memo

to	James Cleavenger, Oakridge City Administrator Rick Zylstra, City of Oakridge Laura Buhl, DLCD
from	Darci Rudzinski, AICP and Emma-Quin Smith, MIG | APG
re	Oakridge Code Evaluation & Update – DRAFT Community Meeting Summary
date	December 28, 2022

Community Meeting Summary

Introduction

The project team hosted a community meeting at Oakridge City Hall on Wednesday, December 7, 2022. The agenda was as follows:

6:30 – Welcome Community Members and invite to start perusing the boards

7:00 – Project Presentation

8:30 – Adjourn

There were 14 community members present, in person and participating online, in addition to the project team (James Cleavenger, Rick Zylstra, Laura Buhl, Darci Rudzinski, and Emma-Quin Smith). Memorandum content is organized by the topics presented at the meeting and in the meeting materials. The following is a summary of items the project team presented and participants' comments and questions that were posed at the meeting. Responses that were received via an online open house and survey, or that were submitted in hard copy to City Hall, are summarized and included in an attachment.

Uptown (Old Town Design Subdistrict)

Issues presented to the community for consideration:

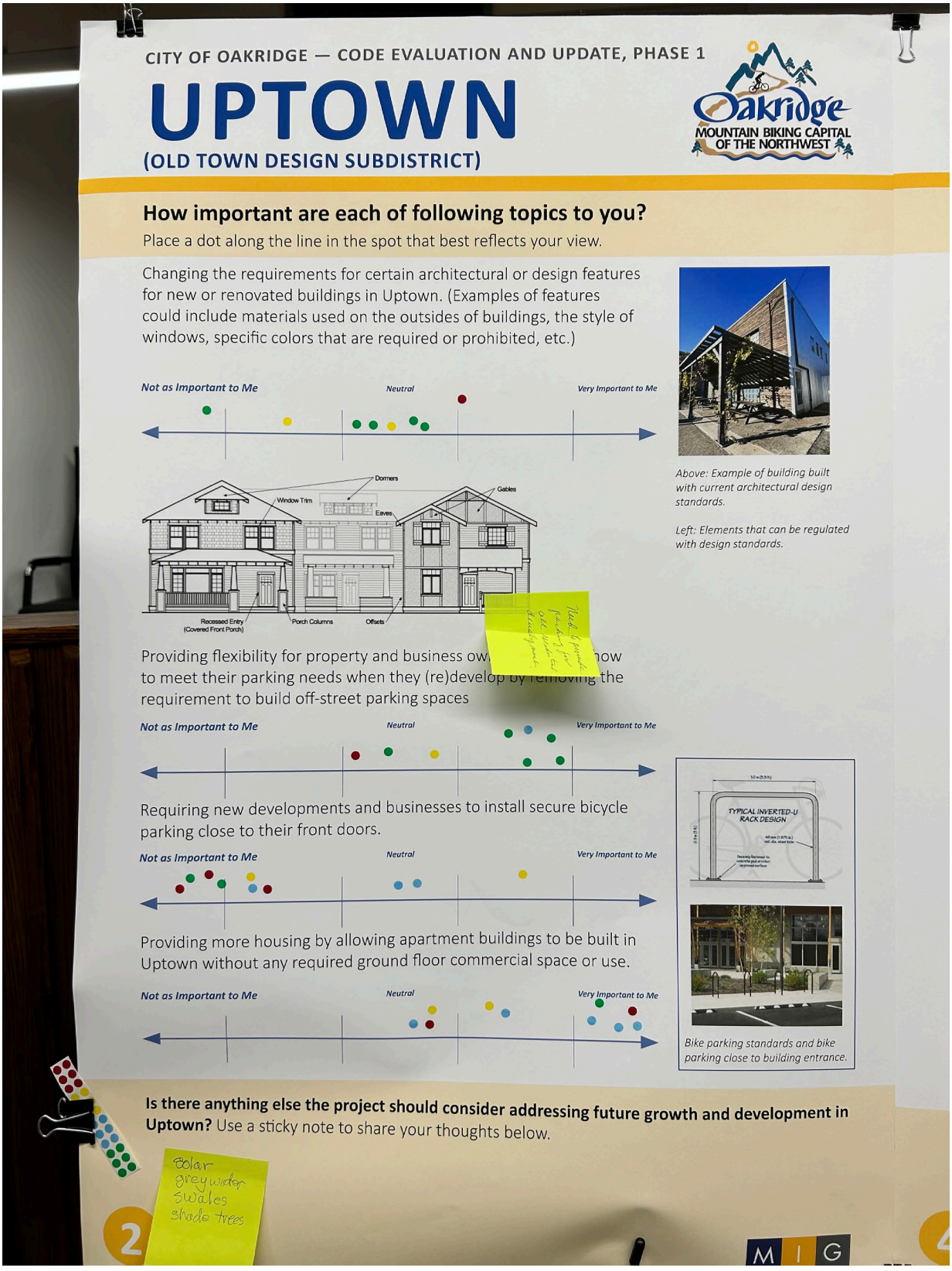
- *Changing the requirements for certain architectural or design features for new or renovated buildings in Uptown. (Examples of features could include materials used on the outsides of buildings, the style of windows, specific colors that are required or prohibited, etc.)*
- *Providing flexibility for property and business owners to decide how to meet their parking needs when they (re)develop by removing the requirement to build off-street parking spaces*
- *Requiring new developments and businesses to install secure bicycle parking close to their front doors.*
- *Providing more housing by allowing apartment buildings to be built in Uptown without any required ground floor commercial space or use*

