

Housing Action Plan – Survey Report DRAFT

The City of Olympia posted a housing survey on Engage Olympia during the month of March 2021. Community members were asked to share information about their housing experiences and preferences, as well as level of support for various proposed actions. The survey was geared for Olympia residents, but open to others as well. There were 319 respondents.

Limitations

This is not a statistically valid survey and represents the opinions of only a small fraction of the Olympia public. Engage Olympia users tend to be more actively engaged in City affairs, so opinions of more marginalized populations may not be widely reflected. In addition, a majority (77%) of respondents to this survey were homeowners rather than renters. Whereas, in Olympia only 45% of residents are homeowners. No one experiencing homelessness responded to this survey.

Key Take-Aways

The attached survey report is generated from the Engage Olympia platform. Some key take-aways include:

- 92% of non-homeowners who responded to the survey (renters plus those who live with family or friends) said they would like to own a home someday.
- A majority of homeowners are not interested in renting in the future. Owners are mixed on whether to downsize, but there is a majority that does not want a larger home. This is even more pronounced among those free of a mortgage. Homeowners with a mortgage appear the most open to homesharing, however the majority still is strongly disinclined.
- While only 6% of respondents reported spending more than 50% of their income on housing, we dug deeper into the data to reveal the rate goes up to 14% for those born between 1990-1999 (the youngest demographic to respond).
- A deeper dive into the data also reveals that the younger the demographic, the more prone these respondents are to negative effects from COVID-19 in relation to their housing stability.
- Each type of housing action listed was supported somewhat or strongly by a majority of respondents.

Housing Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

19 March 2019 - 28 March 2021

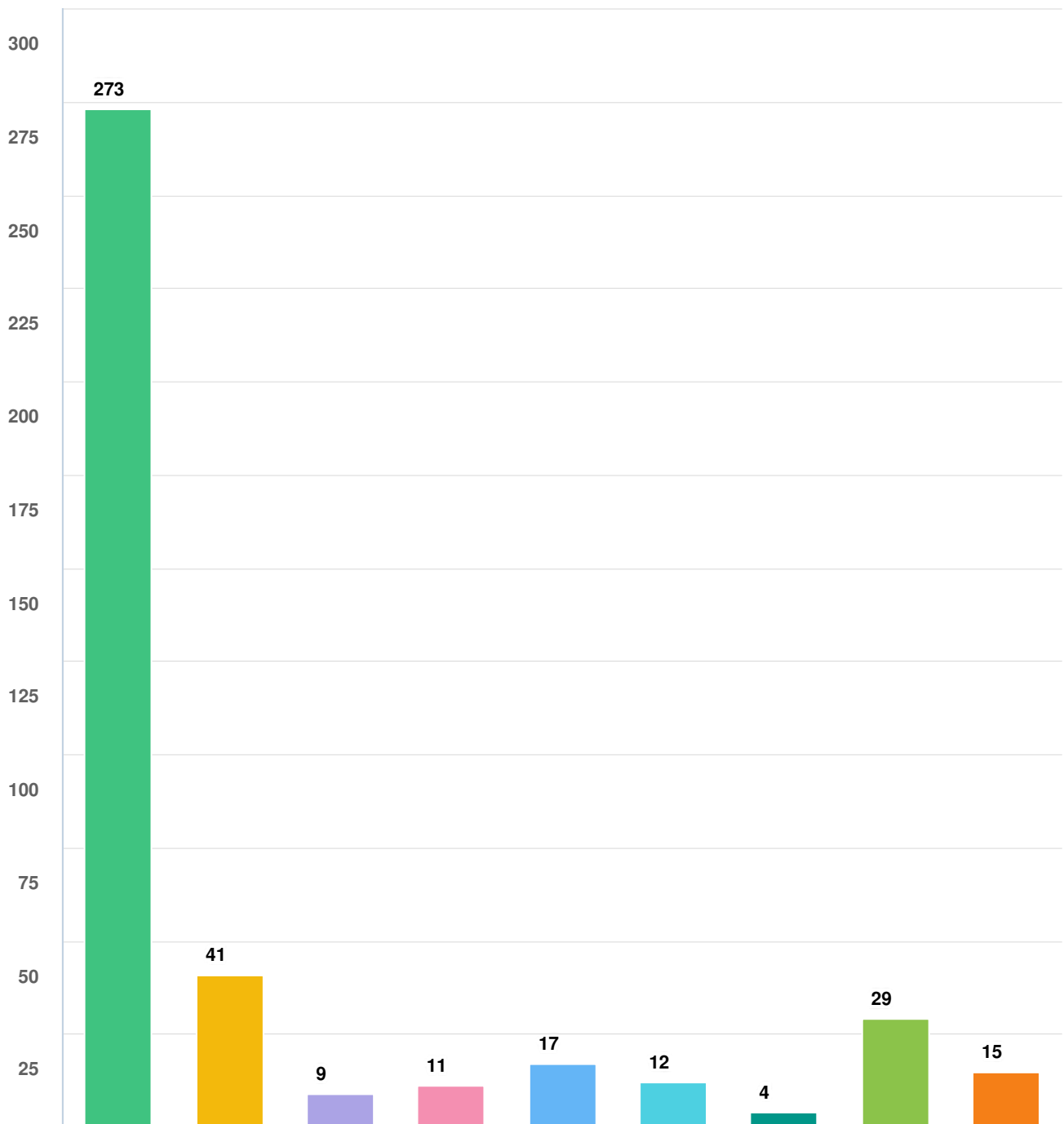
PROJECT NAME:

Housing Action Plan



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 Which of the following describes your relationship with housing in Olympia?(check all that apply)

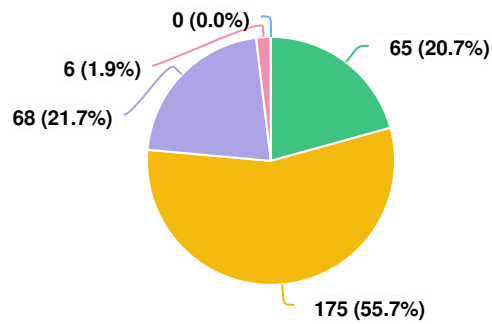


Question options

- Resident (primary address)
- Property manager/landlord
- Real estate agent
- Developer
- Housing services provider
- Builder or designer
- Second homeowner
- Visitor/past or future resident
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q2 What best describes your current primary housing situation?



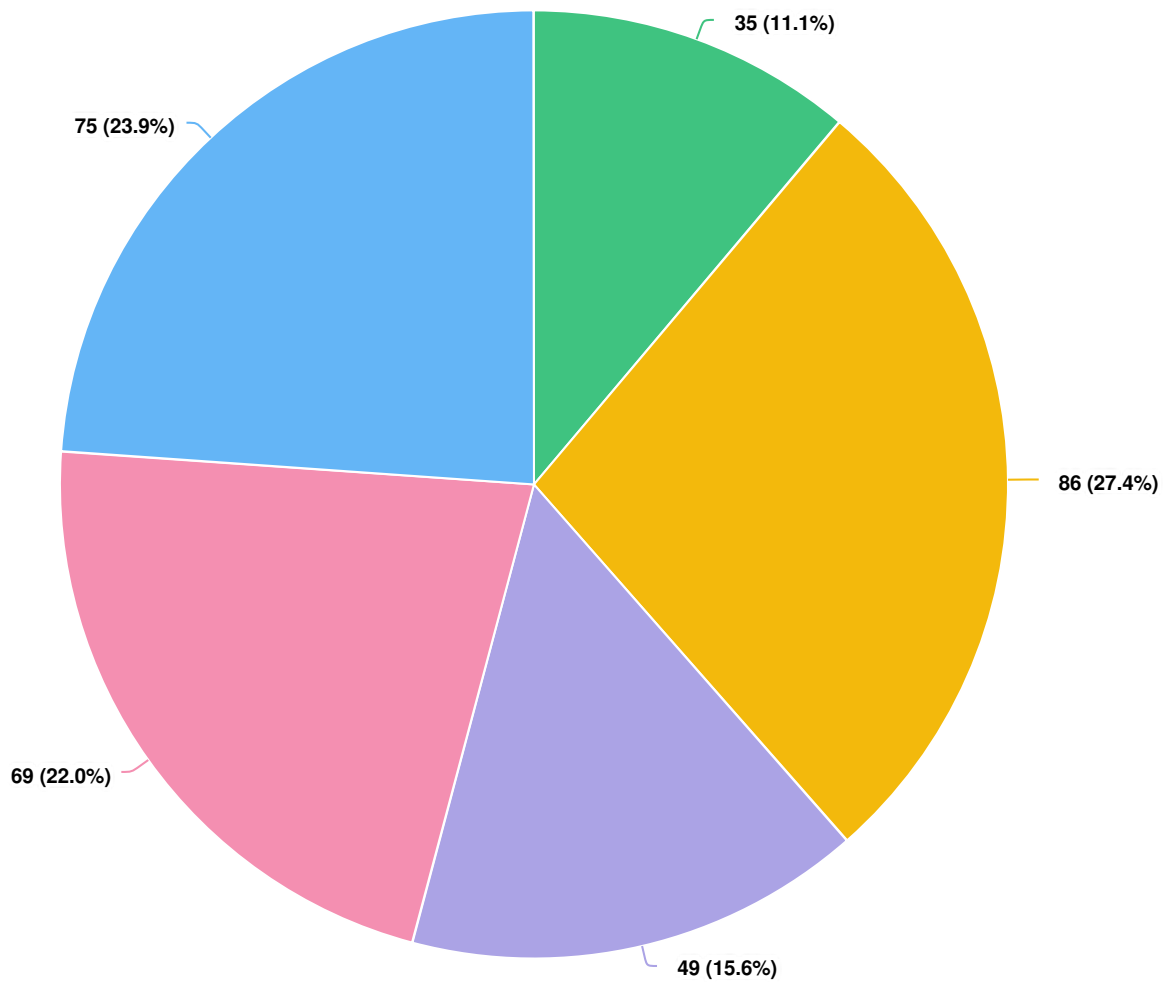
Question options

- I rent my home
- I own my home (and still pay a mortgage or home equity loan)
- I own my home (and am free of mortgage or home equity payments)
- I have stable housing but do not pay rent (e.g., live with parents or children)
- I do not have stable housing (e.g., stay at a shelter, experiencing homelessness)

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Q3 When did you begin your current living situation?

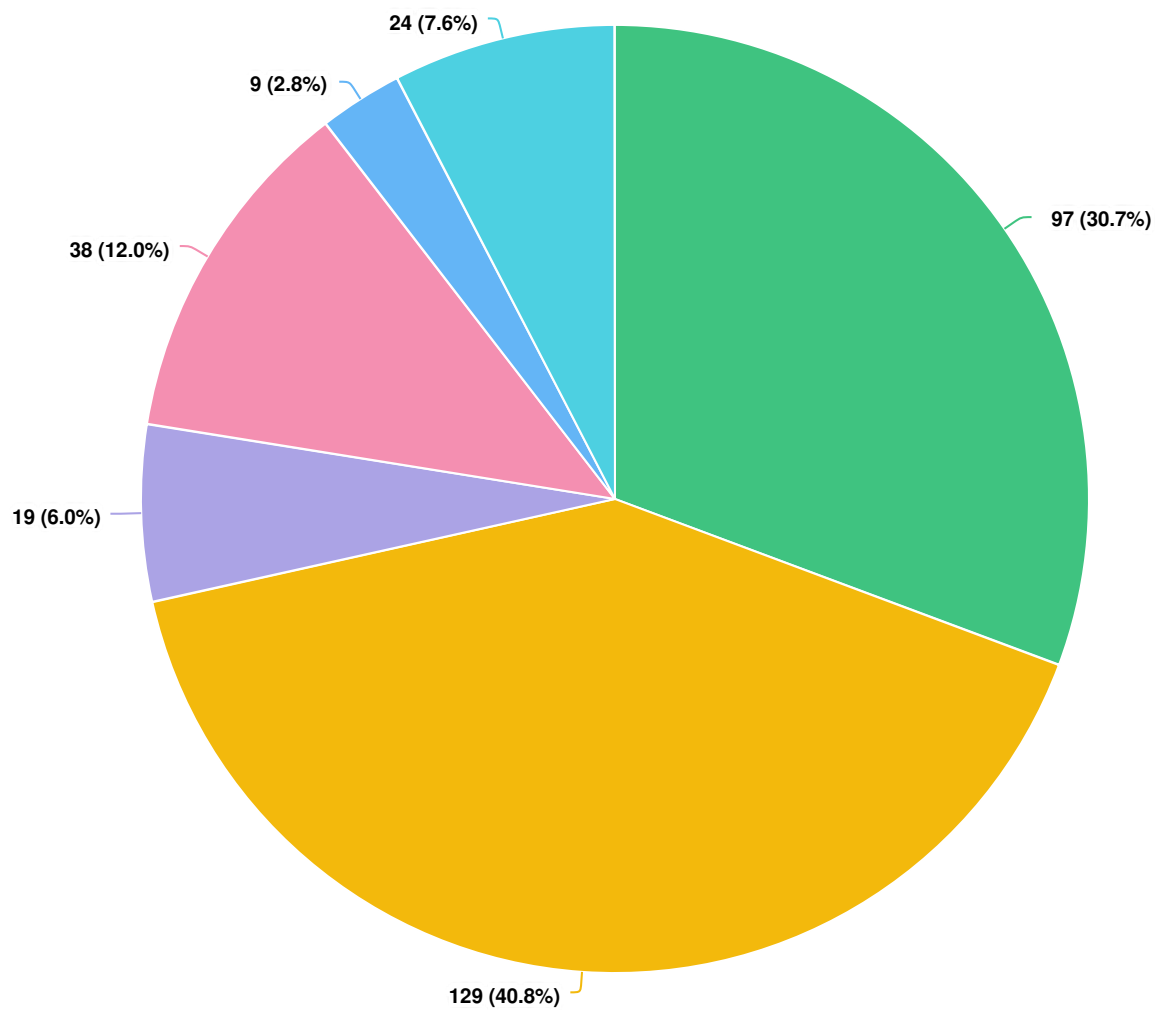


Question options

- Within the past year
- 1-4 years ago
- 5-9 years ago
- 10-19 years ago
- 20+ years ago

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q4 Which best describes the make-up of your household?

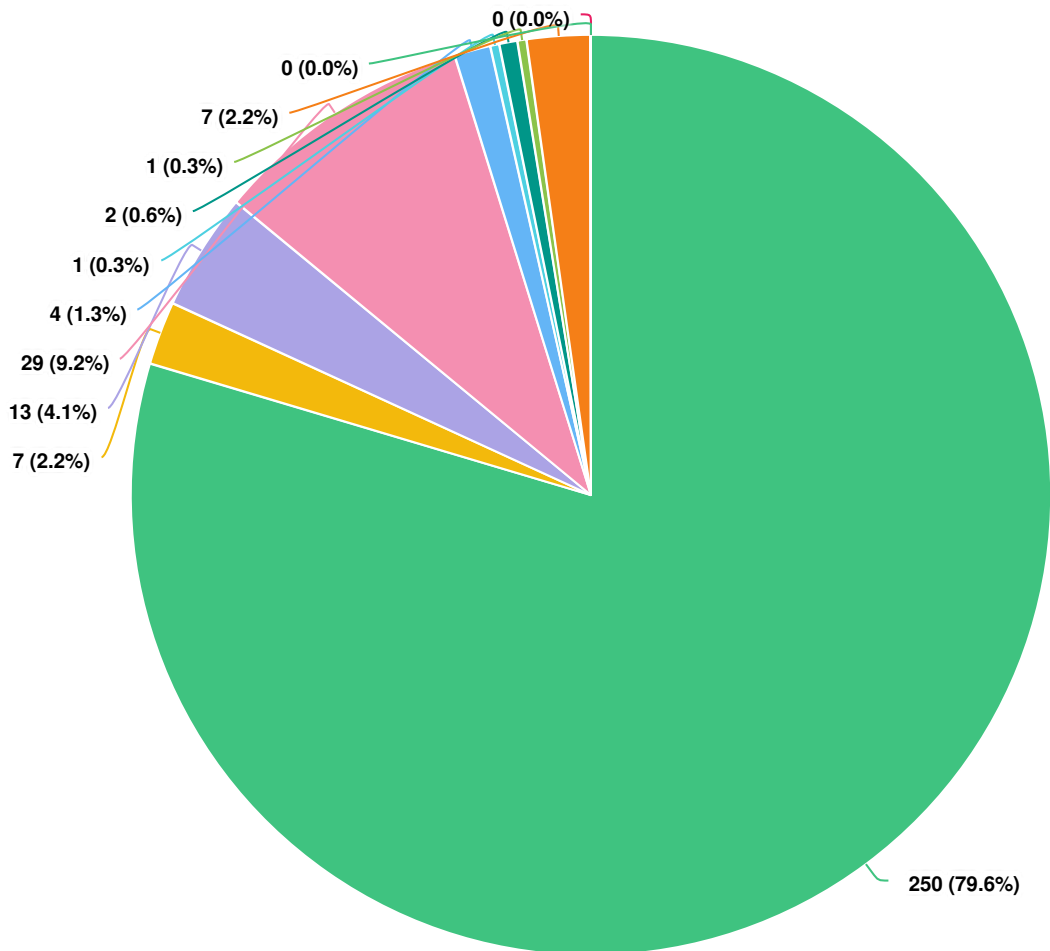


Question options

- Couple with children
- Couple no children
- Single parent living with children
- Householder living alone
- Householder living with non-family members
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (316 response(s), 0 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q5 What type of housing do you currently live in?

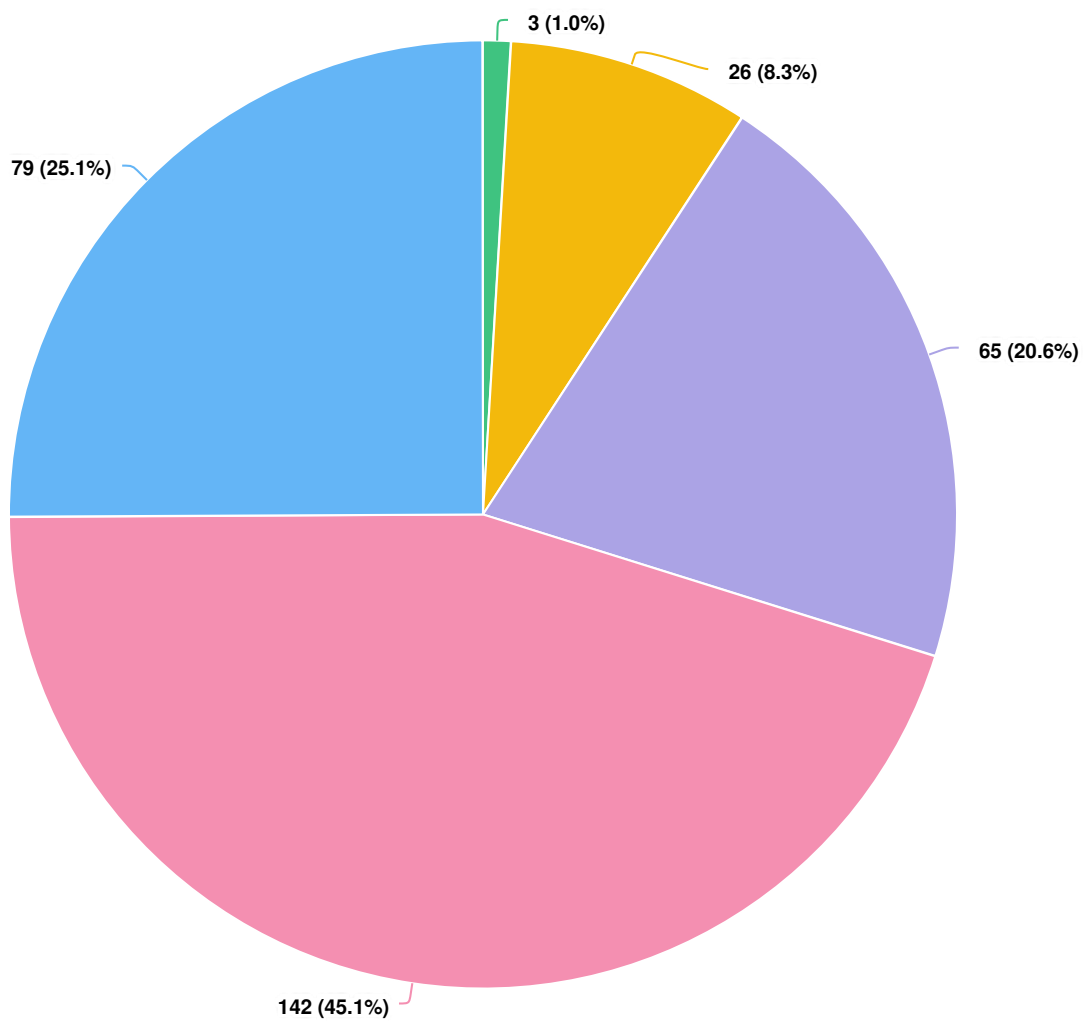


Question options

- Detached house ● Townhouse ● Duplex, triplex, or fourplex
- Multifamily apartment or mixed-use building (Rental situation)
- Multifamily condominium or mixed-use building (Ownership situation)
- An accessory dwelling unit (backyard cottage or unit in home with separate entrance)
- Cottage housing (small homes with a shared common area) ● Mobile home or trailer ● Other (please specify)
- Student dormitory ● I do not have stable housing at this time

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
 Question type: Radio Button Question

Q6 How many bedrooms is your current primary home?

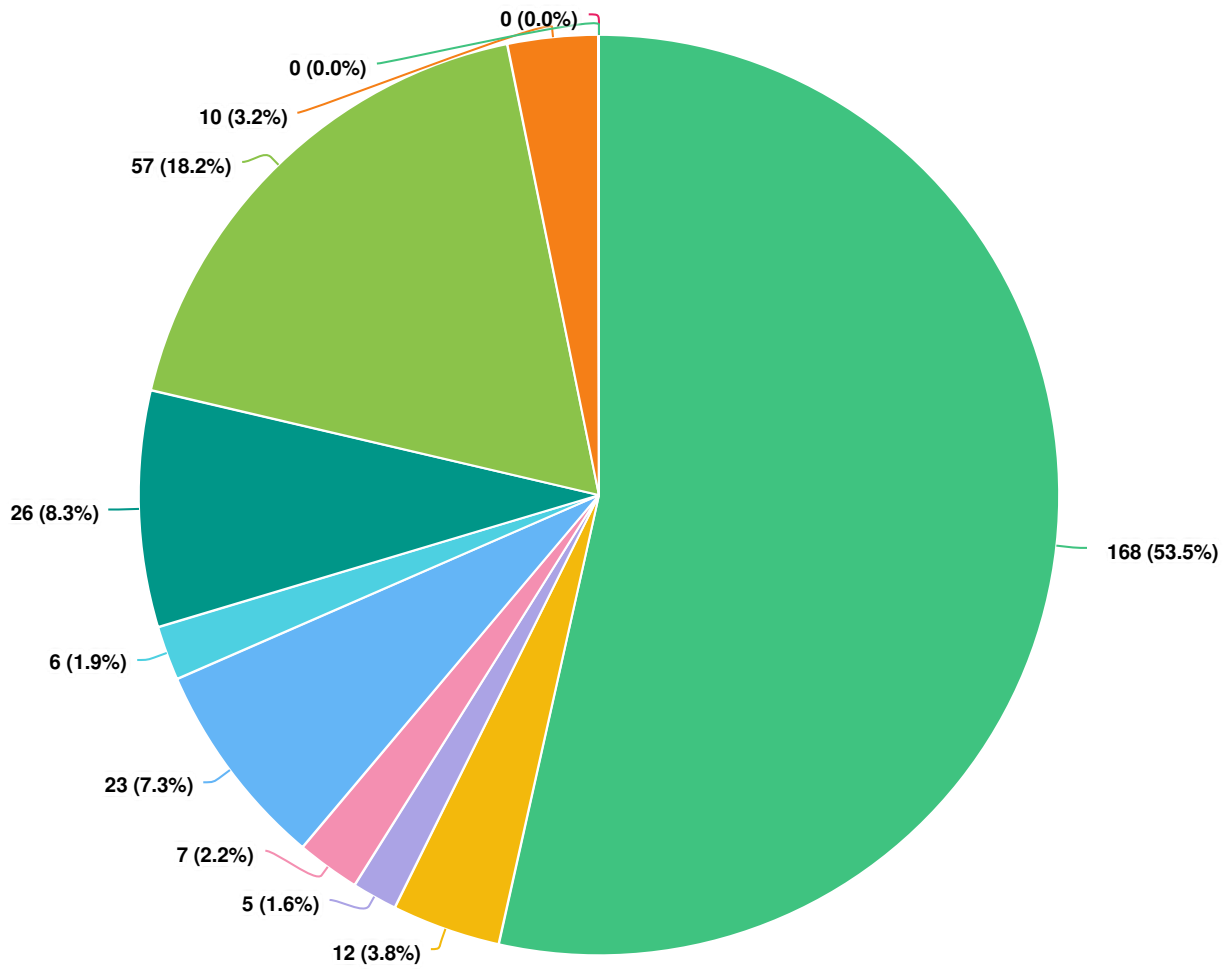


Question options

- Studio
- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedroom
- 3 bedroom
- 4+ bedrooms

Optional question (315 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q7 | If you could choose, what type of housing would you most like to live in next?

