



Creating Connected Communities in Cincinnati

Cincinnati Neighborhood Summit

March 11, 2023 | 10:10 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

Speakers

- Councilmember Reggie Harris

City Manager's Office

- Billy Weber, Assistant City Manager

Department of City Planning and Engagement

- Katherine Keough-Jurs, Director
- Alex Peppers, Deputy Director
- Emily Ahouse, Zoning Administrator

Session Outline

About Connected Communities

- Why?
- Focus Areas

The Engagement Process

- Who We've Engaged
- What We've Learned (So Far)

Next Steps

- There is Still Work to Do

Questions



Why Connected Communities?

- To support the growth and investment that is happening across the city, including Reinventing METRO.
- To allow neighborhoods to support people at every stage of life.
- To help Cincinnati become more people-focused, healthy, and connected.



Focus Areas



Middle Housing



Reduced Regulatory
Barriers to Housing



Parking



Encouraging Affordable
Development



Human Scale
Development



Process
Improvements



Zoning is One Part of the Solution

Full Complement of Policy changes will focus on:

- Financing/Funding
- Incentives
- Process and Operations
- Other Partnerships and Programs

Connected Communities focuses on **land use** policy changes

“Connected Communities” – A History

- Plan Cincinnati (2012)
- Reinventing Metro – Issue 7 (2020)
 - Expanded routes and times; 7 routes with 24-hour service on major corridors
- City Council asked to Study zoning near high-frequency /24-hour corridors proposed by Reinvesting Metro (2020)
 - Letter – Cincinnati USA Chamber, African American Chamber, CDCs, LISC, Port, ULI, Urban League, others
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) convened a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) focused on transit-oriented development (2021)
 - Recommended zoning reforms - height, parking, density, building placement, expansion of typologies, etc.

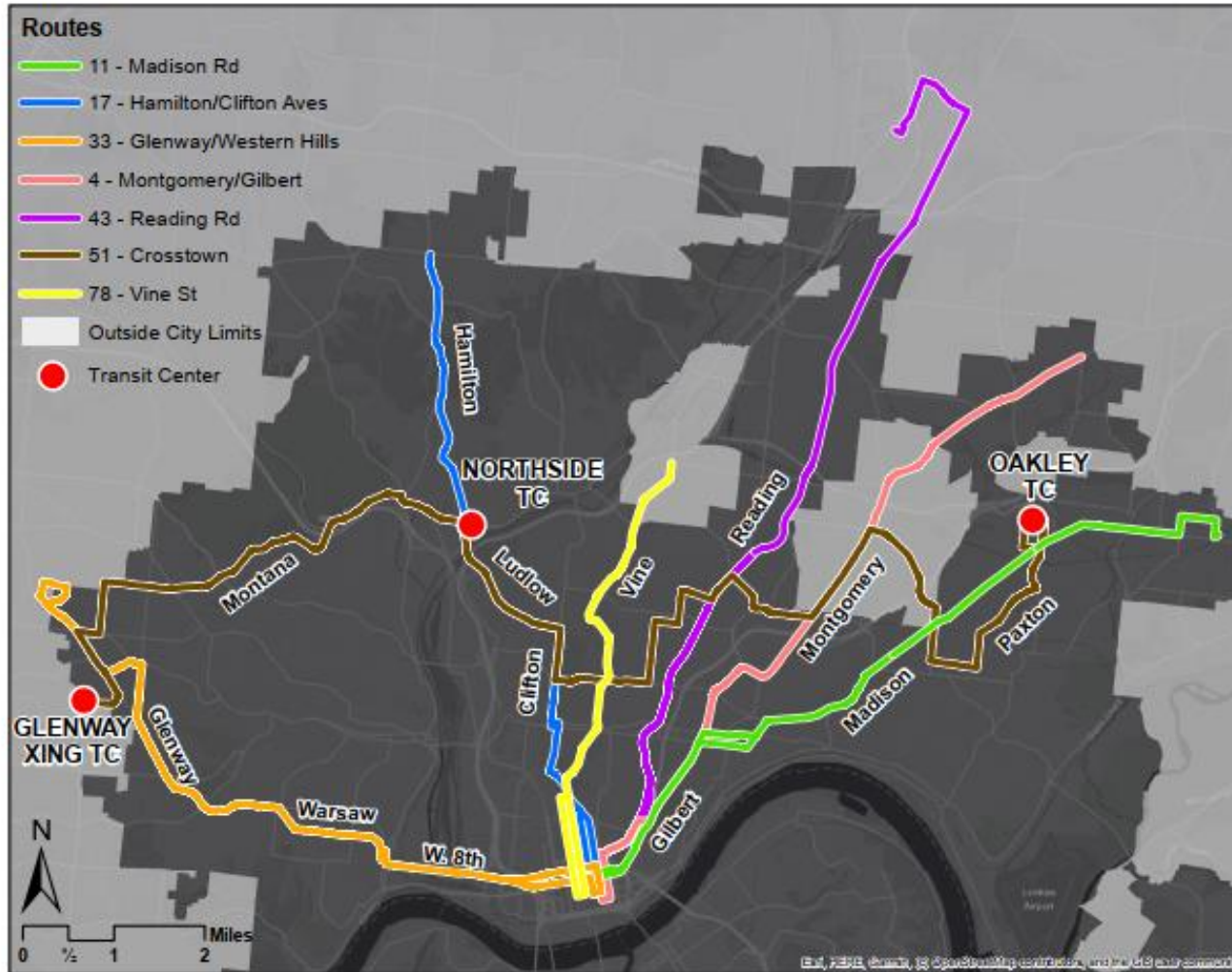
Reinventing Metro (2020)

