

Small Housing BC - Infill  
Housing



February 2023

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# Exploring Public Perceptions of Infill Housing

Prepared for Small Housing BC

# Goals & Sample



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## Strategic Goal

- Increase public support for updating laws and regulations that currently prevent infill housing from being built

## Research Goals

- Understand the public's perception around small-scale infill housing in single-family neighbourhoods
- Explore language that sparks interest in infill housing solutions in single-family neighbourhoods

## Sample

- 1,336 British Columbians province-wide
- Fielded from Jan 26 – Feb 9, 2023

# Segment Profiles



# Key Takeaways

1

Half (52%) of respondents are very concerned about lack of affordable housing in British Columbia. 73% are at least somewhat concerned.

There is little consensus on the cause of the housing problem. Those most impacted say economic intervention would solve the issue (49%). Those least impacted are more likely to name building more housing generally as a solution (34%).

2

Respondents are most likely to be familiar with the term 'small housing.'

A majority of respondents familiar with each term say they agree with the solution, but the intensity of agreement is lowest when using the term 'missing middle housing' (only 16% strongly agree) compared to 'small housing' (25%) and 'gentle density' (23%).

Half (49%) of respondents familiar with each term say they don't know anything about the solution.

3

Nearly half (47%) of respondents cite a positive emotion in reaction to the small housing solution, 10% say they feel hopeful.

A majority (71%) of respondents say they agree with the solution.

Top cited benefits are increased availability and affordability of housing; overcrowding is a top concern.

A plurality (36%) of respondents say the solution would have little to no impact on them.

4

Over a fifth of homeowners across urbanism say they would consider building a small secondary home on their property in the next five years, including 33% of those in rural areas.

Of those who say they would consider building a small secondary home, not knowing how they'd finance it (49%) and lack of process knowledge (47%) are top cited constraints.

55% of respondents say a young family who cannot afford a mortgage would most benefit from small housing. 44% say a grandparent or a person with low income.



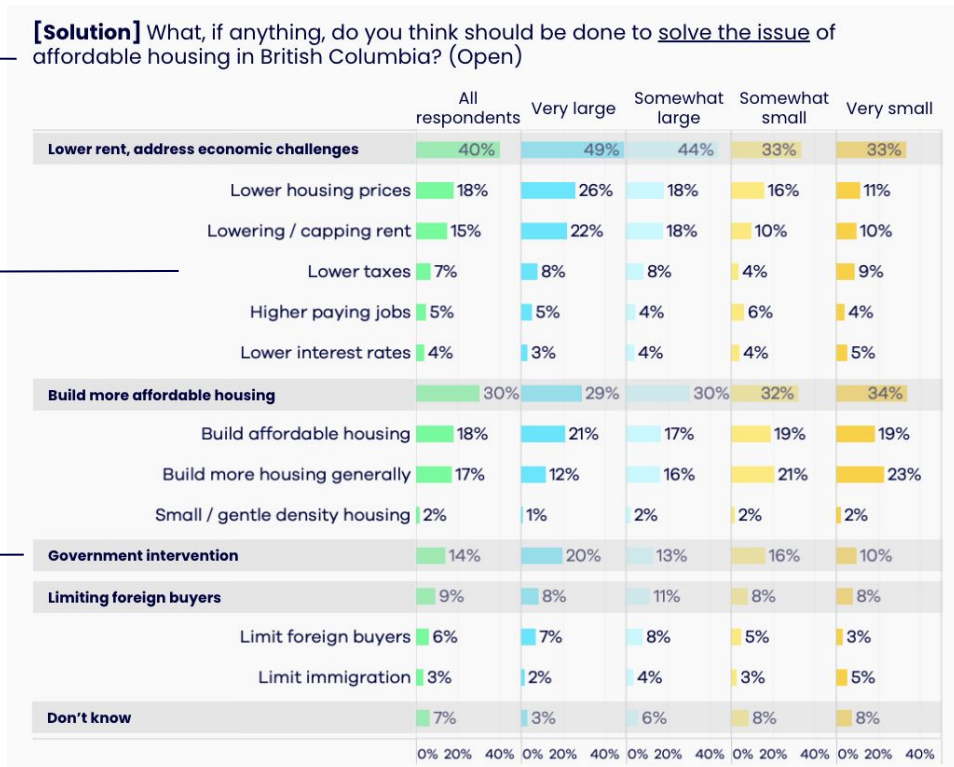
# Understanding Avalanche's Qualitative Data

Avalanche Insights instruments combine closed-ended and open-ended questions, using proprietary in-house tech to code and quantify themes in open-ended responses.

**Question text** indicates whether question was asked in open or closed format.

**Qualitative themes**, which summarize similar responses, are quantified as a percentage of a given audience. Responses *can* be coded into more than one theme.

**Higher-level categories**, indicated by gray headings, group together similar themes to shed light on summary insights from the data.



# All Sample Breakdown



## Rent or Own

60% Own  
34% Rent



## Housing type

52% Single family house  
25% Apartment  
5% Laneway or small housing  
7% Duplex or triplex  
11% Other



## Shared living

20% Live alone  
9% Shared housing  
65% Immediate family  
4% Extended family  
2% Other



## Urbanicity

59% City  
33% Medium-small town  
10% Rural



## Multi-generational household

27% Yes  
73% No



## Income

15% <25K  
10% 25k-50k  
14% 50k-75k  
16% 75k-100k  
13% 100k-150k  
23% 150k+



## Age

27% 18-29  
15% 30-39  
14% 40-49  
22% 50-64  
22% 65+



## Race

60% White  
14% East Asian  
10% South Asian  
5% Southeast Asian  
6% Indigenous  
1% Hispanic  
1% Black  
2% Other



## Class identity

12% Lower class  
33% Working class  
45% Middle class  
9% Upper-middle class  
1% Upper class



## % of income spent on housing

21% Less than 10% of my income  
32% Between 10% and 30% of my income  
32% Between 30% and 50% of my income  
15% More than 50% of my income



## Workplace location

14% Work from home  
12% Hybrid model  
37% In-person or on-site  
15% Currently unemployed  
22% Retired



## Time in community

5% Less than 6 months  
8% 6 months to 1 year  
25% 1 year to 5 years  
18% 5 years to 10 years  
45% 10+ years



## Parent status

50% No  
24% Yes, with children under 18  
25% Yes, with children over 18



## Language

88% English  
1% French  
2% Punjabi  
2% Mandarin  
3% Cantonese  
<1% Korean  
1% Farsi  
<1% an Indigenous language  
3% Other



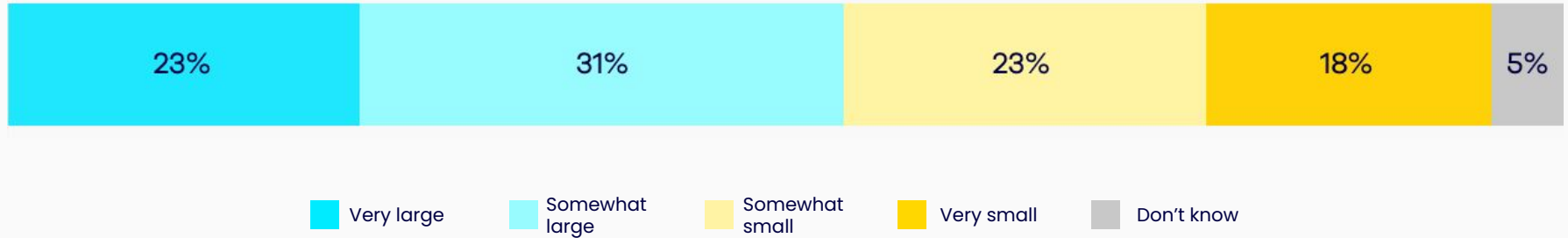
## Ideology

3% Far left wing  
11% Left wing  
20% Centre left  
20% Centre right  
8% Right wing  
1% Far right wing  
16% None of the above  
21% I don't know



# Sample Breakdown – Impact Segments

**[Housing Insecurity]** How much of an impact does the lack of affordable housing in British Columbia have on you and your loved ones?





# Affordable Housing Impact Segments

**[Housing Insecurity]** How much of an impact does the lack of affordable housing in British Columbia have on you and your loved ones?

## A very large impact

(23% of total sample)



### Rent or Own

**59% Rent**  
33% Own



### Urbanicity

**61% City**  
33% Medium-small town  
9% Rural



### Age

**35% 18-29**  
**21% 30-39**  
16% 40-49  
19% 50-64  
10% 65+



### Income

22% <25k  
16% 25k-50k  
**21% 50k-75k**  
12% 75k-100k  
7% 100k-150k  
13% 150k+



### Housing type

**38% Single family house**  
**33% Apartment**  
6% Laneway or small housing  
6% Duplex or triplex  
16% Other



### Shared living

18% Live alone  
13% Shared housing  
**63% Immediate family**  
4% Extended family  
3% Other



### Race

**57% White**  
10% East Asian  
9% South Asian  
6% Southeast Asian  
**10% Indigenous**  
3% Hispanic  
2% Black



### Workplace location

13% Work from home  
12% Hybrid model  
**45% In-person or on-site**  
19% Currently unemployed  
11% Retired

## A somewhat large impact

(31% of total sample)



### Rent or Own

38% Rent  
**57% Own**



### Urbanicity

**64% City**  
29% Medium-small town  
9% Rural



### Age

**33% 18-29**  
19% 30-39  
14% 40-49  
19% 50-64  
15% 65+



### Income

16% <25k  
10% 25k-50k  
12% 50k-75k  
15% 75k-100k  
14% 100k-150k  
**23% 150k+**



### Housing type

**50% Single family house**  
29% Apartment  
5% Laneway or small housing  
8% Duplex or triplex  
7% Other



### Shared living

21% Live alone  
10% Shared housing  
**65% Immediate family**  
3% Extended family  
1% Other



### Race

54% White  
**15% East Asian**  
**14% South Asian**  
6% Southeast Asian  
6% Indigenous  
1% Hispanic  
2% Black



### Workplace location

16% Work from home  
15% Hybrid model  
**42% In-person or on-site**  
15% Currently unemployed  
12% Retired

# Affordable Housing Impact Segments

**[Housing Insecurity]** How much of an impact does the lack of affordable housing in British Columbia have on you and your loved ones?

## A somewhat small impact

(23% of total sample)



### Rent or Own

22% Rent  
**72% Own**



### Urbanicity

56% City  
**34% Medium-small town**  
13% Rural



### Age

26% 18-29  
14% 30-39  
16% 40-49  
**20% 50-64**  
**24% 65+**



### Income

14% <25k  
8% 25k-50k  
14% 50k-75k  
15% 75k-100k  
15% 100k-150k  
**27% 150k+**



### Housing type

**55% Single family house**  
23% Apartment  
5% Laneway or small housing  
7% Duplex or triplex  
9% Other



### Shared living

19% Live alone  
7% Shared housing  
**67% Immediate family**  
4% Extended family  
3% Other



### Race

**65% White**  
**16% East Asian**  
10% South Asian  
4% Southeast Asian  
3% Indigenous  
0% Hispanic  
1% Black



### Workplace location

15% Work from home  
15% Hybrid model  
**35% In-person or on-site**  
13% Currently unemployed  
**22% Retired**

## A very small impact

(18% of total sample)



### Rent or Own

13% Rent  
**82% Own**



### Urbanicity

53% City  
**42% Medium-small town**  
10% Rural



### Age

9% 18-29  
5% 30-39  
9% 40-49  
**32% 50-64**  
**45% 65+**



### Income

9% <25k  
7% 25k-50k  
11% 50k-75k  
22% 75k-100k  
15% 100k-150k  
**31% 150k+**



### Housing type

**63% Single family house**  
15% Apartment  
0% Laneway or small housing  
7% Duplex or triplex  
14% Other



### Shared living

24% Live alone  
3% Shared housing  
**68% Immediate family**  
3% Extended family  
2% Other



### Race

**72% White**  
11% East Asian  
4% South Asian  
4% Southeast Asian  
5% Indigenous  
0% Hispanic  
1% Black



### Workplace location

10% Work from home  
6% Hybrid model  
26% In-person or on-site  
9% Currently unemployed  
**49% Retired**

# The Housing Issue



( 73% )

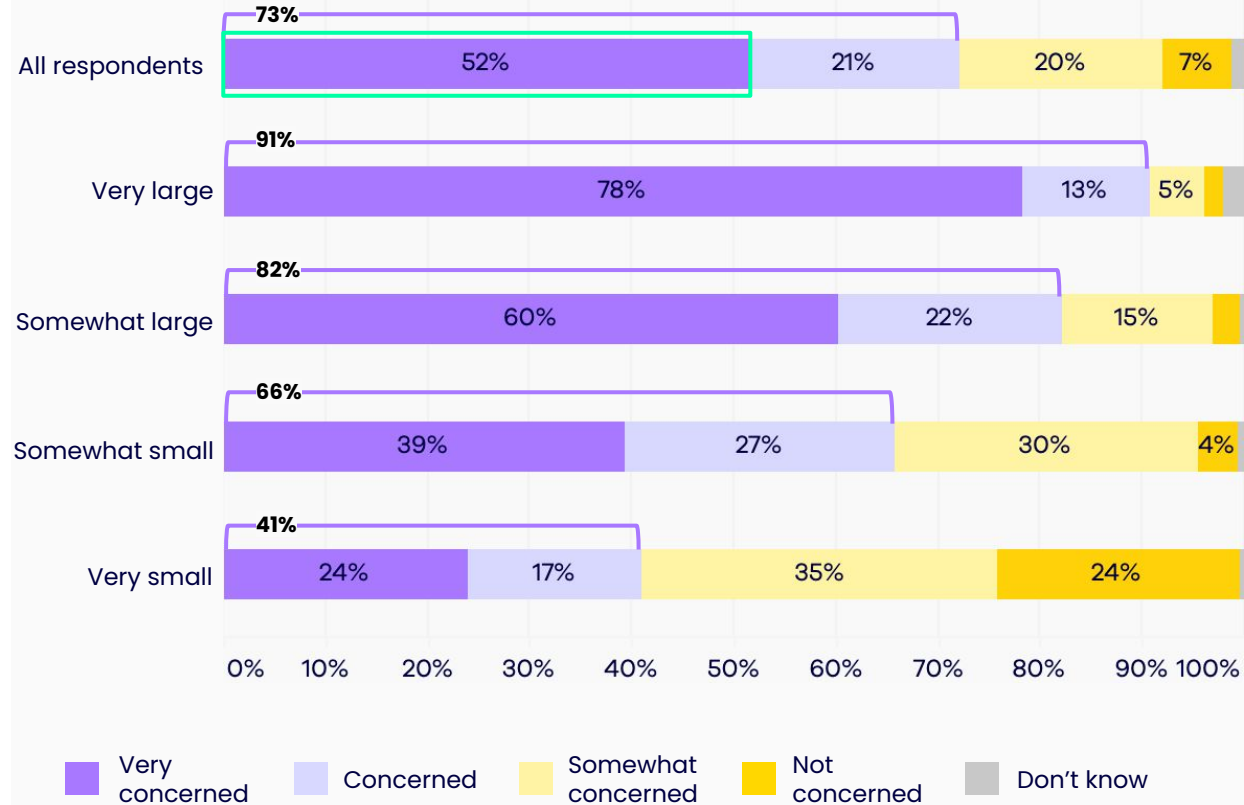
of British Columbians say they are **concerned** about  
access to affordable housing



**Half of respondents say they are very concerned about affordable housing access in British Columbia.**

**Of those who say the lack of affordable housing has a very small impact on them, 41% say they are concerned about the issue.**

**[Housing Concern]** How concerned are you about access to affordable housing in British Columbia? (Closed)

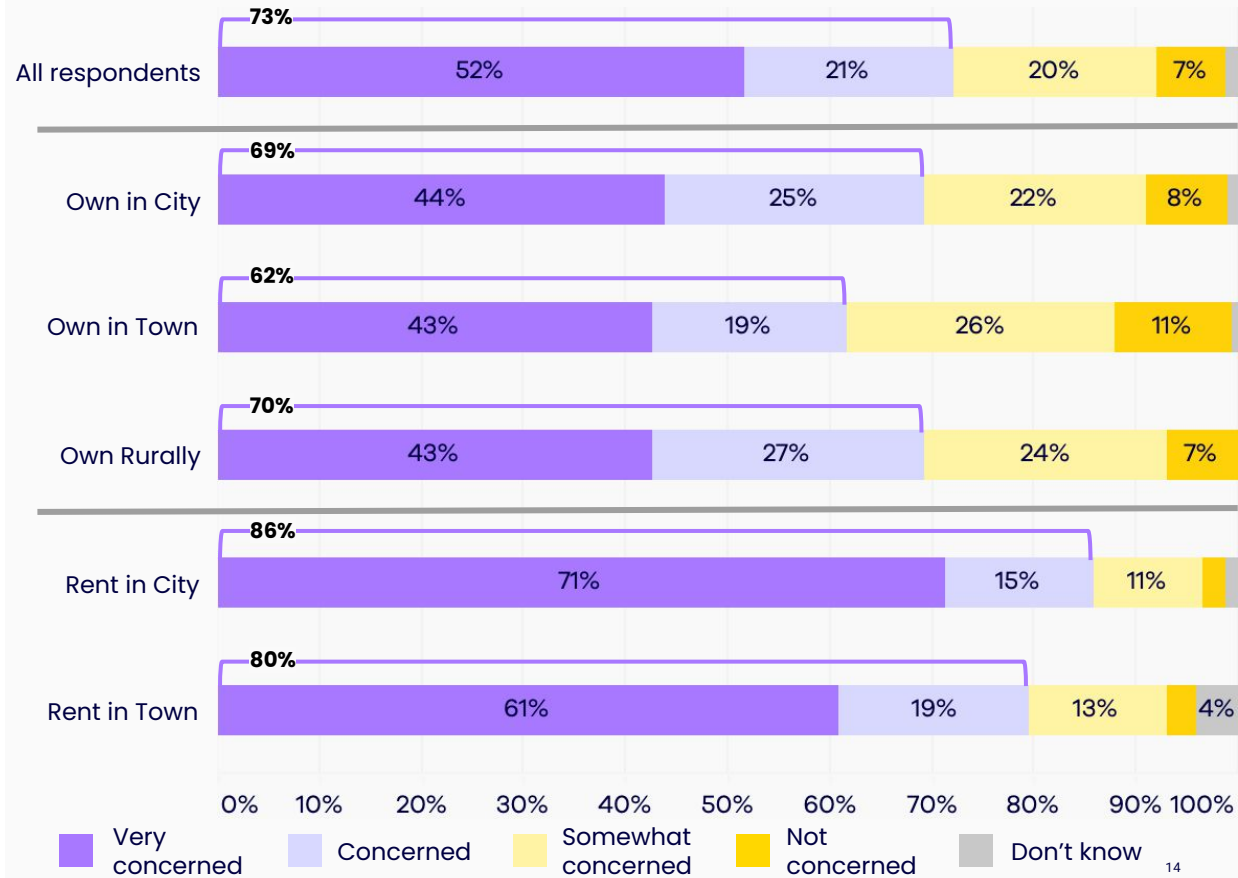


**Renters are more likely than homeowners to say they are concerned about access to affordable housing.**

**Owners are equally likely to be concerned across urbanism.**

**Nearly two thirds of renters in cities are very concerned.**

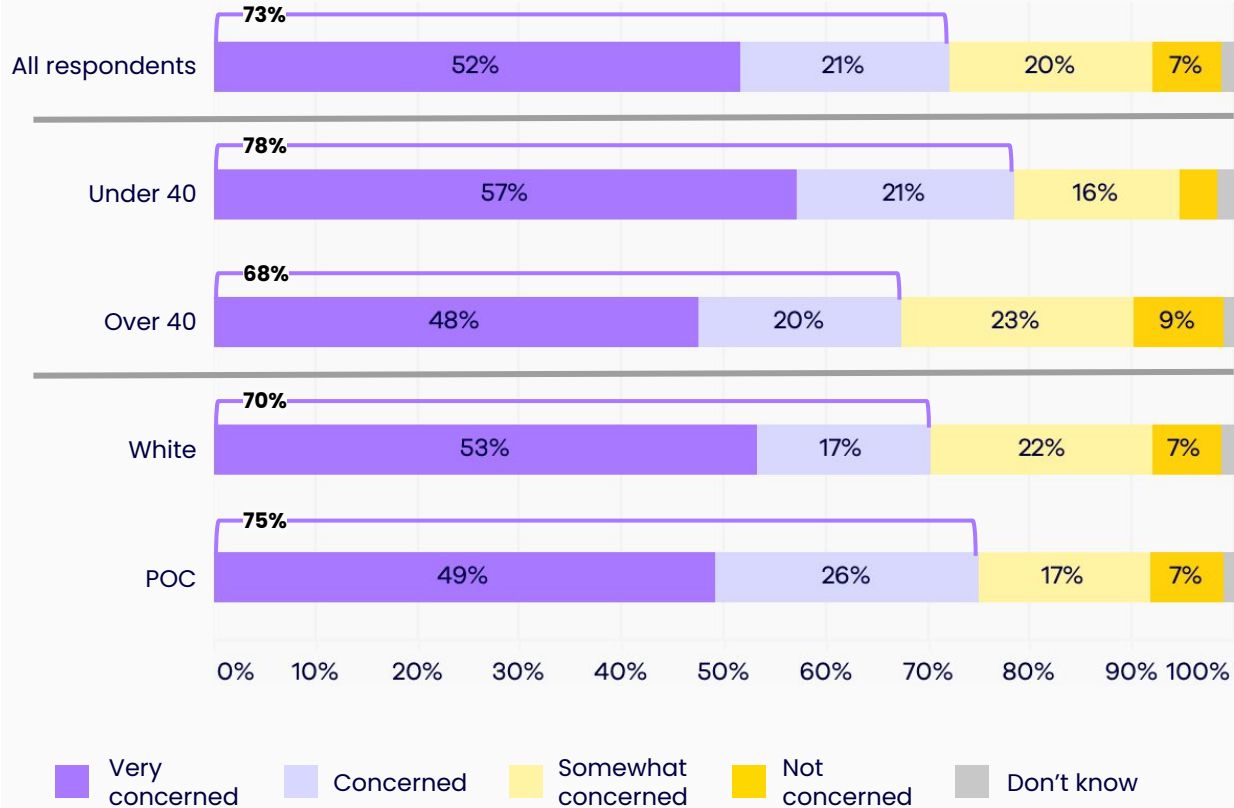
**[Housing Concern]** How concerned are you about access to affordable housing in British Columbia? (Closed)