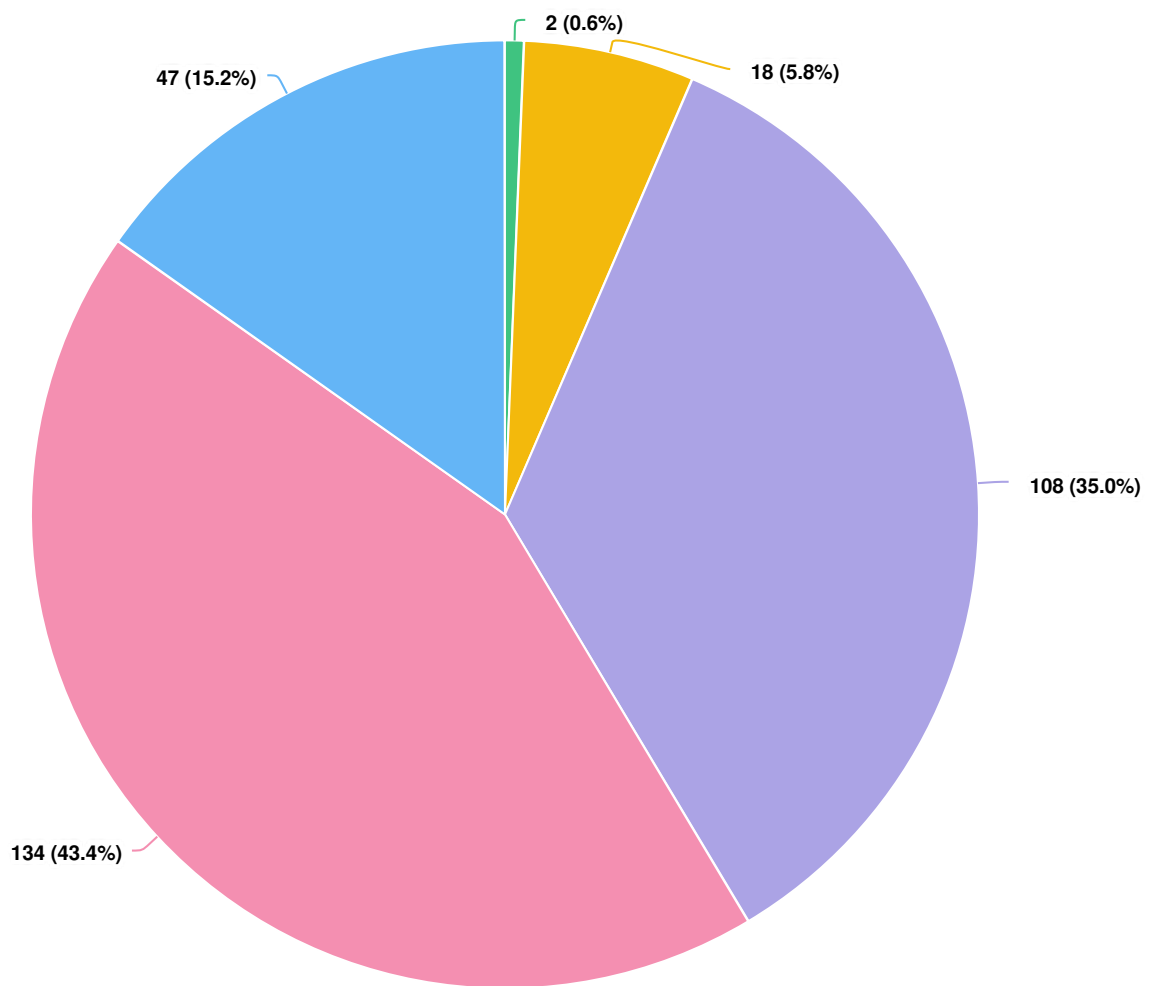


Question options

- Detached house
 ● Townhouse
 ● Duplex, triplex, or fourplex
- Multifamily apartment or mixed-use building (Rental situation)
- Multifamily condominium or mixed-use building (Ownership situation)
- An accessory dwelling unit (backyard cottage or unit in home with separate entrance)
- Cottage housing (small homes with a shared common area)
 ● None. I would stay where I am.
 ● Other (please specify)
- Mobile home or trailer
 ● Student dormitory

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
 Question type: Radio Button Question

Q8 How many bedrooms would like to have in your home?



Question options

- Studio
- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedroom
- 3 bedroom
- 4+ bedroom

Optional question (309 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q9 How much do you agree with the following statements?



Optional question (315 response(s), 1 skipped)
 Question type: Likert Question

Q9 | How much do you agree with the following statements?

I rent now, but would like to own my own home someday

Not applicable : 215



Definitely disagree : 11



Somewhat disagree : 2



Neither agree nor disagree : 9



Somewhat agree : 11

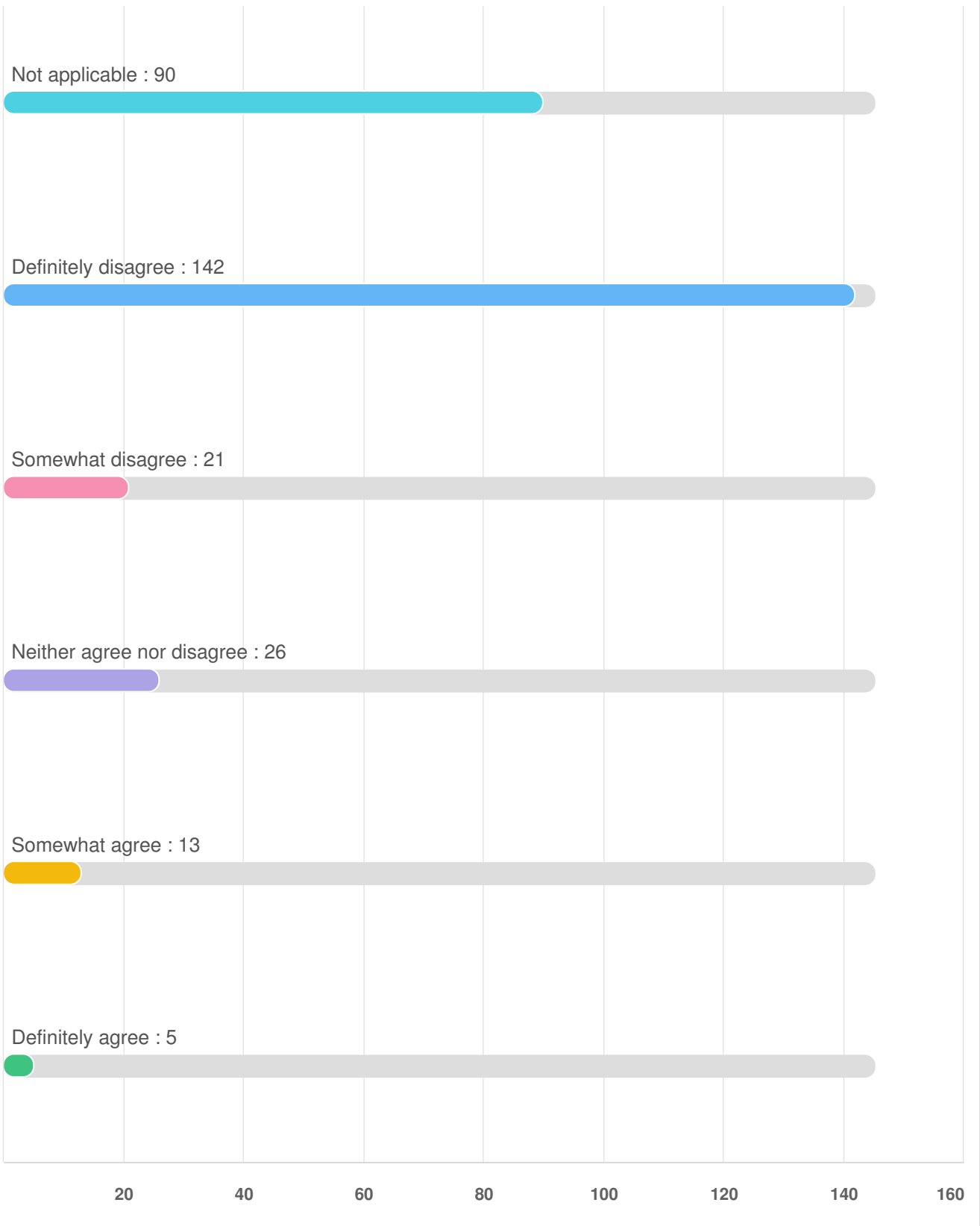


Definitely agree : 46



25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225 250

I own my home now, but would prefer to rent someday



At some point I would like to downsize to a smaller home

Not applicable : 21



Definitely disagree : 80



Somewhat disagree : 27



Neither agree nor disagree : 37



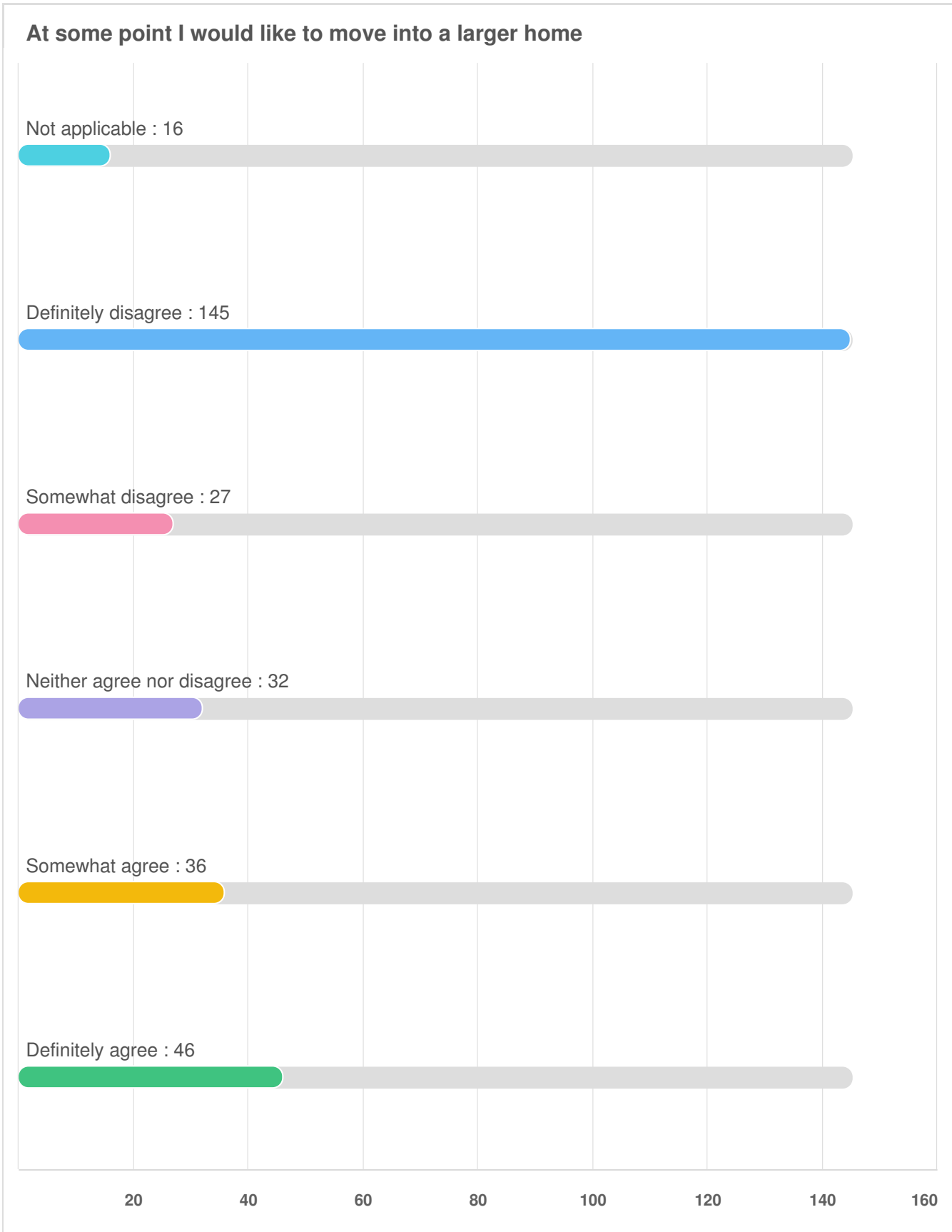
Somewhat agree : 70



Definitely agree : 66



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90



The idea of homesharing (sharing a dwelling with one or more unrelated people) appeals to me

Not applicable : 5

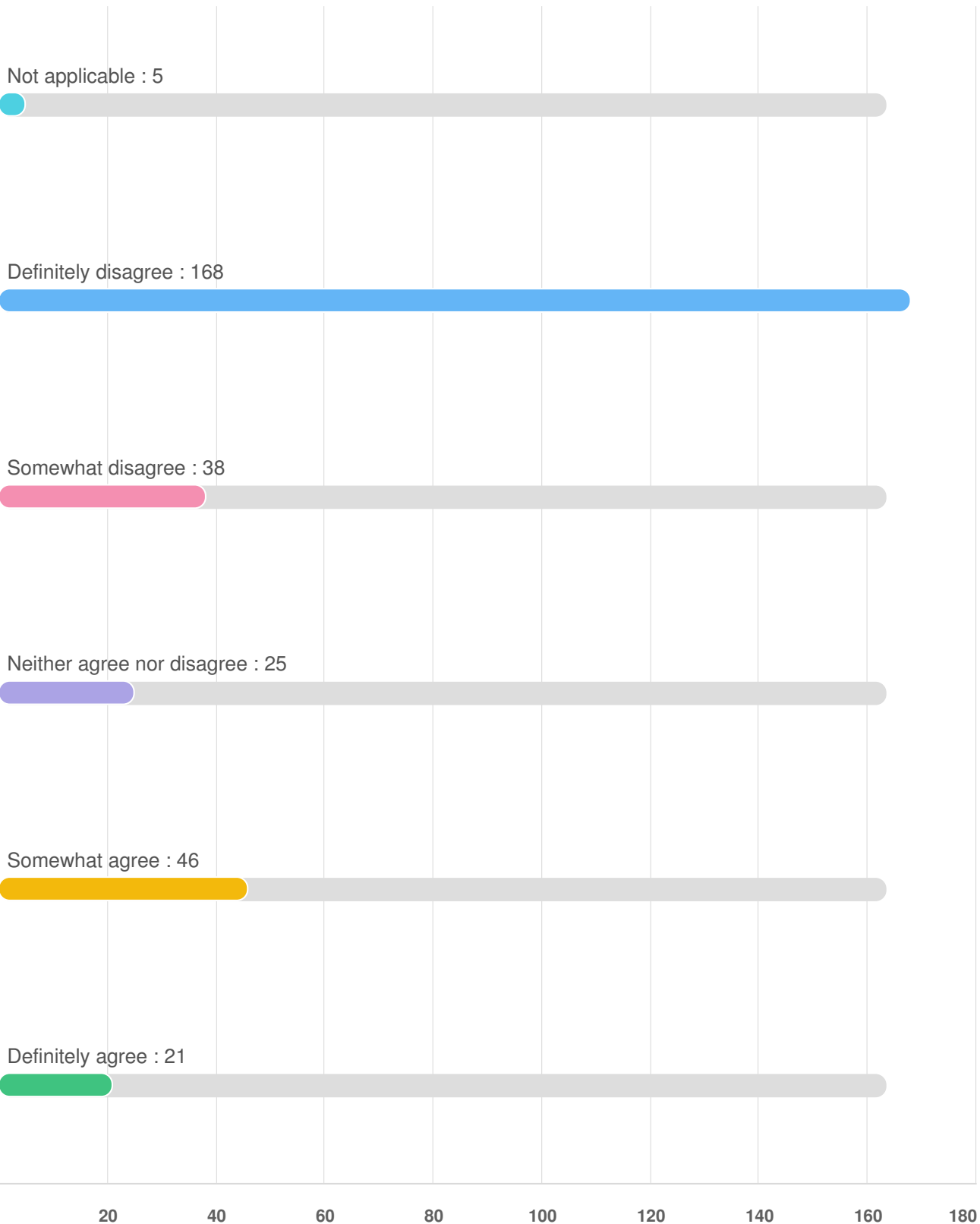
Definitely disagree : 168

Somewhat disagree : 38

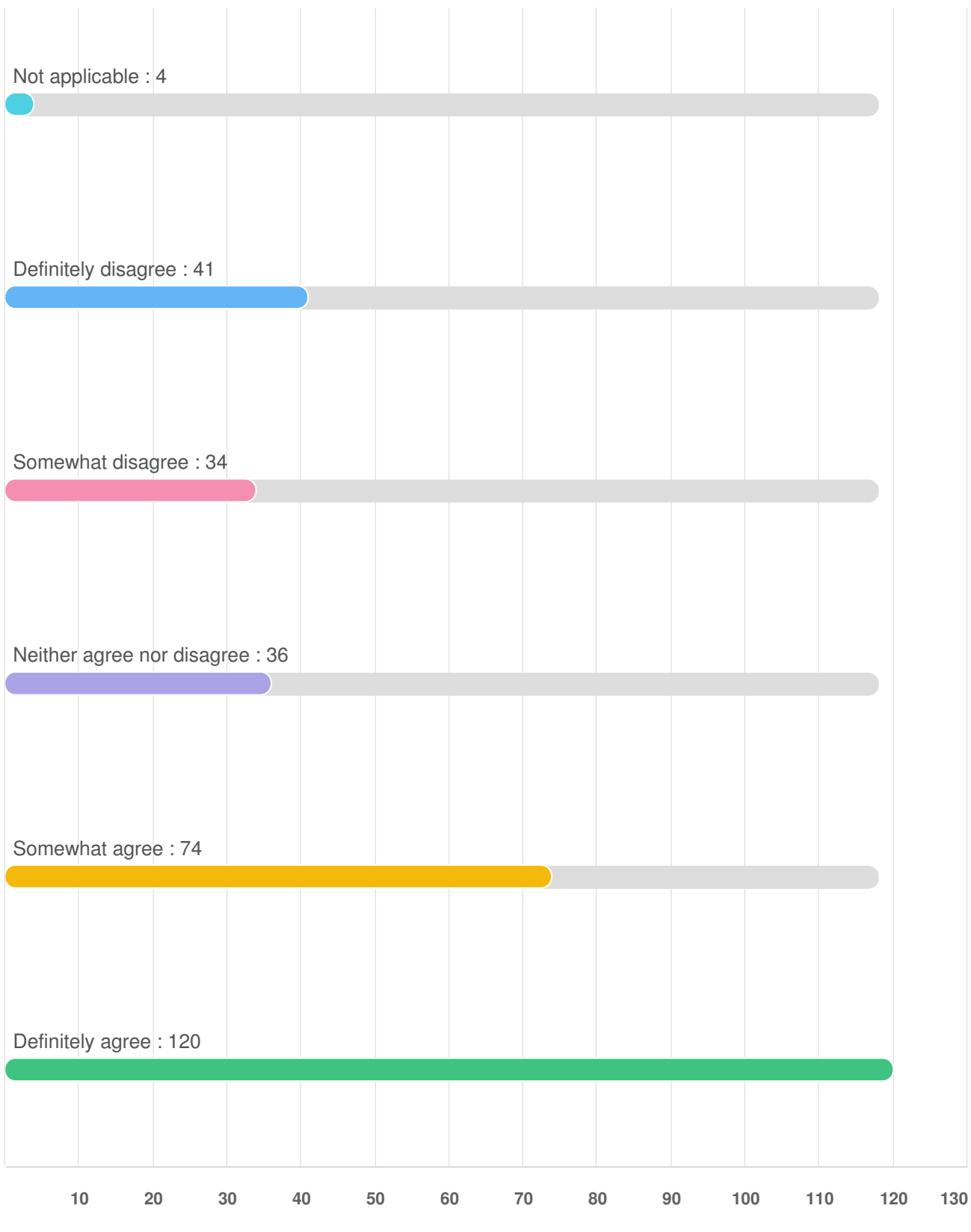
Neither agree nor disagree : 25

Somewhat agree : 46

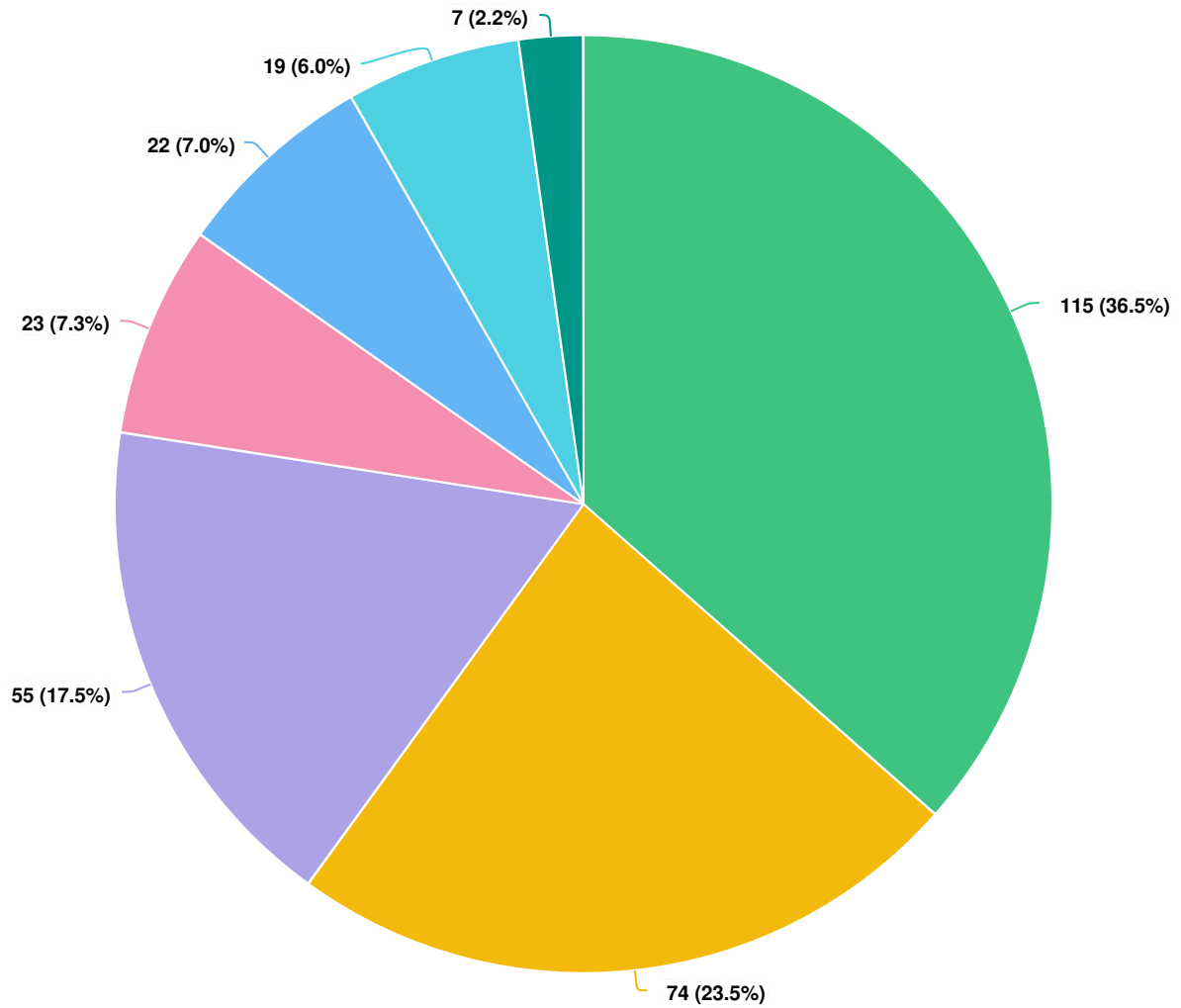
Definitely agree : 21



I plan to live in my current home for as long as possible



Q10 | Approximately what percentage of your monthly gross (before taxes) household income would you say you spend on housing costs (include rent/mortgage, utilities and insurance.)

