

Come Get Dirty with Us!

Building The GNAR Academy to Help Western Communities



ELIZABETH SODJA



JORDAN KATCHER



GATEWAY AND NATURAL AMENITY REGION INITIATIVE



Institute of Outdoor Recreation & Tourism
UtahStateUniversity.

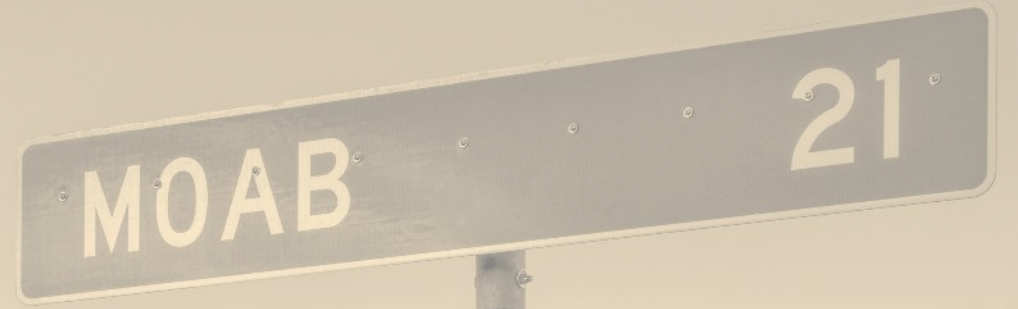
EXTENSION 
UtahStateUniversity.

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**S.J. QUINNEY
COLLEGE OF LAW**
Wallace Stegner Center for Land,
Resources, and the Environment

Environmental Dispute Resolution Program

Session Overview

- Overview of the GNAR Initiative
- GNAR Research Findings
- Introducing the GNAR Academy
- Group Exercise



The GNAR Initiative



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GNAR?



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What is a “GNAR” community?

GATEWAY

...to a state or national park, national forest, BLM recreational area, protected cultural heritage site, or other prominent public lands

NATURAL AMENITY

...community and economic development is closely tied to landscape and natural assets utilized for recreation, tourism, and outdoor-based leisure

REGION

...part of a larger region with similar attributes AND/OR a region surrounding a resort-like community



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What is a “GNAR” community?

- **Small town**
 - 150-20,000 people
- **Close proximity to natural amenities**
 - Within 10 miles of a national park, national monument, state park, national forest, lake, or wild and scenic river
- **Not in an urbanized area**
 - Further than 15 miles from an urbanized area by road



Who is a “GNAR” community?

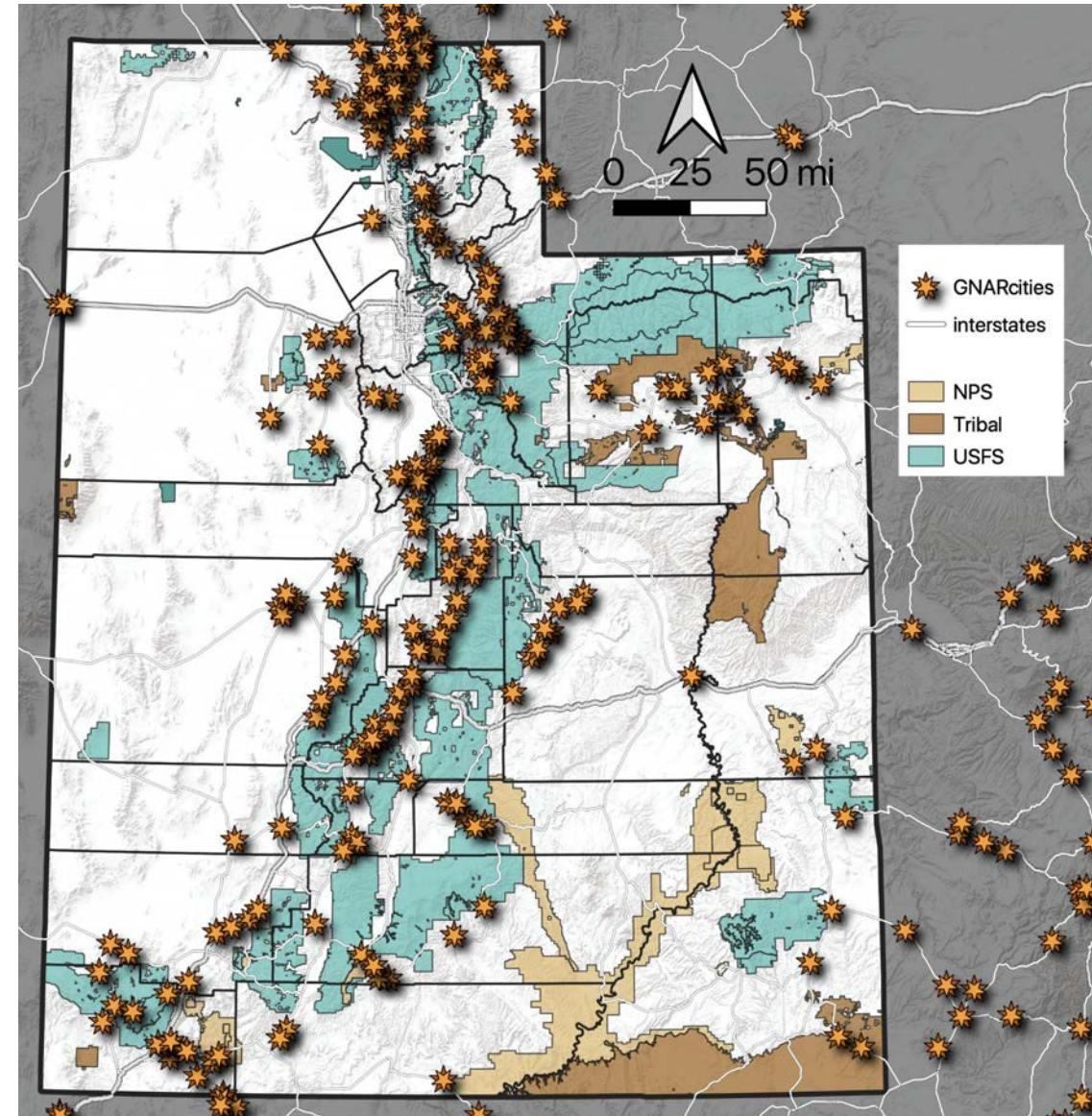
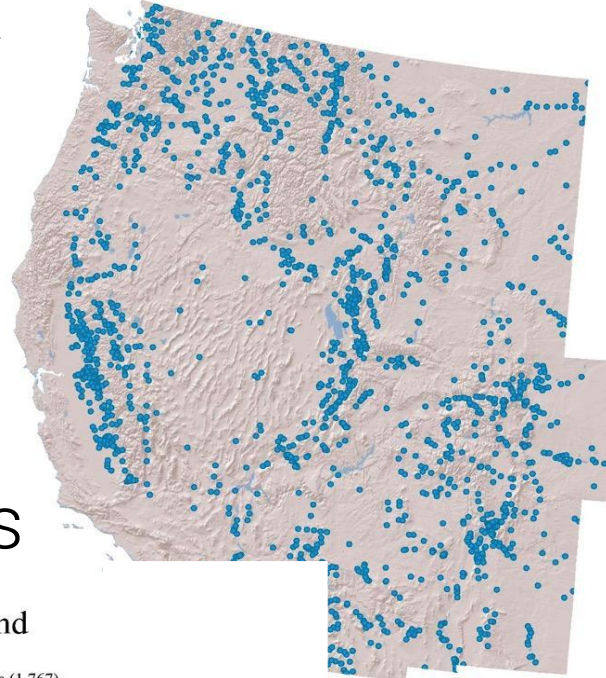
1522 western GNAR communities

