



**Lewiston Planning & Zoning Commission
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
July 8, 2026 - 5:30 PM
Bell Building – Second Floor Conference Room – 215 D Street
Lewiston, Idaho 83501**

Seating will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. CITIZENS COMMENTS

An opportunity for citizens to address the Commission with comments and/or questions about Planning and Zoning Commission-related matters that are not a public hearing action item on this agenda. Citizens are asked to limit their time to three (3) minutes each.

III. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. APPROVAL OF JUNE 24, 2026 MEETING MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

B. GEM STATE HOUSING ALLIANCE (PRESENTATION)::

Presentation by the Gem State Housing Alliance regarding housing policy, addressing NIMBYism, and the importance of considering long-term implications in decision-making.
- Presentation ()

IV. STAFF-COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

A.

SOLICITING COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE FOR THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF JULY 22, 2026 (PUBLIC HEARINGS ON A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND A REZONE APPLICATION).

V. ADJOURNMENT - Action Item

The City of Lewiston is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, and activities and encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided at this meeting, please contact Nikki Province, ADA Coordinator, at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting at 208-746-3671 x 6211.

June 24, 2026

The LEWISTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION met in the Community Development Department Second Floor Conference Room at 215 “D” Street. Chair Iacoboni called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Gabriel Iacoboni, Chair; Emily Wolf, Vice Chair; Cynthia Ball; Zach Battles; Maureen Anderson;

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Shaunita Cable; Kyle Harris;

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Katie Hollingshead, Assistant Planner; Dawn Ortiz, Community Development Office Supervisor; Jennifer Tengono, City Attorney

II. CITIZENS COMMENTS

None

III. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2026 MEETING MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Commissioners Ball and Anderson moved and seconded, respectively, approval of the June 10, 2026, as written. The motion carried 5-0.

B. APPROVAL OF THE REASONED STATEMENT OF RELEVANT CRITERIA AND STANDARDS DENYING FAIRVIEW TERRACE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AMENDMENT BY MILLENNIUM TRUST, LLC (ACTION ITEM):

Commissioner Anderson and Chair Iacoboni moved and seconded, respectively, to approve the Reasoned Statement for PUD-26-1 as written. The motion carried 5-0.

C. RESIDENTIAL ZONES WORKSHOP:

Katie Hollingshead, Assistant Planner, verbally reviewed the current City residential zone uses and used the City’s GIS to provide the locations of current zones and familiarize the commission with the area. Staff provided a description of how a Planned Unit Development is created.

Commissioners discussed current and potential future uses throughout the City zones. Also, how to preserve the residential neighborhoods from moving to commercial and the integrity of the neighborhood. The Commission made comments and asked clarifying questions regarding manufactured home parks and density.

IV. **STAFF-COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. **Query of Commissioners for the July 08, 2026, meeting.**

All commissioners in attendance should be in attendance for the July 08, 2026, meeting, besides Commissioner Wolf.

V. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Commissioner Anderson and Chair Iacoboni moved and seconded, respectively, to adjourn. The motion carried 5-0, and the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at approximately 6:54 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Dawn Ortiz,
Recording Secretary

