

## Facilitation Report

### Community Conversation on reaching the City's housing and climate goals

June 13, 2025

#### Perspectives represented:

Developers, current City Council members, Flagstaff community members representing several different neighborhoods, income levels, and lived experiences, Students, Sustainability, Climate and Housing advocates, Realtors, Emergency Response, City staff, Former City Council members, members from City Commissions (Planning, Housing, Sustainability, Inclusion and Adaptive Living, Heritage Preservation, and others).

## Keynote Points and Questions

Main points from Shane Phillips' presentation that seemed to resonate with the community, as his presentation was referenced about eight times through the course of the day.

- Do something; change is unavoidable; do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good.
- We are here for the community, for those who are in need of attainable housing.
- In Flagstaff, we have demand and demand can be harnessed to find solutions.
- Demand for housing does not go away just because we don't build new homes. If we don't create a relief valve by building new homes, then price becomes the relief valve. We preserve the built environment, but we lose many of the people who made it a community in the first place.
- Housing demand mostly comes from within the community.
- New buildings 'pull people up' into higher quality homes, loosening pressure across the market, which helps stabilize rent and prices across the market.
- More compact housing has lower emissions and a lower per-unit development cost for infrastructure, which costs less for the taxpayer.
- We won't get beautiful buildings if we don't also get ugly buildings.
- Building inward is safer, it prevents sprawl and housing damage from the wildfires we know are going to happen.
- More housing, more diverse, more infill.
- Our communities will not be hurt by more people.
- We do not have a parking crisis – we have a housing crisis.

Community questions to Shane and responses:

- What about water concerns with more housing? Density can increase while water consumption goes down, statistics of LA population doubling while water consumption went down. Reduced individual lawns.

- How can we build with the workforce in mind? Think about housing and economic development and jobs all together. We need both.
- How to manage infill development costs on limited city budget? Building roads, water pipelines, transit, other infrastructure, etc, would be streamlined. Infill development could help with deferred maintenance in the City that there may not have been funding to fix otherwise.
- How to make affordable housing for people with disabilities / consider the aging population? If affordable, subsidies need to come in somewhere. Design with some units as accessible, example ground floor units.
- “New development does not pay for itself”, is that true? If it is true, how can we change that because not building more homes is not an option.
- What about parking minimums? We are paying for free parking in many ways, costs go into rent and housing prices. *Flagstaff does not have a parking crisis, it has a housing crisis.* Parking is an amenity. Has human effects - story of a person opening a daycare in DC in a childcare desert, was not able to open b/c city required 15 parking spaces but there was a 17 space requirement.
- Flagstaff compared to Telluride? % of people coming from other places is high in Flagstaff. It leaves a City with more options to accept this reality.
- Mixed use? If things people do are integrated together, it brings people together. Developers don't always know what they are doing regarding commercial property. City needs to provide guidance, and not force commercial into places where they may not succeed.

