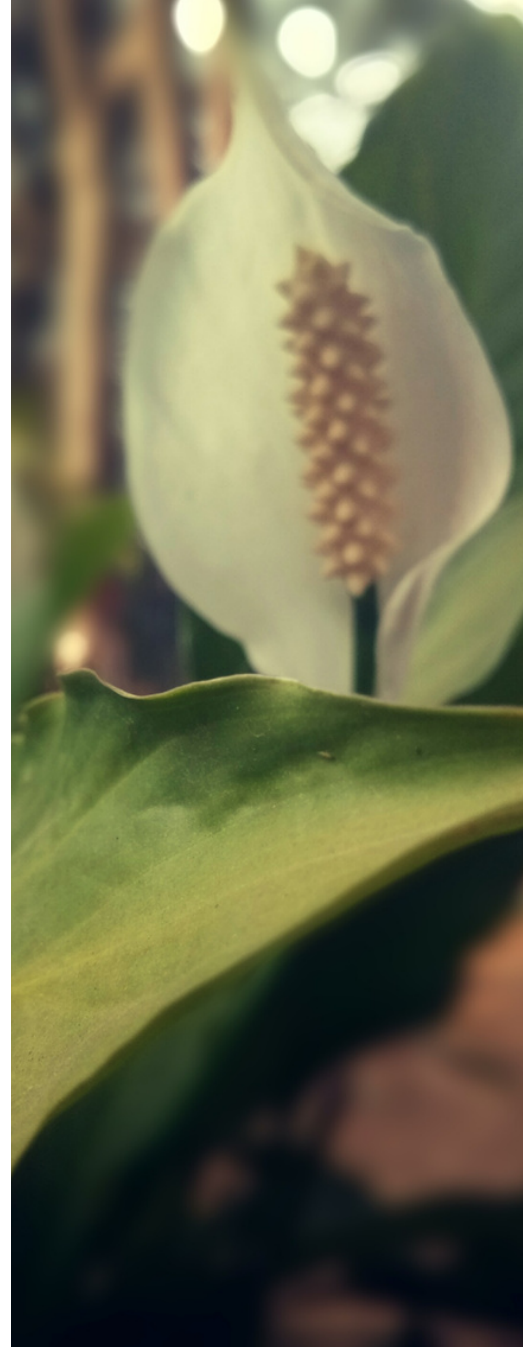


# DENMAN ISLAND HOUSING REVIEW

RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

MARCH 2023



# Contributors

The content of this publication was developed by Vancouver Island University's (VIU) Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI).

VIU conducted primary and secondary research to develop policy recommendations to address housing issues on Denman Island. VIU's Master of Community Planning students assisted in facilitating engagement events with the Denman Island community and the following people contributed to this publication.

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A special thanks to the Island Planner, Sonja Zupanec, for her continued guidance and support throughout the project.

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Islands Trust

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# Introduction

## Project Overview

The Denman Housing Review Project is a review of the Denman Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) to consider policy updates in relation to affordable and attainable housing. The low number of dwelling units, low diversity in housing formats, and low rental vacancies are the prominent housing challenges on Denman Island.

The Denman Island OCP was adopted in 2008, and various changes were consolidated in 2017. Since then, the province has added a new section to the Local Government Act (LGA) on required housing policies to be included in OCPs. The current version of the Denman Island OCP includes several policies relating to housing but does not comprehensively address these requirements. Therefore, these policies need to be updated. The Denman Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) initiated this review with the residents of the Island and also used this opportunity as an outreach to more fully examine housing issues on Denman Island.

Vancouver Island University's (VIU) Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI) was retained to design, facilitate, record, and report on a community engagement process for residents and homeowners on the housing challenges on Denman Island. The purpose of the housing review was:

to engage with residents, title holders, local organizations, and external agencies to identify policy updates and regulatory amendments to the Denman Island OCP and LUB to increase housing options for affordable and attainable housing with minimum environmental impact while supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Overall, the lack of safe, affordable, and attainable rental housing is the most difficult housing problem on the Island. This lack of supply creates ongoing problems relating to unsafe living conditions, instability in rental tenures, and lack of protection from existing regulations and legislation. As noted in the United Nations as early as 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and throughout subsequent documents, as well as in Canada's National Housing Strategy Act and the previously mentioned amendments to BC legislation, housing for all remains a critically important issue at global, national, provincial, and local scales.

## Project Scope

The following five questions were researched to better understand the historical context, current situations, and local perspectives within the Denman Island community.

1. Which recommendations in the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment are supported by the Denman Island community and can be addressed by policy or regulatory updates in the Denman Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw?
2. What are the recommended updates to the Denman Island Official Community Plan to comply with Section 473 of the Local Government Act regarding housing policies?
3. What is the level of community support for changes to existing policies and regulations to allow for more secondary suites, secondary dwellings, and the use of travel trailers that result in increased housing options?
4. What is the level of community support in implementing a distributed square footage and/or maximum floor area of a dwelling in the Land Use Bylaw to regulate residential uses?
5. What aspects/elements of the natural environment, social fabric, and rural character most need to be protected as we consider regulatory changes to increase affordable and attainable housing options?

# Community & Stakeholder Engagement

While it is recognized that discussions on housing instability, affordability, and attainment have been underway for decades on the Island, the engagement process for this OCP and LUB update began in August 2022. Prior to creating an engagement strategy, the team at MABRRI met with the Denman Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC) on September 8, 2022, on Denman Island to understand the local community context, potential barriers to engagement, and to explore options for efficiently engaging the community. Multiple engagement tools were explored to solicit community input and their efficiency for accessibility and inclusivity. Information regarding the upcoming engagement was shared via the local newspaper (the Island Grapevine), Facebook Denman community groups, and posters displayed at key locations on Denman Island.

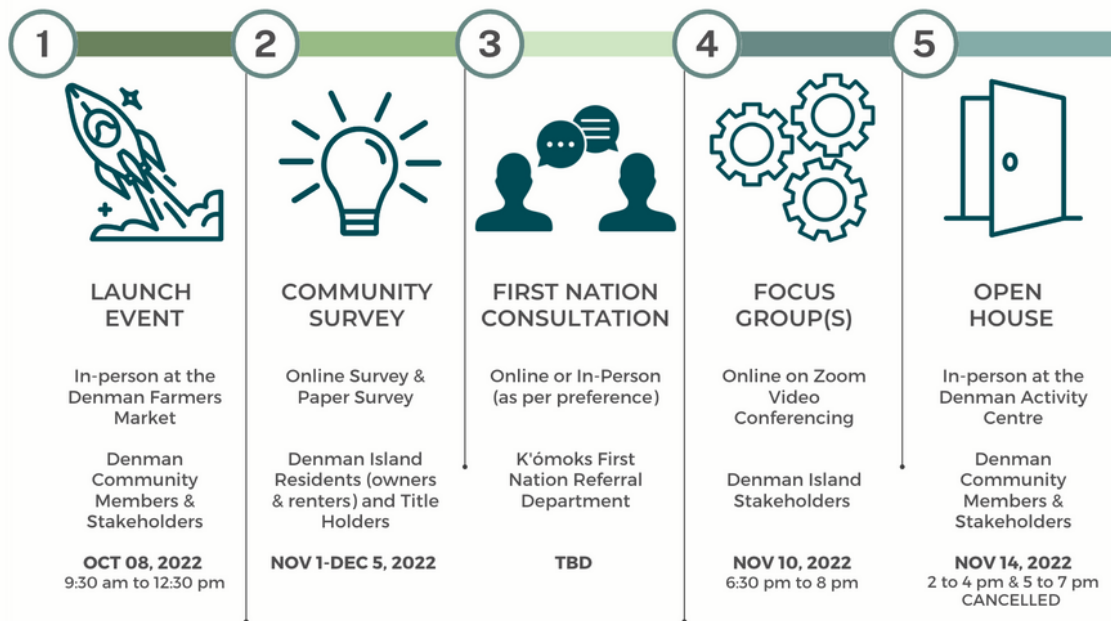


Figure 1 - Engagement Timeline Graphic

## **LAUNCH EVENT OCTOBER 8, 2022**

The MABRRI team was advised by the Denman Island APC that the Denman Saturday market is a popular gathering place among the community members and is a useful opportunity to connect with residents. A booth was set up at the Saturday market to engage with the community and inform them about the Denman Housing Review Project. Information was provided on engagement events and activities planned for the fall of 2022, and residents were invited to share their ideas on improvements to the process. The community feedback gathered at this event informed the engagement strategy for the fall.

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 2022**

The Community Survey was developed to gain an understanding of the current levels of community support for policy updates to the Denman Island OCP and LUB, specifically in relation to affordable and attainable housing on Denman Island. The survey was live from November 1, 2022, to December 5, 2022. A postcard with the link to the online survey, along with a QR code, was mailed to each residence on Denman Island. Owners and renters were encouraged to participate. The postcard was also mailed to homeowners who do not reside full-time on Denman Island. Additionally, paper copies were made available on Denman Island at three locations: the Freepost at Abraxas Bookstore; the General Store; and the Library. The paper copies were intended for individuals who did not have access to a computer or were more comfortable completing an offline version of the survey. Dropboxes were provided at all three locations for the completed surveys. A summary of the online and paper copies of the survey responses can be found in Appendix A.

## **STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP**

### **November 10, 2022**

The Focus Group was hosted and facilitated online by the MABRRI team on November 10, 2022, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. The discussion questions were centered around the existing policies and current zoning in the Denman Island OCP and LUB regarding secondary suites, secondary dwellings, travel trailer regulations, distributed square footage, and other content in the documents. Nine stakeholders/representatives from local organizations and interest groups, including Denman Housing Association, Denman Island Climate Action Network, Denman Works, Lands Trust, Denman Pre-school Society, and community members with lived experiences, were in attendance representing a diverse interest group. A summary of the focus group discussion can be found in Appendix B.

## **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE**

### **Scheduled for November 14, 2022**

The Public Open House, scheduled for November 14 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Denman Activity Centre, was cancelled, and the community was encouraged to participate in the Community Survey to provide feedback. Local Government elections were taking place in BC at this time, so the project was paused until early 2023 when the newly elected LTC decided not to move forward with rescheduling the open house.

# Policy Recommendations

This section reviews the five research questions and provides recommendations for policy and regulatory amendments to the Denman Island OCP and the LUB, as informed by the community feedback gathered through the engagement phase.

## 1. Which recommendations in the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment are supported by the Denman Island community and can be addressed by policy or regulatory updates in the Denman Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw?

The 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment suggested the following four recommendations:

- that each island reviews their OCP to ensure that there are supportive policies for the development of safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable rental housing;
- that the Islands Trust promotes the ability to enter into Housing Agreements with property owners and not-for-profit organizations to ensure housing remains affordable;
- that the Local Trust Committees support the efforts of not-for-profit organizations to increase the amount of safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable housing on their islands; and,
- the Islands Trust and/or the individual Local Trust Committees can consider conducting a local “municipal” census for each island mid-way between federal census years to provide up-to-date information.

