



Request for Proposals

Concept Master Plan

Hermantown Uptown

Proposals Due:

February 4th, 2025

4:30PM

SUMMARY

The City of Hermantown seeks a highly qualified consulting firm (or team of firms) with experience in urban design, community development, and citizen engagement to develop a concept master plan with the intent of creating a destination, mixed-use district in the city's marketplace. With roots in the 2011 Advance Hermantown public engagement process, our community seeks to create a district of economic vitality where community gathering fosters a sense of place by engendering a hometown atmosphere. The concept master plan will create a cohesive vision for a vibrant mixed-use, walkable district that promotes residential, commercial, and civic uses while incorporating community-oriented spaces.

The City of Hermantown will soon be completing its MyTown 2040 Comprehensive Plan update which calls for a focused area of higher density mixed-use development. The City intends to solicit a private development partner to create a strategic Public-Private Partnership for a catalytic development on city owned parcels within the study area. As housing is a cornerstone of economic success and district vibrancy, Hermantown is also conducting an analysis of residential market potential for the study area to inform the process.



The City envisions the resulting master plan will provide a 10-15 year roadmap that guides the City, the community, and development partners in future development. The intent is to create tangible outcomes from the plan that promote opportunities, anticipate up-coming community needs, and create a program for future growth. The small area master plan will serve as a foundational document that provides a detailed strategic vision for years to come.

The project will be managed on a day-to-day basis by City staff. An Advisory Committee, chaired by a member of the Hermantown Economic Development Authority (HEDA) and consisting of community members, area employers, and project stakeholders will guide the process and provide regular input to the project team

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE - 2025

- RFP formally announced and distributed — Monday, January 6th
- RFP questions due — Friday, January 10th, 4:30PM
- Question answers posted at hermantownmn.gov — Monday, January 13th
- **Deadline for receipt of proposals — Tuesday, February 4th, 4:30PM**
- COH reviews submissions/narrows list of finalists week of — February 10th
- COH conducts interviews of finalist's week of — February 17th
- COH notification of selection — Friday, February 28th
- Contract negotiation complete — Tuesday, March 18th
- Final contract approval — Thursday, March 27th

Proposals will be accepted until **4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 4th, 2025**. Digital proposal submittals are to have "Uptown Master Plan" in the subject line. Digital copies should be submitted to Chad Ronchetti, Economic Development Director via email to cronchetti@hermantownmn.com. File size is limited to 25MB. Additionally, please deliver or mail six (6) bound hard copies to:

Hermantown Economic Development Authority

RE: Comprehensive Housing Study

5105 Maple Grove Road

Hermantown, MN 55811

Proposals received after 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 4th, 2025
will not be accepted.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The story of Hermantown is one of key waves of growth where independent, dynamic people have carved out a hometown with the support of government. Pioneering early residents raised their hand to partner with the government for an opportunity to own a piece of this unique wilderness by living on it, working it, and improving it. During the Great Depression, the federal government built "subsistence homestead" projects designed to move people trapped in poverty from the cities to new homes in rural or suburban locations. One of the two Minnesota projects was in the Town of Herman. Completed in 1937, the Jackson Project built 84 homesteads with a brick veneer farmhouse and five or ten acres of land. Many of the families who bravely opted into the lottery to determine original ownership of the Jackson Project homes still have those houses in their families today – a testament to the success of the project.

With the Jackson Project marking the start of the transition transition from rural to suburban for the Town of Herman. A few decades later, it was time for another wave of growth to come to the township. This time, it was the suburbanites of the 1950s, who came from Duluth to the more-rural Hermantown with its low taxes, open space, strong school district, and proximity to the airport and its military-related jobs.



Today the City of Hermantown has grown to more than 10,000 residents and is one of the only communities in Northern Minnesota to be increasing in population. As a world-class hometown, Hermantown has become well known for its special balance of large-city amenities, while still maintaining a country feel.

PROJECT PRINCIPLES

During the 2011 Advance Hermantown initiative, community participants conveyed a desire to create a center to our community; a downtown-style commercial core where the community can gather. Our city has aspirations for a place with a uniquely Hermantown identity that acts as a gathering place and brings us together to live and share our lives: a mixed-use commercial core. The City seeks to create a Concept Master Plan to better attract private investment, and to guide the creation of a community center infused with our identity. The intent of the Concept Master Plan is to align land uses, public infrastructure, and buildings with the values of our community.



