



CITY OF SPRUCE GROVE

HOUSING STRATEGY

2024

What We Heard



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Acknowledgements

The Housing Strategy Project team would like to extend their appreciation to the residents, community leaders, advisory groups, organizations, and the development and building community for their participation in the engagement phase of the Housing Strategy Project. Their contributions were instrumental in providing real, genuine feedback on the housing needs of Spruce Grove and the opportunities and challenges facing residents today.



Executive Summary

The City of Spruce Grove is expected to grow by more than 25,000 in the next 20 years. To accommodate and responsibly plan for this growth, the City is developing a Housing Strategy, reviewing our housing inventory, and assessing what types of housing may be needed in the future. The first step in developing the City’s Housing Strategy was to complete a [Housing Needs Assessment](#) which provides a snapshot of housing needs in the City. The information collected through this assessment, along with data from the 2021 Federal Census and 2023 Municipal Census, informed the engagement phase of the project.

The next step in the Housing Strategy Project was to engage with the community to gather the input necessary to enable the development of the Housing Strategy. The engagement phase began on June 3, 2024 and ended on July 24, 2024, and a variety of engagement tactics were used including:

- An online survey was created on the City’s engagement tool, Connect Spruce Grove, and promoted through in person events, targeted social media advertisements, and by connecting with local rental buildings and community organizations to promote the survey. In total, 692 responses were received.
- Two Community Organization Focus Groups where community leaders and community organization representatives engaged in a facilitated discussion on housing and their clients’ experiences in finding housing that meets their needs. In total, there were 10 participants.
- One Community Member Focus Group where clients of Community Social Development shared their experiences (past and present) with finding housing in Spruce Grove. There were 12 participants in total and each provided a unique perspective on their challenges regarding availability and affordability of housing.
- Two Developer and Builder Focus Groups where companies that develop land or build homes in Spruce Grove provided their perspective on housing in Spruce Grove. There were eight participants in total.
 - In addition, 1:1 interviews were held with builders and rental property owners that were unable to make a scheduled focus group (Akash Homes, GSK Properties).
- Given the subject matter expertise of individual organizations in Spruce Grove and the Capital Region, a series of 1:1 interviews were held to obtain the unique perspective of the following organizations:
 - Meridian Housing Foundation
 - Civida
 - Westview Primary Care Network
- The Youth Advisory Committee, Economic Develop Advisory Committee, and City Centre Business Association were also engaged to discuss their unique challenges and opportunities, as well as the current and future state of housing in the City.

The data collected from the engagement phase of the project was then analyzed and presented in this What We Heard Report. The data can be broken down into five themes:



- **Diversifying Housing Options:** Survey respondents and focus group/interview participants suggest that it is important for Spruce Grove to have a variety of housing options to meet the various needs of its residents.
- **Affordability:** Many survey respondents and focus group participants are limited in housing choices given affordability constraints many households are experiencing. The cost-of-living increases combined with increasing housing costs have resulted in a shortage of affordable housing or rental options in Spruce Grove.
- **Advocacy, Communication, and Education:** Participants identified opportunities around advocacy, communication, and education focused on housing in the City of Spruce Grove. Working with other levels of government, partners, and having clarity on what affordable housing looks like could be considered as the housing strategy is developed.
- **Density:** Density can have a positive impact on affordability and community connections. Consideration could be given as part of the Housing Strategy into how we plan for increasing density in future and existing neighbourhoods.
- **Neighbourhood Design and Building Community Connections:** The design of the built environment and how neighbourhoods connect throughout the City contribute to resident health and well-being. The Housing Strategy could consider how neighbourhood design contributes to building community connections.

The data collected as part of the What We Heard Report will inform the development of the Housing Strategy.





Project Overview



Housing Strategy Project Overview

The City of Spruce Grove is a vibrant, dynamic community of 40,000 people. Over the next 20 years, the population is anticipated to increase by more than 25,000. To accommodate and responsibly plan for this growth, the City is developing a Housing Strategy, reviewing our housing inventory, and assessing what types of housing may be needed in the future.

The Housing Strategy will impact Spruce Grove residents and businesses as it will guide the City’s approach to housing and inform future decisions on land use and housing developments. It will outline expected outcomes, goals, and actions to support the development of a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of the community. A phased approach to the strategy development is being taken.

The Housing Strategy will focus on market rental and home ownership, subsidized/affordable housing (rental and/or ownership), and long-term assisted/supportive housing (i.e. seniors assisted living and supervised care homes), as shown in the Housing Continuum. The Housing Strategy will not include emergency shelters and transitional/short term supportive housing. The City’s social programming, including the mobile [Community Outreach Program](#) and collaboration in the Winter Emergency Response, will continue to assist individuals who are unsheltered, at risk of being unsheltered, or experiencing multiple barriers to well-being.

The [Housing Strategy Glossary](#) includes a list of terms used by the City of Spruce Grove

The Housing Continuum

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relating to housing. This terminology is used in the City’s Housing Needs Assessment, Housing Continuum, public engagement materials, and will be used in the Housing Strategy as it is developed. In particular, “Affordable Housing” is defined as follows:

“A Dwelling is deemed as Affordable Housing when the cost of purchasing or renting the dwelling inclusive of heating costs is no more than 30% of the annual Core Needs Income Thresholds for Spruce Grove as determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.



The [Core Needs Income Threshold](#) for Spruce Grove is posted annually on the Province of Alberta, Municipal Affairs website.”

In 2024, the Core Needs Income Thresholds for Spruce Grove are as follows:

	BACHELOR	1 BDRM	2 BDRM	3 BDRM	4 BDRM
Spruce Grove Core Needs Income Threshold	\$39,000	\$46,500	\$58,000	\$70,000	\$75,500
30% of Core Needs Income Threshold	\$11,700	\$13,950	\$17,400	\$21,000	\$22,650

The first step in developing the City’s Housing Strategy was to complete a [Housing Needs Assessment](#) which provides a snapshot of housing needs in the city. It includes City demographic data such as population, home occupancy versus size of home (number of bedrooms etc.) and housing costs. The Assessment identifies what housing gaps exist today in Spruce Grove and pending different population growth scenarios, what housing demands and gaps may exist in the future.

The next step in the project was to engage with the community to gather the input necessary to enable the development of the Housing Strategy. An online resident survey, focus groups, interviews, presentations, and information booths at community events were utilized as part of the engagement, and details of each can be found below. The data collected from the engagement phase of the project was then analyzed and presented in this What We Heard Report.

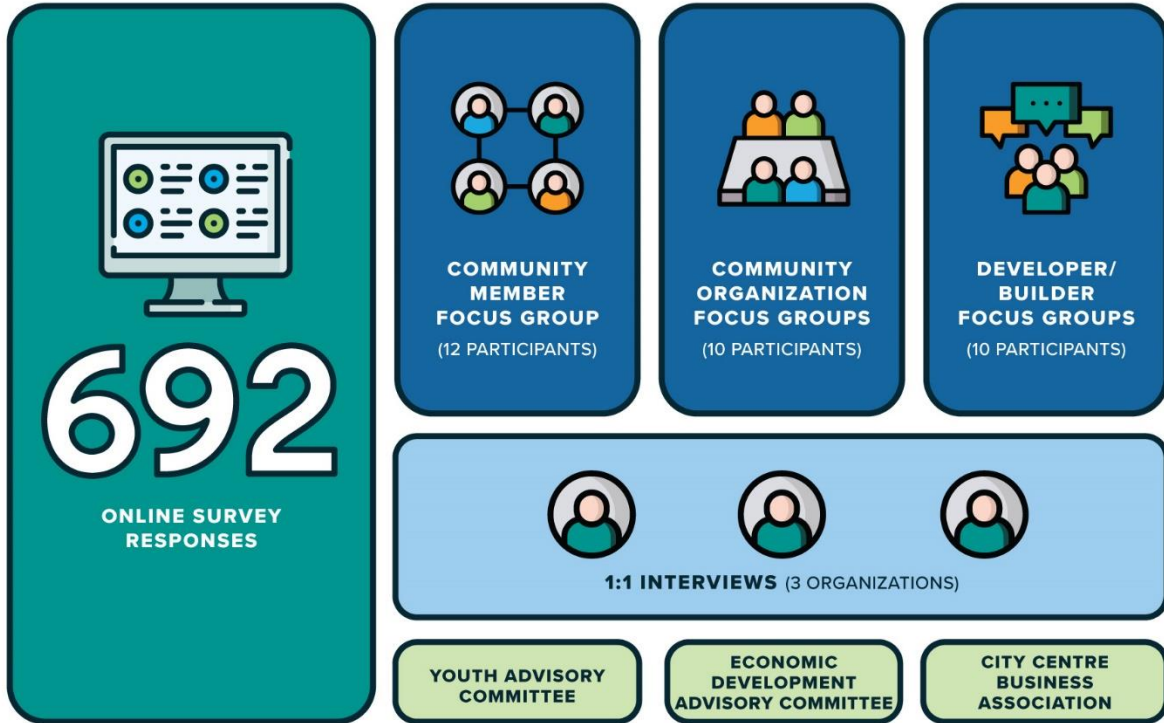
Using what we heard from the community, a series of policy focused questions will be explored to inform development of the Housing Strategy. The final step in the project is to develop the Housing Strategy for Council feedback and final approval. The Housing Strategy will guide the City’s approach to housing and inform future decisions on land use and housing developments.





Engagement Approach

Various engagement tactics were used to reach a variety of audiences in the City of Spruce Grove. The 2021 Federal Census, 2023 Municipal Census, and [2024 Housing Needs Assessment](#) were all used to inform the design and build out of these tactics and all individuals that were engaged were provided with a link to the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment to help provide context to the project and questions they were asked to answer.



A summary of each tactic is as follows:

Online Survey

An online survey containing 25 questions was created on the City’s engagement tool, Connect Spruce Grove, and promoted through in-person events, targeted social media advertisements, and by connecting with local rental buildings and community organizations to promote the survey. In total, 692 responses were received during the engagement phase (June 3 – July 24) and the response data for each question can be found in Appendix B.

Focus Groups

To gain insight from specific groups in the community that have a direct link to housing in Spruce Grove, a series of focus groups were held as part of the engagement portion of the project:

- One Community Member Focus Group where clients of Community Social Development were invited to a two-hour discussion on their experience (past and present) with finding



housing in Spruce Grove. There were 12 participants in total and each provided a unique perspective on their challenges regarding availability and affordability of housing, and the facilitation guide used to lead the discussion can be found in Appendix A.

- Two Community Organization Focus Groups where community leaders and community organization representatives engaged in a facilitated discussion on housing and their clients' experiences in finding housing that meets their needs. In total, there were 10 attendees and the facilitation guide used to lead the discussion can be found in Appendix A.
- Two Developer and Builder Focus Groups where companies that develop land or build homes in Spruce Grove provided their perspective on housing in Spruce Grove. There were eight participants in total and a separate facilitation guide was developed that targeted a developer or builder's subject matter expertise. In addition, 1:1 interviews were held with builders and rental property owners that were unable to make a scheduled focus group (Akash Homes, GSK Properties). A copy of this facilitation guide can be found in Appendix A.

1:1 Interviews

Given the subject matter expertise of individual organizations in Spruce Grove and the Capital Region, a series of 1:1 interviews were held to obtain the unique perspectives of the following organizations:

- Meridian Housing Foundation
- Civida
- Westview Primary Care Network

An interview guide was developed to structure these interviews and guide the discussion, which can be found in Appendix A.

External Committees and Associations

The Youth Advisory Committee, Economic Develop Advisory Committee, and City Centre Business Association were also engaged to discuss their unique challenges and opportunities, as well as the current and future state of housing in the City.

Engagement Survey Overview

Survey Design

The survey was designed to include 25 questions and was available to answer either online through the City's Connect webpage or by paper copy. Those that chose to answer by paper were given the opportunity to pick up/drop off their survey at a variety of City and community facilities including the Library, Tri-Leisure Centre, Border Paving Athletic Centre, City Hall or Community Social Development department reception. Over the seven weeks that the survey was open for responses and actively promoted at events and through social media, a total of



692 responses were received. Respondents were not required to answer every question to progress through the survey so response rates may vary per question.

The survey had an anticipated completion time of 10 minutes and questions were customized to the respondent based on if they were a resident or local business owner. The Connect landing page included a summary of the purpose of the survey, an overview of the Housing Strategy Project, and a link to both the [Housing Needs Assessment](#) and [Glossary](#). There were a variety of question types, including drop-down, multiple choice, data matrix, ranked choice, as well as the option in some questions that allowed the respondent to specify their own response if it was not a listed option. Respondents were not required to provide any identifying information such as name, addresses or phone contact information. Demographic information was collected to cross reference the survey data to the 2021 Federal Census and 2023 Municipal Census data sets (where possible).

Statistical Significance

Reaching statistical significance for a population size indicates the level of confidence that can be had that collected data can reasonably be generalized to be representative of the broader population base. A statistically significant sample size is calculated by taking the total population for a given audience, along with an acceptable margin for error (the smaller this number, the closer to having an exact answer at a given confidence level), and a sampling confidence level (expressed in a percentage, this indicates how confident you can be that the population would select an answer within a certain range).

For this survey, the 2023 Municipal Census total of 38,985 was used to calculate a required sample size of 384. As the number of completed survey responses was 692, the data indicates that there is a 95% confidence that any additional responses would fall within a +/- 5% margin of error.





Survey Design & Respondent Data

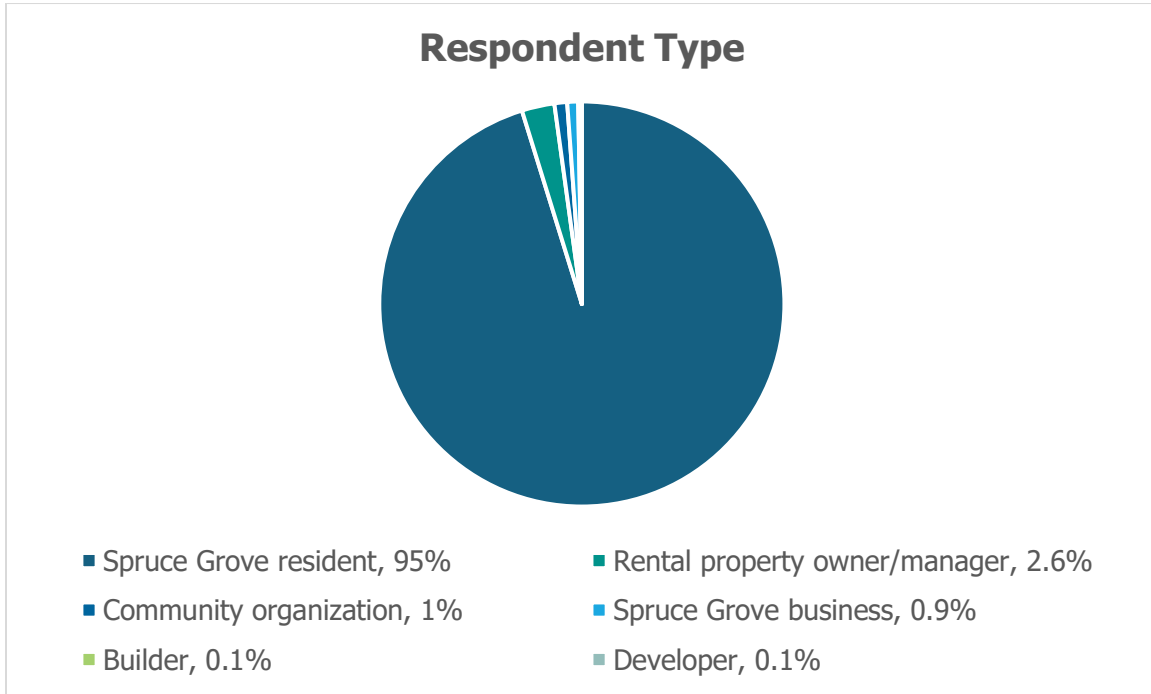


Survey Response Data – Respondent Details

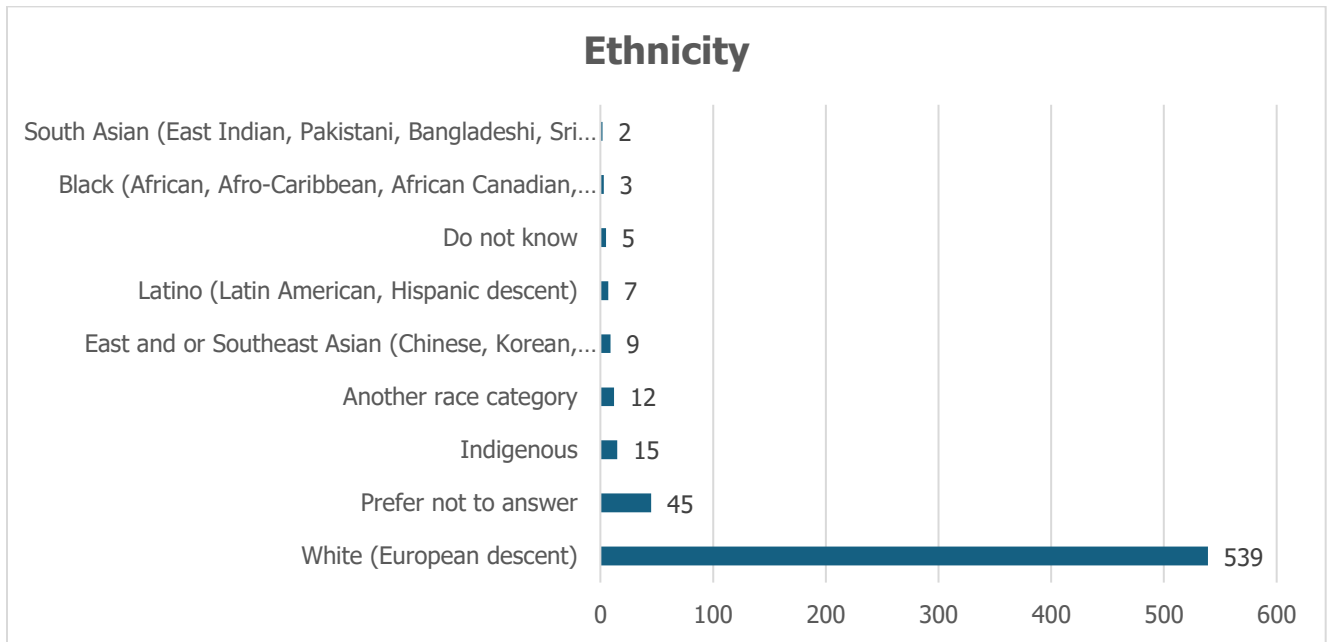
The following charts provide a visual breakdown of the responses to each survey question. Note that respondents were not required to answer every question, so each chart below indicates how many responses were received for each question.

Demographic Data

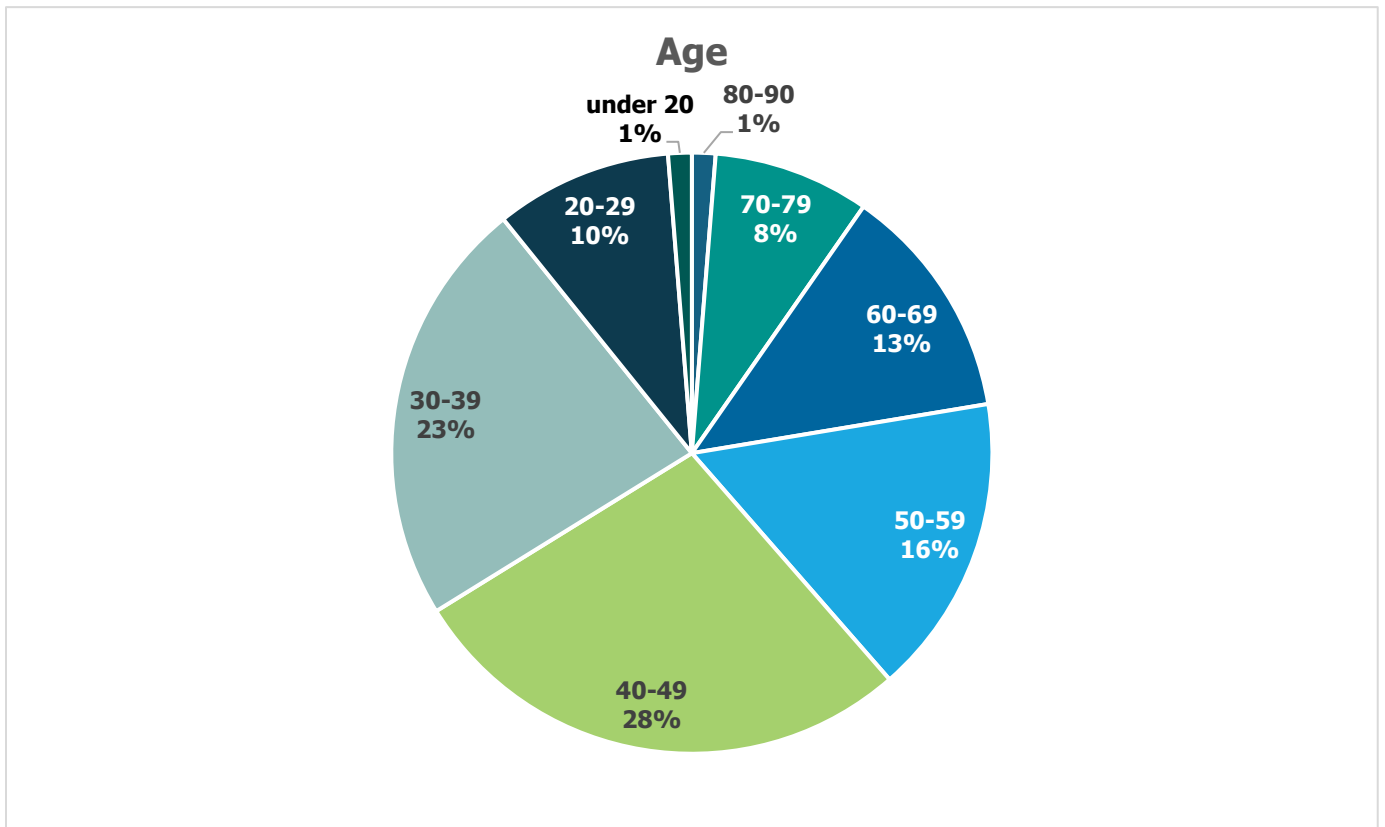
- 95% of respondents that answered the survey are a Spruce Grove resident (mandatory question).



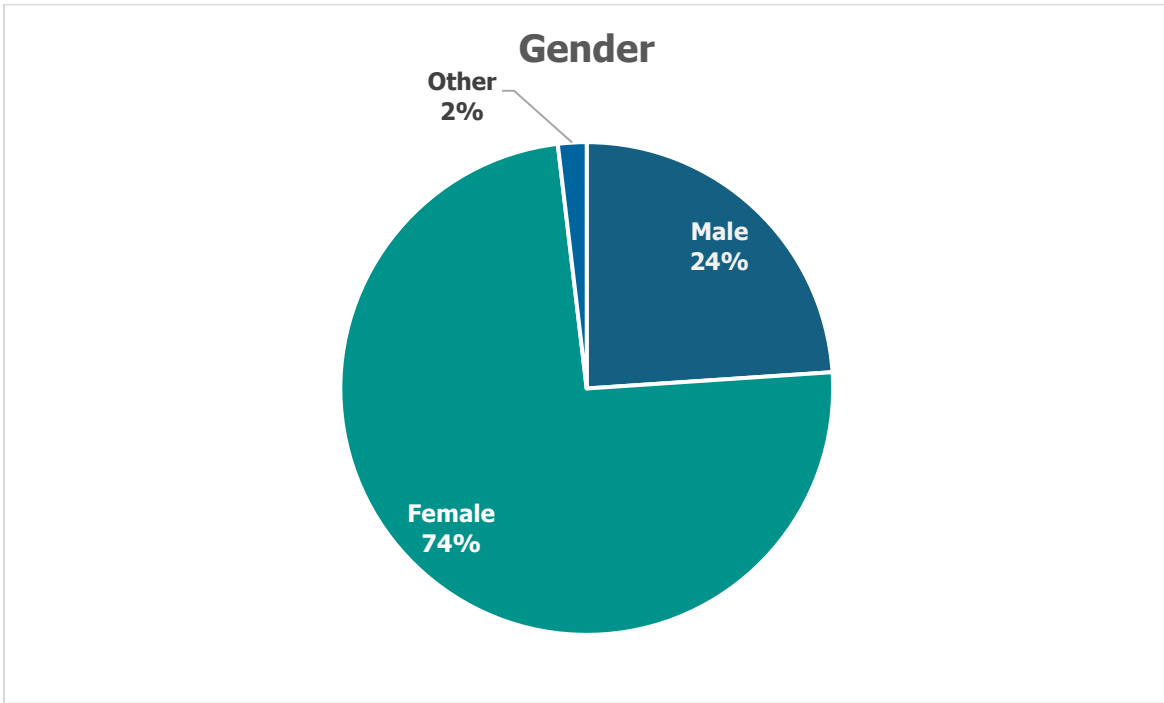
- Of the 639 responses, 85% of respondents identify as White (European Descent).



