



Putting **People** First

Transforming Toronto Community Housing

Single-Family Homes Residents' Survey
September 17, 2012

Single-Family Homes Resident's Survey

Context

Based on the March 2012, City Council direction to the Special Housing Working Group, residents of Toronto Community Housing's single-family homes proposed for sale were surveyed in two mailings between May 28 and July 27, 2012. The response rate was 63%, representing 396 out of 633 households.

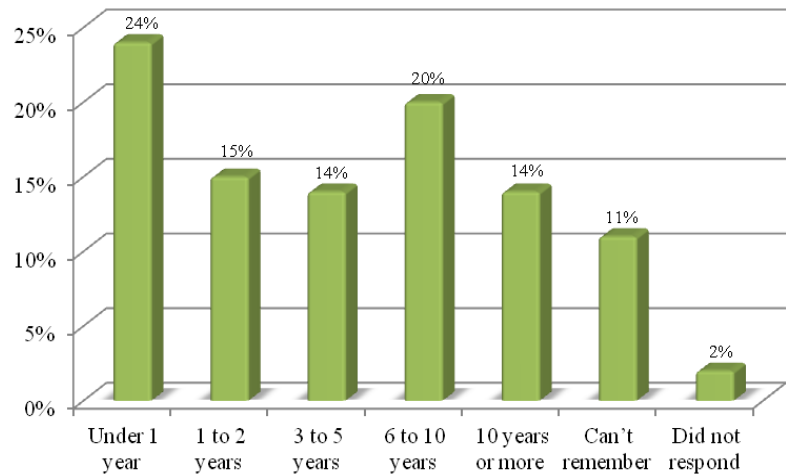
Survey Highlights

- 73% of residents waited at least six years before moving into their current address
- 52% of residents have lived in their home for at least six years
- 28% are under 16 years old and 26% are between 16 and 24
- 7% are over 60 years old
- 81% rated their home in fair to very good condition
- 68% had made repairs to their home at their own expense
- 85% said their home meets their needs
- 41% of households include a person with disabilities
- 15% of homes are equipped for a person with disabilities
- 93% described their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood as strong or very strong
- 72% said moving away from schools, health, faith and social supports would be mainly negative
- 67% said they had no plans to voluntarily move
- 69% said the impact on their household of moving would be negative even with financial assistance from Toronto Community Housing
- 54% said they would be interested in buying the home they live in
- 28% were not sure if they would be interested in purchasing their home and required more information
- 74% of those interested in purchasing their home said they would need financial assistance
- 94% of those interested in purchasing their home said they would be interested in participating in a workshop to learn more about the financial requirements and obligations of owning a home
- 47% are interested in playing a greater role in the management of their home

Survey Results

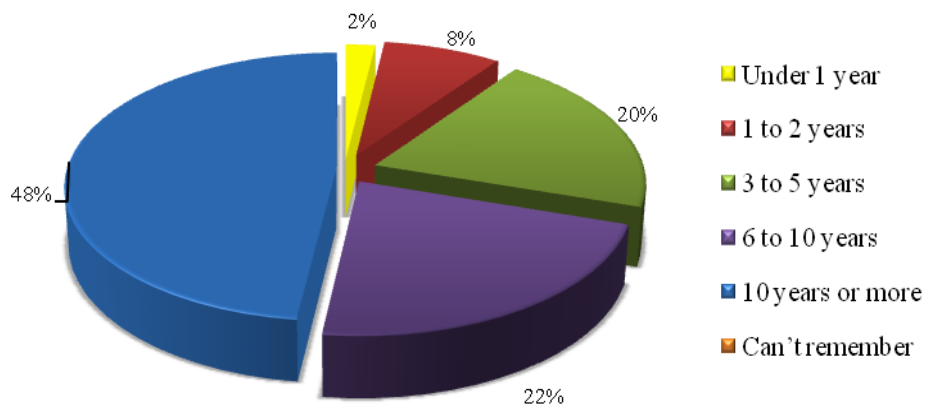
1. How long did you wait for a single-family home before you moved into your current address?

95 (24%) - Under 1 year
59 (15%) - 1 to 2 years
56 (14%) - 3 to 5 years
78 (20%) - 6 to 10 years
58 (14%) - 10 years or more
43 (11%) - Can't remember
7 (2%) - Did not respond



2. How long have you lived at your current address?

9 (2%) - Under 1 year
30 (8%) - 1 to 2 years
79 (20%) - 3 to 5 years
87 (22%) - 6 to 10 years
190 (48%) - 10 years or more
0 (0%) - Can't remember
1 (0%) - Did not respond