Chairperson or Acting Chairperson
Planning and Zoning Commission

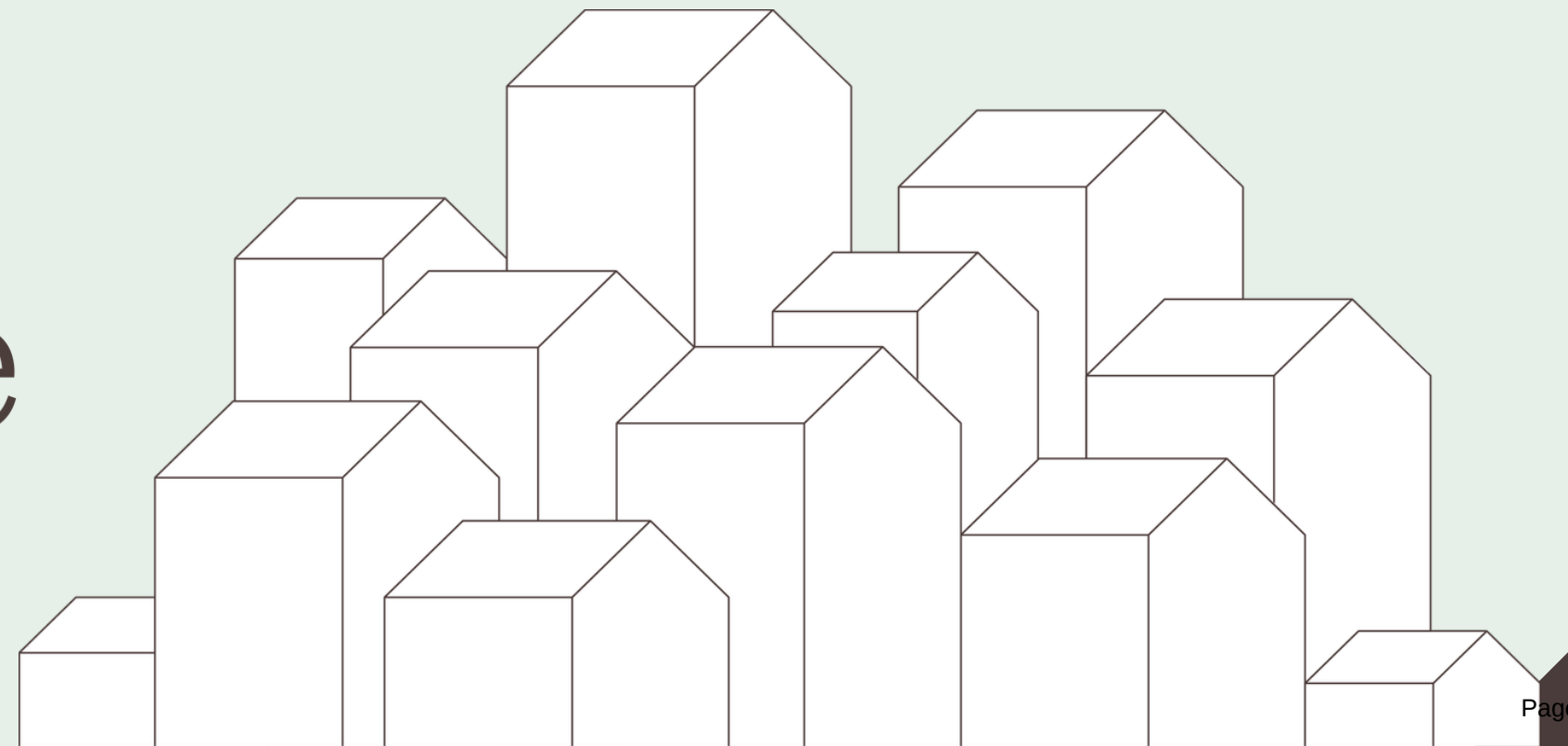
Approved this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Building Lewiston

housing supply needs, growing pains, and tools
to keep Lewiston a wonderful place to live

