

APPENDIX 1 – PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The Solano County Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Housing Element Collaborative completed public outreach at the local and regional levels as part of the regional Solano County Collaborative effort to encourage community involvement and comply with the requirements of state law. These efforts included:

- Project Website
- Stakeholder Consultations
- Housing Element Introduction Workshops
- Housing Needs Assessment Workshops
- Fair Housing Workshops
- Developer Workshops
- Community Survey

PROJECT WEBSITE

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative project website, www.Solhousingelements.com, is a clearinghouse for all information related to the project, with information in English, Spanish and Tagalog. Community members can visit the site to access all public materials; learn about the latest project updates and opportunities to get involved; sign up for email updates; and submit comments directly. The website also includes recordings of all past meetings.

The project website also includes direct links to each of the Solano County Collaborative jurisdictions' websites to promote each city's and the county's specific outreach, share updates, and highlight upcoming opportunities for involvement, including individual Housing Element meetings. The project web page launched in March 2022 and is regularly updated to reflect ongoing community input opportunities and advertise draft work products.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

To ensure that each jurisdiction solicits feedback from all segments of the community, consultations were conducted with service providers and other stakeholders who represent different socioeconomic groups.

From December 2021 through April 2022, staff consulted with 10 stakeholders from 8 organizations that provide services in the Solano County region to obtain input on housing needs and programs. All stakeholders provided feedback via one-on-one interviews or with email responses. Representatives from the following organizations were interviewed:

- North Bay Housing Coalition, December 9, 2021
- Community Action Partnership Solano, Joint Powers Authority (JPA), December 14, 2021

- Legal Services of Northern California, December 22, 2021
- Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California, January 6, 2022
- Solano-Napa Habitat for Humanity, January 28, 2022
- Agency on Aging, January 24, 2022
- Urban Habitat, February 16, 2022
- North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) in April 2022

In each consultation, the stakeholders were asked all or some of the following questions, depending on the type of organization interviewed:

- Opportunities and Concerns: What 3 top opportunities do you see for the future of housing in this jurisdiction? What are your 3 top concerns for the future of housing in this jurisdiction?
- Housing Preferences: What types of housing do your clients prefer? Is there adequate rental housing in this jurisdiction? Are there opportunities for home ownership? Are there accessible rental units for seniors and persons with disabilities?
- Housing Barriers/Needs: What are the biggest barriers to finding affordable, decent housing? What are the unmet housing needs in this jurisdiction?
- Housing Conditions: How would you characterize the physical condition of housing in this jurisdiction? What opportunities do you see to improve housing in the future?
- Equity and Fair Housing: What factors limit or deny civil rights, fair housing choice, or equitable access to opportunity? What actions can be taken to transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity (without displacement)? What actions can be taken to make living patterns more integrated and balanced?
- How has COVID affected the housing situation?

Based on conversations with the Community Action Partnership Solano JPA, there is a need for more permanent supportive housing programs with wrap-around services to support unhoused individuals, populations with mental illness, and the growing number of low-income families. Stakeholders suggested that the Cities and the County leverage the existing momentum in the stakeholder organizations to create a permanent supportive housing program, where the jurisdictions can pool their resources together and equally distribute projects. One stakeholder disclosed that they have funding for assisting jurisdictions with needed affordable housing but finding adequate sites is the barrier. Stakeholders also identified that there are substantial racial disparities in housing among communities of color, recommending that jurisdictions do more through code enforcement, primarily ensuring there is water and heating in low-income housing units, or passing ordinances that protect tenants from living in substandard housing.

Based on a conversation with Fair Housing service providers, there is a need for fair housing education among landlords and tenants, specifically on the topics of enforcement of fair housing laws and rental discrimination practices. Stakeholders encouraged the jurisdictions to contract with fair housing

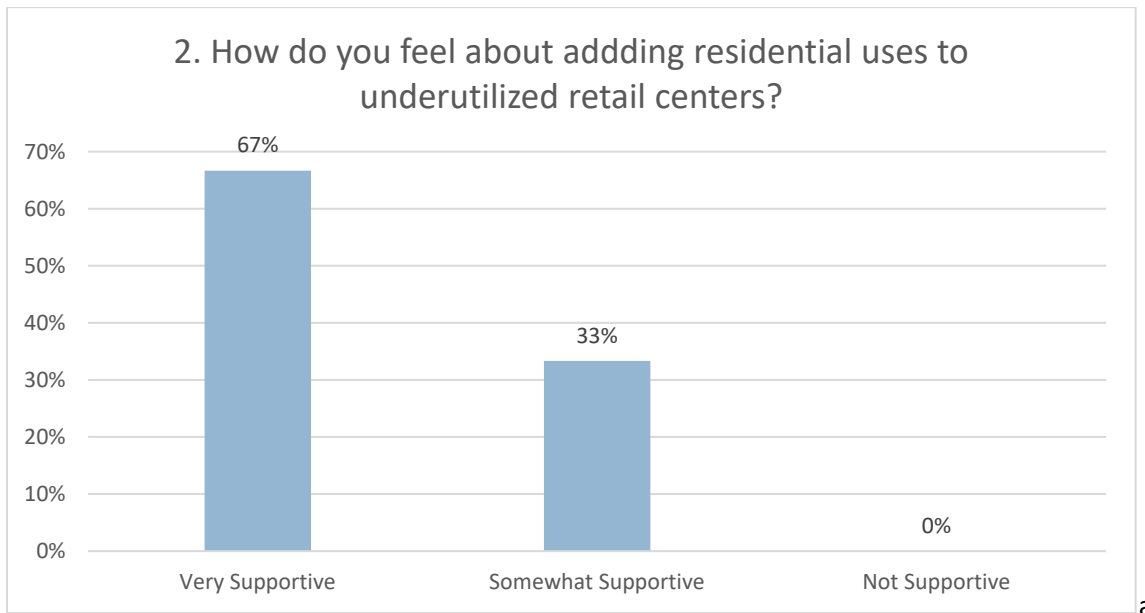
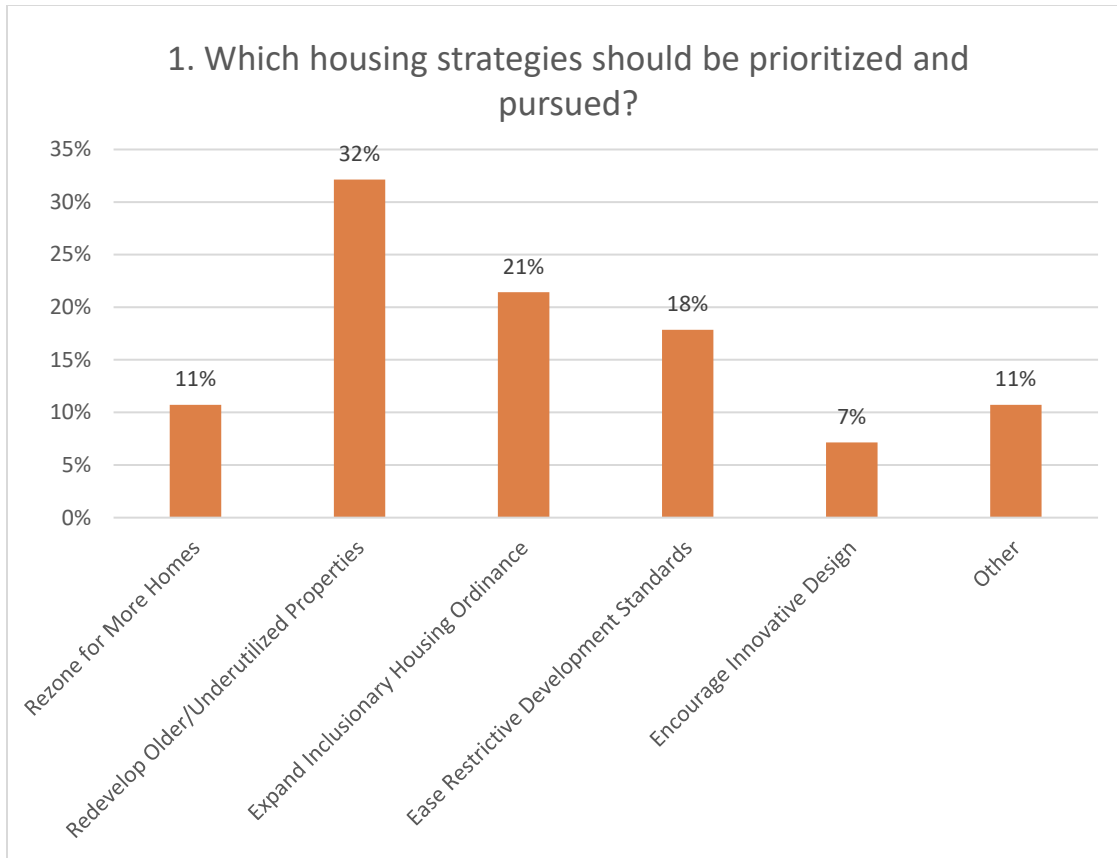
providers to offer services such as housing resources and tenant protections to vulnerable populations such as seniors, low-income seniors, and disabled residents. Stakeholders also identified that single-family housing stock in need of rehabilitation should be acquired, repaired and rented to supplement the affordable housing shortage.

