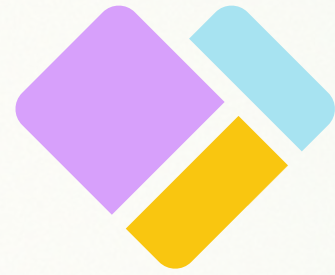




City of Little Rock
Planning & Development

Accessory Dwelling Units



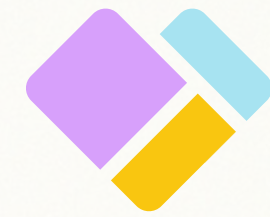
Community Conversation



Date: August 25, 2025

Presenter: Hannah Ratzlaff, Planning Manager





INTRODUCTION

City Objective

The new law, House Bill 1503 (now Act 313) requires all Arkansas cities to update their zoning codes by January 1, 2026, to allow at least one ADU on any residential lot with a single-family home.

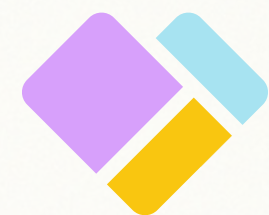
In response, the City of Little Rock launched a community engagement initiative in July 2025, to gather feedback for zoning code updates to support our families, our neighborhoods, and our future together.

The law took effect on August 5, 2025. The City adopted Ordinance No. 22,647 on August 19 to help protect local interests and provide clear guidance for property owners while broader community engagement continues.

The Planning & Development Department is continuing to actively gather public input to help shape future decisions around ADU zoning code changes.



DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT**



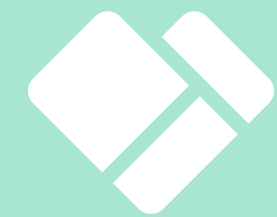
SCAN ME TO PARTICIPATE



Join at
slido.com
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DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT**



WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a self-contained and independently accessed living unit that includes its own cooking, sleeping, and sanitation facilities that is an accessory unit to a primary structure of a greater square footage on the same parcel or lot of record. Common types:

- **Backyard cottages**
- **Garage or carriage houses**
- **Basement or attic apartments**
- **Attached additions with separate entrances**



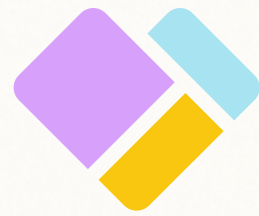
ADUs can provide attainable housing for relatives, caregivers, students, travel-professionals, renters, or homeowners looking to age in place with family.

INITIAL PLANNING PROCESS

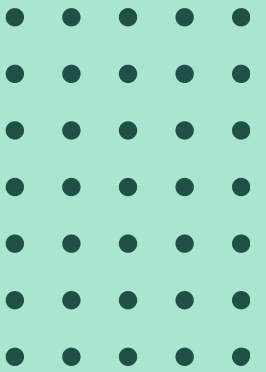


CURRENT PLANNING PROCESS





NEW STATE LAW



Act 313

- Requires municipalities to allow at least one Accessory Dwelling Unit “by-right” on lots containing single-family dwellings.
- The Act aims to address housing attainability and availability.
- The Act goes into effect on August 4th, 2025 and city’s must change their ordinances by **January 1, 2026**.
- At least one ADU per single-family lot by right (i.e. without needing special approval or public hearings)
- Both attached (internal or addition) and detached ADUs
- Residential occupancy of ADUs by family members or unrelated individuals

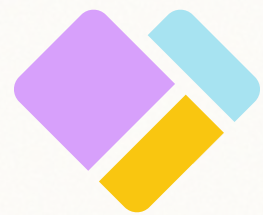


Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.
Act 313 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas As Enrolled: H3/4/25
2 95th General Assembly **A Bill**
3 Regular Session, 2025 HOUSE BILL 1503
4
5 By: Representatives Clowney, Painter, Gonzales, B. McKenzie, J. Richardson
6 By: Senator Hester
7
8 **For An Act To Be Entitled**
9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL
10 REGULATIONS; TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON THE
11 REGULATION OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS; AND FOR OTHER
12 PURPOSES.
13
14 **Subtitle**
15 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL
16 REGULATIONS; AND TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN
17 RESTRICTIONS ON THE REGULATION OF
18 ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS.
19
20
21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
22
23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 14, Chapter 56, Subchapter 2, is
24 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:
25 14-56-205. Accessory dwelling units - Definitions.
26 (a) As used in this section:
27 (1) "Accessory dwelling unit" means a self-contained and
28 independently accessed living unit on the same parcel as a single-family
29 dwelling of greater square footage that includes its own cooking, sleeping,
30 and sanitation facilities and complies with or is otherwise exempt from any
31 applicable regulatory requirements;
32 (2) "By right" means the ability to be approved without
33 requiring:
34 (A) A public hearing;
35 (B) A variance, conditional use permit, special permit, or
36 special exception; or



03-04-2025 10:10:13 SSS115



WHAT CAN CITIES REGULATE?



CANNOT

CAN

Aesthetics: Require the ADU to match the aesthetics or architectural design of the primary single-family structure.

Lot Size: Impose minimum lot size requirements beyond what already exists for the main house.

Occupancy Type: Set owner-occupancy requirements (e.g., requiring the homeowner to live on-site).

Parking: Require parking for the ADU beyond what is required for the primary dwelling.

Utilities: Require separate water and sewer from the primary dwelling.

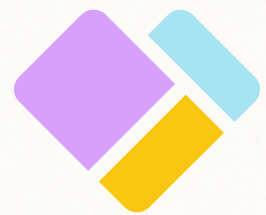
Setbacks: Cities can require standard setbacks (e.g., distance from lot lines) that apply to the single-family structure

Height and size: Reasonable limits on square footage and height are allowed

Lot coverage: Cities can limit how much of a lot can be built upon overall.

Building, safety, and fire codes: ADUs must comply with health and safety rules.

Short Term Rentals: The law does not prohibit municipalities from regulating short-term rentals or require that short-term rentals in ADUs be considered a by-right use.



SHORT TERM RENTALS

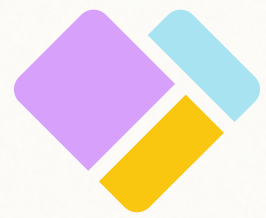


Does the law mandate that cities must allow ADUs to be used as Short Term Rentals?

No. The allowance of an ADU does not automatically allow a short-term rental (STR). I



If a property owner wants to use an ADU as a short-term rental, they are required to apply for a Special Use Permit or a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and be heard before the Planning Commission and Board of Directors (PUDs-only) and provide public notice. **STRs in Little Rock must follow current STR regulations and not allowed by-right.**



BILLS OF ASSURANCE

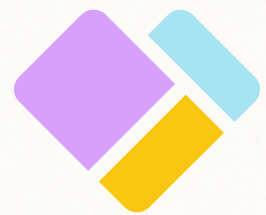


What if my neighborhood has a Bill of Assurance that prohibits or restricts specific zoning uses, like ADUs?

The state law does not override restrictive covenants between private entities, such as a neighborhood **Bill of Assurance**. These are private legal agreements—often included in deed or subdivision rules—that can place additional use and architectural restrictions beyond what city or state zoning laws allow.

If a neighborhood's Bill of Assurance prohibits or restricts uses beyond single-family, those private rules still apply and can be enforced by your owners' association (POA/HOA) or fellow property owners.





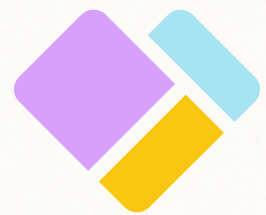
RV & TRAVEL TRAILERS



Are RVs, travel trailers, or similar vehicles considered Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) under the building code?

No. Recreational vehicles (RVs), travel trailers, and other movable structures are not considered ADUs under building code. An ADU must be constructed on a permanent foundation and comply with all applicable residential building, zoning, and safety codes—including requirements for permanent plumbing, electrical, and structural systems.