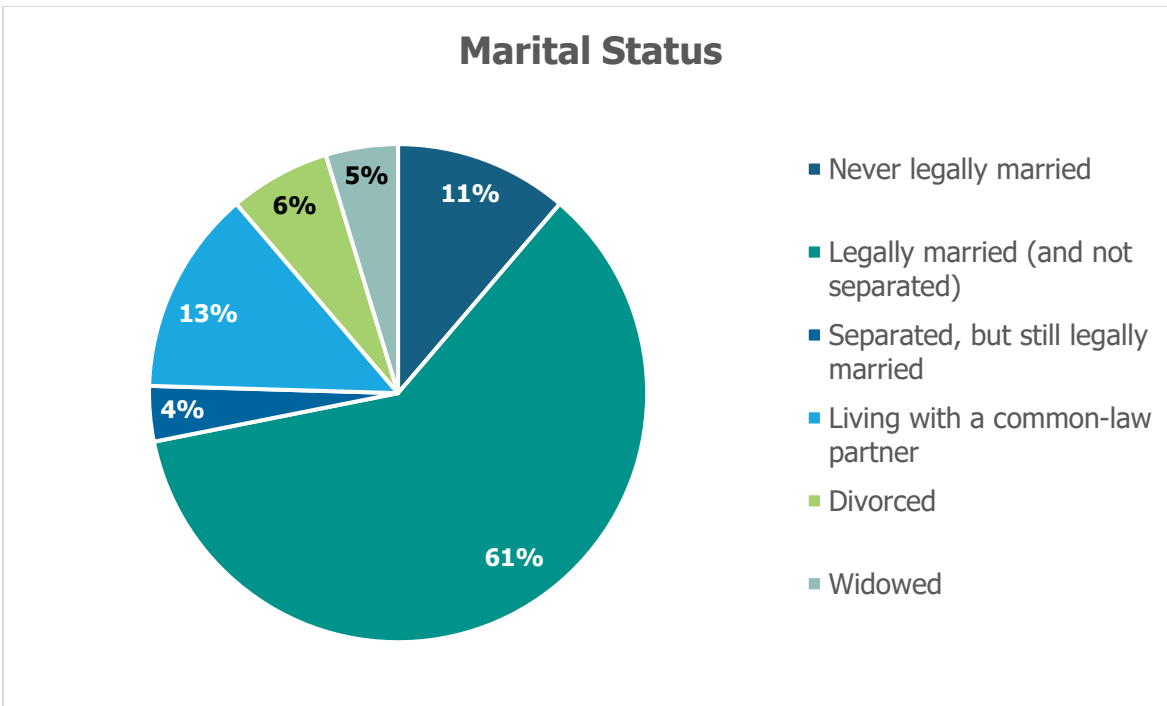
- Of the 630 responses, 51% of respondents are between the ages of 30-49.



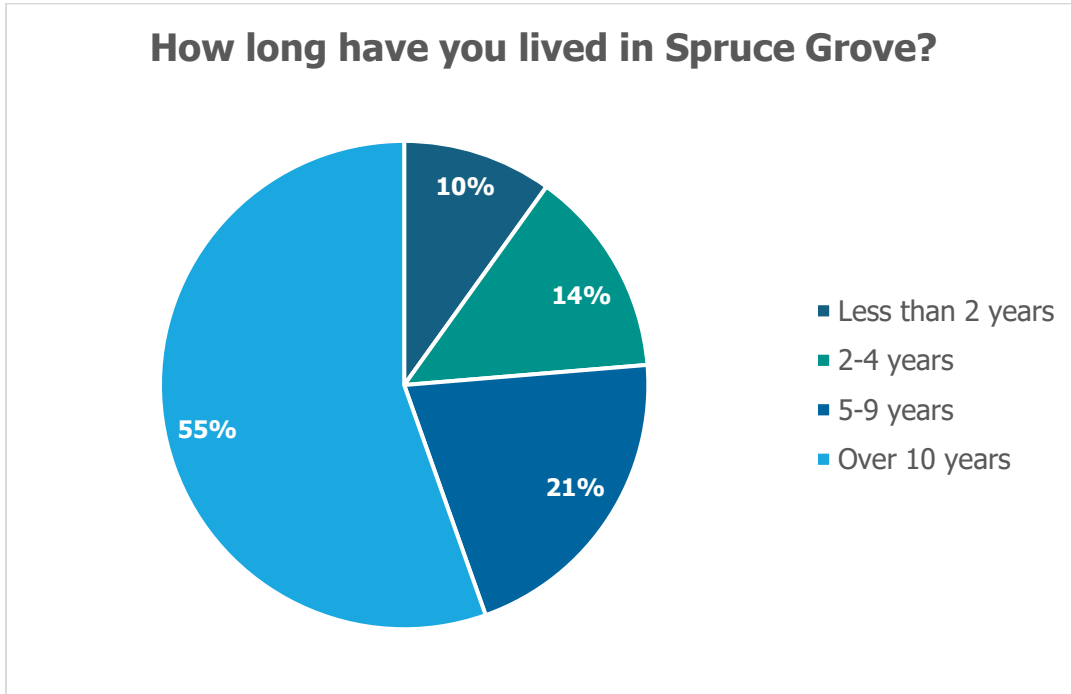
- Of the 639 responses, 74% of respondents are female.



- Of the 640 responses, 61% of respondents are married.

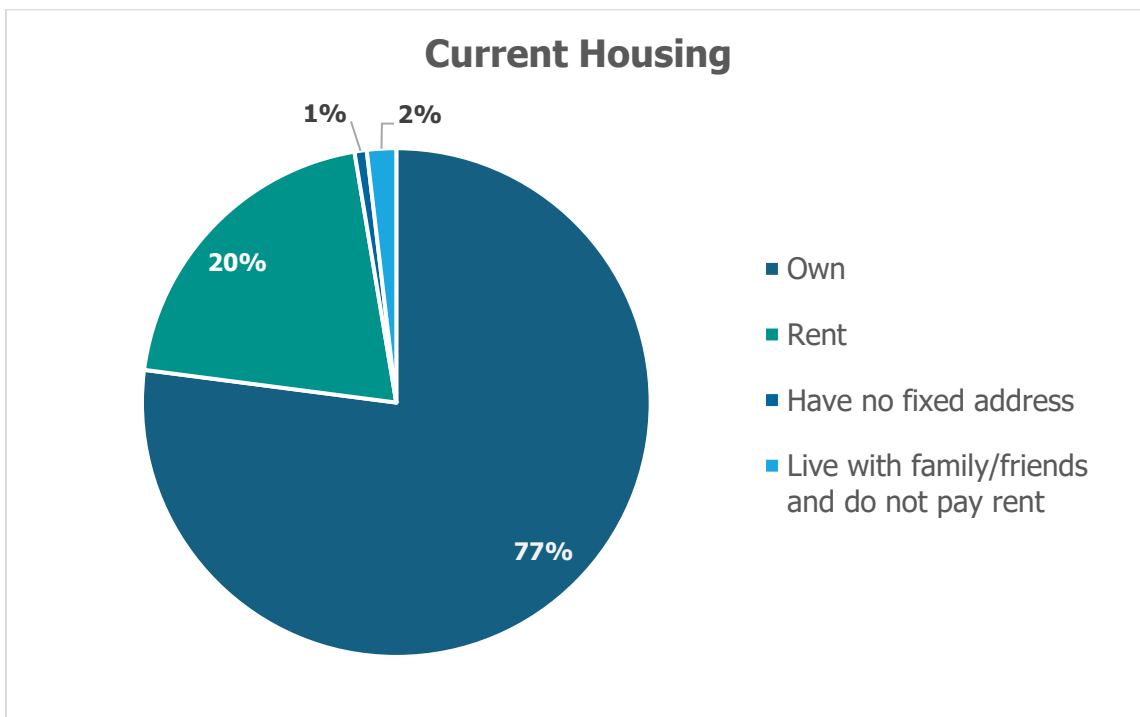


- Of the 646 responses, 76% of respondents live in Spruce Grove for more than five years.

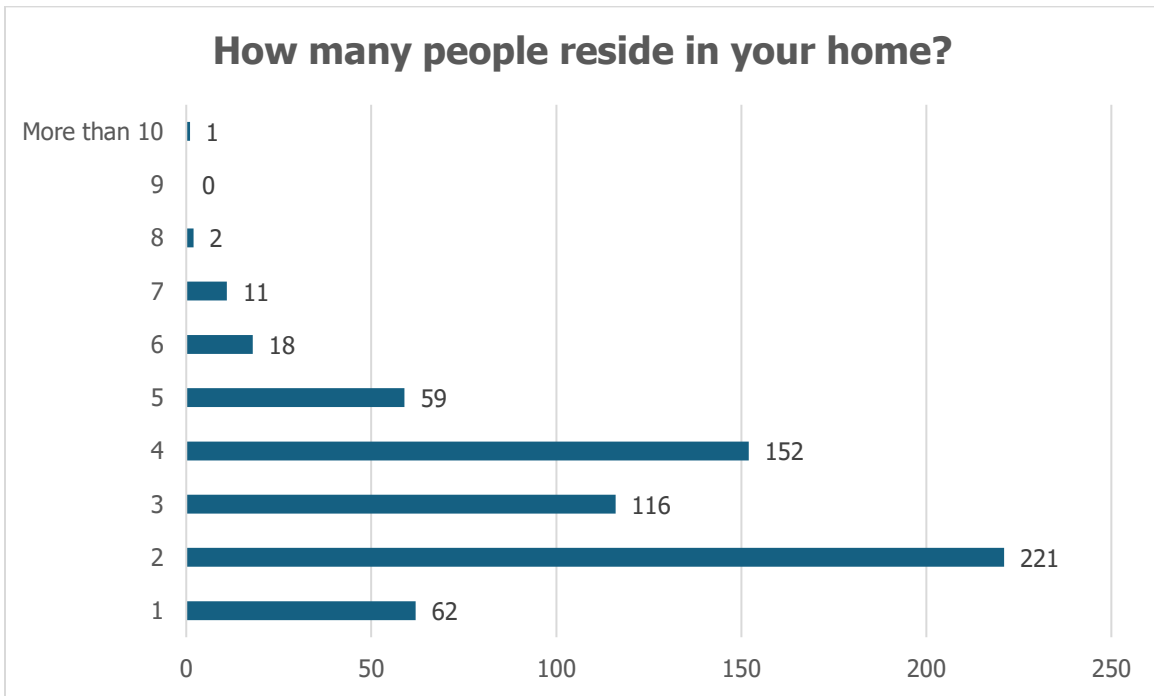


Home Ownership and Living Situation Data

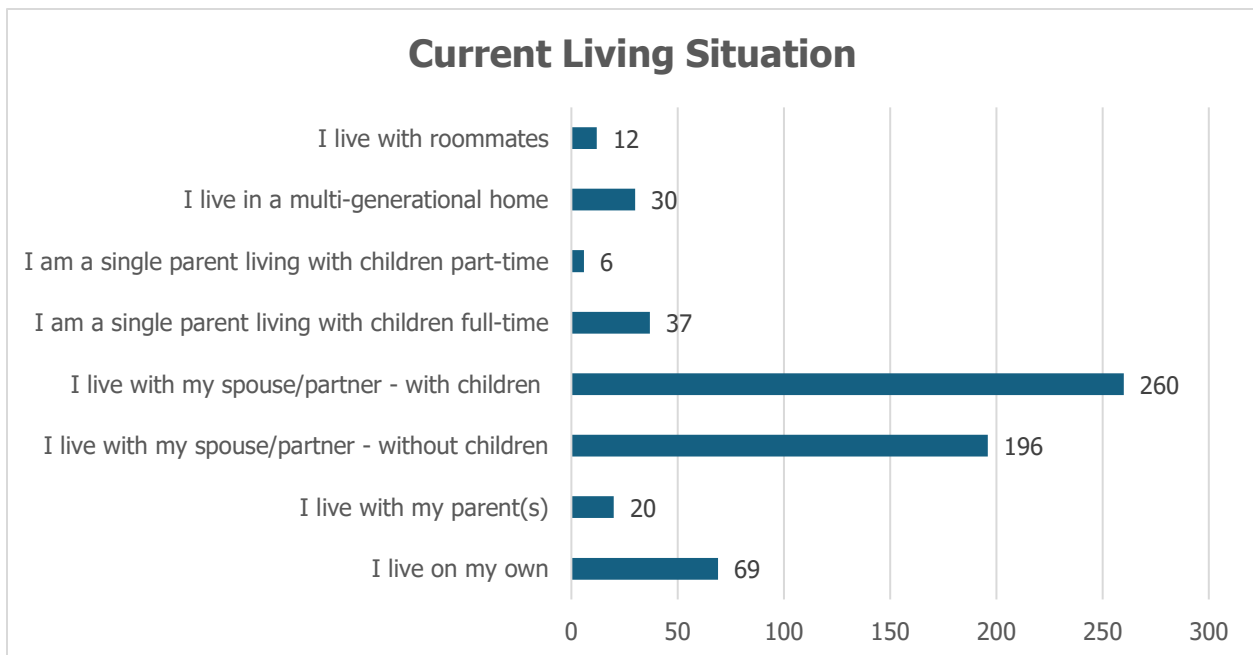
- Of the 645 responses, 77% of respondents own their own home.



- Of the 642 responses, 86% have four or less people residing in their home.



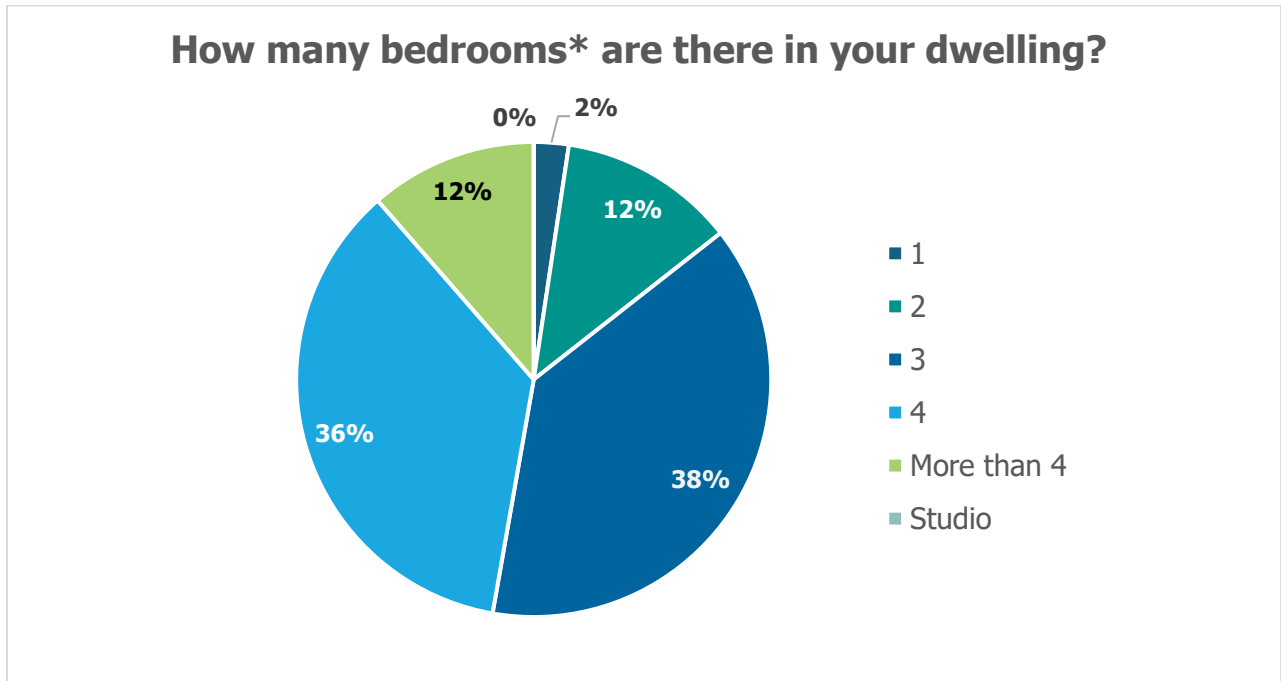
- Of the 649 responses, 40% live with their spouse/partner and with children.



**Multigenerational home was defined as being a home with children and parents/in-laws*



- Of the 631 responses, 74% of responses have either three or four bedrooms in their dwelling.

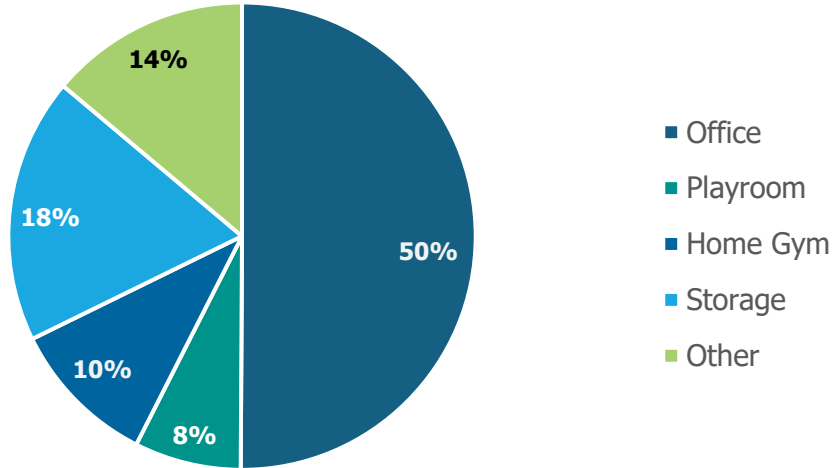


**Include all rooms designed as bedrooms, even if they are now used for something else. Also count basement bedrooms.*



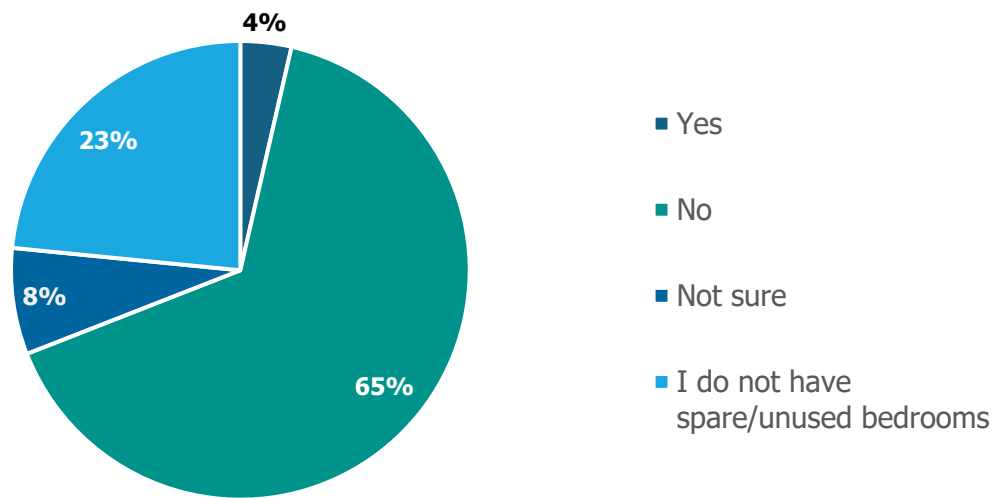
- Of the 383 responses, 50% use a bedroom for office space. “Other” responses included hobby rooms, rooms for pets, or guest rooms.

Are bedrooms in your home used for any of the following purposes? (Select all that apply.)



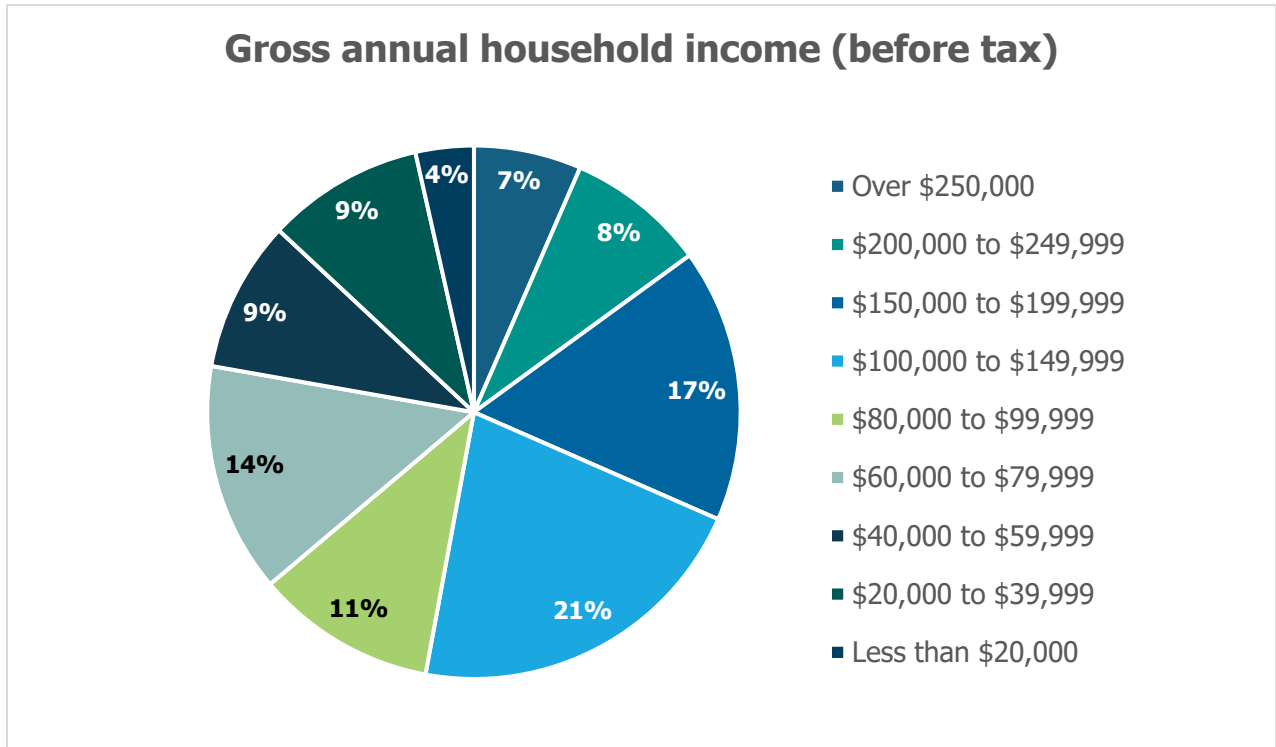
- Of the 640 responses, 65% indicated that they would not consider renting out any spare/unused bedrooms.

If you have spare/unused bedrooms in your home, would you consider renting them out?

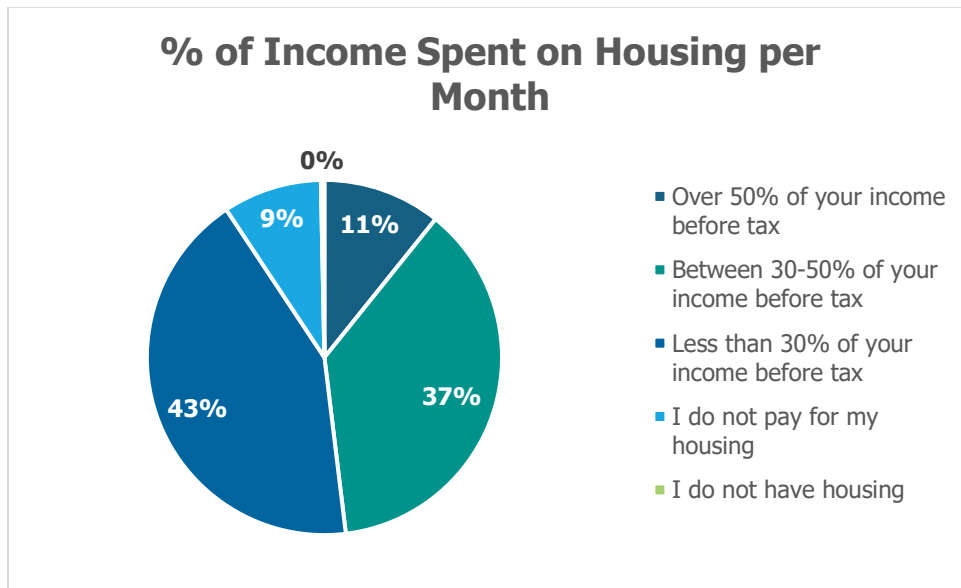


Household Income Data

- Of the 623 responses, the largest number of respondents (21%) made \$100,000 to \$149,000.



- Of the 622 responses, 48% spend over 30% of their income before tax, on housing*.



**Note that some individuals or families choose to spend a higher portion of their income on housing to obtain a more desirable housing option that fits their lifestyle.*





Engagement Data Themes



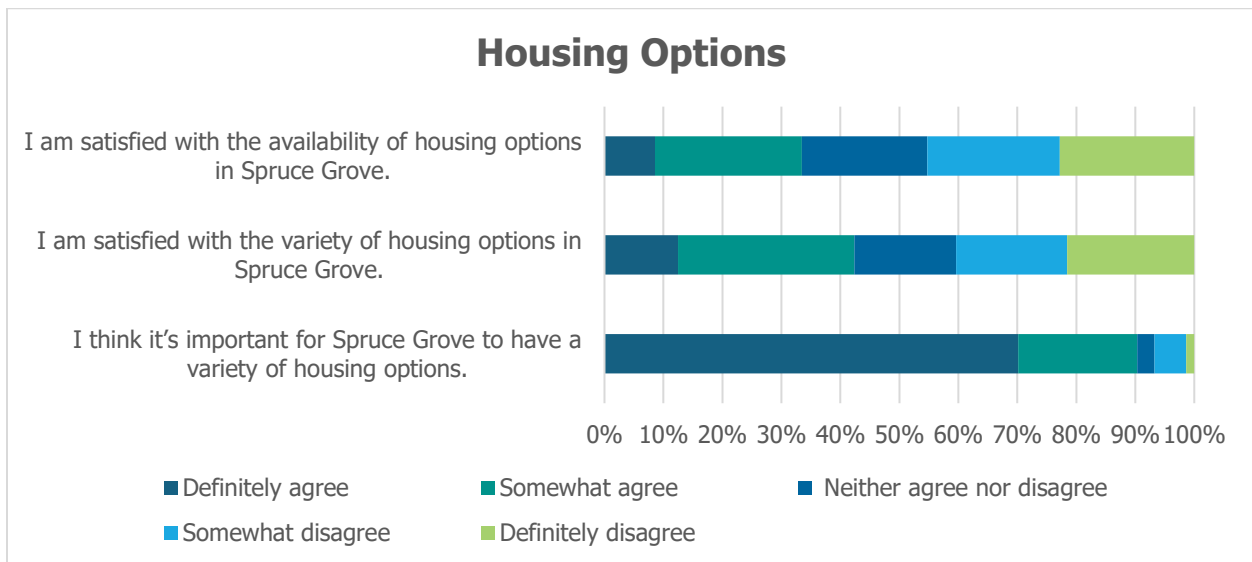
Engagement Data Themes

Data collected through the various engagement tactics used for this project was analyzed and grouped into the following themes. The information presented in these themes will inform the next steps of the project and development of the Housing Strategy.

