



Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

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February 27, 2007

Mr. Glen Skovholt, Chair
Metropolitan Park and Open Space Commission Members
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

VIA Email – Signed hardcopy to follow

Subject: 2008 – 2009 Biennium CIP Formula Revision Proposals

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

First, thank you for the opportunity to testify in regards to another CIP formula revision proposal at your last meeting. As always, we are prepared to support the CIP at the legislature to the best of our ability with staff, our elected Board, residents, NGOs and lobbyists pushing hard for increased regional parks funding for the benefit of all Implementing Agencies (IAs).

Second, we recognize that any formula revision will create winners and losers in the funding, and that formula fairness, simplicity, and transparency are criteria that can be supported by everyone. As I testified, we can support a formula based on population that also seriously considers all visits, as that is the only measure we have that most accurately reflects true demand, as well as impact and need. Need and demand should be what most influences funding decisions and allocations.

Not including local visits tells residents that they don't matter in your funding decisions. In Minneapolis, it also tells the many disadvantaged, people of color, and immigrants that they don't matter in your decisions. If you don't count their visits in funding decisions and formulas, you are telling the residents of Minneapolis that funding to meet their needs is irrelevant. We strongly disagree with that sentiment and encourage you to factor in ALL visits! We highly value, and are committed to serving, all of our residents and visitors, not just visitors.

We also recognize that we need to plan for the system's future, that the population of all agencies will increase, and that acquisition, development and rehab costs will also increase for all IAs.

As part of your decision process, we would like you to consider the following points brought up by both us and other agencies:

- Some agencies brought most of their regional parks systems into the regional system when it was formed. Perhaps the other IAs should also encourage such a vision and commitment on the part of their leaders.
- Certainly acquisition is important, as it is for us, but each IA is at a different point in their evolution and has different needs at differing times. Therefore, each agency should be guaranteed their allocation, and they should make decisions as to their priorities, informing the MPOSC of these decisions. Master plan approval, oversight, the policy plan, and system planning authority would remain with the MPOSC members as they do now.

- We also strive to match regional park dollars whenever we can, other agencies should be encouraged to do the same. Whether our CIP funding is reduced or not, we will still have needs that are well beyond the ability of the Met Council to fund. So we will continue to “look under every rock” for alternative matching sources of funds.
- So called “end run” projects are not end runs at all, but earmarks to solve problems such as the Lake of the Isles flood mitigation, that are outside the ability and scope of the Met Council to fund, and are essentially large scale environmental emergencies. Therefore, we don’t believe they should be factored into the overall historic nor projected funding of an IA. And we don’t believe the Policy Plan would support such moves.
- It may also be useful to look at other measures when considering future regional park need, demand and associated funding. For instance, the attached tables show that if you look at all park acreage within each IA boundary, total IA acreage, as well as population, the urban IAs actually tend to have the highest density of residents over all, and per park acre compared with the others. The urban systems also have the lowest number of total park acres. This is not a small difference, but a startling revelation in our opinion, on the order of many times the suburban systems. The same is true of residents per regional park acre. This is indicative of the intense pressure that the urban systems get compared to suburban systems. And it shows where today’s funding needs and demand really are.
- Another measure, with a similar outcome in orders of magnitude, is percent of all visits. Again the urban areas tend to have by far much higher percent visits than their counterparts. Such numbers put an enormous strain on an urban system.
- The same is true of regional park visits per acre, with the urban systems again experiencing many times the pressure of their colleagues, again underscoring the huge challenge!

The purpose of these studies then is to show the MPOSC where true demand, and demand density is, as well as the relative abundance of parkland that the suburban IAs have relative to other IAs when counting all park acres. These also show why the urban areas have such high immediate funding needs. Ultimately, though, it really shows that we, along with all other park stakeholders, should join forces and lobby intensively together for much higher funding levels, instead of fighting over ever dwindling resources.

In that regard, our strongest support is for creating a Regional Park Dedication Fee, along with the other ideas that we proposed, of each agency getting their full percent allocation and deciding their own priorities, instead of spending huge amounts of time wrangling over formulas. If we are really planning for another million residents by 2030, that will mean roughly 400,000 to 500,000 new homes in the metro (at 2 to 2.5 persons per household). Multiply that by a modest \$250 per new housing unit, and that would net the regional park system \$100 to \$125 million over 20 years, or about \$5 – 6 million per year. If we combine that with current funding, along with other initiatives such as private funding of a foundation, and a dedicated funding tax, we might have enough funds to actually implement the approved system plan, with every IA’s needs better addressed.

We would appreciate a response to these ideas and their inclusion in the MPOSC's work plan for this year.

Thanks again for considering these ideas!

