

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-1242

From Imagining a Great City to Creating It – Honoring the Honorable Mayor Federico Peña

WHEREAS, on July 1, 1983, Colorado Supreme Court Justice Joseph Quinn swore in Federico Peña as Denver's 41st Mayor, and who then confronted pressing challenges with determination and optimism, declaring *"We know we can imagine a great city, and now we must create it"*; and

WHEREAS, it is both timely and instructive to recognize the transformative leadership of Mayor Federico Peña and the Peña Administration, whose vision and accomplishments continue to guide and inspire the work of today's city administration and the people of Denver; and

WHEREAS, we recognize and honor the courage of Mayor Peña's bold and historic actions transforming Denver with strategic economic and infrastructure investments, led by a dynamic team that included women, African Americans, Latinos, LGBTQIA+ individuals, labor representatives, environmental and neighborhood advocates, and people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, within months of taking office, Mayor Peña established the Denver Baseball Commission, rallied regional support for Major League Baseball, hosted exhibition games, convinced Commissioner Peter Ueberroth of Denver's baseball readiness, supported legislation to create a regional stadium taxing district, campaigned for its passage, and served on the site selection committee that chose Lower Downtown Denver (LoDo) for Coors Field all culminating in Colorado being awarded a Major League Baseball franchise in July of 1991; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Peña championed landmark civic projects, including construction of the Colorado Convention Center to replace the outdated Currigan Hall, as well as the new Downtown Denver Public Library; and

WHEREAS, he envisioned and led the redevelopment of the Central Platte Valley transforming 600 acres of abandoned land along the Platte River by reconstructing viaducts, building infrastructure, creating new parks and open space, attracting new development beginning with Elitch Gardens; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Peña launched and advanced the vision for Denver International Airport by securing \$501 million in federal funding and \$704 million in airport bonds, annexing 52 square miles from Adams County, completing the Environmental Impact Study, acquiring acres of essential property, embracing the iconic terminal roof design, and initiating construction of an airport that today provides more than \$47 billion in annual economic impact, employs over 40,000 people, and stands as Colorado's largest employer, all while envisioning the future redevelopment of the Stapleton site; and

WHEREAS, he issued the Executive Order establishing Denver's One Percent for the Arts program, which later became law, and championed creation of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, securing voter approval across the six-county metro area and earning him the Rex Morgan Award for Lifetime Leadership in the Arts; and

WHEREAS, he fought for the creation of the Lower Downtown Historic District, preserving 23 city blocks that became the vibrant neighborhood known today as LoDo, for which he was honored with the Keystone Award for Lifetime Achievement in Historic Preservation; and



WHEREAS, Mayor Peña led the successful redevelopment of the Cherry Creek Shopping Mall, which set a national record for sales per square foot in its first year, and spearheaded a metropolitan effort to reduce Clean Air Act violations from 56 days to just one; and

WHEREAS, he elevated city planning with dozens of neighborhood plans, including the Downtown Area Plan and the Central Platte Valley Plan, and supported fundraising for the redevelopment of the Buell Theatre; and

WHEREAS, after his historic service as Denver’s first Latino mayor, Federico Peña went on to serve in President Bill Clinton’s cabinet as the first Latino Secretary of Transportation, securing \$126 million in 1996 for RTD’s Southwest Light Rail line, and later as Secretary of Energy, where he accelerated the cleanup of the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility to safeguard future generations, and became the only Colorado citizen to lead two presidential cabinet positions; and

WHEREAS, he continues to serve Denver and Colorado by co-chairing the campaign to build the Federico Peña Southwest Family Health Center in West Denver, chairing Governor Jared Polis’ Emergency Council for Economic Stabilization and Growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, serving as co-chair of Mayor Mike Johnston’s Transition Committee and serving as a member of the Vibrant Denver Bond Committee.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. The Denver City Council honors and recognizes Mayor Federico Peña and his administration for the visionary leadership, historic accomplishments, and enduring contributions to the City and County of Denver as dedicated and transformative public servants.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted Mayor Federico Peña and Cindy Peña.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL August 25, 2025

Amursh P. Sanderson

PRESIDENT

