



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
 December 4, 2024
 Hybrid Meeting held at Inn on Lake Superior and Via Microsoft Teams

HTAC Voting Members

Present	Name	Organization	Sector Representing
X	Ed Anderson (<i>Chair</i>)	MIC Policy Board	Regional Organization
	Adam Bechle (<i>alternate</i>)	WI Sea Grant	Agency
X	Dan Belden	Western Lake Superior Sanitary District	Regional Organization
	Cliff Bentley (<i>alternate</i>)	MN Department of Natural Resources	Agency
X	Cameron Bertsch	Douglas County	Local Government
	Brian Boder (<i>alternate</i>)	St. Louis County	Local Government
	CDR John Botti	US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth	Agency
X	Dan Breneman (<i>alternate</i>)	MN Pollution Control Agency	Agency
X	Steve Brossart	US Army Corps of Engineers	Agency
	Natalie Chin	WI Sea Grant	Agency
	AJ Clavette (<i>alternate</i>)	US Customs and Border Patrol	Agency
	John Downing	MN Sea Grant	Agency
	Matti Erpestad	Day Tripper of Duluth	Recreation
X	LTJG Zach Fedak (<i>alternate</i>)	US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth	Agency
X	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County	Local Government
X	James Gittermeier	City of Duluth	Local Government
	Gary Glass	Izaak Walton League	Citizen Group
X	Cheri Hagen	WI Department of Natural Resources	Agency
	Dan Hartman	DECC	Harbor Tourism
X	Barb Huberty	MN Pollution Control Agency	Agency
X	Duane Johnson (<i>alternate</i>)	St Louis County Emergency Management	Local Government
X	Joel Johnson	Lakehead Boat Basin	Recreation
	Sheldon Johnson (<i>alternate</i>)	Northwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Organization
	Brandon Kohlts (<i>alternate</i>)	WLSSD	Regional Organization
X	Shawn Krizaj	City of Duluth Fire Department	Local Government
X	Rich Laskey (<i>alternate</i>)	GLF / Key Lakes	Harbor Industry
	Jason Laumann	Northwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Organization
	Robb McGhie	Perkins Specialized Transportation Contracting	Harbor Logistics
X	Capt. Ed Montgomery	Sea Service LLC	Harbor Industry
	Nick Patterson	JF Brennan	Harbor Industry
X	Mike Peterson	GLF / Key Lakes	Harbor Industry
X	Patrick Phenow	MN Department of Transportation	Agency
X	Kelsey Prihoda (<i>alternate</i>)	MN Sea Grant	Agency
	Jason Reeves	Compass Minerals	Harbor Industry
	Capt. Dan Rentschler (<i>alternate</i>)	Western Great Lakes Pilots Association	Harbor Industry
X	Amanda Rosebrock	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Government
X	Jason Serck	City of Superior	Local Government
X	Mae Sommerfeld	WI Department of Transportation	Agency
X	Bri Speldrich	MN Department of Natural Resources	Agency
X	Matt Steiger (<i>alternate</i>)	WI Department of Natural Resources	Agency
X	Jeff Udd	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Regional Organization
	Ashley Vande Voort (<i>alternate</i>)	Douglas County	Local Government
X	Lou Weichseldorfer	CN	Harbor Logistics
	Vacant	St. Louis River Alliance	Citizen Group
	Vacant		Harbor Industry
	Vacant		Harbor-related Business
	Vacant		Harbor-related Business



