

Public Meeting #2



LIVE

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VISIT

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY
SHORT-TERM RENTAL PROGRAM
PROJECT

May 17th, 2023





Introductions

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SHORT-TERM RENTAL PROGRAM
PROJECT

The Project Team

- Los Alamos County Community Development Department (CDD):
 - Desirae Lujan, Project Manager, Associate Planner
 - Paul Andrus, Director, CDD
 - Sobia Sayeda, Planning Manager
 - Jane Mathews, Senior Planner
 - Anita Barela, Associate Planner
- Wilson & Company
 - Noah Berke, AICP, Project Manager
 - Ben Bachwitz, AICP

Agenda:

- Survey Results
 - Overall perceptions
 - Responses related to potential program elements
- Proposed Program Components
- Next Steps

Project Overview & Purpose

- Los Alamos County Code is currently “silent” on short-term rentals (STRs)
- The County recognizes benefits and drawbacks of STRs
- Establish mechanism for STRs to legally operate in LAC
 - Business registration, etc.
 - Address life-safety concerns
 - Land use compatibility
- An *STR program* is a comprehensive approach – it would create program provisions *and* provide the resources & processes to effectively manage STRs and implement the program

Project Overview & Purpose

- Draft definition:

Short Term Rental: “Dwelling unit, or part thereof, or accessory structure where lodging is provided for no more than 30 days for compensation”



Public Input Survey Results

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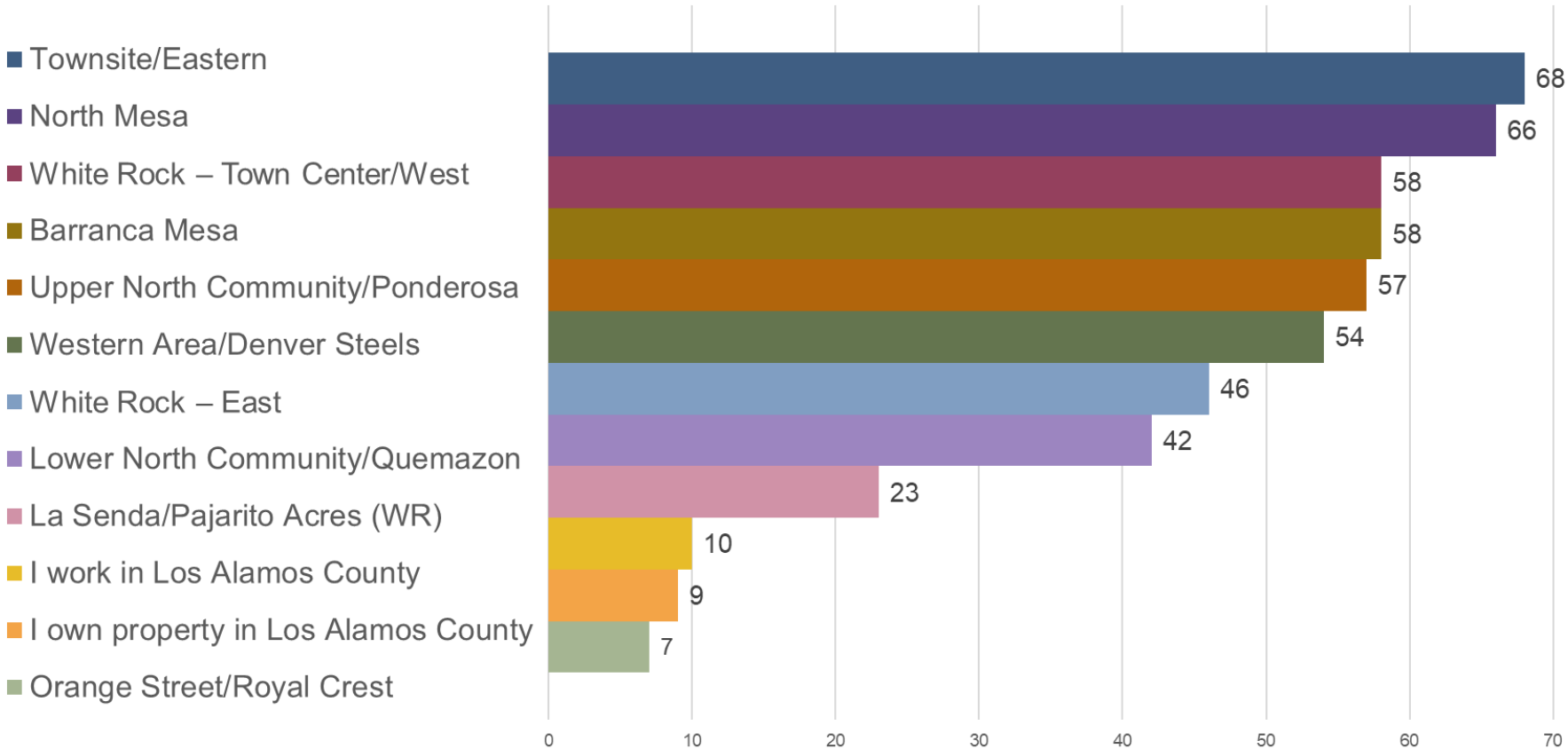
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Public Input Survey results

- Available February 22nd through March 26th
- Available online and in paper
- 504 total responses (all but one were online)

Key Survey Results

In what part of Los Alamos County do you live?



