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2009 Executive Capital Budget Message Mayor Dave Cieslewicz

Summary

My 2009 Executive Capital Budget comes in more than \$7.3 million under my original target of \$65 million in new borrowing. This reduction will save taxpayers over \$1.0 million in annual debt service payments in 2010. While making significant savings, we maintained commitments to public safety and basic services, with an eye towards positioning Madison to take advantage of economic recovery in years to come. I accomplished this by working to cut \$14 million in proposed capital spending from the agency budget requests, putting my budget \$7.3 million under my original target.

As always, the City of Madison capital budget is built on a 10-year borrowing cycle, unlike most communities, which borrow over a 20-year period. This policy reduces interest costs to taxpayers, and also helps us maintain our “Aaa” bond rating. We are one of only a handful of communities nationwide with a top bond rating, which keeps the interest we pay at the lowest rate possible.

Public Safety

My capital budget keeps our commitments to major investments in public safety. Specifically, we are keeping our commitment to build Fire Station 12 on Madison’s far west side. Station 12 will be operational in 2009. This \$4.6 million project continues my long-term commitment to public safety. Combined with the opening Station of 11 in 2005, we will have opened two additional stations in four years – the first new stations in 25 years.

My budget also funds significant new improvements to the Police Department’s Central District offices. These currently inefficient and cramped offices will yield to work space that will make the department more efficient and effective. Finally, I continue my multi-year commitment to making sure every Madison police officer has a Taser, an effective alternative to deadly force.

Street Repair and Transportation

As in past years, investments in basic infrastructure represent by far the single largest portion of my capital budget. This budget includes over \$29 million in general obligation borrowing for reconstruction, expansion and resurfacing of major streets in need of repair throughout the City, like Northport Drive and University Avenue. We will also continue the six-year long reconstruction of East Washington Ave. Currently about 26% of Madison's arterial street miles are not up to the standards we set as a City (a pavement assessment rating (PASER) of above 5 on a 10 point scale). I have set a goal of reducing that percentage to 10% in five years. My budget includes \$10.6 million in general obligation funding to continue to meet these goals.

Economic Development

I am funding the long-planned “One Stop Shop” to improve our customer service for those looking to build homes and businesses in our city.

Water Utility

My budget continues good stewardship of this basic city service, with almost \$13 million in investments in infrastructure to protect and improve our water quality. This includes \$6.8 million for new and replacement water mains, as well as funding to begin work on an iron and manganese filter at Well 8 – one of our high manganese wells.

Innovation and Energy Efficiency

This budget includes several projects to ensure that city-owned buildings are energy-efficient, cost-efficient and well-designed for the long-run. This initiative includes \$200,000 for energy efficiency projects and \$100,000 for renewable energy projects. All energy efficiency projects must pay back their costs in ten years and most will return the investment in a much shorter period. This program saves taxpayers money and helps move us toward our goal of reducing our green house gas emissions citywide by 100 thousand tons in five years as part of the Mpowering Madison campaign.

Quality of Life and Neighborhoods

My capital budget makes a number of investments to improve quality of life in our neighborhoods that makes Madison a special place to live and work.

We made great progress in 2008 toward constructing a badly needed new Central Library. There is an active proposal for a mixed-use project that would include a library, ground floor retail and office space above. My budget includes \$30 million in 2009 and 2010 for this project, split between the public and private sectors. Also, on Madison’s South side, we are moving forward in building a new library, tripling the space of one of Madison’s most used branch libraries. The library is part of the ambitious redevelopment of the City-owned Villager Mall.

We also made very significant progress in the redevelopment of the Villager Mall, a key property on Madison’s South Side, now owned by the City’s Community Development Authority. We expect to break ground on a new 12,000 square foot library later in 2008 and we will start rebuilding the existing building’s facade and interior soon. My budget includes \$3.5 million in 2009 to complete the library and \$5.7 million for other improvements. This project is also key to revitalizing and improving one of the primary gateways to our city, and creating new economic opportunities for South side neighborhoods.

The Parks budget includes funding for various neighborhood park improvements and repairs, like replacement of the Tenney Park shelter. The Central Park Ad Hoc Committee continues to develop realistic plans for the park, and we are moving forward with developing a “Great Lawn” and a skateboard park. My five-year Capital Improvement Program also contains an expansion of Madison’s nationally acclaimed bicycle trail system with new paths planned for the north side and along John Nolen Drive.