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~ Package includes \$965 million in general obligation bonding; \$1.09 billion total ~

Saint Paul – Governor Tim Pawlenty today released his bonding proposal for the 2008 legislative session, putting a strong focus on transportation infrastructure and statewide investment priorities that will yield significant long-term benefits.

The proposal calls for \$965 million in general obligation bonding, with a total of \$1.09 billion when user-financed bonds, trunk highway bonds, and cash amounts are included.

“Positioning Minnesota for future success means making smart decisions about where we should invest,” said Governor Pawlenty. “This proposal is fiscally responsible and it sets key priorities such as replacing more than 600 local bridges.”

Transportation accounts for the largest portion of the bonding bill – nearly 40 percent or \$416 million. Of that, \$225 million will be dedicated to local bridges and \$30 million to local roads. The local bridge amount is more than four times larger than the amount in any other bonding bill in state history.

The package also funds a number of priorities within the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Universities and Colleges systems. Funding is also included for improvements to the Minneapolis Veterans Home, infrastructure related to the Minnesota Steel facility on the Iron Range and the Governor’s Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development (SEED) initiative.

Transportation – \$416 million (38.3% of total)

“This bonding bill has a higher level of investment in transportation than any bonding bill in the history of our state. This strategic focus is an important step in modernizing roads and bridges across Minnesota,” Governor Pawlenty said.

Funding proposals from the Governor include:

- \$225 million for local bridges; this increased funding will provide the state portion of funding to replace approximately 600-700 bridges, likely including:
 - o Lowry Avenue bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, \$24 million
 - o County State Aid Highway 1 over the Big Fork River in Koochiching County, \$3 million
 - o County State Aid Highway 17 over the Minnesota River in Redwood County, \$1.5 million
 - o St. Anthony Parkway over the BNSF & CP Railroad in Minneapolis, \$6.9 million
 - o County State Aid Highway 2 over the Zumbro River in Wabasha County, \$2.8 million
 - o Wheelock Street over the CP Railroad and Trout Brook in St. Paul, \$2.5 million
 - o Thompson Bridge over the Red River in Polk County, \$7 million shared with North Dakota
- \$30 million for local roads.
- \$55 million for Minnesota’s share of the Urban Partnership Agreement awarded by the federal government. The state must pass this request to receive \$133.3 million in federal funds for a project that will add a MnPASS-type congestion pricing lane to I-35W south of downtown Minneapolis, rebuild two avenues in Minneapolis for better transit use and add
- \$70 million to advance the Central Corridor light rail project.
- \$24 million in Trunk Highway bonding for construction of a new district headquarters in Mankato to improve highway construction and maintenance.
- \$8.6 million in Trunk Highway bonding for construction of a new truck station in Chaska.
- \$2 million in Trunk Highway bonding for predesign work for the Rochester Truck Station and the Maple Grove Truck Station.
- \$2 million for property acquisition for the St. Cloud Regional Airport.

Higher Education – \$258 million (23.7% of total)

"Investment in our education system is important to improving Minnesota's competitiveness," Governor Pawlenty said. Funding includes:

- \$129 million for the University of Minnesota.
 - o \$40 million for higher education asset preservation and replacement (HEAPR) to maintain university facilities throughout the state.
 - o \$48 million for a new science classroom and student services center on the Minneapolis campus at the Washington Avenue bridgehead.
 - o \$26 million to renovate historic Folwell Hall.
 - o \$10 million for a Civil Engineering Addition on the Duluth campus.
 - o \$5 million to renovate the Community Services Building on the Morris campus
- \$129 million for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.
 - o \$40 million for higher education asset preservation and replacement (HEAPR), to maintain MnSCU facilities across the state.
 - o \$25 million to complete the final phase of a major addition to the Trafton Science Center at Minnesota State University Mankato.
 - o \$15 million to complete the final phase of a major addition and renovation to the Brown Hall Science Center at St. Cloud State University.
 - o \$14 million to complete a construction trades and transportation academy at St. Paul College.
 - o \$9 million to construct an addition to the Sattgast Science Building at Bemidji State University.
 - o \$20 million for classroom renovations at Normandale Community College and Inver Hills Community College.
 - o \$6 million to renovate small science labs at 11 MnSCU campuses around the state.

