

Orleans Zoning Modernization

Survey Results

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Contents

1. Introduction

- a. Project Goals
- b. Project Timeline
- c. Study Area

2. Engagement Feedback

- a. Pol.is Survey Results
- b. Stakeholder Meetings

3. Next Steps

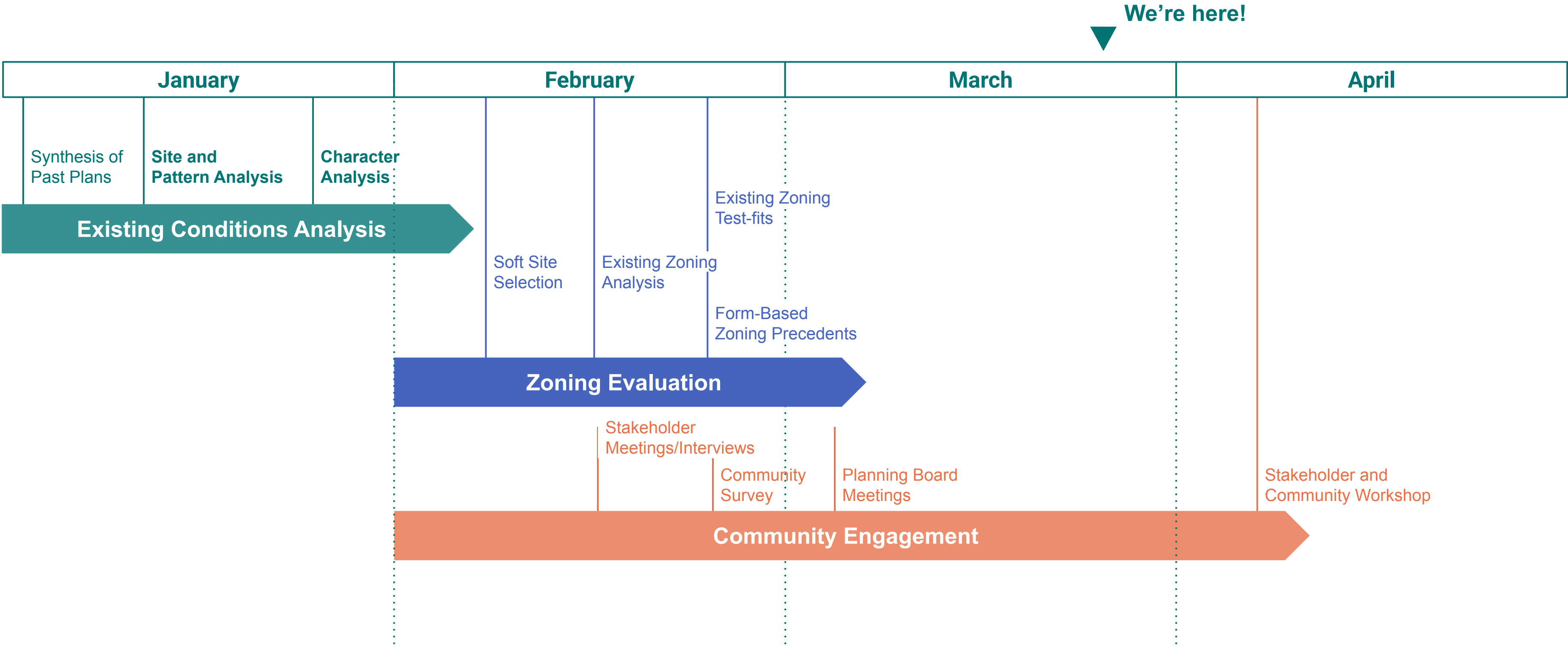
Project Goals

Why are we analyzing existing conditions in Orleans?

- To evaluate the constraints of the zoning and regulatory schemes currently in place in order to recommend new zoning
- To promote mixed-use development and missing-middle housing types
- To encourage new investment contextual with the Town's small, seaside character
- To create community consensus around a vision and goals for the future of Orleans's commercial areas