Mobile or temporary structures do not meet these standards and are not recognized as legal ADUs.



PARKING & INFRASTRUCTURE

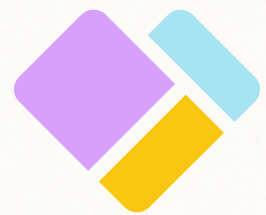


What about parking?

Cities cannot require additional off-street parking for an ADU applicable under the new law if no such requirement exists for the main house.

However, cities can still regulate street use and safety through normal traffic and parking enforcement, as well as other types of ADUs which are not applicable under the new law.





PARKING & INFRASTRUCTURE

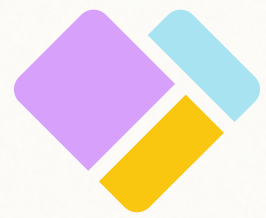


What about public infrastructure?

Cities remain responsible for enforcing building codes, fire safety standards, emergency access requirements, health regulations, and utility provisions. Stormwater management standards continue to apply.

The state law permits cities to require a will-serve letter from water and wastewater utilities to confirm infrastructure capacity.



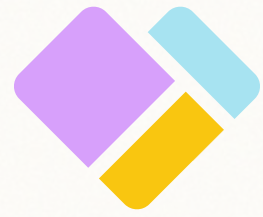


ADDRESSING & EMERGENCY REPSONSE



The Little Rock Planning & Development Department and Public Works Department are working to improve emergency response times for existing ADUs by identifying and resolving addressing issues and for future ADUs by coordinating with PAgis (Pulaski Area Geographic Information System) to enhance structure code assignment protocol, equipping first responders with more accurate information.





ADDRESSING & EMERGENCY REPSONSE



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC
WORKS**

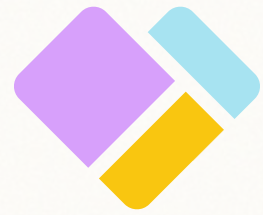
If you have an occupied ADU on your property:

Even if your ADU is built and in use, it may not have a separate certified address recognized by emergency services. Contact Public Works city staff to ensure your ADU is officially addressed for emergency service response. Doing so can save lives by reducing response times to get to occupants in need.

Contact:

Public Works Department
701 West Markham Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
Office: (501) 371-4475





RENTAL REGISTRATION & INSPECTIONS



DEPARTMENT OF
FINANCE



DEPARTMENT OF
**HOUSING &
NEIGHBORHOOD
PROGRAMS**

Rental Registration

Owner: If you own an ADU and rent it out, you are required to register the unit as a rental unit through the Treasury Division of the Department of Finance.

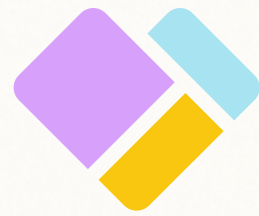
Renter: If you rent an ADU and you are uncertain if the unit is registered, you can contact the Treasury Division of the Department of Finance.

Rental Inspections

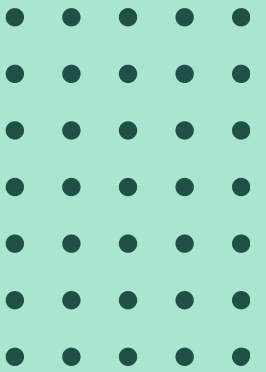
Owner: If you own an ADU and rent it out, you can request a rental inspection before a new tenant moves in to document code compliance prior to tenancy by contacting the Department of Housing & Neighborhood Programs.

Renter: If you rent an ADU and you feel the unit does not meet code requirements, you may request a rental inspection by contacting the Department of Housing & Neighborhood Programs.





NEW CITY ORDINANCE



Ord. No. 22, 647

- Established definitions and development standards for accessory dwelling units allowed by Act 313 of 2025.
- A maximum one (1) ADU is allowed as a permitted use in all zoning districts when accessory to a single-family dwelling.
- The ADU can be reviewed and permitted concurrently with proposals for a primary single-family dwelling, but cannot be occupied before the primary dwelling is complete.
- Will-serve letters are required as permit submittal documents from Central Arkansas Water and the Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority.



ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH CLEAR STANDARDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS IN COMPLIANCE WITH ACT 313 OF 2025, TO AMEND ORDINANCES AND CITY CODE PROVISIONS OF THE LITTLE ROCK REVISED CODE OF ORDINANCES (1988) ACCORDINGLY, TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Arkansas General Assembly enacted Act 313 of 2025, which mandates that municipalities allow at least one (1) accessory dwelling unit as a permitted use on lots containing single-family dwellings; and,

WHEREAS, it is desirable for the City of Little Rock to establish a clear regulatory framework for the development of accessory dwelling units to ensure compliance with Act 313 of 2025; and,

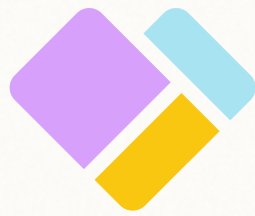
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CITY OF LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS,

Section 1. Little Rock, Ark. Rev. Code Chapter 36, Article I, Subsection 36-2 is amended as follows:

Accessory building or use means a building or use which:

- (1) Is located on the same zoning lot as the principal building or principal use;
- (2) Serves the principal building or principal use;
- (3) In other than a residentially-zoned district, is subordinate in area, extent or purpose to the principal building or principal use served. Accessory structures in residentially-zoned districts shall be subordinate in area, extent and purpose to the principal building and residential use; and
- (4) Contributes to the comfort, convenience or necessity of occupants of the principal building or principal use.

Accessory dwelling unit means a self-contained and independently accessed living unit that includes its own cooking, sleeping, and sanitation facilities, and that is a subordinate accessory unit to a primary or principal structure of a greater square footage on the same lot or parcel. Such accessory dwellings shall comply with the



NEW CITY ORDINANCE

Ord. No. 22, 647

- ADUs seeking a by-right approval, must meet specific development standards, outlined in Section 36-204(b)(2).
- Location:** Whether attached, detached, or internal, the unit must conform to the setback requirements applicable to single-family dwellings of the applicable zoning district.

————— PROPERTY LINE
- - - - - BUILD-TO LINE

REAR

FRONT

SIDE

SIDE

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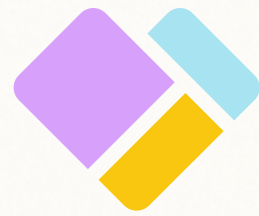
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[Page 1 of 4]



NEW MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE

Ord. No. 22, 647

- **Area/size:** The unit must not be more than 75% of the gross floor area of the primary dwelling or 1,000 sq. ft., whichever is less.
- **Lot coverage:** The unit must meet the same lot coverage requirements of the single family dwelling.
- **Height:** The unit must meet height restrictions of the respective zoning district.

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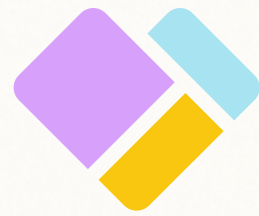
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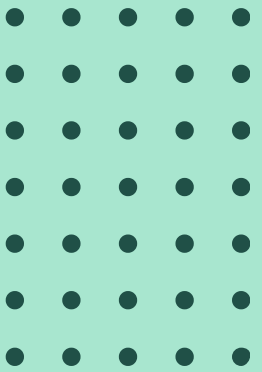
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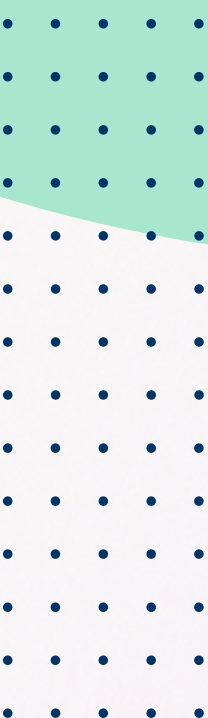


NEW MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE



Ord. No. 22, 647

- **Variances:** ADUs defined in this section of code which do not meet the development standards of this section, can be processed as a request for a variance.
- **Applicability:** This ordinance supersedes any provisions of the zoning code related to accessory dwellings or buildings that are more restrictive or permissive.
- **Additional Units:** Additional units or units accessory to non-single family primary structures must meet existing and applicable zoning code regulations.



