the City's residents. There was concern from a few members that the survey wasn't promoted or advertised to its potential due to the low turnout of respondents. However, it was explained that the survey was hosted through multiple platforms and locations within the City.

### Vision Statement Finalization

At the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, three drafted vision statements were presented to the Planning Committee members. At that meeting, the committee suggested that the vision statement should include some language about attracting and retaining businesses as well as combining individual elements of each vision statement into a singular one. As a result, a single draft vision statement that was presented at the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting read as followed:

*"In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is a growing and exciting community with a great business climate; providing opportunities for visitors and residents to live, work, shop, and eat. It is a safe, walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational activities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents want to live at."*

The Planning Committee members generally liked the vision statement but suggested adding “well connected” and edit the final sentence to read: “Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents are proud to call home”, to ultimately finalize the vision statement and to be declared as:

*“In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is a growing, well connected and exciting community with a great business climate; providing opportunities for visitors and residents to live, work, shop, and eat. It is a safe, walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational activities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want to visit and where residents are proud to call home.”*

## **Draft Goal & Recommendation Ideas**

Valdez provided the Planning Committee recommendation ideas that the group would work off of for the remainder of the meeting. About half of the required planning components were addressed with goal and recommendation ideas. Much discussion ensued in addition to revisions made to the goal and recommendation ideas that were covered.

### Housing

Valdez read the housing goal and recommendation ideas to the Planning Committee. The drafted goal statement read: ***The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownership opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing option with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.*** There were a few recommendation ideas that were carried over from past plans that weren’t implemented as well as some additional ones. The recommendation ideas referred to addressing blight, home maintenance and redevelopment of Old Town.

The Planning Committee discussed on whether the focus on Old Town should be reworded to encompass the entire City, since redevelopment of Old Town has been rather long and difficult for the past number of years. It was stated that the goal for Old Town is not to draw business but to improve it as a residential neighborhood. As a result, it was requested that recommendation H.3 (*Develop commercial opportunities in Old Town for provision of local services to local residents*) be deleted. It was suggested to replace specific “Old Town” language with “entire City”. The Planning Committee suggested including language about reviewing and updating the City’s blight ordinance.

### Transportation

Valdez read the drafted transportation goal which included: ***The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options and promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron’s citizens.*** Seven recommendations were reviewed with the Planning Committee that pertained to participating in planning processes with MnDOT and St. Louis County in regards to improvements to their roadways; connecting and filling in gaps to the existing trail and sidewalk system; supporting public transit opportunities; as well as creating and implementing a Living Streets Policy.

The Committee discussed that there is a desire for a sidewalk along the new County Road 102, between Nichols Avenue and Walmart and that it should be included in the Plan. It was also expressed that the City would like to work with St. Louis County as it relates to the County's recently passed ATV Ordinance. The County's ordinance now allows ATV use on their public roads to allow connections to area trails. It was mentioned by the Committee that the City should examine their roads and designate city street routes that would connect to those county roads. This would strengthen connectivity since there aren't any authorized connections to the county roads.

There was expressed concern and opportunity for the intersection of County Road 7 and Unity Drive. The Committee suggested that an additional recommendation idea should include language of monitoring traffic flow, turning movements, and pedestrian traffic at the intersection.

## Utilities and Community Facilities

The draft goal statement and five recommendation ideas were reviewed with the Planning Committee. The recommendation ideas pertained to prioritizing City and utility/infrastructure improvements; creating a Capital Improvement Program (CIP); incorporating recommendations from the 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and also explore consolidating services and costs. The Planning Committee generally had no significant changes to the goals and recommendations. There was discussion about what should be done concerning the soon to be vacant high school building in Old Town. The Committee requested that it should be identified and included in the plan as there will need to be major decisions over what to do with the building.

## Economic Development

The economic development goal statement and seven recommendation ideas were read to the Planning Committee for their review. The recommendation ideas included language suggesting the development of Highway 169 as commercial corridor; plan for new tourism and recreation resource opportunities; support of existing businesses; improved EDA cooperation with the Planning Commission; and continue awareness and communication of community events and activities. As stated in the transportation section, the Committee wanted the County Road 7 and Unity Drive intersection to be monitored in regards to traffic flow of vehicles and pedestrians, but also for business opportunities.

