

# Community Engagement Update

CENTRALIA HOUSING ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE | APRIL 6, 2023



# Engagement Objectives

- Build a **common understanding** of unmet housing needs in Centralia.
- Identify opportunities to create a **shared vision** for housing in Centralia.
- Determine **desired housing types** for people at all income levels in Centralia.
- Engage **diverse perspectives** and demographic groups to promote equitable access to housing.
- Design **equitable outreach and engagement strategies** to reflect all perspectives and opinions.
- **Build consensus** on strategies and tactics for the CHAAP.

# Engagement Activities

- Pre-engagement Interviews
- Tabling @ Centralia College
- Interviews
- Housing Needs Survey (English & Spanish)
- Spanish Language Focus Groups
- Next Steps
  - Balancing Act
  - Legislative Process
  - Still collecting input

# Pre-Engagement Interview Findings

- **Housing affordability continues to be a top issue.**
  - Lack of affordable housing continues to be a problem.
- **Community partners are responding to needs for affordable housing.**
  - Centralia College providing below-market housing for students
  - Reliable Enterprises seeing an uptick in applications.
- **Infrastructure development and enforcement is critical for housing opportunities.**
  - Poor condition of rental units.
  - Utility expansion is costly
- **There is strong local pride in Centralia.**
- **Ensure in language services in Spanish are available.**

# Additional Interviews

- Housing Needs
  - Housing supply is super inefficient, creating high utility costs
  - We have a shortage of 1 and 2 bedroom units
  - Transitional housing is zoned out in Centralia and Chehalis
- Centralia has a proud history, but we need to meet the needs of all community members.
- Housing is benefiting landlords and speculators, but challenging for local people
  - Vacancy rates are super low
  - People are flipping houses and not living in them.
  - There is a greed factor from folks looking to rent their houses
- Expanding inspection services
- We need to make sure we're accounting for 100-year floods
- Connecting to sewer is expensive. Coordination with county is needed for septic tank inspections

# Spanish Focus Groups

- Conducted by the Equity Institute using existing client lists and snowball sampling.
- March 15th, 2023: **3 participants**
- March 16th, 2023: **12 participants**
- March 17th, 2023: **9 participants**



# What are some of the housing challenges that you face?

- Restrictions and extra charges in mobile home parks.
  - Landlords bringing new mobile homes making parks overcrowded.
  - High lot charges (+\$1,000)
  - Inability to move home
- Too many regulations asked for tenants, with little to none on the landlords.
- Parking issues. It is very hard to find space even on the street sometimes.
- Quality issues, their apartments and mobile homes, are not in the best conditions.
- Cost of renting, owning a house keeps increasing astronomically. Options are non affordable or nonexistent.
- Lack of space for kids to play.
- Lack of home ownership opportunities
- Discrimination is still existent, people can still feel discriminated against in their neighborhood and by landlords.

# In your opinion, what housing does Centralia need more of and why?

- Mobile home parks with less regulation for people who are owners of their own trailer.
- Accessible financing for properties or homeownership
- Low income apartments that aren't limited to agriculture workers
- Accessible public transport
- Green space community (More accessible parks, playground)



# What neighborhood problems should Centralia try to solve?

- Road conditions
- Parking issues
- Substance Use
- Mental health issues
- Multiple participants reported gas being stolen from their tanks
- Not quick enough police response outside of city limits
- Homelessness

# How can centralia better meet the needs of your community?

- More regulation on landlords and mobile home park management companies
- More accessibility to housing for the Latino community
- More accessibility to tenant rights resources
- Less eviction and displacement
- Transportation accessible community.

# What do you want the city to know about opportunities and challenges in Centralia?

- There are many regulations and barriers put in place by the city that do not allow the community to grow and prosper. Example: Such as what someone can and cannot build/install on their property.
- Landlords are taking advantage of the lack of regulation and supervision on their end which makes living in Centralia difficult.
- Centralia Latino communities want to prosper but there needs to be opportunities tailored to the unique conditions in which our community lives in.
- Many participants only make minimum wage, therefore, it is hard to make rent payments on time.
- Most participants believe they're not being heard by the city because of their race.
- Language is another barrier for them when they cannot communicate properly their needs and complaints to landlords and the city.

# Housing Needs Survey

Preliminary results. Spanish survey officially closed on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