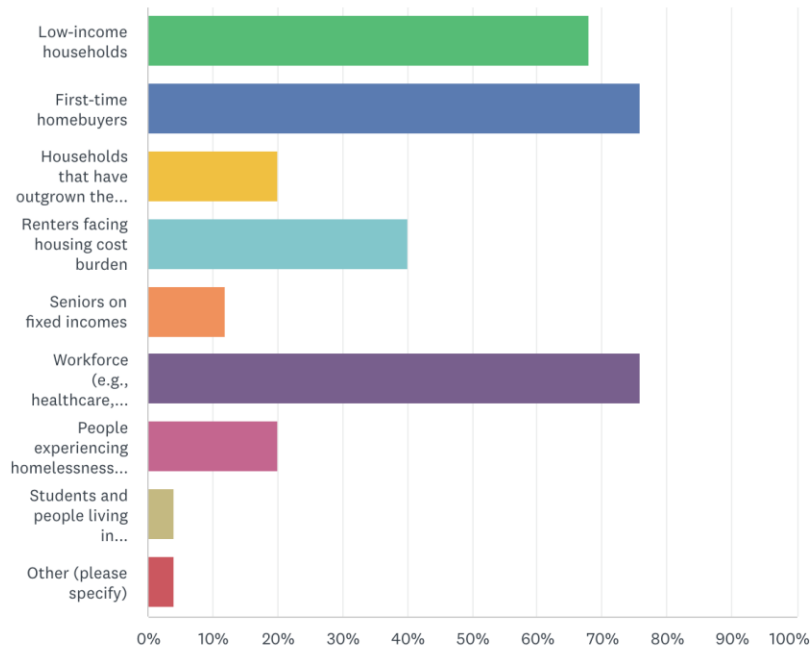
## Format

Attendees were asked to fill out a pre-event survey; the results of which were shared with the audience during the relevant decision point. At the beginning of the discussion of each decision point, attendees were asked to raise their hands if they loved it, could live with it, or if they had concerns. Attendees were given the opportunity to provide comments. The pre-survey responses, polling results, and summary of discussion points are presented with each decision point.

## Pre-Survey Question: Who Needs Housing?

Which groups do you believe are most impacted by the lack of attainable and affordable housing in Flagstaff? (select up to 3, but please no more than 3 or we will not be able to use your response)

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



## Community Responses to the 6 decision points

### Decision Point 1

**Where and how should we increase density?**

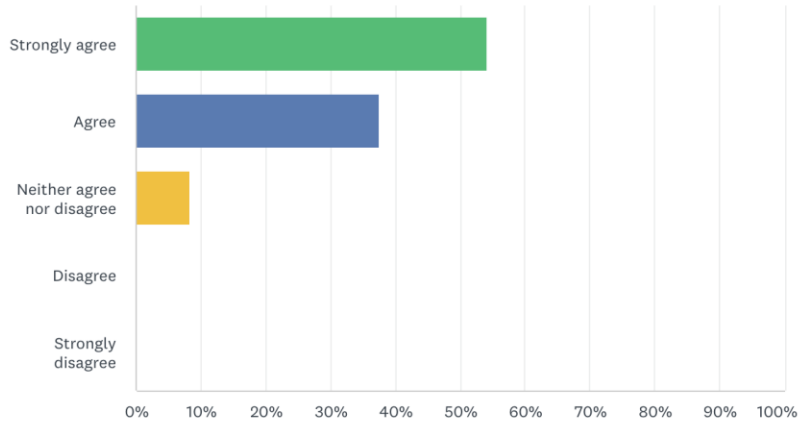
**Should by-right density increases be limited to areas where people tend to drive less?**

**Do we want to increase density allowances for only affordable housing projects or all housing?**

**Pre-Event Survey Responses:**

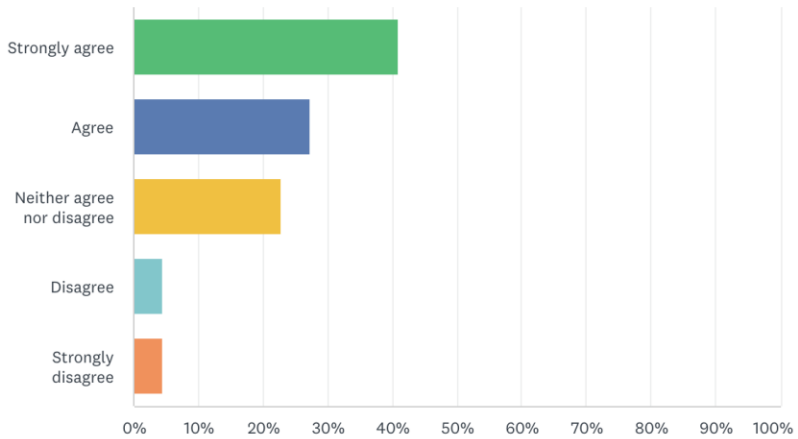
Do you support increasing the housing supply, particularly in areas where people tend to drive less?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 1



Do you support enhancing the current Affordable Housing Incentive Policy with additional regulatory and/or financial incentives?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 3



**In-person Poll: Results**

- Love it: many participants
- Live with it: some participants
- Concerns: some participants

**Discussion Topics:**

- Why not increase the density RR and ER, in addition to increasing density in other
- Not all parcels in the R1 zone are the same. Things need to be adjusted for context.
- Density allowance for affordable housing; separate temporary and permanent housing.