- Issue 7 – Spring 2020 (sales tax levy of 0.8 percent and a new funding source for Metro)
- Expanded routes and times
- 7 routes with 24-hour service on major corridors



Proposed 24 Hour Transit Routes

Core City of Cincinnati Bus Routes - 2024 Conditions



Core Bus Routes Information

All 7 Routes:
 -Operating 24/7/365
 -Saturday & Sunday Schedules Match

Route 4-Montgomery/Gilbert
 -Service every 8-15 min WD daytime
 -Service every 20-30 min WD eve & night
 -Service every 15-20 min SA & SU
 -Branch extension to Symmes Twp

Route 11-Madison
 -Service every 8-15 min WD daytime
 -Service every 20-30 min WD eve and night
 -Service every 20-30 min SA & SU

Route 17-Hamilton/Clifton
 -Service every 8-10 min WD daytime
 -Service every 20 min WD eve and night
 -Service every 20 min SA & SU

Route 33-Glenway/Western Hills:
 -Service every 8-10 min WD daytime
 -Service every 15-20 min WD eve and night
 -Service every 20 min SA & SU

Route 43-Reading Rd:
 -Service every 8-10 min WD daytime
 -Service every 15-20 min WD eve and night

Route 51-Crosstown
 -Service every 20 min WD daytime
 -Service every 30 min WD eve & night
 -Service every 30 min SA & SU

Route 78-Vine St
 -Service every 10-15 min WD daytime
 -Service every 20-30 min WD eve and night
 -Service every 20-30 min SA & SU

Mayor Aftab Pureval and Councilmember Reggie Harris

- Motion #202200163 (January 2022)
 - Mayor Aftab Pureval asked City Administration to engage in a collaborative review of city housing incentives and zoning policies
- Cincinnati Housing Solutions Summit (June 2022)
 - Councilmember Reggie Harris sponsored at ARCO with partnership from Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, ULI, LISC, Urban League, NAACP, CBI
 - Around 200 in attendance
 - Housing Production and Affordability, Access to Transit, Neighborhood Moveability, Access to Amenities, Successful Business Districts
- Mayor Aftab Pureval confirmed commitment to land use and zoning changes to increase housing production in State of the City (November 2022)

Recent Community Engagement

Focus Groups with Professional Stakeholders (August 2022)

- Architects and Designers
- Market-Rate and Affordable Housing Developers
- Transportation and Mobility Experts
- Housing Funders, Advocates, and Non-Profits
- NBD Professionals, CDCs, Small Business Owners

Focus Group with Community Council Leaders (August 2022)

- Led by Councilmember Harris and Invest in Neighborhoods

Community Survey (December 2022 – January 2023)

Connected Communities – Public Engagement Meetings (January – March 2023)

- 4 in-person, 1 virtual, 3 Small Group Conversations with professional stakeholders

How Have You Participated?