821 incorporated cities

701 Census designated places

30.6% of Mountain West communities

61.1% of “small” Mountain West communities



**Big city
problems
in small
rural
towns...**

GNAR(ly) Challenges

- Affordability and availability of housing
- Traffic/congestion/parking
- Short term/Long term rentals
- Climate change vulnerability/adaptation



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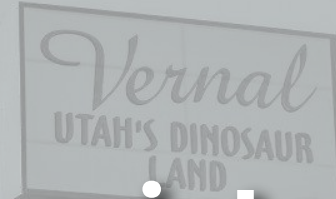
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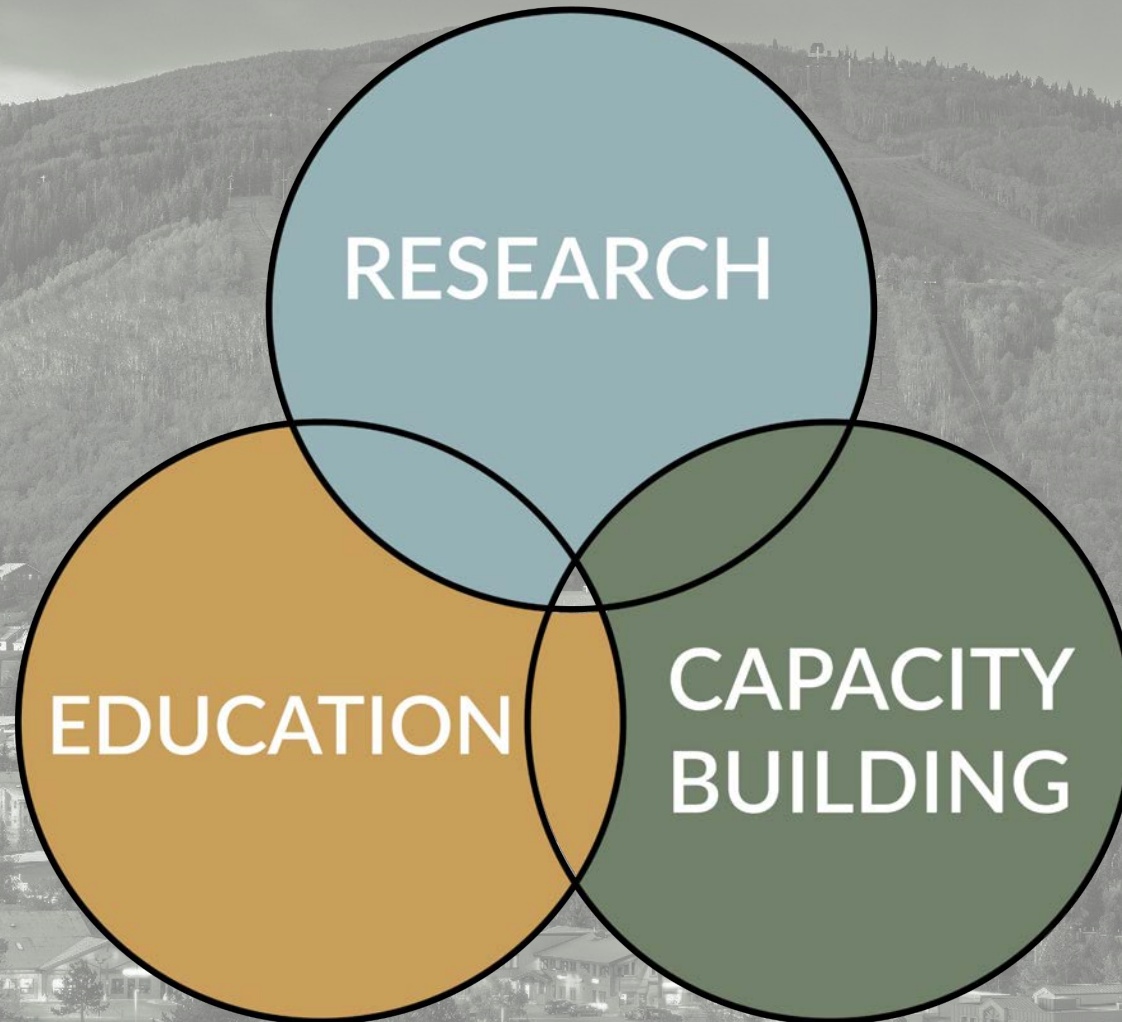
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“The GNAR Initiative exists to help western GNAR communities thrive and preserve the things that make them special.”



