Cherry Creek Needs Assessment: Plan Support and Next Steps

District 5 Council Office
May 2024

Executive Summary

In 2023, Cherry Creek was the second highest revenue-generating area in the City and County of Denver.[1] This neighborhood has seen – and is currently seeing – intense amounts of development activity that has placed strains on the neighborhood. While many of these developments will be positive additions to the neighborhood, the construction period has been a challenge. When these developments are completed, the infrastructure will need to be improved to accommodate the additional density. Due to the City and County of Denver's equity principles, there has been historic underinvestment of City dollars into this neighborhood, and that lack of investment is expected to continue.

To respond to this problem, Denver City Councilmember Amanda Sawyer partnered with Transportation Solutions, the Cherry Creek North Neighborhood Association, the Cherry Creek North Business Improvement District, and the Cherry Creek East Association to commission an online survey from February 1, 2024 to March 31, 2024.[2] The purpose of this survey was to understand resident feelings about existing quality-of-life issues in Cherry Creek, and to identify any desired improvements that could be made should there ever be an additional funding source created that is dedicated to investing solely in the Cherry Creek statistical neighborhood. This report compliments the data analysis of the online survey by tying reported desired improvements to Adopted Plan support and offering next steps.

Based on the City and County of Denver's equity principles, the likelihood of investment in Cherry Creek is low. The potential of additional funding sources to meet the needs and desires of Cherry Creek residents should be examined.[3]

[1] See *Figure 1.*
[2] Survey results can be seen at: https://bit.ly/CherryCreekReport
[3] See *Figure 2* for the rankings display.

10-Highest Sales Tax Generating Neighborhoods in Denver in 2023	
Neighborhood	**Amount**
Union Station	10.55%
Cherry Creek	9.26%
DIA	8.72%
Central Park	6.87%
Marston	4.85%
Central Business District (CBD)	4.68%
Montbello	3.49%
Hampden South	2.88%
Northeast Park Hill	2.74%
Baker	2.73%

Figure 1, data provided by the Denver Department of Economic Development and Opportunity.

City and County of Denver Adopted Plans

The City and County of Denver has multiple Adopted Plans that will be referenced in this report. These plans have been created with community input, and some have been approved by Denver City Council. These plans guide planning and decision-making by City agencies. The Adopted Plans that will be reviewed in this report are:

- Blueprint Denver, which is a citywide land use and transportation plan that was first adopted in 2002 and updated in 2019.
- Comprehensive Plan 2040, which was adopted in 2019 and is a broad, citywide, 20-year vision for Denver and its people.
- Gameplan for a Healthy City, which was adopted in 2019 and is Denver Park and Recreation's citywide, 20-year vision for creating parks, gathering places, activities, and more that are easily accessed, well-maintained and equitable in every neighborhood.
- Cherry Creek Area Plan, which was adopted in 2012 and is the neighborhood-specific plan that guides land use and transportation planning efforts through 2030.
- Denver Moves: Cherry Creek, which was adopted in 2024 and is a strategy for the development of future transportation infrastructure and program that will support the City's mobility goals in the Cherry Creek Neighborhood and surrounding area.
- Cherry Creek Area Greenway Implementation Plan, which was adopted in 2018 and provides a plan to improve access and enhancements to the Cherry Creek Trail.

Tying Desired Improvement to Plan Support

The Cherry Creek Needs Assessment survey identified five themes throughout the survey, which were also reflected in the ranking of the top five improvements respondents would like to see within the Cherry Creek statistical neighborhood. Those five themes are:

- Expanded patrol of private security services
- Better lighting in residential areas
- Traffic calming measures
- Greenway improvements
- Micro-transit

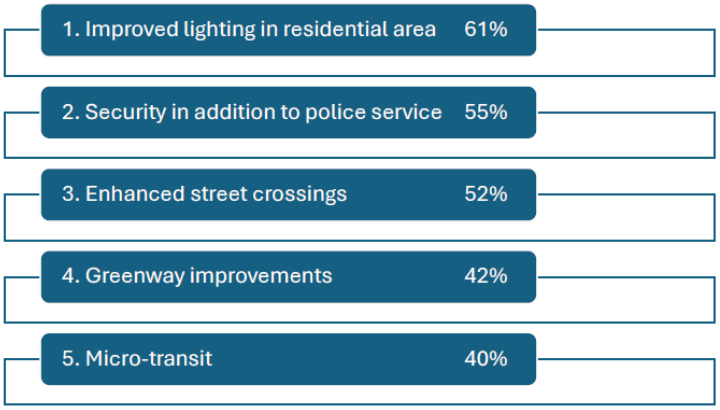

Figure 2, taken from the data analysis of the Cherry Creek Needs Assessment Survey.

