Community Planning and Economic Development Department

News Release

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Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ Jobs & Economic Vitality ▫ Eco-Focused ▫ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ Many People, One Minneapolis ▫ A City That Works

Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant to Fund the Study of A Mill's Historic Tunnel System as a Possible Energy Center

City of Minneapolis Awarded $7,000 in funds appropriated by the Legacy Act

June 15, 2010 (MINNEAPOLIS) – The Minnesota Historical Society awarded a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant in the amount of $7,000 to the City of Minneapolis in partnership with private developer Schafer Richardson, Inc. for a scoping study of the historic tunnel system of the Pillsbury A Mill.

Funding will support preparation of a scope of work to more fully determine the future studies needed to assess the historic and structural condition of the tunnel, drop shafts, and tail races that once provided water to drive the Pillsbury A Mill and other east bank mills. The possibility of using this historic infrastructure as an "energy center" for an innovative hydrothermal heating and cooling system, combined with hydro-electricity, to support development in the area, including the East Bank Mills project that will include the historic A Mill complex, is being explored. The scope will also will lay the ground work for researching the condition of the system in order to plan for and prioritize considerations in the preservation and re-use of these structures by Schafer Richardson. The scope will be completed by August 1, 2010. Information on the East Bank Mills project and the history of the Pillsbury A Mill can be found at www.eastbankmills.com.

The Pillsbury A Mill is one of only 23 National Historic Landmarks in the state, and its preservation and redevelopment is a high priority for the City of Minneapolis. The City has already partnered with Schafer Richardson, the owner of the property, on the "energy center" through approval last fall of a $30,000 loan to study the engineering feasibility of the concept. This engineering study will be completed in summer 2010. Discussions are also under way between the City and Schafer Richardson to formulate a workable redevelopment and preservation strategy for the overall East Bank Mills project.

"It is wonderful to see so many communities and local organizations benefitting from the Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants," said **Britta Bloomberg**, deputy state historic preservation officer. "Minnesotans should be proud of the unprecedented opportunities these grants provide for organizations to preserve and share our history and cultural heritage. The impact of projects supported by the Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants will be felt throughout the state for many years to come."

More on the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants

Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants are made possible by the Minnesota Legislature from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund created with passage of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution in November 2008. The grants are awarded to support projects of enduring value for the cause of history and historic preservation across the state.

The Society will award a total of $6.75 million in Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants to non-profit and educational organizations, government units, and tribes during the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years for projects of enduring value for the cause of history and historic preservation across the state. Grants are available in three tiers: Small, or "Fast Track" grants of $7,000 or less; Mid-size grants between $7,000 and $50,000; Large grants of more than $50,000. For more information, see www.mnhs.org/legacygrants.

The Minnesota Historical Society is a non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1849. Its essence is to help illuminate the past as a way to shed light on the future. The Society collects, preserves and tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs, and book publishing.

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