Living Location	Percent
Townsite/Eastern	14%
North Mesa	13%
White Rock – Town Center/West	12%
Barranca Mesa	12%
Upper North Community/Ponderosa	11%
Western Area/Denver Steels	11%
White Rock – East	9%
Lower North Community/Quemazon	8%
La Senda/Pajarito Acres (WR)	5%
I work in Los Alamos County	2%
I own property in Los Alamos County	2%
Orange Street/Royal Crest	1%

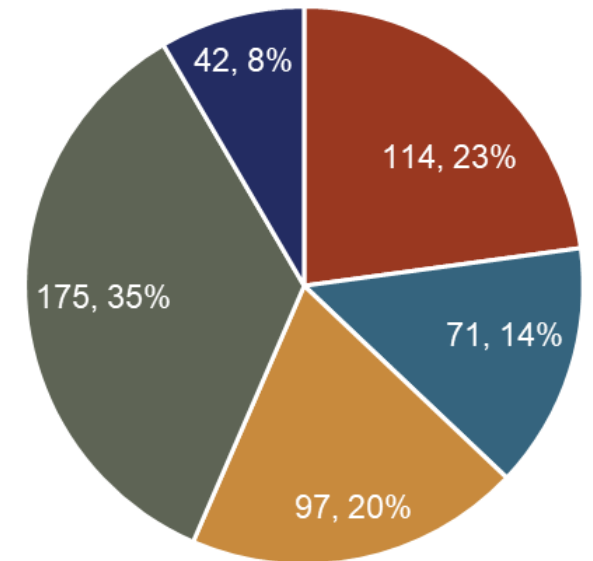
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Overall Perceptions of STRs

- Over half of respondents said STRs were beneficial to the community

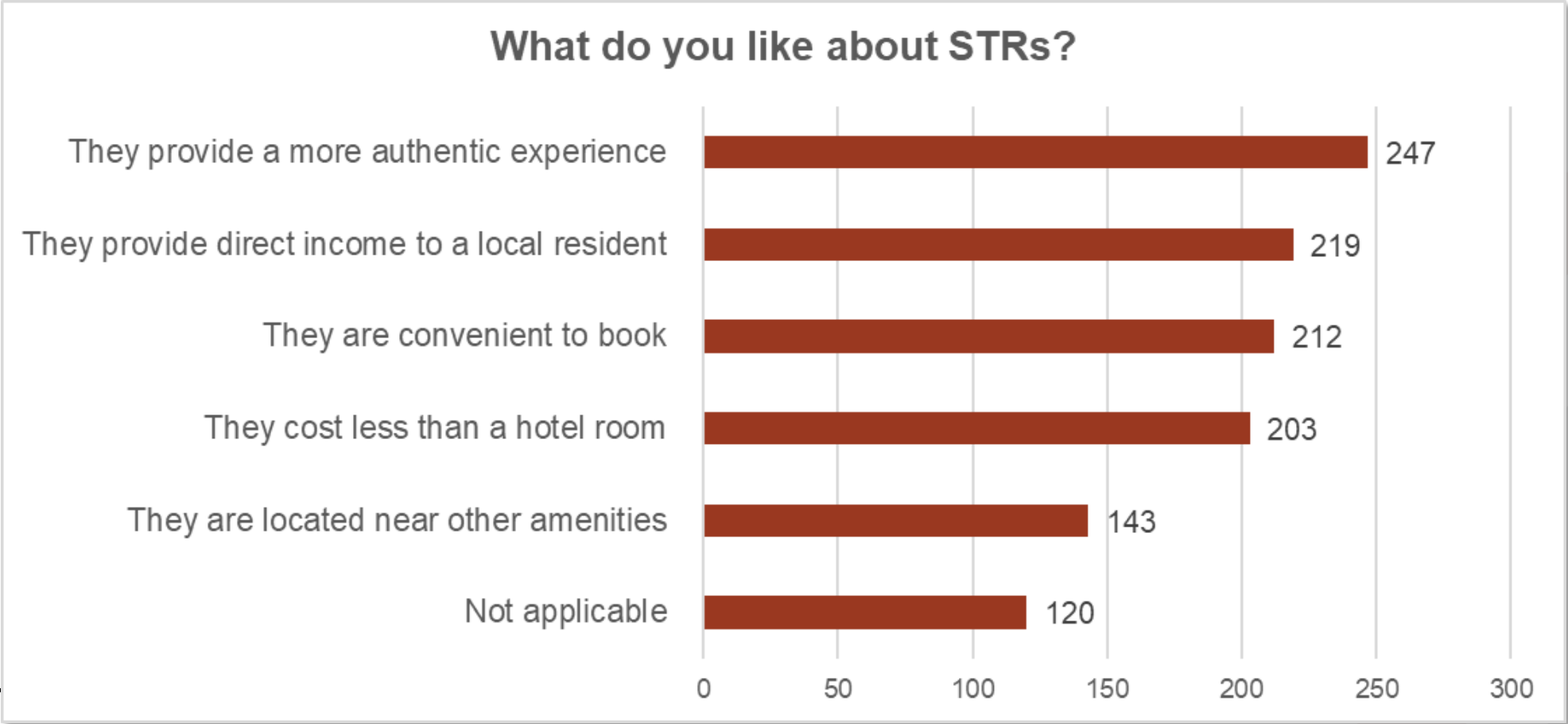
Select the statement that best fits your perception of the current impact of short-term rentals in Los Alamos County's Community