I shared the survey



I completed the survey



I shared information about the public engagement meetings



I attended one of the public engagement meetings

What We've Learned (So Far)

Community Survey – Housing

- What type of housing do you currently live in?
- What type of housing have you lived in?
- Where should there be more of different housing types?
 - City-wide
 - In my neighborhood
 - Along transit corridors
 - Near NBDs
 - None, I don't know



Community Survey – Population

Where would you be supportive of increasing population?

- City-wide (In all neighborhoods)
- In my neighborhood
- Along transit corridors
- Near neighborhood business districts
- In largely single-family residential areas
- In largely multi-family residential areas
- I am not supportive of increasing the City's population
- I do not understand the question
- I don't know

Community Survey – Parking (Residential and Commercial)

Where would you be supportive of reduced parking?

- City-wide (In all neighborhoods)
- In my neighborhood
- Along transit corridors
- Near neighborhood business districts
- In largely single-family residential areas
- In largely multi-family residential areas
- I am not supportive of reduced parking
- I do not understand the question
- I don't know

Highlights From Survey (1,269 responses)



Positive support for increasing population and housing City-wide

70% want to increase population city-wide



Less support for housing “in my neighborhood”

35% want more housing “in my neighborhood”



Less support for housing “along transit corridors” and “near NBDs” (29%)



Support for reducing parking minimums city-wide was ~ 50%
(lower for residential, transit corridors, NBDs)



General support for increased density
But not without improvements to transit, street safety, additional parking

Highlights From Survey



Most popular options for new housing development:

- Small-scale mixed-use buildings (66%)
- Small apartment or condo building (64%)



Least popular options:

- Single-Family Homes (45%)
- Large condo or apartment building (47%)



Connected Communities in Action



5 events

191 Attendees



41 Neighborhoods



Connected Communities in Action

Highlights From Meetings (So Far)



Openness to increasing Middle Housing, but concern about allowing too much density in Single-Family areas



Openness to relaxing regulatory standards (density, height, setbacks) but concern about too much drastic change that is out of character with individual neighborhoods



Openness to relaxing parking minimums in some places, but concern about reducing parking minimums in residential areas



Support for increasing amenities, understanding of importance of transit corridors and NBDs

