



SURVEY RESULTS

Overview

The Town of Branford is preparing a housing plan as required by the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS Section 8-30j).

As part of the process of preparing that plan, the Affordable Housing Steering Committee conducted an on-line survey to obtain community input with regard to housing needs in Branford and possible housing strategies for the future.

The survey was open for about four weeks from early November to early December. The availability of the survey was publicized through:

- Placement on the Town website
- Traditional press releases
- Social media postings on Facebook and Twitter
- Emails to members of local boards and commissions (with a request to share with others)
- Posters placed at several municipal facilities

During this period, **946 responses** were received. This booklet summarizes the results from the community survey.



Introduction

Q1 - Before we get started, what do you think “affordable housing” is?

Responded 943
Skipped 3

Almost half of all participants perceived “affordable housing” as low income housing although it includes people earning typical wages. Some education may be needed regarding this term.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Low-income housing	430	46 %
Housing for people earning typical wages	314	33 %
Section 8 housing	43	5 %
Cheap housing	20	2 %
Housing for people on welfare	19	2 %
Older housing	7	1 %
Other (All of the above, combination of the above, housing based on income, etc.)	110	12 %

Page 2 of the survey provided some potentially relevant information:

Actually, in Connecticut, the term “affordable housing” refers to housing which is:

- Aimed at households earning 80% or less of the area median income (i.e., “*typical wages*”),
- Priced so that such households do not spend more than 30% of their income on such housing (“affordable”), and
- Restricted to sell or rent at such prices for 40 years or longer.

For a family of four, the 2021 median income for the New Haven area is \$93,000. This means half the households in the New Haven area with four people earn more than \$93,000 and half the households with four people earn less than \$93,000.

The 2021 income eligibility and rents/sales prices for different size units in Branford are:

Unit Size	80% of Median Income	Maximum Gross Monthly Rent	Maximum Sale Price
Studio	\$52,080	\$1,258	\$186,758
1 bedroom	\$55,800	\$1,395	\$186,855
2 bedroom	\$66,960	\$1,674	\$218,881
3 bedroom	\$77,376	\$1,934	\$246,824
4 bedroom	\$86,780	\$2,170	\$268,912
		Gross rent includes all utilities	Maximum sales price is based on mortgage payment, taxes, utilities, insurance, condo fees, etc. and 20% down payment

Residency

Q2 – How long have you lived in Branford?

Responded 889
Skipped 57

Over half of participants had lived in Branford for 20+ years (may be less aware of some of the housing cost challenges facing people today).

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less than 5 years	117	13 %
5 to 9 years	95	11 %
10 to 14 years	84	9 %
15 to 19 years	56	6 %
20 years or more	520	58 %
I do not live in Branford currently (North Branford (3), East Haven (2), Guilford, etc.)	17	2 %

Q3 – Do you rent or own your current place of residence in Branford?

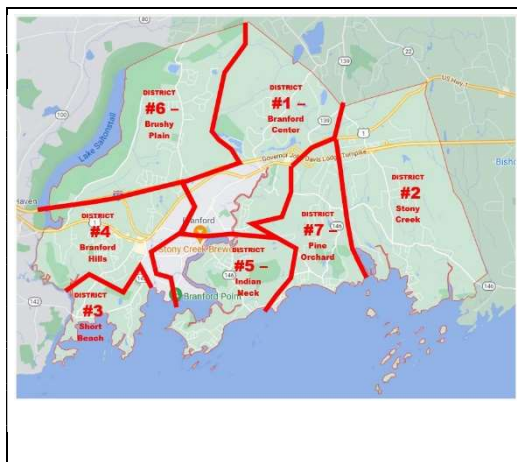
Responded 890
Skipped 56

About 80% of participants owned their current place of residence.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Own	716	80 %
Rent	144	16 %
Other (live with parents, live with child, live with others, live in co-op, etc.)	30	3%

Q4 - How would you describe the general area where you live?

Responded 889
Skipped 57



ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
RTM District #1 - Branford Center	174	20 %
RTM District #2 - Stony Creek	101	11 %
RTM District #3 - Short Beach	99	11 %
RTM District #4 - Branford Hills	106	12 %
RTM District #5 - Indian Neck	190	21 %
RTM District #6 - Brushy Plain	89	10 %
RTM District #7 - Pine Orchard	111	12 %
I don't live in Branford	12	1 %
Other	7	1 %

Housing Types

Q5 - Which of the following housing types have you lived in *at any time in the past*? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)?

Responded 846
Skipped 100

While 90% have lived in single-family detached houses, many participants had lived in other types of housing in the past.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Single-Family Detached House	758	90 %
Multi-Family Condo / Apartment	311	37 %
1-2 Story	166	20 %
3 Story	37	4 %
4 Story	106	13 %
5+ Story	218	26 %
Townhouse (Single-Family Attached House)	206	24 %
Duplex / 2 Family Building	115	14 %
3-4 Family Building	33	4 %
Mobile Home	7	0 %
Congregate Housing / Assisted Living / Nursing Home	27	3 %
Other (accessory dwelling unit, dormitory, public housing, over a store, etc.)		

