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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City to begin process for proposing downtown historic district design guidelines

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

City to begin process for proposing downtown historic district design guidelines

[Duluth, MN] The City of Duluth is beginning the process of proposing historic district design guidelines in downtown. Planning and Economic Development staff will host two public meetings to discuss some of the elements and significant components of the proposed design guidelines. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 27 at 5:00 p.m., and the second will be held on Wednesday, July 28, at noon. The sessions will include a short presentation, with an opportunity for those attending to share comments or questions.

In 2006, a portion of Duluth's central business district was nominated and listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Duluth Commercial Historic District. The purpose of historic districts is, in part, to preserve the character of a neighborhood by retaining historic buildings and features while ensuring that new construction and additions are compatible with their historic surroundings.

The City is proposing historic design guidelines to assist property owners and contractors in determining appropriate treatment for existing historic buildings and landscape elements within the historic district, as well as to help provide direction when new structures are proposed to be constructed within the downtown historic district. The proposed downtown historic standards will give guidance on maintaining, repairing, and, when necessary, replacing historic features. Maintaining a neighborhood's historic character has social, economic, and environmental benefits beyond achieving and preserving a particular aesthetic appearance. Well-preserved neighborhoods with historic character can also attract visitors and investment. These proposed standards would only apply to properties within the 2006 historic district boundaries.

The public information meetings will be held virtually. The links will be posted the day of the meetings, under the link "Heritage Preservation Commission" at <https://duluthmn.gov/live-meeting>. A recording of these meetings will be saved and posted at <https://duluthmn.gov/planning-development/>.

City staff will host a second round of informational presentations in the next two months to present the final version of the proposed guidelines to residents before seeking formal approval from commissions and City Council. The Heritage Preservation Commission, Planning Commission will consider approving the guidelines later this fall. If approved, the recommendations would go before the City Council for final approval. If adopted, the guidelines would not be effective until early 2022.

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