



## Sonoma County Planning Commission **STAFF REPORT**

**FILE:** PLP20-0018  
**DATE:** April 21, 2022  
**TIME:** 1:05 pm  
**STAFF:** Eric Gage, Project Planner  
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### **SUMMARY**

<b>Applicant:</b>	County of Sonoma
<b>Supervisory District(s):</b>	All
<b>Description:</b>	Housing Element Update
<b>CEQA Review:</b>	Environmental Impact Report (pending)

### **Recommendation**

The Permit Resource and Management Department (Permit Sonoma) recommends that the Planning Commission receive an informational update on the 2023 Housing Element Update; review possible policy options and next steps; hold a workshop to receive information, feedback and suggestions from the public; and provide comments to staff and consultants on the policy options presented.

This item is an informational public workshop, and no formal action or decision is required.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the current 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) cycle, the County of Sonoma was assigned an adjusted allocation of a total of 515 dwelling units of varying income categories. At the end of 2021, the County had completed 87% of the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle allocation. In December 2021, the Association of Bay Area Governments voted on a RHNA for the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle that included an allocation of 3,881 units for unincorporated Sonoma County. Each Bay Area jurisdiction must adopt their Housing Element updates by January 31, 2023. In October 2021, staff selected Civic Edge Consulting and Rincon Consultants to support the county's update that not only meets new state laws, but also, most importantly creates a policy framework and implementation plan to address inequities in providing safe and affordable housing for Sonoma County.



Staff is providing the Planning Commission a progress update and seeks input on the “3 P’s of Housing Policy – Protection, Preservation, and Production” in order to:

- Meet the county’s RHNA requirements
- Facilitate the conversion of market rate to affordable housing units
- Preserve existing affordable housing units
- Meet the housing needs identified through Housing Element outreach to date

The California State Legislature has identified the attainment of a decent home and suitable living environment for every Californian as the State’s major housing goal. In the last few years, the Legislature has passed multiple housing bills that prescribe new requirements for Housing Elements and new by-right requirements for housing projects. Some of these bills would further reduce land use control for cities without a certified Housing Element, including their ability to review and process applications for housing projects. This means it is vitally important for the County to adopt a Housing Element that is compliant with the standards set by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Attachment 1 provides a summary of the housing laws enacted between 2017 and 2021 that affect Housing Element requirements, approvals and procedures for certain projects, penalties associated with non-compliance, and possible new policy options to be explored in the County’s Housing Element update.

Moving forward, staff will conduct policy analysis, environmental review, and prepare the draft Housing Element prior to returning to the Planning Commission with a staff recommendation for the Board of Supervisors to adopt an update to its existing Housing Element.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The preparation of the Housing Element is required by California State Law, Chapter 10.6 and 10.7 of the Government Code. The Housing Element is one of the seven mandated elements of the General Plan, and the only element that must be updated on a set schedule, consistent with the establishment of Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA). The County is required to update its 2014 Housing Element to cover the planning period between 2023 – 2031. The 2023 Housing Element will retain many of the existing goals, policies, and programs of the existing 2014 Housing Element; programs that have been completed will be removed, and those that were not successfully implemented will be reviewed and either eliminated or revised and continued. New policies and programs will be added where needed to address new legislative requirements, to address the County’s particular housing needs and trends, and to affirmatively further fair housing.

Local housing issues and needs have been identified through data collection and analysis, interviews with stakeholders and focus groups, community opinion surveys, and input from the Housing Advisory Committee (HAC). New statutory requirements and a significantly increased regional housing need will make the adoption of new policies and programs important if the County is to achieve a certified housing element.

### ***RHNA Background***

State law requires that Housing Elements demonstrate each local agency’s ability to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). Each jurisdiction’s RHNA is set through a process that is meant to identify and address

housing needs for the projected State population and household growth, to improve the jobs - housing balance in communities, and to ensure the availability of housing affordable to all income groups. For the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update period, the County of Sonoma overall (county and cities) has a combined RHNA of 14,562 units. The unincorporated County's assigned share of that RHNA is 3,881 units, which represents an increase of almost 654% above the current 5th Cycle RHNA of 515 units. The current population of unincorporated Sonoma County is 138,460 people. Table 1 below illustrates how the County's regional housing need is allocated across income levels:

**Table 1: Unincorporated Sonoma County Regional Housing Needs Allocation, 2023 - 2031**

Income Level	Very Low < 50% AMI*	Low < 80% AMI	Moderate < 120% AMI	Above Moderate > 120% AMI	Total
RHNA (units)	1,036**	596	627	1,622	3,881

\*AMI = Area Median Income

\*\*Government Code (GC) Section 65583(a)(1) State law further divides the very low-income category into extremely low and very low categories with 50% in each category. Sonoma County's extremely low-income unit allocation will be 518 units.

### **Project History**

During the current (5<sup>th</sup> Cycle) housing element period, the County has been a leader in incentivizing and encouraging housing and has adopted a multitude of new programs and ordinances to implement its housing agenda. While the County has done a lot to promote housing development, the housing crisis remains. More is needed.

Preparation for the 2023 housing element began in 2018 with asking the public to nominate sites for housing. Once this nomination period closed in April 2019, County staff evaluated sites for basic eligibility criteria from the General Plan, including availability of public utilities, location in relation to nearby Urban Growth Boundaries, and proximity to jobs, transit, services, and schools. The Workforce Housing Combining Zone has additional eligibility criteria, so that housing is located within walking distance of jobs and/or transit. This input related to housing sites has been integrated with background research and community engagement related to local housing needs and opportunities. The table below summarizes key project milestones and events:

**Table 2: Housing Element Update Project Milestones and Events**

Date	Project Event/Milestone
12/30/2021	Housing Element Kick-Off Workshop at Planning Agency
11/02/2021	Tribal Consultation invited under SB 18 (General Plan Amendments)
Dec. 2021 to Jan. 2022	Stakeholder Interviews
12/15/2021	1 <sup>st</sup> HAC meeting
01/11/2022	1 <sup>st</sup> community survey released
02/01/2022	2 <sup>nd</sup> HAC meeting



<b>02/12/22 and 02/15/22</b>	Housing Element Public Workshops
<b>03/08/2022</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> HAC meeting
<b>03/10/2022</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> community survey released
<b>04/11/2022</b>	Notice for today's Planning Commission Workshop

The Rezoning Sites for Housing project seeks to rezone up to 59 housing sites to accommodate up to 2,900 units of housing. An EIR (Environmental Impact Report) has been prepared for the project and is currently on hold pending the completion of the Draft Housing Element so that its policies can also be included and analyzed in the environmental document.

**Table 3: Rezoning Sites for Housing Project Milestones and Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Project Event/Milestone</b>
<b>Dec 2018 to April 2019</b>	Public Nomination of Sites
<b>03/11/2020</b>	Notice of Preparation for EIR
<b>03/25/2020</b>	Tribal Consultation invited under AB 52(CEQA)
<b>05/06/2020</b>	Scoping Meeting
<b>11/17/2020</b>	Tribal Consultation Completed
<b>04/19/2021</b>	Draft EIR Publication, Start of Public Comment Period
<b>06/18/2021</b>	Close of Public Comment Period
<b>10/01/2021</b>	Project on hold pending completion of Housing Element Draft

### **Public Participation Update**

As reflected in the timeline above, a great deal of public engagement has been conducted to date. Rather than just meet the requirements of Housing Element law, Permit Sonoma's outreach has centered the lived experience of Equity Priority Communities. Working with a Housing Advisory Committee and community benefit organizations presents an opportunity to engage residents in defining housing issues, and in creating solutions that both meet the needs of the community and the requirements of State law.

Community input has been collected through a series of virtual meetings with the Housing Advisory Committee (HAC), focus groups representing special needs populations, a regional Equity Working Group, stakeholder interviews, and community surveys. The Community Survey results are included in Attachment 3 to this staff report.

### **Housing Element Update Requirements**

California's Housing Element law requires that the Housing Element include the following discussion and analysis:

- Provide achievable goals, policies, quantified objectives, and scheduled programs to preserve, improve and develop housing opportunities.

- Identify and analyze household characteristics, including housing costs compared to residents' ability to pay and housing characteristics, including the extent of overcrowding and an estimate of housing stock conditions.
- Identify and analyze governmental and non-governmental constraints on the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing for all income levels. These constraints may include land use and density controls, building codes and their enforcement, site improvements, fees required of developers, local processing and permit procedures, the availability of financing, the price of land, the cost of construction, and community opposition.
- Identify the special housing needs of the community including housing for homeless, senior, and female-headed households, farmworkers, and persons with disabilities.
- Identify sites that are suitable for all types of residential development, including multifamily and manufactured homes, during the eight-year housing cycle to meet the County's fair share of regional housing needs, or Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), at all income levels.
- Identify opportunities for energy conservation with respect to residential development.

Housing Elements must be reviewed and certified (approved) by the State Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) in order to satisfy State law.

### ***State Expectations and Requirements***

HCD has dramatically increased expectations for Housing Element sites and programs in order to comply with the complex new State laws and to obtain certification. Thoughtful solutions will be needed to address the following State expectations and requirements:

- Regardless of RHNA, all local governments must include zoning for a variety of housing types, including multifamily, transitional, and permanent supportive housing, low barrier homeless navigation centers, SROs (Single Room Occupancy), homeless shelters, mobile homes, and employee and farmworker housing.
- The County will need to demonstrate appropriate zoning to accommodate its share of the regional housing need for lower-income households. Statute provides a default minimum density of 20 units per acre. If the County plans to accommodate their RHNA for low-income households on sites that allow less than 20 units per acre, an analysis is required based on statutory factors including market conditions and the County's experience in developing affordable housing at lower densities.
- HCD will likely require programs to remove zoning barriers and increase housing choices so that housing units are not out of reach to less affluent community members. These actions would be required regardless of how the County accommodates the RHNA. AB 686 requires HCD to also look at how the sites zoned at high enough densities for low-income housing are integrated throughout the community. As the County contains both low and moderate resource areas (as defined by the State's Opportunity Area maps), it will be important to ensure housing sites are not concentrated in low resource areas.
- With the adoption of enough new programs and the completion of the Rezoning Sites for Housing project, the County may be able to demonstrate adequate sites through a combination of methods without the need to rezone additional specific sites within the three-year period noted above.

### ***Local Housing Issues and Needs***

One of the many requirements for the Housing Element is the collection of data to help determine housing needs. This includes quantification of residents overpaying for housing, overcrowded units, the costs of developing housing, and demographic information and trends. The bulk of the required housing and

demographic data has been provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and is contained in Attachment 3. As required by statute, this data has been supplemented by local data and knowledge including an assessment of the County's success in implementing its 5th Cycle Housing Element.

To ensure that the County's Housing Element is more than just a set of policies to meet statutory requirements and a list of sites for review and approval by HCD, staff and consultants continue to collect local data in real time. Efforts to collect community input that supplements the data on housing needs is ongoing as described earlier in the staff report.

### ***Identified Housing Issues, Needs and Trends Based on Data, Analysis and Community Input***

Senior Housing. Sonoma County's population is rapidly aging, and additional housing units for seniors will be needed over the next 8 year planning period.

Farmworker Housing. Over the last decade, the number of permanent farmworkers in the County has increased, while the number of seasonal farmworkers has decreased. Community input has identified a need for additional farmworker housing, with a preference for more housing opportunities within the unincorporated County areas that are not employer owned. Farmworkers prefer housing located off-site because if the housing is tied to the job and they lose the job, they have also lost their housing.

Extremely Low-Income Households. 11% of unincorporated Sonoma County households are considered extremely low income, earning 30% or less of the area median income (AMI). 75% of these households are extremely cost burdened (spend 50%+ of income on housing). Because the County does not have sufficient housing units to meet this need, programs to increase the number of units affordable to extremely low-income households will be required.

Large Rental Units. Around 19% of the unincorporated County's households are considered large households, with 4 or more occupants. Of these households, 40% are rental households. The Housing Element must consider the needs of these households and if a gap exists in the supply of rental units for large families, a program will be required to address the gap.

Young Families and First Time Homebuyers. Over the last two decades, there has been a decrease in all population groups under age 55. Most younger residents are renters: 69% of those ages 25-34, and 59% of those ages 35-44. This data along with community input indicates that there is a lack of opportunities for young families and first-time homebuyers.

In addition to these issues and needs, the following common concerns have been identified through analysis of public input:

- Affordability: high housing prices, high rents, sizable proportion of the population overpaying rent
- Development costs: cost of land, development requirements and fees (ie septic costs, impact fees not related to unit size)
- Conversion of housing to non-residential use (i.e. vacation rentals)
- Lack of suitable land for housing (sewer availability, wildfire prone areas, evacuation access)



- Natural disasters, including wildfires and flooding
- Community opposition to affordable and high-density housing
- Development Requirements & Fees (ie septic requirements, burdensome permitting processes, development fees)
- Fair housing and environmental justice issues including discrimination against housing vouchers

### ***Discussion and Options for Policy Approaches***

Addressing RHNA Need. As discussed above, the Housing Element must demonstrate the County's ability to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 3,881 units during the period from 2023 to 2031. To meet this RHNA, the County can identify units in planned and approved residential developments, and the projected number of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). After these two allowances have been deducted from the RHNA in their respective income categories, the County must demonstrate that it has an adequate inventory of land ("sites inventory") with appropriate zoning to accommodate the remaining RHNA. The County can also receive limited credit against its RHNA for units converted from market rate to deed restricted affordable, or units at risk of conversion to market rate that are preserved as affordable.

New legislation (AB 1397 and SB 166, described in Attachment 1) increases requirements and scrutiny of the Sites Inventory. Changes made by AB 1397 require the County to demonstrate that the sites included in its inventory can realistically develop during the planning period at the density and affordability level at which they are listed. The Housing Element must include an analysis and calculation of the realistic capacity and development potential of each site. This includes accounting for site-specific constraints as well as analyzing recent developments on similarly zoned properties and using the actual densities achieved by those projects in calculating realistic development capacities for the listed sites. Depending on the site, the requirements may also include an assessment of market conditions, existing leases, and the demand for commercial uses compared to residential uses when both are allowed, such as with the County's Workforce Housing sites.

The new laws not only affect the preparation of the Sites Inventory and Housing Element, but also affect the County throughout the entire planning period. Due to changes made by SB 166, each jurisdiction is required to maintain an adequate inventory of appropriate housing sites throughout the entire planning period. This law keeps the County from approving a project on a listed site at less than the listed density or affordability unless it finds that it has adequate additional sites in inventory to accommodate the remaining RHNA. This could potentially put the County in a position where it was unable to approve a good housing project unless it has sufficient remaining sites in inventory.

An initial sites assessment has been conducted to provide an overview of the County's ability to demonstrate an adequate inventory, and a strategy to meet its RHNA. This is conducted by adding the units in planned and approved residential projects, projected accessory dwelling unit (ADU) development, and the unit capacity of potential suitable housing sites, including those identified in the last Housing Element that have not yet been developed. Even if each of the sites identified in the table below meet HCD standards, this assessment demonstrates a shortfall of 735 units, mostly in the very-low- and moderate-income RHNA categories. To meet State requirements, this shortfall must be addressed through programs and/or rezoning efforts that increase the unit capacity.

**Table 4: Initial Sites Assessment**

	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income	Total
<b>RHNA Allocation</b>	<b>1,036</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>1,622</b>	<b>3,881</b>
<b>Planned and Approved Units</b>	148	275	44	862	1,329
<b>ADUs</b>	176	177	177	58	588
<b>Remaining RHNA After Credits</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>1,964</b>
Units Reused from 5th Cycle Site Inventory	186	105	73	643	1,007
Potential Vacant/Underutilized Sites in Units	72	41	56	53	222
<b>Total Units on Vacant/Underutilized Sites</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>1,229</b>
<b>Total Unit Balance</b>	<b>-454</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-277</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>-735</b>
<b>Total % Buffer above RHNA Allocation</b>	<b>-64%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-68%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-37%</b>

If a jurisdiction cannot demonstrate an ability to meet its RHNA obligation under current zoning, it must rezone sites to fulfill that need. As noted above, the County has already identified sites that may be suitable for rezoning under the “Rezoning Sites for Housing” project. Even if all of the identified sites are rezoned, they will likely not all be allowed by HCD without additional proof of their ability to be developed with housing within the next 8 years. Even if the County can demonstrate an adequate sites inventory through the rezoning already contemplated, it must still plan for extra capacity due to the SB 166 “No Net Loss” law as discussed above.

***Policy Approaches for Demonstrating an Adequate Inventory to Address the RHNA Shortfall***

This first set of proposed policy approaches are aimed at ways to best meet the remaining RHNA shortfall after approved “pipeline” projects and certain ADU assumptions are factored in (See Table 4 above). Recommended policy approaches in this report reflect the direction currently being taken by staff and the consulting team after analyzing housing needs and development trends. ***Should the Commission not agree with the recommended direction for these policy approaches, they should provide input on new directions to be explored instead of or in conjunction with the recommended approaches.*** The Commission should add any additional ideas for policy approaches to be explored and should invite members of the public to suggest new approaches as well.

**Policy Approaches for ADU Projections.** As described above, the County can take credit for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) consistent with HCD’s income categories under “safe harbor” affordability assumptions, which are reflected in Table 4 above. The safe harbor for the number of ADUs assumed for the upcoming planning period is the average of ADUs permitted over the years 2018-2021. In the County’s case, the average is 73.5 ADUs per year. If the County uses this safe harbor assumption, this portion of their inventory will be accepted by HCD. The use of ADUs for vacation rentals is prohibited.

If the County wants to claim more RHNA credit by projecting a larger number of ADUs, it must adopt additional programs to incentivize, support, and/or provide funding for ADUs. If the County adopts more of these types of programs, it can justify assuming a higher number of ADUs than the “safe harbor” rule allows. This may be an appropriate approach if the County agrees to funding and staffing of additional programs to incentivize production. The production of more ADUs and JADUs will assist the County in reaching its housing goals, including the provision of units for special needs and smaller households. Note also that the provision of ADUs

throughout the County can help to meet AFFH (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing) objectives because it integrates naturally occurring affordable rental housing units into higher-resource single family neighborhoods. Further incentivizing ADU development would also address the preferences of Latino community groups and others who expressed a desire for more affordable rural housing options.

The County of Sonoma has made considerable progress on the promotion of ADUs, including one-stop permitting, waived and reduced fees, and educational resources such as promoting and providing access to webinars and pamphlets. The County may also consider financial incentives to spur the development of ADUs, penalty fee relief for unpermitted ADUs, and adopting policies and programs that advance the affordability and equity of ADUs and JADUs using enhanced multilingual outreach. These actions would further help to address community interest in smaller homes for renters, students, extended family members, agricultural workers, low-income seniors, and caretakers.

Another option to provide for a portion of the very-low income RHNA within single-family neighborhoods is for the County to facilitate development of JADUs (Junior Accessory Dwelling Units). JADUs are created out of existing space within a home, are the least expensive method of providing new housing units and are the easiest to develop within the County's current housing stock. These programs could include a partnership with regional organizations that provide technical assistance for the development of ADUs and JADUs, such as Homes for Sonoma and the Napa Sonoma ADU Center. A new CalHFA (California Housing Finance Authority) grant program for ADUs and JADUs is also available to low- and moderate-income borrowers.

Policy Option A: Increase ADU Assumptions. This policy option would make maximum use of the allowances for ADUs and JADUs by continuing existing programs and adopting new programs to facilitate and encourage the construction of ADUs and JADUs. This would allow the County to assume and project a larger number of ADUs and JADUs to be constructed over the planning period than the safe harbor assumptions would otherwise allow. To achieve these further allowances, the County would need to commit monetary and staff resources to the development and promotion of Accessory Dwelling Units and would need a program to monitor ADU development and provide further incentives if production lags behind assumed levels. In exchange, the assumed and projected number of ADU units would come directly off the County's remaining RHNA obligation, making it more likely to achieve an adequate sites inventory and a certified housing element.

Policy Option B: Use HCD Safe Harbor ADU Assumptions. This policy option would not commit to adopting additional programs to facilitate and encourage additional ADUs, but instead would use the HCD safe harbor assumptions of 73.5ADUs/JADUs per year (588 total units over the planning period).

**Recommendation:** Policy Option A, Increase ADU Assumptions beyond the safe harbor allowances, but only to the extent that new policies and programs are included to incentivize and facilitate their construction. Care will need to be taken to not project construction numbers and affordability levels so high that replacement sites become needed under the No Net Loss provisions; see discussion below.

**Policy Approaches to Conversion of Units (from Market-Rate to Affordable).** Housing data and development trends show that the unincorporated County's housing stock contains many market-rate multifamily developments and ongoing multifamily developments by for-profit developers typically include these above moderate-income units at a higher proportion than lower-income units, while the RHNA indicates the need for a higher proportion of lower-income units. Under this program, the County could join a JPA to access essential function bonds for the acquisition and conversion of market-rate developments into affordable units. This



program would take advantage of the unincorporated County's existing housing stock and help meet the need for lower-income units. The County is invited to join existing efforts underway by the Cities of Healdsburg, Rohnert Park and Cotati in joining a JPA that would provide bond financing for the acquisition of market-rate housing units and convert them to long-term affordable units. While this program alone does not result in additional housing units being provided, it does result in additional units affordable to lower-income households and an increase in deed-restricted affordable units throughout the county. Statute and the State HCD allow for each jurisdiction to receive credit for these converted (market-rate to affordable) units for up to 25% of its RHNA in each income category.

**Policy Option A:** Continue to pursue the JPA Program to acquire market-rate housing units and convert them to affordable units, to be managed by Burbank Housing. As noted above, this policy approach would allow the county to offset up to 25% of its RHNA, per income group. The downside is that it does not result in the provision of additional housing units within the County, so it must be accompanied by other programs to increase production and retain existing units.

**Policy Option B:** Do not continue to pursue the JPA program; instead, focus the County's resources on the provision of new units and the retention of existing housing units.

**Recommendation:** Option A. Continue to pursue the JPA Program. The County can both participate in this program where available and appropriate, while also facilitating the provision of new dwelling units and the retention/protection of existing units. Full participation in this program could reduce the County's remaining RHNA obligation by up to 25% in each income category.

**Policy Approaches to No Net Loss Law.** Among the many new laws affecting housing (see Attachment 1), new "No Net Loss" laws will impact the sites used in Housing Element sites inventories, including assumed affordability levels and development assumptions. The intent of the legislation is to ensure all jurisdictions maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land to accommodate their remaining RHNA for the entire eight-year Housing Element period. There are three main components to this new law. First, a jurisdiction may not approve a project at a density or level of affordability lower than that listed in the Housing Element inventory unless it can make findings that adequate sites remain available to accommodate the remaining RHNA. Second, if a jurisdiction does approve a project at a density or affordability level of less than the site was listed for and it does not have enough other sites with appropriate zoning to accommodate the remaining RHNA, it must identify and rezone adequate sites within 6 months – a timeframe that is infeasible. Third, the inventory is expected to be dynamic and to reflect all changes and adjustments made throughout the Housing Element period. State law allows referrals to the Attorney General for violations of the No Net Loss laws. Jurisdictions must not run afoul of this law and should plan to maintain an inventory of adequate sites to meet the remaining RHNA throughout the Housing Element period. Options to accomplish this include the following:

**Policy Option A:** Administrative "B" list of sites to be added as needed. This policy option has recently been used in 4LEAF's Southern California Housing Elements and has been accepted by HCD. This option treats the sites inventory as truly dynamic, and revisits it each year during the APR (Annual Planning Report). If necessary, additional sites can be added to the inventory list as part of the APR to ensure adequate sites and maintain local control. For this option, the County would maintain an administrative "B" list of sites that are appropriately zoned for housing but that were not the County's first choice of sites to be listed in inventory. Like Policy Option A, the County needs to have enough sites zoned to accommodate more than its RHNA. However, under this option it is not required to list those sites in inventory unless and until they are needed, if a listed site was

developed at a lower capacity or affordability level. If the program is included in a certified Housing Element, then the revised inventory would not trigger a new HCD review of the Housing Element.

**Policy Option B:** Zone an Excess of Sites to Accommodate Future Development. This is an approach taken by many jurisdictions, with a sites “buffer” of 30%-50% recommended. Under this option, the County would need to ensure that there are adequate sites for at least 130-150% of RHNA for each income category. With limited urban land that can handle the densities assumed to be needed for the development of lower-income housing (20 units per acre), it may be difficult for the County to accomplish this. As well, under the new AB 1397 rules for re-use of sites from a prior inventory, listing significantly more sites than needed in the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle inventory could make it even harder for the County to use those sites again in the 7<sup>th</sup> RHNA cycle if they remain undeveloped.

**Recommendation: Option A.** Sites inventories must now be accurate, validated, and dynamic. To provide accuracy, development capacity assumptions and assumed affordability levels should reflect the actual densities and affordability levels achieved for similar recent development projects in the County. If development capacity and affordability assumptions are realistic and interest in the development of those sites can be shown, then the ability to add other, appropriately zoned “B” list sites to the inventory on an as-needed basis both reduces the risk of falling into a net loss situation and avoids listing sites unnecessarily so that they cannot easily be used in a future Housing Element’s inventory.

#### ***Additional Policy Approaches to Address Identified Local Housing Needs***

Because the County may lack adequate land to construct the total number of units required by its RHNA and does not have the control necessary to ensure that all affordability levels can be met, new programs provide a valuable tool for enhancing the County’s ability to secure housing at all income levels. Several new policy concepts are offered below for discussion. Each concept or approach would address an identified need or statutory requirement. The Commission should consider new approaches to meet identified community needs, to facilitate housing development, and increase the potential to demonstrate adequate sites.

**Housing on Church and School Sites.** Churches and schools have traditionally been located within residential zones and are already a part of the neighborhood fabric. Additional opportunities for housing types that would meet the County’s specific housing needs may exist on underutilized church and school sites. Existing uses on these sites could remain, with residential units added within underutilized areas. Any such development would be at the discretion and desire of the property owner. The allowance for the addition of housing on these sites could be made through a zoning text amendment; conversely, if the County desires to control where housing could be added, it may designate those church and school sites using its existing Workforce Housing Combining Zone.

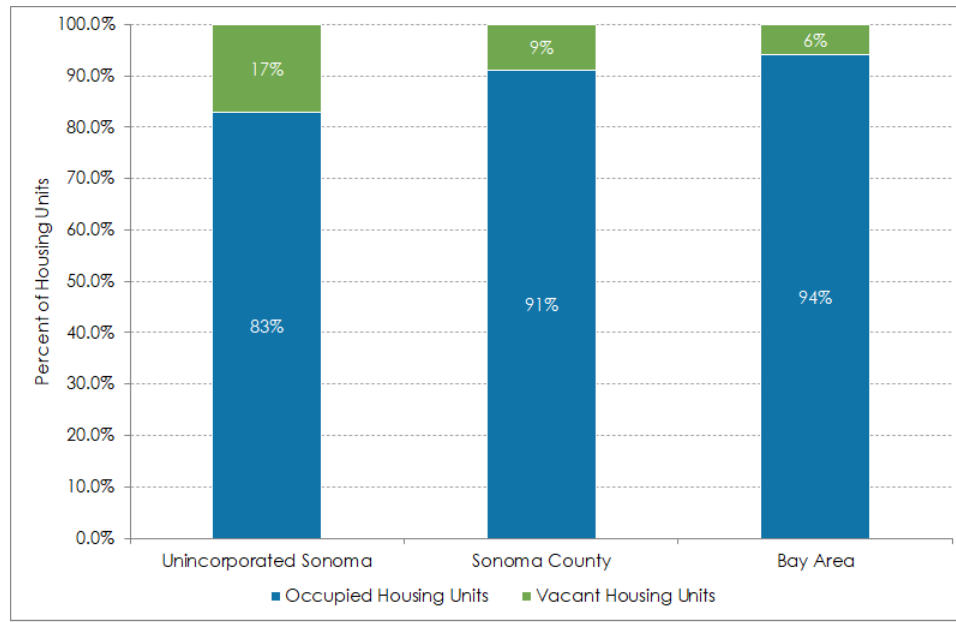
**Housing Land Trust.** Census data shows that homeownership rates vary widely depending on age. In the unincorporated County, owner-occupied households make up only 38% of households ages 25-44, compared to 81% of households age 55 or older. Homeownership rates also vary depending on when a household moved to their place of residence. Of households who moved to their current residence since 2010, only 47% are homeowners. The Housing Land Trust model can help meet this need in a manner that can easily be integrated with ongoing development. The County could modify its on-site inclusionary housing requirements to allow donation of parcels to the Land Trust instead. The model provides a long-term affordable deed restriction on a given parcel to provide below-market rate homeownership opportunities for moderate income first-time home

buyers including members of the essential workforce like teachers and nurses. This program is well established in Sonoma County through the Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County, which typically partners with local developers to supply inclusionary units as part of larger market-rate developments.

**Prohousing Designation Program.** Sonoma County has proudly led in the housing arena for the last two Housing Element cycles, winning awards for its innovative programs and being referenced by the state HCD in its “Best Practices” Guidance. Further recognition of this status is now available, and it comes with significant monetary benefits. AB 101 (2019) established a state program to identify pro-housing jurisdictions throughout the state with the intent of allocating funds to jurisdictions that are proactive about addressing California’s crisis of housing affordability. HCD has developed guidelines for such a designation and a list of eligible policies & programs. In addition to providing an opportunity for jurisdictions to access greater sources of funding, the rubricated blueprint of initiatives is a roadmap of interventions likely to pass muster with HCD when included in the implementation strategy of a Housing Element update. The County of Sonoma is already eligible to gain points in a variety of categories but will not be eligible for every way to gain points, nor will every program be applicable to the County. Pursuing such a designation will allow the County greater latitude in accommodating the County’s RHNA obligation. The list of enhanced State funding opportunities for eligible jurisdictions is iterative and currently includes priority access to Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC), Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG), Transformative Climate Communities (TCC), and the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). Further information on the Prohousing Designation Program can be found at HCD’s website.

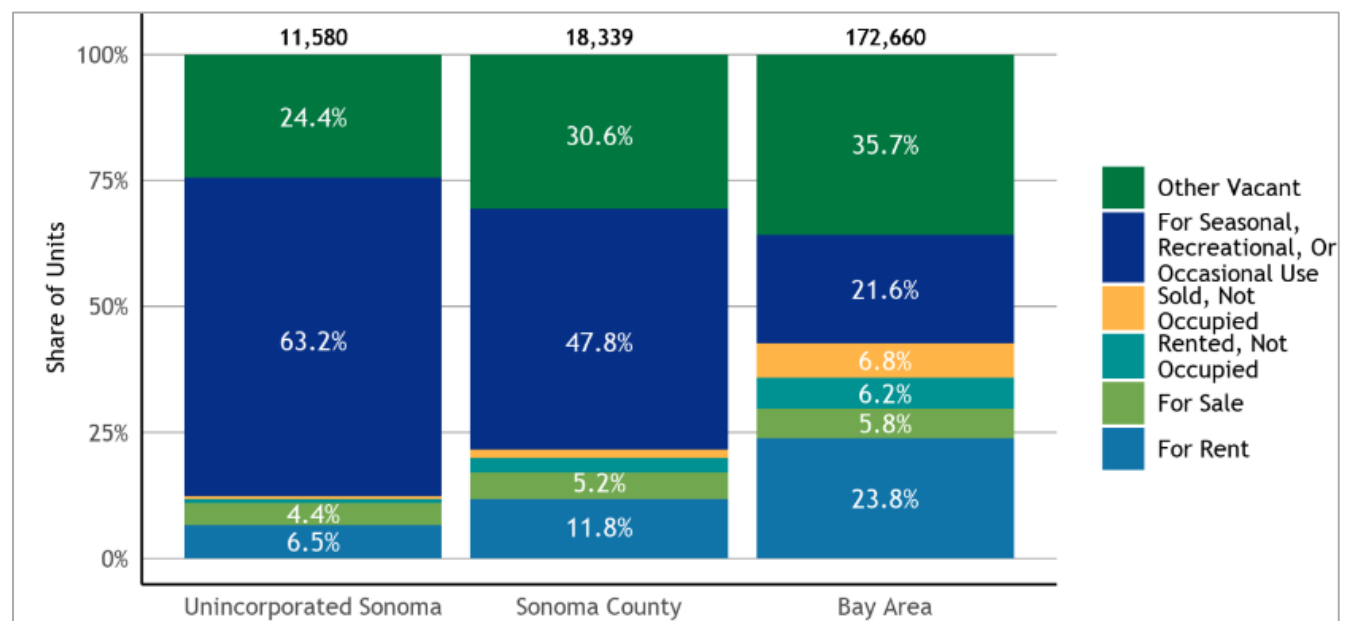
**Addressing Loss of Housing Stock to Non-residential Uses.** Survey results and Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) meetings reflect strong community concern related to the use of housing units as second homes, vacation rentals, or unoccupied investment properties. Demographic data also reflects an exceedingly high level of unoccupied residences in the unincorporated county compared to the County as a whole and to the Bay Area region (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Vacant Units by Geography (ACS 2015-2019)**



The 2015 - 2019 American Communities Survey showed that there were 11,680 vacant units in the unincorporated portion of the county; of those, 87.6% were vacant for reasons not related to the home being on the market or being readied for sale or rent (see Figure 2, below). Instead, 63% of the vacant units were being held for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, including vacation rentals. Another 24% of the unincorporated county's vacant units were being held for "other" reasons, including "personal reasons of the owner."

**Figure 2: Vacant Units by Type (ACS 2015-2019)**



These uses include investment properties which are not serving as homes. These two vacancy categories alone constitute 10,144 units in unincorporated Sonoma County, compared to 14,378 units in the entirety of the county – including its cities – and 133,466 units in the entire ABAG region. While unincorporated Sonoma County has only about 2% of the Bay Area's total population, it has 7.6% of the region's vacant units being held for these two non-residential uses.

#### Types of Vacancy in Census Data

**For Rent** - These are vacant units offered "for rent," and vacant units offered either "for rent" or "for sale."

**Rented, Not Occupied** - These are vacant units rented but not yet occupied, including units where rent has been paid or agreed upon, but the renter has not yet moved in.

**For Sale Only** - These are vacant units being offered "for sale only," including units in cooperatives and condominium projects if the individual units are offered "for sale only." If units are offered either "for rent" or "for sale" they are included in the "for rent" classification.

**Sold, Not Occupied** - These are vacant units sold but not yet occupied, including units that have been sold recently, but the new owner has not yet moved in.

**For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use** - These are vacant units used or intended for use only in certain seasons or for weekends or other occasional use throughout the year. Seasonal units include those used for summer or winter sports or recreation, such as beach cottages and hunting cabins. Seasonal units also may include quarters for such workers as herders and loggers. Interval ownership units, sometimes called shared-ownership or timesharing condominiums, also are included here.

**For Migrant Workers** - These include vacant units intended for occupancy by migratory workers employed in farm work during the crop season.

**Other Vacant** - If a vacant unit does not fall into any of the categories specified above, it is classified as "Other vacant." For example, this category includes units held for occupancy by a caretaker or janitor, and units held for personal reasons of the owner.

Currently, the County continues to approve the conversion of existing housing stock for vacation rental use, despite policies in the 2014 Housing Element to discourage the loss of residential units and to preserve urban residential lands for residential land uses. Recognizing that the Board of Supervisors is poised to adopt revisions to the County's existing Vacation Rentals Ordinance, the loss of housing stock to other uses will continue to be a housing issue for the County. Consideration could be given to an outright prohibition on new vacation rental uses on urban residential lands (those with sewer that can support higher residential densities), the adoption of a vacant home tax, or other vacancy control measures. It is noted that not all vacant homes held for seasonal use are in use as vacation rentals; as well, not all vacant homes are held for any type of occupancy but are held purely for investment purposes and will not be used to house families.

Policy approaches to address the ongoing loss of housing stock to non-residential uses could include a prohibition on the further conversion of units in the Urban Residential (R1) zone and the imposition of a vacant home tax such as the one currently being considered in San Francisco.

**Allowances for ADUs and JADUs Beyond State Law Requirements.** In addition to the discussion above and to the measures that the County has already put into place to promote and facilitate the construction of ADUs and JADUs, the County could choose to go beyond the requirements and allow 2 ADUs per lot, similar to the ADU program in Cloverdale. The County could also consider dedicating funding to assist homeowners in creating ADUs and JADUs in exchange for rental restrictions for a limited term, or a rent share agreement for a longer term. Although such a program could be burdensome to administer, assistance may be available through local non-profit ADU organizations such as Homes for Sonoma and the Napa-Sonoma ADU Center.

### ***Environmental Justice and Fair Housing Policy Topics***

While all of the above policies would help to address Fair Housing and Environmental Justice goals, the following discussion topics are provided to address specific issues that have been identified in the Regional Fair Housing Assessment as Fair Housing or Environmental Justice needs. Additional policy and program recommendations will be made when the County's individual Fair Housing Assessment has been completed.

**Farmworker Housing.** Farmworkers are among the most vulnerable populations in Sonoma County, and highly disproportionate shares of farmworkers are people of color and have limited English proficiency. According to the Sonoma County Farmworker Health Survey, most (88%) farmworkers are now year-round residents of Sonoma County; most live here with their families, and their children attend local schools. Farmworker wages are about half of the Sonoma County median incomes for individuals and for families; farmworker families were estimated to spend between 30% and 54% of their annual income on housing. Two-thirds of farmworkers lived in overcrowded dwellings in Sonoma County, and farmworkers who lived with their families were the most likely to live in overcrowded conditions. Targeted efforts to meet the housing and services needs of farmworkers will be critical fair housing initiatives.

Census data indicate that 18% of Sonoma County residents were born outside the United States, and 58% of the county's immigrant population was born in Mexico. With 11.26% of Sonoma County's population identifying as "linguistically isolated," translation services — particularly Spanish language programs — are essential for the county's residents. According to a 2019 report, the Sonoma County Community Development Commission concluded that the agency lacked sufficient translation services and committed to expanding access to language interpreters and written services. Additional commitments from all County Departments would help to address this need, particularly as it related to housing and to the advertising of community events, hearings and notices.

Community members have also shown considerable interest in the ability to house agricultural workers on working farms and ranches. At the same time, farmworkers themselves desire to live off-site in housing that is not tied to their jobs; that way if their jobs are lost, they have not also lost their housing. The County already allows a variety of on-farm housing types for farmworkers (bunkhouses) and for farmworker families (ag employee housing and farm family housing); however, each of these housing types requires a certain minimum acreage or production that small growers may not meet. The County should consider studying this issue further to determine the type of regulatory changes that might be needed to address the needs expressed by community members as part of the HAC process.

**Availability of Housing Units in a Range of Sizes.** Sonoma County's overcrowding rates remain a consistent issue for residents, and this tends to disproportionately affect the county's communities of color. More specifically, over twenty-five percent of Latino residents and nearly twenty percent of Asian Pacific Islander residents reported living in overcrowded rental conditions, compared to just three percent of white rental units. While the County has recently adopted measures to facilitate the provision of smaller housing units that are more affordable by design, the needed units for large families of more than 4 persons have not been addressed. In fact, recent changes to allow density unit equivalents serve to penalize large rental units with more than 3 bedrooms because those units are counted as 1.50 units in the calculation of allowable densities. This provision could be rolled back to apply only to rental units with more than 4 bedrooms.

Units for multi-generational households could be incentivized to address the specific needs of Latino and Asian households. Consideration should be given to policies and programs that address this gap, including additional

allowances and incentives for the provision of large rental units as well as for JADUs and the interior division of existing single-family homes. Allowing two ADUs per single-family parcel could also help to address the needs of multi-generational households, potentially (with adequate septic capacity) allowing a rural property to be developed or adapted for large, multi-generational households through the provision of two attached or detached ADUs and a JADU. These provisions could also address some of the agricultural worker housing needs discussed above.

**Prioritize County-owned Land to Increase Affordable Housing Supply.** High land costs in the region, coupled with ambitious RHNA goals, will require jurisdictions to identify public land that is suitable for affordable housing development. The County has successfully adopted this approach, as seen in the development of the county-owned “Water Agency” site, but this site is located within the City of Santa Rosa. The County should continue to prioritize County-owned land and should consider prioritizing lands with urban services that are located in the unincorporated county. Focusing on lands with urban services, near medical services, and with access to transit would also address the needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

**Reduce or Waive Permit Fees for Permanently Affordable Housing.** Although the County already defers the collection of impact fees to final occupancy, consideration should also be given to significantly reducing or waiving fees where possible, especially for small units which have lower impacts. Recent state laws also require that the next impact fee studies calculate the fees on a per-square-foot basis rather than a per-unit basis; these studies will become due late in the coming planning period, but the County could direct their preparation and adoption earlier to facilitate a more equitable fee approach sooner.

**Promote Affordable Housing Bond Issues at Multiple Levels of Government.** Affordable housing bonds are one of the primary means that local governments have at their disposal to obtain funds that can be used to promote affordable housing development. Although approval of bond issues ultimately rests with the voters, local government can still proactively educate voters about the urgent need for more affordable housing and the costs of inaction. As recommended above, the County could join the cities of Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Healdsburg in their current efforts to join a JPA and issue bonds for the envisioned Essential Workforce Housing Program, which will be administered by Burbank Housing and will focus on the purchase of long-term affordability agreements in market-rate rental units. HCD allows the County to meet up to 25% of its regional housing need (RHNA), by income category, for the conversion of market-rate units to affordable.

**Achieve Greater Equity by Bringing Public and Private Investment to Lower-resource Areas.** Lower-resources areas within Sonoma County include the South Santa Rosa Avenue area; the Springs area; parts of the Airport area; and parts of the Russian River Area. AB 686 requires that local jurisdictions consider all of their actions through a fair housing lens, and that they take no action that does not Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH). It is therefore necessary for the County to ensure that areas where they are locating affordable housing projects and sites are also provided with the resources and community facilities necessary to ensure that lower-income residents have access to the same opportunities as residents in higher-resource areas. The County should continue its current efforts to adopt Specific Plans for the Springs and the Airport Station Area, and should consider similar a similar Specific Plan effort, in conjunction with the City of Santa Rosa, for the South Santa Rosa Avenue area. Additionally, the County could consider creating an Area Plan for the lower Russian River area; this plan could address wastewater issues as well as equity issues.

**Prevent the Displacement of Residents.** State law requires that any project requesting a density bonus take certain measures to avoid the displacement of residents who live on the project site. These measures could be extended to apply to market-rate developments as well, and could be built into the County’s Objective Design and Development Standards. Existing Specific Plan efforts should incorporate these requirements as well.

**Improve Habitability of Existing Housing and Evaluate Code Enforcement Procedures.** A primary concern among farmworkers, Latino community groups, and residents of low-income housing is a reluctance to report sub-standard living conditions. Residents may not report problems with their housing because of fear of landlord retaliation, or the possibility of having to vacate the residence. Code Enforcement procedure should be reviewed to minimize displacement and protect residents from retaliation to the extent feasible. Incorporating education on tenant rights and resources into existing procedures would also support low-income residents. The County could also consider a routine inspection program or similar procedures to enhance and ensure livability of existing rental housing stock.

**Multiplex Zoning.** Senate Bill 10 (2021) provides jurisdictions with the option to streamline development of small multifamily developments known as multiplexes or “missing middle” housing. Such an ordinance would allow existing urbanized areas of the unincorporated County located outside of Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to ministerially approve small-scale multifamily developments of up to ten units. The ordinance would be customizable; the County may select applicable areas, unit counts, and other objective design and development standards in accordance with the desired outcomes of the multiplex program. Rezoning action implemented by an SB10 (Senate Bill 10) ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA, providing the advantage of accommodating a substantial share of the County’s RHNA without jeopardizing Housing Element certification timelines with protracted rezoning processes.

**Address Inequities Caused by Community Opposition.** Community opposition to housing developments exacerbates the affordable housing crisis. Equity Priority Communities have not been meaningfully engaged in many of the County’s projects as outreach has relied on more traditional tactics that appeal more to wealthier and white residents.