1. Improved Lighting in Residential Areas

The top-rated desired improvement by respondents is improved lighting in residential areas. In 2023, Councilwoman Sawyer's Office worked with the Denver Police Department to overlay crime heat maps with the location of light poles to identify areas that could benefit from additional lighting to deter crime. The lighting study of the Cherry Creek statistical neighborhood identified two locations that could benefit from additional lighting: 1st Avenue & Milwaukee Street and Cook Street & Ellsworth Avenue.[4]

Councilmember Sawyer's Office has requested additional lighting in these two areas from the Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI). DOTI denied both requests, citing a lack of funding. The District 5 Council Office has also submitted these two locations as

[4] The Cherry Creek lighting study can be found at Bit.ly/CCLightingStudy.

Micro-budget Priorities for the 2024 and 2025 budget years.[5] For the 2024 budget year, these funding requests were not approved. The 2025 budget cycle is not yet completed. Based on historical responses from City Agencies for this request, the Council Office believes it is unlikely the funding requests will be approved.

However, Denver's Adopted Plans offer support for additional lighting in residential areas:

Blueprint Denver

- ✓ Quality of Life Infrastructure, Recommendation 5.C: "Identify public safety improvements to streets, including appropriate levels of lighting."[6]

Comprehensive Plan 2040

- ✓ Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods, Goal 9.A to "Encourage design and new development to improve public health and safety"
- ✓ Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods, Goal 9.C to "Actively involve communities in strategies to promote safety."[7]

Separately, there is precedent in the Cherry Creek statistical neighborhood for additional pedestrian lighting in residential areas, for example, in Cherry Creek East. Between 2000 and 2012, the Cherry Creek East Design Guidelines were enforced by the City and County of Denver, but due to a technicality, the City stopped enforcing these rules in 2012.[8] These Design Guidelines required property owners to install outdoor pedestrian lighting fixtures. To re-instate this outdoor lighting requirement, the Cherry Creek East Association worked to add a design overlay in the Denver Zoning Code. The Cherry Creek East Residential Design Overlay District (DO-10) was passed in February 2023 by Denver City Council.[9] Among other things, the design overlay requires of developers to install a minimum of two outdoor light fixtures.[10] These outdoor lighting fixtures have enhanced the pedestrian experience in Cherry Creek East and they are an asset to the neighborhood.

2. Security in Addition to Police Service

[5] Micro-budget Priorities are District-specific funding requests from Members of Denver City Council that can only be submitted annually during the City's budgeting process.
[6] Blueprint Denver (Page 121) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/blueprint-denver/blueprint_denver.pdf
[7] Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Page 35) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf
[8] "Cherry Creek East Design Guideline Background – July 2021" https://www.cherrycreekeast.org/editor_upload/File/Development/Cherry%20Creek%20East%20Design%20Guidelines%20Background%207%206%202021.pdf
[9] Cherry Creek East design guidelines can be found here: https://www.cherrycreekeast.org/editor_upload/File/Development/Cherry%20Creek%20East%20Design%20Guidelines.pdf
[10] Article 9 of the Denver Zoning Code. Section 9.4.5.14.2.b https://denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/8/community-planning-and-development/documents/zoning/denver-zoning_code/denver_zoning_code_article9_special_districts.pdf

The second highest rated desired improvement identified from the survey is the expansion of private security services in addition to police service. Currently, the Cherry Creek North Business Improvement District (BID) funds and operates a private security firm that covers the 16-block area of the district.[11] The BID's private security firm provides 24/7 mobile and foot patrols of the district and offers courtesy escorts to district employees to their vehicles and conducts door-to-door checks overnight to ensure businesses are properly secured. The funding of this service is made possible by the self-taxing authority of the Business Improvement District.

There is no mention of expanding private security services in any of Denver's Adopted Plans. However, there is a broad mention of tailoring the unique public safety needs to fit each neighborhood:

Comprehensive Plan 2040

- ✓ Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods, Goal 9.B: "Address social harms such as mental health, substance abuse, fear of crime and traffic-related deaths through policing that responds to the unique needs of each neighborhood."[12] Additionally, there is precedent for a neighborhood to fund a private security firm for neighborhood patrols. The Country Club neighborhood, directly west of Cherry Creek has a private security firm, as does the Crestmoor neighborhood just east of Cherry Creek. The Country Club Historic District neighborhood organization pays around $30,000 per year for a private security services contract with Advanced Professional Security (APS). This private security service includes two patrols during daytime hours. APS is not authorized to engage any person in active situation and the service offers armed or unarmed patrols. Additionally, there is a separate group of homeowners that pay for private security from 5 P.M. to 7 A.M., and this service only applies to those homeowners who pay into the service.

