



City of Quesnel

Secondary Suites Survey

May 20, 2010

Prepared by:
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Background and Objectives

NRG Research Group was retained by the City of Quesnel to conduct a Secondary Suites Survey. The City wants to measure public perceptions regarding secondary suites within Quesnel and to evaluate the primary concerns residents have regarding the introduction of secondary suites in neighbourhoods.

This project received financial assistance from Affordability and Choice Today (ACT), a housing regulatory reform initiative of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (administrator), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (funder), the Canadian Home Builders' Association, and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association.

•The primary objectives of the survey were to:

- ✓ Understand residents' views on secondary suites in different neighbourhoods within Quesnel;
- ✓ Identify reasons residents support and oppose secondary suites;
- ✓ Gauge support and opposition levels to a proposal for the City of Quesnel to allow for secondary suites in single-detached dwellings;
- ✓ Understand citizens' reactions to both positive and negative aspects of secondary suites being introduced in Quesnel; and,
- ✓ Determine possible differences in acceptance levels by neighbourhood, dwelling type and ownership status.

Methodology

NRG Research Group conducted telephone interviews for the *City of Quesnel's Secondary Suites Survey* between April 30th and May 4th, 2010 with 400 City of Quesnel residents. The survey instrument, available in the Appendix , was developed by NRG Research Group.

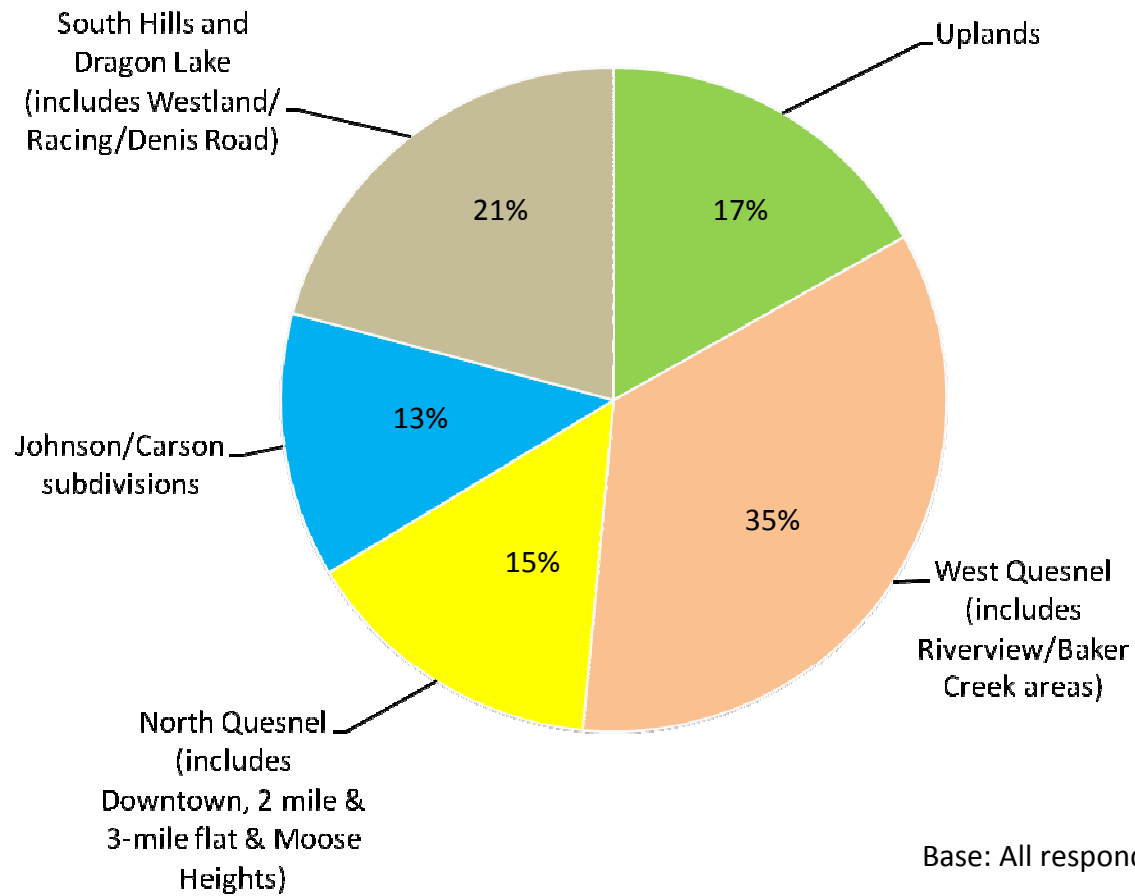
The survey was conducted among residents of the City of Quesnel aged 18 years or older using a random digital dial (RDD) sample source.

Based on data provided by the City, quotas by neighbourhood were set to ensure that respondents represented the overall household composition of the City.

See the next slide for neighbourhood representation in the survey.

Methodology

Q1. First, in which of the following neighbourhoods do you reside?



Base: All respondents, n=400

Methodology

As with all sample surveys, results are subject to margins of error. The table below presents the margins of error at the 95% level of confidence for various sample sizes in the study:

Sample Size	Maximum Margin of Error
400	+/- 4.9%
100	+/-9.8%

The maximum margins of error are based on a 50/50 split on any given question. As consensus on a question increases, the margin of error decreases. For instance, if the results are split 90/10 on a sample of 400, the margin of error at the 95% level of confidence narrows from +/-4.9% to +/-2.9%.

When analyzing results between two sub-groups or from year to year, the difference required to reach the 95% level of confidence is approximately 40% larger than each group's margin of error (assuming equal sample sizes). For example, when comparing results between neighbourhoods, assuming each has a sample of 100, any result that differed by 14% or more could be considered statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence.

Secondary suite support/opposition

- Approximately two in three (67%) City residents support the City of Quesnel modifying its by-laws to allow for secondary suites in single-detached dwellings. Levels of support were similar in all neighbourhoods.
- The citizens opposing the secondary suite by-law modification say they are concerned about the possibility of undesirable tenants and illegal tenant behaviour (27%), think there may be an undesirable neighbourhood change (19%) and see an increase in traffic (15%) and insufficient parking (16%)
- Those citizens in favour of the by-law change think it will lead to an improved availability of affordable (32%) and rental housing (20%), help homeowners with mortgages and expenses (25%) and benefit young people and students (8%). An additional one in ten could see no drawbacks to allowing secondary suites.

