



MEMORANDUM

West Linn Online Survey Summary

West Linn Housing Needs Analysis

DATE May 24, 2021
TO Darren Wyss and Chris Meyers, City of West Linn
FROM Matt Hastie, Brandon Crawford, APG
CC Brendan Buckley, Johnson Economics

Overview

The City of West Linn held a virtual Open House to share the latest results and housing strategy recommendations from the city's Housing Capacity Analysis project. The Open House included two separate online survey sections to gather input from the area's residents regarding the recommended housing strategies. The housing strategies are meant to address the City's housing needs, which were based on the results of the Housing Capacity Analysis and input from staff and the project Advisory Committee. The two survey sections were divided by the following housing strategy categories:

- Land Supply, Policy, and Development Code strategies
- Incentives and Funding Sources

The survey was open from May 5 to May 23. The Open House was hosted on ESRI StoryMaps and the survey was conducted with ESRI Survey123. They were publicized via the following activities:

- West Linn Tidings
- City of West Linn website
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- City Newsletter
- Email to various groups – Neighborhood Associations, Project Advisory Committees, City Boards and Commissions

The Open House had 592 visits, and the two surveys had 64 and 74 responses. The surveys asked respondents to indicate whether each recommended strategy should be high, medium, or low priority. Both survey sections included open-ended "comments/questions" sections, which are provided in separate attachments. While the surveys are closed, the Open House is still active and can be found here:

<https://arcg.is/1jmP8i>

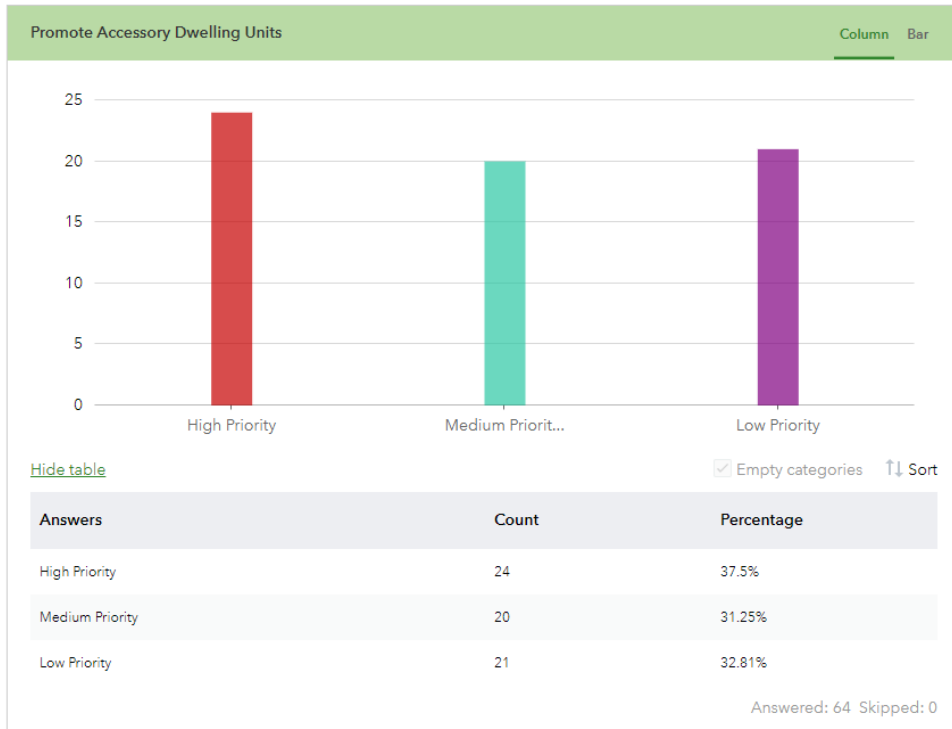
Summary of Responses and Key Themes

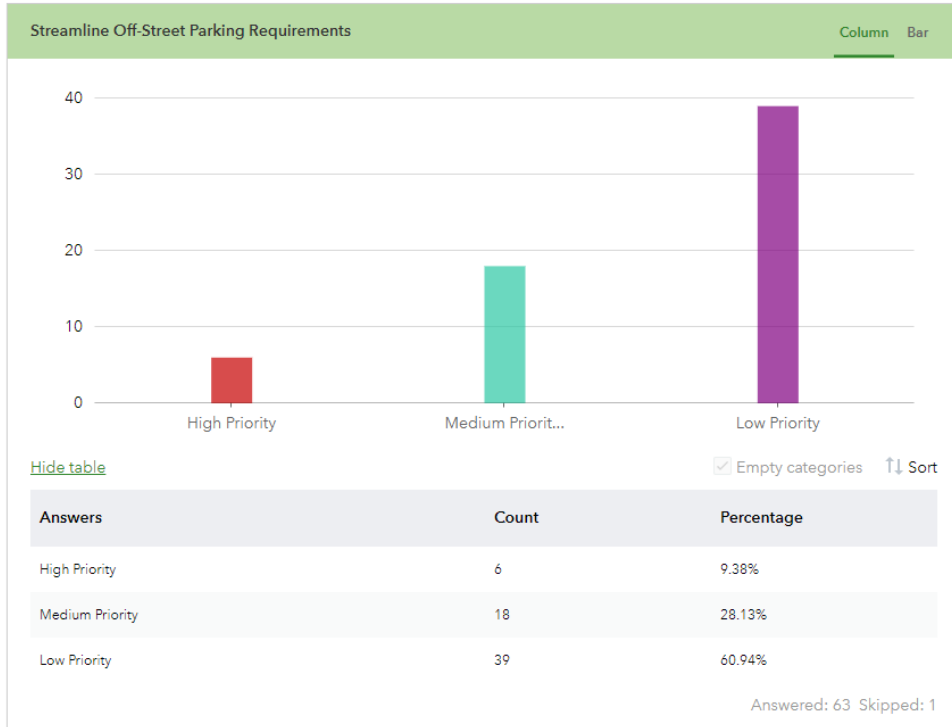
- With the exception of promoting ADUs, respondents generally rated strategies that promote density (e.g. rezone land, increase allowed density, promote middle housing) as “low priority.”
- The majority of respondents rated the incentive and funding strategies as “low priority.”
- Similar to previous survey results, there is a general desire to preserve West Linn’s low-density character.
- There is some recognition and support for more affordable housing.
- There are general concerns about parking.
- Some participants voiced general concerns and distrust regarding development incentives – many respondents claim incentives are designed to favor/maximize profit for developers, rather than making housing more affordable.

