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**The voice of
 Historic Northeast
 Kansas City
 since 1932**



Public Improvements Approved

Capital improvements make up 18 percent of 2001-2002 budgeted for general municipal funds or "basic services"

The City of Kansas City, Mo., works on its yearly budget with an overall five-year plan in mind. The latest budget reflects the City Council's desire to reduce the city's deferred maintenance deficit, to fund and repair the city's suffering bridges, address citywide flooding problems, prudently allocate funding for infrastructure needs in developing areas and to complete previously-funded projects.

The renewal of the one-cent sales tax for capital improvements was approved by voters in 1999; a full 25 percent of this tax is dedicated to replacing old bridges in Kansas City.

The most visible group that works on the five-year capital plan is the Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC). These 13 individuals - two from each council district plus one chair - are appointed by the Mayor and City Council to direct the capital improvements staff. Its engineers and the staff of 11 city operating departments. Together, they develop prioritized lists of capital improvement needs and figure out how to balance the costs with anticipated resources.

Soon, another series of public hearings will begin to provide citizens the opportunity to express opinions, concerns and project requests for the upcoming budget. However, the 2001-2002 adopted budget contains quite a few improvement projects for the first and third districts, which include Historic Northeast.

Each council district was allocated \$2,778,808 for Fiscal Year 2002. In District One, two of the Parks and Recreation projects, two of the storm drainage projects, the only city development project and four special projects all fall within Northeast; the Concourse Park Fountain received \$300,000 and \$118,750 was allocated as the city's 25 percent match with the state to repair the slide on Cliff Drive. In city development, \$50,000 will go for a plan analysis of existing public infrastructure in the St. John Corridor (between Benton and Belmont), North Bellefontaine Avenue, between 4104 and 4138 will get 900 feet of storm sewer drainage for \$240,000; an additional \$31,000 was allocated at 4037 N. Bellefontaine Ave. to cover design cost overrun for a previous project. Of six special projects for the First District, four will benefit Northeast. The Cornithan Hall portion of the Kansas City Museum's roof will benefit from \$200,000. The Brooklyn-Park alleyway north of Eighth Street will be paved with PIAC funds of \$48,800, and the alleys between Smart and Garner from Monroe to Myrtle and between Norton and Jackson from Thompson to Smart will also be paved using \$6,000 of PIAC funds each.

In Council District Three, most projects are focused in the midtown and eastside areas, but the Harmony Park Pioneers will be pleased to know that funds have finally been secured to construct a new ADA playground there. Readers may remember that the youngsters cornered Third District Councilman-at-Large Troy Nash at the Northeast Night Out Against Crime last fall, asking, "Where is our playground?" Nash and PIAC representatives worked to secure \$100,000 for the project, twice as much as was requested. Also for Parks and Recreation in the Third District, the Gregg Community Center will receive more improvements with \$81,318. A new game room will be added and the sauna and steam rooms will be doubled in size. Neighborhood Conservation in the Northeast's portion of the Third District will include curb reconstruction on Lydia between 16th and 17th Streets and on 16th between Lydia and the Paseo for \$58,000, as well as on East 11th Street from Myrtle to Norton for \$40,000.

As for allocating funds from last year, the First District has \$223,325, and most projects will take place right in Northeast, especially through Parks and Recreation. Curb, walks and drives from Indiana to Windsor will go in on Gladstone Boulevard with \$59,100; another \$22,930 will cover the same from Quincy to Denver. On Independence Boulevard, curbs at Chestnut will be replaced for \$12,100 and enhancements such as replacing torn banners and brackets will be done with \$10,000. The bus stop on the Avenue between Hartson and Campbell will get a new sidewalk slab at \$500.

Additionally, the Budd Park Shelter House roof is slated for replacement at \$20,000, and the Concourse Colonnade will be getting upgraded electrical power with \$12,000. Finally, the city will plant a tree in its right-of-way at 511 N. Lawndale for \$200.