

# 2004 CLIC PROJECT SPECIFIC COMMENTS

## **ART 01      Art in Public Places**

**CLIC supports art in public places, but is disappointed** that the Art in Public Places Program continues to use capital funds for salaries and related benefits. As an added layer of bureaucracy, further investment in the program seems unwise. **CLIC recommends** that the City Council and the Mayor institute a policy that each future public and private development incorporate a specified-dollar art component of 1% within its own capital proposal budget. The project's promoter would appoint a site-specific task force to consider and recommend an appropriate expenditure of this money.

## **BIS01      BIS Capital Program**

**CLIC is frustrated and disappointed** by the continuing failure of BIS to present the City's IT projects in a way that can be analyzed and rated along with the rest of the City's proposed capital projects. In an April 8, 2004 communication, BIS suggests that "Fitting the request for IS funding into the current CLIC format, which is designed to address roads, bridges, and buildings, remains a challenge." We do not fully understand why this is such a challenge. The CLIC format is designed to define, describe, and prioritize projects of all kinds, but more importantly to permit a reasonably valid basis for weighing various projects, from a variety of programs and focus areas, as well of various levels of intensity and value, against one another in a balanced way. Without this common format, it would be virtually impossible to determine how and where the City can make decisions regarding where to put its financial resources. CLIC is always open to suggestions regarding new and more clearly defined formats, but the time to raise such matters is not at the end of the process but at the beginning. We welcome any suggestions that BIS has for the next fiscal year and encourage BIS strongly to work with us. For the current fiscal year, we appreciate that BIS has responded to CLIC's request for more information to assist our deliberations.

Last fiscal year, we had requested BIS to explore a diversified funding approach to the city's IT investments. We urge them now to seriously continue exploring this avenue. It is extremely unlikely that the City will ever have sufficient ability to meet all the needs of BIS in any year. The only alternative is to look for options other than City bonding or general revenues. We encouraged last year, and again this year, that department operating budgets have some dedicated portion for IT enhancements and purchases as a part of their business plan, and that technology fees associated with special assessments, NRP funding, utility billing, and similar projects be considered. With the continued need and reliance on a strong IT program to support essential City services and business, the time is right for some very creative funding schemes to assure that we do not fall behind in the area of IT support systems due to the inability to fund it from capital investment.

This year, **CLIC is recommending** a significantly-scaled-down budget for the BIS Capital Program and a specific emphasis on these few projects: 311/CRM, Minneapolis One Stop, Case Management System, Public Works Business Systems, and Enterprise Infrastructure Capacity Upgrades—all listed in priority sequence.

## **BR102      East River Parkway Bridge**

For the third year in a row, **CLIC says "No!"** Again one of the Committee's lowest-rated projects, an East River Parkway Bridge which effectively covers Bridal Veil Falls does not serve Minneapolis well. The objective should be to open-up the falls to the light of day. The answer is to remove the bridge and re-route the roadway.

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## **BR109 Camden Bridge Rehabilitation**

The Camden Bridge over the Mississippi River at 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is perhaps North Minneapolis' major infrastructure investment, accommodating road traffic, a major rail line, and a continuing parkway connector for both pedestrians and bicycles. There is much to recognize in this largely MSA-supported project, including a significant financial contribution from the state and extensive planning involvement from several nearby neighborhoods. **CLIC believes** that, for a relatively moderate expenditure now, there likely will be no need to invest as much as \$15 million in bridge replacement costs for many years. This is a highly-rated wise use of limited financial resources.

## **CDA01 Heritage Park Redevelopment**

The size, scope, and dollars needed for this project are unlikely to be duplicated again in this city. Heritage Park includes the rehabilitation of an existing library as well as the development of new roads, sidewalks, housing, parks, and water and sewer lines. When CLIC traditionally rates projects, they are individual roads, individual libraries, individual parks, etc. Usually the local roads are paid for with general net debt bond funds, libraries are paid out of the Library Board's allocation of net debt bonds, parks are paid for out of the Park Board's allocation of net debt bond funds, and water and sewer infrastructure are paid for out of the Water/Sewer Enterprise Fund.

It is with this background that **CLIC recommends** that the park land portion of this project be paid for with Park Board allocation of dollars and that the water conveyance system be paid for with Water/Sewer dollars. (According to information from CPED, 6% of the project's total dollars are intended for park lands and 18% of the project dollars are earmarked for water or sewer work.)

