

Introduction

Background

Ucluelet is updating its Zoning Bylaw to make it clearer, easier to use, and better aligned with the community’s needs.

The Zoning Bylaw refresh will be a comprehensive process that also includes three focus areas: gentle density housing options, short-term rentals, and pre-zoning for multi-family housing.



About this Report

This report summarizes the feedback input from the community between February and March 2026. The District engaged residents to gain insights on key topics related to the Zoning Bylaw Refresh project. These engagement opportunities included:

- A Housing and Land Use Survey, hosted online from February 5 to March 1, 2026
- A Community Open House, held on February 23, 2026
- A meeting with the local development community, held on February 24, 2026.

Process



Housing and Land Use Survey

The District hosted a public survey for the Zoning Bylaw Refresh from February 5 to March 1, 2026. The intent of the survey was to better understand local needs and resident priorities regarding housing, short-term rentals, and on-site amenities for multi-unit developments, to inform the new Zoning Bylaw. The survey contained 33 questions and was primarily hosted online, with physical copies available at the District office and at the Community Open House. A total of 291 responses were received.

Comprehensive survey results are provided in Appendix A.

Who We Heard From

Connection to Ucluelet

The majority of survey respondents were full-time residents of Ucluelet, representing 77% of all responses received. The remaining respondents represented part-time or seasonal residents (10%), business operators (5%), and a smaller number of commuting employees (2%) and visitors (<1%).

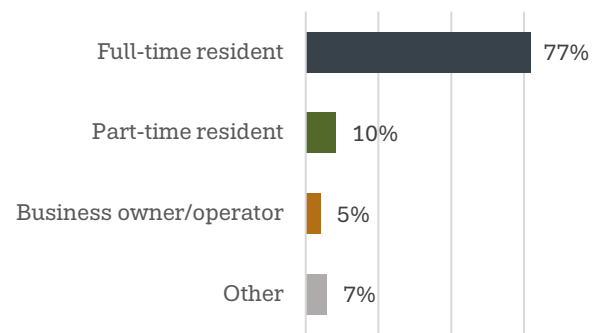
Virtually half of total respondents (49.8%) have lived or been connected to Ucluelet for over 10 years, with another 27% indicating 6-10 years of residence, suggesting a high level of long-term experience in the community.

Housing and Demographics

Over 78% of respondents indicated that they are homeowners, while 17% indicated they are long-term renters in the community. The remaining respondents reported other tenures of housing such as living with family, employer-provided housing, and renting campground space or RV pads.

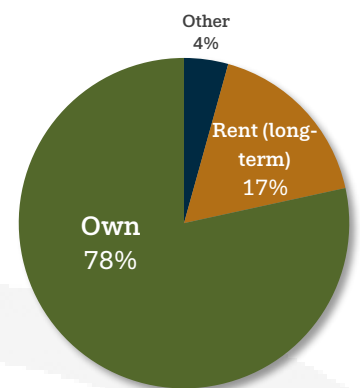
Additional demographic information showed a range of household types and incomes. Couples without children (42%) were the most common household type, followed by couples with children (28%) and then people living along (15%). Over half of respondents (51%) were between the ages of 35-54.

Connection to Ucluelet



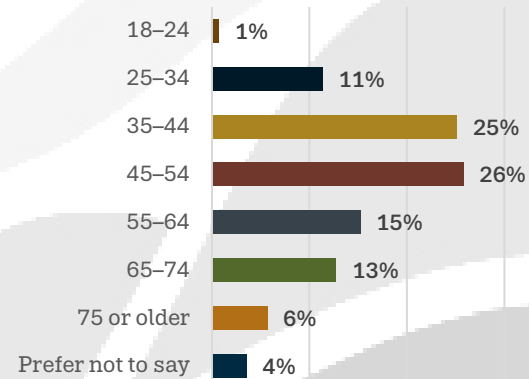
Answered: 289

Housing Tenure



Answered: 289

Age of Survey Respondents



Answered: 283

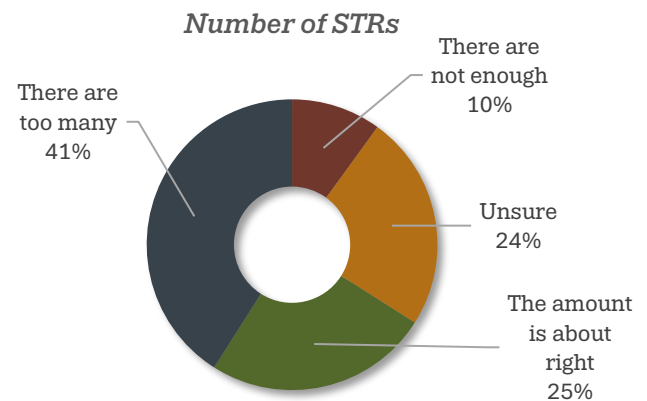
Short-Term Rentals

Survey respondents shared a wide range of experiences and perspectives on short-term rentals operating in Ucluelet. A number of common considerations emerged, such as balancing financial benefits among businesses and long-term residents, maintaining livability in existing neighbourhoods, and support for a principal resident living on-site of short-term rental properties.



STRs in the Community

When asked whether Ucluelet currently has the right number of STRs:

- 41% said there are too many,
- 25% felt the amount is about right,
- 10% said there are not enough, and
- 24% were unsure.



When asked whether they agreed with a selection of statements about short-term rentals:

Perceived Benefits	Perceived Challenges
 <p>80% agreed STRs can act as mortgage helpers, supporting residents in affording home ownership</p>	<p>74% felt STRs reduce long-term rental supply.</p> 
<p>67% agreed that short-term rentals provide a good alternative to hotels and resorts.</p>	<p>56% believed STRs increase home values, making ownership less affordable for residents.</p>
<p>54% felt STRs help local businesses thrive.</p>	<p>41% felt STRs primarily benefit visitors over residents.</p>
<p>47% identified STRs as crucial to the local economy.</p>	<p>22% identified STRs as negatively impacting neighbourhood safety or livability.</p>

STR Operators

- 68 respondents (26%) indicated they operate a short-term rental in Ucluelet. Of those:
 - 58% operated a room or suite within their house
 - 21% operated a purpose-built STR in a development with other STR units
 - 8% operated a building on their property separate from their house
 - One respondent (2%) operated a standalone house
- Of respondents who do not currently operate a STR:
 - 23% (44 respondents) were interested in operating a short-term rental in the future.
 - Most respondents who were not interested operating an STR indicated it was not aligned with their values.

Owners and Renters

- Of respondents who were long-term renters, 88% agreed that STRs negatively affect rental supply. This is higher than, but still consistent with, respondents who own their homes (71%)
- 71% of renters felt that Ucluelet current has too many STRs, significantly higher than the overall results (41%).
- A higher proportion of homeowners (82%) agreed that STRs can be mortgage helpers supporting affordability, when compared to renters (66%).

STR Operators vs Non-Operators

- Among STR operators, the most frequently selected perceived challenge was that short term rentals reduce long-term housing supply. This is consistent with non-STR operators as well.
- STR operators emphasized the economic and personal benefits of STRs for homeowners, while non-STR operators highlighted more concerns related to housing affordability, neighbourhood stability, and community cohesion.
- Comments between the two groups aligned regarding the need for clear regulation and governance.

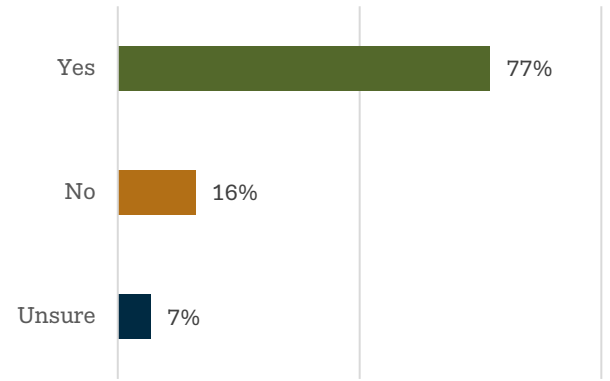
Balancing Community Needs

A large majority of respondents (77%) supported requiring a principal resident to live on-site in order to operate a short-term rental.

When asked about appropriate forms of STRs in the future, participants did not indicate a clear preference for any one particular unit type. Results were relatively even among:

- Purpose-built condos (53%)
- Suites within a single-detached home in existing neighbourhoods (50%)
- Secondary suites in new neighbourhoods/developments (47%)

Do you think a principal resident should be required to live on a single-detached property in order to operate a short-term rental?

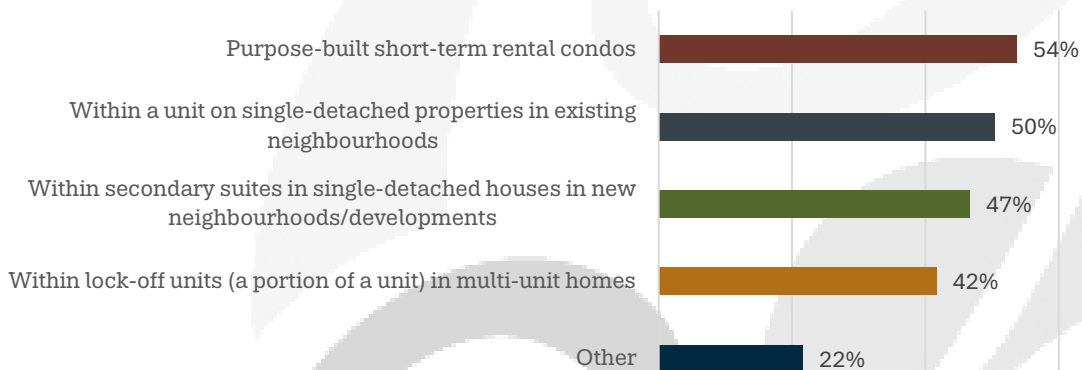


Answered: 261

Other perspectives shared by respondents on how to manage STRs in Ucluelet included:

- Limit the number of STR units per property.
- Restrict STRs to owner-occupied or resident-hosted properties.
- Ban or limit entire home STRs.
- Cap STRs in certain neighbourhoods.
- Use financial tools to offset community impacts (vacancy taxes, hotel tax).
- Enforce and ensure compliance for STRs (illegal STRs, noise complaints, parking and congestion issues).
- Limit STRs to certain seasons or portions of a year.

Do you think any of the following forms of short-term rentals are appropriate for Ucluelet in the future?



Answered: 240

Gentle Density Housing Options

When presented with questions about incorporating gentle density options, participants expressed a balance of support and caution. Many respondents emphasized the importance of neighbourhood character, infrastructure readiness, and parking availability. Maintaining livability and the charm of the Ucluelet lifestyle were important factors for residents in existing neighbourhoods.



Comfort Levels

- 40% of respondents were comfortable or very comfortable with gentle density in Ucluelet.
- 34% said their comfort level depends on how and where it is implemented.
- 16% were very uncomfortable with gentle density.
- 12% were neutral.

Key Concerns

The highest concerns surrounding gentle density development included:

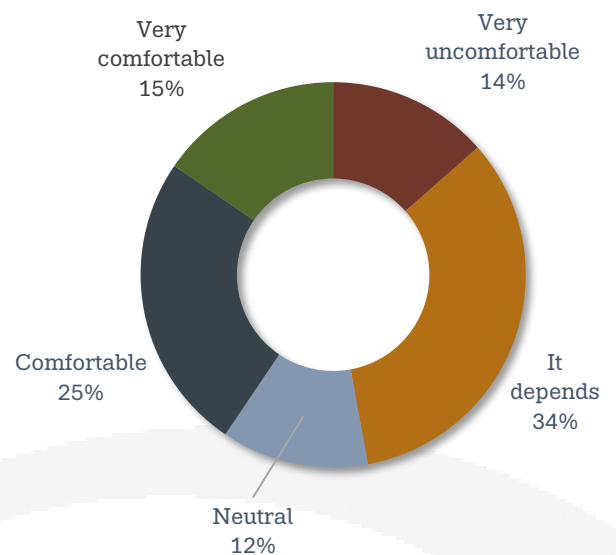
- Infrastructure capacity (62%)
- Parking availability (62%)
- Loss of greenspace/trees (54%)

Building Types

The forms of gentle density that respondents said would fit in their neighbourhoods were:

- Duplexes (47%)
- Small lot single-detached dwellings (42%)
- Triplexes (28%)

An additional 39% of respondents preferred no change of building types in their neighbourhood.



Answered: 259



Appropriate Areas for Gentle Density

Respondents indicated the highest levels of support for gentle density in:

- Area 2 (75%)
- Area 1 (59%)
- Area 3 (55%)

The least appropriate areas for gentle density were:

- Area 7 (39%)
- Area 6 (43%)
- Area 8 (44%)

On-site Amenities for Multi-Unit Housing

Survey respondents identified several storage or parking features as important for new multi-family developments:

- Dedicated general storage (68%)
- Secure bike storage (43%)
- Short-term visitor bike racks (29%)

The most important on-site amenities identified by respondents included:

- Naturalized landscaping (66%)
- Trail connections (48%)
- Shared courtyards or play areas (44%)
- Private patios or balconies (42%)

Community Open House

On February 23, 2026, the District hosted a community open house at the Ucluelet Community Centre from 3:00pm to 7:00pm. The event, facilitated by District staff and consultants from Urban Systems, was designed to seek input directly from community members about the Zoning Bylaw Refresh and key topics related to land use and housing.

The open house contained a total of 16 informational boards, including eight interactive boards where attendees could provide feedback through written comments or “dotmocracy” style polling questions. District staff were present to help answer questions or have direct discussions with community members.



The open house was a walk-through style event, so attendees could drop in at any time and review the information at their own pace. In total, there were **102 participants** who joined the event. The informational boards that presented are included as Appendix B.

