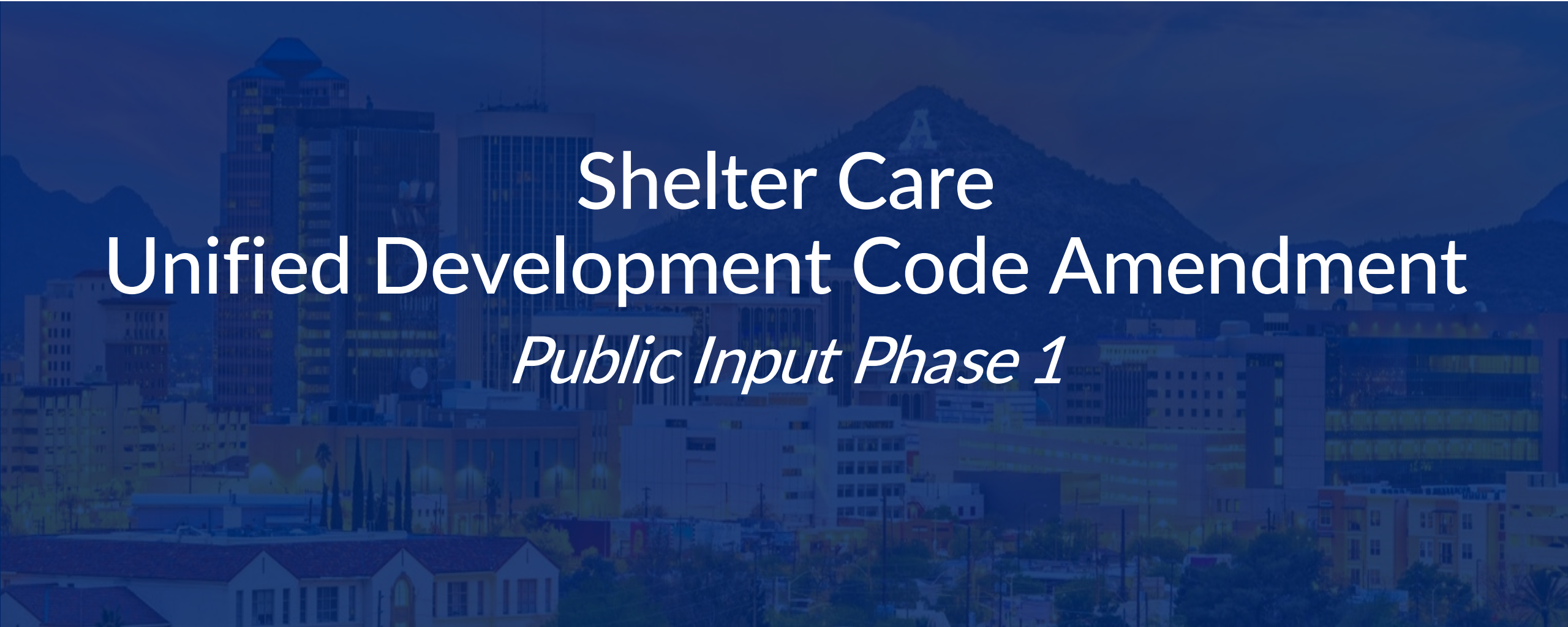


September 24, 2026



Shelter Care Unified Development Code Amendment

Public Input Phase 1

Team Introductions



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City of Tucson, PDSD



Ann Chanecka, AICP

City of Tucson, HCD



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City of Tucson, PDSD



Amanda Smith, AICP

City of Tucson, PDSD

Please Introduce Yourself in Chat

In chat, please share:

- Your name
- General location of where you live, such as the name of your neighborhood
- What interests you about shelter care and this project?

Meeting Agreements

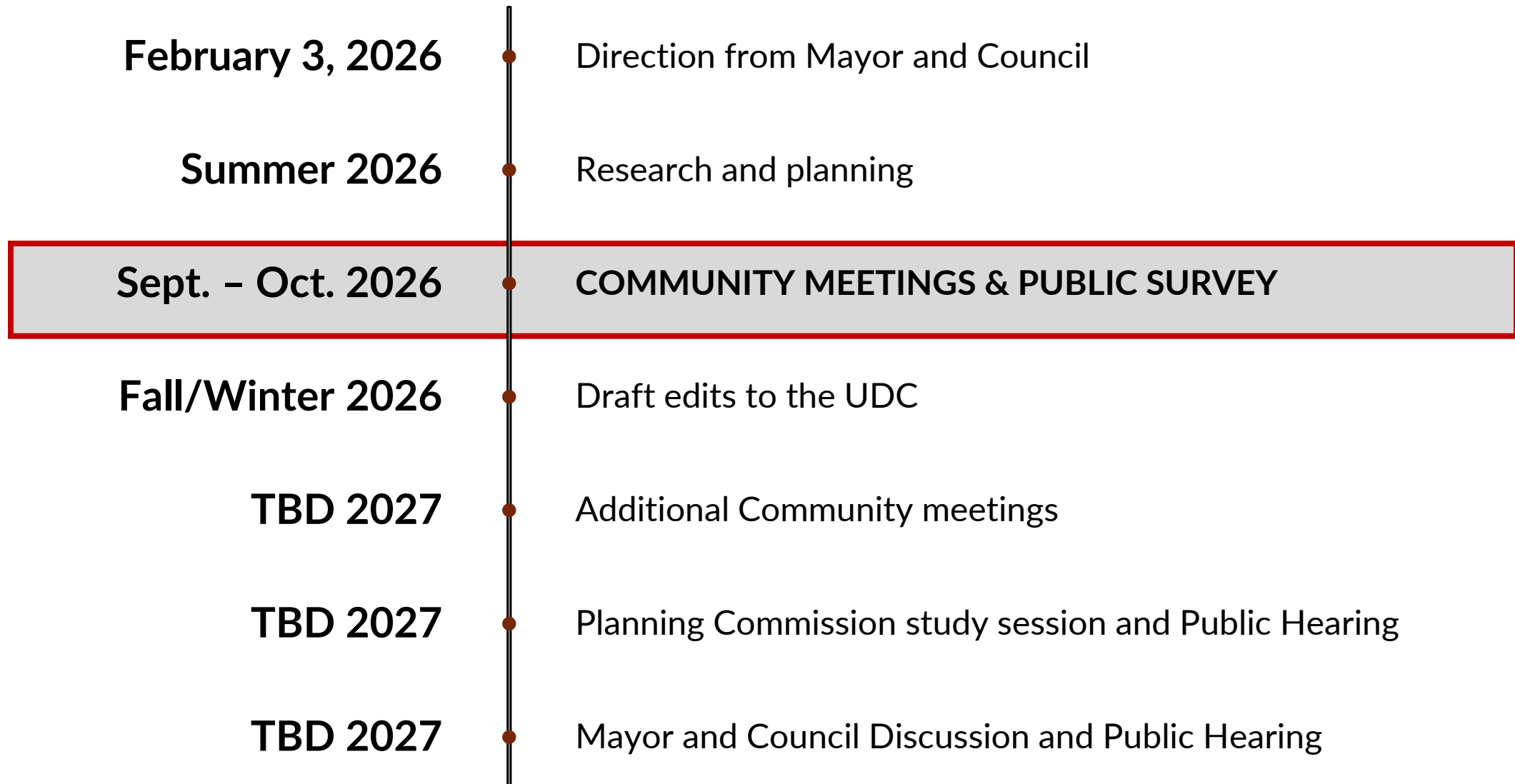
- Enter comments and questions in the chat at any time
- Please stay muted until the Q&A sections of the presentation
- Please be concise and on topic
- Allow everyone to speak before speaking again
- Be respectful of others and of different viewpoints
- This meeting is being recorded and will be posted online

Purpose of the Meeting

Objectives

- **Introduce** the update to zoning standards for shelter care, as directed by Mayor and Council
- **Share background** on our community challenges related to homelessness and shelter care, and why a code update is being considered
- **Gather community input** on specific topics where there are options and trade-offs to consider
- **Outline next steps** in the code amendment process

Shelter Care Code Amendment Process



Meeting Agenda

- Background
- Topic 1 – Location of Approvable Sites
- Topic 2 – Site Design
- Topic 3 – Approval Processes
- Next Steps



CITY OF
TUCSON

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Background

Housing and Homelessness Emergency Declaration

On February 3, 2026, Mayor and Council declared a Housing and Homelessness Emergency

This enables:

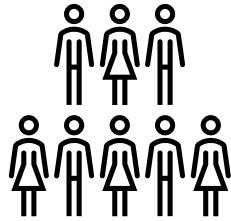
- Temporary zoning flexibility during the emergency period
- Direction to develop a Unified Development Code (UDC) amendment to readdress shelter care