Diversifying Housing Options

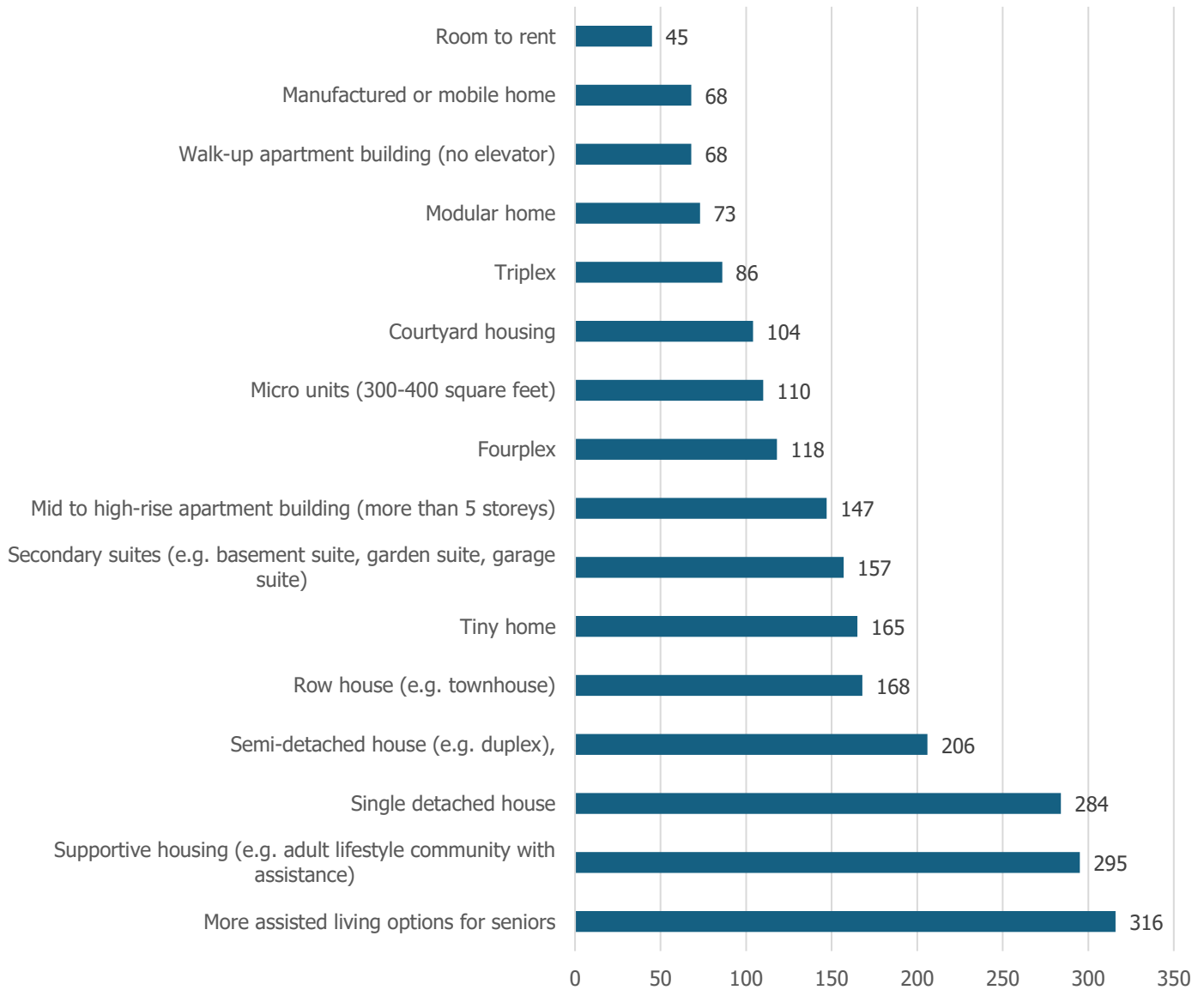
Both survey responses and data collected through focus groups and 1:1 interviews indicate that there is strong support for diversifying housing types in the City.

- Of the 656 responses, 90% of survey respondents somewhat agree or definitely agree that it's important for Spruce Grove to have a variety of housing options.



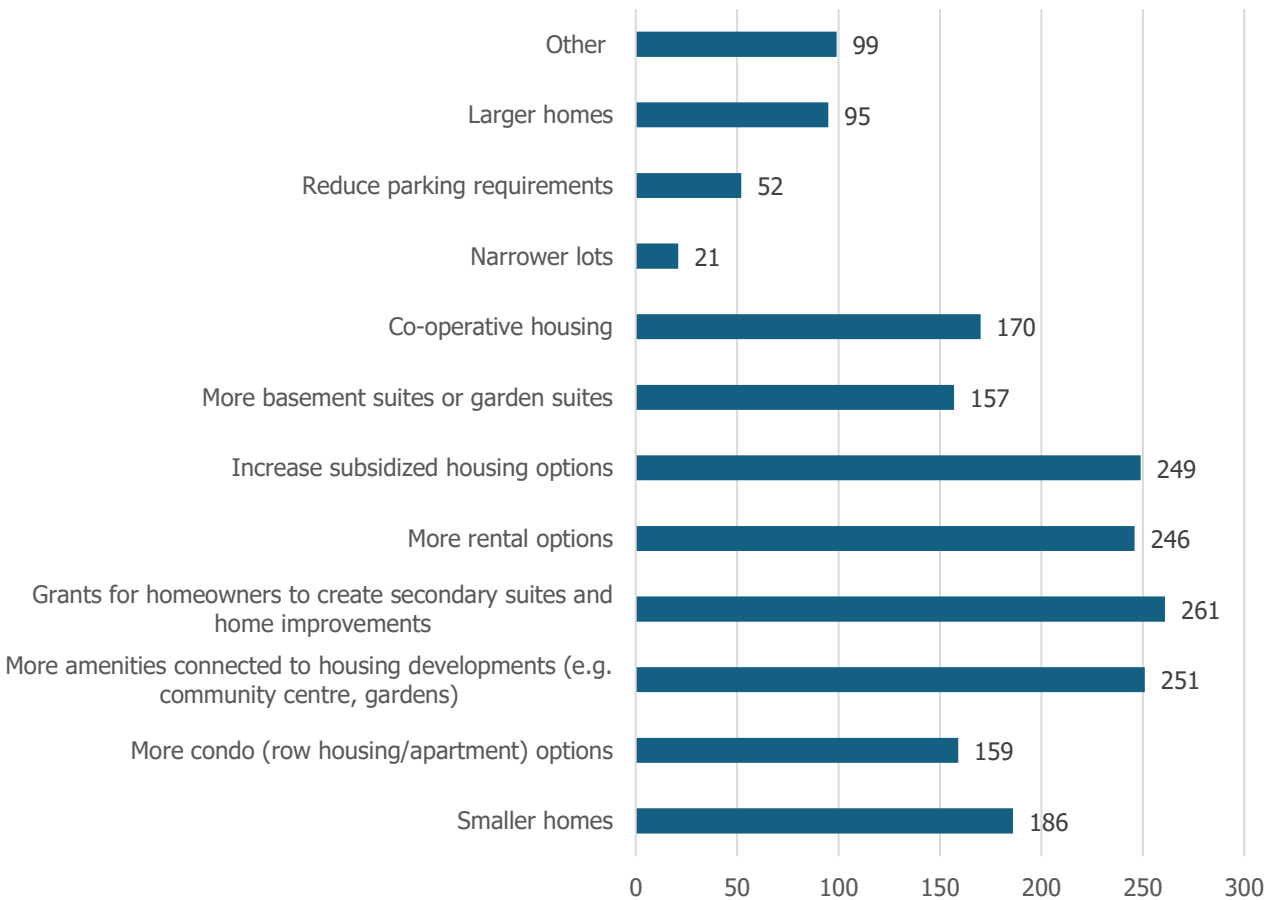
- When asked what housing options are needed, 629 survey responses indicated that the top categories supported were: single family homes, attached housing (row housing, duplexes, triplexes, and four-plexes), tiny homes, apartment buildings (4 storey and 5+storey), and assisted and supportive living options for seniors.

What housing options are required in Spruce Grove?

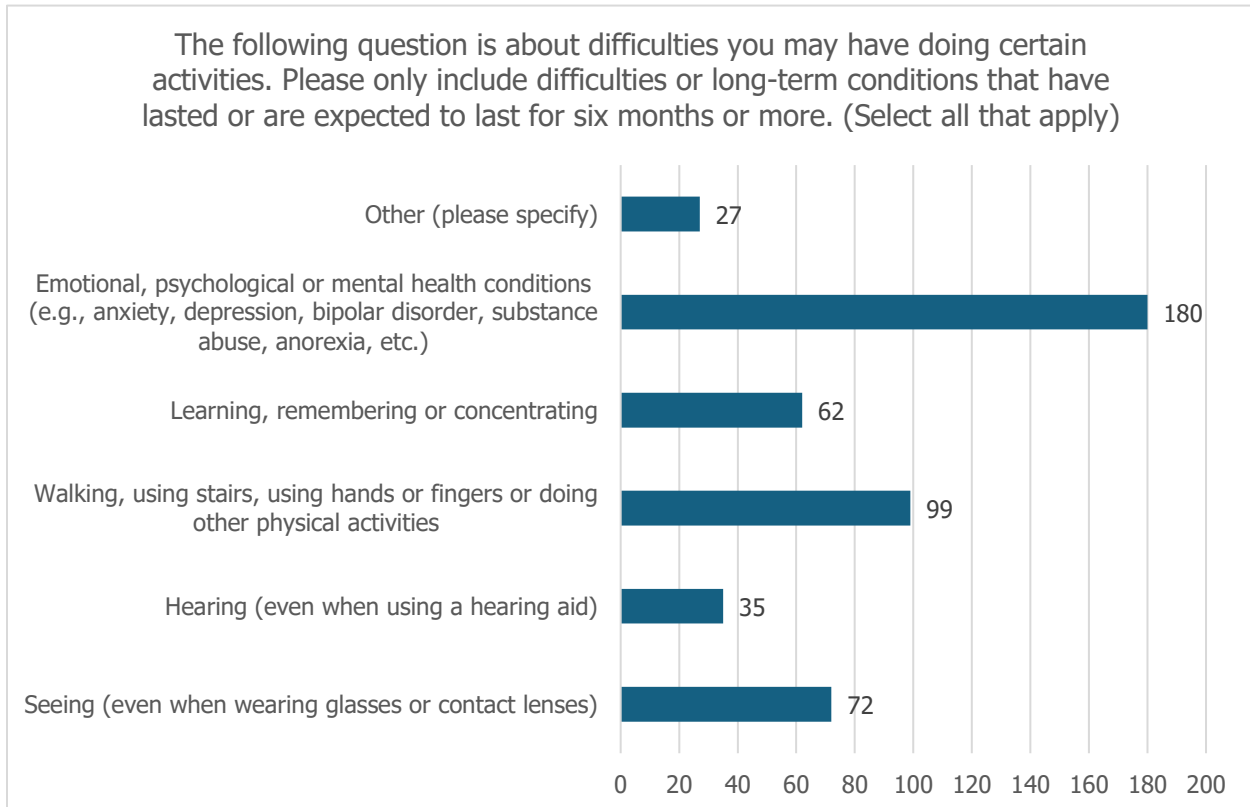


- Survey data suggests strong support for diversifying housing types in the City. When asked what options to address housing needs and gaps respondents would like to see included in the Housing Strategy, 604 survey responses indicated:
 - 41% are looking for more rental options to be included as part of the strategy.
 - 28% would like to see co-operative housing to be included as part of the strategy.
 - 43% would like to see grants for homeowners to create secondary suites and home improvements.
 - 42% are seeking more amenities connected to housing developments.
 - “Other” responses focused on housing diversity, parking options, and affordability.

What options to address housing needs and gaps would you like to see included in the Housing Strategy? (Select all that apply.)



- Physical accessibility is a concern for some residents as there are few housing options available that meet their needs.
 - Of the 293 responses, 34% of survey respondents indicated they have difficulty or long-term conditions related to walking, using stairs, using hands or fingers, or doing other physical activities.
- In addition, 61% of survey respondents indicated they have emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions.
- “Other” responses referred to specific medical conditions that would be categorized in one of the existing options.



Other data collected through focus groups and 1:1 interviews relating to diversity of housing options in Spruce Grove indicate that:

- Recent approval of zero lot lines (homes built along a property line on smaller lots) has helped with development and keeping costs lower, and builders/developers are interested in different types of housing options in Spruce Grove.
- There is an opportunity for Council and Administration to tour different types of developments to see firsthand what they look like (secondary suites, courtyard housing, up to five suites on one lot, etc.).
- There is a housing gap for residents between ages of 50 and 65 that do not need assisted or supportive living options yet, but they don't want to stay in their large family



home as it is too big for them to maintain. They are looking for rental options or smaller home options that can accommodate one to two residents at an affordable rate.

- There was little support from focus groups, interviews, and survey respondents to pursue “room to rent” opportunities (65% of homeowners with available rooms to rent would choose not to).
- Culture has an impact on housing needs. An example is where multiple generations are living in the same home. Many prefer single family homes, but multiple families are living in them, and the home is considered a generational investment.

Affordability

Note that “Affordable Housing” is defined as follows:

“A Dwelling is deemed as Affordable Housing when the cost of purchasing or renting the dwelling inclusive of heating costs is no more than 30% of the annual Core Needs Income Thresholds for Spruce Grove as determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The [Core Needs Income Threshold](#) for Spruce Grove is posted annually on the Province of Alberta, Municipal Affairs website.”

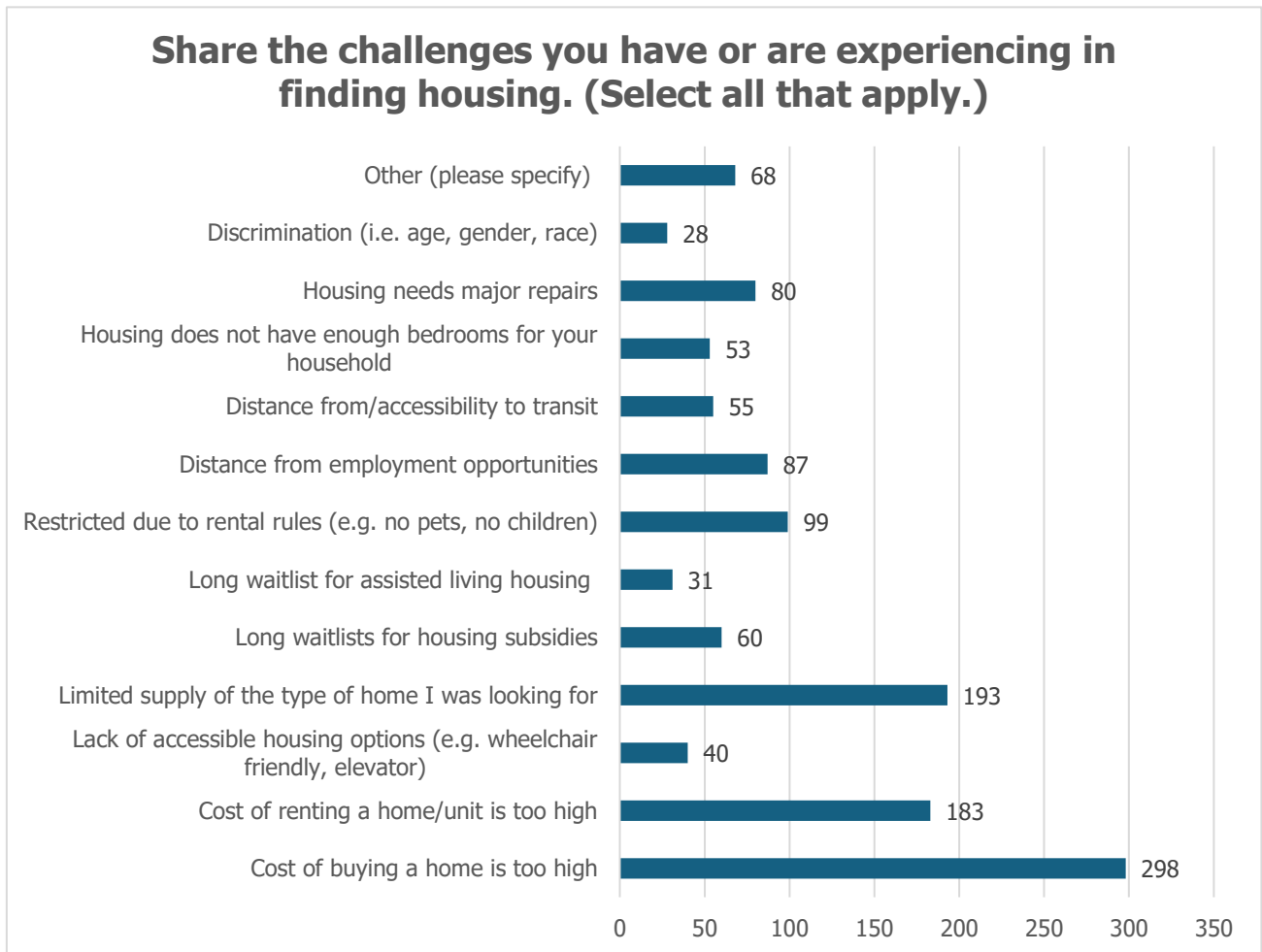
In 2024, the Core Needs Income Thresholds for Spruce Grove are as follows:

	BACHELOR	1 BDRM	2 BDRM	3 BDRM	4 BDRM
Spruce Grove Core Needs Income Threshold	\$39,000	\$46,500	\$58,000	\$70,000	\$75,500
30% of Core Needs Income Threshold	\$11,700	\$13,950	\$17,400	\$21,000	\$22,650

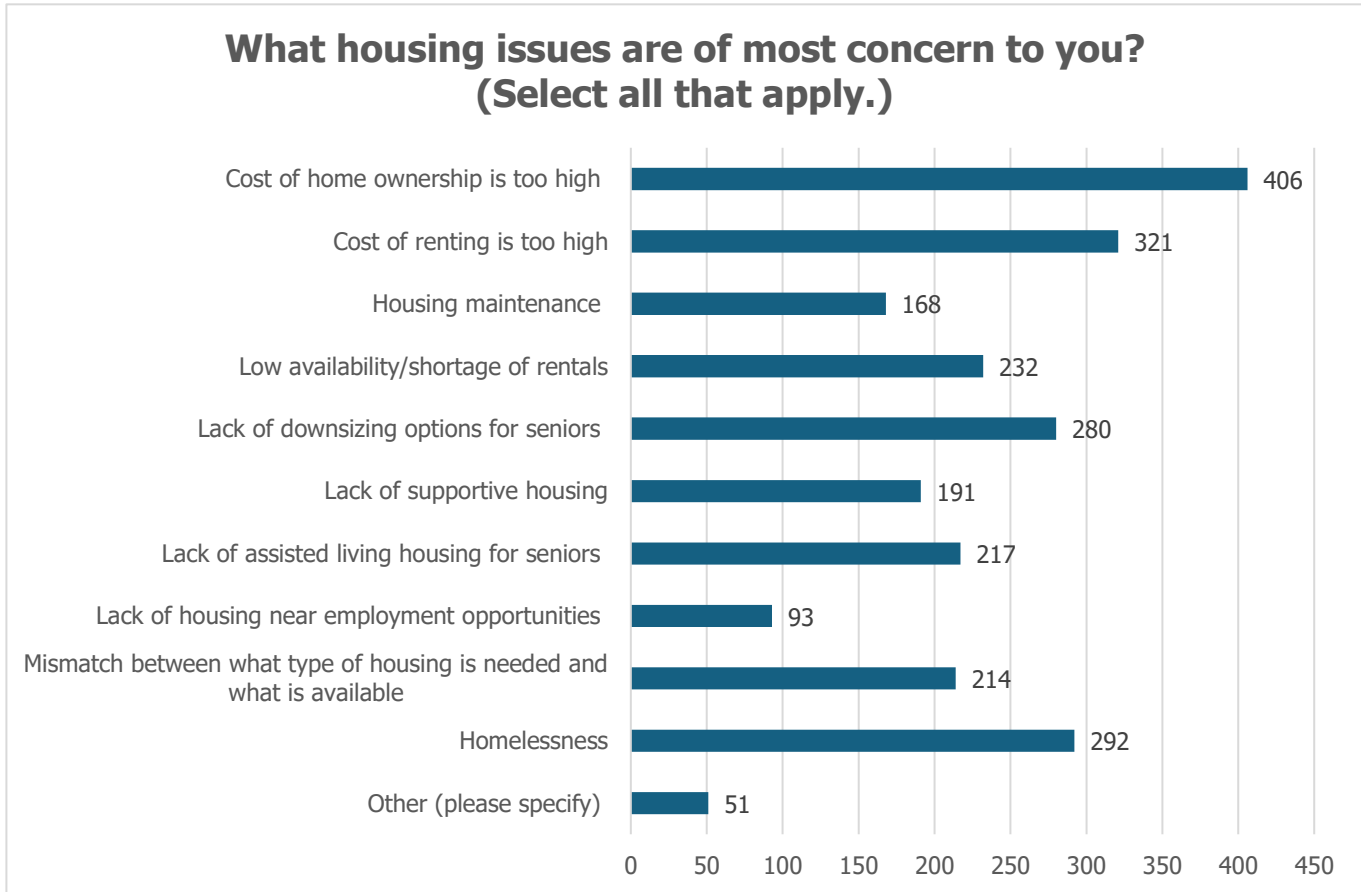


A common theme throughout the engagement was affordability of both home ownership and rentals. The following data points outline what survey respondents indicate regarding affordability of housing in Spruce Grove.

- Of the 452 survey responses, 66% of respondents were challenged in finding housing because the cost of buying a home is too high, and 40% were challenged in finding housing because the cost of renting a home/unit was too high.
- “Other” responses included distance from schools, limited rental options, other cost pressures (increasing mortgage rates, cost of living, etc.), and credit checks/financial instability affecting an individual's ability to be approved for a rental lease or mortgage.



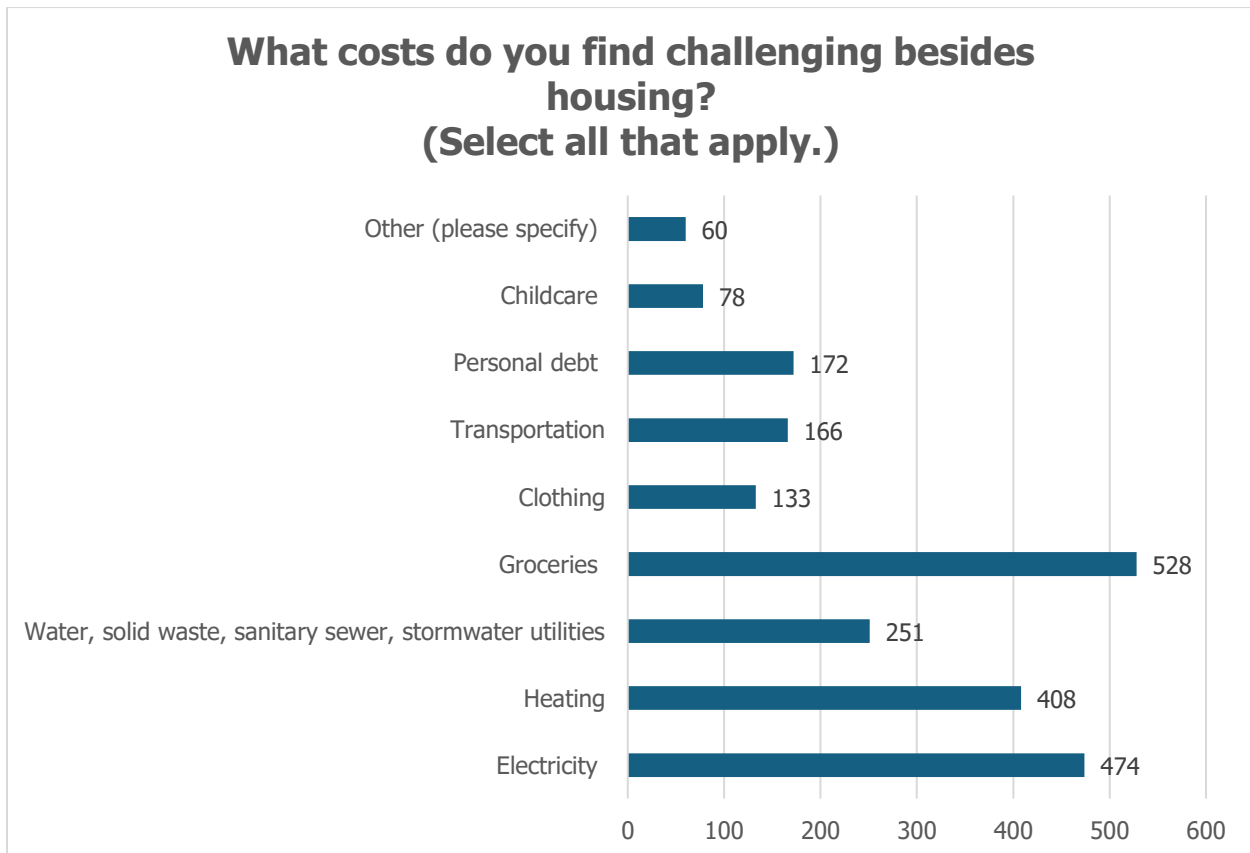
- Of the 622 survey responses, 65% of respondents felt that the cost of home ownership is too high, and 52% felt that the cost of renting is too high.
- “Other” responses included lack of downsizing options for seniors, lack of rental options, aging in place opportunities for seniors, housing diversity and affordability.