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OUR THREE PILLARS



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CAPACITY BUILDING - Online Toolkit

UtahStateUniversity | Gateway & Natural Amenity Region (GNAR) Initiative

Home About Research Toolkit Blog GNAR Network Services Night Skies Council Our Team

SHORT TERM RENTALS

Short Term Rentals (STRs) - ex: AirBnB, VRBO, etc. - can affect GNAR communities in a multitude of ways. While a potential additional source of income for local homeowners, STRs can also lead to housing shortages, affordability issues, and shrinking community populations. Good local ordinances can help mitigate some of the worst impacts of STRs by helping preserve a community's character and keeping economic options available to community members. Below, we have gathered some guides and examples of local STR ordinances. Know of something we should add? Please send any feedback to liz.sodja@usu.edu.

Resources & Tool

STR Policy & Best Practices Guide

SHORT-TERM RENTAL POLICY & BEST PRACTICES
An Introduction for Local Leaders

The Utah Community Development Office (CDO) has created a guide intended to help communities understand and make informed decisions about regulating short-term rentals (STRs). From writing a STR ordinance to incentivizing compliance, this guide serves as a tool for your community as you formulate your own ordinance. This guide also includes ordinance examples from Utah communities in the hopes that you may reach out to these neighboring jurisdictions for guidance in your STR process.

[Access the Guide](#)

Park City, UT: Short-term Rental Website

PARK CITY
1881

Park City's nightly rental website is a good example of a concise and simple website conveying local laws and needs to STR homeowners. Everything is in one place, including a complaint form for locals who are concerned about an STR in their community.

[Park City Nightly Rental Website](#)

WEBINAR: Short-Term Rental Trends & How to Craft an Ordinance to Handle Them

HOW TO SHRED GNAR(LY) PROBLEMS

In partnership with Granicus, this session discussed the most recent data and trends for short-term rentals in the Intermountain West and shared strategies to help communities minimize negative impacts and improve compliance via their ordinances. [Click here](#) to see the slides from the session as well.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

Mono County, CA: Short-Term/Transient Rental Rules

MONO COUNTY
California's Eastern Sierra

South Lake Tahoe: Measure T

YES on T
SAVE TAHOE LOCALS

Measure T was a hotly contested citizen-initiated

Tahoe Home Connection: STR Alternative

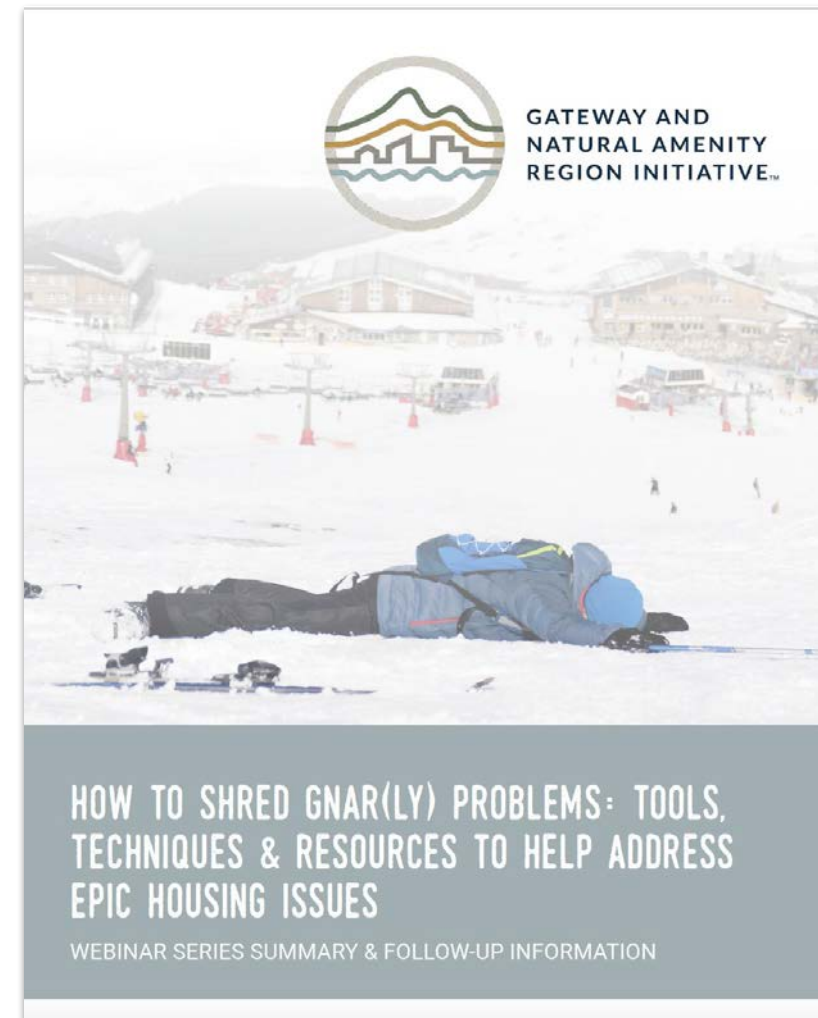
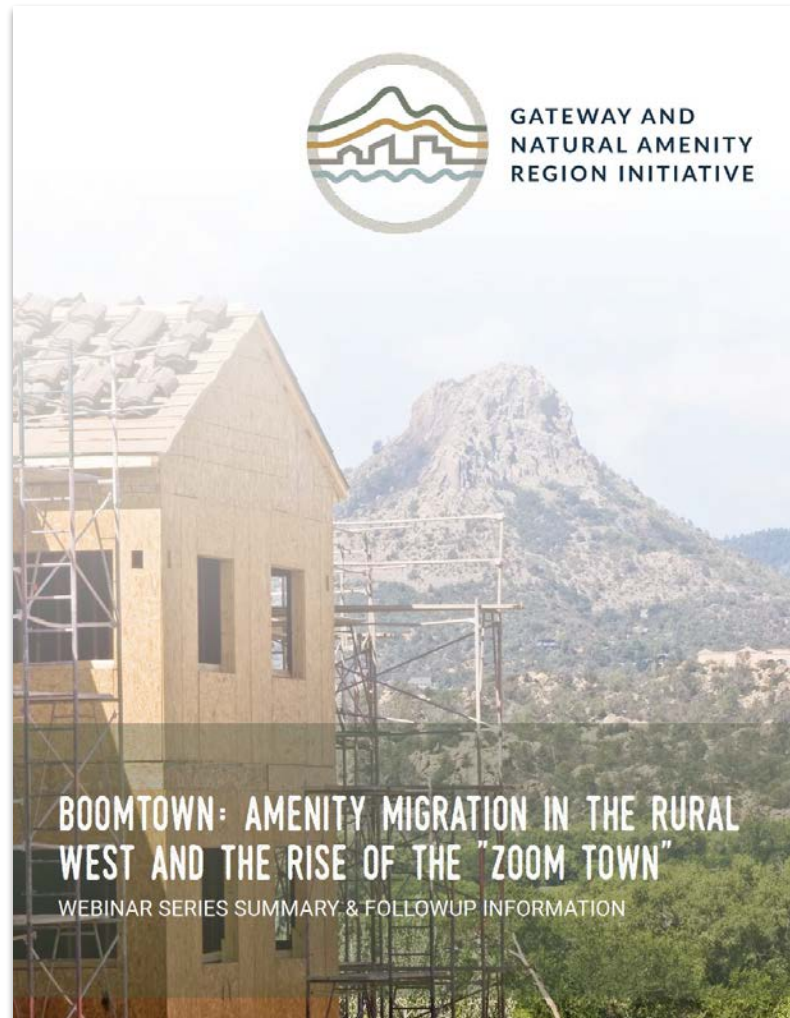
TAHOE
HOME CONNECTION

