



City of Alexandria

Welcome and thank you for joining!

**Staff will begin the presentation at
7:05pm**





City of Alexandria

Substandard Lots Community Meeting

Department of Planning and Zoning
Land Use & Preservation



Agenda



1. Overview/project schedule
2. Substandard lot inventory and findings
3. Research questions and discussion
4. Draft recommendations and discussion
5. Timeline/Next Steps



Overview

The problem

- About 33% of the City's single-unit detached lots are substandard.
- Nearly all of them are developed and fall modestly short of zoning requirements
- All must go through the Special Use Permit (SUP) process before they can be developed — regardless of how minor the shortfall is or how similar the lot is to its surroundings

The recommended solution

- Allow substandard lots that come close to meeting zoning requirements, or that are similar in size and shape to their neighbors, to develop by right — reserving the SUP process for genuine outliers

Tonight's purpose

- Share what we've learned from the citywide inventory, walk through the draft recommendations, and get your feedback before finalizing them for the Planning Commission (October 6) and City Council (October 17) hearings



Project schedule

June 2025: project endorsed by City Council as part of P&Z's long range work program

September 2025: community open house

April 28, 2026: community meeting

May 5, 2026: Planning Commission discussion

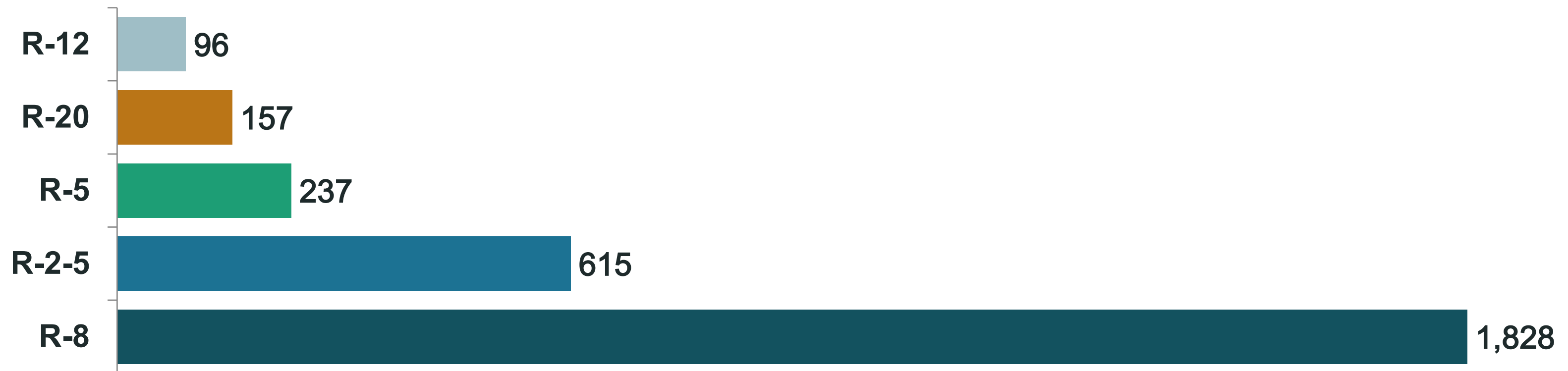
August 11, 2026: community meeting (tonight)