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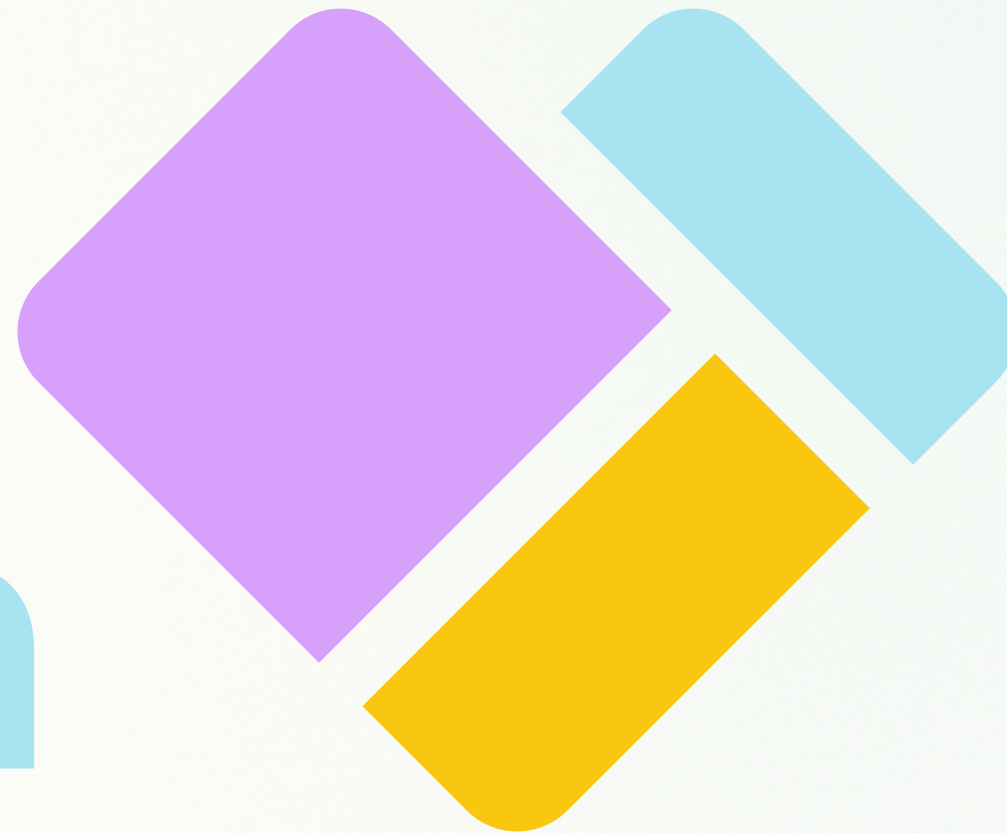
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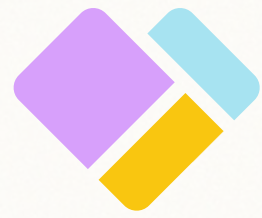
City of Little Rock
Planning & Development

