

IMAGINE...
CANALPARK



Pop-Up! Canal Park

Findings and Recommendations

Prepared by 8 80 Cities

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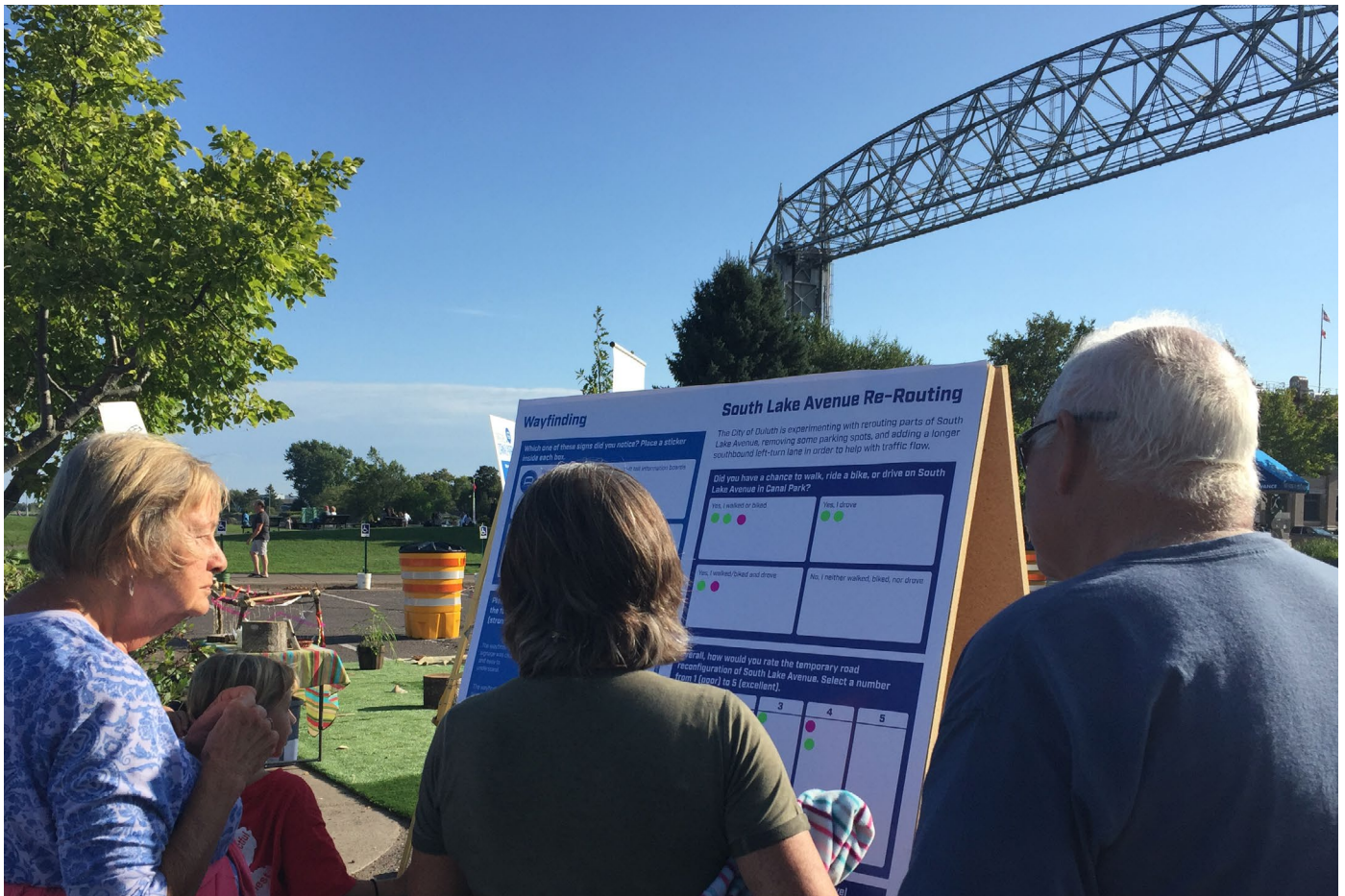
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In September 2017, the City of Duluth invited residents and visitors to think creatively about the future look, feel, and function of Canal Park for a new project titled Imagine Canal Park. In the first phase of the project, more than 1,200 residents, visitors, business owners, and other stakeholders shared their thoughts and concerns about Canal Park through online surveys, at public events, and at community workshops.

A Collective Vision

With this initial feedback, the Imagine Canal Park team developed a collective vision statement for the future of the area:

Vision Statement

In 2035, Canal Park will be a unique and accessible year-round hub that is designed for residents and visitors of all ages, and is seamlessly connected to the rest of the city.

This vision statement highlights two priority areas:

Mobility and Access

Public Space and Programming

Based on these two priority areas, the team consolidated the community's input into actionable ideas and recommendations.

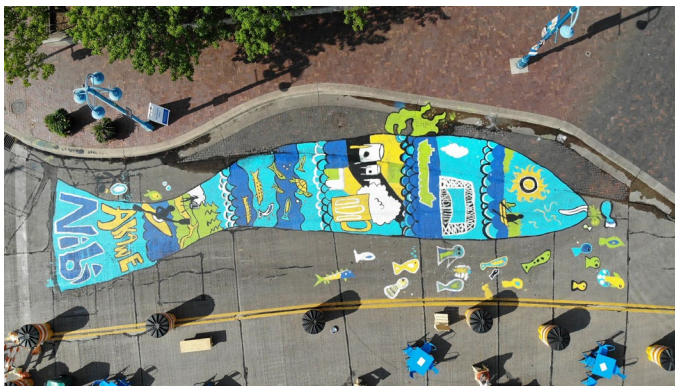
Throughout 2018, the City collaborated with local partners to test six ideas in real time and launched meaningful experiments, or pilot projects, to better understand the benefits and trade-offs of new designs, traffic patterns, and events. These pilot projects included a month-long winter festival, a pedestrian-scale wayfinding system, two temporary public spaces, new traffic configurations on South Lake Ave., and extended free trolley service.

Experiments and Evaluation

The City, in collaboration with consultants 8 80 Cities and Zeitgeist, used a variety of data collection tools to document outcomes and impacts from each pilot project implemented in Canal Park. Stakeholders from across the city provided input through online surveys and emails, and by attending pop-up engagement booths and meetings.

Qualitative feedback and opinions were supported through observational studies which captured how each project performed on-the-ground. The results of this data provide insight into what types of changes could be made permanent or brought to scale, and which experiments need more thought or improvement.

These pilot projects revealed new insights about the strengths and weaknesses of certain ideas, in addition to providing opportunities to learn more about community preferences. These outcomes helped us define recommendations for next steps and potential investments in the area.



The following is a summary of the collected data and stakeholder feedback for each pilot project:

1 Cold Front February

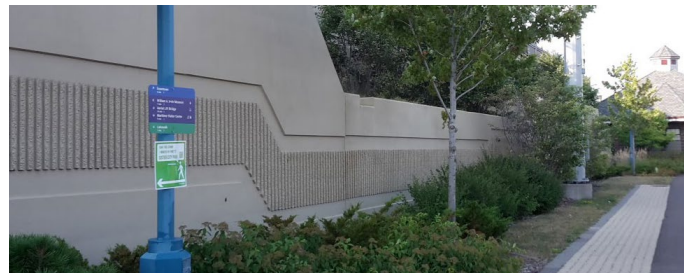
A month-long celebration of winter in Canal Park, with programming and activities.



- Respondents were most enthused about making the ice trail a permanent winter fixture in Canal Park
- Attendees would like more hot food and beverage vendors
- On average, 211 individuals skated the ice trail each day
- Overall, 96 percent of respondents rated their experience at Cold Front favorably

2 Canal Park Wayfinding Pilot

Testing out the impact of three new types of pedestrian-scale wayfinding signage.



- Overall, respondents felt that the wayfinding signage was well-designed
- The round sidewalk stickers were most noticeable but also the least helpful
- The small directional signs and 8-foot informational maps are most helpful for visitors as local residents already had familiarity with listed destinations
- There's support for expanding the scope of the wayfinding project and making it permanent

3 Buchanan Street Plaza

Transforming a portion of Buchanan Street into a pedestrian plaza.



- Buchanan Street is a valued shortcut for drivers going to/from Park Point which caused some frustration for residents when it was closed off to vehicles
- Community members like the concept of a plaza and additional seating, but would prefer to see it done elsewhere
- The plaza improved the pedestrian experience in Canal Park
- More needed to be done to improve the ambiance at the plaza
- Overall, 62 percent of respondents rated the Buchanan Street Plaza unfavorably

4 Lighthouse Park

Converting the Lighthouse Lot into a recreation and play-focused park.



- 85 percent of online survey respondents did not spend time in the park
- The play elements were the most popular
- Three contrasting themes emerged from residents' feedback: 1) retain it as a parking lot, 2) make it permanent but increase the number of activations in the space, or 3) incorporate the same elements elsewhere
- Overall, 50 percent rated it unfavorably and 43 percent rated it favorably

5 South Lake Avenue Re-Routing

Reconfiguring the lanes on South Lake Avenue to test out impacts on traffic flow.



- The loss of parking overshadowed the improvements in vehicular traffic flow
- The new configuration worsened the walking and biking experience
- Desire to keep Morse Street and Buchanan Street accessible to motorists
- Better signage may have prevented driver confusion
- Overall, 77 percent of respondents rated the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing pilot unfavorably

6 Free Trolley Service

Free trolley service from June through September.



