

Civic center, treatment center included in Dayton BONDING PLANS



From left, Jonathan Zierdt, David Schooff and Shirley Piepho listen as Mankato City Manager Pat Hentges addresses members of the Senate Bonding Committee Tuesday at MSU.

Photos by John Cross

Governor touts projects to create jobs for Minnesotans

CLINICAL SCIENCES PROPOSAL MISSES: MSU request for \$2.1 million in design money appears to have fallen just short

By Mark Fischenich
mfischenich@mankatofreepress.com

Requested state funding for expansion of Mankato's civic center was included in its entirety in a statewide construction plan proposed by Gov. Mark Dayton Tuesday. So was funding for a major redesign of the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center.

Numerous other local projects — including planning and design money for a clinical sciences building at Minnesota State University and a Sibley County rail rehabilitation project — were left out of the Democratic governor's \$750 million bonding proposal.

When federal and local match-



Senate Majority Leader and Bonding Committee Chair Sen. Dave Senjem, R-Rochester (center), Sen. Doug Magnus, R-Slayton (right), and Julian Plamann, committee administrator, listen to bonding proposals at MSU.

ing funds are included, Dayton said his plan would spur nearly \$1.5 billion in construction and create as many as 21,700 jobs.

"This bill is our chance to put thousands of Minnesotans back to work by investing in important projects throughout our state," Dayton said, calling for lawmakers to pass the bonding bill in the first month of the 2012 legislative session, which begins Jan. 24.

Leaders of the Republican-controlled Legislature offered mixed

reactions to the Dayton plan, with Senate Majority Leader Dave Senjem questioning whether job-creation should be the focus of the bill and House Speaker Kurt Zellers calling for a focus on roads and bridges rather than "local pet projects."

Civic center and arena projects likely fall into Zellers definition of "local pet projects," but Senjem, a Rochester Republican, has a \$35 million request from his home community for expansion of the

Mayo Civic Center. Dayton supports that funding, along with the requested \$14.5 million for Mankato's \$31 million civic center expansion and upgrade, and a \$10.1 million contribution to a similar civic center expansion in St. Cloud.

The \$40 million Dayton is proposing for the Minnesota Security Hospital at St. Peter's Regional Treatment Center is the

Please see BONDING, Page A2

BONDING: Titloe dam, track repair excluded

Continued from Page A1

second largest individual project in the governor's bill, trailing only the \$54 million allocation for a power plant to provide steam and electricity for the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis campus.

The St. Peter project is the top priority of the Department of Human Services and would involve new construction and renovation of facilities to consoli-

date Minnesota Security Hospital operations on the treatment center's upper campus — where the security hospital is located.

The department's second priority is also focused on the Regional Treatment Center — \$1.7 million to plan and design remodeling of existing buildings on the center's lower campus to create space for 200 additional beds for the Minnesota Sex Offender Program. Dayton's plan

includes that design funding as well, which would need to be followed up with an additional \$22 million in estimated construction funding in future years.

The \$2.1 million in requested design money for a \$34 million clinical sciences building at MSU appeared to just miss Dayton's list. The governor followed the priority list submitted by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and

Universities system, including funding for the top 11 items on the MnSCU list.

He also included the No. 13 item (science, technology, engineering and math labs on nine campuses). MSU's design funding was No. 14 of 26 items on the MnSCU list.

Also excluded from Dayton's bill was funding for Gaylord's Lake Titloe dam; for track repair on the Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority line, which

serves Sibley County; sewer improvement projects for Vernon Center and Waldorf, and a sewage collection system for homes along a trio of lakes in northeastern Blue Earth County.

Area lawmakers are expected to push for inclusion of those projects in bills passed later this winter by the House and Senate. Once those bills pass, a final compromise bill will need to be negotiated with Dayton.