# memo

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**from**   Kate Rogers & Matt Hastie, MIG|APG

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**re**   **Albany Housing Implementation Plan**

**Survey Summary**

**date**   04/17/2023

## Introduction

The City of Albany conducted an online survey in November to gather community input into the Housing Implementation Plan (HIP) project. The main purpose of the survey was to ask whether community members support some of the potential housing strategies that the city is considering. The survey also gathered demographic information and asked a few questions about respondents' personal experiences with housing (e.g., whether they have had trouble finding housing they can afford in Albany).

The survey was available on the SurveyMonkey platform for approximately two weeks—from November 2 through November 15, 2022. It was promoted through the project's interested parties email list, the City's website, and the City's social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram). The survey received a total of **138 responses**.

## Housing Strategy Questions

The survey provided some brief background information about the HIP project and included links to the HIP Background Reports for access to more detailed information about potential housing strategies that the city is considering. The survey then asked questions about a subset of strategies—14 strategies that have been identified as higher-priority initiatives for the city. Each strategy was described at a high level so that respondents did not need detailed knowledge to respond.

Respondents were asked to "indicate their level of support" for each strategy "to help encourage or produce more housing and a wider variety of housing options that meet the needs of current and future Albany residents." The response options were on a five-point scale, from "Do not support at all" (1) to "Strongly support" (5). Results are summarized below.

Overall, the top five strategies that received the **most support** were:

- Encourage accessible housing units.
- Encourage small single-detached homes.
- Offer surplus City-owned land for affordable housing.
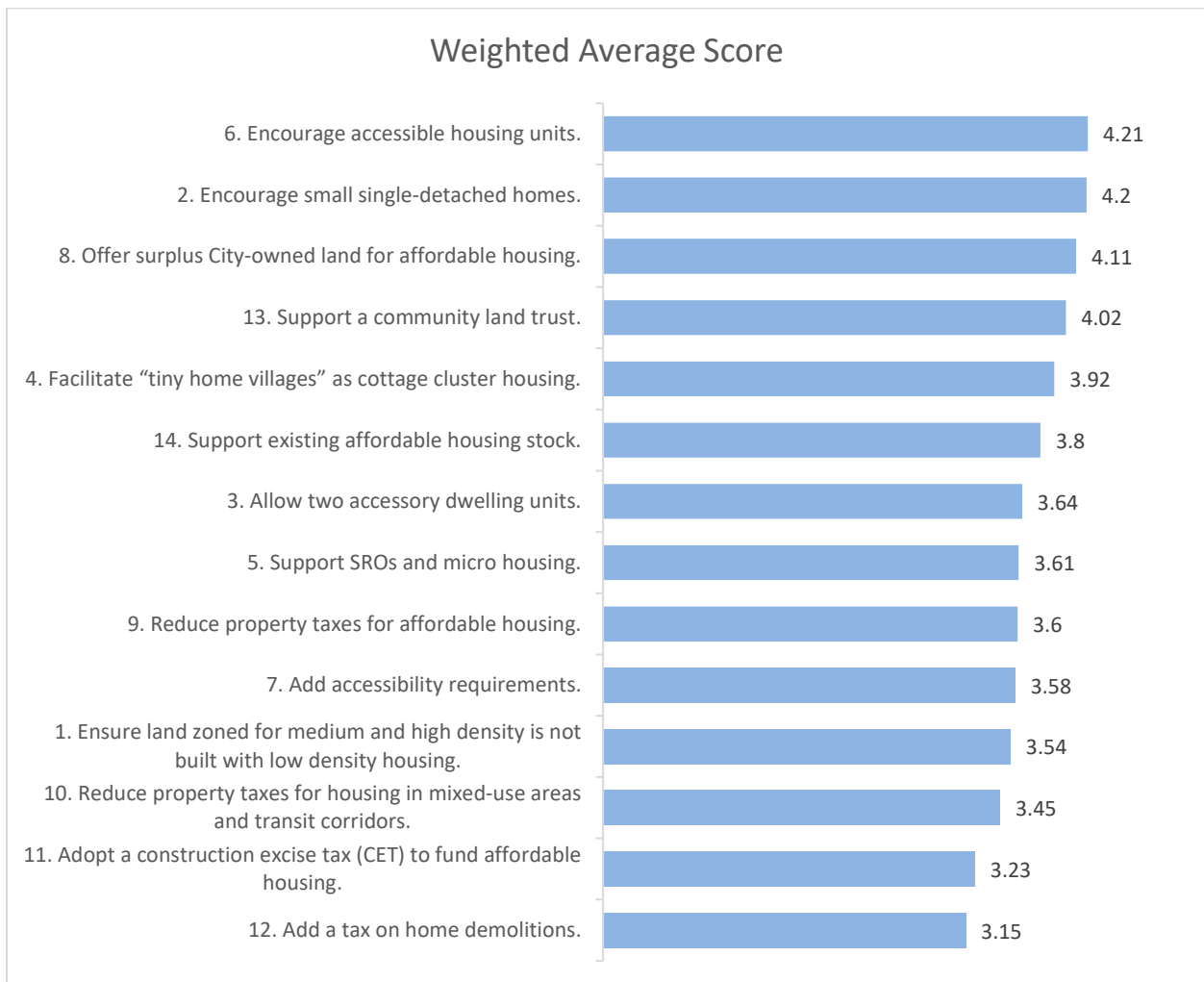- Support a community land trust.

- Facilitate "tiny home villages" as cottage cluster housing.

The five strategies that received the **least support** were:

- Add a tax on home demolitions.
- Adopt a construction excise tax (CET) to fund affordable housing.
- Reduce property taxes for housing in mixed-use areas and transit corridors.
- Ensure land zoned for medium and high density is not built with low density housing.
- Add accessibility requirements.

However, even the least supported strategies received more support than non-support.
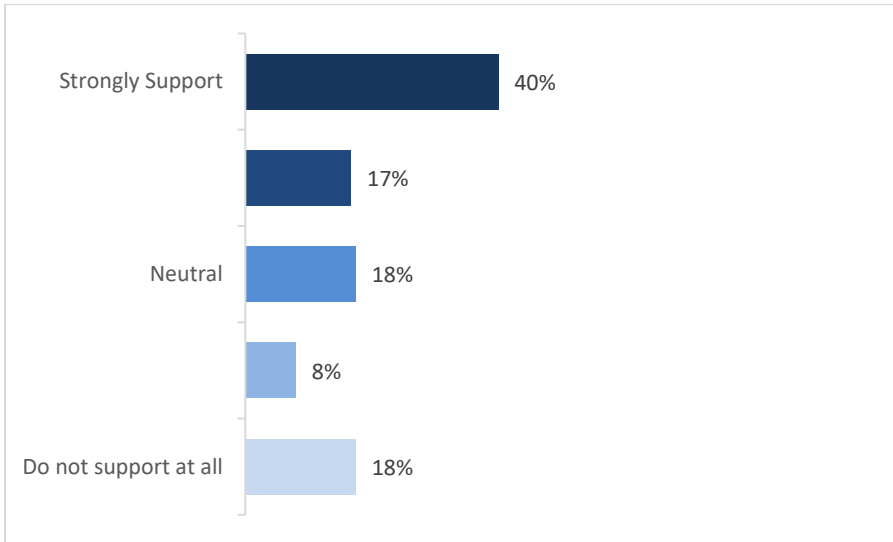
The chart below compares the level of respondent support for each strategy, based on a weighted average score. On the following pages are more detailed charts that summarize the results for each strategy individually.