**Younger British Columbians are more likely to be concerned about access to affordable housing than their older counterparts.**

**Concern is consistent across race.**

**[Housing Concern]** How concerned are you about access to affordable housing in British Columbia? (Closed)



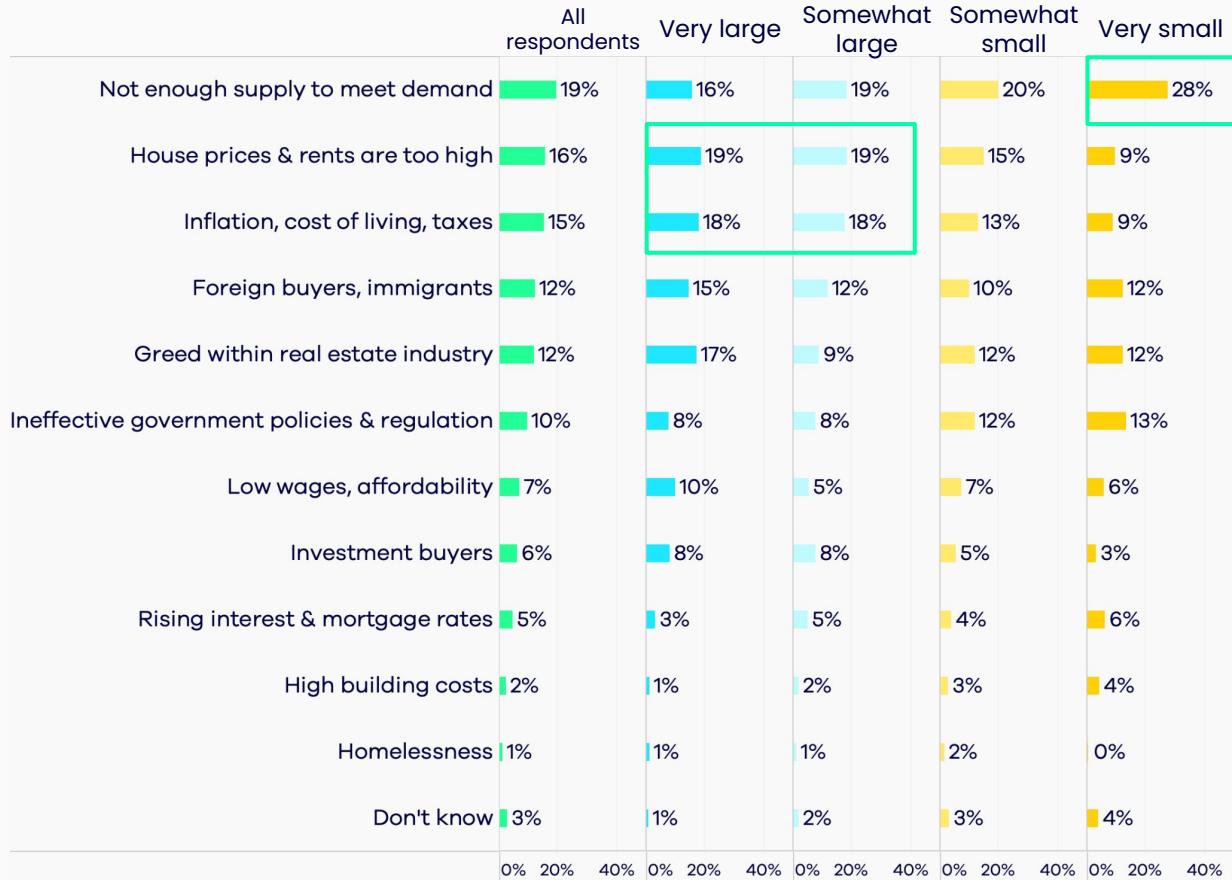
There is little consensus among British Columbians on  
the **cause** of the housing issue





**Those less impacted by the issue are more likely to mention housing supply than those more impacted, who name economic & financial causes.**

**[Define problem]** When it comes to the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia, what specifically do you believe is the cause of the problem? (Open)

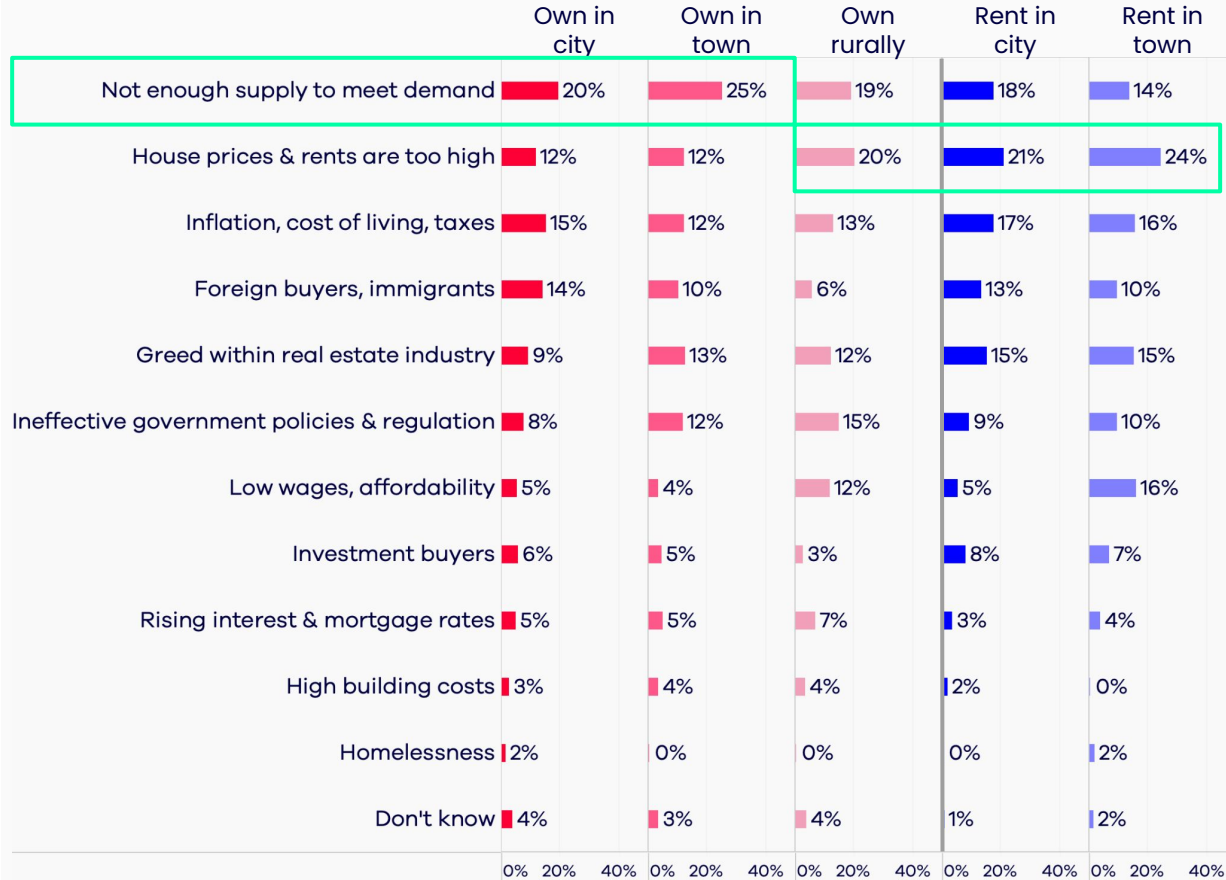


**A quarter of homeowners in small / medium towns and a fifth in cities say lack of housing supply is the cause of the affordable housing issue.**

**Rural homeowners and renters cite cost of housing.**



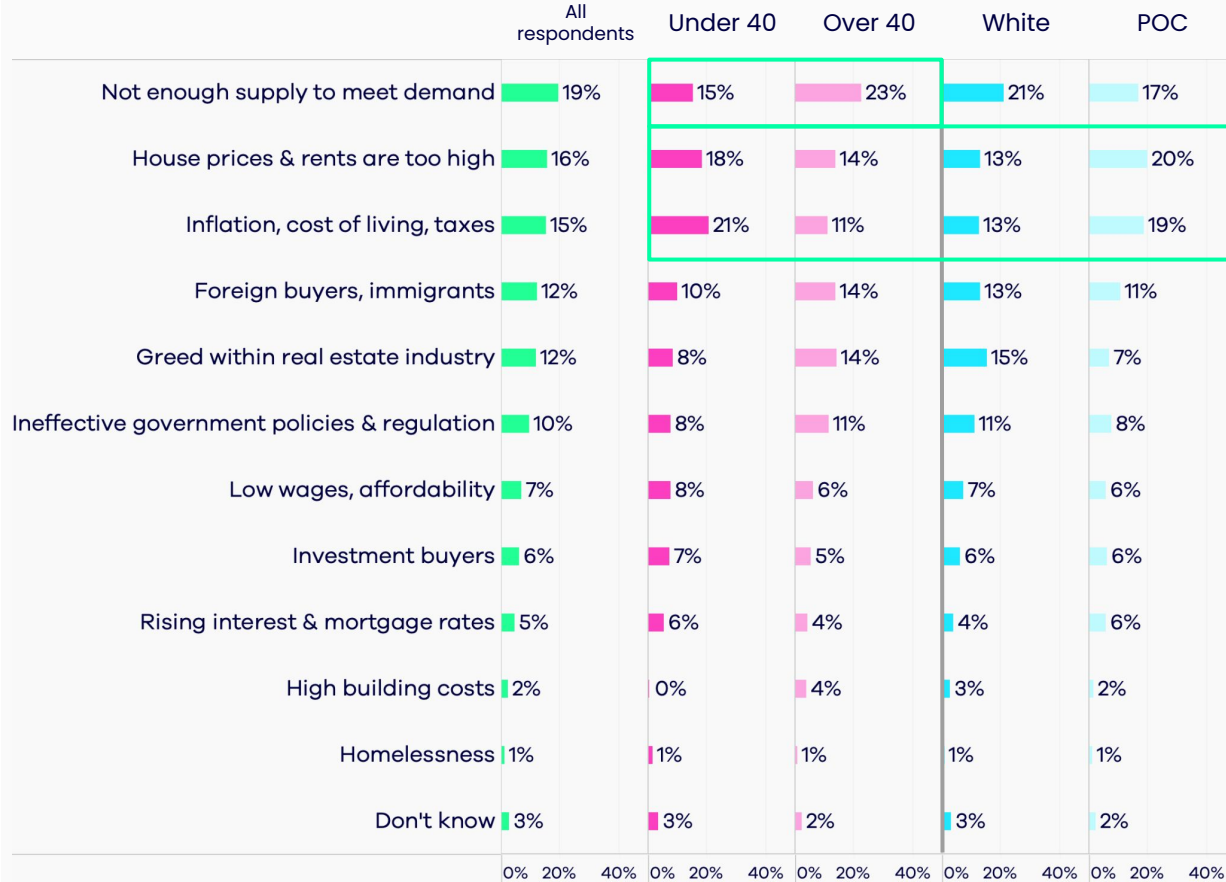
**[Define problem]** When it comes to the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia, what specifically do you believe is the cause of the problem? (Open)



**Older British Columbians are more likely than young to say lack of supply is the cause of the housing issue.**

**Young and POC respondents are more likely than their counterparts to blame economic & financial causes.**

**[Define problem]** When it comes to the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia, what specifically do you believe is the cause of the problem? (Open)



(40%)

Of British Columbians say we must

**lower rent** and address **economic challenges**

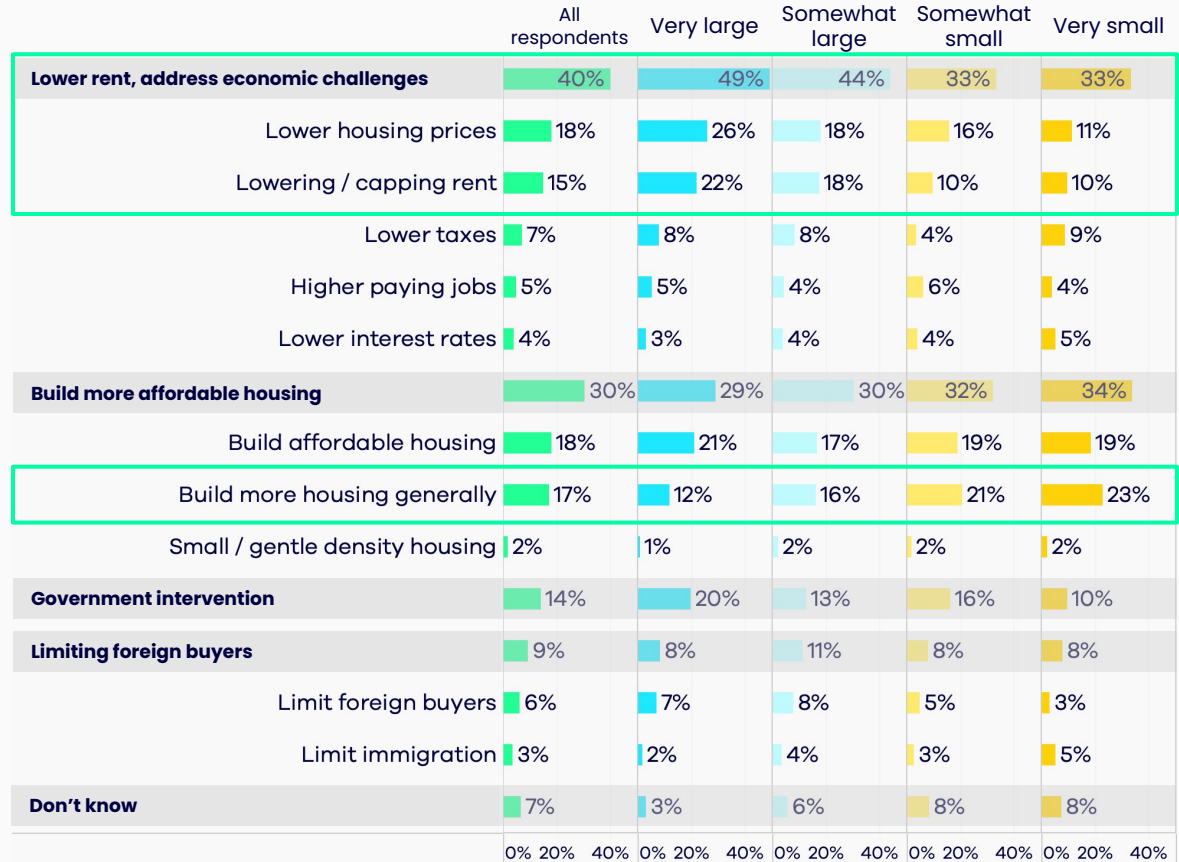
to help solve the affordable housing issue



**Respondents most impacted by the housing issue say lowering housing prices or rent would help solve the issue.**

**Those less impacted say building more housing generally is the solution.**

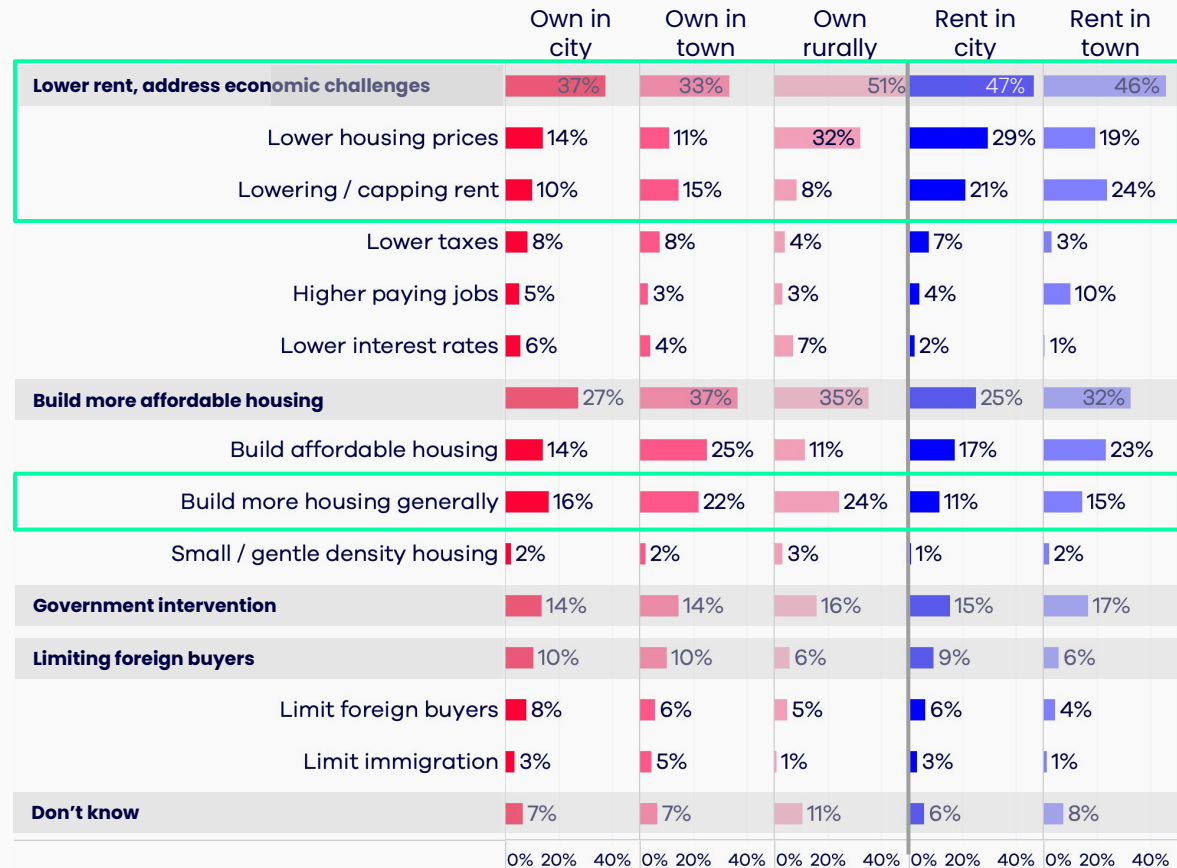
**[Solution]** What, if anything, do you think should be done to solve the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia? (Open)



