

**CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO
WASTEWATER SYSTEM**

**Financial Statements
Years Ended December 31, 2003 and 2002
With Independent Auditors' Report**



**Auditor of State
Betty Montgomery**

City Council
City of Hamilton!-Wastewater System

We have reviewed the Independent Auditor's Report of the City of Hamilton!-Wastewater System, Butler County, prepared by Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co., for the audit period January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003. Based upon this review, we have accepted these reports in lieu of the audit required by Section 117.11, Revised Code. The Auditor of State did not audit the accompanying financial statements and, accordingly, we are unable to express, and do not express an opinion on them.

Our review was made in reference to the applicable sections of legislative criteria, as reflected by the Ohio Constitution, and the Revised Code, policies, procedures and guidelines of the Auditor of State, regulations and grant requirements. The City of Hamilton!-Wastewater System is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty Montgomery".

BETTY MONTGOMERY
Auditor of State

August 17, 2004

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CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO – WASTEWATER SYSTEM

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Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Honorable City Council
City of Hamilton! Ohio

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the City of Hamilton! Ohio - Wastewater System, an enterprise fund of the City of Hamilton! Ohio as of and for the years ended December 31, 2003 and 2002, as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of the City of Hamilton!'s management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As discussed in Note 1, the financial statements present only the Wastewater System and do not purport to, and do not, present fairly the financial position of the City of Hamilton! Ohio as of December 31, 2003 and 2002, and the changes in its financial position and cash flows, where applicable, for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the City of Hamilton! Ohio - Wastewater System as of December 31, 2003 and 2002 and the changes in financial position and cash flows thereof for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.

Cincinnati, Ohio
June 14, 2004

CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO – WASTEWATER SYSTEM
STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS
DECEMBER 31, 2003 AND 2002

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
ASSETS		
Current assets:		
Cash and investments	\$ 2,252,678	12,183,047
Accounts receivable (less allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$1,096,576 and \$965,241, respectively)	1,516,014	1,340,549
Interest receivable	38,188	100,628
Due from other funds	5,000	5,000
Inventory of supplies at cost	1,203	1,055
Prepaid expenses	<u>103,108</u>	<u>96,392</u>
Total current assets	<u>3,916,191</u>	<u>13,726,671</u>
Restricted assets:		
Cash and investments	<u>8,294,607</u>	<u>4,736,249</u>
Bond issuance costs	<u>249,827</u>	<u>270,749</u>
Capital assets:		
Property, plant and equipment	86,292,577	85,229,892
Construction in progress	1,712,424	1,858,720
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(39,104,402)</u>	<u>(36,959,411)</u>
Total capital assets	<u>48,900,599</u>	<u>50,129,201</u>
Total assets	\$ <u>61,361,224</u>	<u>68,862,870</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 468,372	399,271
Accrued wages and benefits	91,979	97,602
Intergovernmental payable	35,231	27,287
Accrued interest payable	342,502	653,966
Ohio Water Development Authority loans payable - current portion	-	484,944
General obligation anticipation notes payable	2,750,000	-
Revenue bonds payable - current portion	<u>865,000</u>	<u>830,000</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>4,553,084</u>	<u>2,493,070</u>
Non-current liabilities:		
Customer deposits payable	87,625	79,929
Compensated absences payable	748,453	696,103
Ohio Water Development Authority loans payable	-	7,227,504
Revenue bonds payable (net of unamortized discounts)	<u>26,322,822</u>	<u>27,173,651</u>
Total noncurrent liabilities	<u>27,158,900</u>	<u>35,177,187</u>
Total liabilities	<u>31,711,984</u>	<u>37,670,257</u>
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	21,712,777	22,125,550
Unrestricted	<u>7,936,463</u>	<u>9,067,063</u>
Total net assets	\$ <u>29,649,240</u>	<u>31,192,613</u>

See notes to financial statements.

CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO - WASTEWATER FUND
STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2003 AND 2002

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Operating revenues:		
Charges for services	\$ 11,624,362	12,057,899
Other operating revenues	<u>45,802</u>	<u>3,495</u>
Total operating revenues	<u>11,670,164</u>	<u>12,061,394</u>
Operating expenses:		
Personal services	2,375,333	2,222,394
Contractual services	2,056,671	1,761,027
Depreciation	2,312,744	2,265,106
Materials and supplies	13,948	359,264
Other operating expenses	<u>2,686,634</u>	<u>1,979,842</u>
Total operating expenses	<u>9,445,330</u>	<u>8,587,633</u>
Operating income	2,224,834	3,473,761
Non-operating revenues (expenses):		
Investment earnings	90,050	448,578
Loss on disposal of capital assets	(310,553)	(35,010)
Interest and fiscal charges	<u>(3,547,704)</u>	<u>(2,200,817)</u>
Total non-operating revenues (expenses)	<u>(3,768,207)</u>	<u>(1,787,249)</u>
Change in net assets	(1,543,373)	1,686,512
Net assets - beginning of year	<u>31,192,613</u>	<u>29,506,101</u>
Net assets - end of year	\$ <u>29,649,240</u>	<u>31,192,613</u>

See notes to financial statements.

CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO - WASTEWATER SYSTEM
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2003 AND 2002

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Cash received from customers	\$ 11,456,593	12,171,854
Cash paid for employee services and benefits	(2,320,662)	(2,204,488)
Cash paid to suppliers for goods and services	(4,695,016)	(4,425,928)
Other operating revenues	<u>45,802</u>	<u>20,261</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>4,486,717</u>	<u>5,561,699</u>
Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:		
Acquisition and construction of capital assets	(1,394,695)	(2,374,095)
Proceeds from notes	2,750,000	-
Principal paid on OWDA debt	(7,712,448)	-
Principal payment on debt	(830,000)	(1,242,035)
Interest payment on debt	<u>(3,824,075)</u>	<u>(2,192,890)</u>
Net cash used in capital and related financing activities	<u>(11,011,218)</u>	<u>(5,809,020)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Interest from investments	<u>152,490</u>	<u>537,675</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities	<u>152,490</u>	<u>537,675</u>
Net change in cash and investments	(6,372,011)	290,354
Cash and investments at beginning of year	<u>16,919,296</u>	<u>16,628,942</u>
Cash and investments at end of year	\$ <u>10,547,285</u>	<u>16,919,296</u>
Reconciliation of operating income to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Operating income	\$ 2,224,834	3,473,761
Adjustments to reconcile operating income to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	2,312,744	2,265,106
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable	(175,465)	116,808
Inventories	(148)	152
Prepaid expenses	(6,716)	(16,228)
Accrued wages and benefits	(5,623)	16,103
Intergovernmental payables	7,944	14,150
Accounts payable	69,101	(46,685)
Compensated absences payable	52,350	49,990
Customer deposits	7,696	6,106
Due to other funds	<u>-</u>	<u>(317,564)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$ <u>4,486,717</u>	<u>5,561,699</u>

See notes to financial statements.

CITY OF HAMILTON! OHIO – WASTEWATER SYSTEM

Notes to Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2003 and 2002

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Reporting Entity – The City of Hamilton! Ohio – Wastewater System (Wastewater System) is a utility operating as a separate enterprise fund of the City of Hamilton! Ohio (City). The Wastewater System is controlled by and is dependent on the City's executive and legislative branches. Control by or dependence on the City is determined on the basis of outstanding debt secured by revenues or general obligations of the City, obligation of the City to finance any deficits that may occur, or receipt of subsidies from the City.

Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting and Basis of Presentation – The financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as applied to government units. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard-setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of cash flows. The Wastewater System has elected only to apply Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) pronouncements issued on or before November 30, 1989 that do not conflict with or contradict GASB pronouncements.

