



*cityparkalliance.org*

**MAR 24 2015**

Steve Turner  
Director, Colorado State Historical Fund  
1200 Broadway  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Mr. Turner:

We appreciate the opportunity to be involved in discussions regarding the potential local historic landmark designation of Denver's City Park. The City Park Alliance's (the Alliance) vision 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 the development of design guidelines for City Park and for the update of the City Park Master Plan. We believe that these two essential tools are critical to the ongoing preservation of City Park's historic character.

City Park is an extremely important piece of Denver's park system because it is both a neighborhood and regional park. It is highly revered by users as a pastoral and beautiful open space, as an active space, and for its numerous historic elements. The park as a whole is an historic landmark of success in the 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 and 2014.

As a case in point, in 2013 and 2014, the Alliance sponsored public meetings about the design for a new playground project known as the City Loop. 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 and 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 of what was being proposed. The final design chosen (albeit an award winning spectacular design) ignored the historic character and feel of City Park. The City Park Master Plan did not contemplate a giant playground.

The character of some neighborhoods surrounding City Park is changing. Thus development pressure within the Park will continue. Some of these neighbors are interested in the quiet aspects of City Park, while other neighbors are looking for more

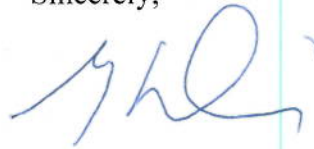
activities in City Park. A thoughtful and inclusive Master Plan and design guideline development process would help the community navigate future changes in City Park while respecting its historic character.

Citizens have become more increasingly involved in the policies that affect City Park. The number of people reading the publications from City Park Alliance has increased exponentially over the past three years. We at the City Park Alliance prefer to spend 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.

City Park is an extremely important piece of Denver's legacy. Visitation to this park will increase. The neighborhoods will continue to rely on the park for activity and for quiet spaces. The Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Denver Zoo will continue to look for opportunities to grow and enhance their visitor experience. The Alliance believes that this 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.

We support the request for a grant to develop design guidelines and to update the City Park Master Plan. The Alliance looks forward to being involved in these efforts as an organization dedicated to maintaining the character of City Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'GDavis', is written over a light blue vertical line.

Greg Davis, Board Chair  
City Park Alliance