The first three recommendations from the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment report were strongly supported (by over 70%) by the survey respondents. The fourth recommendation received 47% support, while 20% did not support and 33% of respondents had a neutral opinion about it. Many respondents believed that the need for affordable and attainable housing on Denman Island is evident and does not need a mid-way census to demonstrate need.

The policy recommendations are as follows:

- 1.1 Encourage and ensure new developments support the low-income market and long-term rentals to meet affordability needs.
  - 1.1.1 Assign an appropriate percentage of new development to be used for long-term rentals and limit use to non-market housing.
  - 1.1.2 Introduce policies on rental price control.

- 1.1.3 Use of simplified templates for housing agreements between property owners and renters and incentives for property owners to ensure affordable, year-round tenancy.
- 1.2 Update the current OCP and LUB to allow for secondary suites and secondary dwellings to be used for long-term rentals on conditions that there is proof of adequate groundwater and/or proof of water catchment (can be waived if the proof of aquifer capacity is known and at an adequate rate) and that the dwelling can be connected to an approved sewerage system, in case of secondary dwellings.
  - 1.2.1 Regulate dwelling size (re-visit as per current needs), dwelling location (preferably close to the main house), and aesthetic requirements to maintain the rural character of Denman Island.
- 1.3 Review existing secondary homes that are being used or have the potential to be used for yearly rentals on a case-to-case basis, and consider making them fully legal.
- 1.4 Encourage and promote conservation-focused innovation in new housing developments that is affordable and reflects a diversity of needs through both policy and planning.
  - 1.4.1 Create clear guidelines for sustainable and environmentally conscious development unique to Denman Island.
- 1.5 Encourage the formation of an on-island Public Trust to hold lands donated to the community for the purpose of conservation, affordable housing, and agriculture.
- 1.6 Instate stronger measures such as the “Empty Homes Tax” or “Vacancy Tax” for homes that are unoccupied for more than six months or are used for short-term rentals only.
- 1.7 Identify areas suitable for densification with adequate water, sewage capacity and minimal environmental impact, and amend zoning regulations and density requirements to allow for cluster housing, tiny homes, and/ or trailer parks.
- 1.8 Update the Housing Needs Assessment Report for Denman Island every five years to address housing issues as per the most recent federal census data.
- 1.9 Review and remove current policies that are restrictive in addressing the growing affordable and attainable housing needs on Denman Island.
  - 1.9.1 Consider the impacts of population increase on Denman Island as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on housing.
  - 1.9.2 Instate flexible, responsive and adaptive policies to the changing needs of the community while maintaining careful stewardship of the natural environment and resources on Denman Island.
- 1.10 Island Trust to support not-for-profit and co-op housing groups to navigate the development approval process for efficiency and faster results.

## 2. What are the recommended updates to the Denman Island Official Community Plan to comply with Section 473 of the Local Government Act regarding housing policies?

Section 473 of the Local Government Act regarding housing policies states that:

473 (1) (a) An official community plan must include statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years.

473 (2) An official community plan must include housing policies of the local government respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.

The Community Survey included current housing policies specific to Subdivision Regulations, Use and Density, Affordable Housing, and Zoning Amendments, and asked the community whether they support the continued inclusion of these policies to address housing issues on Denman Island. The survey respondents answered with either “yes”, “no”, or “neutral”. The table below shows the survey response statistics.

	Policies on Subdivision Regulations	Yes	No	Neutral
Policy 1	In the Residential designation, the size of new lots created by subdivision may not be less than 1.0 hectares. The minimum lot sizes should be increased if there would be negative impacts on the natural environment.	63%	25%	12%
Policy 2	In the Rural designation, the size of new lots created by subdivision may not be less than 2.0 hectares, and the average lot size created by subdivision may not be less than 4.0 hectares. The minimum lot size should be increased if there would be negative impacts on the natural environment.	68%	24%	8%
Policy 7	In the Residential designation, parcel consolidations are encouraged wherever possible.	45%	19%	36%

	Policies on Use and Density	Yes	No	Neutral
Policy 8	In the Residential designation and the Rural designation, the principal use should be single-family residential with the exception of the existing cabins on the R1(2) zoned parcel and the rental accommodation on the two R1(1) zoned parcels as permitted by the Denman Island Land Use Bylaw.	54%	32%	14%
Policy 9	In the Residential designation, zoning regulations should permit one dwelling unit per 1.0 hectare of lot area to a maximum of five dwelling units, provided there is adequate water supply without endangering the supply of adjacent landowners. One dwelling unit should be permitted on lots that are less than 1.0 hectares in area.	65%	30%	5%
Policy 10	In Rural designation, zoning regulations should generally permit one dwelling unit per lot, including a secondary suite, provided there is adequate water supply without endangering the supply of adjacent landowners. A secondary dwelling unit may be permitted on a lot if approved by a Temporary Use Permit.	50%	41%	9%
Policy 11	The overall residential density on Denman Island should generally not increase beyond that permitted by existing zoning on the date this Plan was adopted, except that an increase of approximately 5 percent may be permitted to accommodate zoning amendments for special needs and affordable housing, secondary dwelling units approved by the Denman Island Local Trust Committee under a Temporary Use Permit and site-specific zoning amendment applications under Policy 29 of this Section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, secondary suites contained within the footprint of conforming dwelling units are not deemed to contribute to density calculations for the purposes of this policy.	60%	28%	12%

	Policies on Use and Density	Yes	No	Neutral
Policy 13	In the Sustainable Resource designation, zoning regulations should permit one dwelling, including a secondary suite per parcel.	63%	25%	12%
Policy 14	In the Sustainable Resource designation, on land in the Agricultural Land Reserve, one dwelling could be permitted per the minimum lot area permitted by Subdivision; and additional dwellings could be permitted if they are required for full-time farm help. *Please note that this policy is currently under review as part of the Farming Regulations Review Project.	67%	16%	17%
Policy 15	The Local Trust Committee may approve secondary dwelling units on land within the “Rural” and “Sustainable Resources” designations through a Temporary Use Permit in order to address housing objectives as defined in the Official Community Plan.	48%	39%	13%
Policy 16	Landowners are encouraged to cluster houses and buildings accessory to a residential use to leave areas of undeveloped space.	77%	13%	10%

	Policies on Affordable Housing	Yes	No	Neutral
Policy 17	The Local Trust Committee should encourage the establishment and work of non-profit land trusts for affordable housing.	74%	15%	11%
Policy 19	The Local Trust Committee should review the policies in this section with a view to determining whether further opportunities for affordable housing are needed and what form such opportunities should take.	76%	16%	8%

	Policies on Zoning Amendmends	Yes	No	Neutral
Policy 27	The Local Trust Committee should consider zoning amendment applications for seniors housing provided the proposal is small-scale, will not impact adjacent properties, will maintain an adequate supply of potable water and sewage disposal system, protects environmentally sensitive areas, will not place a strain on existing public services and infrastructure.	85%	8%	7%
Policy 28	The Local Trust Committee should consider zoning amendment applications for affordable housing projects provided the proposal is small-scale, will not impact adjacent properties, will maintain an adequate supply of potable water and sewage disposal system, will protect environmentally sensitive areas, and will not place a strain on existing public services and infrastructure.	77%	16%	7%



Photo - Canva Gallery

The policy recommendations are as follows:

- 2.1 Encourage and promote conservation-focused innovation in new housing developments that is affordable and reflects a diversity of needs through both policy and planning. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.4.
- 2.2 Focus on densifying areas that have close proximity to services, adequate groundwater supply, and overall low environmental impact.
  - 2.2.1 Amend zoning and density requirements to allow clusters of tiny homes with shared resources for such areas.
  - 2.2.2 Allow changes to existing minimum lot size regulations to support increased densities (in the form of cluster developments) for such areas.
- 2.3 Allow secondary dwellings on residential lots with lot sizes over 1 hectare as a measure to increase rental housing on existing residential lots rather than subdividing new lots for low-density residential development.
- 2.4 Allow secondary dwellings on lots larger than 1 hectare as a long-term permanent housing solution with the following regulations and limitations:
  - Regulate dwelling size, location, and aesthetic requirements to maintain rural character and encourage a smaller footprint;
  - Regulate dwelling use to long-term affordable rentals;
  - Limit use to non-market rental; and,
  - Proof of adequate groundwater and human waste disposal.
- 2.5 Allow land subdivision for affordable housing options including, but not limited to, co-op housing, non-market housing, affordable rentals, and affordable ownership.
  - 2.5.1 Avoid subdivisions for low-density residential to limit further land fragmentation.
- 2.6 Take a total square footage approach to approve subdivision applications.
- 2.7 Abolish Temporary Use Permits as a tool to regulate housing.
- 2.8 Adjust the density bank baseline to reflect reality or pull the ALR from the density bank entirely.
- 2.9 Use of simplified templates for housing agreements between property owners and renters and incentives for property owners to ensure affordable, year-round tenancy. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.1.3.
- 2.10 Include allowances for water catchment, composting toilets, and greywater reuse to support secondary dwellings and travel trailers, wherever allowed, on residential lots.

### 3. What is the level of community support for changes to policies and regulations to allow for more secondary suites, secondary dwellings and the use of travel trailers that result in increased housing options?

As per the Denman Island Land Use Bylaw, 2008, Section 2.1.4, “secondary dwelling units may be permitted, subject to conditions, by Temporary Use Permit on lands zoned as “R2” (Rural Residential), “A”(Agriculture), “F” (Forestry) and “RE” (Resource). Secondary suites are generally permitted within these zoning designations without the need for a Temporary Use Permit.”

When asked in the Community Survey whether the community supports changes to policy updates to allow for more secondary suites, secondary dwellings and the use of travel trailers for increased housing options, the majority said “yes” to secondary suites (82%) and secondary dwellings (75%). Less than 15% said “No,” and less than 11% answered “Neutral.” 56% supported policy changes to allow for travel trailers, while 32% opposed and 12% answered “Neutral.”

50% of the survey respondents feel that the use of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) is ineffective (26%) and very ineffective (24%) in addressing housing objectives as defined in the OCP. 23% of the survey respondents felt TUPs are effective (16%) and very effective (7%), while 27% answered “neutral” to this question.

By definition, TUPs are temporary in nature and do not provide long-term housing solutions. The temporary nature of TUPs and the onerous application process may discourage the landowners from creating secondary rental housing if the zoning allows for it, thus impacting the rental housing stock.

When asked whether allowing secondary suites (in a primary dwelling) on R1 lots would benefit the community, 78% of the survey respondents agree, 14% disagree, and 8% answered “neutral” to this question. When asked whether allowing secondary dwellings on R1 lots would benefit the community, 65% of the survey respondents agree, 27% disagree, and 8% answered “neutral” to this question. When asked whether allowing for travel trailers as secondary dwelling units on R1 and R2 lots would benefit the community on Denman Island, 50% of the survey respondents agree, 37% disagree, and 13% answered “neutral” to this question.