Orleans Zoning Modernization Timeline

First Phase



Study Area



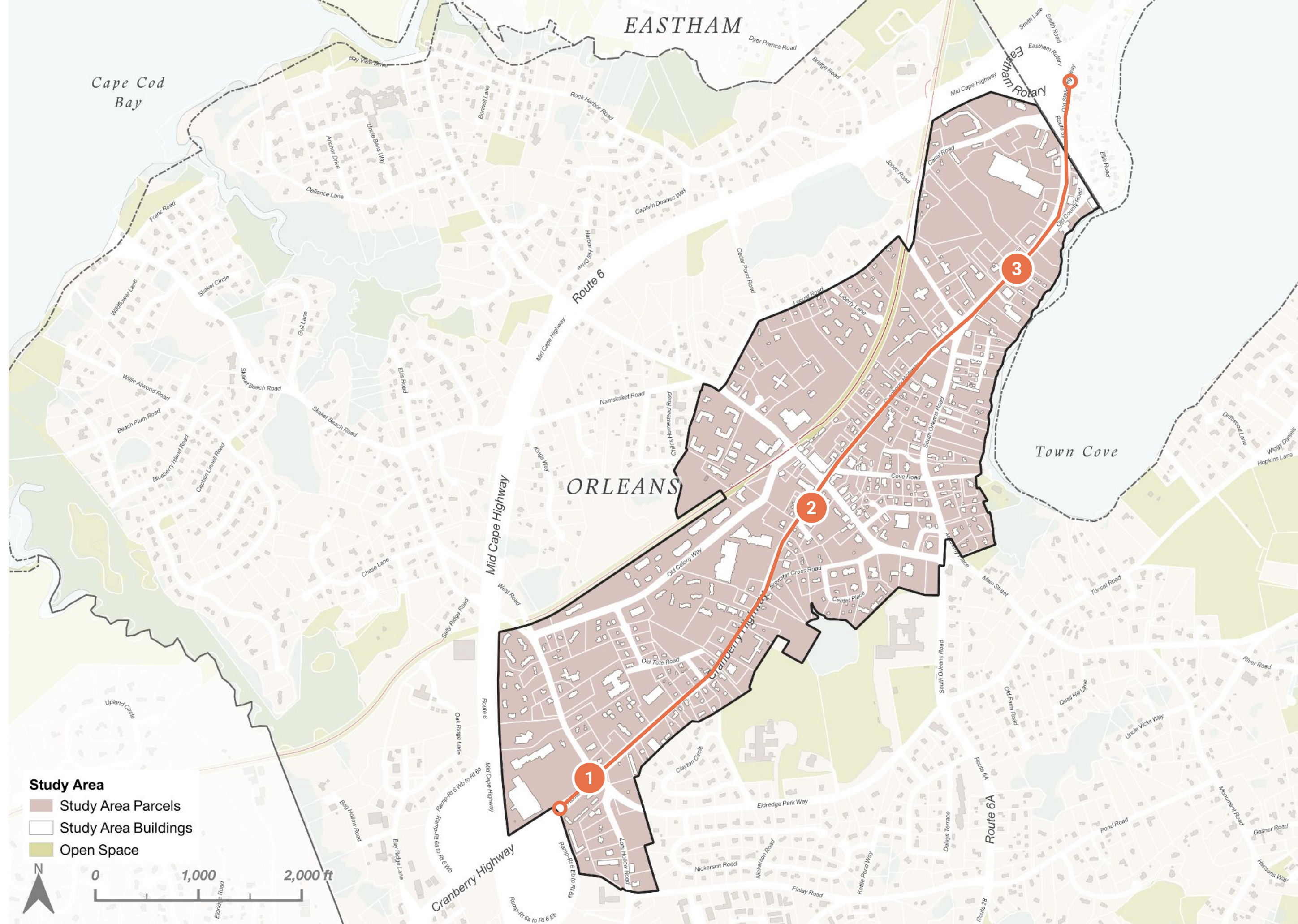
1. Shaws Commercial Development



2. Orleans Village Center



3. North Route 6A General Business District



Engagement Feedback

Pol.is Survey Results
Stakeholder Meetings

Polis Survey

Snapshot of Results

188

people voted
(based on logins or individual devices)

172

people grouped
(49 in Group A, 123 in Group B)

