



Denver Residents' Issues Survey

Conducted by Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Fall 2016

Denver INC Mission

To advocate for Denver citizens by bringing together, informing and empowering Denver neighborhood organizations to actively engage in addressing City issues.

Survey Objectives

- ▶ With the advent of new Denver City Council members in 2016, INC conducted this first-ever survey to:
 1. Gather feedback about key concerns of Denver's residents
 2. Get feedback about City services performance
 3. Learn how well Council is perceived to be listening and responding to those issues.
 4. Use these results to open dialog with City leaders in a more meaningful manner

Methodology

- ▶ The survey was sent via email to INC's RNO members, Denver's list of other RNO leaders and additional Denver-based neighborhood advocates
- ▶ It successfully reached 373 good email addresses
- ▶ The survey invitation encouraged receivers to pass along to other neighborhood residents.
- ▶ All responses are anonymous
- ▶ Survey launched July 24, 2016 and closed September 4, 2016

Response

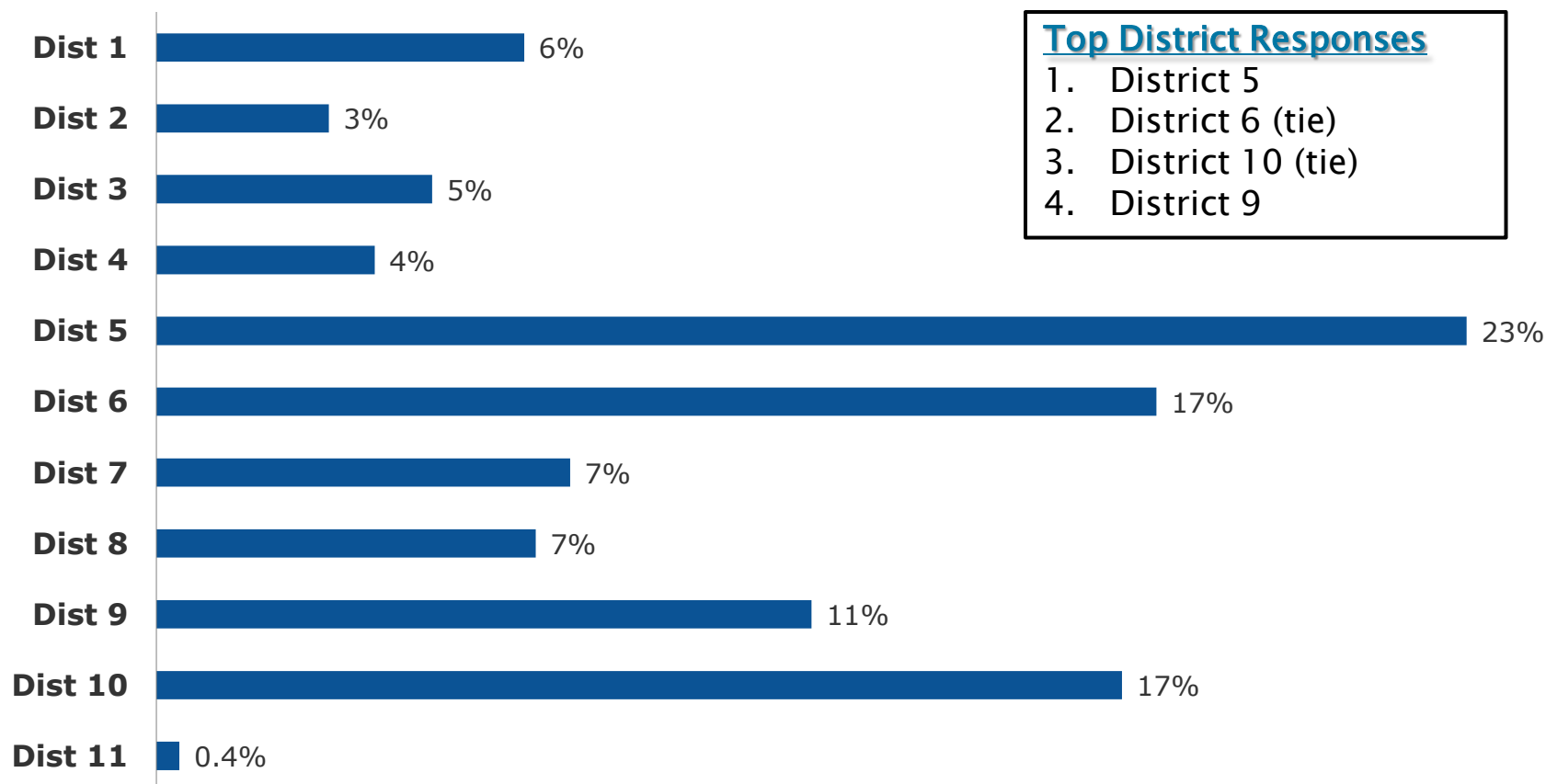
- ▶ A total of 503 responses was received

- ▶ Disclaimer:

While this survey in no way represents the opinions of every Denver neighborhood, it does provide credible feedback and establishes benchmarks relative to how residents feel about city provided services and council representation; and, it expresses issues of concern from various neighborhoods within Denver.

