

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cook County EDA Launches Taconite Harbor Redevelopment Project

A Community-Driven Vision for the Future of Taconite Harbor

Cook County, MN – The Cook County/Grand Marais Joint Economic Development Authority (EDA) is launching a community planning effort to shape the future of Taconite Harbor, one of the region’s most historic and visible industrial sites. With support from a \$200,000 Community Energy Transition Grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the project will explore redevelopment opportunities to benefit Cook County and the broader region.

Why this matters:

Built in the 1950s as part of Erie Mining Company’s iron ore operations and later home to Minnesota Power’s coal-fired energy center (retired in 2021), Taconite Harbor has long played a role in Cook County’s economy and identity. Now, the site offers an opportunity to reimagine its future for residents and businesses.

Project leadership:

The EDA has selected Stantec, a global leader in sustainable planning and design, to guide the strategic planning process. Together with local stakeholders, Stantec and the EDA will develop a community-driven plan that supports job creation, expands the tax base, diversifies the economy, and builds long-term resilience.

Community input is essential:

A 12–15-member Advisory Committee of residents from Cook and Lake Counties will help shape the plan’s direction. Committee members will provide input during the early research and visioning stages, and broader community visioning sessions will also be held in 2026 to ensure public values and goals are reflected.

Timeline:

- September 2025 – Advisory Committee application opens
- October 2025 – Kick-off meeting
- October 2025 – March 2026 – Advisory Committee meets twice monthly
- April – June 2026 – Public community visioning meetings
- Fall 2026 – Final redevelopment framework presented

Get Involved:

Residents who want to help share the future of Taconite Harbor are encouraged to apply for the Advisory Committee. Details and the application form are available on the EDA’s website, <https://www.cookcountymneda.org/taconiteharbor>.

Contact: For more information or to apply, visit:

<https://www.cookcountymneda.org/taconiteharbor> or email director@cookcountymneda.org