Anacortes Housing Action Plan
Public Engagement Report
September 7, 2022

1.0 – Introduction
In the course of preparing a housing action plan (HAP) Anacortes engaged community members to gain a deeper understanding of local housing needs and affordability issues, find shared values and common ground, and identify divergent viewpoints. Public engagement occurred primarily in three ways:

• Stakeholder interviews (see section 2.0)
• A communitywide housing survey (see section 3.0)
• Meetings and presentations with the City Council’s housing affordability and community services (HACS) committee

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### 2.0 – Stakeholder Interview Summary

MAKERS and Leland Consulting Group interviewed 15 individual Anacortes stakeholders. They included or represented city residents, social service providers, business owners, non-profit groups, developers and homebuilders, and other community leaders. This range of people provided a variety of perspectives on housing challenges and opportunities in Anacortes. This section summarizes their comments, observations, and priorities.

Organizations interviewed:

- Anacortes Family Center
- Anacortes Housing Authority
- Skagit Habitat for Humanity
- Irwin Development
- Landed Gentry
- Strandberg Construction
- Madrona Real Estate
- Gary Merlino Construction
- Island Hospital
- Anacortes Community Health Council (includes representatives from multiple groups and public agencies)
- Anacortes School District
- Safeway
- Seattle Yachts

Overall, stakeholders confirmed that low-moderate income workers and fixed-income retirees are struggling to afford housing in Anacortes. There is concern that essential service and retail workers are leaving the community and the city is becoming a retirement community for wealthy individuals. This is connected to a variety of other issues and capacity constraints in healthcare, transportation, and social services. Many non-profit entities are effective in providing support for people with low incomes and/or experiencing homelessness, but enhanced coordination would be helpful.

All cost inputs for new housing are going in the wrong direction amid rising prices for materials, labor, and land and stringent energy and stormwater codes. There may be some regulatory opportunities to improve the cost efficiency of construction and create partnerships for affordable housing. There is a perception that the City will need to implement bold solutions for housing in spite of potentially vocal opposition from some community members.

### 2.1 – Housing Challenges

Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:

- Rents and upfront fees/deposits have increased significantly over the past several years, compounding the difficulties for entry-level and moderate-income workers. Some people commute from Bellingham or further because they can’t find affordable homes closer.
• Several stories were shared by people who have lived in town decades and their children cannot afford to purchase a home in town.
• Renting a single-family home seems to be a preferred choice over apartments, but it is hard to get into that market since it is partly based on “who you know.” Renting a single-family house also has an increased risk of eviction because the owner or a family member could move back in at any time.
• The only house options seem to be old small homes or new 4-bedroom houses. New single-family homes are often priced in the million-dollar range. A single-family home for $500-600k is a relatively affordable price in Anacortes, and those are diminishing, though some townhouses are being sold in that range.
• There seems to be little price difference in the cost of purchasing a single-family home versus a condo, even though they have significant differences in amenities and size.
• Many homes sales (as much as half) close above listing price with cash offers. This is partly driven by the telecommuting trend and people discovering small towns. This is a change from when higher-end homes were often purchased by locally-based Navy officers. Local people of modest means cannot compete with out-of-staters showing up on doorsteps with a check.
• Taxes have been following the increase in prices, and utilities can also be expensive. This affects longtime residents who are straining to stay in their current homes.
• Public housing waitlists are years long and require monthly check-ins and paperwork, which can be discouraging. Waitlists are longest for small units (studio and 1-bedroom) and senior units. People who get in to public housing tend to never leave or stay a very long time – they can’t get into market-rate housing even if their incomes increase.

2.2 – Housing Production and Code Considerations
Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:
• Several stakeholders said Anacortes’s land use process is relatively straightforward and credit is given to City staff who process permits very quickly (both attributes are favorable compared to other Washington cities). One housing provider said more staff support for affordable housing projects would be appreciated.
• While there is considerable development and construction happening, it is happening less quickly than it might otherwise because of limited labor availability and supply chain disruptions. Tradespeople are in short supply, the price of lumber increased during the pandemic, and key components like garage doors, windows, and appliances require lead times of six months or more. This is a nationwide problem.
• Apartment construction costs in Anacortes are similar to Seattle, but here the market can only bear one-third to one-half of the rents in Seattle.
• One contributing factor to increases in housing prices are the updated state energy code, which for one developer added $20,000 to the cost of a new home. The cheapest way to meet the energy code is mini-split air conditioners and solar panels.
• Local and state stormwater regulations can also be cumbersome.
• While the 2019 development regulation updates helped reduce barriers, the parking requirements and zoning standards (such as minimum lot size, maximum height, and
some design standards) remain a hurdle to more economical and affordable housing projects. The City has aggressive parking lot landscape requirements, for example.

- Anacortes requires a significant amount of open space and there is some confusion/discrepancy in the options between multifamily, mixed-use projects, and multi-building developments. There is a strong desire for rooftop decks.
- Height limits should continue to be evaluated. From a development standpoint, a 3 or 4-story building makes little financial sense, because 3-6 story construction is similar on a per-square foot basis. One developer sat on a property for 10 years until a 4-story height limit was increased, and suggested that limits of 60-65 feet improve feasibility for multifamily/mixed-use and economies of scale that lead to reduced rents.
- Developers try to reduce uncertainty as much as possible, and one way to do that is by reducing the number of conditional uses.

2.3 – Homelessness and Social Services

Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:

- No story of homelessness is the same, everyone fell into it in their own way.
- Non-governmental organizations seem to be doing a better job than government agencies in responding to homeless and health issues. For example, the Anacortes Family Center is effective in moving people out of shelter and into permanent housing.
- The school district has a liaison staff person who helps homeless or near-homeless students with hotel vouchers, clothing, connections to services, etc.
- More centralized communications among service providers would be preferable, especially sharing information about openings and tracking case management.
- The Anacortes Community Health Council (an informal collection of service providers) could have a stronger connection with the City government.
- Several housing communities or service providers were cited as good examples or where lessons can be learned, such as the First Step Shelter operated by Skagit Friendship House, Skagit Habitat for Humanity, housing and services by Community Action, transitional housing support from the Northwest Regional Council, the medical clinic operated by Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, portable showers by Skagit Connections, and food banks operated by Salvation Army and Helping Hands.
- People living in vehicles are forced to relocate often because of duration limits. Having a sanctioned vehicle lot would help.
- The lack of a cold weather shelter was cited by several stakeholders. Some people are supported by hotel vouchers in the winter months, funded through donations and grants.
- There are many retirees moving to Anacortes. Over time that will be a growing problem because there is a lack of elderly care services.
- Some homeless people have no place to store belongings securely so they can attend medical appointments, job interviews, etc. Pets are a related issue.
2.4 – Employment and Businesses

- One employer said they would hire 10 more people if they could (expanding their workforce by 20%), but housing is a constraint on recruitment. They estimated 90% of their employees live outside Anacortes and many commute up to an hour.
- Quote (paraphrased): “Anacortes has no housing for middle-income workers, like the people who work at restaurants and grocery stores, draw our blood, and change our oil.”
- There is unused capacity at the town’s largest assisted living facility because of staffing shortages. Anacortes overall lacks capacity for assisted living and memory care.
- School district employees are committed to serving the community even if they commute from Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, Burlington, etc. But the question is how long they’ll stay when looking at competing wages.
- Land values are not at the point for big box retailers like Safeway to consider mixed-use redevelopment and structured parking, but more housing nearby is important to support the customer base.

2.5 – Transportation

Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:

- Parking was discussed by several stakeholders. It was suggested that 0.5 spaces per affordable unit is adequate (partly relying on on-street parking). In Seattle, typical ratios are 0.6-0.7 parking spaces per unit regardless of bedroom count. Without parking requirements, higher-end multifamily units in Anacortes would probably be built with 0.75 spaces per unit. Developers are not interested in empty parking lots. Senior households rarely have more than one car. More flexibility in shared parking arrangements is desired.
- For one recent development, the improvements and materials for surface parking cost approximately $30,000 per space. This, along with rising land values, approaches the cost where underground parking would be worth considering (which are $40,000-50,000 per space). Underground parking becomes feasible on lot sizes of 12,000 square feet or more.
- Public transit is not reliable in town nor for getting to Mount Vernon and Burlington, where most social and human services are located. Better service is needed.
- Biking in general and e-bikes in particular are growing in popularity as a way to get around town, do shopping, commute, etc. Seems like an opportunity for people to reduce their cost of living by driving less.

2.6 – Opportunities

Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:

- Most stakeholders expressed support for increased housing construction generally, especially near downtown and services. Some stakeholders specifically mentioned incentive zoning and fee-in-lieu options.
- Vacant land for new housing is diminishing and infill development requires some ingenuity and creativity to make it work. The R3 zone has some of the most unbuilt lots.
• Anacortes has a good urban grid, infrastructure, and a town core that makes infill work more easily here than other places.
• Developers appreciate the City’s infrastructure work. Anything where the cost can be spread around is appreciated, especially stormwater which is difficult on small sites.
• There is some public land worth considering for housing. Free or reduced-price land can reduce the cost of housing development by 20% or more and return land to the tax rolls.
• Non-profit housing providers are moving toward multifamily housing products to make the most efficient use of land given increases in land and construction costs.
• Duplex/triplex/townhouse brings housing diversity and could fit well in the walkable/bikeable areas of town. Duplexes and triplexes would benefit from smaller lot size requirements. They are also a great way to involve small investors because those projects are very manageable and scalable. Townhouses are more of a niche product.
• Some stakeholders see the demand for condos increasing, especially for seniors who want to downsize from single-family homes and who prefer single-level living. Developers are considering it even with the legal risk and extra liability insurance costs of condos.
• A multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) program and the city’s Opportunity Zone are chances to encourage more housing and steer development toward specific locations or needs. Multifamily projects require large, risky capital outlays and these tools can help defray the risk. One option is to give an extra floor bonus for MFTE.
• One stakeholder noted that an MFTE programs capping rent based on 80% of area median income (AMI), which is workforce housing, is relatively easy to achieve. For example, a market-rate apartment renting for $1,600 could go down to $1,200-1,300 per month. True low-income housing (for 30-50% AMI) are hard to hit without subsidies.

2.7 – Public Engagement and Support

Summary of stakeholder comments on this topic:

• A groundswell of public support is going to be needed to implement the changes recommended by the HAP. It’s easier to testify about something you don’t like than something you are favor of. Quote (paraphrased): “This Council and mayor will need to have courage to take these problems on and expect to be yelled at. Do the tough work and make people uncomfortable. If we can’t get doctors to stay in town, and I can’t get my kids to stay in town, we don’t have just a T Avenue problem, we have a bigger problem...It will be painful to face the fact that this won’t be easy.”
• One housing provider noted that elected leaders mostly hear from anti-housing people who are very vocal. People need to be educated about what is being built, the quality of the homes, and the circumstances of the future residents. Quote: “Good people are moving in, just because they’re low-income doesn’t mean they’re criminals.”
• The community will need to understand some of the factors causing housing prices to increase and that prices are out of the hands of developers. Quote: “Every input is going the wrong direction for housing to be affordable and to create more inventory that will make it affordable.”
• A key thing for the City’s staff, elected leaders, and residents is to get educated about the fact that Anacortes will change. Either more trees are cut and roads are paved outside the city, or housing goes vertical and people live closer to services.
• When considering individual development proposals, having Council and staff support the development if it meets the intent of the code and the Comprehensive Plan is vitally important.
3.0 – Housing Survey Summary

3.1 – Target Audience and Response Rate
The target audience for the survey was people living and/or working in Anacortes city limits. The majority of respondents self-reported meeting these criteria. The project team set an informal goal of receiving at least 800 responses, or roughly five percent of the city population.

The total input was 1,146 responses combined, and after removing non-valid response there are 1,067 responses available for analysis. The breakdown is provided below and details on outreach methods are provided in section 3.10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Version</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
<th>Non-local responses removed*</th>
<th>Incomplete responses removed</th>
<th>Remaining for analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>756**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,146</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,067**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* 70 people (6 percent) reported both living outside Anacortes and not working in Anacortes, and the majority are retired. While it is likely that most of these respondents have some connection to Anacortes, they are not currently local constituents.

**The online survey had expected attrition, with around 60-70 people skipping some of the later or complex questions.

3.2 – Housing Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 21</th>
<th>Which of these best describe your living situation?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (992)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most respondents are homeowners, at 82.5%. Approximately 14.4% of respondents are renters. The rest reported being in some other situation or being homeless (the online survey was filled out by two homeless people). The survey was disproportionately answered by owners, whose households make up about 66% of the housing units in Anacortes. About 34% of Anacortes housing units are renter households.

NOTE: Some of the questions in the remainder of the survey compare answers between owners and renters, noted in the question summary boxes. The 31 respondents who report neither owning nor renting represent a small percentage of responses and are excluded from those comparison analyses for brevity, but are included in other analyses and any written comments.
Most respondents live within Anacortes city limits. About 7% of respondents live outside the city and have a job based in Anacortes.
Question 2: Regarding employment and commuting, please select the answer that most accurately describes your situation.

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<tr>
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<th>Online and paper</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Owners (818) and renters (141)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most homeowner respondents are retired and most renter respondents are working. Combined, about 49% of respondents are retired. Overall, one-third of respondents work in Anacortes and about 15% of respondents have employment based outside the city.

As a percentage of responses, almost twice as many people reported being retired on the paper survey as those who took the online survey. This is consistent with the majority of paper survey takers being at least 60 years old (see more information in section 3.9).

![Bar chart showing employment and commuting preferences for owners and renters.](image-url)
**Question 3**  What is your household’s total annual income?

It's okay to guess. Your household includes yourself, partner/spouse or family members living with you, and roommates.

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<th>Owners (804) and renters (142)</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Respondents reported a wide range of annual household incomes. Owner respondents generally have higher incomes than renter respondents. For reference, the 2020 Median Household Income in Anacortes reported by the ACS was $74,161. About 59% of owners report their households have an income of at least $80,000 per year. About 76% of renters report their households earn less than $80,000 per year.
Question 4 | Approximately what percent of total/gross annual income does your household pay for your home?  
It’s okay to guess. This includes rent or mortgage payments, HOA fees, property taxes, and utilities (water, sewer, etc.).

| Survey version | Online and paper |
| Survey version | Online and paper |
| Respondents    | Owners (808) and renters (143) |

“Cost burden” is a measure of how many households pay more than 30% of their annual income on housing.

Over 70% of renters report being cost burdened by housing, with nearly a third being extremely cost burdened (paying more than half their household income on housing). Only 24% of owners report being cost burdened.
3.3 – Housing Stability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5</th>
<th>If you experience a major unexpected financial event like a job loss, large medical bill, or a partner passing away, would you be worried about being able to stay in your current home?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Owners (538) and renters (111)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly nine in ten renters report being at risk of losing their home from a major unexpected financial event. A little more than one-third of owners report the same risk.
**Question 6**  
Considering the next five years of your life, do any of the following issues concern you about the security and stability of your housing situation?  
Select all that apply or select “none of these apply”. You can also consider your response with respect to your next major life stage, such as graduating from school, marriage, having children, retiring, etc.

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Over 60% of owners said they are feeling secure about their housing situation. About 20% said they are concerned about their income not keeping up with the costs of housing, and 15% said a spouse/partner is nearing retirement age and will soon be on a fixed income. Few owners reported other housing stability concerns.

Renters are feeling much less stable. Three-quarters of renters said they are interested in homeownership but are concerned about being financially able to do so, and similarly 69% of renters are concerned about their income not keeping up with the costs of housing. About 16% of renters are concerned their home is not big enough and 13% of renters reported neighborhood nuisances being an issue.

Combined, only 2% of respondents are concerned about their home being too big for what they can afford and needing to downsize. This relates to question #13, where many respondents said that size is a key feature they look for in a home.
Question 7
Do you or any of your closest family or friends share any of the following concerns about these costs of living and service issues in Anacortes? Select all that apply.

Survey version
Online only

Respondents
All respondents (659)

Housing relates to other economic, service, medical, and transportation issues. The top three concerns did not differ significantly between owners and renters, and overall were:

- 63% of respondents said they or close family and friends are concerned about businesses struggling to recruit employees who can afford to live in the city.
- 38% are concerned about the availability of medical care in town
- 36% of respondents are concerned that assisted living is either expensive or unavailable in town

Notably, these top three concerns all relate to employment and economic development.

The remaining concerns closely followed, with about a third of respondents being concerned with:

- Limited availability of shelter and services for homeless people
- Expensive or unavailable day care
- Housing prices forcing people into a long commute from outside Anacortes
- Limited public transit service

About 92 people selected the “other” option for this question to provide written answers. Full comments are available in Appendix A.1. These are summarized as follows.

- Healthcare providers and home caregivers are not accepting new patients due to lack of staff
- Property taxes are high and keep increasing, which affects everyone
• Sales tax revenues are leaking to other communities, capturing that funding could help fund improvements locally
• The town's housing appears to cater to the wealthy. Young families cannot afford to move here and there are no "starter homes."
• Need more affordable and smaller homes, especially for seniors who can no longer maintain their homes
• Lack of housing options for singles and families experiencing homelessness
• Parking and traffic are problems with a growing population
• Some concerns about crime and discrimination
3.4 – Housing Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 8</th>
<th>Do you have a housing story to tell?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (411)</td>
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</table>

Hundreds of housing stories were submitted. A full listing is available in Appendix B.

Overview
The stories range from a simple recounting of why people moved to Anacortes, concerns about growth and the town’s character, and emotional calls for action after seeing friends and family struggle with housing costs. One key theme that also emerges is the definition of Anacortes’s small town charm and what is at risk: some people think charm comes from the people and society of Anacortes, while others think the charm comes from the built environment of Anacortes.

Many homeowners are concerned about the increased cost of maintaining their home and the cost of property taxes, and are interested in downsizing, but are not seeing options in the market that work for them. Many renters are discouraged at any prospect of homeownership and described large and sudden rent increases in recent years. There were many stories shared of living with parents, people working multiple jobs and still struggling to afford the rent, and poorly maintained rental units.

Renter Stories
Many renters are feeling the pinch of increasing rent prices and are feeling pressure to move out of town for more affordable housing. Many renters also mentioned they are renting in single-family homes, rather than apartments, and seem to be at greater risk of displacement compared to apartment buildings when landlords sell the homes or a family member needs to move in. Renters also feel they are legitimate members of the community yet are looked down upon for not owning property.

A renter named John said: “I’ve lived in Anacortes nearly my entire life (since 88). Housing is a constant issue for people my age and younger. The most discouraging thing is seeing my friends and peers, many of whom are creatives, artists, small business owners and entrepreneurs, leave Anacortes because of the cost of living. When the vast majority of people owning and buying homes are wealthy retirees relocating and investors looking to rent out property (at insane prices), it’s only a matter of time before Anacortes completely loses its charm.”

A renting grandparent said: “It is almost impossible to find a decent home to rent. If my landlord decides to sell the home I am in, I would not be able to find a home to live in, especially in the area I am currently in where I provide help getting my grandson to and from the local school while his parents work.”

A renter named Mary said, “I rent because I don’t want to own a house. I’m stable economically and I contribute to the town by volunteering and participating, but I often feel looked down on or less than because I don’t own a home. The downside to renting is uncertainty. If my landlords sell my place or raise my rent, it is a really big problem, much bigger than it would have been in the
past. It is now incredibly stressful to try and find another place in Anacortes that is close to affordable (and accepts pets).”

The below word cloud was generated using all of the renter’s housing stories.

**Homeowner Stories**

Homeowners frequently said they feel lucky, fortunate, or grateful to have purchased a home when they did, acknowledging that they could not afford current prices. One person named Darren said, “I am lucky to have come to Anacortes when it was affordable. I don’t see how people do it now-except for those with independent wealth and or retirement.”

A homeowner named Adam said: “We were able to purchase our house in 2016 for $350,000, and as of last month, our home is now estimated at being worth $720,000. There is no way we would have been able to purchase our house two years after we purchased it. It’s also worth noting, we’ve had several friends either sell their house or are putting offers to purchase homes where the winning bid will be $40,000+ over the asking price and waving inspections.”

Another homeowner named Heather said: “Anacortes has changed significantly since I moved here. We are losing our working class residents because they can’t afford to live here. Students regularly leave our schools because their families can’t afford rent. My friends in their 30’s have long commutes because they can’t buy here.”

The below word cloud was generated using all of the owner’s housing stories.
Family and Friends
Many people said their children would like to move to town to be closer with their parents or share caretaking responsibilities, but they cannot find affordable options. Some adult children still live with their parents. This anonymous story is typical of the situation: “My daughter moved out of state to afford housing, as did a close friend recently. My son and his family can’t afford to move here. I would like my children to live here, especially since I’m aging.” Similarly, Dennis shared, “My adult daughter with serious health concerns and her husband would like to move to Anacortes from Eastern Washington to be closer to me but cannot afford to buy a home here.”

A homeowner and empty nester named Anita said, “We love it here, but the only reason we can afford to stay is we don’t have a house payment. Our adult son just recently moved back to town and is currently living with us again. He would love to move out and get his own place, but can’t afford any of the rentals. Rent and home prices are through the roof and prevent people from living here.”

Renter Robert shared, “My brother just recently had to move his family out of town since his landlord raised their rent by $400. He has been trying to buy a house here in town for the last 3 years but everything has been beyond what his family could afford. He now has to commute from Sedro Woolley to work here in Anacortes.”

A homeowner named Chris said, “Church friends that are retired complain they can’t find housing they can afford in Anacortes and buy in Mt. Vernon. Other church members moved to Whidbey Island. Very frustrating to lose friends and church members due to cost of housing in Anacortes.”

Seniors and Assisted Living
Many older people said they are looking to downsize, have trouble maintaining their home, want a single-level or home, or wanted more assisted living options. Assisted living is also expensive and impacting housing choices.

A homeowner named Sandy said, “I wish we could leave this two story home with a yard for a one level with no yard work. Retirement type housing.” Another person named Susan shared, “I would like to grow old here. Keeping up a home in old age might be difficult. It would be good to know that there are small apartments with no stairs which provide some quiet, garden and safe pedestrian area as well as easy access to public transportation.” An anonymous commenter said, “I have a mom who is in assisted living and the cost is about $8,000 and her money is almost gone and I will probably need to mortgage my house to keep her in dementia care.”

Homelessness
Many respondents have been touched by the homeless crisis in Anacortes or are on the edge of it. For example, Dennis said, “Two elderly male friends we have were able to recently find low income housing here in town. They have housing now, but one of them was living in his car previously.” An anonymous renter said, “Housing is out of control in Anacortes. The last 3 times I had to move (due to rent increases or sale of property I was renting) if it were not for friends who had RVs I could live in on their property, I would have been homeless. I love Anacortes but cost of rent/mortgages are out of control, especially for low to mid-income people.”
A homeless service provider said, “I know a number of residents who lost (or fear losing) their residences due to inflation, rising rents and housing costs. These people have nowhere to go locally. There is no safety net. They lived here all or most of their lives. They would have no support group if they were to move somewhere else. Some have ended up living in their cars or “couch surfing”.” Some commenters were supportive of recent affordable housing projects, with one saying, “...I would be in favor of Anacortes continuing to support the Anacortes Family Center and the development of public housing.”

Growth Concerns
Other people are not as concerned about housing, saying the city doesn’t need to be welcoming and that not everyone has to be able to afford to live in Anacortes. A comment from one person said: “We need a balance now that limits growth. High rise buildings are not an acceptable answer. More people necessitates more public services which require more taxes which require increases in housing and rental costs. This is a vicious circle which I would like to see stopped.” Another respondent said, “We moved to Anacortes because it is a smallish town...Now buildings are getting higher and more commercialized looking. The small town atmosphere is disappearing.”

One commenter was typical of skeptics about more housing helping with affordability, saying, “Any decision making that involves providing an excess of affordable housing will be the first nail in the coffin in what Anacortes is NOW, putting in on the wrong path. In my entire friend and family circle in the town, we only have one person we know who’s needed help from The State. Excess housing brings us the worst society has to offer. I would immediately move out the moment you decide to start turning our city into Seattle.” Another said, “There are much cheaper places to live in this country than here with plenty of jobs and services available. I don’t feel that anyone has a right to live here if they cannot afford to do so and pull their weight as a taxpaying citizen.”

Employment and Businesses
Many comments tied housing issues to economic development and the labor market. Said one person, “Hopefully with all the development going on, there will soon be a store like Fred Meyers built in [the] Anacortes area so people can at least buy a pair of socks without going to Burlington.” For retail and service workers, the price of minimum wage has not been adequate for housing. A renter named Teresa said, “I have worked full time for the same employer for over twenty years in our community, however with the cost of living, my income hasn’t increased much with it. I feel like the majority of people who work for minimum wage are being priced out of this beautiful community.”

Medical services are particular issue and were frequently cited by respondents. Tiffany said, “The biggest challenge living in Anacortes has been finding available health services. To get an appointment as a new patient with a doctor is 8 months out, as a new patient with a dentist it’s 6 month out.” An anonymous person said, “My daughter completed her masters in nursing and is ready to contribute to the healthcare field locally, but can’t afford housing here.”

A business owner said, “I have lost 5 of my 19 employees in the past 8 months due to the inability to find affordable housing in town. Majority of move-in requirements (first/last/deposit) are
extremely challenging to pull together when average monthly rental even for a small apartment is over $1,400/month." Another business owner and renter said, "Many, many friends who have experience and interest in starting small businesses our town desperately needs have attempted to move here and find it simply impossible. Absolute lack of affordable rental options. We own a business in town and yet cannot afford to buy a house in town - if something happened to our housing situation, we'd be forced to take our historic Anacortes business elsewhere. It will not surprise me if, in a handful of years, town simply dries up because business owners/employees cannot afford to live anywhere near here. Density must increase around the town's core."

Renter and shipyard worker named Ryan shared, "We just found out that the landlord is planning to sell the home this summer...There are no rentals in the area that fit our needs for less than $3,000 plus utilities a month. This is unsustainable for our family so we are looking to move out of state. We would absolutely love to stay but the wages being paid in this area just aren't enough to justify the housing costs."

Calls to Action
One of the homeowners said: "We have seen that the only way to address homelessness permanently is to make more low and housing available. I strongly support building more apartments, condos, townhouses, and ADUs in all neighborhoods of Anacortes. Some could be designated for low-income residents, multifamily new construction in existing single family neighborhoods should have to meet strict design criterial including height restrictions to fit in aesthetically."

One renter said: "We have considered moving because the cost of living here is too high, as a young family there's little opportunity to root here and be financially secure. Landlord raised rent +$400 a month during the pandemic while my husband's boss cut his pay by 25% forcing us to find different work in order to pay the rent. Landlords should not be able to raise the rent to any amount they want."

Megan said, "We want affordable options for everyone more then we care about our home value going up more and more. We value living in an area in which teachers, servers, childcare providers, ALL people can afford to live here and have reliable options. This is what makes a community strong."

Christine said, "I see little that is affordable for working class families. This creates profound inequities for having a diverse population. I fear that Anacortes will become a rich white enclave like much of the coastal towns in the PNW. Anacortes is in great need of affordable housing!!"

A homeowner named Rob said, "Our home that we purchased in 2016 for $350k is now valued at an estimated $675k. While this is good for our value, I am deeply concerned about the door closing behind us, and others in similar situations not being able to live in this wonderful community and enjoy all it provided."
3.5 – Housing Types

For these three housing type questions, the answer choices were the same but the questions were different. The questions asked:

- What type of home do you currently live in?
- In the future, what types of homes would you consider or see yourself living in, assuming it met your price range and the needs of your family or household?
- If greater housing variety was proposed in Anacortes to help stabilize prices and create more options for people of varying income levels and family types, what types of homes would you be comfortable with seeing in your neighborhood?

The following graphic was provided to illustrate examples of some of the less common home types. The answer choices also had some parenthetical details to further explain each type, which are removed from the charts for brevity. These were:

- Single-family house on a small lot with a modest yard (the lot size is smaller than 5,000 square feet)
- Accessory dwelling unit (often designed as a mother-in-law suite, basement apartment, or backyard cottage)
- Cottage housing (small single-family homes clustered around a shared yard)
- Duplex or triplex (two or three attached homes)
- Townhouse (attached homes, usually with multiple floors)
- Supportive living residence (such as a group home, assisted living, or nursing home)
Question 10 | What type of home do you currently live in?
---|---
Survey version | Online only
Respondents | Owners (541) and renters (111)

Of the owner survey takers, 94% live in a single-family home. Renters live in a larger variety of housing: 48% live in single-family homes, 24% live in a multifamily building, 10% live in ADU’s, 9% live in a duplex or triplex, and 5% live in a townhouse.

The survey had an “other” option which was filled out by 17 people. Almost all of these other answers were also “single family house” with various qualities and lot size description, and so they are added to the overall counts in the chart. No survey takers report living in a supportive living residence (nursing home, assisted living facility, etc.).
Question 11: In the future, what types of homes would you consider or see yourself living in, assuming it met your price range and the needs of your family or household? Select all that apply.

Survey version: Online and paper
Respondents: Owners (790) and renters (141)

This question was intended to understand the demand for different housing types. This will be compared to the actual housing available and being built in Anacortes.

Both renters and homeowners have a strong interest in living in single-family houses. There is an especially strong interest by renters to live in a single-family house on a small lot (71%).

A variety of other homes are desired. Renters generally have more openness to living in different home types. Combined results of all survey takers:

- 15% would consider living in an ADU (with 19% of renters interested)
- 14% would consider living in a duplex or triplex (with 30% of renters interested)
- 26% would consider living in cottage housing (with 36% of renters interested)
- 14% would consider living in a townhouse (with 24% of renters interested)

A quarter of homeowners and one-third of renters are interested in multifamily homes (apartments or condominiums), with a stronger preference for smaller units of 1-2 bedrooms. Combined, 8% of all survey takers are interested in 3-bedroom multifamily units.

Overall, owners are five times as likely as renters to consider supportive living residences, which may speak to the age of homeowners. Relatedly, on the paper survey, which was mostly answered by retirees aged 60 or older, there was considerable interest in cottage housing, small condos, and supportive living residences. Written comments and stories from some seniors demonstrated a pattern that many have difficulty maintaining their own homes or paying for...
maintenance services. Many seniors reported seeing friends and family move away, which shrinks their social circle, and therefore may lead to a desire to live in more communal settings.

A total of 76 people selected the “other” option. Full comments are available in Appendix A.2. Several commenters said they do not plan to move and so would not consider any other housing types, and most answers are similar to the basic housing types listed above. There were additional mentions of tiny homes, work/live arrangements with shop space, multi-generational living, group living if required for health reasons, and sharing the cost of a duplex with friends.

**Question 12**

If greater housing variety was proposed in Anacortes to help stabilize prices and create more options for people of varying income levels and family types, what types of homes would you be comfortable with seeing in your neighborhood?

Select all that apply. Note: All new development in Anacortes is subject to requirements for building height, setbacks, parking spaces, environmental review, landscaping, architectural design, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (931)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question was intended to determine potential openness to zoning changes. Both sets of surveytakers indicated some level of comfort with seeing different housing types in their neighborhood. Renters were more open to variety than owners, but also had the stronger preference for seeing single-family homes on small lots. There was less support overall for multifamily buildings and supportive living residences.

Compare these results to Question #16 below.
### 3.6 – Amenities and Features

For this set of questions, respondents filled out matrices of housing features using a weighted 1 to 5 scale. Answers of “not sure” were weighted zero. The data here uses all respondents, rather than comparing owners and renters. There was little difference in the overall results between the two groups. The answer tables are shaded for quick reference as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
<th>&lt; 4.25</th>
<th>3.5 to 4.25</th>
<th>2.75 to 3.5</th>
<th>&gt; 2.75</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Question 13**  
How important are these amenity features for you when searching for housing? Please rate on a scale of 1-5.  
A 5 means the feature is very important, and 1 means the feature is not at all important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (701)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question was intended to determine how important key housing features are for people when searching for housing. The features listed are those commonly listed on real estate listings and the basic physical aspects of a home.

