

Affordable Housing Research

Sponsored by The McKnight Foundation

Conducted by
Himle Horner Inc.
ActionMedia Ltd.
Decision Resources Ltd.
2009

Research components

- Statewide survey 700 respondents
- Ten focus groups 90 respondents, Twin Cities, Suburbs
Hibbing, Rochester
- Media scan news, letters to editors, editorials Jan 1- Oct
31 2008
- In-depth interviews with elected officials, industry
representatives and advocates

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

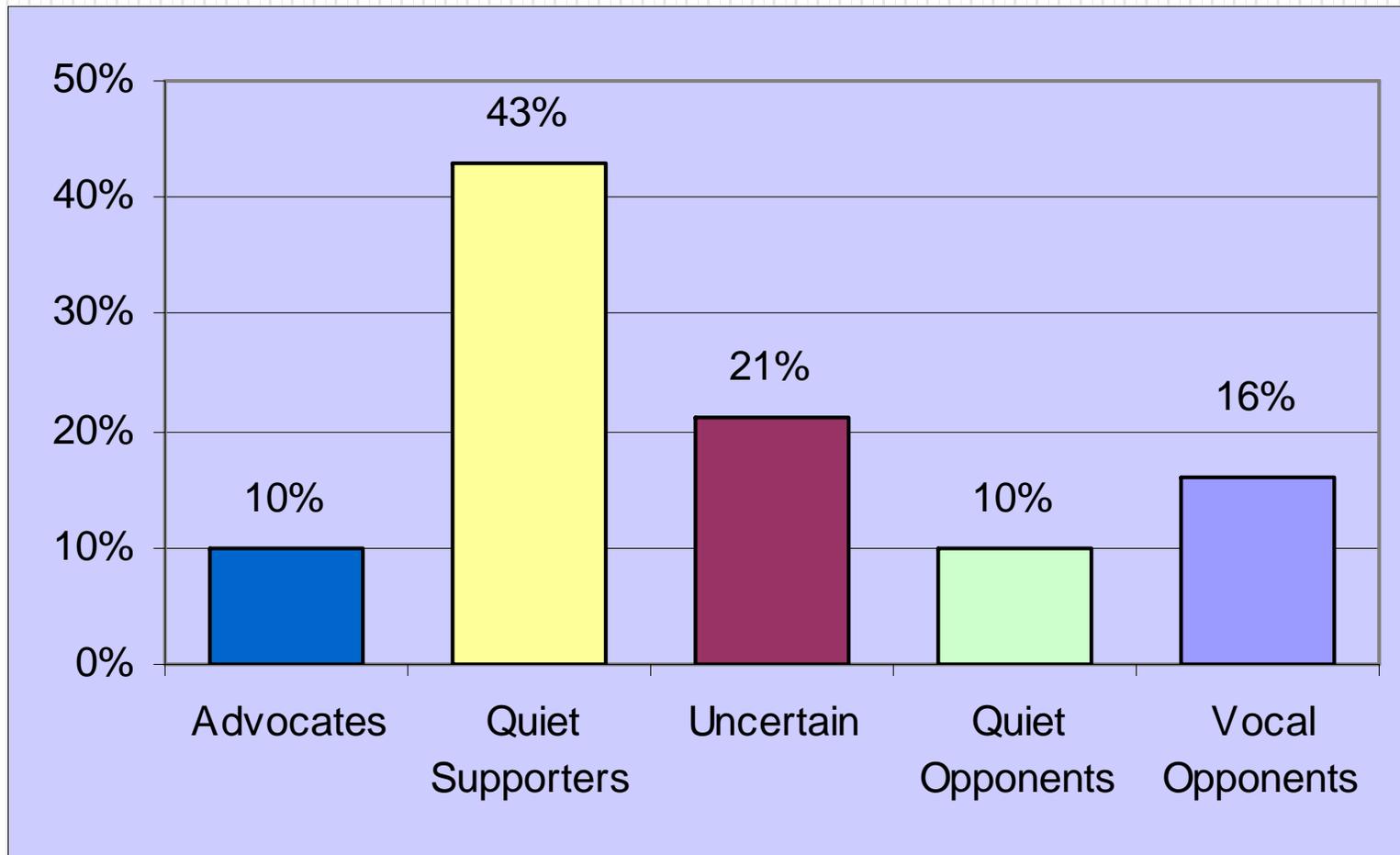


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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Support for affordable housing is broad, but soft



Minnesotans are proud of their communities

- 85 percent of Minnesota homeowners believe their communities are very close or somewhat close to the ideal place to live.
- 89 percent would recommend that a member of the family live in the community.
- 74 percent believe that their communities have the right mix of housing choices, including a range of prices.

Opposition to affordable housing is strongly felt and personal

- Opponents see housing proposals as a threat to the status quo: this community is a great place already – this proposal is a “solution” in search of problem
- Opponents and supporter share **values** of security, sense of community, aesthetics, schools, et al.
- Most Minnesotans evaluate affordable housing from **their own** self-interest, not from concern for the poor.

Set the context

**Making this community
a better place to live**

Define the issue

- Protect existing home values.
- Maintain the current character of the community.
- New residents must have the same sense of commitment to the community that current homeowners have.

Build for the Future

Minnesotans know change is coming; they want the housing response to change to be well managed.

“The bottom line is we’re going to see a shift in housing overall as it reacts to the economy. The housing market has to look at developing opportunities for people to have housing whether it’s single family homes, rental, higher densities, etc.”

– Elected city official

Invest in Economic Vitality

- Make it possible for young professionals to live in the community.
- However, don't build housing to chase jobs; attract good jobs that support quality housing.

Words that work

- The health and vitality of a community and a region rests on new solutions and smart investments, including new thinking about preserving the housing that already is here and creating new housing that is right for the market.
- Minnesota is changing. Protecting the investments we have in our homes will require new solutions for our community and region, including housing, transportation and economic development.

Story of Opportunity

- -- to renew older houses and neighborhoods so they remain valuable assets in today's housing market;
- -- to provide the housing and transportation that attracts new and experienced workers;
- -- to create housing that allows our lifelong residents to remain in their homes while new buyers gain the economic means to buy these larger homes.

Leadership and Public Engagement

Voters believe the best decisions depend on meaningful public participation.

Public engagement processes, about how to make the community better, stronger, more ready for the future, allow citizens to set the context and define the issue in their terms.

Leadership that honestly listens can help citizens develop real solutions that work for their community.

Media Scan

- Coverage of affordable housing in local news media emphasizes stories most likely to drive negative messages
- Opponents' messages drive the strongest emotions
- Local elected officials quoted in news stories are more often negative than positive
- Local elected officials and local housing agencies are more often neutral (relaying facts) than positive (speaking to shared values).

Road testing the research

How do these findings match your own experience?

How can we apply these findings in ways that work for you?

- What do you say that works?
- What do you say (or hear allies say) that doesn't work?
- What do others say that stops dialogue?
- What do others say that fosters dialogue?
- Which communities have opportunity to most immediately apply this research?

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