

# COVENTRY HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY RESULTS

## SUMMARY REPORT

**To:** The Honorable Coventry Town Council  
**From:** Doug McLean, Director of Planning and Development  
**Date:** January 8, 2026

### INTRODUCTION

Coventry Planning Staff conducted a Housing Needs Survey to gather the community's thoughts, concerns, and suggestions on various housing issues in Town. The survey was intended to understand local perspectives amidst the current housing challenges being faced across the State with rising prices and limited inventory.

Planning Staff officially launched the survey with a Facebook post on **July 28, 2025** and officially closed on **December 5, 2025**. Over those four+ months, Planning Staff used several traditional and digital means to spread the word to Coventry residents.

The survey was promoted through a range of approaches, such as:

- Encouraging survey participation on multiple municipal-run Facebook pages,
- Providing online links to the survey on the Planning Department webpage and Town newsfeed,
- Direct advertisement in *The Reminder*,
- Providing a flyer in Town newsletters and brochures,
- Posting flyers in popular restaurants and storefronts,
- Coordinating with community organizations to promote the survey on their social media platforms,
- Promoted the survey at open house nights at Coventry schools,
- Including a survey flyer to parents of incoming students with back-to-school packets,
- Coordinating with Coventry school administrators and faculty to share the survey in their back-to-school presentations,
- Attending community events such as the National Night Out and the Community Yard Sale, and
- Offering a \$50 Amazon gift as a raffle prize amongst all survey respondents.

These promotional efforts were largely successful and the survey ultimately received **353 total responses**, surpassing previous surveys conducted by the Town's Planning Staff on other topics in 2019 and 2022. The 353 responses result in a margin of error of approximately 5%, which means the sample size is a reasonable statistical representation of Coventry.

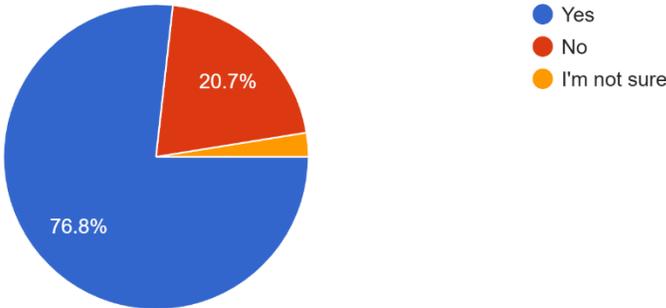
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

The survey responses indicate that housing availability and affordability is at the forefront of the minds of Coventry residents, reflecting:

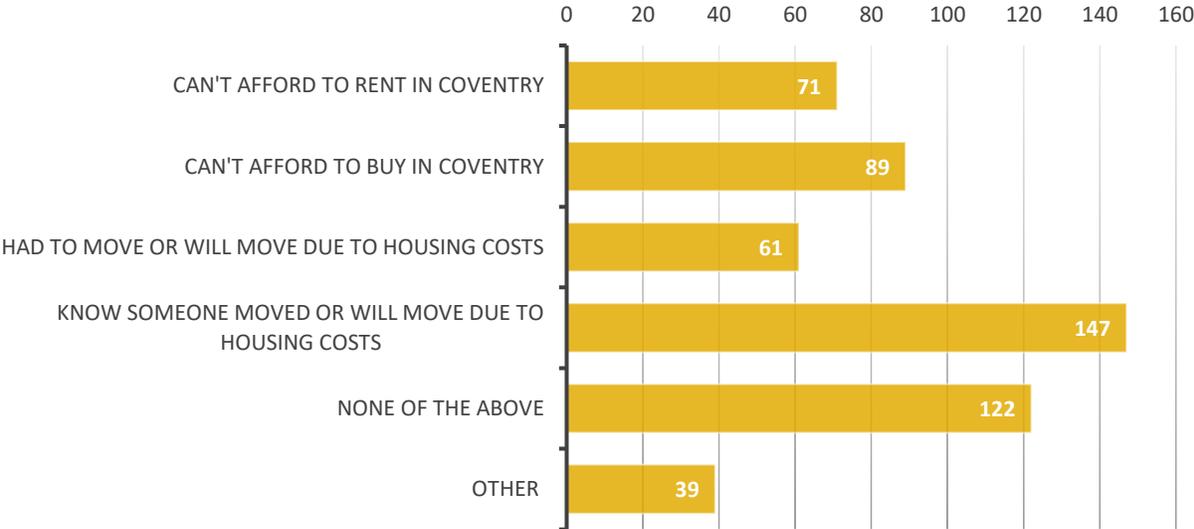
- A clear concern about the costs of housing, especially rising rents and home prices,
- A desire for diverse housing options, such as duplexes, multi-family housing, accessory dwelling units, and housing for protected groups (e.g. age-friendly housing),
- Broad support for affordable housing, including both homeownership and rental units,
- Strong support for the adaptive reuse of underutilized or vacant commercial buildings and plazas, such as the old K-Mart lot on Tiogue Avenue or Garland Pen Factory building on South Main Street, as affordable housing,
- A desire for walkability and connectivity as important neighborhood characteristics – e.g., proximity to public transit, shopping centers, employment, and schools,
- A desire to maintain Coventry’s character through the preservation of existing open space and green areas, and
- General support for new housing development in established villages and major roadway corridors in the Eastern sections of Coventry, such as Centre of New England or Route 3, with existing public infrastructure.

