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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City of Duluth announces tourism tax applications now open

BY: Phil Jents, Communications and Policy Officer

City of Duluth announces tourism tax applications now open

[Duluth. MN] The City of Duluth has opened the application process for tourism tax allocations. The online application will be open from 8:00 am on July 7, 2023 until 5:00 pm on July 31, 2023.

The application process was implemented in 2017 as a way to improve transparency on how allocations are made. This formalized process has improved the City's ability to better understand the need for tourism dollars while allowing organizations the opportunity to apply for funding and requiring past recipients to report back on that funding's impact. Before implementing the application process, there was no formal process requiring financials, impact, or organizational plan to show how the funds would be used or the impact that the funds would have on the Duluth community.

"In the last year, we have forged new collaborations with local groups, and now prioritize bringing the economic benefits of visitors to all neighborhoods across the city," said Mayor Emily Larson. "And the results are promising. More and more people are visiting Duluth. On virtually every measure, we have surpassed last year as well as our best pre-pandemic record – more visitors, longer stays, higher revenue, over and above inflation. But my favorite statistic is that 15 of Duluth's 23 neighborhoods saw increased visitation. That means more business for local restaurants and hotels, local retailers, local theaters, local gas stations, and local grocery stores."

"I am thrilled to see the progress that our tourism industry has made over the last couple years," Senior Economic Developer Tricia Hobbs said. "The industry is growing, more people are visiting, and I believe residents are also reconnecting with the destinations that make Duluth so unique. Visitors are looking for more ways to experience those local favorites and hidden-gems – and our local industry continues to provide the opportunity for visitors to love it like we do. We're constantly hearing visitors share their gratitude and appreciation for the welcoming attractions and businesses that make their visit to Duluth one they'll never forget. This is a chance to continue that hard work and for organizations to tell their story. To tell the community what you do, why you do it, and how your work supports our tourism industry. I would encourage all qualified entities to look into this application process."

Tourism taxes generally support over 20 Duluth attractions each year. Funding recommendations are anticipated to be brought before the City Council and are pending their approval.

Interested applicants can apply via the following link:

<https://duluthmn.gov/finance/tourism-tax-allocation/>

Past recipients of previous tourism tax allocations will need to click both "Submit a Request" and "Submit a Report". Qualified applicants who have not previously received tourism tax allocations will need to click "Submit a Request".

Applications are due no later than 5:00 pm on July 31, 2023.

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