

Duluth & St. Louis County

AT THE CAPITOL

March 6-7, 2024



Advocating for Northeastern Minnesota's Legislative Priorities



Thank you for your service!

Duluth & St. Louis County Regional Representatives

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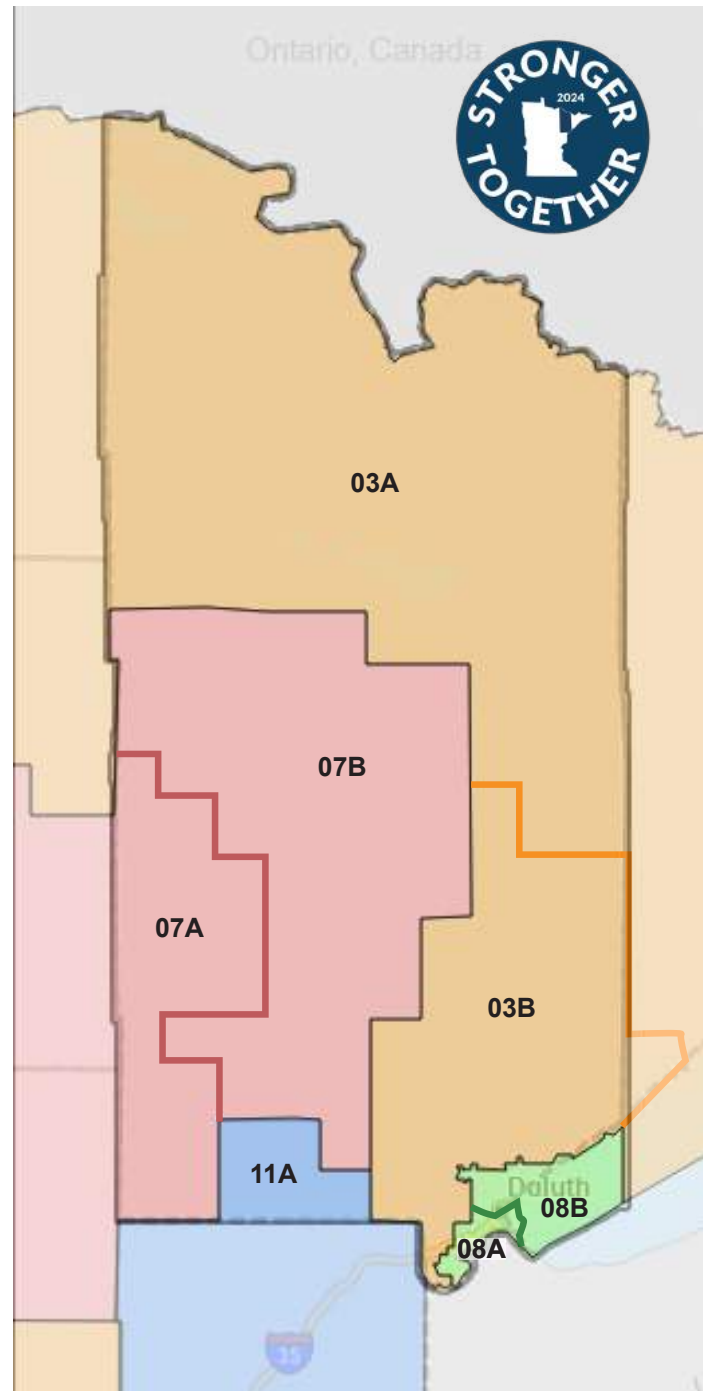
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27th Annual

Duluth & St. Louis County

AT THE
CAPITOL



Join Us. Stronger Together.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024

Grand Reception

4:30 - 8:00 p.m.

InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront Hotel

Free to Attend

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024

Legislative Breakfast

9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront Hotel

RSVP Required



2024

Northeastern Minnesota LegiPriorities

Welcome	4
Sponsors	5
Greetings from the City of Duluth	6
Greetings from St. Louis County	7
City of Duluth	9
St. Louis County	11
148th Fighter Wing	13
Duluth Airport Authority	15
Cirrus Aircraft	17
Duluth Seaway Port Authority	19
Duluth Entertainment Convention Center	21
Armory Arts & Music Center	23
Duluth Public Schools - ISD 709	25
City of Hibbing	27
City of Rice Lake	29
City of Hermantown	31
University of Minnesota Duluth	33
Lake Superior College	35
The College of St. Scholastica	37
Essentia Health	39
St. Luke's	41
TKDA	43
Thank You	46
Sponsors	47



Welcome and Thank You for Participating in the 27th Annual Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol Days

Together, we are advocating for legislative priorities for Northeastern Minnesota. Together, we have a unified and more effective collective voice. **We are stronger together!**

Thank you for being part of our region's collective voice as we advocate for several key legislative priorities that would benefit our local communities and economy. We encourage you to read more about all of these legislative priorities and requests on the following pages, so we can all help support each other and our region's business community.



Duluth and St. Louis County at the Capitol Days has grown to become the largest regional advocacy event in the state. The Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce and Duluth Area Chamber Foundation are once again collaborating with the City of Duluth and St. Louis County, along with a record-number of key community stakeholders and sponsors, to bring the voice of Northeastern Minnesota to the Capitol. With a collective message, advocacy efforts generated by this event help secure funding for regional projects, effectively tell the narrative of our region's opportunities and challenges, celebrate our collective successes and progress, and illustrate how investing in projects in and around Duluth and St. Louis County are investments that pay off for our regional and state economy.

Last year's turnout for this event was the largest turnout so far in the 26-year history of Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol Days with well over 500 people participating, and we anticipate 2024 will be even bigger and better yet. Throughout the first day, March 6, key community and business leaders will meet with legislators and legislative staff to lobby for several projects, as well as for policy and tax reform requests and other legislative priorities. That evening, legislators, staff and other key leaders join community members and guests at what is really the main event of the program, the Grand Reception, an informal gathering designed to promote continual dialogue and networking. This is an ideal opportunity for lawmakers and others to learn more about our region's legislative initiatives directly from community leaders and those directly involved with these projects. On the morning of March 7, the formal event concludes with a legislative breakfast where we'll hear directly from city, county and chamber leaders, along with senior members of our local state delegation and state leadership. We sincerely appreciate your involvement in this annual event. We all benefit from being united, and advocating in one regional voice.

We are stronger together!





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A member of Minnesota State



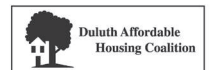
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Greetings From Duluth

I want to start by thanking each of you for your commitment to the success of this community and our region. Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol Days has long been one of my favorite occasions. I've engaged in it across the years as a community member, a city councilor, a legislator, and now as your mayor of Duluth. Each and every time it has proven an amazing opportunity for us all to gather, to center our energies, and to focus on the local issues that matter the most.

The City of Duluth's top legislative priorities this year include funding for our water system, repairs to the Aerial Lift Bridge, development of Lot D, the Spirit Valley youth center, and reconceptualization of the downtown library facility. These priorities reflect the community conversation we just had over the past year with our Duluth residents. They represent utilities, infrastructure, commercial tax base development, and community service assets. Because this will be a short, fast, and focused legislative session, it is critical we have a clear and concise agenda for Governor Walz and for our legislative partners. The work you do as citizen lobbyists through this event is essential. I thank you for stepping up to the plate, and leaning in. As a former legislator, I can tell you that the conversations you're about to embark upon will clear a path toward funding these priorities. You **WILL** be heard!