- Buyers are shifting towards attached housing (particularly duplexes and row housing) given affordability constraints. Note as well that there is a greater gap between the cost of the same home in Edmonton vs. Spruce Grove and this gap is large enough to attract buyers to our city, which contributes to the growth rate (i.e. \$50,000 cheaper per lot in summer 2024 than 2023).
 - West Edmonton is running out of land and those communities are almost completed – this will also push buyers to the Spruce Grove market given the affordability delta between the two with only a short drive between them.
- Low-income earners are faced with difficult decisions given recent increase in rental rates – some are forced to decide between making rent, buying food and medications, or keeping their animal companions.
 - Many rentals require additional pet fees, and some don’t allow pets at all, which is indicated in the survey as 22% found it challenging to find housing due to animal restrictions set by landlords.



- The increase in grocery and utility costs have had a significant impact on household finances. Those who were not struggling financially three to four years ago are now struggling to keep up with living costs. Of the 607 survey respondents:
 - 87% of survey respondents indicated that they found grocery costs to be a challenge.
 - 78% of survey respondents indicated that they found electricity costs to be a challenge.
 - 67% of survey respondents indicated that they found heating costs to be a challenge.
 - 41% of survey respondents indicated that they found water, solid waste, sanitary sewer, and stormwater utility costs to be a challenge.
 - “Other” responses included property taxes, insurance, overall inflation, medical expenses, and hobbies/leisure activities.



- Some builders are shifting their business model towards building rental developments given the very low vacancy rate in Spruce Grove.
- The strategy should consider “mortgage helper” options (ie: secondary suites) that make a single-family home or duplex more affordable for the owner.
- The rental market needs to offer a mix of horizontal, attached housing and vertical apartment style housing.



- Relative to other housing markets in Canada, the Edmonton Metro Region is considered to be an affordable housing market – the region could look at ways to capitalize on this opportunity.
- Basic rental accommodations may address some affordability concerns. Builders could consider building rentals that don't have the “bells and whistles” that many expect today, such as in-suite laundry, gym facilities, etc.
- Credit score, downpayment requirements, criminal record, physical/mental health challenges, and financial history impact an individual's ability to rent or purchase a home.
- Land prices have increased along with offsite levies and constructions costs – these costs are then passed down to homeowners.
- Many builders spoke to the need for “attainable” housing as opposed to “affordable” housing being the goal for the communities they're building in.

Advocacy, Communication, and Education

Throughout the engagement phase of the Housing Strategy Project, many opportunities surfaced around advocacy, communication, and education focused on housing in the City of Spruce Grove. The following data was collected through focus groups and 1:1 interviews:

- Builders indicated funding challenges with the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Mortgage Loan Insurance (MLI) Select program, which provides affordable housing development grants based on unit size instead of door counts. This severely limits the number of affordable (as defined by CMCH) rental units for households with more than one member. The program as it is currently designed incentivizes affordable units to be built for one-bedroom units only.
- There is an opportunity to develop an education campaign that focuses on what higher density looks like and how neighbourhoods are designed with it in mind.
- Having the ability to see what different types of developments look like in person would help members of Administration and Council to make informed recommendations and decisions. This could also include communities with high density and walkability (i.e.: Emerald Hills in Sherwood Park).
- Residents responded through the survey that they want affordable housing but also want large homes on large lots.
- There may be a stigma attached to “affordable housing” and the residents that are seeking it. This term needs to be destigmatized and the Housing Continuum can be used to demonstrate how residents from many backgrounds are represented across the continuum.
- There is an opportunity for government decision makers to learn more about how the planning process works and the role of each stakeholder (Council, Administration, Developers, Builders, legal requirements, EMRB, etc.) within the process. There is an opportunity as well to offer resources on the City's website for residents to access to learn more about the planning process.

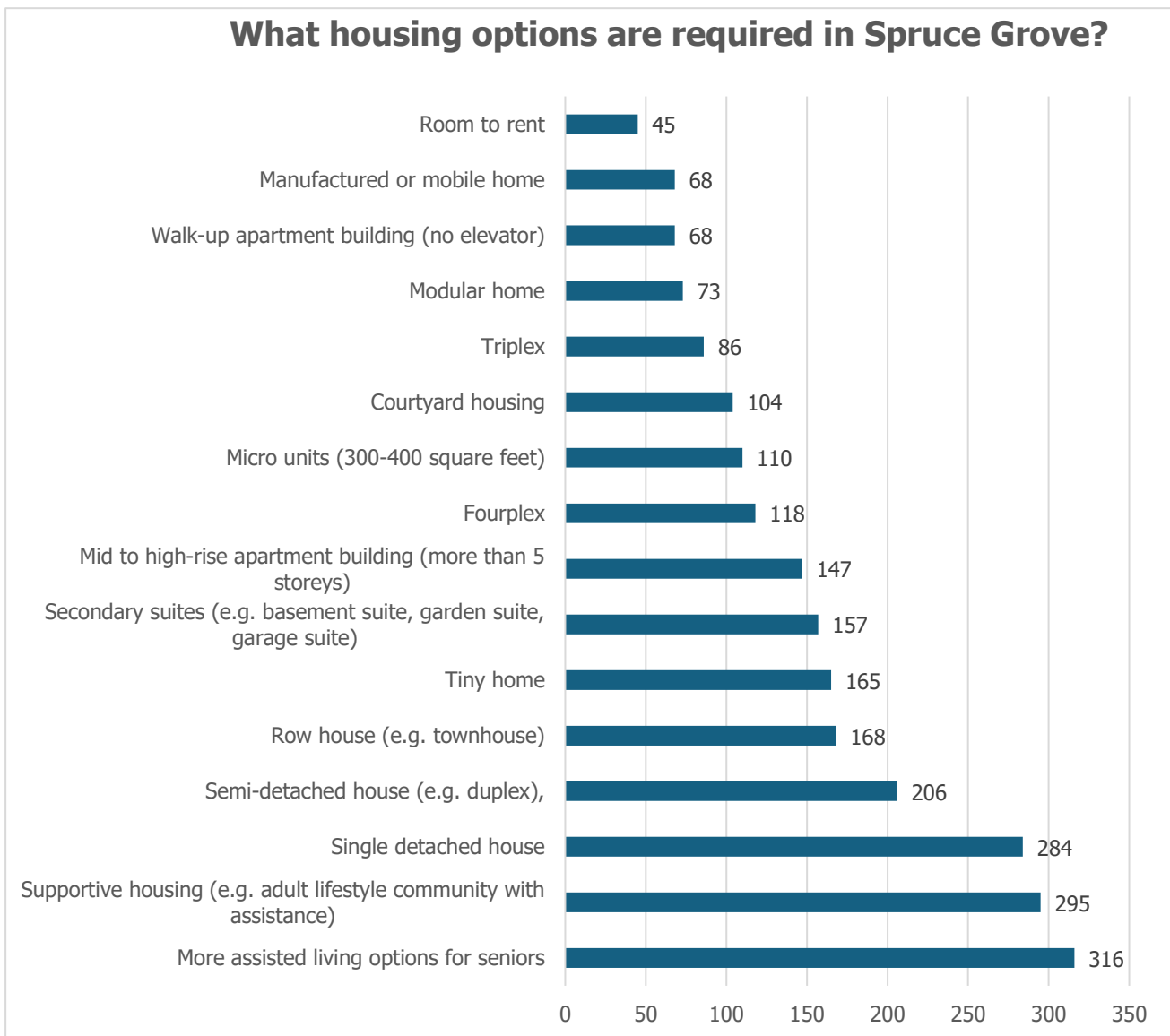


Density

Density can have a positive impact on affordability and community connections. As the City plans for future development, both in net new and existing neighbourhoods, density will have an impact on decision making and land use planning. When asked what housing options are needed in Spruce Grove, survey respondents indicated support for the following higher density housing types:

- 92% indicated support for an attached housing style option (duplex, triplex, fourplex, townhomes),
- 31% indicated support for low-rise apartment building (4 storeys or less)
- 25% indicated support for secondary suites.
- 23% indicated support for mid to high-rise buildings (5+ storeys)

What housing options are required in Spruce Grove?



Focus group and 1:1 interview participants also indicated support for pursuing developments and housing types that increase density:

- Builders are looking for flexibility in parking requirements and driveway lengths to accommodate secondary suites or higher density developments.
- The City Centre is our greatest opportunity to increase density. However, this would impact parking requirements and it was noted the importance of a strong transit system to support a higher density area.
- Consideration could be given to how non-financial incentives could encourage new builds to have rough-ins for secondary suites, or for existing homes to incorporate secondary suites.

Neighbourhood Design and Building Community Connections

In addition to the above themes, an overarching theme of the impact of neighbourhood design on community connection and development surfaced many times. Residents are seeking housing options that allow for them to build community with their neighbours and be an active resident within their community. How neighbourhoods are designed can have a positive impact on a resident’s lifestyle and wellbeing and the following points were raised in the engagement phase of the Housing Strategy Project that fit within this theme:

- 42% of survey respondents would like to see more community amenities connected to housing developments (e.g.: pocket parks, community gardens, green spaces, active transportation network, etc.). How housing and neighbourhoods are designed together with community amenities impacts resident mental health and wellbeing.
- Community gardens are a community amenity that positively impacts mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- There is some desire for more flexibility in neighbourhood design and identity.
- There is support for mixed used design (commercial on first floor, residential above) but builders/developers recognize the complexity of these types of structures, and they are generally difficult to build – the area they are built in needs to be very specific and purposeful in its design. An opportunity that exists in Spruce Grove for this type of development is the City Centre.
- Residents want to stay in Spruce Grove and there is a desire for residents to “age in place” with a system of supports to allow for this.
- Consideration could be given to an “ecosystem model” where wrap-around services are available to residents.
- Mixed housing within neighbourhoods would help to end the stigma around affordable housing or other specific housing types.
- There is an opportunity for the City of Spruce Grove to determine our identity apart from the City of Edmonton and other Edmonton Metro communities. This concept ties into the Brand Strategy work being conducted in 2024.





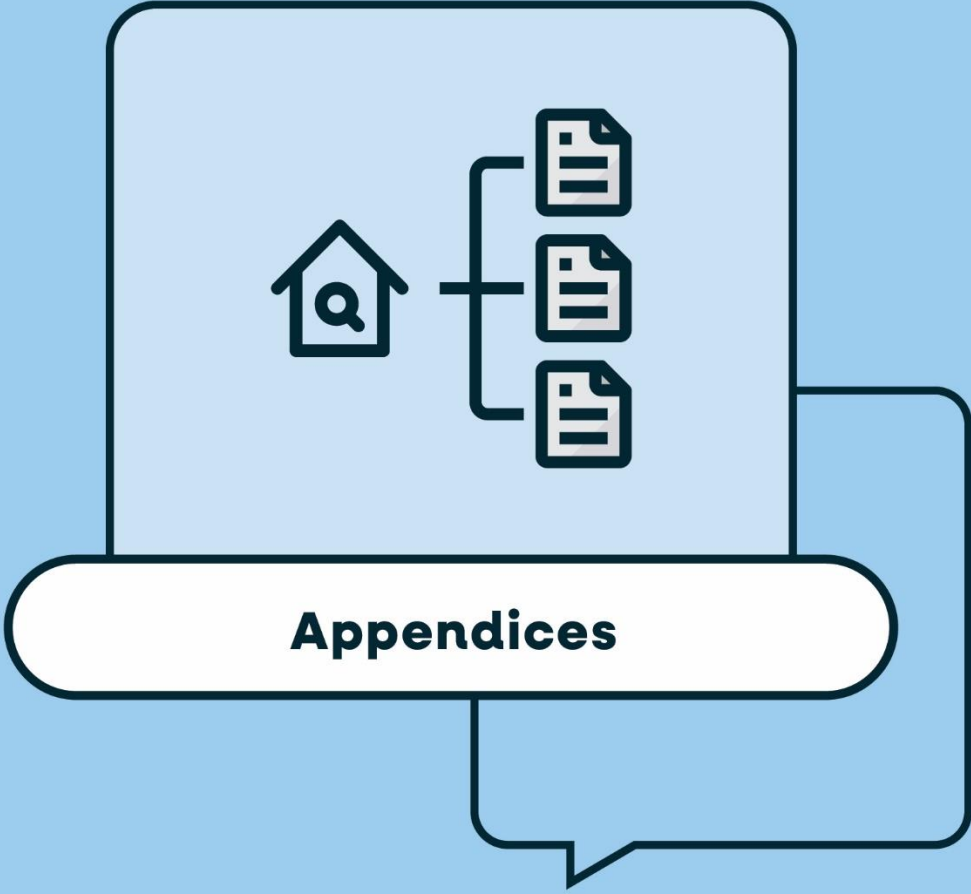
Conclusions/Next Steps



Conclusion and Next Steps

To conclude, a variety of engagement tactics were used to gain the community’s insight on housing in Spruce Grove. The data collected through this stage of the project is summarized in this report and will inform the next stage of the project, which is development of the Housing Strategy. After this data is presented to Council for information, Administration will conduct an analysis of the existing Land Use Bylaw, recently approved Municipal Development Plan, and other related policies and Master Plans to determine existing state of planning and development policies. This information will then be compared to the data collected through this engagement exercise to determine where gaps and opportunities exist. Policy focused discussions will inform development of the draft housing strategy, which is scheduled to be presented to the Council in the first quarter of 2025. Following this, the final version of the Housing Strategy will be presented for Council approval.





Appendix A – Facilitation Guides

Community Members Focus Group

Housing Strategy Focus Group Guide

Community Members

Introduction

The City of Spruce Grove is a vibrant, dynamic community of nearly 40,000 people. Over the next 20 years, the population is anticipated to increase by more than 25,000. As Spruce Grove continues to grow as a thriving community, it is important to plan for our future housing needs. As such, the City of Spruce Grove is developing a Housing Strategy to help meet the housing goals for our community and inform future decisions on land use and development.

What it is

The Housing Strategy will outline expected outcomes, goals, and actions to support the development of diverse housing choices to meet the needs of the community. As well, it will examine the housing types in our community and identify strategies and actions to respond to the City’s housing needs. Further, the Housing Strategy will focus on market rental and home ownership, affordable/subsidized housing (rental and /or ownership), and long-term assisted/supportive housing (i.e. seniors assisted living and supervised care homes). The strategy will also explore concepts such as the missing middle and gentle density.

What it Is Not

The Housing Strategy will not include emergency shelters and transitional/short-term supportive housing. The City’s social programming, including the mobile Community Outreach Program and collaboration in the Winter Emergency Response, will continue to assist individuals who are unsheltered, at risk of being unsheltered, or experiencing multiple barriers to wellbeing.

Housing Needs Assessment

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The Housing Needs Assessment was completed in May 2024 and will be used to inform the Housing Strategy. A link to the Assessment was provided in the invitation to participate in this session and can be found at www.sprucegrove.org/housingstrategy.

Public Engagement

Thank you for participating in this roundtable discussion and providing feedback to help us plan for the housing needs of our community. Your feedback and ideas are a key component in the development of the City’s Housing



Strategy. In addition to the focus group, you are also encouraged to answer the [Housing Strategy Survey](#), which closes July 15, 2024, and is open to all residents and businesses in Spruce Grove.

Session Outline and Discussion Questions

5 Minutes	Session Overview and Roundtable Introductions
15 Minutes	City Presentation Housing Strategy overview Housing Continuum overview Housing Needs Assessment key findings
90 Minutes	Discussion Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What stood out to you in the Housing Needs Assessment key findings? Do the findings reflect your observations of housing in Spruce Grove? • What does housing insecurity mean to you? • What housing issues are of most concern to you? • When considering affordability of housing, what are you experiencing? • Please explain the challenges you have or are experiencing in finding housing. (Select all that apply.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost of purchasing a home is too high ○ Cost of renting a home/unit is too high ○ Lack of accessible housing options (e.g. wheelchair friendly) ○ Lack of elevator or other accessibility supports ○ Limited supply of the type of home they are looking for ○ Long waitlists for housing subsidies ○ Restricted due to rental rules (e.g. no pets, no children) ○ Distance from employment opportunities ○ Distance from/accessibility to transit ○ Housing does not contain enough bedrooms for their household ○ Housing requiring major repairs ○ Other (please specify) • What housing options have you seen work well in other communities that Spruce Grove could explore? • What opportunities are there for certain demographic groups within the community (i.e. seniors or youth) with respect to housing? • What housing options are needed in Spruce Grove? (Participants may select multiple types.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single detached house ○ Semi-detached house (e.g. duplex) ○ Row house (e.g. townhouse) ○ Secondary suites (e.g. basement suite, garden suite, garage suite) ○ Walk-up apartment building (no elevator) ○ Low-rise apartment building (4 storeys and lower) ○ Mid to high-rise apartment building (more than 5 storeys) ○ Manufactured or mobile home ○ Tiny homes ○ Modular homes ○ Courtyard housing ○ Triplex ○ Fourplex



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Micro units (300-400 square feet) ○ Room to rent ○ More assisted living options for seniors ○ Supportive housing (e.g. adult lifestyle community with assistance) ○ Other (please specify)
<p>10 Minutes</p>	<p>Discussion Summary and Final Thoughts</p>

Next Steps

Information gathered through roundtable discussions and other components of the public engagement will be summarized in a *What We Heard* document, which will be provided to Council and posted on the City’s website. Should you have any questions or further comments on the Housing Strategy, please contact the Housing Strategy project team at housingstrategy@sprucegrove.org.



Community Leaders and Organizations Focus Groups

Housing Strategy Focus Group Guide

Community Leaders and Organizations

Introduction

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The Housing Needs Assessment was completed in May 2024 and will be used to inform the Housing Strategy. A link to the Assessment was provided in the invitation to participate in this session and can be found at www.sprucegrove.org/housingstrategy.

Public Engagement

Thank you for participating in this roundtable discussion and providing feedback to help us plan for the housing needs of our community. Your feedback and ideas are a key component in the development of the City's Housing



Strategy. In addition to the focus group, you are also encouraged to answer the [Housing Strategy Survey](#), which closes July 15, 2024, and is open to all residents and businesses in Spruce Grove.

Materials Provided Before the Session

- [Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- Guide with discussion questions

Session Outline and Discussion Questions

5 Minutes	Session Overview and Roundtable Introductions
15 Minutes	City Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy overview • Housing Continuum overview • Housing Needs Assessment key findings
90 Minutes	Discussion Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What stood out to you in the Housing Needs Assessment key findings? Do the findings reflect your observations of housing trends in Spruce Grove? • What does housing insecurity mean to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe the recent trends in housing insecurity within the community your clients are experiencing. • What housing issues are of most concern to your organization? • When considering affordability of housing, what is your clientele experiencing? • Please explain the challenges your clients have or are experiencing in finding housing. (Select all that apply.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost of purchasing a home is too high ○ Cost of renting a home/unit is too high ○ Lack of accessible housing options (e.g. wheelchair friendly) ○ Lack of elevator or other accessibility supports ○ Limited supply of the type of home they are looking for ○ Long waitlists for housing subsidies ○ Restricted due to rental rules (e.g. no pets, no children) ○ Distance from employment opportunities ○ Distance from/accessibility to transit ○ Housing does not contain enough bedrooms for their household ○ Housing requiring major repairs ○ Other (please specify) • What housing options have you seen work well in other communities that Spruce Grove could explore? • What opportunities are there for certain demographic groups within the community (i.e. seniors or youth) with respect to housing? • Do you have advice for us in how to address community perceptions of new (smaller) housing designs, affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing developments? • What housing options are needed in Spruce Grove? (Participants may select multiple types.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single detached house



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Semi-detached house (e.g. duplex) ○ Row house (e.g. townhouse) ○ Secondary suites (e.g. basement suite, garden suite, garage suite) ○ Walk-up apartment building (no elevator) ○ Low-rise apartment building (4 storeys and lower) ○ Mid to high-rise apartment building (more than 5 storeys) ○ Manufactured or mobile home ○ Tiny homes ○ Modular homes ○ Courtyard housing ○ Triplex ○ Fourplex ○ Micro units (300-400 square feet) ○ Room to rent `dsd ○ More assisted living options for seniors ○ Supportive housing (e.g. adult lifestyle community with assistance) ○ Other (please specify) ● Are there any potential housing partnerships and creative housing solutions (housing partnerships with indigenous communities, unconventional housing partnerships) that you would like to bring forward?
<p>10 Minutes</p>	<p>Discussion Summary and Final Thoughts</p>

Next Steps

Information gathered through roundtable discussions and other components of the public engagement will be summarized in a *What We Heard* document, which will be provided to Council and posted on the City’s website. Should you have any questions or further comments on the Housing Strategy, please contact the Housing Strategy project team at housingstrategy@sprucegrove.org.



Developers, Builders and Rental Property Owners/Managers Focus Groups

Housing Strategy Focus Group Guide

Developers, Builders and Rental Property Owners/Managers

Introduction

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Public Engagement

Thank you for participating in this roundtable discussion and providing feedback to help us plan for the housing needs of our community. Your feedback and ideas are a key component in the development of the City's Housing



Strategy. In addition to the focus group, you are also encouraged to answer the [Housing Strategy Survey](#), which closes July 15, 2024, and is open to all residents and businesses in Spruce Grove to participate in.

Materials Provided Before the Session

- [Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- Focus Group Guide

Session Outline and Discussion Questions

<p>5 Minutes</p>	<p>Session Overview and Roundtable Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your name and how long have you been in your role? • How many housing units do you bring to market each year? OR How many rental units do you manage? • Developers: How many more years of land at current levels of development activity do you have in Spruce Grove?
<p>15 Minutes</p>	<p>City Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy overview • Housing Continuum overview • Housing Needs Assessment key findings
<p>30 Minutes</p>	<p>Current State Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What stood out to you in the Housing Needs Assessment key findings? Do the findings reflect your observations of housing trends in Spruce Grove? • What housing issues are of most concern to your organization? • What housing products are currently most in demand in Spruce Grove? Do you see this changing in the future? • What challenges do you encounter with housing development in Spruce Grove? What’s working well?
<p>60 Minutes</p>	<p>Future State Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do you see the market heading in the next 5 years in terms of housing type mix? (in Spruce Grove and the region) • What new housing options are you considering building in Spruce Grove? • What role do you think the private sector can play in achieving more affordable forms of housing? Are there any partnership opportunities? • What are other municipalities doing when it comes to housing that you think Spruce Grove should try and emulate? • What sort of policies or incentives do you think would enhance housing development, particularly for affordable or non-market units? • What are your thoughts on the following potential actions being considered as part of the Housing Strategy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More basement suites or garden suites ○ Reduce parking requirements ○ Narrower lots ○ Smaller homes ○ Multigenerational homes ○ More rental options ○ More condo options (missing middle) ○ Increase affordable housing options ○ Co-operative housing



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More amenities connected to housing developments (e.g. community centre, gardens) ○ Grants for homeowners to create secondary suites and home improvements ○ Infill development incentives ○ Development grants or tax incentives ○ Mixed use developments (a combination of commercial and residential with a higher degree of design) ● What ideas do you have for redeveloping our city centre? ● Do you have advice for us in how to address community perceptions of new (smaller) housing designs, affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing developments? ● What other ideas do you have to enable a range of housing types in Spruce Grove?
10 Minutes	Discussion Summary and Final Thoughts

Next Steps

Information gathered through roundtable discussions and other components of the public engagement will be summarized in a *What We Heard* document, which will be provided to Council and posted on the City's website. Should you have any questions or further comments on the Housing Strategy, please contact the Housing Strategy project team at housingstrategy@sprucegrove.org.



1:1 Interview Guide – Housing Foundations and Westview Primary Care Network

Housing Strategy Interview Guide

Introduction

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Public Engagement

Thank you for participating in this discussion and providing feedback to help us plan for the housing needs of our community. Your feedback and ideas are a key component in the development of the City’s Housing Strategy. In addition to this discussion, you are also encouraged to answer the [Housing Strategy Survey](#), which closes July 15, 2024, and is open to all residents and businesses in Spruce Grove to participate in.



