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Marisa Fischette

CENTER CITY Digest

Cautious Optimism

People who work, live, shop or dine in Center City are quite optimistic about downtown's future. That's apparent in the Center City District's annual customer satisfaction survey, where 79% of the 4,640 respondents say downtown is *headed in the right direction*. Only 3% feel it's *on the wrong track*, while 18% don't sense things trending significantly either way.¹ Attitudes about the city as a whole are also upbeat at 62%, but 17 points lower than confidence in downtown, the location for 42% of Philadelphia's jobs, a burgeoning scene for new businesses and residents, new hotels and restaurants and a continuing surge of new construction.

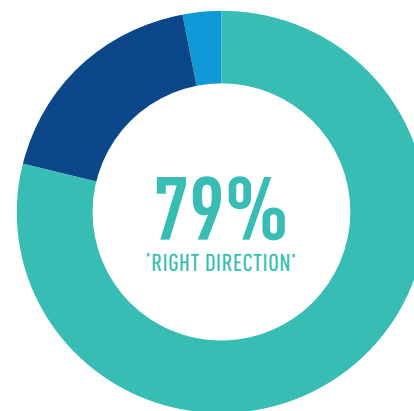
CAUTION FLAGS:

But, there are caution flags. While 79% indicate they feel safe *most of the time* or *always* in Center City, 20% say they *often*, or *occasionally*, feel unsafe. Fifty-nine percent say *panhandlers who confront pedestrians* cause the greatest insecurity; 47% are concerned about *people sleeping on the sidewalks and in building entrances*; and 31% worry most about the *absence of uniformed police officers or other public safety professionals*. Because street behavior is a much debated issue, the survey also offered respondents the choice: *most of these items are part of urban life and do not bother me*. Only 24% selected this option.

Respondents include both individuals who work or live in Center City, as well as those who come just for shopping, dining, tourism and entertainment. Among respondents who are continually in Center City because they work or live here, concerns about panhandling

and homelessness rise to 64% and 50% respectively, with just 22% selecting the *do not bother me* option.

DO YOU FEEL CENTER CITY IS HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?



79% RIGHT DIRECTION
18% NEITHER/MIXED
3% WRONG TRACK

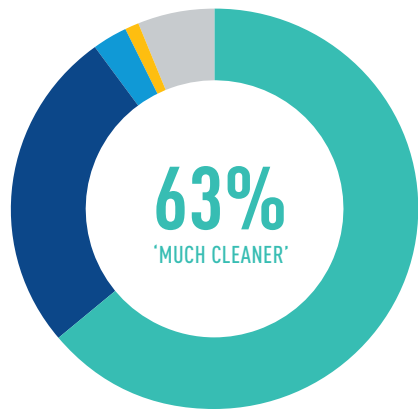
Source: 2018 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Center City District

¹ The Customer Satisfaction Survey took place in October and November. More than 6,000 postcards with an online link were distributed: 2,000 to pedestrians in Center City, 1,000 mailed to downtown commercial property owners and 3,200 to residential owners in the District. An ad for the survey appeared in the fall Digest, mailed to 9,632 business owners, workers and residents. A social media and email campaign through several CCD social media accounts spanned the eight-week period; four "special edition" emails were sent to all 93,000 of our email subscribers throughout the region. In addition, we conducted five days of on-street interviews at nine locations (Dilworth Park, 18th & Walnut, 13th & Sansom, 19th & Market, Comcast Center, 10th & Chestnut, 12th & Market, Collins Park, Sister Cities Park). Some survey totals exceed 100% for questions in which respondents could choose more than one answer.

These concerns have *more than doubled* from similar surveys in the last five years. This increased anxiety reflects less a shift in public attitudes than changing realities on the street, documented by censuses CCD has conducted within District boundaries for more than two decades.

In June 2008, 54 homeless individuals were on sidewalks in the core commercial area of downtown *during daytime hours*. In June 2013, the count had increased to 74; in June 2018, the number had grown to 138. This does not include people in the subway concourses, train stations or under highway bridges.

