COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

CITY OF DES MOINES CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE	Number:	**26-270**	Meeting:	**August 3, 2026**
	Agenda Item:	**61**	Roll Call:	**26-0931**
	Submitted by:	**Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer**		

AGENDA HEADING:

Hearing on Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1: Resolution approving plans, specifications, form of contract documents, engineer's estimate, receive and file bids, and designating lowest responsible bidder as Minturn, Inc., Clinton M. Rhoads, President, $1,045,700.

SYNOPSIS:

This is a public hearing to allow for public input on the Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1 and take the necessary actions as required by Iowa Code to authorize a contract for construction of the proposed project. This project will repair exterior finishes, waterproof existing joints and glazing seals, replace lighting to improve safety of adjacent street level pedestrians, and clean the exterior of 12 skywalk bridges along Grand Avenue downtown.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: $1,045,700 Construction Contract, which includes Add-Alternate No. 1 (Skywalk 4E-5E over 5th Avenue) at a cost of $73,000 (City Engineer's Estimate was $640,000 for the Base Bid only, plus an additional $60,000 for Add-Alternate No. 1)

Funding Source: 2026-27 CIP, Page 166, Skywalk System, SW094

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The City owns 52 skywalk bridges and is responsible for replacement of structural, mechanical, way finding signage, and major interior items, including but not limited to roofs, heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) systems, electrical components, light fixtures, windows, metal panels, joint seals, soffits, carpet, paint, ceiling tile, etc.

- The City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes funding for the above responsibilities with approximately $2.1 million remaining in FY 2027, $1.35 million in FY 2028, $500,000 in both FY 2029 and FY 2030.

- From 2013-2015, the City conducted a Skywalk Bridge Roof and HVAC condition analysis. Since that time, the City has replaced 30 roofs and 26 HVAC systems.

- In 2020, the City conducted a Skywalk Bridge Interior and Lighting condition analysis. Since that time, the City has performed various interior renovations and light-emitting diode (LED) lighting system upgrades for 16 Skywalk bridges.

- In 2021, the city conducted a Skywalk Bridge Structural and Exterior condition analysis. This study identified several items that needed repairs, including window seals, metal panels, soffits and joint seals.

- In 2022, the City solicited bids to replace joint seals on 15 skywalk bridges and received zero (0) bids.

- In 2024, the City completed exterior and interior repairs on two (2) skywalk bridges (Skywalk Bridges 3C-4C & 4E-4F) as part of a larger project that also included HVAC replacement, joint seals, ceiling tile, carpet, paint, drywall, doors, and LED lighting.

- In 2025, the City addressed exterior repairs on Skywalk Bridge 3Cas as a part of a larger project that also included HVAC duct replacement, ceiling, carpet, paint, drywall, doors, and LED lighting.

- In February 2026, the City awarded a contract for exterior repairs on three (3) skywalk bridges (2Ca, 2C-2D and 2C-3C), which project is scheduled to be completed later this summer. The work for this project includes exterior paint, roof repairs, window sealant repairs, and joint sealant repair.

- In March 2026, the City solicited bids for exterior repairs on 12 skywalk bridges and received zero (0) bids. This work for this project included soffit repair, exterior paint, roof repairs, window sealant repairs, and joint sealant repair.

- The City revised the scope of work for the exterior repairs on 12 skywalk bridges, based on feedback from contractors (replace soffits instead of repair, with negligible cost difference) and rebid the project on July 14, 2026.

- This is the first of three (3) phases to address the exterior repairs on the City's skywalk bridges. The next two phases will include similar work on 10 skywalk bridges in each phase. The age and condition of the remaining skywalk bridges do not require any repairs at this time.

- If the City does not perform this exterior work, the affected skywalk bridges will continue to see degradation of exterior and interior conditions of the structure, causing further damage, increased costs, more frequent emergency repairs, closures, and potential safety issues for residents, workers, and visitors to the downtown area within and immediately adjacent to the skywalk system. When this needed work is delayed, issues such as the joint sealants, building seals, and window gasketing failures occur, which leads to water infiltration, corrosion to structural steel, and irreparable damage to interior and exterior finishes; resulting in more costly and disruptive rehabilitation projects.

