

**THE PEOPLES ECONOMY PARTY PROPOSAL FOR A
COMPREHENSIVE STREET AND SEWER PLAN FOR THE
VILLAGE OF BROOKFIELD**

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Submitted for discussion by:

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Peoples Economy Party Candidates for Village Trustee

We believe that the #1 priority of the Village Board of Brookfield should be to create a long-term, comprehensive plan to repair and replace the streets and sewers under its control within the Village. Additionally a systematic plan for maintenance of the streets and sewers that are repaired or replaced must be a component of this plan.

Such a comprehensive plan must include a list of the necessary projects, in order of priority, and specify the scope of the necessary work. Once a priority list of projects has been established, an aggressive, but realistic plan to finance the projects must be enacted.

Based on these broad ideas, we offer the following **Proposal for a Comprehensive Street and Sewer Plan** for discussion. In offering this plan, we are agreeing to engage in open and honest discussion with any Village official or resident. We expect, and that discussion on this **Proposal** will lead to changes and even modifications of the proposed plan.

THE PEOPLES ECONOMY PARTY PROPOSAL TO:

“BUILD A NEW BROOKFIELD”

A proposed plan of action:

PHASE ONE: CREATION OF A LIST OF PLANNED STREET AND SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

Because it is necessary to know what work needs to be done on the streets and sewers, the new Village Board seated in April of 2003 should immediately adopt a *List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements*. We believe that the 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan that was prepared by Hancock Engineering in January 2003, as it relates to streets and sewers is an excellent starting point. When we refer to street and sewer improvements, we also mean to include any water main improvements that are necessary and accessible during street repairs or replacement. We suggest that all capital projects that are not specifically street and sewer repair or replacement projects be placed somewhere other than the *List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements*. We acknowledge there are other capital improvements needed in the Village, but for the sake of efficiency and clarity, we think they should be addressed separately from the streets and sewers.

The *List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements* should attempt to record, in order of priority, all necessary repairs to and replacement of streets and sewers that are the responsibility of the Village of Brookfield. The proposed projects should be placed into 3 categories:

1. Street and sewer repair/replacement projects that may be accomplished with matching Federal, State, or County Funds. (Note that typically such matching funds are not available for strictly residential streets, but are usually awarded for improvement to larger collector routes, such as Maple Ave., Ogden Ave., Grand Blvd., etc.)
2. Street and Sewer Repair/ Replacement projects that would require full funding by the Village of Brookfield. (This would encompass the majority of the residential streets under the Village’s control.)

3. Long Term Pavement Maintenance Projects to ensure the systematic maintenance of newly repaired or replaced streets and sewers.

The Village Board should formally adopt this List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements after receiving input from elected officials, professional staff and interested residents.

(Anticipated completion of Phase One – June 1, 2003)

PHASE TWO: ESTABLISHMENT OF A FINANCIAL STRUCTURE FOR THE PLANNED STREET AND SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

Once the List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements has been adopted by the Village Board, a long-term financial plan to subsidize the improvements must be established. We believe that this financial plan must be aggressive, in light of the need to make the improvements as soon as possible, yet at the same time realistic, in that it must be able to be followed even in times of economic fluctuations. Therefore, we suggest only existing funds and historically stable revenue sources be used to determine how much the Village can dedicate to these improvements in any given year. Positive economic circumstances could then allow the Village to accelerate the improvements beyond the original plan.

For simplicity sake, we recommend the Village establish:

“THE BUILD A NEW BROOKFIELD FUND” to be used to finance the List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements.

The new Village Board should immediately establish by ordinance the “Build a New Brookfield Fund.” Within this fund, 4 distinct accounts should be set up:

AN INFRASTRUCUTE ESCROW ACCOUNT: This account would be used to hold the Village of Brookfield’s required share of specific anticipated street and sewer projects that would be funded by matching Federal, State, or County programs. Additionally, this account would receive any straight grants (no Village matching required) that are only allowed to

be used on certain eligible projects, such as the repair or replacement of larger volume collector streets.

AN INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ACCOUNT:

This account would be used to accumulate funds to repay the bonds that must be issued to fund residential street and sewer repair and replacement.

A LONG-TERM MAINTENEANCE ACCOUNT:

to be used to fund systematic maintenance over the anticipated life expectancy of newly repaired streets and sewers.

AN EMERGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT ACCOUNT:

to fund unanticipated projects beyond regular maintenance as they become necessary.

We recommend that the Fund be established by ordinance, and that said ordinance require that certain existing assets and specific revenue sources be directly deposited into the Fund. Further, the ordinance should expressly restrict the use of money from the “Build a New Brookfield Fund” to projects on the *List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements*. This system of funding will help ensure that future administrations will be bound to keep street and sewer improvements as a priority. There should be no discretion for the Village Board to use these accumulated funds for any other purpose or to borrow against the funds. This money must be used only for the List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements for this plan to succeed.

(Anticipated Completion of Phase Two – June 1, 2003)

PHASE THREE: DEDICATING VILLAGE FUNDS AND REVNUES TO THE “BUILD A NEW BROOKFIELD FUND”

Once the previously noted accounts have been established, the new Village Board must allocate funds currently on hand (*current assets*) that can be specifically and exclusively dedicated to the “Build a New Brookfield Fund.” These existing dollar amounts should be allocated to the four

accounts based on board discussion and long-term finance projections for the Village.

