

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
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DATE: December 27, 2006

TO: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

FROM: Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst--Parks (651-602-1360)

SUBJECT: Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board request to amend unfunded portion of the 2006-07 regional parks capital improvement program by replacing funds proposed for Lake of the Isles to Theodore Wirth Regional Park

INTRODUCTION:

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board has submitted a request to amend the unfunded portion of the 2006-07 regional parks capital improvement program by reallocating \$1.8 million that was proposed for rehabilitation at Lake of the Isles Regional Park and instead propose that amount for additional rehabilitation at Theodore Wirth Regional Park. The premise for the requested amendment is that \$2.5 million of State bonds was earmarked in the 2006 bonding legislation for Lake of the Isles rehabilitation and subsequently no additional funds are needed for that park.

The attached letter from Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission Chair Glen Skovholt summarizes the policy issues to be considered on this matter by the Commission with requested input from the regional park implementing agencies.

December 18, 2006

(Insert park agency director name/address here)

Dear (insert director's name):

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) has submitted the enclosed letter dated November 28, 2006 addressed to me and Metropolitan Council Chair Peter Bell, which requests an amendment to the 2006-07 regional parks capital improvement program (CIP). As you will recall, the Metropolitan Council's 2006 bonding request to the legislature included a request of \$700,000 for Lake of the Isles as part of the \$8.2 million recommended by the Governor. The Governor also recommended an additional \$2 million for Lake of the Isles. Ultimately, the legislature appropriated \$7 million for the CIP, which provided \$700,000 for Lake of the Isles and earmarked an additional \$2.5 million for Lake of the Isles.

The unfunded portion of the 2006-07 CIP includes \$1.8 million for Lake of the Isles. In the attached letter, the MPRB is requesting that the \$1.8 million proposed for Lake of the Isles be reallocated to one of its own unfunded priorities: Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

Furthermore, MPRB seems to suggest that the Council's approach could jeopardize the agreement among implementing agencies to support the collective requests for state bond funds first and foremost, before seeking funds for other local projects. Maintaining this agreement is of critical importance to Peter Bell, me, and the integrity of our approach to regional park funding. Accordingly, the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission would like your input on this matter before preparing a recommendation to the Metropolitan Council, and will place the issue on the MPOSC's next meeting agenda.

Essentially, the question presented for discussion is this:

If an item in the MPOSC/Met Council funding request is rendered obsolete by virtue of a separate earmark appropriation, should any duplicate funding proposed in the unfunded portion of the CIP be: (1) reallocated to the highest unfunded priorities on the regional CIP, (2) reallocated at the discretion of the agency in whose jurisdiction the earmarked project lies or, (3) not reallocated at all but instead recognize the earmark as part of that agency's allocation for that CIP?

On behalf of the Commission, we welcome your input on this matter at the next meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission on Tuesday, January 9, 2007 at 4 p.m. in Lower Level Room A of the Metropolitan Council.

Sincerely yours,

Glen Skovholt, Chair
Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission

Enclosures:

November 28, 2006 letter from Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
August 15, 2005 letter from Glen Skovholt to regional park agencies
February 10, 2006 letter from Jon Gurban to Glen Skovholt

CC: Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commissioners
Metropolitan Council members