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**City of Duluth Communications Office**

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**SUBJECT: Duluth Poised for Success According to National Experts**

**BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator**

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## **Duluth Poised for Success According to National Experts**

[Duluth, MN] – Over the course of the past two days, 200 people representing over 35 organizations convened during 12 separate meetings to give input about the future development for the Downtown, Hillside, and Waterfront areas. National experts in transportation, housing, and urban planning came from the University of Miami and other parts of the country to listen to community stakeholders and learn about what has taken place over the past 6 years since the last 2005 Charrette and assess what Duluth needs to move forward.

The City of Duluth, Duluth LISC and other community partners hosted a group of national experts convened by the University of Miami School of Architecture's Community Building Program, to listen to the stories of progress and change over the past six years to better understand the challenges that face the area in its next stage of development. The meetings addressed housing needs and opportunities, connectivity, and how we market Duluth's best assets.

The consultants provided the following feedback after meeting with multiple community stakeholders. "We've been energized and inspired by your progress, team work and optimism. Duluth is poised to become the next great city success story," said Ken Stapleton, of Ken Stapleton & Associates and the Lead for the consulting team. The final report should be completed in 4-6 weeks and will include detailed action items that address housing, connectivity, marketing, institutional partnerships, planning and urban design. In summary, the group felt Duluth demonstrated great progress and resilience over the past 6 years. The group suggested the following focus areas:

- - Measuring success and setting bold goals to develop urban living opportunities;
- - Strengthening the institutional partnerships, especially with higher education institutions such as the University of Minnesota Duluth;
- - Creating a "multi-node creative corridor" with relation to the arts, engaging artists and entrepreneurs;
- - Developing a marketing plan to better promote the already strong brand of Duluth; and
- - Continuing the good work of developing Complete Streets and addressing connectivity.

According to Pam Kramer, Executive Director of Duluth LISC, "The 2005 Charrette brought citizens and key stakeholders together to create a common vision for the east downtown, Hillside and waterfront. Working together, Duluth has accomplished a lot in the last six years. The meetings this week have helped us realize our potential, spurred creativity and rejuvenated the community as we look

towards the future.”

The initiative is funded in part by the Community Opportunity Fund and the Knight Fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, the Duluth Economic Development Authority, Minnesota Power, and Duluth LISC with the support of the Greater Downtown Council, The City of Duluth, The Sheraton Duluth Hotel, LHB, Greysolon Plaza by Black Woods, the AIA Northern Minnesota, and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

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