



Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities

CGMC in Brief

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Contact: Sarah Kleppe
651.225.8840

Governor's bonding bill stirs up transportation debate

Gov. Pawlenty's \$1 billion bonding proposal contains \$416 million in borrowing for transportation projects, \$40 million for the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center, and \$258 million for projects at the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities systems. While the dollars committed to local bridges and roads are a positive thing, the proposal does nothing for state roads and bridges, which cannot be funded with General Obligation Bonds. Capitol insiders are speculating that the Legislature will try to pass a comprehensive transportation bill in the first few weeks of session.

The CGMC continues to support a comprehensive transportation bill that meets the needs of the entire state with an ongoing and consistent source of state revenue.

As part of his Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development (SEED) initiative, Gov. Pawlenty also has included \$20 million in his bonding bill for the *statewide* redevelopment grant program and \$20 million for the Greater Minnesota Business Development Infrastructure Grant Program. A detailed list of the governor's bonding proposal is online at: www.budget.state.mn.us/budget/capital/2008/governors_summary080114.pdf

Annexation Task Force begins work on legislative recommendations

The Municipal Boundary Adjustment Task Force met for the third time Tuesday. **Rochester Assistant City Administrator Gary Neumann, Sartell City Administrator Patti Gartland, and Waconia City Administrator Susan Arntz** represented the cities at the meeting.

The Task Force discussed the form and content of its forthcoming report to the Legislature, as well as items of agreement that will be presented to the Legislature in a technical/non-controversial bill.

The Task Force has yet to take up many of the more controversial annexation issues, such as:

- Townships' discontent with "balloon and string" annexations.
- Townships' desire to reinstate an election requirement for some annexations.
- Cities' request to expand options for annexation by ordinance.
- Cities' request of more extra-territorial planning abilities.

It is unlikely the Task Force will produce any substantive recommendations. Instead, those issues are likely to be addressed by the Legislature this year.



Board/Property Tax Committees to hold joint meeting

A joint meeting of the **CGMC Board of Directors and Property Tax/LGA Committee** will be held **Jan. 24 from 10 a.m. – Noon at the Flaherty & Hood, P.A. offices in St. Paul.** Steve Peterson, policy analyst for the CGMC, will present the two committees with formula and funding options to consider.

Please R.S.V.P. to Sarah Kleppe at skleppe@flaherty-hood.com or 651.259.1919 if you are able to attend.

Legislative Leaders and Tax Chairs confirmed for CGMC Legislative Action Day, February 20

We are pleased to announce that all legislative leaders will participate in the CGMC's Legislative Action Day on Feb. 20.

Senate Tax Chair Tom Bakk, DFL-Cook, and House Tax Chair Ann Lenczewski, DFL-Bloomington, will discuss LGA and property tax relief at Noon.

Later that afternoon, **Senate Majority Leader Larry Pogemiller, DFL-Minneapolis, House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher, DFL-Minneapolis, House Minority Leader Marty Seifert, R-Marshall, and Senate Minority Leader David Senjem, R-Rochester,** will discuss CGMC issue areas and answer questions from our members.

Please book your hotel rooms! There is a high school hockey tournament at this time and hotel-motel accommodations are limited.

Rooms at the **Holiday Inn RiverCentre** (near Xcel Energy Center) are \$115 (plus tax) and are available by calling 651.225.1515. Parking is an additional charge, but the hotel offers a free shuttle to and from Mancini's. There are only five rooms left on the CGMC block for Wednesday night.

Rooms at the **Best Western Kelly Inn** (near the Capitol) are \$94 and are available by calling 651.227.8711.

The updated agenda and registration form are available on the CGMC website at: www.greatermncities.org/2008_LADregistration010208.pdf.

East Grand Forks City Administrator Bob Brooks dies

The CGMC is saddened by the death of **East Grand Forks City Administrator Bob Brooks.** He was the city administrator of Warren when that city joined the coalition in 2003 and was active in the CGMC. He will be greatly missed.

The funeral will be **Jan. 19 at 1:30 p.m. at St. Michael's Church, 524 5th Avenue North, Grand Forks, ND, 58201.**

