



# **2025 Vibrant Denver Bond**

## **Executive Committee Orientation**

Department of Finance

Mayor's Office

May 12, 2025

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City and County of Denver honors and acknowledges that the land on which we reside is the traditional territory of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Peoples. We also recognize the 51 contemporary tribal nations that are historically tied to the lands that make up the state of Colorado.

We honor Elders past, present, and future, and those who have stewarded this land throughout generations. We also recognize that government, academic and cultural institutions were founded upon and continue to enact exclusions and erasures of Indigenous Peoples.

May this acknowledgement demonstrate a commitment to working to dismantle ongoing legacies of oppression and inequities and recognize the current and future contributions of Indigenous communities in Denver.

# LABOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that our country's economy, infrastructure, and resulting generational wealth would not exist as they do today without the stolen and forced labor of enslaved Africans who suffered transatlantic human trafficking, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow.

We acknowledge how these dehumanizing practices have social, legal, and economic legacies that continue to haunt to this day.

# Agenda

- I. Introductions
  - I. Executive Committee
  - II. Presenting Team
- II. Recent Bond Programs
- III. Vibrant Denver Bond Overview
- IV. Subcommittee Project Evaluations & Recommendations
- V. Executive Committee Process, Expectations & Timeline
- VI. Q&A



# Executive Committee Roster

- **Amanda P. Sandoval**, Denver City Council President
- **Nicole Doheny**, Chief Financial Officer, City and County of Denver
- **Dr. Ben Sanders**, Chief Equity Officer, City and County of Denver
- **Christine Benero**, President & CEO, Mile High United Way
- **Kayla Garcia**, President & CEO, Girls, Inc.
- **Mowa Haile**, Chair-elect of the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and Founder & President, Sky Blue Builders
- **Happy Haynes**, Former Executive Director of Denver Parks & Recreation
- **Mary Nguyen**, Founder & President, Olive & Finch Collective
- **Federico Peña**, Former Denver Mayor
- **Murphy Robinson**, CEO, SurePass, and former City & County of Denver deputy mayor, COO & executive director of the Denver Department of Safety

# Presenting Team

- **Evan Dreyer**, Deputy Chief of Staff for the Mayor
- **Laura Wachter**, Capital Planning & Programming Director, Department of Finance
- **Laura Swartz**, Marketing & Communications Director, Department of Finance
- **Patrick Riley**, Bond Program Manager, Department of Finance
- **Jane Fisher**, Elevate/RISE Bond Program Manager, Department of Transportation & Infrastructure