As a part of its 5-year Strategic Plan, the County has an objective of promoting more inclusive community representation. The County should actively recruit county residents in low opportunity neighborhoods to serve or participate on boards, committees, and other local government bodies to foster inclusive communities and further fair housing objectives.

Permit Sonoma has been working on establishing new public participation standards for policy projects that include effective engagement with Equity Priority Communities. These standards will include establishing an adequate budget and responsible parties for engaging equity communities with tactics that are effective. Fully, implementing the standards will help ensure the voice of these communities is more fully considered in future housing policy projects.

In addition, Latino community representatives have identified a lack of Spanish language informational resources as an obstacle to participation in public outreach and navigating government programs. The County should establish standard procedures to increase the availability of bilingual resources and translation services for County administered programs and participation in local government generally.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission receive an informational update on the 2023 Housing Element Update; review possible policy approaches and next steps; hold a workshop to receive information, feedback, and suggestions from the public; and provide comments to staff and consultants on the policy approaches presented.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Summary of Housing Laws
2. ABAG Housing Needs Data Packet
3. Community Survey Results

## **ATTACHMENT 1: HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW HOUSING LAWS SINCE THE LAST HOUSING ELEMENT**

**AB 72** (2017) strengthened California’s 50-year-old “Housing Element law,” which requires local governments to adequately plan for future housing needs at all income levels. The bill grants the State HCD (Housing and Community Development) the authority to review any action or failure to act by a local government that it determines is inconsistent with an adopted Housing Element or Housing Element law. This includes failure to implement program actions included in the Housing Element. HCD may revoke Housing Element compliance if the local government’s actions do not comply with State law. In addition, HCD can refer violations to the State Attorney General’s Office for enforcement any time it determines that a local jurisdiction is in violation of State law for non-compliance with Housing Element law, the Housing Accountability Act, the “No Net Loss” law, the density bonus law or anti-discrimination laws. Since 2018, HCD has sent more than 250 enforcement letters to jurisdictions up and down the State. A notable case involving the Attorney General’s office was that of Huntington Beach, which held that, for multiple reasons, the RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) did not apply to them. The case was settled in 2020 when the city agreed to amend one of its Specific Plans to provide adequate sites to meet its RHNA obligation. In late 2021, HCD added a Housing Accountability Unit to further hold local jurisdictions accountable for their Housing Element commitments and other State laws. This illustrates why it is vitally important to achieve compliance with Housing Element Laws (“certification”) and maintain local land use control.

**SB 35** (2017) requires that jurisdictions that are not meeting their RHNA obligations have a “streamlined ministerial approval process” for housing developments of two or more units when 10% or 50% of project units are provided as affordable and deed restricted. “Streamlined ministerial approval process” means that officials cannot exercise discretion over a qualifying project, but can only compare it against adopted, objective design and development standards. Because the County of Sonoma is on track with its RHNA obligations for the current Housing Element cycle, the County is not currently subject to the provisions of SB 35.

**AB 1397** (2017) requires that jurisdictions zone appropriately for their share of the regional housing need, and zone for all types of housing. The new law requires strong justification when non-vacant sites are zoned to meet the housing need, especially for lower-income housing.

**SB 166** (2017), the new “No Net Loss” law, requires that a jurisdiction replace any site that was zoned and listed in the sites inventory for low-income housing if it ends up being developed as anything else, unless the County can make findings that enough additional sites that are adequately zoned remain to allow the County to continue to accommodate its remaining housing need (RHNA), by income category (this issue is fully discussed in Policy Issue #3 below). The intent is to ensure that jurisdictions have adequate sites with appropriate zoning to accommodate their share of the regional housing need throughout the Housing Element period. As noted above, AB 72 provides that HCD and the State Attorney General can intercede if a jurisdiction fails to uphold the “No Net Loss” provisions.

**AB 686** (2018), also known as the anti-discrimination or “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (AFFH) law, requires specific analysis around patterns of socio-economic concentration within the County and the larger region. This new law requires the County of Sonoma to examine past and current zoning, land use, funding, and other practices. New programs may be needed to ensure compliance.

**SB 330** (2019) prohibits local jurisdictions from enacting new laws that would have the effect of reducing the legal limit on new housing within their borders or delaying new housing via administrative or other regulatory barriers. The law places a moratorium on new construction bans and downzoning, or reducing development capacity from existing standards, until 2029.

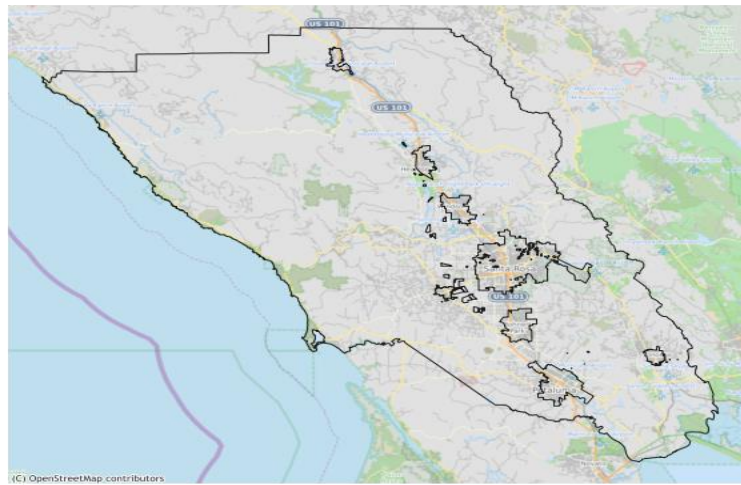
**SB 9 and SB 10.** While these bills do not directly affect Housing Element law or RHNA allocations, they may be considered when making development capacity assumptions or when exploring policy approaches to meet the County's needs for housing development. SB 9 builds on existing accessory dwelling unit (ADU) law by allowing duplexes and lot splits on most single-family parcels in California, and SB 10 is an opt-in provision to allow low-density multiplexes with streamlined rezoning and flexible parameters tailored to local needs.

In addition to the above, **Government Code Section 65583(c)** requires that the Housing Element include a five-year schedule of actions (programs) the County is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the Housing Element. Significantly, if the County's housing sites inventory "does not identify adequate sites to accommodate the [RHNA] need for groups of all household income levels ..., the program shall identify sites that can be developed for housing within the planning period pursuant to § 65583.2(h)." Those sites must typically be identified and rezoned to allow housing by-right at default densities within three years from the beginning of the Housing Element period. However, **AB 215** (2021) now shortens that rezoning period from three years to one year for any subject jurisdiction that does not adopt a Housing Element in time.

# HOUSING NEEDS DATA REPORT: UNINCORPORATED SONOMA

ABAG/MTC Staff and Baird + Driskell Community Planning

2021-04-02



ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Bay Area continues to see growth in both population and jobs, which means more housing of various types and sizes is needed to ensure that residents across all income levels, ages, and abilities have a place to call home. While the number of people drawn to the region over the past 30 years has steadily increased, housing production has stalled, contributing to the housing shortage that communities are experiencing today. In many cities, this has resulted in residents being priced out, increased traffic congestion caused by longer commutes, and fewer people across incomes being able to purchase homes or meet surging rents.

The 2023-2031 Housing Element Update provides a roadmap for how to meet our growth and housing challenges. Required by the state, the Housing Element identifies what the existing housing conditions and community needs are, reiterates goals, and creates a plan for more housing. The Housing Element is an integral part of the General Plan, which guides the policies of Unincorporated Sonoma County.

## 2 SUMMARY OF KEY FACTS

- **Population** - Generally, the population of the Bay Area continues to grow because of natural growth and because the strong economy draws new residents to the region. The population of Unincorporated Sonoma County decreased by 7.8% from 2000 to 2020, which is below the growth rate of the Bay Area.
- **Age** - In 2019, Unincorporated Sonoma County's youth population under the age of 18 was 23,386 and senior population 65 and older was 33,616. These age groups represent 16.5% and 23.7%, respectively, of Unincorporated Sonoma County's population.
- **Race/Ethnicity** - In 2020, 71.7% of Unincorporated Sonoma County's population was White while 0.7% was African American, 2.2% was Asian, and 20.9% was Latinx. People of color in Unincorporated Sonoma County comprise a proportion below the overall proportion in the Bay Area as a whole.<sup>1</sup>
- **Employment** - Unincorporated Sonoma County residents most commonly work in the *Health & Educational Services* industry. From January 2010 to January 2021, the unemployment rate in Unincorporated Sonoma County decreased by 7.3 percentage points. Since 2010, the number of jobs located in the jurisdiction increased by 10,340 (25.0%). Additionally, the jobs-household ratio in Unincorporated Sonoma County has increased from 0.69 in 2002 to 0.96 jobs per household in 2018.
- **Number of Homes** - The number of new homes built in the Bay Area has not kept pace with the demand, resulting in longer commutes, increasing prices, and exacerbating issues of displacement and homelessness. The number of homes in Unincorporated Sonoma County decreased, 4.1% from 2010 to 2020, which is *below* the growth rate for Sonoma County and *below* the growth rate of the region's housing stock during this time period.
- **Home Prices** - A diversity of homes at all income levels creates opportunities for all Unincorporated Sonoma County residents to live and thrive in the community.
  - **Ownership** The largest proportion of homes had a value in the range of \$500k-\$750k in 2019. Home prices increased by 79.7% from 2010 to 2020.
  - **Rental Prices** - The typical contract rent for an apartment in Unincorporated Sonoma County was \$1,340 in 2019. Rental prices increased by 30.2% from 2009 to 2019. To rent a typical apartment without cost burden, a household would need to make \$53,800 per year.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Census Bureau's American Community Survey accounts for ethnic origin separate from racial identity. The numbers reported here use an accounting of both such that the racial categories are shown exclusive of Latinx status, to allow for an accounting of the Latinx population regardless of racial identity. The term Hispanic has historically been used to describe people from numerous Central American, South American, and Caribbean countries. In recent years, the term Latino or Latinx has become preferred. This report generally uses Latinx, but occasionally when discussing US Census data, we use Hispanic or Non-Hispanic, to clearly link to the data source.

<sup>2</sup> Note that contract rents may differ significantly from, and often being lower than, current listing prices.

- **Housing Type** - It is important to have a variety of housing types to meet the needs of a community today and in the future. In 2020, 81.5% of homes in Unincorporated Sonoma County were single family detached, 4.0% were single family attached, 4.0% were small multifamily (2-4 units), and 3.7% were medium or large multifamily (5+ units). Between 2010 and 2020, the number of multi-family units increased more than single-family units. Generally, in Unincorporated Sonoma County, the share of the housing stock that is detached single family homes is above that of other jurisdictions in the region.
- **Cost Burden** - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development considers housing to be affordable for a household if the household spends less than 30% of its income on housing costs. A household is considered “cost-burdened” if it spends more than 30% of its monthly income on housing costs, while those who spend more than 50% of their income on housing costs are considered “severely cost-burdened.” In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 20.0% of households spend 30%-50% of their income on housing, while 18.9% of households are severely cost burden and use the majority of their income for housing.
- **Displacement/Gentrification** - According to research from The University of California, Berkeley, 27.1% of households in Unincorporated Sonoma County live in neighborhoods that are susceptible to or experiencing displacement, and 3.4% live in areas at risk of or undergoing gentrification. 38.2% of households in Unincorporated Sonoma County live in neighborhoods where low-income households are likely excluded due to prohibitive housing costs. There are various ways to address displacement including ensuring new housing at all income levels is built.
- **Neighborhood** - 6.5% of residents in Unincorporated Sonoma County live in neighborhoods identified as “Highest Resource” or “High Resource” areas by State-commissioned research, while 41.7% of residents live in areas identified by this research as “Low Resource” or “High Segregation and Poverty” areas. These neighborhood designations are based on a range of indicators covering areas such as education, poverty, proximity to jobs and economic opportunities, low pollution levels, and other factors.<sup>3</sup>
- **Special Housing Needs** - Some population groups may have special housing needs that require specific program responses, and these groups may experience barriers to accessing stable housing due to their specific housing circumstances. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 13.0% of residents have a disability of any kind and may require accessible housing. Additionally, 8.2% of Unincorporated Sonoma County households are larger households with five or more people, who likely need larger housing units with three bedrooms or more. 8.2% of households are female-headed families, which are often at greater risk of housing insecurity.

**Note on Data**

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on the “opportunity area” categories developed by HCD and the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, see this website: <https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/ctcac/opportunity.asp>. The degree to which different jurisdictions and neighborhoods have access to opportunity will likely need to be analyzed as part of new Housing Element requirements related to affirmatively furthering fair housing. ABAG/MTC will be providing jurisdictions with technical assistance on this topic this summer, following the release of additional guidance from HCD.

*Many of the tables in this report are sourced from data from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey or U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, both of which are samples and as such, are subject to sampling variability. This means that data is an estimate, and that other estimates could be possible if another set of respondents had been reached. We use the five-year release to get a larger data pool to minimize this “margin of error” but particularly for the smaller cities, the data will be based on fewer responses, and the information should be interpreted accordingly.*

*Additionally, there may be instances where there is no data available for a jurisdiction for particular data point, or where a value is 0 and the automatically generated text cannot perform a calculation. In these cases, the automatically generated text is “NODATA.” Staff should reword these sentences before using them in the context of the Housing Element or other documents.*

**Note on Figures**

*Any figure that does not specify geography in the figure name represents data for Unincorporated Sonoma County.*



## 3 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS

### 3.1 Regional Housing Needs Determination

The Plan Bay Area 2050<sup>4</sup> Final Blueprint forecasts that the nine-county Bay Area will add 1.4 million new households between 2015 and 2050. For the eight-year time frame covered by this Housing Element Update, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has identified the region's housing need as 441,176 units. The total number of housing units assigned by HCD is separated into four income categories that cover housing types for all income levels, from very low-income households to market rate housing.<sup>5</sup> This calculation, known as the Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND), is based on population projections produced by the California Department of Finance as well as adjustments that incorporate the region's existing housing need. The adjustments result from recent legislation requiring HCD to apply additional adjustment factors to the baseline growth projection from California Department of Finance, in order for the regions to get closer to healthy housing markets. To this end, adjustments focus on the region's vacancy rate, level of overcrowding and the share of cost burdened households, and seek to bring the region more in line with comparable ones.<sup>6</sup> These new laws governing the methodology for how HCD calculates the RHND resulted in a significantly higher number of housing units for which the Bay Area must plan compared to previous RHNA cycles.

### 3.2 Regional Housing Needs Allocation

A starting point for the Housing Element Update process for every California jurisdiction is the Regional Housing Needs Allocation or RHNA - the share of the RHND assigned to each jurisdiction by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). State Housing Element Law requires ABAG to develop a methodology that calculates the number of housing units assigned to each city and county and distributes each jurisdiction's housing unit allocation among four affordability levels. For this RHNA cycle, the RHND increased by 135%, from 187,990 to 441,776. For more information on the RHNA process this cycle, see ABAG's website: <https://abag.ca.gov/our-work/housing/rhna-regional-housing-needs-allocation>

Almost all jurisdictions in the Bay Area are likely to receive a larger RHNA this cycle compared to the last cycle, primarily due to changes in state law that led to a considerably higher RHND compared to previous cycles.

In January 2021, ABAG adopted a Draft RHNA Methodology, which is currently being reviewed by HCD. For Unincorporated Sonoma County, the proposed RHNA to be planned for this cycle is 3,881 units, a slated increase from the last cycle. **Please note that the previously stated figures are merely illustrative, as ABAG has yet to issue Final RHNA allocations. The Final RHNA allocations that local**

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<sup>4</sup> Plan Bay Area 2050 is a long-range plan charting the course for the future of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. It covers four key issues: the economy, the environment, housing and transportation

<sup>5</sup> HCD divides the RHND into the following four income categories:

Very Low-income: 0-50% of Area Median Income

Low-income: 50-80% of Area Median Income

Moderate-income: 80-120% of Area Median Income

Above Moderate-income: 120% or more of Area Median Income

<sup>6</sup> For more information on HCD's RHND calculation for the Bay Area, see this letter sent to ABAG from HCD on June 9, 2020: [https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/housing-element/docs/abagrhna-final060920\(r\).pdf](https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/housing-element/docs/abagrhna-final060920(r).pdf)

jurisdictions will use for their Housing Elements will be released at the end of 2021. The potential allocation that Unincorporated Sonoma County would receive from the Draft RHNA Methodology is broken down by income category as follows:

**Table 1: Illustrative Regional Housing Needs Allocation from Draft Methodology**

Income Group	Unincorporated Sonoma Units	Sonoma County Units	Bay Area Units	Unincorporated Sonoma Percent	Sonoma County Percent	Bay Area Percent
Very Low Income (<50% of AMI)	1036	3999	114442	26.7%	27.5%	25.9%
Low Income (50%-80% of AMI)	596	2302	65892	15.4%	15.8%	14.9%
Moderate Income (80%-120% of AMI)	627	2302	72712	16.2%	15.8%	16.5%
Above Moderate Income (>120% of AMI)	1622	5959	188130	41.8%	40.9%	42.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3881</b>	<b>14562</b>	<b>441176</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments Methodology and tentative numbers were approved by ABAG's Executive board on January 21, 2021 (Resolution No. 02-2021). The numbers were submitted for review to California Housing and Community Development in February 2021, after which an appeals process will take place during the Summer and Fall of 2021. THESE NUMBERS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE PER HCD REVIEW

## 4.1 Population

The Bay Area is the fifth-largest metropolitan area in the nation and has seen a steady increase in population since 1990, except for a dip during the Great Recession. Many cities in the region have experienced significant growth in jobs and population. While these trends have led to a corresponding increase in demand for housing across the region, the regional production of housing has largely not kept pace with job and population growth. Since 2000, Unincorporated Sonoma County's population has decreased by 7.8%; this rate is below that of the region as a whole, at 14.8%. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, roughly 11.6% of its population moved during the past year, a number 1.8 percentage points smaller than the regional rate of 13.4%.

**Table 2: Population Growth Trends**

Geography	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Unincorporated Sonoma	160186	152872	150223	151509	145363	149301	138532
Sonoma County	388222	416776	458614	475703	483878	500640	492980
Bay Area	6020147	6381961	6784348	7073912	7150739	7595694	7790537

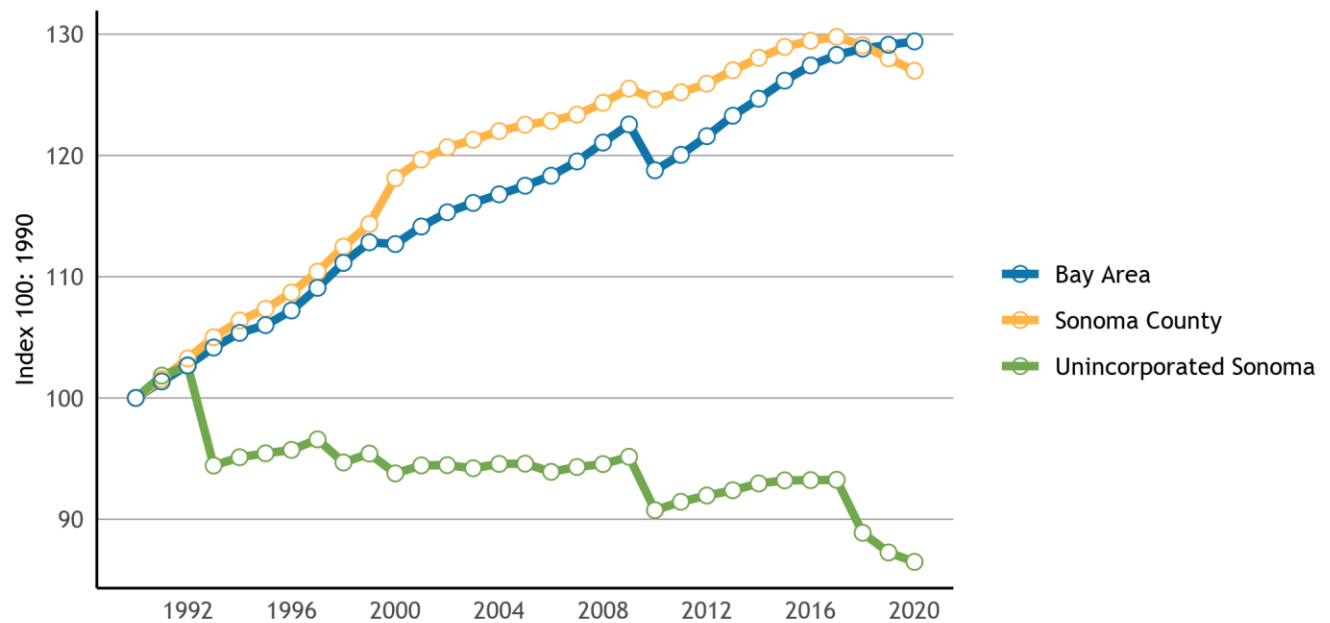
*Universe: Total population*

*Source: California Department of Finance, E-5 series*

*For more years of data, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-01.*

In 2020, the population of Unincorporated Sonoma County was estimated to be 138,532 (see Table 2). From 1990 to 2000, the population decreased by 6.2%, while it decreased by 3.2% during the first decade of the 2000s. In the most recent decade, the population decreased by 4.7%. The population of Unincorporated Sonoma County makes up 28.1% of Sonoma County.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> To compare the rate of growth across various geographic scales, Figure 1 shows population for the jurisdiction, county, and region indexed to the population in the year 1990. This means that the data points represent the population growth (i.e. percent change) in each of these geographies relative to their populations in 1990.



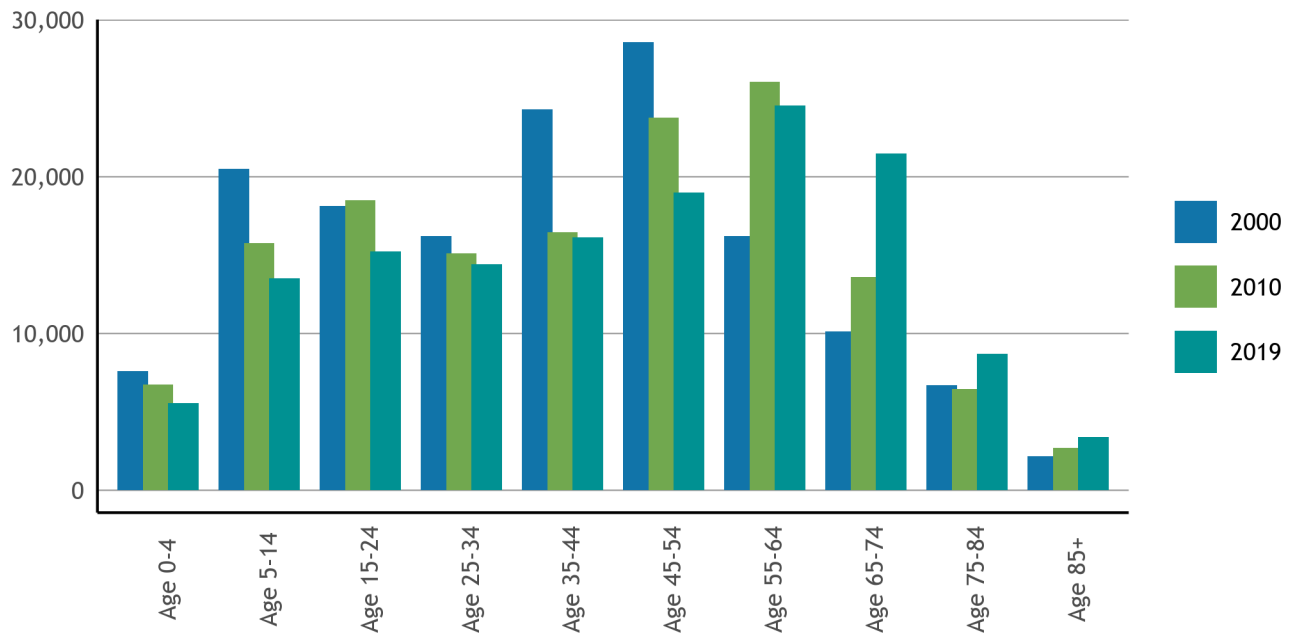
**Figure 1: Population Growth Trends**

Source: California Department of Finance, E-5 series Note: The data shown on the graph represents population for the jurisdiction, county, and region indexed to the population in the first year shown. The data points represent the relative population growth in each of these geographies relative to their populations in that year. For some jurisdictions, a break may appear at the end of each decade (1999, 2009) as estimates are compared to census counts. DOF uses the decennial census to benchmark subsequent population estimates. For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-01.

## 4.2 Age

The distribution of age groups in a city shapes what types of housing the community may need in the near future. An increase in the older population may mean there is a developing need for more senior housing options, while higher numbers of children and young families can point to the need for more family housing options and related services. There has also been a move by many to age-in-place or downsize to stay within their communities, which can mean more multifamily and accessible units are also needed.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the median age in 2000 was 39.7; by 2019, this figure had increased, landing at around 48 years. More specifically, the population of those under 14 has decreased since 2010, while the 65-and-over population has increased (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Population by Age, 2000-2019**

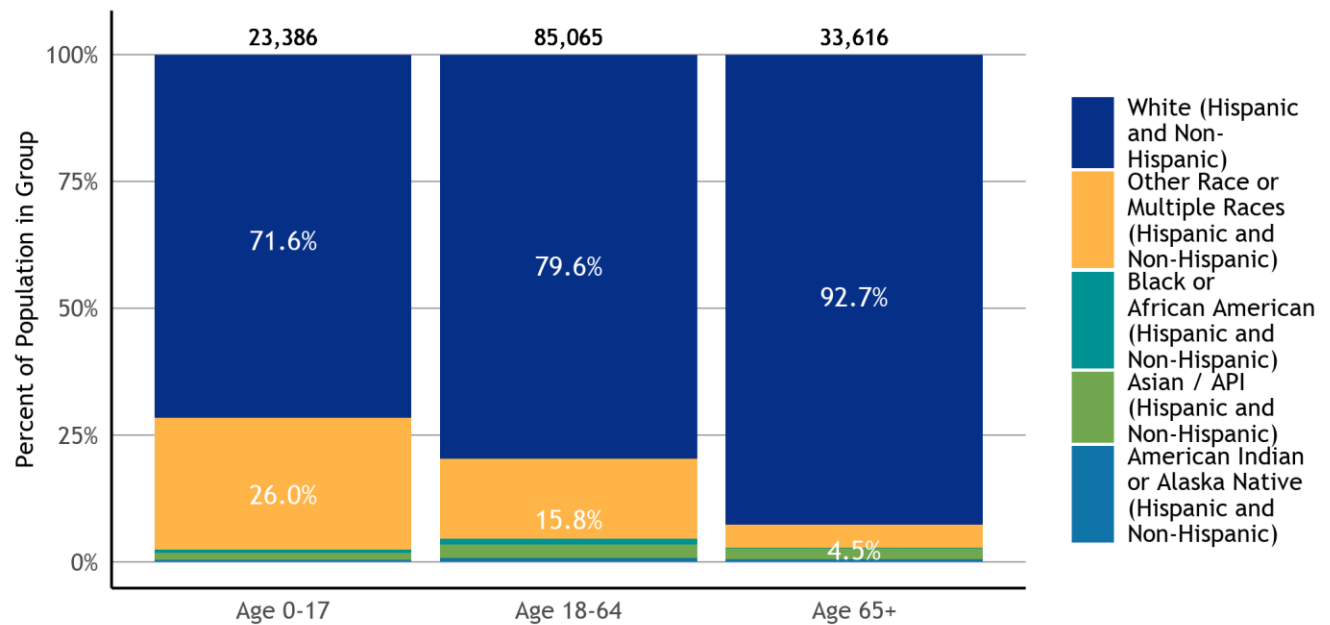
*Universe: Total population*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 SF1, Table P12; U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 SF1, Table P12; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B01001*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-04.*

Looking at the senior and youth population by race can add an additional layer of understanding, as families and seniors of color are even more likely to experience challenges finding affordable housing. People of color<sup>8</sup> make up 7.3% of seniors and 28.4% of youth under 18 (see Figure 3).

<sup>8</sup> Here, we count all non-white racial groups



**Figure 3: Senior and Youth Population by Race**

Universe: Total population

Notes: In the sources for this table, the Census Bureau does not disaggregate racial groups by Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity, and an overlapping category of Hispanic / non-Hispanic groups has not been shown to avoid double counting in the stacked bar chart.

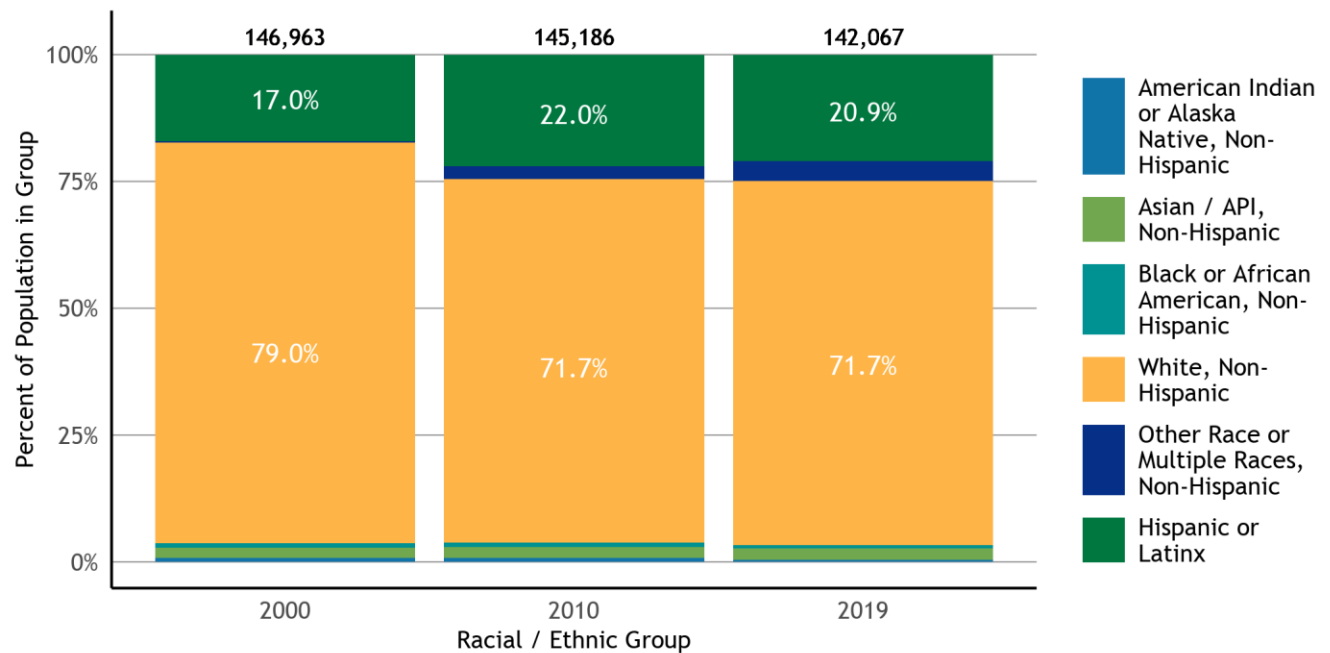
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B01001(A-G)

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table SEN-02.

### 4.3 Race and Ethnicity

Understanding the racial makeup of a city and region is important for designing and implementing effective housing policies and programs. These patterns are shaped by both market factors and government actions, such as exclusionary zoning, discriminatory lending practices and displacement that has occurred over time and continues to impact communities of color today<sup>9</sup>. Since 2000, the percentage of residents in Unincorporated Sonoma County identifying as White has decreased - and by the same token the percentage of residents of all *other* races and ethnicities has *increased* - by 7.3 percentage points, with the 2019 population standing at 101,922 (see Figure 4). In absolute terms, the *Other Race or Multiple Races, Non-Hispanic* population increased the most while the *White, Non-Hispanic* population decreased the most.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Rothstein, R. (2017). *The color of law : a forgotten history of how our government segregated America*. New York, NY & London, UK: Liveright Publishing.



**Figure 4: Population by Race, 2000-2019**

Universe: Total population

Notes: Data for 2019 represents 2015-2019 ACS estimates. The Census Bureau defines Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity separate from racial categories. For the purposes of this graph, the “Hispanic or Latinx” racial/ethnic group represents those who identify as having Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity and may also be members of any racial group. All other racial categories on this graph represent those who identify with that racial category and do not identify with Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Table P004; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B03002

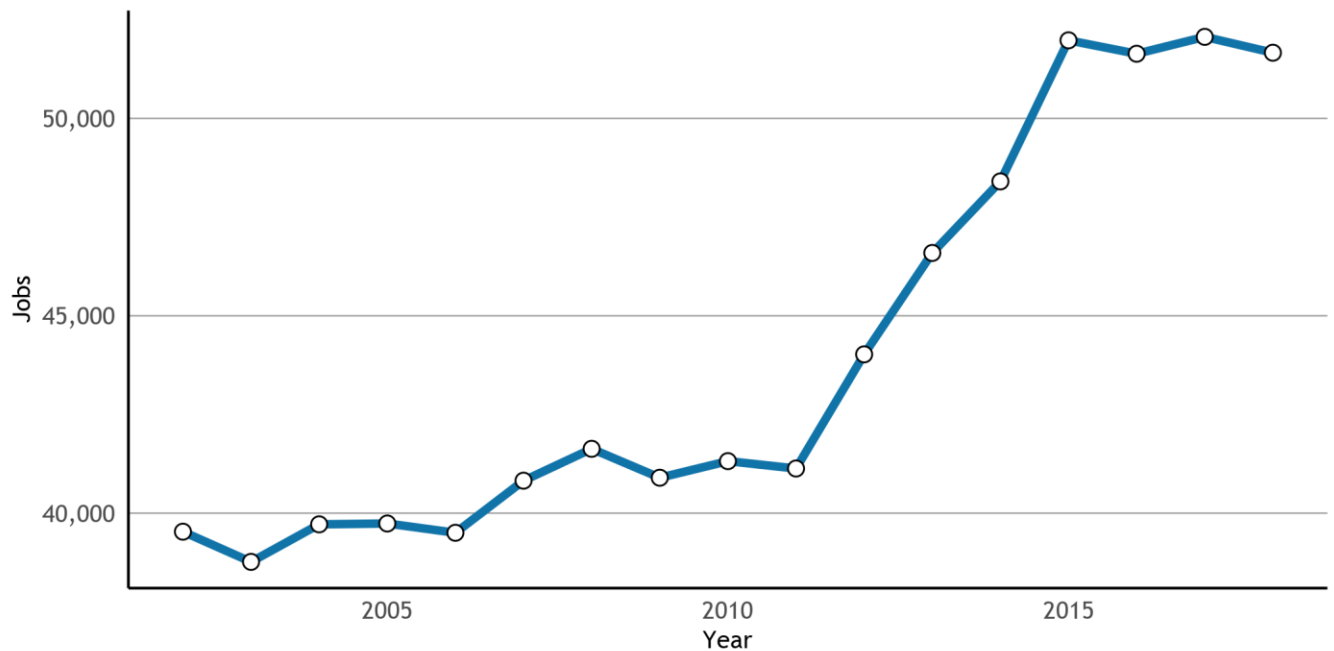
For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-02.

## 4.4 Employment Trends

### 4.4.1 Balance of Jobs and Workers

A city houses employed residents who either work in the community where they live or work elsewhere in the region. Conversely, a city may have job sites that employ residents from the same city, but more often employ workers commuting from outside of it. Smaller cities typically will have more employed residents than jobs there and export workers, while larger cities tend to have a surplus of jobs and import workers. To some extent the regional transportation system is set up for this flow of workers to the region’s core job centers. At the same time, as the housing affordability crisis has illustrated, local imbalances may be severe, where local jobs and worker populations are out of sync at a sub-regional scale.

One measure of this is the relationship between *workers* and *jobs*. A city with a surplus of workers “exports” workers to other parts of the region, while a city with a surplus of jobs must conversely “import” them. Between 2002 and 2018, the number of jobs in Unincorporated Sonoma County increased by 30.7% (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5: Jobs in a Jurisdiction**

*Universe: Jobs from unemployment insurance-covered employment (private, state and local government) plus United States Office of Personnel Management-sourced Federal employment*

*Notes: The data is tabulated by place of work, regardless of where a worker lives. The source data is provided at the census block level. These are crosswalked to jurisdictions and summarized.*

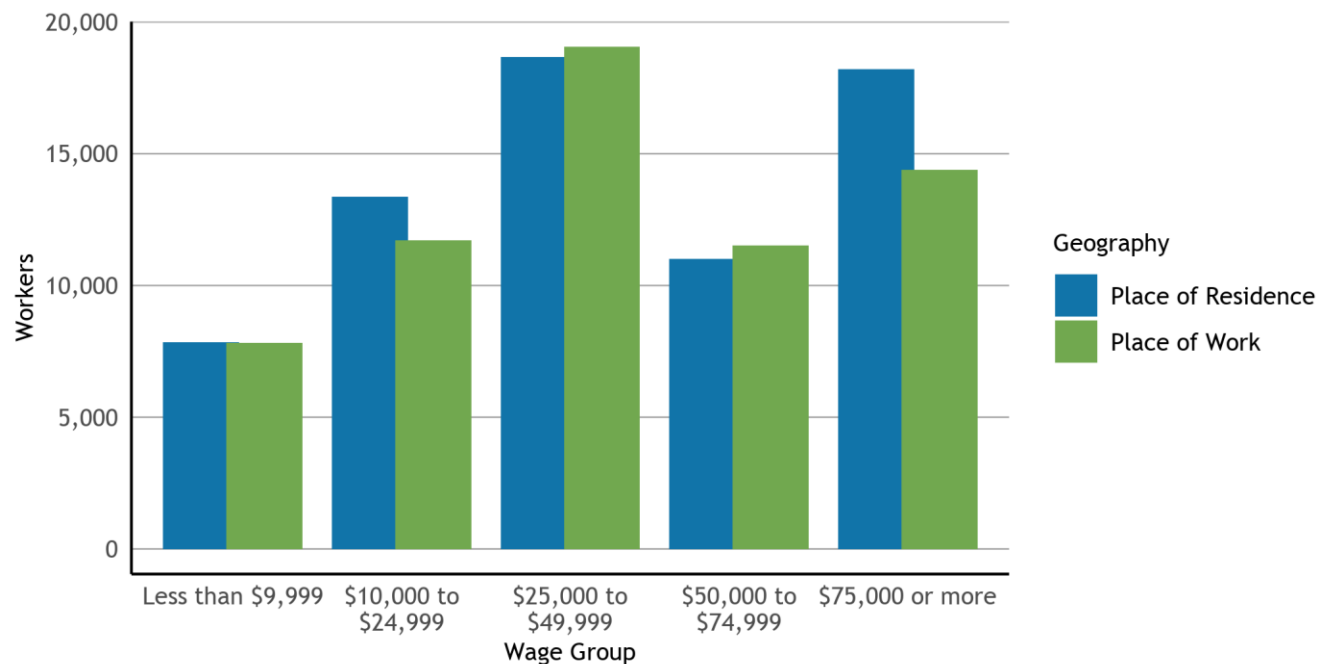
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, Workplace Area Characteristics (WAC) files, 2002-2018 For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-11.*

There are 69,104 employed residents, and 64,488 jobs<sup>10</sup> in Unincorporated Sonoma County - the ratio of jobs to resident workers is 0.93; Unincorporated Sonoma County is a *net exporter of workers*.

Figure 6 shows the balance when comparing jobs to workers, broken down by different wage groups, offering additional insight into local dynamics. A community may offer employment for relatively low-income workers but have relatively few housing options for those workers - or conversely, it may house residents who are low wage workers but offer few employment opportunities for them. Such relationships may cast extra light on potentially pent-up demand for housing in particular price categories. A relative *surplus* of jobs relative to residents in a given wage category suggests the need to import those workers, while conversely, surpluses of workers in a wage group relative to jobs means the community will export those workers to other jurisdictions. Such flows are not inherently bad, though over time, sub-regional imbalances may appear. Unincorporated Sonoma County has more low-wage *residents* than low-wage *jobs* (where low-wage refers to jobs paying less than \$25,000). At the

<sup>10</sup> Employed *residents* in a jurisdiction is counted by place of residence (they may work elsewhere) while *jobs* in a jurisdiction are counted by place of work (they may live elsewhere). The jobs may differ from those reported in Figure 5 as the source for the time series is from administrative data, while the cross-sectional data is from a survey.

other end of the wage spectrum, the city has more high-wage *residents* than high-wage *jobs* (where high-wage refers to jobs paying more than \$75,000) (see Figure 6).<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 6: Workers by Earnings, by Jurisdiction as Place of Work and Place of Residence**

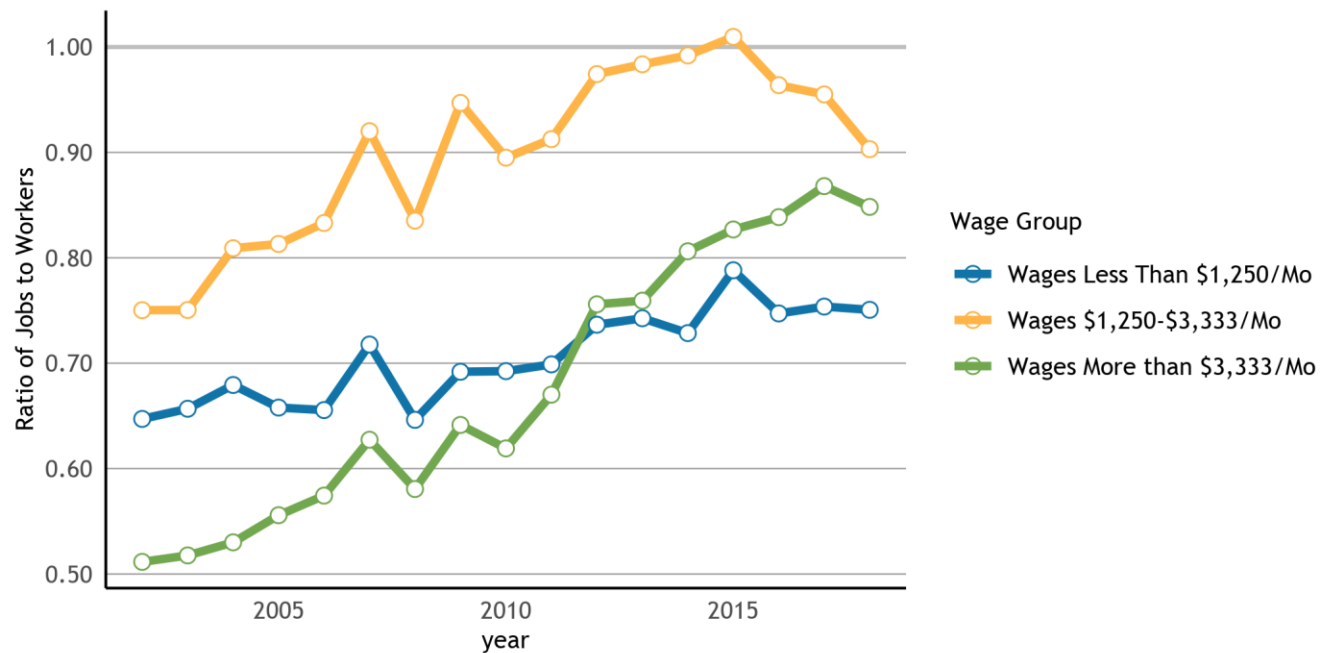
*Universe: Workers 16 years and over with earnings*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data 2015-2019, B08119, B08519*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-10.*

Figure 7 shows the balance of a jurisdiction's resident workers to the jobs located there for different wage groups as a ratio instead - a value of 1 means that a city has the same number of jobs in a wage group as it has resident workers - in principle, a balance. Values above 1 indicate a jurisdiction will need to import workers for jobs in a given wage group. At the regional scale, this ratio is 1.04 jobs for each worker, implying a modest import of workers from outside the region (see Figure 7).

<sup>11</sup> The source table is top-coded at \$75,000, precluding more fine grained analysis at the higher end of the wage spectrum.