# SURVEY RESULTS - HOUSING SECTION

**Question #1: Is the cost of housing a concern to you?**

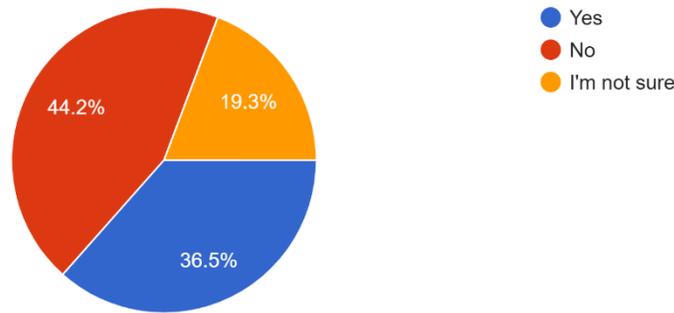


**Question #2. Do any of the following apply to you? (check all that apply)**

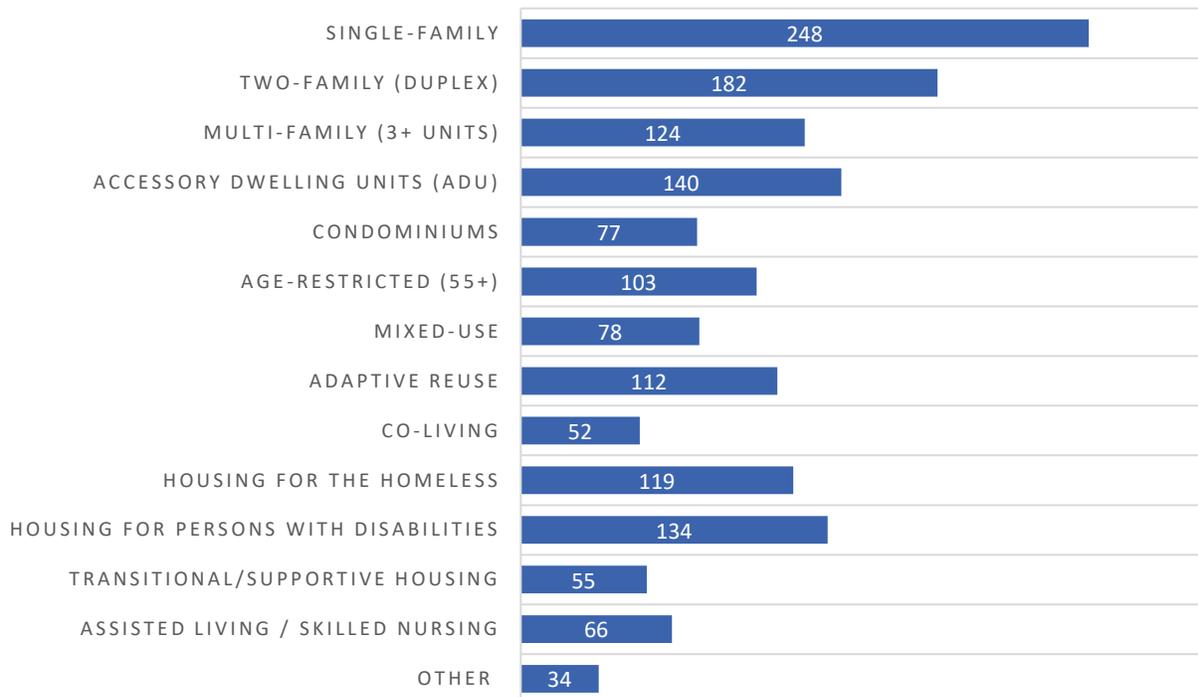


Question #2 offered a write-in reply under the category of “Other.” The write-ins for “Other” generally reflected housing stress or instability not directly tied to affordability alone, such as difficulty finding housing, concerns about future cost increases, or broader economic pressures (e.g., taxes, utilities, or maintenance costs). Some respondents also described indirect impacts, such as delayed household formation or reliance on family housing arrangements, which were not explicitly captured by the listed options.

**Question #3. Do you believe Coventry offers enough housing options of different building types for its residents? (e.g. two-family, multi-family, apartments, mixed use, etc.)**

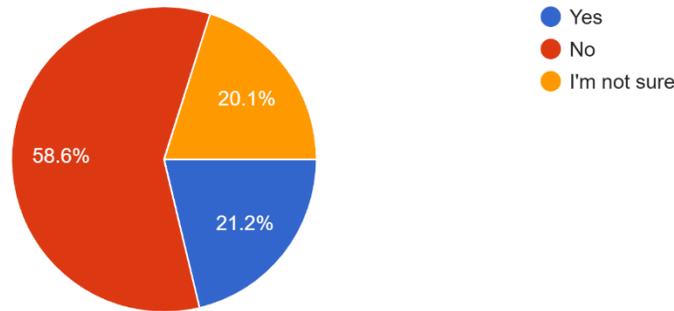


**Question #4. What types of housing do you think are important to meet residents' needs in the future? (check all that apply)**

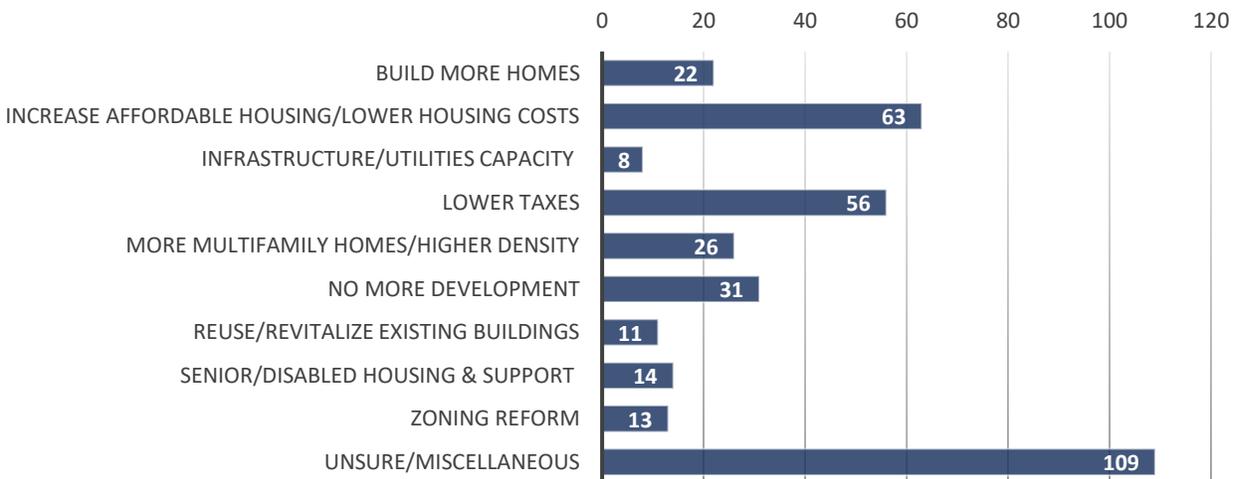


The “Other” write-in responses to Question #4 most often identified housing forms not explicitly listed, including townhouses, smaller starter homes, cottage-style housing, mobile/manufactured homes, or flexible single-family homes designed for aging in place. Some respondents emphasized housing characteristics (e.g., affordability, smaller lot sizes, rental vs. ownership) rather than specific building types, making them incompatible with the predefined categories.

