



Neighborhood of choice

Pricey homes notwithstanding, households are drawn to community

SOUTHEAST
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“People mainly come to me because they already want to be in this area. Many people want to be within the *eruv* — they have already picked their geographic area.”

For some people, living within the *eruv* is a must, while others want to be within walking distance to Aish of the Rockies, but their level of observance does not compel them to live within the confines of the *eruv*.

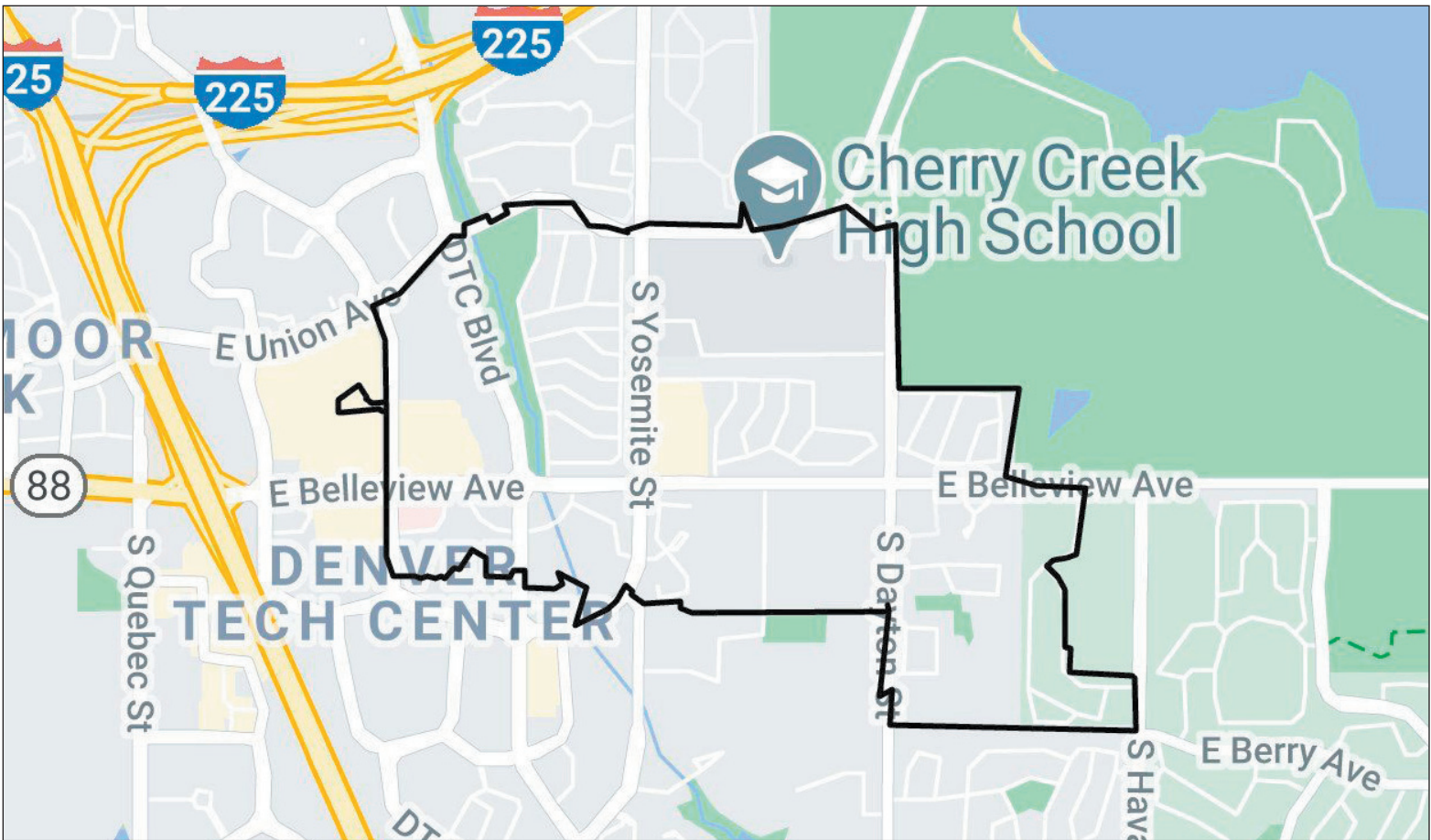
“They want to be closer, but they’re not necessarily *shomer Shabbat*, and they still feel like they’re in the community. There are different levels of observance, but people still want the proximity.”