Materials Provided Before the Session

- [Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- Discussion questions

Discussion Questions

The following questions will be asked in the interview and should take no longer than one hour in total:

- What does housing insecurity mean to your organization?
 - Describe the recent trends in housing insecurity within the community your clients are experiencing.
- What opportunities are there for certain demographic groups within the community (i.e. seniors or youth) with respect to housing?
- When considering affordability of housing, what is your clientele experiencing?
- What are the biggest obstacles to increasing affordable housing stock in a community?
- How can we partner on affordable housing projects?
- Are there any potential housing partnerships and creative housing solutions (housing partnerships with indigenous communities, unconventional housing partnerships) that you would like to bring forward?
- What housing options are needed in Spruce Grove? (Participants may select multiple types.)
 - Single detached house
 - Semi-detached house (e.g. duplex)
 - Row house (e.g. townhouse)
 - Secondary suites (e.g. basement suite, garden suite, garage suite)
 - Walk-up apartment building (no elevator)
 - Low-rise apartment building (4 storeys and lower)
 - Mid to high-rise apartment building (more than 5 storeys)
 - Manufactured or mobile home
 - Tiny homes
 - Modular homes
 - Courtyard housing
 - Triplex
 - Fourplex
 - Micro units (300-400 square feet)
 - Room to rent
 - More assisted living options for seniors
 - Supportive housing (e.g. adult lifestyle community with assistance)
 - Other (please specify)

Next Steps

Information gathered through these discussions and other components of the public engagement will be summarized in a *What We Heard* document, which will be provided to Council and posted on the City's website. Should you have any questions or further comments on the Housing Strategy, please contact the Housing Strategy project team at housingstrategy@sprucegrove.org.



Project Report

31 May 2024 - 31 July 2024

Connect Spruce Grove Housing Strategy

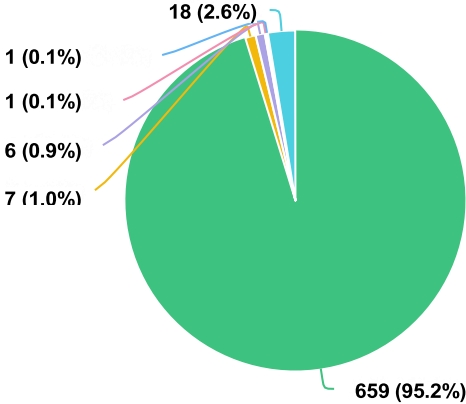


ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

Housing Strategy Survey

Visitors	814	Contributors	608	CONTRIBUTIONS	692
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I am responding to this survey as a:

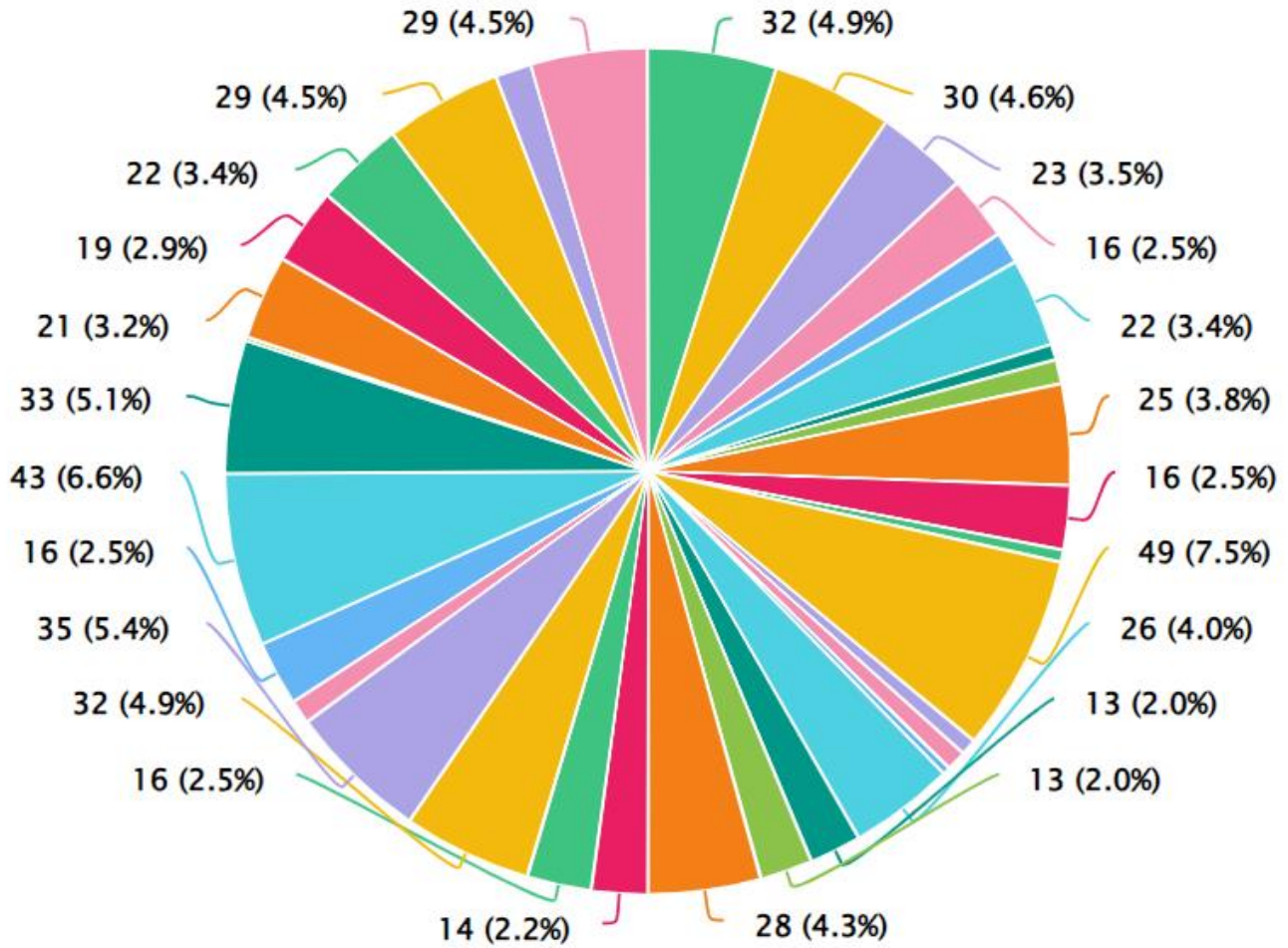


Question options

- Spruce Grove resident owner/manager
- Community organization
- Spruce Grove business
- Developer
- Builder
- Rental property

Mandatory Question (692 response(s)) Question type: Radio Button Question

Please select your neighbourhood.



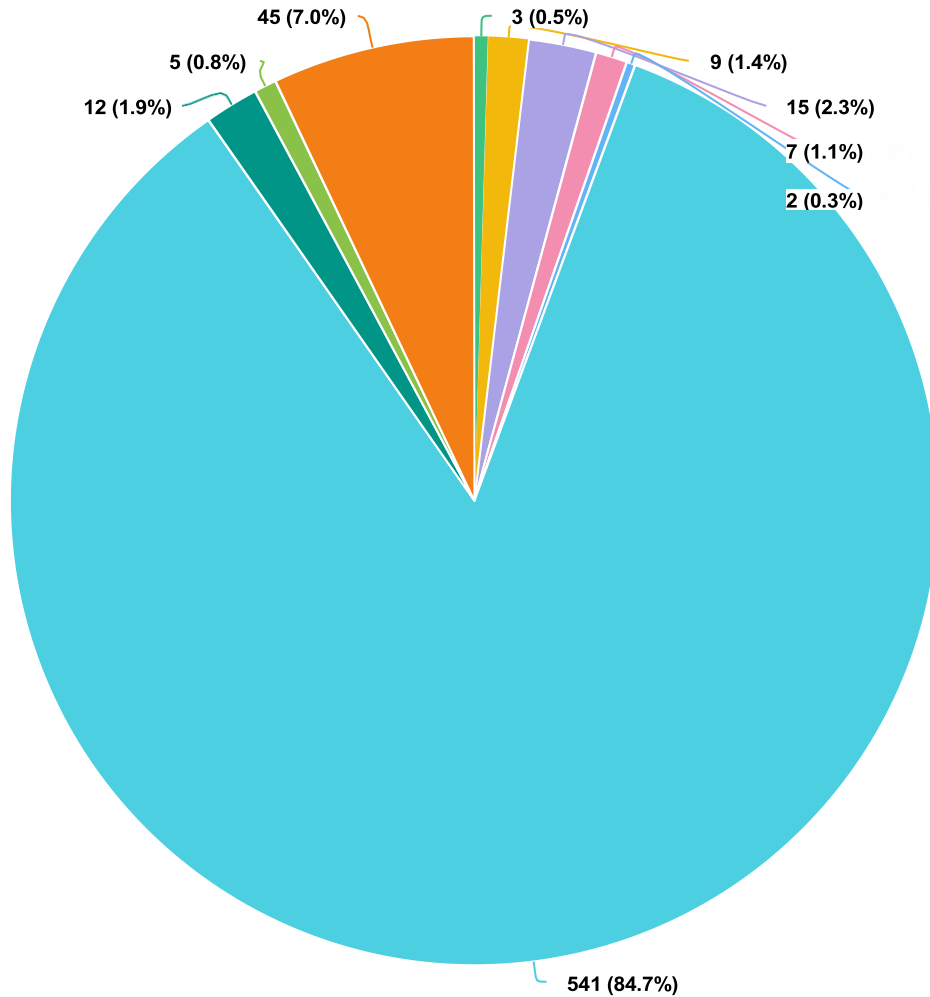
Question options

- Aspenglen
- Brookwood
- Broxton Park
- City Centre
- Copperhaven
- Deer Park
- Fenwyck
- Fieldstone
- Greenbury
- Grove Meadows
- Grove Seniors Village
- Harvest Ridge
- Hawthorne
- Heatherglenn
- Heritage Creek
- Hilldowns
- Jesperdale
- Kenton
- Lakewood
- Legacy Park
- Linkside
- McLaughlin
- Millgrove
- Mobile City Estates
- Prescott
- Spruce Ridge
- Spruce Village
- Sprucewoods Villa
- Stoneshire
- Tonewood
- Westgrove
- Woodhaven
- Woodside
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (650 response(s), 42 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

Which category best describes your race/ethnicity?



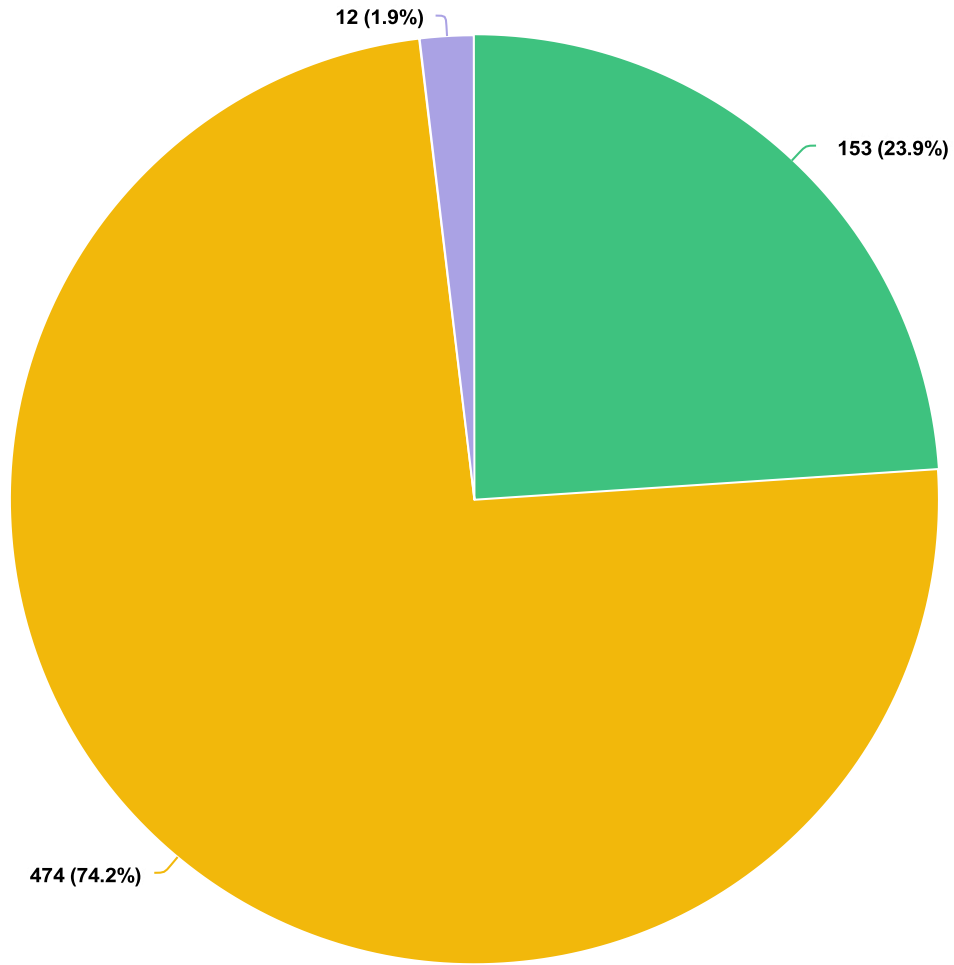
Question options

- Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African Canadian, African American descent)
- East and or Southeast Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese descent or Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, other Southeast Asian descent)
- Indigenous
- Latino (Latin American, Hispanic descent)
- South Asian (East Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean descent)
- White (European descent)
- Another race category
- Do not know
- Prefer not to answer

Optional question (639 response(s), 53 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

What is your gender?



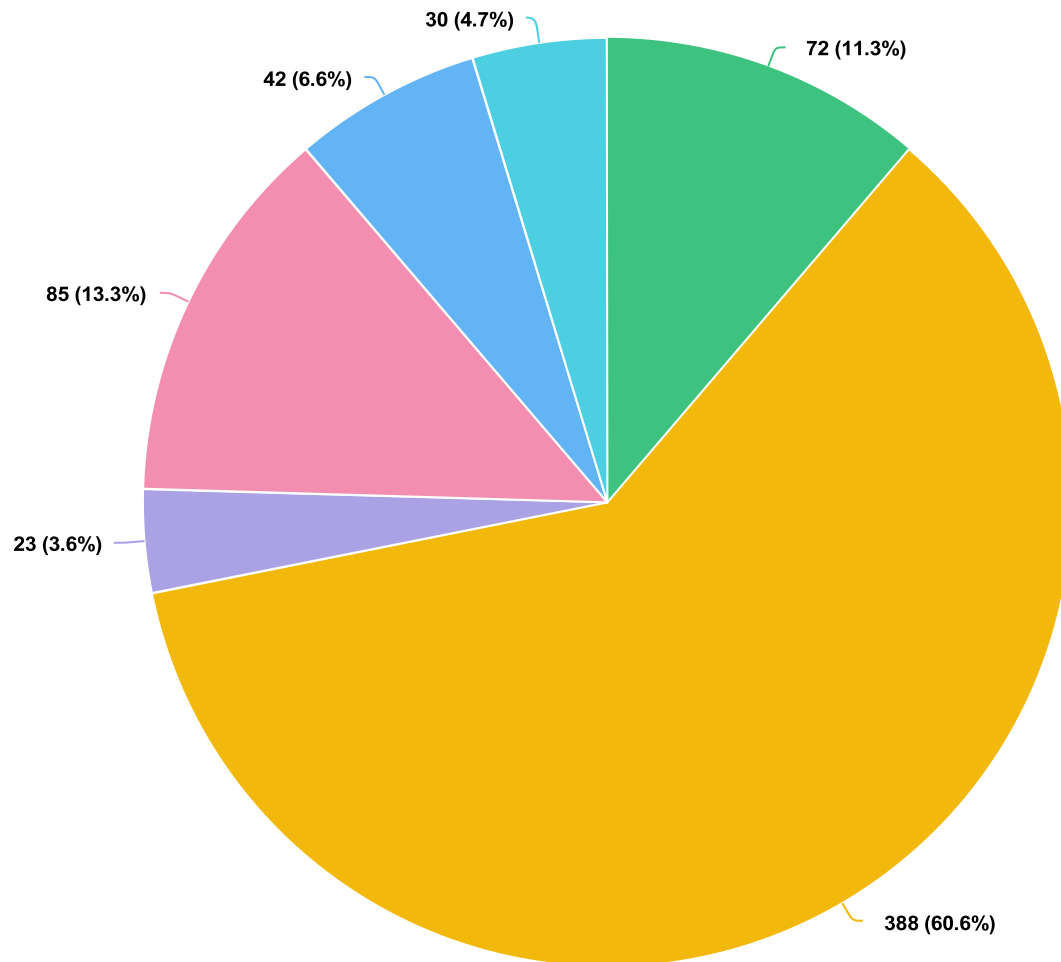
Question options

● Male ● Female ● Other

Optional question (639 response(s), 53 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

What is your marital status?



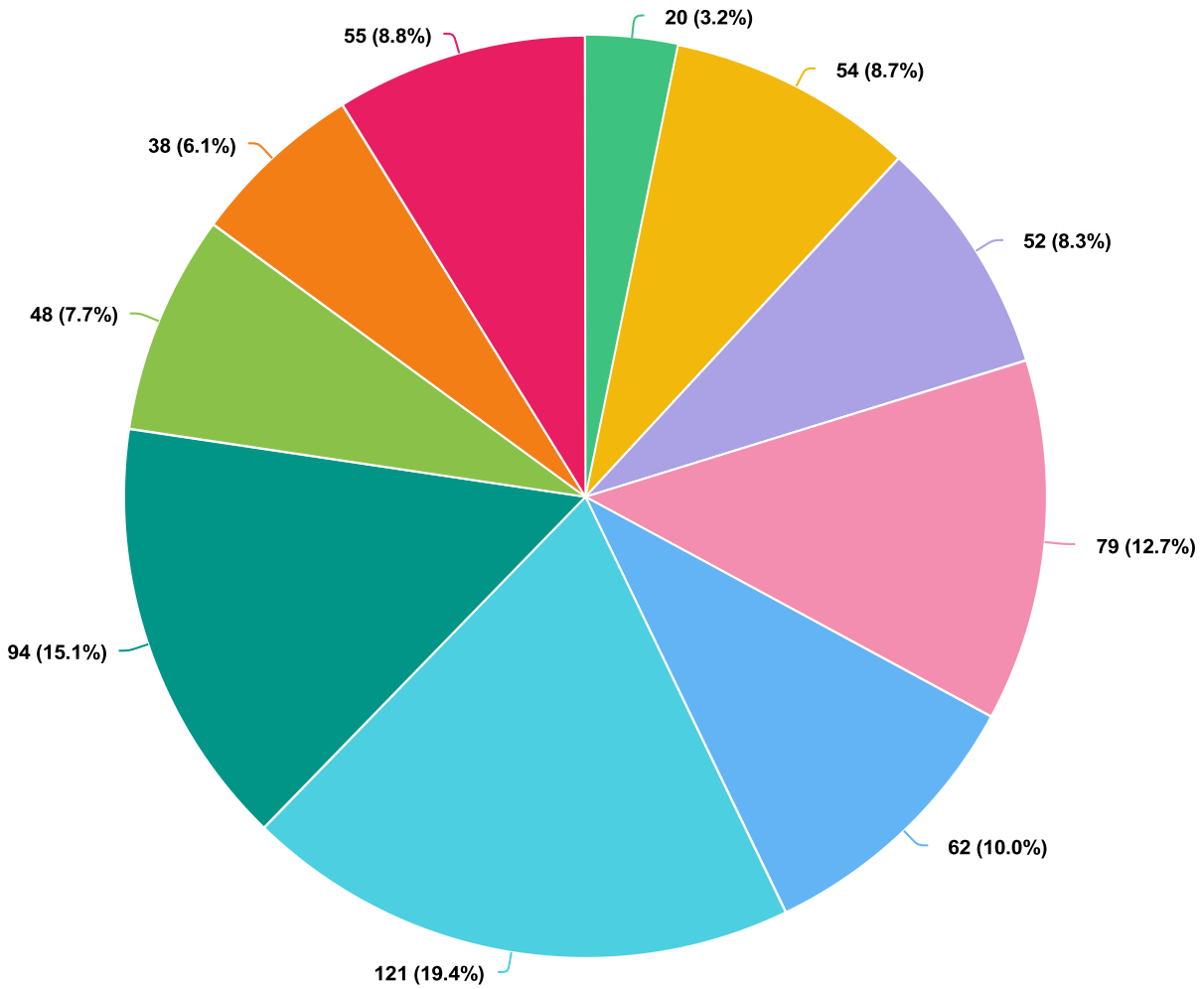
Question options

- Never legally married
- Legally married (and not separated)
- Separated, but still legally married
- Living with a common-law partner
- Divorced
- Widowed

Optional question (640 response(s), 52 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

What is your gross annual household income (before tax)?



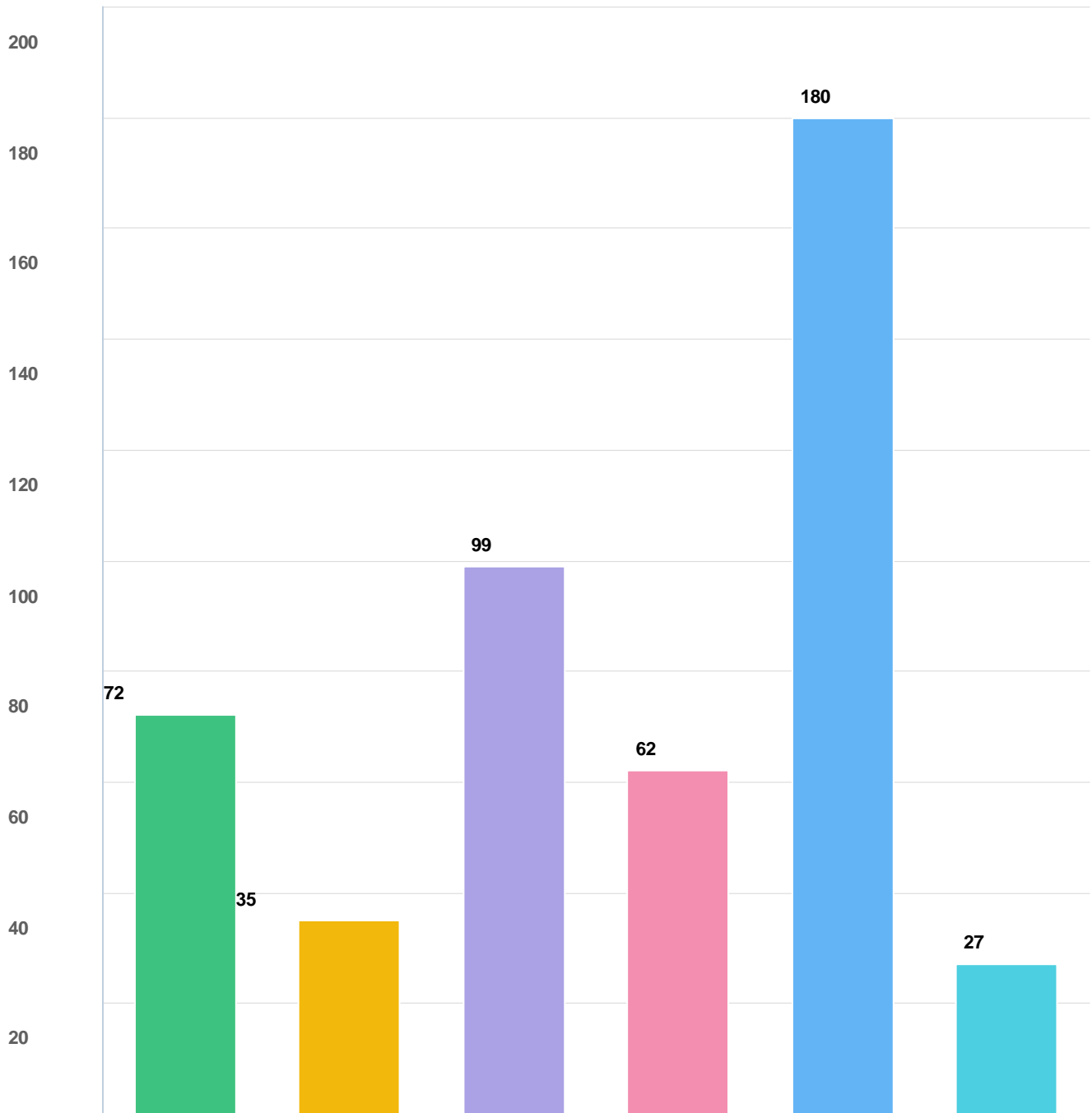
Question options

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 to \$249,999
- Over \$250,000
- Prefer not to say

Optional question (623 response(s), 69 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

The following question is about difficulties you may have doing certain activities. Please only include difficulties or long-term conditions that have lasted or are expected to last for six months or more. Do you have any of the following difficulties or long-term conditions? (Select all that apply)



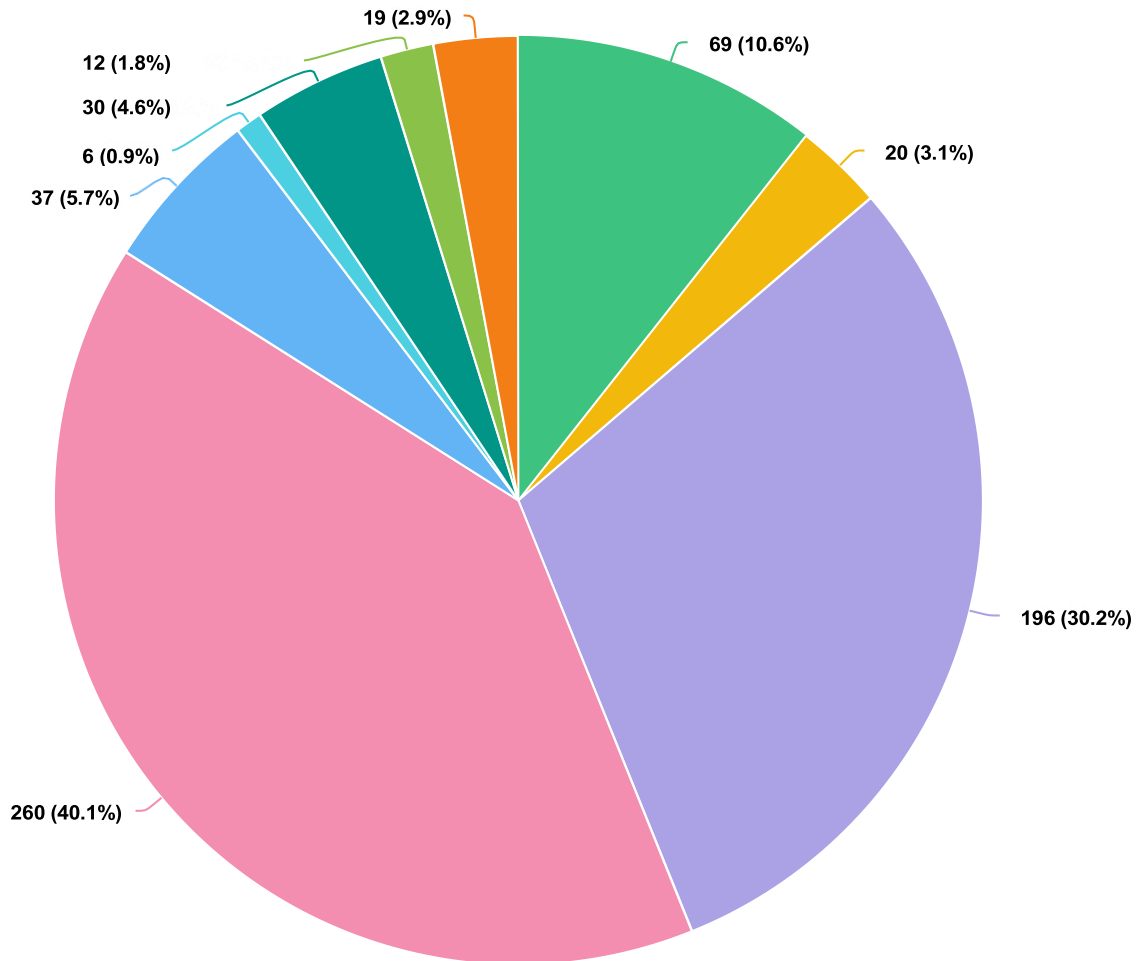
Question options

- Seeing (even when wearing glasses or contact lenses)
- Hearing (even when using a hearing aid)
- Walking, using stairs, using hands or fingers or doing other physical activities
- Learning, remembering or concentrating
- Emotional, psychological or mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (293 response(s), 399 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

How would you describe your current living situation?