As shown in Figure 1, participants were neutral on the issue of changing the architectural design standards in Uptown. Participants thought it somewhat important to address the issue of parking flexibility in Uptown. Addressing bike parking was “not very important” to the majority of participants. And providing more housing in Uptown by adding apartment buildings was “very important” or "somewhat important" to the majority of participants.

On the boards, one community member expressed concern about removing minimum parking requirements in the Old Town subdistrict saying that, particularly for residential uses, if no parking was required to be built, the streets would get “clogged.” Another community member comments that “solar, greywater, swales, and shade trees” should be incorporated into the district design standards.

During the presentation and Q&A, one community member asked about the tax implications of removing off-street parking minimum requirements. In response, it was noted that if more useable, taxable space is developed in uptown, the taxable value of the space increases, thereby increasing the tax revenue for the area.

Figure 1: Uptown Board Results



Housing

Issues presented to the community for consideration:

- *Increasing housing options by removing code barriers to building middle housing types (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, cottage clusters).*
- *Allowing multiple-dwelling development anywhere residential uses are allowed.*
- *Creating more opportunities for senior housing, low-income housing, and transitional housing for currently houseless community members.*
- *Creating a High Density Residential (R-3) zone to encourage more development of apartment housing.*
- *Allowing multiple-dwelling development in existing commercial areas (Uptown and along Highway 58) to provide more housing options closer to services and community hubs.*
- *Preserving land in the Medium Density Residential (R-2), Central Commercial (C-2), and Highway Commercial (C-3) zones for commercial uses and smaller, more affordable housing types by prohibiting new single dwelling housing development in these zones.*
- *Reducing off-street parking requirements in residential zones to one space per dwelling to help decrease the cost of developing housing.*