3. Please tell us the number of people in your household in these age categories.

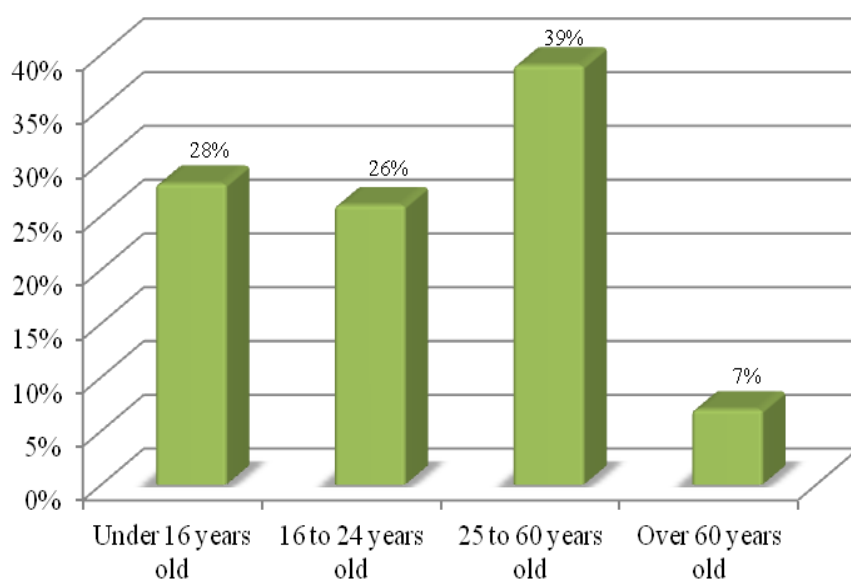
379 (28%) - Under 16 years old

347 (26%) - 16 to 24 years old

532 (39%) - 25 to 60 years old

91 (7%) - Over 60 years old

1,349 household members reported here.



