

Dear County Councilmembers: Once again, the Parks Department is asking for more of our taxpayer dollars (FY27-32 CIP). The testimony is scheduled for Feb 9th and 10th. First of all, you know all this. The county is operating in a shortfall from federal layoffs and loss of federal projects. It is also suffering from an outflow of wealthy taxpayers from the county and state, to other states that are better suited at controlling expenses and taxes. We have a dismal future in economic development. Where are new jobs coming from that will allow the people living here work at wages that will allow them to pay their state and property taxes? The state of our economy is poor. I think that Park's insistence on lobbying citizens to sign up to ask for more money is unconscionable. Also, I ask, is it within state law to ask common citizens to testify to get more money for a specific department? I think fraud could and does happen in these circumstances. You all have to watch that. **The main example of profligate spending by the Montgomery Parks Department is the careless, wasteful spending on Little Falls Parkway. The area is 4/10 of a mile or exactly 2112 feet of road, between Arlington Road and Dorset Avenue. I got the exact numbers from a PIA I filed with MNCPPC and MCDOT. The number before construction started was 1.7 million dollars (including an estimate of \$1,070,000 for the actual construction that started this Fall.) It was supposed to be finished by Dec 9th. It looks like it is about 1/3 done. We all know that delayed projects with rental equipment and loss of work hours will ultimately equal going over budget by quite a lot. The project looks like it might be finished by April, if they are lucky. The price of \$1,700,000 will rise to at least \$2,500,000. I ask you, is this the right way to spend Parks' budget and our taxpayer dollars on 1/4 of a mile that the neighborhoods all around never needed or asked for? It is now more dangerous than ever and filled with backed up and frustrated traffic. In fact we wrote, testified, and voiced our concerns and complaints loudly. It fell on deaf ears and we will remember that when we go to the polls. Don't give Parks any more money now or in the distant future. They are not good stewards of our natural resources (look at all the unkept parkland where people walk and bike, such as the two well used trails on either side of this spending debacle, with trees that badly need pruning and underbrush that needs cleaning out). They don't care about what people want or ask for, yet they are asking specific chosen biased groups to lobby for them to get more money from us, the taxpayers and voters. Vote no to Parks' requests. They are not good stewards of our Parks or taxpayer dollars.**

Sincerely,

Patricia and David Johnson