

Background

In 2014, the City launched an effort called “Nature in the City” to ensure that, as our community grows to its build-out population, all residents have access to high-quality, natural spaces close to where they live and work. Whether it’s a formal natural area, neighborhood park, or just the open space behind your home, our primary objective is to create and maintain access to nature within Fort Collins.

Process

365 surveys were received between March and September 2014. The survey was initially piloted at the March 2014 Visioning Workshop as well as in other focus groups, e.g., the Chamber’s Local Legislative Affairs Committee, and then refined based on feedback.

Surveys were presented via keypad polling (“clickers”) or residents could complete them via paper surveys. A copy of this survey is provided at the end of this summary. Demographic data were collected to ensure that the findings were relevant across a broad range of factors, including gender, age, income levels, race, and where individuals live and work throughout the City.

Due to multiple data sources, surveys were analyzed in Excel.

What’s included in this document?

- A summary of the results from 365 respondents to the project’s survey
- Detailed results from the survey (page 2) and comparison by demographics (page 10).

For more information about the project:

www.fcgov.com/natureinthecity

Summary of Findings

A project survey was developed to solicit feedback from the community on whether nature is important to them and why, where they access nature, and on what they believe this project should focus.

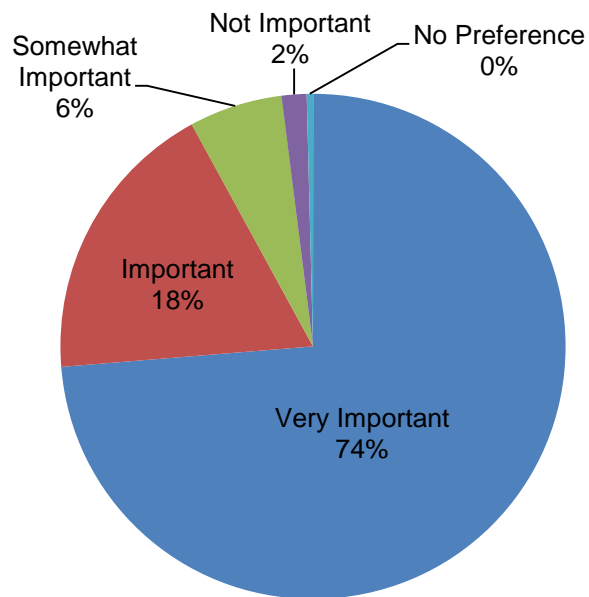
Key findings from the survey are as follows:

- Residents in Fort Collins strongly value access to nature (92% of respondents indicated nature was important or very important to them).
- Most residents feel they have easy access to nature (78% agree or strongly agree), but note that a lack of time (94 respondents) and lack of easy access (48 respondents) are the two biggest barriers to open space access.
- The places residents most frequently access nature are the City’s Parks (305 respondents) and Natural Areas (283 respondents). As staff spoke with younger respondents, the numbers for schools and community gardens/local farms rose steadily.
- Residents access nature within the community primarily for personal recreation or exercise; to escape from the urban environment; and to observe wildlife, plants and trees.
- When asked what this project should focus on, given our current strengths and weaknesses, four priorities emerged:
 1. Provide opportunities to escape from the urban environment
 2. Increase connectivity and opportunities for wildlife and plants (especially trees) to thrive in the community
 3. Provide places to find beauty, peace, and relaxation
 4. Provide more opportunities for personal and group exercise or play, with an emphasis on a connected network of these opportunities.

Project Survey Results by Question

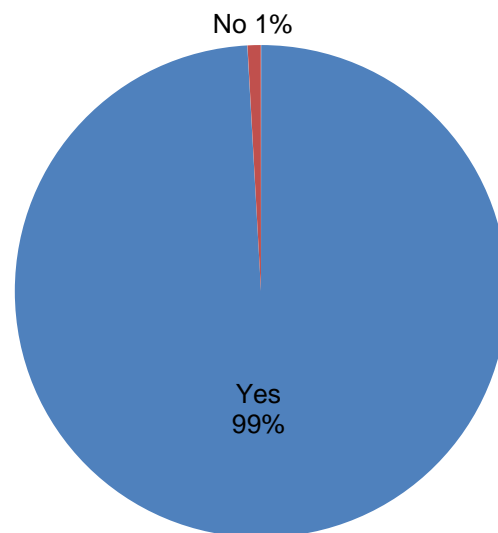
Question 1: Is nature in Fort Collins important to you?

Most residents (92% or 231 out of 251) responded that nature was either very important or important to them.



Question 2: Do you access nature in the city?