- On June 29, 2026, under Roll Call No. 26-0718, the City Council received and filed plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1. Before the City Council can enter into a contract, it must hold a public hearing and approve the proposed plans, specifications, and form of

contract documents and engineer's estimate for the construction of the Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1, Activity ID 10-2024-007. This project will repair and restore 12 skywalk exterior finishes, install new water proofing systems, replace window gasketing and seals, thoroughly clean of all skywalk exteriors on Grand Avenue and the immediately adjacent streets, replace existing recessed lighting with new LED lighting, and replace all missing aluminum and steel trim, all in accordance with the contract documents including Plan File No. 679-247/261, on skywalks located along Grand Avenue and immediate adjacent streets, and other locations directed by the City Engineer.

- At the June 29, 2026 City Council meeting, Council asked for separate cost estimates to demolish the Skywalk 4E-5E bridge (over 5th Avenue), or to permanently close off (mothball) the bridge, for comparison with the cost of repairing and keeping the bridge open under Add-Alternate No. 1 ($73,000). The estimated cost of demolition could range from $500,000 to $750,000, which includes required repairs/restoration of adjacent building walls and would require agreements with adjoining property owners to remove the bridge and close off their private corridors. The Renaissance Des Moines Savery Hotel staff have indicated they have parking arrangements for their hotel guests to use the parking garage connecting to Skywalk 4E-5E bridge (over 5th Avenue). The estimated cost to mothball the bridge is $75,000, which requires constructing new fire-rated walls, plus ongoing HVAC costs to prevent mold and degradation issues over time.

- Sealed bids for said improvement were submitted by the following bidders:
  - Minturn, Inc., Brooklyn, IA – Low Bid
  - Hildreth Construction Services, L.L.C., Cumming, IA

- The bids were received and opened through the City of Des Moines' electronic bid submission system at https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/27010/home, presided over by the City Engineer in the T.M. Franklin Cownie City Administration Building, 1200 Locust Street, Des Moines, Iowa at 11:00 a.m. on July 14, 2026.