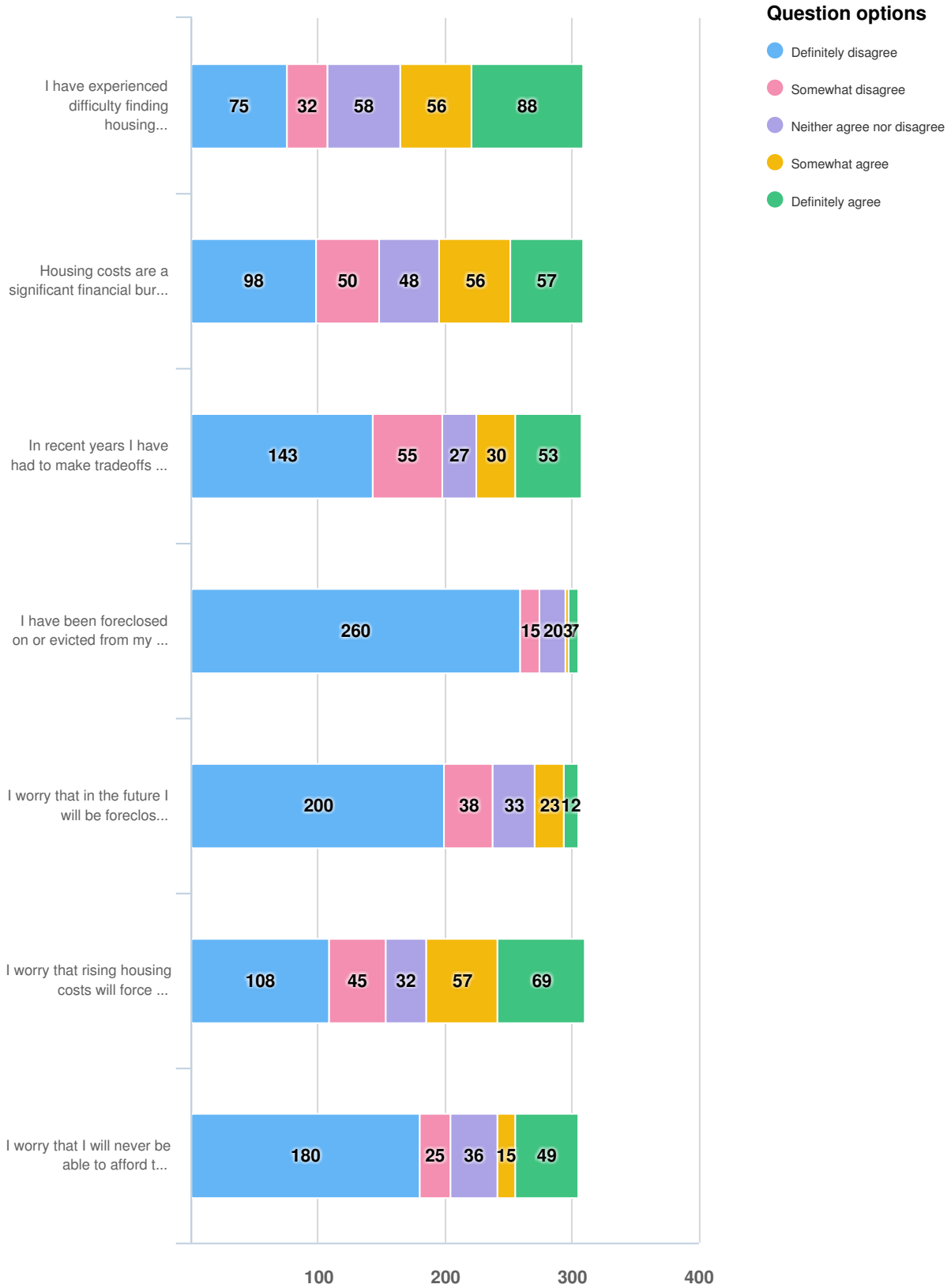


Question options

- Not sure
- More than 50%
- 41%-50%
- 36%-40%
- 31%-35%
- 21%-30%
- 20% or less

Optional question (315 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q11 How much do you agree with the following statements?

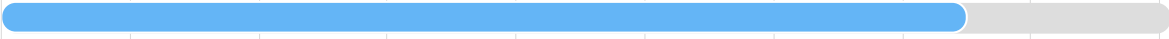


Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
 Question type: Likert Question

Q11 | How much do you agree with the following statements?

I have experienced difficulty finding housing that is affordable for me in Olympia

Definitely disagree : 75



Somewhat disagree : 32



Neither agree nor disagree : 58



Somewhat agree : 56

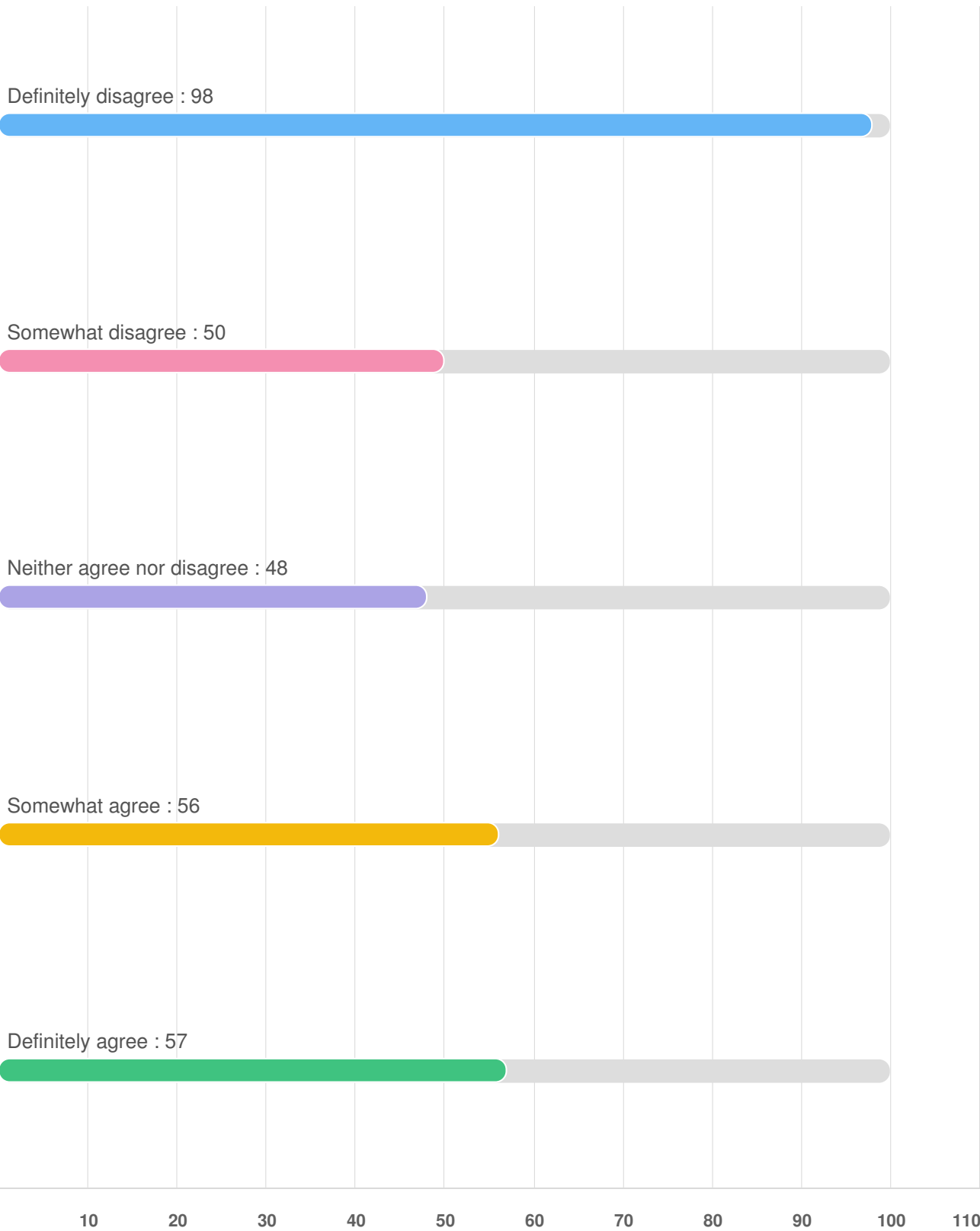


Definitely agree : 88

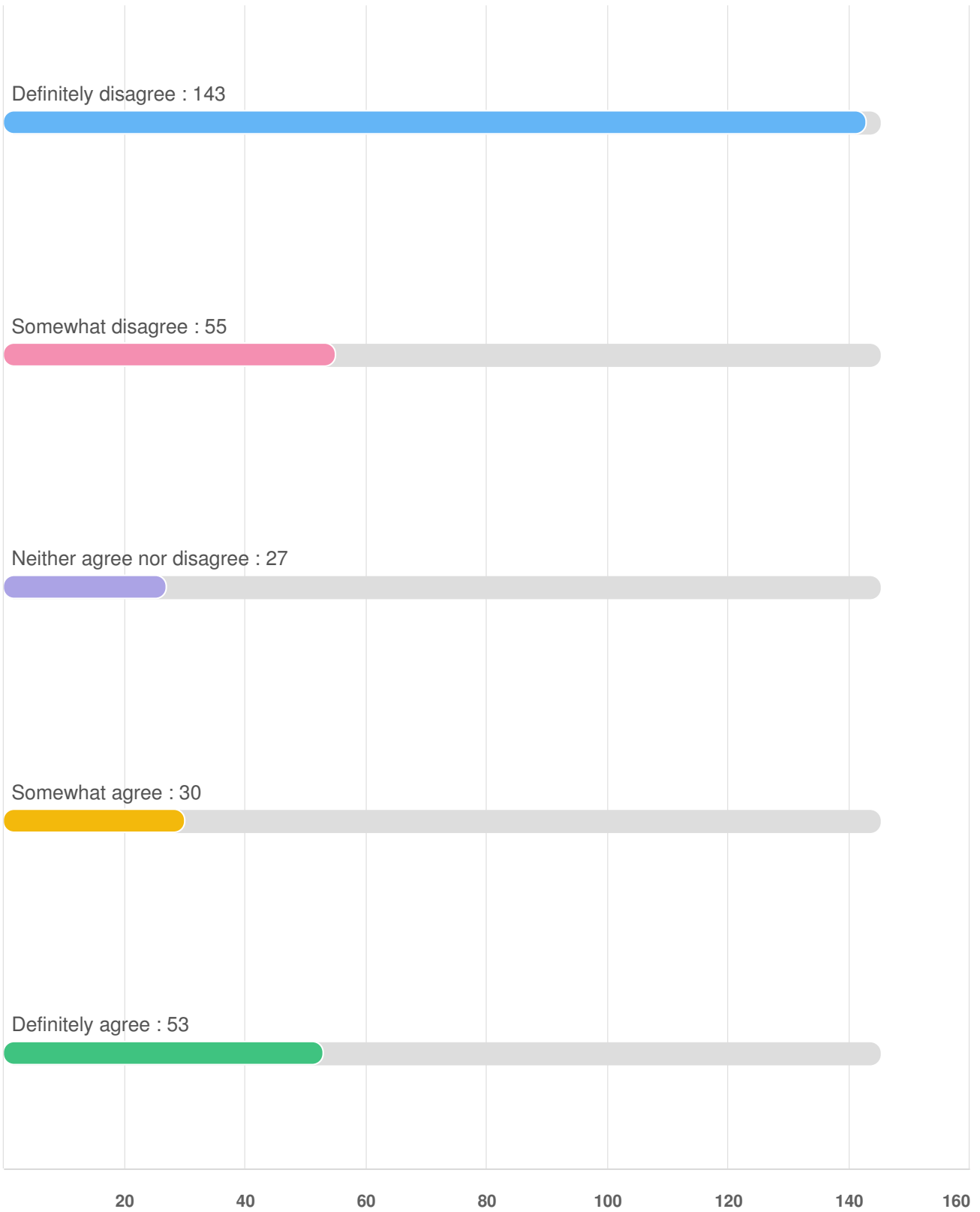


10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Housing costs are a significant financial burden for me

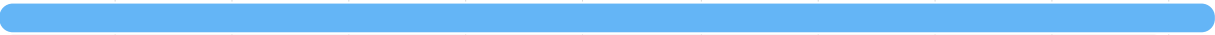


In recent years I have had to make tradeoffs (such as cutting back on spending for other needs like health care or healthy food, or taking a second job) in order to make my housing payments



I have been foreclosed on or evicted from my home due to an inability to afford my housing payments

Definitely disagree : 260



Somewhat disagree : 15



Neither agree nor disagree : 20



Somewhat agree : 3



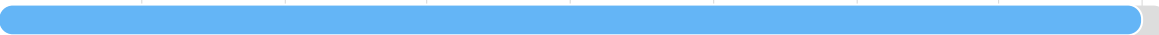
Definitely agree : 7



25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225 250 275

I worry that in the future I will be foreclosed on or evicted from my home due to an inability to afford my housing payments

Definitely disagree : 200



Somewhat disagree : 38



Neither agree nor disagree : 33



Somewhat agree : 23



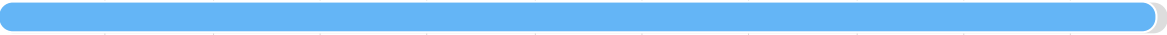
Definitely agree : 12



25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225

I worry that rising housing costs will force me to move out of Olympia

Definitely disagree : 108



Somewhat disagree : 45



Neither agree nor disagree : 32



Somewhat agree : 57



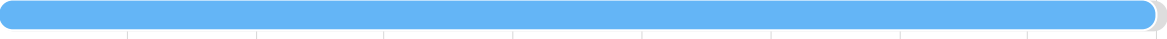
Definitely agree : 69



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120

I worry that I will never be able to afford to own a home

Definitely disagree : 180



Somewhat disagree : 25



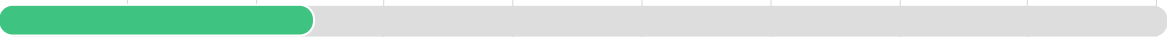
Neither agree nor disagree : 36



Somewhat agree : 15

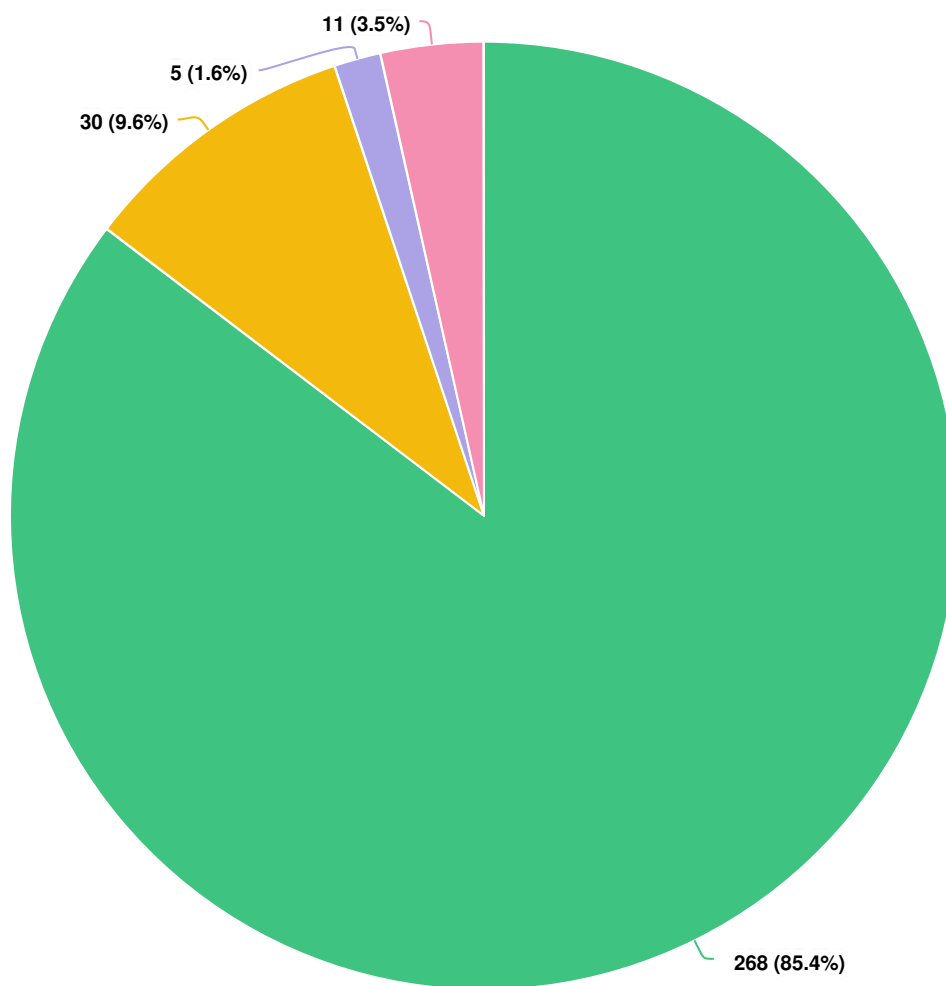


Definitely agree : 49



20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

Q12 Which best describes how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the stability of your housing situation?

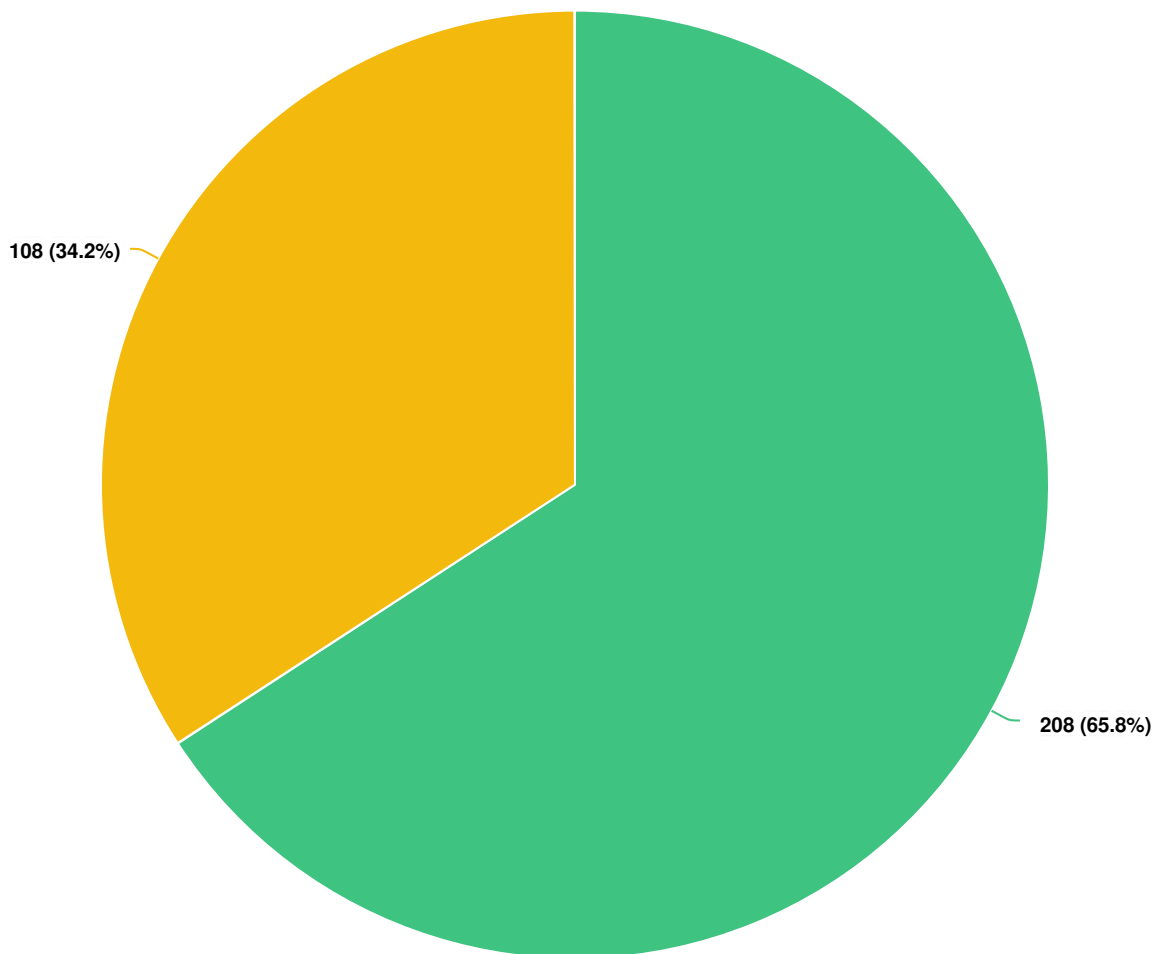


Question options

- My housing was already unstable and COVID made it worse
- My housing was already unstable, but COVID has not changed the situation
- My housing was stable, and COVID made it worse
- My housing was stable, and COVID has not changed the situation

Optional question (314 response(s), 2 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q13 First of all, did you read our storymap titled, “Welcome to the Neighborhood: Unlocking More Affordable Housing in Olympia”

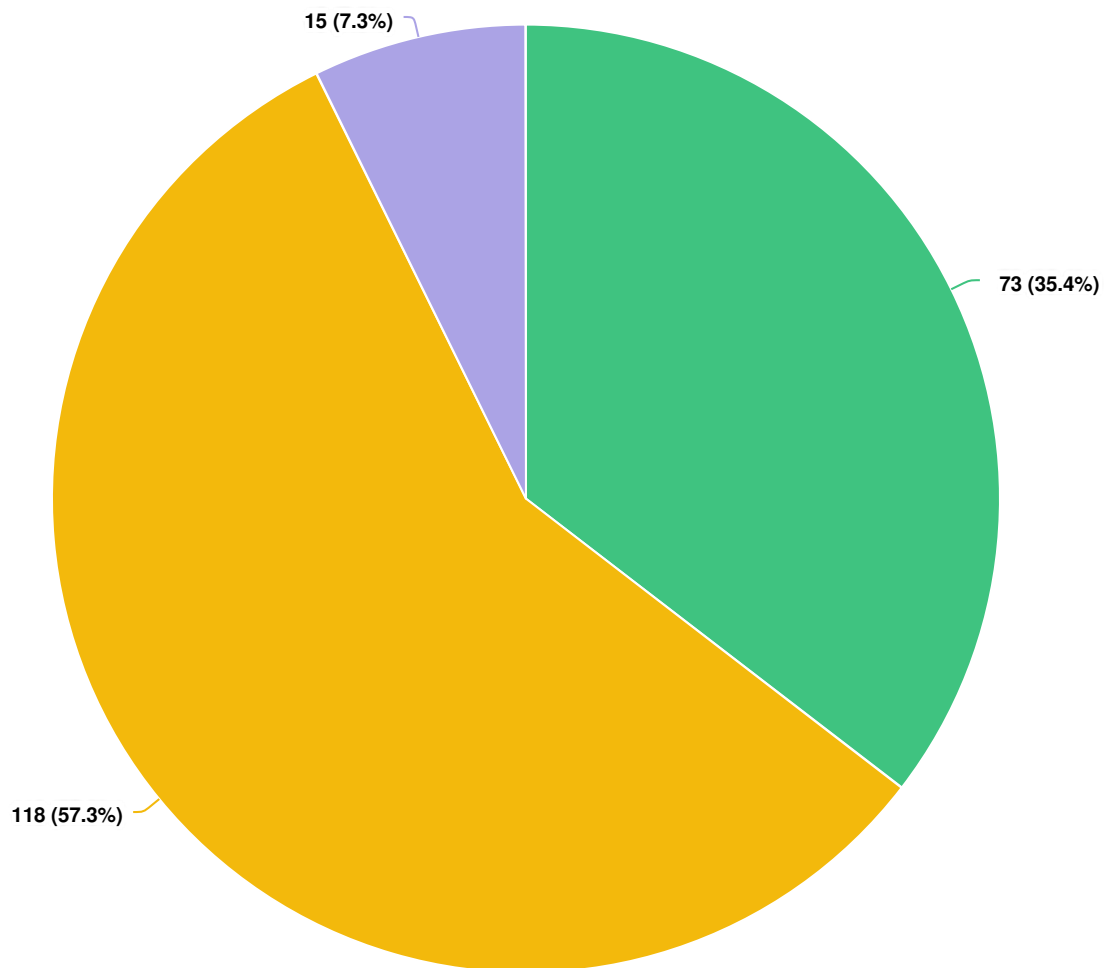


Question options

- No
- Yes

Mandatory Question (316 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q14 | How useful was the information in the storymap toward your understanding of the housing situation in Olympia?