Q6 - Which of the following housing types do you live in today in Branford?

Responded 845
Skipped 101

About 70% of participants indicated they currently lived in a single-family detached house.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Single-Family Detached House	583	69 %
Multi-Family Condo / Apartment	83	10 %
1-2 Story	35	4 %
3 Story	2	0 %
4 Story	7	1 %
5+ Story	68	8 %
Townhouse (Single-Family Attached House)	36	4 %
Duplex / 2 Family Building	8	1 %
3-4 Family Building	8	1 %
Mobile Home	0	0 %
Congregate Housing / Assisted Living / Nursing Home	15	2 %
Other		

Q7 - OTHER THAN YOUR CURRENT HOUSING TYPE, what other housing type do you feel could BEST meet your housing needs today?

Responded 809
Skipped 137

Although about one-third did not consider a housing type other than a single family detached house, about one-quarter felt a townhouse could also meet their housing needs today.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Single-Family Detached House	294	36 %
Multi-Family Condo / Apartment	97	12 %
1-2 Story	11	1 %
3 Story	5	1 %
4 Story	11	1 %
5+ Story		
Townhouse (Single-Family Attached House)	195	24 %
Duplex / 2 Family Building	71	9 %
3-4 Family Building	6	1 %
Mobile Home	9	1 %
Congregate Housing / Assisted Living / Nursing Home	29	4 %
Other (one floor living, acc. dwelling unit, 55+ community, no other type works, etc.)	81	10 %

Q8 - In terms of your next housing option, do you think it will be larger or smaller than where you live today?

Responded 822
Skipped 124

About 2/3rds of respondents felt their next housing option would be smaller than where they live today.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Smaller	563	68 %
Larger	262	32 %

Q9 - In terms of your next housing option, do you think you will want to own or rent?

Responded 841
Skipped 105

About 2/3rds of respondents felt they would want to own their next housing option.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Own	519	62 %
Rent	106	13 %
Not sure	216	26 %

Q10 - Now, thinking about housing options, are you personally aware of anyone that would benefit from ... more affordable housing?

Responded 838
Skipped 108

More than 2/3rds of respondents were personally aware of someone who would benefit from more affordable housing.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	573	68 %
No	265	32 %

Q11 - With regard to housing options/choices, how do you think Branford might benefit from offering more housing options / choices, including housing which is more affordable?

Responded 604
Skipped 342

The 604 written responses to this question were tabulated separately:

Housing Strategies

The Affordable Housing Committee is thinking about ways to increase the range of housing options and choices in Branford - both market rate and below market rate - and is seeking your input.

Q12 – OVERALL ATTITUDE

Responded 744
Skipped 202

Respondents were generally supportive of Branford taking concrete actions to enable more housing choices and options.

STATEMENTS	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Branford should <i>take concrete actions</i> to enable more housing options and choices to help meet the housing needs of current and future residents.	49 %	19 %	9 %	11 %	13 %
	68 %			24 %	
2. Branford should <i>wait and see</i> if the "housing market" provides for more housing options and choices.	13 %	16 %	20 %	24 %	26 %
	29 %			50 %	
3. Branford should enable more housing which is affordable <i>to people who work in Branford</i> .	39 %	26 %	12 %	12 %	11 %
	65 %			23 %	
4. Branford should enable more housing to meet local and regional housing needs.	40 %	24 %	9 %	11 %	16 %
	64 %			27 %	
5. Since State law allows an <i>over-ride of local zoning</i> (CGS Section 8- 30g) for certain affordable housing developments, Branford should seek ways to add affordable units in ways it favors rather than be subject to what an applicant wants.	31 %	25 %	24 %	8 %	12 %
	56 %			20 %	

Q13 – ZONING/POLICY APPROACHES

Responded 741
Skipped 205

Participants were generally supportive of encouraging or requiring private development to provide for affordable housing.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Providing for affordable housing should be <u>solely</u> a government responsibility (Town, State, Federal).	9 %	17 %	21 %	30 %	23 %
	26 %			53 %	
2. Private development should be <u>encouraged</u> (but not required) to provide affordable housing.	24 %	31 %	12 %	17 %	17 %
	55 %			34 %	
3. Private development should be <u>offered incentives</u> such as density or height (but not required) to provide affordable housing.	16 %	25 %	21 %	18 %	20 %
	41 %			38 %	
4. Private development should be <u>required</u> to provide affordable housing as part of that new development.	29 %	21 %	16 %	13 %	21 %
	50 %			45 %	

