

February 2024

City of Bellingham

Housing Preference Survey Report



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Executive Summary

Study Purpose

Population growth has put stress on the housing market. Demand is outpacing supply, causing difficulties for people who rent and for people with low to no income. The City of Bellingham hired a Seattle-based consulting firm, PRR, to field an online public opinion survey about **housing needs, priorities, and preferences**. The survey results will inform updates to the housing elements of The Bellingham Plan, as part of a state-mandated update to comply with new zoning legislation.

Study Approach

Community feedback is crucial to the planning process, so the project team used **oversampling, targeted outreach, and data weighting** to ensure equitable representation from community members who traditionally have not participated in City processes. The project team recruited participants for the survey by:

- 1) **mailing 10,000 postcard invitations** to randomly selected addresses in Bellingham
- 2) **partnering with 11 local organizations** to share the survey via social media and at in-person outreach events.
- 3) **distributing survey information** at City events.

The survey fielded from **November 14 to December 11, 2023**, was available in both **Spanish and English**, and received **1,475 responses**. We weighted the final sample based on **age and housing tenure** factors to ensure the sample remained representative at the city level and was reflective of Bellingham's diversity of incomes, race/ethnicity, housing tenure, and age.

Executive Summary

Key Survey Findings



When asked what type of neighborhood in which they would **prefer to live**, the most common responses were **small-scale residential (31%)** and **urban residential (27%)**. These neighborhoods include a **diversity of housing** forms with single-family, duplex, triplex, townhome, and small apartment and condominium blocks mixed with **commercial services, good bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and access to transit**.



A clear **majority** of respondents preferred **owning** rather than renting their home. Some people (up to 21%) were interested in **shared living** arrangements that are uncommon in Bellingham today.



Most respondents were generally **satisfied** with their current living arrangements. Those that are **less satisfied** included a higher proportion of lower-income, renter, BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, young adult, and disabled community members. Historically, people in these groups have been underrepresented in the public planning process across the country.



When considering **housing and neighborhood trade-offs**, respondents indicated a preference for neighborhoods where **homes are closer together** to gain access to transit, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and parks and trails.



When **balancing** neighborhood and housing priorities and amenities, the top concern expressed was a **feeling of safety**. Secondary priorities include being **close to parks and trails**, having a **private yard, dedicated parking, and housing with good quality construction and condition**. Also of note, **2-bedroom units** are by far the most common preference, with 3-bedroom and 1-bedroom units following and 4-bedrooms and studios the least popular.



Most employed respondents reported **working remotely at least once per week**, with 26% working remotely at least 4 days a week.

People Prefer Owning over Renting

87% prefer to own their home

56% currently rent their home



People are Satisfied with Current Housing Situation

69% are satisfied with their current housing situation.

A higher proportion of **lower-income, renter, BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, young adults, and people with disabilities** said they were less satisfied. Historically, people in these groups have been underrepresented in the public planning process across the country.



The City Needs More Diverse Housing



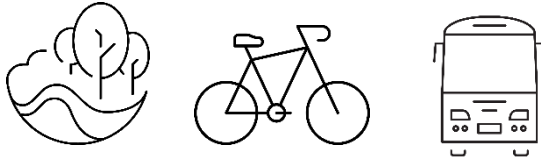
31% prefer to live in a **small-scale residential** neighborhood

27% prefer to live in an **urban residential** neighborhood

These neighborhoods include a diverse mix of housing forms with a single-family, duplex, triplex, townhome, and small apartment and condominium blocks mixed with **commercial services, good bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity, and access to transit.**

People Prefer Homes That are Closer Together

78% prefer having many housing units near their home and good access to public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure compared to having few other homes nearby, no access to public transit, and limited or no sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure.



Remote Work is Common

58% of employed respondents reported working remotely at least once per week

26% reported working remotely at least 4 days a week.



Safety is a Top Priority



When balancing neighborhood and housing priorities and amenities:

55% care about feeling safe

35% want to be close to parks and trails

35% want to have a private yard

34% want dedicated parking

34% care about housing with good quality construction and condition

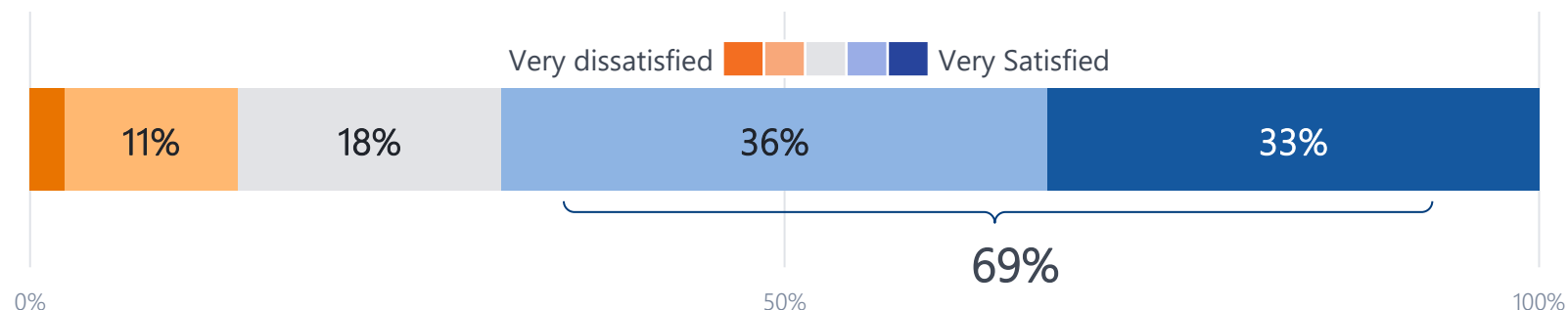
2-bedroom units are the most common room preference, followed by 3-bedroom, 1-bedroom, and 4-bedroom units

Research Findings

Most respondents (69%) were satisfied with their current housing situation.

How satisfied are you currently with your housing situation?

Base: all respondents (n = 1,469)



Top reasons for being dissatisfied include:

- Doesn't fit in my budget
- Poor quality of construction or condition
- Home doesn't feel spacious
- No private yard/outdoor space
- Shared walls with neighbors

Correlations: The following respondents were less satisfied with their housing situation:

- Renters
- Younger adults
- BIPOC respondents
 - More likely to select "do not feel safe" as the reason for dissatisfaction.
- Respondents with a disability
- Members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community
- Respondents with lower income
- Respondents experiencing poverty

Neighborhoods that feel safe and quiet, are close to parks, trails, commercial services, and have bicycle and pedestrian connectivity were top priorities for respondents.

When choosing the ideal location to live, please select all the options that are important to you.

■ Neighborhood preferences

Base: all respondents (n = 1,475)

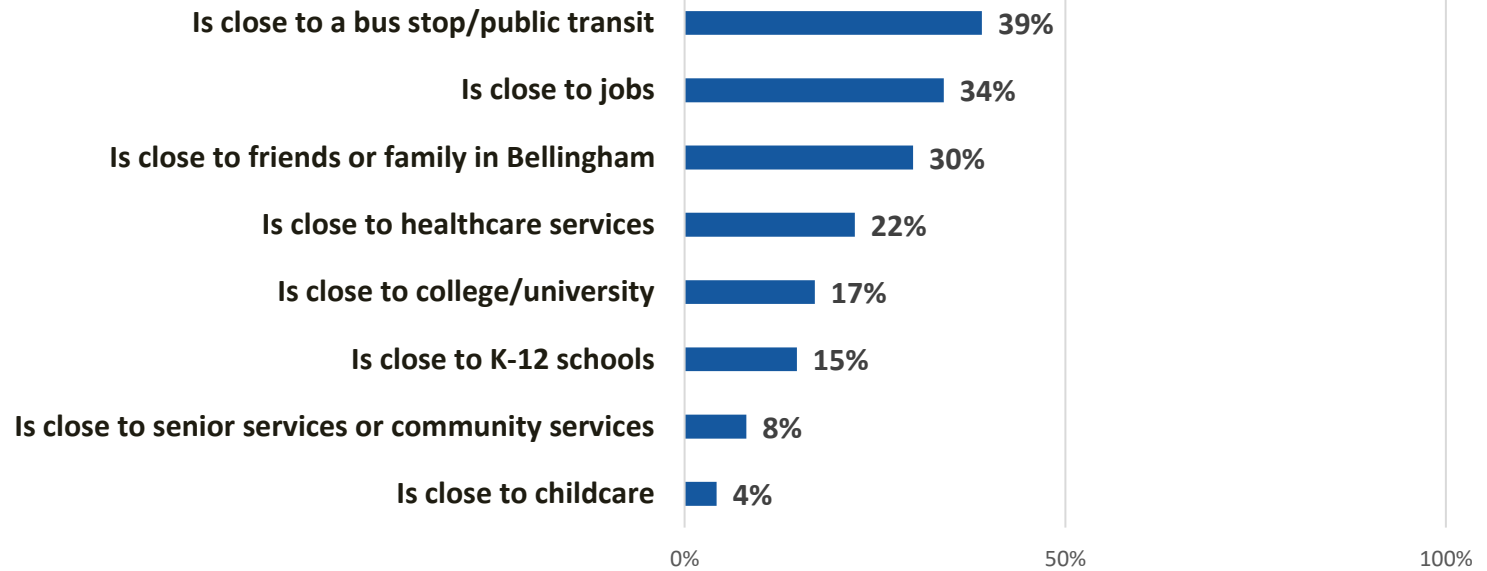


Correlations:

Renters were more likely to select the following options:

- Is closer to a job
- Is closer to college/university

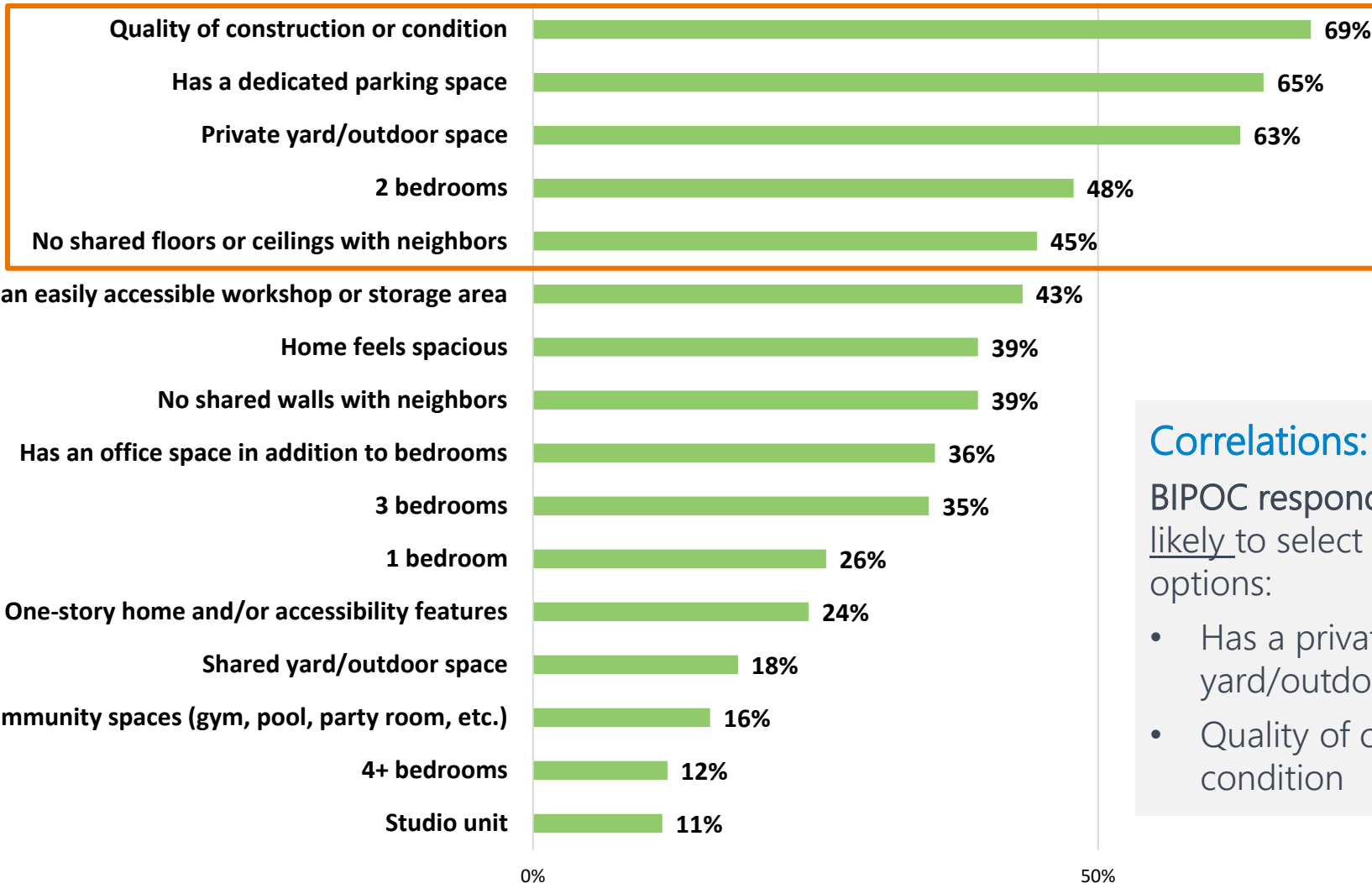
BIPOC respondents are less likely to select "is close to parks/open spaces and/or a trail system".



Housing with quality construction and condition, dedicated parking, a private yard, and two-bedroom size with no neighbors above or below were top priorities for respondents.

When choosing the ideal place to live, please select all the options that are important to you.

■ Housing preferences Base: all respondents (n = 1,475)



Correlations:

BIPOC respondents were less likely to select the following options:

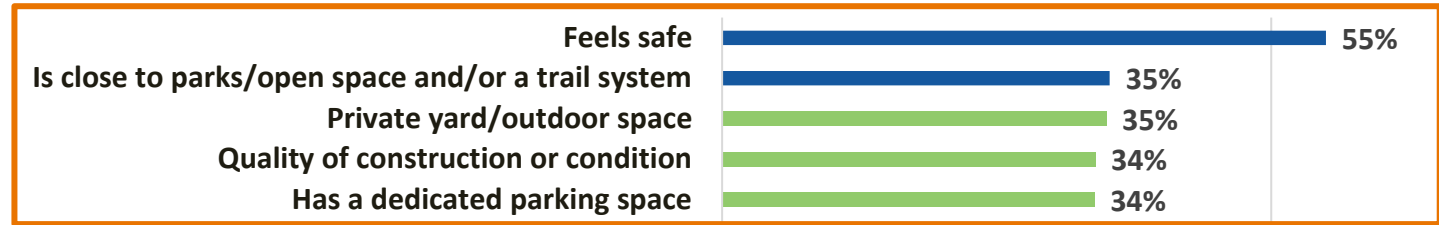
- Has a private yard/outdoor space
- Quality of construction or condition

When considering neighborhood and housing characteristics together, feeling safe was the clear top priority.

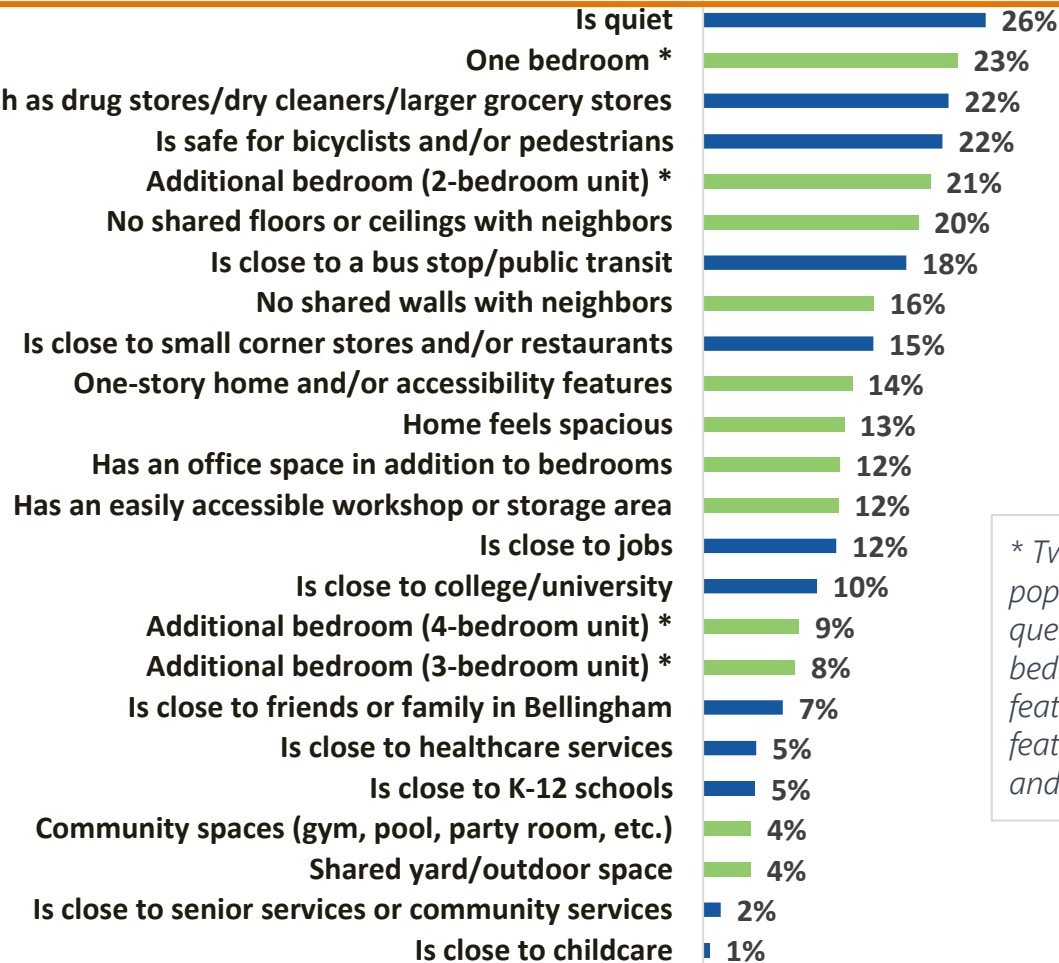
Respondents' top five most important housing and neighborhood preferences

Base: all respondents (n = 1,453)

- Neighborhood preferences
- Housing preferences



Secondary priorities include being close to parks and trails, a private yard, quality construction and condition, and dedicated parking.



