

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 2025



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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In January 2020, the Mineland Vision Partnership (MVP) launched a process to create a new 2020-2025 strategic plan. The partnership has long sought to bring together mining, business, and community partners to shape future land use in northeast Minnesota. While its core motivations have not changed, members of the partnership saw a need to revisit and hone their strategic approach. The group changed its name from the Laurentian Vision Partnership to the Mineland Vision Partnership to clarify its role to outside audiences. It also adopted the following new mission and vision statements, plus four strategic directions:

## VISION

Shaping evolving landscapes for future generations.

## MISSION

A regional collaboration that invests in our diverse community by:

- Developing opportunities for dynamic minescapes,
- Preserving lands to sustain current and future mining, and
- Providing resources and education

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 1. Optimizing Organization & Communications
- 2. Investing in Mineland Communities
- 3. Enhancing Stakeholder Partnerships
- 4. Educating Partners & the Public

This document provides an overview of the new strategic plan, which will guide MVP's work for the next five years. Details on the planning process and supporting documents from that process are available in the appendices.



# **OVERVIEW**

The Mineland Vision Partnership (MVP) is a collaborative group of mining, business, government, professional, and community interests representing all parts of Minnesota's Iron Range. Partners agree to collaborate in shaping evolving landscapes for future generations. This regional collaboration invests in our diverse community by developing opportunities for dynamic minescapes, preserving lands to sustain current and future mining, and exploring cutting edge reclamation practices that perpetuate the natural environment of the area. MVP also helps identify resources and provides education for land use projects identified by the group

MVP serves as both a convener and a land use planner. It facilitates discussion and decision making among all interests, and it helps identify lands for economic, recreation, and resource-based uses that meet mining and community goals. Playing both roles allows the Partnership to encourage collaboration, help craft future goals for the region, and clarify the steps needed to move proposals into development and implementation phases.

MVP promotes collaboration between mining companies and communities to plan and design future landscapes that can benefit both interests. It explores how mining operations can systematically integrate land design as an integral part of mine planning and operation. It also provides technical and consensusbuilding tools to help industry, local government, and other parties form the ideas and working relationships needed to promote and enhance the vitality of the region. This collaboration generates local strategies for economic revitalization, and can build the attractive, productive landscapes for local communities and the environment.

MVP is open to the public and encourages all interested stakeholders, whether private property owners, mining company representatives, or business or community interests to engage in the organization's activities.

Partners typically contribute in-kind services, funds, or other financial and human resources to sustain the Partnership's mission. For a current list of the partner organizations and individuals, check the website at <u>www.lvpmn.org/</u>.



# **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since the late 1800s, Minnesota's Iron Ranges have supplied most of America's iron ore. Iron ore from Minnesota is transported to the Duluth-Superior Harbor and through the Great Lakes to steel-making companies that produce high quality steel for building materials, automobiles, home appliances and national defense machinery and equipment. Today, Minnesota is still meeting the nation's demand for iron ore through taconite mining. However, global competition has facilitated a decline in regional mining operations and local ancillary services in northeast Minnesota. The region has faced challenges and continues to evolve with changes in its most prominent job-sustaining industry.

- More than a century of iron ore and taconite mining has resulted in a changed landscape. In order to maintain environmental vitality and assure future use, it needs enhancement, restoration, or land shaping as mining progresses.
- There are communications barriers between community and mining interests, which has resulted in varying opinions about land planning, economic development, and the viability of the taconite industry. Stakeholders have a vested interest in the region and a collaborative approach will keep the Iron Range a healthy region of the state.
- Iron Range communities are often located next to or near active mining or mineral reserves that could be mined. Such conditions can challenge local economic and community planning. Communities need sound, up-to-date resources and mining information so they can understand and incorporate the geography of mining areas into local development plans.
- Many development projects designed to diversify local economies have sometimes been built and located as single ventures, not as elements within a larger regional vision. Communities need conceptual frameworks for planning that include larger economic and landscape contexts.
- Taconite mining is still the region's strongest and most viable employer, and companies have a vested interest in its employees, communities and the resource-rich land of the region. There is opportunity in considering more productive, scenic, and valuable end uses as a way to collaborate with other stakeholders, capitalize on special economic opportunities, and eliminate difficult, less productive approaches to reclamation.
  Similarly, communities need to consider maintaining the physical and economic availability of the mineral resources that are critical to sustaining the region's major economic activity.



