

Valdez Zoning Code (Title 17) Revision zoningvaldez.com Community Survey Results | Spring 2023

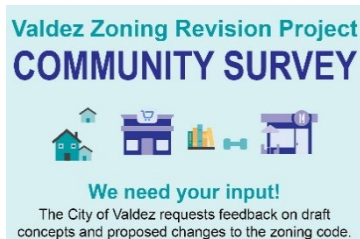
ABOUT THIS SURVEY

As part of the Valdez Zoning Code Revision project’s community outreach, the project team hosted an in-person Open House on March 16, 2023, and released a community survey to gather feedback on the project’s overall direction, proposed concepts and policy choices to include in the new draft code. The event and survey both included explanatory graphics about the proposed concepts, asked the community’s level of support for these concepts, and also asked for feedback on whether and how to approach topics such as short term rentals.

The survey was open between March 24 and April 14, 2023, and received 186 responses. The survey was hosted online by project contractor Agnew::Beck, as well as being available from City staff in paper format (but no paper responses were received).

The survey was shared via:

- Project website zoningvaldez.com
- E-mail listserv
- City website
- City e-newsletter
- City Facebook page
- Print flyers locally



WHO RESPONDED?

Respondents were asked to share some demographic information: about 80% provided answers to these questions.

- 97%** have primary residence in Valdez
- 80%** own a home (**15%** rent, **5%** other)
- 30%** own a business

Length of Residency	Respondents
Less than 5 years	11%
5 – 9 years	11%
10 – 19 years	14%
20 years or more	36%
No answer	25%

Top 10 Occupations

Retired (21)	Oil and Gas (8)
Professional (17)	Education (7)
Trades (10)	Tourism (6)
Self Employed (9)	Government (6)
Healthcare (9)	Maritime/Fishing (4)

TOP TAKEAWAYS

- **Strong support for the overall approach: simplify** the code, build more **housing**, encourage new **development**, and **streamline** the approval process.
- **Support for most proposals to increase housing: accessory dwelling units (ADUs)**, more housing types in residential and commercial zones.
- **Mixed opinions on manufactured housing**, specifically concerns about existing (pre-1976) mobile homes.
- **Recognition that short-term rentals impact the housing market**, but **mixed opinions** on whether and how to regulate them.

COMMUNITY VOICES

“This community needs housing and allowance to expand with less restrictions.”

“Anything we can do to make entrepreneurship and development easier is a good thing.”

“Some changes would be good. Others could effect existing residents and businesses negatively.”

“Still include public in the process but try to eliminate some of the barriers to getting things done.”

“We have to be creative with the limited space we have for building. Along with that we will want to be assured that health and safety standards are applied.”

“I'm only worried about neighboring properties and how 'crowded' it may feel.”

Learn about the project, sign up for e-mail updates, and share your comments: zoningvaldez.com

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Housing

Housing is a top policy priority to address in the new zoning code. Housing-related code changes were the primary focus of this survey. Overall, residents supported the new options—but also expressed concerns about impacts on existing homes and neighborhoods, especially for older mobile homes.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)



78% support ADUs (**14%** oppose)

62% support a size limit for ADUs

Comments:

Many residents would consider building an ADU for family, short- and long-term rentals.

Some concerns about neighborhood impacts.

EXPAND HOUSING TYPES IN MORE ZONES



69% support multi-unit housing (**18%** oppose)



76% support housing in commercial zones (**10%** oppose)



63% support worker housing in more districts (**19%** oppose)

MANUFACTURED AND MOBILE HOMES



Manufactured

57% support manufactured homes (**28%** oppose)



Mobile home

58% oppose (pre-1976) mobile homes (**27%** support)

Comments: Concerns for condition, safety risks of older mobile homes.

SHOP-HOUSES



Detached

80% support shop-houses (**7%** oppose)



Attached

Comments:

Some residents would like to build a shop-house. Concerns about size, design, business uses.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS (STRS)



62% say short term rentals have big impact on the housing market (**23%** some impact, **5%** none)



59% support registration & permits for STRs, like B&Bs. (**32%** oppose)

Comments: Mixed views on whether to regulate or limit STRs.

SNOW STORAGE AND ROOF SHEDDING



Side setback

Mixed opinions about if and how zoning code should manage snow storage, shedding from roofs, potential impacts to property.

Comments: Residents recognize the hazards of Valdez's snowfall, importance of building design. Concerns about damaging neighboring homes.

Commercial and Industrial Uses

Proposed changes include simplifying and broadening the list of commercial uses, and allowing more home occupations.

80% support simplifying business uses and allowing more business types (**3%** oppose)

Comments:

Allow more home-based businesses (home occupations), but limit impacts to neighboring properties: noise, traffic, hours of operation. Mixed opinions about the level of regulation. Other businesses to allow: childcare, small-scale agriculture, food trucks, professional services.

Approval Process

Proposed changes include allowing more uses by-right (without additional approvals), simpler alternatives to current Conditional Use Permit process, and upfront zoning clearance review during initial building or application process.

67% support administrative (staff-only) approvals and simpler processes (**10%** oppose)

Comments:

Many recognize the challenges with current approval process, support streamlining. Some concerned about inconsistent or arbitrary decisions. Others value public hearing process, want opportunity to give input on projects.

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