Mayor Roger Reinert

On behalf of my administration, and our fantastic City of Duluth team, I want to thank Matt Baumgartner and the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce and its staff and board for continuing to advance the tradition of legislative advocacy and ensuring that our priorities are heard by the legislators and policymakers at the Capitol. Sincere appreciation as well to our legislators, the Governor, and all State of Minnesota partners for all you do to partner with Duluth.

This is a year of change, and the eyes of our community, and the State of Minnesota, are upon us. Let's seize this opportunity! Let's move forward, let's grow, let's thrive – as citizens, organizations, and businesses. As I said to our team at the City – let's get comfortable with being uncomfortable because that is the place from which we learn best.

Let's get after it!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reinert".

Roger Reinert
Mayor
City of Duluth

Greetings From St. Louis County

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners and our 200,000 residents, welcome to Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol Days!

This event is important for our region. It's an opportunity to make our case for legislative priorities. From my perspective, it's also an opportunity to highlight for lawmakers in St. Paul and others about the uniqueness of our large county and the many contributions we make to the state's success.

Did you know? St. Louis County spans 7,000 square miles. If superimposed over the Twin Cities metro area, we're larger than the combined land areas of 16 counties!

Our county touches both Lake Superior and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Of course, my favorite part of the county is my home – the Iron Range. Here we have a rich history of responsible mining for more than 140 years. We're also home to some of the cleanest lakes, rivers and streams in the state, making us a destination point for so many.



Chair Keith Nelson

My thanks to our legislative delegation and all lawmakers for your service to our citizens. I and the rest of the St. Louis County Board look forward to working with you all on solutions that serve our county, region and state.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Nelson'.

Keith Nelson
Chair
St. Louis County Board

CITY OF DULUTH

TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



1. Water treatment plant capital improvements

Located on the north shore of Lake Superior, the City of Duluth Water Treatment Plant treats and delivers safe drinking water to the Duluth metro area, which includes the City of Duluth, Proctor, Hermantown, and Rice Lake. The structure and roof of the plant are in need of significant repairs. The pump house is over 100 years old, and the plant equipment is original to the main plant building, which was placed in service in 1977.

2. Aerial Lift Bridge capital improvements

The iconic symbol of the gateway to our Zenith City, the Aerial Lift Bridge requires significant structural repairs to its lift span, sidewalks, and overhead truss across the ship canal.

3. Lot D development funds

Funding to cover costs to rehabilitate Lot D in Duluth's bayfront area to enable new economic development opportunities on the site. Costs will include seawall repairs, demolition of existing infrastructure, utilities, and other related site preparation.

4. Funding for Spirit Valley multi-purpose facility

Funding for the Spirit Valley multi-purpose community center and sports arena in Memorial Park, which will provide wellness, recreation, and workforce programming across all age groups.

5. Reconceptualization of Duluth's downtown library

Funding for planning to reconceptualize the downtown library project, envisioning a new library facility incorporating complimentary privately funded development, including housing, commercial, and retail space, as well as community space and adjacent outreach services.

To learn more, please visit www.duluthmn.gov





City of Duluth's 2024 Legislative Priorities

The City of Duluth is grateful for the strong partnership with the State of Minnesota, legislators, and the various community and regional partners involved in helping advocate for the City's recent successes, as well as current efforts and requests. We look forward to working together to build on the momentum and continuing to help deliver for citizens by supporting the City of Duluth's 2024 legislative priorities.

City of Duluth's Approved Bonding Priorities for 2024

- Funding for Lakewood Water Treatment Plant to cover repairs to roof and other building components and rehabilitation of the granular filtration system used to treat and ensure safe drinking water for the Duluth metro area, including Duluth, Proctor, Hermantown and Rice Lake;
- Funding for the Aerial Lift Bridge for significant structural repairs to the lift span, sidewalk reconstruction and painting of the overhead truss across the ship canal;
- Funding to cover costs to rehabilitate Lot D in Duluth's bayfront area to enable new economic development and housing opportunities on the site. Costs include seawall repairs, demolition of existing infrastructure, utilities and other site preparation;
- Funding for the Spirit Valley multi-purpose community center and sports arena in Memorial Park, which will provide wellness, recreation and workforce programming across all age groups;
- And funding for planning to reconceptualize the downtown library project, envisioning a new library facility incorporating complimentary privately funded development including housing, commercial and retail space.

The Duluth City Council also unanimous approved a resolution in support of these non-city projects, as they would help bolster our local business community and economy:

- Funding for the Duluth Airport Authority's control tower project, replacing a more than 70-year-old tower facility and taking advantage of federal dollars to be leveraged;
- Funding for the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center for accessibility improvements, deferred infrastructure repairs and maintenance, and investments in energy saving improvements;
- Funding in support of the redevelopment of the Historic Duluth Armory, leveraging millions in private contributions and development to build a community space for economic development, arts, entertainment, events, culture and a place of history to come alive for future generations;
- And state funds to support the Minnesota Air National Guard's 148th Fighter Wing aircraft shelter project, ensuring the men and women of the 148th are able to safely accomplish their current and future missions and continue to serve our community, region, state and nation with distinction.

More at duluthmn.gov

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These priorities reflect the community conversation we just had over the past year with our Duluth residents. They represent utilities, infrastructure, commercial tax base development, and community service assets.

Roger Reinert, Mayor, City of Duluth

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SAINT
LOUIS
COUNTY
MINNESOTA

stlouiscountymn.gov

WHEN WE SEEK LEGISLATIVE HELP, IT'S FOR A BIG REASON

Just how big is St. Louis County?



200,000
RESIDENTS

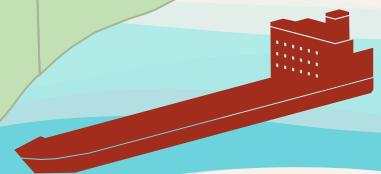
THE GATEWAY TO **LAKE SUPERIOR, VOYAGEURS
NATIONAL PARK AND THE BOUNDARY WATERS,**
PLUS **700 OTHER LAKES** IN BETWEEN



HOME TO THE MAJORITY OF
MINNESOTA'S MINES, WHICH PRODUCE
MORE THAN 75% OF AMERICA'S IRON



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2
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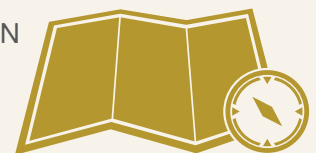
HOME TO THE PORT
OF DULUTH-SUPERIOR,
THE #1 TONNAGE PORT
ON THE GREAT LAKES



27 CITIES
72 TOWNSHIPS
76 UNORGANIZED
TOWNSHIPS
2 TRIBAL NATIONS

7,000 SQ MILES

MORE LAND THAN
**16 METRO
COUNTIES
COMBINED**



LARGER THAN
THREE US STATES

WE MANAGE **900,000 ACRES** OF TAX FORFEITED LAND FOR
THE STATE, SUPPORTING THE TIMBER INDUSTRY
AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

2024 BONDING PRIORITIES

- 1 CANYON - INTEGRATED SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT CAMPUS
- 2 DULUTH - ST. LOUIS COUNTY HERITAGE & ARTS CENTER (THE DEPOT)
- 3 ASH RIVER - WASTE WATER TREATMENT AND COLLECTION SYSTEM

ST. LOUIS COUNTY
PLAYS A UNIQUE ROLE IN
MINNESOTA. THANK YOU TO OUR
STATE PARTNERS FOR YOUR
CONTINUING SUPPORT.