#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Continued)

Faced with these challenges, industry, government, education, and community groups came together in the 1990s and organized what was then called the Laurentian Vision Partnership in 2000. Its partners believed that:

- 1) effective collaboration and coordinated decision-making among all interests,
- 2) sound resource information regularly applied to local and regional issues, and
- 3) creative design ideas that link planning decisions with timely actions that can change the landscape, will sustain jobs, increase economic opportunities, enhance communities, and ensure environmental vitality.

Since 2000, the Laurentian Vision Partnership has:

- Built a dynamic, proactive partnership between industry, government, and community stakeholders
- Crafted and helped implement local partnership agreements that require joint decisions and actions between mine companies and communities
- Illustrated how land design can work hand-in-hand with the earth moving processes of a mine operation
- Conducted public design workshops with mine companies and communities to illustrate the feasibility of using active mineland as the infrastructure for future land use
- Built a comprehensive GIS database to help local communities make informed decisions about the use of areas adjacent to depleted, active, or future minelands
- Developed GIS modeling techniques to help mining companies and communities visualize development scenarios

By encouraging collaboration between industry and community, and by using technical design and planning tools to explore land design options, the Laurentian Vision Partnership is providing a model for regional development in mineral-based economies. It allows maximization of mineral resources but anticipates the future of mineral depletion by linking earth moving for mining with land-shaping for new and desirable landscapes.



# **RENAMING CONVENTION**

During the 2020 Strategic Planning process many participants aired the idea that the Laurentian Vision Partnership name and mission statement did not adequately portray the meaning of the group. Over the years, the name and mission were difficult to describe the partnership to people who were not from the Iron Range. Due to this nearly unanimous feeling, the group went through a brainstorming, voting, and renaming process. The Laurentian Vision Partnership (LVP) has now officially been renamed the Mineland Vision Partnership (MVP).

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 – 2025**

Since the 1990s, the group now known as the Mineland Vision Partnership has been working collaboratively to promote sustainable mining and the reshaping of minelands into productive and ecologically sustainable landscapes for the future. MVP continues to lead efforts to transform underutilized mining lands and guide future land use decisions that will maintain the long-term economic viability and natural environment 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. We will continue to build on the organization's 20-plus year history by focusing on efforts to enhance communication, build trust, and demonstrate the group's value and successes. This Strategic Plan will continue to guide the work of MVP toward a shared vision.

## **VISION & MISSION**

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

#### VISION

Shaping evolving landscapes for future generations.

#### MISSION

A regional collaboration that invests in our diverse community by:

- Developing opportunities for dynamic minescapes,
- Preserving lands to sustain current and future mining, and
- Providing resources and education



# **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

The following are the strategic directions of MVP's vision and mission:

- 1) Optimizing Organization & Communications
- 2) Investing in Mineland Communities
- 3) Enhancing Stakeholder Partnerships
- 4) Educating Partners & the Public

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION OPTIMIZING ORGANIZATION & COMMUNICATIONS

#### Definition:

This strategic direction addresses internal MVP efforts to streamline its operations and better explain its work. It explores new and existing modes of communication and incorporates them within a plan to disseminate a consistent message for the group.