The most important item was finding housing in the respondents’ price range. The second most important was the home being large enough for the family or household. Appliances and heating/air conditioning also rated highly. Other private spaces for storage and recreation were fairly important.

The least important amenity feature was common space for residents. This is more likely to be located in townhouse or multifamily developments than the single-family developments that many survey takers said they are interested in with previous questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amenity Feature</th>
<th>Percentage Rating 4 or 5</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my price range</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large enough for my family or household (number of bedrooms and bathrooms)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-unit appliances like laundry and dishwasher</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air conditioning and heating</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private yard space</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage space</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other private space, such as a balcony, deck, or rooftop</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The building allows pets</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No stairs – the unit is either on the ground level or accessed by elevator</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common space for residents, like a courtyard, roof deck, or recreation room</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 14  How important are these location and transportation features for you when searching for housing? Please rate on a scale of 1-5.
A 5 means the feature is very important, and 1 means the feature is not at all important.

Survey version       Online only
Respondents          All respondents (703)

In this category, the top answer is housing located in a neighborhood that feels safe for active transportation (walking, rolling, and bicycling). Survey takers were also strongly interested in finding housing that has enough off-street parking.

The other location and transportation features were moderately important: the distance from the home to shopping, parks, and schools; having a secure place to park bikes at home; and having equipment to charge an electric vehicle at home.

The least important feature is housing that is located a short distance to work, but still valuable to nearly a third of respondents. This is consistent with 49% of survey takers being retired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location and Transportation Feature</th>
<th>Percentage Rating 4 or 5</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The neighborhood feels safe for walking, rolling, and bicycling</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enough off-street parking</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short distance to grocery stores and other services</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short distance to public parks and schools</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure place to park bikes</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment for electric vehicle charging</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short distance to work</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 15

After housing, transportation is often the second largest share of household costs. If the following transportation options were practical and available to you, how likely would you use them to spend less on transportation? Please rate on a scale of 1-5. A 5 means you would definitely use the option, and a 1 means you would never use the option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (703)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this question, the top answer was “More safe sidewalks connecting my neighborhood to the rest of town.” Far behind, the second top answer was safe bicycling routes. This is consistent with the top result of Question 14 which favors housing in neighborhoods that are safe for active transportation.

There is moderate interest in transportation options like driving electric vehicles and working from home. There was relatively low but still noticeable interest (with at least a quarter to a third of respondents interested) in electric bikes, downsizing the number of vehicles in the household, and riding transit. There was very little interested in using car-share or ride-share/taxi services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Option</th>
<th>Percentage Rating 4 or 5</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More safe sidewalks connecting my neighborhood to the rest of town</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More safe bicycling routes connecting my neighborhood to the rest of town</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving an electric car to save on gas costs</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working from home/telecommuting</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using an electric bike (for distances, hills, or carrying needs)</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling a car or downsizing to a one-car household</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More bus service connecting to my job, school, shopping, or other services</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car-share or ride-share/taxi services in town</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 – Housing Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 16</th>
<th>If you heard about a new multi-floor apartment project planned in or near your neighborhood with rents affordable to people like recent college graduates, teachers, nurses, restaurant workers, mechanics, etc., would you support or oppose the project?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (651)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question was intended to gauge the level of community support or opposition for new multifamily housing construction in general. It is related to Question #12 above.

Combined, 61% of survey takers would strongly or somewhat support the hypothetical project. There was greater support among renters (80%) than homeowners (57%).

One in four respondents would strongly or somewhat oppose the hypothetical project. There was greater opposition among homeowners (28%) than renters (6%).

About 14% of total survey takers were “not sure” how to respond and may need more information.

The next question asked respondents to explain their answers.
Question 17 | Thinking about the previous question, why did you choose that answer?
What are your hopes and concerns with new housing construction, especially multi-floor housing that could be affordable to people with moderate incomes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>By Question 16 answer choice (535 answers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hundreds of answers were submitted. A full listing is available in Appendix C. A summary follows, sorted by the answer choices from Question 16.

**Strongly Support**
There were 204 comments. People who strongly supported the concept said Anacortes urgently needs more affordable and sustainable housing to support its residents and a more resilient workforce. There was acknowledgement that not much land is left for new houses, so building up is one of the only remaining solutions to add housing. Many respondents shared a concern that Anacortes is becoming an exclusive retirement community.

Along with families in general, people working in services, public safety, education, and retail were specifically mentioned as needing this type of housing. It was frequently said that people who work in Anacortes should be able to live in the city. Several stories were shared of respondents or their colleagues commuting 30 minutes or more into the city, people living in motels, and young adults living with their parents. A link was also made back to the local economy, with some respondents saying younger apartment dwellers are more likely to be out meeting friends and spending money in the community at bars, restaurants, and local shops.

Some commenters suggested that Anacortes cannot thrive unless it is welcoming to a wide spectrum of family incomes and that the community cannot only be a place for older people and wealthy people. Connections were made between multifamily housing and how it supports residents with a diversity of age, race, and life experiences. Many comments said more options are simply needed for people are renting and some said the city has too many large single-family homes. Some commenters also mentioned how this type of housing can help single parents or recent divorcees, along with retirees who are aging, who cannot afford to maintain a large house by themselves.

Several people said that multi-floor housing is desirable in the right places or with appropriate design, and that it can be more environmentally sustainable by providing smaller homes closer to jobs. Specific design mitigations mentioned are landscaping, tree planting, private open space for residents, view protection, pedestrian pathways, and building separation. There was some concern about out-of-scale buildings and "boxy" aesthetics. Several commenters mentioned a desire to avoid large areas of surface parking.

Some people also were concerned about the actual affordability levels of the hypothetical project, a few wondered about financial incentives for developers. There were also several commenters advising anticipation of community opposition to this type of new housing.
Somewhat Support
There were 117 comments. These commenters were generally supportive and said more housing and affordable housing is essential to breathe new life into the community and to support everyone, but some would be wary of how the hypothetical project is implemented. Some commenters questioned the premise and said they are more interested in seeing other housing types like duplexes, cottages, ADU’s, and townhouses throughout Anacortes. The project’s location and size are important factors and many people would want more details.

Some said the project would work best in the central business district, the Commercial Avenue corridor, the waterfront industrial areas, or near the ferry terminal. Some commenters outside the center of town (many identifying themselves as living in Old Town or Skyline) said their neighborhoods would not be appropriate for this type of project, nor would young people want to live there. Others were supportive of new multifamily housing and say it is highly needed, but at the same time may be skeptical the homes are not truly affordable or that the residents would not go through a safety screening process for criminal history or behavioral health issues.

Other commenters may be comfortable seeing this type of building in their neighborhood but would want nuisance impacts addressed. Numerous comments said they would be supportive if new buildings don’t block their views of the water and mountains or block sunlight into their yard. There was some concern that apartments themselves can be noisy or cheaply built, too small, and have little private space. Many commenters said the building should be appropriately scaled for the neighborhood and rental properties should have adequate maintenance standards to keep up appearances. There was modest concern that poorly maintained multifamily housing lowers the value of nearby homes.

Externally, there were some concerns about traffic, though other respondents said this type of housing can work well with the appropriate road infrastructure, public transit, and off-street parking. There were desires for new neighbors to be respectful and engaging with the existing community, and concerns of increased noise from cars, residents, parties, and dogs.

Not Sure
There were 73 comments. Generally, these commenters said they would need to see the project design, size, and location before forming an opinion, and could be supportive but were also worried about the physical and social impacts of new housing in existing neighborhoods. Parking and traffic were key concerns. There was also an interest in seeing greater housing diversity than Anacortes currently has, e.g. more attached and mixed-income housing.

Suggested areas for this type of project are Downtown, the R and T Avenue corridors, Storvik Park, and View Ridge. Some said their specific neighborhood would not have room for the hypothetical project or that there is inadequate public transportation and grocery store access in their neighborhood to support multifamily housing. Relatedly, many commenters said they suspected wealthy neighbors would vigorously oppose any project that lets moderate-income people live nearby. Some commenters would be supportive in general, especially if the project used vacant land and if new buildings don’t block their views of the water and mountains or
block sunlight into their yard, but might be opposed if it required tearing down existing single-family homes.

Some were concerned about the small town charm of Anacortes being impacted by such a project, especially if it were excessively tall, not designed to architecturally fit in to the neighborhood, brought excessive traffic, or caused the loss of natural areas. Some respondents would want to ensure the new building has adequate off-street parking and recreation space for residents before being supportive. The specific Fidalgo Flats project was mentioned several times for its height and location adjacent to single-family homes. There were also questions about whether the appropriate infrastructure is in place to support multifamily housing (water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, roads, public transit, etc.).

Somewhat Oppose
There were 54 comments. Many people cited concerns about higher population density which is associated with increased traffic and congestion, and a perception that apartments do not provide enough parking for residents. Several commenters said parts of the city do not have adequate sidewalks and bicycling paths to support this type of housing.

Suggested areas for this type of project are Downtown and within a couple blocks of Commercial Avenue. Some said their specific neighborhood is too far from the city center and public transit to support this type of housing. Some people cited their HOA rules that prohibit the hypothetical project. Many commenters said they want to preserve the quietness and low traffic in their neighborhood, and they moved to their neighborhood because it only had single-family homes.

Several commenters expressed fears of higher property taxes to subsidize moderate- or low-income housing and lower property values caused by the construction of new housing. Some respondents said that not everyone deserves to live in Anacortes just because they want to and they worked hard to buy a place in the city.

Some commenters have a preference for more ownership opportunities instead of rentals. Similarly, some commenters said there is plenty of new multifamily development happening but the rents are still not affordable to the example demographic. Others were convinced that new multifamily housing would be used exclusively for short-term rentals or vacation rentals instead of helping existing residents find housing.

Some commenters mentioned environmental and aesthetic impacts, especially if a single-family home is demolished and the materials are not reused, or if a large building is built on a hillside that requires extensive grading and tree removal. Many commenters said they want to avoid losing their views of the water and mountains. Quality of design was also an issue, with commenters being opposed to buildings designed like boxes or prisons.

Strongly Oppose
There were 87 comments. Generally, these commenters are worried about population growth, decrease in livability, ugly buildings, and prefer their own neighborhoods to remain exclusive. Many cited their HOA rules that prohibit the hypothetical project. Several comments say the government should not be involved in housing and to let the free market handle it.
Many commenters suggested a link between high-density housing and low-income housing with increases in crime, drug use, and traffic. There were also skeptical remarks about rental housing's lack of property upkeep and drawing in undesirable people. Several commenters said multifamily housing draws in outsiders to enjoy the low costs of the city without contributing back to the community. Some respondents said that Anacortes has sufficient housing already and not everyone deserves to live in Anacortes just because they want to, as the respondents worked hard to buy a place in the city. There was pushback on the examples in the question, saying that teachers, nurses, and mechanics make good money.

There is a strong concern that Anacortes is losing the small town feel that people have moved here for. There is a desire for new housing to match the existing neighborhood it is built in, and a conviction that multi-floor housing ruins the aesthetic of Anacortes. Many commenters stated that single-family residential areas should not change, or that the entire city should not change. Some respondents say Anacortes does not need to turn into an apartment community (often referencing Seattle) and it is acceptable for people to commute into town.

Suggested areas for this type of project are the commercial areas, eastern Anacortes, and March Point. Many commenters said they live in Old Town where this type of new housing would be inappropriate. There were questions about whether the transportation and utility infrastructure is in place to support multifamily housing.
3.8 – Concepts Evaluation
This question was intended to gauge the level of community support or opposition for land use, program, and funding concepts. The answers were weighted as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly support</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat support</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/need more information</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat oppose</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly oppose</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 18
The following is a list of land use and zoning concepts that could be considered in the Housing Action Plan to help stabilize housing prices and improve access to housing in Anacortes. Do you support or oppose these concepts?

Survey version  
Online only

Respondents  
Owners (537) and renters (110)

The charts below compare owner and renter response and are listed in order of the weighted average scores from high to low (for all respondents), which is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use and Zoning Concepts</th>
<th>Percentage Support</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow more housing types like duplexes, cottages, and townhouses in single-family neighborhoods if they’re compatibly sized and designed</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relax restrictions on accessory dwelling units to encourage more to be built</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow more housing on land owned by religious organizations and non-profit housing providers</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced minimum lot sizes for “middle housing” like duplexes and townhomes</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modest increase in building height limits (1-2 floors) in multifamily and/or commercial areas</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modest decrease in parking requirements for some types of housing</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bar charts below break down the support by owners and renters. Renters are generally more supportive of the concepts. The strongest support overall is for allowing more housing types in single-family neighborhoods and relaxing restrictions on accessory dwelling units, with both renters and owners saying they support those concepts by large margins. There was moderate support for the other concepts. The most opposed and uncertain concept among all respondents is “modest decrease in parking requirements for some types of housing.”

With any concept some level of public outreach and education may be needed, demonstrated with the large shares of people who are not sure or need more information.
Allow more housing types like duplexes, cottages, and townhouses in single-family neighborhoods if they're compatibly sized and designed

- Renters: 55% Strongly support, 26% Somewhat support, 15% Not sure/need more information
- Owners: 39% Strongly support, 30% Somewhat support, 8% Not sure/need more information

Relax restrictions on accessory dwelling units to encourage more to be built

- Renters: 49% Strongly support, 19% Somewhat support, 27% Not sure/need more information
- Owners: 33% Strongly support, 30% Somewhat support, 9% Not sure/need more information

Allow more housing on land owned by religious organizations and non-profit housing providers

- Renters: 39% Strongly support, 19% Somewhat support, 35% Not sure/need more information
- Owners: 25% Strongly support, 22% Somewhat support, 36% Not sure/need more information

Reduced minimum lot sizes for “middle housing” like duplexes and townhomes

- Renters: 30% Strongly support, 25% Somewhat support, 37% Not sure/need more information
- Owners: 25% Strongly support, 28% Somewhat support, 24% Not sure/need more information
Modest increase in building height limits (1-2 floors) in multifamily and/or commercial areas

- Renters: 42% for 23%, 23% for 6%, 6%
- Owners: 29% for 25%, 19% for 10%, 17%

Modest decrease in parking requirements for some types of housing

- Renters: 15% for 28%, 43% for 11%, 4%
- Owners: 11% for 23%, 28% for 17%, 20%
**Question 19** The following is a list of policy and program concepts that could be considered in the Housing Action Plan to help low-moderate income people in Anacortes. Do you support or oppose these concepts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Owners (535) and renters (111)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The charts below compare owner and renter response and are listed in order of the weighted average scores from high to low (for all respondents), which is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy and Program Concepts</th>
<th>Percentage Support</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incentives for private housing projects to reserve some units for low-income households</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stronger renter protections such as more notice time for rent increases or options to manage move-in fees</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire a city housing coordinator to assist renters and support local homeless services</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten regulations on vacation rentals to discourage the use of regular housing for tourists</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for private housing projects to reserve some units for low-income households</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably, the two concepts for either “incentives” or “requirements” for private housing projects to reserve some units for low-income housing scored oppositely. The “incentives” approach was the most supported in this category while the “requirements” approach was the most opposed – thought the requirements approach was still highly supported by renters (74%).

All the concepts scored relatively moderately when viewed overall, but when broken down renters were strongly supportive of most concepts.
Stronger renter protections such as more notice time for rent increases or options to manage move-in fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renters</th>
<th>Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hire a city housing coordinator to assist renters and support local homeless services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renters</th>
<th>Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tighten regulations on vacation rentals to discourage the use of regular housing for tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renters</th>
<th>Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements for private housing projects to reserve some units for low-income households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renters</th>
<th>Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 20 The following is a list of funding concepts that could be considered in the Housing Action Plan. Do you support or oppose these concepts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Owners (537) and renters (111)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The charts below compare owner and renter response and are listed in order of the weighted average scores from high to low (for all respondents), which is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Concepts</th>
<th>Percentage Support</th>
<th>Weighted Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City advocacy for more county, state, or federal funding for affordable housing projects</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional funding for public transit to help people access jobs and services without a car</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct and/or temporary rental payment assistance for those most in need</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assistance to help single-family homeowners build accessory dwelling units</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A citywide property tax levy to fund affordable housing</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, there is strong support for the City to advocate for more funding from its government partners for affordable housing projects. There is also support for increasing the amount of public transit funding to help people access jobs and services with cars. There is moderate support for the concept of direct rental payment assistance, with renters more supportive than owners. There is more uncertainty with the concepts to provide financial assistance for homeowners to build accessory dwelling units, and considerable opposition to the idea of an affordable housing property tax levy.
Additional funding for public transit to help people access jobs and services without a car

Renters
- 42%
- 28%
- 25%
- 3%

Owners
- 31%
- 35%
- 19%
- 7%
- 8%

Direct and/or temporary rental payment assistance for those most in need

Renters
- 45%
- 29%
- 19%
- 4%

Owners
- 24%
- 29%
- 27%
- 8%
- 12%

Financial assistance to help single-family homeowners build accessory dwelling units

Renters
- 40%
- 14%
- 36%
- 5%

Owners
- 18%
- 22%
- 30%
- 12%
- 18%

A citywide property tax levy to fund affordable housing

Renters
- 28%
- 23%
- 28%
- 8%
- 13%

Owners
- 14%
- 16%
- 23%
- 14%
- 33%
3.9 – Demographic Information

This section of the survey emphasized that answers are voluntary (as are all questions on the survey) and are only used to determine if the City is reaching a representative population.

NOTE: Housing tenure is listed at the beginning of the survey summary under the Housing Information section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 22</th>
<th>Do you live in a subsidized or rent-restricted home?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For example, a home managed by the Anacortes Housing Authority or similar housing agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (681)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the respondents who answered, 11 said they live in a subsidized or rent-restricted home. This is about 1.6% of respondents. While not directly comparable, for reference about 4.4% of housing units in Anacortes are subsidized or rent-restricted homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 23</th>
<th>What is your race?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select all that apply. All questions on this page are optional and help the City of Anacortes understand if its public engagement methods are reaching a representative population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (981)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey captured a representative population in terms of race. For example, 10% of respondents identified as non-white and about 11% of the population is non-white. Of the respondents who answered, 46 or 4.7% provided “other” answers that are mostly invalid, and are excluded from the chart below.

- White: 90%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 3%
- Asian: 3%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 3%
- Black or African American: 1%
Question 24  | What languages do you primarily speak at home?
--- | ---
Survey version | Online only
Respondents | All respondents (655)

Of the respondents who answered, 98.9% primarily speak English at home and 1.7% primarily speak Spanish at home. This is representative of the population, where 1.9% primarily speak Spanish at home. Other survey answers include French, Afrikaans, Mandarin, German, and Italian.

Question 25  | Do you have any permanent physical disabilities that make it difficult to use your home?
--- | ---
Survey version | Online only
Respondents | All respondents (668)

Of the respondents who answered, 6.3% report having a permanent physical disability that makes it difficult to use their home. This compares with the 7.4% of the Anacortes population with an ambulatory difficulty according to the 2020 ACS. Additionally, 2.6% of the Anacortes population reported a self-care difficulty on the ACS. Notably, the paper survey did not have this question, and the paper survey was likely answered by an older group of people.

Question 26  | Which of these describe the makeup of your family or household? Select all that apply.
--- | ---
Survey version | Online only
Respondents | All respondents (672)

Owners are most likely to live with a partner or spouse at nearly 80%, higher than the 2020 ACS-reported share of Anacortes ownership households living with a partner or spouse, which is 63%. Renters are more likely to live with children and the total share of survey respondents living with children is about 29%, similar to 2020 ACS data. Only a handful of respondents live with multiple generations such as grandparents or grandchildren and even less live with unrelated roommates. A sizeable number of respondents live with pets.
### Question 27
**How many people of these age ranges live in your household?**
Include yourself. Skip the age ranges that do not apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey version</th>
<th>Online only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (667)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey respondents represent a fairly even spread of age ranges. The households of online survey respondents skew somewhat older than the Anacortes population. Most survey takers reside in two-person households above the age of 30. Younger people are more likely to live in larger households.

There is one anomaly in the data, with a large number of respondents saying they live with under-5-year olds despite only 28% of people saying they live with children on the previous question. This may be the result of participants misunderstanding the question format.
**Question** | What is your age?
---|---
Survey version | Paper only
Respondents | All respondents (308)

The paper survey formatted the age question in a different way, hence this additional age information. The paper survey respondents skew older than those who complete the online survey.

![Age Distribution Graph]

**Question 28** | What is your home 5-digit zipcode?
---|---
Survey version | Online only
Respondents | All respondents (672)

93% of respondents report living in the 98221 zipcode which includes the entire Anacortes city limits. This is consistent with Question 1 in the Housing Information section where 93% of respondents report living in the city limits.

The other 7% of respondents likely represent the survey takers who live outside the city but work in the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zipcode</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98221</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>Anacortes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98277</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>Northern Whidbey Island and Oak Harbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98273</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>Western Skagit County and Mount Vernon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98233</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>Northern Skagit County and Burlington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98284</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>Eastern Skagit County and Sedro Wooley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98274</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>Southern Skagit County and Mount Vernon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98225</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>Bellingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98257</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>Western Skagit County and La Conner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98222</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>San Juan Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98229</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>Bellingham area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98226</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>Bellingham area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.10 – Outreach Information

The online survey was hosted on SurveyMonkey and went live on June 27, 2022, and closed on July 31. The link to the survey was formally distributed by:

- The email list of the City Council’s Housing Affordability and Community Services (HACS) committee
- An email to the interviewed HAP stakeholders
- A post on the Facebook page of the Anacortes Planning, Community, and Economic Development Department
- A news flash on the City of Anacortes website
- An update on the project webpage

It took an average of 15 minutes to complete the online survey. Of the local respondents, 91% fully completed the survey meaning they viewed and/or responded to all questions.

The paper survey was distributed in the bi-monthly City utility bills that went out the week of July 4th and copies were also made available at community hubs. Directions were provided on how to return it to city hall. It consisted of a single two-sided page with a subset of the questions from the online survey. It also had a QR code (which was scanned 103 times) and a short weblink, encouraging people to take the full survey online. Answers from the paper survey were digitized with manual entry on SurveyMonkey.

Both survey versions provided the offer of Spanish translation and no participants requested it.
Survey Appendix A – Written Comments for “Other” Answers

Appendix A.1 – Question 7 “Other” Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 7</th>
<th>Do you or any of your closest family or friends share any of the following concerns about these costs of living and service issues in Anacortes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
<td>Online only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>All respondents (659)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Incomplete answers are removed. Answers may be lightly edited for spelling or to remove offensive content.

- Caregivers for disabled or elderly cannot afford to live here
- High density housing will cause crowding, traffic and decreased quality of life in town.
- affordable rental for when I can no longer maintain my home by myself.
- due to lack of staff/doctors, many healthcare providers are not accepting new patients
- Our out of town family cannot afford to move near us
- The homeless and addicted are lowering our quality of life here.
- Property taxes are so high and just keep increasing
- Insufficient single floor homes for retired to purchase.
- Skagit County/Anacortes Taxes are forcing me to move away
- Affordable housing for senior citizens.
- increased property taxes
- Not enough low income housing is being built in Anacortes.
- Need for strong police services
- Comfortable and at peace
- Decision to add density though building height rather than expanding city boundaries, not supported by NIMBY actions of citizens.
- Too much low income housing is being built and will result in increased crime.
- GENTIFICATION
- I just moved to Anacortes a few weeks ago, so it is too early to tell
- I wish our elected city officials would put into effect a limited growth policy such as exists in Boulder City, NV
- Parking is a problem because of the number of drivers / people that live in the area.
- Rising property taxes due to housing values are becoming a burden as well as the levies that continue to be passed.
- There are very few move in ready 1200-1500 sf houses under 500k for seniors to down size to.
- cannot afford a home here
- Families cannot afford to move here, I'm concerned that finding good teacher, healthcare workers etc. will be impacted further from the cost of homes.
- Friends have lived in Anacortes for decades-so stable.
- Make public transit more frequent and economical (free like Island County) so people have more housing options even if distant.
• Young adult children cannot afford expensive rent!
• People are getting taxed out of their homes, but people can park in front of their homes and live tax free.
• Housing prices are forcing out young families.
• Property taxes keep going up steeply and we've been paying them our entire lives.
• I'm on a fixed income and inflation has really had a negative impact on me.
• Property prices are skyrocketing and homes that were paid off years ago are now being hit with large property taxes. How will one keep up on a fixed income?
• No comment.
• New construction is primarily large homes for retired people. There should be a moratorium on large home construction for low occupancy rates.
• Taxes are getting to be way too high.
• Housing is too expensive for young families.
• I own wetlands along with the 39 other homeowners in my neighborhood. I cannot sell without disclosing that EPA has found a problem with fiber optic in city water pipes and wetlands.
• It is becoming a haven for only those who have considerable amounts of money.
• City infrastructure can’t keep up with the rate of population growth. Yet it’s the city that loosened development restrictions. What’s the plan for the town to ensure all the new residents?
• Loss to our IRA’s Value if the Market Tanks in a Major Recession.
• My husband worked at Everett Boeing for 35 years.
• My employer cannot pay new recruits enough to afford to purchase housing.
• Cost of living keeps going up and getting hard to live on a fixed income.
• One Fred Meyer’s type store and better network of walking and cycling routes.
• Cost of services are higher than anywhere we have lived in the USA (CT, TX, CA, FL).
• Not enough help for low income seniors to stay in their homes, or find affordable housing in town.
• Prices too high. Fixed income people can’t afford it. Multi houses are going up but none for housing authority.
• High cost of food and gas.
• Our small garbage/recycling bins are too large; the fees unfairly high for a one person household. Perhaps instead recycling should be reduced/discontinued given the lack of world demand. One less bin would also reduce unsightly street clutter.
• Losing high percentage of staff due to rising cost of commute and/or inability to afford to live in town.
• Increasing property taxes.
• Government treating homeowners as their piggybank for nearly anything they want.
• Grocery availability & pricing.
• Our Mayor and council should be addressing the sales tax leakage. We send so much money to other communities. Capture that and use for all kinds of City improvements. Also, stop granting any kind of development bonuses for ‘affordable housing’. If it’s not enforceable and restricted for 10 years or...
only reasonably wealthy people can buy even fixer-uppers here now.
I have a concern that a derelict RV parked by my home can't be towed or forced to leave. Unsafe for kids to play and unsanitary
can't pay all expenses to live here
My Daughters family had to move out of Anacortes because there was nothing to rent that was affordable. Also having pets keep you out of a lot of homes
none
Over development - impact on infrastructure and loss of open spaces
The large diesel bus that run 12 times daily has no passengers. We need to get a much smaller van that doesn't pollute so much. Skagit transit needs to figure out a more efficient way of transporting 1 or 2 people from Skyline to Safeway
La Conner and Anacortes both cater to wealthy retirees rather than provide opportunities for young people to stay.
Handouts for the permanent underclass while the middle class suffer.
Public Transportation may be underutilized. The 409 and 410 that go by my house are often empty.
Not being affordable to be able to live in the town we grew up in and having to move other places.
I lived in Anacortes and could not afford to buy so I had to buy outside of Anacortes and I have to commute now to work.
no housing for homeless single me or couples without children. Anacortes Family Center provides services for those with children. Urgent need for affordable rental and housing for our working population who are low to moderate income.
Too much growth, more crime.
I am not sure if Anacortes is a safe place to live as member of the LGBTQIAA community.
Inadequate parking. Allow people too long to park next to a residence they don't reside in.
Laws may be passed that restrict the ability of my home to increase in value.
I will not be retiring in the Anacortes area or greater area
Taxes are extremely harmful
No starter income type housing and lack of jobs mean young people who might want to move here can't afford to work or live here.
Council too afraid to make the necessary difficult decisions to
Focus for decades has been on supplying housing for the wealthier sector without building in requirements for supply of affordable housing. Now we are stuck with the demographics we have and no affordability for lower income families
Anacortes is becoming a playground for yacht people. Hard for regular folks to find and maintain housing.
We've seen investors buy into our neighborhood and immediately turn around and charge a huge rent that working wage families can't afford.
worried about the aging population experiencing difficulties, and also starter families being unable to afford housing here
• Don’t like the homeless being allowed to live in public areas and on the streets of Anacortes
• An increase in the number of homeless people or those parking their RV’s in neighborhoods.
• No group homes or family homes for those with mental disabilities
• There are not enough affordable condos or townhouses for those who do not need or wish to live in a single family residence
• A Place for RV homes to park off the street
• Homeless individuals living in vehicles on public streets
• Born and raised in Anacortes and the cost of housing has pushed me and my grown children to buy off island.
• I am concerned about homeless people from other areas coming to Anacortes and expecting services
• property taxes way to high
• Not everyone can afford to live on our island, that is life. For many years, I could not either and worked hard to achieve that goal.
### Appendix A.2 – Question 11 “Other” Answers

| Question 11 | In the future, what types of homes would you consider or see yourself living in, assuming it met your price range and the needs of your family or household? Select all that apply.
| Survey version       | Online and paper |
| Respondents          | All respondents (931) |

- coop housing w/ garden
- a tiny home
- single ground level with 3 bedrooms
- home with garage
- one I am in now
- single level
- don't plan on moving again
- mobile home townhouse w/ garden
- stay in my home
- stay in my home
- no plans to move
- hope to stay in home
- apt for low income
- single story small yard private
- acreage rural
- I plan to remain in my own home as long as possible
- Condominium with 1 or 2 bedrooms
- Possible Assisted Living
- I will die here in this house, I can't afford to move
- Co-housing
- Stay in home with live-in caregiver
- Group of tiny or small homes in supportive commune/community
- Smaller home with acreage
- happy where we are.
- Single family, single storied home on modest lot w/small yard
- Don't see moving
- I don't plan on moving.
- Assisted
- We would be able to buy a duplex with a friend if we each paid around 300k
- Continuing care community, independent living thru nursing home.
- Single-family home on medium size lot
- Staying put with help; our house is not big enough for live in help.
- Retirement housing
- We would not move
- Until Death: Our Single-family home where we currently reside.
- Want to stay were we are at, but the taxes could not make that possible soon
- Multi generational community living
- More rural 1 ac.+ & more hands-off govt.
- Small house on a half acre to one acre with separate shop building.
- Studio apt, senior dorms, Golden Girls type housing
- and renting out part of my small home to a roommate
- Not planning to move
- A smaller house. We are two seniors in a 3,200 sq ft house
- Next home likely Assisted Living, hopefully many years from now.
- I hope to live here until I die
- We do not plan on selling or moving ever.
- This doesn't apply to me. Our home will be paid off before I retire
- not moving
- Condo
- Work / Live Loft (large shop with small living space)
- Single Family Home in the Country out of this area
- Tiny homes
- I prefer not living in over crowded areas with plenty of parking and privacy
- Co-housing
- Don't plan to move ever again.
- Group living only if required by declining health
- Single level living with small patio as I age
- multi family home with one of my grown children to care for me
- Wife and I built this house & I don't want to move.
- The above apply for when our kids move away
- No plans to move
- Yards are important, shared yards aren't good for family's with kids, to many weirdos
- Anything affordable
- Tiny Home Park
- I don't consider moving
- one level 2 bedroom 2 bath condo
- Tiny home
- Row house with private back garden like Europe.
- Accessible! cottage housing
Survey Appendix B – Housing Stories

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<th>Do you have a housing story to tell?</th>
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Incomplete answers are removed. Answers may be lightly edited for spelling or to remove offensive content. See a summary under section 3.4 of this report.

Appendix B.1 – Housing Stories from Owners
Stories with people who volunteered to attribute their first name are listed first. Stories after that are anonymous.