- Even if we increase density, we might not get the product we want (smaller homes that are more affordable). We also need to encourage product choices – developers should build more and smaller units.
- Students cannot afford to live in Flagstaff.
- More density is the right direction. Could go further.
- RR. We don't like to go through rezone (it can take 19 months). We can change from 350 to 1900 units if RR density increases now. Already have a rezone part to build high-density multi family units.
- Suggest that the developer builds smaller units.
- Agree on more density and accessibility to Mountain Line, along with an increase in routes frequency.
- We are not seeing house prices going down. It is concerning about new development pushing price higher. When can we see that density can help drive prices down?
- Fire concern with density.
- We need to think about what's missing. How do we get the product we want? FAR is a way to do it. Now the smaller houses still cost a lot.
- If we're not building for lowest income residents, then who are we building housing for?
- Developer: RR and ER. New lot, townhomes condos, SFH. If the RR can move to R1, we can get moving on those houses quicker.
- We live in a trailer, our landlord is old, we may soon be homeless, can't afford housing in Flagstaff.
- Flagstaff has 94% fire risk. We should reduce the density of trees. It has a direct effect on housing prices through insurance.
- What is the effect of increasing the density allowance? We are not currently hitting our density max. If we go from 6 to 10 units per acre, we may not reach max. density because of the other requirements..
- Can we move town eastwards, where there are fewer trees and there is water?
- Woody mountain site. Will do our best to not go by right. Mixed use, mixed income community. When you trigger a certain density, it will cause mixed use development.
- Life long resident, family from near Wupatki. Navajo. Trim the grass but if my neighbors don't do it, fire will get us. Protect town from fire.
- Not all neighborhoods are the same. Love to see the city to get more affordable housing in historic areas. Older ones have smaller homes, keep them affordable.

**Decision 1 Summary:** Broad support for increased density across zoning categories, especially to support affordable housing and reduce housing scarcity; Calls for context-sensitive zoning, especially within R1 areas and historic neighborhoods; Suggestions to prioritize transit-aligned development and allow mixed-income and mixed-use communities; Concerns raised about fire risk, displacement, and the real-world impact of density bonuses, particularly in tree-dense areas prone to wildfire.

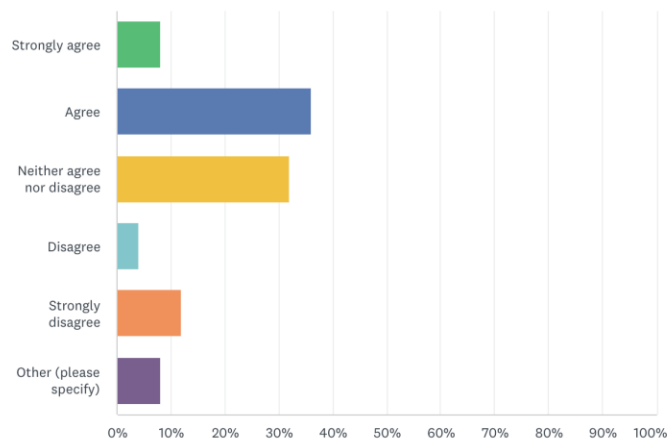
## Decision Point 2

### Do you support managing the intensity of residential land uses with floor area ratio (FAR) caps?

#### Pre-Event Survey Response:

Do you support managing the footprint of residential land uses with Floor Area Ratio (FAR). FAR is the measurement of a building's floor area in relation to the size of the lot/parcel on which the building is located?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



#### Initial Poll: Results

- Love it! - A few participants
- Live with it – more participants
- Concerns – some participants (less than live with it, more than love it!)