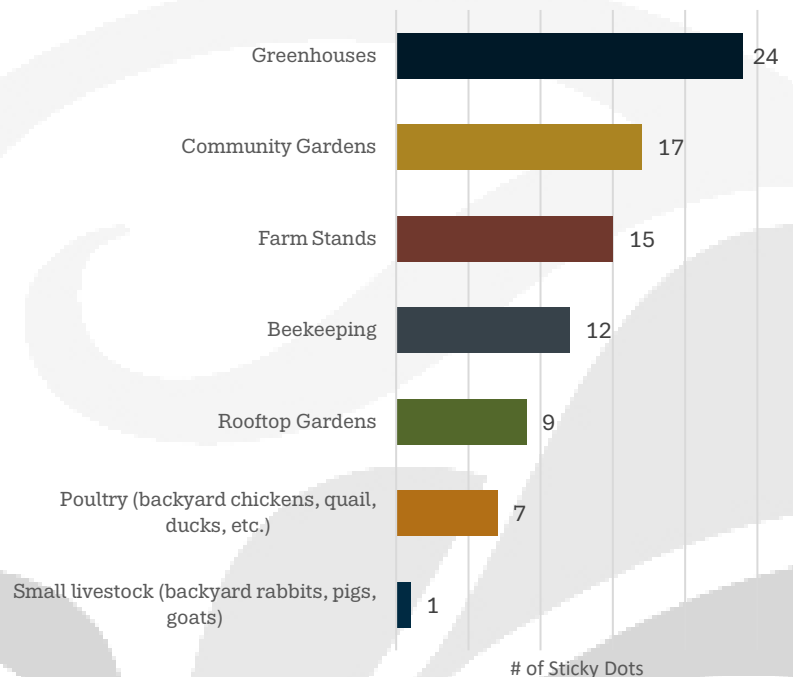
What We Learned

Urban Agriculture

When asked to consider potential urban agriculture uses to permit within Ucluelet, open house participants showed the highest level of support for greenhouses (24 votes), community gardens (17), and farm stands (15). A low level of support was shown for permitting small livestock due to wildlife concerns.

Notable comments left by participants included a suggestion to consider wildlife safety in all potential urban agriculture uses, as well as an idea to consider aquaculture (e.g. clam harvesting) to improve local food security.

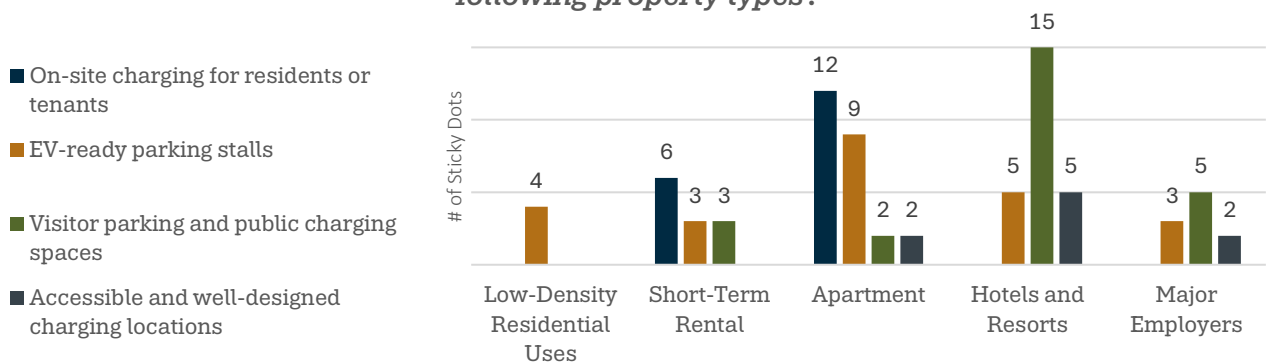
What types of Urban Agriculture might be appropriate for Ucluelet?



Electric Vehicle (EV) Parking

The Open House asked participants to consider which types of new development should require “EV-Ready” parking spaces. Through a voting exercise, participants showed the highest level of support for requiring hotels and resorts to provide visitor and public charging spaces. Support was also notable for requiring new apartment developments to provide on-site charging for tenant spaces. Notable comments included suggestions for solar panel use and questions about long-term infrastructure costs.

What level of connectedness do you think should be required for the following property types?



Bicycle Parking & End-of-Trip Facilities

Participants were asked to share their thoughts about cycling infrastructure and amenities, which are currently not considered in the District’s current Zoning Bylaw. The most popular comments left participants included:

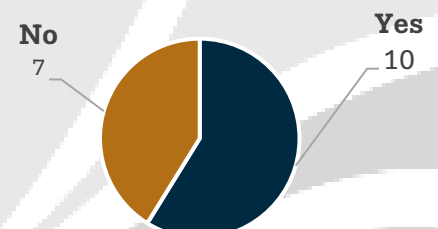
- Covered bike racks for weather protection
- Charging station + repair station for bicycles
- Requiring bike racks close to daily needs (stores, restaurants, etc.)
- Incorporating bike racks with public art/beautification

Cannabis Retail

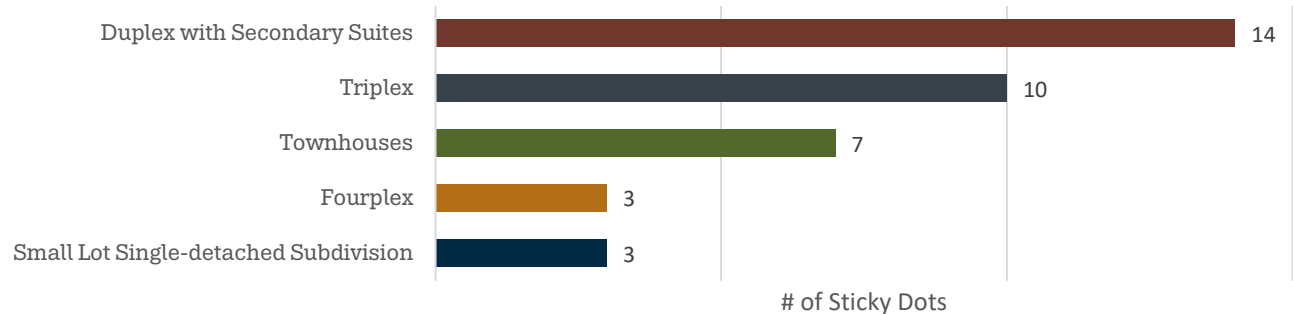
When participants were asked about allowing cannabis retail in Ucluelet’s commercial zones, 59% (10 people) supported permitting it, while 41% (7 people) were opposed.

Participants suggested several conditions or parameters to apply, such as capping the number of cannabis retail business (to 2 or 3) and requiring a minimum distance away from schools or other public community spaces.

Should cannabis retail be permitted broadly in commercial zones?



What gentle density options would you support in Ucluelet's existing neighbourhoods?



Gentle Density

The open house presented information about potential gentle density options that could provide more diverse housing types and increase total housing supply in Ucluelet. To gain a deeper understanding of the community's preferences, the open house asked participants to indicate what types of development, in their opinion, would be suitable for existing neighbourhoods.



For open-ended questions, participants could leave written comments and also "upvote" other people's comments using a sticker, to indicate their mutual support.

Options: On average, participants showed the greatest support for duplexes with an additional secondary suite (14 votes), followed by triplexes (10). The lowest level of support was shown for fourplex development and small lot, single-detached dwellings.

What matters most: The most popular responses included maintaining greenspace and mature trees (9 upvotes), parking (9), and ensuring that gentle density units are used for long-term residential use (6). Multiple comments also mentioned maintaining neighbourhood character as well as creating affordability.

Concerns: The most commonly cited concerns about gentle density were the loss of mature trees and green space (5 upvotes), limited street parking affecting neighbourhoods (3), and the loss of neighbourhood character through density (3).

Opportunities: The most commonly identified opportunity was creating more diverse and affordable housing options in Ucluelet (3).

Short-Term Rentals

Open house participants reviewed information about short-term rentals and the current provisions and requirements in Ucluelet. A voting exercise asked participants to consider some conditions that can help mitigate STR impacts to the community, while supporting the needs of local businesses and homeowners.

What should be prioritized for short-term rentals?

Most support	# of Dots
→ The Principal Residence Requirement in existing neighbourhoods (at least one unit on a parcel is someone's principal residence)	24
→ Maintaining a safe, quiet, neighbourhood feel in existing neighbourhoods	17
→ Maintaining choice for property owners in which unit on a property they choose to occupy (e.g. property owner lives in secondary suite and utilizes main house as short-term rental).	16
Some support	
→ Avoiding the use of existing single-detached parcels solely as short-term rental properties without long-term residents.	12
→ Encouraging some new development in the village core to have residential-only units. (I.e., not allowing STRs)	10
→ Creating a safe, quiet, neighbourhood feel in newly developing areas.	10
→ Permitting one short-term rental unit on single-detached or gentle density parcels in existing neighbourhoods.	10
Least support	
→ Supporting future short-term rental development outside of existing neighbourhoods.	3
→ Permitting two short-term rental units on single-detached or gentle density parcels in existing neighbourhoods.	2

Based on the open house results, residents supported a Principal Residence Requirement for STRs, while maintaining choice for property owners in the unit they occupy. Neighbourhood character and safety was valued in existing neighbourhoods, and there was preference for permitting one STR unit over permitting two units on a single-detached parcel.

Open house participants left additional comments about short-term rentals, including suggestions for capping the number of STR licences, ensuring there is sufficient off-street parking, and creating consistency by discontinuing “grandfathered” properties.

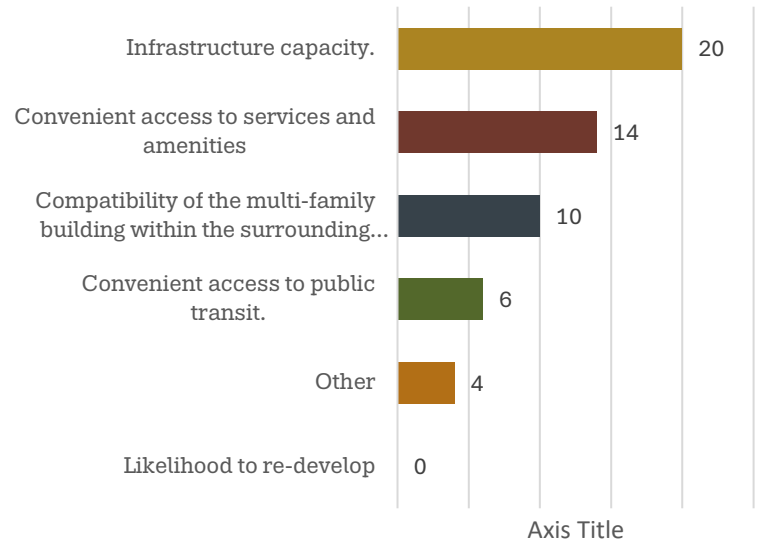
Multi-Family Residential Pre-Zoning

The final section of the open house asked participants about opportunities to pre-zone land for multi-family residential development (consistent with their OCP designations). As the District explores these options, open house participants provided input about key variables and areas that are most important.

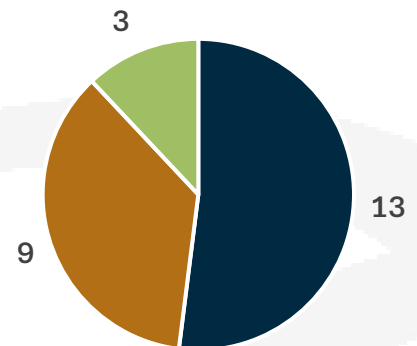
Overall, open house participants indicated that infrastructure capacity (20) and access to services and amenities (14) were important factors when planning multi-family residences in Ucluelet.

When asked if pre-zoning should be focused within the core of Ucluelet, on the edges of the community, or a mixture of both, over half of participants slightly preferred a mixture (13). Among the remaining participants, there was a stronger preference towards pre-zoning in the town core (9 to 3).

Place a dot on the variables that you think are most important.



Place a dot on the areas you think should be prioritized for multi-family pre-zoning.



- A mixture of multi-family pre-zoning within the core area and on the edges of the developed areas of Ucluelet.
- Multi-family pre-zoning in the core area of Ucluelet, close to services, amenities, and public transit.

Development Community Meeting

Staff and consultants met with the development community on February 24 to introduce the Zoning Bylaw Refresh project and seek input on existing challenges and opportunities for improvement. Developers, builders, realtors, and consultants with development experience in Ucluelet were invited to participate and **seven people** attended the event.

Participants noted frequent challenges with differing interpretations of Zoning Bylaw definitions, provisions, and regulations. These challenges have resulted in application delays, costly design revisions, and the need for legal services, all making development in Ucluelet more expensive. While these challenges have historically impacted developers' decision-making with regard to developing in Ucluelet, participants expressed appreciation for the District's renewed, proactive approach to improvements and a desire to continue working in Ucluelet with an improved development framework.

In addition to the Zoning Bylaw Refresh, participants were adamant that there are opportunities to improve the OCP and emphasized the importance of undertaking an OCP update soon.

Other Zoning Bylaw-specific challenges noted by participants included:

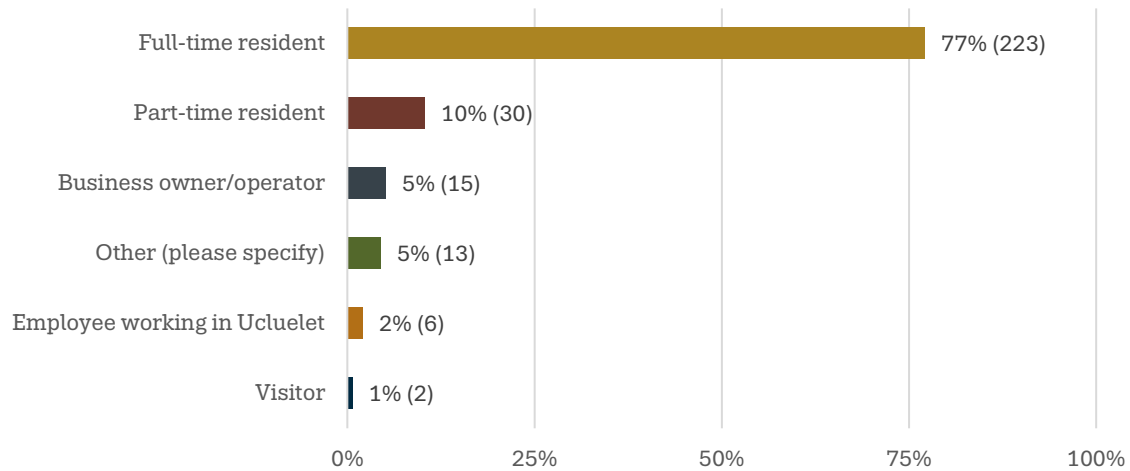
- inconsistency with updated versions of the BC Building Code.
- lack of clarity and excessive restrictions in Commercial Service (CS) zones regarding residential, commercial, and short-term rental options.
- inconsistencies and/or redundancies between the Zoning Bylaw and OCP Development Permit Areas.
- uncertainty regarding elements of the Zoning Bylaw that have changed frequently in the last decade, such as short-term rentals.