Current Efforts:

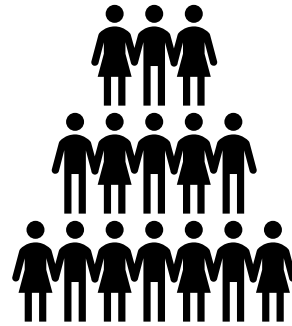
- Shelter Care & PDSD Director Special Exception Process
- Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas Policy
- Turn Team
- Permanent Supportive Housing Tucson HEART Program – filling vacant units
- 3 affordable housing projects in construction, with 5 more anticipated next year

Recent Data on Unsheltered People in Tucson

From the TPOCH Point in Time count – January 2026



**683 People sleeping in
emergency shelter**



**1,269 People sleeping
without a shelter**



**20-40 Emergency Shelter
beds available in Tucson on
a given night**

- 3 shelter projects in the permitting pipeline
- 6-8 months until those are completed, started 2+ years ago

Point In Time Count Data

ALL PERSONS						
	EMERGENCY SHELTER	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	SAFE HAVEN	UNSHELTERED	2026 TOTAL	2025 TOTAL
Total Households	484	113	15	1173	1785	1875
Total Number of Persons (Adults & Children)	683	163	15	1269	2130	2218
Number of Persons Under Age 18	166	43	0	2	211	204
Number of Persons Age 18-24	45	22	0	40	107	112
Number of Persons Age 25+	472	98	15	1227	1812	1786
Number of Persons Age 64+	45	17	2	81	145	150

Point In Time Count

- Since 2022, overall PIT numbers have remained relatively flat, holding steady even as many communities continue to experience increases.
- For the first time since 2022, there was a decrease in those experiencing sheltered homelessness.
 - The decrease in sheltered homelessness in 2026 did not result in a corresponding increase in unsheltered homelessness.
- Youth homelessness among 18–24-year-olds continues to incrementally decline.
- Racial disparities persist, with minority populations disproportionately impacted by homelessness in Pima County.
 - The University of Arizona is conducting additional analysis to better understand disparities; findings are expected later in 2026.

One part of a big picture:

This code amendment addresses Shelters, which is one part of the Housing Continuum and the Safe City approach



STAR Village – Outcomes in Immediate Neighborhood

Study in Tucson for first 6 months of STAR

- 35% decrease in crime in Ward 3 area surrounding STAR
- Neighborhood Beautification and Stewardship a part of operations
- Neighbors shared concerns before opening, but concerns have decreased based on results



Tucson's Star Village sees success six months after opening | Local News | kvoa.com

Housing & Homelessness Emergency Declaration & Shelter Care Code Amendment

PDSD Special Exception

- 1 project submitted and under review:
 - 28-resident microcabin shelter in Ward 3

Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas

- 0 applications to date.
- Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) briefed on requirements; several parties have expressed interest.

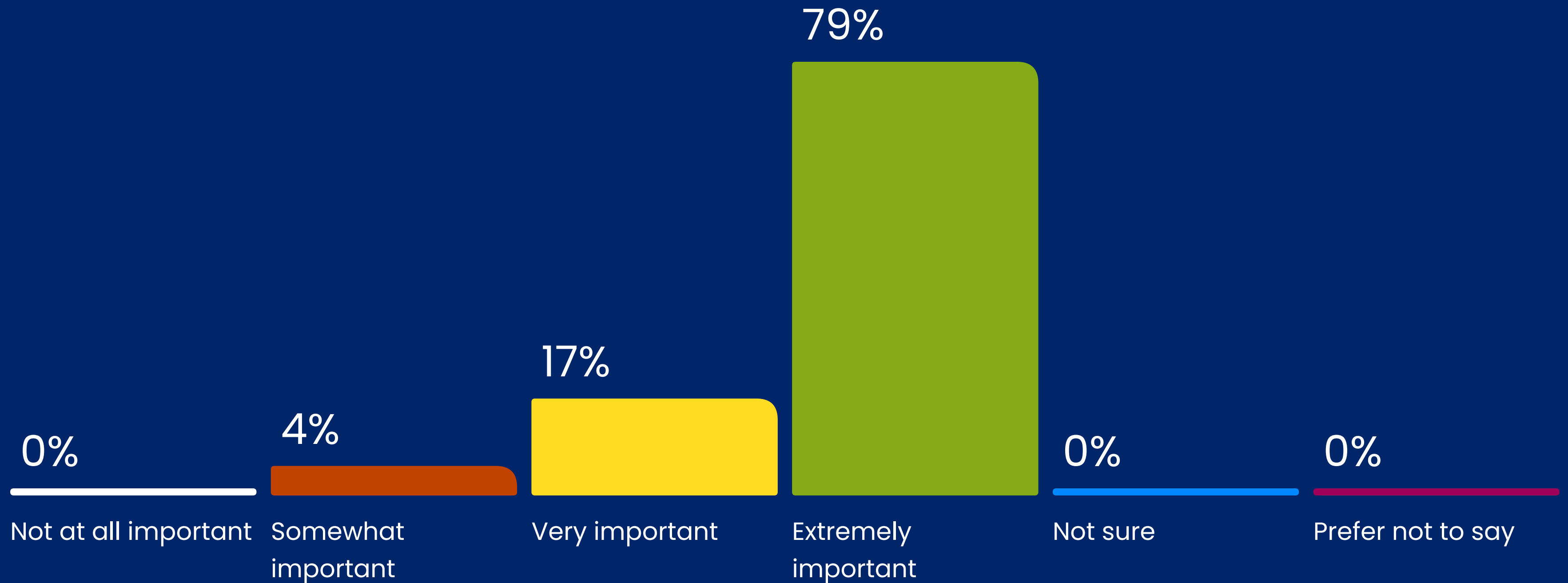
Shelter Care Code Amendment

- 1-year process underway
- Community engagement began this month.
- Planning Commission & Mayor and Council consideration late 2026 - early 2027

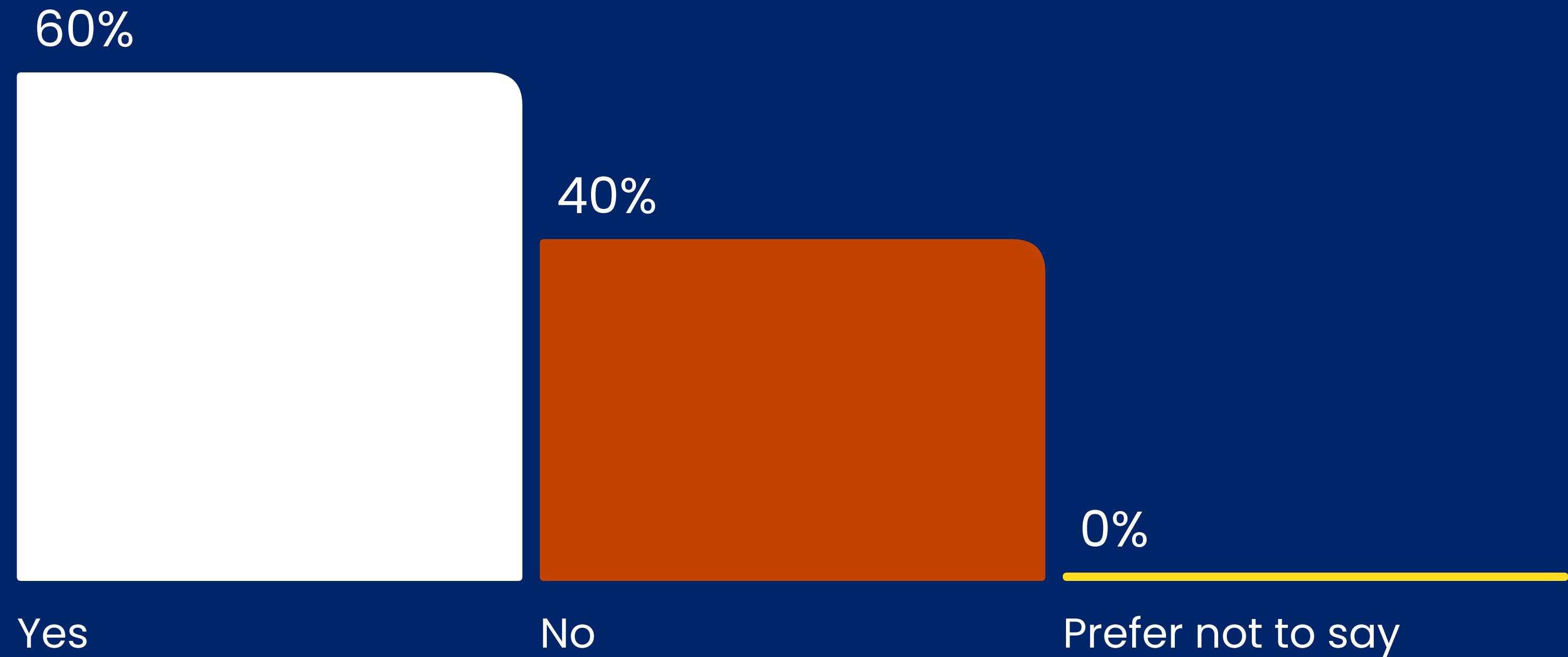
\$45,000 in Framework funding to support 3 Safe Outdoor Sleeping Area projects



How important is it that our community addresses homelessness in Tucson?



