

# DRAFT

## **FY2009 FEDERAL AGENDA** *for the* **CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA**

This memorandum outlines areas of Federal government in which the City of Minneapolis has a particular interest or local concern. The Office of Intergovernmental Relations within the City of Minneapolis welcomes any questions on the on these or other issues pending before Congress.

Thank you for helping to build a better Minnesota.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact:

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## Appropriation Requests

### Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)

CSOs are remnants of the country's early infrastructure. In the past, communities like Minneapolis built sewer systems to collect both storm runoff water and sewage in the same pipe. In 1922, new developments constructed separate storm drain systems, and in 1986 the City began an accelerated program of construction to separate the old, combined sewer systems, aided by state and federal funds. These efforts have reached approximately 95% of our system, but the remaining connections in the older parts of the City still cause an overburden of the sanitary sewer system when we have a big rain event. In Minneapolis, an overloaded sanitary system causes overflow of untreated sewage into the Mississippi River, and in extreme events causes backup of raw sewage into residents' basements. With prior appropriations, the City has been able to develop two separation projects. The most recent appropriation will permit the start of another project.

The projects are intended to reduce alley and street flooding, and prevent residential sanitary sewer backups. Both projects will involve the disconnection of catch basins and construction of new storm sewers. The project located on 45<sup>th</sup> Street West between Lyndale and Garfield Avenues were under construction in 2006. The project located on 22nd Avenue South is in design.

For FY 2009 the City would use the federal funds for a project in the City's downtown to relieve stormwater inflow into the sanitary sewer system.

The CSO project was approved in the FY2008 proposed appropriations bill for \$300,000.

**FY 2009 Request:** The City requests \$1.25 million to continue combined sewer overflow (CSO) program.

### Parkway Lighting

The Grand Rounds Scenic Byway consists of 50 miles of parkway located throughout the city. The Grand Rounds Scenic Byway traverses around lakes, the Mississippi River, and includes 87 miles of bike and pedestrian trails.

The City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have jointly developed a plan to replace up to 2,300 light fixtures located on the Grand Rounds. Installed during the 1970s, the lights need to be replaced. Many of the light standards show signs of rust, cracking, tilting, and unsafe wiring.

The City of Minneapolis has estimated that the project would cost \$12.0 million. The City has appropriated approximately \$1.30 million from the five year capital improvements budget for the project and is requesting up to \$2.0 million from the Minnesota Legislature.

When completed the project will provide safe, energy efficient lighting to the parkways and parking lots. The project includes transformers, cable and conduit, concrete footings, site restoration, and new poles and luminaries.

**FY 2009 request:** \$2.0 million to assist in project implementation.

### **Public Safety Technology**

Information technology will continue to be a factor in reducing crime. The gunshot detection grant received in the FY2008 appropriations bill, for example, will assist the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) in responding to gun shot calls. The MPD has also implemented, in whole or in part, a computer aided dispatch (CAD) – a safety camera system in several precincts and an automated citation.

The MPD has as part of its five year business plan developed a technology plan. The MPD is planning approximately ten technology investments. For calendar 2009 the department is recommending funding for squad car cameras and mobile data computers.

The MPD has used state grant proceeds to convert one third of squad car cameras from analog to digital. Cameras in squad cars provide better information to both the police department and the community in all areas of law enforcement. To continue the program which is the MPD's second technology priority, \$1.0 million is requested.

Mobile data computers (MDC) are replacing an outdated technology – mobile display terminals (MDT). The MDCs will provide quick access to criminal histories, driver and vehicle records, and information from other law enforcement agencies. The system could also include a mobile fingerprint identification system.

**FY 2009 request:** \$500,000 is requested for mobile data computers and \$500,000 for squad car cameras.

### **Pedestrian Bridge Across Hiawatha: 46<sup>th</sup> Street Station**

The need for the bridge has been identified by several groups. The groups include neighborhood organizations such as the River Lake Greenway Community Group, Longfellow Community Council, and the Standish Ericsson Neighborhood Association. The bridge would allow pedestrians to safely cross Hiawatha Avenue, a busy four lane roadway that parallels the Hiawatha LRT line. The bridge would also allow safe access to the 46th Street LRT station. The cost of the bridge is estimated to be in excess of \$1.5 million.