**Renters and rural homeowners say economic intervention is the solution to the housing issue.**

**Rural homeowners and respondents in small / medium towns are more likely to say building more housing.**

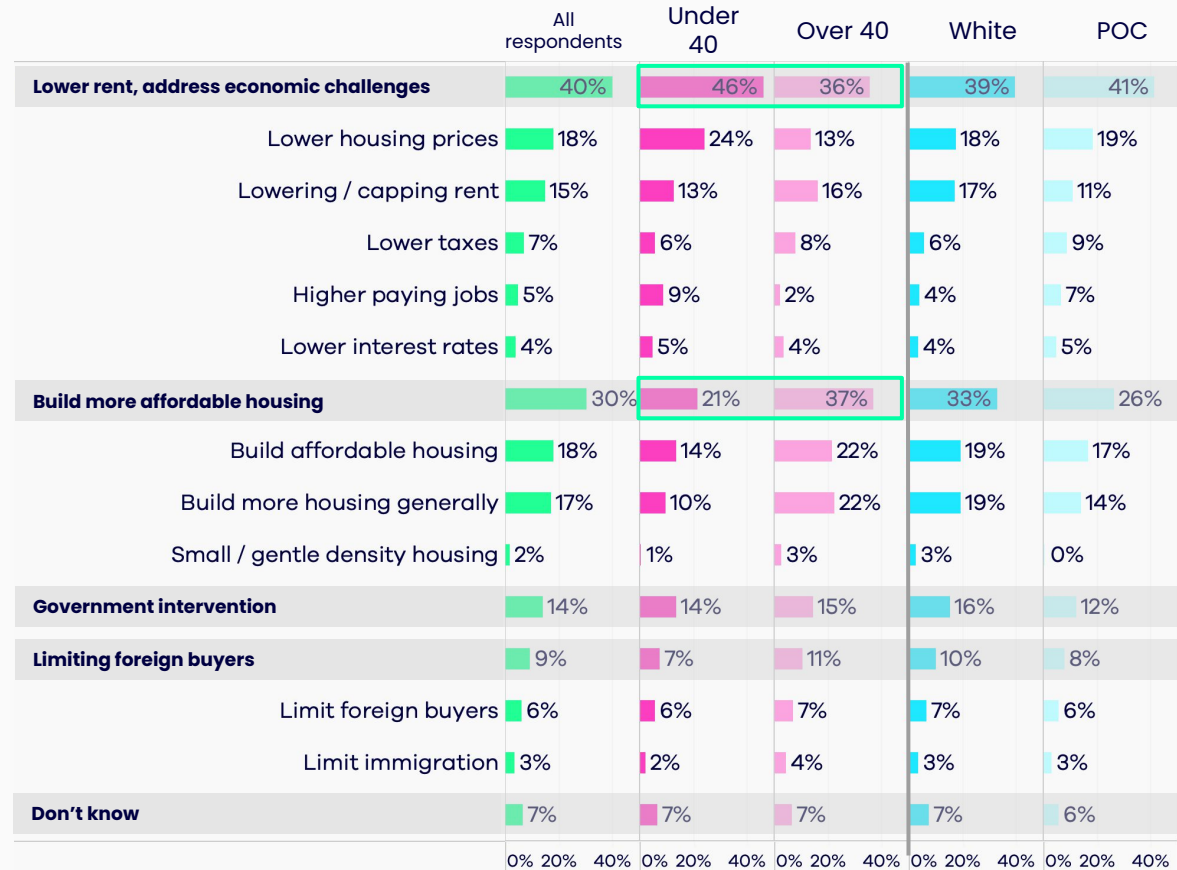
**[Solution]** What, if anything, do you think should be done to solve the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia? (Open)



**Younger respondents are more likely than their older counterparts to say lowering housing prices or rent would help.**

**Older respondents are most likely to cite building more housing.**

**[Solution]** What, if anything, do you think should be done to solve the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia? (Open)



British Columbians **blame** government and politicians,  
along with bureaucracy, for standing in the way of  
solutions.

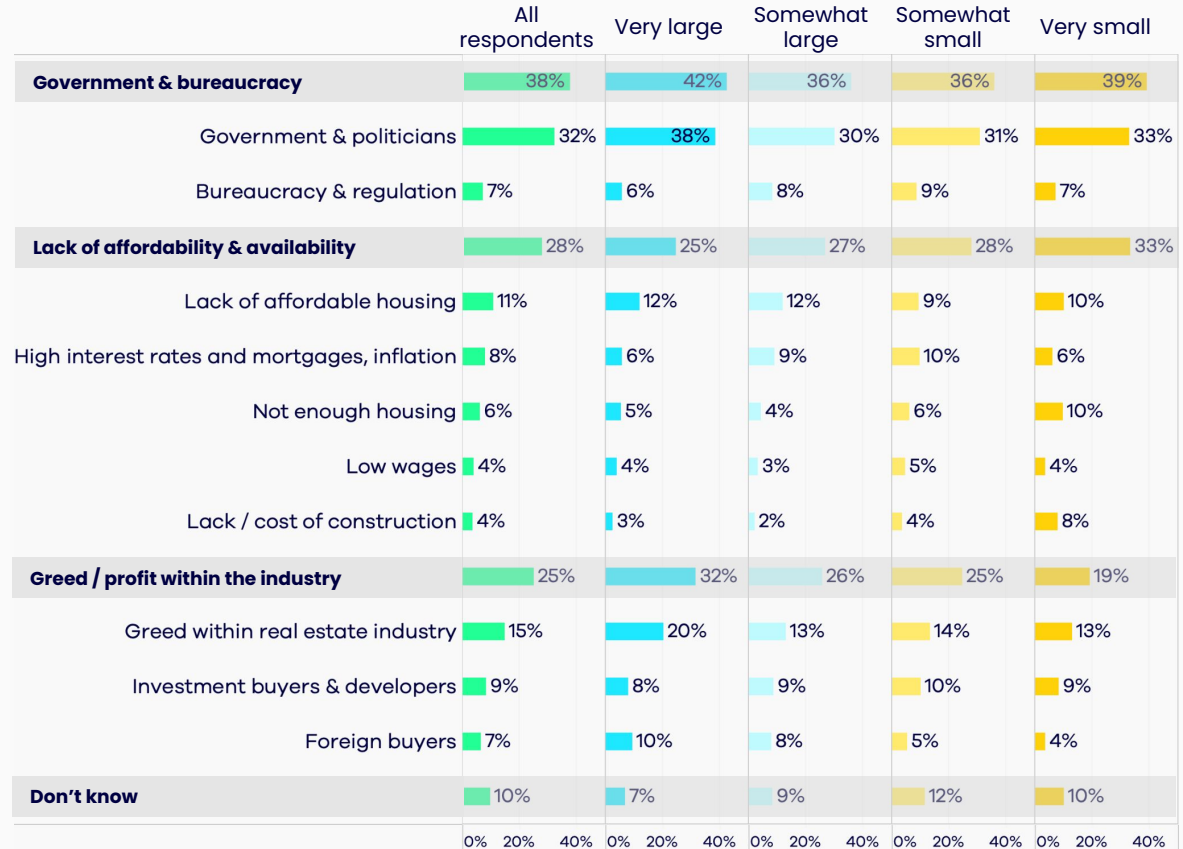




**Regardless of impact, a plurality of respondents blame government and bureaucracy for lack of housing.**

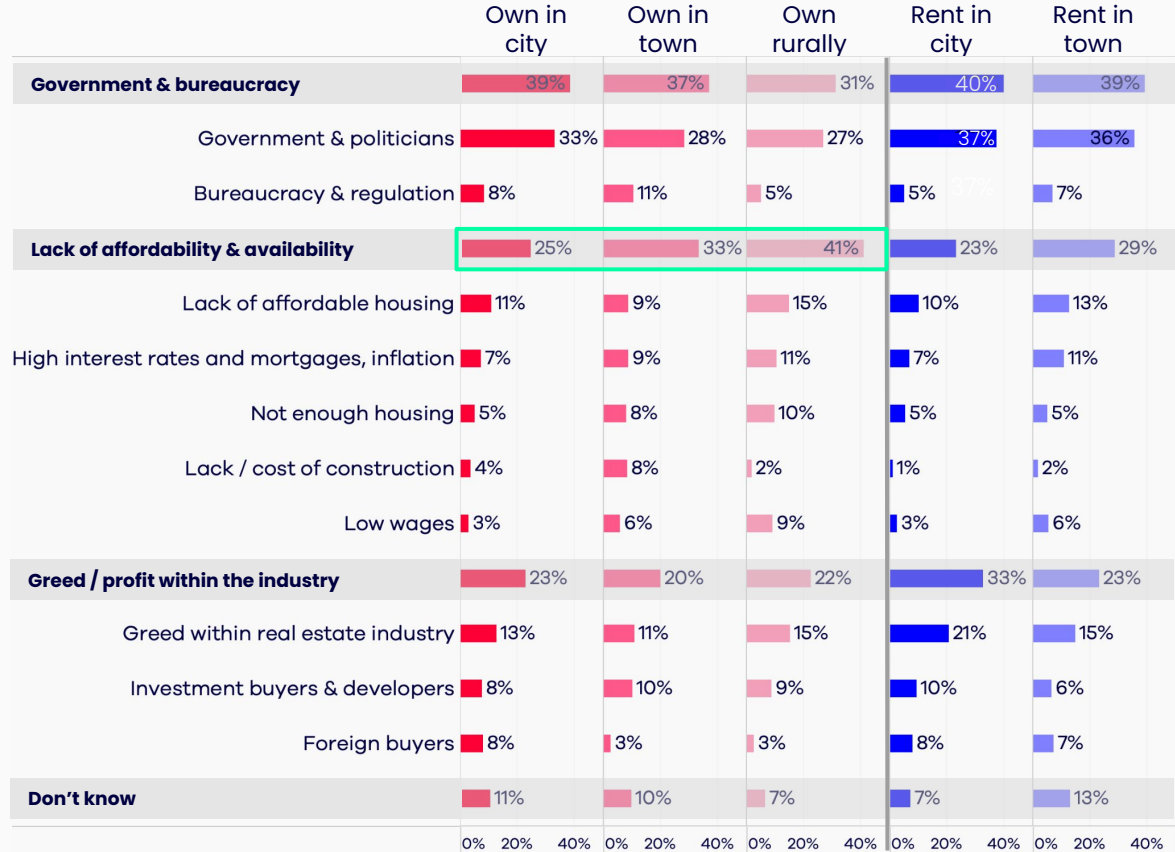
**Those more impacted are more likely to cite 'greed' than those less impacted, who point to a lack of affordable housing.**

**[Villain]** Who or what, specifically, do you think is standing in the way of there being enough housing that people can afford in British Columbia, if anything? (Open)



**Respondents in small / medium towns and rural areas are more likely than those in cities to say lack of affordability and availability is standing in the way of enough affordable housing.**

**[Villain]** Who or what, specifically, do you think is standing in the way of there being enough housing that people can afford in British Columbia, if anything? (Open)



# Infill Housing Reactions



# Small Housing | Gentle Density | Missing Middle

Of respondents who are familiar with these terms, half say they **don't know anything about the solution**

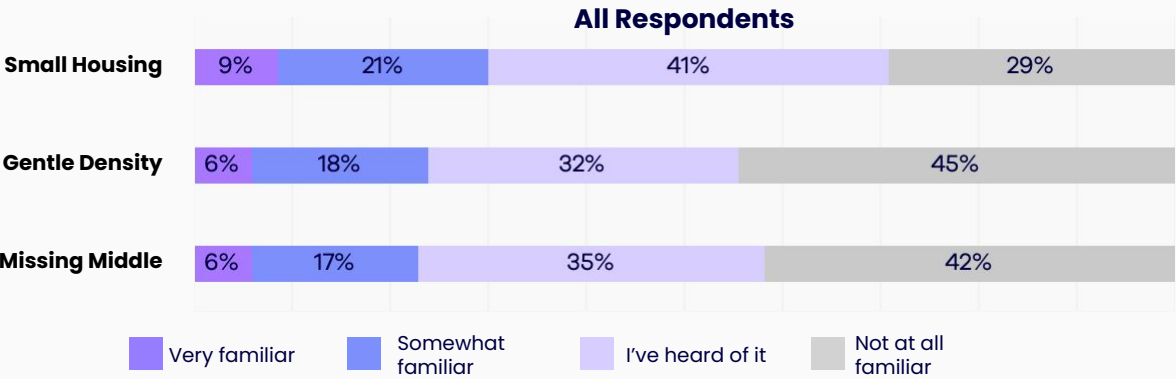


**Respondents are most likely to say they are familiar with the term 'Small Housing'.**

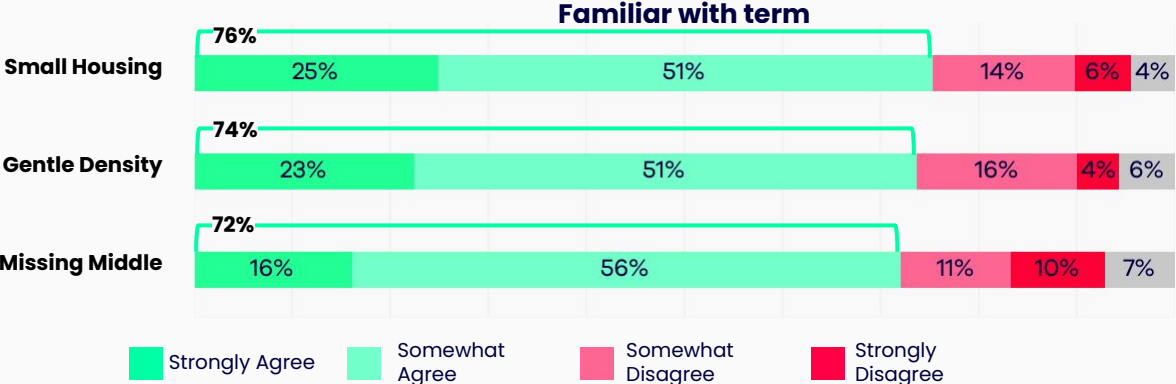
**A majority of those who are familiar with each term say they agree with the solution, but intensity of agreement is lowest for 'Missing Middle.'**

**[Term familiarity]** One proposed solution to the housing issue is [*small housing / missing middle housing / gentle density*], which encourages people to build multiple homes of different sizes on neighbourhood properties that can accommodate them.

How familiar are you with this proposed solution? (Closed)



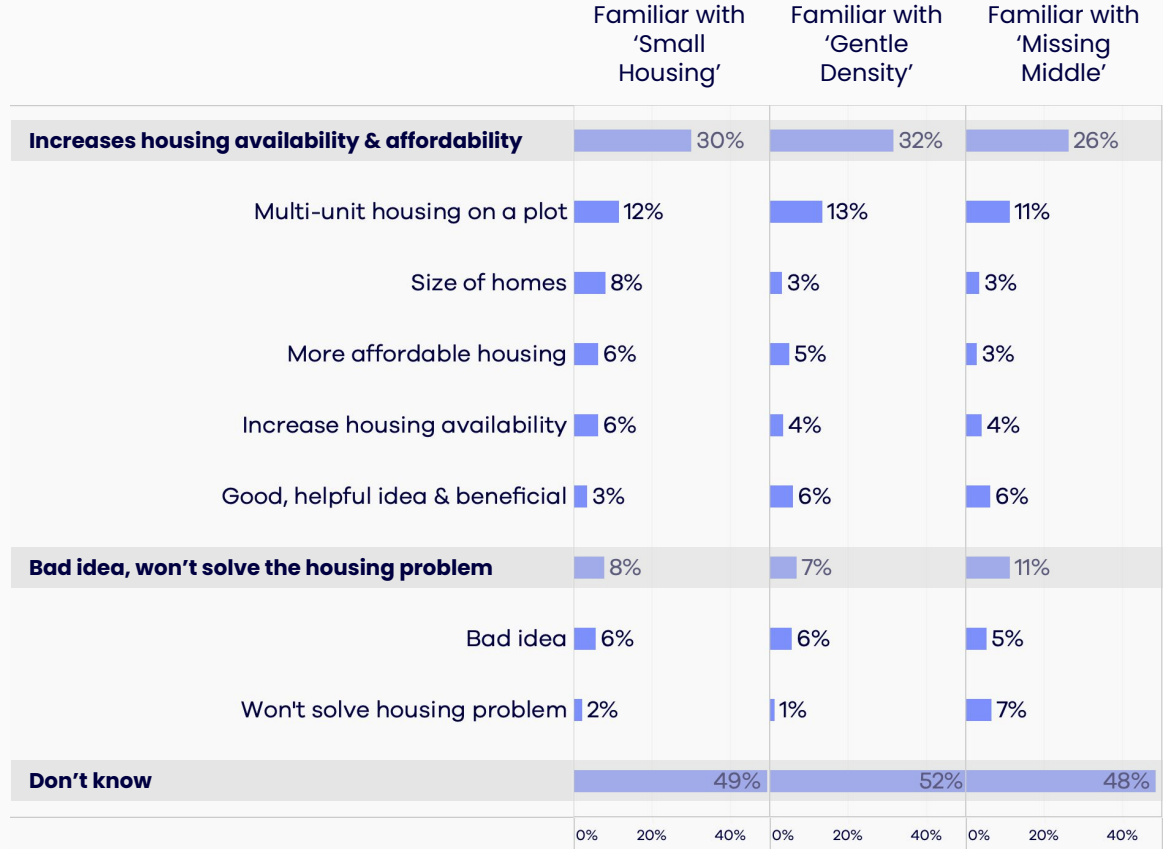
**[Term agreement]** How much do you agree or disagree with this proposed solution? (Closed)



**Half of respondents familiar with each term say they don't know anything about the solution.**

**Nearly a third mention housing availability & affordability.**

**[Term association]** What, if anything, have you heard about this proposed solution?  
(Open)



# Proposed Solution Description

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*A proposed solution to the housing problem in British Columbia involves allowing people to build additional smaller homes on properties in single-family neighbourhoods.*

*These could include laneway homes, backyard cottages, duplexes, multiplexes and basement apartments, which can be more affordable options and would allow people to live closer to jobs, schools and transit. Families could live closer to one another, younger generations would be less likely to be priced out of certain areas, and seniors could downsize or age-in-place. This solution increases the supply of homes and boosts the economy by offering local homeowners a source of revenue through rent and offers small-scale homebuilders more opportunities to build.*

*Currently, many places have rules and bylaws that forbid these kinds of homes from being built. By updating these rules, many more families with middle incomes could afford to live where they choose.*



(71%)

Of British Columbians say they **agree** with the  
small housing solution





**A majority of respondents say they agree with the small housing solution.**

**Those who say the housing issue does not impact them much are just as likely as those who are impacted to agree with it.**

