

Public Input Report – Housing

Community input related to housing has been gathered through a city wide survey and engagement day, two real estate professional specific events and from the Steering Committee of the 2030 Plan Update. The input is summarized by event below. Future opportunities for additional input on housing will be available.

On the Table Georgetown

The City hosted a citywide Engagement Day on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, which coincided with National Night Out to provide residents an opportunity to give their ideas about the future of Georgetown’s growth and development. Facilitated discussion groups were planned throughout the day across the city so that individuals could participate at their convenience. Materials were also made available online so that people could host discussions at their home or business. Each discussion table was asked to consolidate their ideas into a one page summary sheet. Of the 858 total comments collected, 71 addressed housing and affordability. A sample of the housing related comments are below categorized by the three Housing Element themes.

Affordability

- A need for affordable housing in Georgetown.
- Rising housing prices have aided in creating a high cost of living, increasing to the point where many residents feel they might not be able to live in Georgetown in the near future.
- Use of incentives to help create a more affordable community.
- Providing incentives to developers to provide more affordable housing.
- Providing incentives to City employees to encourage and allow them to live in the City.
- Affordable housing with rental and home buying is not only affecting low income but also medium income individuals and families
- Hard to live in Georgetown on a single income.

Preservation

- Gentrification is creating affordability issues
- Gentrification has impacted current residents in a negative manner
- Cost of living is increasing in town and it is difficult for people who have been here to stay.
- Concerned too expensive to live here for much longer

Diversity

- Not enough variety of housing types within the City.
- Townhomes and apartments are housing developments that could be implemented in the City.
- More diverse housing types are needed.

- There is slow growth of multi-resident/high density residential buildings. Need more of these.

Survey #1 – Question #5

The City conducted an online survey as initial outreach of the 2030 Plan Update asking participants what Georgetown should look like in the year 2030. This question allowed an open field for the respondent to enter their own comments. A sample of the housing related comments are below categorized by the three themes addressed by the Housing Element. Of the 1,323 open ended comments, 18 addressed housing and affordability directly.

Affordability

- Affordable housing needed to make sure everyone feels welcome, not the case currently
- Affordability has changed in 10-15 years

Preservation

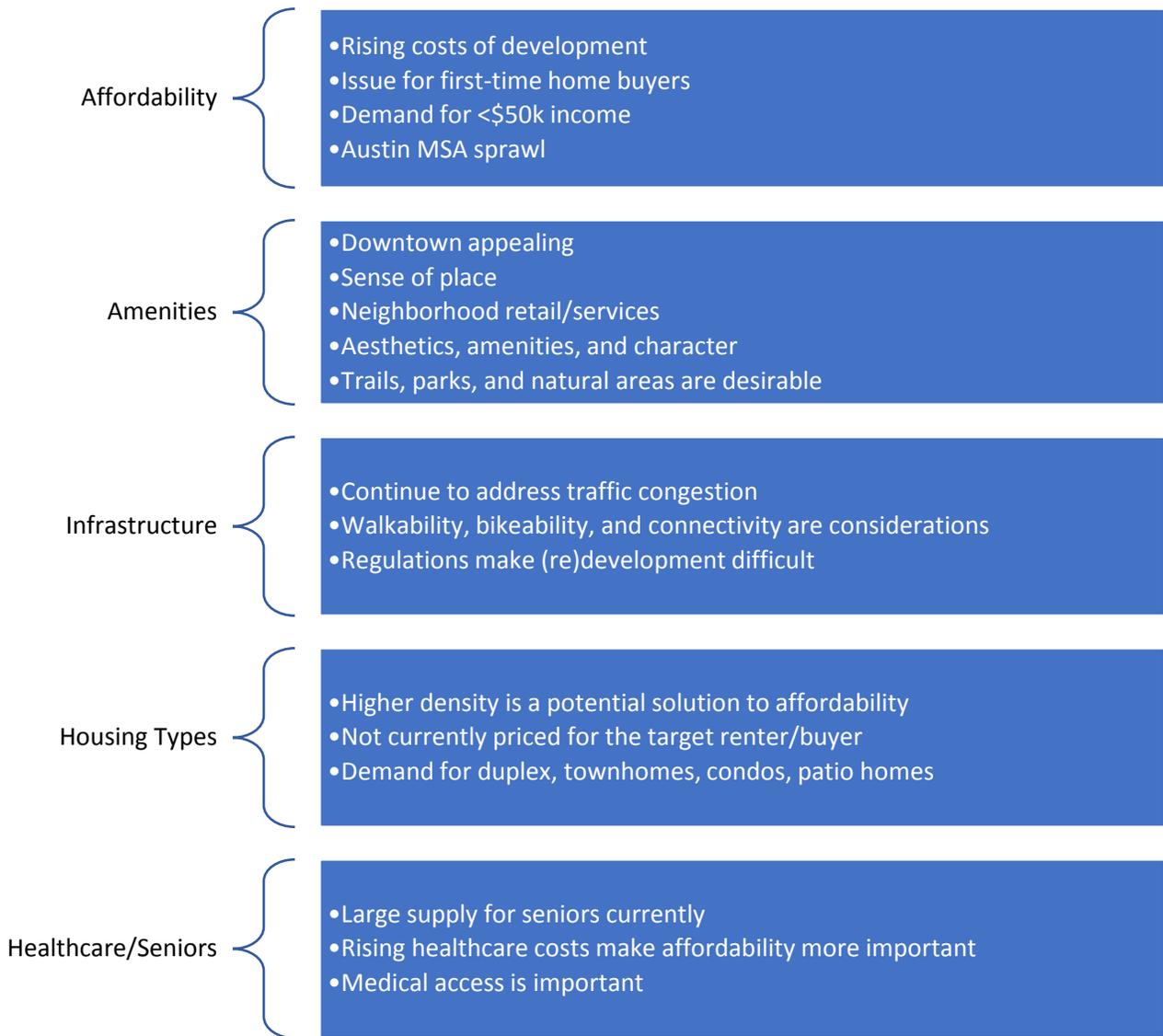
- Maintain existing core neighborhoods and downtown areas. Infill and expansion construction should be compatible with neighboring properties.