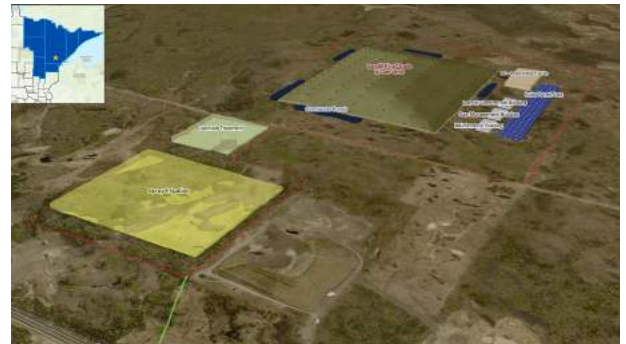


Creating and Preserving Regional Assets

St. Louis County is thankful for our state partners and the many successes they helped achieve last session that benefitted our residents. Building on the momentum from past support, St. Louis County is requesting bonding support for:

Integrated Solid Waste Management Campus

St. Louis County is seeking \$6 million (which it would match) for phase II work focused on the planning, design and construction of a leachate treatment system. This will ensure proper management and treatment of leachate from the region's landfills, preventing PFAS and other leachate contaminants of concern from entering groundwater, Lake Superior, and other waters in the Great Lakes watershed. The anticipated closing of the landfill that currently serves the Duluth area in 2026 increases the need for this new facility.



St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center (The Depot)

Our request is for \$11.3 million to replace the failing heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) and mechanical, electrical, plumbing systems. These improvements are urgently needed so the 130+ year old building can continue its mission of supporting arts, history and cultural organizations, and providing a welcoming experience to all in the community. It also well positions The Depot to accommodate the arrival of Northern Lights Express (NLX).



Additional legislative priorities:

- Ash River Waste Water Treatment and Collection System - \$7 million bonding request
- Preservation of Legacy Lands and path forward for tax delinquent properties
- Urgent Care Behavioral Health Center (Clarity Project) funding fix

More at stlouiscountymn.gov

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Stewardship matters. St. Louis County commissioners and our staff pride ourselves on being good stewards of taxpayer dollars, our county's natural resources, and the diverse history and culture of the people of our region. Our bonding priorities reflect this commitment with requests for state assistance on two key projects that will serve our vast county and the surrounding region. We look forward to working with you!

Kevin Z. Gray, St. Louis County Administrator

”



Military Affairs Committee: Advocating for the 148th

The Duluth Area Chamber's Military Affairs Committee (MAC) was formed in 2003 as a community-led effort to help promote and support the vast economic impacts of local military branches. The MAC's primary goal is to support local military units through legislative advocacy, as well as building community support through education, fundraising and advocacy efforts.

The MAC works with all military branches and especially with local U.S. Coast Guard units and the MN Air National Guard's 148th Fighter Wing. The 148th is an integral part of the state and nation's military network with numerous national performance awards that speak to their exemplary service. The 148th also serves as one of the largest employers in the region and provides an estimated annual economic impact of \$112M. Shortly after the MAC's formation, the 148th was selected for closure through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. The MAC unified voices and actively began lobbying for the 148th, engaging business leaders and elected officials at every level. Thanks to the strong community support, the base remained opened and has only grown since. The MAC was also instrumental in successfully advocating for the 148th to receive Block 50 F-16s as well as active association status. For over twenty years the MAC has consistently been effective in advocating on behalf of the 148th, who cannot lobby for themselves due to federal restrictions.

Now, the Duluth Area Chamber and Duluth Chamber Foundation's Military Affairs Committee, led by Chair Jennifer Cady and Chamber Foundation Executive Director Daniel Fanning, is advocating for state funding for much needed hangar upgrades on the base. State funding would help leverage additional federal funding and would not only enhance safety for members of the 148th but would also help prepare the base for updated aircraft and future missions, further securing the long-term mission and success of the 148th for decades to come.



Jennifer Cady



Daniel Fanning



148FW

MN AIR NATIONAL GUARD



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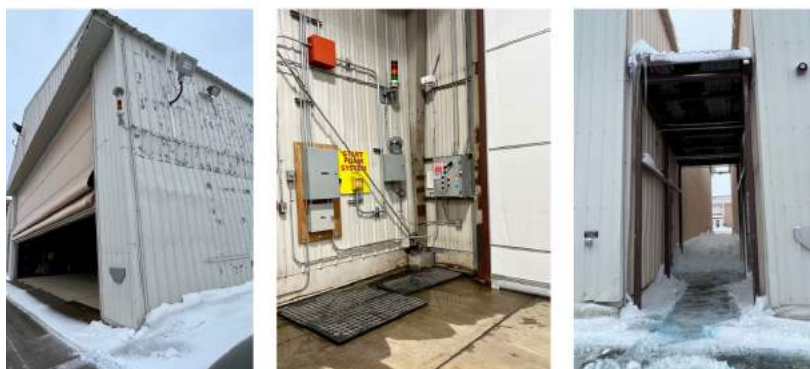
Contact us: 218-788-7818



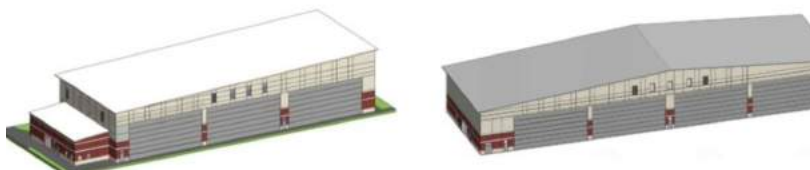
Support the 148th by Funding Necessary Hangar Upgrades

The Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, Duluth Chamber Foundation and our Military Affairs Committee (MAC) are advocating for a \$25M request from the State of Minnesota for much-needed hangar upgrades at the Minnesota Air National Guard – 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth.

When approved, the funding will go towards demolition of the current, outdated hangars and allow for new and safer hangars, which will also be able to house updated aircraft, such as F-35s. This proposal has received strong, bipartisan support at the legislature but has yet to receive funding. There is an increased sense of urgency to get this funding approved in 2024 to ensure the 148th has what they need to succeed, as well as potentially leverage federal dollars and ensure the 148th is ready and able to adapt to future missions and the possibility of updated aircraft in the near future.



Never before has more been asked of the 148th, which has included pandemic response and additional security missions in recent years as well as combat deployments. The 148th made national headlines in 2023 for successfully shooting down an unidentified object over Lake Huron, further demonstrating their incredible relevance to national security, as well as their vast contributions to our community and state. The 148th has an annual \$112M economic impact for our region and serves as Duluth's eighth largest employer. For these reasons and more, this proposal has broad community support, including a unanimous resolution by the Duluth City Council. We are grateful for their service and vast contributions, and now it's our time to help support them!



The men and women of the 148th are second to none and deserve the best, and safest, equipment and hangars. They currently operate out of old, outdated and even potentially unsafe hangars. These hangars are over seventy years old and have several concerning safety issues including leaks, pooling water and electrical issues. This funding would allow the 148th to replace the outdated hangars with state-of-the-art hangars to enhance safety and support the Bulldogs' current and future missions.