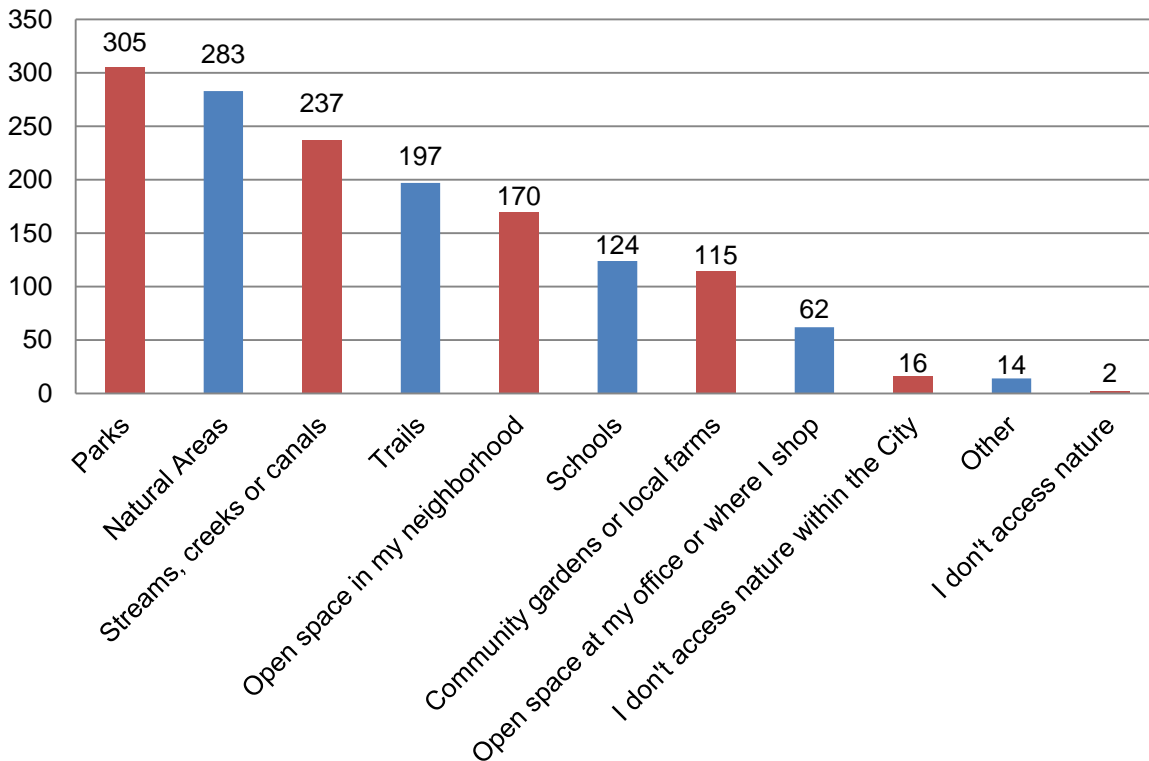
Almost all (99%) residents are able to access nature in the city (225 out of 227 respondents).



Project Survey Results (cont.)

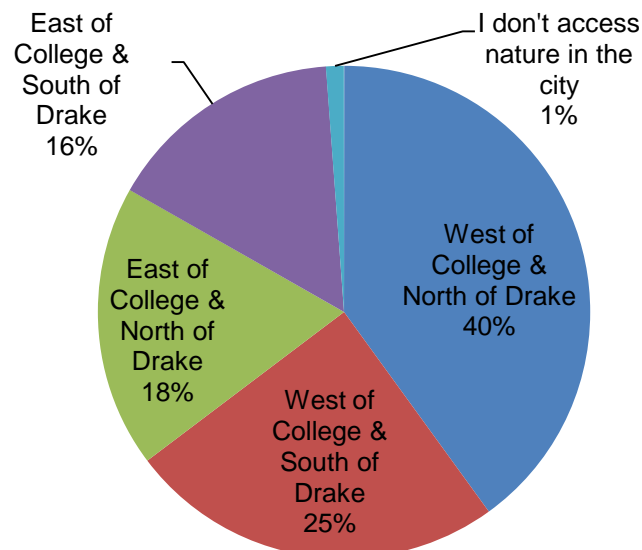
Question 3: Where do you access nature in the city?

The most cited place where residents access nature is in parks, followed closely by Natural Areas, and then by streams, creeks, and canals.



Question 4: In what part of the City do you access nature most often?

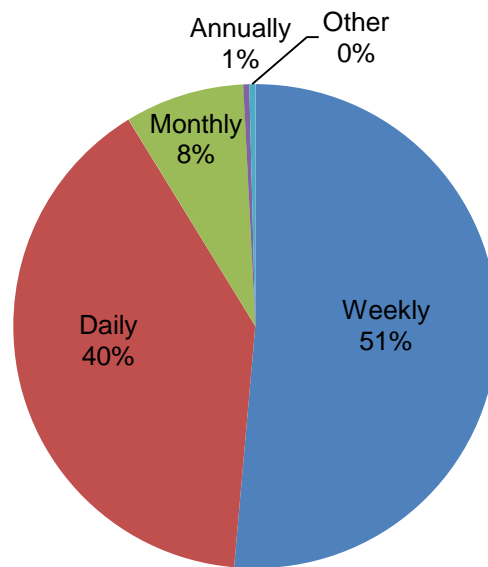
Access to nature was spread across the City, with areas in the northwest part of town being visited most often (40%).



