



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council Policy Board

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 6:00 pm
MEETING NOTICE

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting – join us in person at the location listed below OR participate virtually via Microsoft Teams (login info, below).

Meeting materials can be viewed on the [meeting web page](#) as well as on the attached pages.

Items for Approval:

- Meeting Summary of 10.18.23
- 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #1
- 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #2
- 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #3

Items for Presentation and Discussion:

- Rice Lake Road Corridor Improvement Project
- Minnesota Carbon Reduction Strategy

Project Updates:

- Administrative Modification #1 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP
- Administrative Modification #2 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP
- HTAC Update
- 2023 Duluth Superior Adjusted Urban Area Boundary

In-Person Meeting Location:

Northwood Technical College
Conference Center Room 108F
600 N 21st Street
Superior, WI 54880

OR Join virtually via TEAMS below:

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN TEAMS MEETING](#)

OR Join by phone (audio only)

+1 929-352-2956

Conference ID: 735 692 199#

Attendance / Meeting Quorum

If you are NOT able to attend, or expect to arrive late to the meeting, please contact Tari Aanonsen at taanonsen@ardc.org or 218-529-7541 to ensure a quorum will be present for voting items on the agenda.

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Complaint instructions and forms can be found in the Title VI Non-Discrimination Program and Limited-English Proficiency Plan online at dsmic.org/titlevi-policy. If you require ADA accommodations to be able to participate in this meeting, or if language translation services are needed, please contact the MIC office at least three days prior to the meeting, and we will do our best, within the resources available to us, to accommodate your request.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Duluth and Superior Urban Area Communities Cooperating in Planning and Development through a Joint Venture of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission

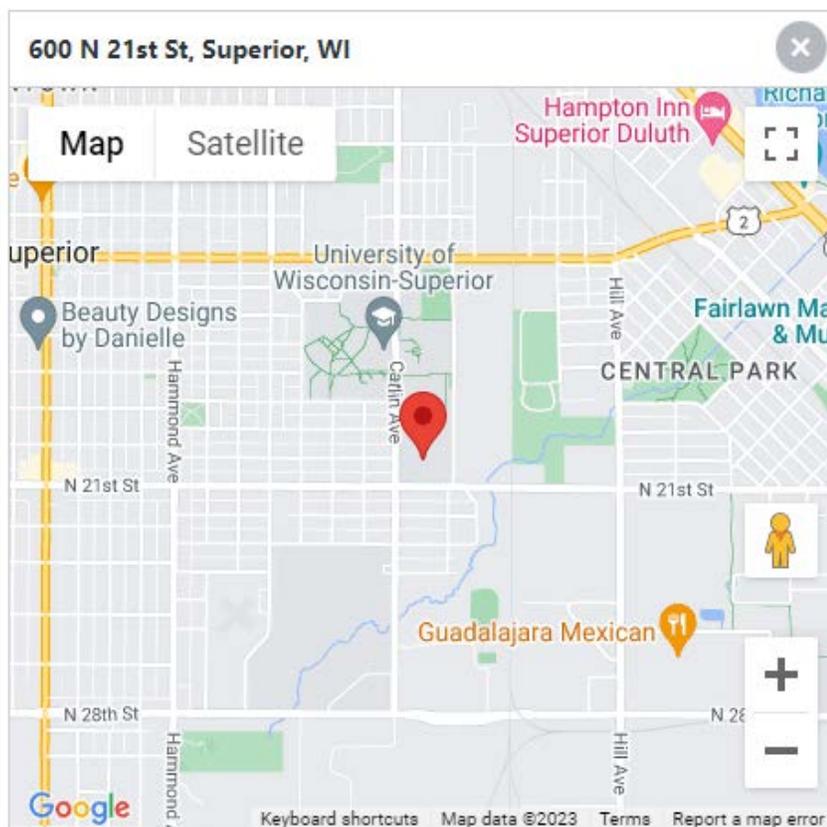
221 West First Street • Duluth, MN 55802 • 218/529-7541 • www.dsmic.org

Northwoods Technical College

600 N 21st Street
Superior, WI 54880



Parking and entrance for the Conference Center is located at location #3 on the Campus map above.



