



**Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) Forum Feedback**

Forum Date: Saturday, September 14, 2019

Location: Eisenhower Chapel at Lowry

About The Forum

Forum Topics

What process City planning is using to design the area plans across the city and is it successful to this point?

What are the planning process areas that work and what needs improving?

** Please note: INC is required by bylaws to present both sides to issues.*

Forum Purpose

1. To increase awareness of the NPI and its effect on Denver's neighborhoods.
2. To allow neighborhood residents to ask questions about the NPI process.

How Publicized

- The forum was announced/publicized via email to all Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNO's) listed with the City of Denver and to INC's RNO members of record prior to the forum.
- Media releases were sent to INC's press list, Denver City Council and all RNOs listed with the City.
- Although an official count of attendees was not taken, the estimated attendance was about 200 people based upon available seating at the venue. Attendance included both INC member and non-member RNO's, media and city agency representatives.

Forum Format

The panel was made up of three residents and three representatives from City Planning Department (CPD).

Panelists

Tracey MacDermott, Park Hill neighborhood, East Area Plan steering committee member

Myles Tangalin, Congress Park neighborhood, East Central Plan steering committee member

Christine O'Connor, Lowry neighborhood, INC Zoning & Planning Co-Chair

Eugene Howard, West Area Plan Project Manager for CPD

Cortland Hyser, Principal City Planner (CPD)

Curt Upton, Principal City Planner (CPD)

Moderator

Jamie Giellis, President, Centro Inc. and recent Mayoral candidate

Each panelist representing residents had three (3) minutes to present their thoughts. This was followed by an allowed nine (9) minute presentation by the City Planning Department (CPD) members who took 15 minutes for their slide/oral presentation before being cut off. The introduction portion was followed by audience questions submitted in writing.

Volunteers collected the questions from attendees and grouped similar questions for submission to the Moderator. The Moderator asked the questions submitted. An additional 67 cards were handed in at the forum with a total of 77 questions. These questions were reviewed and 20 additional questions have been sent to CPD for answers.

Feedback Survey

An online survey was launched September 16 to 440 email addresses that included member RNO delegates, non-member RNO leaders (per City lists) and other forum attendees who provided email contacts. 3 email addresses bounced. The overall response was 27%.

An email reminder was sent September 22 to those respondents who had not responded.

- 51% opened the survey.

- 86% of those who opened the survey completed the survey.

- 14% of those who opened the survey partially completed the survey.

The survey screen (Q1.) asked whether or not the respondent or someone from their RNO attended the forum. Skip logic routed those who responded "no" to another set of questions.

Summary of Findings

Who Took The Survey

The survey was sent to 437 valid email addresses and 117 responded to the survey for an overall response rate of 27%. Of those who answered, about two-thirds (64%) attended the forum. Three of every five respondents (68%) who attended, heard about the forum via an email from INC (meeting notice or media release). Fifty-six percent (56%) of those who did not attend were aware of the forum.

Attendee Feedback About Elements of the Forum (n=65)

Format

Eight of every ten (84%) said the format, with opening statements followed by Q&A, was excellent or good.

Content:

Information about NPI presented by CPD was rated as excellent or good by 63%; 37% felt CPD presentation was poor. Most of the respondents (88%) said the moderator allowed adequate time for panel responses, while 12% did not. Seven of every ten (69%) respondents thought the forum met their need to learn about the NPI process.

Question Submission

Only 26 attendees who responded indicated they had submitted questions and 17 felt their question(s) were not answered. 13 advised a question was submitted and not answered.

Questions Attendees Still Had

- Continued concerns about how few people are actually involved in full area plans and how to get more involved once plans are adopted.
- Critical path items tied to prior infrastructure projects proposed that would adversely impact NPI--where is that focus?
- Ensuring inclusivity and how to properly engage all communities (especially "people of color") in an authentic way.
- How the plan and the planners are held accountable. Who states the percentage of approval needed before it is passed?
- Where funding will come from.
- Feeling overwhelmed with so much going on in neighborhoods along with NPI, Blueprint, etc.

