

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City of Duluth and Bentleyville staff excited for annual event to open

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

City of Duluth and Bentleyville staff excited for annual event to open

[Duluth, MN] The City of Duluth and Bentleyville are excited to welcome back Duluthians and visitors alike to the 18th Annual Bentleyville Tour of Lights that opens tomorrow, November 20, at 5:00 p.m. Santa Claus will be skydiving into Bayfront Festival Park at approximately 4:55p.m. The lights will then be lit by a group of volunteers and sponsors at 5:00 p.m.

This year the event will be held in its traditional form as a walk-through at Bayfront Festival Park. Last year due to COVID-19 precautions, the event was changed into a drive-through experience. This is the event's thirteenth year at Bayfront.

"We are excited to welcome the public for another great season," said Executive Director and event founder Nathan Bentley. "So much goes into planning for and executing this event. We can't thank our volunteers and sponsors enough for continuing to create this life-changing experience year after year."

Bentleyville is free to attend; however, attendees are strongly encouraged to donate a toy or canned goods. These donations are then given to the Duluth Salvation Army. The Salvation Army provides services to thousands of Duluthians in need each year.

"Bentleyville is pure joy," Mayor Emily Larson said. "An invitation to set down your worries to find hope and fun with people you love. It's free, it's festive, and it's available to everyone. Bentleyville has become an important tradition for Duluth and hundreds of thousands of visitors who travel long distances just to see it, be here and make special memories. I can't wait for this season to start!"

Traffic Closures:

During the event there will be traffic closures. Please review the following changes before planning your trip.

On Friday and Saturday evenings beginning on November 20 through December 27, Fifth Avenue West will be closed to southbound traffic. Traffic will be redirected to the slip ramp by accessing Bentleyville from Railroad Street. This closure will be instated on Friday night's from 4:30 – 10:00 p.m. and on Saturday evenings from 3:30 – 10:00 p.m.

Those wanting to access the Great Lakes Aquarium parking lot on Friday and Saturday evenings during Bentleyville should use Harbor Drive behind the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center.

The Railroad Street to 5th Avenue West connector will also be closed to traffic on Friday and Saturday nights to accommodate buses and shuttles transporting attendees to the event.

The City of Duluth encourages those looking to go to Canal Park to use the Lake Avenue exit off of I-35.

Parking:

The City of Duluth and Bentleyville would like to encourage those attending the event to park in lots in downtown Duluth, and Canal Park to alleviate wait times and traffic congestion. For a parking map, please visit <https://www.duluthparking.com/locations>.

Parking lots closer to the event include Bayfront Festival Park, Duluth Entertainment & Convention Center, and the Great Lakes Aquarium.

For additional information on the Bentleyville Tour of Lights, please visit www.bentleyvilleusa.org.

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