



Duluth Climbers Coalition
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Councilors,

On Monday, August 31, you will be voting on a resolution (15-0471-R) to authorize the acceptance of the Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter as a document to formally advance an important vision for all Duluth's children, and to guide future programming opportunities and programming partnerships within the city.

As climbers, we understand the importance of not only connecting to the outdoors through recreation and adventure, but also of mastering skill sets that can promote self-confidence and offer healthy alternatives to traditional sports. For many of us, our first exposure to climbing (or even to outdoor recreation) came as children, through the efforts of teachers or other adult authorities who embraced the outdoors and recognized the potential of nontraditional avenues of physical education. These experiences were more than "single exposure" events. They were situations where the adults identified kids who might benefit from mastering a nontraditional sport or activity, and so worked to give those children a chance to develop the mental and physical skills necessary to be successful—the definition of personal growth. The fact that the activity also provided a strong connection to the outdoors was an integral part of the equation. We know from personal experience how these opportunities can be life-changing, instilling values and passions that transcend the moment and the activity, and how they can provide a framework for future success.

Unfortunately, these opportunities were/are sporadic and not typically the result of established curriculum or programming. We believe the Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter is an opportunity to integrate a philosophy that will promote healthy outdoor experiences, and will help to ensure they are available to any child throughout the city, regardless of location or economic circumstance. By seeking to merge two of Duluth's greatest resources, our youth and our diverse outdoor environment, the Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter is a strong statement of our city's values and a tremendous tool for guiding our community's future.

The Duluth Climbers Coalition strongly supports the Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter, and we urge you to do so as well.

Thank you.