

RESULTS OF THE TOWN OF UPTON HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

These survey results
will support the
update of the Town of
Upton's Housing
Production Plan.

2023

A town-wide survey was conducted as part of the Housing Production Plan public outreach process to gather input on housing needs.

The survey was available online and print copies were available at the Upton Town Hall, Public Library, and Senior Center.

The survey was open from October 2022 to January 2023.

356 residents responded to the survey.

The survey aimed to gather information about the following:

- **Demographic Information:** How do the survey respondents represent Upton's population overall?
- **Housing Affordability:** Are survey respondents facing challenges in affording to live in their home or community?
- **Future Housing Needs:** What are survey respondents' current and future housing needs? What types of new housing would residents like to see in the future?

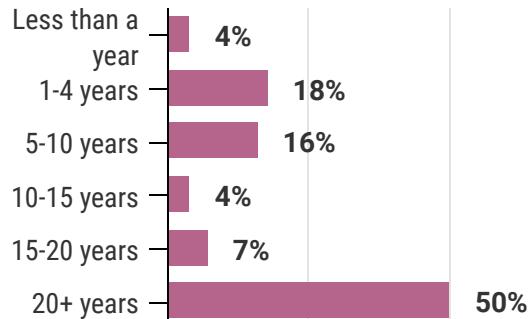


CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS
Regional Planning Commission

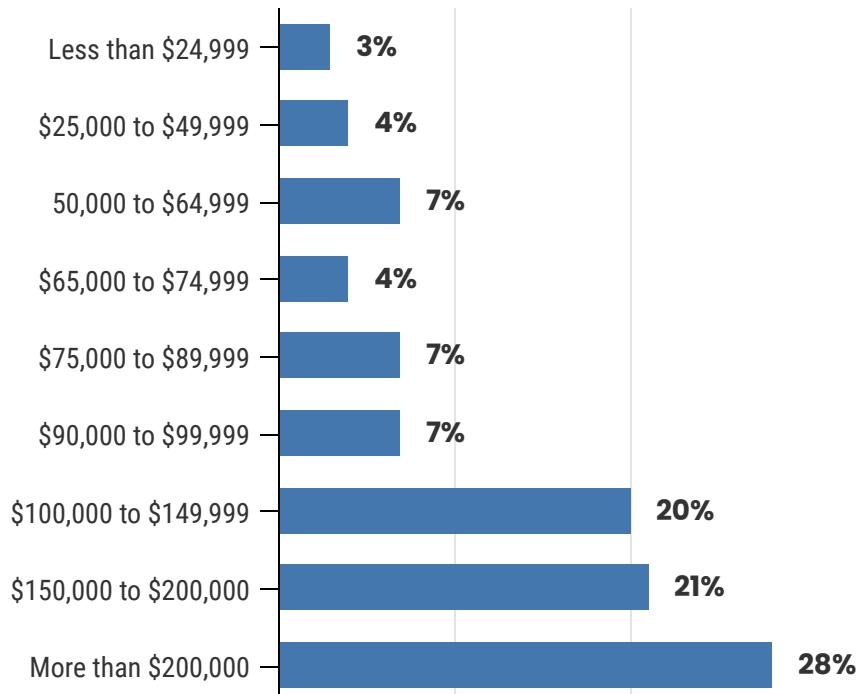
Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Demographics of Survey Respondents

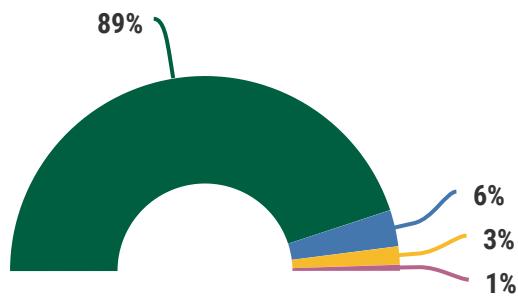
How long have you lived in Upton?



Annual Household Income Range

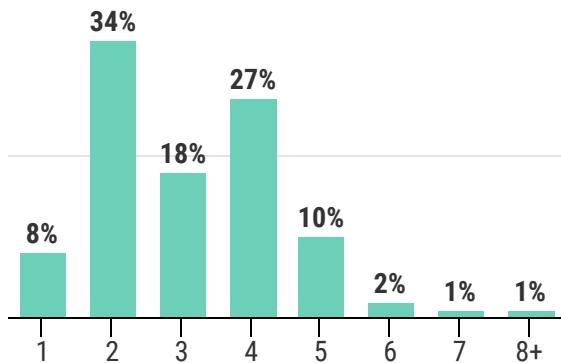


What best describes your current housing situation?

