How Housing Matters

Regional Council of Mayors Meeting
ULI Housing Opportunity 2015
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MacArthur’s Historic Commitment to Housing

To increase the availability of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families

MacArthur Foundation
HOW HOUSING MATTERS
macfound.org/HousingMatters
2015 How Housing Matters Public Opinion Survey

• Telephone survey among a nationally representative sample of 1,401 adults, including 461 who have only a cell phone and an oversample among Millennials (18-34)

• Interviews conducted April 27 – May 5, 2015

• Full survey report available at:

  www.macfound.org/housingmatters
Housing affordability is widely recognized as a real and serious problem in America.

Is housing affordability a problem in America today? If so, how serious a problem is it?

60% say housing affordability is a serious problem.
Finding affordable housing is perceived to be challenging for many.

In your community, how easy/challenging is it for these groups to find affordable quality housing?

- **Finding affordable, quality housing to buy in my community**
  - Very challenging: 27%
  - Somewhat challenging: 33%
  - Very easy: 11%
  - Somewhat easy: 25%

- **Finding affordable, quality housing to rent in my community**
  - Very challenging: 27%
  - Somewhat challenging: 31%
  - Very easy: 11%
  - Somewhat easy: 23%

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*In your community, how easy/challenging is it for these groups to find affordable quality housing?*

- **For a family of four with an income of about $24,000**
  - Very challenging: 74%
  - Somewhat challenging: 15%
  - Very easy: 3%
  - Somewhat easy: 5%

- **For young adults just entering the labor force**
  - Very challenging: 46%
  - Somewhat challenging: 34%
  - Very easy: 4%
  - Somewhat easy: 13%

- **For a family of four with an income of about $50,000**
  - Very challenging: 29%
  - Somewhat challenging: 36%
  - Very easy: 8%
  - Somewhat easy: 24%
Americans continue to make tradeoffs to afford their housing.

Have you had to make any of these tradeoffs in the past three years because you were struggling to pay your rent or mortgage?

I have made this tradeoff:

- Taken second job, working more hours: 21%
- Stopped saving for retirement: 17%
- Accumulating credit card debt: 14%
- Cut back on healthy food: 12%
- Cut back on health care: 9%
- Moved to a neighborhood I feel is less safe: 9%
- Moved to where schools are not as good: 4%

55% have made at least one tradeoff.

52% in 2014
Americans want their elected leaders to make housing affordability a priority.

When it comes to addressing the issue of housing affordability, would you like to see your elected leaders make it a priority; if so, how high a priority?

- **Very/fairly high priority**
- **Just somewhat a priority**
- **Not a priority**
- **Low priority**

**Elected leaders in Washington/housing affordability in America**

- 75% Very/fairly high priority
- 49% Just somewhat a priority
- 22% Not a priority
- 13% Low priority

**Local/state elected leaders/housing affordability in my community**

- 79% Very/fairly high priority
- 55% Just somewhat a priority
- 18% Not a priority
- 10% Low priority
Americans see their elected leaders falling far short on this important issue.

On addressing the issue of housing affordability, would you like to see your elected leaders make this a priority? And how high a priority do they currently treat it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elected leaders in Washington/housing affordability in America</th>
<th>Local/state elected leaders/housing affordability in my community</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What we want</strong></td>
<td><strong>What we want</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What they do</strong></td>
<td><strong>What they do</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<td>-35</td>
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- 43% Very/fairly high priority
- 24% Just somewhat a priority
- 14% Low priority
- 14% Not a priority
There are compelling reasons why housing should be a higher priority on the policy agenda.

This is a VERY CONVINCING reason to ensure that more people have access to quality affordable housing:

73% The **chronic stress experienced by families who live in unsafe neighborhoods** can negatively affect young children's mental and social development.*

62% Having **quality, stable housing is directly linked to children's ability to do well in school** and when a family has to move frequently it reduces a child's educational achievement and can have a negative effect on the whole classroom.

61% Increases in the cost of rental housing are placing a serious burden on too many families. Today, **11 million Americans pay more than half their income on rent**, leaving less money for essentials such as food, transportation, and healthcare.

59% The **chronic stress experienced by families who live in low-quality or unaffordable housing** can negatively affect young children's mental and social development.*

51% It has become **difficult for many elderly Americans to find quality affordable housing.** Increasing numbers of seniors are spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

50% When a family has decent, affordable housing, they spend more on things that **contribute to their child's development**, such as books, music lessons, and educational trips and experiences.

*Items were asked of half of participants to measure how the underlined phrasing affected responses.
http://howhousingmatters.org/

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