Have you, or someone you know, ever experienced homelessness or stayed in a shelter?



What is the Zoning Code? (aka Unified Development Code)

A set of regulatory policies that shapes the layout and form of our City because it addresses

- The kind of uses for land are allowed where (“zoning,” “land use”)
- The layout of the site and some basics of the buildings (“dimensional and development standards”)
- The approval process for getting a permit to use that land (administrative processes, special exception processes)

The zoning code needs periodic updating to ensure it reflects the needs, wants, values of our community

What is Shelter Care

A location providing temporary overnight lodging, meals, and counseling to people experiencing homelessness

In current code:

- Congregate (one large open room with multiple beds)
- Non-congregate (separate rooms for individuals, families, or small groups)
- Shelter Care is *not* day-use only or long-term housing

Emerging approach, new pilot program under the Housing Emergency Declaration

- Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas (SOSAs): (tents or private vehicles – allowed for up to one year at a time)
 - Note: The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not consider SOSAs as shelter for HUD funding

Questions and Comments about Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas:

Star Village is a wonderful pilot and we should replicate it across the city with more resources

Needed

An important improvement to Tucson's codes

How will users be monitored for drug use, committing crimes etc.?

Star village seemed to work really well. Please do more across the city and high value neighborhoods where there is more opportunities!

Do folks have to leave during the day? How would that be enforced?

Restroom access?

Great idea as linked to social services

Questions and Comments about Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas:

Will this be allowed in neighborhoods and what protections are offered to the neighborhood?

Safe Outdoor sleeping areas are simply places where folks are ALREADY sleeping outside, but with resource and rules attached. Adding the legal allowance of sleeping will ADD safety and resources.

very needed

We really need more. It allows for triage, stability and structure for those that are NOT housing ready. We set people up for failure if we attempt to house them too soon.

maximum time frames for use, hours of operation, locations, trash, sewer

Concerned about locations. Restrictions on where they can be. How neighborhood is engaged.

It's better than none.

What's the difference between a safe area and the people that are sleeping and drugging and defecating and sexing in my area wherever they want?

Questions and Comments about Safe Outdoor Sleeping Areas:

support it in areas away from neighborhoods. How will drug use be monitored

Need to be connected to services and public transit

Let's do more of them!

There should be more of them! They're an innovative approach to providing temporary shelter.

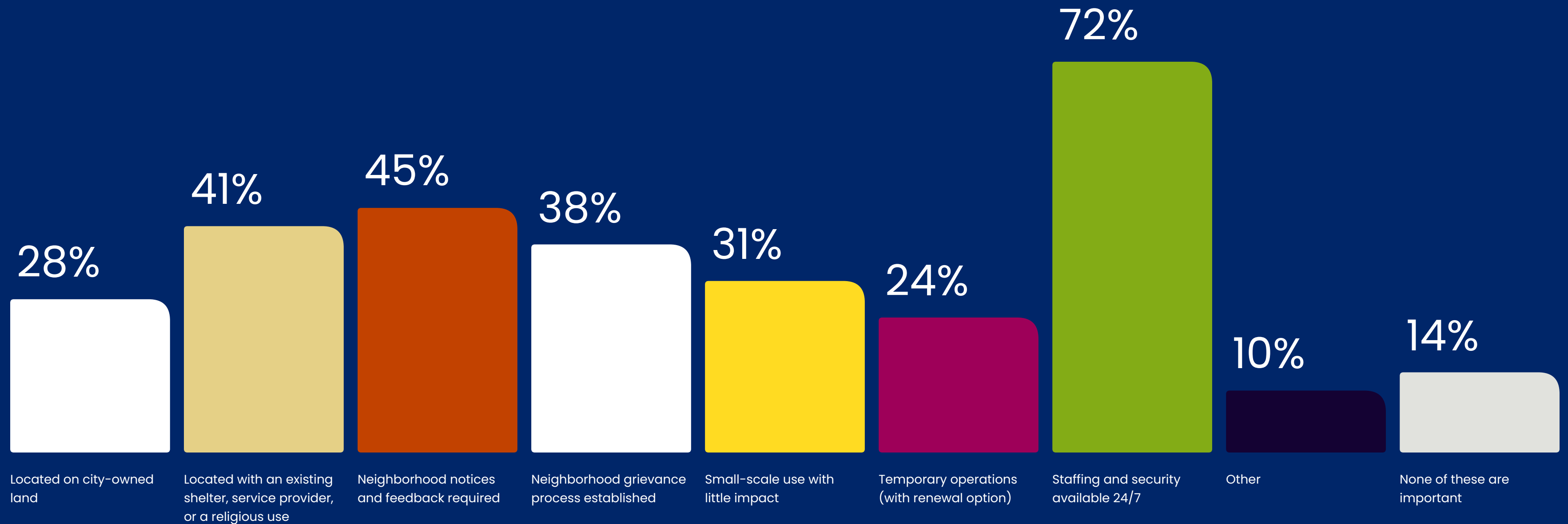
We should allow them in all neighborhoods. We should not be segregating folks in specific areas based on surrounding neighbors being unwilling to engage with folks who are different from them.

use of private property - allowances and restrictions. use of non-running vehicles for housing

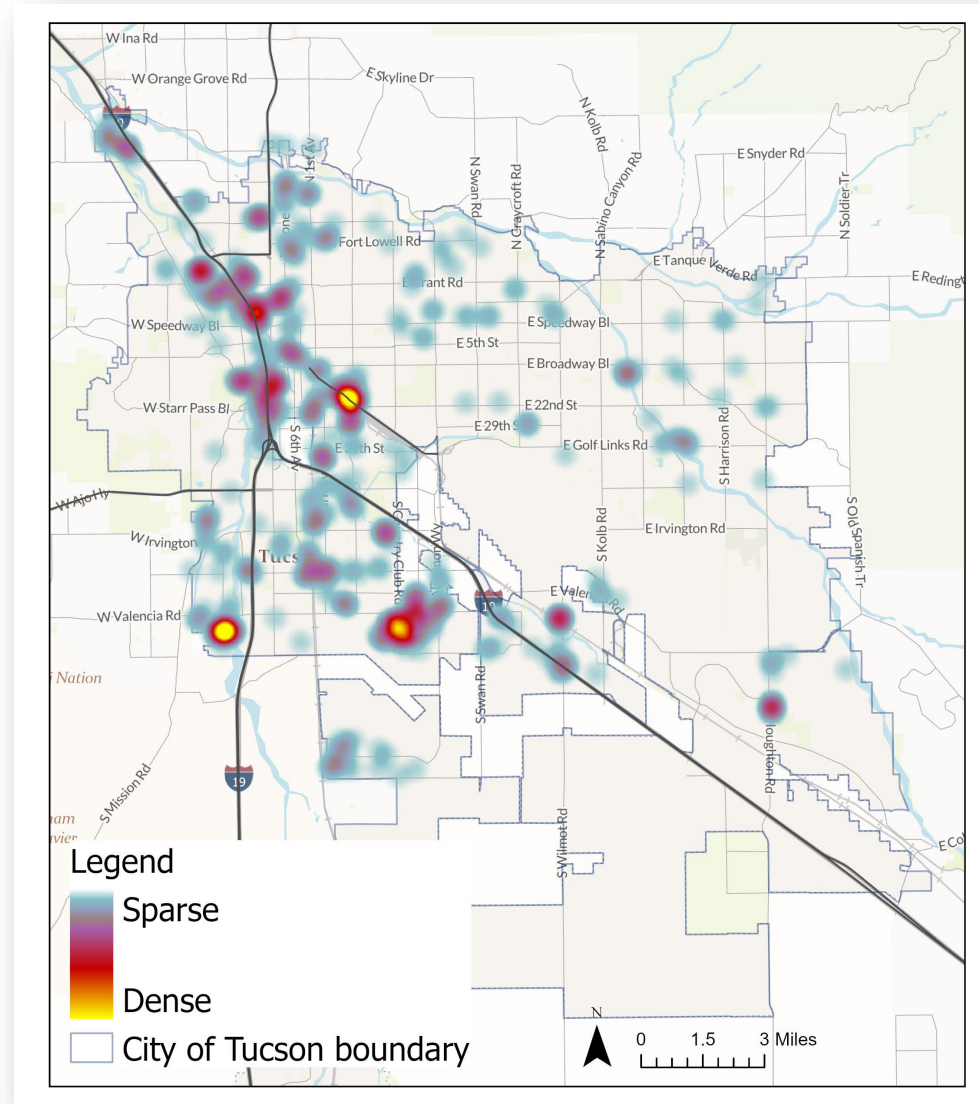
Standards in temporary use only require notification of 100 feet, too short

Needs restrooms, support and ensure safety for neighborhoods

If SOSAs are available after the Emergency Declaration ends, what aspects are most important to you? Check all that apply.