#### Discussion Topics:

- Making lots smaller won't guarantee smaller homes. FAR is one of the tools available to encourage smaller homes.
- Nebulous concept. What does it mean?
- Can you put into context the community character? Do you mean for single homes? Are you looking at it from a rural or urban perspective?
- FAR is the only method to influence project type.
- How to understand the issue of how many bedrooms and how this impacts FAR.
- Is there a way to depict FAR visually, or using photos?
- FAR is about changing up the intensity of a building footprint (lot coverage ratio). If you are a developer, if you treated one bedroom units differently than five bedroom units, you could make more money. Trying to build a tool to increase density, but still want to manage intensity of development. Could offset bedroom densities.
- Presidio was touted to be small homes, but what happened was large homes on small lots. How did this happen? How could FAR affect that?

- . Just did a walking tour of Townsite. FAR can be used to manage the size of the building. There is awesome density in Townsite, because units are smaller.
- With some density, 35% of lot coverage feels like 85%. With FAR, things that are not included - elevator shafts, parking. As things are added, the building gets bigger. Better to bring more people in through affordable housing.
- Do not add FAR on to development requirements.

**Decision 2 Summary:** FAR is not well understood by many community members; more visuals and education are needed. Some participants recognized its utility in regulating building mass and encouraging smaller units. Others expressed concerns about stacked development impacts and requested flexibility in application.

### Decision Point 3

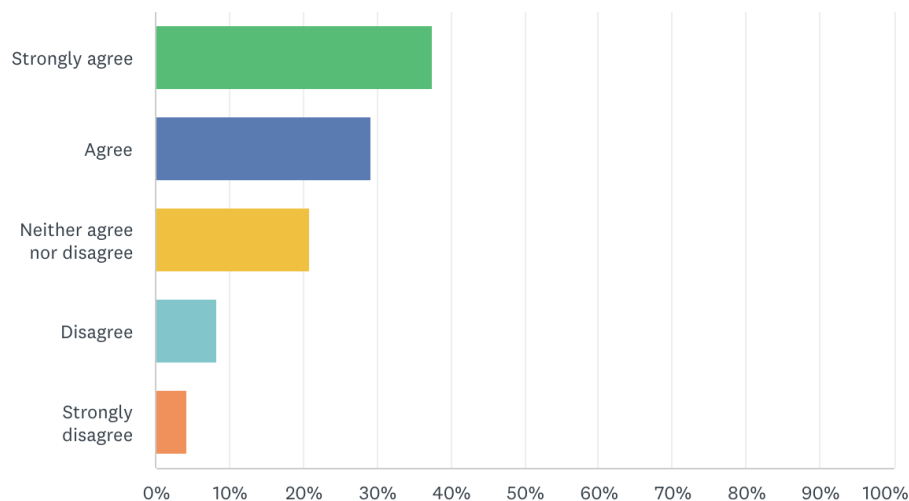
**Do you support creating a menu of sustainable design options for developers to choose from?**

**Should a wider menu of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies be included in this menu?**

**Pre-Event Survey Response:**

Do you support creating a menu of sustainable design standards for developers to choose from?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 1



#### Initial Poll: Results

- Support a menu?
  - Love it! – Almost all participants
  - Live with it – a few participants
  - Concerns – very few participants
- TDM?

