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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Mayor Larson issues statement regarding outcome of Park Fund referendum

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

Mayor Larson issues statement regarding outcome of Park Fund referendum

[Duluth, MN] Mayor Emily Larson issues the following statement regarding last night's outcome of the Park Fund referendum:

"Good morning! Today, like half of Duluth voters who supported parks, I am disappointed the parks levy question did not pass.

I am so incredibly proud of us as a community for asking this important question - and asking it when it was needed, not when it was politically convenient.

Despite a legally wonky question, a very short campaign window, political noise and it being a mid-term election, nearly half of all voters went with this. What that tells me is that the default, basic premise of funding public space and parks is a resonant, core value.

Even while people are hurting.

This is a time when every dollar makes a difference. Every financial decision in our households matter. Inflation is up. Groceries cost more. Gas, heat and the cost of living are high.

And still, this question performed well.

This also shows that every conversation, and every vote, matters.

The work to get this question that close has created important awareness and started a conversation that I am confident will continue.

As for next steps on our parks - our amazing Parks staff will continue to do important work with the resources we have, we will revisit strategies for future funding options and we will continue to be a city which prides itself on our green space and the way it holds a

sense of place, and a sense of one another, together.”

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