- 2018 saw the highest ridership numbers in history with 28,332 rides
- Free trolley admission and extended service led to a spike in ridership in summer 2018, an increase of 53 percent compared to summer 2017

Recommendations

The recommendations presented in the full report are:

1 Continue to experiment

- 1.1 Institute pilot projects as a standard engagement strategy in future projects
- 1.2 Engage more citizens and stakeholders in building and evaluating the pilots

2 Invest in active transportation infrastructure to, from, and throughout Canal Park

- 2.1 Continue and improve free trolley service
- 2.2 Improve walking experience between downtown Duluth and Canal Park

3 Improve communication and coordination around vehicular access to Canal Park

- 3.1 Invest in parking guidance systems
- 3.2 Actively promote parking located outside of Canal Park to targeted audiences
- 3.3 Partner with Canal Park hotels to efficiently make use of underutilized parking spaces

4 Expand the wayfinding system to downtown Duluth

- 4.1 Use sidewalk decals more strategically
- 4.2 Increase the dimensions and font size of the small directional signs
- 4.3 Increase number of 8-foot informational maps
- 4.4 Include information to attractions outside of Canal Park

5 Transform Buchanan into a flexible, shared street

- 5.1 Go curbside
- 5.2 Test out regular, timed closures
- 5.3 Promote Buchanan as a programmable space

6 Consider a more balanced approach to reconfiguring South Lake Avenue

- 6.1 Provide higher visibility crosswalks
- 6.2 Provide traffic calming interventions
- 6.3 Designate Canal Park a 20 mph zone
- 6.4 Retain on-street parking possibilities
- 6.5 Develop a more thorough understanding of vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns on South Lake Avenue before making a permanent reconfiguration

7 Increase opportunities for play near the water

- 7.1 Transform a portion of the Lighthouse Lot into a year-round kids' play area
- 7.2 Provide wind protection at the Lighthouse Lot
- 7.3 Increase recreational opportunities along the Lakewalk

8 Grow and expand Cold Front February events

- 8.1 More vendors and programming
- 8.2 Provide more comfortable restrooms
- 8.3 Maintain the skating trail throughout the winter
- 8.4 Recruit volunteers

As the City of Duluth moves forward with temporary and permanent improvements in Canal Park, it is crucial to continue involving and seeking input from diverse stakeholders. The City should report back the results of this process to community members and gather additional feedback; and together with the community, develop priorities, explore other pilot project ideas, and plan for implementation.





DOWNTOWN LAKEWALK

INTRODUCTION

IMAGINE CANAL PARK



Canal Park is one of the most beloved and unique places in Duluth. With a diverse mix of restaurants, cafes, bars, and shops, it is a popular entertainment district for residents and visitors alike. People live and work in Canal Park, and the area also serves as a crucial link to the Park Point neighborhood. In summary, Canal Park is a destination district that serves many people and purposes in Duluth.

Given its widespread appeal, it is critical that Canal Park evolves to meet the changing needs and interests of the many people and functions it serves, while maintaining the unique character that draws people there in the first place. Imagine Canal Park is a unique opportunity for everyone in Duluth to reflect on what they like about Canal Park and what they want to see and do there in the future.

Imagine Canal Park began in September 2017 by sparking a city-wide conversation about Canal Park. We checked in with residents, business owners, and visitors of all ages

about what is currently working in Canal Park and what could improve their access and experience in the area. As the conversation continued, the City of Duluth and project partners began incorporating these ideas and feedback into a series of temporary pilot projects. These projects included a winter festival, new public spaces, signage, traffic configurations, and more.

Each change to Canal Park was carefully documented through an evaluation strategy that recorded impacts and, most importantly, stakeholder responses to the interventions. Through surveys and pop-up events, we asked people for their thoughts on the pilot projects. We supported this qualitative feedback by counting how many people visited these initiatives through observational studies. This report summarizes those findings and recommends next steps to build on the momentum and lessons learned from Imagine Canal Park.

The Team

Imagine Canal Park is led locally by the City of Duluth. The Community Planning Division is leading this work through their ongoing efforts with the Imagine Duluth 2035 process. The City of Duluth has enlisted consultants 880 Cities and Zeitgeist to conduct the community engagement and pilot project processes. The pilot projects were documented in video and photography by Wherehouse Productions.

Imagine Canal Park is a recipient of a 2017 Knight Cities Challenge grant, generously provided by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. This project is also generously supported by the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.





WHAT WE DID

THE EXPERIMENTS

Based on the findings of the Imagine Canal Park community engagement process in fall 2017, the City of Duluth and local partners developed and implemented five site-specific pilot projects to test out new concepts: one in winter and four in summer. In addition, the Port Town Trolley service was extended throughout the month of September to complement the summer pilot projects.



1. Cold Front February (February 2018)

A month-long celebration of winter in Canal Park, complete with a schedule of family-friendly activities, recreational programming, musical performances, and more.



2. Canal Park Wayfinding Pilot (September 2018)

Installation of three types of new wayfinding signage to help orient people around Canal Park and downtown Duluth.



3. Buchanan Street Plaza (September 2018)

Creation of a new public plaza in the heart of Canal Park by designating part of Buchanan Street pedestrian-only.



4. Lighthouse Park (September 2018)

A family-friendly play and rest area that maximizes views of the lake and lift bridge, located in the Lighthouse Lot.



5. South Lake Ave. Re-Routing (September 2018)

Reconfiguration of the driving and parking lanes on South Lake Ave. to test out impacts on traffic flow and pedestrian mobility.



6. Free Trolley Service (June - September 2018)

Free trolley rides, provided by the Duluth Transit Authority, throughout the summer season to test if ridership would increase.

EVALUATION METHODS

We used a variety of evaluation methods to assess the impacts of the pilot projects, including:

Online Survey

Community members provided feedback on each of the individual pilot projects via an online survey. The survey was available throughout the duration of the pilot project period in September 2018. Survey questions asked what people liked about the pilots and their ideas for improving the pilots, in addition to some demographic questions. In total, 671 people completed the online survey. It should be noted that 85 to 90 percent of the survey respondents did not spend time at the two public space pilots, which might limit their perception of the spaces. There was no online survey component for Cold Front February.

Pop-up Engagements

During the launch weekend for both the winter and summer pilot projects, we set up pop-up engagement booths to collect feedback from people spending time in Canal Park. These consisted of oversized, highly visual survey boards where people provided their thoughts using sticky dots and sticky notes. In total, 205 people provided in-person feedback for the winter pilot and 368 people provided in-person feedback for the summer pilots.

Public Life Studies

Public life studies are an observation-based tool to collect data about how people access and spend time in a given space. Our team conducted public life counts before and during the pilot project period to measure the level of foot traffic and types of activities that were occurring in various locations around Canal Park.

Speed Study

For the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing project, the City of Duluth conducted a speed study of the South Lake Avenue corridor. The results will be factored into the final recommendations for improving the travel experience along this important street.

Parking Study

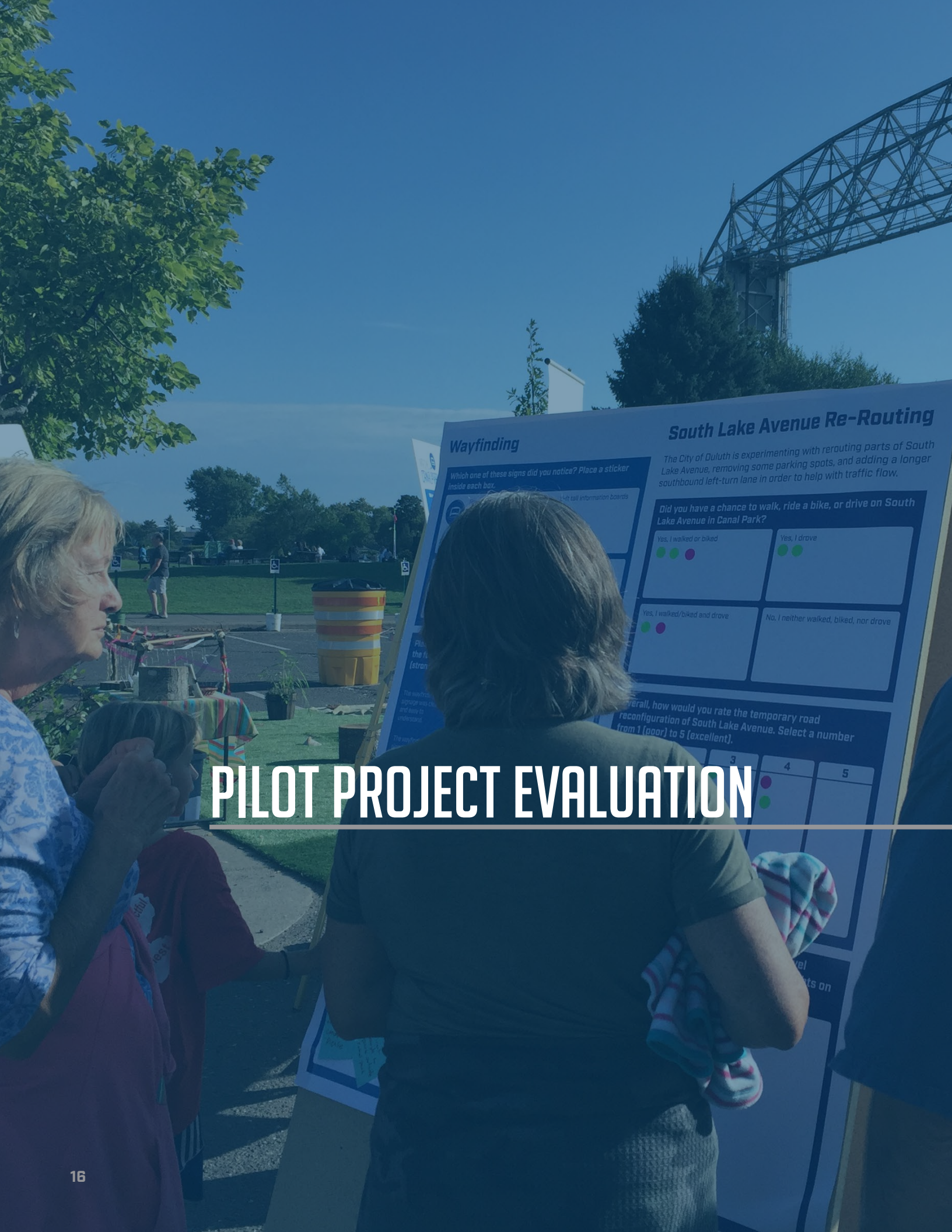
The City of Duluth conducted a parking study before and during the pilot project period to measure the level of parking availability in the Canal Park area. Given that one of the pilot projects took over an entire parking lot for two weeks, we wanted to see how this impacted the parking system in Canal Park as a whole.

Trolley Counts

In partnership with the City of Duluth, the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) offered free trolley rides during the Cold Front kick-off weekend and from June through September of 2018. This was the first time that trolley rides were free all summer. The DTA kept data on ridership numbers.

Independent Feedback

City of Duluth staff received more than 27 emails from community members concerning the pilot projects.



Wayfinding

Which one of these signs did you notice? Place a sticker inside each box.

