



# Housing Affordability Survey Report

City of Walnut Creek

February 2018

# Housing Affordability Survey Report

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## Summary

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In recognition of the state-wide housing crisis that's impacting low- and moderate- income residents, Walnut Creek's City Council declared Improving the Availability and Affordability of Housing a top priority for 2017-2018. One action item towards this priority is undertaking a year-long public information campaign on housing affordability in Walnut Creek. As part of the campaign, Walnut Creek conducted a Housing Affordability Survey from November 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 asking community members about their thoughts on housing affordability. The survey was available through the City's Housing webpage and promoted through various social media outlets such as email subscriber lists, Facebook, Twitter, City Manager's Update, and Nextdoor. The survey reveals the community is aware of the housing crisis and supports affordable housing development, though they are concerned about potential impacts such as traffic, safety, neighborhood appearance, school, and property value. Additionally, the City asks which City programs and policies the community is familiar with and which they are interested in learning more about. The results shows the community is most familiar with the City's First Time Homebuyer Loan Program and they would be interested in learning more about affordable homeownership and rental programs and city policies.

From a total of 1,111 surveys collected, major findings include:

1. The majority, 52%, believe there is not enough housing in Walnut Creek to meet the needs of the community.
2. A clear majority of 69% believe housing is not affordable enough in Walnut Creek to meet the needs of the community.
3. 47% believe there is not enough housing options (e.g. the mix of single family homes, condominiums, apartments, townhomes, senior housing) in Walnut Creek to meet the needs of the community.
4. The majority, 58% supports a community where people can afford to live where they work.
5. 41% support the development of subsidized affordable housing units in their community, while 38% support the same development in their neighborhood. 26% and 30% do not support the development of subsidized affordable housing in their community and neighborhood, respectively.
6. The most concerning potential impact of subsidized affordable housing is the impact to traffic congestion, with 53% stating they are very concerned and 19% concerned followed by concerns to public safety, appearance of neighborhood, and use of public funding.
7. The majority, 54%, believe affordable housing benefits the community while 25% is neutral, and 21% believe affordable housing hurts the community.
8. There is more familiarity with City housing programs than policies with 74% being familiar with programs and 26% being familiar with policies.
9. The most familiar program is the City's First Time Homebuyer Program with 28% stating they are familiar with it and the least familiar program is the City's Home Rehabilitation Program with 10% stating they are familiar with it.
10. The most familiar policies are the Density Bonus and Inclusionary Housing Ordinances with 7% and 6% stating they are familiar with them while the least familiar program is the Commercial Linkage Fee as 3% are familiar with this policy.
11. Affordable homeownership has the highest interest with 33% stating they were interested in learning more about it, followed by interests in affordable rentals, 29%, and housing policies, 20%.
12. Survey participants are diverse in age, level of education, income, housing tenure and housing type.

The City thanks all its survey participants for their time and thoughts. Their feedback and the survey results will be used and considered when organizing events and activities related to the housing affordability campaign such as in presentations, panel discussions, and informational materials.

## Methodology

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The Housing Affordability Survey was available online from November 1- December 31, 2017 to the public through the City's Housing Homepage. The survey link was posted and the survey was promoted through several social media outlets such as the City's Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, City Manager's Update, and the City's homepage.

The survey was also promoted through various email subscriber lists such as the housing interest list consisting of approximately 1,700 subscribers, Chamber of Commerce list with approximately 3,500 subscribers, and Walnut Creek Downtown list with approximately 3,375 subscribers.

The survey includes questions on housing affordability, affordable housing, and City housing programs and policies to gauge the community on their thoughts, areas of support and concern, and familiarity and interests in housing issues, programs, and policies. The survey also includes demographic questions about age, education, income, housing tenure, and household type of the survey participants.