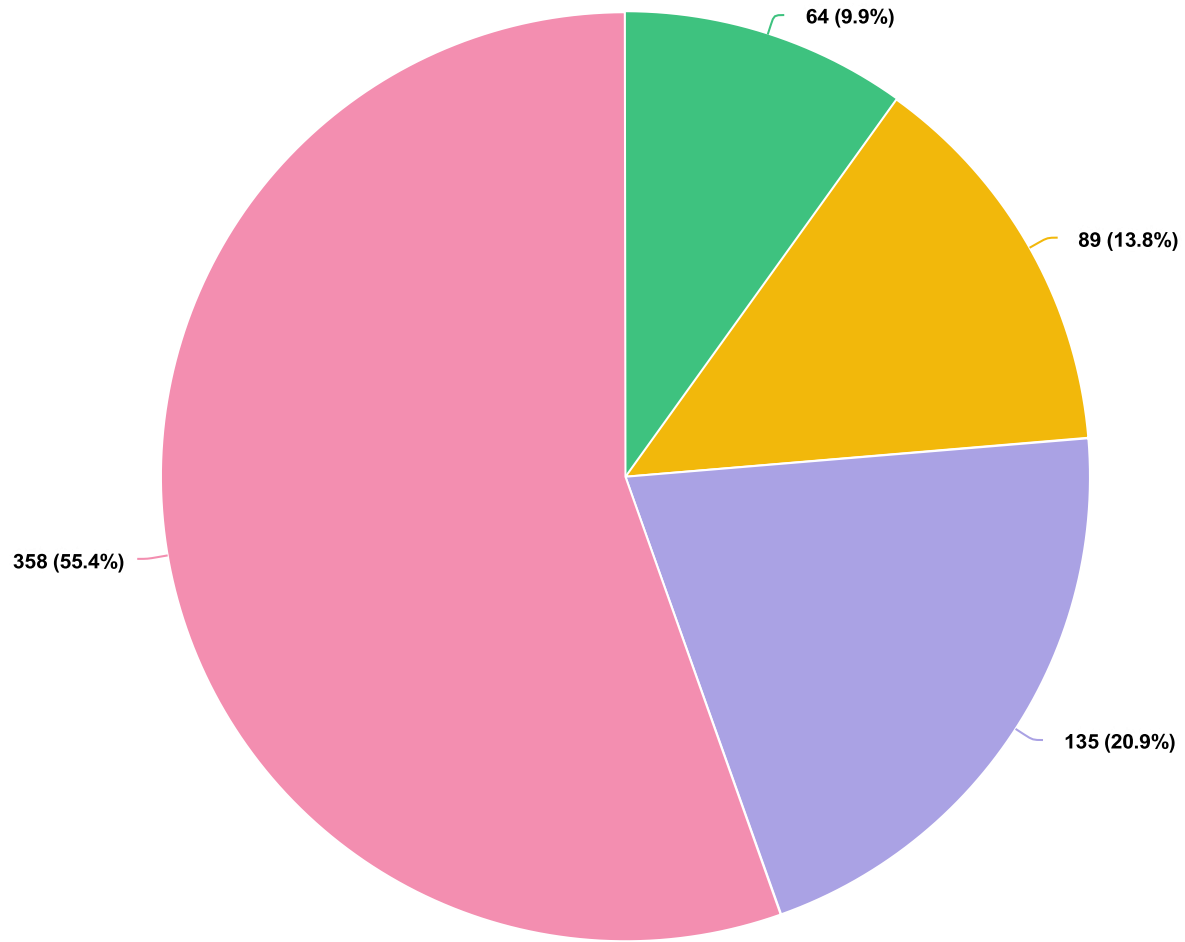
Question options

- I live on my own
- I live with my parent(s)
- I live with my spouse/partner - without children
- I live with my spouse/partner - with children
- I am a single parent living with children full-time
- I am a single parent living with children part-time
- I live in a multi-generational home (i.e. with children and parents/in-laws)
- I live with roommates
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (649 response(s), 43 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

How long have you lived in Spruce Grove?



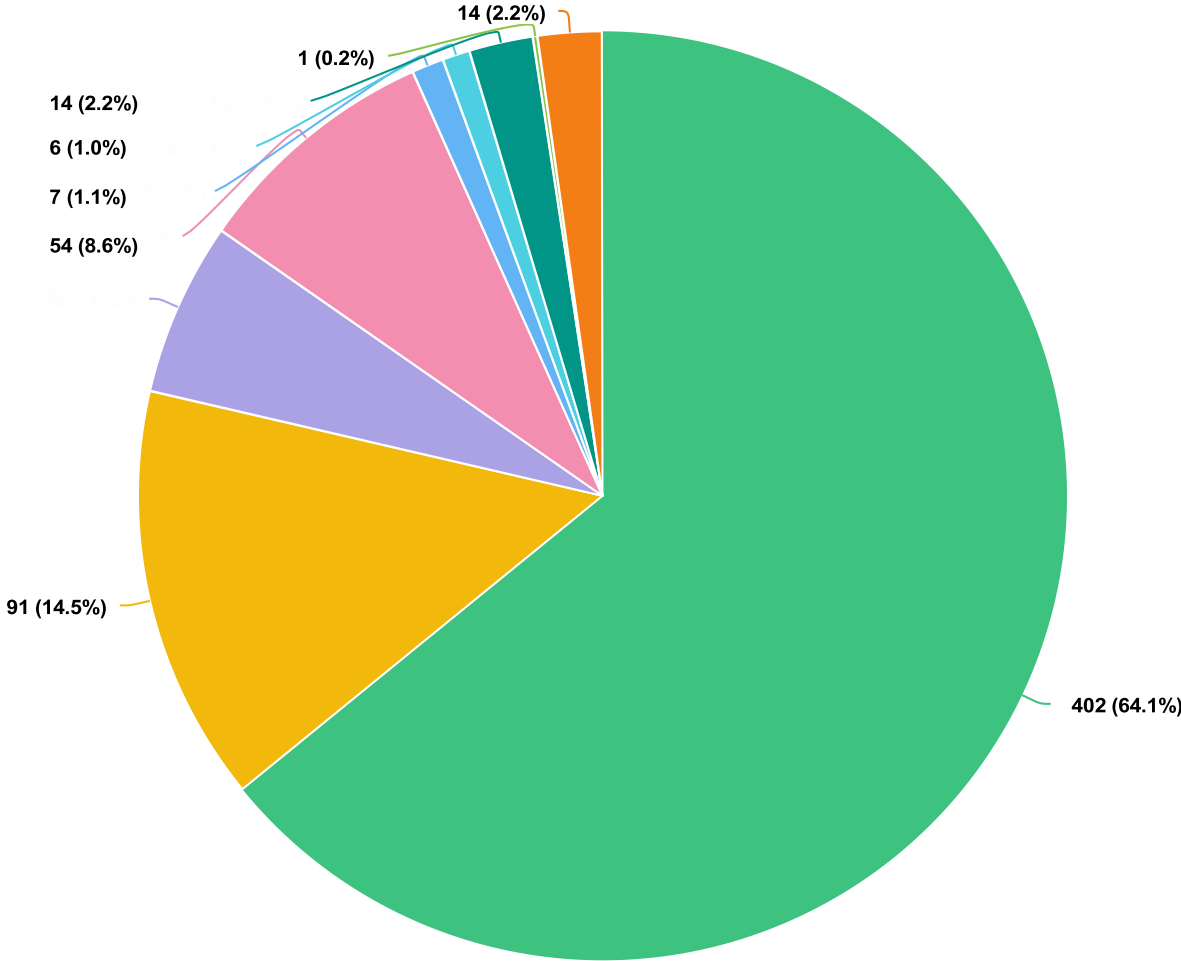
Question options

- Less than 2 years
- 2-4 years
- 5-9 years
- Over 10 years

Optional question (646 response(s), 46 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

Which of the following best describes the type of housing you currently live in?



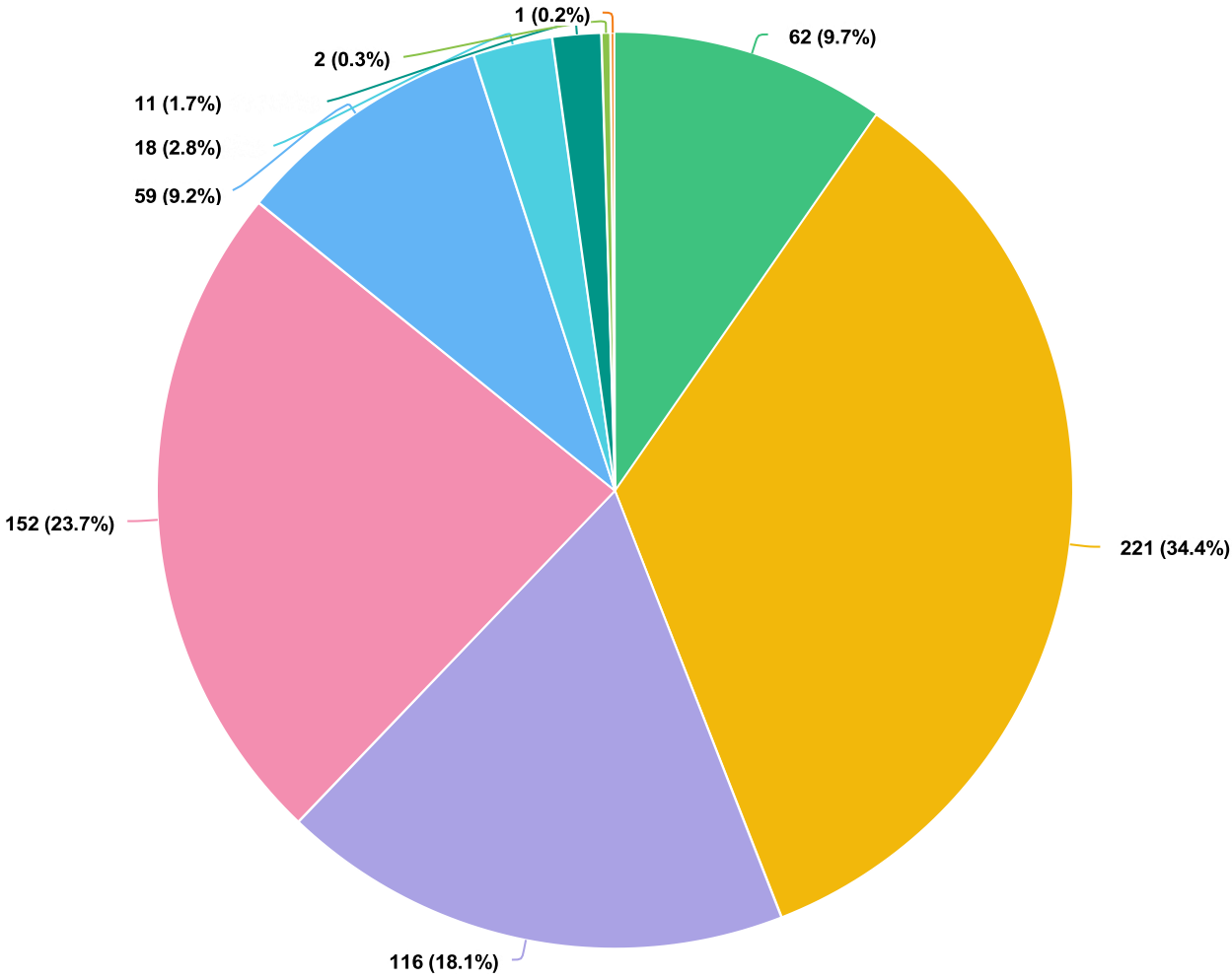
Question options

- Single detached house
- Semi-detached house (e.g. duplex)
- Row house (e.g. townhouse)
- Apartment unit
- Secondary suites (e.g. basement suite, garden suite, garage suite)
- Room in a house
- Manufactured or mobile home
- Modular home
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (627 response(s), 65 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

How many people reside in your home?



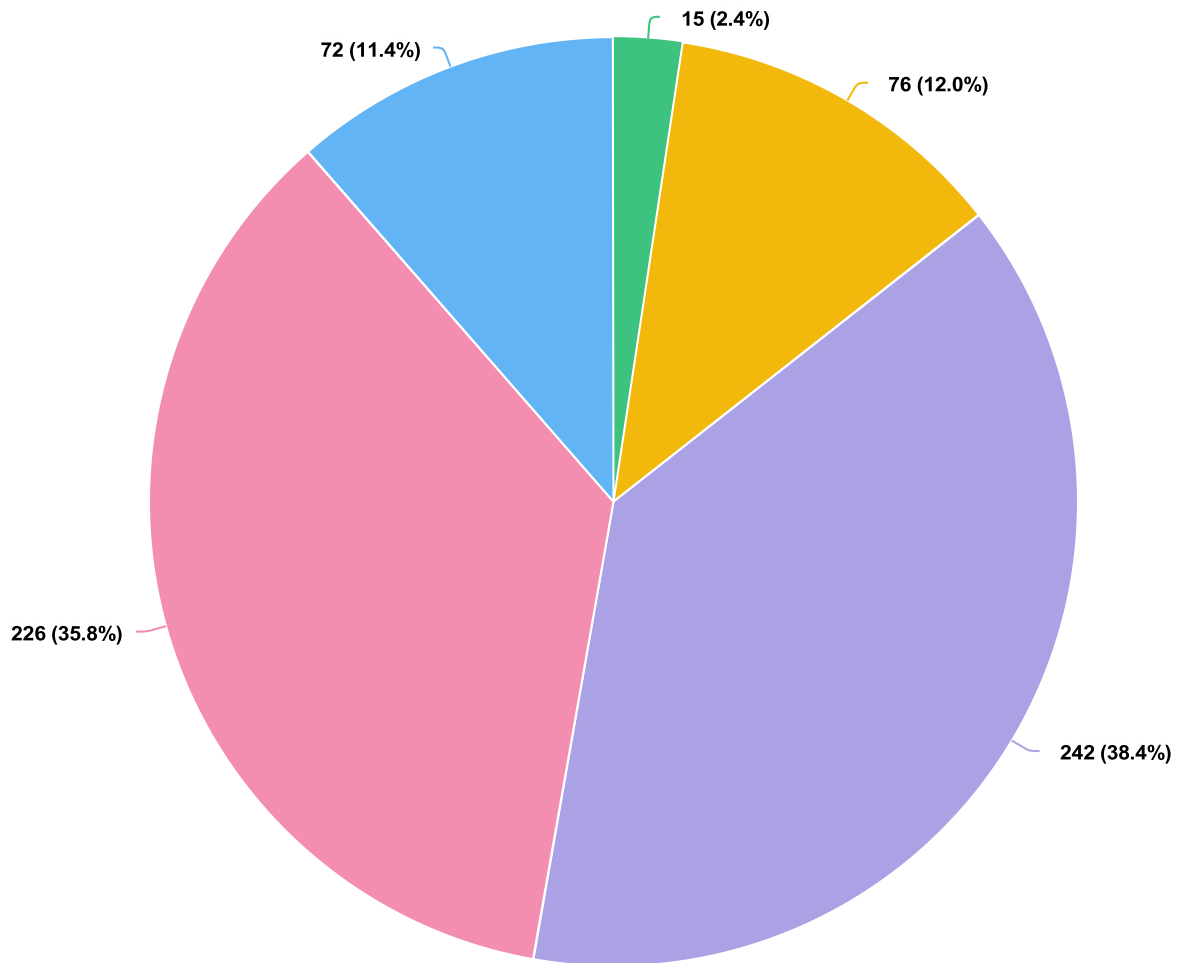
Question options

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- More than 10

Optional question (642 response(s), 50 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

How many bedrooms are there in your dwelling? (Include all rooms designed as bedrooms, even if they are now used for something else. Also count basement bedrooms.)



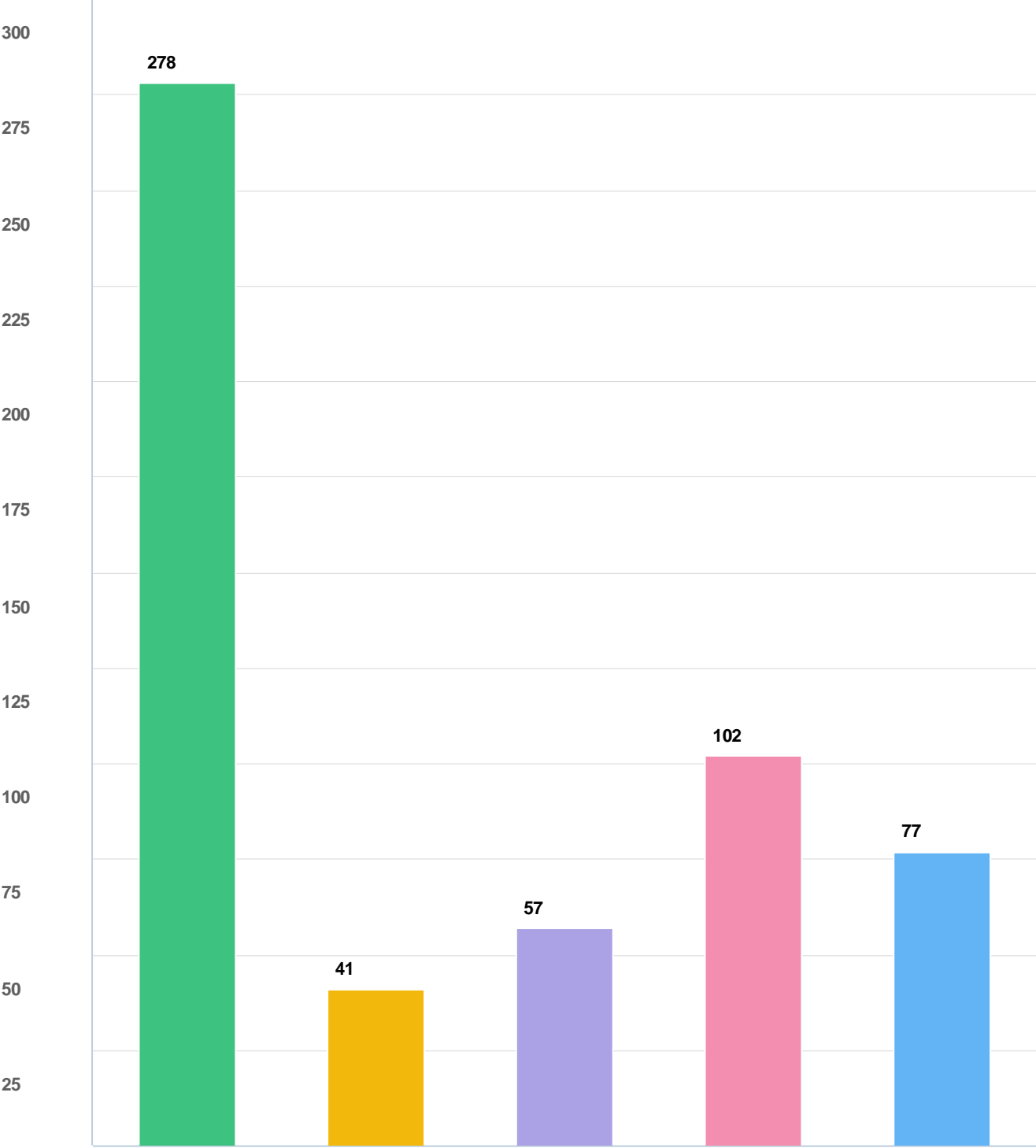
Question options

- 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● More than 4 (please specify)

Optional question (631 response(s), 61 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

Are bedrooms in your home used for any of the following purposes? (Select all that apply.)



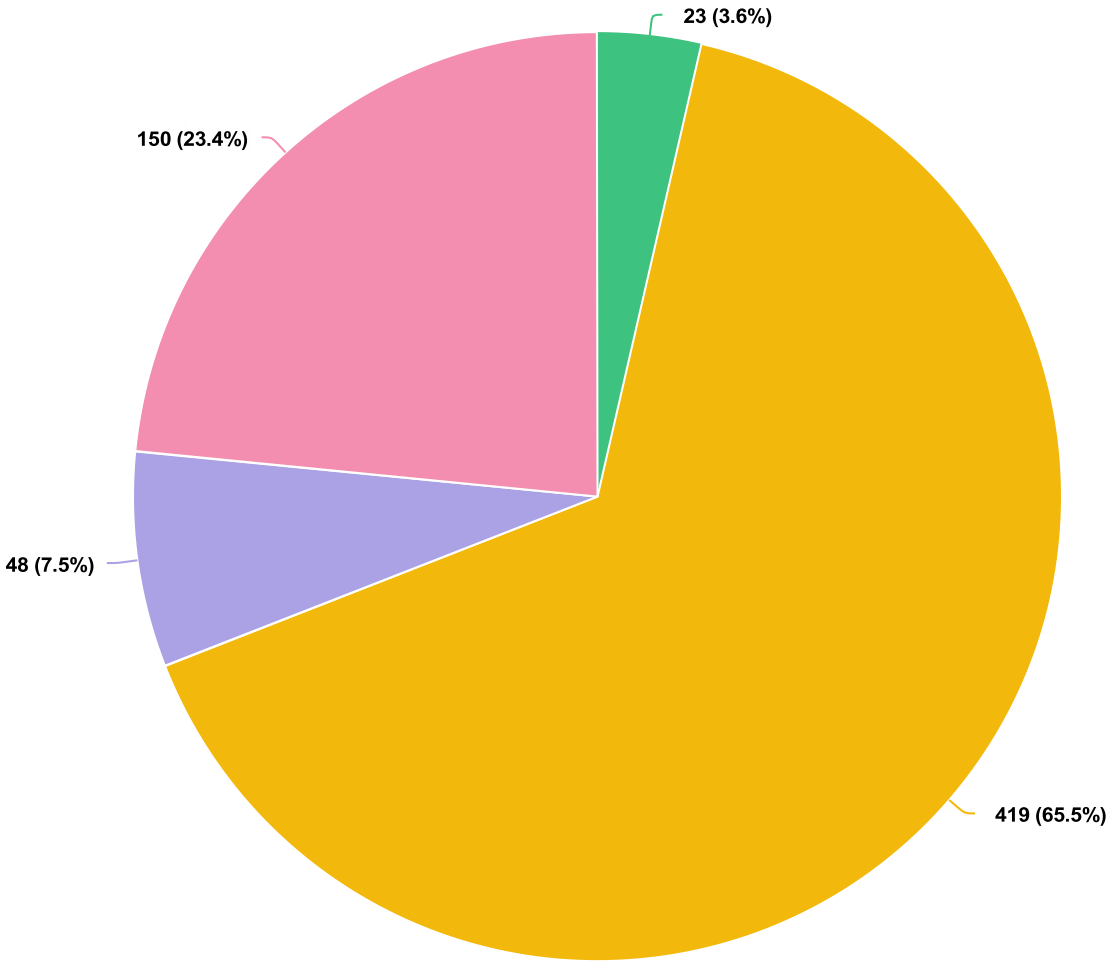
Question options

- Office
- Playroom
- Home gym
- Storage
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (383 response(s), 309 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

If you have spare/unused bedrooms in your home, would you consider renting them out?