#### Action Steps:

- 1. Create a subgroup or sub-committee to create and present a communications plan that includes measurement tools such as website analytics
  - a. Consider leveraging what other communities have done successfully and launch a new technologically advanced publicity tool
    - i. FM or AM radio concepts
    - ii. Community walking tours
    - iii. PSAs
    - iv. Potential ways to display a "Now" & "Then"
  - b. Consider ways that MVP could utilize electronic media for sharing stories and creating professional connections
  - c. Consider how to create a shared plan for promotion of grants between recipients, communities, mines, and MVP
  - d. Consider ways to share MVP promotional materials and project opportunities with IRRR, other state department staff, and local government units
- 2. Share content after each full MVP meeting via the IRRR communications lists
- 3. Coordinating Committee will investigate the group's potential structure, potential larger Coordinating/Advisory Committee, Board of Directors, or more organized volunteer direction

#### Outcomes:

1. Group has an organized structure for reporting to funding & stakeholder partners

2. Subgroups become more active

3. A new publicity tool becomes active



## Definition:

This strategic direction seeks to drive projects that reuse former minelands. It builds on extensive past efforts to return minelands to community use, preserve them for future mining, shares best practices, and publicizes the organization's successes to drive further interest.

## Action Steps:

- 1. Ensure people know funding application deadlines and time frames
- 2. Create and establish a process to regularly update a one- or twopager (short document) to publicize successful projects
  - a. Publish and advertise the range of previous projects and what could be done
  - b. Create an informational road show
  - c. Focus on next stages of tourism-based reclamation
- 3. Capture dollars leveraged on all MVP supported projects and publicize these uses
- Encourage and facilitate partners presenting MVP successes at League of Minnesota Cities, Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration (SME) Conferences, and other appropriate venues
- 5. Work to recapture the successful, science-based intellectual property developed in earlier LVP activities from the University of Minnesota for MVP

## Outcomes:

- 1. Increased and deeper engagement from mining companies with MVP
- 2. New communities applying for projects with new ideas
- 3. A variety of projects being replicated across communities
- 4. Increased idea-sharing and science replication across multiple mining activities / operations
- 5. Increased state-wide (nation-wide) knowledge of MVP's innovative work to enhance, preserve and reuse mine lands



# Definition:

This strategic direction seizes upon MVP's new Strategic Plan to involve additional stakeholders. It seeks to spread information to the group and actively engage partners who have not historically participated in MVP.

## Action Steps:

- 1. Roll out new strategic direction to IRRR commissioners, mines, and other stakeholders to show new direction
- 2. Conduct special planning sessions or other events to further MVP's objectives
- 3. Create a presentation/summary document of MVP to foster understanding of the group and drive attendance
- 4. Meet with tribal group representatives and liaisons to establish a plan for future engagement
- 5. Create a subgroup or sub-committee to manage personal outreach to network with and invite mining engineers & operators
- 6. Revisit the existing Coordinating Committee structure and consider methods to expand participation
- 7. Revisit the meeting format such as length of meeting, times per year, and topics to be covered
  - a. Consider formats that allow for more dialogue and idea-sharing opportunities
  - b. Consider offering virtual tool options to expand participation

# Outcomes:

- Greater MVP involvement in land use planning and development and broader use of its techniques and approaches
- Information-sharing becomes more continual, living outside of set meetings
- 3. Attendee list updated regularly to include engineers and operators from each mine
- 4. Establish tribal engagement while maintaining engagement of current and historical participants



## Definition:

This strategic direction seeks to increase public awareness of MVP. It builds connections to generate fresh ideas and engages the media to showcase the value of work completed by MVP.

## Action Steps:

1. Include global or national speakers at least once per year

2. Student groups invited to have representation within MVP such as Iron Range Engineering, landscape architecture, high school students, and others.

3. Hold periodic student-driven workshops

4. Identify potential participants/stakeholders from the Duluth market area and hold an MVP meeting in Duluth

5. Seek opportunities for media engagement such as with MPR or local TV to highlight successes

## Outcomes:

- 1. Regular newspaper coverage on MVP activities
- 2. City councils and community members are more aware of the grant process and are receiving project updates
- 3. MVP messaging has spread onto new and expanded platforms
- 4. Area students are better informed regarding MVP activities and existence

## **APPENDIX**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Mineland Vision Partnership (MVP) has prepared this 5-year strategic plan to guide its activities and achieve accomplishments consistent with the group's vision and mission. The strategic process steps, session dates, and agendas are included as an attachment, as are the results the subset sessions and virtual planning session that followed.

