



# June Online Open House Results

---

## Introduction

From May 28 to June 24, Housing Lynn conducted an online open house (OOH) on the plan's draft vision statement, draft goals, and potential strategies. The OOH essentially functioned as a long-form survey divided into subject areas and with significant contextual information. Housing Lynn conducted this activity on Qualtrics software and promoted the activity via an email newsletter, social media, and through word-of-mouth (specifically through members of the plan's Steering Committee and the Housing in Lynn Coalition convened by CHAPA). The City of Lynn and LHAND also promoted the survey through various avenues. All OOH content was offered in both English and Spanish, and participants could select or change their preferred language at any point in the OOH. This memo summarizes the demographics of OOH participants and their responses to OOH questions, and offers insights for the next steps of the Housing Lynn process with a focus on transitioning to plan recommendations to meet housing need.

Importantly, this OOH was not a poll, and insights from this memo cannot be taken to perfectly reflect the views of Lynn's population or subgroups thereof. Insights from these responses nonetheless provide valuable information for the Housing Lynn process.

## Participant Profile

This section summarizes information on the participants' demographics. Overall, participation in the OOH was robust. Nearly 300 people meaningfully participated. Roughly 260 people provided input on at least one question, and roughly 160 people completed the entire OOH. These top-line figures exceed the typical planning engagement event, either in-person or online. The demographic breakdowns are also encouraging. White people, upper-middle-income households, homeowners, and residents of certain neighborhoods are overrepresented among respondents, but less so than in comparable planning processes. While respondent demographics are not identical to Lynn's population, they are similar enough to treat the OOH results as meaningful.

## Background and Caveats

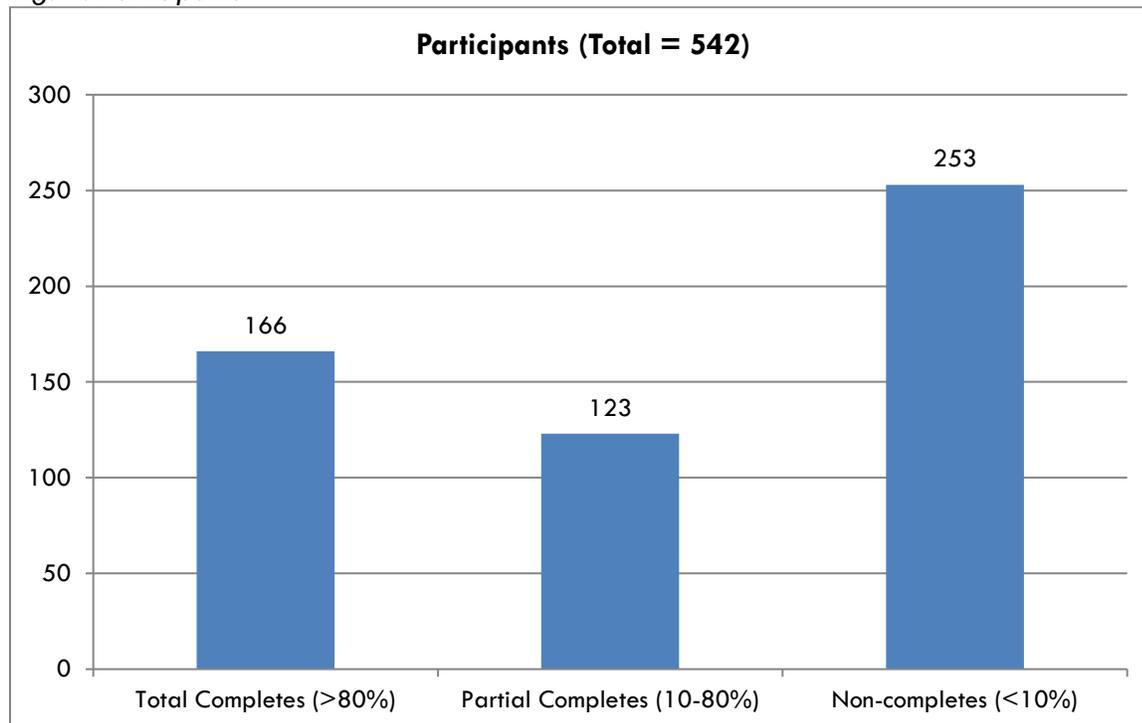
Every user who opened the OOH was recorded as a participant, and the following information was recorded for all participants regardless of whether they finished the entire OOH: when they started and finished the OOH, how far they proceeded through the OOH, and which language they used.