- Love it! – Almost all participants
- Live with it – a few participants
- Concerns – very few participants

**Discussion Topics:**

- Concern that renewable energy is unreliable, especially during snow storms.
- Give the developers the ability to choose. TDM: give credit.
- I have built solar homes. It is doable.
- Consider the total cost of ownership? Low income people find it hard to pay utilities. Highly energy efficient, low monthly utility costs buildings are really important. . Find out what the effects are on costs. What’s the monthly cost for utility? Knowing this offers economic leverage.
- Options in the sustainability menu should have the greatest impact on climate and the smallest impacts on costs. Are extra points given for energy?
- I like mandating utility bills in disclosure. High density housing has separate meters.
- It wasn’t clear when we voted whether the menu was optional or required. When required, it makes it harder for developers.
- It is not clear what you are asking. There should be less regulations to make more housing.
- It makes no difference if a utility is expensive or not. People care about housing prices. Newer buildings are already energy efficient.
- This adds the cost and is unclear. We need to look at how to get more housing.
- Was the project manager for an all-electric, sustainable building. Having a menu to choose form is good because it gives developers flexibility to pick and choose what works for them and their site.

**Decision 3 Summary.** Feedback emphasized the need to clarify whether sustainability features are required or optional. Stakeholders were split on mandates: some cited the value of reduced utility costs, while others warned against rising housing costs due to green building requirements. Support existed for TDM credits and greater transparency around the impact of utility design on affordability.

## Decision Point 4

**Do you support moving forward with parking reductions?**

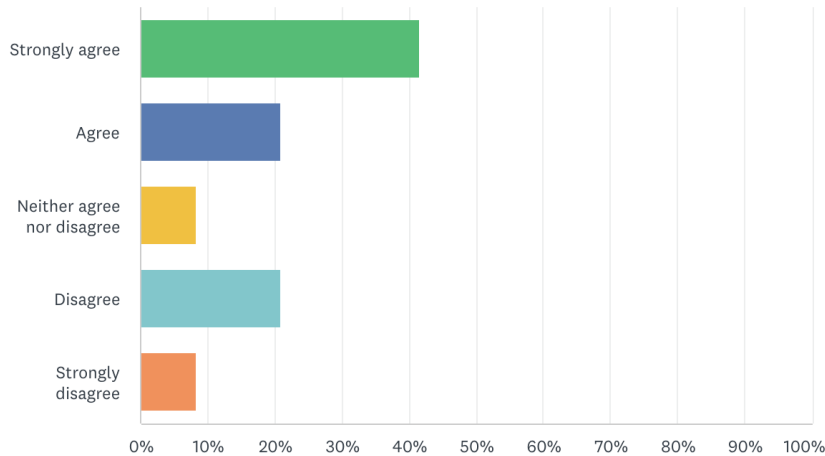
**Should parking be left to the developer or the market to decide (no minimum standards)? Or should there be standards?**

**Should on-street parking be addressed in conjunction with reducing parking standards?**

Pre-Event Survey Response:

Do you support considering parking reductions for new housing and/or commercial developments? (Please use other box for comments if you would like to differentiate your response between housing and commercial parking)

Answered: 24 Skipped: 1



### Initial Poll: Results

- Love it! – Most participants
- Live with it – a few participants
- Concerns – a few participants

### Discussion Topics:

- Let developer and development decide. Downtown development cannot get parking spots.
- Unintended consequences - I'm in a single family neighborhood, my neighbors have five people parking in front of the house.
- Go further, parking requirements are antiquated – they lead to parking lots instead of density. Use land instead for parks and open space. Developers will put in what they need – this is a lot less than we think it is. If we want to eliminate a parking requirement, we could have the developer submit a parking plan so we know there will be some parking.
- Need two incomes. Need two vehicle spots to get to work.
- French fries analogy. Parking requirements is the same. Some people like french fries, some don't. Some people have no cars, some have 5 cars, there is no one size fits all. Can we talk about parking maximums? High costs are due to parking minimums. People should not have to subsidize parking.
- To park what is in this room now, we would need 21,000 sq ft. We need spaces for our cars everywhere we go (home, shops), which leads to a larger space than my house.
- Somebody has to pay for parking requirements. It's not free. How are we transporting ourselves through life? Why not rideshare? People like to drive. We have to be realistic. We can't control people by getting rid of parking. Long term implications.