Topic 1: Location of Approvable Sites



Where Shelter Care is Allowed Today

- Prohibited outright on about **2/3** of parcels in the city
- Allowed on the remaining **1/3** parcels – but almost always through a Zoning Examiner Special Exception: long, costly, no guaranteed outcome
- Allowed by right on roughly **7%** of all parcels

Location Requirements for Shelter Care:

In addition to basic feasibility requirements, like not being in a floodplain, the zoning code requires that the site:

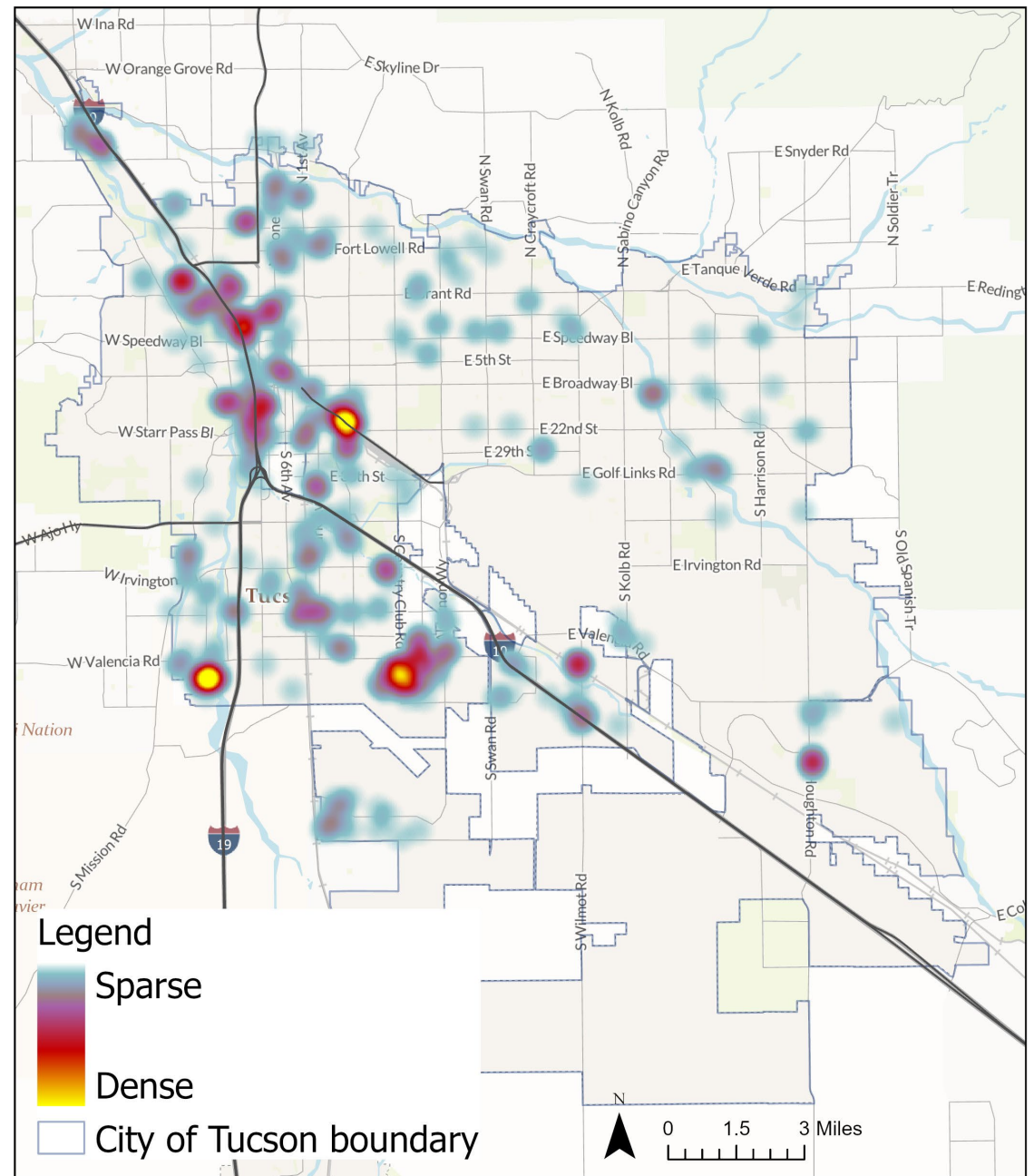
- Must be in a zone where shelter care is allowed
- Must meet the minimum lot size
- Must be 1,200 ft away from another shelter
- Must be 500 ft away from a residential zone (unless approved through special exception)

Where Shelter Providers Want to Be

From conversations with seven shelter care provider organizations in 2024, shelters work best with:

- Access to public transportation
- Sidewalks for pedestrian safety
- Access to schools and parks (for families with kids experiencing homelessness)
- Access to social services and commercial services
- Natural features on site or nearby

Vacant parcels that meet code are largely on the outskirts of the City or along highways



Comments and Questions about the location of allowed shelter care sites:

Do not restrict

Not isolated! Near
community
resources and transit

So location is predicted
on the types of
available lots with the
right sizes, setback
requirements and
zoning?

People should take
priority over industry

Is shelter care
permitted in Airport
Environs overlays?

Near resources

Seattle requires
shelters to be a mile
or more apart

accessibility of public
transportation a
criteria?

Comments and Questions about the location of allowed shelter care sites:

let's make sure we allow folks to live where WE WOULD ALSO want to live. They are residents just like us.

Are City Parks "allowed shelter care sites?" Like Reid Park?

i would like to see a map that is clear enough to blow up and see what the specific sites are in each neighborhood. I can see that there are blue dots in my neighborhood.

Please make sure they are near services

Will the city keep working with Drachman to expand the use of Shelter Care zoning to expand shelter access in Tucson?

We're by the Alamo Wash and it's been an absolute nightmare. Crime, drug use, weapons, little police support.

Could these be placed along major roads such as grant, speedway and Broadway? In the central parts of the city

Ward 3 should not bear the burden of this code change. The city should not bend over backwards to make a project possible, balance with the neighborhood concerns need to be considered.

Comments and Questions about the location of allowed shelter care sites:

Maintain 500 feet from R1 as is today

500 feet away from a residential area is insane. Especially if you're looking for a site close to schools for kids experiencing homelessness. Are tenants in a shelter screened 4 sex offender registry

All wards and neighborhoods!

Please repeat response to City Parks.

need a less squishy answer on whether parks are available for sites if that's possible.

The closer to community resources behavioral health and substance use treatment is important. Major bus route access is needed. Including bus access to get to jobs.

Is there precedent for micro scale sites, for instance on church properties, that would be possible even though they are typically in residential zones?

Can't solve homelessness without solving mental illness and substance abuse.

Comments and Questions about the location of allowed shelter care sites:

More on the east side
and not just
concentrated

Keeling has two shelters
within 300' of each
other, this is an extra
burden for a
neighborhood.

Location should also take
into consideration the
amount of services already
in an area so that one
neighborhood does not
bear a larger burden than
a more well to do
Neighborhood

What is the City doing
related to addressing
the root causes of
homelessness in our city

Do you take saturation
into consideration? ie
many social services
already located in a
small area?

Shelters should be
dispersed
throughout the city

Let's balance helping
others with keeping
residents safe.