The City intends to utilize this plan as 10-15 year roadmap for the community and development partners. The guidance of community input, stakeholder feedback, and quality partners are critical components of the master planning process, and the following Project Principles will serve as the key guides for the overall approach. These three principles will serve to keep discussions focused and intentional, providing a grounding reference to the foundational elements our outcomes will be measured against.



PROJECT PRINCIPLES

CULTURE

Uptown will imbue our community's culture of balance between big-city amenities, country living, and a small-town feel. As one of the few growing northern Minnesota cities, Hermantown seeks to remain a welcoming community that continually fosters the heart of what it means to be a special hometown through a cohesive, vibrant, and exciting Uptown at the Hermantown Marketplace that aligns with the community's next natural evolutionary step.

ECONOMY

This special opportunity will provide for the creation and development of an Uptown mixed-use district where: economic vitality meets community gathering space; sense of place is fostered through residential and commercial connections that engender a hometown atmosphere; and create a destination that generates everyday social and mercantile activities across multiple generations.

CONNECTION

Connection to the built environment is crucial to creating a unique sense of place. Hermantown's future Main Street and connecting lanes will have well-appointed streetscapes that promote walkability and encourage patronage and commerce. Uptown will provide a community space that brings people together and emboldens our already-strong community spirit. This new neighborhood design of mixed housing types and commercial architecture will engage the senses, strongly tie to Hermantown's unique past, and cultivate connections to people and place.

STUDY AREA

The proposed Uptown Study Area includes the developable area within the bounds of Maple Grove Road to the north, Haines Road to the east, Anderson Road to the south, and Stebner Road to the west in the City of Hermantown, MN.

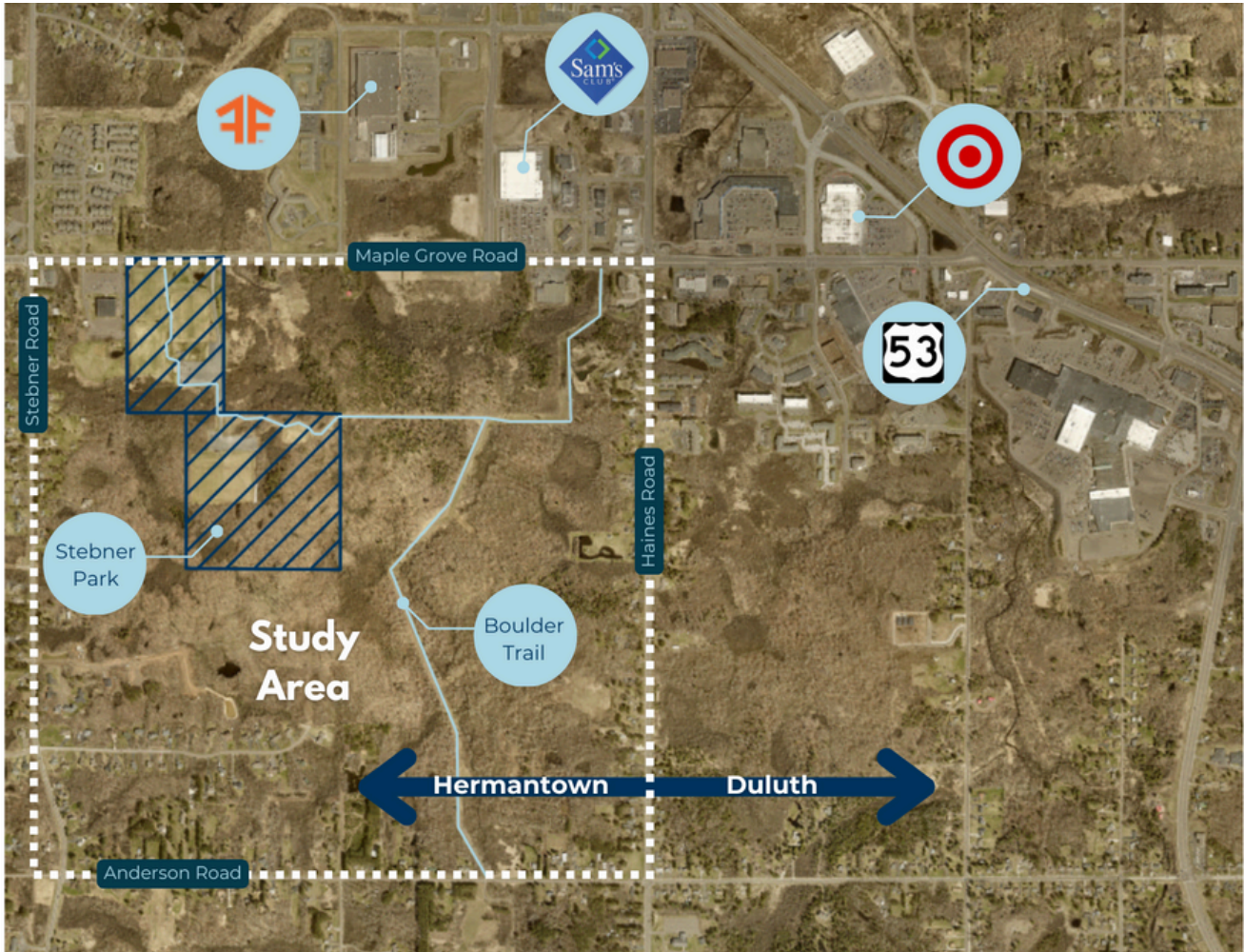
The the area surrounding the Study Area is experiencing development pressure because of its status as the regional commercial center for the region, resulting in growth from private investment. The Study Area is well positioned to serve as Hermantown's commercial core, community center, and act as the transition from our more densely developed area to the east and Hermantown's traditional residential neighborhoods to the west. The site is a prime candidate for destination shopping, dining, living, working, and recreating.



