



Report

Housing Perceptions in BC Research



Date: June 2025
Project: 42574-001



Introduction

Background

Small Housing BC is a not-for-profit that is committed to increasing housing choices through gentle density in the province.

As part of their work, the organization would like to understand what British Columbians know and think about small scale and multi-unit housing as well as their awareness of a new government initiative.

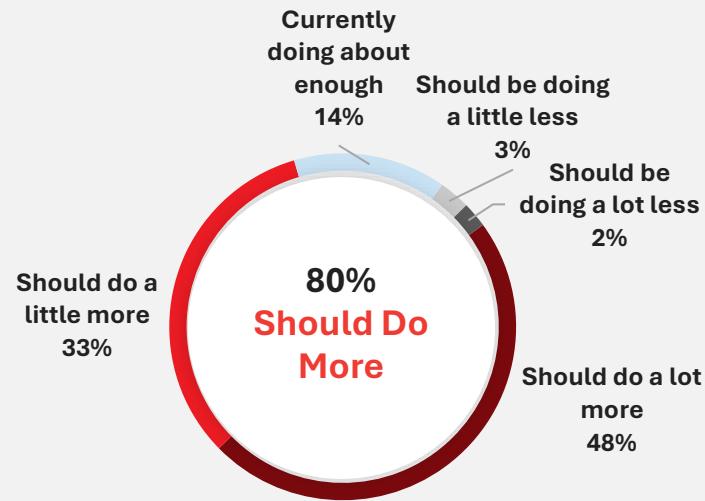
Results will be used in strategic planning as well as advocacy work.

Methodology

- Online survey using Leger's BC omnibus.
- Fieldwork June 20-23, 2025.
- 1,002 completed surveys with a representative sample of BC adults 18 years of age and older.
- A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey, but for comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size would have a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- Data was statistically weighted according to 2021 Census Canada figures.
- Since data presented in this report is rounded, the sums in graphs and tables (based on actual figures before rounding) may not match the manual addition of rounded numbers.

Perceptions BC Government Efforts to Restore Home Ownership Affordability

- A strong majority of British Columbians feel the provincial government should be doing more to restore affordability in the province when it comes to home ownership and nearly half think this should be a “lot” more.
- This viewpoint is basically universal, crossing geographic and demographic groups, although there is even stronger alignment with this viewpoint among renters, those with lower levels of income, women and those living in areas outside of Metro Vancouver or Vancouver Island.



			Total Do More	Do a Lot More				Total Do More	Do a Lot More
REGION	Metro Van	(n=502)	80%	44%	AGE	18-34	(n=139)	86%	45%
	Van Isl	(n=188)	82%	50%		35-54	(n=278)	80%	53%
	Rest of BC	(n=312)	81%	53% ↑MV		55+	(n=585)	78%	45%
AREA	Urban	(n=484)	84%	52%	HH INCOME	<\$40k	(n=186)	87% ↑\$80k+	54%
	Suburban	(n=360)	77%	43%		\$40k-<\$80k	(n=281)	84%	53%
	Ruran	(n=153)	79%	46%		\$80k+	(n=463)	77%	41% ↓
GENDER	Men	(n=438)	75%	42%	HOUSING	Own	(n=668)	75%	39%
	Women	(n=564)	86% ↑	52% ↑		Rent	(n=327)	91% ↑	63% ↑