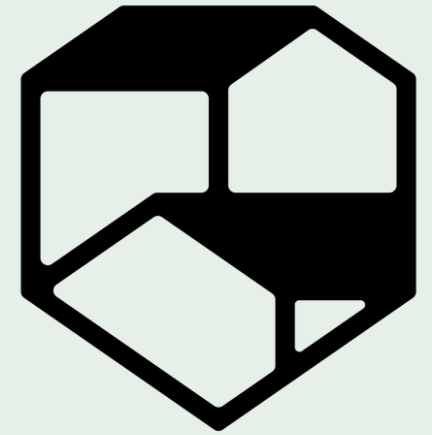


Gem State
Housing Alliance



A g e n d a

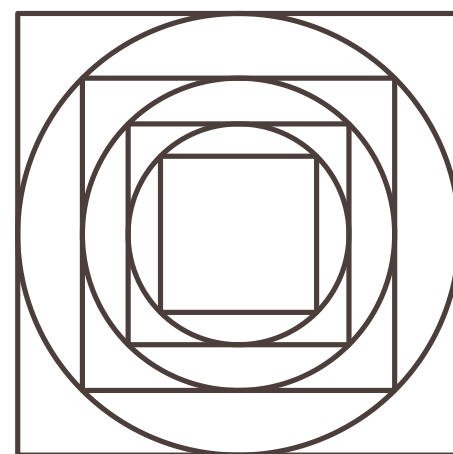
1. Who we are
2. Lewiston's housing snapshot
3. LLUPA requirements
4. Public hearing challenges and solutions
5. Top line messaging advice
6. Recap and conclusion



Gem State
Housing
Alliance

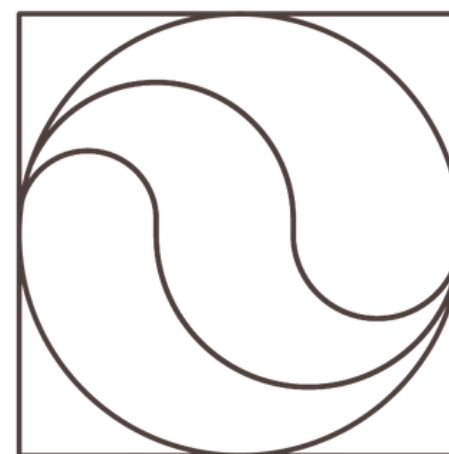
About Gem State Housing Alliance

Idaho's first and only pro-housing advocacy group, making it easier to build more homes for Idahoans.



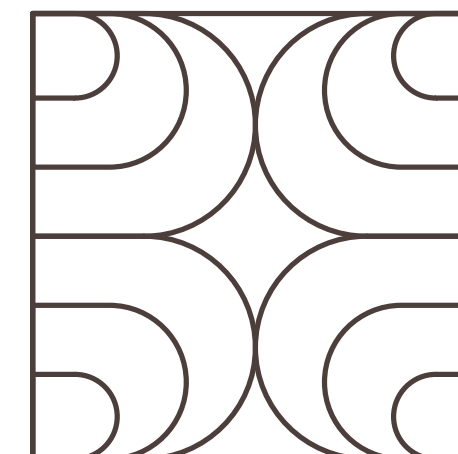
Advocate

For more homes by engaging decision-makers and shaping policy.



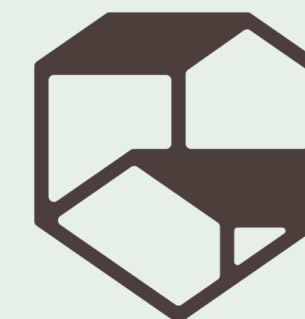
Educate

Idaho communities on the benefits of new housing.

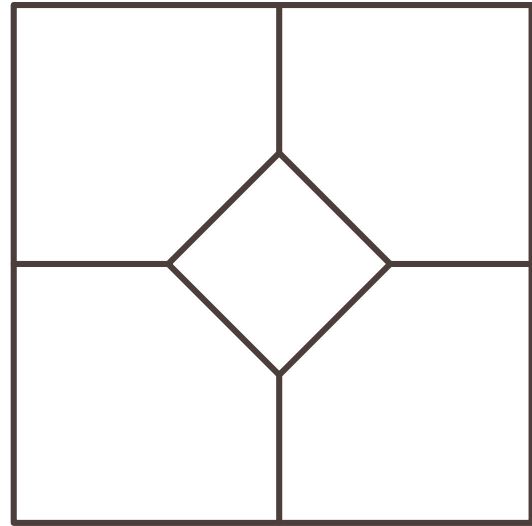


Organize

Partners across Idaho to turn care into action.