**FY 2009 Request:** \$500,000 to begin preliminary engineering and planning for the project.

### **Upper Mississippi River**

The City of Minneapolis along with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has completed a master plan for the upper Mississippi River. The plan presents a bold vision for developing the riverfront into a regional park in north and northeast Minneapolis. The plan will provide public access to the river, create a system of riverway streets, enhance the ecological function of the river corridor, link the upper river to the Grand Rounds parkway system, realize the area's potential for economic development and establish urban design guidelines. When completed the plan will result in 90 acres of new park, 15 miles of bike and recreational trails, 4 miles of restored riverbank, 5.25 miles of parkway and boulevard, 2,500 housing units in new riverfront neighborhoods, and 2,000 net jobs.

**FY 2009 Request:** \$4.0 million for construction of the public infrastructure.

### **Employment and Training Services for Ex-Offenders**

The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (METP) is requesting \$750,000.00 appropriation to expand employment and training services for hard-to-serve individuals with a criminal background. This funding will allow the City of Minneapolis to build on the success of the "Close the Gap" initiative by focusing on a very challenging and growing population of ex-offenders reentering the workforce. It will place 150 ex-offenders into jobs.

In 2007 nearly 25 percent of Minnesota's 9,214 inmates were from Hennepin County, with a sizable proportion of that 25 percent from the City of Minneapolis. In turn, upon release, whether through probation, parole, or simply discharged, many of these former Hennepin County residents, along with others not formerly from Hennepin County, settle in the City of Minneapolis in search of needed social services. Because of the increased barriers to employment for ex-offenders, and little money specifically designated to serve this population, social services struggle to fully meet the needs of the ex-offender community.

Moreover, the long-term impact of helping ex-offenders become part of the workforce is proven to reduce recidivism and improve neighborhood safety and stability. The additional funding would allow MEPT to expand the capability of nonprofit employment and training providers to offer intensive employment related case management and training opportunities to the ex-offender community in Minneapolis.

**FY 2009 Request:** \$750,000 to implement the program.

### **Youth Violence Prevention**

As part of the federal 2008 appropriations bill, the Department of Justice was directed to report on the Congress by April 2008 on youth violence and its growth in cities and the suburbs. The 2008 appropriations will also include appropriations for prevention programs in several cities. The city is concerned about youth violence and has developed several strategies to address the issue. The proposed funding requests will not only expand the capacity of existing programs to serve youth.

Lack of safe and reliable transportation is a major barrier preventing youth from participating in youth program opportunities. In order to help eliminate this barrier, the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board has created two circulating bus routes in the summer of 2007 to transport young people to program opportunities. Busses are staffed with youth workers who have proven to be essential to their success in attracting riders, maintaining safety and connecting youth with appropriate activities in the community. Ongoing funding for year-round routes has not been identified. During the first summer of operation, more than 6,000 free rides were given to youth who accessed high quality youth programming. The requested amount would support three busses, one on the north side, one on the south side, and a connector bus to facilitate movement between the north and south sides of the city.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the U.S. Department of Justice has highlighted the need to address the needs status offenders and their families. In Minneapolis, we have taken this charge by developing a Juvenile Supervision Center to ensure that those who are picked up for status and low-level

offenses are assessed and are referred to the services and support they need to reduce the risk of further involvement with law enforcement. The next stage in the development of this work is to develop contracts with community organizations to provide ongoing services, supports and opportunities for these youth and families in the community.

**FY 2009 Request:** \$350,000 to Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board to operate the bus circulator. \$500,000 to MDHFS for grants to community organizations to provide ongoing assistance for youth who are low level offenders and their families.

## **Programs with Grants Received, Applied for, or Anticipated by Minneapolis**

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

Cities throughout the country have used a combination of financial resources to conduct their community development activities. A major financial resource has been the federal community development block grant (CDBG) administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). For nearly thirty years CDBG has supported such activities as new housing development, the rehabilitation of existing units, employment training, small business creation, infrastructure improvements and cleanup of contaminated sites.