# Recent Bond Programs



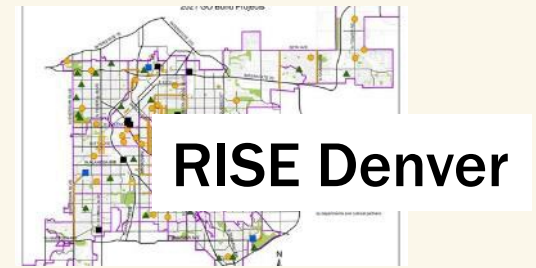
## 2007 Better Denver Bond

- \$550 million
- 380 capital projects
- 10-year bond



## 2017 Elevate Denver Bond

- \$937 million
- 500 capital projects
- 10-year bond



## 2021 RISE Denver Bond

- \$260 million
- 80 capital projects
- 5-year bond

# Elevate Denver

**10-YEAR,  
\$937 MILLION**

ELEVATE DENVER BOND PROGRAM

NEARLY  
**500**  
PROJECTS



# RISE Denver

**MULTI-YEAR,  
\$260 MILLION**

RISE DENVER GO BOND PROGRAM

MORE THAN  
**80**  
PROJECTS



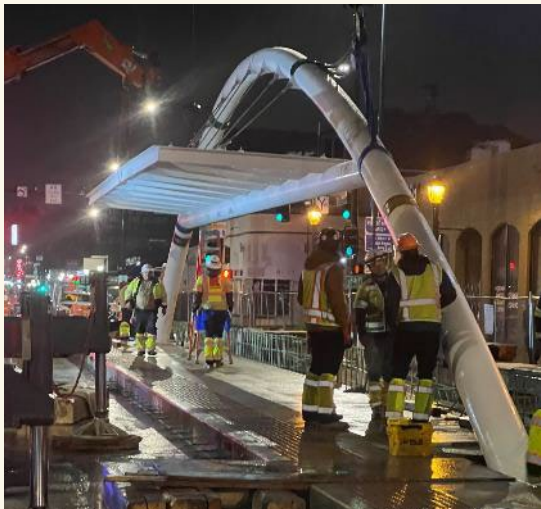
# Bonds In Action

Denver Zoo Improvements & New Animal Hospital



16th St Mall

Green Valley Ranch Indoor Pool



Colfax BRT



Bear Valley Park Tennis Courts

# Elevate/RISE Go Bond Highlights

- **On track to complete all projects by 2027**
  - RISE is five years ahead of schedule
- **Only 3% of projects are currently still "in development" (14 out of 530)**
- **City secured additional sources to increase the \$1.2B approved by voters to total investments of \$2.05**
- **Most recent (and final) issuance of bond funding was in April 2024**
  - \$637 million total spent to date on Elevate
  - \$78 million total spent to date on RISE

# Elevate & RISE– Key Takeaways

## Current Status

- 2017 Elevate Bond Program is 68% spent (\$637M of \$937M), which is 99% of planned expenditures
- 2021 RISE Bond Program is 30% spent (\$78M of \$260M), which is 92% of planned expenditures

## End of 2025

- 428 of 530 projects will be open to the public, 35 projects will be in design

## End of 2026

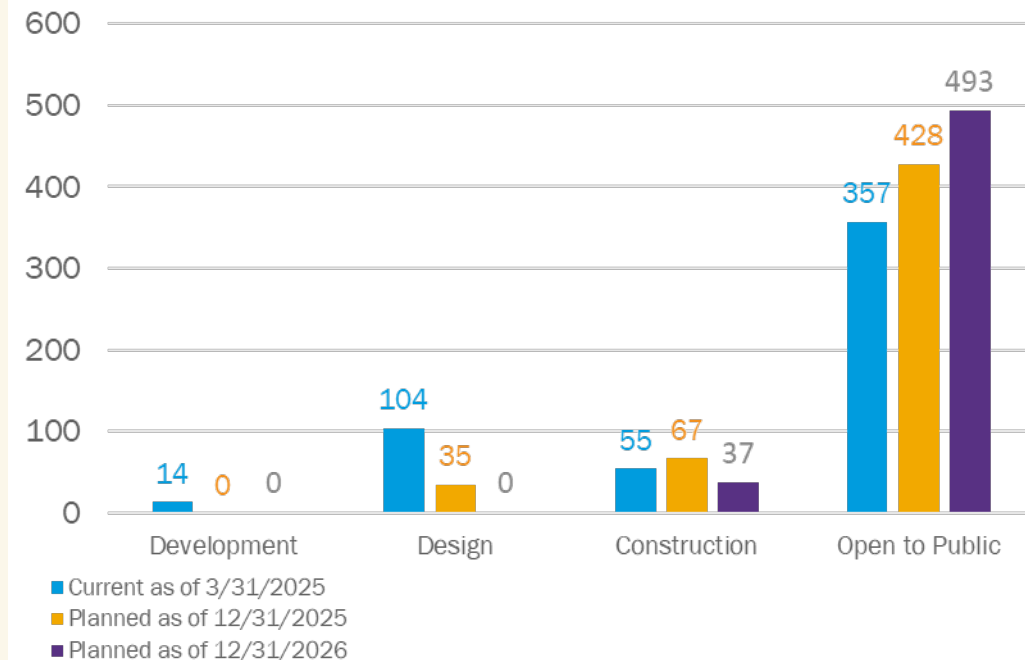
- 493 of 530 projects will be open to the public, with 37 projects in construction