Question options

- Not useful
- Somewhat useful
- Very useful

Optional question (206 response(s), 110 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q15 How much do you agree with the following statements?



Optional question (316 response(s), 0 skipped)
Question type: Likert Question

Q15 | How much do you agree with the following statements?

I want to see more housing built within Olympia

Definitely disagree : 12



Somewhat disagree : 22



Neither agree nor disagree : 24



Somewhat agree : 63

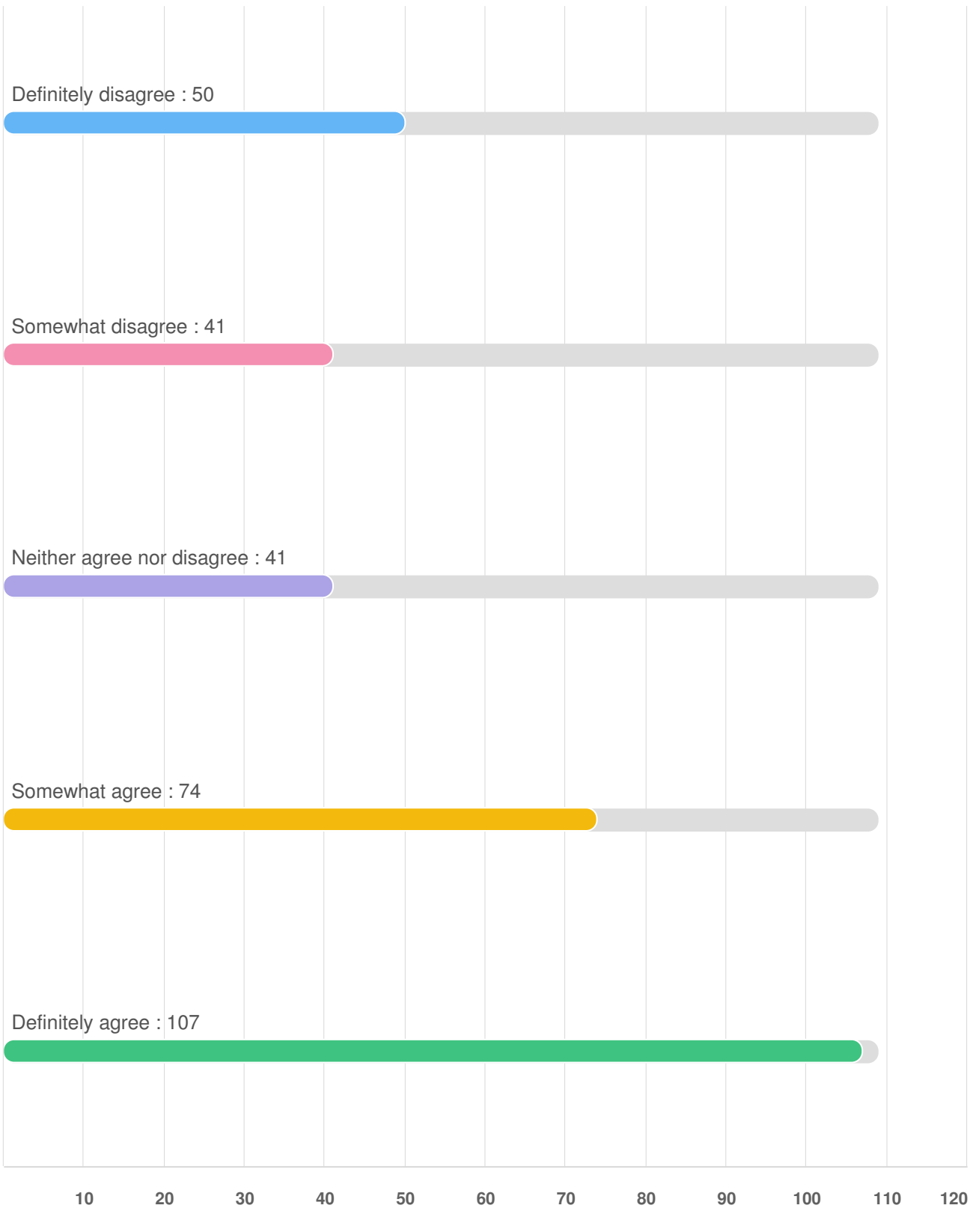


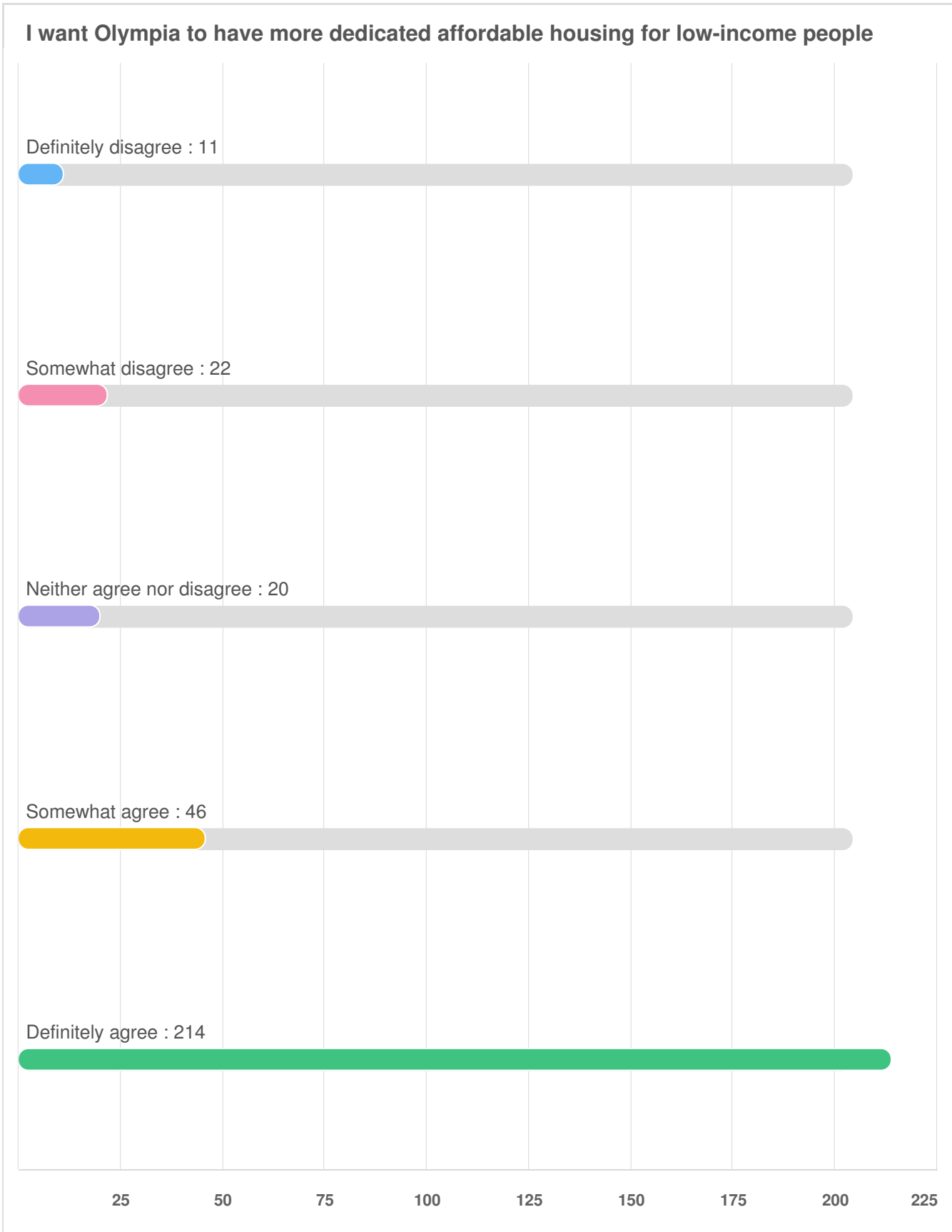
Definitely agree : 193



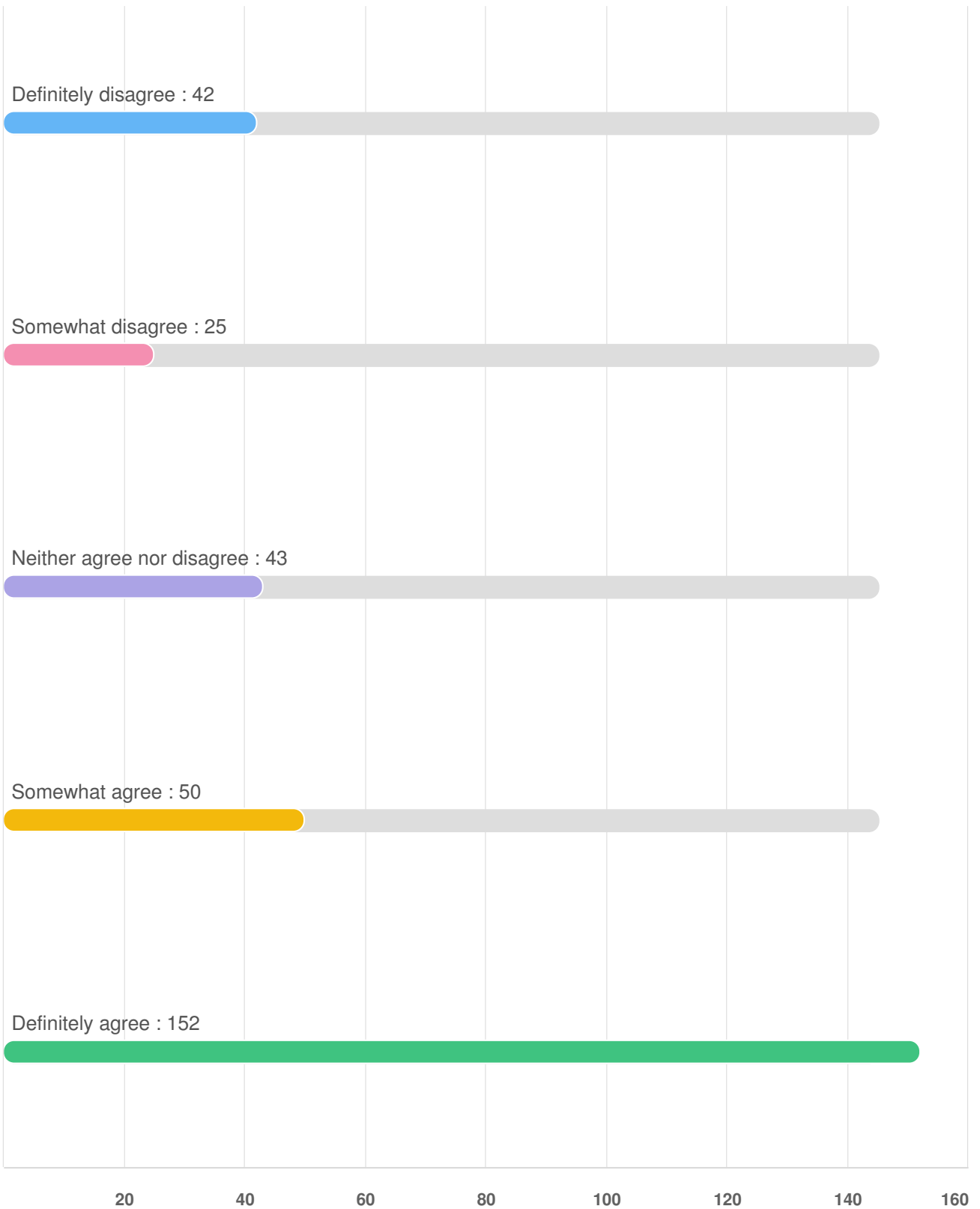
25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225

I want to see more housing built within my neighborhood

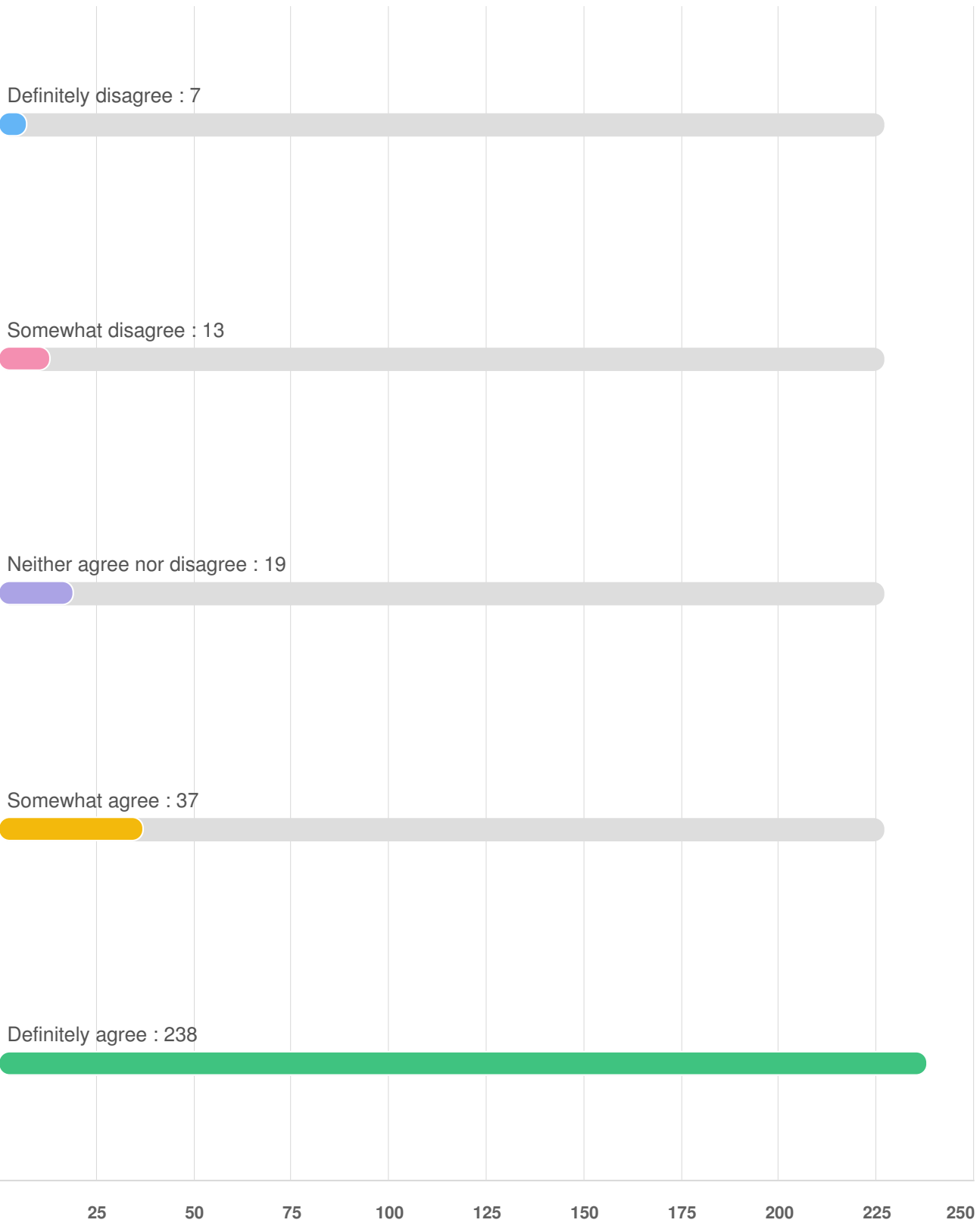




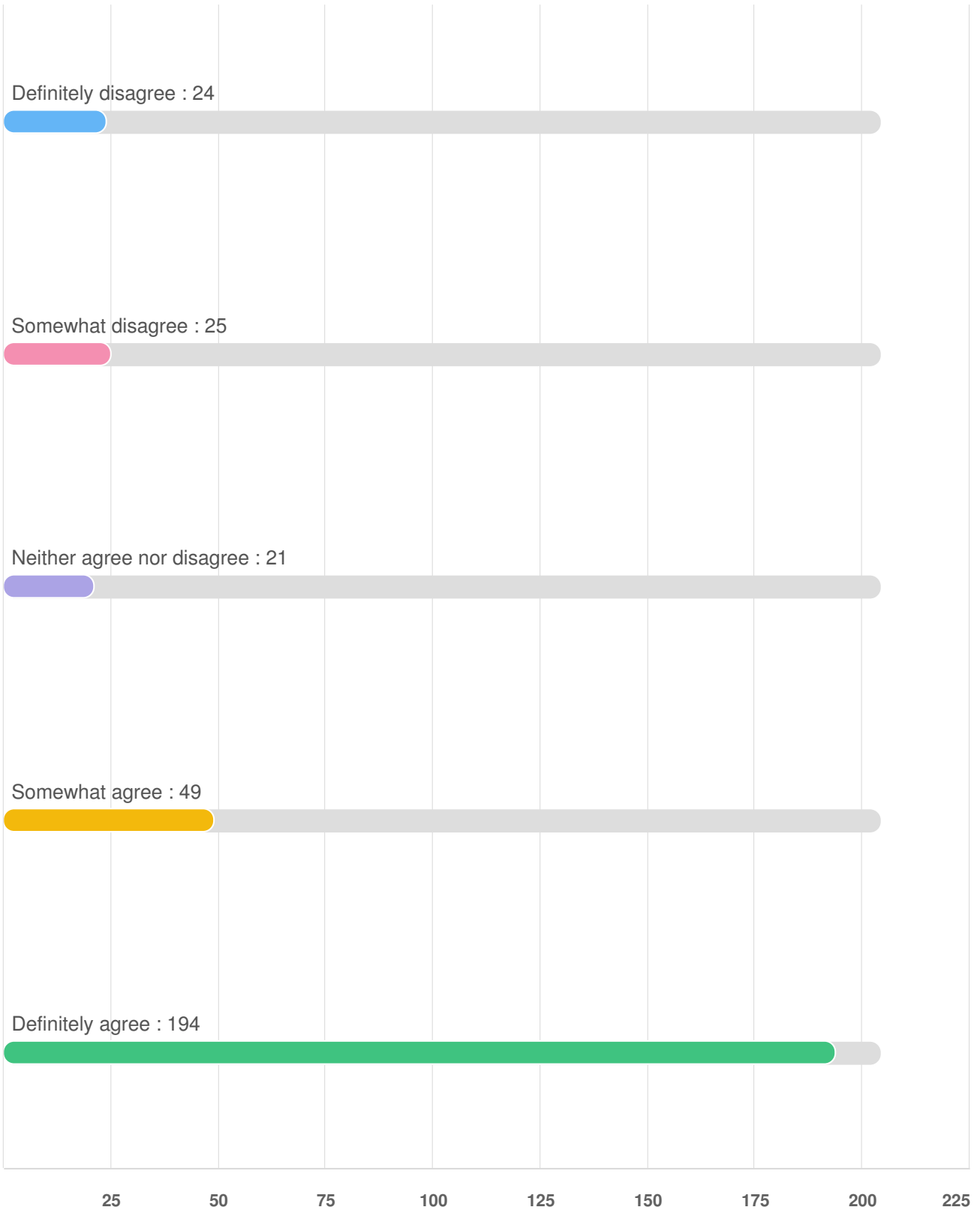
I want my neighborhood to have more dedicated affordable housing for low-income people



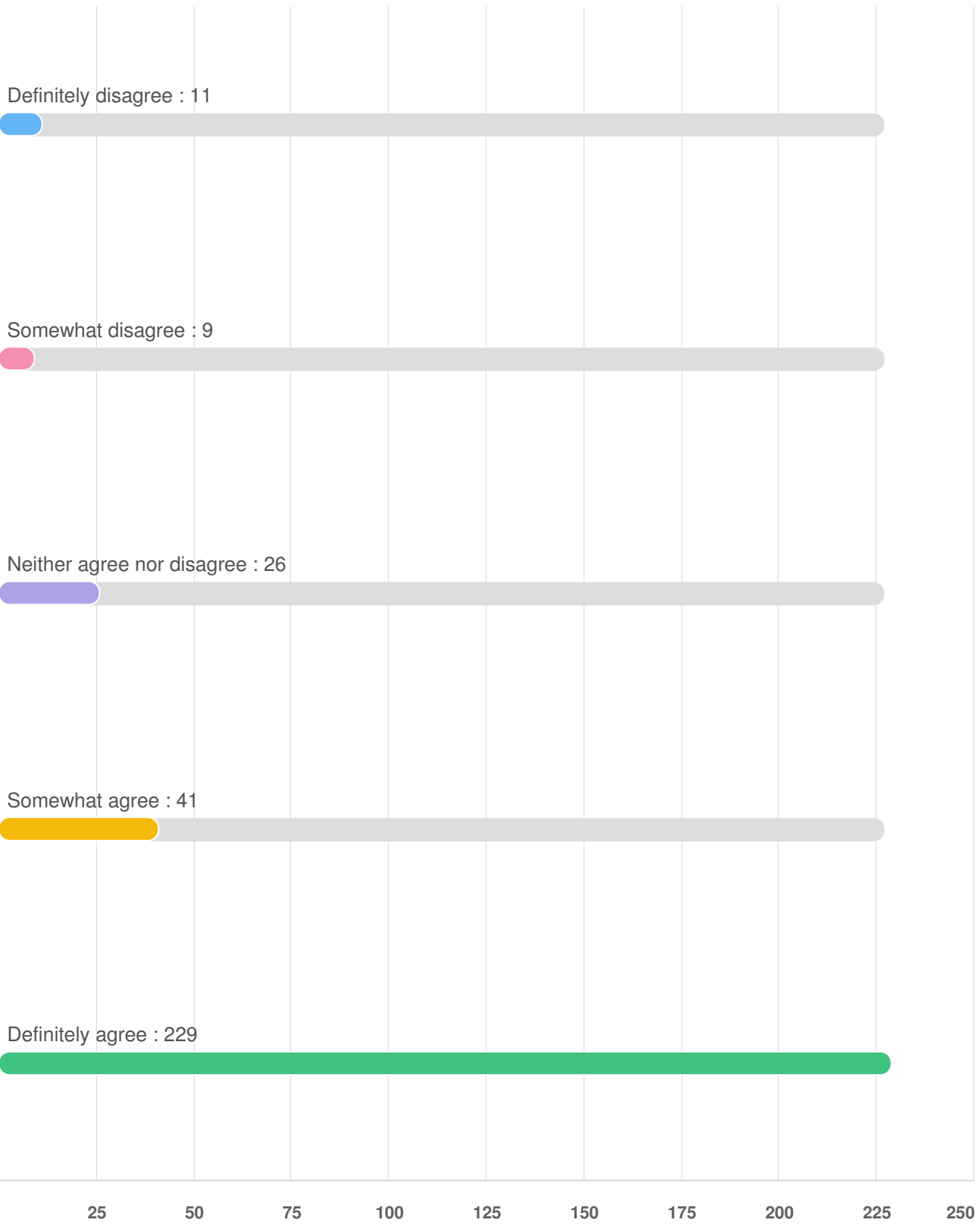
Olympia should include housing for people with a variety of incomes



Most, if not all, neighborhoods in Olympia should include housing for people with a variety of incomes



