



May 5, 2013

Lauri Dannemiller, Manager  
Denver Parks and Recreation  
City and County of Denver

**RE: Proposed Park Designations**

Dear Manager Dannemiller,

We are very glad that DPR is undertaking the designation by ordinance process for the 30% of our parks that need this effort. We understand that it is not always a simple matter, but it is of great importance. Every neighborhood in Denver depends on its parks for natural beauty and health and inspiration. Thank you for this effort.

This letter is for the purpose of urging you to hold public meetings with interested citizens as you proceed to review the currently “undesignated” portion of Denver’s park portfolio. Of course, these meetings should precede bringing recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

As you know, pursuant to Section 2.4.5 of Denver’s City Charter, no land acquired by the City of Denver after December 31, 1955, shall be deemed a “park” unless specifically designated such by City ordinance.

At the January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, meeting of INC’s Parks and Recreation Committee meeting, Assistant Park Manager Scott Gilmore reported that at that time only about 70% of Denver’s parks were “designated” pursuant to the City Charter. He explained that the intent was to review the remaining 30% for future designation, but that you had already selected a group of parks to be recommended to City Council, which was referred to as “Round 1.” He went on to explain that a “Round 2” is contemplated for later this year, to be followed by more as time permits for Denver Parks and Recreation to review its real estate portfolio.

Toward that end, on April 1 Denver City Council acted on the first round of new park “designations” by enacting the “Round 1” set of ordinances to designate more parks. These new designations are commendable and a step in the right direction, but there is a need for a transparent and public process as you move forward to review Denver’s remaining undesignated parks.

As explained by Mr. Gilmore, it is anticipated that perhaps as much as 10% of the park system might not qualify for various reasons. Those reasons included possible perceived “problems” such as title or ownership issues, utility easements, and *“pending or anticipated plans for making/expanding non-park uses within the park.”*

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In keeping with and as another reminder of INC's strong belief that neighborhoods be involved in important City decision-making processes at the earliest stages, the public should be included in the review process of Denver's undesignated parks. This crucial so that all of the information is clear and transparent regarding what lands are or are not being recommended for designation. This public review process should include two-way communication with the opportunity to ask questions and express opinions about what areas should be recommended for designation.

While at the end of the day there may be disagreements regarding certain areas that are not recommended for designation, a clear and transparent review process will help to keep any such disagreements to a minimum.

In furtherance of this goal, we urge you to consider now how best to accomplish this public review process of Denver's remaining undesignated park land portfolio, and to announce to the public your intentions and a time table for when public meetings might be held.

Again, thank you for your positive effort to move forward with additional park designations. We look forward to working with you in the future as the process continues.

Respectfully,



Larry Ambrose  
President, INC

Cc: Mayor Michael B. Hancock  
INC Parks & Recreation Committee  
INC Executive Committee  
Denver City Council