## End of 2027

- 2017 Elevate and 2021 RISE Bond programs on track to be completed by 12/31/2027

## 530 Total Projects

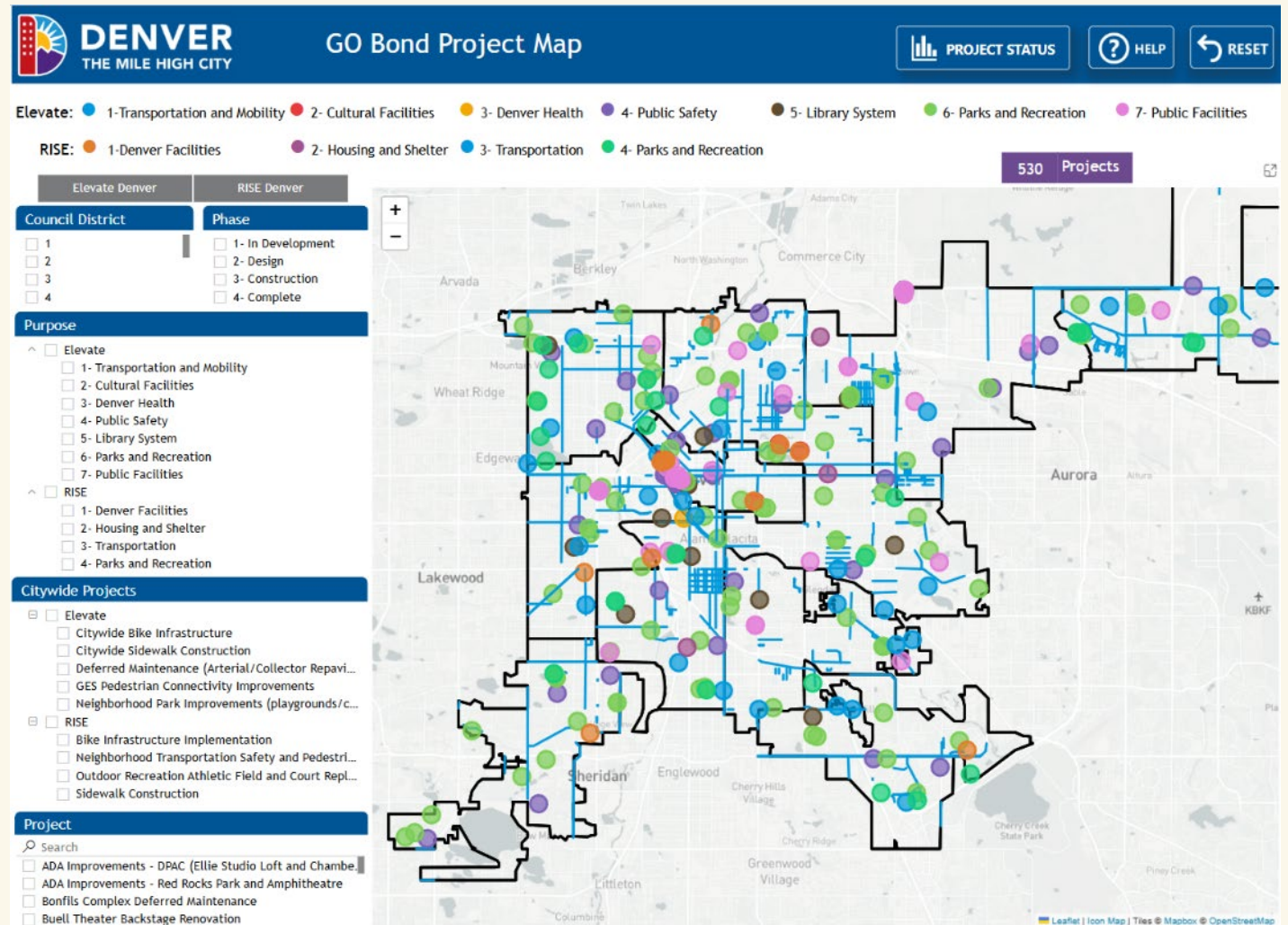
### Project Summary by Phase



# Public-Facing Dashboards

- Updated monthly to communicate to external stakeholders
- Project Map can be sorted by Council District, project phase, or Bond Purpose
- Project phase and upcoming milestones available for over 500 GO Bond projects
- Program and project financial summary also provided
- Project Map developed and deployed in January 2024

