



January 25, 2017

Mayor Michael B. Hancock  
1437 N. Bannock St., Room 350  
Denver, CO 80202

Re: RiNo Park Buildings as Dedicated, Affordable Creative Space

**RiNo Art District**

**2901 Blake Street, Suite 165  
Denver, Colorado 80205  
303.345.8285**

The RiNo Art District is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization, and serves as the Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO).

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Dear Mayor Hancock:

In our quickly-changing neighborhood of RiNo (as is also true in this quickly growing City of Denver) we are racing against time to find creative solutions to ensure that now, and always, RiNo holds a place and space for everybody. We are at the forefront of conversations on homelessness and are being asked to support new solutions in the form of creative housing and service solutions. We are seeing our DIY spaces – the very spaces that have helped foster a young, creative community in Denver – being threatened, their safety and viability questioned. While trying to help get homeless off the streets, we are watching others get pushed out of the places they work, live and create.

RiNo is working every single day to come up with creative solutions. The RiNo BID has funded the advancement of Artspace. We are supporting circHouses and investing in other support services for homeless. We are raising money and looking to change policy to ensure the DIY community has a home. Bigger solutions are needed, and we're working as fast as we can as a neighborhood to advance those.

***There is one big idea you can help us advance right now. A project that could be a win for everybody.***

Over the last year, we have been advocating (pushing, even) for the City to come to an agreement with the RiNo Art District to keep and manage the two buildings that will eventually become part of RiNo Park (the EEB Building at 35<sup>th</sup> and Arkins Ct. and the Interstate Building adjacent to it). When RiNo Park was envisioned several years ago, the idea was that these buildings would be demolished to make way for open park space. Then as the City initiated 30% design on RiNo Park, the community made it clear that they wanted the buildings to stay, to be repurposed for a creative use to compliment the park space. Initial conversations were held around how these buildings might serve the neighborhood, and preliminary discussions with the Denver Public Library about a partnership to create a unique library makerspace were held. The design documents that have been created to date for RiNo Park continue to show these buildings being preserved, but their programming, management and ultimate use have not (as of yet) been decided.

Then, a few months ago, we got word that the City was undertaking a “market study” of the buildings to determine their financial feasibility. All the while, RiNo has had an offer on the table to take over the buildings, fund their redevelopment and take on their management, at no cost to the City.

Now, with all these other issues around affordability looming, we are asking as a community for the City to stop looking towards studies and hoping for commercial success in these buildings, and come to the table with us to give these buildings a future that's appropriate – ***as permanent, affordable creative and community space for the neighborhood.***

Partnering with the RiNo Art District on the buildings at RiNo Park directly addresses and supports the Imagine 20/20 Cultural Plan's Seven Vision Elements: integration, amplification, accessibility, lifelong learning, support of local talent, economic vitality, and collective leadership. It also provides as least the start to a solution around how to ensure affordable, safe space for our artist community.

We are offering our commitment to success, our financial support, and a willingness to be a complete partner in making this a win not just for RiNo, not just for our creative community, but for our neighborhoods, our residents, our children and the City as a whole. It's a tremendous opportunity at a perfect time. Together, we could set a new precedent for partnership and leadership.

We'll be following up with a meeting request to discuss. Time is of the essence, so we hope you will act quickly.

Regards,



Jamie Licko  
President, RiNo Art District

CC:

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