Attitudes towards secondary suites

- City-wide, eight in ten residents agree that allowing secondary suites would increase the number of housing options available to city residents.
- Across all neighbourhoods, almost all residents agree (90%) that secondary suites in Quesnel would benefit home owners seeking additional household income through renting out suites. Only 6% disagree somewhat or strongly with this concept.

Summary

Attitudes towards secondary suites (cont'd)

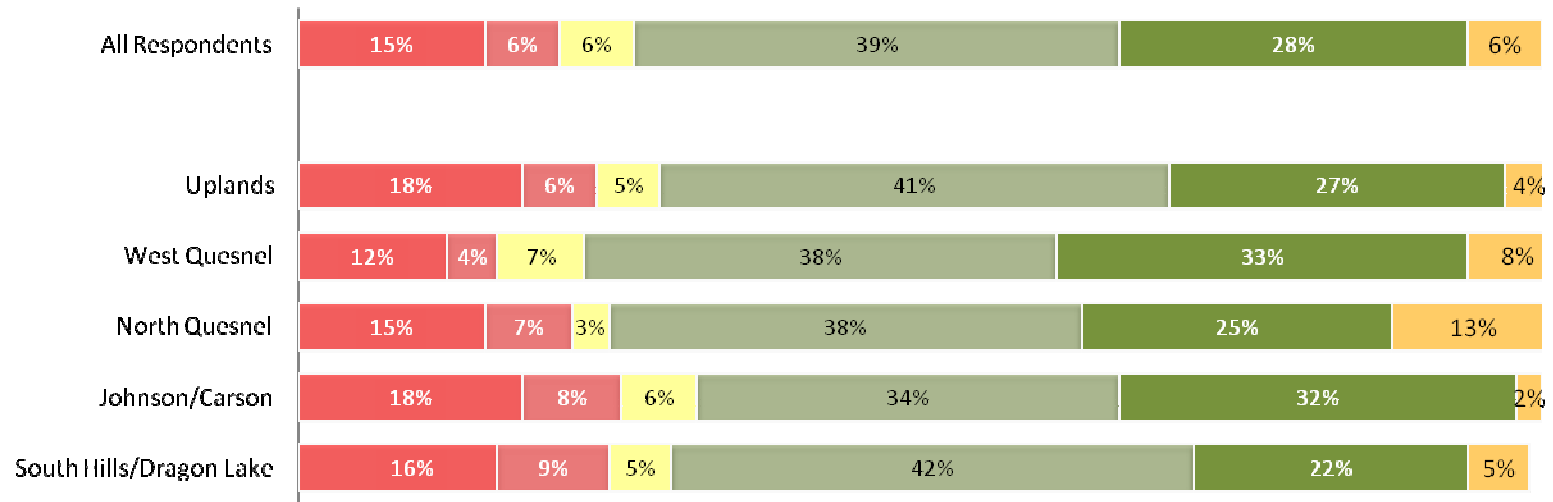
- Though supporting secondary suites strongly, residents do express some reservations. More than five in ten (54%) agree that secondary suites in Quesnel would add to density and create traffic, parking and noise issues. Interestingly, an almost equal level of concern is expressed in all five neighbourhoods.
- Almost half (47%) of city residents disagree somewhat or strongly that secondary suites would 'probably' be unsafe for residents to live in. By neighbourhood, Johnson/Carson citizens show the most disagreement with the statement – 60%. This contrasts with West and North Quesnel neighbourhoods where around 45% disagree. Just over one in three (36%) express agreement, i.e., secondary suites are perhaps unsafe to live in.

Neighbourhood and dwelling demographics

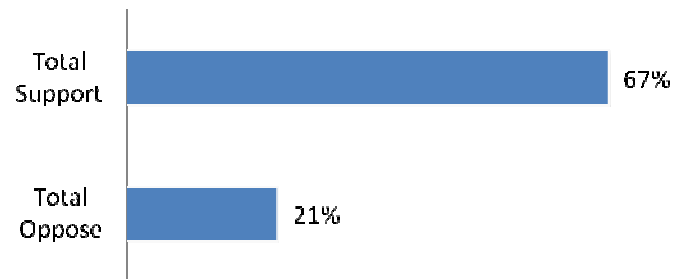
- The West Quesnel neighbourhood contains a higher proportion of long-term (20 years or more) residents (35% vs. 30% city-wide) and a lower proportion of citizens living in single-family detached dwellings (68% vs. 80% of all city residents) than any other neighbourhood in Quesnel.
- The vast majority (84%) of City residents own their dwelling, ranging from a still substantial 75% in both North and West Quesnel neighbourhoods to 99% in the South Hills and Dragon Lake area.

Secondary Suite Support/Opposition

Q5. In general, do you support or oppose the City of Quesnel modifying its by-laws to allow for secondary suites in single detached dwellings?



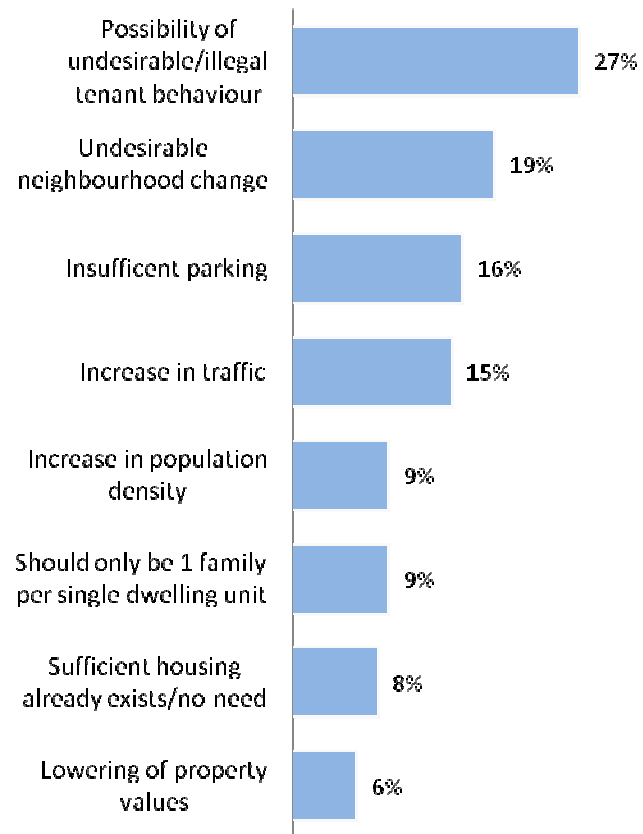
■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Somewhat oppose
 ■ Neither support nor oppose
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Strongly support
 ■ Don't know / No answer