The City of Minneapolis has also used its annual appropriation of approximately \$16.0 million to improve housing, stimulate job growth, improve public infrastructure, provide public health services and school readiness programs. The federal funds have matched and leveraged other public and private funds. The reduction in CDBG could, for example, hinder the City's efforts in program year 2005 to assist 200 persons to obtain private sector jobs, develop 150 multi-family housing units, acquire and demolish 110 vacant and boarded housing units, provide loans for capital improvements to 25 child care facilities, reduce lead hazards in 70 housing units and provide youth employment training to 300 youth age 14 to 21.

The City strongly supports the continuation of the CDBG program and its administration by HUD. The City urges Congress to fund CDBG at no less the \$4.7 billion in fiscal year FY 2009 and of the total at least \$4.350 billion should be for formula grants. The funding request would fund the program at its FY 2004 level and restore the \$200.0 million cut made in FY 2005.

### **Housing Programs**

In addition to the CDBG program, the City of Minneapolis supports the continuation of HUD's housing programs. The City has been able to assist in the development of housing for low and moderate income persons through such programs as HOPE VI and HOME. The City also supports the continuation of the housing voucher program as well as programs to assist the homeless.

### **Public Housing**

The City also supports full funding for the Public Housing Authorities across the nation. The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) is the state's largest public housing authority. MPHA manages and maintains 4,856 units in forty high rise buildings, 731 single family homes and 184 town homes. In addition, it administers 4,000 Section 8 vouchers and has maintained a 99%-100% occupancy rate in its properties. In 2004, federal funding provided 85% of MPHA's funding or just over \$89 million.

MPHA has designated nine apartment complexes with nearly 1,600 residents for senior citizens. In addition, it provides assisted living programs for frail and elderly and using funds from the Home Ownership Made Easy (HOME) program assisted families to move from Section 8 assistance to their own homes. The authority's "Moving Home" program was the first in the nation to provide Section 8 families with the education and counseling they will need to purchase and maintain their own homes.

### **Public Safety Programs: National Fire Academy**

The Minneapolis Fire Department has benefited from the research and training provided by the national Fire Academy. City personnel have attended training programs offered by the academy and the City supports continued federal funding of this resource.

### **Medicaid (called Medical Assistance in MN)**

Medical Assistance (MA) provides health care coverage for low income children under the age of 21, parents or relative caregivers of dependant children, pregnant women, people who are 65 or older and persons with disabilities. Minnesota's joint federal/state-funded Medicaid program covers 366,000 low-income senior citizens, children, families, and people with disabilities. Families, children and pregnant women make up the largest MA group (68 percent), but account for the least expenditures (22 percent). People who are elderly or disabled make up the smallest group (32 percent) but represent the majority of expenditures (78 percent). In addition to MA, the state offers other publicly funded health care programs such as MinnesotaCare and General Assistance Medical Care. More Minneapolis residents are enrolled in MA as opposed to enrollment in any other state funded health care program.

### **Homeland Security**

The City supports the continuation of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grants. From 1999 through 2005 the City has received \$11.2 million from the two grant programs. UASI funds have been used to secure public buildings, train public safety personnel, purchase equipment and improve communication systems.

In FY 2009, the seven county metro region is eligible for UASI funds. The City recommends that UASI and MMRS continue as separate programs.

### **Emergency Operations Center**

The development and implementation of a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is vital to the City's ability to provide essential services throughout the metropolitan area during a disaster—be it natural, accidental, or intentional. An inadequate facility hampers and limits the effectiveness of the command structure and during an incident the coordination between various City departments and federal and state agencies is vital. The Minneapolis Fire Training Campus is an ideal location and would provide a secure operations center with enough room to respond to a major incident affecting the area and meet the training needs required to respond to an incident.

**FY 2009 Request:** \$6.0 million to develop an Emergency Operations Center that would serve the region.

### **Public Health Grants**

To support its programs, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support has received funding from 5 different federal programs. The programs have been funded from either the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Three of the programs are multi-year grants and two of the grants – Twin Cities Healthy Start and lead prevention and remediation – serves both Minneapolis and Hennepin County residents.