**CLIC realizes** that neither of these two funding sources have asked for or planned for the use of these dollars for this project. We also realize that neither of these funding sources has the resources they desire or deserve. Despite this, Heritage Park is our highest rated project – higher than any other park project, higher than any water or sewer project. From a Minneapolis citizen's point of view it does not matter from which pocket the funds come. If this project is truly so important (and a federal court has told us it is), then it should have first crack at all funding sources – from all parts of the city.

## **MPD01 Minneapolis Police Department Forensic Laboratory**

## **MPD02 Minneapolis Police Department Evidence Unit**

The Minneapolis Police Department has requested both a new forensic laboratory and a new evidence unit. But to try to use straight property tax dollars to fund the combined-projects' \$13.8 million cost would wipe out a significant number of other vital capital improvements over a three-year period. Therefore, **CLIC recommends** that neither of these projects be directly funded with property tax dollars. Instead, CLIC asks that the City consider and choose between these two options: a Public Safety Referendum or a property tax surcharge, both to include bonding repayment from residential and commercial/industrial tax bases. CLIC only makes this recommendation with the added stipulation that the involved revenue enhancements not be included in any existing or future tax and/or budget ceilings for the life of the required bonds.

## **PRK04 Athletic Field Renovation**

While supporting this program, **CLIC recommends** that the Park Board discuss these projects with the city's Sewer Department. The change from natural grass to artificial turf may result in more runoff into the sewer system and require the relocation of drains and/or the addition of pipe capacity.

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## **PRK12 Community Skate Parks**

**CLIC supports** the creation and maintenance of Community Skate Parks, hopefully not at the expense of overall system infrastructure maintenance. **CLIC is concerned** about the Park Board's ability to fully-maintain its existing facilities, let alone new additions.

## **PSD02 Public Works Facilities Program – The Hiawatha Site**

**CLIC unequivocally recommends** fully-funding this major and long-overdue Public Works Facilities Program. Further, CLIC hopes that the City will study all possibilities of including other of its various operations in the new Hiawatha Public Works Campus, such as Water's Hennepin Maintenance Facility (East Yard Facilities) and Solid Waste's fleet storage and maintenance facility (currently sited on the Mississippi riverfront in North Minneapolis) and that profits realized from the sale of existing Public Works facilities and properties be incorporated into this program's budget.

## **PV007 SEMI**

[Repeating and updating last year's comment.] For the fourth year in a row, CLIC rates this project in its top tier. As has been stated before, "SEMI speaks to so many elements of city goal contributions, including environmental stewardship, alternative transportation considerations, traffic management, commercial-industrial development and general infrastructure investment. There is particular reason to be pleased with the project's active collaborative structure and ongoing potential for leveraging of private investment." **CLIC is pleased** with SEMI's objectives and its constant progress.

## **PV008 I-35W & Lake Street Interchange Reconstruction**

Last year, while noting that Minneapolis' direct share of this project appeared "minor," with most funding coming from federal sources, a CLIC task force hoped "...that nearby neighborhoods and small businesses understand the eventual impacts of opening the community to direct freeway access." This year, CLIC reiterates the controversial nature of this large project within the affected area, and CLIC also notes that the project's design is still incomplete and appears to involve reconsideration of other nearby roadway interchanges. **CLIC asks** that the City ensure MNDOT completes its planning stages in a neighborhood-friendly manner.

## **PV009 I-35W Crosstown Interchange Reconstruction**

As the metropolitan area's most-traveled traffic artery, the I-35W Crosstown Interchange Reconstruction project receives CLIC's strong support and high rating, especially since residents and businesses continue to support the project despite its delay by the State Legislature in 2002. **CLIC encourages** the Mayor and City Council Members to assist in resolving both property acquisition and entrance/exit ramp siting issues as well as ensure that appropriate landscape improvements are incorporated into the project.

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## **PV020 Loring Greenway**

## **PV032 LaSalle Avenue South**

At almost 30 years old, the Loring Greenway is beginning to show its age and present a possible safety and liability problem for Minneapolis. One of Downtown's more successful economic tools, the Greenway spurred development in the area from the Convention Center, through Loring Park, to the Guthrie Theater and Walker Art Center, creating a significant concentrated tax base with hotels, high-rise condominiums, and small businesses. **CLIC expects** this same base to assist in funding the necessary pavement resurfacing and amenity improvements to keep this unique neighborhood connector secure and viable, through assessments and fees. This will allow CLIC to score this already-highly-rated project even higher and support use of direct city funds. At the same time, CLIC hopes that Public Works will address the related safety and visual concerns under the Greenway—on the dark and dreary LaSalle Avenue level—with appropriate lighting and repainting strategies.