## Weighted Average Score

| Strategy | Score |
|---|---|
| 6. Encourage accessible housing units. | 4.21 |
| 2. Encourage small single-detached homes. | 4.2 |
| 8. Offer surplus City-owned land for affordable housing. | 4.11 |
| 13. Support a community land trust. | 4.02 |
| 4. Facilitate "tiny home villages" as cottage cluster housing. | 3.92 |
| 14. Support existing affordable housing stock. | 3.8 |
| 3. Allow two accessory dwelling units. | 3.64 |
| 5. Support SROs and micro housing. | 3.61 |
| 9. Reduce property taxes for affordable housing. | 3.6 |
| 7. Add accessibility requirements. | 3.58 |
| 1. Ensure land zoned for medium and high density is not built with low density housing. | 3.54 |
| 10. Reduce property taxes for housing in mixed-use areas and transit corridors. | 3.45 |
| 11. Adopt a construction excise tax (CET) to fund affordable housing. | 3.23 |
| 12. Add a tax on home demolitions. | 3.15 |

1.  **Ensure land zoned for medium and high density is not built with low density housing.**

    Albany has a limited supply of land that is designated for things like apartments and townhomes. This strategy would require new development to be built at 50 to 80 percent of the maximum density so lands are used efficiently and not consumed by lower-density development (such as large-lot single-detached homes). [Strategy 1.1]

    *Although this was one of the lower-supported strategies overall, it still received support from 57% of respondents.*

    | | |
    |---|---|
    | Strongly Support | 40% |
    | | 17% |
    | Neutral | 18% |
    | | 8% |
    | Do not support at all | 18% |

2.  **Encourage small single-detached homes.**

    This strategy would encourage development of smaller single-detached homes (e.g., under 1,250 square feet) by allowing those homes to be built on smaller lots than would be allowed today and may provide more entry level and empty nester ownership options. [Strategy 1.2]

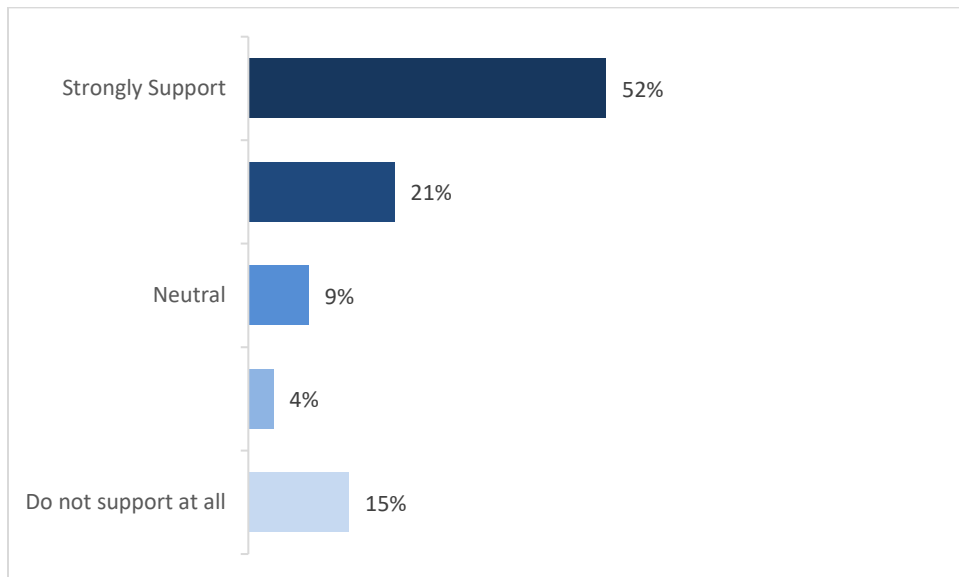    *This was one of the most strongly supported strategies.*

    | | |
    |---|---|
    | Strongly Support | 54% |
    | | 26% |
    | Neutral | 12% |
    | | 3% |
    | Do not support at all | 5% |
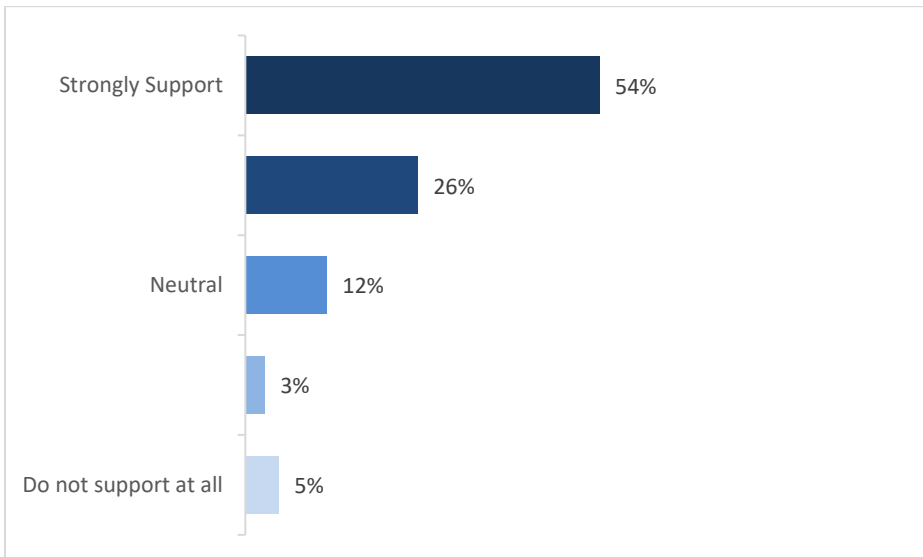
3.  **Allow two accessory dwelling units.**

    Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are small homes (under 900 square feet) built on the same lot as a single-detached home. Albany currently allows one ADU on a lot with a single-detached home—the ADU can be internal or attached to the home or in separate, detached building. This strategy would allow two ADUs on a lot, as long as one of the ADUs is attached or internal to the home. [Strategy 1.4]

    | Response | Percentage |
    |---|---|
    | Strongly Support | 42% |
    |  | 20% |
    | Neutral | 14% |
    |  | 6% |
    | Do not support at all | 18% |
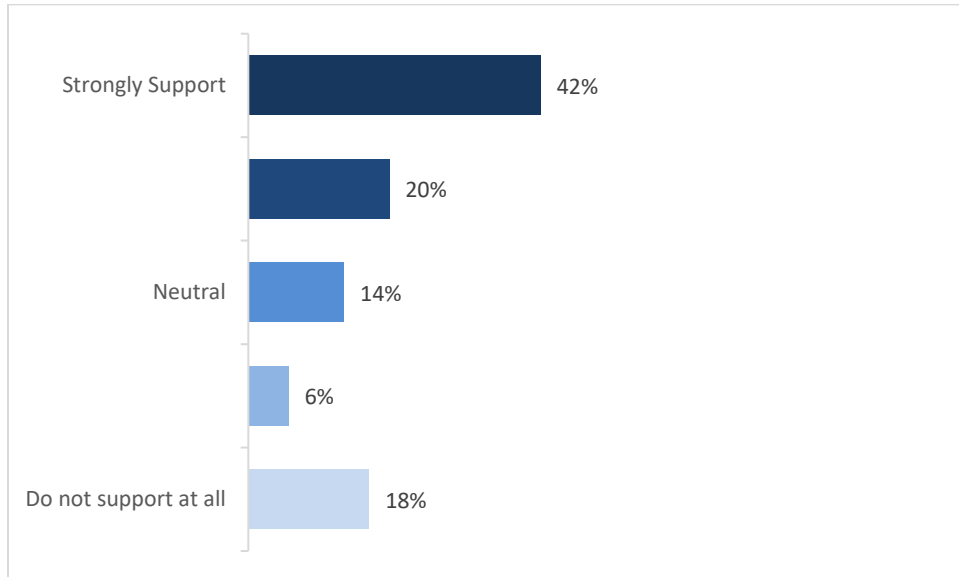
4.  **Facilitate "tiny home villages" as cottage cluster housing.**