[11] See *Figure 3* for a map of the BID's geographical boundaries.
[12] Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Page 34) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf

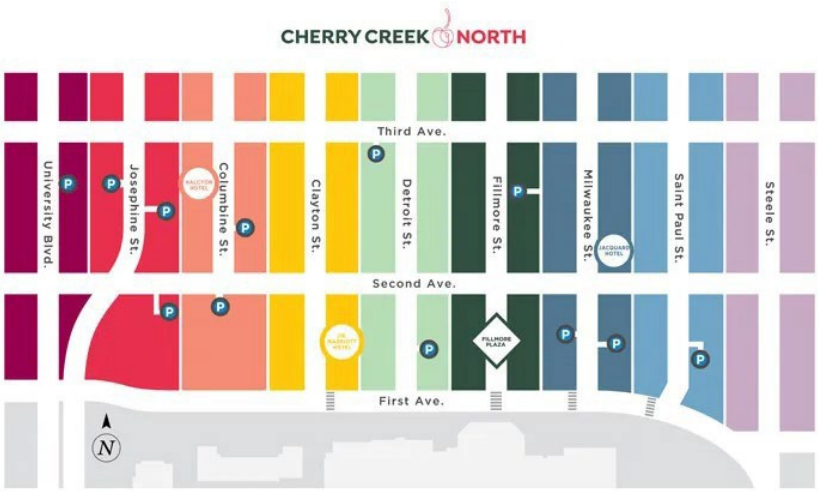

Figure 3, taken from the Cherry Creek North Business Improvement District (BID) website.

3. Enhanced Street Crossings

The third highest-rated desired improvement from the survey is the enhancement of street crossings to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. In the survey, respondents repeatedly mentioned feeling unsafe when crossing the street. Cherry Creek is one of the most walkable neighborhoods in Denver, but street crossings often don't reflect that. There is myriad Adopted Plan support for enhanced street crossings in Cherry Creek:

Blueprint Denver

- ✓ "People walking (including those using mobility devices) are the priority in the design of all streets. Certain streets can be further enhanced to create vibrant public spaces and encourage walking."[13] Other features of pedestrian safety mentioned in Blueprint Denver are high-visibility crosswalks; signalized crossings; signal timing that prioritizes pedestrians, such as leading pedestrian intervals or all pedestrian-phases; medians or pedestrian crossing refuge islands; curb bulb outs, which shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians.

Comprehensive Plan 2040

- ✓ Connected, Safe and Accessible Places, Goal 6: "Build and maintain safe bicycle and pedestrian networks."[14]

[13] Blueprint Denver (Page 168) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/blueprint-denver/blueprint_denver.pdf
[14] Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Page 41) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf

Cherry Creek Area Plan

- ✓ Section A – A Connected Cherry Creek, walkability is identified as a key issue. "High volume, arterial streets in and adjacent to Cherry Creek can seem like barriers to pedestrians. However, opportunities exist on these streets and with private property to improve walkability through enhanced pedestrian amenities and streetscape elements as appropriate"[15] It goes on to say that "These locations show particular opportunity for improvements to the pedestrian realm that can both improve a pedestrian's experience and better balance multi-modal needs through the integration of land use and transportation." Other mentions of enhancing street crossings include:
  - ✓ A Walkable Cherry Creek, Recommendation A.2.A, Pedestrian Priority Zone (PPZ) calls for "balance[ing] the needs of multiple transportation modes and provide clearly marked pedestrian crossings" and "additional enhancements that can help to provide the most comfortable and convenient crossing points along these multi-modal streets to facilitate connects to major destinations."[16] [17]
  - ✓ A Walkable Cherry Creek, Recommendation A.2.B, Pedestrian Priority Intersections says that "To ensure that these multi-modal streets provide high quality connections for pedestrians and cyclists, priority intersections on arterial streets where the pedestrian crossing movement should be enhanced to better balance the use of the right-of way."[18]
  - ✓ Streets and Streetscapes, Recommendation C.3.C, Streetscapes and Pedestrian Amenities says to, "Encourage the use of streetscape amenities that promote high levels of pedestrian activity, physical comfort and visual interest including pedestrian lighting, seating, landscaping, trash receptacles, bike racks and curb extensions at intersections."[19] [20]