4. How would you rate the physical condition of the home you live in?

42 (10%) - Very good

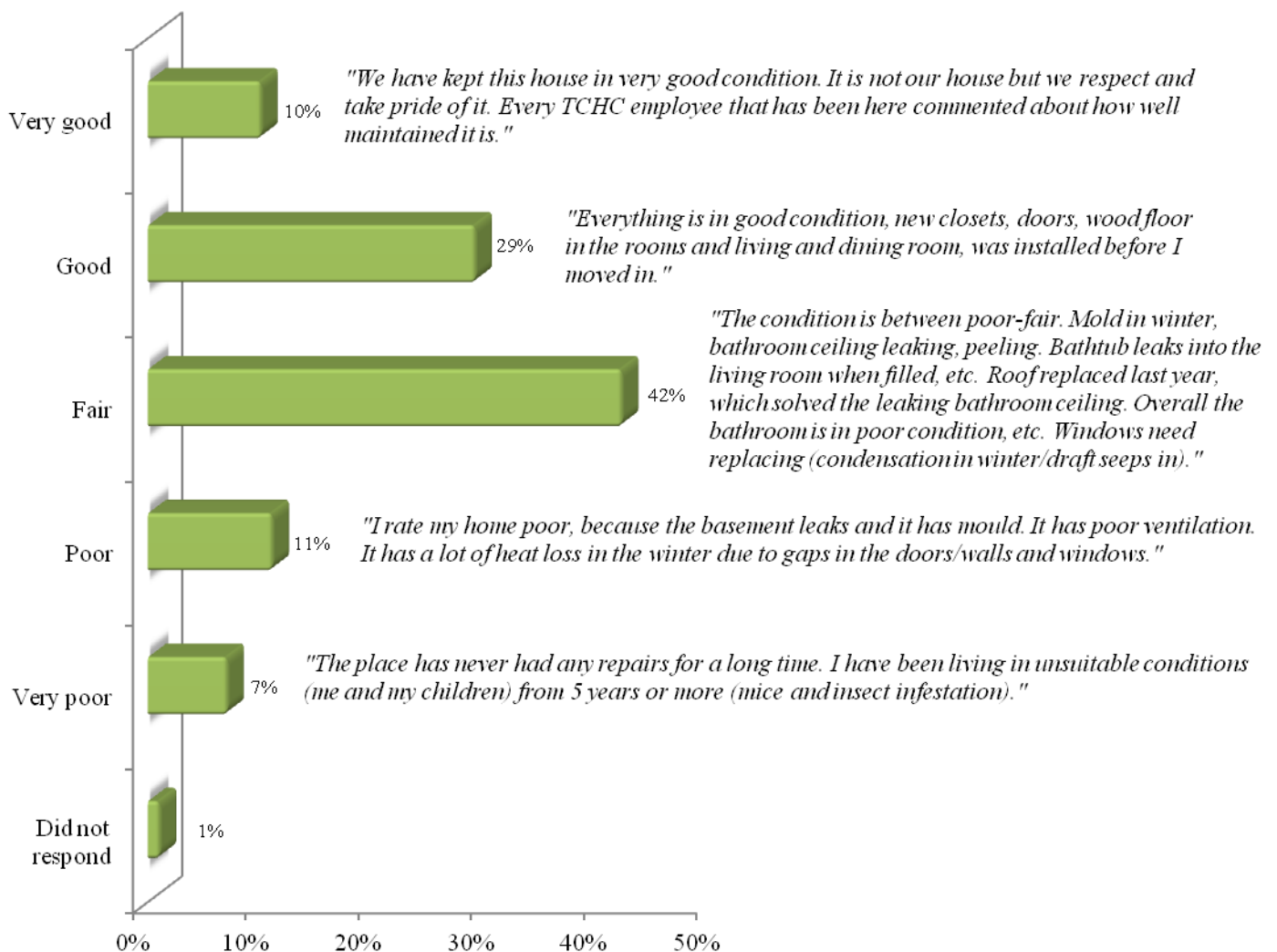
115 (29%) - Good

165 (42%) - Fair

43 (11%) - Poor

27 (7%) - Very poor

4 (1%) - Did not respond

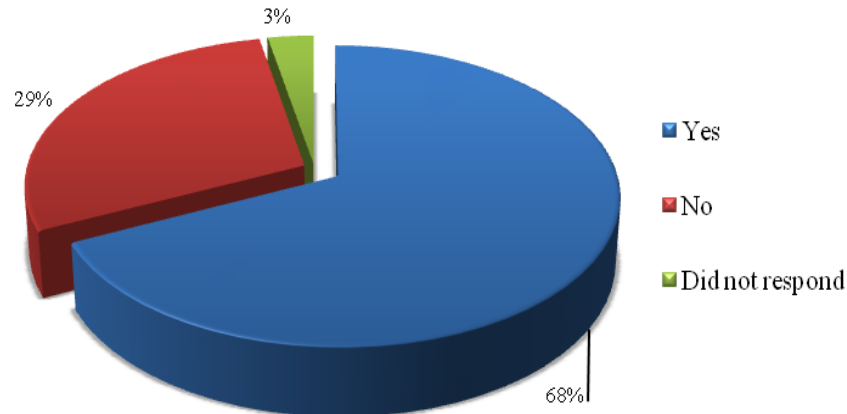


5. Have you made repairs at your own expense to the home you live in?

270 (68%) - Yes

113 (29%) - No

13 (3%) - Did not respond



"Over the last 9 years, I've done minor repairs, paint, new floors, bathroom sink and fixtures, landscaping, kitchen floors, backsplash, ceiling fixtures, door light, pest control, minor electrical (estimated probably \$2000 - \$3000)."

"Painted whole house, re-did the floors with tile, laminate, fixed broken floors, taps, windows, eaves troughs, plumbing and fencing."

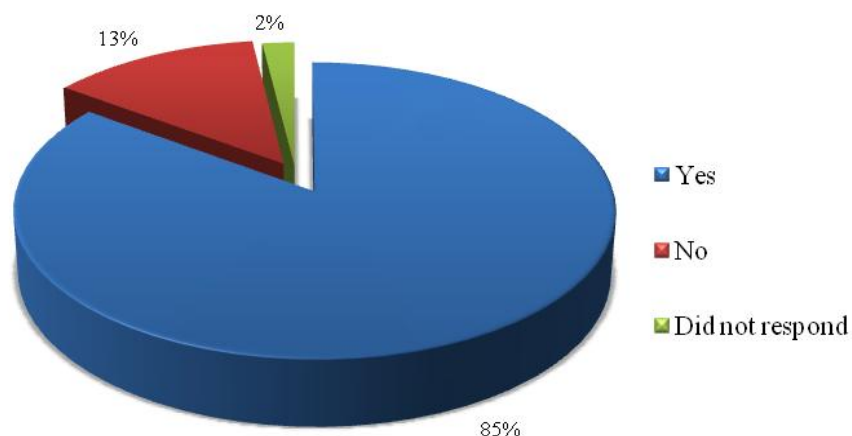
"Bought toilet seats and a new sink for the washroom when we first moved in. Also bought equipment for caring for the grounds such as a lawnmower and trimmer."

6. Does the home you live in currently meet your needs?

337 (85%) - Yes

50 (13%) - No

9 (2%) - Did not respond



"It's perfect! Nice space, wonderful garden, great location - near my friends and shopping and doctor, excellent for those of us who don't walk so well anymore. "

"Home Sweet Home."

"The home is now accessible for my sister who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair always. The bathroom and bedroom renovation have been great for Alicia and her independence. The accessibility she has to come and go, because of the ramp at the back. The house for us meets all our needs and then some."

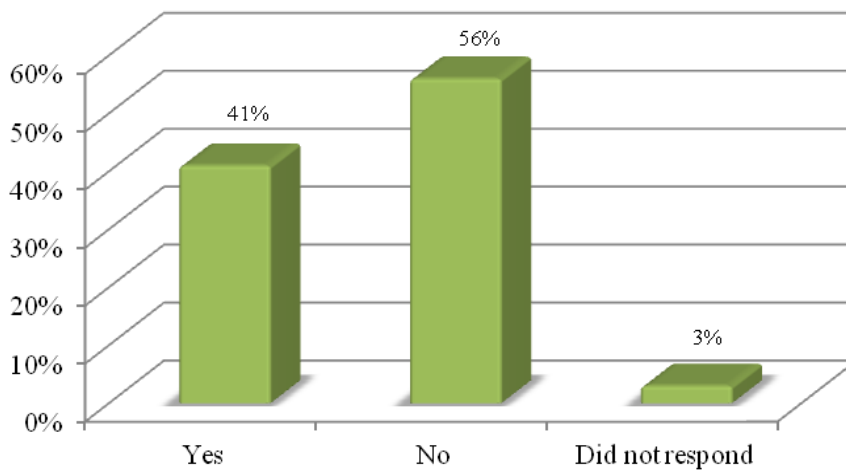
"After 17 years of waiting for a house with my four children cramped into a two bedroom apartment and four children living in one room, this house meant a lot for us."