Please help support the 148th Fighter Wing by supporting this urgent \$25M request for much needed new hangars on the base. For more information, please visit duluthchamber.com/148fw or contact Daniel Fanning, Vice President of the Duluth Area Chamber, at dfanning@duluthchamber.com.

duluthchamber.com/148fw

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Duluth Airport Authority: Air Traffic Control Tower

The Duluth Airport Authority (DAA) is aggressively fulfilling its vision for the future as outlined in the master capital plan for the Duluth International Airport. Over the past 11 years, the DAA has completed over \$131 million in infrastructure investments that support a vibrant aviation cluster. The DAA continues its commitment to air commerce by spearheading an investment of \$135 million over the next 10 years that will preserve vital infrastructure at both of Duluth's airports.

A key infrastructure need is the Duluth International Airport's (DLH) air traffic control tower. The tower is 70 years old and past its useful life. It has the distinction of being the third oldest air traffic facility in the country! Historically, there has been no federal program to fund the replacement of a locally owned air traffic control tower.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, passed by Congress, established a competitive grant program to fund the replacement of locally owned air traffic facilities. This program provides a 5-year window to secure funding that will pay 95% of eligible costs to construct a new, \$66 million air traffic control tower at DLH.

The DAA is asking the state legislature to help us leverage a considerable federal investment by providing \$14 million in funding. An investment from the state of Minnesota will supply 5% matching funds for the \$52 million federal grant application. It will ensure the final design of the new facility, the commission of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to participate in the design process, the demolition of three blighted buildings to make way for the new tower, and an environmental assessment.

DLH contributes \$760.6 million annually to the region's economy by facilitating 75,000 commercial passenger, cargo, emergency medical, and military flights in 2023. A viable air traffic control facility is critical to sustaining the growth of air commerce and emergency services vital to all of Northeast Minnesota.

We are poised to support the next generation of air commerce in our region. A state-of-the-art air traffic facility will ensure DLH is supporting safe air travel for decades to come.



“

A new air traffic control facility is critical to enhancing safety and sustaining the growth of air commerce and aviation services in our region. Funding the replacement project now ensures that Duluth International Airport can continue delivering quality air service to the region.

Tom Werner, Executive Director, Duluth Airport Authority

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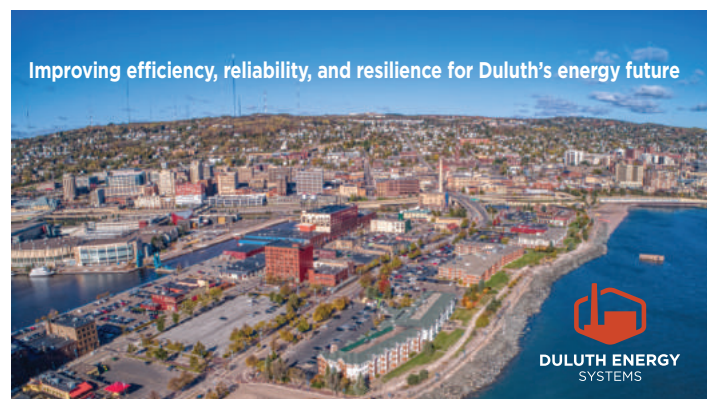
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Take to the Skies With Aviation + Aerospace

With over 1,600 employees in Duluth and 100 suppliers in the state, Cirrus Aircraft is committed to growing our operations in Minnesota and working together to strengthen our communities.

Cirrus Aircraft is in the business of promoting aviation and aerospace. As the largest manufacturing employer in the Duluth region, our legislative priorities for 2024 center around promoting aviation business growth, creating new high paying aerospace jobs, and supporting development of mid-level housing in our communities.

1 | Support an expansion of the airport property tax exemptions for airport hangars owned or operated by a city over 50,000 but under 150,000 in population, to reduce property taxes by 50% for property used for manufacturing of aircraft. Provision was included in 2022 and 2023 omnibus tax bill.

2 | Promote the creation of aerospace jobs through the implementation of a five-year (2023-2027) initiative to invest in aerospace workforce development.

1) Create an employee \$5,000 per year nonrefundable tax credit for newly hired aerospace professionals from a qualified two- or four-year accredited engineering or technology undergraduate or graduate degree program, an associate of applied science degree program, or a career technical program;

2) Create a nonrefundable income tax credit for business involved in the aviation sector for tuition or certain program-specific course-fee reimbursements paid to a full-time employee who is attending an accredited engineering or technology undergraduate or graduate degree program, an associate of applied science degree program, or a career technical program;

3) Create a nonrefundable tax credit for an amount equal to 10.0 percent of the compensation paid to qualified employees in each of the first five years of employment, not to exceed \$15,000 per year.

3 | Enact legislation spurring housing development state-wide. This should be done by providing grants that are expediently accessible for housing across all income levels; reducing required warranties associated with condominium development and new housing construction; making the costs of construction of housing more affordable instead of just limiting the rents or prices to be charged; and providing funding for municipalities to construct roads and utilities for new development instead of burdening the developers with property to be owned by the Cities.



“

Cirrus just recently invested over \$20 million into its Duluth campus by adding the Innovation Center. The Innovation Center is an incredible company milestone that supports the future development and endeavors of Cirrus Aircraft product development. We are continuing to invest in the company and the City of Duluth with the Innovation Center opening. We have worked closely with our partners to renovate the building and hire more engineers and technicians to join the new facility in Duluth. Every opportunity we have, we're reinvesting into Duluth and the state of Minnesota, into more jobs, and driving more economic growth.

Zean Nielsen, CEO, Cirrus Aircraft

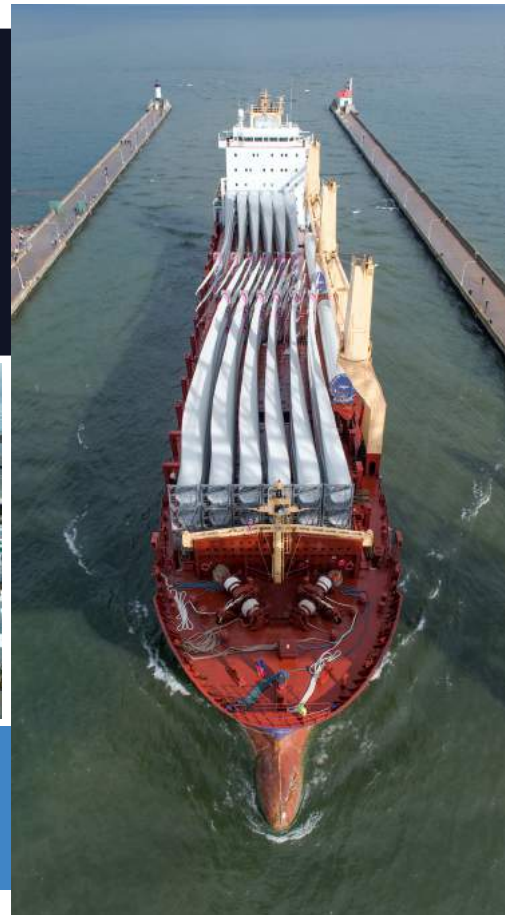
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Minneapolis — Duluth



Spirit Valley Center for Youth & Community Wellness

Community Impact for Regional Sustainability










Duluth: Building Minnesota's World Port of the Future

The mid-1960s shift from coal-fired steam power to diesel fuel reduced the environmental footprint of Great Lakes freighters by almost 80%. Today, verging on another ambitious advance, the marine shipping industry is exploring what's next in decarbonization, both on the water and landside, as we integrate green energy sources on our freshwater inland seas.