Denver Council District

n=503



Note: Although every Council District was represented, District 11 had only two responses. Districts 2, 3, & 4 had light response.

Survey Elements

1. City Services Performance
2. Neighborhood Issues
3. City Council Representation

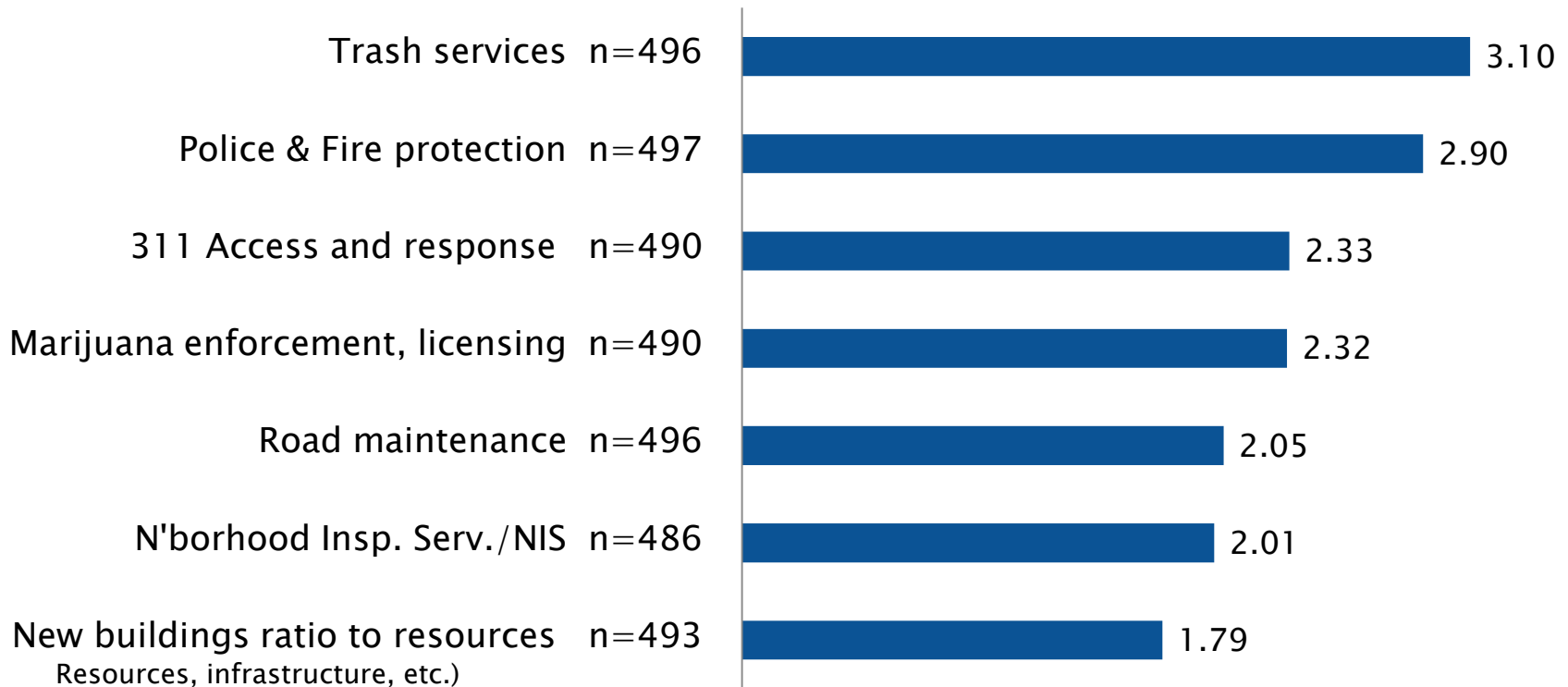
City Services Performance



How would you rate the following City services (Denver)?