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South Lake Avenue Re-Routing

The City of Duluth is experimenting with rerouting parts of South Lake Avenue, removing some parking spots, and adding a longer southbound left-turn lane in order to help with traffic flow.

Did you have a chance to walk, ride a bike, or drive on South Lake Avenue in Canal Park?

Yes, I walked or biked <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I drove <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, I walked/biked and drove <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No, I neither walked, biked, nor drove <input type="checkbox"/>

Overall, how would you rate the temporary road reconfiguration of South Lake Avenue. Select a number from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION

COLD FRONT FEBRUARY



For the month of February 2018, the City of Duluth worked with local partners to host Cold Front February, a month-long celebration of winter. The Cold Front event grounds were located in the Lake City Lot and featured a sledding hill, a 500-meter ice skating trail along the Lakewalk, fire pits, heated tents, a mini curling rink, a winter market, and other scheduled programming. There were additional discounts and special events in various locations throughout the city for the entire month. More than 1,800 community members

attended the kick-off celebration, which took place from February 1 – 4, 2018.

The idea for Cold Front reflected public feedback to activate Canal Park during the off-peak season. Canal Park is already a wildly popular destination in summer, but there are few things drawing locals and visitors to the area during the coldest, darkest months of the year. Cold Front aimed to bring more action to Canal Park during what is typically the slowest and quietest time of the year.



What We Heard

We collected feedback about Cold Front in person at pop-up engagement booths. In total, 234 people participated in the conversation about Cold Front.

1. Respondents were most enthused about making the ice trail a permanent winter fixture in Canal Park: When asked which Cold Front activities people would like to see in Canal Park throughout winter (Figure 2), the top three responses were the ice trail (64 percent), fire pits (55 percent), and winter market (45 percent).



2. Attendees would like more hot food and beverage vendors: 24 percent of respondents suggested improving the Cold Front experience by inviting more food and drink vendors, making it the most common piece of feedback (Figure 3). Other popular suggestions included having a beer truck and/or ice bar (12 percent), and having ice sculptures (10 percent).



3. On average, 211 individuals skated the ice trail each day: From February 1 to February 13, 2018, a total of 2,533 people experienced the ice trail (Figure 4). The busiest day for the trail was the Saturday (February 3, 2018) of the kick-off celebration, which attracted 896 skaters onto the trail.



4. Overall, 96 percent of respondents rated their experience at Cold Front favorably: The support for Cold Front was nearly unanimous (Figure 1). 46 percent rated it “excellent” and 50 percent rated it “good”. The remaining 4 percent rated it “okay”.

Figure 1

Overall, how would you rate your experience at the Cold Front February?

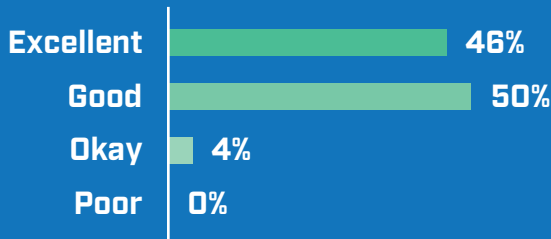


Figure 2

Which of the following Cold Front activities would you like to see in Canal Park throughout winter?

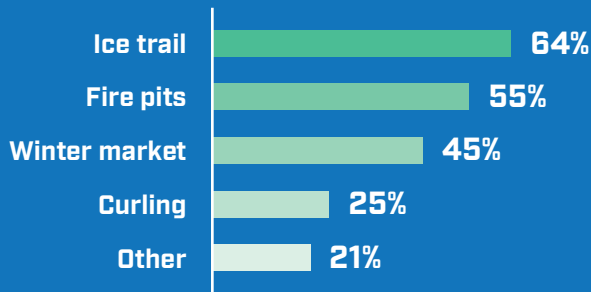


Figure 3

Top 5 themes from comments regarding improvements to Cold Front:

1. Hot food and beverage vendors [24%]
2. Beer truck/ice bar [12%]
3. Ice sculptures [10%]
4. More music [7%]
5. Twinkle lights and candle lights [5%]

Figure 4

Daily counts of people skating on the ice trail:

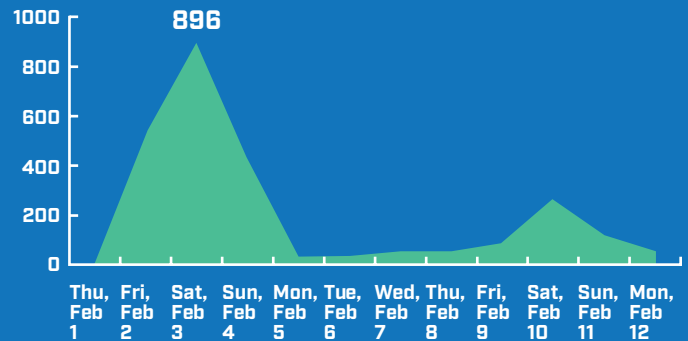


Figure 5

Age of survey respondents:

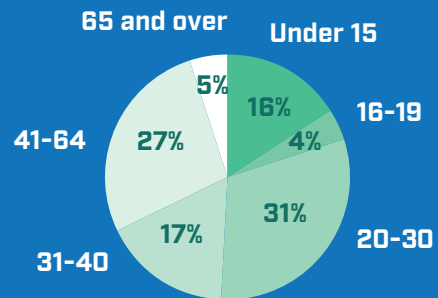
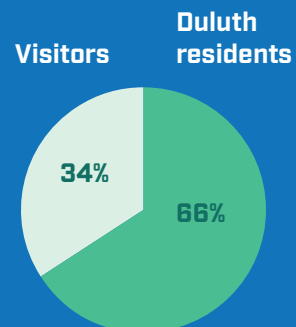


Figure 6

Origin of survey respondents:



The Lakewalk & Canal Park Drive

Canal Park

- ➔ Park Point
4 min ↓
- Great Lakes Aquarium
12 min ↓
- ➔ Aerial Lift Bridge
3 min ↓
- ➔ Maritime Visitor Center
1 min ↓

← Lakewalk
1 min ↓

Transit		Parking	
➤ 19 Port Town Trolley	2 min ↓	➤ Northwest Inn Lot	1 min ↓
➤ Bus Line 15	3 min ↓	➤ N. Lake Ave Lot	1 min ↓
		➤ DCCC Ramp	1.5 min ↓



Building	Lakewalk	Park	Parking
Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route
Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route	Lakewalk route



WAYFINDING PILOT



For the month of September, the City of Duluth installed three new types of wayfinding signage in Canal Park with the dual objectives of making it easier for people to navigate the area and encouraging people to walk more in Canal Park and downtown Duluth.

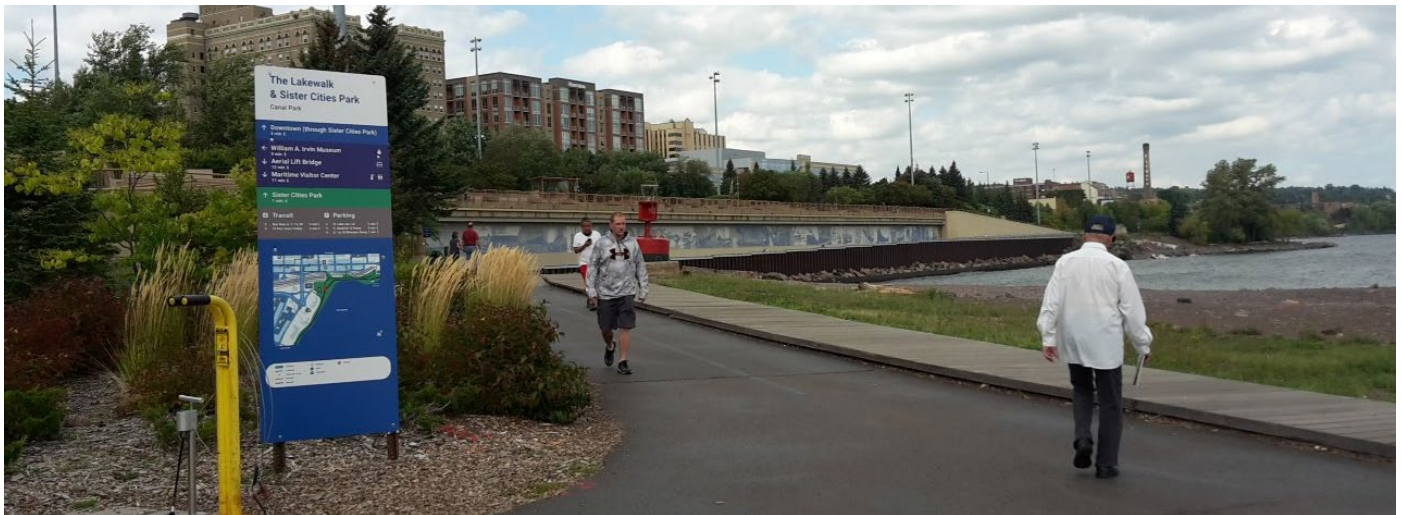
The team experimented with three forms of wayfinding:

1. Sidewalk decals: These colorful round stickers were placed on the sidewalk to visually guide people to Canal Park from downtown Duluth and to enhance the branding of the neighborhood. The stickers

also displayed the Imagine Canal Park survey link, to encourage more public engagement with the project.

2. Small directional signs: These signs were installed on existing posts throughout Canal Park and served as visual cues to nearby attractions.

3. 8-foot tall informational maps: These were installed at key locations throughout Canal Park and displayed more detailed information about attractions in the area. Each map also displayed the 10-minute walkshed.



What We Heard

We collected feedback on the wayfinding pilot via online survey (382 responses), in-person intercept surveys (60 responses), and at pop-up engagement booths (31 responses). In total, 473 people weighed in on the wayfinding conversation.

- 1. Overall, the wayfinding signage was well-designed:** Most respondents felt either neutral (29 percent) or agreed (54 percent) that the wayfinding signage was clear and easy to understand (Figure 8).
- 2. The sidewalk decals were most noticeable but also the least helpful:** Of all the people who had noticed the new wayfinding signs, 74 percent saw the sidewalk decals (Figure 7). However, 22 percent of comments about the wayfinding expressed confusion about the purpose of the stickers (Figure 12). They ended up serving more of a branding function rather than a wayfinding one.
- 3. The small directional signs and 8-foot informational maps are mostly helpful for visitors:** Over half the people who noticed the new wayfinding signage indicated that they had seen the small directional signs and the 8-foot informational maps (Figure

7). 28 percent of comments expressed that locals already knew their way around Canal Park and so they personally wouldn't benefit from the wayfinding (Figure 12). For that reason, only a minority of respondents reported that the new signs helped them find their way around more easily, encouraged them to walk more, or allowed them to discover a new destination. However, many of these same respondents also expressed that having the signage nonetheless was beneficial for visitors to the area.