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Reasons for Opposition

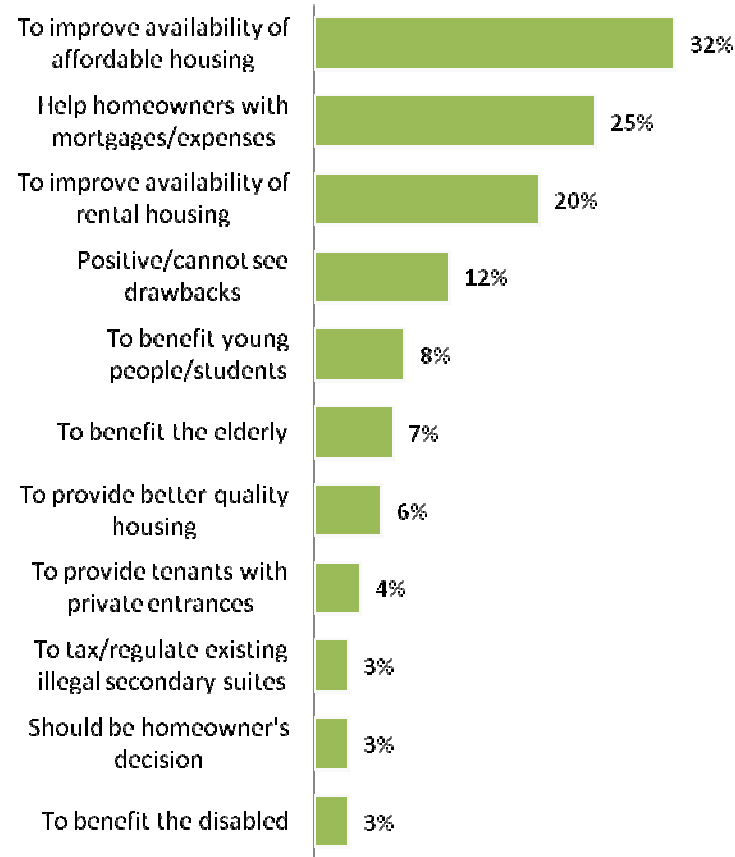
Reasons for Opposition
Q6a. And what are the main reasons you oppose the City of Quesnel modifying its bylaws to allow for secondary suites?



Base=85 (those who oppose).

Reasons for Support

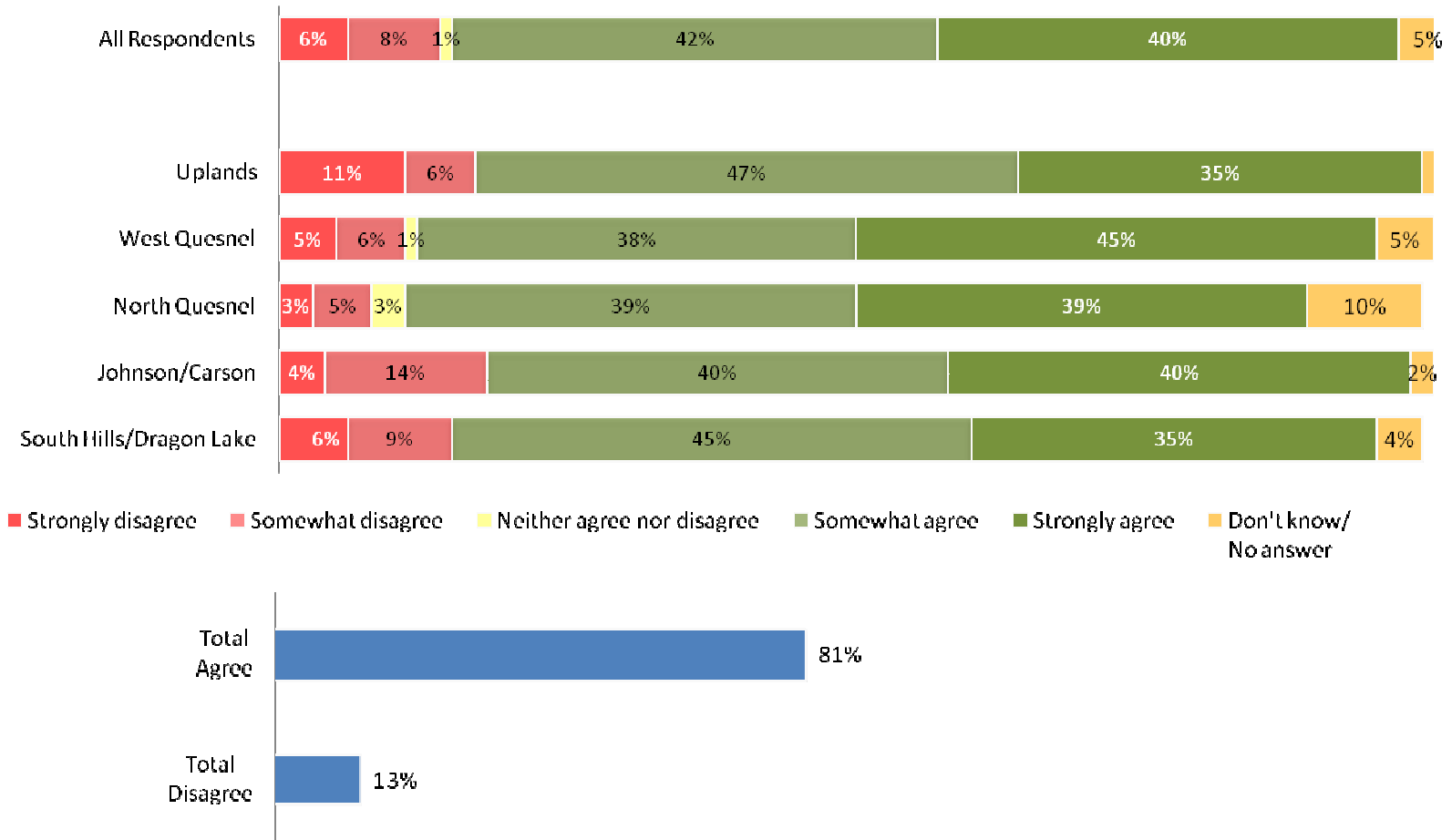
Reasons for Support
Q6b. And what are the main reasons you support the City of Quesnel modifying its bylaws to allow for secondary suites?



Base=268 (those who support).

