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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City to launch dedicated housing webpage for local housing rehab programs

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

City to launch dedicated housing webpage for local housing rehab programs

[Duluth, MN] – The City of Duluth Planning and Development Division is pleased to announce the launch of our new dedicated housing webpage. Our primary goal with this webpage was to create a more valuable, user-centric resource for housing developers and Duluth residents alike. Information regarding local, state, and federal funding opportunities, general housing market information, and new housing initiatives will now be available online under the “Housing” menu option at the following address: <https://duluthmn.gov/planning-development/>.

Additionally, beginning July 1, 2020, the City in partnership with the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Duluth (HRA) and U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), will launch two modified housing rehab loan programs. The Healthy Homes Homeowner Rehab Program will provide zero interest, deferred loans of up to \$30,000 to qualified homeowners for single-family home repair projects. Eligible projects include roof repair/replacement, window replacement, siding/envelope improvement and energy-efficiency upgrades. Eligible applicants must earn 80% of the area median income or less.

The Rental Rehab Loan Program will provide zero interest loans of up to \$15,000 per rental unit (\$10,000 per studio unit), and up to \$30,000 for a single-family rental home for qualifying properties. To be eligible, units receiving Program funds must be available at rents that are affordable to tenants earning 80% of the area median income or less. To learn more about these programs, contact the Duluth HRA at 218-529-6300 or visit them online at www.duluthhousing.com.

Duluth is home to roughly 86,000 residents, or 36,000 households. While the population has remained relatively unchanged in the last decade, the need for additional housing, particularly affordable housing, is greater than ever. A 2019 Maxfield Research, Inc. analysis found that Duluth could absorb 3,509 additional units of affordable apartment housing and 126 affordable single-family homes by 2024. Progress has been made with a net gain of approximately 1,185 new units from 2015 to 2019, but low vacancy rates, an older than average housing stock, and increasing construction costs demonstrate continued demand for housing. In response to this mounting challenge, the City is diligently collaborating with local partners and stakeholders to develop new, creative initiatives that encourage new housing development in Duluth. Such efforts include the convening of a Housing Task Force to brainstorm and generate recommendations surrounding the creation of new local resources, as well as the Rebuild Duluth Program, which provides free infill residential lots for builders to incentivize innovative and affordable construction.

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