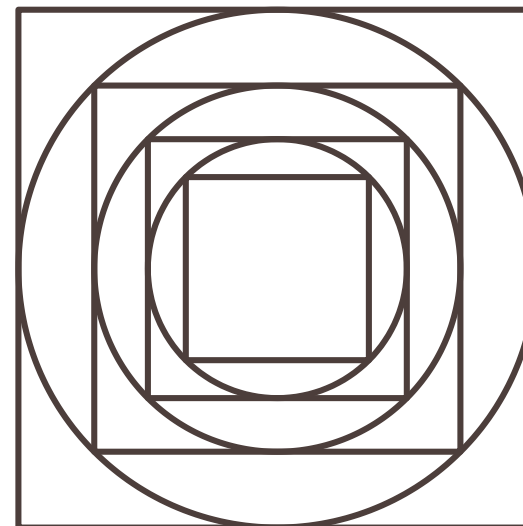


Why housing is so expensive



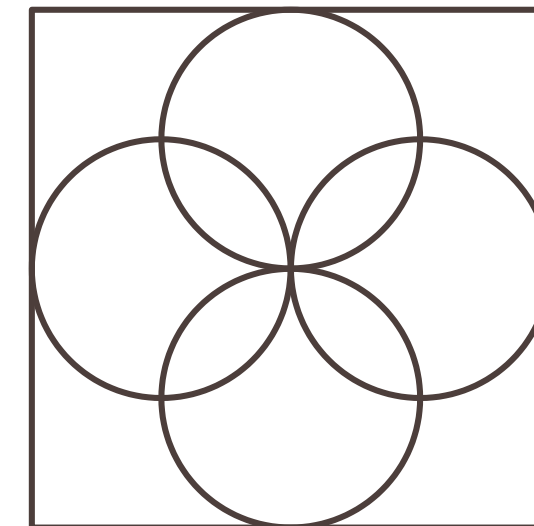
Lack of *supply*

Supply has not kept up with population growth and demand. Meanwhile, many Idahoans resist local housing development, stalling projects and policy alike.



Regulation *& red tape*

Industry estimates put regulation at roughly 25% of development costs, including policies, delays, and paperwork.



High *costs*

Rising land, labor, and material costs are passed directly to consumers.



Research is clear: more homes means lower costs



5-7%

decrease in nearby rents from new market-rate buildings

Philadelphia Federal Reserve, 2020

17%

lower displacement risk for renters within 100 meters of new construction

UC Berkeley, 2021

+0.9%

property value increase for homes near housing developments

Urban Institute, 2021

19%

reduction in rent costs in Austin Texas after building boom

Pew Charitable Trusts

What Idahoans think

Housing is #1

The high cost of housing is Idahoans' #1 concern in recent polling

Not enough homes

8 in 10 Idahoans say there are not enough homes to rent or buy in their area.

Wants action

72% of Idahoans say their city or town is not doing a good job at addressing affordability



Lewiston housing snapshot



~35K

Lewiston residents and growing

\$397K

Median home value

\$1,100

Median gross rent

Source: US Census Bureau



What LLUPA requires

Idaho Code § 67-6501 et seq. – Local Land Use Planning Act

ESTABLISHES

The requirement for a comprehensive plan as the legal foundation for zoning

A planning commission as the body for review and recommendation to Council

REQUIRES

Zoning ordinances must be consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan

Public notice and hearings before adopting or amending land use regulations

REQUIRES

Commissioners and Councilmembers fill a quasi judicial role in reviewing applications

If something meets the code, technically it should be approved

Challenges with public hearings



The loudest voices at public hearings often don't reflect the broader community.



Hyper-local focus

Neighborhood-only meetings skew toward those who oppose change.



Bad timing

Meetings held when only retired people or those with flexible schedules can attend. Attendees are more likely to be homeowners, older, and wealthier.



In-person only

No written or online comment options excludes working parents, people with disabilities, and other residents.



