

May 7, 2024

Representative Liz Olson, Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
479 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Olson and House Ways and Means Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share written testimony on **HF5220 and HF5162**, the 2024 Capital Investment Bills.

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) represents fifteen of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and eleven Greater Minnesota counties.

Leading up to this legislative session, state and local infrastructure capital requests totaled \$7.6 billion. That volume of requests underscores the importance of prioritizing bi-partisan action this session to build upon the historic capital investments authorized in 2023.

In addition to the critical need to continue progress toward catching up on Minnesota's backlog of deferred infrastructure projects, regular and timely passage of biennial bonding bills supports efficient planning, project management, and continuity across the workforce and professional services essential to bringing these projects to reality.

As discussions continue toward enacting a 2024 capital investment package, MICA urges that the mix of funded projects better reflect the critical role county infrastructure plays in the day-to-day functioning of residents and businesses across the state. More specifically, we respectfully urge:

- Meeting or exceeding the level of funding recommended by Governor Walz for the **Local Government Road Wetland Preplacement Program**. Counties have called for \$15 million in General Obligation-bonds and \$16 million in General Fund dollars.
- Providing increased funding for the **Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP)** and the **Local Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program**, both of which support statewide investments while prioritizing project requests based on need. There are more projects in need of funding than capacity available. Our initial recommendation of \$250 million for local roads and \$200 million for local bridges reflects that there are dozens of shovel-ready projects awaiting funding.
- Fully fund **Capital Assistance for Solid Waste Management Infrastructure** requests.

Additionally, we appreciate the goal of the proposed requirement to establish local capital project funds. We also appreciate the willingness of Chair Lee to recognize that local capital improvement plans (CIP), local resource capacity, and other factors influence state and local capital investment priorities over time. As the bill moves forward, we would welcome additional consideration of how best to ensure assets funded with state capital funding are properly cared for over time. We also seek to ensure that the proposed definition of “state share” will not prohibit the total state share from exceeding fifty percent of total project costs, which often occurs when combining funding from multiple sources (federal, state, other) for high-cost road, bridge, and other public infrastructure projects.

In closing, we strongly urge adoption of a bonding bill this session that aligns with the resources available for general obligation bond authority and debt service and responds to the significant ongoing need to invest in Minnesota’s public and community infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,



**Matt Massman**, *Executive Director*  
*Minnesota Inter-County Association*

Cc: Representative Fue Lee, Chair  
House Capital Investment Committee