- 4. Expand the scope of the wayfinding project:** 29 percent of comments pertained to improving the wayfinding system in the following ways:
 - Increase the number of signs in Canal Park
 - Highlight nearby destinations in Park Point and downtown Duluth on the map and encourage people to walk/bike to those places
 - Make the signs double-sided in locations where people are likely approaching the sign from different directions
 - Increase the font size of the small directional signs to make them more noticeable and legible.

Figure 7

Which one of these types of signs did you notice?



Figure 8

The wayfinding signage was clear and easy to understand.

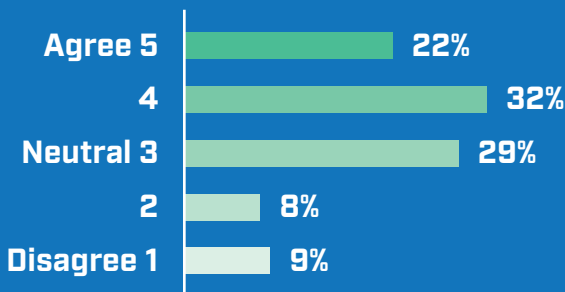


Figure 9

The wayfinding signage helped me find my way around Downtown Duluth and Canal Park more easily.

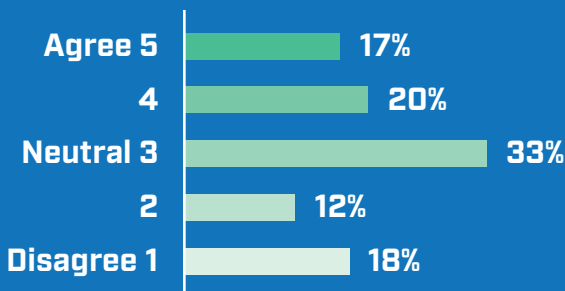


Figure 10

The wayfinding signage encouraged me to walk more or further in Downtown Duluth and/or Canal Park.

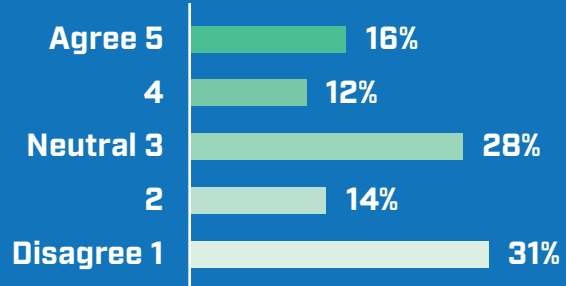


Figure 11

I discovered a new place as a result of the wayfinding signage.

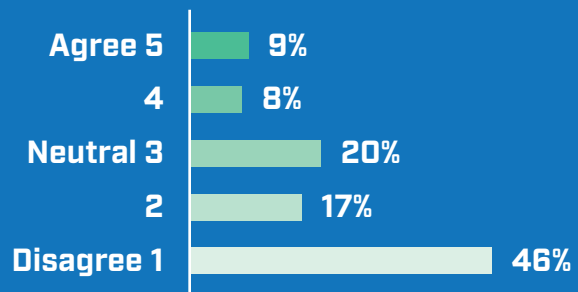


Figure 12

Top 5 themes from comments regarding wayfinding signage:

1. Improve orientation/location of signs [29%]
2. Already know my way around [28%]
3. Unclear of purpose of sidewalk decals [22%]
4. Good for tourists [17%]
5. Signage is well designed [14%]



AKAWE

Blueberry Plaza

60

BUCHANAN STREET PLAZA



The Buchanan Street Plaza closed off a portion of Buchanan Street to vehicular traffic and transformed it into a pedestrian plaza for the month of September 2018. The plaza featured moveable tables and chairs, a community art mural, and buskers during lunch and dinner hours. The pedestrian area was blocked off with cylindrical traffic barrels filled with sand.

The concept of the Buchanan Street Plaza stemmed from community feedback to

improve the pedestrian experience in Canal Park. Participants from the September 2017 community consultations noted that cars turning in and out of Buchanan Street would cause back-ups on South Lake Ave. and Canal Park Drive. Pedestrians would often weave between cars to cross the street, especially during peak season. The closing of Buchanan intended to test out the community's appetite for a central gathering space and a more streamlined traffic flow pattern in Canal Park.

What We Heard

We collected feedback on the Buchanan Street Plaza via online survey (571 responses), pop-up engagement booths (160 responses), and emails to City staff (20 responses). In total, 751 individuals weighed in on the Buchanan Street Plaza conversation.

- 1. 90 percent of online survey respondents did not spend time in the plaza:** When asked how people spent time in the plaza, most online respondents said they simply passed by it, either by walking or driving.
- 2. Buchanan Street is a valued shortcut for drivers, especially those headed to Park Point:** Many Park Point residents noted that they would bypass traffic on South Lake Ave. by driving down Canal Park Drive instead. They would then turn right on Buchanan to return to South Lake Ave. to cross the bridge. Closing off access to Buchanan meant longer delays while the lift is in use. When asked “What would you improve about the plaza?”, 33 percent of comments conveyed a desire to re-open the road to vehicular traffic.
- 3. Community members like the concept of having a plaza and additional seating, but question the location of it on Buchanan Street:** When asked what aspects of the plaza pilot that community members liked the most, 46 percent of the comments focused on the fact that it was a publicly accessible space (Figure 14). Many of these respondents liked the opportunity to sit in a central area of of Canal Park without having to patronize a restaurant. At the same time, when asked how the space could be improved, 19 percent of comments suggested to locate the seating and tables elsewhere in Canal Park, such as on the Buchanan Street sidewalk or somewhere along the Lakewalk (Figure 15),

where traffic lanes and parking wouldn't be sacrificed.

- 4. The plaza improved the pedestrian experience in Canal Park:** In terms of what worked well, 32 percent of comments suggested that the Buchanan Street Plaza provided improved pedestrian experience where one did not have to worry about cars (Figure 14). Buchanan Street serves as a natural crossing point between the Northwest Iron Lot and the Dewitt Seitz building. Not everyone who stepped foot in the plaza chose to sit and spent time there, but those walking through the space could do so without the interference of cars.
- 5. Improve the ambiance at the plaza:** 28 percent of suggestions for improving the space pertained to making the space feel more inviting, by adding more landscaping, art, and nicer barriers that kept cars out of the space without detracting from the plaza ambiance (Figure 15). In doing so, the plaza would feel less like a road closure and more like a natural public space. An additional 14 percent of comments suggested more activations at the site, such as vendors, to encourage more people to use the space.
- 6. Overall, 62 percent of respondents rated the Buchanan Street Plaza unfavorably.** 7 percent gave it a neutral rating and 30 percent gave it a positive rating (Figure 16).

Figure 13

What did you do there?

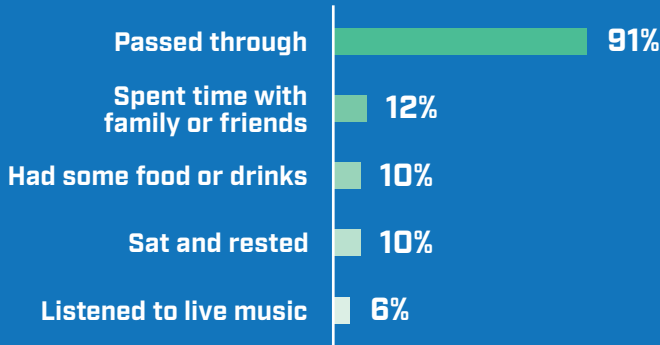


Figure 15

What would you improve about the plaza? What would make you want to spend more time there?

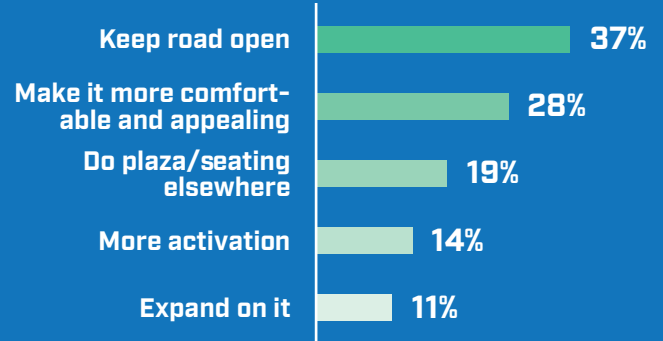


Figure 14

What did you like about the plaza?

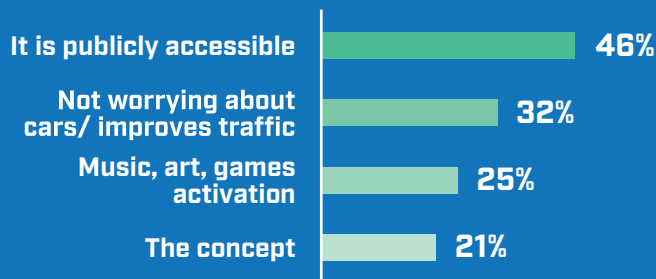
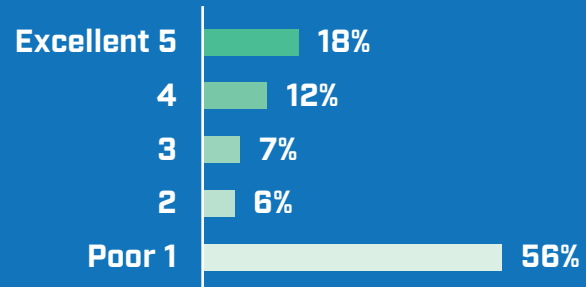


Figure 16

Overall, how would you rate the temporary changes to Buchanan Street?