Project Survey Results (cont.)

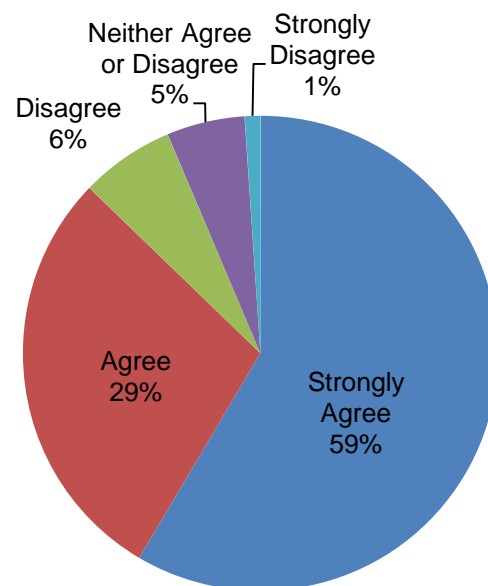
Question 5: How often do you choose to access nature?

Most residents choose to access nature either weekly (51%) or daily (40%).



Question 6: I feel I have easy access to nature (within a 10-minute walk).

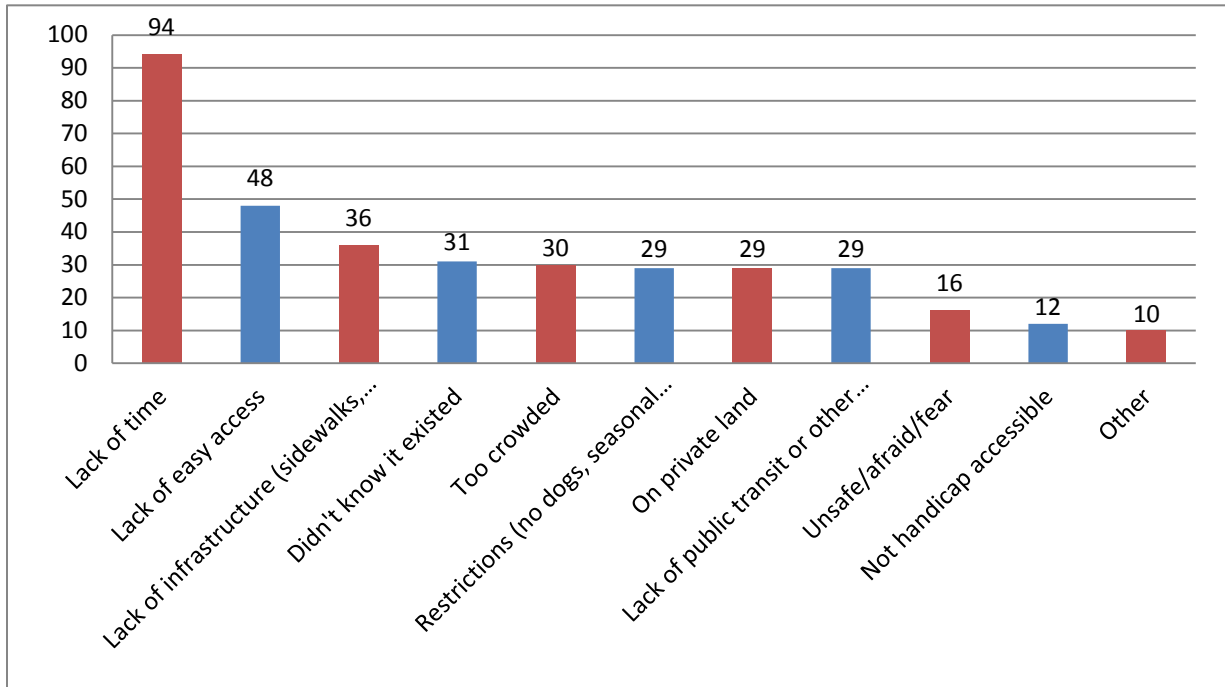
Most residents agree that they have easy access to nature (78%).



Project Survey Results (cont.)

