



## **Council Agenda Item 25-0730R**

**MEETING DATE:** September 22, 2025

**SUBJECT/TITLE:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH CONFLUENCE INC.FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE PRILEY CIRCLE RESTORATION PROJECT

**SUBMITTED BY:** Kooper Andringa, Project Tech, Property & Facilities Management

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:** None

**BACKGROUND:** Priley Circle is the central public space within the Duluth Civic Center Historic District, originally designed in 1909 by famed architect Daniel Burnham, known for his work on the Chicago Plan and other iconic civic spaces. The circle serves as the primary access and landscape hub for three major government buildings: City Hall, the Federal Building, and the St. Louis County Courthouse.

Its layout reflects early 20th-century ideals of civic grandeur, symmetry, and public accessibility. The space includes historic sidewalks, curbs, lighting, and the Priley Fountain, named after former county commissioner Joseph Priley, who championed its landscaping and public use.

Despite its historic charm, Priley Circle faces several challenges:

- Aging Infrastructure: Pavement, lighting, and landscape features have deteriorated over time. The Priley Fountain, a centerpiece of the space, has suffered repeated mechanical failures and is a major maintenance issue. The updated design will incorporate durable, low-maintenance materials and modern construction techniques to reduce long-term upkeep and operational costs for the City.
- Accessibility Gaps: The site lacks modern ADA-compliant features, limiting access for people with disabilities.
- Historic Preservation Compliance: As a National Register-listed site, any updates must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and undergo Section 106 consultation with the Minnesota SHPO and GSA.
- Public Activation: The City envisions a revitalized Priley Circle that better serves the community, encourages public gathering, and reflects both its historic roots and future-forward civic values.

This restoration is more than a facelift—it's a chance to honor Duluth's architectural legacy while making the space functional, inclusive, and sustainable for generations to come.

**BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:** Budget is now \$355,135.00, from the City CIP budget.

**OPTIONS:** Approve the resolution and the design of the Priley Circle restoration can start as planned. If denied the project will be halted

**NECESSARY ACTION:** Approve.

**ATTACHMENTS:**