Secondary Suites Attitudes

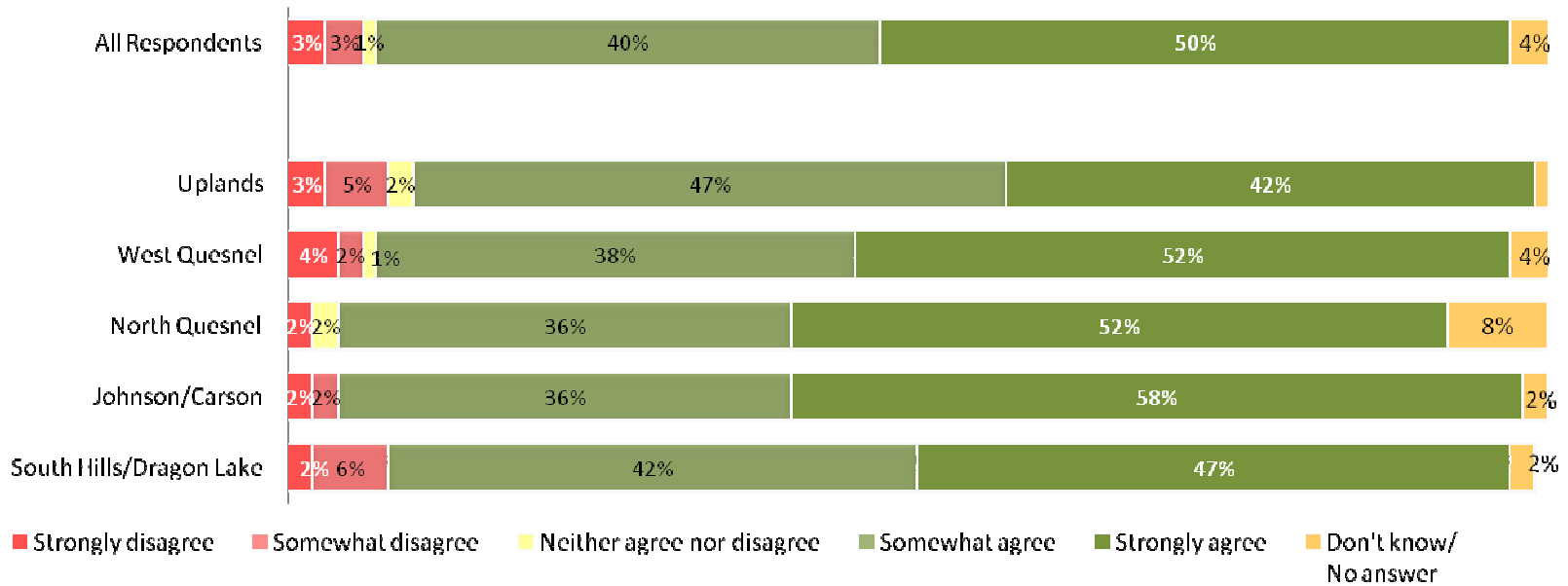
Q7a. Secondary suites in Quesnel would increase the number of affordable housing options available to city residents. Would you say you agree or disagree with this statement?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85

Secondary Suites Attitudes

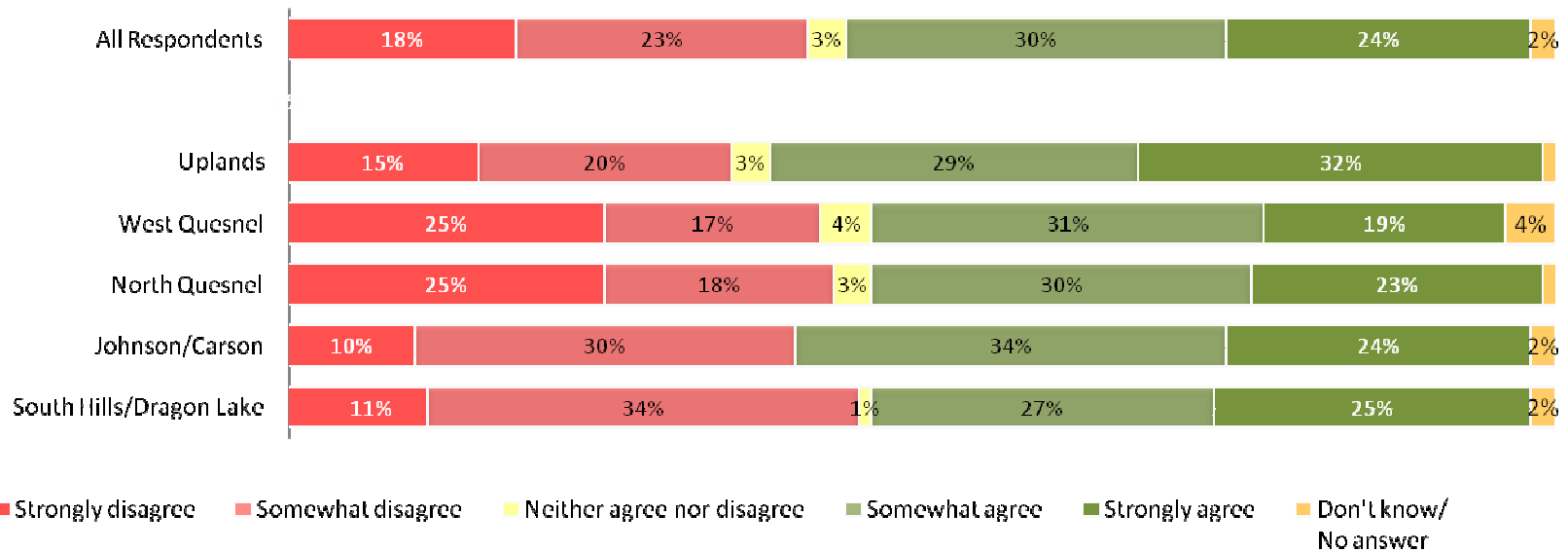
Q7b. Secondary suites in Quesnel would benefit home owners wishing to supplement their household incomes with additional rental income. Would you say you agree or disagree with this statement?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85

