



City of Newark Rental Housing Workgroup

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City of Newark
Rental Housing Workgroup

PUBLIC SIGN-IN

Check here if
you'd like to
comment publicly

First and Last Name

Organization (if applicable)

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OPAL PLUMER			☐
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RENTAL HOUSING WORKGROUP MEETING #4

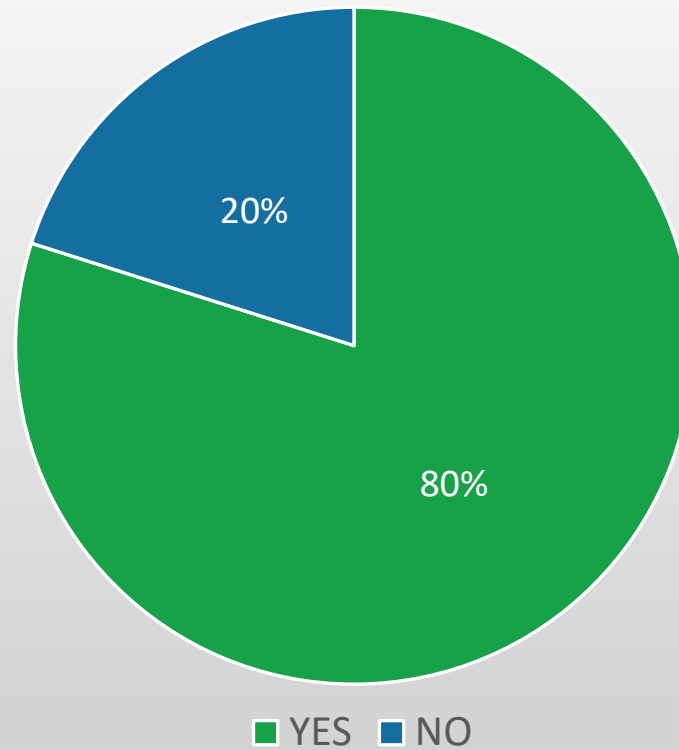
Council Chambers

October 16, 2019

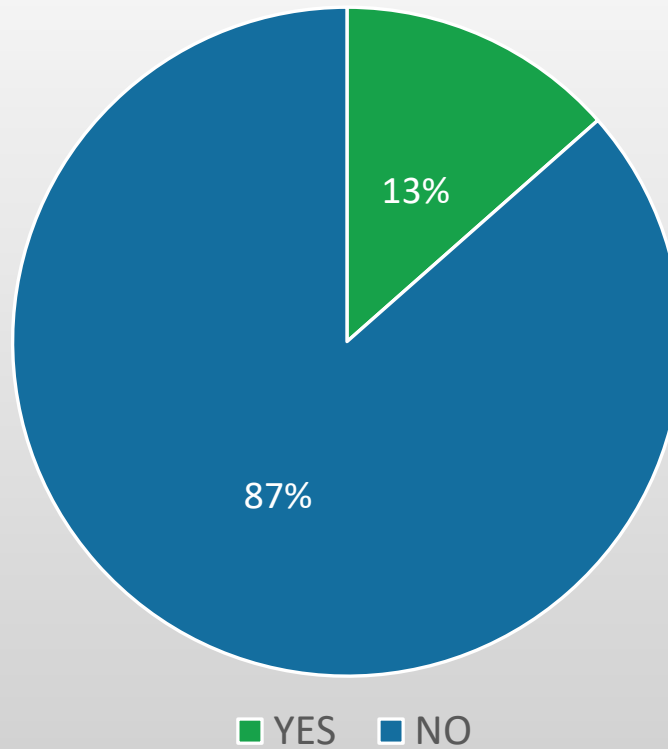
Rental Housing Survey Overview

- ▶ Open from September 15 – October 14, 2019
- ▶ Received 378 responses
- ▶ Promoted through the following methods:
 - ▶ Community Day, September 15, 2019
 - ▶ Email blast to stakeholders and meeting attendees
 - ▶ Workgroup member promotion (Landlord's Assoc., NHA)
 - ▶ Newark Post
 - ▶ Social media

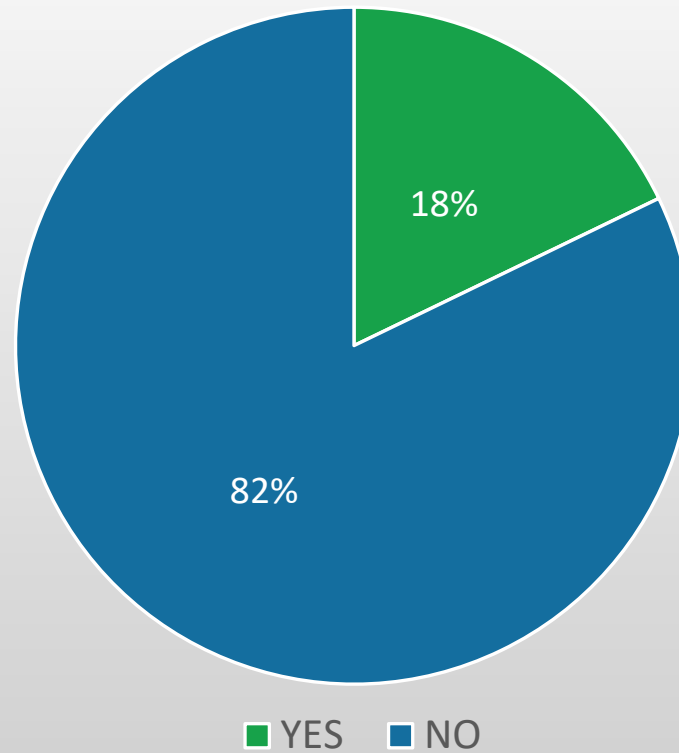
Q1: Are you a resident of the City of Newark?