## **RMP02 Residential Parking Program**

This “project” is actually an ongoing program of study and experiments completely financed through the city's Parking Fund. Since no capitalized assets are generated by these funds, **CLIC recommends** that this program not be considered in the CLIC process. However, capital projects that result from these studies may well be within the Committee's purview.

## **WTR02 New 40 Million Gallon Southwest Reservoir/Pump Station**

With the choice of the St. Paul/Minneapolis Interconnection as the preferred alternative for the City's emergency water supply, most of this project is on hold. To ensure continuing and improved water service to Southwest neighborhoods, **CLIC requests** more information about the cost of the Pump Station component of the project. In addition, **CLIC asks** for details about the acreage, market value and potential future uses of the Edina/St. Louis Park reservoir site, perhaps with an eye towards selling the property and using the proceeds to help hold down water rates.

## **WTR08 Complete SCADA System**

The SCADA System should actually pay for itself within ten years through an overall system-wide operating cost savings of \$1.7 million annually—and then begin to offset some of the City's water treatment enhancement operating costs. **CLIC recognizes** SCADA as Minneapolis' current top money-saving project by far and has rated it accordingly high.

## **WTR09 Ultrafiltration Program – Columbia Heights and Fridley**

**CLIC believes** that clean water is vitally important to the health and well being of all of its citizens. Minneapolis undertook its current Ultrafiltration Program project only after completing an exhaustive review of the regulatory requirements for surface drinking water and of the risks to human health and potential litigation if improvements were not made; conducting a thorough examination of the technology options to replace the City's two 75-plus year-old water filtration facilities; and evaluating the results of a “value engineering study” which validates the need for upgrading water facilities to ensure removal of microbial contaminants from the City's Mississippi River water supply. The City's widely-supported decision has been to invest in the membrane filtration process. Installation of the new ultrafiltration plant in Columbia Heights will be completed next year and construction of the second stage plant in Fridley will begin shortly.

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## **WTR09 Ultrafiltration Program – Columbia Heights and Fridley - continued**

Three years ago, a CLIC task force said, “If CLIC could support only one project, this would be it.” Two years ago, the task force learned that “Minneapolis’ ultrafiltration plant will be the most extensive in the United States,” and CLIC continued to rate it highly. Last year, the same task force learned that the City was able to receive some federal funding through state revolving loans, and CLIC once again gave the project its strong support. This year, despite some “sticker shock” due to the City’s tight budget and funding constraints, **CLIC continues to give** its solid support for clean water in Minneapolis.

**But this year, while a majority of the Committee supports the Ultrafiltration Project, CLIC is more divided.** There is concern and confusion expressed by CLIC members about the significance of the difference between the 99.999% and 99.99999% water purity levels, especially since this difference is frequently mentioned as a reason for undertaking and completing this very expensive project. In addition, CLIC is aware that the potential loss of suburban customers for Minneapolis water could greatly affect the city’s ability to fully-proceed with many of its water projects. Finally, CLIC members are concerned about transporting ultra filtered water through insufficiently cleaned pipes.

## **WTR12 Water Distribution Improvements**

**CLIC supports** this continuing program for water distribution improvements. It will add an estimated 50 years to the useful life of Minneapolis’ water pipes, minimize the extent of service interruptions during partial-system failures, and ensure that the world’s cleanest water is not degraded as it travels to residents’ taps.

## **WTR14 The MWW Facilities Security Improvement**

**CLIC finds it difficult** to rate and comment on the proposed security improvements without additional—and apparently unavailable to the public—information. This understandable ambiguity made the Committee’s rating of security-related projects difficult, perhaps resulting in significantly-lower scores than might have been expected. However, with the Water Works’ sharpened focus on facilities improvements, **CLIC hopes** that security issues are addressed at the same time--vehicle entrances, loading docks, accommodations for surveillance equipment and electronic building access are several examples.

## **WTR16 St. Paul / Minneapolis Interconnection**

**CLIC supports** preliminary funding to continue exploring the financial feasibility of completing the St. Paul/Minneapolis Interconnection Project which will provide a 60 MGD reserve water capacity for emergencies. With a \$19 million price tag, the Interconnection strategy offers a significant savings over the alternative Southwest Reservoir approach. **CLIC suggests** that, with the 2004 engineers’ report now available and a legitimate proposal now on the table, the time for a decision by policy makers is also now.