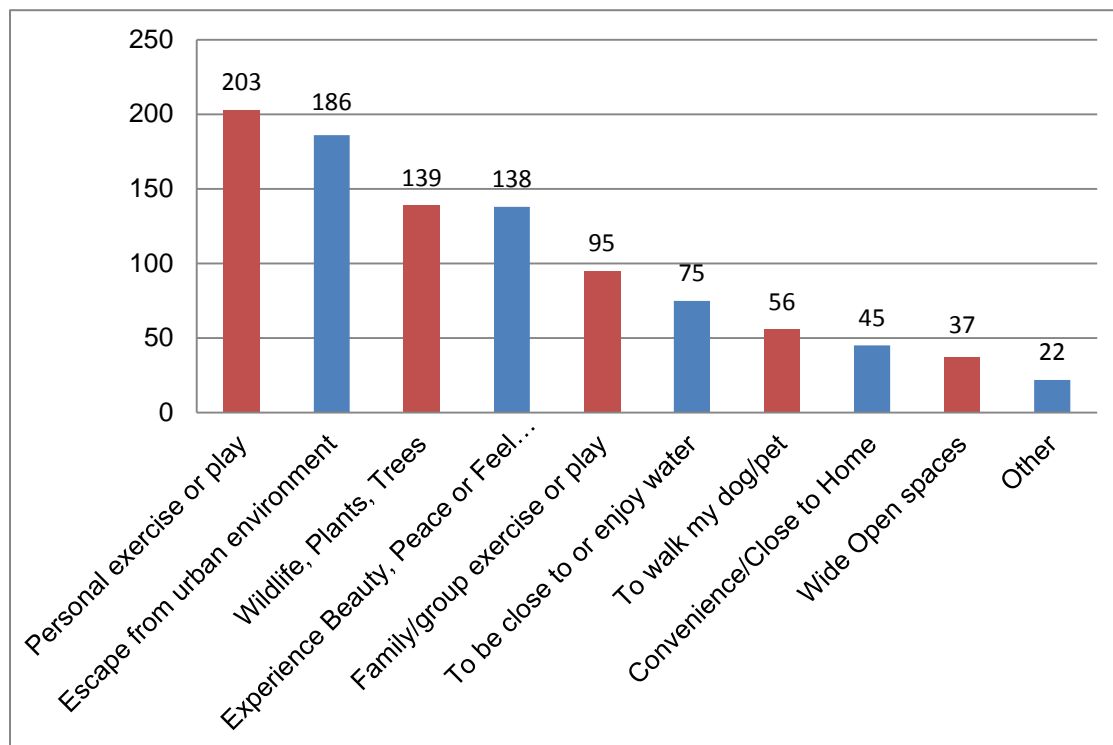
Question 7: What barriers prevent you from accessing nature?

The biggest barrier to accessing nature is lack of time (n=94), with lack of easy access being the second most common barrier (n=48).



Question 8: Why do you choose to spend time in nature?

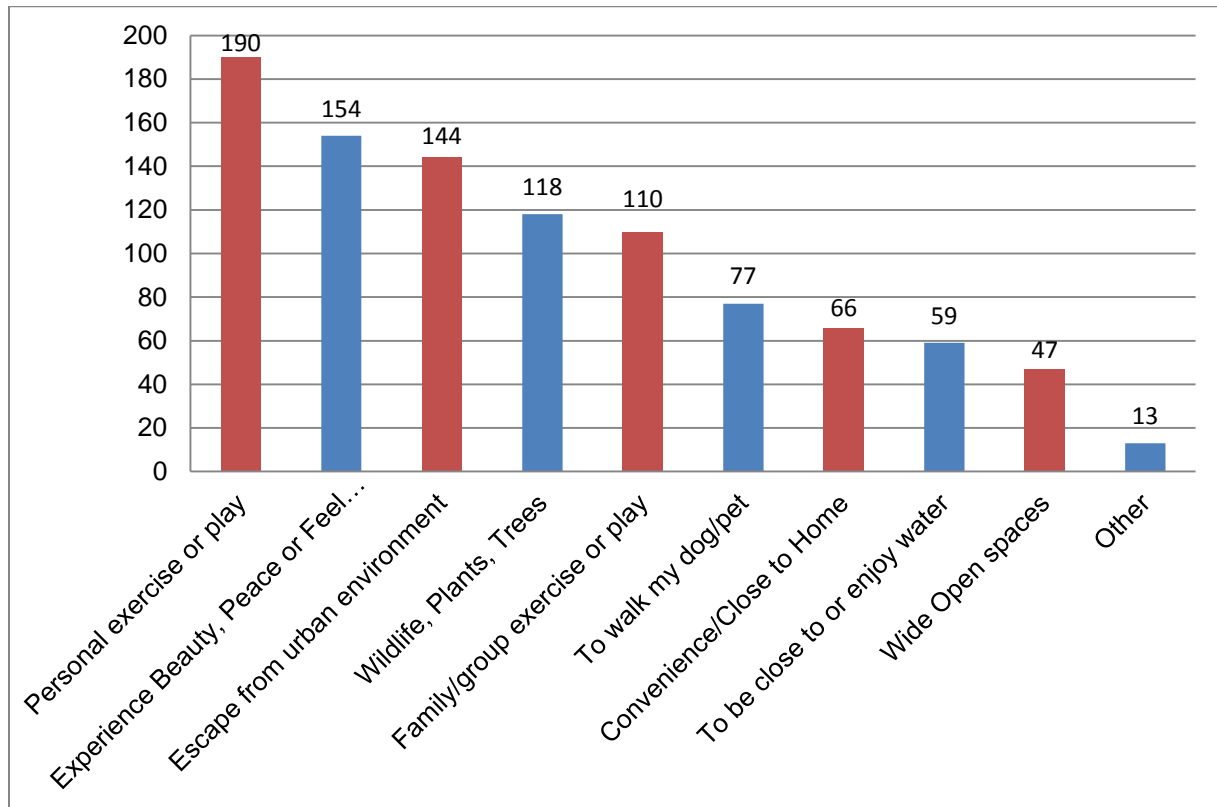
The most common reason people choose to spend time in nature is for personal exercise or play (n=203).