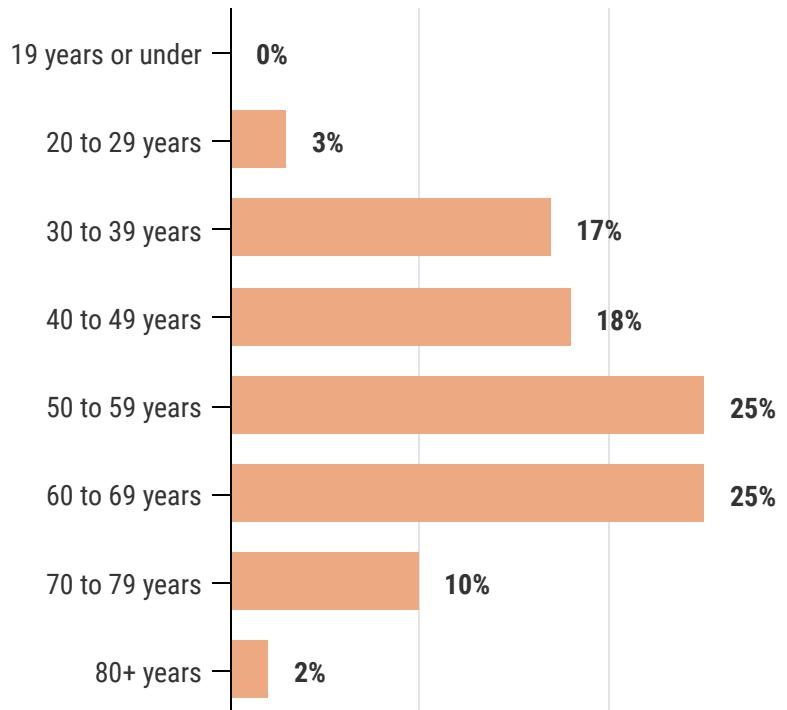


- Homeowner
- Renter
- Living with others and assisting with paying rent or mortgage
- Living with others but not paying rent or mortgage

How many people currently live in your household?



Age Range



Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Current Residence

44% of respondents plan to live in their current home as they age into retirement and **anticipate being able to afford their home** and housing costs.

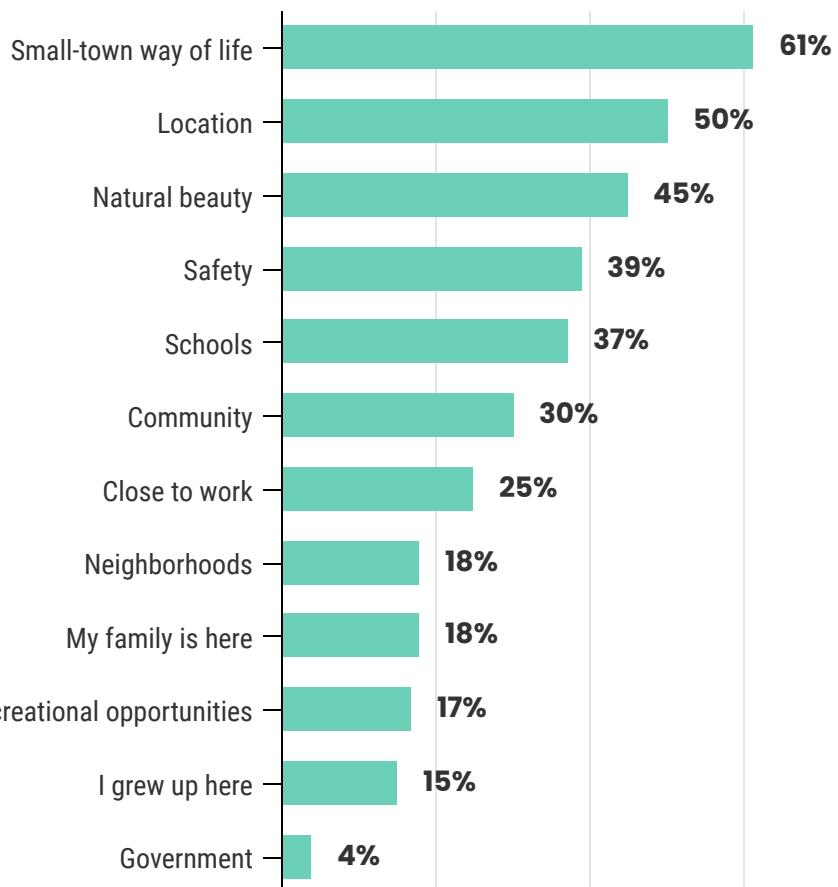
27% of respondents plan to live in their current home as they age into retirement but are **unsure if they will be able to afford their home** and housing costs.