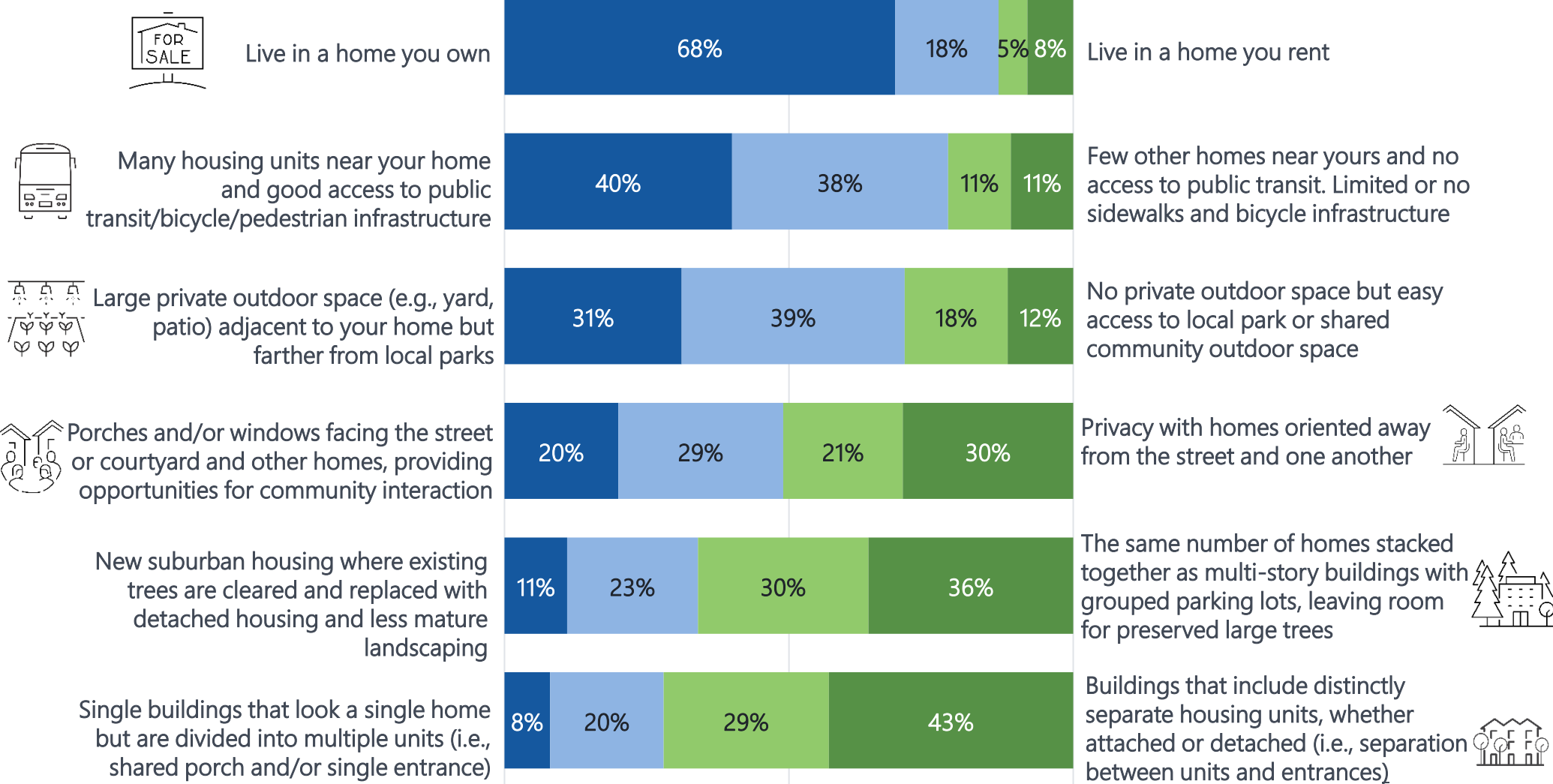
* Two-bedroom units were a popular option in the previous question. When asked about bedrooms alongside neighborhood features, respondents prioritized features like services, amenities, and safety.

Participants strongly preferred owning their homes and living closer together to gain access to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Which would you prefer?

Base: all respondents

Prefer left scenario     Prefer right scenario



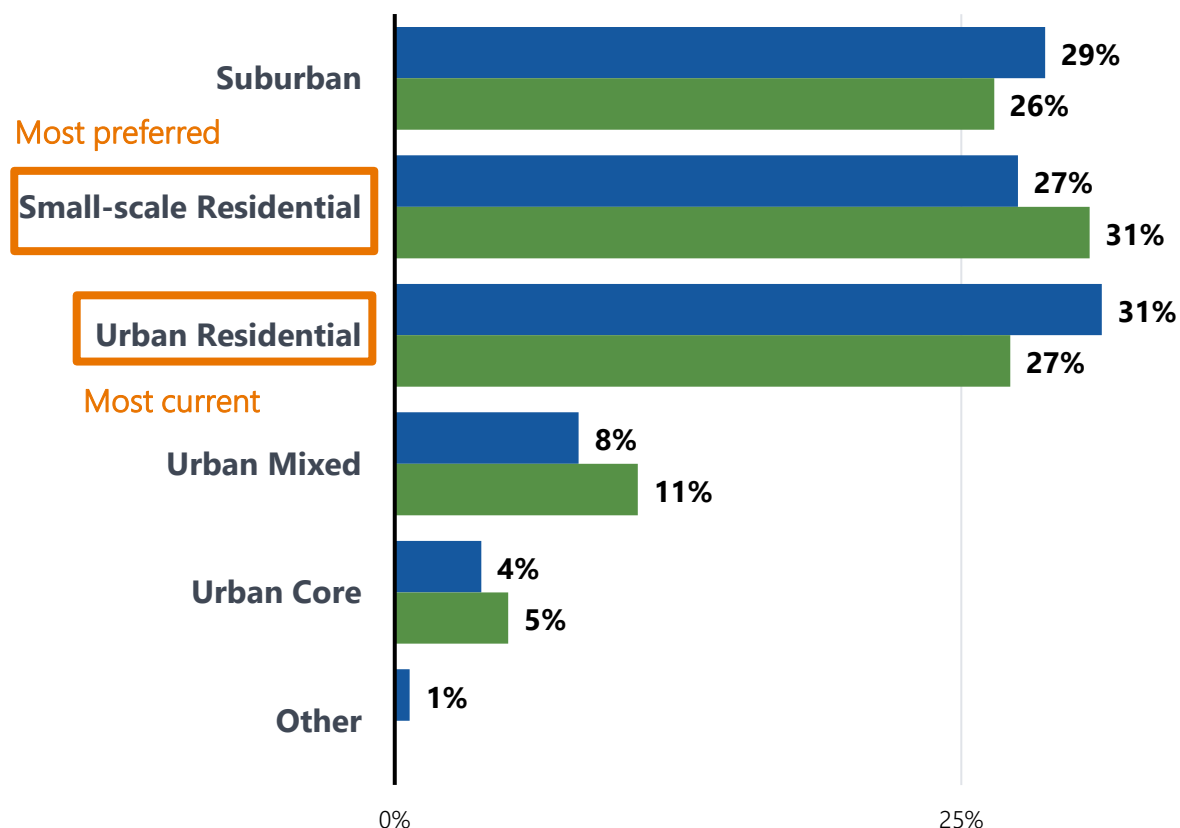
*Participants saw these questions in a randomized order.

Small-scale residential was the most preferred neighborhood type. Among those who preferred a neighborhood type other than their own, urban residential and small-scale residential top the list.

What type of neighborhood do you live in currently?
 What type of neighborhood in Bellingham would you prefer to live in?

Base: all respondents (n = 1,459; n=1,469)

■ Current neighborhood ■ Preferred neighborhood



Note: Participants could not select "Other" for the question "What type of neighborhood in Bellingham would you prefer to live in?"

See Appendix A for crosstabulation.

Suburban (up to 3 stories): Mix of mostly single-family homes with some duplexes or townhomes. Quieter feel with longer travel time to businesses, services, or amenities. Residential spaces are separate from commercial spaces, car or bike required for most trips and errands.

Small-scale Residential (up to 3 stories): Mix of single-family homes, triplexes, townhomes, and other small-scale homes. Corner store, coffee shop or park may be walking distance, but expect a drive, bus, or bike ride to larger services.

Urban Residential (up to 5 stories): Mostly residential area with a core of businesses and mixed-use buildings. Housing includes mix of single-family detached, townhomes, and small apartment or condominiums. Walkable, convenient access to transit and services with some car dependency.

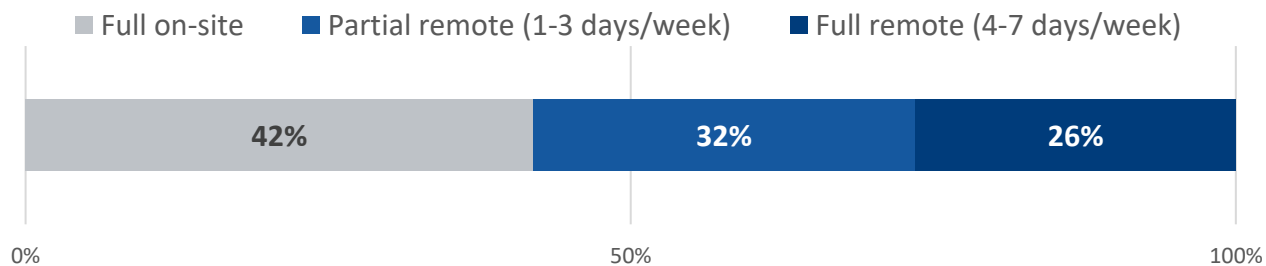
Urban Mixed (up to 5 stories): Mix of creative spaces, businesses, co-working spaces, performing arts venues, re-purposed industrial buildings, and other attractions, with some residential areas. Residential spaces are above businesses, art galleries, and restaurants. Walkable, convenient access to transit and services with some car dependency.