Project Map: [Link](#)



# Upcoming Events

- **La Raza Park Groundbreaking – Thursday, May 15 | 5:30pm**
- **Dailey Park Grand Opening - Saturday, May 31 | 11am – 3pm**

# Highlights of Proposed New Vibrant Denver Bond Program

~\$800M

Target investments  
across the city



**Parks,  
playgrounds, trees,  
trails, and our  
climate**



**Arts and  
cultural  
venues**

6 years

Delivery  
timeframe



**Recreation  
centers, libraries,  
housing, and other  
city facilities**

**No new  
taxes**

Denver's current bond programs are nearly complete, creating capacity for new projects – **without raising taxes**

Shorter timeframe with fewer projects reduces risk and ensures residents see improvements in their neighborhoods sooner

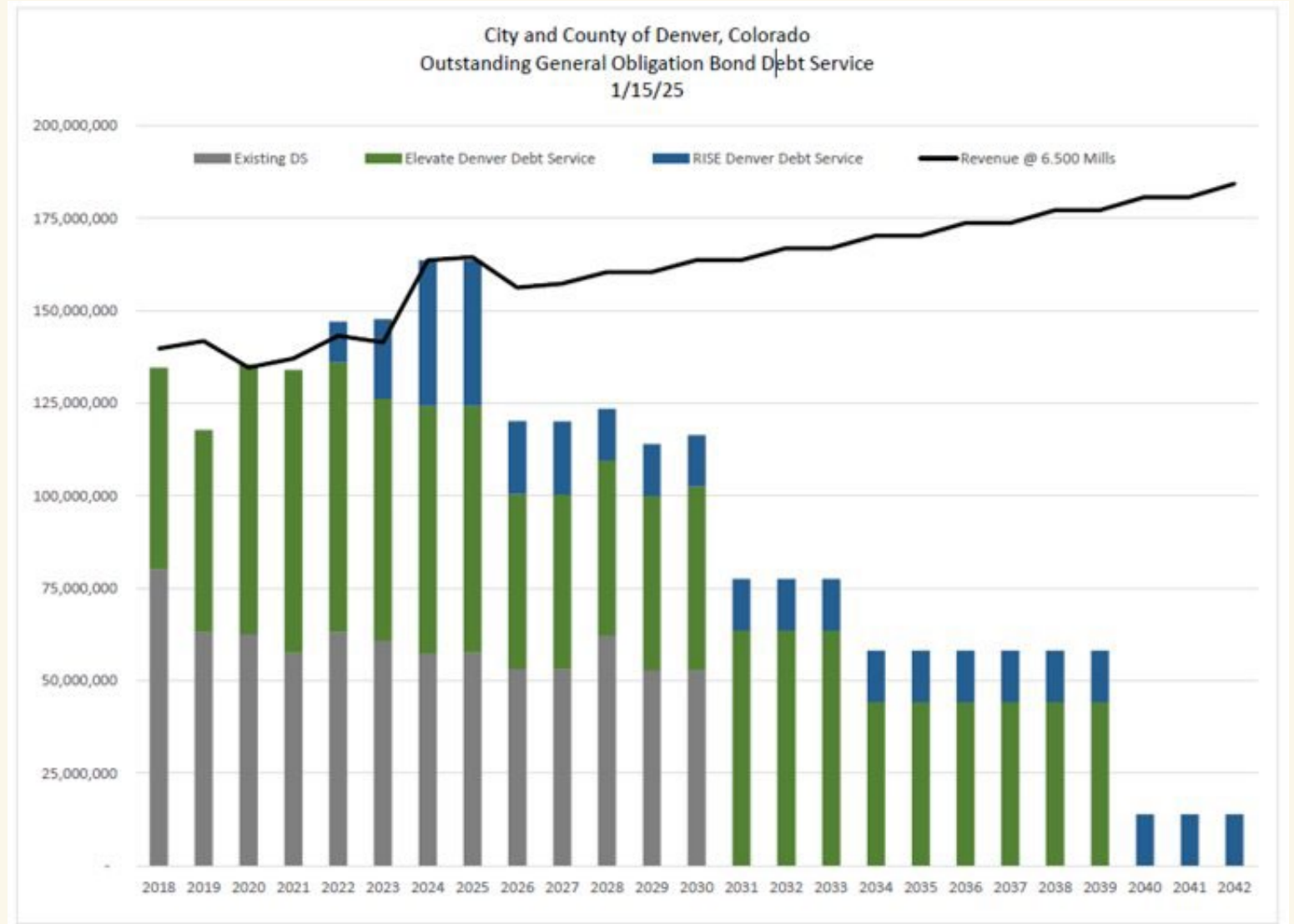


**Connectivity:  
street, bridge,  
bike, and  
pedestrian safety**



**Safe and healthy  
neighborhoods  
(formerly, 'Public  
Safety')**

# Bond Interest & Payments



# What General Obligation (GO) Bonds Are and Aren't

## Sources of Funding

Program should further an equitable distribution of projects across communities

### **BONDS**

Restore, replace and expand city amenities

Infrastructure improvements

Reinvestment, deferred maintenance

### **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Regular maintenance or funding (i.e., annually)

Can help “initiate” larger projects