Value of This Type Info to Those Who Did Not Attend (n=35)

Over forty percent (43%) felt this type information would be of value to their neighborhoods; 29% said "probably"; 20% not sure and 9% "not at all"

Summary Continued

How Attendees Thought This Forum Could Be Improved

- Fairly allot time allowance for responses so one side doesn't prevail over another
- Require a code of conduct; no heckling or attacking
- Ask the City for what they learned from this event; too much boilerplate response from City
- Host more NPI forums like this
- Be more selective with who is on panel representing the community residents and would like more diversity on panels
- Some felt the forum was biased against the City; some felt one hour would have been long enough
- Communications need to be better to get turnout

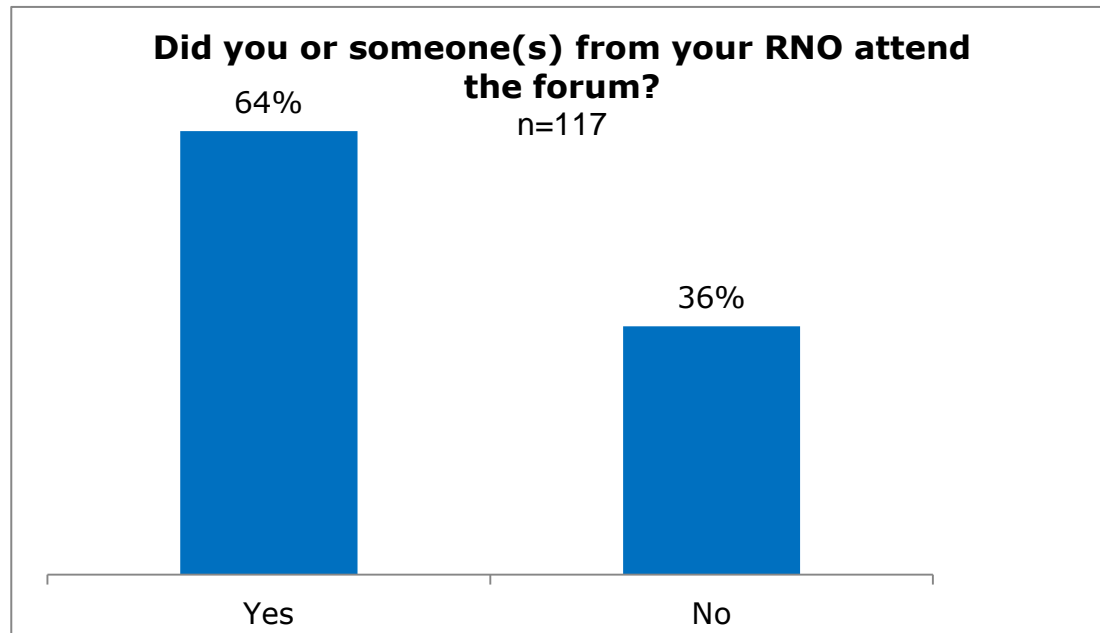
How INC Could Do Better in Attracting Neighborhood Leaders to Forums

- So much email about forum and other things, some don't read the emails anymore
- Feeling as long as this administration is running Denver, there is no use because input is ignored
- Saturday mornings are not best time
- Plan a series of forums and advertise them well as "forums"
- Invite all parts of the city; members or not

Question Breakdown

Q1. Did you or someone(s) from your RNO attend the forum? [Survey screening question]

| | % Resp | # Resp |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| Yes | 64% | 75 |
| No | 36% | 42 |
| Totals | 100% | 117 |



36 answered they did not attend the forum and of those, 20 stated they were aware of the forum.

Of those who did not attend, 72% indicated this type of information would be or probably be of value. Only 9% said it would not be of value.