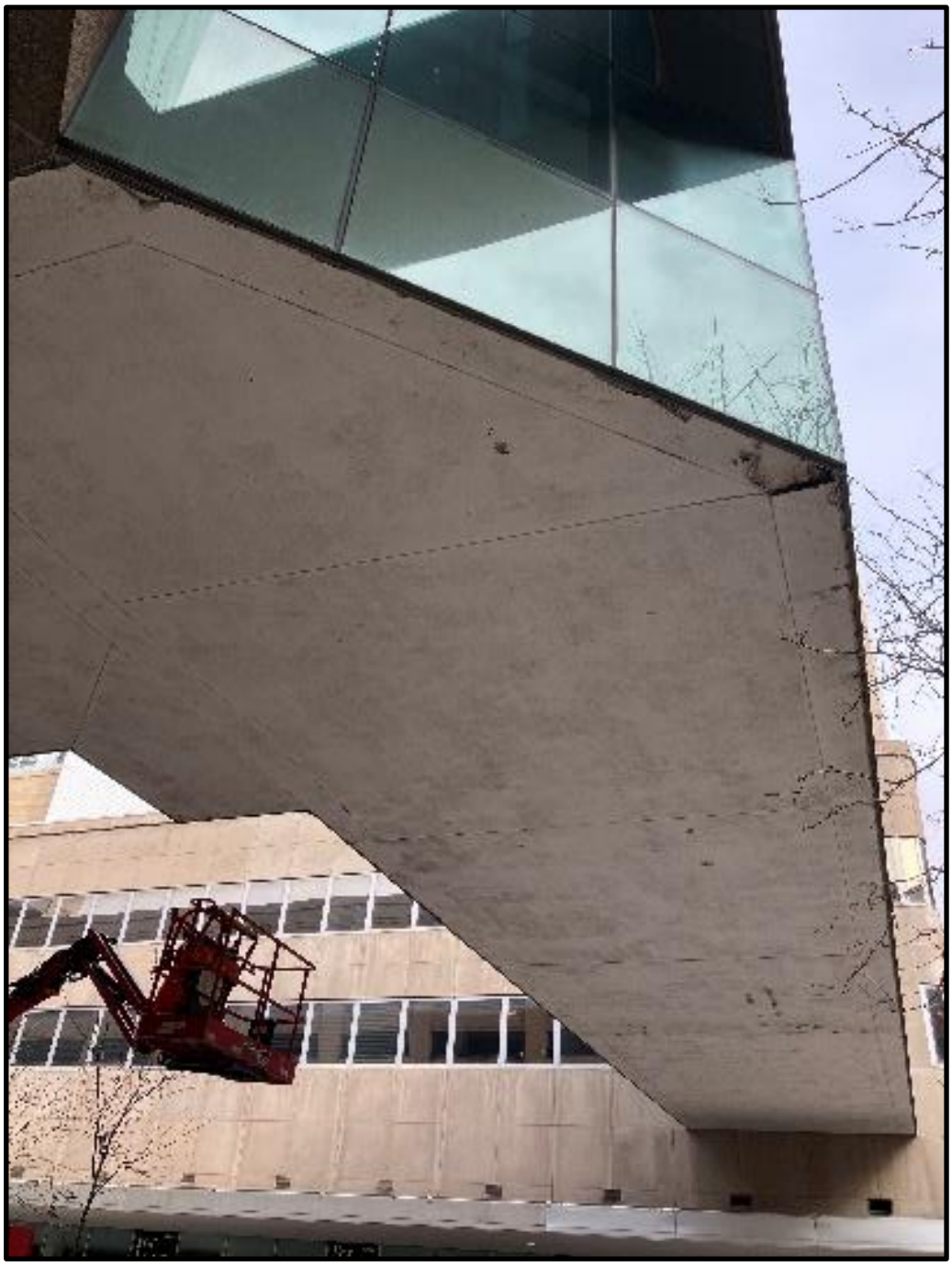
- The City Engineer has determined that the lowest responsive, responsible bid for the construction of said improvement was submitted by Minturn, Inc., 144 W. Front Street, PO Box 369, Brooklyn, IA, 52211 (Clinton M. Rhoads, President); in the amount of $1,045,700 ($972,700 Base Bid, plus $73,000 for Add-Alternate No. 1), and said bid should be accepted. The Finance Director has determined that funds are available for said improvement as stated above.

- After discussions with bidders, and other contractors who chose not to bid on the project, the bid prices reflect higher than anticipated costs due to experience with current and past skywalk bridge projects, which require elevated working conditions, significant traffic control in downtown, remobilization several times for each location to accommodate special events, access coordination with adjacent building owners, and workforce capacity that is required for the project. None of these conditions will change by rebidding the project in the future.

- This project is anticipated to begin in summer of 2026 and be completed in spring of 2027.