Let's Dive In



Community Survey Results



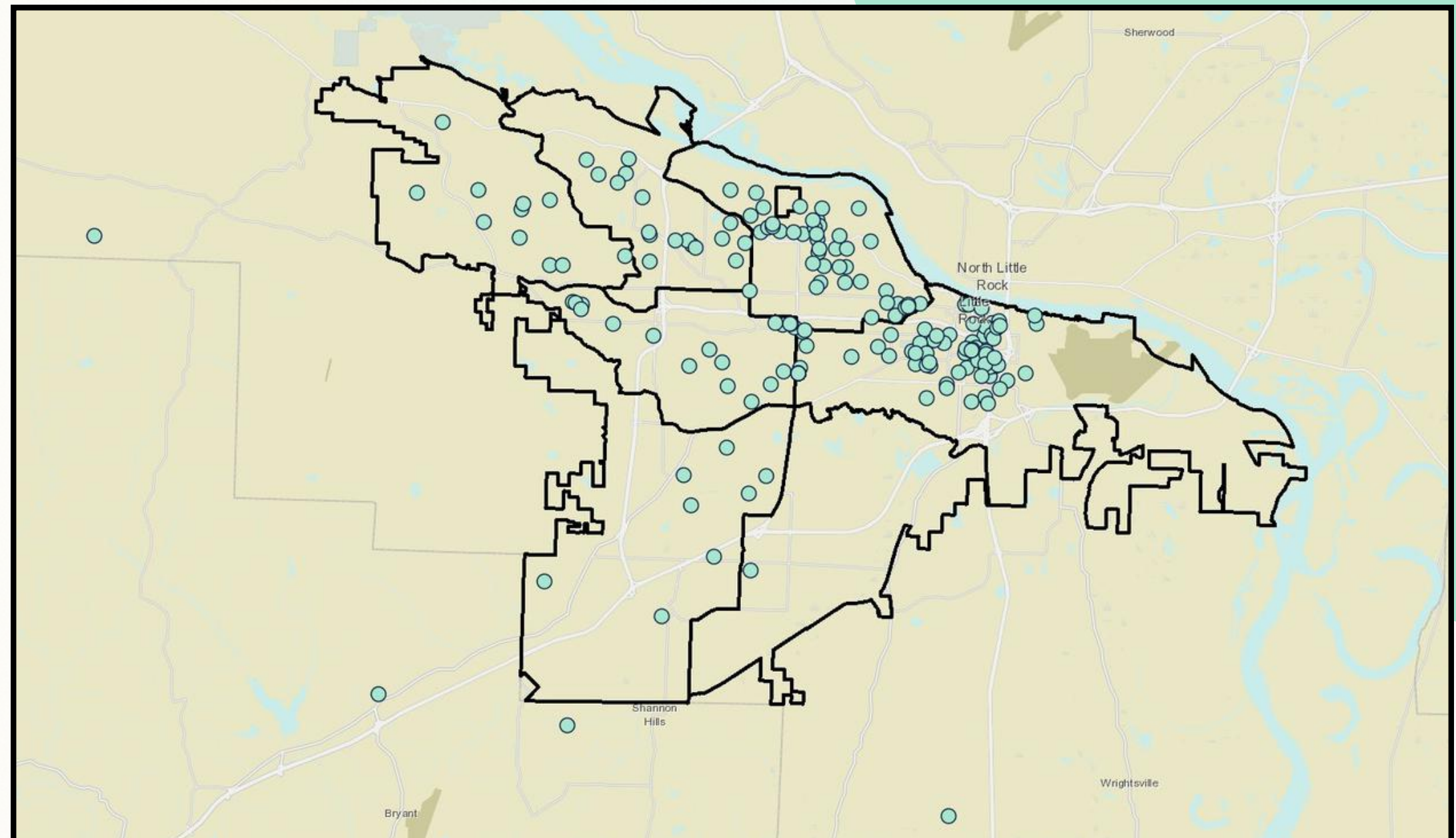


COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

259

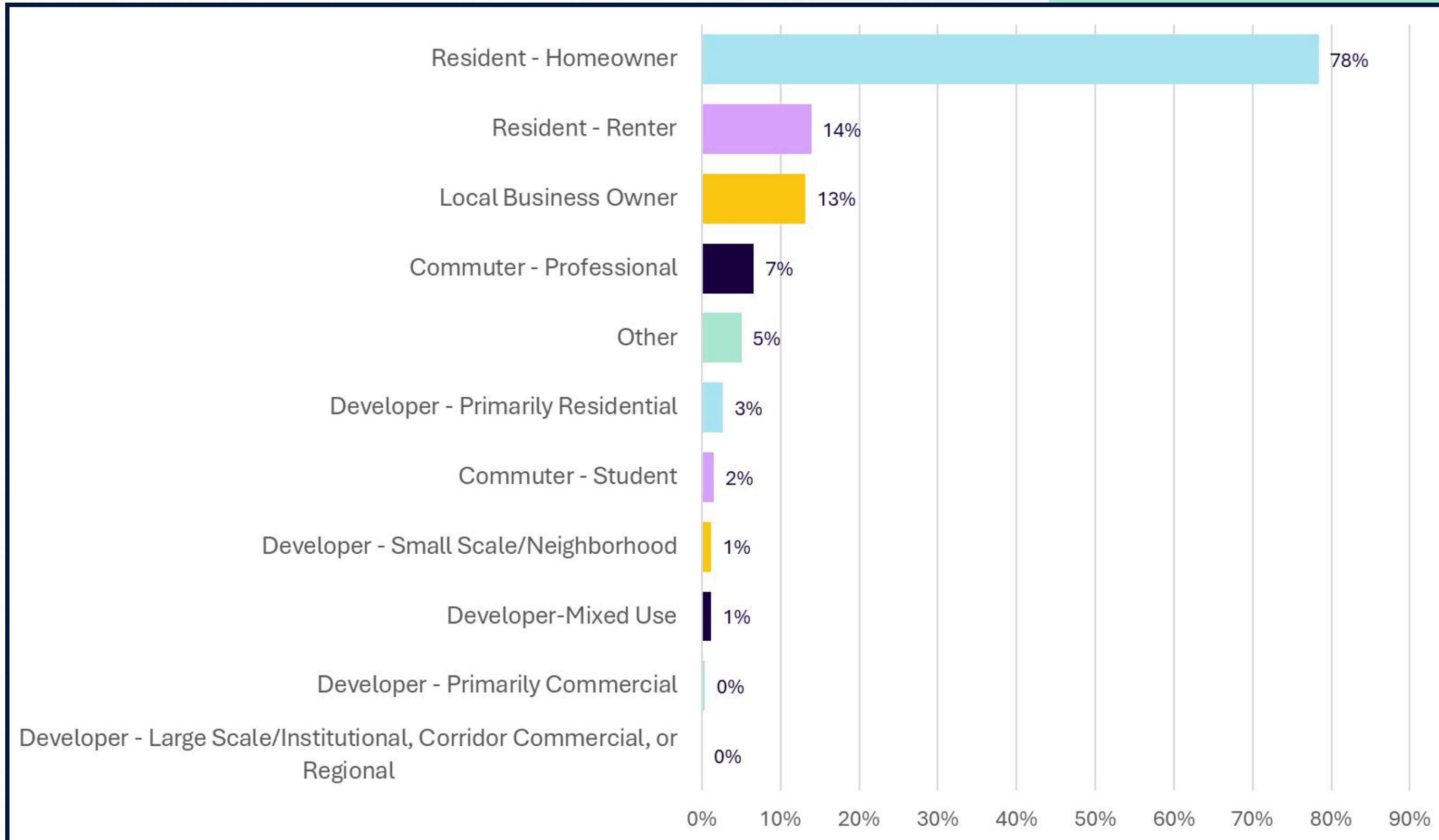
Respondents

- Survey open from **July 17th - August 24th**
- **78%** of respondents were Little Rock homeowners
- **83%** of respondents generally support ADUs
- **67%** of respondents favored detached ADUs in their neighborhood over attached or internal



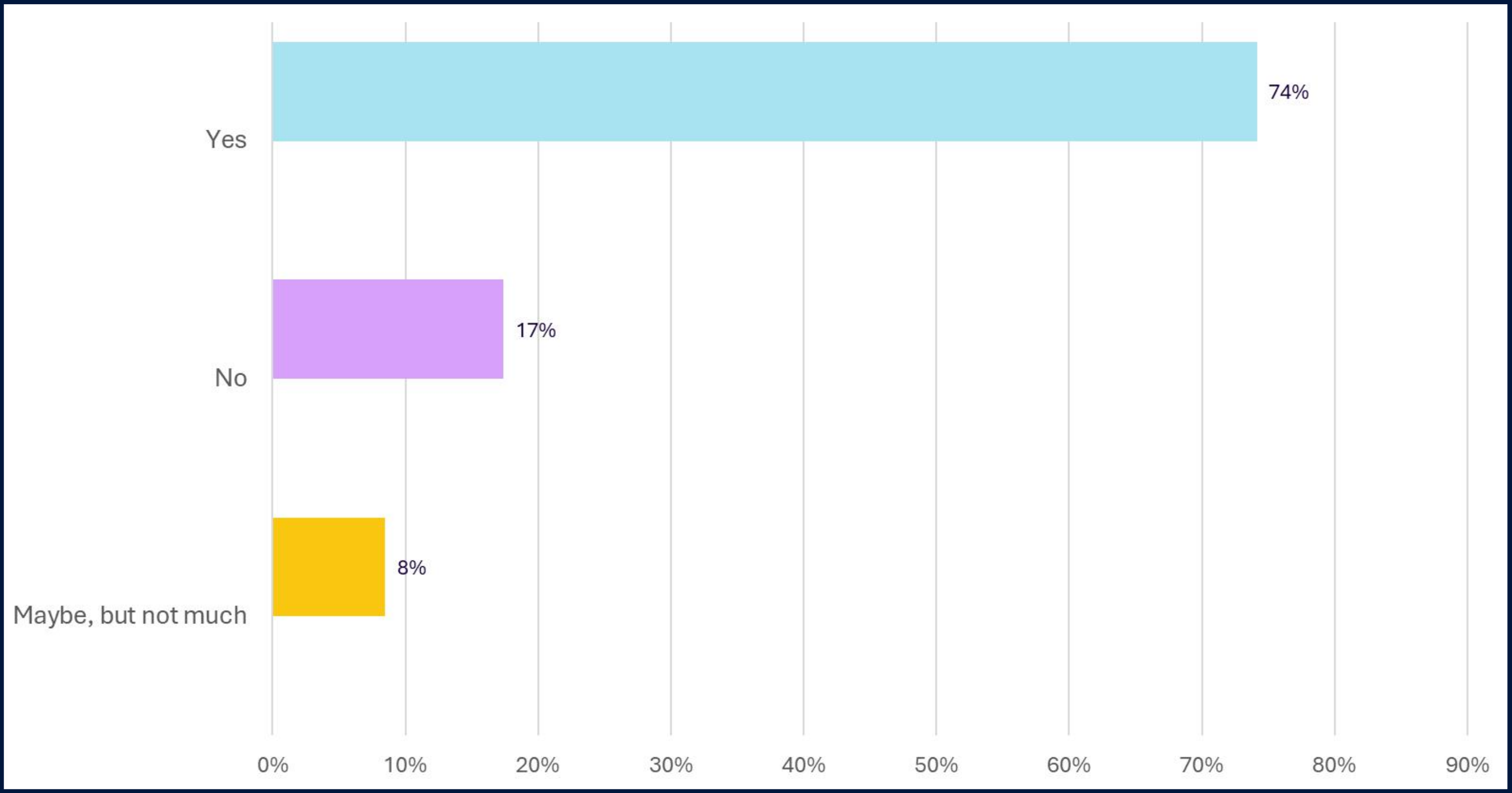


What best identifies your relationship to Little Rock?



