



Building Better in Blacksburg

Community Conversation #1

October 29, 2018



Agenda

Background

Roles

- Town of Blacksburg
- Virginia Center for Housing Research (VCHR)
- Community Members & Stakeholder Team

Timeline & Process

Questions & Discussion

Background: Overarching Objective

Creation of a draft ordinance for Town Council's consideration.

This ordinance would establish a voluntary program to provide incentives for development and redevelopment projects that significantly advance affordable housing and green building in the Town of Blacksburg.

Background: Affordable Housing + Green Building



Affordability



Opportunity



Proximity



Materials



Renewables



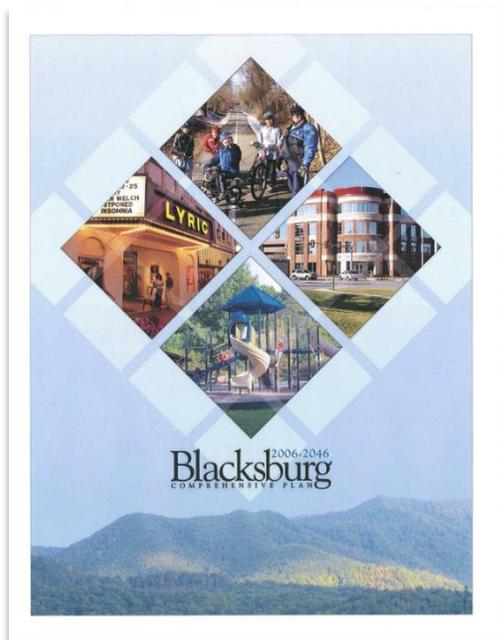
Efficiency

Can We Advance These Goals Together?

Background: Community Plans

Policy Alignment → Policy Implementation

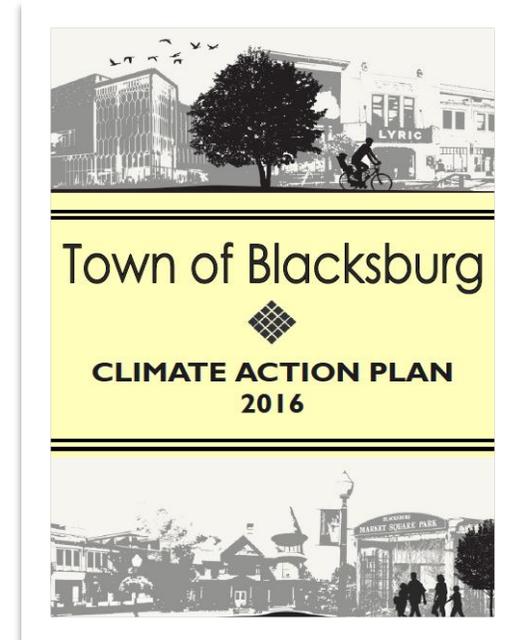
Comprehensive Plan



2012 → 2018
update

*Affordable Housing
Green Building
Energy Efficiency
Renewable Energy
Transportation Options*

Climate Action Plan



2016
implementation

Background: Climate Action Plan

CAP HOUSING CHAPTER



GOALS

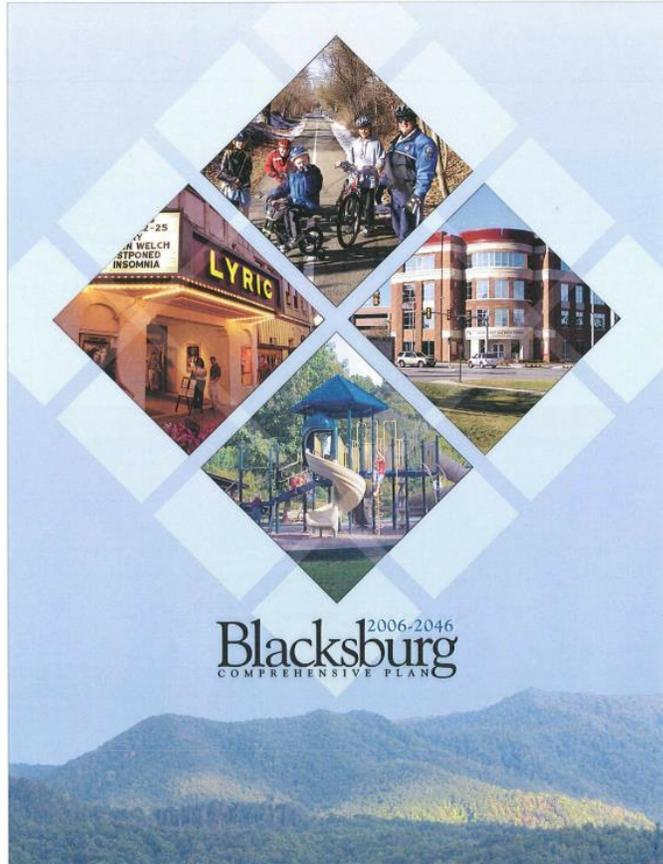
INCREASE RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONSERVATION BEHAVIORS
IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES
IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF RENTAL PROPERTIES
EXPAND ADOPTION OF RESIDENTIAL RENEWABLE ENERGY

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce average per-unit greenhouse gas emissions from single-family homes by 15% by 2020, and by 66% by 2050.
- Reduce average per-unit greenhouse gas emissions from existing multi-family housing units by 15% by 2020, and by 66% by 2050.
- Increase the installation of solar PV, solar water heating systems , and/or geothermal on residential buildings tenfold by 2020, and seventy-five fold by 2050.

Background: Comprehensive Plan

COMP PLAN HOUSING CHAPTER



2018 update

Objectives and Policies relating to housing **AFFORDABILITY:**

27

Example:

H.2.9. Encourage affordable and appropriate housing as a development option for infill sites, particularly in commercial areas and near employment concentrations.

