



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City to fix Minnesota Slip Bridge

BY: Pakou Ly, Communications Office

City to fix Minnesota Slip Bridge

[Duluth, MN] - The City of Duluth is taking steps to prepare for a future retrofit of the Minnesota Slip Bridge in Canal Park to improve operations, connectivity and access. The Minnesota Slip Bridge, also known as the Blue Bridge, cost \$800,000 to build in 1991 and has been part of the rich development in what is now Canal Park. Unfortunately, this landmark has also become a source of much frustration. Since its construction, the 75 foot wide Slip Bridge has faced many challenges over the past 25 years with multiple mechanical failures. Mayor Larson announced today that the City is proposing to spend a little over \$329,000 on a contract with LHB to design a retrofit for the bridge's machinery drive.

"Finding a solution to the Slip Bridge has been a priority for me since I got elected and one that has direct impact on our economy and safe mobility for the 3 million tourists who visit Canal Park each year. I understand the economic impacts that our business partners bear as well as the frustration that sets in when the Bridge becomes a barrier rather than a connector. I am committed to ensuring our customers have safe and accessible passage between the DECC and the Canal Park business district and feel we are headed in the right direction with this retrofit," said Mayor Emily Larson.

"This is great news for Duluth's Waterfront and for our customers! I applaud Mayor Larson and her team for their commitment to fix the Bridge," said the DECC's Executive Director Dan Russell. Russell reports that "last summer the Bridge was out of operation 35 days for mechanical issues plus an additional 10 days because the Bridge doesn't work in high winds." It is estimated that over 600,000 people cross the Bridge each season.

In the short term, the City has a contractor who will provide on-call emergency services during large scale events. The City will have a better estimate of the total cost of the retrofit once the designs are completed. The City anticipates starting construction in spring 2017 with the Bridge being fully operational by May 2017.

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