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SUBJECT: City of Duluth Recognized for Energy System Carbon Reductions

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City of Duluth Recognized for Energy System Carbon Reductions

Project partners win Environmental Initiatives' Energy & Climate Award

[Duluth, MN] April 12, 2021 ¼ Environmental Initiative announced today that the City of Duluth and Ever-Green Energy alongside project partners are the winners of the Energy and Climate Award for their work to decarbonize Duluth Energy Systems.

The award recognizes projects working in partnership at the nexus of a healthy environment, a prosperous economy, and an equitable society. After a decade of planning and stakeholder engagement, the energy system was overhauled in conjunction with the Superiors Street reconstruction project. Modernizing the system has resulted in air quality improvements, carbon emission reductions, and a reliable and efficient source of heating for Duluth's downtown business district. Already, coal usage at the plant has been reduced by 80%, and greenhouse gas emissions reduced by 20%. Customers who have transitioned from steam to hot water service are already realizing over 26% energy savings, on average. The system redesign to close the distribution network will conserve 20 million gallons of Lake Superior water every year.

"This important public-private partnership and their commitment to decarbonization, stakeholder input and engagement, and equity in hiring exemplifies the vision for our Awards program," said Christina Vang-Dixon, Environmental Initiative. "We believe in honoring the work of diverse stakeholders collaborating and moving us all toward social equity and a healthy environment.

The energy infrastructure project also provided economic opportunity through the construction phases. The project also followed the City of Duluth's Community Benefits program, and 12% of work hours were performed by women, people of color, and disadvantaged workers.

"This one project has been a big part of putting us on the path to meet the City's climate goals in reducing carbon emissions," Duluth Mayor Emily Larson said. "We really appreciate the Environmental Initiatives acknowledgement of the hard work that has gone into the project by so many people and partners. We are excited to celebrate this hard work."

Duluth Energy Systems is a city-owned energy system that provides heating service to over 160 buildings in downtown Duluth and the Canal Park area. In 2018, the City and Ever-Green Energy began one of the largest conversions of a municipal thermal system, replacing 16 blocks of the aged downtown system steam pipe with new hot water infrastructure to improve the efficiency, water conservation, and performance of this system.

This was also a critical upgrade to enable future renewable energy alternatives. This project establishes the necessary infrastructure to further decarbonization for this community, allowing the integration of renewable thermal and electric options that were not possible with a primarily steam distribution system. Including the potential for more distributed energy resources and grid flexible buildings.

"Investing in the energy system that has served the City's business district since 1932, is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Converting from steam to hot water, adding natural gas to the fuel mix, and updating customer building systems reduced carbon emissions, improved efficiency, and has positioned the system to continue to decarbonize to the benefit of the customers and community," says Ever-Green Energy's CEO Ken Smith. "Thoughtful planning means that this system could serve the City for another 89 years or more."

The City and Ever-Green Energy will continue working with partners and community stakeholders to identify local and innovative solutions for the next phase of carbon reduction and energy system advancement.

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About Ever-Green Energy

Ever-Green Energy works across sectors to advance and operate energy systems, with a deep commitment to financial and

environmental stewardship. Ever-Green is one of the only firms in North America whose portfolio and services include utility ownership, operations and management, engineering, business planning, and community engagement. The Ever-Green team applies its depth of knowledge through every step of a system's development and advancement, working collaboratively to implement viable solutions that make energy systems more resilient. Located in Saint Paul, Minnesota, Ever-Green operates and manages District Energy St. Paul, Duluth Energy Systems, CoolCo, Energy Park Utility Company, Milwaukee Regional Medical Center Thermal operations, and Mission Rock Utilities. For more information, visit ever-greenenergy.com.

About Environmental Initiative

Environmental Initiative is a nonprofit organization collaborating across perspectives, power, and systems and implementing on-the-ground projects to improve our air, land, and water for all beings. Our team facilitates conversations between diverse stakeholders to address environmental, economic, and public health issues as we work toward social equity and environmental health.

Project Partners

There were also nearly three dozen organizations involved in the construction project, including construction, engineering, design, and equipment suppliers. The full list of partners is included in an Ever-Green Energy blog post about the project blog: <https://www.ever-greenenergy.com/posts/far-superior-serious-efficiency-gains-in-duluth-business-and-hospital-corridors/>