In addition to addressing the above-noted challenges, some opportunities noted for consideration in the updated Zoning Bylaw included:

- reserving some areas for residential-only development while allowing short-term rental use integrated with residential uses in other areas.
- improving consistency with provincial best practices to make it easier for developers working across multiple communities.
- permitting the use of either a principal dwelling or a secondary suite as a short-term rental unit to accommodate evolving household needs.
- introducing incentives or requirements for seasonal employee housing.
- scaling the size or permitted number of STR units based on lot size.
- introducing incentives or requirements for large commercial accommodation and resort condo developments to include a proportion of residential units.

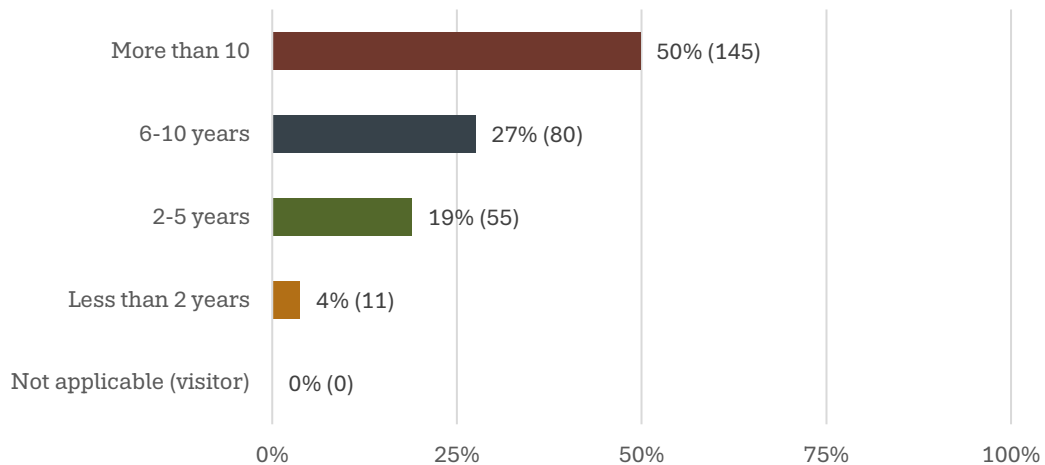
Appendix A: Housing and Land Use Survey Results

Q1. What best describes your connection to Ucluelet?
Select all that apply.



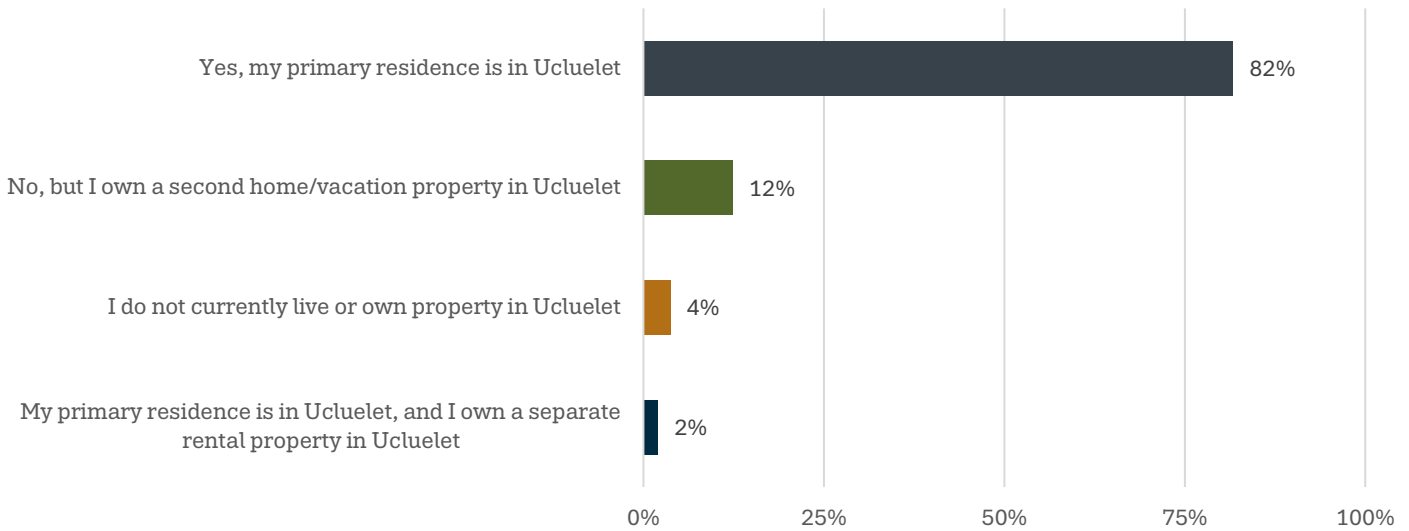
Responses: 289
Skipped: 2

Q2. How long have you lived in or been connected to Ucluelet?



Responses: 291
Skipped: 0

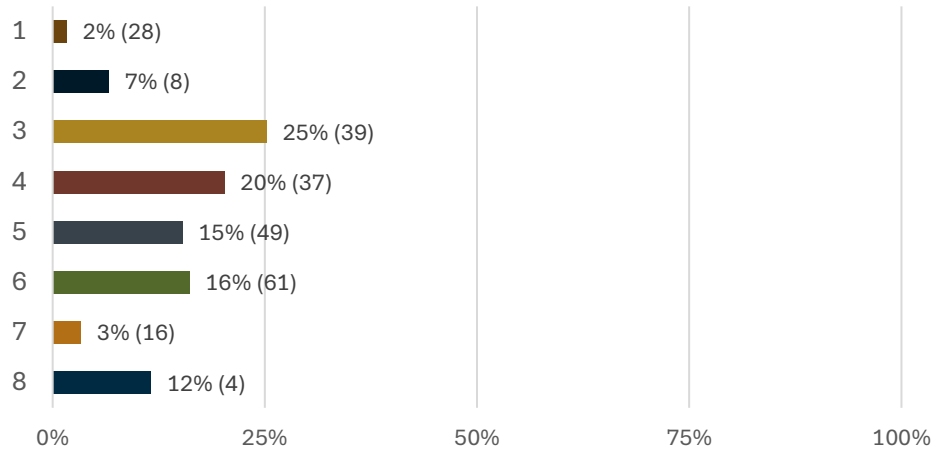
Q3. Is your primary residence in Ucluelet?



Responses: 290

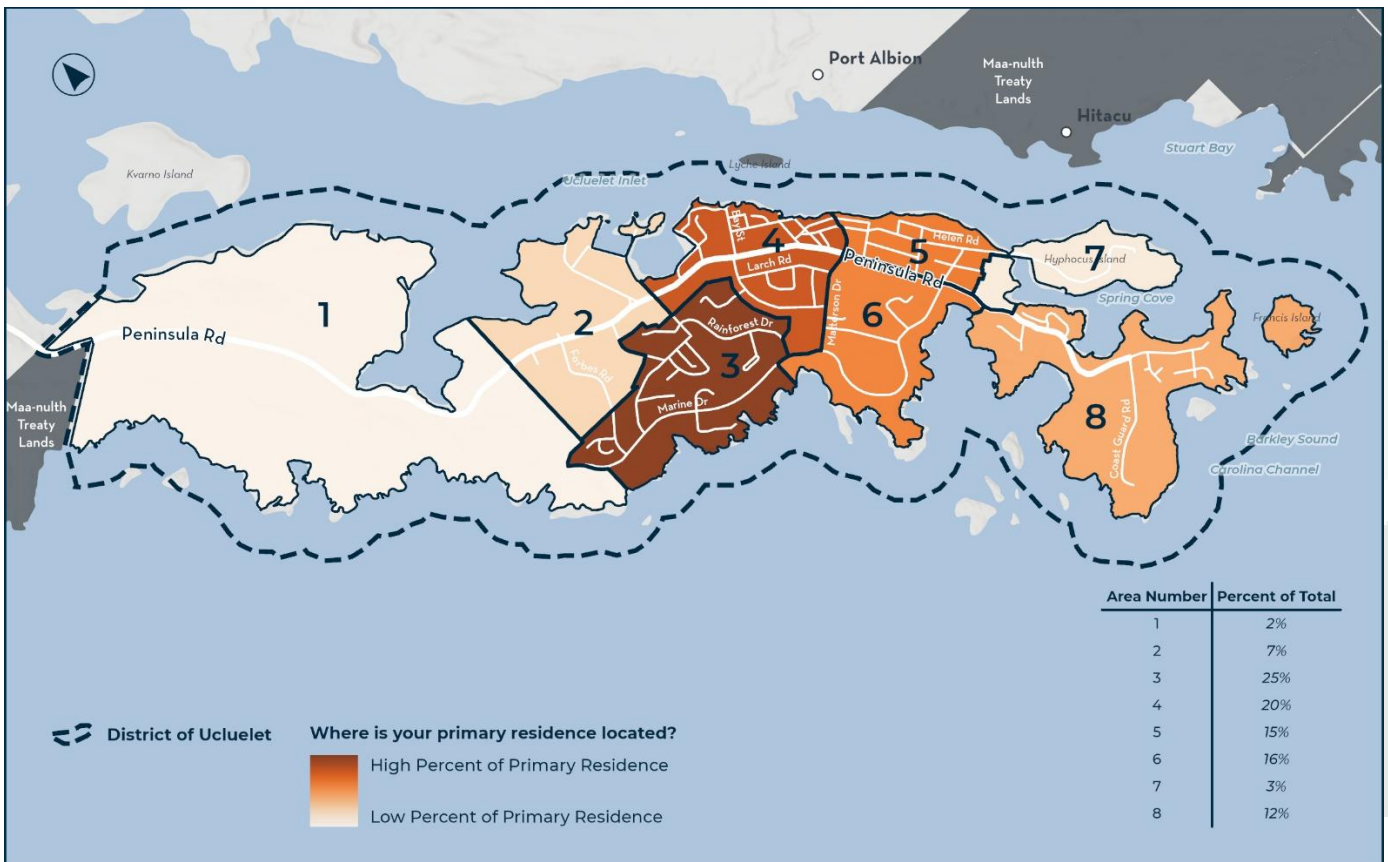
Skipped: 1

Q4. Where is your primary residence located?



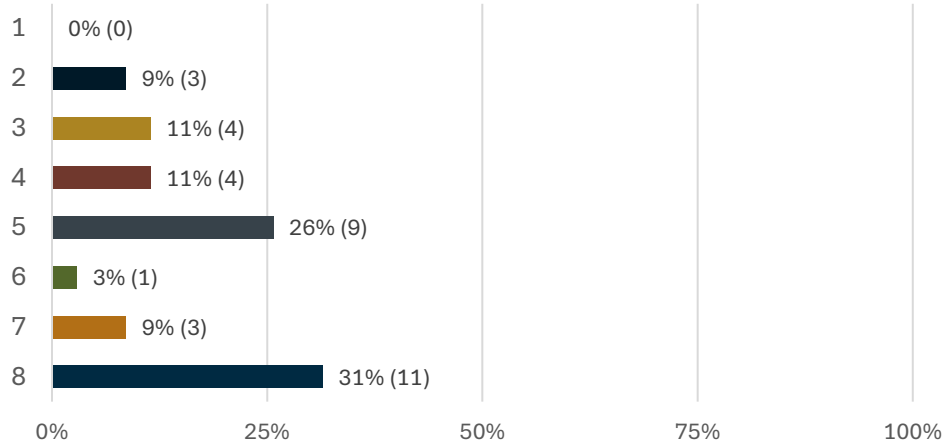
Responses: 242

Skipped: 49

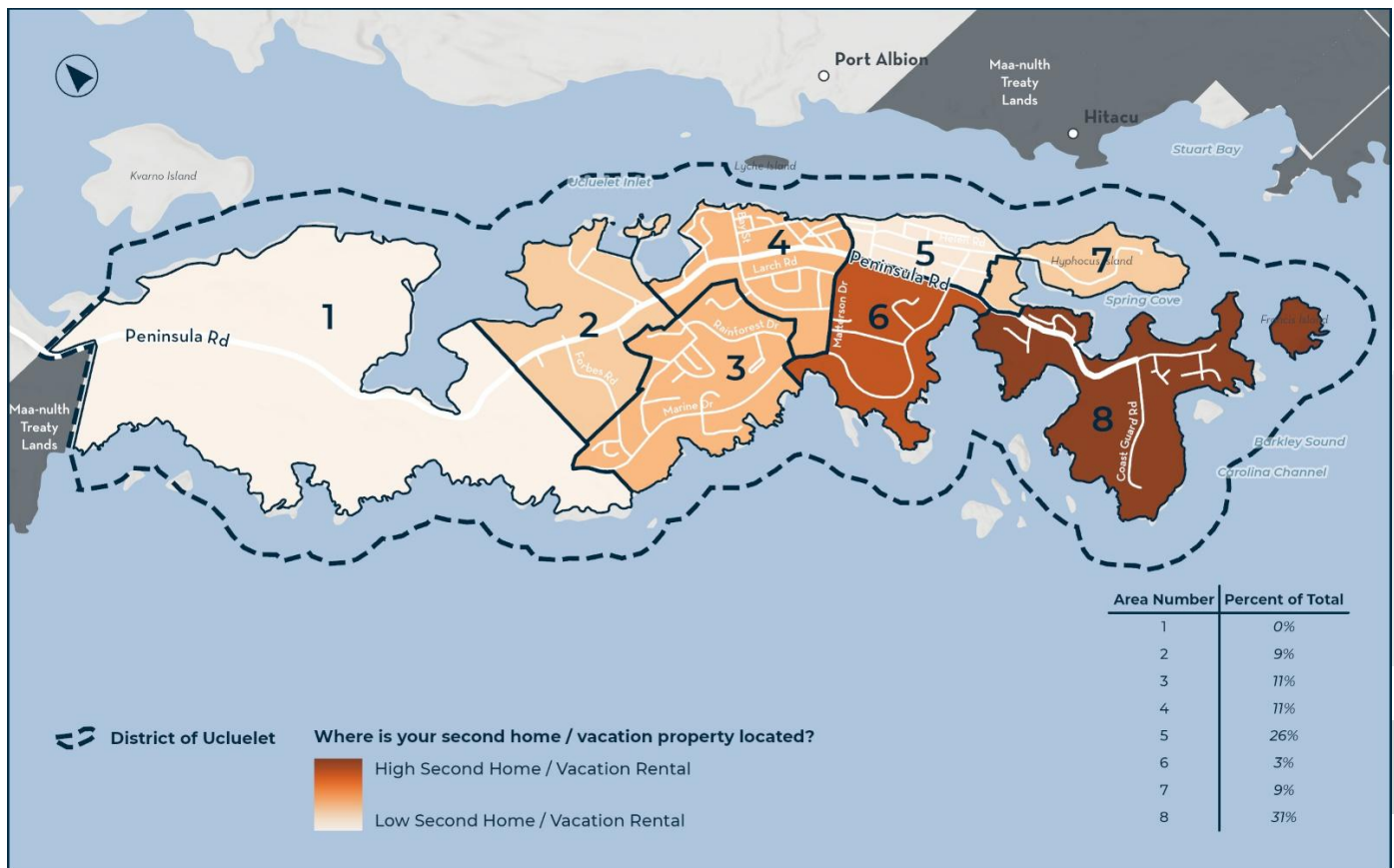


Note: Question 5 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 3 that they their primary residence is not in Ucluelet, but they do own a second home/vacation property in Ucluelet.