- 11 focus areas
- Continually building new pages as critical topics and resources come up.

EDUCATION - The GNARly Blog



EDUCATION - Webinar Series



EDUCATION - Webinar Series

PLANNING FOR A GNARLY FUTURE
ONLINE LEARNING SERIES
REIMAGINING PLANNING TO EMPOWER YOUR COMMUNITY

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OCT 27 **REFOCUS: Values as Vision**
Rally the community around a shared identity to guide the future

NOV 17 **REFRAME: Focus On Assets, Not Deficits**
Reframe challenges into “probletunities,” and tap into existing resources

JAN 26 **REENGAGE: Mobilize Community Through Proactive Engagement**
Shake up public outreach efforts while brainstorming with other communities

FEB 23 **REDEFINE: Solutions Beyond Boundaries**
Craft regional solutions for regional problems

MAR 30 **REIMAGINE: Planning, Not Plans**
Navigate an uncertain future and increase resiliency

RESEARCH - 2018 & 2021 NITC Community Surveys

GNAR COMMUNITY GENTRIFICATION & SPILLOVER EFFECTS:

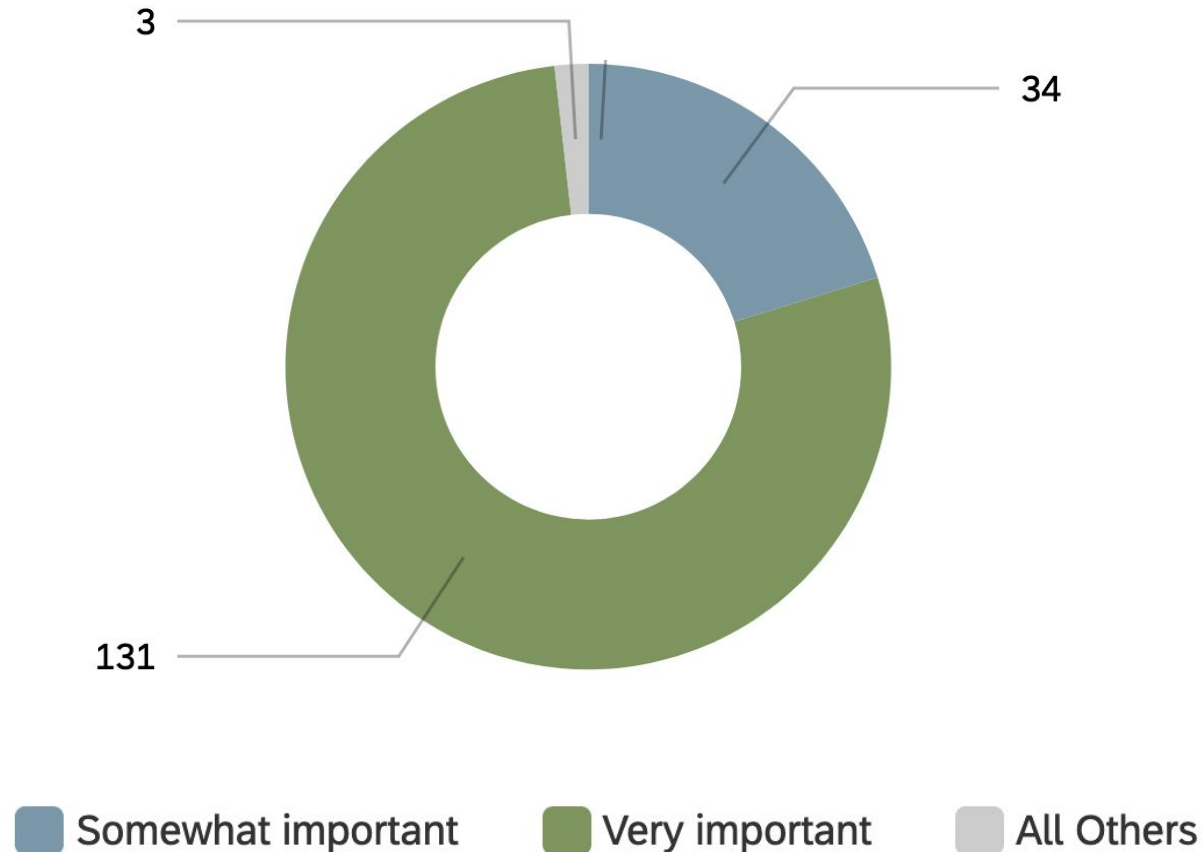
Integrated Housing, Transportation, Land Use Challenges and Strategies in Gateway Communities

