



## CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK

1707 ST. JOHNS AVENUE  
HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS 60035  
(847) 432-0800

May 6, 2010

Dear Selection Committee:

The City of Highland Park is pleased to submit the Sewer Public Improvements Consortium for consideration of the Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award.

Highland Park is nestled along nearly five miles of Lake Michigan and understands the need to protect it. Lake Michigan is one of three drainage areas for stormwater and therefore it is extremely important to the City to have effective stormwater management systems. The purpose of the Sewer Public Improvements Consortium is to utilize the resources of four communities located in Lake County to increase public health and quality of life by working together in upgrading stormwater management systems. The Consortium uses economies of scale to reduce costs, which allows the communities to line and clean sanitary sewer mains, which in turn keeps contaminated stormwater from draining into Lake Michigan.

If the Sewer Public Improvements Consortium were to receive the \$5,000 grant award, it would utilize it to improve the stormwater sewers. To achieve improved sanitary systems, the grant money would be used to line sewers with impermeable material, provide point repairs for broken or collapsed sections of sewers, and initiate systemic upgrades to stormwater sewers.

In conclusion, please note the information discussed herein about the Consortium as you consider candidates for the Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award. If you should have additional questions, please feel free to contact me at (847) 926-1030 / [rhelm@cityhpil.com](mailto:rhelm@cityhpil.com)

Sincerely,

Renee Helm  
Administrative Intern  
City of Highland Park  
1707 St. Johns Ave  
Highland Park, IL 60035



## **City of Highland Park, Illinois – Sewer Public Improvements Consortium**

### **Project Goals:**

The purpose of the Sewer Public Improvements Consortium is to utilize the resources of four communities located in Lake County to increase public health and quality of life by working together in upgrading stormwater management systems. Stormwater management is extremely important to the City of Highland Park because of its unique drainage system. Currently, stormwater can either make its way through to two of three “forks” of the North Branch of the Chicago River: the Middle Fork and East Fork, or into Lake Michigan. Both the Chicago River and Lake Michigan are valuable regional assets—both host a variety of plant and animal species and are used for a number of recreational activities. Lake Michigan also serves as a primary source of drinking water for millions of people in the Chicago metropolitan area, including Highland Park. If a stormwater system goes above capacity, the excess water is diverted into one of the three drainage areas or local collector sewers, which has the potential to overload regional wastewater treatment facilities and can cause damage to private properties through basement sanitary backups and sanitary sewer overflows. The Consortium seeks to eliminate the infiltration of stormwater into the three drainage areas or the sanitary sewer system.

### **Project Description:**

In 2004, the City of Highland Park, the City of Highwood, the Village of Lake Bluff and the City of Lake Forest joined together to create the Sewer Public Improvements Consortium to address public health issues and improve the quality of life for residents. The Consortium uses economies of scale to reduce costs, which allows the communities to line and clean sanitary sewer mains. The project is funded through the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program for sanitary and storm sewer systems. To achieve improved sanitary systems, the grant money is used to line sewers with impermeable material, provide point repairs for broken or collapsed sections of sewers, and initiate systemic upgrades to stormwater sewers.

### **Project Results:**

The Consortium used \$850,000 of federal funding during two fiscal years to facilitate \$1.5 million worth of improvements for Consortium communities. Amongst the four participating communities, there was a reduction of stormwater infiltration and sanitary back-ups into private property.