A number of initiatives are underway throughout the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System and here in Duluth, at North America's furthest-inland seaport.

- Vessel operators and fleets are experimenting with bridge fuels, biofuels and electrification, vetting options to decrease carbon intensity and find the most effective, safest and greenest propulsion solutions for the future.
- Shippers are taking a fresh look at short-sea shipping on the Great Lakes, minimizing the landside portion of the transportation journey and maximizing the waterborne leg to achieve huge reductions in congestion and CO2 emissions.
- Ports are upgrading facilities, equipment and operations to be more efficient, resilient and sustainable.

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority is a leader for the Great Lakes, ranking No. 7 nationally and No. 1 among U.S. Great Lakes ports in the most recent Green Marine environmental stewardship rating. At the Port Authority-owned Clure Public Marine Terminal, electric gantry cranes have been in use since the facility opened, and shore power is sourced from Minnesota Power, which supplies more than 50% renewable energy. Shore power reduces ship idling, oil consumption and diesel generator operation, alleviating air pollution. The Port Authority is also exploring the viability of electrifying additional lift equipment and vehicles in its fleet and testing a goal of net-zero carbon by 2050 as part of its forthcoming climate action plan.

Support from the Minnesota legislature and MnDOT's Port Development Assistance Program (PDAP) is crucial to these efforts, making possible the infrastructure investment necessary to achieve Duluth's seaport sustainability goals. As a public port authority, we are grateful for this vital support.

Our port moves the raw materials of everyday life – and we're leading the advance toward a more efficient, more effective and more sustainable multimodal supply chain for our region and North America as a whole.

Credit: Photos by David Schauer



“

Living in a seaport city is special. The port is woven into Duluth's identity and supports the region's economy. We are proud of that heritage and want our community to share that pride. That's why we honor our port history and work each day to create a vibrant, prosperous, sustainable port future.

Deb Deluca, Executive Director, Duluth Seaway Port Authority

”







Duluth Entertainment
Convention Center

DECC Embraces Accessibility and Energy Conservation

Stop Summer Steaming

The DECC is connected to the Duluth Energy Systems, also known as the Steam Plant. Unfortunately, due to faulty pipe fittings, we are forced to run 190-degree water through the pipes 24/7 – or thousands of joints throughout the facility will leak.

This current system continuously heats our spaces, even in the summer. The need for additional air conditioning then compounds this inefficiency. The DECC stands to recoup over 40% of its heating and cooling costs by replacing faulty joints with welded pipes.

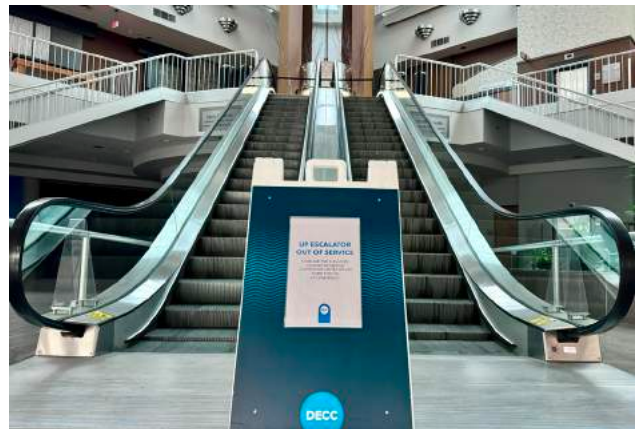


Welcoming to All

To further support accessibility, upgrades are needed and long overdue for many of our elevators and escalators throughout the facility.

A core value at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC) is Hospitality. However, many guests have felt less than welcome for years in our 2,300-seat Symphony Hall – the largest in the region.

That's because the auditorium was built in 1966 when people were smaller and required less legroom for a comfortable evening at the theater. Also, additional accessible seating is required as our population ages. Our goal is to replace our current seating with larger, generously spaced chairs while creating additional accessible seating closer to the action on stage.



More at [DECC.org/truth](https://decc.org/truth)

“

Our bonding projects are focused on increasing accessibility and energy conservation. Once completed, it will greatly add to the long-term sustainability of the facility.

Dan Hartman, Executive Director, DECC

”



Honoring the past...



...Reimagining the future.



www.dulutharmory.org



Food Hall



North Country Creative Center
Museum



Restored Historic Stage



Music Resource Center



Artist office, arts and craft studio spaces



Food Enterprise Center



Commanders Ballroom Event Center



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Honoring the Past... ...Reimagining the Future

A place for history to come alive for future generations.



"The restoration of the historic Duluth Armory represents a major step forward for historic preservation and economic development in northeastern Minnesota.

We are thrilled with the unique partnership formed between the Armory Arts and Music Center and Sherman Associates which will result in the revitalization of the Duluth Armory.

With the support of many community leaders, artists, businesses, musicians and organizations as well as the Minnesota Legislature, we will succeed in efforts to bring the Armory back to life."

Mark Poirier
Executive Director
Armory Arts and Music
Center

ARMORY ARTS AND MUSIC CENTER

1325 London Road
Duluth, MN 55805

Phone: 218.428.9686
Email: mark@dulutharmory.org

The restoration of the Duluth Armory will honor the past and reimagine the future while providing important community space for economic development, arts, entertainment, events, culture, and a place for history to come alive for future generations.



Celebrating History

The foundational history of the armory as a military training center and as a cultural and entertainment hub for northeastern Minnesota will be showcased throughout the renovated facility. The story of the Minnesota National Guard and Minnesota Naval Militia and Reserve will be honored in the Hall of Heroes.

Economic and Entrepreneurial Development

The Drill Hall will become the centerpiece of a vibrant entertainment and event space that will come alive and create an energy all its own. The lower level will contain a food enterprise center that will be available to variety of food entrepreneurs. A fourth floor event center will be a feature of the former Commanders Ballroom. The plans also include a food hall filled with food vendors and entrepreneurs, and artist galleries and studio spaces.

Arts and Culture

Restoration of historic Duluth Armory stage will be an entertainment focal point and will foster local and regional talent and keep the space active and fresh. The North Country Creative Center will be an exhibit space that celebrates the creative spark of the people and entertainers who performed at the Duluth Armory. The Music Resource Center will also be located in the restored Armory.



The Armory Arts and Music Center (AAMC) has partnered with Sherman Associates to restore the historic Duluth Armory. AAMC is asking the State of Minnesota for \$7 million to complement the 2023 appropriation of \$4.5 million for rehabilitation of the historic Duluth Armory and the North Country Creative Center. The state funds will match federal funds, state and federal tax credits, state grants and private funds to fund the estimated \$58 million restoration.





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At Duluth Public Schools, we truly believe in every student, every day. From our teachers and staff to our administrators and volunteers, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for each and every student in our community.

Join our community of learners and experience the difference that comes with a truly inclusive and supportive education.





Supporting Every Student, Every Day

The Duluth Public Schools (DPS) legislative platform recognizes and appreciates the historic investments made by the Legislature in public education last year. We believe the 2024 Legislative Session is another opportunity to invest in schools and continue the progress made in meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. Supplemental education investments in 2024 will provide stability for districts like Duluth as federal pandemic era funding expires and enrollment fluctuates. DPS appreciates the notable funding increases in 2023, but our district, like so many others, is experiencing shortfalls that put progress made by students and teachers at risk.