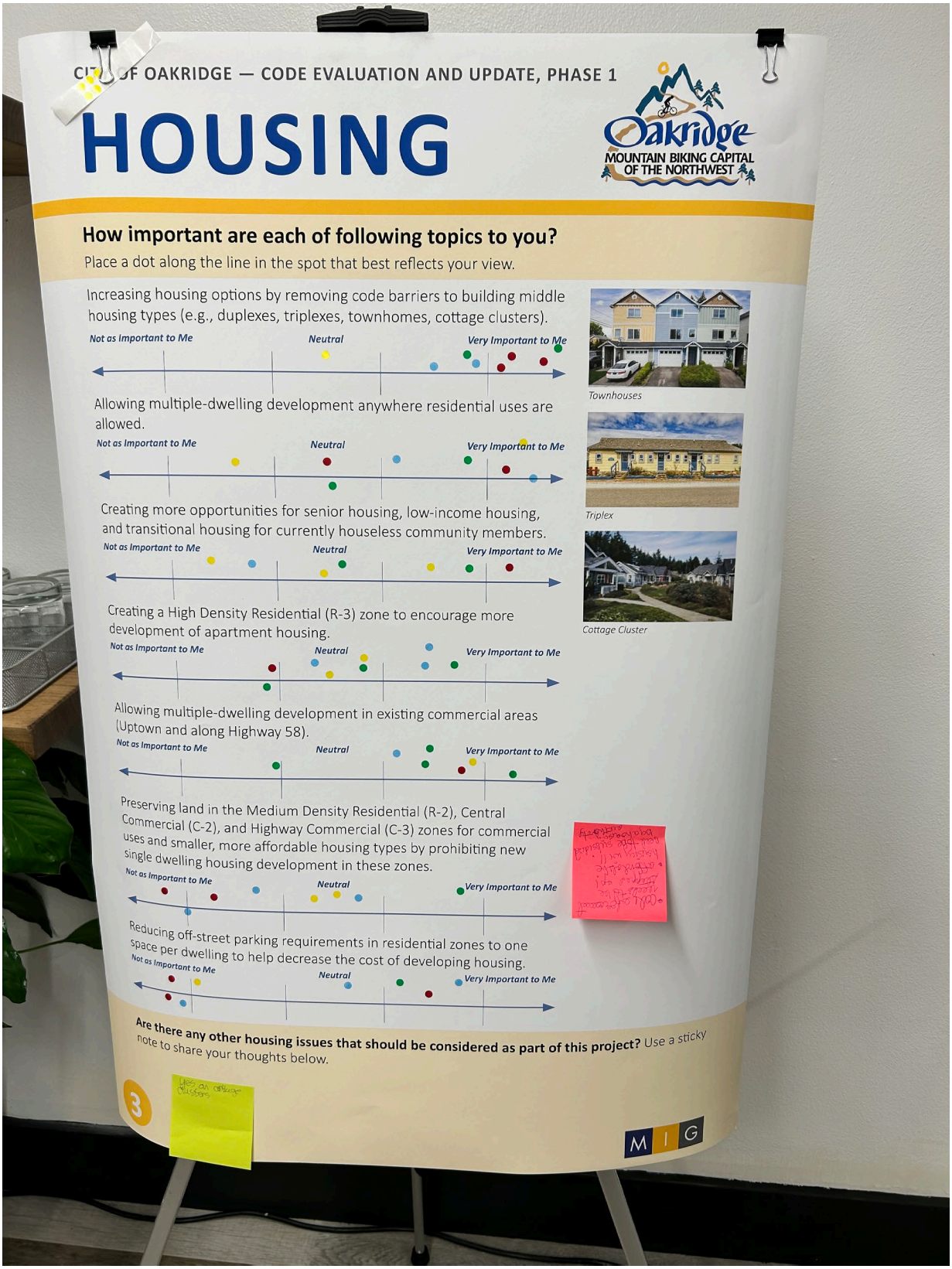
As shown in Figure 2, increasing housing options was “very important” to the majority of participants. “Allowing multiple-dwelling development anywhere residential uses are allowed” was "very important" to neutral to the majority of participants. Creating more senior, transitional, etc. housing options was of varied importance to participants – "very important" to some, "somewhat unimportant" to others. Participants responded fairly neutral to creating a R-3 High Density Residential zone. The majority of participants voted that “allowing multiple-dwelling development in existing commercial areas” is "somewhat important." Preserving land in certain zones for smaller, more affordable housing types was “not as important” or of neutral importance to most participants. Reducing off-street parking requirements in residential zones was “not as important” to about half of participants, and "somewhat important" or "neutral" to the other half of participants.