Respondents Who Attended the Forum

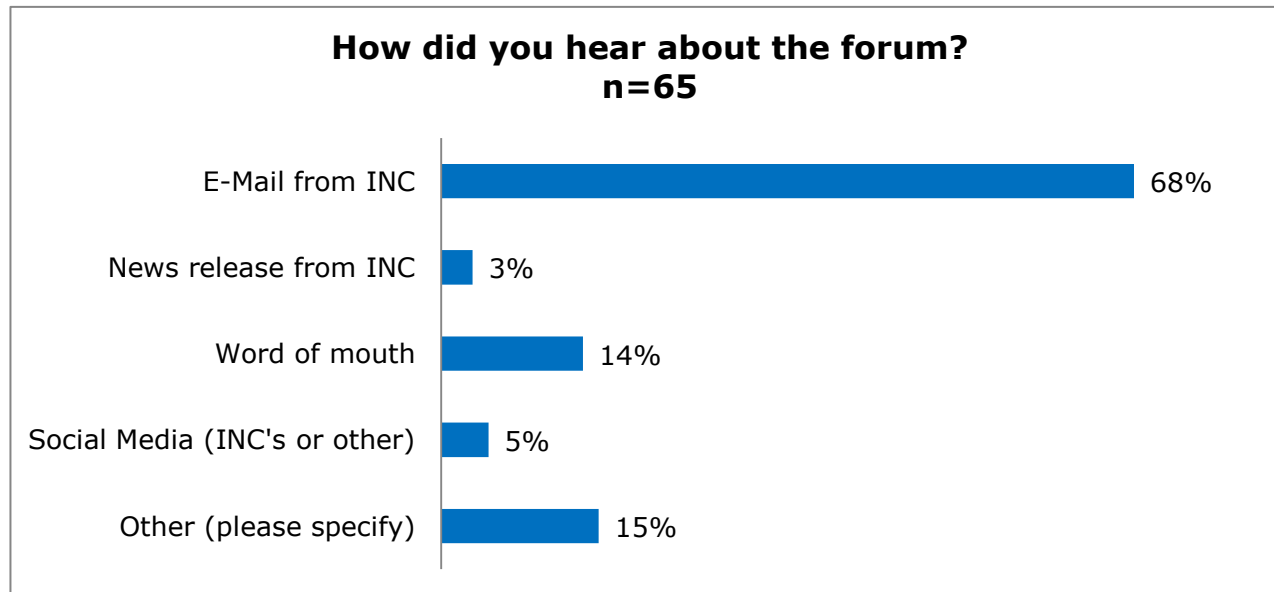
Q2. How did you hear about the forum? *[Check all that apply]*

Other

*Our RNO president
Request to speak.
I also regularly attend delegate meetings
can't recall what was the source.
I was invited by another member of INC
email from RNO
Jane who went is a member of INC
Email from RNO.
delegate to INC
news release, social media*

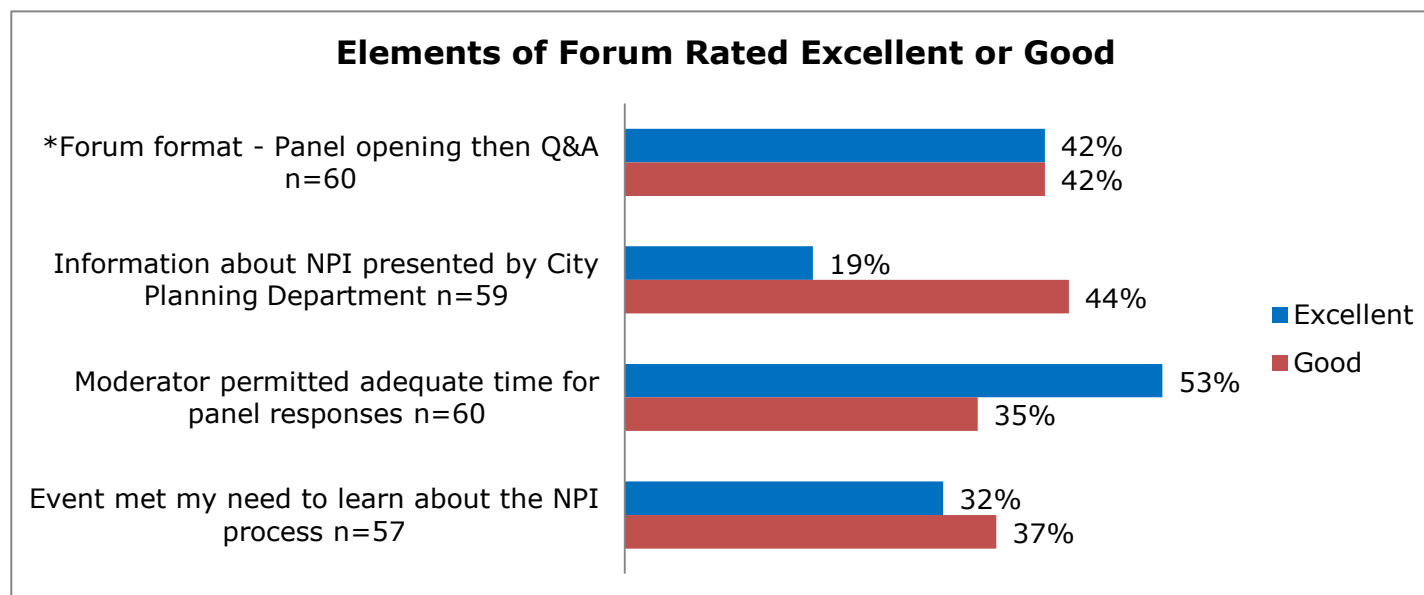
n=65

| | % Resp | # Resp |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|
| E-Mail from INC | 68% | 44 |
| News release from INC | 3% | 2 |
| Word of mouth | 14% | 9 |
| Social Media (INC's or other) | 5% | 3 |
| Other (please specify) | 15% | 10 |