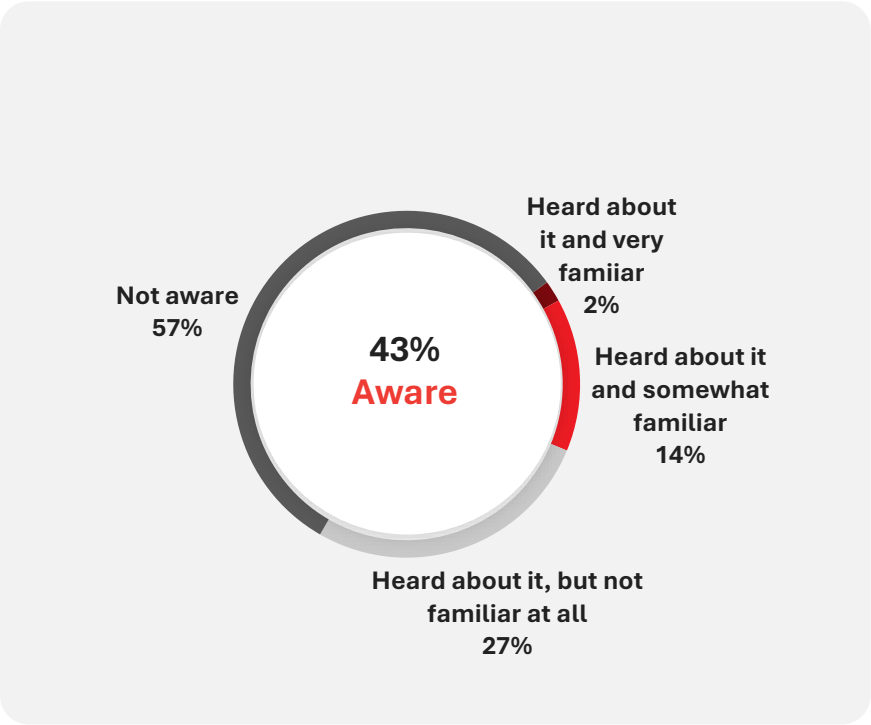
Base: All respondents (n=1,002)

SH1. Do you think the **BC government** is currently doing enough to **restore affordability of home ownership** in BC, or should they be doing more or less than they currently are?

↑↓ Statistically significantly higher/ lower than comparison group(s)

Awareness and Familiarity With BC Government Standardized Housing Designs

- Fewer than half of British Columbians were aware of the standardized housing designs available from the BC Government and a very small minority possess any familiarity with this initiative – there is clearly much potential for greater engagement with these designs.
- Despite perhaps greater relevance to them, awareness and familiarity is no higher among owners versus renters and differences are slim among most other subgroups. The exception to this pattern is among age groups, with the youngest BCers more likely to be aware (although not necessarily more familiar) with the initiative than their older counterparts and men claiming greater awareness than women.