The University of Minnesota will invest an additional \$45 million as its share of the proposed building projects. MnSCU would be responsible for \$29 million for its share of the projects.

Environment and Outdoors – \$175 million (16% of total)

"Protecting and improving Minnesota's natural resources continues to be one of our top priorities," Governor Pawlenty said. "This package builds on our solid foundation in the area of conservation and the environment."

Governor Pawlenty noted that he supports use of bonding authority through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to acquire and develop land for the proposed state park on Lake Vermilion, but did not include a specific dollar amount for that project in his bonding plan as the purchase price is still being negotiated.

Funding includes:

- \$46 million for loans and grants for drinking water and wastewater treatment facility improvements.
- \$15 million to cleanup a contaminated landfill in Washington County. 3M is providing up to \$8 million for cleanup of the site.
- \$30 million for wetland preservation activities.
- \$10 million to accelerate strategic acquisition of new Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), improve WMA facilities and restore habitat on newly acquired lands.
- \$9 million for the Forest Legacy Project to acquire conservation easements on private forestlands, primarily in northern Minnesota.
- \$6 million to improve and expand the Metropolitan Regional Park system.
- \$1 million for shoreline habitat acquisition.

- \$3 million for state forest land reforestation.
- \$3 million for native prairie conservation and protection.
- \$1 million for rehabilitation of fish hatchery facilities to maintain efficient production of fish stock.
- \$3 million for repair and renovation of state trails.
- \$10 million to acquire, develop and renovate state parks and recreation areas.
- \$2 million to preserve DNR-owned facilities statewide.

Economic Development – \$96 million (8.9% of total)

Funding proposals from the Governor include:

- \$50 million for the Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development (SEED) initiative, including:
 - o \$20 million for the Redevelopment Grant program, which provides assistance in redeveloping commercial, industrial and residential sites.
 - o \$20 million for Greater Minnesota Business Development infrastructure.
 - o \$10 million for Bioscience Business Development infrastructure.
- \$30 million for infrastructure related to the Minnesota Steel plant including:
 - o \$6.2 million in general obligation bonding.
 - o \$14.9 million in previously appropriated funds from the 21st Century Minerals Fund
 - o \$8.9 million from Iron Range Resources funding.
- \$40 million for the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

State Building Asset Preservation – \$68 million (6.3% of total)

Funding includes:

- \$18.2 million in Trunk Highway Bonding to repair the exterior of the Minnesota Department of Transportation Building in the Capitol Complex.
- \$15.4 million for State Capitol asset preservation and design and planning for the full restoration of the building.
- \$9.5 million for Department of Human Services facilities.
- \$7.5 million for the Minnesota Zoo.
- \$4 million for the Perpich Center for the Arts and the state academies for the deaf and blind
- \$5 million for the Minnesota Historical Society.
- \$5.3 million for emergency repairs and unanticipated hazardous material abatement and property acquisition.

Veterans and Military – \$50 million (4.6% of total)

Funding proposals include:

- \$35 million for improvements at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, including demolition of Building #9, construction of a new 100-bed nursing facility, and heating and air conditioning work.
- \$7 million for asset preservation at Minnesota Veterans Homes facilities statewide.

- \$8 million for asset preservation, life safety and improvements at military facilities, including armories and training/community centers, statewide.

Public Safety and Corrections – \$41 million (3.8% of total)

Funding proposals include:

- \$16 million for continuation of an expansion at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Faribault, including construction of an intake security center building.
- \$16 million for asset preservation at correctional facilities statewide.
- \$5 million for design and construction of an emergency management training center at Camp Ripley.
- \$4 million toward development of a public safety training facility in Olmsted County.
- \$500,000 for predesign of a new State Emergency Operations Center to meet requirements set by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for emergency operations centers.

For full details on the bill visit www.finance.state.mn.us.