**[Agreement]** How much do you agree or disagree with this solution? (Closed)



**Respondents who own are just as likely as those who rent to agree with the small housing solution.**

**Those who own in a small/medium town are most likely to strongly agree.**

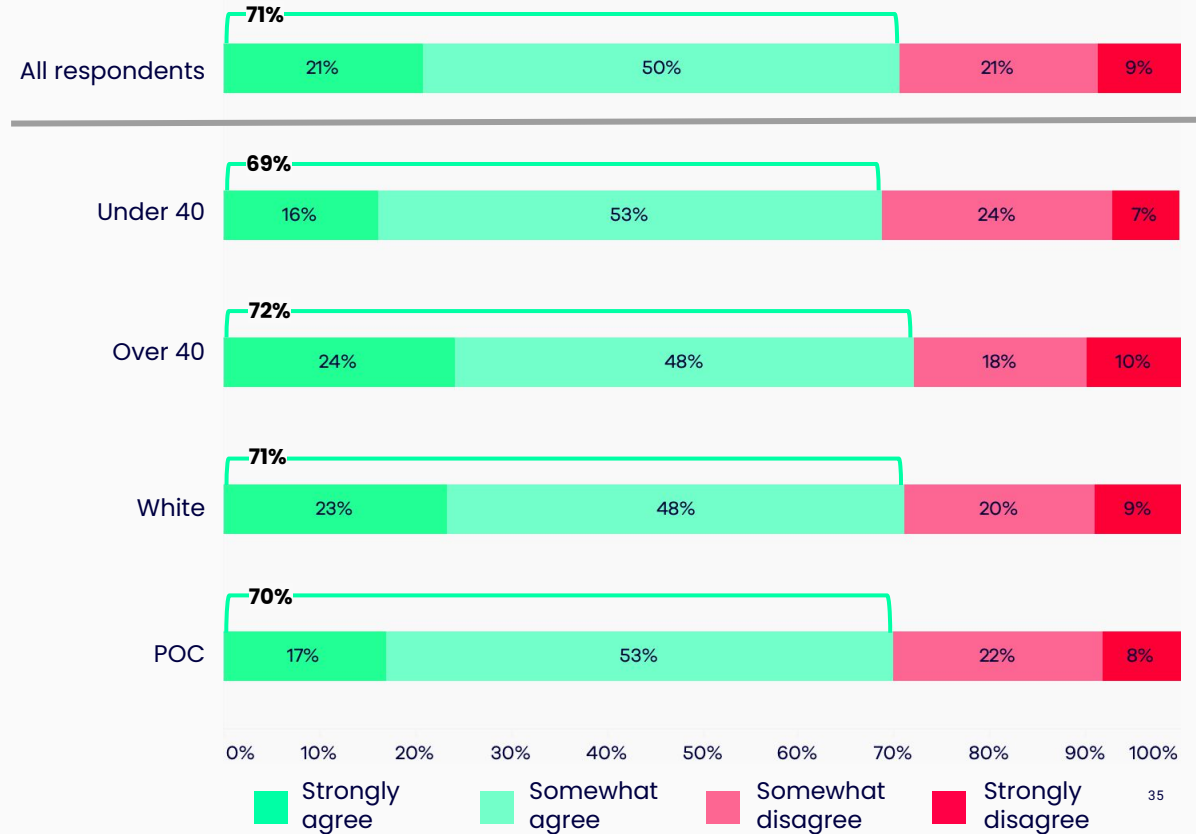
**[Agreement]** How much do you agree or disagree with this solution? (Closed)



**A majority of respondents agree with the solution across race and age.**

**Older, white British Columbians are more likely to strongly agree than younger or POC counterparts.**

**[Agreement]** How much do you agree or disagree with this solution? (Closed)



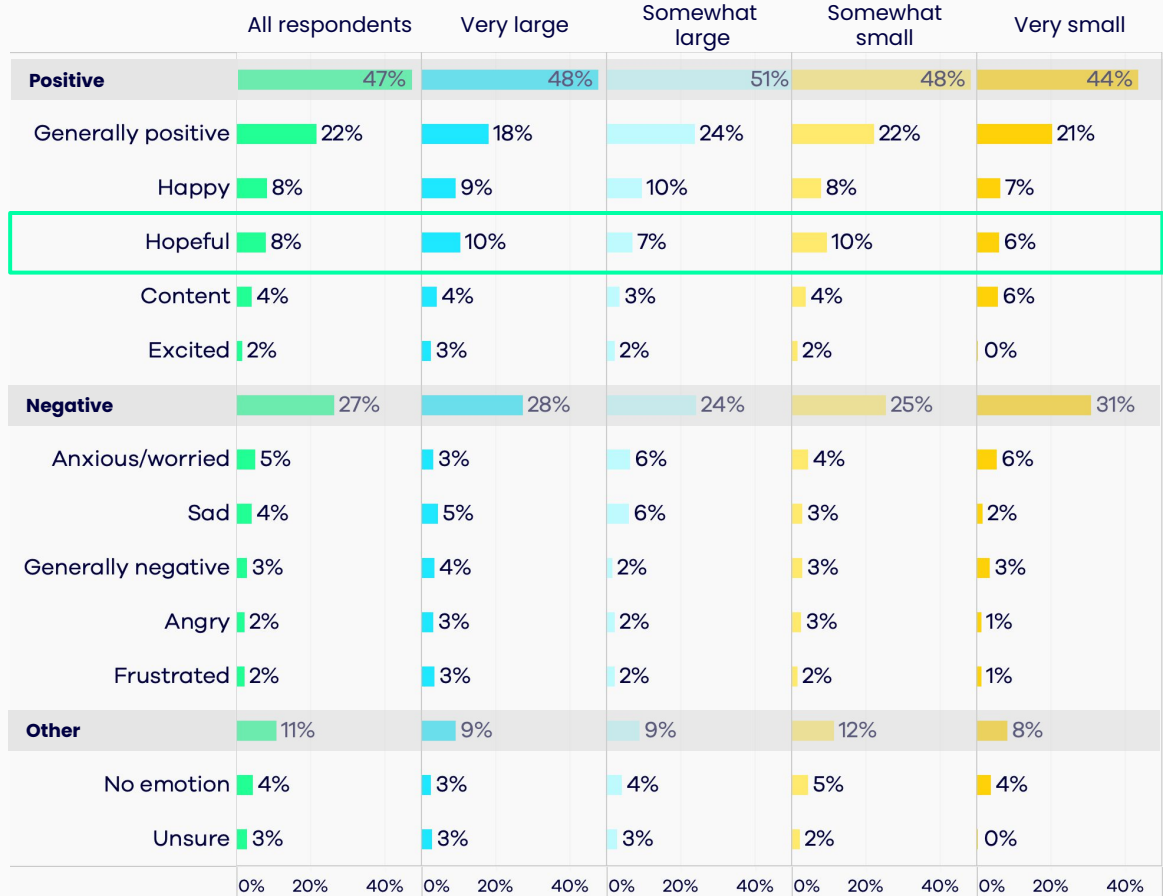
(47%)

Of British Columbians feel **positive emotions**  
after reading about the proposed solution



**Half of respondents cite positive emotions in reaction to the small secondary housing solution; a tenth say they feel hopeful.**

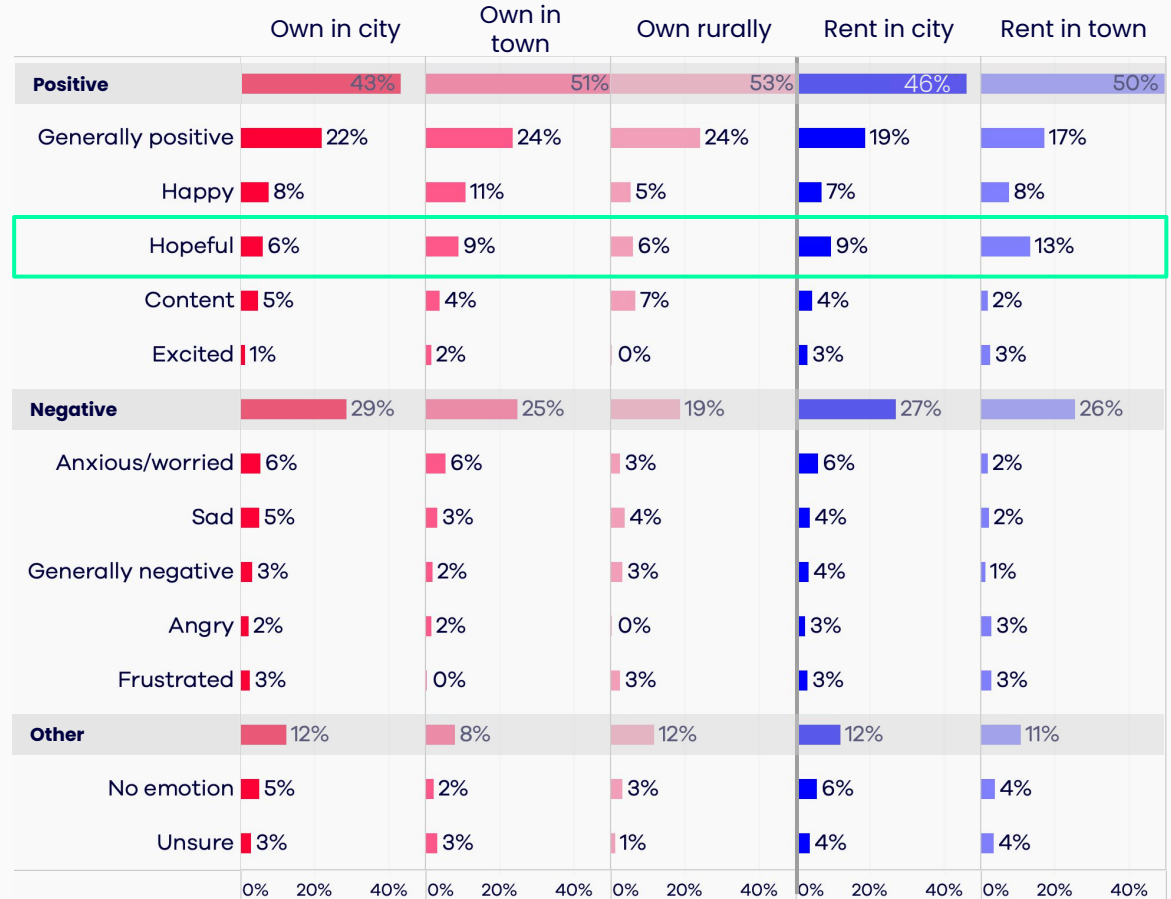
**[Emotion]** When you think about this solution, what emotion best describes how you feel? (Open)



**Half of respondents in small/medium towns and rural areas say they feel positive emotions in reaction to the small housing solution.**

**One in ten renters cite feeling hope, but about a quarter share negative reactions.**

**[Emotion]** When you think about this solution, what emotion best describes how you feel? (Open)



## British Columbians see benefits

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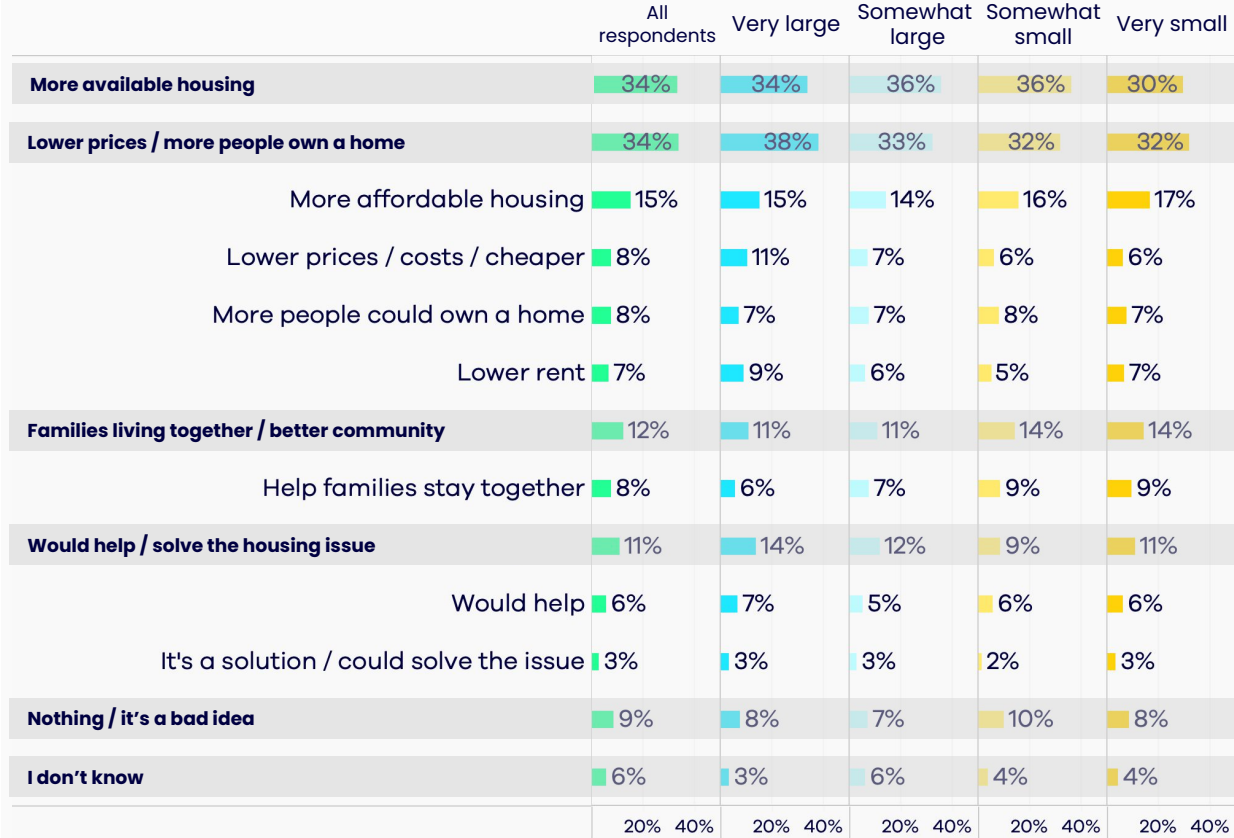
*“Increase in availability of rental properties, shorter commutes for people if they can live closer to work or school; possibly the average cost of rent goes down as the rental pool grows bigger.”*

- Medium-small town, Renter, 50-64



# Across degrees of impact of the housing issue, respondents say the small secondary housing solution would create more availability and affordability.

**[Why good]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be good about it in your opinion? (Open)

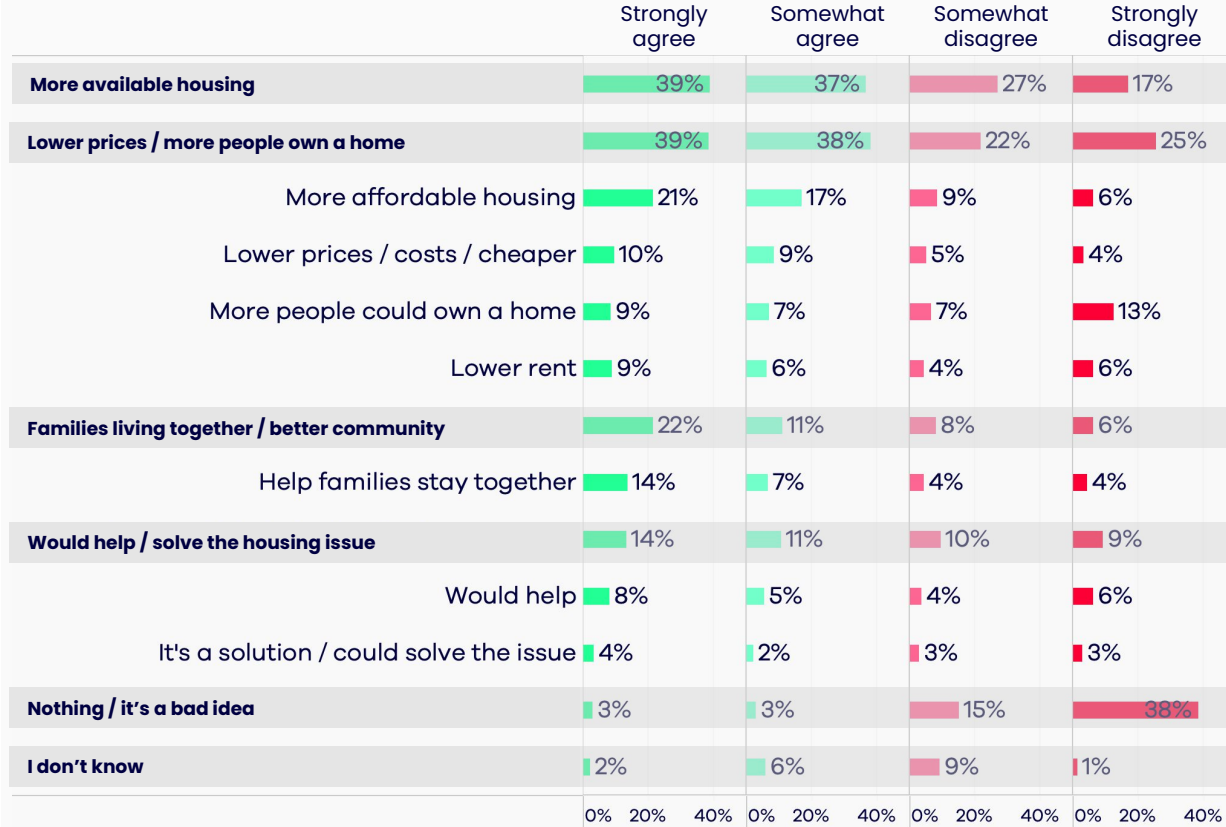




**A plurality of respondents who agree with the small secondary housing solution say it would create more available housing and more people could own a home.**

**Those who strongly agree are more likely to cite families staying together.**

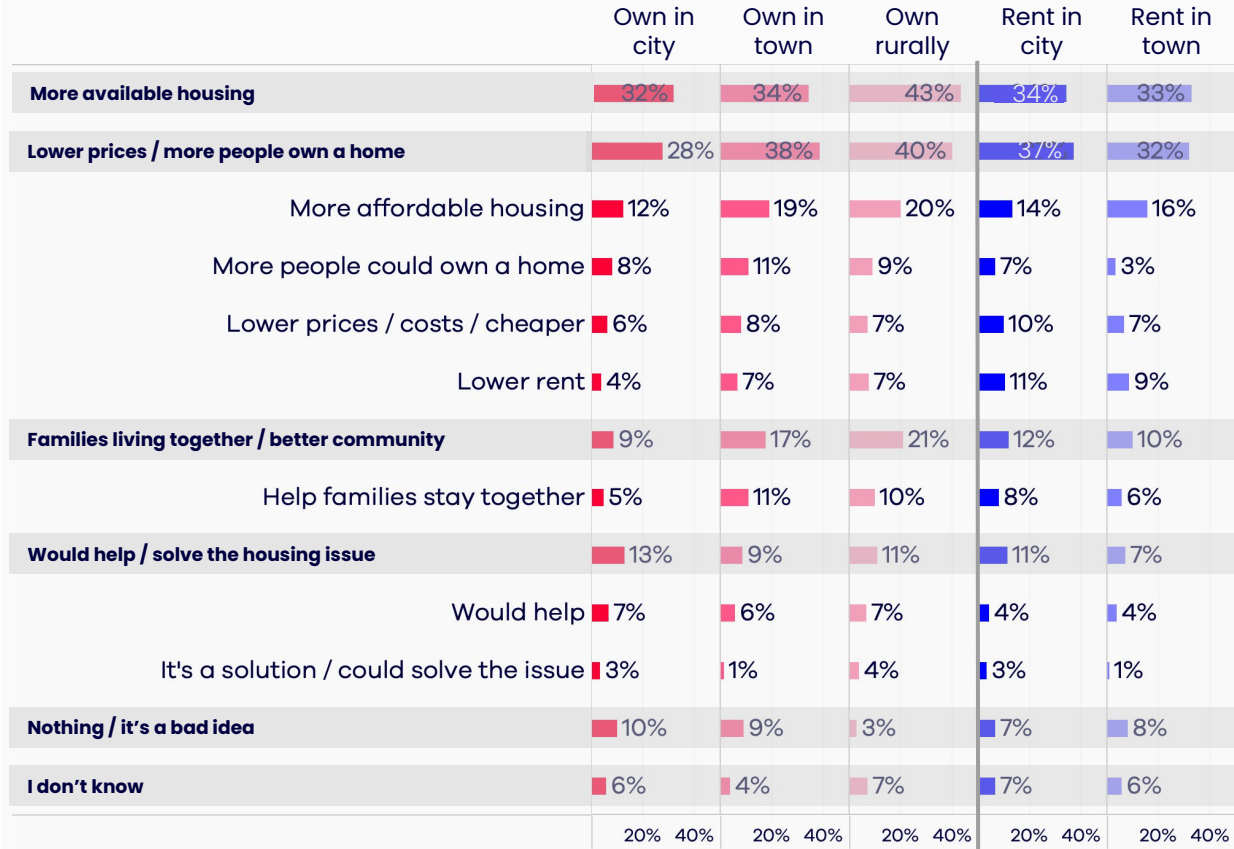
**[Why good]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be good about it in your opinion? (Open)



