

Making a change

Trainer Mike Gogolin reflects on time at SHS

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SUPERIOR Telegram

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Blatnik will be rebuilt

Bridge to likely feature new Wisconsin connector

By Brady Slater
Duluth News Tribune

SUPERIOR — Residents have until July 21 to address new details about the future of the Blatnik Bridge, which has been targeted for replacement by transportation departments from both Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Among the latest developments related to the estimated \$1.8 billion project: The bridge won't be refurbished. Instead, it will be a full replacement beginning in 2028, with construction lasting five or six years, said Marc Bowker, Eau Claire-based project manager for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

"The actual rehabilitation we have ruled out," Bowker said. "It doesn't become financially feasible to rehabilitate the entire structure."

Transportation officials are also recom-

mending that a new bridge exits onto U.S. Highway 53 South, instead of Hammond Avenue in Superior. In order to do so, some existing businesses and residences in the city's north side will need to be relocated, officials said.

"I certainly support it landing on Highway 53," Superior Mayor Jim Paine said. "That makes so much more sense. Landing directly onto Hammond is dangerous. It would be a real step forward to land that thing correctly."

The News Tribune visited the area Monday to see activity up close. Police officers were busy clearing a rear-end crash, something that happens with frequency in the area as traffic lines get backed up and distracted drivers tend to plow into one another.

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Jed Carlson / Superior Telegram

Kym Nepper, second from right, fills a cooler with hot lunches that will be delivered to the Boys & Girls Club on Thursday at Superior High School. The Superior School District provides up to 1,200 meals a day over the summer. Meals go to students in the summer school program as well as children in the city's park program and at community sites throughout the city.

Free meals to end

Local families will have to pay for school meals

By Maria Lockwood
Superior Telegram

SUPERIOR Douglas County families will be paying for school lunch again this fall.

The federal government provided more than two years of free lunches nationwide during the COVID-19 pandemic, but that will end in August, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

"We have done everything we can. We've been speaking to legislators and pushing our goals of sticking with it, and they are not buying it," said Jamie Wilson, food service director for the



Jed Carlson / Superior Telegram

Food services staff prepare hot lunches for delivery on Thursday at Superior High School. The Superior School District provides up to 1,200 meals a day over the summer. Come fall, breakfast and lunch in local school districts will no longer be free to all students.

Superior School District. "So beginning Sept. 1, we have to ask for applications and go back to the free, reduced and

paid status." There is a short grace period for families who were receiving free or reduced price lunch

prior to the pandemic. They must reapply by Oct. 14, or they will be charged full price for meals.

"We're really encouraging everyone, more so than ever, to fill out a free and reduced form online," Wilson said.

Meal prices were a subject of conversation at both the Superior and Maple school board meetings Monday, July 11.

Maple

The Maple School Board approved setting lunch prices to the minimum limit allowed by the state, but won't have a firm price for a few weeks.

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Steve Kuchera / Duluth News Tribune

Traffic flows off and onto the Blatnik Bridge in Superior on Monday. According to the Minnesota Department of Transportation, an average of 33,021 vehicles use the bridge each day.

Tourism committee explores marketing

By Shelley Nelson
Superior Telegram

SUPERIOR — The city's tourism development commission is looking to expand the area it markets to tourists as it begins to dive into its strategy to draw visitors to Superior.

Superior's marketing efforts could include promoting Douglas County.

After meeting with Douglas County Board Chairman Mark Liebaert on Monday, July

11, Commissioner Pattie Soliday said she and commission chairperson Lindsey Graskey assured Liebaert that they would seek approval from the commission to include Douglas County in their marketing efforts.

Historically, the city and county partnered to promote tourism in the area, most recently by funding Travel Superior. When the city made the decision not to renew its contract with Trav-

el Superior at the end of the 2021 and instead work with the tourism development commission, that decision left officials wondering what their best option would be to promote tourism in the county.

The county has typically contributed a small amount, comparatively, to marketing efforts handled by Travel Superior.

At the commission's meeting on Monday, Soliday said the tourism

development commission would seek that funding in September to add to its efforts.

Mayor Jim Paine said the rule established by statute is that hotel/motel taxes used for marketing the area must be reasonably likely to generate overnight stays in Superior. While promoting a stay on the St. Croix flowage isn't likely to generate overnight stays in Superior,

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