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- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS
COMMITTEE

October 22, 2015

Members of the Finance and Personnel Committee:

Re: 2016 Proposed Budget

The Capital Improvements Committee recognizes and supports the efforts of the Administration and the Council to incorporate the long term perspective into the City's budget process. For some segments of the City's infrastructure, especially its streets and buildings, the challenges presented by deferred maintenance are extremely daunting. In addition, the City's capital program faces new challenges. The growing need to replace and maintain information technology systems and the need to make City-wide improvements to increase access for the disabled will put increasing pressure on the City's ability to engage in appropriate maintenance of all classes of its infrastructure.

The committee believes that the 2016 Proposed Budget demonstrates a genuine commitment to maintain the City's infrastructure and capital assets in a manner that will not jeopardize the City's finances. The committee believes that the infrastructure priorities proposed for 2016 are reasonable and will not compromise the value and condition of the city's assets. The proposed budget includes several on-going initiatives that the committee supports, in particular the Library Facilities initiative, the increased emphasis on the High Impact paving program and the Strong Neighborhoods Plan.

The committee recognizes however, that the level of borrowing proposed for 2016 is not sustainable in the long run. The committee is not urging action for the 2016 Budget, however it believes that the age of the City's infrastructure, the continuing pressures from state shared revenue reductions and levy limits, and the City's responsibility for the proper maintenance and stewardship of its assets, will require that the City consider alternate revenue sources for its capital program in the future.

Again, the committee would like to thank the Administration, the Finance & Personnel Committee and the entire Common Council for their diligent efforts to ensure Milwaukee's fiscal health and for the opportunity to bring the long term perspective to the City's Executive Budget process.

Sincerely,

Ald. Robert Bauman, Chair
Capital Improvements Committee