**Question #5. Do you believe Coventry offers enough sustainable housing prices for its residents?**



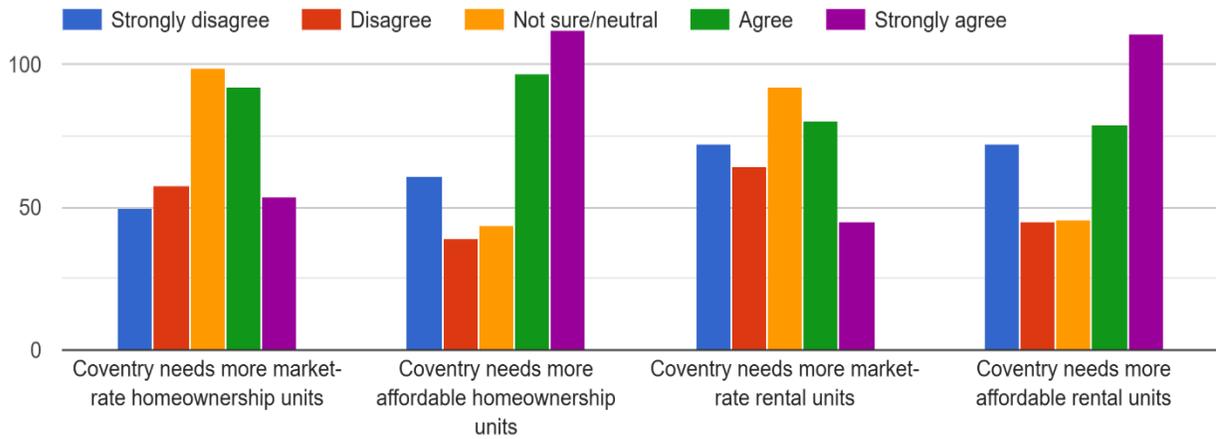
**Question #6. OPEN-ENDED: What other action or strategy do you think would be best suited to improve housing affordability and/or availability in Coventry?**



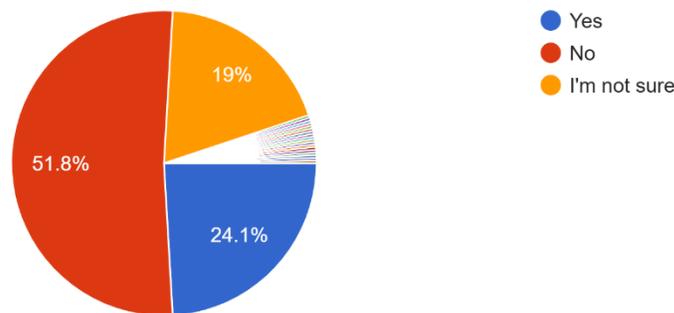
The open-ended nature of Question #6 invited residents to write about possible actions or strategies to improve housing affordability and availability in town. These responses were thematically coded by Planning Staff into ten (10) groups, as shown on the graph. Respondents emphasized affordability as the core housing challenge in Coventry, especially rising rents and home prices. Additionally, respondents linked housing growth to infrastructure readiness – particularly sewer, water, roads, and schools – and expressed concern that Coventry is not equipped to support additional development.

Respondents also expressed support for the reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings and parcels, particularly former commercial or industrial properties. Respondents also identified zoning as a lever for addressing housing needs – suggestions ranged from modest adjustments like ADUs to structural changes, such as: update zoning codes to increase density, enable or incentivize mixed-use development, reducing zoning restrictions, reducing minimum lot sizes, reducing parking requirements, and streamlining permitting and approval processes.

**Question #7. In your opinion, does Coventry need more homeownership units or rental units?**

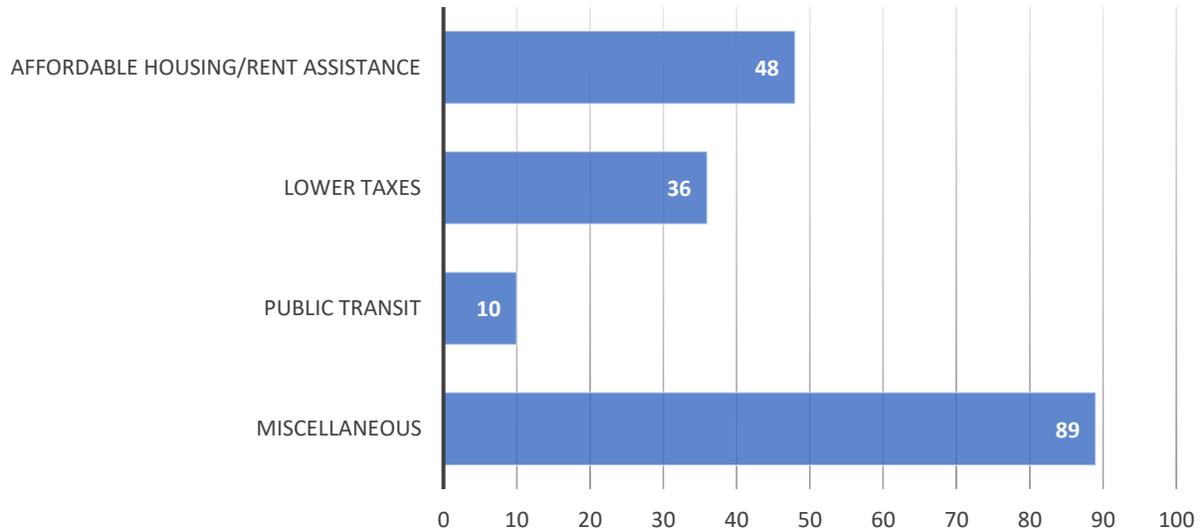


**Question #8. Do you need or anticipate needing support or opportunity to stay in Coventry?**



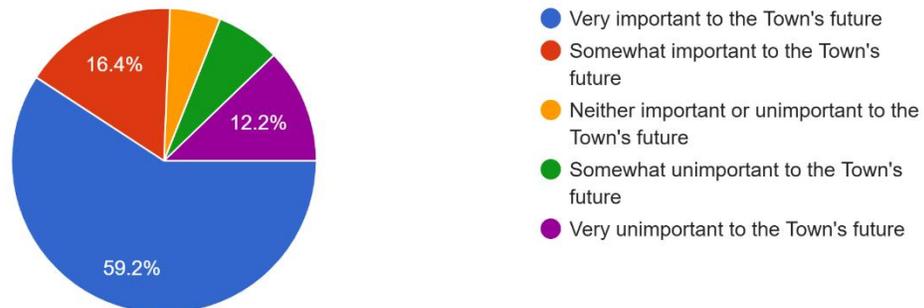
The write-in responses to Question #8 generally did not provide an affirmative or negative answer. Instead, they often included qualified statements, such as “it depends,” explanations of personal circumstances, or commentary on the question itself. In several cases, respondents expressed uncertainty about future conditions or policy outcomes rather than a lack of opinion.