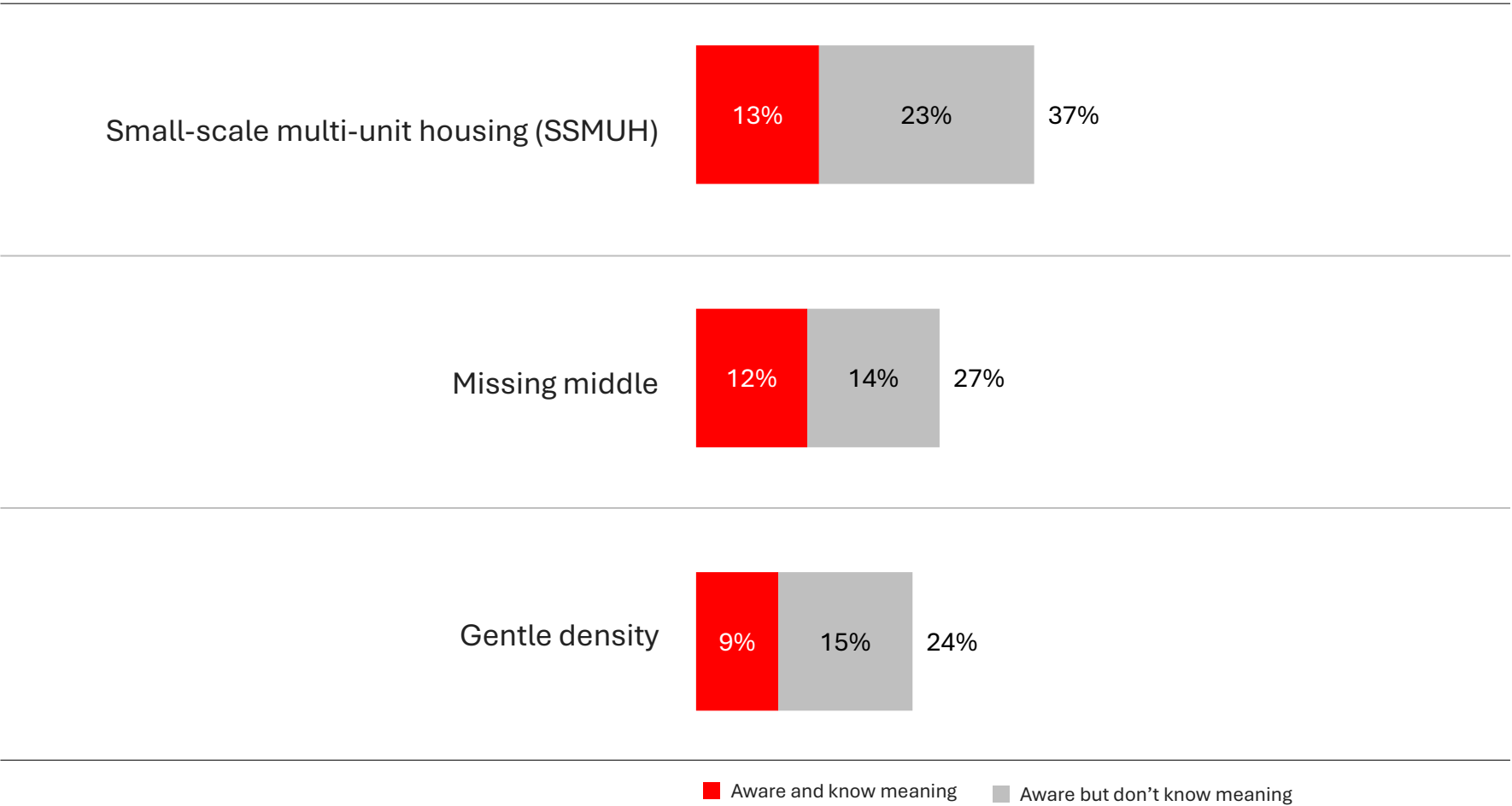


			Aware	Familiar				Aware	Familiar
REGION	Metro Van	(n=502)	46%	17%	AGE	18-34	(n=139)	56%↑	20%
	Van Isl	(n=188)	36%	12%		35-54	(n=278)	36%	15%
	Rest of BC	(n=312)	43%	17%		55+	(n=585)	42%	15%
AREA	Urban	(n=484)	44%	16%	HH INCOME	<\$40k	(n=186)	44%	13%
	Suburban	(n=360)	44%	16%		\$40k-<\$80k	(n=281)	42%	16%
	Rural	(n=153)	41%	19%		\$80k+	(n=463)	46%	18%
GENDER	Men	(n=438)	50%↑	18%	HOUSING	Own	(n=668)	44%	16%
	Women	(n=564)	38%	15%		Rent	(n=327)	41%	16%

Base: All respondents (n=1,002)
 SH2. The BC government recently introduced a new set of **standardized housing designs** that are available for free download. These designs include options for duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and townhouses, and are designed to be customizable and adaptable to different lot sizes. The BC Government’s goal with this initiative will help to create more housing. Were you aware of this initiative before now and if you were, how familiar are you with it?

↑↓ Statistically significantly higher/ lower than comparison group(s)

Awareness and Understanding of Housing Terms



- None of the housing terms presented are well known among British Columbians and familiarity of all is extremely low. Of the three, SSMUH is marginally better known, but this may relate as much to its “self explanatory” nature than anything.
- As such, the industry has something of a “blank slate” at present and can likely use and build whichever term it chooses.

SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES

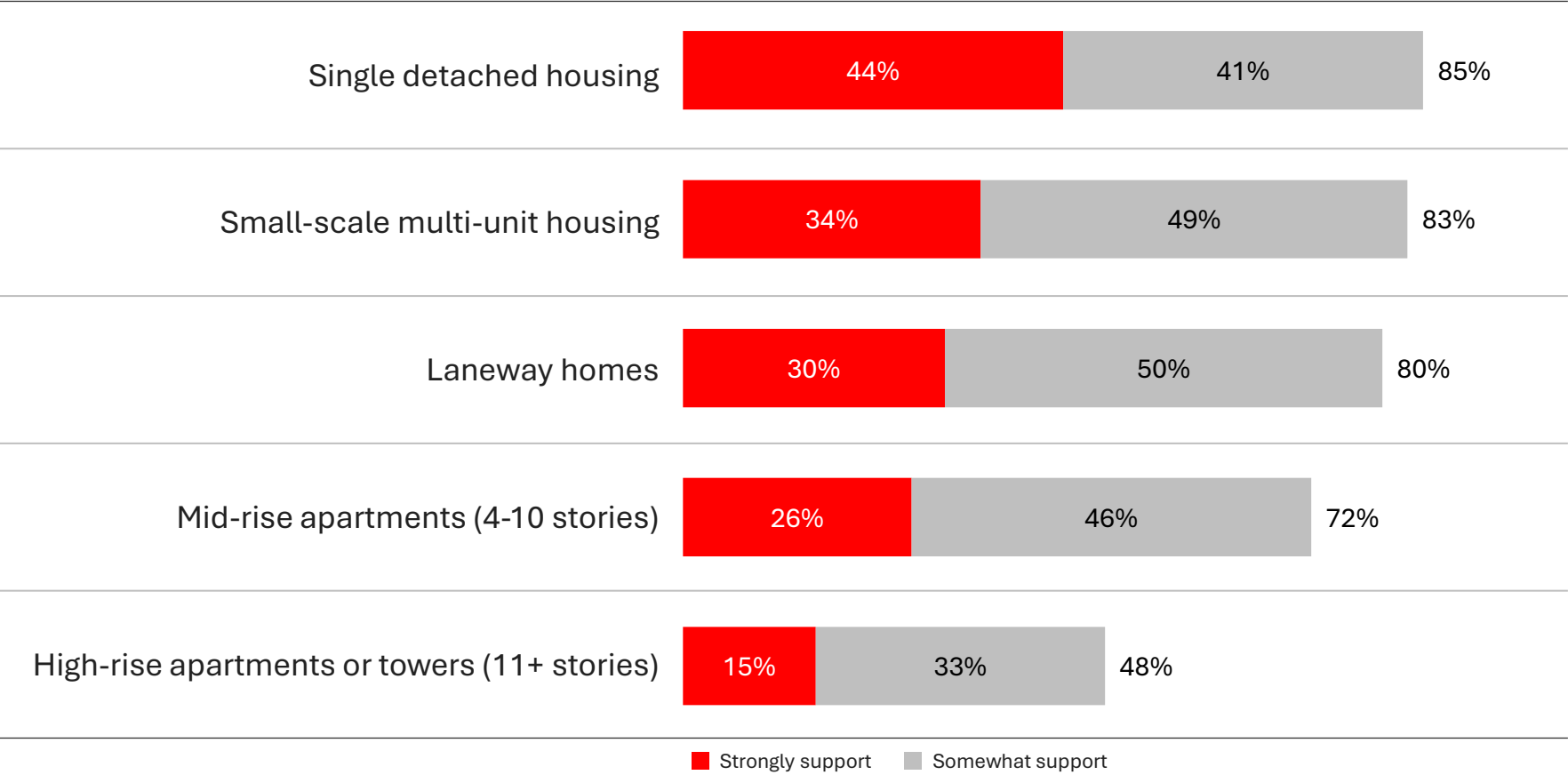
- There are few differences in awareness or understanding of any of these terms among subgroups other than a slightly lower awareness of each among the oldest age group (55 years+). None are universally well known nor understood.



Base: All respondents (n=1,002)
 SH3. Housing such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and laneway homes that can fit within traditional family neighbourhoods can be referred to by a number of different terms. Have you heard of the **following terms for this kind of housing** before and if you have, how well did you understand what each meant ?

Support for More of Housing Types Built in Neighbourhood

- Support for all but high-rise apartments being built in British Columbians’ neighbourhoods is widespread, showing perhaps a surprisingly high degree of flexibility with new housing types for many communities.
- As shown in the subgroup difference box below, views are perhaps surprisingly universal across the province.



- SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES**
- Renters show stronger support for mid-rise developments than owners (81% vs. 67%) , but the two groups are otherwise well aligned on other property types.
 - Support for single detached housing and small-scale multi-unit housing have similar levels of acceptance across other demographic and geographic groups.
 - For laneway homes, support is somewhat stronger among older residents (55+) whereas the pattern is flipped for mid and high-rise developments (support declines with age with a majority of 55+ opposed to high rises in their neighbourhood).
 - Differences are small for gender (men a little more likely to support mid-rise than women) and perhaps surprisingly even household income groups (higher income just slightly less supportive of mid-rise only).