- A severe concern for the community
- A small concern for the community
- Somewhat beneficial to the community
- Very beneficial to the community
- Neither a concern nor a benefit for the community



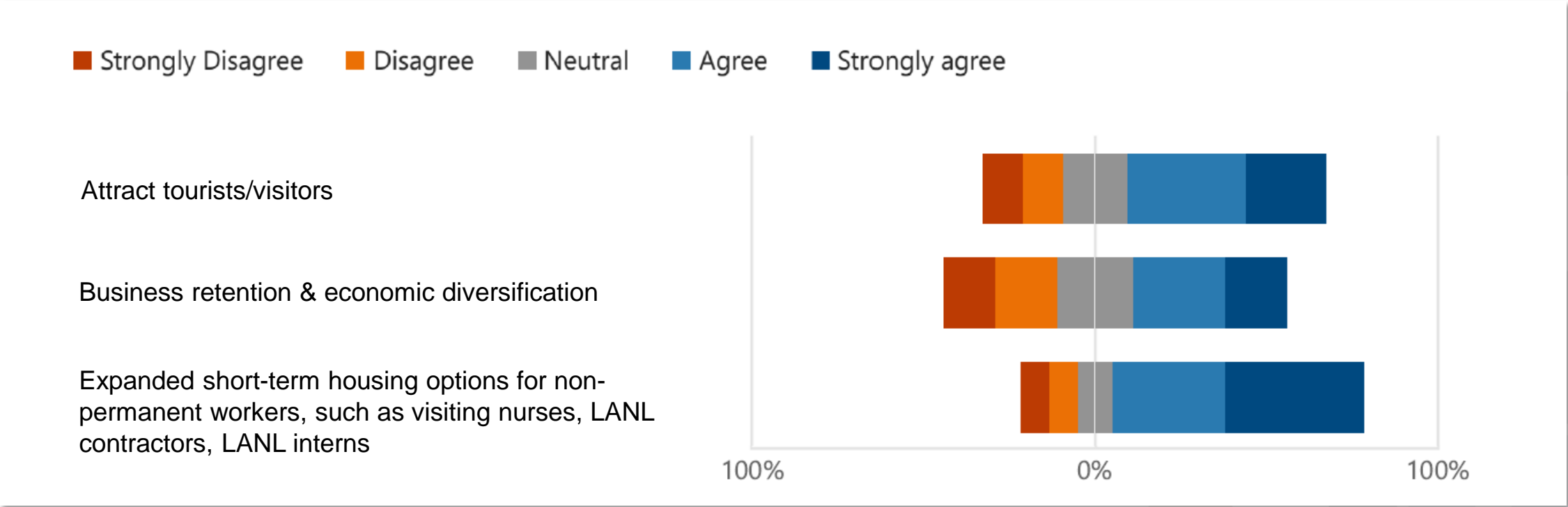
Overall Perceptions of STRs

- Benefits of STRs generally (not only in LAC)



