



Survey Results

Green Lower Nob Hill

5/15/2025

Prepared by Elijah Ball for the LNHNA Open Space Working Group

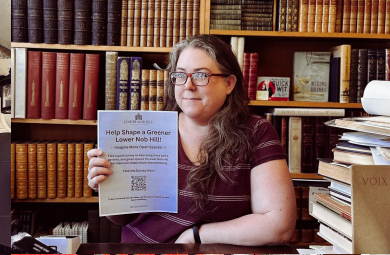


Background

Between **June 2024 and May 2025**, we collected a total of **126 responses** through a **community survey** aimed at understanding public space needs and neighborhood priorities in **Lower Nob Hill**.

To reach a broad range of voices, we distributed the survey by putting up flyers and handing it out directly to people on the street and at local businesses. The survey included a mix of open-ended and multiple-choice questions covering topics such as safety, accessibility, community use, and desired neighborhood improvements.

The results offer valuable insight into how residents and visitors experience the neighborhood today and what they hope to see in the years ahead.





Help Shape a Greener Lower Nob Hill!

🌱 Imagine More Open Spaces! 🌱

Take a quick survey to help bring more parks, gardens, and green spaces to Lower Nob Hill. Your input will shape future improvements.

Take the Survey Now!



To learn more and stay up to date visit Greenlowernobhill.com and lowernobhill.org

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Survey Demographics:

A **vast majority (94%) are residents**, showing strong local engagement. Very few identified as **workers (2.4%)** or **visitors (2.4%)**. Only **1.6% selected “Other,”** suggesting minimal ambiguity in how people relate to the area.

95% of respondents do not have children or dependents, suggesting a **predominantly child-free or single-resident community**. Only **5% have 1–2 dependents**, and **none reported 3 or more**.

This supports a planning focus on **adult-centric amenities and open space uses** unless outreach specifically targets families going forward.

The **majority of respondents skew older**, with **over half (56.45%) aged 45 and above**. The largest single group is **ages 55–64**, making up nearly a **quarter of all responses**.

This indicates: **Engagement is highest among older adults**, especially those approaching or in retirement.

Findings...

Q: What's your favorite open space in San Francisco, and what do you enjoy most about it?

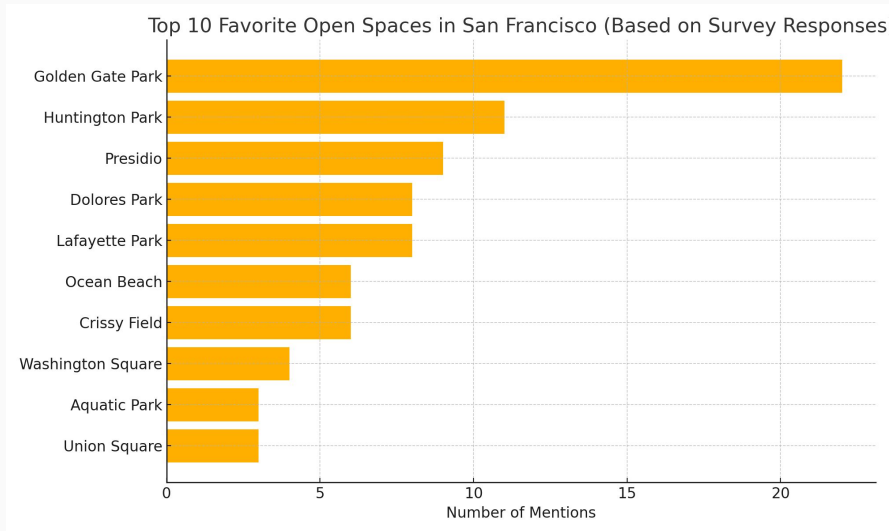
Golden Gate Park dominated with the highest number of mentions. Respondents love its **variety, greenery, and accessibility**.

Huntington Park was a close second, especially noted for its **tranquility, elegance, and neighborhood integration**.

Presidio, Dolores Park, and Lafayette Park also ranked highly praised for their **views, vibe, and community energy**.

Several respondents appreciated **oceanfront spaces** like **Crissy Field** and **Ocean Beach** for their **relaxation and natural beauty**.

Parks with **good maintenance, dog-friendly features, and social gathering options** (e.g., Washington Square, Salesforce Park) were consistently valued.



Q: What people like most about Lower Nob Hill (top themes)

Restaurants lead the list, people love the variety, walkability, and access to great food.

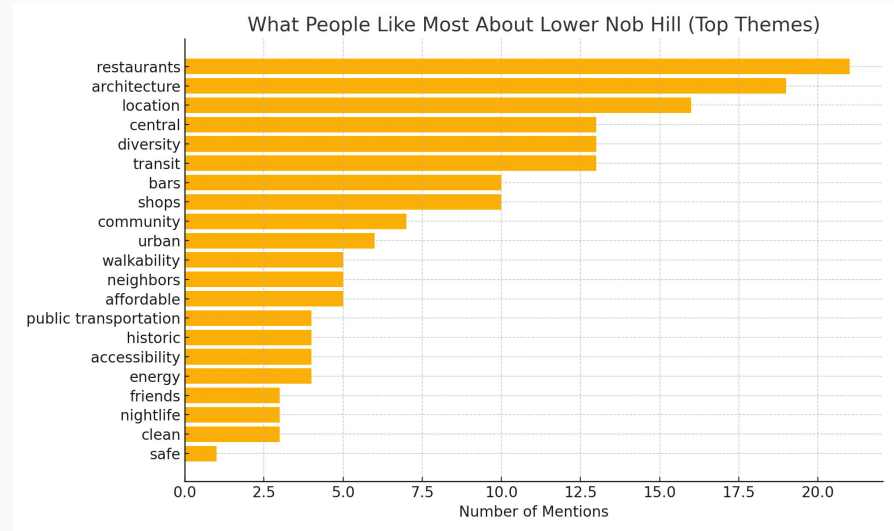
Architecture, especially historic and Edwardian, is widely appreciated.

Location and centrality are big draws, residents value being close to transit, downtown, and other neighborhoods.