[15] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 13)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[16] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 16)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[17] See *Figure 4* for a map of the Cherry Creek PPZ and identification of priority intersections.
[18] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 16)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[19] Curb extensions are defined as an area where the sidewalk and curb are extended into the parking lane, resulting in a narrower roadway, usually to shorten pedestrian crossing distance. (Often referred to as a "bulbout" or "neckdown")
[20] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 43)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf

- ✓ Economic Vitality, Recommendation D.1.D, Walkability Equals Prosperity says, "Providing attractive connections within the Cherry Creek area assures that the subareas are well connected and interrelated."[21]

Adopted in 2012, the plan identified specific locations for enhanced street crossings:

- Cherry Creek South Drive & Dakota Avenue
- Dakota Avenue & Colorado Boulevard*
- Alameda Avenue & Colorado Boulevard*
- Alameda Avenue & Garfield Street
- Alameda Avenue & Madison Street
- Steele Street & Bayaud Avenue*
- Bayaud Avenue & Madison Street*
- Steele Street & Ellsworth Avenue*
- 1st Avenue & Steele Street*
- 1st Avenue & Adams Street*
- 1st Avenue & Madison Street*
- 1st Avenue & Garfield Street
- 1st Avenue & Colorado Boulevard*
- 1st Avenue & Milwaukee Street*
- 1st Avenue & Fillmore Street*
- 1st Avenue & Detroit Street*
- 1st Avenue & Clayton Street*
- 1st Avenue & University Boulevard*
- 2nd Avenue & University Boulevard*
- 2nd Avenue & Josephine Street*
- 3rd Avenue & University Boulevard*
- 3rd Avenue & Josephine Street*
- 3rd Avenue & Colorado Boulevard*
- 4th Avenue & University Boulevard*
- 4th Avenue & Josephine Street*
- 6th Avenue & Columbine Street*
- 6th Avenue & Saint Paul Street*
- 6th Avenue & Garfield Street
- 6th Avenue & Colorado Boulevard

** means that the intersection has been identified in both the 2012 CCAP and the 2024 DMCC Plan. In over 10 years, there has been no significant investment to these intersections by the City & County of Denver.*

[21] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 47)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf

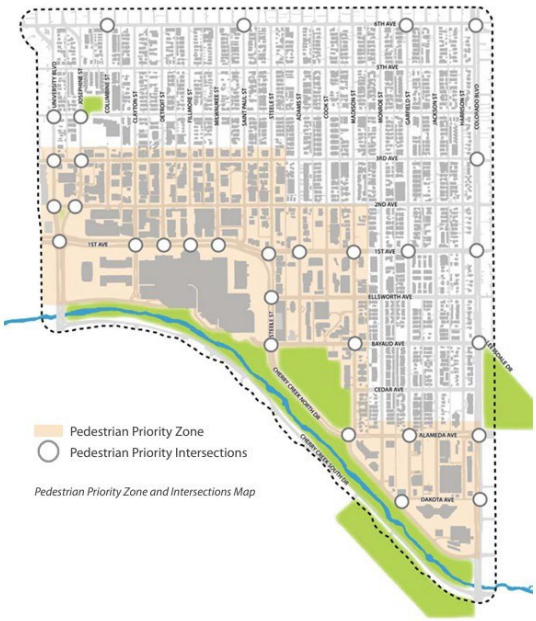

Figure 4, map from the CCAP of the Cherry Creek PPZ and priority intersections.

Denver Moves: Cherry Creek

DMCC, adopted in 2023, seeks to improve safety at signalized intersections with proven safety countermeasures, like including recommendations of signal timing adjustments to reduce speeding, increased pedestrian phase length to meet the needs of those who need more time to cross, no right turn on red, Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs), and protected left turns on multilane arterials. The Plan also identified specific locations for enhanced street crossings.

There are 23 locations identified in *both* the Cherry Creek Area Plan, which was adopted in 2012, and the Denver Moves: Cherry Creek Plan, which was adopted in 2024. Over the span of 12 years, these 23 locations have been identified as in need of improvements, but have not received investment from the City and County of Denver.[22]

Many of the streetscaping improvements desired by residents, including additional lighting, are very difficult to find funding for implementation. Blueprint Denver says, "In many areas of the city, streetscaping is only possible if there is a self-taxing district, such as a business improvement district or general improvement district, to cover the cost of maintenance." This is found under *Mobility, Recommendation 10.*A, which also speaks to the City and County of Denver providing "equitable opportunities to improve streetscaping and placemaking along city streets."[23]