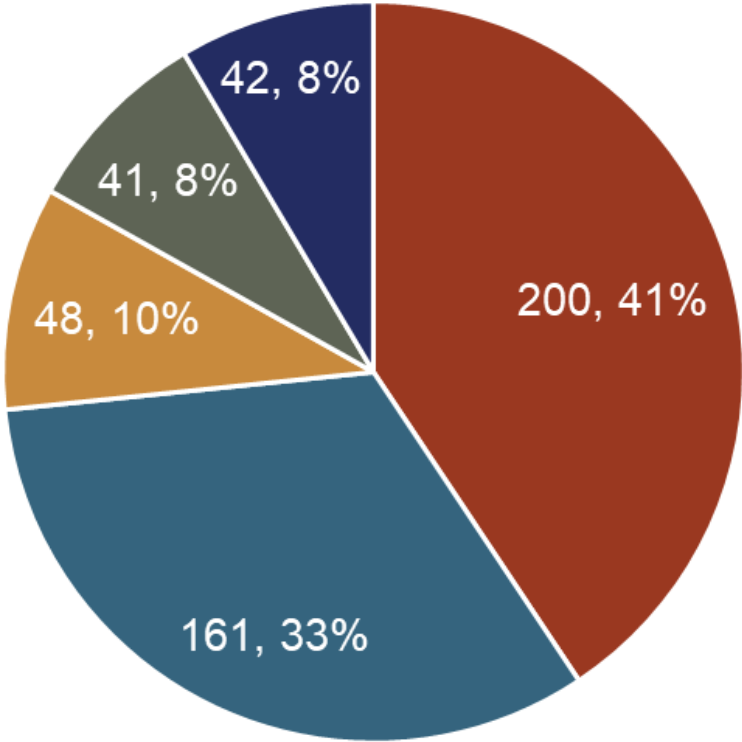
Overall Perceptions of STRs

- Potential benefits of STRs in Los Alamos County:



Overall Perceptions of STRs

STRs have the potential to expand short-term housing options for non permanent workers



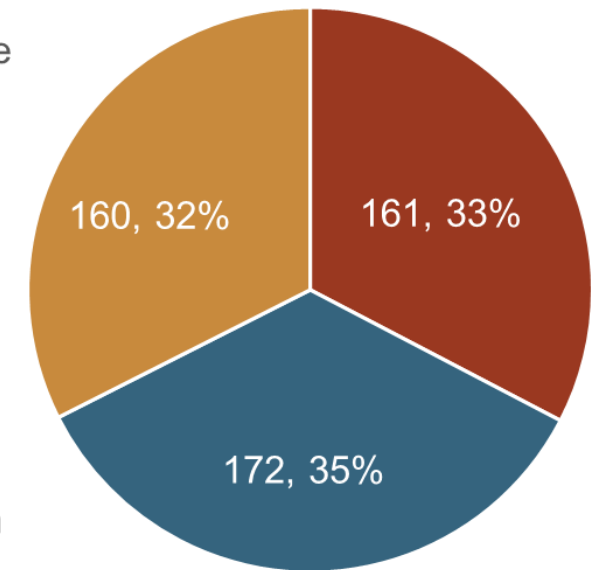
■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Program Components

- Positive perception does not correspond to desire for not establishing program provisions
- In other words, many pro-STR respondents still support some rules