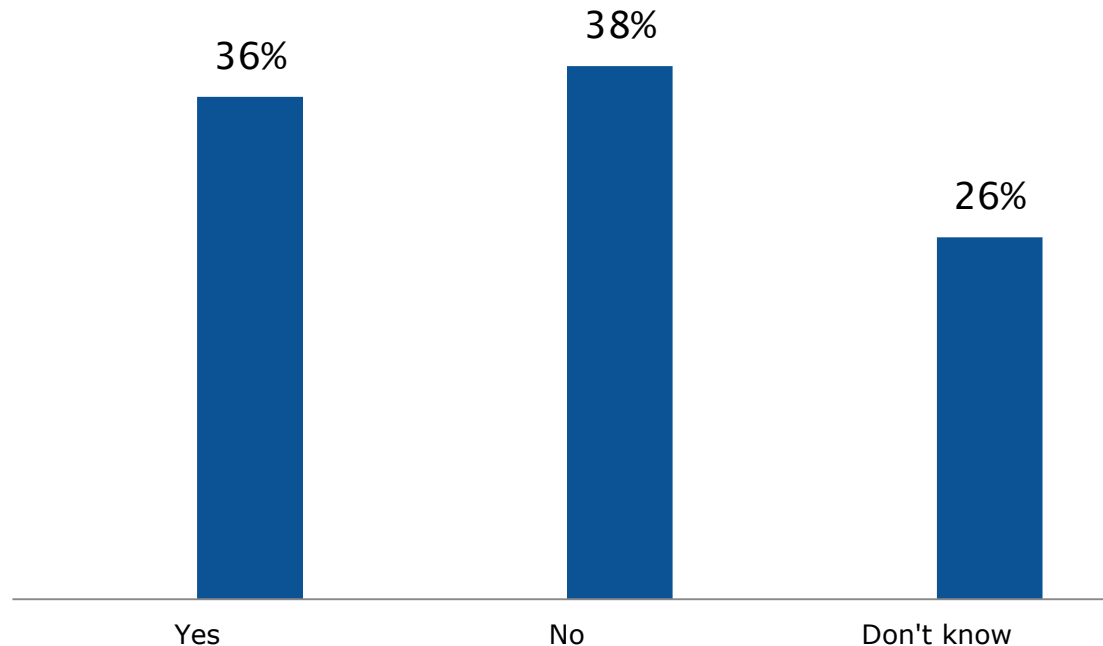
Averaged Ratings Per Service

Excellent =4, Good=3, Fair=2, Poor=1



Is Denver's 311 complaint-driven system adequate?

n=498



Interesting comment. “If a neighborhood complains about continued infractions, there must be consequences. Property values must never be affected by lack of City involvement.”

311 – Comments

- ▶ Comments ranged from "love it" to "hate it."
- ▶ Negatives included: slow response time, not enough staff, long delays on hold if call, no feedback if problem was resolved and no action.
- ▶ Many felt this is a reactive system and one that turns neighbors into "rats" who squeal on one another.