    Cottage clusters are groupings of small, detached homes with shared open space and sometimes parking. Albany currently allows up to 8 cottages per cluster. This strategy would allow additional cottages in a cluster (up to 10 or 16, depending on the zone) if all the homes are under 750 square feet—to encourage "tiny home villages" in Albany. [Strategy 1.5]

    | Response | Percentage |
    |---|---|
    | Strongly Support | 52% |
    |  | 21% |
    | Neutral | 9% |
    |  | 4% |
    | Do not support at all | 15% |

5. **Support SROs and micro housing.**

   Single room occupancy (SRO) housing and micro housing are specialized types of apartments where individual living spaces are smaller and kitchen and (sometimes) bathroom facilities are shared. This can offer a more economical form of housing for people who want or need less space and don't mind sharing common areas—especially for very low-income individuals, young adults, singles, and seniors. This strategy would reduce barriers to and encourage more of this type of housing in Albany by making these developments more feasible to build. [Strategy 1.8]
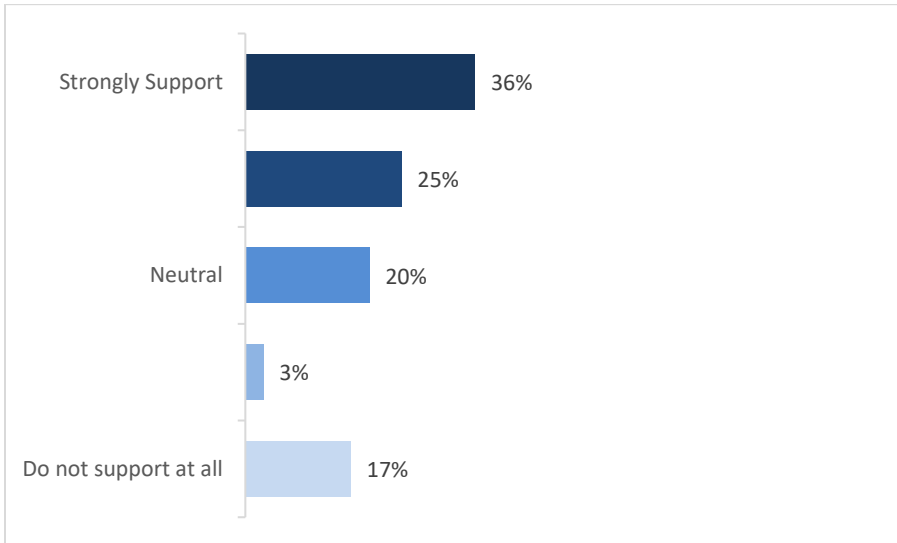


6. **Encourage accessible housing units.**

   While the elderly and people with disabilities account for 20% or more of Albany's population, less than 1% of housing is accessible, and virtually all of that is in new multi-family development. These potential strategies could promote design of homes that are accessible to people with physical or other disabilities or limitations, including many of Albany's aging residents. [Strategy 1.12]
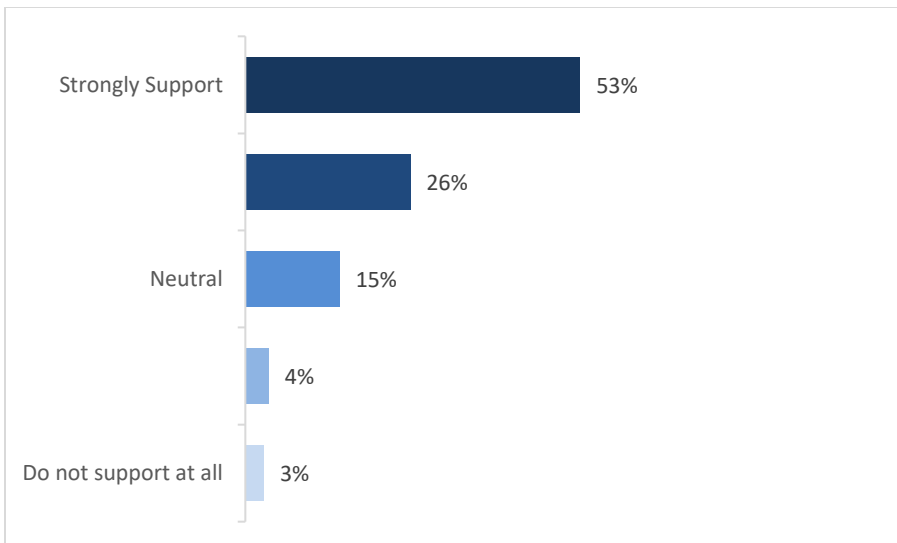
7.  **Add accessibility requirements.**

Elevators are typically not required in multi-story residential developments (under 5 stories). This strategy would require housing that is paid for with public dollars to provide certain accessible features within units, and elevators in some or all buildings, even if elevators increase the cost to develop such housing. [Strategy 1.13]

Strongly Support — 38%
— 21%
Neutral — 19%
— 6%
Do not support at all — 16%
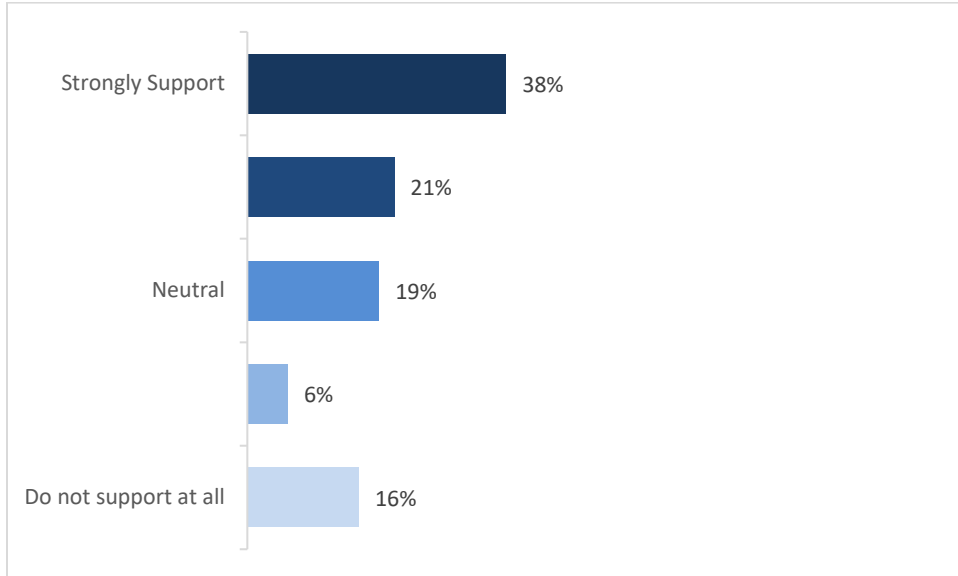
8.  **Offer surplus City-owned land for affordable housing.**

This strategy involves the city repurposing land that it no longer needs so it can be developed with affordable housing for low-income households. The city could sell or lease the land, or partner with a non-profit housing developer to build affordable housing. [Strategy 2.2]