The City of Hermantown currently has site control of 65 acres which exist as Stebner Park today. The initial first phase of development is anticipated to begin on city controlled parcels through a Public-Private Partnership with a qualified real estate developer, to be selected through a Request for Qualifications during the planning process. Other developable areas within the study area are owned by a number of other stakeholders with a range of development plans. Some stakeholders may help increase the scope of the first phase of development through their involvement.

The study area is bifurcated by the Boulder Trail, a paved multi-use trail that is a part of the Hermantown Connector Trail System. The trail was constructed above a new trunk sewer line completed in 2021, opening the study area to development. The trail will act as the connecting public amenity that serves as the multimodal access for Uptown.

STUDY AREA MAP



SCOPE OF SERVICES

In partnership with City staff, with guidance from the HEDA Advisory Committee, the selected team – led by a Landscape Architecture/ Urban Design firm – will be responsible for creating a plan that balances urban design, transportation planning, land use analysis, and community engagement. The multi-disciplinary planning team will be responsible for delivering a comprehensive Concept Master Plan. The City of Hermantown has identified what we believe to be pertinent components and deliverables. However, the consultant and/or City may identify additional intermediate deliverables when the final scope of work is negotiated. Within the proposal, consultant teams are encouraged to include any additional/alternative components or deliverables they see as necessary based on their professional expertise and knowledge.

1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Lead the overall project to ensure that objectives are met and Project Principles are followed. Staff will support the consultant team in all aspects of the project. Consultant will provide regular updates to the staff and Advisory Board and will present updates to the HEDA and City Council.
 - Performed by a professional team of staff that adheres to the guiding principles previously listed.
 - Regular communication with City staff.
- *Deliverables:*
 - *Agendas, minutes, materials and lead meeting facilitation throughout the process.*
 - *Documentation from all meetings, correspondences, site visits and workshops.*
 - *Presentations to policy makers, including: HEDA, City Council, and other commissions or stakeholder groups as needed.*



