

Date: December 6, 2023

To: Interested Parties

From: Joe Goode, CEO American Strategies

Re: **Knoxville Multi-Family Zoning Poll Results**

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A new poll from American Strategies shows that Knoxville voters are highly supportive of changing zoning laws to accommodate more types of housing across the city. Almost three-quarters (73 percent) agree with a statement that Knoxville needs more housing options, like duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment complexes (42 percent agree *strongly*). Seventy percent also agree that Knoxville's economy benefits from additional residents, and 61 percent agree that building more housing will help reduce the overall cost of housing in Knoxville.

An overwhelming majority (83 percent) recognize that housing costs in Knoxville are a significant issue, with 59 percent who say costs are a *very big problem* and a further 24 percent who say they are a *fairly big problem*. Eleven percent say costs are a *moderate problem*, while just four percent say that costs are a *slight problem* or *not a problem at all*. A plurality (48 percent) say that housing costs are the most important issue for the Knoxville city government to focus on; crime and public safety follows distantly with 20 percent, with traffic and congestion (12 percent) as the third top concern.

Over two-thirds (69 percent) agree that Knoxville lacks enough housing options. In particular, 83 percent of voters say that there is not enough housing for younger people and those just getting started in their careers, and 80% say the same for people with low incomes. Seventy-one percent also agree there is a lack of housing for people with moderate incomes, and 56 percent say there are too few apartments to rent.

After hearing a brief description of proposed changes to zoning laws in Knoxville, 64 percent favor changes to encourage more multi-family development (36 percent *strongly*). Thirty-one percent are in opposition (17 percent *strongly*), and four percent are unsure.

Nearly half of voters (47 percent) say that they experience at least *slight* strain in covering their monthly housing payments. This trend is especially pronounced among voters who do not own a home (81 percent), and voters under the age of 50 (61 percent). Eighty-nine percent say that if they had to find another home or apartment in Knoxville today, it would be at least *somewhat* difficult for them to do so.

The poll was conducted between September 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, using a combination of live interviews over the phone, and online interviews completed through SMS-to-online. American Strategies interviewed 404 registered voters in total, yielding a margin of error of +/- 4.9 percent.

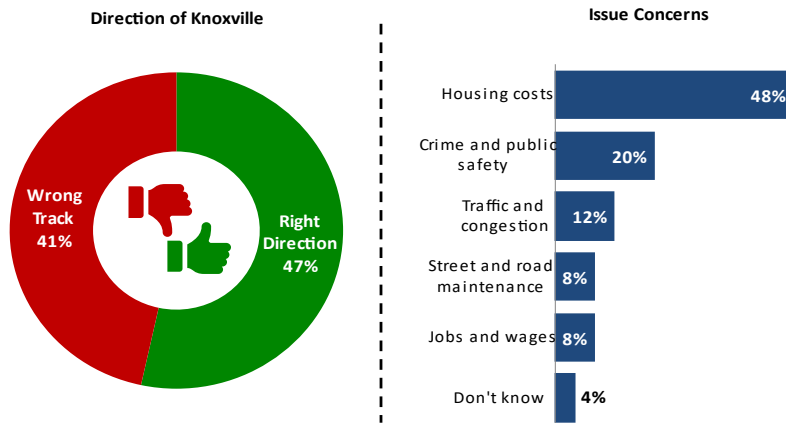
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*American Strategies is a national political research and consulting firm that works on behalf of clients in the housing and economic development sectors. For more information, visit <https://amstrat.com>*

*Methodological inquiries may be directed to: [info@amstrat.com](mailto:info@amstrat.com)*

**Appendix A: Results Deck**

**Plurality say Knoxville is Headed in the Right Direction;  
Housing Costs by Far the Top Concern**

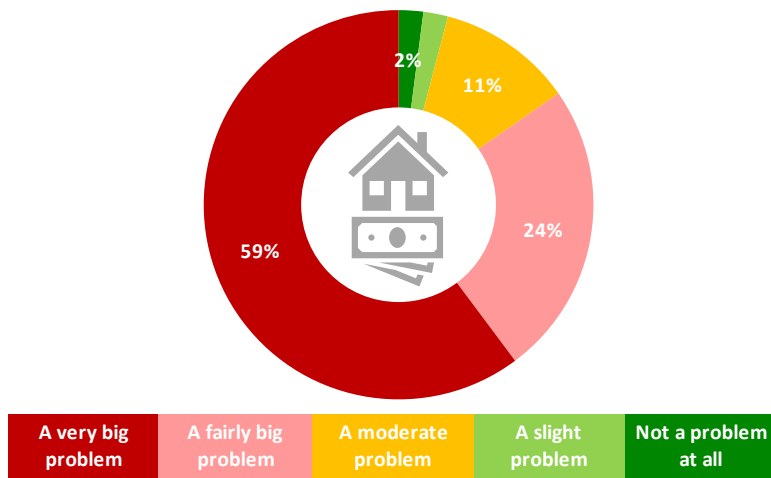


Q. Generally speaking, do you think that things in Knoxville are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?  
 Q. Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that many people have. Please tell me which ONE of these concerns you believe is the most important for the Knoxville city government to focus on.