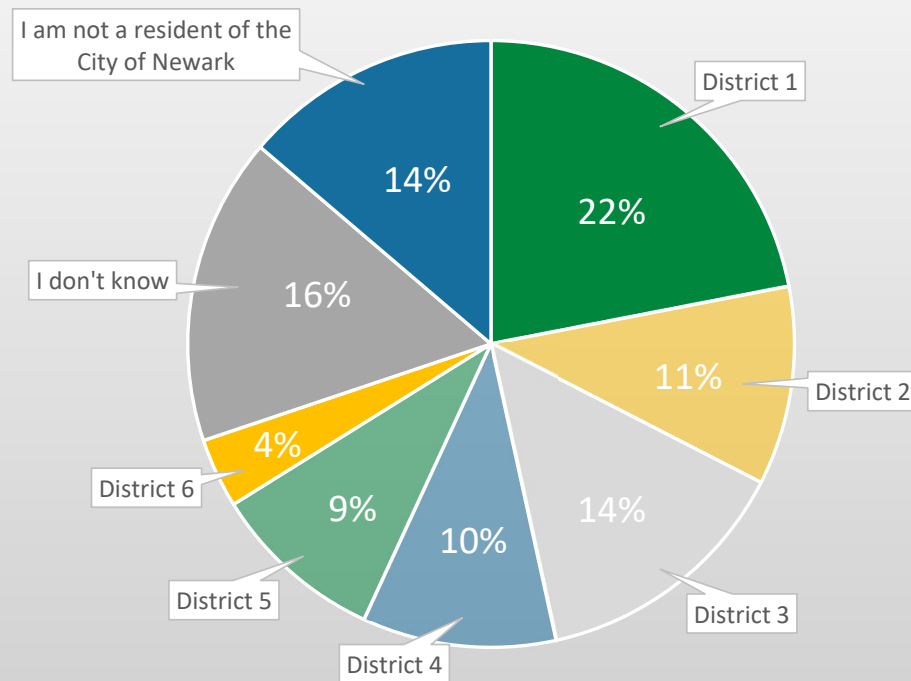
Q2: Are you a University of Delaware student?



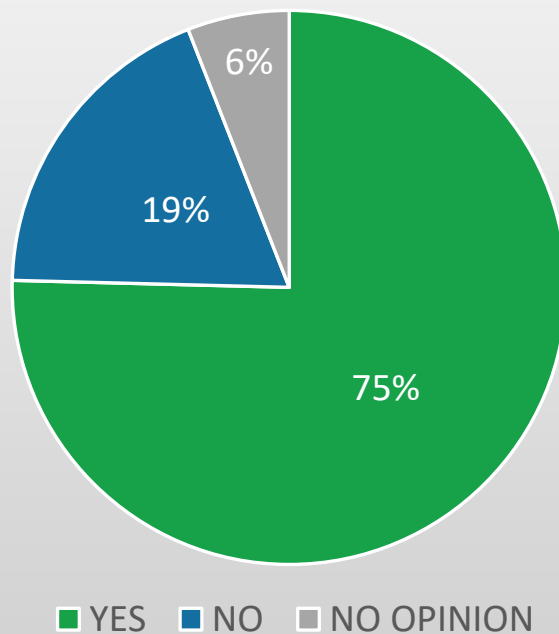
Q3: Do you own rental property in the City of Newark?



Q4: Please select which City of Newark Council District you reside in.



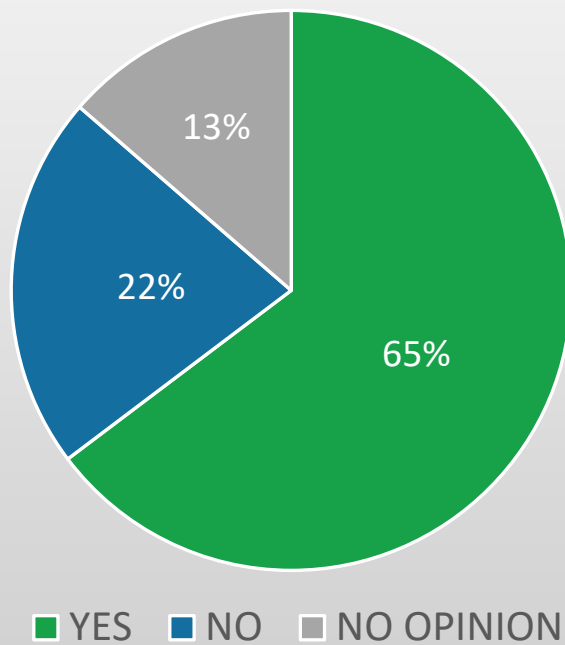
Q5: Do you support the following University of Delaware Student Growth Subcommittee recommendation? Institute a community relations campaign to help students living off campus to understand expectations and common courtesies as a community member in the City of Newark.