- Funded by the National Institute for Transportation and Communities,
- Community survey sent out to 1,500+ Communities, 235 responses



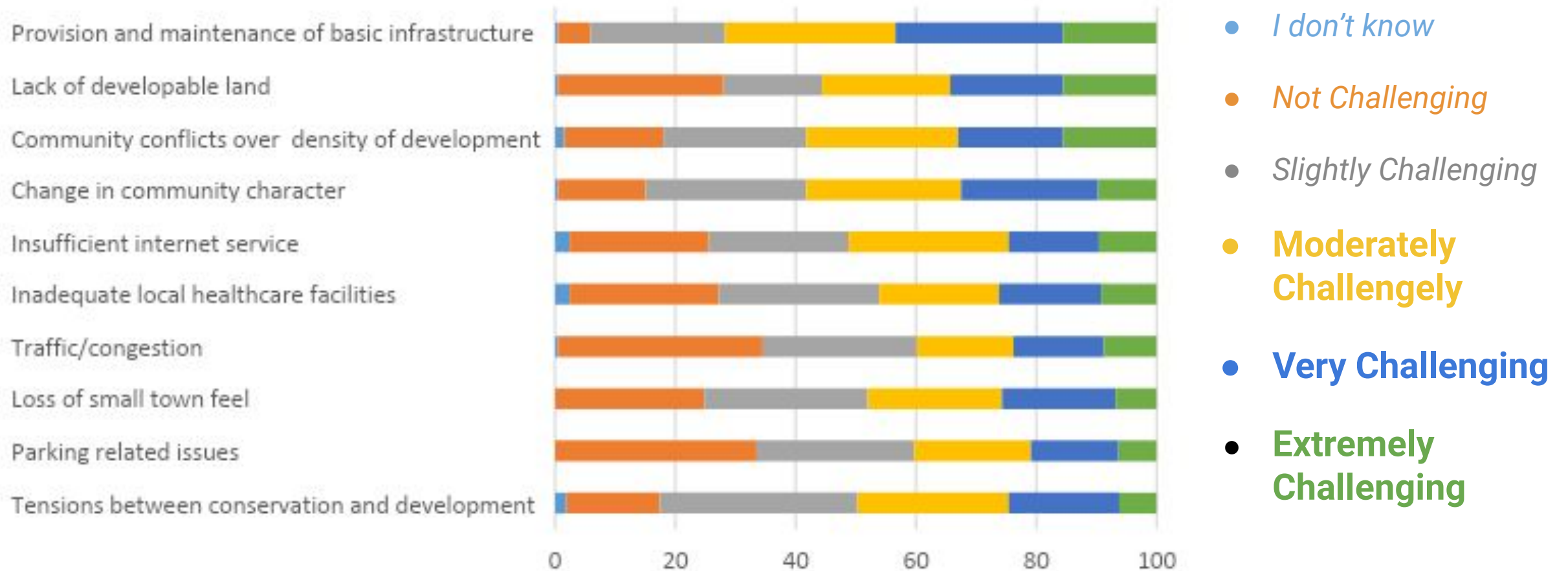
RESEARCH - 2021 NITC Community Survey Feedback

Protecting their “small town” character



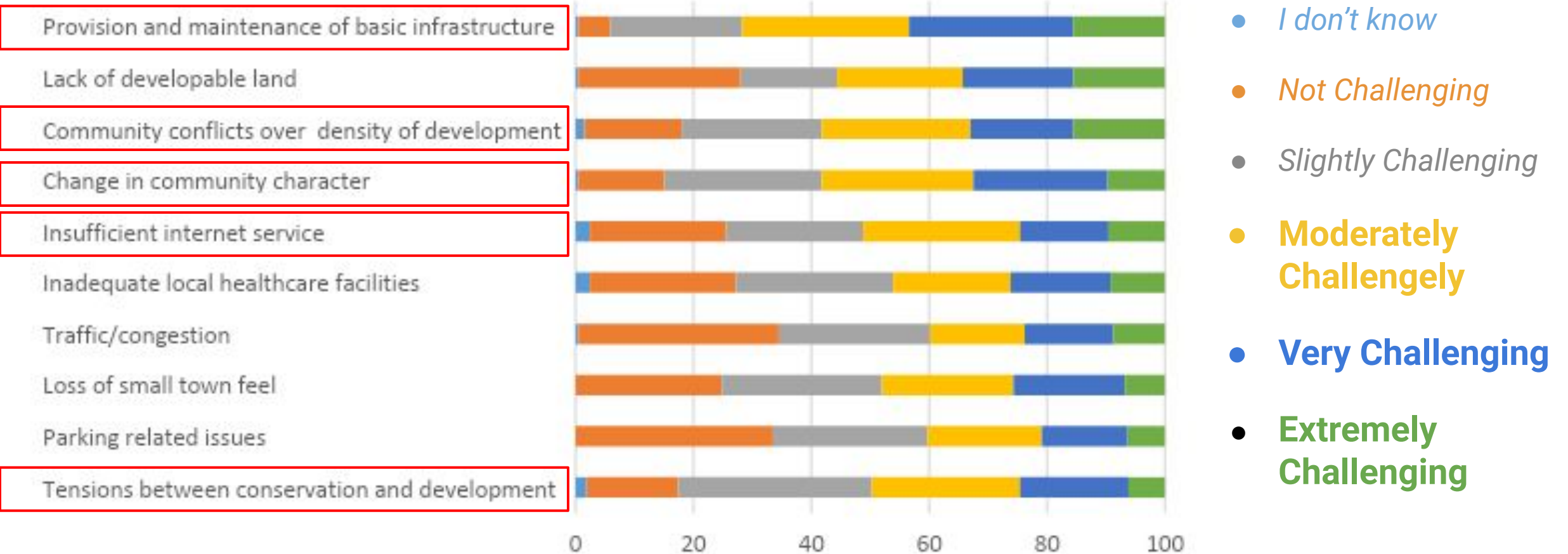
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Development Challenges