Adam
We were one of the lucky individuals who were able to find a house before it went on the market by virtue of being the renters of the house when the owners wanted to sell it. We were able to purchase our house in 2016 for $350,000, and as of last month, our home is now estimated at being worth $720,000. There is no way we would have been able to purchase our house two years after we purchased it. It's also worth noting, we've had several friends either sell their house or are putting offers to purchase homes where the winning bid will be $40,000+ over the asking price and waving inspections. My wife and I both work for the City of Anacortes, my wife is in management, and over 50% of our income goes to our mortgage. Our cost of living adjustments haven't even covered US inflation, let alone the actual cost of living in Anacortes. Knowing that the city isn't even keeping up with cost of living, I can imagine that other people without public mandates are struggling even more.

Alan
I moved to Anacortes because it was small town and had all the amenities I needed. It has grown larger than I like and continues to expand which upsets me. More homeless people are coming onto town which is driving up crime. I support low income people needing a place to live but am not opposed to them having to drive a small distance to work here. I would like to limit the number of people allowed in Anacortes. I understand business want more people so they sell more products but that comes at the expense of having a small town community. We need a balance now that limits growth. High rise buildings are not an acceptable answer. More people necessitates more public services which require more taxes which require increases in housing and rental costs. This is a vicious circle which I would like to see stopped.

Anita
We own our home outright after paying off our mortgage over 20 years. However now we are stuck. We are empty nesters living in a house too big for us and would love to downsize. But if we sold our home, even at today’s ridiculous prices, we couldn’t afford to buy back in. Not in Anacortes. Currently we don’t have a mortgage and as we prepare to retire that is just what we want. But buying another home at today’s prices would add a mortgage and put it out of our reach. We love it here, but the only reason we can afford to stay is we don’t have a house payment. Our adult son just recently moved back to town and is currently living with us again.
He would love to move out and get his own place, but can’t afford any of the rentals. Rent and home prices are through the roof and prevent people from living here.

April
NONE of my adult children can afford to live in Anacortes. Finding an affordable place to rent is not possible. All of my children have moved out of Anacortes due to housing availability/costs and we plan on moving away as soon as we reach retirement. We moved here in 2000 because Anacortes was a quiet little town with open spaces. Now, huge expensive houses are taking up every inch of Anacortes. The wooded and open areas are nearly gone. Deer have always been here, but now they literally live in yards, mine included, because their habitat is disappearing.

Art
My wife and I have lived in our home for nearly 20 years, so we haven’t had a housing issue. Yet. If one of us dies, we’re both retired, our income would drop significantly, forcing the survivor to find less expensive housing. Which just plain isn’t available. We’d face a similar situation if one of us were forced into a nursing home, when expenses would go up dramatically, too.

Bailey
My husband and I can’t afford to live in Anacortes so we commute from Burlington. And recently 5 of my friends, my age (in their mid to late 30s), with families, have had to move out of Anacortes because rent is too high or they cannot afford to purchase a home.

Barbara
Know people that live in other parts of Skagit County because they can’t afford to live in Anacortes. Assisted living is very expensive. Not enough low income housing. Affordable housing is not low income. Anacortes has become very expensive and hard for families to live here. This is reflected in the decrease in school age children

Bebe
Many of my friends can afford to come to Anacortes due to the high costs of RE taxes and rent

Beth
My concern is for those who cannot afford rent in Anacortes. We will lose diversity and young people just starting out in life. I wish the greed factor was not so prevalent.

Bob
We are fortunate to be in a good home that meets our needs. While we would like to downsize, no way we can afford anything else in town. Selling would also prevent our kids from being able to afford anything in town. I have been in Anacortes since 1974. Hard to think of anything that hasn’t changed during that time. Very challenging getting folks to take jobs here in town.

Brian
My employees cannot afford to purchase a decent home in Anacortes.

Bruce
My children moved to Seattle because Anacortes is a retirement community. The Anacortes housing authority should give local employees of retail and service jobs in Anacortes priority. They should not be used as low income retirement homes. Service workers should not be
burdened with a very expensive commute from eastern Skagit County. Retired folks have no claim or need to live in Anacortes if they cannot afford the costs. They must live within their budget.

Cathy
I have a son and his family who left to find jobs that pay higher wages and better opportunities. I have another son and his family who are struggling to stay here due to lack of full time job opportunities that pay enough to afford housing here. They have one child with a disability and the Mom must remain home to care for that child’s needs, therapy and ongoing appointments and educational needs. My son loves his job of 7 years and has been seeking full time employment with his employer, but is overlooked and the full time jobs go to newer favored employees instead sadly.

Chris
We were originally looking to purchase a single storied home in Anacortes back in 2016, but due to lack of appropriate square footage (2500 sq ft) in what was available, we were forced to purchase the largest home we’ve ever owned. Church friends that are retired complain they can’t find housing they can afford in Anacortes and buy in Mt. Vernon. Other church members moved to Whidbey Island. Very frustrating to lose friends and church members due to cost of housing in Anacortes. We also don’t have enough Adult Family Homes. I’ve had clients sell their home here and move to more affordable and available assisted living in Issaquah.

Chris
I moved here in 2000. Housing costs have skyrocketed, especially in the last 8 years. The home I bought in 2013 is now worth 2.5 times what I paid for it. Good for me, but not for folks moving to Anacortes.

Christine
We moved from Seattle 8 years ago. Since that time housing prices have skyrocketed. Our house has doubled in equity and taxes have doubled too. I see little that is affordable for working class families. This creates profound inequities for having a diverse population. I fear that Anacortes will become a rich white enclave like much of the coastal towns in the PNW. Anacortes is in great need of affordable housing!!

Cindy
When we moved here housing prices definitely caused problems for us. Our children cannot afford to live here. When I worked, finding employees was definitely hampered by housing costs. Also lost potential clients who decided not to live here because of housing costs. I have a friend who wants to move here but cannot because of costs. Her social network is here, very sad. Anacortes was expensive when I moved here for work. Now it’s outrageously expensive.

Cindy
There is no way I would be able to afford my home if I had to buy it today. We built it 20 years ago. Our mortgage is paid off, and property taxes are our largest expense.

Claudia
I moved my family to Anacortes in 1995 to take a bank manager job here in town. We built a
home in Parkside Development, and I still live there. In 2016 my now adult son, upon moving out of mom's house, could not find a place to live while working for a local restaurant at $12 per hour fulltime. He was thinking of buying a school bus but had no idea where it could be parked to live in. Instead, I offered to co-purchase a 3 bd 2 bath home as long as he could find 2 roommates to rent rooms, we could afford to do this. We made fast offers on houses, and did not get the first one, but did get the 2nd one. I cashed out a portion of my retirement fund and incurred a $15,000 tax liability due the following year. I rented a room in my house for 1.5 years just to pay the tax liability. My son has been successful renting out 2 bedrooms in his house for the last 5 years to other young single people who work here in town. The rooms are always rented.

Cora  
We moved from Washington, D.C. in 1996. At that time Anacortes housing was much cheaper than DC. The rising housing costs and increase in crime with state laws that tie the hands of the police may drive us away to another state after 26 years here.

Dan  
I am lucky to have come to Anacortes when it was affordable. I don't see how people do it now-except for those with independent wealth and or retirement.

Darren  
Friends and family members want to live here, but housing prices are too expensive when considering the lack of high-paying jobs.

Dean  
Moved here from California to retire about five years ago. Living here was cheaper then California and, food, dining out, medical, property tax, city sale tax was so much cheaper. Now, everything has gone up, but yet cost of living has not kept up. Now have to worry if we will have enough funds to live on since taxes, keep going up and more money and services is now going to the Homeless (they could use it of course), but we are getting less for the money we worked for and they are getting more for not working. Does not seem fair, we didn't work hard all our lives so others could live off of us.

Debi  
I work for a contractor at the hospital. I am one of 3 night shift nurse practitioners who our staffing model is supposed to cover nights. In the over 3 years I have been here, we have never been able to fill the 3rd position. I told them that I thought our salaries are not competitive and after researching, my company found that they were indeed under market. Now they have to submit a proposal to raise our rates to the hospital. I bought into a small duplex condo in Skyline. I cannot afford to buy a single family home, and will likely leave the area when I full time retire.

Dennis  
My adult daughter with serious health concerns and her husband would like to move to Anacortes from Eastern Washington to be closer to me but cannot afford to buy a home here. My son-in-law would probably make more money here working for the city, county or state as a
truck driver/ heavy equipment operator but they would need some place to live while getting established in a new job.

**Douglas**
We have a couple of friends who are currently renting in town and are worried about what may happen when their landlord sells the house they are in. Two elderly male friends we have were able to recently find low income housing here in town. They have housing now, but one of them was living in his car previously. A good friend and his wife moved to Mount Vernon prior to the pandemic due to being unable to afford a home here. They were able to purchase a home there.

**Ed**
We moved to Anacortes because it was an active, inviting and volunteer oriented community. It makes me sad that there is not sufficient affordable housing for all who work in Anacortes.

**Ed**
I was lucky enough to buy a house in 1979. For $49,000. Live there for 47 years. If I had done that I could not afford a house in Anacortes. That was one of the wisest moves I have ever made. We now live in a brand new house. 5 years old. I was able to have that built with the proceeds for my other house.

**Fran**
We moved here in 1995. One of our primary reasons for coming here was that it was essentially a blue color town; home to workers. The change we see is the influx of wealthy retirees, many of whom have been able to retire at a young age with huge 401ks, pensions and/or large capital gains from the sale of prior homes. To meet that demand, it seems as if new construction is focused entirely on $1m + homes. In my view, that is a huge loss to the community.

**Frank**
We moved here in 2004 from a small town in Alaska. One of the reasons we chose Anacortes was for the Challenge program, affordable housing and small town atmosphere. Since 2004, Anacortes has grown quite a bit. The density is increasing and will get worse, leading to more traffic, crime and unaffordability. Anacortes needs to research other cities and what they have done to make their towns more affordable. Bellingham realizes that adding more multiple unit housing has NOT done anything for affordability. Again in Bellingham, building a big housing complex for the homeless is not without problems & is not working. I strongly encourage our City Planners to do some research on what other towns have done and what works and what does not.

**Gale**
I am extremely fortunate that I don’t directly face most of these problems. However, I am very aware of the tight housing situation. People who work here deserve to have pleasant attractive housing to live here. I will be looking for assisted living here in the foreseeable future. The choices are expensive and few. Anacortes is a lovely, vibrant town.

**Gina**
It was very difficult to find a home to purchase in Anacortes. We had to downsize and accept
that we would have to make upgrades to the home. My husband is a new clergy person in town and I am underemployed, working in Mt. Vernon, but our household income is sufficient for a mortgage. We had a realtor to help us and a very sizable down payment available, yet it took a long time looking with several offers declined. We felt like we had to “settle” in order to get the house we got.

Heather

Anacortes has changed significantly since I moved here. We are losing our working class residents because they can’t afford to live here. Students regularly leave our schools because their families can’t afford rent. My friends in their 30’s have long commutes because they can’t buy here.

James

I previously lived in King County for 10 years, from the east side of the state. After 10 years in King County the grind wore me down. I had visited Anacortes frequently because of the islands and boating. When I had a chance to relocate with my employer to Anacortes, I did. I moved here in 2004. Love the small down atmosphere a lot like where I grew up in E Wash, without the heat and the dust. Here to stay!!

James

I used to live in a shared house but over the years I worked hard and was able to buy my own house. The reason I stayed in Anacortes is because it’s nice. I define nice as being the opposite of Seattle, where drugs, homelessness, and crime are rampant and very much fueled by providing non-residents all the amenities they need to live a drug-fueled prison-free crime-funded lifestyle. Any decision making that involves providing an excess of affordable housing will be the first nail in the coffin in what Anacortes is NOW, putting in on the wrong path. In my entire friend and family circle in the town, we only have one person we know who’s needed help from The State. Excess housing brings us the worst society has to offer. I would immediately move out the moment you decide to start turning our city into Seattle.

Janell

As seniors in a small two story house we are not able to find move in ready single level housing. On a fixed income we would not be able to pay condo dues once one of us passes. We would love to see another senior manufacturer home park where you own the lot and could get all in for around 350k.

Jeff

Since moving to Anacortes 20 years ago, traffic, congestion and crime has skyrocketed. Why must we continue to build more and more housing when we can hardly keep up with the current populations needs? Multi story buildings don’t fit, bring more traffic, and strain public services. I’m sure the city government loves the increased revenue streams but enough is enough.

Jim

Recently widowed living in a house too large for my needs. Limited options for downsizing to an affordable single family residence
Jim
Moved to Anacortes because of work and small town feel. Population has doubled since I moved here. Traffic has gotten out of hand.

Jim
Fear that if I have to move, I will not be able to afford to stay in Anacortes

Jo
We love Anacortes and saved for many years to buy here. However, it is too expensive for my mom (dad died, she is on a fixed income) or our daughter (she has a degree but the housing is far too expensive for a young woman in her mid 20s to find housing). Because of the cost, family cannot live close by and we have had to tell our daughter and her friends that this is not a town for young people or for families, sadly it is more of a 2nd home or retirement home for those that can afford it. I don't know what the future holds but it does worry me that costs are making it unreasonable for young families to live here and I honestly feel that is not good for any town.

John
I am personally extremely disappointed with the never-ending rush to alter the small town character of Anacortes & turn it into another Seattle bedroom community. The governmental drive to bring in "the masses" seems insatiable & the infrastructure to support even the current population, particularly its traffic & road accessibility seems woefully inadequate & discarded from the planning process as building permits are issued. I came here for the small town character of the town, but it seems to be in the process of being traded away to become just another bedroom community of Seattle. I am looking for a much lessor "progressively developing" environment for my home - but at least I will enjoy a nice profit for my 4+ years of residence....

John
"We moved to Anacortes as retirees drawn by the nature of the community, vibrant arts, music, etc., close to nature and the water and in general the look and feel of the community. Anacortes is changing with more retirees moving here along with a vibrant tourist and boating population. As the population mix changes the needs of the community will need to change accordingly. We moved from a suburban area and have seen the changes higher density, taller buildings and less green space can bring, i.e. fewer people outside, lack of community feel, etc. Suggest planners walk the streets of the re-developed areas of Mercer Island, Redmond, Juanita, etc. as compared to the core city area of Anacortes (H to R and 36th to 5th)."

Jones
I see challenging times. Anacortes eliminated affordable housing opportunities in 1980. No double or single wide mobile parks, limited zoning for condos or multi-family, limited opportunities for anyone needing affordable housing.

Joyce
I have lived here my entire life and the take I hear about Anacortes is oh you mean "Can't afford Us" and I think that sums it up.
Judy
I grew up here, moved away and then returned to raise my family here. Now my children can't afford to buy a house in Anacortes as some of them would like to do.

Julia
I moved to Anacortes in September, 2018 after retiring. I was a little concerned about the rise in housing prices, but we did not have difficulties paying for a new home here, because of the high price received for our home of 30 years in California before moving here. We chose Anacortes because of the small town, far away from the bustle of Seattle, moderate weather, and friendly people. We wanted to be near the water, and were both professionals (attorney and engineer), so we had rather large income before retirement and generous pensions upon retirement. We are concerned about the lack of medical professionals in Anacortes area for specialty areas, such as heart specialist, but otherwise have found medical care for all other conditions we have encountered (such as glaucoma and retinal issues, kidney issues). My husband is still working out of our home (basically on-line or via zoom/telephonic meetings) and I am retired.

Justine
I have none of the problems mentioned above, though as I age, taking care of my home is a growing problem.

Kate
I have three disabled children who qualify for Developmental Disabilities Administration (DSHS) support for paid caregivers. State caregivers get paid just under $20 an hour to provide care. I cannot find a caregiver for the many hours of care I am given by the state, who can afford to live here and it is not worth someone commuting from Mt Vernon/Burlington with pay levels/fuel costs. This may mean we have to move in the future to find caregivers in a more affordable community. We moved here to access medical care for our medically complex child at Seattle Children’s Hospital.

The same situation would apply to the retired/elderly here who make up a great proportion of the community, if they cannot find affordable caregivers to give care in their homes when they need it they will have to move also. This is a housing/care crisis that will happen if it is not addressed with affordable housing for essential workers and caregivers. I have recently lost a caregiver because rent became too high and she could not afford to live here. I have not been able to replace her.

We need affordable housing and affordable rents to support essential workers who are not on a high income to make a balanced sustainable community. Every development should include a percentage of affordable housing to rent or buy as a mandatory requirement.

Kathleen
We moved here over 30 years ago and are appalled at the extravagant homes being built, the seeming focus on development. Sadly it is becoming a town for the wealthy. Following a conversation in a grocery line between a resident and a friend looking for a place to live, the latter moved to Whidbey Island and renamed Anacortes to Can't-afford-us.
Katie
My husband and I found a house in Anacortes before the prices skyrocketed and it was sheer, dumb, luck. Had we waited to purchase a home, we would be struggling to pay a mortgage on a much smaller/less desirable house or would be forced to rent. We are watching our close friends who were born and raised here struggle financially with housing.

Kayjay
My adult kids are having a tough time staying afloat here in Anacortes and because they have my grandkids I would be heartbroken if they had to move because they couldn't afford to live here.

Ken
The infilling/ADU's that are not permitted does nothing! to address affordability. The same several developers buy the properties, add more units, and flip them at a very decent profit.

Kenley
We moved to Anacortes because of the small town atmosphere, and now the cost of maintaining a home has more than doubled.

Kenneth
My partner and I retired to Anacortes to be amongst upper income wage earners. Affordable housing is secondary in priority to real life pressing issues such as climate change and renewable energy sourcing.

Kris
Our family is a Dakota Creek Industries family, and we know very few co-workers who live here anymore. The town has changed quite a lot, many new buildings don't fit the original feel at all. It's sad. We will be looking at retirement around 10 years from now, but can't say we feel confident about the cost of living here. Our college aged children have even less options. For the time being, we will continue to stay here as a whole family. The only other choice would be to move to a much cheaper state with the sale proceeds of our home. We'd like to stay...

Linda
My husband and I have not had difficulty finding or paying for housing. However, we moved here in 2009. Our house has more than doubled in price since then. We wouldn't be able to afford it now. We have friends who would like to move here but they are not sure they can afford it, even though they have good financial resources. If they came, they would need to find affordable assisted living for their mother. They have looked into that and have concluded there are few affordable options. My question: when we know we need more affordable living, why are all those new apartment buildings so expensive? We should use the few lots available for building to construct places that are affordable.

Linda
We are fine but our son cannot afford to buy here so considering moving out of state

Linda
We purchased our home in Old Town in 2010. At that time, several art galleries and boutiques provided entertainment for the two of us. Since then, the "flavor" of the town has changed.
Corporations have taken over the retail area of town to a large extent; restaurants have built a fortress of kiosks on the public right-of-way causing congestion for those of us who prefer an evening stroll rather than getting snockered at the many pubs spilling onto the sidewalk; the local park has become a haven for homeless; and the charm of the town has been reduced to a typical tourist trap with over-priced and under-performing goods and services. When we bought our home, we were required to obtain permission not only from the planning/permitting department but also from the Museum Board. We were told that the city fathers (and mothers) wanted to keep the soul of Old Town intact. That has apparently gone by the wayside as megahouses have replaced many charming cottages and there now seems not to be any soul of what used to be Old Town when we moved here.

**Linda**

Just that it is hard for me to believe the fixer-upper that just sold next door to me cost $450,000. To a retired person. It has been a home bought by young families since 2010, and sold for reasonable prices. We are becoming a city for only the rich and well-off. (Boring!)

**Lisa**

The alleys in my neighborhood are in poor condition due to increased use from newly built duplexes. I support greater density, but the infrastructure must keep up. Storm drainage has become a problem for my lot - my shop/garage floor has flooded every winter since two upslope neighbors, across the alley, asphalted their large driveways off the alley. All the stormwater from the upslope lots, about 6 lots, passes over my property. The asphalting occurred before storm water regulations were in place, so I live with it. Btw, the City street crew has been responsive and tried to minimize the flow, but there is only so much that can be done without pipes and catch basins.

**Marilyn**

My adult children CANNOT afford to live in Anacortes even though they both have 4 yr college degrees.

**Marti**

I feel extremely lucky to have purchased our place in 2018 before the latest pricing increase. "Anacortes can't afford us!" I fear for the future of our schools and the ability of "good people" to be part of our community and it aging away into an exclusive retirement community.

**Mason**

I've lived in Anacortes for years now. I know people who live on the lower end of the income bracket and have to share housing in order to keep a roof over their head. I also see people from elsewhere moving into Anacortes, and they neither work here nor have family here. I worry that providing services to outside people will encourage others who have drug or other problems best solves if they went to larger cities. Attempting to support them in Anacortes will
change the city in a way that makes us want to move out, which would be unfortunate since those of us who moved here are hoping to always be here and not be forced out by big city problems.

**Mayo**
We moved here from Fairbanks in 1984. Bought our first house in Old Town for $79K.

Anacortes’s demographics were very different then: younger median age, blue collar jobs, larger middle class. We’ve bought 4 homes here and made a good profit on every one of the 3 we’ve sold, so we have no mortgage now. BUT, the fact that we’ve been able to do that reflects exactly the reason housing is so challenging now. It’s been great for us, but the changing demographics, loss of blue collar jobs, influx of retirees with money, and an increasing median age have all led to where Anacortes finds itself today regarding housing. This is just analysis from my point of view. The only solution I can think of is to build more single-family homes with government subsidies.

**Megan**
We recognize that we were able to purchase our home here 6 years ago and would be priced out of the market today. We want affordable options for everyone more then we care about our home value going up more and more. We value living in an area in which teachers, servers, childcare providers, ALL people can afford to live here and have reliable options. This is what makes a community strong.

**Michael**
We can only afford to live in town because we were able to buy a house during the beginning of the last recession as prices were plummeting. None of my children can afford to live here so have moved out of the area, one moved out of state because of lower cost of living.

**Mike**
I moved to Anacortes for the quality of life (access to nature, pool, good library, theatre, etc.), and this has remained a key selling point for residing here. At the same time, continues to lack diversity in several areas (ethnic, age, economic status).

**Mike**
We rented happily in Anacortes for 18+ years, in very good circumstances with outstanding landlords, and could happily have continued. However, circumstances changed and we had to move on in 2020. We were extremely fortunate to find a new construction home to purchase here in town, at a reasonable (for the time) price and with interest rates at or close to the bottom of the range. I’m sure that if we had been moving this year instead of when we did, we would have been very much less lucky and in fact would probably be living in Oak Harbor now.

**Mike**
Have a parent who is about to need assisted living facility. Moved here for geographical location, outdoor activities, natural surroundings, climate. Since moving to Anacortes 7 years ago from out of state housing prices have increased, leftist politics has further polarized citizens, city has gone into (unfair and uneconomical) competition with private enterprise with fiber ""Access"" boondoggle. Have also realized that city, county and state have no idea how to
evaluate and prioritize spending but rather simply want to generate more and more tax dollars to spend on feel good projects (aka picking winners and losers to buy votes).

**Mike**
We are researching different areas of the country to retire. Housing costs here will take too big of a percentage of our fixed retirement income. I will be sad to leave the home we raised our children in.

**Mitch**
I see my retired friends moving out of Anacortes for better and warmer weather in AZ, TX, FL

**Nels**
I would say 1/2 of my employees choose to live outside Anacortes in other less expensive parts of the Valley. This is not a long commute for them, but less than an ideal situation. One might simply watch the shift change at Dakota Creek and/or the refineries to see where the working person drives, they drive east.

**Nicole**
I have many friends that have rented houses and the owners sold and that left them with nowhere to go. They work in Anacortes but were forced to move to Mount Vernon and Burlington and Oak Harbor to find a place to live. Anacortes does not offer enough housing, especially if you need 2 or more bedrooms and if you have a pet, forget finding a place to rent. You shouldn't be forced to move so far away just to even have options of places to try and apply to live at. We had to buy a house in Oak Harbor because there were very few options under $700,000 that didn't get picked up by someone paying way over asking with cash. Now my husband and I have to pay a lot of money to commute to work since neither of us can work remotely.

**Nina**
I have lived in Anacortes since 2011. We rented a 2 bedroom town home for $750 around 2012. Since then, there has always been issues with finding child care that’s not only affordable, that also has availabilities. I have moved around since 2012 and my fiancé and I had to buy out of Anacortes. We could not afford the mortgage on a 4 bedroom 2 bath house that did. not need a TON of work. We ended up buying a home in Mount Vernon, for $530k 4 bed 2.5 bath and 2700 sq ft.

I work for a Non Profit homeless shelter in Anacortes. I had to pull my kids out of Anacortes School District. I lived 2 blocks away from work. Now I drive about an hour and a half a day commuting. It's really hard to find a home for family to buy unless you have a 200,000 yearly income. It's sad that I had to pull my daughter form ASD. She has been going to ASD all her life and I had to take her out at the end of 7th grade.

**Paula**
Yes, My daughter’s family was asked to find another place to live because they needed to move their daughter and family into the home. Even though they were given 5 months to find a place they were not able. Even in trying to purchase a home here, the bidding wars were $25,000 to $50,000 above asking and out of their price range of being comfortable. They were willing to
spend up to $515,000 and just couldn't touch anything here. They moved to Sedro Woolley and got a 4 bedroom home for $2000 a month with the promise from the landlords that this will not increase!! Pretty hard to pass up. I have lived here my whole life and have 5 generations of family here and I'm sad to see that families in their mid 30's can't afford housing even on an income of over $100,000 a year

**Pete**
We moved here from another State (don't shame us) and found a semi-affordable for us new build but 6 months later it was $75,000 more. We bit it and purchased the home. No view but close to the ACFL. We just can't take the heat, smoke and excessive crime in bigger cities. Times are very troubling and being in the “outskirts” and in a fairly “free” area is a relief. Need to rely on U-tube to do things because it hard to find reliable services due to high housing costs.

**Phil**
We definitely moved here 18 years ago because housing was affordable but that is no longer true for retired individuals on a fixed income. Anacortes has become a place for the “rich” and the wealthy. The values and lifestyle have changed to a more socially exclusive, somewhat racist white community. The present Mayor wanted to cancel the Pride Parade, what does that tell you about his homophobic values and fairness for ALL of the citizens of Anacortes.

**Rachel**
I find it ridiculous how taxes are generated on what homes are selling for in your area.... even if they aren't true compatibles. A steady 10% yearly or more.

**Randy**
I moved to Anacortes in 2021 because I love the town, mountain & water views. I discovered what a gem Anacortes was in 1981 when I came through to catch the ferry to Sidney on Vancouver Island. It took me 40 years to get here. I would hate to lose the charm of Anacortes being a small town with outstanding views and easy access to boating.

**Rebecca**
My husband and I just moved to Anacortes in April where he got a job in the county. We paid at the limit of what we could afford for a mortgage, but looking at rental prices we weren't going to be paying much less. Any houses that were available that were cheaper were huge fixer uppers. There just isn't affordable, safe, livable housing.

**Richard**
No obvious concerns as home is Mortgage and Debt Free and condition of our home is very good considering age.

**Rob**
My family moved to Anacortes in the late winter of 2013. We rented for several years before purchasing a home in 2016. Moving from Missoula, Montana I felt rent was a bit high in Anacortes, but reasonable for how nice the rental we lived in.

While we were in the process of purchasing our home we settled on a maximum price for a home of $450k. This heavily restricted the options available to us, even in 2016. We were able to find a home for ~350k. I noted that the home had previously sold in 2013 for $303K. I could
hardly believe that level of price increase in only 3 years. Our home that we purchased in 2016 for $350k is now valued at an estimated $675k. While this is good for our value, I am deeply concerned about the door closing behind us, and others in similar situations not being able to live in this wonderful community and enjoy all it provided.

We have several friends who have moved from Anacortes for work reasons, who upon return a year or 2 later find themselves completely priced out of Anacortes despite now having much higher income levels.

I know of several people who have left good jobs in Anacortes because they do not live in town do not see a way to move into town.

Ron
I moved to Anacortes 25 years ago and was more affordable back then. Yes it was smaller and more rural then today. The road are a joke here. we pay north of $5000 a year in taxes and the road in front of my house is like it was in Sedro Wolley

Ruth
We moved here in 2014 from a farm in Stanwood. We chose a place one mile from downtown that was a "walkable" location to work (the hospital), to stores, to entertainment and dining, and to nature (the Forested Lands!). The value of walking and biking for such needs/desires is not emphasized enough. We need to have more of this "accessible" housing for people. That does NOT mean more 5-story high-rise apartment complexes owned by out-of-town developers that provide anything but "affordable" housing. It means thoughtful, community oriented, affordable housing options. It has been very sad to see the Old features of town being replaced by the New vision of "let's make this like Kirkland," or whatever (think - the new Waterfront development breaking ground, breaking old buildings and beautiful old fruit trees).

The flavor and historic elements are being destroyed and replaced by high-rise apartments that only make the rich developers richer and keeps service workers "rent-poor" and commute-dependent as they live in Burlington and farther away. It also drives out those who lose family members, end up single and unable to maintain a home, and can't afford any of the current options to still live in town.

Things change. But we can still be thoughtful, be inclusive, and not bow to the money-hungry developers who would turn this lovely place into a crowded set of boxes that look like everywhere else."

Sam
If my partner didn't own her home, I could not afford to live in Anacortes.

Sandra
Yes. I have friends who have struggled to find affordable housing in Anacortes and on rural Fidalgo island. It’s a challenge in most coastal communities.

I appreciate that the new city council and local government is stepping up and taking action. I hope the city will continue to incentivize local contractors to renovate and construct affordable
housing, especially in the downtown area. Low income multifamily housing is a favorable concept in the Mid Town and south end areas.

Historic downtown building owners can also be encouraged to renovate or remodel old buildings converting space to affordable housing, giving locally based workers first priority. Building owners may be eligible for B&O tax credits. 

Sandra
I have a friend who sold her home in Island County and wanted to live in Anacortes again but couldn't afford the rent. So for almost $200/month less she rented a home in La Conner within walking distance to all the amenities since September 2020.

Sandy
I wish we could leave this two story home with a yard for a one level with no yard work. Retirement type housing.

Sandra
My previous profession was to assist individuals with finding and maintaining housing.

Anacortes is a desirable, beautiful area that also is home to a tribal community. Citizens of this tribal community want to be close to their ancestors and native lands, but are often times priced out of the area. There is not enough subsidized housing, rental units, or property owners willing to rent to a tenant that is not perfect on paper.

There have also been hurdles with finding assisted living facilities in the Anacortes area, which leaves the most vulnerable population scared and unsure of where they will go and what will happen to them.

Anacortes is an idyllic community, it makes sense why people want to live there. The big issue is where will this much needed housing go, and who will be the target population? So many are in need of affordable housing, who do you chose to serve?

Sarah
We moved here in 1990's because of the water and nature and lack of traffic and big retail. Since then the buildup of large home and luxury homes and condos has exploded as has the influx of wealthier retirees from out of county. I have worked with lower income families and retirees that have found the cost of housing prohibitive and are having to move off island. I have a neighbor that will be moving to oak harbor to find affordable housing for his family.

Shawn
We were lucky to catch a nice condo. Prices have gotten so high that moving to a house with a yard in Anacortes won't work.

Stephanie
We bought our house 21 years ago but if we were to need to buy a house today that we wouldn’t be able to afford current prices. If I were to leave my position and my employer would need to hire for my position they’d struggle to find someone who could afford to move to Anacortes. We have friends who are struggling to find affordable housing.
Susan
I feel very lucky that I bought my home in 2015 which makes it quite affordable. If my son needed to move back here, they would have to pay a huge percentage of their monthly income as they also do for a house in Oregon. I would like to grow old here. Keeping up a home in old age might be difficult. It would be good to know that there are small apartments with no stairs which provide some quiet, garden and safe pedestrian area as well as easy access to public transportation. For example the housing across from the hospital next to the police station. I have seen a friends daughter who wanted to settle here have to go to Mt. Vernon to find something affordable.

