

C20-2024-004
Citywide Density Bonus Program
Public Comment as of Friday,
May 15, 2026

Prepared by Austin Planning
Includes feedback and comments submitted to staff through
various channels as of Friday, May 15, 2026.

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

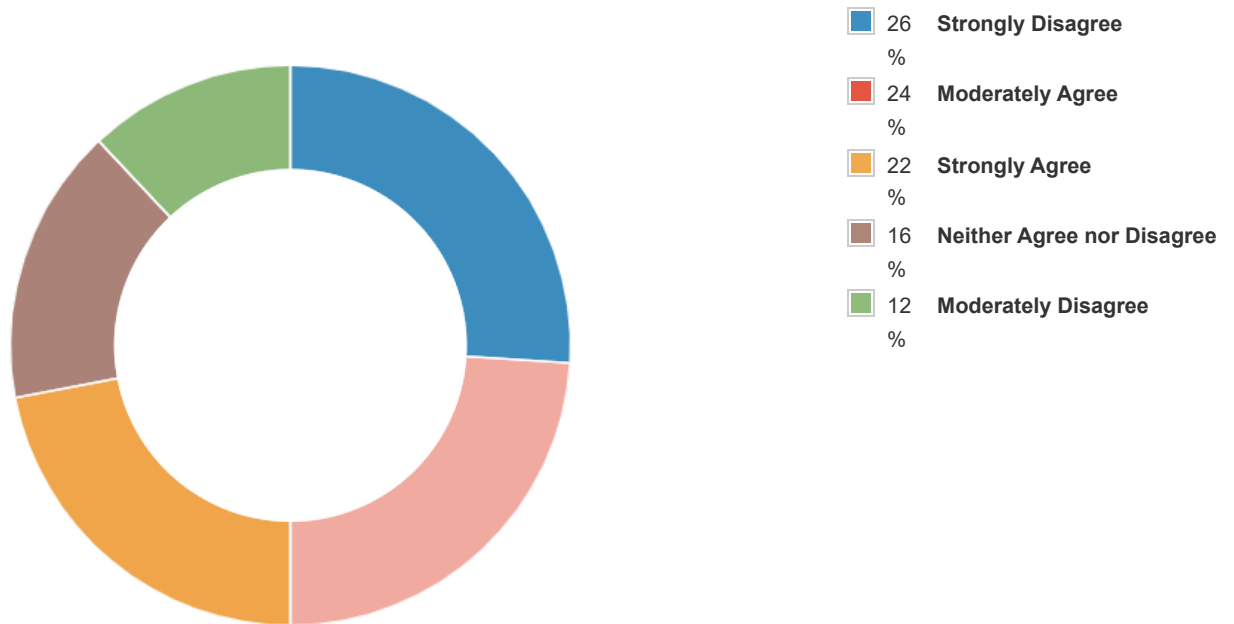
Project Survey Engagement

VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS	SUBSCRIBERS
6,955	89	661	245	32

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

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Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: This summary of Austin's affordable housing needs reflects your experience with or your understanding of housing affordability in Austin.



50 respondents

Please rank the following priorities we've heard from Austinites regarding density programs in the order **you** think we should prioritize from 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority). Select and drag a priority into the "Next Priority" box to move it. You do not have to rank every priority.

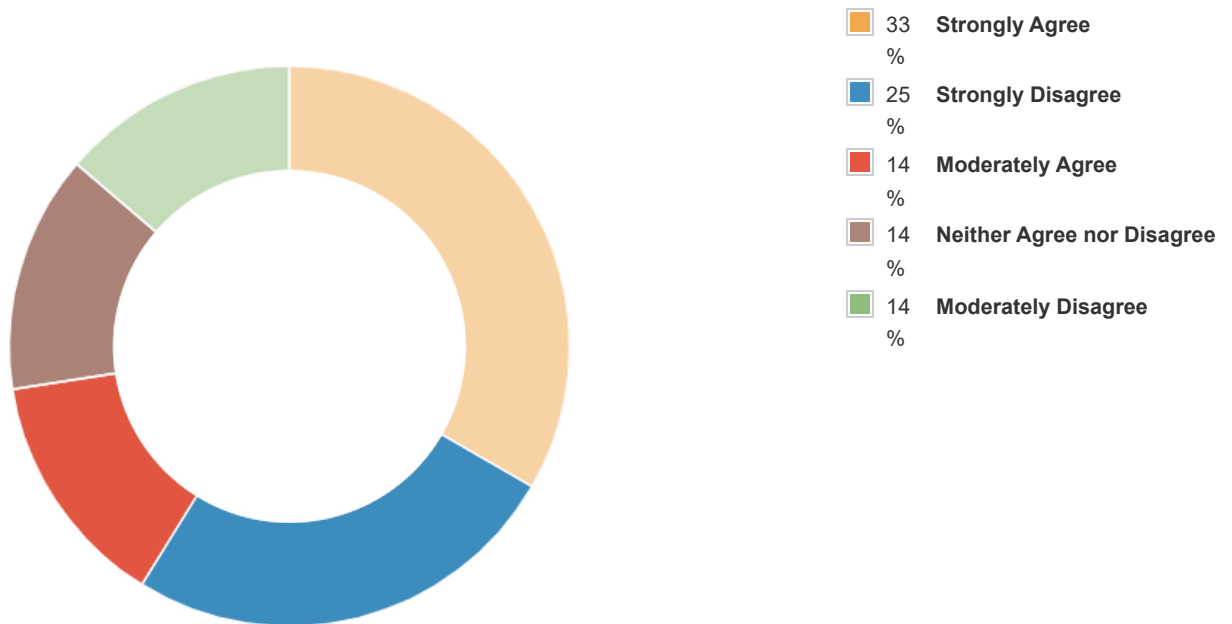
Be sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood context.	Rank: 2.23	31 ✓
Provide affordable housing in addition to a mix of other community benefits (public open space, ground-floor stores, civic/cultural spaces, bike lanes, transit amenities, etc.).	Rank: 2.43	28 ✓
Be intentional about preserving existing affordable housing.	Rank: 2.55	29 ✓
Offer a mix of income-restricted housing levels, not just deep affordability or only moderate affordability.	Rank: 2.70	23 ✓
Tall buildings should be near transit; mid-rise and shorter buildings are more appropriate farther from transit.	Rank: 3.76	21 ✓

38 Respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

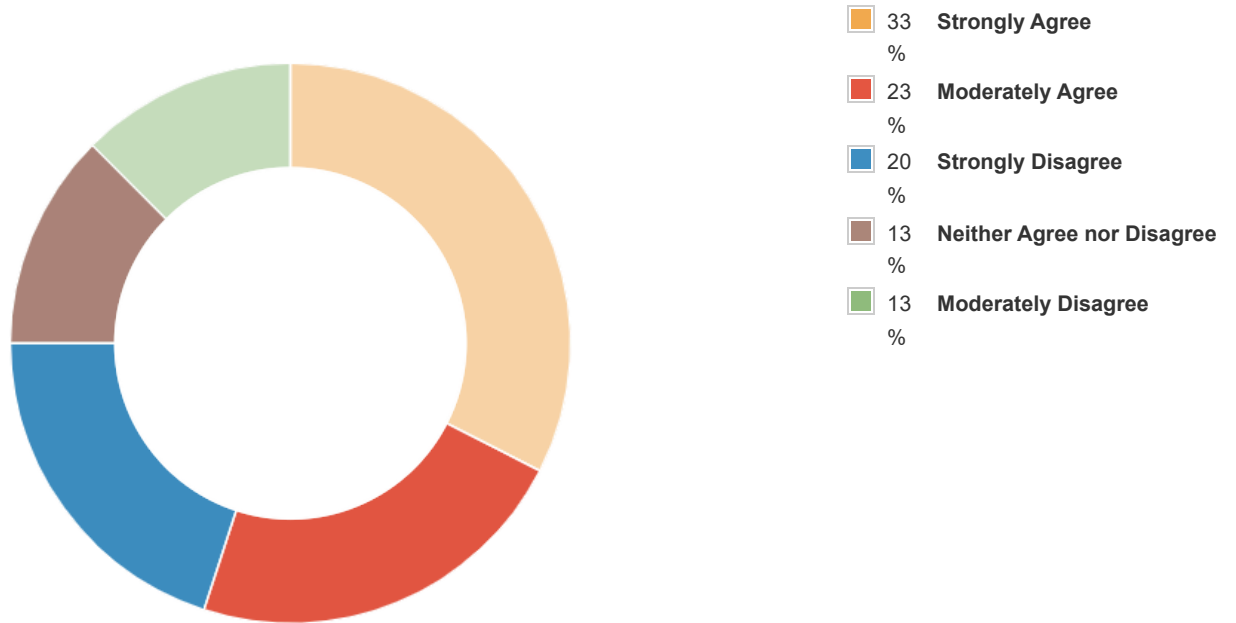
Existing density bonus programs in Austin generally aim to serve rental households at levels anywhere from 50% MFI (\$66,900 for a 4-person household) up to 80% MFI (\$104,200 for a 4-person household). The new Citywide Density Bonus Program would require a minimum of 10% of the proposed rental units to be affordable for households at 50% MFI or below, to match the area of greatest existing need in Austin. Do you agree with this approach to require units affordable at 50% MFI and below?