**Over Three-Quarters Say  
Housing Affordability is a Big Problem**

**Total Problem 83% | Total Not a problem 4%**

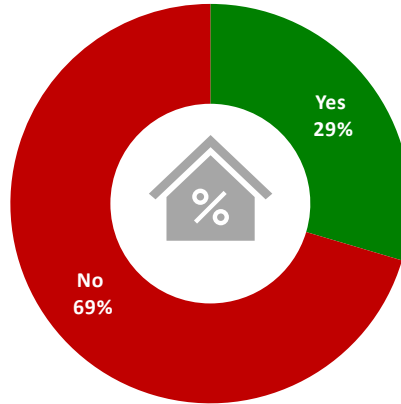


Q. And thinking now just about the issue of housing, how much of a problem is housing affordability in Knoxville, that is to say, how much it costs to buy or rent a home?



## Over Two-Thirds Cite a Lack of Housing Diversity in Knoxville

### Enough Different Housing Options

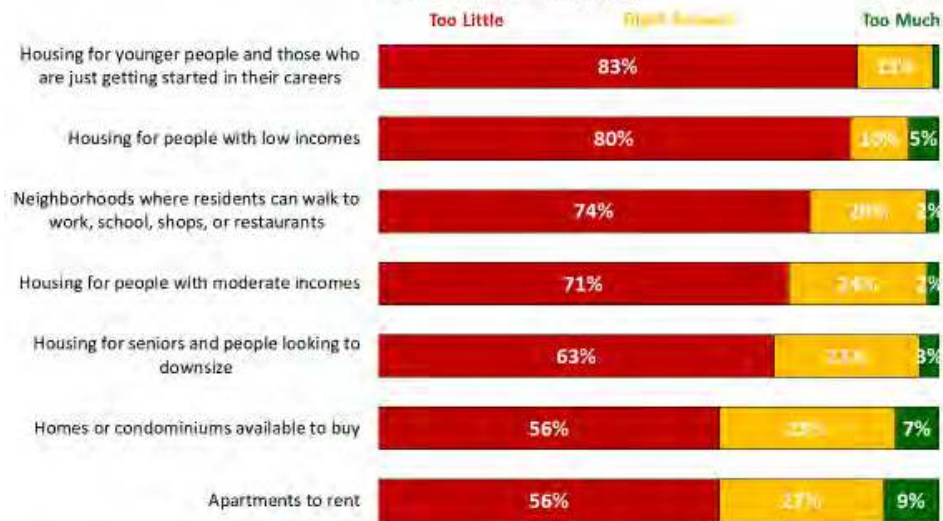


Q. When it comes to housing options in Knoxville, things like apartment buildings, town homes, duplexes, fourplexes, and single-family homes, would you say there are enough different housing options available for people who want to live in Knoxville? (ROTATE) Yes or no.

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## Over Two-Thirds Say Too Little Housing for Low-Income Residents, Younger People

### Inventory of Homes by Type



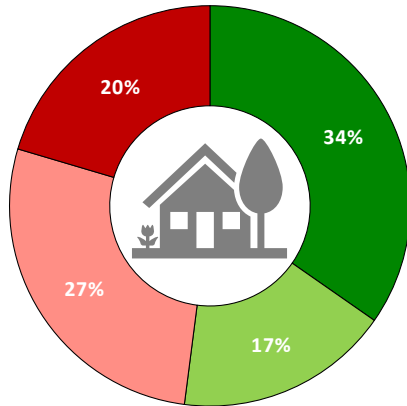
Q. Next, please tell me if you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH/TOD LITTLE) too much, too little, or the right amount of each of the following in Knoxville.

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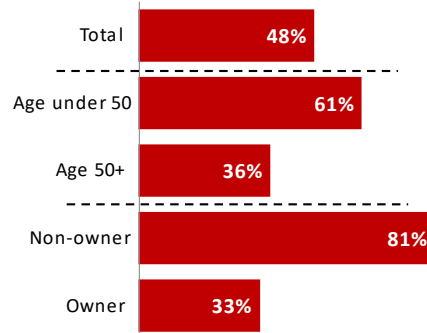
## Half Experience at least Some Financial Strain over Housing Costs