The policy recommendations are as follows:

- 3.1 Abolish TUPs as a tool to regulate housing as TUPs do not provide long-term housing solutions, the uncertainty for renters and owners discourages investment, and TUPs fail to address Housing Objective 2, “to ensure housing options preserve human diversity in the community.”

- 3.2 Allow secondary dwellings on residential lots with lot sizes over 1 hectare on conditions that there is proof of adequate groundwater and/or proof of water catchment (can be waived if the proof of aquifer capacity is good), and that the dwelling can be connected to an approved sewerage system.
  - 3.2.1 Regulate dwelling size (re-visit as per current needs), dwelling location (preferably close to the main house), and aesthetic requirements to maintain the rural character of Denman Island. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.2.1.
  - 3.2.2 Encourage secondary dwelling uses including, but not limited to, family members, affordable rentals, and housing for staff, seniors, and individuals with special needs and limit the use to non-market housing.
  - 3.2.3 Allow secondary suites in all residential zones for long-term housing solutions and limit the use to affordable rentals, family members, staff, seniors, and persons with disabilities.
- 3.3 Review existing secondary homes that are being used or have the potential to be used for yearly rentals on a case-to-case basis, and consider making them fully legal. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.3.
- 3.4 Identify areas suitable for densification with adequate water, sewage capacity and minimal environmental impact, and amend zoning regulations and density requirements to allow for cluster housing, tiny homes, and/ or trailer parks. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.7.
- 3.5 Instate stronger measures such as the “Empty Homes Tax” or “Vacancy Tax” for homes that are unoccupied for more than six months or are used for short-term rentals only. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.6.
- 3.6 Travel trailers and other types of movable housing units may be permitted by TUPs, subject to conditions including, but not limited to, proof of adequate water, proper sanitation, and current health and safety standards.
  - 3.6.1 Simplify the TUP application process to encourage the use of the tool.
- 3.7 Encourage and incentivize landowners for environment-conscious green approaches including, but not limited to, rainwater catchments, provision of outhouses for movable housing units, shared resources, and more.
- 3.8 Use of simplified templates for housing agreements between property owners and renters and incentives for property owners to ensure affordable, year-round tenancy. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.1.3 and 2.9.



Photo - Canva Gallery

#### **4. What is the level of community support in implementing a distributed square footage and/or maximum floor area of a dwelling in the Land Use Bylaw to regulate residential uses?**

60% of the survey respondents support the implementation of a distributed square footage of a dwelling to regulate residential uses, 20% do not agree, and 20% feel neutral about it.

60% of the survey respondents support the implementation of a maximum floor area of a dwelling to regulate residential uses, 21% do not agree, and 19% feel neutral about it.

#### **5. What aspects/elements of the natural environment, social fabric, and rural character most need to be protected as we consider regulatory changes to increase affordable and attainable housing options?**

The 2008 Denman Island OCP states the following guiding objective for housing policies: “to encourage housing that accommodates the needs of a variety of families and individuals while protecting the natural environment, the social fabric and the rural character of the community.”

The engagement feedback strongly suggests that community members believe that a mix of demographics is key to a rich, diverse social fabric demand, and thus supports a diverse housing stock for a variety of age and income groups on Denman Island. However, the protection of the natural environment (water and trees), biodiversity, and the rural character of Denman was also considered paramount.

The policy recommendations are as follows:

- 5.1 Be considerate of environmentally sensitive areas when rezoning lands for density.
- 5.2 Protect the rural character of Denman Island.
  - 5.2.1 Allow housing density in the form of cluster housing rather than low-density subdivisions to limit further land fragmentation.
  - 5.2.2 Amend regulations to allow secondary dwellings on existing lots larger than 1 hectare.
  - 5.2.3 Regulate dwelling size (re-visit as per current needs), dwelling location (preferably close to the main house), and aesthetic requirements to maintain the rural character of Denman Island. Also mentioned in recommendation 1.2.1 and 3.2.1.
- 5.3 Amend OCP policies that currently “encourage” landowners to protect tree habitats and limit tree removal to firmer regulations for new developments and changes to existing lots.
- 5.4 Research comparable alternative methods and best practices for rainwater storage, regulating water use, and sewage disposal.
  - 5.4.1 Consider partnering with Regional Districts to allow for subsidization of rainwater catchment on residential lots.
- 5.5 Protect, preserve, and maintain public access to beaches.
- 5.6 Develop and maintain pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure while maintaining the rural character of the community.
- 5.7 Encourage housing diversity to support housing for diverse age and income groups.
  - 5.7.1 Instate strict regulations to prohibit the use of secondary dwellings as short-term rentals.
  - 5.7.2 Ensure appropriate disposal of human waste for movable homes.

# Conclusion

Throughout the fall of 2022, the MABRRI team engaged with the residents of Denman Island (owners and renters), with the help of several engagement tools, to understand the housing challenges in the community and to identify ways to increase affordable and attainable housing options on Denman Island while protecting the natural environment, social fabric, and rural character of the community.

The feedback from the community engagement was further analyzed to identify possible recommendations for policy updates and regulatory improvements to the Denman Island OCP and LUB that strengthen affordable and attainable housing options on Denman Island. The Recommendations Report will be submitted to the Denman Island Local Trust Committee for review.

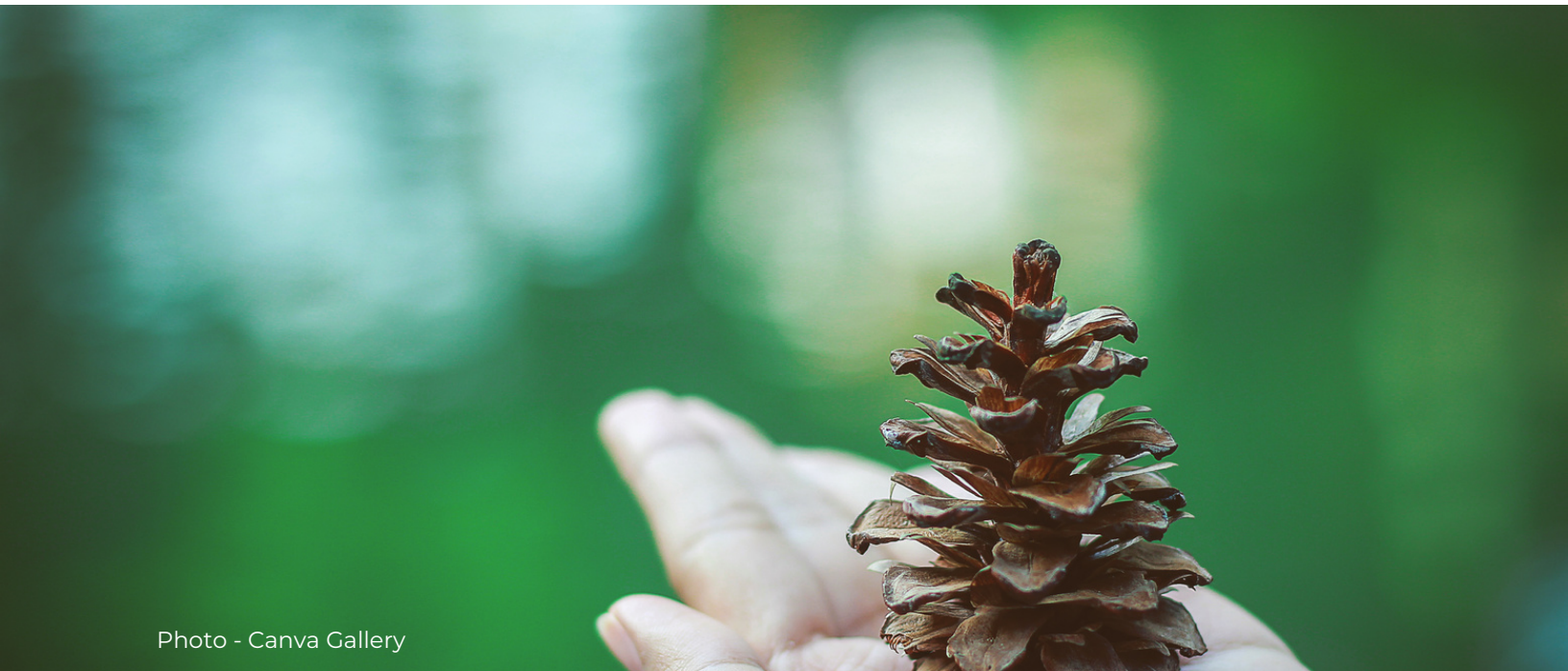
A close-up photograph of a hand holding a brown pine cone. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. The lighting is bright and even, highlighting the texture of the pine cone's scales.

Photo - Canva Gallery

# Appendix A

## Community Survey Summary

The Community Survey was developed and made available to the residents (owners and renters) of Denman Island between November 1 and December 5, 2022. The intention of the survey was to gain an understanding of the level of community support for policy updates to the Denman Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB), specifically in relation to affordable and attainable housing on Denman Island. The survey was available online and was promoted via postcards with the direct link to the survey mailed out to each residence on Denman Island and to the owner's alternate addresses who do not live on Denman Island year-round. Paper copies of the survey and collection boxes were available on Denman Island at the Freepost (Abraxas Bookstore), the General Store, and the Library.

The Survey received a total of 174 responses. Of these responses, 160 were completed digitally and 14 physically. The survey consisted of a total of 18 questions. The average time it took to complete the survey was 21 minutes. Of the 18 questions that were asked, some were answered more than others. This could be due to the respondent's interests in regard to particular issues with affordability and attainability or could speak to the respondents understanding and/or confidence in answering the question appropriately.

Questions 1-8 focused on the existing housing policies and regulations in the Denman Island OCP (2008) and their effectiveness in addressing the housing issues on Denman Island. Questions 9-12 and 15-16 focused on current regulations around secondary units in the Denman Island LUB and the effectiveness of Temporary Use Permits (TUP) for long-term housing solutions. Questions 13 and 14 focused on the recommendations from the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment Report to assess the level of community support for these recommendations.

## Survey Data Summary

When asked whether the respondents support the continued inclusion of policies regarding subdivision regulation, 168 answered this question, and 6 skipped. An average of 59% of respondents were in support, 23% opposed, and 19% felt neutral about it.