7. Does anyone in your home have a disability issue?

161 (41%) - Yes

224 (56 %) - No

11 (3%) - Did not respond



"I have lupus/sclerodermy which causes joint swelling, fatigue, nausea, etc. My depressed immune system makes me prone to infections and I have periods of time when I am "shut in", including four months in 2011-2012. My housemate suffers from PTSD and is phobic, not venturing more than two blocks away from the house. Also suffers from COPD."

"I am terminally ill. I have osteoporosis and only 1/2 a knee cap in my left leg. My daughter has a shifting patella and we both have Von Willebrand disease."

"My daughter Kyla is brain damaged by a childhood vaccine. She is quadriplegic and totally dependent. In diapers and g-tube fed. She requires a lot of attention and has bowel problems that would make it impossible to live in enclosed places."

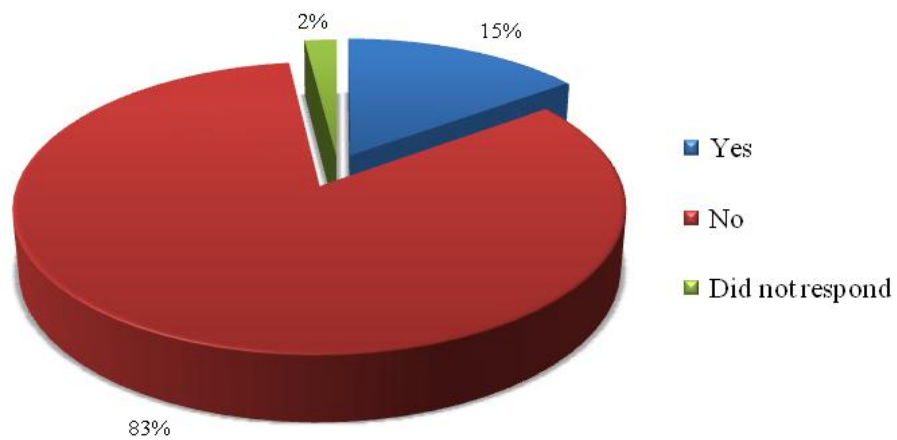
"My son is 14, mentally disabled and mildly autistic. I also have OCD and suffer from depression, we are both on medication which allows me to work and function."

8. Is the home equipped for accessibility for persons with disabilities?

58 (15%) - Yes

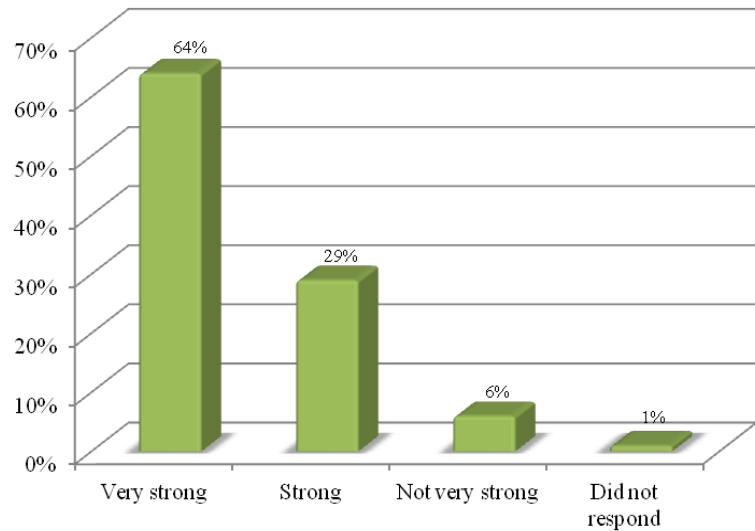
328 (83%) - No

10 (2%) - Did not respond



9. Describe your sense of belonging to the neighbourhood you live in.

254 (64%) - Very strong
113 (29%) - Strong
25 (6%) - Not very strong
4 (1%) - Did not respond



"My boys and I love the area, everything they want and need is here for us. I love the neighbours, we all get along great. I bake for my family and neighbours ... and we watch out for each other, this street is our home."

"We have lived in our home for over 30 years. We have strong and good relationships with our neighbours. All of our retail and medical needs are fulfilled in this neighbourhood. We not only feel a strong sense of belonging to the neighbourhood but we also have a strong attachment to our home."

