**Bipartisan Co-Chairs of the Mayors for Parks Coalition
Call on Presidential Candidates to Address
Urban Park and Recreation Needs**

To: Presidential Candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump
From: Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price and Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock

We are the co-chairs of the bipartisan Mayors for Parks Coalition, launched by the City Parks Alliance, in support of full funding and permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). City Parks Alliance and the Mayors for Parks Coalition advocate for strong park systems around the country.

Because of the pressing need for city park funding, for the first time, city park leaders are addressing Presidential candidates with an urgent question.

QUESTION
If you are elected President of the United States what would you and your administration do to help highlight the importance of city parks and advocate for additional city park funding, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund?

STATEMENT
City parks play a vital role in the social, economic and physical well-being of America's cities and their residents. Parks improve the economic health of America's cities by creating jobs, increasing property values and attracting the kinds of businesses, workforces, and private capital that make metropolitan areas economically competitive. Easy access to parks and greenways significantly boosts the health and wellness of urban citizens and creates a healthier environment in cities by improving air and water quality. And now, cities are creating and using parks as a green infrastructure approach to managing stormwater and preventing flooding.

The LWCF is an essential resource for cities as they seek to develop new or revitalize existing urban parks, green spaces, and recreation opportunities. 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. LWCF has supported more than 42,000 projects in 98% of the nation's counties. It is a smart and effective use of federal funds for all Americans. However, Congress has rarely funded the program at its $900 million authorized level. In fact, LWCF has only been funded at its authorized amount once in its history. It is important that the LWCF is permanently reauthorized and fully funded.

One of the most important measures of a healthy and vibrant city is the health of our park systems. Great cities are now characterized by great parks. City parks and natural areas improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, and make our neighborhoods attractive places to live and work. In Denver and Fort Worth, our parks, trails, greenways and natural areas – the "green" infrastructure - are as essential as the sports, cultural, residential and commerce-based cornerstones.

Today, 80 percent of us live in metropolitan areas, but city dwelling must not be allowed to cut us and our children off from the wonders of nature, and the comfort and refreshment that even a few hours outdoors can bring into our hectic urban lives. Our nation's investment in urban parks is essential in order to make our communities economically, environmentally and culturally vibrant, and most importantly, ensure a healthy and livable city for everyone to enjoy.

Mayors for Parks, a project of City Parks Alliance, is a national bipartisan coalition of mayors who understand the importance of urban parks in their communities, and are advocating for a strong Land and Water Conservation Fund.

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

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