Next, the new Village Board should identify the specific revenue sources (*existing revenue streams*) that must be directly deposited into the specific accounts of the “Build a New Brookfield Fund.” The existing revenue streams chosen to fund these accounts should be specific, historically stable revenues that are not subject to substantial fluctuations. The success of the funding plan is contingent upon making accurate estimates as to what money is available for these purposes. Some suggested, existing revenue streams that can be allocated to the “Build a New Brookfield Fund” include specific percentages of:

1. Water bill revenue,
2. The Village’s share of the Annual Property Tax Levy,
3. The Village’s share of sales tax revenue, and
4. The Village’s share of the State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax.

The allocation of the current assets and existing revenue streams to the four accounts should be a policy decision made by the new Village Board after discussion, public input, and professional advice.

We suggest that the **Infrastructure Escrow Account** be fully funded first. This should be a priority because if the Village’s share is not on hand when matching Federal, State or County Dollars are available; we risk losing this valuable resource. Often these matching grants cover as much as 80 % of projects. For this reason, it seems like a wise investment strategy to fully fund the Village’s share of any anticipated projects that require a Village matching contribution.

Additionally, the **Emergency Infrastructure Project Account** should have sufficient funding based on historical needs for unplanned repairs. In other words, the Village should attempt to budget a dollar amount to cover emergency repairs based on past experiences in the Village.

The funding level for the **Long-Term Maintenance Account** should be based on engineering estimates for a cyclical program to protect our investment in our newly repaired streets and sewers.

Finally, the **Infrastructure Repair and Replacement Account** should be the depository for every other existing dollar that can be used to pay for

streets and sewers. The Village's ability to issue bonds to pay for the necessary street and sewer replacement each year will be a function of what is in this account. Therefore, the pace of street and sewer repair/replacement will be based on how much the Village Board can dedicate to this account while not jeopardizing other essential services.

(Anticipated completion date of Phase 3 – July 31, 2003)

PHASE FOUR: ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE THE NECESSARY STREET AND SEWER PROJECTS.

The Village should sell the maximum amount of bonds annually that can be paid back with existing funds and specific revenue streams in the Infrastructure Repair/Replacement Account. Prior to each construction season, it should be determined by the board what amount of new bonds could be sold to complete projects on the *List of Planned Street and Sewer Improvements*. It is important that the board be aggressive in this determination, but not exceed the amounts that can definitely be paid back based on current amounts in the Fund.

A quarterly review of the bonding capacity of the Village and the funding level of the various accounts in the "Build a New Brookfield Fund" should be done.

Additionally, the interest rates on the various outstanding bonds should be reviewed on a regular basis to look for opportunities to refinance them at a lower rate. Any savings realized as a result of refinancing or lower interest rates should be deposited right back into the "Build a New Brookfield Fund."

(Anticipated completion of Phase Four – August 31, 2003, and ongoing after that)

PHASE FIVE: ACCEL RATING THE PACE OF STREET AND SEWER REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

The Village of Brookfield should conduct regular reviews of its current financial status as opposed to annual budget meetings. These quarterly reviews should be held in order to determine what additional means could be used to direct more money into the "Build a New Brookfield Fund."

The three most obvious ways to accelerate the improvements are to increase revenues, reduce expenses, and restructure debt.

We make the following suggestions, in each of these areas:

Increase Revenues:

- Sales tax revenue could be increased through the addition of new businesses and providing assistance to existing businesses. The new Village board should:
 - Work with Chamber of Commerce or other business organizations to hire an economic development professional to attract new businesses and aid existing ones.
 - Offer incentives to existing businesses to expand and improve (e.g. Façade Improvement Programs.)
 - Develop and implement a “Buy in Brookfield Campaign” to increase sales tax revenue.
- Reexamine the Village’s fee and licensing structure to determine what, if any, increases are justified.

Reduce Expenses:

- Consider a hiring freeze of non-emergency personnel. New police and fire personnel should be hired per the Police and Fire referendum, but we suggest that no new Village positions be created without board action.
- Conduct a review of what community benefit events are held and determine which if any should be scaled back or eliminated.
- Require that contract bidding procedures be strictly adhered to, in order to ensure the Village spends efficiently.
- Review and restrict use of Village vehicles and cell phones, etc.

Debt Restructuring:

- Establish a committee of elected officials and professional staff to conduct a regular review of existing outstanding debt and new financing options to ensure the village is receiving the best rates possible.

(Anticipated Completion of Phase Five – Ongoing)

CONCLUSION

We acknowledge that this Proposal does not provide all the answers. We offer it as a suggested Action Plan and a beginning point for discussion. It is our opinion that this Proposal provides an organizational structure that can be followed by the next Village administration and all subsequent administrations. It is recommend that many of the principles of the plan be enacted as ordinances. We believe this will be necessary for the plan to work. If there are ordinances that codify these elements, future administrations will either have to follow the guidelines or change the laws. This ensures future accountability.

The current situation did not happen overnight and it will not be fixed overnight. However, with a long-term plan and a commitment by elected officials to put aside past political issues and make street and sewer repairs the # 1 Priority, we can “BUILD A NEW BROOKFIELD.”

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