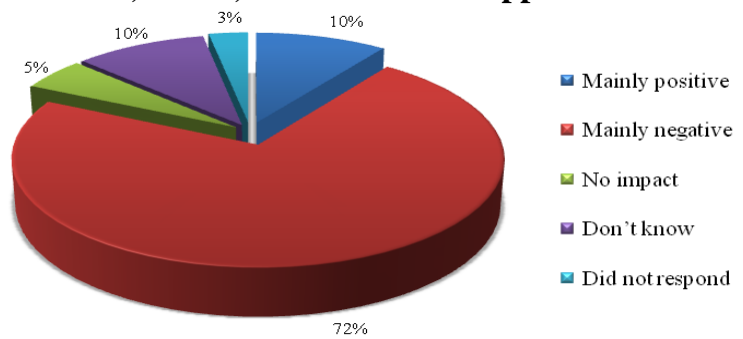
"My children walk to school and daycare, they participate in community events and play with neighbours children, my 16 year old mows the lawn and shovels snow of the elderly neighbour and does not take any money for payment but instead shares cold glass of lemonade or a hot cup of cocoa with them as they share life stories with my son. We get invited to neighbours family celebrations and I also walk to work. My community plays a big part within our lives."

"I love the neighbourhood because it is a mixture. It is not all low income units. Some are owned, some low income. I feel just as important."

"We know all our neighbours and are completely happy with all of them. They watch over us. We have a park very close by where we can walk to. There are close by (walking distance) pharmacy, groceries, convenience stores. Everything we need is within walking distance. Many people (other families) in our neighbourhood speak our language which has been extremely helpful whenever we need translators or just have someone to talk to."

10. What effect would moving away from schools, health, faith and social supports have on you and your family?

41 (10%) - Mainly positive
 286 (72%) - Mainly negative
 19 (5%) - No impact
 39 (10%) - Don't know
 11 (3%) - Did not respond



"My children's father has moved frequently since our separation, and more recently has moved to Collingwood. This house is their primary residence and has remained consistently their home, while other factors in their lives fluctuate beyond their control. They do not want to move. Moving would have a negative effect on our family."

"This is our home, our stability. Moving would take that away. We would lose our connection to belonging. It just wouldn't be good, not while they are still in school. My daughter is going to university in the fall, we need stability."

"My children have met friends and my son who has ADHD and LD has finally a school who is helping him with his disorder. He is 10 years old and has been improving at his new school and has new friends. By moving and starting all over again would be so hard for me and him."

"The most negative impact would be on Kent, my autistic child. It would be difficult to find another place nearby, for health and social supports, shopping and family and friends."

"We would be devastated because this is the area where we have lived in since coming to Canada."

"Moving away will have a negative impact on me, my family and my neighbourhood, as it is going to leave a lot of damage on the family. The kids will be away from the school that they like and the friends that they have. We establish a good life here and we have a bad experience in the past. So it will be very negative to move."

"Very negative. This area has everything my family needs - school, daycare, doctor, drug store, TTC, friends, neighbours, grocery stores. We would be devastated. I do not drive, I rely on TTC to get to work, TTC is at the top of my street. My son gets extra help at school, that he otherwise might not get because his school is so under populated. If he goes to a larger school he may start to fail. The extra help has helped him keep up with the other kids. Childcare is hard to find. If we move, I will not have daycare for my daughter."

11. In the future, do you plan to voluntarily move from your home?

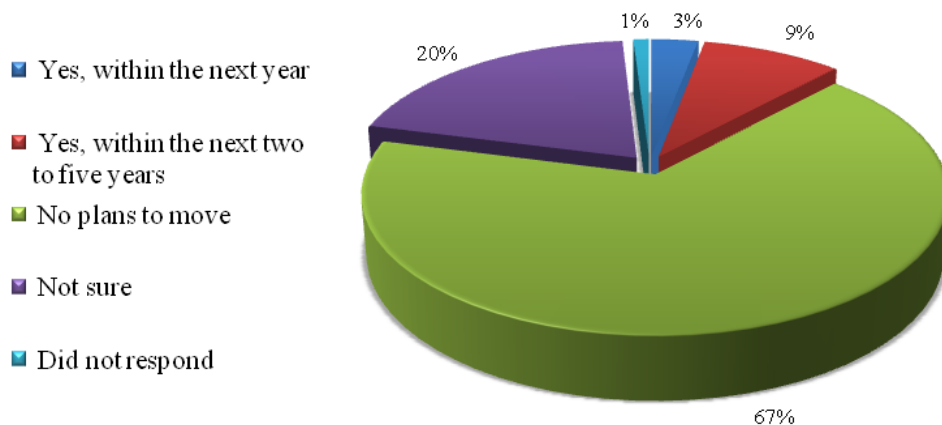
10 (3%) - Yes, within the next year

34 (9%) - Yes, within the next two to five years

265 (67%) - No plans to move

81 (20%) - Not sure

6 (1%) - Did not respond



"No immediate plans to move, however, once children are grown, I would consider downsizing."

"Due to my income and credit moving into another home is not feasible in the near future."