Urban Core (may be more than 5 stories): Vibrant and convenient hub close to nightlife, restaurants, and shops. Defined by denser mix of multistory housing above businesses and workplaces. Walkable and close to transit services with less car dependency.

Remote work: most employees work remotely for some part of the week.

On-site vs. remote work

Base: Respondents who are employed (n = 931)



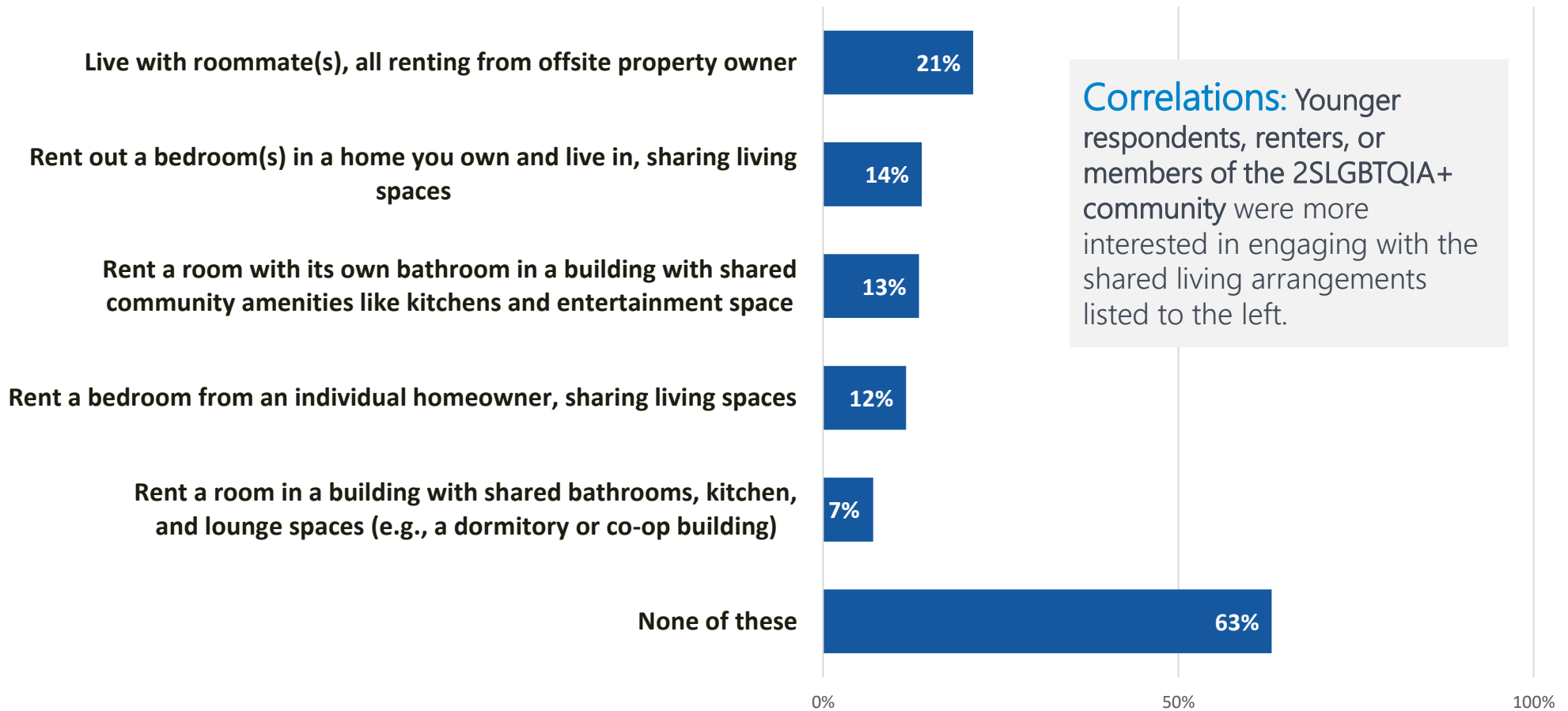
- Excluding overnight travel for work, 15% of employed respondents said they commute at least 20 miles outside of Bellingham at least once a week. This could be somewhere else in Whatcom County or further away, like Seattle.
- 39% of employed respondents said they did not work in Bellingham (other than at home/coffee shop/etc) at all in a typical week. This could include those working from home and places outside the city.

See Appendix B for details on employed respondents' travel patterns.

Some participants were interested in shared living arrangements that are uncommon in Bellingham today.

What kinds of living arrangements are you interested in?

Base: all respondents (n = 1,467)



Research Overview

Study overview

Bellingham conducted a survey to inform the City's housing work, particularly for The Bellingham Plan and related development code updates.

Purpose

Bellingham is growing, and access to housing for our current and future community is critical. To better inform plans to accommodate that growth, the City surveyed residents on their housing needs and priorities, including housing types, location, and cost.

Approach

The City hired a Seattle-based consulting firm PRR to conduct a statistically valid, online public opinion survey in Spanish and English, to:

- Gauge the community's satisfaction with their current living arrangements and identify factors contributing to dissatisfaction.
- Identify preferences and top priorities in neighborhood and residence features when looking for a new place to live.
- Explore alternatives to increase the supply and availability of housing in Bellingham.
- Encourage representation from community members who are generally underrepresented in City processes.



Research objectives

- Explore attitudes about the current supply of housing in Bellingham.
- Outline housing desires, needs, and priorities of the general public.
- Provide City decisionmakers with input from a representative cross-section of the public.

Survey recruitment method

PRR used two sampling methods to encourage equitable representation

Address-based sampling

Recruited 1,166 (79% of total respondents) respondents from a mailed invitation. Among the address-based sampling, 15 individuals responded to the Spanish invitation.

The project team mailed survey invitations (see Appendix B) to 10,000 randomly selected addresses within Bellingham city limits. Two weeks later, the team mailed a reminder postcard to all previously identified selected addresses. The following processes ensured the sample represented the population in the region for cross-county comparison:

1. Stratified, random sampling (based on the proportion of households in each census tract) to select 10,000 residential addresses.
2. Based on the adjusted distribution, the team applied the [EJSCREEN demographic index](#) to oversample census tracts that are more racially diverse and have lower household incomes.
 - For the census tracts that score 100-45%, oversampled by 30%.
 - For the census tracts that score 44-35%, oversampled by 25%.

Outreach to historically underserved communities

Recruited 309 respondents (21% of total respondents) through community outreach. Among community outreach respondents, nine individuals responded to the Spanish invitation.

To achieve a well-balanced survey sample that accurately reflects the Bellingham residents, the project team developed an outreach plan to reach historically marginalized or disenfranchised communities, which include:

- Residents with low to no income
- BIPOC community
- Renters
- Spanish speakers
- Unhoused residents
- Students

The project team contacted 34 community-based organizations (CBOs) and stakeholders, and of these, 11 community partners supported the survey recruitment through various channels. See Appendix C for the full community partner list. Community partnerships produced:

- **Ten** social media calls to action posts to promote the survey.
- Posting flyers at **four** local Mexican restaurants.
- **Two** in-person outreach events at Western Washington University and Birchwood Elementary School.

Among the 309 respondents who took the survey through outreach channels, 34 (11%) self-identified as Hispanic or Latina/o/x.

Survey methods

Final sample

SURVEY PERIOD



SURVEY COMPLETION



12%

response rate (mail invitation)

+/-3%

margin of error

10,000 randomly-selected households invited
274 invites returned undeliverable
12% Response rate= $1,166 / (10,000 - 274)$

The survey was available in English and Spanish.

Questionnaire design

The survey was available in both Spanish and English. Respondents could also complete the survey in English with a live interviewer upon request. See Appendix D for survey respondent demographics, including detailed survey mode and language distribution. Respondents were incentivized with an opportunity to win one of ten \$100 gift cards. Please see Appendix B for recruitment materials.

Data was collected through Alchemer, a professional online survey platform optimized for easy use on computers and mobile devices. See Appendix E for the survey instrument.

Weighting

Overall, the sample was close to representative across six Bellingham regions*. Our analysis weighted data on age and renter/owner factors to ensure the sample remained representative at the city-level and maintained consistent analysis procedures. See Appendix F for the final survey demographics comparison.