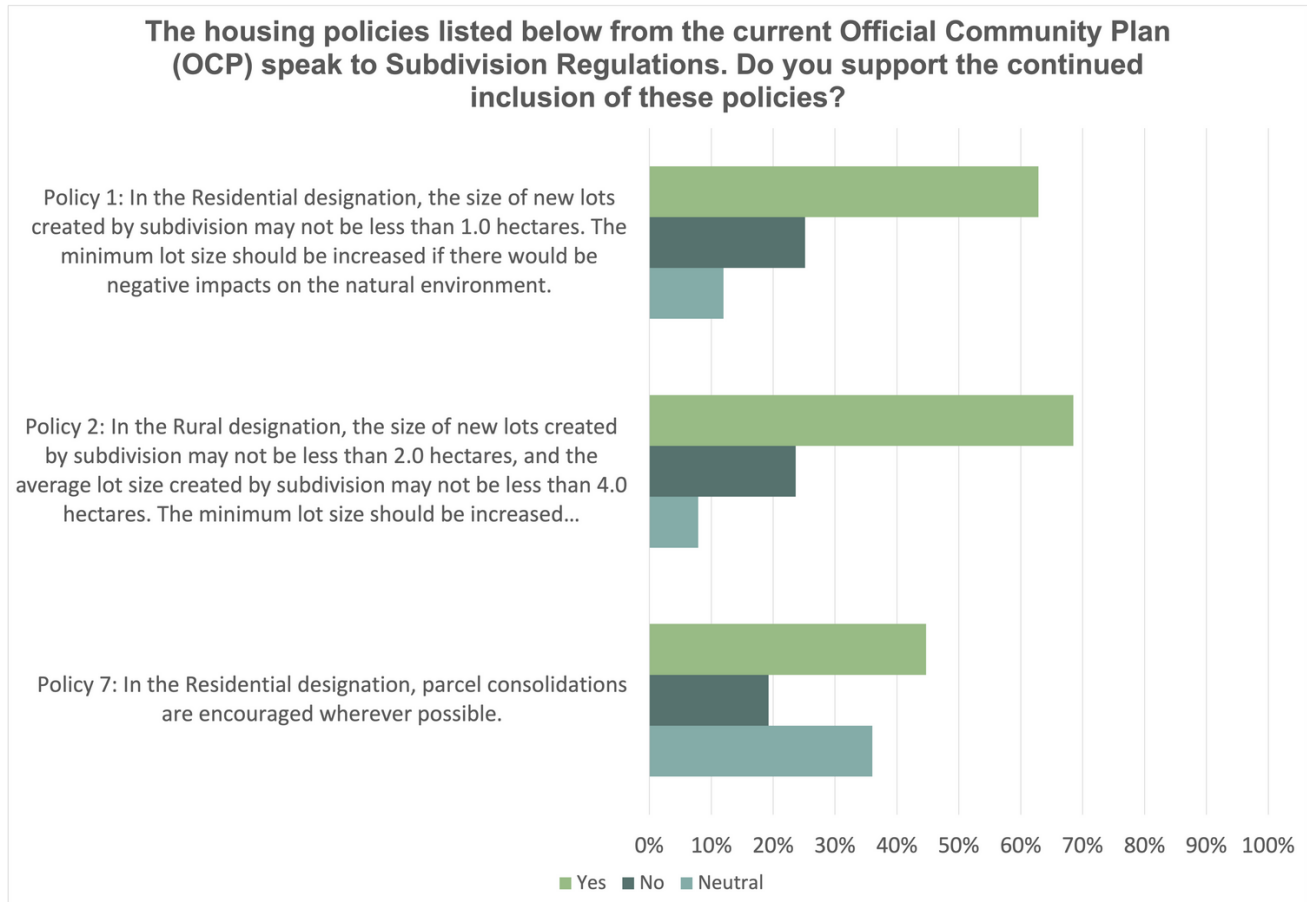


Figure 1

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions on policies mentioned in Figure 1 related to Subdivision Regulations that can support affordable and attainable housing options on Denman, 74 provided comments, and 100 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Against New Subdivision</b>	Some comments reflected a disagreement with subdividing lots and instead suggested allowing secondary suites and dwellings on the properties.	8
<b>Increased Density</b>	These comments were in favour of increasing density with a focus on specific areas of high density close to amenities and services.	12
<b>More Rental</b>	Comments suggested more rental units with the overarching idea of affordable rentals and non-market housing.	4
<b>Compact Housing Options</b>	These comments spoke to reducing house size to allow for higher density within an existing area, as well as an option to increase affordability.	6
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Lot size definition, subdivision, and affordable housing options spoke to environmental concerns being of importance when considering further housing options.	18
<b>Affordable Housing Options</b>	Many people want affordable options including co-op housing, non-market housing, affordable rentals, and affordable house purchasing with a focus on densifying specific areas close to services.	23

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:

“ I think we need to revisit the underlying assumption that having individual dwellings on larger lots is more sustainable. Sustainability research suggests that it might be better to congregate housing in village-style amalgamations with larger, connected, less human-impacted ecosystems, maybe held in common? Eg CoHo, Komas. I would have loved to see the Northlands developed in this way. Instead, people are everywhere.”

"Climate impacts, including decreasing potable water supply, should be paramount when deciding whether to allow any subdivisions or affordable housing. ”

When asked whether the respondents support the continued inclusion of policies regarding use and density, 152 answered this question, and 22 skipped. An average of 60% of respondents were in support, 28% opposed, and 12% felt neutral about it.

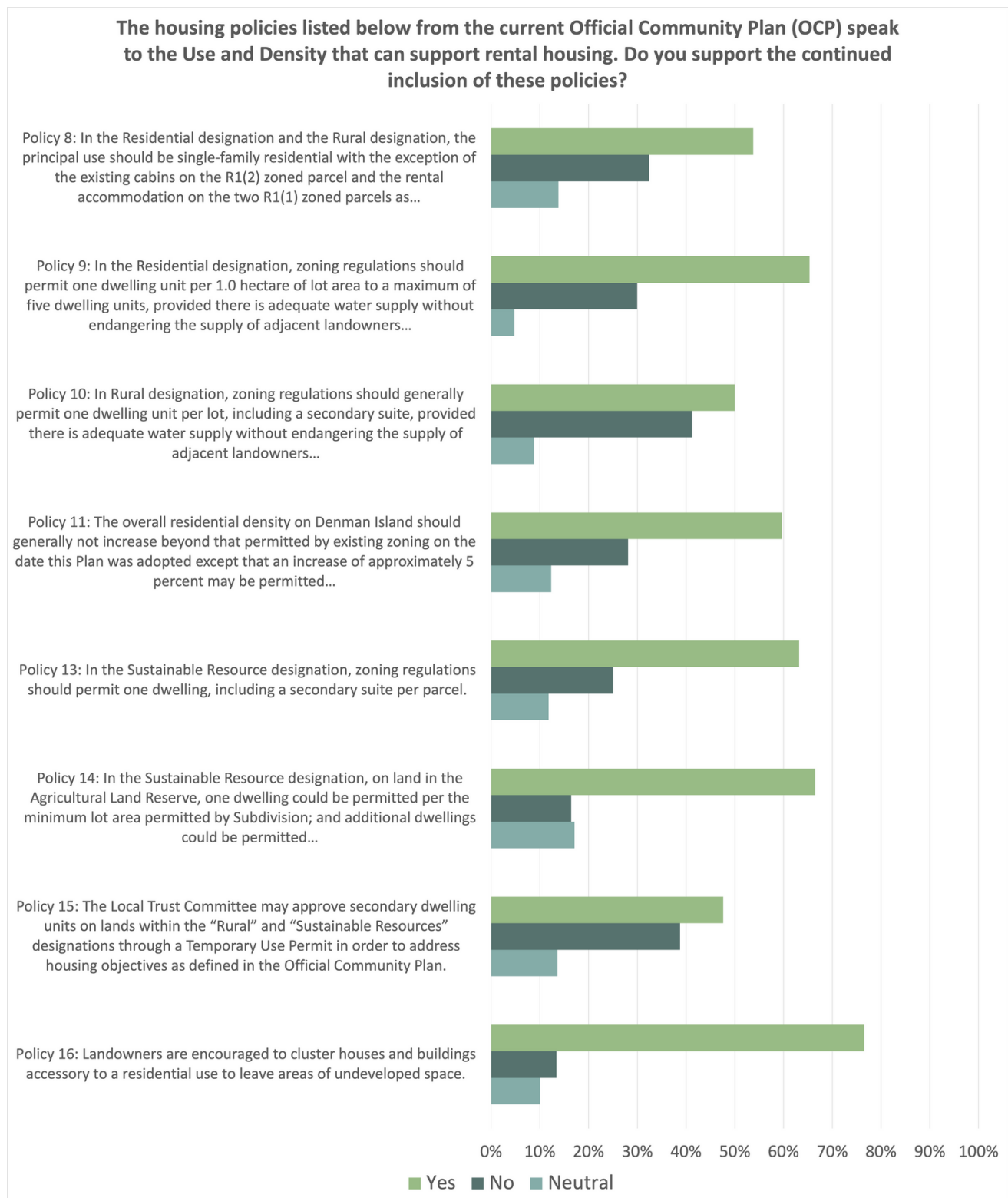


Figure 2

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions on policies mentioned in Figure 2 related to use and density that can support affordable and attainable housing options on Denman, 62 provided comments, and 112 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Against New Subdivision</b>	Some comments reflected a disagreement with subdividing lots and instead suggested allowing secondary suites and dwellings on the properties.	8
<b>Increased Density</b>	These comments were in favour of increasing density with a focus on specific areas of high-density.	12
<b>More Rental</b>	Comments suggested more rental units with the overarching idea of affordable rentals and non-market housing.	4
<b>Compact Housing Options</b>	These comments spoke to reducing house size to allow for higher density within existing areas as well as an option to increase affordability.	6
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Lot size definition, subdivision, and affordable housing options spoke to environmental concerns being of importance when considering further housing options.	18

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*Do not create new areas for housing, but densify where possible to decrease the human footprint."*

*"Neighbouring homeowners are not the only ones needing water. There needs to be adequate water for the non-human life on the islands. Leaving spaces undeveloped is important."*

When asked whether the respondents support the continued inclusion of policies regarding affordable housing, 149 answered this question, and 25 skipped. An average of 76% of respondents were in support, 15% opposed, and 9% felt neutral about it.

