

Laurentian Vision Partnership

Transforming pits and piles into lakes and landscapes



STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN for 2011 AND BEYOND

Laurentian Vision Partnership

Strategic Action Plan for 2011 and Beyond

OVERVIEW

The Laurentian Vision Partnership (LVP) has prepared this multi-year strategic plan to guide its activities and achieve key outcomes consistent with the group's vision and mission. The LVP is a coalition of mining, business, government, education, professional and community interests representing all parts of the Mesabi Iron Range. Since the 1990's, this group has been working collaboratively to promote sustainable mining and the reshaping of mining sites into productive landscapes for the future. LVP continues to lead efforts to transform underutilized mining lands of the past and guide future land use decisions that will maintain the long-term economic viability of the region. By working together and building trust around common interests, stakeholders are breaking down past barriers and tackling old and new challenges related to land use, maintaining environmental integrity, creating new economic development opportunities and sustaining the economic health of the region well into the future.

The 2011 strategic process involved a review of major LVP accomplishments since 2007; a review of the vision and mission for continued relevance; and completion of a situational assessment of changing conditions, issues, challenges and threats. The outcome is the 2011-2015 Strategic Action Plan. The Strategic Action Plan identifies major areas of focus, expected outcomes, actions and tactics to support and achieve the LVP vision and mission:

- Address changing needs
- Add value for partners, and
- Enhance our regional presence and continued effectiveness.

MISSION AND VISION

The following vision and mission statements reflect the purpose and long-term focus of the partnership:

LVP Vision:

“Transforming pits and piles into living lakes and landscapes...our legacy for the future.”

LVP Mission:

The Laurentian Vision Partnership is a regional coalition that promotes the development of productive post mining landscapes by cooperating in:

- Preserving lands to sustain current and future mining,
- Promoting landscape options for post mining uses,
- Identifying and discussing new development opportunities, and
- Providing the tools to achieve these goals.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

Since the 1990's Laurentian Vision Partnership has filled a void by providing a forum to raise difficult issues, recognize challenges and engage key public and private partners in a dialogue about sustainable mining and a future post mining economy that is envisioned. By thinking long term and acting today we have helped to position the Iron Range for future landscapes and land uses that will contribute to the quality of life and economic vitality desired across the Iron Range. We will continue to build on the last ten plus years by communicating, building trust and demonstrating the value and successes that have been achieved. This Strategic Action Plan will continue to guide the work of LVP and bring the shared vision, tools and resources, and delivery of brick and mortar projects to demonstrate the future landscapes and land uses, and economic opportunities that are possible. The following is the guiding framework and major objectives of this mission.

- **Facilitate Partner Engagement and Shared Visioning:** Provide a forum for local communities, mining companies and regional partners to communicate, envision, design and collaborate on productive post mining landscapes, preserve mineral resources to sustain regional economic prosperity, and explore associated land use implications that will create opportunities to sustain and grow liveable communities and a prosperous Iron Range economy.
- **Deliver Tools and Resources:** Develop, update and deploy LVP land use and design tools, and define future mining reserve areas that help communities, companies and other stakeholders make informed decisions and plans.
- **Target Priority Projects:** Construct land design projects that demonstrate and test LVP design applications.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN SUMMARY (2011-2015)

The Strategic Action Plan identifies major areas of focus, expected outcomes, actions and tactics to support and achieve the LVP vision and mission:

- A. **Facilitate Partner Engagement and Shared Visioning:** Provide a forum for local communities, mining companies and regional partners to communicate, envision, design and collaborate on productive post mining landscapes, preserve mineral resources to sustain

regional economic prosperity, and explore associated land use implications that will create opportunities to sustain and grow liveable communities and a prosperous Iron Range economy.

Outcome:

- LVP is a convener and forum for regional discussions on land use impacts, needs and opportunities

Action Step:

- Hold three membership meetings per year where presentations are made, projects are discussed and information is shared.

Outcome:

- Communicate the regional economic importance of protecting current and future mine lands from competing development interests.