Diversity

- Afford to purchase a home and stay their whole life
- Mixed use development like Mueller
- Embrace everyone
- Expand with mixed-use and a variety of housing types/sizes.
- More dense but still a welcoming community. Pride for historic assets, and a place for people of all ages.

Real Estate Roundtable

On June 26, 2018, the City of Georgetown met with members of the local real estate, development and finance community to discuss housing trends in the City and region. The following five topic areas emerged from their discussions:



WilCo Realtors Association

On September 18, 2018, the City of Georgetown met with 67 members of the Williamson County Association of Realtors to discuss relevant elements of the 2030 Plan, present key trends from the State of the City, and solicit input on existing conditions within the real estate market. About half (49%) of the participants have been in the real estate industry for at least 10 years, and over a third (35%) have worked in the Georgetown market for at least 10 years.

Participants were asked to identify the top three characteristics that their clients request from a list of eight options. The most requested characteristics include:

1. Affordability (47%)
2. Schools (37%)
3. Regional access (jobs and medical) (26%)
4. Neighborhood aesthetics and “character”
5. Neighborhood retail and services

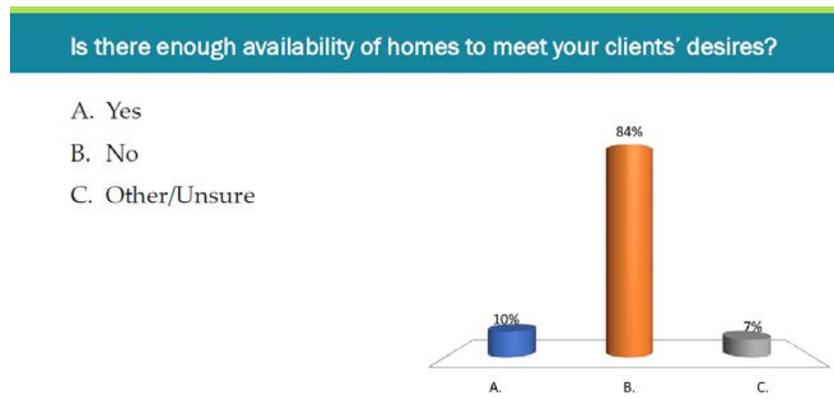
Affordability

The price points with the highest demand in Georgetown are \$200,000 to 250,000 (41%) and \$250,000-300,000 (32%). When desirable housing options cannot be found within Georgetown, clients most frequently turn to Hutto and Jarrell.

Diversity

The most difficult housing product to find in Georgetown is condominiums (63%), while 18% of realtors said townhomes are the most difficult to find.

- 84% said there is not enough housing to meet demand
- 79% said Georgetown’s housing quality meets client expectations



Preservation

The realtors were not asked questions related to preservation of existing neighborhoods.