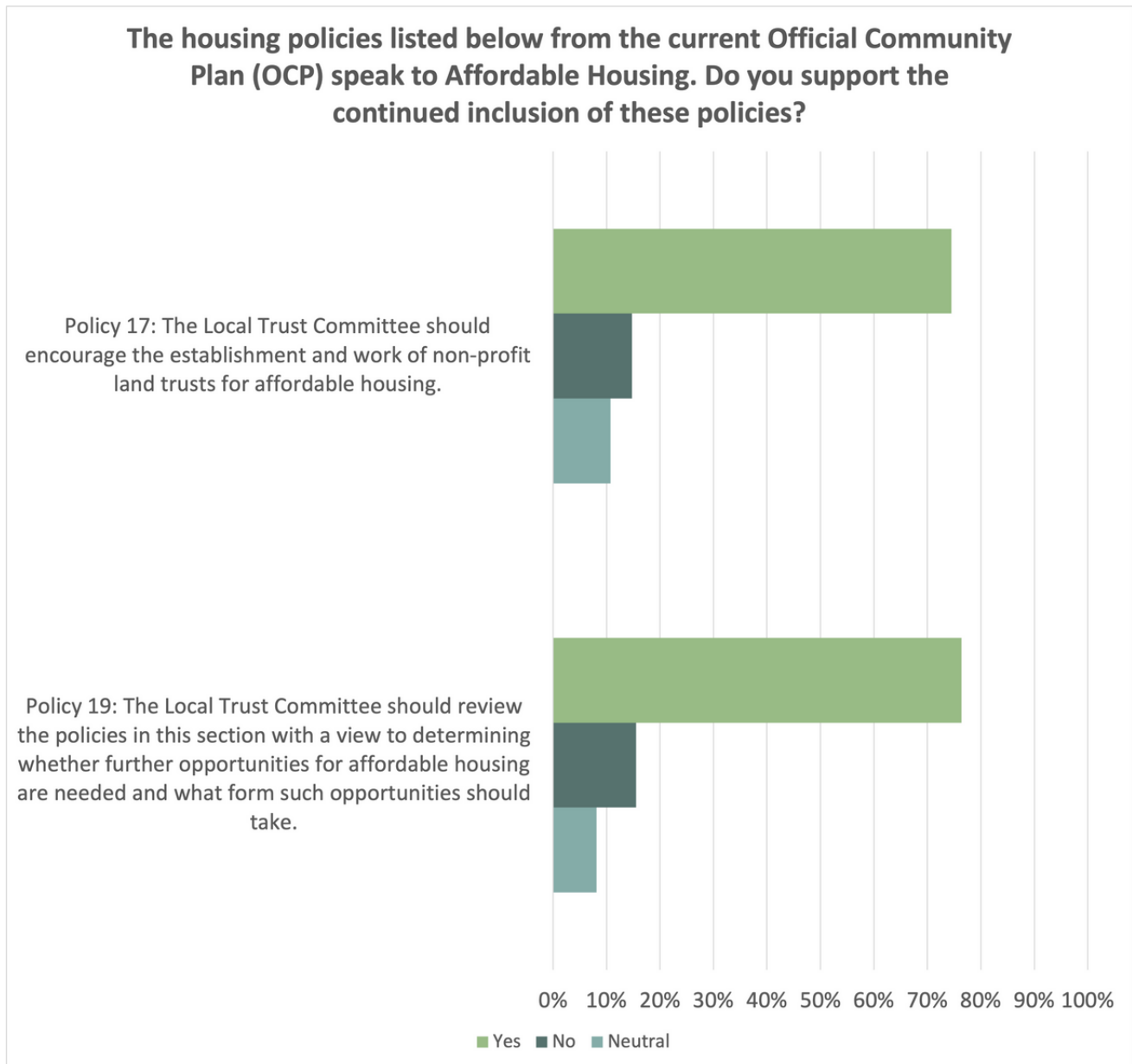


Figure 3

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions on policies mentioned in Figure 3 related to affordable and attainable housing options on Denman, 62 provided comments, and 112 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Increase Affordable Housing</b>	These comments specifically requested more affordable housing options.	22
<b>Define Affordable Housing</b>	These comments requested a better definition of what affordable housing means.	5
<b>Focused Density</b>	These comments were focused on specific neighbourhoods for affordable housing, and increased density.	4
<b>Non-Market/Co-op Housing</b>	Non-market, co-op housing and others were suggested as solutions. Affordable housing is a recurring theme that residents desire.	5
<b>Secondary Dwelling/Suite Allowance</b>	Secondary suites or dwellings were commented on as permanent solutions and as long-term rental solutions as well.	9

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*The fragile environment and ecosystems on Denman should be the paramount consideration."*

*"I would like to see a proactive policy to identify land that may be acquired for non-market housing, perhaps through programs that are established by provincial or federal governments. Non-market housing should be emphasized over 'affordable' housing, as 'affordable' is a subjective concept. "*

When asked whether the respondents support the continued inclusion of policies regarding zoning amendments, 143 answered this question, and 31 skipped. An average of 81% of respondents were in support, 12% opposed, and 7% felt neutral about it.

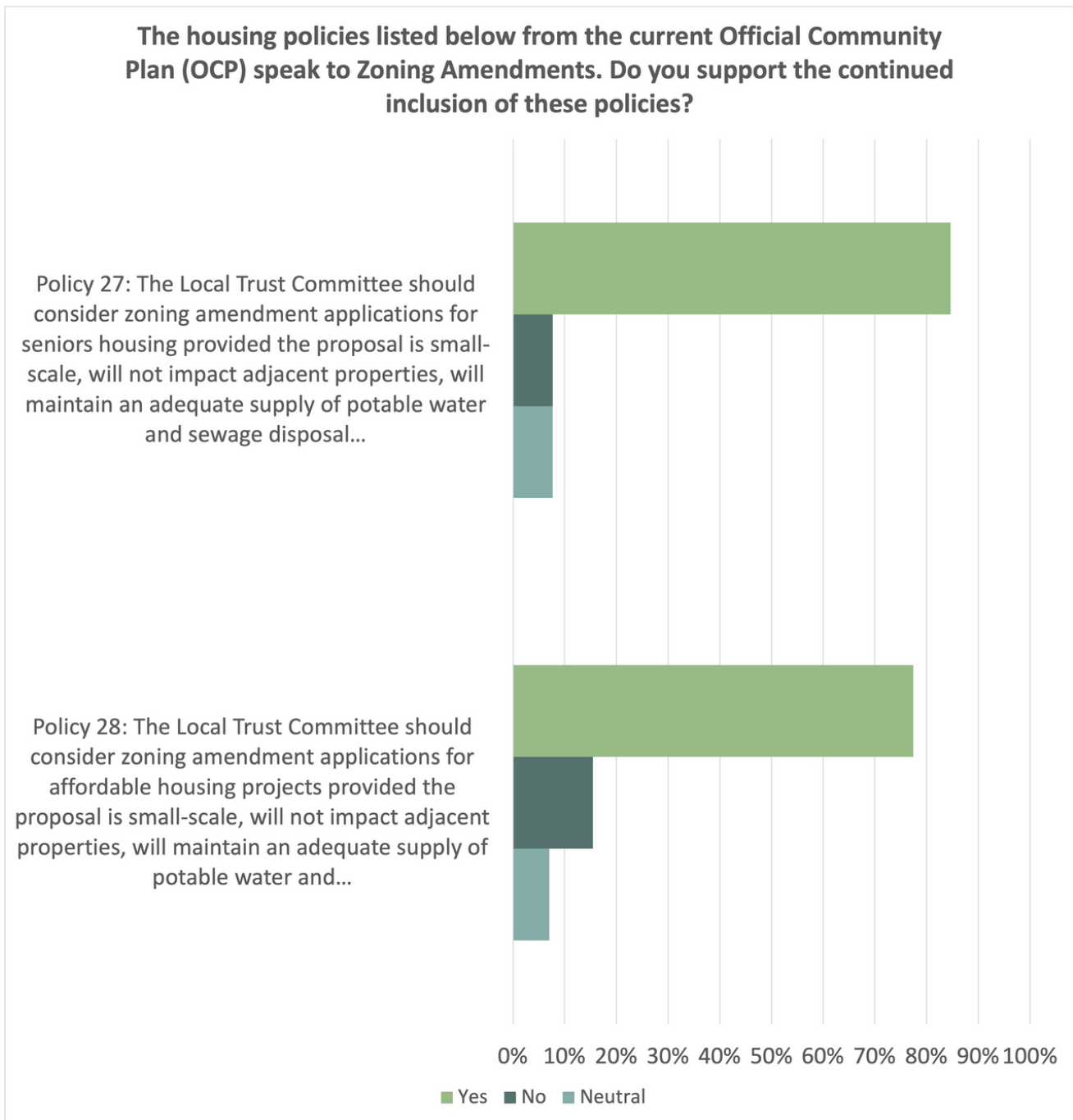


Figure 4

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions on policies mentioned in Figure 4 related to zoning amendments that can support affordable and attainable housing options on Denman, 56 provided comments, and 118 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Servicing Considerations</b>	Water and sewage services were continuously mentioned as having high importance to consider with developments.	11
<b>Zoning</b>	These comments mentioned zoning and specifically pre-zoning or having existing zones that allow for affordable options, rental options and focused areas potential for increased density. Some comments were opposed to zoning amendments.	8
<b>Secondary Dwelling/Non-Market Housing</b>	Secondary suites, or dwellings, were commented on as permanent solutions and as long-term rental solutions as well.	8
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Lot size definition, subdivision, and affordable housing options spoke to environmental concerns being of importance when considering further housing options.	5
<b>Increase Affordable Housing</b>	These comments specifically requested more affordable housing options.	22

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*Absentee landowners should be penalized for leaving perfectly good housing empty."*

*"Clusters of housing might be better in terms of leaving the land undeveloped for fauna/flora. "*

When asked whether the respondents felt the TUP was effective in addressing housing objectives in regard to secondary dwellings, 145 answered this question, and 29 skipped. 23% of respondents feel it is very effective (7%) and effective (16%), 27% feel neutral about it, and 50% of respondents feel it is ineffective (26%) and very ineffective (24%).