51 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

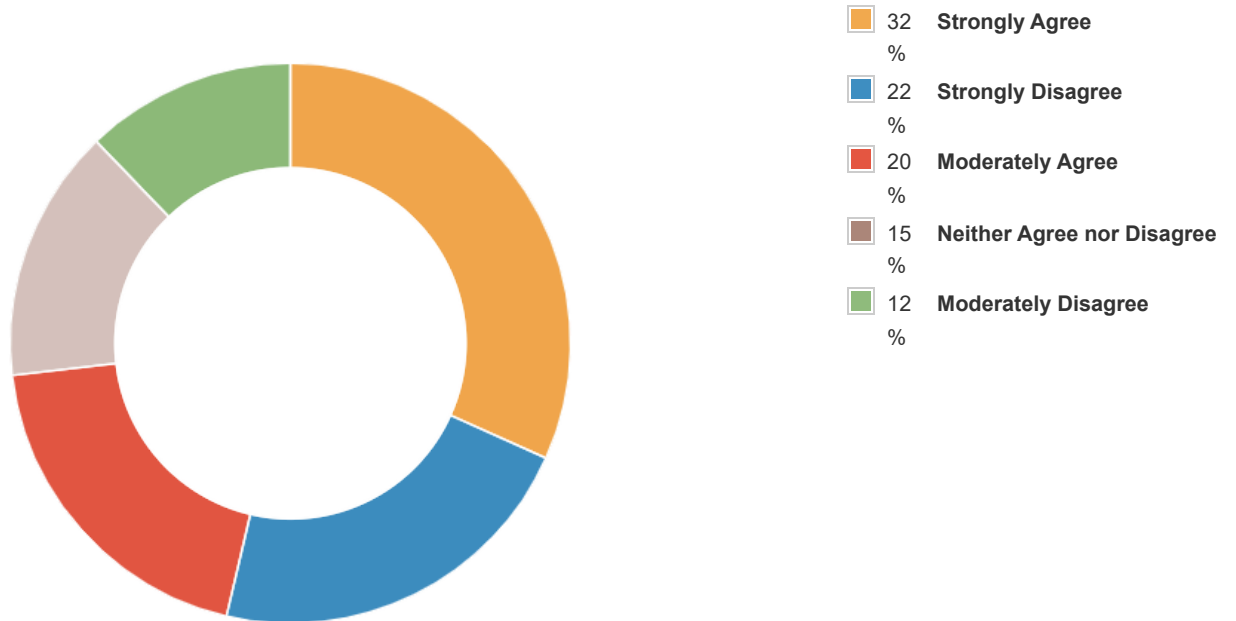
Some existing density bonus programs in Austin include tenant protections and unit replacement requirements, while others do not or only require some of these items. Do you agree with the new Citywide Density Bonus Program's approach to including extra requirements when existing lower cost housing is redeveloped?



40 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

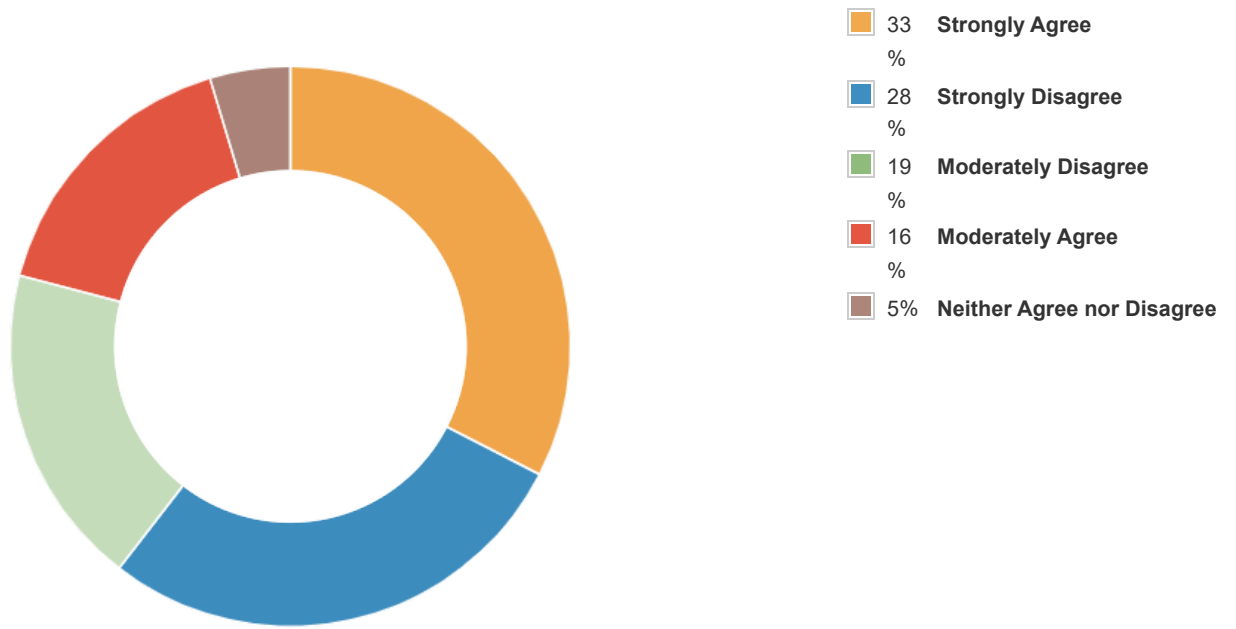
Existing density bonus programs have offered either no additional height, +30', or +60'. The new Citywide Density Bonus program includes more height options (no additional height, +15', +30', +45', and +60') that can match different neighborhood contexts. Do you agree with the approach to have more height options?



41 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: Many tools are needed to address affordability in Austin, and the new Citywide Density Bonus Program should be one of those tools.



43 respondents

Raw Comment	Source
In response to: From your perspective, please add anything we may have missed in this summary of Austin's affordable housing needs.	
We cannot use affordable housing as an excuse to destroy existing neighborhoods. People's back yards are private spaces and need to be kept free from new construction towering over them. Any new development needs to allow both renters and homeowners access to nature, including pollinator friendly plantings in yards, dark sky sensitivity in lighting, and fruit and vegetable gardening opportunities. We cannot have endless lawns that are scraped flat, poisoned and watered ceaselessly, and lit up in a way that destroys both human enjoyment and animal habitat. Yes to diverse plantings and nature and clean water with appropriate rain management.	Survey
I strongly disagree with establishing a density bonus program. The existing programs and efforts in Austin to create density are flawed. In short, they support building taller, denser buildings around transit corridors/hubs. Citizens inhabiting that housing are not going to overwhelmingly use bikes, buses, or walk. A larger building translates to higher building and maintenance costs, which trickle down to the cost of the housing for tenants/buyers. People who can afford those costs are not going to be using public transportation for their main type of transportation. Look at Dallas' DART. Hardly anyone uses it. Look at New York City. If density translated to affordable housing, NYC would be the most affordable place in the nation. I own a rental house. If I built a larger, taller, denser building on the property, it would cost me a fair bit of money. And my property taxes, insurance, mortgage & interest, and maintenance/repair costs would be higher each year than that for a smaller building. I would charge my tenants/buyers rent or prices that cover all of my costs. So the idea that density translates to more affordable housing is not logical. If you build denser housing and subsidize it, then costs would be lower for tenants/buyers. But that is a bad idea to build housing through the city that Austin is subsidizing. If people cannot afford to live in Austin, then Austin needs to lower the property taxes and/or people need to decide to live in places they can afford	Survey
Density is profiting those in Austin's government that have ties to real estate investments.	Survey
I don't recall this: "When Austin voters approved funding for Project Connect in 2020, they also sent a clear signal that they wanted to ensure that lower-income Austinites would also benefit from the new transit by being able to afford housing along the Project Connect transit lines." being any part of that vote. I do know that I regret having voted for project connect. Forever tax increases like this and the city of austin's wasteful spending is what is driving the decrease in affordability here.	Survey
Y'all have completely ignored the will of us voters. We voted down Codenext years ago. Yet, y'all keep finding a way to stuff it down our throats. Everyone should step down except for Marc Duchon. This includes the mayor!	Survey
The phrase "due in part to rapid population growth" should read "due in LARGE part to rapid population growth and City of Austin policies that encourage that growth".	Survey
What is actually affordable or MFI relative to another major city with a lower MFI. It Austin's MFI is much higher and lower-income households are getting pushed out to the suburbs of the Metro, then the 2025 average MFI is even more skewed for city-limits. It would seem to be in my opinion that 30% of MFI or about \$1,000 per month is "affordable". As a single individual looking to build on my SF3 lot as a personal investment, I don't want to contribute to the speculating and profiteering of housing done by so many developers. \$1,000 rental-income might need to be subsidized OR built "efficiently" through better design methods and still good quality. Something simple. I think if I could build a triplex of 1,030 sq ft each dwelling, there might be room or could substitute for some smaller dwellings, around 500 sq ft designated "affordable".	Survey
Austin needs to protect existing affordable housing. This proposal is about giving developers more flexibility.	Survey
It would be helpful if you provided an affordability table for a 1 or 2 person household, since many of us don't live in a 4-person household.	Survey
My understanding is that cost to build is up an average 58% since 2017, and that as a result some builders have exited the market (or simply don't try to build in Austin proper, instead moving to a surrounding area to build). And as a result, several city council districts are not meeting their affordable housing goals. The Housing Blueprint needs to be updated, and needs to reflect new information and innovations to reduce cost to build	Survey
City subsidies and coddling developers is a mistake. I strongly oppose any incentives to developers and citizens. City staff don't understand the marketplace. Just let the marketplace function!	Survey
It doesn't appear that you have taken into consideration our water supply, electric grid, traffic patterns, taxpayer burden. Please halt growth until you all can figure out the above. More is not always better, and those of us who live and work here are impacted by the growing density on a daily basis. Common sense approach, not more taxpayer funded programs, please. Thank you for asking.	Survey
No Multifamily housing units shall be placed where a there currently is/was a single family dwelling. Don't mess up our neighborhoods by increasing housing density!	Survey
<p>I love Austin. Austin has planned density downtown, at the Grove, in Mueller and other areas. There are many other tracts of land near the Airport and in other areas, that can also be developed in a planned manner.</p> <p>The neighborhood I live in, Hancock is already a dense, central Austin neighborhood and the neighborhood is eclectic, charming, and walkable. I am very concerned about proposed density and 4, 5, or 6 story building being crammed into a small lot and causing flooding, increased traffic, and other issues in a quiet residential neighborhood. The charming neighborhood feeling of central Austin historic neighborhoods like Hancock and nearby Hyde Park are in danger of disappearing. These and other neighborhoods contribute to the UNIQUE CHARACTER of Austin, and make Austin a desired place to live and work. By creating unnecessary density in historic central Austin neighborhoods you are destroying the uniqueness of Austin.</p> <p>Austin is advocating for exponential growth in established neighborhoods, instead of updating the infrastructure and preserving our limited water supply. Austin residents are already advised to lower energy and water use during the summer and freezing winter. How will the new density impact the infrastructure of an old neighborhood?</p> <p>People from other states move to Austin because of its charm and livability. Austin was ranked 9th in US News and World Reports as Best Places in the US to live in the 2024-25 rankings. Sprawling, overcrowded Houston is not on that list of 250 cities.</p> <p>After ranking 9th in the nation as Best Place to live, Austin Mayor Kirk Watson said, "Our city is a special place. Our access to nature, our dynamic and diverse economy, and an unparalleled music scene make Austin a vibrant place to live, work, and play." Please don't destroy our special place.</p> <p>Please build PLANNED DENSITY in additional areas like Mueller and the Grove, not change the character of well established neighborhoods. Keep building high rises in downtown Austin. There are lots of large areas of vacant land by the airport and other Austin locations - create planned dense neighborhoods in areas that are undeveloped. Thank you.</p> <p>You do not understand how expensive it is to live in Austin.</p>	Survey
You're heading in the wrong direction and you NEVER help the people you say you're helping. Personal gain is not helping others!	Survey
This summary does not reflect any consideration of strategies to regulate growth. Maximizing attraction to the Austin area demonstrably creates problems that can never be solved. While zero growth may be unrealistic, un-managed growth is more so, and by definition, unmanageable.	Survey
People bought their homes with hard earned money - many of them forever homes - with the understanding that they would not have to live near tall building and commercial businesses and that their deed restrictions/zoning would be followed now the city wants to destroy those neighborhoods. There is undeveloped and underdeveloped land (large warehouse commercial properties) that would be better suited to the type development that the city is pushing without destroying existing neighborhoods.	Survey
Special housing support for Austin singles, especially those 40 or over.	Survey

