



September 15, 2013

Dear **Name of Neighborhood Association**,

Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) wanted to contact you about our Omaha Tobacco-free Parks initiative and ask for your support to create a healthier and a more vibrant community. As a community organization, your group possesses a good understanding of the issues that surround your homes and community spaces. You have clear goals and aspirations to better your community and do what you can to advocate for clean, healthier, and safer neighborhoods. MOTAC is a coalition of members who are public health professionals and experts in tobacco prevention. As members of the community, we also have similar goals to extend a safe, healthy, and clean community for all citizens in the Metro area.

The National Parks and Recreation Association recognized the importance of tobacco-free park policies in their November 2012 issue of *Parks & Recreation*. Articles in the magazine explain that there are tobacco-free city-wide and county-wide policies that can be seen across the nation in states like Minneapolis, New York, Texas, and Iowa. Even cities next door to us are taking the step towards implementing policies against tobacco use in parks such as Lincoln, La Vista, Fremont, and Grand Island.

A recent study conducted by a UNMC graduate student found that 86% of Douglas County residents surveyed supported tobacco free park policies. In an effort to achieve a healthier and safer living community and follow a national trend that has wide support, MOTAC recently launched the "Omaha Tobacco-Free Parks Initiative" campaign. The goal is to eliminate tobacco use from our parks to ensure healthy safe environments for our children, improve park appearance, and enhance social norms promoting tobacco-free environments.

MOTAC asks for your support to move this initiative forward. We have enclosed an endorsement form for your organization to fill out and return to us. As we work toward reaching our goal of a city-wide tobacco-free parks policy, we look forward to collaborating with you. If you have any other questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/omahatobaccofreeparks and join the movement to create tobacco-free parks!

Respectfully Yours,

Michael Robinson, President

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