Younger people and non-homeowners disproportionately affected

### Financial Strain



### Significant/Slight Strain by Age and Homeownership

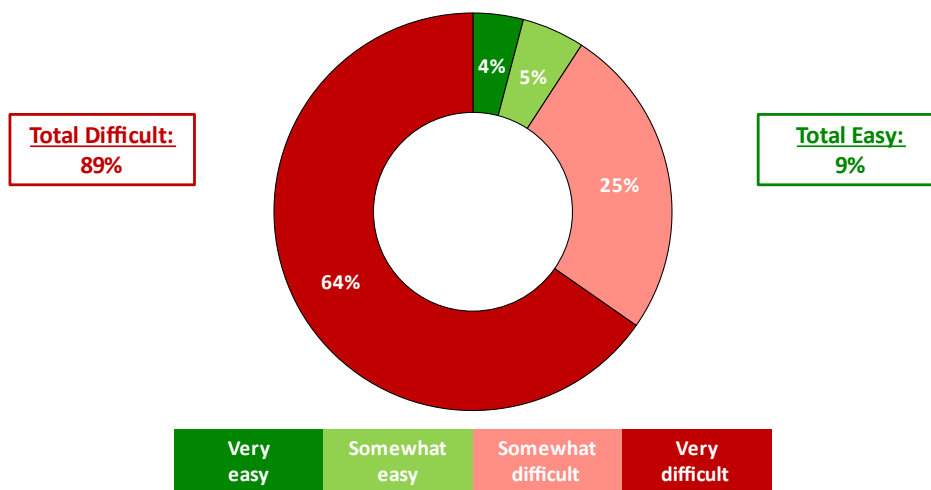


Q. How much of a financial strain on your budget is paying your rent or mortgage each month? Is it (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) a significant strain, a slight strain, not much of a strain, or no strain at all?



## Nearly Nine-in-Ten Would Have Difficulty Finding a New Home in their Price Range

### Ease of Finding Housing in Price Range



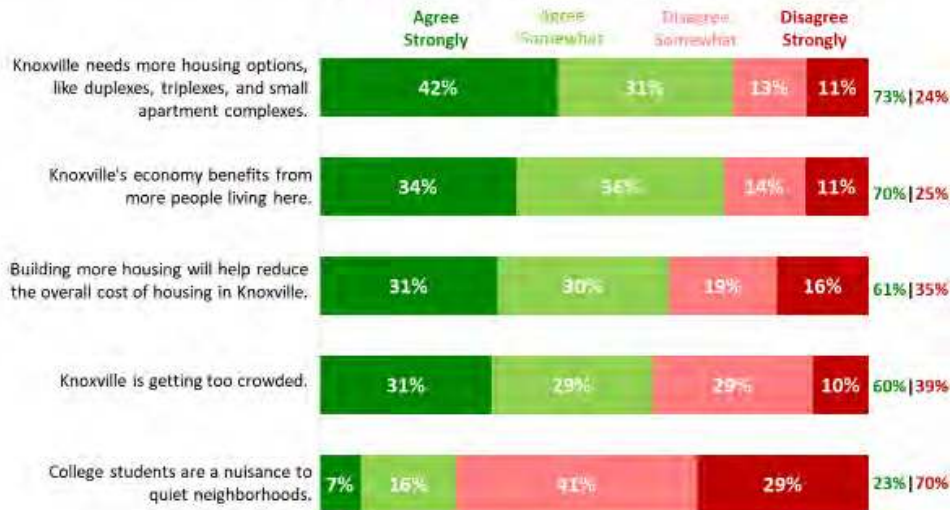
Q. Imagine if you had to find another home or apartment in Knoxville today. Do you think it would be (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult to find something in your price range?



## Majorities Agree More with Pro-Development Sentiment

Strongest feelings are towards additional housing types, economic benefit of more residents

### Housing Growth and Development Statements



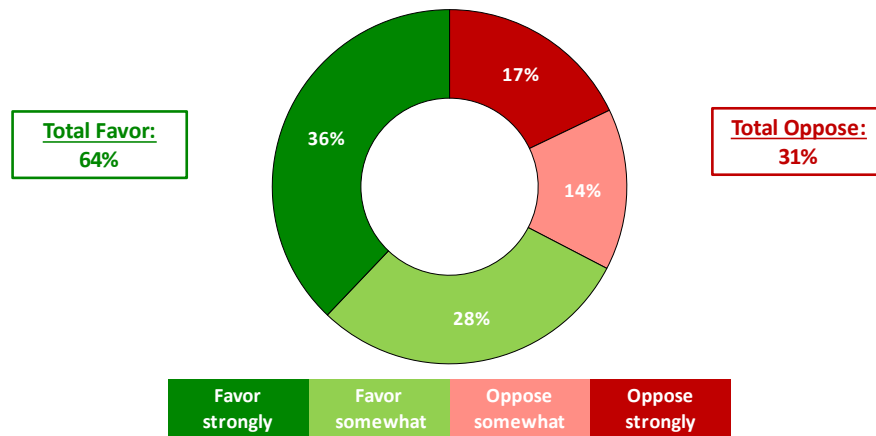
Q. Now I am going to read you a series of statements related to housing, growth, and development in Knoxville. Please tell me whether you (ROTATE) agree or disagree with each.

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## Nearly Two-Thirds Favor New Zoning for More Multi-Family Housing

Over one-third favor strongly

### Changing City Zoning Laws to Allow More Multi-Family Housing



Q. As you may know, Knoxville is mostly zoned for single-family homes only. This means that multi-family homes, like townhouses, duplexes, or triplexes, are not allowed in most neighborhoods. Some people say the city's zoning laws should be changed to allow multi-family housing in more neighborhoods. How about you? Do you [ROTATE] favor or oppose changing the city's zoning laws to allow for more multi-family housing construction in Knoxville?

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