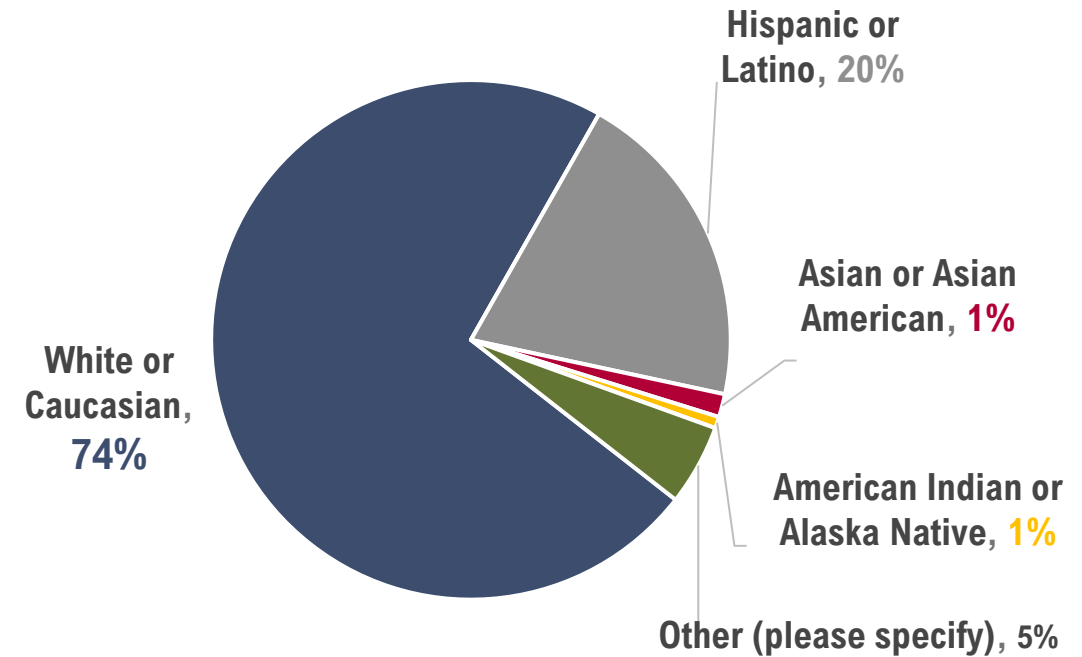
**175** Respondents

**137** English survey respondents

78% of respondents compared to 87% of community members who speak “English only”

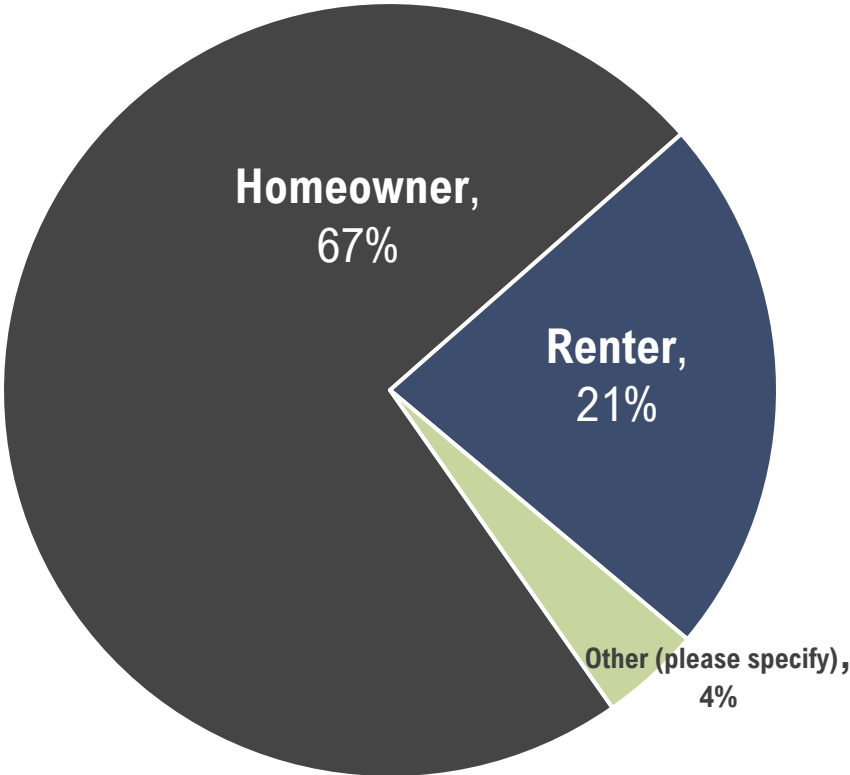
**38** Spanish survey respondents

22% of respondents compared to 12% of community members who speak Spanish at home.

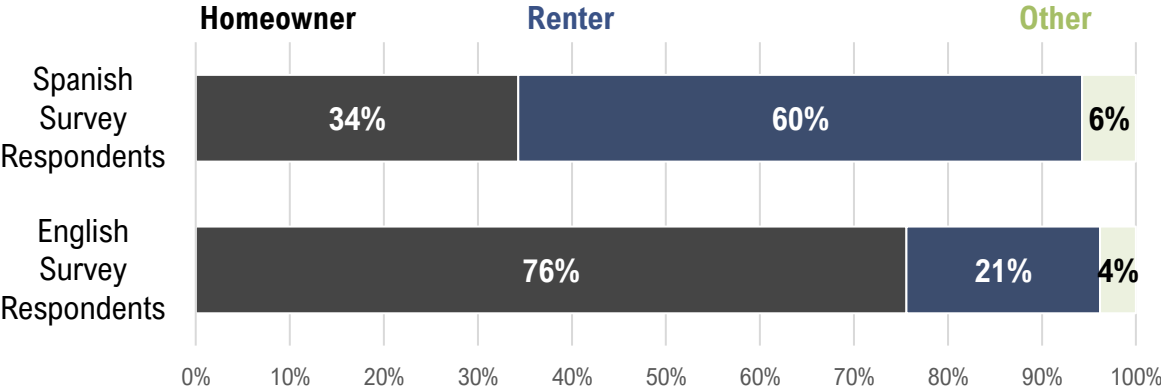


# What best describes your living situation?

Most respondents are **homeowners**.