## Next Steps

ARDC will summarize the meeting and email to those who attended with posting to the project's website. ARDC will also make necessary edits, corrections, and additions to the planning chapter's goal statements and recommendation ideas covered for the night. The next meeting will cover the remaining chapters (*Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources; Recreation, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts; Land Use; Intergovernmental Cooperation; and Implementation*) with the Planning Committee for their review and feedback. Please look at the project website for future meeting date announcements. Anyone not able to attend and/or interested in the planning project is encouraged to contact Jarrett Valdez at ARDC at 218-529-7513 or [jvaldez@ardc.org](mailto:jvaldez@ardc.org) for more information as well as an opportunity to provide public comment in the vision of the City.

Insert Public Review Flyer

**Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update 2016  
Public Hearing Meeting Summary  
October 27, 2016 – 6:00 p.m.  
Mountain Iron City Hall/Community Center**

***Welcome and Project Overview***

The public hearing began at 6:00 p.m. in the Mountain Iron City Hall/Community Center with Jarrett Valdez and Justin Otsea from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) welcoming the Planning Committee members and the public in attendance. Valdez reviewed and highlighted information regarding what is a Comprehensive Plan, the required chapters (land use, transportation, housing, etc.), and the project's scope of work which includes the piloted health component that ARDC initiated. The finalized Vision Statement was read as followed:

“In the future, the City of Mountain Iron is growing, well connected and excited community with a great business climate; providing opportunities for visitors and residents to live work, shop, and eat. It is a safe walkable/bikeable, healthy and inviting community that is supported by a wide variety of recreational activities. Mountain Iron will continue to be a city in which tourists will want visit and where residents are proud to call home.”

***Draft Goal and Recommendation Review***

Valdez proceeded to review each planning chapter's goal, recommendations, and action steps. The meeting attendees were provided the opportunity to comment on each of the following items:

**Housing**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will strive to provide housing that offers a selection of affordable and sustainable options that include varying lot sizes, with rental and ownership opportunities for residents of all ages; creating equitable housing options with access to facilities that can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

**Recommendations:**

- H 1: Address the elimination of blighted or problematic structures.
  - H 1.1: Inventory properties throughout the City that are considered as blight or problematic (beyond city scope of restorative efforts) and enforce the City's blight ordinance.
  - H 1.2: Research and apply for IRRRB Commercial Redevelopment and/or Residential Redevelopment grants as appropriate (<https://mn.gov/irrrb/grant-resources/community-programs.jsp>). If blighted properties and historic structures, the Minnesota Historic Society's funding may be applicable for restoration efforts.
  - H 1.3: Review and update the City's existing blight ordinance every 6-12 months.
- H 2: Maintain and improve the quality of safe and affordable housing throughout the neighborhoods in Mountain Iron.
  - H 2.1: Promote rehab and preservation of public and subsidized housing stock. This provides stability to lower-income families by ensuring their access to quality and safe, affordable housing.



- H 2.2: Investigate and pursue development of new senior-friendly housing opportunities throughout the City.
- H 2.3: Conduct a housing survey of the community to determine current numbers and demographics of residents who own their home or rent in Mountain Iron.
- H 3: Promote maintenance of the existing housing stock in Mountain Iron.
  - H 3.1: Advertise existing loan/grant programs for homeowner improvements through the use of social media (and local newsletter), the website, or other means as a way to promote additional improvements and celebrate successes by other homeowners throughout the community.
  - H 3.2: Collaborate with existing organizations/grant programs to create incentives for home maintenance.
    - Potential resources include: Community Development Block Grant, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) Housing Department, St. Louis County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and others for a variety of improvements including home maintenance, energy efficiency, exterior improvements, and others.
- H 4: Maintain the existing character of established neighborhoods.
  - H 4.1: Ensure that new commercial and industrial development is buffered from residential areas and will minimally impact commercial/industrial traffic in Mountain Iron's residential neighborhoods.
- H 5: Explore the feasibility of creating and annually reviewing a 'Housing Indicator Report' which utilizes annual statistics regarding housing to provide a snapshot of where the community is currently, and indicators of trends moving forward to help spur private sector development and new housing.
  - H 5.1: Components of a 'Housing Indicators Report' can include: demographics (past and projected); employment/labor force trends; home ownership trends; rental indicators (survey). The Survey should address:
    - Rental rates
    - Vacancy rates
      - Derive: average rent (# of bedrooms/utilities paid vs. not paid)
      - Housing production (\*amount and costs of sales/\*foreclosures)
    - Number of building permits issued (new builds, additions, plats approved)
      - Affordability analysis
      - Annual income necessary to afford particular rent/buy a dwelling
      - % of income designated to take care of housing costs
- H 6: Research and consider adopting housing development and/or subdivision incentives to encourage design for future residential units and lots that encompass lifestyles for users of all ages and abilities (including vacation and short-term housing), as well as 'Age in Place principles'. Aging in Place is a tool designed to help local governments plan and prepare for their aging populations (<http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/plan/planning/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments-aarp.pdf>).
  - H 6.1: Design elements may include: development of smaller, affordable housing units in compact multi-house developments or allowing accessory dwelling units, supported by facilities (commercial, pharmacy's, etc.) accessible by walking/biking or transit.