Thomas
The Swinomish did a good job with the shelter bay development. They have a lot of real estate that might be suitable for an affordable housing development, such a development could absorb some of Anacortes housing demands. It would be a shame if they continued to rely on gambling as the main source of revenue for their tribe.

Tiffany
The biggest challenge living in Anacortes has been finding available health services. To get an appointment as a new patient with a doctor is 8 months out, as a new patient with a dentist it’s 6 months out, as an established patient with an eye doctor it’s 3 months out. More and more houses and apartments are being built without the systems in town to support all the people.

Tom
My wife and I are now 70 years of age and we wanted to be near two daughters that might be able to assist us if we need help as we get older. So we moved here on 7/2/2021 from MN. One lives in Bellingham and the other lives in Anacortes city limits.

Tom
Moved to Anacortes in 2001 and have been home owner since 2002. Our home has increased dramatically, but to little benefit. If we want to downsize, it will be difficult financially.

Tony
Average people cannot afford to buy, build or own here in Anacortes

Tony
No. I would not have chosen to move to Anacortes if I could not afford to do so. There are much cheaper places to live in this country than here with plenty of jobs and services available. I don’t feel that anyone has a right to live here if they cannot afford to do so and pull their weight as a taxpaying citizen.

Veronica
I’m fortunate and moved here from La Conner just over 3 years ago. I am in a stable situation and doing fine. Anacortes is doing a much better job than La Conner in this regard. I worry for people that don't make much to be able to find housing. Please get affordable housing not high dollar condos or the like. Jimmy Carter can’t do everything he’s nearly 100.

Vicki
Not personally but have talked with numerous employers whose employees cannot afford
housing and cannot find childcare in Anacortes. The apartments that AFC (Launch and Landing) on 27th and 28th are great models for what is needed here.

Warren
One of the most important factors that drew me to Anacortes is the sense of community. It is also an interesting, welcoming and safe environment for residents of all ages. It's a great place to raise a family or retire.

But if we don't correct the cost-of-housing imbalance the influx of new residents will become increasingly older and more affluent, which will put even more pressure on local workforce resources, causing more people who work here to commute from further away. It will also reduce funding in the schools as fewer kids attend public schools. We need families with kids to have diversity survive and grow.

Maritime influences need to be supported, and not lost to development.

Wes
My daughter will finish her University degree of training in healthcare next year. She would like to be able to move closer to her parents here in Anacortes but feels she will not be able to afford to purchase housing that she could afford.

Winnie
I have lived in Anacortes since 1942. My parents were low income but were able to buy a home. In 1954 my husband got out of the Navy and was able to buy a house here, and I have been able to live in a house I owned ever since. I have had children live with me while they were trying to find a house they could afford. I've had 3 grandchildren live with me for months, and then have to move away because they could not afford to live here. What is the reason? Sometimes I think it is greed!

Yoli
I moved to Anacortes because it was not crowded and there was work. Housing was not affordable in 1975 at top of the pay scale at Island Hospital. I saved and after searching for a year purchased a fixer upper which was difficult because I was turned down or thrown out of loan/bank places because my income was so low (as an RN with 5 years education beyond nursing school). Women helped me obtain a low income farm home loan and to this day I still live in the same home. I fixed it up myself by taking courses at Skagit Valley College. This was all possible by growing our food, saving and planning. No, I did not complain to the City of Anacortes that rent was too high, but it was. It was cheaper to buy a house and fix it myself. This house is now completely redone and fully paid for. All it took was saving, planning and work.

Anonymous
We moved here almost four years ago and we're dismayed at the rapidly escalating costs of housing and scarcity of affordable housing for younger people. We see so many expensive "second" homes that remain empty for much of the year and it's disheartening. Anacortes definitely needs more affordable housing options!
Anonymous
The high rise developments favor developers under the guise of affordable housing. They will run down the town and make it less livable. The developers make out not the average citizen. Follow the m-o-n-e-y.

Anonymous
We moved here for residency but couldn’t afford the rentals here...so we moved in with in-laws. we went into substantial debt to live here when we had to rent. We now own the home we rented but have to pay off our debt still.

Anonymous
I was trying to help a friend get into low income housing a few years back. At that time, the applicant had to apply at each of the five housing authority units. It seems we could have a central database for these people who already have enough trouble in life. (Seemed extraordinarily difficult at the time.). Since then she managed to get in to a facility in La Conner.

Anonymous
My adult employed children (working in healthcare and food production, (above minimum wage) cannot afford even a small studio apartment in Anacortes or even Skagit County (in a safe location). Rent prices are astronomical, as are basic utility needs, especially the w/s/g utilities costs here. Rents where some utilities are included are only adjusted up so not “free” to the renter. Anacortes especially caters to wealthy, retirees, and custom high-end homes are the norm. Wait lists for the HUD supported apartments are very long and requirements to qualify are not designed for a single, no dependents, non disabled, lower income wage earner. I've lived in SV my entire life, Burlington, SW, MV and now Anacortes the last 40 years. As long as this town caters to affluence, it wont be a place for low or even average earners and businesses will struggle or shutter because their employees can't afford to live here, find childcare, or pay commuting coats to get here to work, and young people will move away. And even though property taxes rates are the lowest in the county, values are highest so that's not a great argument to put out to people who aren't looking to buy sell for profit but simply love this town, like myself.

Anonymous
Children would have trouble affording a home here. Parent looking for assisted living here. We bought a house here 7 years ago and now we could not afford to move here due to high housing costs.

Anonymous
My husband and I waited 13 years before we could afford the down payment needed to purchase a home in 2003. Now, we could sell our home, but we could not afford to buy another home.

Anonymous
We were lucky to buy our home when we did, as even with good credit and reliable, decent paying jobs, we could not afford to buy it today. Also, if we did not have family to care for our children while we work we would be totally screwed.
Anonymous
My son 22 year old, is at home and concerned about finding work and affordable housing in or near Anacortes.

Anonymous
I worry about losing skilled labor (for all businesses in town) simply because they can not afford to buy a house or even rent an apartment. It's bad for the entire town.

Anonymous
I have to share the mortgage payments with my parents to make do having been without work since a Covid job loss.

Anonymous
Too expensive for my child to buy a home here.

Anonymous
I've lived in Anacortes for nearly 42 years. My daughter was born here, and is now renting in Seattle. It saddens me greatly that she will not be able to buy a home or, likely, even be able to find a rental in her home town if things continue as they're going.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes for the schools and family environment. This has changed in the last 20 years as it seems more and more retirees have moved into town from higher income areas. Understanding that Anacortes is a desirable place to live with the weather and access to the water, this has been a driving factor in the increase of prices and driving out those families that were the reason we moved here. Additionally, we nor the people moving here currently moved here to live in an urban environment like the metropolitan area of Seattle. Focusing only on housing prices and not the atmosphere and character of the town would be a mistake.

Anonymous
As Anacortes continues to expand upwards we see our family moving in the next ten years or so. Small town feeling will come to an end in the next decade. This will be good for younger workers. However, Anacortes will loose its retirement town appeal.

Anonymous
My daughter moved out of state to afford housing, as did a close friend recently. My son and his family can't afford to move here. I would like my children to live here, especially since I'm aging.

Anonymous
We have family who would like to live closer but cannot afford it.

Anonymous
The first time we arrived in Anacortes on a return from a camping trip to Victoria, we fell in love with the town. When we retired from our business we made the decision to move to Anacortes, and we have never regretted that decision. We now have some family who have also moved here and others who love to come here for vacation. We help support the "Anacortes Family Center" but still see people who are obviously in trouble, sometime with children, and would like
to know if there is any more help for them. Must admit we don’t like seeing the multi story buildings going up in residential area of Anacortes. Down Town was fine as has multi story Commercial Building already. But having them built in established residential areas does not see right. Know that residents who have single story homes are not pleased to have a multi-story apt. bldg. put up in the midst of their neighborhood.

And, cannot really blame them. Hopefully with all the development going on, there will soon be a store like Fred Meyers built in Anacortes area so people can at least buy a pair of socks without going to Burlington. Also am sure that business here in town are having trouble finding employees due to the higher cost of Renting or Owning a home here.

Anonymous
My parents would like to move to Anacortes but cannot afford to buy a home here.

Anonymous
We moved from Seattle to Anacortes for the schools and lifestyle in 2014. We love it here. We live in Old Town and are surrounded by wonderful neighbors. Our greatest housing concern is that the ever increasing property taxes may force us to sell when we retire.

Anonymous
We moved here for my husband’s job and the company has been repeatedly sold to outsiders. Our cost of living has increased so much since moving here in 2014 and causes financial stress and concern for the future.

Anonymous
My friends, neighbors and family have all had to move away because they can no longer afford to live here. I myself am at the tipping point. Real estate speculation appears to be the only true industry on this island, and as a result the taxes in this little community are beyond insane. Utilities always increase as well, but each new mayor and city council member runs for election on a campaign stating they will no longer fund out-of-control spending. However, after they are elected, there always seems to be a pet project that they fund, no matter the financial repercussions. It all adds up and the people who live here no longer have disposable income. Instead of creating surveys that are designed to show that we need "affordable housing", ask the residents if their taxes are out of control due to a city that doesn’t know when to stop wasting money. This community needs to start living within their means, or it won’t be a community much longer. Placing "affordable" cottages and high rise apartments into established neighborhoods does not solve the housing problem, instead it undermines the very community that the policy makers claim they want to establish.

Anonymous
I currently pay the mortgage on my mother’s house, as she is retired and cannot afford to live on her retirement income in Anacortes. She provides childcare to our family. She’s a retired, private school teacher, but cannot afford the cost of a single family home in our community.

Anonymous
Our research identified the most ideal neighborhood, great neighbors, and perfectly designed 2,958 sqft home. No story here that would support your bias about a housing problem.
Anonymous
I am a hospital employee and walk to and from work everyday. I am literally living paycheck to paycheck because the bills are so insane. My mortgage has gone up every year. The utilities have gone up every year. Child care is too expensive to utilize. With cost of food sky rocketing, living in this town is getting harder and harder. I have been in Anacortes since 2008 and everything has gone way up in price.

Anonymous
We paid a lot more than asking price for our home. And housing prices forced friends of ours into a bidding war on a few houses until they were able to secure a place they liked and could afford.

Anonymous
Friends want to move back to Anacortes but have been priced out of the housing market.

Anonymous
I've lived in Anacortes for 45 years and have seen it change from a commercial fishing town to one of a high percentage of retired people. My children can't afford to live in Anacortes.

Anonymous
Throughout my life I had to commute to work from housing that I could afford. I worked hard my whole life to move to a city like Anacortes. My children can't afford to live here now, but they both work hard and will be able to afford Anacortes in the future. That is the way it should be, taxpayer money should not be spent on affordable housing. You are using our money to make Anacortes a less desirable place to live. I am concerned the current push towards "affordable housing" will result in an increase in crime, attract vagrants and increase traffic congestion. By building affordable housing you will bring Seattle's problems to Anacortes. Also, affordable is a relative term, housing will be rented or sold at Anacortes market value and will still be too expensive. Please stop the social engineering. Work on lowering taxes, not wasting our money.

Anonymous
We were fortunate to move to Anacortes (1998) when there were still affordable housing options of varying size. We had lived in Skagit Valley since the 70's, but wanted the natural beauty and amenities that we found in Anacortes. We were both still working but looking forward to retirement years. Our son's wife's family had lived here for 4 generations - and soon there were grandchildren. This is our forever home. On the downside, my son and his family cannot afford to buy a home here. They are renting and feel very lucky to have adequate and reasonably affordable housing. Their children, now young adults, live at home because there is really nowhere that they could live on their own. We could not afford our modest house in today's market. And even though we could sell our house for a hefty profit, we don't have any options to downsize. The 3 bedroom ramblers that used to be in abundance are gone or ridiculously expensive. Virtually all the new housing in town consists of very large, very expensive houses and upscale condos. New rental housing is not affordable. And existing housing stock that is available for rent is getting out of the reach of many people. I do miss the diverse and charming neighborhoods and the people who lived in them that used to make up our town. We are fortunate that we have a modest but adequate retirement, our children and
grandchildren are employed. No one is on the verge of homelessness or going hungry. Many are not so lucky. I wish I had a brilliant idea to solve the problems we are facing. But I hope that the bright young people who are leading our city can figure this all out. Good luck!

Anonymous
I am 48, born and raised in Anacortes. Own my own home in Anacortes with a rental in Sedro Woolley. I know it is expensive to live in Anacortes but have planned accordingly so I can remain in Anacortes in my own home. It is an island and has always been more expensive to live on the island and that's ok.

Anonymous
After 30+ years living in Bellevue, we moved to Anacortes to escape the traffic congestion and ever-present construction. We found what we were looking for in Anacortes. Since moving here in 2014 we have witnessed considerable growth, much of which seems loosely planned. We understand that the city must grow or perish, so we are not anti-growth... we would just like to see uniform zoning regulations that prevent an 1000SF modular home being constructed adjacent to a neighborhood of 3000SF upper-end single-family residences. We are anxious to see more details about the development of the MJB property and hope it proves successful for both the developer and the city.

Anonymous
My wife and I purchased a home in Anacortes in 2006. Ferry traffic notwithstanding, traffic has gotten worse. And when housing becomes more dense and the MJB property is built out to its max. bloated limits, what then? Does anybody in gov't. really care?

Anonymous
Lots are too small for nature to coexist with housing. Neighborhoods don't have enough green space and are becoming the less desirable side of urban living.

Anonymous
We purchased our home three years ago from my in-laws and moved to Anacortes to co-live June 2021. This approach made it possible for us to buy a home in Anacortes and make the move. It has also enabled my inlaws to maintain their ability to live independently, address worries about assisted care, and lift the burden of maintenance (physical and financial) of homeownership. Having more housing designed to consider the benefits of intergenerational living should be considered.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes since it was 1) nearly all single family homes, 2) had very few apartments, 3) no high density housing, 4) low crime rates, 5) a stable population with few transients (except our wonderful military folks), 6) low traffic congestion and 6) a build-out population of 19,000 which meant our small nice town could never get big. Sadly, there is a push for more high density housing which will forever change the character of Anacortes and thus destroy our town by turning it in to another mini-Seattle. We are strongly opposed to the current vision of city council of a bloated Anacortes; there is no such thing as low cost housing on the west coast. Already, we worry about hiking in town waiting for the smashed windows at the trailhead or a stolen catalytic converter. Your un-objective and rigged survey is unfortunately set
Anonymous
We are not able to renovate our house due to costs that builders are either not interested in completing small jobs or the costs are based on us living in Anacortes so the builders/construction companies all want more money as they perceive us as being able to afford to pay those costs.

Anonymous
We retired here in 2013 and enjoy it very much.

Anonymous
A disabled (mental) family member is currently living alone in a house larger than needed. This person needs care (supervision with everything, cooking, transport, etc.) and would greatly benefit from social contact. This person can make a substantial contribution to the community but can't afford something like Chandler's Square.

Anonymous
I wanted to move my parents closer because they are in their mid-70s but they can’t afford to buy a home here. There is limited availability of 2 bed/2bath, ADA accessible homes/condos. It seems like all the new housing projects start over 600k and are built vertically, making single-floor living impossible. Housing projects here don’t take into account independent living, smaller space needs, access to care/help – a 60+ community, but not a retirement home.

My husband and I fell in love with Anacortes, but it’s stressful to know that if my parents need more help it will be a huge financial burden.

Anonymous
I worked for a local tech business several years ago that struggled to find qualified employees locally, or to recruit qualified employees from outside Skagit County. We often heard concerns about how expensive it is to live in and around Anacortes, and that there are so few rental options.

Anonymous
I know many people who have moved from Anacortes because of the cost of living. I am also concerned about the tear-downs and multi-unit housing of poor construction that is popping up near Commercial Avenue.

Anonymous
We have friends who rent in town and their landlord is selling the home, so they have to move. They are possibly moving to the east coast because they cannot afford any of the houses here in town or in the local area.

Anonymous
I moved to Anacortes for my job. I have friends who have moved away from Anacortes, because they cannot afford to pay rent/ mortgage.
Anonymous
Both of my adult children have moved away from Anacortes in the last few years because of the inability to find either suitable employment or affordable housing. One has recently passed up an employment opportunity that could have allowed their return, due of the high cost of housing. Young people who want to own a home can’t do that here.

Anonymous
Our adult daughter has moved out of Anacortes due to high rent and our adult son is still living at home because he is unable to find a place that is affordable for a young service worker.

Anonymous
Lots of retirees are finding it very difficult to maintain their home ownership due to increased costs and inflation and lack of growth in income to offset those costs. Young adults and families are relying on family members for housing and child care support due to lack of sufficient income. Local jobs tend to be part time only with no benefits to further impact these situations.

Anonymous
We have lived here for ten years this August. We lived near La Conner for 35 years but did not like being so far away from shopping, doctors, services. Anacortes has worked out well for us. Our house is just the right size and all on one level. Our goal is to age in place. Not too much has changed for us in the past ten years; there has been growth, but most of the growth seems to be on the right scale. I understand the need for multiple family dwellings and hope care to site such places will be done very carefully. There is more of a homeless population here than there was when we moved here and I would be in favor of Anacortes continuing to support the Anacortes Family Center and the development of public housing. I would not mind seeing some of my tax dollars being spent on housing. It is important that the city encourage the development of affordable housing for those with families who would want to live and work here.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes 37 years ago and have witnessed many changes. We were drawn by the small town feel, the natural beauty, the vast parks system, and the sense of community. The changes we have witnessed have been the disappearance of the small town feel - now there is more of a boxed-in vibe with multi-storied buildings that claim to be low income but in fact are not.

Anonymous
Time to look into more City public transportation options. A city bus/shuttle service perhaps?

Anonymous
I heard from a friend who is looking to buy a house in Anacortes, her husband is a Police officer here in Anacortes and even with two incomes they cannot afford a house that fits their needs. I think this is a very sad situation for our town.

Anonymous
While housing is expensive in Anacortes, I do not believe we should build large amounts of low
income housing and/or homeless shelters in the city. The issues that plague Seattle should not be moved or transferred here. We live here for the high quality of life and low crime, let’s move another city’s problems here.

Anonymous
Anacortes is a beautiful town but it lacks a clear development vision. Contractors build house for maximum profit without regard of the neighborhood impact. There is no city building code "theme" (i.e. maritime features) like Poulsbo, Winthrop, etc. The result is that most new construction makes Anacortes beautiful to look out from but ugly to look at from other islands or the water.

Anonymous
There is no affordable housing in Anacortes. It is ridiculous. We purchased a modest home 23 years ago and will pay it off soon but our children will not be able to afford to live here even as they find work here. Realtors and greedy people are evil.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes for the small-town feeling - friendly neighbors that genuinely care for you, slower pace life, beautiful nature surrounding and in town. We hoped to build our small "forever' house, but the building costs, due to lack of workforce and the added code requirements priced us out.

Anonymous
We bought our home when prices were low. We could barely afford it at the time but now we have a worthy investment.

Anonymous
Moved here because of the beauty of the area, the boating availability, and the friends.

Anonymous
I made a purchase agreement to buy a new construction home in Anacortes in August 1998. I moved in in February 1999. At that time there were mobile homes 1/2 mile down the hill off Oakes. Some years later those mobile homes were moved out and replaced with pricey homes. Ever since then more and more trees have been taken out and replaced with pricey homes. Of course the cost of housing is going up around here, you have totally designed it to be that way. My neighborhood was built as lower cost housing. It no longer is. The original owners in this neighborhood were a pretty social crowd. This neighborhood has become both expensive and pretty anti-social. As long as you keep trying to attract the high-tech crowd it will increasingly be this way, less affordable and more anti-social. I can't afford to leave. And I know wealthier people in Anacortes that also are no longer happy here, but stay because they also don't know where else to go. If you stop promoting technology around here, then maybe the less well-to-do would have a better shot at being able to afford to live here. I moved here from Bellevue to get away from this, not to have it follow me here.

Anonymous
My 24 year old had a good job in town but could not afford to live here so he moved to Bellingham.
Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes to start a family in a small town. Since then we've watched every open space replaced by densely packed, oversized homes - changing the identity of the city for the worse.

Anonymous
We are 4th generation residents and it is very challenging to see how much our hometown has changed. Some for the better but the cost of living here is a burden to so many who wish to stay or even find another home to move to. Kind of heartbreaking for those of us who have lived and maintained our community since the 1800's

Anonymous
Since moving here in 2012, I’ve seen drastic housing price increases. Many people have moved here from other states like California and pay cash for housing and cause bidding wars. Young people with families who are not in a high income position certainly must struggle. Retired people on a fixed income may be priced out when trying to afford a home. Rents are ridiculously high.

Anonymous
In 1978, we moved here because it looked like a nice small town to raise a family, desirable climate and available work. My husband had his own construction business for awhile and then joined the painters union. After that, he worked on the skids, the refinery, WWU in Bellingham and finally at Boeing in Everett. He traveled one hour fifteen minutes each year for over 35 years.

We bought a home in 1978 with money from selling our house in another state. Around ten years later, we build a new house and moved into it (within city limits). We kept the first home and rented it out for extra income.

Eventually, we retired back to the first house and sold the new, larger one. One child’s family lives here and one lives about an hour away.

Anonymous
Our household income will likely increase in the upcoming years and we would like to upgrade to a larger home, however, we are concerned that housing costs will prohibit that decision.

Anonymous
Purchased a home in town over 20 years ago. Would have been more challenging to purchase one in town now. As a homeowner I like that my housing investment sees increases. However, realize that it creates challenges for new homebuyers (especially young families or single people) to purchase a new home. I also think a small town has challenges recruiting younger workforce to live here because there are not as much things to do in a small town. Some people may like to commute. But there are other things that government needs to do to make commuting easier like lowering gas prices. Or improving traffic flow like getting rid of all the stop lights on Hwy 20 and replacing with roundabouts.

I've recently moved to Anacortes and don't yet have a story to share.
Anonymous
We bought in 2013 and it was a miracle we could afford housing. Luckily housing was low and we worked for a year saving one of our salaries, and borrowed money from our parents. Now we have 1200 sq ft for 5 people and no way to buy or add on.

Anonymous
One of the reasons I moved to Anacortes was for the ACFL. New housing encroaches closer and closer to the ACFL’s edges, and some neighborhood trail access points have been closed.

Anonymous
Have seen friends leave town because they can’t find housing in their budget or a salary that would allow them to stay?

Anonymous
We have no issue with housing. I am a bit worried about Anacortes setting up too many low income housing units. I have lived all over the country and two consistent traits of the best areas are good schools and expensive housing. I really don’t support making housing in Anacortes more affordable.

Anonymous
We moved here because it was a small town with limited area growth. Now, the city is pushing the limits by allowing multi story apartments that are out of place in this community. The infrastructure is not ready for this growth. For instance, the roads cannot accommodate the number of autos."

Anonymous
If I become a widow I face the very real possibility of becoming homeless. There is very limited HUD housing (and in this political climate I worry about that program going away altogether) and I can’t afford to move into either Cap Sante Court or Chandler Square.

Anonymous
I have only lived in Anacortes for 8 years but my wife grew up here. We always wanted to live here so after retirement we moved here to take care of her aging parents. Real estate taxes have more than doubled during our time here. Yes, the value of our home has also doubled.

I continually see streets being repaved throughout the city. It seems that many of those projects on streets that weren’t really in need of it while streets such as ours is crumbling away. While I have no statistics, it appears that more affluent areas get a higher priority.

We pay monthly storm water fees as part of our utility bill yet we still battle with water especially because home above us all seem to have French drain’s emptying onto the street. Three years ago I wrote to the city about this. A person came to my home stating that when they started paving that summer they would put in a berm at the end of my driveway but was never done. Instead the used a grader to deepen the ditch on the other side of the road. I asked why we couldn’t have curbing like all the streets around us was told that would never happen. Now a great deal of time and money is being used to address low income housing. The community I came from did the same and it was needed. The problem was that as those facilities filled largely because of people moving into the community due to that housing, more and more were
built drawing in more non residents. The city went from a nice suburban location to a large city filled with crime, street people, gangs etc. That city was Marysville.

Anonymous
My mother in law lived at a home here in Anacortes. Her rent was around 700 after 12 years of living at that home. Because rent has increased, her landlord said he was going to double the rent to 1,500. My mother in law only makes 2800 on a fixed income. With prices going up, she couldn’t afford it. We looked everywhere in Anacortes for a home, but rent at its lowest was about 1500. She applied for the Anacortes Housing Authority, but is 66 on the wait list. She is now living with us. Moving out of Anacortes is an option, but she would be away from her grandkids and any help should she need it. These high prices are phasing out those on a fixed income.

Anonymous
We moved here 10 years ago when we retired and because we had bought a boat. Have noticed more obvious examples of people on the street who might be homeless, in mental health crisis mode and just heard at a meeting about the drug issue in old town on 3rd, 4th 5th streets and L, M, N and O avenues. Also the skyrocketing price of houses to either rent or to buy. Also, unavailability of housing.

Anonymous
We own our home outside of Anacortes. As we took in family members displaced by COVID and caretake for our disabled parents, we are a large family. There are no properties in Anacortes large enough to hold all of us, and even if we could find one, it would be too expensive. Even a two-bedroom home is out of our price range. To move closer to my work in Anacortes, we’d have to put our parents in assisted living and find some other place for our displaced family members to live.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes because it was more affordable than King County and feel very fortunate that we purchased (2020) just before housing prices went crazy.

Anonymous
We have several friends who have not been able to find affordable rental units or modest homes to buy. Rentals are very scarce, so the prices are high. We also have a daughter who would like to buy a home, but there is no way she could afford something in Anacortes. And the only way I could afford the house I own currently is that I inherited it from my parents.

I have lived in Anacortes for over thirty years and have seen tremendous growth, mainly of big homes. There are few small ""rambler"" type homes being built anymore, the type that are good for couples and families starting out and which is the type of home I was able to buy when I moved here. Expensive condos are also being built, rather than modest rental apartments or condos. I’m sure the MJB project’s condos will also be expensive.

Anonymous
I grew up in Anacortes and returned here for retirement, in part to be near extended family living in the Skagit Valley. The island and valley have always seemed special to me. The weather
pretty good all things considered. Anacortes became more appealing as the trail network was extended. The location seems a bit isolated since Covid reduced the ease of travel to Vancouver or elsewhere in BC for a day or a week.

I don't believe that the cost of housing is as much an obstacle for a retiree coming here, as the excessive size of existing housing... that then pushes prices beyond affordability. My place is modern but small.

Anonymous
I have lost 5 of my 19 employees in the past 8 months due to the inability to find affordable housing in town. Majority of move-in requirements (first/last/deposit) are extremely challenging to pull together when average monthly rental even for a small apartment is over $1,400/mo.

Anonymous
We have lived here 20 years and are now retired. Luckily we just paid off our mortgage. We would like to stay here and downsize but we can't afford to now. We have older home and won't be able to sell it and afford anyplace decent. Not ready for assisted living. What can we buy here for less than 700k which is what our home is worth. Would like to see more single story apartments or townhouses geared to middle income seniors. Our income is too high for tax breaks. We are stuck in an older home that will need constant work and upgrades.

Anonymous
Many of my employees have roommates or live out of town because of the cost of living here.

Anonymous
Our daughter lives in a tiny ADU. She works at the hospital and is worried she will have to move out of town if her rent increases.

Anonymous
Have lived in Anacortes for 9 years. Taxes on the house have nearly doubled. If this continues into the future, it could be a major problem. We are retired with a decent income but when one of us passes, the situation will be much more difficult to manage. Using the homeowner as the revenue source for everything is not fair even though it is convenient.

Anonymous
We have a 3 year-old 2-bedroom ADU, that is a desirable rental every time we advertise it. While we've had no trouble finding good renters, it was telling that we had a number of interested parties who could not afford the $1,800/month.

Anonymous
We moved here for a job in 2019 and even then prices were at the top of our range (higher Ed teacher/librarian). We barely were able to purchase our small house (family of 4, 1 bathroom, 3 beds) and had to jump through some hoops to get it and were anonymously offered $2500 to pull out. The house needed a lot work, which we have done all on our own or not at all as contractors were too costly and/ or unwilling or unavailable to do our smaller jobs. We are grateful now to live in a home we can afford in a place we love. We recognize that things have changed and others in our position could not do what we were able to do even 3 years ago.
Anonymous
Initially moved to area in 2003 due to military transfer, due to housing costs found home on Whidbey that was more than $100,000 cheaper than a similar home in Anacortes. Have since considered moving but it is cost prohibitive to move to Anacortes. I have been working in Anacortes since 2005, childcare has been difficult if not impossible to find, especially for children under 3. It is also difficult to find local employees as many new hires are commuting an hour or more each way.

Anonymous
It has been challenging to recruit employees to my employer who can afford local housing.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes in the early 1990’s. It was safe. Clean. Friendly. Today? A car jacking at knife point, car thefts. Gas thefts. Catalytic converter thefts. Pan handlers on the street corner at Safeway. Why must Anacortes accommodate everybody? At one point, I wanted to live in Beverly Hills. But, shoot I couldn’t afford it. So, I chose a different town. Developing “affordable” housing attracts problems. Smaller lots. More compressed housing. Congestion. And tempers rise. Affordable housing is a misnomer. Affordable for who? And at what cost? The free market drives housing costs. The idea that so many able bodied people do not work is sickening. They take the easy route getting free handouts that don’t cover today’s living costs. Jobs are available. But they choose otherwise. Anacortes has enough affordable housing.

Anonymous
I am concerned that "affordable" (subsidized) housing is confused with housing options that the average working person can afford. Construction of subsidized housing is not typically market based but subsidized in some way. Availability of regular housing at lower cost is dependent on market supply and demand. We need to make sure developers have incentives to provide increased numbers of housing units that can still be profitable for them to build.

Anonymous
Why did you move to Anacortes and what has changed since? Lack of crowd for hiking and biking. Things are much busier.

Anonymous
I have children who have or are planning to move away because they can't afford housing here. I also have employees and former employees who have left for the same reason.

Anonymous
There is no way young people can buy a house in this town now. I know four different people that their kids would like to move back here but cannot afford a house here. My own daughter lives in Mount Vernon because she cannot afford the cheapest homes in this town. It has become a rich mans town. My wife and I have lived here for 45 years and have watched it changed and we are looking to move away as taxes are driving us out as we are on fixed incomes.
Anonymous
I lived in Anacortes for 20 years and had to move due to the cost of housing and now commute to work in Anacortes.

Anonymous
With four kids in our lives that are/on the verge of adulting it is obvious to me that without significant help from us, none of them would be/have been able to transition out of our home. This process is a natural transition in a young adults life to earn/gain independence and life experience.

Anonymous
Actually, both my sons cannot afford to live here. One lives on Whidbey and he commutes to town to work and the other works here and lives at home because he cannot to rent a place in this town. Even with the new construction and making $17 an hour, no benefits, he could not afford one of the new places being built in town with buying his own medical insurance, paying car costs and other utilities, food, gas, work expenses, etc. We are retired and watch our spending very carefully in order to stay in our home.

Anonymous
We purchased our home in April 2020, right when covid hit and have three young children. Fortunately we purchased our home within our means (650k). Today, we would not have been able to afford our home (now valued at over 1 million. Our children all attend a local elementary school now, and I work for our school district, but childcare was hard to find for the past two years.

Anonymous
We have many friends who have decided to move away from Anacortes because it has gotten too expensive to raise children, the schools have become too political, and the town is growing too fast to keep up with support services, getting dirtier and unfriendlier, and housing costs are accelerating too fast.

Anonymous
My son’s family cannot afford to move to Anacortes.