Capital programs with smaller scope projects

### **Vibrant Denver Bond criteria:**

- Serve a public purpose
- Be complete within 6 years
- Be part of a city-owned asset / co-located operations
- Have an expected useful life of at least 10 years
- Legal mandates / ADA Compliance

### **Examples of What GO Bonds Cannot Pay For**

- Operations
- Schools
- Enterprise (Drainage, Golf Course, Airport)
- City Services

# Community Engagement Update

- **7,569 touchpoints**, coming from:
  - 5,299 online survey responses  
(At least 4,374 unique responders online)
  - 924 print surveys
  - ~1000 community conversation/town hall attendees
  - 70+ online "submit a comment" forms/letters



# Survey Dashboard

Response results may be filtered by clicking on a variable of interest within the dashboard. The opportunity "gap analysis" is possible by comparing an area's relative importance to current satisfaction levels.

## GO BOND Survey Dashboard - Quantitative

Which area best represents where you live?

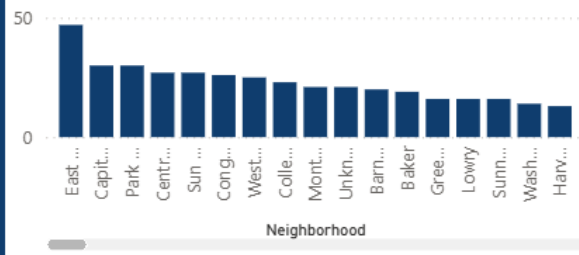


Which area best represents where you work?

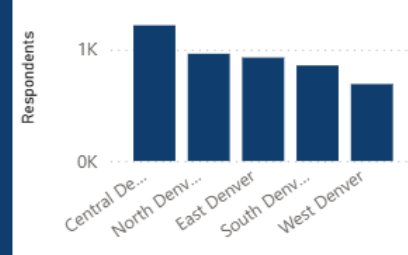


6246  
Respondents

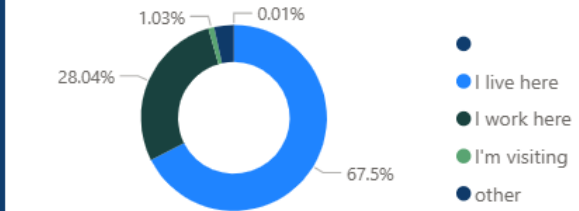
### PRINT Survey Responses by Neighborhood