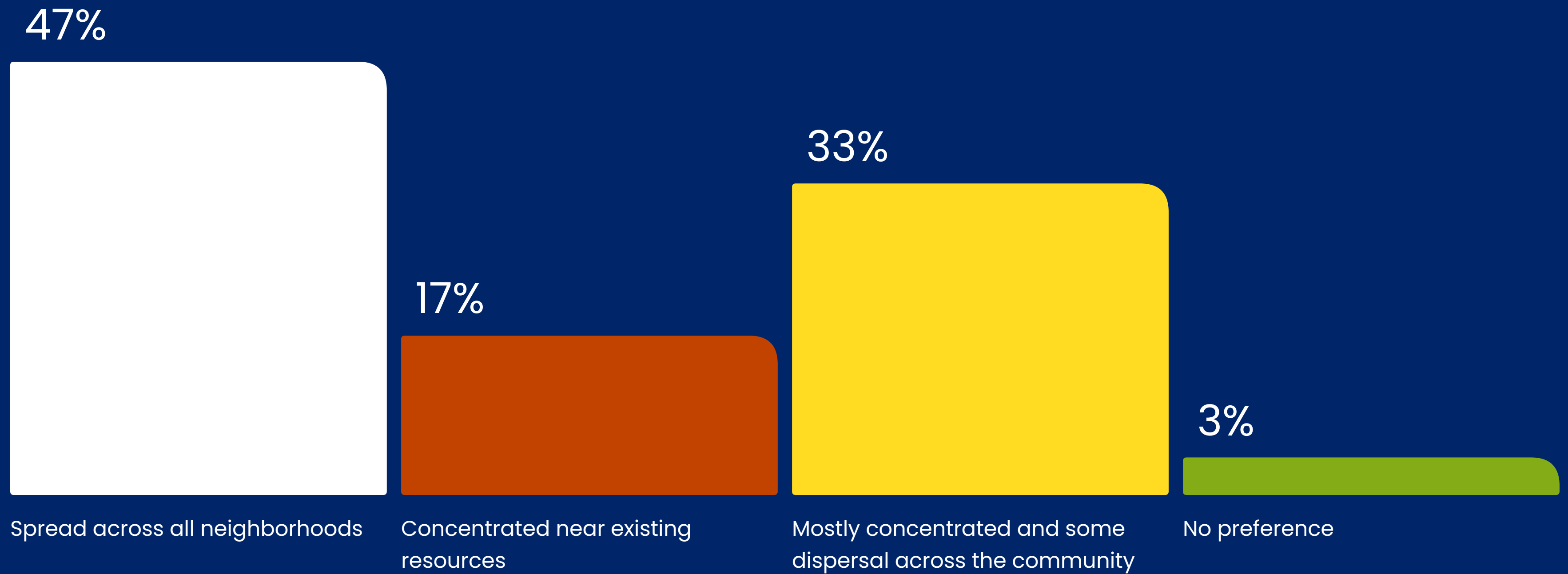
That's too close
together

Comments and Questions about the location of allowed shelter care sites:

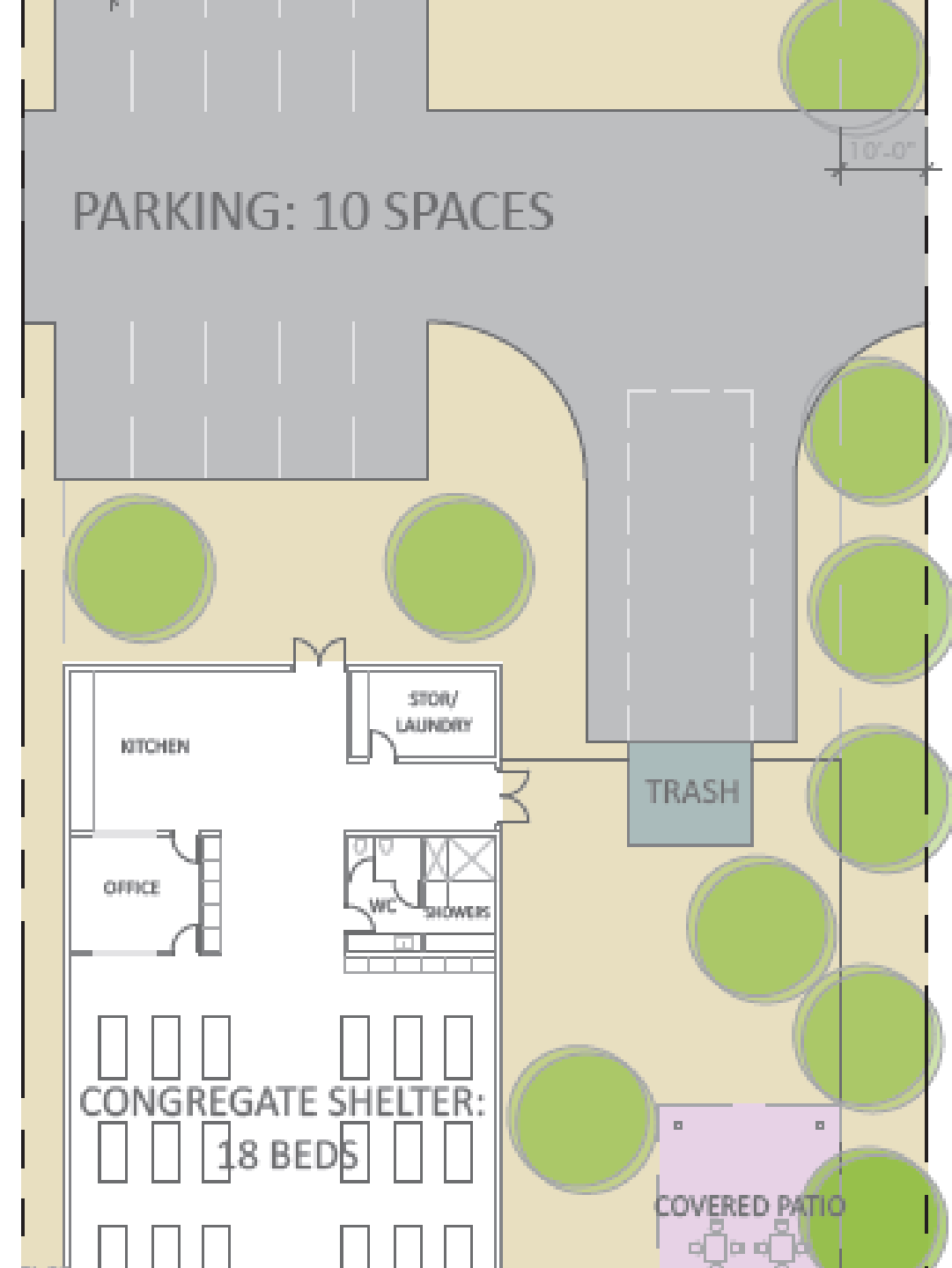
What do you mean
parks “are zones?”
Zoned for what?

Don't oversaturate
a neighborhood

How should shelters be distributed across the city?



Topic 2: Site Design



Site Design Basics

Where shelter care is allowed, there are on-site requirements unique to shelters

	Multi-family In a Residential-3 zone	Shelter Care In a Residential-3 zone
Maximum number of Units/Clients	36 units per acre	20 clients max (sites 20,000 square feet to 1.5 acres in size)
Minimum Lot Sizes	0 square feet	20,000 square feet
Maximum Lot Coverage	75%	60%
Side/Rear Setbacks	0 feet	20 feet from adjacent residential zones
Parking Minimums	1.25 spaces per dwelling unit	1 space for every 2 beds
Approval Process	By-right	Zoning Examiner Special Exception

Sample site designs

- Addressing requirements means creative balancing of needs
- Sometimes the best arrangement that meets code is not feasible for operation
- Non-profit shelter care providers must consider:
 - paying for the land
 - construction costs of the site
 - costs of running the site including staffing, recruiting volunteers etc.
- Sites that can support more clients are more feasible for non-profits

