

IMAGINE DULUTH YOUTH OUTREACH

People 24 and under make up a third of Duluth's population. What do they want for the future of Duluth? We held focus groups and conducted a youth specific survey to make sure the voices of Duluth's youth are incorporated into Imagine Duluth 2035.

In March 2017 we held nine focus groups at Neighborhood Youth Services and Life House with young people ranging in age from 13 to 24. Three to seven youth participated in each focus group. We talked about transportation, neighborhoods, and young people's vision for the future of Duluth. In April 2017 we surveyed 146 youth, ages 12 to 18, who attend Marshall School. We asked the Marshall School students about transportation, recreation, and their preferences for the future.

Half of the youth we surveyed are unsure if they want to be living in Duluth in 10 years. How can we create incentives for them to live here in the future?

Transportation

Young people want improvements in transportation infrastructure including roads and for active transportation. Teens and young adults need reliable transportation to access school and employment. They want increased bus service on nights and weekends to get to and from work and a student DTA pass program for high schoolers.

Economic Development

Education and job opportunities are important to young people and are high priorities when they think about where they want to live in the future. They want Duluth to offer more opportunities for education and good jobs in a variety of fields.

Open Space

Lake Superior and access to nature in general are important to young people. They want more outdoor recreation opportunities, especially water-based recreation and trails .

What is your favorite thing about Duluth?



Sense of community

Young people appreciate the sense of community they feel in Duluth. They want to see an increase in opportunities for socialization and group recreation.

Housing

Young people want to live in a place with affordable, quality housing options and they want to live near community gathering places. They like that elements of nature, such as trees and views of the scenery, are spread throughout residential neighborhoods.

FOCUS GROUPS



Transportation was a big issue for the youth we talked to. Focus group participants brought it up a lot, even in the focus groups where we did not ask specific questions about transportation. They want safer walking conditions like crosswalks and better sidewalks. They want more bus stops with shelters to protect them from the cold and rain. They want more frequent bus service on nights and weekends, mainly so they have a reliable way to get to and from work. High school students in the Hillside who have to take DTA to

get to schools out West or out East, want to be able to use their school IDs as bus passes and they think that free or lower cost bus passes should be available to lower income students.

The young people who participated in the focus groups want fun, safe places to hang out in their neighborhoods and they want affordable recreational activities. When young people think about where they might want to live in the future, they want a community that supports and accepts them and they want job and educational opportunities.

SURVEY

A majority of the survey respondents live in Duluth (82%). The majority (92%) of the students surveyed normally drive or are driven to get around to daily activities, but almost a quarter of them (23%) live within a 15 minute walk or bike ride of their school.

Natural areas are important to young people. A majority of students surveyed (65%) said their favorite thing about Duluth was something to do with opportunities to access and enjoy nature. When asked where they would like to be able to get to easily to hang out with their friends, nearly half (48%) of student respondents chose natural areas or parks.