**Question #9. OPEN-ENDED: Please expand upon your reasons for your answer in the previous question. What kind of support will you need to stay in town? (e.g. transportation, ability to rent out rooms, in-home care, etc.)**

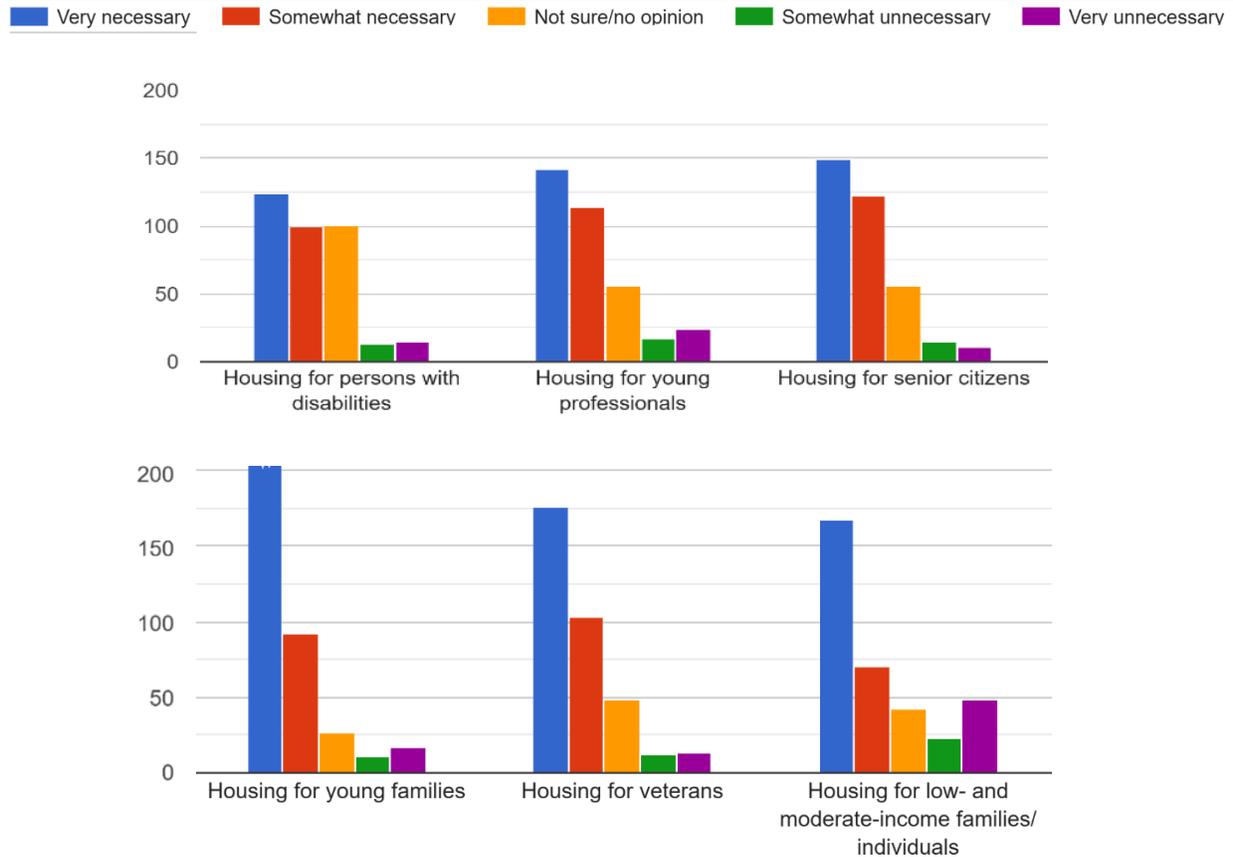


The open-ended nature of Question #9 invited residents to write about support needed to stay in Coventry. These responses were thematically coded by Planning Staff into four (4) groups, as shown on the graph. Responses support interventions such as rent assistance and affordable housing options, particularly for working families and residents on fixed incomes. They framed assistance as a way to prevent displacement and homelessness.

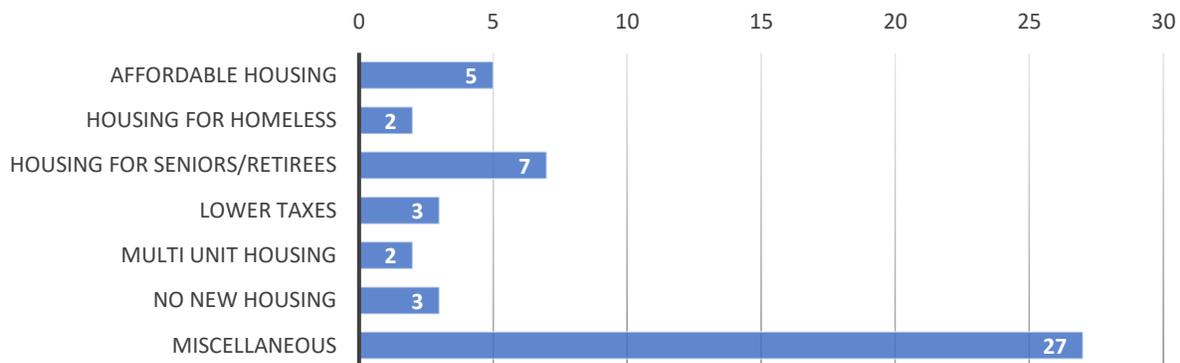
**Question #10. I believe affordable housing in Coventry is...**



**Question #11. What housing options are needed most?**

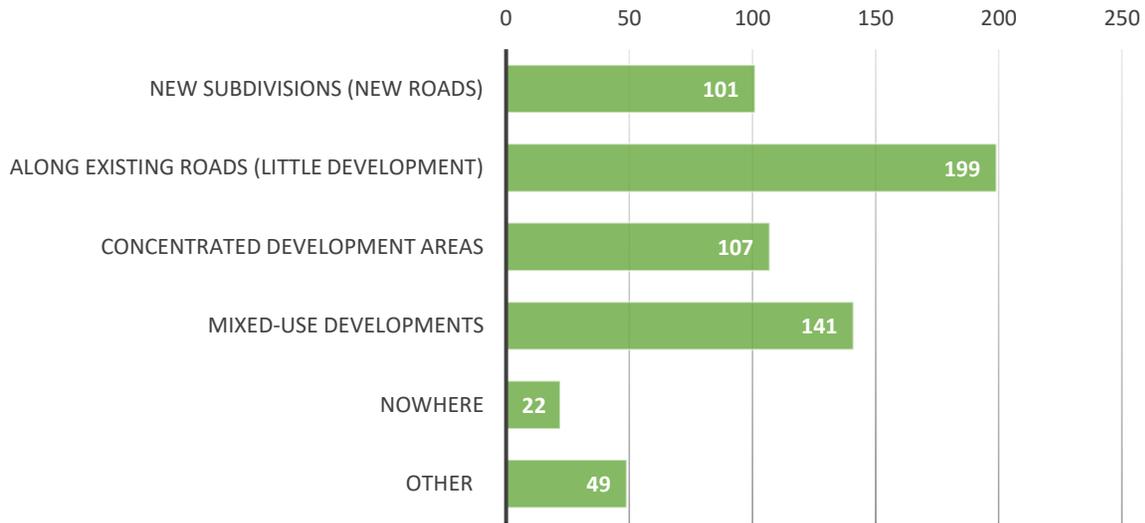


**Question #12. OPEN-ENDED: If there is an additional housing option that was not addressed in the previous question that you feel is needed, please specify. How necessary is this option?**