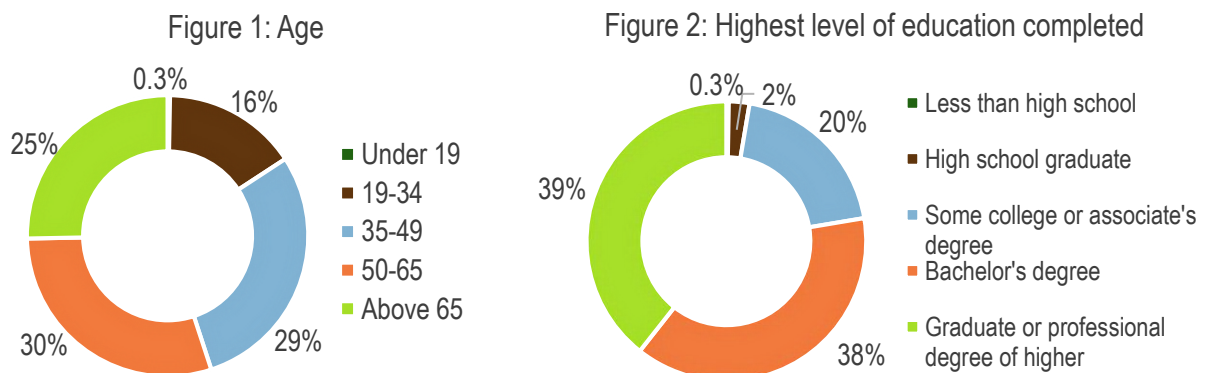
The survey was created through a survey agency, Open Town Hall, the City of Walnut Creek partners to make and administer surveys. At the close of the survey, Open Town Hall generated a report showing all participants' responses. City staff entered and analyzed the data on Microsoft Excel.

## Demographics

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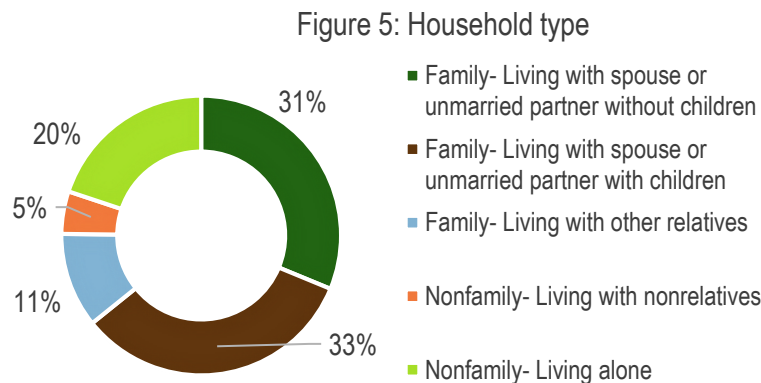
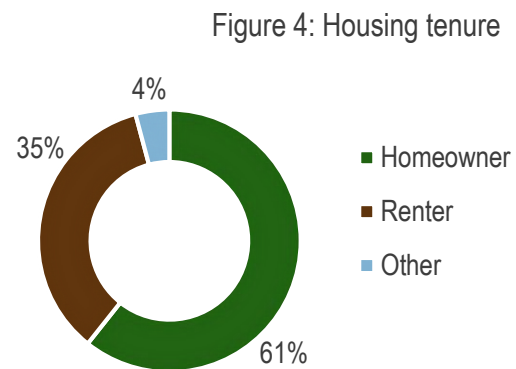
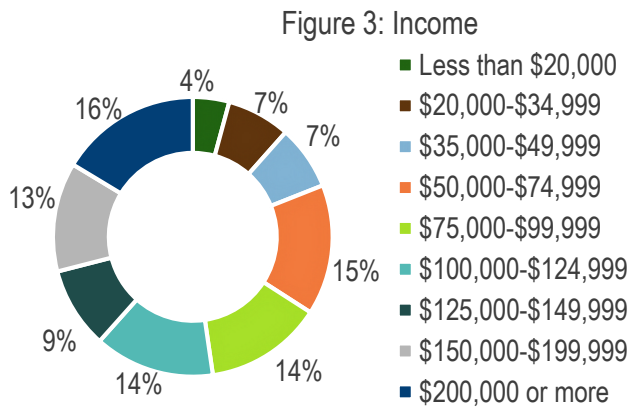
From a total of 1,111 surveys submitted, there was a diverse mix of ages, education, income, housing tenure, and household type.

The majority of survey participants are above the age of 34. 30% of the survey participants are between the ages of 50 and 65, 29% are between the ages of 35-49, 25% are above 65, 16% are between the ages 19 and 34 and 0.3% were under 19 (Figure 1).



The majority, 77% of survey participants have at least a bachelor's degree or graduate or professional degree. 39% of the survey participants have a graduate or professional degree of higher, 38% have a bachelor's degree, 20% have some college or associate's degree, 2% have high school diploma, and 0.3% have less than high school degree as their highest level of education (Figure 2).