A demand that was stressed among all stakeholders was the need for more affordable housing and homeownership opportunities. Strategies for achieving this include community land trusts and mixed-use housing. Stakeholders voiced that seniors have experienced isolation as result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are in need of socialization. Housing that supports wrap-around services and is located near transit routes was identified as a strategy. Stakeholders also identified the cost of land as a barrier to developing affordable housing.

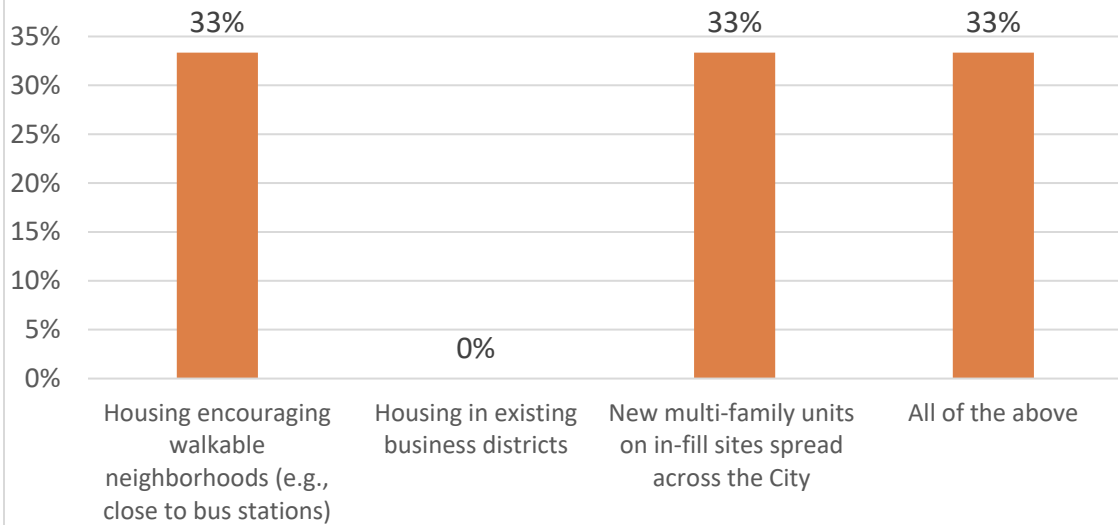
Representatives from the North Bay Regional Center and North Bay Housing Coalition expressed that residents with intellectual disabilities typically require supportive services (case management, grocery delivery, and/or other services) to be successful and may even require that a caretaker live with them. As a result, there is a need for more one- to two-bedroom affordable housing units. The lack of affordable housing in the region makes it hard to find affordable one- and two-bedroom units.

HOUSING ELEMENT INTRODUCTION WORKSHOPS

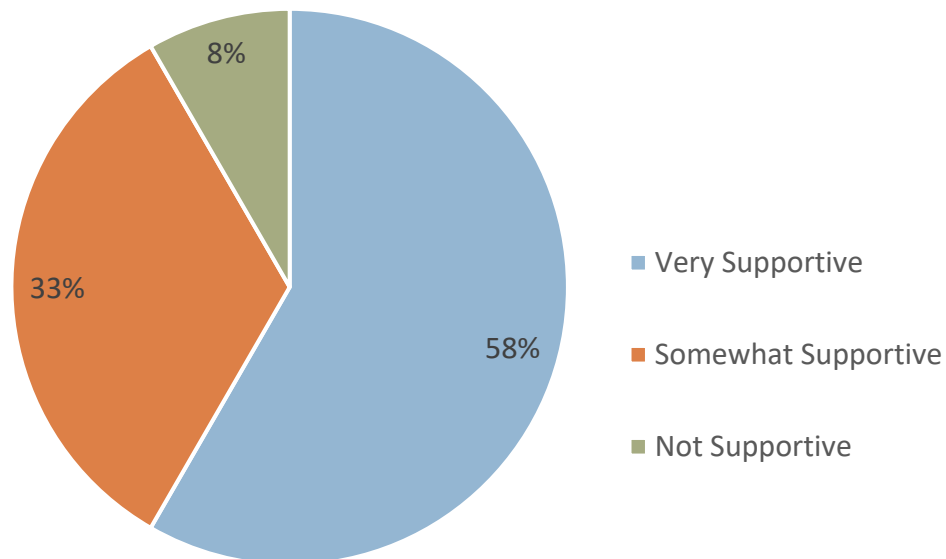
The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative made diligent efforts to encourage public and stakeholder participation in the Housing Element update process at the regional and local scale. The first two workshops introduced the Housing Element requirements and process and were held during the lunch hour on Wednesday, January 26, 2022, and the evening of Thursday, January 27, 2022. There were 13 participants in attendance at the January 26 meeting, and 9 participants in attendance at the January 27 meeting. The Housing Element Introduction workshops were advertised with flyers in English, Spanish, and Tagalog. The workshops were conducted virtually to ensure accessibility for residents throughout the county and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of these meetings was to provide high level demographic information and an overview of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and to solicit input from stakeholders and the public regarding housing needs and opportunities. Polling was conducted as part of each workshop. The combined results are summarized in the following charts.



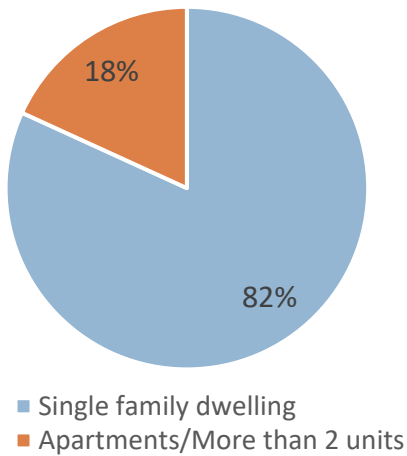
3. What is the most important consideration for location?



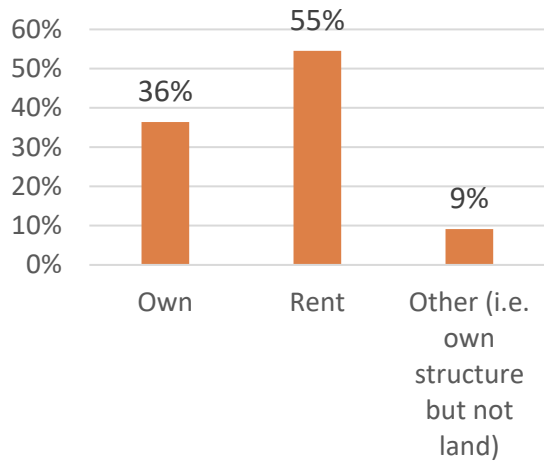
4. How do you feel about replacing underperforming/obsolete businesses (e.g., big box retail stores) with residential uses and/or community serving uses in retail or office centers?