Operating revenues and expenses generally result from providing services and producing and delivering goods in connection with the Wastewater System's principal ongoing operations. The principal operating revenues are charges to customers for sales and services. Operating expenses include the cost of sales and services, administrative expenses, and depreciation on capital assets. All revenues and expenses not meeting these definitions are reported as non-operating revenues and expenses.

Income Taxes – The Wastewater System, which is owned and operated by the City, is exempt from income taxes since it is a division of a municipality.

Cash and Investments – Certain Wastewater System cash and investments are held in the City Treasury and pooled for investment management purposes. The portion of these pooled funds owned by the Wastewater System is reported as cash and investments. The Wastewater System's investments are stated at fair value. Interest earned on funds invested is distributed on the basis of the relationship of the average monthly balance of all funds, including the Wastewater System.

Inventories – Inventories are stated at the lower of cost or market based on a moving-average cost method.

Capital Assets – Expenditures that increase values or extend the useful life of the respective assets are capitalized while the costs of maintenance and repairs are charged to operating expenses. Interest costs related to the construction of property, plant and equipment are capitalized. Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful life of the various classes of assets. The range of useful lives for computing depreciation is 3 to 75 years.

Bond Discounts and Issuance Costs – Unamortized bond discounts and issuance costs are amortized on the interest method over the term of the related bonds. Amortization of bond discounts was \$14,171 and \$14,513 in 2003 and 2002, respectively. Amortization of issuance costs in 2003 and 2002 amounted to \$20,922 and \$21,410, respectively.

Compensated Absences - The Wastewater System follows the provisions of GASB Statement No. 16, "Accounting for Compensated Absences". Vacation and compensatory time benefits are accrued as a liability as the benefits are earned if the employees' rights to receive compensation are attributable to services already rendered and it is probable that the Wastewater System will compensate the employees for the benefits through paid time off or some other means. Sick leave termination benefits are accrued using the vesting method. The liability includes the employees who are currently eligible to receive termination benefits and those employees for whom it is probable that they will become eligible to receive payment in the future. The amount is based on accumulated sick leave and employees' wage rates at year-end.

Use of Estimates – The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Reclassifications – Certain items from the prior year financial statements have been reclassified to conform to the current year presentation.

2. CASH AND INVESTMENTS

The Wastewater System follows the practice of pooling cash and investments with the City Treasurer except for the cash and investments of certain accounts maintained by trustees. Pooled cash and investments of the Wastewater System totaled \$2,252,678 and \$12,183,047 at December 31, 2003 and 2002, respectively, and consisted of demand deposits, money market funds, U.S. government securities and STAR Ohio.

Star Ohio is an investment pool managed by the State Treasurer's Office, which allows governments within the State to pool their funds for investment purposes. STAR Ohio is not registered with the SEC as an investment company, but does operate in a manner consistent with Rule 2a7 of the Investment Company Act of 1940. Investments in STAR Ohio are valued at STAR Ohio's share price, which is the price the investment could be sold for on December 31, 2003.

Deposits – Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the City's deposits may not be returned to it. The City does not have a custodial risk policy. As of December 31, 2003, nearly 97% of the City's deposits with financial institutions, including the amount of pooled deposits related to the Wastewater System, were exposed to custodial credit risk because they are considered uninsured and uncollateralized. However, the State of Ohio has established by statute a collateral pooling system for financial institutions acting as public depositories. Public depositories must pledge qualified securities with fair values greater than the total amount of all public deposits to be secured by the collateral pool. This pooled collateral covers the Wastewater System's uninsured and uncollateralized deposits.

Investments – The State of Ohio statutes, Wastewater Revenue Bond indentures, and the City Charter authorize the City to invest in obligations of the U.S. Treasury, agencies, instrumentalities, and repurchase agreements. Custodial credit risk in regards to investments is the risk that, in the event of a failure of a counter party, the City will not be able to recover the value of its investments or collateral securities that are in possession of an outside party. The City employs the use of “safekeeping” accounts to hold and maintain custody of its investments as identified within this policy and as means of mitigating this risk.