**Figure 7: Jobs-Worker Ratios, By Wage Group**

*Universe: Jobs in a jurisdiction from unemployment insurance-covered employment (private, state and local government) plus United States Office of Personnel Management-sourced Federal employment*

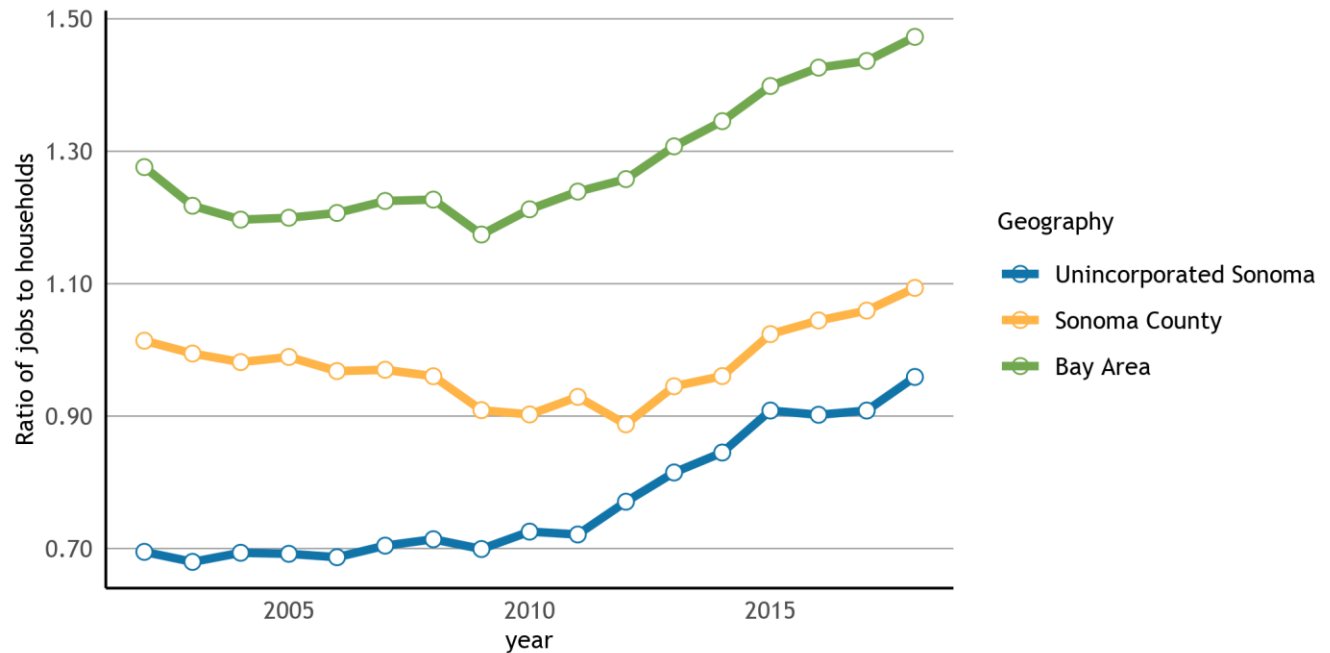
*Notes: The ratio compares job counts by wage group from two tabulations of LEHD data: Counts by place of work relative to counts by place of residence. See text for details.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, Workplace Area Characteristics (WAC) files (Jobs); Residence Area Characteristics (RAC) files (Employed Residents), 2010-2018*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-14.*

Such balances between jobs and workers may directly influence the housing demand in a community. New jobs may draw new residents, and when there is high demand for housing relative to supply, many workers may be unable to afford to live where they work, particularly where job growth has been in relatively lower wage jobs. This dynamic not only means many workers will need to prepare for long commutes and time spent on the road, but in the aggregate it contributes to traffic congestion and time lost for all road users.

If there are more jobs than employed residents, it means a city is relatively jobs-rich, typically also with a high jobs to household ratio. Thus bringing housing into the measure, the *jobs-household ratio* in Unincorporated Sonoma County has increased from 0.69 in 2002, to 0.96 jobs per household in 2018 (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8: Jobs-Household Ratio**

*Universe: Jobs in a jurisdiction from unemployment insurance-covered employment (private, state and local government) plus United States Office of Personnel Management-sourced Federal employment; households in a jurisdiction*

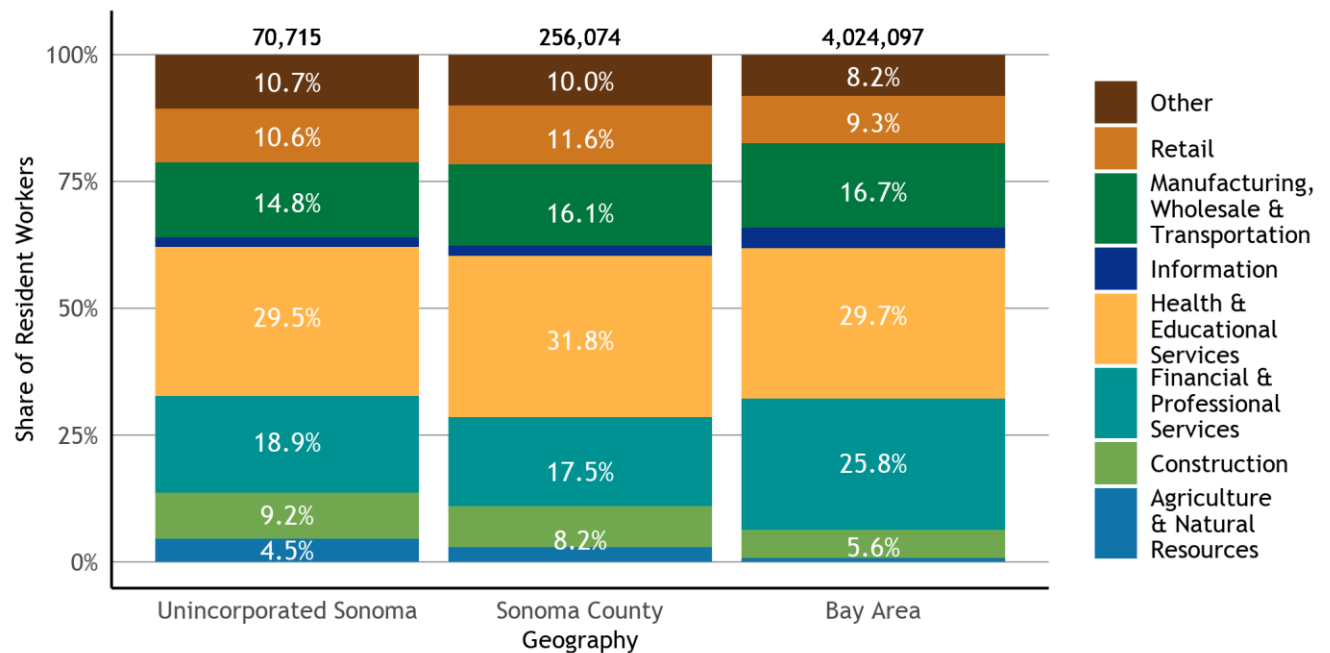
*Notes: The data is tabulated by place of work, regardless of where a worker lives. The source data is provided at the census block level. These are crosswalked to jurisdictions and summarized. The ratio compares place of work wage and salary jobs with households, or occupied housing units. A similar measure is the ratio of jobs to housing units. However, this jobs-household ratio serves to compare the number of jobs in a jurisdiction to the number of housing units that are actually occupied. The difference between a jurisdiction's jobs-housing ratio and jobs-household ratio will be most pronounced in jurisdictions with high vacancy rates, a high rate of units used for seasonal use, or a high rate of units used as short-term rentals.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, Workplace Area Characteristics (WAC) files (Jobs), 2002-2018; California Department of Finance, E-5 (Households)*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-13.*

#### 4.4.2 Sector Composition

In terms of sectoral composition, the largest industry in which Unincorporated Sonoma County residents work is *Health & Educational Services*, and the largest sector in which Sonoma residents work is *Health & Educational Services* (see Figure 9). For the Bay Area as a whole, the *Health & Educational Services* industry employs the most workers.



**Figure 9: Resident Employment by Industry**

*Universe: Civilian employed population age 16 years and over*

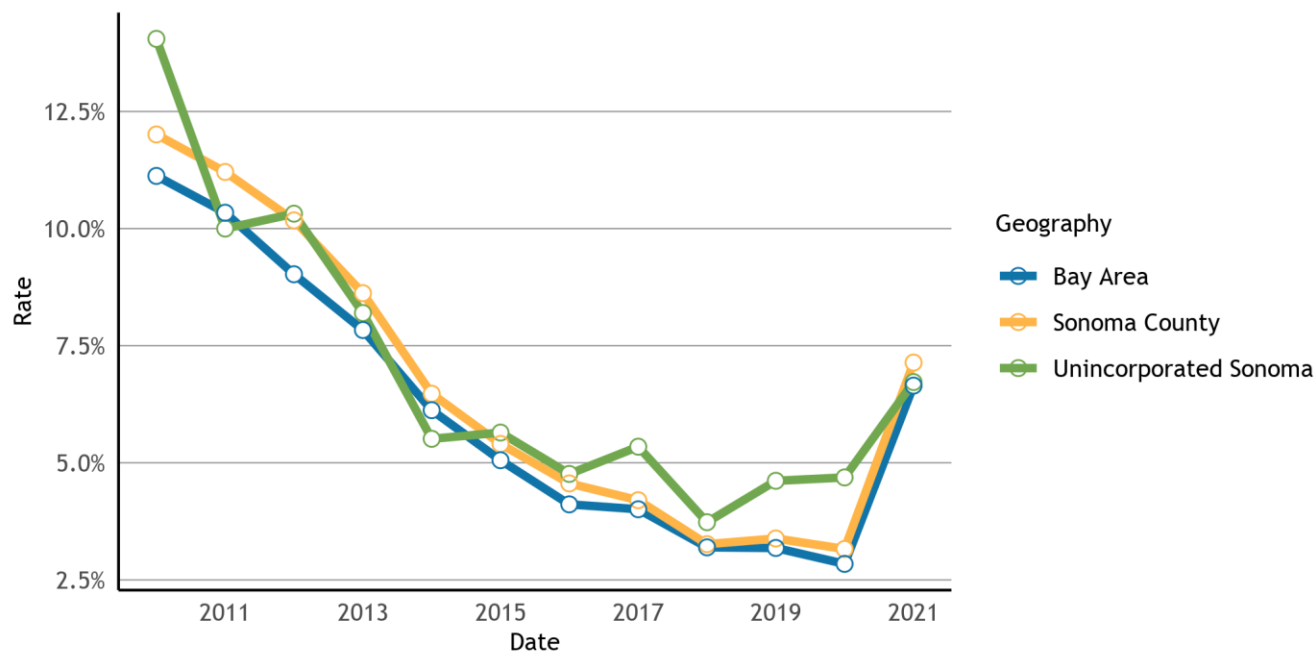
*Notes: The data displayed shows the industries in which jurisdiction residents work, regardless of the location where those residents are employed (whether within the jurisdiction or not). Categories are derived from the following source tables: Agriculture & Natural Resources: C24030\_003E, C24030\_030E; Construction: C24030\_006E, C24030\_033E; Manufacturing, Wholesale & Transportation: C24030\_007E, C24030\_034E, C24030\_008E, C24030\_035E, C24030\_010E, C24030\_037E; Retail: C24030\_009E, C24030\_036E; Information: C24030\_013E, C24030\_040E; Financial & Professional Services: C24030\_014E, C24030\_041E, C24030\_017E, C24030\_044E; Health & Educational Services: C24030\_021E, C24030\_024E, C24030\_048E, C24030\_051E; Other: C24030\_027E, C24030\_054E, C24030\_028E, C24030\_055E*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table C24030*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-06.*

#### 4.4.3 Unemployment

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, there was a 7.3 percentage point decrease in the unemployment rate between January 2010 and January 2021. Jurisdictions through the region experienced a sharp rise in unemployment in 2020 due to impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, though with a general improvement and recovery in the later months of 2020.



**Figure 10: Unemployment Rate**

Universe: Civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 and older

Notes: Unemployment rates for the jurisdiction level is derived from larger-geography estimates. This method assumes that the rates of change in employment and unemployment are exactly the same in each sub-county area as at the county level. If this assumption is not true for a specific sub-county area, then the estimates for that area may not be representative of the current economic conditions. Since this assumption is untested, caution should be employed when using these data. Only not seasonally-adjusted labor force (unemployment rates) data are developed for cities and CDPs.

Source: California Employment Development Department, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Sub-county areas monthly updates, 2010-2021.

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-15.

## 4.5 Extremely Low-Income Households

Despite the economic and job growth experienced throughout the region since 1990, the income gap has continued to widen. California is one of the most economically unequal states in the nation, and the Bay Area has the highest income inequality between high- and low-income households in the state<sup>12</sup>.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 53.8% of households make more than 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI)<sup>13</sup>, compared to 10.8% making less than 30% of AMI, which is considered extremely low-income (see Figure 11).

<sup>12</sup> Bohn, S. et al. 2020. Income Inequality and Economic Opportunity in California. *Public Policy Institute of California*.

<sup>13</sup> Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located. Households making between 80 and 120

Regionally, more than half of all households make more than 100% AMI, while 15% make less than 30% AMI. In Sonoma County, 30% AMI is the equivalent to the annual income of \$29,450 for a family of four. Many households with multiple wage earners - including food service workers, full-time students, teachers, farmworkers and healthcare professionals - can fall into lower AMI categories due to relatively stagnant wages in many industries.

#### **Note on Estimating the Projected Number of Extremely Low-Income Households**

Local jurisdictions are required to provide an estimate for their projected extremely low-income households in their Housing Elements. HCD's official Housing Element guidance notes that jurisdictions can use their RHNA for very low-income households (those making 0-50% AMI) to calculate their projected extremely low-income households. For more information, visit HCD's Building Blocks page on Extremely Low-Income Housing Needs.

This document does not contain the required data point of projected extremely low-income households, as Bay Area jurisdictions have not yet received their final RHNA numbers. Once Unincorporated Sonoma County receives its 6th Cycle RHNA, staff can estimate the projected extremely low-income households using one of the following three methodologies:

**Option A:** Assume that 59.8% of Unincorporated Sonoma County's very low-income RHNA is for extremely low-income households.

According to HCD's Regional Housing Need Determination for the Bay Area, 15.5% of the region's housing need is for 0-30% AMI households while 25.9% is for 0-50% AMI households. Therefore, extremely low-income housing need represents 59.8% of the region's very low-income housing need, as 15.5 divided by 25.9 is 59.8%. This option aligns with HCD's guidance to use U.S. Census data to calculate the percentage of very low-income RHNA that qualifies for extremely low-income households, as HCD uses U.S. Census data to calculate the Regional Housing Need Determination.

**Option B:** Assume that 50.9% of Unincorporated Sonoma County's very low-income RHNA is for extremely low-income households.

According to the data shown below (Figure 11), 12,473 of Unincorporated Sonoma County's households are 0-50% AMI while 6,354 are extremely low-income. Therefore, extremely low-income households represent 50.9% of households who are 0-50% AMI, as 6,354 divided by 12,473 is 50.9%. This option aligns with HCD's guidance to use U.S. Census data to calculate the percentage of very low-income RHNA that qualifies for extremely low-income households, as the information in Figure 11 represents a tabulation of Census Bureau Data.

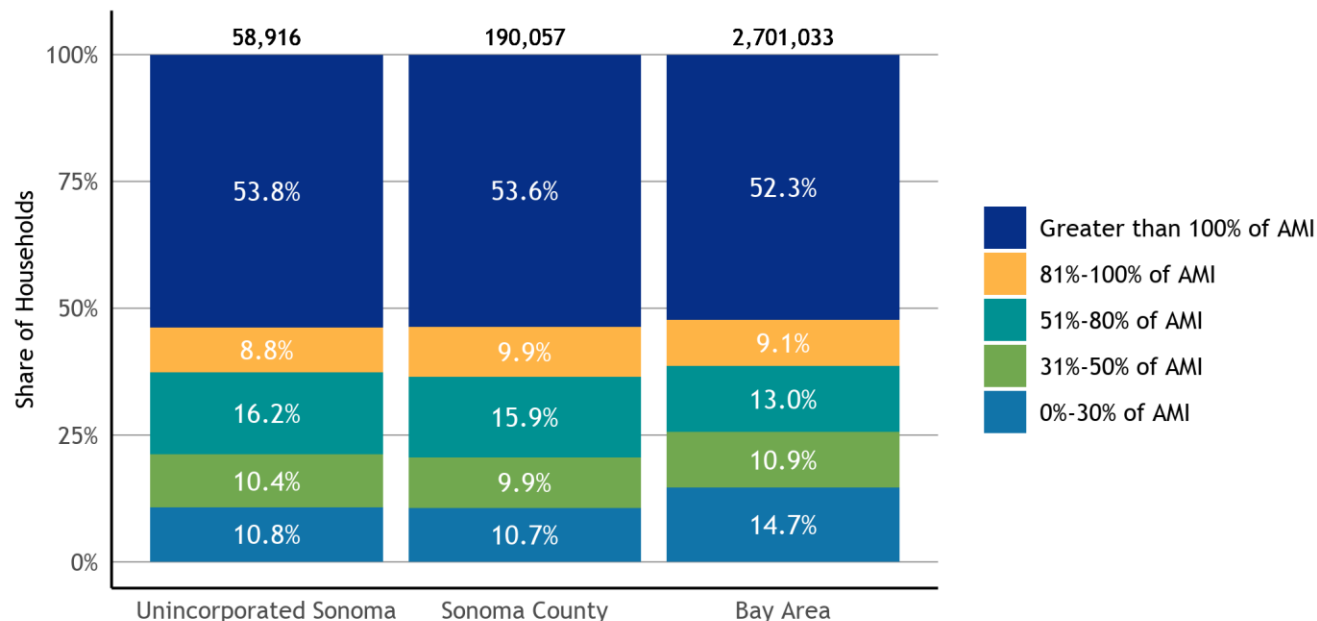
**Option C:** Assume that 50% of Unincorporated Sonoma County's very low-income RHNA is for extremely low-income households.

HCD's guidance notes that instead of using U.S. Census data to calculate the percentage of very low-income RHNA that qualifies for extremely low-income households, local jurisdictions can presume that 50% of their RHNA for very low-income households qualifies for extremely low-income households.

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percent of the AMI are moderate-income, those making 50 to 80 percent are low-income, those making 30 to 50 percent are very low-income, and those making less than 30 percent are extremely low-income. This is then adjusted for household size.





**Figure 11: Households by Household Income Level**

Universe: Occupied housing units

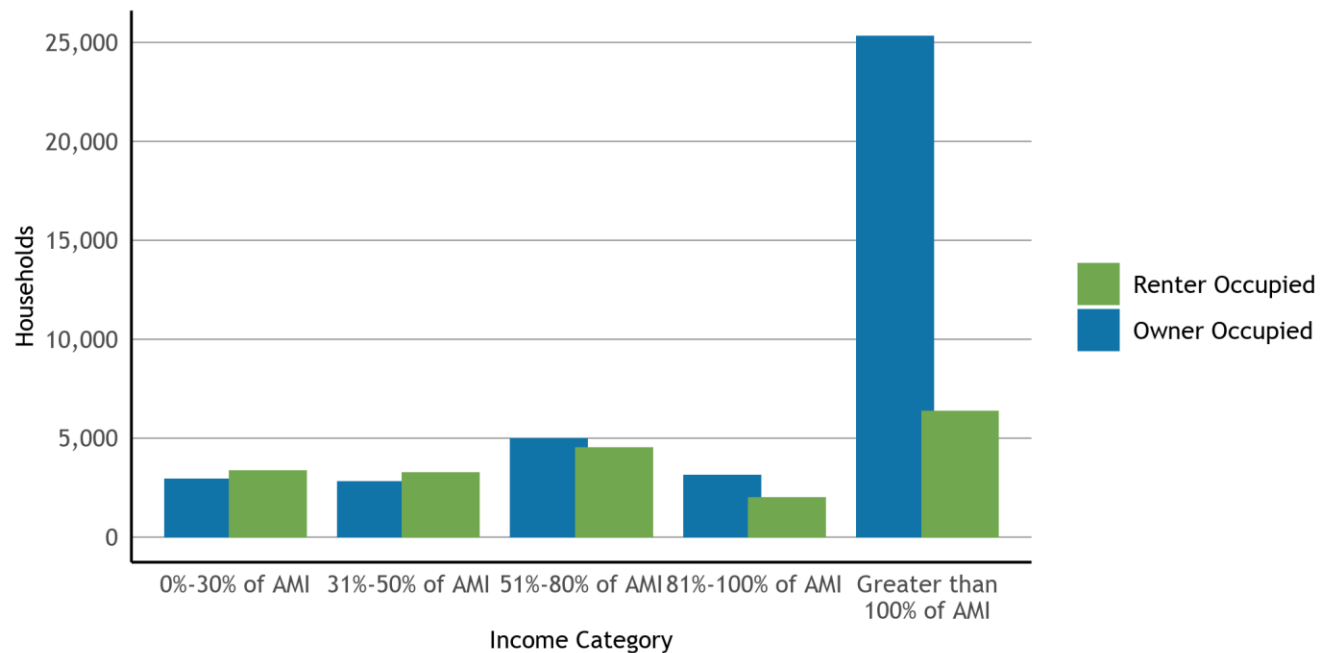
Notes: Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located. The data that is reported for the Bay Area is not based on a regional AMI but instead refers to the regional total of households in an income group relative to the AMI for the county where that household is located. Local jurisdictions are required to provide an estimate for their projected extremely low-income households (0-30% AMI) in their Housing Elements. HCD's official Housing Element guidance notes that jurisdictions can use their RHNA for very low-income households (those making 0-50% AMI) to calculate their projected extremely low-income households. As Bay Area jurisdictions have not yet received their final RHNA numbers, this document does not contain the required data point of projected extremely low-income households. The report portion of the housing data needs packet contains more specific guidance for how local staff can calculate an estimate for projected extremely low-income households once jurisdictions receive their 6th cycle RHNA numbers.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table ELI-01.

Throughout the region, there are disparities between the incomes of homeowners and renters. Typically, the number of low-income renters greatly outpaces the amount of housing available that is affordable for these households.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the largest proportion of renters falls in the *Greater than 100% of AMI* income group, while the largest proportion of homeowners are found in the *Greater than 100% of AMI* group (see Figure 12).



**Figure 12: Household Income Level by Tenure**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

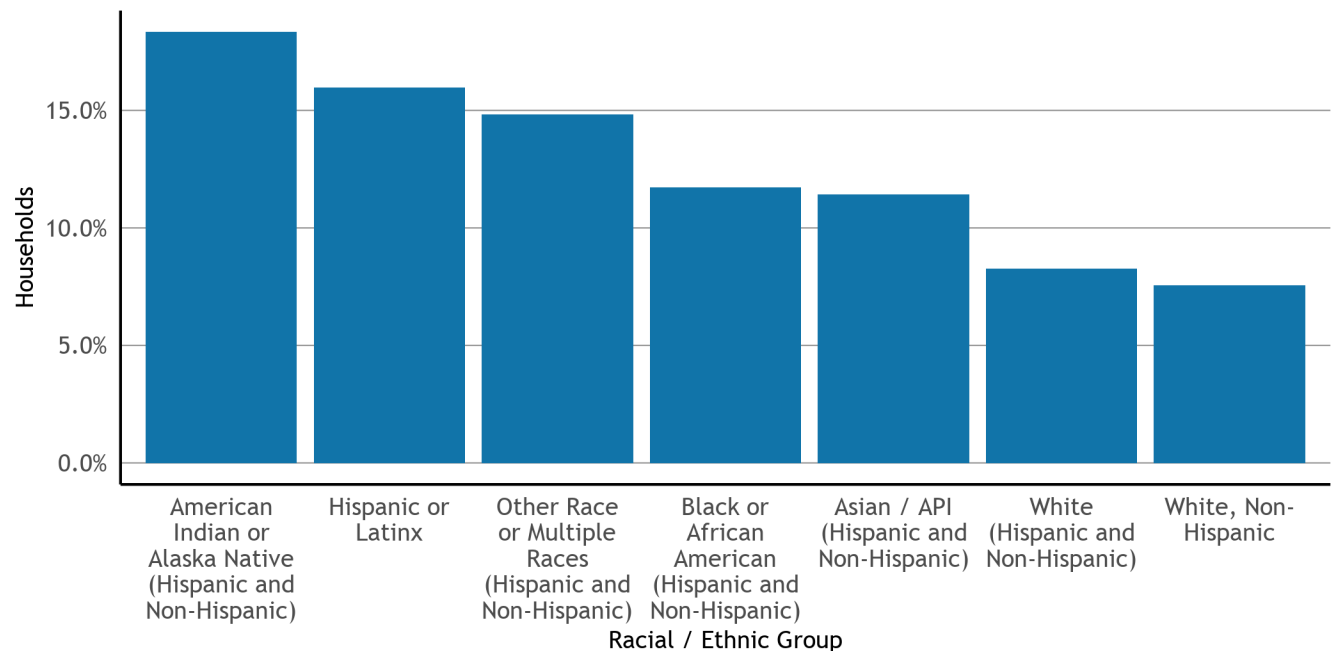
*Notes: Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-21.*

Currently, people of color are more likely to experience poverty and financial instability as a result of federal and local housing policies that have historically excluded them from the same opportunities extended to white residents.<sup>14</sup> These economic disparities also leave communities of color at higher risk for housing insecurity, displacement or homelessness. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, American Indian or Alaska Native (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic) residents experience the highest rates of poverty, followed by Other Race or Multiple Races (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic) residents (see Figure 13).

<sup>14</sup> Moore, E., Montojó, N. and Mauri, N., 2019. Roots, Race & Place: A History of Racially Exclusionary Housing the San Francisco Bay Area. *Hass Institute*.



**Figure 13: Poverty Status by Race**

*Universe: Population for whom poverty status is determined*

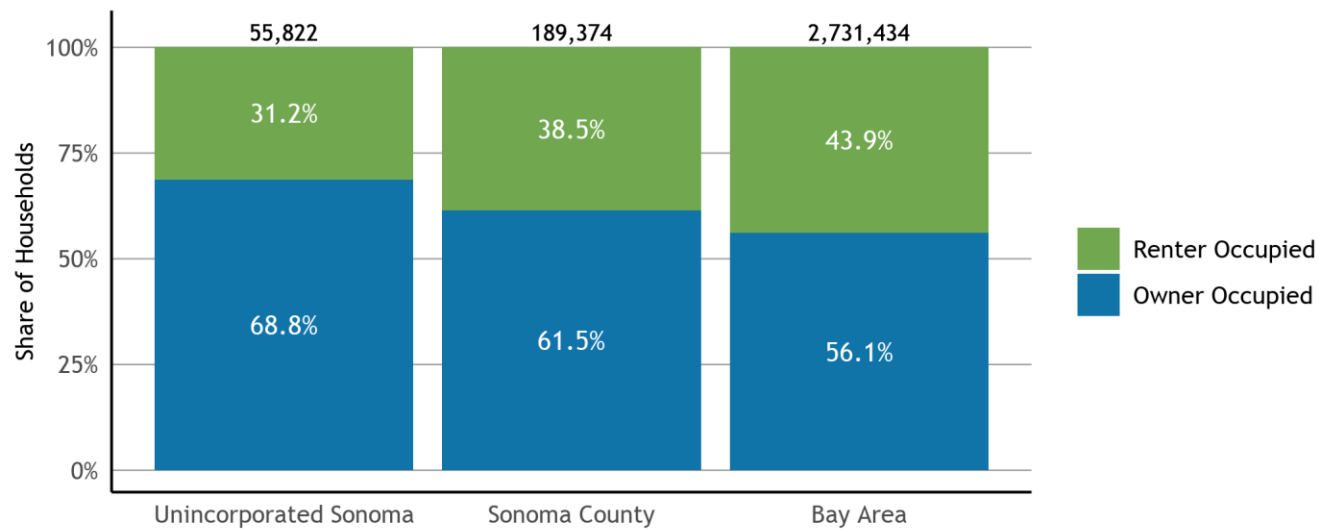
*Notes: The Census Bureau uses a federally defined poverty threshold that remains constant throughout the country and does not correspond to Area Median Income. For this table, the Census Bureau does not disaggregate racial groups by Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. However, data for the white racial group is also reported for white householders who are not Hispanic/Latinx. Since residents who identify as white and Hispanic/Latinx may have very different experiences within the housing market and the economy from those who identify as white and non-Hispanic/Latinx, data for multiple white sub-groups are reported here. The racial/ethnic groups reported in this table are not all mutually exclusive. Therefore, the data should not be summed as the sum exceeds the population for whom poverty status is determined for this jurisdiction. However, all groups labelled “Hispanic and Non-Hispanic” are mutually exclusive, and the sum of the data for these groups is equivalent to the population for whom poverty status is determined.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B17001(A-I)*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table ELI-03.*

## 4.6 Tenure

The number of residents who own their homes compared to those who rent their homes can help identify the level of housing insecurity - ability for individuals to stay in their homes - in a city and region. Generally, renters may be displaced more quickly if prices increase. In Unincorporated Sonoma County there are a total of 55,822 housing units, and fewer residents rent than own their homes: 31.2% versus 68.8% (see Figure 14). By comparison, 38.5% of households in Sonoma County are renters, while 44% of Bay Area households rent their homes.



**Figure 14: Housing Tenure**

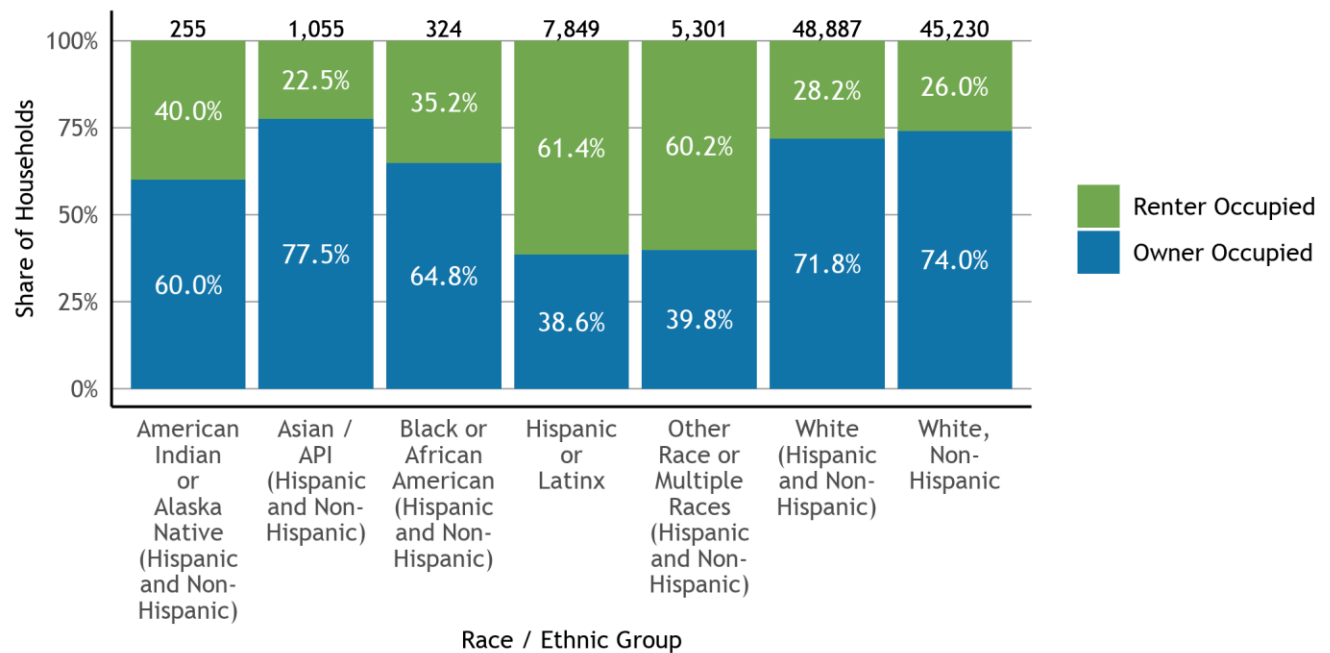
*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25003*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-16.*

Homeownership rates often vary considerably across race/ethnicity in the Bay Area and throughout the country. These disparities not only reflect differences in income and wealth but also stem from federal, state, and local policies that limited access to homeownership for communities of color while facilitating homebuying for white residents. While many of these policies, such as redlining, have been formally disbanded, the impacts of race-based policy are still evident across Bay Area communities.<sup>15</sup> In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 64.8% of Black households owned their homes, while homeownership rates were 77.5% for Asian households, 38.6% for Latinx households, and 71.8% for White households. Notably, recent changes to state law require local jurisdictions to examine these dynamics and other fair housing issues when updating their Housing Elements.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Rothstein, R. (2017). *The color of law : a forgotten history of how our government segregated America*. New York, NY & London, UK: Liveright Publishing.



**Figure 15: Housing Tenure by Race of Householder**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

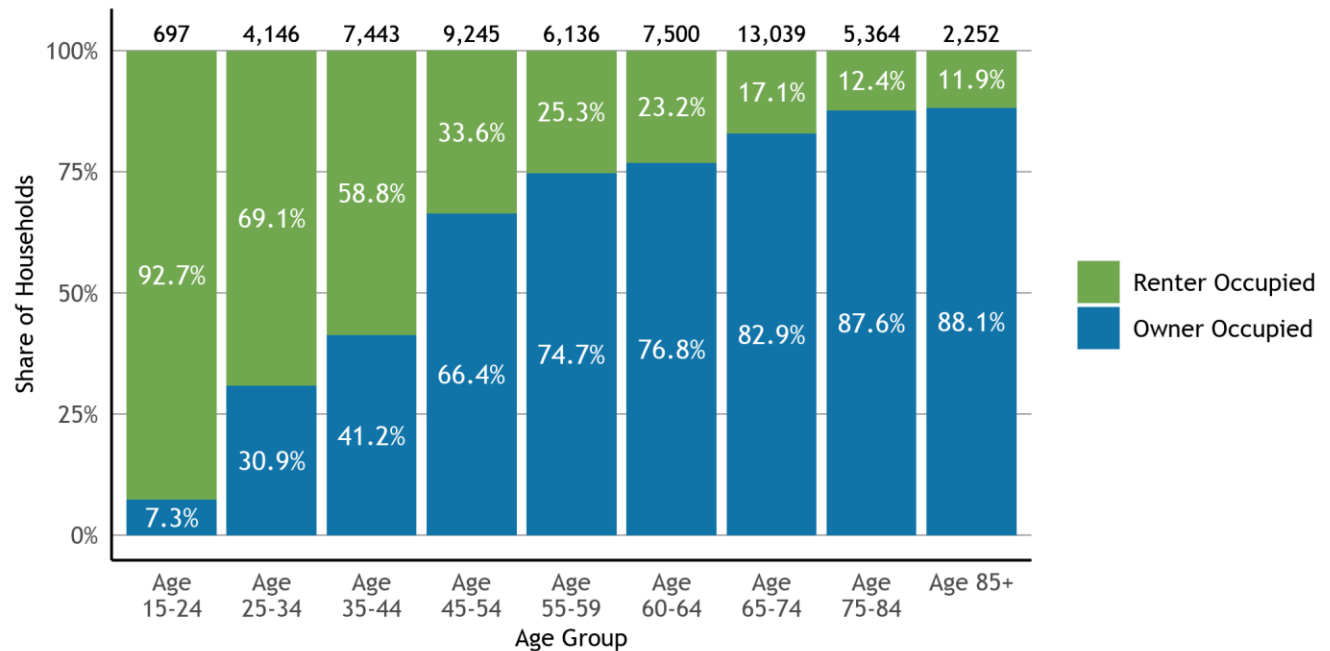
*Notes: For this table, the Census Bureau does not disaggregate racial groups by Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. However, data for the white racial group is also reported for white householders who are not Hispanic/Latinx. Since residents who identify as white and Hispanic/Latinx may have very different experiences within the housing market and the economy from those who identify as white and non-Hispanic/Latinx, data for multiple white sub-groups are reported here. The racial/ethnic groups reported in this table are not all mutually exclusive. Therefore, the data should not be summed as the sum exceeds the total number of occupied housing units for this jurisdiction. However, all groups labelled “Hispanic and Non-Hispanic” are mutually exclusive, and the sum of the data for these groups is equivalent to the total number of occupied housing units.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25003(A-I)*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-20.*

The age of residents who rent or own their home can also signal the housing challenges a community is experiencing. Younger households tend to rent and may struggle to buy a first home in the Bay Area due to high housing costs. At the same time, senior homeowners seeking to downsize may have limited options in an expensive housing market.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 62.5% of householders between the ages of 25 and 44 are renters, while 15.3% of householders over 65 are (see Figure 16).



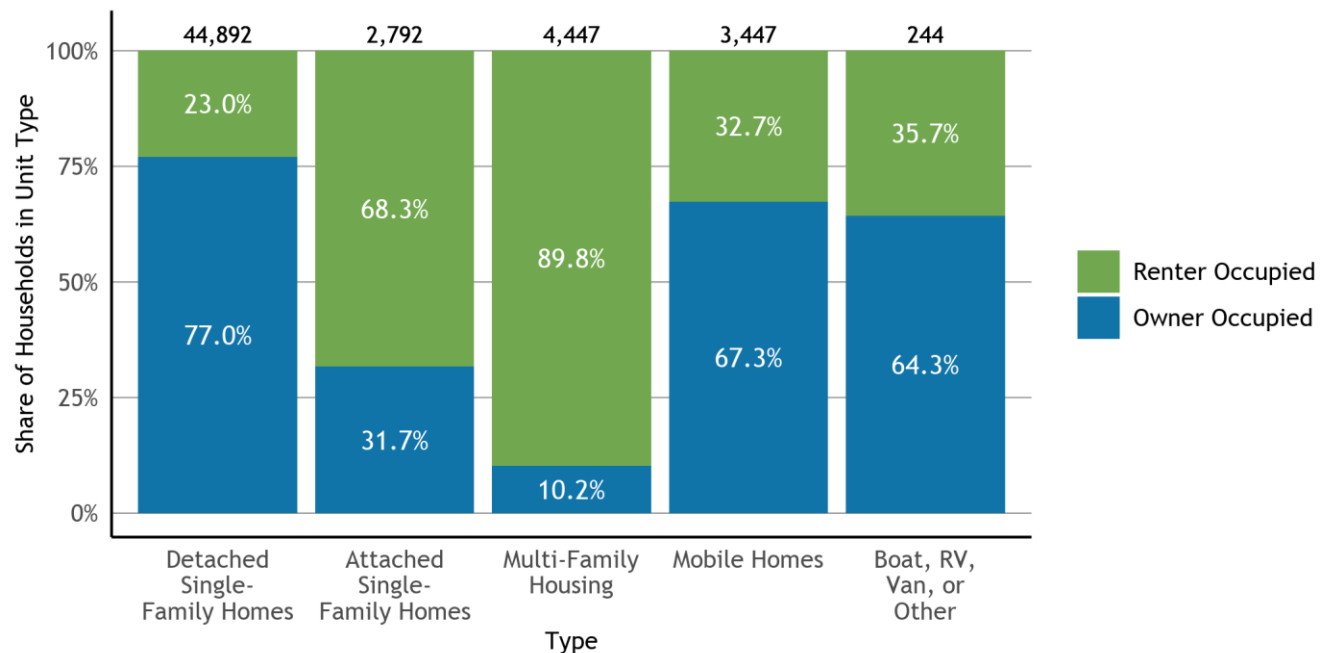
**Figure 16: Housing Tenure by Age**

Universe: Occupied housing units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25007

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-18.

In many cities, homeownership rates for households in single-family homes are substantially higher than the rates for households in multi-family housing. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 77.0% of households in detached single-family homes are homeowners, while 10.2% of households in multi-family housing are homeowners (see Figure 17).



## Figure 17: Housing Tenure by Housing Type

Universe: Occupied housing units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25032

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-22.

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### 4.7 Displacement

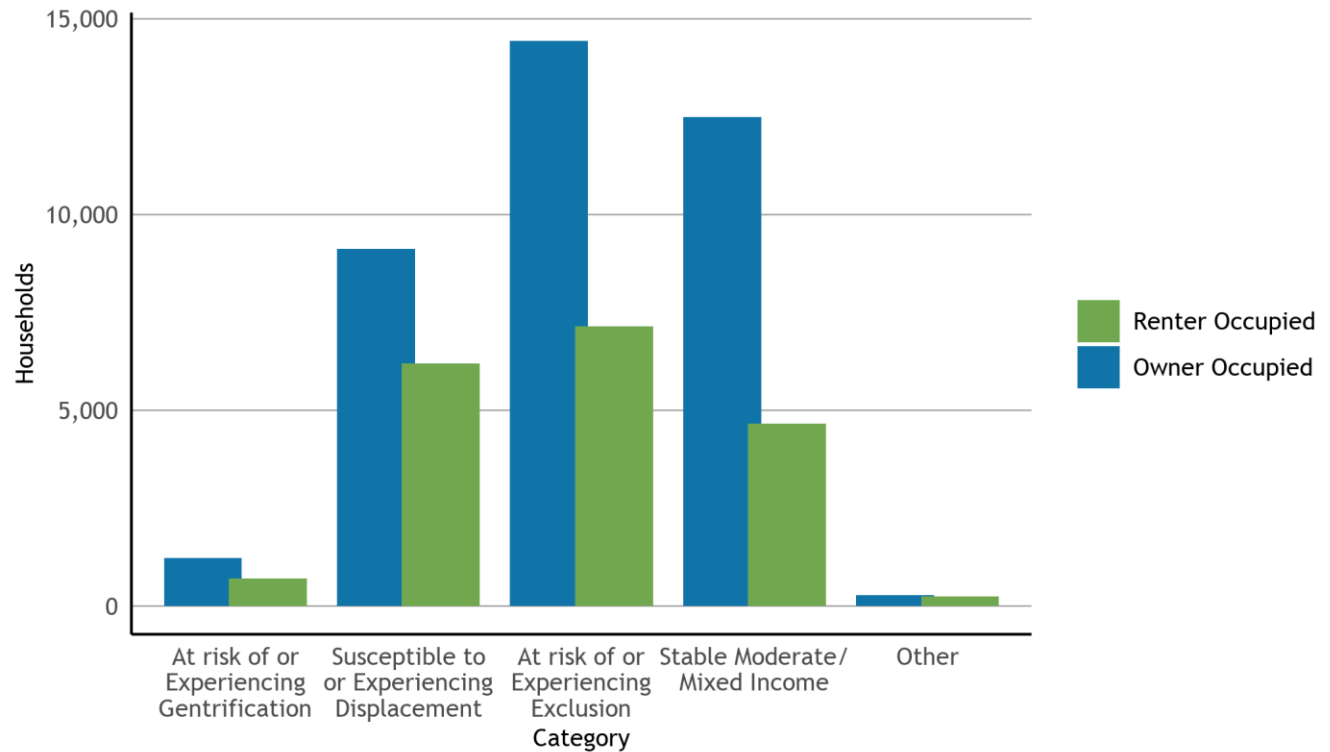
Because of increasing housing prices, displacement is a major concern in the Bay Area. Displacement has the most severe impacts on low- and moderate-income residents. When individuals or families are forced to leave their homes and communities, they also lose their support network.

The University of California, Berkeley has mapped all neighborhoods in the Bay area, identifying their risk for gentrification. They find that in Unincorporated Sonoma County, 27.1% of households live in neighborhoods that are susceptible to or experiencing displacement and 3.4% live in neighborhoods at risk of or undergoing gentrification.

