

## **City considers more projects**

*By Scott Aust, Journal Staff Writer*

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RAPID CITY — So far, 73 proposals have been made requesting more than \$150 million from Rapid City's Economic Development and Civic Improvements fund, more commonly known as the Vision 2012 fund.

The Rapid City Council established three,

nine-member citizens' committees last year to hear proposals in three categories: municipal infrastructure, economic development and civic improvements.

The committees held hearings in December and January. The final two hearings are set for Tuesday and Thursday, Feb. 22 and 24.

About \$37 million could be available to pay for projects in a new five-year plan. The city council decided last year to designate half the money toward municipal infrastructure, and 25 percent each to civic improvements and economic development projects.

Municipal infrastructure includes construction or reconstruction of streets, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water and drainage facilities, and municipal buildings.

Civic improvement projects are defined as facilities or programs that add to the community's quality of life. Projects must have a long-term funding source for operation and maintenance.

Economic development funds must be dedicated to specific economic development projects or loaned to specific projects. Any money loaned for economic development projects must be repaid to the city under terms and conditions determined by the city, and the recipient of the loan must report at least quarterly to the council about construction and repayment progress.

Revenue for the 2012 fund comes from a half-cent sales tax that raises about \$7.5 million each year.

Next month, the committees will prioritize and filter projects using a scoring process, making sure projects fit guidelines for each category spelled out by ordinance. The goal is to deliver recommendations to the city council no later than April 4. The report will list each project and its estimated cost.

After hearing recommendations, the council will adopt a five-year plan. The council could accept, reject or amend recommendations.

A binder containing copies of all proposals is available in the caucus room at the City/School Administration Center. Inquire at the mayor's office on the second floor.