Interest rate risk is the risk that the City will incur fair value losses arising from rising interest rates. Such risk is mitigated by the investment policy by limiting investments to certain maximum maturities. As a rule, unless specified otherwise within the policy, investments are to have a maximum maturity of five years unless the investment is matched to a specific expenditure. The context of a specific investment purchase must be weighed in proportion to the remainder of the existing investment portfolio and the “prudent investor” rule to attempt to limit such risk.

The City’s pooled investments, as well as the investments held by trustees specifically for the Wastewater System, are invested primarily in U.S. governmental agency securities with an average maximum maturity of 3.07 years and STAR Ohio which has a credit rating of AAAM.

3. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Receivables at December 31, 2003 and 2002 consist of the following:

		<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Earned and unbilled consumer accounts	\$	398,113	403,528
Earned and billed consumer accounts		2,212,867	1,901,483
Other		1,610	779
Less allowance for uncollectible accounts		<u>(1,096,576)</u>	<u>(965,241)</u>
Total	\$	<u>1,516,014</u>	<u>1,340,549</u>

4. RESTRICTED ASSETS

Restricted assets consist of assets whose use has been restricted by bond indenture, City Charter or City Council ordinance for debt service, capital improvements or wastewater rate stabilization. Restrictions and related assets are as follows:

		<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Debt service	\$	542,637	383,351
Construction of capital improvements		-	36,792
Reserve for debt service		2,322,583	2,315,337
Wastewater rate stabilization		<u>5,429,387</u>	<u>2,000,769</u>
Total	\$	<u>8,294,607</u>	<u>4,736,249</u>

5. CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital asset activity for the years ended December 31, 2003 and 2002 was as follows:

		Balance			Balance
		<u>1/1/03</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>	<u>12/31/03</u>
<i>Capital assets not being depreciated:</i>					
Land	\$	6,087,501	-	-	6,087,501
Construction in progress		<u>1,858,720</u>	<u>753,295</u>	<u>(899,591)</u>	<u>1,712,424</u>
Subtotal		<u>7,946,221</u>	<u>753,295</u>	<u>(899,591)</u>	<u>7,799,925</u>
<i>Capital assets being depreciated:</i>					
Buildings and improvements		54,174,781	755,335	(71,067)	54,859,049
Machinery and equipment		<u>24,967,610</u>	<u>785,770</u>	<u>(407,353)</u>	<u>25,346,027</u>
Subtotal		<u>79,142,391</u>	<u>1,541,105</u>	<u>(478,420)</u>	<u>80,205,076</u>
Totals at historical cost		<u>87,088,612</u>	<u>2,294,400</u>	<u>(1,378,011)</u>	<u>88,005,001</u>
Less accumulated depreciation:					
Buildings and improvements		28,856,850	729,582	(71,607)	29,514,825
Machinery and equipment		<u>8,102,561</u>	<u>1,583,162</u>	<u>(96,146)</u>	<u>9,589,577</u>
Total accumulated depreciation		<u>36,959,411</u>	<u>2,312,744</u>	<u>(167,753)</u>	<u>39,104,402</u>
Capital assets, net	\$	<u>50,129,201</u>	<u>(18,344)</u>	<u>(1,210,258)</u>	<u>48,900,599</u>
		Balance			Balance
		<u>1/1/02</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>	<u>12/31/02</u>
<i>Capital assets not being depreciated:</i>					
Land	\$	6,080,342	7,159	-	6,087,501
Construction in progress		<u>812,938</u>	<u>1,046,849</u>	<u>(1,067)</u>	<u>1,858,720</u>
Subtotal		<u>6,893,280</u>	<u>1,054,008</u>	<u>(1,067)</u>	<u>7,946,221</u>
<i>Capital assets being depreciated:</i>					
Buildings and improvements		53,071,694	1,161,113	(58,026)	54,174,781
Machinery and equipment		<u>24,875,067</u>	<u>135,038</u>	<u>(42,495)</u>	<u>24,967,610</u>
Subtotal		<u>77,946,761</u>	<u>1,296,151</u>	<u>(100,521)</u>	<u>79,142,391</u>
Totals at historical cost		<u>84,840,041</u>	<u>2,350,159</u>	<u>(101,588)</u>	<u>87,088,612</u>
Less accumulated depreciation:					
Buildings and improvements		27,072,633	1,784,217	-	28,856,850
Machinery and equipment		<u>7,679,471</u>	<u>480,889</u>	<u>(57,799)</u>	<u>8,102,561</u>
Total accumulated depreciation		<u>34,752,104</u>	<u>2,265,106</u>	<u>(57,799)</u>	<u>36,959,411</u>
Capital assets, net	\$	<u>50,087,937</u>	<u>85,053</u>	<u>(43,789)</u>	<u>50,129,201</u>

6. BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES

During 2003, the City issued \$2,750,000 of bond anticipation notes that were outstanding as of December 31, 2003 and consisted of \$1,550,000 issued in January 2003 and \$1,200,000 issued in June 2003. Both notes pay interest at 1.49% and matured in January 2004. The notes were issued to provide funding for construction, acquisition and improvements to the Wastewater System in accordance with the City Council's 2002 Wastewater Rate Mitigation Program.

Subsequent to year end, in January 2004, the City issued a combined \$2,750,000 of bond anticipation notes to retire the two outstanding notes.

7. LONG TERM DEBT

Long-term debt consists of Wastewater System Mortgage Revenue Bonds including the 1998 Series, due serially through 2023 with an interest rate of 5.10% and the 1996 Series, due serially through 2021 with interest rates from 4% to 6%. Also, the Wastewater System borrowed from the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) under a loan originating in 1988 with a final maturity in 2013 and an interest rate of 8.48%. In 2003, the OWDA loan was defeased.

Debt activity for the year ended December 31, 2003 was as follows:

	Balance January 1, <u>2003</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	Balance December 31, 2003	Due Within <u>One Year</u>
1998 Series Bonds	\$ 20,075,000	-	(580,000)	19,495,000	605,000
Less deferred amount for issuance discounts	(100,753)	-	7,616	(93,137)	-
1996 Series Bonds	8,105,000	-	(250,000)	7,855,000	260,000
Less deferred amount for issuance discounts	<u>(75,596)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,555</u>	<u>(69,041)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total bonds	<u>28,003,651</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(815,829)</u>	<u>27,187,822</u>	<u>865,000</u>
 OWDA Loans	 <u>7,712,448</u>	 <u>-</u>	 <u>(7,712,448)</u>	 <u>-</u>	 <u>-</u>
	\$ <u>35,716,099</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(8,528,277)</u>	<u>27,187,822</u>	<u>865,000</u>

In 1988, the City entered into a long-term loan arrangement with the Ohio Water Development Authority. The loan provided funding for the acquisition, construction and upgrade of certain assets of the Wastewater System. As a part of the Council authorized Wastewater Rate Mitigation Program, which was a series of pro-active fiscal measures intended to minimize and delay the need for double digit rate increases in the Wastewater System, the 8.48% \$7,712,448 OWDA Loan balance was escrowed to maturity through the purchase of U.S. Government securities with an irrevocable trust agreement with Huntington National Bank. The purchased securities, with the interest earned thereon, are considered sufficient to provide for an in-substance defeasance of the OWDA loan. The escrow was funded with existing cash reserves and the agreement was executed in January 2003.