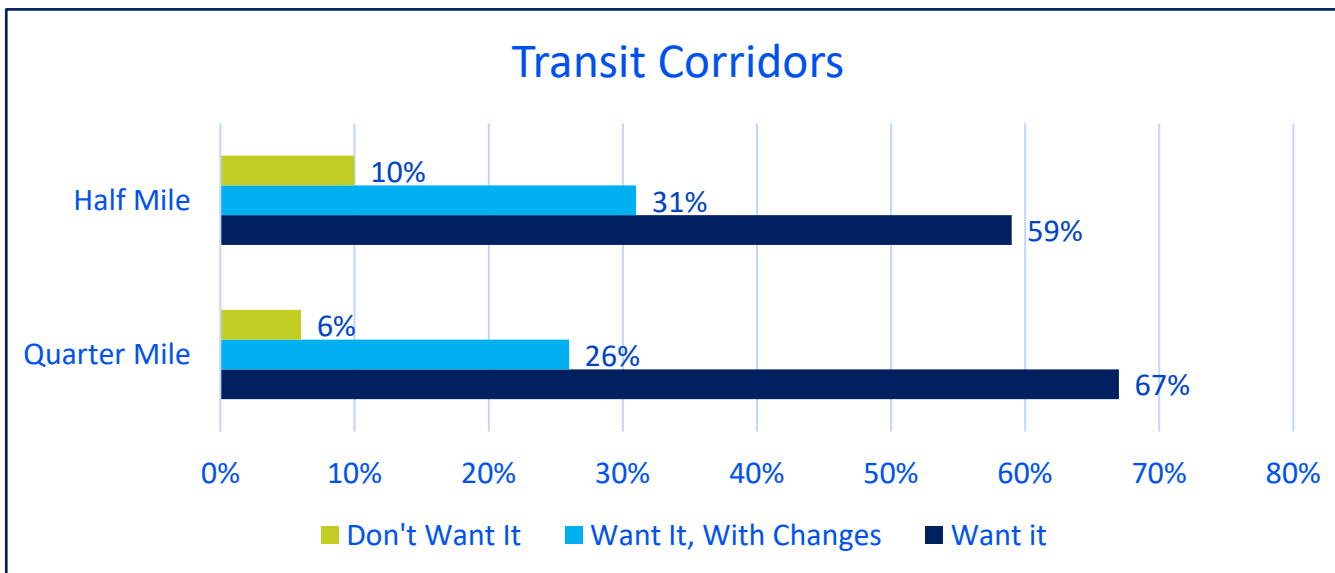
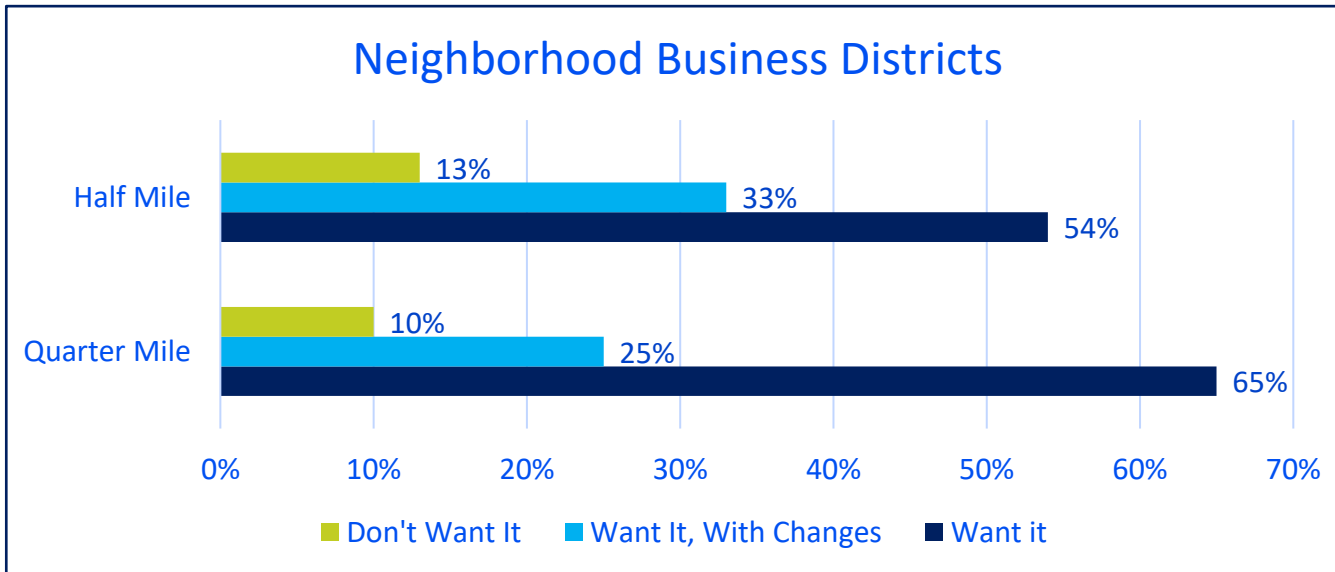