*Public Comments: There were no comments made regarding the Housing recommendation section of the plan.*

## **Transportation**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will provide a safe, clean transportation system with opportunities for various modes of transportation (auto, bike, pedestrian, etc.) which connect to both local and regional destinations; creating a system that enables safe and healthy travel options and promoting equity for all socioeconomic backgrounds of Mountain Iron's citizens.

### **Recommendations:**

- T 1: Participate in corridor and MnDOT District 1 planning processes in order to lobby for continued maintenance and improvements to Trunk Highways 169 and 53.
- T 2: Participate in the St. Louis County 5-year road and transportation planning process.
- T 3: Support the Mesabi Trail and regional bicycle connections projects.
- T 4: Support and work to complete the City Bike Connections Route. There is a designated and signed route between access points, which goes through the older section of the City. Much of residential Mountain Iron is situated south of Highway 169 and could use better connections to the Mesabi Trail rather than using narrow, busy roadways.
- T 5: Connect existing and planned community destinations by expanding and filling gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail system.
  - T 5.1: Construct a 10' wide paved trail running north-south along the east side of the South Grove neighborhood.
  - T 5.2: Construct a 10' wide paved trail through the City's ball fields near the Mud Lake Road and CR 102 intersection.
  - T 5.3: Construct a 10' wide paved trail connecting the Mesabi Trail to the Rock Ridge Retail Center.
  - T 5.4: Complete sidewalk along 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave W. on the south end of the West Virginia neighborhood of Mountain Iron.
  - T 5.5: Construct a sidewalk along the new County Road 102 from Nichols Avenue to Walmart.
- T 6: Collaborate with St. Louis County to designate potential ATV routes within the City to connect to St. Louis County roads that allow ATV operation.
- T 7: Monitor traffic flow, pedestrian movements, safety considerations and potential business opportunities at the intersection of Unity Drive and County Road 7.
- T 8: Promote and support public transit opportunities such as Arrowhead Transit.
  - T 8.1: Review transportation options, specifically for those in wheelchairs and with limited mobility, and collaborate with potential partners to enhance available services.
- T 9: Evaluate creating a Living Streets Policy to provide for sustainable, ADA-compliant, multi-modal street designs when completing improvement projects. The general nature of a Living Streets Policy is to enhance biking and walking conditions, improve safety and security of streets, calm traffic, create livable neighborhoods, and improve stormwater quality and neighborhood aesthetics.

*Public Comments: There were no comments regarding the Transportation recommendation section of the plan.*

Justin Otsea explained to the public of the fundamentals and provided examples of what Living Streets is.

## **Utilities and Community Facilities**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will stay committed towards providing its residents with effective infrastructure to city structures, water and sanitary systems, recreational facilities, and other public facilities and services, through a systematic short-range planning process to ensure the health and equitable transfer of resources to the citizens of Mountain Iron.