Sincerely,

Jon Gurban
Superintendent

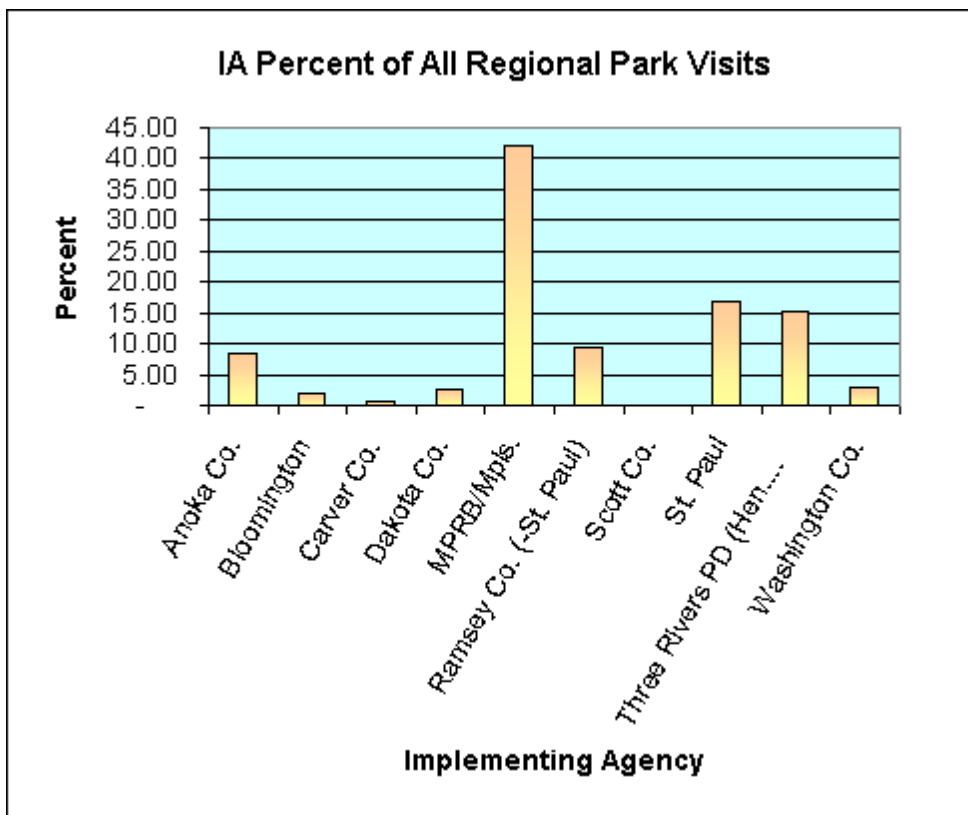
Attachments

cc: Jon Olson, President, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Carol Kummer, Chair Legislative and Inter-governmental Committee,
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Commission Members
Peter Bell, Chair, Metropolitan Council
Annette Meeks, Metropolitan Council Member, District 7 – Minneapolis
Lynette Wittsack, Metropolitan Council Member, District 8 – Minneapolis
Senator Larry Pogemiller
Representative Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Minneapolis Legislative Delegation
Michael Schmidt, General Manager of Operations
Judd Rietkerk, Director of Planning and Project Management
Minneapolis City Council Members
Mike Kimble, Community & Government Relations Coordinator

**Metropolitan Council
IA Percent of all Regional Park Visits**

MPRB DRAFT 2-27-07			Mar. 22, 2006 Updated	2005 Visits
No.	Agency	Percent of All Visits	Regional Park Weighted O&M Acres	In 1,000s
1	Anoka Co.	8.29	6,314.03	2,773.5
2	Bloomington	1.80	115.14	601.7
3	Carver Co.	0.75	618.00	251.1
4	Dakota Co.	2.65	3,440.80	886.9
5	MPRB/Mpls.	42.25	2,617.50	14,125.6
6	Ramsey Co. (- St. Paul)	9.43	4,654.08	3,154.3
7	Scott Co.	0.14	553.00	48.0
8	St. Paul	16.84	2,700.36	5,632.1
9	Three Rivers PD (Hen. Co.-Mpls. & Bloomington)	15.08	10,135.19	5,042.0
10	Washington Co.	2.76	2,665.00	921.8