Objectives and Policies relating to **ENERGY** or **GREEN BUILDING:**

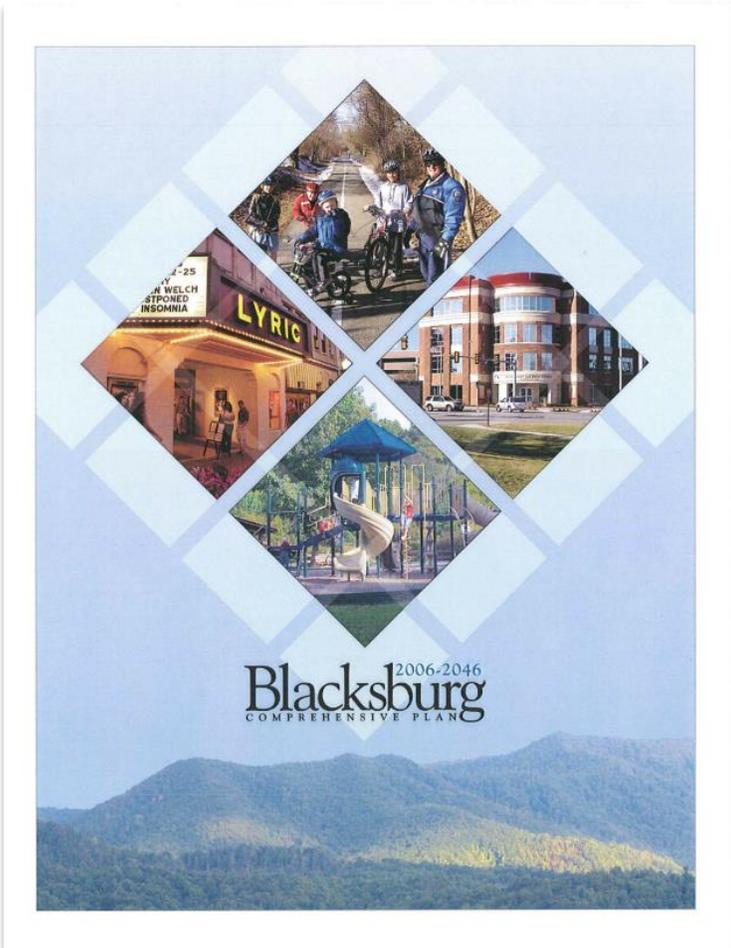
12

Example:

H.8.6. Provide economically persuasive incentives for homebuilders and developers to maximize future renewable solar energy potential when making site and home design decisions (i.e. building orientation, roof slope, framing, and geometry, tree selection and siting, conduit placement).

Background: Comprehensive Plan

COMP PLAN SUSTAINABILITY CHAPTER



2018 update

Objectives and Policies relating to housing **AFFORDABILITY:**

4

Example:

S.11. Expand efforts to offer programs that improve affordability of housing, energy, and transportation for underserved and lower-income residents.

Objectives and Policies relating to **ENERGY** or **GREEN BUILDING:**

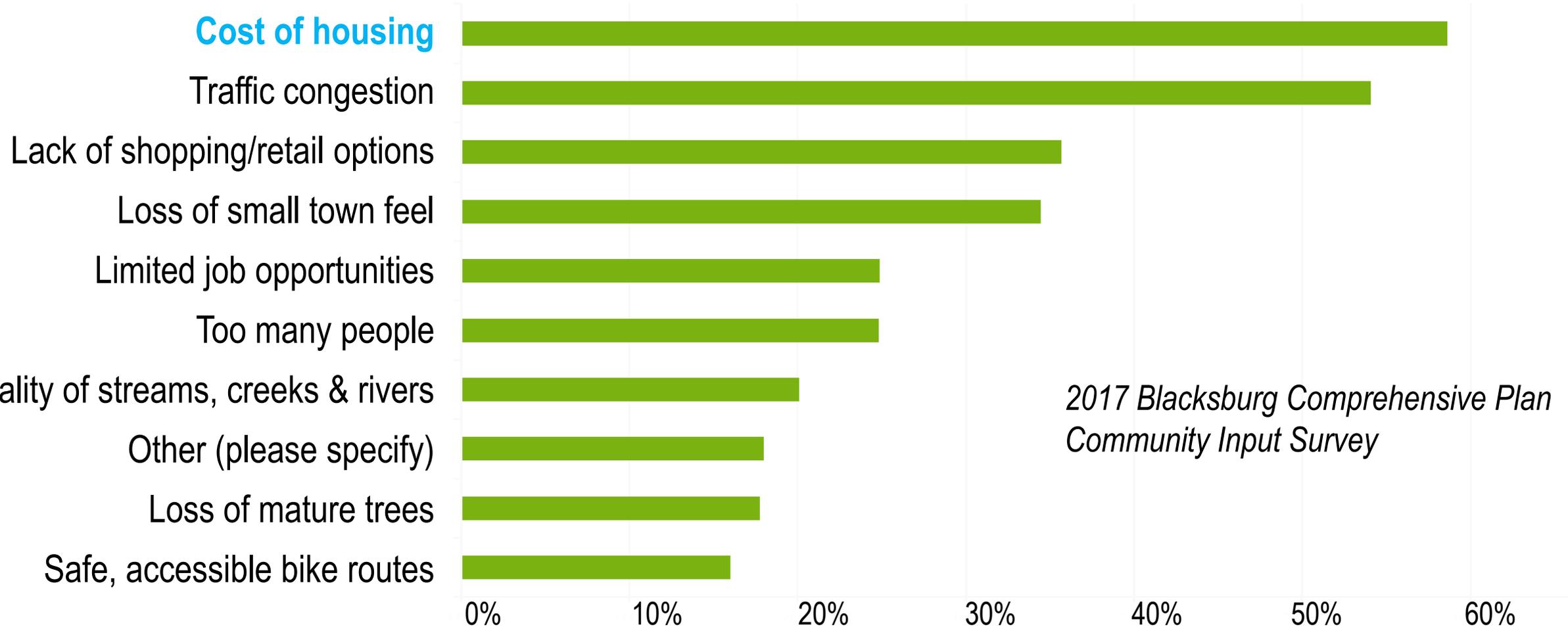
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Example:

S.25. As part of the development review process, consider how well proposed applications support the Town's community commitment to sustainability.

