



**City  
of  
Milwaukee**

INTERDEPARTMENTAL

CORRESPONDENCE

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

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## Memorandum

**To:** Ald. James A. Bohl, Jr.  
**From:** Michael Talarczyk, Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
**Date:** December 23, 2008  
**Re:** History of Capital Improvements Committee

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This memorandum provides a brief history of the City of Milwaukee's Capital Improvements Committee.

On June 30, 1941, the Milwaukee Common Council appointed a "Long-Term Improvement Program Technical Committee" and instructed this committee *"to prepare a long-term improvement program for the City of Milwaukee of six years or more, to be submitted to the Common Council at the earliest possible date."* The first report prepared by this committee was for the years 1944 through 1949. The committee was then authorized *"to submit annually to the Common Council at budget-making time a revised six-year program of public improvements."* In July of 1952, the name of the committee was changed to "Capital Improvements Committee."

The Capital Improvements Committee was reorganized and streamlined in 1965 to place greater emphasis on the planning aspects of the capital program. The new committee was comprised of the Commissioner of Public Works, the Commissioner of City Development and the City Comptroller. The Commissioner of Public Works served as Committee Chair. The intent in structuring the Capital Improvements Committee in this manner was that each member would bring an essential element of planning required to carry out effective capital programming, namely: public works management; comprehensive planning; and, financial planning.

At that time, the Committee was also assigned a number of consultants, including the City Engineer, the City Planning Director, the Tax Commissioner and the Director of Community Development. The Committee was staffed by a "capital improvements administration" headed by a program coordinator selected by the committee. Salaries required for the capital improvements administration, along with supporting supplies, equipment and other administrative costs were provided annually out of capital improvement funds.

In conjunction with a major reorganization of City of Milwaukee government in the 1989 Budget, the Capital Improvements Committee was dissolved and its duties assigned to the Department of Administration-Budget and Management Division.

Please contact the Bureau if you have any questions or would like further information.

LRB08582