2. COMMUNITY & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Develop a comprehensive participation program that encompasses public engagement activities at each phase of the project.
 - Public engagement is to gather local knowledge and experience from members of the general public, business owners, and key stakeholders. Vital to the development and success of the plan, the consultant must facilitate participation and interaction of residents, property owners, business owners and leaders, community organizations, City officials, and stakeholders.
 - At a minimum, the public engagement and participation plan should:
 - Include working group meetings with the HEDA Advisory Board, HEDA, and City Council.
 - Utilize a mix of in-person interactive activities at open houses, social media, online polling, and in-person work sessions. City staff will be available to aid in the implementation of the public engagement plan.
 - The public participatory process should be creatively designed to seek out and involve residents and other stakeholders who are unlikely to participate in standard meeting style community engagement processes.
 - The process must ensure that participation is reflective of current and future citizenry and visitors. The overall goal of the participatory process is to increase the community ownership of the final product.
 - *Deliverables:*
 - *Communications documents for distribution to the public and stakeholders (i.e., emails, letters, articles, social media posts).*
 - *Meeting notes and summaries focused on topics/outcomes for each engagement activity.*
 - *Final engagement report that details all engagement activities and the way that community input shaped the master plan.*



3. ANALYSIS OF MARKET CONDITIONS

- The analysis will serve as a guide for the city and its selected private development partner to execute future projects, gain insight into the current market conditions and potential for commercial development, and to diversify revenue sources by leveraging Uptown's unique assets and strengths.
- Residential analysis will not be part of the scope of work for current market conditions.
 - The city is currently contracted with Volk/Zimmerman to develop an analysis of residential market potential that will identify the potential for new dwelling units in the Study Area based on housing preference and economic capabilities of target households, the existing conditions, and characteristics of the site, as well as the City's development objectives.
- The consultant team will outline current and future demand for:
 - Retail, restaurant, service, office, and business.
 - The intent is to leverage the identified target market housing types to inform the demand for the other developed mix of uses.
- *Deliverables:*
 - *Market analysis for new/additional uses including market absorption estimates.*



4. VISION & PLACEMAKING



- This is where the Project Principles are of the utmost criticality. The City desires to create and integrate placemaking as part of the larger Uptown master planning effort. The consultant team will work with the City and project stakeholders in developing an achievable vision for a long-term future land uses, design standards, and character of Uptown.
 - Identify opportunities for creating a district identity and sense of place that adheres to the Project Principles.
- Create a vehicular and pedestrian circulation plan.
- Create a design of unique & quality streetscape components including hardscape elements, light fixtures, seating, litter receptacles, bike racks, wayfinding signage, landscape, plantings, etc., that will create a cohesive Uptown identity. Placemaking is of the utmost importance to the outcomes of this plan.
- *Deliverables:*
 - *A summary of findings including maps, graphics, charts, cost estimates, and photos identifying a unified vision for Uptown Hermantown. This section shall also include goals, objectives and strategies for achieving this overall vision.*
 - *Propose three (3) design concepts for land use, density, building heights, and the integration of public spaces. The purpose of multiple concept plans is to provide contrasting visions and a process to evaluate and articulate a vision.*
 - *Design guidelines, building and structural elements, streetscape, and wayfinding,*
 - *Solutions for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking, and connections to existing and proposed transportation networks.*
 - *A summary of the data collection and analysis including a comparison of similar communities.*

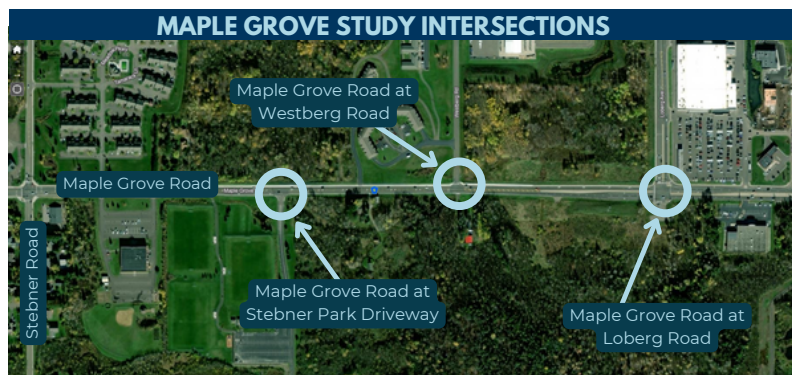
5. ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC AMENITY NEEDS

- Evaluate potential public amenity options such as a public square, splashpads, and publicly owned entertainment venue within Uptown. The evaluation will include options for shared parking including connections to trails, infrastructure to support recreation, and facilities to support expanded public activities.
- *Deliverables:*
 - *A written report about the analysis conducted and options evaluated. The report will include the following:*
 - *Narrative describing how suggested improvements advance the Project Principles;*
 - *An explanation of how suggested improvements meet the identified needs, both future and existing, of public amenities;*
 - *Color maps depicting options for recreational and publicly owned amenities*
 - *Estimates of development costs including land acquisition, grading, infrastructure, and construction.*