Q3. Please rate the following elements of the forum:

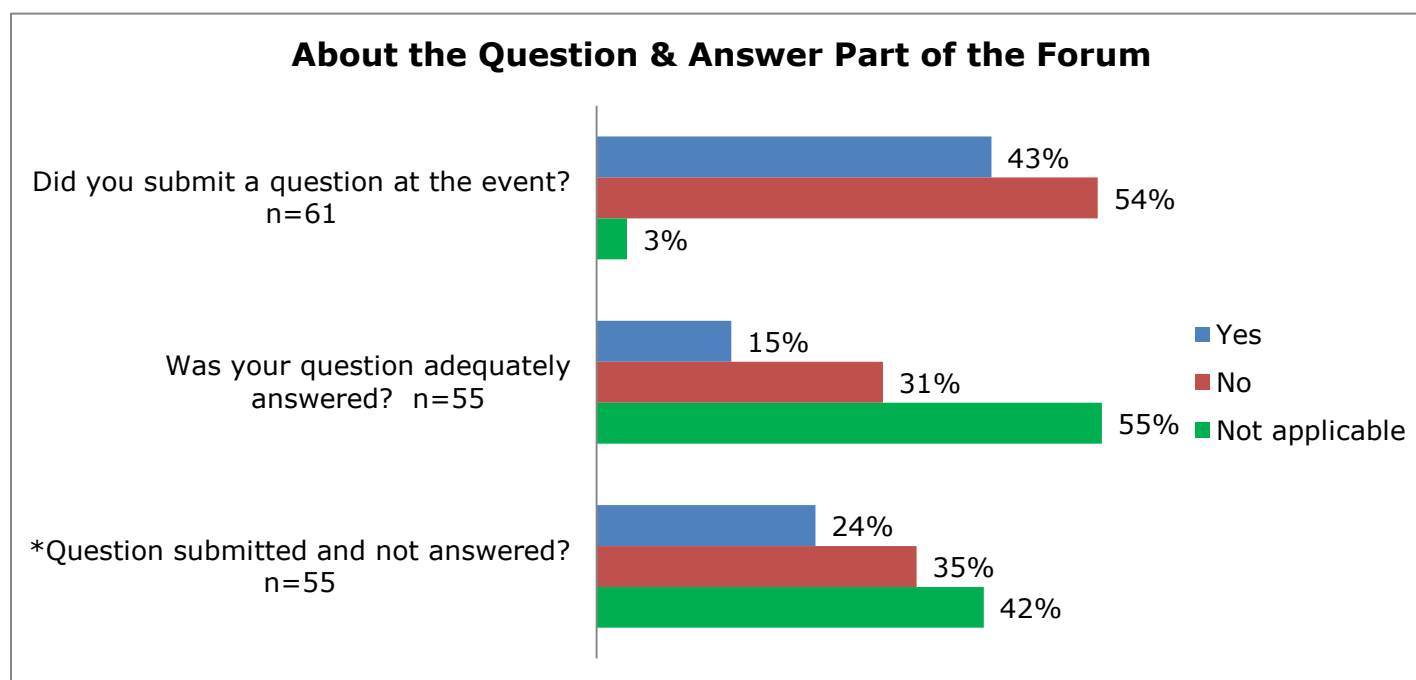
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total Resp |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| *Forum format - Panel opening then Q&A n=60 | 42% | 42% | 13% | 3% | 60 |
| Information about NPI presented by City Planning Department n=59 | 19% | 44% | 22% | 15% | 59 |
| Moderator permitted adequate time for panel responses n=60 | 53% | 35% | 7% | 5% | 60 |
| Event met my need to learn about the NPI process n=57 | 32% | 37% | 26% | 5% | 57 |



*Forum format: Opening statements from panel, then questions from audience

Q4. Please answer the following about the question & answer part of the forum.

| | Yes | No | Not applicable | Total Resp |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|------------|
| Did you submit a question at the event? n=61 | 43% | 54% | 3% | 61 |
| Was your question adequately answered? n=55 | 15% | 31% | 55% | 55 |
| *Question submitted and not answered? n=55 | 24% | 35% | 42% | 55 |



*Full question asked: Did you submit a question that was not asked in some form or another?