The survey sample over represents English-speaking **homeowners** and Spanish-speaking **renters**.

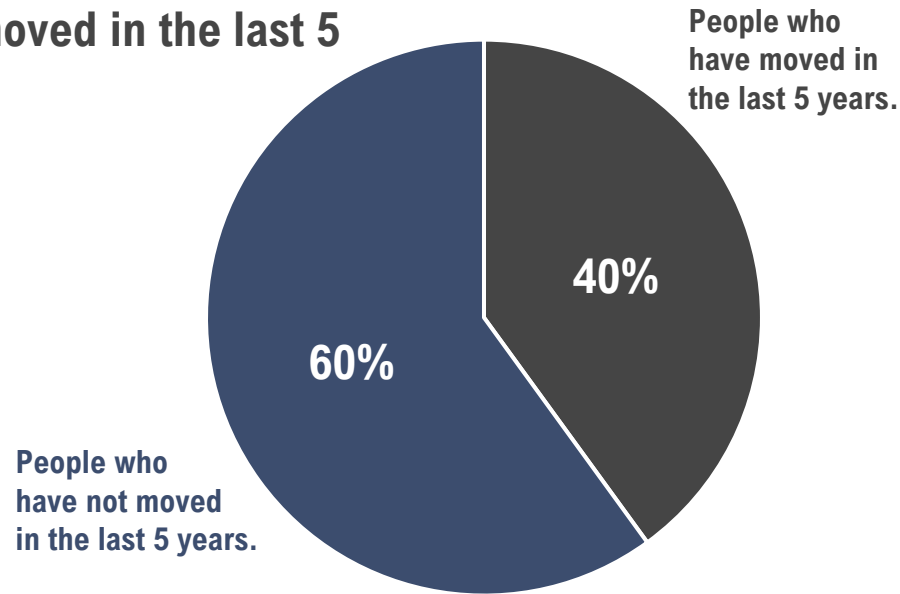


Other responses:

- Homeowners that rent in an MHP
- Living with family members
- Homeless

# Have you moved withing the past five years?

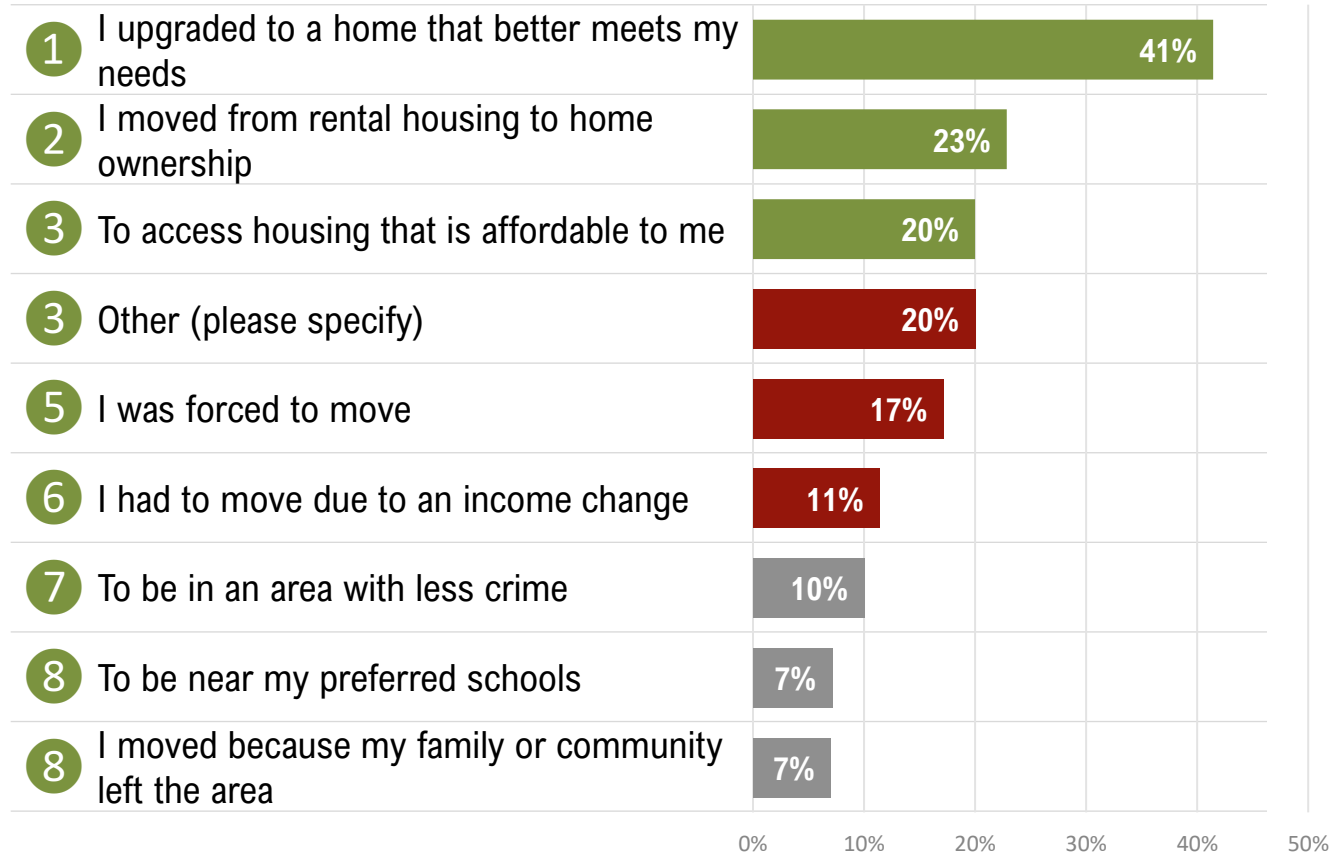
Two fifths of respondents have **moved in the last 5 years**.