Others Present

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Tari Aanonsen	MIC	Rachel Loeffler-Kemp	US Senator Klobachar
Katherine Alexson	US EPA	Ericka Massa	SEH
Ron Chicka	MIC	Julie McDonnell	MnDNR
Ryan Dagger	AMI Engineers	Eric Oberhart	CPCS
Orion DiFranco	US Senator Smith	Stacy Oltmanns	Northland Constructors
Madison Doman	USACE	Guy Partch	Barr Engineering
Christopher Edyvean	Western GL Pilots Association	Alex Popp	City of Duluth
Deanna Geelhoed	ARDC	Ethan Rentschler	US EPA
Michael Halsted	WisDOT	Elinor Rosenberg	City of Duluth
Nick Hickey	Fraser Shipyards	Daniel Rust	UW-Superior
John Hoenig	Barkers Island Marina	Ricky Sarran	MIC
Jayson Hron	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Jeff Stollenwerk	
Pat Huston	MnDOT	Robert Sullivan	MARAD
Cindy Jarema	USACE	Hayden Thomas	MIC Intern
Seth Johnson	AMI Engineers	Nick Thorson	USACE
Kristi Kane	ARDC	Maren Webb	MnDOT
Raymone Kral	USCG Auxiliary	Mike Wenholz	MIC
Pat Lammersen	US Coast Guard	Larry Zanko	

In addition to the above, there was at least 1 unidentified person online. We do not have the names of that participant.

Introductions / Agenda Review / Committee Business

HTAC Chair Ed Anderson called the meeting to order at approximately 9:09 AM. Ed welcomed everyone to the hybrid HTAC quarterly meeting, and he and Ron Chicka shared a few basic meeting logistics.

Ed A asked if there were any concerns with the September 4, 2024, Meeting Summary, and hearing none asked for a motion to approve.

- Jason Serck moved to approve the 9/4/2024 HTAC Meeting Summary. Shawn Krizaj seconded the motion.
- There was no further discussion.
- **The motion to approve carried unanimously.**

Ron C introduced ARDC Director Kristi Kane. Kristi said a few words about herself and stated her interest in learning more about HTAC.



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Ron C introduced Rachel Loeffler-Kemp of US Senator Klobachar's office. Rachel shared her role in participating and offered all participants to reach out to the Senator through her and ask how they may be able to help in various situations.

Ted Smith Acknowledgement, Ron Chicka, MIC

Ron C shared a few thoughts in recognition, memory, and gratitude for Ted Smith and his long-standing, active, and valued partnership with HTAC. Ted competently engaged in numerous issues, sharing both his knowledge and personal experience. The MIC appreciated his efforts to provide viable and practical solutions, being able to bring diverse groups together collaboratively. Ron asked for a moment of silence for Ted.

HTAC Dredging Subcommittee Update, Dan Breneman, MPCA

- Dan B provided a brief summary of recent local dredging topics, including:
 - There was not a Dredging Subcommittee meeting since the last HTAC quarterly meeting.
 - The plan continues to be that the 2025 USACE Duluth-Superior federal O&M contract will include dredged material beach placement on Wisconsin Point adjacent to the closed City of Superior landfill.
 - The plan is to continue updating and populating a prioritized list of viable placement alternatives with project partnership identified to properly use the USEPA's Dredged Material Decision Support Tool.
- Dan B also provided a brief summary of the Great Lakes Dredging Team Annual meeting in Erie, PA (September 24-25). The meeting was well attended and included special sessions and discussion on PFAS in dredged material.

Navigation Subcommittee Meeting Summary, Zach Fedak, US Coast Guard MSU-Duluth

- Zach F provided a brief summary of the Navigation Subcommittee meeting held on October 22, 2024, which following a few opening remarks from CDR John Botti, included the following:
- Harbor Safety Workgroup and Paddle Safe Twin Ports updates
- US Coast Guard involvement in the harbor for summer 2025
- Introduced and discussed the idea of forming a new work group to consider and discuss Duluth Ship Canal concerns (see next agenda item)

Introduction of the Duluth Ship Canal Work Group, Mike Wenzholz, MIC

- See the one-pager
- Mike W shared that a new Duluth Ship Canal Work Group, a work group of the Navigation Subcommittee, has been formed with the purpose of addressing the following concerns and bring finality of these topics/concerns within the Subcommittee and HTAC:
 1. Navigation Aids for commercial & recreational use of the Duluth Ship Canal
 2. Duluth Ship Canal Velocity Sensor