Secondary Suites Attitudes

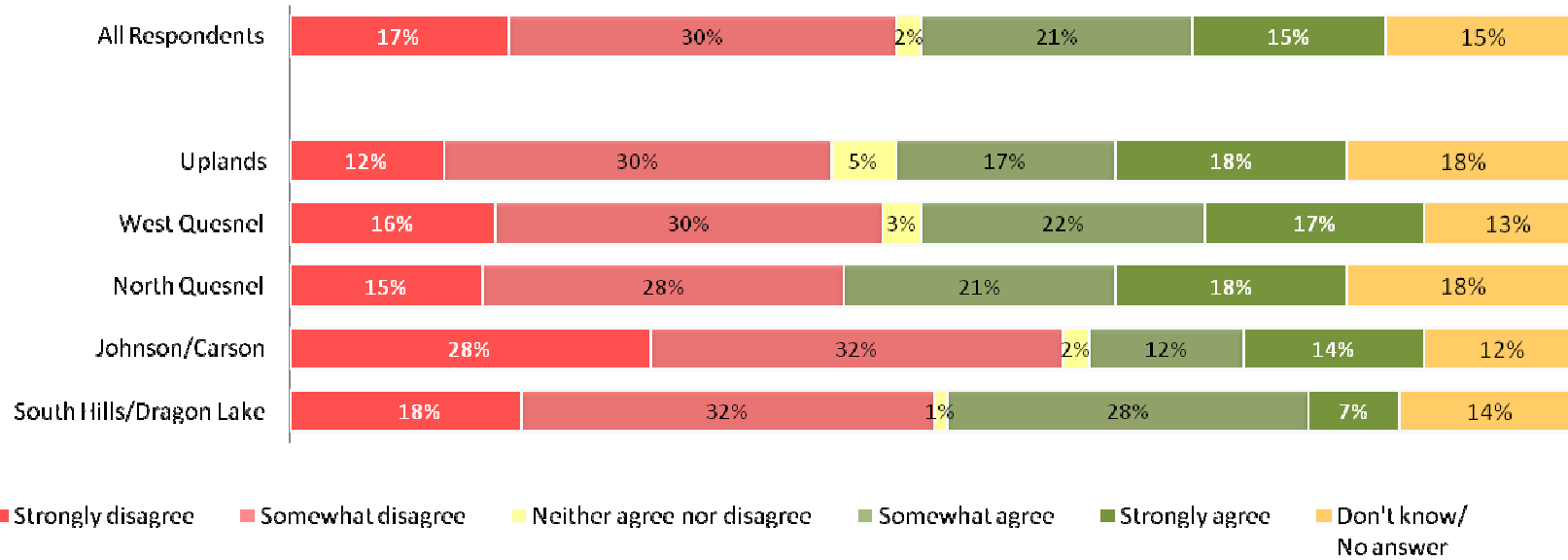
Q7c. Secondary suites in Quesnel would make neighbourhoods too dense and create traffic, parking and noise problems. Would you say you agree or disagree with this statement?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Secondary Suites Attitudes

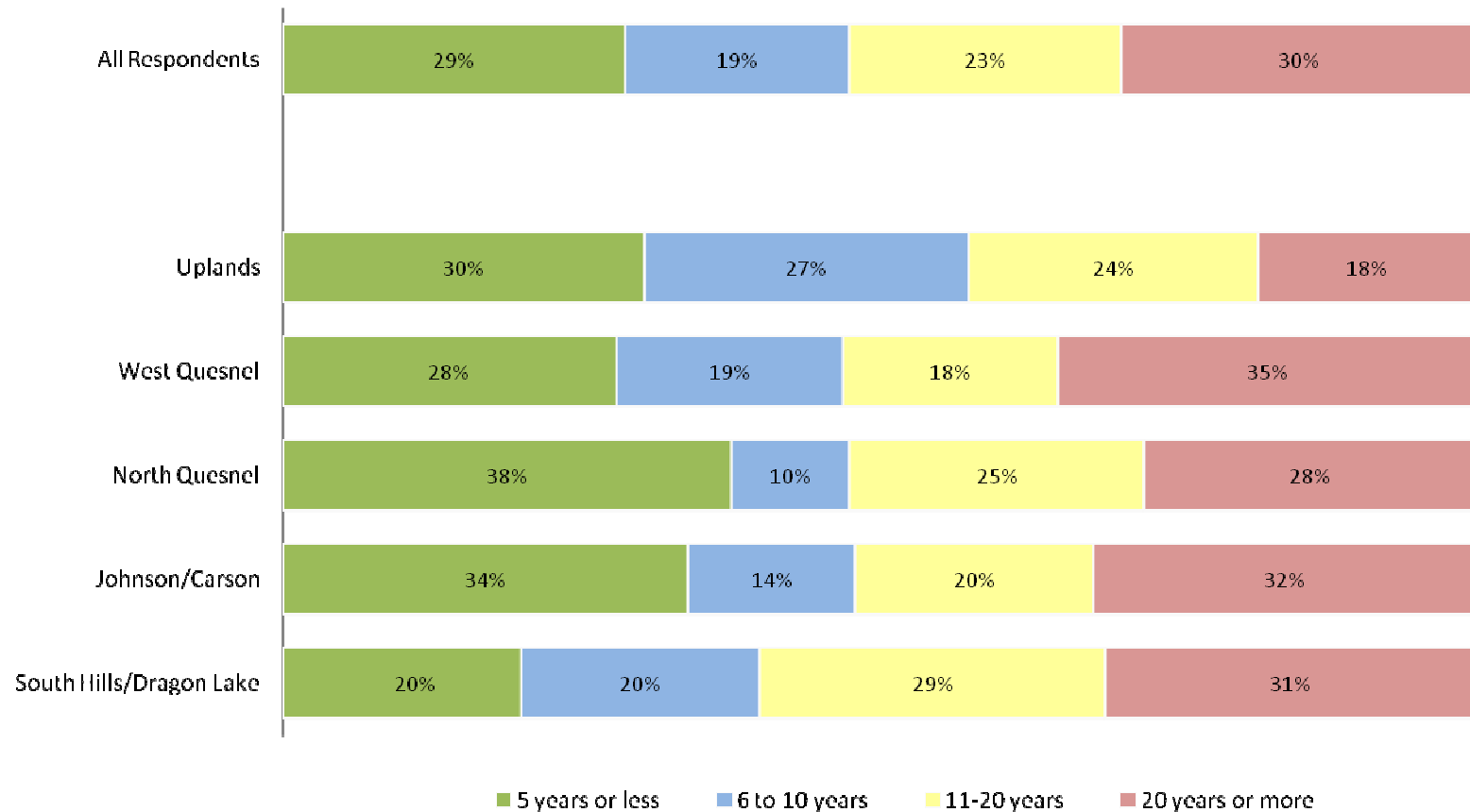
**Q7d. Many secondary suites in Quesnel would probably be unsafe for residents to live in.
Would you say you agree or disagree with this statement?**