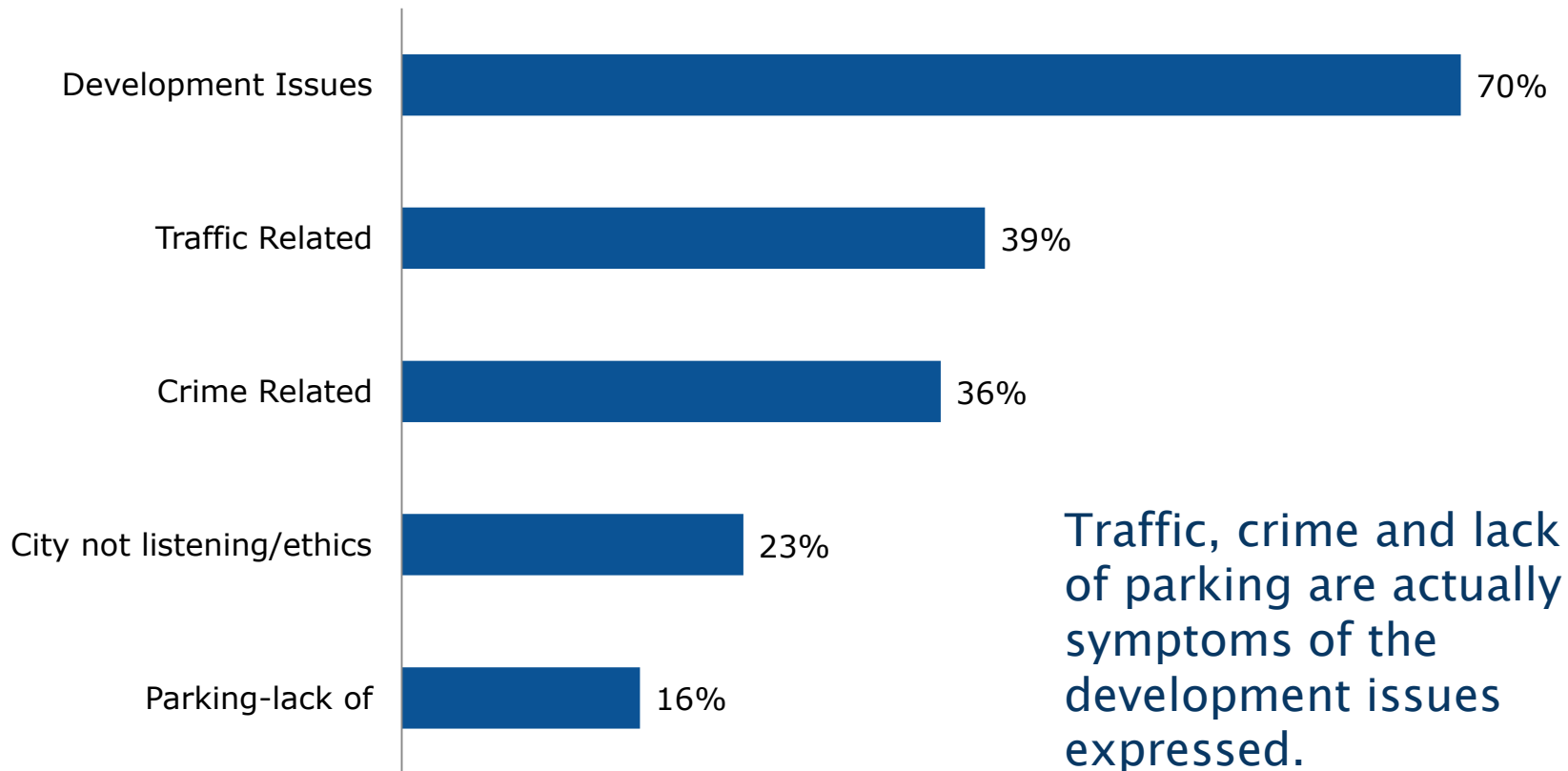


Neighborhood Issues



Top Five Neighborhood Concerns

n=493



Neighborhood Concerns

1. Development Related

- ▶ "Extreme", "unbridled", "unfettered" development
- ▶ Aesthetics: poor design, "ugly" buildings
- ▶ Density: too many units for the infrastructure
- ▶ Disparity: gentrification displaces diversity, scraping off old to build new, doing away with neighborhood communities, ignores seniors
- ▶ Increased pollution & noise from construction
- ▶ Lack of affordable housing, tearing down affordable housing to build new more expensive properties
- ▶ Lack of historic preservation, poor restoration, ignoring historic areas
- ▶ Smart growth missing
- ▶ Too many apartment rentals, existing rentals not being kept up

Neighborhood Concerns

2. Traffic Related

- ▶ Bad drivers: ignore traffic laws, speeding, road rage
- ▶ Congestion: big increase, endless
- ▶ Cut-through traffic into residential areas
- ▶ Light sequencing: no mitigation for congestion
- ▶ Traffic patterns and growth are not considered with zoning

Neighborhood Concerns

3. Crime Related

- ▶ Drugs (not including marijuana)
- ▶ Gangs/guns and violence
- ▶ Lack of police presence
- ▶ Overall increases in theft, burglaries and vandalism
- ▶ Police response – sometimes rude response
- ▶ Prostitution
- ▶ Perception of increased crime with marijuana

Neighborhood Concerns

4. City Not Listening/Ethics

- ▶ Councilpersons not listening
- ▶ Ignoring neighborhood input
- ▶ Comments such as being “in the pockets of developers”/ethics
- ▶ Pleasing the Mayor– not the constituents
- ▶ Spot zoning/zoning ethics
- ▶ Perception that neighborhoods/homeowners have lost their rights – City decisions outweigh them

Neighborhood Concerns

5. Parking – lack of

- ▶ No parking, hard to find
- ▶ Increased street parking – narrows passage
- ▶ No place to park in “my” neighborhood
- ▶ Paid parking at Cherry Creek – what’s next?
- ▶ Zoning codes for new builds without adequate parking

Neighborhood Concerns

Other

- ▶ **Homelessness:** Growth, no plan to handle, too many panhandlers/transients, perception of increased crime
- ▶ **Parks/Open Space:** Losing tree canopies, losing open space, park maintenance, use of parks for paid events
- ▶ **Pedestrian Safety:** Not enough sidewalks, sidewalks in disrepair, crosswalk safety,
- ▶ **Transit:** Not enough, reliable, safe public transit

Neighborhood Concerns

Infrastructure

- ▶ No city roadway improvements
- ▶ I70 project impact on neighborhood
- ▶ Storm drainage issues, costs and to whom
- ▶ Access to City services – difficult or missing
- ▶ Not enough staff to enforce codes, laws
- ▶ “Retail deserts” – no nearby stores
- ▶ Safe walkways – no sidewalks, unsafe crossings
- ▶ Reliable, affordable transit – missing it

Significant quotes

► *City Ethics*

“There is a growing perception that the Mayor's office is somewhat corrupt and that Council members go rotten once incumbent.”

“If it is not true, you have got to over-communicate to correct this perception.”

“If it is true, you had better clean up your act. The way people communicate, organize, and vote is changing.”



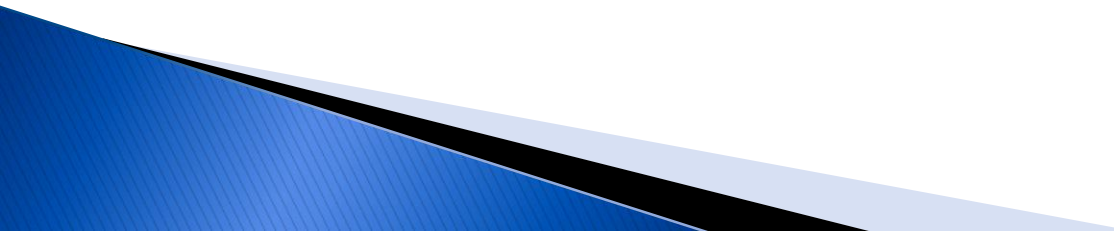
Quotes cont'd

▶ *Growth*

- “Leaders should strive for higher quality architecture and more public open spaces to ensure that future generations can be proud of a beautiful, livable city. “
- “New development is inevitable but ...having a future vision and understanding about how that impacts an area is important.”
- What is the City's vision?



