

CHERRY CREEK AREA COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY

Councilmember Amanda Sawyer commissioned a survey of Cherry Creek residents and patrons to identify community priorities. The survey was conducted online from February 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024. Total responses received is 1,027¹.

Most respondents believe that Cherry Creek is a good place to live with a high quality of life. Top qualities of the community include feeling safe in parks and playgrounds during the day, and cleanliness of the neighborhood. The least desirable indicators are transportation related including traffic, interaction with scooters, and safety crossing streets.

When asked to indicate desired public service improvements, the highest ranked items include traffic, pedestrian safety, and safety walking home at night. Most respondents are upset with the volume of traffic and the unsafe conditions that it creates. Many respondents feel that traffic can be addressed by the city even though pass-through trips make up a significant portion of the cars in the area during the peak period. Many of these pass-through trips originate in areas outside of Denver, and thus, difficult for the city to influence.

Should local funding be obtained, beyond regular city investment, the desired improvements include improved lighting in residential areas, security services beyond police, enhanced street crossings, greenway improvements and micro-transit.

¹ Note that 178 were not eligible respondents and thus removed from the analysis. This total represents all eligible respondents.

A. BIG PICTURE INDICATORS

Big picture indicators are designed to assess overall opinions about the area. The survey results show that Cherry Creek is seen as a desirable place to live with a high quality of life. Government services and investment in the area are sufficient but not great, with the ease of travel being less than satisfactory.

Respondents were asked to rate the following indicators on a scale of 1-5, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. Averages are provided below.



COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide comments to support their ranking. The most common comments made by respondents include:

- Cherry Creek is growing too fast.
- Traffic and parking are challenging.
- Construction is everywhere.
- Unsafe for pedestrians.

B. SAFETY INDICATORS

Public safety is critical to the vitality and function of a community. Respondents indicated that they feel safe during the day but offer some concern about safety at nighttime. Transportation related issues continue to be an area of concern including crossing streets and interacting with scooters that are often used on sidewalks and in other pedestrian focused areas. Surprisingly, cycling safety was somewhat satisfactory given the magnitude of desired improvements identified in Denver Moves Cherry Creek.

Respondents were asked to rate the following indicators on a scale of 1-5, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. Averages are provided below.



COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide comments to support their ranking. The most common comments made by respondents include:

- Need more police patrolling the area.
- Need better bike infrastructure.
- Speeding cars on 1st Avenue. Feels like a freeway.
- Too many drivers run stop signs.
- Scooters are a problem in the area.

C. NON-SAFETY INDICATORS

Non-safety indicators relate to other aspects of the community that address quality-of-life factors such as cleanliness, tree canopy, and noise. Respondents were asked to rate the following indicators on a scale of 1-5, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. Averages are provided below.



COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide comments to support their ranking. The most common comments made by respondents include:

- The neighborhood and area are clean and beautiful.
- Drag racing, motorcycles and leaf blowers make too much noise.
- Trees need to be better maintained.
- Too much construction related dust.
- Cars are challenging for Cherry Creek.

D. QUALITY OF SERVICES

Survey respondents were then asked to rank the quality of services provided in Cherry Creek. Police response, garbage pickup, and Denver's 311 resident portal ranked highest. Special events in Cherry Creek North Business District, hosted by the Cherry Creek North Business Improvement District, ranked high as expected given the regional popularity of these events.

Electric vehicle charging ranked high even though there are few charging stations in the area. This may be due to residents having charging capacity at their homes.

Public transportation also ranked higher than expected, but given the profile of respondents, few are transit dependent and most likely already own a car.

Respondents' opinions about sidewalks varied, but overall people are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with sidewalks. Although several comments were made about a particular location needing improvement. Responses may be influenced by the recent passage of the sidewalk initiative shifting responsibility for sidewalks from property owners to the city.

COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide comments to support their ranking. The most common comments made by respondents include:

- Cherry Creek North BID is doing a great job keeping streets and sidewalks safe and clean.
- Landscaping on 1st Avenue needs improvements.
- Need more parking with less overbearing enforcement.
- Eliminate parking fees.
- Homelessness is a problem.
- Don't always receive a response from 311.
- Need more frequent bus service.
- The city needs to enforce snow shoveling.



E. NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were asked to identify and rank needed improvements from the city. Seventy-one percent of respondents feel that more could be done to address traffic. Most comments were strongly worded, desiring cars drivers to pay attention to stops signs and pedestrian crosswalks, slowing down speed, maintaining mufflers, and not congesting the streets. Very few comments offered realistic solutions beyond improved bike facilities, and a few mentioned a more frequent bus service and micro-transit (shuttle, shared rides, etc.).