LIGHTHOUSE PARK



City staff and local partners transformed the Lighthouse Lot, a City of Duluth-owned parking lot located at the southernmost end of Canal Park Drive, into a recreational park. The new “Lighthouse Park” was open to the public for two weeks in September 2018 and featured landscaping, moveable chairs and tables, sandboxes, children’s programming, musical performances, and more. All parking functions in the lot were restricted, except for eight

stalls which were reserved for anyone who possessed a Disability Parking Certificate.

The concept of Lighthouse Park reflected community feedback from the Imagine Canal Park consultation process which called for: a) preserving and maximizing viewsheds of the water and lift bridge, and b) increasing play opportunities for children and families in Canal Park.

What We Heard

We collected feedback about the Lighthouse Park through online surveys (283 responses), pop-up engagement booths (208 responses), and emails to City staff (6 responses). In total, 497 people participated in the conversation about Lighthouse Park.

- 1. 85 percent of online survey respondents did not spend time in the park:** When asked how people spent time in Lighthouse Park, most online respondents said they simply passed through it. The remainder of respondents went to the park to spend time with family and friends (16 percent), sit and rest (12 percent) and eat (12 percent) (Figure 17). People were more compelled to spend time in the space when there was programming. Some mentioned that it wasn't clear that the space was free and open to the public.
- 2. The play elements were the most popular feature:** When asked what park users liked the most about the park, 52 percent referred to the play elements such as the sandbox, bouncy house, and play-based children's programming. 28 percent said they liked the rest areas, 20 percent mentioned the music programming, and 14 percent liked the view and location of the park (Figure 18).
- 3. Retain it as a parking lot:** 40 percent of comments suggested that the Lighthouse Lot should remain a parking lot (Figure 19). Most people drive to access Canal Park. Respondents said that removing the Lighthouse Lot reduces the appeal of coming for a quick visit to watch the ships go by. Moreover, we heard from older adults and those with disabilities who said that finding parking close to the lift bridge is crucial for accessing and enjoying Canal Park.
- 4. Make it permanent with better quality infrastructure and increase the number of activations in the space:** 15 percent of comments pertained to making more permanent investments in the space to improve the overall quality of the experience (Figure 19). Respondents wanted to see real grass instead of astroturf, permanent bathrooms instead of portable toilets, and fixed playground infrastructure. Another 13 percent of comments suggested increasing the number of the activations and programming so that the space is vibrant and lively at all times.
- 5. Incorporate the same elements elsewhere:** Another 14 percent of comments suggested that all the elements of Lighthouse Park were fine, but that they could be placed in other areas of Canal Park, such as in the grassy knoll just south of the pilot site, or along the Lakewalk (Figure 19). These respondents considered parking too valuable to sacrifice for more park space.
- 6. Overall, 50% rated it unfavorably and 43% rated it favorably:** The remaining 6% were neutral (Figure 20).

Figure 17

What did you do there?

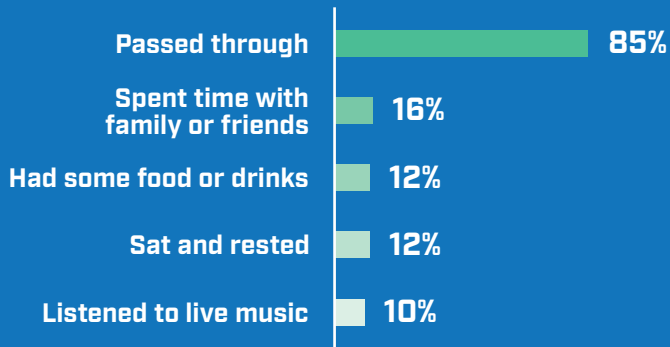


Figure 19

What would you improve about the pop-up park? What would make you want to spend more time there?

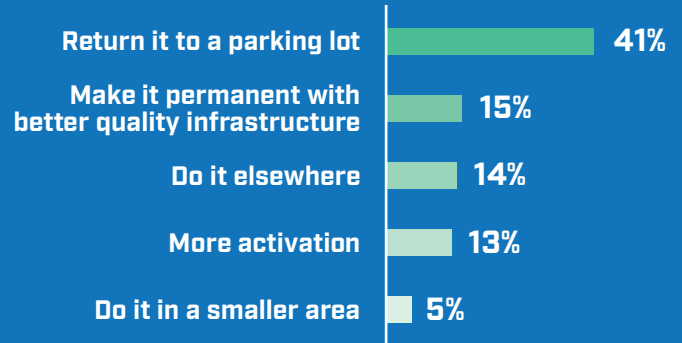


Figure 18

What did you like about the pop-up park?

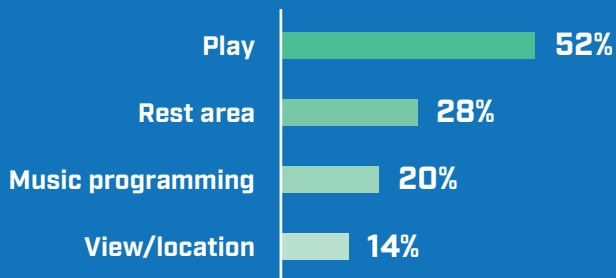
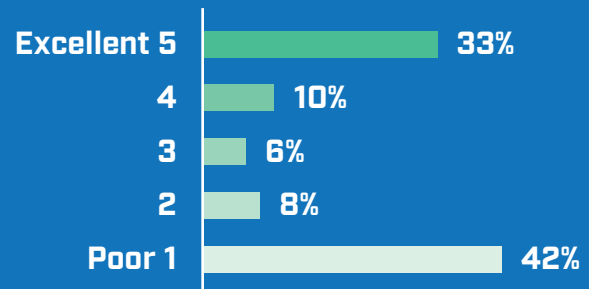


Figure 20

Overall, how would you rate the temporary changes to the Lighthouse Lot?



SOUTH LAKE AVENUE RE-ROUTING

The South Lake Avenue Re-Routing pilot project tested out a new road configuration on South Lake Avenue. This involved adding an extra driving lane leading towards the lift bridge. The right hand lane was designated for drivers heading in the direction of Park Point, whereas the inner lane was designated for drivers intending to make a left turn at Morse Street, to head back north on Canal Park Drive. The addition of the new lane required closing 50 parking meters along South Lake Avenue.

The concept of this pilot project reflected public feedback which called for improving traffic flow in Canal Park, especially along South Lake Avenue. During peak season, traffic often crawls on this corridor, with many drivers trawling the area looking for parking. By removing the on-street parking closest to the lift bridge and creating a designated travel lane for people headed into Park Point, the goal was to improve the traffic flow in Canal Park.

What We Heard

We collected feedback on the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing via online survey (596 responses), pop-up engagement booths (45 responses), and emails to City staff (16 responses). In total, 657 individuals weighed in on the conversation about the re-routing pilot.

- 1. The loss of parking overshadowed the improvements in traffic flow:** 45 percent of comments disapproved of the loss of on-street parking along South Lake Avenue. Respondents say that parking in Canal Park is already insufficient given the demand (Figure 22). Eliminating the on-street parking on South Lake Avenue made it inconvenient for patrons of Canal Park businesses. Only 7 percent of comments claimed that the new configuration increased congestion (primarily during ‘bridgings’), whereas 15 percent of comments said that the re-routing improved traffic flow and increased driving speeds along the corridor (Figure 22). Nonetheless, the loss of parking significantly shaped the negative perception of the pilot overall.
- 2. The new configuration has worsened the walking and biking experience:** 15 percent of comments suggested that the re-routing pilot has made it more dangerous for people walking and biking on South Lake Ave (Figure 22). The new configuration eliminates a row of parking on either side of the street, which otherwise separated moving traffic from people walking on the sidewalk. Moreover, the addition of a southbound vehicular lane makes the road appear wider, which may encourage cars to drive faster than usual, especially during non-peak hours. This makes it more dangerous for pedestrians to cross the street and for cyclists to bike on South Lake Avenue.
- 3. Keep Buchanan Street and Morse Street accessible:** Many drivers headed south towards Park Point are accustomed to bypassing traffic on South Lake Ave. by taking Canal Park Drive south, turning west onto Buchanan Street before continuing south on South Lake Ave. Morse Street could provide a similar “shortcut” for those headed north from Park Point. 14 percent of comments pertained to ensuring vehicular access to both Buchanan Street and Morse Street from South Lake Ave (Figure 22). Some suggested that if the city pursued a permanent version of the pilot project, that

it would be helpful to make Morse Street two-way.

- 4. Better signage may have prevented driver confusion:** 9 percent of respondents suggested that clearer signage warning drivers of the reconfiguration may have reduced driver confusion about which lane they should be travelling in (Figure 22). Respondents claim to have witnessed other drivers who found themselves in the “wrong” lane and proceeded to make illegal turns to correct their course.
- 5. Overall, 77 percent of respondents rated the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing pilot unfavorably:** 12 percent gave it a neutral rating and 22 percent gave it a positive rating (Figure 23).

Speed Study Results

The City of Duluth conducted a speed study of South Lake Avenue over six days during the pilot period and discovered the following:

- Average speed: 19.21 mph
- 50th percentile: 19 mph
- 85th percentile: 23 mph

The study demonstrated that cars were on average moving at 19 miles per hour, which is typical in urban, commercial centers across America. Moreover, the average speed of cars travelling on South Lake Avenue was well below the posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour.

While there is no baseline data with which to compare these results, it confirms that on average, cars during the pilot period moved at a speed that is well under the posted speed limit. Given the lack of comparative data however, the speed study neither verifies nor discounts that traffic moved faster during the pilot period.

Figure 21

How did you travel on South Lake Avenue?

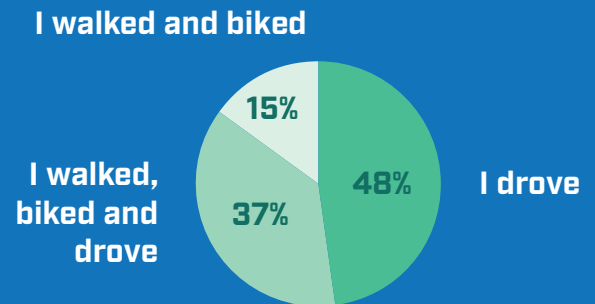


Figure 22

Do you have any suggestions for improving the travel experience on South Lake Avenue?

