Affordable Housing Survey Results

Emphasizing that this Survey is not representative or scientific, and therefore may not necessarily reflect the opinion or profiles of all Oahu households, respondents are people who do have an interest in housing.

- The majority of respondents—across all income groups, no matter where they live, no matter if they rent or own their home—agreed on three things: 1) affordable housing is the most critical housing issue for Oahu; 2) more housing in general is most critical in terms of supply; and 3) the most critical affordable housing issue is ensuring that affordable housing stays affordable for more than ten years.
- The majority of open-ended comments said that it is critical to develop affordable housing that is really affordable and available to those who need it but may not necessarily qualify for it under current requirements. Some mentioned that to do this, affordable housing requirements must be redefined to become more meaningful and that affordable housing should be reserved for Hawaii residents.
- Majority of respondents said that both the City and State financial aid programs should focus on: 1) subsidies for home buyers such as down payment assistance; 2) subsidies and other incentives for developers to build more affordable rental housing; and 3) subsidies to build needed infrastructure for affordable housing.
- Almost half of survey respondents (49%) said that the State’s non-financial aid policies should focus on using underutilized land near transit stations for affordable and middle-income housing development. The second choice (19%) was to use this same area of land for economic development purposes, including mixed-use commercial uses.
- There appears to be a significant amount of “doubling up”—27% of households said that there is at least one person living in their home that is not a member of their immediate family and does not have the resources to buy or rent their own place—further confirming that there is a shortage of affordable housing.
- 90% of homeowners participating in the survey have an annual income of $50,000 or more with most within the $100,000 to $149,000 income range. 85% of renters make less than $99,999 per year with most within the $50,000 to $74,999 range.
- More people living near transit rent their home rather than own it. Homeownership is more prevalent outside of urban Honolulu. 58% of respondents who live in urban Honolulu near transit rent the place where they live. 59% of respondents who live elsewhere own the place where they live.
- The majority of renters (91%) said that affordable rent would be anything less than $1,725 per month. This amount is less than the average monthly rent for a 2 bedroom unit in most places on Oahu.
- Based on responses, a significant number of households that rent have little savings to meet typical down payment requirements. The median sales price for a condominium on Oahu in 2013 was $332,000, which would require a 20% down payment of $66,400. Only 5% of respondents who rent have more than $50,000 to put towards a down payment. The majority of renters (38%) have less than $1,999.
- Most households participating in the survey are at or approaching the HUD Median Family Low Income limit. The 2 person household size is the only group where the majority is above the HUD Median income limit.