

Council Agenda Item 26-0040R



MEETING DATE: January 26, 2026

SUBJECT/TITLE: 26-0040R, RESOLUTION APPROVING DEDA RESOLUTION 25D-50 AUTHORIZING FUNDING FOR THE DULUTH PRODUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UPPER MIDWEST FILM OFFICE.

SUBMITTED BY: Tricia Hobbs –Executive Director, DEDA

RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: N/A

BACKGROUND: The Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) is working with the Upper Midwest Film Office to fund the production incentive for 2026. To date, spending directly tied to this program is estimated at \$3.6M, utilizing over 7000 hotel rooms and nearly \$1M in wages to Duluth residents. An additional \$700K is certified for Q1 2026. UMFO reports over \$14M in spending in the region since their programs began in 2021.

2024 projects included projects of all sizes, including a post-production project for an editor in Gary New Duluth, an emerging Duluth filmmaker doing a documentary about the Ronald McDonald House Northland, two lifetime movies (Hockey Mom Revenge premiering 12/27!) and the most recent project *Autopsy of Albert Kemper* was the largest project in the region (to date) that just finished filming in November. "Kemper" rented the vacant Technical College building and estimates to spend nearly \$800,000 within the parameters of this program.

There is currently a waiting list of projects that are ready to utilize this program.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: \$220,000 from DEDA fund 860-860-8640-5434.

OPTIONS: Authorize the contract or forego authorization that would allow the film incentive to attract film, television, and digital media projects in the City of Duluth to further drive economic development.

NECESSARY ACTION: Authorize the resolution acknowledging the actions of DEDA.

ATTACHMENTS: Agreement with UMFO with Program Guidelines as an exhibit to the agreement.

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