Q14 – LOCATION

Responded 741
Skipped 205

Participants generally supportive of housing options in all areas of Branford but particularly so in areas in and near the Town Center and where public water // sewer was available.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Affordable housing options and choices should be allowed <u>in all areas of Branford</u> .	37 %	21 %	7 %	10 %	23 %
	58 %			33 %	
2. Branford should allow more housing options and choices <u>in and near the Town Center</u> since this could help support local businesses and help maintain a vibrant, walkable, mixed use area.	40 %	32 %	7 %	10 %	12 %
	72 %			22 %	
3. Branford should promote affordable housing options and choices <u>in areas served by public water and public sewer</u> .	44 %	27 %	14 %	5 %	10 %
	71 %			15 %	
4. Branford should encourage the <u>redevelopment of business sites</u> to include affordable housing options and choices.	34 %	33 %	12 %	9 %	12 %
	67 %			21 %	

Q15 – DESIGN

Responded 740
Skipped 206

Participants clearly indicated that the design of housing options is important to them.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Guiding the design of housing options so that it fits into the physical characteristics of Branford <u>is NOT important</u> .	4 %	7 %	6 %	25 %	56 %
	11 %			81 %	
2. Guiding the design of housing options so that it fits into the physical characteristics of Branford <u>is important</u> .	62 %	27 %	5 %	4 %	2 %
	89 %			6 %	

Q16 – FUNDING / SUPPORT

Responded 739
Skipped 207

Participants were supportive of establishing a dedicated housing fund and a housing trust.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The Town should establish a dedicated housing fund to support housing strategies.	25 %	28 %	20 %	8 %	18 %
	53 %			26 %	
2. The Town should contribute funds to a dedicated housing fund.	24 %	24 %	21 %	10 %	21 %
	48 %			31 %	
3. The Town should collect a small fee as part of any Zoning Permit to help support a dedicated housing fund.	24 %	25 %	18 %	8 %	25 %
	49 %			33 %	
4. Branford should create a "housing trust" (like a land trust) to work on creating affordable housing.	25 %	30 %	20 %	8 %	17 %
	55 %			25 %	

Q17 – MUNICIPAL INVOLVEMENT

Responded 738
Skipped 208

Participants were supportive of municipal involvement in addressing affordable housing issues.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Not Sure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The Town should look at whether there are any Town-owned properties which could be used for providing housing options.	43 %	33 %	7 %	4 %	12 %
	76 %			16 %	
2. The Town should look at ways to increase the number of affordable housing units through Town purchase, construction, or rehabilitation of properties.	34 %	27 %	12 %	10 %	17 %
	61 %			27 %	

Q18 - Are there any other strategies you feel the Town should consider with regard to housing options and opportunities in Branford?

Responded 276
Skipped 670

The 276 written responses to this question were tabulated separately.

Demographic Questions

Q19 - What age group are you part of?

Responded 737
Skipped 209

Respondents generally fell into the 35-79 age groups.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Under 20 years old	0	0 %
Age 20 to 34	53	7 %
Age 35 to 54	227	31 %
Age 55 to 64	179	24 %
Age 65 to 79	232	31 %
Age 80 or over	32	4 %
Prefer Not To Answer	14	2 %

Q20 - To which gender do you most identify?

Responded 732
Skipped 214

About 2/3rds of participants were female.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Female	469	64 %
Male	212	29 %
Transgender / Gender variant / Non-binary / A gender type not listed here	2	< 1 %
Prefer not to answer	49	7 %

Q21 - Which of the following best describes you? (please select one answer)

Responded 732
Skipped 214

The largest race/ethnicity groups were “White/Caucasian” and “prefer not to answer”. In addition, 214 participants skipped this question.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Asian or Pacific Islander	3	< 1 %
Black or African American	5	1 %
Hispanic / Latinx	14	2 %
Native American or Alaskan Native	1	< 1 %
White or Caucasian	598	82 %
Biracial or Multiracial	7	1 %
Prefer not to answer	93	13 %
A race/ethnicity not listed here	11	2 %

Q22 - What percentage of your *GROSS INCOME* (monthly gross income or annual gross income) do you think you spend on your current place of residence in Branford (including taxes, utilities, insurance, homeowner association fees, etc.)??

Responded 737
Skipped 209

At least 39% of participants can be considered cost-burdened since they are spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less than 20%	107	15 %
20% to 29%	204	28 %
30% to 49%	179	24 %
50% or more	108	15 %
Prefer not to answer	139	19 %

Q23 - So that we can better understand local housing needs, please tell us which category your combined household income falls (including social security, pensions, IRA withdrawals, and other sources of income)?

Responded 736
Skipped 210

Almost 1/3 of respondents earn less than 80% of the area median income.

ANSWER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less than \$50,000 per year	116	16 %
\$50,000 to \$74,999 per year	109	15 %
\$75,000 to \$99,999 per year	81	11 %
\$100,000 to \$149,999 per year	140	19 %
\$150,000 to \$199,999 per year	81	11 %
\$200,000 or more per year	86	12 %
I prefer not to answer	123	17 %

Q24 - Thanks for your input! Are there any other thoughts you would like to share with us today?

Responded 255
Skipped 632

The 255 written responses to this question were tabulated separately.