Equally important, some neighborhoods in the Bay Area do not have housing appropriate for a broad section of the workforce. UC Berkeley estimates that 38.2% of households in Unincorporated Sonoma County live in neighborhoods where low-income households are likely to be excluded due to prohibitive housing costs.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> More information about this gentrification and displacement data is available at the Urban Displacement Project's webpage: <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/>. Specifically, one can learn more about the different gentrification/displacement typologies shown in Figure 18 at this link: [https://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/typology\\_sheet\\_2018\\_0.png](https://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/typology_sheet_2018_0.png). Additionally, one can view maps that show which typologies correspond to which parts of a jurisdiction here: <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/san-francisco/sf-bay-area-gentrification-and-displacement>



**Figure 18: Households by Displacement Risk and Tenure**

Universe: Households

Notes: Displacement data is available at the census tract level. Staff aggregated tracts up to jurisdiction level using census 2010 population weights, assigning a tract to jurisdiction in proportion to block level population weights. Total household count may differ slightly from counts in other tables sourced from jurisdiction level sources. Categories are combined as follows for simplicity: At risk of or Experiencing Exclusion: At Risk of Becoming Exclusive; Becoming Exclusive; Stable/Advanced Exclusive At risk of or Experiencing Gentrification: At Risk of Gentrification; Early/Ongoing Gentrification; Advanced Gentrification Stable Moderate/Mixed Income: Stable Moderate/Mixed Income Susceptible to or Experiencing Displacement: Low-Income/Susceptible to Displacement; Ongoing Displacement Other: High Student Population; Unavailable or Unreliable Data Source: Urban Displacement Project for classification, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25003 for tenure.

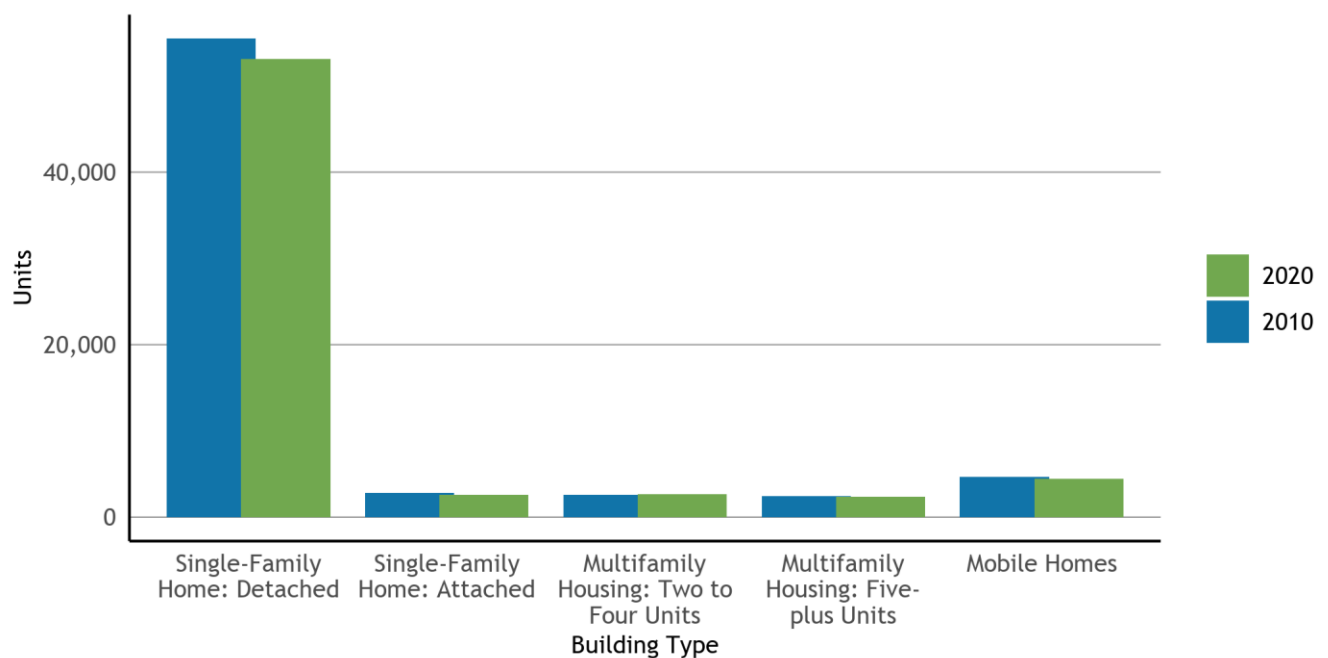
For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-25.

## 5 HOUSING STOCK CHARACTERISTICS

### 5.1 Housing Types, Year Built, Vacancy, and Permits

In recent years, most housing produced in the region and across the state consisted of single-family homes and larger multi-unit buildings. However, some households are increasingly interested in “missing middle housing” - including duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, cottage clusters and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). These housing types may open up more options across incomes and tenure, from young households seeking homeownership options to seniors looking to downsize and age-in-place.

The housing stock of Unincorporated Sonoma County in 2020 was made up of 81.5% single family detached homes, 4.0% single family attached homes, 4.0% multifamily homes with 2 to 4 units, 3.7% multifamily homes with 5 or more units, and 6.8% mobile homes (see Figure 19). In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the housing type that experienced the most growth between 2010 and 2020 was *Multifamily Housing: Two to Four Units*.



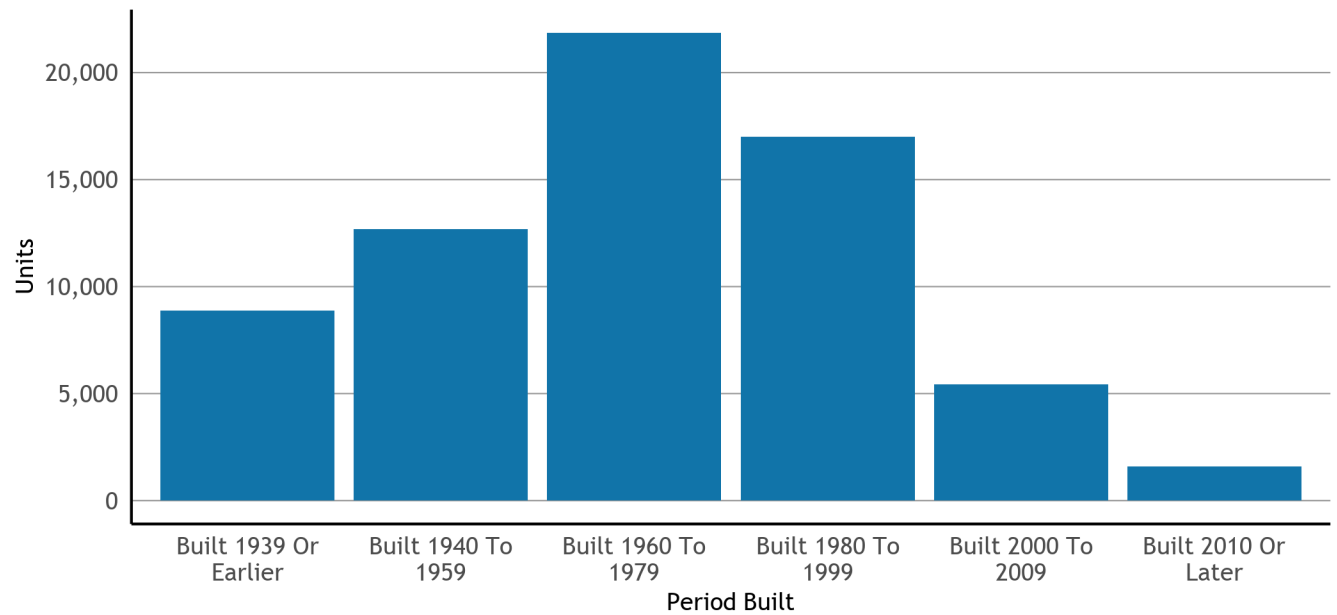
**Figure 19: Housing Type Trends**

Universe: Housing units

Source: California Department of Finance, E-5 series

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-01.

Production has not kept up with housing demand for several decades in the Bay Area, as the total number of units built and available has not yet come close to meeting the population and job growth experienced throughout the region. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the largest proportion of the housing stock was built 1960 to 1979, with 21,849 units constructed during this period (see Figure 20). Since 2010, 2.4% of the current housing stock was built, which is 1,594 units.



**Figure 20: Housing Units by Year Structure Built**

Universe: Housing units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25034

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-04.

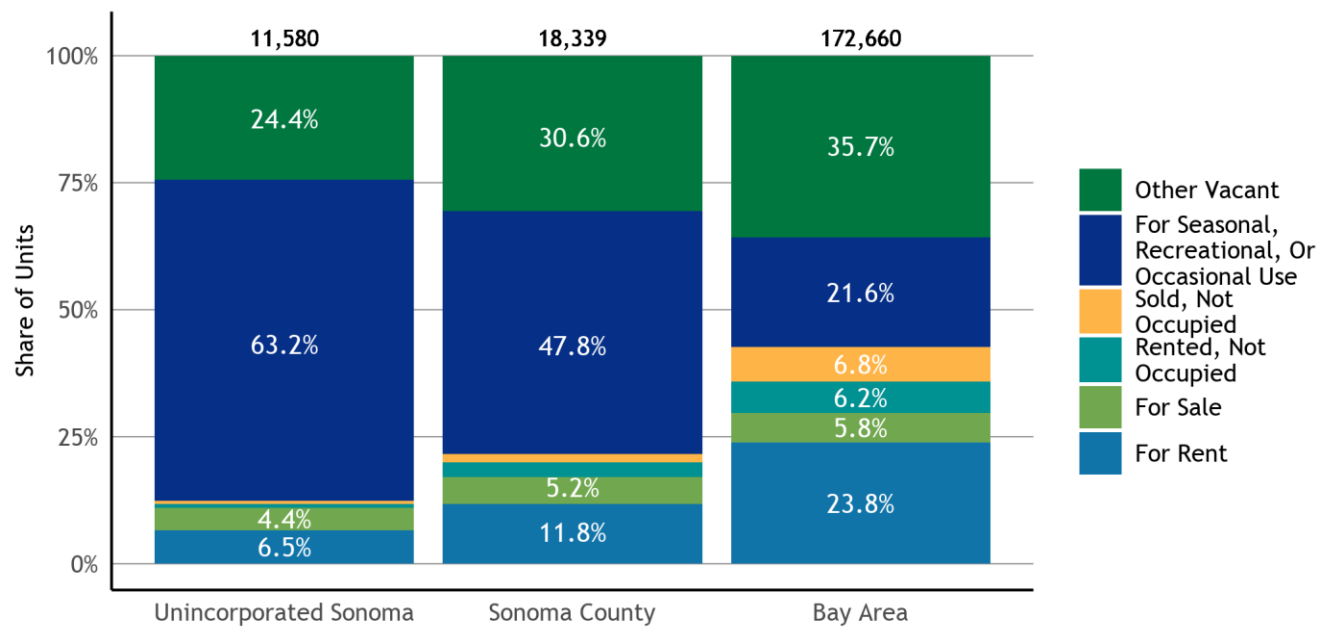
Vacant units make up 17.2% of the overall housing stock in Unincorporated Sonoma County. The rental vacancy stands at 4.6%, while the ownership vacancy rate is 1.5%. Of the vacant units, the most common type of vacancy is *For Seasonal, Recreational, Or Occasional Use* (see Figure 21).<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the Bay Area, vacancies make up 2.6% of the total housing units, with homes listed for rent; units used for *recreational or occasional use*, and units not otherwise classified (*other vacant*) making up the majority of vacancies. The Census Bureau classifies a unit as vacant if no one is occupying it when census interviewers are conducting the American Community Survey or Decennial Census. Vacant units classified as “for recreational or occasional use” are those that are held for short-term periods of use throughout the year. Accordingly, vacation rentals and short-term rentals like AirBnB are likely to fall in this category. The Census Bureau classifies units as “other vacant” if they are vacant due to foreclosure, personal/family reasons, legal proceedings, repairs/renovations, abandonment, preparation for being rented or sold, or vacant for an extended absence for reasons such as a work assignment, military duty, or incarceration.<sup>18</sup> In a region with a thriving economy and housing market like the Bay Area, units being renovated/repared and prepared for rental or sale are likely to represent a large portion of the “other vacant” category. Additionally, the need for seismic retrofitting

<sup>17</sup> The vacancy rates by tenure is for a smaller universe than the total vacancy rate first reported, which in principle includes the full stock (17.2%). The vacancy by tenure counts are rates relative to the rental stock (occupied and vacant) and ownership stock (occupied and vacant) - but exclude a significant number of vacancy categories, including the numerically significant *other vacant*.

<sup>18</sup> For more information, see pages 3 through 6 of this list of definitions prepared by the Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/definitions.pdf>.

in older housing stock could also influence the proportion of “other vacant” units in some jurisdictions.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 21: Vacant Units by Type**

Universe: Vacant housing units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25004

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-03.

Between 2015 and 2019, 1,666 housing units were issued permits in Unincorporated Sonoma County. 58.5% of permits issued in Unincorporated Sonoma County were for above moderate-income housing, 20.5% were for moderate-income housing, and 21.1% were for low- or very low-income housing (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Housing Permitting**

Income Group	value
Above Moderate Income Permits	974
Moderate Income Permits	341
Low Income Permits	236
Very Low Income Permits	115

Universe: Housing permits issued between 2015 and 2019

Notes: HCD uses the following definitions for the four income categories: Very Low Income: units affordable to households making less than 50% of the Area Median Income for the county in which the jurisdiction is located. Low Income: units

<sup>19</sup> See Dow, P. (2018). Unpacking the Growth in San Francisco’s Vacant Housing Stock: Client Report for the San Francisco Planning Department. University of California, Berkeley.

affordable to households making between 50% and 80% of the Area Median Income for the county in which the jurisdiction is located. Moderate Income: units affordable to households making between 80% and 120% of the Area Median Income for the county in which the jurisdiction is located. Above Moderate Income: units affordable to households making above 120% of the Area Median Income for the county in which the jurisdiction is located.

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), 5th Cycle Annual Progress Report Permit Summary (2020)

This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table HSG-11.

## 5.2 Assisted Housing Developments At-Risk of Conversion

While there is an immense need to produce new affordable housing units, ensuring that the existing affordable housing stock remains affordable is equally important. Additionally, it is typically faster and less expensive to preserve currently affordable units that are at risk of converting to market-rate than it is to build new affordable housing.

The data in the table below comes from the California Housing Partnership's Preservation Database, the state's most comprehensive source of information on subsidized affordable housing at risk of losing its affordable status and converting to market-rate housing. However, this database does not include all deed-restricted affordable units in the state, so there may be at-risk assisted units in a jurisdiction that are not captured in this data table. There are 810 assisted units in Unincorporated Sonoma County in the Preservation Database. Of these units, 3.7% are at *High Risk* or *Very High Risk* of conversion.<sup>20</sup>

### Note on At-Risk Assisted Housing Developments

HCD requires that Housing Elements list the assisted housing developments at risk of converting to market-rate uses. For more information on the specific properties that are at Moderate Risk, High Risk, or Very High Risk of conversion, local jurisdiction staff should contact Danielle Mazzella, Preservation & Data Manager at the California Housing Partnership, at [dmazzella@chpc.net](mailto:dmazzella@chpc.net).

Table 4: Assisted Units at Risk of Conversion

Income	Unincorporated Sonoma	Sonoma County	Bay Area
Low	780	7195	110177
Moderate	0	68	3375
High	0	267	1854
Very High	30	149	1053
Total Assisted Units in Database	810	7679	116459

<sup>20</sup> California Housing Partnership uses the following categories for assisted housing developments in its database: Very-High Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate within the next year that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer.

High Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in the next 1-5 years that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer.

Moderate Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in the next 5-10 years that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer.

Low Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in 10+ years and/or are owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer.

Universe: HUD, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), USDA, and CalHFA projects. Subsidized or assisted developments that do not have one of the aforementioned financing sources may not be included.

Notes: While California Housing Partnership's Preservation Database is the state's most comprehensive source of information on subsidized affordable housing at risk of losing its affordable status and converting to market-rate housing, this database does not include all deed-restricted affordable units in the state. Consequently, there may be at-risk assisted units in a jurisdiction that are not captured in this data table. Per HCD guidance, local jurisdictions must also list the specific affordable housing developments at-risk of converting to market rate uses. This document provides aggregate numbers of at-risk units for each jurisdiction, but local planning staff should contact Danielle Mazzella with the California Housing Partnership at [dmazzella@chpc.net](mailto:dmazzella@chpc.net) to obtain a list of affordable properties that fall under this designation. California Housing Partnership uses the following categories for assisted housing developments in its database: Very-High Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate within the next year that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer. High Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in the next 1-5 years that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer. Moderate Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in the next 5-10 years that do not have a known overlapping subsidy that would extend affordability and are not owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer. Low Risk: affordable homes that are at-risk of converting to market rate in 10+ years and/or are owned by a large/stable non-profit, mission-driven developer.

Source: California Housing Partnership, Preservation Database (2020)

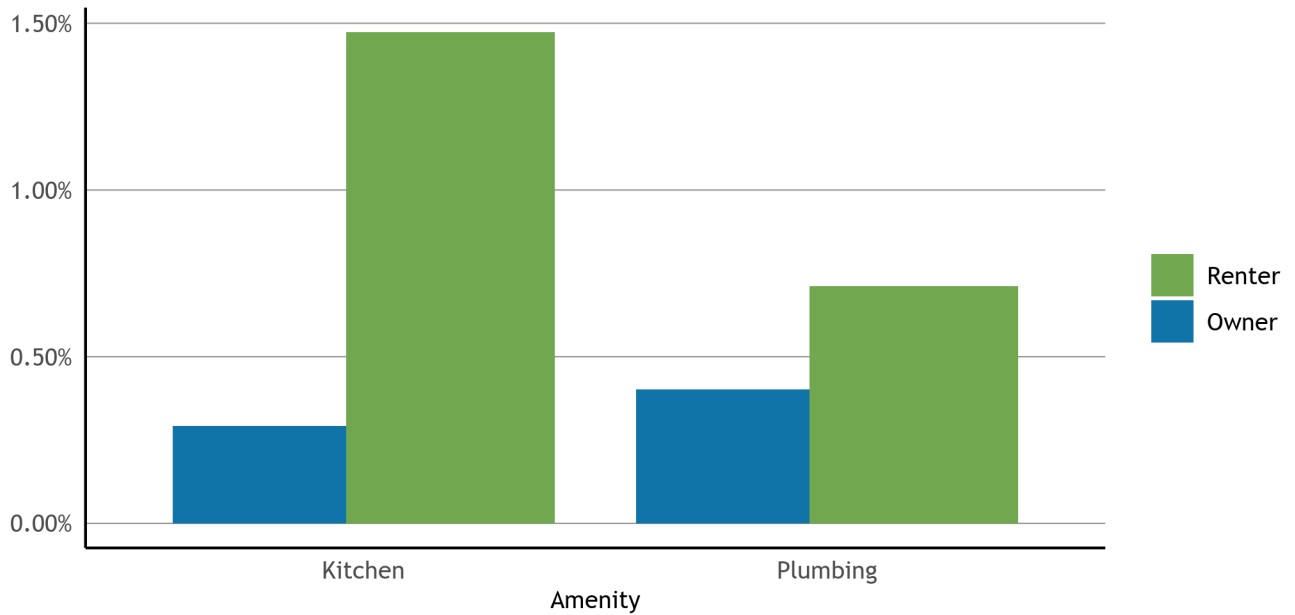
This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table RISK-01.

### 5.3 Substandard Housing

Housing costs in the region are among the highest in the country, which could result in households, particularly renters, needing to live in substandard conditions in order to afford housing. Generally, there is limited data on the extent of substandard housing issues in a community. However, the Census Bureau data included in the graph below gives a sense of some of the substandard conditions that may be present in Unincorporated Sonoma County. For example, 1.5% of renters in Unincorporated Sonoma County reported lacking a kitchen and 0.7% of renters lack plumbing, compared to 0.3% of owners who lack a kitchen and 0.4% of owners who lack plumbing.

#### Note on Substandard Housing

HCD requires Housing Elements to estimate the number of units in need of rehabilitation and replacement. As a data source for housing units in need of rehabilitation and replacement is not available for all jurisdictions in the region, ABAG was not able to provide this required data point in this document. To produce an estimate of housing needs in need of rehabilitation and replacement, staff can supplement the data below on substandard housing issues with additional local information from code enforcement, recent windshield surveys of properties, building department data, knowledgeable builders/developers in the community, or nonprofit housing developers or organizations. For more information, visit HCD's Building Blocks page on Housing Stock Characteristics.



**Figure 22: Substandard Housing Issues**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

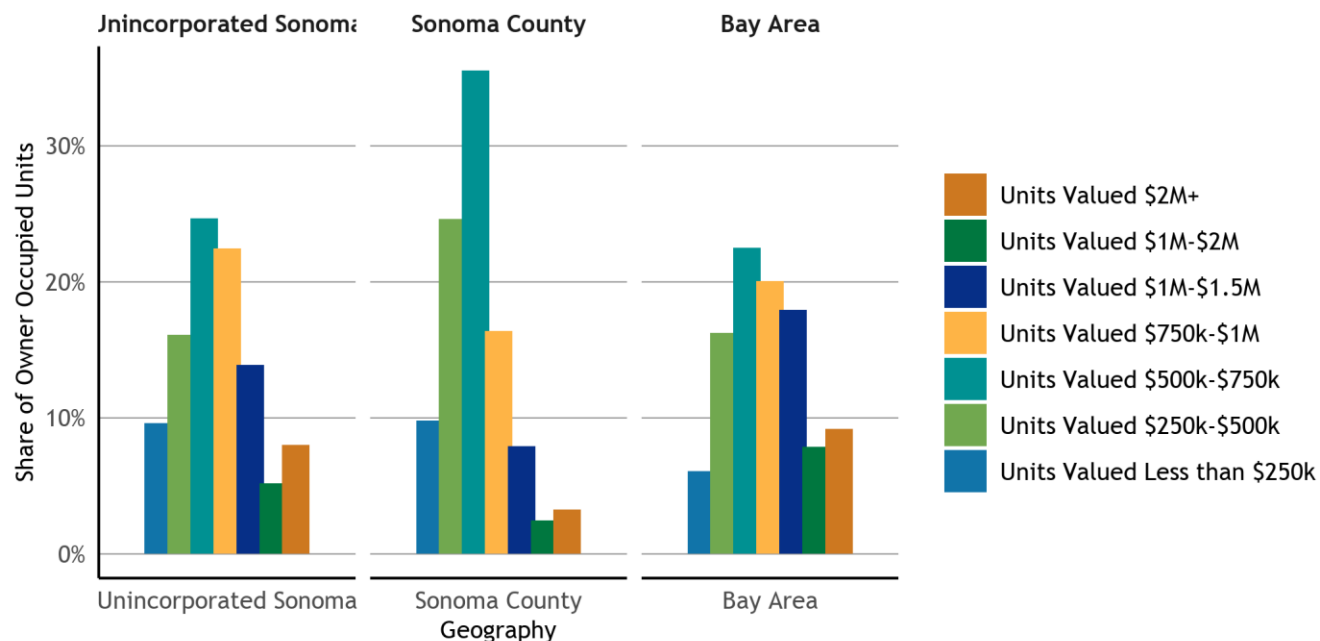
*Notes: Per HCD guidance, this data should be supplemented by local estimates of units needing to be rehabilitated or replaced based on recent windshield surveys, local building department data, knowledgeable builders/developers in the community, or nonprofit housing developers or organizations.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25053, Table B25043, Table B25049. For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-06.*

## 5.4 Home and Rent Values

Home prices reflect a complex mix of supply and demand factors, including an area’s demographic profile, labor market, prevailing wages and job outlook, coupled with land and construction costs. In the Bay Area, the costs of housing have long been among the highest in the nation. The typical home value in Unincorporated Sonoma County was estimated at \$761,130 by December of 2020, per data from Zillow. The largest proportion of homes were valued between \$500k-\$750k (see Figure 23). By comparison, the typical home value is \$691,580 in Sonoma County and \$1,077,230 the Bay Area, with the largest share of units valued \$500k-\$750k.

The region’s home values have increased steadily since 2000, besides a decrease during the Great Recession. The rise in home prices has been especially steep since 2012, with the median home value in the Bay Area nearly doubling during this time. Since 2001, the typical home value has increased 104.8% in Unincorporated Sonoma County from \$371,690 to \$761,130. This change is below the change in Sonoma County, and below the change for the region (see Figure 24).

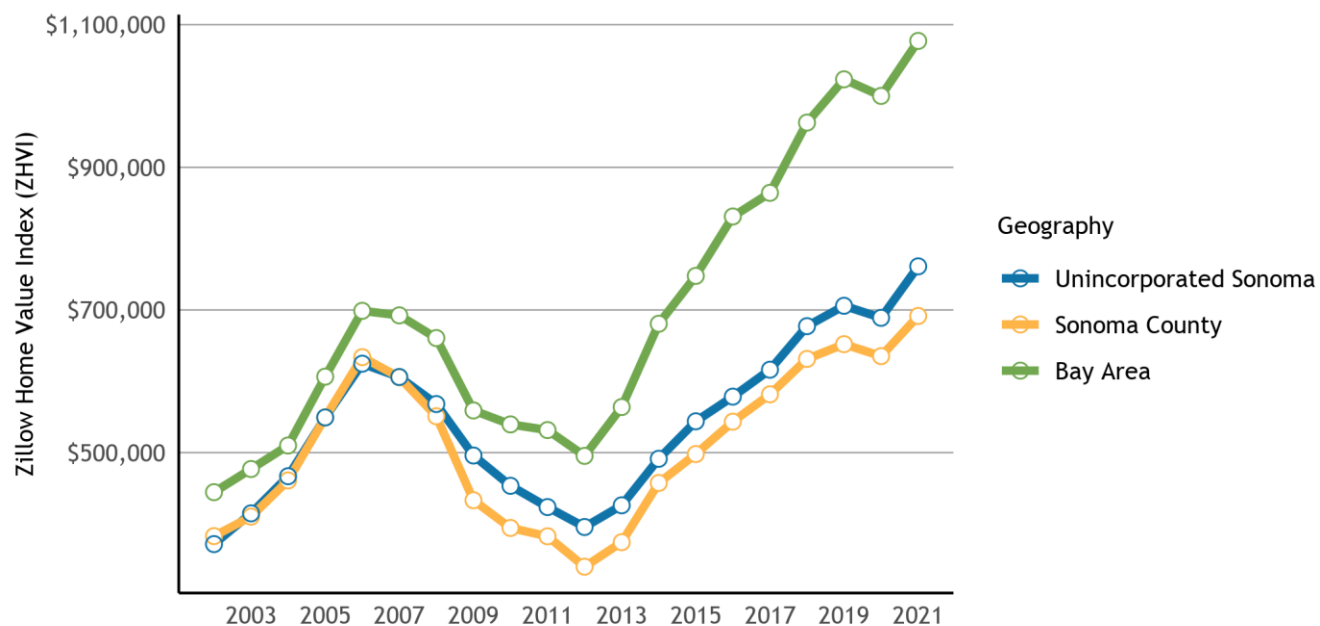


**Figure 23: Home Values of Owner-Occupied Units**

Universe: Owner-occupied units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25075

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-07.



**Figure 24: Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI)**

Universe: Owner-occupied housing units

Notes: Zillow describes the ZHVI as a smoothed, seasonally adjusted measure of the typical home value and market changes across a given region and housing type. The ZHVI reflects the typical value for homes in the 35th to 65th percentile range. The

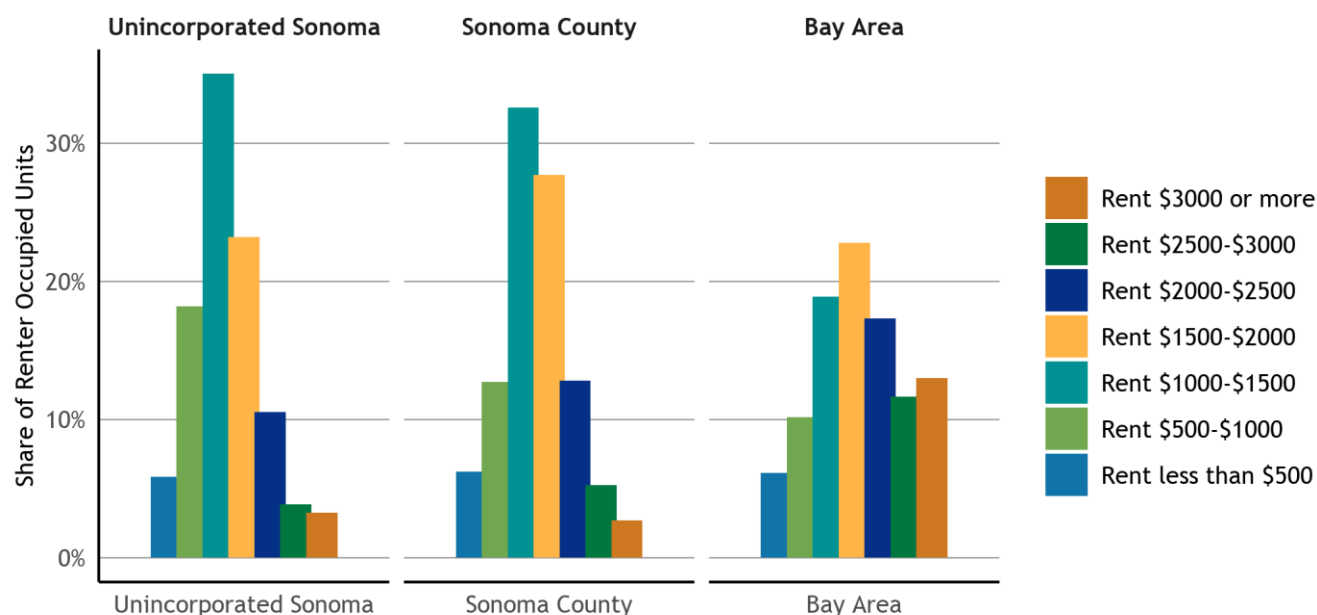
ZHVI includes all owner-occupied housing units, including both single-family homes and condominiums. More information on the ZHVI is available from Zillow. The regional estimate is a household-weighted average of county-level ZHVI files, where household counts are yearly estimates from DOF's E-5 series. For unincorporated areas, the value is a population weighted average of unincorporated communities in the county matched to census-designated population counts.

Source: Zillow, Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI)

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-08.

Similar to home values, rents have also increased dramatically across the Bay Area in recent years. Many renters have been priced out, evicted or displaced, particularly communities of color. Residents finding themselves in one of these situations may have had to choose between commuting long distances to their jobs and schools or moving out of the region, and sometimes, out of the state.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the largest proportion of rental units rented in the *Rent \$1000-\$1500* category, totaling 35.0%, followed by 23.2% of units renting in the *Rent \$1500-\$2000* category (see Figure 25). Looking beyond the city, the largest share of units is in the *\$1000-\$1500* category (county) compared to the *\$1500-\$2000* category for the region as a whole.



**Figure 25: Contract Rents for Renter-Occupied Units**

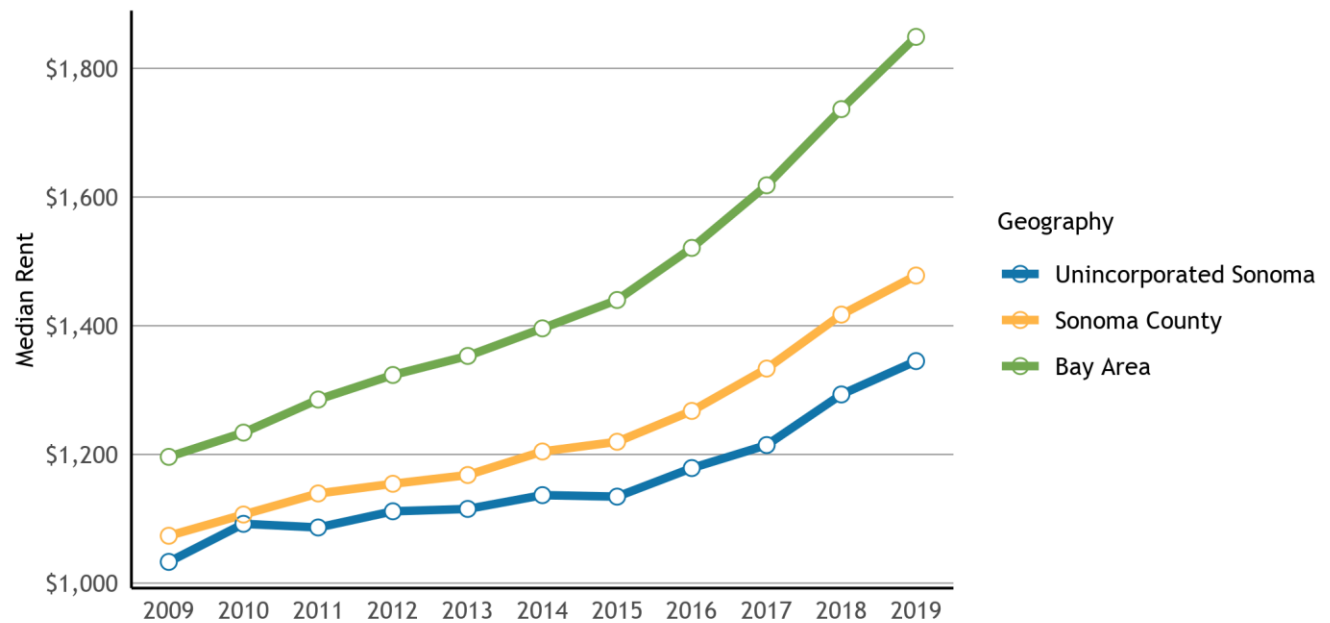
Universe: Renter-occupied housing units paying cash rent

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25056

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-09.

Since 2009, the median rent has increased by 30.2% in Unincorporated Sonoma County, from \$1,130 to \$1,340 per month (see Figure 26). In Sonoma County, the median rent has increased 22.7%, from \$1,200 to \$1,470. The median rent in the region has increased significantly during this time from \$1,200 to \$1,850, a 54% increase.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> While the data on home values shown in Figure 24 comes from Zillow, Zillow does not have data on rent prices available for most Bay Area jurisdictions. To have a more comprehensive dataset on rental data for the region, the



**Figure 26: Median Contract Rent**

*Universe: Renter-occupied housing units paying cash rent*

*Notes: For unincorporated areas, median is calculated using distribution in B25056.*

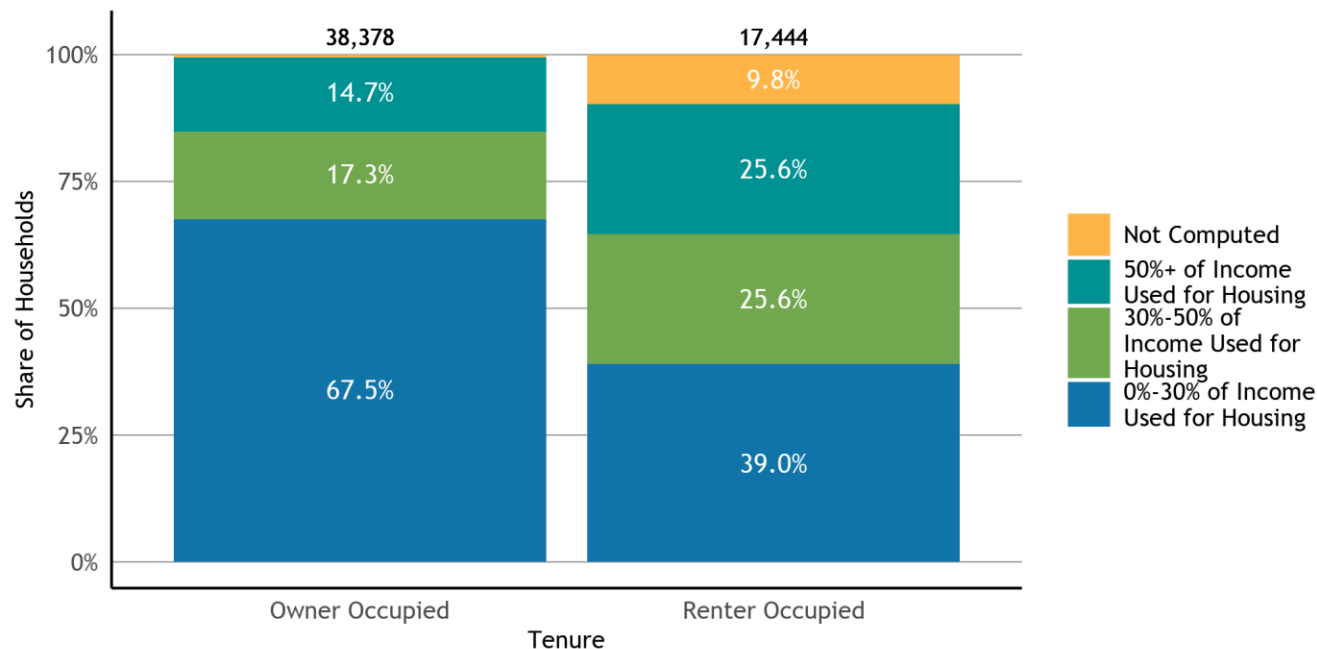
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data releases, starting with 2005-2009 through 2015-2019, B25058, B25056 (for unincorporated areas). County and regional counts are weighted averages of jurisdiction median using B25003 rental unit counts from the relevant year.*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-10.*

## 5.5 Overpayment and Overcrowding

A household is considered “cost-burdened” if it spends more than 30% of its monthly income on housing costs, while those who spend more than 50% of their income on housing costs are considered “severely cost-burdened.” Low-income residents are the most impacted by high housing costs and experience the highest rates of cost burden. Spending such large portions of their income on housing puts low-income households at higher risk of displacement, eviction, or homelessness.

rent data in this document comes from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, which may not fully reflect current rents. Local jurisdiction staff may want to supplement the data on rents with local realtor data or other sources for rent data that are more current than Census Bureau data.



**Figure 27: Cost Burden by Tenure**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

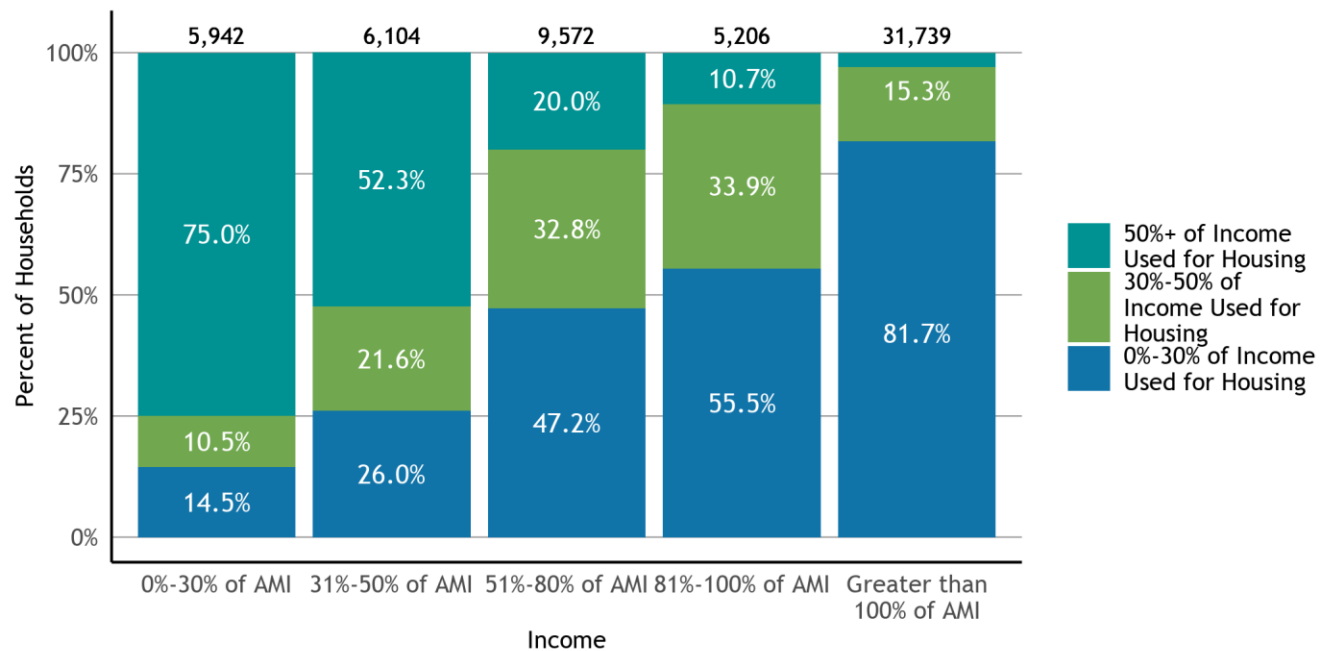
*Notes: Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is “select monthly owner costs”, which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50% of monthly income.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25070, B25091*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-06.*

Renters are often more cost-burdened than owners. While the housing market has resulted in home prices increasing dramatically, homeowners often have mortgages with fixed rates, whereas renters are more likely to be impacted by market increases. When looking at the cost burden across tenure in Unincorporated Sonoma County, 25.6% of renters spend 30% to 50% of their income on housing compared to 17.3% of those that own (see Figure 27). Additionally, 25.6% of renters spend 50% or more of their income on housing, while 14.7% of owners are severely cost-burdened.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 18.9% of households spend 50% or more of their income on housing, while 20.0% spend 30% to 50%. However, these rates vary greatly across income categories (see Figure 28). For example, 75.0% of Unincorporated Sonoma County households making less than 30% of AMI spend the majority of their income on housing. For Unincorporated Sonoma County residents making more than 100% of AMI, just 3.0% are severely cost-burdened, and 81.7% of those making more than 100% of AMI spend less than 30% of their income on housing.



**Figure 28: Cost Burden by Income Level**

Universe: Occupied housing units

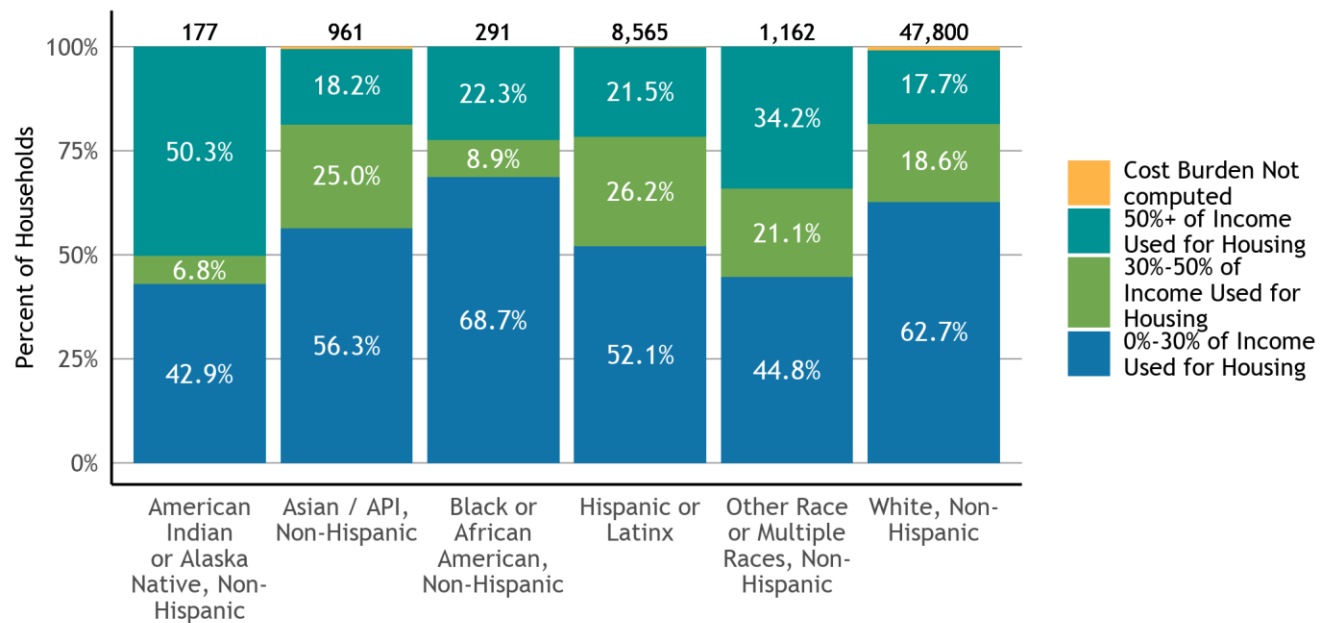
Notes: Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is “select monthly owner costs”, which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50% of monthly income. Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-05.