Common Comment Themes:

- Doubtful that a campaign would make any difference in student behavior.
- This should be the responsibility of the University of Delaware.
- These are items that the landlord should relay to the tenant upon property rental.

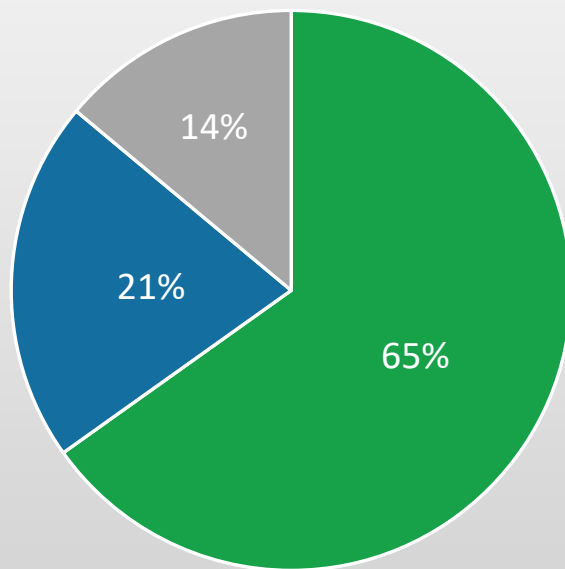
Q6: Do you support the following University of Delaware Student Growth Subcommittee recommendation? UD to improve available data about student enrollment numbers and students living off campus via a voluntary student survey.



Common Comment Themes:

- The survey should be made mandatory.
- UD should already have this information and be publicly sharing it.

Q7: Do you support the following University of Delaware Student Growth Subcommittee recommendation? Improve the process to disseminate information about available rental housing opportunities with more concise, aggregated information (“one stop shop”) for people seeking rental housing.

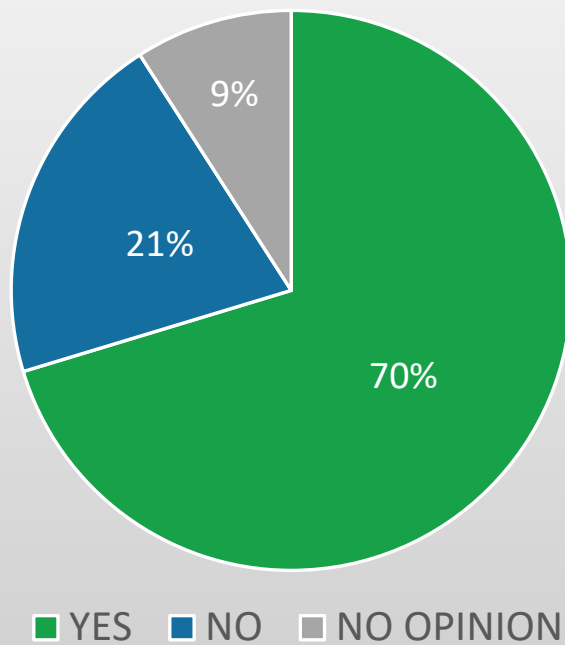


■ YES ■ NO ■ NO OPINION

Common Comment Themes:

- This information should be made available to the public, and not just the student population.
- The information is already out there.
- Increase accountability for landlords, could be an area to review them as well.

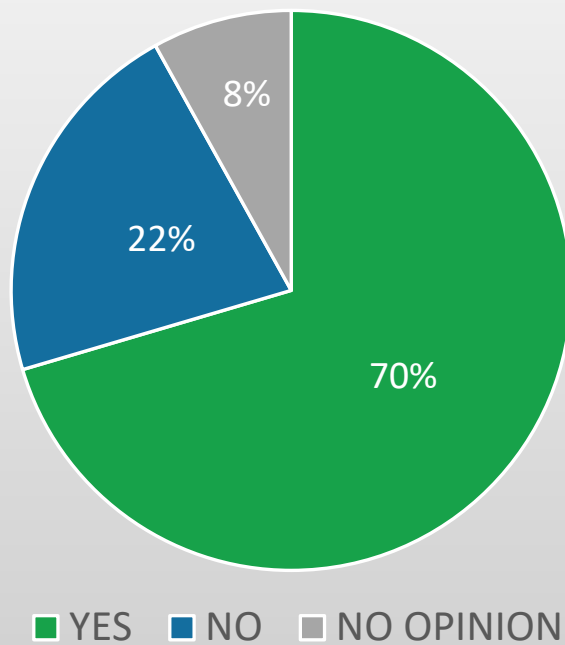
Q8: Do you support the following University of Delaware Student Growth Subcommittee recommendation? Improve the ability for the general public to find out information regarding rental property ownership.



Common Comment Themes:

- Landlords need more accountability for their tenants and property upkeep.
- Information is already available, need to inform the public how to use websites that already exist.
- Increase accuracy of data.

