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City of Duluth Communications Office

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DATE: 11/12/2013

SUBJECT: Bike Lanes Proposed for Duluth's Bikeway System

BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator

Bike Lanes Proposed for Duluth's Bikeway System

Public meeting on November 13 will roll out the proposed city-wide network of on-road bike lanes and take comments.

[Duluth] – Bicyclists and other interested community members will have the opportunity to learn about the on-road bike lanes being proposed for city-wide implementation. The public is invited to attend a meeting to review the input gathered this summer and the resulting proposed bike lanes on **Wednesday, November 13, 2013, 6:00 - 8:00 pm at Clyde Iron, located at 2920 West Michigan Street in Duluth.**

The proposed system, which will include protected bike lanes and revisions to signed bike routes, is being developed to support bicycling as a transportation option. “There is a growing interest in active transportation in this community – especially with finding alternatives to driving a car for short trips and errands,” states James Gittemeier, a Planner at the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC). “Active transportation includes walking, bicycling and taking the bus. One way to encourage more bike riding in particular is to develop a practical urban bikeway system that will serve people's everyday use. Specifically, that means creating dedicated bicycle lanes to popular destinations that make the rider feel safe and comfortable.”

Duluth has an active bicycling community and was recently recognized as a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community by the American League of Cyclists. As Duluth continues to implement its Complete Streets initiative, the city recognizes the importance of designing a transportation system that provides safe access and travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

Gittemeier noted that the MIC has been working to develop a long-term plan for a system of safe, coordinated, on-street bike routes throughout Duluth and Superior since it released its first bike route plan in 1994. This year it has been assisting the City of Duluth in gathering public input and mapping the routes.

An intensive public input process to seek ideas and input from the community began last summer with three interactive workshops facilitated by MIC Planning and City of Duluth Engineering staff. To determine the locations of the proposed bike lanes, the suggestions that were received were then filtered through a number of engineering considerations, including roadway widths and grades, and connectivity to other lanes and the rest of the on- and off-road system.

“The city continues to work towards becoming more bike-friendly, but first we need to identify and plan for where the improvements make the most sense,” said City Engineer Cindy Voigt. “The best routes are not necessarily going to be the shortest distance between two points. In addition to the slopes or steepness of the hills, we needed to factor in information about where people are riding now, and where they’d like to ride if lanes were made available.”

The final results of this process are displayed in a map of the proposed bikeways system and will be the centerpiece of the discussion at Wednesday’s meeting. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions about the routes and their proposed implementation. The map can also be viewed online at www.dsmic.org/bike and printed copies have been distributed to area bike shops for review and comment.

Public comment is being sought before the proposed bikeways map is presented to the Duluth City Council on December 5, 2013.

Anyone with questions should contact James Gittemeier at jgittemeier@ardc.org or (218) 529-7556 or Cindy Voigt at (218) 730-5071 or cvoigt@duluthmn.gov.

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