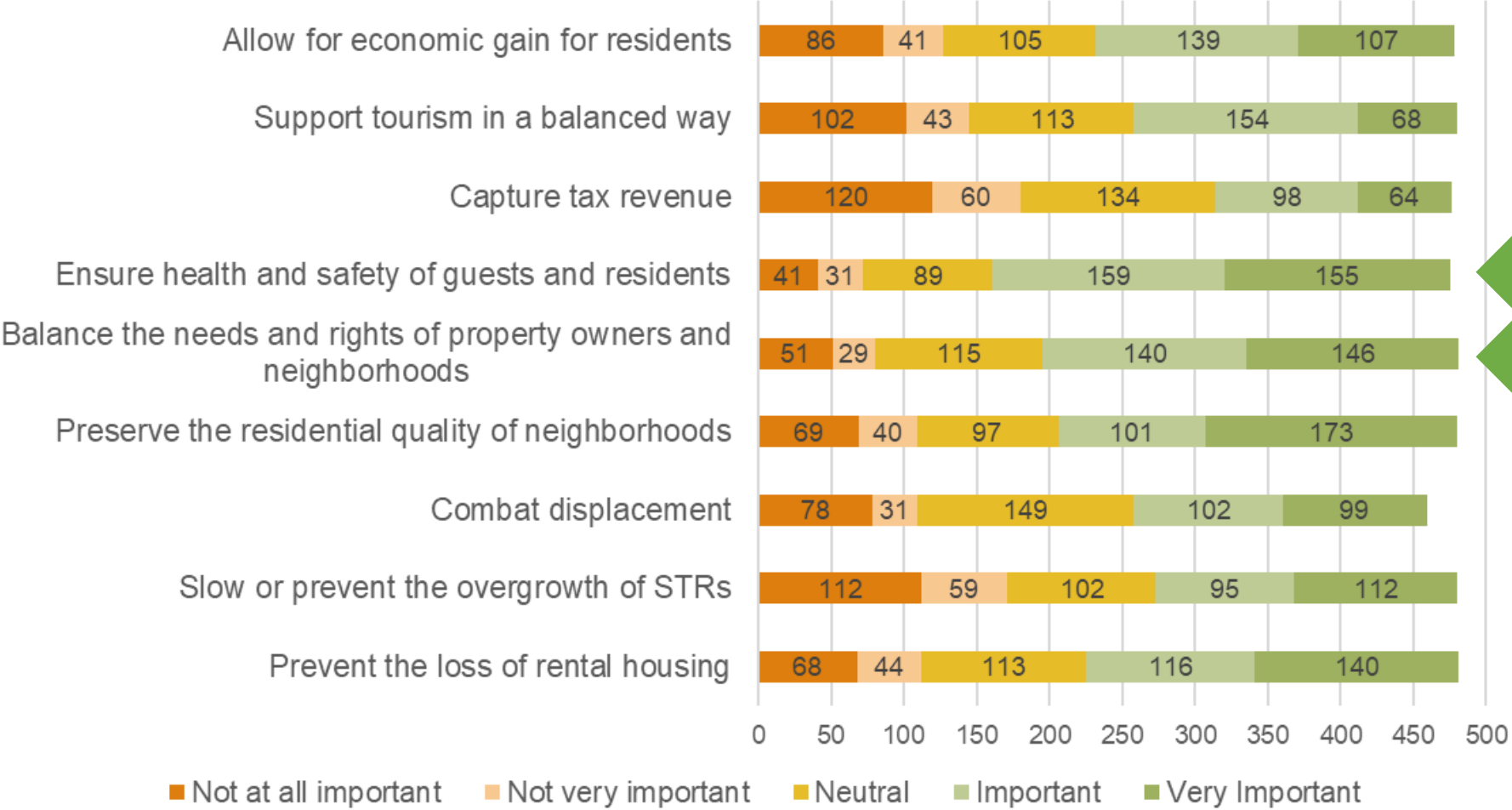
Please select the statement that best fits your opinion regarding regulations on short-term rentals.

- Short-term rentals should be strictly regulated, with a cap on the total number of STRs operating at any one time
- Short-term rentals should be regulated somewhat, but there does not need to be a limit on the number of STRs operating in the County at any one time.
- There should be no regulations on short-term rentals in Los Alamos County



Program Components

Level of Importance for Possible Goals of STR Program



How Draft Program Addresses These Results:

Draft Program is mostly aimed at ensuring life-safety is addressed, minimizing nuisances, and maintaining & protecting residential character of neighborhoods