10,813

votes were cast

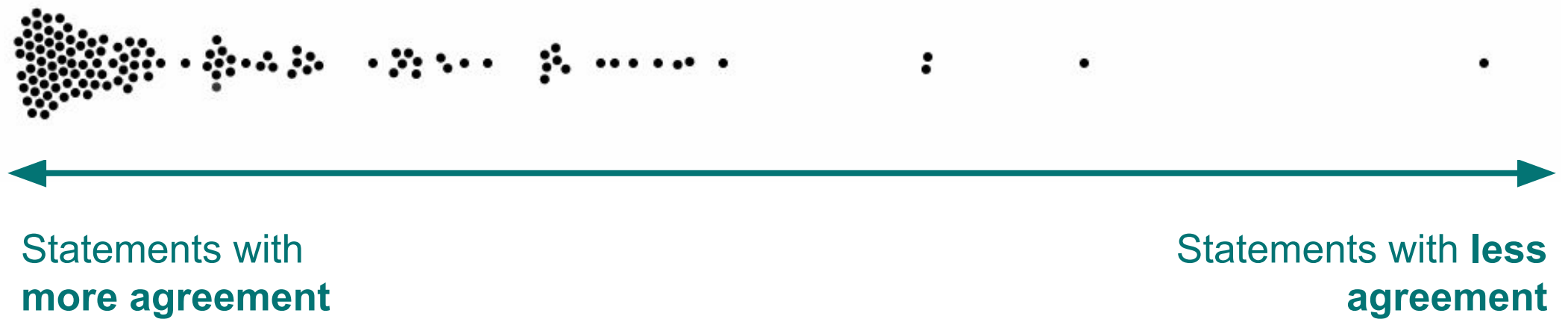
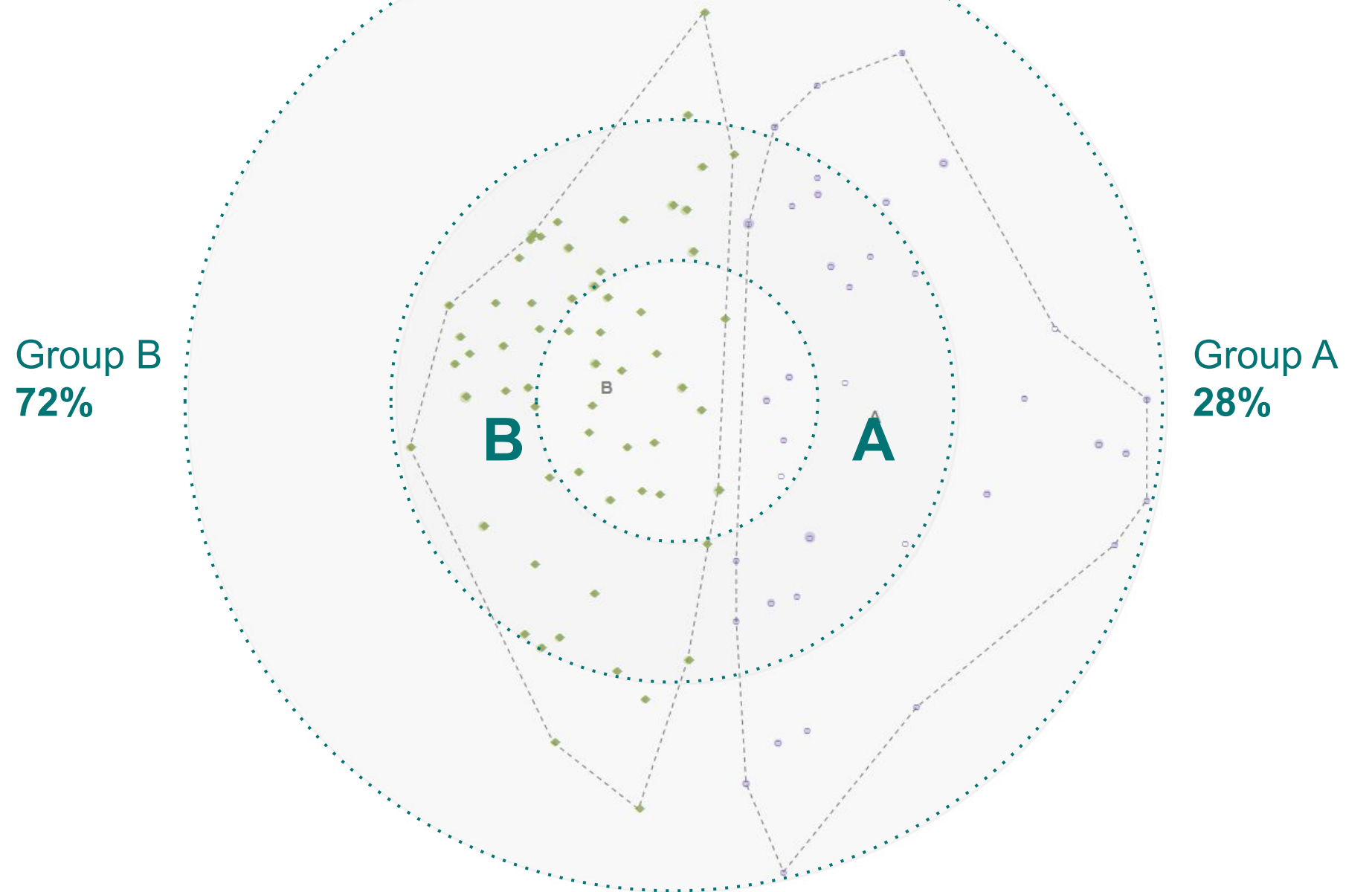
209