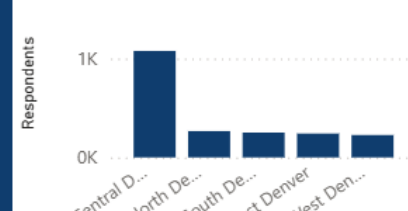
### Where They Live



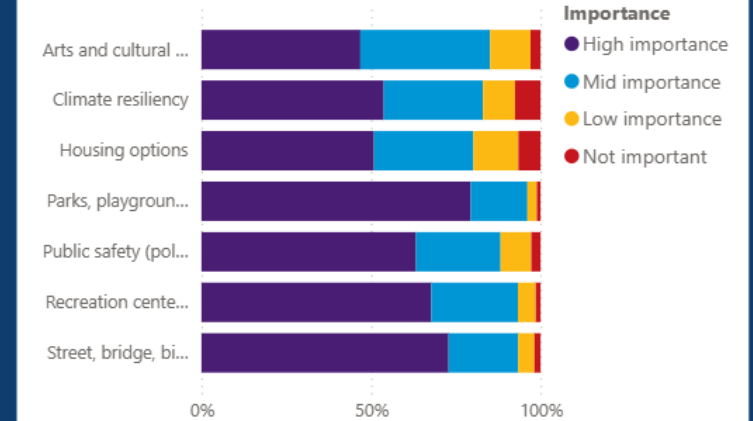
### Relationship to Denver? (Multi-select)