About half of the survey participants have household incomes of or above \$100,000 and half below \$100,000 with 52% at or above \$100,000 and 48% below \$100,000. A high amount of participants, 16% reported to have incomes of or above \$200,000 (Figure 3).

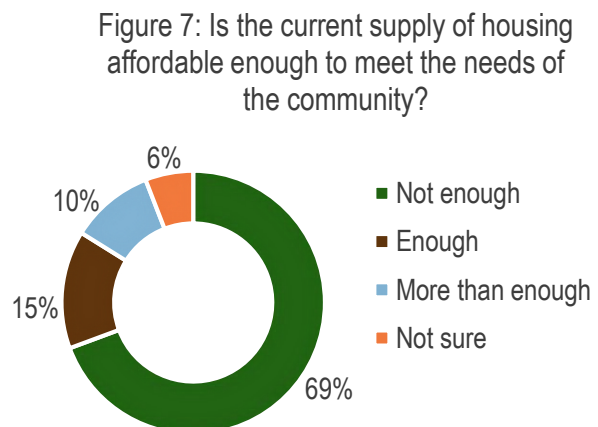
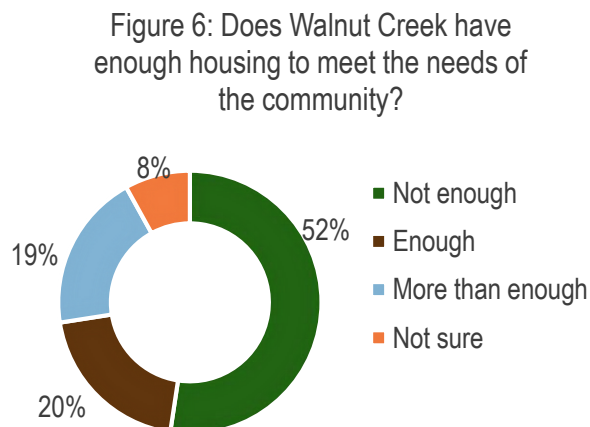


The majority of survey participants are homeowners, 61%, 35% are renters, and 4% stated other (Figure 4).

The majority of survey participants are living with family with a spouse or partner with children (33%) and family with a spouse or partner without children (31%). 20% live alone, 11% live with family relatives, and 5% live with nonrelatives (Figure 5).

## Survey Results

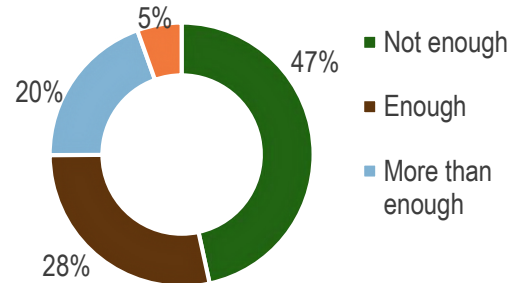
The majority, 52% believe there is not enough housing in Walnut Creek to meet the needs of the community. 20% believe there is enough, 19% believe there is more than enough, and 8% are not sure (Figure 6).



The majority, 69% believe the current supply of housing in Walnut Creek is not affordable enough to meet the needs of the community. 15% believe housing is affordable enough, 10% believe housing is more than affordable, and 6% are not sure (Figure 7).

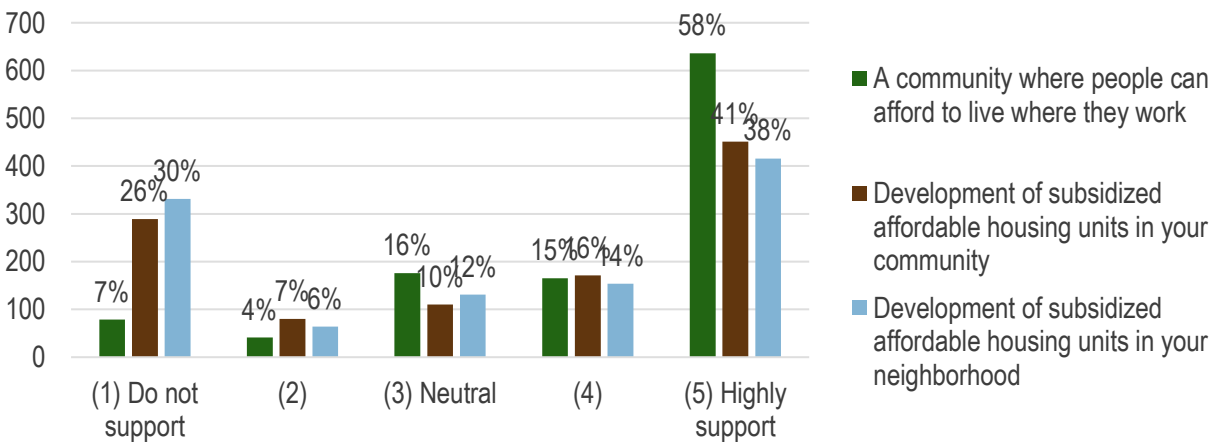
47% believe there is not enough housing options in Walnut Creek (e.g. single family homes, apartments, condominiums, townhomes, senior housing). 28% believe there is enough housing options, 20% believe there is more than enough, and 5% are not sure (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Are there enough housing options in Walnut Creek? (single family, apartment, condo)