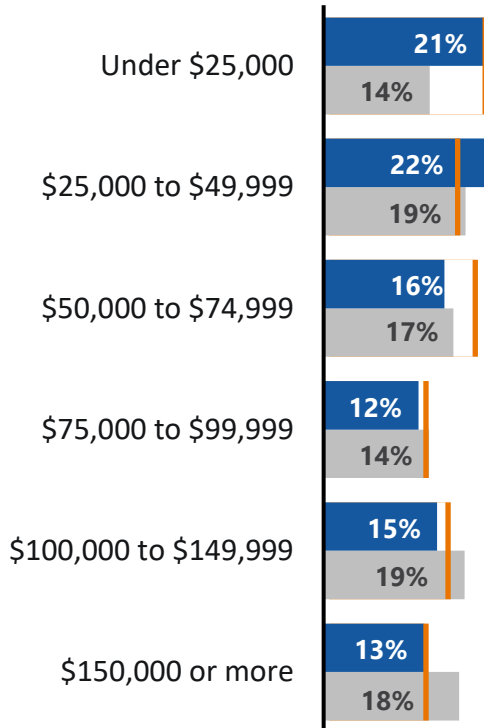
** The survey respondents identified their current location within six smaller geographic locations within Bellingham. We received representative respondents from all six locations. See Appendix G for the regional map.*

Survey Respondents Demographics

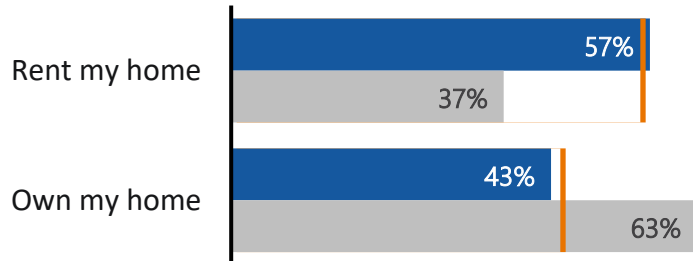
Survey respondent demographics

■ Weighted
 ■ Unweighted
 | | Census

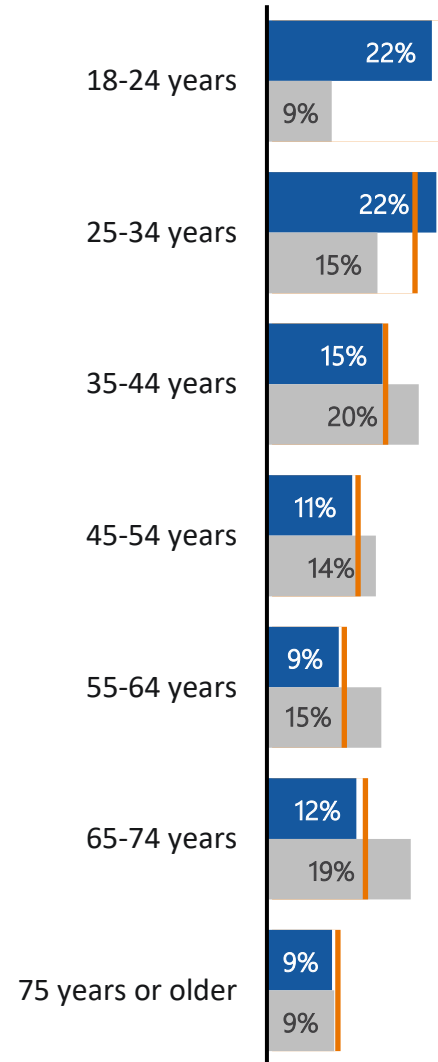
2022 Household Income (n = 1,311)



Housing status (n = 1,449)



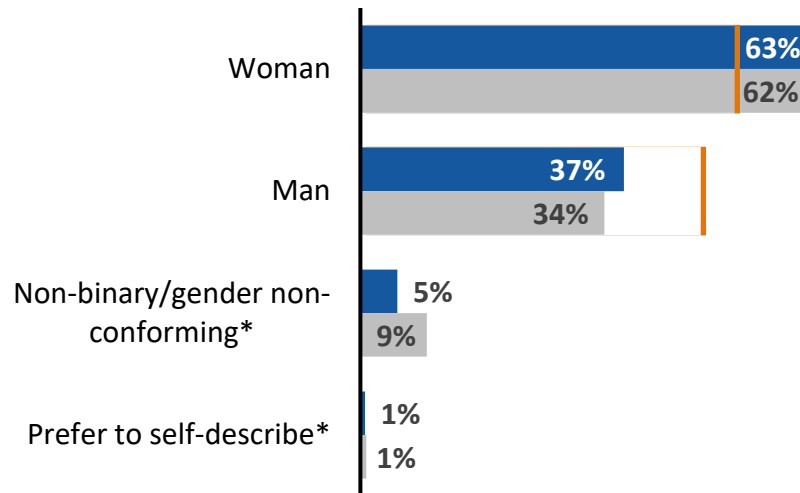
Age (n = 1,446)



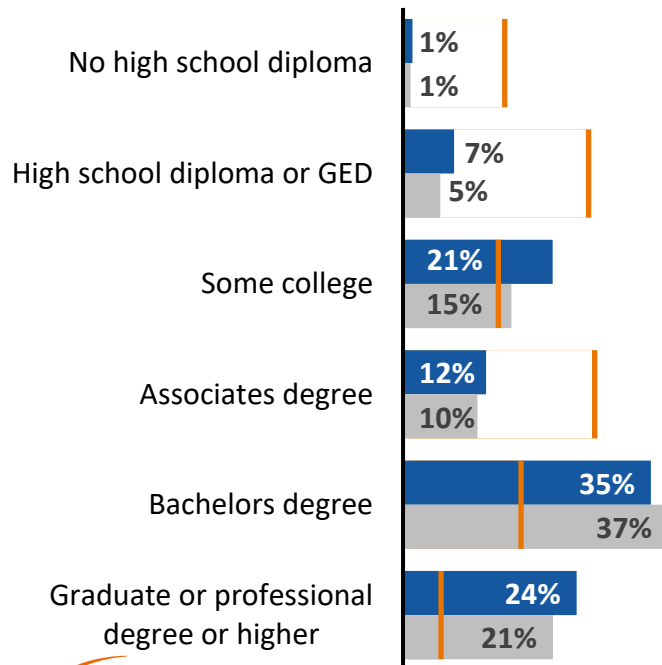
Survey respondent demographics

■ Weighted ■ Unweighted | Census

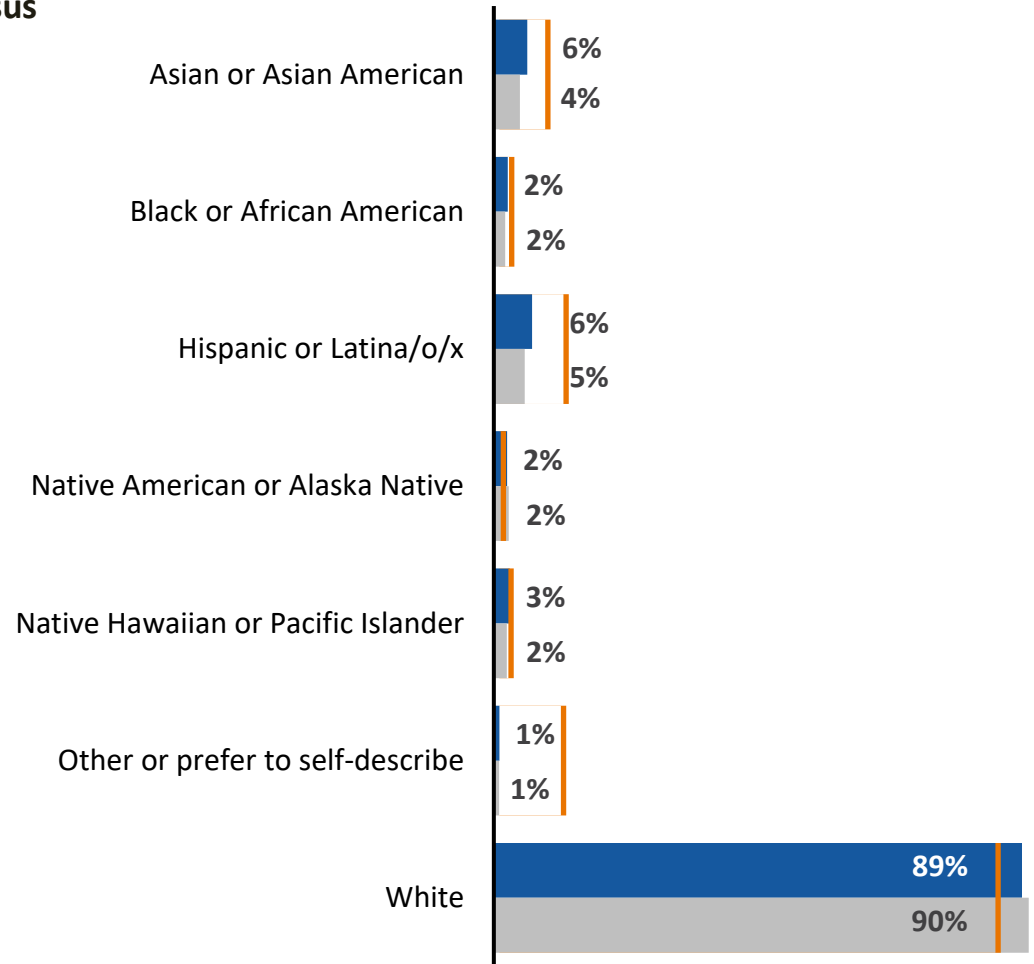
Gender (n = 1418)



Educational attainment (n = 1,443)



Race and ethnicity (n = 1,377)



- 22% of respondents are living on a fixed income
- 15% have a disability
- 18% are members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community
- 11% are experiencing poverty
- 19% are students

Due to rounding, or options where respondents could select multiple answers, percentages may not sum to 100%. Rounding occurs on all demographic slides.

**The US Census records gender as a binary male/female variable; thus, census comparisons for "non-binary/gender non-conforming" and "prefer to self-describe" are not available.*

Appendices

Appendix A: neighborhood preference matrix

What type of neighborhood do you live in currently?
What type of neighborhood would you prefer to live in?