Policy Board Members

Minnesota Members

City of Duluth

Hannah Alstead
Mike Mayou

City of Duluth

Citizen Rep
Vacant

City of Hermantown

Wayne Boucher (Co-Chair)

City of Proctor

Chad Ward

City of Rice Lake

Bob Quade

Duluth Transit

Authority Board

Tom Szukis

St. Louis County

Annie Harala

St. Louis County

Suburban Townships

Scott Welsh

Wisconsin Members

City of Superior

Jenny VanSickle
Nick Ledin
Mark Johnson

City of Superior

Citizen Rep
Ed Anderson

Douglas County

Nick Baker (Co-Chair)

Randy Skowlund
Rosemary Lear
Sam Pomush

Douglas County

Suburban Townships

Broc Allen



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Policy Board

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

MEETING AGENDA

1. Introductions/Agenda Review	
2. Committee Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Summary of 10.18.23 (for Approval) Director's Report <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Open Public Comment Period"</i></p>	10 min
3. Rice Lake Road Corridor Improvement Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation & Discussion, Vic Lund, St. Louis County Public Works, Traffic Engineer 	20 min
4. 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend to the Policy Board for Approval, Prescott Morrill 	5 min
5. 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend to the Policy Board for Approval, Prescott Morrill 	5 min
6. 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend to the Policy Board for Approval, Prescott Morrill 	5 min
7. Minnesota Carbon Reduction Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation & Discussion, Prescott Morrill 	5 min
8. Round Table	5 min
9. Project Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Modification #1 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP Administrative Modification #2 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP HTAC Update 2023 Duluth Superior Adjusted Urban Area Boundary 	5 min
10. Adjourn	

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Hampton Inn

6:00 pm



Agenda Item Descriptions

* = Presented for Approval or Adoption

1. INTRODUCTIONS / AGENDA REVIEW

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summary of 10.18.23*
- MIC Director's Report
 - Safety Action Plan Update 2023 and 2024 – AECOM and the area jurisdictional partners continue to meet and are currently uploading detailed data on: speed limits, curve locations and radius, intersection traffic control, lighting, land use and socioeconomic data. Project will continue into 2024.
 - MIC Staffing Update – Greatly pleased to announce Mike Wenholtz (left for couple years to the Wis DNR) is back with the MIC in the role of Principal Planner, leading our HTAC and its subcommittees, plus co-leading our Long Range Plan. We're back to being fully staffed after many months of trying to fill the vacancy with an experienced individual.
 - I-35 Plan Update – The MICs and DOTs Final Plan for our I-35 work can be found online at https://dsmic.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Duluth-Area-I-35-Corridor-Plan_Executive-Summary_FINAL.pdf A series of short-range projects (5 to 10 years) along the route are now better identified/positioned for further design and ultimately funding as a result. Very pleased with AECOM staff (and their subconsultants) for the outstanding process throughput and the end product we now have in place.
 - Letters of Support – MIC staff has had multiple requests from area jurisdictions toward projects proposed for the metro area. These include:
 - 1) Blatnik Bridge – Bike/Ped Component – BPAC requested by both DOTs for Federal grant programs to emphasize a multimodal network for the facility.
 - 2) Five project applications submitted by St Louis County for HSIP (Highway Safety Improvement Program) funding. HSIP is a core Federal-aid program with the purpose of achieving a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. All are supported by MIC area plans.
 - 3) Pike Lake Bike-Ped Improvement Study – BPAC requested for St Louis County toward application for a MnDOT Active Transportation grant. The study would involve the Canosia Township Trails Plan and further identify a series of recommendations.



