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City of Duluth - Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Twin Ports Interchange Project Secures \$20 Million Grant to Jumpstart Largest Infrastructure Reinvestment into Duluth in 25 years

BY: Pakou Ly, Communications Office

Twin Ports Interchange Project Secures \$20 Million Grant to Jumpstart Largest Infrastructure Reinvestment into Duluth in 25 years

[Duluth, MN] - The future of transportation and economic development in Duluth is getting a \$20 million boost. Thanks to a U.S. Department of Transportation Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is ready to start the reconstruction of the Twin Ports Interchange.

The project is a significant historic reinvestment since the completion of the Interstate 35 terminus in Duluth 25 years ago. The project will create better and safer connectivity serving as a fundamental link between the Duluth Port, Lincoln Park, Canal Park, and Downtown. People and goods moving in and out of this region will be able to easily and more intuitively get to their destinations, alleviating logistical issues that exist today, while positively affecting Duluth's local economy.

"The announcement that the Twin Ports Interchange project has been selected to receive a \$20 million BUILD grant has made us all very happy at MnDOT," said Duane Hill, MnDOT District 1 Engineer. "We are grateful to Senator Tina Smith, Senator Amy Klobuchar and Congressman Rick Nolan for their help in making this important project a reality".

The Twin Ports Interchange project is an amazing opportunity to not only fix traffic congestion issues and increase safety, but to also spur economic development in an area of Duluth that is already seeing tremendous growth and energy. "I am thrilled that the U.S. Department of Transportation and MnDOT have made Duluth a priority. It is a big reason why we have focused on transportation as a priority in our Comprehensive Plan and traveled to Washington D.C. to ensure that our federal partners know that we are with them on improving infrastructure in Minnesota, and across the country," said Mayor Emily Larson.

State Representative Liz Olson, the new House Majority Whip, stated, "This reconstruction is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve safety, noise, congestion, and aesthetics on I-35. Particularly, I'm excited about what the final result can mean for the connectivity of Lincoln Park, Canal Park and the vibrancy of downtown Duluth. Clearly, our ports, streets, rail, and highways all must function together for not just our regional economy to thrive, but for all Duluthians to have a quality way of life. As the reconstruction proceeds, I'm hopeful we can have a community-focused approach ensuring the needs of residents, visitors, and businesses can all share in a successful long-term outcome."

The project is slated to start with preliminary work in 2019 and is estimated to cost \$340 million. The project would extend into 2023. At an upcoming meeting, the Duluth City Council will consider an amendment to the Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan that seeks to incorporate community-driven transportation and access priorities with the latest details of the Twin Ports Interchange project. Project details are available at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d1/projects/twin-ports-interchange/index.html>

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