6. TRANSPORTATION STUDY

- In coordination with the St. Louis County Public Works Department, a transportation evaluation will be conducted as a part of this study. Analysis of existing conditions, access, and potential impacts/connections to the existing road network from potential development will be completed. The outcome of the transportation study will support and guide proposed infrastructure improvements for the corridors surrounding the study area. The study will include:
 - Maple Grove Road (CSAH 6) Corridor Study
 - Haines Road Corridor Access Evaluation
- The county RFP is included and a part of the Urban Design RFP. Full **details and specifics for the scope of services included in the transportation study are amended below as Exhibit 1**. Please ensure you read the the exhibit and include the appropriate members in your team to satisfy the requirements of Exhibit 1.



7. FINAL CONCEPT MASTER PLAN

- The City intends to utilize this plan as 10-15 year roadmap helping to guide the City, the community, and development partners in future development. Together, the consultant, the City, and the community will create an urban design framework that fosters mixed-use development, walkability, and a vibrant streetscape.
- *Deliverables:*
 - *An executive summary of the plan's findings.*
 - *A Uptown master plan document which details the process, inputs, findings, results, conclusions, and recommendations.*
 - *A highly graphic and interactive complete Uptown Concept Plan that can be easily disseminated and understood by the public to include, but not limited to: 3D Images and videos, seasonal streetscapes, color rendered illustrative plans, before and after elevations of proposed streetscape changes, etc.*
 - *A detailed and pragmatic plan of action to implement the plan's recommendations, including benchmarks split between short-term (0-5 year) and long term (5-20 year) strategies, specific action items and the responsible party, necessary resources, and anticipated funding mechanisms.*
 - *GIS mapping data and files in ESRI format shall be provided.*

OTHER NOTES

All project deliverables shall be provided for staff review at an appropriate time within the project schedule and included in the final plan. Final plan revisions as directed by staff and the HEDA Advisory Committee shall be included. The final plan shall be provided in both PDF and Word format.

The items in this list are intended to be the minimum required. The selected consultant may add more information to this list if they find it valuable to the overall success of the Uptown master plan. **The City is looking for creative proposals and a plan that is ultimately user friendly for all stakeholders.**

PROPOSALS

The proposal shall contain the information as summarized below and structured accordingly. Additional information is allowable as long as it is directly relevant to the proposed project.

- **Cover Page/Introductory Letter**
- **Project Understanding**
 - A summary of the team's understanding of the Project Principles, the objectives of the project, and how your firm plans to fulfill those objectives.
- **Primary Contact:**
 - Provide the name and title of the person who will be the primary contact and manager for the project, plus contact phone number(s), email, and mailing address.
- **Team Overview and Qualifications**
 - Provide an overview of the proposed team, with a focus on the landscape/urban designer's role as the lead. Include key consultant firms (architects, engineers, market analysts, transportation planners, etc.).
 - Include one-page resumes of key personnel inclusive of applicable experience and qualifications on similar projects, and detail their specific roles on this project.
 - Include key team members from partner firms, if any.
 - Provide a summary of three (3) projects or related work that the firm has completed. Please make every effort to include projects that were led or contributed to by the key personnel proposed for this project.
 - A list of additional similar projects beyond three may be provided without the inclusion of summaries.
- **Approach and Methodology**
 - Provide specific approaches, methods, and assumptions that will be utilized to accomplish each work product item in Scope of Services. Each item listed in items 1-6 of the Scope of Services should have a response.
 - Provide any proposed modifications to the planning process described in this RFP

