

Yes on Parks and Open Space Statement on Park Hill Golf Course

(Shontel Lewis Answers Highlighted)

For the third time since November of 2021 (yes 301 and no 302 and no 2 O), voters in the City and County of Denver have sent a decisive message in overwhelming fashion that they wish to guarantee the open space and recreational future of the Park Hill Golf Course land. As the leaders of this multi-year fight, Save Open Space Denver feels it is our responsibility to lay out the principles that should guide any future discussions regarding this invaluable land. We expect the following:

1. That future City leaders will respect and honor the conservation easement and its conservation purposes of providing open space and recreation to the people of Denver
 - a. I agree that voters have spoken clearly after two election cycles of ballot measures over this parcel, and the city should respect the vote. It will be the job of the next City leadership to chart a way forward that makes this parcel actually usable by residents for the open space and recreational purposes.
2. That open space and recreation are the ONLY legal and appropriate uses for this land.
 - a. Without overstating the law, I do believe the people's preferred uses of the land for open space, as reflected in the recent ballot measure results, should triumph over any alternative usage which a court might find permissible.
3. If Westside Investment Partners chooses not to re-open golf operations, that City leaders will facilitate the City's purchase of the property for a designated city park at its fair market value (as encumbered by the easement) by using funds from the Referred Measure 2A 0.25% sales tax revenues
 - a. The city purchasing the property to create a city park would be appropriate, even if Westside were to attempt to re-open golf operations, as would utilizing 2A funds to finance the sale. Whatever recreational or open space purpose the property might be used for, my community engagement on this issue so far shows a significant share of residents who imagine and hope for a better use of the parcel than reverting to a golf course.
4. That the newly elected Mayor engage a wide range of unpaid Denver community volunteers in a measured and thoughtful planning process to define a broad outline of features and amenities that will activate the land consistent with the conservation easement's open space and recreational purposes
 - a. I do agree that a thoughtful planning process is necessary should the city fully acquire the parcel. Conducting that process before attaining public ownership and control would be putting the cart before the horse, and it's important to move at the speed of trust, especially given the contentious divides on this issue across the city.
5. That the outgoing administration will respect the next administration's ability to fully take on this once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen our parks system by refraining from any type of intervention in this process before July 17

- a. We all should want the outgoing administration to respect the voters and the incoming administration, whoever it may be, and refrain from any lasting interventions in the final days before the transfer of power is concluded.
6. That full appraisals of the property will be conducted to determine its fair market value both with the conservation easement in place and without the conservation easement in place.
 - a. I am somewhat confused as to the necessity of conducting a fair market value appraisal of the property without the conservation easement, considering that the easement is here to stay for the foreseeable future. But the city acquiring the property will necessitate an appraisal, and it likely wouldn't hurt to have another data point on fair market value.
7. That the incoming administration will comply with state law in its future dealings with the protected land.
 - a. It goes without saying that the incoming administration ought to comply with state law.
8. That the newly elected Mayor and City Council will repeal the small area plan approved on December 5, 2022, in accordance with the voters' rejection of Measure 2 O.
 - a. Yes, and a new area plan should be reflective of the voters intentions. The situation has changed dramatically, and the plan should change with it.