Requiring people to come to you

Advocates for new housing are less organized than opponents making turnout harder.

How to address public hearing challenges



- 1 Prioritize getting closer to a representative sample of your whole city, not just who shows up by notifying local organizations about the hearing and encouraging them to attend. Opponents will always show up and ample, visible support is helpful to counterbalance negative energy.
- 2 Acknowledge that Idaho communities will grow. Engage the public to help determine how: frame it as "how" you grow, not "if."
- 3 Look at other opportunities for public engagement, and celebrate other efforts and communicate how much community input you gathered.
- 4 Emphasize that developments that meet code technically should be approved due to state law (LLUPA)

Common objections at public hearings



COMMON OBJECTION

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS



"This will change the character of our neighborhood."



Character comes from design standards, setbacks, and scale. Missing middle IS the historic character of most American neighborhoods built before 1975.



"We don't have the infrastructure."



Infill uses existing roads, water, and sewer, which is far cheaper per unit than sprawl. Blocking it doesn't protect infrastructure; it just pushes growth further out.



"Property values will drop."



Research shows missing middle and multifamily don't reduce adjacent property values when design standards apply. Scarcity drives prices up, not supply, and high prices hurt homeowners trying to sell.



"Neighbors should have a say."



Public input belongs at the comp plan and zoning level, not on individual projects that already follow the rules. That's what by-right provisions enable: due process, not veto power.

Common objections at public hearings



Common objection

What the evidence says

"This is a one-size-fits-all solution."



We need a variety of housing options. Idaho families get more choices, not fewer. Single-detached homes remain an option.

"The new housing won't be affordable."



More homes on the market means more options at more price points. Adding supply reduces pressure on existing homes.

"It won't fit the character of our neighborhood."



Duplexes, ADUs, and cottage courts can look exactly like the neighborhood around them; they have for over a century in Idaho communities.

Top line messaging advice



Based on research by the Sightline Institute, tested in focus groups and refined across the Mountain West.

- 1 Say "homes of all shapes and sizes, for all types of people", not "increase density."
- 2 Say "legalize [housing type]" or "remove the ban on [housing type]", not "end single-family zoning."
- 3 Say "homes", not "units."
- 4 Say "single-detached" and "workforce housing", not "single-family" and "multi-family."
- 5 Use visuals whenever possible - show what these homes actually look like in Idaho neighborhoods.

Lean on visuals



Show Idaho neighbors what these homes actually look like.

- Use photos of existing duplexes, cottages, and ADUs in Idaho neighborhoods, not renderings of towers.
- Show the scale: a fourplex that looks like a large single-detached home is not scary.
- Avoid abstract diagrams - use street-level photos that feel familiar and comfortable.

Lean on visuals



Recap



Idaho has a housing shortage

We are the fastest-growing state, and we need housing of more types and sizes, especially those that are harder to build under code.



Engagement must be representative

Use multiple strategies to reach average community members.



City leaders can educate

Focus on messaging that works and “how” we grow, not “if”



Words matter

"Homes of all shapes and sizes." "Legalize."
"Workforce housing." Use language that opens minds, not closes them.

How Gem State can help



Zoning Code or Comp Plan review

We'll cross-reference your current code against state law requirements, identify gaps, and flag opportunities for by-right reform — at no cost to the city.



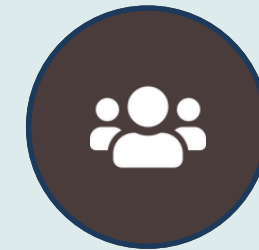
Code implementation help

We can help Lewiston develop housing element language and a zoning amendment framework that meets the S1352/S1354 deadline of February 1, 2027.



Vacant Land Scan

Using parcel data and current zoning maps, we'll identify underutilized sites where infill housing is possible under existing or amended rules.



Stakeholder Engagement

We help city staff structure public input processes that surface the full range of voices not just the loudest ones at a hearing.