Q5. Where is your second home/vacation property located?*

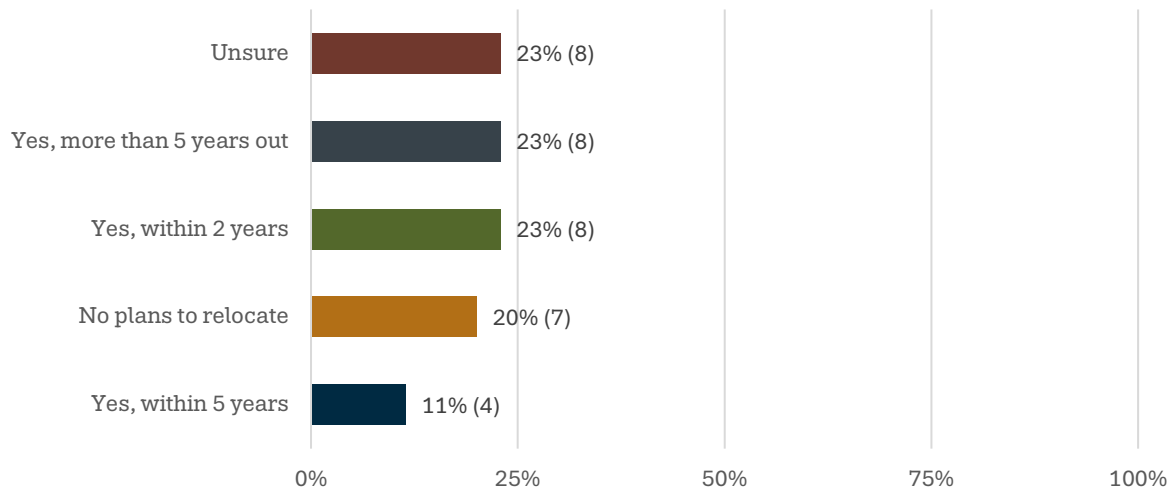


Responses: 35



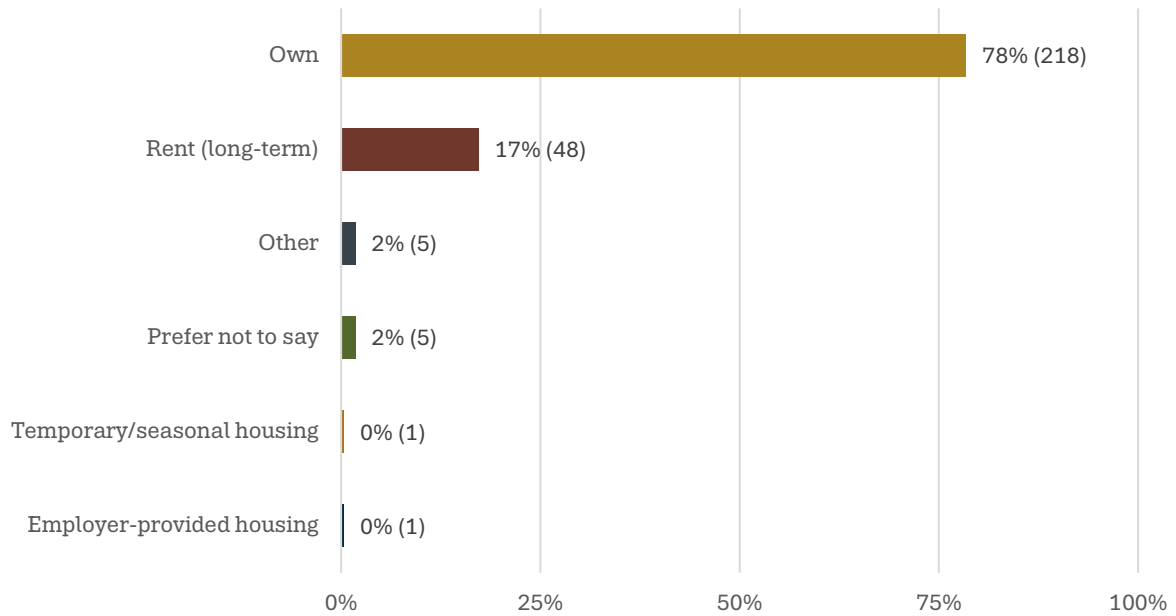
Note: Question 6 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 3 that they are not residents, but do own a second home/vacation property in Ucluelet.

Q6. If you own a second home in Ucluelet but do not live here now, do you plan to relocate to Ucluelet?*



Responses: 35

Q7. What is the tenure of your current housing?

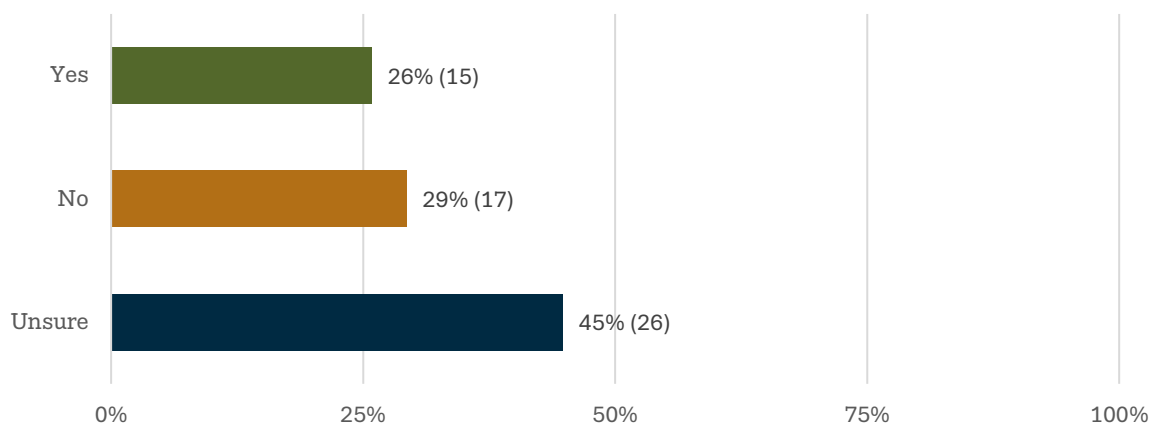


Responses: 278

Skipped: 13

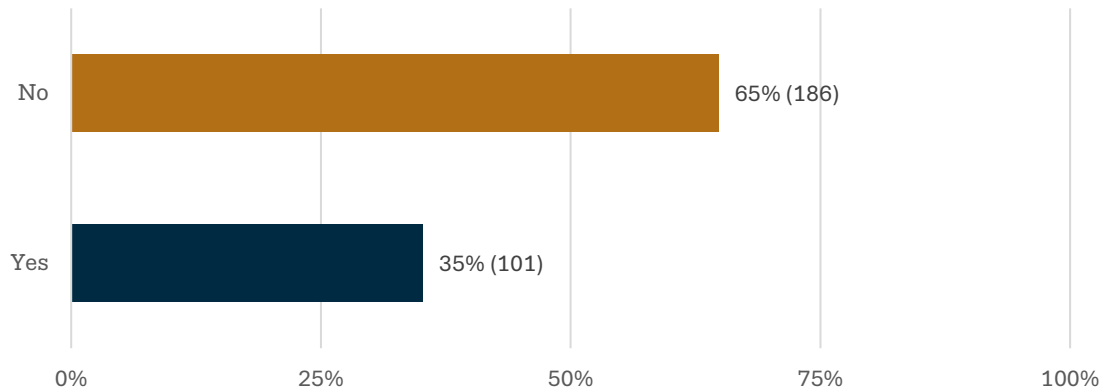
Note: Question 8 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 7 that rent (long-term).

Q8. Do you plan to purchase a home in Ucluelet in the next 5 years?



Responses: 58

Q9. Are you a business owner in the community?

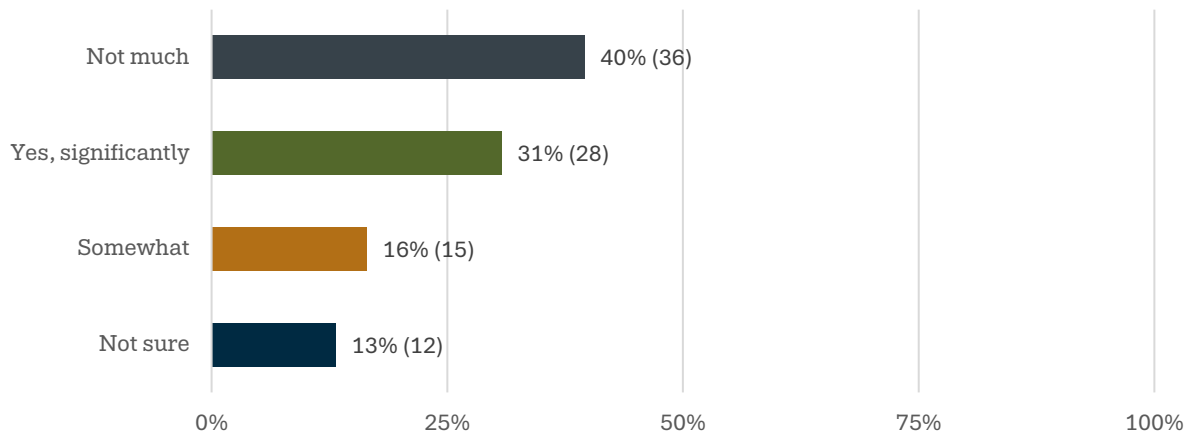


Responses: 287

Skipped: 4

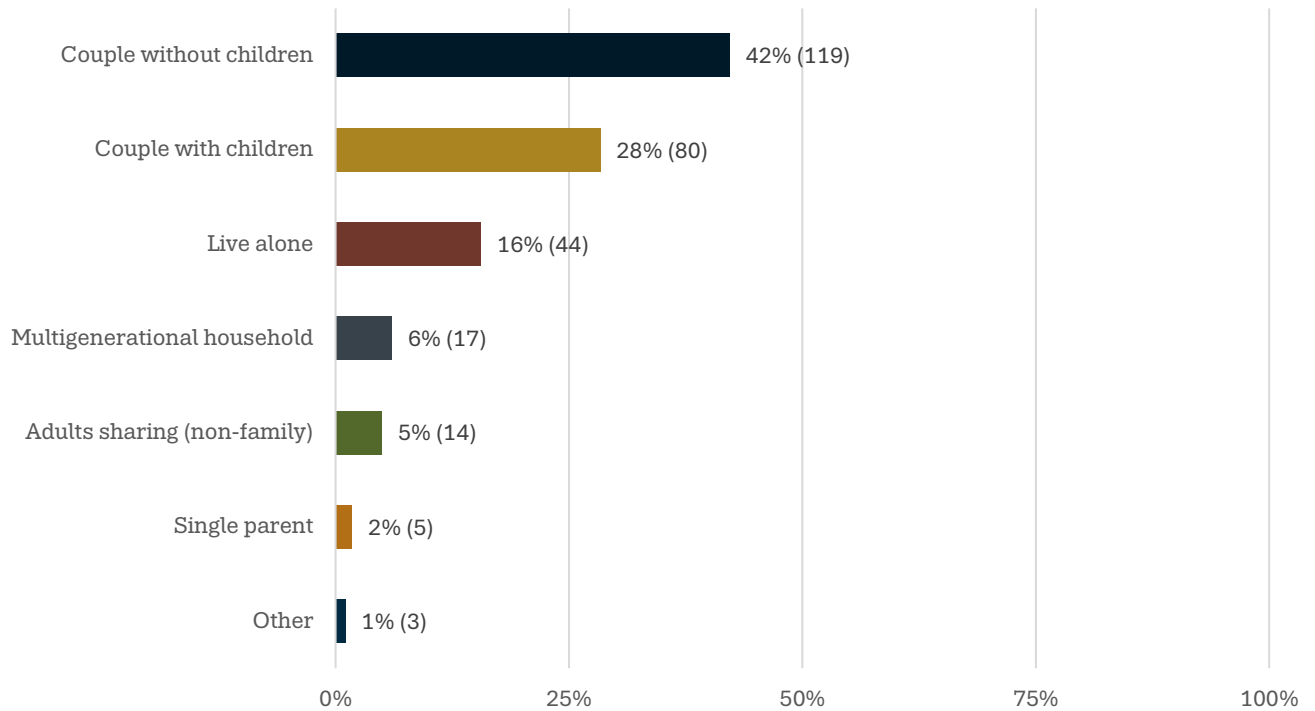
Note: Question 10 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 9 that they are a business owner in the community.

Q10. Do your employees struggle to find housing?*



Responses: 91

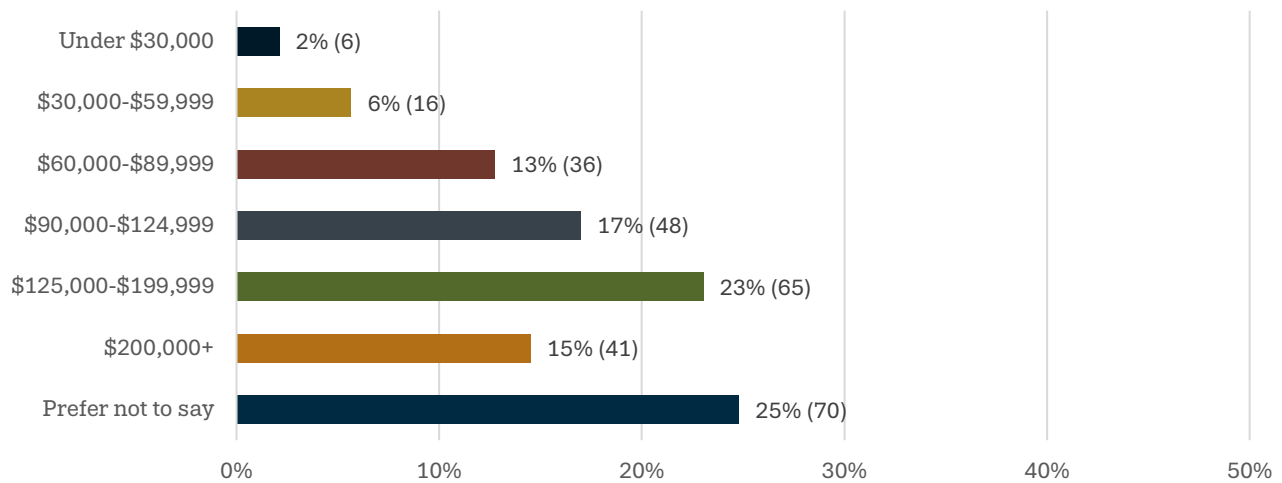
Q11. What is your current household composition?