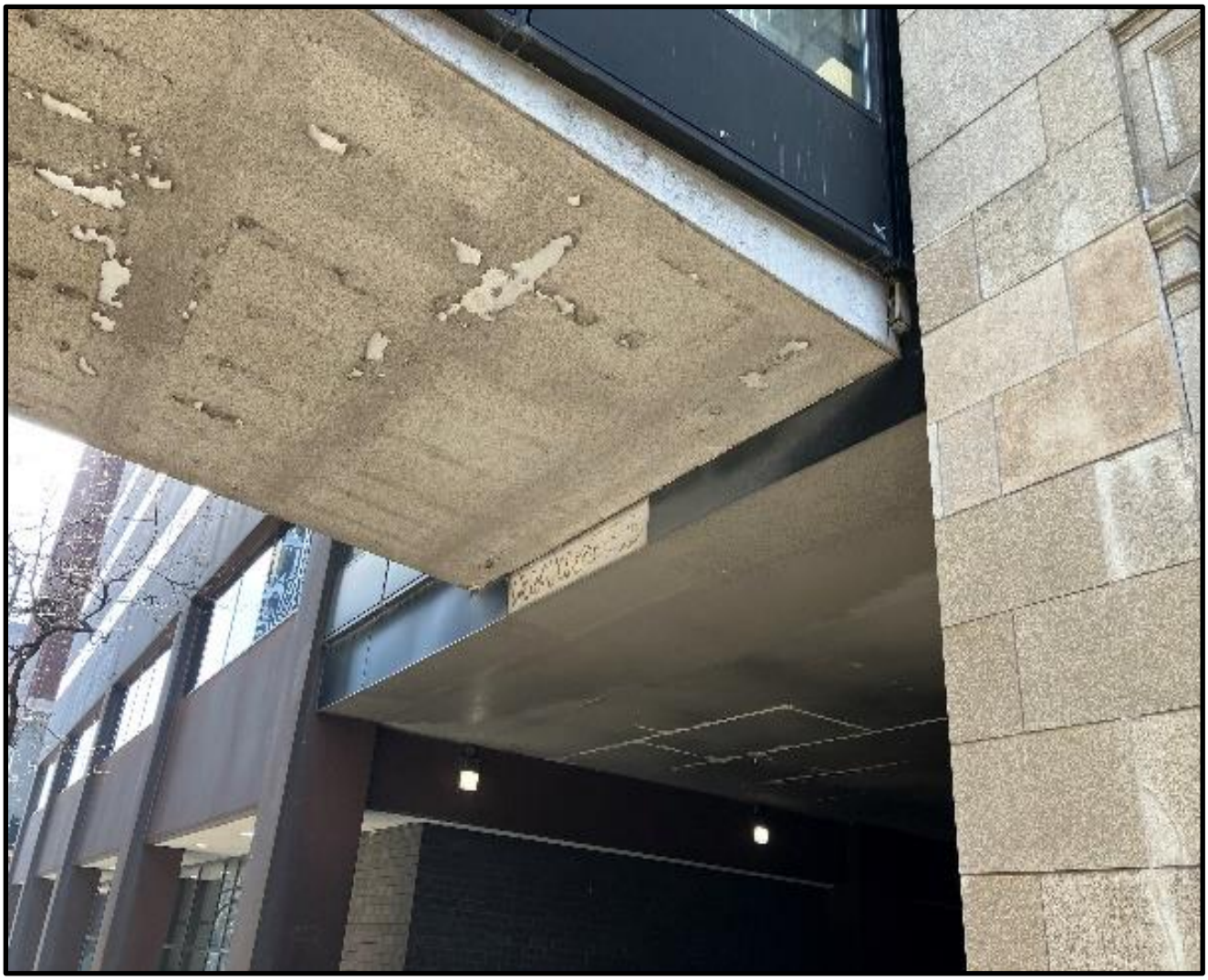
Skywalk Bridge 4E-5E over 5th Avenue (Add-Alternate)
(soffit replacement and drainpipe repair needed)