Community members shared the following comments on the boards:

- Yes, to cottage clusters!
- Code enforcement needs to be stepped up!
- Affordable housing will need to be subsidized by a housing authority

During the presentation, a community member asked about allowing tiny homes and the building code associated with such development. While building code is outside the scope of this project, this project could explore zoning code amendments that could catalyze the development of more tiny homes.

Figure 2: Housing Board Results



Multimodal Transportation

Issues to consider:

- *Improving the safety of walking, biking, and rolling (e.g., scooters, mobility devices) along and across Hwy. 58.*
- *Improving bike and pedestrian connectivity around town through more trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks.*
- *Reconfiguring on-street parking in Uptown to make space for bike lanes, as proposed in the adopted Transportation System Plan.*
- *Requiring green infrastructure, like street trees or stormwater planters, to be built with new development.*

As shown in Figure 3 improving safety along and across Hwy. 58 was "somewhat" or "very important" to the majority of participants. Improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity was "neutral" or "somewhat important" to most participants. Most participants voted that reconfiguring off-street parking in Uptown was "neutral" or "not as important" to them. Requiring green infrastructure was "somewhat" or "very important" to most participants.

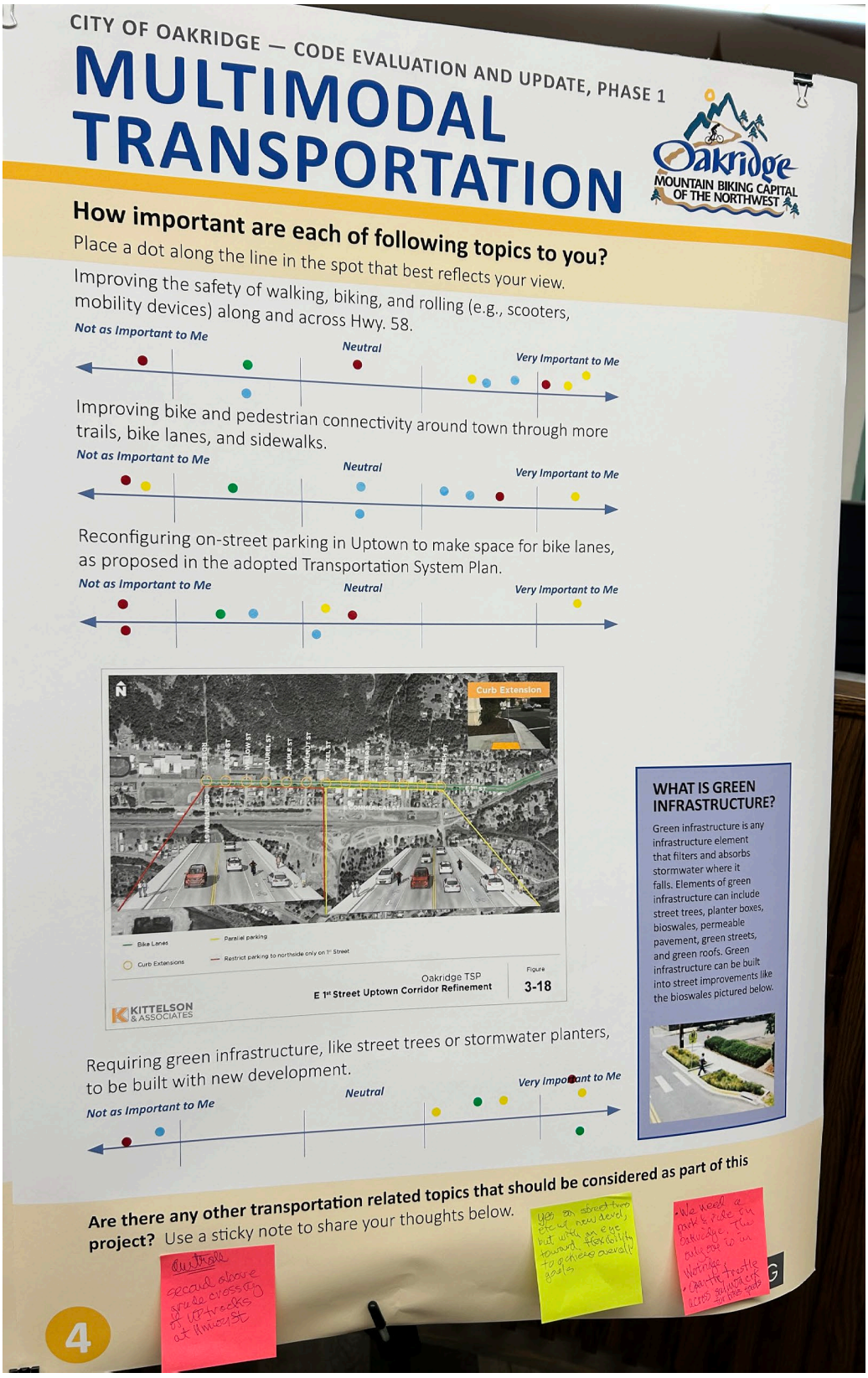
Comments put on the board included:

- We need a park and ride in Oakridge. The only one is in [Westfir].
- Open the trestle across Salmon Creek for bikes and peds.
- Yes, on street trees, etc. with new development but with an eye toward flexibility to achieve overall goals.
- Second above grade crossing of UP tracks at Union St.

During the presentation, a community member asked how transit service could be built within Oakridge and incorporated into the code amendments.

Another community member mentioned the partnerships that businesses have with transit services in Eugene. Businesses can buy reduced fee bus passes for their employees. This service is not currently available in Oakridge but would help more people be able to work in Eugene and make a living wage. Project team members acknowledged that, while a partnership like this is outside the scope of this project, it is still important to note.

Figure 3: Multimodal Transportation Board Results



Short Term Rentals (STRs)

Issues to consider:

- *Adding a definition for "short term rentals" to the Oakridge Zoning Ordinance so that they may be more specifically addressed in the code.*
- *Requiring STR owners, such as those with properties listed on Airbnb, to register their unit(s) with the City and pay a permit fee.*
- *Requiring owner-occupancy, ensuring that the owner of the STR unit will live somewhere on the property.*
- *Limiting the number of STR units allowed within city limits.*

As shown in Figure 4, participants were split on the importance of adding a definition for STRs to the Zoning Ordinance. Most participants voted that STR registration permit and/or fees were "very important" or "somewhat important."

One comment on the board said "yes – register STR; no – pay fee."