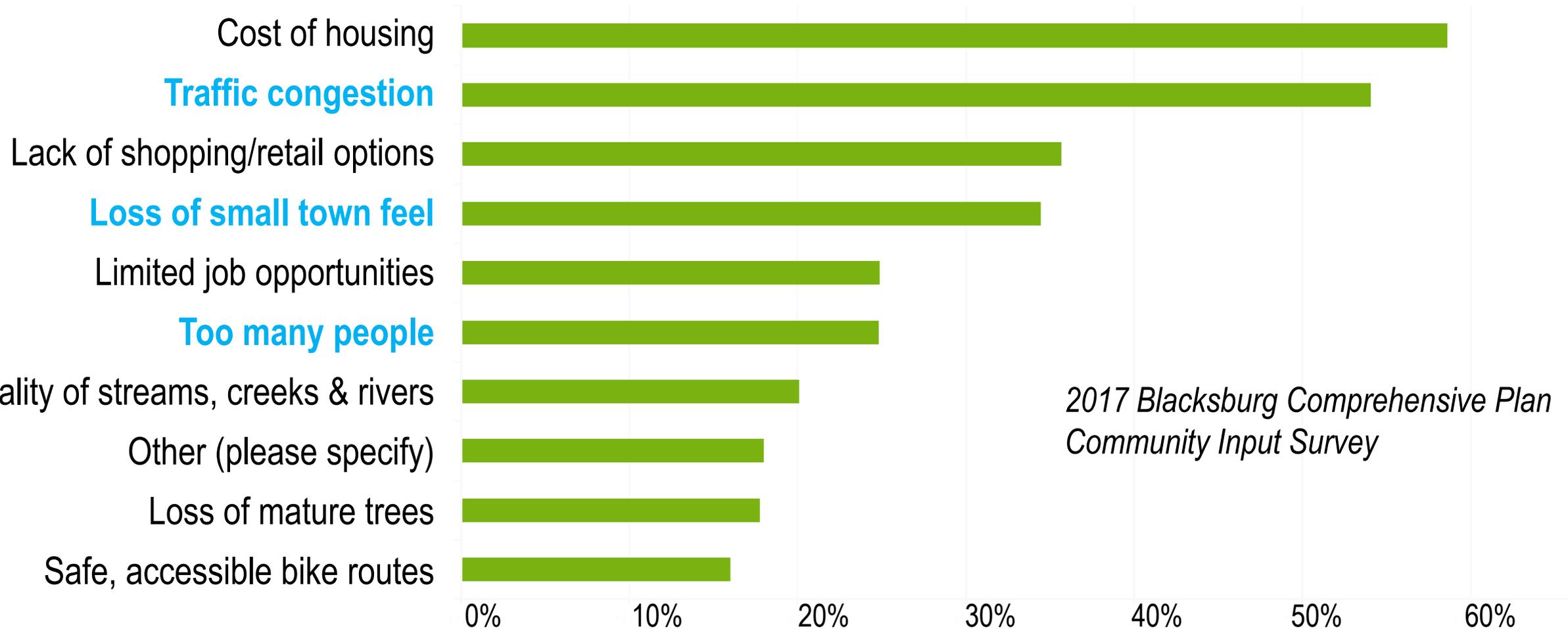
Background: Citizen Priorities

What do you think are the **biggest challenges** the community will face as Blacksburg continues to grow and change?

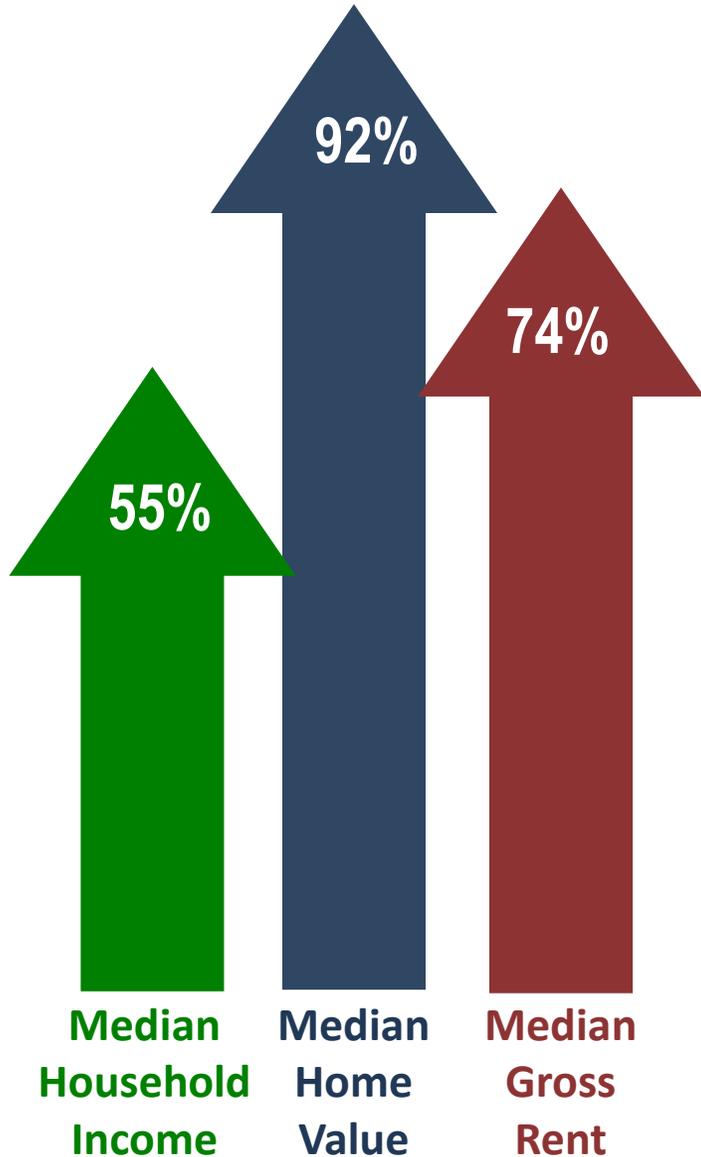


Background: Citizen Priorities

What do you think are the **biggest challenges** the community will face as Blacksburg continues to grow and change?



Background: Growing Affordability Challenges



Background: Terminology

“Low Income”

“Workforce Housing”

“Affordable”

“Moderate Income”

Background: Income Levels & Definitions

In the Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA:

- Very-low income = 50% of the area median income
- Low income = 80% of the area median income
- No official definition of moderate, but generally 80-120%

	50%	80%	100%	120%
2 people	\$27,950	\$44,700	\$55,900	\$67,080
4 people	\$34,900	\$55,850	\$69,800	\$83,760

Background: Housing Affordability

Household pays no more than **30%** of their income for **housing** (rent or mortgage) and basic **utilities**.