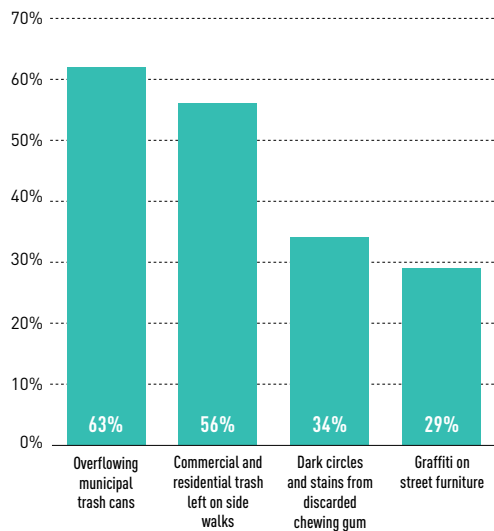
CLEANLINESS OF CENTER CITY SIDEWALKS COMPARED TO OTHER PARTS OF PHILADELPHIA



63% MUCH CLEANER
 26% ABOUT THE SAME
 3% SOMEWHAT DIRTIER
 1% MUCH DIRTIER
 6% NOT SURE

Source: 2018 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Center City District

BESIDES LITTER, PLEASE TELL US WHICH ARE THE TWO BIGGEST PROBLEMS THAT DETRACT FROM THE APPEARANCE OF SIDEWALKS IN CENTER CITY?



Source: 2018 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Center City District

The police *overnight* count in June 2018 for the larger area between Spring Garden and Spruce streets, river to river, was 505, including the underground and areas beneath Convention Center and highway bridges,

As panhandling surges with the opioid crisis, counts have risen from 11 such individuals in the core of downtown during lunchtime hours in June 2008, to 24 in June 2013, to 69 in June 2018.

The highly successful, combined outreach effort funded by the Center City District in partnership with Project Home and the Philadelphia Police Department with strong support from City's Department of Behavioral Health has resulted since April in 134 individuals choosing to come off the street and enter social service, mental health and housing programs (see article on page 9). As a result, counts have come down since the early summer. Still, some return to the street, new individuals steadily arrive, while resources off-street are periodically constrained.

QUALITY OF LIFE:

Seventy-one percent of survey respondents see CCD personnel *every time or most of the time* they are in Center City and 63% think downtown has far less litter than other areas of the city. When asked, "Besides litter, which are the two biggest problems that most detract from the appearance of sidewalks in Center City," 62% pointed to *overflowing municipal trash cans*; 56% note *commercial and residential trash left on sidewalks*; 34% commented on the *dark circles and stains from discarded chewing gum*; and 29% expressed concern about *graffiti on street furniture like trash cans, postal boxes, parking kiosks, electrical utility boxes and traffic signs*. Among respondents who live in Philadelphia, 67% checked *overflowing trash cans*.

The CCD was formed to supplement, not replace, City services. As pedestrian volumes have risen on prime shopping streets by as much as 30% in the last five years, we have increased sidewalk sweeping and lengthened operating hours. But as municipal resources have been curtailed and government priorities have shifted, CCD has also stepped up to support homeless outreach efforts and to fund graffiti removal – not only from ground floors of building facades within the District and from the streetscape enhancements we have installed, but we have also started to clean the City's Big Belly trash cans, the Parking



Overflowing trash cans and illegal dumping

Authority's kiosks, bus shelters, traffic boxes and UPS/FedEx/USPS mailboxes – all things that technically are someone else's job. We continue to urge basic enforcement of sanitation ordinances and codes that govern the condition of commercial dumpsters. But in 2019, we are budgeting for increased deployment of cleaning and public safety crews, more frequent graffiti removal and pressure washing, and an expanded version of this year's homeless outreach initiative. Internally, we debate the long-term implications of crossing the line between *supplementing* and *replacing*, but worry about the consequences if we don't. We welcome your thoughts on this question.

IMPROVING THE PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT:

Beyond the essentials of *clean* and *safe*, the customer satisfaction survey asked questions about improvements to the public environment and about competitiveness. During the last two decades, CCD has installed hundreds of directional signs, thousands of pedestrian-scale light fixtures and several hundred street trees and planters. We improve, maintain and program five parks.