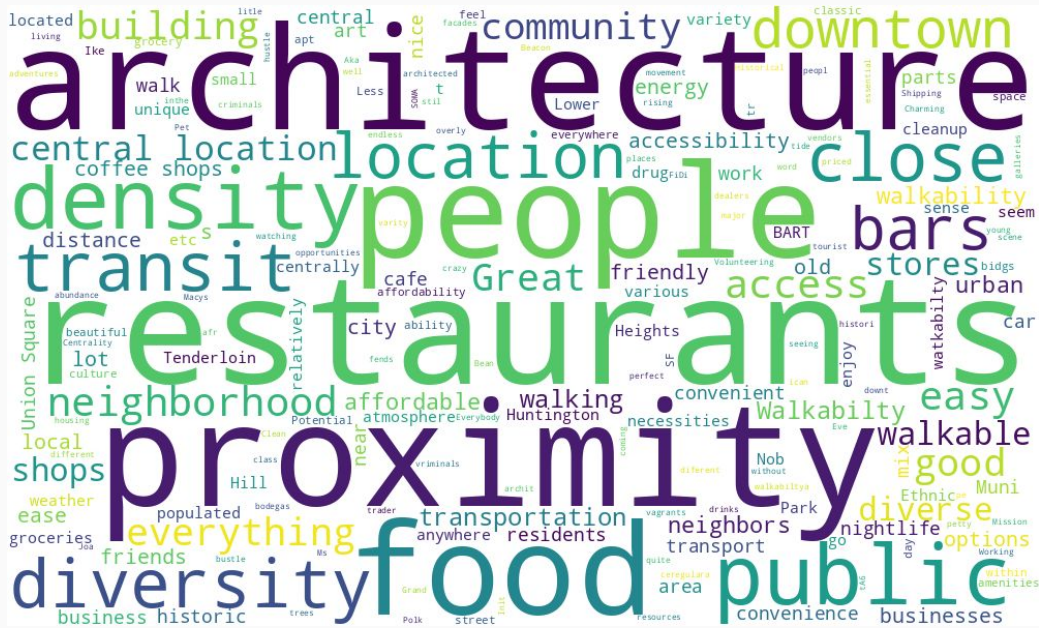
Diversity (of people, culture, and food) is a core part of the neighborhood's identity.

Other frequently noted themes include **transit access, bars, shops, and community feel**.

Walkability continues to be a major advantage, along with affordability relative to surrounding neighborhoods.



Q: What people like most about Lower Nob Hill (top themes)



Q: Where are specific areas of concern? (key themes)

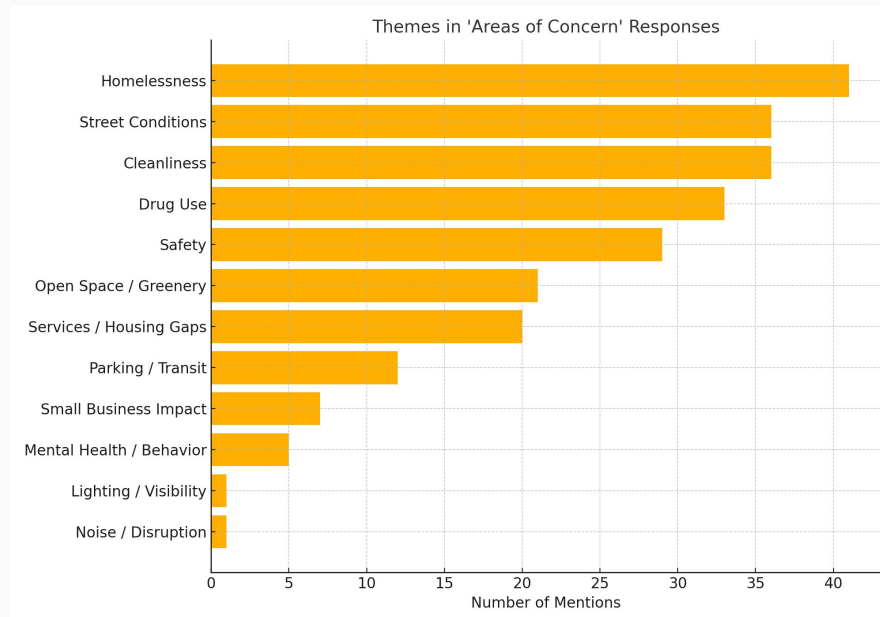
Homelessness and **drug use** are by far the most prominent concerns, particularly regarding visibility, lack of services, and safety.

Words like “**street**,” “**sidewalk**,” “**cleanliness**,” “**feces**,” “**trash**,” and “**crime**” appear frequently, indicating frustration with day-to-day sanitation and safety.

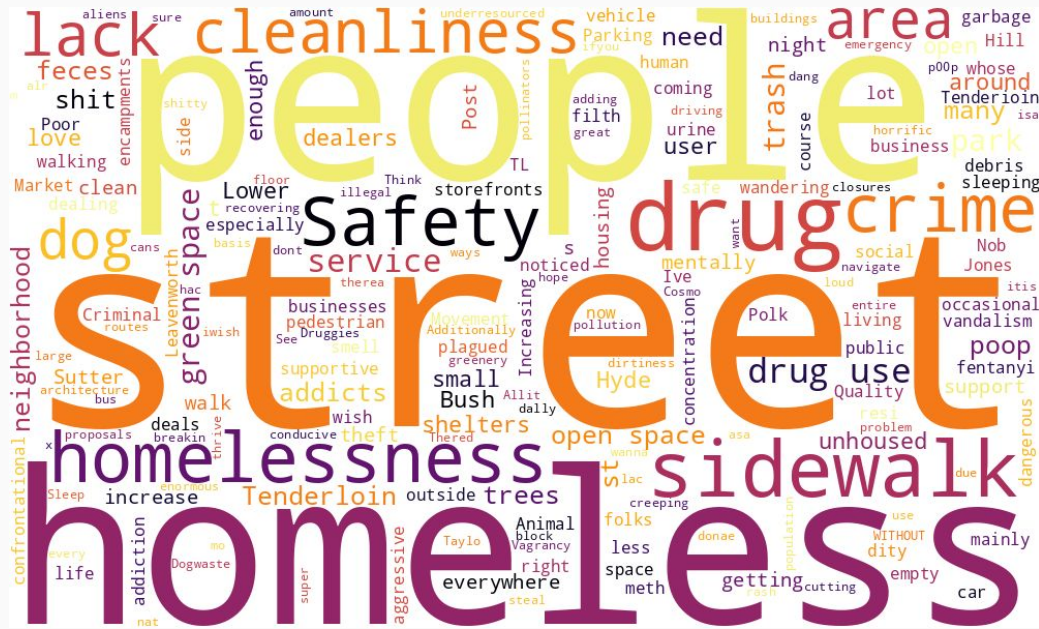
Lack of green space and the **impact of shelters** on the area were also repeated often.