Project Survey Results (cont.)

Question 9: Which of these values are most important for you in your neighborhood?

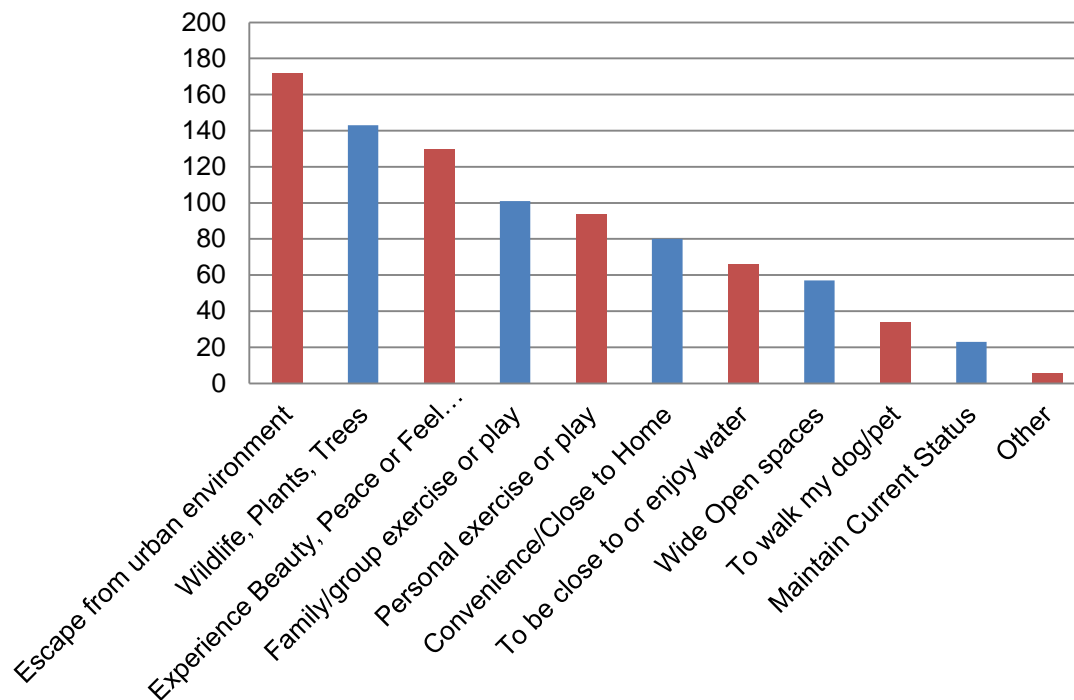
As with question 8, the most important reason people access nature in the neighborhood is for personal exercise or play. However, the opportunity to experience beauty, peace or feel relaxed moved from #4 to #2 in terms of preference.



Project Survey Results (cont.)

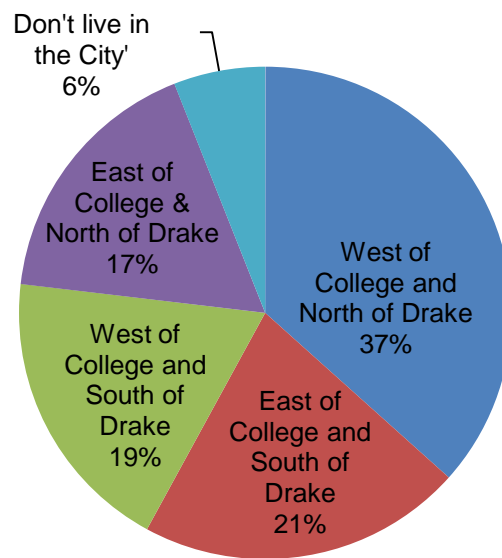
Question 10: Considering our current strengths and weaknesses, which of these values should this project focus on the most for the city overall?

In this question, the opportunity to escape from the urban environment moves to the top most preferred value to focus on, with wildlife, plants, and trees being the second most preferred item. Of note is that these priorities were consistent overall based on demographics, but that males wanted the project to focus on personal exercise or play as their second priority for the project.



Question 11: What part of the City do you live in (by quadrant)?