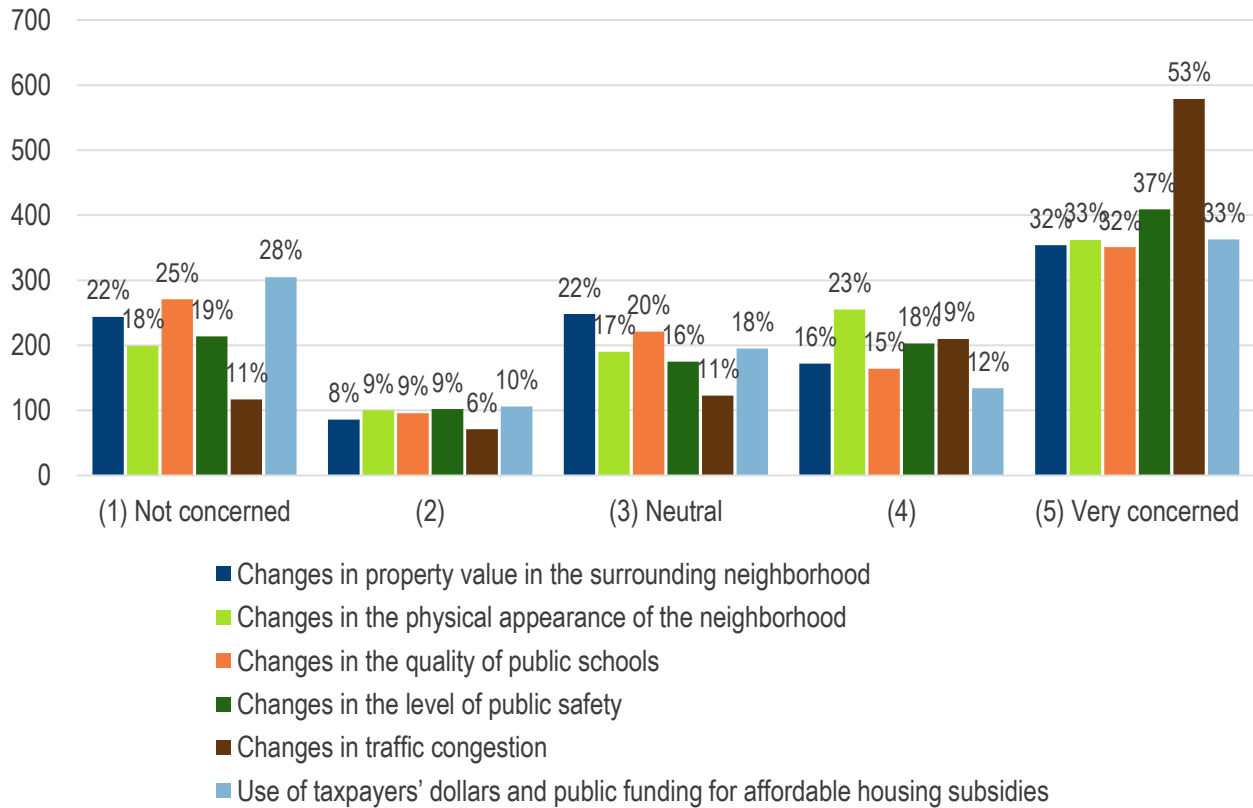
The majority, 58%, supports a community where people can afford to live where they work while 16% are neutral, and 7% are not in support of this. 41% support the development of subsidized affordable housing units in their community while 10% are neutral, and 26% are not in support of this. A slightly lower percentage, 38% support the development of subsidized affordable housing units in their neighborhood, while a slightly higher percentage, 12% are neutral, and 30% are not in support of this (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Level of support