Land Supply and Policy/Development Code Strategies

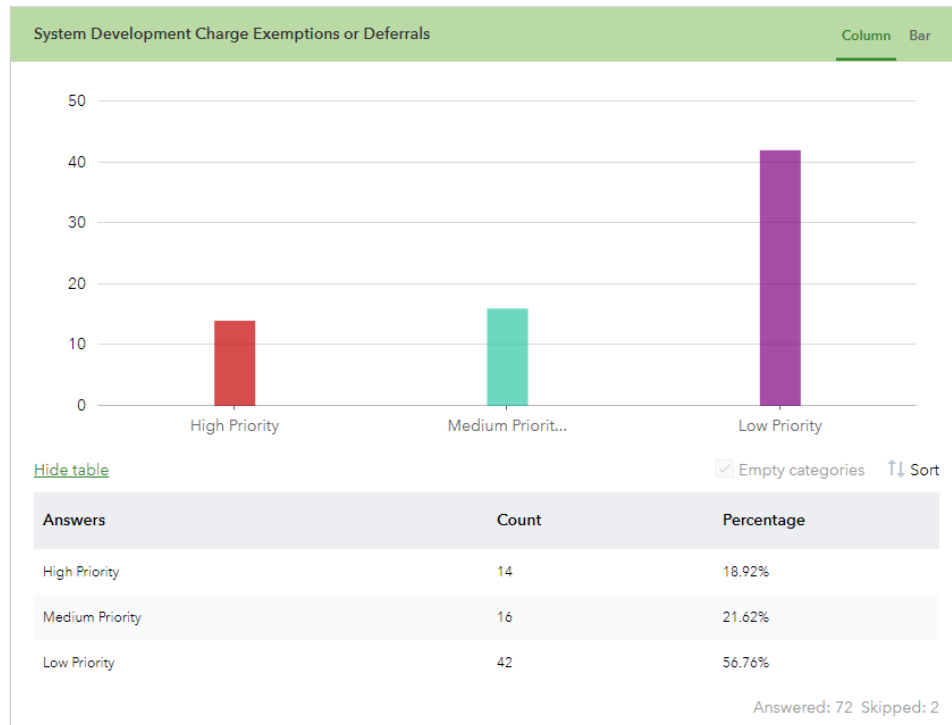




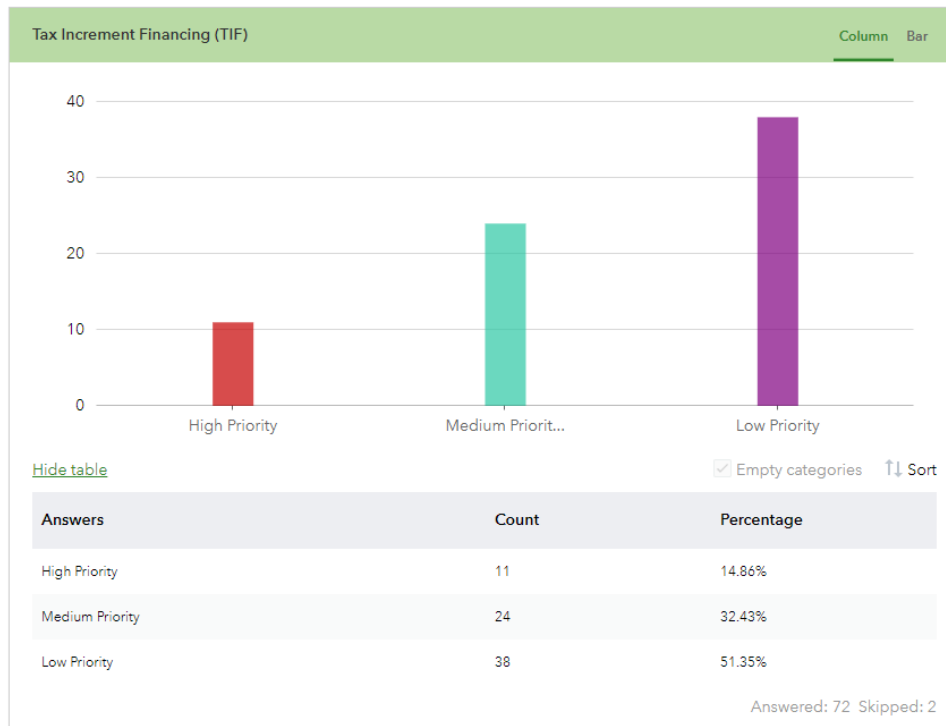


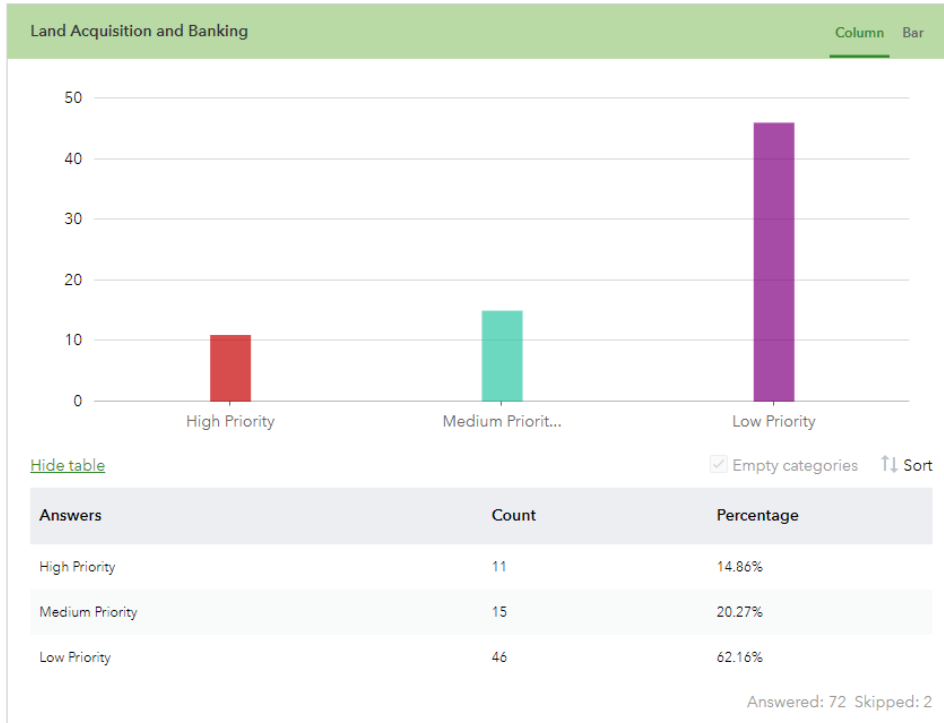


Incentives and Funding Sources











West Linn Housing Capacity Analysis Survey

II – Open Ended Responses

May 2021

In response to the open-ended question “Do you have any other comments?” participants in the West Linn Housing Capacity Analysis online survey provided the following responses. Responses have been transcribed verbatim with no corrections for punctuation or grammar errors.

Land Supply and Policy/Development Code Strategies

- your totally missing housing for seniors and the aging community
- While there were some "knee-jerk" reactions to the Oregon legislation, I think helping people find affordable housing IN WEST LINN is a very important project that will not only meet housing needs, but will help strengthen West Linn as a community - making it more diverse and welcoming. I support these measures and zoning changes 100%.
- West Linn is an upper middle class to low wealth community. I have no interest in sacrificing the investment I and others have made in this community for low income housing. Low income, will not be able to support the public things we have achieved. They will always be against adequate funding increases for infrastructure, not because they do not support good infrastructure, they simply cannot afford it. We should not be all things to all people. Lets keep the quality of life we now enjoy. I have worked in communities where I have seen the desire for low income housing and I have watched those communities significantly deteriorate.
- West Linn is a community and that means having a populous of residents with some ties to the city. That does not mean more apartments that tend to be somewhat transient by nature. We have a nice level of residents now, and unless new housing comes with a large initial payment for the increased services needed, I say stick with what we have.
- This did not take into account the committees recommendations on adjustments of priorities.