Q5. What question(s) do you still have about NPI and the process or questions that were not answered at the event?

Verbatim Responses (27)

- *All chaos, bs and confusion. will be a disaster. We will all have to hire consultants to figure out what it says and allows. Tilted toward developers.*
- *Courtland from CPD said that there was super majority support for the plan based. He was referring to responses they had about the plans prior to when the public started finding out about the plans. For the ECAP only 1,900 people responded via surveys and in person meetings. With nearly 50,000 residents, this is only 3.5% of the community. I would like to know what goals CPD has in regards to the % of a community that needs to know about, and give feedback, about a plan. 3.5% of people is not adequate feedback when the other 96% don't even know*
- *do you have a week?*
- *Examples of when and where community input actually applied to final recommendations.*
- *How can other neighborhoods get started in the process now?*
- *How the NPI will circumvent NIMBY opposition and help our city be more inclusive*
- *How the plan can be amended before submission the planning department.*
- *How will residents be taken care if their neighborhood is blighted by DURA as a result of the NPI?*
- *I didn't hear any questions about lack of parking with new developments. Regardless of what people think, our transit system is not user friendly or efficient, and does not easily connect all parts of the city. People still own cars and are parking them on the street, adding to overwhelming parking congestion.*
- *I don't know how the plan and it's actors are held accountable.*
- *I don't have many questions about the process because I'm a steering committee member.*
- *I had to leave early - so cannot fully comment*
- *I know the focus was on the NPI so I didn't get and didn't expect answers to all my open questions about the EAP[East Area Plan]. My fingers are crossed that I will get them on 10/29 or before.*
- *I want to understand what INC can do to help us, People of color, hold the NPI process accountable to our communities? What will NPI do to properly engage us in an authentic and lasting way?*
- *none*
- *none- i am pretty clear on the process*
- *Not applicable (2)*
- *One of my questions had to do with how climate change will be addressed. The community members on the panel*

Verbatim Responses Continued

- *Questions to the entire panel, where do you live. Lowry, Park Hill and Congress responded. The Middle city planner, I think his name is Courtland, (SP) would not answer the question, neither would the other 2 City Planners. We are the tax payers and pay their salaries. This once again shows the people of Denver that the City of Denver staff cannot be trusted. At this point there was booing from the audience and this Courtland wanted to address something else.*
- *The city is doing great*
- *The process CPD, PW or other consultants use to weight comments and make decisions on plans? What is their process to identify and resolve areas of conflict within the neighborhood? Do different agencies use the same tactics and have the same goals? When collecting survey data, why doesn't the city use some method of tracking who is taking the survey and where they live? What would the departments and consultants recommend for the next NPI areas? What were the lessons learned? How will the city change it's process for the current ECAP and next NPI areas?*
- *There are critical path items tied to prior infrastructure projects proposed that would adversely impact the NPI currently being developed if not undertaken, where is that focus area connection?*
- *What cities were used for research and as models for the Denver plan? Are the city planners Denver residents?*
- *What is the threshold percentage of residents in an area plan for City Council to approve their area plan?*
- *Where will funding for the completed NPIs come from ie what are the tradeoffs? What has the city learned from plans like the Cherry Creek Area Plan?*
- *While I appreciate the City's attempt to solicit information about what residents of the affected areas think, I have also felt overwhelmed by the number of meetings and e-mails on the subject and have also never been clear on the differences between all the plans (e.g., Blueprint) and why they've been undertaken at the same time. No doubt I should have prioritized this, but there is so much else to do in neighborhoods.*