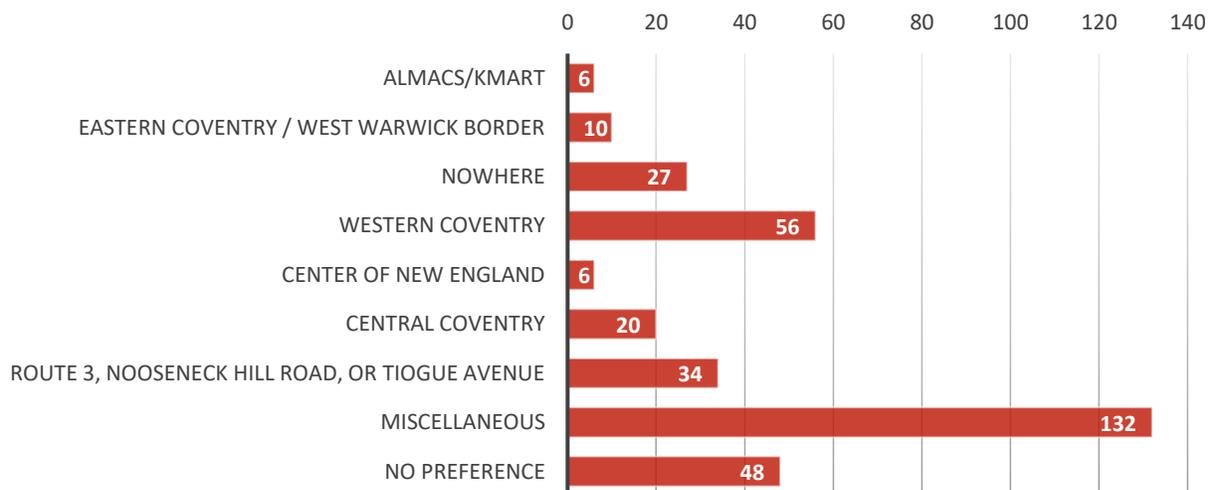
The open-ended nature of Question #12 invited residents to write about additional housing options not listed in question 11. These responses were thematically coded by Planning Staff into seven (7) groups, as shown on the graph. Some respondents opined that Coventry needs more affordable age-friendly housing – such as assisted living, retirement communities, and shared living. The responses categorized as “other” suggested farm land as a housing option, handicap accessible housing, “housing within a safe walking distance to shops, stores,” co-op lands, etc.

**Question #13. Generally, where would you like to see new housing built? (select all that apply)**



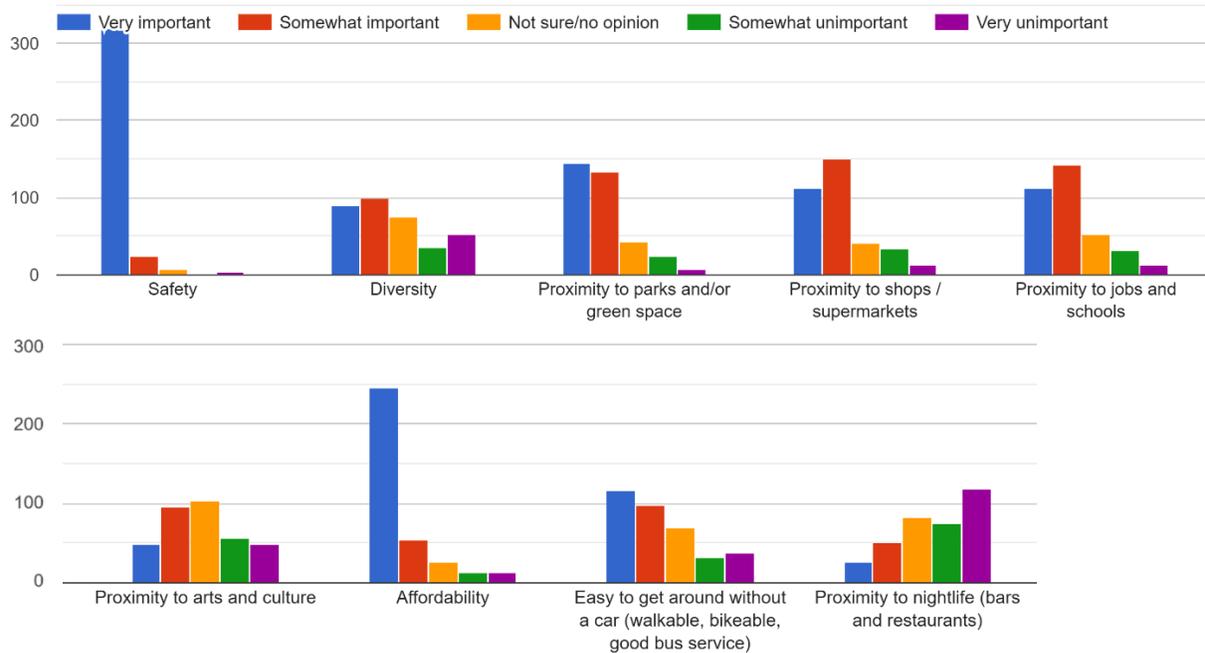
The “Other” write-in responses to Question #13 typically focused on locational preferences defined by impacts rather than geography, such as housing near employment, transit access, schools, or existing infrastructure. Some respondents stressed environmental sensitivity and preservation of rural character.

**Question #14. OPEN-ENDED: In what areas/villages or Coventry would you like to see future housing development?**

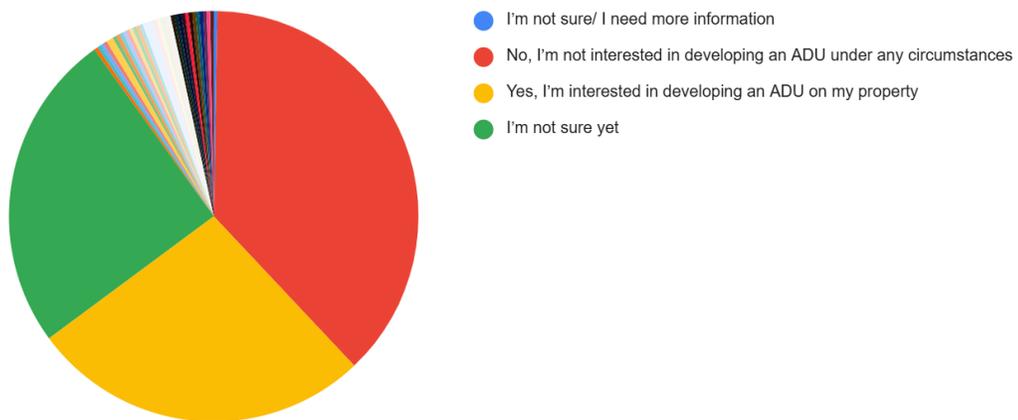


The responses to this open-ended question were thematically coded by Planning Staff into nine (9) groups, as shown on the graph. Those responses coded as “No preference” generally agreed that development should occur anywhere/everywhere there is open space, all villages/areas of town, vacant lots, or empty buildings and plazas. “Miscellaneous” responses identified particular areas of Coventry as suitable for development, most often pointing to other major roadway corridors where commercial activity and infrastructure already exist.

