



12/20/16

President-elect Donald J. Trump
Presidential Transition Office
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear President-elect Donald J. Trump:

We are the Co-chairs of the bipartisan Mayors for Parks Coalition, a project of the City Parks Alliance. The Mayors for Parks Coalition represents mayors from cities large and small across the country that advocate for strong park systems.

As the newly elected President of the United States, you have put forward a vision in wanting to fix our inner cities and rebuild our infrastructure. Our coalition recognizes parks as essential elements of city planning, and asks that you include park infrastructure as an eligible component within any infrastructure plan.

Mayors know that innovative investments in community parks help grow local economies by creating jobs, increasing property values, and attracting the kinds of businesses, workforces, and private capital that make metropolitan areas competitive in today's global economy. Good examples of this are your developments near Riverside Park and Central Park, and the development of Riverside Park South, which has added to the value of the Trump Place area. In fact, many studies have shown that parks add a 15-20% premium to nearby residential and commercial land. As someone with experience operating many golf courses and skating rinks, and who has donated many important parcels of land for parks and conservation, you have seen first-hand the multiple benefits of parks, recreation facilities, and open space, especially for city residents.

Parks make cities more resistant to weather-driven problems. Nationwide, cities are confronted with the impacts of major storms and flooding. Hurricane Sandy caused up to \$70 billion in damages to communities. Cities are now creating and using parks as an infrastructure approach to manage stormwater and prevent flooding. For example, over the next 25 years Philadelphia will be investing \$2 billion in parks and infrastructure to capture 85% of the city's stormwater, saving the city \$16 billion that would otherwise be spent on underground pipes and tunnels. Similar budget-smart infrastructure approaches are being used in cities across the country; this type of infrastructure investment makes plain sense.

Mayors also know that parks are critical to maintaining and improving the physical and mental health of all Americans. Parks are an important part of the solution in reducing obesity, and its associated public health costs. And parks provide wide ranging environmental benefits including keeping our urban waters clean and removing air pollution which has been linked to asthma in children.

For the past three years the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) adopted urban park resolutions that called for permanent and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and emphasized the importance of parks as essential elements in a comprehensive approach to urban policy and community development.

The Mayors for Parks Coalition supports full funding and permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Created in 1964, with strong bipartisan support, LWCF is funded through revenues from offshore oil and gas drilling royalties, a portion of which is matched by state and local contributions – increasing the return on investment without using federal tax dollars. A robust network of public/private partnerships already exists in cities around the country to leverage public funding. The LWCF is an essential resource for cities as they seek to develop new or revitalize existing urban parks, green spaces, and recreation opportunities.

Today, 80 percent of us live in metropolitan areas. As cities become more densely populated, planners, elected officials, and community advocates are taking a fresh look at parks and their potential to help address critical urban infrastructure and public health issues.

We urge you to include parks as an eligible component in your infrastructure plan.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Mayor Michael B. Hancock (D)
Denver, CO

Mayor Betsy Price (R)
Fort Worth, TX