Multiple mentions of specific trouble spots: **Sutter, Bush, Hyde, Leavenworth, Jones, and Post.**

Other concerns include transit issues, lighting, small business decline, and a need for wraparound housing services.



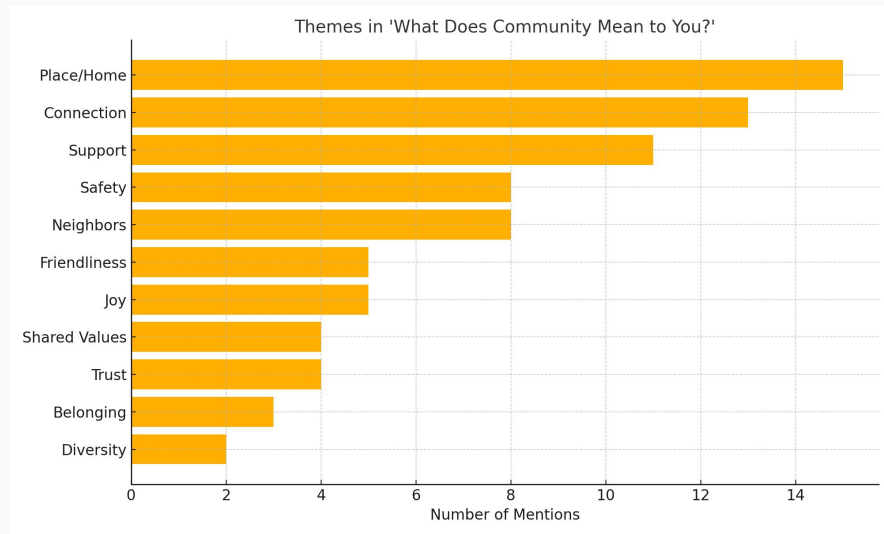
Q: Where are specific areas of concern? (key themes)



Q: What does community mean to you? (key themes)

- **People, neighbors, and connection** are at the heart of how respondents define community.
- Words like **“feel,” “place,” “safe,” “together,” “supporting,” and “trust”** are prominent, underscoring both emotional and physical dimensions of community.
- Other notable concepts include **“shared goals,” “joy,” “helping,” “home,” and “respect.”**

Overall, respondents overwhelmingly associate community with **mutual care, familiarity, inclusiveness, and a sense of belonging** even in a dense urban setting.

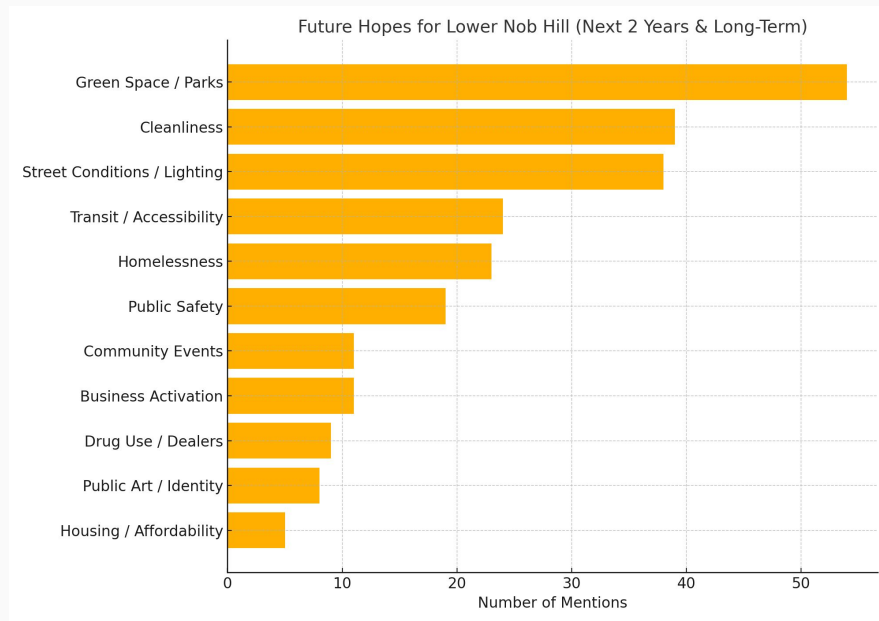


Q: What does community mean to you? (key themes)



Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

1. **Green Space and Parks**
2. **Cleanliness and Public Maintenance**
3. **Addressing Homelessness and Drug Use**
4. **Public Safety and Comfort**
5. **Community Events and Programming**
6. **Small Business Activation and Street Life**
7. **Transportation Access and Walkability**



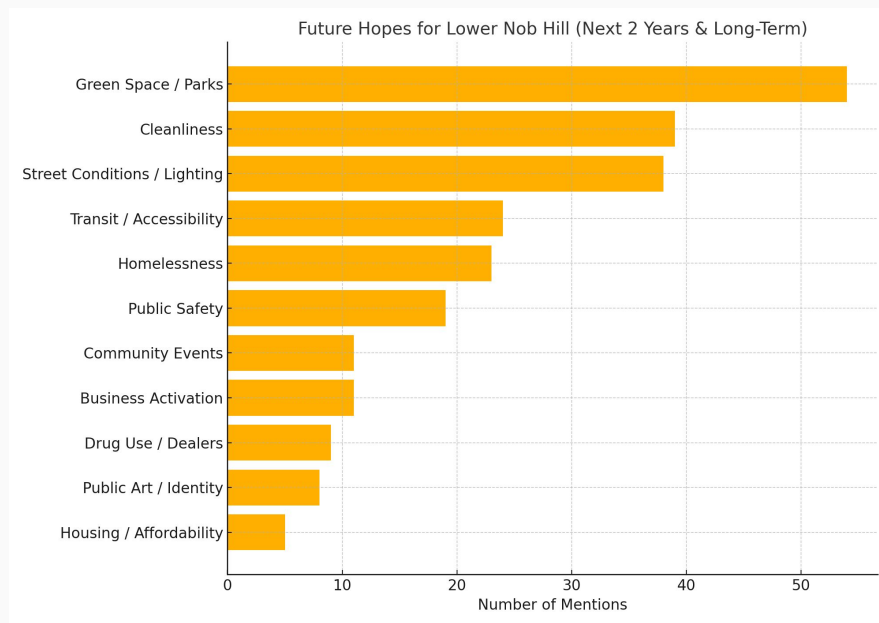
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

1. Green Space and Parks

This was the most frequently cited need. Residents emphasized the lack of accessible green space in Lower Nob Hill and expressed interest in parks, rooftop gardens, trees, shaded seating areas, and space for dogs and children.