Responses: 282

Skipped: 9

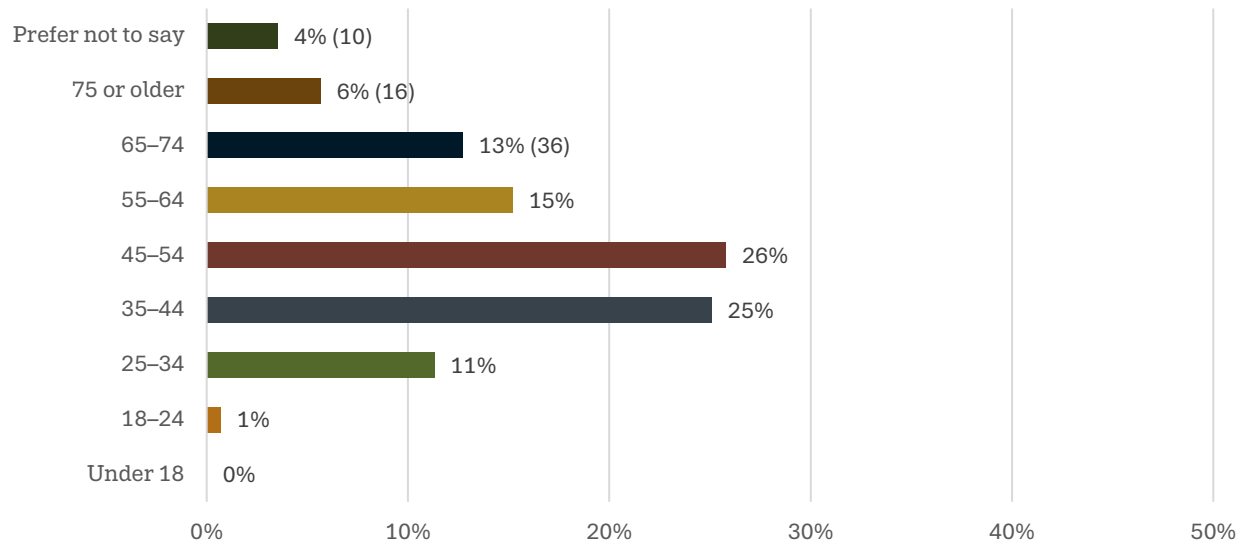
Q12. What is the combined gross income of adults in your household? (optional)



Responses: 282

Skipped: 9

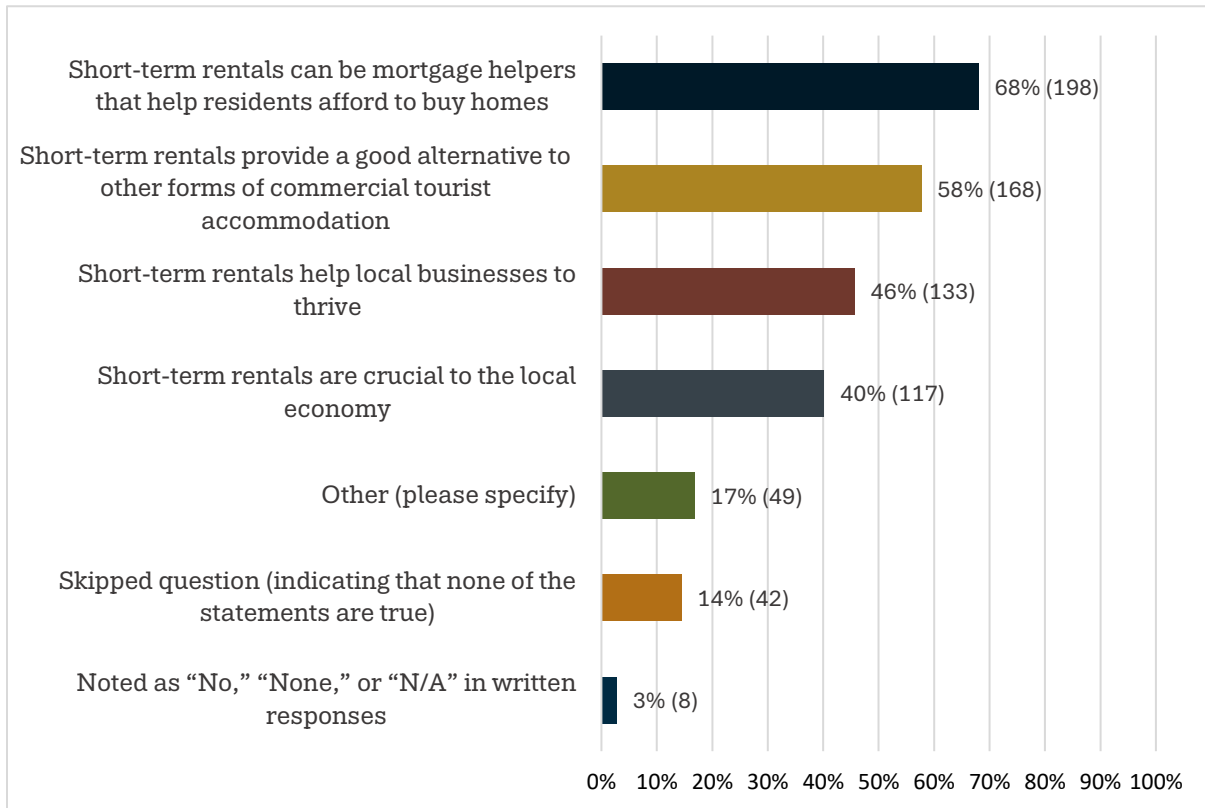
Q13. What is your age?



Responses: 283

Skipped: 8

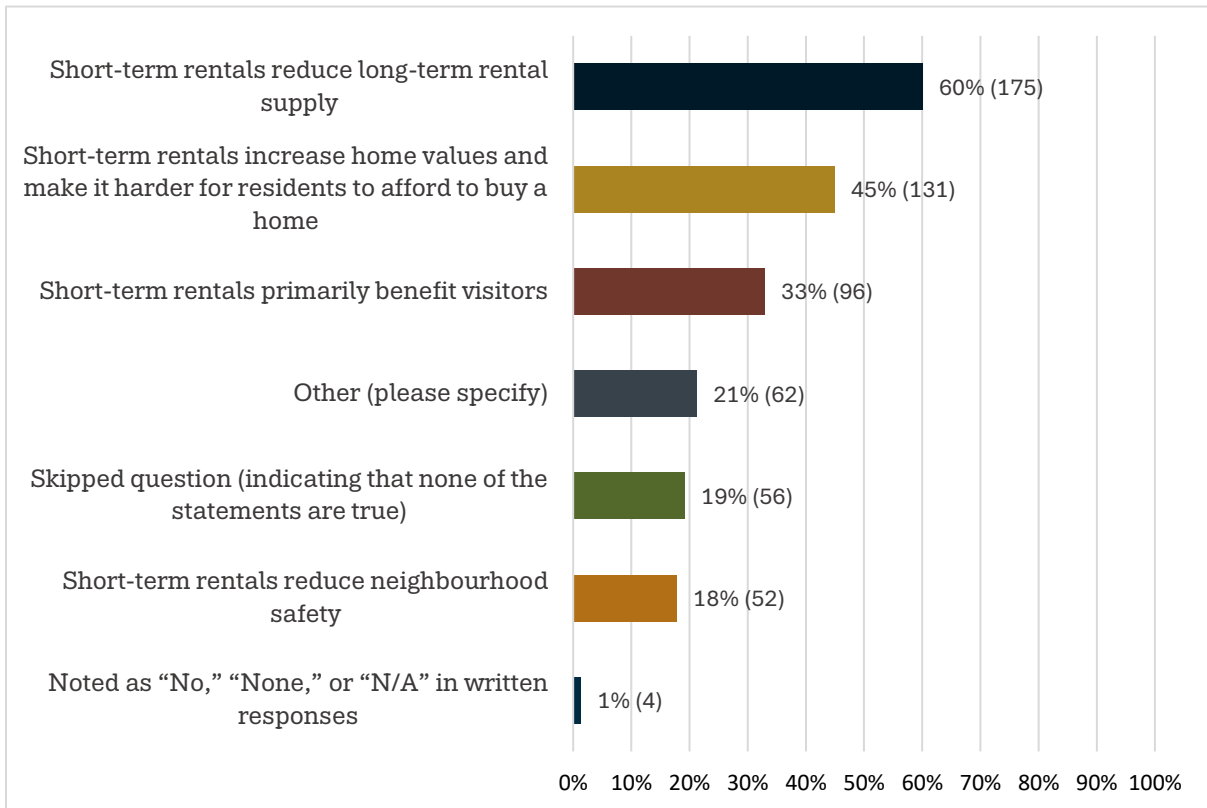
Q.14 Do you think that any of the following statements are true of short-term rentals in Ucluelet? If so, select all that apply.



Responses: 249

Skipped: 42

Q.15. Do you think any of the following are challenges of short-term rentals in Ucluelet? Is so, select all that apply.



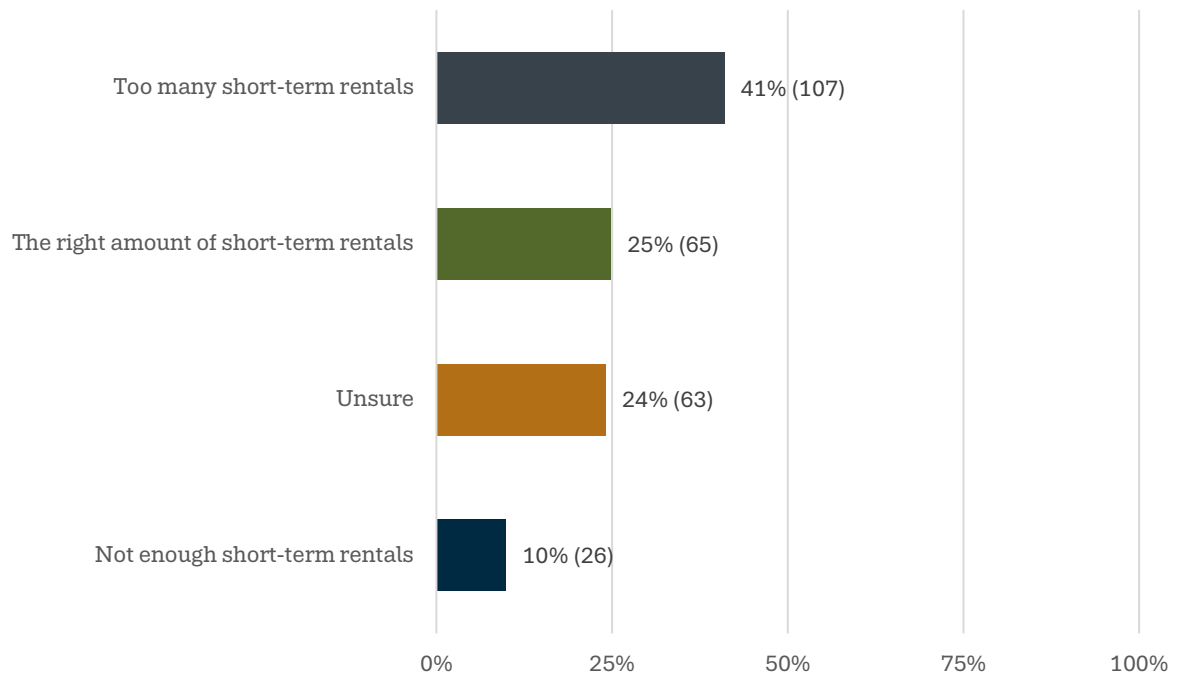
Responses: 235

Skipped: 56

Questions 14 and 15 provided the opportunity for respondents to identify other statements regarding short-term rentals, or to forego any selection if they did not identify with any of the statements. Following is a summary of "other" statements provided.

Summary: Responses showed strongly divided views on short-term rentals in Ucluelet. Many respondents emphasized that short-term rentals are important to the local economy and household financial stability, allowing residents to remain in the community. At the same time, a significant number of respondents felt that short-term rentals have reduced the availability of long-term housing and have had a negative effect on community cohesion. Concerns about infrastructure capacity and environmental impacts led many respondents to call for a more balanced and carefully managed approach to how short-term rentals are permitted.