[22] See *Figure 5* for a chart of the 23 intersections identified in both Plans.
[23] Blueprint Denver (Page 113) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/blueprint-denver/blueprint_denver.pdf

List of the 23 Problem Intersections Identified in both CCAP and DMCC	
Dakota Avenue & Colorado Boulevard	1st Avenue & University Boulevard
Alameda Avenue & Colorado Boulevard	2nd Avenue & University Boulevard
Steele Street & Bayaud Avenue	2nd Avenue & Josephine Street
Bayaud Avenue & Madison Street	3rd Avenue & University Boulevard
1st Avenue & Steele Street	3rd Avenue & Josephine Street
1st Avenue & Adams Street	3rd Avenue & Colorado Boulevard
1st Avenue & Madison Street	4th Avenue & University Boulevard
1st Avenue & Colorado Boulevard	4th Avenue & Josephine Street
1st Avenue & Milwaukee Street	6th Avenue & Columbine Street
1st Avenue & Fillmore Street	6th Avenue & Saint Paul Street
1st Avenue & Detroit Street	1st Avenue & University Boulevard
1st Avenue & Clayton Street	

Figure 5, which shows the 23 intersections identified in both the CCAP and DMCC.

4. Greenway Improvements

The fourth highest-rated desired improvement by respondents is greenway improvements in Cherry Creek. The Cherry Creek Greenway is a highly utilized bike lane and multi-use trail that connects Downtown to Cherry Creek and Southeast Denver. It is a vital community asset that has not received enough investment for its potential to be fully maximized. In fact, the south side of Cherry Creek is built in a pattern of blocks and buildings shifts to incorporate the Greenway. Specific improvements to the Greenway were mentioned by respondents in the survey. One of the specific desired improvements identified in the survey is the construction of pedestrian and bicycle bridges to create better access and connectivity to the Cherry Creek Trail.

Blueprint Denver

- ✓ Quality-of-Life Infrastructure, Recommendation 7: Recognize greenways and trails as multimodal connections providing a variety of experiences and habitats for people, plants and wildlife."[24]

Comprehensive Plan 2040

- ✓ Connected, Safe and Accessible Places, Goal 3.C: "Protect, enhance, and expand Denver's legacy pathways: its historic parkways, boulevards, greenways and trails."[25]

Cherry Creek Area Plan

- ✓ "Connections and accessibility between the Cherry Creek Shopping District, adjacent neighborhoods and the Greenway are in need of physical improvements and better signage. Improved bicycle connections along and across arterial streets linking destinations, open space, and other regional routes are also needed."[26]
- ✓ Recommendation A.3 – A Bikeable Cherry Creek
  - A.3.A Expand Network and Improve Greenway Connections: "Connections to the regional trail along the Cherry Creek Greenway."[27]
  - A.3.C Bring Back 'The Bike Rack': "Locating a bike station near the Cherry Creek Greenway, bus transfer points like University and 1st Avenue, the Shopping District parking garages, and/or future priority transit routes is ideal. An appropriate entity must be identified to develop, maintain and operate this bike station."[28]
- ✓ Recommendation A.4 – Multi-Modal Streets
  - A.4.A Improve the Alameda Parkway: "Create a safe, comfortable pedestrian and bicycle connection between Burns Park, Pulaski Park and the Cherry Creek Greenway; also between Cherry Creek East and the Cherry Creek Triangle."[29]
- ✓ Recommendation B.3 – Concentrate Economic Activity

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[24] Blueprint Denver (Page 122) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/blueprint-denver/blueprint_denver.pdf
[25] Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Page 40) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf
[26] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 13) https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[27] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 18) https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[28] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 18) https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[29] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 20) https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf

- B.3.A – Concentrate Higher Intensity Mixed-Use Buildings Along Multi-Modal Streets, Major Intersections and Major Public Open Spaces: "Cherry Creek's high intensity nodes are appropriate for increased development intensity allowing for the concentration of active uses utilizing appropriate locational criteria. These locational criteria include:
    - "Adjacency to multi-modal corridors (includes the shopping district segments of 1st Avenue and Steele Street as well as the Cherry Creek Greenway and Colorado Boulevard)"
    - "Adjacency to major public open spaces (such as the Cherry Creek Greenway"[30]
- B.4.C Promote Continued Investment and Development in Emergency Neighborhoods: "Continued development should focus on quality architecture, improved streetscapes and enhancing the connections to Cherry Creek East, Glendale, and the Cherry Creek Greenway."[31]