English respondents' rate: 41% (14)

Spanish respondents' rate: 37% (56)

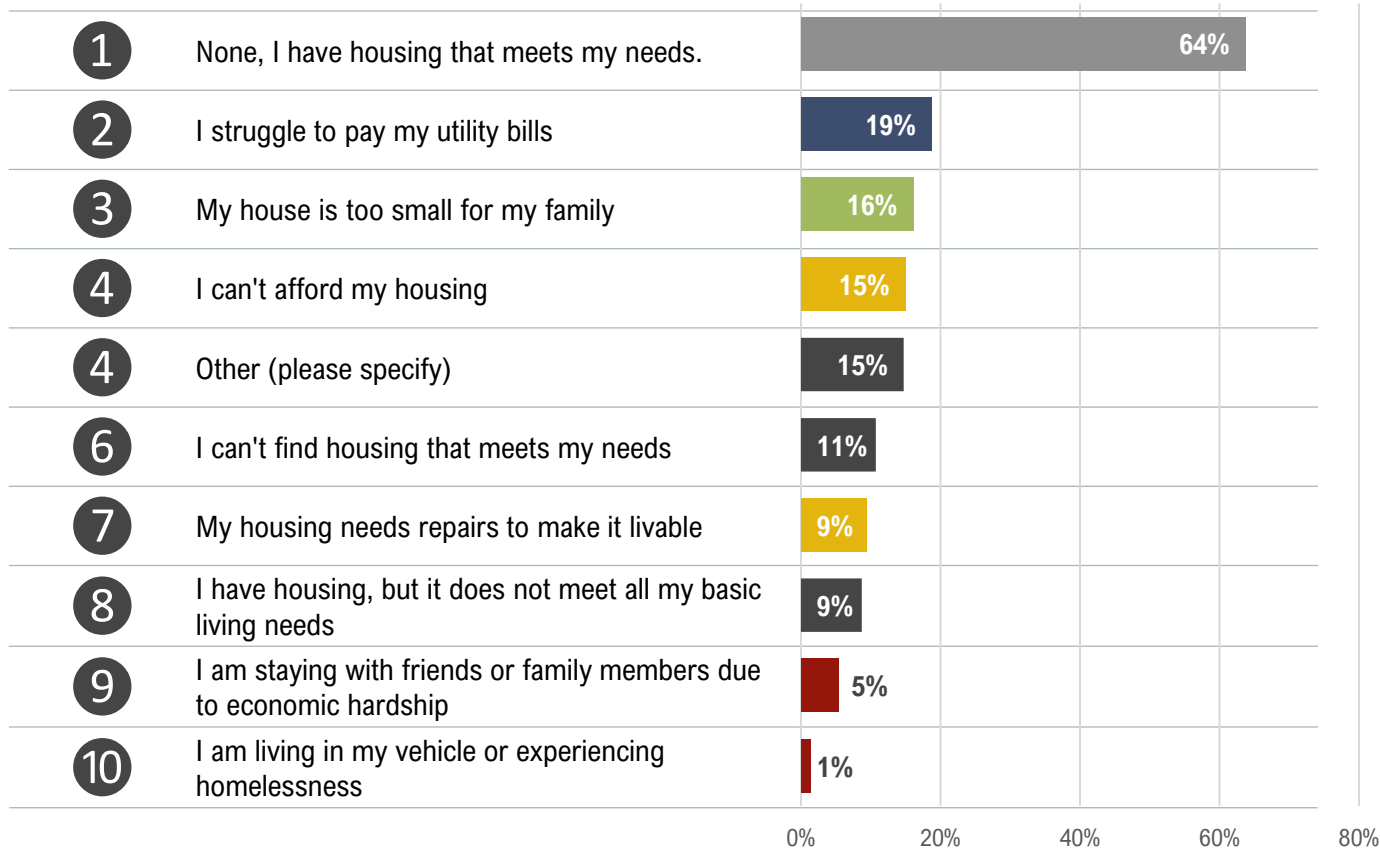
Most movers **moved by choice**, into housing that better met their needs.



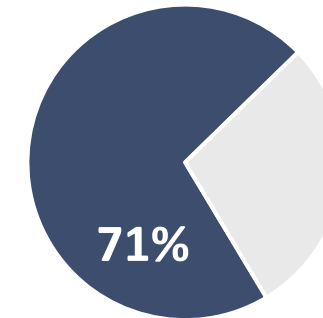
# Are you, or your household, experiencing any of the following housing challenges?