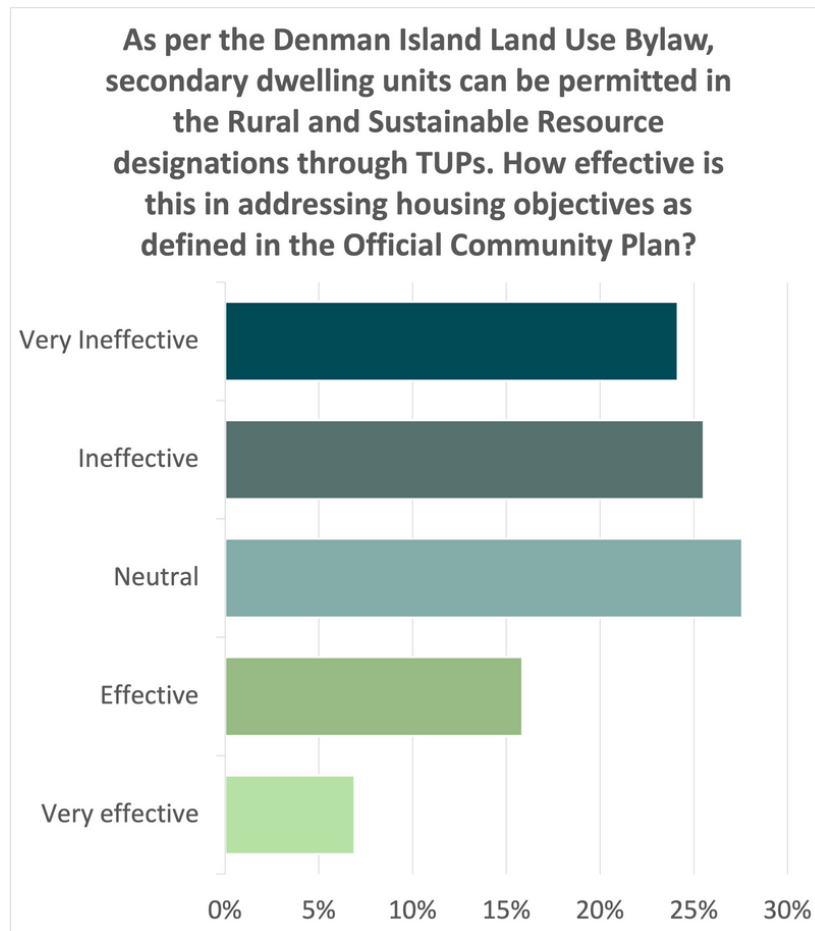


Figure 5

“ I think most people agree that the TUP is not an attractive option for people to create more housing. At 3 years, with only one renewal and some cost and bureaucracy not many will take it up. It may be more attractive if it was for the life of the ownership of the property but could not be transferred to subsequent owners. Also, with little or no enforcement of bylaws, why go the TUP route? ”

- Survey Respondent

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions if they chose ineffective or neutral on the previous questions relating to secondary dwellings and TUPs, 80 provided comments, and 94 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Remove TUPs and Instate Better Ways to Regulate Growth</b>	The general feeling around TUPs was that it is not the best way to create long-term sustainable housing options. The process to apply for a TUP is cumbersome and costly, and investment in housing cannot be justified for a three-year period, hence not preferred. The uncertainty for renters and owners discourages long-term investment. To address the affordable and attainable housing issues on Denman Island, longer-term housing solutions are needed. TUPs do not address Objective 2 of the Housing Objectives in the Denman Island OCP, as it does not preserve human diversity.	19
<b>Cluster Housing</b>	Would minimize environmental disturbance as buildings could be contained to a specific area. "CLUSTER HOUSING means a group or groups of dwelling units which may be in various forms, and so located on a lot that each dwelling unit may not have legal frontage on a public street or road and more than one dwelling unit may exist on one lot." (definition provided by Law Insider)	4
<b>Preserve The Rural Nature</b>	Further addressed in the concerns section, the rural nature could be at risk if densification is not conducted carefully.	6
<b>Create Non-Market Housing</b>	There are hopes for the development of a non-profit organization to create non-market housing options on Denman Island.	3
<b>Vacant Homes</b>	Many houses on Denman Island are either vacant or used for short-term rentals.	4

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:

“ Affordable and attainable housing on Denman is not possible without damaging the ecosystems, increasing traffic on roads, increasing water and infrastructure demand and ending up drawing more people here in search of cheap housing. Look at Surrey, Vancouver Island etc - they were rural and beautiful once. ”

“ To have a vibrant community, we want to support full-time residents, not absentee owners and recreational properties. ”

When asked whether the respondents agreed with the statements listed in Figure 6 regarding secondary dwellings or suites in R1 and R2 zones, 144 answered this question, and 30 skipped. Please refer to Figure 6 to see the Likert scale response.

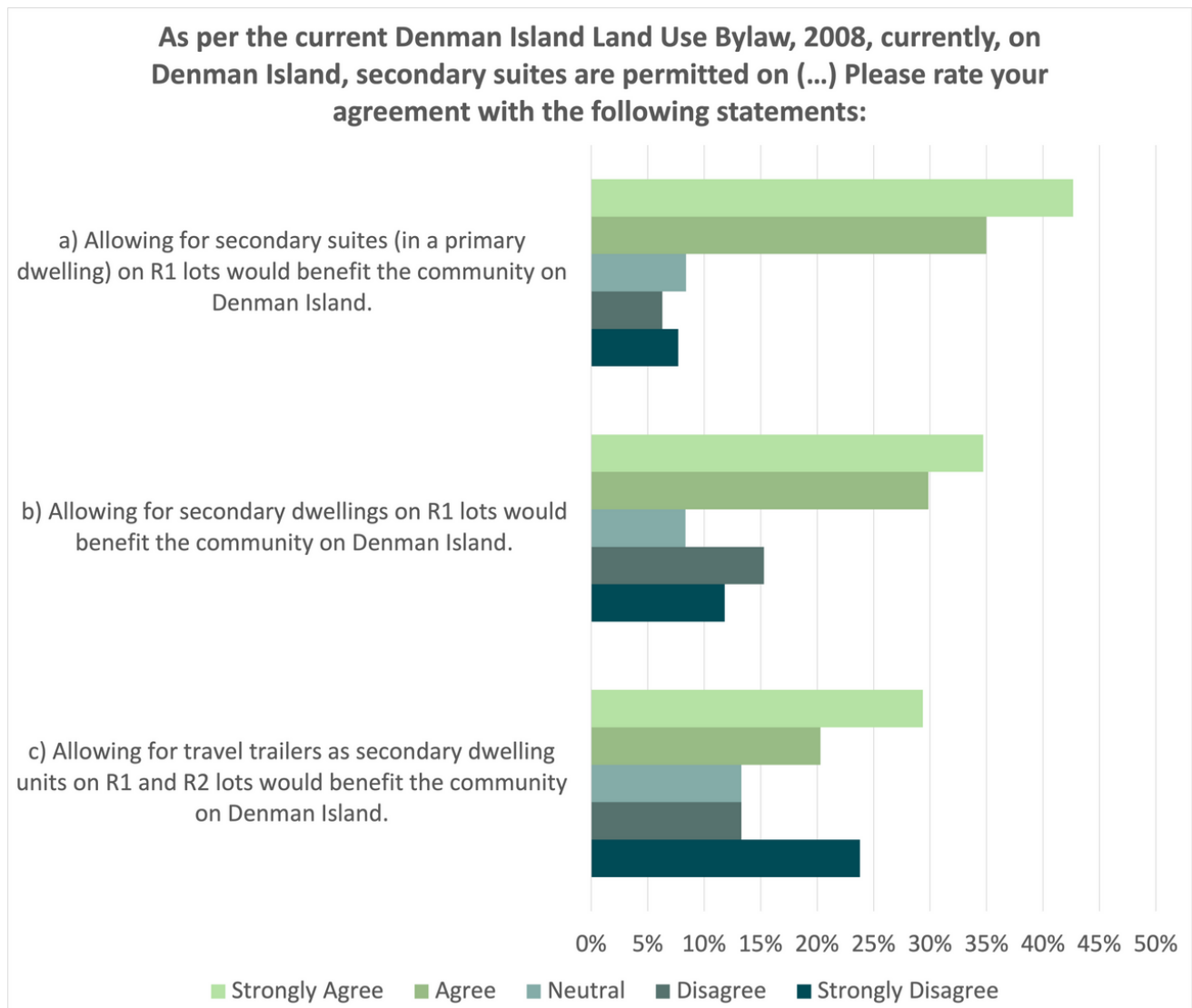


Figure 6

When asked whether the respondents supported the statements listed in Figure 7, 143 answered this question, and 31 skipped. Please refer to Figure 7 to see the Likert scale response.

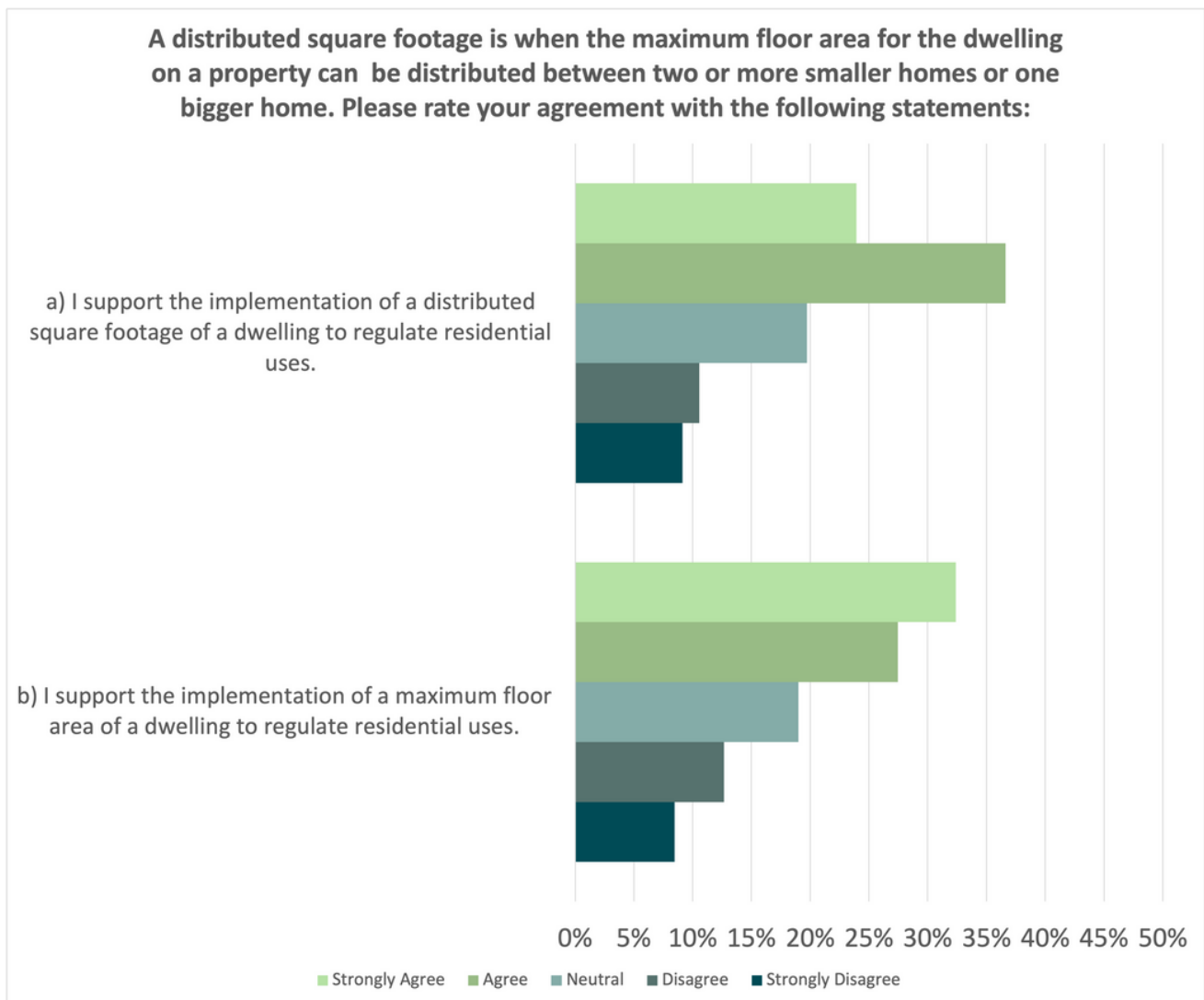


Figure 7

When asked whether the respondents support the recommendations from the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment Report, 142 answered this question, and 32 skipped. An average of 62% of respondents were in support, 16% opposed, and 22% felt neutral about it.