People should be able to afford housing in the community where they work



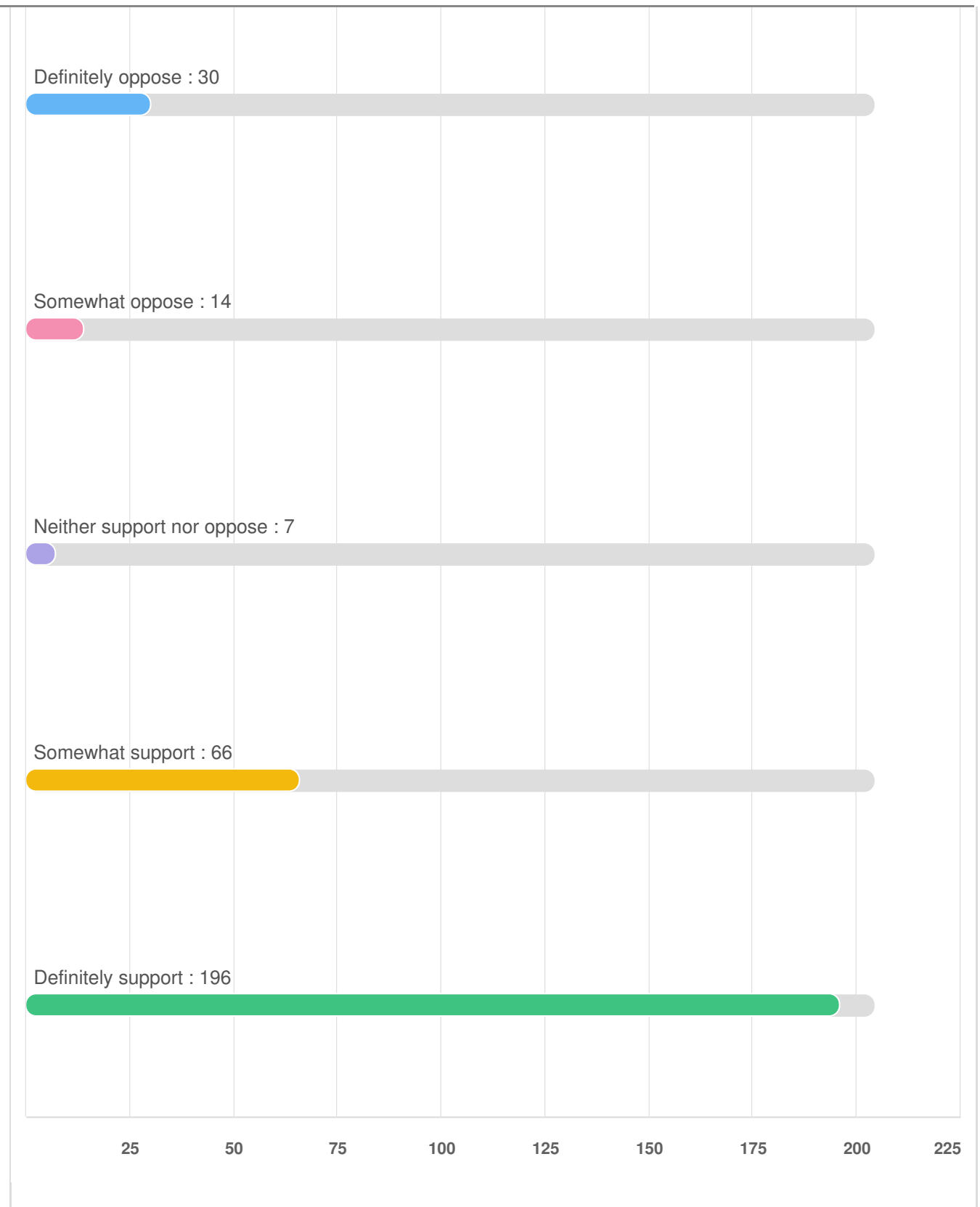
Q16 What is your level of support for the City of Olympia taking the following type of action?



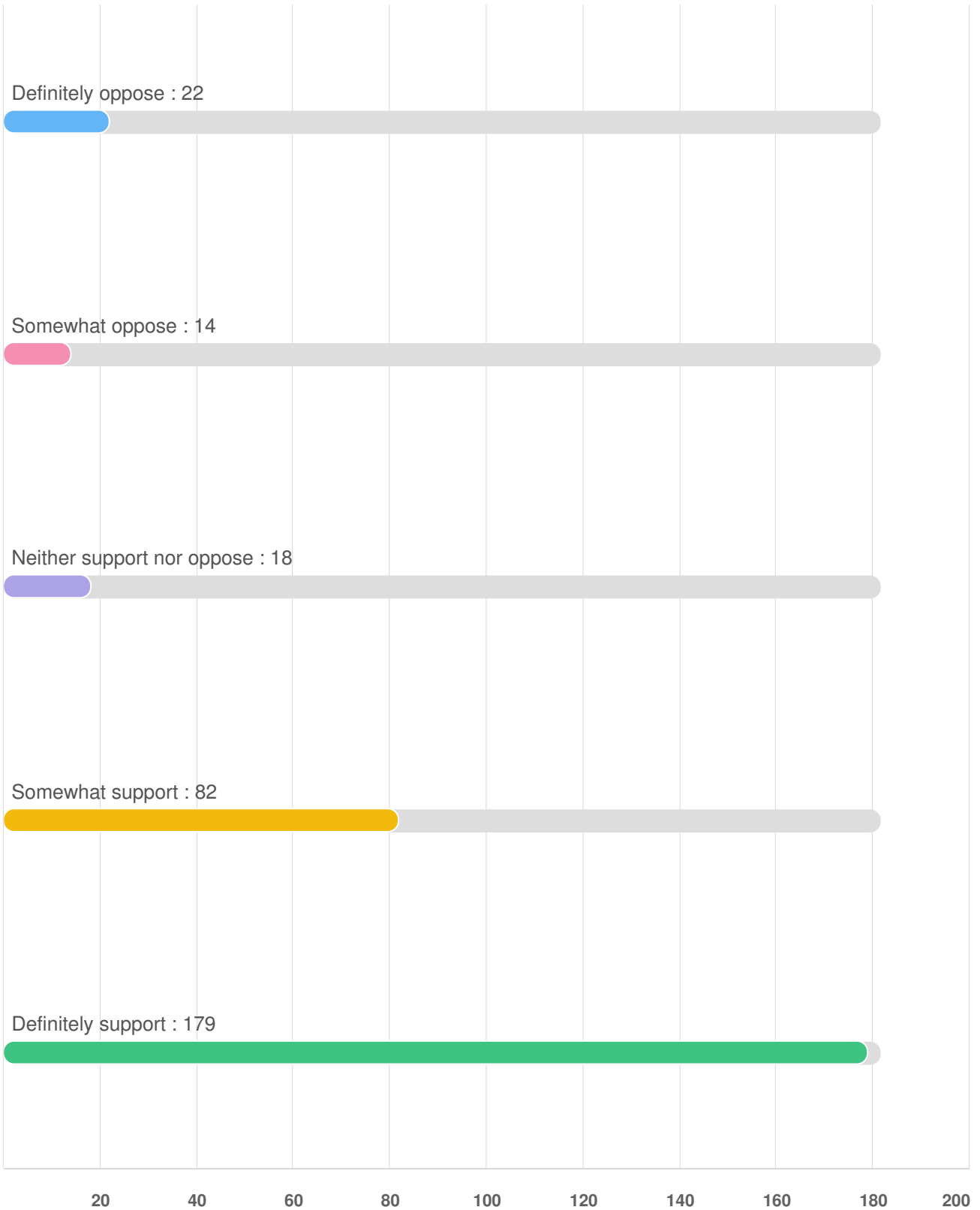
Optional question (315 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Likert Question

Q16 | What is your level of support for the City of Olympia taking the following type of action?

Provide funding and/or land to non-profit organizations and low-income housing developers to help them purchase, build or maintain housing for low income households.



Establish a revolving affordable housing loan program to help non-profit and low-income housing developers purchase and develop properties for low income housing.



Make strategic infrastructure investments (e.g., sewer, transportation) in areas underdeveloped due to lack of infrastructure in order to spur housing development.

Definitely oppose : 21



Somewhat oppose : 22



Neither support nor oppose : 26



Somewhat support : 94

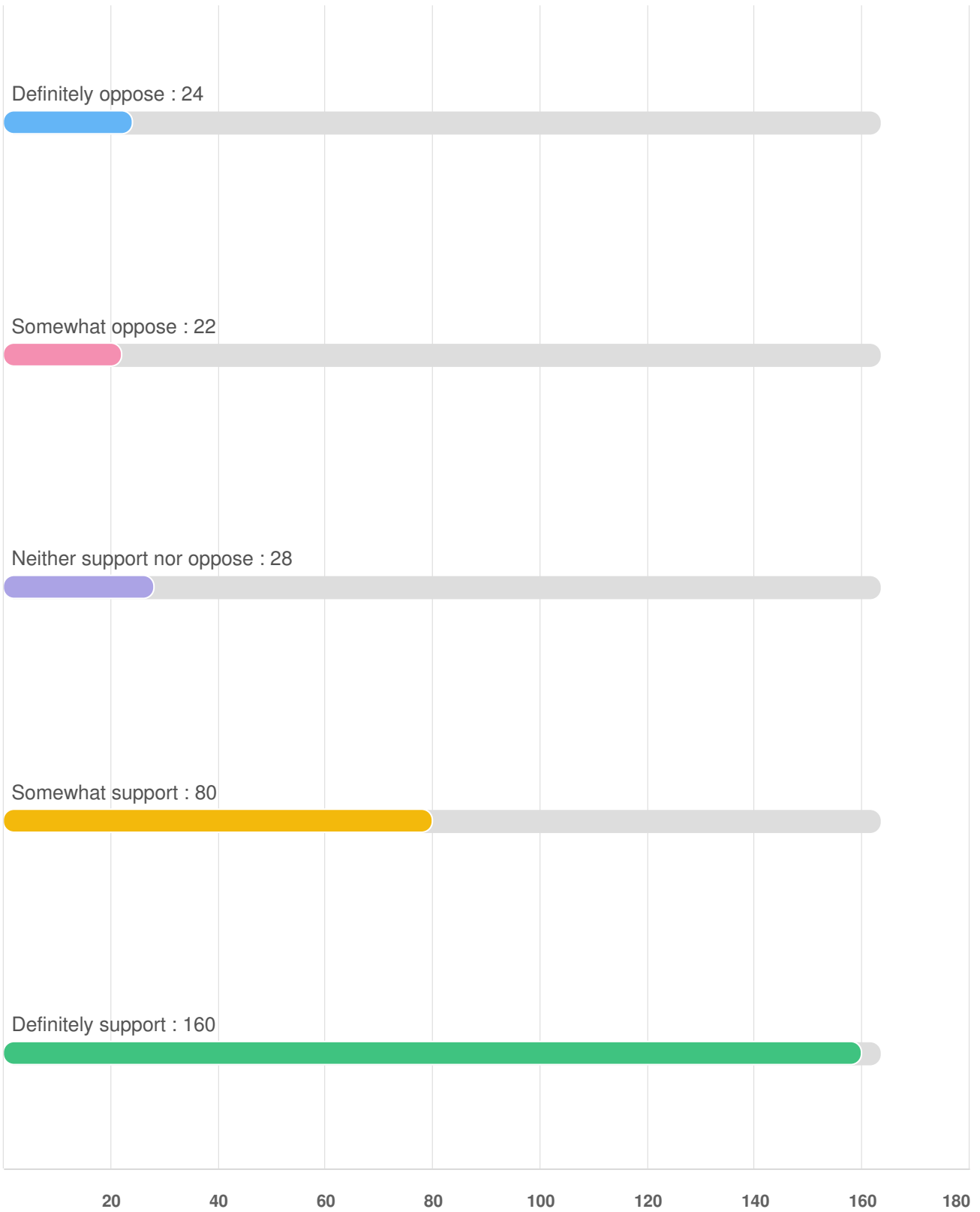


Definitely support : 147

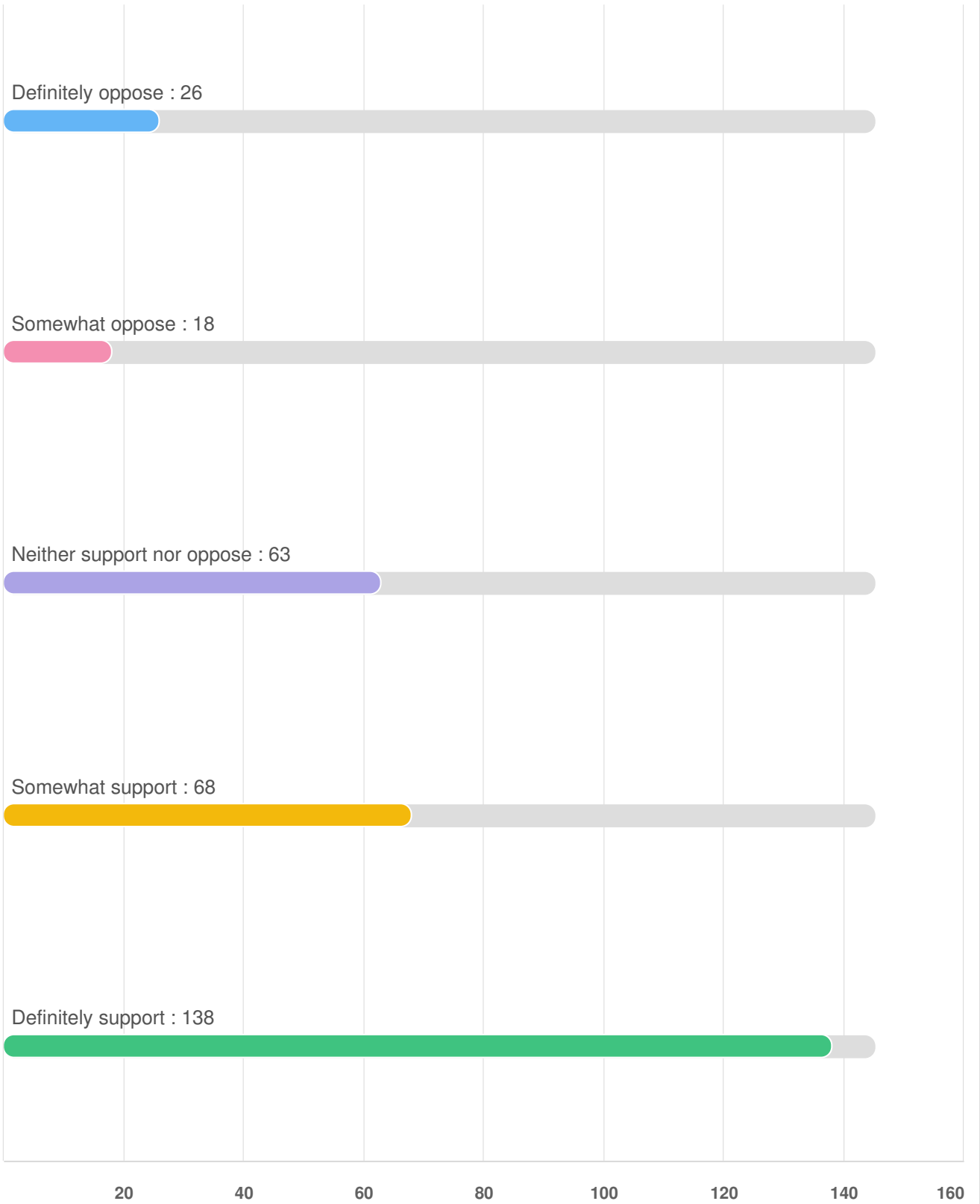


20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160

Establish incentives (e.g., density bonus, development fee reductions, etc.) that help make it financially feasible for developers to include a certain percentage of low-income housing units within new multifamily developments.



Carry out a strategic planning process aimed at increasing residential density around the Capital Mall area on Olympia’s westside.



Develop an easier path for adapting vacant commercial space into housing (e.g., relaxed regulations, incentives).

Definitely oppose : 15



Somewhat oppose : 9



Neither support nor oppose : 17



Somewhat support : 66

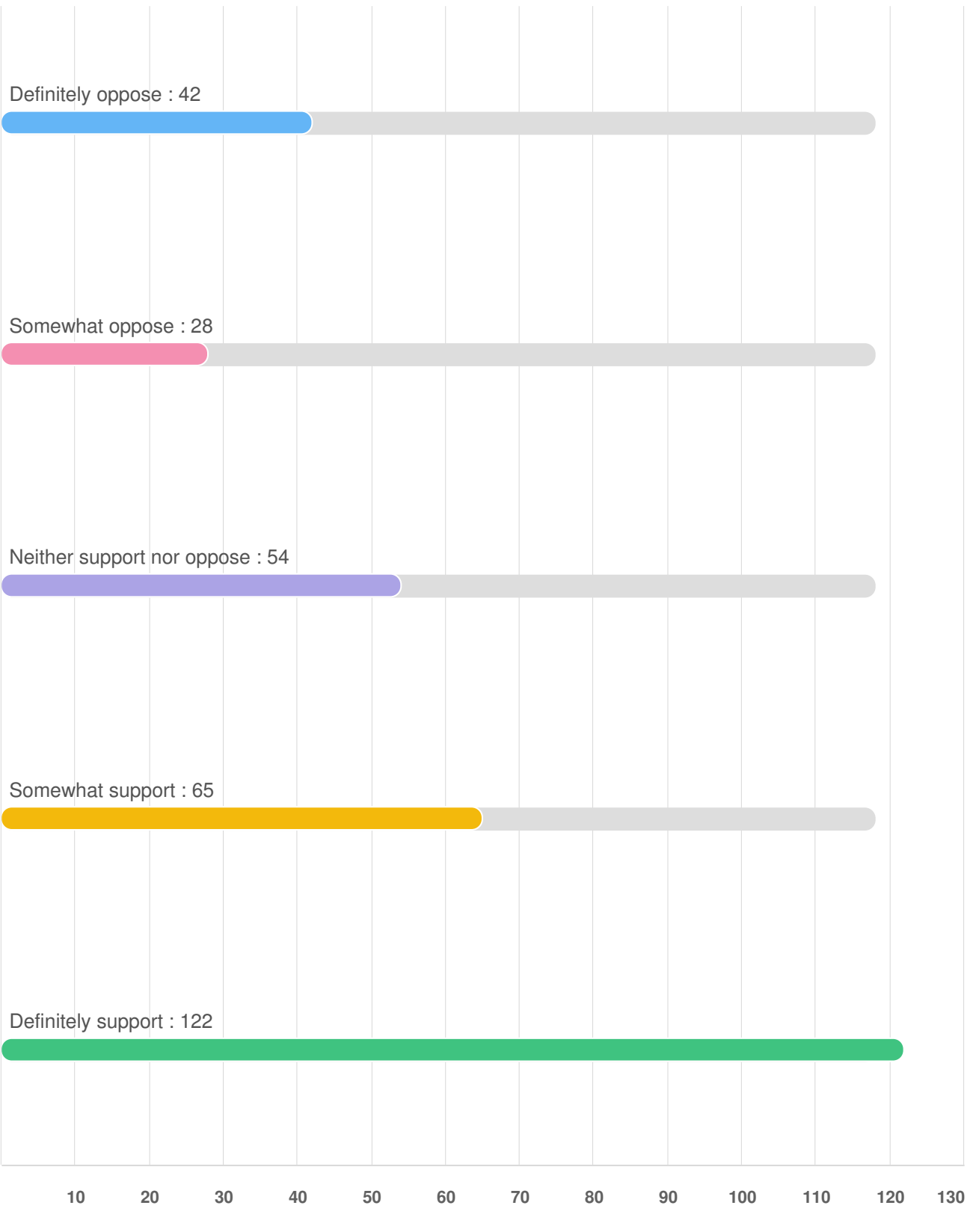


Definitely support : 203

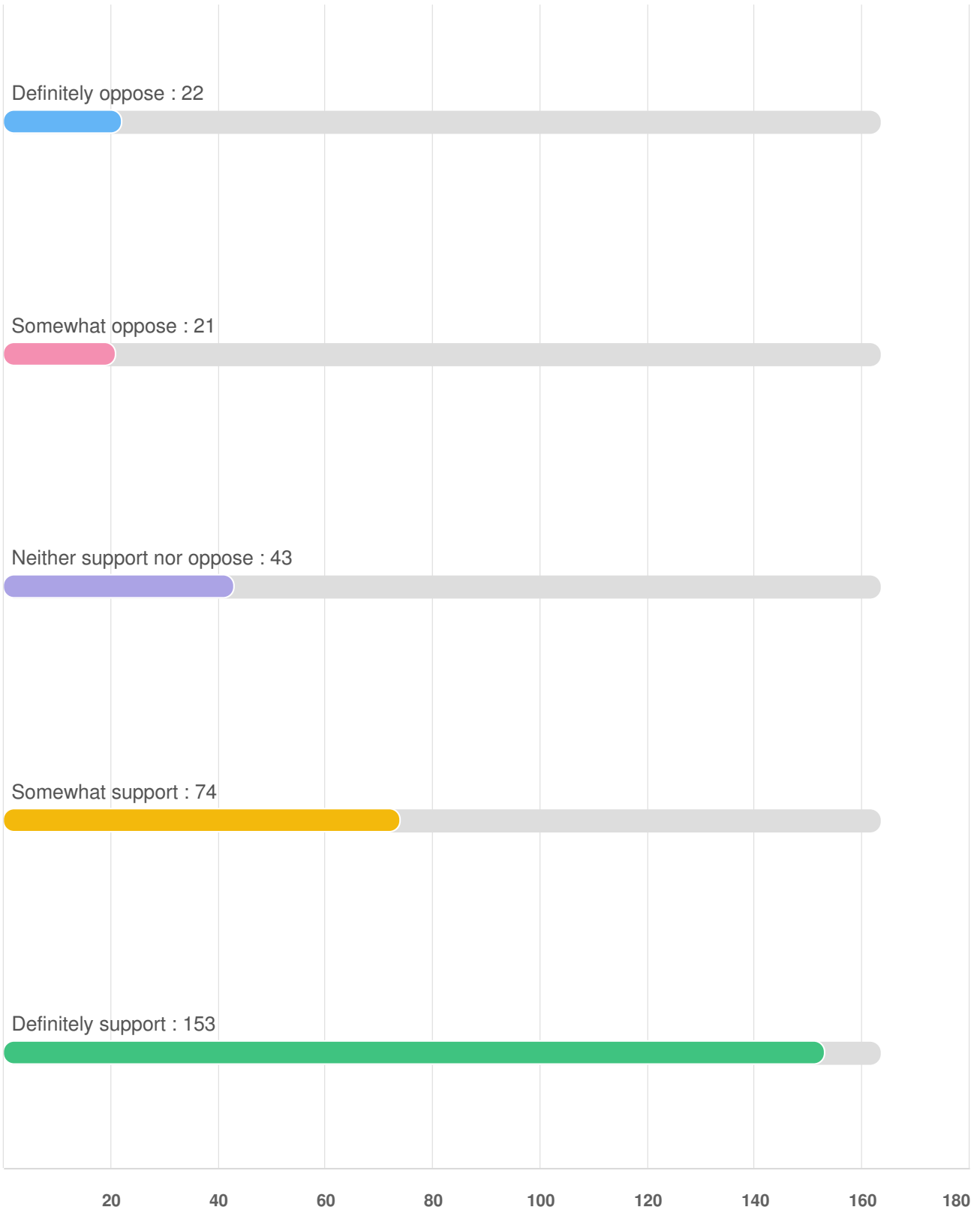


25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225

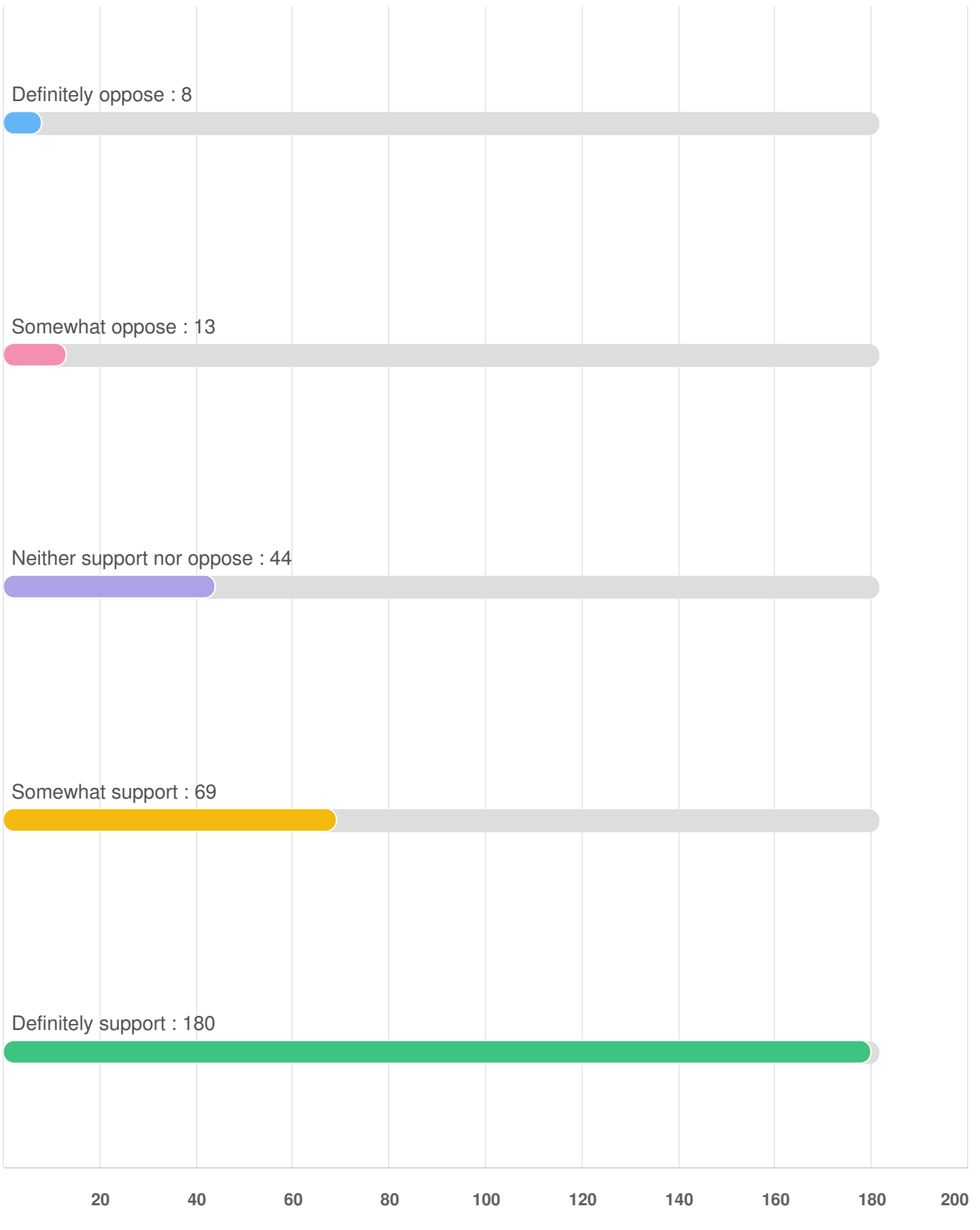
Reduce parking requirements for residential uses near frequent transit routes.