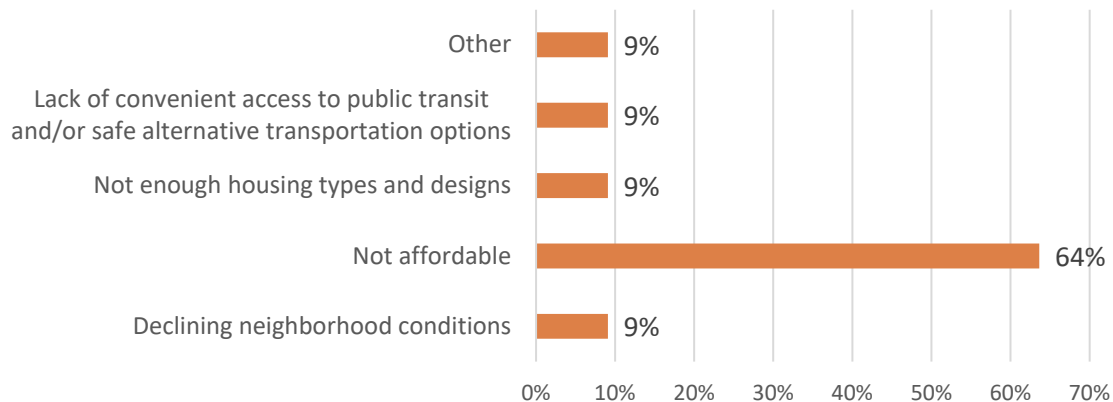
5. What type of housing do you live in?



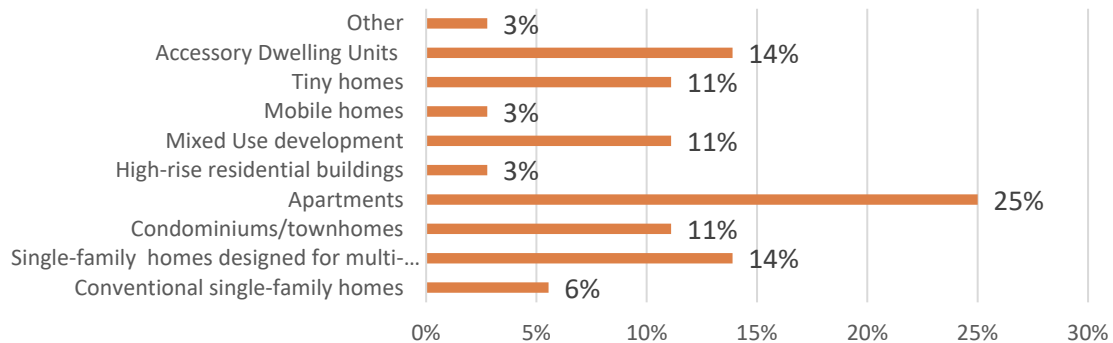
6. Do you own or rent your home?



7. What do you consider the biggest issue related to housing?



8. What type of housing is needed?

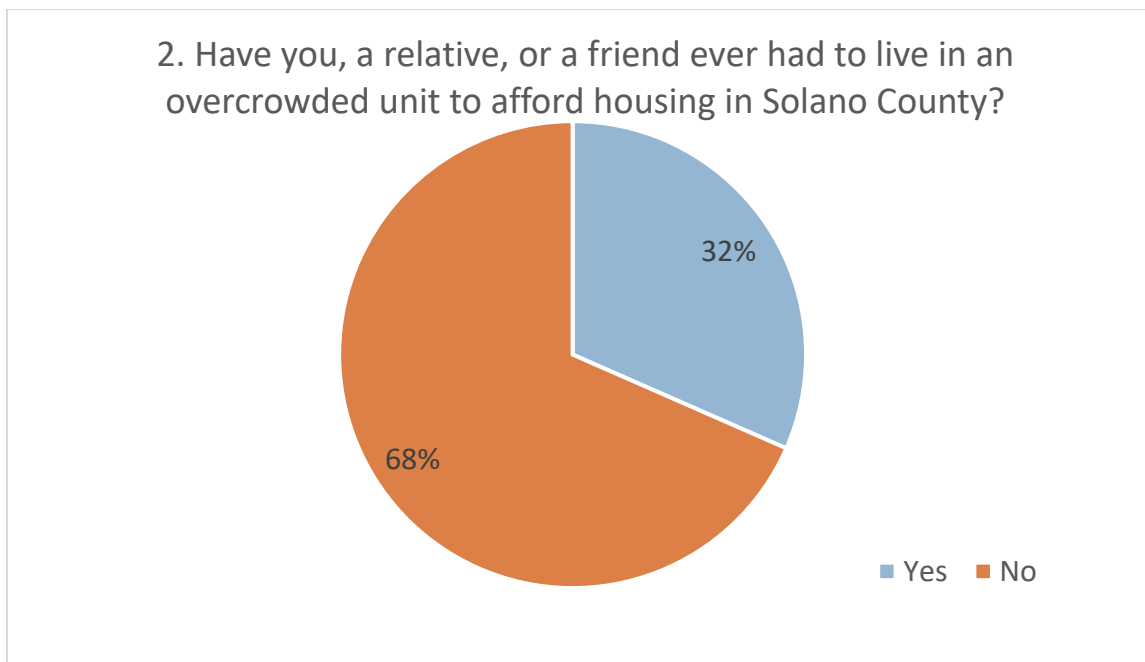
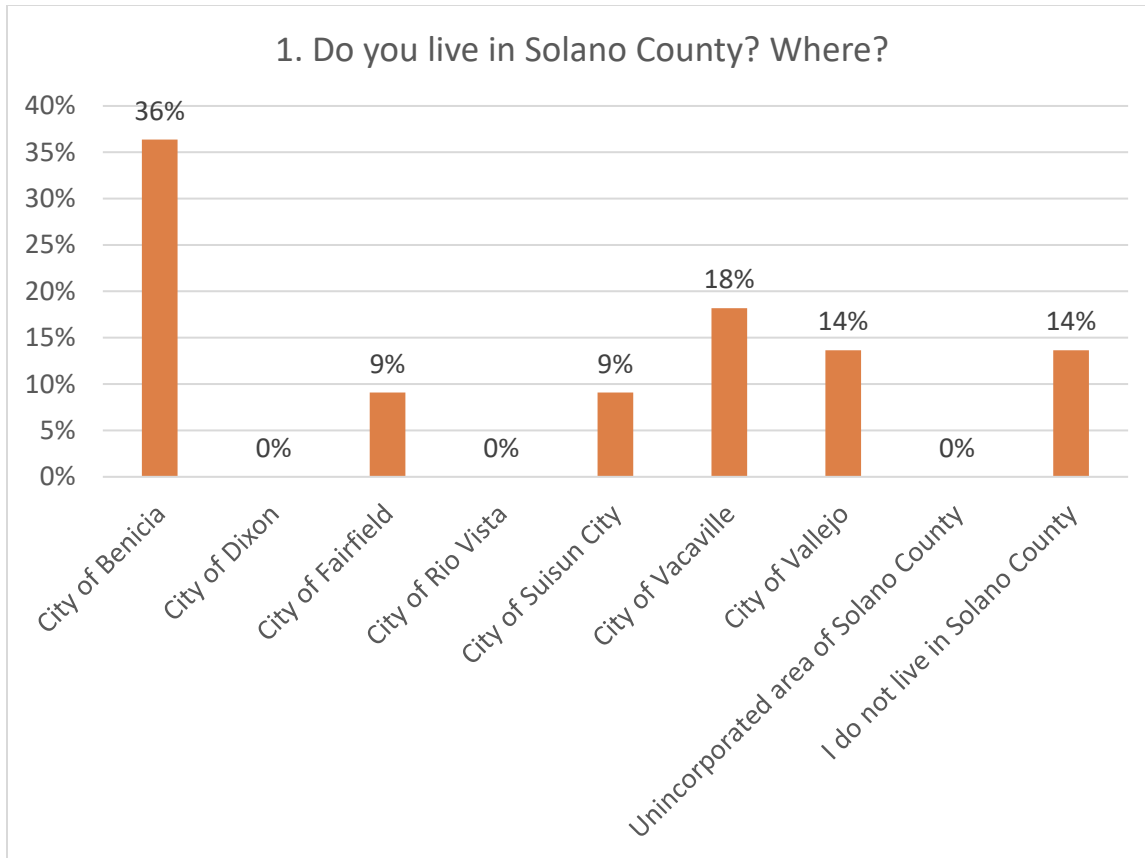


HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

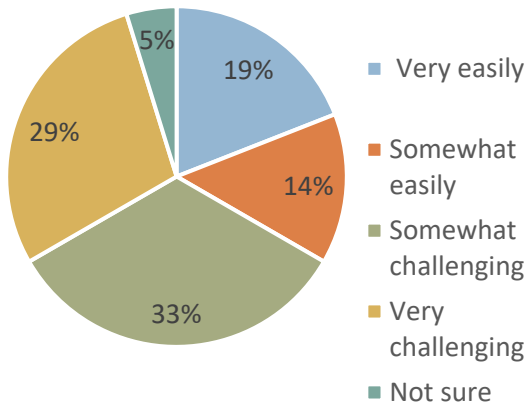
The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative held two virtual workshops to present the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment section of the Housing Element. The two workshops were advertised with flyers in English and Spanish. The workshops were conducted virtually to ensure accessibility for residents throughout the county and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meetings were held on Wednesday, March 30, during the lunch hour and in the evening. Nineteen participants attended the lunch workshop, and eight participants attended the evening meeting. Spanish translation was offered at both meetings. The presentation included statistics and initial findings from the Housing Needs Assessment for individual jurisdictions as well as for Solano County as a whole. Participants identified teachers as a group with housing needs and were interested in identifying strategies for supporting Community Land Trusts, and for helping seniors to age in place. Participants were also interested in learning more about the consequences jurisdictions face if they do not meet their RHNA, and the methodologies used for identifying overcrowded units.

FAIR HOUSING WORKSHOPS

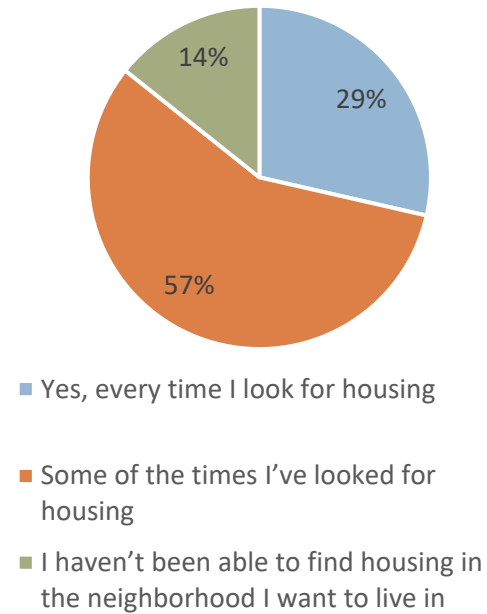
On June 1, 2022, the Solano County Housing Element Collaborative held two virtual Fair Housing Workshops to present an overview of the requirements of the new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Requirement (AB 686) in the Housing Element, and to gather feedback from participants on their experiences with fair housing barriers they may have encountered. One workshop was held over the lunch hour, and one was held in the evening to offer two opportunities for participation. Across both workshops, 86 percent were attendees from the Solano County region. The remaining 14 percent noted that they did not live in Solano County but had some other interest in the Housing Element process. Polling was conducted to gather feedback and input on fair housing concerns in the county. The results are summarized in the following charts.



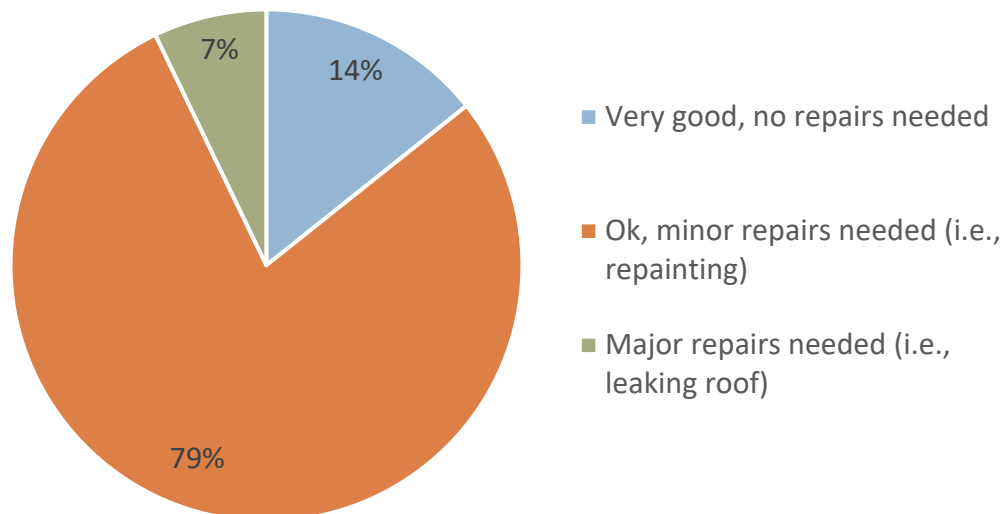
3. Can you easily change your housing situation if needed? (i.e., there are other units available that fit your need based on prize, price, etc.)

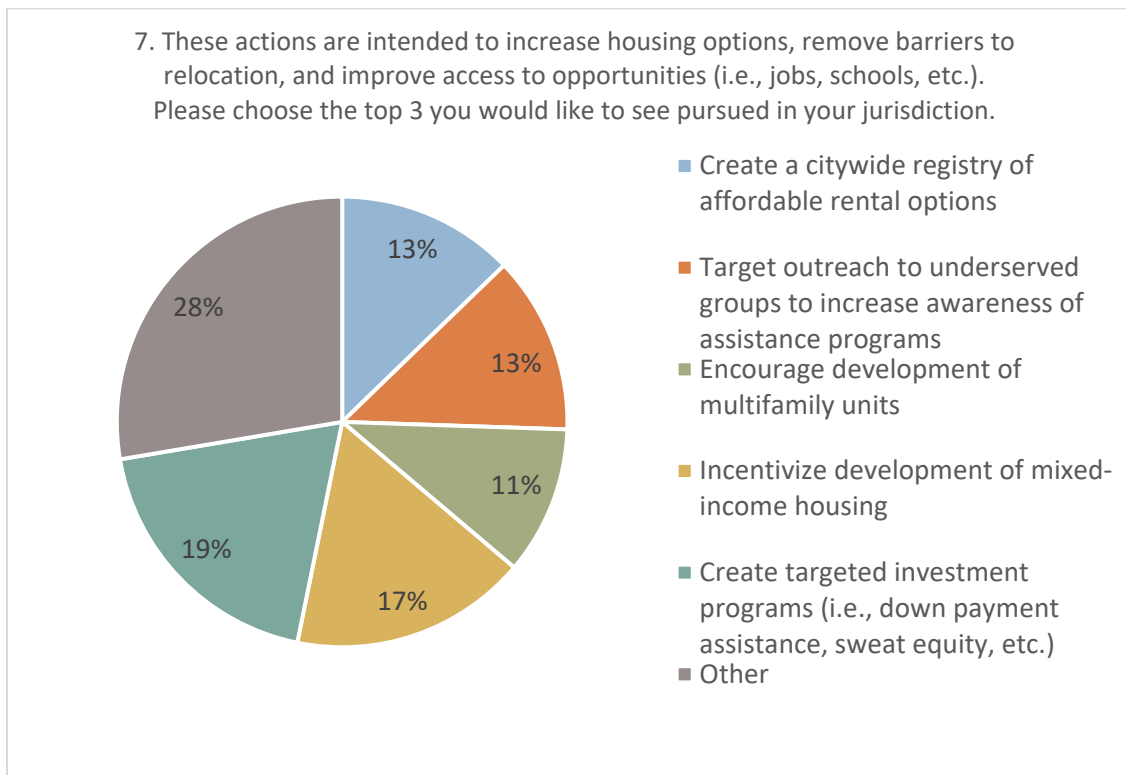
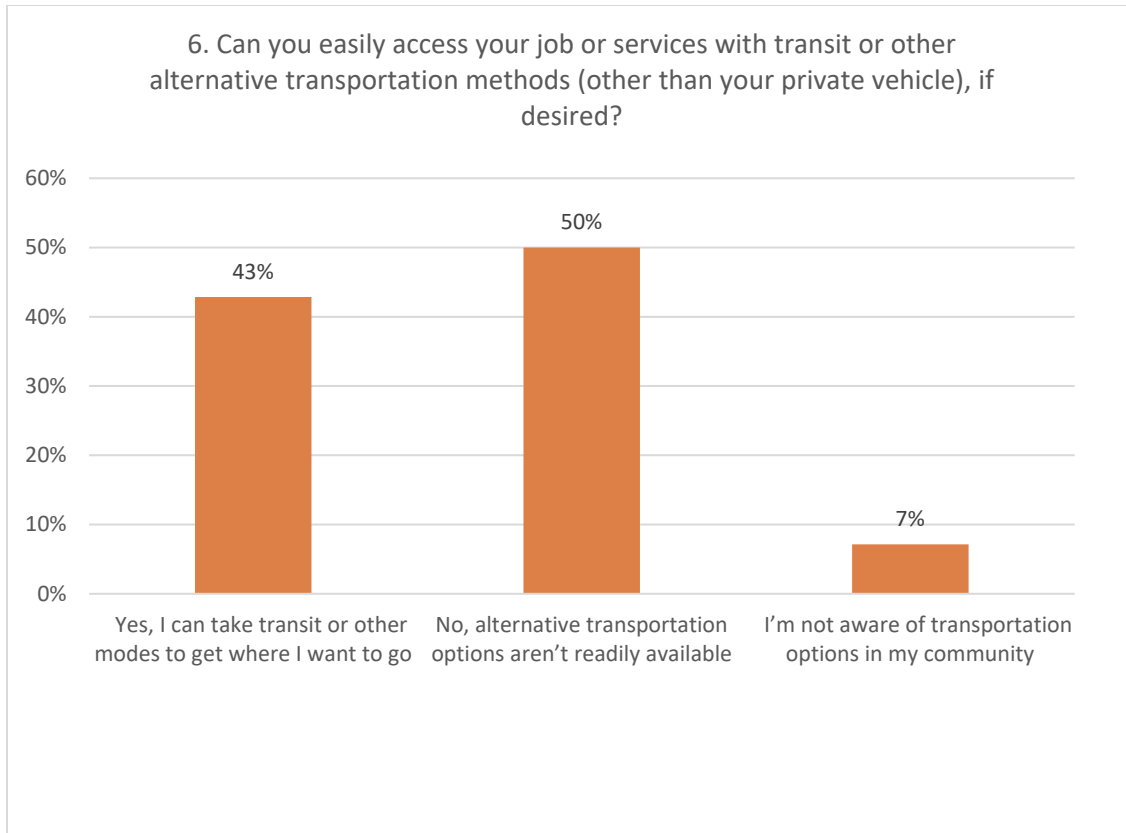