Strongly Support — 52%
— 26%
Neutral — 9%
— 6%
Do not support at all — 7%
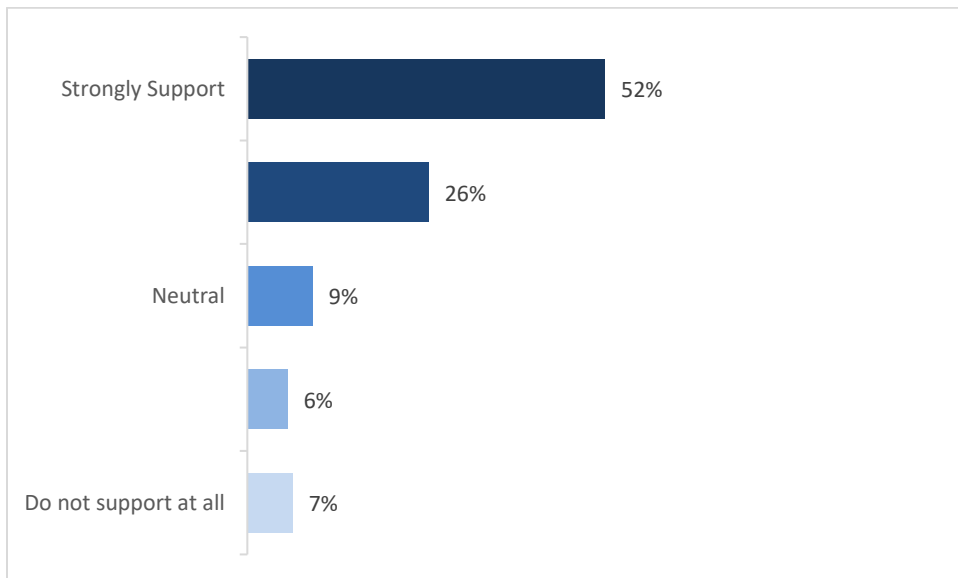
9.  **Reduce property taxes for affordable housing.**

    The city could provide a 20-year tax reduction for new rental housing that is guaranteed to be affordable to low-income households over the long term. [Strategy 3.2]
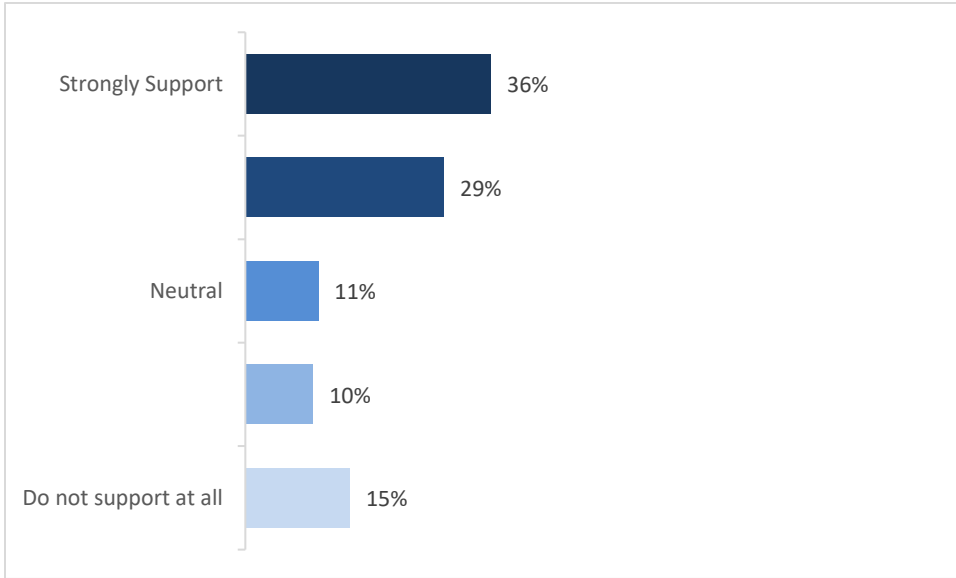
    

10. **Reduce property taxes for housing in mixed-use areas and transit corridors.**

    Support multi-story residential development within designated areas such as downtown, along transit corridors, and in other areas where a mix of housing and businesses is permitted/planned by allowing reduced property taxes for up to 10 years for these developments where they meet specific local and state requirements. [Strategy 3.2]
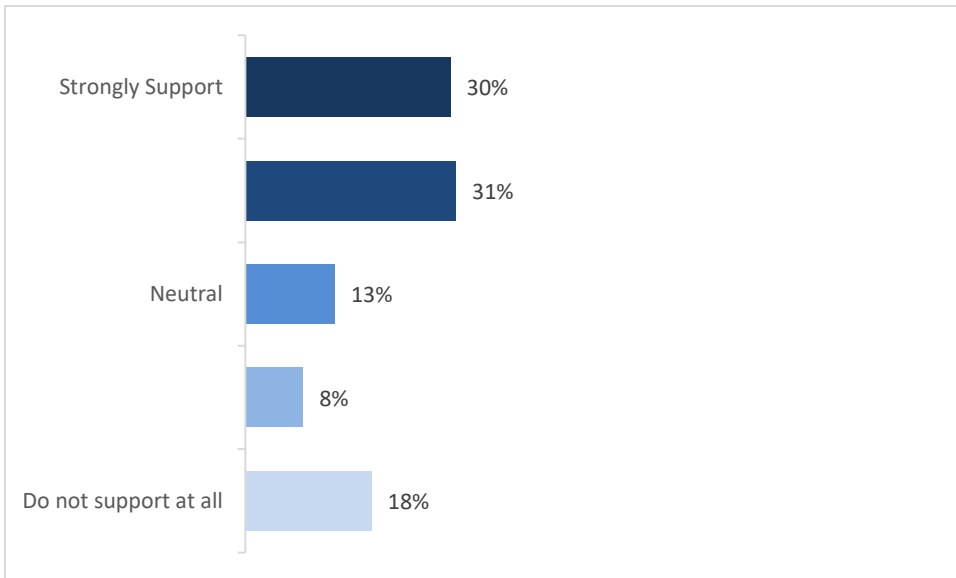
### 11. Adopt a construction excise tax (CET) to fund affordable housing.

Apply a tax of up to 1 percent of the permit value for residential and/or commercial/industrial development, with proceeds used to help pay for programs to promote housing affordability, including homeowner programs. Many similar-sized cities like Corvallis, Newport, and Medford have a CET and revenues are used to provide financing and incentives for affordable housing. [Strategy 4.1]

*This strategy received the highest percentage of "Do not Support at All" but still had close to 40% levels of support overall.*

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Strongly Support | 32% |
|  | 17% |
| Neutral | 20% |
|  | 5% |
| Do not support at all | 27% |
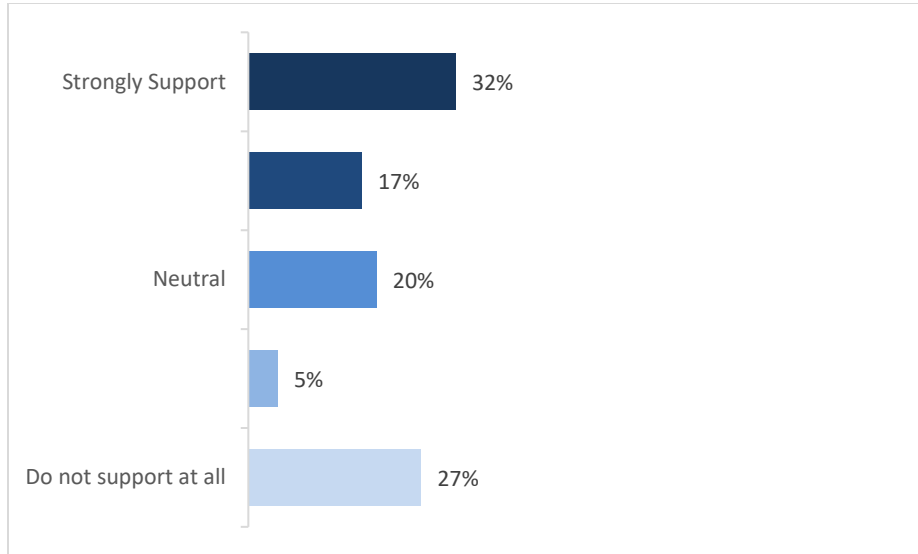
### 12. Add a tax on home demolitions.