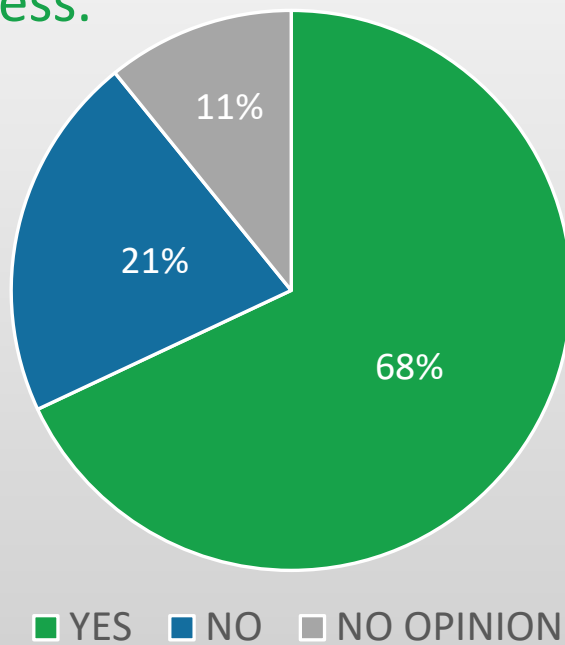
Q9: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Improve the rental inspection program to include: a safety marketing/educational component; promote voluntary interior inspections; develop a “what to expect” document to explain inspection purpose/process; and provide a publicly available list of properties that have been interior-inspected.



Common Comment Themes:

- Inspections should be made mandatory and include exterior inspections.
- Timing of the inspection is key e.g., before re-leasing or tenant occupancy.
- Could be a marketing tool for landlords who comply and have properties that are kept up.
- Inspections are cumbersome and expensive, government should not be involved.

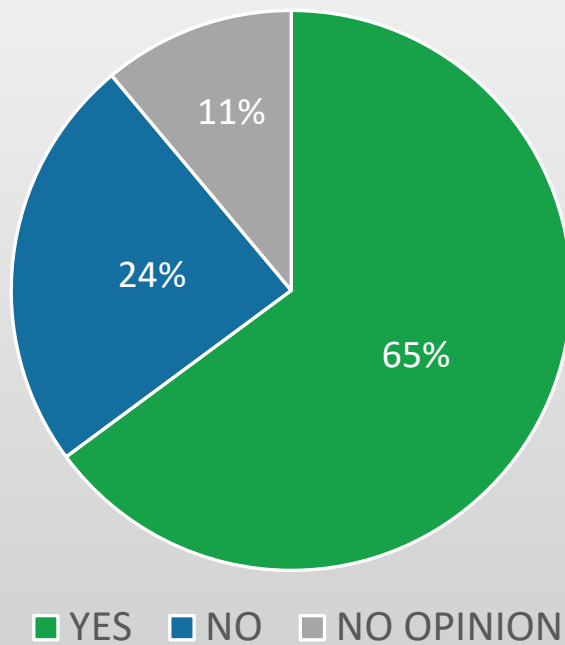
Q10: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Reassess the 20-year-old Student Home Ordinance (which regulates permits for single family homes occupied by more than two college students, outside of Newark's central core) to determine its current effectiveness.



Common Comment Themes:

- 20 years is too long without an update.
- Not sure how effective it is now.
- Stronger enforcement is needed.
- Do not promote rentals in primarily residential family occupied homes through a reassessment.
- Eliminate the ordinance entirely, reassess the legality.

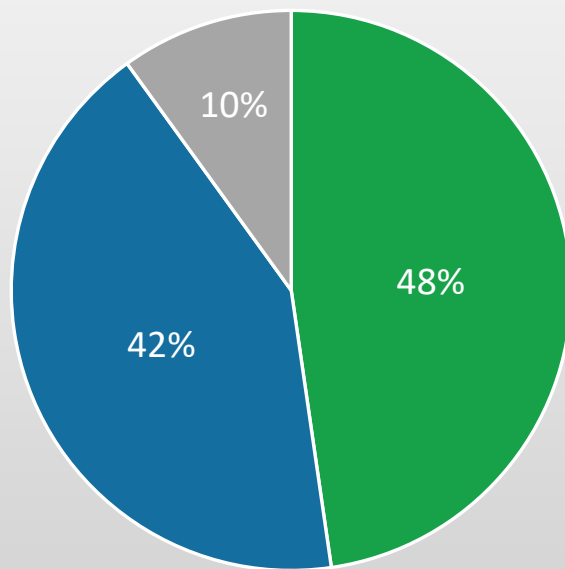
Q11: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Also related to the Student Home Ordinance – replace the word “student” with “unrelated persons” since the definition of student in the ordinance is broad and cannot be confirmed by tenants or the University.



Common Comment Themes:

- Assess the legality of this change.
- Better define “student” instead.
- Melding too much into personal life.
- Effectiveness of enforcement.

Q12: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Also related to the Student Home Ordinance – increase allowable occupancy in homes on exempt streets to be based not on a specific “allowable number of unrelated individuals,” but rather based on a home’s square footage and number of bedrooms.

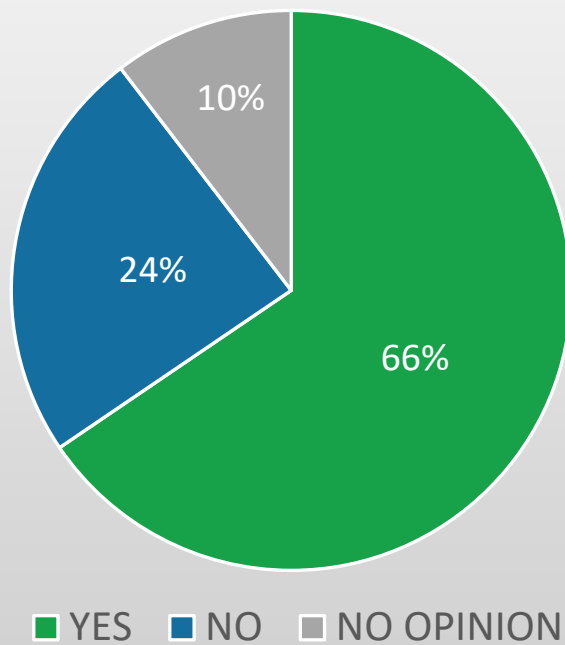


■ YES ■ NO ■ NO OPINION

Common Comment Themes:

- Exempt streets need to be reviewed.
- Too subjective - what is the definition of a bedroom?
- What about the spillover effects - parking, increased garbage, etc.
- Enforcement is key.
- Fear that this is going to just pack more students into single family homes.