Debt activity for the year ended December 31, 2002 was as follows:

	Balance January 1, <u>2002</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	Balance December 31, 2002	Due Within <u>One Year</u>
1998 Series Bonds	\$ 20,635,000	-	(560,000)	20,075,000	580,000
Less deferred amount for issuance discounts	(107,475)	-	6,722	(100,753)	-
1996 Series Bonds	8,340,000	-	(235,000)	8,105,000	250,000
Less deferred amount for issuance discounts	<u>(83,387)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,791</u>	<u>(75,596)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total bonds	<u>28,784,138</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(780,487)</u>	<u>28,003,651</u>	<u>830,000</u>
OWDA Loans	<u>8,159,483</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(447,035)</u>	<u>7,712,448</u>	<u>484,944</u>
	\$ <u>36,943,621</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,227,522)</u>	<u>35,716,099</u>	<u>1,314,944</u>

All property and revenue of the Wastewater System facilities have been pledged as collateral on the indebtedness. Under the terms of the revenue bond indenture, the City has agreed to certain covenants including, among other things, maintaining revenue levels and providing for operating expenses and debt service. The Mortgage Revenue Bonds are insured under a municipal bond insurance policy. Under the terms of this policy, the payments of principal and interest are guaranteed by the insurer.

Maturities of mortgage revenue bonds at December 31, 2003 are as follows:

	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Total</u>
2004	\$ 865,000	1,429,145	2,294,145
2005	905,000	1,389,610	2,294,610
2006	950,000	1,347,315	2,297,315
2007	995,000	1,302,285	2,297,285
2008	1,045,000	1,254,460	2,299,460
2009-2013	6,045,000	5,435,857	11,480,857
2014-2018	7,830,000	3,651,193	11,481,193
2019-2023	<u>8,715,000</u>	<u>1,326,435</u>	<u>10,041,435</u>
Total	\$ <u>27,350,000</u>	<u>17,136,300</u>	<u>44,486,300</u>

8. **DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS AND OTHER POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

The Wastewater System contributes to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) which administers three separate pension plans as described below:

- The Traditional Pension Plan – a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan.
- The Member-Directed Plan – a defined contribution plan in which the member invests both member and employer contributions (employer contributions vest over five years at 20% per year). Under the Member-Directed Plan, members accumulate retirement assets equal to the value of member and vested employer contributions plus any investment earnings thereon.
- The Combined Plan – a cost sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan. Under the Combined Plan, employer contributions are invested by the retirement system to provide a formula retirement benefit similar in nature to the Traditional Plan benefit. Member contributions, the investment of which is self-directed by the members, accumulate retirement assets in a manner similar to the Member-Directed Plan.

OPERS provides retirement, disability, survivor and death benefits, and annual cost of living adjustments to members and of the Traditional Plan and Combined Plan. Members of the Member-Directed Plan do not qualify for ancillary benefits. The authority to establish and amend benefits is provided by state statute per Chapter 145 of the Ohio Revised Code. OPERS issues a stand-alone financial report that may be obtained by writing to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System, 277 East Town Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-4642.

Plan members are required to contribute 8.5% of their annual covered salary. The City was required to contribute 13.55% of covered payroll for employees. The Wastewater System's required contributions to PERS for the years ended December 31, 2003, 2002, and 2001 were approximately \$235,000, \$230,000, and \$206,000 respectively, equal to the required contributions for each year.

PERS provides postretirement health care coverage to age and service retirees with ten or more years of qualifying Ohio service credit and to primary survivor recipients of such retirees. Health care coverage for disability recipients is available. The health care coverage provided by the retirement system is considered an Other Postemployment Benefit (OPEB) as described in GASB Statement No. 12. A portion of each employer's contribution to PERS is set aside for the funding of postretirement health care based on authority granted by State statute. The 2003 employer contribution rate was 13.55% of covered payroll for employees and 5.0% was the portion that was used to fund health care for the year.