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Neighbourhood Residence

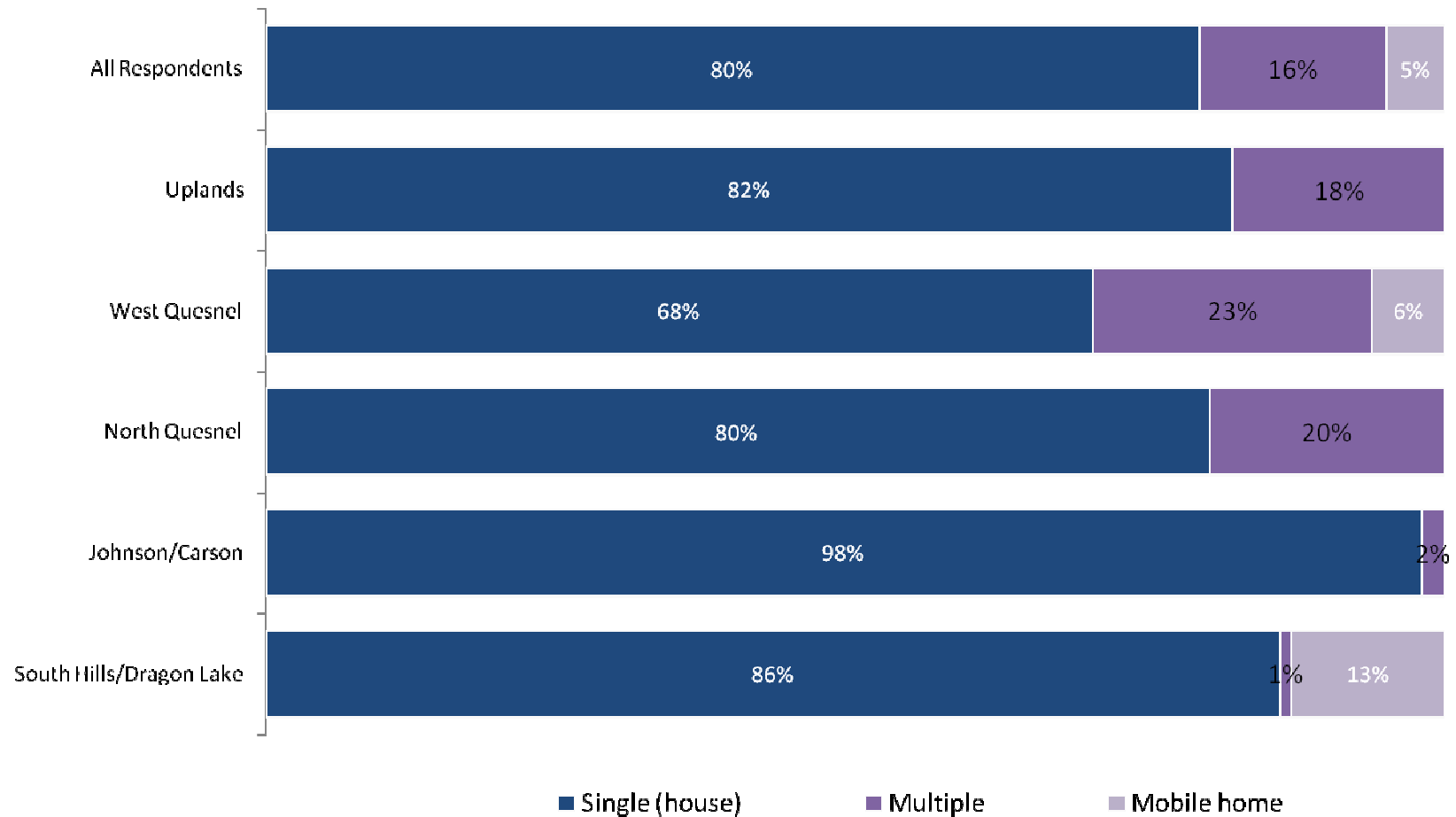
Q2. How long have you lived in that neighbourhood?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Dwelling Type

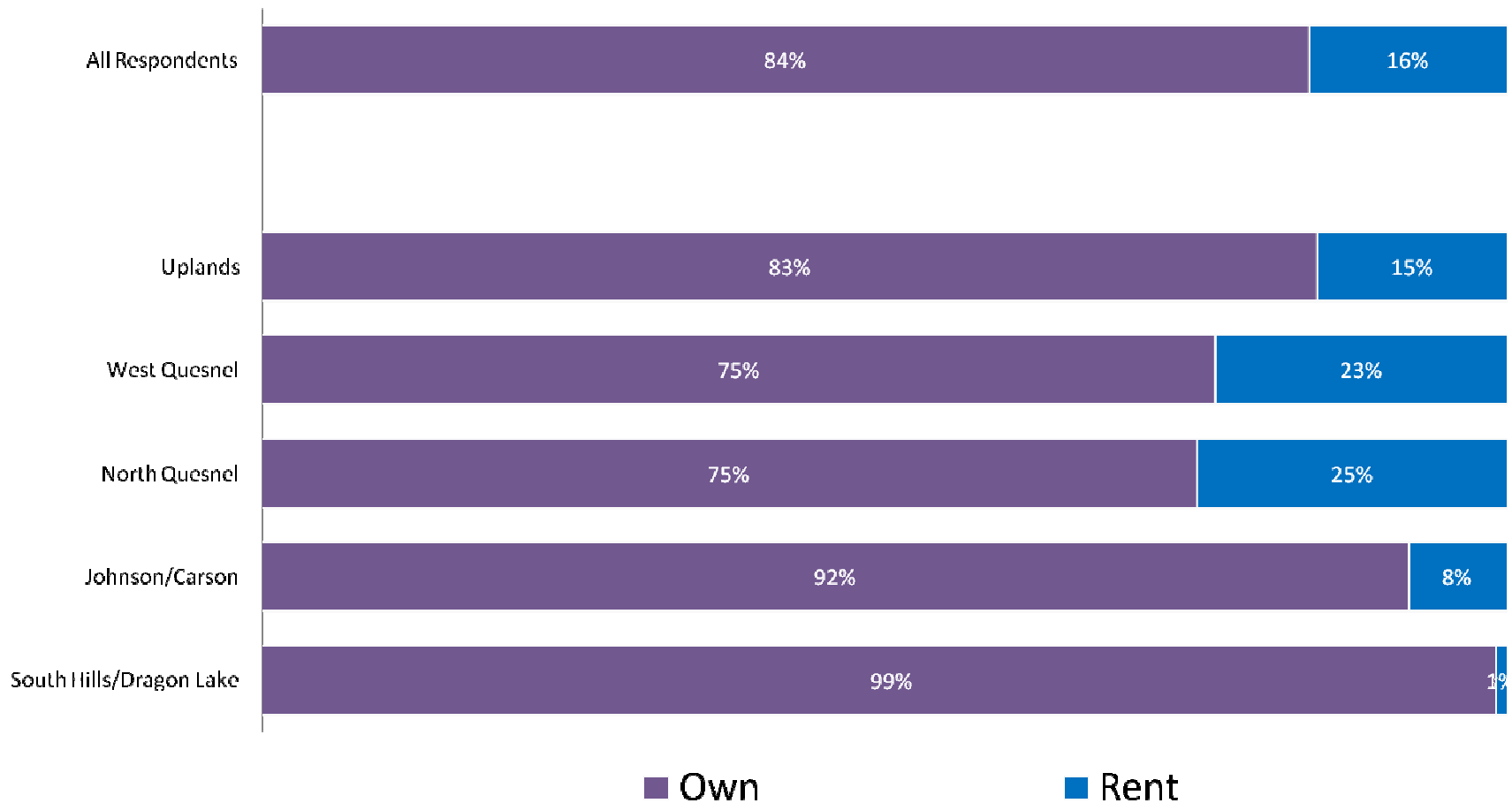
Q3. And which of the following best describes the type of dwelling you live in?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Dwelling Ownership Status