- **Schedule**
 - A project timeline with identified milestones, phases, dates for submission of draft deliverables, and decision-making deadlines.
 - A schedule of community and public meetings including meeting goals.
 - A project schedule from initial site analysis through final plan submission that your team may have.
- **Total Consultant Cost**
 - Proposed costs for each scope of work for items 1-7 in the Scope of Work section. This includes the St. Louis County Transportation Study
 - Hourly rates for all consultant team members who are expected to work on this project. These rates shall be the agreed upon costs for any additional services requested by the City of Hermantown, above what is detailed in the scope of this RFP.
 - Reimbursable costs including detail of service or item and applicable charge per unit.
 - Not to Exceed cost for the project. **Proposals that do not include a 'Not to Exceed' cost will be disregarded with no further consideration.** It is the responsibility of the proposing firm to accurately predict the amount of time that they will need to spend on all services identified in items 1-6 in the Scope of Services.
- **Qualification Based Review and Selection**
 - Selection will be based on qualifications and experience, with cost being only a consideration, not a determining factor. After review of the submitted proposals, a selected number of consultants will be asked to interview with a committee consisting of city staff and a HEDA representative. The committee will recommend to the HEDA a consultant to be retained. The City of Hermantown intends to select the consultant team that is evaluated to be best qualified to perform the work based on the extent and quality of the consultant's resources, cost, communication, presentation skills, compatibility, and quality/extent of experience. Other performance factors may also be considered.
- **Selection Criteria**
 - The City anticipates that the successful team will likely include experienced individuals in the following disciplines: urban design, urban planning, landscape architecture, engineering, architecture, and economic development. Proposals will be independently evaluated by the selection committee. The following criteria will be used to ascertain which proposal best meets the needs of the City:

- The responsiveness to RFP, completeness of the RFP, and adherence to submission requirements.
 - Demonstrated understanding of the Project Principles, project components, and deliverables.
 - Qualifications and experience of key team members with projects of similar scope and complexity. Must possess the leadership skills necessary to navigate the project through the public process.
 - Feasibility of proposed timeline
 - Proposed budget and allocation of costs
- **Proposal Terms and Conditions**
 - The City, at its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to determine whether any aspect of the proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this RFP; the right to seek clarification from any proposer; the right to negotiate with any proposer; the right to reject any or all proposals with or without cause; the right to waive any or all informalities or irregularities in the proposals received; the right to investigate the qualifications or experience of any proposer; and the right to cancel, withdraw and/or amend any and all parts of the RFP. The City further reserves the right to request additional information or clarification and to allow corrections or errors or omissions during the evaluation process.

Proposals will be accepted until **4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 4th, 2025.** Digital proposal submittals are to have "Uptown Master Plan" in the subject line. Digital copies should be submitted to Chad Ronchetti, Economic Development Director via email to cronchetti@hermantownmn.com. File size is limited to 25MB. Additionally, please deliver or mail six (6) bound hard copies to:

Hermantown Economic Development Authority
RE: Comprehensive Housing Study
5105 Maple Grove Road
Hermantown, MN 55811

Proposals received after 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 4th, 2025 **will not be accepted.**

EXHIBIT 1: COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STUDY RFP

- **Maple Grove Rd (CSAH 6) Corridor Study**
 - **Intersection Control Evaluations**
 - Document existing conditions of the study intersections.
 - Control type
 - Turn lane configurations
 - Geometry
 - Traffic volumes
 - Turning movement counts
 - Crash history
 - Ped and bike accommodations
 - **Document planned development in Section 24**
 - Location(s)
 - Development type and size
 - Will development be phased?
 - Estimated traffic generation
 - Traffic type (passenger vehicles vs. trucks)
 - Estimate trip distributions and volumes on Maple Grove Rd
 - **Intersection Priority**
 - Utilizing the planned development documentation, identify the intersection(s) that will service this new development