### **Recommendation Ideas:**

- UC 1: Identify and prioritize all City utility and infrastructure improvements and secure funding for implementation.
  - UC 1.1: Research and apply for IRRRB Development Infrastructure Grant Program and the St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant as appropriate.
- UC 2: Create a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process that annually implements and reviews priorities to provide adequate infrastructure (including roads, sidewalks, water/wastewater facilities, etc.) to the community while balancing financial constraints in a systematic process.
- UC 3: Incorporate the Mountain Iron recommendations from the 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan (<http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/Portals/0/library/law-n-public-safety/emergency-operations/hazard-mitigation/St-Louis-County-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-2013.pdf?timestamp=1467733265423>) into the planning process to reduce potential damage costs due to natural disasters.
  - UC 3.1: Annually address, implement, and monitor projects and mitigation strategies identified in the 2013 St. Louis County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
  - UC 3.2: Include infrastructure and other mitigation improvements into the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process when addressing annual maintenance/improvements.
- UC 4: Explore opportunities to consolidate services and save costs when possible.
- UC 5: Explore permeable alternatives to traditional curb and gutter projects, which can be incorporated in the development of a 'Living Streets Policy'. This allows for air and stormwater filtering through the alternative permeable material to the soil below as opposed to the use traditional concrete.
- UC 6: Address opportunities to redevelop and reinvigorate the vacant Mountain Iron-Buhl High School building.
- UC 7: Explore opportunities for improved internet and Wi-Fi connection.
  - UC 7.1: Research the Blandin Foundation's Community Broadband Program for potential grant and technical support opportunities. More information about the Community Broadband Program can be found on the following website: <http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/>.

*Public Comment: There were not public comments regarding the Utilities and Community Facilities recommendation section of the plan.*

## **Economic Development**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will promote and seek partnership opportunities with new and existing businesses by advocating for manageable growth and retaining an aesthetically pleasing environment while reducing conflict between residential and commercial uses. Mountain Iron will promote an economic environment that supports the health of its residents and visitors to the City.

## **Recommendation Ideas:**






- ED 1: Continue to develop Trunk Highway 169 as a commercial corridor destination.
  - ED 1.1: Map all available land and infrastructure existing or planned along Highway 169 to support new commercial development.
  - ED 1.2: Identify and pursue potential commercial opportunities for “big box” retailers to locate on Highway 169.
  - ED 1.3: Secure property and necessary infrastructure to available City-owned retail sites.
  - ED 1.4: Evaluate potential for a section of Highway 102 to be used as a frontage road for development.
- ED 2: Strategically identify and plan for new tourism and recreation resource opportunities.
  - ED 2.1: Inventory and map potential locations for a new scenic overlook to the mine (i.e. Energy Park, new dump, across from City garage). As appropriate, hold discussions with U.S. Steel to request support for creation of a new overlook to the mine with the loss of Wacootah Overlook.
- ED 3: Identify and secure outside funding for tourism-related initiatives.
  - ED 3.1: Develop a grant application for IRRRB’s Culture and Tourism Grant to support planning for an appropriate tourism project.
- ED 4: Improve EDA (Economic Development Administration) cooperation with the Planning Commission.
- ED 5: Evaluate and implement an Old Town Revitalization Plan which can include: urban design elements, storefront changes, public art, wayfinding signage, ongoing programming, partnerships funding, and other related components.
- ED 6: Continue supporting existing businesses and encourage them to participate in local business organizations, seize opportunities for growth, and foster local talent.
- ED 7: Continue the awareness and communication of local community events, activities, and amenities on a local, regional, and statewide level.
  - ED 7.1: Continue to update information on the City’s website, monitor upgrade possibilities, and explore other information that can enhance site’s effectiveness.
  - ED 7.2: Create a formalized process for providing information about recreational opportunities and community events to the public, via multiple modes of communication (online, newspaper, tourism organizations, etc.).
- ED 8: Work to restore and revitalize the Plaza 53 West area as a prime commercial location for the community.

*Public Comment: There were no comments regarding the Economic Development recommendation section of the plan.*

## **Mining, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will utilize and preserve its cultural, historical, and natural resources to provide a deeper connection of a sense of place to its citizens and travelers in the area while addressing local agricultural and mining efforts, considering resources that contribute to a sustainable future and support the health of the City's environment and people.