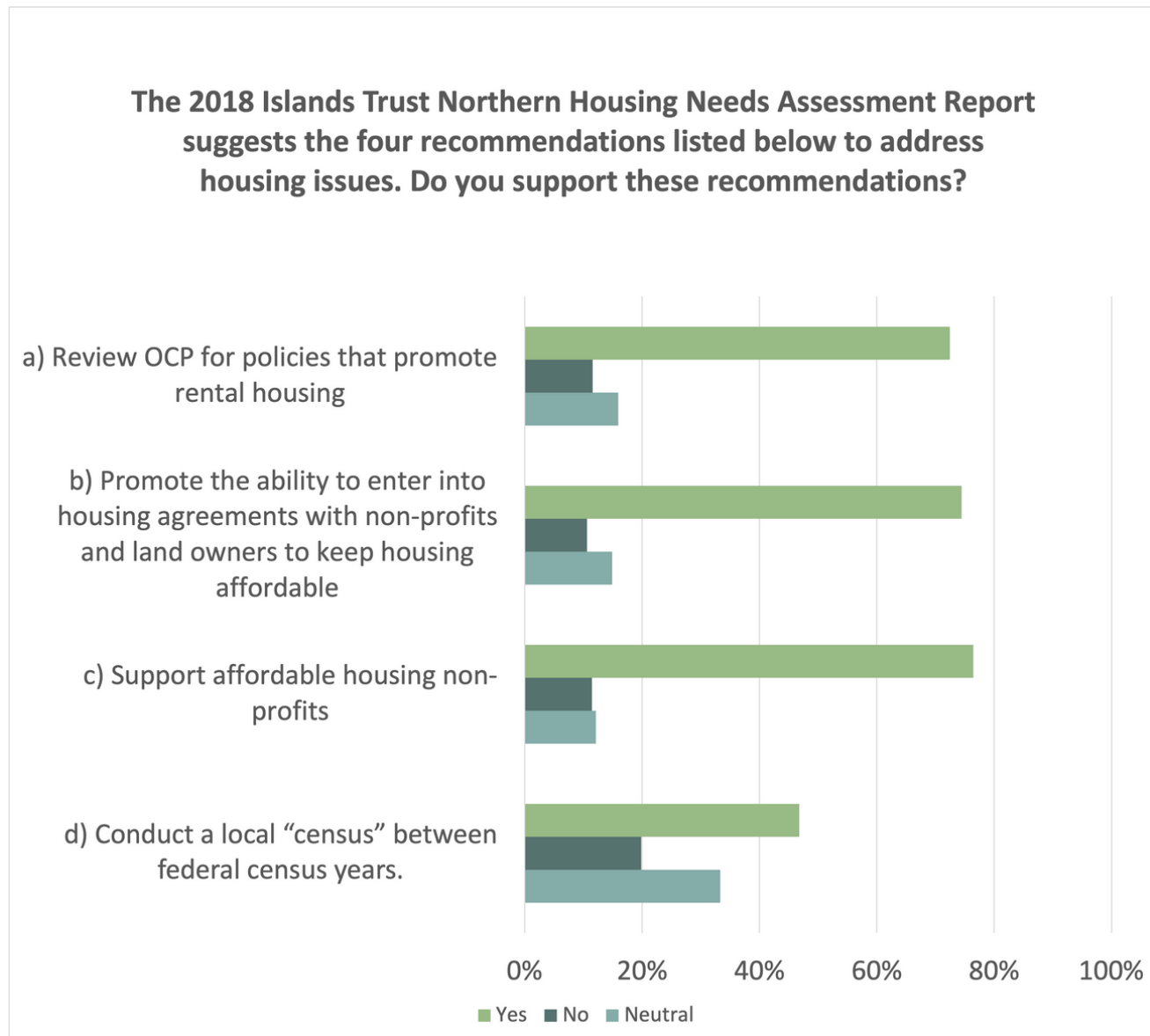


Figure 8

When asked if the respondents had any other comments on the recommendations from the 2018 Islands Trust Northern Housing Needs Assessment Report mentioned in Figure 8, 46 provided comments, and 128 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Development should be focused on sustainable options and staying within the capacity of the island	6
<b>Affordability</b>	Affordability is of high importance, and these comments wished for more affordable options	13
<b>Rental Housing</b>	More rental options and affordable options. The long-term rental was of the highest importance	9
<b>Population Rise</b>	Concern that the island could not support the increasing population due to finite resources	4
<b>Census Fatigue</b>	Frustration that surveys were too numerous and hard to follow and wished for progress	14

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*Increasing the housing supply rarely solves the affordability issue. In a capitalist system where real estate is an investment opportunity, affordable places are those places no one wants to be. Changing zoning to allow for more dwellings will open up a few more affordable spots but many will be for family members or end up short-term rentals even if Airbnb is banned. And the big question is, should we add population to a place we are supposed to preserve; protect for environmental reasons? At some point, you can't have both. What is the maximum population, and will bylaws be put in place to keep it there."*

*"Islands are not the place for young families. With the exception of working for the ferries and a couple of stores, there is no employment. Years ago, we could not afford to live on the island, it was too far to go to school, and we could not participate in extra activities after school. I do not agree with promoting low-income housing."*

When asked whether the respondents supported changes to existing OCP policies to allow for more secondary suites, secondary dwellings and the use of travel trailers to increase housing options on Denman, 138 answered this question, and 36 skipped. An average of 68% of respondents agreed with the statements, 22% opposed, and 10% felt neutral about it.

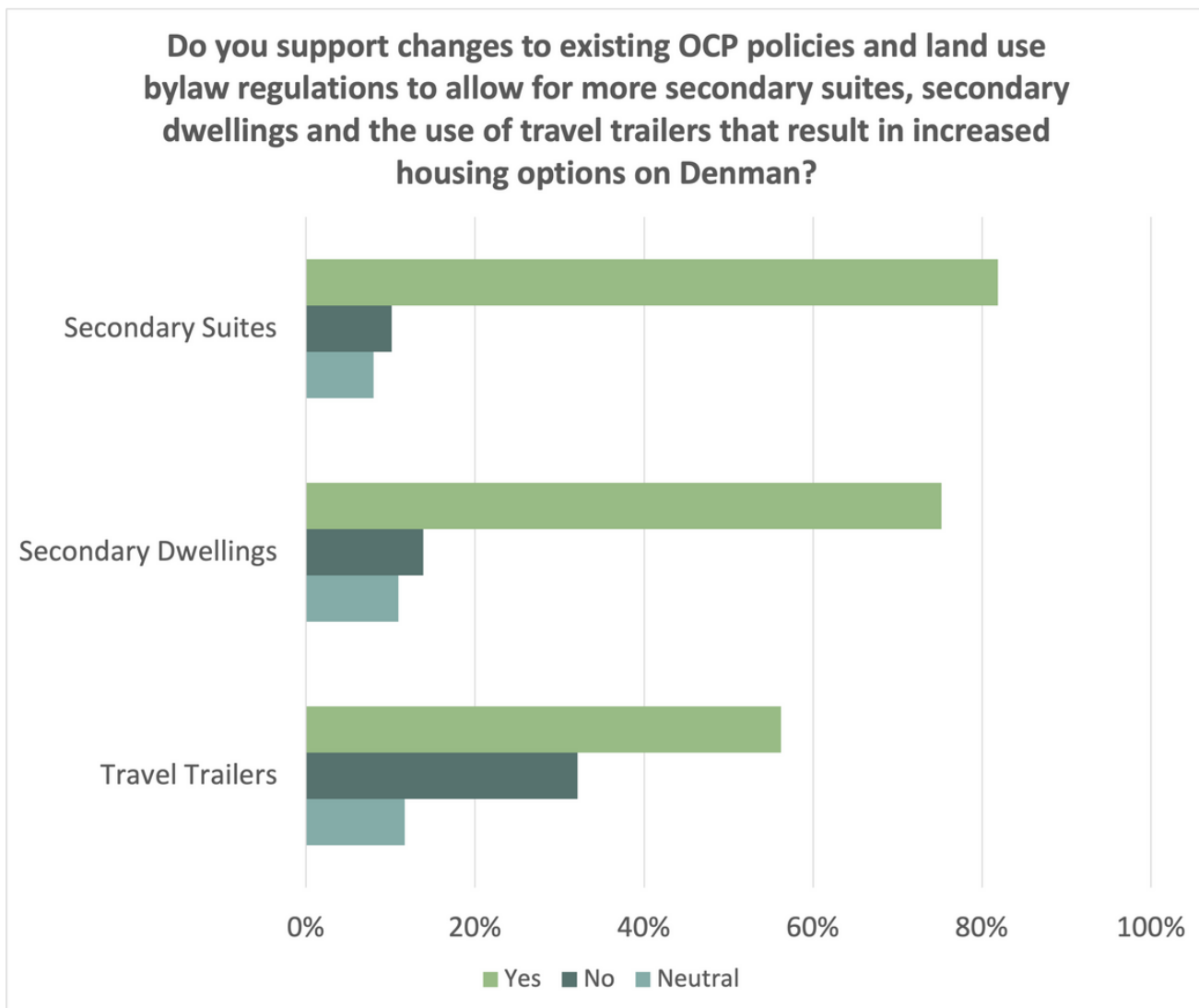


Figure 9

When asked if the respondents had any suggestions regarding regulations around secondary suites, secondary dwellings and travel trailers to promote increased affordable and attainable housing options on Denman Island, 56 provided comments, and 118 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Allow Secondary Dwellings with Restrictions</b>	Secondary units must be allowed with permanent restrictions on the titles regarding permitted uses (such as affordable rental, family members, staff housing, and senior and special needs housing), resale price, and financial status of the owner.	15
<b>Travel Trailers</b>	Travel trailers are not permanent housing solutions, their use as such pose a risk to the environmental well-being of the island.	3

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*Policies to limit fire, safety, environmental, and disturbance issues that may arise as a result of allowing more secondary housing options."*

*"Secondary dwellings should be allowed in residential areas - without a TUP if they do not move and have required water and sanitation. Travel trailers and moveable housing units should have TUPs and prove to have suitable sanitation. Incentives should be provided to encourage landowners to provide outhouses, for example, for people in moveable dwellings.*



When asked what aspects of the natural environment, social fabric, and rural character most need to be protected as we consider regulatory changes to increase affordable and attainable housing options, 80 provided comments, and 94 skipped the question. The responses were grouped into appropriate themes. The table below mentions the themes, context and the count of the number of times each theme was mentioned.