What Can People in Blacksburg Afford Today?



4 Person Household				
% of Area Median Income	50%	80%	100%	120%
Max Purchase Price	\$85,271	\$168,103	\$243,555	\$303,768

4.75% interest, 30 year, 10% down (50%&80%), 20% down (100%&120%), \$250/mo. utilities, assumes property taxes & insurance

Background: Housing Trends in Blacksburg

Highlights from Jeremy Hart, Nest Realty, May 15th Presentation

- Median price \$265,000
- Average sales price \$277,102
- *Common to have multiple offers over asking price*

A home in Blacksburg that costs \$250,000 will cost:

\$215,000 - \$220,000 in Christiansburg

\$185,000 - \$190,000 in Radford

Impediments to Low & Moderate Income Housing

- Land cost
- Land availability
- Competition with student housing
- Lack of density incentives
- Lack of creative design
- Lack of subsidized funding
- Lack of community support
- Concerns about student housing



Background: Affordability Challenges



BLACKSBURG HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

\$49,000

Median income of households aged 25-44

\$88,000

Median income of households aged 45-64

Background: Affordability Challenges



Density/acre



4 units



35 units

Required
Home Value/Rent

\$685,000

\$1,450/month

Required
Household Income

\$185,000

\$58,000

Background: Affordability Challenges



Density/acre



4 units



35 units

Required
Home Value/Rent

\$685,000

\$1,450/month

Required
Household Income

\$185,000

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Background: Affordability Challenges



Density/acre



4 units



35 units

Required
Home Value/Rent

\$685,000

\$1,450/month

Required
Household Income

\$185,000

\$58,000

Background: Growth Projections

OVER THE NEXT 8-10 YEARS
BLACKSBURG IS EXPECTED TO ADD:



4,700
Students



4,000
Non-Students

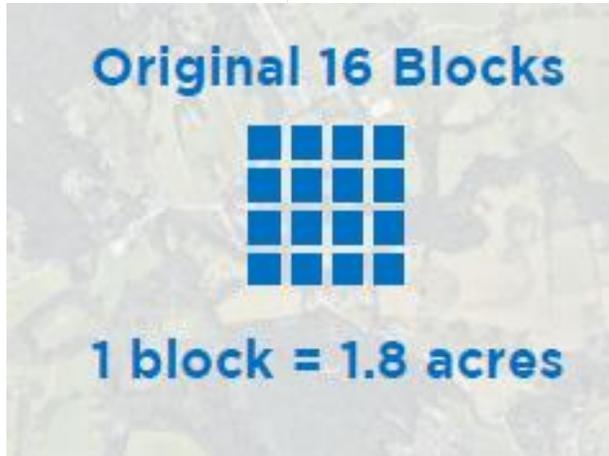


725
VT Faculty/Staff

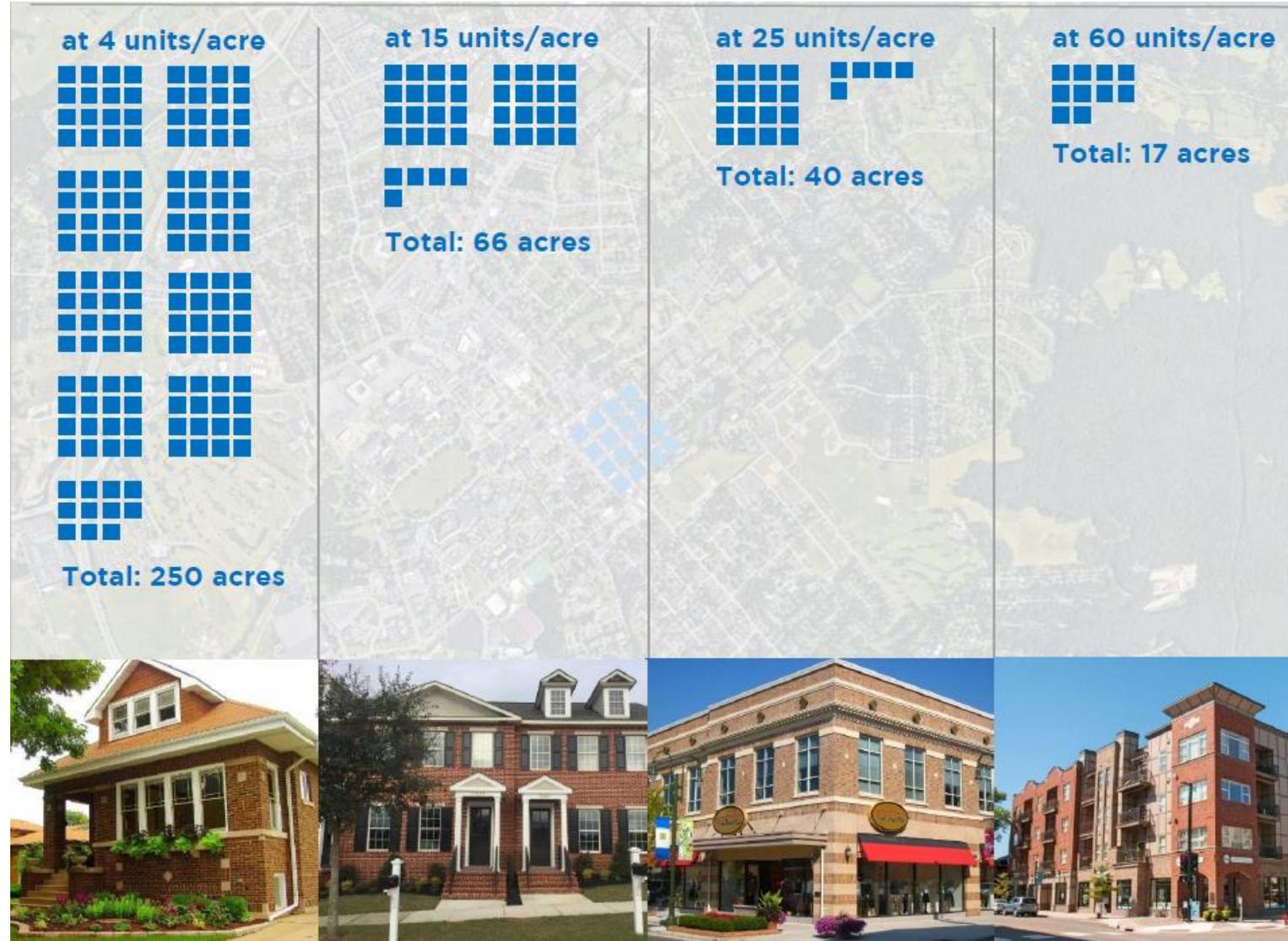


3,400
Non-VT Jobs

Background: Density and Development Patterns



**1000 new units
@
different densities**



Background: College Town Housing Market

Blacksburg is an employment & amenities hub for the NRV



MOOG



Montgomery County
Public Schools

Blacksburg TOWN OF
VIRGINIA



Background: Jobs/Housing Imbalance = Traffic, Sprawl

BLACKSBURG HOSTS
21,000
EMPLOYEES EACH DAY