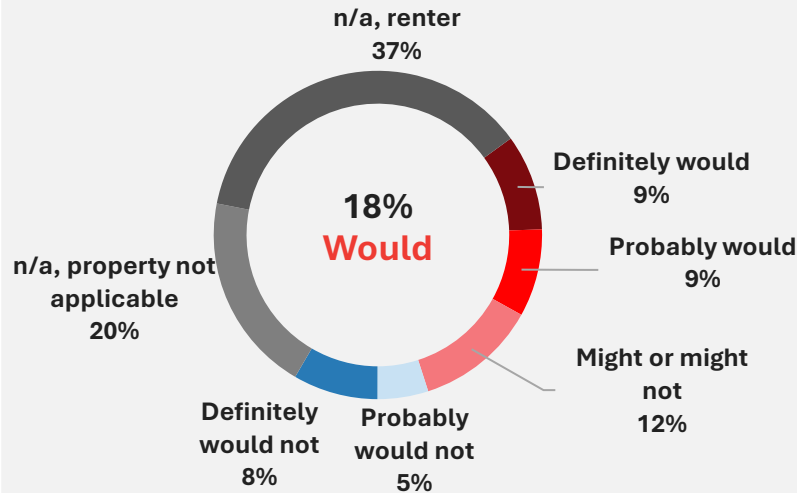
Base: All respondents (n=1,002)
 SH3. The **BC government** recently introduced a new set of **standardized housing designs** that are available for free download. These designs include options for duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and townhouses, and are designed to be customizable and adaptable to different lot sizes. The BC Government’s goal with this initiative will help to create more housing. Were you aware of this initiative before now and if you were, how familiar are you with it?

Interest in Adding Small-Scale Rental/Multi-Unit Home If Process Simpler/More Affordable

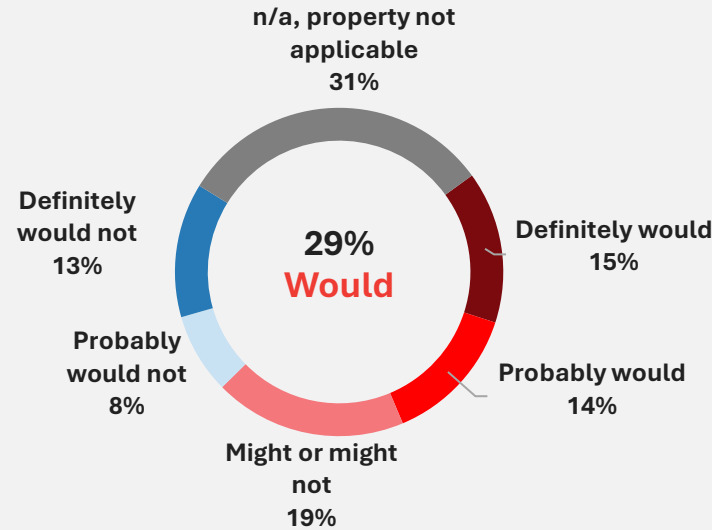
- Across all British Columbians, fewer than one-in-five would be interested in adding small-scale rental or multi-unit housing on their property; this low level reflects to a large extent that more than half do not have relevant properties (either being renters or not having a property that lends itself to the addition).
- Narrowing the metric down to being among homeowners only, interest in adding this type of housing rises to more than a quarter and narrowing it further to those homeowners of applicable properties, to over four-in-ten. And in each case, there is also a good chunk who “might or might not”, showing some amenability to the idea.
- This suggests there is a high degree of interest in the idea in the province if our caveat presented in the survey holds – that is, that the process to build this housing was simpler and more affordable than it is now.



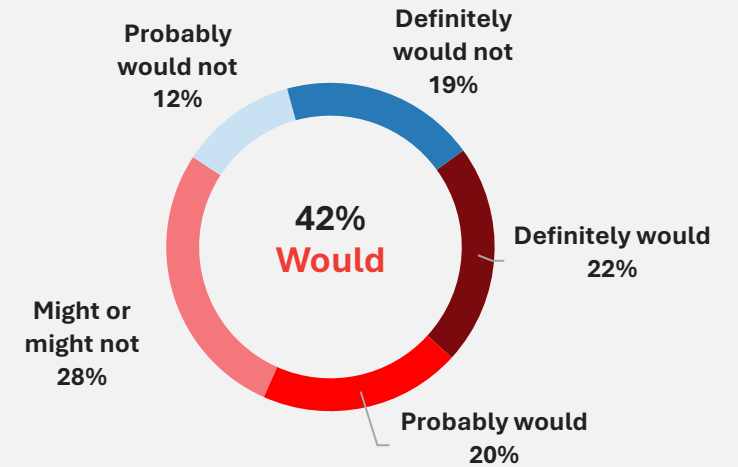
TOTAL
(n=1,002)



HOMEOWNERS
(n=668)