✓ C. A Green Cherry Creek
- "Despite its adjacency to a vibrant shopping district and high population and employment densities, the section of the Greenway between University and Colorado lacks points of visual and physical access and is therefore underutilized as a neighborhood resource. Neighborhood access to the trail is via Cherry Creek Drive North, the recently improved bike/ped bridge at Steele, and the Steele Street multi-use sidewalk. The plazas on either side of the Cherry Creek Drive North are both underutilized."[32]

✓ Recommendation C.1.A – Improve Visual and Physical Access: [33]
- "Public access into the Cherry Creek channel should be limited, appropriate and designed with care, such as for observation and rest areas. Appropriately placed and well-designed pedestrian bridge crossings would improve visual connections and allow people to interact sensitively with the natural creek."
- "Enhance the visual connection between the Greenway and the Shopping Center. Strategically improve existing access and create more points of physical and visual access to the creek without destroying the integrity of the greenway as a natural feature. Public access into the Cherry Creek channel should be limited, appropriate and designed with care, such as for observation and rest areas.

[30] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 32)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[31] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 35)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[32] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 36)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[33] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 38)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf

Appropriately placed and well-designed pedestrian bridge crossings would improve visual connections and allow people to interact sensitively with the natural creek."

- "Build a pedestrian bridge over the creek at Dakota Street to better connect the two sides of the creek and neighborhoods to the south."
- "Study opportunities for an additional connection across the creek to integrate with the redevelopment of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center (west end) and better connect the neighborhoods to the north and south, as well as the business district."

✓ Recommendation C.1.C – University, Cherry Creek Drive North and South Parkways:[34]

- "Connect to the Greenway by introducing a sidewalk and streetscape amenities along the east side of University parkway between the creek and 1st Avenue"
- "Continue the Greenway theme along the south side of 1st Avenue and west side of Steele Street"
- "Explore opportunities to integrate recently constructed parkway amenities along Cherry Creek Drive South to the Greenway."
- "Enhance the connection between Pulaski Park, Alameda Parkway, Cherry Creek Drive North and the Greenway."

[34] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 38)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf

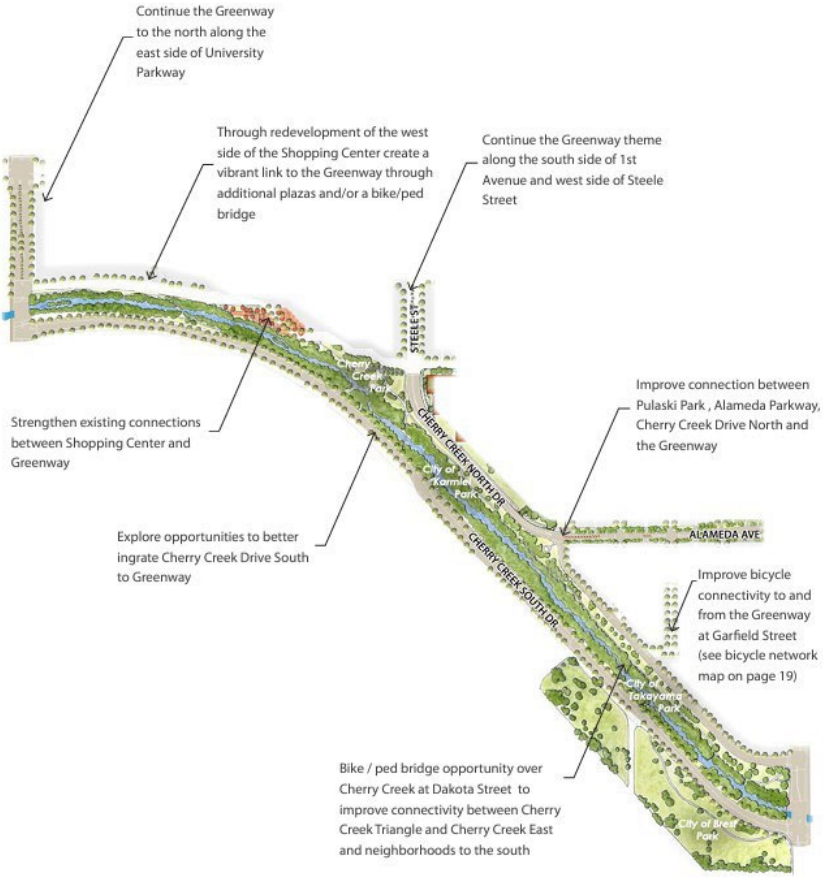

Figure 6, visual of the recommendation improvements identified in Recommendation C.1.C of the Cherry Creek Area Plan.

