



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Communications Office

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DATE: 10/19/2018

SUBJECT: City of Duluth Makes Request for Emergency Disaster Aid

BY: Pakou Ly, Communications Office

City of Duluth Makes Request for Emergency Disaster Aid

[Duluth, MN] – On Tuesday, October 23, the St. Louis County Board will review and take action on the disaster declaration request for the City of Duluth to the State following the October 10 storm surge that devastated several public assets along the lakeshore.

As part of the process, the County Board must make an emergency declaration to the State of Minnesota Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM) department. This declaration will be reviewed by HSEM and requires approval of the Governor. The significant damages have a preliminary estimate of \$18.4 million, which is subject to change as more detailed assessments are completed. The estimate also meets the threshold for federal emergency aid but will require action from the Governor to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The City will make an appeal to the Governor to consider pursuing federal aid for its recovery efforts.

“The City appreciates the St. Louis County Board’s partnership as we look towards recovery and restoring these valuable public assets. We are fully committed to not only restoring these assets back to their original state but to ensure that they are rebuilt to resiliency standards to withstand future storms,” said Acting Chief Administrative Officer Keith Hamre.

The preliminary estimate for the October 10, 2018 storm encompasses: the Lakewalk Trail from the canal to Leif Erikson Park and missing revetment along the shoreline, a section of the seawall by the MN Slip Bridge, the sidewalk behind the DECC, the 12th Street beach access boardwalk, Brighton Beach, the pedestrian trail located behind the Ledges residential units, the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad rail line, and eroded shoreline behind the Lakewood Water Treatment Plant.

There are outstanding repairs from the two 2017 storms which have a repair cost of about \$10 million. The City expects to receive state disaster assistance to support the restoration work from 2017 and had started emergency repairs to the middle section of the Lakewalk Trail before the onset of the October 10 storm.

In the meantime, City crews have been working hard to restore public access to damaged areas. The City anticipates reopening a temporary path on the Lakewalk Trail in Canal Park before the end of next week. In addition, a temporary sidewalk behind the DECC and vehicle access to Brighton Beach will also reopen towards the end of next week. The Lakewalk Trail tunnel by Lester River has been cleared and is open for trail users. Other areas such as the 12th St. beach access and the pedestrian trail by the Ledges residential units east of 21st Ave East remain closed until further notice.

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