Overall Planning

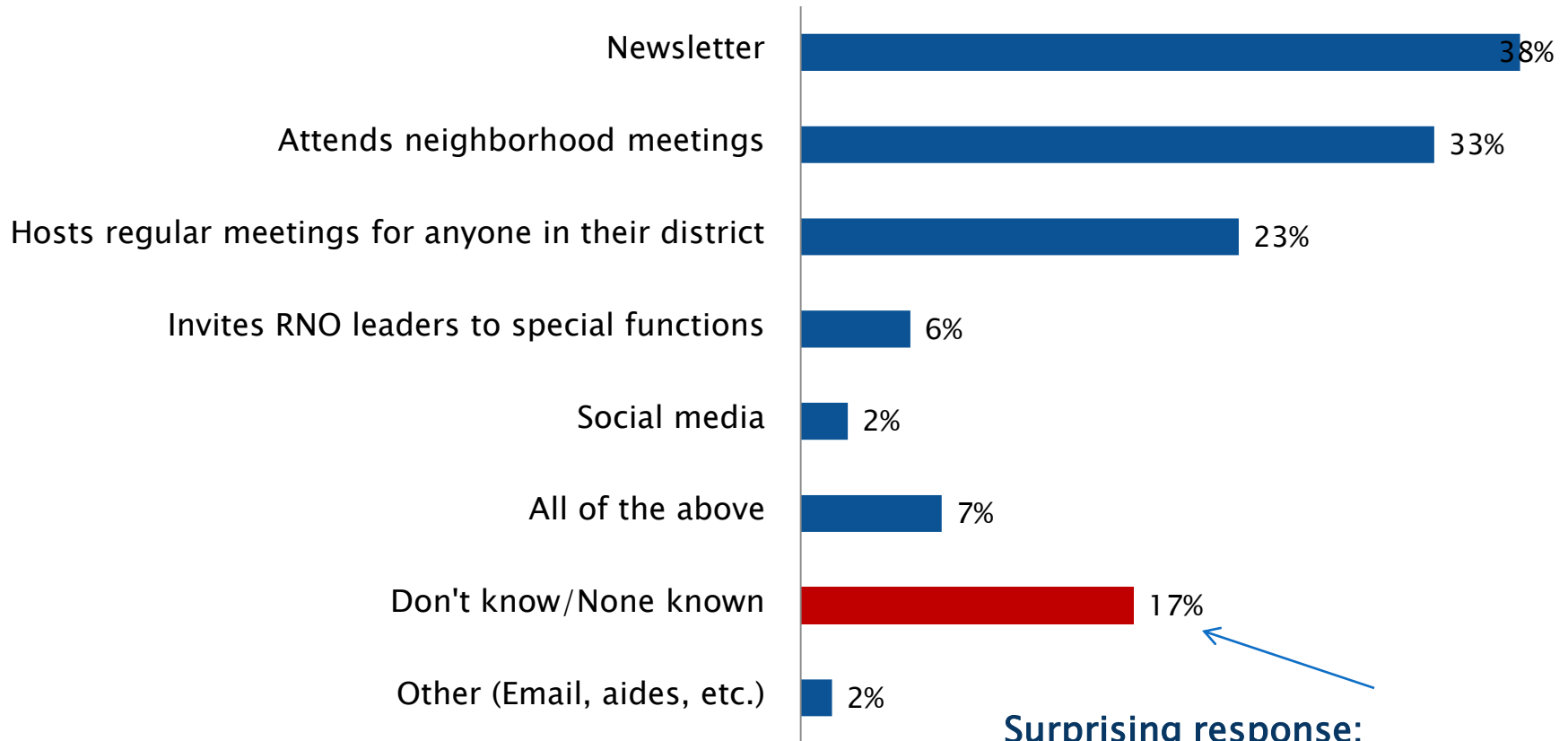
- ▶ We want a long term vision communicated in terms of what that is, how to transition it and how to finance it
 - ▶ We want zoning to address the impact on our existing infrastructure – look at the whole picture vs. pieces and parts
 - ▶ Planning seems to be done in silos–no big picture
- 

City Council Representation



In what ways does your Councilperson communicate with your neighborhood?