- These questions are dejavu all over again. To my memory these topics (and discussion about them) go back at least thirty years. Almost all options are now a HIGH PRIORITY because of neglect and misplaced priorities for decades. West Linn now faces putting greater density on few available locations. We may have passed the tipping point of making this palatable to the citizens. I believe that a sincere and determined effort will have to be made to correct the imbalance in West Linn's housing mix. I heartily endorse the effort to correct the situation but history teaches that West Linn will probably again fall short. However, the likelihood of failure should not dissuade an attempt to succeed.
- There is no true need to replicate every type of housing/development in every portion of the Metro area -- a logic that underlies most planning. As a sociologist, I believe that a rational approach would consider the entire Metro area and allow specialization of housing types within it. We chose West Linn due to its low-density, almost ex-urban quality, while still allowing condos and similar development in some portions.
- Streamline off-street parking requirements will create conflicts among neighbors: Occupants of new housing units without on-site parking (driveways and/or garage) will park their vehicles in front of adjacent neighbor's residence. Also, why is the City/County/Metro/State determined to

Re-Imagine the Bolton neighborhood so much? Is it because Bolton is an older neighborhood with a higher concentration of more modest homes? Is it because Bolton doesn't resemble neighborhoods like Parker Crest, Rosemont-Summit? Increasing housing density in West Linn will result in greater demand for infrastructure, newer residents will demand more parks (there are enough parks in West Linn, and existing parks are already too expensive to maintain). Increasing housing density in West Linn will increase utility (water & sewer rates; street and parks fees) existing residents already pay. Planners to alter housing densities don't live in West Linn and want to make it unbearably expensive for those that do