We are asking for:

An additional increase in the basic general education formula by an additional 2% for the 2024-2025 school year to address staffing shortages, Elementary and Secondary Education Relief (ESSER) federal funding running out, student and staff mental health supports, decline in enrollments, and interrupted learning recovery efforts.

The creation of a permanent state funding stream for unemployment insurance for non-licensed school district employees and requests that the Legislature fully fund the cost of unemployment insurance for non-licensed employees.

Other priorities include:

The Legislature eliminating the cap on Long Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue, allowing districts like Duluth to address critical facility needs.

A one-time investment in Career and Technical Education, allowing funds to be used for equipment, supply, and technology to support the CTE mission. CTE is a critical education tool helping to get students into the workforce.



“

We deeply appreciate the significant funding provided last year. Universal free meals, for example, was a game changer for many families! We look forward to our continued partnership and working together to make sure the new initiatives approved last year are fully funded.

John Magas, Superintendent, Duluth Public Schools

”





Hibbing is a thriving community that leverages resources, opportunities and strengths to enhance quality of life. We aim to improve the quality of life for all residents through the delivery of quality and sustainable services.

- Destination**
Thriving destination & regional leader.
- Quality of Life**
Well-rounded, strong quality of life.
- Forward Thinking**
Engaged & forward-thinking leadership.
- Economic Development**
Vibrant economic hub.
- Safety**
Safe, secure, and valued community.
- Service Delivery**
Excellence in the delivery of services.



Key Results Areas

- Long Term Financial Sustainability
- Economic Vitality
- Community Growth & Public Safety
- Communication & City Image
- Community Pride & Philanthropy

www.HibbingMN.Gov

Thank you
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WESTERN LAKE SUPERIOR SANITARY DISTRICT



Thriving in the TTRA: Hibbing Is Poised for Renewed Investment

Founded in 1893, Hibbing is at the heart of Minnesota's Iron Range. The City of Hibbing is the largest city in the state by area (186 square miles) and the largest city by population (16,077) in the Taconite Tax Relief Area (TTRA).

Known for being a tight-knit community, Hibbing is intimately intertwined with the mining industry that fueled its growth and two taconite production plants continue to operate within city limits. It has undergone numerous transformations to become the thriving city it is today. Additionally, the city is home to a vibrant manufacturing sector, a spirited political landscape, a historic downtown, and the breathtaking Hull Rust Mine View.

In collaboration with Hibbing Public Utilities (HPU), our top legislative priorities are:

Water Projects/Bonding Request

- A new Water Treatment Plant and Well Field are needed to maintain Hibbing's usage. The reservoir at the water treatment plant is over 100 years old and is critical to the water supply for Hibbing as there is no way to supply water to the city without this tank. In the current water treatment process, water flows to three failing seepage basins which overflow into a nearby wetland.
- State funding is needed for HPU to maintain affordability for customers: \$24 million required for new water treatment plant, reservoir, and well field. The combination of projects is expected to double sewage/water rates to 2.1% of Median Household Income (MHI). With state support, rates would remain manageable at 1.5% MHI.



Biomass

- Recognition of Biomass as a net-neutral method of energy generation in the "Carbon-Free by 2040" Bill.
- Restorative Technology supports "Going Green" and local jobs. Uses renewable energy to create approximately 80 high-wage, career positions for the current and next generation of workers.
- Excellent forestry management tool, including use as a certified disposal site for quarantined or dead/dying trees due to emerald ash borer and spruce budworm.



“

We are excited to roll up our sleeves and get to work with our Legislative Leaders, the Governor's office, and regional partners to drive community and economic investment in the City of Hibbing and the Iron Range Region. Our top priorities, this session, are the HPU bonding request and recognition of Biomass as a net-neutral method of energy generation in the 'Carbon-Free by 2040' Bill. Further, we're requesting that the work of the EMS Taskforce translates to new annual state aid for rural ambulance services. Finally, we're supporting continued investments at the state level in housing, broadband, workforce development, and childcare.

Pete Hyduke, Mayor, City of Hibbing



”



PRESERVING OUR FUTURE

THROUGH SMART PLANNING

Rice Lake has been a City since 2015 and has been working to balance our rural lifestyle with economic development, in an effort to provide additional services to our community. With the addition of Kwik Trip in the fall of 2018, Boomtown Brewery in February of 2021, Open Arms Assisted Living Facility in 2022, General Equipment in 2023, and the newly completed water main extension, Rice Lake is poised for commercial development along the Rice Lake Road Commercial Corridor. By working with St. Louis County, the State, and other organizations, Rice Lake is putting together an infrastructure package to promote development while protecting the rural character in the rest of the community.

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City of Rice Lake: Preserving Our Future

Since Rice Lake incorporated as a city in 2015, we have been working at leaving behind the township mentality and moving towards city priorities. Rice Lake's recently updated Comprehensive Plan's theme was Preserving our Future through Smart Planning. Our citizens have shown overwhelming support of remaining rural in character while providing a few additional services and amenities to our community. We have been working with St. Louis County and the Metropolitan Interstate Council to create a transportation plan for the Rice Lake Commercial Corridor which will allow for additional commercial growth within our community.

Utility Water Loop and Extension

Rice Lake received \$1 million from the State in 2020 for a sewer and water extension on Rice Lake Road. This allowed for the extension of the water main, which was completed in November 2021, we received \$1.8 million from the State to complete the sewer main extension, including a lift station, and to close a water loop on Martin Road, this is scheduled to be completed September 2024. These projects will get the City poised for development along the Rice Lake Commercial Corridor thus allowing for additional services and amenities in our community and creating a larger commercial tax base to help alleviate the tax burden on our homeowners.



Regional Public Safety Center

Rice Lake has a state bonding request to plan and construct a public safety/emergency shelter for \$5.7 million. This facility would be used to train fire and EMS personnel for Rice Lake and the surrounding townships, be the dedicated and consolidated fire services headquarters for Rice Lake, serve as a dedicated backup Emergency Operations Center for St. Louis County, have dedicated space for the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, as well as an emergency shelter for our regional needs. Rice Lake works well with our smaller surrounding communities and could help facilitate a much needed regional public safety center and training facility for our area. Rice Lake City Council would like to request our legislators help in supporting our bonding request.



“

It's important that we share the challenges and accomplishments of Northeastern Minnesota. Rice Lake will continue these conversations with our elected officials. We speak loudly for our local needs but we carry one voice for the priorities that impact our region.

Suzanne Herstad, Mayor, City of Rice Lake, Minnesota

”





Momentum: Minnesota Made

Hermantown continues growing as a regional resource

- ✓ Population growth continues; businesses creating new jobs
- ✓ 100's of new housing opportunities possible for 2024 and beyond
- ✓ Construction set to begin on legislative-supported investments
- ✓ Forward-looking approach to public-private partnerships

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State Investment Continues To Pay Dividends in Hermantown

Hermantown shows no signs of slowing down.

Whether the measurement is population, business growth, or the next significant project, the City continues to make a more prominent mark in northern Minnesota each subsequent year.

The Essentia Wellness Center continues to provide a model for multi-faceted, public-private partnerships making a positive regional impact.