**Across urbanism, owners and renters cite affordability and availability as a benefit of the small secondary housing solution.**

**Homeowners in small/medium towns and rural areas are more likely to mention families living together and community.**

**[Why good]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be good about it in your opinion? (Open)



**Older respondents are more likely to mention affordability and families living together as benefits of the small housing than their younger counterparts.**

**Younger respondents are more likely to say it would help solve the housing issue.**

**[Why good]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be good about it in your opinion? (Open)

	All respondents	Under 40	Over 40	White	POC
<b>More available housing</b>	34%	34%	33%	36%	30%
<b>Lower prices / more people own a home</b>	34%	29%	37%	34%	33%
More affordable housing	15%	12%	18%	16%	15%
Lower prices / costs / cheaper	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%
More people could own a home	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%
Lower rent	7%	5%	8%	7%	6%
<b>Families living together / better community</b>	12%	9%	15%	15%	8%
Help families stay together	8%	7%	8%	9%	5%
<b>Would help / solve the housing issue</b>	11%	13%	9%	11%	10%
Would help	6%	5%	6%	7%	4%
It's a solution / could solve the issue	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%
<b>Nothing / it's a bad idea</b>	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%
<b>I don't know</b>	6%	7%	5%	5%	6%
	20% 40%	20% 40%	20% 40%	20% 40%	20% 40%



# In their own words: What might be good about this solution?

## Lower prices / more people could own a home (34%)

“**Increase in availability of rental properties**, shorter commutes for people if they can live closer to work or school; possibly the average cost of rent goes down as the rental pool grows bigger.”

- *Medium-small town, Renter, 50-64*

“It may give some homeowners the ability to pay off mortgages faster, thus becoming mortgage free, and the **opportunity to purchase or rent a small house or apartment** in desirable areas for less cost is very appealing.”

- *Medium-small town, Owner, 65+*

“Help owners to pay part of mortgage and **allow locals to find places to live and rent** at an affordable price.”

- *City, Owner, 30-39*

“Giving people who aren't in the home-buying market, an **opportunity to potentially get into the homebuying market.**”

- *Rural, Owner, 30-39*

## More available housing (34%)

“I like that there are **more options for people to choose** from that best suit their preferences and what they pay for housing.”

- *City, Owner, 18-29*

“Create more housing availability, **allow for more flexibility in housing options.**”

- *City, Renter, 30-39*

“This will be a good way to utilize large lots and will help to **ease housing crunch.**”

- *Medium-small town, Owner, 50-64*

“The prices might be lower, offering **more affordable options** to home buyers.”

- *Medium-small town, Owner, 65+*

“It provides a starting point for discussion and the further possibility of a brave contractor building a neighborhood using the various housing densities and the **possibility of building a multi-density neighborhood.**”

- *Rural, Renter, 65+*

## Families living together, better community (12%)

“That **different generations of families can easily live** on the same property **together** and look out for each other but still have their own space.”

- *City, Owner, 30-39*

“This approach would **add character and creativeness to our communities.** People ought to be able to build homes that make them happy and allow them to live where they like.”

- *City, Renter, 50-64*

“It will increase affordable housing. **Families could add a living space for parents or kids** to live in a separate smaller unit on the property.”

- *Medium-small town, Owner, 40-49*

“Allows **people from a wide variety of** economic and demographic **backgrounds to live in the same neighborhood.**”

- *Medium-small town, Owner, 50-64*

“It would be **good for families** needing to provide housing for adult children or elderly parents.”

- *Rural, Owner, 30-39*



## British Columbians have concerns

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*“More traffic, less parking available, noise, possible increase in crime from lower income renters, more construction noise and disruptions.”*

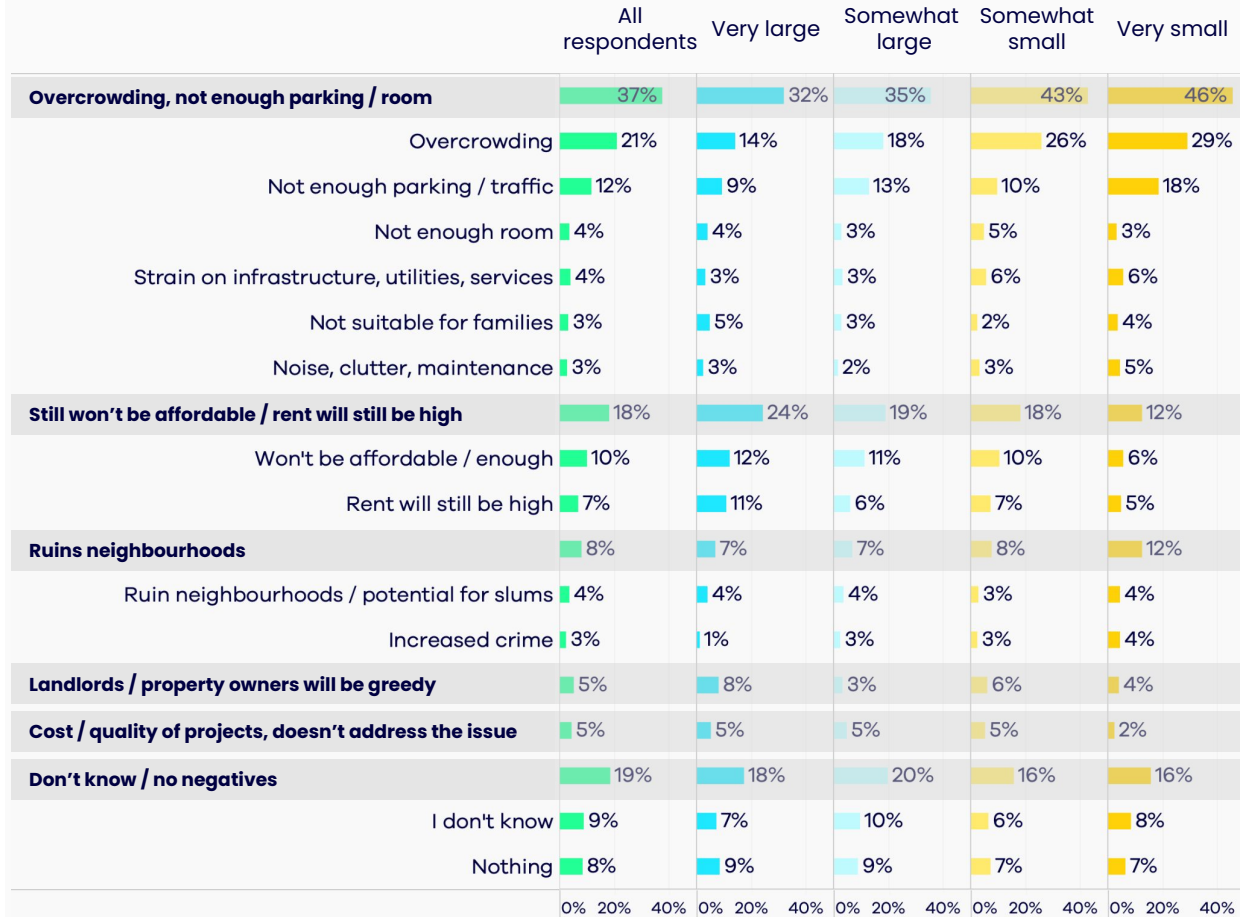
- Rural, Owner, 50-64



**Respondents least impacted by the housing issue are most likely to say that the small housing solution would cause overcrowding.**

**Those most impacted are more likely to say it won't make housing more affordable.**

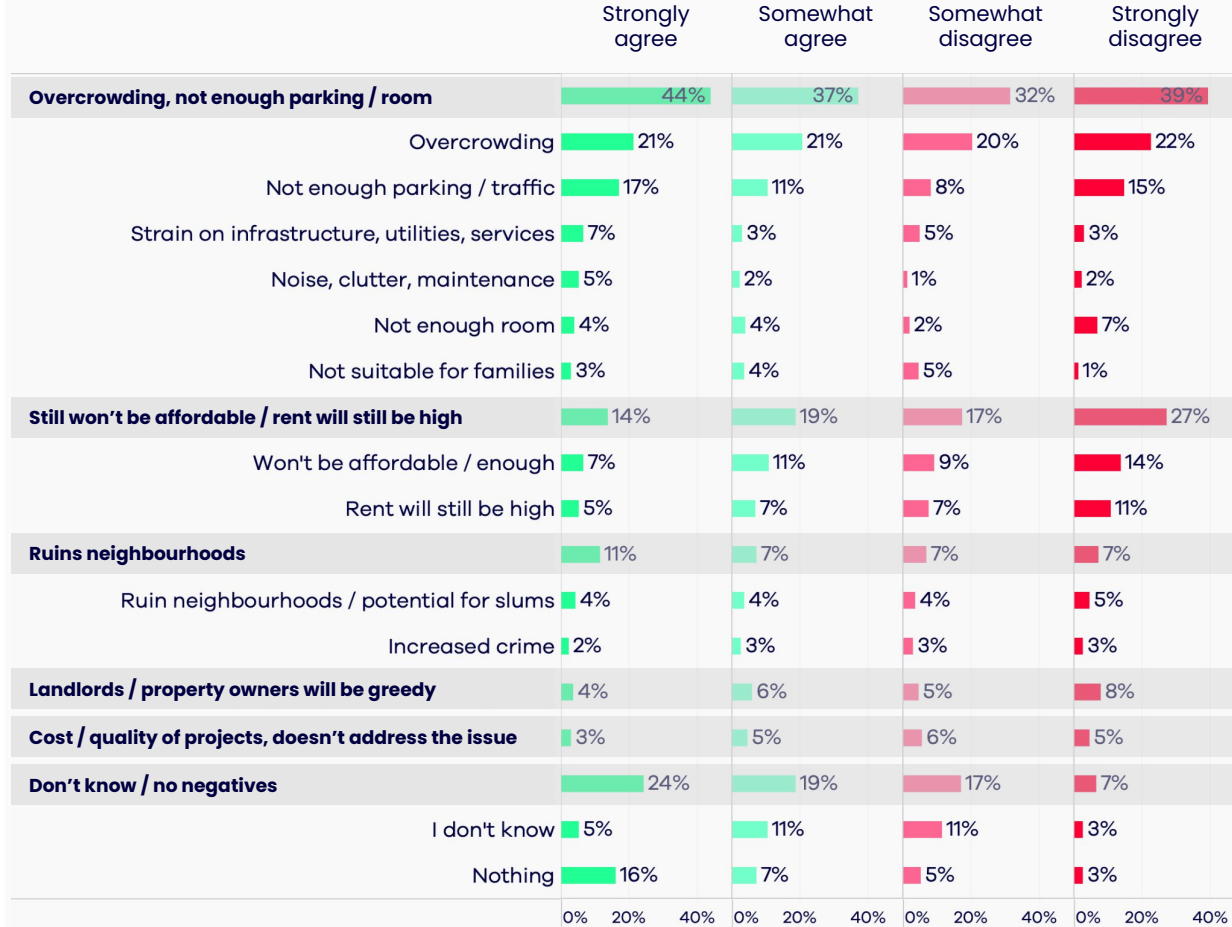
**[Why bad]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be bad about it in your opinion? (Open)



**Across agreement with the small secondary housing solution, respondents name overcrowding as a potential negative outcome.**

**Over a quarter who strongly disagree say it still won't make housing affordable.**

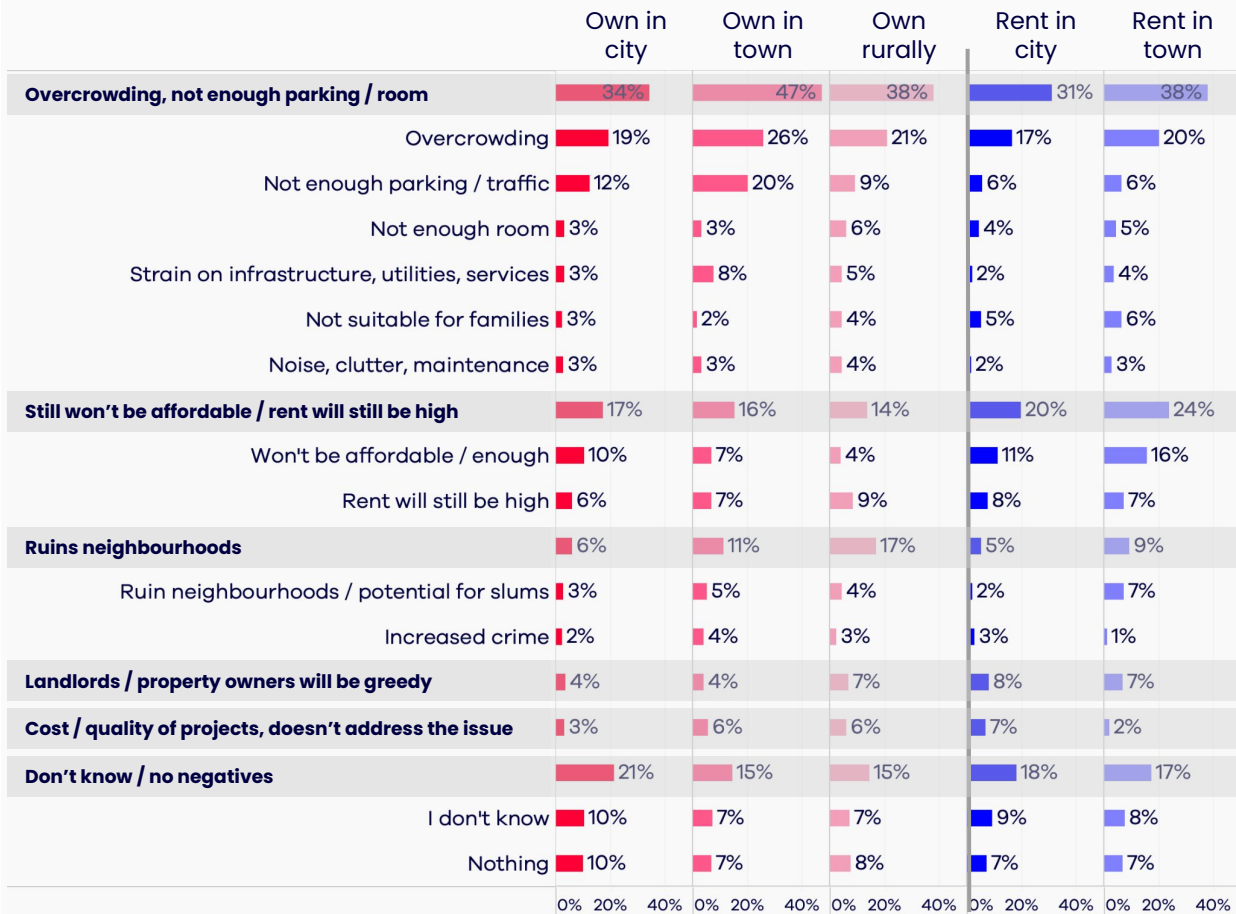
**[Why bad]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be bad about it in your opinion? (Open)



**Half of homeowners in small/medium towns say the solution might create overcrowding.**

**Over a fifth of homeowners in cities say they can't think of any negatives or there aren't any.**

**[Why bad]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be bad about it in your opinion? (Open)

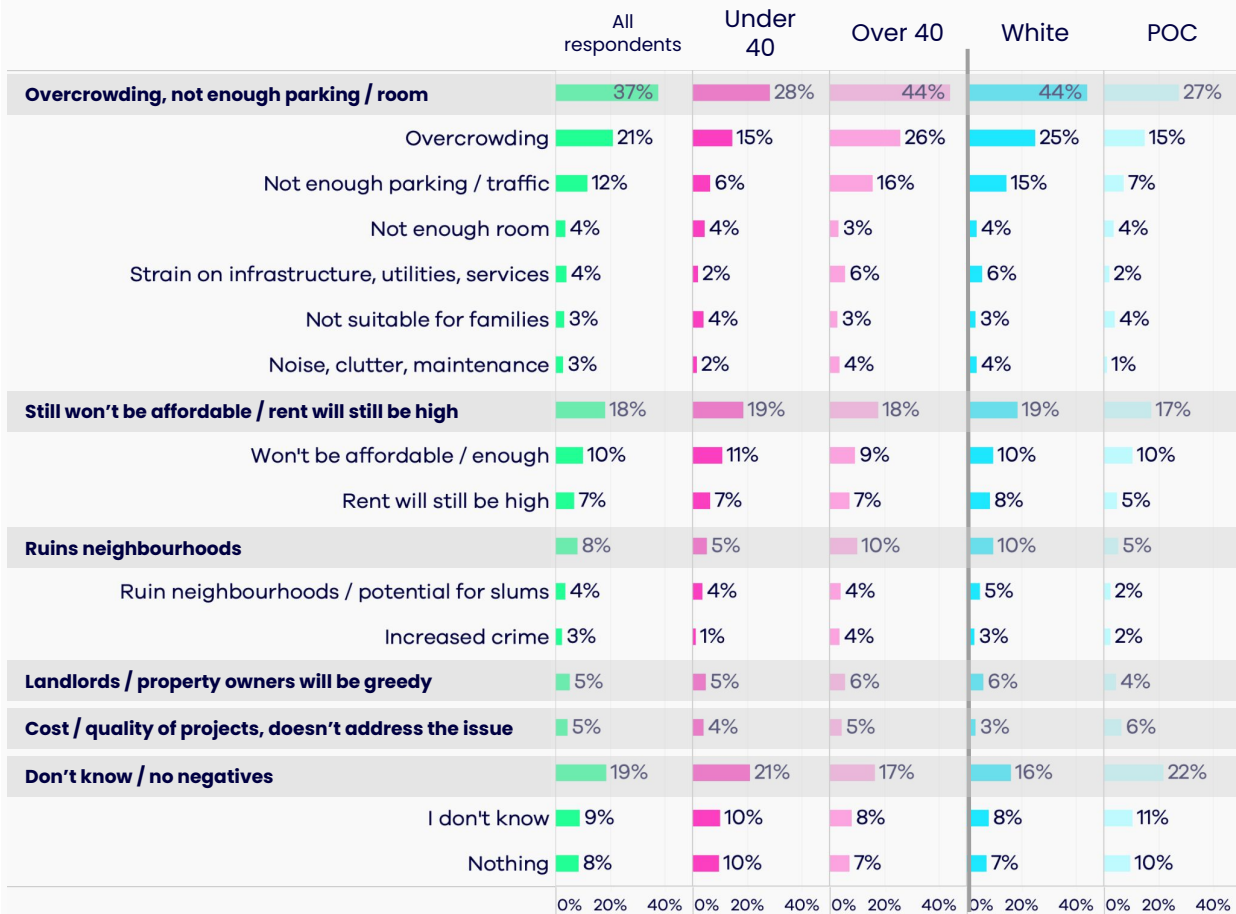




**Younger, POC respondents are more likely than their counterparts to say there are no negatives to the small housing solution.**

**Older, white respondents are most likely to say it could cause overcrowding.**

**[Why bad]** Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with this proposed solution, what, if anything, might be bad about it in your opinion? (Open)



# In their own words: What might be bad about this solution?

## Overcrowding, not enough parking / room (37%)

"Not enough infrastructure to support increased population, e.g. **schools can't handle more students in catchment.**"

- City, Owner, 50-64

"**Cluttered and over-crowded neighborhoods**, blocked roads, bad street parking, it'll look ugly."