There seems to be a general sense of diminishing quality of life directly relating to the intensity of development and traffic. A surprising number of comments demanded free and abundant parking, and free flowing streets like it was when they first moved to Cherry Creek. Several comments focused on Cherry Creek not turning into downtown Denver.

Many comments blame traffic congestion on new development leading to comments such as “no more development, no

more traffic”. Thus, the city controls congestions since the city controls development. A few pointed to pass-through traffic as being a key factor.

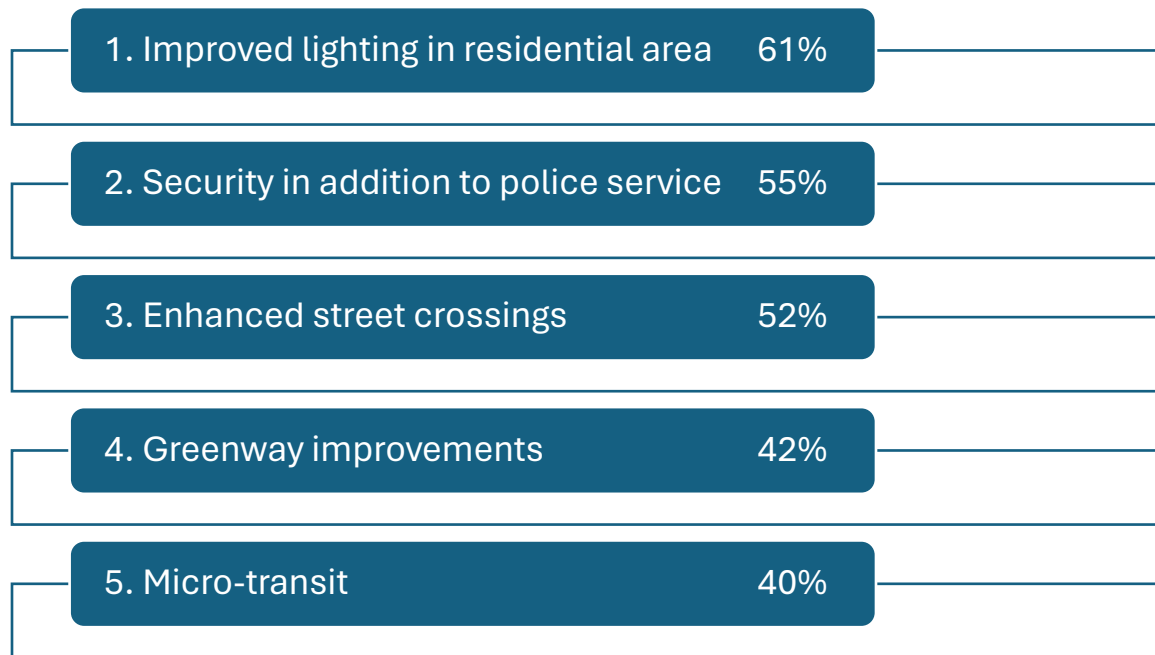
Some dangerous sidewalks and potholes were mentioned. But as stated previously, the responsibility of sidewalk maintenance will be shifting from the property owner to the city.

Homelessness was a common concern, yet little more than a third of respondents feel that the city could do more. This may be related to the sense that the city has already done a lot in this area. Some mention pan-handling as a problem that is associated with immigration.



F. DESIRED IMPROVEMENT BEYOND PROPOSED PUBLIC INVESTMENT

Community improvements beyond regular public investment and services were ranked by respondents. The ranking included the option for people writing in an investment or service. Respondent were asked to identify their top 5 items. The following chart displays the top 5 items.



Other items from the survey

6. Landscaping 33%	10. Promotional events for biking, walking, and using transit 21%
7. Public Art 30%	11. Wayfinding 12%
8. Additional creek pedestrian bridge 28%	12. E-bike library 11%
9. Bike paths 25%	13. Branded bus stop 10%

A total of 245 write-in items were listed. Many comments offer further detail on selected rankings. Top write-in options include:

- More free parking.
- Dog park and waste stations.
- Street calming.

