



# Saint Louis County

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **“Wall breaking” to kick off renovations at Government Services Center**

It may be tradition to mark the beginning of a new construction project with a ceremonial groundbreaking. But in the case of the massive renovation of the Government Services Center (GSC) in downtown Duluth, a “wall-breaking” ceremony seems more fitting. This Wednesday, October 23, at 2:30 p.m., St. Louis County leaders, along with representatives of building and construction trades, will grab sledgehammers and take some swings to mark the beginning of a two-year, \$21 million overhaul of the GSC. The event will take place on the seventh floor of the building at 320 West 2nd Street.

The project will result in long term cost savings and greater convenience for the public. It’s also expected to create an average of 100 construction jobs lasting the duration of the project.

The current layout and configuration of the office space within the building is inefficient, as it formerly housed several tenants from different governmental agencies. The renovations will create more space within the building, allowing it to house more County offices. This will save money that’s currently spent to rent space in other downtown Duluth locations. Additionally, consolidating government offices within the facility will make it easier for citizens to find and use the services offered. Also, the space will be designed to improve work flow and efficiencies between departments.

The renovations will also result in significantly lower utility costs. While the building is in excellent condition structurally, the mechanical, electrical and HVAC infrastructure is in poor condition. The changes and new systems in this facility are estimated to reduce energy consumption by 40 to 60 percent annually.

The GSC is a 30-year-old building that St. Louis County purchased from the state of Minnesota in 2002. It houses numerous county departments, including Public Health and Human

Services, Land and Minerals, County Extension and Information Technology; and receives more public visitors each year than any other county building. Consolidating county services into centralized county-owned buildings has been a priority for the County Board.

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