4. Have you been able to find housing in a neighborhood or community of your choice?



5. How would you rate the condition of your home?





DEVELOPER WORKSHOP

A summary will be included once the workshop is complete.

HOUSING SURVEY

In March 2022, the Solano County Housing Element Collaborative launched a housing survey to gather information on housing needs and concerns in the county. The survey was available on the Solano County Housing Element Collaborative website from March 17, 2022, to June 16, 2022. A countywide email blast was sent three separate times reminding residents of the survey. In addition, each City and the County announced the survey on their individual websites and through their individual distribution lists. The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Tagalog.

The housing survey yielded 156 survey responses, 1 of which was completed in Spanish (only 1 percent of the responses were in Spanish, even though 16.4 percent of residents countywide speak only Spanish). Among respondents, approximately 65 percent lived in the City of Benicia; 9 percent in the City of Suisun City; and the remaining 18 percent resided in the cities of Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Vacaville, and Vallejo and the unincorporated county. About 44 percent of respondents worked in Solano County and 55 percent worked outside of the county. Approximately 29 percent of respondents have lived in their homes for more than 20 years, and 78 percent lived in a single-family home. About half of respondents (52 percent) said their homes were not in need of repairs, and 35 percent answered that their homes needed minor repairs (peeling paint, chipped stucco, etc.). The majority of participants (56 percent) would like to see more small and affordable single-family homes built; 46 percent of respondents said they would like to see more senior housing; and 35 percent would like to see accessory dwelling units.

Participants were asked to select the top three greatest barriers to the availability of adequate housing. The following were the top barriers identified:

- 64 percent cited issues related to high prices in rents
- 35 percent cited sales price
- 21 percent cited lack of adequate infrastructure such as water, sewer, electricity, and internet
- 55 percent of respondents cited roadway improvements
- 44 percent of respondents cited enhancing livability of neighborhoods

Additionally, participants were asked to prioritize population groups based on who needs more housing and support services in Solano County. The responses were ranked as follows:

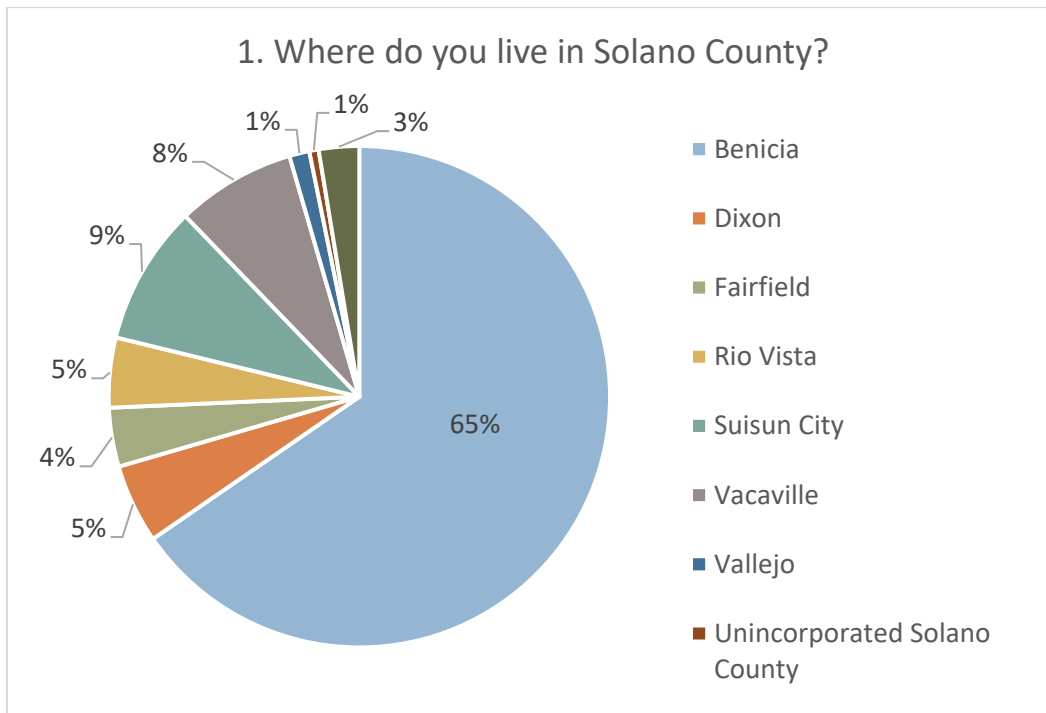
- 37 percent selected seniors
- 32 percent cited homeless individuals
- 20 percent selected persons with disabilities

