



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0044R, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY FOR BUILDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES (BRIC) PROGRAM FUNDS TO MITIGATE DAMAGE TO THE LAKEWALK.

CITY PROPOSAL:

RESOLVED, that the proper city officials are hereby authorized to apply for up to \$6,750,000 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the city of Duluth has the legal authority to accept the money and financial, technical, and managerial capacity to ensure proper planning and maintenance of the project. Match is not required but leverage is encouraged.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Duluth city council names the fiscal agent for this project as Jen Carlson, City of Duluth Finance Director, 411 West 1st Street, Duluth MN 55802.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution will authorize the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, to submit an application to FEMA for \$6,750,000 from the FEMA BRIC grant program on behalf of the City of Duluth to pay for mitigation of at-risk sections of the Lakewalk from the vicinity of Vietnam Veterans Memorial to 21st Ave East. Actions will include relocation of the trail several feet inland from the eroding bluff line, shoreline armoring, and erosion-resistant green infrastructure.

The requested funds will restore and stabilize those portions of the Lakewalk shoreline that were not restored in previous phases of FEMA-funded work. Exhibit I identifies the portions of shoreline that have been restored in prior phases with different funding sources and the portions of shoreline that will be restored if this BRIC grant request is funded. Full funding of this BRIC request would permit complete restoration of all segments of downtown shoreline except that through Leif Erickson Park. Renewal of shoreline, trails, and park amenities in Leif Erickson will necessarily be planned, financed, and implemented in a future year and depend upon new state and federal funding.

The project will benefit residents and visitors by protecting I35, the railroad, sewer mains, and the Lakewalk from progressive damage by powerful Lake Superior storms that have been eating away at the adjoining shoreline.

The Lakewalk is the most popular public green space in Duluth with more than one million visits per year by residents and tourists. Repeated storm repairs on the Lakewalk shoreline consume finite funds from important public budgets. The reconstructed Lakewalk shoreline will be far less vulnerable to harm from storms.

A local match is not required but, in order to compete for limited federal funds, the City will contribute a match of 25% or \$2,250,000. The match will be paid from the \$5.5 million the City originally planned to contribute to the Lakewalk/DECC seawall bonding project. In consideration of the budgetary challenges that faced local governments in 2020, the state waived the usual local match requirements in the bonding bill approved in late

2020. That waiver gives the City the opportunity to get more value for our limited public investment by using portions of our originally planned \$5.5 million project investment to secure additional federal funds. The City will bond for the match in its planned Lakewalk and Seawall Infrastructure bond issue as established in the City's 2022 annual bonding plan approved by the City Council on December 6, 2021.