What residents want:

- A walkable, accessible open space in the neighborhood
- Dog-friendly areas
- Greenery and biodiversity (trees, flowers, pollinator habitat)
- A place to relax, read, picnic, or gather



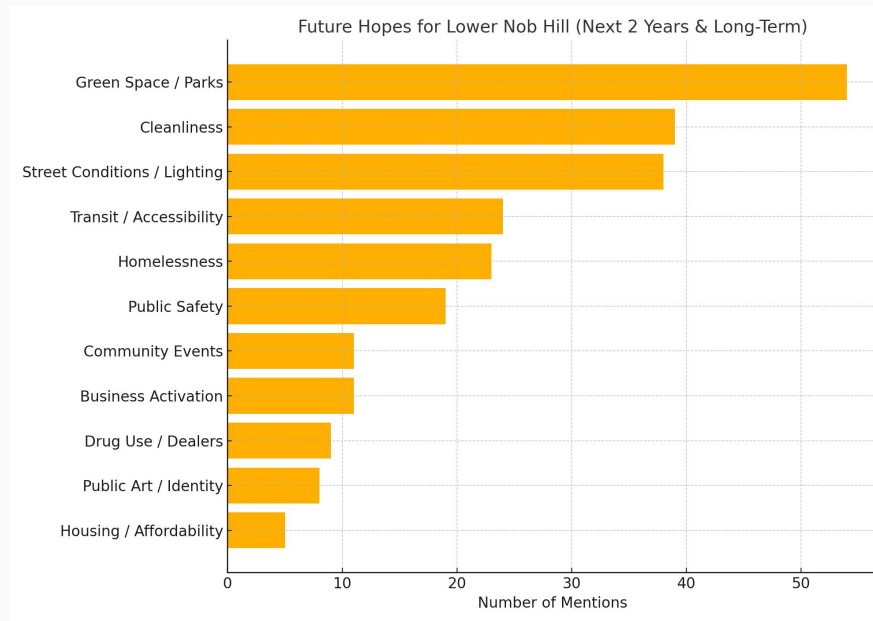
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

2. Cleanliness and Public Maintenance

Concerns about unsanitary sidewalks, litter, and general neglect were widespread. Residents frequently cited the need for clean, well-maintained public areas.

What residents want:

- Sidewalks and public spaces free of feces, trash, and urine
- Better trash collection and public hygiene infrastructure
- More trash cans, cigarette receptacles, and upkeep



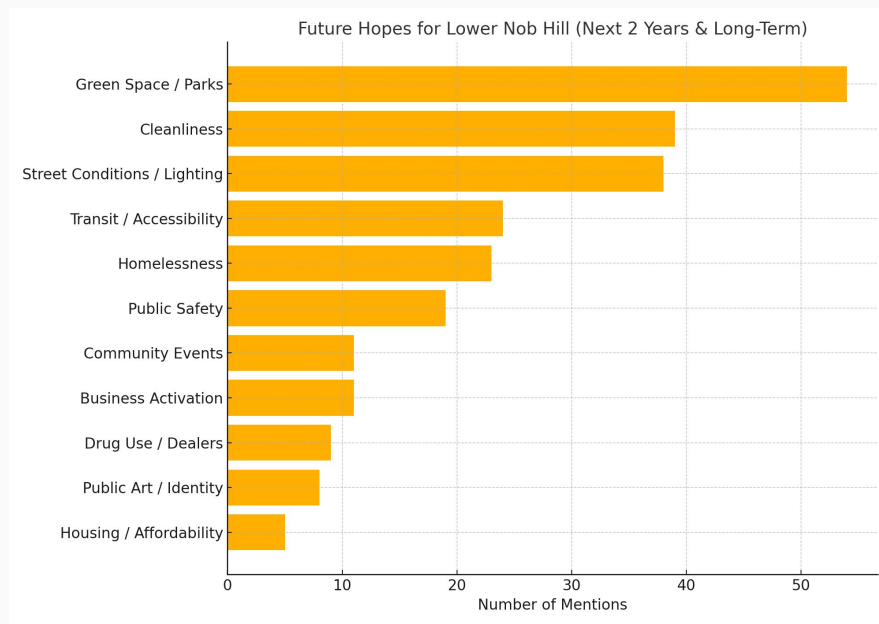
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

3. Addressing Homelessness and Drug Use

There was an overwhelming call for compassionate yet visible responses to open drug use and the overconcentration of shelters and services in the area. While opinions varied, many called for thoughtful solutions that prioritize safety and dignity.

What residents want:

- Fewer people visibly suffering in the streets
- More wraparound services and housing options, especially outside LNH
- Reduction in open-air drug use and loitering



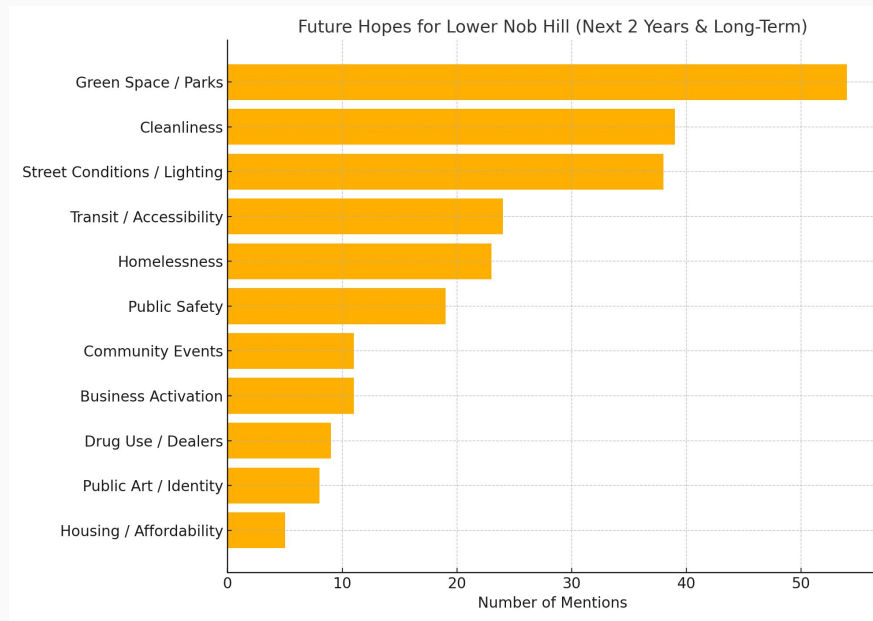
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

4. Public Safety and Comfort

Many responses focused on feeling unsafe walking in the neighborhood, especially at night. Concerns about crime, harassment, loitering, and aggressive behavior were frequent.

