

August 20, 2025

Chairwoman Milele Coggs  
Public Works Committee

Dear Chairwoman Coggs and Members of the Public Works Committee,

Subject: Proposal for the Revision of Chapter 98 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances - Use and Occupancy of City-Owned Conduit and Other Facilities

Please find the attached proposed full-scale revision to Chapter 98 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances (MCO), governing the use and occupancy of city-owned conduits and other facilities. These revisions are designed to improve administration, accountability, and financial sustainability of our city's conduit systems and assist efforts at collecting fees and outstanding receivables owed the city by conduit occupants. The major proposed changes are outlined below:

1. **Fee Structures for Conduit System Occupancy:**
  - Updated occupancy rates to reflect full cost recovery.
  - Introduction of automatic annual inflationary adjustments tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to address increasing maintenance costs.
2. **Registration Requirements:**
  - New and existing occupants must register with the department, initiate new three-year agreements upon the expiration of current ones.
  - First-time registrants are required to pay a \$1,500 fee to cover extensive verification processes.
  - Mandatory submission of Operations Plans and annual reports to include detailed maps, installation data, and project timelines.
3. **Enhanced Policing Authority:**
  - Designation of the Commissioner of Public Works with enhanced authority to oversee conduit use, including the power to determine and action upon violations.
  - Introduction of a \$500 permit review fee and structured penalties for unauthorized occupancy.
  - Provides a mandatory requirement for collections referral of unpaid fees, the application of 1% monthly interest on unpaid bill balances and denial of permits for occupants with outstanding collections owed the City.

The proposed changes aim to streamline processes, enhance the ability to police conduct within the conduit system effectively, improve collections of fees and outstanding fees owed the City, and ensure that the City's infrastructure management is both sustainable and efficient.

We are confident that these revisions to Chapter 98 will significantly benefit our city's operations and request your favorable review and approval. We welcome any questions or further discussion on these changes during your upcoming session.

Thank you for considering this comprehensive revision to Chapter 98 to facilitate better management and utilization of city-owned infrastructure.