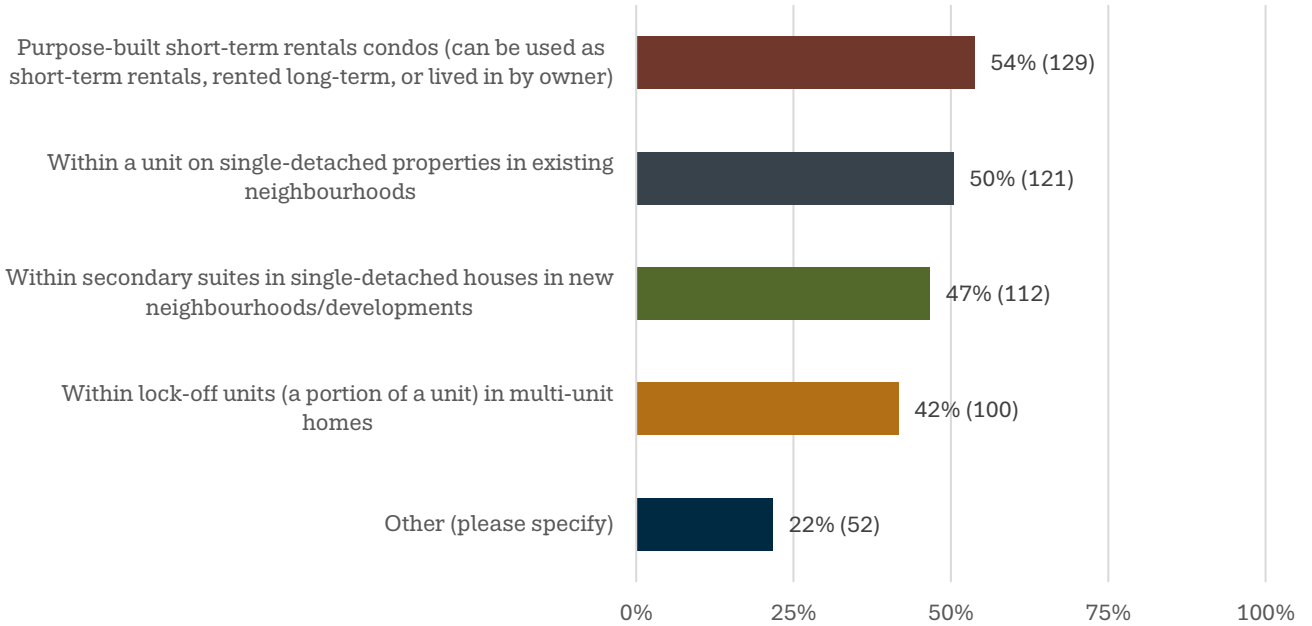
Q16. Do you think Ucluelet currently has:



Responses: 261

Skipped: 30

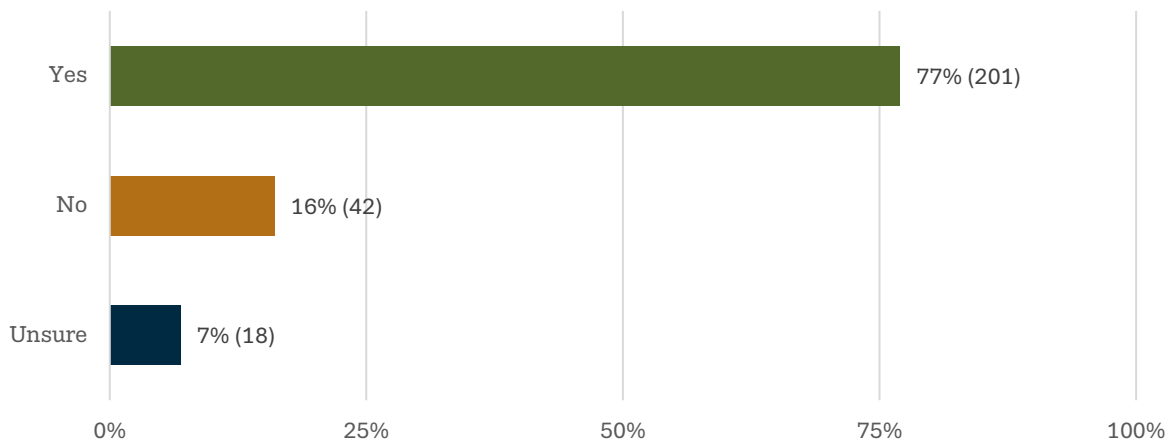
Q17. Do you think any of the following forms of short-term rentals are appropriate for Ucluelet in the future?



Responses: 240

Skipped: 51

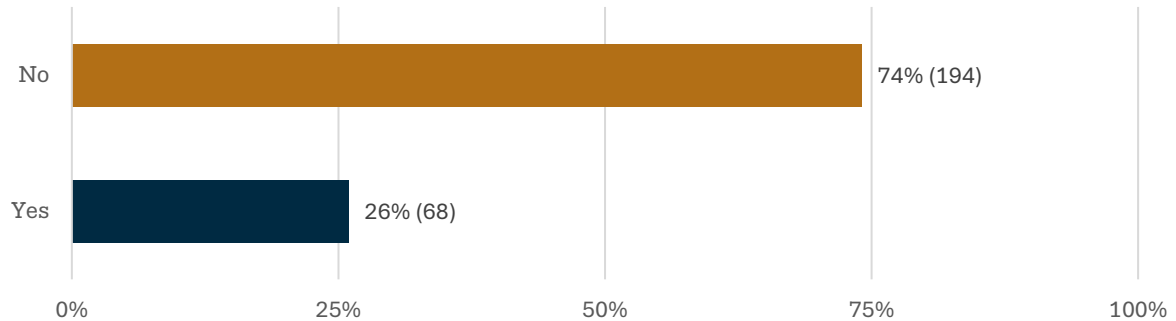
Q18. Do you think a principal resident (owner or long-term renter) should be required to live on a single-detached property in order to operate a short-term rental?



Responses: 261

Skipped: 30

Q19. Do you currently operate a short-term rental in Ucluelet?

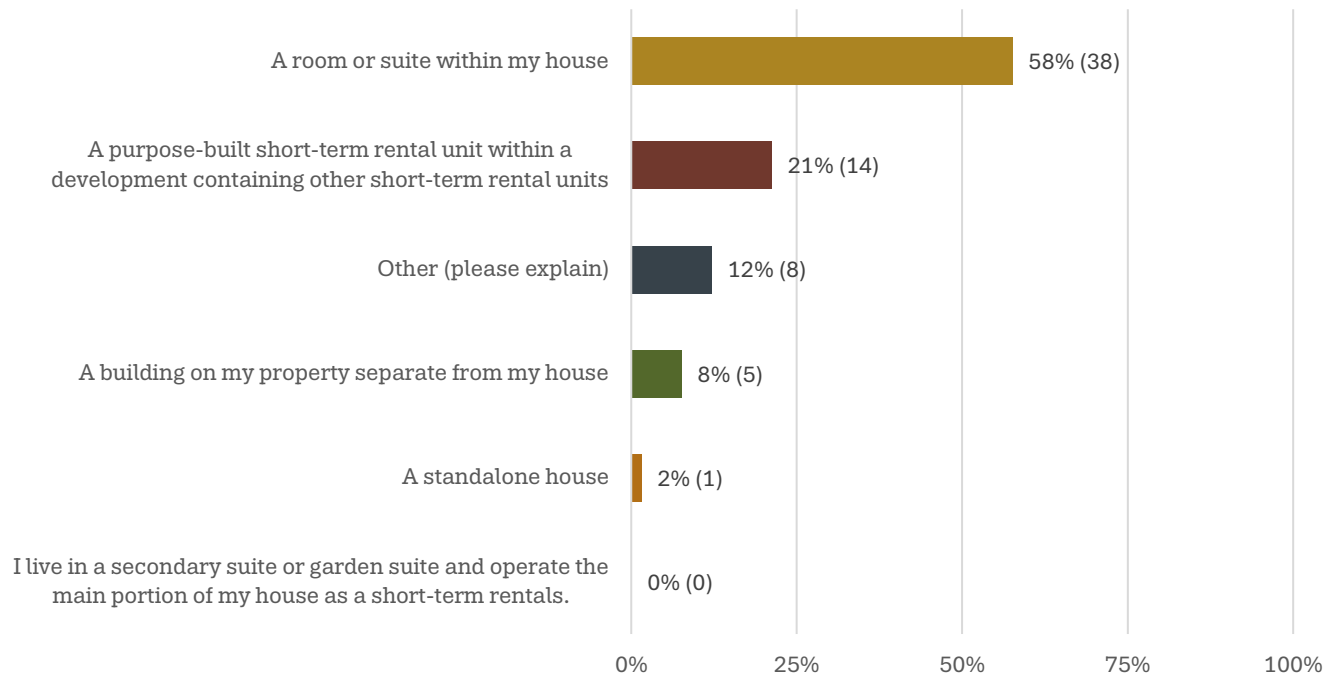


Responses: 262

Skipped: 29

Note: Question 20 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 19 that they currently operate a short-term rental in Ucluelet.

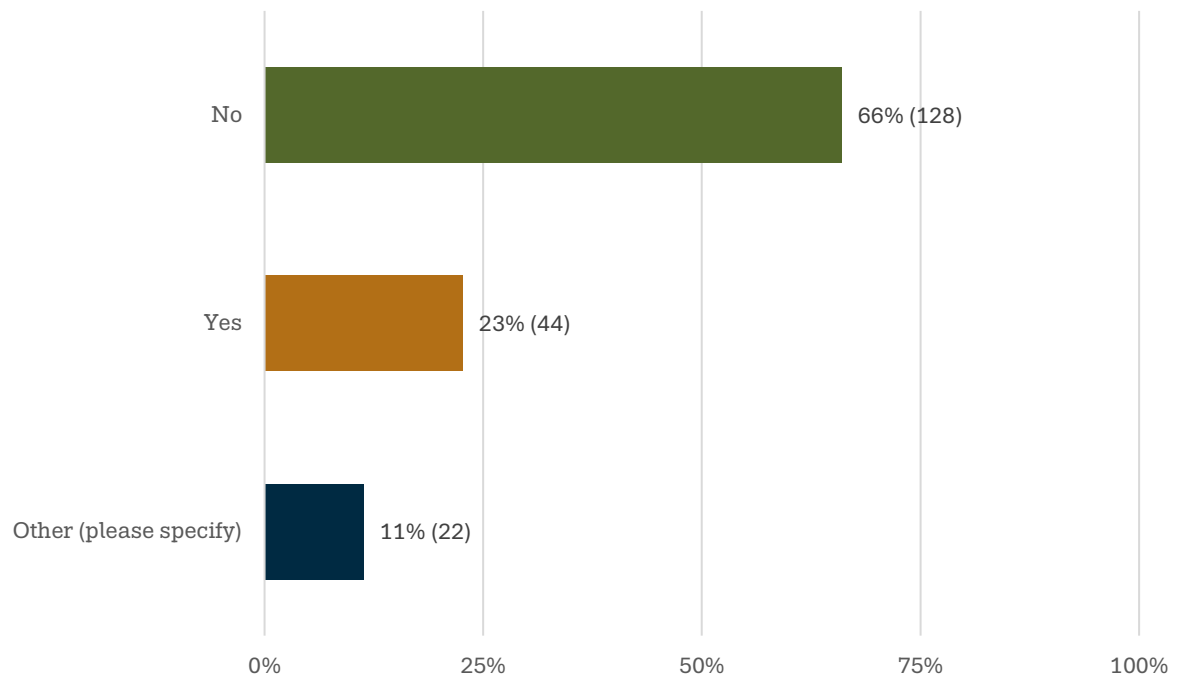
Q20. What type of short-term rental do you operate?*



Responses: 66

Note: Question 21 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 19 that they do not currently operate a short-term rental in Ucluelet.

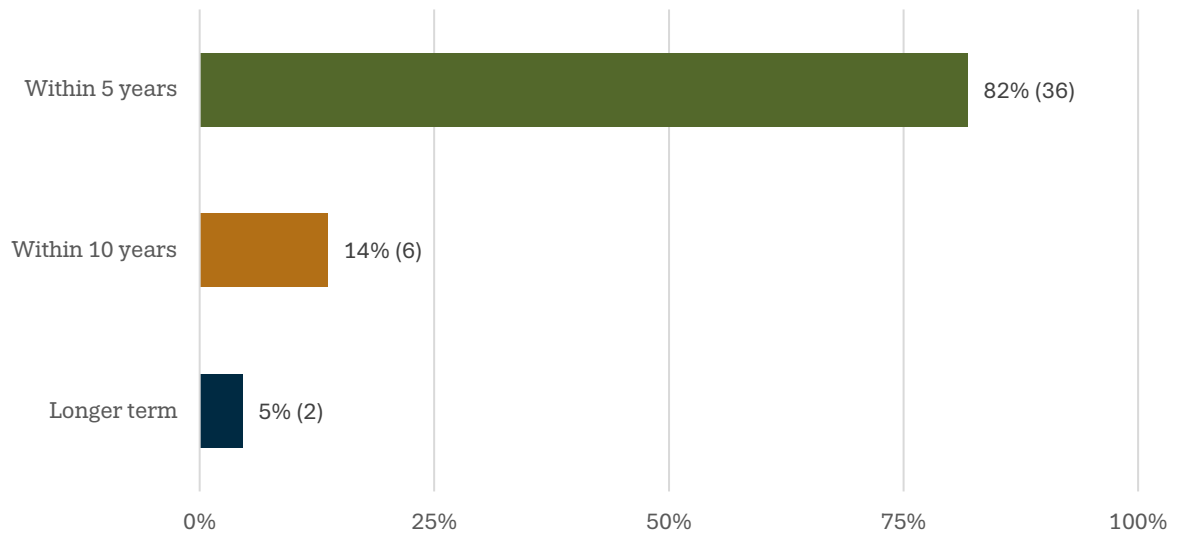
Q21. Are you interested in operating a short-term rental?



Responses: 194

Note: Question 22 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 21 that they are interested in operating a short-term rental.

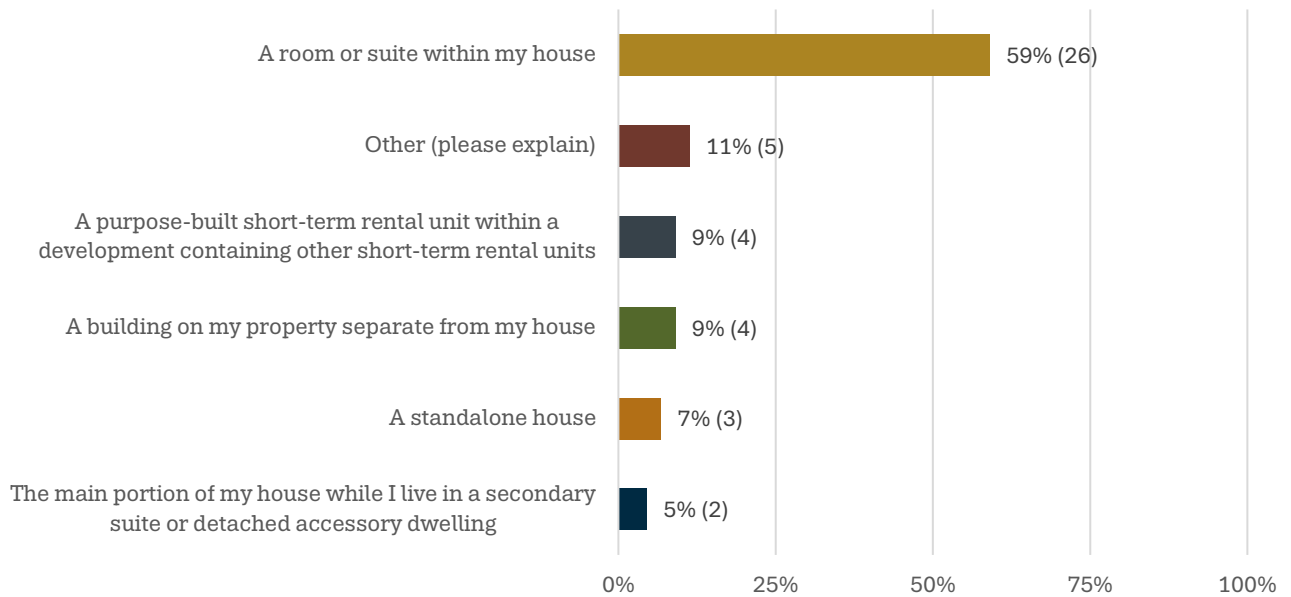
Q22. When would you consider starting to operate a short-term rental?



