

**Department of Finance, City of Seattle**  
**2007-2008 Capital Improvement Program - Project Suggestion Form**  
**Background and Instructions**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the **Capital Improvement Program - Project Suggestion Form** is to 1) provide citizens with a way to formally nominate a capital project for consideration during the budget process, 2) make suggested projects available for comment by neighborhood district councils and other members of the public; and 3) provide feedback to citizens about their suggestions. The desired outcome of this process is to engage the public in a way that improves the information available to City departments and officials as they make decisions about possible capital projects.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Overview**

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) allocates existing funds and revenues to rehabilitate, restore, improve, and add to the City's physical plant. The CIP covers a six-year planning horizon, but a new one is adopted each year to reflect ongoing changes, additions, and deletions. The document, prepared by the Department of Finance based on submissions from City departments, is approved by the Mayor, and is then submitted to the City Council, which, with any revisions, adopts it. Although this process occurs every year, there is greater focus every other year, as the City is now on a biennial budget cycle, with 2006 being the year in which the next two-year budget (2007-2008) will be adopted.

Under the City's financial policies, a capital expenditure is defined to include all costs: labor, equipment material, consultant, and contractor for the creation/purchase of an asset (1) with a useful life of more than one year; (2) whose benefits accrue to future customers or generations; and (3) which maintains the value of investment or adds to the City's Physical Plant or is an intangible asset, such as a planning study or software development which can be amortized because its useful life extends beyond the period that expenses were incurred.

**What is a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project?**

A CIP project involves the construction, purchase, or renovation of buildings, parks, streets, or other physical structures. A capital improvement generally has a useful life of five or more years. It also provides one of the following two elements: has a cost of approximately \$50,000 or more or satisfies the functionality of a capital asset. A capital improvement is not a recurring capital outlay item (such as a motor vehicle or a fire engine) or a maintenance expense (such as fixing a leaking roof or painting park benches). Acquisition of equipment is not a capital project unless it is an integral part of the capital project.

Examples of approved CIP projects can be found at the Department of Finance's Web site:

<http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/>

**Capital Project Suggestion Form Instructions**

1. Pages 1 and 2 must be submitted to Candice Chin, Department of Finance, by **9 a.m., Monday, March 20, 2006**. They can be e-mailed, faxed, mailed, or hand delivered, but e-mail is strongly recommended as your suggestion can be acknowledged and processed most quickly if received in electronic form.
2. The e-mail address to submit forms or for inquiries is [candice.chin@seattle.gov](mailto:candice.chin@seattle.gov). Suggestion forms, instructions, and other information are available at:  
[http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/CIP\\_Project\\_Suggestion\\_Form.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/CIP_Project_Suggestion_Form.htm)  
You can download Word versions of the forms, or Candice Chin can email the forms to you upon request.

Mailing Address:  
City of Seattle  
Department of Finance  
PO Box 94747  
Seattle, WA 98124-4747

Physical Address:  
City Hall  
601 Fifth Avenue  
Department of Finance, Floor 6  
Seattle (between James and Cherry  
Streets)

Phone for questions: (206) 233-7014

Fax: (206) 233-0022

3. Only submit pages 1 and 2. Do not include a cover letter or letters of endorsement. However, maps, drawings, or pictures will be accepted; again, it is strongly recommended that they be submitted electronically.
4. Staff in the relevant department may contact you to receive information to help estimate project costs or to discuss your proposal.

If you have questions about the suggestion forms or the 2007-2012 CIP process, please contact Candice Chin at 206-233-7014 or [candice.chin@seattle.gov](mailto:candice.chin@seattle.gov). Thank you.

### **Additional Notes:**

- **Project Timing and Constraints:** Submitting a form is a way to suggest a project for consideration, and is in no way a guarantee that a project will be added to the CIP. City departments make recommendations to the Mayor, who makes the executive branch's final CIP recommendations, for adoption or revision by the City Council. Projects that are eventually included in a CIP typically represent years of design, engineering, planning, and evaluation. Therefore, a suggested project is less likely to lead to its immediate adoption in that year's CIP than it is to engender staff work that will help it be considered for a future year's CIP.
- **Communication:** Citizens are encouraged to contact the relevant City department and district council to discuss their idea and its costs and feasibility.
  - **Departmental Staff:** As early as possible before filling out and submitting a CIP project suggestion form, it is desirable to make contact with relevant City department staff, who can be a useful source of background. For example, it may be that the project you have in mind already has been or is being considered in the CIP process. Departmental staff can be a useful source of information on past consideration of a project, and if a project has not previously been considered, they can provide advice in fashioning a feasible proposal. Please see Attachment A or the web link of [http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/docs/Attachment\\_A\\_Department\\_Contacts.doc](http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/docs/Attachment_A_Department_Contacts.doc) for a list of contacts designated by each department to answer your questions and to assist you in locating the relevant staff.
  - **District Council:** The City is geographically divided into 13 district councils, each of which is composed of the district's neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce, and other community organizations. You are required to list your district council on the suggestion form; if you do not know it, consult the Department of Neighborhoods' Web site at <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoodcouncil/boundaries.htm> or contact Wendy Watson at 684-0464. Your district council may be a source of advice and possible support for your proposal, and will be of greatest assistance if you contact it about your project well before the March deadline.

## **Timeline for Public Involvement in the CIP**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
January 2006	The Department of Finance (DOF) provides the capital projects suggestion form, instructions, deadlines, and a list of City contacts on its Web site: <a href="http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/">http://www.seattle.gov/financedepartment/</a> . These documents will also be available at neighborhood service centers and public libraries.
March 2006	Capital project suggestion forms are due to Department of Finance (DOF) by <b>9 a.m. 3/20/06</b> . By the end of March, DOF and Department of Neighborhoods (DON) confirms the neighborhood district boundaries for the proposals. DOF, serving as the central clearing house, distributes the suggestion forms to appropriate City departments and district councils.
April 2006	By <b>4/14/06</b> , relevant departments send comments on proposals to Department of Finance (DOF). By the end of the month, DOF provides a compilation of feedback to originators of requests, district councils, and via the DOF Web site.
June 2006	By <b>6/1/06</b> , district councils provide compiled recommendations to Department of Finance (DOF) for consideration in the development of the 2007-2012 Proposed CIP.
July 2006	2007-2012 Proposed CIP submittals from departments are due to Department of Finance
August 2006	Department of Finance makes recommendations to the Mayor on the 2007-2012 Proposed CIP and 2007-08 Proposed Budget
September 2006	Proposed CIP and Budget is produced and the Mayor submits it to the City Council. Department of Finance posts the proposed CIP and Budget on its Web site.
Early October 2006	After the Mayor submits his recommended budget to the City Council, the, Department of Finance (DOF) provides to district councils a response to the comments they made on potential CIP projects.
October – November 2006	City Council reviews Proposed CIP and Budget. Council adopts 2007-2012 CIP and 2007-08 Budget in late November.
December 2006	By mid-December, after final City Council action on the budget, Department of Finance will notify each respective district council of any departures within their district boundaries from the Mayor's CIP recommendations that the City Council made in adopting the final CIP.