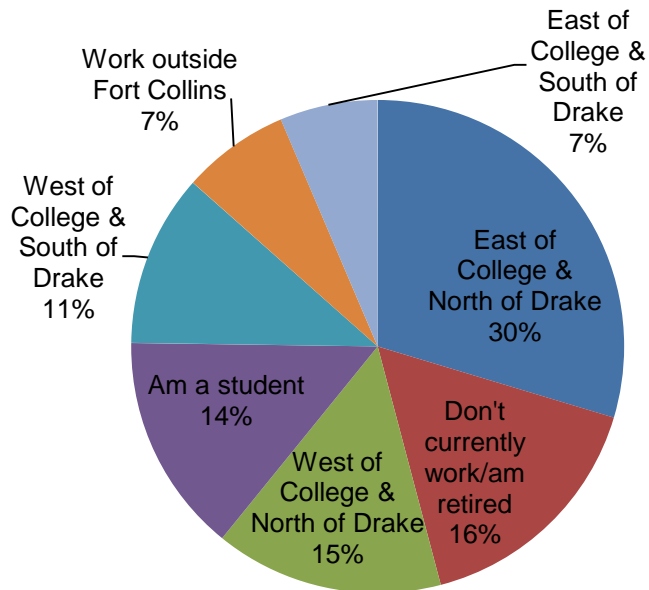
The majority of residents that responded lived in the northwest quadrant of town.



Project Survey Results (cont.)

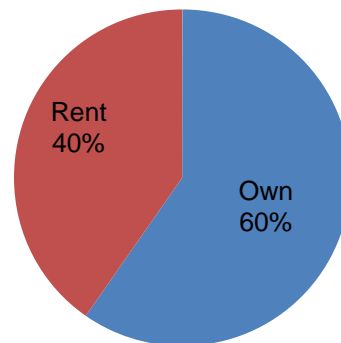
Question 12: Which part of the City do you work in (by quadrant)?

Respondents work in a variety of places across the City.



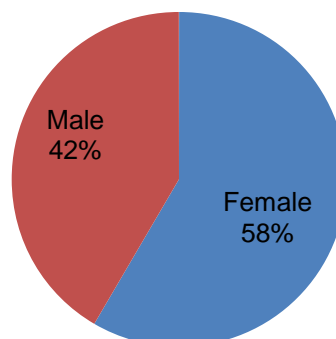
Question 13: Do you own or rent your residence?

Respondents were nearly split on home ownership versus being renters.



Question 14: What is your gender?

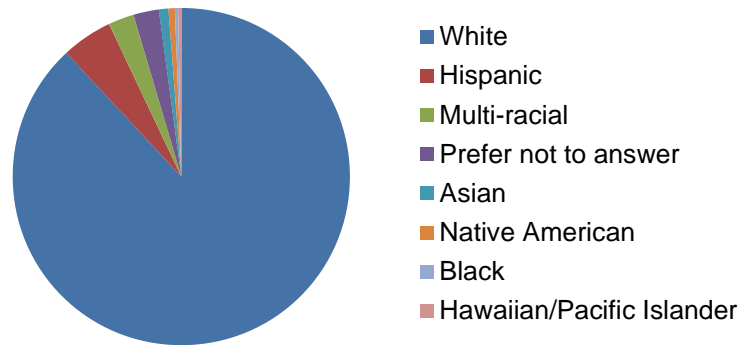
Overall, more females responded to the survey than males.



Project Survey Results (cont.)

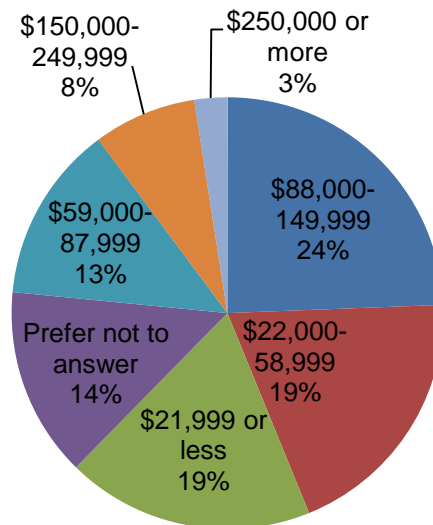
Question 15: What is your race?

Approximately 85% of respondents are white, with approximately 5% of the respondents being Hispanic. The remaining 10% of respondents are multi-racial (2.4%), prefer not to answer (2.4%), and less than 1% each of Asian, Native American, Black, and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander respondents. Fort Collins Demographics from 2012 indicated the population is approximately 82.5% white, 10.3% Hispanic, 2.0% Black, 1.7% Native American, 4.1% Asian, 0.3% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2.4% is another race.



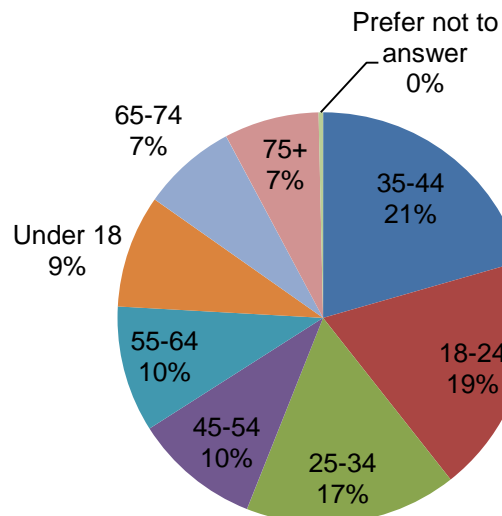
Question 16: What is your household income?