- City, Renter, 18-29

"It might make an area **too densely populated** without the right infrastructure and green space."

- Medium-small town, Owner, 65+

"Without strict regulations and specific zoning. It could **cause over powering of utilities**, traffic, etc."

- Medium-small town, Owner, 65+

"**More traffic, less parking available**, noise, possible increase in crime from lower income renters, more construction noise and disruptions."

- Rural, Owner, 50-64

## Still won't be affordable / rent will still be high (18%)

"It still **only benefits those who already own**. It does not make home ownership more accessible to middle income families, but gives more wealth to those who already own."

- City, Renter, 30-39

"I think it will **still bring in higher rent** so it only helps certain members of the population, not those who really need lower rent."

- City, Renter, 40-49

"The **few that can afford** to be the primary landowner still having **more opportunity** to grow wealth while still **not solving the problem** of affordability."

- Medium-small town, Renter, 50-64

"Once built, the **rent will be no cheaper than other rentals**, hence I do not see how this will solve the problem of unaffordability."

- Medium-small town, Owner, 30-39

"**Pricing might still be unaffordable** for some home seekers."

- Rural, Owner, 65+

## Ruins neighbourhoods (8%)

"**Slumlords taking advantage** of vulnerable people by renting them bad housing units."

- City, Owner, 18-29

"The only bad situation might be the **use of drugs by the low income individuals** living in these low income facilities!!!"

- City, Renter, 50-64

"People may build many small cabins in their yard. **Bad living conditions** and that is **not good for the neighborhood.**"

- Medium-small town, Renter, 30-39

"There is a drug problem and **what sort of riffraff would this allow in neighborhoods** that would normally not have these problems?"

- Medium-small town, Owner, 50-64

"You're gonna be bringing people into neighbourhoods that are a **different class than what is already there** and that can **cause a lot of trouble** depending on behaviours."

- Rural, Owner, 30-39



Of British Columbians who are very impacted by  
the lack of affordable housing,

(28%)

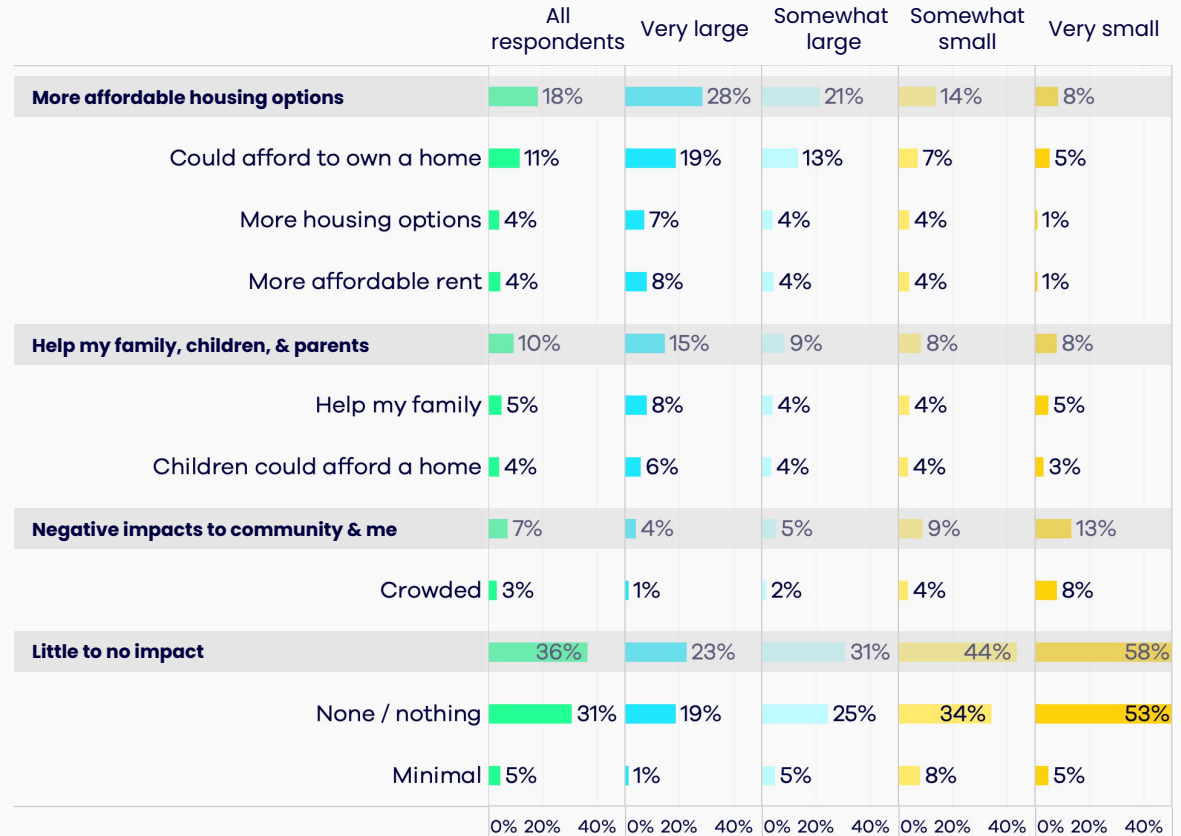
say it would give them **more affordable**  
housing options



**A plurality of all respondents say the small housing solution would have little to no impact on them.**

**Those most impacted by the housing issue are most likely to say it would give them more affordable housing options.**

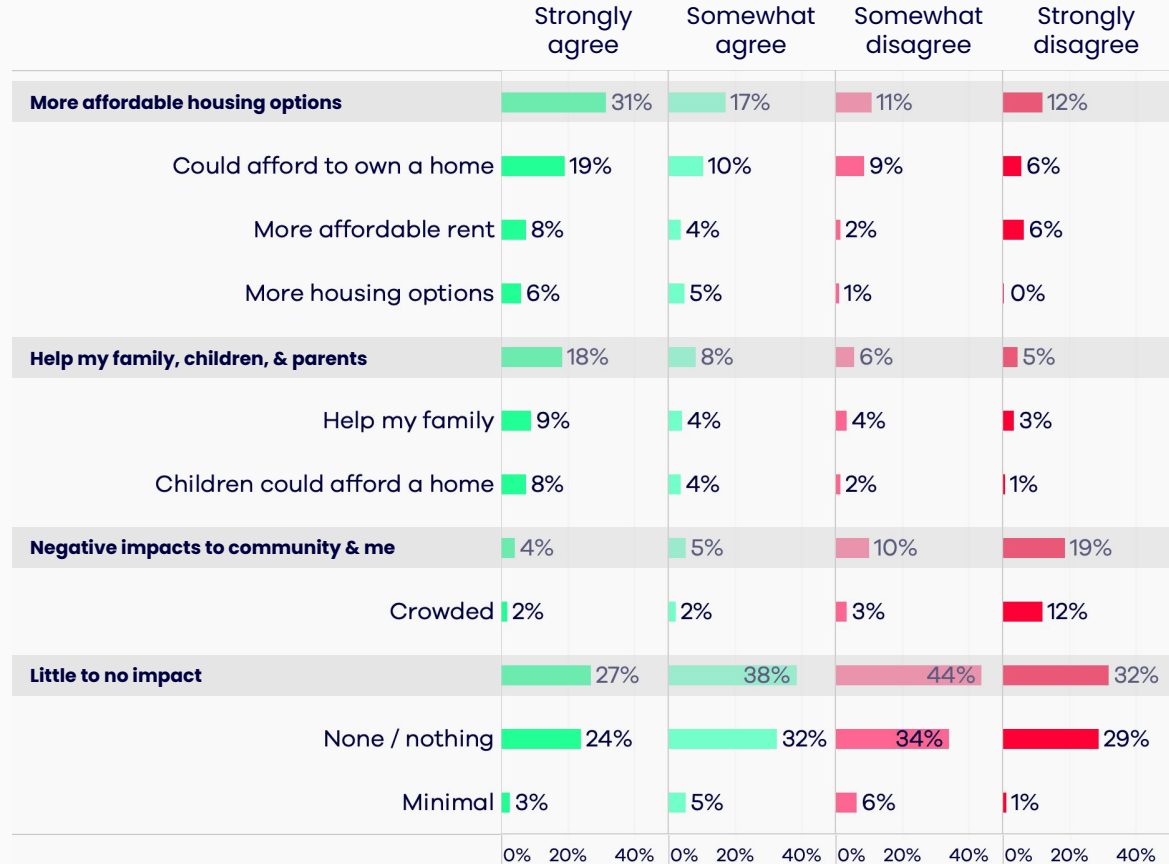
**[Impact]** What impact, if any, would this proposed solution have on you or your loved ones? (Open)



**Over a tenth of respondents across agreement with the small housing solution say it would give them more affordable housing options.**

**One in five who strongly agree say it would help their families.**

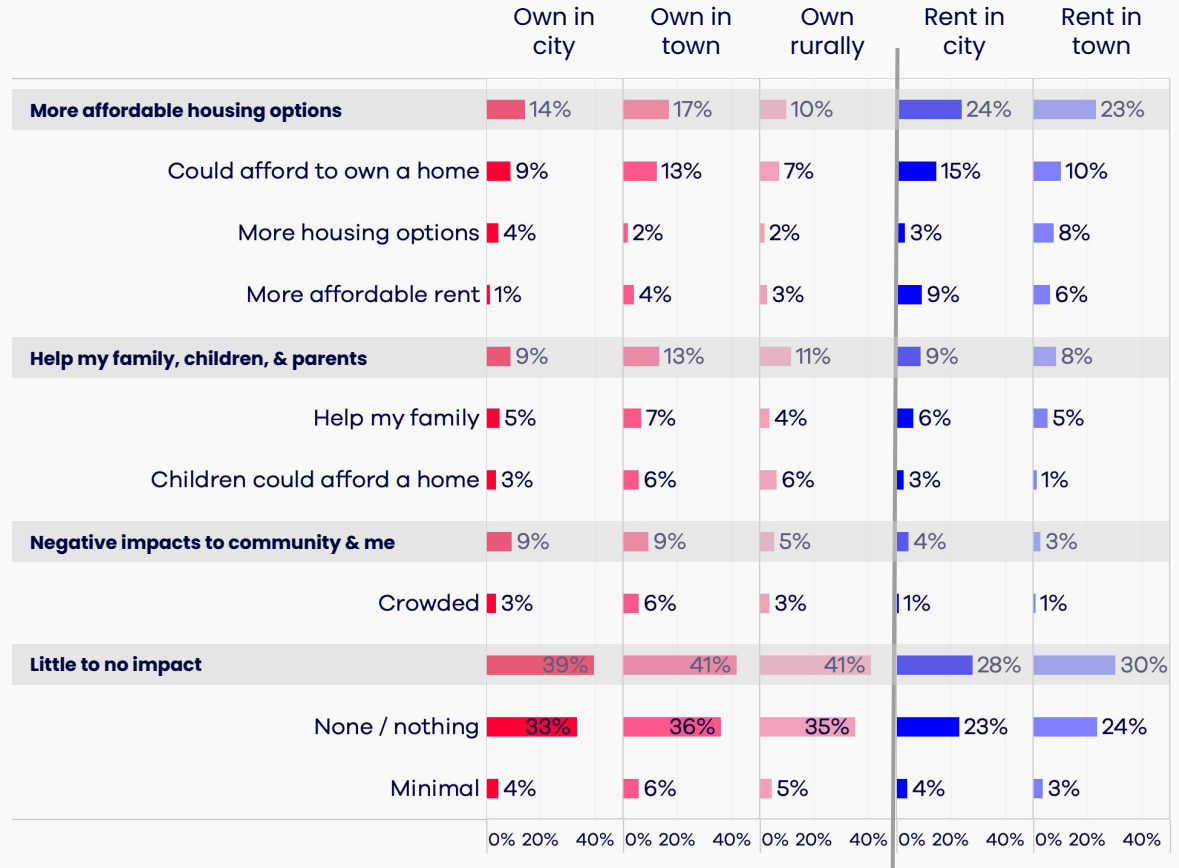
**[Impact]** What impact, if any, would this proposed solution have on you or your loved ones? (Open)



**A plurality of homeowners say the small housing solution would have little to no impact on them.**

**A fifth of renters and owners in small/medium towns say it would give them more affordable housing options.**

**[Impact]** What impact, if any, would this proposed solution have on you or your loved ones? (Open)



# In their own words: What impact would it have?

## More affordable housing options (18%)

"It would give **more opportunity to purchase a home** and benefit multiple generations on the same property."

- City, Owner, 18-29

"I am terrified constantly that my apartment building will be torn down for a highrise and I won't be able to find another place to live. This **may help** that **anxiety**."

- City, Renter, 40-49

"Affordability and **allow** our **younger people** the **chance of owning their own homes** instead of renting."

- Medium-small town, Owner, 50-64

"More **options for affordable housing** (possibly) and maybe we would build some affordable housing."

- Medium-small town, Renter, 18-29

## Help my family, children & parents (10%)

"It would **bring families closer together** to help support financially. Shared land/housing makes for more affordable living."

- City, Owner, 40-49

"I think it would provide at least the opportunity for us to **live closer to relatives** meaning more time for kids to see grandparents and cousins."

- City, Renter, 30-39

"It would allow me to build a home on the property with **my parents** and **help me take care of them when they are older**."

- Medium-small town, Renter, 18-29

"It would be amazing. Give my **family** the option to have **their own space** but **still be close** to each other."

- Medium-small town, Owner, 30-39

"It would **help my kids** to be able to afford a home."

- Rural, Owner, 50-64

## Negative impacts to community & me (7%)

"If it is going to be **forced on us it'd be an extremely negative impact** as we would lose the wildlife that enjoys visiting and we'd lose our land we've been paying for."

- City, Owner, 18-29

"It may **bring down property values** which, as a homeowner, I don't want and it would make my neighbourhood less pleasant to live in."

- City, Owner, 50-64

"Roads would be more congested in the city centre, parking would be more expensive, **hospitals would be more crowded** and waiting time for ER would become longer, **even harder to find family doctors** and **dentists**, even longer **waiting time for nursing homes**."

- City, Owner, 40-49

"The density of population would be too high and it would **denigrate the neighbourhood** with the turnover of renters, the traffic caused by their vehicles. I would not feel as safe."

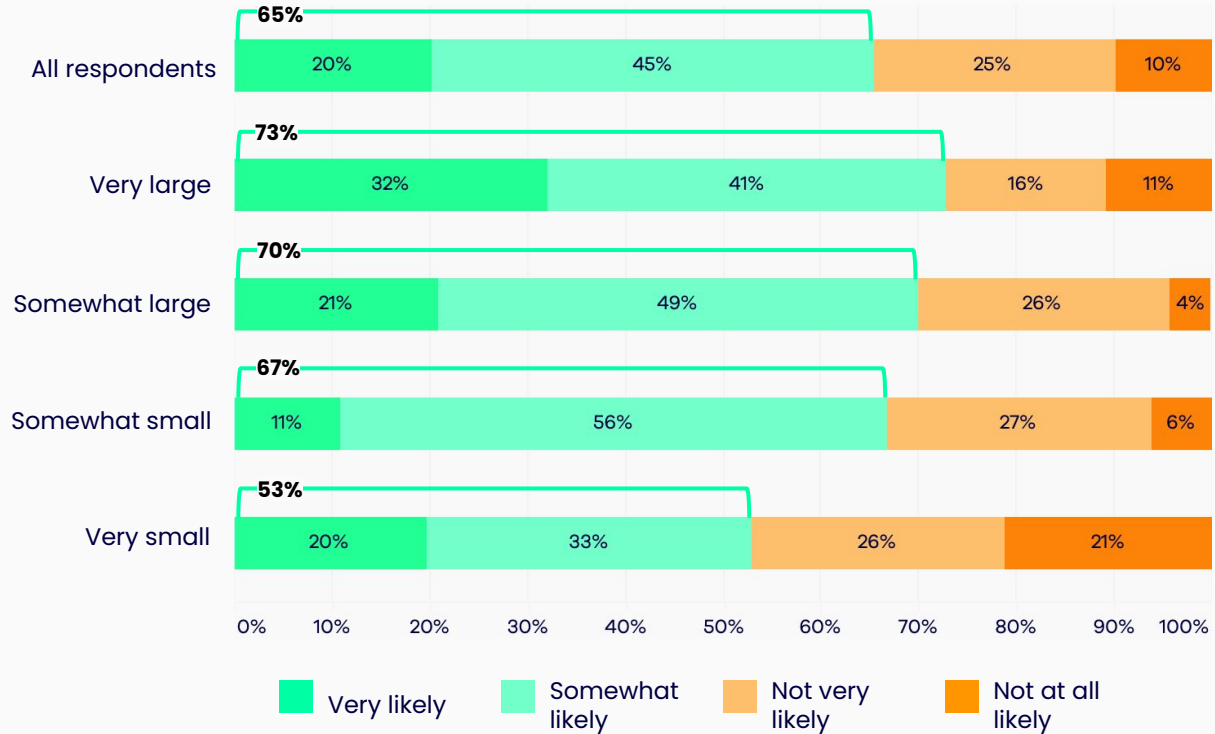
- Medium-small town, Owner, 65+



**A majority of respondents say they are at least somewhat likely to talk about the solution to their family or friends.**