Review fees and regulations (e.g., thresholds for requiring street or other improvements, permit process) to identify housing cost reductions.



Work with partners to help households achieve home ownership.



Require owners of multifamily housing to provide tenants with the first opportunity to purchase the property when it is going up for sale.

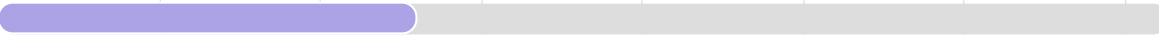
Definitely oppose : 41



Somewhat oppose : 22



Neither support nor oppose : 52



Somewhat support : 57

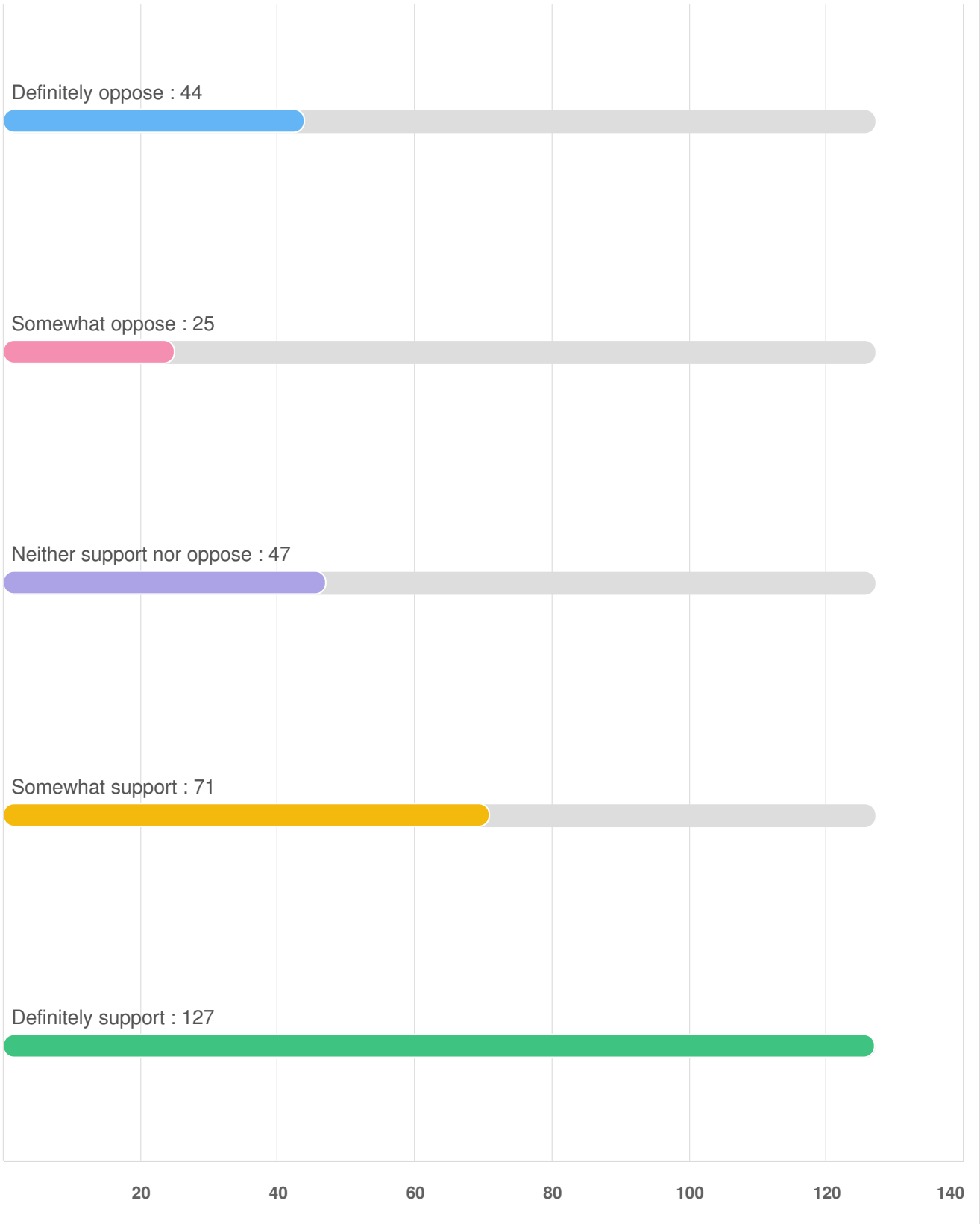


Definitely support : 143



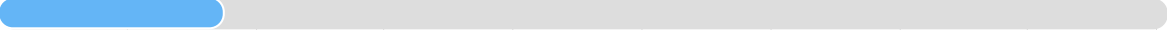
20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160

Require owners of single-family homes to provide rental tenants with the first opportunity to purchase the property when it is going up for sale.

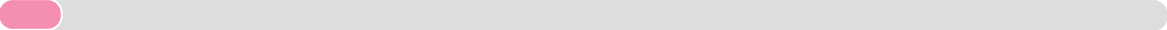


Require developers to provide low income tenants with relocation assistance if they will be displaced by redevelopment.

Definitely oppose : 35



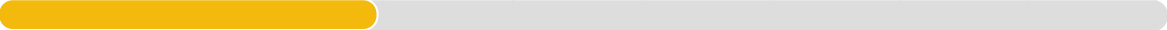
Somewhat oppose : 10



Neither support nor oppose : 31



Somewhat support : 59



Definitely support : 178



20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

Q17 | Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

- 3/05/2021 02:03 PM
This survey is clearly biased and is aimed at the continuing to degrade our neighborhoods and support destruction of neighborhoods. It doesn't address environmental considerations and is aimed at supporting developers.
- 3/05/2021 02:07 PM
I'm a little nervous about easing parking requirements. Better to replace the need with alternatives to cars. Otherwise, we all need to do what we can to provide more housing for all, even if it affects us in ways that we don't like. Our housing policies are racist and classist. Maybe we didn't plan it that way, but the proof is in the pudding.
- 3/05/2021 02:15 PM
The City of OLYMPIA needs to reduce the Permit and impact fees on new housing. It also needs to remove the Sprinkler system mandate. it makes building in the city too expensive. This simple step will have a huge impact on new housing.
- 3/05/2021 02:15 PM
Don't place the burden of supplying low cost housing on landlords who have their own cost issues to deal with. This is a city or county responsibility; take ownership.
- 3/05/2021 02:23 PM
Go Olympia!
- 3/05/2021 02:47 PM
These choices are interesting but seem at odds with the current emphasis on building market-rate apartments while giving developers extreme tax deferrals. Requiring the developers to have a percentage of low-income housing should have happened years ago. Concentrating the drug -addicted and mentally unstable in the downtown core while not providing services is not compassionate and does not lead to people wanting to live and work in Olympia. At least not long-time residents who know what it was like before.
- 3/05/2021 02:48 PM
Don't try and manipulate the market. Provide incentives and reduce costs to building. There are so many new requirements and impact fees, that adds tremendously to the cost of construction. You can't build affordable housing when between impact fees of \$40k, pervious surface requirements, sprinkler system, and on site water retention, that can add upwards of \$100k to a home! You have to charge at least \$400-500k to make it pencil out. Then downtown requirements of flood gates, parking, trees, street lights etc, again it makes marginal projects unaffordable. Make development easier, quicker, and cheaper, and it will come. Also look at higher building heights so we go up vs out.
- 3/05/2021 02:51 PM
When will Capital Lake, Wheeler Road, Ensign Road and similar areas be cleaned out? Enough studies!
- 3/05/2021 03:07 PM
Reinvest in working people instead of the homeless and drug addicted that drain. Out already limited resources. Cut the tens of thousands of dollars

legal, county, state fees including permit fees to build a new home in Olympia.

3/05/2021 04:06 PM

Thanks for your thoughtful attention to this important issue. It's difficult to solve and reach agreement on how to create more housing at different price points/density for many reasons. On a personal note, I'd like to see more attention paid to building sidewalks next to busy roads that are used by pedestrians. I know sidewalks are expensive. But they are worth it for quality of life and for safety of walkers. I'm thinking in particular of the very busy road that leads to Marshall Middle School on the westside. It is so dangerous for kids walking up that hill. Also, please pay attention to building height. I was disappointed by the Parkside Cafe being so overwhelmingly tall and out of scale on Harrison Avenue. There need to be firm planning codes in place to prevent this from happening, no matter how well intentioned the developer is in creating a new retail space. I also encourage the city to continue working on ADUs. Providing approved models (like Lacey is doing) seems like a good route to go. We will need more of these as the population increases and ages. I'm glad the city has relaxed the sprinkler codes for older homes that are building ADUs. More needs to be done to incentivize their development and integration into existing neighborhoods without making them so costly to be compliant with city codes.

3/05/2021 04:09 PM

Maintain zoning that prevents out of town landlords and investors from building without interest or care of existing communities

3/05/2021 04:10 PM

When Seattle moved toward allowing developers to NOT provide parking space due to nearby mass transit, people brought their cars to the area anyway creating serious parking issues. Complex builders should be required to provide parking space on the property where they build whether on surface parking lots, underground, or in parking structures. If they can't do that, due to water tables, et al, the property should be repurposed to something else.

3/05/2021 04:15 PM

Consider impact of overflow parking on narrow residential streets to ensure easy access by emergency and sanitation vehicles.

3/05/2021 04:18 PM

I know this is irrelevant to your survey but, Thurston Co./cities, in coalition with other state counties/cities, must pressure the state legislature to institute law(s) making it mandatory for homeless residents (HR) to accept community/other placements when available and appropriate to the HR's situation. I know any such law will be appealed, referencing the 9th circuit, but we must keep trying. Thank you for the opportunity to take the survey and enter this comment.

3/05/2021 04:29 PM

This isn't truly a survey. Nowhere does it seek input or new ideas. It focuses narrowly on the topics the city considers important and that list is biased. It mentions infrastructure briefly but doesn't address issues related to homelessness such as Health and Safety or Environmental Impacts. More importantly, these plans do not address the new reality that is made clear by the pandemic - People want space, both indoors and outdoors to deal with

the lockdown. The pressure on housing is even greater than it was a year ago as residents realize that they need an extra room for office or schooling, not a space made smaller by cheaper and limited housing styles and cost-cutting measures by developers. They want to be able to have a yard and play space to enjoy the day not a 16 unit, 3 story box with a 5 foot yardline setback. The market pricing is already 13% higher than a year ago. How does your funding model pay for that? It does not address the impacts of creating classifications of neighborhoods which by style and manner of construction could amount to the development of ghettos and stigmas attached to the area and its residents. If tax breaks and reduced development fees were important, why did the city waste the incentives on expensive, high end developments near the waterfront that will never be affordable housing and only line the pockets of already wealthy developers and dentists. There is a high level of hypocrisy related to the wording of these plans verses the actions seen.

3/05/2021 05:01 PM

We need state level section 8 or federal that is need based and not limited. I have tried to get housing help for 10 YEARS. My rent is 105% of my income. I cannot get housing help if I am housed, I have to be on the streets. I am being penalized for steely fiscal discipline. I have to do a GFM to raise rent, so in other words I am forced to beg. I did get 3 months assistance in 2020 due to COVID and it made all the difference in my life. I should not have to live with this level of stress. My house is up for sale now. Luckily my landlord is trying to find an investor who will take the house and me as a package deal because despite my rent being so high relative to my income, I have always paid it because housing is my number one value. I stay housed in Oly on 15K a year. It is remarkable I can do it. It is a testament to my ability to survive on nothing. I use the food bank, union gospel, all the providers because I cannot get rental help. Yet able bodied young people will get vouchers ahead of me. I am not alone, I had a severely disabled woman staying in my spare room, she too could not get help unless she was on the streets. That is not right. I thought Housing First was designed to keep people off the streets not force them on to them. She tried the shelters, she tried to stay on the streets a couple nights to qualify, she did not, it was incredibly sad. I had a near breakdown over guilt when I had to have her leave due to my lease, and my fear that I would be in violation and lose my housing. This is NOT RIGHT! She was incontinent w heart & cognitive problems, and Olympia was forcing her to stay on the streets to get help. There was NOTHING for her. It was all going to the street subculture, she was left to fall. I honestly do not know what happened to her and it weighs on me constantly. It is stories like hers and mine (and so many others) that are propelling my run for Olympia City Council. It is morally WRONG.

3/05/2021 05:10 PM

My household is not cost burdened, because we had the good fortune to buy our home 20 years ago. It's really painful to watch many families not be able to get into stable rental housing or ownership. We need more diverse infill housing.

3/05/2021 05:34 PM

Drug addiction is the primary driver of homelessness. Affordable housing is largely unrelated to homelessness.

3/05/2021 05:47 PM

Denser and more diverse neighborhoods are critical to a strong Olympia. As an owner of a single family home in an established neighborhood, I would love to welcome more neighbors to this great community - and my neighborhood in particular. It's people who give Olympia its great character. I strongly support whatever efforts are required to make sure all of Olympia is available to everyone who wants to live here regardless of income, age, race, and ability.

3/05/2021 06:17 PM

If new housing does not pay impact fees the rest of us will be paying for the needed parks, roads, etc. Okay to help people who really need support but I do not support subsidies for housing types that simply 'increase the inventory.' I don't really buy the 'trickle down' concept that any new housing makes housing more affordable. Large homes and expensive condos do not bring down the price for other housing. Developers and builders should be finding ways to offer housing that fits current needs. Also wages are part of this problem so having a minimum wage that offers a living wage makes sense as part of the solution.

3/05/2021 07:13 PM

I have lived in Olympia for 36 years. We as a city are losing our identity, allowing developers to get special concession, build high rate apartments with not enough parking. This takes parking away from people who are trying to shop at downtown business.

3/05/2021 08:23 PM

I do not have a lot of information about "low income property developers" and find myself wary and untrusting of their intent. This may just be a lack of clear information. I have some concerns about how well low income housing is managed and cared for now. I'd hate to see that grow!

3/05/2021 08:25 PM

Great work and keep up the good work.

3/05/2021 10:55 PM

Vadas, B. Jr. 2020. The future of Olympia's urban zoning in the face of covid-19 and climate change. Works In Progress (Olympia, WA) 31(3): 14 (<https://olywip.org/the-future-of-olympias-urban-zoning>). Vadas, R.L. Jr. 2021. OP-ED: Concerns about West Bay Yards development proposal. Olympia Tribune [online], March 4: 1 p. (<https://theolympiatribune.com/op-ed-concerns-about-west-bay-yards-development-proposal>).

3/06/2021 08:00 AM

While I am generally supportive of "missing middle"-type housing and increasing the density of inner-Olympia neighborhoods (NE, SE, Westside, etc.), city officials should not be so dismissive of the impacts of these types of changes on residents, many of whom are not particularly affluent. Go walk around similar neighborhoods in Seattle and Portland to see what lies ahead: 100-year old homes being demolished left and right, and being replaced with big shiny condos for even wealthier inhabitants. Rents and housing costs remain sky high. What's different about Olympia than Portland, Seattle, etc.,

is that there is TONS of vacant land here. Downtown is 25% parking lots or vacant buildings. The westside is home to some of the most regrettable land use decisions in Olympia planning history: Capital Mall and Cooper Point Blvd. Think of all the housing that could be there if city officials hadn't decided that thousands of parking stalls and half-vacant strip malls were a better use of all that space. (I'm sure the impact fees were great, though!) Maybe you should focus more of your efforts there? Sort of feels those of us who were fortunate enough to be able to move to inner-Olympia neighborhoods back when it was still barely affordable are now being asked to shoulder a disproportionate burden of the changes needed to accommodate the region's growing population.

3/06/2021 08:09 AM

Stop City leaders from recommending tenants start a rent strike. The City needs to be friendly to developers if you want the housing we need built.

3/06/2021 08:37 AM

You did not ask what other things people spend their money on. Without this info, you can hardly analyze who can afford what (ie people who choose to spend money on things other than housing, then complain they cannot afford housing). You also did not ask about whether the person was capable of gainful employment or voluntarily unemployed. You did not ask about why someone has unstable housing, and any attempts they have made to secure stable housing. As to the question about, essentially, being entitled to afford to live where one works, the question should be whether one should chose to live where one can afford to do so, or whether one who chooses to live in an area where one cannot afford should expect his fellow neighbor to absorb the cost of that decision. The city's job is to ensure the city runs efficiently and productively most of the time for most of the people. The city's job is not to socially engineer housing affordability so that a certain population in Olympia consumes a disproportional amount of the city's and taxpayer's time, money, and resources. I purchased my home in an area where there are stable, long-term residents. I do not wish to reside along unstable, short-term residents as there exists a difference in behavior, treatment of the land and property, expectations and involvement in community gatherings, safety, etc. In low-income, higher-density housing areas I see behavior of residents that are inconsistent with my values and expectations of behavior.

3/06/2021 09:33 AM

Whatever works to bring more housing online, I support it.

3/06/2021 11:22 AM

We live in a neighborhood that is currently all smaller, one story homes. However, directly behind us is a one-plus acre parcel with one dwelling (also a one story home). We are very worried that if this parcel is sold, it could be developed with two or three story dwellings, such that we lose all our backyard privacy. That would be devastating, since we purchased this home because of its relative privacy. If any future development was limited to only allow one-story homes, that would be perfect.

Olympia should be careful not to turn into Seattle.

3/06/2021 03:11 PM

Consider reducing or eliminating any existing requirements that on-site parking be included in multi unit development near transit.

3/06/2021 04:16 PM

Housing people is - and will continue to be a challenge. Use all available strategies to continue to make progress on adequate housing and prevention of additional houselessness for as many people as possible in our city and region.

3/06/2021 04:35 PM

I'm particularly interested in seeing the city use the Housing Land Trust model.

3/06/2021 09:15 PM

I would need more information about these strategies. While some sound good, I want to better understand costs, funding sources, risks, and possible unintended consequences.

3/07/2021 08:54 AM

Build more middle-income housing!! More homes worth 300,000

3/07/2021 08:58 AM

We moved into Olympia, and bought a ridiculously over-sized house because that was all that was available. It's affordable for us, but we wished there were options close in to downtown Oly that were smaller.

3/07/2021 10:34 AM

Thanks for all your efforts to supply more affordable housing. This is an extremely important issue.

3/07/2021 11:33 AM

Use of tax incentives to achieve some affordable units.

3/07/2021 11:39 AM

How about enforcing some standards around RV's and Campers that dump waste into our waterways.. Preach about environmental consciousness but I guess they all get a pass. My property tax keeps going up but the streets are dirtier than ever and now I don't even want to go downtown because its disgusting.

3/07/2021 01:55 PM

Adjustments to housing cost metrics to take single parent/primary income budgets into consideration

3/07/2021 02:18 PM

City and county planners should inventory properties to deed over to a community land trust to develop permanently affordable housing for cost burdened families and preserve governmental housing subsidies with an affordable housing resale formula.

3/07/2021 02:41 PM

Thank you for working to increase density and affordable housing in Olympia's city limits!

3/07/2021 04:27 PM

Thanks for investing the time and resources to make the city a better place!

3/07/2021 05:59 PM

3/07/2021 08:20 PM

Use city public land, particularly downtown parking lots for housing. Remove parking requirements for all buildings, instead look into a parking cap and a goal for reduction in absolute (rather than relative to population) vehicle miles traveled in Olympia.

3/08/2021 08:18 AM

Safe, affordable housing in Olympia is very difficult to find. I had to relocate to Tacoma to find such housing. I would have preferred to stay in Olympia, where I work.

3/08/2021 08:32 AM

800 sf houses were common at one time. Small but affordable. No one builds small houses now due to high cost of development fees. \$40,000 in permit and impact fees averages out to \$50 a square foot for a 800sf house. Have to build big to lower the SF cost. Scale the fees to fit the size of the house. Technical engineering and studies (biologist report, tree report, geotechnical engineering, etc) add another \$5-15,000 in costs. Planners don't consider the cost impacts when they require more studies, reports and surveys. Costs are incorporated into the price of house (\$10,000 avg./ 800sf house = \$12.50 a square foot). Again you have to build big to average out the costs of the reports. Thank you

3/08/2021 08:35 AM

Clear the homeless camps.

3/08/2021 08:37 AM

I appreciate that the City of Olympia is working WITH other local jurisdictions to address our housing challenges. This is a regional problem and I am grateful to see Olympia leading the way to address it.

3/08/2021 08:40 AM

The following is a loaded question because it assumes it is not already "financially feasible" for developers to do this. Once again, the city is loading questions in favor of developers: Establish incentives (e.g., density bonus, development fee reductions, etc.) that help make it financially feasible for developers to include a certain percentage of low-income housing units within new multifamily developments. Also, this needs a whole lot more explanation: " Work with partners to help households achieve home ownership." What partners? Nonprofits? Developers? Without specifics, this is impossible to answer.

3/08/2021 09:48 AM

More funding for mental health services and supportive housing. More funding for seniors who need affordable housing. More funding for housing adults who need in home provider services due to health or disability, nursing homes are full and expensive. Funding for supportive housing for those with a criminal backgrounds. Look at the big picture it's not a simple fix, all must be included in affordable housing in order to help our city continue to exist.

3/08/2021 09:55 AM

I think we need to specifically discuss economic displacement, aka "gentrification," and come up with some concrete strategies to address it.