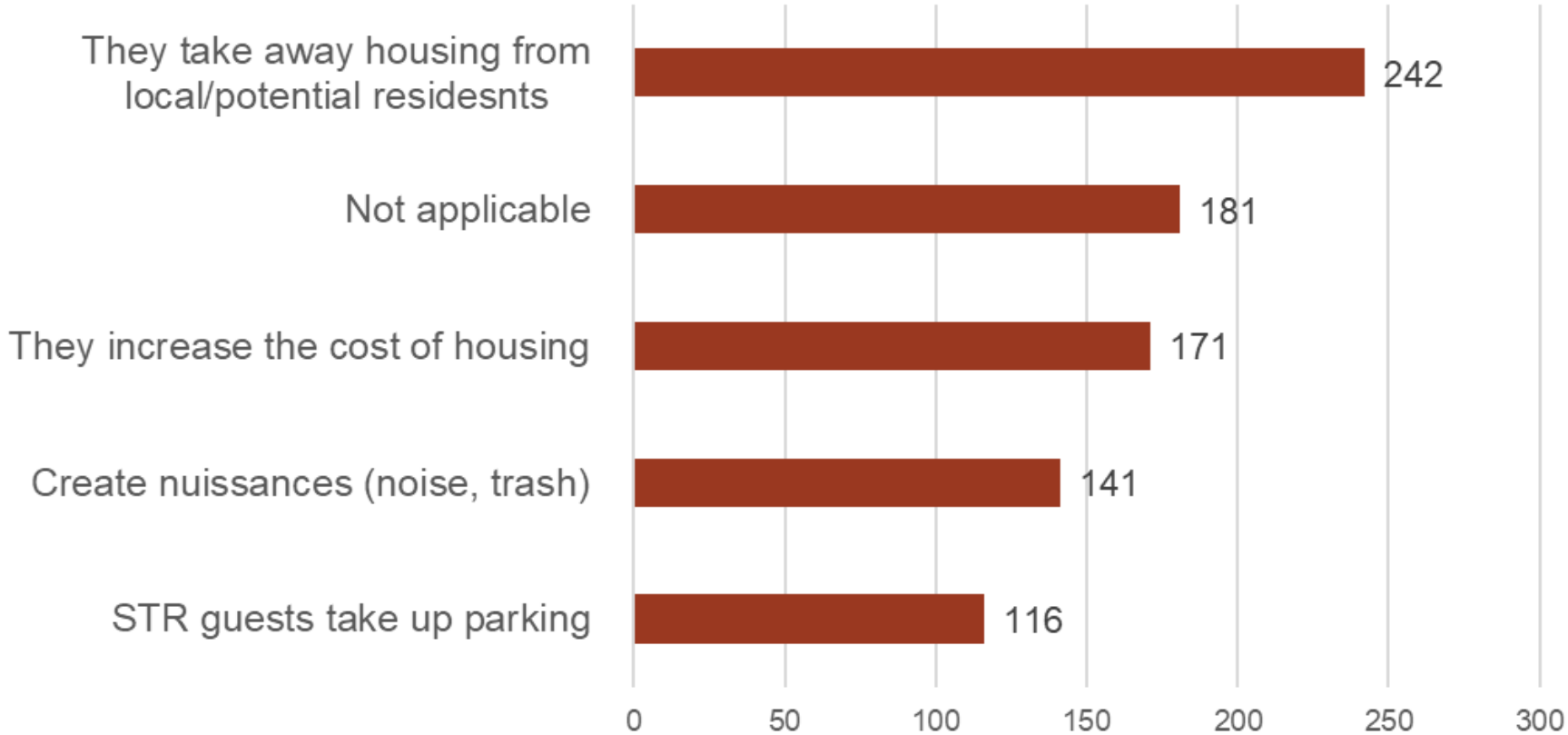


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STR Program Components

What do you dislike about STRs?

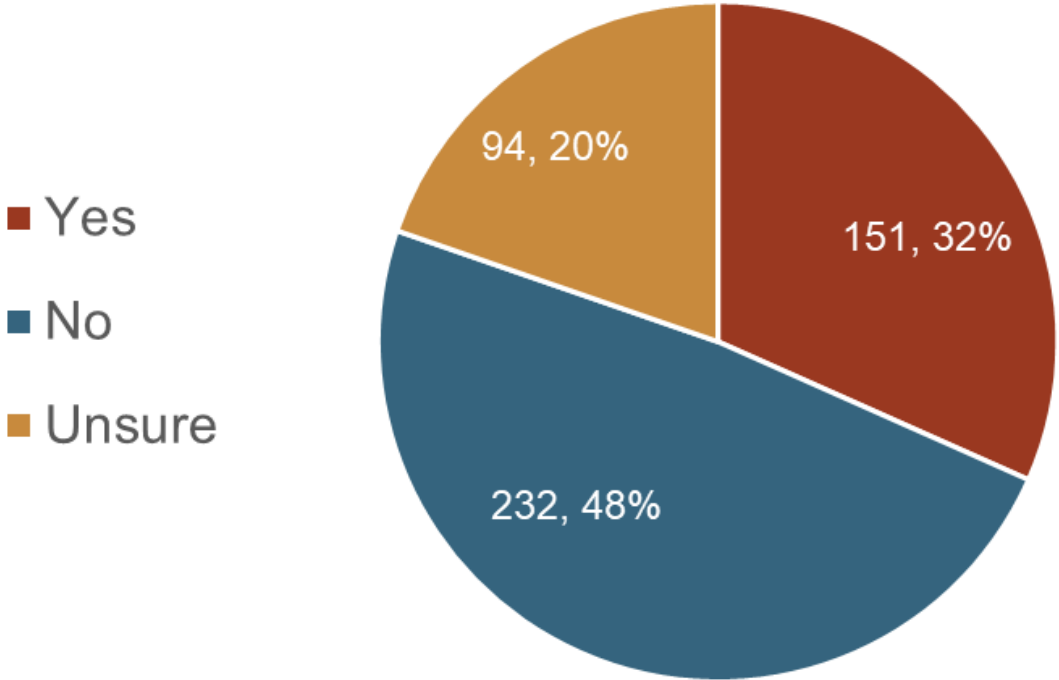


How Draft Program Addresses These Results:

- STR permits may only be issued to a “natural person”
- STR program incorporates County nuisance regulations
- STR Program requirements must be posted prominently in a STR unit
- Each STR must have a 24-hr contact person to address emergencies/complaints
- STR operators shall provide certain number of off-street parking spaces

Program Components

Do you believe short-term rentals make living in Los Alamos County less affordable?