What residents want:

- Increased visibility and lighting
- Beat cops or some form of presence
- Safe streets for walking, especially for families and elders



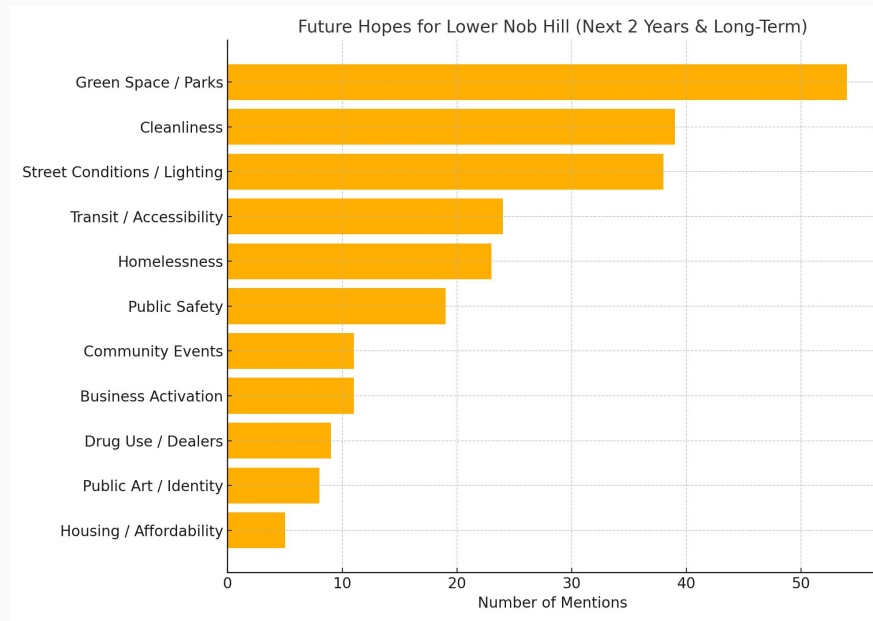
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

5. Community Events and Programming

Residents voiced strong support for spaces that encourage gathering, civic pride, and connection from block parties and farmer's markets to small concerts and clean-up days.

What residents want:

- Block parties, music events, markets
- Opportunities to meet neighbors and build relationships
- Public spaces that reflect community identity



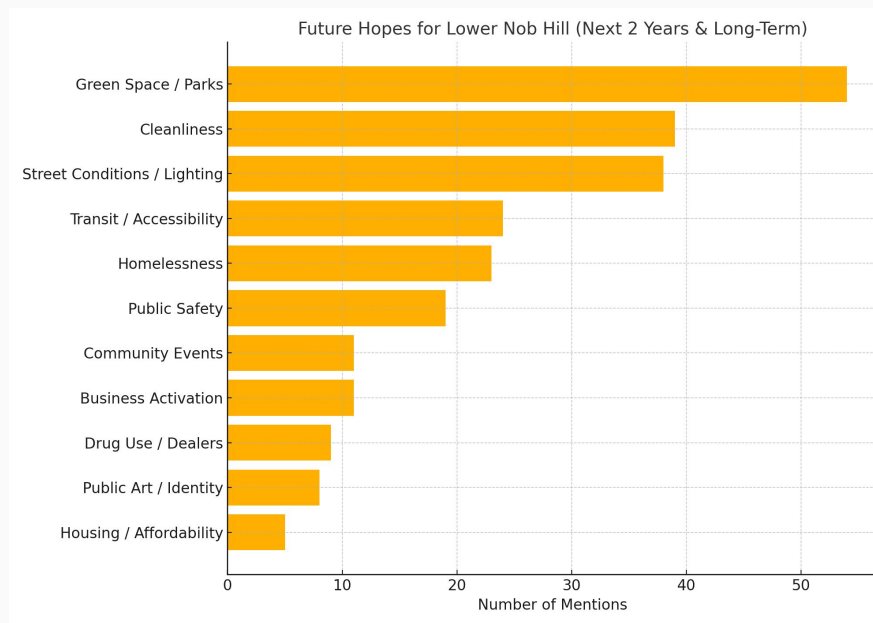
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

6. Small Business Activation and Street Life

Respondents wanted more neighborhood-serving businesses and fewer empty storefronts. There's a desire for a lively, mixed-use environment not just green space, but a complete street.

What residents want:

- Affordable commercial space
- Cafes, bakeries, hardware stores, food vendors
- More eyes on the street to enhance vitality and safety



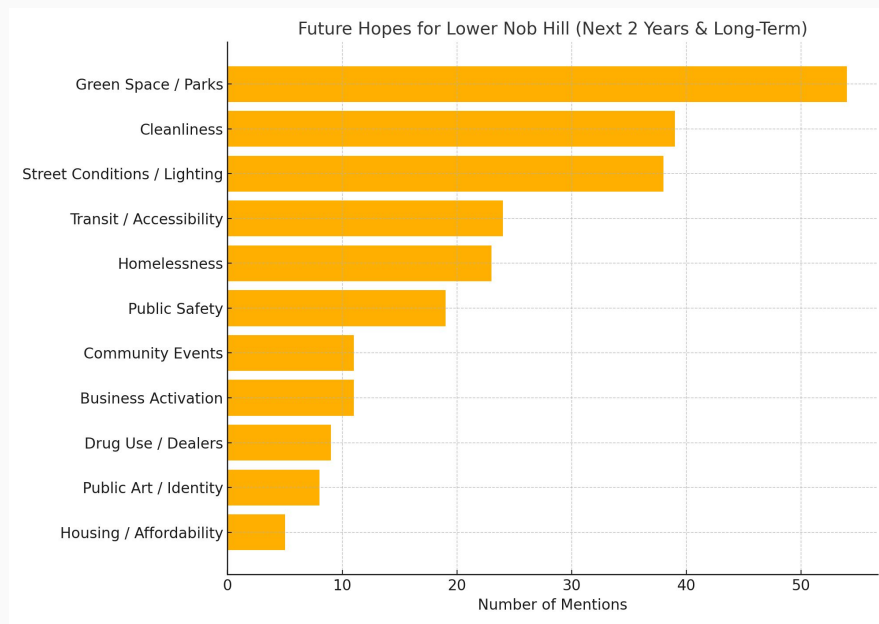
Q: What would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 2 years? Long-term?

