

Submitter: Sarah Merten
On Behalf Of: City of St. Paul
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or SB5701
Topic:

Good afternoon,

My name is Sarah Merten, and I serve as the City Administrator for the City of St. Paul home of the St. Paul Rodeo. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today regarding the proposed replacement of our deteriorating water main line.

This water main is a critical piece of our city's infrastructure. It was installed decades ago and has reached the end of its useful life. Over the past several years, we have seen an increase in breaks, emergency repairs, and service disruptions. Each repair is costly, disruptive to residents and our school district, and ultimately a temporary fix to a long-term problem.

Replacing this water main now is a proactive investment in reliability, safety, and fiscal responsibility. If we delay, the risks grow: major water breaks, road damage, service interruptions for homes, schools, and businesses, and significantly higher emergency repair costs. Planned replacement allows us to control the timeline, minimize disruptions, and coordinate with other infrastructure work. Saving taxpayer dollars in the long run.

Clean, reliable water is not optional. It is fundamental to public health, future housing development, economic development, and the overall quality of life in St. Paul. This project will ensure continued water service reliability, reduce future maintenance costs, and protect both public and private property.

We are requesting funding for this project so we can address the problem before it becomes a crisis. This is about protecting our small town of 434 residents, supporting our local economy, ensuring the potential for future housing, and responsibly maintaining the infrastructure entrusted to us.

I respectfully ask for your support of this funding request and your commitment to investing in St. Paul's future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.