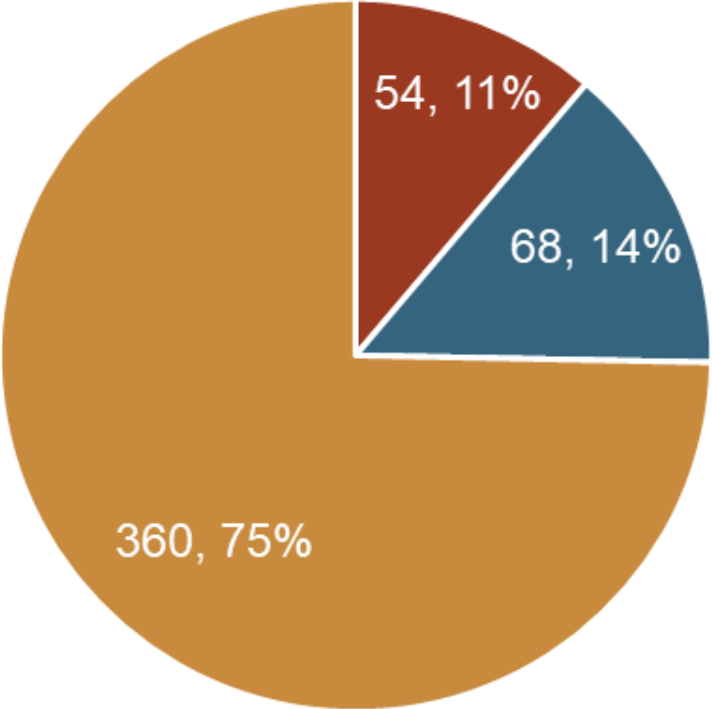


Takeaway: Respondents concerned with STRs' impacts on housing *availability* not necessarily housing affordability

Program Components

What areas should STRs be allowed in?

- Multifamily residential areas only
- Commercial areas only
- Both commercial and residential areas