6% of respondents do not plan to live in their current home as they age into retirement because they **will not be able to afford their home** and housing costs.

10% of respondents do not plan to live in their current home as they age into retirement but **would like to remain in Upton if there is housing available** that meets their needs.

14% of respondents do not plan on staying in Upton for **reasons unrelated to housing affordability**.

Which of the following attributes were most influential in your decision to reside in Upton?



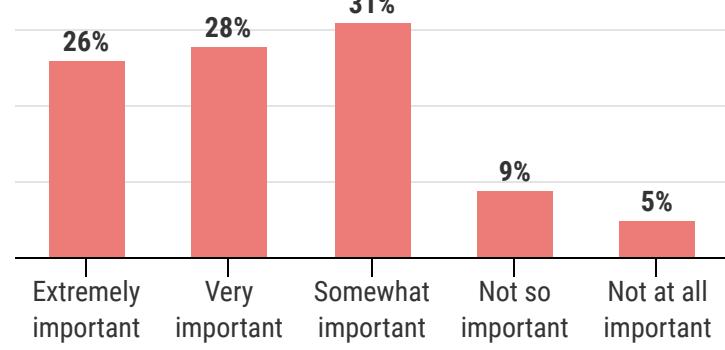
If you were to consider moving out of your community, which of the following factors would drive your decision to move?

- 1 Looking for a different home size that meets your needs (39%)
- 2 Maintaining your current home will be too expensive (34%)
- 3 Maintaining your current home will be too physically challenging (31%)
- 4 Looking for an area that has a lower cost of living (30%)
- 5 Needing to move into a single-level home (26%)

HERE TO STAY

A majority of survey respondents plan to continue living in their current residence and feel it is important to remain in Upton as they age.

How important is it for you to remain in Upton as you age?



Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Comments on Current Residence

"My in-laws will be living with us as THEY age and so it is important for us to be able to be here/afford living here so we can care for them. ""

"We were specifically looking for a 55+ development in a quiet environment"

"I would like to move back to Upton since I grew up here. But at age 48 had to move out because I couldn't afford to buy a house as a single parent."

"I have an affordable housing apartment but with high rent increases and inflation and a job that doesn't promise an annual raise makes, it very difficult on a single income"

"Tax rate which use to be low but is no longer low."

"Upton needs affordable senior living and special needs. Cannot rely on Mill House."

"Strongly desire to remain in the town after downsizing"

"The rising property taxes and lack of town plan for elderly to be able to afford them. My parents died paupers because they elected to stay in their Upton home dad built."

"At the time, Upton was significantly more affordable than where we had been living, just two towns east"

"I can't move out of my parents house because everything is too expensive."

"Ironically, affordability is what brought us here. More home and land for our money compared to where we moved from (Dedham)"

"We have at least 20 years until retirement, and many children. We are afraid to make renovations on our home to better accommodate our large family, because we don't know if we would be able to afford the increase in our property taxes if our home value was assessed higher."

Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Comments on Future Housing and Living Needs

"Downsizing after children age to more accessible city"

"We will need a cheaper home with less stairs."

"Seeking a more culturally diverse community. Seeking a better school system."

"Happy where I am!"

"Looking for a multi generational property with multiple residence structures."

"The costs keep going up in home taxes and sewer charges, it will make it unaffordable for me being disabled and fixed income"

"I'd like to see property taxes structured to not increase after age 65 for those that have lived in Upton for at least 5 years (and that have properties worth less than a million or some other reasonable cap). I'd also like to see more affordable options for assisted living in Upton. The costs right now are not affordable. I'd like to see new developments regulated so that none are allowed to be built over the median cost for that category of housing in our county. We do not need more luxury developments."

