

cityparkalliance.org

OCT 29 2015

State Board of the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund
303 East 17th Avenue, Suite 1060
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Community Support for Updating the City Park Master Plan and
Developing Design Guidelines for City Park

I am writing to express our support for the City and County of Denver's grant application to Develop Design Guidelines for City Park and update the City Park Master Plan. The City Park Alliance is committed to these projects in terms of providing input and analysis, garnering local interest, and providing financial resources.

The City Park Alliance's vision for City Park is for City Park to maintain its historic character and flourish for future generations, providing all visitors with positive and memorable experiences. As such, we would like to express our support for these two projects. We believe that these two essential tools are critical to the ongoing preservation of City Park's historic character, and now is the time to fund these projects so that they may move forward.

City Park is an extremely important piece of Denver's park system because it is both a neighborhood and a regional park. It is highly revered by users as a pastoral open space, as an active space, and for its numerous historic elements. The park as a whole is an historic landmark of success in a long line of efforts to create critical open spaces of sufficient scale and care to ensure places of respite within urban cores.

Recently, there has been increased pressure in the park to develop open spaces as the surrounding community becomes more densely populated. The Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Denver Zoo also both expanded their impact on the park with new developments in 2013, 2014, and 2015.

The Alliance sponsored public meetings regarding the design for a new playground during 2013 and 2014. At the end of the meeting process, a large architectural play element that would have encompassed 17 acres in City Park won a national contest was chosen. Although it was not built in City Park due to public pressure, the process was instructive going forward. It was evident that there were no design guidelines to gauge the appropriateness of the features, lighting, vegetation, walkways, and the general look-and-feel of what was being proposed. The final design chosen (albeit an award winning and spectacular design) ignored the historic character and feel of City Park.

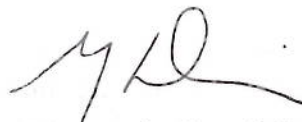
In 2015, the Denver Zoo constructed a facility within City Park to incinerate waste. While many citizens supported the concept of the Denver Zoo's operation of the facility in an effort to reach its "zero waste" goals, the general populous was outraged that the facilities constructed to house the incineration unit did not mesh with the historical look-and-feel of the park. Had there been design guidelines in place for City Park prior to construction, the visual impacts of the construction would have been mitigated and been more thoughtfully integrated into the historic character of the park.

Development pressure in City Park is increasing, transportation patterns adjacent to the park are changing, and the number of events in City Park has dramatically increased over the past three years. The time for updating the Master Plan and creating design guidelines is now if we are to preserve City Park's historic legacy.

Citizens have become more increasingly involved in the policies that affect City Park. The number of people reading the publications from the City Park Alliance has increased exponentially over the past three years. We at the City Park Alliance prefer to spend our time and financial resources towards improving City Park rather than facilitating discussions between groups and individuals where the rules for projects in City Park are not known. Updating the Master Plan and creating design guidelines can reduce needless controversies and false starts by fostering a common understanding of expectations. These projects are important to our mission. As such, the City Park Alliance will be instituting our own fund raising specifically for this grant, and **we will be matching donations 1:1 in an effort to reach the community grant match of \$12,500.**

City Park is an extremely important piece of Denver's legacy. Now is the time to define the appropriate pathway forward by updating the Master Plan and creating design guidelines for Denver's largest park and a regional historic gem. I look forward to being involved in these efforts representing an organization to maintaining the character of City Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GD', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Greg Davis, Board Chair
City Park Alliance