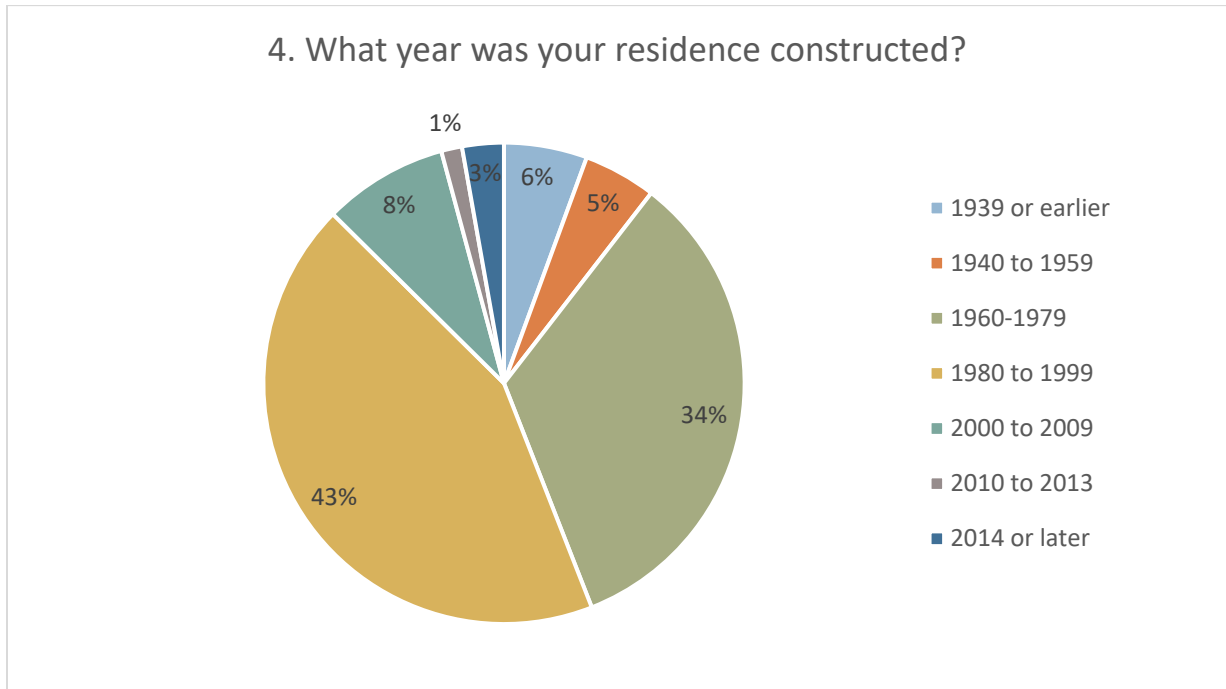
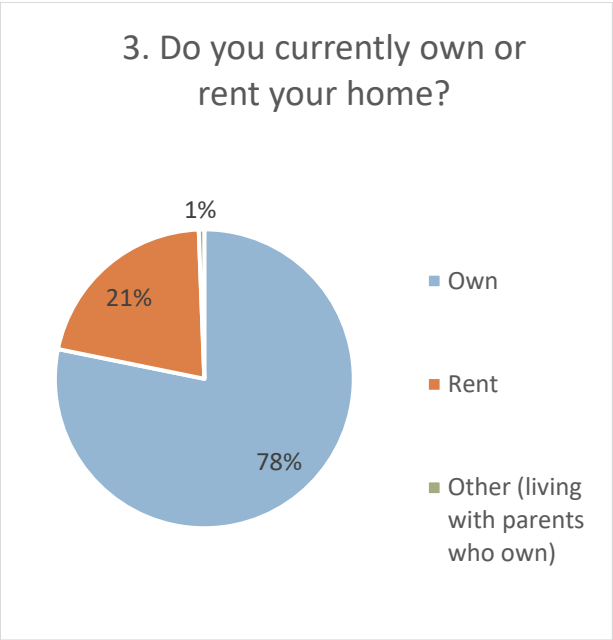
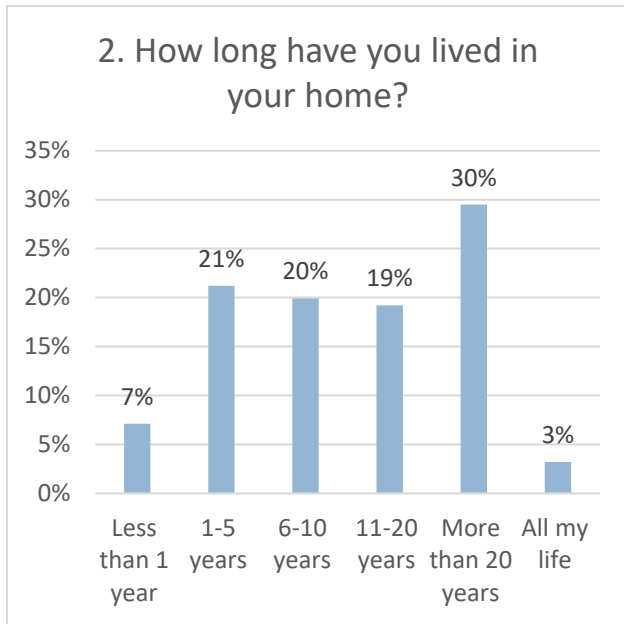
These additional comments were received:

- Cities should explore community land trusts to provide more homeownership opportunities.

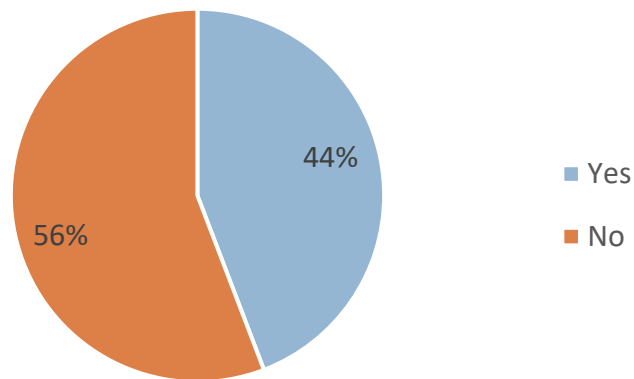
- More green spaces, parks and such are needed, to provide the neighborhood with much-needed mental-health benefits of nature. Equity, fair housing, complete neighborhoods, improving connectivity between housing and jobs and services are priorities.
- The diversification of housing being built is important, such as by including duplexes or medium density housing. Improving connectivity between housing and jobs and services are priorities.
- Preservation of green and open space is important.
- There are needs for affordable rentals for young adults and/or students.
- Evacuation needs, building equity for disadvantaged communities and promoting environmental justice are priorities.

The following charts summarize the 156 responses to the housing survey.