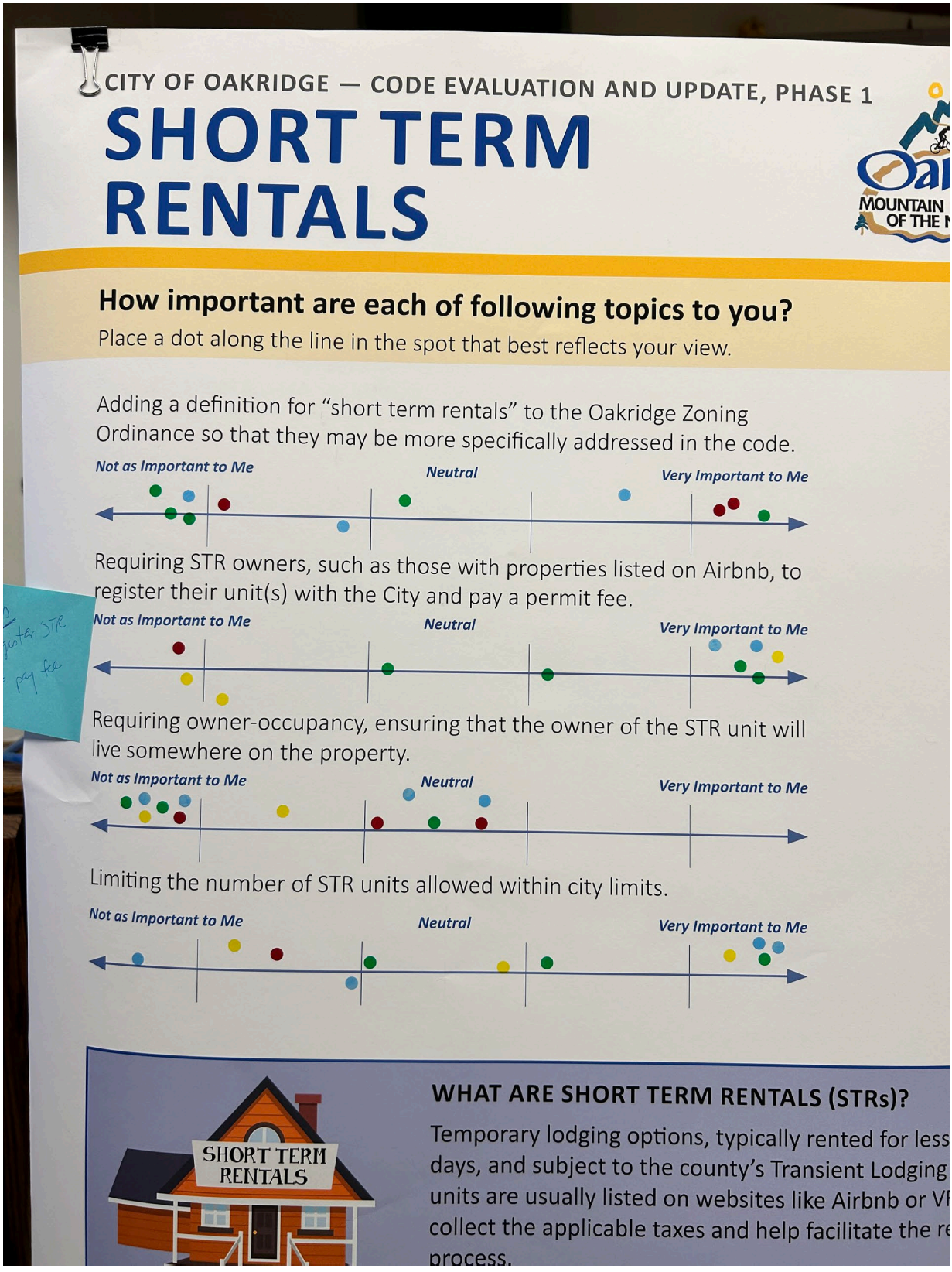
During the presentation, one community member shared that the STR(s) she owns would not be affordable housing to anyone, even if it was not a STR, due to the value of improvements. Therefore, she felt that STRs were not taking away from the affordable housing stock in Oakridge.

Another community member shared that a house on his street that is currently a long-term rental creates problems for the street. He would rather see it be an Airbnb than a nuisance property.

One community member asked how a cap on the number of STRs could be calculated. The consultant team shared that it is up to the City to decide. Data on housing availability and affordability constraints from the concurrent Housing Needs Analysis project could help determine the cap.

Anther community member raised the point that STRs provide tax revenue that long-term rentals do not via the transient room tax.

Figure 4: Short Term Rentals Board Results



Other Topics

During the presentation the following questions and comments were raised:

- Design guidelines in Uptown and for residential uses should be updated to Firewise or similar standards
- A community member asked if smart growth development guidelines are codified anywhere or required by state statute.

Online Engagement Summary

Overall, the online open house results aligned with the comments heard at the in-person community meeting. The online open house was open for public response from December 7 to December 31, 2022. Online respondents indicated that all topics were at least somewhat important to address in the project. Detailed responses can be found in the Online Response Export attachment.

Attachments

A. ONLINE RESPONSE EXPORT

B. PRESENTATION SLIDE DECK

C. TGM INFORMATION HANDOUT

D. TOPIC BOARDS