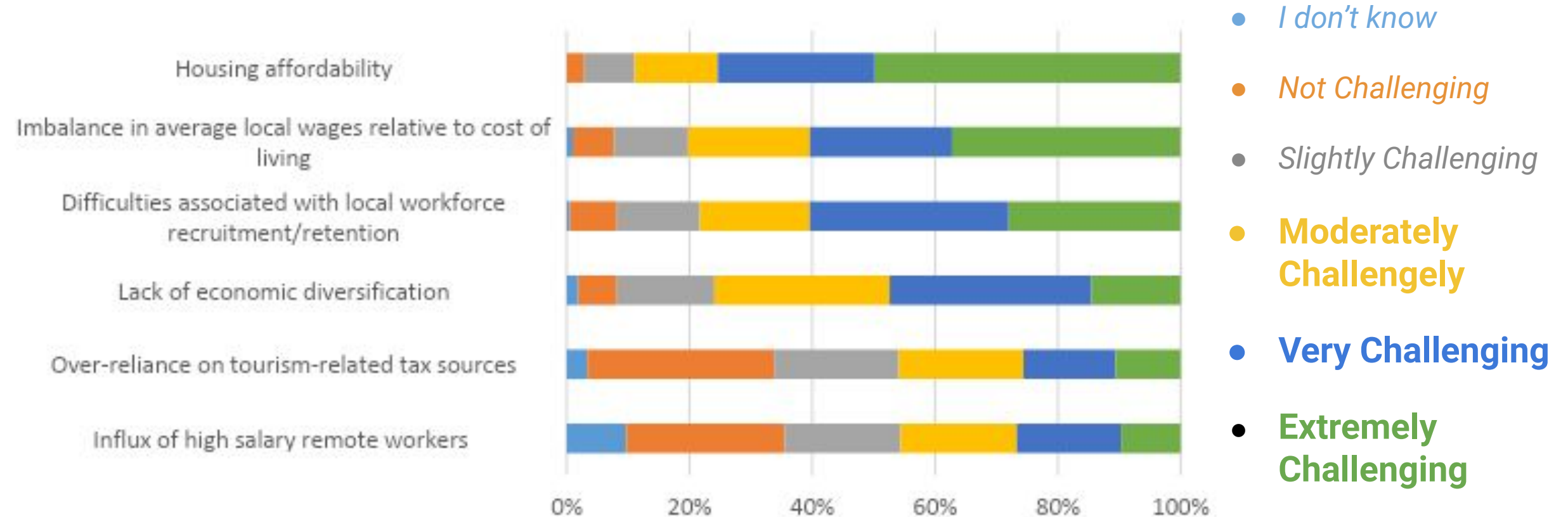
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Development Challenges



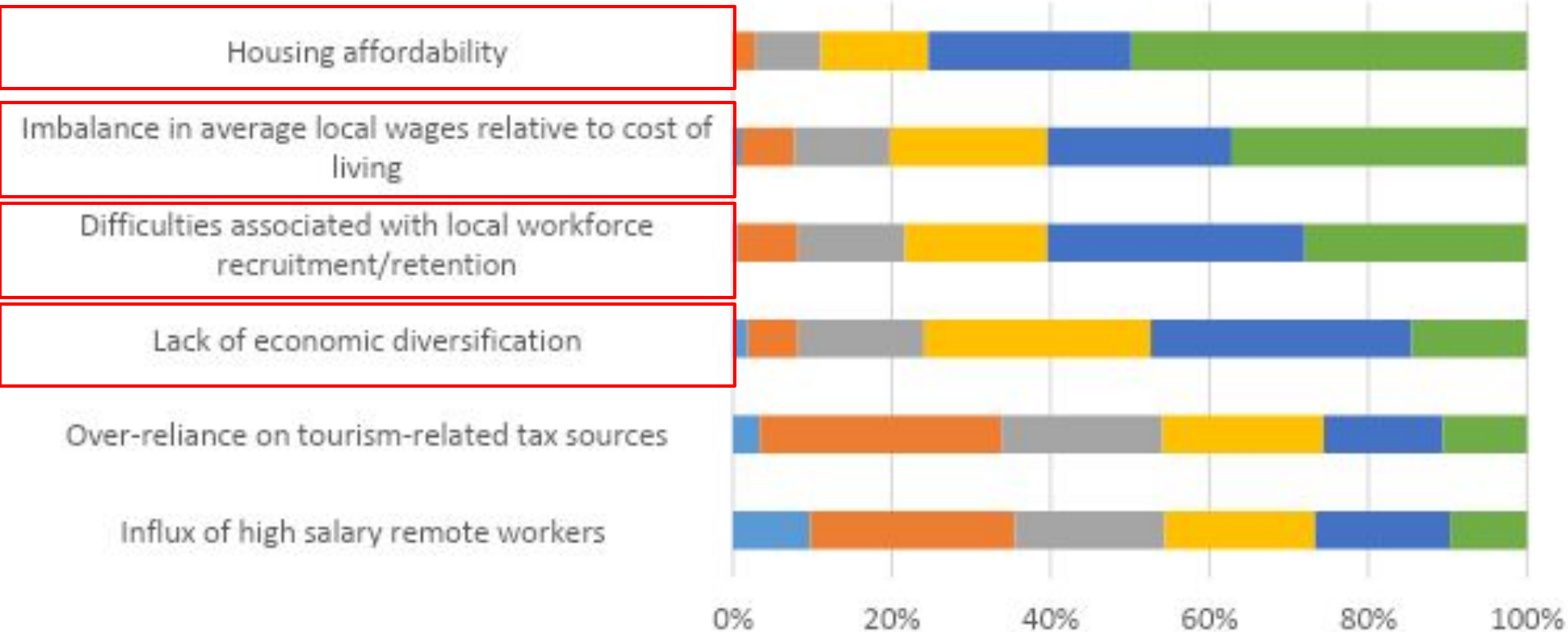
RESEARCH - 2021 NITC Community Survey Feedback