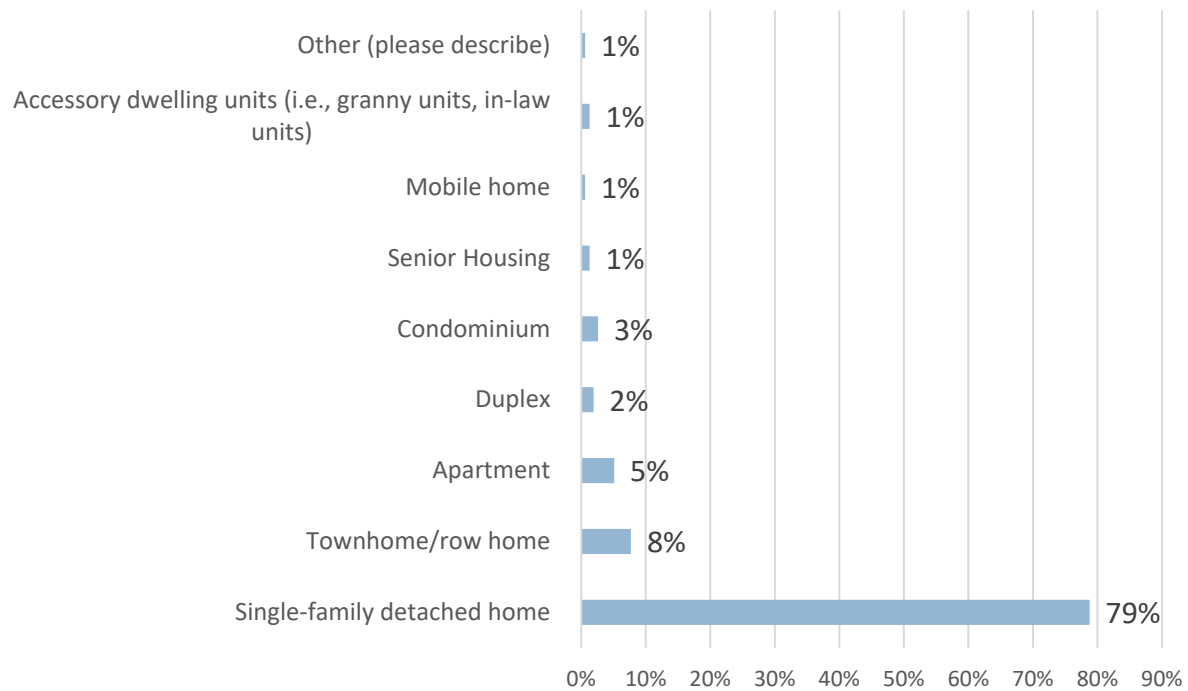




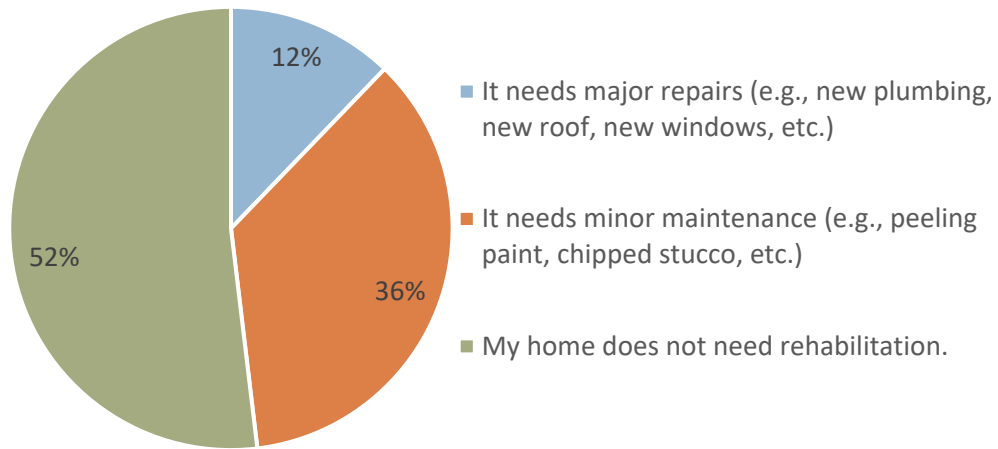
5. Do you work in Solano County?



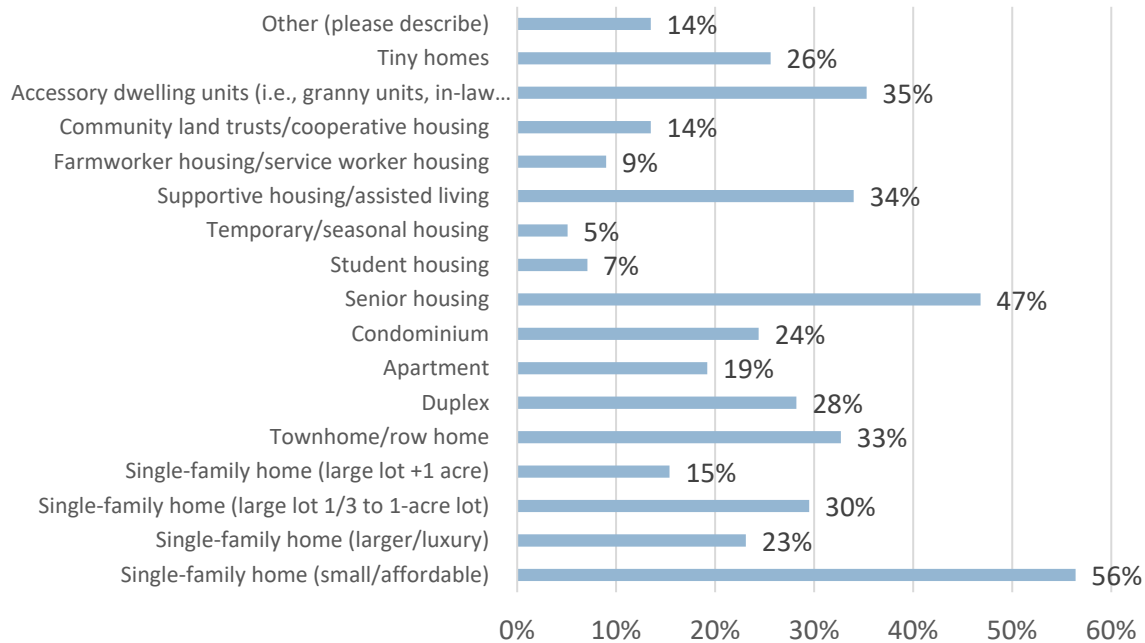
6. What type of housing do you currently live in?



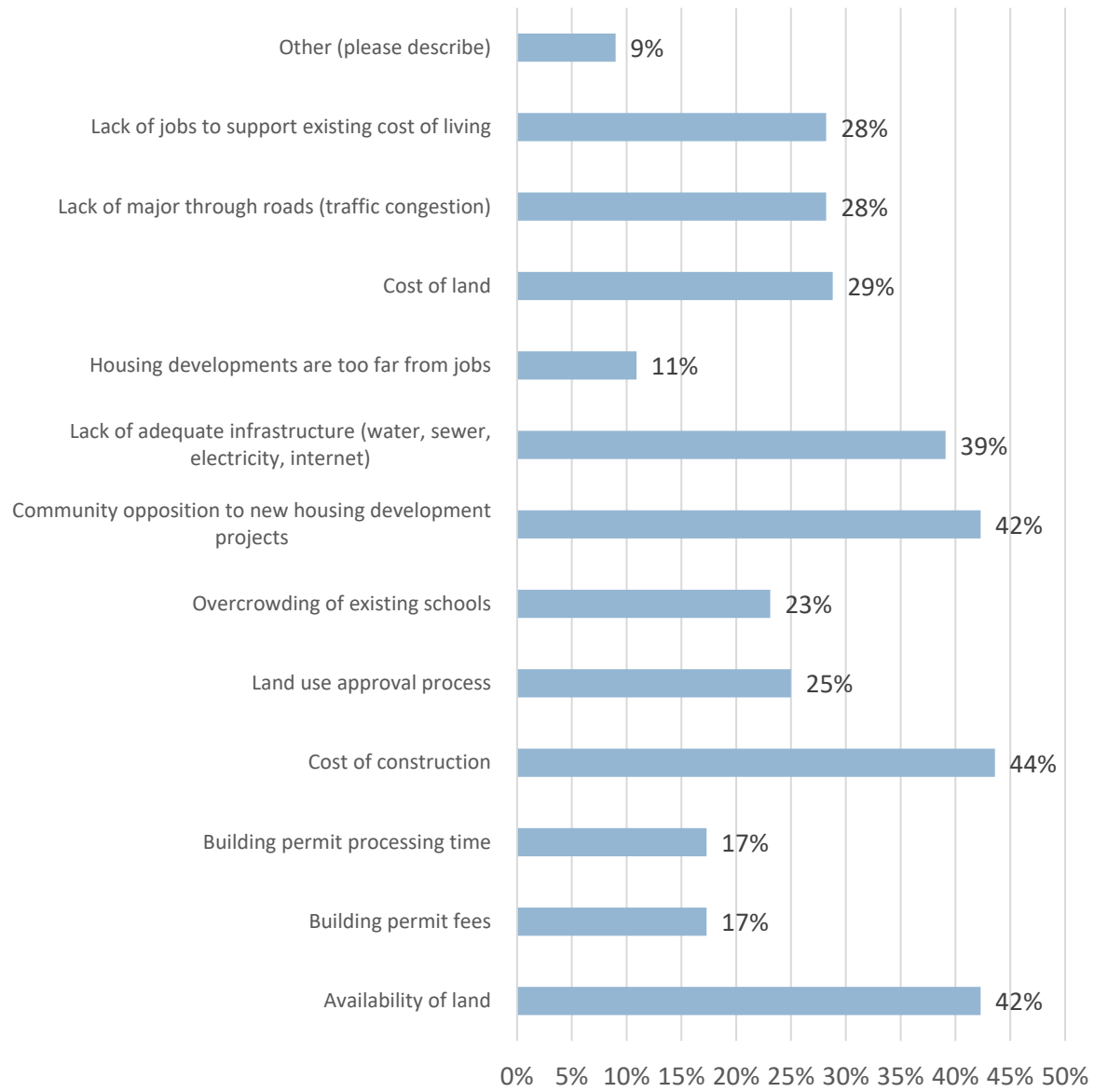
7. How would you rate the physical condition of your home?