All City Technical Assistance Program services are provided at no cost to municipalities.

www.gemstatehousing.org

We make it easier to build more homes for Idahoans.



Gem State
Housing Alliance

All Posts



Ali Rabe · 7 days ago · 6 min read

Public hearings aren't the whole story

When a housing project comes before a city council or planning and zoning commission, the room often fills with neighbors who oppose it. They passionately testify about how a housing development will worsen traffic or disrupt their neighborhood character.

We can all empathize with their concerns. Change is hard, especially when it's happening in the place you call home. But we know that the voices that oppose housing do sometimes cause housing developments to get shut down, and not always because the project failed to meet the code, but because the body approving it felt the political pressure and found a reason to say no.

Ultimately this restricts housing supply, causes prices to go up for everyone. One thing we're doing is talking with elected officials and commissioners about what the law says regarding these situations - while hopefully inspiring everyday Idahoans to reach out to their electeds, and show up to hearings to counter the opposition.

Two different kinds of land use decisions

Under Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act (LLUPA, I.C. §§ 67-6501 through 67-6537), cities and counties make two fundamentally different kinds of land use decisions.

The first kind is legislative - adopting or amending a comprehensive plan, changing the zoning code, or establishing initial zoning upon annexation. The second kind is administrative - the governing body has broad discretion, weighs community values, and the outcome can reflect political judgment. Public input at this

stage is appropriate and important especially as you're setting the rules that will govern everyone going forward.

The second kind is quasi-judicial: deciding whether a specific application meets the standards already established in the code such as a conditional use permit, a subdivision plat, a variance, or a rezone of a particular parcel. These decisions are not meant to be based on open-ended policy decisions. They're determinations of fact and law. Does this application comply with the criteria in our ordinance, or doesn't it?

Idaho courts have been explicit about this distinction for decades. In *Chambers v. Kootenai Cnty. Bd. of Comm'rs*, 125 Idaho 115, 118 (1994), the Court held that zoning board decisions are "quasi-judicial in nature" because they "apply general rules to specific individuals, interests or situations," and are therefore subject to due process constraints. The quasi-judicial/legislative distinction first took root in *Cooper v. Ada Cnty. Comm'rs*, 101 Idaho 407, 411 (1980), where the Court held that rezoning a specific parcel unlike adopting a city-wide zoning ordinance is quasi-judicial in nature, entitling affected parties to due process protections.

"The neighbors don't like it" can't be a reason for denial

When a city acts in its quasi-judicial capacity on a permit application or a rezone, it is not conducting a popularity contest. The question before the body is narrow: does this application meet the express standards in our ordinance and comprehensive plan?

LLUPA is clear on this. I.C. § 67-6535 requires that any approval or denial of a permit application "shall be based upon standards and criteria which shall be set forth in the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance or other appropriate ordinance or regulation." The decision must be in writing and must explain which standards were considered, which contested facts were relied upon, and why the decision follows from those standards and facts.

The same section makes the stakes plain: "Failure to identify the nature of compliance or noncompliance with express approval standards or failure to explain compliance or noncompliance with relevant decision criteria shall be grounds for invalidation" of the decision. (I.C. § 67-6521(1)(a).) An applicant denied a permit, or aggrieved by a zoning application, has 28 days after exhausting local remedies to seek judicial review in district court. (I.C. § 67-6521(1)(a).)

dr
by



Quentin (Idaho) gave \$10
6 months ago

In plain terms: if a project meets the code, "the neighbors don't like it" is not a lawful basis for denial. And a denial issued without a written, reasoned explanation of which standards weren't met is vulnerable to being overturned on appeal.

Why this matters for housing reform

This distinction carries real practical weight for cities working through zoning code updates and the wave of permit applications that follow.

When a city amends its comp plan or rewrites its zoning code to allow ADUs, small-lot subdivisions, or missing middle housing types, that's a legislative act. Wide public engagement at that stage builds durable community support for the policy. This is where residents should be shaping the rules.