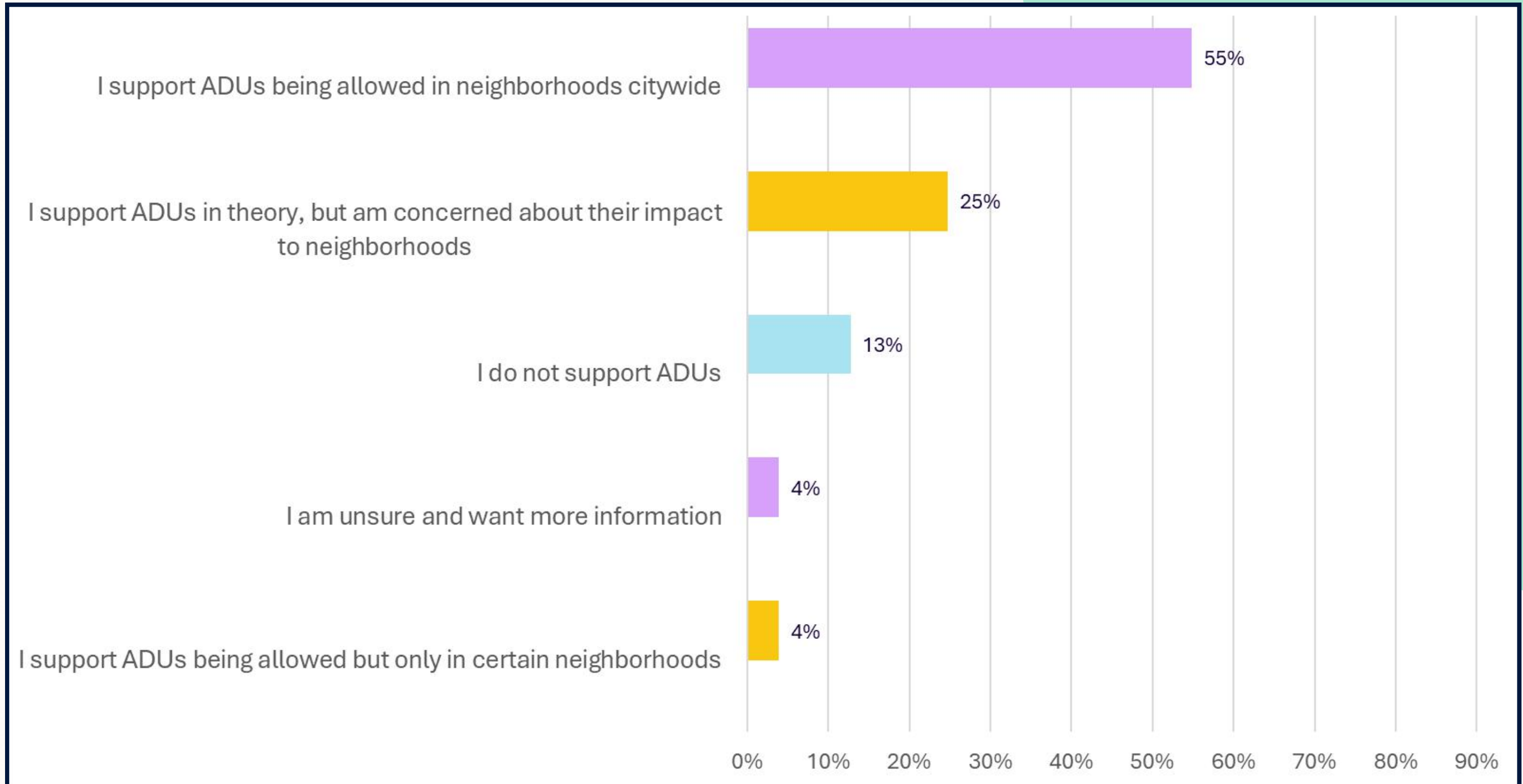


Had you heard of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) before this survey?



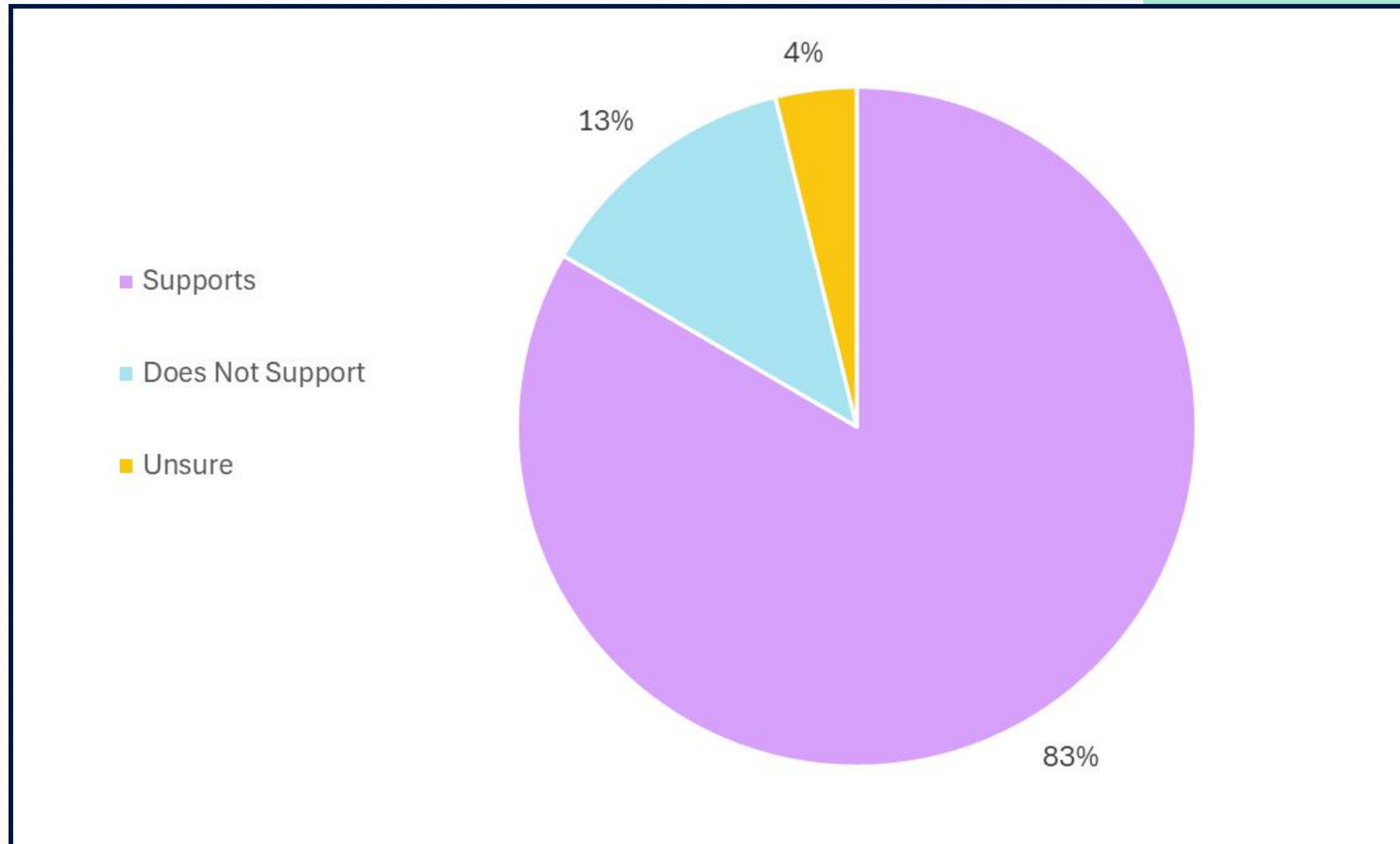


What do you think of allowing small, secondary housing units (ADUs) in residential neighborhoods?