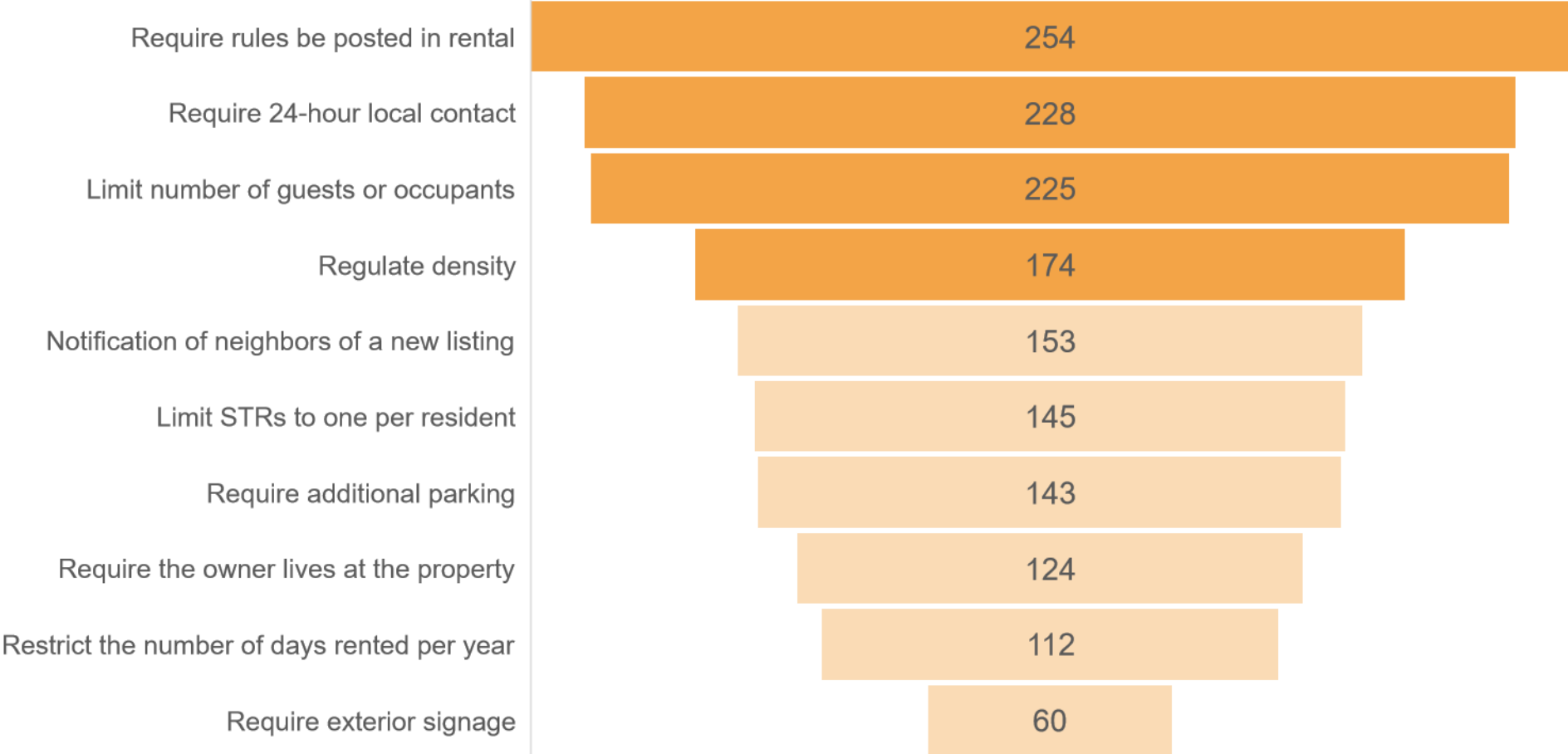


How Draft Program Addresses These Results:

STRs are allowed in residential and commercial areas

Program Components

Please select the following short-term rental regulations that you would like to see enforced in Los Alamos County. (Select all that apply)



How Draft Program Addresses These Results:

Options here that received high or moderate support are included in the draft program ordinance

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Proposed Program Components

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Key Proposed STR Program Components

- Key provisions in following areas:
 - Registration
 - Density & Distance
 - Life-Safety & Nuisance
 - Compliance

What the Program Won't Do

- Program components are not applicable for STRs used for stays longer than 30 days, i.e., typical housing options for summer interns, traveling employees, and construction workers
- Will not ban STRs

Key Proposed Program Components

Registration

- Business license required for STRs in residential and commercial districts
- STRs in residential zoning districts need STR permit
- All permits will be issued and renewed on annual basis
- One permit issued per natural person

Addresses:

- County goal to track STRs & apply basic regulations
- Desire to maintain residential character of neighborhoods
- Concerns about housing availability

Key Proposed Program Components (cont'd.)

Density and Distance

A 50-limit cap for STR permits countywide (first-come first-serve basis)

- STRs must maintain 50-foot radius buffer from each other
- In a multifamily dwelling development with 4 or more units, no more than 25% of units are permitted to have an STR permit, with a maximum of 12 in one building

Addresses:

- Desire to maintain residential character of neighborhoods
- Concerns about housing availability

Key Proposed Program Components (cont'd.)

Life-Safety and Nuisance

- Short-term rental unit will meet all applicable building, fire, and safety codes
- Occupancy limited to 2 adults per bedroom
- Parking provisions:
 - Two or more bedrooms require 2 off-street parking spaces
 - Multi-family buildings must comply with current Code regulations
- Adhere to Noise Ordinance between 9 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Addresses:

- Concerns about life-safety in STRs
- Desire to maintain residential character of neighborhoods
- Concerns about nuisances from STRs

Key Proposed Program Components (cont'd.)

Life-Safety and Nuisance (cont'd.)

- Relevant local program provisions will be posted visibly in STR unit
- Local agent required to respond to emergencies or complaints at an STR

Addresses:

- Concerns about life-safety in STRs
- Desire to maintain residential character of neighborhoods
- Concerns about nuisances from STRs

Key Proposed Program Components (cont'd.)

- Compliance

- Lack of registration/license addressed per Chapter 12
- Other operator lapses – 3-strike approach
 - Courtesy letters for first two confirmed lapses
 - Upon third confirmed lapse process for revocation

Addresses:

- Concerns about too much “red tape” in program



Next Steps

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Mechanism for Implementation

- Program would mostly be implemented via an ordinance amending Chapter 16 – Los Alamos County Development Code
- Draft ordinance contains the following text amendments:
 - Establish STR program under existing and new sections
 - Create new definitions as applicable
 - Amend Permitted Uses table to reflect in which zoning districts STRs will be allowed
 - Amend Off-Street Parking Standards Table to account for STRs and their off-street parking requirements

Mechanism for Implementation: Ordinance

- Draft ordinance available for public review through Sunday, June 18th, on the project website, livehostvisitlac.org
- Please provide written comments to noah.berke@wilsonco.com or desiraej.lujan@lacnm.us
(No later than June 18th)

Next Steps

- Provide your feedback tonight
- Provide written comments on draft ordinance through June 18th
- Incorporate public input to fine tune STR Program
- Steering Committee review through June 28th
- Finalize Draft STR Program
- Presentations to Planning & Zoning Commission for review and recommendation of approval to County Council (July and August)



Thank you

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