Support for Austinites 40 or over for rental and purchased housing.	Survey
The scale is off. People of all income levels need actual affordable housing. Making nearly \$80k/year, I refuse to pay over \$1300/mo for a one bedroom apartment. So, it's hard for me to find housing I consider actually affordable. This means of course it is harder for people in every income scale below mine. In general, building more housing has not truly helped because it is all luxury apartments for Californians to fill. The news skews everything because everything is "affordable" to the boatloads of Californians. People making Texas wages should be the benchmark. Specifically, maybe the salary of City of Austin employees should be the benchmark and of course considering service industry workers who make even less, as well as teachers, etc. The entire scale is bogus.	Survey
I think it is important to pay special attention to the different types of housing at each level. A single person household at 50% MFI may well have an easier time finding housing than a four person household at 70% MFI, because it is easier to find a one bedroom apartment than a two or three bedroom apartment	Survey
In response to: Do you generally agree with these priorities? Is there anything you would add?	
Encourage more natural building through straw bale and cob training programs. Flood prevention needs to be more aesthetically integrated. Don't allow land to be entirely scraped of trees.	Survey
I oppose everything I read about this Density Bonus Program. These programs and laws are ruining Austin and the neighborhoods in it. People used to want to come and live in Austin. That is changing, because Austin is just becoming another Dallas or Houston. There is nothing unique or special about denser buildings. The city is just becoming a lot of tall, uninteresting buildings that degrade citizens' quality of life.	Survey
I do not agree with the priorities other than to be sensitive to surrounding neighborhoods. Do not give lip service to community engagement.	Survey
I do not generally agree with these priorities.	Survey
Council Staff is forcing a plan on us which neighborhoods do NOT want! Who are you listening to? Why would anyone want a store on their next door neighbor's front yard? This is totally unwanted.	Survey
The priorities are generally ok. The crucial missing element is how does the city council revise outdated rules or laws to support quality of life, for all residents, in a densely-built city. Austin has not adapted this reality while focusing on the physical building of structures.	Survey
yes	Survey
Regardless of what you call it No More Codenext!	Survey
I disagree with creating more affordable housing.	
Rent control and subsidized housing reduce the incentive for developers to build new units, which can tighten supply over time and paradoxically drive up market-rate prices.	Survey
I generally agree with these priorities, however, as a homeowner who has resided in the same home since 1998, I would add that it is damaging to the fabric of a neighborhood, when developers are given looser regulations around trees, or setbacks, in exchange for CURRENT city priorities. I watched, in my own neighborhood - Dawson, as Mercury Hall was "developed" from a heavily wooded event site to a dense multi-story apartment complex, called the Mercury. The tree protections were a joke...literally there were no fences around the CRZ of the protected trees as they bulldozed the lot! When I spoke to the city arborist's office about it, I was told they don't oversee commercial development. The insanity of not requiring a developer to follow the same rules as a homeowner boggles the mind. If I pull a permit to install a deck near protected trees the city arborist will come out and check the holes I dig for the piers...but if I am a big developer I can use heavy equipment near those same trees all in the name of expedience for development of housing units that now are sitting empty because of over-development in the past few years. The lifespan of those apartments is maybe 50 years, but the trees they were allowed to remove were in some cases 100+ years old. We can't re-build the environmental services back that were destroyed by the city's unequal rules around those trees and land development. Also, the push for increased density on transit corridor streets makes sense when there is ample room to expand the street to handle the increased traffic. However, on a street like S. First Street, we feel every additional car from the Mercury development...the solution of barricading the center stripe in front of the garage entrance off of S. First is a band-aid. A street without a dedicated turn lane, like S. First, is not appropriate for the same level of density as a street with a dedicated turn lane, like S. Congress or S. Lamar. So, making sure that the changes to the density programs address the capacity of the road, not just whether there are buses on the road is important. Finally, I wholeheartedly agree that we need more affordable housing solutions, but rather than shoehorning giant apartment buildings into the edges of existing single family neighborhoods I think it would be better to encourage the redevelopment of sites along larger roadways that have already been paved. It shouldn't be the environment vs housing. If the incentives are handled with sensitivity we can maintain our urban tree canopy, work with existing traffic patterns, and redevelop underused and blighted sites into the larger developments that the city is trying to encourage. For example, twice the number of units that were built at the Mercury could have been located just a few blocks south of Mercury Hall along one of the numerous blighted sites on Ben White/Hwy 71, while encouraging a much smaller development at Mercury Hall that would have protected the native flora and fauna that guarded against urban heat islands, and flooding via pervious cover. It is much more complex than just incentivizing more housing units!	Survey
I can not agree. The general idea of increasing density (people + cars) with a fixed quantity of roadways plus limited public transportation along with a decreasing water supply just seems like a dangerously short sighted idea. I'm concerned about quality of life in future Austin.	Survey
Keep the application and enforcement processes as simple as possible	Survey
VMU's density bonuses (at least originally) did not include extra height but included removing FAR limits, side setbacks and caps on units per acre in exchange for on-site affordable units. That approach seems to have been very successful. I am concerned about undoing VMU's density bonuses. Extra height is frequently quite unpopular and is frequently not necessary for achieving the laudable goal of extra density. Extra density can be achieved through the use of VMU's existing density bonus toolkit (i.e., removing FAR limits, side setbacks and density caps).	
Our community also badly needs walkable supportive housing for seniors and adults with limited mobility.	Survey
I disagree. Austin has done a great job making housing more affordable thru increasing supply. Many affordable units end up more expensive than market rate units while adding to more paperwork for developers and the City. Street level amenities would be great as they offer a benefit to the developer and the neighborhood. I would love to see better streetscapes with more trees (this may require undergrounding utilities, another plus) and higher quality architecture so Austin does not look like one big grey box after another.	Survey
Council must be sensitive to overburdening established communities as the more dense populated units will put a strain on services. Council must also consider the change in quality of life issues when changing the nature of a community by increasing the density.	Survey
Based on what I have seen in Austin and other cities, "tall buildings" are by their very nature not conducive to so-called "affordable housing" The city should examine what heights of residential construction results in an optimum height. (i.e. three stories, four stories, five stories...?) Regardless of the type of buildings however, the fundamental problem is excessive population growth and policies that promote that growth.	Survey
Current Neighborhood HOA rules override policy unless approved by resident owners	Survey
Yes	Survey