The assumptions and calculations below were based on the System's latest Actuarial Review performed as of December 31, 2002. An entry age normal actuarial cost method of valuation is used in determining the present value of OPEB. The difference between assumed and actual experience (actuarial gains and losses) becomes part of unfunded actuarial accrued liability. All investments are carried at market value. For actuarial valuation purposes, a smoothed market approach is used. Under this approach, assets are adjusted annually to reflect 25% of unrealized market appreciation or depreciation on investment assets. The investment assumption rate for 2002 was 8.00%. An annual increase of 4.00% compounded annually, is the base portion of the individual pay increase assumption. This assumes no change in the number of active employees. Additionally, annual pay increases, over and above the 4.00% base increase, were assumed to range from 0.50% to 6.30%. Health care costs were assumed to increase 4.00% annually.

The OPEB's are advance-funded on an actuarially determined basis. The number of active contributing participants in the Traditional and Combined Plans totaled 364,881. The portion of the Wastewater System's contributions that were used to fund postemployment benefits was approximately \$87,000 and \$85,000 in 2003 and 2002, respectively. At December 31, 2002, the actuarial value of the Retirement System's net assets available for OPEB was \$10 billion. The actuarially accrued liability and the unfunded actuarial accrued liability, based on the actuarial cost method used, were \$18.7 billion and \$8.7 billion, respectively.

9. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Various claims and lawsuits are pending against the City involving the Wastewater System. The City believes that the ultimate disposition of such claims and lawsuits will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position of the Wastewater System.

The City entered into a Consent Decree in 1994 in State of Ohio ex. Rel Fisher v. City of Hamilton, Case No. CV88-10-1450 (In the Court of Common Pleas of Butler County) to address sanitary sewer overflows in the Wastewater System. The City is currently negotiating with the State relative to modification of the 1994 Consent Decree to further address such SSOs. The City plans to deal with the effect and impact of the SSO Remediation in an economic and effective fashion over the next five years. However, the outcome of the negotiations with the State in this regard may have a material impact on the Wastewater System and Fund, including its rates to fund the remediation. The City does not, at this time, have adequate information to estimate the required costs to maintain EPA compliance nor of its effect on the Wastewater System or its rates.

10. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Wastewater System purchases electricity from the City's Electric System. Purchases of approximately \$525,000 and \$507,000 from the Electric System are included in operating expenses in 2003 and 2002, respectively.

The City allocates the cost of certain administrative services. In addition, the City established internal service funds which provide services to various City departments. Charges to the Wastewater System for these services were approximately \$1,988,000 and \$2,022,000 in 2003 and 2002, respectively, and are included in other operating expenses.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

The City is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts and liability, damage to and theft of or destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. The City maintains comprehensive insurance coverage, for all City departments including the Wastewater System, with private carriers for real property, building contents, vehicle, property and general liability insurance, police professional liability, and public officials errors and omissions insurance. Vehicle policies include liability coverage for bodily injury and property damage. Claim payments have not exceeded coverage in the past three years. There was no decline in the level of coverage from the prior year.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

Honorable City Council
City of Hamilton! Ohio

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America the statement of net assets of the City of Hamilton! Ohio - Wastewater System, (Wastewater System) as of December 31, 2003 and 2002, and the related statements of operations and cash flows for the years then ended, and have issued our report thereon dated June 14, 2004.

In connection with our audits, nothing came to our attention that caused us to believe that the Wastewater System failed to comply with the terms, covenants, provisions or conditions of Sections 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.14 of the Indenture dated July 1, 1996 and Sections 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.14 of the Indenture dated January 15, 1998, with U.S. Bank, trustee, insofar as they relate to financial and accounting matters. However, our audits were not directed primarily toward obtaining knowledge of noncompliance with such Sections.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the City Council and management of the City of Hamilton! Ohio, Auditor of State of Ohio, and U.S. Bank and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.

Cincinnati, Ohio
June 14, 2004



**Auditor of State
Betty Montgomery**

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CITY OF HAMILTON WASTEWATER SYSTEM

BUTLER COUNTY

CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report which is required to be filed in the Office of the Auditor of State pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in Columbus, Ohio.

Susan Babbitt

CLERK OF THE BUREAU

**CERTIFIED
SEPTEMBER 2, 2004**