October 2026: Planning Commission and City Council hearings

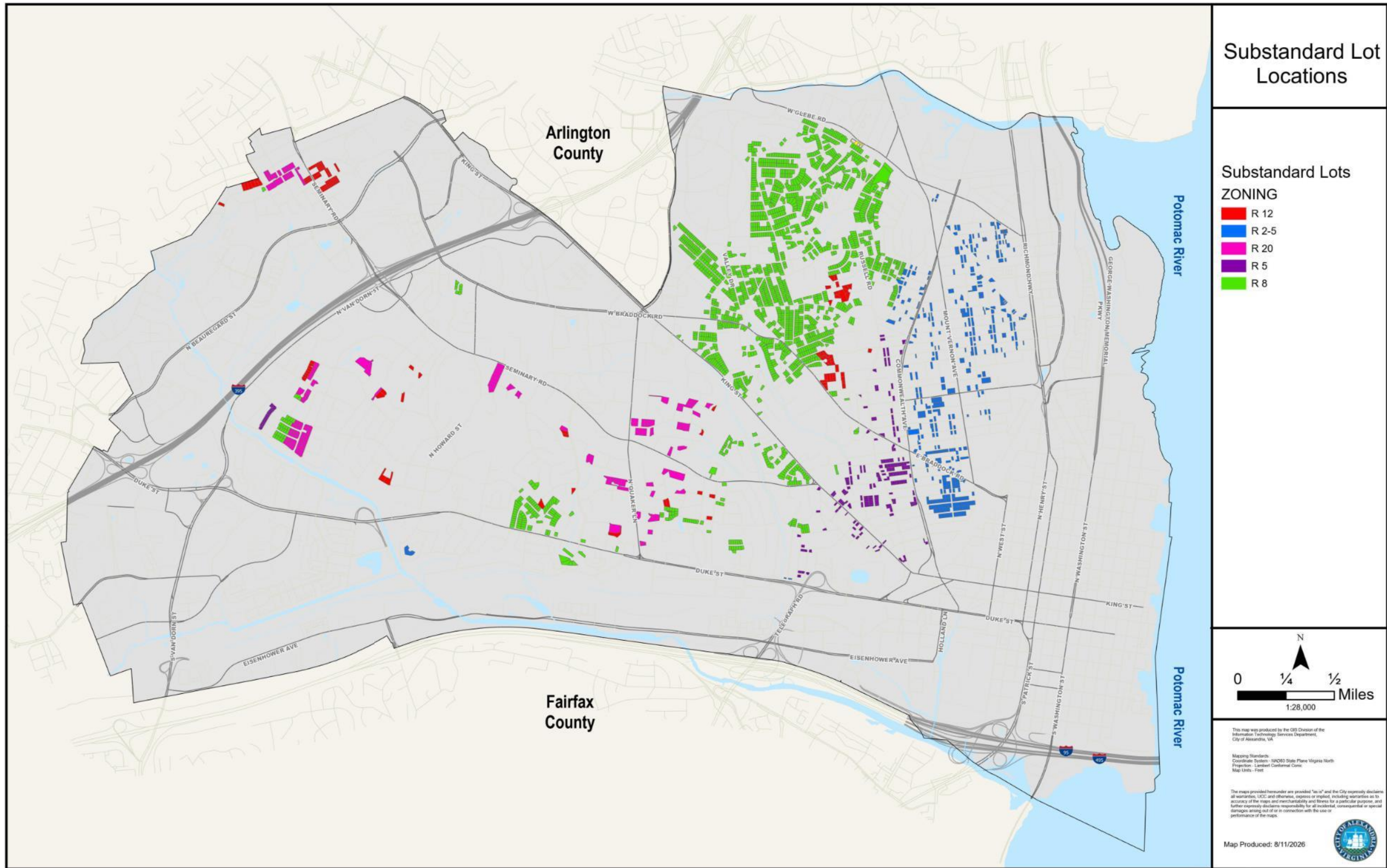


Substandard lot inventory

- ~2,933 substandard residential lots citywide
- 33% of the City's ~9,000 single-unit detached housing inventory
- Found in all residential zones
- Concentrated in R-8 (North Ridge/Beverley Hills) and R-5/R-2-5 (Rosemont/Del Ray) zones