"At this time, the prospect is very concerning and I would prefer to pay whatever it cost to remain here."

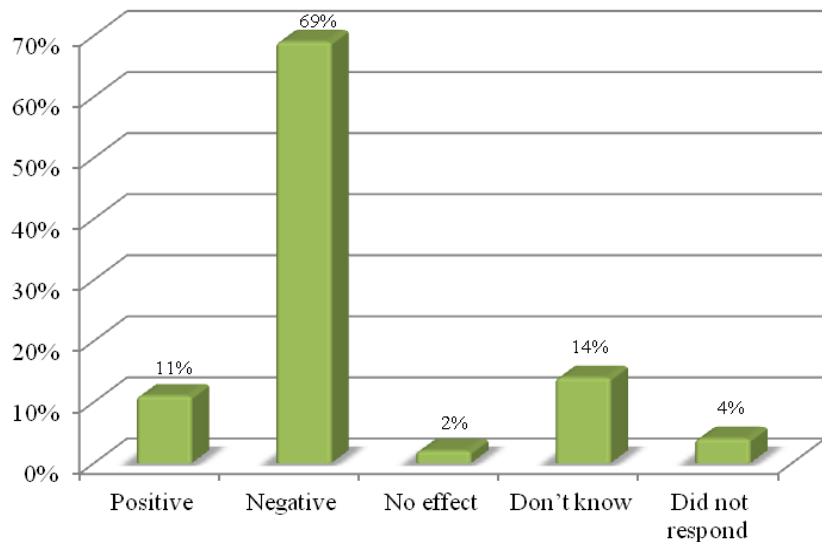
"If we can stay here another 30 years, why not? The neighbourhood is safe, the people are friendly and if we can keep up the repairs ourselves, sure. No plans to move unless TCHC or the City will decide to sell the homes to the tenants already there. We think that's fair considering we have paid our dues every month for the past 30 plus years."

"Honestly I never really had any intention of leaving this house because as I mentioned before I was told that I would be able to stay here permanently."

"I am concentrating on my health, keeping my boys emotionally together, continuing to fight and survive cancer. I need continuity, stability, safety and security to continue our journey through this horrendous diagnosis."

12. Toronto Community Housing has proposed providing you with financial assistance to relocate to another TCH building. With this in mind, what would be the impact on your household of moving?

43 (11%) - Positive
274 (69%) - Negative
9 (2%) - No effect
53 (14%) - Don't know
17 (4%) - Did not respond



"The cost of relocating to another TCH building is not the problem. Providing with financial assistance cannot change the emotional and social effects. As a tenant, our concern is not the financial issue for moving cost. The issue is we don't want to leave our home."

"It's not about the financial assistance. We finally have a home where my children can relax, play outside without having to run because they hear gunshots being fired. They love their neighbourhood and all the friends they have met."

"As I mention, it would be devastated to the children to pack up and move again, their happiness is important to me and I really don't want to put them through that again. They've made some great friends in this area."

"Financial assistance to move does not replace years of built relationships among people living in a community. Paying the moving company to take my belongings to whatever place housing intends to dump my family does not equate to losing relationships I have built with my neighbours for over 20 years. This move is something that my family has not planned and certainly seems like an eviction rather than a move. My family feels as though we are not in control of our own choice to live where we want. Even after we are forced to move, there are no guarantee that we will not be forced to move once again with housing claims of raising needed funds whether for repairs or other unknown reasons. This feels as though our fundamental rights as citizens and tenants or residents are being taken away."

"Any little change negatively impacts the autistic child, relocating would be difficult for him, especially in an apartment building."

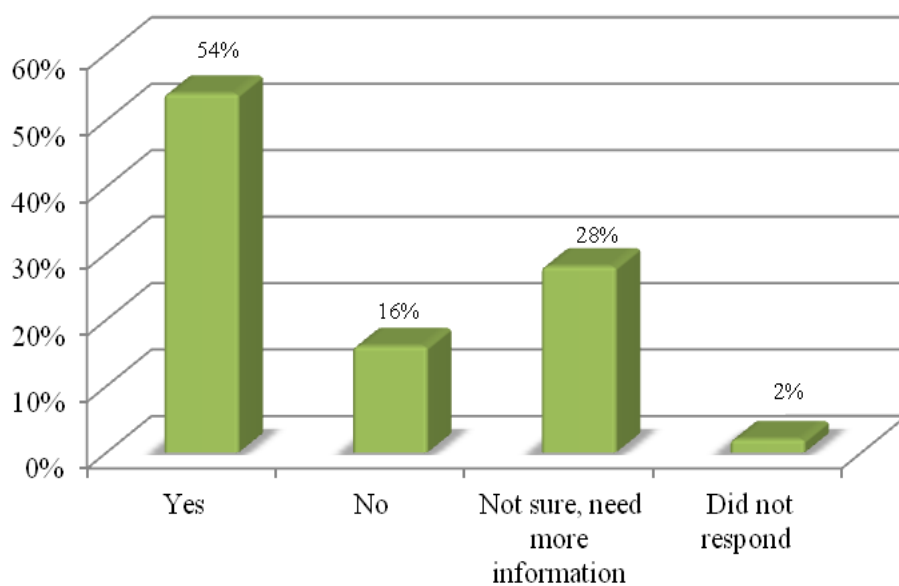
13. Would you be interested in purchasing the home you live in should Toronto Community Housing be given permission to sell it?