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3. Duluth Ship Canal Portage on Park Point (8th Street at Lake Avenue & Minnesota Avenue)

- The Work Group was formed for the following reasons:
 - Each of these topics/concerns have been brought up many times over many years in Navigation Subcommittee and HTAC meetings.
 - The concerns have obviously not been addressed (at least not fully).
 - The Navigation Subcommittee has no authority over these topics/concerns.
 - To bring these topics/concerns to finality within the Navigation Subcommittee and HTAC.
- The following are the proposed actions of the Work Group:
 1. Define the exact issue for each of the 3 topics/concerns.
 2. Identify the desired resolution for each of the 3 topics/concerns.
 3. Identify who has the authority to bring each of the 3 topics/concerns to resolution.
 4. Determine the specific final action(s) the Work Group will take to attempt to resolve each of the 3 topics/concerns. If applicable, identify the steps of each action.
- The focus is to reach an action decision on each topic/concern and moving on so that the concerns do not keep coming before the Subcommittee, or other HTAC meetings. The goal is to complete this work within 3-4 meetings. The first meeting is set for December 19.
- Following specific appropriate requests made during this meeting there are 11 Work Group members.

Introduce Idea of Forming a Coastal, Harbor, & Estuary Resiliency Subcommittee, Mike Wenzholz, MIC

- Mike W introduced the idea of forming a new Coastal, Harbor, and Estuary Resiliency Subcommittee.
- Given that resiliency is a topic that is coming up in numerous ways among many of the HTAC partners on an increasingly greater frequency, and is a topic of interest and concern locally, nationally, and globally, Mike believes this would be a good and useful HTAC subcommittee now and into the future.
- Mike specified that this subcommittee would focus on resiliency broadly. It would certainly include climate resiliency, but also infrastructure resiliency, emergency management, harbor security, and other forms of resiliency important to local coastal Lake Superior, St Louis River and estuary, and the working harbor.
- Ron C noted that resiliency is a topic of focus in federal infrastructure bills.
- Mike asked if others agree and support the formation of such a subcommittee, or alternatively if others believe this is not necessary nor a good idea.
- Of the 6-7 people that spoke, all were in favor of forming such a subcommittee. No one voiced opposition. Thus, Mike will move forward with this idea and start forming a subcommittee membership. The goal will be to have a significant update, if not a member list established by the March HTAC meeting.

Blatnik Bridge Project Update, Pat Huston, MnDOT

- See the presentation
- Pat H provided a thorough update of the Blatnik Bridge reconstruction project, including the following:
 - Identification and explanation of the final proposed alignment
 - Explanation of the design-build delivery method for the project
 - The project timeline
 - Renderings of the two bridge types being considered – tied arch and cable stay
 - Traffic diversion and concerns, including using the MIC's traffic model
 - Public engagement



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- Lighting and other aesthetics
- Pat shared the sobering reality and concerns of high suicide rates among construction workers, especially those working on large projects such as this. Being aware of this MnDOT and WisDOT are focused as project owners to work with the industry to address this problem, perhaps most notably in considering responsible project schedules.
- Pat stated the current estimated total project cost is \$1.8 billion and noted the amounts from different sources.
- Regarding harbor concerns, Pat noted they are working on a draft USCG permit. MnDOT understands it will need to define with USCG the “rules of engagement” for construction of the bridge in the working harbor/shipping channel. MnDOT is asking for input from the maritime industry to aid in determining best practices, communication, and other issues.