Most are **not experiencing** housing challenges. The most common challenges relate to **utility bills**, **home size**, and **cost**.

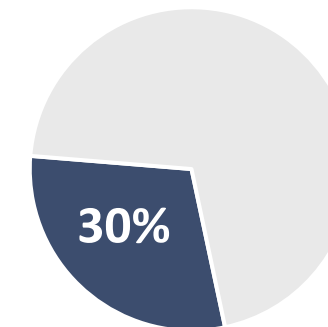
English survey respondents are more likely to report that their **housing meets all their needs**.



English respondents

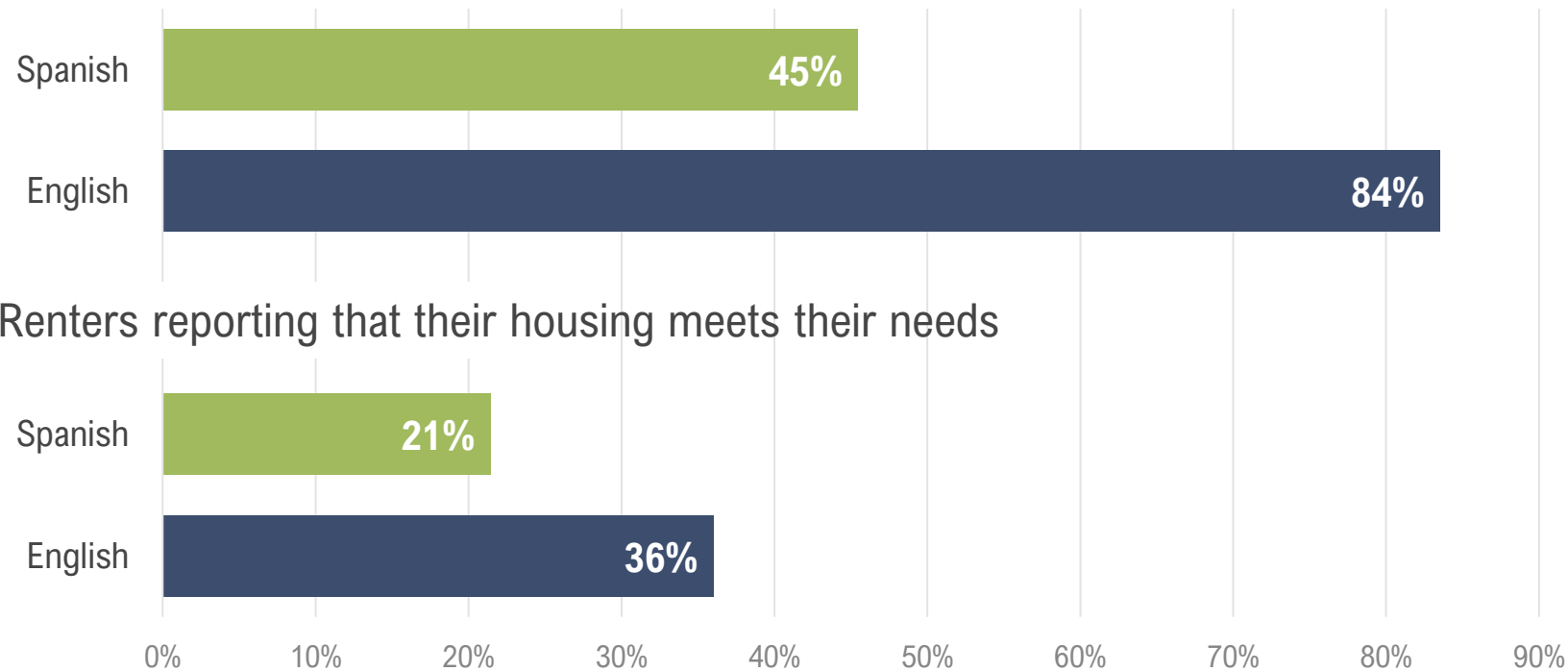


Spanish respondents

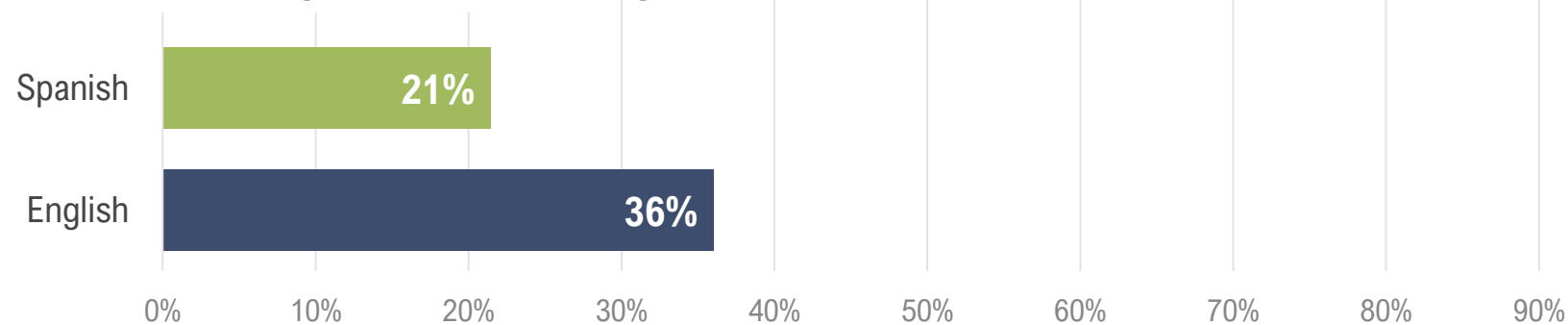


# Are you, or your household, experiencing any of the following housing challenges?