The OOH also included an “About You” section, which asked more detailed demographic questions. Some of those questions were optional, so except for the highest-level information, all demographic insights are limited to those participants who responded to some or all of those questions. The respondents to these questions do not necessarily reflect the demographics of all respondents, and we have no insight into how the population responding to demographic questions differed from the wider participant population. For convenience’s sake, this memo will refer to the group of people who responded to demographic questions as “respondents,” without repeated reference to the caveat that they may not reflect all respondents.

### Overall Participation

A total of 542 people participated in the OOH in some way, including simply opening the OOH webpage but not progressing beyond the introduction. Excluding participants who progressed less than 10% through the OOH (i.e., not past introductory remarks), 289 people meaningfully participated in the OOH. Of those, 166 participants progressed through at least 80% of the OOH (i.e., at least through the plan-content-related questions, but not necessarily through demographic questions). An additional 123 participants progressed through at least 10% but less than 80% of the OOH. Participation declined through the OOH, with 262 participants responding to the draft vision statement, 188 participants responding to the draft goals, 173 participants responding to at least one strategy, and 157 people responding to demographic questions. However, because of the high participation rates overall, even the relatively fewer respondents who went all the way through the OOH constitute a substantial number.

Fig. 1: Participants

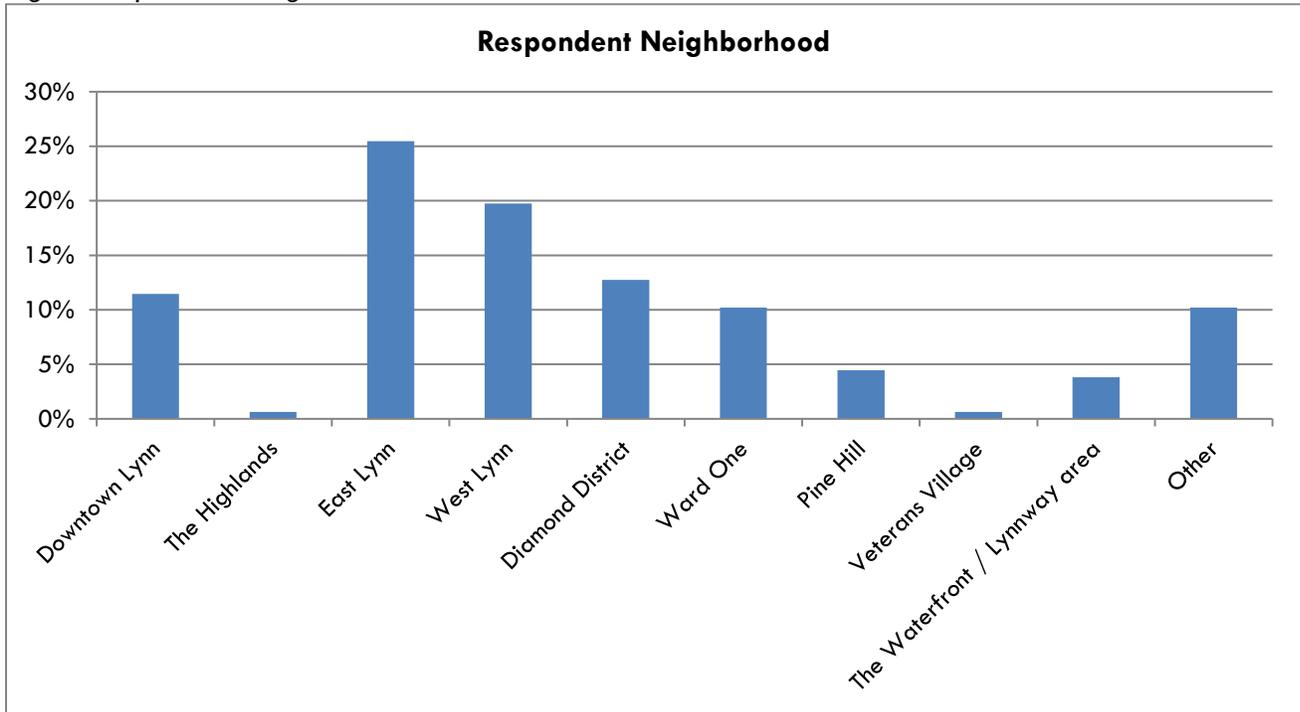


### Neighborhood

Respondents were residents of neighborhoods across Lynn, with 25% and 20% from East Lynn and West Lynn respectively. Other neighborhoods with substantial respondents include the

Diamond District (13%), Downtown (11%), and Ward One (10%). There were a handful of respondents from Pine Hill (4%) and the Waterfront/Lynnway area (4%), and only one respondent each from the Highlands or Veterans Village. Ten percent of respondents selected “other” as their neighborhood and provided text input. These responses were typically other neighborhood or ward designations (e.g. Sagamore Hill, Goldfish Pond, Ward Two, etc.). One respondent was not a resident of Lynn.