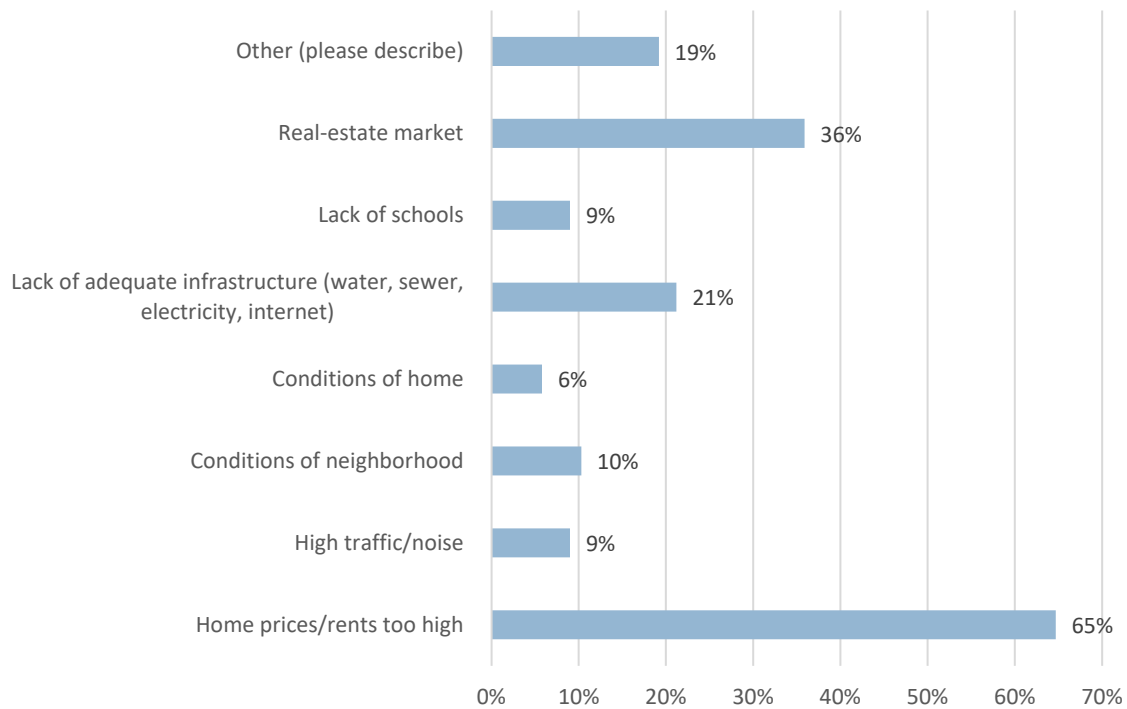
8. What type of housing would you like to see built in your community?



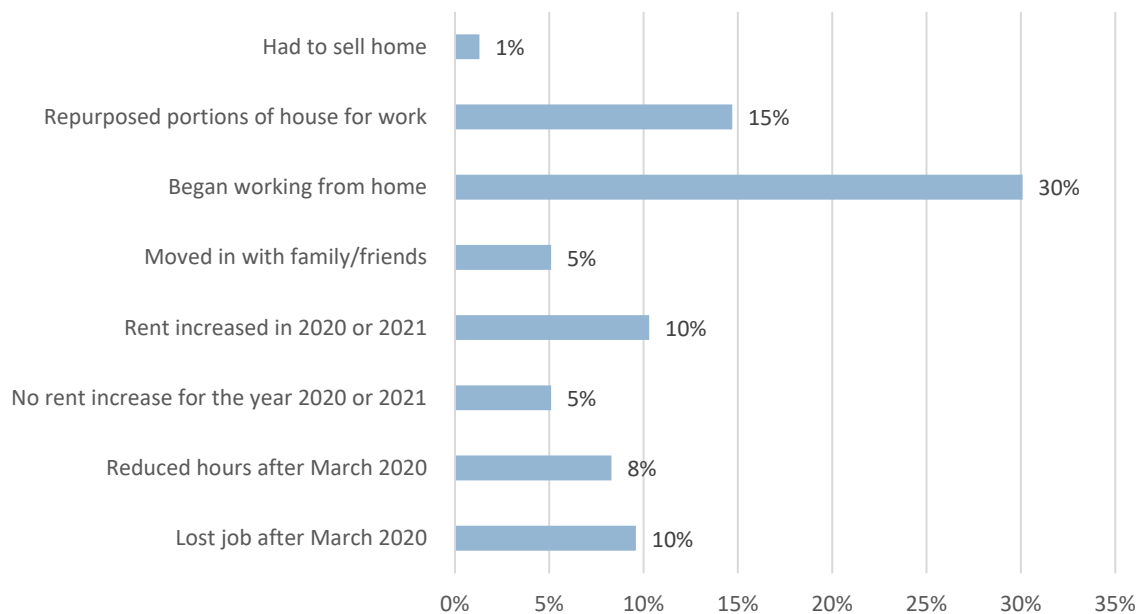
9. What do you think are the greatest barriers to building additional housing in your community?



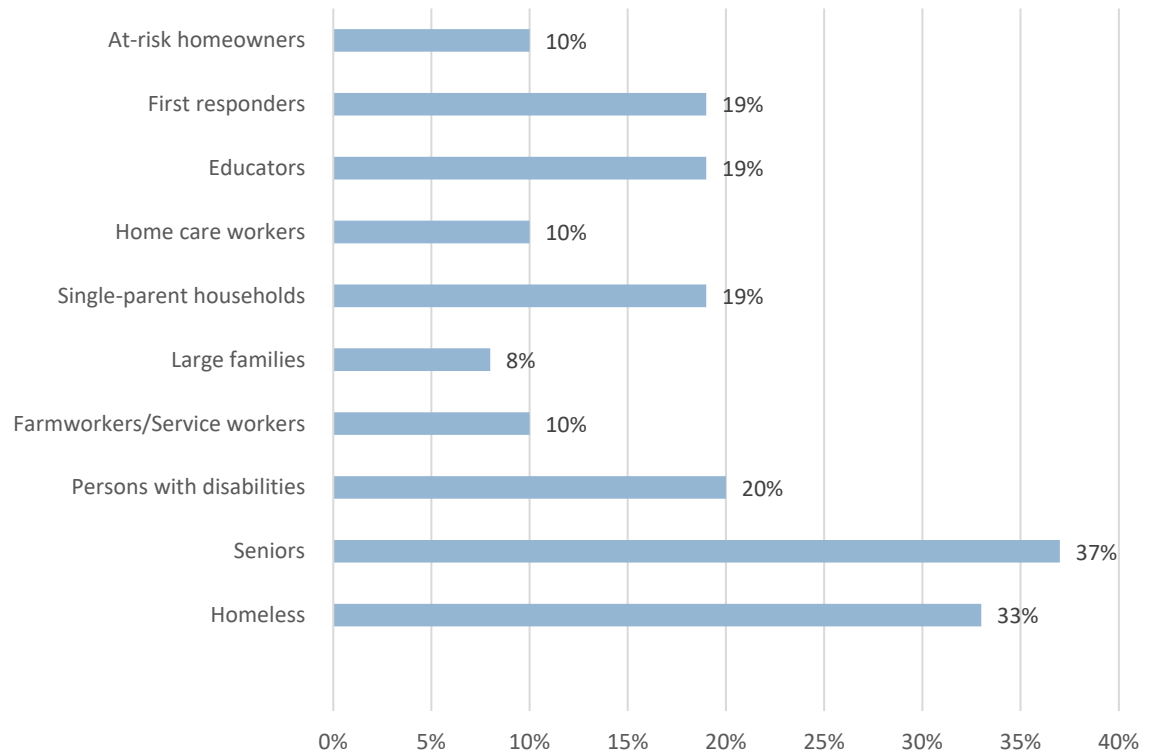
10. What are your greatest barriers to obtaining housing in your community?



11. Have you experienced a change in your housing/economic situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic?



12. Prioritize the following population groups based on who needs more housing and support services in Solano County.



13. How important is each of the following concerns to you or to the people you represent in your organization?