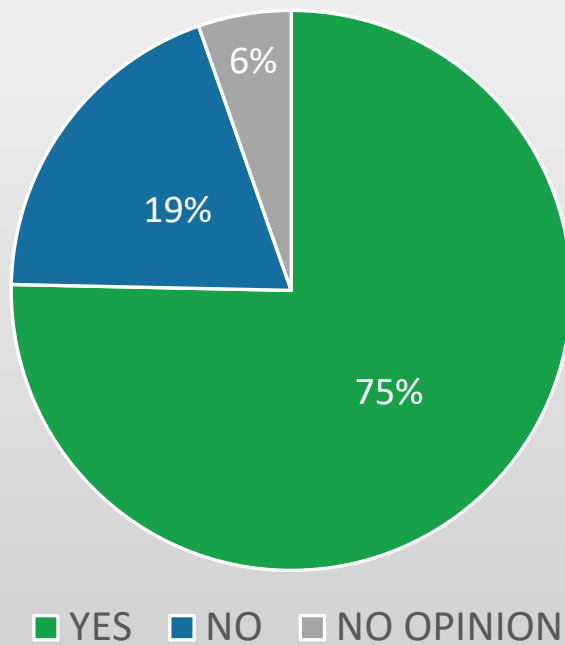
Q13: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Expand Property Maintenance Code section 404.8.3.D to include all civil violations from Unruly Social Gathering Ordinance in addition to noise (underage drinking, littering, fights, etc.)



Common Comment Themes:

- What is the Code/Ordinance?
- Current enforcement is an issue.

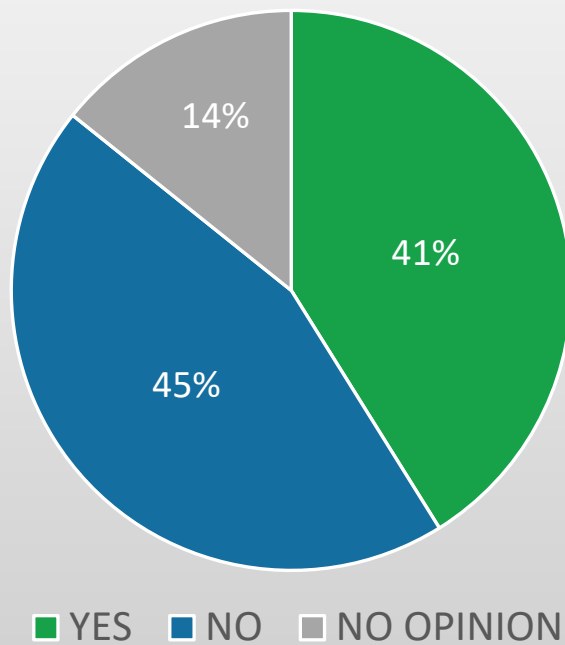
Q14: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Improve policy on enforcement of repeat property owner/landlord offenders to include penalization and escalating fines.



Common Comment Themes:

- Property owners/landlords should be held responsible.
- The City makes visits, but nothing is done.
- Current enforcement is an issue.
- Landlords are not responsible for the behavior of their tenants.

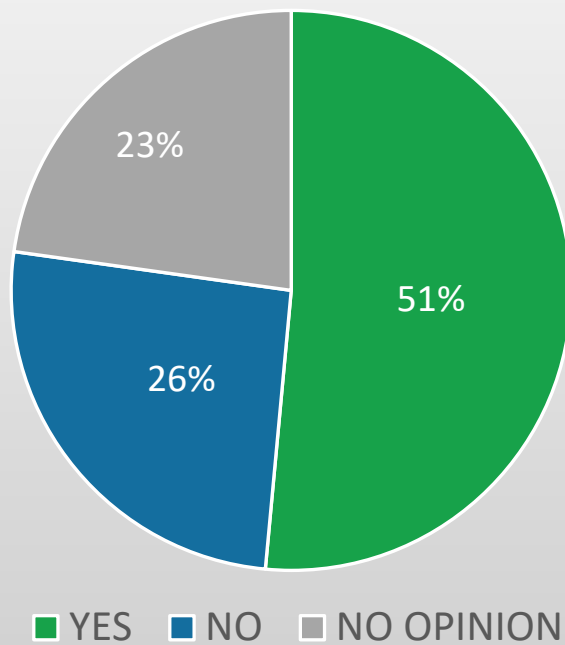
Q15: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Consider reducing rental permit late fees from 25% to around 5%, like other City permit late fees.



Common Comment Themes:

- No reason to reduce, just pay on time.
- Needs to remain high to keep landlords on task with inspections and renewing rental permits.
- Reduce, but not as drastically.
- What are funds used for?