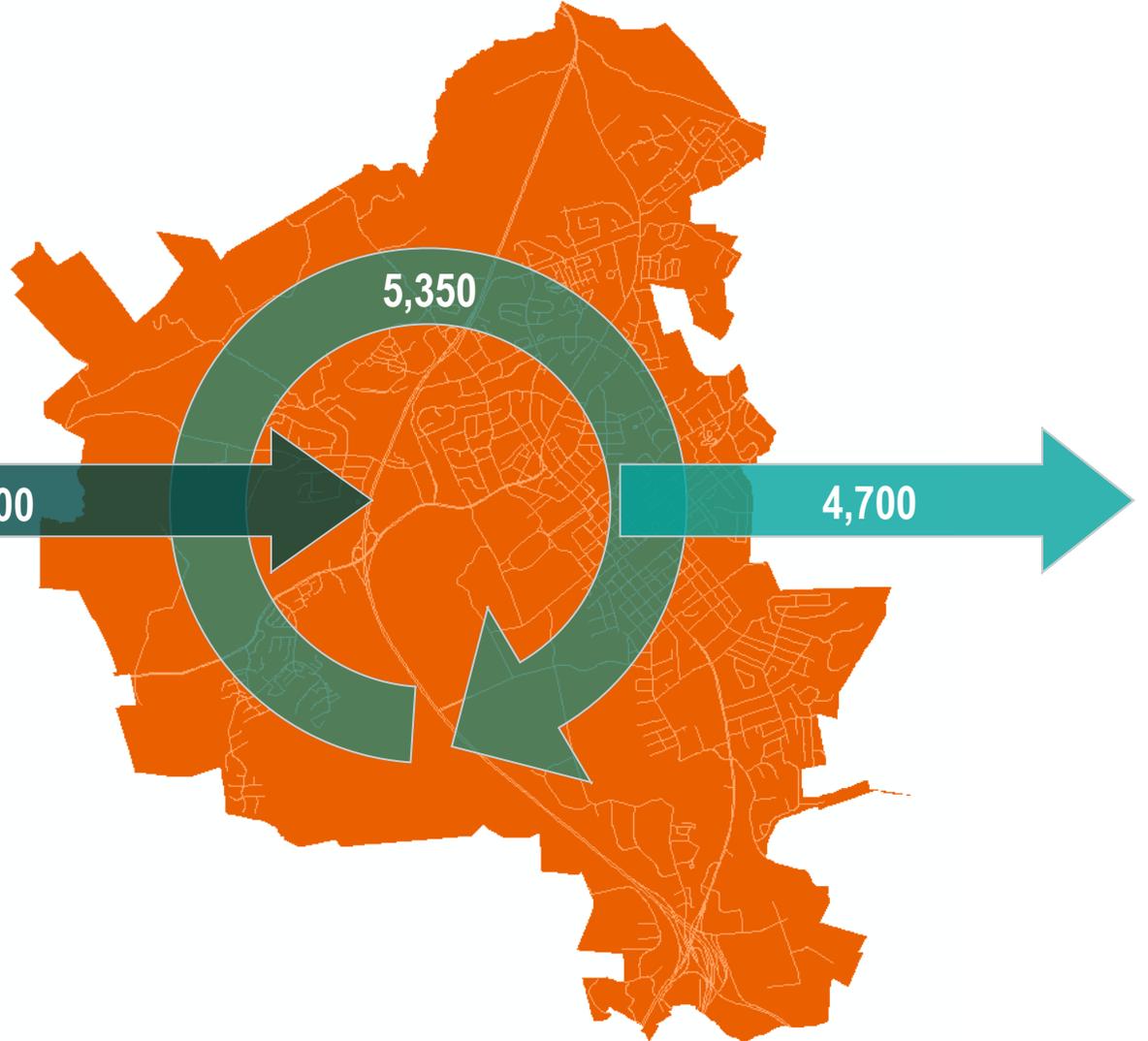
Commuting into Town

3 out of **5**

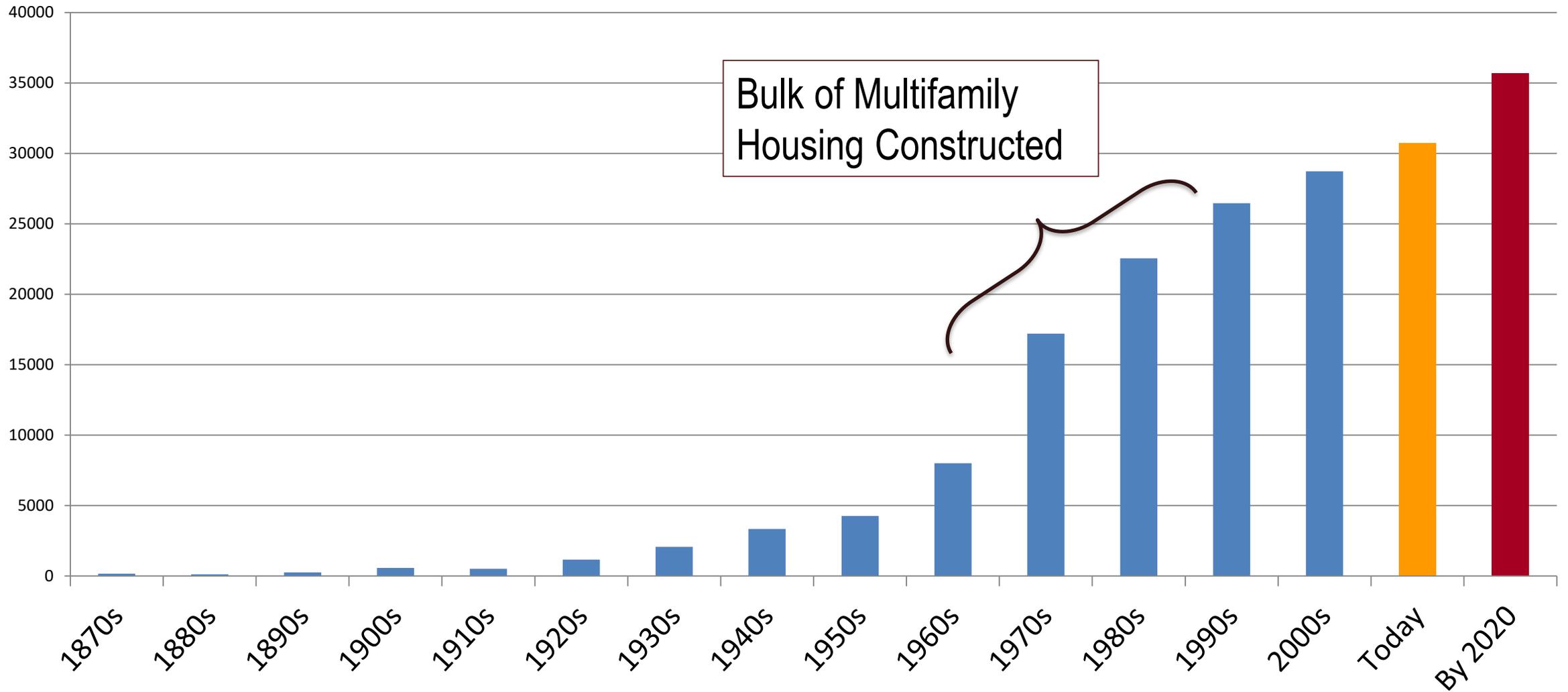
15,900

5,350

4,700



Background: VT Enrollment Growth



Virginia Tech Student Enrollment: Average by Decade

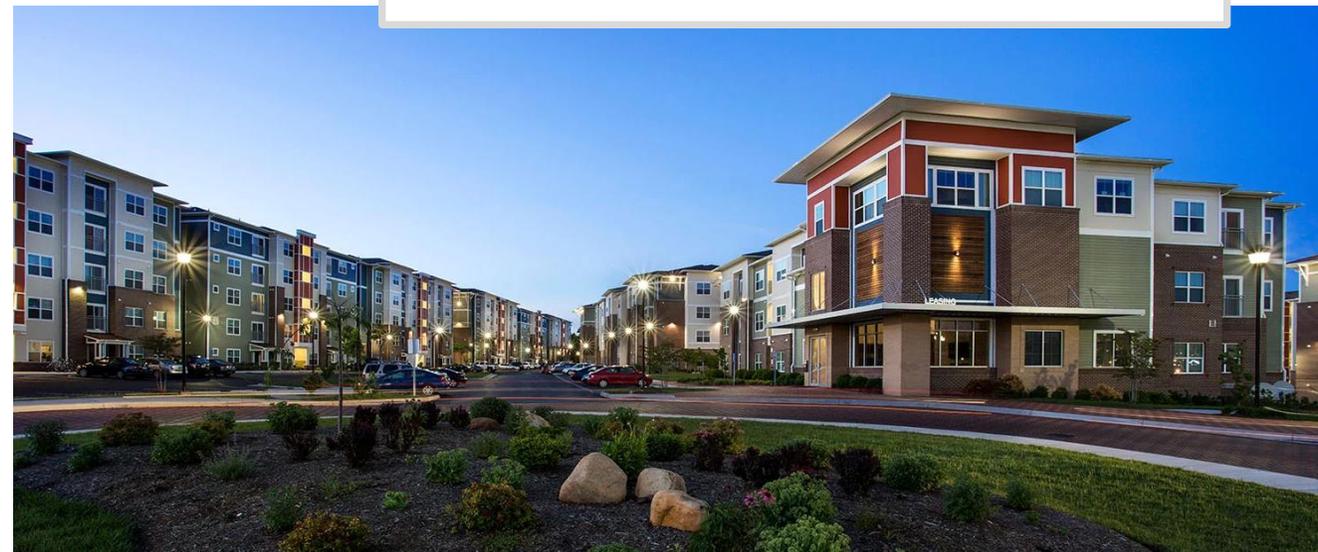
Background: Development & Redevelopment



Background: Development & Redevelopment



*Draper's Meadow
358 bedrooms*



*The Edge
909 bedrooms*

Background: Development & Redevelopment



Original Sturbridge Square = 342 bedrooms
Approved New Sturbridge = 1052 bedrooms

