



**Legislative Department
Seattle City Council
Memorandum**

Date: March 28, 2012

To: Parks and Neighborhoods Committee

From: Norm Schwab, Council Central Staff

Subject: **Rowing and Sailing Centers Transition Plan SLI Response
(SLI 103-1-A-1)**

The 2011 Adopted Budget included a Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) asking the Parks Department (DPR) in cooperation with the Associated Recreation Council and the advisory councils for the Green Lake Small Craft Center and the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center to develop a transition plan for successful long-term operations of both centers. The Council's intent in passing the SLI was to ensure stable funding for the rowing and sailing centers during a time in which DPR is facing significant budget cuts. The SLI states:

This plan should identify the operations goals of DPR's rowing and sailing program, evaluate utilization of the centers, analyze possible alternative management models, and, if possible, make recommendations about how the centers should be operated in the long-term. At least one management option should explore whether the centers could become self-sufficient under a concession agreement or other arrangement. The plan should evaluate the benefits and costs of different operating models. Comparison to models in other cities should be included.

After conducting this evaluation, DPR has concluded that the current operational model for these centers should continue. DPR notes in its SLI response that the General Subfund (GSF) contribution, in the range of \$150,000 to \$200,000 annually, represents a small fraction of the center's costs, about 10 to 15 percent. Further, both DPR and the City Budget Office have indicated that because this GSF contribution leverages more than \$1 million in outside funding as well as administrative support via the advisory council's fundraising and volunteer efforts, the rowing and sailing centers would be a low-priority area for GSF cuts to address the 2013-2014 budget reduction targets for DPR.

Although DPR and the advisory committee (named the Boating Action Team) evaluated non-profit management, non-profit lease, and long-term lease options, the Executive had concerns about how these would impact the current relationship with the ARC and how to protect the assets developed and funded with advisory councils support. Also, the Executive was concerned about forging partnerships with similar small craft centers such as the Lake Washington Rowing Club and the Pocock Rowing Center, which have

membership-based operating models. Those centers do not have a youth-focused mission. Youth access, both physical and financial, was a driving concern.

Although, not included as a recommendation, the Boating Action Team did note the possibility for renovating the Green Lake center to add space for special events and rentals to bring in more revenue. However, there is no short-term path forward identified for funding a major capital renovation.