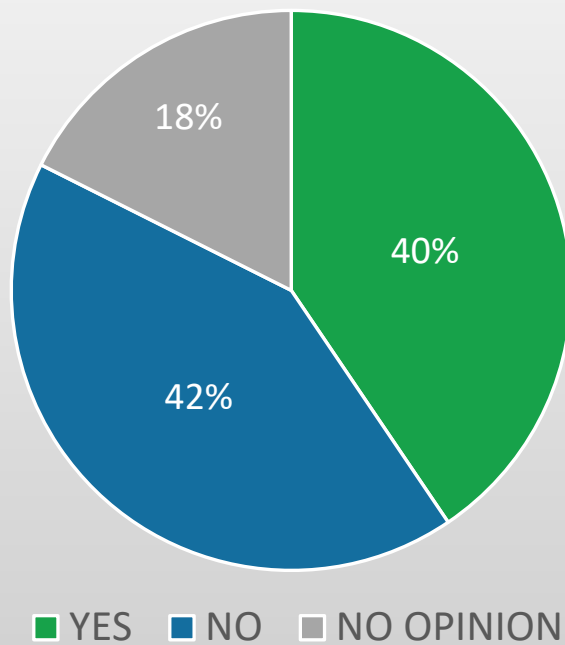
Q16: Do you support the following Rental Permits Subcommittee recommendation? Consolidate bills and inspections for owners of more than 1 rental property.



Common Comment Themes:

- As long as it doesn't cost the City more time or money.
- It's up to property owners to keep track of their properties.

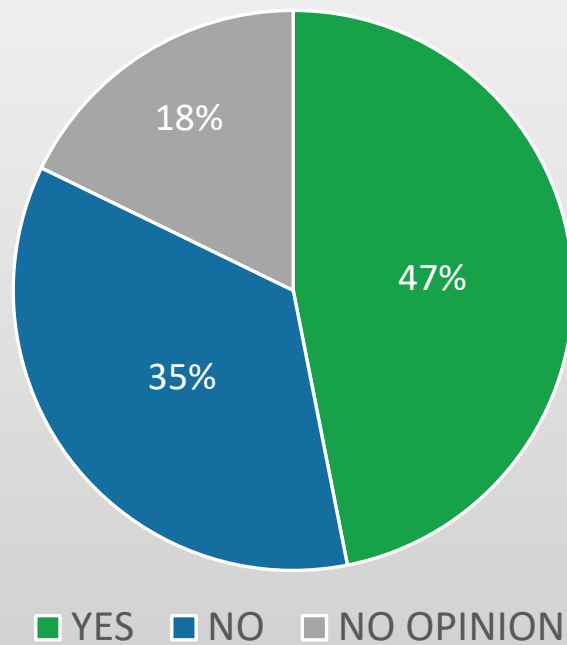
Q17: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Amend zoning code to include an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring new housing development to include some affordable housing measure for rental housing such as percentage of units made affordable, fee-in-lieu, and density bonuses.



Common Comment Themes:

- Need for affordable housing in Newark.
- Would this just make apartments cheaper for college students?
- What is the definition of “affordable housing”?
- Developers will just pay the fee-in-lieu. Where is that money going?

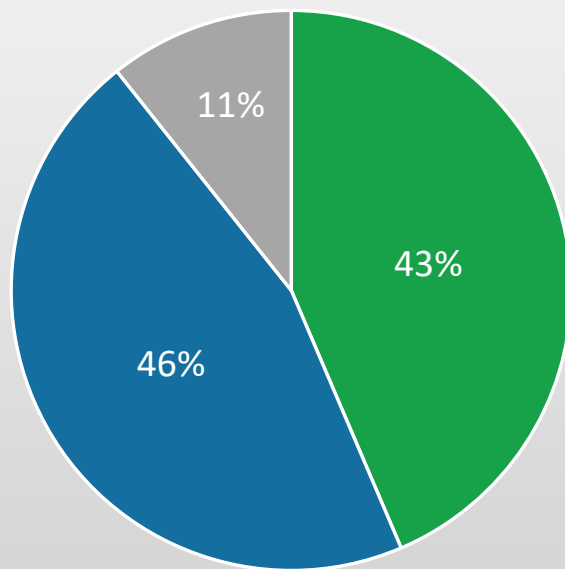
Q18: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Amend zoning code to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) at single-family, owner-occupied homes with parameters such as limited number of tenants, tenants must be non-transient, attached or detached, architectural guidelines, etc.



Common Comment Themes:

- What are ADUs? Need more information.
- Keep it for family, not general rental housing.
- Limit the percentage of ADU permits.
- Architectural standards are key.
- How will this be enforced?

Q19: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Amend zoning code to allow Duplex or Semi-detached housing in areas with single-family zoning. Incorporate architectural guidelines that ensure the building setbacks, parking, height, and mass are complimentary to the surrounding neighborhood.