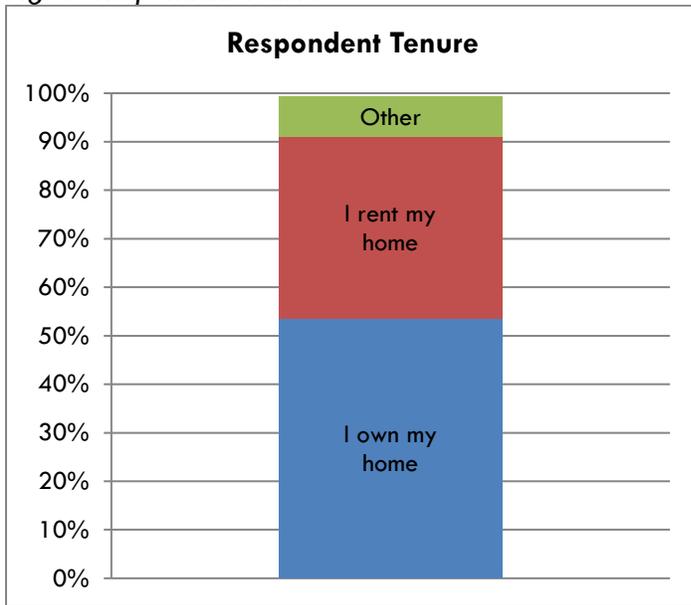
Fig. 2: Respondent Neighborhood



### Housing Tenure

Fifty-four percent of respondents own their homes, and 38% rent their homes. The final 8% of respondents selected “other” and provided text input. These respondents either live with family, in a shelter, or in supportive housing. More respondents were homeowners than Lynn’s general population, in which 45% of occupied housing units are owned by the occupants according to Census data.

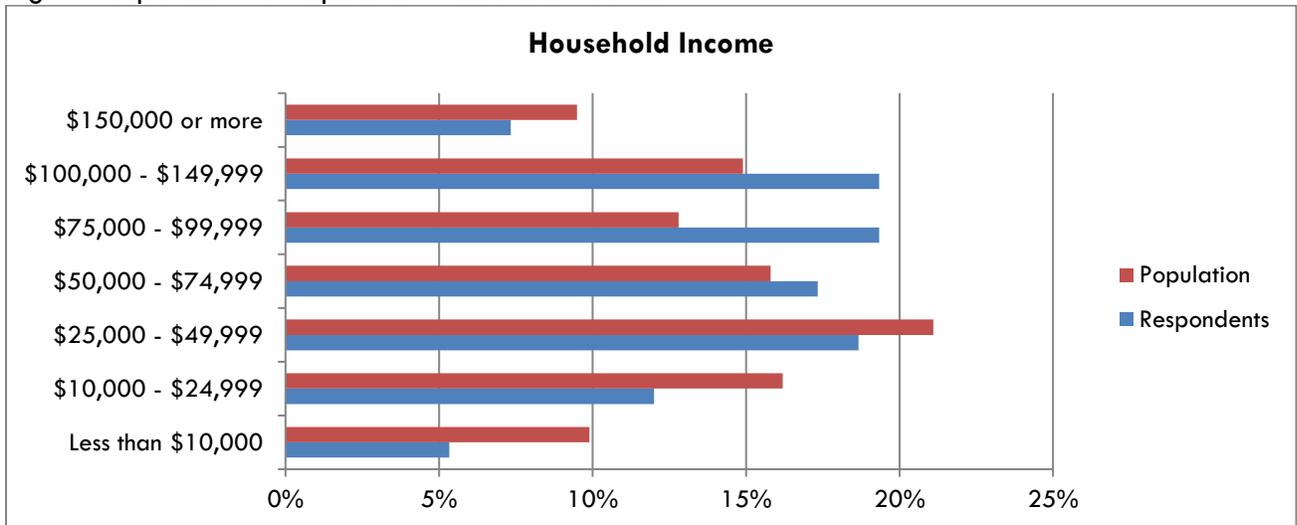
Fig. 3: Respondent Tenure



### Income

Respondents' self-reported household income brackets followed a relatively normal distribution across the given options. While responses at the lower end of the income spectrum were relatively high for a public engagement activity (based on MAPC's past experience), respondents' households were more likely to be in the upper-middle range of incomes than Lynn's general population. There were fewer respondents with household incomes of less than \$50,000 or more than \$150,000 than the general population.