"Moving to a town with more amenities including shops and restaurants."

"I would like a more friendly and accepting senior community. If you are not from Upton, you are not welcome!"

"I anticipate downsizing once we no longer need space for three children that live at home. No need to pay or put time into maintaining a home this size."

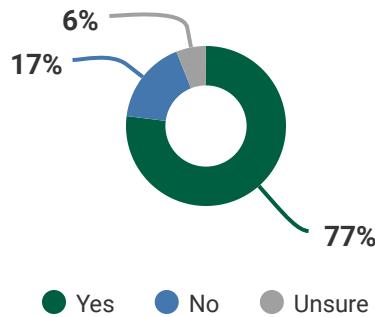
"Want to be in a community that is not stuck in the past and has a sense of community and downtown area more like Westborough, Hopkinton, Uxbridge, etc."

"Reduce property taxes, way too high"

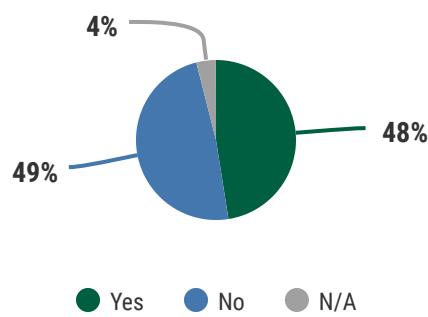
Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Housing Affordability

Are you comfortably able to afford your home and associated housing costs?



Is more than 30% of your monthly income dedicated to paying for housing?



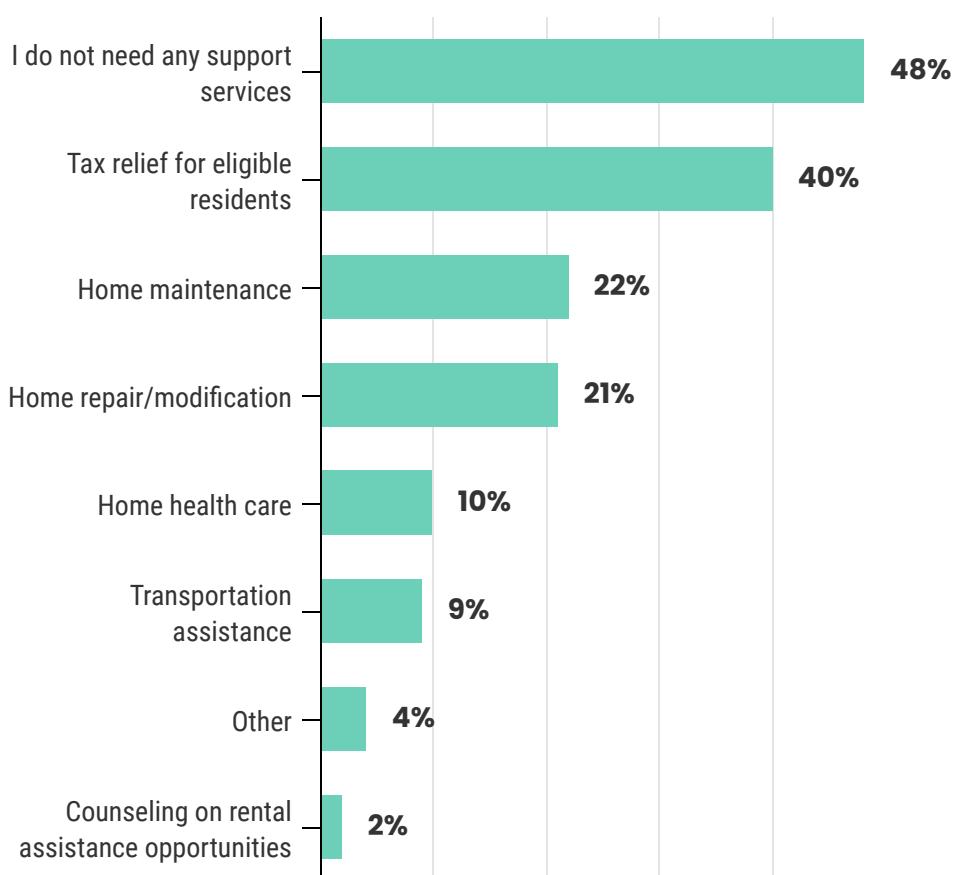
COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

Households that spend more than 30% of income on housing costs (including mortgage, rent, property taxes, utilities, insurance) are considered **cost burdened households**.