Anonymous
We were only able to afford to BUY because we bought within the family...and paid the county assessor amount, not market value.

Anonymous
High rise building is not in character of Anacortes, a seaside town. Lots if visitors for seaside events. Views are compromised by multi story building. This is not Bellevue Washington. NO HIGH RISE BUILDINGS. EVER!

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes because it is/was a community that cares about the beauty of the environment (ACFL) and balances that with housing and business. We like the smallness of the community, and really hope that it focuses on maintaining that small-town feel. We came from a community that prioritized development over aesthetics. Three or four-story townhomes ruined
what had been a friendly and walkable neighborhood. They are NOT the answer. Nor are big-box stores like Costco or Walmart. We are willing to sacrifice some conveniences for maintaining that small-town feeling. And the greenscapes - let's prioritize the protection of our environment. In the long-run, our world might be in a better place now if we'd focused on that instead of commerce/profits.

Anonymous
I was only able to afford a house by purchasing one with my retired mother; even then, our down payment was only made possible due to an inheritance from my grandmother’s passing. We would have never been able to afford housing in this area without that privilege, and even then independent housing remained unattainable. Multigenerational homes are become a necessity. This was in 2019 right before housing prices took off -- even with our privilege, trying to buy a home right now would probably be impossible.

Homes around the nation are also ""too big"" for most young people, who are increasingly choosing not to have children, but housing developers are still focusing on larger homes to maximize profit. I would have loved to own a cheaper and more modest studio home/cottage, but the only ones that still exist were most recently built in the 1920's, and most of them are already owned. Few are constructed due to ""market trends,"" but those trends are misleading due to lack of options.

Likewise, most young people who work in/around Anacortes commute from Oak Harbor because they have more affordable housing and apartments, and that's mostly because they cater to Navy personnel. Other young people commute in from Mt. Vernon's apartments. This results in considerable traffic that could be pared down with more apartments and smaller homes in town.

Anonymous
My wife and I moved here to get away from the traffic and congestion of metropolitan Seattle. We loved the feeling of a smaller town, and I had a bit of a history having practiced on Whidbey Island and been on the staff of both the hospital in Coupeville and here when I first began my career. We love the setting, the views, the parks, and the people.

In the seven years we've been here we've seen housing costs increase substantially and the number of homeless people rise along with it. We both volunteer at AFC and hope to do our part to help.

Anonymous
Not everyone has to be able to afford to live here.

Anonymous
I moved to Anacortes because I thought it would be a great place to get married, settle down, and raise a family. I chose Anacortes for good schools, a pleasant environment, good people, and lots of things to do. I did not choose Anacortes because it was affordable to everyone. I chose to work hard and earn enough to live in a special place.

Anonymous
I am having a very tough time recruiting employees to work in Anacortes. The last three people I
hired are choosing to commute an hour or more a day because they cannot afford to live in Anacortes.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes in 2020 for the schools. We love our neighborhood and schools.

Anonymous
I moved to Anacortes in 2015. My spouse followed six months later in 2016, once our house in SoCal sold. We moved here because of my job. We’ve seen our taxes increase, but not City services. We were able to purchase a home at a reasonable cost, and by today’s real estate market, the value of our home has doubled in value. We are worried that our city cannot provide adequate housing for those work here. Most of the new construction in town is selling for $700-800k. Who can afford that? Unless you have a good retirement portfolio. We’re worried that in retirement, we won’t be able to afford the ever increasing property taxes.

Anonymous
Can’t afford to have generations of our family staying in town where we grew up, so the town doesn’t feel like a small town anymore.

Anonymous
I am extremely fortunate to have been gifted my father’s fully-paid-for house in Anacortes. My housing expenses are limited to maintenance, real estate taxes, and utilities. As a single parent, I would not be able to afford to live in Anacortes on my current full-time income if my housing costs were any higher.

Anonymous
Children wouldn’t be able to afford to live here. It’s a nice community, great place to live, lots of new multi units going up, from what I hear they are all expensive

Anonymous
20 years ago we purchased the vacant lot behind our house to build a dream shop when we retire. Now that it’s time, the city requires that we build a residence and bring in paved streets and sidewalks. They also insist that access be from an unimproved alley. We had hoped to vacate the 1 block long alley … no one in the neighborhood wants it and it goes nowhere. We feel that the new rules do not consider our rural neighborhood and our hopes for the future.

Anonymous
The Navy has brought many to Anacortes and surrounding areas, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for Navy personal to afford housing.

Anonymous
We bought a condo in 2010. Prices since then have skyrocketed. Personally I feel we are running out of room to keep building. There are some open lots here and there but I think we have taken down enough trees here.

Anonymous
We (and many of our friends) are very concerned about the next round of tax assessments, given the extraordinary price of real estate in Anacortes. We may be retired, and our houses paid
off, but the tax burden is forcing us to rethink our retirement plans. We have lived in Anacortes for 40+ years, and this is the first time we have been so concerned about the cost of living that we’ve started researching other areas that are more affordable. Our kids were born and raised here and will never be able to return. We’ve noticed the trend toward affordable housing is to build more apartments. While this works for a segment of the population, many people desire more space around them. Unfortunately, homes built through Habitat for Humanity or a land trust are not viable options for those with “working wage” jobs since they make too much to qualify. For young people lucky enough to have parents who can give them property, it is cost prohibitive to build with the astronomical cost of City permit fees. It’s really sad that our city is becoming less gentrified with each passing year.

After generations of family living here, our adult children cannot afford to buy homes here. Other family members are also struggling to afford suitable housing—rental or purchase. Also have a parent now in a long term care facility 40 minutes away with nothing comparable in terms of care nearby.

Anonymous
We moved permanently to Anacortes when my husband retired and our kid is off to college. Even though our home is paid, the property tax is high. A little concerned after I retire too. My sister was looking into moving in Anacortes but they found that it is too expensive for them / cannot afford the move here. Last but not least, yes, our office is finding it hard to recruit employees.

Anonymous
In 2016, my families landlord decided to sell the house forcing us to find a new place to rent. Due to the high Anacortes rent amounts we could not find another place to rent therefor we had to move to concrete Lake Tyee and move the trailer back and forth between Lake Tyee and Fidalgo Bay Resort. Upon moving out my parents are still living in a trailer moving back and fourth and I was able to purchase a house but not in the Anacortes area leaving me to commute an hour to work. Luckily with COVID-19 we have been able to work remotely.

Anonymous
I moved to Anacortes because of the quality of life and want to ensure that the quality of life is maintained and that housing maintains its value.

Anonymous
Affordable living is not in this area.

Anonymous
Anacortes is a beautiful area with many parks and trails. I’m from the San Juan's and love it here. The taxes are making it unlivable along with high grocery, electricity, water sewer and garbage.

Anonymous
Moved to Anacortes for a job opportunity... stayed because of quality of life and K-12 school system.
Anonymous
As someone under 40 living and working here for the past ten years, many friends have come and gone because they can only live here with older family. Many want to stay here, but jobs are scarce and don’t pay close to what you need to live here. Housing is nonexistent and there is nothing for people starting out.

Anonymous
We will need to downsize with retirement (within 3 years) and we will not find affordable housing in Anacortes on our fixed income.

Anonymous
I may want to downsize in five years or so and am concerned I won’t be able to afford a smaller home.

Anonymous
My son just retired from the Navy and can’t afford to live in this town even with all these ridiculous apartments going up.

Anonymous
We have employees who cannot afford to live in the area. Some have resigned and moved away and others are considering it.

Anonymous
Moved here to escape urban life and live near the ocean in a small town 1/2 way between Vancouver BC and Seattle.

Anonymous
This is NOT a retirement community. Yes, there is a sizable retired-age component to our population, but we must push back in this misguided mindset at every opportunity. Many/most of our police officers cannot afford to live in the community they police, same for AFD. Newly minted nurses and teachers? Nope. Service industry employees? No chance. The often affluent retired age community members who push back against affordable growth initiatives with predictable NIMBYism speak loudly ($), but are missing a very important point. No families = no employees = no services.

Anonymous
Lucky to not have a story to tell but many people do. Affordable housing needs to be addressed in Anacortes.

Anonymous
Moving here was an investment. Young married couple new to the area saw the value, the beauty and the investment potential. We lived within our means, bought our home and fixed it up. In the first number of years the budget was tight but we worked hard and put in the effort. It makes you appreciate your efforts much more thoroughly. First starting out will and should be tough for all first time home buyers. You got to put in the work! You have to chill out on big new cars, big debt and living out of your budget brackets. Live a little more simply so that your investment pays off
Anonymous
Extremely grateful to have found Anacortes over 30 years ago. Also found a great job in town, worked hard and paid off the mortgage! So happy both my children can say they were born here. Now just saving money for property taxes.

Anonymous
We’re concerned our children won’t be able to afford to live in Anacortes when they are in their own.

Anonymous
Anacortes, and everywhere else, is expensive. People can’t complain about living here though when they work 6 hours a day at a downtown antique shop. If you work hard and prioritize your finances, you can still live here.

Anonymous
I have friends who want to live here but can’t find a place they can afford.

Anonymous
I share my home with my son who can’t afford to rent or buy in Anacortes.

Anonymous
I see the need for more dense housing like the Fidalgo Flats project, where allowed by zoning. Also, the need for property tax incentives to encourage more dense development of multi-family projects.

Anonymous
Moved to Anacortes to be near family. We’re both retired. It was time to downsize.

Anonymous
Moved to Anacortes to enjoy small town living and to escape the rising cost of property taxes, utilities, homeowners insurance cost and the blight of high-density housing. Surprise! Same problems in Anacortes.

Anonymous
I’m from Anacortes. What has changed is upzoning has allowed for too much density resulting in heavily congested streets and reduced quality of life. This is an island with finite land. Pressure to add even more density on this finite land may lead to a very regrettable situation. Density in places like Seattle has not solved affordability issues; just created more revenue and profit opportunities for builders, investors and municipalities. Only subsidies have shown to work.

Anonymous
I have one family; Children and grandkids, who are barely making the rent with the city limits. Their rent was just raised again and they cannot afford it. Both work in town. They have talked about moving to Idaho because they can’t afford Anacortes anymore. I don’t want my kids/ grandkids to leave. One of my good friends has three daughters, and all have moved over to Idaho or Montana because they can’t afford it here. That is sad to me.
I have a mom who is in assisted living and the cost is about $8000 and her money is almost gone and I will probably need to mortgage my house to keep her in dementia care.

I have many friends who work in town and can’t afford to live here. They live in Oak Harbor or Mount Vernon Burlington area.

I’ve lived here for over 30 years and it’s seems crazy to me how the rents have gone up up up. There needs to be more affordable housing. The only thing that has saved me is the Property tax discount I get for being a senior citizen on low income.

I know that businesses are hurting. I have worked on and off for Anacortes yacht charters. Many of their adult employees live out of town. The kids of course still live with their families, those who come in to clean boats. Many of the restaurants face the same issue. And because of this issue, the restaurants have had to raise their prices because they have to pay their employees an income so they can live. I can’t even go out to dinner anymore. What was a seven dollar salad is now a $15 salad.

The homeless is also a big issue. I loved the cold weather shelter. Sticking them all in a hotel doesn’t seem like the right way to go. I’m grateful for the Anacortes Family Center and I’ve helped out there for years. I love that group! I feel for the last 10 years that I’ve been a part of the housing committee for the homeless, nothing has been done. I stopped even going to the zoom meetings because I was just frustrated. My voice has never been heard.

And these high-rises are an atrocity! To have our historic churches in bowling alleys and landmarks torn down for these ugly apartment buildings that no one can afford. It makes me so sad to drive down commercial. Our founding fathers would be appalled!

Anonymous
Have children who can’t afford to move to Anacortes after finishing master degree programs. My daughter completed her masters in nursing and is ready to contribute to the healthcare field locally, but can’t afford housing here. Concerned about people VRBO’ing their homes in areas not allowed in Anacortes. Would rather see their homes available for long term renting for families.

Anonymous
We had a hard time finding a house to buy, but we were able to eventually get one although we had to drastically increase our budget. We will probably outgrow it in the next 3 years though and concerned we won’t be able to afford a bigger house when the time comes.

Anonymous
I run a non-profit in town that serves the homeless and less fortunate (those “on the edge”, living in fear of homelessness). I know a number of residents who lost (or fear losing) their residences due to inflation, rising rents and housing costs. These people have nowhere to go locally. There is no safety net. They lived here all or most of their lives. They would have no support group if they were to move somewhere else. Some have ended up living in their cars or “couch surfing”. It’s especially hard on older people who have trouble navigating the paperwork for assistance or hesitate to accept “charity”. Most of the homeless I meet are victims of bad luck, unexpected tragedy or poor decisions but they are NOT drunks and druggies, at least not to
begin with. We need to reach out early to prevent a downward spiral into hopelessness and despair. There are several groups in town that provide meals and clothing. What we really need is a centralized resource center with one-on-one mentoring and support in addition to housing. Housing is important, absolutely, but we need to help the homeless find their way back into community.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes 24 years ago, and it was difficult then to find an affordable house. We loved the rustic or "blue collar" appearance of town which has since disappeared with the influx of California money. It's sad. We were told years ago that there was only room for about 100 more homes in Anacortes--how wrong that was, as condos spring up along with roundabouts, an multi-million dollar homes in which only one or two people are living. The waterfront changed when the port decided to encourage larger pleasure boats and smaller fishing boats had to relocate. As retirement nears, our next home is going to be a challenge.

Anonymous
Our family has lived in Anacortes for generations, but we are not building housing wealth that can be passed down to the next generation to secure their own home in town. Our town does not offer the kind of living wages that allow our children to establish roots, nor does it offer enough opportunities in sustainable growth for anyone other than the very wealthy to live here continuously.

Anonymous
My wife and I just moved here after effectively being priced out of Bellingham this spring after over a decade of living there. We found the market in Anacortes only slightly more affordable with a few less offers to compete with. We feel fortunate to have some stability, and empathize with those who are looking for it. In Bellingham we experienced the feeling of being pushed out by wealthier outsiders, so we don't take for granted being outsiders ourselves now. Ideally I think we would solve the supply issues such that established people wouldn't feel threatened by those needing or wanting to relocate. While there is always limited space, if used optimally I think it is possible to continue providing affordable housing for many years to come.

Anonymous
We came here to retire 7 years ago. Since then I am sick and tired of seeing people on drugs, crime, derelict vehicles parked all over town, and city council doing nothing to improve the situation. It is an embarrassment. Posted 72 hour parking signs with the vehicle code posted, is a joke as there is no enforcement.

Anonymous
We were fortunate to buy our 3-bedroom home in 2013 at an affordable price. Now, close to retirement, we would like to downsize to a condo or townhome, but there are not any affordable condos or townhomes in the area. It does not make sense to sell our home and pay more for a smaller place in the same city, though we would like to downsize and make this home available for a family.
Anonymous
Housing prices have significantly increased since 2014 when we moved here. We would not be able to afford our current home based on its assessed/market value.

Anonymous
I have enjoyed my home value going up every year. However, once I retire I will be selling my home to move to a more affordable area. Even though my home would be considered a starter home for a young family, I will be selling it for over $600K, which is NOT a starter home price, but that is what the current market is fetching for this small house on a big lot.

Anonymous
I moved to Anacortes from Bellevue for a better of quality of life. I very much enjoy living in a smaller town. I am concerned that Anacortes is beginning to see an influx of homeless people from other areas. I am concerned about the ability of Anacortes to provide affordable housing when the cost of building a home continues to rise.

Anonymous
Search for next home as we age concerns us. Caring for our current home is a struggle. Condo type living opportunities will hopefully increase.

Anonymous
"We moved to Anacortes because it is a smallish town. No huge multi story buildings. Traffic was not bad. Now buildings are getting higher and more commercialized looking. The small town atmosphere is disappearing.

Anonymous
You can't fix this problem. Housing pricing here is influenced by two things, the Seattle influence and the desirability factor.

Anonymous
Transferred with Shell oil co in 1955. Have since retired and property taxes have gotten out of line.

Anonymous
"We had a part-time nanny have to leave town and move in with her daughter in Vancouver because she could not find a place she could afford here. We have the ability to build a small ADU on our property that could be a small, affordable apartment, but the cost of building is too high right now, and there are few incentives to do so.

Anonymous
In the 8 years we have been in Anacortes we have had to move once because property taxes had almost doubled my mortgage payment. As a retiree on a relatively fixed income that became untenable. We were fortunate enough in the sale to be able to comfortably afford our present home with an acceptable mortgage and so far rather stable, although rising, property taxes.

Anonymous
I have commuted to Anacortes from 1987 until 2013. I have always wanted to live here but was
not able to move my business and afford housing. I worked hard to live here. It has become more and more crowded. I fear that it will be over built and that is when I would decide to leave. It ruins the quality of life for all when things are too crowded. It is hard for young people but some of the rules that you loosened up for tiny homes, renting out rooms etc. has helped. Right now, it seems people don't want to work, there are many jobs available. Until we solve that we would be providing services and housing for less money. There is no reason to come here to live if you are not willing to work, the cost of living will be too high for you.

Anonymous
My children were born and raised in Anacortes. All but 1 have been able to stay here, The housing market is too expensive for them to rent or buy a house in this town

Anonymous
We have seen that the only way to address homelessness permanently is to make more low and housing available. I strongly support building more apartments, condos, townhouses, and ADUs in all neighborhoods of Anacortes. Some could be designated for low-income residents, multifamily new construction in existing single family neighborhoods should have to meet strict design criteria including height restrictions to fit in aesthetically

Anonymous
My husband passed away feb 2022 which we have lived together for 20 years. He left me our condo, what is hard is the condo’s 4 of them, their water runs down into my live space where I have a sump pump. When he was alive he took care of it all for everyone. Now I have already paid $1,938 for a pressure value, now I will be paying with 4 other condos around $950 for me something else for 3 others

Anonymous
Friends and family members have moved to other areas because housing is so expensive. We all grew up here and hate having to relocate because of the expense to live here. Everything has sky rocketed here. Some friends and family members have stayed at my house in tents to try to save and find a place here. Anacortes is our home forever. needs a lot more housing for low income here so many don't have to leave

Anonymous
We need affordable housing in Anacortes so people who work at low paying jobs can live here

Anonymous
Our sons were move in Anacortes when they became adult and married, we assisted them to make a down for each of their homes.

Anonymous
We left King County to live in Skagit County as it is much more affordable

Anonymous
I feel so fortunate to have purchased a home when housing in Anacortes was more affordable. I still have mortgage payments, I have refinanced a few times - but they are affordable for me. I have always been rather frugal. I like the idea of small homes in a community setting. My home
now is small - but eventually it may be too much for me to care for myself and I will have to make other choices. I love living in Anacortes I love community here!

Anonymous
My son cannot afford to buy a house in Anacortes

Anonymous
I just heard a presentation on the MJB developers and we are thrilled to hear the scope of their project will include townhouses, condos, apartments, assisted living, memory care. Plus the hotel and event center, restaurants, a dock for guests to tie-up their boat while in the hotel or restaurant. So exciting! Finally something is being to happen on that beautiful piece of waterfront that the community can enjoy.

Anonymous
We have been looking for 3 years for a one story home with at least 2,400 sqft. Around the top of commercial, yes we have a realtor

Anonymous
I cannot find a housing to meet my needs. I am retired and living on a low income and would love to find a smaller place to live. Everything here seems to rise at $640,000 or more and very high HOA fees along with it. We are above the national average for property taxes. Who can afford maintenance on property where prices are so high.

Anonymous
Workers need local housing

Anonymous
As past president of Skagit habitat for humanity I am very aware of shortage of housing (affordable) in Anacortes for workers, please help

Anonymous
Fairly boring live alone take of myself yard house. in time would prefer a person needing home to live with me to help out but not yet

Anonymous
large discount on property tax

Anonymous
As a retired Anacortes business owner and a home owner, it is hard to grasp the unaffordability of housing in Anacortes. My property taxes have increased dramatically. Selling my (long owned) home would possibly be profitable in todays market and yet I would not be able to replace my living situation (and neighborhood) with a moderate one level home - availability is scarce my adult children and their families can no longer hope to find a permanent home in Anacortes. They have lived here their entire lives and now find themselves pushed out of the bid to purchase. Their respective wages certainly have not increased at the rate of the inflated market the rental market has become unaffordable as well, housing costs can be 50% or more of their income.
Anonymous
We have family members who cannot afford the rent and are helping them financially so they can afford to live here. Rentals are expensive and unavailable.

Anonymous
I work at a small retail and we cannot find applicants who can afford to live here. For my family (and for everyone) we need neighborhood green space and trees/vegetation. That is why a house with a yard is preferred. Multifamily should be required to provide green space and this is not happening with new developments in Anacortes!

Anonymous
"Where is the housing for the people who doesn't subsidized but work at low paying ordinary jobs like at Rite Aid or grocery stores, etc. The community wants workers. These workers and few can afford to live here. And now that community is more expensive - how do you expand to functions as a full service community? I am aware that waiting here for low-income housing year long. How can it work both now and in the future. Plus I am nor convinced putting everyone in small apartments together in the answer. What is the influence of habitat for humanity on others similar idea that create restedness in a place.

I am grateful on have bought houses about 6 years ago as they would not be able to buy in recently for these young people, they have full time upper level jobs."

Anonymous
None of the above. My husband was a builder - built all of our homes in the 90's

Anonymous
I live in a mobile home in Skyline because it's the only thing in Anacortes I could afford. In my job I meet a lot of tourists and a lot of people ask me about housing up here. They say they would love to move here but they cannot find anything they can afford. I also have friends who are renting and their rent got jacked up. One lady doesn't know what she is going to do. Another lady was able to get help from family.

Anonymous
My husband and I were care-givers for an 88 year old family member, She had been independent for years living at Creekside, then needed Assisted Living at Chandler’s Square for 3 years. In the summer of 2021 she became totally unable to use arms or legs and required 24-Hour-Skilled Nursing Care. She was mentally very alert, and therefore not eligible for admission to Light House Memory Care. Her need was for physical assistance for every aspect of daily living. What a challenging journey we undertook on her behalf.

In order to "hold" her at Chandler's Square we were paying them, plus private home care agency fees for 24-Hour coverage while we searched for an available Nursing Home bed. NO BEDS were available in Skagit County at that time. The top Medicare Rated Nursing Home in Mt. Vernon had literally closed several weeks before we began our search. Two others were not admitting due to COVID (the Life Care Settings in Mt. Vernon and Sedro Wooley). The local Anacortes SNF had no openings, but after touring we agreed with the low Medicare Rating it had received and are doubtful we would have placed her there. Despite years of paying into her Long
Term Care Insurance Policy, we could find no openings in Skagit County for her to get the care she needed.

We widened our search to Bellingham and fortunately located an EXCELLENT placement in a private room in Mt. Baker Care Center. She resided there from her July 2021 admission until her death in January of 2022.

We're a family who visited frequently and were deeply involved in all aspects of her life and care. Therefore we traveled the distance from Anacortes to Bellingham most days for the six months it was home for her. We were relieved she was safe and content, but regretted there were no similar choices closer to our home base of Anacortes.

It leaves large questions regarding our own aging choices in the future. We are wondering if we should consider leaving this area ourselves before we reach a time of increased care? As more and more retiree's move to this area the need is only going to increase. Does Anacortes have a plan? Are we actively recruiting any Senior Communities that provide a true continuum of all levels of care?

Anonymous
We have 2 of our adult children and their families that current are having a hard time with meeting their rental amounts. One of those families are seriously considering moving out of Anacortes as it is too costly to live here. This city really needs more lower income living situations to be able to help young families meet their financial needs while living a decent life.

Anonymous
Anacortes doesn't need more housing or developments! Roads are deplorable and cannot handle the huge volume of traffic. This should be a priority! We need to have stores, not more tourist specialty shops, but stores where it's residents can purchase basic things. Keep those tax dollars here, not 30 minutes away! (Fred Meyer, Target, etc.)

Anonymous
We currently have one elderly parent living with us because she cannot afford to live independently. We left Seattle area because of home prices 5 years ago. We have seen friends move away because of housing. We worry about our ministry staff being able to afford housing.

Anonymous
My adult daughter is 25 years old and still living at home with me because she cannot afford housing on her own. My son and his wife also lived with me for a while and eventually moved into a tiny house in Conway that my son built. They now live a house in Bellingham and they can barely afford the mortgage payments with both of them working fulltime.

Anonymous
Couldn't afford taxes in Seattle and moved here in 2010. Retired totally with covid. Current taxes here are 50% of what they were in 2010. Wow, here it is easy to see where the money goes - streets, water, street lights, etc. Still don't understand the marina for keeping the grass so short but that's ok
Anonymous
I only hear stories of young families who work full time (sometimes both parents) to whom home ownership is a distant dream, especially as the price of homes and even rent on Fidalgo Island seems to keep rising exponentially

Anonymous
I would like option for assisted living in town that is a bit upscale but still affordable with green space not a concrete jungle

Anonymous
Our children and grandchildren cannot afford to live in Anacortes

Anonymous
Any new multi-family units should fit in with the "'look'" of the town rather than cheap square bow metal looking buildings that would look more appropriate in an industrial park. Please plan at least 2 parking places for each unit

Anonymous
Encourage ADUs! They're cute, don't appreciate the face of the town. provide more affordable living spaces without having dense, "low-income cluster"... Provide more privacy and dignity for occupants who were wealthy. I'd have built my Granny Ranch idea many years ago - way more fun than the nursing home and still a community for elder that still have a little space and want their own space

Anonymous
Our son lives in our rental. He pays enough to cover taxes + utilities. If not for that he couldn't afford to live in Anacortes with his 2 children. He is employed fulltime.

Anonymous
"Staff shortages at island hospital mostly due to nursing shortage etc. I would guess that lower wage workers may not to work here due to affordability issues. BTW, how about some uniformity building design on commercial aesthetic no highrises, keep Anacortes quaint.

Anonymous
I got a Farmer's Home loan in 1984. When I got an inheritance I paid my mortgage off. While I have a subsidy recapture and a home equity loan, I am able to live comfortably on what income I have. However I know many people who cannot afford to live in Anacortes and there is no way I would be able to buy a home today.

Anonymous
A young AHS school teacher told me that he could only qualify for a mortgage amount that would allow him to buy a trailer home near Sedro Wooley, no options for him in Anacortes.

Anonymous
We could not afford to buy our house at current prices and we bought it only 4 years ago

Anonymous
I would like to live in Portugal, Spain etc for 1-2 years without having to be forced to sell my
home with an ADU. Removing the requirement for me to live there 6 months/year would allow me to do this. The exemption for owner occupied should apply to everyone, not just military.

Anonymous
As we get older, I fear we may get taxed out or our home

Anonymous
Yes, we have adult children in their 30s and 40s who would not be able to afford to move to Anacortes. Our worry is that we are retired with limited income and although our house is completely paid for, the value continues to rise and so do our property taxes. Will it come to the point where we are forced to move because our property taxes are too high for our budget?

Anonymous
We were lucky enough to find a fixer in Old Town that we’ve been working on for 12 years. We love our neighborhood, but we’re concerned about the homeless situation that seems to be impacting our security. I think that the roots of homelessness need to be addressed and hopefully accommodated.

Anonymous
Prices for food, transportation, taxes and other life necessities like medical, utilities are likely to force us out of our home

Anonymous
Most of my family could not afford to live here

Anonymous
Out of town assisted living for siblings

Anonymous
I believe in rent controls, especially for the elderly. I am lucky to have a home, if I didn’t I don’t believe I would find affordable housing / rentals in Anacortes.

Anonymous
We own a rental home in Anacortes since 2011 and have never had a problem w/ keeping it rented w/ great tenants. We feel bad about charging $2,200 monthly (including only landscape maintenance) for a 3 bedrooms, 1.75 bath home w/ detached garage but mortgage taxes + insurance costs, along w/ competitive rent in the city seems to call for that as a "reasonable" rate, also considering the lack of good rentals available. We support ADU's small homes + studio apartments, but we're also appalled by the neglect, disrepair and junk houses in the city owned by individuals who don't care, eg. 1113 17th ST)

Anonymous
It is nor the job of government to provide housing. Stop spending money on this.

Anonymous
We had to rent for 2.5 years before we found a home to buy in our price range. And even then, we went over budget $20,000. (We did get a great home, finally - thanks to our wonderful patient and persistent realtor)
Anonymous
I have watched young people have to move out of town because they cannot find affordable housing to rent or buy. It is increasingly hard to find handymen or other contractors. One big cause is lack of affordable housing. They all have to come from out of town.

Anonymous
We moved here 1/21 to be closer to our family. We love Anacortes, our neighbors and all of the wonderful community events. Our home was a purchase from an estate at a very reasonable price. We have no complaints on the housing market nor availability.

Anonymous
I am lucky to have purchased my first home 58 years ago and have upgraded several times. But I could not afford to buy a home today based on my retirement income.

Anonymous
Some of my children cannot afford the rent here and have to locate in a more affordable community. Due to not being able to drive they must rely on public transportation, friends or us to get them to medical appointments, shopping etc. Of all the new construction here it doesn't appear that any of it is affordable for them.

Anonymous
Parents and I have resided here since 1949!

Anonymous
I have family members that work in Anacortes and can live here only because they stumbled onto a basement space in someone's home. The rent was below market rate because they were remodeling upstairs. Not great conditions...but it's affordable.

Anonymous
Children who can't afford to move to Anacortes. Have seen friends or family members leave town because they can't find housing in their budget or which meets their needs.

Anonymous
No 4 and 5 story housing in the residential areas like the one behind Starbucks!

Anonymous
Yes - most of our money goes for taxes which the City keeps rising along with County and the Port since 1979. Retired 26 years - reverse mortgage so we can pay our taxes. Next big expense is medical and prescriptions - in doughnut hole. We have no smart plans! Do everything to our cost down. Most friends moved out of Anacortes. We were here in 1960. We stay out of downtown as much as possible.

Anonymous
If you can't afford to live in Anacortes, you have to live somewhere else. Low income housing doesn't really end up being reasonable enough supported by retail jobs. Housing is less expensive in other cities. Low income housing brings more of the wrong elements to Anacortes. We have enough. Let's keep our unique little town the way it is. What's with all of the 3 story or more buildings that are rentals or condos? Bigger town bigger problems. More traffic.
Anonymous
Utilities are a huge expense. City of Anacortes cost is very difficult to pay. 7% increase by City far exceeds 2.5% social security payment on my fixed income!

Anonymous
All of the above, considering our current economy and inflation. Maintenance and service have become very expensive.

Anonymous
I have a lot of friends 30-50 years of age who cannot afford to live in this town. I have employees who make 60k plus a year and they cannot find an affordable rental. This town also offers nothing for families, the only thing left is the pool which hasn't been updated ever.

Anonymous
Two adult children (one married), ages 33 and 35, cannot afford to buy a home anywhere, let alone Anacortes.

Anonymous
Having volunteered at the senior center, I know many that are having a hard time finding and maintaining affordable housing here.

Anonymous
Opinion: Anacortes should not be turned into an "urban sprawl" town with a lot of cheap housing. A lot of people have come and/or stay here due to its small town charm. If this changes appreciably, high tax base, people will leave.

Anonymous
I have had many senior friends having to move out of town due to high rent or lack of housing or apartments to meet their needs. Very sad at this age, they had to leave Anacortes. Anacortes needs more affordable apartments or small houses! Young adults cannot afford rent on their own, takes 3 young adults working to pay rent. That is sad. We don't need anymore million dollar homes, they are everywhere on the west end of town. Build affordable housing!

Anonymous
Our children can't afford to buy a home in Anacortes as much as they would like to.
Appendix B.2 - Housing Stories from Renters

Stories with people who volunteered to attribute their first name are listed first. Stories after that are anonymous. Incomplete answers are removed. Answers may be lightly edited for spelling or to remove offensive content. See a summary under section 3.4 of this report.