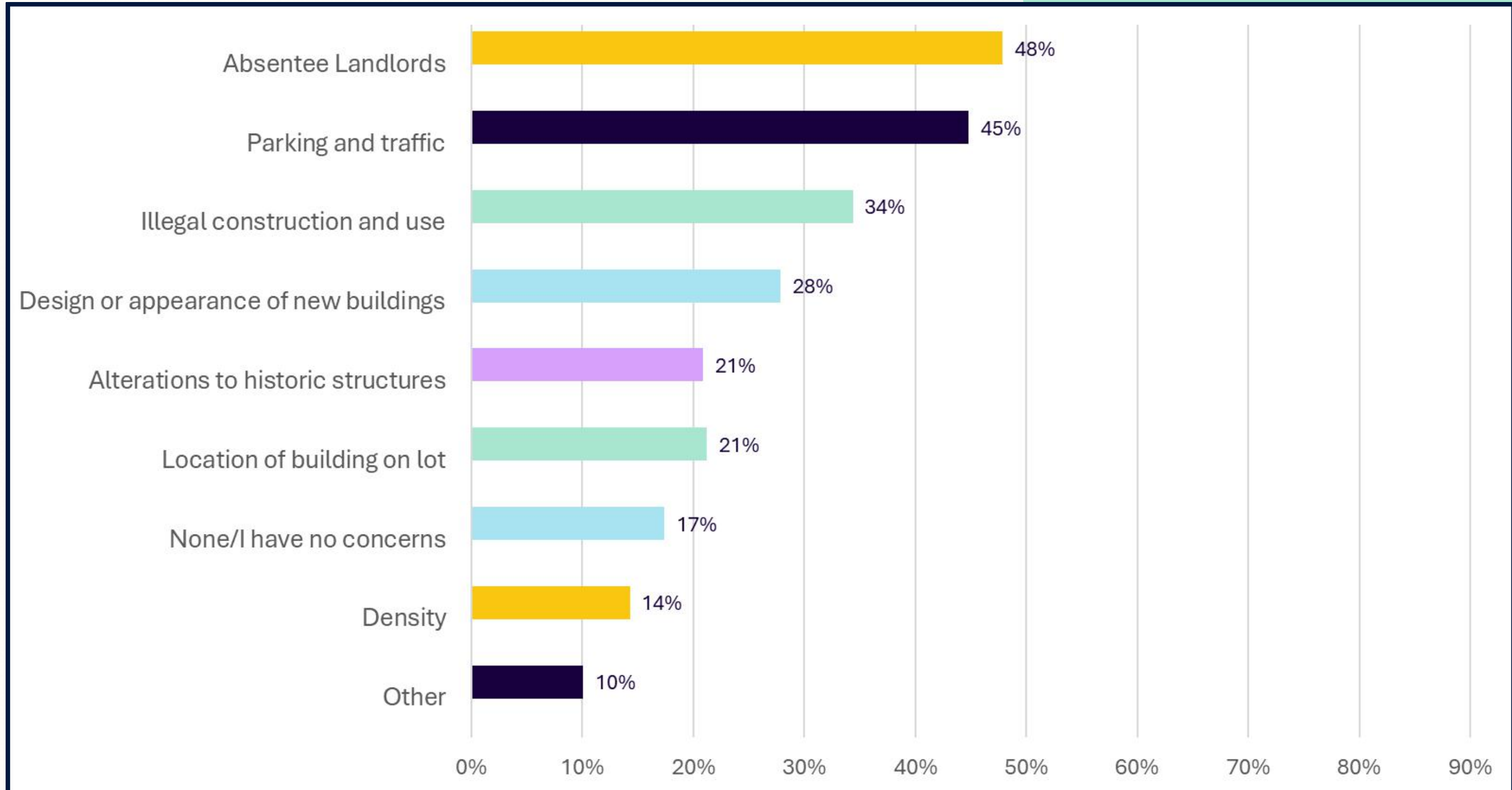


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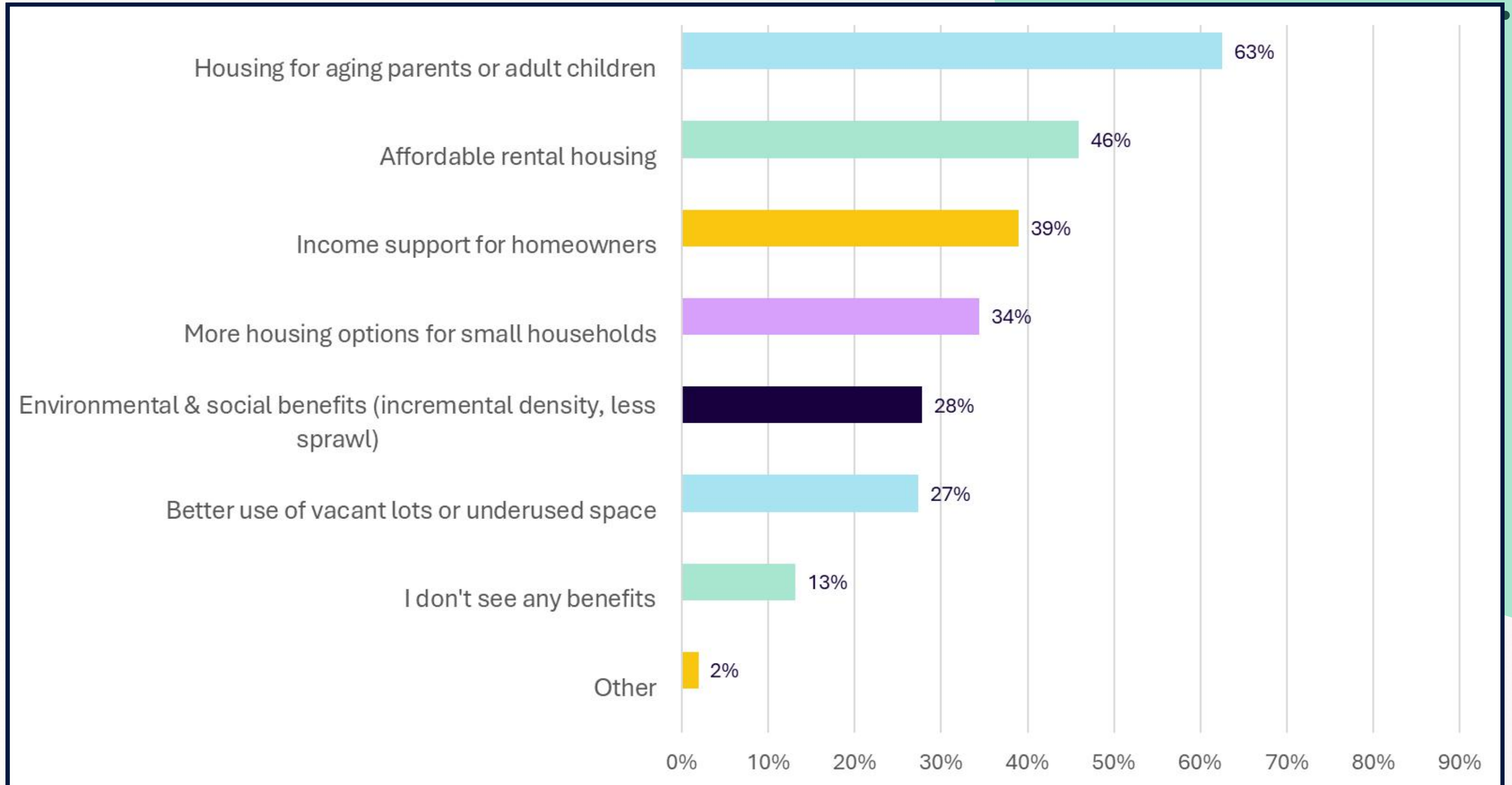


What are your 2-3 top concerns, if any, about ADUs in your neighborhood?