## Recommendation Ideas:

- MNAC 1: It is recommended that the City examine any proposed developments against future mining potential and how that might impact development.
  - MNAC 1.1: Several organizations are involved in the mining industry in Minnesota. More information about mining can be gathered from the following organizations and websites:
    - Laurentian Vision Partnership: <http://www.lvpmmn.org/>. The Laurentian Vision partnership is an active coalition that provides information about mining on the Iron Range.
    - MnDNR, Minerals Division: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands\\_minerals/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/index.html)
    - IRRRB Mining Impact Grant: <https://mn.gov/irrrb/grant-resources/mining-programs.jsp>
- MNAC 2: It is recommended that a copy of this plan be sent to the MnDNR Minerals Division, area mining companies and area mineral rights owners. IRRRB and MnDNR can help contact the appropriate people.
  - MNAC 2.1: Mining interests recommend that no new developments occur over the known iron formation (red  area on map). This is because any area within the iron formation has the potential to be mined in the future, which would displace development.
    - Some areas of the iron formation are likely to be mined sooner than others, but for the purposes of long-term planning, the entire formation needs to be considered.
    - Interim, easily removed uses could be considered for some portions of the iron formation.
  - MNAC 2.2: It is recommended that new development not occur within one quarter (1/4) mile of the *north* edge of the iron formation (shown as light red buffer ). This buffer is for blasting and other safety reasons.
  - MNAC 2.3: It is recommended that new development not occur within one half (1/2) mile of the *south* edge of the iron formation (also shown as light red buffer ). This buffer is for blasting and other safety reasons, but wider to account for the depth of the iron formation on the south edge.
  - MNAC 2.4: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around iron bearing rock stockpiles (shown in dark red ). These stockpiles have the significant potential to be processed for iron production.
    - Interim, easily removed used could be considered for some stockpiles.
  - MNAC 2.5: It is recommended that new development not occur on or immediately around fine tailings basins from natural ore processing (shown in blue with hashes ). The stockpiles have the significant potential to be processed for iron production.

- Interim, easily removed used could be considered for some basins.
- MNAC 3: Support community-oriented agriculture and the development of community gardens, farmers market, or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites within the City.
  - MNAC 3.1: Use public meetings to identify the need and/or potential sites for a community garden, Farmer's Market or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites.
  - MNAC 3.2: Address and revise land use zoning where necessary to make allowable use.
  - MNAC 3.3: Work with local interest group(s) to develop maintenance, distribution, and use partnership(s) prior to establishing a garden or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) drop sites, or Farmer's Market.
- MNAC 4: Encourage the preservation of the City's history and culture.
  - MNAC 4.1: Continue supporting the preservation of the City's mining history through the identification, preservation, and displaying of historic places and artifacts.
  - MNAC 4.2: Seek federal and state grants and support local, grass roots efforts for historic preservation and renovation projects.
  - MNAC 4.3: Consider developing a "Mountain Iron History Walk" which is a community history and wellness initiative that encourages knowledge of place-based history by bringing stories of the past to the streets through the use of interpretive signage that highlights places and sights of historical significance. See an example of the Proctor History Walk (<https://proctorhistorywalk.org/>).

*Justin Otsea explained what the Proctor History Walk was and how a similar model could be incorporated with Mountain Iron.*

*Public Comments: There were no public comments regarding the Mining, Natural, Agriculture, and Cultural Resources recommendations section of the plan.*

## **Recreation, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will strive to enhance the recreational and cultural facilities/opportunities available by utilizing public input, planning proactively, and implementing projects and programs to provide an array of opportunities to residents and travelers of all ability levels. The City will provide equitable access to facilities that promote the health and well-being of every member in the community.

### **Recommendation Ideas:**

- RC 1: Continue to support and make improvements to local playground and recreational areas.
- RC 2: Evaluate opportunities for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) activities, which provide healthy food options available within the community.
  - RC 2.1: Provide open space for activities to take place if organized and requested by local organization(s)/individual(s).
- RC 3: Encourage the maintenance and expansion of the recreational trails and parks system throughout the City
  - RC 3.1: Inventory and document the existing condition of City parks and trails. Examine them for deterioration, maintenance needs, and infrastructure improvements.



- RC 3.2: Develop action priorities and cost estimates of improvements.
- RC 4: Continue to support the organization of community events, celebrations, and festivals such as Merritt Days, the Taste of Mountain Iron, the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, etc.
  - RC 4.1: Continue to support new and ongoing community events and festivals to provide residents with community engagement, networking, and volunteering opportunities as a way to stay engaged with the community.
- RC 5: Continue to identify and explore recreational facilities, programs, and opportunities for all ages and abilities.
- RC 6: Support and partner with the community YMCA in regards to programs, possible expansion, general improvements, and other activities.

*Public Comments: There were no public comments made regarding the Recreation, Parks, Open Space, Cultural Arts section of the plan.*

## Land Use

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will utilize policies that promote sustainable land use by activity assessing future needs and promoting the most effective use of each property while balancing cost efficient public services. Mountain Iron's land use policies will be clear, concise and easy to administer, contributing to the creation and sustenance of an equitable and healthful environment.