Eighty percent of all respondents (and 84% of city residents) have visited Dilworth Park, 37% of all respondents (and 41% of city residents) have been to Sister Cities Park, 22% have visited Café Cret, and the same percent have walked on the Rail Park, which just opened in June, while 21% have walked in Collins Park. Eighty-nine percent think these parks are positive additions to Center City; 9% view them

as improvements that are not convenient or attractive to them personally, while 1.7% don't think they are a good use of CCD resources.

When asked, "What other changes to the public environment would most improve Center City as a place to work or live," 59% responded: *better manage and reduce the amount of traffic congestion*; 41% want property owners to *repair their deteriorated sidewalks*; 38% cite *the condition of dumpsters in service streets and alleys*.

Items 2 and 3 above can be achieved without much public expenditure, if the City would devote more attention to quality-of-life enforcement in Center City, even as they wrestle with the catastrophic impact of opioid addiction in parts of the city and the critical, life-safety challenges in many lower income neighborhoods. Good governance is about recognizing that needs in different portions of the city are different, that *one size does not fit all*; and most importantly, that addressing quality-of-life issues in the 8% of the city's geography that provides more than 50% of the municipal tax base is essential to Philadelphia's ability to fund public services and schools everywhere else.

CONGESTION:

Traffic congestion is a problem of abundance, the byproduct of success: more residents, more jobs, more pedestrians, more delivery trucks, more cyclists and more people using Uber and Lyft. However, problems of success are no less compelling than challenges of scarcity: insufficient jobs, inadequate incomes or the shortage of quality, affordable housing. We neglect congestion at our peril, since funding from higher levels of government is steadily declining for problems of scarcity. We either improve the coordination of our fragmented system of transportation management, dedicate revenues from enhanced enforcement to management and technology upgrades, or we will reach a tipping point at which those who work or visit Center City start choosing not to do so.²

ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS:

When asked, "Which three improvements would enhance the competitiveness of Center City as a place to work or to start/expand a business, *improve public schools* came in first with 59%; *reduce the wage tax* was selected by 52%; *reduce traffic congestion* came in third with 49%; *reduce the number of people living*

and/or panhandling on Center City sidewalks was close behind with 48% and *reduce the Business Income and Receipts Tax (BIRT)* was selected by 21%.

For those who live or work in Center City, concern about the wage tax rises to 56% and schools come down a notch to 58%. For those who own businesses, concerns about BIRT rise to the number two position at 57% just behind schools at 60% and ahead of concerns about the wage tax at 52%.

MILLENNIALS ARE NOT FOREVER:

Center City reaps enormous benefits from an expanding cohort of young professionals: 46% of residents between Vine and Pine streets, river to river, are between the ages of 20 and 34. In the neighborhoods that extend north to Girard and south to Tasker Street, that age cohort has swelled to 37% of the population. This demographic is filling new apartments, driving demand for retail, bars and restaurants, and, given their high level of educational attainment, attracting employers to downtown.

For those with distinct memories of the 1980s, when gutters on residential streets surrounding downtown were filled each morning with shards of glass from broken car windows, when retailers rolled down security gates on Chestnut and Walnut Street by 5:30 p.m. and employers were fleeing for the suburbs, it's worth underscoring that the *oldest* of today's millennials were in third grade in 1990. So it shouldn't be surprising if they take the vitality and nightlife of Center City for granted. That too is a sign of success: America's largest cohort knows only cities where downtowns are thriving, even if that accentuates concerns about poverty and equity.

But no one should mistake the presence of millennials in Philadelphia as a sign that the tide has fully turned. Start with the obvious: as people age and incomes rise, values and needs change. While millennials place *public schools* highest on the competitiveness question, scoring it at 64% and ranking *reduce the wage tax* at 56%, 35-54 year-olds put the wage tax first at 59% and public schools second 58%. Obviously, each is very important. However, across the city in both white and African-American communities, *twice as many households earning over \$125,000 annually are moving out of Philadelphia as are moving in*.