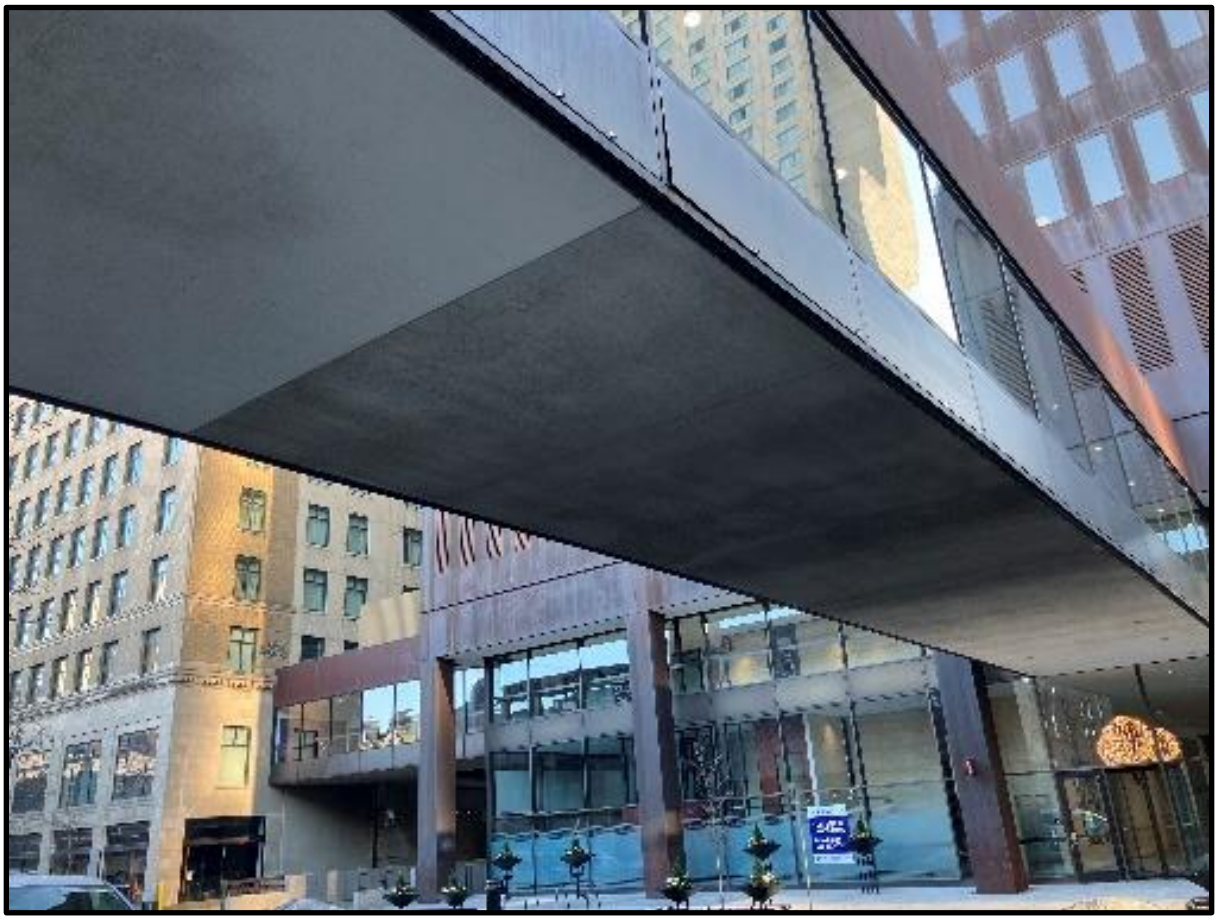
Skywalk Bridge 7E-8E over 8th Street (soffit replacement needed)