The burden of increased fees and the sprinkler mandate are the one of the

3/08/2021 10:02 AM

largest costs of building a new home. Many of the review fees that were previously free, are now so cumbersome, that they dissuade business from investigating and possibly developing property to allow affordable housing. The cost of the fire sprinklers and the alarms are an additional roadblock to affordable housing. Every additional cost added to the building process by a jurisdiction, makes housing, that much further out of reach for first time homebuyers and people with lower incomes. The additional taxes, codes, and regulations may, in an academic sense, make housing safer, however, I do not believe a safer house is better than the population of a city being able to afford housing. The burden placed on the citizen's housing looks acceptable at the micro level. In my opinion, if you step back and look at housing in its totality, these costs and regulations are making housing unattainable for the people you are trying to help.

3/08/2021 10:47 AM

Converting commercial space seems to me to hold the best possibility for quickly creating transitional housing, even if it's not permanent, and help folks get off the street.

3/08/2021 11:00 AM

The homeless situation in Downtown area has reached a serious risk to public safety. I am interested in helping with the issue as a member of this community.

3/08/2021 11:27 AM

The homelessness issue is more and more visible everyday. How are they allowed to throw all of their trash on the ground and not be held accountable? They are destroying our environment and ruining the image of this beautiful city. If they want to be apart of the community they should be held to the same standards as everyone else. I understand not all encampments can be removed, and even the homeless deserve compassion and a safe place to sleep, but they need to be accountable for preserving the environment and valuing the land that they live on.

3/08/2021 11:28 AM

Please reduce sprawl onto undeveloped land. Instead focus development in city centers or along major streets. Also consider bringing in a fresh grocer like Spuds and a business such as a Rite Aid to downtown. Walkable access to fresh food, grocery staples, prescriptions, over the counter medical supplies and items like toothpaste, etc. seem to be missing in downtown Olympia. I believe these would be welcome amenities for people living in apartments (don't own a car or want to drive to run these errands) or people living in senior housing. As a non-downtown resident but semi-regular visitor, I would head downtown more often if I could take care of multiple errands at once (i.e. hit the bakery, grab some q-tips, get that birthday gift, and some groceries for dinner that night). I also appreciate the focus on neighborhood centers - let's create more incentives to eat/shop nearby. It gets people out of their cars and activates neighborhoods. Lastly, I think NIMBYs tend to stereotype middle housing with those 'box store eye sore beige plastic 5-story buildings' overlooking their lawn. It would be great if the initial projects to increase housing in Oly were developed with some care. Housing that reflects the character of the neighborhood/area instead of building the cheapest nastiest option on the block. Great work and loved the story map!

- 3/08/2021 11:47 AM No more tax breaks for housing development aimed at middle to upper class.
- 3/08/2021 12:21 PM Dismantle the homeless encampments due to inhumane living conditions.
Work with nonprofits to find solutions.
- 3/08/2021 12:34 PM Additional work to maintain spaces for other species to live within cities and in underdeveloped areas. Increase in community owned housing. Work with local tribes on discussing land treaties and land back reparations, as well as input on city owned property.
- 3/08/2021 02:15 PM This survey is a joke. The real problem with affordable housing in Olympia is the cost of permitting, impact fees, whole house sprinkler systems, requirement for engineered drains from roof water and the new energy code. Until the City is open to addressing their contribution to the cost of new housing, new housing will continue to be out of the reach of most people. Until the City is open to addressing their contribution to utility costs, ie; adding City taxes to all utilities not provided by the City and the City's escalating water, sewer, garbage and storm water fees any type of housing including rentals will be out of the reach of many people.
- 3/08/2021 02:25 PM The only reason why I didn't select DEFINATELY SUPPORT for all is simply a lack of information currently acquired on my part about any particular subject. But at the end of the day I want to help our homeless and struggling population in anyway possible. Thank you for all that you do. Please keep me in the loop; I have been working with the homeless population of Thurston County since 2012. Beau D> Shattuck He/Him Pronouns Thurston County/City of Olympia Housing Liaison
- 3/08/2021 02:50 PM I would really like to add an adu to my home and being able to get a loan from the city and/or reduction of fees and expensive unnecessary requirements like sprinklers and parking when I'm within a mile of three bus line would really help.
- 3/08/2021 04:33 PM Young adults getting good paying jobs should be able to afford their own housing. It can't be that over 50% of their paycheck should be going towards rent, making them have to find roommates to split the costs! It's unbelievable what has been happening around here.
- 3/08/2021 04:46 PM 1) explore guaranteed minimum income as tried in Stockton 2) lobby Congress & President to eliminate the mortgage income tax deduction, at least for high income households. 3) create/assist pathways to home/land ownership for low income minority households 4) reduce the huge excess amount of commercially zoned & developed land and revert to residential zoning/development, and control/slow conversion of land in other jurisdictions to commercial development. 5) preserve historic housing and character of historic neighborhoods...new housing can and should be designed to be compatible rather than intrusive. 6) revive federal public housing construction programs.

Please revoke MFTE for market rate housing.

3/08/2021 04:51 PM

3/08/2021 08:48 PM

While my housing in this community is fairly stable, I am watching many of my friends leave this community due to not being able to find affordable rental housing or not being able to find a pathway toward home ownership in this community. Most of them are living on a single income. It really concerns me that there aren't affordable options in this community for folks on a single income. I don't want to diminish families that are priced out of our area. That, too, is of great concern. I have also watched many families leave the community due to the cost of housing. I have a great fear that with the increase in telework, our community will become made of people that don't work here while the people who work here will flee to larger or cheaper homes farther from Olympia. I don't think that supports the model for growth that many folks want to see here. I'd like to live in community where the people that work in the community can afford to live in the community.

3/08/2021 09:38 PM

The Capital Mall area floods! Also, do not put people into homes/rentals without adequate parking. Causes conflict between residents, and too hard to bring groceries in, move furniture in or out. Provide people with privacy, like fencing/barriers between homes, even a small yard. Despite promises, someone will sublease, violate parking rules, and let their pets and kids run wild. Also, lots of issues with drug users and multiple families moving into low income housing, sometimes 3 or more family units in a 3 bedroom, and all have cars. People use cars because of daycare, employment hours, unsafe alternative transportation- no one wants to go to the dangerous downtown Olympia bus station or even walk through that crime cesspool or get on a Covid bus. Put homes in over by the Capitol building or by the park near Oly high school - less traffic there. Maybe repurpose the old police department and old Thurston County jail into safe warm temporary housing for homeless persons. Transitional housing for recovering sex trafficking survivors would be a great idea - in a different community than where they lived before so they can make a clean break and be safe.

3/08/2021 11:27 PM

The city and county need to bold about the un-housed. It is going to be a long time until there is enough affordable housing built and available (like all the ideas mentioned in the survey) even if regulations and fees are streamlined. The need is huge and immediate. We can all see that without a survey. That is the reality. We have camps all over the place. That is a fact. Why is there not more focus on planning and preparing for this reality? Should we be asking people if they would rather have a condoned or random camp in their neighborhood? I understand the desire to dream big but that means we have people living wherever they can in the mean time, which will be years. We must do better and act more boldly and quickly. Sites need to be identified that are not a wet land, durable tents/shelter and facilities need to be provided. And I'm going to say it.... those who receive these services should give something back and help take care, not just take. Without that there is no investment and buy in. (There is no doubt that people can get

things for free. We see all these things along our roads. There is a HUGE resistance to asking anyone who receives a service to give anything back. When there is no contribution there is no sense of investment, pride, or need to maintain and people will destroy an area). Providing this temporary shelter is a huge investment we need to make as a community. It literally drains my soul to see what looks like a Landfill along I-5. The exposed camps that are piles of garbage cause intense damage to the morale, pride, compassion and sense of well being in our community. I cannot over emphasize what a negative impact a few camps have on an ENTIRE community. I wish we could, as a community, help those people in particular and clean up the insane amount of garbage that has been hauled in. We can't wait for developers to build a few units of low income housing. We need better tents and a garbage limit/system. I know this is a wicked problem but I don't see how what is happening now is the best our city can do for the unhoused or housed. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

3/09/2021 06:27 AM

We need more bathrooms, garbage cleanup, and support for people on the street.

3/09/2021 07:46 AM

While we are building permanent Supportive Housing for our house les Neighbors, we need to have more stable transitional housing until that is accomplished. Get people inside. I don't understand why the City of Olympia Lacey and Tumwater are not purchasing hotels to accommodate people like Seattle is doing. They have been able to get people inside, Provide support systems with meals Etc and really made it work.

3/09/2021 08:56 AM

Senior Housing is too often neglected. Between seniors with extra rooms in their house as their kids leave, and seniors living on SSI who lack funds for an apartment, there is a real need for a program like Home Share that is offered by Senior Services for South Sound. For transparency, I am the Executive Director there! Home Share helps in a very cost-effective and community building way.

3/09/2021 09:30 AM

Glad to see the inclusion of senior housing as a priority, hope to see actions that follow suit. Data shows that seniors are cost burdened & severely cost burdened at nearly the exact same rate as the general population, yet there have been zero public investments in low-cost senior housing in over 20 years. Thank you for your work - excellent materials!

3/09/2021 09:41 AM

City needs to eliminate costly "nice to have" but nonessential requirements, such as fire sprinklers in single family homes. Analyze how the City can make building easier and more affordable.

3/09/2021 01:36 PM

Homeownership is a means to create wealth and equity in housing that has long been ignored and/or undersupported at the local level (as evidenced by the number of renters in Olympia). Homeownership is a means to create equity for low-income residents (who disproportionately represent marginalized groups) if a goal for the city of Olympia is to create a diverse and inclusive community, it should start with an investment in permanently

affordable homeownership. Many types of affordable housing require public investment at multiple points during the project's life cycle. Affordable homeownership projects require a single investment of capital funds that can be leveraged and multiplied at an impressive rate and with a huge social return on investment.

3/09/2021 02:52 PM

I support Homeownership over renting. it builds generational wealth for families and supports better health and educational opportunities to the families that own their homes.

3/09/2021 05:31 PM

I would like to see support for housing land trusts to make homes permanently affordable. I would end all subsidies/tax abatements, etc. to developers of market rate housing. I would put a moratorium on development of market-rate housing, and tie future development to the availability of new low-income housing developed by low-income developers.

3/09/2021 06:13 PM

City of Olympia needs to decrease permit fees, look at cities such as Ft Collins, CO - how they've revitalized downtown and have managed growth.

3/09/2021 06:35 PM

This process (not the survey itself) is cumbersome for non-techies, particularly figuring out if I was looking at the "storymap" (whatever that is) and then finding the survey - seems to require lots of tabbing & clicking & often finding myself back on the same page. I appreciate text boxes for explanations as everyone's situation is a bit different. Good luck bringing more affordable housing to Oly; I want my kids to be able to live here - just not with me!

3/09/2021 06:39 PM

For many of these questions I indicated some support. However, in some cases I didn't really feel like I knew enough about the question to give more than a tepid response. I definitely support things like backyard cottages, and getting rid of CCRs that that require a minimum house size. I don't think I support developments that are all low income. If I were low income, I'd want to live in the same neighborhoods as everyone else, not in the special "poor peoples" neighborhood. I'd rather see small homes built well and sustainably than big cheaply built developer projects. I like to see projects with character, and I'm wary of developers trying to make a buck. Finally, I absolutely do not support that the city's shoreline master program allows for development of housing along sensitive shorelines. Shorelines should be protected and accessible to ALL. I re ignite that population growth is inevitable and we will have more density. Let it be small, good quality, have character and integrate low income everywhere

3/09/2021 07:54 PM

Housing is a basic need. We need more density, and assistance for low-income citizens. Home ownership isn't the goal. The goal is decent shelter for those who lack it.

3/09/2021 08:39 PM

Remove height restrictions, abolish single-family zoning, make it easier to build rowhouses, mixed use buildings, and affordable condos everywhere. Encourage architectural diversity, invest in better mass transit and pedestrian-centered spaces.

3/09/2021 09:24 PM

Encourage options such as Community Land Trusts/Housing Trust that keeps the land ownership with the Trust and the home ownership with the resident as a long-term affordable housing option. Also models of low-income or supported housing rentals that allow for residents to build equity - <https://renterequity.org/>. Other cities have used these strategies successfully. We must get people out of tents and into decent housing. And it is my hope that we keep a diverse mix of housing to keep Olympia affordable and able to keep a creative, quirky mix of residents who are able to follow their passions. We risk becoming a wealthy enclave as developable land shrinks in the region. I hope we can remain welcoming to all.

3/09/2021 10:59 PM

Hey. So I don't know if you really read these comments. But I was born down town 40 years ago. I've lived in Olympia almost my whole life. I currently live in a tiny house with my toddler during this unending pandemic. I'm on disability and can't even afford an apartment on the \$1014 I get a month, so building this tiny house was my last option to staying connected to my support network. What I really need to happen is for y'all to relax all the rules about tiny homes and just let folks live. It's already stressful, but having to worry about code enforcement or some other bs rule just makes things harder. Y'all literally building 8' boxes for folks to live in, but when I try to buy a tiny sliver of land I'm told I can't park my house on it with out a ton of inspections. I'm literally one step away from homelessness and y'all just gotta make things harder.

3/10/2021 08:43 AM

It's simple. The more the city attempts to regulate free market the more expensive and difficult it becomes to build. If the city would pull their nose out of people's business in regards to what they can build on their properties, how much the gouge for permits, and other requirements such as off street parking, impenetrable surface, and mole studies there would be much more housing available at various levels of price.

3/10/2021 09:11 AM

Please help people afford single family housing over building developments for low income or high income.

3/10/2021 10:26 AM

As much accountability as possible for everyone involved in the process

3/10/2021 10:42 AM

There is a program in New York where they're using the Land Trust model of land acquisition to provide housing (i.e. a Housing Trust). A non-profit can receive grant funds to acquire land where affordable housing can be built. The title/deed on the property would have a restriction that the property can only be used for affordable housing. It's an interesting model that I did not necessarily see captured above. These are complex problems that require sometimes complex solutions so thank you for all you're doing! Some of these ideas are great and I haven't been able to give them much thought, so many of my answers are first instinct. Thanks again!

3/10/2021 11:30 AM

Take a look at existing environmental permitting regulations (EIS, SEPA, EJ) and require a review/analysis of current cultural/community demographics to

ensure new/redevelopment doesn't unjustly impact the existing community. When there is a focus on building expensive fancy dwellings for investment return, the existing community is inadvertently impacted by rising costs (home values and taxes). And eventually the old community gets forced out.

Thanks!!!!

3/10/2021 11:45 PM

Clean up our once lovely city. It is a disgrace, health problems, and eye sore ----- and, we are the Capitol!!!!!!! Pay the homeless \$5.00 (maybe by the pound) to cleanup their camp sites.

3/11/2021 07:57 AM

We should be creating as much density as possible downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods. Lots of units inside big buildings are the most cost effective and environmentally sound way to increase housing supply. Locating these buildings close to downtown helps to create that feedback loop of jobs creation close to homes, and we can stop planning our cities for cars instead of people.

3/11/2021 09:35 AM

More housing downtown for many income levels

3/11/2021 10:05 AM

Please address the lack of safety that is now becoming a "norm" in the Olympia area due to the ever increasing homeless population. Driving through the city there is trash visible in areas which used to be encampments and have since been abandoned. My kids and I routinely run into needles on our walks/bike rides that are just thrown into the sidewalks and/or streets. It's important to provide housing for people in need, but it is equally important to maintain working families in the area and not reduce their home values which those same families worked hard to attain.

3/11/2021 10:26 AM

Stop building million dollar apartments. Stop prioritizing money over people. Stop trying to give people money for having to care about other people and calling it "incentives." Developers shouldn't shouldn't richer while others here suffer. Stop fawning over development, stop accepting money for deals, and give the city back to the people.

3/11/2021 01:31 PM

I am glad you realize that affordable housing in Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater is impossible to find. I have personally experienced this. I am very fortunate to live in an apartment with one roommate in apartments that are "low income". However I pay 50% of my income on rent and utilities. Get this, a 2 bed, 2 bath apartment that is quite old and kind of shabby is \$1029 in rent. I pay half of that and have to put up with a roommate when I would prefer to not have one. Also there is a huge problem, from personal experience, that it is very difficult to find housing that will allow a pet. I have one cat. I have spent hours, probably hundreds of hours searching for housing here in this area. I have had to move 3 times in 7 years due to: 1. Owner of house decided to live there, 2. renting a room from homeowner who had a dog that barked constantly, I couldn't even have a visitor, 3. renting a small cabin on property

3/11/2021 02:37 PM

where the owner spied on me and said hateful things to some friends because they looked poor 4. now my roommate whose name the apartment is in is threatening to kick me out because she doesn't like me and she's a racist and I'm not. I only got this living situation because her son knew the manager of the apartments, low income. I pay 50% in rent yet, before Covid, I got \$30 in WA food stamps. Systems are against poor people.

3/11/2021 03:20 PM

New construction should reflect the neighborhood where it occurs. For example, in Bigelow a developer could build a property that has character similar to existing homes, even those 100 years old like mine. Ranch homes, overtly boxy homes, contemporary homes ala the 1960s are not appropriate for Bigelow.

3/11/2021 03:24 PM

Owning a home in Olympia is rapidly becoming unattainable for my household with a gross income of 140K a year because it is outrageously difficult to be financially prepared with a down payment and other related moving/purchasing costs. Help the houseless and low income first, but don't leave the middle class behind. Don't leave the middle class behind, but don't help us at the expense of the houseless and low income People.

3/11/2021 03:50 PM

Many of these questions are coming from a place of misinformation around the housing crisis and the very essence of poverty. It's not about developing more housing, there's largely enough. It's about 1) making those spaces ethically livable and 2) making them affordable. 80% of my income goes towards housing expenses. This includes maintenance because the "affordable" living space I could find with my spouse is full of mold and leaks that go without repair- or we get charged for those repairs that aren't our fault. There needs to be a cap on how much rent can be depending on the square footage. This is also why I don't believe in housing for "multiple incomes." There has to be a standard, or the living conditions will be horrendous. Reducing parking requirements just make the housing inaccessible. Disabled people, like myself, are among the poorest populations. We also need to be able to park closely to our own apartments. Walking is hard. We have limited mobility. Olympia needs a housing plan that focuses on affordability, not development. Development is expensive, but maintenance saves money. It's incredibly basic knowledge every poor person in this city knows, but you haven't been listening to us. You're too busy calling us terrorists.

3/11/2021 04:52 PM

None of this addresses the true issues here. Housing isn't affordable or accessible. So many poor, disabled, and mentally ill individuals are stuck in abhorrent living situations because landlords do not care. There is plenty of physical housing in most cases, however those places that are open are too expensive or are inaccessible. Maybe focus on fixing those issues, not incentivizing more building when it will continue being inaccessible and unaffordable.

3/12/2021 12:03 PM

We neeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeed emergency housing for the unhoused now. Also, if I'm making over 50k a year I shouldn't have to worry about meeting apartment income requirements, but every one bedroom built in the last 4 years is above my price range. How? Who can afford to live there? Not the

service industry folks that work here.

3/12/2021 01:28 PM

Any of the strategies you develop must address the intersection of landlords denying people housing who have conviction histories. You can build housing all day but if landlords won't rent to people with conviction histories it will not help. We over-criminalize and over-incarcerate communities of color then make laws that allow landlords to pull background checks up to 7 years, locking people out of housing for far too long. Additionally, there is no data to prove that having a record has any bearing on whether a tenant pays the rent or is a good tenant. We have to address this hidden issue.

3/13/2021 05:33 AM

Some of these questions seem to assume one size fits all. The answers I gave might apply to my neighborhood but not others. For example when I am lukewarm about more density or more lower income housing it is because I live in a dense downtown neighborhood with apartments and some housing designated for housing authority use. So I may not support more, but might for other neighborhoods in Olympia. Otherwise had fun with the survey
Thanks!

3/14/2021 10:42 AM

The City currently seems rather focused on expensive apartment rental development in Downtown Olympia, which is good, but does not provide the needed diversity in housing opportunities. Expensive apartments in the downtown core, and along West Bay Drive, will not get us to where we need to be. The West Bay Yards Development proposal seems really ill conceived and poorly thought out. There are currently pretty unfriendly walking infrastructure on West Bay Drive, there are no public transportation opportunities present, the current road capacity will not support the number of vehicles associated with such a large development, and given it's location people will need to drive to get to the store, work, and everything else. And the overall lack of adequate sidewalks in Olympia's neighborhoods is something that the needs to be prioritized, along with more alternative transportation opportunities. And, unless you work for State Government, there are limited well paying job opportunities in our area, meaning most people need to commute somewhere... How about planning for light rail to come into Thurston County to address this issue that will only continue to get worse as the area grows.

3/14/2021 11:02 PM

I support creating more economically diverse communities through housing policies. I also support all that's being done to facilitate more ADUs. I also agree with construction of many more tiny homes for the unhoused population. I favor developing housing in some or all of LBA Park (won't happen but still wanted you to know there are some Oly residents who live near that park who would strongly support using some of it for mixed income housing and tiny homes.) FYI I grew up on the West side of Oly from 1971 to 1989 so I have seen so so many changes since then. Many are good, some others, not so much, Thank you for seeking our opinions!

3/15/2021 04:13 PM

We live in Thurston County in unincorporated Olympia but are huge supporters of affordable housing initiatives and incentives. We look forward to downsizing in the future and moving closer to the center of town and to

transit routes. Thanks for doing this!

3/15/2021 04:49 PM

We have been residents in Tumwater for almost 6 years and I work in the home inspection business. The lack of housing in Thurston County is a huge concern for my family and many people I work with in the real estate industry. The current market is causing gentrification and exacerbated the homeless crisis.

3/15/2021 04:57 PM

As a business owner downtown I see a lot of luxury apartments going up from urban Olympia that most cannot afford unless they come larger cities with higher income. While the homeless population continues to grow. I think Olympia needs to shift their focus from allowing luxury apartments to helping address the homeless population struggling with housing and mental health. Human beings are living in deplorable conditions with some resources but it's not enough, yet luxury apartments seem to go up and either sit with empty business space on the bottom or empty apartments. This is a huge problem. We need to take care of our community before we build luxury spaces to enhance the aesthetic of downtown. We need more affordable housing, spaces for low income families and better resources to address mental health and rehabilitation. The homeless population is seen as an eye sore when in fact we forget that these are someone's sons, daughters, mothers and fathers. Everyone deserves adequate care.

3/15/2021 07:19 PM

Many landlords require people to make 4-6x the rent in order to be approved to live in the space. I understand they want security that rent will arrive, but that isn't feasible for many people, especially with low wages and an unstable economy.

3/15/2021 07:23 PM

I also support any programs that assist younger first-time homebuyers. The difficulty of buying a house for younger people is significant.

3/15/2021 08:15 PM

Rent caps if the landlord is not investing in or changing/enhancing their properties. Why is it a landlord is able to rent our a shitty 2 bedroom place and constantly up the rent when no investments or changes have occurred?

3/15/2021 10:27 PM

Loans for individuals trying to purchase, maybe who have good credit and can afford a mortgage...but are struggling to get a down payment saved, etc.

3/16/2021 02:29 AM

On Question 16: Providing land or funding to non-profits is good but that can't be the only strategy. The affordable housing shortage is too big for non-profits or faith-based organizations to handle on their own, although they certainly should be part of the mix. It will also need to be government and even regulated private sector operations. Staffing these organizations with the necessary level of talent and resources will take more than shoestring budgets.

3/16/2021 07:09 AM

The cost of trash pick-up coupled with it only coming every other week is a huge financial burden on our family and not being able to afford the giant trash can means we are living with growing piles of trash we cannot afford to throw away. I've never lived in a city where this was a problem and I wish I

had known how much the city of Olympia charges to do so little before moving here.

3/16/2021 07:48 AM

Full strategic dreaming and planning is essential to successful increased development. Don't just increase density without considering our vision for the community. Walkability, access to transit, healthy food options, neighborhood stores, restaurants and other businesses.

3/16/2021 09:09 AM

There needs to be some monitoring and regulations against who can buy up all this new housing. Too many people who already own homes are buying secondary properties to rent out the spaces, trapping lower-income residents into a renting cycle they can't break out of.

3/16/2021 12:57 PM

Whatever plans that are developed or strategies implemented, you have to make it rewarding for the private developer and builder to build low income housing. There is very limited incentive now.

3/16/2021 03:58 PM

I strongly oppose surrendering impact fees to facilitate increased development. Impact fees are to mitigate for development, so cutting impact fees *and* increasing development is extremely counterproductive.

