



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**City of Duluth Communications Office**

---

411 West First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
218-730-5230 | [www.duluthmn.gov](http://www.duluthmn.gov) | Don Ness, Mayor

For more information contact Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator 218-730-5309  
or Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator 218-730-4312

**DATE: 04/23/2010**

**SUBJECT: City could save \$1.6 Million in skywalk construction costs with NorShor deal**

**BY: Pakou Ly**

---

For additional information, contact Brian Hanson, Business and Community Development Director at (218) 730-5310.

## **City could save up to \$1.6 million in skywalk construction costs with NorShor deal**

The City of Duluth is one step closer to completing the next stretch of the skywalk system with the tentative purchase of the NorShor Theater, Temple Opera Building, and NorShor Annex. The Duluth Economic Development Authority has already approved the purchase which is waiting for City Council approval.

LHB recently indicated that construction of a skywalk in the upper alley would increase costs by \$1.6 million based on conservative preliminary estimates, but could be higher and does not include costs for obtaining easements. Constructing the skywalk through the properties would save money, provide better direct connections and speedier implementation.

“The purchase of the Temple Opera block helps the City meet its contractual obligation and justifies the economics of this purchase. The City will be able to expand the skywalk system at a lower cost to the taxpayers and offer a more direct connection between west and east downtown businesses,” said Mayor Don Ness. “We want to ensure the success and vitality of downtown businesses like the casino, medical district, hotels, restaurants, and retailers. Completing the skywalk connection will contribute to their future longevity.”

The City is contractually obligated to connect the Sheraton Hotel and SMDC to the skywalk system west of Lake Avenue. A 2005 engineering study conducted by LHB, Inc. reviewed

many possible routes and options to meet this obligation. The most significant challenge was extending the system from Greysolon to the Fond du Luth Casino. The preferred route then was to connect through the casino and the NorShor Theater. A route through the buildings above the alley was cost prohibitive and posed problems due to the building types and multiple level structures.

###