



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division

411 West First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-730-4309 | www.duluthmn.gov | Kathleen Bergen, Parks and Recreation Division Mgr.

For more information contact Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator 218-730-4312

DATE: 11/03/2010

SUBJECT: Duluth Parks and Recreation Master Plan Unveiled

BY: Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator

Duluth Parks and Recreation Master Plan Unveiled

Public invited to comment at November 10th meeting.

For the past year, Duluth staff, Park Commissioners and park planning consultants have been working on a master plan to guide the future of Duluth's parks, recreation and trails.

Key elements of the Master Plan are to:

- improve the quality of existing parks (especially neighborhood parks),
- focus on connecting the community through trails and bikeways,
- have fewer, but higher quality recreation buildings,
- enhance stewardship of natural resources,
- expand partnerships with schools for community recreation and gathering,
- increase use and recognition of volunteers and volunteer groups, and
- create stable and sustainable funding sources to improve the park system.

The Plan is based on extensive public input gathered in surveys, meetings and focus group sessions. Kathy Bergen, Duluth's Manager of Parks and Recreation said *"Feedback from the community was overwhelmingly in favor of a high quality park, recreation and trails system. We heard from many people who moved to Duluth to be close to nature and close to recreation. Our parks, recreation activities, trails and natural resources are a huge part of the local economy and attract visitors from across the world. We needed a plan to protect and enhance that resource."*

The Plan does not recommend the addition of many new parks. Park planning consultant Greg Ingraham of HKGi praised Duluth's park system. *"Duluth has a*

great system of park land, but due to budget constraints some parks and recreation buildings are in sad shape and are not meeting resident's expectations. Improving existing parks and connecting the community with trails and bikeways should be the focus. That will take additional funding and a commitment of the community, but parks and recreation are a vital element of Duluth's future and deserve the investment."

People are invited to attend an open house meeting on Wednesday, November 10th from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM at Washington Center, 310 N 1st Avenue West to review the Park Master Plan and provide feedback. Beginning November 3rd the Park Plan will be available for review and comment on-line at www.duluthmn.gov/park/mast www.duluthmn.gov/park/masterplan.cfm

Comments from the open house meeting will be used to shape the final Parks and Recreation Master Plan which will go to the Duluth City Council in December.

#