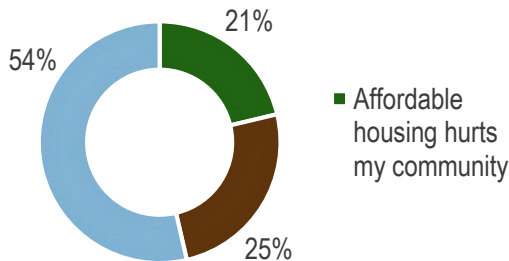
The most concerning potential impact of the development of subsidized affordable housing is the impact of traffic, with 72% ranging from concerned to very concerned, while 11% are neutral and 17% are not as concerned. The next most concerning potential impacts are public safety (55%) and neighborhood appearance (56%) ranging from concerned to very concerned. Other concerns include impacts to the use of public funding, changes in property values, and quality of schools all ranging from 45-48% from concerned to very concerned (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Level of concern



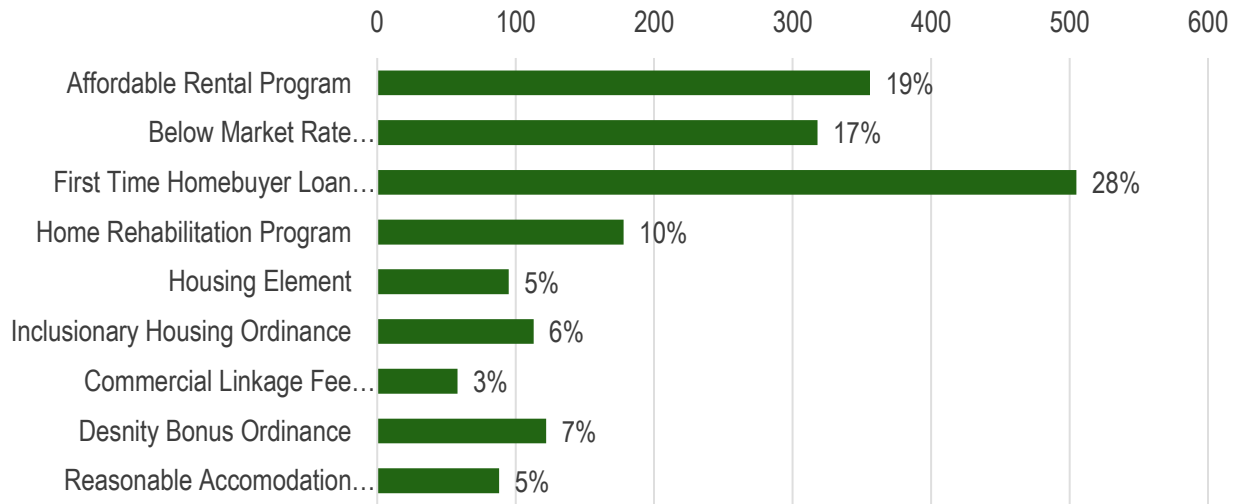
The majority, 54% believe affordable housing benefits the community while 25% are neutral, and 21% believe it hurts the community (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Impact of affordable housing on your community



Survey participants are more familiar with the City's housing programs than policies as 74% of all the categories chosen are programs and 26% are from policies. The most familiar or well-known program is the First Time Homebuyer Program followed by the Affordable Housing Rental Program, Below Market Rate Homeownership Program, and Home Rehabilitation. The most familiar policy is the Density Bonus Ordinance (7%), followed by the Inclusionary Ordinance (6%). Survey participants are least familiar with the Commercial Linkage Fee Ordinance as 3% are familiar with the program (Figure 12). Participants may check all that applies so one participant may select more than one program and policy.

Figure 12: Familiar City housing programs and policies



Survey participants are most interested in learning more about affordable homeownership programs and opportunities, 33%, followed by an interest to learn more about affordable rental housing, 29%, and housing policies, 20% (Figure 13). Participants may check all that applies so one participant may select more than one program and policy.

Figure 13: Housing programs and policies of interest

