

Appendix D

Public Input

The involvement of the public in the CIP process is a commitment of the City and Planning Commission. However, it is often difficult to generate interest and engagement by the community in such a broad and technical endeavor. It has been recognized in the past, but even more so this year that the greatest impact of the public on the CIP actually occurs before the CIP process itself.

Prior to department heads submitting revised CIP information, the Planning Commission held a Public Input Session. As on of the main identifiers of needs, the public's comments are considered and discussed by Planning Commission and City staff at all subsequent CIP meetings.

The current CIP is available in hardcopy format at City Hall, as well as electronically on the City's website via the Planning Office homepage. The Planning Commission held a public hearing to obtain input on plan on December 9th, 2008.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ST. CLOUD PLANNING COMMISSION

A meeting of the St. Cloud Planning Commission was held on December 9, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Members present were Andzenge, Chirhart, DeVine, Holtberg, Langsjoen, Radaich and Council representative Pederson.

Open Forum: There was no one present to speak at the open public forum.

Consent Agenda: Langsjoen moved to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Approval of the minutes from the November 11, 2008, Planning Commission meeting.

Acceptance of staff reports for December 9, 2008, as part of the official record.

Andzenge seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2010-2015 St. Cloud Capital Improvements Program: Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, explained that the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a document that indicates how the City will spend dollars on big purchase items for a 5-year period as well as unprogrammed projects. The CIP outlines the order of preference for projects. The CIP schedules the replacement, renovation, rehabilitation, or alteration of existing facilities. Glaesman stated that physical items costing more than \$250,000 or having an anticipated life span of five or more years are considered capital improvements. The City Charter provides for the CIP to be the responsibility of the Planning Commission. The document is presented to the Mayor to assist in the budgeting process. Glaesman noted that one of the significant improvements to the CIP in the last several years is the detailed explanation of projects. The CIP is an important planning tool and indicates how the projects apply to the City Council goals and their relationship to existing land use, future land use, and growth areas. The CIP is also used as a financial analysis tool. Glaesman stated that the 2010-2015

CIP will provide for public input and be more user friendly; it shows budget implications for all projects; it lists the staff contact for each project; it provides a link to reference documents related to projects; and provides map interactivity. Glaesman summarized the projected 2009 expenditures. He pointed out that there are several projects that were scheduled for 2009 that may not occur due to lack of grant monies. Those projects may have to be moved to 2010 or later. Glaesman introduced Carla Chapman, primary staff who drafts the CIP, Steve Foss from the Engineering Dept. and Scott Zlotnik from the Parks Dept. Radaich asked if the Co. Rd. 134 improvements project are the improvements referenced in the e-mail from the APO. Steve Foss, Assistant City Engineer, answered that the Co. Rd. 134 project is slated for 2009 construction, which is why the document isn't noted in the 2010-2105 CIP. This fact has been relayed to the APO. Chirhart said it would be helpful for the public to know which items/projects have been removed from the list and why. Many park projects are not included because of the lack of state grants. Glaesman stated that the draft project sheets should be available in the next several weeks. Anyone interested in a specific project can contact the Planning Office, and an explanation can be given on why the project may not be moving forward as planned. Holtberg stated that the plan has greatly improved in the last few years and assumed the City's bond rating has also improved as a result of the CIP tool. Holtberg asked if monies have been set aside for unexpected projects that arise. Glaesman explained that each department has its own funding sources. With the exception of Parks, some reasonable amount of reserves are available to deal with unexpected situations that may occur. Holtberg asked if the public can follow the CIP process through the City's website. Glaesman answered that the draft CIP document will be available on-line in February. The public can contact the Planning Office for updates. Glaesman noted the letter from Scott Mareck, Executive Director of the APO, asking that the Planning Commission include the Pinecone Rd. connection to Co. Rd. 120 and the roundabout at CSAH 134 as well as the University Bridge project in the CIP. The City's response to Mr. Mareck is that those projects are moving forward quickly, and the City is in a position to construct those projects. The Pinecone Rd. project has been in the CIP and programmed for construction but has been delayed due to some of the funding that did not come through. The University Bridge Study is underway, and the project will be ready for construction shortly.

Chairperson DeVine opened the public hearing and invited testimony on the 2010-2015 St. Cloud

Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The following persons testified:

Dean Reller
223 23rd Ave. No.

He pointed out an unprogrammed neighborhood revitalization project for the area between T.H. 23 and 3rd St. No. and between Cooper Ave. and 25th Ave. No. The streets in that area are in very poor condition. He believes it should be a programmed project so that neighbors can plan ahead for upcoming assessments.

Matt Glaesman
Planning Director

Mr. Reller's comment is the type of input that the City is seeking. There are usually one or two neighborhood revitalization projects programmed annually in addition to unprogrammed neighborhood revitalization projects. It is difficult to prioritize those projects. When property owners request that their areas be at the top of the priority list, the Engineering Dept. takes that into consideration.

Lowell Olson
23 Pandolfo Place

He stated that this fall, MN voters voted to increase their taxes for clean water, fine arts, and parks and trails. He noted that 14.25% of the additional tax dollars collected will be designated for parks and trails, and grant monies will become available. He suggested that a representative serve on the commission that oversees those funds and how they are distributed. He said he wants to be sure that some of that grant money will be available to outstate cities. Bike trails are an alternative intermodal transportation system which will save money, improve health and increase interaction between communities within the community. He would ask that construction of intermodal bike paths not be delayed. Also, he asked that the CIP include improvements in many of the neighborhood parks, particularly in the annexed areas, which have not seen any improvements in the parks themselves or equipment. He stated that the Co. Rd.134 bridge at the Sauk River should include trail connections heading north along Co. Rd. 134. He pointed out that Stearns Co. has purchased all the right-of-way and easements necessary from the south edge of St. Cloud to Warner Lake Park for a trail. It is important that St. Cloud move forward so there can be interconnected trails.

Ed Schnettler
Schnettler Properties

As planning for 33rd St. So. proceeds, he asked that the property owners in that area be actively involved and kept apprised of projects for that area.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed. Chirhart stated that the Planning Commission had a discussion with the Park Board recently about being a stakeholder for State monies that may become available during the next legislative session. A citizen commission will determine where monies will be spent; therefore, it is important that someone from St. Cloud apply to serve on this commission. Chirhart also stated that the City must take advantage of any public improvement monies that may become available. Glaesman responded that the City has already presented a list of \$41 million in

projects to its federal lobbyist. Holtberg asked how the public will be involved with the projects scheduled for the last several years of the CIP, e.g., University Bridge and the 33rd St. corridor. Glaesman responded that there are several steps involving public input such as the planning process and environmental review. As the project date approaches, the Engineering Dept. involves affected property owners. Steve Foss, Ass't. City Engineer, clarified that the Co. Rd. 134 improvements are an integral part of the APO's West Metro Corridor project. The CIP projects involve a series of informational meetings as well as public hearings. Holtberg noted that the possibility of forming a task force to investigate alternative funding mechanisms for parks was discussed at the joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Park Board. Scott Zlotnik, Parks Director, stated that recommendation was taken to the Park Board, and Troy Fritz, Park Board member, volunteered to work with the neighborhoods and other entities to look at funding opportunities and to analyze delivery of services. DeVine commented that the CIP is becoming a more user friendly and informative document.