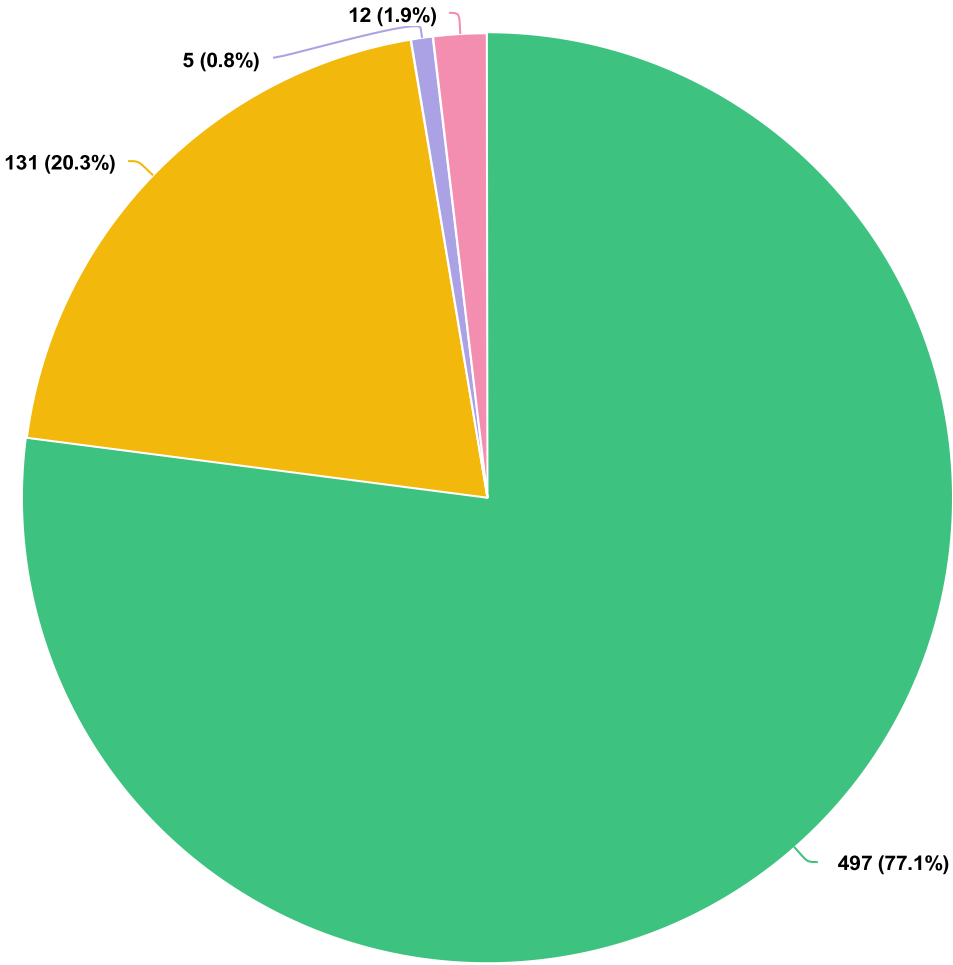
Question options

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- I do not have spare/unused bedrooms

Optional question (640 response(s), 52 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

Which statement best describes your current living situation?



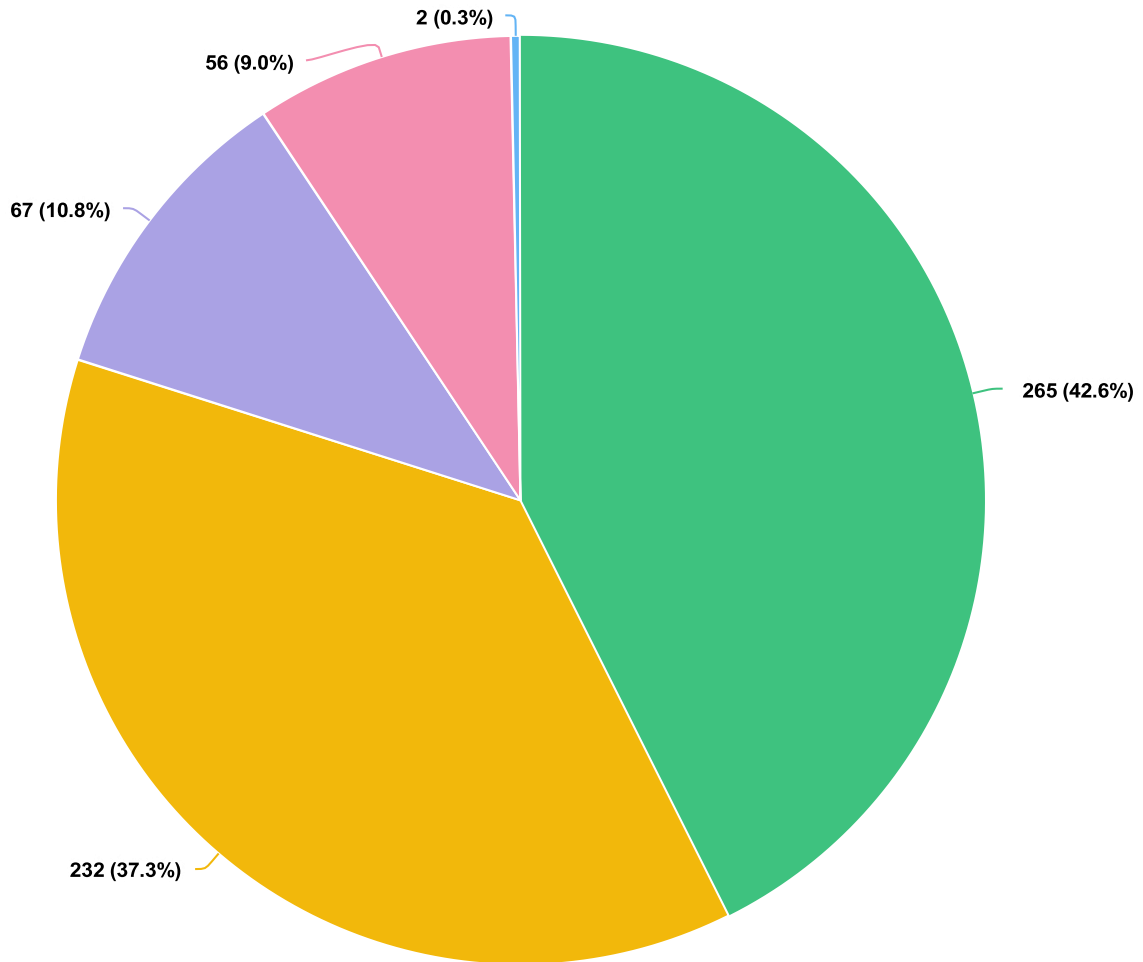
Question options

- Own
- Rent
- Have no fixed address
- Live with family/friends and do not pay rent

Optional question (645 response(s), 47 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

How much are you spending on housing (i.e. rent/mortgage) per month?



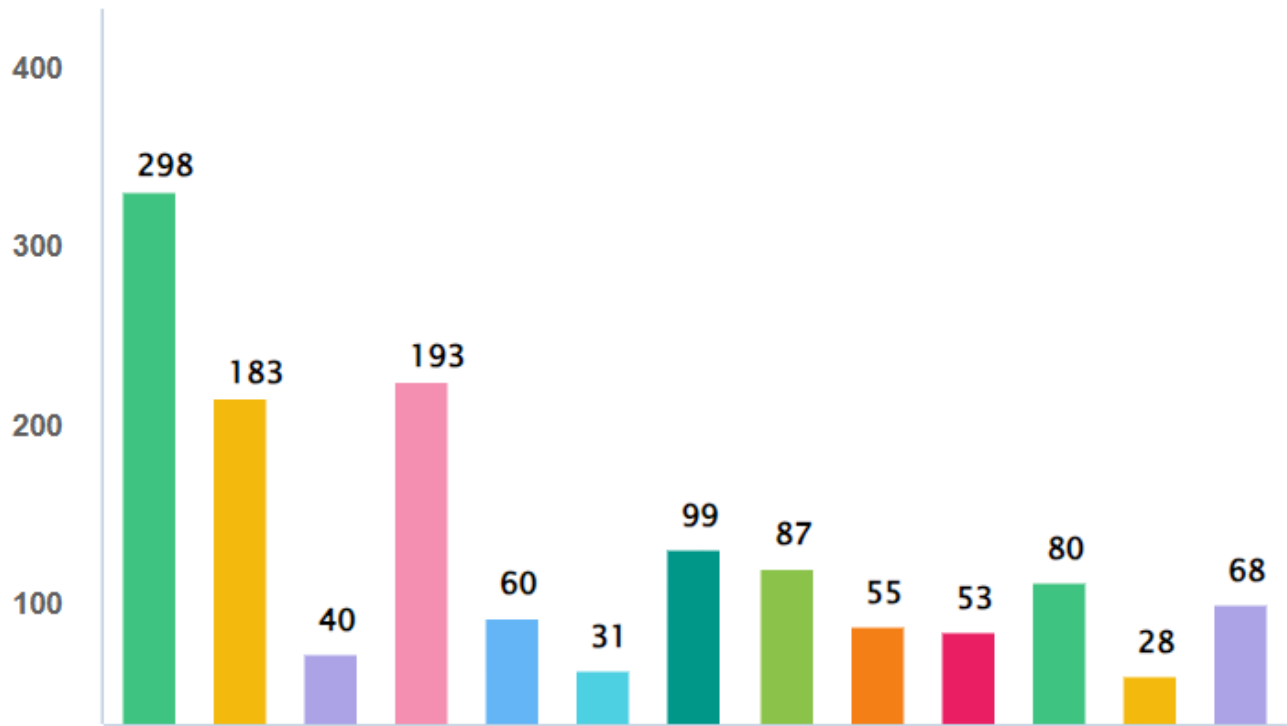
Question options

- Less than 30% of your income before tax
- Between 30-50% of your income before tax
- Over 50% of your income before tax
- I do not pay for my housing
- I do not have housing

Optional question (622 response(s), 70 skipped) Question type:

Dropdown Question

Share the challenges you have or are experiencing in finding housing. (Select all that apply.)



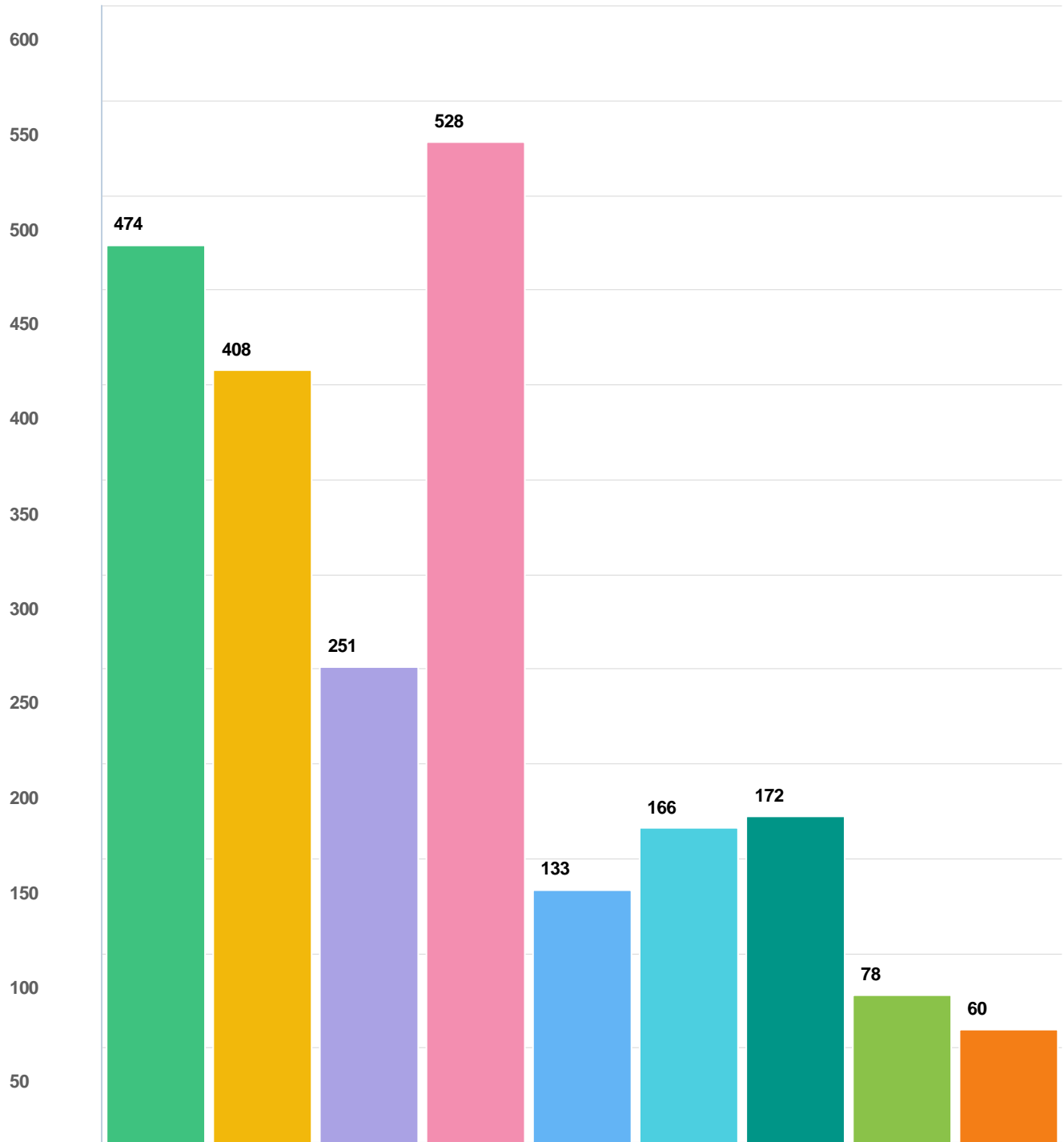
Question options

- Cost of buying a home is too high
- Cost of renting a home/unit is too high
- Lack of accessible housing options (e.g. wheelchair friendly, elevator)
- Limited supply of the type of home I was looking for
- Long waitlists for housing subsidies
- Long waitlist for assisted living housing
- Restricted due to rental rules (e.g. no pets, no children)
- Distance from employment opportunities
- Distance from/accessibility to transit
- Housing does not have enough bedrooms for your household
- Housing needs major repairs
- Discrimination (i.e. age, gender, race)
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (452 response(s), 240 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

What costs do you find challenging besides housing? (Select all that apply.)



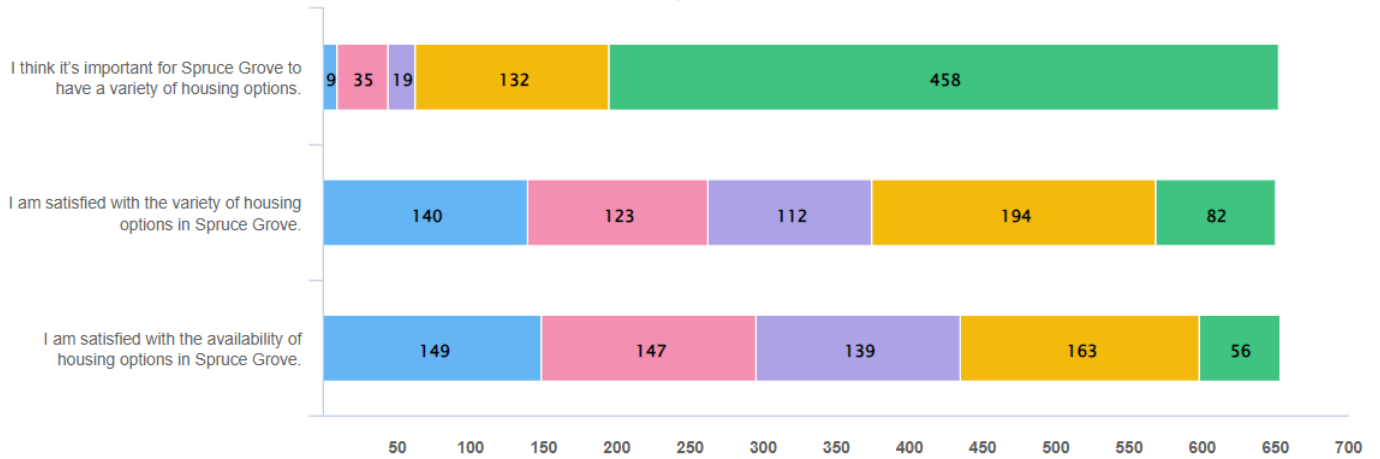
Question options

- Electricity
- Heating
- Water, solid waste, sanitary sewer, stormwater utilities
- Groceries
- Clothing
- Transportation
- Personal debt
- Childcare
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (607 response(s), 85 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

Housing Options



Question options

● Definitely disagree ● Somewhat disagree

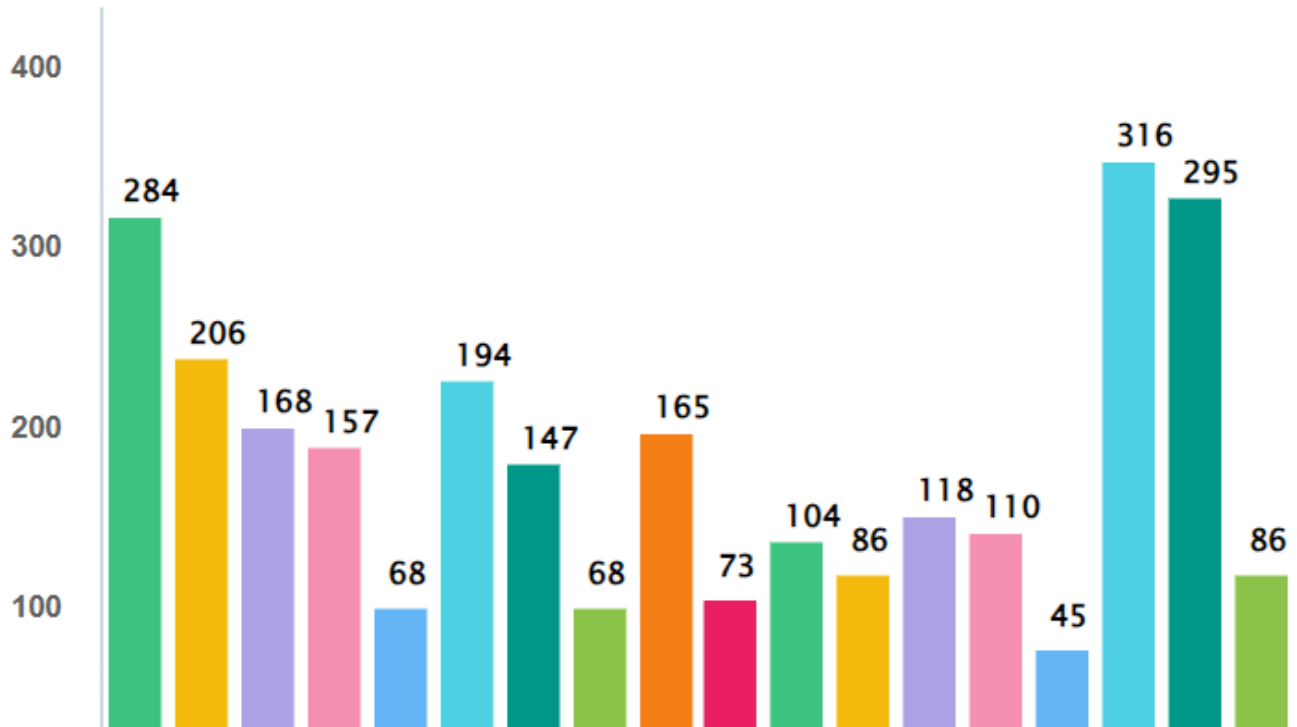
● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree

● Definitely agree

Optional question (656 response(s), 36 skipped) Question type:

Likert Question

What housing options are needed in Spruce Grove? (Select all that apply.)



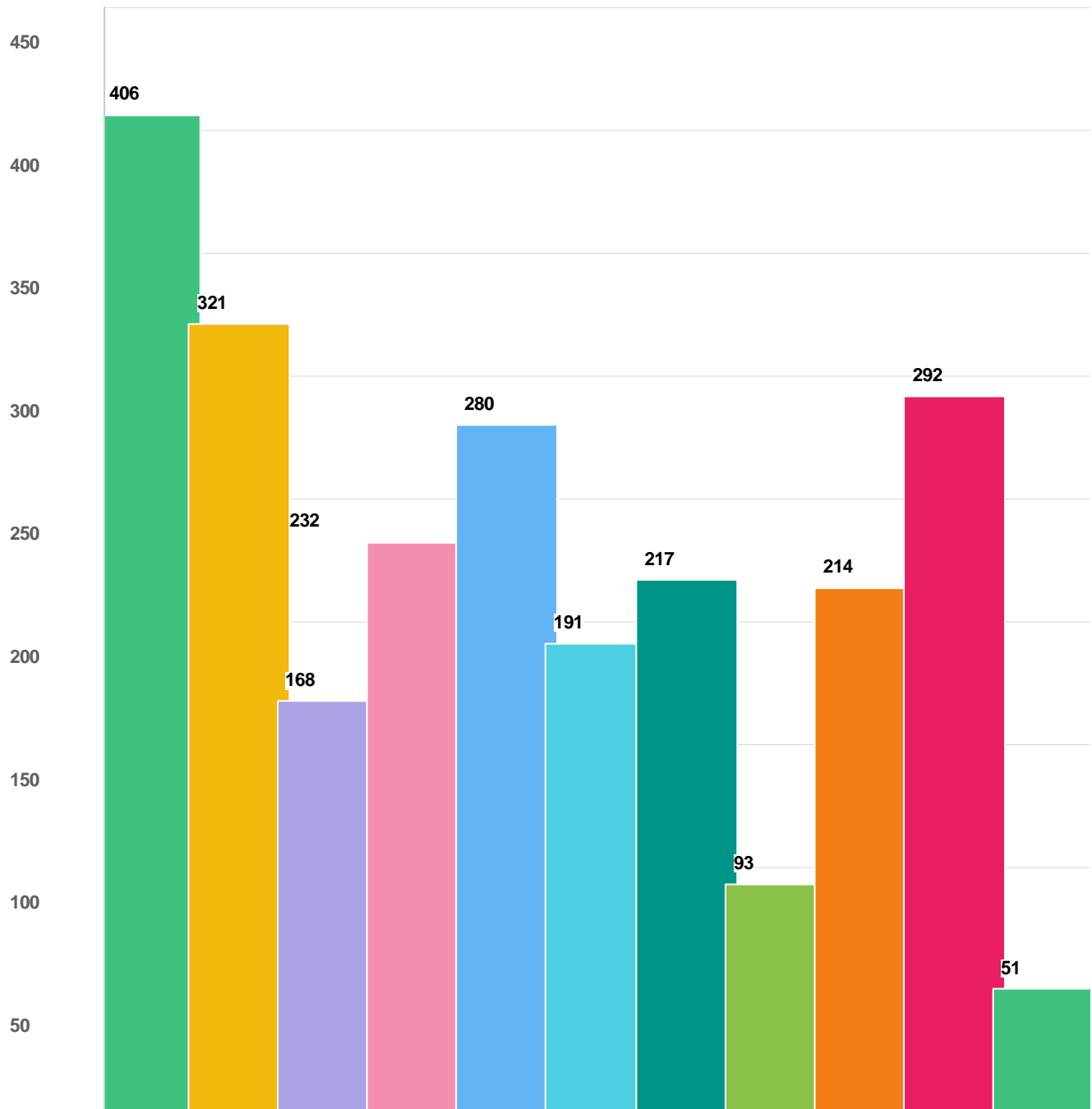
Question options

- Other (please specify)
- Supportive housing (e.g. adult lifestyle community with assistance)
- More assisted living options for seniors
- Room to rent
- Micro units (300-400 square feet)
- Fourplex
- Triplex
- Courtyard housing
- Modular home
- Tiny home
- Manufactured or mobile home
- Mid to high-rise apartment building (more than 5 storeys)
- Low-rise apartment building (4 storeys and lower)
- Walk-up apartment building (no elevator)
- Secondary suites (e.g. basement suite, garden suite, garage suite)
- Row house (e.g. townhouse)
- Semi-detached house (e.g. duplex)
- Single detached house

Optional question (629 response(s), 63 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

What housing issues are of most concern to you? (Select all that apply.)