**Q6. [Optional] Please use this space to tell us how we could have improved this experience for you.
Verbatim (34)**

- *1) Provide an objective panel that represents the interests of all renters and owners living along the plan area v. high income white owners who bought homes decades ago. 2) Allow panelists one minute to respond and counter-respond. Fairly allocate response time; 3) Do not allow personal questions to be asked of staff. They have no bearing on the process and led to harassment by the public. 4) If INC cannot control attendees, require a code of conduct. INC needs to pay for security at these events. I was appalled by the behavior they allowed.*
- *A written followup from the city on what it learned from the sessions and how it will act on them.*
- *Allowing for personal attacks of City staff, allowing for heckling and booing should be completely unacceptable. That INC would not demand civility is appalling. Additionally, the community panel did not reflect the Plan steering committee and one panelists wasn't even from the affected areas. By having such a biased panel INC reveals their lack of respect for the democratic process and inability to engage in an honest public process.*
- *City planning reps could have acted less boilerplate in their responses. Quit using diversity inclusiveness, equity, etc. as their teflon halo to deflect even constructive criticism.*
- *City sticking to time line. Learned they were told in advance time line for opening statements and they disregarded which is rather rude - but guess they know that!*
- *did a great job*
- *Disbanded the entire process*
- *Have a candid, straight talking project manager for the NPI process.*
- *Host another forum please in all communities. I will assist. Evsarris@aol.com*
- *I like to know who else is in attendance - City staff, planners, how many were residents of the neighborhoods presented that are in the planning process.*
- *I think this was very well done.*
- *I thought you did an excellent job. It could have been 30 minutes longer.*
- *I understand the need to keep these meetings short, maintain a since of order. However, there were so many questions and inaccuracies by the city that the questions really should have been from the audience not a moderator*
- *I wanted to have the panel from the city to talk more about planning than about process.*
- *I was pleased with the overall format.*

Verbatim Continued

- *I did not think that INC was completely fair with this event. It seemed there was a bias against NPI demonstrated in the choosing of the community panelists. Choosing any other members of the steering committees would have produced a very different dynamic, but specifically choosing the two you did was a clear indication of bias. Then, later in the one panelist who said she did not attend any of the steering committee meetings or community forums and focus groups (though she read the *Cliff* notes), was a clear indication that INC wanted to stick it to the City. There are community members who are not on the committee that have attended our steering committee meetings pretty consistently. Any of those non-steering committee members would have had more accurate insights into the process than Christine. They would not have agreed with everything about the process, but they would have had more credibility in their comments since they've participated. And, the last question was totally meant to *get* the City. Christine herself said that she didn't live in the study area but didn't say how the plans did/did not affect her. Did she get booed? No!*
I am frustrated by the promise and position that INC holds and sometimes uses in such a biased way. I applaud your efforts at working to get people involved and I know it is a very difficult job as a volunteer. I've been an RNO president and board member and it can be both very rewarding and very frustrating. My critique is not that you tried and failed. My critique is that your intent was to discredit the process. Full stop. It was not to truly learn what
- *I would have liked the moderator to have required responses to the questions asked. The question about where people on the panel live that was not answered by anyone on CPD just increased my distrust in them as representatives. They are being paid with my tax dollars. I think they forget who they work for sometimes.*
- *I'm not sure how the panelists were chosen. They did not adequately represent the scope of opinions held by neighbors. There was no one from the East Colfax neighborhood, for example, and no one from the immigrant community. I'm not sure why a Lowry representative was on the panel, since Lowry is a master - planned community and does not deal with many of the same issues as others.*
- *Making it shorter. No more than 1 hour. We all know the city mayor and planners do not care what the public thinks anyway and the planning process is a big waste of money. The politicians are in bed with the developers.*
- *more time for Q & A. some of the attendees were very rude to the city staff there.*
- *More time!*
- *Overly reliant with online surveys and communications skews responses outside of the actual demographics of the affected areas. Better presentation of items raised as concerns or changes requested to date would engender greater respect and trust.*
- *The City Planner should be honest and up front. They should have answered the question. it makes people feel they*