Respondents had varying income levels. Preferences for different values did not vary greatly among the different income levels, and across every income level – the opportunity to escape from the urban environment was prioritized.



Question 17: What is your age?

A variety of folks of different age groups responded to the survey.



Project Survey Results (cont.)

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across income levels?

In general, the top three priorities found overall (escape from the urban environment; wildlife, plants and trees; and to experience beauty, peace or feel rejuvenated) were consistently in the top three priorities for all income levels. As income levels increased, family exercise or play was also identified as a top priority. Note that only 8 respondents to the survey indicated an income over \$250,000, and the priorities in this income level varied greatly, likely as a result of the low number of respondents sampled.

		Income Levels						
		\$21,999 or less	\$22,000-58,999	\$59,000-87,999	\$88,000-149,999	\$150,000-\$249,999	\$250,000 or more*	Prefer not to Answer
Priorities	Top Priority	Escape from the Urban Environment	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment & Family Exercise or Play	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment; Family exercise or play; To Experience Beauty, Peace or Feel Rejuvenated; and Wide Open Spaces	Escape from the Urban Environment
	Second Priority	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Escape from the Urban Environment	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Wildlife, Plants, Trees & Family Exercise or Play	Wildlife, Plants and Trees and To Walk my Dog/Pet	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees & To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated
	Third Priority	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated		Personal exercise or play; Family exercise or play; and Convenience/It's Close to Home

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across races?

Given the small number of respondents of different races, this analysis was not conducted for all races. However, as 5% of respondents were Hispanic, the priorities for Hispanic respondents are as follows: (1) To Escape from the Urban Environment & to Experience Beauty, Peace or Feel Rejuvenated; (2) Personal Exercise or Play; and (3) Convenience/It's close to home. White respondents' priorities were consistent with the overall survey: (1) To Escape from the Urban Environment; (2) Wildlife, Plants, and Trees, and (3) To Experience Beauty, Peace or Feel Rejuvenated.

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across genders?

In general, the top priorities for men and women were comparable, with men prioritizing family/group exercise or play slightly higher than women.

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Priorities	Top Priority	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees
	Second Priority	Family/group exercise or play	Escape from the Urban Environment & To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated
	Third Priority	Escape from the Urban Environment	Family/group exercise or play

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across home ownership versus renters?

Both home owners and renters prioritized the opportunity to escape from the urban environment and wildlife, plants, and trees, but their third priorities differed. For renters, family/group exercise or play ranked #7 overall, while it ranked #3 for home owners. The opportunity to experience beauty, peace or feel rejuvenated was ranked #3 for renters and #4 for home owners.

		Home Owners	Renters
Priorities	Top Priority	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment
	Second Priority	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees
	Third Priority	Family/group exercise or play	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across where people live?

In general, the top priorities were consistent regardless of where respondents lived in the City, with those West of College prioritizing personal or family exercise or play in their top three priorities.

		East of College & North of Drake	East of College & South of Drake	West of College & North of Drake	West of College & South of Drake	Don't live in the City
Priorities	Top Priority	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees
	Second Priority	Escape from the Urban Environment & To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Family exercise or play
	Third Priority	Convenience/It's Close to Home and To be Close to or Enjoy Water	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Personal exercise or play	Family/group exercise or play	Escape from the Urban Environment; Convenience/It's Close to Home and To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated

Analysis: How do project priorities compare across age groups?

In general, at least two of the top three priorities found overall (escape from the urban environment; wildlife, plants, and trees; and to experience beauty, peace or feel rejuvenated) were consistently in the top three priorities for all age groups. Note there were few respondents who were above the age of 75 or who preferred not to answer this question on the survey.

		Age Groups								Prefer not to Answer
		Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	
Priorities	Top Priority	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Escape from the Urban Environment	Escape from the Urban Environment & Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Family/group exercise or play	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees	Personal exercise or play	Wildlife, Plants, and Trees & To Walk my Dog/Pet	Escape from the Urban Environment & To Experience Beauty, Peace or
	Second Priority	Escape from the Urban Environment	Wildlife, Plants, Trees	Family/group exercise or play	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Escape from the Urban Environment & To Experience Beauty, Peace or Feel Rejuvenated	Escape from the Urban Environment & To Experience Beauty, Peace or Feel Rejuvenated	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Wide Open Spaces	Feel Rejuvenated & Wide Open Spaces (only priorities identified in this group, and all were the same)
	Third Priority	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated & Wide Open Spaces	To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Personal exercise or play & To Experience Beauty, Peace or feel Rejuvenated	Family/group exercise or play	Wide Open Spaces	Personal exercise or play	Escape from the Urban Environment		

- 1) Is nature in Fort Collins important to you?
 - a. Not important
 - b. Somewhat important
 - c. Important
 - d. Very important
 - e. No preference

- 2) Do you access nature in the city?
 - a. Yes, see questions 3 and 4
 - b. No. If not, why do you not access nature in the city?

