RESOLUTION 26-15

OF THE

DULUTH-SUPERIOR METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL (MIC)

Acknowledging the Role of the MIC Policy Board
as the Metropolitan Planning Organization
and
Providing for Coordination, Staffing, and Fiscal Responsibilities Agreements

WHEREAS, in 1975 the Governors of Minnesota and Wisconsin designated the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) in cooperation with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior urbanized area, with the stipulation that both commissions recognize the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) as the body responsible for making transportation policy decisions, and the U.S. Department of Transportation concurred in that designation on March 17, 1976; and

WHEREAS, ARDC and NWRPC established the MIC by agreement dated January 8, 1976, and for more than 50 years have served as its host agencies, with ARDC providing the MIC's full-time staff, fiscal management, and Minnesota local match, and NWRPC providing Wisconsin coordination and local match, enabling the Duluth-Superior area to receive federal transportation planning funds without interruption; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) by letter dated May 20, 2026, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) by letter dated August 28, 2026, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Minnesota and Wisconsin Divisions by letter dated September 14, 2026, have since concluded under 23 U.S.C. § 134(b)(2) that the MIC Policy Board is the MPO for the Duluth-Superior urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, this determination reflects the current interpretation of our state and federal partners and calls on the Policy Board, ARDC, and NWRPC to move forward together in a new way; and

WHEREAS, as the MPO, the MIC Policy Board is responsible for:

1. Carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process for making transportation investment decisions in the metropolitan area, with program oversight from FHWA, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), MnDOT, and WisDOT;
2. Preparing and maintaining a Metropolitan Transportation Plan;
3. Preparing and implementing an annual Unified Planning Work Program;
4. Preparing a Transportation Improvement Program to provide for transportation investments that meet metropolitan transportation needs;
5. Preparing and maintaining the Public Participation Plan and the Title VI Plan;
6. Establishing operating rules and procedures; and
7. Other duties as required to comply with state and federal regulations; and

WHEREAS, the MIC Policy Board values its long partnership with ARDC and NWRPC and shares their commitment to the Duluth-Superior region, to a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process, and to ensuring that federal transportation funding continues without interruption; and

WHEREAS, current agreements supporting the MIC run through December 31, 2026, and the roles and responsibilities of the Policy Board, and of ARDC and NWRPC as coordinating, staffing, and fiscal agencies, should be defined clearly in written agreements, in consultation with MnDOT, WisDOT, FHWA, and FTA, before 2027 programming begins; and

WHEREAS, developing those agreements will require Policy Board members from both states to meet with ARDC and NWRPC representatives in late 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Interstate Council Policy Board acknowledges the determinations of MnDOT, WisDOT, and FHWA and accepts its responsibilities as the MPO for the Duluth-Superior urbanized area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Policy Board will collaborate with ARDC and NWRPC to develop coordination, staffing, and fiscal responsibilities agreements for 2027 programming, working either as a full Board or through a working group of members from both states, as determined by the Policy Board, with recommended agreements brought to the full Policy Board for action [by _____, 2026].

Attest:

_____ _____

Wayne Boucher, Minnesota Co-Chair Nick Baker, Wisconsin co-chair

_____ _____

Ron Chicka, MIC Director Sheldon Johnson, MIC Deputy Director

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Date