Yes	Survey
No	Survey
There is a lot of nuance in the "middle". SF3 lots may be a good starting point on this.	Survey
I do not generally agree with the priorities as written, except for the one to preserve existing affordable housing. I would like to see affordable housing prioritized over other community benefits. I don't like the phrasing of "Tall buildings should be near transit". Instead, the tall buildings should be on major thoroughfares or larger streets, not based on whether or not there is transit. Some smaller streets have transit. I don't agree that a mix of affordability levels is preferable in all situations. The affordability levels offered should be specific to the type of project and what will work out financially for it. I generally agree that you should be sensitive to the neighborhood context, but that is a loaded statement that has been used in the past to oppose all proposed affordable housing or density projects in some neighborhoods.	Survey
no mention of mixed income, multigenerational housing - only "affordable housing". My sense is that Austinites don't love the IDEA of affordable housing (I know it's not the same as in year's past, but many think of "Cabrini Green" (Chicago) old school housing. We can do better than that (and I believe better than the current model of affordable housing)	Survey
Austin has done an abysmal job of respecting existing neighborhoods. I'm sick and tired of Austin coddling and subsidizing rich developers!! The influence of the developers is corrupting Austin city government!!	Survey
Again, it is not the burden of taxpayers to provide for others, unless voluntarily. I do believe that cutting some of the bureaucracy and entitlements and bloated budgets might help with the long range plans for our great city.	Survey
No	Survey
no, i don't think it's appropriate to tax new development or treat tall buildings as incompatible with existing neighborhoods	Survey
I live near the MetroRail Red Line which runs parallel to Airport Blvd and crosses 45th st. Though that is a transit corridor, I don't think there should be tall buildings in that location, Airport and 45th.	Survey
Yes, I do agree. I think by only doing moderately affordable or deeply affordable, you tend to group people which is a reverse form of segregating.	Survey
NO. Stop pushing and changing single family neighborhoods!	Survey
This discussion is limited to supply-side dynamics. Consideration of mandates like a "living wage" income threshold can address the demand side of the affordability discussion.	Survey
NO! What the city means when it talks about "affordable housing" is not what the average citizen means. The average citizen want to live in a safe community in a home - not in a high rise apartment.	Survey
The bonus programs are weak. The developers and owners of huge multifamily buildings make their money back quite quickly with the high rent prices for the luxury units they lease out. Making a small percentage of units "affordable" for a handful of years is not really a deal or benefit. They should be forced to maintain a range of all types of affordability for at least 20 years, or pay big money in taxes to support infrastructure projects like roads without potholes.	Survey
Don't allow fee-in-lieu, which negates the point of such programs.	Survey
I think that artificially limiting building height is a bad idea if our goal is to get more housing built, so there shouldn't be any height restrictions anywhere in the city for residential development unless there are other compelling concerns related to safety or other pressing matters. Simply "preserving neighborhood character" or other aesthetic concerns are not even close to compelling.	Survey
In response to: If a density bonus development is proposed near your neighborhood, what factors would make you more likely to support it?	
Large buffer zone of big trees so that privacy is maintained. If the development is beautiful straw bale and cob homes with vegetable gardens and nature instead of acres of concrete I would feel more enthusiasm. If co-housing style HOA documents were in place to encourage community connection.	Survey
Not building it.	Survey
I will oppose it as much as possible.	Survey
Revise quality of life rules by understanding best practices from other densely-built U.S. Cities. Some animals, e.g. roosters, are incompatible with dense urban life. So is air pollution created by deliberate idling trucks and vehicles. Large U.S. cities have ordinances against these things. Austin has not even thought about these impacts yet as they rush to build.	Survey
I would not support it and don't want it anywhere in the city.	Survey
No tall buildings.	Survey
I didn't support Codenext and I won't support any density development. It's not a bonus!	Survey
Absolutely nothing.	
Concentrating subsidized housing in specific areas can depress surrounding property values, which shrinks the local tax base. That means less revenue for schools, roads, and services the whole community depends on.	
I bought my house and I don't get any magical support or help with my mortgage, and I work a full time job. Why do I get punished?	
Poorly planned affordable housing developments can concentrate poverty, which correlates with higher crime, weaker schools, and fewer commercial amenities. The track record of large public housing projects in the U.S. — Cabrini-Green, Pruitt-Igloe — is a cautionary tale.	
From a free-market perspective, the core issue is that affordable housing policies substitute bureaucratic judgment for price signals. Prices communicate scarcity and direct resources; overriding them with subsidies and mandates tends to create shortages, misallocation, and political capture of who gets what.	Survey
I would support density bonuses if you encourage development along larger roadways like Ben White, where the environmental destruction has already occurred, that allow for the land to truly be maximized and used to its highest potential. Places where the additional traffic can be absorbed by the roadways. I am tired of paying off developers to make the same ugly building, with pencil diameter trees, on a clear-cut lot, they were going to build anyway. My tax dollars should not be spent to encourage the clearcutting of functioning urban woodlands or to encourage traffic jams where there is no way of mitigating the traffic. Density around transit only works when people use the transit. Planning in isolation without taking into account all of the impacts of the changes that will be set in motion by the actions of the code changes has to stop. The answer is not as simple as: more housing good...and this is not a NIMBY point of view...it is a point of view that understands the complexity of any change. In an age of climate emergency, housing insecurity, and general instability, it is important to look at the big picture if we are going to succeed as a community. We can build more houses without destroying what makes Austin a place people want to live: the natural beauty and the existing neighborhoods. Don't incentivize things that developers were going to do anyway...they want to build houses. Incentivize them to build better houses while protecting our environment.	Survey
Corresponding transit improvements.	Survey
I would support it if the development is vertical mixed use with ground floor retail, if it includes housing targeting to seniors and includes public spaces such as pocket parks.	Survey

none	Survey
Better streets, bulb outs, trees, nice looking streetlights, good street level architecture, small storefronts, intersection treatments (brick or pavers), basically anything that will make the neighborhood I live in better. The increase in housing units (and commercial space) will make housing more affordable (as studies show).	Survey
If it changes the quality of life and the reason I moved here to have a residential experience, I would oppose it. I do not see any benefit to my neighborhood and would need to know how it benefits rather than challenges my quality of life.	Survey
For well established Single Family Residential neighborhoods, NO FACTOR would make me support density bonus development in those neighborhoods. There are ample previously developed commercial areas within the city limits of Austin where some form of density bonus may be appropriate and possible, but NOT within SFR neighborhoods.	Survey
If it's based on the Mueller model where families apply under strict rules, I would be more than likely. But in my neighborhood, it makes no sense. It typically means building an apartment in a nice neighborhood full of medium to large single family homes.	Survey
Yes	Survey
Maybe	Survey
Intentional Developers!	Survey
That is something I would need to think about.	Survey
There is a lot of construction noise in my neighborhood, so that is a big concern. If they can restore or renovate existing buildings, that would be less expensive and also less disruptive to the neighborhood. New projects need to provide more affordable housing than they destroy by tearing down or renovating an existing building. If a project doesn't do that, and many don't, it's not worth it for the community; the benefits go to the developers. The project would need to provide a significant amount of affordable housing, or fee-in-lieu for affordable housing; other types of community benefits are lower priority.	Survey
If it offered community benefits needed in the neighborhoods (a grocery store, pocket park), or deeper affordability levels	Survey
Not call it anything "Affordable Housing"... Instead, we need to streamline permitting, do city-owned developments to reduce or eliminate "rent seekers" (developer 20% margins, realtor fees, reduce code requirements when they can't demonstrate verifiable safety OUTCOMES, innovative efficiency programs like distributed thermal networks, incorporated solar, green spaces, more walkable with "remote", and reduced parking...etc). Goal would be for the city to develop their own expertise, look at cost drivers, and eliminate/reduce them... I'm sure you're aware that in some european cities (and not low-cost ones) frequently build city owned developments, sometimes created as "eco-districts", that regularly lease at rates for 2-3 bedrooms that meet your stated MFI cost-burden objectives.	Survey
Respect the existing efforts citizens have made to create and preserve wonderful neighborhoods. Save us from the greedy developers!!	Survey
Nothing at this point. Traffic, crime, street peddlers, congestion are all very real to those of us who are affected. Please listen and stop building for now.	Survey
None	Survey
None	Survey
I would say to try to make it the least disparity between the average income of the area where they will be and the average income of the people who are being given the discounted affordable rate.; I would prefer to have the disparity between the average income in a particular area and the affordability housing being brought in be not a huge disparity. Culturally, people think differently, if you have been raised with a certain level of income than others.	Survey
Consideration of how traffic will become worse.	Survey
NONE	Survey
Absolutely, positively, do NOT punish long-time residents who have lived and invested in Austin for decades. Do NOT push low-rise single dwelling neighborhoods to the margins. Do NOT disincentivize home owners or renters from investing in and caring for their own personal green spaces.	Survey
Nothing - it sucks!	Survey
None. Established, historic neighborhoods, especially downtown, are a scarce amenity in Austin. Leave them be.	Survey
Knowing rent prices ahead of time and seeing how "affordable" they actually are. Would someone like me actually be able to rent there? I am probably too high income, yet I can certainly find a cheaper place to live that isn't income restricted. Meanwhile those who would qualify will still struggle to pay the rent there, because as stated previously, the rent scale/affordability scale is bogus and based on Californians. I support affordable housing. Actual affordable housing. Enough with the granite counter tops. Literally unnecessary slapdash construction w "high end" finishes and electronic keys is not convincing anyone to pay more. The place still leaks when it rains, still has roaches and mold, and still extorts its tenants.	Survey
Support of my neighborhood association, who I trust to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of such development. City Council seems to be pushing this stuff through without data to support such programs and regardless of resident sentiment.	Survey
I would want to make sure that the density bonus is not going to use some community benefits as leverage for the achievement of other community benefits. Yes, affordable housing is a very important community benefit, but so is all housing. If we artificially impose limits that reduce the amount of housing that can be built, just so that we can then waive those limits for developers who are willing to build affordable housing, we are shooting ourselves in the foot. If the city of Austin is serious about getting out of the housing crisis we are in, we need to remove as many obstacles to building housing as possible. Bonuses are a perfectly good method of getting more benefits out of developers, but they shouldn't be offering things that we want on their own merits. Some better bonuses might be allowing developers who provide community benefits like affordable housing to avoid paying the fee in lieu for parkland or allowing them to exceed parking limits like the ones we are considering imposing downtown. Both of those benefits are things we don't want on their own, but that we can use as leverage. Waived height restrictions, in contrast, are a benefit to the city and should apply to all development, so it doesn't make sense as a bargaining chip.	Survey
In response to: Existing density bonus programs in Austin generally aim to serve rental households at levels anywhere from 50% MFI (\$66,900 for a 4-person household) up to 80% MFI (\$104,200 for a 4-person household). The new Citywide Density Bonus Program would require a minimum of 10% of the proposed rental units to be affordable for households at 50% MFI or below, to match the area of greatest existing need in Austin. Do you agree with this approach to require units affordable at 50% MFI and below? Please explain the main reason for your level of agreement or disagreement.	
I disagree with this entire proposal.	Survey
The word "bonus" should never be used in association with Citywide Density Programs.	Survey
Rent control and subsidized housing reduce the incentive for developers to build new units.	
Government-managed or heavily regulated housing tends to deteriorate faster than market-rate housing because the feedback loop between tenant, owner, and market is broken. There's less incentive to maintain what you don't fully own or compete for.	
I support a free market, not a welfare state.	Survey
This density bonus approach only serves one level of affordability (50% MFI). It should instead serve multiple levels of affordability so that more of the community can benefit from this program.	Survey