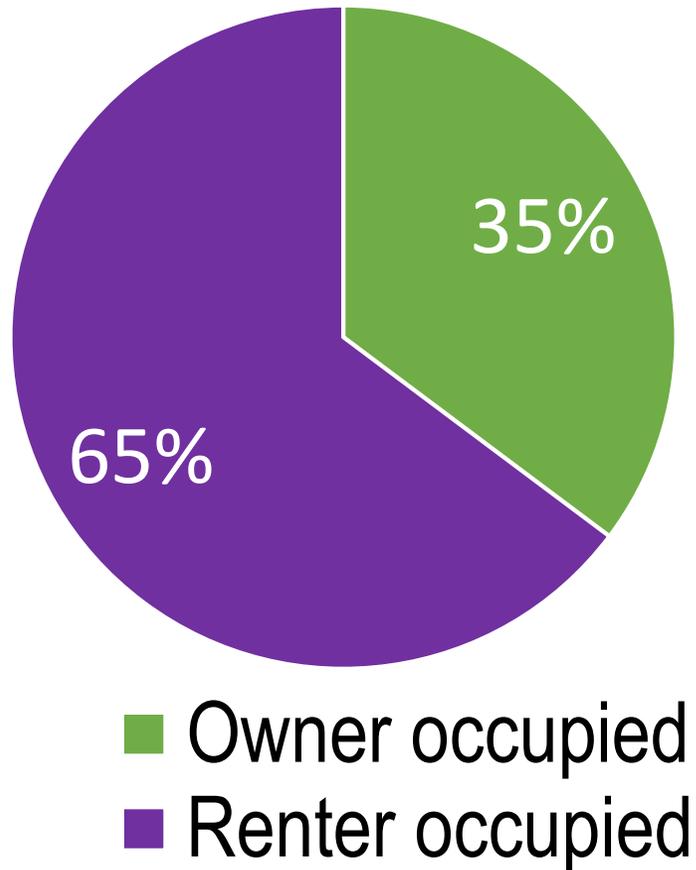


Original Terrace View = 533 bedrooms
Approved New Terrace View = 1530 bedrooms

Background: College Town Housing Market

High Proportion of Renter Occupancy

Source: 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year Estimates



Student Renters

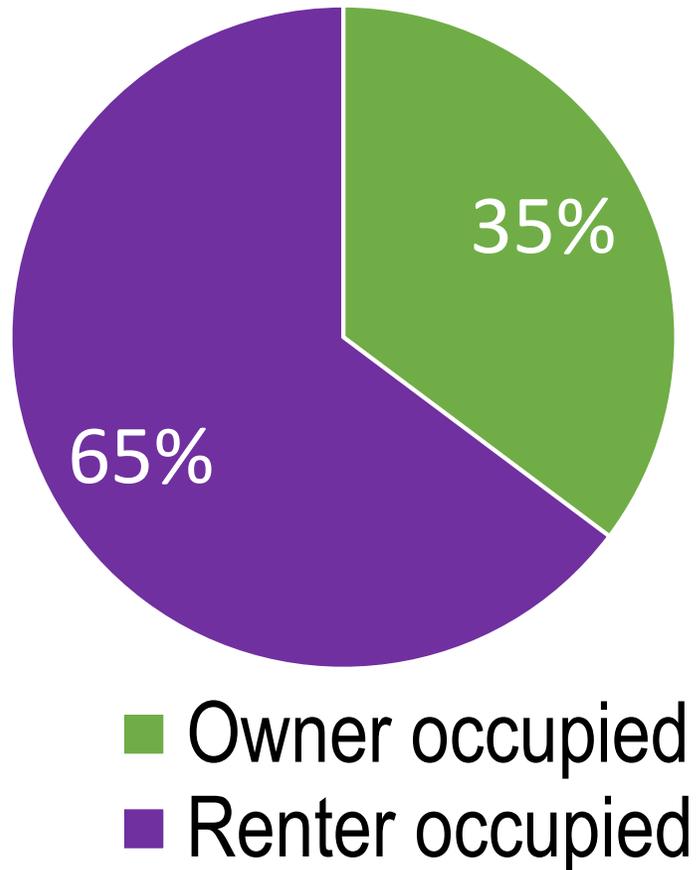


first-time renters
high turnover
short-term residents
energy incentives not aligned

Background: College Town Housing Market

High Proportion of Renter Occupancy

Source: 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year Estimates



Lifestyle Conflicts



Background: Clear Guidelines Needed

Developers & Decision-Makers



What do we mean when we say “green building” or “sustainable development”?

Roles & Responsibilities

Town of Blacksburg

Convene and guide process

Lead community engagement efforts

Develop draft ordinance language

VCHR

Background research

Economic analysis

Support community engagement

Support ordinance development

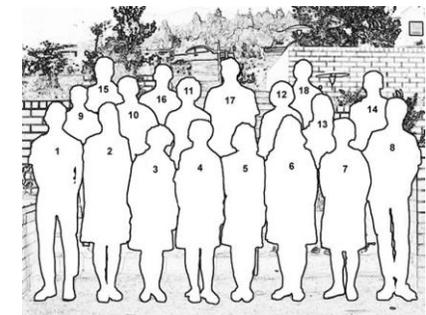
Community

Stakeholder Team

Developer Focus Groups

Community feedback:

- Policy Goals
- Standards & Incentives
- Trade-offs



Virginia Center for Housing Research

VCHR is the official housing research center for the Commonwealth and is a university research center in Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies.

VCHR provides services to localities, the state, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit businesses.



Andrew McCoy & Mel Jones

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY
BUILDING INNOVATION
RESIDENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY
DATA DEVELOPMENT

VCHR Workplan

- Conduct **background research**
- Propose **green-building standards** and **affordable housing options** to be refined in collaboration with the Town
- Conduct **economic analysis** to determine an “exchange rate”: density for green-building and/or affordable housing
- Support **community conversations** to determine the scope and implementation of the program

VCHR Workplan

Economic Analysis

- Understand **costs** associated with **green building**
- Understand **costs** of providing **below-market-rate units**
- **Explore density-bonus scenarios that consider**
 - Varied levels of density and corresponding levels of green building and/or affordability
 - Development and building costs
 - Market conditions
 - Land-use regulations and plans
 - Town goals

Proposed Timeline & Process: April 2018 – March 2020



<https://tinyurl.com/buildingbetterblacksburg>

COMMUNITY RESIDENTS BUSINESS DEPARTMENTS TOWN COUNCIL

- Housing and Neighborhood Services
 - Affordable Housing
 - Aging in Place
 - Building Better in Blacksburg (BBB)**
 - CAPER
 - Consolidated Plan
 - Fair Housing
 - Housing and Community Development Advisory Board
 - Housing Resiliency Grants
 - New River Valley HOME Consortium
 - Nuisance Code Enforcement
 - Town Gown
 - Plans and Studies
 - Customer Feedback
 - Contact Us

Departments » Departments A-K » Housing and Neighborhood Services »

Building Better In Blacksburg (BBB)

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Incentives for increasing affordability and sustainable building practices

Housing affordability is increasingly a concern for renters and homeowners alike as Blacksburg and the university continue to grow. Blacksburg strives to be an affordable place to live for all of its residents: students, service and retail workers, young professionals, families, and retirees.