214 (54%) - Yes

62 (16%) - No

112 (28%) - Not sure, need more information.

8 (2%) - Did not respond

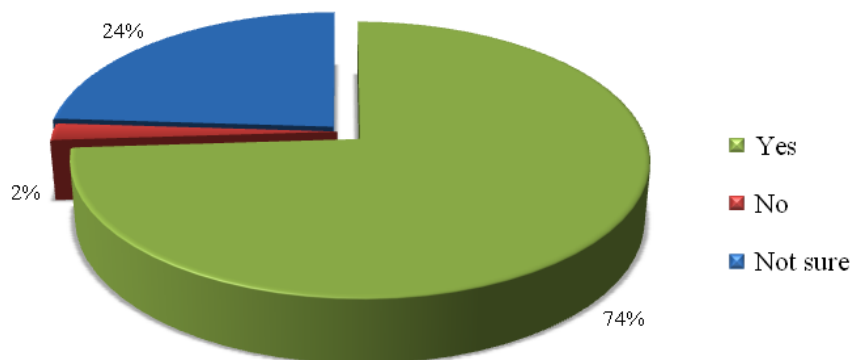


14. If you have answered 'Yes' to Question 13, would you require extra financial assistance to purchase the home you live in?

158 (74%) - Yes

5 (2%) - No

51 (24%) - Not sure



*From the 214 respondents who are interested in purchasing the home

"I would love to get the chance to purchase the house because it is our family home. I work but, I would need financial assistance."

"Paying market rent, it is hard to save money for a down payment. Mortgage would not be a problem but large down payment is difficult. Would try anything."

"Depending on the way arrangements could be made, i.e. on a rent to own payment plan like Habitat for Humanity Interest free payment plan."

"I am on medical leave from the Royal York Hotel where I have worked for the past 12 years until I became ill. I have exhausted the insurance and am now on social services. No money for deposit."

"I would require extra financial assistance, unless I find a relative or friend to help with this purchase. I would be very interested in this proposition as an alternative to avoiding being relocated to another TCH building."

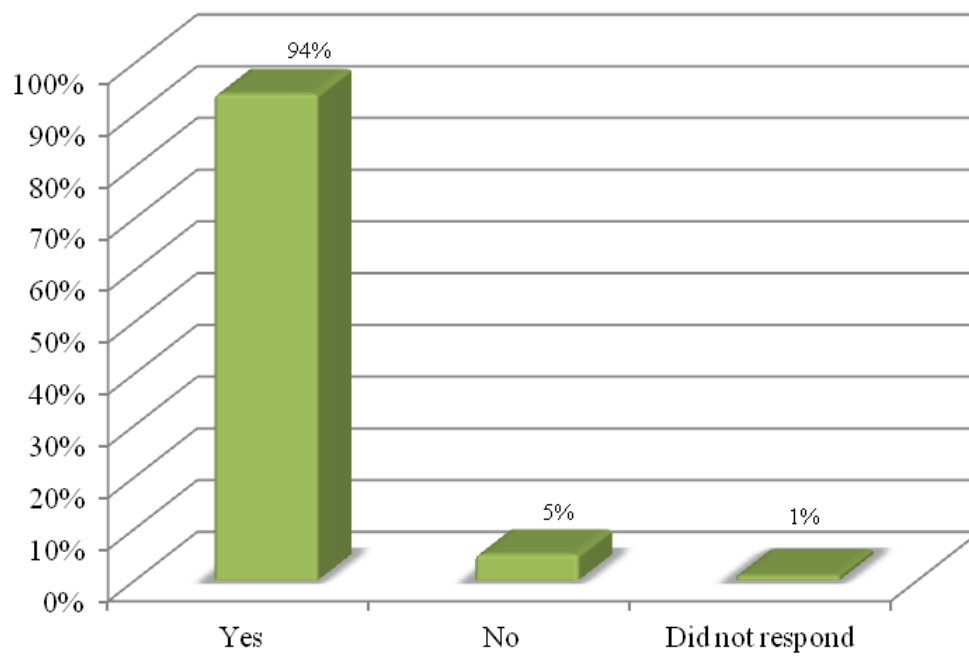
"At this point securing a mortgage would be difficult as would getting together sufficient down payment. If we could somehow negotiate around those barriers, I would do whatever it would take to own this home."

15. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 13, would you be willing to participate in a workshop to find out more about the financial requirements and obligations of owning a home?