- Rural areas of West Linn should be kept rural to maintain our city's quality of life. Respect the values and wants of current taxpayers. Our infrastructure doesn't support the population density as is, much less an increased density. Many of our roads need to be redone, not just patched, and traffic is excessive at many areas in the city, such as Borland Rd/Willamette Falls Drive, and Blankenship Rd/Salamo Rd. As shown on Zillow, Trulia and other real estate sites, homes are frequently available for sale in West Linn. There is adequate housing available without the need for more.
- Quality of life in West Linn is more than jamming more people in a finite area. Some leeway needs to be accommodated, but sensible planning requires a coordinated approach of people, services and environment.
- Parking is essential. Lack of parking leads to neighborhood conflict, and calls for service to the police and code enforcement. Look at our demographics, we are a young city. Young families have kids that will drive, and need to park. West Linn cannot be served by transit like a flatter more urban area. Lack of parking has devastated neighborhoods in Portland, don't repeatedly the mistakes/negligence of Hoodview- Noble.
- None of this matters if people can't easily commute to work from their homes. Once you head up the hill from 43, it's very difficult to get around if you don't have a car. I'd love to see more investment in public transportation options that make it easier to get to/from business and retail hubs!
- No one is addressing traffic, speed control, address traffic flow and speed, walking, quality of life.
- New high density housing should be limited to age 55+ to keep our public schools high performing. The selling point of higher density housing will lower the cost of housing for everyone doesn't work in West Linn or Lake Oswego. We moved here because it is an affluent community. We choose to pay more so we don't have the problems that come with low income housing or houseless communities.
- Let the marketplace decide
- It should be easier for homeowners to pull permits, the West Linn permitting office clearly caters to contractors and developers, not home owners. We should be able to work on our homes easier without pushback from the city in the form of vague rules and staff that refuse to respond to simple inquiries. If you want access to improve, help homeowners pull permits easier so that we can better remodel our properties.
- Increasing population density beyond what it is now degrades every measurable element of livability and is contrary to the needs of the people of West Linn. Everything from traffic problems to mental health will be worse as density increases. The community will be less

enjoyable and more problematic, crime will rise, and safety will degrade. We need to leave zoning alone.

- If you're going to build, put in the required number of parking spaces. Otherwise, no go. West Linn isn't a transit town.
- I would like to see more affordable options for housing in this area and I don't mind higher density living. However, greater density means more people, which can negatively impact the number of students in the schools and the amount of traffic on the roads, among other things. These issues need to be addressed in conjunction with any housing plans. Better public transport and more options for safe walking and biking (like along Willamette Falls Drive) could take pressure off the roads and provide options for commuting.
- I would also love to see more nice, single family homes that are not huge - there is a big need for more homes in the 1,500 - 2,000 sq ft range. This could be a great option for people who no longer need the 3,000+ sq ft but want a nice home in a nice area and are not interested in a townhome or other such type of dwelling.
- I thought I already answered. The only change that seems aesthetically acceptable and supports existing home values so that homeowners don't lose a significant portion of their equity, is the cottage cluster. Consider that home equity is a significant portion of retirees' assets, and they really can't afford to lose this asset. You would be creating a new category of poverty by taking this away. There is plenty of land for condos and quadriplexes, etc. Those areas have their own aesthetic and people know what they are choosing. People who bought in single family zones invested in exactly what they wanted: space, privacy, quiet, NOT urbanized settings. Relaxing off street parking requirements to some extent is not really objectionable, but a suburb dweller normally expects to park in front of their own house, not find that space occupied. This might seem trivial, but it's one of the reasons people buy in a single family zoned area.
- I have to move away from west Linn this year due to housing cost, so I feel this on a personal level.
- I don't want to see anytime of this development. I like our city small and do not see a need to shove more people in. We are basically frustrated with this direction for the city (and state). We are beginning to feel the need to just move.
- Don't wreck West Linn. #Resist
- Don't allow McMansions on large plots and then shoehorn high density into other neighborhoods, i.e., Toll Brothers on Salamo. (Let's talk about equity rather than the top dollar winning.) Single story homes, without steps, in cottage clusters would meet the needs of older residents. Against rezoning for taller buildings, closer to property line, and allowing more on-street parking.
- completely off track. survey doesn't address what residents want. rather, it leans heavily toward politically desired outcome. start over. do a true unbiased survey
- Changing the density of housing will only benefit the developers and hurt the character of the area. Certain areas are already feeling the negative impact with increased parking difficulty and added traffic.
- Changes need to be equitable, and avoid dumping high density development onto 43 in Bolton or in Sunset. Instead of offloading focused high density development into a few neighborhoods, consider incremental changes to city zoning as a whole. That way the burden of change is

equitably shared throughout the city, instead of focused on 1 or 2 neighborhoods as is typical for Oregon land use planning.