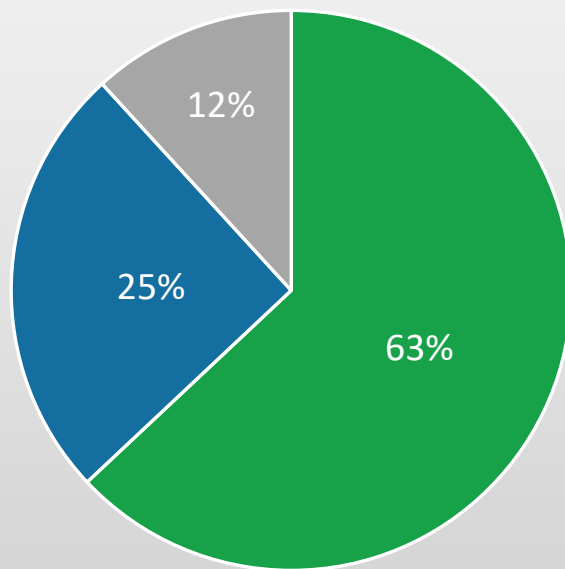


■ YES ■ NO ■ NO OPINION

Common Comment Themes:

- Undermines the point of zoning - single family home areas should remain that way.
- Would provide expanded housing opportunities and allow for affordable housing.
- Need more information to understand the consequences.
- Could apply just for new developments and neighborhoods.

Q20: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Develop a program to support transitioning rental units into owner occupied homes through an incentive program.

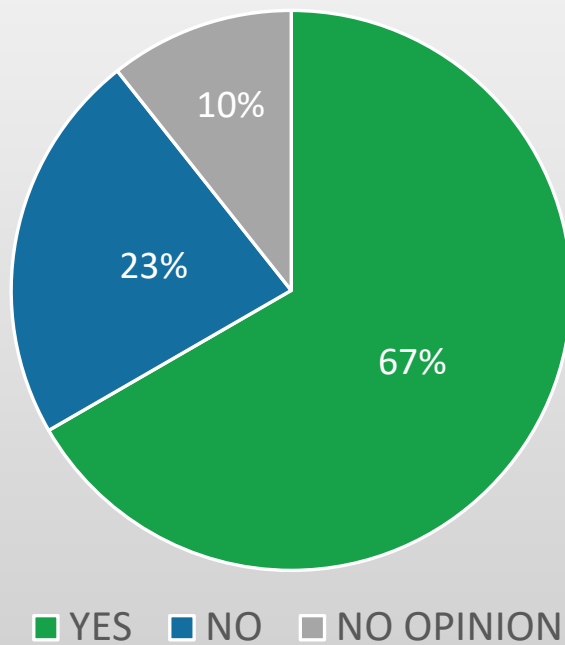


■ YES ■ NO ■ NO OPINION

Common Comment Themes:

- City already tried this with the POOH program and it did not work.
- Where is the money coming from?
- Would help families and the City.
- Does the City really need to be involved with this?
- Supply and demand issue must be resolved.

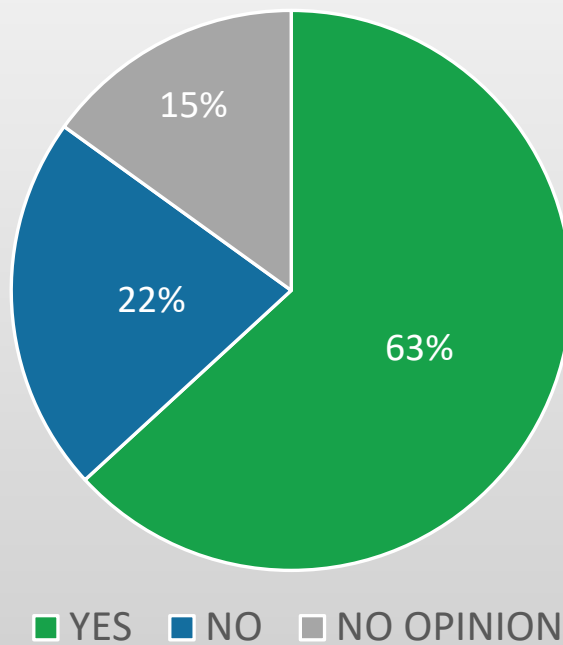
Q21: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Identify additional federal, state, and private funding sources for affordable renter and home ownership programs.



Common Comment Themes:

- People in need of funds are not aware they are available.
- For home ownership, but not rentals.
- The more assistance, the better.

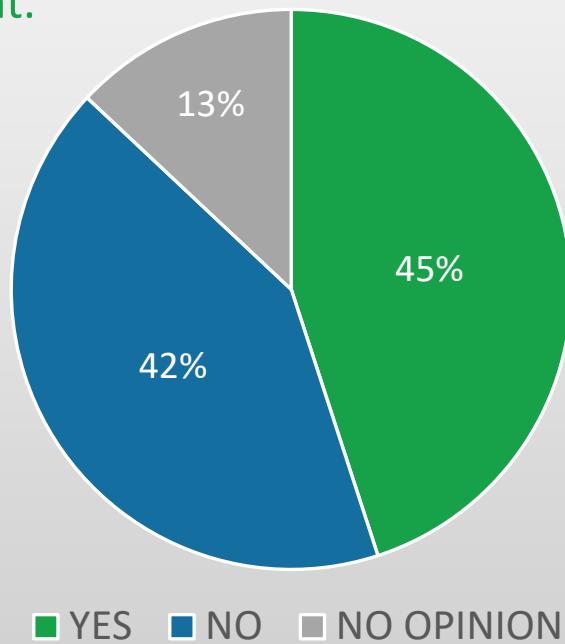
Q22: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Officials to improve safety and increase neighborhood appeal for non-student renters through increased civic engagement and events.



Common Comment Themes:

- Skeptical of effectiveness.
- Need better code enforcement.
- Safety events – yes, civic events, no. The City already hosts events.
- Need more information and examples.