Hypothetical Site Design as Example
C-1 Zone; 20,000 square-foot lot

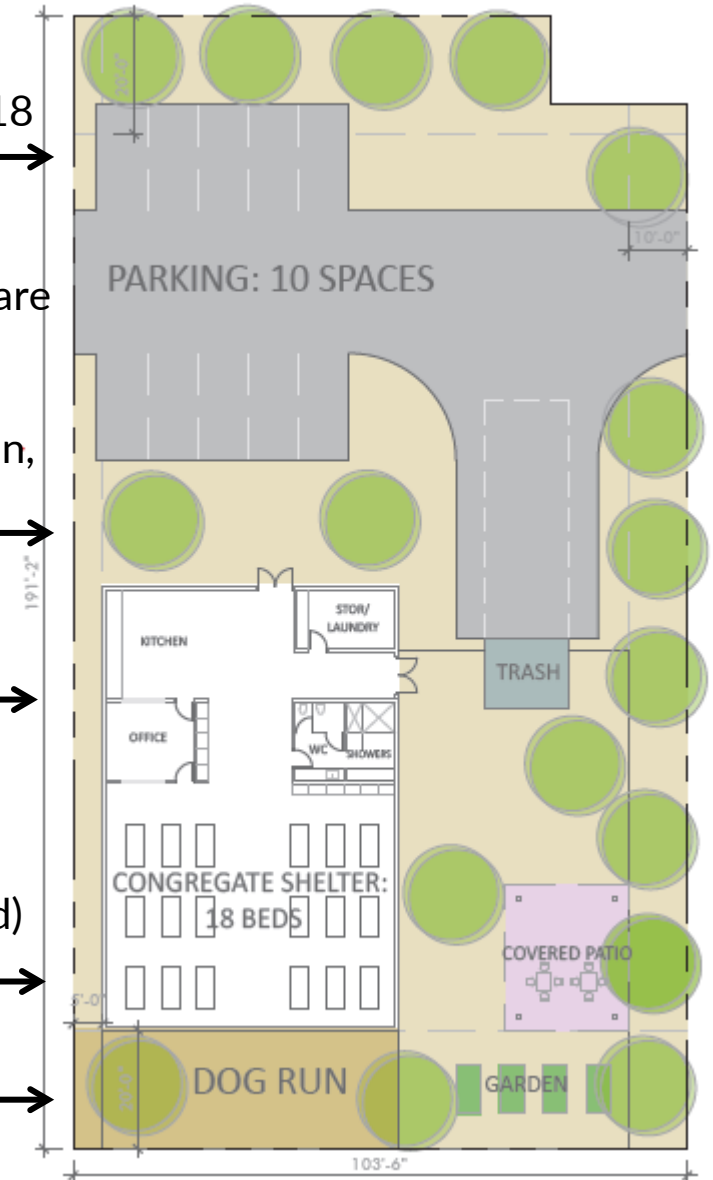
10 Parking Spaces for 18
bed shelter

Screening & natural space are
essential, but 60% lot
coverage limit means open
space to monitor & maintain,
less space for beds

Limited space for on site
social services

Can fit 18-20 beds in
congregate style (non-
congregate sites preferred)

20 ft setback



Example Project: Wildcat Inn

City-owned Housing First non-congregate shelter

Adaptive reuse of a vacant hotel

Successes:

- Served 780 adults and 577 children in 4 years
- Transitioned 839 clients; 71% positive exit rate

Would not have been possible without relief from zoning requirements:

- Lot coverage: 60% required, 98% existing
- Parking: 62 spaces required, 43 spaces existing



Comments and questions about site design/layout:

Need more time to digest.

Do tent structures count towards lot coverage if they aren't permanent structures with foundations?

Wildcat Inn sounds like a great success story!

As flexible as possible

Hopefully the emergency declaration will put the focus on removing barriers to providing more shelter

How much do you consider neighborhood concerns when granting a special exception?

Wildcat is awesome!

Need an easier review process for exceptions

Comments and questions about site design/layout:

Ridiculous parking requirements. Park-like surroundings is lovely, but should not be a priority.

Designated space including sleeping for 24 hour staff? Is this need accounted for?

Pre-existing motel conversions are ideal!

You expressed that wide open space makes it easier for supervision that answers our questions... without adequate staff this doesn't work. High risk for bad behavior

I would like to see whatever changes put in place be periodically reviewed because needs and communities change

Can vacant buildings, if they meet most requirements, be used?

Use of existing buildings are great

Parks are incompatible placement

Comments and questions about site design/layout:

Secure bike racks?
Shade & green
space a must.

When shelter by me is
staff there isn't much
problem however it
goes for long periods
without staff.

Don't ignore
neighborhood
feedback

Staffing is going to
be critical

please dont' require
parking, the folks
staying here don't need
cars and it will make the
project more expensive
to develop

Please rank these shelter care site design requirements in order of importance.

1. Maximum number of clients
2. Side/rear site setbacks from adjacent residential properties
3. Maximum lot coverage (amount of land for buildings and parking vs open)
4. Minimum amount of parking
5. Minimum Lot Sizes

Topic 3: Approval Processes

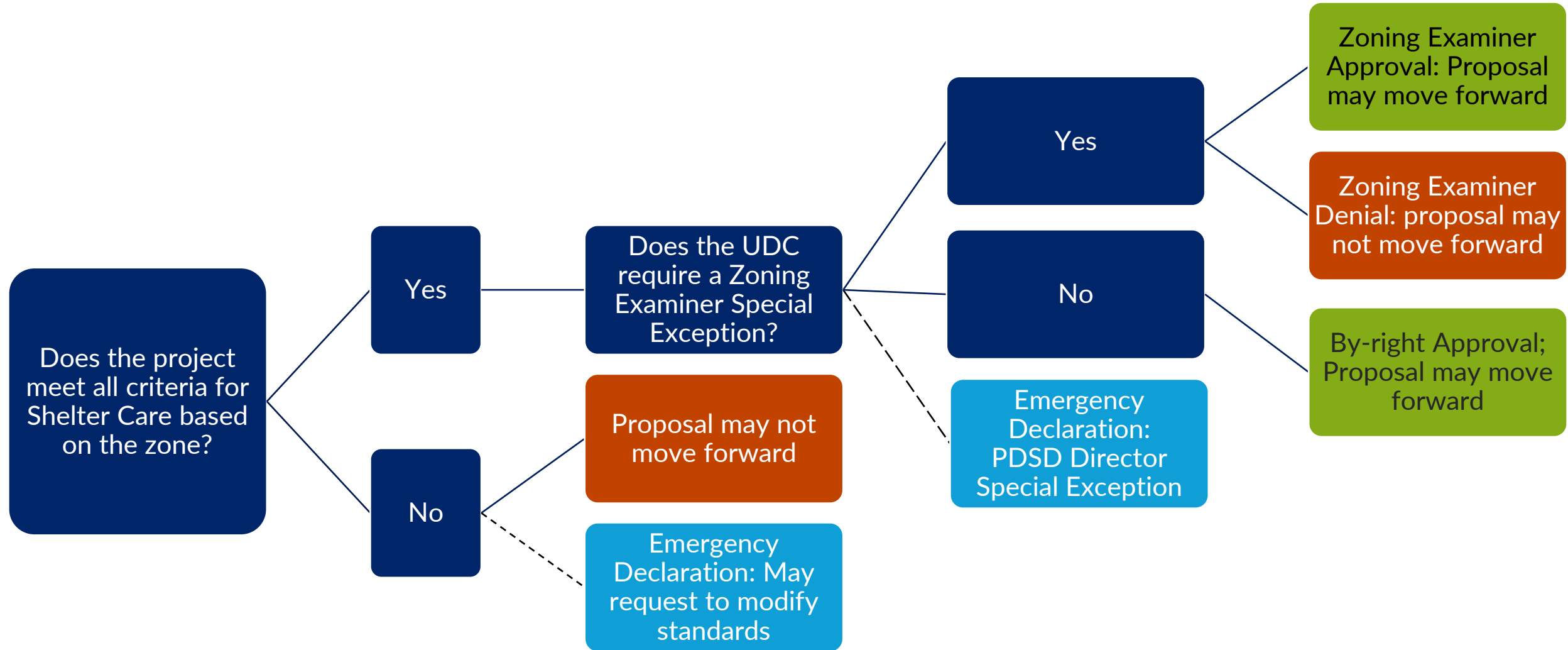
By-right

- Quicker process
- Allowed without special review and approval
- Public notice not required
- Administratively approved by staff