Action Step:

- Identify and address areas where growth and competing land uses jeopardize mining resources.

Outcome:

- Provide post-mining lands to support business and community development needs and reclaim mining lands to resemble or complement the natural landscape.

Action Step:

- Conduct meetings with mine operators, DNR Lands and Minerals Division, and Iron Range communities to identify and document potential project sites.
- Ask communities “what mining-impacted land could you use for future growth?”

Outcome:

- Expand the dialogue between communities and mining companies on key issues.

Action Step:

- Identify land use conflict “hot spots” where near-term mining expansion and community growth interests may be in competition.
- Identify communities that would benefit from a charrette or a more in-depth analysis of future land-use patterns relating to mining expansion.
- Expand mining company and community conversations on collaboration and projects that preserve lands containing mineral resources for mining, while preparing post-mining lands for community development.

Outcome:

- Heighten regional awareness and communicate mining land use challenges and opportunities to a broader audience

Action Step:

- Develop a LVP Communications Strategy and Outreach Initiative:
 - Look for opportunities to make LVP presentations to various audiences.
 - Continue to improve, update and add information to the website.
 - Provide Innovation Grant project updates and other current information at LVP meetings.
 - Send E-mail blasts to members on relevant topics.
 - Create a Facebook page.

Outcome:

- Communicate to and add value for our funders and partners.

Action Step:

- Acknowledge and thank our funders on the website.
- Increase communication and expand the dialog with our funders and partners.
- Actively maintain our relationship with our fiscal supporters.

B. **Deliver Tools and Resources:** Develop, update and deploy LVP land use and design tools, and define future mining reserve areas that help communities, companies and other stakeholders make informed decisions and plans.

Outcome:

- LVP design principles are incorporated by mine engineers and MNDNR as standard operating procedures.

Action Step:

- Produce standardized design applications for mining end-use land formations in collaboration with mine engineers and MNDNR.
- Assist mine engineers in applying land design applications (landforms, land patterns and land covers) to help improve end use land formations.
- Describe and demonstrate applications that contribute to "applicable research" as defined in the MN Mineland Reclamation Rules.
- Develop and teach Mine Engineers Course II.
- Incorporate LVP design principles and applications in mine plans that reshape and vegetate mine features for future community development, habitat and aesthetic appearance.

- Develop and manage online demonstrations of principles, pilot projects, case studies, etc. to make concepts, data and results available to the mining community.
- Share success stories with engineers and community members to continue to build interest and support

Outcome:

- 50 Year Mine Land Use Map is updated to reflect new market driven changes and realities for ferrous and non-ferrous mineral mining.

Action Step:

- Information from the map is actively shared with local units of government and other groups.
- Information from the map is used to update local comprehensive plans, zoning maps and other official land use controls.

Outcome:

- Mineral resource information is gathered and disseminated.

Outcome:

- A regional web-based interactive GIS system is available to promote better land use planning, infrastructure management and related needs.

Action Step:

- LVP will partner with the St. Louis County on implementing this project.

C. **Target Priority Projects:** Construct land-design projects that demonstrate and evaluate LVP design applications.

Outcome:

- Collaboratively identify and develop new bricks and mortar projects.
- Assign high priority to bricks and mortar projects that are visible and have short to mid-term development potential.
- Consider bricks and mortar projects that have short-term, mid-term and long-term impacts and results.
- Demonstrate a willingness to try new ideas with companies and the communities working together (a track record we have been building on for several years).

Action Step:

- Maintain the emphasis on “Bricks and Mortar” demonstration projects within the Innovation Grants Program and identify other sources to leverage these projects.
- Develop a list of potential Innovation Grant projects based on information gathered from mining companies, communities, the MNDNR and other stakeholders.
- Show the “picture” of the results of these projects to date with the *Innovation Grant Project Development Handbook*, to include graphics, findings, lessons learned, recommendations, and other pertinent materials and information.
- Create interactive web-based *Innovation Grant Project Development Handbook*.