Denver Moves: Cherry Creek called for the implementation of a neighborhood bikeway on Clayton Lane/Street from the Cherry Creek Trail and on Detroit Street from 1st Avenue, through Cherry Creek North and beyond.

Cherry Creek Area Greenway Implementation Plan (CCAIP) provided final design recommendations that were crafted with and supported by community. Those recommendations in the Plan include: [35]

- Improving the regional trail between Colorado and University Boulevards for safety, wayfinding, and multiple uses
- Adding three playgrounds and an active play area
- Replacing the Steele Street Bridge with a wider, safer span

[35] See *Figure 7* for a visual of the recommendations presented in the CCAIP.

- Adding a signature bridge and plaza between the Creek and the Cherry Creek Shopping Center. The bridge will include shaded seating and a place for vendors. The plaza includes a spray ground, gathering space, and shade structures
- Adding a community amphitheater
- Adding an improved pedestrian bridge at west end of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center, near Clayton Street
- Provide a pedestrian loop trail (separate from the regional trail) that includes public art or arboretum walk

In 2017, the estimated cost of all final design recommendations was $26,143,762.50.[36] To adjust for those costs in 2024, it's estimated that the new total would be $33,443,100.99. This calculation is based on the Consumer Price Index, which reports an average inflation rate of 3.71% per year, totaling 27.92%.

Figure 7, screenshot of the site concept plan of the final design recommendations from the CCAIP.

There is significant Plan support for improvements to the Cherry Creek Greenway. Another specific improvement identified in the CCAP calls for a bike rack along the Cherry Creek Trail near bus transfer points, like 1st Avenue & University Boulevard, or near the Shopping District. Bike racks that include repair capabilities typically cost between $1,000 and $2,000. The design recommendations outlined in the CCAIP include wayfinding, signage, lighting, playgrounds, and improvements to the pedestrian trail.

Several funding mechanisms were identified in the CCAIP, including public-private partnerships, a self-taxing district, like a General Improvement District, the City and County of Denver Capital Improvement Budget, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and state and federal sources.

[36] Cherry Creek Area Greenway Implementation Plan (Appendix, Page 1) https://cherrycreekgreenway.com/final-plan#29

5. Micro-transit

Micro-transit is defined as a privately or publicly operated, technology-enabled transit service that typically uses multi-passenger/pooled shuttles or vans to provide on-demand or fixed-schedule services with either dynamic or fixed routes. This service has been identified as a top five desired improvement by respondents in the survey. Public transportation in Cherry Creek is unreliable and infrequent. This challenge makes it difficult for employees of restaurants, hotels, bars, or other businesses to get to and from their place of employment if they don't own a motor vehicle. Because these workers cannot afford to live in Cherry Creek, they must travel to their jobs. One potential idea to fill this gap is micro-transit.

In 2018-2019, the local Transit Management Association, Transportation Solutions, worked with the city to pilot micro-transit in Cherry Creek. The partnership was between Transportation Solutions and Chariot (a private organization owned by Hertz). Just months into the pilot, Hertz made the decision to close Chariot and no other micro-transit option has been explored for the Cherry Creek area.[37]

In 2021, the City and County of Denver began the Denver Connector Pilot, a free ride-share for the Montbello statistical neighborhood in the Far Northeast to use to commute to local neighborhood destinations and transit stations. The pilot program was successful and expanded to include the Green Valley Ranch, Globeville Elyria-Swansea, and Valverde neighborhoods. The service provides on-demand trips anywhere within either of the two service areas, it's free, and is available weekdays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Over three years, between 2022, 2023, and 2024, the Denver Connector pilot program is budgeted at $3,200,000 combined.[38] [39] [40]

Another example of micro-transit is an e-bike library, which was also identified as a top 13 desired improvement in the 2024 Council Office survey.[41] E-bikes can be two- or three-wheeled, making them accessible for a wider range of people with various abilities. E-bike libraries loan out the e-bikes, handle all maintenance and recharging, and offer flexibility should a person choose to borrow the e-bike for an hour or a week. Currently, Transportation Solutions and East-West Partners are in discussions for East-West to build an E-bike library at Cherry Creek West, but those discussions are ongoing.