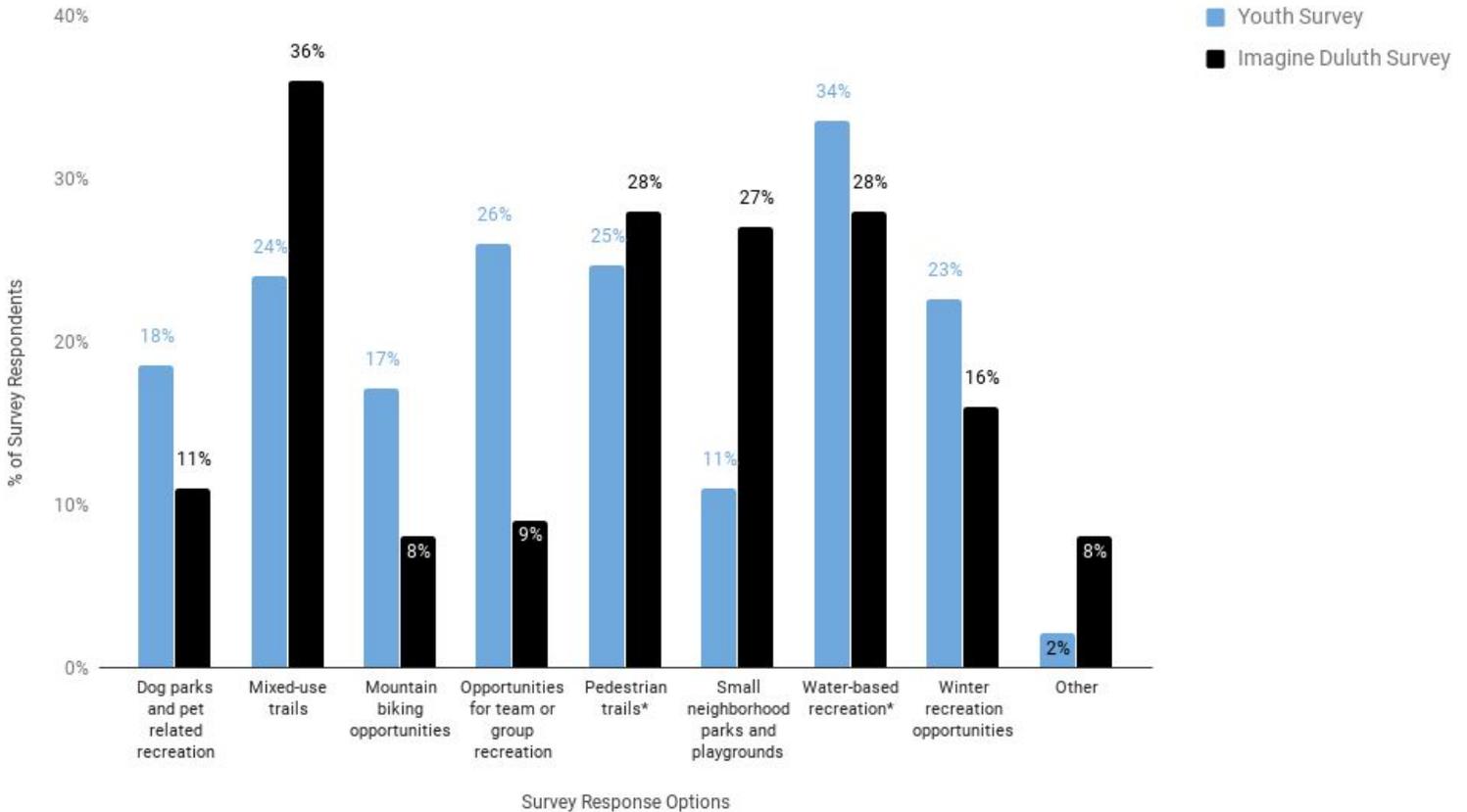
Canal Park also appears to be an important asset to young people. In an open ended question asking their favorite thing about Duluth, 10% of respondents said Canal Park and many students (38%) also want easy access to pedestrian areas with many storefronts where they can walk around, shop, and eat, similar to the design of Canal Park.



In 2016 we conducted an Imagine Duluth survey which 4,175 community members responded to, but only 9% of them were under 24 and just a handful were under 18. We asked this question in both surveys: "Which types of outdoor recreation opportunities should the city focus on?" Respondents could choose two options. Our youth survey respondents were more in favor of the city focusing on team or group recreation, winter recreation, mountain biking, and dog parks than the Imagine Duluth survey

respondents, while Imagine Duluth survey respondents favored mixed-use trails and small neighborhood parks more than youth respondents.