The Community Recreation Initiative, supported by a voter-supported sales tax increase and a state-backed bonding effort, is slated to begin construction on all three projects in 2024. From parks, fields, arenas, and trails, these projects will bring varied recreation opportunities to every age and ability in our region in the coming years. These projects will aid in meeting regional residents' quality-of-life desires and help improve our region's less-than-ideal health outcomes statistics.

New housing continues to come online in Hermantown despite the challenging current market developers face in other areas across the state and country. Businesses are still steadily choosing to make Hermantown their new hometown because of the supportive atmosphere.

Creative partnerships, healthy recreation opportunities, additional housing, and an environment attractive to new businesses; these hallmarks of Hermantown have helped prove that investing state dollars here allows for maximum return.

In concert with private landowners, business developers, and elected officials, we are working across our community to align the bonding request that is the best next investment of state dollars in Hermantown.

There is a "next level" that combines all four of the above – housing, business, recreation, public-private partnerships – that would provide a considerable boost to new and current regional residents. The size and location of the first step in that process requires thoughtful coordination and is underway.

The proof already exists that when defined and requested, it will be an excellent investment aiding in continued growth.



“

We are grateful for the investments the state has made in Hermantown in recent years, and we are proud to say they are already making a positive impact,” Mayor Boucher said. “As we look to our next move as a community, we are confident our state’s leaders will know that Hermantown is a place of growth and success.

Wayne Boucher, Mayor, City of Hermantown

”



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Waves are a potential source of alternative energy. Craig Hill, mechanical engineering professor, monitors wave conditions to understand how much energy is available with hopes to develop new, affordable energy technologies, and make beaches safer.

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Preserving Assets To Enhance Education

UMD graduates help fill workforce needs through a well-rounded education with hands-on experiences that helps prepare them to adapt, ask questions, and deliver results. Investing in our students is a solid investment in the future leadership of our community and state.

The U of M System is requesting \$500 million for more than 150 Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPR) projects on four campuses and 11 research and outreach centers across the state.

For UMD, this request includes:

- **Heller Hall** - \$15.8 million; Heller Hall holds a mix of general purpose, pharmacy, and earth and environmental science classrooms and labs.
- **Humanities** - \$15.8 million; This facility serves half of the student body each year and provides critical general classroom space for several academic programs.
- **Library Annex and Sales Center** - \$8 million; This donor-supported project converts an old library annex into student-focused space, updates regional archival resources, and adds a state of the art sales center that aligns with the new professional sales major.

Future projects on the U of M planning list for Duluth include the downtown academic health center and Large Lakes Observatory. These two exciting upcoming requests continue their planning phases. Taking care of critical asset preservation needs this session will help position the university for these future milestone projects.



UMD Facts / Figures

- Nearly 25% of facilities across the U of M System are in poor or critical condition.
- UMD welcomed 9,350 students this fall.
- The Duluth campus brings over \$500 million in regional annual economic impact a year.

More at government-relations.umn.edu/

“

UMD appreciates the support from our legislative delegation. You can see the incredible impact that state funding has had across campus. State support enhances the educational experience for our students. Our request this year is simple - asset preservation. Preserving our existing facilities is an investment that supports education, the workforce, and brings impact for decades to come.

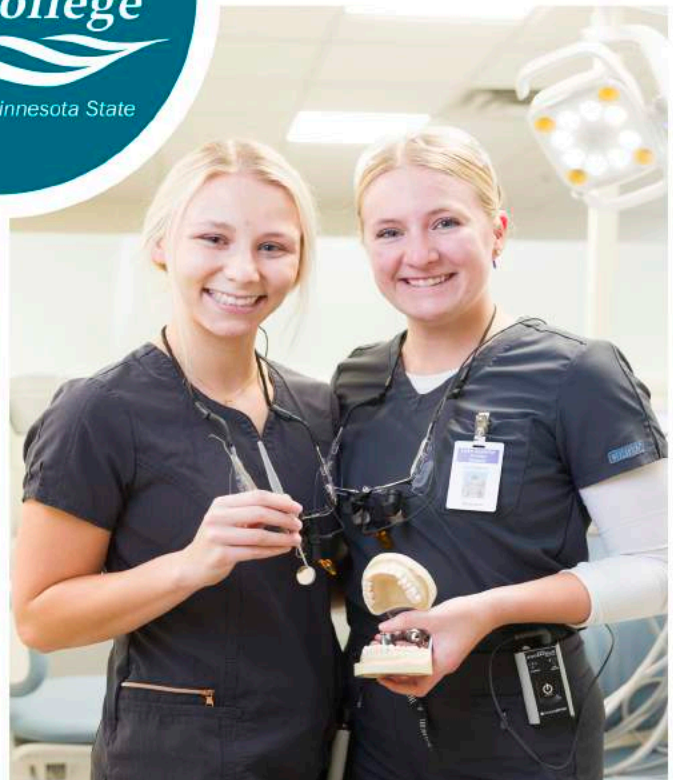
Dave McMillan, Interim Chancellor, University of Minnesota Duluth

”





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Lake Superior College's Enduring Value

Lake Superior College (LSC) is a comprehensive two-year community and technical college serving Duluth and surrounding communities. Students earn certificates, diplomas and associate degrees in dozens of in-demand careers that boost the economy and improve their quality of life. Students often transfer to four-year institutions or enter the healthcare industry or skilled trades.

Legislative Request

Although LSC does not have a current bonding request this time, it needs HEAPR funds. These funds maintain the quality of the workshops, classrooms, and labs across the main 97-acre campus, and the Emergency Response Training Center in West Duluth. We also seek your support for Minnesota State's request for a \$61 million-dollar supplemental budget to cover operational campus expenses resulting from compensation and other cost increases. This funding will help provide financial stabilization for our campuses. LSC's anticipated share would be \$1,359,577.

HEAPR Details

Repairs to roof structures, mechanical, and interior spaces are critical investments for the long-term health of the institution. Fully funding HEAPR translates into cost savings compared to unpredictable and costly emergency repairs that not only disrupt classes but waste college employee's limited time when it's needed for daily operations. Protecting the existing assets of Lake Superior College is the fiscally smart move!

More at lsc.edu



“

Thank you for your support of Lake Superior College and the Minnesota State system. The supplemental budget is vital to the financial health and wellness of our campus. Past support from the legislature has helped us keep up with the demands of the Duluth area for educating a skilled workforce.

HEAPR funds are unglamorous but extremely necessary for the preservation of prior investments made by the citizens of Minnesota. Our campus welcomes visits from elected officials anytime so you can see HEAPR dollars at work as well as seeing the faces of the beneficiaries...our students.

Dr. Patricia Rogers, President, Lake Superior College



”





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Thank you, Minnesota Legislators, for helping our students transform the world.

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Our students are future educators, caregivers, healthcare professionals, artists and business thought leaders who will go on to make a difference in their communities.

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The College of
St. Scholastica

Values-Based Higher Education To Strengthen Our Communities

Since 1912, The College of St. Scholastica has prepared graduates with the intellectual and moral foundation for responsible living and meaningful work. We aspire to be a diverse and inclusive community that develops and sends forth thoughtful leaders committed to serving and transforming their communities.

The positive effects of this transformation are felt statewide. St. Scholastica offers programs in Duluth, St. Cloud and online. Bachelor, master and doctoral-level education is available in various traditional, accelerated, hybrid and fully online modalities. Graduates fare well: Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau revealed St. Scholastica alumni earn an average of \$11,000 more than other Minnesota college graduates one year out of college.