**Over a fifth of those impacted by the housing issue say they are *very likely* to share the solution.**

**[Share solution]** How likely would you be to talk about this proposed solution to family or friends? (Closed)

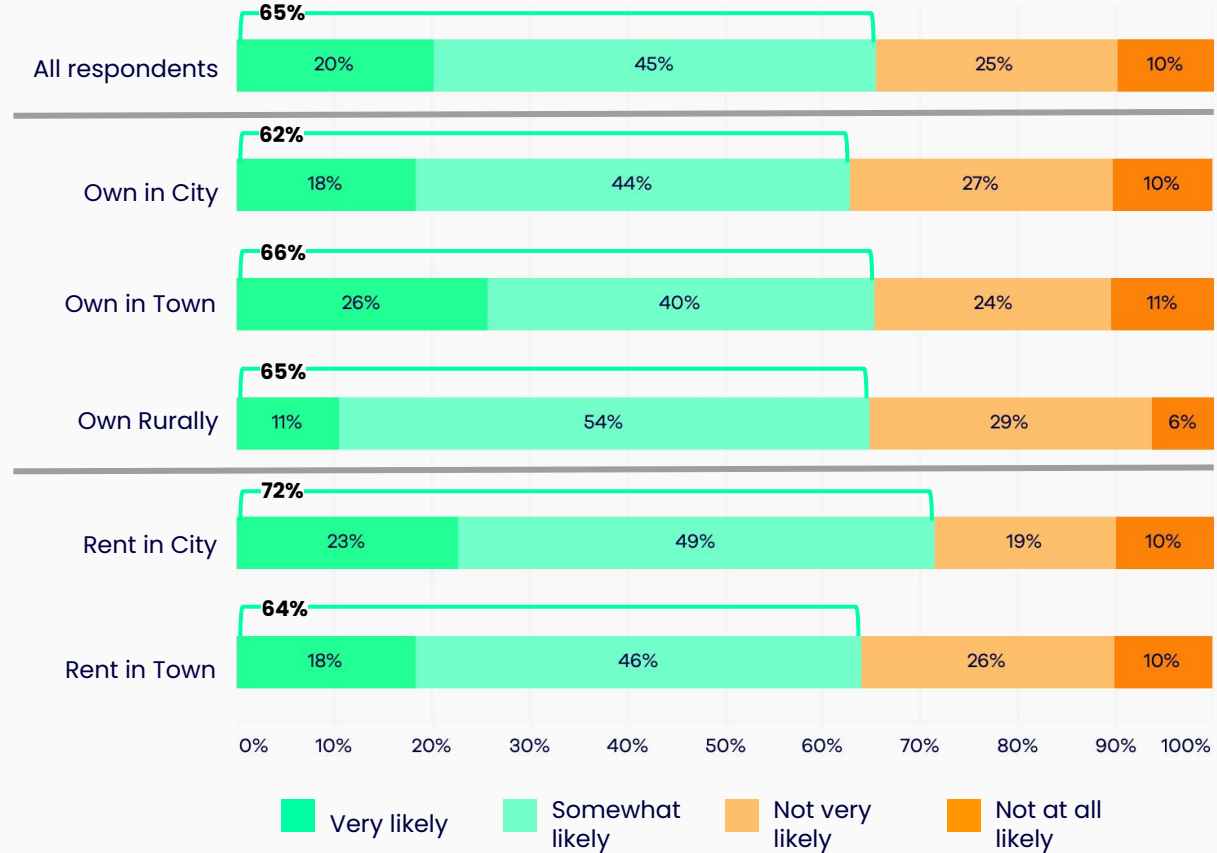




**Homeowners are just as likely as renters to say they would be at least somewhat likely to talk about this solution with their family or friends.**

**A quarter of homeowners in small/medium towns say they are *very likely* to.**

**[Share solution]** How likely would you be to talk about this proposed solution to family or friends? (Closed)



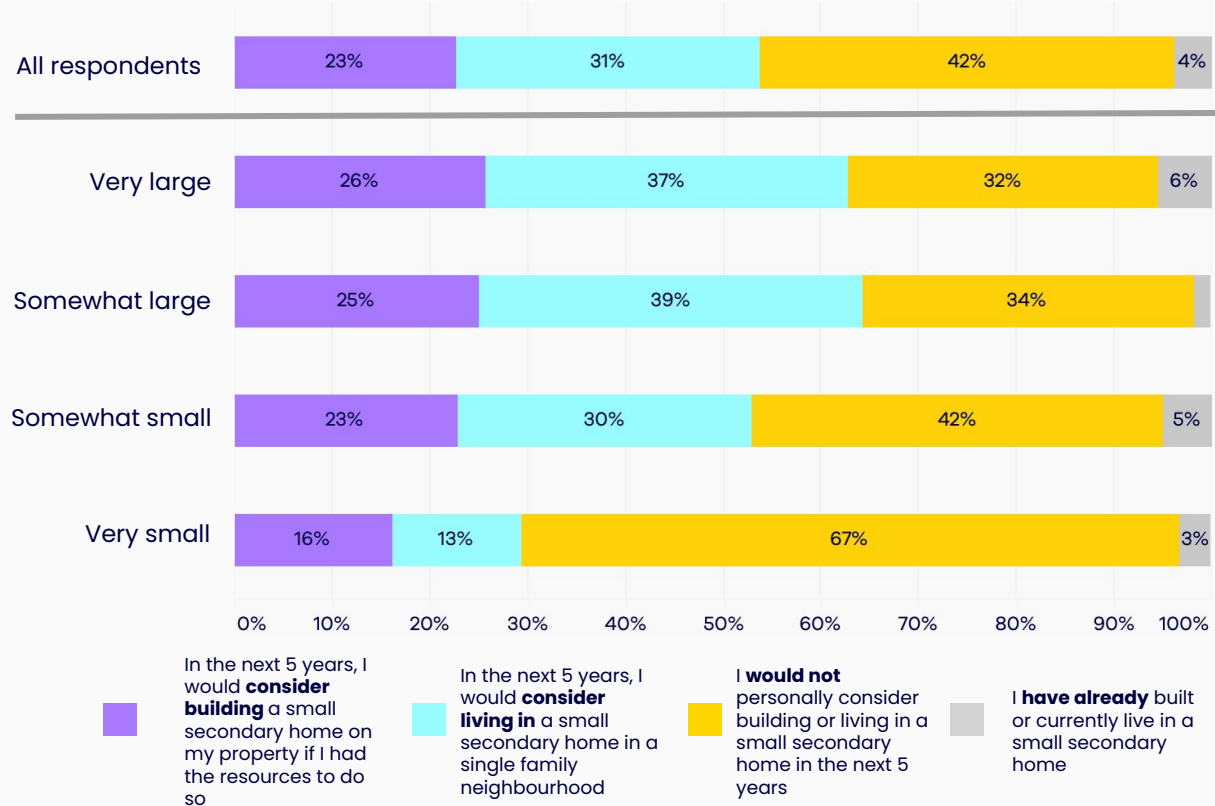
**(33%)**

of rural homeowners in British Columbia say  
they **would consider building a small  
secondary home** in the next 5 years



# Over half of respondents impacted by the housing issue say they would consider either living in or building a small home in the next 5 years.

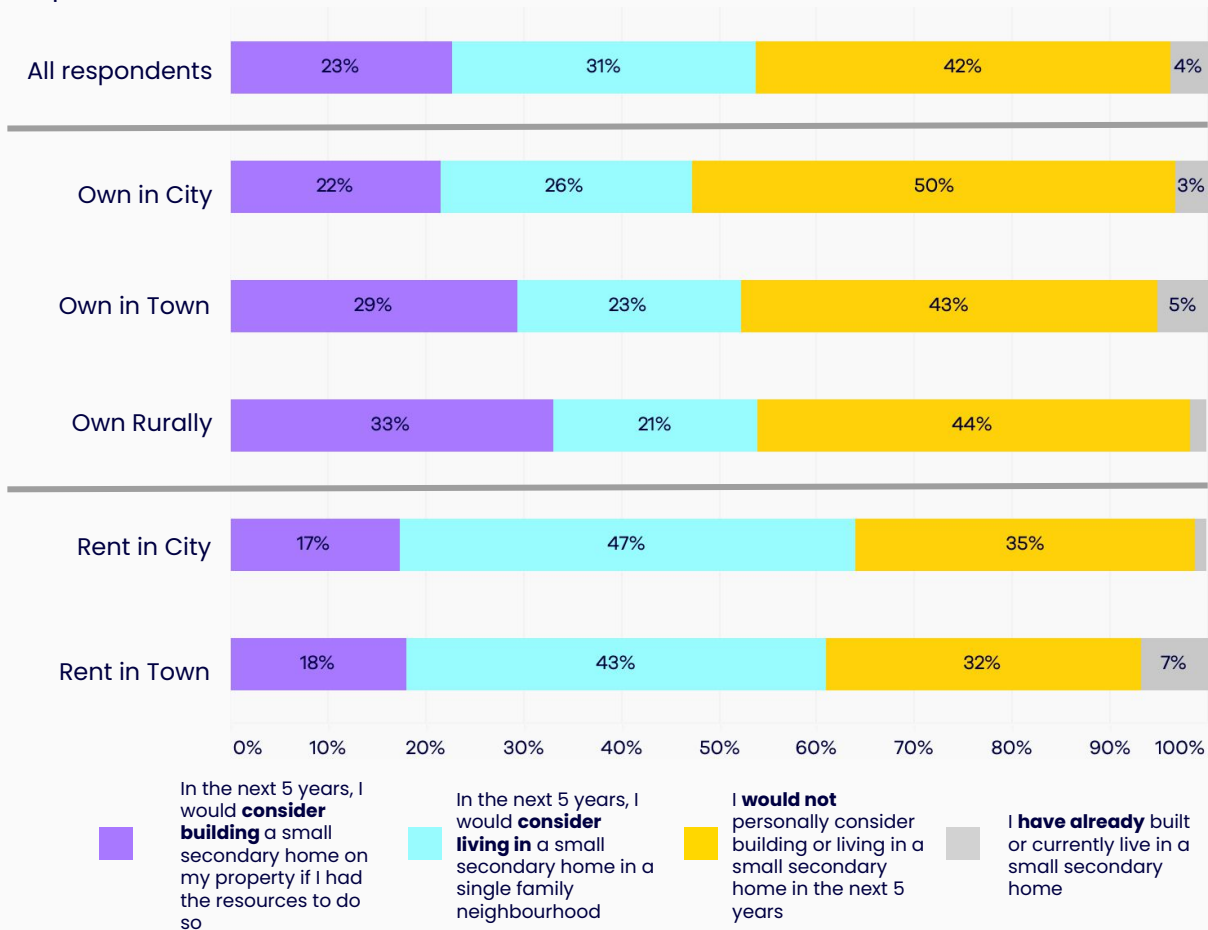
**[Implement solution]** Which of the following statements most accurately reflects your opinion? (Closed)



**Over a fifth of homeowners say they would consider building a small secondary home in the next 5 years; rural owners are most likely to say they would consider it.**

**Over 40% of renters say they would consider living in a small secondary home.**

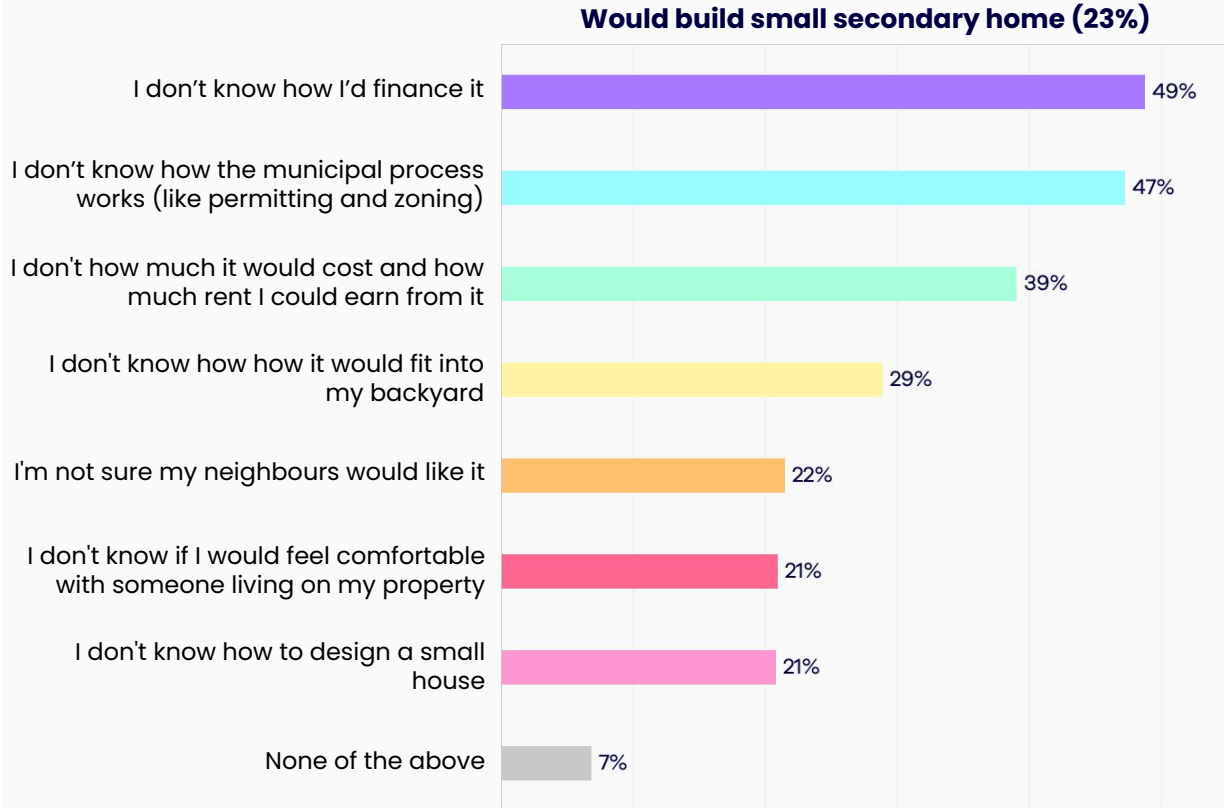
**[Implement solution]** Which of the following statements most accurately reflects your opinion? (Closed)



# Respondents who would consider building a small secondary home are most likely to say the financial and process challenges are holding them back.

**[Resources needed]** You indicated that in the next 5 years, you would consider building a small secondary home on your property if you had the resources to do so.

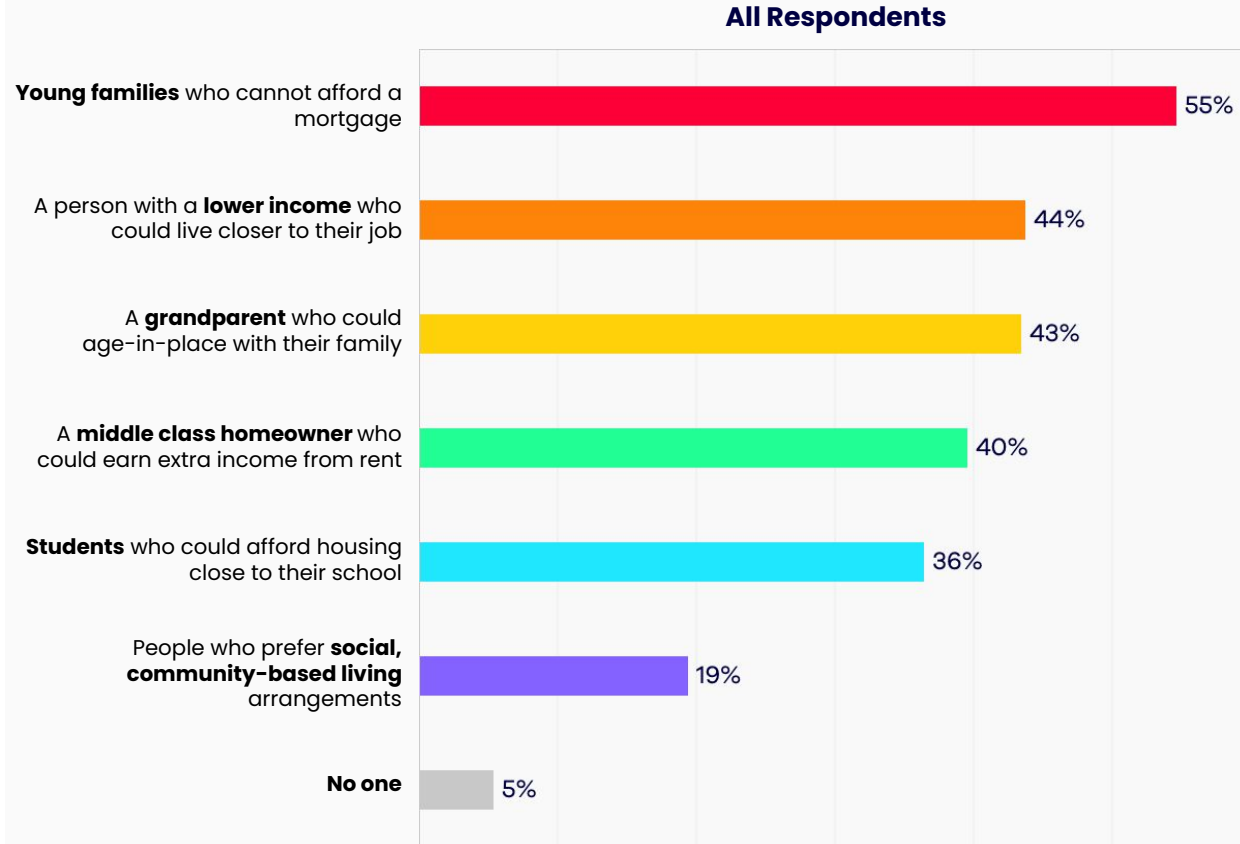
Which of the following challenges best describes what might hold you back from seriously considering building a small second home on your property? (Closed)



**Respondents are most likely to say young families unable to afford a mortgage would most benefit from the small secondary housing solution.**

**Nearly half say a grandparent or a person with low income.**

**[Most benefit]** Who do you believe would most benefit from this proposed solution to the affordable housing issue? Select up to three. (Closed)



# Strategic Recommendations

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## 1

**Proactively fill in narrative gaps by expanding the boundaries of what is possible**

People are very receptive to the idea, and will better connect with it when they see it placed within a fuller story.

Most people are ready to agree that 'bureaucracy' is to blame. Cast it as an apolitical villain with a fix that regular people have agency to influence.

## 2

**Help people see themselves in the solution – not just the wealthy**

British Columbians want this idea to work, but many don't see how it will impact them. Some also worry it might only benefit those who already have a lot, like homeowners or people who can afford high rent.

Bring to life who stands to benefit: The young families that value location and community over size, the person who wants a shorter commute to their job, the grandparents who want to age-in-place near family.

## 3

**Authentically acknowledge challenges, including economics**

Overwhelmingly, people's top concern right now is high costs of living. Housing is associated with 'too expensive' and 'not enough.'

To engage beyond the base, particularly with those who say they are most impacted by the issue and younger people in cities (highly overlapping groups), they will need to hear how this solution will make a dent in the urgent issues around affordability.

## 4

**Areas for future exploration**

Map this issue against deeply-held values (ie: care, community) to explore how different segments relate to it.

Test the salience of messages to narrow in on what will emotionally activate target audiences, particularly those who identify as less impacted.



# Narrative Implications

## Perceptions to reinforce

- Small housing can provide a pathway for people to **express deeply-held values, like care**: Caring for elderly parents, helping grown children afford their own place, keeping young families near their ‘village,’ etc.
- Housing is a complex issue, it’s the largest portion of a person’s monthly budget, living costs are high, and there simply isn’t enough right now. We need **all the solutions** we have at our disposal - this is one we can make progress on.
- Small housing encompasses a wide range of **budgets and styles**, as varied as the individuals who choose to build or live in them. Show what these look like to combat initial hesitations (ie: overcrowding).

## Vulnerabilities to guard against

- Being seen as *not empathetic enough* toward challenging economic contexts.
- Potential for backlash around *elitism* or ‘helping the rich get richer’ (ie: wealthy homeowners).
- Unintentionally tapping into deep-seated internalized narratives around *who is deserving* of good things and zero-sum thinking.