10% is too high for 50% MFI, unless you are doubling the size of the building this is a significant subsidy on market rate units. This will drive market rates up and make them less affordable. This traps residents in income restricted units which may be hard to find, require extra paperwork and incentive residents to keep their income level to avoid pricing themselves out. Ultimately, market rate housing is best when possible. Also, the MFI should be determined by the market rates of the units being delivered. If the building is very expensive, offering 100% MFI could be reasonable, a cheaper development on the edge of town may have not problem offering 50% MFI since their rents may be close anyways.	Survey
Not clear on this point	Survey
10 percent is way too low. It should be at least 30 percent. And it should be tiered, for example: 10% of units at 30% MFI, 10% at 40% MFI, and 10% at 50% MFI. Also, 40 years is too short. Should be at least 60 years.	Survey
too high a %,	Survey
CoA has barely met its goals to build less than 50% MFI housing units.	Survey
Better for community	Survey
I can see both sides	Survey
I think it should be 15%	Survey
I think there should be more.	Survey
Some housing advocates say that we should provide more housing for people at 30% MFI or below. If the level is at 50% MFI, not enough housing may be provided for people at or below 30%. I don't think it should be above 50% MFI if they are only proving 10% affordable units, but maybe there could be opportunities for layered benefits where the developer provides additional affordable units at a higher MFI level.	Survey
Agree, but also requiring a lower percentage of units to serve populations at or below 40 or 30% MFI also serves a high need population	Survey
I believe all people should have opportunity to live where they want/work instead of what they can afford.	Survey
Not ambitious enough - some cities, elsewhere, regularly set goals of 70% "affordable" - but not by subsidies for developers - instead, driving out costs to make "housing affordable" (not affordable housing, if you see the distinction)	Survey
Traffic, congestion, water rationing, electricity costs, waste management, crime.	Survey
I agree deeper affordability should be prioritized, but implementing an unfunded density requirement will result in a drop in housing overall and increase the cost of living burden for a broader set of the population than subsidizing density bonuses.	Survey
Low income folks need support	Survey
Should include a timeline to recalibrate the percentage if uptake is low	Survey
I would want to understand if all the units in that 10% are grouped in one part of the building or can be sprinkled throughout the building.	Survey
Low income housing tax credits exist for 50% AMI already	Survey
EVERY TIME YOU DO THIS, THE UNITS ARE NOT AFFORDABLE TO THOSE YOU SAY THEY ARE	Survey
This is another "bait and switch" gift to developers. Can't wait to vote out our city council.	Survey
Developers will find a way to get market value if they can.	Survey
Need housing, not fees	Survey
fee-in-lieu is used too often by developers to avoid losing income from renters	Survey
The units that would be required to be affordable at 50% MFI will likely naturally occur with aging properties. I honestly support full rental control and regulation - so that would mandate affordable housing for all levels across leased properties in the city. Somewhere in the middle, the newer housing could be for those with the greater ability to pay for what's being offered, if that makes sense.	Survey
Fee in lieu should not be allowed at all. Don't facilitate affordable units being moved further away (i.e. gentrification).	Survey
I think a good program would scale based on level of affordability, with a base bonus offered for 80% MFI units, and a more attractive bonus offered for each lower level of MFI, up to the most attractive bonus for 50% MFI units	Survey
In response to: Some existing density bonus programs in Austin include tenant protections and unit replacement requirements, while others do not or only require some of these items. Do you agree with the new Citywide Density Bonus Program's approach to including extra requirements when existing lower cost housing is redeveloped? Please explain the main reason for your level of agreement or disagreement.	
As a landlord, why would I want those restrictions as outlined? It eats into my profits. If people cannot afford to live here, then they need to live elsewhere. Or the city needs to lower property taxes.	Survey
I'm in favor as long as it doesn't require a high rise of building over 2 stories high.	Survey
I am a supporter of a free market, not a gov controlled welfare state.	Survey
current affordable housing redevelopment should be at minimum 1 to 1.	Survey
This is a great way to combat the notion of "gentrification". Even though gentrification could be fought by allowing enough housing to be built for everyone in every neighborhood, this will help put people at ease.	Survey
Unclear how this works	Survey
Perhaps if the city would make building less onerous and expensive to build, we wouldn't need all this additional expense.	Survey
Tenants don't have enough rights. Housing is a right, should be less of a means for developers to make money.	Survey
Better for renter	Survey
Agree because you don't want to incentivize the destruction of NOAH. Slight concern that this could make it very difficult or expensive to redevelop properties that are at the end of the life cycle and offer a bad quality of life for its tenants	Survey
There should also be a requirement the income based unit have same design and appliances etc as non income based unit's.	Survey
The city should provide incentives to retain as much as possible of existing affordable rental housing. It is the least expensive option for providing affordable housing, and it also allows tenants to continue to live where they are. Providing strict requirements to help existing tenants and requiring a higher percentage of affordable units with redevelopment are both good policies because they may limit the amount of redevelopment and increase the number of new affordable units if redevelopment occurs. The measures to mitigate displacement costs are essential for the tenants. I recommend raising the MFI level above 70% for the existing affordable housing included in this program so more of it is included. I also recommend increasing the potential maximum percentage of affordable units required.	Survey
See other comments. Too much emphasis on complex "programs" that attempt to incentivize developers/builders (and thus do nothing to solve total cost to build problem).	Survey

There should be full replacement of existing units 70 % or below for all types at the same or higher level that is there currently.	Survey
I support tenant protections, but my agreement is only moderate because this will continue to pressure commercial lots on our existing retail street fronts to bear the burden of the city's housing shortage -- all while central city single-family neighborhoods are allowed to remain expensive & exclusive without contributing their fair share	Survey
Do we have enough people who want to live in a downtown area even though they make less than the MFI? It could be they make less, but they don't want to live in a big downtown area, and want to live in more suburban areas. Would we then have enough people to fill those units? Or would they just sit there vacant?	Survey
Density bonus is not really providing affordable housing.	Survey
Need to reduce displacement	Survey
Some options result in fewer units at at 70% MFI or below than before the redevelopment	Survey
We should not be removing affordable housing, even if it's to build newer affordable housing. Developers should be required to provide nearly the same # of affordable units or more, not a small percentage.	Survey
Not enough is done to replace existing affordable units. In too many cases, more housing is built without increasing the number of affordable units. In too many cases, the resulting number of affordable units is lower than before. That defeats the purpose of affordable housing and begs the question: is this even really about providing affordable housing?	Survey
If feasible, the tenant protections should be applied to all development, not just when participating in the bonus	Survey
In response to: Existing density bonus programs have offered either no additional height, 30', or 60'. The new Citywide Density Bonus program includes more height options (no additional height, 15', 30', 45', and 60') that can match different neighborhood contexts. Do you agree with the approach to have more height options? Please explain the main reason for your level of agreement or disagreement.	
I oppose denser, taller buildings.	Survey
Shouldn't be anything over 30'	Survey
+0 should be the only option and no subdividing lots.	Survey
Government overreach	Survey
I think that it is all about the right solution to the right spot. Having more lower height options (including no extra ht) makes sense in properties that back up on to existing residential properties	Survey
Flexibility is important	Survey
This seems reasonable. We badly need lots of additional housing at all income levels.	Survey
The removal of lot size minimums is bad.	Survey
If more developers use the tool because of the flexibility that is great. But it needs to be clear what is required so this does not become a tool to stall projects	Survey
Unclear	Survey
I agree with more options for bonus heights. I disagree with no maximum FAR and no maximum residential density.	Survey
I have participated in a zoning change to allow for multi-family development in or adjacent to an existing neighborhood. Despite objections by the existing residents the City moved forward with approving the zoning change. The zoning change will negatively impact an existing school directly across the street from the proposed development and increase traffic on residential neighborhood streets. Additionally, parking on residential streets will increase, all of the forementioned will degrade the existing neighborhood and possibly negatively impact property values.	Survey
I don't trust the city to make the height appropriate for most neighborhoods.	Survey
Understand the intent. But what will guide a developer to choosing a height that is "right" for a neighborhood.	Survey
Privacy	Survey
It seems good to provide more height options, but I don't know the practical impact of this policy on development decisions. I think the lack of a maximum FAR or minimum lot size might create problems in some situations, but I don't know what the particular circumstances might be; those policies could impact other standards like tree cover, setbacks, and impervious cover.	Survey
Too complex. And incentivizing with extra height, while it might be helpful, is not necessarily so. Height above "mid-rise" types frequently are much more expensive to build (increased code requirements, structural, overly expensive elevator requirements etc.)	Survey
Neighborhoods should definitely have a vote. Government usually is not responsive or knowledgeable.	Survey
I agree in principle but given past experiences I do not trust city staff or council to apply appropriate height limits.	Survey
Especially when it comes to affordability requirements, the same standards at 15' and 30' additional height as 60' makes developers less inclined to use a density bonus program at all at the lower tiers.	Survey
I agree but there should greater height options, including a DCB90 & DCB120; buildings need more stories to make up for the sharp increase in structural costs after the first ~85-90 feet due to the high-rise threshold in the building code.	Survey
I think by allowing the +15, it won't be such a stark difference between current buildings and new buildings being built. The new buildings won't seem to hover over the old buildings.	Survey
Some of the heights approved in my neighborhood (Central East Austin - DB 90) are not compatible with residential uses directly adjacent, leaving neighbors no step-down heights or other options to increase compatibility. I would like to see this area reviewed again for amendments that take into account more varied heights that fit with the neighborhood character.	Survey
Everyone should have the right to a clear view of the sky when they look out their own private window. Tall residential and commercial structures artificially impose a hierarchy of privilege where those hat the top have the most commanding views, and those at the bottom are forced to feel the psychological weight of all those feet above them.	Survey
Because I disagree with the whole concept of density bonus near residential and the city just keeps pushing the limits more and more - its as bad as the military. Ask for twice what you want, take less, then come back for more.	Survey
More flexibility	Survey
There are parts of Austin that is really hilly. Can there be an adjustment to the formula added if triggering properties are 30 ft or more higher in elevation than a potential building being developed, based on the lowest point within each triggering property?	Survey
Many older neighborhoods exist along what have become busy corridors. Some of those residents, who may be retired and unable to relocate, will now be in shadow for half the day in order to make room for people new to the city.	Survey
The flexibility will adapt to grouchy neighbors and to developers with different interests and financial ability. Let's not exclude smaller developers from being able to contribute right-sized affordable housing. Not everything needs to be a huge hideous sky scraper and not everyone wants to live in one of those or near one of those, either.	Survey
Not enough information. Unclear how "different neighborhood contexts" will be evaluated and accounted for.	Survey