The tide may be coming in young downtown, but it's not enough to offset older trends elsewhere in the city. Eighty-one percent of households that left Philadelphia between 2010 and 2016 *do not* have children. Job opportunities that allow workers to shed the wage tax remain quite alluring.

Second, the age cohort behind millennials is somewhat smaller, so the volume of young people to replenish the city will taper down over the coming decade. Third, several untended quality-of-life issues matter greatly to millennials: 64% rate *managing traffic congestion* as top priority, compared to 59% for the entire sample and 55% for those 55 years of age and older. Forty-four percent of millennials place a high priority on cleaning up service alleyways, seeing their potential as animated, pedestrian lanes, compared to 38% for the sample as a whole and 34% for those 55 years and older. On issues of panhandling and homelessness, there is no significant difference between the rankings of millennials (57% and 45% respectively) and the overall sample (59% and 47%). It is also notable that while only 22% of millennials seek more visible, uniformed security professionals to enhance safety, the number rises to 33% for 35- to 54-year-olds and 38% for those over 55.

The good news is that while millennials are slightly more optimistic about the direction of Center City than Philadelphians as a whole, they are substantially more upbeat about the direction of the entire city, as they continue to explore and move to neighborhoods that two decades ago were overcome with abandonment and deterioration. If job growth was more on pace with Boston, New York and Washington, if accelerated cuts to wage and business taxes were restored, we'd be creating more opportunity for all city residents and enjoy an expanding real estate tax base to support public schools. With greater attention to behavioral and quality-of-life issues, we'll keep many more people in Philadelphia as their incomes rise and families and businesses grow. Now is the time to lock in the dividends of favorable market and demographic trends while they favor places like Philadelphia.

Paul R. Levy

President

plevy@centercityphila.org

²: See CCD/CPDC's 2018 transportation report, *Keep Philadelphia Moving*, for recommendations.



Winter in Dilworth Park

ONGOING

THROUGH JANUARY 1 DECK THE HALL LIGHT SHOW

Presented by Independence Blue Cross and supported by 6abc

Made in Philadelphia HOLIDAY MARKET

THROUGH FEBRUARY 19 QUIZZO IN THE CABIN

*Presented by The Franklin Institute
Tuesdays, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.*

THROUGH FEBRUARY 20 COCKTAILS & COLD ONES

*Presented by The Met Philadelphia
Wednesdays, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.*

THROUGH FEBRUARY 21 COLLEGE NIGHTS

Thursdays, 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

THROUGH FEBRUARY 24 ROTHMAN ORTHOPAEDICS INSTITUTE ICE RINK & ROTHMAN CABIN

WINTERGARDEN

Presented by TD Bank

COMING IN 2019!

JANUARY 8 – FEBRUARY 19 CENTER CITY FIT

*Presented by Rothman Orthopaedics
Tuesdays, noon*

JANUARY 11 – FEBRUARY 22 KARAOKE NIGHTS

Fridays, 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

JANUARY 19 SUPERHERO SKATE

Saturday, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

FEBRUARY 2 & 9 STORYTIME WITH MARTY THE MOOSE

Saturdays, 11 a.m.

FEBRUARY 8 DISCO SKATE

Friday, 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

FEBRUARY 14 SWEETHEART SKATE

Thursday, 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CCD
PARKS & EVENTS THIS SEASON, VISIT
CCDPARKS.ORG

*Winter in Dilworth Park is presented by Rothman Orthopaedic
Institute and supported by Independence Blue Cross, Capital One,
Temple University, Live Nation and 6abc*

Fall Clean-up at Sister Cities Park



We're always grateful to our volunteer friends at Friends Select School, who join Center City District staff for a service day each fall at Sister Cities Park. Their efforts include clearing and beautifying the park's planting beds and landscaping in preparation for fall.





Jeff Fusco

Pulse Debuts in Dilworth Park

Thanks to a group of generous and committed donors, led by the National Endowment for the Arts and the William Penn Foundation, Center City District unveiled Phase 1 of Pulse at Dilworth Park this fall.

