

# HOUSING ATTAINABILITY IN THE BEAR RIVER AREA



## Assessing Public Attitudes, Beliefs, and Preferences on Housing Attainability, Growth, and Development



**PREPARED BY** Peyton Reynolds, TCI Intern & Dr. Jess Lucero, TCI Faculty Researcher

**FUNDED BY & PREPARED FOR** Bear River Association of Governments



College of Humanities & Social Sciences  
Transforming Communities Institute  
Utah State University.

### BACKGROUND

Utahns are experiencing numerous challenges related to affording, securing, and maintaining housing.

#### Why was this study done?

**40%** of all Utahns are housing cost burdened (spending more than 30% of monthly income on housing)



**18%** of all Utahns are severely cost-burdened (more than 50% of monthly income on housing)



- To assess public perceptions of affordable housing in the Bear River area (Cache County, Box Elder County, and Rich County).
- With rising prices, interest rates, and other issues, many Utahns face significant housing challenges that affect health and workforce retention.
- Despite ongoing efforts, progress is slow, and public outcry often hinders solutions.

This survey will provide crucial data on public sentiment to inform policy and interventions in the Bear River area.

### METHOD

TCI used public intercept and online survey recruitment strategies to collect 316 survey responses (70.3% women) from residents in the Bear River area.

#### % of responses by County



### MEASURES



TCI partnered with BRAG to develop a 5-7 minute online survey with 20 descriptive qualitative and quantitative questions.



Three participants were randomly selected to receive gift cards as an incentive.

### RESULTS

What housing challenges are Bear River area residents most concerned with?\*

- #1** Housing affordability 
- #2** Infrastructure capacity (e.g., roads, water, electric) 
- #3** Overcrowding 
- #4** Limited variety in housing types (e.g., apartments, townhouses) 
- #5** Other

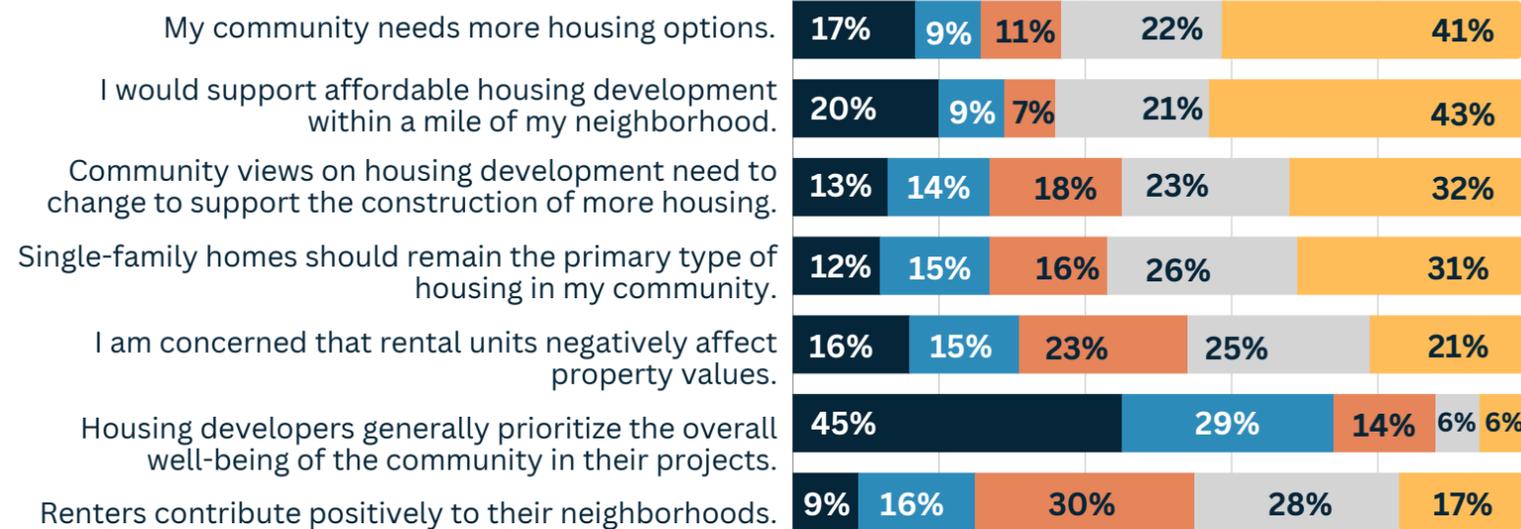
\*The rank order of concerns was remarkably consistent between counties.

Although "Other" was ranked last, more than 70 residents shared concerns in detailed responses in the following themes:

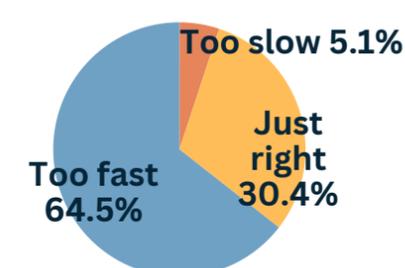
- Affordability and Housing Quality
- Community / Social issues
- Zoning and Land Use Issues
- Short Term Rentals
- Impact on Schools / Community Services
- Government / Policy Concerns
- Housing for Vulnerable populations
- Environmental Impact
- Parking Concerns
- Crime Rates



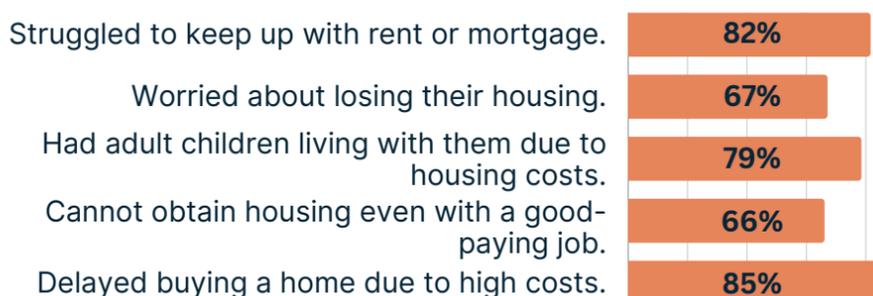
Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on each statement below (see chart to the right).



In the last 5 years, my community's population has grown...



In the last 5 years, I personally know someone who has...



### CONCLUSION

#### Personal Impact

Many residents know individuals facing housing challenges



#### Key Issues

Zoning restrictions, short-term rentals, loss of small-town character



#### Community Frustrations

Overcrowded schools, insufficient local services, affordable housing, etc.



#### Call to Action

Community-driven efforts for sustainable, inclusive solutions



Despite challenges, a strong community desire exists for diverse, affordable housing options and thoughtful development that balances growth with preserving community identity.