- Developer. Visited WA, MT, UT. Designed communities for amenities for people to be able to walk or ride their bike. There is a different way to design.
- Multi family project - Tempe, culdesac. 700 units, less than 50 parking spots. Transit is right there. There are really creative things that are changing things. Outside of Atlanta GA, people checked out rental cars through a ride share program. New things are coming out. Move past designing things the way things used to be.
- There is a short-term rental house next to me that is advertised as sleeping 16 people. When we do have short term rentals, they have a lot of cars, which affects full time residents. We need to reduce parking. We have to do something to get to the density. Reducing requirements is the right direction. Will help with adaptive reuse strategies. This isn't saying this is a free for all. It's reducing the requirements – mitigates some of the harm from no parking.
- We should eliminate parking requirements. Cars at NAU get towed and booted all the time and people learn to deal with it.
- Can we have enforcement of existing parking requirements?
- Parking requirements are causal to less vehicle ownership. This is what the research has shown.
- Supportive, but don't eliminate parking everywhere. Council received a call from a resident who lives downtown, but has nowhere to put their car. Elimination is appropriate in some places, but it is a problem when people have no place to park.
- I have trouble dealing with the next three points without taking them together. If we reduce parking, reduce street size, and winter ordinances we will still not get away from not having cars.
- We are not getting rid of parking. There will be parking. It just won't be mandated. Ex. Sacramento, changed from minimum requirement to maximum. Things can be handled through curb management. Families need garages.
- If want to eliminate the parking requirement, ask developers to submit a parking plan.
- What about having the option of charging the units for their parking space? Person leading or selling the condo pays the cost.
- Reduced parking does not go far enough. Consider the draining and flooding problems that come with parking lots.
- We are building homes with three car garages. Can we build a multimodal community so we are not wasting space on parking spots?
- Could no parking requirements create an unintended consequence? How do we get a socially optimal way of not having a minimum? The intent of reductions is really important.
- Perception vs reality is real: we have way too much parking.
- Eliminate the parking minimum. If there is demand for more parking than people will put in more parking.
- Seen cases where we wouldn't know who will be using the parking. It's a hard thing to put a number on. The private sector knows how much parking they need. Support parking maximum approach.

**Decision 4 Summary:** Most, but not all, comments were favorable to reducing parking requirements, but there was mixed feedback on the approach. Some favored reducing minimums, while others favored eliminating minimums in favor of market-based or developer-driven parking decisions. Others warned about spillover effects in residential areas and short-term rentals increasing demand. Emerging consensus to explore parking maximums and more flexible approaches. Interest in integrating parking policy with climate and land use goals.

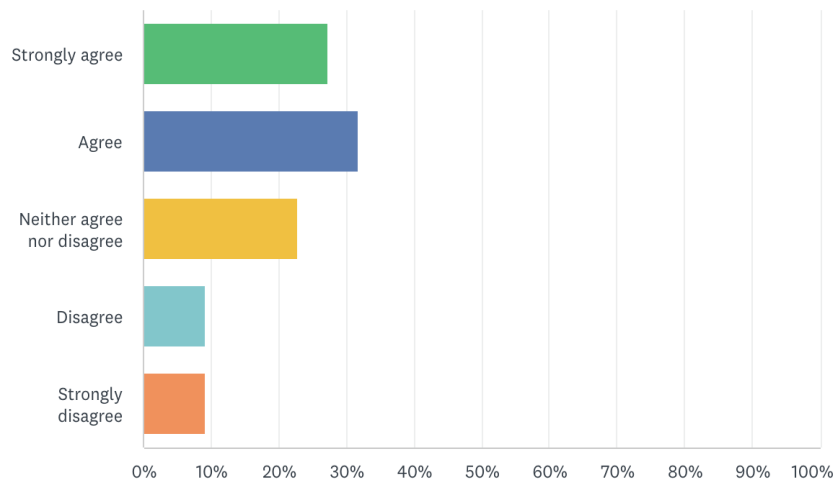
## Decision Point 5

**Do you support developing a strategy and outlining a process for creating a narrower local street design option?**

### Pre-Event Survey Response:

Do you support developing a strategy and process for allowing narrower local street designs?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 3



