



City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City of Duluth sets 2022 legislative priorities

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

City of Duluth sets 2022 legislative priorities

[Duluth, MN] Mayor Emily Larson and the City Council have set the 2022 legislative priorities. The priorities were approved on the consent agenda as a part of tonight's, January 24, City Council meeting.

"Setting these priorities and having a unanimous approval of the City Council carries a lot of weight in St. Paul," Mayor Emily Larson said. "These priorities have been a part of a public process that makes the case stronger for what we are advocating for. Thanks to the process and participation that has gone into this list, we are rooted in the values that impact our entire city, and will help Duluth to continue to thrive."

The City has three top priorities, which are:

- To work with legislators and the Administration to safeguard funding for Local Government Aid;
 - Secure state funds for improvements and upgrades to the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area; and
 - Secure state general obligation bond proceeds for improvements and upgrades to the Duluth Aerial Lift Bridge.
- "Robust state funding of local government aid, which helps provide our basic services like fire, police, and snowplows, continues to be a top city priority for the 2022 legislative session," City Council President Arik Forsman said. "State bonding for Spirit Mountain and the Lift Bridge will earn an economic and quality of life return on the state's investment. I'm optimistic the city's relationships across the political spectrum will lead to a successful Minnesota legislative session for Duluthians in 2022."

Additionally, the City supports efforts to advance a number of other important issues, policies and investments. These efforts include:

- Funding for housing projects as proposed by the Homes For All Coalition which calls for general obligation bonds for public housing rehabilitation and housing infrastructure bonds for construction of affordable housing through the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency;
- Policies to help reduce and prevent evictions; programs to provide emergency and long-term rental assistance, identifying and protecting Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing, increasing affordable homeownership development through Minnesota Housing programs such as the Economic Development and Housing Challenge Program, state matching dollars for local housing trust funds; and policies and funding to combat and prevent homelessness;
- A reduction in the class tax rate impacting the net tax capacity of parcels at the airport to stimulate local economic development;
- Increased funding for Department of Employment and Economic Development programs such as the Minnesota Investment Fund, the Job Creation Fund and the Redevelopment Account and support for local businesses that may apply for these funds;
- State funds to establish a customs facility to develop a market for cruise ship industry in the Great Lakes;
- State funds to facilitate the redevelopment of Lot D;
- State general obligation bond proceeds for the Port Development Assistance Program;
- State funds for redevelopment and upgrades to the Armory;
- State funds for programs and incentives to expand and attract opportunities for film, television, and music production in Minnesota;
- State funds to improve access and affordability of child care throughout Minnesota;
- Increased funding for library programming and infrastructure;

- State funds to remove and replace lead service lines still in use throughout Minnesota;
 - State funds to address the future of Highway 61 in downtown Duluth;
 - State funds to improve access to universal, high quality broadband services for all Minnesotans;
 - State funds to support local government efforts to remove and replace trees infested by emerald ash borer and development of markets for products utilizing the resulting wood waste;
 - A statewide policy requiring employers to provide safe and sick time for employees; and
 - Efforts to meaningfully address racial and economic disparities as the state recovers from COVID related economic strain.
 - State funds to establish a Minnesota health plan and support for federal Medicare for All Act
- The 2022 legislative session will begin on January 31 at noon, and runs through the beginning of May.

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