n=486

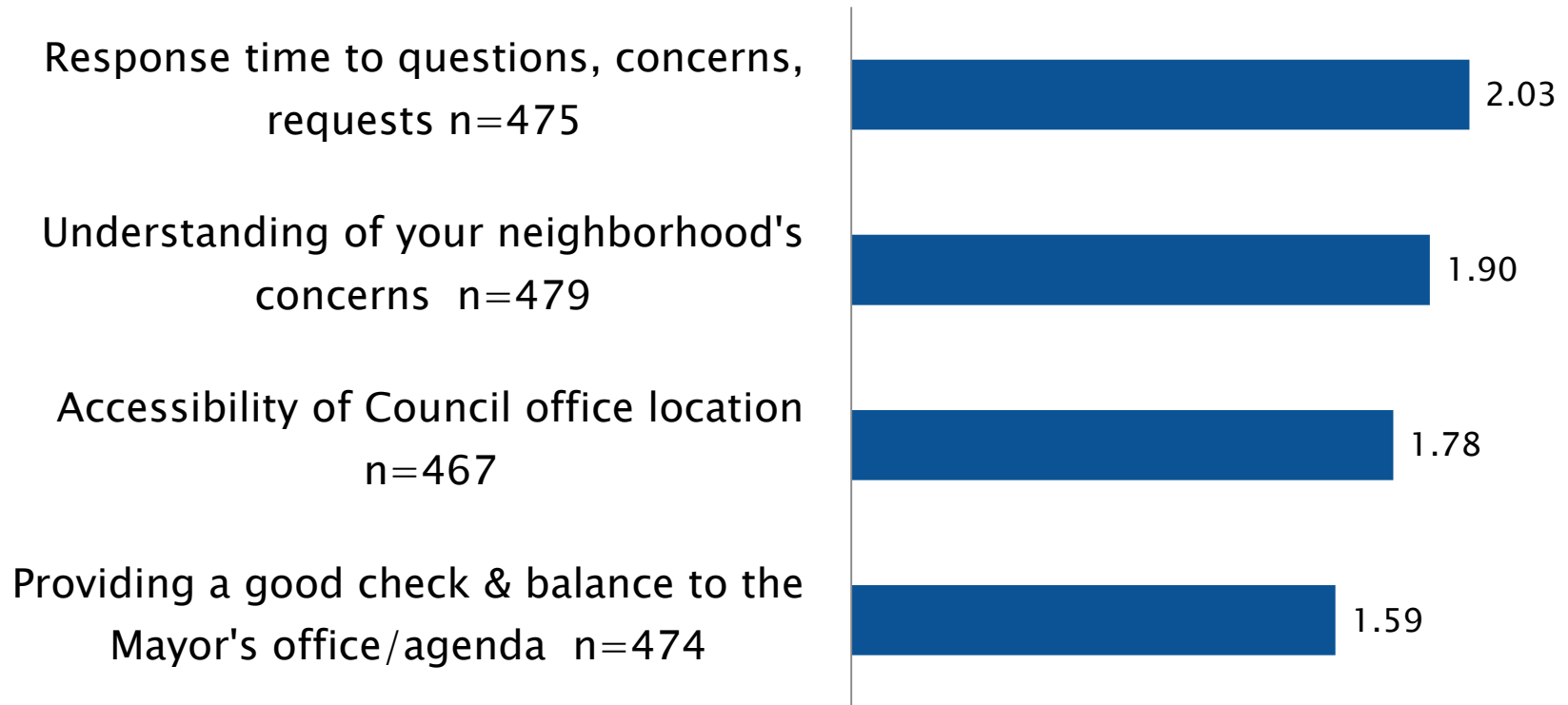


Surprising response:
17% who don't know about or
who have no communications.

When you have a specific request for information or questions, how would you rate the following elements by your Councilperson (office).