**Question #15. What neighborhood characteristics are most important to you?**

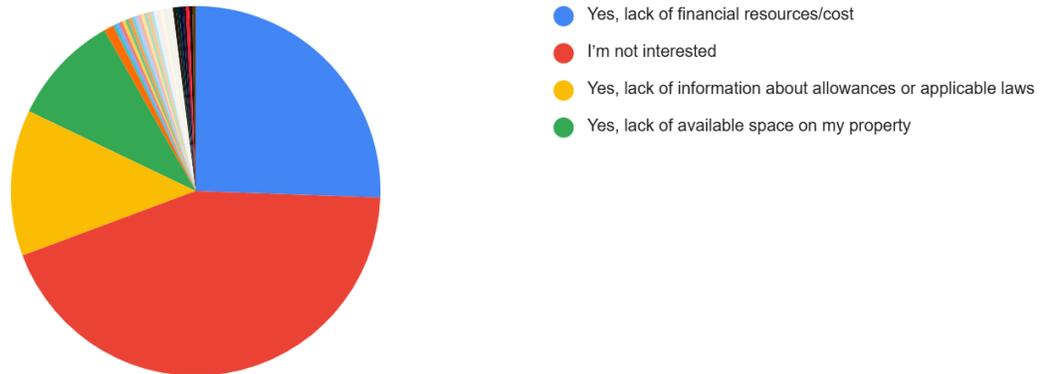


**Question #16. Would you be interested in developing an Accessory Dwelling Unit (accessory apartments, guest house, in-law/ “granny” unit, etc.) on your property?**



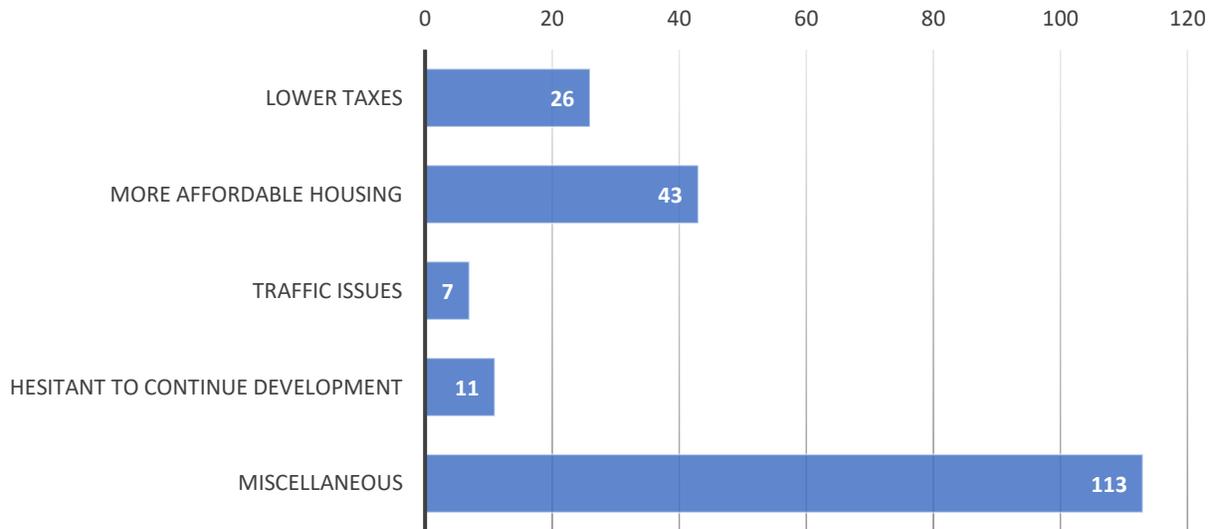
The write-in responses to Question #16 commonly reflected conditional interest in developing an ADU. Respondents indicated they might consider an ADU depending on factors such as construction costs, property characteristics, zoning allowances, family needs, or regulatory clarity. These answers did not fit into “yes,” “no,” or “not sure,” as they expressed openness under specific circumstances.

**Question #17. If you are interested in developing an Accessory Dwelling Unit, are there any barriers that might prevent you from doing so?**



The write-in responses to Question # 17 identified barriers beyond those listed, including age, health, lifestyle preference, neighborhood compatibility concerns, infrastructure limitations (e.g., septic or water), or philosophical opposition to additional development. Some respondents framed their answers in terms of broader community impacts rather than personal feasibility.

**Question #18. OPEN-ENDED: Do you have any other thoughts on the subject of housing needs and affordability challenges in Coventry? Is there anything else we should know?**

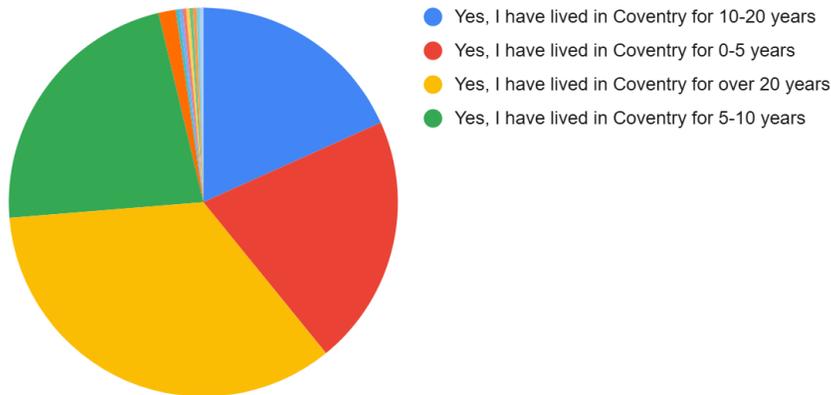


The open-ended nature of Question #18 invited residents to provide any final thoughts on housing needs and affordability. These responses were thematically coded into five (5) groups, as shown on the graph. Responses coded as “More Affordable Housing” emphasized that Coventry already has existing structures and vacant buildings that could be repurposed into affordable housing, discussed policy or fee structures such as the lead law, and expressed concern about rising housing costs, especially for single people, renters, people with disabilities, and seniors.