statements were submitted

57.52

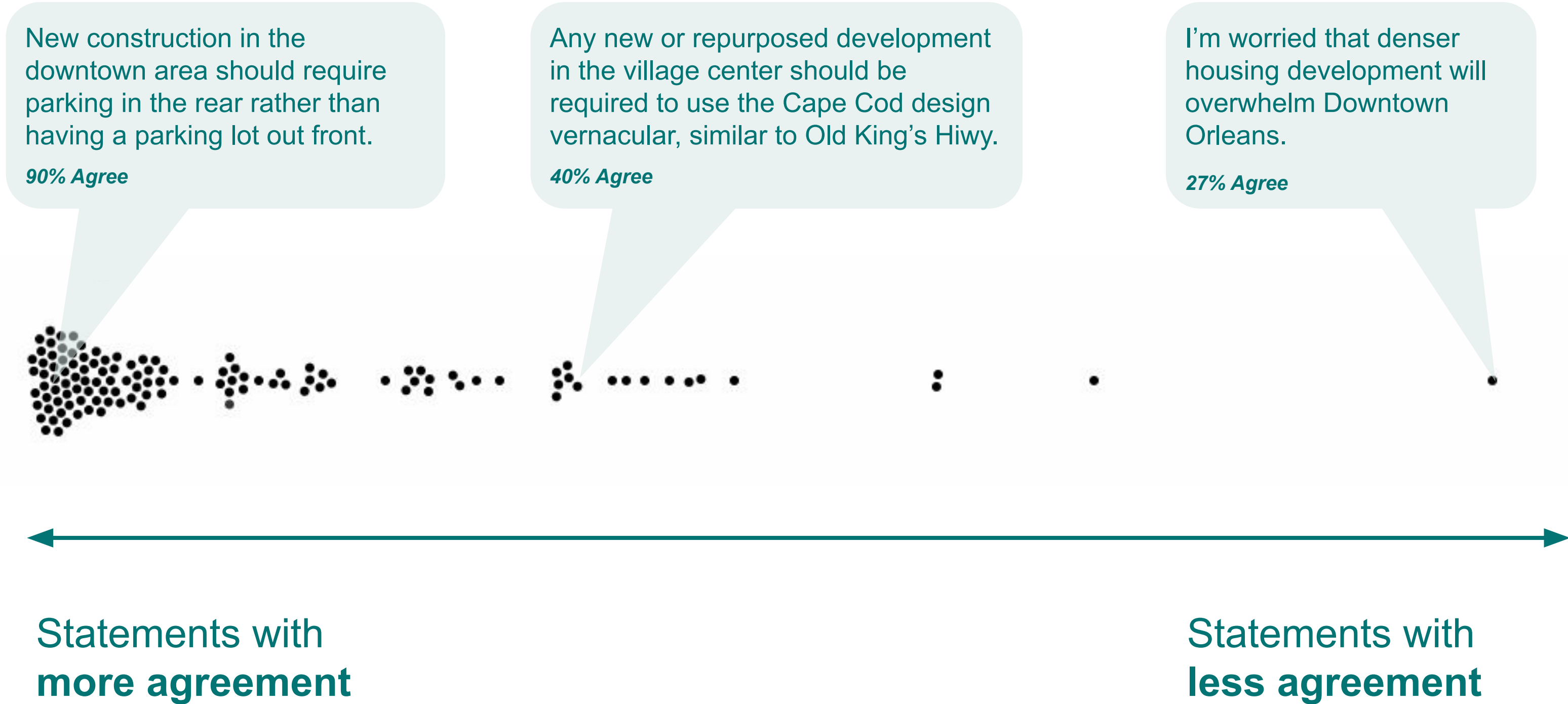
votes per voter on average

Opinion Groups Diagram



Polis Survey

Snapshot of Results



Polis Survey

Snapshot of Results

Group A (49 participants) agrees with:

Easy parking is more important to me than the walking and biking experience.