Outdoor Recreation

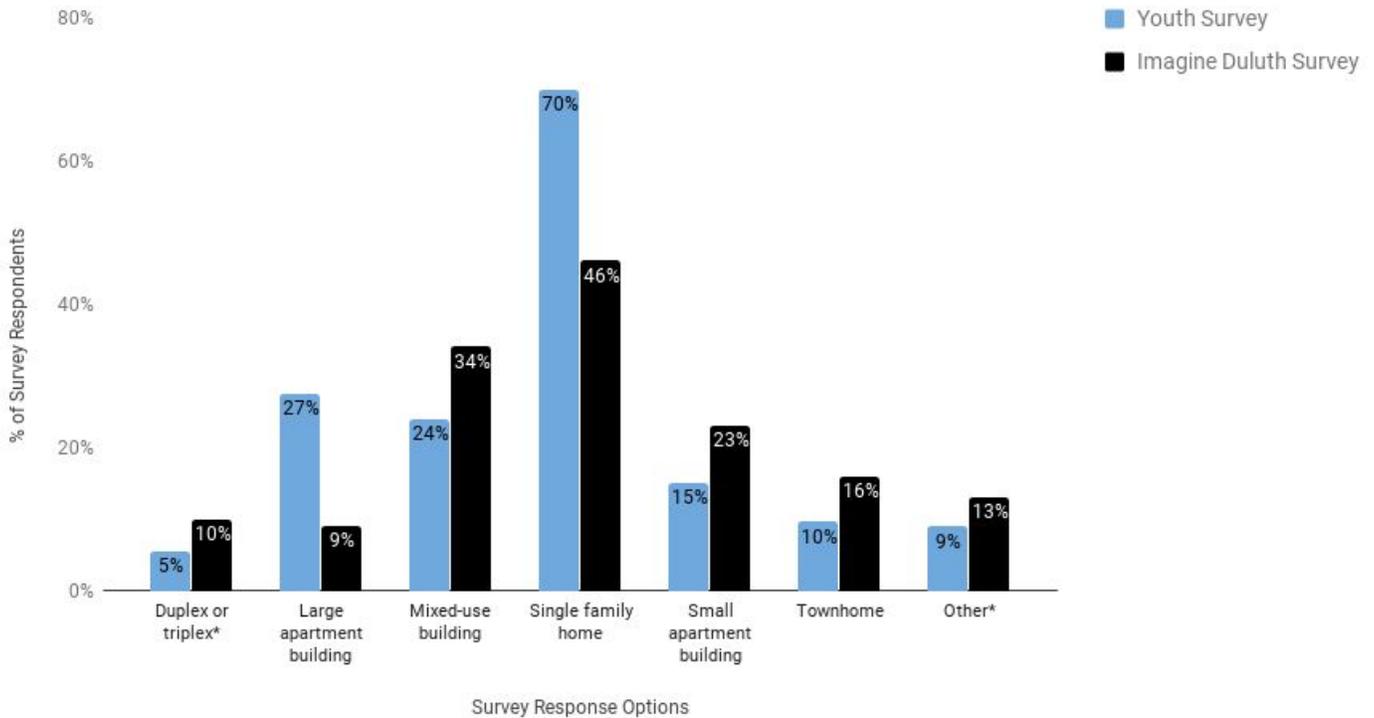


*not a statistically significant difference between the proportion of youth and Imagine Duluth survey respondents

Half of the student respondents were uncertain whether they would be living in Duluth in 10 years or not. About a third of the respondents said they did not see themselves living in Duluth in 10 years while 14% said they did see themselves living in Duluth. When asked to think about themselves 10 years in the future and what they are most looking forward to, the top three answers were pursuing education or jobs opportunities (41%), enjoying recreational activities (25%), and having independence (12%). When thinking about which factors might be important to them in choosing where to live in 10 years, 82% of the surveyed students said having available jobs that interest them would be important and 77% said affordable, quality housing options would be important. Many students think that the ability to walk, bike, or take transit to daily activities (60%), where their family or friends live (50%), and the availability of cultural and recreational activities (47%) will be important factors in choosing a place to live in 10 years.

In the Imagine Duluth survey we asked which types of housing respondents felt were “most needed for Duluth’s success” while in the youth survey we asked which types of housing respondents thought they “might like to live in 10 years from now.” In both surveys the same options were listed and respondents were asked to choose up to two housing types. The youth we surveyed showed a strong preference for wanting to living in single family homes in the future, but also have a preference for large apartment buildings and mixed-use buildings.

Housing Types



*not a statistically significant difference between the proportion of youth and Imagine Duluth survey respondents

Nearly half (46%) of the students thought that Duluth could be a better place to live if we increase opportunities for socialization and recreation. Ideas included having more events and activities in all seasons, having professional sports teams and more recreational

sports leagues, having more shops and restaurants, and increasing opportunities to access nature by adding more trails and scenic views.

What’s one thing that could make Duluth a better place to live?

More & Better Jobs
 Warmer Weather
 More Shops & Restaurants
More Recreation Opportunities
 More Community Events & Activities
 Infrastructure & Transportation Improvements
 More Affordable Housing
 Increase Cleanliness & Safety