In response to: Please let us know any additional thoughts you would like to share about the new Citywide Density Bonus Program.	
Do not move forward with the Density Bonus Program.	Survey
Destroying single family neighborhoods only enriches the developers at everyone else's expense. It does not make living in Austin more affordable, it just has negative long-term consequences to families and our schools.	Survey
The new Citywide Density Program aka Codenext is not a bonus!	Survey
Rent control and subsidized housing reduce the incentive for developers to build new units, which can tighten supply over time and paradoxically drive up market-rate prices. Price floors and ceilings almost always produce unintended consequences — this is basic economics, not ideology.	Survey
If state law is making it easier to build housing, Austin should embrace that. Austin and the State often have conflicting priorities, so I do not understand why the City would be against this. Austin should also consider offering expedited or fixed permitting timelines for developers as an option in addition to height. Developers would be keen on reducing the risk in their project and this can help more housing get built faster with no impacts to neighborhoods.	Survey
Need more information to support.	Survey
Since you like to fund things, pay moving expenses for existing neighbors negatively impacted. Where the data on existing home values once these taller buildings at within eye sight. Big miss.	Survey
Focusing on providing more affordable housing for less than 50% should be the main goal. The city has barely met its previous goals, this could be a big step that would continue to set Austin apart, and keep its lower income residents in the city - improving the side affects of all the accompanying issues of growing urban sprawl.	Survey
Qualifying should be determined by net income, not gross.	Survey
I agree that we need a density bonus program, but I don't know how the outcomes from the proposed Citywide Density Bonus Program will differ from the current programs, so I can't evaluate whether it will be better.	Survey
Agree - but you're looking in the wrong places IMHO. Instead of incentives going to rent seekers, work on removing barriers to build, policies/code revisions that make it more cost-effective to build.	Survey
90' heights are completely inappropriate at 25' from a single family home. In addition some uses - notably restaurants or bars - should require additional regulations to operate in close proximity to residences (noise, trash, hours, dumpsters, grease pits etc).	Survey
Density shouldn't need a bonus. Unfunded affordability requirements result in less housing. This approach is misguided but a citywide density bonus program is better than no additional density at all.	Survey
Please add a DCB90 and DCB120 allowing greater height options	Survey
I am concerned about the loose wording of the last thing mentioned. It talks about developing things in an area that something is not zoned for. Visions of Houston and how it seems like a hodgepodge of things thrown together are coming to mind. I don't want Austin to end up, looking like that.	Survey
Do not think the compatibility is really dialed in with this proposal. Would like to see a wider zone with less height near residential use.	Survey
I'd like to see a requirement where all who serve on the City Council are required to live in housing units that are at the lowest tier (least) affordability for the entirety of the duration of their service, excluding out of town travel.	Survey
Keep business out of established neighborhoods! Don't build taller building closer to residential homes. Try out these idea in new large developments and not in established neighborhoods. These questions are weighted to present a pre-established city position and do not ask the real questions.	Survey
Austin needs to stop limiting residential property owners from utilizing their property to the highest best use. The city council needs to stop worrying about affordable housing thinking that density is the answer. When commercial property developers are allowed to change their affordable housing offerings halfway through the process, or by paying to omit them.	Survey
Ae fee-in-lieu structure based on number of units (instead of sq ft) encourages developers to provide fewer total units, each with larger rooms. Property taxes, home sales, and HOA fees for condos usually correlates to price per square foot. Cost of construction rises faster than inflation and costs are often based per square foot.	
There should be a way to incentivize developers to creatively squeeze in more smaller-sized units to their developments. More units means increased supply and lower market prices (or lower risk of price bubbles).	
The current per unit fee-in-lieu encourages more luxury spacious units (to pay a lower fee), discourages units with smaller bedrooms/living rooms, and adds a barrier to be creative with tetris-like strategy to squeeze in more units.	
Fee-in-lieu needs to be tweaked in a way to incentize squeezing in more units by encouraging each building's unit category (1 bedrm, 2 bed, 3 bed, etc...) to have a smaller footprint (sq ft) per unit.	Survey
Promote infill housing. Humans want to live in smaller multifamily builds, not just skyscrapers or megaplexes.	Survey
There should be strong protections for existing neighborhood character through standard compatibility standards (not "relaxed" standards). Don't steamroll huge changes on existing residents in single-family home neighborhoods.	Survey
Compatibility requirements besides the initial 25 foot buffer zone should be eliminated everywhere in Austin	Survey
General Comments	
Dear COA, Please correct the Error Loading issue below with your policy page. I cannot get any info on the proposed program. Seriously, you are hosting meetings on it and the info is not available! I have tried browser searches and they all lead to this as the source and there is no information available. Things like this make members of the public think this may be a ploy to keep them unaware of the program. Please alert me when this is corrected.	Email
a. The City Planners already made a Big error when homestead designated lot sizes were reduced 2000 sq.ft. or so from 5000 sq. ft., and removed any requirement for OFF STREET PARKING for developers to consider/comply. b. City Planners need to at the least make Off Street Parking such that for each bedroom there is a vehicle space on a homestead lot. City Planners and Leaders need to drive around and see the serious Concern that is leading to an Issue (being ignored) and becoming a Problem (costly) - vehicles everywhere, demands for street parking permit zones (where will visitors parking?!/? Travel to LA or New York and see the problem. Make Off Street Parking Space for each Bedroom Mandatory!	
Thank You, and please forward to City Council Members and Density Bonus Program Management	Email

You lose a lot of the audience by throwing in MFI percentages rather than stating working in the actual dollars, or tiers stating income language which year, why do you not mention those in presentation and conversations which most people can more easily understand.	Virtual Open House
Grant the bonus entitlements by right and use the extra tax revenue for affordable housing	In-Person Open House
Density bonus programs produce less housing than granting the entitlements by right	In-Person Open House
The thing that usually holds up a 90 foot building is the neighborhood, not the developer.	Staff Briefing - Planning Commission
I understand from developers that there are certain heights that can and can't be built. Seems that the neighborhoods need to be convinced that a 90' building is okay to be built in their neighborhood.	Staff Briefing - Planning Commission
Base zone 30' + 60', noting that we're not getting taller than the 75' threshold because of costs	Staff Briefing - Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee

RECA's Feedback on the Citywide Density Bonus Program Proposal

A successful and widely-used density bonus program is critical to Austin's long-term success as a city. The proposed citywide density bonus program is a substantial improvement from Austin's other density bonus programs, but the program requires important revisions to achieve the City's affordability and economic development goals.

The proposed citywide density bonus program makes great progress in that it is more comprehensive, flexible, and consistent than other density bonus programs. This is achieved through its range of height tiers, which give developers more options to directly rezone into. The program also simplifies requirements across tiers and clarifies requirements and allowances in each tier, streamlining program participation.

However, RECA recommends **(1) adding taller density bonus tiers and (2) adding a rental fee-in-lieu option to the citywide density bonus program** to amplify affordability outcomes and secure new development that grows the tax base.

1. Add Taller Density Bonus Tiers

Recommended Action: Increase density bonus tier options to achieve heights of 150 ft. and 180 ft. to correctly incentivize participation in the citywide density bonus program

Under the current proposal, height tiers include a base height tier (45 ft. or 60 ft. in a commercial zone), a +15 ft. tier, a +30 ft. tier, a +45 ft. tier, and a +60 ft. tier. The proposed +60 ft. tier is unlikely to see meaningful utilization. Buildings above 90 ft. require light steel construction, a significant cost premium over wood frame, and the resulting height allowance of 105 to 120 ft. does not yield enough additional floor area to justify that expense. Without enough additional yield to cover the costs, developers will forgo the tier entirely, undermining the City's ability to generate the additional housing it's seeking with this proposal.

Instead, RECA recommends increasing density bonus height tiers to align with full construction-type breakpoints. Providing density bonus tiers at 150 ft. and 180 ft. make it financially feasible to construct taller buildings under the citywide density bonus program, as these heights can cover the required costs. These taller height allowances should be implemented in areas that make sense, especially since these tiers would be subject to the rezoning process and require Council approval.

In ensuring taller buildings can be constructed under the proposed program, the City would **improve affordability with the increased housing supply** provided by taller projects in addition to the reduced impact on City services per unit, as well as secure high value development where it makes sense, **significantly growing City tax revenue.**

2. Add a Well-Calibrated Fee-in-Lieu Option for Rental Units

Recommended Action: Add a fee-in-lieu option for rental units to better support Austin's affordability goals while ensuring more development under the proposed program.

The proposed program's requirement to provide on-site affordable rental units is not impactful or feasible in all construction cases, particularly at the shorter density bonus tiers that can only provide a few affordable units over a 1-2 year construction period, and at the taller density bonus tiers that require expensive construction materials and cannot cover their costs with subsidized housing units.

To ensure the program meaningfully improves local affordability and increases high-tax-revenue development, RECA recommends the citywide density bonus program to provide a fee-in-lieu option for rental units. This fee-in-lieu money would secure affordability at all levels in Austin, as it could be used to **immediately** buy-down existing rental units and **fill the 11,000+ unit gap available at the 30-50% MFI**. It would also make it more feasible to build at taller density bonus tiers, ensuring project costs are covered and development gets on the ground.

The calibration of the fee-in-lieu will be important to ensure that development is still feasible while also achieving comparable affordable housing benefits to on-site units. The calibration of the fee-in-lieu can be done between the passage of the citywide density bonus item and the passage of the 2026-2027 fee schedule in August. The density bonus item need only to allow a fee-in-lieu beginning October 1, 2026, and the remainder of the calibration can occur separately.

Future Recommended Action

In the future, City-initiated rezonings of these density bonus tiers should be considered to make development even more predictable and consistent, which would amplify the positive impacts of the citywide density bonus program.