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[37] *Denverite* published an article on January 10, 2019 titled "Private 'transit' company Chariot is going out of business and so is the short-lived shuttle between Cherry Creek and downtown" https://denverite.com/2019/01/10/private-transit-company-chariot-is-going-out-of-business-and-so-is-the-short-lived-shuttle-between-cherry-creek-and-downtown/

[38] 2022 Denver Mayor's Adopted Budget (Page 455) https://denver.prelive.opencities.com/files/assets/public/v/1/finance/documents/budget/2022mayorbudgetfinalada.pdf

[39] 2023 Denver Mayor's Adopted Budget (Page 145) https://denver.prelive.opencities.com/files/assets/public/v/2/finance/documents/budget/2023/2023-ccd-budget-final.pdf

[40] 2024 Denver Mayor's Adopted Budget (Page 749) https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/3/finance/documents/budget/2024/2024-final-budget-book_ada-compliant_2-27-24.pdf

[41] *See Figure 8* for the list of the top 13 desired improvements identified in the survey.

The state of Colorado has created the Community Accelerated Mobility Project (CAMP) to advance the use of electric powered vehicles throughout Colorado. CAMP encourages the placement of e-bike libraries at affordable housing facilities where residents can borrow an e-bike to use for work, errands, or pleasure.

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%

Figure 8, list of top 13 desired improvements respondents reported in the survey.

Denver Moves: Cherry Creek recommended the exploration of micro transit to connect employees of Cherry Creek to the neighborhood.[42]

Other Desired Improvements Noted

Eight other desired improvements were identified from the survey. These included landscaping, public art, an additional pedestrian and bicycle bridge across the Creek, more bike paths, wayfinding, an e-bike library, branded bus stops, more free parking, an enclosed, off-leash dog park, and traffic calming measures. This report has alre tied additional pedestrian and bicycle bridges across the Creek, more bike paths, wayfinding, an e-bike library, and traffic calming measures to Plan support.

Landscaping, public art, and wayfinding are currently managed by the BID, but these amenities aren't available in other parts of the neighborhood outside of the district boundaries. Additionally, in response to this survey, Councilmember Sawyer has requested funding for an enclosed, off-leash dog park at Pulaski Park. The Cherry Creek Area Plan encouraged residents and the City and County of Denver to "Increase the usability of the park for all ages."[43] Further, there are no other enclosed, off-leash dog parks within two miles of Pulaski Park, and there is currently only one enclosed, off-leash dog park in Council District 5, which is in Lowry. Cherry Creek is identified as a service gap in Denver's 2019 Dog Park Master Plan.[44] An enclosed, off-leash dog park is estimated to cost $500,000.

[42] Denver Moves: Cherry Creek (Page 39)
https://denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/3/doti/documents/programsservices/denver-moves-cherry-creek/dmcc-final-plan-feb-2024.pdf
[43] Cherry Creek Area Plan (Page 40)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Cherry_Creek_Area_Plan.pdf
[44] "Denver Parks & Recreation Dog Park Master Plan Technical Update – 2019" (Page 14)
https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/747/documents/planning/master_plans/DPR_DogPark_MasterPlan_TechnicalUpdate.pdf

Other Notes

Electric Scooters, like Lime or Lyft, have been identified by respondents as an issue in need of being addressed. Councilwoman Sawyer's Office requested crash data involving electric scooters from the Denver Police Department (DPD). DPD located one (1) crash involving an electric scooter, which occurred on May 16, 2021, in the Cherry Creek statistical neighborhood from January 1, 2021 to April 20, 2024. To compare, DPD pulled crash data from downtown. That data from downtown showed 80 crashes involving an electric scooter between the same time frame. DPD stated that most crashes involving electric scooters are not reported because the injuries sustained are typically minor. If possible, Cherry Creek leadership should explore the possibility of stricter geofencing to prevent scooters from being driven on the sidewalk or in any other unwanted area to minimize the contact between electric scooters and pedestrians.[45]

Conclusion

Based upon the City and County of Denver's equity principles, the likelihood of investment coming from the City is low. This assertion is also supported by *Mobility, Recommendation 10* of Blueprint Denver that specifically calls out a general improvement district, or some other self-taxing district, to cover the cost of maintenance for infrastructure and other quality of life amenities. The desired improvements identified by respondents of the survey cost over $40,000,000. This cost includes a potential expansion of a security service in addition to police service, improved pedestrian lighting in residential areas, enhancements to street crossings, greenway improvements, and micro-transit. Given that many of these issues have been identified in City planning initiatives for, in some cases over 20 years, it is not reasonable to assume the City and City of Denver will suddenly start investing in Cherry Creek now. This is not to discount the fact that the cost of living in Denver has increased significantly. However, the idea of a self-taxing district in Cherry Creek should be explored.

[45] Geofencing is a location-based service that uses virtual boundaries to trigger actions when a device enters or exits a specific geographic area. Geofences are created using mapping software and can be any shape or size, including a straight line between two points or a circular area.