- allowing more ADUs does not always mean property owners will rent to long term tenants, in this current economic situation many property owners use their ADUs for short term "visitors" (airb&b, vrbo) which cause more parking problems, more trash, more noise, etc. Also, the property taxes in Oregon are ridiculous ! adding more housing will not encourage the state to reconsider the way properties are assessed ! I know because I have appealed my property taxes many times !!!!
- Allow adu and make permit on existing property cheaper

Incentives and Funding Sources

- You know this is all bulls**t because West Linn always has and always will continue to cater to the people who want to make money by tearing down forests and fields and building huge monuments to excess wealth. Good luck
- Yes! Please stop adding bonds to seniors 60 and older. We are being taxed out of our homes because people move in for good schools, vote for high bonds added to our taxes and then they move to less expensive areas when the kids graduate. When the new people move in they also vote for high bonds and then they move on. Anyone that has lived here for more than 10 years should not have to pay for all of these bonds. At some point, this city will not have any grandmas and grandpas left.
- Yeah, let's cram more people into West Linn , "low income" housing = crime. More people = more crime. We pay more to live here so as to enjoy a safe community, a refined city, a higher-end way of life. Lets not become freaking Gresham. Why can't the city realize people want a lovely community, not a sea of apartments or more McMansion developments? Don't ruin an already over-populated community. Don't invite a less than desirable element with overcrowding and low income housing. If someone can't afford to live here, too bad.
- Why not allow rezoning so that existing large lots can be split in two?
- Whatever is decided there should be some information sent to all surrounding neighbors in any infill being developed.
- West Linn needs to focus on using existing taxpayer dollars as requested by the taxpayer. Borrowing against future taxes or taxes intended for other purposes is irresponsible and poor use of citizen tax dollars. Property taxes continue to increase to the point of forcing some citizens out of homes they've owned for decades and this is unacceptable. ADUs at property owner discretion can provide resources for citizens to support family members or generate additional income to allow property owners to stay in their current homes. New developments and division of current lots to add additional homes is not in the best interest of the citizens of West Linn, as our infrastructure doesn't support our current density and the rural areas of West Linn need to be preserved.
- West Linn must dynamically change its use of land and perspective of what kind of community it is if it is to meet its housing needs for the next 20 years.
- We absolutely do not need to give developers, who are typically not residents and who tend to use out-of-state workers, to have it any easier. What we do need is for some developers who promise one thing and then do something else to be held accountable. I specifically refer to the

one-time winery on Salamo that went in when the owner stated he only wanted city water rights so he and his wife could live there and open a small vineyard. Several years later, WHAM! Expensive housing and no more vineyard. That is the sort of shenanigans that ought to have been put stop to when the bulldozers came in to level the land. Also, CET rates need to be higher, at least 5%/

- There is little employment in West Linn relative to population so I think worker housing is a red herring. The City would benefit more from adding accommodations to office buildings and urban amenities like music venues and restaurants. I fail to grasp how the zoning and other changes would actually benefit West Linn residents.
- The monies, tax breaks, etc. should be focused on the folks who need the economic support-- not on corporations. I know we need enhancements to get industry to work with us to build affordable housing, but sometimes what is billed as affordable housing (i.e. tiny studios in downtown Portland which rent for \$1,500 or more a month) is not affordable. Remember minimum wage earners make about \$30,000 a year pre taxes.
- The city should really focus on road improvements and park maintenance and stop being magnanimous with our tax money.
- The city needs to take all options into consideration for how to create more affordable housing options in the city of West Linn.
- Stop taxing hard working Americans to support those who choose not to work!! We chose to live in West Linn for a reason. This will drive down property values and increase panhandlers on our streets.
- Sprawl and growth and infill needs to be managed. Maintaining the pastoral places should be a priority—similar to what LO did with Luscher Farms. West Linn doesn't want more apartments and low-income units. We are already paying for that being the priority in Wilsonville. I'd like to see WL break from a connected WL-Wilsonville school district!
- Single family dwellings are what the community is built round. I don't agree with high density or "middle" sized housing projects.
- SDC's could be less for these types of project but not eliminated. I've seen too many developers come to West Linn and claim they will build "affordable housing" (looking for a break of some sort) and reality they are just doing the same old stuff. Just look around and you can see what I mean. Part of the issues with any of the incentives, speeding up the process and stuff is a small staff that would have a hard time potentially keeping up with the demand.
- quit bending us over for the loudest squawking individuals who try to run everything and change results and history. We don't want to be another Portland and be ruined by those who don't create but instead destroy what hard working citizens help build.
- Please stop adding bonds to senior citizens property taxes. We will have to move if this doesn't stop.
- Please ensure that adequate off street parking is mandated. It is extremely dangerous for our kids walking or playing outside when cars are parked in the street, serving as obstructions to drivers. Put their lives first.
- One choice does not make a survey. This survey is communist, not capitalist. You give no choices. Your only interest is to bulldoze your way to profit whether it is a top, a medium or a low "priority." The only interests this city serves are the cement and construction families who reside in this town. I have an idea: fashion a tent city for the homeless in Forest Park. Plenty of

space there for human dumping. I am against your foul mouthed city council and its monied masters.