Averaged Rating

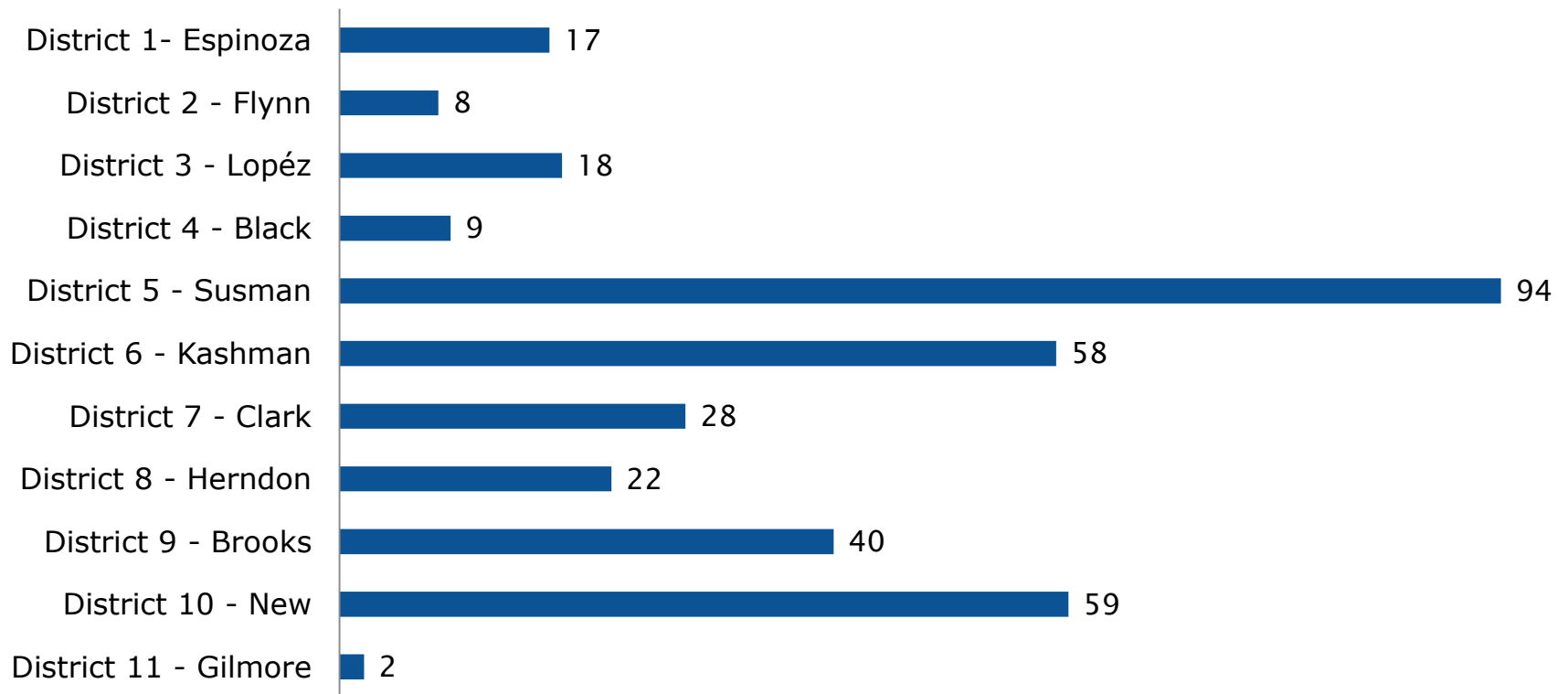
Excellent =3, Good=2, Poor =1



What two or three things would you like to see your Councilperson do more or less of within your area?

Number of responses by Council District

n=355



Sample of comments



- ▶ **Please listen to US– don't tell us what we're supposed to think**
- ▶ Please attend more of our meetings
- ▶ When considering zoning, include infrastructure support and traffic mitigation– we live here “now”
- ▶ Want us to walk? Provide safe walkways and intersections
- ▶ Want us to stop driving? Provide adequate, reliable public transit and parking. We like to drive to scenic places!

Comments cont'd

- ▶ Be more **transparent in dealings** --stop favoring developers and not listening to constituents
- ▶ **Develop a plan for chronic homelessness** – believed to getting worse and more so because of marijuana issues
- ▶ **Communicate with us and educate us**
- ▶ **Stay on top of crime** – homelessness, density & marijuana are believed to increase crime



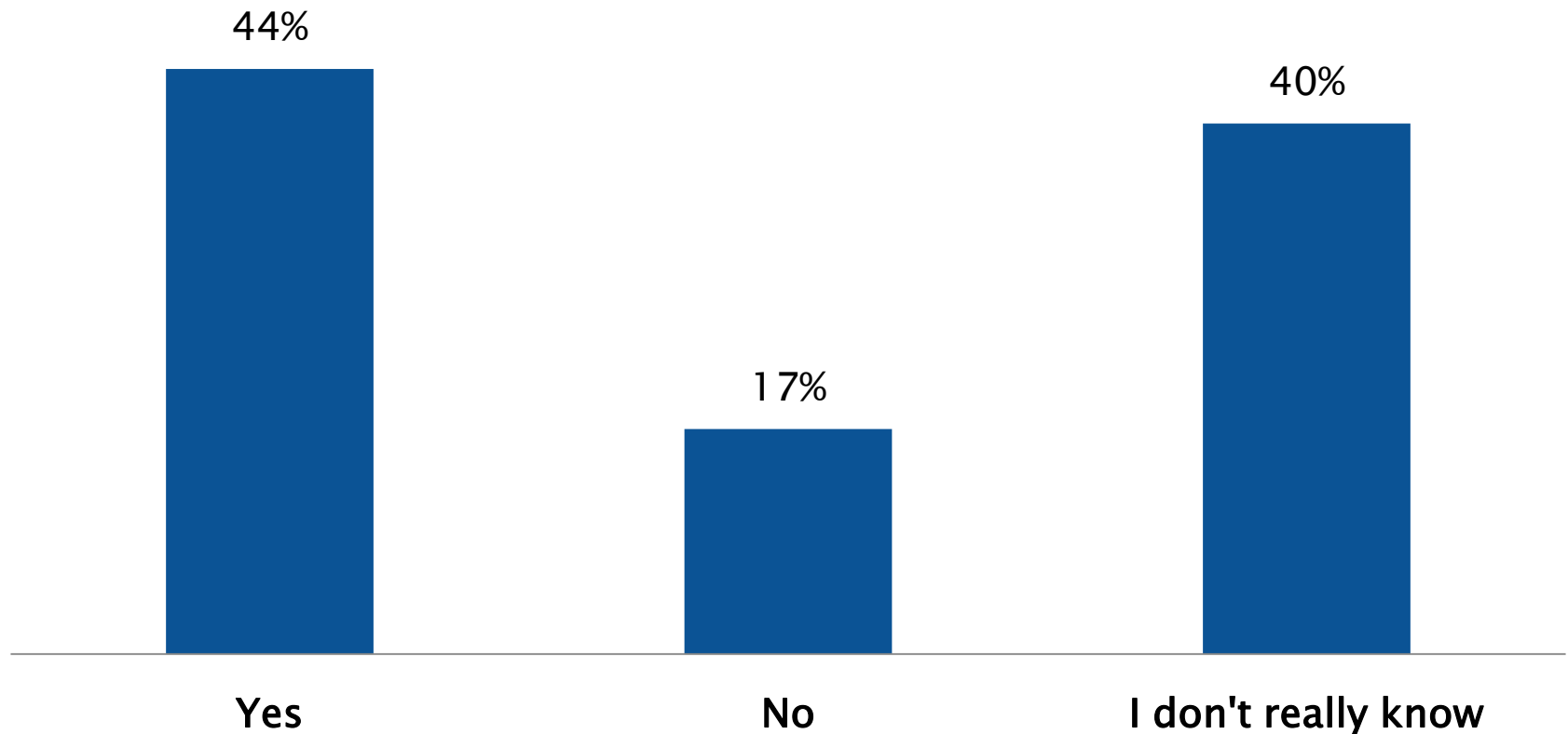
Do you feel your Councilperson fairly represents all neighborhoods within your district?