Economic Challenges



RESEARCH - 2021 NITC Community Survey Feedback

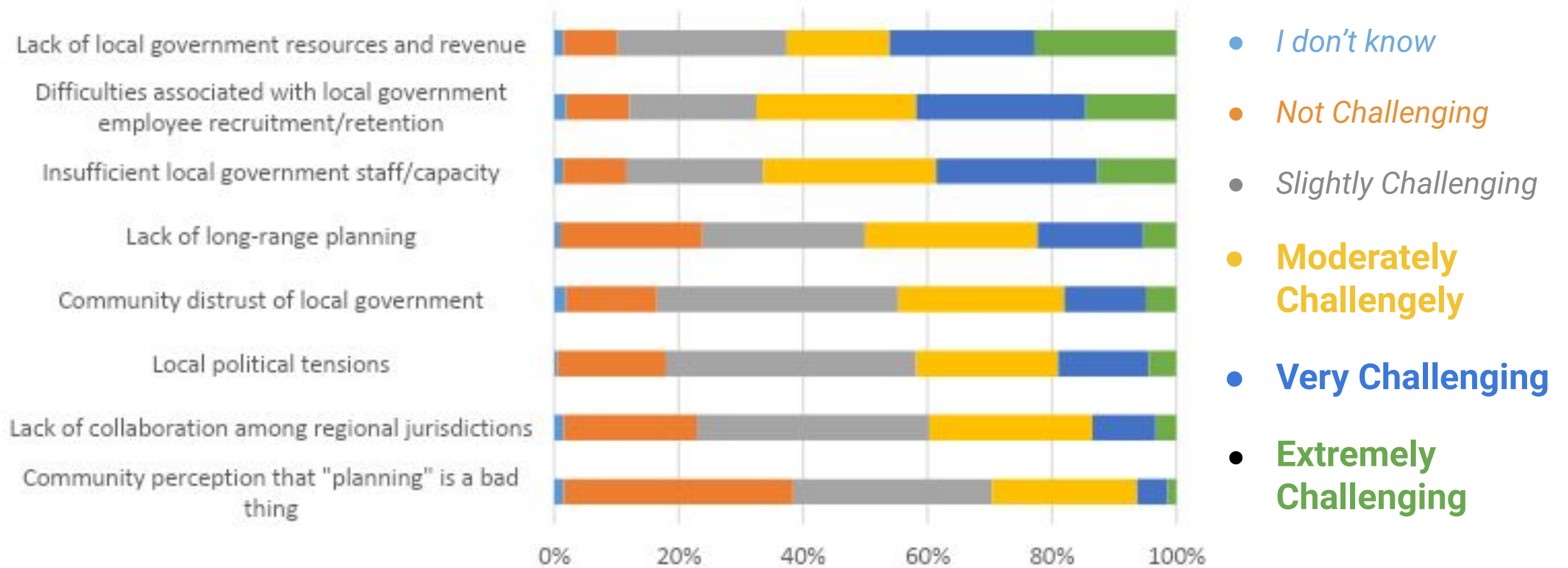
Economic Challenges



- *I don't know*
- *Not Challenging*
- *Slightly Challenging*
- **Moderately Challenging**
- **Very Challenging**
- **Extremely Challenging**

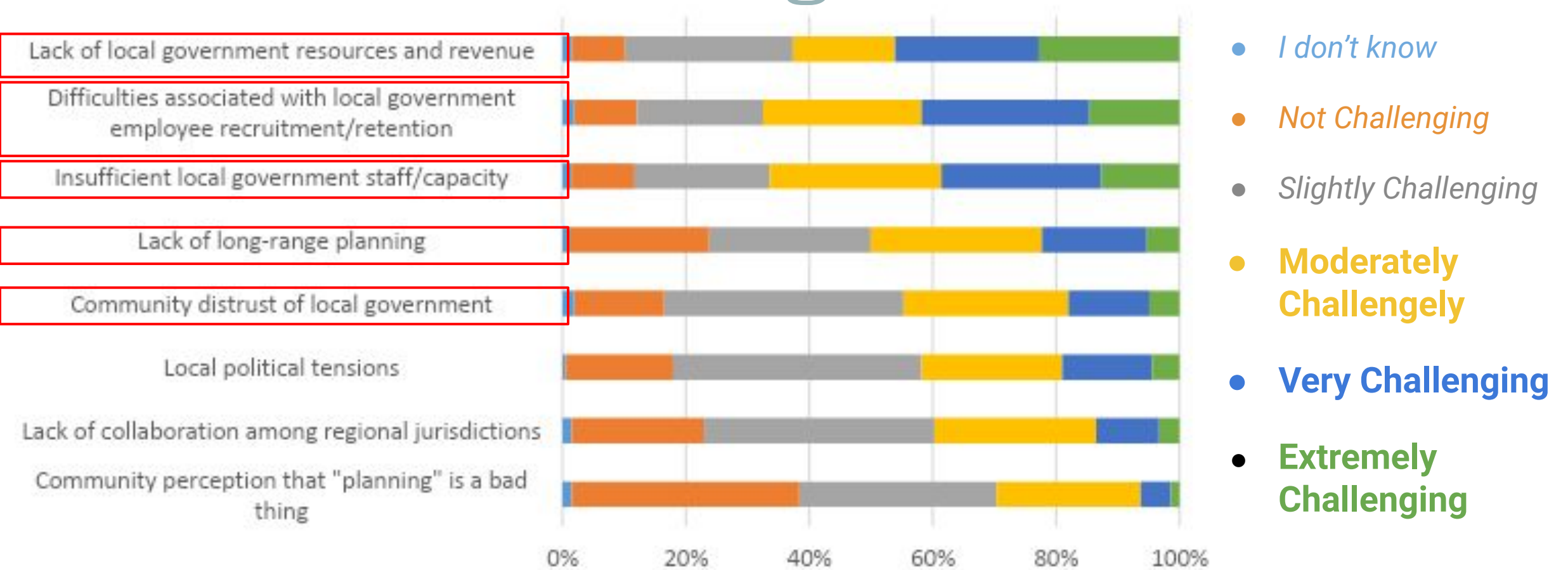
RESEARCH - 2021 NITC Community Survey Feedback