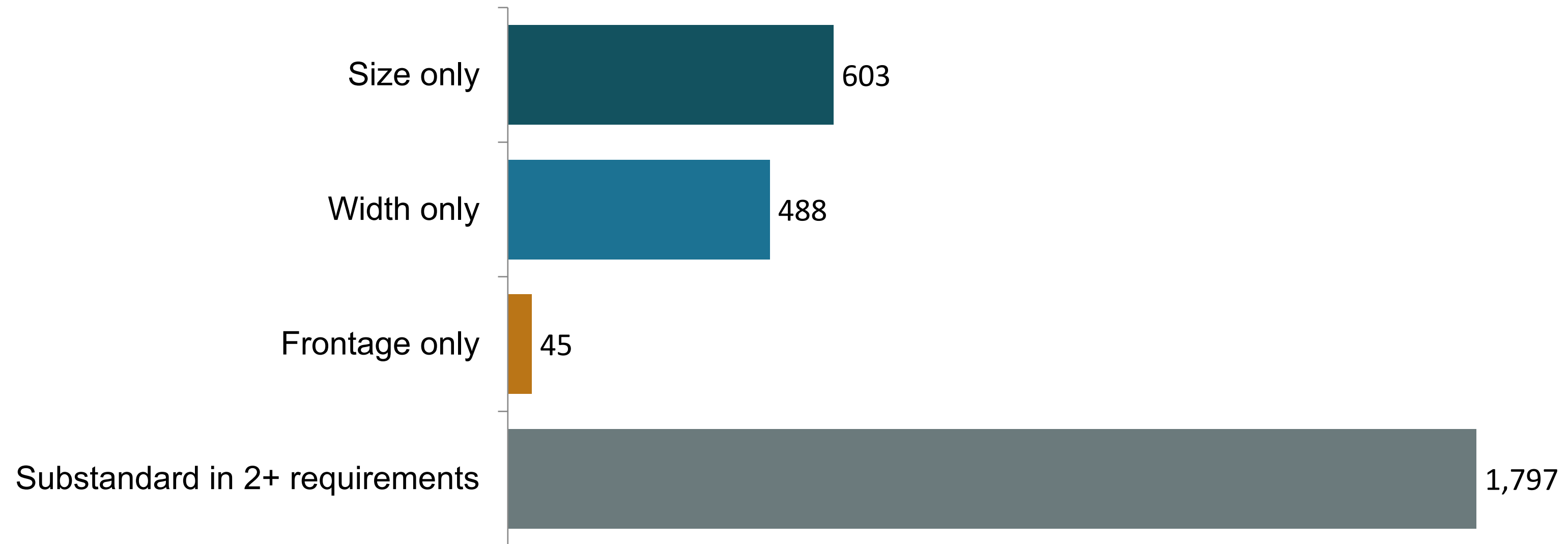
Number of substandard lots by zone





Lot Characteristics

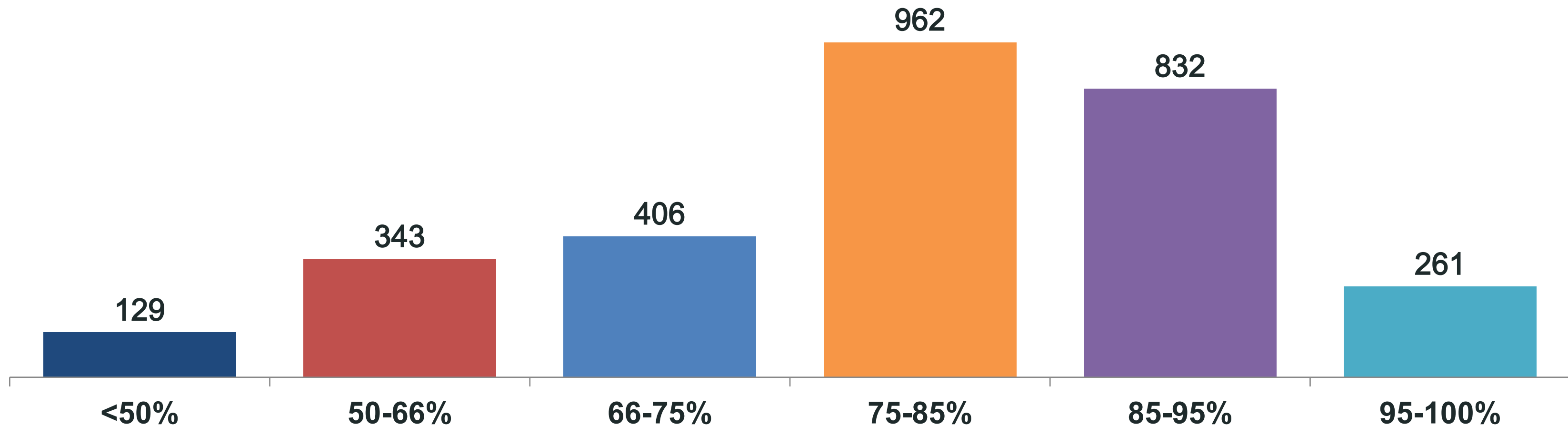
~61% of substandard lots have **insufficient width and size**





Lot Characteristics

Most substandard lots have dimensions that meet at least **75% of the zone's minimum lot requirements**





Average substandard vs. complying lot (R-8 Zone)

	Average Lot Size (square feet)	Required Lot Size (square feet)	Average Width (feet)	Required Width (feet)
Interior	6,343	8,000	54.7	65
Corner	7,308	9,000	65	80



Impact on house size, shape, and placement

Houses on substandard lots (vs. complying lots) must be **smaller, shorter, and/or narrower** to meet setback and floor area ratio (FAR) requirements

	House Size		House Width	
Zone	Average Substandard Lot	Complying Lot	Average Substandard Lot	Complying Lot
R-20	2,735 sq ft	5,000 sq ft	45.1 ft	70 ft
R-12	2,907 sq ft	3,600 sq ft	32.3 ft	50 ft
R-8	2,220 sq ft	2,800 sq ft	24.7 ft	35 ft
R-5	1,852 sq ft	2,250 sq ft	21.4 ft	30 ft
R-2-5	1,825 sq ft	2,250 sq ft	18.7 ft	30 ft



