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Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

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A division of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

Date: September 1, 2020
From: Rondi Watson, Communications Coordinator
Subject: **Two Proctor Demonstration Projects to Open along 2nd Street**

[Proctor, MN] – Throughout September and October, the City of Proctor will install temporary street improvements to provide more comfortable streets for people walking and biking. The two installations, referred to as “demonstration projects” will be installed in downtown Proctor at 2nd Street and Highway 2 (3rd Avenue), as well as a few blocks west at 2nd Street and 5th Avenue. Demonstration projects use low-cost and temporary materials and supplies like traffic paint and plastic flexible posts to test and evaluate potential long-term installations.

The demonstration projects are part of the broader Proctor Transportation Plan, which will define the community’s vision for how it would like its transportation system to look, feel, and function. The plan will bring forward key ideas from previous planning efforts and gather input from additional stakeholders to produce a comprehensive guiding plan.

“We wanted to bring forward common themes about what makes Proctor a special place and how an integrated, multimodal transportation system can contribute to that. A key feature of this Plan will be illustrations —drawings and animations — to literally picture how this could look for the roadway projects that are coming in the near future,” said James Gittemeier, project manager for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), the project sponsor.

Project staff and partner agencies plan to install traffic paint and vertical plastic flexible posts at the two intersections during the week of August 31. The posts will come down at the end of October (or before first snowfall) and the traffic paint will naturally wear away over winter.

“We are hoping that people who walk, bike, take transit, and drive will try it out and also help us to evaluate the effectiveness of these pedestrian improvements,” said Gittemeier.

Project staff spoke with city officials and other community stakeholders when choosing the two demonstration project locations. “2nd Street is the key corridor for getting across Proctor – to

schools, parks, community facilities and businesses – therefore a logical place to try out these improvements,” Gittemeier noted. He added that project staff would like to hear from the community about the demonstration projects. A survey is available at bit.ly/ProctorDemo.

The design uses curb extensions – sometimes called “bump outs” or “bulb outs”—to narrow the roadway. This narrowing calms traffic, gives people walking more visibility at intersections, and shortens the crossing distance.

“Curb extensions are a great way to indicate to drivers that they should expect to see people walking in the area,” said Jimmy Shoemaker, a Senior Planner at Alta Planning & Design and one of the consultants working on the project. “At the 2nd Street and 5th Avenue intersection, the road transitions from industrial and commercial land use to one that is more residential. The temporary curb extensions are a visual cue to drivers to slow down, especially as they approach the school campus to the west.” Similar thinking applied to 2nd Street and Highway 2, Shoemaker says. “When drivers approach downtown Proctor from the south, we wanted the street changes to say ‘you are entering a community. Time to slow down.’”

The two demonstrations and the broader Proctor Transportation Plan are a joint project of the MIC and the City of Proctor. More information can be found on the project website at <https://clients.bolton-menk.com/proctor2020/>.

For more information contact James Gittemeier, Principal Planner at the MIC, at jgittemeier@ardc.org or (218) 728-1836, or Jimmy Shoemaker, Senior Planner, Alta Planning & Design, jimmyshoemaker@altaplanning.com.

The MIC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior urbanized area, which includes Proctor. MPOs exist across the United States for urbanized areas over 50,000 and work with local government staff and elected officials on regional planning efforts.

The MIC is a division of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission. The mission of ARDC is to serve the people of the Arrowhead Region by providing local units of government and citizens groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems and fostering local leadership.

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