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DULUTH -- A review of the Duluth Business Index through the first 10 months of 1966 indicates the overall Duluth economy is up nearly 6% over the corresponding period in 1965.

The unadjusted October index (1957-1959=100) rose to 145, the same as a year ago, but contrary to the usual three-point decline from September.

In October, 11 of the index's 15 components were above their respective 1965 level while the September-October increase was reflected in gains made by eight of the components.

The most notable increase over September came in the value of building permits issued (\$1,288,000) and was due to the substantial amount of non-residential alteration and repair work initiated.

The use of electric power, both commercially and in residential dwellings, and the number of electric customers were up. Freight carloadings and coal receipts also registered strong gains.

Iron ore shipments were down. However, the fact shipments are being made from the Two Harbors docks for the first time since 1962 affected the total. The combined totals shipped to date surpass last year's figure by 16%.

The shipments of general bulk and lake cargo declined just eight points from September but, in comparison with October 1965, the component was down a staggering 206 points due largely to reduced shipments of flour, wire, powdered milk and grain by-products.

Retail sales were up 11 points from September but off seven points from October, 1965. The business in men and women's apparel so far this year has surpassed last year's figures by 6%. Increased volume is attributed to the concern of youth for clothes.

The index is published monthly by the UMD Department of Economics in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Employment Security, Duluth Chamber of Commerce and Duluth Industrial Bureau, and co-authored by Dr. Cecil H. Meyers, professor and head of economics, and Glenn O. Gronseth, research analyst for the Minnesota Employment Service.