Not incl. open water
33,437.0



Based on Met Council data

**Metropolitan Council Regional
Parks**

Population per Acre

MPRB DRAFT

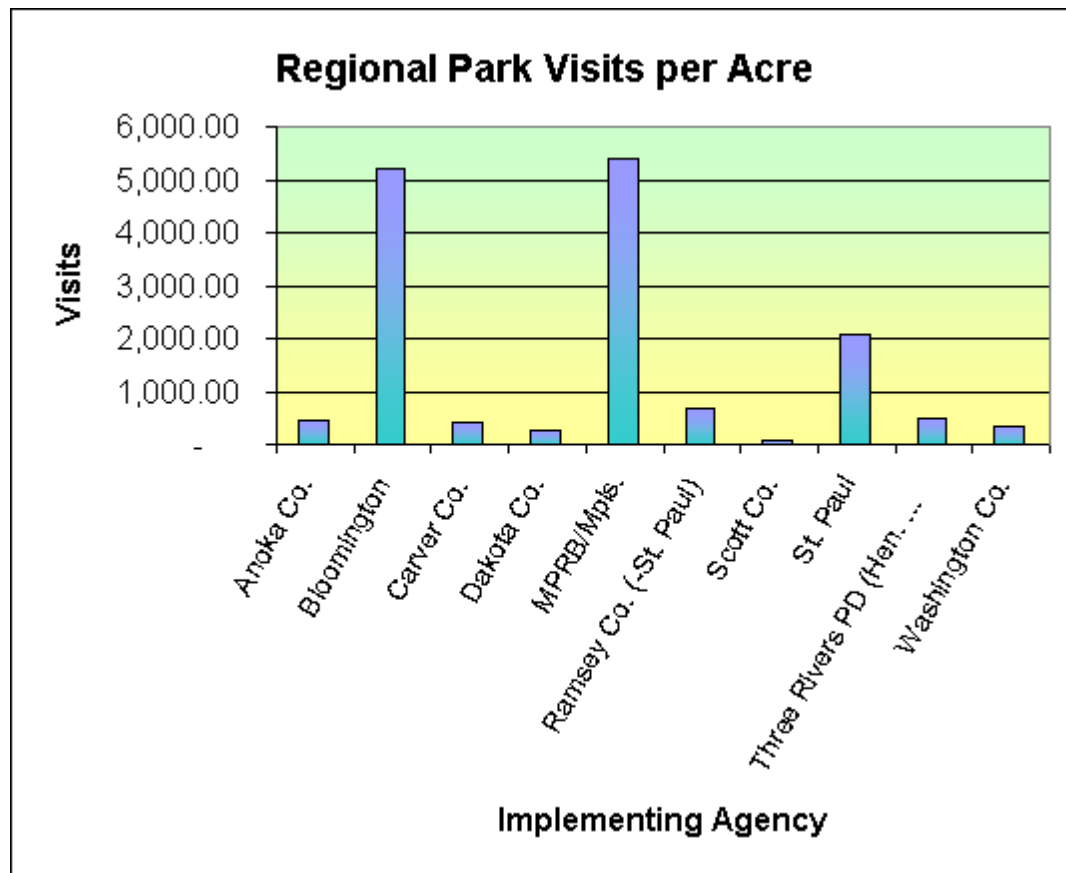
No.	Agency	2005 Population	2005 City or County Acres	Residents per City or County Acre	2005 Total of All Parks, Recreation & Preserves	Residents Per Total of All Parks Parks, Recreation & Preserves
1	Anoka Co.	326,393	284,973	1.15	39,290	8.31
2	Bloomington	84,347	24,542	3.44	6,153	13.71
3	Carver Co.	85,204	240,474	0.35	12,903	6.60
4	Dakota Co.	391,558	375,185	1.04	23,502	16.66
5	MPRB/Mpls.	387,711	36,726	10.56	3,783	102.49
6	Ramsey Co. (-St. Paul)	227,873	72,848	3.13	16,100	14.15
7	Scott Co.		236,008	-	17,644	-
8	St. Paul	287,385	35,826	8.02	5,133	55.99
9	Three Rivers PD (Hen. Co.-Mpls. & Bloomington)	678,854	326,673	2.08	49,521	13.71
10	Washington Co.	224,857	270,760	0.83	22,731	9.89

Based on Met Council data

**Metropolitan Council Regional Parks
Visits per Regional Park Acre**

MPRB DRAFT 2-27-07			Mar. 22, 2006 Updated	2005 Visits
No.	Agency	Visits per Acre	Regional Park Weighted O&M Acres	In 1,000s
1	Anoka Co.	439.26	6,314.03	2,773.5
2	Bloomington	5,225.81	115.14	601.7
3	Carver Co.	406.31	618.00	251.1
4	Dakota Co.	257.76	3,440.80	886.9
5	MPRB/Mpls.	5,396.60	2,617.50	14,125.6
6	Ramsey Co. (-St. Paul)	677.75	4,654.08	3,154.3
7	Scott Co.	86.80	553.00	48.0
8	St. Paul	2,085.68	2,700.36	5,632.1
9	Three Rivers PD (Hen. Co.- Mpls. & Bloomington)	497.47	10,135.19	5,042.0
10	Washington Co.	345.89	2,665.00	921.8

Not incl. open
water **33,437.0**



Based on Met Council data

