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Title: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR AND, UPON APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANT TO STUDY I-35 TO RESTORE COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY.

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RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR AND, UPON APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANT TO STUDY I-35 TO RESTORE COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY.

CITY PROPOSAL:

WHEREAS, the city of Duluth (City) is authorized to apply for the federal Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program for a Community Planning Grant to study the downtown and West Duluth segments of I-35, with funding to be used for planning activities for future construction projects;

WHEREAS, the study proposes an analysis of the transportation system surrounding the I-35 corridor in Duluth with an emphasis on housing availability, economic equity, and climate resiliency; and will allow for innovative community planning to address community connectivity, including barriers to mobility, access and economic development, due to high speeds, grade separation and other Interstate related design factors as contained in the grant program application to be submitted by September 28, 2023;

WHEREAS, that the City has the legal authority to apply for financial assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability to ensure adequate project administration;

WHEREAS, that the City has not violated any federal, state, or local laws pertaining to fraud, bribery, graft, kickbacks, collusion, conflict of interest, or other unlawful or corrupt practices;

THEREFORE RESOLVED, the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to apply to the United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) for the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program in the amount of \$1,800,000 for the funding of this project;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City will commit to leading a public and private partnership to provide the minimum 20 percent match of non-federal funds, required by the discretionary program which is estimated to be \$450,000;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City hereby commits to provide no less than 100 percent of the project cost contribution in excess of any grant provided by the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program;

FURTHER RESOLVED, the proposed study will be led by the City in strong partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Duluth-Superior Metro Interstate Council (MIC);

FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon approval of its application by the Secretary of Transportation of the United States of America, the Mayor and Clerk may enter into a grant agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation for the above referenced project and local match, and any project costs above the grant award will be paid from the appropriate funding source. The City certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations;

FURTHER RESOLVED, the City, upon approval of this application by the state, shall enter into an agreement with the U.S. DOT for the above-referenced study, and will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in all contract agreements;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Clerk are authorized to execute such documents as are necessary to implement the project on behalf of the city;

FURTHER RESOLVED, the City recognizes that all projects awarded with FY 2023 RCN Program grant funds must be obligated by the date of September 30, 2026 and is committed to satisfying applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements, within this timeframe;

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This is a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods federal funding competitive grant program application in response to City Council Resolution 21-0681R supporting the formal re-evaluation of the 1-35 corridor. The grant application is for a community planning and technical assistance grant to study the Downtown Duluth and West Duluth segments of I-35, to reconnect community through the removal, retrofit, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities. The 20% local match for this community planning grant will be a combination of public and private resources in the amount of \$450,000. The final combination of sources for the required local funding will be identified following the grant selection process by U.S. DOT. If a grant is awarded, the City will prepare a community-driven planning process, starting in 2024.