This would encourage retention of smaller and/or older existing livable housing, which may be naturally more affordable. The City could provide exemptions when the dwelling is replaced with affordable housing or denser housing types, like middle housing. [Strategy 4.5]

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Strongly Support | 30% |
|  | 17% |
| Neutral | 17% |
|  | 10% |
| Do not support at all | 26% |
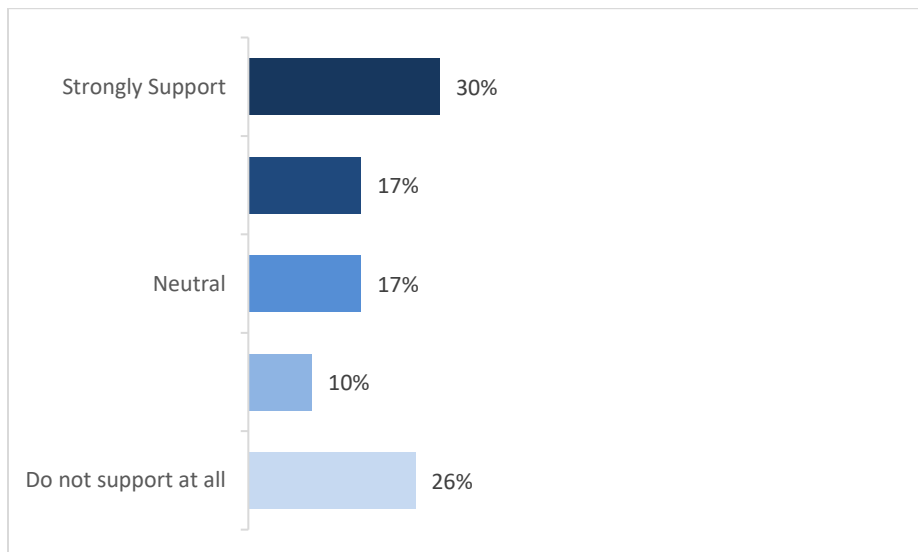
### 13. Support a community land trust.

Work with and support a non-profit organization that provides affordable homeownership opportunities for those with low incomes. Support could be in the form of grants, loans, donating land, or direct funding support. (Note: Financial assistance would require a revenue source.) [Strategy 5.1]

*This strategy had the highest level of neutral responses among all the strategies, with very few respondents not supporting it.*



Strongly Support — 45%
— 23%
Neutral — 23%
— 4%
Do not support at all — 4%
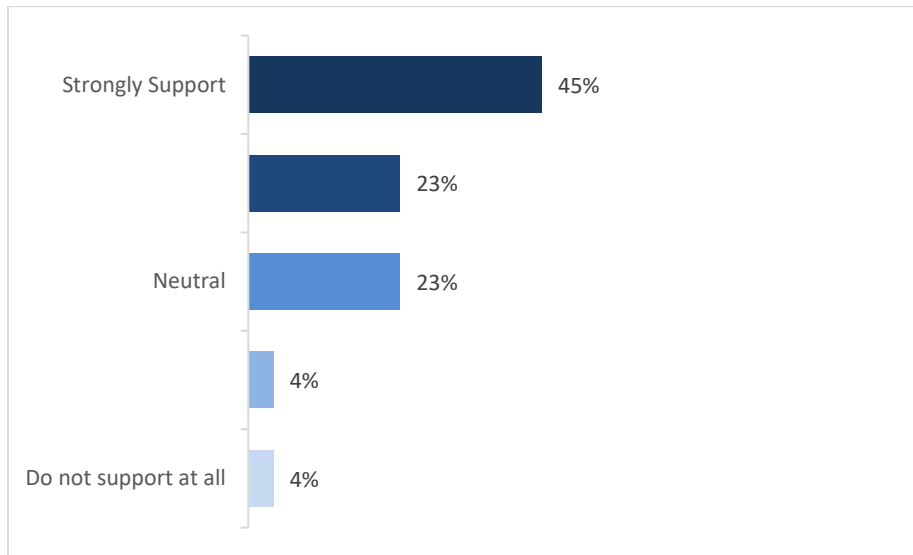
### 14. Support existing affordable housing stock.

Consider development standards and policies that may prevent demolition of naturally occurring affordable housing or preserve manufactured home parks from redevelopment. The city could support non-profits and owners in efforts to preserve and improve existing housing. [Strategy 5.2]



Strongly Support — 37%
— 29%
Neutral — 20%
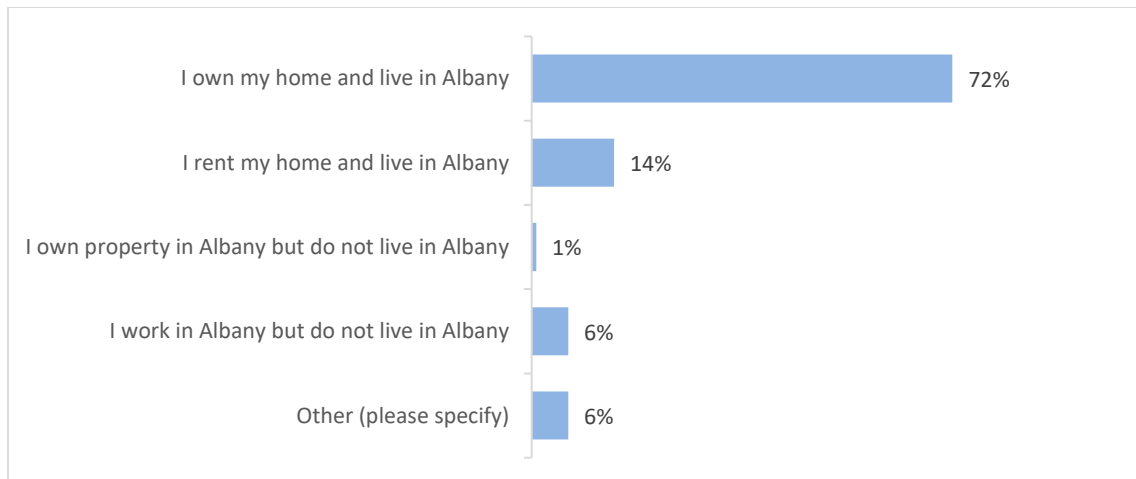— 7%
Do not support at all — 8%
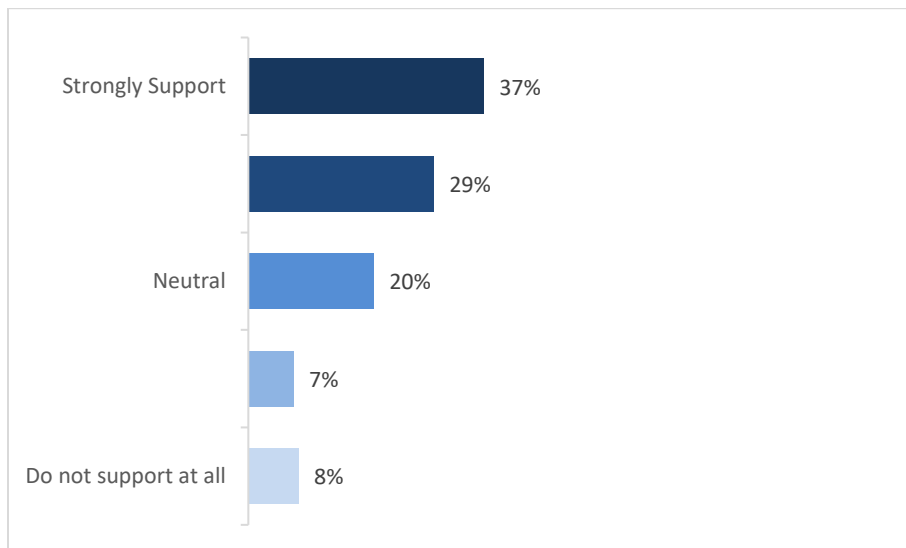
# Demographics Questions