## Segment snapshot:

### **Very impacted by lack of affordable housing**

(23% of total sample)

British Columbians who say they are very impacted are more likely than others to be:

- Renters in cities
- Between 18-39 years old
- Earn \$50-75k or less
- Work in-person
  
- Most concerned about the problem
- See high prices/rents & inflation/cost of living as the cause
- Want to see lower housing prices/rent & more *affordable* housing be built
- Likely to blame government and greed
- Feel positively about the solution & think it might help lower housing prices
- Least worried about overcrowding or increased crime
- Most worried that housing still won't be affordable





Zoë Tomaskova-Redfield, Lead Analyst  
Kyla Yeoman, Lead Strategist

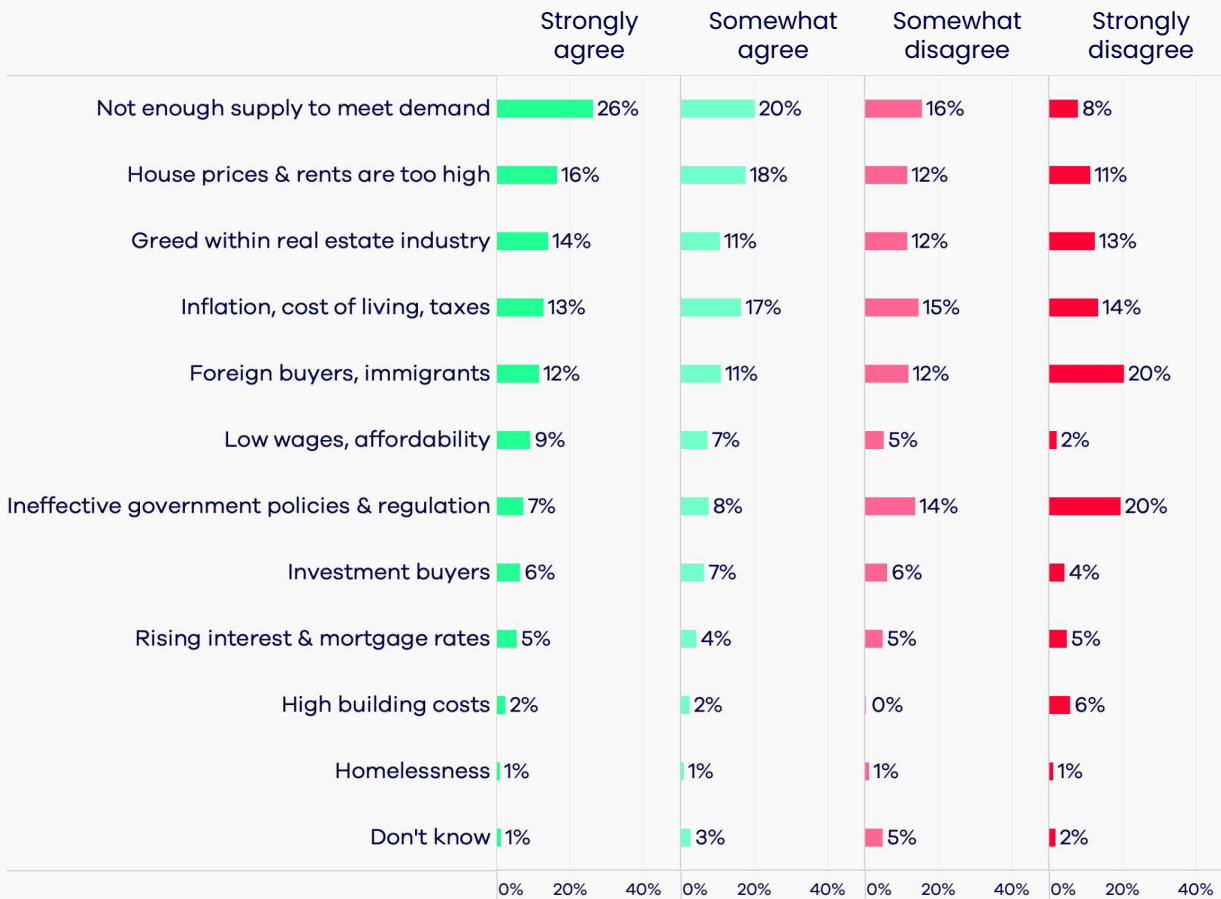
[hello@avalancheinsights.com](mailto:hello@avalancheinsights.com)

# Appendix



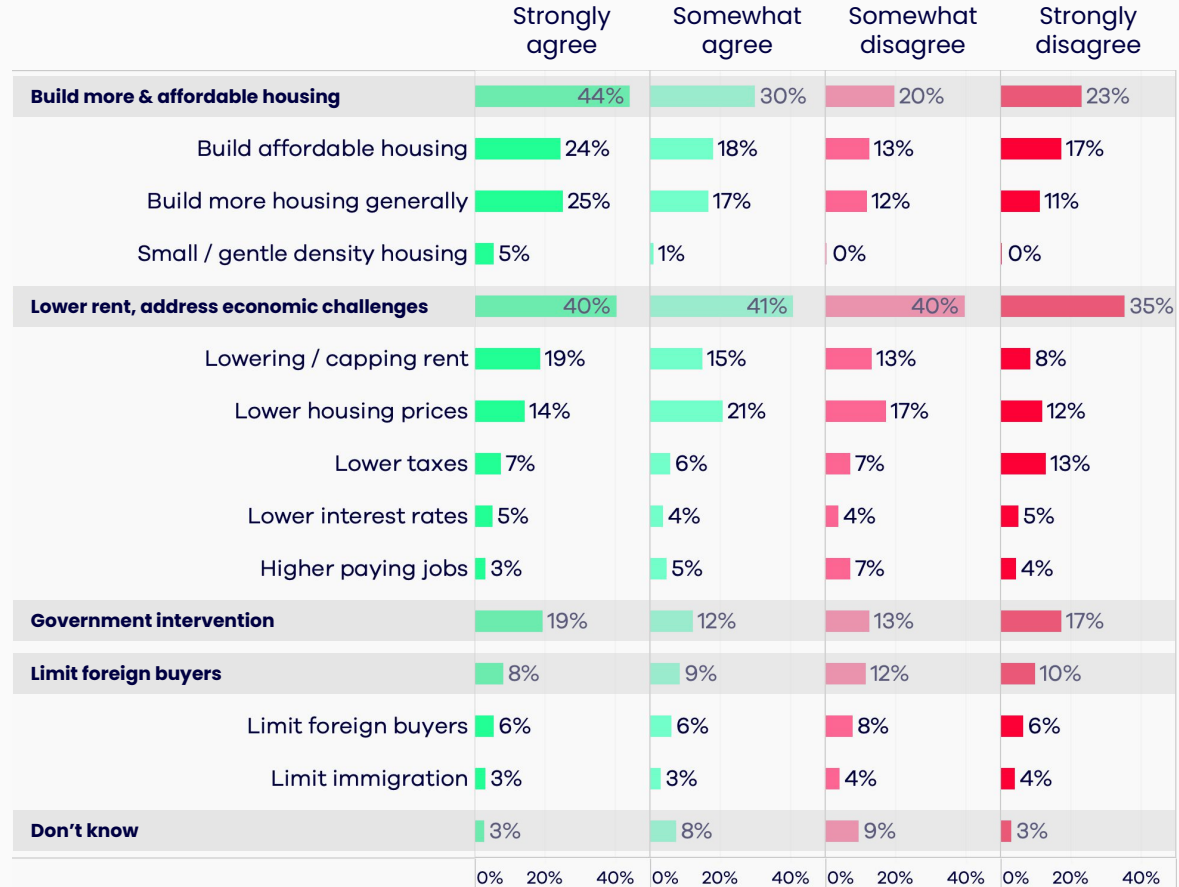
# Plan agreement x Define problem

**[Define problem]** When it comes to the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia, what specifically do you believe is the cause of the problem? (Open)



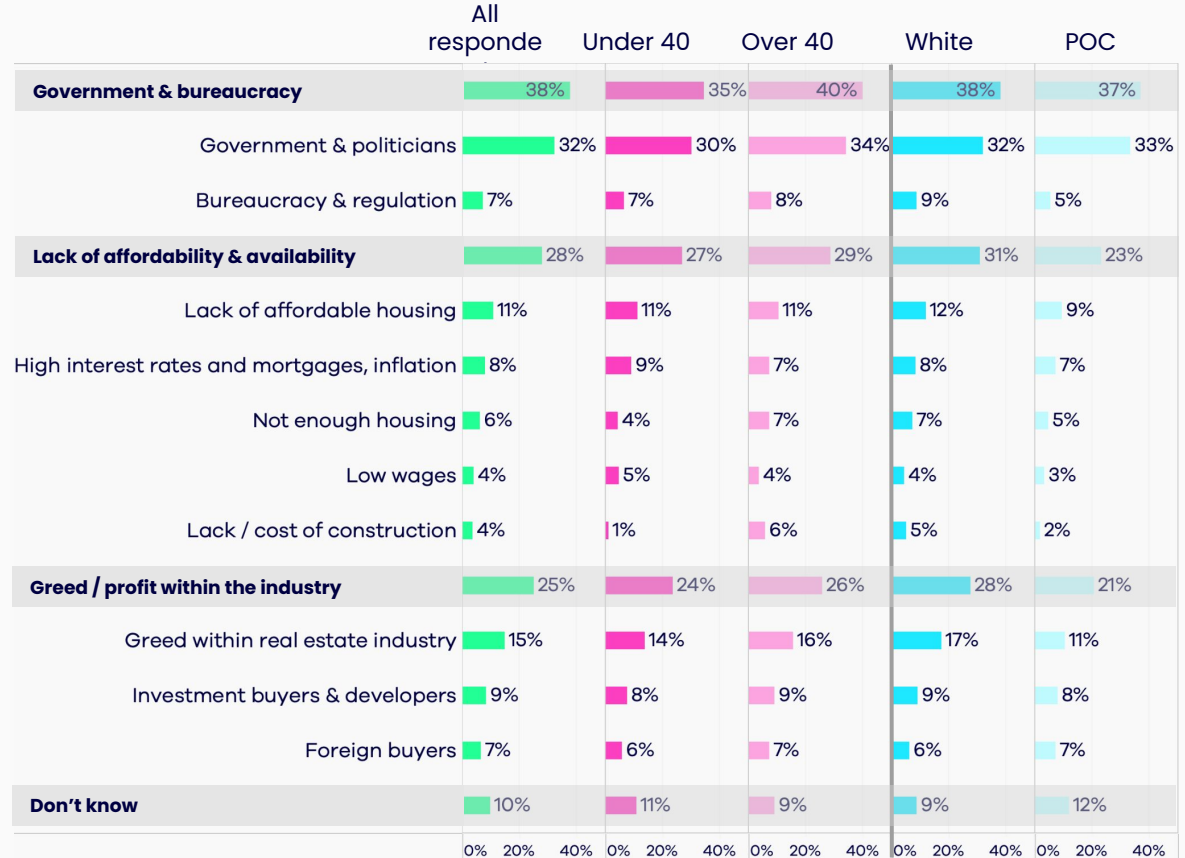
# Plan agreement x Solution

**[Solution]** What, if anything, do you think should be done to solve the issue of affordable housing in British Columbia? (Open)



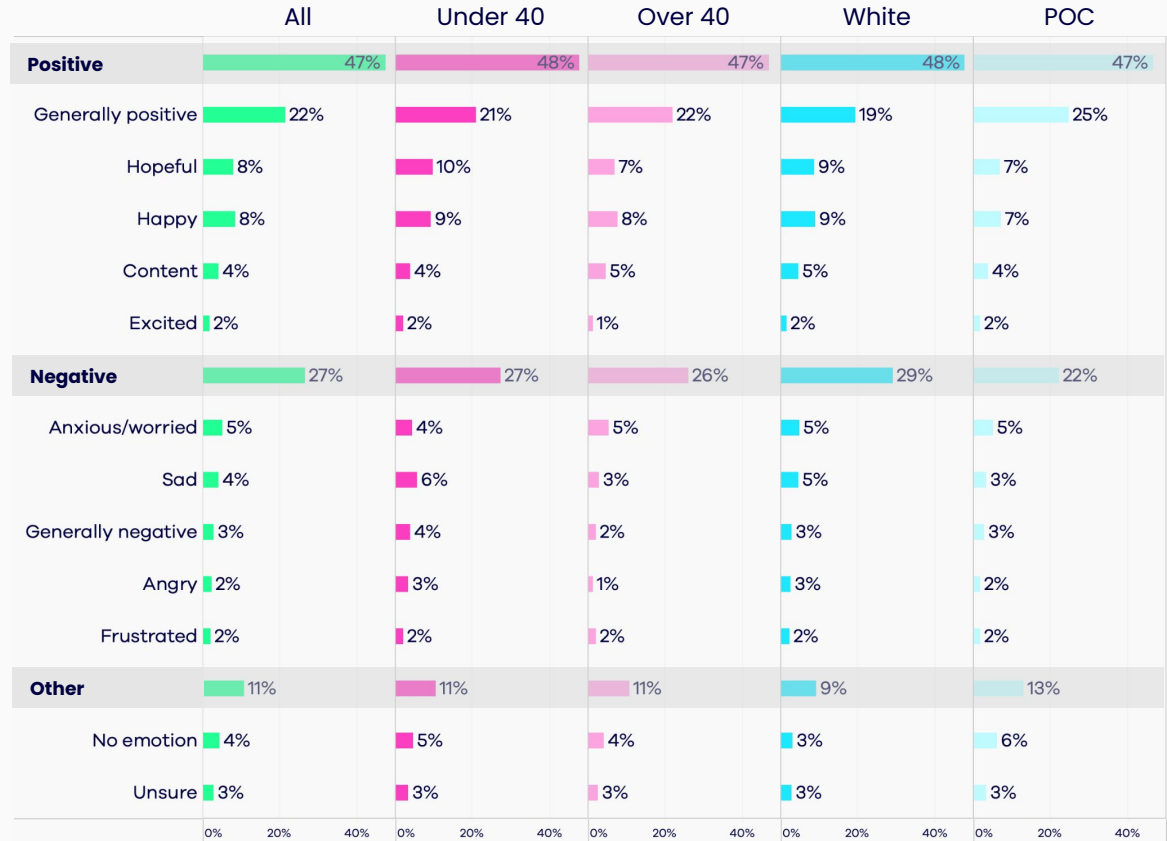
# Demographic Segments x Villain

**[Villain]** Who or what, specifically, do you think is standing in the way of there being enough housing that people can afford in British Columbia, if anything? (Open)



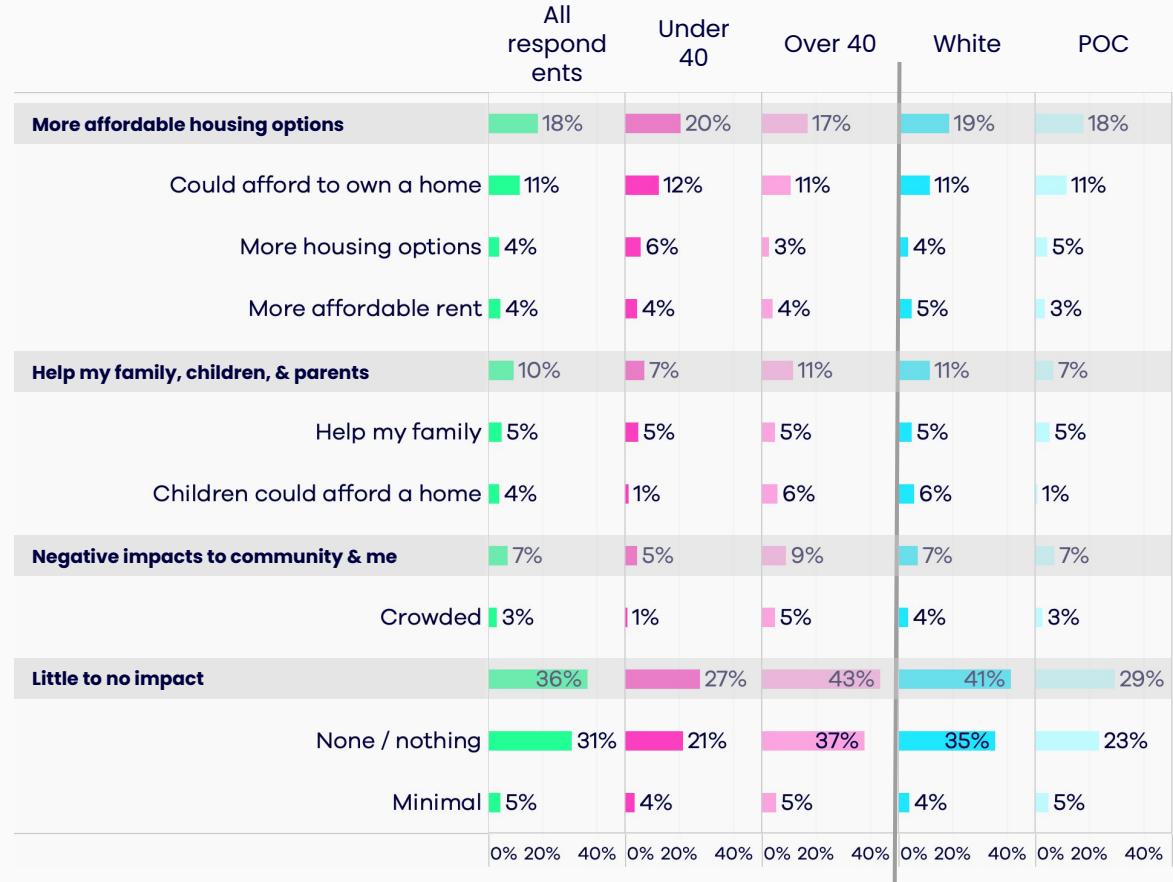
# Demographic segments x Emotion

**[Emotion]** When you think about this solution, what emotion best describes how you feel? (Open)



# Demographic Segments x Impact

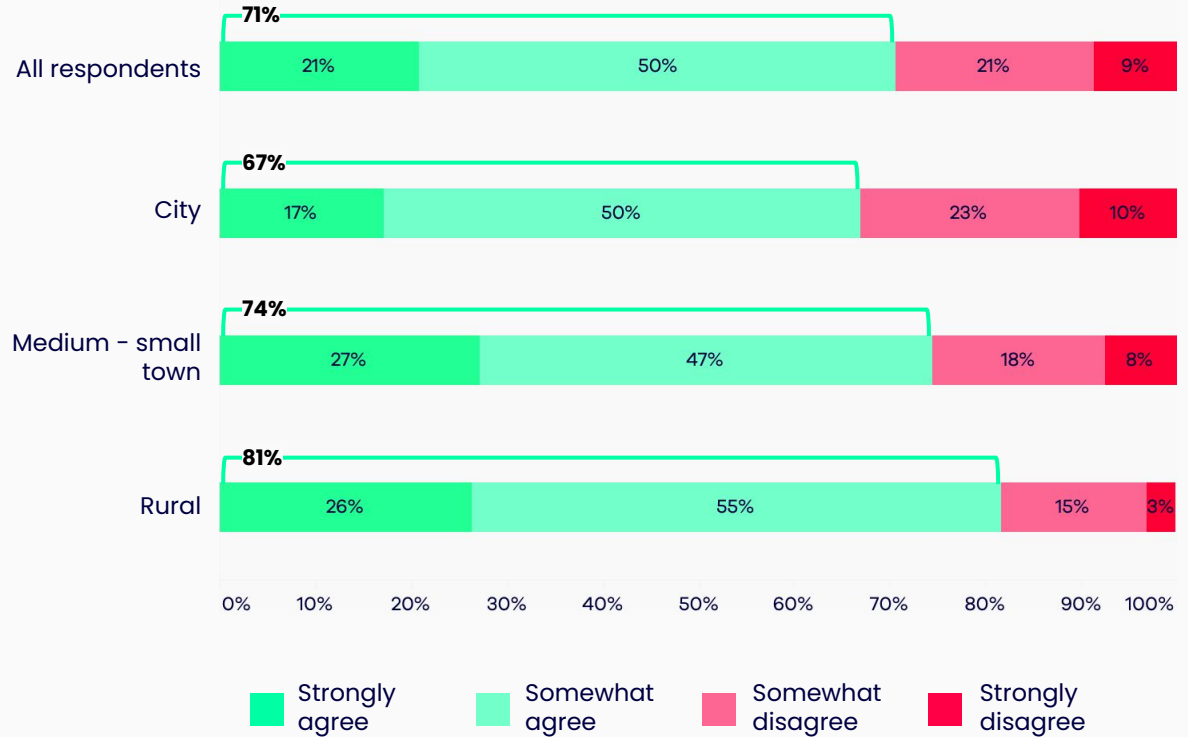
**[Impact]** What impact, if any, would this proposed solution have on you or your loved ones? (Open)





# Urbanism x Agreement

[Agreement] How much do you agree or disagree with this solution? (Closed)



# Demographic Segments x Share solution

**[Share solution]** How likely would you be to talk about this proposed solution to family or friends? (Closed)