Preliminary Results



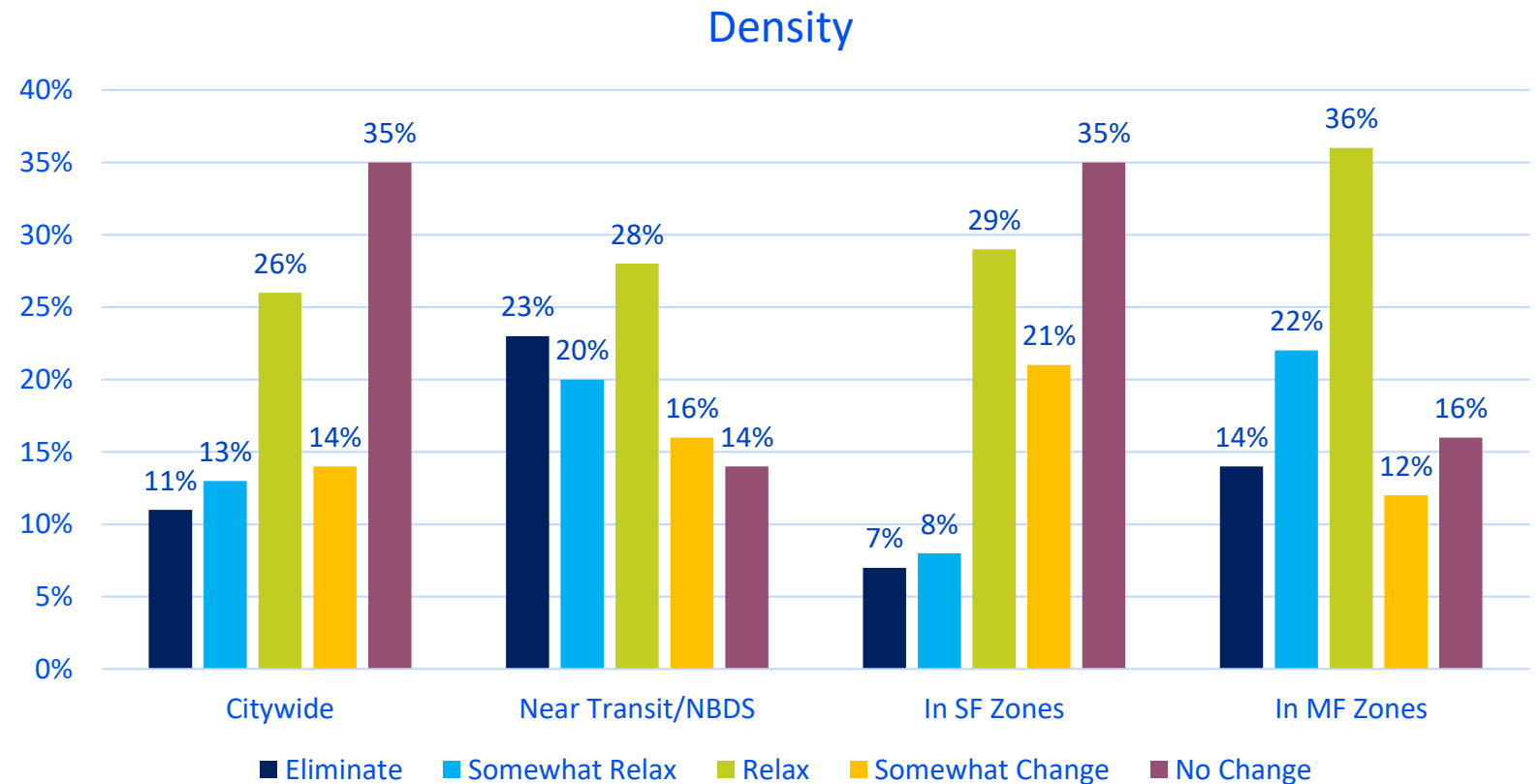
Openness for More Middle Housing



- **Many support Middle Housing in NBDs and Transit Corridors**
- **Some would prefer with conditions**