Q23: Do you support the following Non-Student and Affordable Housing Subcommittee recommendation? Increase development density within the downtown core to allow more mixed-use, commercial, and housing development (including student and non-student housing and amenities) in areas within close proximity to the University. Implement the proposed zoning density increases within Newark's Focus Areas to allow more infill development of higher density development.



Common Comment Themes:

- Newark road infrastructure cannot handle any more density.
- Preferable to increase density at downtown core. Will pull students away from residential areas.
- What are the Focus Areas?
- Affordable housing and mixed-use must be incorporated.

Q24: Please provide any additional thoughts, ideas, comments, etc. about the Rental Housing Workgroup and/or these recommendations:

Common Themes:

- General appreciation for looking into these issues.
- Needed to allow for more time and advertisement so that people could come to Workgroup and Subcommittee meetings (i.e. not during the workday.)
- Parking and traffic concerns must also be addressed as consequences of recommendations.
- There needs to be a discussion of how to support density increases.
- Better enforcement of laws and regulations that are already in place.
- The University should have increased involvement and awareness of student housing needs/trends both on-campus and within City limits.
- Better accountability for both student renters and landlords.
- Availability of affordable housing is an issue for **all** parties involved.
- Shift the rental market focus away from undergraduate students; consider graduate students, families, etc.

Meeting Summary

10/16/2019

The Rental Housing Workgroup met at The City of Newark Council Chambers on 10/16/2019. The following Workgroup members were in attendance:

Name	Organization
Jeff Dixon	District 6 Representative
Matt Dutt	Multifamily Housing Landlord
Mike Fortner	City Planner, City of Newark
Meghan George	Housing Manager, Newark Housing Authority
Tina Jackson	District 2 Representative
Vinny Jackson	Office of Conduct, UD
Kevin Mayhew	Newark Landlord's Association
Tim Poole	Code Enforcement, City of Newark
Katie Rizzo	Office of the Dean of Students, UD
Mary Ellen Gray	City of Newark
Elisabeth McCollum	JMT
Allysha Lorber	JMT
Sarah Diehl	JMT

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the results of the public survey seeking input and feedback on the Rental Housing Workgroup's DRAFT Recommendations, and to get consensus on the recommendations that will be presented to the City Council on October 28th.

The following items were discussed:

Rental Housing Survey Overview

- Open from September 15 – October 14, 2019
- Received 378 responses
- Promoted through the following methods:
 - Community Day, September 15, 2019
 - Email blast to stakeholders and meeting attendees
 - Workgroup member promotion (Landlord's Assoc., NHA)
 - Newark Post
 - Social Media
- Please refer to the meeting presentation for a complete summary of survey results.

Affordable Housing Discussion

- A comment was made by a member of the public regarding the fact that housing at its current state seems to be geared solely towards students.

- It was suggested that buildings should have units for seniors, handicapped, veterans, and others who can no longer afford to do so.
- The concept of inclusionary zoning was explained and how it is a part of the recommendations.
- It was then suggested that older units should adopt inclusionary zoning principles and not be created in only new developments. The City does not have the authority to regulate this; they cannot force a private landowner to convert units in their building once they have been approved.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) will help provide more affordable rental options to the community.
- Particular attention was paid to the close survey results for following recommendation: Amend the zoning code to include an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring new housing development to include some affordable housing measure for rental housing such as percentage of units made affordable, fee-in-lieu, and density bonuses:
 - Concern that density bonuses would be seen as an incentive and fee-in-lieu a disadvantage.
 - Ultimately, funding has to be approved to make any of this possible
 - It is up to the jurisdiction to determine what percentage of housing must be affordable
 - <10% is typical
 - Developments that are larger/smaller than average must be considered.
 - For example, it would be difficult for a development with less than 10 units to achieve affordable housing balance versus one that is 150+ units
- There was concern raised that the fee in-lieu option of the proposed inclusionary zoning recommendation would be seen as an “out” to developers.
 - Fee in-lieu is not an “out”- these funds would go back to the City to be spent on affordable housing programs and units built elsewhere in the City.
 - There are some cases where the idea of building the units elsewhere in the City may be more successful.
- The inclusionary zoning ordinance will be a lengthy measure for Council to undertake. This, as well as all other recommendations, are meant to be the starting points for Council to take and write/adopt specific legislation to address the issues.

“Spillover” Effects Discussion

- The spillover effects of these recommendations (i.e. traffic and parking) must be addressed. What are current City Council efforts on this matter?
 - ~2-year parking subcommittee effort: public meetings, discussions, etc.
 - Set of recommendations looking at ways to improve parking efficiency, particularly focusing on the downtown area
 - Workplan put together and approved by Council
- The establishment of a Transportation Improvement District (TID) is already underway
 - This will help to anticipate future needs and uses with a complete a buildout projection
 - Traffic forecasts for the buildout scenario will help to identify future transportation investment needs
 - The planned transportation improvements will incorporate multi-modal transit, bicycle, and pedestrian mobility needs to help reduce automobile congestion
 - The costs for planned transportation improvements will be assessed and divided equitably among future developments within the TID

Additional Discussion

- It was decided that all recommendations should be presented to Council on the 28th as is
- Survey summary will be included in presentation
- Two members of the public provided comment at the end of the meeting. They expressed a general concern regarding potential new regulations and quality of life.