Our Benedictine Catholic institution has helped students facing higher education barriers since its founding. This is evident in current demographics: 20% of students are from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, 25% have family incomes below \$50,000, and nearly 34% of our current undergraduates are first-generation college students.

St. Scholastica plays a significant role in Minnesota's workforce development. We are a major provider of healthcare workers — approximately 60% of our graduates enter a healthcare-related field — with one of the largest private nursing programs in the state and increasing offerings in physical therapy, occupational therapy and physician assistant studies.



“

I am very grateful to Governor Tim Walz and our state legislators for continuing to prioritize the State Grant program. This investment benefits all eligible students and helps break down barriers to a college education. Students and families count on us to deliver an excellent education at an affordable cost. Thank you for this vital support!

Dr. Barbara McDonald, President, The College of St. Scholastica

”





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Essentia Health

Transforming Care for Our Communities

Health care today is facing tremendous challenges: steeply rising labor and supply costs; declining reimbursement; and workforce shortages. To sustain high-quality health care for our patients, Essentia Health is committed to overcoming these obstacles. This is particularly critical in the rural areas we are privileged to serve.

Thank you to our lawmakers for their partnership and important role in supporting healthy, thriving communities through policies that keep patients and families at the heart of their decision making.

Adequate reimbursement

Government health insurance programs such as Medicaid and Medicare pay well below the actual cost of providing care. The Minnesota Hospital Association reports the percentage of patients covered by these programs is on the rise across the state. Medicaid reimbursement rates must be improved to address inflation and today's health care costs.

Improving access to timely care

Minnesota hospitals continue to experience delays in discharging patients due to barriers in post-acute care placement. This leads to daily challenges of full emergency departments and trouble finding beds for patients who need a higher level of care. Let's continue to build on the work started in the legislature to find solutions to support the continuum of patient care.

Workforce shortages

Essentia is dedicated to recruiting and retaining medical professionals to care for our rural and underserved communities. We support a variety of innovative programs and educational partnerships to train health care professionals. Creating a new four-year medical degree program at the University of Minnesota, located at the site of the former St. Mary's Medical Center, would be instrumental in addressing physician shortages in rural areas.

More at [EssentiaHealth.org](https://www.essentialhealth.org)

“

At Essentia Health, we are committed to partnering with our communities to address the serious challenges facing health care today. It will take all of us, working together, to find innovative solutions to the financial pressures and workforce shortages affecting health care.

David C. Herman, MD, Essentia Health Chief Executive Officer

”



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2024 Legislative Priorities

▶ Workforce

We appreciate current efforts to address workforce challenges. As advocates for healthcare career pathways, we applaud state-level initiatives and value funding support.

We ask for continued efforts in streamlining administrative processes in workforce programs to minimize participation barriers. We ask that you recognize the diverse healthcare career landscape, supporting not only traditional roles but also technical positions crucial to our workforce.

Your continued support will enhance the success and inclusivity of our workforce development initiatives.

▶ Medical School

We fully support the University of Minnesota's Medical School and College of Pharmacy building expansion into the Duluth Medical District. We strongly believe that a centralized location, between the east and west medical campuses in downtown Duluth, would have the greatest benefit for students, patients and our community.

▶ City Parking Ramp

We appreciate our legislative delegation's support for the Medical District. State funding was critical for the advancement of the new city parking ramp located on our campus. To maximize that impact on our patients, neighbors, and staff, we are asking for additional state funding to further expand parking capacity.

▶ Reimbursement Rates

We are proud to care for Medicaid patients, a program funded by the state. However, poor Medicaid reimbursement rates result in a \$20 million loss each year for St. Luke's. As we face unprecedented inflation, we ask you to advocate for dramatically increasing Medicaid reimbursement. This will allow us to continue to provide these vital services to our community and look to provide even more services for all patients in our region.



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From the Co-Presidents

"We look forward to working with you on these important priorities as we continue to provide the highest level of care to our patients. Your dedication to the individuals in our region and across Minnesota is deeply appreciated."



Eric Lohn
Co-President/CEO &
Chief Financial Officer



Nick Van Deelen, MD
Co-President/CEO &
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This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society.



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Spectrum



A Legacy of Solving for What's Next

TKDA helps build and grow communities, institutions, and businesses across the Northland. Founded in 1910, our roots in this region date back to the earliest days of our business with the design of the Allouez Ore Docks and work for Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing. Today, our engineers, architects, planners, and specialized experts are proud to build on this legacy, working with our clients to create solutions for the future of Duluth, St. Louis County, and the larger region.

TKDA and our employee owners are invested in this region and in the ongoing success of our clients and partners that call this great place home. As the lobby teams visit the Capitol during this event to ask for support, know that TKDA's continued growth in Duluth and St. Louis County is inextricably connected to our clients' sustained prosperity and policy priorities.



TKDA is proud to serve as a design solution partner for the following clients and projects in Duluth and St. Louis County:

- University of Minnesota Duluth - Production Kitchen
- City of Duluth - Wade Stadium Improvements
- Twin Ports Interchange
- St. Louis County - Public Works Facilities
- City of Ely – Regional Trailhead Building
- Cleveland Cliffs - St. Louis County Operations
- Cirrus Aircraft - Duluth Innovation Center

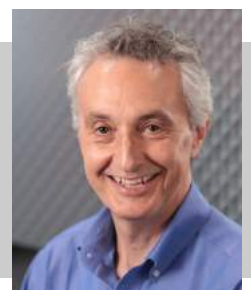


“

We at TKDA are proud of our company's century-long commitment to Duluth, St. Louis County, and the surrounding region. We are optimistic about the prospects for continued growth here and appreciate the State of Minnesota's ongoing investments and policy support for this region.

Tom Stoneburner, CEO, TKDA

”





Our people power the future

At ALLETE, we champion diversity in all its forms and support a workplace where everyone is valued, respected and heard. We're leading the way to a sustainable clean-energy future through our commitment to customers, communities and the climate.

ALLETE Corporate Sustainability Report
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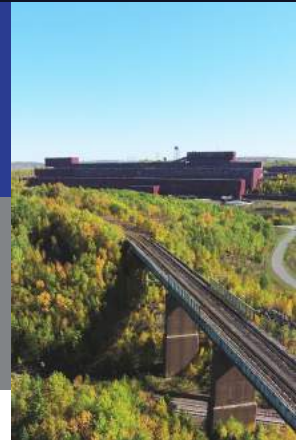


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Stronger Together 45

Thank You, on Behalf of the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce

Valued Elected Officials,

Thank you for welcoming Duluth and St. Louis County participants to the Capitol, and for listening to our perspectives and requests.

Appreciated Regional Key Stakeholders,

Thank you for your time, attention and resources to help amplify our collective voice at the Capitol.

The Duluth Area Chamber is pleased and proud to assist in coordinating this ambitious and energizing event, Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol. We are excited to share our legislative priorities and requests with you and thank you for your leadership and support.



Matt Baumgartner

In support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Baumgartner'.

Matt Baumgartner
President
Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce

27th Annual

Duluth
& St. Louis
County AT THE
CAPITOL



DULUTH
AREA CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE



**SAINT
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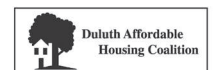
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Duluth
& St. Louis
County AT THE
CAPITOL



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COMMERCE



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**SAINT
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