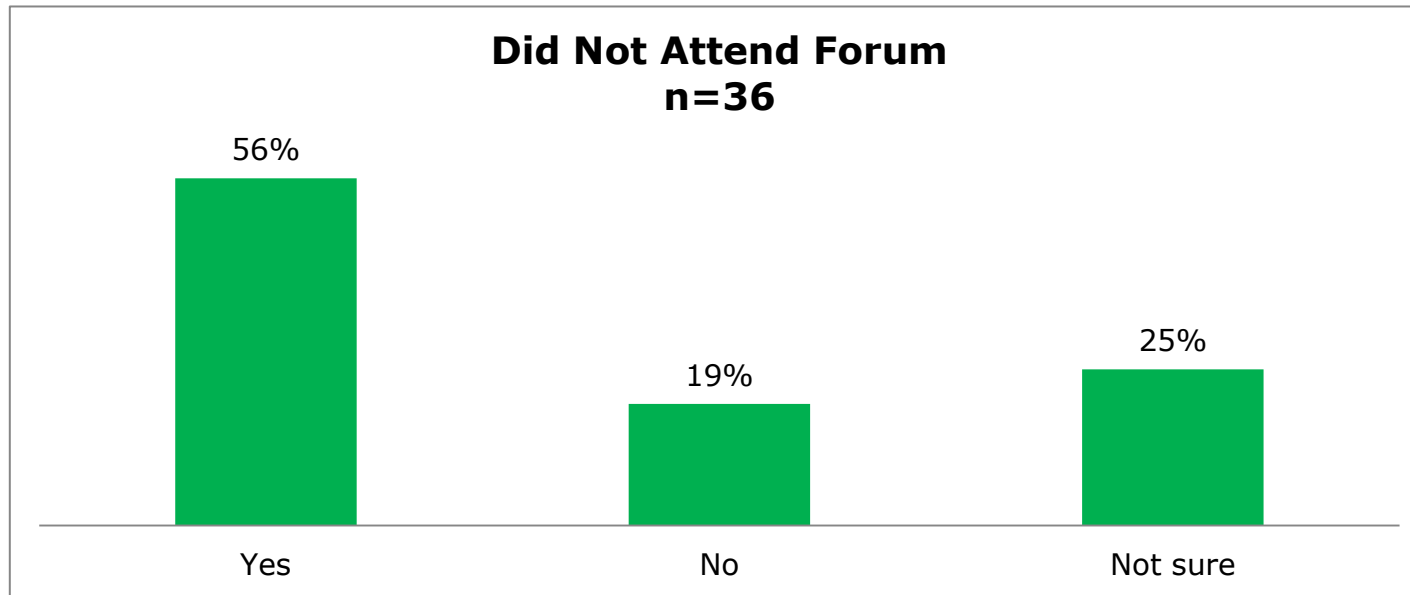
Verbatim Continued

- *The first question was whether someone from the RNO or I attended. I answered "yes," because someone else from our RNO attended, but I did not. Therefore, I could not answer any of the questions. Also, while I get an email about the monthly meeting, they tend to be so poorly formatted that I just skim and delete. Didn't realize there was a forum. Website is cluttered and unhelpful, and Facebook is spotty at best. I would suggest hiring a young person to update your online communications, because they tend to get it.*
- *The Forum was very informative and organized.*
- *I would like to see more diversity on the panels.*
- *The issues raised by the East Colfax RNO concerning the blight action by DURA were not addressed. The City folks need to be prepared to face the human element for any actions they take that could displace fellow residents. It's unfair that people are not a consideration in the neighborhood plans.*
- *There was animosity in the room from the start, expressed for example by instructions from the emcee to, in effect, "behave." This seemed to get things off on the wrong foot, but maybe that would have happened anyway.*
- *There was too much time wasted at the beginning with INC process/voting*
- *This event was completely biased. INC chose the most disenfranchised members of the steering committees (why not invite the chairs?), offered a politically biased moderator and managed the event to disparage and discredit the city planners. Shame on you -- INC Fox News*
- *Was good as it was. Glad you did not have tables where we bring our turquoise sticky dots.*
- *Well first, a big thank you for putting a great event together. The only minor & gentle recommendation would be to have a better handle on AV sound issues if you can. I can imagine the venue presented its own unique challenges so take even that with a grain of salt. Great job!*
- *Went well and INC provided a needed service to the community. Thank you.*
- *the moderator was poor. there should have been opportunity for questions to be asked directly. The mayors office were full of *** -and no one asked the "elephant in the room" question of the input of developers/investors...*