Responses: 44

Note: Question 23 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 21 that they are interested in operating a short-term rental.

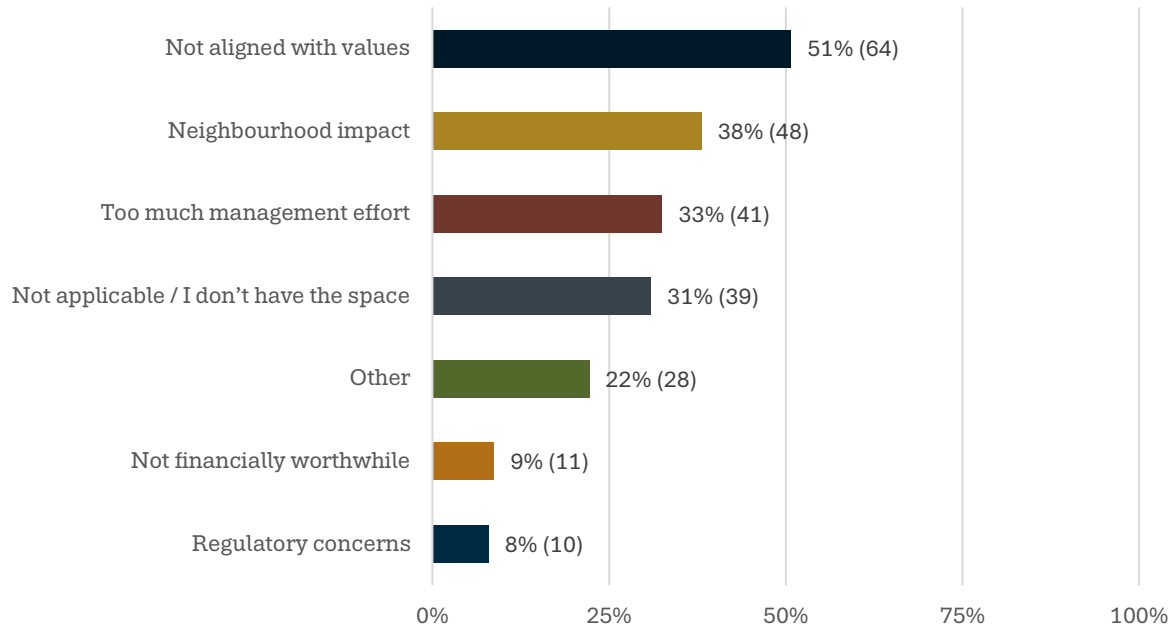
Q23. What form of short-term rental are you interested in operating?



Responses: 44

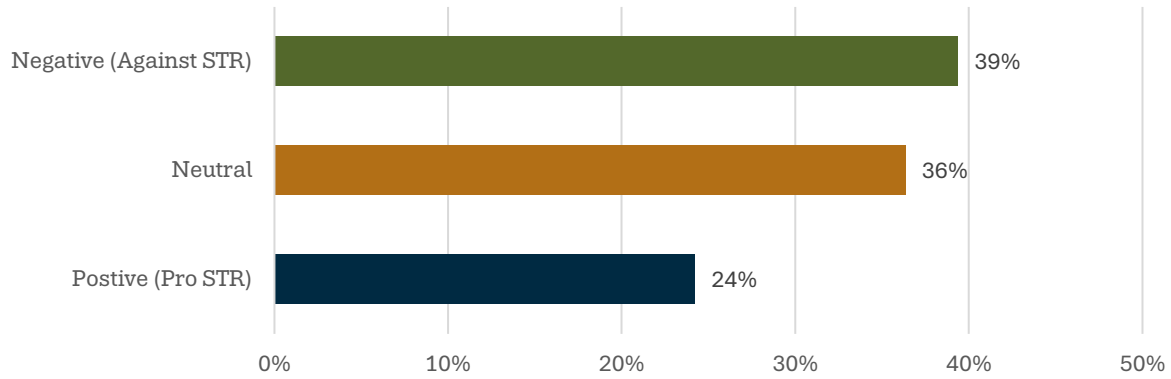
Note: Question 23 only appeared for those that indicated in Question 21 that they are not interested in operating a short-term rental.

Q24. Why aren't you interested in operating a short-term rental?



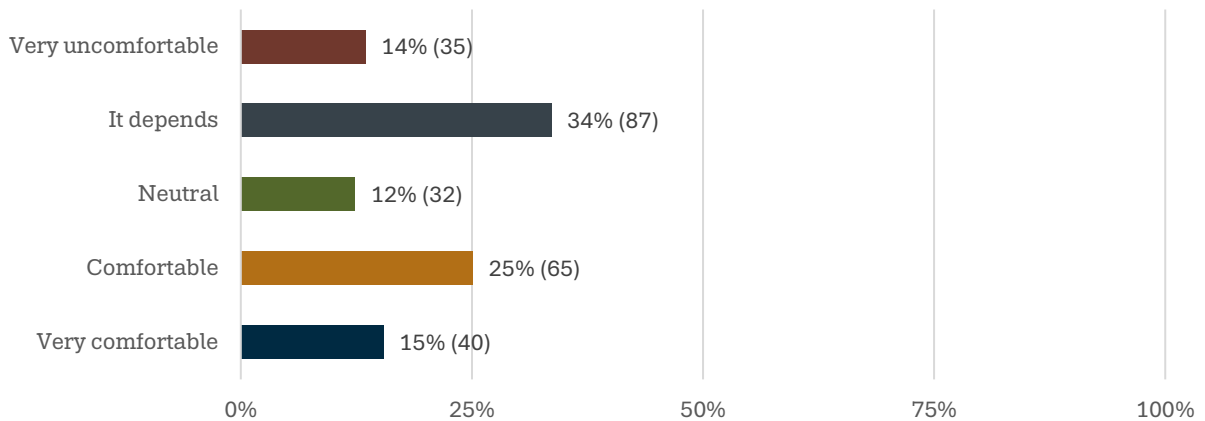
Responses: 126

Q25. Is there anything else you would like to share about short-term rentals in Ucluelet?



Responses: 99

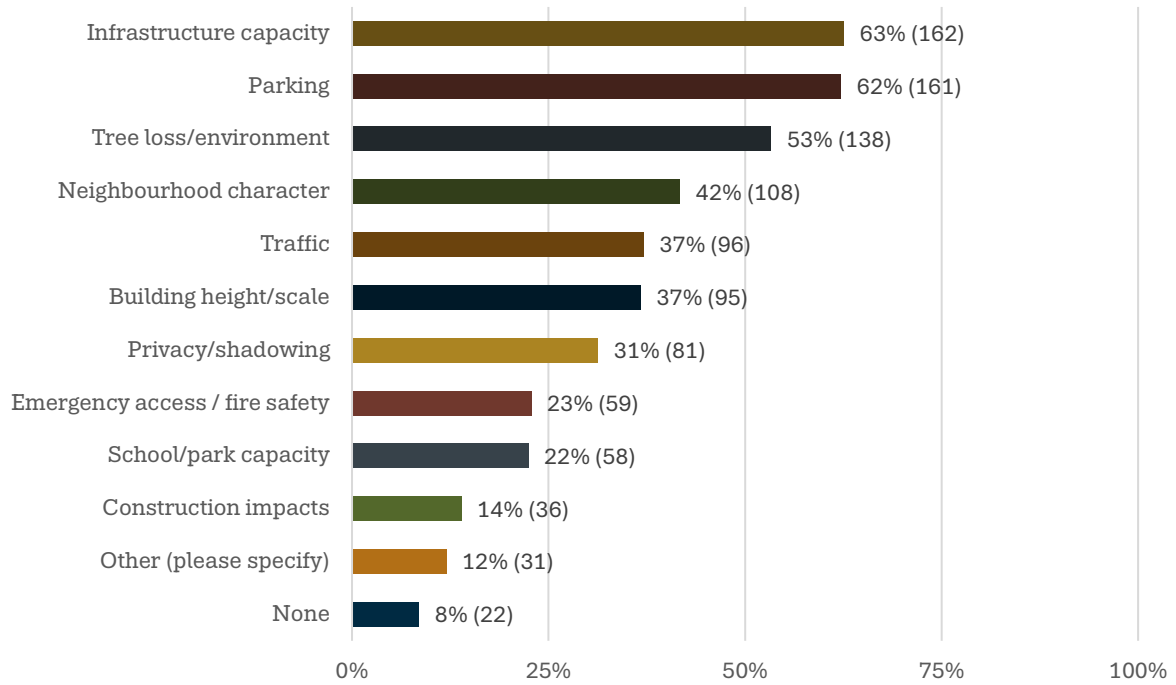
Q26. How comfortable are you with gentle density in Ucluelet?



Responses: 259

Skipped: 32

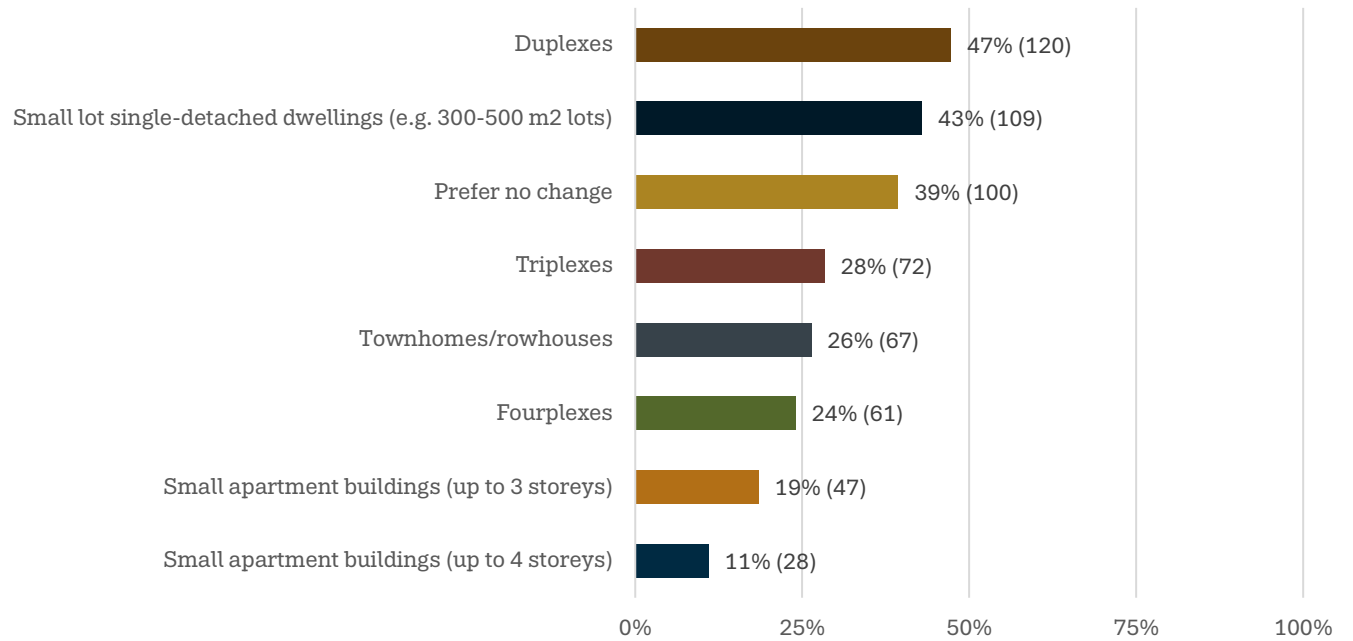
Q27. Do you have any concerns regarding gentle density development? (Select up to 3)



Responses: 257

Skipped: 34

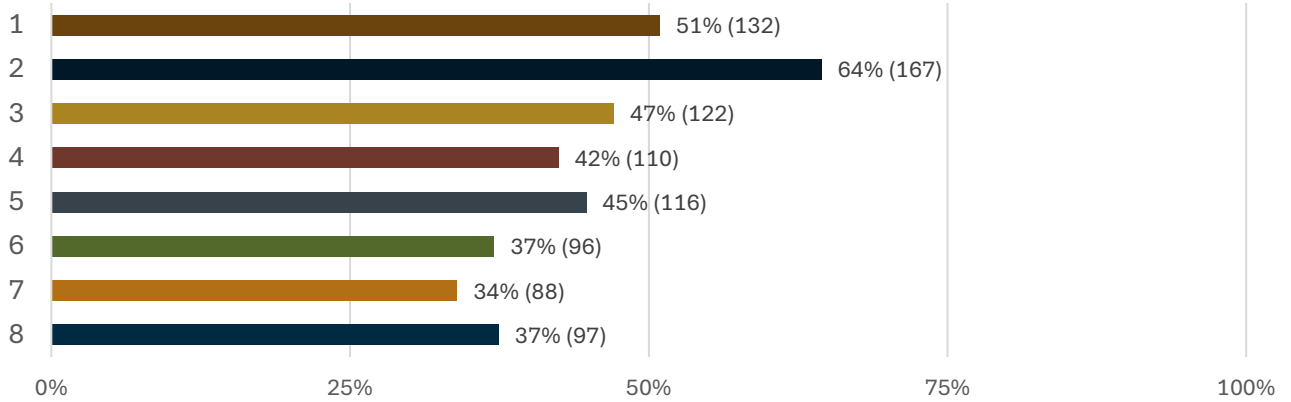
Q28. Would any of the following building types fit in your neighbourhood?