- Not willing to pay higher taxes so developers/builders can feather their own pockets. That includes decreasing SDC and giving tax abatements. Prefer any TIF to be used for the waterfront project which benefits all of WL's population. Any TIF must have a short life span so that WL fulfill the project but not handicap our tax base.
- None of them are desirable!
- Like you guys really give a s**t about these results. Define how High, Med, Low results will alter YOUR plans for OUR neighborhoods.
- Leave zoning the way it is and don't use funds to encourage multi family units that make developers a lot of money even without subsidy.
- Leave West Linn alone. You're trying to turn it into a ghetto.
- It seems the city needs 5 more acres for high density housing. Let's focus on that problem, get it done and move on. Most homeowners bought in West Linn due to its existing housing density. Increases in density will cause some (many?) to move out. This is evidenced by the low demand for high density housing in the initial table. None of these strategies will affect overall cost much. That should not be our goal. I don't want the city's money going to incentivize anyone. It's not that big of a problem. If the city wants to spend money, buy 5 acres in an appropriate area, get it rezoned and sell it to a high density developer.
- If the market demands a type of housing, there is no need to subsidize it with taxpayer users. All government needs to do is to get out of the way of the private sector and allow them to build. If a development needs a subsidy, then it shouldn't be built in the first place because all you're doing is shifting the tax burden to everyone else.
- I feel like West Linn will be turning into Ghetto housing and lowering the value of our homes by adding these low cost housing. I'm not for it. I feel it's a HUGE mistake, just like your "back in parking" theory. I feel you're taking West Linn down the wrong path. I'm disappointed.
- I do not support any development that does not include off street parking. We need to learn from the Hoodview-Noble area to see what a complete failure that is. On going calls for police and code enforcement. You cannot enforce your way out of BAD planning and engineering. We are a young city, families have kids, kids drive...they need to park.
- I am a West Linn residence since 1993 living in the same neighborhood and home for 28 years. My only feedback and concern is this: TRAFFIC - BY FOOT OR CAR - GETTING WORST! By foot and auto, our streets and intersections are getting over crowded! I.E. - 10 St. intersection near 205 S. FWY. on/off ramps with NO traffic lights yet; Stafford and Salamo Rd. intersection; any street intersecting Hidden Springs Rd. upward or downward. Non-existing sidewalks or walkways for pedestrians (e.g. - some along Santa Anita Rd. or downhill to 205 S. FWY.). Need more pedestrian friendly walkways.; 43 HWY (Willamette Drive) is very BAD TRAFFIC most times beginning in the afternoon during weekdays (especially towards West Linn Library!); Intersection near West Linn High School downhill leading to Oregon City bridge or towards Market of Choice - VERY BAD - left or right turns are virtually impossible with out much needed traffic lights during rush hour weekday traffic! We want more residence???
- Freezing property assessments only help those who already have property here as well as limiting growth opportunities for revenue. Prioritizing affordability and reduction of building costs is an immediate savings to those seeking affordable housing.

- Find strategies to incentivize infill in neighborhoods currently served by infrastructure-especially public transportation.
- Don't wreck West Linn. #Resist
- Any housing considerations need to include parking and funding for traffic improvements ie additional roads, traffic lights. Should not increase any housing density without doing these necessary transportation additions to be able to accommodate that increased density.
- Additional affordable housing will increase the people using a limited infrastructure and supplies, plus bring in more crime into the the suburban areas. An increase of low income households will diminish the desire of new home buyers to want to live in the new areas. There are plenty of low income houses around the area without sacrificing new developments.
- A strategy that offers financial benefits to the developer (such as SDC exemptions or deferrals) should only be given if it can the developer can demonstrate that the cost reduction has been passed on to the occupant(s) of the built housing units. Don't give the developer a financial reward that does not manifest itself in lower housing costs to the buyer/renter.