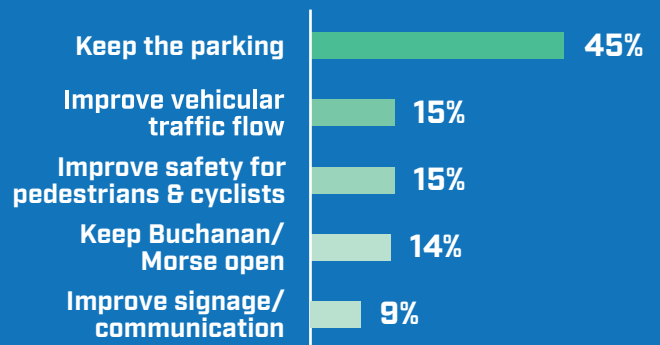
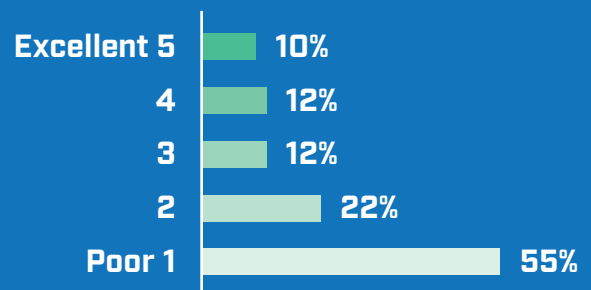


Figure 23

Overall, how would you rate the temporary road reconfiguration of South Lake Avenue?



FREE TROLLEY SERVICE PILOT

For the first time ever, the Duluth Transit Authority, in partnership with the City of Duluth, provided free trolley service throughout the summer season (June through September 2018). Previously, trolley rides were available for 50 cents a ride. During the pilot period, the daily service ran every 30 minutes from 11:30 am to 7:30 pm, which was an extension beyond its normal schedule.

The graph in Figure 24 illustrates how free admission to the trolley dramatically increased ridership. As a result, 2018 saw the highest ridership numbers in history with 28,332 rides in total. 2017 also saw a spike in ridership as compared to previous years, but this also is attributed to the fact that over 9,500 rides that year were provided for free.

Overall, there is tremendous opportunity to elevate the role that the trolley plays in moving people throughout downtown Duluth and Canal Park.

Figure 24

Trolley ridership in the summers of 2017 and 2018:

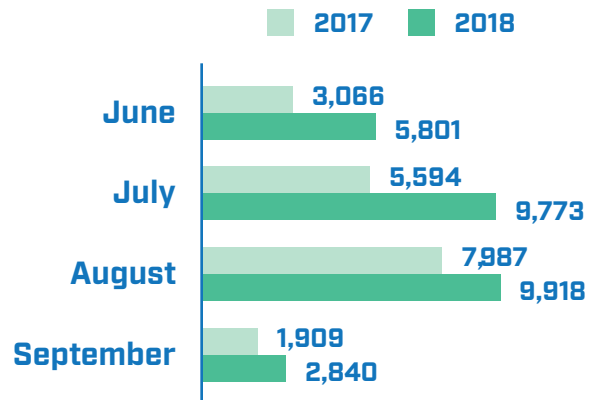
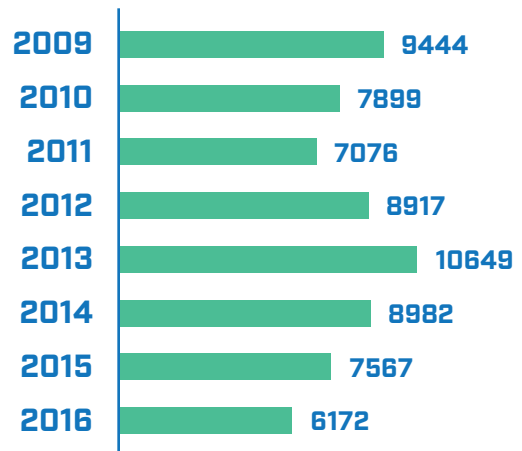


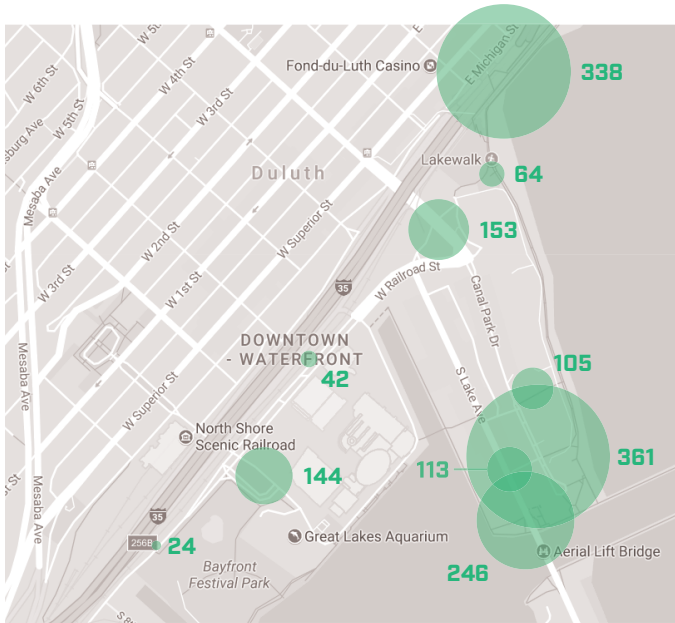
Figure 25

Trolley ridership from 2009 - 2016:

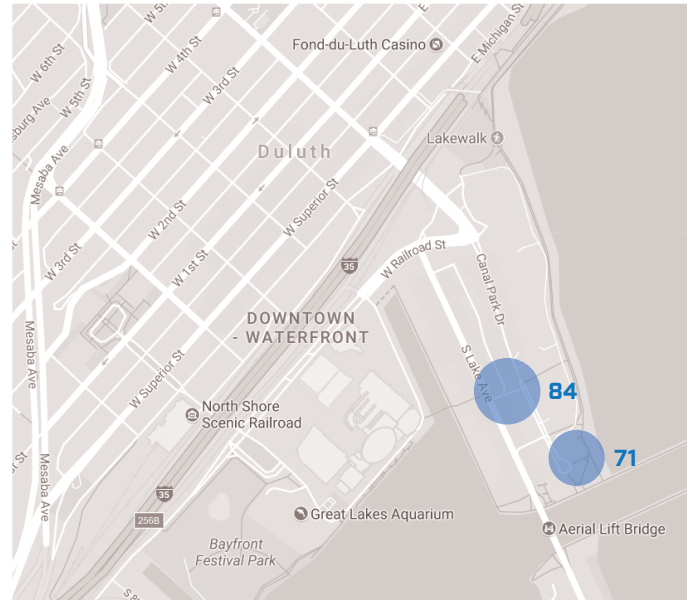


PUBLIC LIFE STUDIES

Figure 26 Travel Counts & Activity Mapping: Saturday, Sept. 8, 2018, 1-2 pm



Travel Counts (Pedestrians & Cyclists)



Stationary Activity Mapping

With the help of volunteers, the team conducted Public Life Studies to observe non-vehicular traffic flow and street activity in and around Canal Park. The data provided a glimpse into where people access Canal Park and where they spend their time.

The Lakewalk is the most popular way for pedestrians and cyclists to access Canal Park from downtown, followed by the Canal Park Drive overpass (Figure 26). Whenever there are events at the DECC, the Great Lakes Aquarium or the Bayfront Festival Park, there is an increase in people crossing the South 5th Avenue W overpass (as seen on the day of observation). A significant number of people also walk or bike across the lift bridge towards Park Point. Within Canal Park, the intersection of Canal Park Drive and Morse St sees the greatest amount of foot and bike traffic. This is not surprising as it is one of the entry points to the Lakewalk, and along the route to

attractions like the Maritime Visitor Center and the pier by the lift bridge.

We documented the types of activities people engaged in at the Buchanan Street Plaza and the Lighthouse Park experiments. Comparing the travel counts and the people counted in the two public spaces during peak hour of 1 - 2 pm on Saturday afternoon, we can roughly estimate that one out of five visitors travelling through the area spent time lingering in either spaces. While most visitors at the Buchanan Street Plaza were simply sitting at the tables, the activities were more diverse at the Lighthouse Park: 28 percent of the visitors were children playing, 28 percent were standing, and another 27 percent were sitting. 14 percent of the visitors were customers of the mobile cafe on site. This again shows the significance of design and programming, such as play elements and food vendors.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on a combination of community feedback from all phases of the Imagine Canal Park process, evaluations of the pilot projects, analysis of local conditions, City of Duluth staff input, and 8 80 Cities’ experience of working in more than 250 cities of all sizes around the world.

1. Continue to experiment.

Imagine Canal Park gave everyone in Duluth the creative license to think big about the future of Canal Park. It also provided the opportunity to move from thinking and talking about the future to implementing and testing new public spaces, programs, and events. None of these experiments were perfect and some worked better than others. Support for Cold Front February was nearly unanimous,

while the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing had mixed results and mostly negative reviews. Each pilot project implemented taught us all something new about Canal Park and the preferences of the people who spend time there. The challenge now is to fine-tune and scale up the projects that were successful, and to learn from the projects that triggered less positive responses and unintended impacts.

1.1 Institute pilot projects as a standard engagement strategy in future projects



One of the main reasons why Imagine Canal Park was able to engage so many people in the future of the area was thanks to the pilot project aspect. Residents were able to see, touch, feel, and experience temporary changes to the area, and go beyond thinking theoretically about the future of the space. Going forward, piloting should be a standard step that’s built into the budget and process of high profile, potentially controversial projects.

1.2 Engage more citizens and stakeholders in building and evaluating the pilots

While there was a high degree of participation from citizens in testing out and providing feedback on the pilot projects, future piloting processes would benefit from involving more citizens in the actual design, physical construction, and evaluation of the pilots. Particularly, consider limiting the number of pilot projects to ensure quality and incorporating multiple methods of evaluation.

Creating “tactical teams” with representation from citizen volunteers can help enhance the City’s capacity to deliver high quality pilots while also creating more community ownership over the process. Directly involving students from University of Minnesota Duluth, the Collage of St. Scholastica, and Lake Superior College is also an option for increasing local engagement in the projects.

2. Invest in active transportation infrastructure to, from, and throughout Canal Park.

Accommodating high parking demand and traffic flow, while supporting the beauty, amenities and businesses of Canal Park has been a consistent challenge that community members have discussed throughout the Imagine Canal Park engagement process. Driving is currently the most convenient way to

get to and from Canal Park. However, the only way to improve the traffic situation in Canal Park in the long-run is to make walking, biking, and public transit the most convenient and comfortable modes of getting to and from the area.

