Resolution
#26-##
Resolution that the MIC perform a post-construction Road Safety Audit of the 26th Ave. East Roundabout at London Road in Duluth

Whereas the MIC Policy Board adopted a Safety Action Plan (SAP) on 9/16/26 committing to Vision Zero; and

Whereas the SAP framework establishes metrics to ensure long-term safety outcomes and assess progress toward achieving zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries. and ongoing transparency, while local county and city/county partners coordinate specific project evaluations and post-implementation reviews; and

Whereas the first core principal of the Safe Systems Approach as stated in the SAP is that crashes should be treated as preventable and "deaths and serious injury crashes are unacceptable and system design is part of the duty of safety"; and

Whereas a key goal of the Duluth Superior Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is to focus the area's limited transportation funding on projects that yield the greatest safety benefit for all roadway users (MIC website, "What is an MPO?"); and

Whereas the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Sustainable Choices 2050 addresses the unmet need for network connectivity: "Prioritizing cars along with the lack of safe, direct, and four-season pedestrian and/or cycling routes associated with the design of many roadways makes them uninviting and unsafe for non-motorized users." (Page 10-2, "Improve Safety"); and

Whereas federal rules and funding streams require MPOs and state departments of transportation to explicitly "increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users" as a core factor in regional and statewide transportation planning (23 CFR 450.306(b)(2) Bike Plan, Chapter 1, Page 4);and

Whereas the MIC board in 2025 approved a regional Bicycle Transportation Plan prioritizing multi-modal transportation, the completion of regional biking networks, and the development of a connected, safe and maintained active transportation network that is fully integrated into a seamless and complete multimodal transportation system and treats bicycles as equal (Chapter 2, Page 3); and

Whereas the City of Duluth has adopted both a Comprehensive Plan (Imagine 2035) that directs transportation infrastructure to prioritize city and neighborhood vitality over automobile through-put (Policy #5), and a Bike Plan that prioritizes multi-modal transportation, complete streets, and the development of a connected and safe active transportation network; and

Whereas the MN Climate Action Framework directs investments to prioritize safe walking and rolling networks and public transit to reach a reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled of 20% by 2050; and

Whereas the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), passed a resolution on August 12, 2025 requesting MNDOT address the safety concerns posed by the slip lane of the 26th Ave. roundabout, noting the design prioritizes vehicle throughput over the safety and comfort of non-motorized users, conflicting with local and regional goals around transportation equity, public health, sustainability, and the reduction of serious injuries and fatalities on our roadways; and

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes that right-turn slip lanes may encourage higher-than-intended vehicular speeds and create conflicts among motor traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and

Whereas the current 26th Ave. roundabout design creates an unsafe condition for bicycles traveling east on London Road that will exit the roundabout to the left of fast-moving vehicles exiting the freeway via a slip lane on their right. A pedestrian struck by a vehicle at 40 mph faces an 80% to 85% risk of death, compared to a 2% to 5% risk of death at 15 mph or below; and

Whereas the roundabout creates a gap (rather than the stated goal of closing gaps in multi modal infrastructure) in the London Road bike lane, directing a cyclist traveling east on London Rd. to exit the roadway, dismount, cross four lanes of the roundabout using two refuge islands to access the lakewalk, and then cross two lanes of London Rd. to arrive at a destination on the south side of London Road; and

Whereas there is "a measured increase in the adoption of micromobility devices, such as e-scooters, e-skateboards, and self-balancing e-devices in addition to electric pedal-assisted bikes...that further the need for greater, safer, and more reliable bike/multimodal facilities." (Bike Plan, Chapter 1, Page 3); and

Whereas there was an alternative design of lane merger prior to the roundabout presented to MNDOT that created a merge point on 1-35, slowing highway traffic and funneling it into the roundabout which calms traffic for entrance into a neighborhood; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the MIC Policy Board requires a Road Safety Audit on the 26th Ave. East roundabout within 12 months after construction is complete and normal traffic patterns established; and

Resolved that the Road Safety Audit include collecting data on roundabout performance during a temporary closure of the slip lane, with a merge point on 1-35, to evaluate whether the slip lane should be closed to improve eastbound multimodal connectivity and to determine if any other reconfiguration is necessary to improve safety for multimodal uses.