Homeowners reporting that their housing meets their needs



Renters reporting that their housing meets their needs

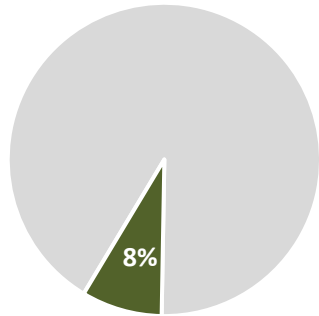




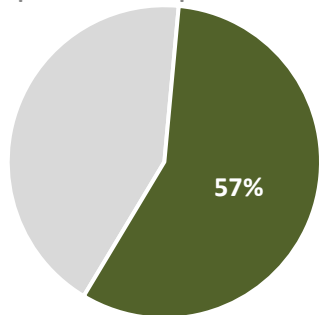
# Do you need housing assistance?

Proportion reporting that they **need housing assistance**.

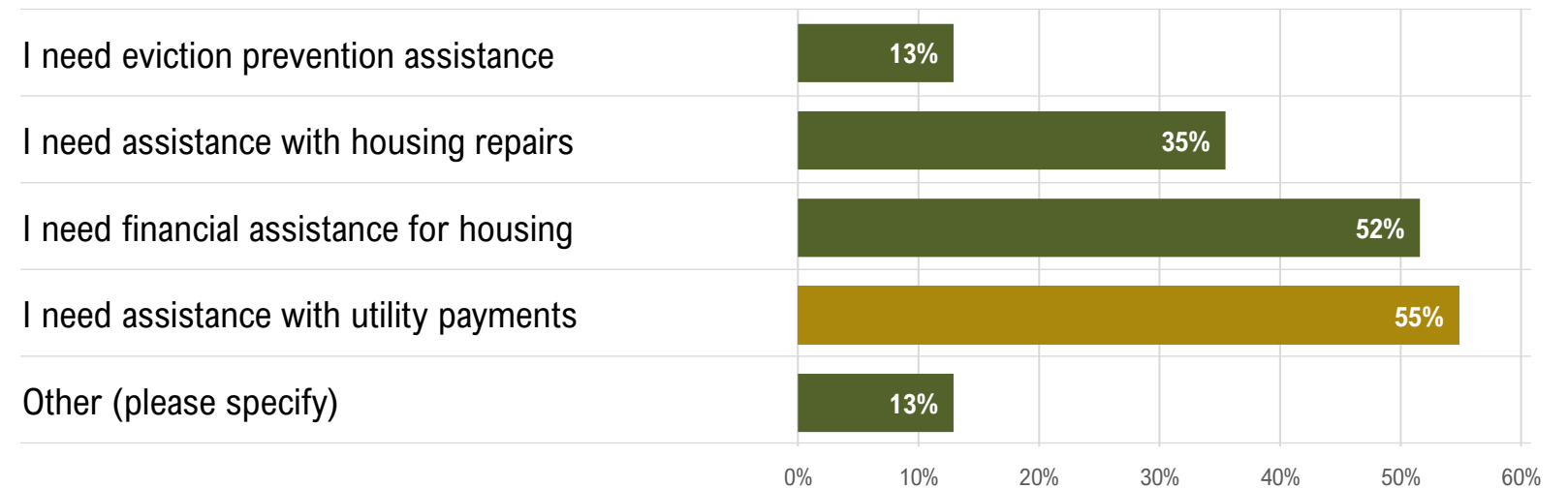
English Respondents



Spanish Respondents



Respondents most commonly report needing assistance with **utility payments**.