7. Transportation Access and Walkability

Some residents cited the need for better bus service, more walkable routes, and less vehicle dominance—especially in relation to access to parks and services.

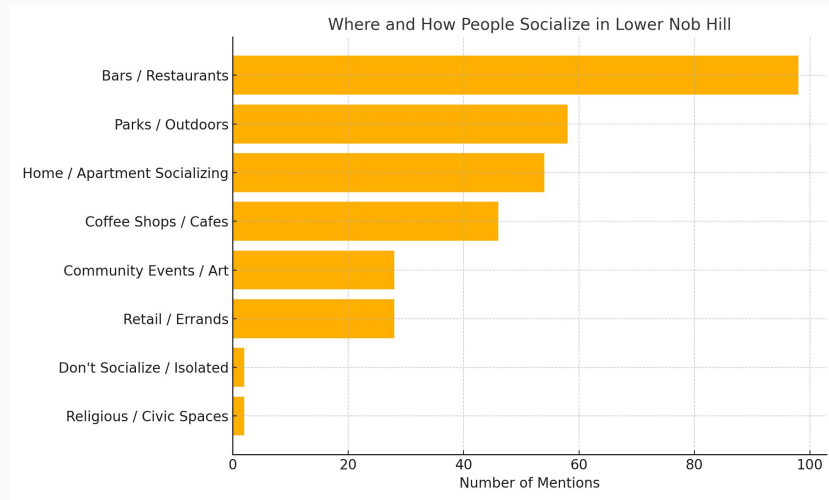
What residents want:

- Better MUNI service, fewer encampments on bus stops
- Walkable, well-lit connections between blocks
- Traffic calming and bike-friendly streets



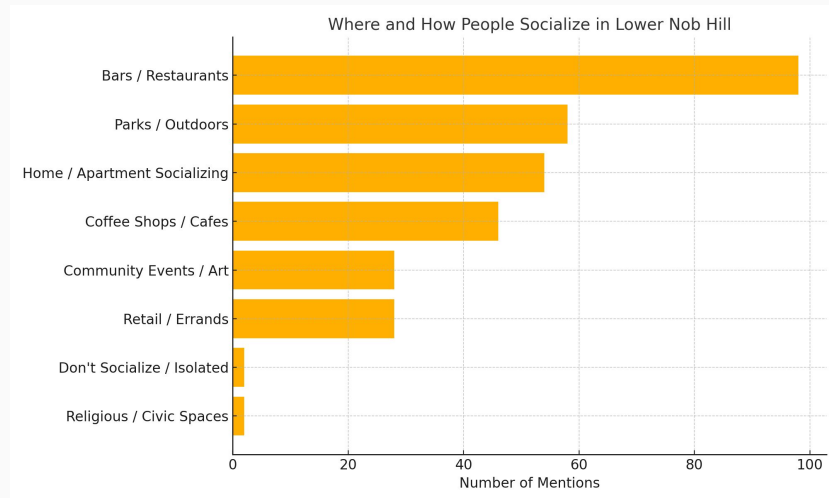
Q:Where and how do you typically socialize in the neighborhood?

- **Bars and Restaurants** are by far the most common social setting in Lower Nob Hill, reflecting the area's nightlife and dining culture.
- **Parks and Outdoor Spaces** especially Huntington Park and Lafayette Park—are valued as social alternatives, particularly for walking or meeting casually.
- **Home-based socializing** and **neighbor interactions within apartment buildings** are common, especially among longer-term residents.
- **Coffee shops and cafes** remain important as casual social hubs, though slightly less so than bars.
- A smaller number of residents socialize through **community events, art walks, or neighborhood cleanups**.
- A few respondents mentioned **not socializing at all**, citing safety concerns, isolation, or neighborhood decline.



Q:Where and how do you typically socialize in the neighborhood?

This data suggests that creating a non-commercial, outdoor social hub such as a well-designed public plaza or pocket park could meet a significant unmet need for a more inclusive, daytime gathering place.



Q: What are some of your favorite destinations in the neighborhood?

Bars and Lounges are the top destination type, underscoring the neighborhood's strong nightlife scene.

Restaurants and **Cafes/Coffee Shops** follow closely, pointing to food and drink as central to neighborhood life.

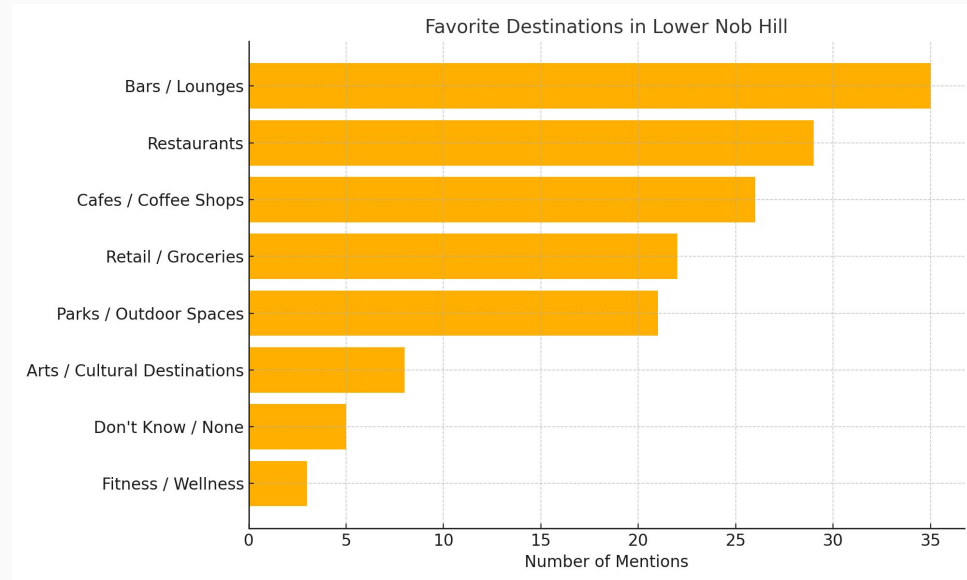
Retail and Groceries like Trader Joe's are frequent mentions, emphasizing the importance of convenience.