n=490



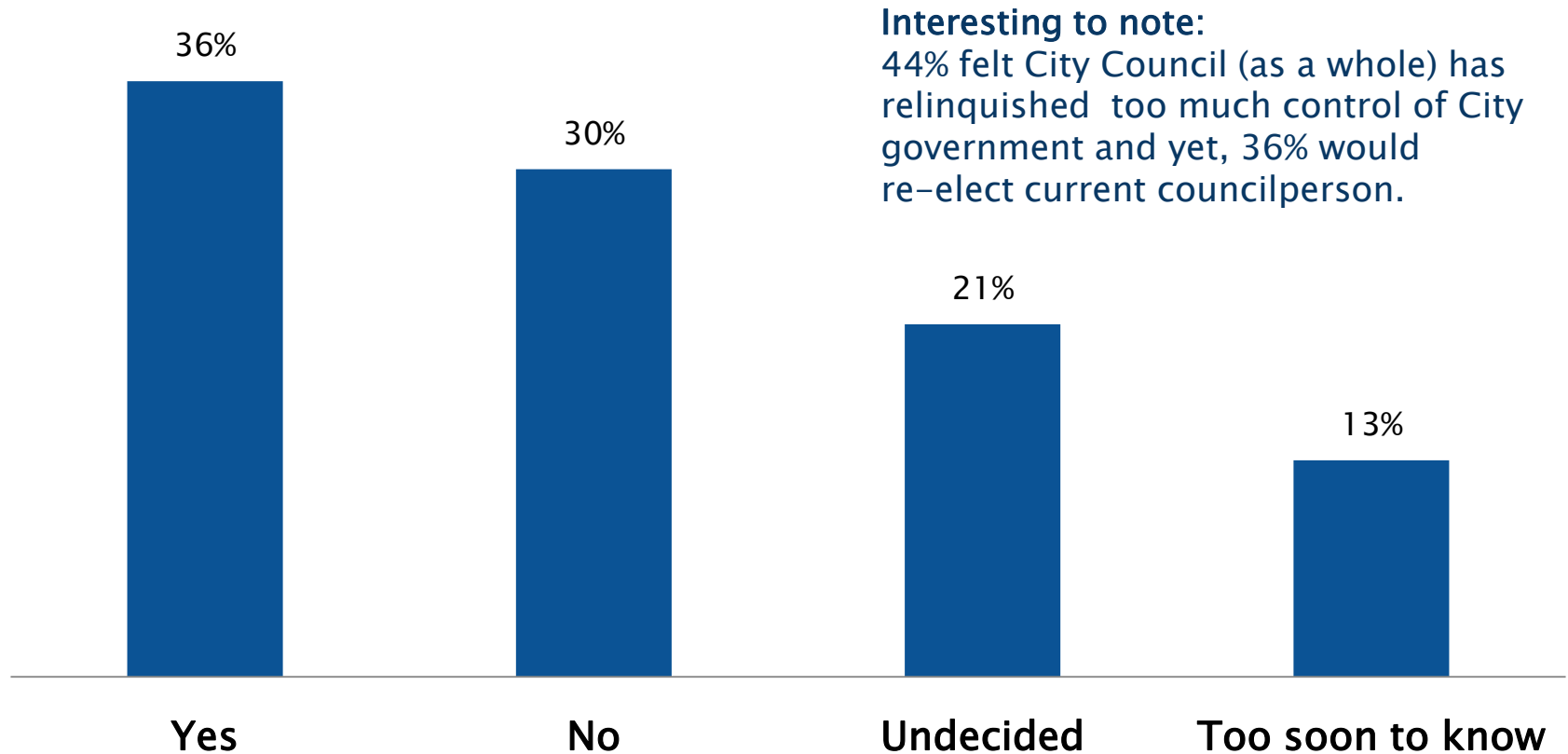
Has City Council relinquished too much control of City Government?

n=491



At this time, would you re-elect your current District's Councilperson?

n=494



Bottom line re Council feedback

- ▶ Listen to us – don't tell us what to think
- ▶ Employ smart growth vs. developer desires
- ▶ Address the infrastructure needed
- ▶ Be transparent in your dealings
- ▶ Respect our rights
- ▶ Remember we live here **now** -- it needs to be well thought out for “now” as well as future
- ▶ Teach us how Council works with us/City



INC's Planned Rollout

- ▶ Presentation to Mayor's staff assigned to neighborhood relations completed in December.
- ▶ Individual presentations to City Council were completed mid-January
- ▶ Available online to INC members in February
- ▶ Media release is not planned in order to protect distortion of results
- ▶ Board approved repeating survey– task force review forthcoming



About INC

Established in 1975, Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is a city-wide network of more than 100 Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs).

On behalf of Denver's neighborhoods, INC and its committees address city-wide issues including zoning, transportation, parks and open space, and public safety.

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