- 3) Where do you access nature in the city?
(choose all that apply)
 - a. Natural Areas
 - b. Parks
 - c. Open space in my neighborhood (HOA or other)
 - d. Open space at my office or where I shop
 - e. Schools
 - f. Community gardens or local farms
 - g. Streams, creeks or canals
 - h. Trails
 - i. I don't access nature
 - j. I don't access nature within the city
 - k. Other _____

- 4) In what part of the city do you most often access nature?
 - a. East of College & North of Drake
 - b. East of College & South of Drake
 - c. West of College & North of Drake
 - d. West of College & South of Drake
 - e. I don't access nature in the city

- 5) How often do you choose to access nature?
 - a. Daily
 - b. Weekly
 - c. Monthly
 - d. Annually
 - e. Other _____

- 6) I feel I have easy access to nature (within a 10-minute walk)
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree or disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

- 7) What barriers prevent you from accessing nature? (choose all that apply)
 - a. Lack of easy access, e.g., major street/railroads/traffic
 - b. Unsafe/Afraid/Fear
 - c. Lack of infrastructure, e.g., no sidewalks, trail, or parking
 - d. Too crowded
 - e. Didn't know it existed
 - f. Not handicap accessible
 - g. Restrictions (no dogs, seasonal closures, cost)
 - h. On private land
 - i. Lack of public transit or other transportation
 - j. Lack of time
 - k. Other _____

- 8) Why do you choose to spend time in nature?
(rank top 3 reasons in order)
 - ___ Escape from urban environment/
Fresh Air
 - ___ Wildlife (intrinsic value or viewing),
Plants, Trees
 - ___ Personal exercise or play
 - ___ Family/group exercise or play
 - ___ Convenience/It's Close to Home
 - ___ To Experience Beauty, Peace, or feel
Rejuvenated
 - ___ To be Close to or Enjoy Water
 - ___ To Walk My Dog/Pet
 - ___ Wide Open Spaces
 - ___ Other _____

- 9) Which of these values are most important in your neighborhood to you? (rank top 3 values in order)
 - ___ Escape from urban environment/
Fresh Air
 - ___ Wildlife (intrinsic value or viewing),
Plants, Trees
 - ___ Personal exercise or play
 - ___ Family exercise or play
 - ___ Convenience/It's Close to Home
 - ___ To Experience Beauty, Peace, or feel
Rejuvenated
 - ___ To be Close to or Enjoy Water
 - ___ To Walk My Dog/Pet
 - ___ Wide Open Spaces
 - ___ Other _____

10) Considering our current strengths and weaknesses, which should this project focus on the most for the city overall? *(rank top 3 values in order)*

- ___ Escape from urban environment/
Fresh Air
- ___ Wildlife (intrinsic value or viewing),
Plants, Trees
- ___ Personal exercise or play
- ___ Family exercise or play
- ___ Convenience/It's Close to Home
- ___ To Experience Beauty, Peace, or feel
Rejuvenated
- ___ To be Close to or Enjoy Water
- ___ To Walk My Dog/Pet
- ___ Wide Open Spaces
- ___ Maintain current status
- ___ Other _____

11) What part of the city do you live in (by quadrant)?

- a. East of College & North of Drake
- b. East of College & South of Drake
- c. West of College & North of Drake
- d. West of College & South of Drake
- e. Don't live in the city

12) What part of the city do you work in?

- a. East of College & North of Drake
- b. East of College & South of Drake
- c. West of College & North of Drake
- d. West of College & South of Drake
- e. Work outside Fort Collins
- f. Don't currently work/am retired
- g. Am a student

13) Do you own or rent your residence?

- a. Own
- b. Rent

14) What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

15) What is your race?

- a. Asian
- b. Black
- c. Hispanic
- d. White
- e. Native American
- f. Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- g. Multi-racial
- h. Prefer not to answer

16) What is your household income?

- a. \$21,999 or less
- b. \$22,000-58,999
- c. \$59,000-87,999
- d. \$88,000-149,999
- e. \$150,000-\$249,999
- f. \$250,000 or more
- g. Prefer not to answer

17) What is your age?

- a. Under 18
- b. 18-24
- c. 25-34
- d. 35-44
- e. 45-54
- f. 55-64
- g. 65-74
- h. 75+
- i. Prefer not to answer

18) Is there anything else you would like to add?

19) Would you like to join our email list?

Email: _____

Please return this survey to Lindsay Ex via email at
lex@fcgov.com

Or mail to the following address:
Lindsay Ex, City of Fort Collins
PO Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80522