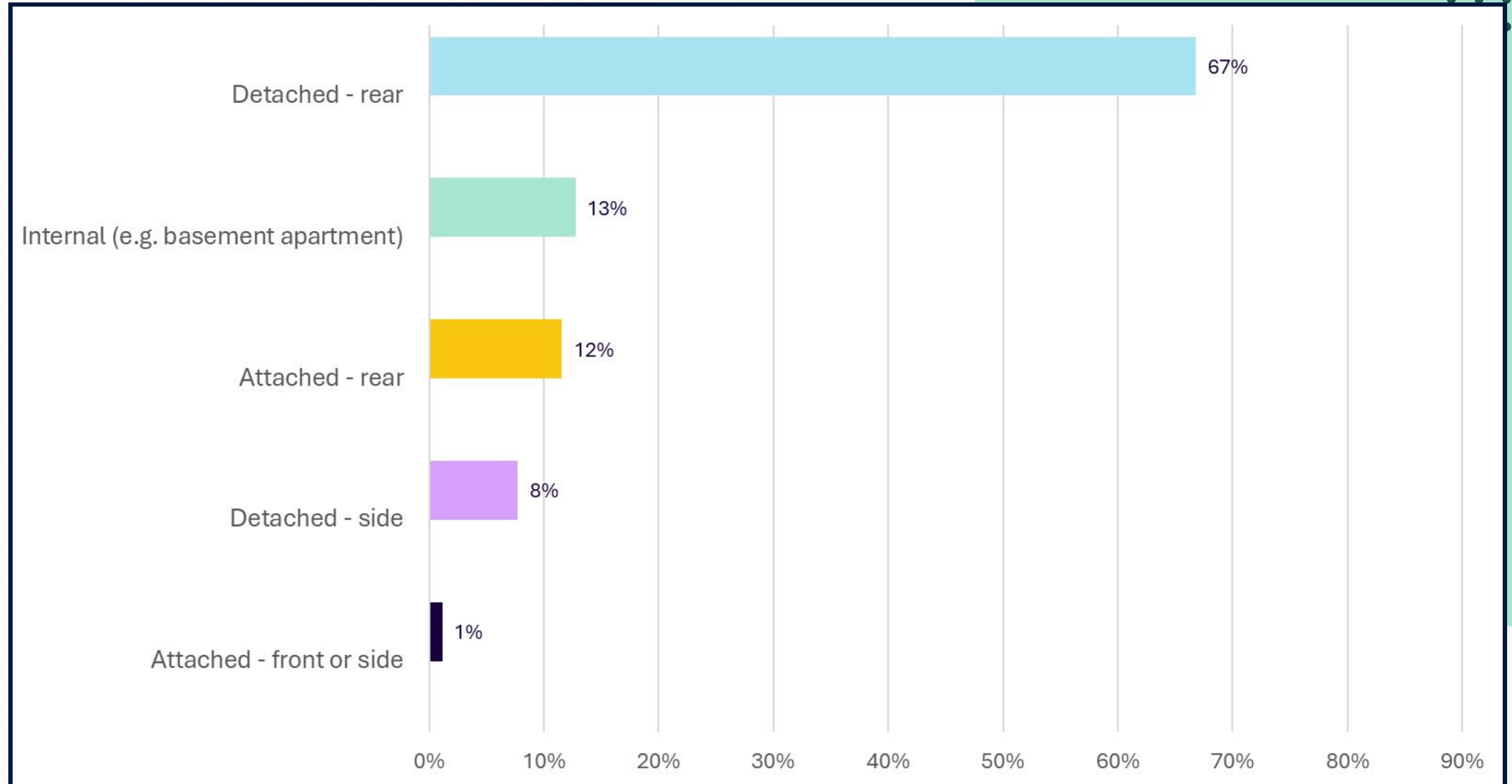


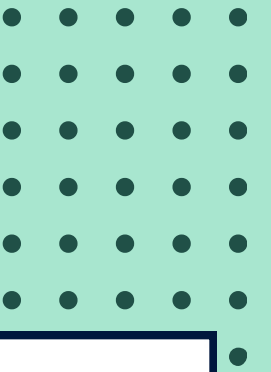
What are the top 2-3 benefits you see in allowing ADUs?



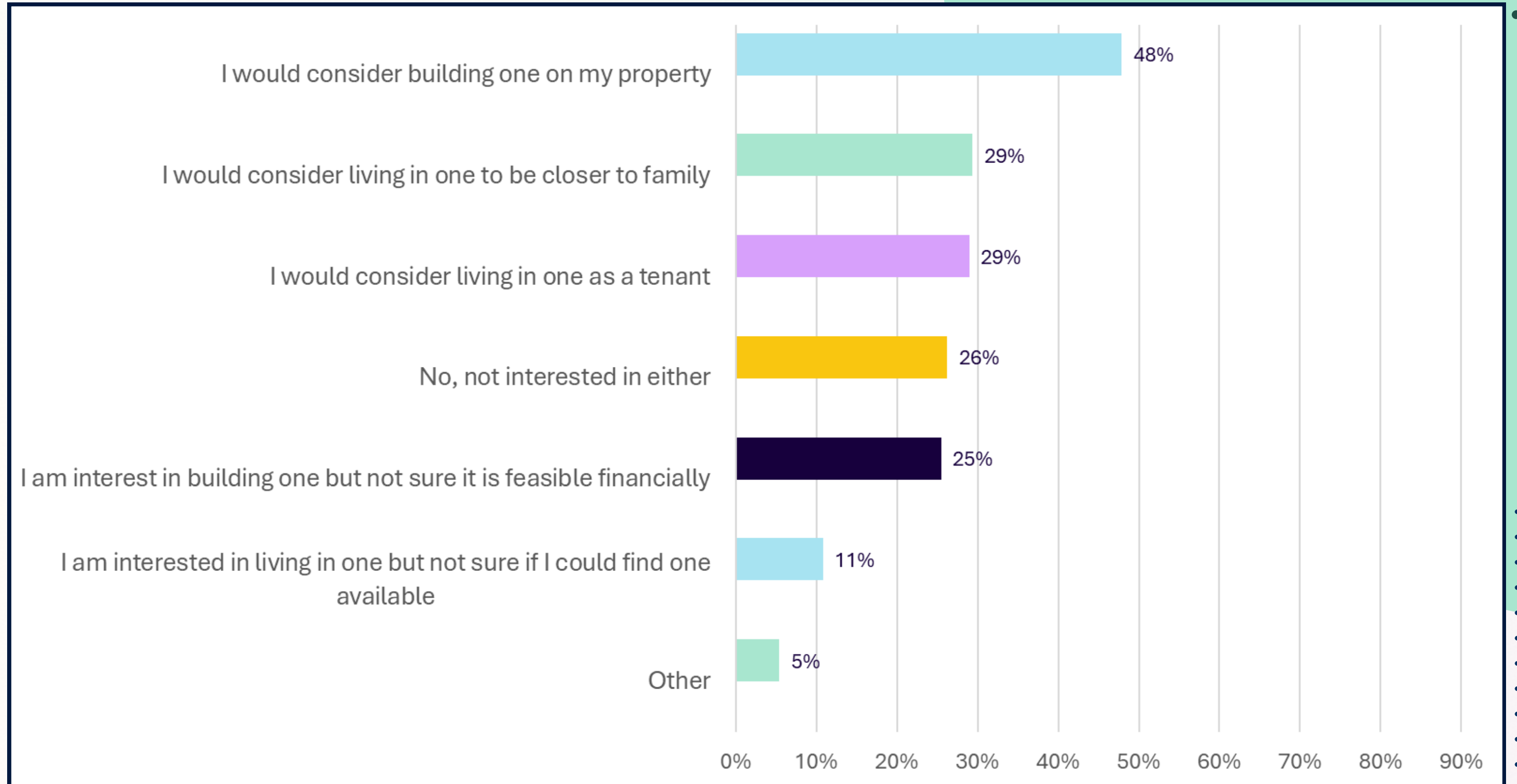


What location of an ADU is most preferable on a lot?