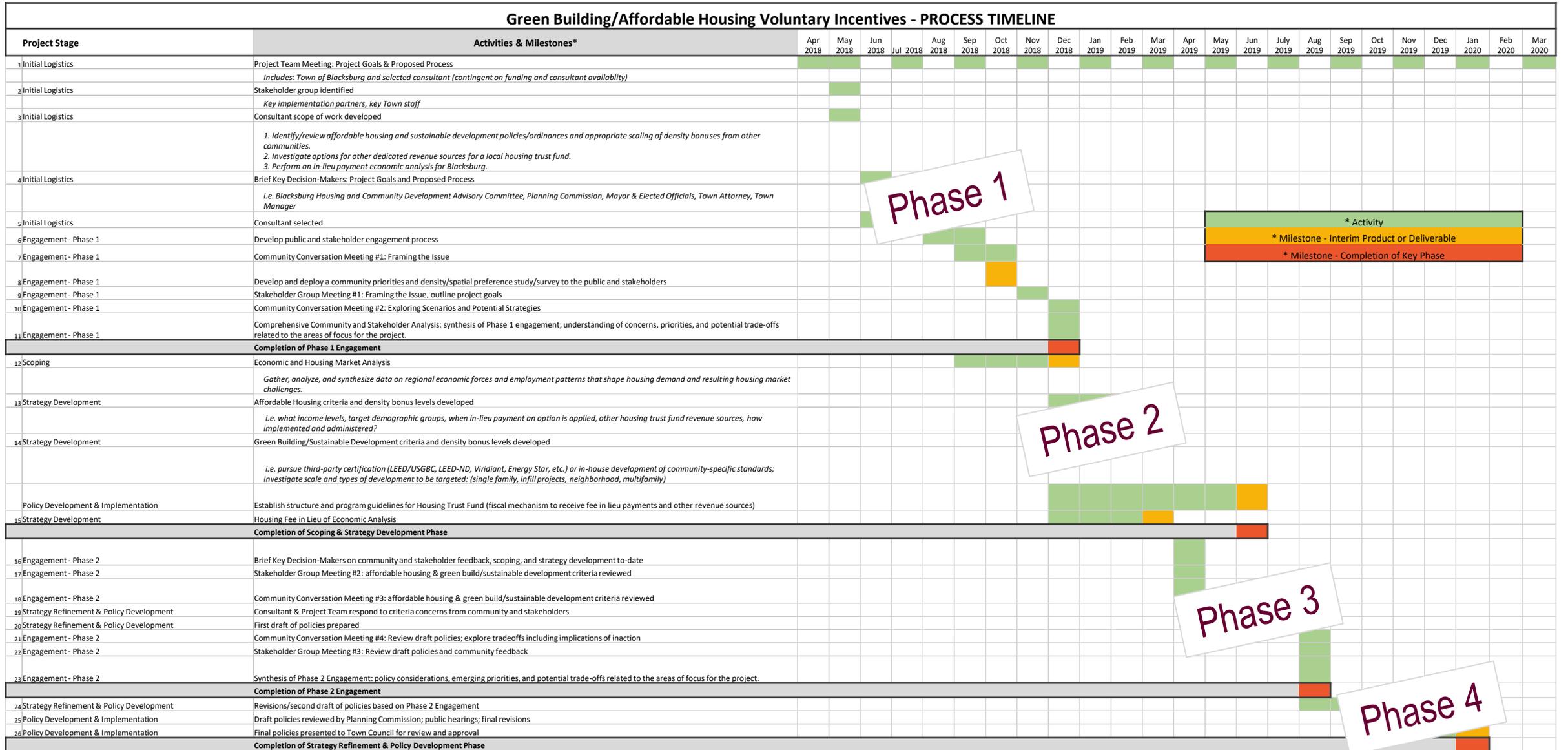
At the same time, Blacksburg has set ambitious goals to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions, and energy associated with the residential sector is the single largest contributor to the community's emissions profile. To advance the parallel goals of improving housing affordability while making Blacksburg's housing stock greener and more energy-efficient, the town is exploring options to offer a set of economically persuasive and voluntary development incentives.

The public is invited to attend the first of three community conversations on the topic, to learn about the key considerations and challenges associated with the creation of greener and more affordable housing options while also providing a setting for citizens to share their concerns and priorities.

Community Meeting #1 Monday, Oct. 29, 6:30 p.m., Blacksburg Community Center Program Room	Framing the Issue; Identifying and Understanding Citizen Priorities
Community Meeting #2: TBA (est. Feb. 2019)	Exploring Scenarios and Potential Strategies
Community Meeting #3: TBA (est. July 2019)	Review Draft Policies; Explore Tradeoffs and Implications of Inaction

detailed project timeline
background research & data
public meeting schedule
community feedback
survey links
draft policy language

Proposed Timeline & Process: April 2018 – March 2020



Proposed Timeline & Process: Phase 1

Initial Logistics and Engagement: **Apr – Dec 2018**

Develop Project Goals & Proposed Process

Develop Public and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Begin Background Research and Data-Gathering

Convene Stakeholder Group Meeting #1: Framing the Issue; project goals, timeline and process

Host Community Conversation Meeting #1: Framing the Issue; project goals, timeline and process

Proposed Timeline & Process: Phase 2

Scoping & Strategy Development: **Sept 2018 – June 2019**

Perform Economic and Housing Market Analysis

Develop Affordable Housing criteria and incentive options

Develop Green Building/Sustainable Development criteria and incentive options

Host Community Conversation Meeting #2: Exploring Scenarios and Potential Strategies

Proposed Timeline & Process: Phase 3

Intensive Engagement & Policy Development: **Apr – Aug 2019**

Brief Key Decision-Makers: community and stakeholder feedback, scoping, and strategy development to-date

Stakeholder Group Meeting #2: affordable housing & green build/sustainable development criteria reviewed

Host Community Meeting #3: affordable housing & green build/sustainable development criteria reviewed

Consultant & Project Team respond to criteria concerns from community and stakeholders

Prepare First draft of policies

Host Community Conversation Meeting #4: review draft policies; explore tradeoffs/implications of inaction

Convene Stakeholder Group Meeting #3: review draft policies and community feedback

Proposed Timeline & Process: Phase 4

Policy Refinement & Revisions: **Aug 2019 – Feb 2020**

Revisions/second draft of policies based on Phase 3 Engagement

Draft policies reviewed by Planning Commission; public hearings; final revisions

Final policies presented to Town Council for review and approval

Overarching Objective

Creation of a draft ordinance for Town Council's consideration.

This ordinance would establish a voluntary program to provide incentives for development and redevelopment projects that significantly advance affordable housing and green building in the Town of Blacksburg.

Contact Info



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Questions & Discussion?