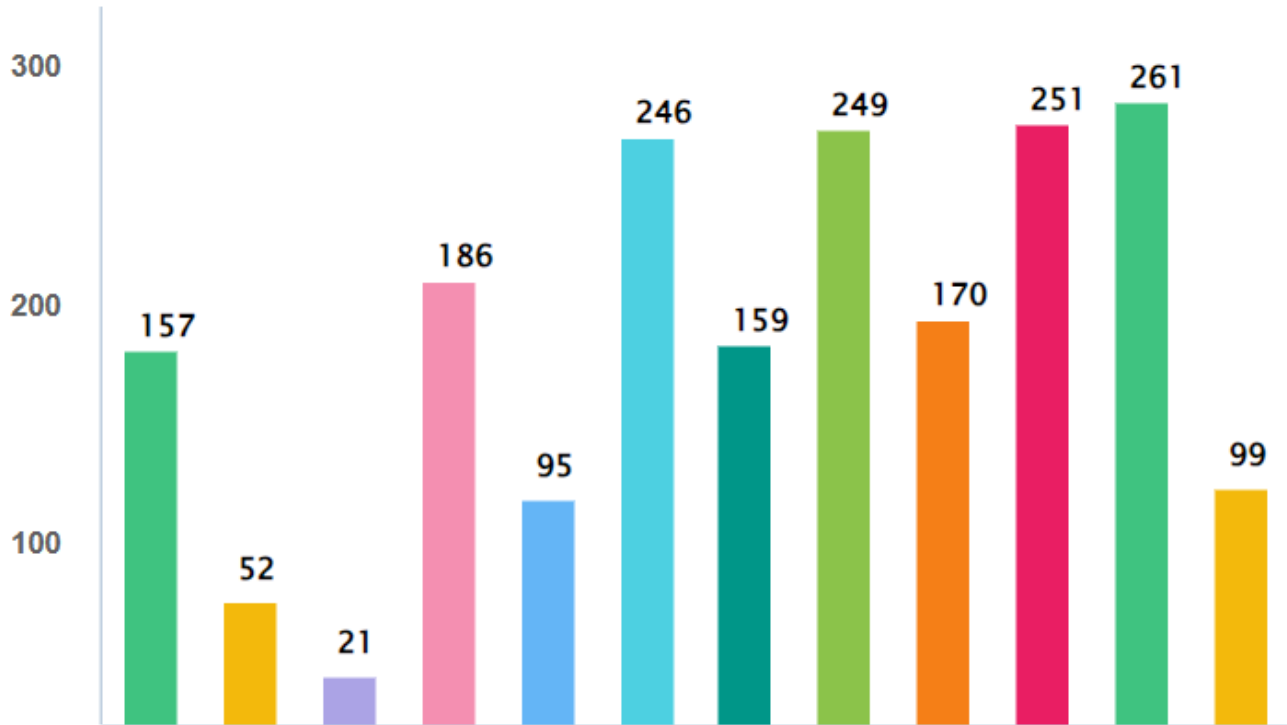
Question options

- Other (please specify)
- Homelessness
- Mismatch between what type of housing is needed and what is available
- Lack of housing near employment opportunities
- Lack of assisted living housing for seniors
- Lack of supportive housing
- Lack of downsizing options for seniors
- Low availability/shortage of rentals
- Housing maintenance
- Cost of renting is too high
- Cost of home ownership is too high

Optional question (622 response(s), 70 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

What options to address housing needs and gaps would you like to see included in the Housing Strategy? (Select all that apply.)



Question options

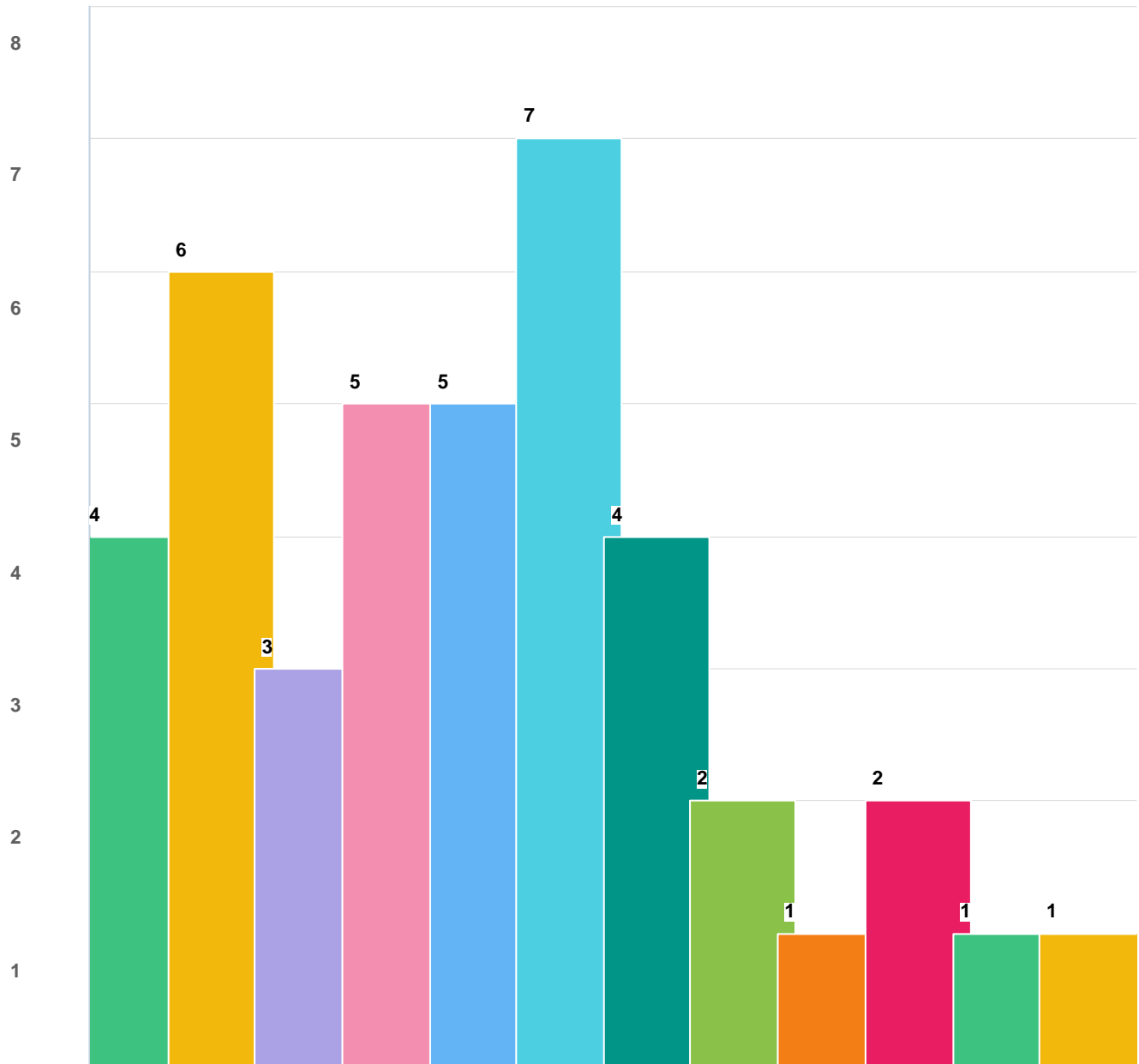
- Other (please specify)
- Grants for homeowners to create secondary suites and home improvements
- More amenities connected to housing developments (e.g. community centre, gardens)
- Co-operative housing
- Increase subsidized housing options
- More condo (row housing/apartment) options
- More rental options
- Larger homes
- Smaller homes
- Narrower lots
- Reduce parking requirements
- More basement suites or garden suites

Optional question (604 response(s), 88 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

Client focused questions (responding on behalf of a community organization)

Share the challenges your clients have or are experiencing in finding housing. (Select all that apply.)



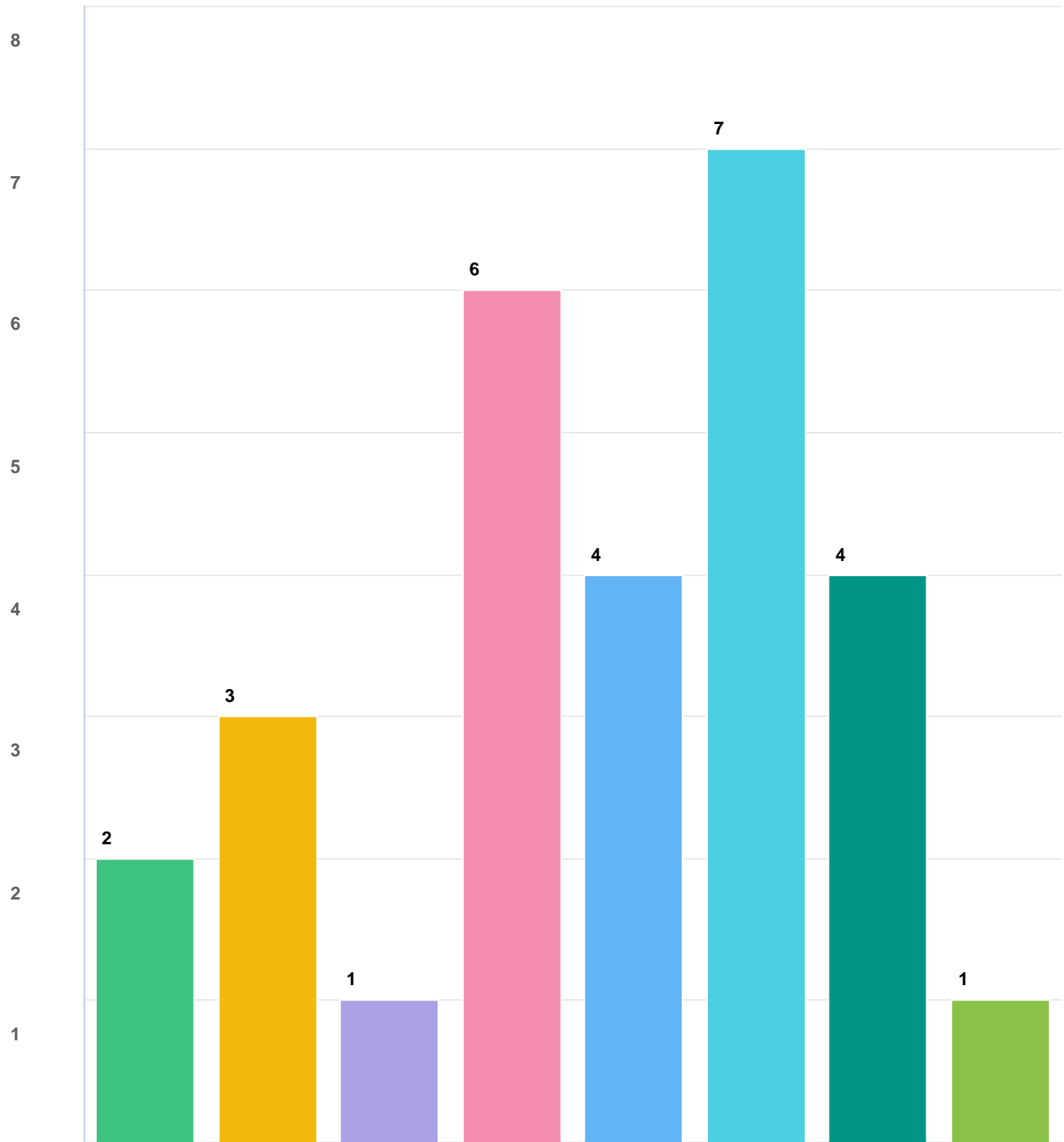
Question options

- Other (please specify)
- Housing requiring major repairs
- Housing does not contain enough bedrooms for your household
- Distance from/accessibility to transit
- Distance from employment opportunities
- Restricted due to rental rules (e.g. no pets, no children)
- Long waitlists for assisted living housing
- Long waitlists for housing subsidies
- Limited supply of the type of home they were looking for
- Lack of accessible housing options (e.g. wheelchair friendly, elevator)
- Cost of renting a home/unit is too high
- Cost of buying a home is too high

Optional question (7 response(s), 685 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

What costs do your clients report as challenging besides housing? (Select all that apply.)



Question options

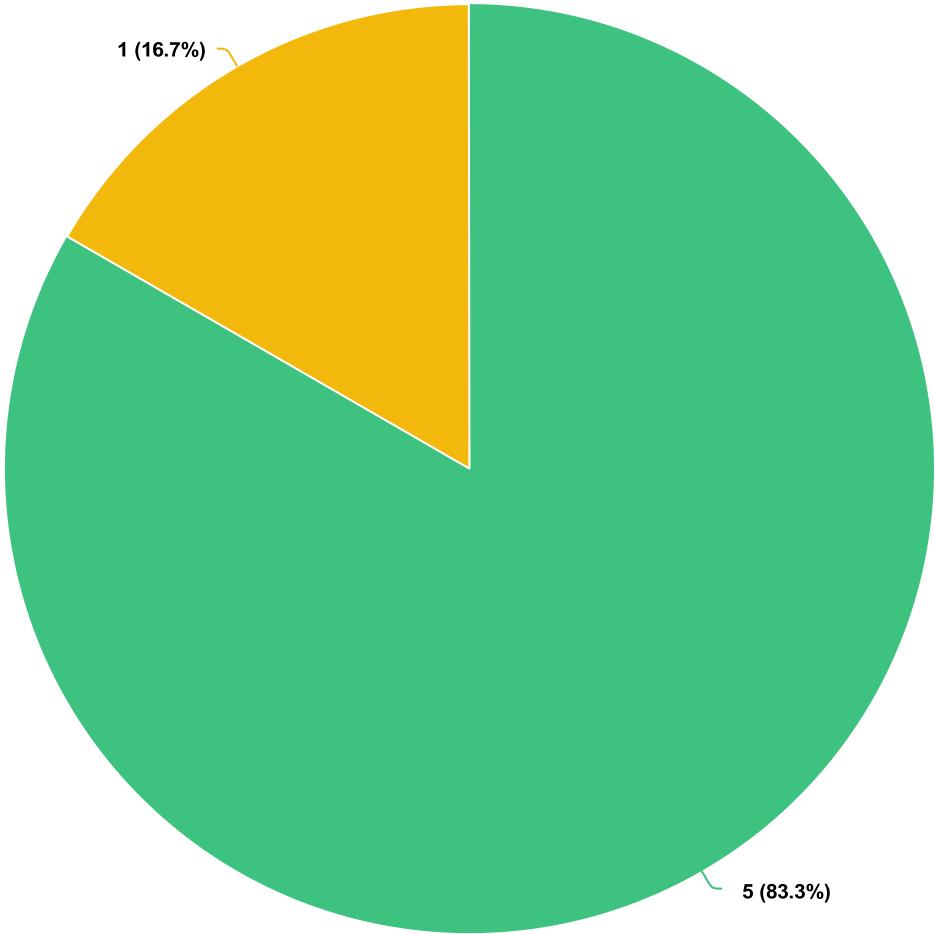
- Other (please specify)
- Personal Debt
- Transportation
- Clothing
- Groceries
- Electricity
- Water, stormwater, sanitary sewer, solid waste utilities
- Heating

Optional question (7 response(s), 685 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question

Employer focused questions (responding on behalf of a local business)

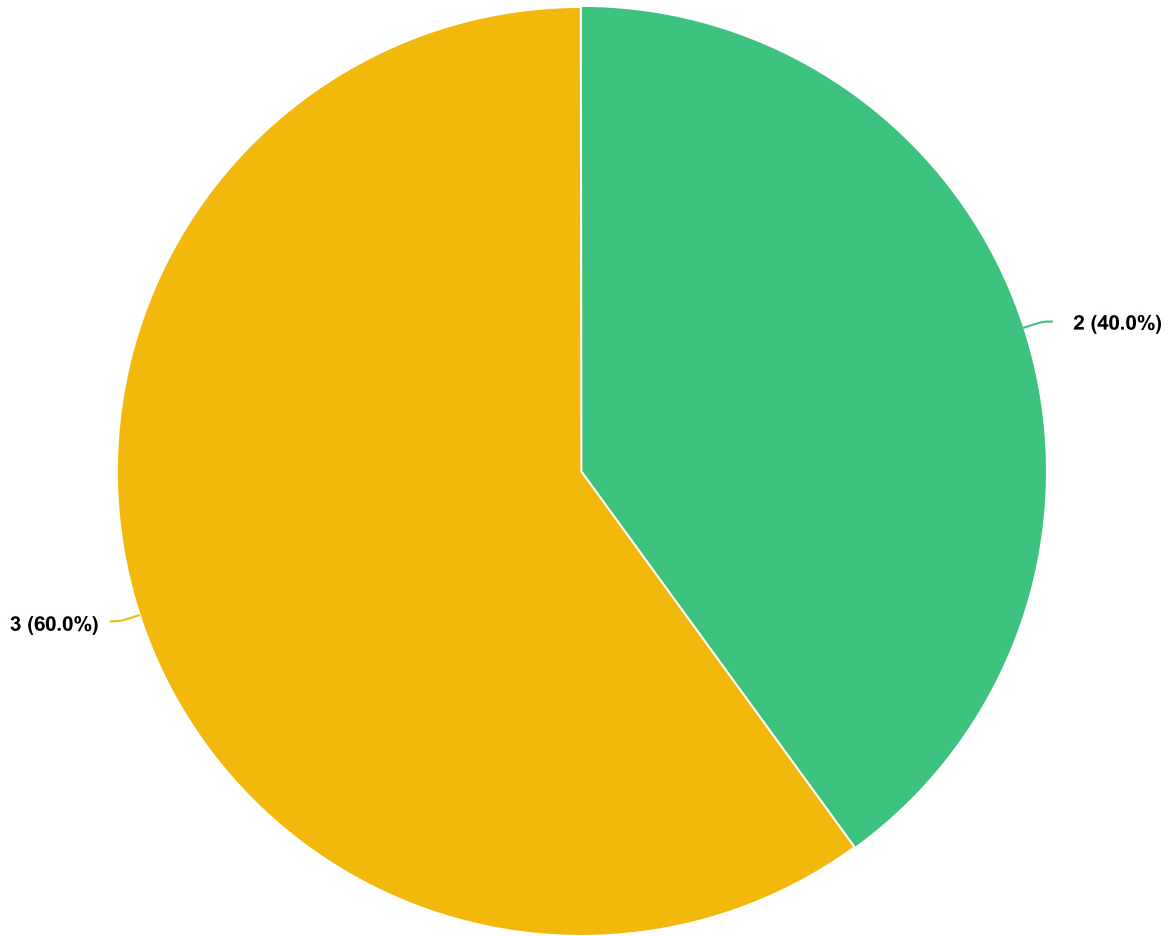
Do you have challenges recruiting employees?



Question options
 No Yes

*Optional question (6 response(s), 686 skipped) Question type:
Radio Button Question*

Is housing a factor in your recruitment challenges?



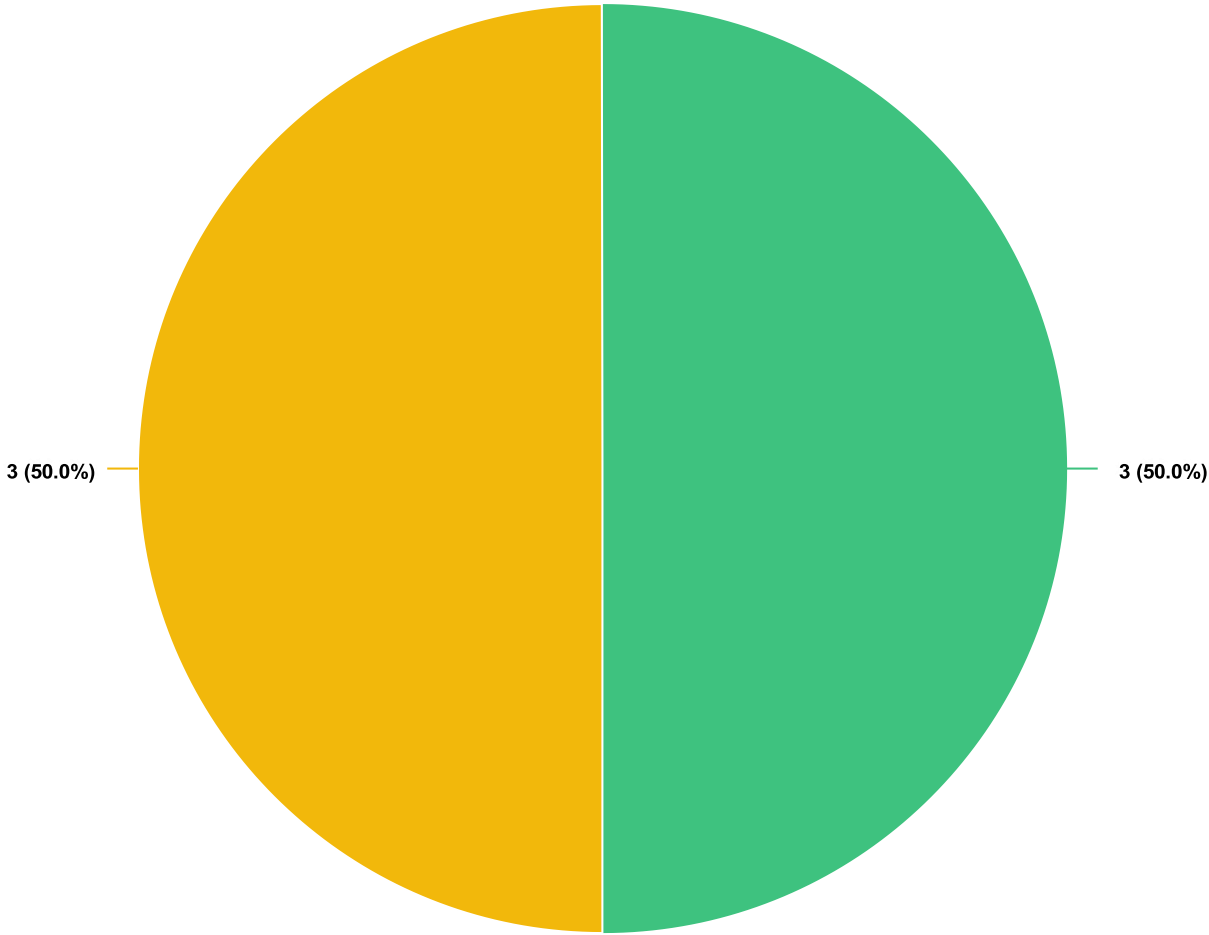
Question options

- No
- Yes

Optional question (5 response(s), 687 skipped) Question type:

Radio Button Question

Do your employees have reliable transportation to and from their home and your business?



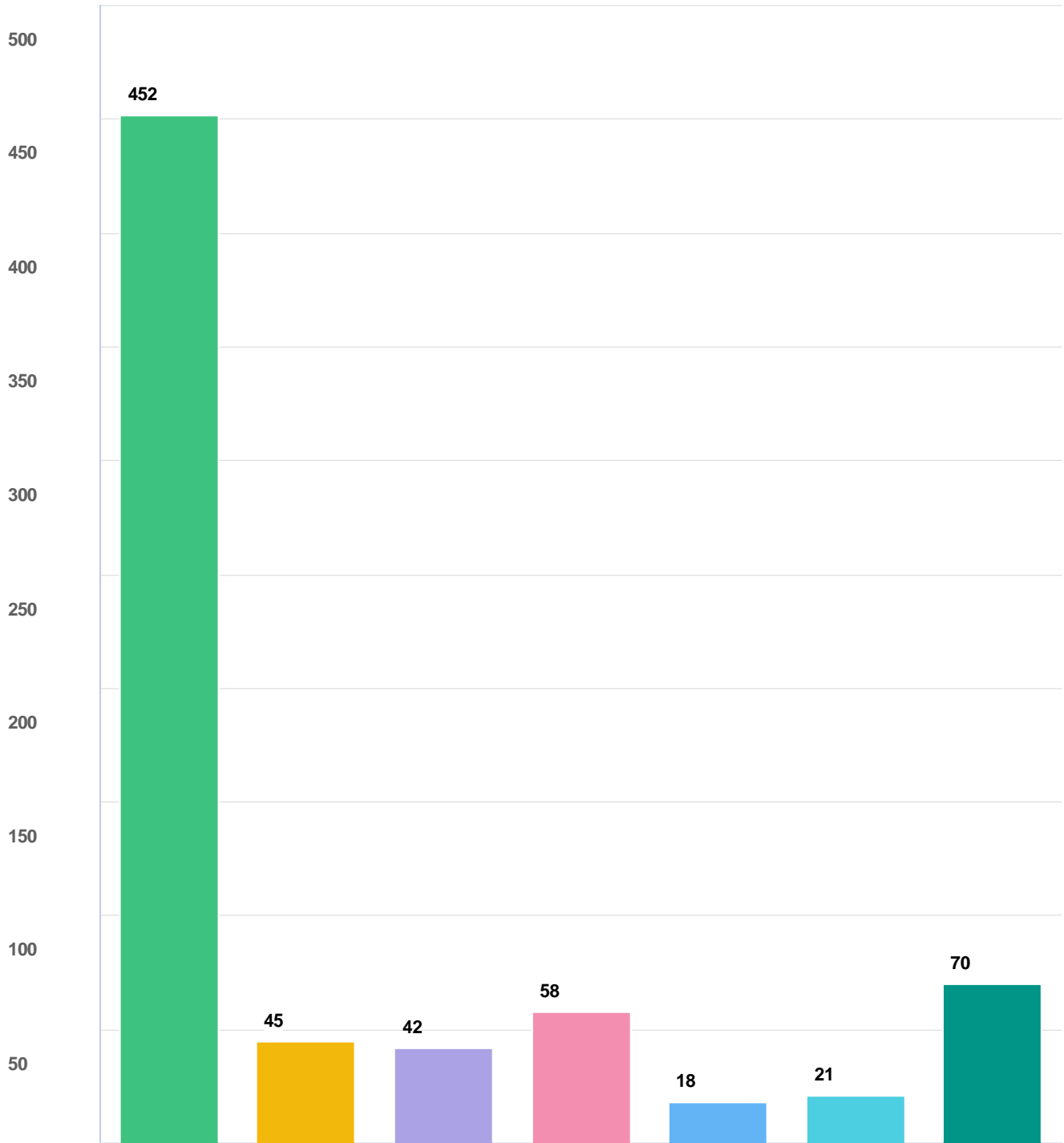
Question options

- No
- Yes

Optional question (6 response(s), 686 skipped) Question type:

Radio Button Question

How did you hear about the survey?



Question options

- Other (please specify)
- Information booth at an event
- Digital sign
- Word of mouth
- Email
- Spruce Grove Housing Strategy Project website
- Social media (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn)

Optional question (671 response(s), 21 skipped) Question type:

Checkbox Question