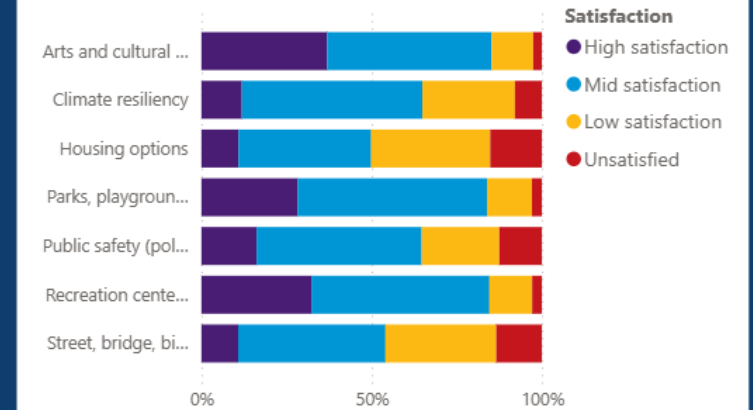
### Where They Work



### Importance



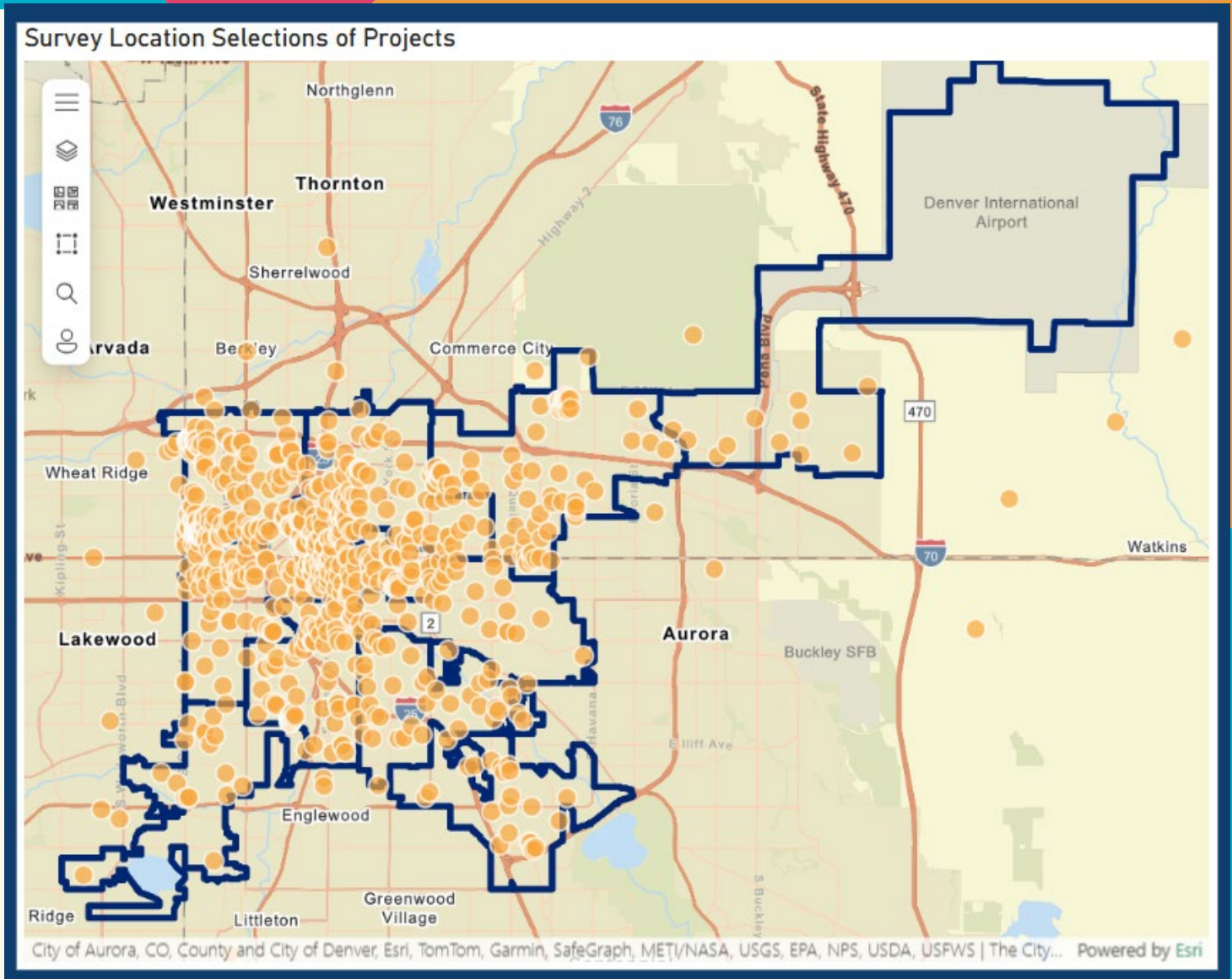
### Satisfaction





# Mapped Project Distribution

Open response detail for ideas and requests appears when hovering over each dot.



# Bond Process

## PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION/ INTAKE

Via Survey,  
Community  
Meetings, CIP,  
Outreach, and  
Reinvestment  
Project  
Opportunities

## TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Staff experts  
  
Validate Scope,  
Schedule, Budget.  
OSEI and citywide  
equity review. Validate  
Intake Forms.  
  
Is it Bond Eligible?

## SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEW

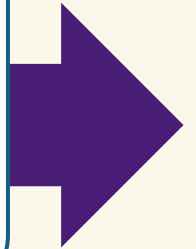
Community-led  
Process  
  
Review and tier  
Project List

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REVIEW

Review  
Subcommittee  
Recommendations  
and Refine into  
Final Project List

## LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Process is led by  
City Council and  
determines the final  
Project List to be  
referred to the ballot



# Subcommittee & Executive Committee Values

- Commitment to Equity
- Commitment to Sustainability
- Transparency
- No Advocating/Lobbying on Behalf of Projects or Organizations
- Serve to Present a Balanced Package of Investments that Address City Needs

# Subcommittee Evaluation Criteria

## Projects were evaluated based on their:

- **Community Needs and Benefit** – How does this project change or improve the lives of the people in the community?
- **Community Equity** – Does this address historic deficits in services and investment? How will this project impact the community holistically? Do the long-term benefits from the project outweigh the negative impacts from project implementation?
- **Economic Impacts** – Does this project promote economic activity? Does this project create growth? Does this project require long term O&M investment?
- **Health, Safety, and Environmental impacts** – Does this project address health and safety concerns? Does it increase or decrease environmental impacts?
- **Project Readiness** – Can this project be completed in 6 years?

