

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**City of Duluth Communications Office**

Mayor Emily Larson  
411 West First Street • Duluth, Minnesota 55802 • [www.duluthmn.gov](http://www.duluthmn.gov)

*For more information, please call 218-730-5309*

**DATE:** 9/20/2023

**SUBJECT:** Mayor Emily Larson announces applications are open for Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force

**BY:** Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

**Mayor Emily Larson announces applications are open for Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force**

[DULUTH, MN] Mayor Emily Larson announced today in a press conference that she is creating a task force to draft a set of recommendations intended to help Duluth meet the community's need for quality, accessible indoor athletic venues for a variety of athletic activities. Goals of the Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force include supporting sports tourism, lowering barriers to athletic participation, and enhancing Duluth's quality of life.

Mayor Larson will appoint nine-to-thirteen members of the Duluth community to the Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force. Task force members will work in collaboration with City staff, project partners, and consultants to draft recommendations for the Mayor, City Council, and project partners. The task force will be asked to deliver its findings by September 30, 2024.

"This is a great day for every resident across Duluth. Conversations which began pre-pandemic are now full circle, and I am proud and thrilled for our community. By announcing this task force, we are committing to finally solving our athletic facility shortage. A problem decades in the making, we're putting our collective shoulder to the wheel and we know the community is with us on this," said Mayor Emily Larson of the announcement.

"My thanks to Todd Fedora for answering the call to chair this process, to City staff for their leadership in community recreation, to Director Jim Filby Williams for helping to shape this process, and to our legislative delegation for their effort, support, and political leadership to extend the half-and-half to partially fund this vision.

"This announcement is what all kids and families in Duluth deserve: a plan for long term, sustainable, athletic investment that can bring our community together around a shared

vision. A vision to keep youth sports affordable, accessible, and thriving; a vision which builds on the special places that are our parks, and invests specifically in facilities like Fryberger, which are long in need of our investment and attention.”

The Indoor Athletics Venues Task Force, with support from consultants and City staff, will be asked to advise on effective strategies to better meet the community’s need for indoor athletic venues, including:

1. **Making better use of existing indoor venues** through improved interagency communications and cooperation.
2. **Forging effective public-private partnerships** for the ownership, financing, and operation of existing and new indoor venues.
3. **Renovating or replacing existing indoor venues.**
4. **Constructing new indoor venues.**

While anyone may apply to serve on the task force, the City is especially interested in residents with relevant business and professional expertise who have a strong connection to parks-based athletics programming and can contribute constructively to group decision-making process.

The Task Force will be chaired by Todd Fedora, former Duluth City Councilor and longtime regional leader in commercial banking.

Applications will open on September 20, and will close at 4:30 pm on October 6. Selected task force members will be announced in mid-October. For more information, and to apply, please visit [Mayor's Office \(duluthmn.gov\)](https://www.duluthmn.gov/mayors-office)

###