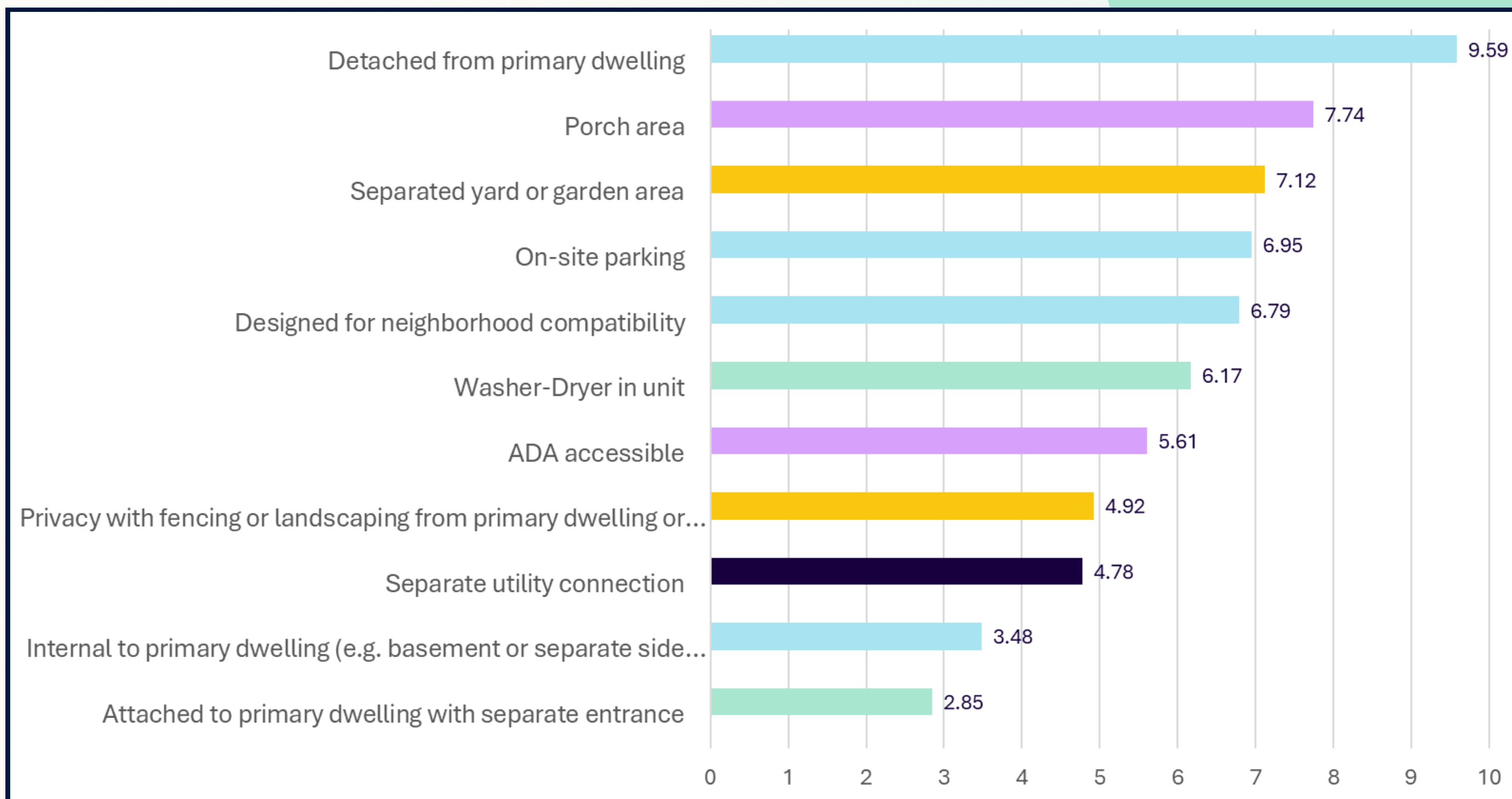


Would you consider building or living in an ADU?



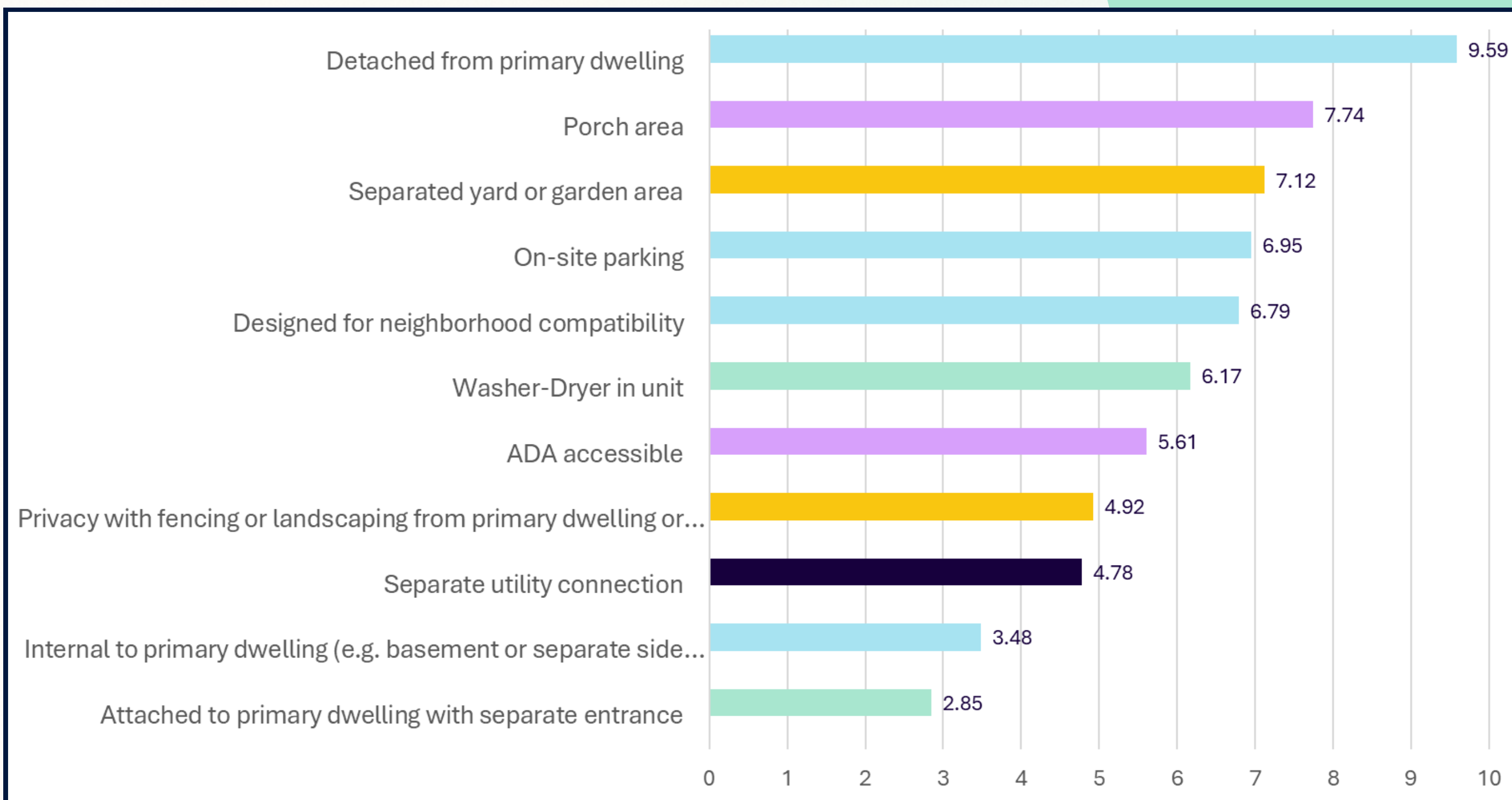


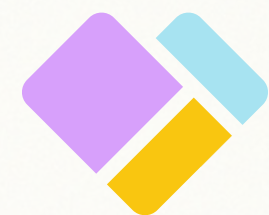
Build Your ADU: If you were looking to live in an ADU, share with our developer and homeowner communities what elements and amenities would be most attractive.





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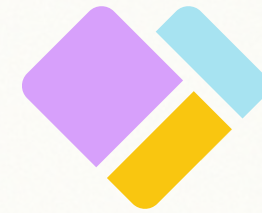
SCAN ME TO PARTICIPATE



Join at
slido.com
#3446 429



DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT**



How can I provide additional input or ask additional questions?



DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT**

Contact:

Hannah Ratzlaff,
Planning Manager
Office: (501) 371-4789
Email: HRatzlaff@LittleRock.gov

Planning & Development Department
723 West Markham Street
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