# Subcommittee Evaluation Criteria (Cont'd)

## Why Tiering?

- Narrow focus while not disqualifying any projects during the process
- Qualitative vs. quantitative process (relying on the lived experiences of subcommittee members and not reducing the process into project scoring metrics)
- Projects evaluated on individual merit without competitive analysis against each other
- Projects specifically not evaluated for cost (understanding that phasing and scaling could be applied to most projects)
- Allowed standardized evaluation criteria to be applied against varied projects without direct insight into other subcommittee project lists or agency priorities
- Rolling subcommittee process - projects introduced in tranches (created a potential for bias based on when a project was introduced). Tiering allowed this to be negated

# Project Intake Status

Total Touchpoints <i>(Count includes surveys without specific project ideas)</i>	7,569
Total Project Ideas Reviewed by Technical Review Committee (TRC)	1,101
Project Ideas Referred off Bond Review and to Departments by TRC	448
Projects Advanced to Costing/Feasibility (includes programs & duplicates)	653
<b>Projects/Citywide Programs Reviewed by Subcommittees</b>	
<b>Tranche A</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Tranche B</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Tranche C</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Tranche D</b>	<b>88</b>

# Subcommittee Project Recommendations

Subcommittee	# of Projects
Connectivity	65
Arts and Cultural Venues	16
Recreation Centers, Libraries, Housing & Other Facilities	50
Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods	11
Parks, Playgrounds, Trees, Trails & Our Climate	73
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>215</b>

**Subcommittee tiering will be presented at the next Executive Committee meeting**

# Evaluation Process

- Subcommittee Chairs/Co-Chairs will present their recommendations at the next group meeting; Executive Committee members will receive summaries of each project
- During the weekly meetings, Executive Committees will review tier recommendations from each subcommittee and make project-by-project recommendations by project type/subcommittee
- Executive Committee will present final recommendations to the Mayor before the full bond package is sent to Denver City Council for possible inclusion in the November ballot

# Evaluation Criteria

## **Project evaluations should include:**

### **Community Needs and Benefit**

- How does this project change or improve the lives of the people in the community?
- What level of community involvement and support exists for this project?

### **Community Equity**

- How does this project address historic deficits in services and investment?
- How will this project impact the community holistically?
- Do the long-term benefits from the project outweigh the negative impacts from project implementation?
- Does the project serve or represent a community that has been or is at risk of being marginalized, displaced, or exploited?

### **Economic Impacts**

- How does this project promote economic activity both through implementation and through long term O&M?
- How would this project promote economic stabilization and growth?
- Does the project present the possibility for catalytic growth?

# Evaluation Criteria

## **Health, Safety, and Environmental Impacts**

- How would this project contribute to Health, Safety, or Environmental Goals in Denver such as Energize Denver?
- Would this project help to advance Health outcomes in the City including Mental Health?
- What is the context and interaction to nearby projects? Does the project create synergies, or does it stress existing systems?

## **Project Readiness**

- Is this project suited to accommodate uncertain market conditions such as material availability and sourcing, or rising and volatile costs?
- What level of risk does the project present, and does it have viable mitigation options?

## **Budget**

- Is the project scalable or does it have opportunity for phasing?
- How does the project provide value for its requested budget?
- Does the project have opportunities for alternative funding sources?

# Evaluation Timeline

- **May 19:** Subcommittee Chairs and Staff Facilitators to present on tiering/project recommendations
- **May 27, June 6, June 13:** Executive Committee meets weekly to review tiers and refine the list / provide final recommendations
- **Week of June 23:** Bond package presented to Denver City Council

# Executive Committee Governance

## For Discussion:

- Decision making & voting
- Creating space for discussion
- Integrating public comment

## Resources & Materials:

- Executive Committee will receive all resources and materials provided to Subcommittees, including citywide plans, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization (NEST) Index Map, materials from City Councilmembers, and more



**VIBRANT DENVER**  
— **BOND** —

# Questions & Discussion



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**Thank You**