Currently, people of color are more likely to experience poverty and financial instability as a result of federal and local housing policies that have historically excluded them from the same opportunities extended to white residents. As a result, they often pay a greater percentage of their income on housing, and in turn, are at a greater risk of housing insecurity.

*Hispanic or Latinx* residents are the most cost burdened with 26.2% spending 30% to 50% of their income on housing, and *American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic* residents are the most severely cost burdened with 50.3% spending more than 50% of their income on housing (see Figure 29).



**Figure 29: Cost Burden by Race**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

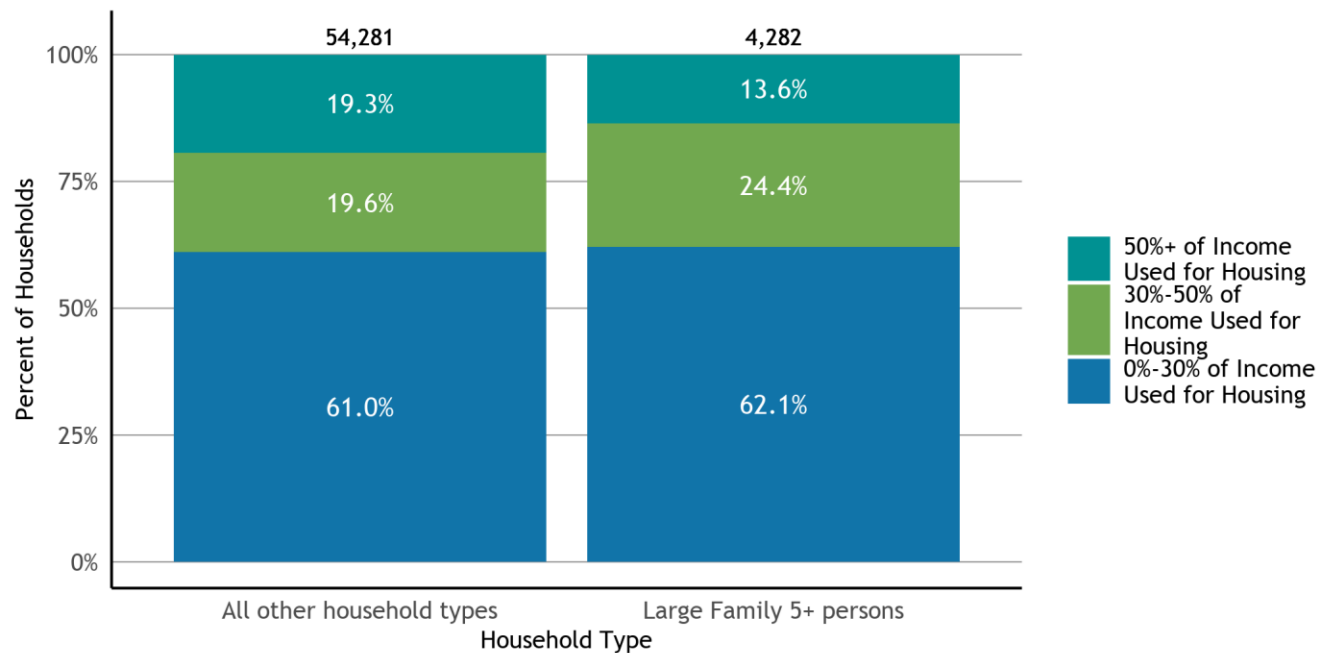
*Notes: Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is “select monthly owner costs”, which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50% of monthly income. For the purposes of this graph, the “Hispanic or Latinx” racial/ethnic group represents those who identify as having Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity and may also be members of any racial group. All other racial categories on this graph represent those who identify with that racial category and do not identify with Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-08.*

Large family households often have special housing needs due to a lack of adequately sized affordable housing available. The higher costs required for homes with multiple bedrooms can result in larger families experiencing a disproportionate cost burden than the rest of the population and can increase the risk of housing insecurity.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 24.4% of large family households experience a cost burden of 30%-50%, while 13.6% of households spend more than half of their income on housing. Some 19.6% of all other households have a cost burden of 30%-50%, with 19.3% of households spending more than 50% of their income on housing (see Figure 30).



**Figure 30: Cost Burden by Household Size**

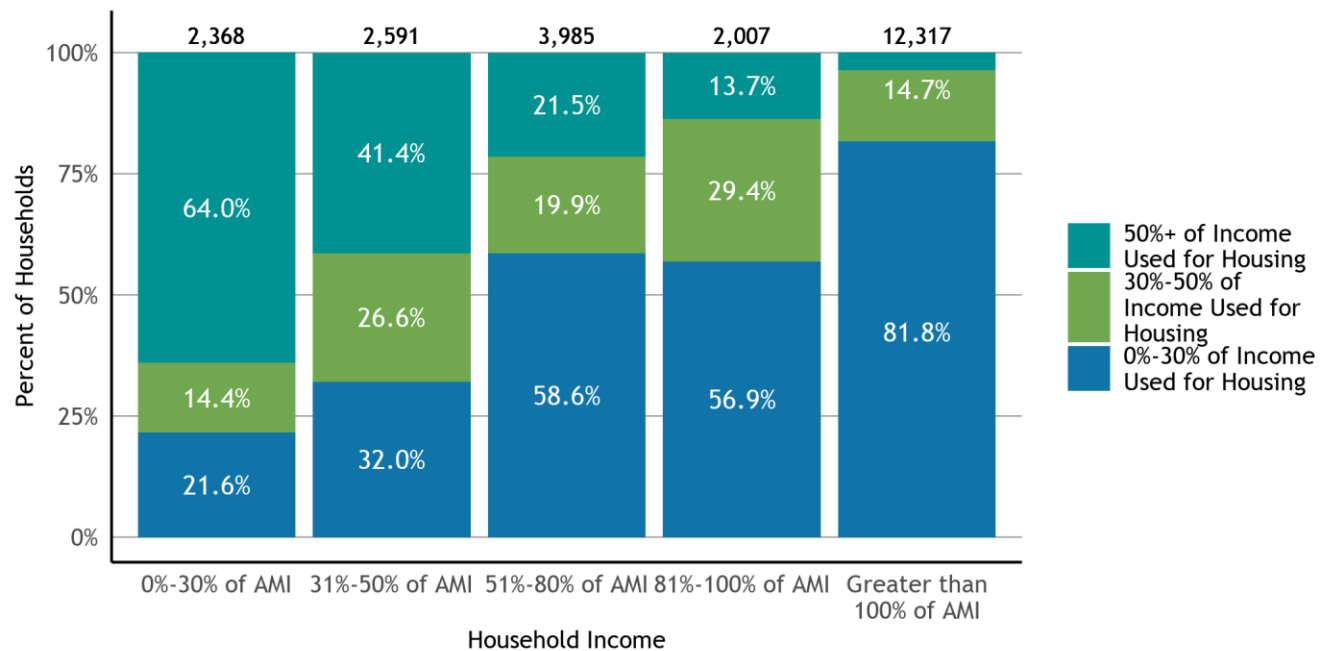
*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Notes: Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs", which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50% of monthly income.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-09.*

When cost-burdened seniors are no longer able to make house payments or pay rents, displacement from their homes can occur, putting further stress on the local rental market or forcing residents out of the community they call home. Understanding how seniors might be cost-burdened is of particular importance due to their special housing needs, particularly for low-income seniors. 64.0% of seniors making less than 30% of AMI are spending the majority of their income on housing. For seniors making more than 100% of AMI, 81.8% are not cost-burdened and spend less than 30% of their income on housing (see Figure 31).



**Figure 31: Cost-Burdened Senior Households by Income Level**

Universe: Senior households

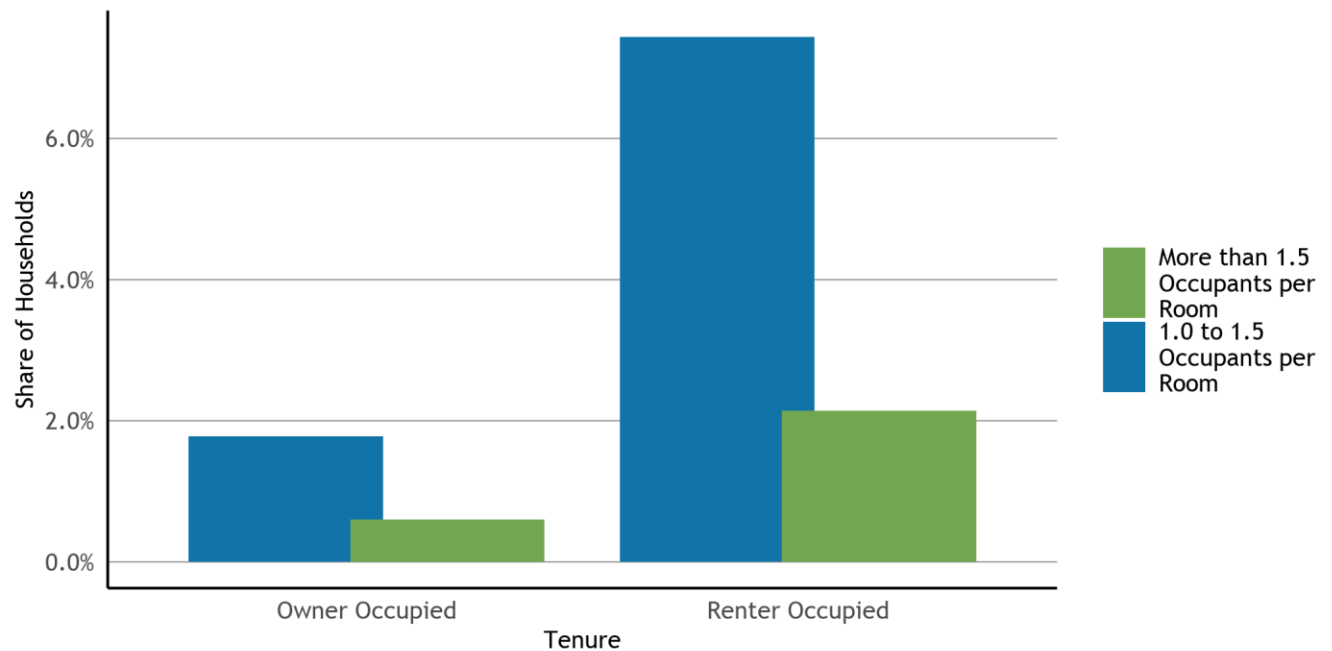
Notes: For the purposes of this graph, senior households are those with a householder who is aged 62 or older. Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs", which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50% of monthly income. Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table SEN-03.

Overcrowding occurs when the number of people living in a household is greater than the home was designed to hold. There are several different standards for defining overcrowding, but this report uses the Census Bureau definition, which is more than one occupant per room (not including bathrooms or kitchens). Additionally, the Census Bureau considers units with more than 1.5 occupants per room to be severely overcrowded.

Overcrowding is often related to the cost of housing and can occur when demand in a city or region is high. In many cities, overcrowding is seen more amongst those that are renting, with multiple households sharing a unit to make it possible to stay in their communities. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 2.1% of households that rent are severely overcrowded (more than 1.5 occupants per room), compared to 0.6% of households that own (see Figure 32). In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 7.4% of renters experience moderate overcrowding (1 to 1.5 occupants per room), compared to 1.8% for those own.



**Figure 32: Overcrowding by Tenure and Severity**

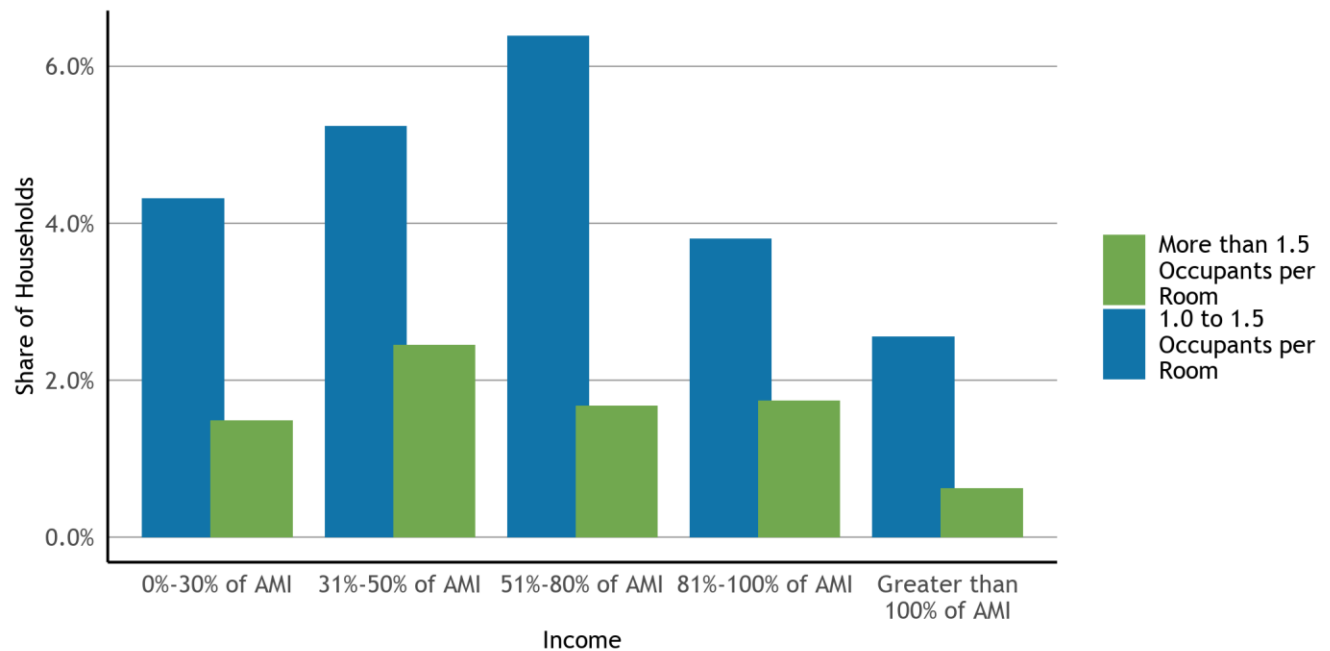
*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Notes: The Census Bureau defines an overcrowded unit as one occupied by 1.01 persons or more per room (excluding bathrooms and kitchens), and units with more than 1.5 persons per room are considered severely overcrowded.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-01.*

Overcrowding often disproportionately impacts low-income households. 1.5% of very low-income households (below 50% AMI) experience severe overcrowding, while 0.6% of households above 100% experience this level of overcrowding (see Figure 33).



**Figure 33: Overcrowding by Income Level and Severity**

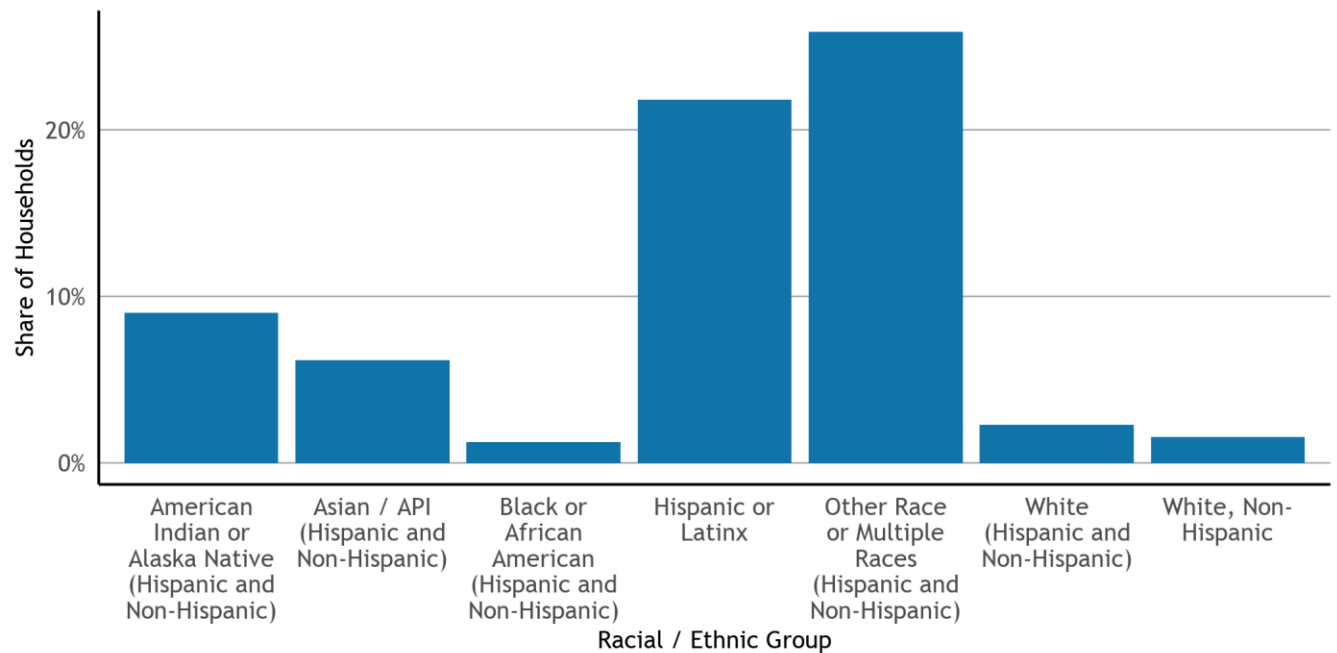
*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Notes: The Census Bureau defines an overcrowded unit as one occupied by 1.01 persons or more per room (excluding bathrooms and kitchens), and units with more than 1.5 persons per room are considered severely overcrowded. Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-04.*

Communities of color are more likely to experience overcrowding similar to how they are more likely to experience poverty, financial instability, and housing insecurity. People of color tend to experience overcrowding at higher rates than White residents. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the racial group with the largest overcrowding rate is *Other Race or Multiple Races (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic)* (see Figure 34)



**Figure 34: Overcrowding by Race**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Notes: The Census Bureau defines an overcrowded unit as one occupied by 1.01 persons or more per room (excluding bathrooms and kitchens), and units with more than 1.5 persons per room are considered severely overcrowded. For this table, the Census Bureau does not disaggregate racial groups by Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. However, data for the white racial group is also reported for white householders who are not Hispanic/Latinx. Since residents who identify as white and Hispanic/Latinx may have very different experiences within the housing market and the economy from those who identify as white and non-Hispanic/Latinx, data for multiple white sub-groups are reported here. The racial/ethnic groups reported in this table are not all mutually exclusive. Therefore, the data should not be summed as the sum exceeds the total number of occupied housing units for this jurisdiction. However, all groups labelled “Hispanic and Non-Hispanic” are mutually exclusive, and the sum of the data for these groups is equivalent to the total number of occupied housing units.*

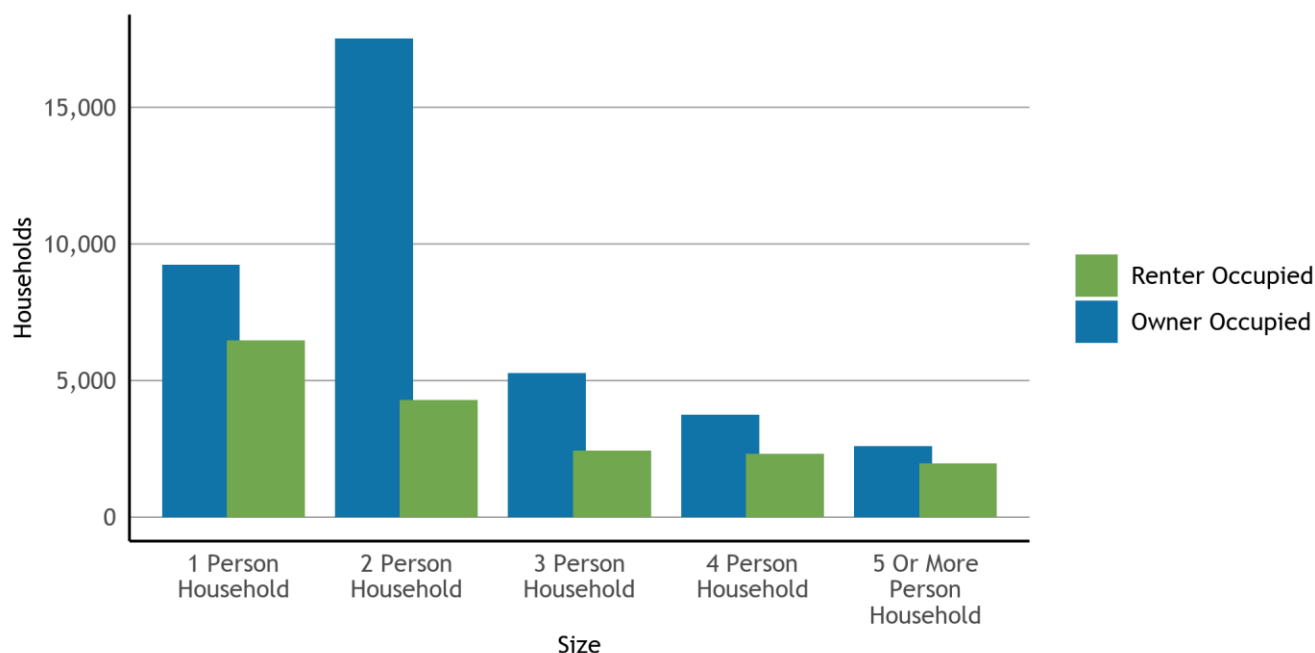
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25014*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table OVER-03.*

## 6 SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS

### 6.1 Large Households

Large households often have different housing needs than smaller households. If a city's rental housing stock does not include larger apartments, large households who rent could end up living in overcrowded conditions. In Unincorporated Sonoma, for large households with 5 or more persons, most units (57.1%) are owner occupied (see Figure 35). In 2017, 15.8% of large households were very low-income, earning less than 50% of the area median income (AMI).



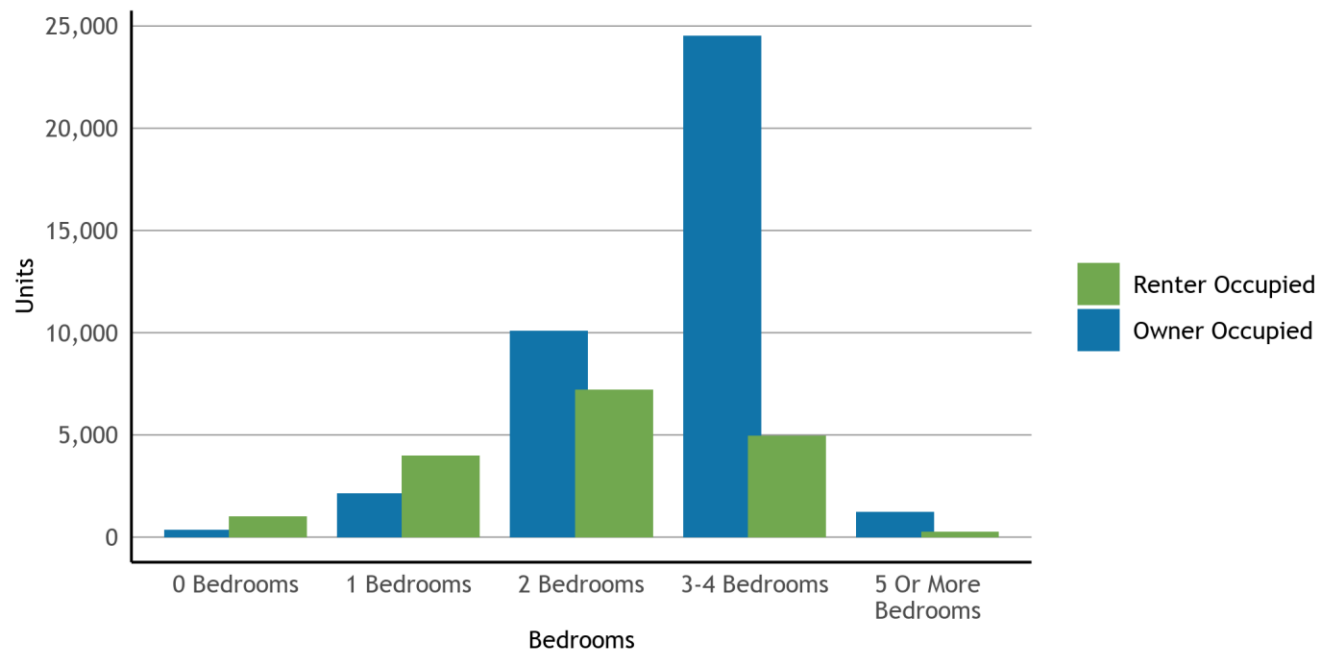
**Figure 35: Household Size by Tenure**

*Universe: Occupied housing units*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25009*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table LGFEM-01.*

The unit sizes available in a community affect the household sizes that can access that community. Large families are generally served by housing units with 3 or more bedrooms, of which there are 30,984 units in Unincorporated Sonoma County. Among these large units with 3 or more bedrooms, 16.8% are owner-occupied and 83.2% are renter occupied (see Figure 36).



**Figure 36: Housing Units by Number of Bedrooms**

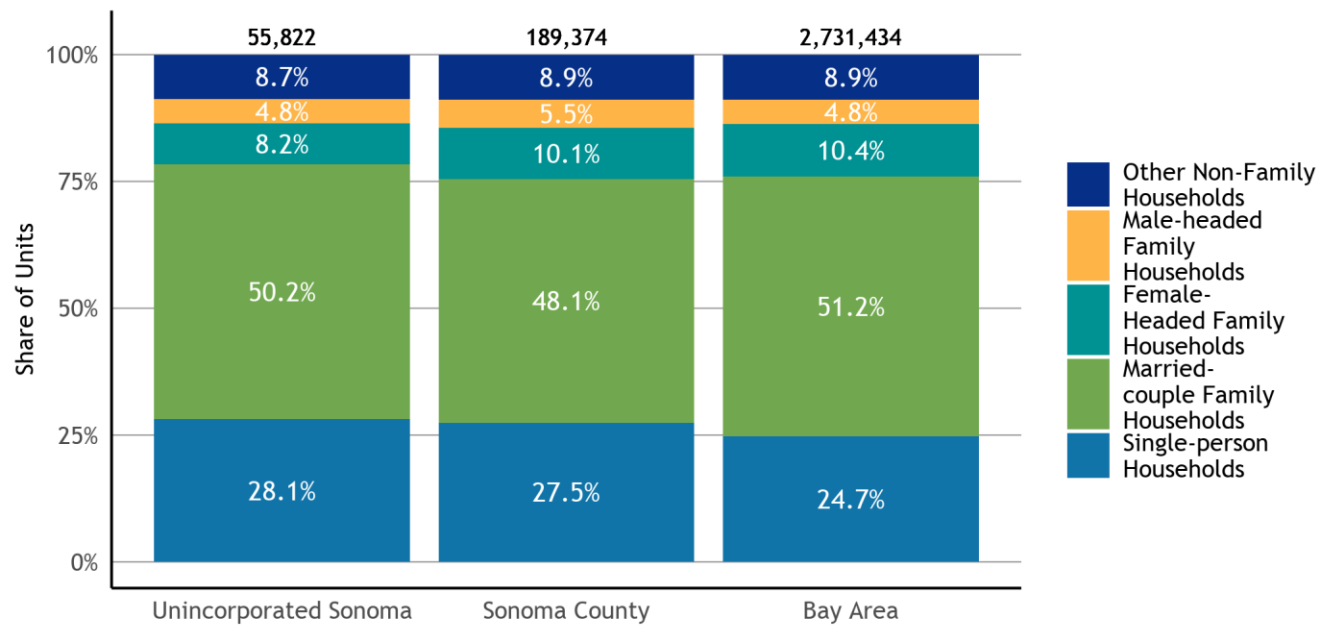
Universe: Housing units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B25042

For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HSG-05.

## 6.2 Female-Headed Households

Households headed by one person are often at greater risk of housing insecurity, particularly female-headed households, who may be supporting children or a family with only one income. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the largest proportion of households is *Married-couple Family Households* at 50.2% of total, while *Female-Headed Households* make up 8.2% of all households.



**Figure 37: Household Type**

*Universe: Households*

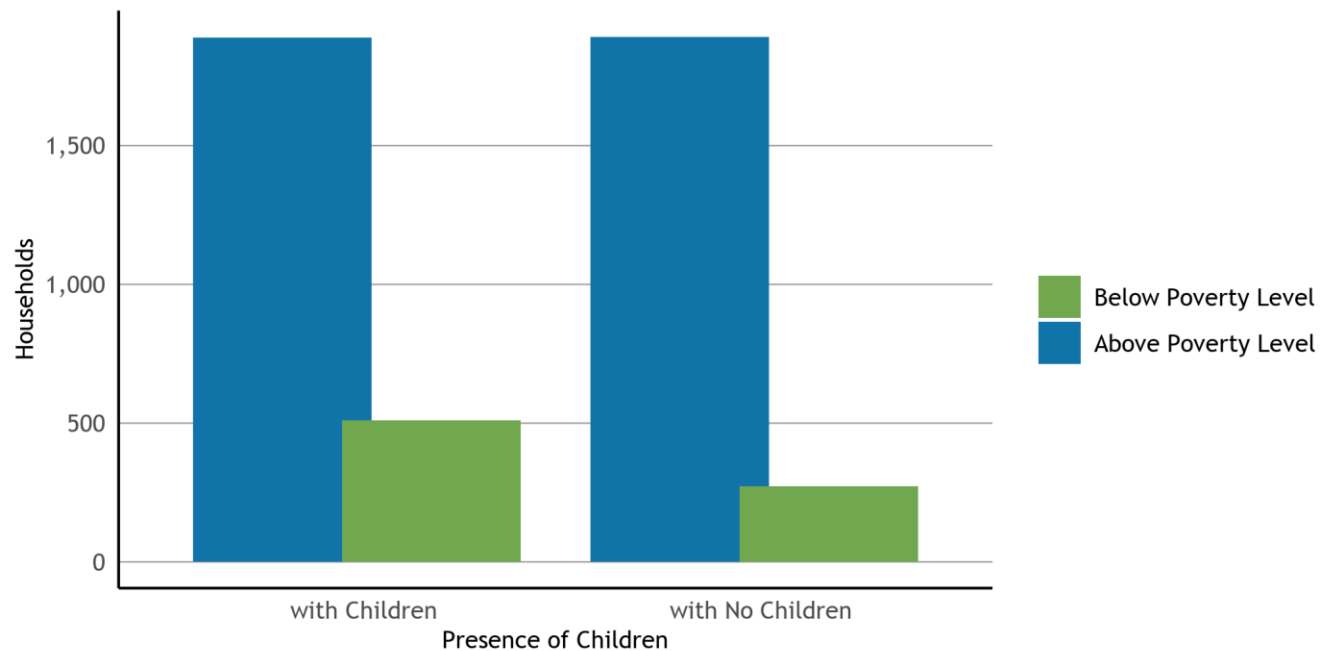
*Notes: For data from the Census Bureau, a “family household” is a household where two or more people are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. “Non-family households” are households of one person living alone, as well as households where none of the people are related to each other.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B11001*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table POPEMP-23.*

Female-headed households with children may face particular housing challenges, with pervasive gender inequality resulting in lower wages for women. Moreover, the added need for childcare can make finding a home that is affordable more challenging.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 21.2% of female-headed households with children fall below the Federal Poverty Line, while 12.6% of female-headed households *without* children live in poverty (see Figure 38).



**Figure 38: Female-Headed Households by Poverty Status**

*Universe: Female Households*

*Notes: The Census Bureau uses a federally defined poverty threshold that remains constant throughout the country and does not correspond to Area Median Income.*

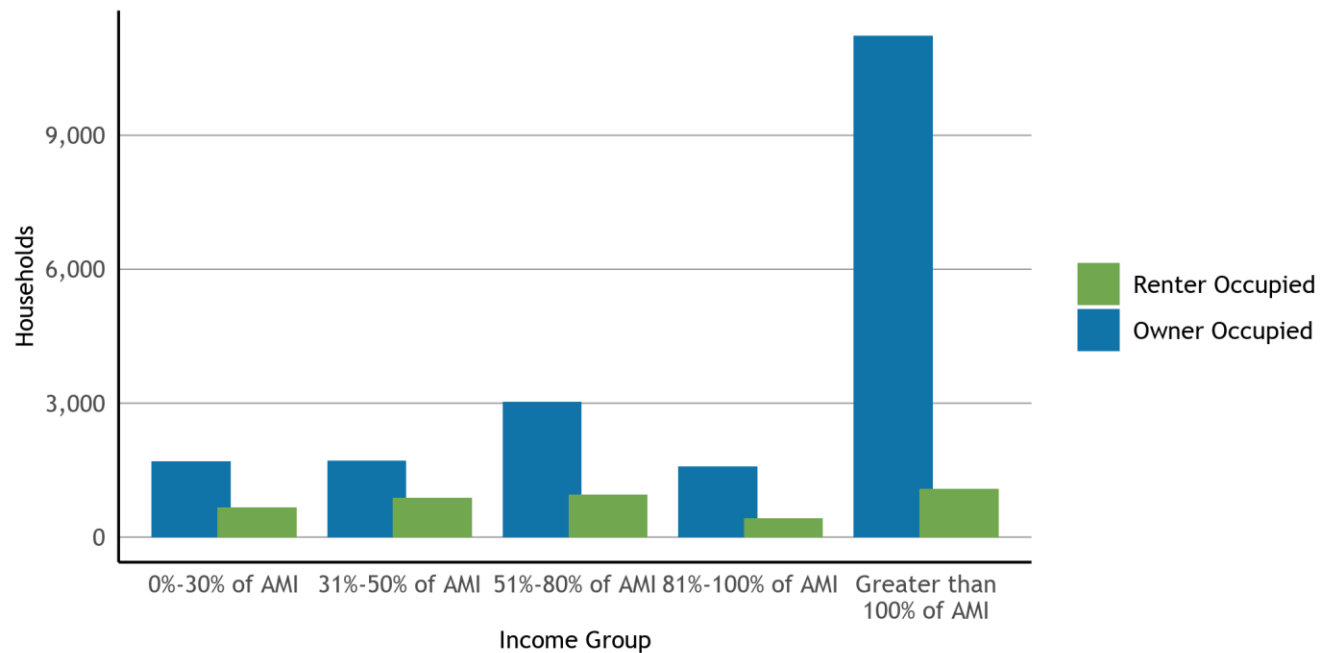
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B17012*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table LGFEM-05.*

## 6.3 Seniors

Senior households often experience a combination of factors that can make accessing or keeping affordable housing a challenge. They often live on fixed incomes and are more likely to have disabilities, chronic health conditions and/or reduced mobility.

Seniors who rent may be at even greater risk for housing challenges than those who own, due to income differences between these groups. The largest proportion of senior households who rent make *Greater than 100% of AMI*, while the largest proportion of senior households who are homeowners falls in the income group *Greater than 100% of AMI* (see Figure 39).



**Figure 39: Senior Households by Income and Tenure**

*Universe: Senior households*

*Notes: For the purposes of this graph, senior households are those with a householder who is aged 62 or older. Income groups are based on HUD calculations for Area Median Income (AMI). HUD calculates the AMI for different metropolitan areas, and the nine county Bay Area includes the following metropolitan areas: Napa Metro Area (Napa County), Oakland-Fremont Metro Area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), San Francisco Metro Area (Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties), San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metro Area (Santa Clara County), Santa Rosa Metro Area (Sonoma County), and Vallejo-Fairfield Metro Area (Solano County). The AMI levels in this chart are based on the HUD metro area where this jurisdiction is located.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) ACS tabulation, 2013-2017 release*

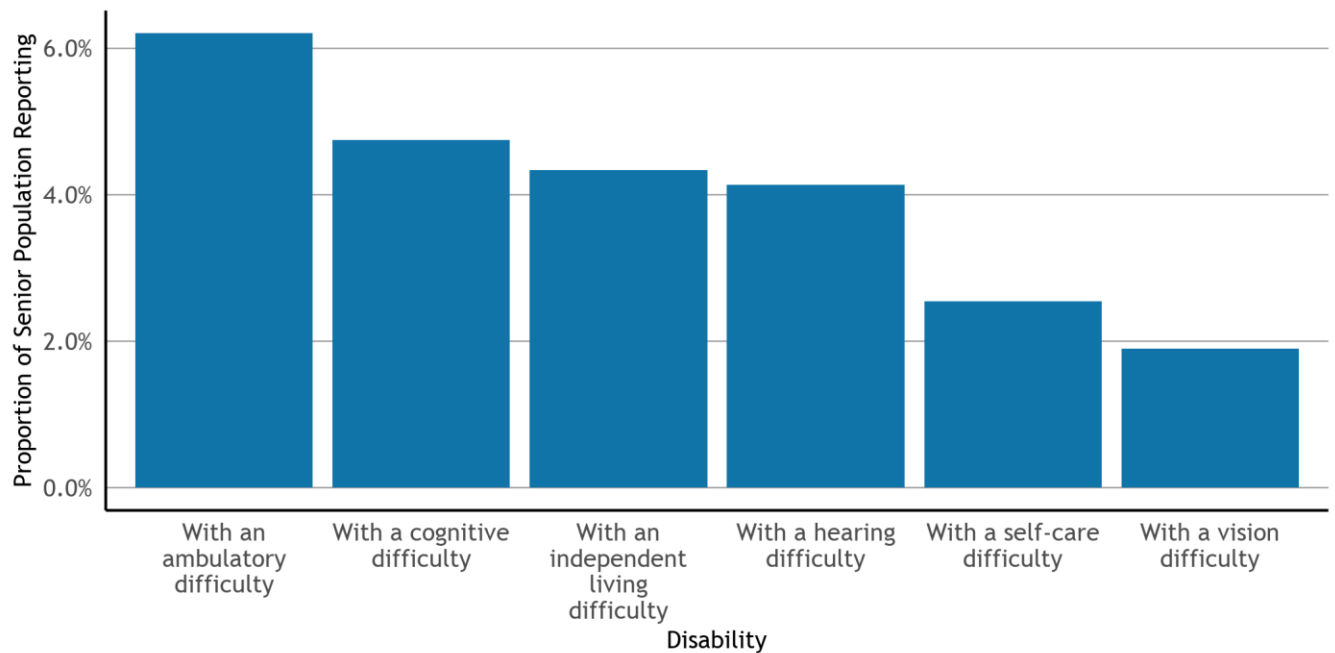
*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table SEN-01.*

## 6.4 People with Disabilities

People with disabilities face additional housing challenges. Encompassing a broad group of individuals living with a variety of physical, cognitive and sensory impairments, many people with disabilities live on fixed incomes and are in need of specialized care, yet often rely on family members for assistance due to the high cost of care.

When it comes to housing, people with disabilities are not only in need of affordable housing but accessibly designed housing, which offers greater mobility and opportunity for independence. Unfortunately, the need typically outweighs what is available, particularly in a housing market with such high demand. People with disabilities are at a high risk for housing insecurity, homelessness and institutionalization, particularly when they lose aging caregivers. Figure 40 shows the rates at which different disabilities are present among residents of Unincorporated Sonoma County. Overall, 13.0% of people in Unincorporated Sonoma County have a disability of any kind.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> These disabilities are counted separately and are not mutually exclusive, as an individual may report more than one disability. These counts should not be summed.



**Figure 40: Disability by Type**

*Universe: Civilian noninstitutionalized population 18 years and over*

*Notes: These disabilities are counted separately and are not mutually exclusive, as an individual may report more than one disability. These counts should not be summed. The Census Bureau provides the following definitions for these disability types: Hearing difficulty: deaf or has serious difficulty hearing. Vision difficulty: blind or has serious difficulty seeing even with glasses. Cognitive difficulty: has serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions. Ambulatory difficulty: has serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. Self-care difficulty: has difficulty dressing or bathing. Independent living difficulty: has difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B18102, Table B18103, Table B18104, Table B18105, Table B18106, Table B18107.*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table DISAB-01.*

State law also requires Housing Elements to examine the housing needs of people with developmental disabilities. Developmental disabilities are defined as severe, chronic, and attributed to a mental or physical impairment that begins before a person turns 18 years old. This can include Down's Syndrome, autism, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, and mild to severe mental retardation. Some people with developmental disabilities are unable to work, rely on Supplemental Security Income, and live with family members. In addition to their specific housing needs, they are at increased risk of housing insecurity after an aging parent or family member is no longer able to care for them.<sup>23</sup>

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, of the population with a developmental disability, children under the age of 18 make up 44.7%, while adults account for 55.3%.

<sup>23</sup> For more information or data on developmental disabilities in your jurisdiction, contact the Golden Gate Regional Center for Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties; the North Bay Regional Center for Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties; the Regional Center for the East Bay for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties; or the San Andreas Regional Center for Santa Clara County.

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**Table 5: Population with Developmental Disabilities by Age**

Age Group	

*Universe: Population with developmental disabilities*

*Notes: The California Department of Developmental Services is responsible for overseeing the coordination and delivery of services to more than 330,000 Californians with developmental disabilities including cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, Down syndrome, autism, epilepsy, and related conditions. The California Department of Developmental Services provides ZIP code level counts. To get jurisdiction-level estimates, ZIP code counts were crosswalked to jurisdictions using census block population counts from Census 2010 SF1 to determine the share of a ZIP code to assign to a given jurisdiction.*

*Source: California Department of Developmental Services, Consumer Count by California ZIP Code and Age Group (2020)*

*This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table DISAB-04.*

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The most common living arrangement for individuals with disabilities in Unincorporated Sonoma County is the home of parent /family /guardian.

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**Table 6: Population with Developmental Disabilities by Residence**

Residence Type	value
Home of Parent /Family /Guardian	743
Independent /Supported Living	139
Community Care Facility	67
Foster /Family Home	30
Intermediate Care Facility	17
Other	15

*Universe: Population with developmental disabilities*

*Notes: The California Department of Developmental Services is responsible for overseeing the coordination and delivery of services to more than 330,000 Californians with developmental disabilities including cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, Down syndrome, autism, epilepsy, and related conditions. The California Department of Developmental Services provides ZIP code level counts. To get jurisdiction-level estimates, ZIP code counts were crosswalked to jurisdictions using census block population counts from Census 2010 SF1 to determine the share of a ZIP code to assign to a given jurisdiction.*

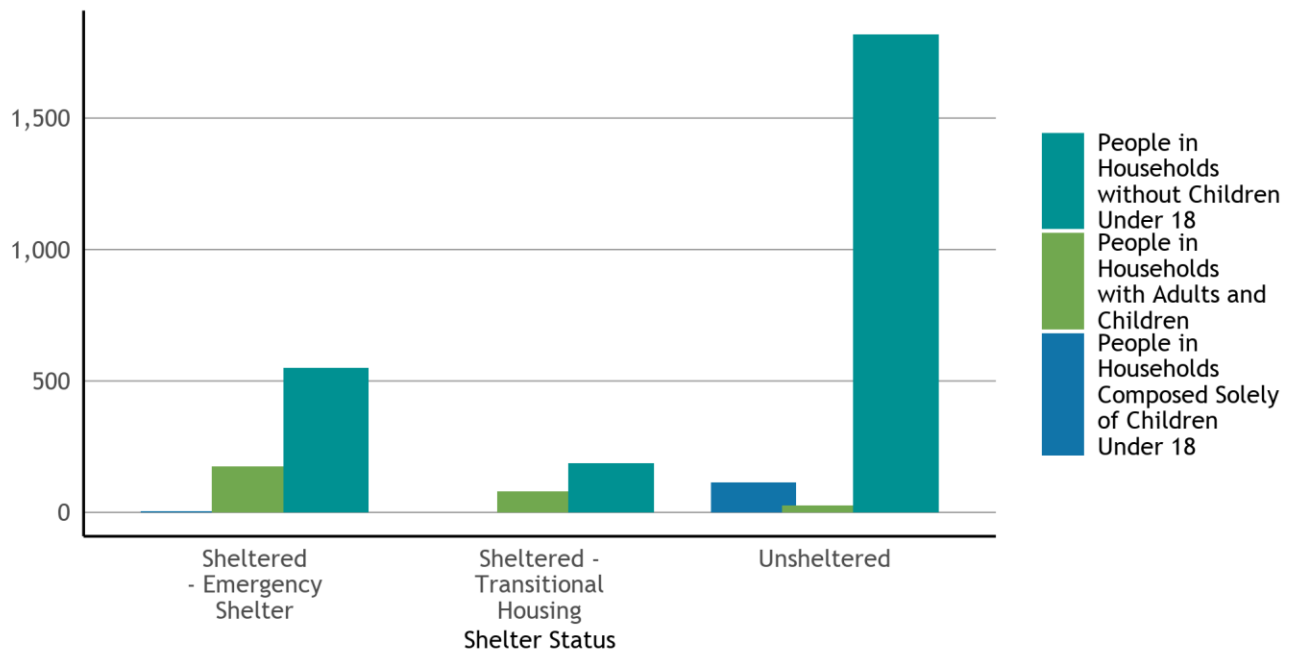
*Source: California Department of Developmental Services, Consumer Count by California ZIP Code and Residence Type (2020)*

*This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table DISAB-05.*

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## 6.5 Homelessness

Homelessness remains an urgent challenge in many communities across the state, reflecting a range of social, economic, and psychological factors. Rising housing costs result in increased risks of community members experiencing homelessness. Far too many residents who have found themselves housing insecure have ended up unhoused or homeless in recent years, either temporarily or longer term. Addressing the specific housing needs for the unhoused population remains a priority throughout the region, particularly since homelessness is disproportionately experienced by people of color, people with disabilities, those struggling with addiction and those dealing with traumatic life circumstances. In Sonoma County, the most common type of household experiencing homelessness is those without children in their care. Among households experiencing homelessness that do not have children, 71.2% are unsheltered. Of homeless households with children, most are sheltered in emergency shelter (see Figure 41).



