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Page 1: Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation Parks and Rec Committee Survey

**Q1** What is your name please?

Jamie Torres

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**Q2** What Office are you running for?

**Council**

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Page 2: Further questions

**Q3** Which council district are you running for?

**Council District**

**3**

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**Q4** Regardless of the office you are running for, if you were appointing the Executive Director of Parks and Recreation Department, what education and previous experience would you expect the person to have?

I've been a city employee under four different mayors and worked for three different Agency directors. The most effective Directors knew how to manage a complex staff structure, facilitate challenging conversations and were willing to grow and develop leadership. In a division like Parks and Recreation, you must be able to think strategically about the staff you lean on and the work they carry out. For a potential Executive Director's education, I would expect the executive director to have a degree related to public administration, affairs, policy, urban planning, community leadership, or any combination of these. When considering a potential director's experience, I'd expect to see an Executive Director who has experience engaging with community and understanding their needs. They will know how to engage and listen to community in order to create spaces for parks and recreation that meet the needs of community.

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**Q5** Will you support an ordinance moving OS-A zoning from the Ex. Director of Parks back to City Council? If not, why?

I would support this move. Land use is a key responsibility of City Council and that responsibility should remain in tact.

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## INC PARC 2019 Candidate Survey

**Q6** What would you consider is adequate green space for high density development, for example Elitch's. What steps would you take to ensure the zoning requirement for green space is adequate?

We are certainly at a point in Denver where we have to begin to plan differently and better when it comes to green space, whether its in existing neighborhoods or in brand new development like Elitch's. I would also ask us to pay attention to all of the areas where Denver is investing in affordable housing to ensure we are achieving real goals in adding to green space as well as identifying new open space zoning, like our bond partnership with Denver Housing Authority for their work in Sun Valley and West Colfax neighborhoods. In terms of adequate amount, I think we should take into account our residents' proximity to parkland or open space of the neighborhood and plan or invest according where equity demands we improve.

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**Q7** The use of recycled water in Denver parks appears to be causing the premature loss of many mature evergreens. Is that an acceptable trade-off for accommodating more population growth or should the city spend money to untie remediation measures to save those legacy trees? Please explain your answer.

I feel this is far more complex a question than agree or disagree. I don't think it's an acceptable trade-off but I also recognize that this is more than just a question of fully switching from recycled water to potable water. Denver Water plays an important role here as well as determining which areas of Denver have greater amounts of sodium, if this is the ultimate culprit to the tree loss, in order to conduct flushing tests. I wouldn't eliminate the impact, however, that climate change also plays a role. It is telling, however, that Denver Botanic Gardens does not use recycled water at all, but they have a much smaller impact space than the expansive parks system.

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**Q8** What would you do to protect and enhance waterways going through Denver?

I appreciated that Denver Parks and Recreation took on the large task of assessing three key waterways in Denver that have not seen much improvement or assessment, two of which run through Council District 3, Weir Gulch and the Platte River. The investment in understanding these waterways and then identifying ways to improve them is key. Additionally, understanding how development in and around them must be considered for leveraging recommendations. I'm concerned about the expanded floodplain and its possible impact on housing and vulnerable residents. District 3 will also see significant transformation in the Sun Valley Neighborhood directly next to the South Platte River and direct conversations will be necessary between Denver Housing Authority, Metropolitan Stadium District and a growing number of stakeholders who have or will have interest in the land surrounding the South Platte River. All my life, Weir gulch and the South Platte River have been uninviting spaces that were not meant for community recreation or interaction. I want to change this and ensure we are creating more opportunities to embrace and celebrate our waterways.

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**Q9** What aspect(s) of INC Parks and Rec Urban Platform do you support?

I support the introductory assumptions as a firm basis for protection, appreciation, and growth of Denver's park system and green spaces. The platform, which was approved eight years ago should be updated given a number of the platform recommendations have been realized or have evolved, particularly that Denver voters approved a dedicated source of funding for parks and that a new Game Plan is in development. I would also recommend the next iteration of a platform consider equity and communities that need greater investment become a priority topic of INC.

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