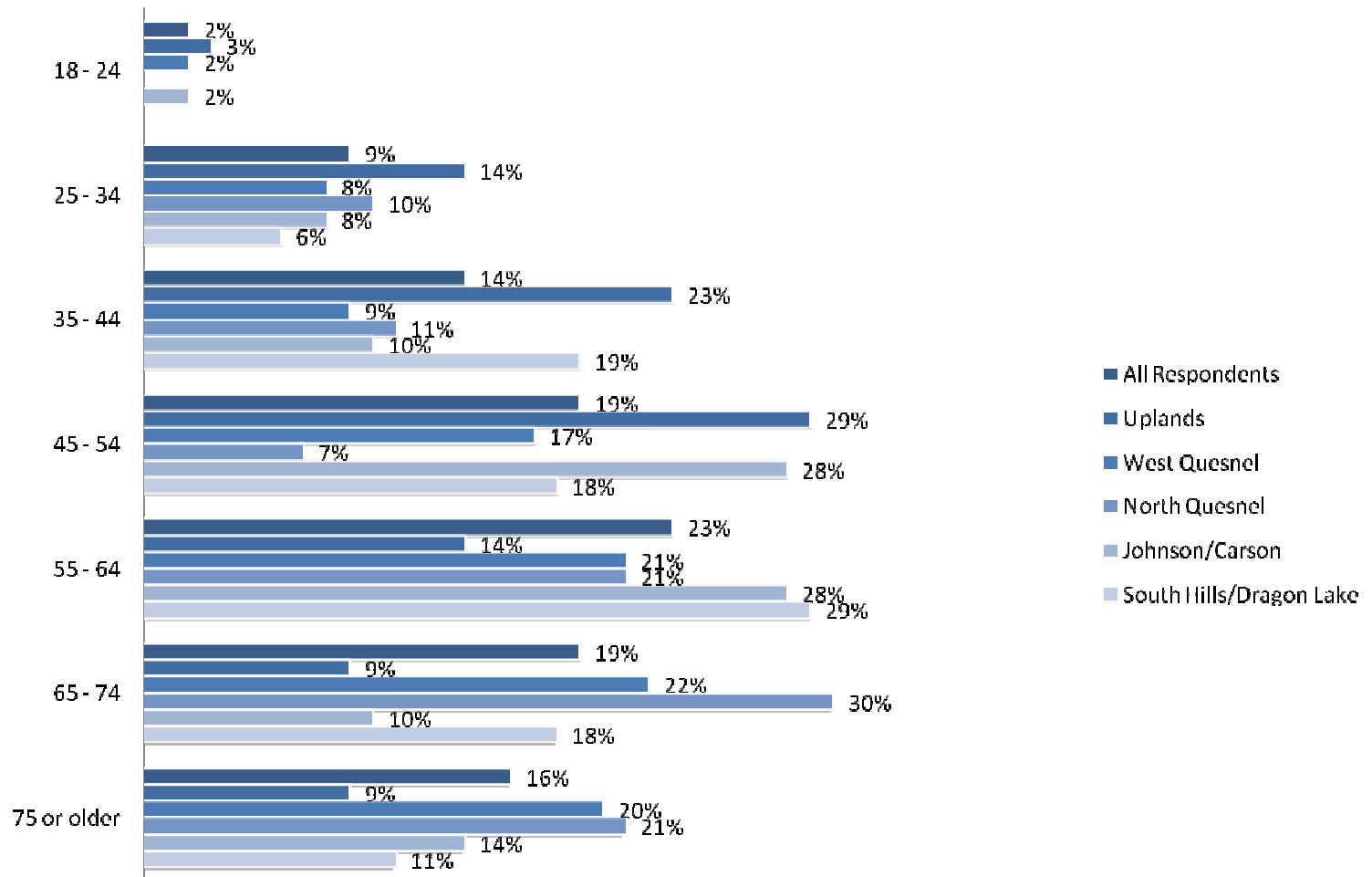
Q4. And do you currently own or rent this dwelling?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85.

Demographics – Age by Neighbourhood

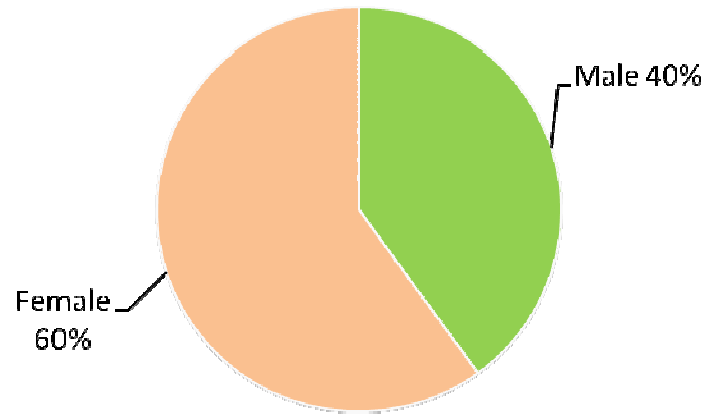
Q10. In which of the following age groups may I place you?