**Figure 41: Homelessness by Household Type and Shelter Status, Sonoma County**

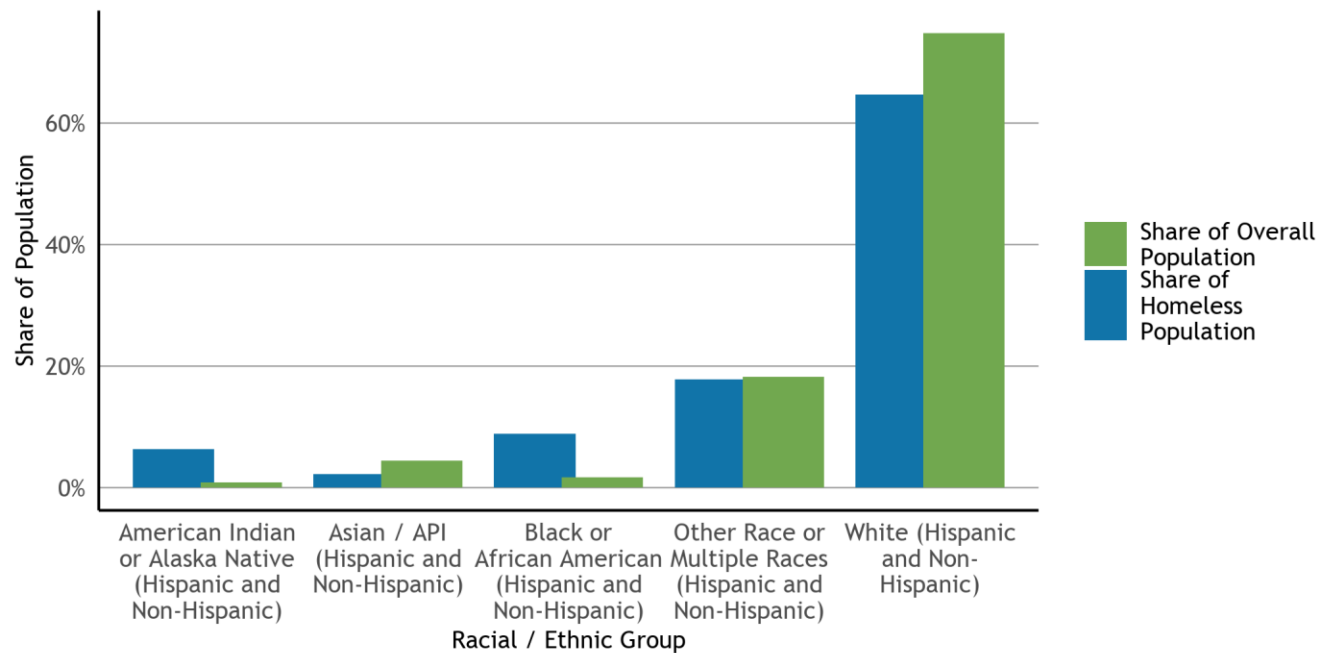
*Universe: Population experiencing homelessness*

*Notes: This data is based on Point-in-Time (PIT) information provided to HUD by CoCs in the application for CoC Homeless Assistance Programs. The PIT Count provides a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night during the last ten days in January. Each Bay Area county is its own CoC, and so the data for this table is provided at the county-level. Per HCD's requirements, jurisdictions will need to supplement this county-level data with local estimates of people experiencing homelessness.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports (2019)*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HOMELS-01.*

People of color are more likely to experience poverty and financial instability as a result of federal and local housing policies that have historically excluded them from the same opportunities extended to white residents. Consequently, people of color are often disproportionately impacted by homelessness, particularly Black residents of the Bay Area. In Sonoma County, White (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic) residents represent the largest proportion of residents experiencing homelessness and account for 64.7% of the homeless population, while making up 74.8% of the overall population (see Figure 42).



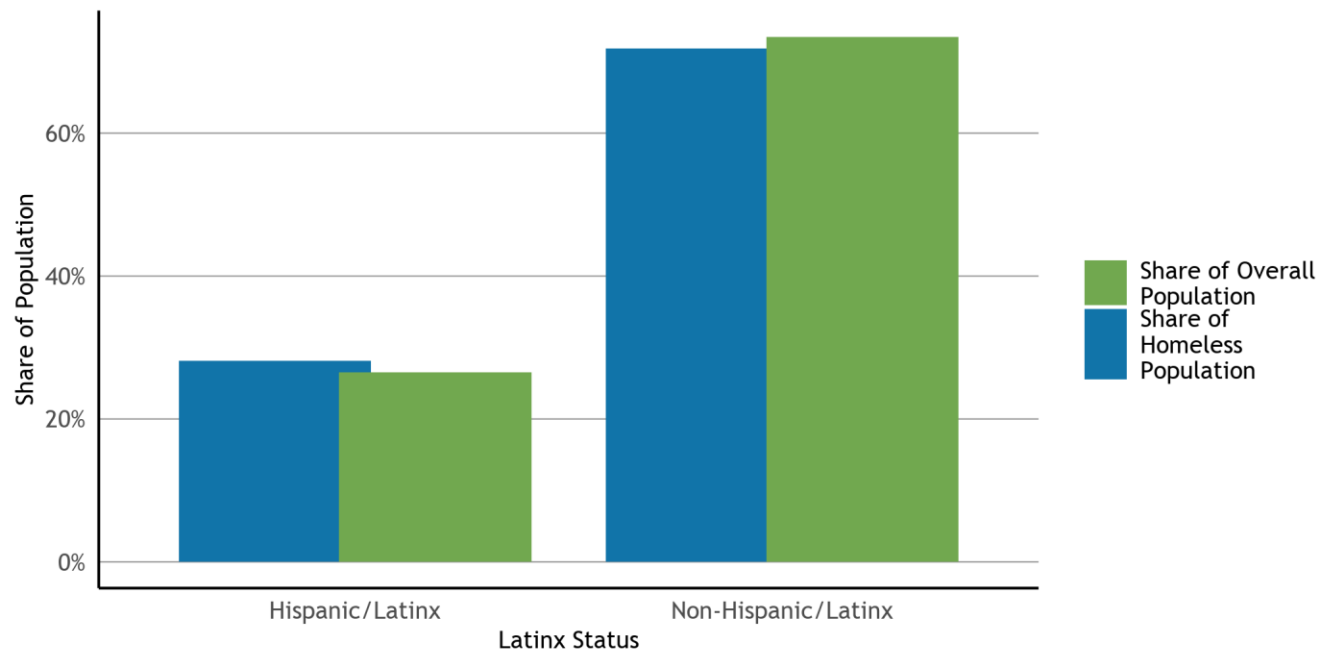
**Figure 42: Racial Group Share of General and Homeless Populations, Sonoma County**

*Universe: Population experiencing homelessness*

*Notes: This data is based on Point-in-Time (PIT) information provided to HUD by CoCs in the application for CoC Homeless Assistance Programs. The PIT Count provides a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night during the last ten days in January. Each Bay Area county is its own CoC, and so the data for this table is provided at the county-level. Per HCD's requirements, jurisdictions will need to supplement this county-level data with local estimates of people experiencing homelessness. HUD does not disaggregate racial demographic data by Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity for people experiencing homelessness. Instead, HUD reports data on Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity for people experiencing homelessness in a separate table. Accordingly, the racial group data listed here includes both Hispanic/Latinx and non-Hispanic/Latinx individuals.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports (2019); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B01001(A-I) For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HOMELS-02.*

In Sonoma, Latinx residents represent 28.2% of the population experiencing homelessness, while Latinx residents comprise 26.5% of the general population (see Figure 43).



**Figure 43: Latinx Share of General and Homeless Populations, Sonoma County**

*Universe: Population experiencing homelessness*

*Notes: This data is based on Point-in-Time (PIT) information provided to HUD by CoCs in the application for CoC Homeless Assistance Programs. The PIT Count provides a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night during the last ten days in January. Each Bay Area county is its own CoC, and so the data for this table is provided at the county-level. Per HCD's requirements, jurisdictions will need to supplement this county-level data with local estimates of people experiencing homelessness. The data from HUD on Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity for individuals experiencing homelessness does not specify racial group identity. Accordingly, individuals in either ethnic group identity category (Hispanic/Latinx or non-Hispanic/Latinx) could be of any racial background.*

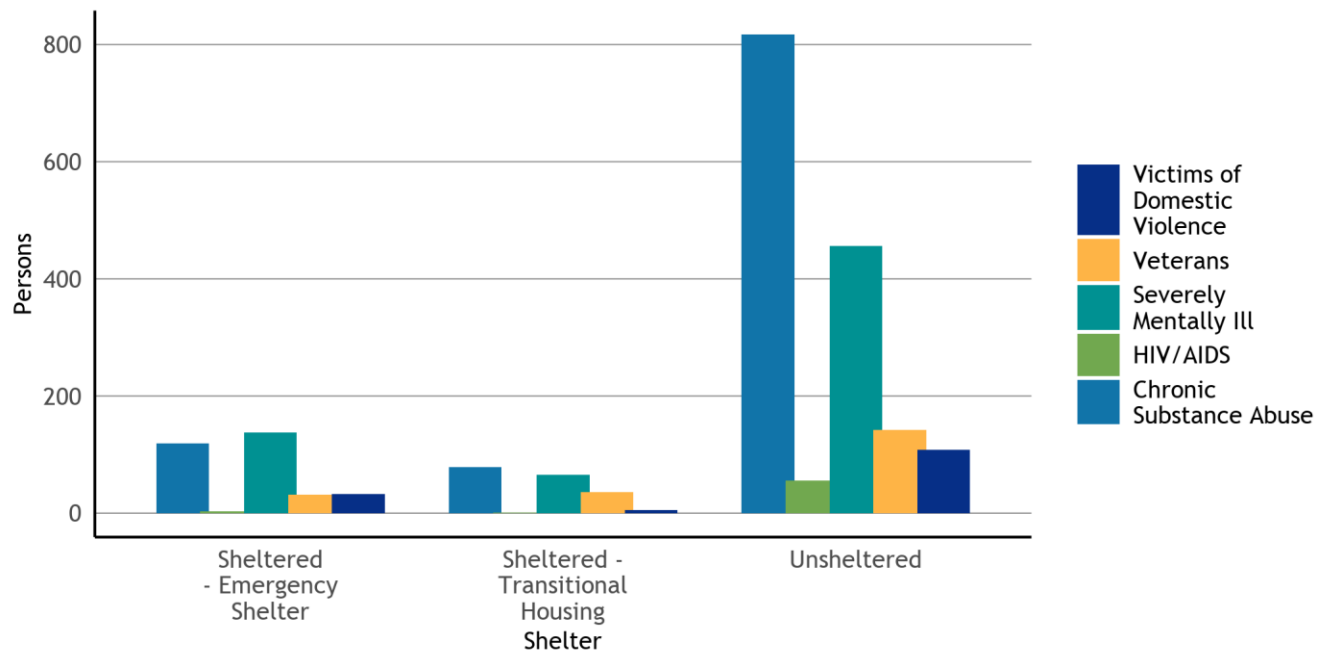
*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports (2019); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B01001(A-I) For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HOMELS-03.*

Many of those experiencing homelessness are dealing with severe issues - including mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence - that are potentially life threatening and require additional assistance. In Sonoma County, homeless individuals are commonly challenged by chronic substance abuse, with 1,015 reporting this condition (see Figure 12). Of those, some 80.5% are unsheltered, further adding to the challenge of handling the issue.

#### **Note on Homelessness Data**

Notably all the data on homelessness provided above is for the entire county. This data comes from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Point in Time count, which is the most comprehensive publicly available data source on people experiencing homelessness. HUD only provides this data at the county-level and not for specific jurisdictions. However, Housing Element law requires local jurisdictions to estimate or count of the daily average number of people lacking shelter. Therefore, staff will need to supplement the data in this document with additional local data on the number of people experiencing homelessness. If staff do not have estimates of people experiencing homelessness in their jurisdiction readily available, HCD recommends contacting local service providers such as continuum-of-care providers, local homeless shelter and service providers, food

programs, operators of transitional housing programs, local drug and alcohol program service providers, and county mental health and social service departments.<sup>24</sup>



**Figure 44: Characteristics for the Population Experiencing Homelessness, Sonoma County**

*Universe: Population experiencing homelessness*

*Notes: This data is based on Point-in-Time (PIT) information provided to HUD by CoCs in the application for CoC Homeless Assistance Programs. The PIT Count provides a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night during the last ten days in January. Each Bay Area county is its own CoC, and so the data for this table is provided at the county-level. Per HCD's requirements, jurisdictions will need to supplement this county-level data with local estimates of people experiencing homelessness. These challenges/characteristics are counted separately and are not mutually exclusive, as an individual may report more than one challenge/characteristic. These counts should not be summed.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports (2019)*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table HOMELS-04.*

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the student population experiencing homelessness totaled 267 during the 2019-20 school year and increased by 493.3% since the 2016-17 school year. By comparison, Sonoma County has seen a 12.9% decrease in the population of students experiencing homelessness since the 2016-17 school year, and the Bay Area population of students experiencing homelessness decreased by 8.5%. During the 2019-2020 school year, there were still some 13,718 students experiencing homelessness throughout the region, adding undue burdens on learning and thriving, with the potential for longer term negative effects.

The number of students in Unincorporated Sonoma County experiencing homelessness in 2019 represents 44.4% of the Sonoma County total and 1.9% of the Bay Area total.

<sup>24</sup> For more information, see HCD's Building Blocks webpage for People Experiencing Homelessness: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/building-blocks/housing-needs/people-experiencing-homelessness.shtml>

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**Table 7: Students in Local Public Schools Experiencing Homelessness**

AcademicYear	Unincorporated Sonoma	Sonoma County	Bay Area
2016-17	45	690	14990
2017-18	284	1445	15142
2018-19	13	345	15427
2019-20	267	601	13718

*Universe: Total number of unduplicated primary and short-term enrollments within the academic year (July 1 to June 30), public schools*

*Notes: The California Department of Education considers students to be homeless if they are unsheltered, living in temporary shelters for people experiencing homelessness, living in hotels/motels, or temporarily doubled up and sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing or economic hardship. The data used for this table was obtained at the school site level, matched to a file containing school locations, geocoded and assigned to jurisdiction, and finally summarized by geography.*

*Source: California Department of Education, California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), Cumulative Enrollment Data (Academic Years 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020)*

*This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table HOMEELS-05.*

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## 6.6 Farmworkers

Across the state, housing for farmworkers has been recognized as an important and unique concern. Farmworkers generally receive wages that are considerably lower than other jobs and may have temporary housing needs. Finding decent and affordable housing can be challenging, particularly in the current housing market.

In Unincorporated Sonoma County, the migrant worker student population totaled 74 during the 2019-20 school year and has decreased by 2.1% since the 2016-17 school year. The trend for the region for the past few years has been a decline of 2.4% in the number of migrant worker students since the 2016-17 school year. The change at the county level is a 3.5% increase in the number of migrant worker students since the 2016-17 school year.

---

**Table 8: Migrant Worker Student Population**

AcademicYear	Unincorporated Sonoma	Sonoma County	Bay Area
2016-17	94	825	4630
2017-18	91	789	4607
2018-19	74	738	4075
2019-20	92	854	3976

*Universe: Total number of unduplicated primary and short-term enrollments within the academic year (July 1 to June 30), public schools*

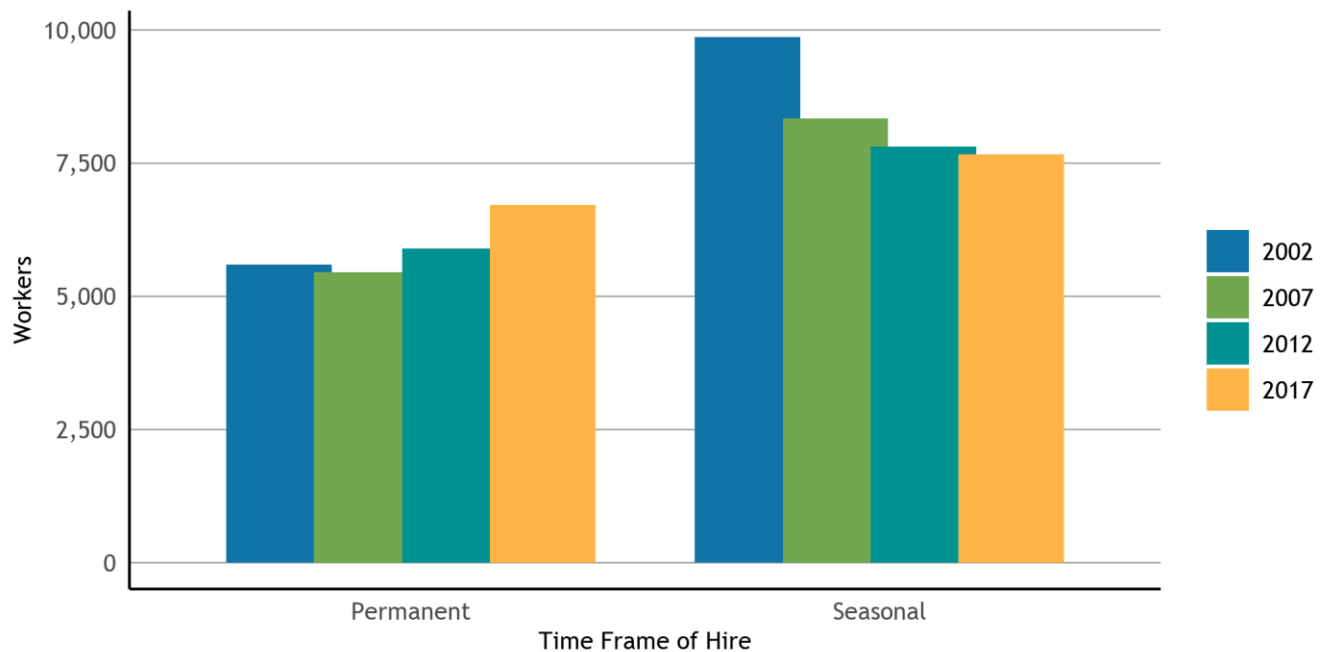
*Notes: The data used for this table was obtained at the school site level, matched to a file containing school locations, geocoded and assigned to jurisdiction, and finally summarized by geography.*

*Source: California Department of Education, California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), Cumulative Enrollment Data (Academic Years 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020)*

*This table is included in the Data Packet Workbook as Table FARM-01.*

---

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Farmworkers, the number of permanent farm workers in Sonoma County has increased since 2002, totaling 6,715 in 2017, while the number of seasonal farm workers has decreased, totaling 7,664 in 2017 (see Figure 45).



**Figure 45: Farm Operations and Farm Labor by County, Sonoma County**

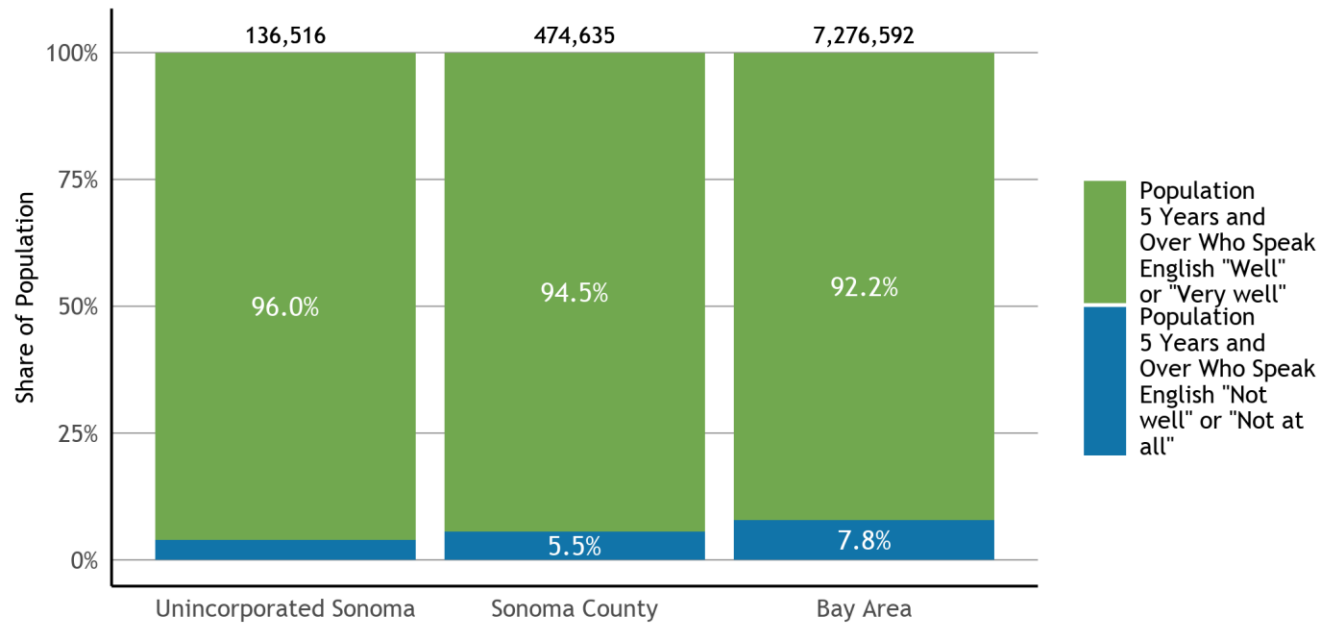
*Universe: Hired farm workers (including direct hires and agricultural service workers who are often hired through labor contractors)*

*Notes: Farm workers are considered seasonal if they work on a farm less than 150 days in a year, while farm workers who work on a farm more than 150 days are considered to be permanent workers for that farm.*

*Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Census of Farmworkers (2002, 2007, 2012, 2017), Table 7: Hired Farm Labor*  
*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table FARM-02.*

## 6.7 Non-English Speakers

California has long been an immigration gateway to the United States, which means that many languages are spoken throughout the Bay Area. Since learning a new language is universally challenging, it is not uncommon for residents who have immigrated to the United States to have limited English proficiency. This limit can lead to additional disparities if there is a disruption in housing, such as an eviction, because residents might not be aware of their rights or they might be wary to engage due to immigration status concerns. In Unincorporated Sonoma County, 4.0% of residents 5 years and older identify as speaking English not well or not at all, which is below the proportion for Sonoma County. Throughout the region the proportion of residents 5 years and older with limited English proficiency is 8%.



**Figure 46: Population with Limited English Proficiency**

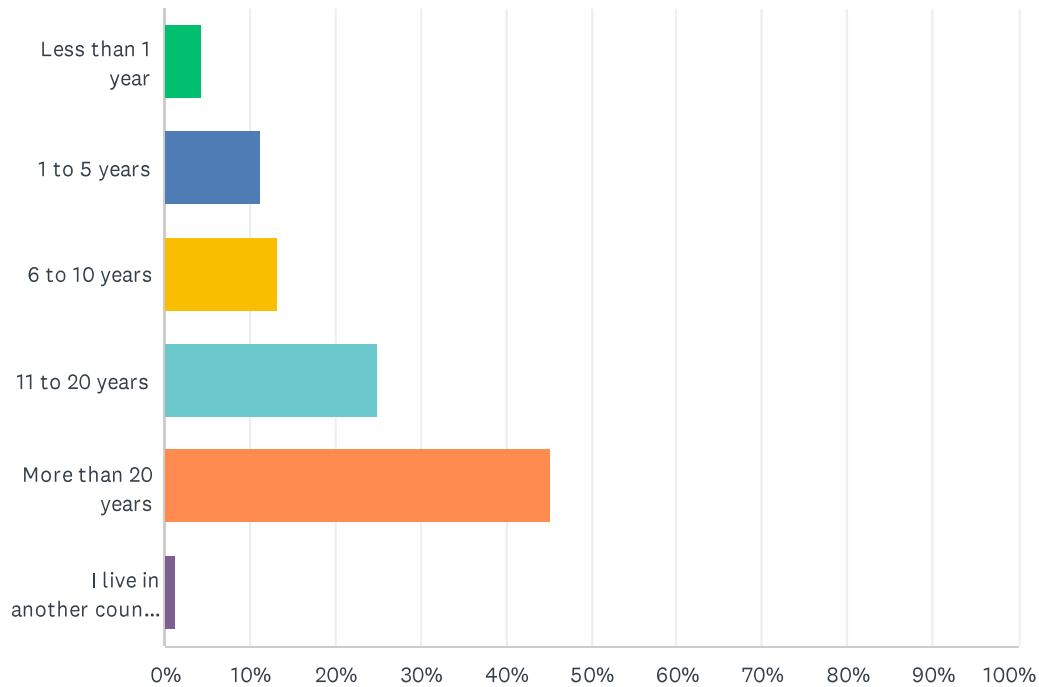
*Universe: Population 5 years and over*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2015-2019), Table B16005*

*For the data table behind this figure, please refer to the Data Packet Workbook, Table AFFH-03.*

## Q1 How long have you lived in Sonoma County?

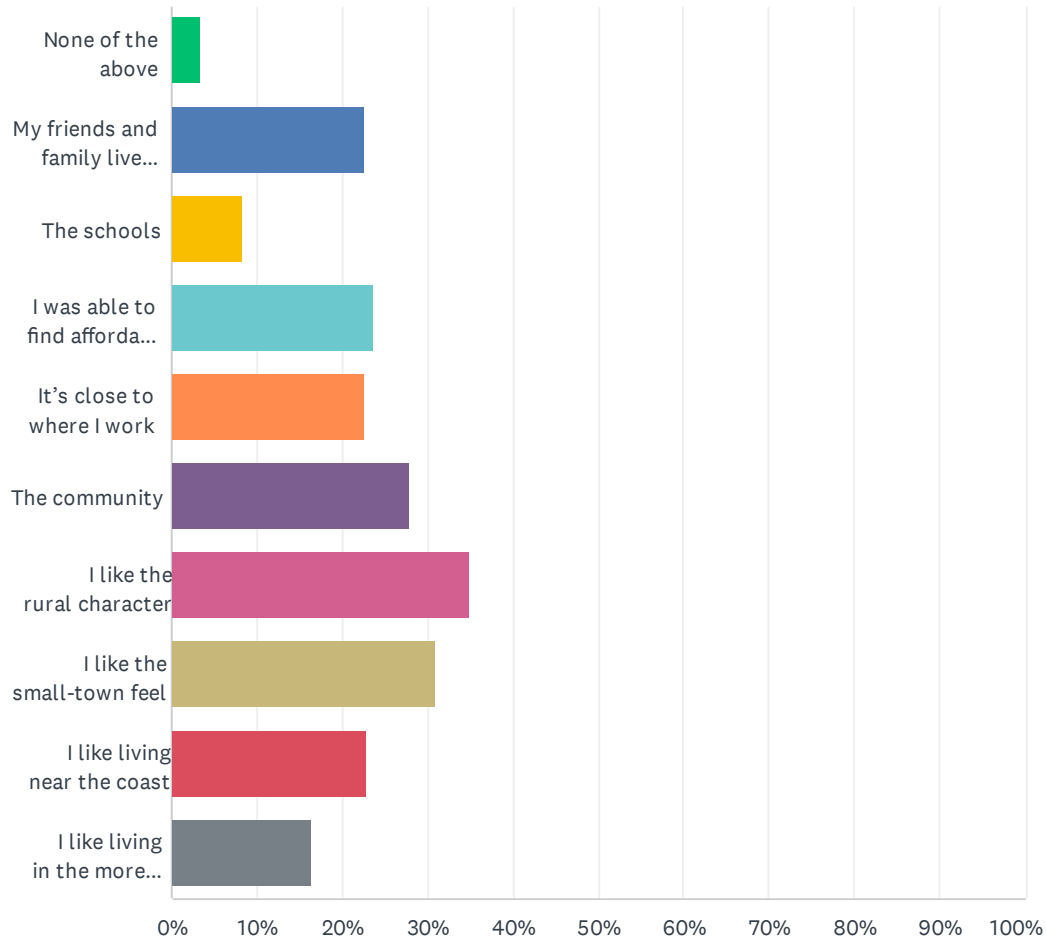
Answered: 1,929 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 year	4.25%	82
1 to 5 years	11.20%	216
6 to 10 years	13.27%	256
11 to 20 years	24.94%	481
More than 20 years	45.10%	870
I live in another county (please specify)	1.24%	24
TOTAL		1,929

## Q2 Why did you choose to live in Sonoma County? If you don't live in Sonoma County, skip this question. (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,885 Skipped: 46

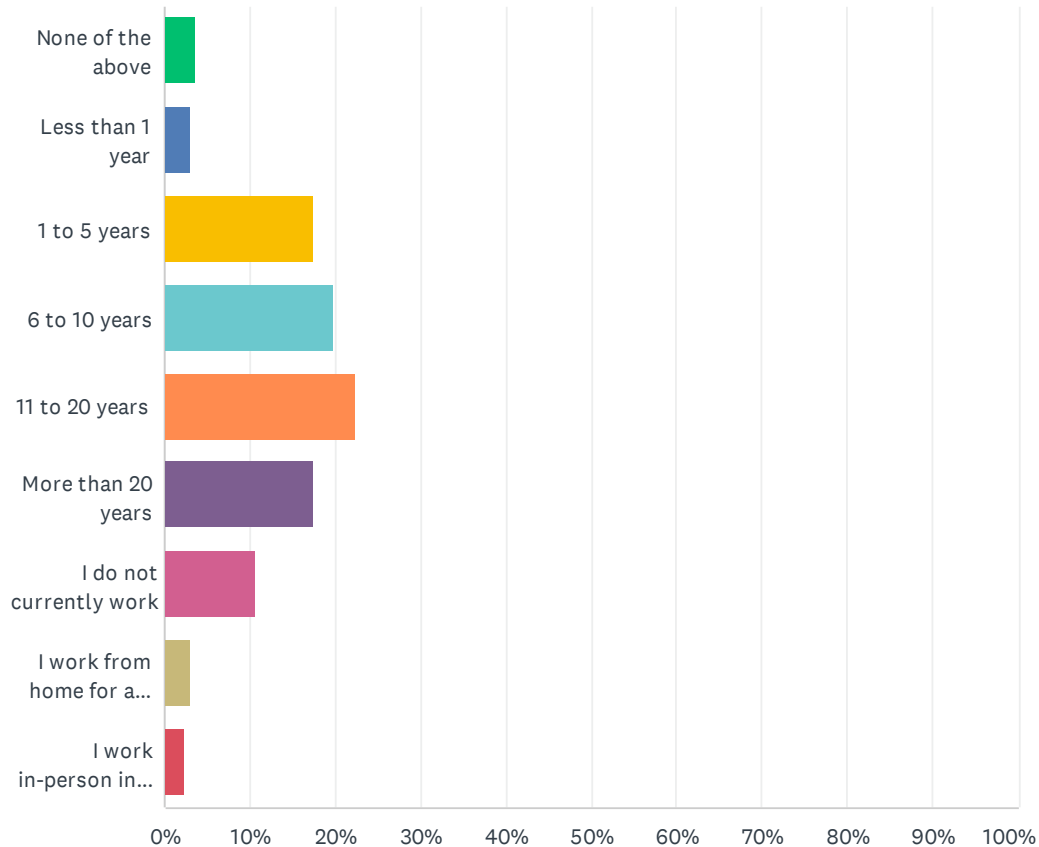


# Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.40%	64
My friends and family live here	22.65%	427
The schools	8.28%	156
I was able to find affordable housing here	23.61%	445
It's close to where I work	22.65%	427
The community	27.96%	527
I like the rural character	35.07%	661
I like the small-town feel	30.98%	584
I like living near the coast	22.86%	431
I like living in the more urban environments in Sonoma County	16.34%	308
Total Respondents: 1,885		

### Q3 Do you work in Sonoma County? If so, how long have you worked here?

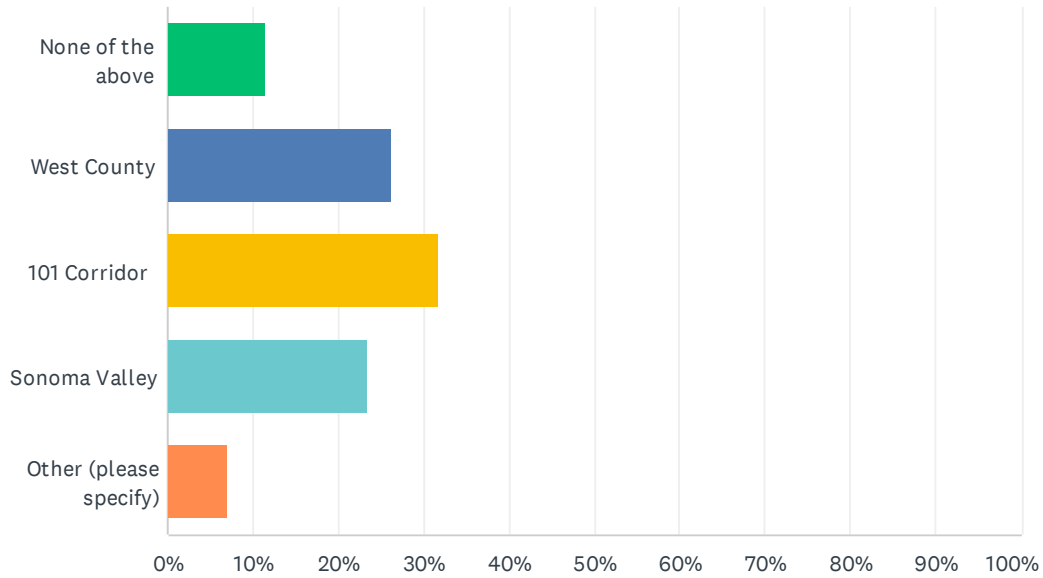
Answered: 1,925 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.69%	71
Less than 1 year	3.06%	59
1 to 5 years	17.56%	338
6 to 10 years	19.74%	380
11 to 20 years	22.39%	431
More than 20 years	17.56%	338
I do not currently work	10.65%	205
I work from home for a company in another county	3.06%	59
I work in-person in another county (please specify)	2.29%	44
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,925</b>

## Q4 Where do you work in Sonoma County?

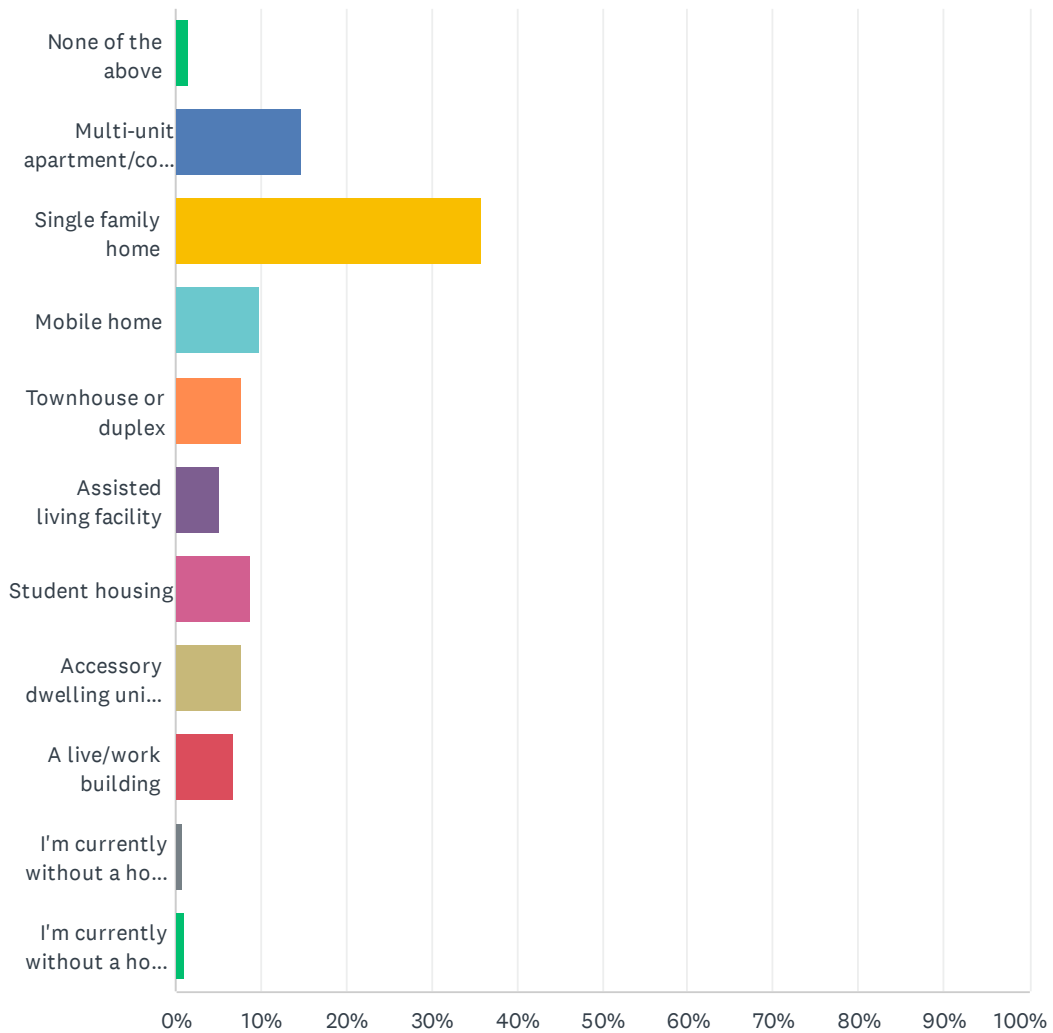
Answered: 1,881 Skipped: 50



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	11.59%	218
West County	26.16%	492
101 Corridor	31.74%	597
Sonoma Valley	23.55%	443
Other (please specify)	6.96%	131
TOTAL		1,881

## Q5 What type of home do you currently live in?

Answered: 1,916 Skipped: 15

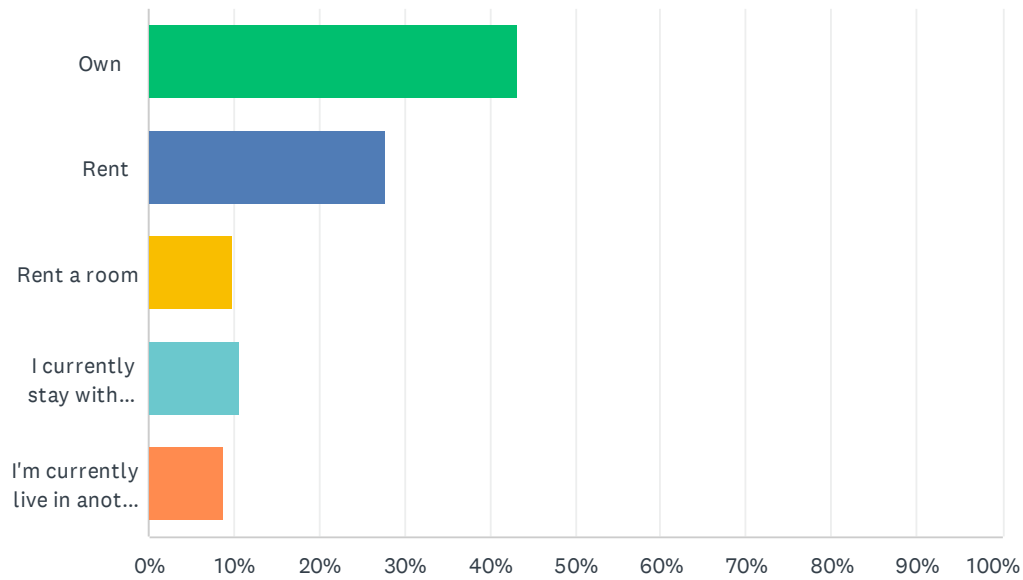


# Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	1.46%	28
Multi-unit apartment/condo	14.77%	283
Single family home	35.80%	686
Mobile home	9.86%	189
Townhouse or duplex	7.72%	148
Assisted living facility	5.22%	100
Student housing	8.77%	168
Accessory dwelling unit (aka granny or in-law unit)	7.62%	146
A live/work building	6.78%	130
I'm currently without a home, living outdoors or in a vehicle	0.89%	17
I'm currently without a home, living indoors	1.10%	21
TOTAL		1,916

## Q6 Do you own or rent your current residence?

Answered: 1,915   Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own	43.19%	827
Rent	27.62%	529
Rent a room	9.87%	189
I currently stay with family or friends rent-free	10.60%	203
I'm currently live in another type of housing, rent-free	8.72%	167
TOTAL		1,915

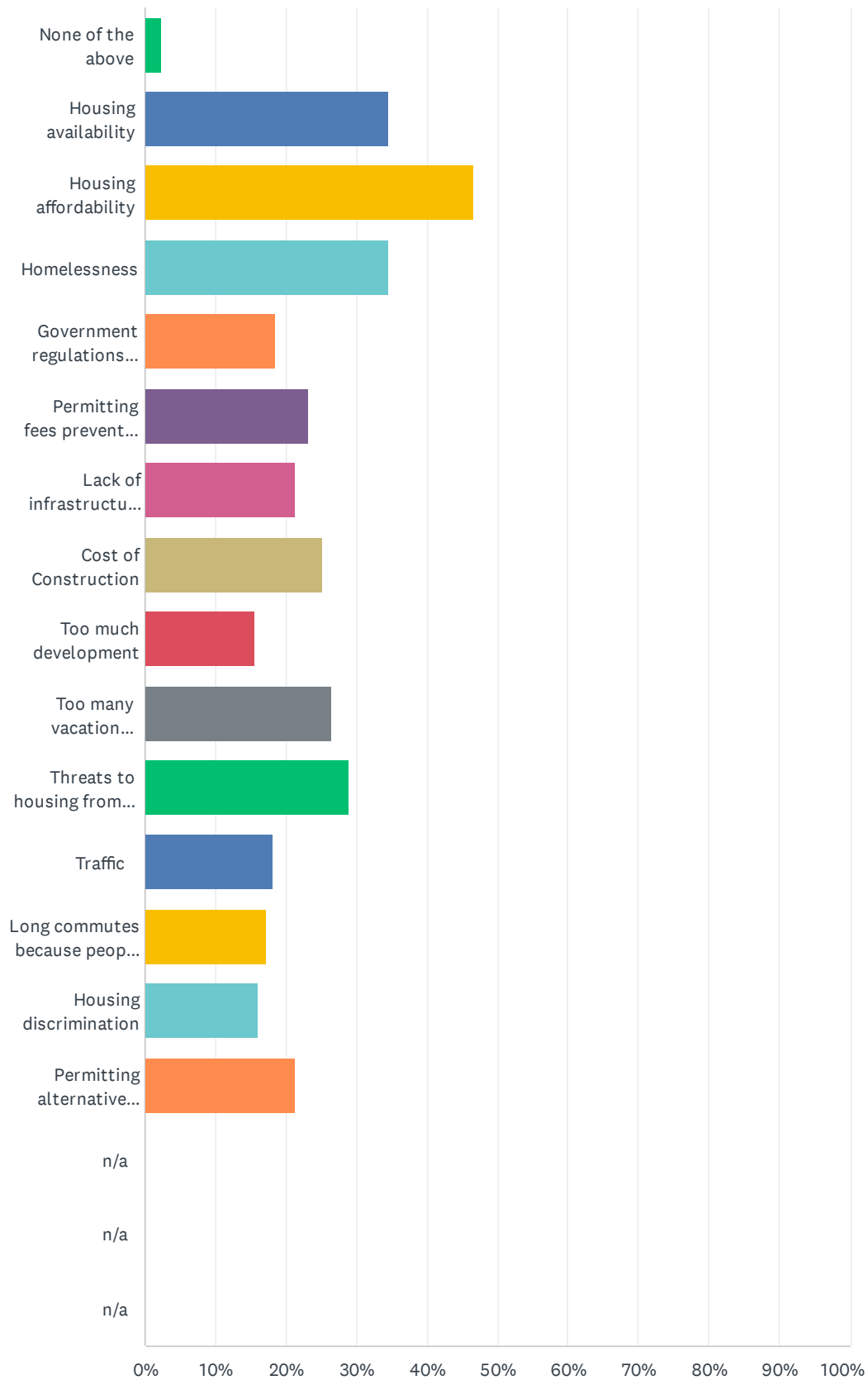
## Q7 Optional: Describe your experience finding your current home.