### **Recommendation Ideas:**

- LU 1: Maintain a modern, up-to-date zoning ordinance, zoning map, official map, and permitting documents.
  - LU 1.1: Update City Zoning Ordinance Code and procedures to include modern developmental concerns, and streamline administration. Make amendments to the code as needed in order for alternative energy infrastructure to be implemented.
  - LU 1.2: Update existing identified permit, variance, and other application forms to enhance user friendliness and improve administration.
  - LU 1.3: Make zoning ordinance, map, applications, and related materials available online via City website for citizens and potential developers alike.
- LU 2: Update the City's Sign Ordinance to regulate dynamic signs. *(Dynamic signs are signs that appear to have movement or that appear to change, caused by any method other than physically removing and replacing the sign or its components, whether the apparent movement or change in display, the sign structure itself, or any other component of the sign. This includes a rotating, revolving, revolving, moving, flashing, blinking, or animated display that incorporates rotating panels, LED lights manipulated through digital input, "digital ink" or any other method or technology that allows the sign face to present a series of images or displays.)*
  - LU 2.1: Adopt the following items:
    - 1) Dynamic displays may occupy no more than 35% of the actual copy and graphic area. The remainder of the sign must not have the capability to have dynamic displays even if not in use. Only one, contiguous dynamic display area is allowed on a sign face.
    - 2) A dynamic display may not change or move more often than once every 20 minutes, except one for which changes are necessary to correct hour-and-minute,



date, or temperature information. Time, date, or temperature information is considered on dynamic display and may not be included as a component of any other dynamic display. A display of time, date, or temperature information must remain for at least 20 minutes before changing to a different display, but the time, date, or temperature information itself may change no more than once every three seconds.

- 3) The images and messages displayed must be static, and the transition from one static display to another must be instantaneous without any special effects.
- 4) The images and messages displayed must be complete in themselves, without continuation in content to the next image or message or to any other sign.
- 5) Every line of copy and graphics in dynamic display must be at least seven inches in height on a road with a speed limit of 25-34 miles per hour, nine inches on a road with a speed limit of 35-44 miles per hour, 12 inches on a road with a speed limit of 55 miles per hour or more. If there is insufficient room for copy and graphics of this size in the area allowed under clause 1 above, then no dynamic display is allowed.
- 6) Dynamic displays must be designated and equipped to freeze the device in one position if a malfunction occurs. The displays must also be equipped with a means to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions, and the sign owner must immediately stop the dynamic display when notified by the City that it is not complying with the standards of this ordinance.
- 7) Dynamic displays must comply with the following brightness standards:
  - a) No sign may be brighter than is necessary for clear and adequate visibility.
  - b) No sign may be of such intensity or brilliance as to impair the vision of a motor vehicle driver with average eyesight or to otherwise interfere with the driver's operation of a motor vehicle.
  - c) The person owning or controlling the sign must adjust the sign to meet the brightness standards in accordance with the City's instructions. The adjustment must be made immediately upon notice of non-compliance from the City. The person owning or controlling the sign may appeal the City's determination through the following appeal procedure:
    - o After making the adjustment required by the City, the person owning or controlling the sign may appeal the City's determination by delivering a written appeal to the City Clerk within 10 days after the City's non-compliance notice. The written appeal must include the name of a person unrelated to the person and business making the appeal, who will serve on the appeal panel.
    - o Within five business days after receiving the appeal, the City must name a person who is not an official or employee of the City to serve on the appeal panel. Within five business days after the City names its representative and the two of them must appoint a

- third member to the panel, who has no relationship to either party.
- The appeal panel may develop its own rules of procedure, but it must hold a hearing with five business days after the third member is appointed. The City and the sign owner must be given the opportunity to present testimony, and the panel may hold the hearing, or a portion of it, at the sign location. The panel must issue its decision on what level of brightness is needed to meet the brightness standards within five business days after hearing commences. The decision will be binding on both parties.
- 8) All signs installed after adoption of the amendments that will have illumination by a means other than natural light must be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness in response to ambient conditions. These signs must also be equipped with a means to immediately turn off the display or lighting if it malfunctions, and the sign owner or operator must immediately turn off the sign of lighting when notified by the City that it is not comply with the standards in this section.
- 9) Dynamic displays existing as of adoption of the amended ordinance must comply with the operational standards listed above. An existing dynamic display that does not meet the structural requirements in clause 1 may continue as an allowed non-conforming use subject to restrictions place upon such uses.
- LU 3: Ensure that green space and recreational opportunities are available to the existing and newly-developed neighborhoods.
  - LU 4: Ensure buffers are set between commercial/industrial development and existing and future residential properties in order to preserve neighborhood intrinsic qualities desired by community.
  - LU 5: Ensure land use practices within the City make the best use of available land while also ensuring it's compatibility with current and future surroundings.
    - LU 5.1: Work with nearby agencies to ensure land use and developments within the City are compatible with current and future mining activities.
    - LU 5.2: Consider minimal to low impact development (i.e. open space, recreational trails, etc.) in areas in close proximity to established mining deposits/interest areas.
  - LU 6: Inventory Parkville properties that may be bought out by U.S. Steel and identify a new location for the Parkville homes.