Base= All Respondents=400, Uplands=66, West Quesnel=138, North Quesnel=61, Johnson/Carson=50 & South Hills/Dragon Lake=85

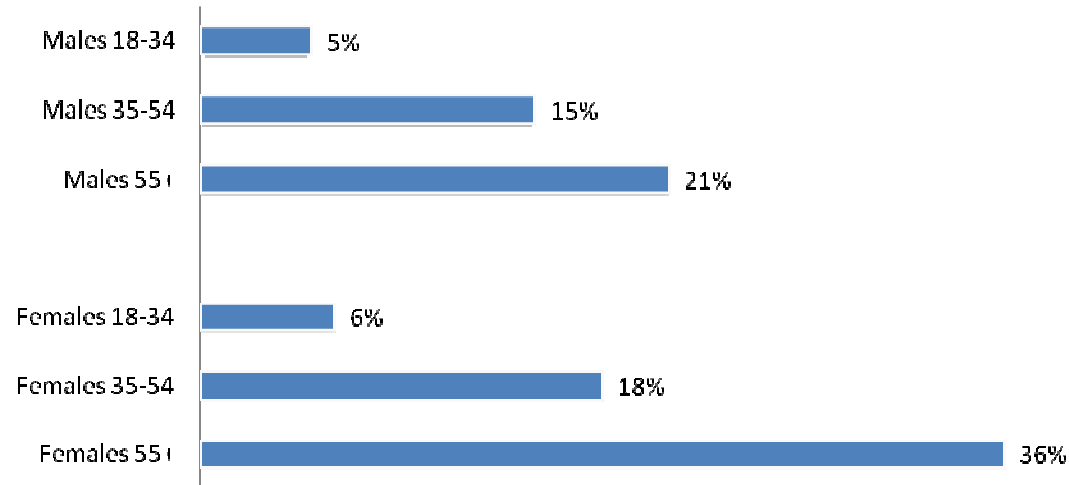
Demographics – Gender by Age

Gender



Base: All respondents, n=400

Age by Gender



Base: All respondents, n=400

Conclusion

More living space within the city

A change in the City of Quesnel by-laws to allow for secondary suites in single-detached dwellings has the support of two in three residents. This support comes from both owners and renters, with all five neighbourhoods showing similar levels of approval. The perception seems to be that allowing for secondary suites will improve the amount of and access to affordable rental housing, while providing an additional revenue source for owners to pay down mortgages and offset expenses.

While there is strong support for the initiative, more than half of the residents surveyed have concerns about lack of parking and increased traffic in their neighbourhoods if secondary suites are allowed. As well, more than one in three citizens express the opinion that secondary suites may be unsafe to live in. These issues will have to be addressed if the majority of Quesnel residents are to continue approving of the secondary suite by-law change over the long-term.

Appendix – Questionnaire



MARKET & PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

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Final Draft: May, 2010

NRG Project #: 371-10-1766

Target Population for Survey

The target population of the survey are residents living in the City of Quesnel. Given the nature of the survey, we will screen households to speak with a person who is a head of household—a person who is either solely responsible, or who shares responsibility, for running the household.

SURVEY INTRODUCTION

Hello, this is _____ calling on behalf of the City of Quesnel [PRONOUNCED: KWA-NELL] from NRG Research Group, a professional survey company in B.C. We are conducting a very brief survey today/this evening among city residents to get their views on important issues affecting the community.

May I speak to the person in your household who is either solely responsible, or who shares responsibility, for making household decisions and paying taxes and bills?

REINTRODUCE AS NECESSARY:

This survey will take no longer than 5 minutes to complete and all of your responses are strictly confidential and anonymous.

Can I ask you a few questions?

IF PARTICIPANTS WISHES TO VALIDATE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE SURVEY:

You may verify that this is a legitimate survey by calling Jillian Shaughnessy at City Hall at (250) 992-2111.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Let me begin by asking a few questions, so we can categorize the responses properly...

Q1. First, in which of the following neighbourhoods do you reside?

Uplands

West Quesnel (includes Riverview/Baker Creek areas)

North Quesnel (includes Downtown, 2 mile & 3 mile flat & Moose Heights)

Johnson/Carson subdivisions (combined)

South Hills & Dragon Lake (includes Westland/Racing/Denis Road)

Appendix – Questionnaire

Q2. And for how long have you lived in that neighbourhood? READ CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY. Would it be...

5 years or less
6 to 10 years
11 to 20 years, or
More than 20 years?
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER

Q3. And which of the following best describes the type of dwelling you live in?

An apartment or condominium?
A townhouse?
A duplex?
A single detached dwelling (also could be referred to as single family detached residence)?
Other (please specify)
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER

Q4. And do you current own or rent this dwelling?

Own
Rent
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER

Q5. We are interested in learning about your views regarding the introduction of secondary suites, also called basement suites, in the City of Quesnel (KWA-NELL).

A secondary suite is a dwelling that exists within a single detached dwelling. A secondary suite must have its own separate cooking, sleeping and bathing facilities. It must also have its own separate entrance and exit way, so that those living in the secondary suite have direct access to outside without having to pass through any part of the primary residence.

In general, do you support or oppose the City of Quesnel modifying its by-laws to allow for secondary suites in single detached dwellings? IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE: And do you strongly or somewhat [support/oppose] this?

Strongly oppose secondary suites
Somewhat oppose secondary suites
Somewhat support secondary suites
Strongly support secondary suites
NEITHER SUPPORT OR OPPOSE
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER.

Q5A. ASK ONLY IF OPPOSE: And what are the main reasons that you oppose the City of Quesnel modifying its bylaws to allow for secondary suites? RECORD UP TO THREE REASONS.

Appendix - Questionnaire

Q6B. ASK ONLY IF SUPPORT: And what are the main reasons you support the City of Quesnel modifying its bylaws to allow for secondary suites? RECORD UP TO THREE REASONS.

RECORD OPEN

Q7. And please tell me if you generally agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to :

RANDOMIZE OPTIONS

- A. Secondary suites in Quesnel would increase the number of affordable housing options available to city residents.
- B. Secondary suites in Quesnel would benefit home owners wishing to supplement their household incomes with additional rental income.
- C. Secondary suites in Quesnel would make neighbourhoods too dense and create traffic, parking and noise problems
- D. Many secondary suites in Quesnel would probably be unsafe for residents to live in.

IF AGREE OR DISAGREE: And would you say you strongly [agree/disagree] with that statement or [agree/disagree] somewhat?

Strongly disagree
Somewhat disagree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree
NEITHER
DON'T KNOW
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER

DEMOGRAPHICS.

And now just a final question for our statistical comparisons...

Q10. Into which of the following age groups may I place you?

18 to 24
25 to 34
35 to 44
45 to 54
55 to 64
65 to 74
75 and older

RECORD GENDER MALE OR FEMALE; DO NOT ASK.