Ben
I was born in Anacortes and love it here. It’s been really frightening to see what's happened to the housing market and I don't think we'll ever experience home ownership unless we move out of the area completely which is a strong possibility. Rent in this town currently is what a mortgage used to cost 10 years ago. Unless you inherit the family home or have tons of money, you're simply not going to own a home here. It's really too bad. Anacortes is becoming a case study in gentrification. I will miss it here but that's how it is. Not just here though. Everywhere in the Puget Sound is experiencing the same thing. Off to Idaho for us and likely never to return.

Carla
My husband and I have lived here for 10 years. I live in the "ghetto" of Anacortes. 3 doors down is our local drug dealer that the police do know about.....but somehow he's lived here longer than us. We have found needles and caps on our front porch and sidewalk. My 1.5 year old son hasn't grabbed any of these....so all is well right?

Now to housing. Somehow my landlord is not a complete a****** and has kept our rent under $1,000. Mind you it is completely falling apart and built in 1910. The black mold or single pane windows (winter is freezing) aren't an issue since we have a roof over our heads. We definitely kick ourselves everyday for not buying 5 years ago, because it's obviously way to expensive now. I have friends in their 30’s that work and make decent $ but still have to have multiple roommates, or they still live with their parents.

I would like to suggest limiting the Airbnb permits you hand out. I have 3 homes in my area dedicated to Airbnb or Vacasa. They are split into units. How many rentals for locals could these be? They aren't even citizens of Anacortes who own these, they are wealthy people who see this as a "fun hobby". Cool.

It does give me hope you are actually taking a survey though! Please don't forget about the working class people in Anacortes. I am completely happy where I am at in life, but it is frustrating to see Anacortes taken over by Seattle....basically people that don't care about their surroundings and this is a 2nd or 3rd home to them.

Rant done! Thank you.

Cathy
My rent is below average for a 1 bedroom apt. I would not be able to afford any more than that.

Danielle
Living in a tiny cabin with only woodstove for heat/traditional rentals too expensive

Evie
I have owned and operated a thriving business in Anacortes for 12 years and still cannot afford
a house in town. I want to keep the shop here and hire employees, but I also want to be rooted in a forever home. Unfortunately, that seems further out of reach than ever right now.

**Hailey**
Not a long story- we are renting and are doubtful about our ability to buy a house, but would really like to.

**Joe**
It’s super expensive to live here our rent is almost same as living in King County again. Hopefully we will be able to afford a house here in next couple years

**John**
I’ve lived in Anacortes nearly my entire life (since 88). Housing is a constant issue for people my age and younger. The most discouraging thing is seeing my friends and peers, many of whom are creatives, artists, small business owners and entrepreneurs leave Anacortes because of the cost of living. When the vast majority of people owning and buying homes are wealthy retirees relocating and investors looking to rent out property (at insane prices), it’s only a matter of time before Anacortes completely loses its charm. Please remember, towns and cities that lose their young creative and entrepreneurial spirit lose their appeal to tourists, families and new business owners.

My wife, son and I rent in Anacortes. There is virtually no hope that we can own a home. This will eventually lead us somewhere else, which breaks my heart.

I’ve asked city council members, mayors and community leaders to take this seriously by incentivizing the development of small cottage housing, mixed use housing, ADU/tiny house friendly zoning laws amongst many other policies that places all over our country have succeeded in implementing.

It never seems to change and it’s discouraging.

**Kathy**
My husband is already retired and I am at retirement age, but still working part-time. We are extremely lucky that our landlord is very kind and has only minimally raised the rent since we moved in 5 years ago. We are paying well under market at this point. With our current income, I don’t believe that we would be able to stay in Anacortes if something was to change in our living situation and it worries me a great deal as I am 67 years old. My husband and I both strongly believe that there should be adequate support for providing affordable, safe housing options for people living in this town, especially since it is not in an urban hub. More multi-family housing is a good idea, but for instance the new multi-family development in Skyline and Oakes is renting at $2700.00 a month. Yes they are large units, but if new multi-unit developments are permitted they should consider/reflect folks on lower or fixed income. Thanks for your time,

**Lisa**
I have family and friends who moved to Oak Harbor and Mt. Vernon because housing is more affordable there.
Liz
I moved here in 2004 for work, rents and home prices were reasonable for a good community. Now all the starter homes are being torn down, rents are more than 25% of your income. Buying a house is unattainable at $400,000 plus. Now we are looking to leave the state all together in order to live in a place that we can purchase a home in the $200,000 range. Short term rentals also add to the problem of not being able to find housing and inflating the value of rent.

Mary
We moved to Anacortes 18 months ago to be closer to our daughter (she lives in Victoria BC). We love the energy in Anacortes but we moved right on the cusp of increasing housing and we now don't want to purchase a home and be house poor. There are homes are within our reach yet we are an older retired couple and we were fortunate enough to find a rental home 1/2 block from our church and 3 blocks from downtown Anacortes. We are very spoiled and want to stay in this neighborhood. The homes in this neighborhood are difficult to find and when they come on the market they are either more than we want to pay or fixer uppers. At this stage in our lives we don't want a fixer upper. Even the fixer uppers are expensive.

We were very blessed to find the home we are currently living. When we came here to decided where we wanted to live we found there was very little home inventory and when we were looking the homes were purchased before we could even look. The homes we are in came up for rent and we snatched it up even before we were able to move. Our landlord was willing to split a months rent with us so we were paying rent for a home we were not occupying but if we had not we would have moved here with no homes available to purchase or rent. At that point we realized we were meant to move! If this had not happened we would not have been able to move.

Mary
I rent because I don't want to own a house. I'm stable economically and I contribute to the town by volunteering and participating, but I often feel looked down on or less than because I don't own a home. The downside to renting is uncertainty. If my landlords sell my place or raise my rent, it is a really big problem, much bigger than it would have been in the past. It is now incredibly stressful to try and find another place in Anacortes that is close to affordable (and accepts pets).

Michelle
I work remotely so I don't care about location my husband works within Anacortes for the WA state ferries out of Anacortes. We love it here and want to stay but there isn't much for sale nor in a reasonable price. Will likely have to buy outside of Anacortes but we are hoping the housing market will dip down.

Monica
We moved to Anacortes to be near family after my husband became disabled 8 years ago. At the time we had declared bankruptcy because of medical bills and only now in the next year or so will that drop off our credit. We are on a fixed income that is provided through the VA because of my husband's disability. I can only rarely work part-time as I am the main caretaker
in our home. 8 years ago we could have possibly considered affording buying something in Anacortes but our income certainly has not kept up.

The home we are in would probably have sold for less than $300,000 when we moved in but is now valued at well over half a million. We are fortunate to have friends that own a rental property that they are renting to us for much less than they could be getting at market value. We do not know how long this will last for. My parents live in Skyline and are aging and it concerns me that I will not be able to continue to afford to live near them and support them as they pass through their golden years. The thought of moving again with my husband's health problems is also overwhelming. We would love to stay in Anacortes long term but don’t see that as a reality.

Nichole
We moved to Anacortes in 2002 when we were just 19 and 22 years old. We paid $625 a month for a 2 bedroom house. When we moved to our current house in 2012 we paid $900 for this 3 bedroom house. Since then our rent has gone up $1100! $500 of that in just the past 2 years!!

We have friends in their 60's that have been forced to move twice in the past year due to rental increases or property owners cashing in on the housing market.

I absolutely love Anacortes and planned to stay here forever, I would at least like to stay here until my oldest son graduates in 2 years but it’s getting so hard to continue to make ends meet. I had hoped to buy a house here but there is no chance I could ever buy a home here now and now I can barely afford rent!

It’s sad for myself and all my friends having to work 2 and sometimes 3 jobs just to survive and have no time for our families or to enjoy our beautiful community. I really hope things turn around for the better soon!

Rebecca
I have lived in Anacortes all of my 65 years, I was born in the local Library. I raised my family here. My Parents, my Sons and Husband are buried here. My Grandparents are buried here. My Granddaughters live here.

Now, through a series of unfortunate events, and a serious health issue, I lost my family home during the Housing Crisis of 2008. Since then I have been unable to find a way to be a home owner again. I have a job that I am able to do from home but it doesn’t pay enough to allow me to own a home. My health is so bad that I will never get out of this situation, in fact, it will get much worse once I am faced with retirement as my Social Security and small pension will not cover my current rent.

I had hope for more affordable housing being made available here in Anacortes but with our current leadership I feel less hopeful. We seem to currently be willing to welcome huge investors, Real Estate Agents who can turn around and build new office buildings on Prime Commercial blocks and families that build 3 and 4,000 sq. foot homes and drive $80,000 diesel pickups, but what of the rest of us who can't keep up with the cost of living, the record profits by the oil companies, the Corporate giants such as Kroger, Walmart and Amazon? Where are we to live?
Some Federal programs that are available for small businesses in economic need are not available to citizens of Anacortes because our community has too many high wage earners and properties valued much higher than the National and even local standard. We have become a community of the very rich and the very poor, I believe I know which ones will be here longer.

I am very sad by the things I see in my small town, very sad indeed.

**Rich**

Housing costs have risen more than we anticipated a decade ago.

**Robert**

My brother just recently had to move his family out of town since his landlord raise their rent by $400. He has been trying to buy a house here in town for the last 3 years but everything has been beyond what his family could afford. He now has to commute from Sedro Woolley to work here in Anacortes.

**Ryan**

Life long Skagitonian resident. 38yrs. My family and I moved to Anacortes and am renting a home now. We just found out that the landlord is planning to sell the home this summer. I work at a local shipyard and love my job and this community. But unfortunately there are no rentals in the area that fit our needs for less that $3000+ utilities a month. This unsustainable for our family so we are looking to move out of state. We would absolutely love to stay but the wages being paid in this area just aren't enough to justify the housing costs.

**Scott**

I am currently renting a house which suits my family perfectly and the rent has been reasonable for the 8 years we've rented here, but I am concerned that if my landlord were to sell the house or increase the rent to the current market level my family would be challenged to find a comparable home at an affordable price.

**Shane**

I have rented for years, it’s a cheap place however, my family has grown and there isn't enough space at my current home. We are a one income family because the cost of childcare is so high. My partner was working making $20 an hour and $18 of that $20 per hour went to daycare... We don't have the greatest credit from medical bills we couldn't/can't afford. It just seems we'll be stuck in this tiny house. I work at dci and commuted for years. I'd love to live out there but if I can't afford Mount Vernon how could I even consider Anacortes. I want my kids out of this school district too... a lot of gang stuff here....

**Teresa**

I have worked full time for the same employer for over twenty years in our community, however with the cost of living, my income hasn't increased much with it. I feel like the majority of people who work for minimum wage are being priced out of this beautiful community.

**Tina**

I am currently in government housing and disabled. If it were not for government housing I would not be able to continue living here. I am grateful! I sometimes feel stuck like I could never move out of here even if I tried. I am concerned about the extensive building taking the beauty
of our island away! As well as the many trees take down for development. I am grateful for the Anacortes forest lands!

**Travis**
I moved to Anacortes in 2017 and rented privately until my partner and I decided to buy a house. The only way we could afford to was with some creative financing options like taking out a personal line of credit for the down payment and then also borrowing the maximum while also taking advantage of being first time home buyers.

We amicably split in 2020 and I could only find a place to rent and which I ended up paying more than we were for the mortgage on our house. At the time they were also requiring first, last and deposit, so over $5,000 just to sign the lease. Neither one of us were able to buy the other person out of the house and were forced to sell. In 2021 I received my first notice that my rent was increasing from $1850 to $2000 a month, and then in 2022 I received a second notice that they were going to ask me to renew my lease for $2300 a month.

I had written a nicely worded letter to my property manager & landlord to see if I could negotiate by offering to do additional maintenance on the property. The PM let me know that the owner wasn't interested in negotiating. It was at that point realized just how unsustainable it had been for me to stay there as my neighbors who were also renting were only able to make it affordable by splitting the rent between 3-4 people in their units.

I had been interested in purchasing a home but things that were in my price range just 2-3 years ago had sometimes more than doubled in price making the situation extremely cost prohibitive to be able to finance buying a home even with a large down payment. The search began to find a new place and the only way I was able to locate a place to live and stay was to downsize significantly.

I love Anacortes because of its wonderful community and culture. It’s been a very warm and welcoming community and its access to amazing outdoor scenery and trails have made it a dream place that I had fallen in love and hoped to establish a family. That dream has been quickly started to fade due to the prospect that I’ll be able to find and afford housing long-term. I had to choose to find employment outside of Anacortes to be able to afford my current living situation and entering into my mid 30’s I don’t see my ability to advance my career fast enough to be able to catch up.

**Anonymous**
I’m working 3 jobs, all that pay well above minimum wage. I’m barely making ends meet.

**Anonymous**
We are in the process of selling a home in a nearby town and were able to secure an apartment in Anacortes for what we consider to be a reasonable price. The location, building, and view are all amazing. There do seem to be houses in the surrounding neighborhood that range from falling apart to spectacularly expensive. We could not currently afford to buy a home here, but there appears to be a range of options for the future, even if the average price is much higher than where we lived before.
Anonymous
Bork and raised here, moved away because it was too expensive to live. I am back now but rent out of a small house with roommates because I work locally. I have known countless folks who moved out of Anacortes because of the high cost of living, and dozens of people who live and work here and are unstable in their housing situations.

Anonymous
I am a newly single mom of 3 and what I can afford and space I need do not coincide, ideally a 4 bedroom would be nice but not for 3,000 a month. Even a 3 bedroom ranges from if you’re lucky 1750-2700. I get there is property tax increase and mortgage plus ins, home owners and places have to pay. Housing is incredibly hard to find with 3 kids no matter how well behaved they are, a lot of the housing problem is also caused by discriminatory property managers and owners. Reasonable family housing is a must if you want a well-rounded community. I see a lot of friends have to move out of town and our kids still go to school here because we all work here. I also understand owners have their own prerogative and can charge whatever they want, but there needs to be another affordable option for those who make decent money and do not qualify for assistance.

Anonymous
I am a single father who has his son 50% of the time. It is impossible to buy a home with a single income; in addition, the cost of renting is out of hand...greed. I make 4 times as much now them I did when I was able to buy my first home brand new just built in 1997 and that was working in the service industry. But yet I cannot buy a moderate home for myself or my son. Anacortes has always be high compared to other cities in Skagit Valley, but a little more is ok for the life style. I see new places going up in Anacortes; however, the price for the spaces are out of my price range...well they are priced for people who don’t live in Anacortes.

Anonymous
Can’t recruit quality employees as they can’t afford to move here or live here. Personally struggling to pay the rent on a home in town and banks won’t lend to small business owners. My rent is the same as a mortgage!! Rip off.

Anonymous
"I was deeply disturbed to find the "affordable housing" in the giant five story complex that the city approved is in fact just tiny, expensive 'luxury' housing. That was a betrayal of the good faith trust we put in our council and illustrates handily why developers should be kept far from any positions of power. I want to see an Anacortes that respects its actual existing citizens. "

Anonymous
My family & I were living in Anacortes until we were forced to move outside of Anacortes when the home we rented sold. We are still in Skagit as I work in Anacortes. The cost of living has gone up as well as everything else. My children still attend Anacortes schools as well. We’d love to be able to move back there. Housing cost and people unwilling to allow family pets makes it’s hard for many people.

Anonymous
I attempted to buy a home a few years ago for $330,000 which is very reasonable in the current
Anacortes Housing Action Plan – Public Engagement Report

market. However, I could not get approved for a loan due to the highest wage job I have ever had in town which was $17.00 per hour. Therefore I will never be able to own a home here where myself and my children have grown up. And I’m sure this is the case for most of my peers.

Anonymous
We are a Navy family who we’re looking for a safe and comfortable place to live with our children. The rent is double what we paid at our last duty station, for a house the same size. We are very concerned our rent will be raised at the start of next year because of the market here. There is no full day childcare here and medical services are almost impossible to seek without a long waiting period.

Anonymous
Moved to Anacortes in June 2018 with my two kids. Single mom going through a divorce. We moved into a small 2 bedroom 1.5 bath townhouse, with the idea of it being temporary. Covid hit and kids needed their own room to be able to have zoom calls for school, so I moved my bedroom into the garage. Divorce finally came through March 2022. Now struggling to be able to purchase a home that meets our needs and is within my budget.

My mom had a major stroke in Jan 2022. Assisted living in town is either too expensive, not able to accommodate her needs, or full. She’s about a 30-minute drive out of Anacortes."

Anonymous
We are renting at the moment and are looking to buy. Our work is such that we might be gone for different amounts of time. To make buying viable, we’d want to be able to rent out our place as a short-term rental, but Anacortes makes it very difficult to do that. I think it would be good to expand the short-term rental market in Anacortes, to help people afford their homes, when they are away from the area.

Anonymous
Moved from Oak Harbor to Anacortes thanks for Anacortes Family Center, moved in Launch Apartments on AFC grounds, into an apartment too small for my family with neighbors that make the entire complex feel unsafe yet AFC has taken no action.

Anonymous
Began renting in Anacortes three years ago. Our rent has been raised 9% two years in a row - now $405 over our original lease (and that's $405 a month). Not a lot of rentals available in Anacortes at our price point. We like where we live but wish we had more options available.

Anonymous
I retired and moved to Anacortes, staying with friends while I looked for a place of my own. The rent for a very small 2 bedroom apt. was $750 per month and was raised twice in 2 years to $1100 per month. I applied to the Housing Authority and after 2 years was able to get a subsidized 1 bedroom apartment which meets my needs at an affordable rent.

Anonymous
I have lived and worked in 15 years. My husband grew up here and I moved here when we got together. We have rented our whole marriage trying to save to possibly buy a house one day. We both work downtown, and would like to stay. Even with what we have saved we can't afford to
buy a house here. What we can afford to rent is not meeting many of our needs as a small family. We are afraid that all the young people who work and keep out town vibrant and full or art and work the jobs and the restaurants and coffee shops will also have to leave because rent and cost of buying homes is so expensive. They don't work together here.

There is no incentive to buy here because you can't. It feels impossible. I have several friends who have moved because they could not afford to stay here. My family is here, my heart is here but if something doesn't change I don't know how long we will be.

Anonymous
It is almost impossible to find a decent home to rent. If my landlord decides to sell the home I am in, I would not be able to find a home to live in, especially in the area I am currently in where I provide help getting my grandson to and from the local school while his parents work.

Anonymous
My mother wishes to move to town to be closer to my family - she cannot afford to do so even after selling her house in suburban Chicago. Many, many friends who have experience and interest in starting small businesses our town desperately needs have attempted to move here and find it simply impossible. Absolute lack of affordable rental options. We own a business in town and yet cannot afford to buy a house in town - if something happened to our housing situation, we'd be forced to take our historic Anacortes business elsewhere. It will not surprise me if, in a handful of years, town simply dries up because business owners/employees cannot afford to live anywhere near here. Density must increase around the town's core.

Anonymous
My spouse and I work in town and make good money. We started renting 6 years ago after finally being able to get out from under a mortgage on our house in Mt Vernon. We moved to Anacortes for a better/safer area for our family. After a few years and getting financially stable, we are now unable to afford a house that wouldn't require lots of work and still leave us “house poor”.

Our landlord has been very generous, allowing us to be able to save quite a bit, but house prices have been going up too fast for us to get ahead of it.

Anonymous
I have lived in the same apartment unit for over 8 years. I have always been able to afford my rent and pay it on time. I’m an excellent tenant who my landlord appreciates. The current owners are selling the property and the new owner is expected to increase the rental rate way above anything I can pay. Anacortes used to be affordable. You could easily find apartments under 1,000.00 month. Now, the cheapest rental is 1,400.00. Those of us who have lived here for decades and call this home are being forced out either to relocate, or to live in our vehicles. Most of us have full time employment, but the wages do not match the inflation. I also have friends who are facing the same challenges. Homes are being sold and tenants are being forced out with nowhere to go. This is not the Anacortes I know.

Anonymous
My husband was born in Anacortes, we both work and live here, and my husband's family is
from here, but many of our friends and family have moved away because of the rising costs of housing and not a match in pay. We have a family with small children and an adult family member we care for who cannot live on their own and we cannot find affordable suitable accommodations to meet our needs in Anacortes. We are considering moving out of state. We like the community and beauty of Anacortes but it is expensive. We have an unusual situation where the place we currently live is abnormally inexpensive, but it is considered a unicorn as housing is concerned here (anywhere really), and again, it is too small to meet our needs.

Anonymous
Born and raised here, my husband and I have 3 children. During lock down, we worked on our credit score to start looking to buy instead of rent. Now housing costs are so out of reach, and rent is becoming too much as well. The whole situation is depressing.

Anonymous
I do union organizing for Island. The sad stories I’ve heard about the wages not keeping up with the cost of living, while staff is being called “healthcare heroes.” They’re being offered 3.5% raises while the cost of living is skyrocketing. Coworkers living in tents on campgrounds and their spouses getting pneumonia because of the cold (and not being able to afford medical bills). Coworkers living in campers (like little pop up tent campers) on the outskirts of town- not even on campsites with their children unable to afford housing or daycare. It’s disingenuous and makes the people who do the hard emotional work at the hospital feel like their work isn’t validated. Meanwhile on the Anacortes Facebook pages people are like "well we can’t all live and work in Beverly Hills" the wealthy residents that probably donate to the hospital. We need affordable housing and we need the snobby geriatric boomers of this town the recognize the working class.

Anonymous
Having trouble finding two bedroom apt even at $2000 per month. WE need all levels of appts, not just low cost ones.

Anonymous
I have a good job and make over $100,000 a year and when I moved here in January, there were only two houses available for rent on Zillow/Trulia in Anacortes. I was forced to rent a 2 bedroom 1,000 sq foot house for $2,800 a month due to lack of availability. The second room has to be used as a closet. If I were to lose my job, I would certainly have to move immediately. I can’t imagine how people are making it that do not make at least $75,000 a year or living with roommates. I am not writing to complain about my situation. I am writing to help the people that do not make $100,000+ a year. It is impossible for them here.

Anonymous
I’m a single mom of three, I’m thankful my mom is giving me a great deal on renting in her old home. If it wasn’t for her I would not be living in the town I grew up in raising my kids in the town they’ve grown up in. I wouldn’t be able to afford a 1 bedroom apartment in Anacortes let alone 4. If she chooses to sell the run down (needs to pipes new electrical new foundation new building basically as the home was built in the 1930s) house I will be forced to move. I make enough to not ‘need’ assistance but I can’t afford health care let alone the cost of this town.
Anonymous
As a full-time working teacher in ASD, single parent in Anacortes I know the time will soon come that I can’t afford to live in Anacortes. I want my children to be able to go through the Anacortes school system. We love our community and friends but I can’t afford a mortgage here on my salary. Rents are going up. I am lucky my landlords haven’t raised my rent in 2 years but eventually they will or they’ll sell the home for a very large profit. I don’t want to leave Anacortes but I fear it’s just a matter of time.

Anonymous
We moved to Anacortes for my work, and because of my husband’s slowly progressive dementia. He has gone into memory care (Burlington) because there are no affordable options in Anacortes. His retirement and my (medical professional) salary has been spent for his dementia care (not covered by insurance, of course). I’ve recently retired and would like to downsize (from 1200 sf to 600-700 sf)... but in the 4 years I’ve lived here, the costs for the smaller places are even more than what I’m paying now.

Anonymous
Almost 2 grand for a one bed in Anacortes. Any young person that is from here physically cannot afford to move out of the house since there’s no shot you’ll be able to make rent. Add that to the fact that we have an influx of people from out of state moving here, it gets crazy expensive. The apartments that were just built has an owner from California, the person showing it is from California, and the people who have moved in don’t even have a job but sold their house in California. There are people in this town who aren’t of retirement age and don’t have a stockpile of cash that are from here and can’t afford a place to stay. It’s a joke.

Anonymous
Very challenging to recruit staff for business. Have had to move twice as rentals were sold. Rent went up 6 percent and will again. Bring forced out in next 1-3 years. Can no longer afford to buy housing. Same is true for rental even with roommate.

Anonymous
I am in my twenties still living at home with my parent. My significant other also moved in. We cannot afford to have our own apartment due to high living costs in the community. So we pay a low rent toward my parents rent while we save.

Anonymous
I cannot afford to buy a home and my rent keeps increasing making everything more difficult to pay for.

Anonymous
Housing is out of control in Anacortes. The last 3 times I had to move ( due to rent increases or sale of property I was renting ) if it were not for friends who had RVs I could live in on their property, I would have been homeless. I love Anacortes but cost of rent/mortgages are out of control, especially for low to mid-income people. This is a lovely town but it is getting priced out of reality for lots of people who work here.
Anonymous
Incredibly difficult to find a rental, and even more difficult to find one that isn't exorbitantly priced

Anonymous
We have employees who have lost long term rentals due to their rentals being sold for unbelievable prices. They had to move out of town because rentals in Anacortes are expensive

Anonymous
Housing is too expensive for families these days, especially those starting out on their own, or for newly graduated students or married couples. Those with disabilities have a harder challenge finding affordable housing of any kind.

Anonymous
I used to live in Anacortes as a renter until I got priced out several years ago. I support 2 people on just over 50k a year and we live at poverty levels with historic food and housing costs, often forgoing some basic needs so that bills and rent are paid. I love this community and it saddens me that I work here, but don't earn enough to live here now, and the gap gets bigger each year.

Anonymous
I sold my home in Anacortes two years ago and am renting now. I am fine renting as I get older and don't want to maintain a home, but I could never ever afford to buy back in if I wanted to. Policies that encourage maintaining adequate rental stock in the city are important.

Anonymous
The complete and utter unpredictability and inconsistency of property taxes (and significant increases) makes home ownership harder. And the lack of accessible housing, parking, shopping, and other services adds another challenge.

Anonymous
I moved here in 2010 and was lucky enough to find a place to live until I met my wife. We moved into a 2 bedroom rental unit in 2015 where we have lived comfortably until this year. Now our rent has suddenly jumped 35% while our wages have stagnated since 2019. We have a child and the cost of living has risen so considerably that we may not be able to keep up. Moving elsewhere is not quite hopeful either as we would be paying even more for less quality of living and in less desirable areas. We would love to buy and wish we were able to before covid hit but were never able to bring that dream to fruition. With exorbitant pricing and rising interest rates, it seems impossible without a large cash sum over asking. This simply is not possible for us.

Anonymous
If like to buy a bigger house for my family but there's no way to afford a house with a single income.

Anonymous
I live at the Anacortes Housing Authority (Bayview Apartments). Before, I was living with my mom and dad in Mt. Vernon and commuting to Anacortes to my job at Anacortes Safeway. It took me 1 year and 4 months to find an apartment in Anacortes to live closer to my job. The
wait time was reasonable and my rent is also reasonable. Bayview is conveniently located, not far from my work place.

Anonymous
We have considered moving because the cost of living here is too high, as a young family there's little opportunity to root here and be financially secure

landlord raised rent +$400 a month during the pandemic while my husband's boss cut his pay by 25% forcing us to find different work in order to pay the rent. Landlords should not be able to raise the rent to any amount they want.

Anonymous
Rent is so very high - wherever you go... owners are charging double of what the home expense are maker more money than what is necessary

Anonymous
My children have moved to Ferndale because they cannot afford Anacortes rent

Anonymous
Was paying $1,350 rent + all utilities - House was sold and had to move. Have 2 indoor cat totally discriminated against in Anacortes and a massage business semiretired forced to work as SS income is only $1,222/m. Found eventually a 2 bedroom on 10th street have to pay $1,950 plus $160 for water/sewer + gas + electric. All going to be 78 years old, don't know how much longer I can work, applied for subsidized housing. Found no vacancies on the list in Mt Vernon, Anacortes, Oak Harbor and I am #63 on the list for housing

Anonymous
I would like to see: every multi-unit construction project include a percentage of affordable units. There needs to be more housing for our service workers, seniors, and low-income residents. We could also ask habitat for humanity to build within Anacortes - maybe we could be creative about land for them to build on. We all do better when we all do better

Anonymous
"My entire family has left Anacortes because they cannot afford to live here. There is no good paying rate here. This town exists on outside money conclusion: people like me are being systematically squeezed our in favor of big bucks $. Health care is non existing here unless you are wealthy. Island hospital is totally dysfunctional!"

Anonymous
I am waiting for an Anacortes Housing Authority apartment

Anonymous
I live in 1 bedroom Anacortes housing, seen plenty of people leave because they couldn't afford to stay, I am and was while working below poverty level, lots of people can only afford $250 a month, I can never hope to have one of single family or cottage one bedroom never apartments because of cost being too high.
Anonymous
I have lived in Anacortes for over 20 years. I would like to stay because the health professionals know me along with many others in the community.

Anonymous
Senior citizen or families on smaller incomes can't afford to live in Anacortes. This has to stop. Build more apartments, triplexes, small ramblers at an affordable cost. We don't need any more million dollar developments in Anacortes, we have too many as is. Keep our seniors here or small families!
Survey Appendix C – Housing Construction Comments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question 17</th>
<th>Thinking about the previous question, why did you choose that answer? What are your hopes and concerns with new housing construction, especially multi-floor housing that could be affordable to people with moderate incomes?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Survey version</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Sorted by Question 16 answer choice (535 answers)</td>
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</tbody>
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Incomplete answers are removed. Answers may be lightly edited for spelling or to remove offensive content. See a summary under section 3.7 of this report.

