



April 1, 2019

The Honorable Michael B. Hancock
Mayor, City and County of Denver
1427 Bannock Street, Suite 350
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Measure 2A Funding Priorities

Dear Mayor Hancock,

On behalf of the Downtown Denver Partnership, I am writing this letter to convey to you our recommended priorities for the funds generated by the 2018 Ballot Measure 2A: Parks & Open Space Tax. The additional tax funds combined with existing City general funding creates real opportunities to realize the goals outlined in The Outdoor Downtown plan and the forthcoming Game Plan.

The Outdoor Downtown plan was created through a collaborative effort between Denver Parks and the Partnership that engaged a wide range of stakeholders, neighborhood organizations, and over 4,000 interested citizens. With this broad base of input, the plan represents the collective voice for Downtown's outdoor spaces and provides the visionary and actionable list of policies, programs, and projects for a holistic approach to Downtown's public realm. Measure 2A creates the funding source to achieve the visionary goals and objectives that are stated in The Outdoor Downtown plan.

While the plan lists many goals and recommendations to be implemented over a twenty-year timeline, the plan also outlines the top ten recommendations that should receive the highest near-term priorities. At the base of all of these recommendations are the findings that Downtown's network of parks and public spaces is wholly under-resourced today, and that the levels of funding for capital improvements and maintenance fall far short of the need and of the funding levels for downtown parks of many peer cities. With the Downtown population rapidly increasing, The Outdoor Downtown plan calls for creative strategies to meet the City's short- and long-term needs. Specifically, we would like to reiterate the following specific priorities of the plan:

- Two of the *Four Iconic Projects* are primed for additional funding:
 - 5280 Loop. This project is through concept and ready for implementation dollars. 2A should fund seed money for implementation and leverage CIP funding for Sunken Gardens Park master plan (and possibly Lincoln/La Alma Park master plan in CIP 2020). Arapahoe Square and Lincoln/La Alma are potential areas for first phase implementation.
 - Children's Signature Playground. This project is ready for near term design and implementation in Commons Park

- Park Acquisition to mitigate Downtown’s park “desert.” There are significant areas throughout Downtown which are more than a 5-minute walk from a neighborhood park, and the park area per resident is significantly below national guidelines
- Grow our Urban Forest – One fifth of respondents to the initial Outdoor Downtown public survey ranked the trees as their highest priority. To complement the Downtown Tree Canopy Master Plan, implement recommendation 5.1 by funding a tree planting area retrofit program to allow for adequate uncompacted soil to support healthy trees and to achieve tree canopy coverage goals.
- Skyline Park Blocks Two and Three to further leverage the 2017 GO Bond and 2018 funding approved by adjacent property owners when they agreed to create a Local Maintenance District for the Park.
- Civic Center Park Central Promenade to leverage 2017 GO Bond funding for the Greek Theater

We understand the limited resources of the City budget and believe that the priorities listed above represent projects that will advance key objectives for our city and are well-aligned with stated priorities from the Downtown Area Plan, The Parks Game Plan, The Outdoor Downtown plan, and other stated City priorities.

Thank you for your investment in Downtown Denver and for your consideration of these Outdoor Downtown priorities that support an economically viable center city. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working together to support these and other initiatives in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Tamara Door
President and CEO
Downtown Denver Partnership



Rob Cohen
Chair,
Downtown Denver Partnership Management Group

CC: City Council – Rafael Espinoza
City Council – Paul Lopez
City Council – Albus Brooks
City Council – Wayne New
Executive Director of Parks and Recreation – Happy Haynes
Executive Director of Community Planning and Development – Jill Jennings-Golich
Executive Director of Public Works – Eulois Cleckley