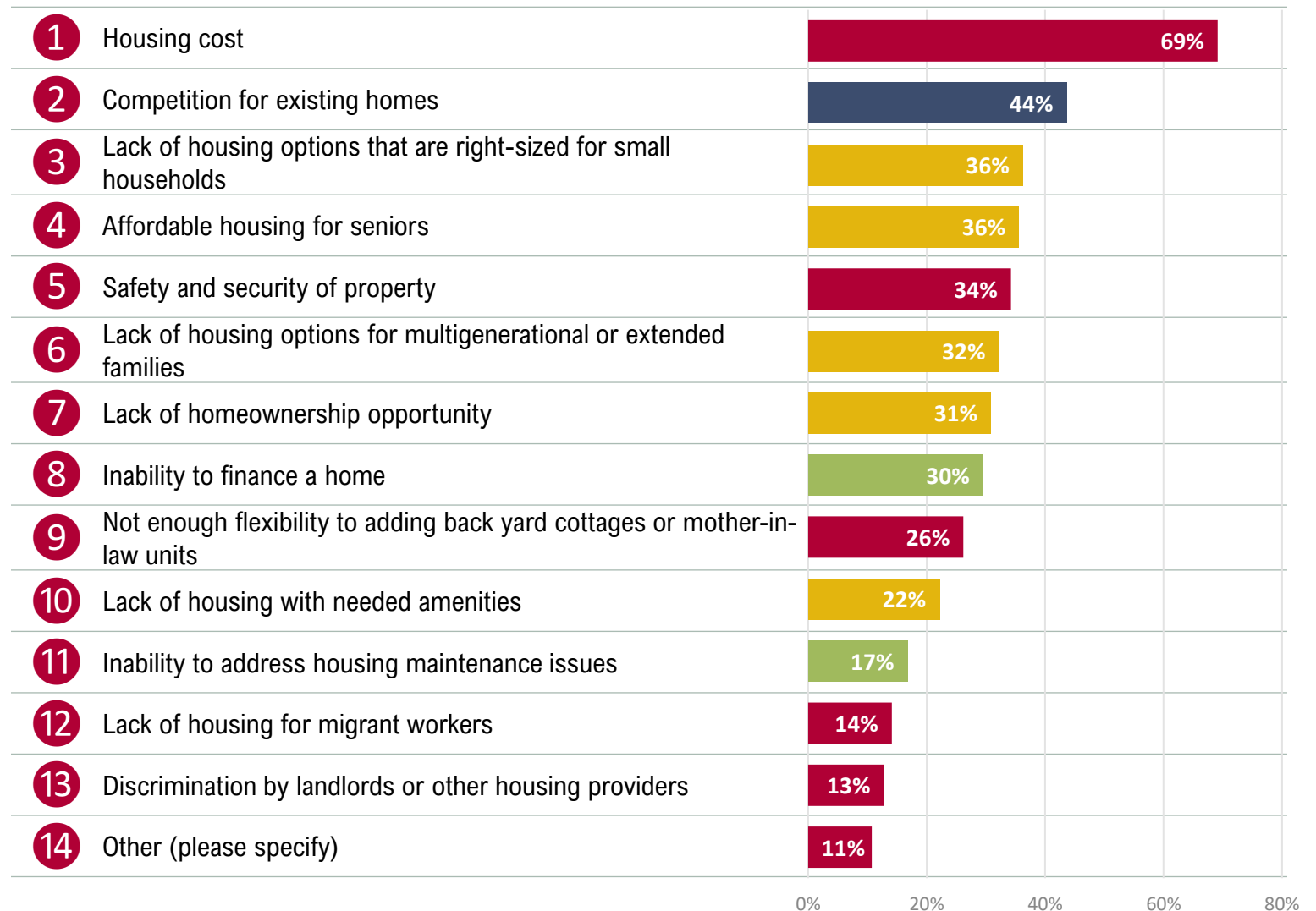


# Which of the following are housing challenges in Centralia?

Other responses:

- More quality affordable apartments
- Housing supply/ continuum of options
- Homelessness
- Regulations
- Taxes

Most feel **housing cost** is a challenge in Centralia, followed by **competition**, and **sundry needs** for different housing types.

