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Mayor

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October 31, 2022

Vicki Eppler  
President, Congress Park Neighbors RNO  
Email: [victoriaeppler@outlook.com](mailto:victoriaeppler@outlook.com)

*Via email*

**RE: Congress Park Neighborhood Solid Waste Collection Services**

Dear Ms. Eppler:

Thank you for contacting the City Attorney's Office of the City and County of Denver ("City") regarding waste collection services in portions of the Congress Park neighborhood. While our office does not provide legal analysis to members of the public, we write to respond to the factual assertions outlined in your email.

Starting in 2016, Solid Waste Management ("SWM") rolled out operational changes to improve the City's waste collection system by introducing cart-based collection services utilizing automatic trucks. The purposes of these Citywide changes were to enhance cleanliness of alleys and neighborhoods, increase recycling, improve collection efficiency, and support safer alleys and neighborhoods. Additional positive impacts include improved health and safety of SWM staff and reduced incidences of property damage.

Prior to beginning the Citywide roll out of cart-based collections in 2016, SWM officials visited every alleyway in the City, including those in Congress Park, to conduct visual inspections and take measurements. Where an alleyway is too narrow to permit safe and unobstructed collection from automated trucks, curbside collection of trash and large items became necessary. This is the case for alleyways in portions of Congress Park, where collection changes began in 2021, and is the case for all other alleyways in the City with similarly restricted physical configurations.

Notwithstanding these changes, curbside collection is not a new practice for residents in these portions of Congress Park or other locations in the City. While the process outlined above is with respect to changes for *trash and large item* collections, residents in these areas of Congress Park had already been successfully utilizing the City's curbside collection services for *recycling and compost* prior to 2021.

You are correct that SWM officials have met with Congress Park residents on numerous occasions regarding waste collection services. However, your assertion that SWM *admitted they should have visited the neighborhood before making this change* is incorrect. SWM officials did make other statements at meetings, including acknowledging that, despite mailing notices of

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changes to all affected residents, they could have done additional outreach. Your assertion is also factually inaccurate. As described in the preceding paragraphs, SWM officials visited Congress Park for alleyway inspections prior to any collection changes; observations of the alleyways during those inspections were the very reason for the changes.

You are also correct that SWM offers reasonable accommodations to residents requiring collection assistance. The City continues to encourage impacted Congress Park residents to contact SWM if such accommodations are needed. However, based upon the information known at this time, we disagree with any and all assertions or implications that SWM's collection practices are discriminatory or illegal.

We appreciate your comments to help us better understand resident concerns and welcome any additional feedback regarding your waste collection services. For your information, residents may reach SWM for waste collection reasonable accommodations by calling 311 or (720) 913-1311. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned. Thank you.

Sincerely,

s/ Lindsay Walton

Lindsay Walton  
Assistant City Attorney  
Denver City Attorney's Office