Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	Approving the Audit Committee's recommendation to audit the Capital Improvement Budget process since the City last revised the process in the 2018-19 cycle for the 2020-2021 and future cycles.		
Sponsors:	Saura Jost, HwaJeong Kim, Rebecca Noecker		
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. Capital Improvement Budget Project Scope of Work FINAL.pdf		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/4/2024	1	City Council	Adopted	Pass

Approving the Audit Committee's recommendation to audit the Capital Improvement Budget process since the City last revised the process in the 2018-19 cycle for the 2020-2021 and future cycles.
WHEREAS, per RES 20-1110, the Saint Paul City Council established the Saint Paul Audit Committee on August 12, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Audit Committee's mission is to evaluate the financial and program performance of City departments to build public trust and ensure outstanding service delivery, transparency, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, the Audit Committee solicited suggestions on an audit topic from residents, City employees, Councilmembers, and city departments; and

WHEREAS, at the Audit Committee's June 18, 2024 meeting, the acting members and advisors deliberated on the audit topics that would be relevant to community needs and narrowly focused enough to allow for an effective audit; and

WHEREAS, the acting members and advisors agreed that an audit of Saint Paul's Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process that the city use to fund the construction and maintenance of City infrastructure (i.e., streets, bridges, libraries, parks, recreation centers, and other public facilities) would benefit from a follow-up examination since its last process change during the 2018-19 cycle for the 2020-2021 and future cycles; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the city launched a new CIB process to replace the over three decades old existing process and focus more strongly on:

> **Equity and inclusion**: Budgeting decisions reflect the city's commitment to equity and to identify ways to invite more voices to the table and ensure investments are distributed equitably throughout the City.
> **Strategic investments**: Capital investments all feed into a larger, more comprehensive strategic framework that takes advantage of data and ensures maximum return on investment.
> **Fiscal responsibility**: Existing infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and sidewalks - as well as existing parks and libraries facilities - are well-tended. Maintenance is prioritized.

WHEREAS, one of the most significant changes to the process in 2019 is the creation of a two-year cycle with

the first year dedicated to City department-submitted projects and the second for community-submitted projects, eliminating the competition for funding between City and community projects that existed in the previous process; and

WHEREAS, the Audit Committee have identified the following CIB process study priorities that they would like to re-examine and expand on:

Overall Questions
Is the current community-project CIB process working as intended with the changes in place?
Is the current community-project CIB process effective?

Process Questions
- How did the CIB process shift from its previous delivery?
    - What does success look like now? What did it look like then?
- What are the characteristics of the current process (including participants, investments, committee members, applications, distribution of spend)?
- What process steps could be improved for the next CIB round?
- What communications support for the variety of partners/owners is needed in the future?

Community Engagement Questions
- What are the overarching goals for the CIB process related to engagement?
- Who is ultimately accountable for the CIB community engagement approach? What changes might need to be pursued in the future?
    - How is ownership currently shared and how should it be shared between the Departments (including Public Works and Parks & Recreation), Mayor's Office, OFS, and the community?
- How are CIB committee members acting as community ambassadors? How might the City better support their work?
- How are district councils and other organizations in the City involved in the community engagement work?
- What additional tools would help with CIB community engagement?
- How can the application process continue to be adapted to meet City and community needs?
- How can the City balance a data-driven approach and ongoing needs around community engagement?

Equity Questions
- In what ways could the CIB process be adapted to focus funding more equitably?
    - What does it mean for the community process funding to be equitable?
- How might the CIB process be evolved to move from a complaint-based or a process-knowledge-based orientation?
- How can everyone assembling the CIB process work toward centering community more in the process so that it does not feel as much like an 'insider' process?
    - Where are there opportunities for departments to work together to support the community process?; and

WHEREAS, the acting members with the advice and support of the advisors decided that the CIB process that the city use to fund the construction and maintenance of City infrastructure is warranted further study, research, and evaluation; and, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council hereby approves the recommendation of the re-examination of the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process as part of Audit Committee's second study for the 2024-25 period.