2.1 Continue and improve free trolley service

The trolley ridership this summer grew 53 percent compared to the summer of 2017 after the admissions were made free from June to September. In 2017, rides were free only from August 4 to September 4, and on the Imagine Canal Park project launch day on September 12. While this is a significant gain, there is still room for growth especially in the “shoulder months” of June and September. First, the City and DTA should increase the frequency of the service from every 30 minutes to every 15 minutes. Recognizing the budgetary limitations to acquiring new trolleys, the partners can explore using DTA buses or other types of vans or shuttles in the current fleet for a test run.

If the demand continues to grow, the partners then can make the case for investing in new vehicles. Second, the partners should improve the visibility of trolley stops through larger and more visible signage at each stop (on signage posts and/or sidewalk decals) along with trolley schedules, and potentially seating and shelters. Third, continue to partner with hotels and businesses in downtown Duluth and Canal Park to promote the free trolley service to visitors. The route maps distributed to visitors could include advertisements or coupons to attract the buy-in of businesses and help visitors make the connection between taking the trolley and visiting these businesses.

2.2 Improve walking experience between downtown Duluth and Canal Park

To help manage the amount of vehicular traffic in Canal Park and to create a more cohesive downtown environment, it is imperative to improve the pedestrian connection between Canal Park and downtown Duluth. This was a key recommendation that came out of the initial September 2017 engagements. Unfortunately, aside from the wayfinding pilot,

it was not feasible to pilot any of the other recommendations related to improving this linkage in time for the September 2018 pilot period. Nonetheless, improving this connection continues to be a key strategy to improve the overall traffic management and visitor/local experience in Canal Park.

2.3 Increase bike parking in Canal Park



Example of a bike rack that also functions as public art in Macon, GA. Photo: 41NBC-WMGT

We consistently heard that there is too little bike parking in Canal Park. New bike racks should be placed close to Canal Park's most popular destinations. If the designs of the

racks are made to reflect the character and unique history of Canal Park, they can double as public art even when they are not being used.

3. Improve communication and coordination around vehicular access to Canal Park.

Parking has long been a challenge in Canal Park. Until it is more attractive, comfortable and convenient to walk, bike, and take transit to Canal Park, people will often choose to drive and park in the area. However, Canal Park is not alone in its experience. Vibrant downtowns and well-traveled urban destinations all over the country are known for their charm and attractions. In nearly all these places, it is difficult to find ample, cheap parking.

Currently, nearly half of Canal Park’s open space is dedicated to surface parking. A new parking ramp in Canal Park would come at an

estimated cost of \$20,000 per parking space. We also heard that Canal Park’s parking lots frequently reach capacity on weekends from June to September and during special events. While drivers’ frustrations should be taken into account, the parking challenges that only occur seasonally should not dictate multi-million dollar infrastructure investments that would go underused the rest of the year.

A more cost-effective approach would be to effectively manage existing spaces in and around Canal Park, and to inform visitors of different parking options that are available.

3.1 Invest in parking guidance systems

Parking guidance systems can help improve traffic flow by displaying real-time information about how many parking spots are available in a parking lot/area. This system relies on sensors that are installed at a cost of \$300 - \$500 per parking space. By communicating to drivers this information, the system dissuades drivers from entering or circling a parking lot that might already be full. Moreover, if this information is displayed in a strategic location just outside of Canal Park or is accessible via a phone app, it may have the effect of: a) managing expectations and frustrations related to parking, b) reducing congestion on South Lake Ave. and Canal Park Drive caused by drivers circling in search of parking spaces, and c) signaling to drivers that it may be wiser to park in a location further away.



Example of an information board as part of a parking guidance system in downtown Milwaukee, WI. Photo: Scott Wise

3.2 Actively promote parking located outside of Canal Park to targeted audiences

There are many parking areas just outside of Canal Park that remain severely underused. For example, there are at least five parking ramps offering hundreds of parking spaces within a 15-minute walk of the DeWitt-Seitz building. Recognizing that not every person coming to Canal Park has the time or ability to walk half a mile, this option should be especially promoted to out of town visitors who are already going out of their way to spend the

day at Canal Park. Partnering with downtown hotels, Visit Duluth, and Canal Park businesses to promote these ramps as an option can help spread the knowledge that there are alternatives to parking in Canal Park. The City should also work to improve the pedestrian experience via the Minnesota Slip Bridge from the DECC, as well as the access points along the Lakewalk.

3.3 Partner with Canal Park hotels to efficiently make use of underutilized parking spaces

Hotels typically have a good sense of how many parking spaces they'll need for their guests on a day-to-day basis. Currently, many hotels in Canal Park have surface parking lots that are reserved only for guests. Parking spaces remain empty if there isn't enough demand from hotel guests. Sometimes, these parking spaces stay empty even while many of the surrounding public lots fill up. The first step

is to start the conversation with hotel partners to better understand the potential for some hotel parking to flexibly double as non-guest parking, and what the benefits and logistics of doing so would look like. To start, City staff can work with hotel partners to pilot this idea, assess the impact, and make iterative changes to improve it along the way.

4. Expand the wayfinding system to downtown Duluth.

Overall, survey respondents viewed wayfinding as a welcome addition to Canal Park even though it would primarily benefit tourists. To make the wayfinding system even more useful,

the wayfinding elements should extend to downtown Duluth and possibly even Park Point.

4.1 Use sidewalk decals more strategically



Example of wayfinding sidewalk decals in Fall River, MA. Photo: WalkBoston

The sidewalk stickers were the most visible wayfinding element that was piloted and yet survey respondents were least clear about their purpose. In the future, sidewalk decals should serve more of a wayfinding purpose. For instance, at the entrance to the Lakewalk

on Superior Street, a sidewalk decal could indicate the direction and walking time to Canal Park. Likewise, a sidewalk decal in Canal Park could indicate the direction and walking time to Superior Street.

4.2 Increase the dimensions and font size of the small directional signs

Some survey respondents indicated that the size of the directional signs is too small. Compared to the sidewalk decals and the large informational signs, they were the easiest to be

overlooked on the street. Increasing the size of the signs and the text on the sign would make these signs more noticeable and legible from a distance.

4.3 Increase number of large informational signs



The 8-foot tall informational maps were well-used, especially by out of town visitors to Canal Park. Increasing the number of these signs would also provide a stronger and consistent visual branding presence in Canal Park. In locations where people are approaching the sign from opposite sides, the sign should be double-sided. These signs would be especially more effective if they were placed at key locations in downtown Duluth, clearly highlighting the walkable distances between downtown Duluth and Canal Park.

4.4 Include information to attractions outside of Canal Park

Community members suggested that the City could use the wayfinding signage to promote destinations just outside of Canal Park. For example, there are beautiful beaches and parks in Park Point that are all public amenities. Visitors who are already in Canal Park can venture past the lift bridge to explore

this part of the city. Other points of interest in downtown Duluth are also walkable from Canal Park and would be beneficial to highlight. Partner with Visit Duluth to explore how the three types of wayfinding signage can direct visitors to different attractions in the city and play a role in enhancing their stay in Duluth.

5. Transform Buchanan into a flexible, shared street.

There is currently a high volume of pedestrian crossing activity at all points along Buchanan Street. By transforming Buchanan into a shared street, also known as a “woonerf”, it keeps the road open to cars while also increasing the safety and comfort of pedestrians. Shared streets are typically found in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity.

They are designed in such a way that blurs the division between vehicles and pedestrians. People using different modes of transportation share the same space, but pedestrians have the highest priority. If desired, small bollards, planters, street furniture, and/or special paving can be used to demarcate the areas where cars should not go.

5.1 Go curbless



Left: Bell Street, Seattle, WA [NACTO]; top right: River Street, Batavia, IL [Active Transportation Alliance]; bottom right: James Hirsch Place, Winnipeg, MB [Sandy James]

The curbless aspect of a shared street has many benefits. Vehicles travelling on curbless streets are more likely to display caution and reduce their speeds. This is because the design of the street forces different users to negotiate the space with one another via

increased eye contact, hand signals, and reduced speeds. Curbless streets are also flexible streets, providing more opportunities for programming and activation, as is explained in recommendation 5.3 below.

5.2 Test out regular, timed closures



Long table dinner on River Street, Batavia, IL. Photo: Batavia Main Street

A curbless street allows for greater flexibility at different times of the day, days of the week, and weeks of the year. Once the shared street is in place, City staff can test regular, timed closures of the street during known peak times, e.g. summer weekends, from 11 a.m. – 9 p.m. allowing for the mass of pedestrians to flow more freely and safely through the space. During this time, regular programming such as

vendors, seating, and music programming will make it more inviting for people to spend time in the space. In addition, the shared street will be a major asset during major festivals and events in Canal Park at any time of year. The curbless aspect of the design allows the space to easily transform into a plaza atmosphere, as opposed to feeling like a road closure.

5.3 Promote Buchanan as a programmable space

During the Buchanan Plaza pilot period, City staff organized for buskers to perform in the space during lunch and dinner time. Should Buchanan Street become a shared street that can accommodate programming, there should

be a well-known, streamlined application process for buskers, artists, businesses and vendors, community programmers, and other event organizers to use and program the space.

6. Consider a more balanced approach to reconfiguring South Lake Avenue.

The South Lake Avenue Re-Routing pilot was designed to improve traffic flow over all else. Most evidence and feedback we collected affirmed that it likely worked, however, we also heard that pedestrian safety and on-street parking must also be priorities. By removing parking and adding a driving lane on South Lake Ave., the South Lake Avenue Re-Routing pilot project had the unintended effect of making the walking and biking experience more uncomfortable. Even prior to the pilot

project, we had heard that there are many conflicts between people walking and those who are driving on South Lake Avenue. This is due to the combination of narrow sidewalks, high volume of both cars and pedestrians, few marked crossings, and high frequency of pedestrian crossing activity. Major priorities moving forward are to improve the pedestrian experience on South Lake Avenue and to develop a more rigorous understanding of traffic patterns on this corridor.