A path or sidewalk from downtown and/or East Orleans to Nauset Beach would be prohibitively expensive, and ruin the character of Beach Road.

Orleans has limited resources. More housing will make problems (water use restrictions, full beach parking, Kents Point erosion, etc) worse.

There is way too much emphasis on improving the biking experience, not relevant to many elderly residents.

Group B (123 participants) agrees with:

There should be a variety of housing options, including affordable housing, in Downtown Orleans to provide opportunities for residents to live near local stores and businesses.

Taller buildings used for housing will contribute to a more vibrant Village Center.

New developments in Downtown Orleans should provide community-oriented spaces accessible to the public.

Better/more efficient connections should be made between the rail trail and Orleans beaches.

Polis Survey

Major Themes

Environment

- Prioritize low-impact and sustainable development practices
- Add more trees and greenery to make Downtown more welcoming
- Maintain and improve the quality of public spaces
- Increase access to Town Cove and other natural assets

Transportation

- Add sidewalks for easy walkability in the Downtown area
- New construction should provide parking in the rear rather than the front of the property so as not to dominate the streetscape
- Parking is abundant/easy to find Downtown

Economic Development

- Diversify businesses (specialty retail, restaurants, gathering spaces) to contribute to vibrancy and unique Orleans identity
- Create policies that support small, new businesses
- Ensure that commercial business owners can maintain attractive property sites

Arts & Culture

- Create more spaces for outdoor dining, socializing, and lingering
- Add more activities for year round residents
- Foster a vibrant nightlife in Downtown Orleans to attract tourists and residents

Housing

- Increase the density and diversity of residential and mixed-use development (housing above first floor retail)
- Incentivize development of smaller market rate homes
- Provide more options for family and affordable housing for the workforce

Other

- Revitalize empty, dilapidated storefronts along 6A
- Encourage adaptive reuse
- Bolster tourist economy to sustain current businesses and attract more

Stakeholder Meetings

Questions

Economic Development

- **What mix of uses would you like to see in Downtown Orleans (e.g. day-to-day services, retail shops, restaurants, office space, housing)?**
- What improvements do you think would help support downtown Orleans businesses and encourage new businesses to come?
- Are there precedents for successful New England downtown commercial corridors we should consider?
- What are the biggest opportunities and constraints you encounter to development in Orleans today?

Housing

- What kind of housing would you like to see in Downtown Orleans (e.g. market rate, affordable, low-rise, mid-rise, townhouse, condo, etc)?
- What are some issues new zoning should consider for missing middle and affordable housing in Downtown Orleans?
- **What are some ways to incentivize mixed-use development, with housing above ground floor retail?**

Zoning

- **What has your experience been with the current regulatory process (application, permitting, and review)?**
- **What form-based issues do you think the new zoning should prioritize to encourage contextual and viable development (building height, building footprint, density, facade articulation, roof form, parking standards, public realm, etc)?**
- What climate or environmental goals would you like to see new zoning address?

Stakeholder Meetings

What we heard

Economic Development

- Explore incentives for businesses to relocate to or build in the Downtown
- Expand allowable uses, and define the uses in more general categories
- Consider making auto-oriented uses allowable by special permit only. The Downtown should be oriented toward more pedestrian-friendly uses
- Explore central parking solution for Downtown

Housing

- Measuring residential density by units/acre constricts residential development
- Allow denser housing along Route 6A and encourage mixed-use in the center of the study area
- Densify housing in nodes along 6A, Main Street, Cove Road, and Old Colony Way in order to create a more walkable Downtown.

Zoning

- Lack of clear guidelines on how to convert commercial buildings to residential use
- Architectural review and 40B slow down the permitting process
- Reduce off-street parking req's for businesses. Prohibit parking along street-facing frontage.
- Decrease front setbacks near the street to create a more active street wall

Next Steps

Ongoing

- **Zoning Test-fits:** Utile is developing analysis of the current zoning using parcels vulnerable to near-term development.



Tedd's Garage



Orleans Shopping Center



Post Office Square



Cove Motel



Vacant Lot

Next Steps

- **Community Workshop:** Utile and Town Staff are coordinating a date for an in-person community workshop that will summarize the existing conditions, define a vision, and outline goals for future zoning.