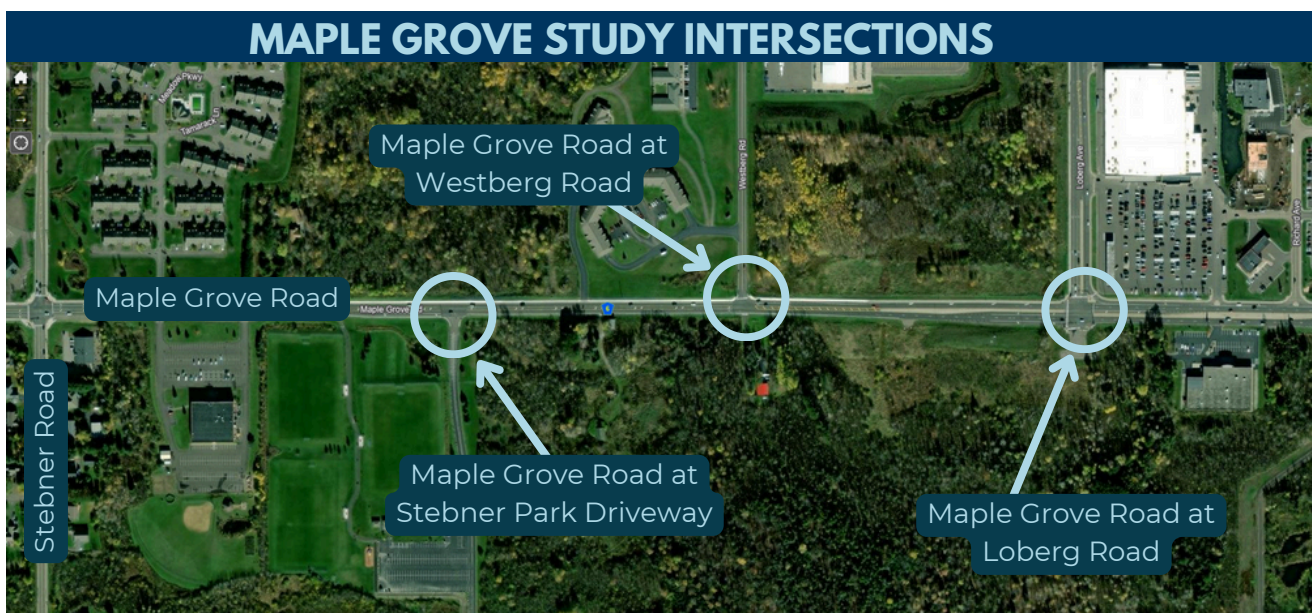


EXHIBIT 1: COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STUDY CONT.

- **Maple Grove Rd (CSAH 6) Corridor Study Cont.**

- **Evaluation of alternatives using the intersection priority analysis**

- Develop list of alternative control and geometric types for each study intersection
 - Do nothing
 - Side-street stop control
 - All-way stop control
 - Traffic signal control
 - Roundabout control
 - Channelized (restricted) control using side-street stop control
- Estimate traffic demand in the short- and long-term for each study intersection using background AADT growth and estimated trip generations/distributions for proposed development.
- Analyze alternatives for each intersection considering factors such as:
 - Estimated operations (delay)
 - Estimated traffic safety performance
 - Benefit-cost ratio
 - Accommodations of peds and bikes
 - Context of the Maple Grove Rd corridor
 - Impacts to the Maple Grove Rd corridor operations
 - Impacts to the adjacent signalized intersections on Maple Grove Rd at Stebner Rd and Haines Rd

- **Summarize intersection control evaluation recommendations for each study intersection.**

- **Evaluation of Maple Grove Rd corridor linear features**

- Document the existing cross-sections between Stebner Rd and Haines Rd
- Document existing linear ped/bike accommodations between Stebner Rd and Haines Rd
- Considering the study intersection alternatives analysis and recommendations, recommend potential changes to the Maple Grove Rd cross-section and linear ped/bike accommodations (e.g. extend the raised non-traversable median to Stebner Rd while maintaining strategic access).
- Recommend potential ped/bike crossings between Stebner Rd and Haines Rd.

EXHIBIT 1: COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STUDY CONT.

- **Haines Rd (CSAH 91) Corridor Access Evaluation**

- Is there a need to connect the proposed development to Haines Rd?
Can the proposed development rely on other routes such as Maple Grove Rd?
- Where would the proposed development connect to Haines Rd?
- Perform an abbreviated Intersection Control Evaluation for the proposed access on Haines Rd.

- **Engagement**

- Develop and engage with key stakeholder groups
 - Agency representation (include administrators, planners, engineers, maintenance staff, law enforcement and emergency response representatives)
 - St. Louis County
 - City of Hermantown
 - Hermantown Public Schools
 - Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
 - Maple Grove Rd corridor property owners/residents Existing property owners/managers/residents located on Maple Grove Rd between Stebner Rd and Haines Rd.
 - Include a presentation to regional agency leadership of the outcomes of the Maple Grove Rd Corridor Study.