With the activation of the Trolley Line (green) section of *Pulse* on September 12, the Center City District Foundation is actively fundraising for the final phases of the work that correspond to the Market-Frankford Line (blue) and the Broad Street Line (orange).

The work became an instant hit, both with adults capturing creative photos in the glowing mist, and with children enjoying an added level of fun to Dilworth Park's popular play fountain. *Pulse* also created a visually stunning accompaniment to CCD's fall programs in the park, including a Philadelphia Fashion Week runway show and an interactive art-dance performance from Hip Hop Fundamentals.

Pulse garnered praise from international and local media as well, with Philadelphia

Inquirer architecture critic Inga Saffron calling it "Philadelphia's answer to Chicago's Bean – a selfie magnet."

Because this site-specific work of public art traces the transit lines below with atomized water, it turns off for the cold weather months, but will return to Dilworth Park in the spring.

YOUR GIFT TO CCDF WILL HELP US COMPLETE *PULSE!* FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT SUPPORTCCDF.ORG OR CONTACT KATIE ANDREWS, AT 215.440.5529

Plant Center City

It began with William Penn’s founding vision of Philadelphia as a “greene countrie towne” with streets named after trees. More than 300 years later, we still take pride in his original plan with civic squares and intimate, walkable tree-lined streets.

Street trees not only beautify residential and commercial corridors, they encourage walking, reduce harmful auto emissions, lower summer temperatures and offset the urban “heat island” effect. Studies have shown they can also increase property values and even reduce stress and blood pressure levels.

But trees and landscaping in cities need our care and support. That’s why the Center City District Foundation (CCDF) created the Plant Center City program to green our streets with trees. There are approximately 2,300 street trees within the Center City District’s boundary and, for two decades, we have maintained 700 of them that we added in the 1990s.

With your support, the CCDF can expand the downtown canopy of healthy street trees. Within the boundaries of the Center City District, we can plant new trees, replace damaged ones and sustain a



James B. Abbott

routine schedule of pruning, watering, pest management and fertilization to sustain William Penn’s vision for coming generations.



Marisa Fischette

TD is proud to support Plant Center City to create a healthier and more sustainable Center City, to promote an inclusive and connected community, and to nurture our cherished and vibrant public spaces.

Your investment in Philadelphia’s tree canopy will enhance Center City for years to come. To contribute to the continued beautification and greening of downtown Philadelphia, visit supportccdf.org or contact Katie Andrews at 215.440.5529

New Fountain at Dilworth Park

This fall, Center City District unveiled a new amenity for Dilworth Park visitors and canine companions: a sleek new drinking fountain designed with bubblers at heights for adults, children and for dogs, as well as a station for refilling water bottles.

The dog-friendly fountain was spearheaded by Helen and Burt Laman, neighbors and friends of Dilworth Park. They walked their dog Louie in the park for many years and, after his death last year, approached CCD about a way to memorialize their companion.

“They became champions of fundraising and approached many friends and neighbors, and helped raise funds that CCD matched,” Center City District President Paul R. Levy said. A small dedication ceremony was held on September 13 to dedicate the fountain and to thank the Lamans and their friends for their generous contributions.



Philadelphia Retail Report

Center City’s flourishing retail scene builds on more than two decades of mixed-use development, with residential, convention and tourism growth broadening the historic base of retail customers provided by office and institutional tenants in the central business district. Today, 307,000 workers, 190,000 residents, 3.3 million occupied hotel room nights and 112,000 college students combine to create more than \$1 billion in retail demand annually.

Center City District’s *Philadelphia Retail* report, released annually and just updated with the latest data, notes that a dramatic increase in Center City residents has attracted more than 77 national retailers in the last five years. These stores supplement a strong base of local boutiques, independents and long-term nationals, broadening Center City’s role as the city’s major shopping area as well as a regional and national retail destination.