Parks and Outdoor Spaces such as Huntington Park are well-loved, especially among those seeking calm or daytime activity.

Arts and Cultural Destinations have a niche following but show potential for growth.

Few people cited **fitness or wellness spaces** as favorites, possibly indicating a gap or lack of appealing options.

A handful of respondents noted **they don't have favorite destinations**, which may reflect dissatisfaction or disengagement with the area.



Q:Where do you consider the heart of the neighborhood to be?

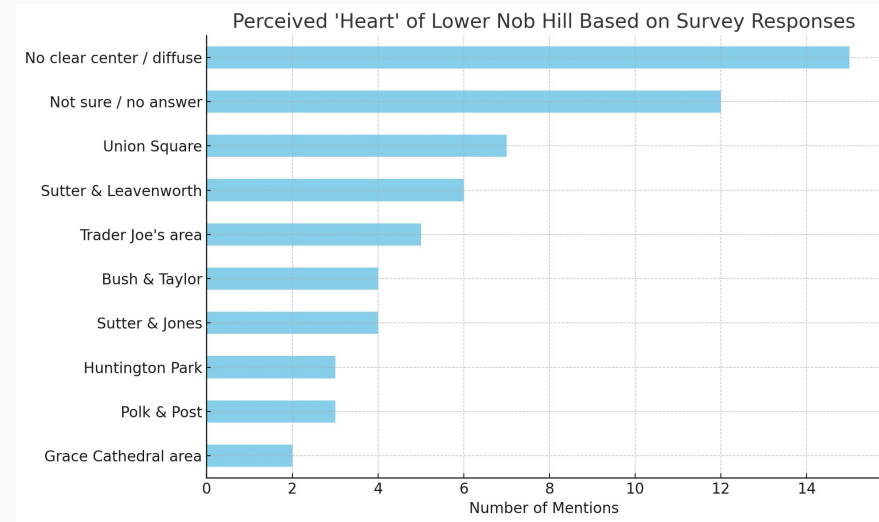
No clear center: Most respondents felt there is no definitive heart of the neighborhood highlighting a diffuse identity or lack of a communal anchor.

Union Square: While not technically within Lower Nob Hill, it's referenced frequently, likely due to proximity and visibility.

Sutter & Leavenworth and **Trader Joe's area:** These corners are among the most commonly mentioned actual intersections, suggesting potential as organizing nodes.

Bush & Taylor and **Sutter & Jones:** Also named often, hinting at perceived activity or centrality.

Huntington Park and **Grace Cathedral** were identified but less frequently, likely due to their stronger ties to adjacent Nob Hill.



Q:Where would you position open space(s)?

Cosmo Alley most frequently cited, often described as underused and full of potential.

Post & Larkin (including adjacent parking lots) seen as centrally located and in need of activation.

Former Le Colonial site mentioned as a sizable, inactive property with potential.

651 Geary (empty lot) identified as one of the only undeveloped parcels left.

Bush Street corridor called out for its length and untapped corner lots.

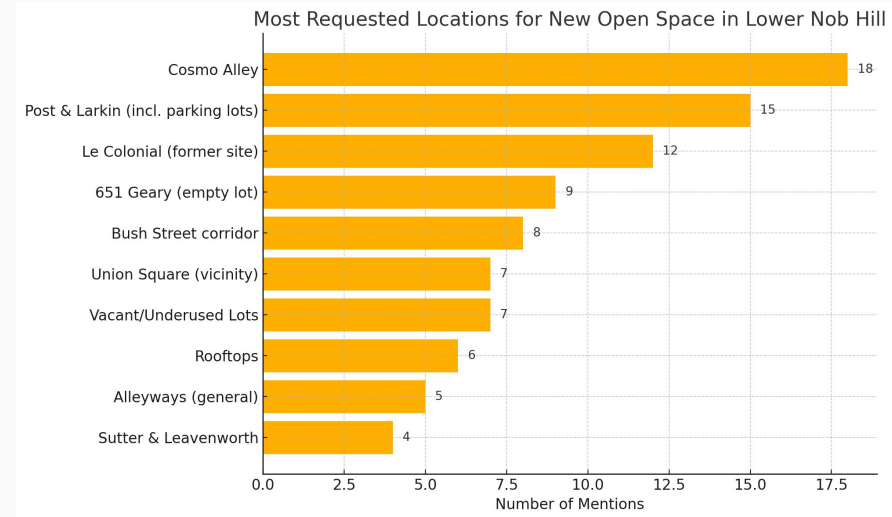
Union Square vicinity seen as a strategic location if not overly commercialized.

Vacant/underused lots a general desire to repurpose existing unproductive land.

Rooftops especially of newer buildings or hotels.

Alleyways (general) specifically ones that are already underutilized.

Sutter & Leavenworth noted as a central convergence point.



Q: Are there any groups or organizations that you are a part of the would benefit from open space beyond what we already have?

1. **Book Clubs** Several people participate in or want a local book club that could meet outdoors.
2. **Dog Owners** Informal dog meetups and dog-friendly design are a major need.
3. **Neighborhood Clean-Up** Cleanup crew wants gathering space to build social ties while improving the neighborhood.
4. **Groups for Children or Seniors** While many respondents weren't in family-focused groups, they noted these populations would benefit.
5. **Yoga & Wellness Groups** Interest in classes like yoga or drum circles came up multiple times.
6. **LNHNA & Local Advocates** People involved in the Lower Nob Hill Neighborhood Alliance and similar efforts seek public space for organizing and civic events.
7. **Others** Dozens of responses weren't affiliated with specific groups but expressed strong interest in informal community-building through green, safe space.

This shows that even among people not in formal organizations, there's clear appetite for flexible, inclusive outdoor areas especially for walking, sitting, chatting, and casually meeting others.