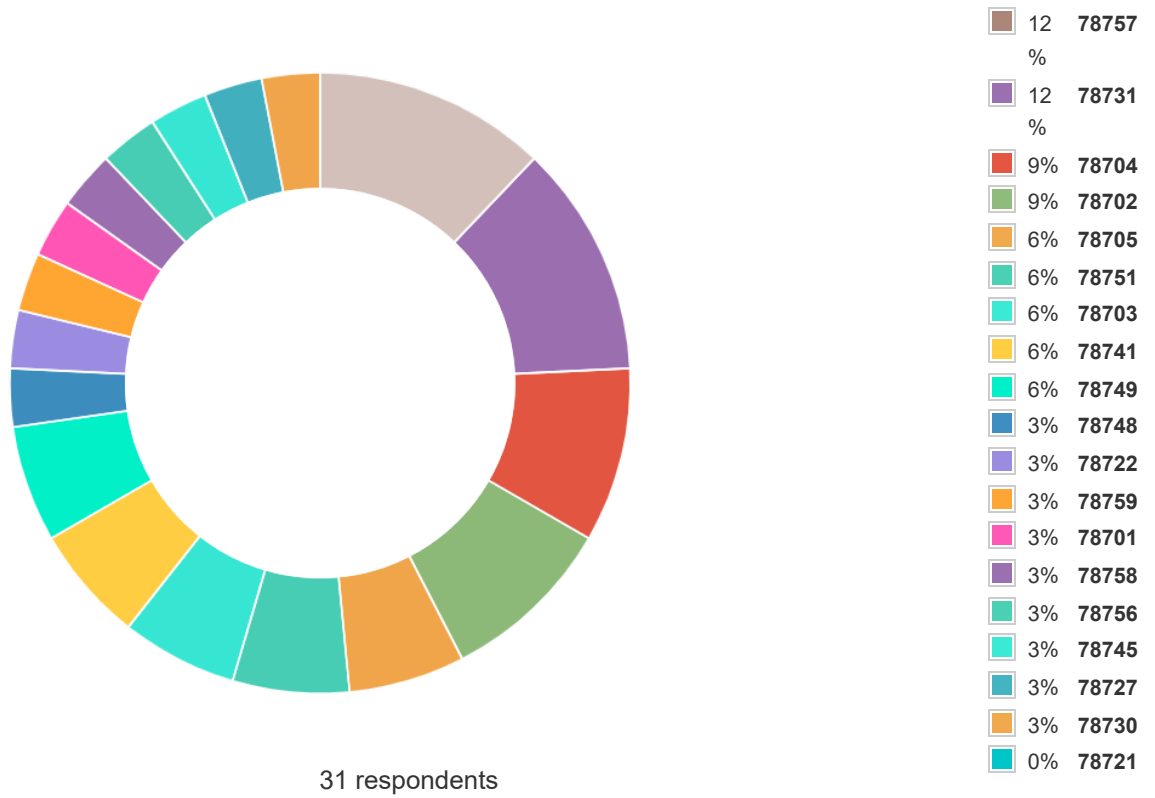
Summary

In conclusion, by **(1) adding taller density bonus tiers and (2) adding a rental fee-in-lieu option**, more high-tax developments will be built using the citywide density bonus program. As a result, Austin will **secure deep affordability gains** through sustaining the Housing Trust Fund, while the **City's tax base would grow** with more projects on the ground. RECA is available to support the City in the calibration and implementation of these reforms.

Thank you for your consideration.

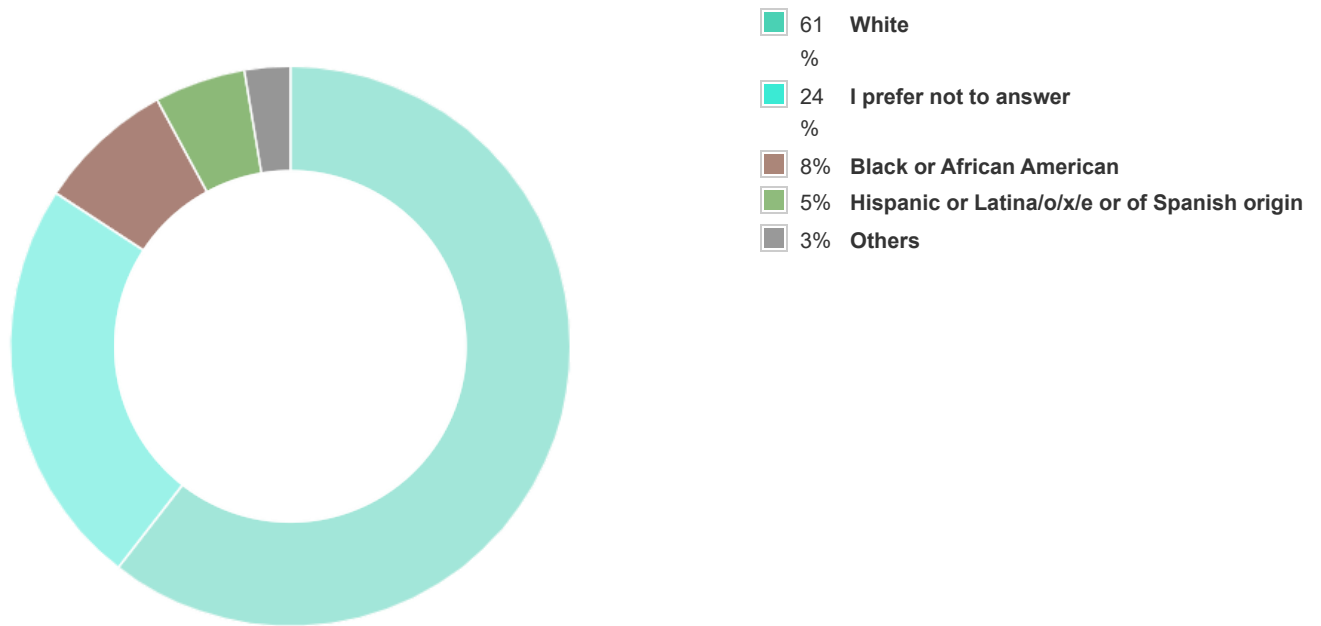
Appendix A: Survey Demographics

What is your ZIP code?



☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

What is your race or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.



37 respondents

Poll Questions 'Other' Responses:

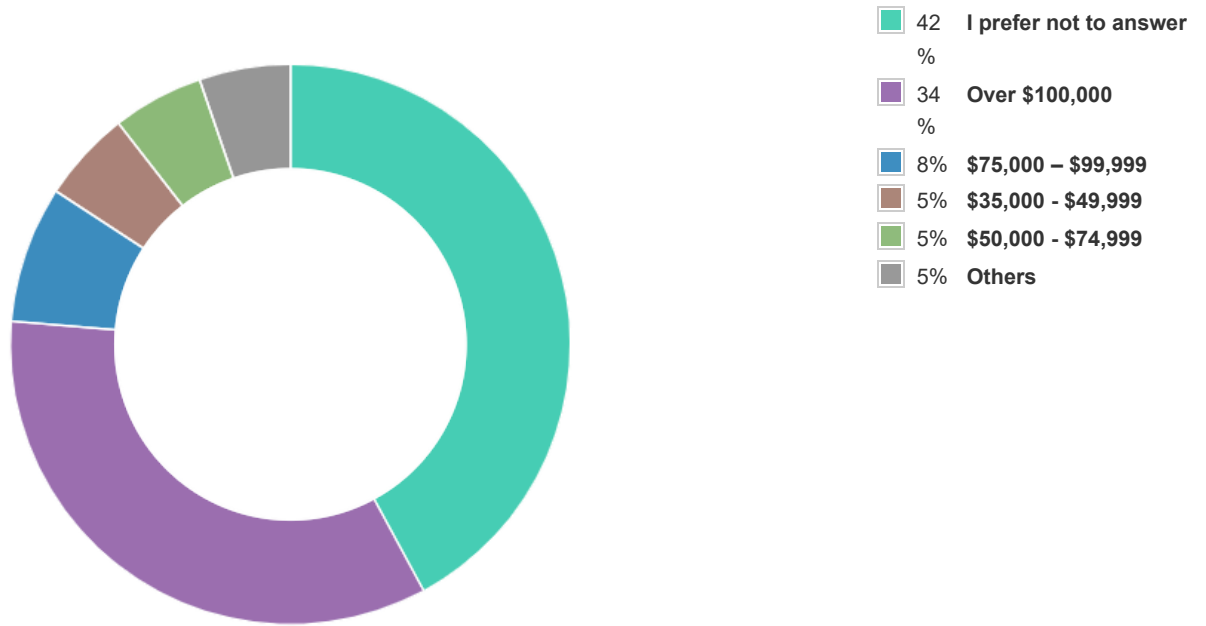
Why does it matter?

4/1/2026

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

What is your annual household income?