Steering Committee #5

Following a presentation of the supply and demand of for-sale and rental housing, the Steering Committee was asked to note their findings and key takeaways. Many of the findings from the rental demand data related to affordability.

Affordability

- Surprised by high renter cost burden
- Surprised Georgetown AMI is lower than WilCo
- Surprised that there are a significant amount of more renters are cost burdened than owners.
- Regional demand cannot be completely addressed by local supply
- The data suggests there is a segment of the population for whom Georgetown is unaffordable
- Lower income is more cost burdened.
- Surprised that anyone under \$20K could own a home
- Not enough houses for \$50K incomes
- Income does not equal ownership
- Lower rents for single family than expected
- 2008-2018 Wages not growing as fast as housing costs
- Surprised to know wages not growing as fast as housing costs

Preservation

- Duplexes = affordability

Diversity

- Send to Council: Georgetown needs more duplex, fourplex
- Surprising that more subsidized units than Class B
- Townhouses/condos play a role in the market
- Density is the answer
- Housing is an economic development issue
- Surprised nothing under \$399K west of I-35
- # of units under \$275K in next 12-18 months, making some progress
- increase UDC, increase cost

BOARD AND COMMISSION INPUT

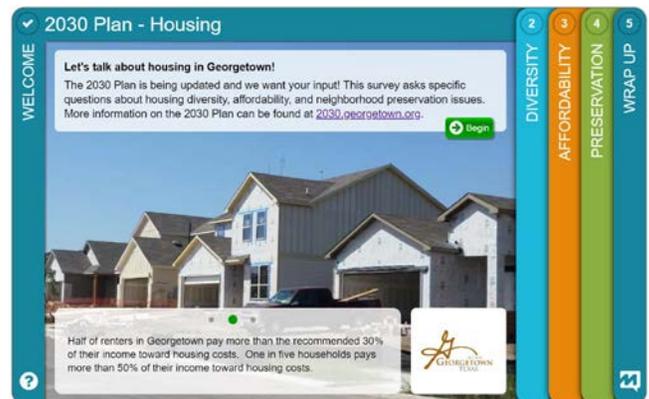
Following Council direction given in February, the Housing Advisory Board (HAB) gave input on the housing themes of diversity, affordability and preservation at their March 18, 2019, meeting. The HAB stated that preservation policies should support and strengthen neighborhoods, preserve existing neighborhoods, protect and retain existing housing stock through public policy, and include revitalization of neighborhoods. For affordability, the HAB would like to see terms that say “Create more, support existing” for policies addressing low income and workforce households. The Board would like policies to be specific on homelessness, include the idea of “working poor” or underserved” populations, and have an education component.

At the March Commission on Aging meeting, the Commission gave input on the housing goal themes and were specifically asked to give input on ideas of “aging in place” and “aging in the community”. The Commission shared that financial assistance is important to many aging adults who want to remain in their home and in the community. Home modification is often necessary and services including transportation, medical and nutritional assistance are critical.

HOUSING (SURVEY #2)

Participation information

- 566 people participated in the survey between March 1 – March 29, 2019
- 9% of respondents rent their homes
- 43% have lived in Georgetown at least 11 years; 34% have lived in Georgetown 5 years or less
- 94% live in a traditional single-family detached home



Diversity

Which housing types are needed?

Single-family homes, townhomes, mixed-use development are needed. Less preference for apartments or condos. No clear conclusion on duplexes.

Which densities are needed?

Low density rural lots, small homes on small lots are needed. Less preference for large homes on small lots, medium to high density, or accessory dwellings.

What is needed to support aging-in-place?

All options were highly rated – support services, accessibility, healthcare, transportation, and range of housing types

Affordability

What are housing challenges for owners?

Property tax (by a large margin)

What are housing challenges for renters?

Rent prices and housing availability *(note that many homeowners also responded to this question)*

Who could benefit from additional housing options?

Mid-income people, families, and young professionals

What types of housing affordability support are needed?

Focus on providing a range of housing prices, particularly lower housing prices

Preservation

What might cause you to leave your neighborhood?

Participants were asked to select their top five concerns from a list of eight choices. The following table indicates how many times each concern was selected as a priority, and how high each concern was ranked.

Number of Times Ranked	Highest Ranking
1. Property tax increases	1. Property tax increases
2. Cost to maintain	2. Public safety
3. Public safety	3. Inability to age in place
4. Walkability and access	4. New development
5. Inability to age in place	5. Walkability and access
6. New development	6. Cost to maintain
7. Variety of housing types	7. Variety of housing types
8. Not enough amenities	8. Not enough amenities