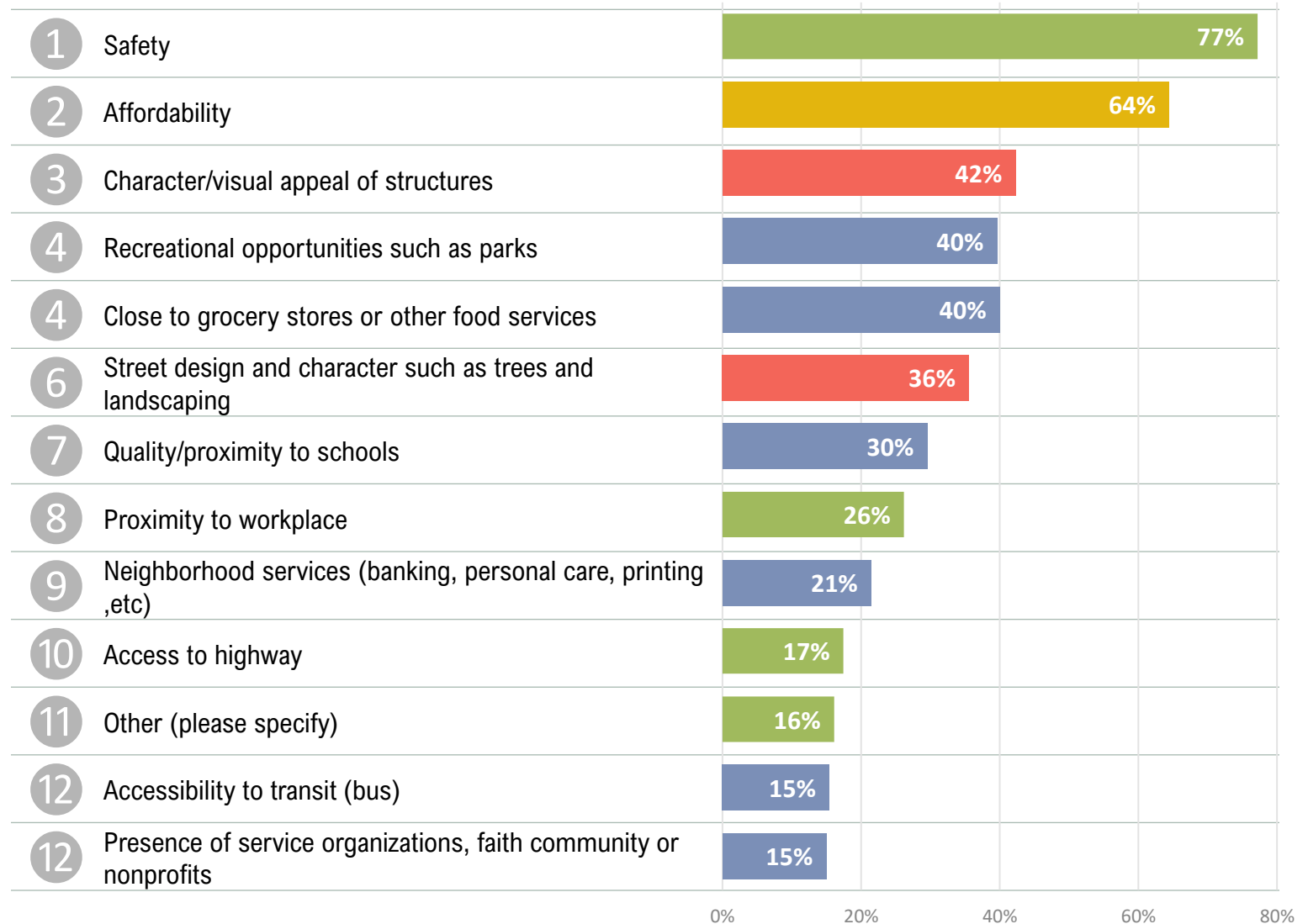


# What neighborhood characteristics are most important to you?

## Other responses:

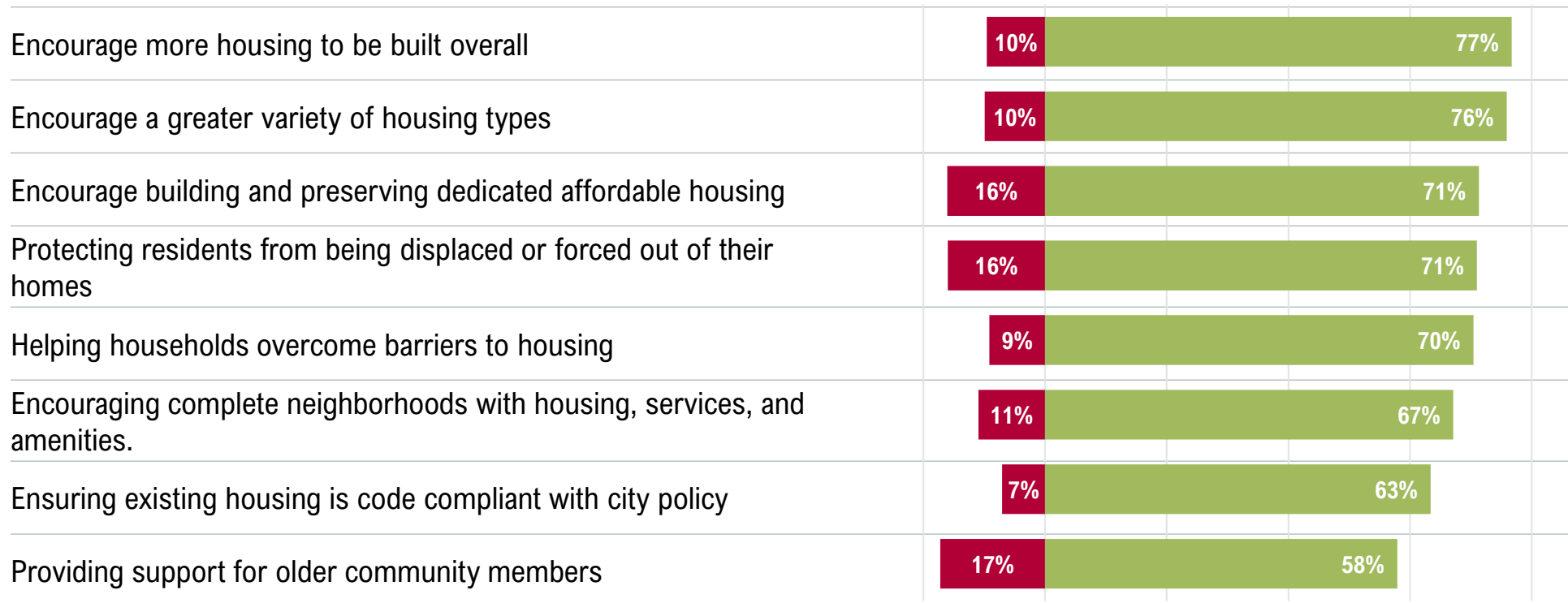
- Walkability (proximity, sidewalks, trails)
- Road conditions
- Open space and privacy
- Spanish respondents put more importance on proximity to services and public transit.

**Safety** is the most important neighborhood characteristic, followed by **affordability**. Moderate importance on **neighborhood amenities** and **visual design and character**.



# Are the following solutions a good fit for Centralia's housing needs?

Should not be considered ←      → Should be considered



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**Thank you.**