The southeast community straddles the borders of Greenwood Village, unincorporated Arapahoe County and Denver, where home prices are higher than the Denver metro average, and inventory is low.

“Affordability is the biggest challenge because prices have jumped so high in the past five years,” says Zuckerman. That is due to and exacerbated by the lack of inventory in this area as well as most parts of the Denver metro area.

The average list price of the 11 single-family homes currently on the market within a one-mile radius of Aish of the Rockies is \$1,235,909.

Six of those homes are in Greenwood Village and range from \$1,000,000 to \$2,200,000. Four are in unincorporated Arapahoe County with an Englewood address and are priced from \$740,000 to \$980,000. The Greenwood Village and Arapahoe County homes are in the coveted Cherry Creek School District and therefore demand higher prices.



SOUTHEAST ERUV

Many of the people moving to the Southeast community want to live within an *eruv*.

Google Maps

Only one of the current listings is in the Pine Valley subdivision of Denver and is listed at \$550,000. It is served by Denver Public Schools.

For families choosing to send their children to Jewish day schools, the school district is not an issue, but does affect the prices of their homes and property taxes.

There are currently 13 condomini-

ums on the market in the area, ranging in price from \$339,900 for one bedroom to \$495,000 for two bedrooms.

Zuckerman says, “One of the challenges that I find is that while Denver has a lot to offer in terms of a Jewish community, sometimes it’s not enough to trump the affordability issue in which someone

may move to Cleveland or Detroit and where they might have cheaper housing or school vouchers.”

There are also several rental apartment complexes nearby which Zuckerman says “could be a stepping stone for people who come here, but eventually they are going to want to be in Pine Valley on the Denver side or any of the Cherry Creek [school district] neighborhoods.”

The affordability issue is sometimes mitigated with financial assistance from Aish’s Community Development Initiative fund, which can sometimes help with a down payment or other expenses, but Rabbi Meyer told the *IJN* that the financial assistance Aish provides has

model.

Rabbi Meyer laments that because of COVID restrictions this past year, he has not been able to get to know many of the newcomers to the community as well as he’d like to. He notes that because there is no children’s programming at Aish on Shabbat mornings, many women with children have not been able to attend services, which have had limited capacity.

He says the hospitality for which the community is known is beginning to pick up a bit as people are getting vaccinated or have already had COVID.

“Hospitality, far, far from what it was — because, thank G-d, we



COVID-19 pandemic has delayed some people’s plans to make the move to the neighborhood. Rabbi Meyer longs for resumption of Aish’s well-attended *kiddushes*.

never been a make-or-break criteria for people wishing to move into the community.

Rabbi Meyer is proud of the relationships between the diverse members of the Jewish neighborhood, from those who have become fully observant to those who were observant their entire lives to those who are not as observant but who embrace Judaism as offered by Aish of the Rockies.

“Of course, we’ve had our share of differences within the community, but overall, politics have been kept to a minimum, compared to other communities, and I think people appreciate that,” says Rabbi Meyer.

People in other communities have also told Rabbi Meyer that Aish of the Rockies’ ability to work with other organizations, notably the Denver Community Kollel, serves as a

have a very hospitable community, certainly has opened up somewhat.”

He also looks forward to the resumption of Aish’s Shabbat *kiddush* which has always served as a way for Jews to feel connected socially.

“At our *kiddushes*, there are many people, some of whom are invited out to others’ homes for Shabbos lunch, but some don’t have a place to go. Some don’t want a place to go, but they stick around for an hour or two on Shabbos morning because this is a place to socialize, and people miss that.”

Rabbi Meyer is optimistic about the continued growth of his community.

“A lot of people are discovering that Colorado is a nice place to live. Within Colorado is a Jewish community — our community — which I think is a very beautiful place.” ■



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