Base: all respondents (n = 1,459 & 1,469)

Row totals indicate the proportion of all respondents who currently live in a given neighborhood type (e.g. 29% of respondents live in suburban neighborhoods).

Column totals indicate the proportion of all respondents who would prefer to live in a given neighborhood type (e.g. 5% of respondents would prefer to live in urban core neighborhoods).

Current Neighborhood	Total %	Preferred Neighborhood				
		Suburban	Small-scale Residential	Urban Residential	Urban Mixed	Urban Core
Suburban	29%	61%	20%	13%	4%	3%
Small-scale Residential	28%	13%	55%	23%	7%	2%
Urban Residential	31%	11%	24%	44%	15%	6%
Urban Mixed	8%	19%	18%	26%	33%	4%
Urban Core	4%	7%	14%	29%	10%	39%

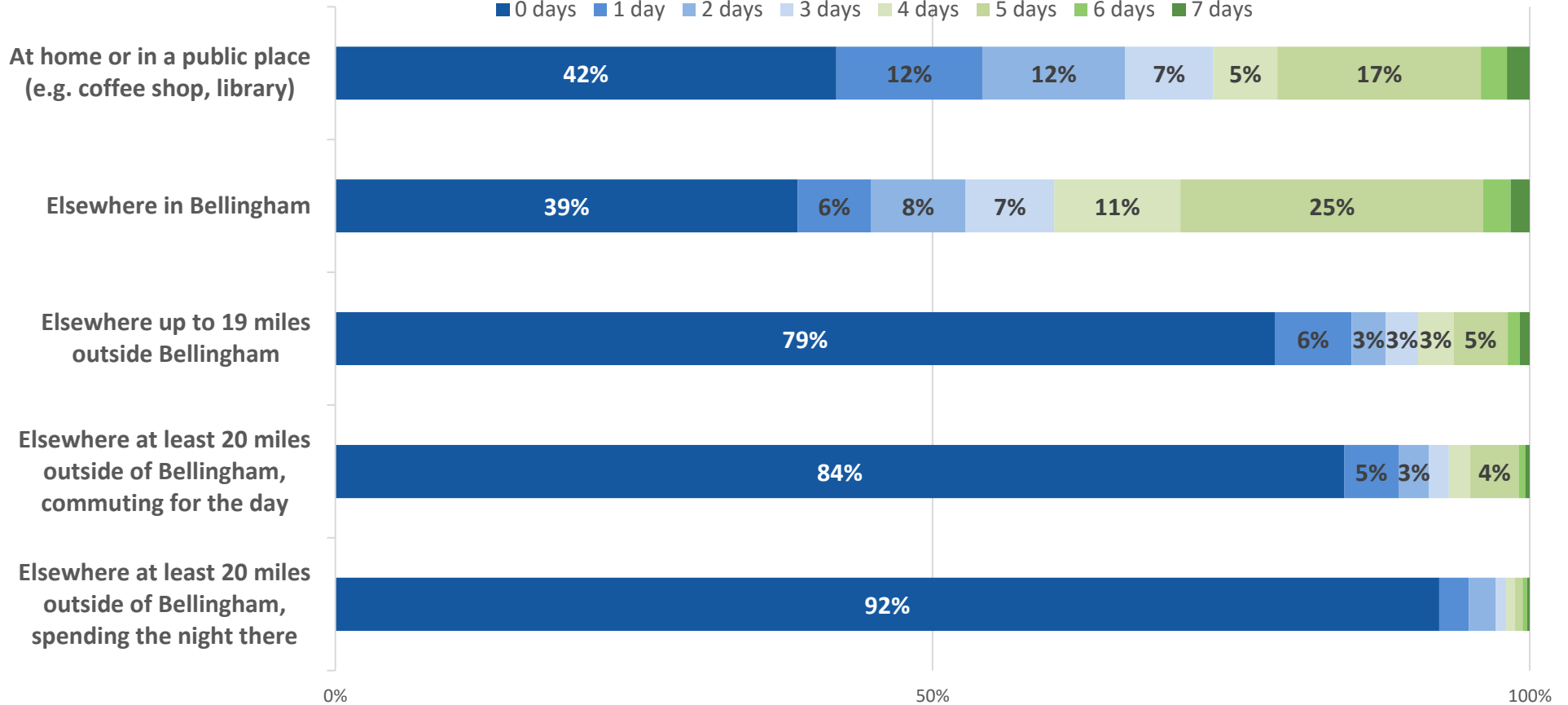
Cell percentages indicate the proportion of respondents currently living in the row neighborhood who would prefer to live in the column neighborhood type (e.g. 23% of respondents living in small-scale residential neighborhoods would prefer to live in urban residential neighborhoods).

Appendix B: Detailed travel patterns for employed respondents

How many days in a typical week do you work from each of the following locations?

Base: respondents who are employed (n = 931)

0 days 1 day 2 days 3 days 4 days 5 days 6 days 7 days



39% of employed respondents said they did not work in Bellingham (other than at home/coffee shop/etc) at all in a typical week. This could include those working from home and places outside the city.

Excluding overnight travel for work, 15% of employed respondents said they commute at least 20 miles outside of Bellingham at least once a week. This could be somewhere else in Whatcom County or further away like Seattle.



Appendix C: Survey invitation postcards

PC 1, Option 1

You have been selected for Bellingham's Housing Preference Survey!

The City evaluates housing needs and priorities regularly, but right now we are in our biggest push in 10 years. And we want to hear from you! Providing feedback should only take about 10 minutes, and you could win a \$100 gift card.

All voices matter, and our community includes a diversity of people. The City of Bellingham wants our housing plan to take many perspectives into account.

Please complete the survey by December 10, 2023, for a chance to win one of ten \$100 gift cards.

You can take the survey in one of the following ways:

- Online link: bellinghamsurvey.com/en
- QR code: Hover your smartphone or tablet camera over the image on the right
- You will need to enter this code to access the survey: XXXXX



If you have any questions or comments, please contact PRR (the independent firm the City of Bellingham hired to complete the research) at research@prbiz.com.

Thank you for your participation!

The Bellingham Plan Team
360.778.8310 • thebellinghamplan@cob.org
Planning & Community Development Dept.
City of Bellingham

¡Usted ha sido seleccionado/a para participar en la encuesta sobre preferencias de vivienda de Bellingham!

La ciudad de Bellingham evalúa periódicamente las necesidades y prioridades en materia de vivienda, pero ahora mismo nos encontramos en el mayor esfuerzo de los últimos 10 años. ¡Queremos conocer su opinión! Solo le llevará unos 10 minutos dar su opinión y tendrá la oportunidad de ganar una tarjeta de regalo de \$100.

Todas las opiniones son importantes y nuestra comunidad abarca una gran diversidad de personas. La ciudad de Bellingham quiere que este plan de vivienda tenga en cuenta varias perspectivas.

Realice la encuesta antes del 10 de diciembre de 2023 y tendrá la oportunidad de ganar una de diez tarjetas de regalo de \$100.

Puede realizar la encuesta de una de las siguientes maneras:

- En línea: bellinghamsurvey.com/es
- Con un código QR: Escanee el código que aparece a la derecha con la cámara de su teléfono o tableta
- Necesitará ingresar este código para acceder a la encuesta: XXXXX



Si tiene alguna pregunta o comentario, puede enviar un correo electrónico a PRR (la agencia independiente contratada por el Ayuntamiento de Bellingham para llevar a cabo el estudio): research@prbiz.com.

¡Gracias por su participación!

El equipo del Plan de Bellingham
360.778.8310 • thebellinghamplan@cob.org
Departamento de Planificación y Desarrollo Comunitario
Ayuntamiento de Bellingham

PC 2, front

Initial postcard, mailed on November 10th, 2023

Earlier in November, the City of Bellingham invited you to take a 10-minute survey to help plan for the future housing needs of the community. If you already completed the confidential survey, thank you! If not, please take the survey by **December 10, 2023** for a chance to win **one of ten \$100 gift cards**.



Go to: bellinghamsurvey.com/en
You will need to enter this code to access the survey: XXXXX

If you have any questions or comments, please contact PRR (the independent firm the City of Bellingham hired to complete the research) at research@prbiz.com or (206) 462-6385.

Thank you for your participation!

The City of Bellingham
Planning & Community Development Dept.
(360) 778-8300 • planning@cob.org



A principios de noviembre, la ciudad de Bellingham le invitó a realizar una encuesta de 10 minutos para planificar mejor las futuras necesidades de la comunidad en cuanto a vivienda. Si ya ha realizado la encuesta confidencial, le damos las gracias. Si no la ha realizado, hágalo antes del **10 de diciembre de 2023** y tendrá la oportunidad de ganar **una de diez tarjetas de regalo de \$100**.



En línea: bellinghamsurvey.com/es
Necesitará ingresar este código para acceder a la encuesta: XXXXX

Si tiene alguna pregunta o comentario, puede enviar un correo electrónico a PRR (la agencia independiente contratada por el gobierno de la ciudad de Bellingham para llevar a cabo el estudio) research@prbiz.com al (206) 462-6385.

¡Gracias por su participación!

El gobierno de la ciudad de Bellingham
Departamento de Planificación y
Desarrollo Comunitario
(360) 778-8300 • planning@cob.org

Reminder postcard, mailed on November 30th, 2023



Appendix C: Survey recruitment through outreach channels



Housing is essential to community health. And it's clear there's extraordinary need in our community. The City of Bellingham is conducting a survey to understand housing needs and plan for housing in our community.