Answered: 489   Skipped: 1,442

**Q8 What are the most important housing issues facing Sonoma County today? Check all that apply.**

Answered: 1,729   Skipped: 202

## Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey



# Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey

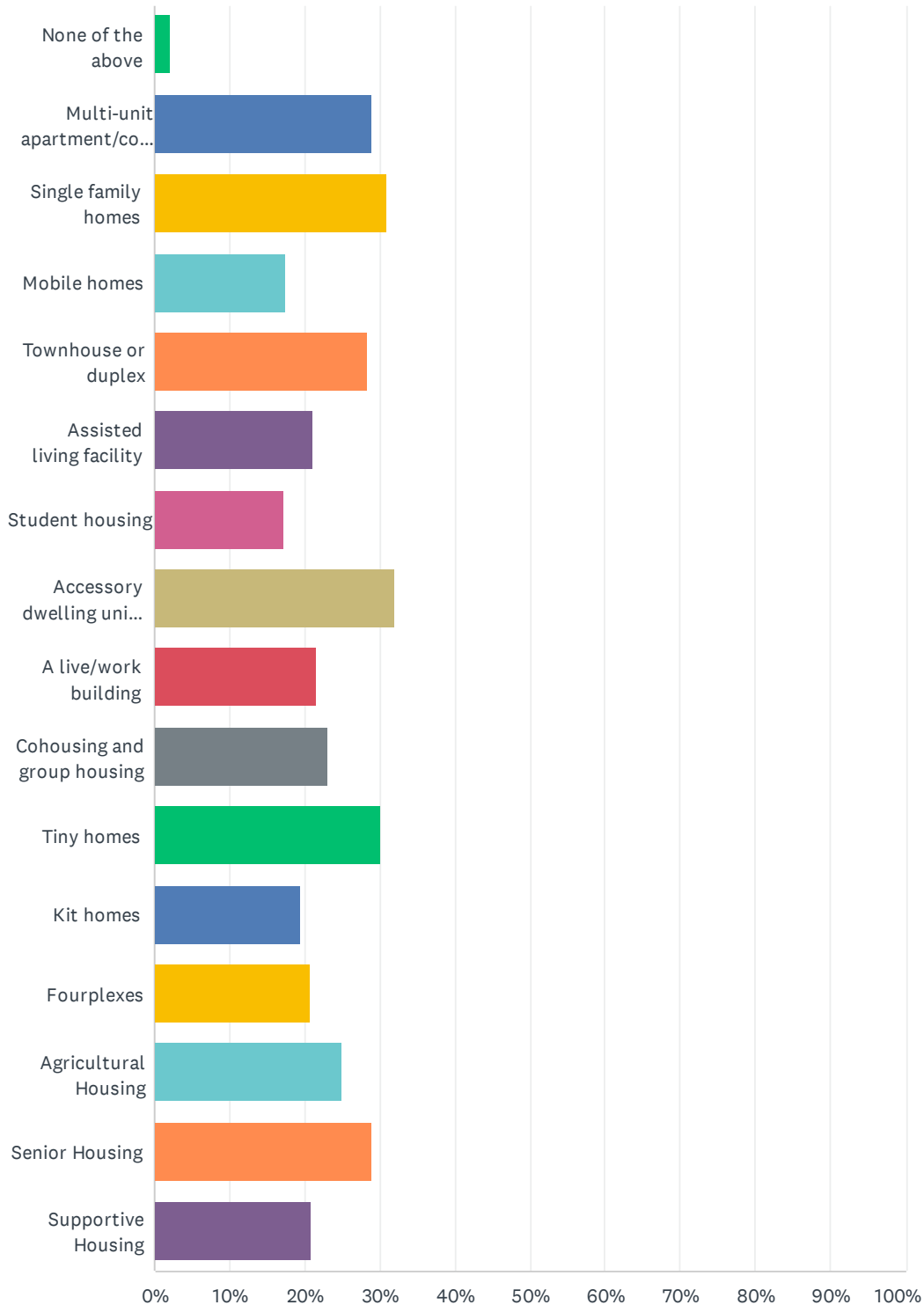
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	2.43%	42
Housing availability	34.64%	599
Housing affordability	46.79%	809
Homelessness	34.59%	598
Government regulations preventing development	18.62%	322
Permitting fees preventing development	23.25%	402
Lack of infrastructure to support housing	21.34%	369
Cost of Construction	25.16%	435
Too much development	15.56%	269
Too many vacation rentals	26.43%	457
Threats to housing from natural disasters like fires, earthquakes, and floods	29.03%	502
Traffic	18.16%	314
Long commutes because people live too far from where they work	17.35%	300
Housing discrimination	15.96%	276
Permitting alternative housing that use grey water and composting toilets	21.40%	370
n/a	0.00%	0
n/a	0.00%	0
n/a	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 1,729		

## Q9 Optional: Tell us more about the most important housing issues facing Sonoma County.

Answered: 361   Skipped: 1,570

## Q10 What types of new housing would you like to see in unincorporated Sonoma County? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,718 Skipped: 213

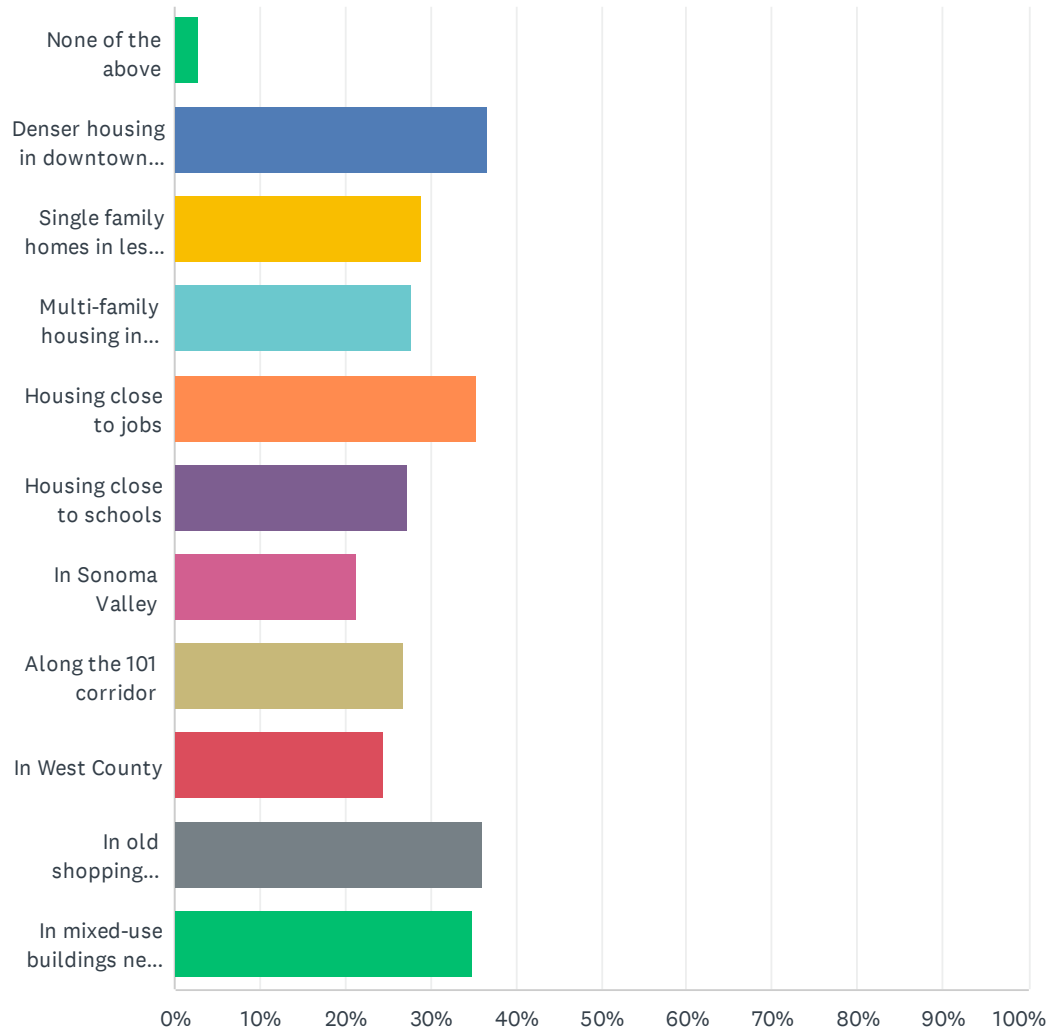


# Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	2.04%	35
Multi-unit apartment/condo	28.93%	497
Single family homes	30.97%	532
Mobile homes	17.40%	299
Townhouse or duplex	28.35%	487
Assisted living facility	21.07%	362
Student housing	17.17%	295
Accessory dwelling unit (aka granny or in-law unit)	31.96%	549
A live/work building	21.48%	369
Cohousing and group housing	23.05%	396
Tiny homes	30.03%	516
Kit homes	19.50%	335
Fourplexes	20.66%	355
Agricultural Housing	25.03%	430
Senior Housing	29.10%	500
Supportive Housing	20.95%	360
Total Respondents: 1,718		

## Q11 In what areas would you like to see more housing created? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,706 Skipped: 225



# Sonoma County Housing Needs and Opportunities Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	2.75%	47
Denser housing in downtown areas	36.64%	625
Single family homes in less developed areas	28.90%	493
Multi-family housing in areas that currently single family	27.78%	474
Housing close to jobs	35.40%	604
Housing close to schools	27.32%	466
In Sonoma Valley	21.28%	363
Along the 101 corridor	26.91%	459
In West County	24.62%	420
In old shopping centers	35.93%	613
In mixed-use buildings near commercial corridors	34.88%	595
Total Respondents: 1,706		

**Q12 Optional: What else would you like people to know about housing in Sonoma County? Tell us anything we should know as we plan for the next eight years of housing in the county.**

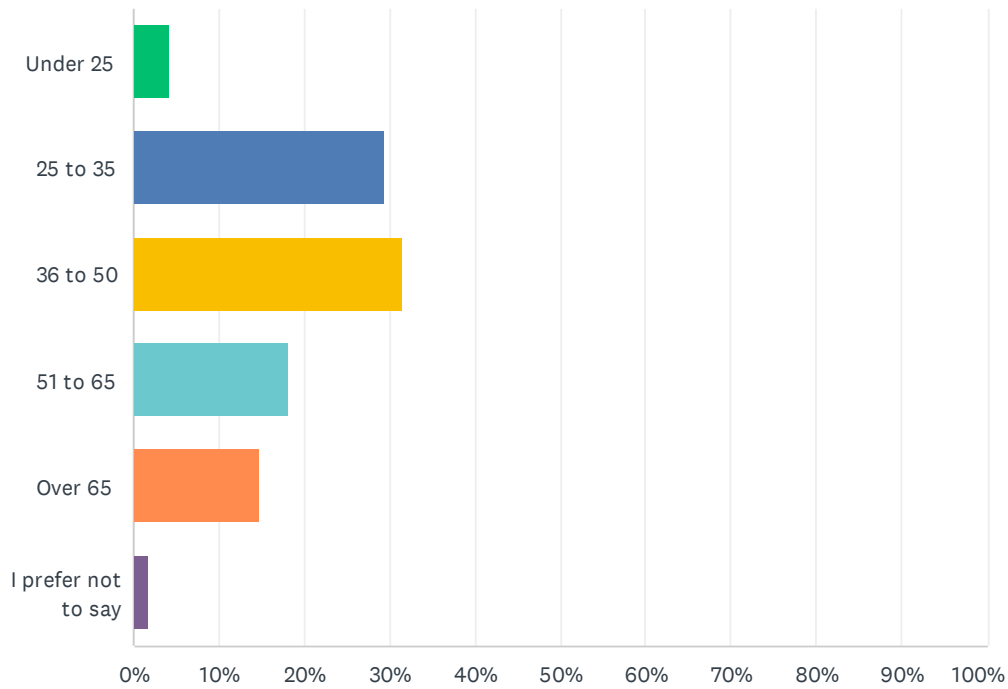
Answered: 357   Skipped: 1,574

## Q13 What is your home zip code?

Answered: 1,283   Skipped: 648

## Q14 How old are you?

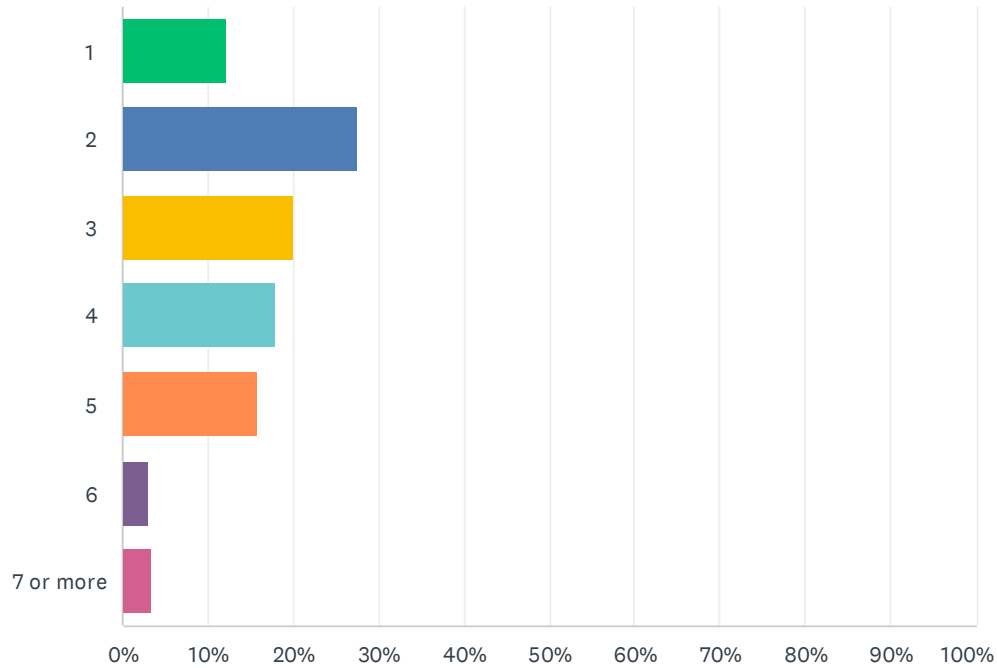
Answered: 1,673 Skipped: 258



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25	4.36%	73
25 to 35	29.53%	494
36 to 50	31.56%	528
51 to 65	18.11%	303
Over 65	14.70%	246
I prefer not to say	1.73%	29
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,673</b>

## Q15 How many adults live in your household'

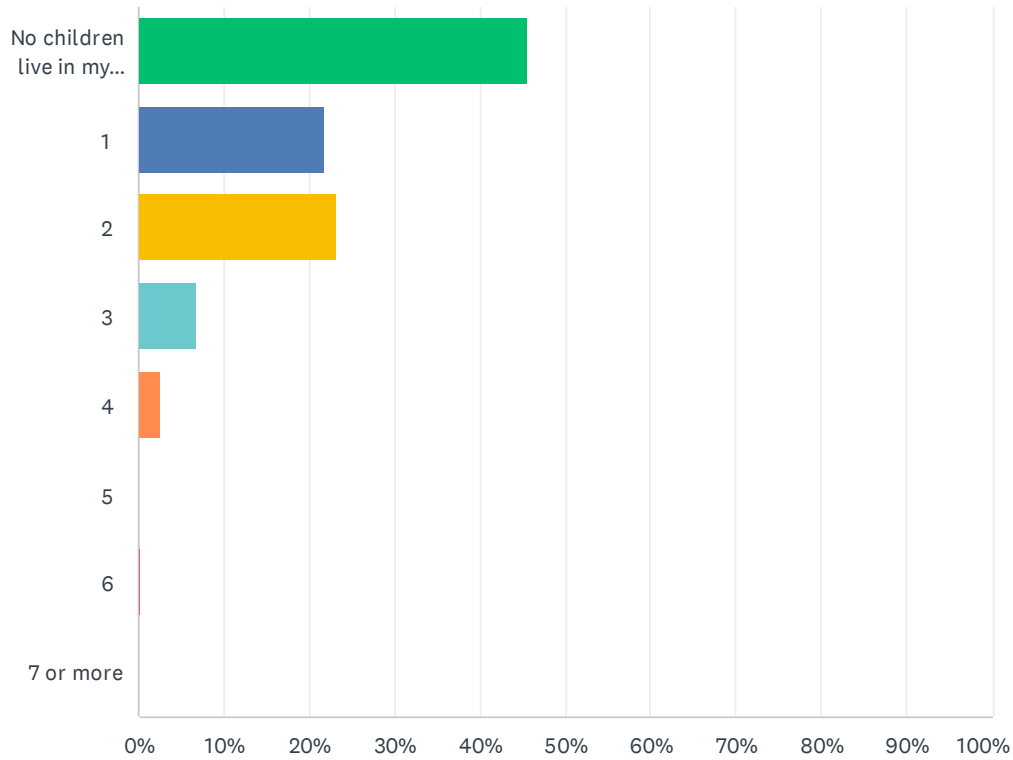
Answered: 1,670 Skipped: 261



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	12.22%	204
2	27.43%	458
3	20.12%	336
4	17.96%	300
5	15.87%	265
6	2.93%	49
7 or more	3.47%	58
TOTAL		1,670

## Q16 How many children live in your household?

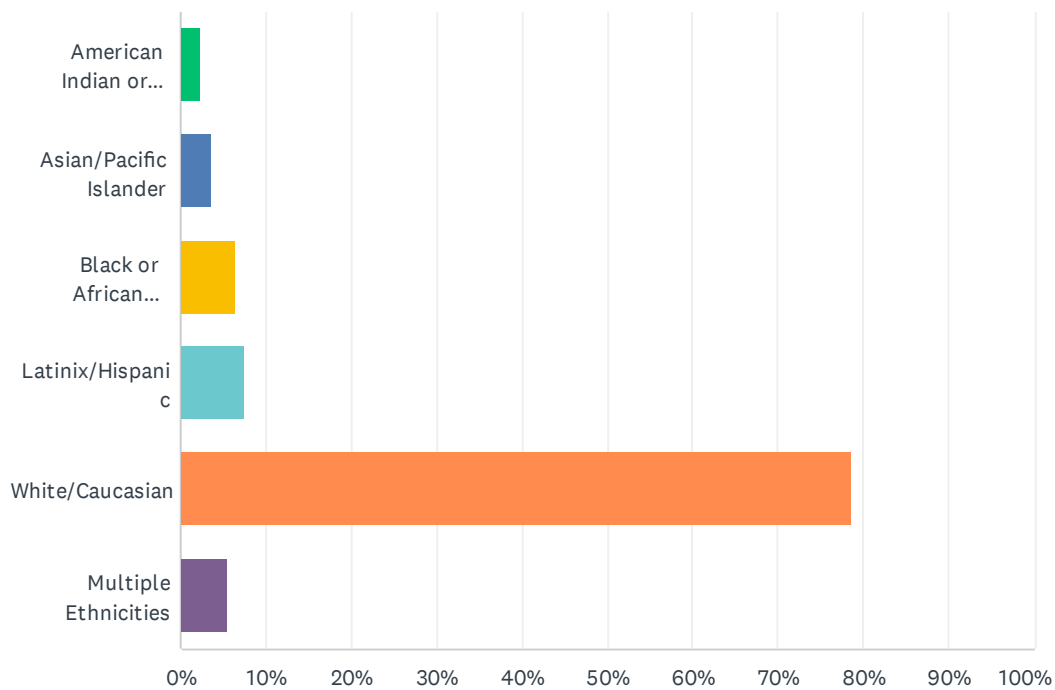
Answered: 1,634 Skipped: 297



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No children live in my household	45.59%	745
1	21.66%	354
2	23.19%	379
3	6.79%	111
4	2.51%	41
5	0.00%	0
6	0.18%	3
7 or more	0.06%	1
TOTAL		1,634

## Q17 How would you best describe your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply

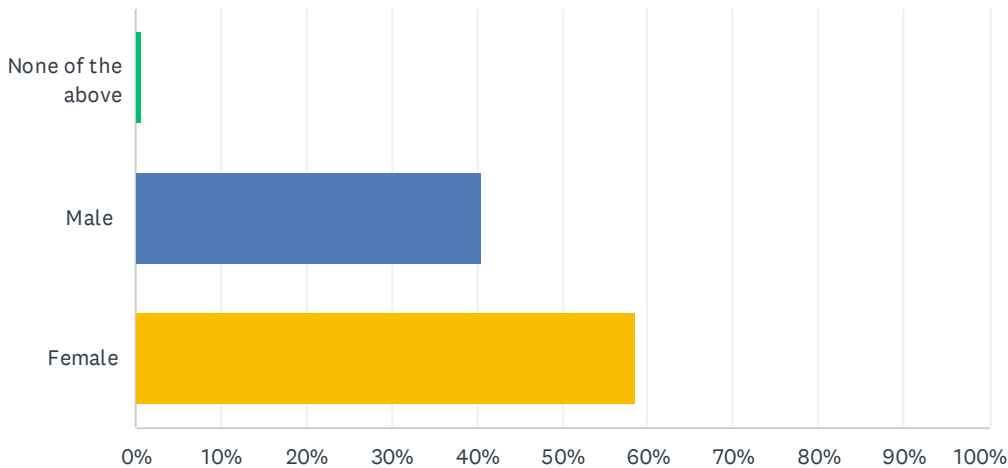
Answered: 1,634 Skipped: 297



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2.33%	38
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.55%	58
Black or African American	6.43%	105
Latinix/Hispanic	7.47%	122
White/Caucasian	78.64%	1,285
Multiple Ethnicities	5.45%	89
Total Respondents: 1,634		

Q18 What is your gender?

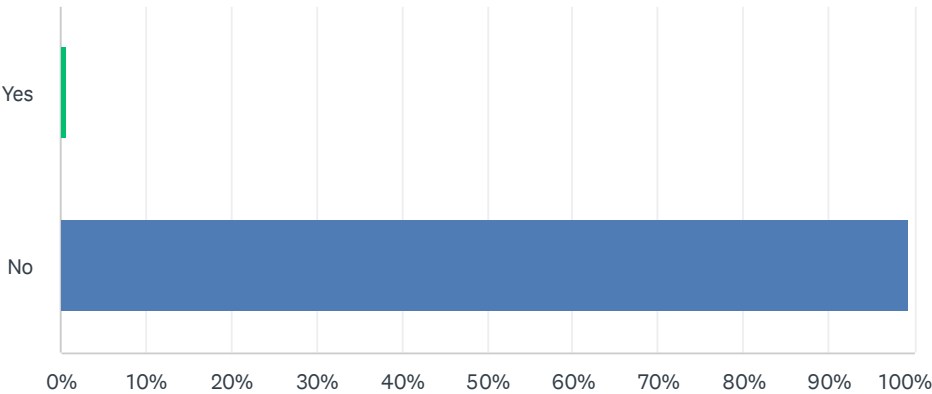
Answered: 1,658    Skipped: 273



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	0.72%	12
Male	40.59%	673
Female	58.69%	973
TOTAL		1,658

Q19 Do you identify as a transgender person?

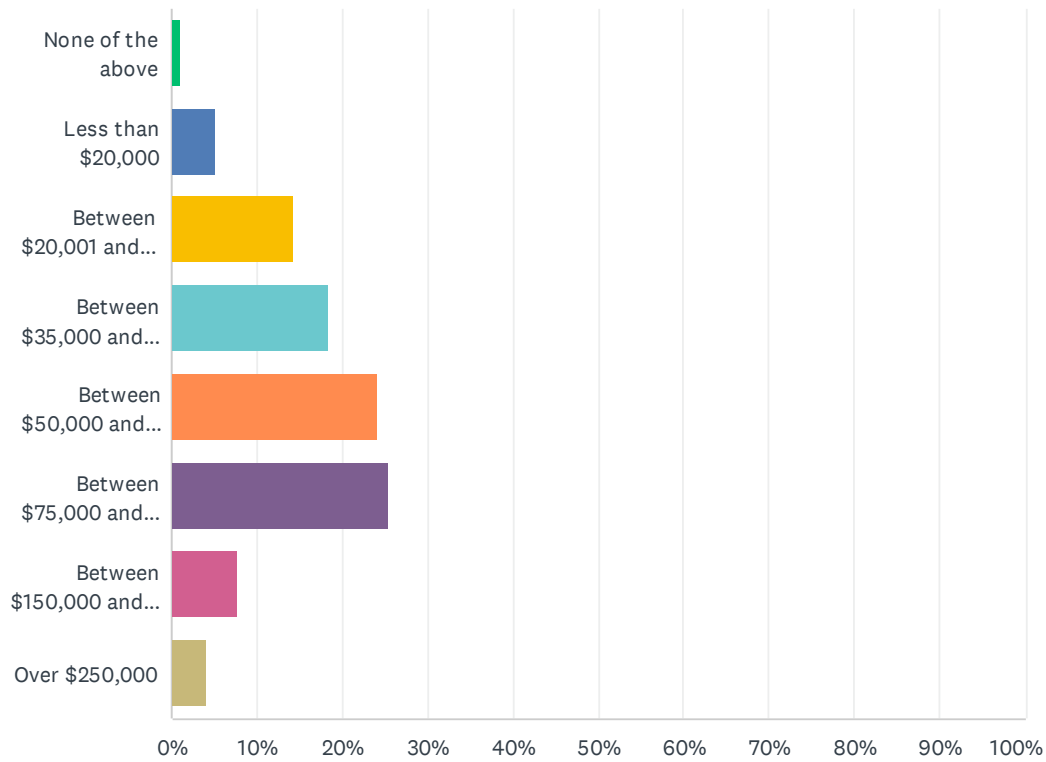
Answered: 1,642    Skipped: 289



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0.67%	11
No	99.33%	1,631
TOTAL		1,642

## Q20 What was your total household income last year?

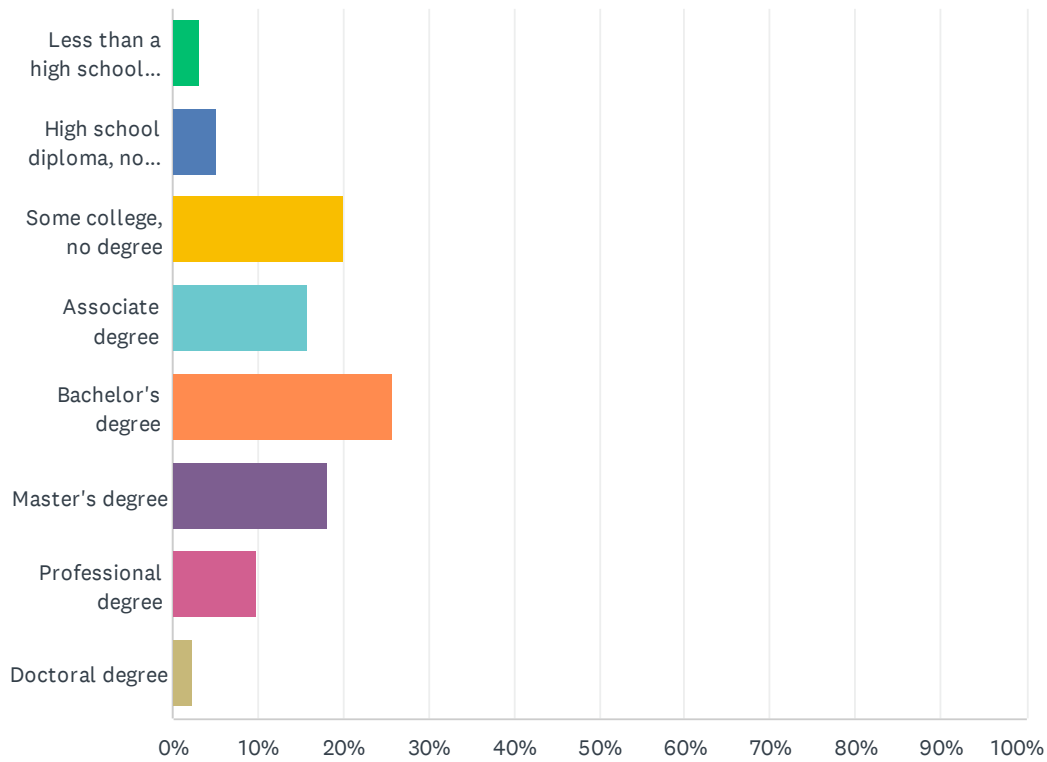
Answered: 1,631    Skipped: 300



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	1.10%	18
Less than \$20,000	5.03%	82
Between \$20,001 and \$34,999	14.29%	233
Between \$35,000 and \$49,999	18.27%	298
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	24.16%	394
Between \$75,000 and \$149,999	25.38%	414
Between \$150,000 and \$249,999	7.73%	126
Over \$250,000	4.05%	66
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,631</b>

## Q21 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

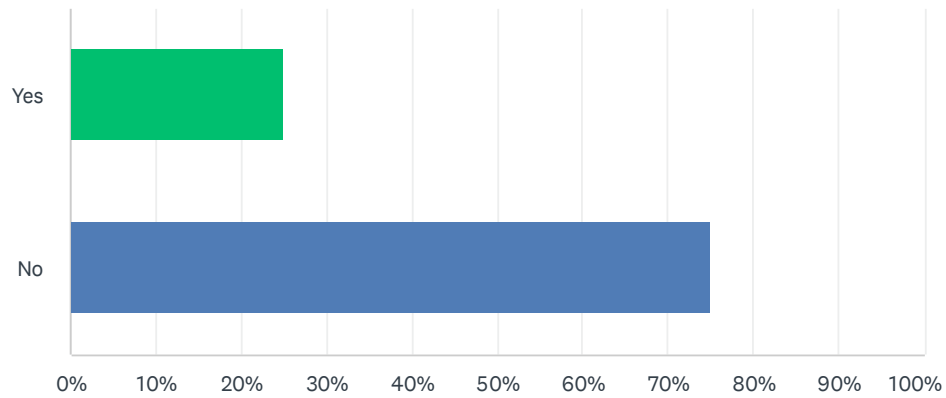
Answered: 1,665    Skipped: 266



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than a high school diploma	3.24%	54
High school diploma, no college	5.05%	84
Some college, no degree	20.06%	334
Associate degree	15.68%	261
Bachelor's degree	25.77%	429
Master's degree	18.08%	301
Professional degree	9.73%	162
Doctoral degree	2.40%	40
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,665</b>

## Q22 Do you identify as having a disability?

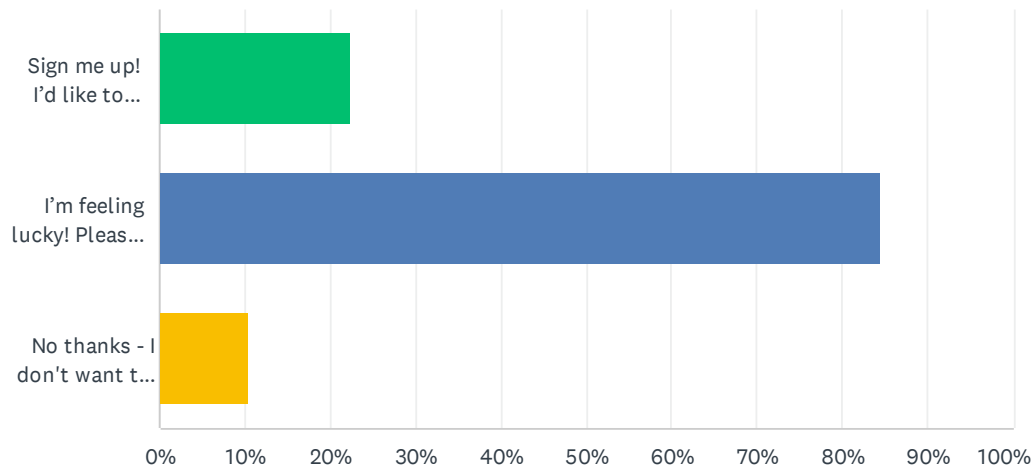
Answered: 1,660 Skipped: 271



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	24.94%	414
No	75.06%	1,246
TOTAL		1,660

**Q23** Thank you for sharing your feedback! Please let us know if you would like to receive email updates about Sonoma County's Housing Element and/or be entered for a chance to win one of five \$50 Visa Gift card by checking the boxes below and sharing your email address before clicking the "Submit" button. You do not have to receive updates to be entered to win a gift card, but you **DO** have to share your email or phone number.

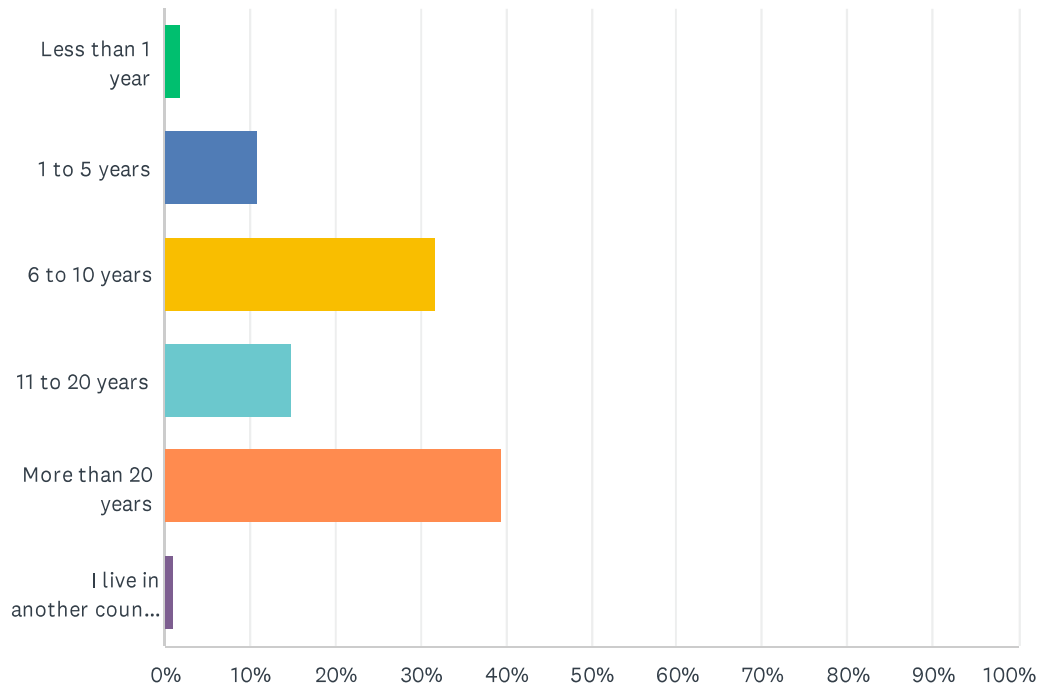
Answered: 1,603    Skipped: 328



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sign me up! I'd like to receive updates about Sonoma County's Housing Element update as they're available.	22.33%	358
I'm feeling lucky! Please include me in the chance to win one of five \$50 Visa gift cards.	84.53%	1,355
No thanks - I don't want to receive updates about the Housing Element or enter to win a \$50 Visa gift card.	10.42%	167
Total Respondents: 1,603		

## Q1 How long have you lived in Sonoma County?

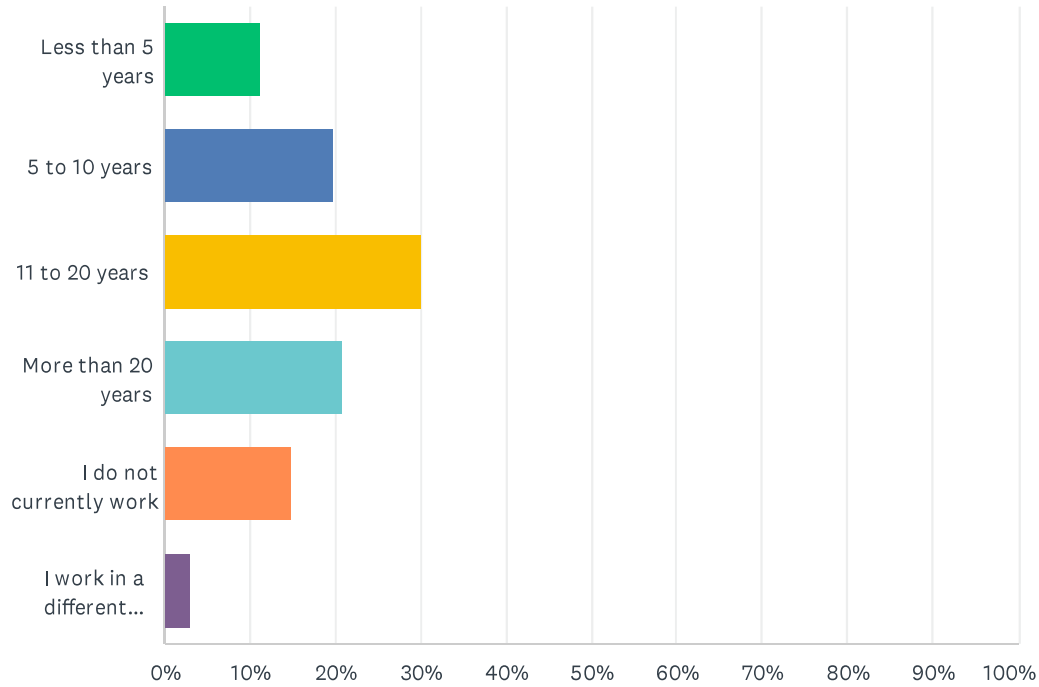
Answered: 1,591   Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 year	1.95%	31
1 to 5 years	10.81%	172
6 to 10 years	31.80%	506
11 to 20 years	14.83%	236
More than 20 years	39.53%	629
I live in another county (please specify)	1.07%	17
TOTAL		1,591

## Q2 Do you work in Sonoma County? If so, how long have you worked here?

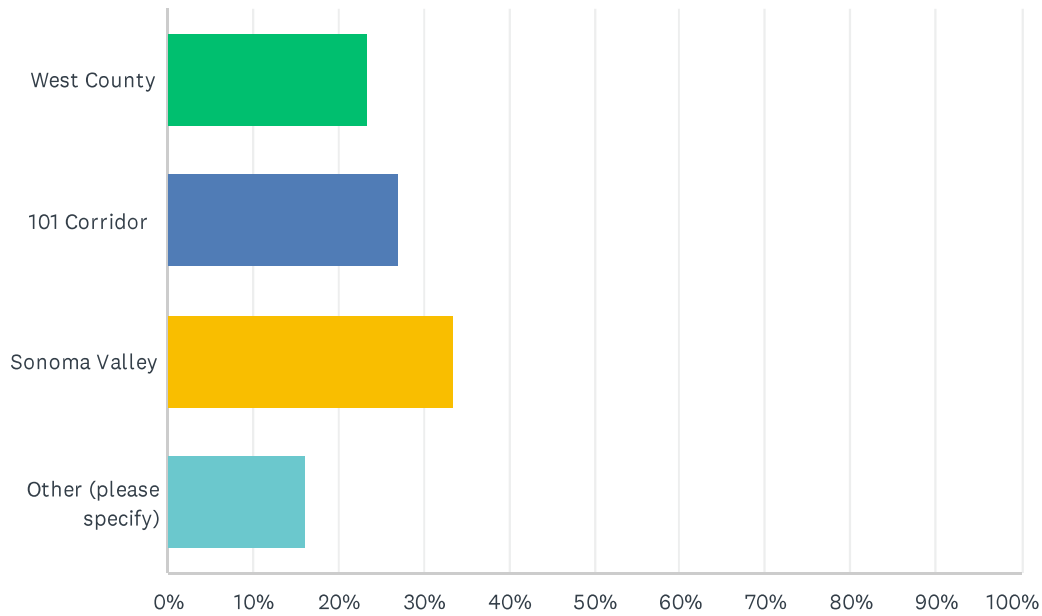
Answered: 1,589 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5 years	11.26%	179
5 to 10 years	19.76%	314
11 to 20 years	30.08%	478
More than 20 years	20.96%	333
I do not currently work	14.85%	236
I work in a different county (please specify)	3.08%	49
TOTAL		1,589

## Q3 Where do you work in Sonoma County?

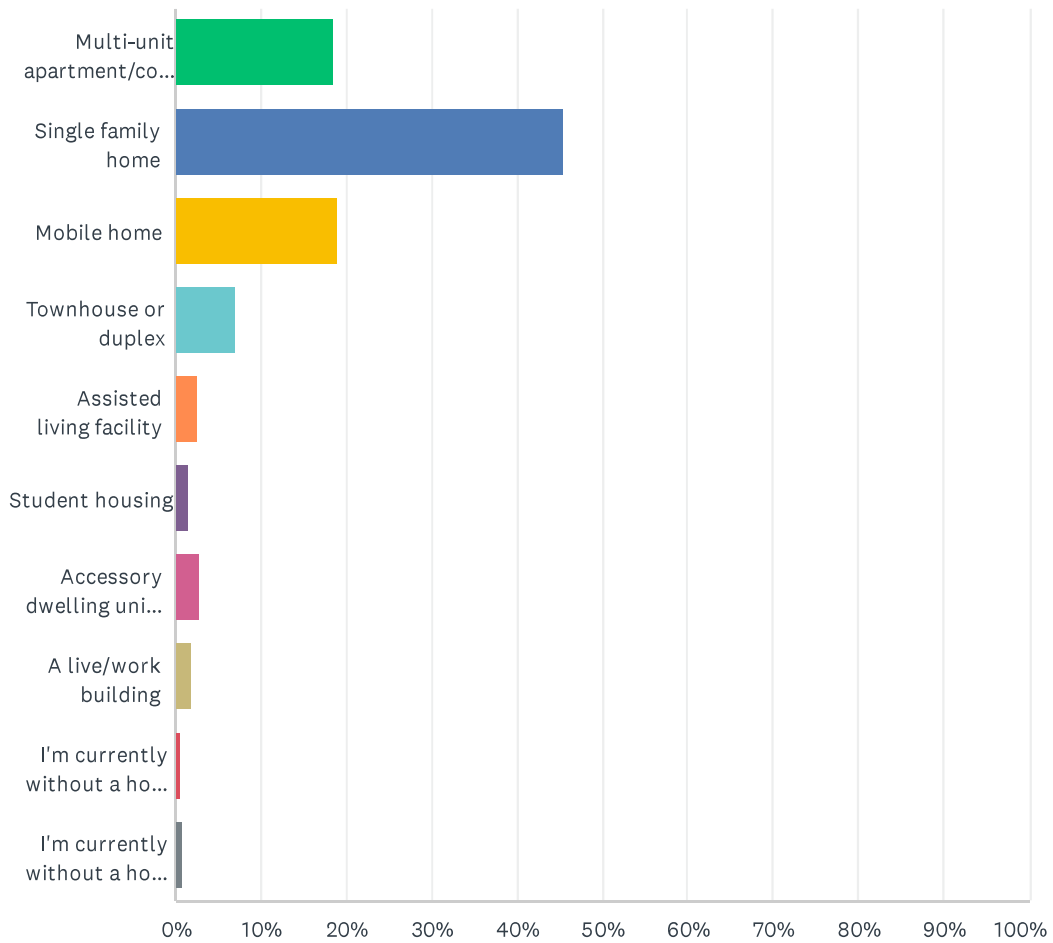
Answered: 1,416 Skipped: 183



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
West County	23.52%	333
101 Corridor	26.98%	382
Sonoma Valley	33.40%	473
Other (please specify)	16.10%	228
TOTAL		1,416