### Initial Poll: Results

- Love it! – Most participants
- Okay with it – A few participants
- Concerns – A few participants

### Discussion Topics:

- A new development has narrower streets. Wider lanes increase injury. Reducing lane size slows traffic.
- Wider streets make traffic faster. Not having parking on one side to make bikers safer.
- Snow plowing issue. No room to get around.
- Where to put snow? Keep in mind snow storage on streets and sidewalks.
- Can we purchase smaller emergency equipment?

- Flagstaff has been using smaller vehicles for the past 2 decades. However, for structural firefighting, the equipment is as efficient as can be.
- When we talk about street widths, we're talking about new development. Let's encourage maximum flexibility to provide solutions for those developers. If they can get it done with 40', then there are cost savings that can be used for other things.
- The smaller the roadsize, the better. But, we still need to provide enough room for emergency services.
- Narrow streets are important to roadway safety goals, so is the parkway. Let's be more creative than just reducing by 3'. That won't bring the savings we need for housing – we should go farther.
- Comply with ADA. This is the right direction.
- Can parking spots be used for snow storage?
- We are in a special place today, making decisions about the future of flagstaff that are affecting residents generations from now. We don't know what the future holds, but we know it will be different. This is the tension in the room. Analogy: we want to lose weight. We do not want to dismiss every option because we want to have our cake and eat it too. We want to get on the scale and see change. Thinking 50 years out, maybe Flagstaff will not have snow? What is the opportunity cost for the future?

**Decision 5 Summary:** General support for narrower street design in new developments to calm traffic and reduce injury risks. Strong emphasis on snow removal logistics, emergency response, and ADA compliance. Encouraged designing for maximum flexibility and context-based trade-offs.

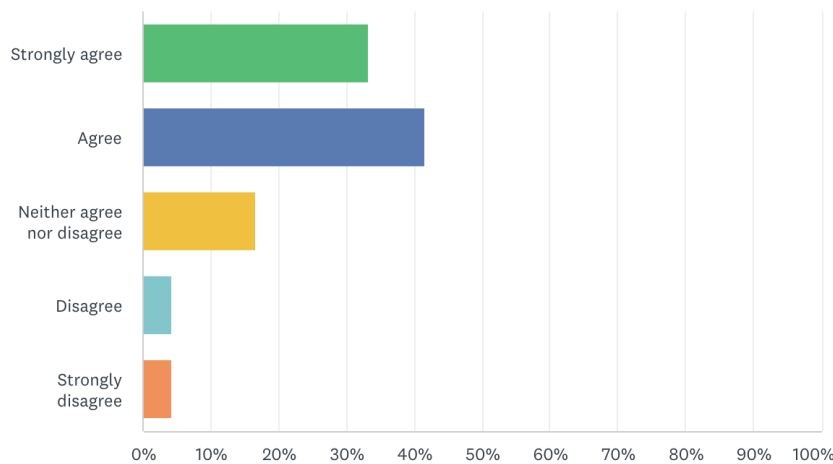
## Decision Point 6

**Do you support developing a strategy and outlining a process for replacing the current Winter Parking Ordinance?**

**Pre-Event Survey Response:**

## Do you support developing a strategy and process for a more flexible Winter Parking Ordinance?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 1



### Initial Poll: Results

- Love it! – Almost all participants
- Okay with it – A few participants
- Concerns – Very few participants