But once those rules are in place, a builder who submits a compliant application is entitled to have it evaluated against those rules, not against the preferences of whoever showed up to the hearing. The hearing at that stage is still required by LLUPA for many permit types, and the applicant and affected neighbors must have notice and an opportunity to be heard. But the body's job is to apply the criteria in the ordinance to the facts in the record, not to act as a veto point for organized opposition.

This matters because the two contexts call for very different engagement strategies, and conflating them causes many housing developments to get shut down.

The problem with listening to whoever shows up

Research is consistent on who participates in local government land use proceedings. A 2017 study ("Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes") found that compared to the general public, zoning meeting participants skew older, wealthier, and toward homeownership by roughly 25 percentage points. They are also more likely to oppose change.

Every week in hearings across Idaho, people who oppose housing show up to Planning & Zoning meetings and Council meetings. More rarely do we see people show up again, when you look at polling from Idaho Mountain States Policy Center, we see Idahoans rank housing as the number one issue they're concerned about. In a recent poll, eight

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en again, when you look at polling from Idaho
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in ten Idahoans said there are not enough homes to rent or buy in their area, while 72% of Idahoans say their city or town is not doing a good job at addressing housing affordability. All polling and surveys we seen are overwhelming in showing the same thing: that Idahoans want housing solutions. Strikingly, we know those perspectives don't show up in public hearings.

This skew doesn't mean public participation is bad. It means that cities need to work much harder to hear from the people who are most affected by housing costs but least likely to show up - while everyday Idahoans also need to work harder to participate in public processes.

What engaging all residents can look like

When a city is undertaking a comp plan amendment, a zoning code rewrite, or any other policy change that will set the rules going forward, the engagement goal should be a representative sample of the whole community, not just whoever has time to show up to a Tuesday night hearing.

Scientific polling gives you the clearest read on where your community actually stands. Phone or online surveys with a statistically significant sample are more affordable than ever, and in our experience, actual public opinion on housing reform is almost always more supportive than a packed opposition hearing suggests.

Community tabling at farmers markets, rodeos, festivals, and grocery stores reaches people who would never attend a planning meeting. They will stop and talk to you about whether their adult kids can afford to live nearby. That conversation is worth more than three minutes of public comment.

Stakeholder meetings with employers, faith communities, school districts, and neighborhood associations serve two purposes. They surface real concerns early, when you can still address them in the policy design. And they create the conditions for respected community voices to show up and speak in support when it counts.

Interactive problem-solving sessions reframe the question. Instead of asking whether gr
fa  6 months ago residents a map, a set of tradeoffs, and a good solve a problem behave very differently from people who are invited to object to a proposal.

Hold meetings in the evenings and on weekends. Provide childcare. Advertise through social media, radio, and local newspapers. Hold sessions across different parts of the community, not just downtown. And once you've done broad, genuine engagement, don't fall into the "just one more meeting" trap that lets organized opposition indefinitely delay a decision the broader community supports.

Start with shared concerns. A hospital system that can't recruit nurses, a chamber of commerce watching businesses struggle to hire, a congregation that can't house its own staff - these groups have real stakes in the housing supply question even if they've never thought about floor area ratios.

Give stakeholders real input into how the policy is designed. Groups that help build something are far more likely to defend it publicly. When the hearing comes, ask them to testify and reach out to their own networks. Opponents will always show up. The goal is to make sure they're not the only ones.

I want to again emphasize that the people who show up at 6pm on a Tuesday are not going to be the representative voices on whether or not they want more housing. It's important for our electeds to be aware of this - and the laws they're required to follow under LLUPA. It's even more important for everyday, regular people to get more engaged in policymaking by emailing and calling their electeds and even showing up to public hearings to tell them, quite simply, that they want more housing solutions, not less.

GSHA.

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Newsletter

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☐ Yes, subscribe me to your newsletter.

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Mail checks to: PO Box 2035, Boise, ID 83701

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