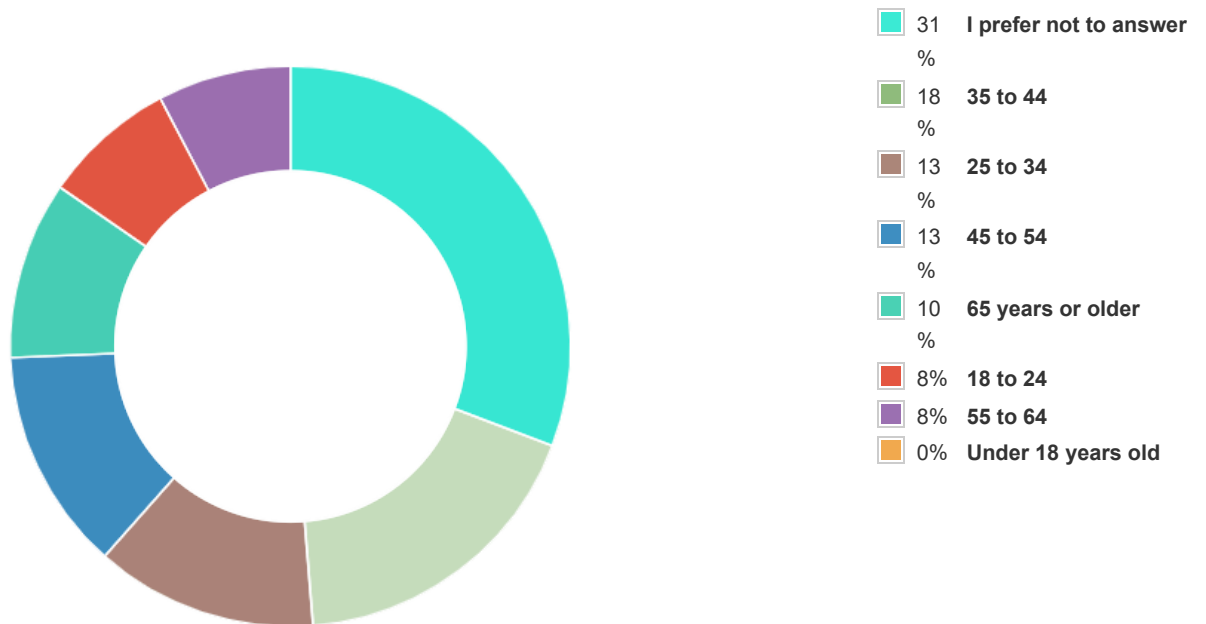


38 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

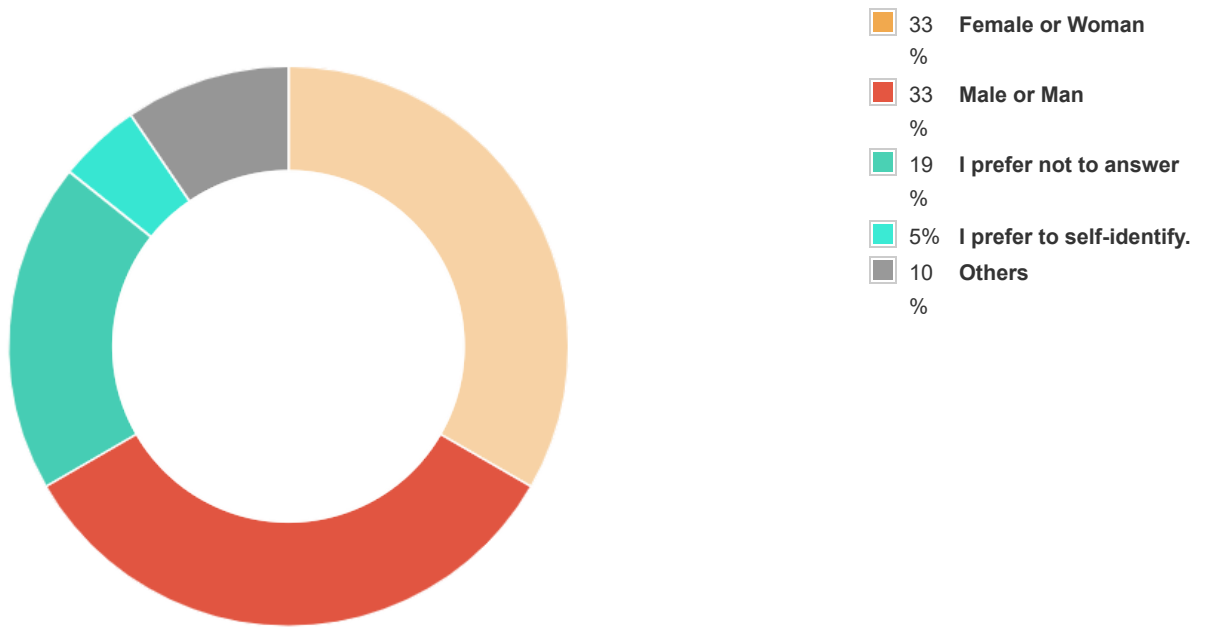
What is your age?



39 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

We know that gender identity is personal and complex. By gender identity, we mean your internal understanding of your own gender(s) or gender(s) with which you identify. What is your current gender identity? Please select all that apply.



36 respondents

Poll Questions 'Other' Responses:

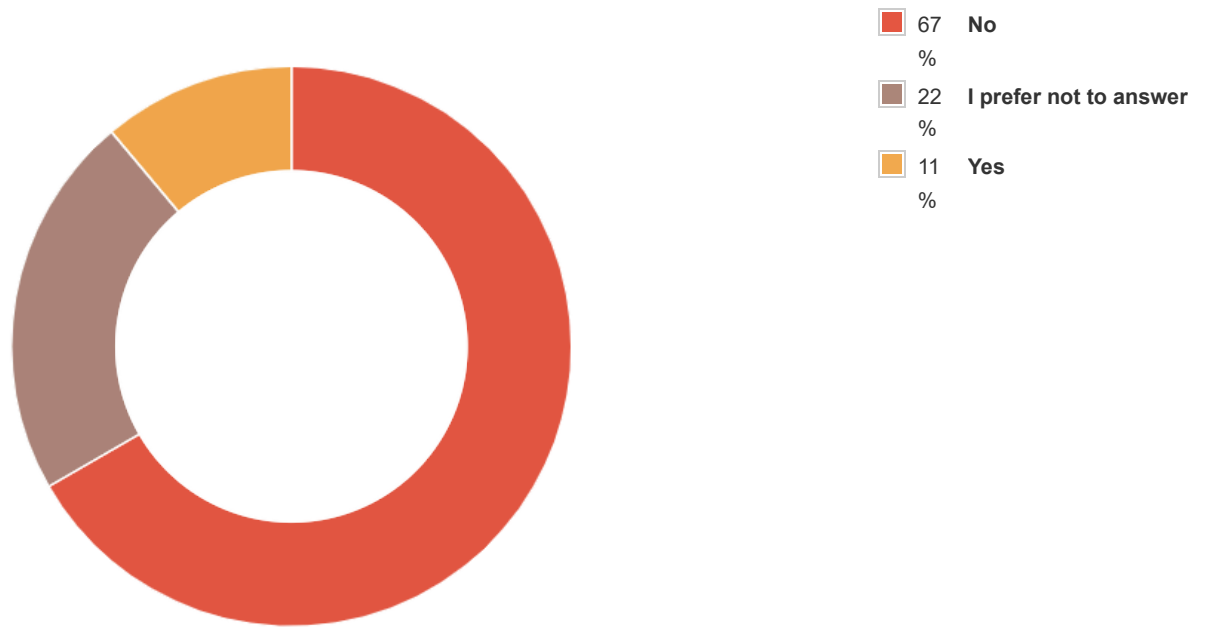
Seriously?

4/1/2026

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

Do you have serious difficulty in the kind or amount of activity you can do because of a physical, mental, or emotional health condition?

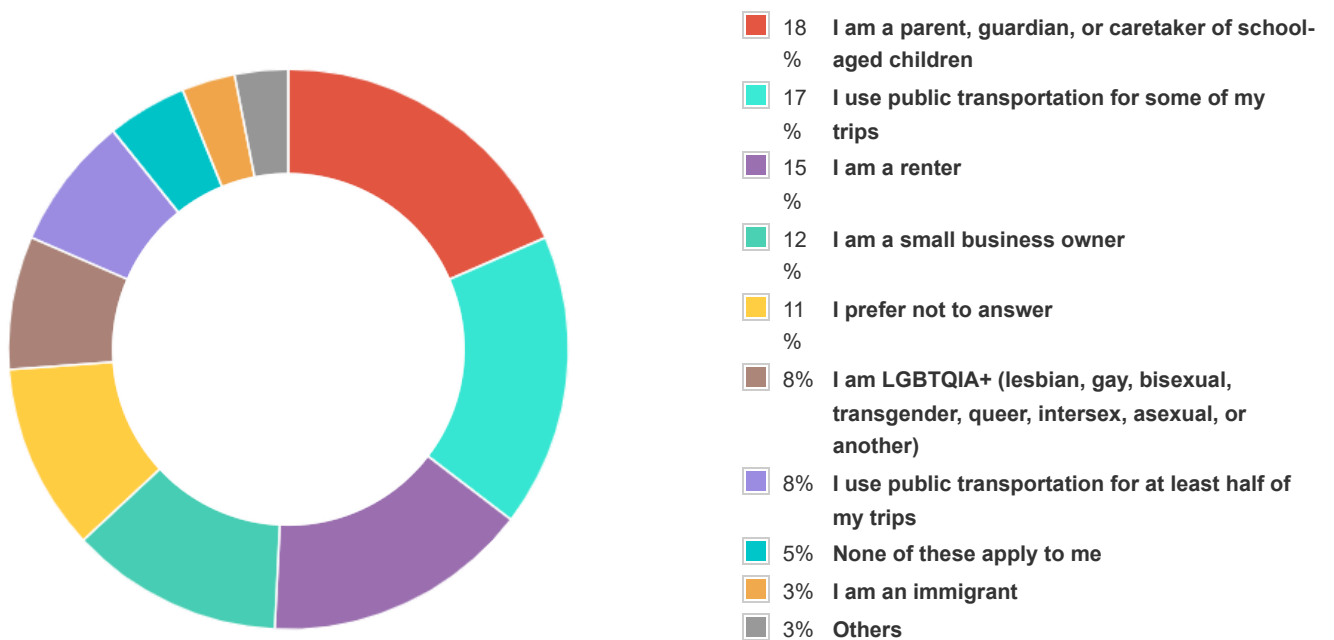


36 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

Filtered by Date

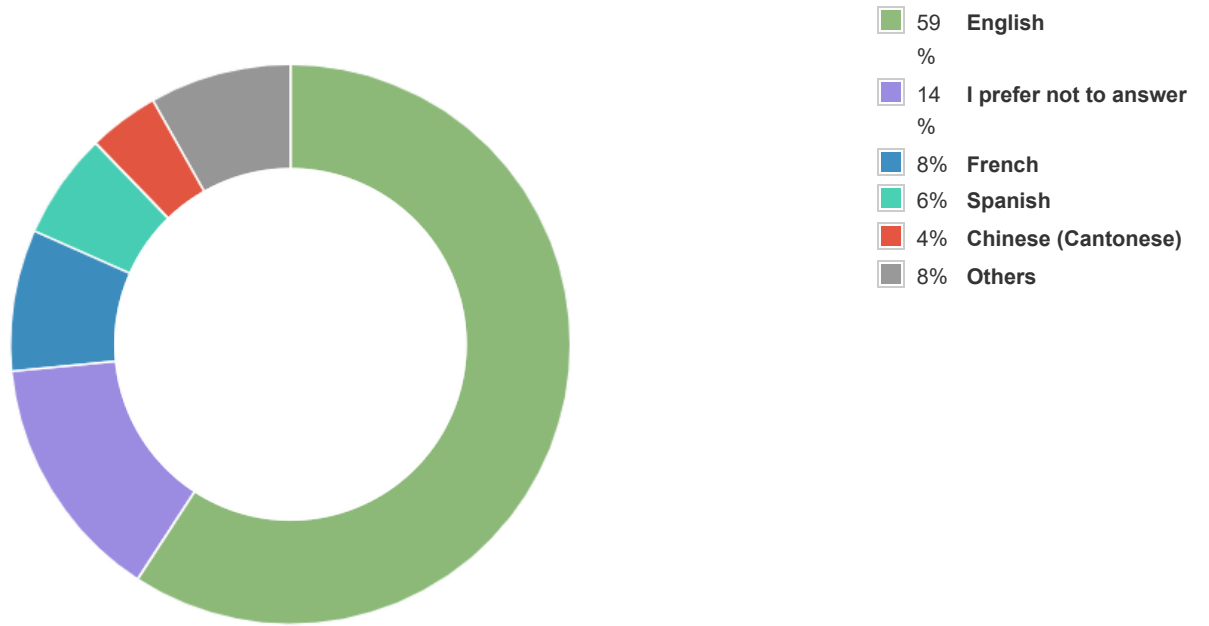
Do any of the following describe you? Please select all that apply.



37 respondents

☰ All participants - Custom Date Range

What is/are your primary language(s)? Select all that apply.



35 respondents