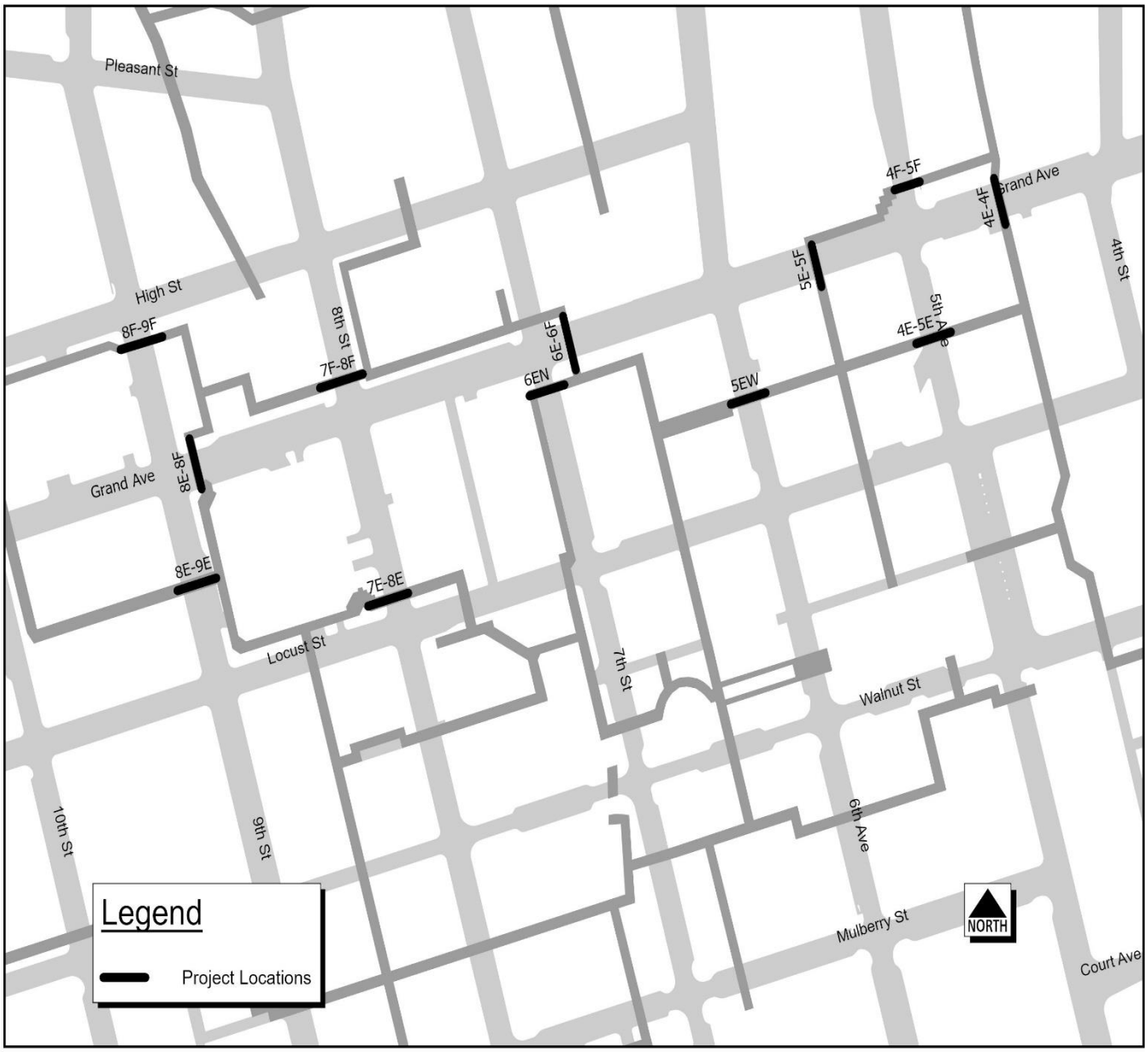
Skywalk Bridge 5E-6E over 6th Avenue (soffit replacement needed)



Skywalk Bridge 5E-6E over 6th Avenue (soffit replacement and metal panel repairs needed)



Skywalk Bridge 6E-6F over Grand Avenue (metal panel repairs and cleaning needed)



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: June 29, 2026

Roll Call Number: 26-0718

Action: Ordering construction of Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1: Receiving of bids, (7-14-26) and Setting date of hearing, (8-3-26), Engineer's estimate, $700,000. (Council Communications No. 26-218) Moved by Mandelbaum to adopt and direct the City Manager to update the bid to include an add alternate for the skywalk bridge across 5th Avenue between Grand Avenue and Locust Street. Second by Simonson Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: April 20, 2026

Roll Call Number: 26-0531

Action: Dismissing hearing on approval of plans, specifications, form of contract, and Engineer's estimate on the Skywalk Exterior Improvements Phase 1 due to no bids being received. Moved by Mandelbaum to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: March 9, 2026

Roll Call Number: 26-0287

Action: Ordering construction of the following:

(D) Skywalk Exterior Improvement Phase 1: Receiving of bids, (3-24-26) and Setting date of hearing, (4-20-26), Engineer's estimate, $700,000. (Council Communication No. 26-082) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- Partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the second floor of T.M. Franklin Cownie City Administration Building, 1200 Locust Street. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to cityclerk@dmgov.org.