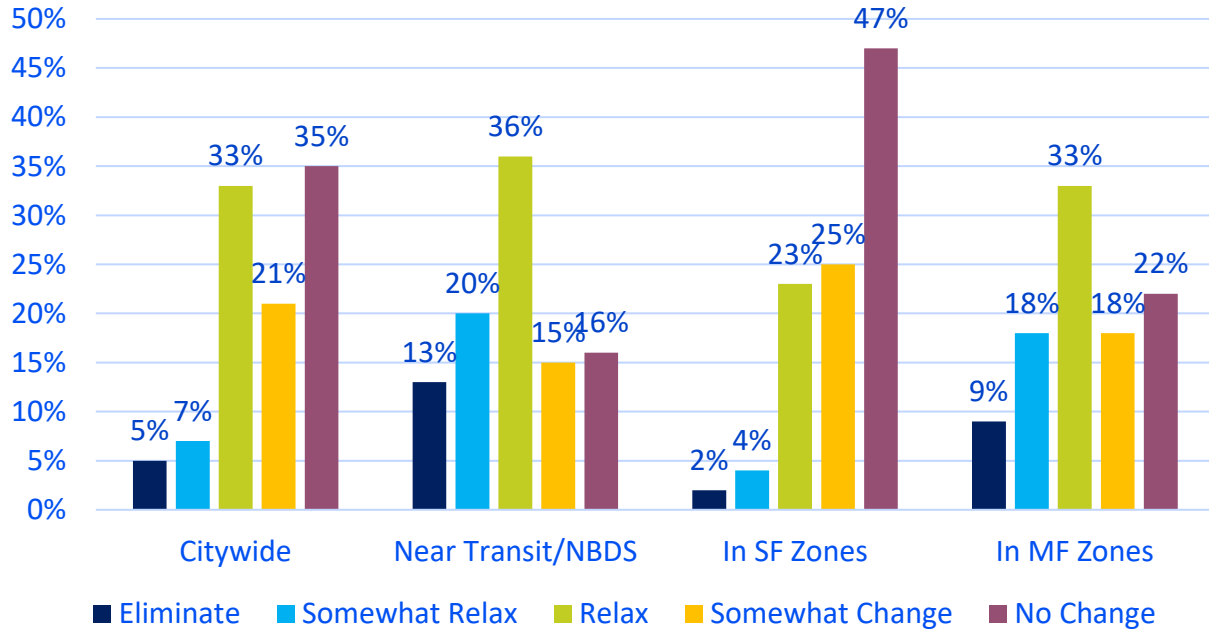
Cautious support for reducing regulatory barriers

- Some support for relaxing density, height, setbacks, but will depend on how
- Little support for eliminating standards, especially in Single-Family Zones