Highlights from these responses are summarized below. For some items, the respondent data is compared to city-wide demographic data.

- **Homeownership:** About three-quarters of respondents are homeowners in Albany. This compares to the city-wide homeownership rate of 60%.[1]
- **Housing type:** Most respondents (over 80%) live in a single-family detached home. City-wide, 66% of housing units are single-family detached homes.
- **Children:** Almost 50% of respondents have children in the home.
- **Disability:** Over 20% of respondents report having a disability.
- **Age:** About 45% of respondents are 55 years old or older. This compares to the city-wide rate of 28%.[2]
- **Income:** About 58% of respondents have annual household incomes of $75,000 or more. This compares to a city-wide rate of 38% earning $75,000 or more (the City's median household income is $60,624).[3]
- **Housing cost burden:** A substantial percentage of respondents (almost 40%) spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- **Housing challenges:** About 40% of respondents have had difficulty finding housing in Albany that meets their needs.

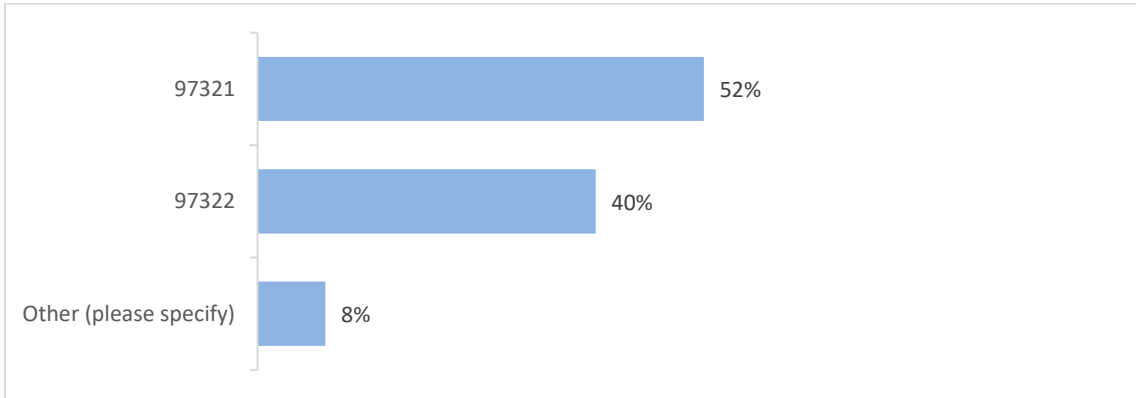16. Do you live, work, or own property in Albany? (select all that apply)



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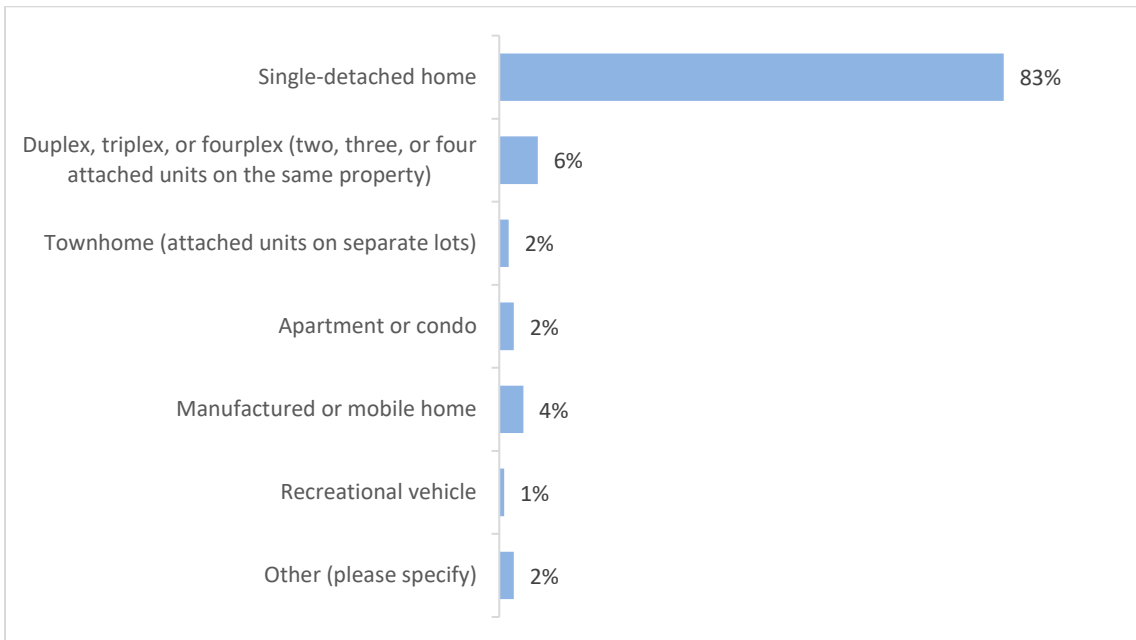[1] U.S. Census, QuickFacts, Albany city, Oregon.
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/albanycityoregon/PST045221
[2] City of Albany, Demographic Data. https://www.cityofalbany.net/demographics/population/age
[3]

17. What is your zip code of residence?

| Zip code | Percentage |
|---|---|
| 97321 | 52% |
| 97322 | 40% |
| Other (please specify) | 8% |

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

| Housing type | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Single-detached home | 83% |
| Duplex, triplex, or fourplex (two, three, or four attached units on the same property) | 6% |
| Townhome (attached units on separate lots) | 2% |
| Apartment or condo | 2% |
| Manufactured or mobile home | 4% |
| Recreational vehicle | 1% |
| Other (please specify) | 2% |

