

Dear Jenna Harris and the Denver Parks and Recreation team,

I am Alan Tran, a director of the United States Parkour Association, the national Governing Body for Parkour, Freerunning and L'Art du Deplacement. Our mission is to represent parkour in the United States by serving parkour practitioners, professional athletes, business owners, organization leaders, and enthusiasts. We aim to raise awareness to the general public, protect the integrity of the sport and represent the US parkour community at large. As a non-profit organization formed by members of the parkour community, we are committed to running on principles of good governance with full transparency driven by accountability to the community.

I am writing in support of the United States Parkour Association for the preservation and repurposing of the fountain in Block 2 of Skyline Park. Colorado is known for having one of the largest and most vibrant parkour communities in the world. This particular site is internationally recognized and has been an important cultural landmark and community gathering place for the global parkour and natural movement community. Skyline Park has been an epitome to the Colorado Parkour jam that has brought hundreds of athletes from across North America to gather, train, and celebrate parkour. I can remember visiting in late 2007 to meet with the local Denver group. In the midst of training, I met with two local gym owners that would go on to build pillars for both Colorado and the United States parkour community. In particular, Amos Rendao of APEX Movement is one of the founding members of USPK. We owe it to the personal experiences shared by athletes for cultivating a large momentum that fosters creativity, play, problem-solving, and deeply-rooted sense of exploration rooted in the local neighborhoods - much like Skyline Park for Denver.

COVID-19 has shown the world how important public space and equity of access to recreation is to the health of our communities. Unlike other athletic sports and physical practices, parkour does not require specialized gear, teams, or practice fees. The community teaches each other online and practices in our found public spaces, such as Skyline Park. Parkour-inspired parks and their supporting parkour groups across the world provide free fitness and community, bridging the gap and ensuring everyone has a way to play. The reality of parkour is not kids jumping on buildings, but people methodically, carefully, and playfully working to improve their movement and physical health.

Furthermore, the United States Parkour Association supports the broader initiative of establishing parkour-inspired parks and adult-friendly play spaces in the City of Denver. These types of play spaces have been utilized in other cities to provide cost-free fitness opportunities that serve kids, teens, and adults in one cost effective design and public space. While parkour is the design inspiration, these parks are multi-functional and appeal to a larger community of active lifestyles including rock climbing, calisthenics, bootcamps, and general outdoor fitness.

“Evidence clearly supports that movement and play are critical to life long, whole human health... not just for children, but teens, adults, and seniors as well. Beyond the physical benefits of strength, mobility, and dexterity, participation supports overall mental health. It has been shown to improve cognitive performance and learning, reduce the impact of stress, and

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support social and emotional development. It nurtures our confidence, curiosity, creativity, and sense of control. It brings us joy. So if play is so important — why do we stop? The answer to that question is complex, and presents the problem we, as a community, need to solve together.” states Caitlin Pontrella from the Board of USPK. Skyline Park lowers the barriers to play and health by creating accessibility for all. The physical access to the park provides the parkour community a social, physical, and cultural experience that can be found nowhere else in the United States. It’s uniqueness has brought together hundreds of practitioners and its features are easily recognizable by the international community at large.

Sharing spaces for movement and play is a declaration for everyone having access to health, play, and fitness. It takes both commitment and courageous action to stand for the parkour community that has created positive change with deep impact on the world. We ask for Denver Parks and Recreation to coordinate with the parkour community regarding the renovation of Skyline Park to preserve and adapt the fountain in Block 2 to meet the community’s needs and to make parkour widely accessible to the people of Denver.

Please reach out if there is any further support I can provide,

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Alan Tran
Director
United States Parkour Association