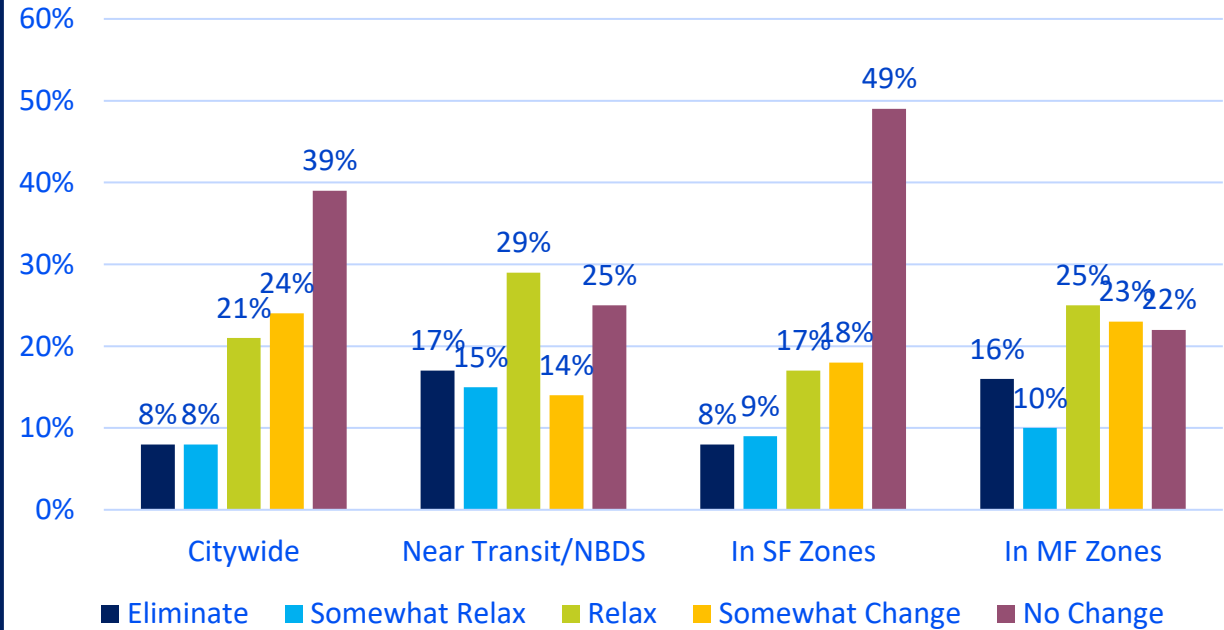


Cautious support for reducing regulatory barriers

Height

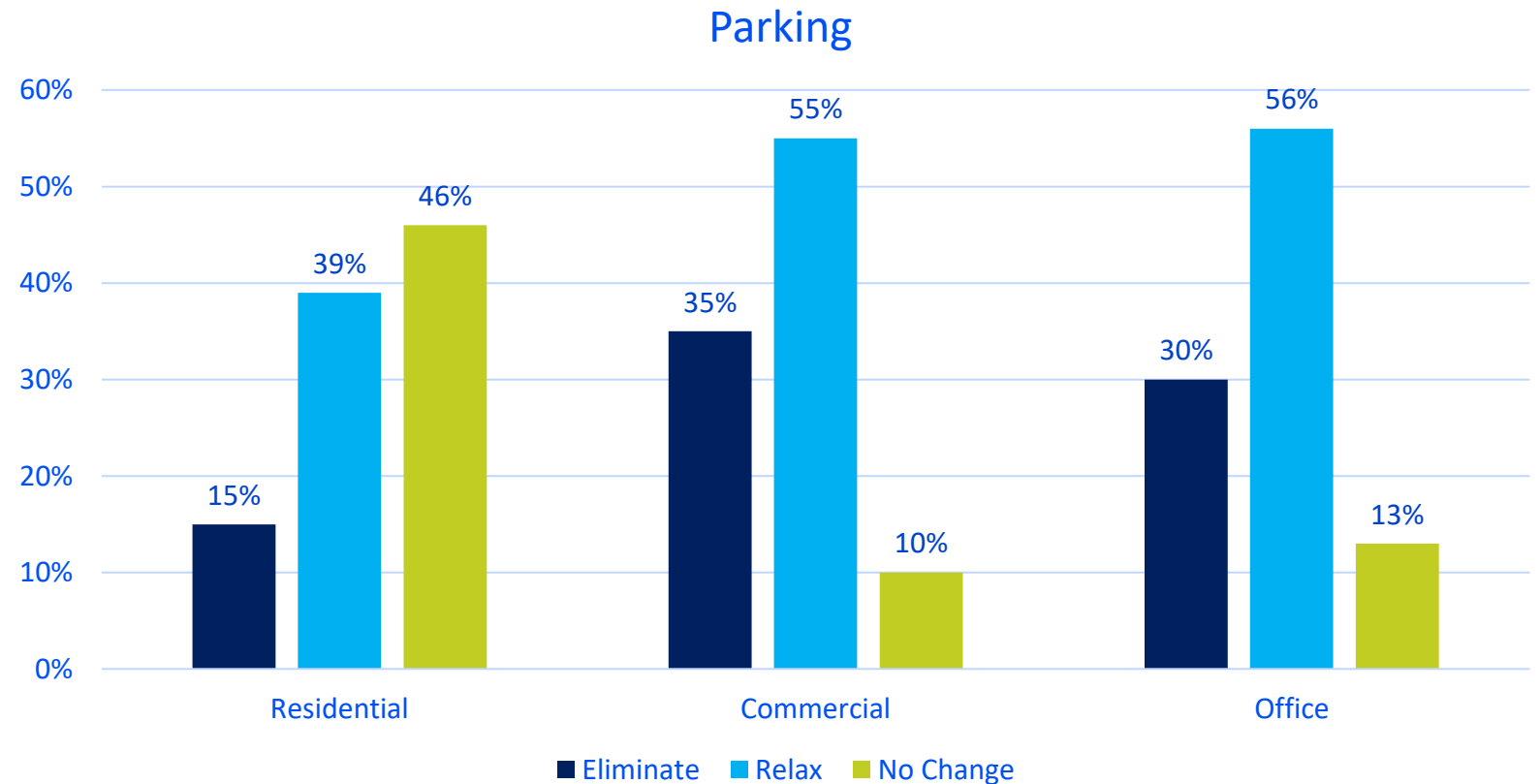


Setback



Some support for reducing parking minimums

- Some support for relaxing for commercial/office uses
- Little support for eliminating/relaxing for residential uses