Appendix C.1 – Answers from People Who Chose “Strongly Support”

204 comments

- We need affordable but sustainable housing. Multi-floor is ok in the right places and with consideration for the community surrounding the site. The city should be identifying suitable sites for development and planning these purposefully not just waiting for developers to take the lead. We need more purposeful landscaping in town. more trees, and shade not just more buildings with more tarmac parking lots for them. Opportunities are currently being missed for this. It is not just about the building but the area around the building that can soften the impact and be a positive addition by good tree planting and landscaping. I have not seen many examples of this in recent larger scale developments. you cannot find any shade downtown just parking lots with no trees.
- Towns that can house teachers, public safety officers, healthcare workers, etc. are more attractive as working places and probably find it easier to hire qualified applicants.
- Will these apartments be affordable for these individuals in Anacortes
- I want to have the ability to create community with those who live in the buildings. But we need to diversify our housing options to afford a stronger work force!!
- Everyone deserves a roof over their head
- We need to provide housing for these essential workers.
- I would like housing available to all and a mixed income community. However, multistory should be done in a way which maximizes a friendly environment for all as much as possible (not destroying views of other homes, off street parking, integrating publicly accessible pedestrian paths through green areas of the multi-floor housing properties (examples in Europe or some of our bigger cities), building so that sun reaches the yard or courtyard areas. In other words not building so high and close together that we loose the joys and psychological health benefits of our beautiful environment here.
- I am a human being who cares about other human beings being able to live. Why would I oppose affordable housing unless I was some kind of monster?
- A community cannot thrive unless housing is available for wide spectrum of family incomes.
- Working people deserve good housing
- Affordable housing options are good for the community.
• I feel strongly that Anacortes should not only be for wealthy people. I understand not everyone who wants to move here can, but I think it is important to have options available to more income brackets than the top ones.
• Younger people would be able to afford to live here.
• I want Anacortes to be a place with a diversity of incomes, races, and life experiences. I have friends who are close to being priced out of this town they love and contribute to, and contribute to. Losing people like that would be a loss for the whole community.
• Paying close to $2000 in rent while being told you can't afford a $1200 mortgage payment is just not fair.
• I desire afford housing for those who work in the service industry. We need options in order to have and keep employees in those industries
• Because if there is not housing for the work force in Anacortes they will move away, and there will be nobody to take care of you when you go out to eat, go to the hospital, fix the roads and cut your hair.
• I'm beyond tired of seeing all the huge single-family homes going up in Anacortes. We need to shelter people - more will be coming as drought and wildfire situations increase in other areas - and we need to think about how to do that while still preserving as much land as possible.
• More affordably priced housing is available to those who live/work here.
• Need for diversity and entry level housing options.
• Underground/rooftop parking should be included as part of all multi-story buildings to keep road ways safer for kids and secure parking for people's assets.
• It's important to have housing for all age groups and economic means to have a healthy community. This includes having a work force as well as inter-generational relationships.
• We need more economic diversity in town.
• Anacortes needs more affordable housing for those retirees who have lost their spouses, can no longer afford to live in a big home and need to live on their own &/or their retirement income no longer can pay for our taxes and utilities. And their friends and acquaintances reside in Anacortes where they've been living.
• The only solution to homelessness is having more housing available at all levels of the economy. I strongly support building more homes that are smaller, more affordable, and close to transportation and shopping.
• I was in this situation very recently and I think society needs to do more to help young people get established and build wealth
• I would hope that it would remain affordable, and not simply rise in price after a short while. Many of my coworkers in the food service industry struggle to make ends meet even when they work two jobs, and have a roommate.
• It would be good for the city to have affordable housing available. People who work here could then live here.
• Hope the community will support to allow younger families to live here
• People need somewhere to live. I would be happy to see zero 'luxury condo/triplexes/apartments' and all large-scale housing be dedicated to lower income needs. Those are the people Anacortes is letting down, and that really ought to matter.
• We value a diverse community.
• Multi-floor housing will help prevent homelessness and all its evils and help preserve our ACFL from developers.
• Because it means I have more options in housing. I could move from where I currently live.
• Unlike subsidized housing and full market priced housing which we have plenty of, "work force" housing has not been adequately addressed through appropriate zoning, regulation and development support.
• I have rented here since I was in my 20s and it is only by pure luck and personal connection. We need more housing for young families and those who cannot afford such expensive houses or rentals.
• I want my grandchildren to be able to live and work in town and I want our teachers, firefighters, grocery clerks and other working people to be able to live here.
• I would like to see affordable housing for Anacortes to be an economically diverse community.
• There's nothing magical about working in Anacortes, not if you're commuting in from Burlington or S-W. Living here, however ..... many would consider that a selling point when considering jobs locally.
• Affordable homes for everyone
• I don't want Anacortes to be a place where only wealthy people/retirees can afford to live
• This is exactly the kind of housing we need for people that have to work in Anacortes and that can't afford million dollar homes with a view.
• We need homes for people with limited incomes
• I would support this to give affordable housing to people who would like to live and or work in Anacortes. It keeps families together, brings in a needed skilled work force and would be fair to new families getting started.
• These are people needed by this community!
• We can't afford to take the NIMBY approach to what needs to be done.
• We need a diverse community. Financially, multicultural, multi experience.
• Our town has so many large single-family homes. I feel that this limits our beautiful island to wealthy individuals. We greatly lack diversity, young people, and families who want to live here. Offering affordable housing would contribute to our town. My concern would be that the top floors with the views would be saved for a few units. Rent would be too high and developers would get unfair tax breaks.
• To encourage diversity and offer local employers more opportunities to fill open positions.
• Need affordable housing in town!!!
• Variety of families able to live in our city.
• Short-term affordable housing (less than 3 years) for people who are in transition supports a more vibrant and diverse community. Have some concerns about obstructed views, and increased traffic for the existing neighborhood.
• I support a diverse housing neighborhood that is well designed—provided private outdoor spaces for most people, gardens and adequate parking.
• I think there is a need for this kind of housing, but I think it needs to happen in the industrial side of town and not in established neighborhoods that already have to deal with traffic/parking issues.
• No concerns
• Need housing for people finishing school, working locally, for young families and for retirees.
• Places for diverse income earners to live in the community.
• To be a balanced community, Anacortes must house its workforce.
• It’s an option that could allow us to stay in Anacortes.
• I support encouraging a diverse population in Anacortes.
• I think it is important for a community to have ample options for housing for people in all economic circumstances.
• that the people who work here can afford to live here
• I will ALWAYS be in favor of more affordable housing options in town.
• I think it is enormously important to the health and vibrancy of the community to provide a wide variety of housing at different price levels, so there are places for those in lower income jobs to live in the community.
• We need a community full of diversity and I come from a blue collar family. Every neighborhood benefits by having people of varying economic, cultural, and occupational differences. Life is boring when we’re all over 50 :-(
• I would want it to be appropriately scaled.
• It is important we support those critical jobs in our community since they are not paid what they should be paid.
• Jobs jobs jobs. The people living in these should be employed and contributing members to the community of Anacortes.
• Because the influx of huge, million+ dollar homes is ridiculous. This used to be a wholesome, worker-friendly town. If anything, I’d support a moratorium on McMansions and encourage vastly more affordable housing units.
• I like diversity in neighborhoods.
• Our teachers need affordable housing and childcare desperately.
• I believe in affordable housing in Anacortes.
• My family is who you these are designed for. Young families looking for a nice, safe, affordable place to raise children, work, and pay taxes. Affordability is a must.
• Folks that work in Anacortes should be able to live in Anacortes. There are areas in town that are conducive to these type of dwellings (have a few going up nearby where we rent).
• People need affordable housing. Get over nimby people.
• Like everywhere else, there is not enough affordable places for people to live. We should be ashamed of ourselves.
• Lower income (service industry) workers have a difficult time finding anything that they can afford.
• People who work for a living should have access to affordable housing to live and work in their community. It often feels like non-working people get all the benefits while not contributing to society.
• More affordable housing would bring more workers with skills.
• I think diverse and higher density housing is an important asset to this community.
• I don’t have a concern, I think it is important and needed.
• Communities need a broad strata of incomes in order to thrive, communities made up entirely of retired, wealthy people crumble from the inside due to lack of commerce per person. Statistically, younger people go out more, spend more in their community, and bolster the economy. Additionally, there’s evidence that if someone’s home is massive, has a gorgeous view, and has a big entertainment system, there’s less incentive for them to meet friends at a bar, have dinner at a restaurant with a view, or go to movies at the theater. Per person, wealthy people actually drain the economy more than they put into it. Having a range of economic status housing will provide vibrancy to the economy, as well as to the community.
• It is very important that our community has affordable housing for all who work or want to live here.
• I would strongly support more housing, but only if it’s actually affordable (30% of income or less). Putting up more housing that’s only affordable to a small rich population is sad and frustrating. The housing size should also be reasonable. Such as being priced “affordable” yet the dwelling is the size of a closet with no amenities.
• My hopes are that these options be provided to people who need the access to affordable living as a means to remove barriers to access quality of living at a cost-of-living-rate commensurate with our neighboring communities.
• My hope is that our community keeps and facilitates our valued art and creative community.
• I’m tired of seeing new construction start at $600,000. This is unsustainable for our general working population that can barely afford to rent in Anacortes but want to stay for the long haul. I’m also tired of seeing reasonably priced homes go to investors who won’t live there; they will rent it out or make it in to an Airbnb. This is not sustainable.
• I would like more young people to be here in Anacortes, to balance out the older community. We need to be a community that supports young people and listens to their ideas and wants, regardless of whether they pay city taxes, work here or plan to be here for a long time.
• Vibrant communities contain a mix of incomes, ages, and professions. It is also more environmentally sustainable if people live in smaller homes and closer to where they work.
• This is a no-brainer. We must pursue this option to make our town more dynamic and diverse. Old, rich, white folks are and will continue to make Anacortes a desolate wasteland.
• Adequate parking. Visually appealing and not the "big square box" look.
• My hope is anyone that works in town could live here. My concern would be more apartments and less new single family homes
• I fall in the category of healthcare worker and nursing. Teachers, and restaurant workers and etc. all work supper hard, yet may not be able to keep up with the financial housing crisis. This would help us all out a lot.
• It is a poor image that we expect to have workers, teachers, etc. to provide us with excellent care. But we can't provide them with affordable housing so they have to commute. I believe the lower middle income families are being phased out of Anacortes with these rent hikes. Anacortes should be for all, not just the wealthy
• Anacortes is a wonderful and beautiful place. We have a kind and very generous community but many of us are old, retired and have a good income. I think any town should be a place where our teachers, service workers, housekeepers, mechanics etc. can afford to live so that they do not have to drive 20-30 minutes to come to work in Anacortes. A community should include citizens of all ethnic, religious and income levels.
• People need housing. I'm not sure why anyone would oppose that for anyone. It's a basic human right, especially if they are working hard to have it. But even if someone can't the housing crisis affects everyone.
• High density housing seems like one of the only ways to get us out of the great scarcity/expense of housing in Anacortes. I understand not wanting a "high rise" in a neighborhood but there should be some place in the city where such setups are permitted. If it wasn't for the apartment block I currently live in, I would be living 30+ min out of town before I could find affordable housing elsewhere. I am the only person in my place of work (located in Anacortes) who has been able to find housing in the city limits.
• I think it is important for all communities to be affordable for all levels of income.
• Young people who work in town cannot afford to live here on their own.
• I have 2 employees at a local healthcare organization who currently live in hotels in town because access to affordable rentals are scarce, low income housing only applies to women or families so they don't qualify, and they deserve to have real homes when contributing to the health of our community.
• New construction should match the personality of the neighborhood and not be out of place meaning a limit on how big or tall it can be it where its placed.
• Not too tall. Limit at 4 floors, not 5. Each unit occupies only one floor, instead of townhouse style, esp. 3 stories. Architecturally in line with the current neighborhood.
• These are necessary, but small homes and single family houses are better. Most people hate living in apartments.
• Make "Can't-Afford-Us" accessible to valuable community members.
• I'm a teacher who moved to the community 8 years ago and struggled to find housing for my small family. We ended up purchasing a “fixer upper” but would have preferred to rent and save up. I now work with younger teachers that commute from Bellingham, Sedro, and Burlington.
• Single adults and families need to have a place to live. It shouldn’t be the norm for college graduates or young adults to have to continue to live with their parents simply because they can’t afford their own place to live.

• People can not afford to live in Anacortes any more. In my opinion we need to do anything we can to bring in new housing and try to lower rent and home owner prices as much as humanly possible. Or Anacortes will become just be a rich people’s retirement community.

• Affordable housing for recent college graduates is necessary to maintain staffing as opposed to hiring staff who commute, gain experience, and leave for a position closer to home.

• It is important to have more affordable housing options in Anacortes and on Fidalgo Island, in my opinion.

• Strongly agree that increased density and increased supply results in more housing options affordable for the average person and should be encouraged where zoning allows. Many people complain about lack of housing and then go NIMBY when a project occurs near them.

• I think that is our best, most logical solution.

• Keeping town diverse.

• Those who work and/or were raised in Anacortes should be able to have adequate, affordable housing here.

• Build Smaller units, no more than 2 stories.

• People cannot afford to live in this town.

• That we will be a community of diverse income/age members. We cannot expect to have diversity without providing housing options that work for different groups.

• I don’t like the use of nurses for affordable rent. Nurses make a lot. Let’s look at hospital and medical centers (like nursing homes/skilled nursing facilities) and their support staff- their housekeeping, lab, nursing assistants, surgery techs, dietary, registration, billing... these folks who do hard jobs need affordable rents. Nurses make a decent salary/wage. Let’s look at the staffs that really supports the community. These people need affordable housing that isn’t a hundred year old former bungalow barely updated and made into apartments. They need spaces they can relax in and feel proud of.

• The more apts the more stable the cost and availability

• I think I have somewhat of a bad image of the low-income house complexes

• Not very concerned. I like people of all ages. I do know that parking and noise is a concern. Being flexible is very important and we must allow people to be people.

• because there needs to be affordable housing, even for those that aren’t ready or able to buy a home

• Because Anacortes shouldn’t just be accessible to people who can ‘afford’ to live here - everyone should have access to living in this community because of jobs, school, community resources, etc.

• People who work here should be able to afford to live here. Prices are ridiculous in Anacortes.

• People need to be able to live near where they work.
• Moderate income residents are critical for our community.
• There is not much room to add more lots for housing, so the best option is to build up. We need to attract more moderate- and low-income people to town so there are enough workers.
• People working in Anacortes should be able to live here too
• My children could afford to live here
• Because the wellbeing of the community, especially young people, is more important than getting a couple extra bucks from selling my house someday. I don't care if an apartment complex somehow decreases my home's value by a percentage point. My home's value is that it's a safe roof over my head. Treating a house as an investment account has done irreparable harm to young people, because older home owners don't want any minor thing to impact their "investment," and they start actively denying opportunities to others.
• I feel a community should be able to have housing available for people who provide service to the area but are not high earners.
• Because I work at a restaurant. Though as a restaurant employee I know our teachers make double if not triple what I make. Even if I made 10k more I would have a more stable house over my head.
• People need to live where they work
• My biggest hope is for there to be diverse options for community members. I would also prefer that when new places are built, there is an intentional plan for creating units that are attractive with a common aesthetic.
• Needs to be large enough for families with children and open to pets so that families don't have to leave a beloved member behind
• Hope for more housing options, but am concerned with high-rise structures. Cottage-type housing would be ideal, where there could be arrangements for shuttles or drop-offs from grocery/hardware/pharmacies.
• We need places in town for younger people to actually be able to stay here and stop the town from becoming more of a retirement town.
• more options for me.
• It is important to have employees to support our businesses.
• Without housing affordable to people with moderate incomes, the jobs associated with those incomes are more difficult to fill. (equity & diversity)
• I work for a homeless shelter and I believe everyone deserves affordable housing.
• With the prices of rent and homes right now, I support any housing assistance to those with moderate/low incomes.
• all people deserve to have a safe affordable place to live. We need more mixed use neighborhoods.
• WE need more housing for lower income earners.
• More affordable housing is needed.
• I support it because I have a 16 year old son that has a job and goes to school here and at this point I don't think he would be able to move out on his own due to the cost of housing here.
• Anacortes is a beautiful place to live and work, but it needs affordable housing to keep professionals and service workers in the area.
• We need places for a more diverse demographic of citizens to live (and work) if we are going to be a healthy and sustainable community.
• There needs to be affordable housing for all.
• That it would continue to be an affordable place to live for people who live and work in the community or surrounding communities.
• Our communities desperately need housing, and I am flexible with the use and development of the land
• help people who can't afford expensive properties
• Everybody deserves affordable housing.
• Anacortes is turning into a retirement town, need more family wage jobs and affordable housing.
• I value diversity in our communities and schools.
• A diversity of people are important to keep a community strong and it's necessary for those people to have a place to live. There’s too much NIMBYism happening these days.
• I want our community to be vibrant, diverse, and growing, and not just retirees.
• We need to be able to house the people who work here. We need to have lower cost housing. We need more diversity of residents.
• This is a huge gap in housing. Single homes for single people is very hard to find.
• House mid to low income people! Most of what is available now is very expensive.
• People who work in Anacortes should be able to afford to live in Anacortes. If not, we will have labor problems. Retirees with modest portfolios should be able to afford to continue living in our community. I am a teacher hoping to retire soon. I have saved and planned but my modest pension will not allow me to stay in Anacortes.
• I want to see more living wage-affordable housing. I want to see smaller houses and multiple family dwellings.
• More affordable housing for local workers. A LOT of my employees commute from out of town due to housing costs.
• I am a single low income mother with no outside support.
• We need to make housing more financially available to potential residents of Anacortes.
• work force housing and senior housing
• Bringing educated people, aspiring for success to Anacortes can only increase the quality of living here. Having quality affordable housing and jobs is key to that end.
• Diversity is desirable
• People who work here need the option of living here
• We need to have a work force that lives where they work.
• We need housing for all.
• Somehow, housing has to be more affordable in Anacortes.
• Working hard should be enough to be able to live here.
• That they are truly affordable
• Affordable house needs to be sprinkled in with high end homes to build communities and foster growth for all of Anacortes. If you put all "low income" families in one area, it has a negative effect on the town as a whole.
• I would like to see young people or people with lower incomes be able to live here
• There is a housing shortage and having apartment complexes that are nice and affordable would help so many families.
• Building a diverse community in our city, keeping people here to live and work, requires us to rethink the footprint of our short and long range growth goals. While I realize affordable is very different than low income, both are needed right now. My hope is that we create a welcoming, thriving community that supports and healthy work/life balance for people of all ages.
• Options that make our beautiful town accessible to many incomes and diversities.
• These are some of the hardest-working and who make the most valuable contributions to our community livability.
• Hopes = people could live AND work in Anacortes
• Vertical construction is the easiest way to improve density and realize efficiency in development.
• Been there, done that.
• Rent affordable to those who need it.
• I work in healthcare and I am hardly surviving. My rent is 1400+ my child's daycare is 1200 plus every other expense. This is the town I grew up in but sadly I will be forced out soon.
• I know so many hard working people who want to contribute to our community but can't because of the inaccessibility of nice, clean/safe, affordable housing.
• It's necessary for this community to draw in skilled labor in order to service the needs of the more affluent residents.
• Living space should be made available to people in all income ranges and whether they be short term/transient residents or those looking to settle here. A diverse community is a healthier community.
• Density in town is the only way to preserve forests and farmlands.
• As long as the building met height restrictions and did not include bonus floors etc. so as to be out of scale with neighboring buildings, I would have no objection. We have many such apartment buildings in town already, and they fit in just fine.
• Need to walk the talk of housing affordability. Need to provide an alternative voice of reason against the inevitable NIMBYs (who we saw come out against the 5-story development on O Ave.)
• As a single father I'd rather die than get trapped in some welfare apartment. Figure it out.
• I think that we need to accommodate greater housing density. We also need more affordable options for middle class and early career citizens. As long as the project is designed to "fit" the esthetic of the neighborhood, I'm good with it.
• In order to have a diverse community. Our town would stay lively and vibrant.
• I am of the demographic it references.
• I want Anacortes to be a community that is a good place for all residents of various backgrounds.
• something young people can afford so Anacortes doesn’t turn into a town of old cranky boomers (if it hasn’t already)
• Anacortes is on a island, growing "up" instead of "out" is not only practical, but necessary. I am 100% in support of multi-unit, multi-income housing. I lived in a 40-unit apartment building like this (in a different state) for 10 years, and not only was it safe, I had a variety of neighbors from all over the world. People who are afraid of what a building like this could do to their neighborhood have probably not experienced firsthand the positives that this type of housing can provide. It is incredibly selfish to prevent and/or lament this type of construction, and can end up pricing out the very people who can keep this town afloat (college students, service industry staff, etc.). Anacortes needs new lifeblood and these types of units can provide the town with new people and families.
• It would be very advantageous for adult college age children of families to be able to realize housing locally. Lower wage earners starting out fill the service jobs here and commuting is too much time and expense. Even neighboring communities’ rents are too high anyway. One important factor, though, would be to keep buildings from dwarfing neighboring homes and obstructing views.
• Anacortes needs more service workers and younger citizens. They not only would help the current citizens by providing essential services, but help the economy as well.
• I think Anacortes has to come up with some affordable housing. It is so easy to say once you have your home that you do not want to see any additional density in the area but you wanted to make sure that they made room for you.
• There are always concerns with multi-floor apartments, aren’t there. After all, people are people and there are always some bad actors in the crowd. That being said, if the vetting process for rentals is thorough, the bad actors should be few and far between.
• Yes, yes, yes! We need affordable places for middle to low income workers to live, and doing it through higher density is the key. I would rather have higher density in town and preserve our forest lands than see more big homes with large lots take over the wilderness. European cities, even small ones, have followed this model, and it is nice to have almost everything be walkable. My only concern is that the rents would creep up too quickly because of the current standard and landlords trying to eek every penny out.
• So needed.
• I think this town needs more apartments and I’m fine with them being added to my neighborhood.
• My hope is that Anacortes goes more vertical and that financial incentives are in place to create affordable workforce housing

Appendix C.2 – Answers from People Who Chose “Somewhat Support”
117 comments

• Location and size are important factors
• There are multiple multi-floor housing units in my neighborhood and a few under construction so I'm already comfortable with them. Most, however, aren't truly affordable as there are no rent control laws in place to enforce on promises made at the permit level.
• Largely not an ideal housing situation as apartments can be noisy, cramped, little available private space outdoors, and not to mention very non-aesthetic for Anacortes neighborhoods.
• I feel this type of housing project would lower the value of my home
• I live several miles from the center of town. The homes in my neighborhood are not where younger people would want to live.
• If its multi floor family home I hope it good quality due to no one likes to hear people walking above them. I'm concerned with cheap quick fix builds that eventually will have a myriad of problems and lack of sound proof flooring will be a deterrent.
• Extra traffic, noise, upkeep of premises
• Having affordable housing for new family and young people is desirable to help town grow
• I support affordable housing
• My HOA would not allow that type of dwelling.
• Multi-family housing requires the correct infrastructure to ease traffic congestion. Noise mitigation must also be considered for these projects. Ample parking is a must.
• Apartments are often unattractive and cheap construction.
• Don’t like tall apartment buildings blocking the views on the island.
• Honestly it would depend on the location and if my home was in an area that had a view but now my view is gone from a tall building being placed there. Also it would depend on the pros and cons of one being close to a home I already purchased, if I was a renter I wouldn’t feel as I had a day being it’s not my property.
• My neighborhood is close to the water. Neighbors would be upset if it blocked views.
• I might be able to afford it and may not need roommates.
• I support multi-family housing, especially in and adjacent to the central business district. I live outside of that.
• I would be concerned about the income gap and folks trapped in low income project housing.
• Depends on where it’s located
• Affordable housing needs to be available in Anacortes, but zoning regulations should insure that a 5-story apartment building isn’t sited next to a single-family development. A ‘terracing’ zoning plan which graduates housing density should be employed where larger single-family homes are adjacent to smaller single-family homes on smaller lots which are adjacent to cottage homes which are adjacent to duplex/triplex homes which are adjacent to townhomes which are adjacent to multi-story apartment buildings.
• Design must be consistent with the character of the existing neighborhood. No high-density multistory structures in an area of single story detached homes.
• It depends on where in the neighborhood the building would be located. I don't want it to block my view of Mt. Baker.
• I do worry that the elevation of multi-floor housing in certain areas will obstruct the openness of views for all members of the community, including homeowners who have lived in the community for a long time. I have seen this happen in several new building sites and it is heartbreaking. I don’t want Anacortes to lose its island vibe.
• I think that type of housing is necessary to support local businesses and infrastructure (e.g. schools, governmental operations).
• I would be sad to see trees taken down to build an apartment building.
• I would hope that the location was logical for this type of building. There is a current building complex off D Ave and I think that is logical.
• Blocking views would remove value from my home. Other than that, I am supportive of larger multi-family units.
• Would support as long as it was a reasonable sized place that fits the neighborhood
• This is an island with limited space. We must have a desirable balance between a comfortable town and the number of people to do the jobs. This been not be a little Seattle.
• I like having space and quiet around me and not on busy road. Multi floor apartment brings extra noise and traffic.
• I like the idea, but am leery about the implementation. How do you handle tenants who meet the criteria for moving in, but then do not.
• it would depend on location and impact. Having affordable housing is essential, but it needs to be designed in such a way to maximize privacy and minimize noise, and environmental impacts
• No concerns except inconsistency with the quiet surrounding neighborhood.
• Anacortes needs affordable housing, but housing without improved public transportation would only create more street parking and congestion.
• Define moderate income. Developers are building multiple unit homes now but are charging prices that moderate income people can not afford. They will charge as much as they can.
• Multi-floor housing can mean many things. In Old Town, I would hate to see a building larger than 3 stories, or one that takes up an entire block. Also, we have a few multi-family units in the area, but they are not kept up well and tend to look disheveled.
• Multi floor housing needs to be appropriate to the neighborhood. No more 5 story monoliths! That said, I support 2 - 3 story buildings appropriately situated with neighborhood input.
• I would strongly support this in concept, but I would want such a project to be sited so that it did not block sunlight to, or views from, my property.
• Accommodate growth
• I want there to be more affordable housing, but I don’t trust developers/landlords/realtors to actually keep pricing low, especially if the housing market stays hot. I also worry a bit about a big ol' building and a bunch of new cars changing the feel of my neighborhood and blocking the light. It’s more the light than the view I’m concerned about; we try to grow a useful garden. But I would really love for there to be an apartment nearby that my mom could move into, that we could walk to.
• provided there was sufficient parking and enough landscaping around so that it has a pleasant appearance.
• I recognize the need for affordable housing in our community but I am also concerned about population density.
• Would not want such a building INSIDE my neighborhood of single family residences.
• If it is actually for teachers, mechanics, etc. and not for the non-working I would support it.
• More housing for lower-income people is a desirable outcome and preferable to housing in aging and deteriorating buildings.
• I like my privacy and being connected with neighbors.
• Location mainly. Our streets are so busy and often drivers do not pay attention to signs, etc...so not wanting housing to add to the noise and confusion in already too busy neighborhoods. So it would be ideal if there was ample parking and prices that folks could actually afford.
• Renters and landlords don’t generally take care of the property as well as resident homeowners so the area may severely degrade aesthetically. Rules requiring landlords to uphold minimum standards may help (for example don’t leave lawn care up to the renters).
• I would like to see these projects include features that support architecturally pleasant appearance, plenty of off-street parking, limitations on unsightly personal "stuff" (bbq's, bikes, kid toys etc) enforceable regulations on behavior (noise, loitering, parties, etc.) and require property owner to maintain aesthetically pleasing and clean exterior.
• concerned about traffic increase in neighborhood
• I would hope it would attract people who would take pride in their home and surrounding property. We have an entire block of homes now near us that are just junk yards and a mess. This devalues our homes.
• Concerns–parking; crime; congestion; negatively affect the value of my home; block my view.
• I like that my neighborhood has low density. To add a lot of people, cars, and barking dogs would really change the current serenity.
• Traffic and crime
• I have a view of Mount Baker and the water, a structure could easily eliminate my view and worse cause a feeling of canyoning my property. We have significant elevation gains that would lesson loss of view and should be implemented for potential development not just a grid pattern for simplicity and/or convenience.
• I strongly support affordable housing but of course permits need to respect key elements of a neighborhood. A multi-story building placed even carefully in an existing single family home neighborhood MUST have adequate onsite parking. If this type of residence floods the adjoining streets with parked cars preventing homeowners from parking near their own home this is both a safety problem and promotes unhappy neighbors.
• I live in Skyline, so this question does not apply.
• Was hard to answer without the specifics of location (does it make sense economically/geographically), building design, transportation and parking logistics.
• multi-floor options I've seen recently are boxy, unattractive, and don’t fit in with existing neighborhood structures. Any more than 3 floors is obtrusive and that should be the MAX for any new buildings.
• concerned about aesthetics in the neighborhood and higher density housing
• Case by case situation and code compliance
• That it fit in the character of the neighborhood and kept a connection and respect for the environment. (Not turn Anacortes into a city)
• I would be concerned that services and infrastructure (sidewalks, etc.) are not adequate in my neighborhood to support increased housing at that density. If it was going to be next to my home, I would be worried that a tall building would block my property’s access to sunlight.
• I completely support housing for these types of folks but I have concerns about aesthetic attractiveness of buildings and obstruction of views, loud party types, and aggressive neighborhood drivers,
• Not sure it would ever happen.
• My concerns are regarding infrastructure, or the lack thereof. I would potentially be concerned with losing the privacy of my backyard should a multi-floor apartment be proposed for nearby.
• My immediate neighborhood is pretty small. We are down by the bay in the industrial area. If they put something in the marina area I would definitely support it if the marina goes along with it.
• I would support it but not in the middle of nowhere or in an established neighborhood then it really would not work.
• we need apartments but old town doesn't seem like the proper setting for them
• My only concern is height and blocking of current residents views. I am definitely in support of multi unit housing.
• I strongly support housing that is 1-3 stories, but 4, 5, or 6 story living spaces is absolutely bad idea for Anacortes. I don’t think anyone on the city council or mayor would want a 4-6 multiple story living space next door or across the street from them. I don’t believe Anacortes with high skylines would be a good fit. How about building 4-6 story apartment buildings near Washington ferry terminal or skyline area and connecting it with public transportation for shopping and schools.
• Depends on location, number of levels, on street parking & proximity to public transportation
• I understand that more housing options are needed. However, I don't want my neighborhood to get too congested.
• It would depend on the repercussions that may occur by building such housing. View inhibiting, parking availability, etc.
• Since Anacortes IS a retirement community we definitely need housing for service workers. It is too far to commute and too expensive for service workers to commute. Public subsidies or higher wages are required to support workforce housing. It is my
opinion that even if 5 story apartment buildings were built all over Anacortes, they would not be affordable. Just work on supporting the Anacortes housing authority and prioritize folks that work in Anacortes. No one has a right to retire in Anacortes. Service workers should not have to commute 30 to 50 miles to work in Anacortes. Retired folks should live where they can afford to live. Not in subsidized housing in Anacortes

- Old town does not have a HOA and the city enforces little to nothing in my neighborhood for existing and new construction.
- I would need to know more details
- Overly tall and style that doesn’t fit with design of the neighborhood.
- I realize the entire community needs to find housing, no matter the level of income. But, I am an introvert, so too many people around me make me nervous.
- Cap on building height so it does not block views of existing neighbors. Use of multi-floor housing for affordable housing, not as vacation rentals that drive the market up without providing locals with housing (Airbnb type).
- I’m concerned what “affordable” really means.
- most of these people would have to commute to jobs to be able to afford to live here, parking seems to be a problem with these types of units-not adequate amount
- There are locations where this would work well, and locations that should remain the same as today.
- It would be nice to keep our water view and sunlight for our garden. Other then that, I’m all for it!
- This is hard to answer because there is zero chance our neighborhood will be downzoned to allow for this density. Thinking about the city as a whole, there is a large area on the south side of town with a minimum 15,000 s.f. lot size. If this was changed you could fit 4-5 homes on this size parcel. Any multi-floor apartments need to consider the surrounding neighborhood and would be best downtown or on the east side of Commercial where you would expect higher density.
- I’m concerned with the development of areas that the public use to view the beautiful scenery we are blessed to have. Example: skyline marina development.
- Not sure how these apartments would fit in a neighborhood, parking issues, building heights, etc. Better many units of this types and others located between Commercial and R Ave and like areas. Going high 5 stories - Paris City of Light concept - higher density with lots of public transportation including connecting old downtown with the other California downtowns.
- I ardently believe that Anacortes needs affordable housing and a lot of it, AND, to be entirely honest, like most folk, I have a bit of NIBY in my view. An increase of on-street parking would bother me.
- I think housing is requirement for living and everyone should be able to afford a place to live. Unfortunately I don’t see affordable housing being available to the mentioned above, it is more for people getting out of jail, recovering from a substance, or struggling with mental illness. Unfortunately that crowd makes me nervous to have close to my home and my children. I don’t like to feel uncomfortable in my neighborhood.
• Already living next to apartments that used to only house adults. Changed a few years ago and now we cannot enjoy our quite time without kids screaming from 9am to 10pm. Our neighbors are mostly over 60. Playground for children. Noise restrictions.
• I think we have two choices, either we say we don't want affordable housing, or we do. If we do, the only way to make more affordable options is to increase density and supply.
• A variety of housing options is important to include multi-floor housing, ADU's, cottage housing as well as detached single family homes.
• Parking for the tenants not on the streets, it could take up parking in the front of my house.
• Not much undeveloped space remaining and limited roads in and out could present traffic and safety services issues.
• Very supportive of the effort, but would want to endure it didn't have a negative effect on ACFL (I'm nearly surrounded by forest), and they covenants were written to codify upkeep and "neighborly" expectations for new tenants (similar to HOA rules).
• Needs to be safe - for instance apartments near a school - what is the screening process. Keeping apartments away from schools I think is smart and I would 100% support this type of housing in places as long as they are not near schools or where kids gather. Too many risk factors nowadays
• There is no space for such housing where we live.
• I think we have a lot of subsidized apartments here already, but people just stay and don't try to improve their income.
• I would be interested in how it is designed. Will it be an attractive building where people want to live? Or will it be cheaply constructed and be a place where people will want to move out as soon as possible?
• Tall (over 2-1/2 stories) is out of place in our town. Anacortes is a small town and not Seattle or Bellingham. Tall apartment buildings dwarf the surrounding homes and casts long shadows over those homes, yards and sidewalks.
• I love the idea of breathing new life into the town, I would just be concerned with upkeep and having respectful neighbors
• Selfishly, I wouldn't want to lose my view. Also, it's great to build affordable housing, but the management of the housing needs to be held to high standards and not let a complex become a slum just because of the lower rent.
• I feel it may help with the housing problem and because we live on an island.
• 2 and possibly 3 story buildings fit in but taller buildings block views, and are not in character with the existing single family neighborhood. Note, there are already townhouses and apartments in the neighborhood (probably not inexpensive.
• I would want to ensure that the design was people-oriented (as opposed to some corporate idea of efficiency) and encouraged the residents to walk around and otherwise engage with the community.
• Depends on where it is how it's built what it looks like. I'm totally against over four-story buildings in Anacortes unless it's down by the water
• It would depend on the details of the building, but I would generally be in support of it. New building needs to be well planned in order to accommodate the increase in density, and decisions to build should be structured and non-random.
• We live in an area that is not zoned for this type of building, so I cannot say strongly support. However I do support this in areas zoned for multi-family developments, and I would consider re-locating to those areas if a development was built that was affordable and met our needs.
• I’d like something affordable to all.
• Parking, Appearance of Building
• Pros- affordable to average income / Cons- curb appeal, noise
• Parking off the street
• View impacts in existing homes. Otherwise support the idea
• If the height was over 3 stories as we need to keep the small town feel unless towards middle of island near woods where maybe a 4-5 story may not be too opposing
• Increase in traffic
• Would need more info on design, parking availability, integration into surrounding neighborhood, covenants (if any) etc.
• everyone deserves a place to lay their head