201 (94%) - Yes

11 (5%) - No

2 (1%) - Did not respond



*From the 214 respondents who are interested in purchasing the home

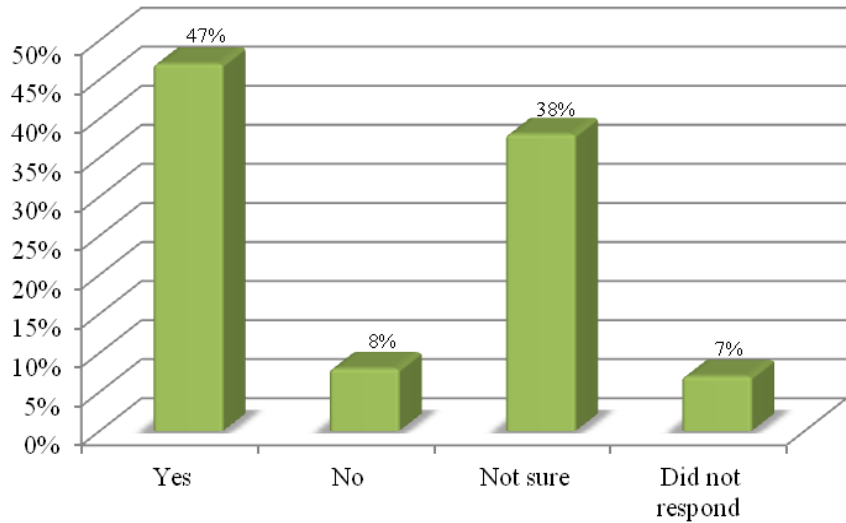
16. If your building was bought from Toronto Community Housing by a co-operative or non-profit agency, would you be interested in playing a greater role in the management of your home?

184 (47%) - Yes

33 (8%) - No

150 (38%) - Not sure

29 (7%) - Did not respond



"I would like to play a greater role. It's like that now. I try to do as much 'fixing' in my home as I can with the help of friends. I treat it as though it were my own."

"That would be perfect for everyone who wants to keep their house."

"To some extent. I have mentioned that as a single parent it is very difficult to look after two severe disabilities."

"Absolutely we will. We currently are playing a great and positive role in managing the care, temporary and long-term repairs and are trying our best to keep this property of TCHC in good shape and are looking forward to do more in the future once we are given the opportunity."

"If my house was bought by let's say, a non profit organization such as Habitat for Humanity or another, I would be interested in playing a greater role in management of my home. It is essential for a family or household to feel grounded in the house and community one lives in. This usually involved a sense of ownership and sense of vested interest without which a home and a community cannot exist. Having a say in the environment you live in makes you feel as if you are a part of something special and that you are not left out and that you, your voice and family are accounted."

"We'd like to know more about the circumstances before responding to the above."

17. Are there any additional comments you wish to make?

"As I have mentioned throughout this survey, we have lived in our home for over 30 years. Although we may not own this house we still consider it our home. All our memories are in this house. Having to leave our home would mean not being able to have family gatherings that we have. It would mean giving up friendships that we have made. A job would most likely be lost. We would have to give up medical and social support. We would be moved away from our family that all live close to us which would mean we would see less of them. Leaving our home would be extremely stressful and devastating in so many ways. We would love to be able to buy this house."

"We, as families with income are really dependent on the units we have been provided by TCH until we become able to afford our own living places. Families like us are really worried and stressed with the thought of losing their homes, especially at a time that the economy is down and most people are struggling with finding jobs. The government and TCH should think of long term solutions rather than the ones that would create more problems. There are hundreds of other alternatives for the solution!"

"We have been good and long term tenants of TCH. We believe that as good tenants we should be given the opportunity of staying in our home. We have respectfully take care of our home and have blended with our community as a home and family. We have made a life here and we want to stay. We ask that you give us the opportunity to stay in our home while raising our family. Thank you!"

"... this is the first home we moved into during our first years in Canada. My children were all born and raised in this house and we have come to love our neighbours like family. We spent our own money on this house as if this house belonged to us because we had no plans to move and believed that this would be our permanent home...After hearing news of our home potentially being sold, causing us to move, my children became very upset. This house has many memories for us, especially of my deceased son, and the thought of leaving the home where we shared great moments together causes great emotional and mental discomfort for my children. They have had enough to deal with and I don't want them to lose the last bit of comfort they have by having to leave the only home they have ever known. Please reconsider your decision to sell our home. Thank you!"

"I am very glad to have the opportunity to live in the house that TCH has assigned to me. It would be very painful to have to relocate to another place. My kids and I have found peace and support in this area since we got separated from my abusive and aggressive husband. Thank very much TCH!"

"I do hope that this initiative is brought forward to the mayor and other options can be proposed in order to prevent my family and I as well as others in this situation not be kicked out from their homes. For the past 10 years I've mainly been responsible for maintaining my home and any repairs. Most buildings are far worse than my single dwelling and many others. Before living in my home I had to live in a building and it was infested with rodents and there was an overwhelming amount of crime. Sometimes it is much better that money is spent in the right places such as the upkeep of these single dwellings in order to prevent the long-term effects it will have on the children, youth and families from being relocated to worse situations."