6.1 Provide higher visibility crosswalks



Example of improved visibility of a crosswalk. Photo: John D. Simmons

Given the pedestrian and vehicular patterns on South Lake Avenue, the existing painted crossings are insufficient. Where possible, it is advisable to install button-activated pedestrian crossing lights. Another option is to provide curb bulb outs at all painted crossings along

South Lake Avenue. This has the effect of shortening pedestrian crossing distances while also enhancing the visibility of pedestrians to drivers. If funding is an issue, temporary curb bulb outs can be created with sidewalk paint and plastic bollards.

6.2 Provide traffic calming interventions

Canal Park Drive has brick paving, trees, and wide sidewalks –all of which work together to discourage speeding and to create an overall pleasant walking environment. South Lake Avenue lacks all these elements. Despite the many businesses that line the street, South Lake Avenue feels more like a thoroughfare rather than an inviting destination. Traffic calming devices such as speed bumps or speed tables can help maintain lower driving speeds. Where a speed table coincides with a crossing, like the mid-block crosswalk between the 310 Pub and The Suites Hotel, it can be designed as a raised crosswalk.

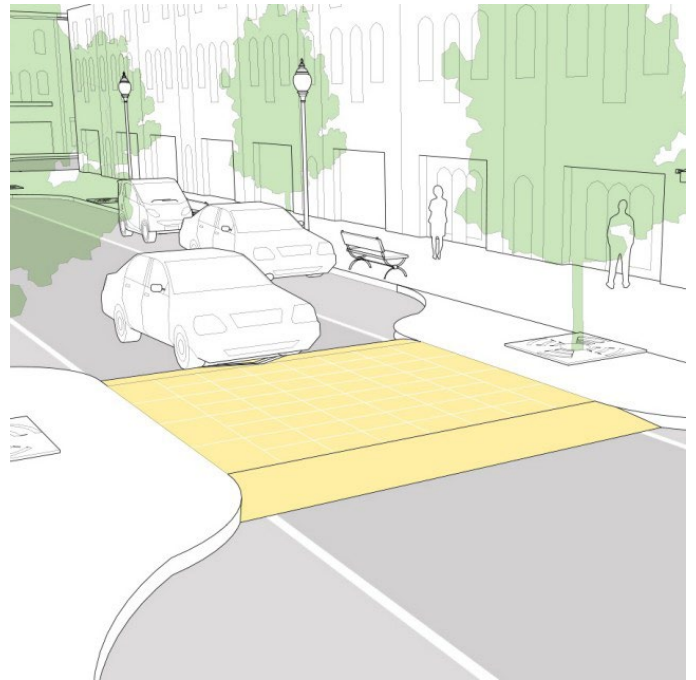


Illustration of a speed table. Image: NACTO

6.3 Designate Canal Park a 20 mph zone

The current speed limit throughout Canal Park is 30 mph. However, Canal Park has the highest concentration of pedestrian activity in all of Duluth and therefore should have different rules for the road. Vision Zero, a multi-national road safety project that aims to achieve zero road deaths, advocates for cities to adopt 20 mph speed limits on all their residential streets. The reasoning

behind this is when a pedestrian is struck by a driver going 20 mph, their chance of surviving is 90%. If struck by a driver going 30 mph, the pedestrian's chance of surviving lowers to 50%. Even though Canal Park is not primarily a residential area, instituting and enforcing a lower speed limit would help create the pedestrian-friendly environment that community members have been calling for.

6.4 Retain on-street parking possibilities

We heard that despite the improvements in traffic flow due to the re-routing pilot, the on-street parking in Canal Park was too valuable to lose, especially for those with mobility challenges, people who are making a quick stop into a business, and locals who choose to patronize Canal Park businesses during off-peak seasons/hours. The pilot also

highlighted the role of parking in providing greater separation between moving cars and pedestrian activity on the sidewalk. As will be explored in the next point, staff require a better understanding of traffic and parking patterns on South Lake Avenue prior to determining the number and location of parking spaces to retain in the final plan for the street.

6.5 Develop a more thorough understanding of vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns on South Lake Avenue before making a permanent reconfiguration



The re-routing of South Lake Avenue taught us many things, but it also raised some more questions about how the street should function. We know that the number of cars using South Lake Avenue varies throughout the day and year, but we don't know by how much. Evaluating how the street is used over time can tell us when a problem exists and doesn't exist, and when one challenge should take priority over all others. Time-lapse video can help provide the City with data about how many vehicles pass through the space and whether it's local or through traffic. DEDA's parking studies should be conducted for the

on-street parking along South Lake Avenue and not just for the public and private lots abutting, which is currently the case. In doing so, we can better understand parking patterns on the street over the course of a year, as well as how to invest parking revenue in Canal Park.

Last but not least, conducting pedestrian counts and studying pedestrian crossing patterns and pinch points on South Lake Avenue will help determine how equitably space is being distributed throughout the day/week/year. All this data and information can help inform a design that can better and more efficiently balance all the needs of different road users. For example, having this information could potentially allow a more flexible management approach to the corridor, allowing greater pedestrian use during peak times while also allowing parking/vehicular use at other times. The re-routing pilot project highlighted the complexity of this corridor and that we need more conclusive evidence before making any permanent changes.

7. Increase opportunities for play near the water.



7.1 Transform a portion of the Lighthouse Lot into a year-round kids' play area

While many people agree that there is a lack of opportunities for play in Canal Park, the Lighthouse Park pilot project generated a mixed response and demonstrated several design and programming challenges that need to be addressed. The large size of the lot and its relatively distant location from most retail businesses in Canal Park meant that it was not easy to fill up all the seats and tables that were set up during the pilot. When paired with the already increasing anxiety over parking spaces, the lot closure did not sit well with many survey respondents. To strike a balance, a portion of the Lighthouse Lot that is closer to the lake can be transformed into a play area. This way, the most beautiful view of the lake

and lift bridge can be preserved for people, while some existing parking spaces can be retained. The play area should be designed in such a way that it will appeal to families throughout the year, including in the winter. For example, a portion of the play area can be designed to be easily turned into a skating rink in the winter.

The City should discuss forming a partnership with the Maritime Visitor Center to explore opportunities to activate both a portion of the Lighthouse Lot and the adjacent green space to the south through children-friendly design and programming.

7.2 Provide wind protection at the Lighthouse Lot

Although its proximity to the lake provided great views, the strong winds made it difficult for people to linger. One way to provide wind protection is to plant large coniferous trees parallel to the lakefront to help shield the space from wind year-round. Another option is

to design and install wind protection structures such as a pavilion or panels, using materials like perforated metal or colored glass to limit obstruction to views of the lake, and creating new opportunities for public art.

7.3 Increase recreational opportunities along the Lakewalk



Example of recreational opportunities in Kalvebod-Waves Waterfront Park, Copenhagen. Photo: Klar Arkitekter, JDS Architects

The Lakewalk Trail is a popular walking path frequented by locals and visitors alike. In addition to seating and wayfinding, there is an opportunity to rebrand the area around the Lighthouse Lot to be the trailhead of the Lakewalk/Baywalk. The emphasis should be

on creating small family-friendly gathering/ resting spaces along the path that incorporate seating and play elements such as swings and teeter-totters. The green space between the carriage way and the multi-use path is an ideal location for such uses.

8. Grow and expand Cold Front February events.

With a 96% approval rating, Cold Front February resonated with almost everyone who attended it. Whereas Bentleyville builds excitement leading up to the holidays, the goal of Cold Front is to celebrate and embrace winter in Canal Park. This year's event was

successful thanks to a full schedule of programming for all ages and participation from local businesses. The following recommendations aim to make the event even more inviting in future years.



8.1 More vendors and programming

Overall, event participants were very satisfied with the programming at Cold Front. The simplest way to make it even better is to do more of it. Respondents would like to see

more hot food and beverage vendors, beer stations and ice bars, as well as winter-specific programming like ice sculptures.

8.2 Provide more comfortable restrooms

Providing bathroom trailers instead of portable toilets would encourage people, especially families, to stay longer at the event. Another option is to partner with local businesses to allow for attendees of the Cold Front Festival to

use their bathrooms. Participating businesses can post a sticker or sign in their window indicating that their bathrooms are open to the public.



8.3 Maintain the skating trail throughout the winter

The ice-skating trail along the Lakewalk was a huge hit, attracting over 200 people per day during the two weeks that it was open. On its busiest day, it saw almost 900 ice skaters. Building on last year's success, this upcoming Cold Front's ice trail should be available for

at minimum the entire duration of Cold Front February, if not the entire winter season. On weekends, additional programming such as a rotating line-up of outdoor DJs can help provide a more festive atmosphere to the ice-skating trail.

8.4 Recruit volunteers

Hosting Cold Front is a huge production that requires a lot of human resources. If the festival hopes to grow in the future, it will need a lot more support. Now that the festival

has established itself, it's a good time to start recruiting volunteers to help supervise, animate, set up and tear down the event grounds.



NEXT STEPS



MOVING FORWARD

The most important legacy of Imagine Canal Park is the dialogue it started in September 2017 and has continued ever since. From the initial outreach and stakeholder meetings to planning the pilot projects to documenting the outcomes, community engagement has been a core component in each phase of Imagine Canal Park. To create a brighter future in Canal Park, the conversations and engagement that began one year ago must continue.

Imagine Canal Park helped raise expectations that real change and improvement will happen when people contribute ideas to a planning process. Whatever improvements are made to Canal Park going forward, it is critical that this expectation is met by continuing to involve and seek input from the many residents, business owners, organizations, and other stakeholders that contributed to this process.

The next steps in the Imagine Canal Park process should include:

- **Reporting back the results of the Imagine Canal Park process to community members, key stakeholders, and City:** In doing so, the local team will be able to gather additional feedback on the results and recommendations that came out of this year-long process.
- **Work with community members to develop priorities moving forward:** As it becomes clear which recommendations the City can feasibly move forward on, staff can continue to consult with community groups to inform and refine the approaches to implementing future changes to Canal Park. Forming a steering committee with representation from residents of different neighborhoods, Canal Park businesses, and community/advocacy groups will help ensure that different perspectives are taken into account moving forward.
- **Continue to work with the community to pilot and implement improvements to the area:** There are several themes and recommendations that came out of the September 2017 round of community engagements that were not included in the scope of the 2018 pilot project phase. They are nonetheless still important and relevant to explore in the grand scheme of improving the Canal Park experience for all. Using the lessons learned from the Imagine Canal Park process, it's important to continue to engage community members to test and refine these ideas as well.