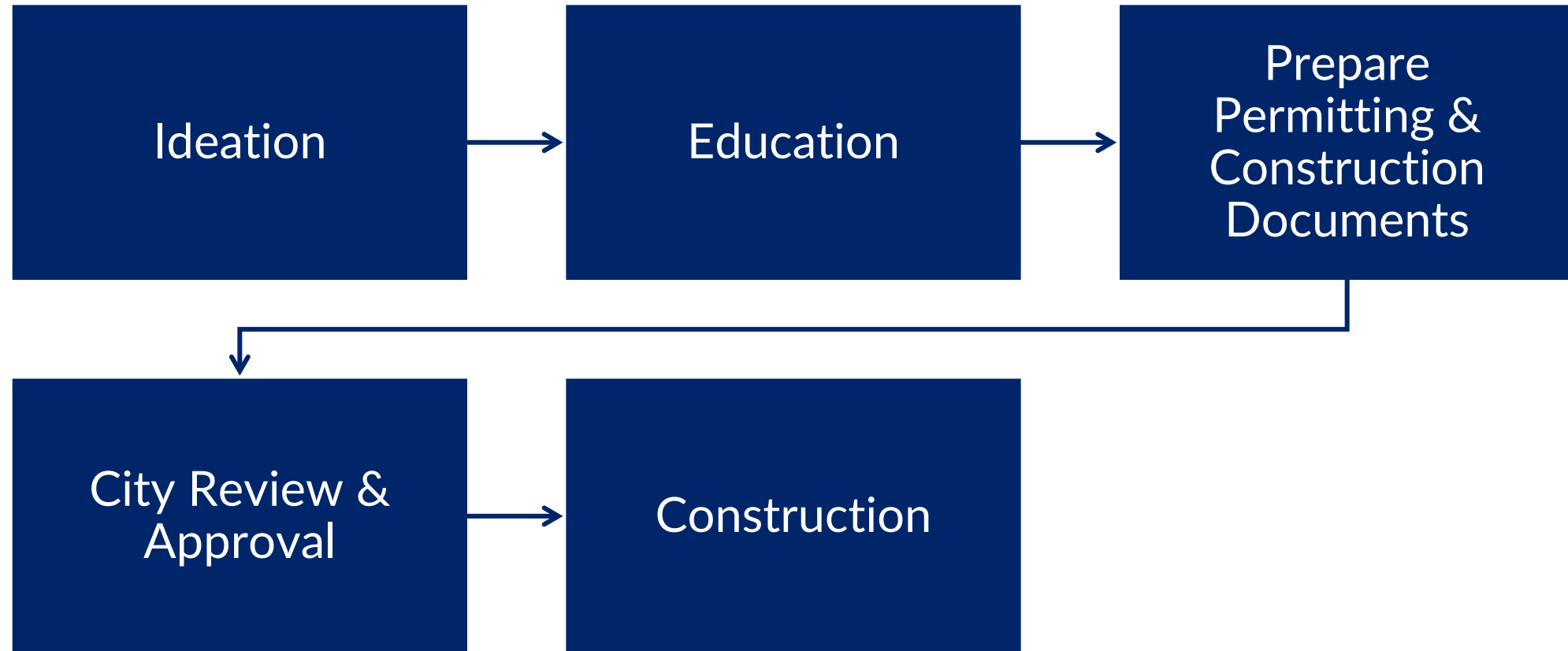
Discretionary

- Longer process
- Allowed after special review and approval
- Public notice required
- Approved by staff once authorized

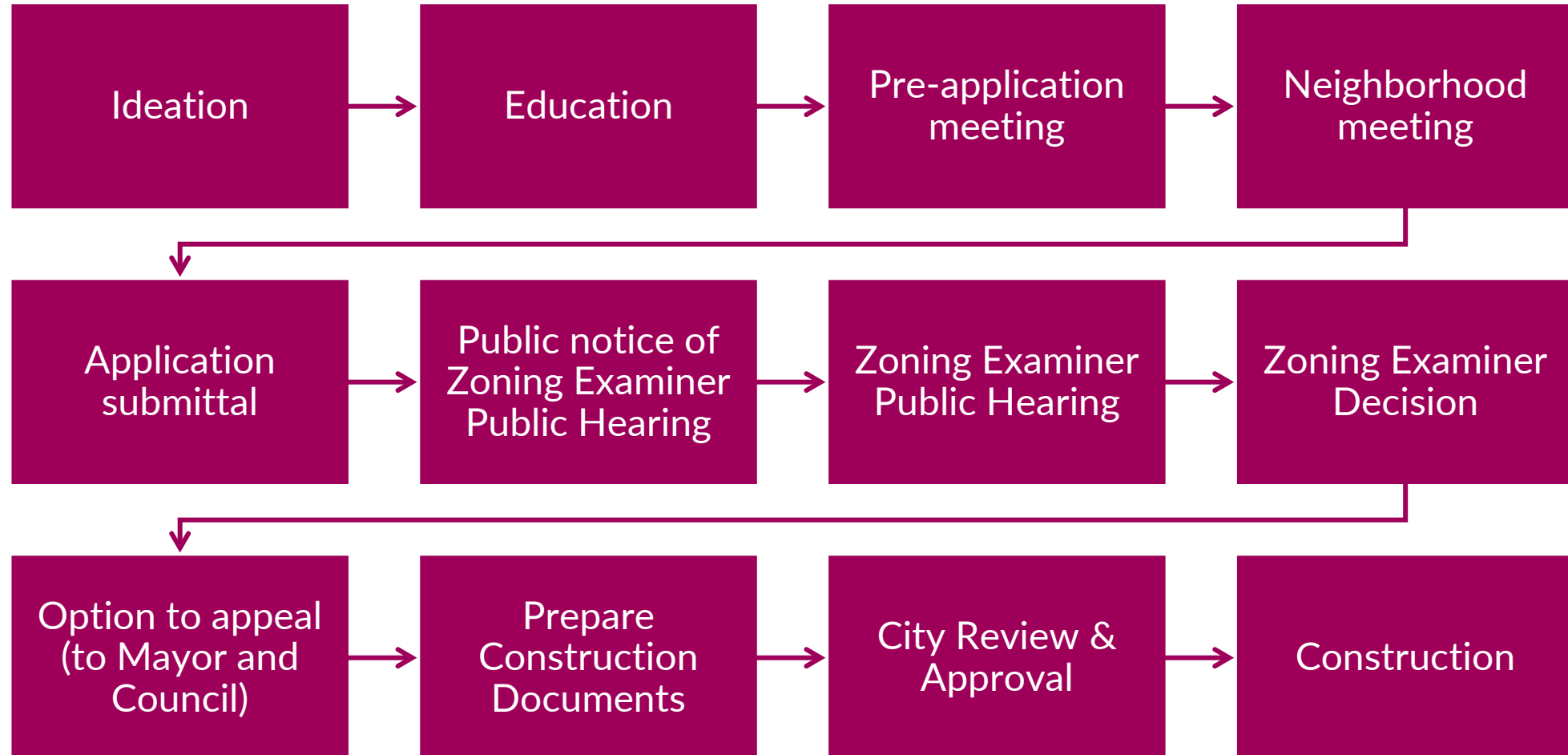
Process for Shelter Care Approval



By Right Process



Zoning Examiner Special Exception Procedure



Timelines for Housing Development (including design, permitting and construction)

Shelter Care

36 months approx.
(Discretionary Process: no guaranteed outcome; requires more money and energy investments up front)

Mostly built by non-profits or religious groups using grants and community donations

Single Family Housing

12 months approx.
(Guaranteed outcome if meets code)

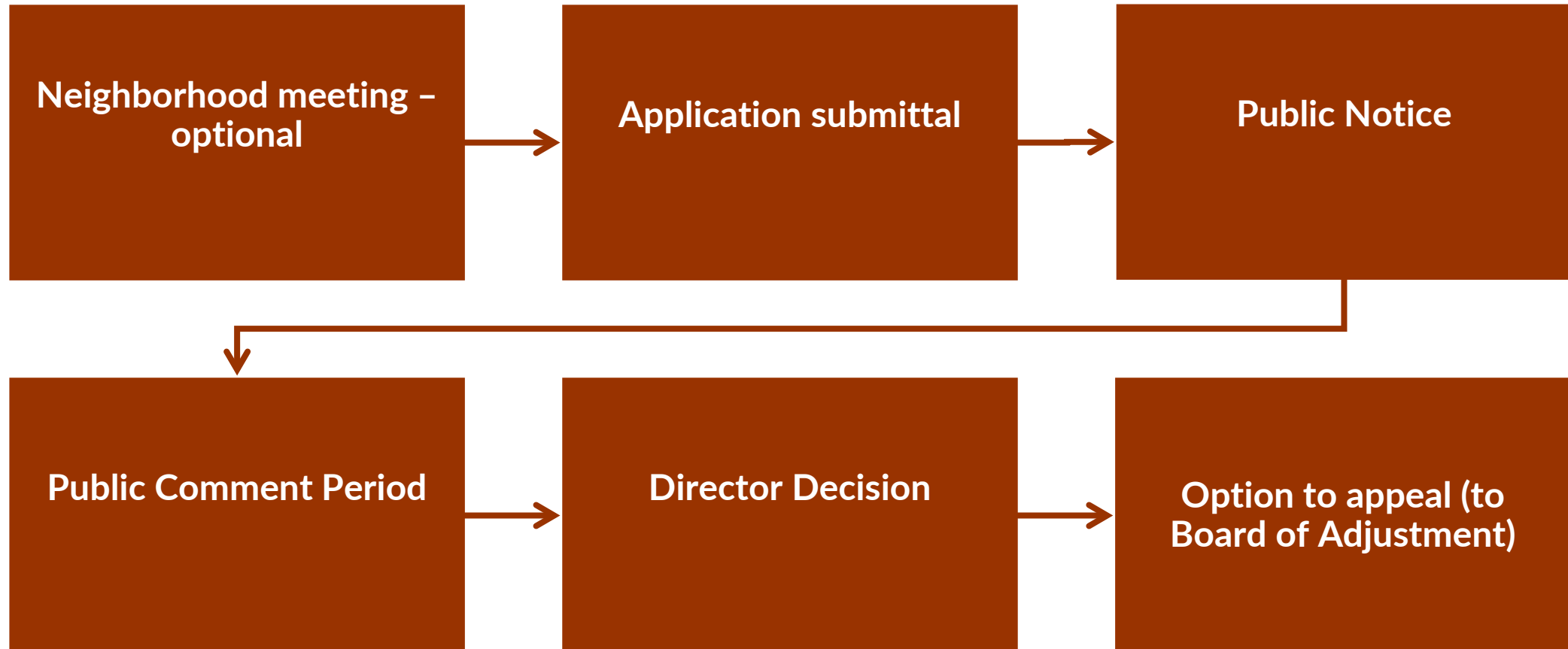
May be built by experienced developers or individuals using private funds

Multi-Family Housing

24 months approx.
(Guaranteed outcome if meets code)

Mostly built by experienced developers using private funds

Current Emergency Process: PDSD Director Special Exception Procedure



Questions and Comments about approval processes:

No public notification required. No neighborhood meeting required. No Zoning Examiner SE

No notifications needed. No neighborhood meeting requirements.