The lead prevention and remediation grant supports a City/county program. While the program's primary purpose is to remediate lead from homes and buildings, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support has used a portion of the grant to conduct an outreach and lead prevention program for children and pregnant women. The City and county coordinate resources so that clients of the outreach program can access the remediation resources.

Twin Cities Healthy Start is a collaborative of public and private agencies committed to establish a comprehensive and coordinated approach to reduce infant mortality among African American and American Indian families. The project serves Minneapolis and St. Paul through local community clinics and social service agencies. The project provides the following:

- training regarding prenatal health to approximately 60 professionals annually;
- providing community health education to approximately 150 African American and American Indian families; and
- providing case management and supportive services to over 500 women annually through contracts with community organizations.

**FY 2009 Request:** The City of Minneapolis is scheduled to receive \$925,000 annually from 2005 to 2009. The annual amount is based on a federal funding level of \$104.0 million.

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support also participates in the Steps initiative of HHS. The purpose of Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis is to help residents live longer, better, and healthier lives by reducing the burden of diabetes, being overweight, obesity and asthma. To accomplish its purpose, the program targets three related risk factors – physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use. The program will occur in four community and health care settings, schools and worksites. The City's grant began in October 2004, and is funded at \$712,000 per year.

The Public Health Preparedness programs have provided funding for several Minnesota cities to plan and implement public health programs as part of an emergency preparedness program. Minnesota has received approximately \$15.0 million annually and an additional \$20.0 million for bioterrorism hospital preparedness.

The federal Maternal and Child Health Block Grant has funded programs to address the health concerns of children, infants, mothers and pregnant women. Several Minneapolis programs are assisted by proceeds from the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. Due to federal budget reductions, Minneapolis could receive \$58,000 less in 2006.

### **Small Starts: Streetcars**

The 2005 Congress approved modifications to the federal transit new starts program related to smaller transit projects. The "small starts" program provides federal funding for transit projects that have a total cost of less than \$250.0 million. The program is aimed at assisting such transit projects as street cars and bus rapid transit. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) estimates that the small starts program could begin funding within the next few years.

The City of Minneapolis has begun developing a ten year transportation plan. As part of the plan the City is examining the role of street cars in the City's transportation system. Street cars could reduce congestion and provide links to the region's developing rail system.

The City supports the small starts program and urges Congress to continue its funding and ensure that the program guidelines provide for the intended program flexibility and responsiveness.

### **Twin Cities Transportation Projects**

In December 2004 the Metropolitan Council adopted the Regional Transportation Policy Plan. The plan outlines the transportation needs and issues of the region which is expected to add 1.0 million people by 2030.

The plan identifies transportation improvements that will help the region increase mobility and reduce congestion. The Metropolitan Council identified five priority Tier 1 transportation corridors that should be the focus of the region's transportation investments. The corridors include the I-35W bus rapid transit (BRT), the Northwest Busway, the Northstar Commuter Rail, Cedar Avenue BRT and the Central Corridor LRT. When completed the corridors will provide commuters with a transit option that would have dedicated lanes and operate at posted speeds.

The region, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), has been working on the corridors and some of the corridor projects are scheduled for construction within the next year. To complete the projects as scheduled additional funding will be required.

**FY 2009 Request:** The City of Minneapolis supports continued federal funding for the Tier I and priority Tier II projects.

## **Policy Initiatives**

### **Universal Health Care**

The City supports legislation that will ensure that all residents have access to health care. Congress should develop legislation that provides a health care program that is available regardless of a person's economic standing and includes preventative, emergency and mental health services.

### **Telecommunications Policy**

The Congress is interested in telecommunications law revisions. House and Senate committees with jurisdiction for the issue have conducted or have scheduled hearings. The House Energy and Commerce Committee has conducted hearings on bills and working drafts while the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee has set a series of hearings for the first three months of 2006.

The House committee released a working draft in early November and held a hearing on the bill later that month. As a result of concerns raised by national organizations, including the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the committee decided to continue its work and conduct further hearings in 2006. The committee chair had hoped to move the bill through a subcommittee in December 2005. The major concerns of the national organization include but are not limited to

franchising authority; requiring channels for public education; public safety; and providing for universal and affordable access to communications services.