Agenda Item Descriptions

** = Presented for Approval or Adoption*

- 4) City of Duluth – Junction Ave/W. St Marie Street – Local Road Improvement Program fund toward approximately 1.0-mile segment of roadway between Carver and College to complete pedestrian and ADA-compliant amenities connecting St. Scholastica with the Lakewalk Shared Use path.
- 5) St Louis County – Rice Lake Road Corridor – The County is preparing to apply for a federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Rice Lake Road Corridor project. The program helps communities around the country carry out projects with significant local or regional impact and supports jurisdictions at state and local levels to complete critical freight and passenger transportation infrastructure projects.

3. RICE LAKE ROAD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

St. Louis County is continuing to lead a planning and preliminary engineering process to improve the Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) corridor – to the immediate north and south of Martin Road (the corridor the MIC has studied as well over many years). The current process will include a visioning exercise to consider additional improvements that could be added to the overall project that would provide a public benefit. This project is currently unfunded. The goal of this process is to develop a competitive project that would successfully obtain Federal funding through discretionary grant programs. A letter of support (for the County's approach) toward the funding grant via the MIC Board will be proposed and submitted. Vic Lund, St Louis Co Engineering, will discuss the project's current status.

(You can read more about the project at <https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>).

4. 2024-2027 DULUTH AREA TIP AMENDMENT #1 *

The City of Duluth is requesting the addition of a project along the Lakewalk, using funding awarded from the federal RAISE grant program (TIP Project ID# 118-090-029). This project will include multi-use trail construction and shoreline stabilization from Lake Ave to 28th Ave E.

- Total Project Cost = \$10,248,758
 - Federal Funding = \$8,196,234
 - City Funding = \$2,052,524



Agenda Item Descriptions

** = Presented for Approval or Adoption*

5. 2024-2027 DULUTH AREA TIP AMENDMENT #2 *

MnDOT is requesting a new project for inclusion in the current Duluth Area TIP for highway sign replacement on MN 23 from Howard Rd to Becks Rd in Duluth (TIP Project ID# 8821-377). This project is 100% funded by state funds. However, because a portion of these improvements fall within the MIC/MPO area, it will be included in the current Duluth Area TIP.

- Total Project Cost (State Funding) = \$900,000

6. 2024-2027 DULUTH ARE TIP AMENDMENT #3 *

Amendment #3 constitutes a suite of changes, including Bridge Formula Funding Program (BFP) for two projects in the TIP. These additional funds will be used to complete bridge deck overlays instead of a cheaper flood seal treatment.

For each project, there are additional federal funds from the BFP program, with additional local match funds, which will be added as new line-items to the Duluth Area TIP.

These two projects are:

Duluth TIP ID# 6982-336: multiple bridges between Lake Ave and 21st Ave E

- Original project cost = \$1,900,000
- Additional BFP Project cost = \$1,138,500 Federal; \$126,500 State Fund match; \$1,265,000 Project Total

Duluth TIP ID# 6982-348: multiple I-35 bridges over Mesaba Ave

- Original project cost = \$8,200,000
- Additional BFP project cost = \$931,500 Federal; \$103,500 State Fund match; \$1,035,000 Project Total

7. MINNESOTA CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY

In November, MnDOT published the Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS) document, which includes a toolkit for jurisdictions to reference when applying to the MPO for CRP funding. The MIC will be soliciting projects for FY 2025 and FY 2026 in February 2024. Project selection will be done by the MIC, in coordination with the NEMNATP, and selected projects for FY 2025 and FY 2026 will be amended into the current Duluth Area TIP.

8. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION



Agenda Item Descriptions

* = Presented for Approval or Adoption

9. PROJECT UPDATES

- **Administrative Modification #1 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

This modification, approved by MIC staff, removes two projects from the Duluth Area TIP.

Duluth TIP ID# 6910-109: This project was intended to remove a historic bridge over Mission Creek. This project is being removed due to cultural discoveries and will be delivered in a future fiscal year. The federal funds allocated to this project will be used to fund other district priorities, to be determined.