OWNERS WITH APPLICABLE PROPERTY
(n=461)

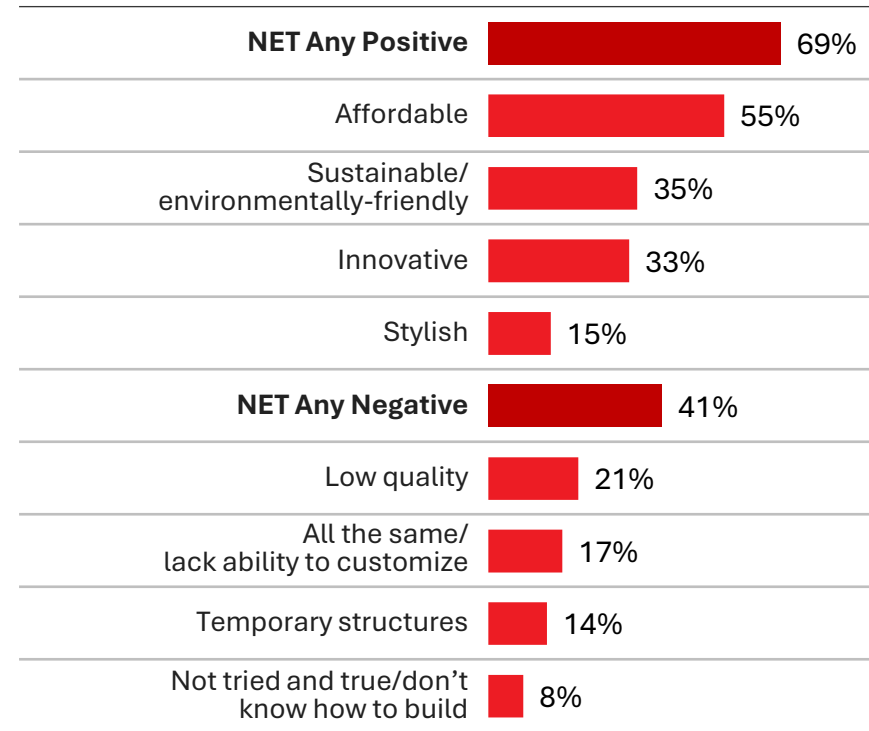


Base: As shown above

SH5. If the process to build it were made simpler and more affordable than it is now, would you be **interested in adding** a small-scale rental unit or multi-unit home (e.g., additional suite, laneway home, duplex, triplex, triplex) **on your property**?

Associations with Prefab Homes

- While views of prefabricated/ prefab homes are mixed among British Columbians, it is fortunately tipped more towards positive rather than negative viewpoints. In particular, the idea of prefab homes is liked for being affordable. Secondly, there is some appreciation for them being sustainable and innovative.
- While some sentiment of this type of housing being low-quality exists, there is relatively little concern that there is a lack of knowledge how to build them nor a sense that they are temporary structures only. While largely not seen as stylish, lack of customization is not particularly felt to be a major drawback.
- Differences by subgroup are again quite small – the only ones worth any note are that those in areas outside of Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island are a little more positive and older residents are a little more negative about the concept.



		Net Positive	Net Negative			Net Positive	Net Negative
REGION	Metro Van (n=502)	68%	45% ↑ RBC	AGE	18-34 (n=139)	63%	47%
	Van Isl (n=188)	70%	42%		35-54 (n=278)	63%	48%
	Rest of BC (n=312)	70%	33%		55+ (n=585)	76% ↑	32% ↓
AREA	Urban (n=484)	70%	44%	HH INCOME	<\$40k (n=186)	69%	34%
	Suburban (n=360)	67%	40%		\$40k-<\$80k (n=281)	68%	44%
	Ruran (n=153)	75%	34%		\$80k+ (n=463)	70%	43%
GENDER	Men (n=438)	71%	37%	HOUSING	Own (n=668)	71%	40%
	Women (n=564)	66%	44%		Rent (n=327)	66%	43%

Base: All respondents (n=1,002)

SH6. **Prefab (prefabricated) homes** are houses that are constructed off-site in a factory and then assembled on the building site. This method is different from more traditionally built homes, which are constructed on-site from the ground up. Prefab homes are often modular, meaning they are built in sections that are then transported and assembled. Which of the following, if any, represent **what you think about** prefabricated homes?

↑ ↓ Statistically significantly higher/ lower than comparison group(s)

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