Your voice can make a difference. What do you think about the future of housing in Bellingham? Those 18 and up who complete the survey can enter to win a \$100 gift card.

Follow the link to take the survey by December 10th:
Survey in English: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-en>
Survey in Spanish: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-es>

Photo credit: Brennan Drew



CALLING ALL WESTERN STUDENTS:

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN BELLINGHAM!

TAKE THE SURVEY BEFORE DEC. 10TH FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$100 GIFT CARD!

ENGLISH: 

SPANISH: 

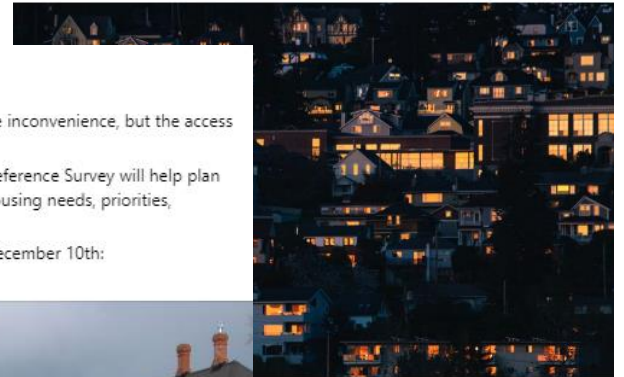


There's still time to help shape the future of housing in Bellingham!

The City of Bellingham is studying housing needs, priorities, and barriers to better prepare for the future of our community. Complete the survey by December 10th and enter to win a \$100 gift card!

In English: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-en>
En Español: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-es>

Photo credit: Brennan Drew



Ok, let's try this again! Apologies for the inconvenience, but the access code glitch has now been fixed! 🙏

The City of Bellingham's Housing Preference Survey will help plan for our community's future based on housing needs, priorities, locations, and costs.

You can help by taking this survey by December 10th:
h... See more



8

3 4

Like Comment

View more comments

Kina Kina
Great survey, I would love to not see sky rise apartments though. Those are not family friendly at all.

8w

Appendix C: Survey recruitment through outreach channels

The Whatcom Dream
November 14, 2023 · 🌐

The City of Bellingham's Housing Preference Survey will help plan for our community's future based on housing needs, priorities, locations, and costs.

You can help by taking this survey by December 10th: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-en>

PLUS, survey participants who are 18+ can enter to win a \$100 gift card!... [See more](#)




Kulshan Community Land Trust
November 15, 2023 · 🌐

What do you think about the future of housing in Bellingham?

The City of Bellingham is conducting a survey to understand housing needs and plan for housing in our community. Share your voice by completing the survey below by December 10th. Those 18 and over will be entered to win a \$100 gift card!

In English: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-en>
En Español: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-es>

Photo credit: Eric Vanvalkenburg



21

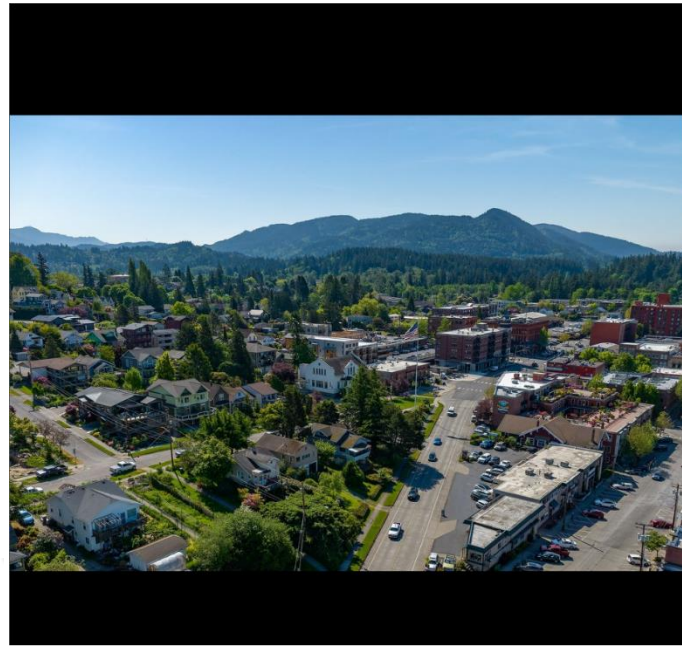
Like

11

5

Like

Comment



chuckanuthhealthfoundation

Bellingham is growing and access to housing for our current and future community is critical. You can help shape the future of housing in Bellingham by taking this short survey:


Survey in English: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-en>
Survey in Spanish: <https://bellingshamsurvey.com/cbo-es>

The City of Bellingham is studying housing needs, priorities, and barriers to better prepare for the future of our community. Complete the survey by December 10th and enter to win a \$100 gift card!

2w

December 4

Liked by katjams and 15 others



35wvu_oce

Calling all Western students: what do you think about the future of housing in Bellingham?

The City of Bellingham is conducting a survey to understand housing needs and plan for housing in our community. Those 18 and up who complete the survey can enter to win a \$100 gift card.

Follow the link in our bio to take the survey by December 10th! The survey is available in both English and Spanish.

Photo by Brennan Drew.

Image description: A graphic showing Bellingham houses lit up by sunset with dark blue shapes in the corners. Text reading "Help Plan for Bellingham's Future!", "Take the Survey", and blurbs on the \$100 gift card offer and the December 10th closing date. There is a small white OCE logo in the bottom right corner.

2w

View insights

Boost post

November 16

Liked by wvu_as and 12 others

Add a comment...

Appendix D: List of community partners

Thank you to our community partners for helping to share the survey:

Associated Students of WWU

Bellingham School District

Chuckanut Health Foundation

El Agave

El Sueñito Brewing Company

Kulshan Community Land Trust

Lighthouse Mission Ministries

Tacos El Tule

Taco Lobo

The Whatcom Dream

Western Washington University

Appendix E: Survey mode and language distribution

Recruitment method	English link	Spanish link
Postcard (address-based)	1,151	15
Outreach	300	9

Language	Number of responses
English	1,463
Spanish	12

** Participants could switch the survey language between English and Spanish at any time. Thus, while 24 participants accessed the survey using a Spanish-language link, only 12 participants completed the survey in Spanish.*

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

Bellingham Housing Preference Survey

1. Are you 18 years or older? *

- Yes
- No

2. Please enter the **access code** provided in your survey invitation.

3. What part of Bellingham do you live in? *

- 1 (landmarks in this area include Birchwood Center, Cornwall Park, and Bellingham Technical College)
- 2 (landmarks in this area include Western Washington University, Maritime Heritage Park, and downtown)
- 3 (landmarks in this area include Fairhaven, Taylor Dock, and Boulevard Park)
- 4 (landmarks in this area include Whatcom Community College, Cordata Park, and Sunset Square)
- 5 (landmarks in this area include Roosevelt Park, Lake Whatcom, and Barkley Village)
- 6 (landmarks in this area include Civic Stadium, Lake Padden Park, and Kulshan Middle School)
- I don't currently live in Bellingham, but would like to.

4. Which of the following best describes your living arrangement?

- Rent my home
- Own my home
- Other arrangement (please specify):

5. Including yourself, how many people are in your household? Only include people you would plan to relocate with.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more

6. Do you have any additional roommates that live with you now?

- Yes
- No

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

7. In addition to adults between 18 and 64, does your household include anyone from the following groups? (Please select all that apply):

- Adults age 65+
- Children under 5 years of age
- Children from 5 to 18 years of age
- None of these

8. We want to show survey questions that are relevant to you. Please select all that apply to you in a typical week.

- Employed full-time (including self-employed and/or working multiple part-time jobs)
- Employed part-time (including self-employed)
- Student full-time
- Student part-time
- Unemployed or furloughed
- Retired
- Unable to work or not looking for employment (for example, due to a disability or caregiver role)
- Other (please tell us more):

9. Do you go to college or university in Bellingham?

- Yes
- No

10. When choosing the ideal location to live, please select all the options that are important to you. Please select at least three options in this question. *

- Is close to small corner stores and/or restaurants
- Is close to neighborhood services such as drug stores/dry cleaners/larger grocery stores
- Is close to jobs
- Is close to parks/open space and/or a trail system
- Feels safe
- Is quiet
- Is close to K-12 schools
- Is close to college/university
- Is close to a bus stop/public transit
- Is safe for bicyclists and/or pedestrians
- Is close to healthcare services
- Is close to friends or family in Bellingham
- Is close to senior services or community services
- Is close to childcare

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

11. When choosing the ideal place to live, please select all of the options that are important to you. Please select at least three options in this question. *

- Studio unit
- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4+ bedrooms
- Has an office space in addition to the bedrooms listed above
- No shared floors or ceilings with neighbors
- No shared walls with neighbors
- One-story home and/or accessibility features
- Community spaces (example - gym/pool/party room)
- Private yard/outdoor space
- Shared yard/outdoor space
- Home feels spacious
- Has a dedicated parking space
- Has an easily accessible workshop or storage area (for bikes and/or seasonal items)
- Quality of construction and condition

13. Below are the housing and neighborhood preferences you said were important to you in the previous questions. Please drag the top five most important ones to the right.

Drag items from the left-hand list into the right-hand list to order them.

- One bedroom
(do not select if a studio unit is acceptable) →
- Additional bedroom →
- Additional bedroom →
- Additional bedroom →

Note: all other response options were piped in based on respondents' selections in questions 10 and 11.