19. How many people live or stay in your home (including yourself)?

| Number | Percentage |
|---|---|
| 1 | 11% |
| 2 | 46% |
| 3 | 20% |
| 4 or more | 23% |
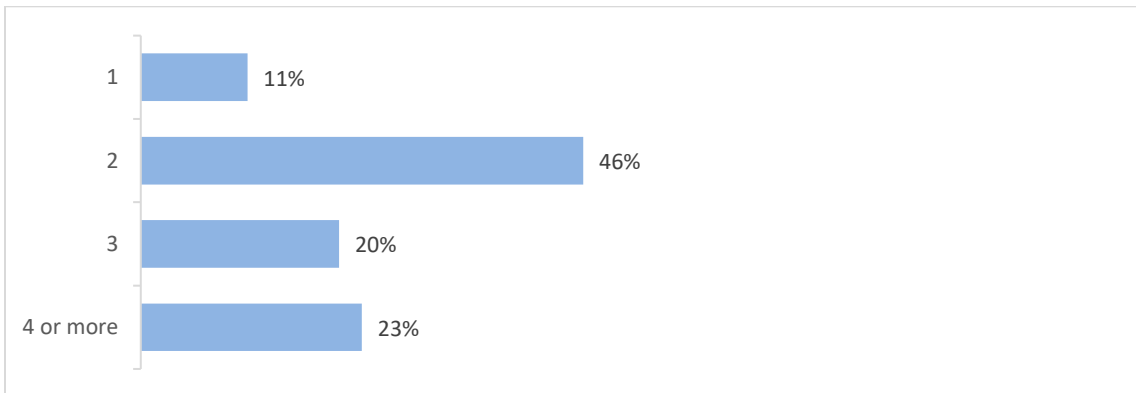
## 20. Do children age 17 or younger live in your home?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 11% |
| 2 | 46% |
| 3 | 20% |
| 4 or more | 23% |
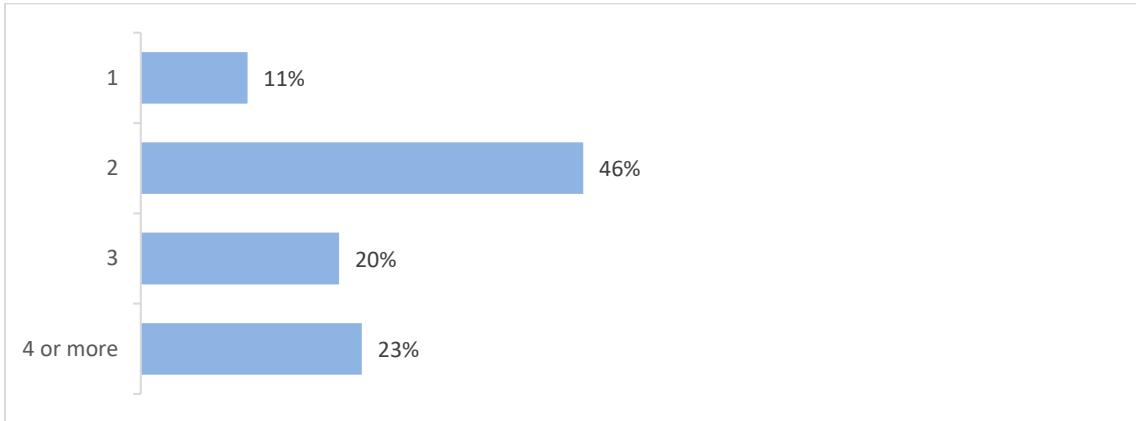
## 21. Do you experience a disability?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 21% |
| No | 79% |

## 22. What is your age?

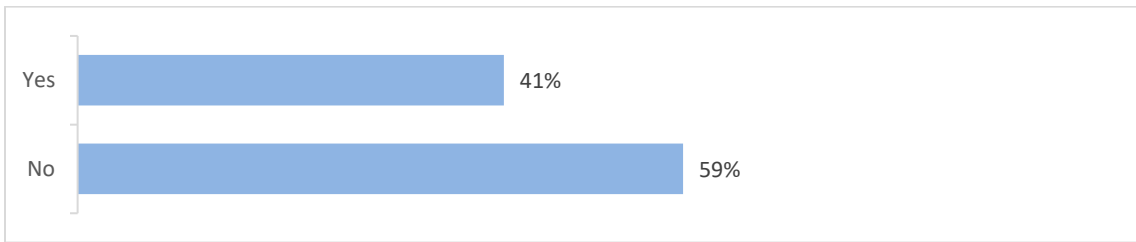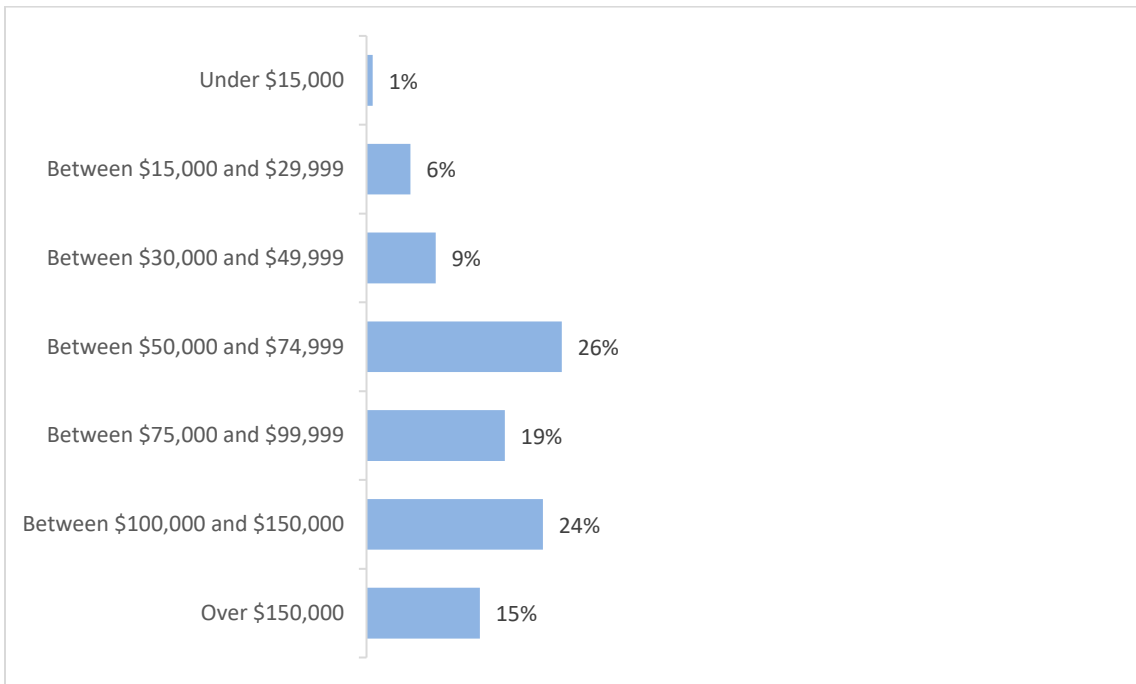| | |
|---|---|
| Under 18 | 0% |
| 18-24 | 2% |
| 25-34 | 12% |
| 35-44 | 20% |
| 45-54 | 22% |
| 55-64 | 20% |
| 65+ | 25% |
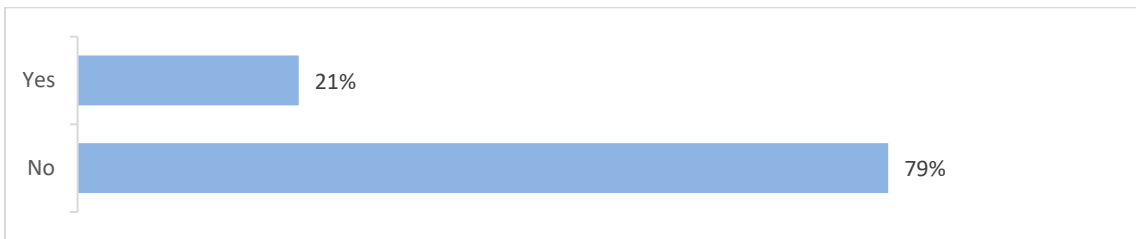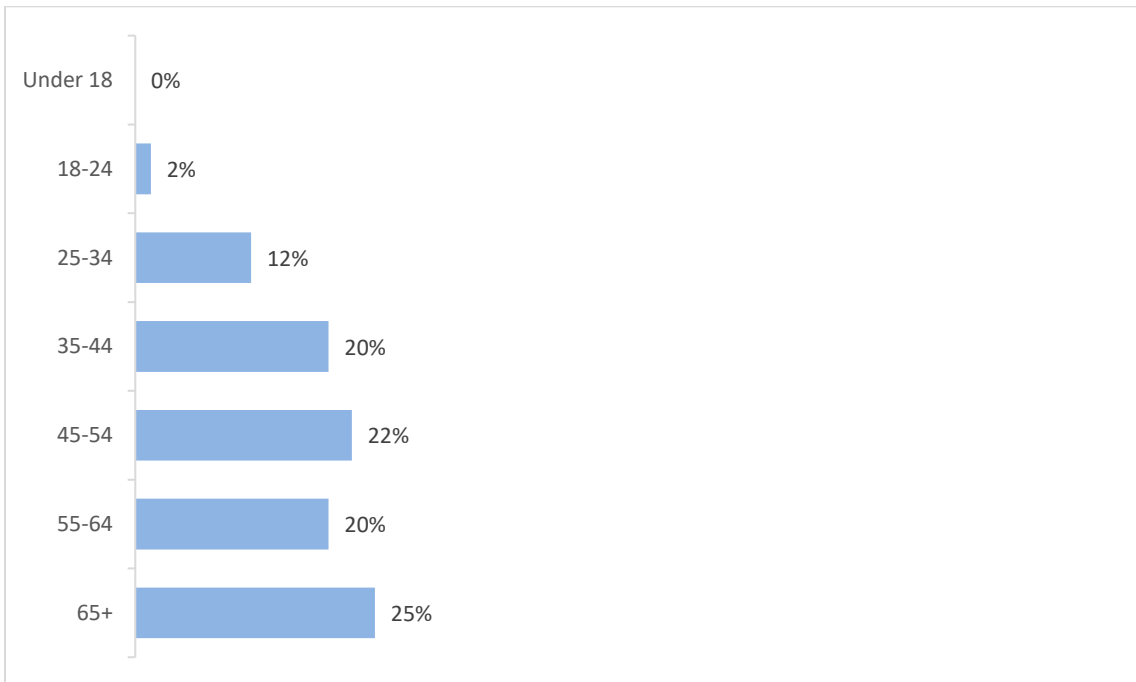
23. Do you spend more than approximately 30% of your household income on housing (mortgage, rent, property taxes, etc.)?



| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 38% |
| No | 62% |
| Don't know | 1% |
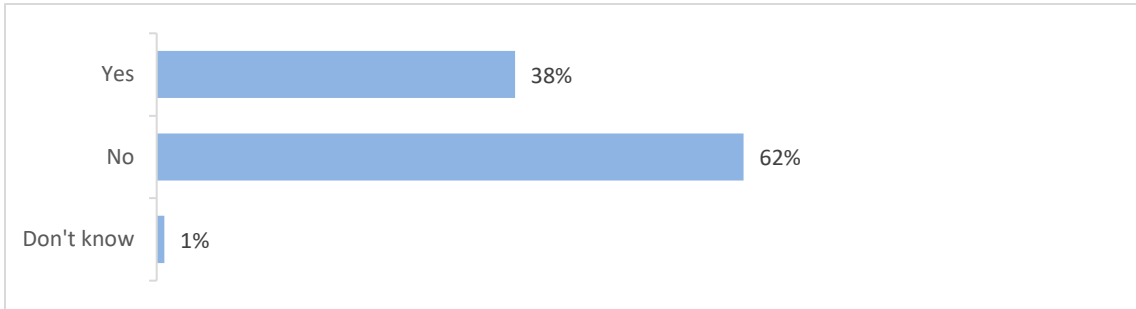
24. Have you had difficulty finding housing in Albany that you can afford or that meets all your needs?



| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 41% |
| No | 59% |

25. What is your annual household income?



| | |
|---|---|
| Under $15,000 | 1% |
| Between $15,000 and $29,999 | 6% |
| Between $30,000 and $49,999 | 9% |
| Between $50,000 and $74,999 | 26% |
| Between $75,000 and $99,999 | 19% |
| Between $100,000 and $150,000 | 24% |
| Over $150,000 | 15% |

### 26. How do you identify your race or ethnicity? (select all that apply)

Hispanic, Latino or Latinx — 8%
American Indian or Alaskan Native — 4%
Asian — 2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander — 0%
Black or African American — 2%
White — 89%
Other (please specify) — 7%
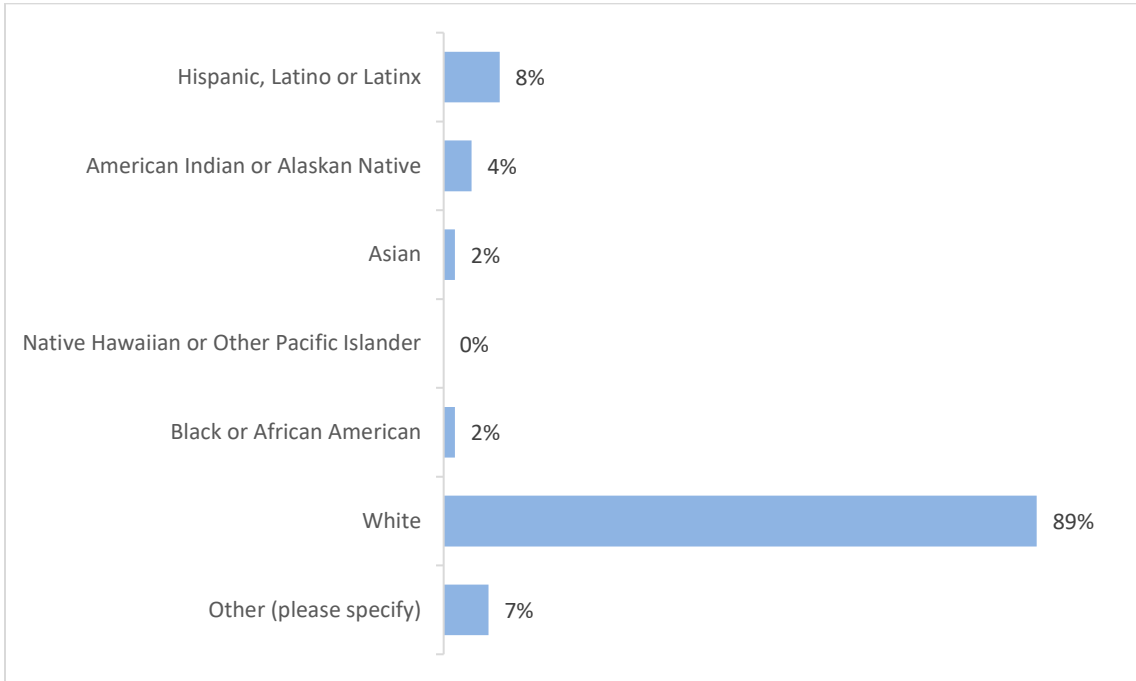
### 27. How did you find out about this survey?

Social media — 30%
City website — 6%
Friend or neighbor — 10%
Email — 52%
Other (please specify) — 2%