### Discussion Topics:

- Before moving to Flagstaff, I lived in Chicago. You had to shovel out your space and put a cone in it to save it. The street is the place where cars live. If we reduce parking for residential and commercial, we need a place for people to park. But please take the width of the road into consideration and have enough room for emergency response.
- We need to take all three decision points on parking and road width together and consider how they interact. My goal is to see that we have a set of parking ordinances that are consistent across the city year-round. Odd/even sides of the street?
- Snow removal ordinances are not enforced. It is dangerous for children and people with disabilities.
- There is a lot of pressure on the west side. When snow comes, Phoenix comes. There is not enough parking.
- Winter ordinance could be more nimble. In Mason City, Iowa, they decided the ordinance would be enacted when needed. We have more and more predictability of when snow is coming. If Mason City IA could do this 12 years ago, Flag should be able to do it.
- Ensure we have place to put cars when they can't park on street. A City lot? Somewhere.
- If we decide to remove winter parking ordinance, we can't have RVs park on street all winter, like they are all summer.
- Winter is a lonely time because the snow plow comes around and puts a berm and I cannot leave the house.

**Decision 6 Summary.** Participants called for a more adaptive, responsive winter parking policy. Concerns included street and emergency access during snow, berms blocking driveways, and lack of enforcement. Suggested odd/even parking strategies, designated snow storage areas, and community lots for overflow. Raised the need for consistent ordinances citywide and recognition of climate shifts.

## Closing

- Decision pt 1: let's go, let's increase; heard let's go further. Increase density and affordable housing. Go forth everywhere.
  - Except: not all areas are the same. Older neighborhoods. Do scatter site permanently affordable houses. Let's keep smaller homes in older communities affordable.
  - Would like more information from staff before decisions are made on increasing density in zoning districts. Justification for not increasing density, you create an R1. Appetite for increasing density.
- Decision pt. 2: FAR. technical topic, City needs to be able to better present the topic.
- Decision pt. 3: Menu of Sustainable Design Options
  - Lots of support in the pre-meeting survey and in-meeting polling, but some concerns about it being required
  - We should explain what those menu choices might be and what could be removed to reduce regulations in other places
- Decision pt. 4:
  - We are on the right path to reducing parking, and maybe we're not going far enough. Staff could go further
- Decision pt 5: Street widths
  - Mixed feedback – depends on on-street parking and how we manage the winter parking ordinance. Need to keep our sidewalks clear and accommodate emergency vehicles. If we can do that, we can narrow our streets.
- Decision pt. 6: Winter Parking
  - Need to keep emergency access and keep sidewalks clear.
- Other comments on decision points:
  - We are in a climate crisis. Let's move fast.
  - Need to consider short term rental and second homes stock.
  - Housing is critical, we need to keep in mind that we cannot focus on one segment of the housing market. We need diversity, allowing people to move up. Create a housing price issue. People are driving in from far distances in gas cars. Also adds to climate issue.
  - Good to hear developer perspectives. Dark sky city. High density required lighting.
  - Climate perspective locally: Thank you Mountain Line. This should be the new building standard for the city. If we have a wildfire, it will cost \$2B. Serious threat to our community. Very real thing that we need to build a future in Flagstaff.

- Word bank at the beginning. Many words about nature. Will we have a menu of resilience options? Are we upzoning?

## Next steps to stay with the City on this process.

- City Council August 26th
- Give consultant the final direction for code recommendations
- Invitation to help in drafting code.

## Conclusion

- Strong calls to "go further" with density increases, especially for affordable and workforce housing.
- Recognition that historic neighborhoods need preservation of smaller, more affordable units.
- Acknowledged need for more technical clarity from staff, particularly on FAR and zoning impacts.
- Renewed emphasis on Flagstaff's climate emergency and how future development must be resilient.
- Appreciation expressed for developer and sustainability perspectives, and the interdependence of housing and climate goals.
- Call to consider short-term rentals, second homes, and housing ladder progression in solutions.
- Encouraged continued engagement and transparency from the City as code changes move forward.

*Report prepared by Facilitators Melissa Jurgensen and Feifei Zhang*