Respondents Who Did Not Attend The NPI Forum

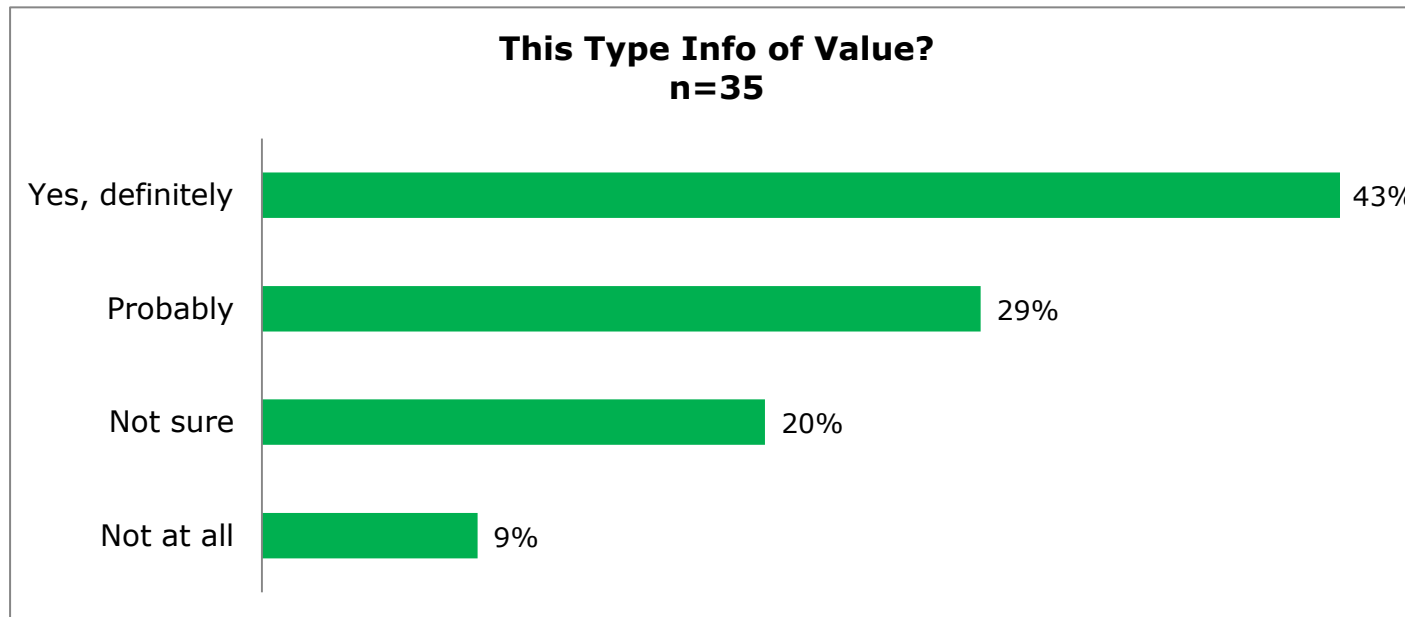
Q2b. Were you aware of this forum about Neighborhood Planning (Area Plans) hosted by INC?
42 originally answered Q1.screening question they did not attend the forum.

| | % Resp | # Resp |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| Yes | 56% | 20 |
| No | 19% | 7 |
| Not sure | 25% | 9 |
| Totals | 100% | 36 |



Q3b. Would this type information be of value to you and your neighborhood?

| | % Resp | # Resp |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Yes, definitely | 43% | 15 |
| Probably | 29% | 10 |
| Not sure | 20% | 7 |
| Not at all | 9% | 3 |
| Totals | 100% | 35 |



Q4b. Please tell us how INC could do a better job in attracting neighborhood leaders to these types

Verbatim (19)

- *As an HOA president, I honestly get so many emails about forums and surveys and events and notices, it's overwhelming and I have stopped reading anything closely*
- *Contact rno contact via email or phone*
- *hold on another day but Saturday. Maybe evenings or alteration of dates.*
- *I am not sure. I need to attend a meeting to have a better idea of what the meetings are for.*
- *I think INC does a good job of putting the information out. In this case, like myself, many of our members were traveling.*
- *I was out of town that week.*
- *I wish I knew. Just seems everyone is so busy - meetings go way down the list. Plus, honestly, as long as this Administration is running Denver, there is not much use in wasting time, and being ignored.*
- *Outreach is fine - we just need more free time to attend meetings. If meeting recording is available that would be great.*
- *Plan a series of forums that is well advertised*
- *Please limit meeting to no more than 1 hour 15 mins*
- *Scheduling the forums for the weekend is a little bit much for me. I have a number of City-related things during the week and try and reserve weekend time for other things.*
- *Send email to CHHHA.com for neighbors in HOA*
- *Share with them the worst case scenarios resultant of decisions to date.*
- *Try to pay attention to other city/neighborhood events that might already be scheduled. (Such as the HLCC.)*
(And I knew someone who attended: just not from my RNO.)
- *UPCC already has a neighborhood plan and it was our understanding that updating this plan is of low priority currently. Therefore we did not send a representative. If there were to be advice on current plan improvements and moving forward with coordination with DenveRight (2040) we would have more interest. More coalition building between near neighborhoods would also be good.*
- *Update your website. It looks like you built it in the 90's. Have regularly scheduled monthly meetings.*
- *We (CPW) need to make more of a commitment to INC and then engage help with zoning issues and questions.*
- *We used to have a free INC membership because we do not collect dues from our low-income members. We gave it up because we feel INC doesn't hear some parts of the community it is intended to serve.*
- *We were away on vacation.*