Some Openness and Support, but also Concern About:

- Too much change
- Changing the feel of residential areas
- Losing historic resources
- Replacing older well-built buildings with newer lower-quality construction
- Unscrupulous landlords and investors

Table Conversations on Middle Housing:

- “How do we add more people and increase tax revenue, particularly in landlocked neighborhoods, without losing the neighborhood feel?”
- Worry about unintentionally incentivizing demolition. “We may improve dilapidated housing but could destroy the character of existing neighborhoods.”
- “Appearance is important, I want it to look like a house and I’m less concerned about number of units.”
- “Need more housing to attract and retain people they need to have some place to live that they can afford. Housing options can help achieve the needed population growth.”

Table Conversations on Density, Height, Setbacks:

- “Get more amenities if you increase density” but “each neighborhood may have different needs.”
- Some said height is more impactful than setbacks, others said the opposite. Agreement that consistency is important.
- Setbacks are an important way to add greenspace to a neighborhood.
- Too much height is a “distraction from the existing streetscape” and “looks hodge podge.”
- Cincinnati’s unique geography and terrain make it hard to envision relaxing these regulations City-wide. Need “*conscientious relaxing.*”

Table Conversations on Parking:

- “Eliminating parking minimums eliminates a mechanism to incentivize business to create and share parking...should be incentivized to share parking and develop shared parking.”
- “Current zoning prioritizes cars over people and changes the fabric of the city.”
- We need to improve our public transit service.
- “Parking is stressful.”
- Current regulations make it hard to open small businesses in some of our NBDs.

Table Conversations in General:

- “Character is important to me. There is so much throwaway architecture going up, like the Banks. We need to do smart design. That environment is important.”
- Concern about changes leading to gentrification and “lose the soul of the neighborhood.”
- Fear of what developers would do without regulation. “How do you balance community input with the developer’s plans/investment goals? Delicate balance between developer’s plans with community input. Developers need to engage early on with residents.”
- “I love the energy of a city and having vibrancy and neighbors and a walkable community.”

How Do We Find the Balance?

- How do we equitably increase housing production in a way that doesn't harm the existing built character in our neighborhoods?
- How do we better support our business districts and increase neighborhood amenities?
- Can we make new development more human-scaled?
- How do we make our Code and processes easier to understand?
- What other non-land use policy changes do we need to consider?
- *Where is the line – how much change is too much?*

Next Steps

- Need to fully download and dig deeper into results
- Develop draft policy changes that strike the right balance
- Engagement on Draft Policy Changes at Housing Summit (Later this Spring)
- Additional Engagement to Follow



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Connected Communities | Introduction

What is "Connected Communities?"

"Connected Communities" is the name given to a series of potential policy changes, and the process involved in crafting those changes, related to land-use that will help Cincinnati grow into a more accessible, people-focused, diverse, healthy, and connected community for all.

Focus Areas

In order to achieve the City's many goals, the Department of City Planning and Engagement has organized the research, work, and menu of changes within the six focus areas as follows:

- **Middle Housing:** The expansion of the different typologies of permissible residential housing, including duplexes, triplexes, row and townhomes, and cottage courts, in certain zoning districts within the zoning code.
- **Reduced Regulatory Barriers:** The modification of existing building regulations, such as height, setback, minimum lot size, floor-area-ratio, and density, to allow more and easier housing production.
- **Parking:** The modification of parking regulations to allow for easier housing production.
- **Encouraging Affordable Development:** Providing a regulatory incentive to projects proposing affordable housing by providing greater flexibility or relaxation of current building regulations such as height, setback,

QUESTIONS