

RESOLUTION 21-12

DULUTH-SUPERIOR METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL

*Supporting the I-535 Blatnik Bridge Project
Connecting Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin*

WHEREAS, the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) was created by the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) and recognized by the Governors of Wisconsin and Minnesota as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth, MN-Superior, WI urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, the MIC, as the designated MPO, is the body responsible for making transportation policy decisions and coordinating the transportation planning and development function among jurisdictions within the Duluth-Superior urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, MnDOT and WisDOT are jointly working toward a future project to address structural concerns about the John A. Blatnik Bridge, one of two bridges that connects Duluth and Superior; and

WHEREAS, the redundancy of two bridges provides critical connectivity between Duluth and Superior and neighboring jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Blatnik Bridge is an important freight and commercial connection between the Twin Ports of Duluth and Superior that supports economic development; and

WHEREAS, the project will address aging infrastructure, improve safety, better accommodate oversize/overweight loads, and improve multimodal transportation options; and

WHEREAS, a direct and more viable connection for people who walk, bicycle, and use other potential future micro-mobility modes between Duluth and Superior is necessary for creating an equitable transportation network; and

WHEREAS, the vision of the MIC's current Long Range Transportation Plan, *Sustainable Choices 2045*, is to develop a community-supported multimodal transportation system that not only supports the diverse needs of people and commerce, but is also fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time; and

WHEREAS, the Blatnik Bridge project could take advantage of potential new funding opportunities at the federal level;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council supports the I-535 Blatnik Bridge Project as a critical connection within the region's future transportation system.

ATTEST:

Wayne Boucher, Minnesota Co-Chair

Nick Baker, Wisconsin Co-Chair

Ron Chicka, MIC Director

August 25, 2021
Date