These households may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Areas with a significant number of cost-burdened households face an affordable housing shortage.

Almost half (48%) of respondents to this survey are considered cost burdened.

Which of the following housing support services would be the biggest factor in helping you stay in your home?



Are you aware that the Town of Upton has Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds available to be used for affordable housing, and would you be interested in learning more about the ways CPA can be used for affordable housing?

23% of respondents are aware of Upton's CPA funds and are interested in learning more

41% of respondents are aware of Upton's CPA funds but are not interested in learning more

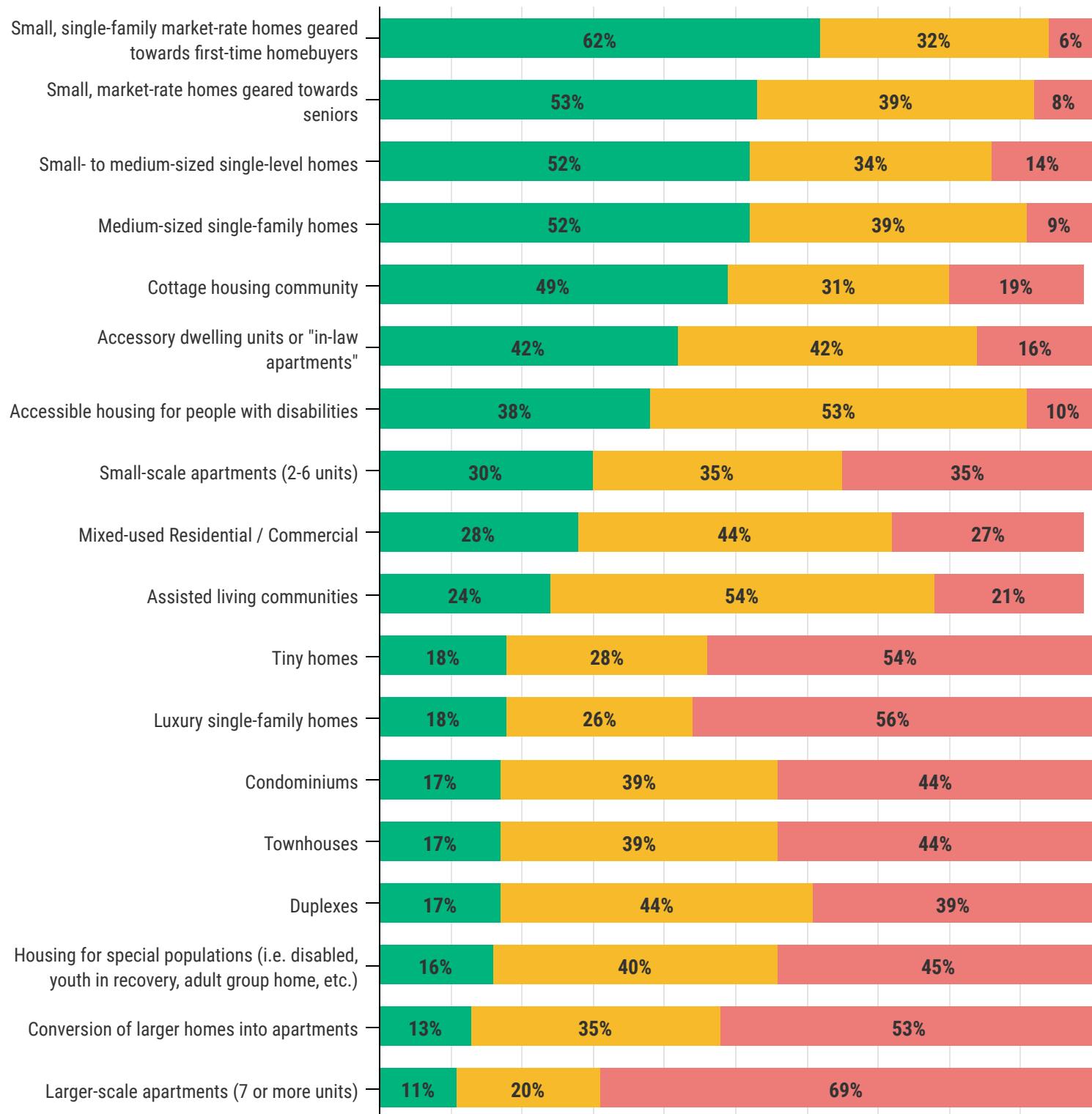
24% of respondents are not aware of Upton's CPA funds but are interested in learning more

