



03/04/2021

Mark Toorock

Founder, American Parkour

219 M ST NW

Washington, DC 20001

Dear Jenna Harris and the Denver Parks and Recreation team,

If there is such thing as a science-backed heartfelt request, this is it. In your role, you know better than anyone that people are happier when they get outside, and even happier when they get outside and move. You also know that particularly in downtown spaces, the more active a space is, the more active it is. In other words, people using a space actively invites others to do the same.

Skyline Park, as with many of the spaces designs by Lawrence Halprin, is an iconic spot for the parkour community. What's more important than that is why his designs are that way, and the simple reason is that they invite and inspire play and natural movement. They speak to something innate in us.

I believe that by working with the local parkour community in Denver you can co-create a space that invites play and natural movement, while at the same time serving the needs of many. In American Parkour's park designs we have included such things as wheelchair courses, calisthenic areas that foster group fitness, play areas that are suitable for children and adults at the same time, all while providing practical use space if someone wants to simply sit and read a book.

Where safety is a concern I'll point to APK's public school programs in Washington, DC. In the past 4 years we have had over 14,000 students go through our program as part of their public school physical education. There have been 0 (zero) reported injuries. School standards for injury reporting are strict, so this is quite significant. I'm sure that Miriam Kenyon, Director of Health and Physical Education would be available to discuss the efficacy and safety of the program.

I am certain that you have heard the term "Parkour Community" ad nauseum at this point, and I would urge you to consider them as "natural movement early adopters" or "true explorers of public space", and consider that they are simply the people using the outdoors for fun, for fitness, and for community. They are the people who can tell you why people use a space

outdoors, your ideal group of “early adopters” for parks.

American Parkour partnered with Park Rangers and Planners to win an IPI (Innovative Program Initiative) Award for an inclusive space in Prince George’s County Maryland in 2018. Their “Parkour in The Parks” mobile program has been cited several times (and nominated for local awards) as an ideal program and has been recommended as a national model. I am happy to introduce the creator of that program, Ranger George Harley.

I am happy to discuss any assistance or guidance that American Parkour can provide. Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

Mark Toorock

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'M' and '2' written in a stylized, cursive font.

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About:

Mark Toorock is the founder and CEO of American Parkour, the first organized parkour community in the US, now over 165,000 followers strong. Mark was working in London as a technology manager for an investment bank when he discovered parkour, reminding him that his true passion was movement, teaching, performance, and building. Mark has since operated the first and longest-standing academy for parkour in the world. He brought parkour to the mainstream media through television series on broadcast networks, high profile performances, and advertising for major brands. American Parkour’s focus in recent years has been bringing parkour to schools and designing equipment that supports the joy of movement that early parkour training can bring to kids. APK’s curriculum and equipment can now be found in over 50 schools throughout Washington DC and Maryland. American Parkour sells equipment and programming to schools, summer camps, and home users.