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

14. What best describes your current living arrangement?

- Single family detached house
- Townhouse, duplex, triplex, fourplex, basement unit, or attached dwelling unit (i.e. a separate living space within an existing home)
- Backyard cottage or detached additional dwelling unit (i.e. a separate living space on the same property of an existing home)
- Apartment or condo building with more than four units
- Apartment or condo building with a specific tenant population (e.g. senior living, student residence hall)
- Manufactured housing community
- Home on wheels (e.g. mobile tiny home, van or camper living, etc.)
- Unhoused
- Other (please specify):

15. What type of neighborhood do you live in currently?

- Suburban
- Small-scale Residential
- Urban Residential
- Urban Mixed
- Urban Core
- Other (please specify):

16. What type of neighborhood in Bellingham would you prefer to live in?

- Suburban
- Small-scale Residential
- Urban Residential
- Urban Mixed
- Urban Core

17. How satisfied are you currently with your housing situation?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

18. What are the main reasons you are not satisfied?

- Not close to small corner stores, cafes, and/or restaurants
- Not close to neighborhood services like drug stores, dry cleaners, and/or larger grocery stores
- Not close to jobs
- Not close to a park, open space, or trail system
- Doesn't feel safe
- Is too loud
- Doesn't fit in my budget

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

- Not close to K-12 schools
- Not close to college/university
- Not close to a bus stop/public transit
- Not safe to bike to, around, and from
- Not close to healthcare services
- Not close to friends or family in Bellingham
- Not close to senior services or community services
- Not close to childcare
- Not enough bedrooms
- Doesn't have an office space
- Shared floors/ceilings with neighbors
- Shared walls with neighbors
- Not enough accessibility features
- No community spaces (e.g. gym, pool, party room, etc.)
- No private yard/outdoor space
- No shared yard/outdoor space
- Home doesn't feel spacious
- Doesn't have a dedicated parking space
- Doesn't have an easily accessible workshop or storage area (e.g., for bikes, seasonal items)
- Poor quality of construction or condition
- Other (please specify)

Trade-off/Housing types

19. Which scenario would you prefer?

	Prefer scenario 1	Somewhat prefer scenario 1	Somewhat prefer scenario 2	Prefer scenario 2	
Single buildings that look like they could be a single home but are divided into multiple units (i.e., shared porch and/or single entrance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Buildings that include distinctly separate housing units, whether attached or detached (i.e., separation between units and entrances)
Porches and/or windows facing the street or courtyard and other homes, providing opportunities for community interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Privacy with homes oriented away from the street and one another
Many housing units near your home and good access to public transit and/or bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Few other homes near yours and no access to public transit and limited or no sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure
Live in a home you own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Live in a home you rent
Large private outdoor space (e.g., yard, patio) adjacent to your home but farther from local parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	No private outdoor space but easy access to local park or shared community outdoor space
New suburban housing where existing trees are cleared and replaced with detached houses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	The same number of homes stacked together as multi-story residential buildings with grouped parking lots

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

detached housing
and less mature
landscaping

lots, leaving room
for several
clusters of
preserved large
trees

20. What kinds of living arrangements are you interested in within the next few years? Select all that interest you, recognizing the potential cost savings and impacts of these types of arrangements.

- Rent a bedroom from an individual homeowner, sharing living spaces
- Rent out a bedroom(s) in a home you own and live in, sharing living spaces
- Live with roommate(s), all renting from offsite property owner
- Rent a room with its own bathroom in a building with shared community amenities like kitchens and entertainment space
- Rent a room in a building with shared bathrooms, kitchen, and lounge spaces (e.g., a dormitory or co-op building)
- None of these

21. How many people in your household (including yourself) work from home at least once a week? Do not include roommates.

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3+

22. How many days in a typical week do you work from each of the following locations?

	0 days	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days
At home or in a public place (e.g. coffee shop, library)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elsewhere within Bellingham	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elsewhere up to 19 miles outside Bellingham	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elsewhere at least 20 miles outside of Bellingham, commuting for the day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elsewhere at least 20 miles outside of Bellingham, spending the night there	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enter another option	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. How many years have you lived in Bellingham?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8+ years

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

24. What are the reason(s) you recently moved to Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. enjoy Bellingham's leisure activities)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

25. What are the reason(s) you would be interested in moving to Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. enjoy Bellingham's leisure activities)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

26. In the past year, have you considered moving out of Bellingham?

- Yes
- No

27. What are the reason(s) for you to consider leaving Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. prefer leisure activities elsewhere)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

28. Did we miss anything? Is there anything else about housing you would like to share with the City of Bellingham?

29. What gender(s) do you identify with? Select all that apply

- Woman
 - Man
 - Non-binary/gender non-conforming
 - Prefer to self-describe:
-
- Prefer not to disclose

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

30. Age group:

- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65-74 years
- 75 years or older
- Prefer not to disclose

31. What race(s)/ethnicity(ies) do you most closely identify with? Select all that apply.

- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latina/o/x
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Native American or Alaska Native
- White
- Other or prefer to self-describe:
- Prefer not to disclose

32. Do you self-identify as any of the following? Please select all that apply.

- A person with a disability
- A recent immigrant to the US (within the last 5 years)
- A student
- An international student
- A member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community
- A person who is a migrant worker
- A person experiencing poverty
- A person experiencing homelessness
- A person living on a fixed income
- A person with limited mobility
- An elderly person
- Prefer not to disclose

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

24. What are the reason(s) you recently moved to Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. enjoy Bellingham's leisure activities)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

25. What are the reason(s) you would be interested in moving to Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. enjoy Bellingham's leisure activities)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

26. In the past year, have you considered moving out of Bellingham?

- Yes
- No

27. What are the reason(s) for you to consider leaving Bellingham? Please select all that apply.

- Personal life event (e.g. need to care for a parent)
- Professional opportunity (e.g. got a new job)
- Personal preference (e.g. prefer leisure activities elsewhere)
- Economic motivation (e.g. cost of housing)
- Other (please tell us more):

28. Did we miss anything? Is there anything else about housing you would like to share with the City of Bellingham?

29. What gender(s) do you identify with? Select all that apply

- Woman
 - Man
 - Non-binary/gender non-conforming
 - Prefer to self-describe:
-
- Prefer not to disclose

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

33. What is your highest level of education completed?

- No high school diploma
- High school diploma or GED
- Some college
- Associate's degree, occupational or academic
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctoral degree
- Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to disclose

34. What was your total household income before taxes in 2022? Your best guess is fine.

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer

35. What's your 5-digit zip code?

36. What county do you live in?

- Adams County
- Asotin County
- Benton County
- Chelan County
- Clallam County
- Clark County
- Columbia County
- Cowlitz County
- Douglas County
- Ferry County
- Franklin County
- Garfield County
- Grant County
- Grays Harbor County
- Island County
- Jefferson County
- King County
- Kitsap County
- Kittitas County
- Klickitat County
- Lewis County
- Lincoln County
- Mason County
- Okanogan County
- Pacific County
- Pend Oreille County
- Pierce County
- San Juan County
- Skagit County
- Skamania County
- Snohomish County
- Spokane County
- Stevens County
- Thurston County
- Wahkiakum County
- Walla Walla County
- Whatcom County
- Whitman County
- Yakima County
- None of the above

Appendix F: Survey Instrument

37. Your feedback is important to us. What's the best way for the City to let you know about opportunities to provide your feedback? Please select your top three:

- Posters/flyers in the community
- Tabling at events
- Social media
- News outlets
- Emails
- Through your neighborhood school, neighborhood association, or other neighborhood group?
- Other (please specify):

38. Thank you for participating in this survey! Do you want to enter your name and email for a chance to win one of ten \$100 gift cards?

- No
- Yes (you will be redirected to a new page to separate your survey answers from your contact information).

Appendix G: Demographic comparison between Census and survey

	Census	Unweighted respondents	<i>Difference</i>	Weighted	<i>Difference</i>
Age Group					
18-24 years	23%	9%	-14%	22%	-1%
25-34 years	19%	15%	-5%	22%	3%
35-44 years	15%	20%	5%	15%	0%
45-54 years	12%	14%	3%	11%	0%
55-64 years	10%	15%	5%	9%	0%
65-74 years	13%	19%	6%	12%	-1%
75 years or older	9%	9%	0%	9%	0%
Income					
Under \$25,000	21%	14%	-7%	21%	0%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	17%	19%	1%	22%	5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20%	17%	-3%	16%	-4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%	14%	1%	12%	-1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	16%	19%	3%	15%	-1%
\$150,000 or more	13%	18%	5%	13%	0%
Race/Ethnicity					
Asian or Asian American	9%	4%	-4%	6%	-3%
Black or African American	3%	2%	-1%	2%	0%
Hispanic or Latina/o/x	12%	5%	-7%	6%	-5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Native American or Alaska Native	2%	2%	0%	3%	0%
White	84%	90%	6%	89%	4%

Appendix H: Regions



Region 1 (14% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Birchwood Center, Cornwall Park, and Bellingham Technical College

Region 2 (26% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Western Washington University, Maritime Heritage Park, and downtown

Region 3 (15% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Fairhaven, Taylor Dock, and Boulevard Park

Region 4 (11% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Whatcom Community College, Cordata Park, and Sunset Square

Region 5 (19% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Roosevelt Park, Lake Whatcom, and Barkley Village

Region 6 (12% of respondents): landmarks in this area include Civic Stadium, Lake Padden Park, and Kulshan Middle School

(3% of respondents stated that they do not currently live in Bellingham)