*Public Comments: There were no public comments regarding the Land Use section of the plan.*

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will work cooperatively with St. Louis County, neighboring communities and other public and private entities to provide high quality, cost effective, public services to residents throughout the community on issues of economic, equitable, social, health, environmental, and cultural significance.

### **Recommendation Ideas:**

- IGC 1: Collaborate with neighboring communities to enhance capacity, strengthen regional relationships, and address consolidation of services when possible.
- IGC 2: Collaborate with St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota, and other entities, and their respective officials.
  - IGC 2.1: Proactively collaborate with and inform St. Louis County, IRRRB, State of Minnesota officials of the needs in Mountain Iron regarding resources, housing, economic development, transportation, and other issues as they arise.
- IGC 3: Collaborate with regional entities, like Healthy Northland, local Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) coordinators, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, and other stakeholders, to implement active living public health, and other related improvements and programming to promote healthy lifestyles in the community.
- IGC 4: Work cooperatively with nearby mining agencies, MnDNR, and other interests regarding future land use and opportunities arise.

*Public Comments: There were no public comments regarding the Intergovernmental Cooperation section of the plan update.*

## **Implementation**

**Goal:** The City of Mountain Iron will work as an entity and with stakeholders to complete the strategies and projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan Update and will review and update implementation priorities and status annually.

### **Recommendation Ideas:**

- IMP 1: Annually review the implementation checklist at a public meeting to determine each step's implementation status and re-determine each step's current priority level.
  - IMP 1.1: Utilize the meeting as a public hearing/engagement session to continue incorporating public priorities in the investment decisions.
  - IMP 1.2: Change, update, or end actions that need alterations or have been completed or new project priorities emerge.
  - IMP 1.3: When appropriate, or whenever half of the finite objectives are completed from the existing plan, begin discussion of identifying next steps for a plan update process.
- IMP 2: Monitor available grant opportunities to leverage funds to implement projects identified within this plan.
  - IMP 2.1: The City should remain informed of funding opportunities through continued communication with its partnering agencies such as St. Louis County, IRRRB, MnDOT, MnDNR, ARDC, and others.
  - IMP 2.2: Utilize ARDC and other entities to help provide technical assistance for project applications, management, GIS mapping and other services offered when deemed necessary.
  - IMP 2.3: Review the Community Planning Toolkit that is hosted on ARDC's website (<http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/Default.asp?PageID=1171>). The Community Planning Toolkit is a resource bank that was developed to help communities achieve the goals outlined in their comprehensive plans. Information on programs range from housing, transportation, land use and zoning, utilities and facilities and more.

*Public Comments: There were no comments regarding the Implementation section of the plan.*

### ***Next Steps***

Valdez informed the meeting attendees that ARDC will summarize the meeting and email to those who attended along with posting to the project's website. ARDC will also finalize the draft plan to be viewed by the Planning Committee as well as the public on the projects website. The final Committee meeting will be held at the beginning of December. The date is yet to be determined. The meeting will be a review of the project implementation schedule to determine time responsible parties and time-frame.

Anyone not able to attend/interested in the planning project is encouraged to contact Jarrett Valdez of ARDC at 218-528-7513 or [jvaldez@ardc.org](mailto:jvaldez@ardc.org) for more information as well as an opportunity to provide public comment into the vision of the City.

# Comprehensive Plan Update 2016

City of Mountain Iron, Minnesota

Prepared for the City of Mountain Iron  
Prepared by the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

## ARDC's Mission:

*"To serve the people of the Arrowhead Region by providing local units of government and citizens groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems, and fostering local leadership."*

If you have questions regarding ARDC or the City of Mountain Iron Comprehensive Plan Update, please contact:

### ARDC

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