



Contact Information

Courtney Accurti
Director of Communications
PA State Association of Boroughs
2941 N. Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
717.236.9526 x12
caccurti@boroughs.org

Capital Budget Requirements Survey Results Released

Identified Economic Development Projects Would Spur Job Growth and Rebuild Communities

For Immediate Release

(Harrisburg – April 20, 2010) – A comprehensive survey jointly commissioned by the Chrostwaite Institute and Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs offers a detailed snapshot of the diverse infrastructure needs for which borough communities across the Commonwealth require funding. The Capital Budget Requirements Survey (CBRS) reflects the cumulative responses of 320 municipalities across all regions of Pennsylvania. The numerous projects identified in the survey represent an infrastructure investment of over \$1.4 billion and would produce thousands of jobs in local communities.

Each municipality has their own process for identifying and justifying the need for these economic development projects. The Chrostwaite Institute and Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs accepted each survey response and the projects identified, yet have not researched the specific merits of each itemized project.

Summary of Results

The CBRS found that boroughs in the state identified a significant number of capital funding needs that involve the following areas:

Public Works Infrastructure projects including street and road rebuilding, resurfacing, sign replacement, bridge repair and/or replacement, sidewalk/crosswalk installation or repair and storm water catch basin maintenance were estimated at \$368,117,331.

Environmental Issues, including the repair and/or construction of wastewater treatment facilities, installation of LED streetlights and traffic signals, repair or replacement of sanitary sewer lines and manholes, construction or renovations of yard waste processing site and separation of combined sewers, were estimated to exceed \$720,472,322.

Recreational Facilities capital budget needs for the repair and upgrade of swimming pools, replacement of antiquated playground equipment and construction of new parks and playground facilities were estimated at \$75,516,665.

Municipal Facilities projects, which include the renovations and repairs of existing municipal buildings, construction of a new borough hall, renovation and repair of existing public works facilities and/or construction of new public works facilities, were estimated at \$121,737,424.

The CBRS respondents indicated they had **Public Safety** projects, including the construction of new public safety facilities, public safety vehicles and communication equipment needs of \$55,626,637.

Renewable Energy, which included roof mounted solar panels and waste to energy facilities had \$7,471,522 in identified projects.

Respondents suggested an additional \$74,524,291 in the category defined as **Other** projects.

CBRS respondents had a total of \$1,423,466,192 in capital projects that would create a significant number of jobs and help to rebuild local communities across Pennsylvania.

Public Policy Remedies

Congress recently began deliberating on a series of jobs bills that may help municipalities across the country to meet numerous infrastructure funding needs such as those identified in the CBRS. U.S. Rep. Paul Kanjorski of northeastern Pennsylvania, recently introduced House Resolution 3007 or the Local Fiscal Assistance Act. This proposal would provide \$30 billion dollars a year to municipalities nationwide for three years. The substance of the bill mirrors the federal General Revenue Sharing Program that was highly regarded by local governments across the country, yet the law expired in 1986 without Congressional action.

H.R. 3007 specifically defines priority expenditures by municipalities as public safety, environmental protection, health, recreation, libraries, social services for the poor or elderly, financial administration or other activities authorized by law.

Future Initiatives

The Chrostwaite Institute plans to engage in future partnerships with the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs to further research infrastructure needs and other areas that are paramount to economic development in Pennsylvania.

About the Chrostwaite Institute

The Chrostwaite Institute is based in Harrisburg and was created in 2008 as a nonprofit organization. The intent behind its creation was to carry on the vision of Mr. Thomas Chrostwaite, who founded PSAB in 1911. He was widely recognized as a model Pennsylvanian who promoted a strong civic environment. The Institute's activities are dedicated to improving and researching such areas as government efficiency, investment in core communities, fiscal stability, transportation, water infrastructure, community and economic development. A core belief of the Institute is that Pennsylvania must also foster local leadership capacity, promote civic engagement and counter the growing crisis of young talent exiting our Commonwealth in favor of other state economies.

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