SUP Case History

Vacant Substandard Lots

Since 1973, 32 vacant substandard lot SUP cases have come forward

- 26 approvals
- 6 denials

Developed Substandard Lots

Since 2008, 35 developed substandard lot SUP cases have come forward

- 35 approvals
- 0 denials



SUP approvals vs. by-right re-development

Houses approved through the SUP process have similar FAR and heights than by-right teardowns

	FAR (Floor Area Ratio)			Height (feet)		
Zone	Maximum	By-right	SUP	Maximum	By-right	SUP
R-8	0.35	0.31	0.33	30	26.2	26.5
R-2-5	0.45	0.41	0.44	30	25.9	24.8

*R-20, R-12, and R-5 zones excluded due to small SUP sample sizes



Substandard Lot Summary

33% of single-unit housing stock

- Concentrated in R-8 (North Ridge/Beverley Hills) and R-5/R-2-5 (Rosemont/Del Ray)

Most fall modestly short of minimum requirements

- 71% of lots meet at least 75% of the lot size, width, and frontage requirements

Clustered together

- Nearly all share a block with other substandard lots with similar in size and shape

Houses must be smaller and narrower

- 400-2,286 sq. ft. smaller and 9-23 ft. narrower/shorter than houses on complying lots

SUP approved homes similar to by-right development

- SUP approved houses have floor area ratios (FARs) and heights similar to by-right houses

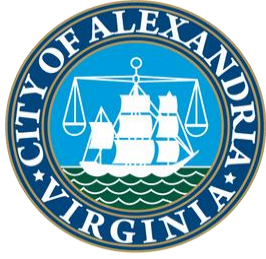


Questions and Discussion

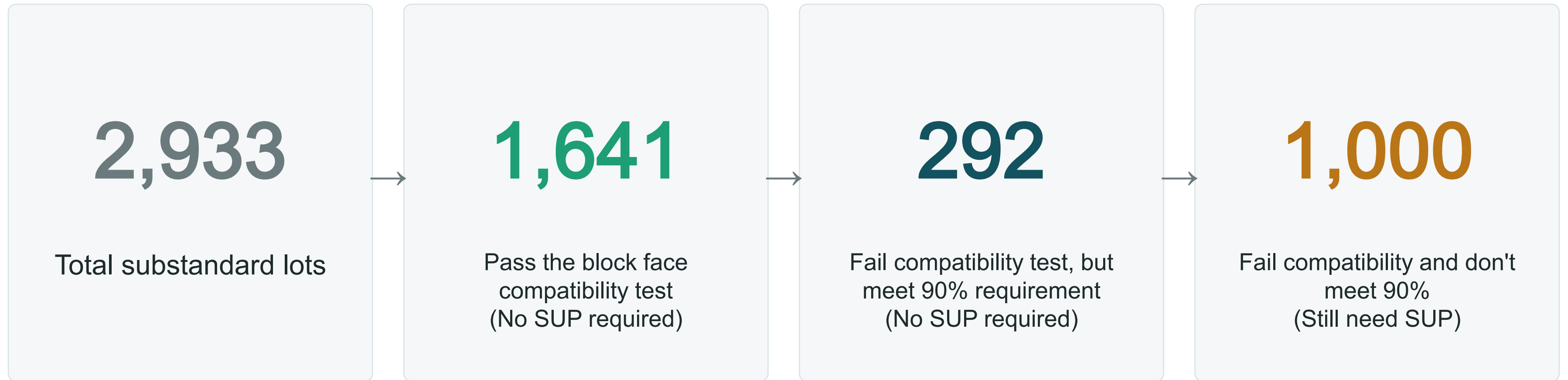


Draft recommendations

- **Make SUP process available to all vacant substandard lots**
- **Allow development of substandard lots that are either:**
 - A. Similar in size/shape to surrounding lots, or**
 - B. Meets $\geq 75\%$ and $\geq 90\%$ of the zone's minimum requirements**
- **Development must comply all other requirements (setbacks, FAR, height, etc.)**
- **Retain SUP requirement for lots that fall outside of these parameters**
- **Retain SUP requirement for lots without frontage**



Estimated City-wide impact by zone





Questions and Discussion



Next Steps

- **Consider tonight's feedback:** comments and questions raised at tonight's meeting will be weighed as staff finalizes recommendations
- **Further engagement:** we're happy to attend civic association meetings or meet with residents one-on-one
- **Refine and finalize proposal**
- **September 25:** staff report and final zoning text released
- **October 6:** Planning Commission public hearing
- **October 17:** City Council public hearing