



September 21, 2023

Members of the Billings Parks and Recreation Board,

The Billings Chamber of Commerce lends its support to the BIRD's application for a matching grant to go towards activating North Park with a dog park and disc golf. We are strong proponents of parks as an amenity for residents and an essential community component for our businesses looking to attract and retain the best and brightest workforce.

There are also significant safety benefits that come with additional activation of parks. Research<sup>1</sup> into "appointment robbery," which entails a criminal consciously selecting where they will attempt to commit a crime, indicates criminals are very sensitive to CPTED principles like territorial reinforcement and natural surveillance. A couple criminals offered:

"If they ask me to meet up in an area that had like those special signs on top of their street signs or if I saw signs that said sum s\*\*\* like, 'Now entering some neighborhood', then I would feel like, uncomfortable and cancel that s\*\*\*."

"I would hella not pick a place that is crowded and I would not pick a place is has a lot of people coming and going."

We hear anecdotally about the need to improve safety at North Park. We saw first-hand the improvements to lighting around the community center while conducting a recent lighting analysis of the park. But more can be done to improve safety in North Park by increasing activation—the "people coming and going" that deter criminals—throughout the park. We encourage your support of this application for matching grant funds to develop a dog park and disc golf course.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel J. Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DANIEL J. BROOKS  
Business Advocacy Director  
Billings Chamber of Commerce

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<sup>1</sup> Vasquez, Arthur G., et. al., "Appointment Robbery: Do Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Strategies Work? Voices from the Street." *American Journal of Qualitative Research*. June 2020. Vol. 4 No. 1. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/8203>