Q: What would you like to see in the neighborhood?

Parks by far the most requested amenity.

Community centers places to gather beyond commercial settings.

Playscapes spaces that support kids and intergenerational play.

Dog runs highlighting a strong dog-owner presence.

Street gardens interest in greening efforts.

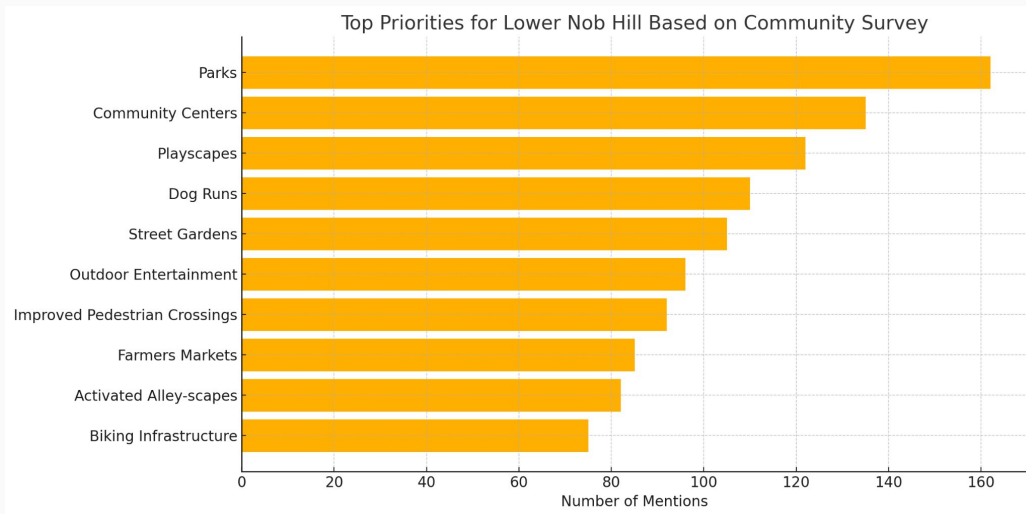
Outdoor entertainment like movie nights or performances.

Improved pedestrian crossings safety and accessibility.

Farmers markets local, accessible food and gathering opportunities.

Activated alley-scapes and cross-block connections improving circulation and unused space.

Biking infrastructure support for safer active transport options.



Q: How do you rank the following characteristics in importance: Safety, accessibility, inclusivity, and comfort?

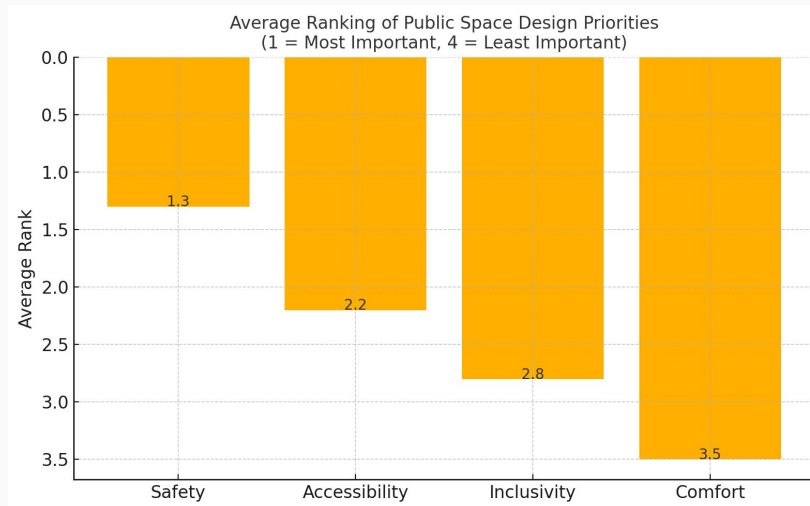
Survey respondents ranked **Safety, Accessibility, Inclusivity, and Comfort** on a scale of 1 (most important) to 4 (least important). Here are the key takeaways:

Safety: Most frequently ranked as the number one priority. The overwhelming majority of respondents identified safety as their top concern. It was consistently prioritized above all other categories.

Accessibility: Frequently ranked second or third. Considered essential for ensuring that people of all abilities can enjoy neighborhood spaces. Often paired with safety in responses, highlighting a desire for safe and reachable spaces.

Inclusivity: Commonly ranked third, though some placed it higher. Seen as important, but generally secondary to safety and accessibility. Responses reflected a desire for welcoming spaces—but only if they are clean and secure first.

Comfort: Most frequently ranked as the lowest priority. Viewed as a secondary concern once basic needs like safety and access are addressed. Still mentioned in relation to amenities like shade, seating, and overall cleanliness.



In Summary...

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Key Takeaways from the Lower Nob Hill Open Space Survey

(June 2024 – May 2025, 126 respondents)

- **Public Safety & Cleanliness Are Top Priorities:**
The most frequently cited concerns were open drug use, sidewalk cleanliness, and public safety. Respondents emphasized the need for cleaner streets, fewer encampments, and better enforcement of quality-of-life issues.
- **Strong Demand for Green & Social Space:**
Many respondents expressed a desire for new public open spaces especially parks, dog runs, rooftop gardens, and community gathering spots like alley activations and farmers markets. Cosmo Alley, Post & Larkin, and other underutilized lots were frequently suggested as potential locations.
- **Walkability, Access & Local Identity Matter:**
Walkability and transit access are highly valued. People want safer pedestrian crossings, more greenery along sidewalks, and improved wayfinding and neighborhood branding. Some mentioned the lack of a “neighborhood heart” and called for a stronger local identity.
- **Informal Social Hubs Exist but Lack Support:**
Residents most commonly socialize at local bars, cafés, and while walking around the neighborhood. However, many noted a lack of free or family-friendly gathering spaces that don’t revolve around drinking or spending money.
- **Inclusive, Accessible Design Is Critical:**
When ranking design values for new open space, *safety* overwhelmingly ranked #1, followed by *accessibility*. Residents also emphasized comfort, inclusivity, and the need for multi-use space that welcomes all ages.
- **Community Spirit Is Present—but Needs Support:**
Many expressed a strong connection to the area and desire for more community centered programming like events, art, music, book clubs, and safe places to simply gather. Others mentioned wanting to build community but not knowing where to start.