Appendix C.3 – Answers from People Who Chose “Not Sure”
73 comments
• New housing should be balanced with existing housing. Neither should overwhelm the other.
• I am not sure there is any space in my neighborhood for this
• concern would be infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc. to support added living units), scale of project to adjacent single family homes (is there set back between the project and adjacent home), like living in single family residential zone and would question changing the zoning to higher density. really wonder what amount of population growth on Fidalgo Island the current water, sewer, electricity and natural gas infrastructure can support with increased density, what infrastructure expansion needs to occur and how will these be funded. all of these are questions.
• Wouldn't the small town vibe be ruined by something like that?
• Large apt buildings don't reflect the character of this area. The parking and traffic can already be difficult here. Off-street parking must be provided and keeping the multi-story buildings in character with the neighborhood should be required (i.e., no 5 story buildings where the neighborhood heights are no more than 3 stories)
• Hope that they would not be built in an area such as the one built recently on "O" street.
• This would not be consistent with the character of my neighborhood which is all higher end single family homes.
• I would oppose if it meant tearing down homes in my neighborhood ("Island View"). I am not necessarily against that type of construction.
• There is poor public transportation and only limited grocery access within walking distance in my neighborhood
• Lots of teachers and nurses make 100K+ per year, so they're in a totally different situation than restaurant workers, mechanics, etc. I think one issue might be that people have purchased homes with views that are not blocked by the single-family homes in front of them. When you build very tall buildings, you block previously clear views which affects property values.
• Need more details. Traffic, parking, open space
• I currently live in a quiet neighborhood of single family homes, with most of them being single-story. I approve of a multi-story building for affordable housing if the location is right. A multi-story building in this neighborhood would feel overpowering and busy.
• We have height limits in our area.
• Blocking our view to the east of water and Mt. Baker
• Traffic is my concern
• Don't destroy the character of neighborhoods by having high density buildings adjacent to single family dwellings. Choose to use space to cluster multi-floor housing together.
• It depends on the architecture of the proposed building and how the look/feel of the unit fits with the rest of the neighborhood. Also depends on the size of the unit(s) and how it might impact traffic flow.
• I personally don't have an opinion. I work remotely in medical field, partner is engineer on the state ferries. We just want to be able to get a house nothing available. We don't want an apartment but more options need to be available.
• Could lead to a lot of turnover. Less stable neighborhood.
• Because I am not sure if I would oppose or support that idea.
• We currently live in a traditional neighborhood. Gardening is our main interest at home. A multistory building that blocked the sunshine would be a problem. When we bought our small house, gardening space was high on our list of requirements. We have enormous houses recently built near us with no yard space. A high rise apartment building wouldn't have an impact there. Of course, the rich people who live in the enormous houses most likely do not want commoners in their neighborhood. Many new homes have been built near us, within two blocks. Those spaces could have easily had multistory buildings and I would not object. You have an uphill battle since builders are business people maximizing their profits. My hope is, unfortunately, that the city start being aggressive about entering the housing market with either state or federal support. Unless the city aggressively buys appropriate land and builds realistically priced housing, I'm pessimistic about the outcome. The current townhouses and condominiums being built either aren’t family oriented or too expensive or both and we will continue to be an aging city full of snowbirds.
• I know this is coming and I hope that this type of construction can be placed so that there is enough property in the development to take care of off street parking, recreation, and common space for those living in the complex.
• I would want more specifics. Height tends to block views of present residents and that's a problem for me.
• Many people like the sound of new housing projects but nobody seems to want them in "their back yard".
• Depends on the neighborhood.
• We have number of multi floor condo units within two blocks from our house. I'm afraid anymore would negatively impact our property value
• I will want to see the plan first
• The building would need to fit the character of the city. I would definitely oppose a building more than 3 stories.
• Multilevel apartment buildings are a great idea when done responsibly unlike the five story eye sore on the corner of 0 and 18 is
• Change the skyline, block views of harbor. I reject the notion the city must keep forever growing, that's a choice by the developer minded. Limit employment growth and you will limit overall growth. Retirees are exception, but this housing issue is not about them.
• Housing and traffic density
• "Would it increase traffic parking? Would it block view?"
• how many units, design, parking
• Parking
• Would hate to have large multi unit complex with very small units.
• I may not be opposed to it if there were size restrictions. Our apartment is 2 floors and that is plenty. I feel like when it gets higher than that it blocks the view for other residents.
• Would need to know the height. If 2 stories I would strongly support if it's truly affordable and not "fake affordable." If 3 stories I would have some hesitation. If 4 stories or more it belongs out on R or neighborhoods such as near Storvik park where there are already many apartment buildings.
• I don't believe current residential "neighborhoods " are the proper place for that type of building.
• The town is already packed and bustling. Stuffing it with apartments seems like it would feel more crowded.
• I would support such a project, as long as it had its own parking and the increased traffic/noise didn't impact the neighborhood too much.
• My concern is the scale of apts/condos. The one between 17th/18th went too far. Similarly, the city seems to have done a poor job protecting public views... think about the high solid fences on the Channel side of road going to WSF dock, new solid board fences at "The Orchards". Going back a couple questions: I am already a single car household. It annoys me that many others effectively store a trailer or 3rd/4th vehicles on our residential streets even when they have a garage and driveway.
• Less than 5 stories, 4 story max size for this town.
• Affordable housing should be available to everyone in our community.
• Depends on size and height of building.
• Not enough information to make a good decision. It's a very 'emotional' type of question. A very poorly written survey.
• I can afford a nice home in a nice neighborhood. I am not opposed to "affordable" housing, but the reality is that at least some people who use affordable housing are sloppy, careless, and poor neighbors.

• I think it’s a good thing to offer affordable housing, but I also do not want to see apartment buildings throughout Anacortes. I believe they detract from the beauty of the town instead of adding to it.

• Crowd control

• I would worry about parking, traffic, noise level, destruction of natural areas. It seems most of the new apartments and cottage construction has extremely small roads and lack of parking.

• How many floors. Does it match with the other buildings in the neighborhood. does it block views of existing homes

• My concerns are, does it block my water view, can I still navigate around parked cars comfortably, is the new increase traffic flow going to jam up getting out of my neighborhood and getting around town? With an increase in human density will it still be safe to go for evening walks ? There is a reason why Anacortes is sought after for a place to live. Don't do like so many communities have done by over building and losing the charm that makes it special in the first place, small town in a beautiful setting.

• My concern is that "affordable housing" typically means subsidized housing. Subsidized housing is typically funded by taxes. I do not want to pay even more in taxes to subsidize other people's housing. I pay enough taxes as it is and I will be priced out of my house (which I've lived in for over 20 years) if taxes continue to rise.

• Depends on size and location

• Well, we just had a multistory apartment building built behind us. Rent is pretty high though and I think that has helped with the people being respectable about their neighbors.

• I'm not sure I would want that many people living around me. Also would depend if the building was blocking the view of my surroundings.

• Currently no space to build in residential neighborhood

• Noise and additional congestion

• My support would depend upon the details - how many stories? How many units? Is there adequate parking? Will it blend in (as much as possible) with the neighborhood? The devil is in the details!

• Because it would be totally out of character for the neighborhood, multi story apartments lack green space and outdoor space for their residents, and cause parking issues, and cottage or higher density duplex or multi family units seem like a step we should be taking first before jumping to multi story apartments

• Scale of project?

• I think I would have to see the plans. These high-rises are terrible. The unit behind Starbucks, the one down on 26 by where the bowling alley was. High-rises should be at the top of town like where all the condos are on view Ridge by the bus garage etc. Where they don't interfere with peoples views.

• Concerned about population density outgrowing the town. 19,000 population is already very high. This island can't grow indefinitely despite the growth management act.
Unless subsidies are in place, e.g. Section 8, affordable housing is a fallacy. What subsidies are available?

- How high is it. We paid a premium for our view
- Depends on the scale of the buildings relative to the existing neighborhood. I like a mixed-use and mixed-scale and mixed-income neighborhood, but it seems like existing codes are all-SF or all-MF. I like diversity. Current codes support homogeneity.
- I’m in a residential neighborhood near the ACFL and there is no open land for any “high rise”. The Commercial Avenue corridor has seen some high-rise developments (Samish Inn, Q and 21st and the apartments at O and 21st). I rented in the Portage Condominiums and they have been building the Coop housing next door (boy, that’s taking a long time!) which seems like an appropriate infill multi-housing. I think I read that another low income housing development is going in near the Coop housing. I think encroaching on some commercial areas near R and T streets with moderate rise affordable housing would be beneficial. You have to be cognizant of property owners with sight lines.
- Parking issues, clutter due to no storage, increase in vehicles on road daily, just to name a few. Definitely would NOT support low income housing.
- I live in Old Town, and would be concerned about maintaining the character of the neighborhood
- It would depend on how it fit the character of the neighborhood. That being said my street already has a dentist office and a triplex is being built. They feel out of place, but so far I feel safe. The multifloor apartment building down the street is modest in height, but it doesn’t, to my knowledge, have adequate parking. I would support it if it actually helped people with affordability while also not exacerbating issues.
- Depends on what the impact would be, the style of building, and making sure they have plenty of parking for themselves and their guests, etc.
- Concern with height of structures compared to current home heights
- Expand Anacortes eastward and build out in that direction.
- My neighborhood is small single family homes and I like that.

Appendix C.4 – Answers from People Who Chose “Somewhat Oppose”

54 comments

- Not wanting high populated units close by which increases traffic and congestion.
- I fear that certain events could lead to higher property taxes to pay for low income housing and that could force me out of my house.
- Apartment design generally does not provide enough parking for residents. Any more now everyone of driving age will have a car. That equates to 2-3 cars per 2 bed apartment which is assigned one spot. Where does the excess go? It spills out into the neighboring area and business lots. The footprints of multi-family dwellings in single family size lots often eliminate maturing trees which are both biological air-conditioners and larger canopies sequester more carbon. This has been done in other areas. A SFR goes into a landfill a MFR goes up with a price tag of ownership nearly that
of the SFR still not affordable. If it’s rental property who is the demographic, the family of 4 or the “young retirees” Anacortes has been marketing toward.

- Already have multi-floor apartments close by my home.
- Will draw more people to the area.
- That’s the reason we moved to this town. But not a problem we will move somewhere else if traffic capacity is not addressed and public transportation doesn’t add better cycling paths and sidewalks. Might need to consider limiting motor vehicles downtown in the future!!!
- Quality of the building. In keeping with the neighborhood aesthetic.
- I live in West Anacortes. Multi-level housing is too far from city center to be useful.
- traffic would increase
- Residential area with no option available
- We are a small town of 18k plus, families living here generations, passing their homes to their children. There is limited work, lots of medical fields if that is your interest. The charm of Anacortes is the number of residences with views. Multi story dwellings take away from that charm and already has.
- It depends on the height. I think some of these multi-story units are too high for the neighborhood and change the feel of it.
- We need more affordable HOMES, not apartments.
- There are not many services in the area I live in, so I think this type of housing should be built closer to town and amenities
- Too much traffic
- I don’t like multi-floor housing situation in a single family dwelling neighborhood. It changes the whole feel and takes away the charm of living in a small town.
- I have a view of Mount Baker and do not want it blocked. That’s the situation with many locations in Anacortes, but new building heights are blocking their view. Not right, not ethical. The city should not allow this to happen to those property owners. Available view is one factor in assessing property values.
- Devaluing property values, increased crime.
- Because we are seeing plenty of multi-floor housing models and the rents are NOT affordable for young people.
- So you’re going to house all the peasants together? Stop with the hideous box Seattle looking apartments. Would you want to live in a prison looking apartment building? Just because their is a housing shortage doesn’t mean people don’t give a crap about where and how they live. Let’s have some standards here, this isn’t China where you have to cram 1 billion people into a 2 mile radius. (Sarcasm, but you get it)
- My concern is that there is only so much infrastructure to support the continued growing population of our town. I would prefer seeing projects like this in town or downtown on commercial or within a couple blocks .... Not in our already established quiet neighborhoods
- Multi level housing would be an inappropriate zoning use in this neighborhood for a variety of reasons: hilly area with intermittent forest and wetlands, insufficient infrastructure to support increased population density without significant disruption to
• Quality of life - the noise, increase traffic congestion, created by apartment complex impacts adjacent landowners and there is little recourse for problem resolution. The city issues the permit - then passes off any problems associated with increased density to law enforcement.
• Our neighborhood is completely built out, no room for anything more
• The design of the facility and how it fits with the neighborhood. Larger complexes bring more people so more traffic, more noise, more chance of crime.
• Our home is located in Old Town Anacortes built over 100 years ago. Like a number of similar homes on the City's Historic Register such designations helps preserve this part of the City's character. I would hope that such new dwellings could be constructed in areas with more space and access for such needed construction.
• Multifloor not in keeping with “feeling” of neighborhood. Too crowded. Don’t know neighbors. Two stories maximum.
• I think higher density housing is appropriate in certain areas and I definitely support building it. I don’t think it’s appropriate to build it right next to single family homes, blocking their views or sunlight. If such a building were close to my house, I would be concerned about noise and parking.
• I've lived in the Seattle/Bellevue area over 40 years. I've experienced neighborhoods ruined again and again by too many multi-floor housing units (especially over 3 stories!!!) overrunning the area. It negatively impacts traffic, affordability, crowding, infrastructure.
• I would not want to see a long time single family residential area torn down for multi-floor apartment projects.
• It would be highly dependent on the density, off street parking, etc. and the impact on the neighborhood, i.e. look, feel, comfort.
• Apartments would be better located in areas with close stores and public transit, i.e. downtown
• "moderate income" still leaves out people who are low or low middle income - that is the most needed. Multifamily construction units are going to be used by owners for B&B or rentals. Too much MF construction going on already
• I would hope that Old Town would not be included in additional multi-floor apartment building plans. Keeping what's left of Old Town is of utmost importance to me.
• Height issues and devaluation of homes in our neighborhood. Rentals should not be clustered as that creates it’s own neighborhood. A homeowner makes a huge calculated investment to buy a home and plan for their own future in Anacortes. Renters are looking for "Availability and Affordability, not necessarily long term housing. Totally different mindsets today with the provision that renters have goals to be homeowners eventually. There is always going to be Pride in ownership. It’s the American Dream."
• Blocking views
• Not really feasible
• UNLESS THE RENT IS SUBSIDIZED THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING GOAL IS NOT ACHIEVABLE IN ANACORTES.
• Height restrictions in Skyline...
• These are young families that can't afford to live here. They usually have pets and have more than one car. When you have homes selling within hours for outrageous prices. That could also affect older people that will be affected by property taxes. If my parents didn't need my help I would consider moving out of Anacortes as well.
• Teachers, nurses and mechanics all make good money.
• Our neighborhood HOA is mainly single family only residences.
• Putting increased vehicle traffic in our neighborhood. I'm for the idea of affordable housing, but our neighborhood is made up of existing homes. The City has already approved the Crossings Development where you're putting small cottage style housing on a once residential lot that had acreage.
• Height restrictions/ view and daylight restrictions.
• The traffic is already a problem in town, with more units come more cars.
• Conservation of property value is important to me.
• Anacortes is already building way too many apts that are "affordable " and its a joke.
• I have lived in Anacortes most of my life. I believe open space, room to grow gardens, and yards are important for mental health, good community feel, and comfort in our town. We live on an island. There is only so much space to build and grow the community. I think we need to be realistic about what "affordable" really means for Anacortes and the island. I don't see that the new building and multi-level building will actually be "affordable". The cost of the land, building supplies, etc. will prohibit a realistic building that is affordable. I am skeptical that the new builds will be affordable to people with moderate incomes. I think we need to calculate the numbers and costs first. We know what it costs to build so let’s be realistic and accurate in what we are doing.
• My concern is the relatively large amount of people in one location. We bought our current house for the quiet neighborhood. We have lived all over the country and in a variety of neighborhoods (multi-floor housing included). We have witnessed the noise with the increase car traffic and safety issues in regards to younger kids playing in the streets.
• You don’t deserve something just because of what you do. Many people who came to Anacortes long ago, or even the last decade, started out small, put in sweat equity, and were able to upsize here. You don’t deserve to live here just because you want to. Priorities and sacrifice. Nothing gets handed to you.
• I intentionally bought a home in a low density, quiet neighborhood.
• I want people to consider how many people an area can support in a healthy way. Limit growth.
• We liked it here because there was not that type of housing.
• This is a small community that has a flavor of it's own. I am not impressed with the building by Starbucks, I have seen MJBs proposal and I am fine with it. Over crowding and large buildings in neighborhoods is not the answer. Put them in places with more space. D street is also going to be very congested once the buildings are occupied there. Keep in mind this is an island, it is only 15 minutes to Burlington.
Appendix C.5 – Answers from People Who Chose “Strongly Oppose”

87 comments

- Multi floor apartments do not fit into my neighborhood. They should be located near commercial areas to alleviate parking and transportation issues thus making them more affordable.
- Income for Teachers and restaurant workers first off do not compare. Anacortes should allow more businesses in town to offer jobs for income and people could work to support themselves and afford the costs of living including housing.
- As I stated before, the atmosphere of why the people moved here and what drew them needs to be considered. This is not an urban environment, does not have the industry requiring it, and does not need to become one. We do not need to turn neighborhoods into square blocks of apartments.
- Multi-floor housing is not in keeping with the current single family zoning and characteristics of this neighborhood.
- Parking is never considered. The explosion of unpermitted ADU’s in town is disappointing and ruining our neighborhoods, The City allows homeless to live in cars, vans, tarps and does not enforce their own codes about habitation wherever and whenever. I have seen mentally ill living, urinating and defaulting on our sidewalks right on Commercial Avenue. It is shameful. A message to City Officials - DO YOUR JOB!
- There should be zones for different types of building and we purchased in a single family residential area and want it to stay that way. The growth and design of the town overall should be considered. Anacortes should embrace its maritime identity and require all new building to conform with "seaboard/maritime" design. Think about how Leavenworth is so committed to their Bavarian theme. Anacortes should begin to upgrade existing old buildings and require all new construction to be designed with a maritime theme. There are already areas that are rundown that detract from this beautiful island.
- Higher density translates into more traffic, more street parking, and more crime for areas that were never designed or planned for such construction. If you want to put high density housing into Anacortes, then place the new units onto virgin land or near already established high density areas, e.g. apartments, condos, etc. Put like structures with like structures. Don't destroy established neighborhoods by placing high rise and high-density structures into single-family neighborhoods that were not planned or designed for high density. Doing so creates animosity toward the city, the developer, and the new tenets.
- Crime, thefts and drug use increases. This in turn causes a decrease in quality of life and feeling of being safe for current Anacortes residences and voters.
- I hope this "concern" is addressed east of the bridge. Anacortes is fine the way it is.
- Housing should match the existing neighborhood. High density housing would diminish the value existing homes and should be restricted to within a few blocks of Commercial Ave.
- Old town
- Anacortes is a small community on an island. It's ok for workers to commute to town. There is no need to turn Anacortes into an apartment community.
- Anacortes is not suited for large low income housing projects. They do not suite the neighborhood nor the skyline.
- parking will be a problem, given the current parking requirements. Traffic increases. Noise increases. People come and go that I don't know which makes me feel less secure. If the City is going to change the housing requirements for more dense housing (a sad thing that I have no control over) please explore placing these apartments out by the park and ride on S. Marches Point Rd. Let's see if the oil companies would be interested in selling (or giving) the city a few hundred acres near that location.
- Renters typically are not at a stage in their life when they care about keeping a neighborhood nice.
- High density housing equals more crime, more traffic, more congestion, unsafe walking and biking. I moved here because there were no plans or push to turn our small town in to a mini-Seattle. I don't like nor support this new changed vision for Anacortes. Please stop wasting my tax dollars to pay for other folks subsidized housing since our own bills are high enough. Market forces set the prices of housing and attempts to influence this are futile.
- Low income housing promotes crime, drugs and theft. Let the market set rental rates.,
- Anacortes is lovely. High density housing would detract from the feel of the town.
- Increased traffic and parking. Multifloor housing attracts undesirable people who allow too many friends and family to live with them.
- I do not think Anacortes has the road and street networking to support the traffic, parking, available shopping of a mass population increase. And what about our water supply?, and what about water and shopping, parking
- To many new multi apartments being built
- WE ARE losing our small town feel. high rise apartments ruining our views. too many drugs coming to Anacortes
- I live in "Old Town" on a small lot. Alley access to parking. Increasing density will ruin the residential sense of the neighborhood. There is no room for multiple car parking.
- It would be ideal if this housing would actually meet the intended purpose, but instead it will turn into public housing for people who do not provide low-wage workers for the city, or people who simply do not work at all. The intent is good-hearted, but the result is something countless other cities have experienced: outsiders moving in to enjoy the low costs without contributing to our city.
- Because it will draw outsiders with low incomes, we do not need to invest in outsiders when they can easily live in another city. Anacortes currently has sufficient housing for its own residents.
- The academic literature does not provide any conclusive evidence that affordable housing and rent control works
- Thinking of the density of traffic and small feel of a small town keep it less people and less traffic
- Agglomeration, noise increase, loss of privacy. Growing the town beyond its capacity in terms of traffic and utilities.
• I repeat what I said before: I made a purchase agreement to buy a new construction home in Anacortes in August 1998. I moved in in February 1999. At that time there were mobile homes 1/2 mile down the hill off Oakes. Some years later those mobile homes were moved out and replaced with pricey homes. Ever since then more and more trees have been taken out and replaced with pricey homes. Of course the cost of housing is going up around here, you have totally designed it to be that way. My neighborhood was built as lower cost housing. It no longer is. The original owners in this neighborhood were a pretty social crowd. This neighborhood has become both expensive and pretty anti-social. As long as you keep trying to attract the high-tech crowd it will increasingly be this way, less affordable and more anti-social. I can't afford to leave. And I know wealthier people in Anacortes that also are no longer happy here, but stay because they also don't know where else to go. If you stop promoting technology around here, then maybe the less well-to-do would have a better shot at being able to afford to live here. I moved here from Bellevue to get away from this, not to have it follow me here.

• I do not think multi-level apartments in single family residential areas is in keeping with the flavor of this small town. There are more light commercial areas that would be more appropriate for multi-level apartments.

• More shady people in a town that used to be safe and secure

• We can not continue to grow for ever. At some point we have to consider that we are built out. I’d love to be able to move to many places I can’t, because they are unaffordable so I’ve learned to accept what I can afford.

• I did not buy my house to be blocked by a apartment complex. It hurts the value of my home. Why do I have to give up something I worked for. We need affordable housing I agree, but not at the cost of others who had worked hard to get where they are at.

• Just don't support increasing housing density in single family home neighborhoods.

• The large multi story apts cause problems with crime, too many people in a too small area and problems with parking and storage.

• We picked our neighborhood because it is not zoned for multiple-floor housing. I don't want to live an area with multiple floor housing. I also have serious doubts about the affordability of these kind of units. Hasn't happened yet in town.

• I came for the character of the small low-density town, not the micro-metropolis government wants to replace it with. I will probably be compelled to leave as a result.

• neighborhoods are important to me and contribute hugely, I feel, to the feeling of community I value. Multi-floor housing has its place, but in my opinion should be excluded from areas which are primarily residential and largely single-family in their makeup.

• We live in Old Town and I don't think that would fit the feel of our neighborhood

• Housing is more needed for elderly than the younger working.

• Anacortes use to have a lot of charm. It is becoming another cookie cutter city, one size does not fit all. I worked hard, two College Degrees to get where I am. The idea that we have to provide everything for everybody is not always the answer.

• I prefer not to live in crowded conditions or in a large city with apartment houses and condos...too crowded.
I grew up in West Seattle. I have seen first hand what happens to a community when it becomes over crowded. I am tired of hearing about "affordable housing". There were places in West Seattle I would have loved to have lived, but I couldn't afford it so I never lived there. If you over crowd Anacortes, you will destroy the livability for EVERYONE.

Prefer my neighborhood to stay a little exclusive. We worked hard to get it and diminishing the value with crowded housing and the resulting problems would not be welcome.

Multi-floor apartment buildings should not be constructed in residential neighborhoods.

Multi-floor housing is ugly, would change the peaceful nature of Anacortes with population and driving density. Teachers, nurses, mechanics have always been able to buy their own homes, if they so wanted. They should still be able to.

I moved to a residential to live in one. Things are crowed as is

My neighborhood is all single family homes

We live in a mostly single home and small condo complex 918 units) near Washington Park. It is quiet and safe. We are concerned all ready about the new 5 building apartment/condo complex at the corner going in to Skyline which will create an ever increasing problem with traffic congestion from the west end of town, increasing noise and potential safety issues.

Crime, on street parking, gangs, crime, on street parking, gangs

Multi-floor housing is not in line with the "skyline" appeal of this lovely town. We're here for the view - and are restricted by our HOA on building height. If the land next to us, which is not in the HOA, has no such limitations and is able to build three or more stories, what's the point? Density is not the answer. Or designate specific areas in town (downtown along commercial) for higher buildings. It would be a travesty if tall buildings are allowed in such neighborhoods as Old Town - it would ruin the sense of neighborhood that exists there now.

The free market can sort this out. We don't need more bureaucrats managing things.

Anacortes is a small town. Multi-floor housing, apartment buildings, and duplex/tri-plex/multi-plex housing change the feel and ambiance. That is not what I want where I live.

I want our neighborhoods to maintain their character with nice lots an no apartment complexes.

Multi-floor housing ruins the aesthetic of Anacortes. Building up is not always the answer. You can build out and develop land further south. There isn't a reason to create very dense communities to accommodate affordable housing. Anacortes can only accommodate a limited population and we will reach a point at which we cannot reasonably offer more and more housing to all who desire to live here. There are limited jobs and limited space. Lower income wage earners cannot reasonably expect to afford a home in downtown Anacortes close to all amenities and comforts. This isn't to say I'm against affordable housing, but it should not be done at the cost of the aesthetic of a desirable city. To reiterate, the options below that I support all hinge on them not exceeding 1 or 2 story buildings.

I have lived around plenty of apartment complexes in Mount Vernon or Burlington and they were less than pleasant to be around. You cannot control the types of people who
would want to move into these places, if they are qualified applicants you can’t
discriminate against them if they don’t have those occupations listed above.

• Our neighborhood is not conducive to multi floor apartment complexes. It is primarily
  single family homes
• Anacortes has had sweeping changes already. We don't need to look like Lynwood. Just
  ask the residents in the house behind Starbucks.
• Anacortes infrastructure cannot support high rises and the island charm will be gone
  when this becomes a mini Vancouver. This isn’t Seattle. Keep the high rises out. Space
  is limited. You can’t try and force more space and more people where it shouldn’t be.
  Sewer, water, parking, streets all need to be able to support the amount of people living
  here. There is open space elsewhere for building. Use our tax dollars to revitalize
downtown not rebuild it. Use our tax dollars to fix the streets and pave the alleys and fix
the sidewalks, not build multiplex apartment buildings that block the view of the water.
Not everyone has to live here. Back off over regulation other than nothing taller than 3
stories and lessen restrictions for backyard dwellings.

• Politics of multi-floor housing residents.
• Like the country will not live in the city and too much clutter in towns.
• Leave existing neighborhoods alone.
• Destroy views. Not appropriate for old town. Hate townhome designs with stairs, which
  are bad for handicapped people.
• Over crowding and congestion. Honestly renters seldom care about their homes,
  neighbors or neighborhoods. Not all of course but most. I would hate to lose our close
  nit neighborhoods.
• This city doesn’t hold contractors accountable for their errors, and let’s big contractor’s
  projects get away with a lot. I have also worked hard, and moved multiple times for work.
  That’s just how it is. I never ever complained that a city I want to live in owes me
subsidized housing, I instead lived where I could afford and worked my way up to where I
am now. I’m also an AHS graduate (in the 90s) and moved away from town for 20 years
before finally moving back.
• This type of construction is not why we invested into Anacortes!
• Recent multi floor screwed up character of town enough. And already overcrowded
• I live in old town, I would not support projects that would change the nature of old town
• We do not live in a multi floor neighborhood. View protection is an issue as well
• Eyesore.. bringing in more people to small town .. home value decline ...
• It brings down home values in the vicinity and causes parking problems. It lowers the
  quality of life for the rest of the neighborhood.
• I live in rural area on a low flow well and septic system. Neighborhood not suitable for
  higher density without enormous investment in infrastructure.
• I live in Old Town. Other parts of town are already more suitably zoned for this type of
development. Old Town does not need its character changed when other areas are
available for development.
• My neighborhood shouldn’t construct multi-level multi-unit housing. Not in my backyard (NIMBY). I moved to this community to be isolated from the crime associated with low-income housing units and the criminal element it attracts.
• wrong zoning
• Blocking views of the water.
• Because these types of buildings rarely have enough green space around them, rarely have enough off street parking, always infringe upon some aspect enjoyed by their neighbors (like view, sunlight, privacy), and often people living in them don’t have a sense of pride in upkeep.
• Since my neighborhood is built on a hill (Clearidge) it would unfairly block or restrict the view of neighbors who chose to move here for the view - if you want to build higher things build it in flat areas that don’t have a view already to be fair to current property owners and renters
• Not consistent with the character of our town.
• I do not want this town to look like Seattle. The height changes to the building code is a mistake. We need to have architectural pleasing buildings that look quaint like our town. High rise type of buildings are an eyesore.
• There are areas closer into town that would be better suited than the south city limits R-1 area. I would want the new occupants to be closer than 2.8 miles to the city core services.
• Looking at the overpriced building behind Starbucks with not enough parking spaces I would wish city council would represent the people and not out of town investors!
• Would not fit within our community which is home environment
• When I was younger, I moved to a city where I could afford to live, even though it was far from work. We can’t all have everything when starting out.
• Don’t need to lower the value of my home
• Too tall and blocking existing view which also lowers home value