3/16/2021 04:12 PM

I am disappointed to see that there is no mention in any of your plans about developing mixed income social housing. Instead it's focused on market housing, financial incentives and isolating poor people in low income areas to be stigmatized and neglected. We need solutions that explicitly move housing and the land under it out of the market. Incentives to convert land into CLTs and financing for turning low density lots into slightly higher density social housing that could be developed locally as well as with existing profit and non-profit developers. The plan feels incredibly limited and reliant on for profit housing developers, tilted towards existing homeowners, and with an eye on financial profits instead of housing people. Not a particularly inspiring plan despite a few decent ideas scattered throughout. Little vision in changing the paradigm about how and why we build what we do. We need much better than this.

3/16/2021 04:25 PM

The city must listen to residents and not developers when making decisions on housing density and policy changes.

3/16/2021 04:50 PM

Yes, Please think about building affordable housing between Eastside St. SE, Union Ave., Plum Street, and I-5. The majority of the property is owned by Vine Street Developers. Allow 9 stories of affordable housing in this area. It will not affect anyone view of the Capitol or Downtown Olympia. At 9 stories, it should pencil out for the developer and provide good affordable housing close to downtown.

3/16/2021 05:08 PM

Neighborhoods that already have a range of affordable housing options - apts, duplexes, and affordable small, older homes - should not be upzoned to increase density. Target increases in density to new developments and existing single-family housing areas.

Many proposals seem to sacrifice what Olympia is, in the hopes of bending

3/16/2021 06:34 PM

the market. Extreme density is a punt maneuver, which will likely only leave us with a still costly—but less desirable—housing stock down the road.

3/16/2021 08:03 PM

The city has failed its residents in every conceivable way. I've been downtown 4 years, nothing has changed. This is going to end up being another few million we sink into planning to make a commission on a study to consider the effects of potentially building an extra 3 tiny homes in 2025. I have no faith or confidence this will produce literally any substantive change.

3/16/2021 08:17 PM

My spouse and I are fortunate - we just bought a home in Oly after renting for a year. We get the keys tomorrow. We sold our home in NE Oly one year ago, planning on renting and then buying when we figured out where our next home should be. The real estate market went BANANAS! We didn't know better or we would have stayed in our previous home. We have lived in Oly for 15 years and were afraid we'd never be able to stay in Oly since prices just kept going up and up this last year during COVID. We put 7 offers on 7 homes. We were outbid by folks with CASH!!! Oly is getting a face lift for sure and it'll be interesting to see how it changes with so many folks coming down from Seattle. The face lift isn't even one of diversity. It feels gentrified. We almost moved to another state and would have if my spouse hadn't a secure job working for the State for 15 years and I didn't own a business of 7 years, which I love. We didn't want to leave, but were willing to leave our secure employment just to find a place to live! Our rental is moldy uninsulated 2 bedrooms and \$1850 a month. Fortunately we were able to continue to work during COVID - but so were a lot of other folks (which is great!) but many of those folks are coming to town and have lots of money to spend on the already very low inventory of homes in Oly - middle income homes. I know we are very lucky - we DO have jobs and aren't suffering as much as many are. We have been able to buy a home. Incredibly. But, Oly is getting squeezed in a weird way that is affecting low and middle income home owners. It feels so smarmy. Like real estate sharks in the waters - not a relaxing place to swim anymore. The home we purchased was at the very edge of our possible price range. We will live and work here until we retire and feel lucky that we could get a home in this crazy housing crisis! But we also look forward to moving since Oly is getting pretty funky - we'll see what happens, we have 15 years to go. Maybe it'll get better - it feels so hostile right now. Like a major disconnect on display. Its capacity is really getting squeezed. I don't understand why we can't use the vacant YMCA to help house and resource folks who need it! When I was young and in need, I lived at the YWCA in Bellingham for 8 months. It was a great resource for good folks in need to help them when people needed a little support. There are so many boarded up shops downtown. It's really strange that the Mistake on the Lake and so many other condos are going up but there's also a pop up shanty village around every green space. I don't get it. The system has really failed us. Someone is getting rich and it ain't the people.

3/16/2021 09:44 PM

I consider equal opportunity for housing, diversity in neighborhoods and nearby transit and shopping to be essential elements in developing solutions to our housing crisis. Even more important, however, is ensuring that

farmland, water sources, shoreline, forest and prairie habitat are "sacrosanct;" i. e. are preserved from development and not fragmented into habitat islands. I also think the increasing vulnerability of western Washington to wildfire due to climate change needs to be a consideration. Thank you to all who have worked long and hard on this planning process!

3/17/2021 08:31 AM

Why is the burden of creating homes for low and no income being placed on non-profits and developers? Why isn't the city and county taking the majority of the responsibility to ensure low and no income housing is developed?

3/17/2021 09:15 AM

In theory it would be great for people to afford housing in the areas they worked in, this would be great to reduce the carbon footprint of our community and provide housing. I see a challenge with this though, it is still the individuals have opportunity costs that they must consider when choosing their profession, and where they want to live. Housing is best served by the free market where there are many suppliers and many buyers. Government intervention in housing prices to drive down the price of housing would likely drive more consumers from other areas to move to our community and purchase the lower income housing, especially with the shift in telecommuting for work.

3/17/2021 09:17 AM

Actually use the multifamily tax exemption for affordable housing projects. Make it less accessible to high-end developers who are displacing low-income tenants downtown by installing expensive investment properties. I understand that this is not a panacea, but I feel like I have heard assurances that we need a "diversity" of housing in every municipal and legislative statement on the topic of housing, and yet somehow exemptions meant to decrease the cost of development serve only to create more market-rate and above-market-rate housing in Olympia. Maybe in order to create a "diversity" of housing it would be helpful to leave market-rate and above-market-rate housing off the table for a couple years - if we focus on lower-income housing exclusively for a little while, maybe we can finally bring these things into balance. It would be great to incentivize development so that we end up with as many Merritt Manors as we currently have Views On Fifths and 123 4ths.

3/17/2021 10:50 AM

In-fill by repurposing/remodeling vacant commercial buildings and commercial-zoned property for low-income and affordable housing, rather than overcrowding already dense housing in established neighborhoods. There is an over-abundance of abandoned or empty commercial space that could be converted to desperately needed housing.

3/17/2021 08:04 PM

These programs you're advocating will destroy neighborhoods

3/17/2021 08:44 PM

Make it easier and more affordable to build ADUs. Review all the fees and reduce as much as possible. Don't make people build little bits and pieces of sidewalks. Also, find a way to tax excess profits when people flip houses or when the market bids up properties so much. Its getting out of control. Also -

STOP GIVING LARGE PROPERTY TAX BREAKS for high end apartments in downtown. As a homeowner I don't like subsidizing property tax breaks for high end housing downtown - by now incentives for that are not needed. I wouldn't mind subsidizing lower income tho. Olympia public works are in shambles - street medians are not maintained, street tree wells are horrible, downtown sidewalks and curbs are broken and dirty. Olympia keeps building bump-outs, roundabouts, medians, etc. but does not keep them up. It makes our town look shabby and ugly.

3/18/2021 09:20 AM

Support progressive tax rates (the top income levels should be paying more). Offer lower property tax rates for families with multi-generational housing (incentivize families to stick together).

3/18/2021 12:37 PM

Housing for all! Our primary goal in life is to help eliminate wealth/cost barriers to home ownership. My wife and I were unable to purchase a home in Olympia for many years. Sadly, my wife's mother passed away in 2017 and we inherited her home. The fact that she was able to give us the gift of home ownership is amazing and truly a blessing. It is the only reason I was able to voluntarily step away from my awesome job with The Olympian and pursue larger opportunities in life and be able to volunteer/contribute more to helping others realize home ownership. If I can't help thousands of folks who dream of buying a home actually realize it, what's the point of all this? I want to help folks get stable housing, gain equity, and be able to start their own businesses to ensure our communities thrive locally and our GDP/GNP grows nationally. Entrepreneurs are the future and I want to flood the market with talented people with amazing ideas/ideals. For a grain of salt, the 41-50% of our income towards our home is entirely voluntarily (we pay x5 the minimums each month to pay off the home quickly). We are fortunate to be in a position like this and will only be able to give back more after we stop paying interest to credit unions, etc. Happy to chat anytime -- 360-870-9975, John Canfield

3/18/2021 01:11 PM

Olympia, Tumwater & Lacey should be developing a housing action plan collaboratively. Independent housing plans for each city, and a separate Thurston county plan is unlikely to address the housing inequity and homelessness. Develop incentives to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) for existing residents who are zoned at a denser residential dwelling units/lot than is currently in use. In particular, property owners who live within Urban Growth Areas. A grant program and low interest loan program that requires renting the ADU once constructed to those with housing vouchers, and includes a reasonable market assessed rental maximum. There must be some assurance at the back end that the property owner will actually collect rent so the system must include a security account. This will avoid 'ghettoizing' low income housing in development tracts, and increase the appeal to property owners to stay if they are collecting rental income and increasing value of their property.

3/18/2021 01:48 PM

Thurston County makes building housing way harder than it should be. Why would someone build in Thurston County when they have to jump through

hoops and wait an unacceptable amount of time to obtain permits!

Additionally, investors and developers don't want to do business in a city that is overrun by drugs, garbage and rioters that are allowed to continue destroying the city. I think that there are many issues that need to be addressed in order to make investing in Olympia a desirable thing.

3/18/2021 03:32 PM

I've only seen luxury style development in town in recent time, I know that some low income housing has also been created as well, but does not in anyway seem like a 1:1 or even 1:2 ratio as it appears we (the city) need it to be. Out of all the solutions listed above, I think it would be most important to require a proportion of all new multi-unit housing secure a certain percentage of low-income/subsidized units. Sending low-income folks to live on the outskirts of town up Martin Way in a humongous subsidized apartment setup can't be the primary direction that we go if we want to reach equality among all the residents of this town.

3/18/2021 05:21 PM

We don't need any more so called market rate or luxury living type housing whatsoever until we are able to catch up to the needs of the majority of the people. The average person in Olympia has an income far below the area median income. We need to stop using this model as it doesn't accurately represent the majority. I was recently literally told that downtown Olympia is better suited for wealthier people because it's on the water and has amazing mountain views by one of the people I managed to actually get on a phone. I wish I'd written down his name, I wanna say Steve, who admitted to me he was new to the area. How dare he imply that the place I grew from was wasted on me as if the systemic poverty I grew up in and live in still somehow has made me blind to the beauty of my home. Downtown Olympia is losing all it's already existing affordable housing. 5 years ago at least half the rentals downtown were either directly subsidized or private owned below market rate. Now 77% is market rate being built with tax credits (MFTE) that the cost of is put off on taxes to the people. This is wrong. Why have we chosen to rubber stamp through these 8 year MFTE developments for already rich people to get richer when they can afford to support the community and still get an MFTE deal under the 12 year MFTE but have to give back for said deal with 20% units held for affordable housing? When the 123 4th avenue building was going in people worried. Gentrification was trying to move in. Mayor Selby said back then, according to an article I saw in Olympian newspaper, that she would be open to more affordable housing in the future, what happened? The city had the option to require the 12 year MFTE. The people are crying out for affordable housing. Trickle down economy isn't working for anyone but those at the top. Start bubbling up. It's what the average salary deserves. No more median income because it isn't representing the majority of the people. And please be aware many people won't even be aware this survey is out so many of the answers you receive will be from connected people who don't necessarily have the community at large in mind. I'm thinking downtown association, rotary club, etc. . those who want to gentrify because they will pad their already fat pockets. Please stand up for the true majority of the people's needs not the wants of bigger

pockets.

3/18/2021 08:38 PM

It would have been nice to have known a year or so ago, that you were working on a plan such as the one we have now been made aware of - and I found out about it from someone on the Nextdoor Neighborhood Blog, just this evening (3/18/21)! I did not find out about it from The Olympian, or any of the mayors of the towns involved in the process...

3/18/2021 10:04 PM

The problem Olympia has is it is becoming such an unsafe environment not only due to homeless, but to radical opinions that hard-working people will continue to avoid it due to safety issues. Nothing in this survey addresses this.

3/18/2021 10:35 PM

Low income housing is well intentioned and yet so misguided. Please stay out of the real estate market in our great little city!

3/19/2021 10:08 AM

Infill of existing residential areas is preferable to expanding into currently undeveloped or low development areas

3/19/2021 01:52 PM

The last thing this city needs is more "low income housing" where it is starting at 1200 a month for a studio And really the other last thing this city needs is more high rise condos that are topping out on Tacoma/Seattle prices and just sitting vacant except for the squatters. How about the city focus on the middle class? Those that are holding this city together? Stop pandering to bend over backwards to give handouts based on the middle class's taxes.

3/19/2021 06:20 PM

Improved availability and access to mental health services is critical for a portion of the homeless population. I am also committed to creating housing for homeless women and children and feel this population should be a priority. Studies show that foster children that leave placement and become homeless reduce their risk for chronic homelessness if they can find stable housing soon after becoming homeless.

3/20/2021 09:12 AM

We also need to take care of the mental health issues that live on our streets. If we can help the people who can work and be part of the community that is a start but the people who have mental health and drug issues that cannot work/or won't participate in making a better community need a place to be so that they are safe, fed and warm and not sitting on the corners or in tents discarding garbage and drug paraphernalia and stealing from business and families that work hard for their money. The tax payers have to look at or pay to clean up their mess. If they are not willing to get help then they need to move on to another city besides Thurston County. This all started in the 1990's when they shut down our mental health institutes because they were not "Humane" I don't think what we are seeing now is humane, at least there they had medication, food, a bed to sleep in and were housed and yes that was a better use of our tax dollars.

3/21/2021 12:42 PM

Affordable housing won't be built by private developers because there's not enough profit. The newly adopted Housing policies are incentivizing developers to buy lots in the City to tear down or renovate houses so they

can make a profit, as shown by the increased valuations for land on the West side and concomitant devaluations of structures. My daughter can no longer afford a home in Olympia. The City is prioritizing any kind of development. That is WRONG. The City is prioritizing profit driven development and has been captured by development and commercial forces to the detriment of its citizens. That is WRONG. The City should prioritize diverse income housing in all neighborhoods and not allow any tax breaks for market rate housing.

3/21/2021 03:33 PM

Over regulation & huge fees are the main cause of this problem. Private enterprise, without such expensive regulation will provide adequate housing for all. Government doesn't belong in the housing business- have you learned nothing from the huge government "projects" in the past. They create misery for all.

Density is good but the devil is in the details.

3/21/2021 07:00 PM

We have a housing crisis which severely impacts low income citizens. This needs to change but not at the expense of destroying the environment.

3/21/2021 07:14 PM

Rely less on "incentivizing": the private sector by reducing their fees and taxes and redirect their tax revenue to subsidizing housing. Developers will build here without the subsidies and they won't build lower income housing. Protect low-density neighborhoods. They are not a problem, they are a defining strength of Olympia. Increase lower-income and density by fostering increased construction of ADU's. They can be made to be compatible with SF neighborhoods. While you plan for a future population, think about respecting the people who live here now and who made Olympia a place that others want to live in the future.

3/21/2021 08:22 PM

Thank you for your time:)

3/22/2021 02:00 PM

We need to develop with the future of the environment in the forefront of our thinking. You talk about a lot of incentives for the developers ~ what about for the good of humanity? Or for the good of our community? I believe we must be transparent when we're talking about profit margins. I'm a bit tired of developers walking away with a payload while the rest of us deal with their mistakes ~ especially in terms of infrastructure. Please, let us develop with a high level of forethought. Thanks!

3/22/2021 03:19 PM

Do not wall off our waterfront, with buildings. Invest in open space. Whatever is done for housing/increasing density needs to be paired with open space, parks, walking paths. Quality of environment, quality of life. Cut the light pollution, dim and hood street lights. Thanks for asking for my input.

3/23/2021 11:17 AM

I think the City of Olympia would be a great candidate for a pilot program of Universal Basic Income (UBI) so that the homeless population could afford rent and the UBI would go back into the local economy. I also believe that

3/24/2021 08:57 PM

tiny house villages that are rent to own could be a great low income option. Not in a religious facility and not regulated like the other free tiny house villages for the homeless. These would be geared toward single workers and low income households. What incentives are there for making the building more eco friendly? Can the city encourage low flow toilets, energy efficient appliances etc. Are there incentives for hiring local contractors and shopping from local lumber/building supply stores and keeping the money even more local that way? I would love to be involved further with helping address Olympias housing and homeless crisis. Please feel free to reach out at glory805@gmail.com. Thank You, Glory Nylander

3/25/2021 12:49 PM

When it's time to downsize (soon!), we would strongly consider cooperative housing or townhouses, particularly if there were high quality options. New development should be very dense and located close to major transit routes.

3/25/2021 12:58 PM

MORE ASSISTANCE FOR THE UNHOUSED POPULATION. The cost of living is too high here for even just a tiny studio apartment! i would be homeless if I didn't live with my sister.

3/25/2021 01:11 PM

Much of the pressure on housing costs in Olympia is being driven by Seattle/King County not providing enough affordable housing. It's bad for us here in Olympia from both a housing and transportation perspective as a result. I urge you to work with Seattle and King County, through the courts if necessary, to take responsibility for and fix their housing issues. No matter how much additional housing you create here in Olympia, you will never satisfy the demand until Seattle/King County fix their issues first

3/25/2021 02:59 PM

The housing crisis in Thurston County is acute and worsening each year. Property taxes are out of control and my adult children with govt jobs are unable to afford most houses or find affordable housing for rent. Not sure what the solution is but this action your organization is embarking on is a good starting point.

3/25/2021 03:37 PM

Most people start out renting apartments/homes and have roommates until they have worked themselves up financially to owning homes. Home ownership is not a right, it is a goal. High density causes infrastructure problems with traffic, pollution, schools, etc. Cutting down every tree and building on every foot of land is not smart planning. The best way to help the homeless (that are committed to helping themselves) is by getting them into apartments and helping them get work. Things earned are appreciated, free is not.

3/25/2021 03:37 PM

My family and I know how fortunate we are to have stable housing in a lovely neighborhood. The economic disparities in our community continue to grow and we (our city, county, state, and federal governments) have to quickly take steps to create more opportunities for all people to have stable housing.

3/25/2021 03:38 PM

Increase the level of police funding to keep all neighborhoods safe from theft, drugs, vandalism, and other crimes.

- 3/26/2021 07:29 AM
Until Affordable Housing is offered to Working Class, the cycle of real poverty- those who pay outrageous rents every month- will never be broken. There is no way a person making \$80K can buy a \$375,000 house and then be expected to fix it up. That's what this market demands. 'Affordable Housing' isn't a term for Transients- it's for people who have worked everyday and are productive in your community.
- 3/26/2021 08:27 AM
Reduce requirements for fire sprinklers in new ADUs. Reduce fees for ADUs - keep making it easier for homeowners to establish them.
- 3/26/2021 08:28 AM
I would like to see incentives for developers to include a certain percentage of low-income units but only if they keep them that way for at least 20 years, to be reviewed at that time for possible changes. Making it anything less than that incentivizes landlords finding ways to kick low income tenants out as soon as they know they can start renting the property for more money.
- 3/26/2021 08:36 AM
My biggest worry about developing more affordable housing is that emphasis will be placed on single family home ownership which has been artificially propped up in this country for the last century. I also worry that developing housing for a "variety of incomes" is code for a few low income units and a bunch of middle to high, so it's harder to support statements like that when there is no policy detail attached. I'm also wary of building out when we need to focus on building up. One of the best things Olympia could do is make it easier for ADUs to be built, offer grants or easy loans for homeowners to develop ADUs but with the requirement that the unit must be rented for 10% under market for a certain number of years. We would jump on the chance to build an ADU and gladly rent it, it wouldn't even have to make money, just pay for itself. If the City offered grants for that, it would offset the cost, you could require a rental cap as a condition of the grant, my payment to the bank would be less and I could and would have to, charge someone less rent. Especially if it wasn't a huge hassle to build them, the city could even offer 3 pre-approved building plans.
- 3/26/2021 08:55 AM
I agree with the need to develop new and affordable housing, but I also want to be careful to avoid urban sprawl, especially into natural areas (like Missiom Creek or Scatter Creek).
- 3/26/2021 09:05 AM
While I understand the need for affordable housing and for high-density housing, I live on the westside and don't believe the current road/traffic infrastructure can support it. We also have already lost a lot of the "charm" of west olympia in recent years. I would rather see more ADUs, single-family, duplex, triplex options as opposed to the HUGE apartment complexes that continue to pop up on the westside. As well as thoughtful development of parks, village-type atmosphere, walkability in high density neighborhoods.
- 3/26/2021 09:18 AM
Let's keep Olympia blended with many socioeconomic groups.
- I think we need more PUBLICLY OWNED low income housing. Tax credit

3/26/2021 10:41 AM

housing is inadequate for very low incomes.

3/26/2021 05:11 PM

There needs to be more affordable housing in Olympia but development and building more homes I dont see as the answer. Take vacant buildings and make them affordable housing. Like the big building by Bayview and Capitol Lake.. that would have been GREAT affordable housing, close to the bus stops and many downtown jobs. Too much new downtown condos for the wealthy!!!

3/26/2021 05:45 PM

Need more direct funding for low income and homeless individuals to obtain or maintain housing

3/26/2021 09:47 PM

Low oncoming housing needs private green/outdoor space and community gardens. The outdoors as part of a living situation should just be a privilege of wealth. Sidewalks and bike routes need to be part of any housing plan.

3/27/2021 10:32 AM

I think that it would be great to work with developers to build extremely small studios spaces to make affordable, functional, healthy spaces where no subsidy is needed.

3/27/2021 03:21 PM

Olympia is too expensive. Our children will never be able to own houses here. Prices are way overpriced. It's great for us homeowners but terrible for young people. But I can't move either everything is so expensive.

3/28/2021 08:40 AM

I understand there are limitations to what the City can do as opposed to what other levels of government can do (county, state, federal). I support the City taking an active role in educating residents about these constraints and the roles different levels of government play and advocating for changes at these other levels of government which would support more equitable and affordable housing here in Olympia. I would also love for the City to be bold and creative and not rely so heavily on existing dominant models of housing that rely on the market.

3/28/2021 08:56 AM

I am a local Realtor and the biggest is problem that is driving our housing prices up is that there are not enough home's for sale. THE PERMITTING PROCESS, GOPHER LAW, and PERMITTING COSTS are entirely to blame for this issue. The exorbitant permitting costs make it impossible for affordable homes to be built. If it costs \$80,000-90,000 to develop a lot including permits and studies and requirements, then a more expensive house has to be built to help the contractor recover that cost. In addition the amount of time required to get through the permit process and the red tape is making small builders not want to build here and so they build in other counties. This is a fact. This issue has to be addressed to resolve the problem.

3/28/2021 10:53 AM

1. Enact affordable housing/linkage fee. 2. End tax breaks and impact fee discounts on market rate housing.

3/28/2021 02:07 PM

While I support density I do not support new construction in neighborhoods that go far above market rate and that no infrastructure like roads or schools

do not match

3/28/2021 04:30 PM

We have too much population, and should not be developing more housing. If we build it, they will come. We need to reduce the population in Thurston County, and all public efforts should be focused on population reduction, not developer subsidies. The best solution to our housing shortfall is to ask Congress to close Joint Base Lewis McChord. That would dramatically reduce pressure on the housing market, reduce traffic on I-5, and reduce certain types of crime.

3/28/2021 06:31 PM

I don't like the "missing middle" plan (now dormant) that would have required re-zoning residential properties to allow 2-, 3- or 4-family housing practically anywhere in the city. Such zoning is appropriate ON A BUSLINE but not on the next two or three blocks out. Denser zoning should be encouraged in places where it would be helpful, that is, in big transportation corridors. The hinterlands (away from the buslines) should be considered "commons," areas that are not being milked for every penny of profit but are there for the benefit of low-income people to pay what they can afford.

3/28/2021 07:34 PM

I think this is already being worked on, but mixed use corridors of 2-4 story buildings on Harrison. Same thing on Pacific in the vicinity of Ralph's. Also would like to see further easing of ADU rules and the ability to include 2 to 4 plexes in most neighborhoods. And while you are at it can you abolish HOAs except for minimum required maintenance of common areas? :)

Optional question (180 response(s), 136 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question