13% of respondents are not aware of Upton's CPA funds and are not interested in learning more

Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Future Housing Needs

Desirability of Housing Types in Upton



● Very desirable

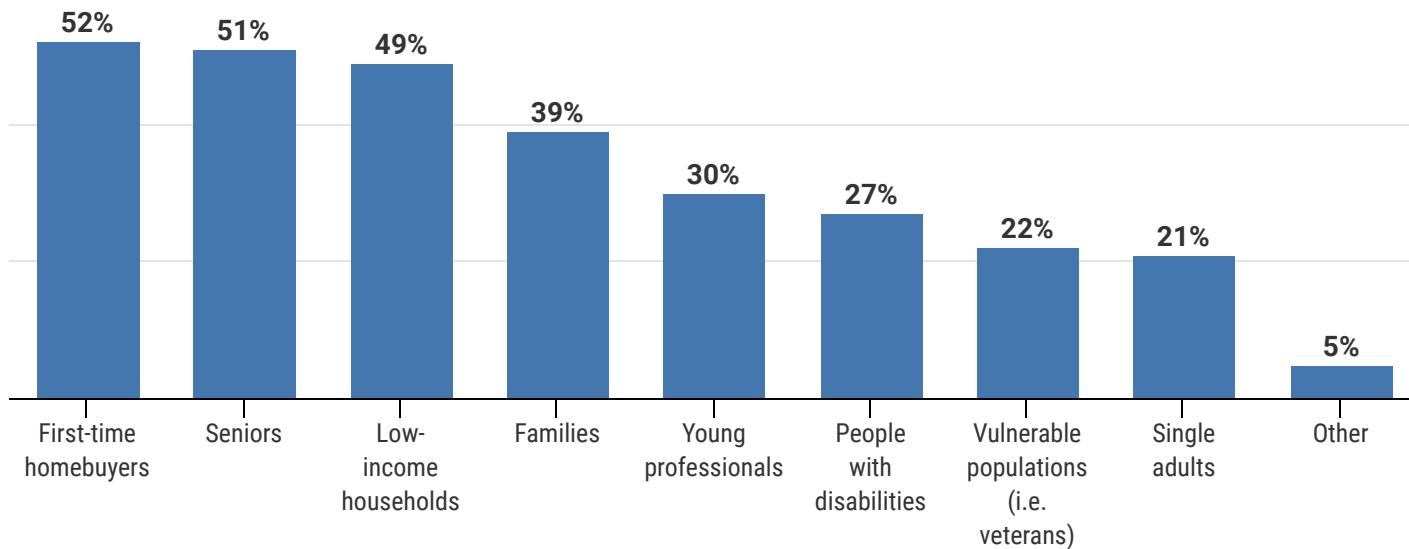
● Somewhat desirable

● Not desirable

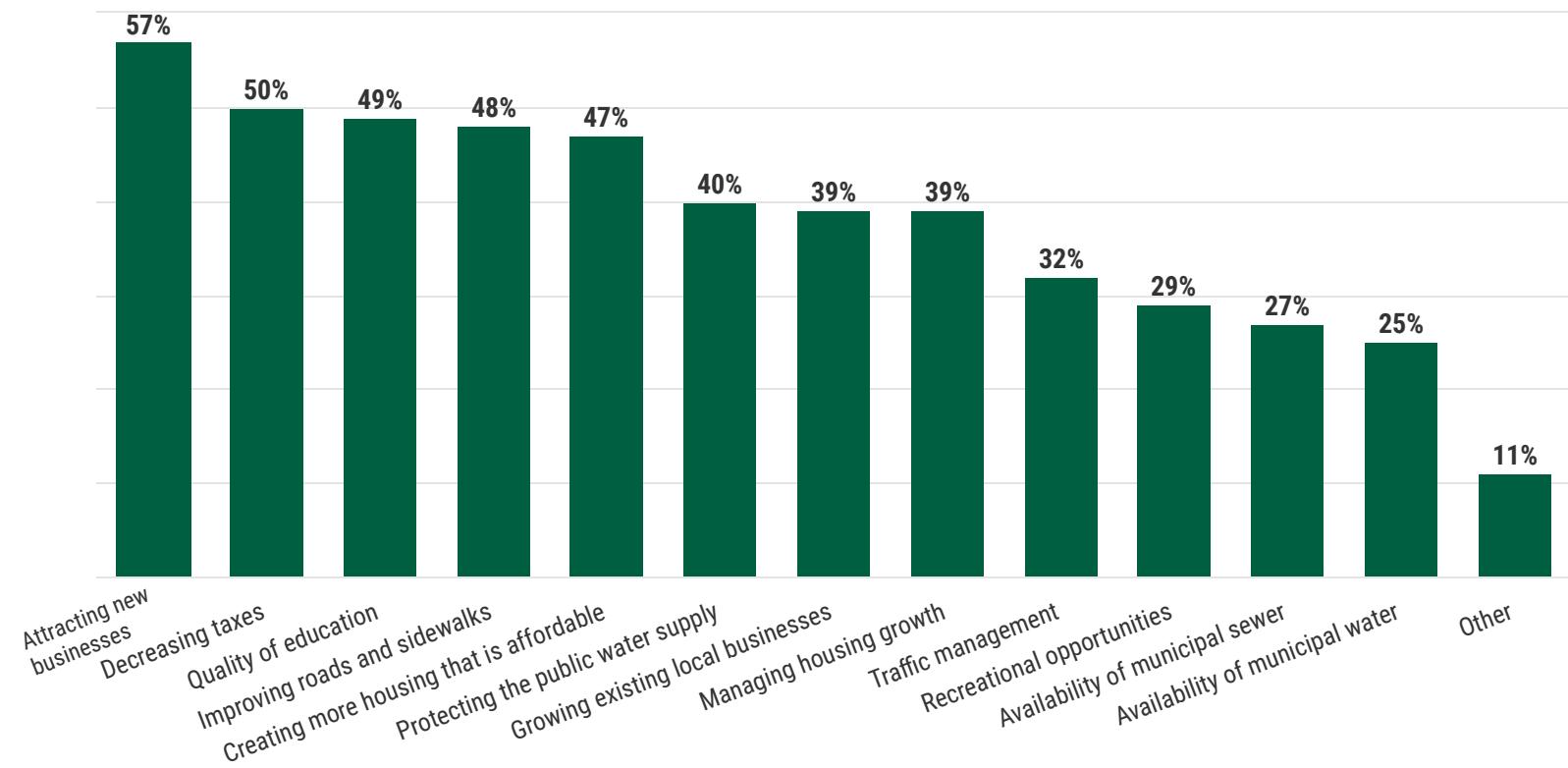
Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Future Housing Needs

Which of the following populations are most in need of increased housing options in Upton?



In your opinion, what are Upton's most pressing needs related to housing and development?



Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

Comments on Housing and Development Priorities

"Protecting open space (re-emphasis on managing housing growth - no more McMansion developments)"

"The town is hardly accessible to pedestrians, wheel chairs and strollers have it hard especially in the summer months when pathways are overgrown"

"Providing water & sewer services for existing streets vs. funding developers."

"Monitoring high speed through residential areas!"

"Cycling and pedestrian safety; green energy and protecting the environment."

"I would love to see more Mixed-use Residential building. Simultaneously provide lower cost housing opportunities, and present prospective businesses with nearby customers to build a local, reliable clientele with. Win/win"

"Plan in advance to expand school capacity. Escrow tax money to apply to the needs of future low-income residents."

"Taxes being #1! You are taxing the old right out of Upton! Stop building such huge homes. The infrastructure can not handle any more homes."

"Negotiate more affordable internet/cable options for seniors and families. Spectrum prices are ridiculous!"

"We need a more robust downtown area. It's currently lackluster."

"A focus on improving what is here already (making town pedestrian-friendly, etc.) will be appealing to potential new businesses and residents in the future. We wish there was a safer way to walk into town from Mendon St! Sidewalk like Mendon has on North Ave."