# SURVEY RESULTS - DEMOGRAPHIC SECTION

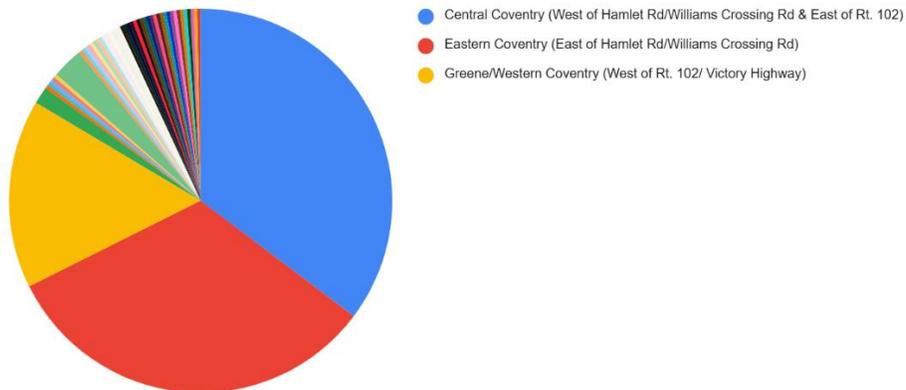
All questions in the Demographic Section were **optional** to respondents

## Question #19. Do you live in Coventry?



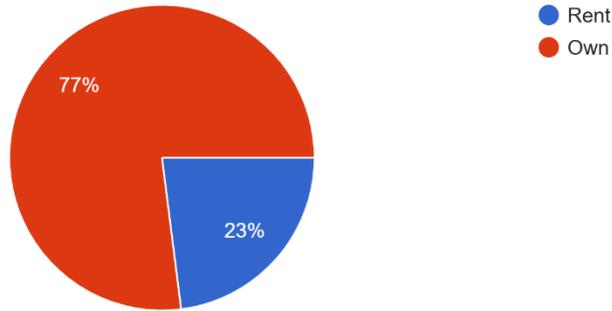
The write-in responses to Question #19 typically described atypical residency or ownership arrangements, such as seasonal residence, recent movers, former Coventry residents, or individuals living nearby but closely tied to Coventry through work or family. A small number of responses were unclear or combined multiple residency descriptions.

## Question #20. What area of Coventry do you live in?

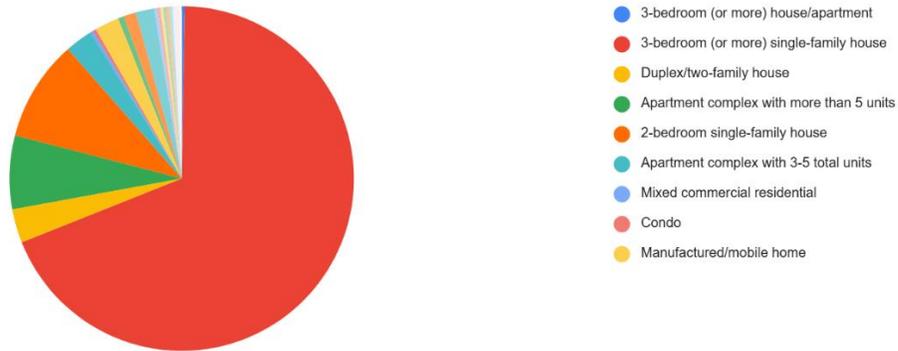


The write-in responses to Question #20 often indicated difficulty identifying with the provided geographic categories. Some respondents referenced neighborhood names, landmarks, or border areas rather than colloquially-defined Eastern, Central, or Western districts, while others expressed uncertainty about which area of Coventry they reside in. These responses could not be confidently assigned to a listed sub-area.

**Question #21. Do you rent or own the place where you live?**

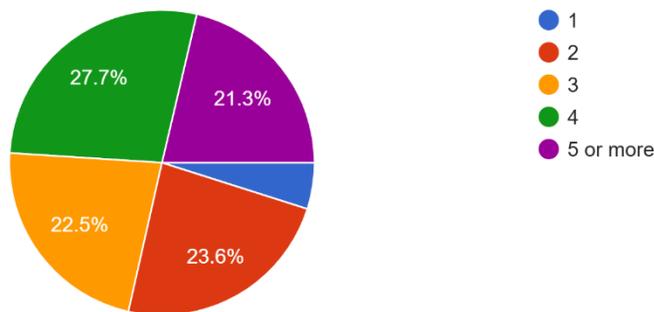


**Question #22. I live in a (select one):**

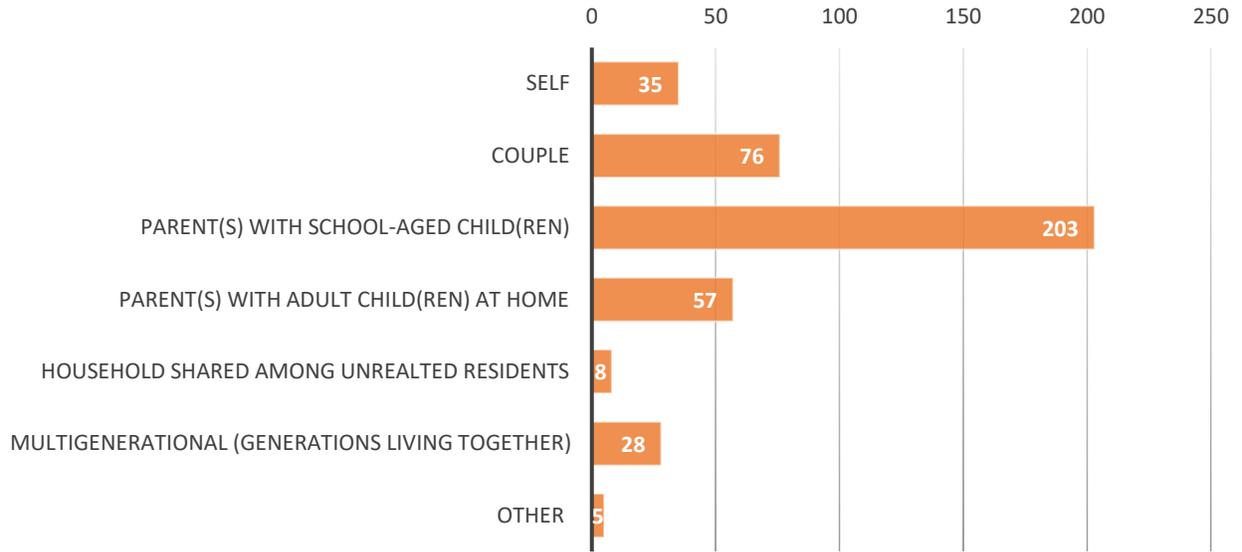


The write-in responses to Question #22 generally reflected housing situations not explicitly captured by the available options, including condominiums, townhouses, mixed-use properties, converted structures, or multi-generational homes that were not clearly ADUs. Some responses lacked sufficient detail to assign a standard housing classification.