Key policy issues are the type of franchise agreement (national or local) for the new broadband video services being offered by telephone companies and the definition of broadband video services.

During 2006 both the House and Senate could adopt a bill amending the federal communications law. In framing amendments Congress as recommended by the national organization should:

- continue to permit local government to facilitate or offer advanced communications services to their citizens through local franchise agreements;
- preserve local authority to manage public rights of way for the benefit of everyone;
- reaffirm local government's ability to provide public safety services over the communications system; and
- recognize local roles in promoting universal access to a full range of communications services.

### **Railroad Safety Zone**

A new federal law requires all Federal Railroad Administration trains sound their whistles at intersections unless specific safety equipment is in place. The City would like a change to the law allowing cities to retain their Quiet Zone ordinances keeping trains from blowing their whistles, or federal money to help buy the necessary equipment.

### **Restore Federal-Local Relationship on Crime Prevention**

One of the City Goals, a Safe Place to Call Home, is to ensure that all Minneapolis residents live in a healthy environment and feel safe in the City, with a specific strategic direction that "Guns, Gangs, Graffiti" be eliminated. The City of Minneapolis would like to see the federal-local relationship on crime prevention restored.

Funding for major Department of Justice law enforcement programs has been slashed in recent years, with the COPS hiring program (once funded at almost \$1.5 billion) and Local Law Enforcement Block Grant program (once funded at approximately \$523 million) both being eliminated.

The City of Minneapolis is calling for federal programs to provide flexible resources for the deployment of law enforcement personnel, support local innovations, fight domestic violence, and fund technology that helps fight crime. Specifically, funding for COPS and the local block grant should be restored. The COPS Program should create ongoing funding support for community policing efforts. Resources are also needed to help promote crime prevention, provide positive alternative for youth, and provide alternatives for ex-offenders who are returning to the City. The Weed and Seed projects should also be funded.

### **Energy and Environment Policy and Funding**

Minneapolis envisions itself as a city with an 'enriched environment.' Plentiful green spaces, public gathering places, restored urban forests, clean air and water, sustainable and energy efficient buildings, and increased use of renewable energy are

characteristics of the enriched environment. To achieve the goal federal, state and city policies and resources will be needed.

Congress adopted legislation that would (1) improve community energy efficiency; (2) reduce carbon emissions; (3) encourage community and transportation energy conservation programs; (4) develop new technologies and systems to decrease dependence on foreign oil; and (5) promote the development of alternative/renewable energy sources.

Congress also adopted an energy or environmental block grant program as proposed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The block grant should be funded in 2009 at its authorized level of \$2.0 billion.

## **Fully Inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)**

The City of Minneapolis has played a historic role in the struggle for equal rights. The city, for example, in 1975 was the first local government in the nation to enact civil rights protections for transgender people and was the second city to pass non-discrimination protections for gay, lesbian and bisexual people. The city firmly supports equality for all persons and recommends that Congress enact a fully inclusive Employee Non-Discrimination Act including gender identity protections.

## **Reauthorization of Transportation Bill**

The Congress anticipates to begin work on the federal transportation reauthorization bill in 2008 with passage in 2009. The city of Minneapolis has benefited from the current transportation authorization through regional and state funding programs as well as a direct grant for the bicycle community program.

In the reauthorization bill the city will continue support of the regional and state programs as well as local projects. A separate list of projects will be developed for the bill.

## **Air Traffic Safety Concerns**

The City of Minneapolis having thousands of residents living in close proximity to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is concerned about three converging issues which if not properly addressed at the federal level may reduce the margin of safety at MSP as well as at other airports around the country. Specifically, these are the re-benchmarking of schedules to deploy Air Traffic Control facilities and equipment to upgrade our air traffic control system; the short staffing of air traffic control facilities and the labor/management issues with FAA and air traffic controllers; and lastly, the lowering of experience thresholds to attract pilots to the commercial carrier segment.

The city supports the accelerated implementation of Next Gen programs together with appropriate funding commitments from Congress. The city further recommends that Congress work with the FAA to evaluate the impact of lower experience thresholds on the commercial pilot community.