

**Minneapolis**  
*City of Lakes*

March 26, 2007

**Community Planning &  
Economic Development**

Lee Sheehy  
Director

105 5th Avenue South – Suite 200  
Minneapolis MN 55401-2534

Office 612 673-5095  
Fax 612 673-5100  
TTY 612 673-5154

Mr. Zygi Wilf, Owner/Chairman  
Minnesota Vikings  
9520 Vikings Drive  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Dear Mr. Wilf:

Council President Barbara Johnson has asked me to respond to your March 16<sup>th</sup> letter about the Downtown East parking ramp. At the outset, please let me reiterate that we look forward to continuing a long, productive working relationship with you and the entire Vikings organization.

We are excited about the prospects for development around the Metrodome which could include a new football stadium for the Vikings. Substantial progress had been made with the leadership of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission (MSFC) in collaboration with the Vikings. The MSFC has responsibility for and has taken the lead on matters related to a new football stadium, while the City staff's role is to advance planning and development opportunities as they arise. The Downtown East Ramp sale can advance both purposes, as I have attempted to explain in meetings with both the MSFC and Vikings representatives.

As you know, a City staff team is currently evaluating proposals to purchase up to eight (8) municipal parking ramps. Three proposals include the Downtown East ramp. Staff's goal is to bring forth a term sheet for the City Council's consideration in May. A sale has the potential to have a positive impact on the City's financial circumstances and advance development within the City.

It would be imprudent for the City to exclude the Downtown East ramp at this time from those that might be sold for at least two key reasons:

1. The evaluation process for sale of the ramps has been sound, focusing on financial issues and development potential on the ramp sites. It involves a City working group which includes senior representatives of Finance, Public Works, CPED, City Attorney, as well as Council Member Lisa Goodman, who chairs the Community Development Committee and in whose ward the ramp is located. Upending the process and eliminating the ramp from consideration may cause otherwise serious proposers to walk away. If that happened, the City may not be able to achieve the important goal of reducing its long-term

debt by about \$60 million through the sale of the ramps. As you know, the Downtown East ramp accounts for about \$15 million of that total.

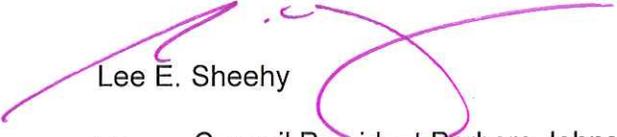
2. At least two of the three potential purchasers are interested in developing the pad above the Downtown East parking ramp. Their vision appears consistent with the Downtown East master plan as well as the ROMA plan and would complement a new Vikings stadium next door. This is important not only to the City, but also MSFC which has been invited to participate in consideration of any potential development.

I want to conclude by noting that I have discussed possible options with the MFSC as well as Vikings representatives which would not jeopardize the current ramp sale process and/or give the Commission site control for some reasonable period of time on reasonable terms. I await their response and am optimistic that we can partner together.

Finally, I should note that the City has a strong working relationship with Congressman Jim Oberstar. He is a valuable ally as the State, Region, and City seek funding for multiple transportation projects, including the North Star commuter rail line and the Central Corridor line. We would appreciate any support for the Winter Garden transit station concept, so long as it is consistent with the priorities established by the City, Region and the State of Minnesota.

Please let me know when you'll be in Minneapolis. I certainly would welcome meeting with you again.

Sincerely,



Lee E. Sheehy

cc: Council President Barbara Johnson  
Mayor RT Rybak  
Congressman Jim Oberstar  
Peter Bell  
Roy Terwilliger