"Holding meetings with town residents and businesses"

Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

General Comments

"I would like to see low income housing in Upton"

"Need to keep Upton the small town everyone loves and support seniors with property tax credits"

"The town needs a plan for affordable housing so it isn't held hostage to developers that try to jam housing in where they otherwise wouldn't be able to because we don't have a plan."

"Housing affordability and diversity in housing types is vital to sustainable growth of the community. There is a major problem with small scale apartment buildings and smaller to mid-sized homes being missing in the community. The community has only built and encouraged upper middle class single family homes and luxury or upscale over 55 homes."

"Nice, affordable rental options are needed. I like the idea of converting buildings and large houses."

"There is enough space/land on the main roads to be used towards affordable housing, let's try to avoid using land near state forests for housing."

"Without more public transport it would be difficult for low income housing. Personal transportation is necessary to live in this town."

"Let the seniors live here affordably, why build affordable housing for any ages to draw to the town, help the residents here."

"Would love townhouses with real amenities (pool, tennis, pickleball)"

"Upton has been gentrifying the past two decades. The housing development excludes the working class, minorities and fixed income seniors. There is little diversity in housing types. This lack of housing diversity makes the community less diverse in its citizens and residents resulting in a decline in the overall quality of Town."

"Location of housing matters. Create housing availability closer to MBTA abutting towns and denser housing where it makes sense, like downtown near commercial areas. Please don't plan giant housing developments where there is nothing around. Upton can have plenty of affordable housing with proper planning."

Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

General Comments

"Build in the center of town. People need walkable neighborhoods."

"There should be a town bylaw that requires 10% low income housing in all new developments"

"I know the math is the math but even the prices of what is being considered "affordable" is ridiculously high."

"We DO NOT need any more 55+ communities! We do need to preserve our forests and stop building such huge single family homes."

"Some type of incentive program to help encourage sellers to sell to first time buyers instead of cash investors & flippers"

"I really hope we can develop affordable housing for seniors. Those 600K townhouses aren't helping lower income seniors."

"We need a larger tax base, more diversity in incomes and ethnicity. Many in town seem determined to maintain its "rural character," but this locks the town into the 1950s. I for one have no interest in living the past."

"Enable young families/lower income individuals to build equity in affordable homes. Condos/developments with ludicrous HOA fees and apartments are undesirable."

"We need to maintain open space, NOT build more housing."

"Stop building giant houses on huge plots of land. We're in a huge housing crisis, we need affordable housing and rental units or this town is going to stifle itself. With a variety of housing options we could have a vibrant and diverse community."

"I know several young adults that are college educated or who have graduated from technical colleges who are still living at home several years after receiving their degrees. They have lived their entire lives here and wish to build their future in this community, however, there is very little hope of them being able to purchase a home here due to the high cost of homes."

Upton Housing Needs Survey Results

General Comments

"I believe the next generation of young professionals prefer to live in condos or apartment buildings and do NOT place importance/demand on 2 acre lots with 2500+ square ft colonial style homes."

"Large scale condos are NOT what Upton needs. The roads water sewer and schools cannot handle it. Fix these first."

"If Millhaus is ever sold, there is no other alternative for the elderly here. Coachroad is falling apart with no upgrades for over 50 years. We need to consider low income and elderly NOW."

"Try to keep from destroying our woodlands and open space. Try to keep development along areas such as Route 140, Main St., etc."

"Mixed developments with different sized and types of houses which can attract seniors, families and low income together. Cookie cutter McMansions aren't appealing."

"Roads need to be fixed/built/expanded before housing is added!"

"It would be great to see Upton still attract young professionals and not have younger home buyers be priced out. I know we can't control all of that, but if we grow static on younger population, that's not healthy for the town."

"More senior housing"

"We love the community here and our neighbors, but it definitely feels like a town that's only for the rich."

"We think the most important theme to adhere to would be to manage Upton's growth in line with Upton's historic style and purpose as a suburban small town with great access to the outdoors and community."

"I'd like to see regulations to preserve agricultural land; regulations to prevent developments that include luxury units; a plan to utilize green energies--e.g., the solar panels over the parking lot at Miscoe. I want every new building project to be required to include explicit plans for maximizing energy efficiency."