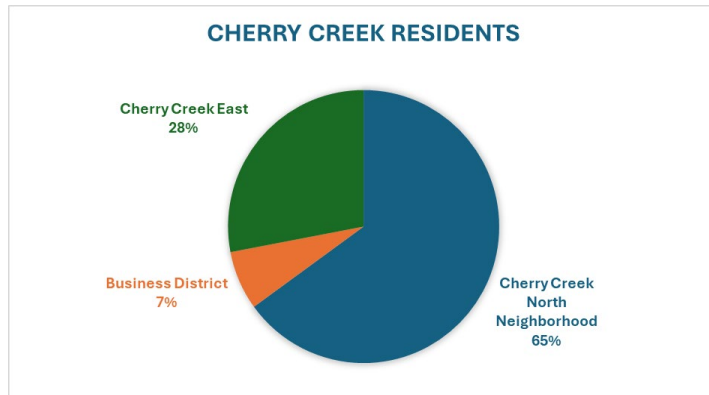
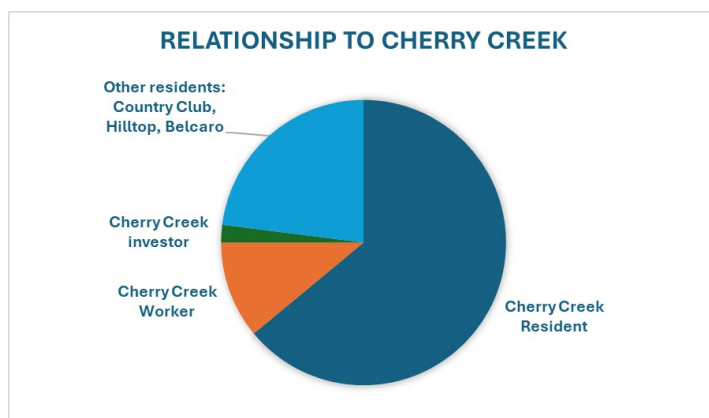
G. RESPONDENT PROFILE

Respondents were asked if they live in Cherry Creek, defined as Cherry Creek North Neighborhood, Cherry Creek North Business District, and Cherry Creek East, 64% of respondents are residents. Of the remaining respondents, 11% work in Cherry Creek, 2% own an asset in Cherry Creek, and 23% indicated that they 1) shop and dine in Cherry Creek, 2) live adjacent to Cherry Creek, and 3) are a frequent visitor to Cherry Creek. Nearby residents had a similar response pattern to Cherry Creek residents.

The only respondents that were not included in the analysis were those that had no relationship with Cherry Creek. Comments suggest that Country Club, Hilltop, and Belcaro residents consider their neighborhood to be part of Cherry Creek.

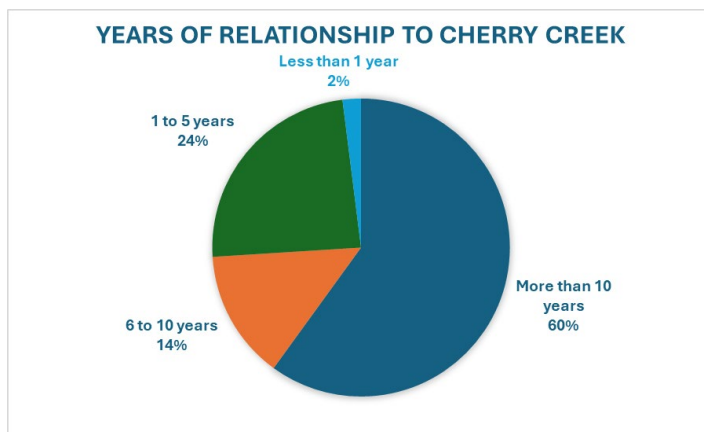
Cherry Creek residents who responded to the survey included 1) 65% Cherry Creek North Neighborhood, 2) 7% Cherry Creek North Business District, and 3) 28% Cherry Creek East.

As noted previously, 178 respondents were removed from the analysis due to not having a direct relationship with Cherry Creek. These respondents self-identified as not having a relationship. No other respondents were removed from the analysis.



Most respondents have had a relationship with Cherry Creek for more than 10 years. This is consistent with the general profile for the area. The lengths of this relationship explain, in part, why so many comments and responses refer to observed changes in the area. Roughly a quarter of respondents have had this relationship for 5 years or less.

The length of the relationship, coupled with the observed changes, lend themselves to a sense of entitlement for longer term residents.



Income levels were higher than average as would be expected for this area. However, it should be noted that a significant number of respondents are at retirement age meaning that household incomes do not necessarily represent the wealth of residents. One-third of respondents did not answer this question.

Those who responded include:

- 50% of households earn more than \$200,000 annually.
- 29% of households earn between \$101,000 and \$200,000 annually.
- 18% of households earn between \$51,000 and \$100,000 annually.
- 3% of households earn \$50,000 annually or less.

Female respondents represented 56% of responses, male 35%, and 9 other or not indicated.

Based on age of respondent, 45% were 65 years or older, 36% were 45 to 64 years, 14% were 25 to 44 years, and 5% preferred not to respond. Only one respondent was under 25 years old.