Public / neighborhood notice should always be required

I don't think it's fair to take away the neighborhood process.

No zoning examiner

How are these requests prioritized?

neighborhood meetings and/or input should not be optional

Notification is critical every time.

Questions and Comments about approval processes:

What you presented was current code I think. Not what you're recommending? Not sure.

Why should the neighborhood have a say about something on a private property?

Neighborhoods will not add anything useful to the discussion

Will approvals granted via PDSD Director Decision remain in perpetuity after the emergency declaration lapses, or would projects have to go back for formal rezoning?

When safety is an issue neighbors should be involved

Working toward getting these shelters up and running is a must. We need to prioritize housing those that need it.

our homes are our biggest investments, and so Neighborhood meetings should be part of the process.

Are these even feasible? With the reduction of government funding?

Questions and Comments about approval processes:

Meeting and input should not be optional

Public notice and a way to notify residents that are renters! What's the plan?

Stop letting one loud neighbor to stall projects that we needed years ago

Not sure why myself, as a neighbor to a shelter, should be asked about code? Let the shelters be built!

Zoning examiner should be required if want to use something for other than it is zoned. Need controls in place to maintain a working city

Shelters impact the value of our properties so we should have input and be informed.

Listen to poorly resourced neighborhoods

shelters do not affect property values

Questions and Comments about approval processes:

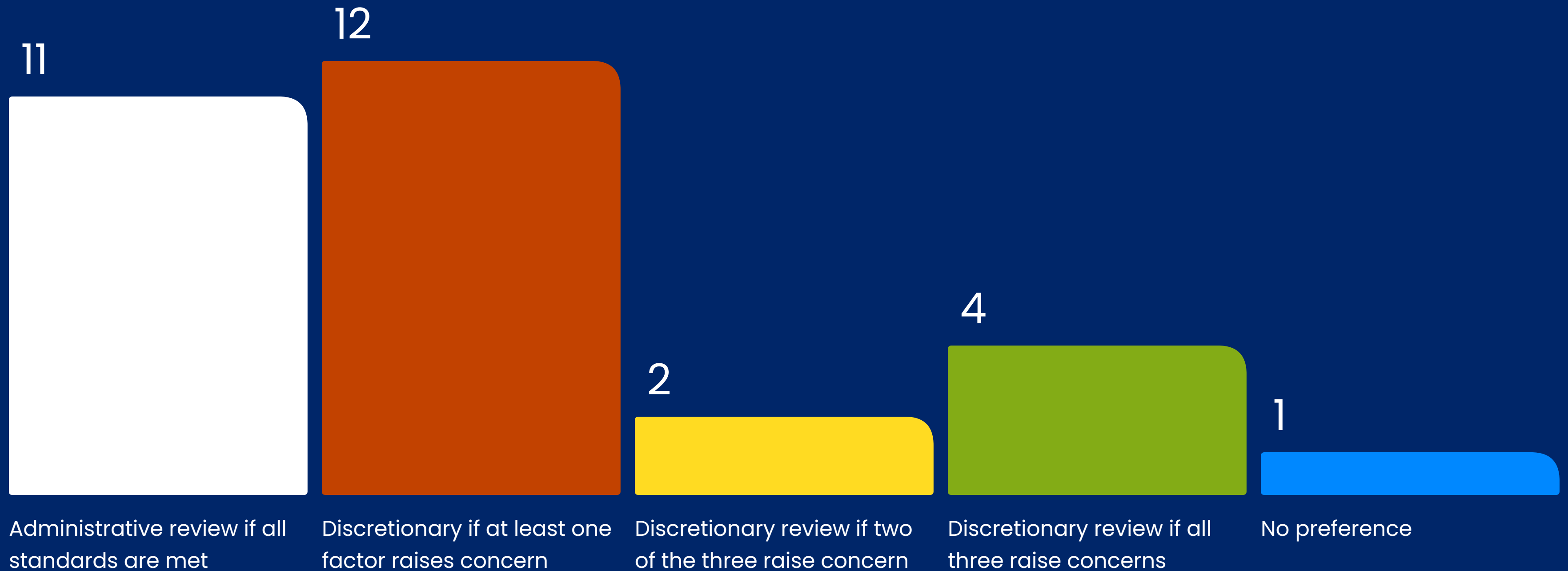
Shelters need to be responsibly managed and part of that is through negotiation with neighbors

Renters are just notoriously difficult to get a hold of half the time it's an out-of-state owner. It's just really difficult and we want them to feel vested in our neighborhood.

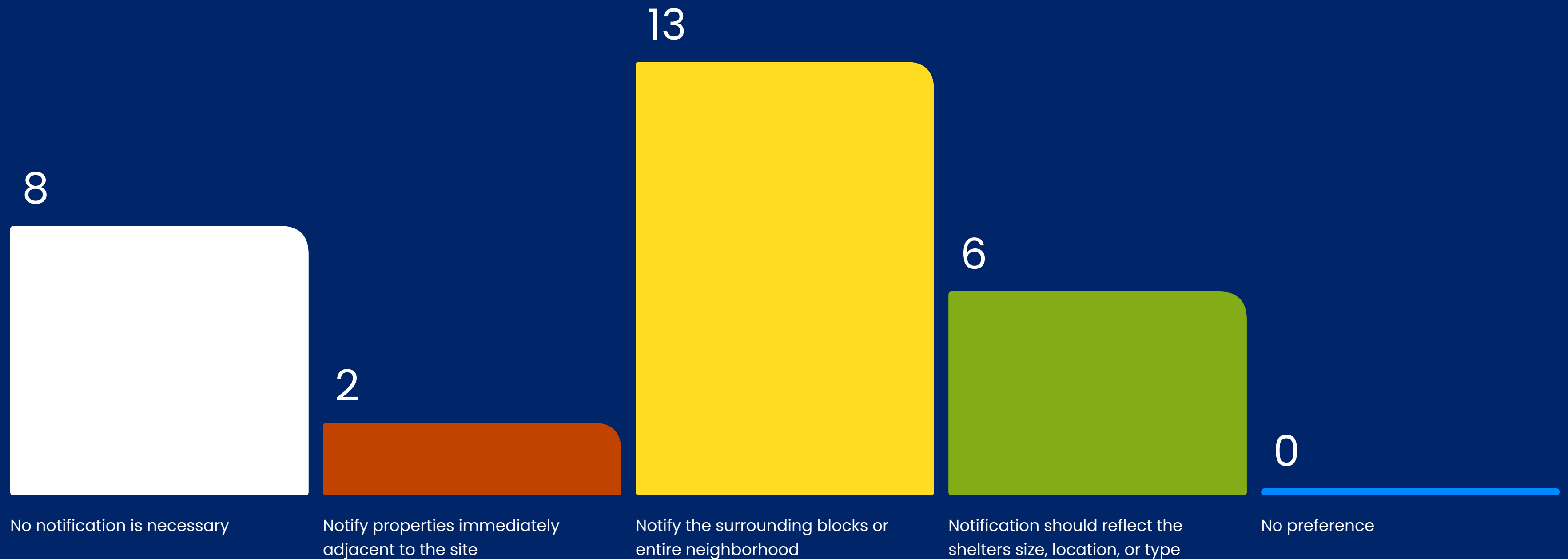
Could a model plan based if Star Village be made available to reduce the construction document process and make it more of a site plan level submittal with pre-approved structures?

I lived next to treatment facility, never had any issues... I don't need input for places to help ppl

Considering the three main factors of **Location, Design, and Capacity**, when should a shelter require discretionary review vs administrative review?



What type of community notification should be required when a shelter is proposed?



Next Steps

- Upcoming Outreach at Park Place Mall
 - RSVP optional: <https://tucsonpdsd.info/ShelterCare>
- Online survey open through October 15, 2026
 - <https://tucsonpdsd.info/ShelterZoningSurvey>
- Feedback will be organized and used to draft proposed changes to the Unified Development Code
- Followed by additional public outreach
- Contact us:
 - Amanda.Smith@tucsonaz.gov
 - Sarah.Meggison@tucsonaz.gov

Questions



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