West Superior Street Reconstruction Project, Alex Popp, City of Duluth

- See the presentation
- Alex P provided a summary overview of the West Superior Street reconstruction project and highlighted some specific details relevant to the HTAC audience.
- Basic details of the project:
 - 1.5 mile long through the Lincoln Park Craft District from Carlton Street to West Michigan Street near M&H gas station.
 - Funded nearly \$25 million from a federal RAISE grant and another nearly \$7.7 million in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act match program from MnDOT.
 - Includes a complete reconstruction of the road and streetscape, as well as utility updates
 - Will include 2 traffic lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian bump-out crossings, and areas of on-street parking and green space throughout.
 - Construction is to begin in 2025 and end in 2028, using a three phase approach.
- Alex noted the importance of the over size, over weight (OSOW) truck routes that utilize or cross this corridor. He identified specific considerations made in the design of turning lanes to accommodate OSOW loads at Carlton Street, 24th Avenue West, Garfield Avenue/Piedmont Avenue, and Michigan Street intersections.

Duluth Dredged Material Preliminary Assessment Update, Madison Doman, USACE

- See the presentation
- Madison D shared that USACE received \$200,000 in the FY25 President’s budget to conduct a Dredged Material Preliminary Assessment (DMPA) in the Duluth-Superior harbor.
- The goal of a DMPA is to proactively identify dredged material management measures for a 20 year period. It is shorter, less intensive, and less expensive first step alternative to a DMMP (Dredged Material Management Plan).
- Madison reminded the group of the Federal Standard Base Plan to use the least costly dredging and placement alternative that is both consistent with sound engineering practices and meets all environmental requirements. She also noted the USACE Command goal for 70% of dredged material to be beneficially used.
- Madison mentioned Beneficial Use Decision Document Integration (BUDDI) which sounds similar to the USEPA’s Dredged Material Decision Support Tool that HTAC Dredging Subcommittee and HTAC partners have been working through in recent years.



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C. Reiss Facility Update, Jason Serck, City of Superior

- See the presentation
- Jason S provided a summary of the work done to transform the overgrown, run-down, and polluted harbor-front lot into the new C. Reiss facility.
- The project cost \$22 million. Approximately half the costs were funded through government grants, and the balance covered privately. The project did receive both a Harbor Assistance Grant and a Federal MRAD grant.
- There was an extensive amount of work that included 110,000 CY of material excavated, 100,000 CY of material imported, a dredging operation with onsite offload and water treatment, dock rehabilitation, 1,400 CY of concrete poured, 207,573 pounds of rebar used, over 20,000 linear feet of 3 different types of pile driven, 8725 track feet of railroad built (including a railroad cut into the facility), construction of a large material storage berm, construction of a shop building, construction of an office, and installation of both a rail scale and a truck scale.
- The work took place over the past year. The first ship unloading at the new facility occurred on August 9, 2024. It was 22 tons of 4x3 limestone. The second ship unloading occurred on September 18, 2024. It was 2.5x1.5 limestone.
- The presentation was primarily many pictures of the work done on the property, noting and highlighting the property's transformation into a working dock and port facility.

Roundtable

- Jason S provided an update on other port-related projects in the City of Superior.
 - Jeff Foster did not receive the planning grant it sought for its harbor-side property in Superior. It plans to resubmit an application in a future application cycle.
 - The General Mills armoring project will cost \$800,000. Jason had announced at the September HTAC meeting General Mills received a \$1 million Harbor Assistance Grant.
- Shawn K shared the following regarding emergency management in the harbor:
 - The City of Duluth's harbor boat is been pulled out for the winter. It is trailered so it can be used if needed. St Louis County boats are available if needed, as well.
 - The City of Superior Air Boat was damaged during a recent retrieval effort.
 - There was very little storm damage in the harbor in 2024.
- Rachel Loeffler-Kemp of US Senator Klobachar's office again offered all participants in the Senator's district to reach out to the Senator through her and ask how they may be able to help in various situations. She mentioned there are potentially available funding sources she can help people be aware of.
- Steve B introduced Nick Thorson as a new USACE Project Manager stationed in Duluth. This has been long-awaited.

With no other items brought forward, Ed Anderson adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:53 AM.