



**City of Duluth Communications Office**

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**SUBJECT:** Demolition underway at Shoppers Auto Park site today

**BY:** Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

**Demolition underway at Shoppers Auto Park site today**

[DULUTH, MN] Demolition is underway at the Shoppers Auto Park as of today, April 23. Demolition was officially kicked off by Mayor Roger Reinert in a news conference, along with Ben and Dave Carleton of Carleton Companies, Inc., Downtown Duluth’s Kristi Stokes, City Councilor Arik Forsman, DEDA Director Tricia Hobbs, as well as City of Duluth staff and other community partners.

“Today’s an historic day as we begin the deconstruction of the Shoppers ramp,” said Mayor Reinert. “Today’s action reflects our continued focus on downtown Duluth, and an investment in downtown’s next chapter.”

Tricia Hobbs, DEDA’s director added, “City of Duluth staff have been working alongside DEDA for nearly a decade to write the next chapter for the Shoppers Auto Park site. We are incredibly proud of the progress made thus far, and we are excited for our continued work toward redevelopment on that site and in our downtown district.”

The parking ramp, which was built onto the 1920s era New Garrick building in the 1950s, was shuttered and condemned for habitation by the City of Duluth in 2019. DEDA certified the ramp as structurally substandard in 2021. The ramp’s structural integrity is tied to the New Garrick building, which led DEDA to purchasing both the building and the ramp for a cost of \$545,000. This past September, DEDA approved an expenditure to demolish the parking structure for \$967,000 and invited contractors to bid the project in November. Carleton Companies, Inc. was the winning bidder, and they recently began the arduous work of shoring and bracing the New Garrick building so as to save that historic structure while still demolishing the parking ramp.

Ben Carleton of Carleton Companies, Inc. said of the task, "My brother, Dave, and I, along with our small crew, are owner-operators of these intricate demolition jobs. We are the ones operating the machinery, allowing us to take the necessary care to ensure that the ramp can come down without affecting the New Garrick building." The contractor will work floor by floor to safely sever the parking structure from the New Garrick building, removing the rubble as they progress, preparing the site for future development.

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