



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

February 13, 2012

Dear Aldermen:

Continued investment in the City's infrastructure is critical to support and enhance our neighborhoods, stimulate job creation, and provide quality City services. Planning for capital improvements must be a comprehensive and forward-looking process that ensures taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly and strategically.

As you know, while the City's resources become increasingly limited, its infrastructure needs continue to grow. It has become even more important to direct capital funds to the highest priority and most necessary capital improvements, and to utilize these funds most efficiently.

In 2012, we plan to reform to the City's neighborhood capital planning efforts. This will include a new, more collaborative process for Aldermanic "menu" project requests that will ensure better coordination with other infrastructure work, focus on the City's most pressing capital needs, and enact a stricter timeline for project selection.

We will provide each of you with more information than ever before about planned improvements in your neighborhoods, supporting your ability to provide enhanced value to constituents with the projects you select. For the first time, you will receive a comprehensive map of all projects that will be completed by Water Management, CDOT, all sister agencies, (Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Park District, CTA, CHA, City Colleges), as well as private utilities.

And to ensure that "menu" projects are in line with the City's most critical needs, you will also receive a list of the most urgent and highest priority projects from which to select. The lists will be informed by other planned work in your neighborhoods to ensure strategic coordination. Because of the substantial increase in water repair and street resurfacing projects in our neighborhoods, it is imperative that we share with you where streets will be replaced over the next several years so we don't waste resources paving a street twice over a short period of time.

We will also ask you to program 80 percent of “menu” funds by June 30 of every year, and the remaining 20 percent must be programmed before the end of the year. This will ensure the City utilizes its 2012 capital project dollars effectively while also enabling CDOT and other relevant departments to expeditiously improve our City’s infrastructure and create jobs.

I look forward to launching these improvements to our neighborhood capital planning efforts with you. It is my desire to strengthen our collaboration on the “menu” process, provide you with more critical information about infrastructure improvements in your neighborhoods, and enhance the impact of capital funds to best serve our residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rahm Emanuel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Mayor Rahm Emanuel