To download the new *Philadelphia Retail* report and other CCD/CPDC reports, visit <https://centercityphila.org/research-reports>

Combined Outreach Effort Will Return in 2019



More than 650 pairs of new socks were donated by Center City District employees during a sock drive for Project Home in October, in time for the colder weather when they are most needed by people experiencing homelessness. (Shown above: CCD, Project Home, and Philadelphia police members of the combined outreach team.)

The Homeless Outreach Program, a 30-week pilot program funded and launched on April 23 by the CCD and implemented in partnership with Project Home, the Philadelphia Police Department and the City’s Department of Behavioral Health, concluded on November 16.

The cooperative outreach effort was very successful: during the 30 week program, 134 people chose to come off the street and enter social service, mental health and housing programs. The CCD provided transportation for 55% of those people, easing the connection to service for many of those who had been reluctant to accept help.

The program involved daily interaction with Center City’s chronically homeless individuals by specially trained teams consisting of two Project Home outreach workers, two CCD Community Service

Representatives (CSRs) and two police officers from the police service detail. The teams covered the entire footprint of the Center City District in two shifts, with one shift covering west of Broad Street and the other covering east of Broad. On average, the teams engaged with an average of 40 homeless individuals and panhandlers each day. Those individuals who did not accept service, but were observed in violation of the Sidewalk Behavior Ordinance, were instructed by the police officers on the team to cease the behavior and all complied, with an average of 14 individuals per day moving away from locations where their behavior was problematic. There were no arrests or citations issued during the entire outreach effort.

The outreach team members met weekly along with the administrators of the program and service providers to coordinate follow-

up for those who received placement to help prevent their return to the streets, and to discuss strategies for reaching those on the street who were resistant to accepting help.

More than a dozen office buildings and hotels contributed to the CCD to defray the costs of this intensive effort. The pilot program will restart in spring 2019.

YOU CAN SUPPORT THE OUTREACH EFFORT IN 2019 WITH A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CENTER CITY DISTRICT FOUNDATION. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT SUPPORTCCDF.ORG

OR CONTACT KATIE ANDREWS AT 215.440.5529



Marisa Fischette

Thank You For Your Support

In February, the Center City District Foundation (CCDF) began a successful fundraising effort for the first phase of *Pulse* in Dilworth Park, led by a generous gift from the William Penn Foundation. *Pulse* debuted in Dilworth in September and quickly became an iconic part of the Philadelphia public art landscape, inspiring selfies for adults and evoking awe and wonder in young children.

In June, the Center City District opened the long-awaited Rail Park to the public, an \$11 million dollar effort spearheaded by CCDF. An official ribbon cutting was held with more than 1,000 people in attendance,

with performances by the Roman Catholic High School Marching Band and the Philadelphia Suns Lion Dancers.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without our partners and contributors, whose generosity fosters the continued transformation of Philadelphia. Sponsors and donors listed here represent commitments of \$250 or more made between December 1, 2017 and November 15, 2018.

In 2019 CCDF looks forward to expanding the tree canopy in the downtown to create greener and cooler streets in the summer through our Plant Center City program,

expanding opportunities for play in Sister Cities Park, and helping the homeless come off the streets and connect with services and shelter through our combined Outreach Program in partnership with Project Home, the Philadelphia Police Department and the Department of Behavioral Health. We are also setting a major goal to complete the *Pulse* experience in Dilworth Park.

VISIT [SUPPORTCCDF.ORG](https://supportccdf.org)
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR
INITIATIVES AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

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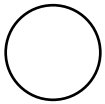
The Center City Digest is a publication of the Center City District (CCD), a private-sector-sponsored municipal authority committed to providing supplemental services that make Philadelphia's downtown clean, safe and attractive; and of Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC), with more than 60 years of private-sector commitment to the revitalization of downtown Philadelphia.



WINTER 2018

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FSC

CENTER CITY DISTRICT RESTAURANT WEEK



[†]Tax, alcohol & gratuity not included. Lunch or dinner only.

JANUARY 13 - JANUARY 25

— 3 COURSES • \$20 LUNCH[†] • \$35 DINNER[†] —

CENTERCITYPHILA.ORG | #CCDRW | @PHILARESTWEEK