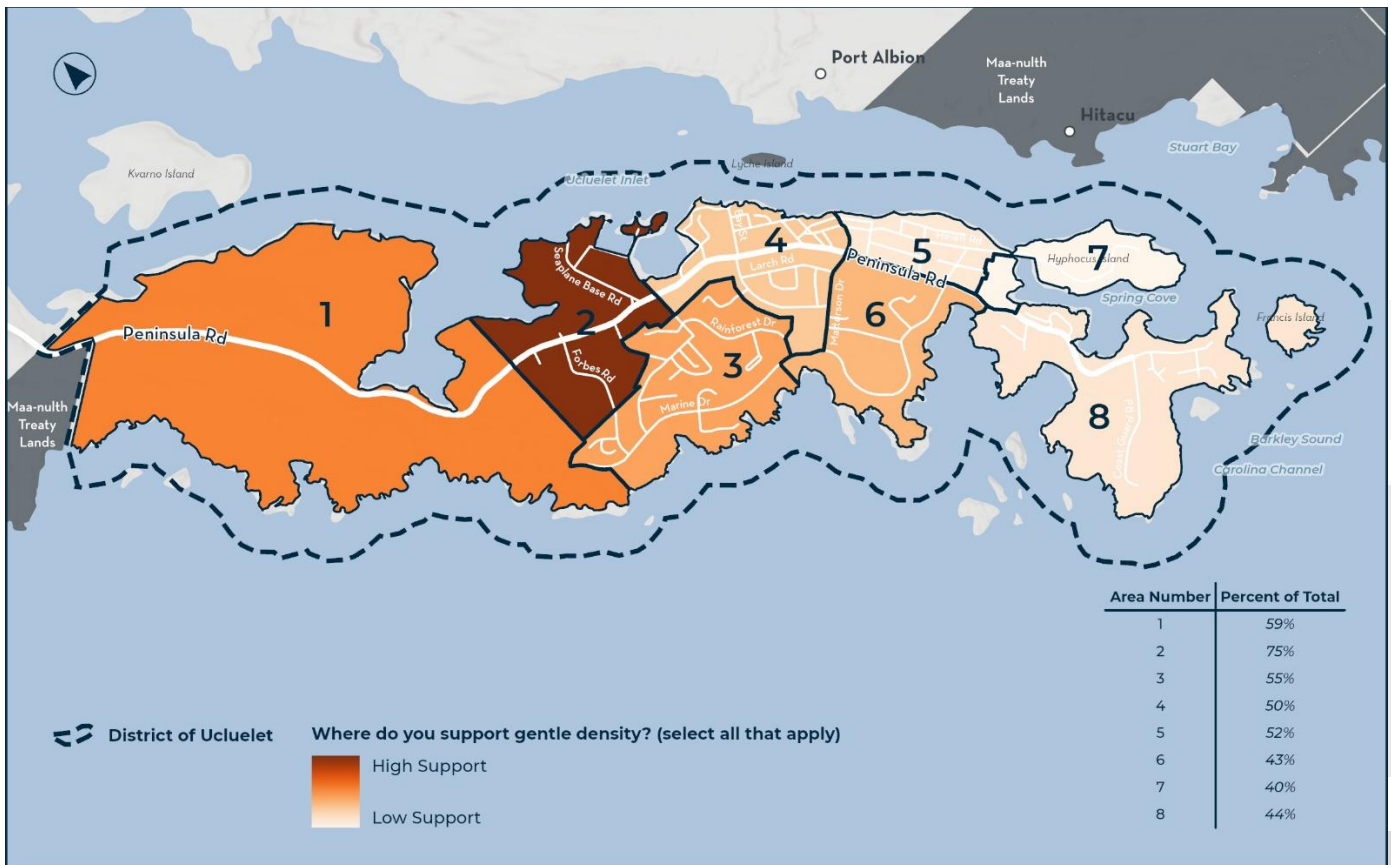
Responses: 254

Skipped: 37

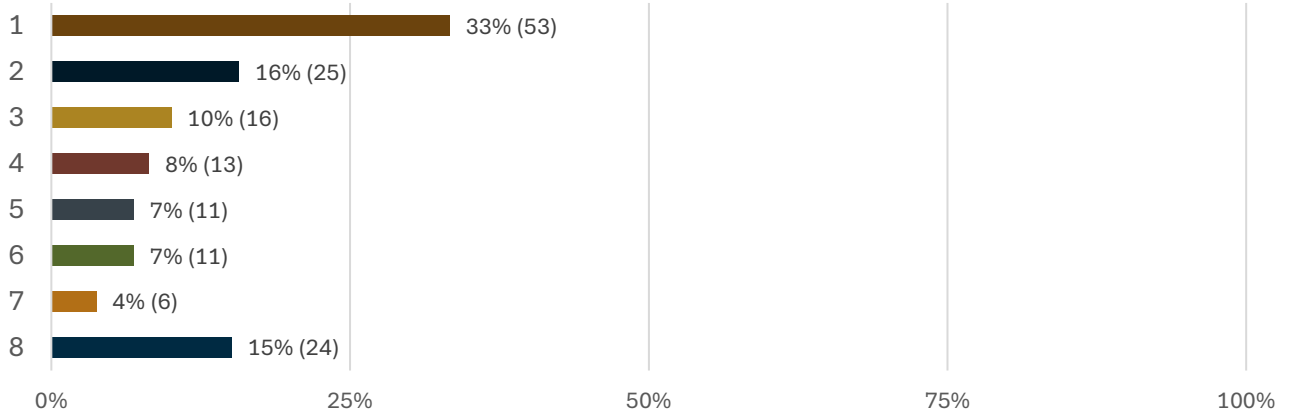
Q29. Would you support gentle density in any of the areas identified on this map?



Responses: 222
Skipped: 69

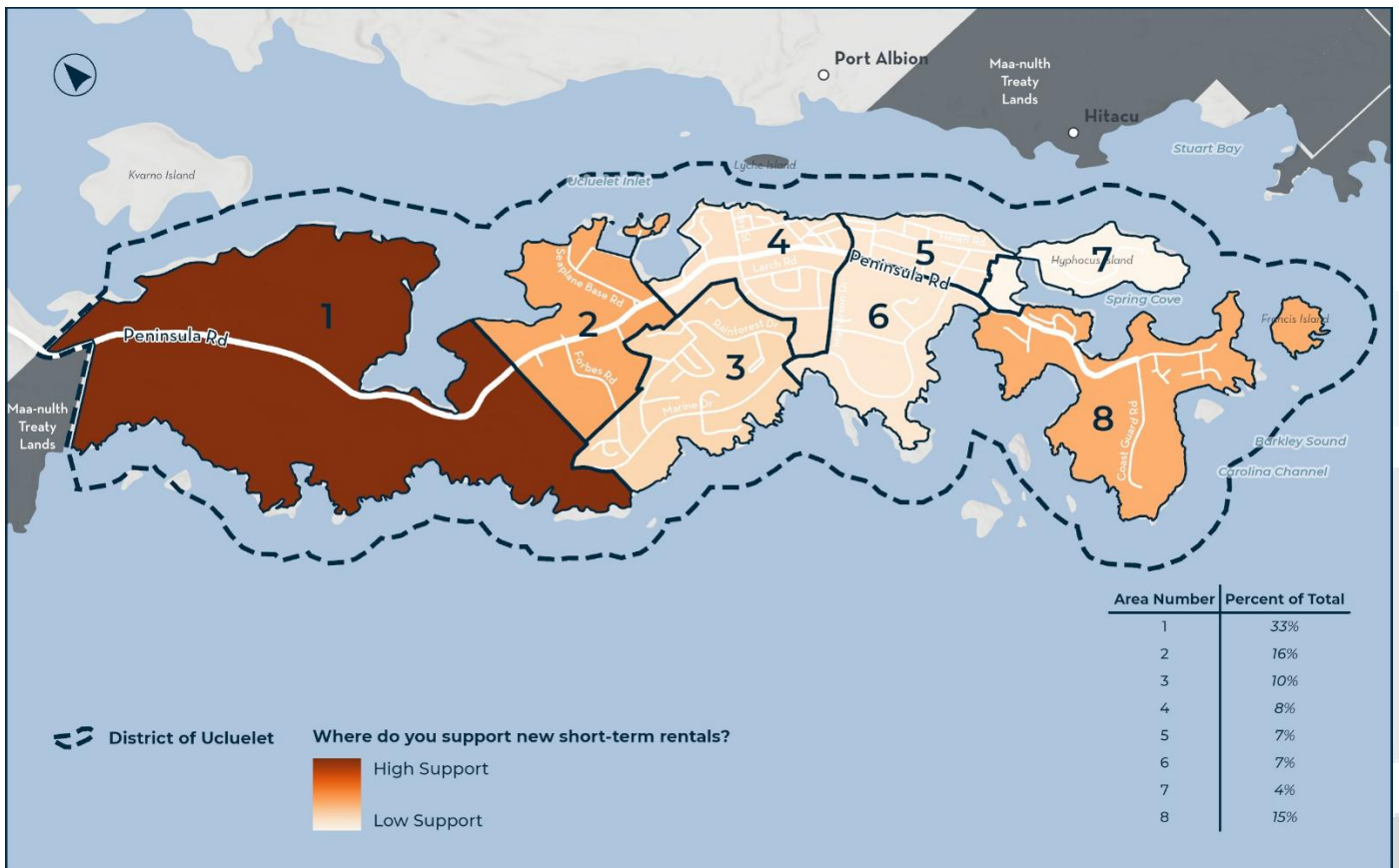


Q30. Would you support new short-term rentals in any of the areas identified on this map?

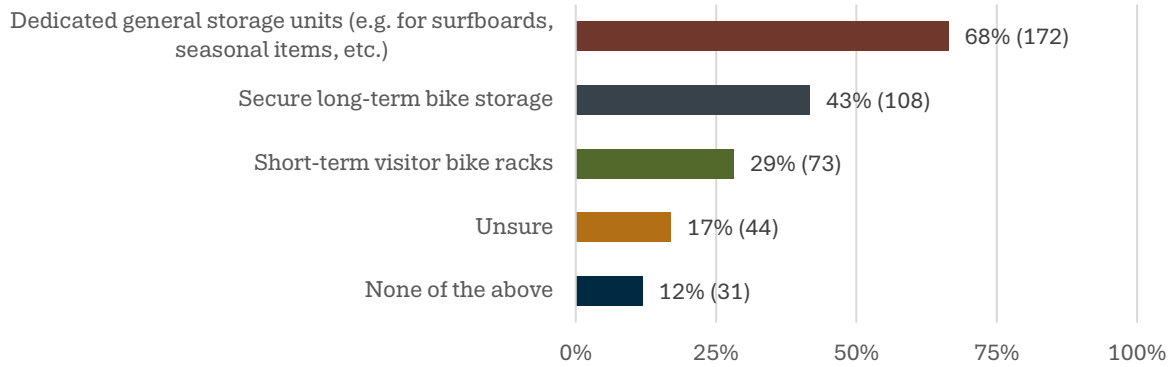


Responses: 159

Skipped: 132

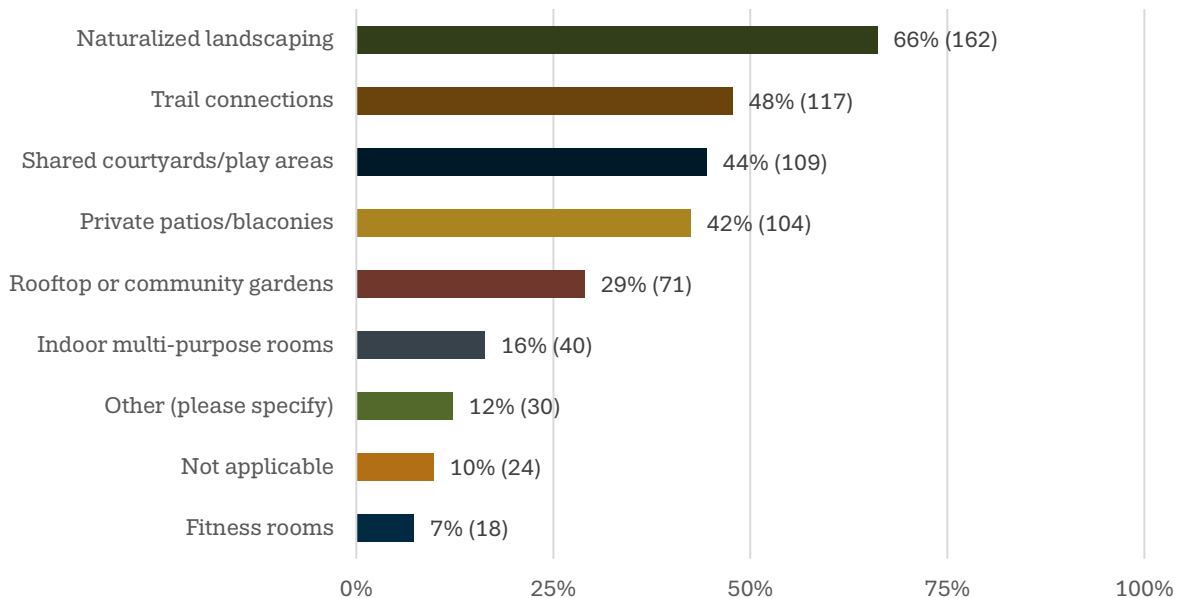


**Q31. Select any of the following options if you think they should be required in new multi-family developments
(Select all that apply)**



Responses: 252
Skipped: 39

**Q32. What are the three most important types of on-site amenities for new multi-family developments in Ucluelet?
(Select 3)**



Responses: 245
Skipped: 46

Q33. Please share any additional feedback or suggestions you have about housing in Ucluelet:

Responses: 134

Key Themes:

- **Housing availability and affordability:** Many respondents emphasized the urgent need for more long-term, attainable housing for people who live and work in the community, including families, seniors, young people, and service workers. There was strong concern that rising housing costs and limited rental supply are making it difficult for residents to stay in Ucluelet, which in turn affects local services, businesses, and community life.
- **Short-term rentals:** Comments reflected a wide range of views on short-term rentals. Some residents expressed frustration that STRs are reducing the supply of long-term housing and changing the character of residential neighbourhoods. Others noted that STRs are an important mortgage helper for local homeowners and a key part of the tourism economy. Across differing views, most respondents supported actions that balance the two needs (e.g. principal residence requirement).
- **Gentle density:** Many respondents stressed that new density should be carefully designed, respect existing neighbourhoods, provide adequate parking, and avoid overdevelopment.
- **Infrastructure capacity:** Housing growth must align with infrastructure and service capacity, and should not increase costs for existing residents.
- **Protection of community character:** Ucluelet's small-town feel and greenspaces should be prioritized when planning for any new housing decisions.
- **Clear, consistent housing decisions:** Some respondents urged the District to design clearer rules, more consistent enforcement, greater transparency, and stronger alignment between community input and housing decisions.