THEME	CONTEXT	COUNT
<b>Street Appeal</b>	Maintaining the yards and buildings, especially in residential areas. Also, revitalizing/reclaiming the downtown core.	2
<b>Zoning</b>	Keep commercial zoning downtown only. Avoid more subdivisions.	4
<b>Protect Rural Character</b>	Limited resources should be protected. Densification should be controlled and kept within certain zones, not everywhere. Avoid new subdivisions with small lots. Difficult to densify while protecting this as they oppose one another.	14
<b>Protect Trees on New and Existing Lots</b>	Residents do not want to see established trees being cut down, which has happened historically.	4
<b>Protect Water Resources</b>	Watersheds, water table, run-off, etc.	8
<b>Accessibility</b>	Beach access, trails (for both biking and walking, access to green space for community members.	4
<b>Carrying Capacity</b>	Limited water and sewage resources on the island.	5
<b>Airbnbs and Short-Term Rentals</b>	Negatively impact the island's rural character take up valuable housing opportunities. Year-round rentals are needed desperately on the island.	4
<b>Rv's as Permanent Housing</b>	How is waste being managed, and who is ensuring this? What impacts does this have on the environment?	2
<b>Wildlife Habitat</b>	Protect habitat, including water bodies.	4
<b>The Survey Itself and Islands Trust</b>	As non-residents, the data collected may not be used appropriately. Bureaucracy presents too many obstacles to actually make a difference.	2
<b>Too Many Regulations</b>	Island trust is too involved. If affordable housing options are what is needed, then regulations must be relaxed/reduced.	3

See below some direct quotes from the survey respondents:



*Make sure that the lots aren't subdivided to the extent that we have a patchwork of degraded lands that don't support species."*

*"Rural character is not compatible with increasing densification. There is a limit to how much can be added to a finite land base, and there are limits on resources such as water and waste management. Safe, affordable housing is the goal for everyone, but not at the cost of poor living spaces that impact health or the destruction of the local environment."*

*"Put some basic controls in place so new owners don't clear-cut mature trees on their property. There have been some really sad examples of this where every single tree is lost."*

*"Keep rural looking rural. The detrimental effects of increased housing cause negative effects on trees, indigenous plants, meadows and marshes. Increase density on rural lands can increase demands on water aquifers, sewage dispersal and roads. "*

When asked how many months per year respondents lived on Denman Island, 136 answered this question, and 38 skipped. 68% of respondents that answered the question live on Denman Island year-round.

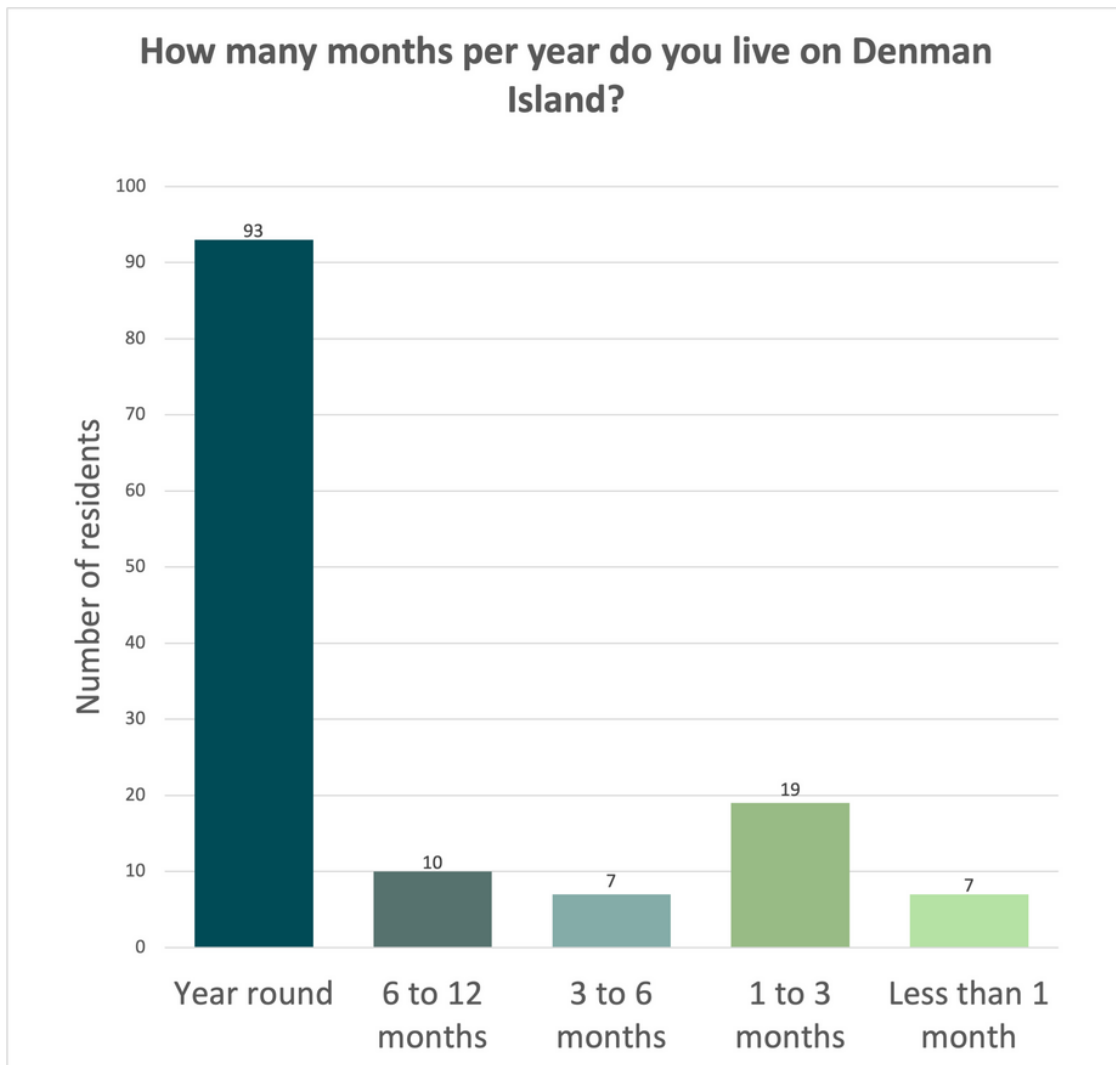


Figure 10

# Appendix B

## Stakeholder Focus Group Summary

The Stakeholder Focus Group was hosted and facilitated online via Zoom by Vancouver Island University's Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI) on November 10, 2022, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Nine stakeholders/representatives from local organizations and interest groups, including Denman Housing Association, Denman Island Climate Action Network, Denman Works, Lands Trust, Denman Pre-school Society, and community members with lived experiences, were in attendance, representing a diverse interest group.

The discussion questions were centered around the existing policies and current zoning in the Denman Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) regarding secondary suites, secondary dwellings, travel trailer regulations, distributed square footage and similar approaches. Participants shared their views and provided feedback. The discussion themes included 1) the natural environment, 2) density, 3) siting and typology, 4) financial issues and solutions, and 5) laws, policies and other legal issues. The discussion themes are explained in more depth below:

### 1. Natural Environment

With the increase in affordable and attainable housing, there were concerns regarding water usage and availability. To address this concern, best practices for water conservation and environmentally conscious building practices were suggested as methods to mitigate the issues. Comments are further categorized into the following sub-themes.

- a) Water Management comments (13) included eco-conscious methods such as water recycling, gray water usage, rainwater collection and general education. Concerns were raised regarding water storage and collection, as well as over water usage.

- b) Composting Technique comments (4) were dominantly focused on the inclusion of composting toilets.
- c) Eco-Friendly Building Solution comments (3) discussed passive house-building techniques for new developments with the inclusion of eco-friendly appliances.
- d) Island Carrying Capacity comments (2) discussed the concerns regarding overuse and finding creative solutions to ensure resources are used that meet the capacity of the island.

## 2. Density

Most people were opposed to adding new density in undeveloped areas on Denman Island and suggested finding better ways to create more rental housing options within the existing housing stock to keep the rural nature of the community undisturbed. With the increase in housing, concerns related to groundwater availability and environmental impacts arose. Comments are further categorized into the following sub-themes.

- a) Secondary Unit comments (6) emphasized that landowners should be allowed secondary units as a means to increase density.
- b) Localized Densification comments (4) favoured densification but preferred specific areas of high density versus overall density increases.
- c) Existing Stock comments (3) discussed utilizing existing stock to increase density and legalizing housing that is currently being used illegally.
- d) Incentive comments (3) provided the solution of incentives to encourage those with empty homes or developers to increase density and affordability.

## 3. Siting and Typology

Most people were not concerned with the typology and siting of the existing housing stock and believed that the lot sizes are quite appropriately sized and that there should be better ways to evaluate which lots should be allowed to have secondary units. Comments are further categorized into the following sub-themes.

- a) Legal Concern comments (5) expressed concerns for illegal housing and that the solutions for housing exist on Denman Island, but they are currently illegal, such as tiny homes or existing secondary suites on properties that are currently considered illegal.
- b) Empty House comments (4) emphasized utilizing existing stock to solve the lack of housing issues.

- c) Appropriate Use/Policy comments (4) discussed siting and typology suitable for secondary dwellings.
  - d) Diversity of Housing comments (2) proposed typologies of diverse housing sizes and types to meet the needs of Denman Island.
4. Financial Issues and Solutions
- Most participants represented services that support folks with lived experiences of housing instability or individuals along with their own lived experiences. Comments focused on housing affordability and accessibility by allowing and incentivizing more rental options for utilizing existing housing stock legally. Comments are further categorized into the following sub-themes.
- a) Too Expensive comments (4) expressed concerns that housing and development were too expensive on Denman Island.
  - b) Incentive comments (4) discussed grants, subsidies, tax breaks, and general incentives to support housing initiatives.
  - c) Rental comments (3) mainly focused on rental affordability and increasing the rental stock.
  - d) Affordability comments (3) generally considered rental affordability but also discussed general house affordability.
  - e) Empty Home Fine comments (2) wished for fines on houses that are vacant for most of the year or increased taxes to incentivize people to utilize this housing for rental purposes.
5. Laws, Policies and other Legal Issues
- Most comments focused on bylaws and zoning amendments to allow for legal housing alternatives such as secondary units and a variety of housing typologies, including tiny homes, mobile homes, and RVs. The unanimous message was that Denman Island needs policies that represent the unique housing challenges of Denman residents. Comments are further categorized into the following sub-themes.
- a) Removing Roadblocks comments (6) mainly focused on changing policies to encourage different forms of housing, such as secondary suites or dwellings.
  - b) Legalize Housing comments (3) were from the same theme but specifically mentioned legalizing existing housing to increase housing stock.
  - c) OCP/Zoning Bylaw Amendments comments (2) emphasized regulatory changes to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw to increase affordable housing stock on Denman Island.