### **PROCESS STEPS**

- 1. 1.29.20 Strategic Planning Session
- 2. LVP Coordinating Committee Survey Conducted
- 3. LVP Mining Survey Conducted
- 4. 3.10.20 Strategic Planning Subset Session
- 5. 4.28.20 Strategic Planning Subset Session Follow Up Survey Conducted
- 6. 4.29.20 Strategic Planning Virtual Session
- 7.5.1.20 Strategic Planning Virtual Session
- 8. 5.20.20 Coordinating Committee Meeting: MVP Agenda Setting and Draft Strategic Plan Review & Feedback
- 9. 6.24.20 MVP Meeting & Strategic Plan Roll-Out

## STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION: January 29th, 2020

#### AGENDA

- 9:00 AM Welcome and Introductions
- 9:15 AM Review Agenda & Strategic Planning Process
- 9:20 AM Historical Overview
- 9:50 AM SWOT Analysis
- 11:00 AM Live Q & A: Vision, Values, Mission & Priorities
- 11:40 AM Full Group Reflection & Wrap Up
- 12:00 PM Adjourn

#### Products

- 1. LVP Historical Overview 1.29.20
- 2. LVP Handout 1.29.20 SWOT.Ideas.VisionValueWords
- 3. LVP Mentimeter Survey 1.29.20.pdf

## STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBSET SESSION: March 10th, 2020

#### AGENDA

9:00 AM	Welcome & Introductions
9:10 AM	Material Review
9:15 AM	Mission: What we do, factual
10:15 AM	Vision: Where we are going, aspirational
11:00 AM	Naming Convention
11:45 AM	Full Group Reflection & Wrap Up
12:00 PM	Adjourn

#### **Products**

- 1. LVP Strategic Planning: Mining Survey Summary, Conducted Winter 2020
- 2. LVP Strategic Planning: Coordinating Committee Survey Summary, Conducted Winter 2020
- 3. LVP 3.10.20 Vision.Mission.Names.pdf

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBSET SESSION: April 28th, 2020

Conducted a Follow Up Survey

#### Product

1. 4.28 LVP Survey Full Summary Results

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING VIRTUAL SESSION: April 29th, 2020

#### AGENDA

- 10:30 AM Welcome & Introductions
- 10:40 AM Material Review
- 10:50 AM Survey Results
- 11:00 AM Strategic Direction Consensus Workshop
- 12:00 PM Adjourn

#### Products

1. LVP 4.29 SP Part 1 of 2 PowerPoint

2. LVP Strategic Direction Consensus Workshop 4.29.20

### STRATEGIC PLANNING VIRTUAL SESSION: MAY 1st, 2020

#### AGENDA

10:30 AM	Welcome & Introductions
10:40 AM	Material Review
10:50 AM	Current Situation / Success Indicators / 5-Year Accomplishments
11:50 AM	Full Group Reflection & Wrap Up
12:00 PM	Adjourn

#### **Products**

- 1. LVP 5.1 SP Part 2 of 2 PowerPoint
- 2. 5.1.20 Major Clusters & Re-Naming
- 3. Current Realities, Success Indications, and 5-Year Accomplishments 5.2.10

## **PLANNING PRODUCTS ATTACHED**

- 1. LVP Historical Overview 1.29.20
- 2. LVP Handout 1.29.20 SWOT.Ideas.VisionValueWords
- 3. LVP Mentimeter Survey 1.29.20
- 4. LVP Strategic Planning: Mining Survey Summary, Conducted Winter 2020
- 5. LVP Strategic Planning: Coordinating Committee Survey Summary, Conducted Winter 2020
- 6. LVP 3.10.20 Vision. Mission. Names
- 7. 4.28 LVP Survey Full Summary Results
- 8. LVP 4.29 SP Part 1 of 2 PowerPoint
- 9. LVP Strategic Direction Consensus Workshop 4.29.20
- 10. LVP 5.1 SP Part 2 of 2 PowerPoint
- 11. 5.1.20 Major Clusters & Re-Naming
- 12. Current Realities, Success Indications, and 5-Year Accomplishments 5.2.10