Governance challenges



RESEARCH - 2021 NITC Community Survey Feedback

Governance challenges



THE GNAR “ACADEMY”



Recent Grants



- NITC Tech Transfer grant - \$110k
- Extension Grant - \$32k
- Public Lands Initiative Grant - \$55k

Purpose



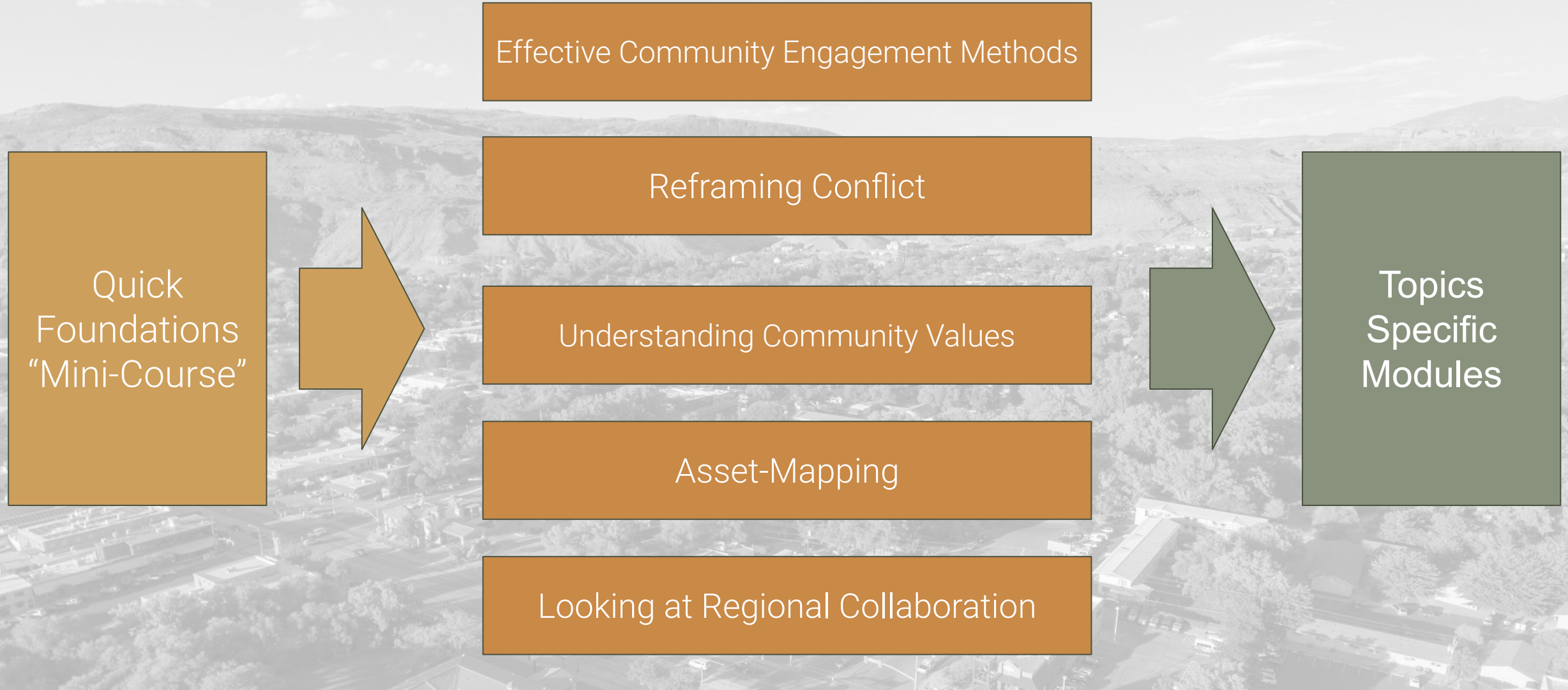
“The GNAR Academy seeks to fill in the gap between what gateway communities have the capacity for and what communities need by providing accessible training to help communities better understand and advocate for their own needs.”

Goals



1. Create low-barrier training that is accessible for gateway community leaders
2. Covers planning topics and challenges from a small, rural, gateway-specific lens
3. Provide opportunities for communities to network and meet with others working on similar projects
4. Increase community capacity to become more self-sustaining and resilient to their unique challenges

Proposed Academy Structure



Proposed Academy Structure



How we need YOUR help!

- 1) What are your initial reactions and feelings about the GNAR academy?
 - a) What benefits do you see?
 - b) What might we be missing?
- 2) What do you feel you/your community leaders most need to know right now.
- 3) Where do you currently get your information from?
 - a) What do you like about that structure?
 - b) What do you wish was different?

An aerial photograph of a town nestled at the base of large, rugged, reddish-brown mountains. The town features a mix of commercial buildings, parking lots, and green trees. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

90-Seconds: What do you think?

(Please write it on a note card! We will collect note cards at the end of this session - thank you!)



Group Activity: What training topics would be most useful, and why?

8 minutes - Talk with your table & write down topics on your postit-pad!

(Remember to designate a spokesperson)

Group Activity: What training topics would be most useful, and why?

8 minutes - Talk with your table & write down topics on your postit-pad!

Topics
Specific
Course



Community Engagement Methods

Housing Affordability Strategies

Scenario Planning

Disaster Planning

Destination Stewardship

Collaboration Methods

Understanding local Infrastructure

Grant Application Skills for Small
Towns

Find & Understand
Local Data

Active Transportation

An aerial photograph of a lake with a sandy beach. On the beach, there are several blue and white tents, many people, and various beach items like chairs and umbrellas. The water is blue and calm. In the background, there are green trees and rolling hills under a clear sky.

90-Seconds: Where do you currently go for training/information & Why

(Please write it on a note card! We will collect note cards at the end of this session - thank you!)

Thank you!



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