## Q4 What type of home do you currently live in?

Answered: 1,567 Skipped: 32

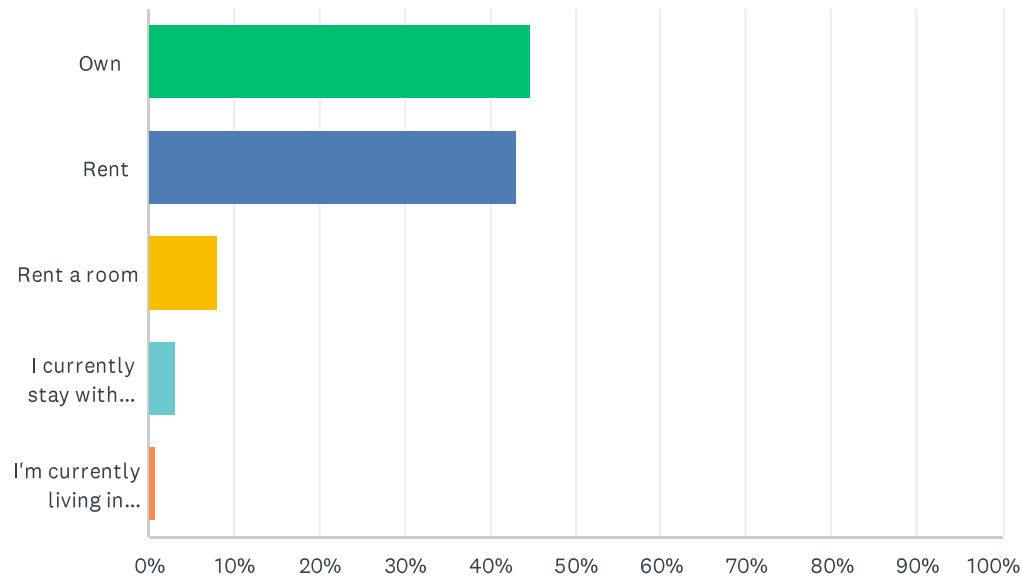


## Sonoma County Housing Preferences Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Multi-unit apartment/condo	18.57%	291
Single family home	45.31%	710
Mobile home	18.95%	297
Townhouse or duplex	7.02%	110
Assisted living facility	2.55%	40
Student housing	1.40%	22
Accessory dwelling unit (aka granny or in-law unit)	2.87%	45
A live/work building	1.91%	30
I'm currently without a home, living outdoors or in a vehicle	0.57%	9
I'm currently without a home, living indoors	0.83%	13
TOTAL		1,567

## Q5 Do you own or rent your current residence?

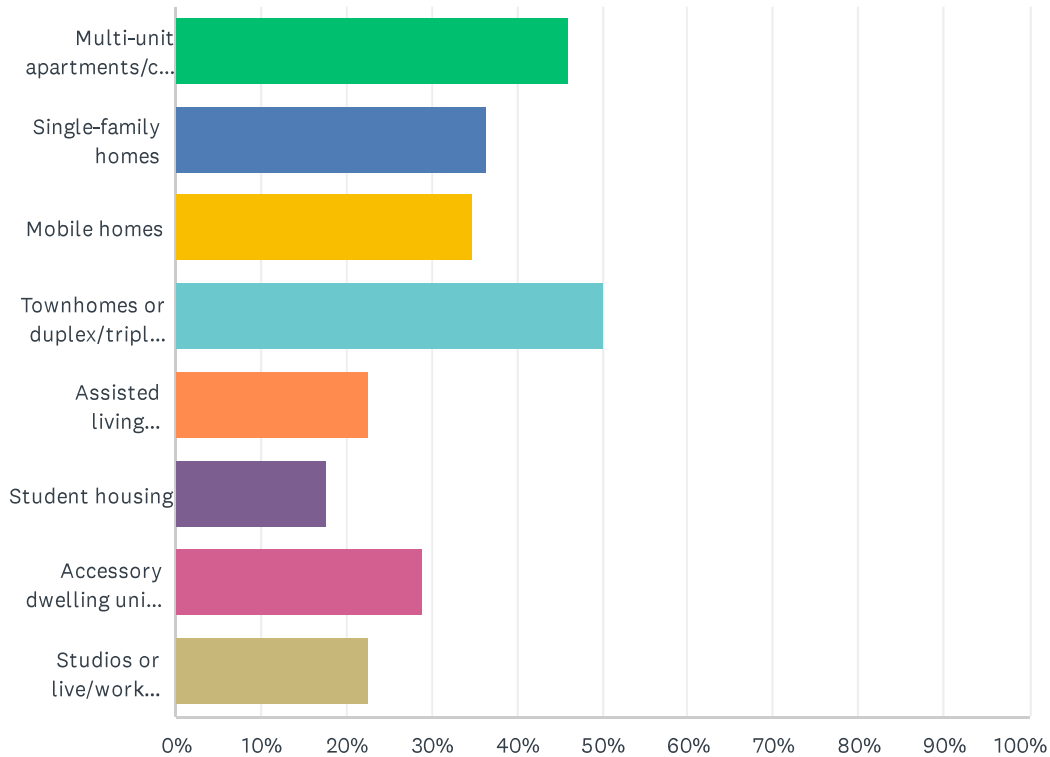
Answered: 1,577   Skipped: 22



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own	44.83%	707
Rent	43.06%	679
Rent a room	8.12%	128
I currently stay with family or friends rent-free	3.17%	50
I'm currently living in another type of housing, rent-free	0.82%	13
TOTAL		1,577

## Q6 What types of new housing should be prioritized in Sonoma County? Check all that apply.

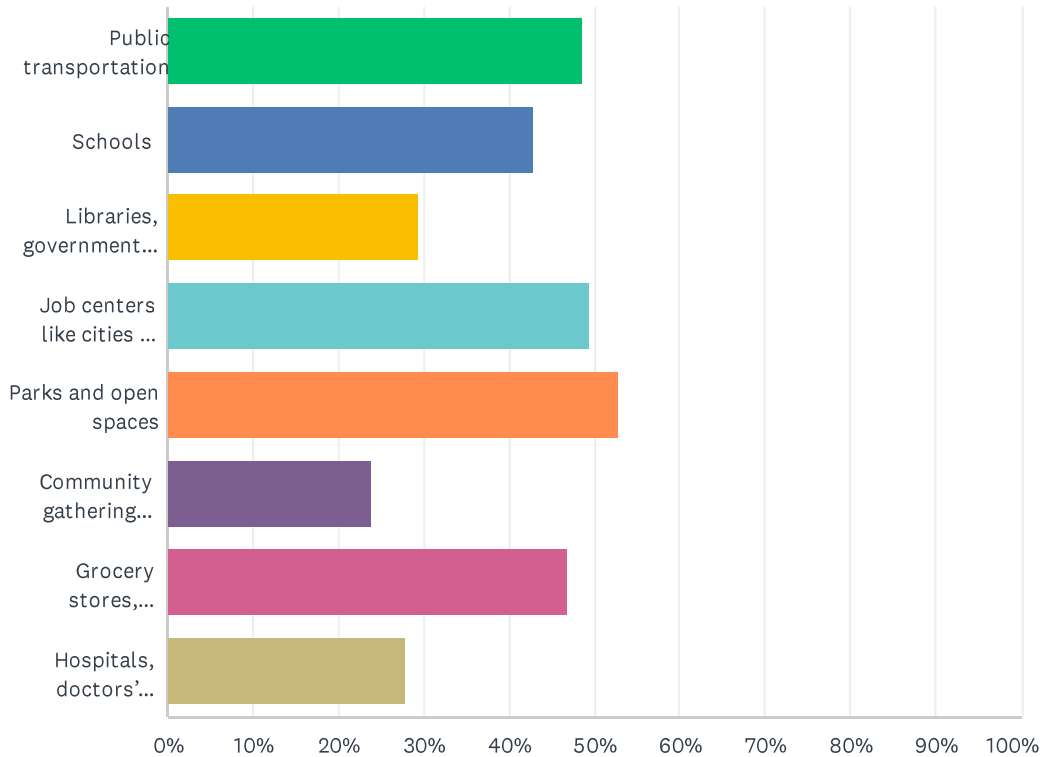
Answered: 1,442 Skipped: 157



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Multi-unit apartments/condos	46.12%	665
Single-family homes	36.55%	527
Mobile homes	34.81%	502
Townhomes or duplex/triplex homes	50.21%	724
Assisted living facilities	22.68%	327
Student housing	17.75%	256
Accessory dwelling unit (aka granny/in-law unit)	28.99%	418
Studios or live/work buildings	22.54%	325
Total Respondents: 1,442		

## Q7 When you think about creating new housing for individuals and families, what is it most important to be close to? (Check all that apply)

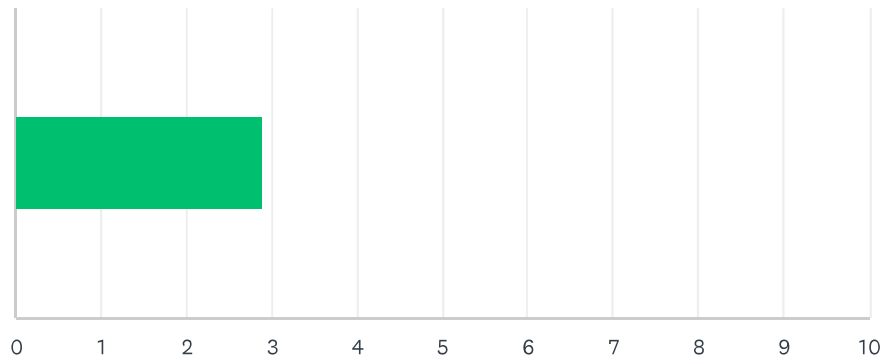
Answered: 1,455 Skipped: 144



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Public transportation	48.52%	706
Schools	42.89%	624
Libraries, government offices, non-profits and other social services	29.42%	428
Job centers like cities and downtown areas in small towns	49.48%	720
Parks and open spaces	52.85%	769
Community gathering places	23.99%	349
Grocery stores, restaurants, and other businesses	46.80%	681
Hospitals, doctors' offices, and other medical centers	27.90%	406
Total Respondents: 1,455		

Q8 We know that public input can make projects fit communities better. However, the tradeoff can be longer planning and development processes that mean longer waits for new housing. Using the slider below, show what you think the right balance is between robust public input opportunities and a faster planning and development processes.

Answered: 1,472 Skipped: 127

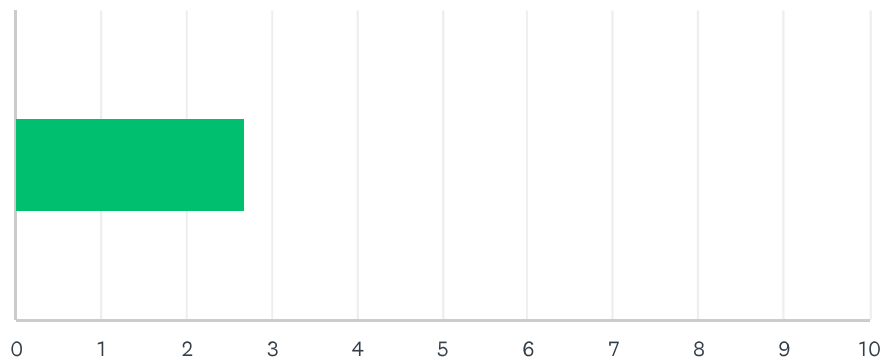


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	3	4,281	1,472
Total Respondents: 1,472			

**Q9 Building more housing that is denser (like multifamily housing/apartments or rather than single family homes) lowers the cost of building each individual unit, making housing prices more affordable.**

**However, some people say that denser housing hurts neighborhood character. Using the slider below, show us what you think the right balance is between building denser, more affordable housing and maintaining neighborhood character.**

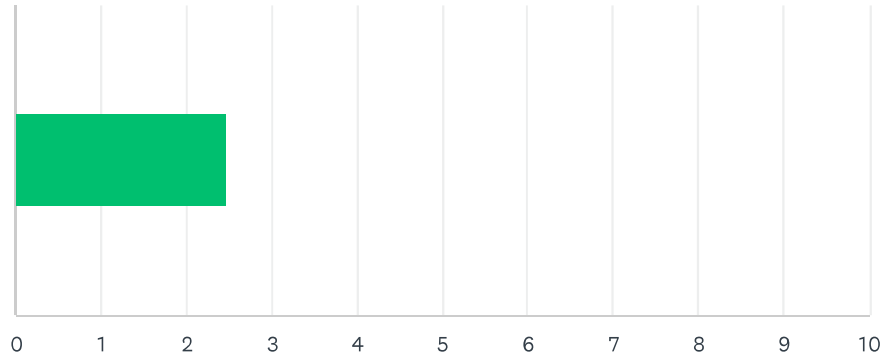
Answered: 1,460   Skipped: 139



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	3	3,908	1,460
Total Respondents: 1,460			

Q10 Some people think that we should encourage building smaller units that will be less expensive, while others think that we need to prioritize building housing that has more room for larger families. Using the slider below, share what you would prioritize.

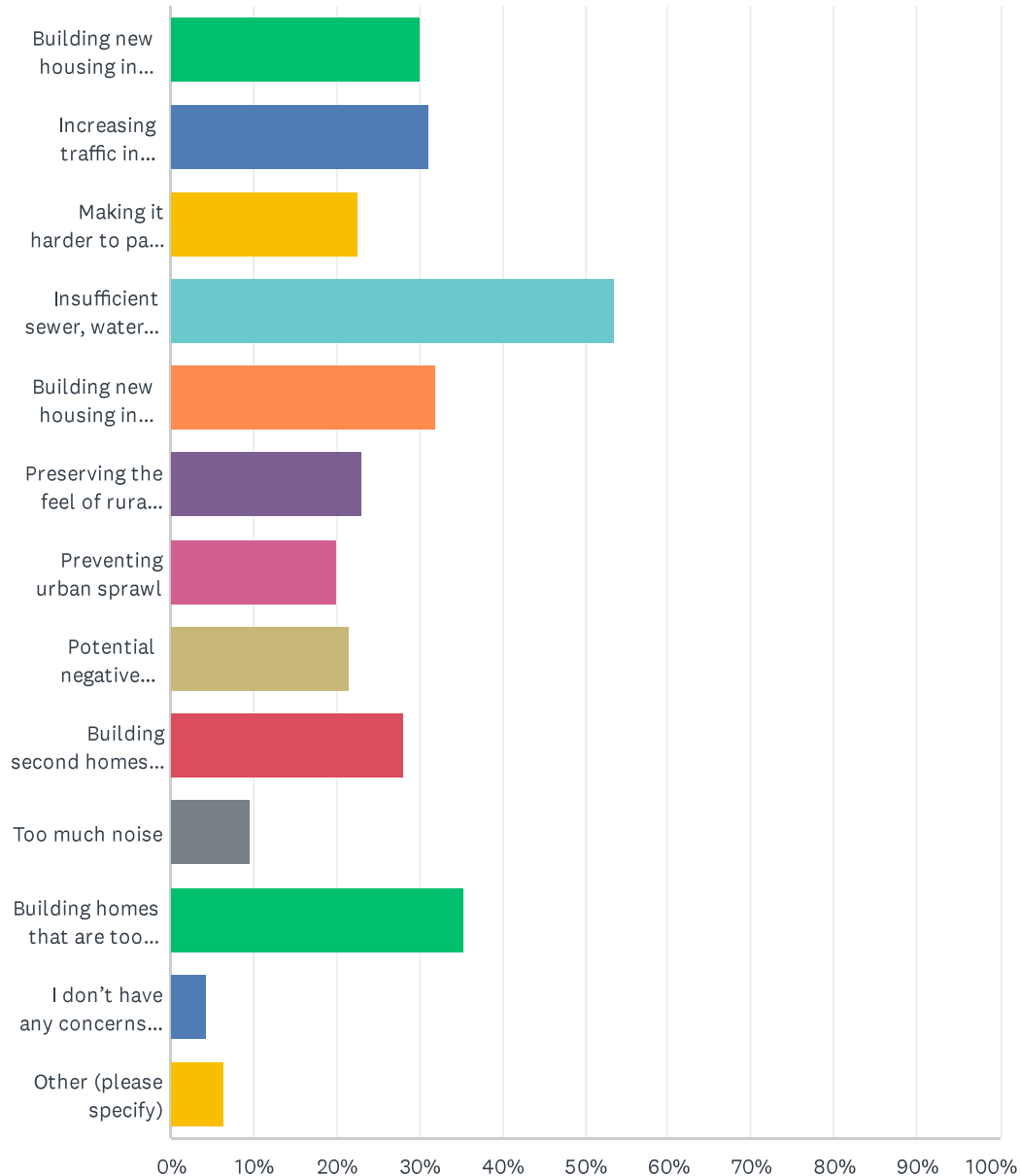
Answered: 1,453 Skipped: 146



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	2	3,589	1,453
Total Respondents: 1,453			

## Q11 What are your biggest concerns about new housing projects? (Check up to three top concerns.)

Answered: 1,485 Skipped: 114



## Sonoma County Housing Preferences Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Building new housing in areas that may be vulnerable to wildfires	30.03%	446
Increasing traffic in Sonoma County, making it harder to get around	31.11%	462
Making it harder to park in denser areas of the county	22.63%	336
Insufficient sewer, water, or other infrastructure to support new residents	53.60%	796
Building new housing in areas that may be vulnerable to floods	32.05%	476
Preserving the feel of rural areas	23.10%	343
Preventing urban sprawl	20.07%	298
Potential negative impacts on wildlife and the environment	21.55%	320
Building second homes or vacation rentals, rather than primary residences	28.15%	418
Too much noise	9.70%	144
Building homes that are too expensive for regular people	35.49%	527
I don't have any concerns about building new housing in Sonoma County	4.24%	63
Other (please specify)	6.46%	96
Total Respondents: 1,485		

**Q12 Optional: What would you like us to know about the barriers to building housing in Sonoma County.**

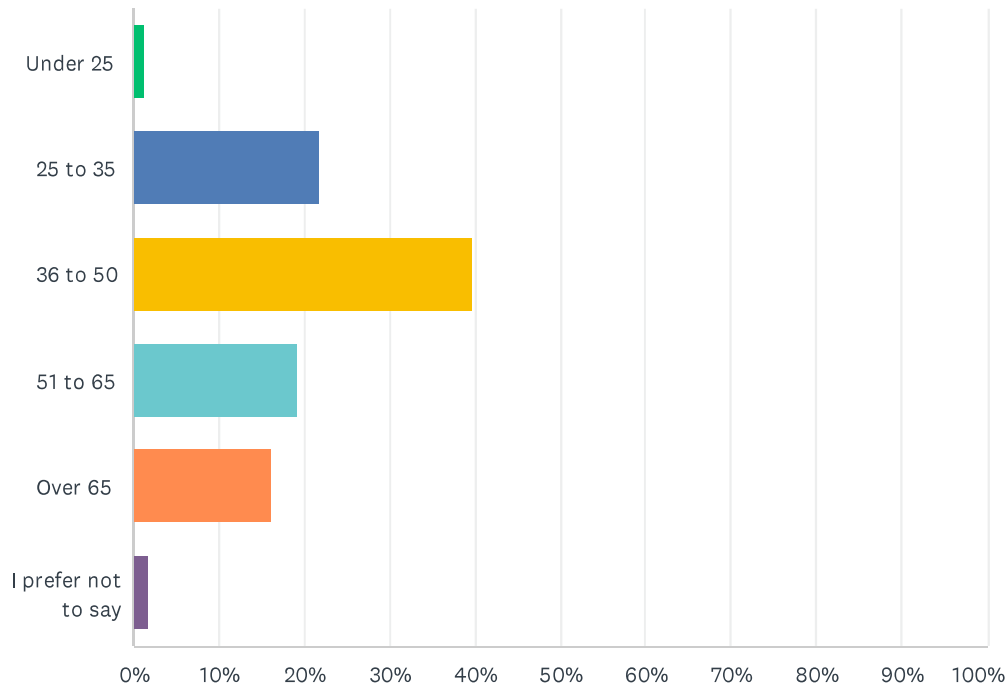
Answered: 793   Skipped: 806

## Q13 What is your home zip code?

Answered: 1,347   Skipped: 252

## Q14 How old are you?

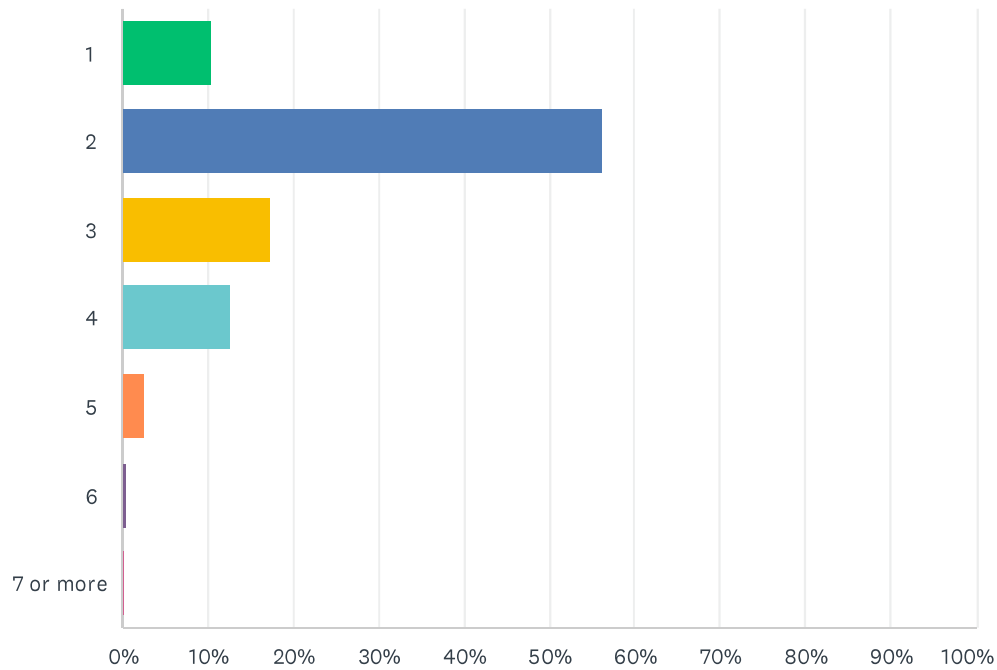
Answered: 1,424   Skipped: 175



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25	1.33%	19
25 to 35	21.77%	310
36 to 50	39.75%	566
51 to 65	19.17%	273
Over 65	16.22%	231
I prefer not to say	1.76%	25
TOTAL		1,424

## Q15 How many adults live in your household?

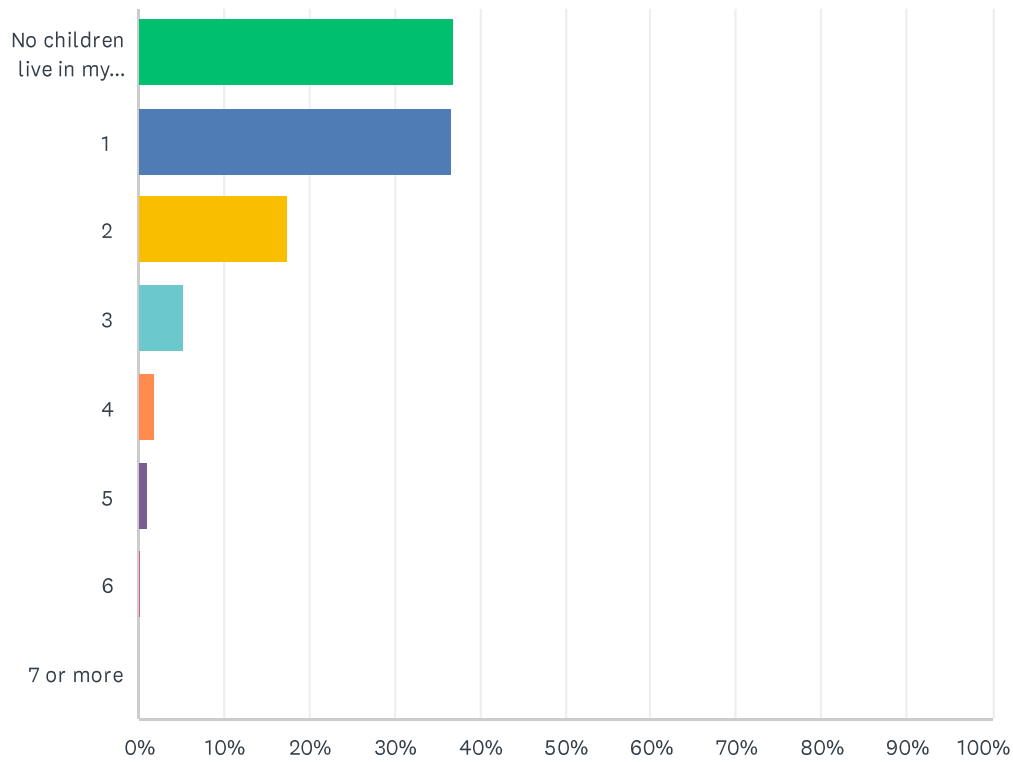
Answered: 1,411    Skipped: 188



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	10.49%	148
2	56.34%	795
3	17.36%	245
4	12.47%	176
5	2.62%	37
6	0.50%	7
7 or more	0.21%	3
TOTAL		1,411

## Q16 How many children live in your household?

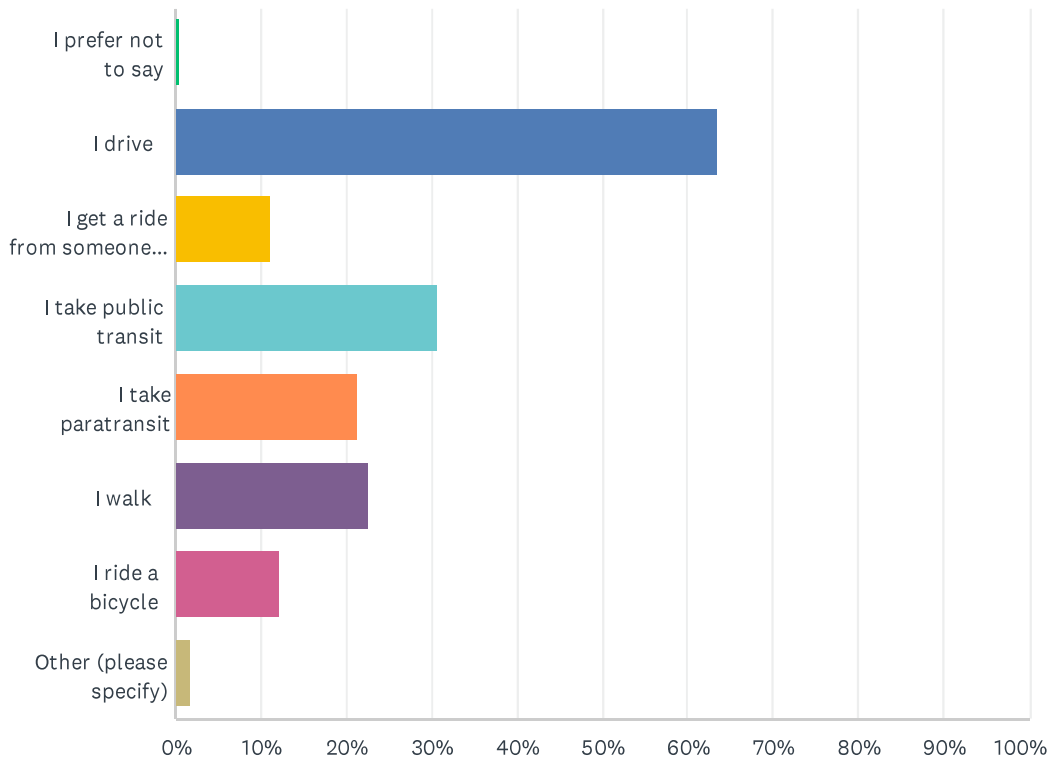
Answered: 1,371 Skipped: 228



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No children live in my household	36.91%	506
1	36.76%	504
2	17.51%	240
3	5.32%	73
4	1.97%	27
5	1.17%	16
6	0.29%	4
7 or more	0.07%	1
TOTAL		1,371

## Q17 How do you get around most of the time? Check all that apply.

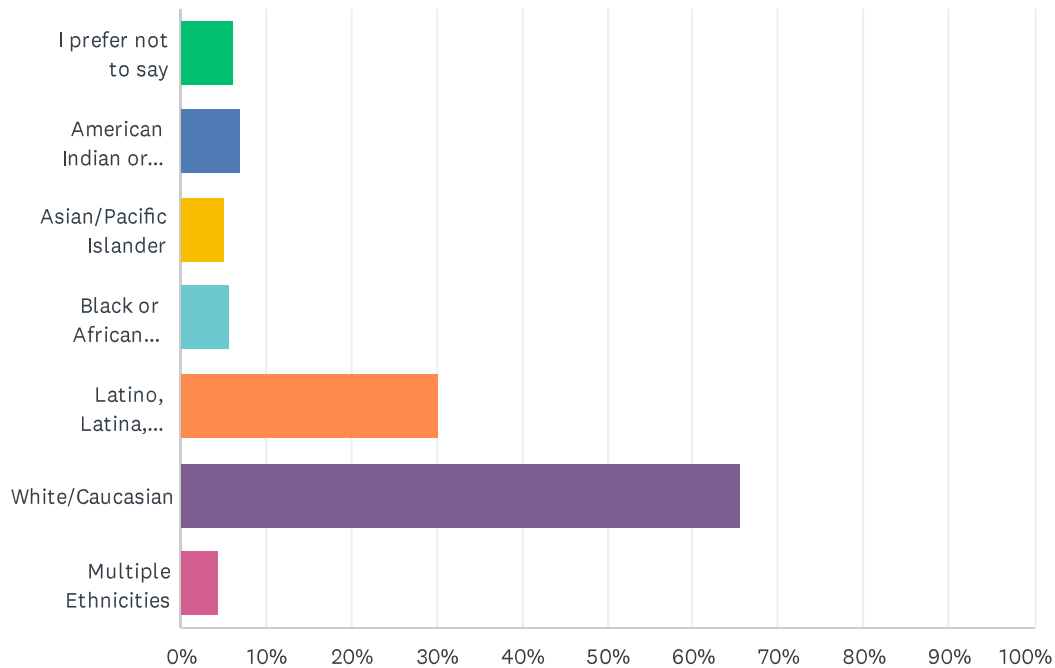
Answered: 1,421 Skipped: 178



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	0.42%	6
I drive	63.55%	903
I get a ride from someone else	11.19%	159
I take public transit	30.61%	435
I take paratransit	21.39%	304
I walk	22.59%	321
I ride a bicycle	12.24%	174
Other (please specify)	1.62%	23
Total Respondents: 1,421		

## Q18 How would you describe your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply

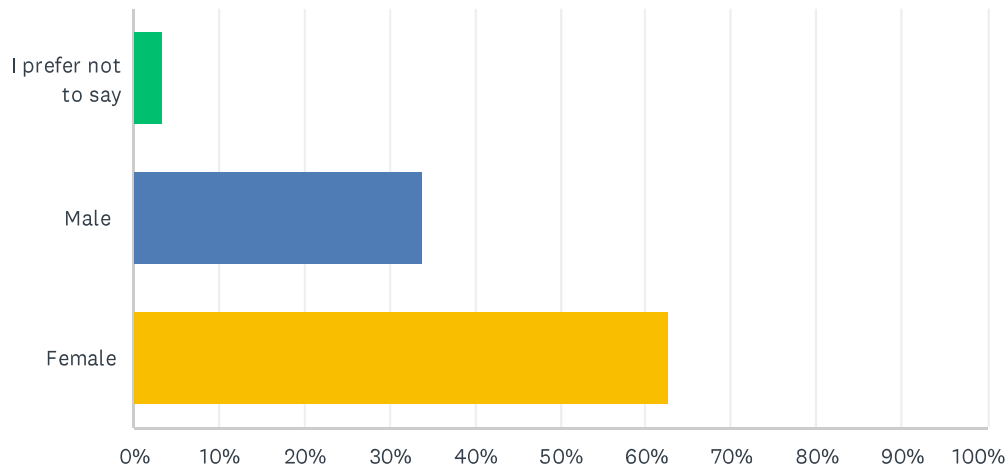
Answered: 1,401    Skipped: 198



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	6.28%	88
American Indian or Alaskan Native	7.00%	98
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.14%	72
Black or African American	5.71%	80
Latino, Latina, Latinx, or Hispanic	30.26%	424
White/Caucasian	65.74%	921
Multiple Ethnicities	4.50%	63
Total Respondents: 1,401		

## Q19 What is your gender?

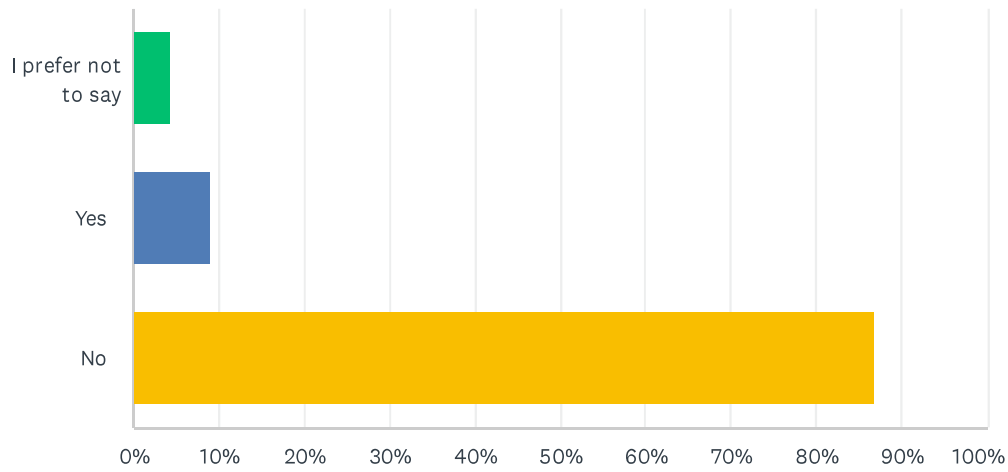
Answered: 1,413 Skipped: 186



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	3.47%	49
Male	33.83%	478
Female	62.70%	886
TOTAL		1,413

## Q20 Do you identify as a transgender person?

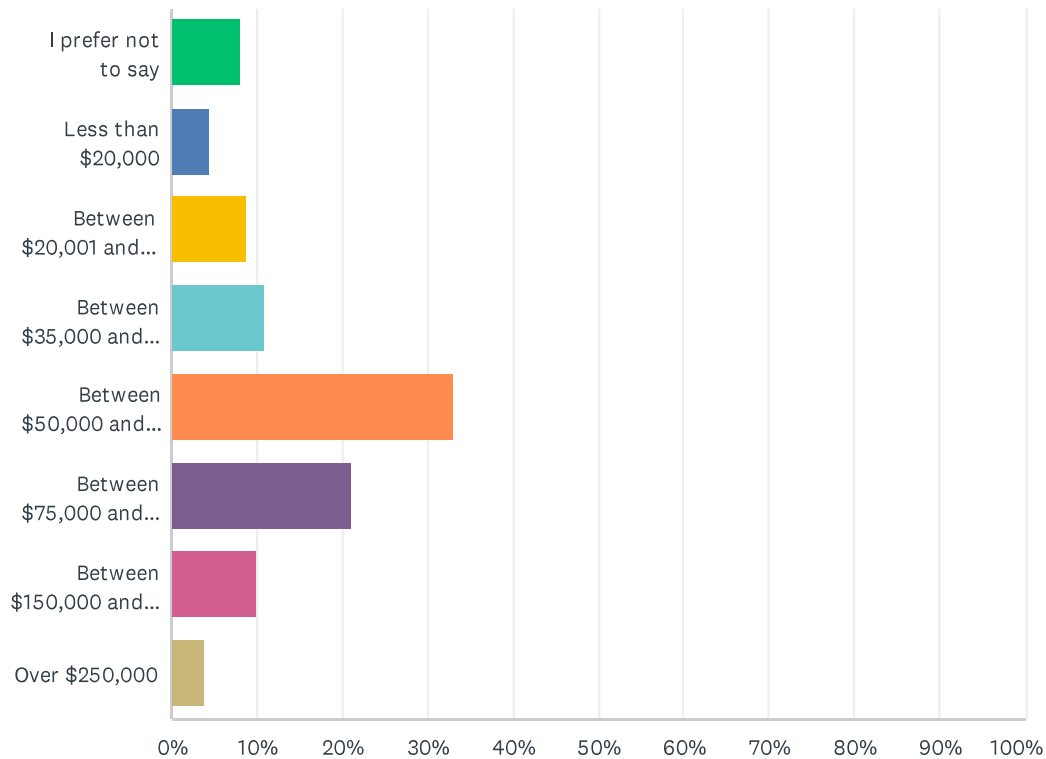
Answered: 1,400 Skipped: 199



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	4.29%	60
Yes	8.86%	124
No	86.86%	1,216
TOTAL		1,400

## Q21 What was your total household income last year?

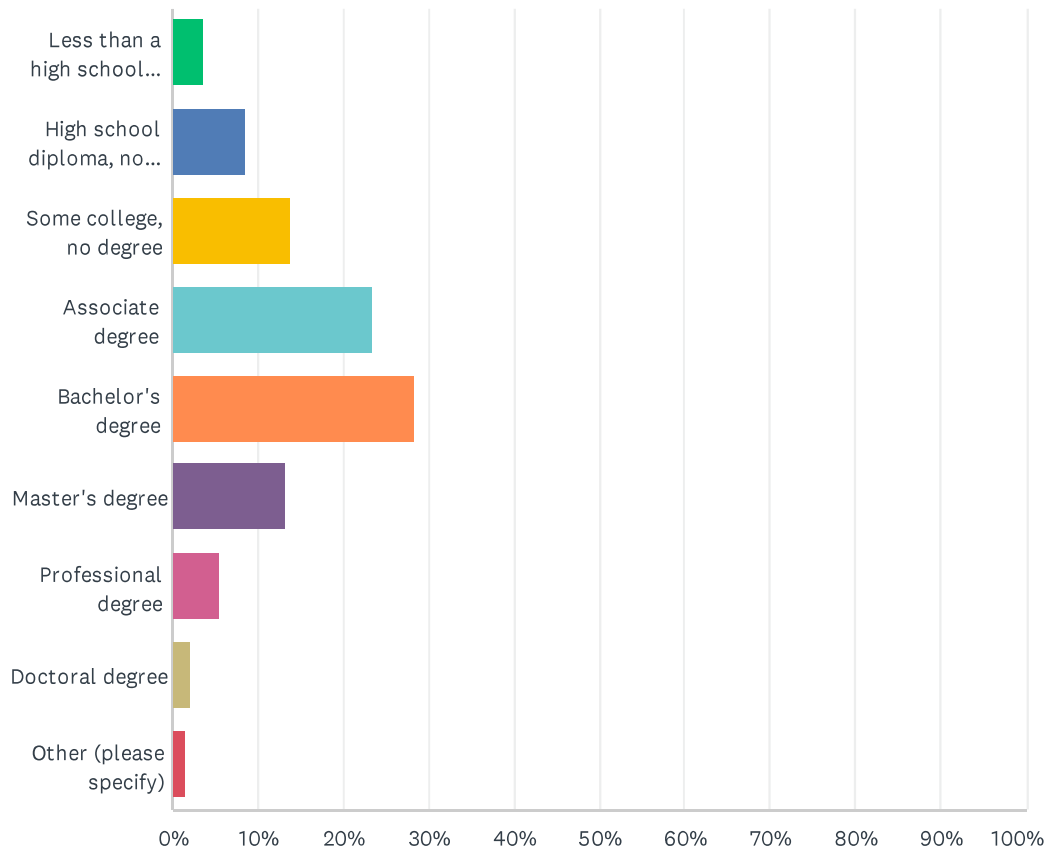
Answered: 1,418    Skipped: 181



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	8.04%	114
Less than \$20,000	4.44%	63
Between \$20,001 and \$34,999	8.67%	123
Between \$35,000 and \$49,999	10.93%	155
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	33.07%	469
Between \$75,000 and \$149,999	21.09%	299
Between \$150,000 and \$249,999	9.94%	141
Over \$250,000	3.81%	54
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,418</b>

## Q22 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

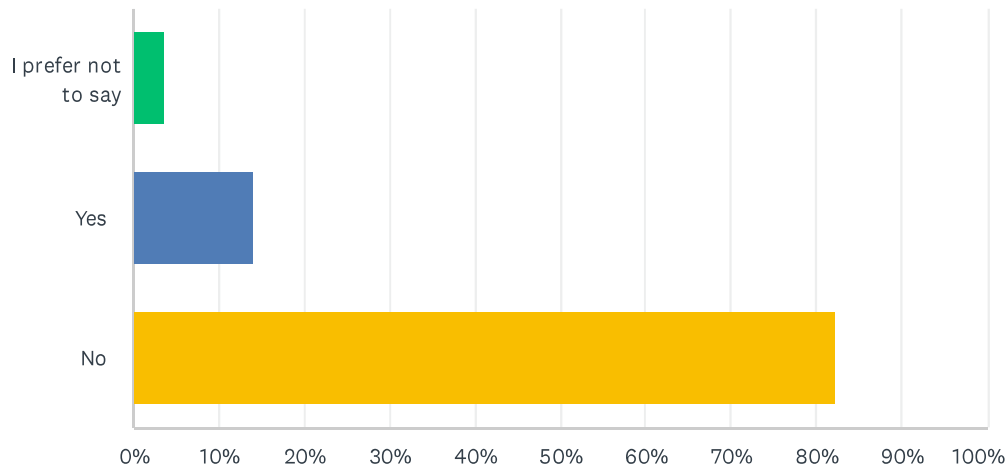
Answered: 1,412 Skipped: 187



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than a high school diploma	3.61%	51
High school diploma, no college	8.50%	120
Some college, no degree	13.81%	195
Associate degree	23.44%	331
Bachelor's degree	28.33%	400
Master's degree	13.24%	187
Professional degree	5.45%	77
Doctoral degree	2.12%	30
Other (please specify)	1.49%	21
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,412</b>

## Q23 Do you identify as having a disability?

Answered: 1,412 Skipped: 187



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer not to say	3.54%	50
Yes	14.16%	200
No	82.29%	1,162
TOTAL		1,412

**Q24 Thank you for sharing your feedback! Please share your email to be entered for a chance to win one of five \$50 Visa Gift cards. You will also receive updates about the Sonoma County Housing Element over the next few months.**

Answered: 1,157   Skipped: 442