Duluth TIP ID# 6982-342: This project was to make some nominal improvements for ADA compliance from Lake Ave to 26th Ave E. However, district priorities have changed due to budgetary constraints, and these funds will be allocated for similar purposes in the same fiscal year (FY 2024) for other MnDOT projects.

- **Administrative Modification #2 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

This modification is for a project on the Two Harbors Expressway, for intersection conflict reductions. Due to more refined project estimates, the projected project cost has been reduced by \$800,000. The revised total project cost is \$1,077,778.

- **HTAC Update**

Issues reviewed and presented at the December HTAC included: reporting out of the work of both the Navigation and Dredging subcommittees by their respective Chairs; presentation and input period regarding the Minnesota statewide Freight Plan Update by central office staff of the DOT; an input session from HTAC members and other relevant entities focused on the MICs Metropolitan Transportation Plan in order to gain input on current key issues of movement in the Twin Ports area; lastly, a discussion led by Bryan Rydberg of AOR Waterfront Security, a local leader in the logistics industry and experienced at security with shippers/businesses in Duluth and Superior.

- **Letters of Support for St. Louis County Safety Projects**

We prepared letters of support on behalf of the MIC for five project applications submitted by the county for HSIP (Highway Safety Improvement Program) funding. HSIP is a core Federal-aid program with the purpose of achieving a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads and requires a data-driven, strategic approach to improving safety, with a focus on performance.

All five projects are located within the MIC area, and the proposed improvements would implement some longstanding recommendations from several MIC plans, including the



Agenda Item Descriptions

** = Presented for Approval or Adoption*

2000 Midway Road Access Management Plan, the 2018 Duluth-Superior Area Truck Route Study and the 2020 update of our long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

- **2023 D-S Adjusted UAB**

The 2023 Duluth-Superior Adjusted Urban Area Boundary has been submitted to both states. MnDOT has officially accepted the Boundary and sent it on to FHWA for Minnesota Approval.

10. ADJOURN



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

November 9th, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject:

Letter of Support – Bike and Pedestrian Accommodation - Blatnik Bridge
Reconstruction Project - 2023 MPDG and BIP Grant Request

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), an advisory committee to the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the joint Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation application for a grant to help fund the Blatnik Bridge Reconstruction Project under the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program (MPDG) and the Bridge Investment Program (BIP).

The MIC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Twin Ports of Duluth, MN and Superior, WI, and has identified this crossing replacement as a priority improvement project in its Long Range Transportation Plan, *Sustainable Choices 2045*. In addition, this crossing is identified as a key missing link for active transportation and micromobility in both the MIC's Duluth-Superior Bikeways Plan and Duluth-Superior Pedestrian Plan. It is strongly supported by the BPAC as a facility that will accommodate safe, comfortable, convenient, and reliable year-round transportation for all modes, and will also serve the economic, social, and environmental progress of our region.

As the Twin Ports is a regional hub for employment and social services, this crossing replacement project will maintain a key transportation link between northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin while improving it for all modes of transportation. Although there are other crossings over the St. Louis River Estuary, the crossing at the Blatnik Bridge has historically been the most direct transportation link between the two cities, and as such, must serve current transportation needs and support innovative future uses.

221 West
First Street
Duluth, MN
55802

Tel 218-529-7541

www.dsmic.org

*Duluth-Superior
urban area
communities
cooperating in
planning and
development
through a joint
venture of the
Arrowhead Regional
Development
Commission and the
Northwest Regional
Planning Commission*

*ARDC is an equal
opportunity employer*

In summary, replacing this crossing is a top priority for the greater Twin Ports region. These improvements will not only encourage regional growth but will also expand the transportation options for a multimodal network that serves hundreds of communities across northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, and beyond.

Sincerely,



Ron Chicka, AICP

MIC Director

rchicka@ardc.org | (218) 529-7506

cc: Wayne Boucher, MN MIC Policy Board Co-Chair
Nick Baker, WI MIC Policy Board Co-Chair
Andrea Crouse, BPAC Chair