**Question #23. How many people live in your immediate household?**

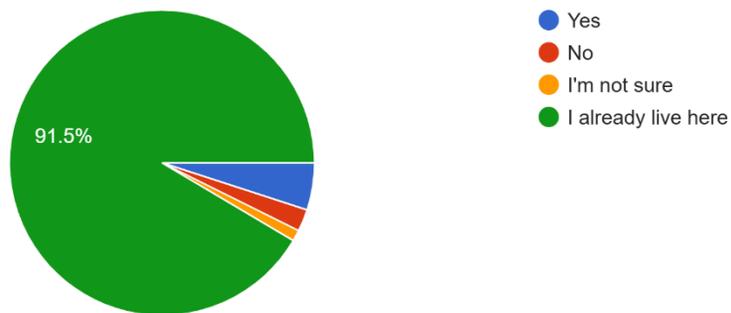


**Question #24. Which best describes your household? (select all that apply)**

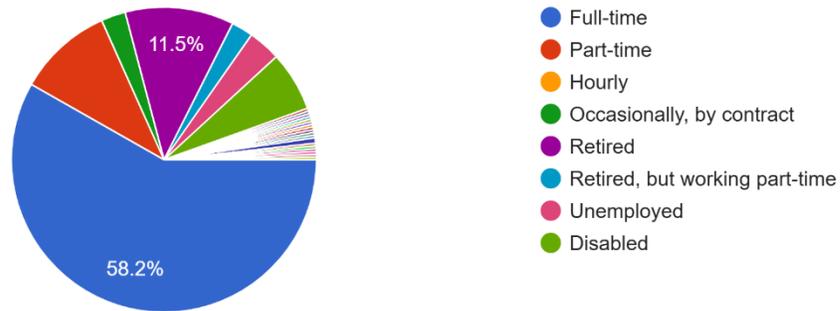


The “Other” write-in responses to Question #24 generally described household arrangements not reflected in the listed categories, such as single parents, individuals living alone, roommates with partial familial ties, caregivers living with non-relatives, or transitional living situations

**Question #25. If you don't live in Coventry, would you like to live here?**



**Question #26. What is your employment status?**



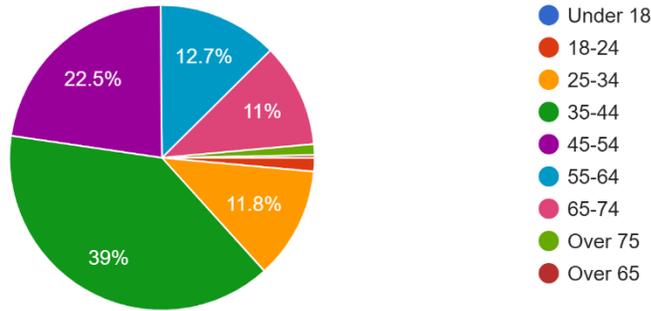
The write-in responses to Question #26 typically described employment arrangements outside traditional categories, such as self-employment, freelance or gig work, seasonal employment, full-time caregiving, students, or individuals with multiple jobs.

**Question #27. In what field are you employed?**

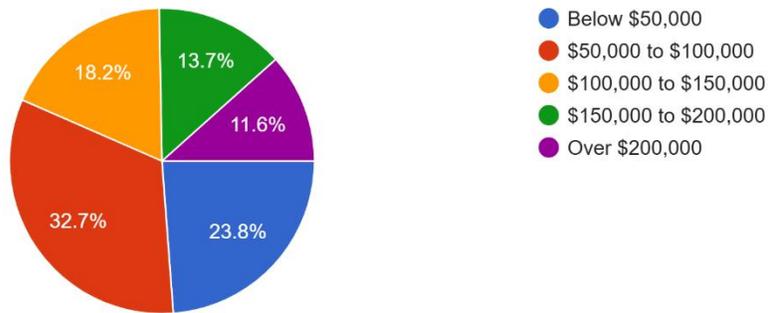


The “Other” write-in responses to Question #27 most often reflected employment sectors not captured by the listed industry categories, including self-employment, professional services, technology, utilities, military or public safety roles, nonprofit work, or multiple concurrent job sectors. In some cases, respondents listed job roles rather than industries, or described hybrid employment situations that could not be assigned to a single category.

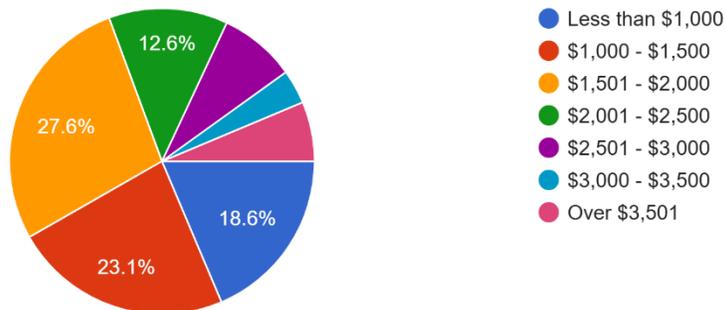
**Question #28. What is your age category?**



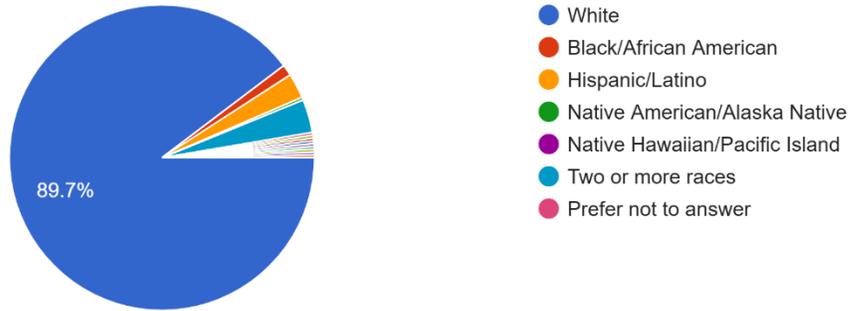
**Question #29. What is your gross annual household income?**



**Question #30. What is your monthly mortgage/rent?**

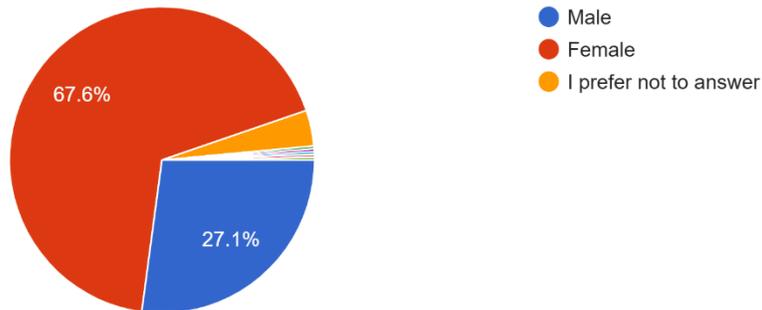


**Question #31. What is your race/ethnicity?**



The write-in responses to Question #31 often involved more specific racial or ethnic identities than those provided, including detailed multiracial identities or ethnic descriptors not listed. In some cases, respondents declined to self-identify using the available categories.

**Question #32. What is your gender identity?**



The write-in responses to Question #33 most commonly reflected gender identities not represented by the listed options, including non-binary or gender-diverse identities, or statements expressing discomfort with binary classifications.

**END OF SUMMARY REPORT**