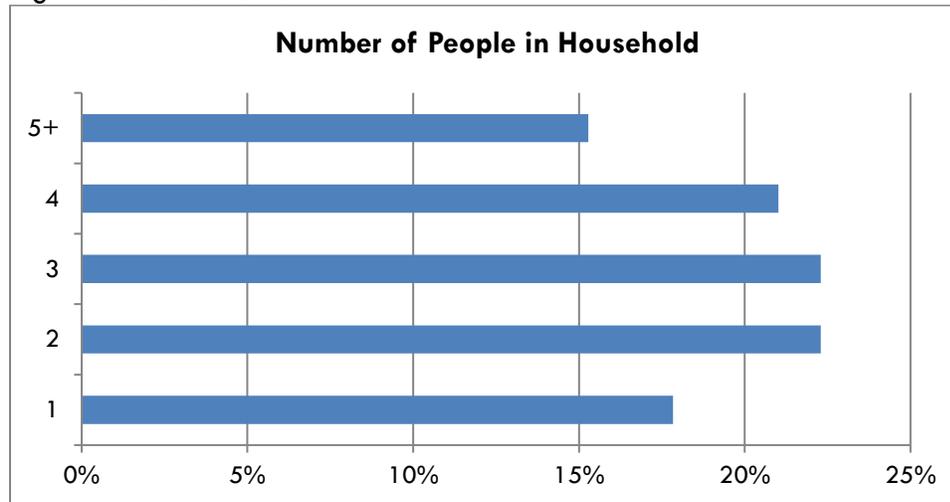
Fig. 4: Respondent vs. Population Household Incomes



## Household Size

The number of people living in respondent households was fairly evenly distributed across the options given, which ranged from one-person to five-plus person households. Between 15% and 22% of respondents selected each option.

Fig. 5: Household Size



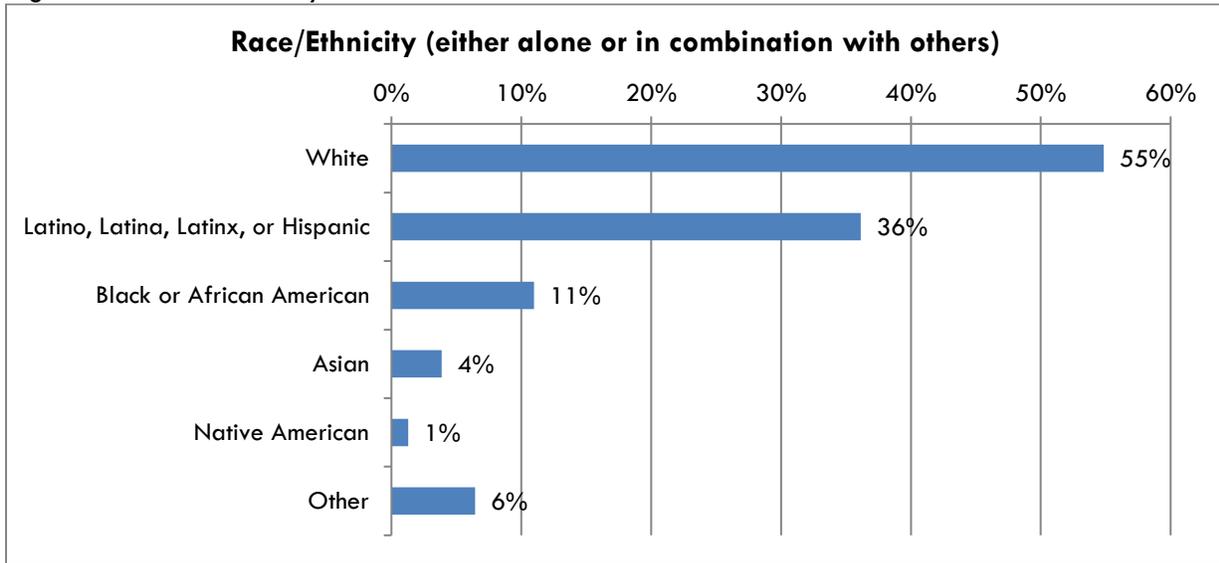
## Race and Ethnicity

Respondents were given the option to identify with one or more of the following races/ethnicities: White; Black or African American; Latina, Latino, Latinx, or Hispanic; Asian; Native American; or other. The framing of this question was intended to reflect the typical approaches to racial and/or ethnic identity found in the general population and to allow for flexibility (acknowledging that people have different approaches to this question of identity). The question was not framed to be directly comparable to US Census Bureau data. The most important difference relates to the Census Bureau treating “Hispanic or Latino” identity as an ethnic category separate from race. Those with “Hispanic or Latino” ethnicity commonly select White, Black, Native American, and Other as racial categories. Without wanting to impose the Census Bureau’s atypical framing, we opted to allow respondents to select racial/ethnic categories as desired. Despite the difference, this memo will make loose comparisons to Census Bureau data where possible.

It is useful to assess racial and ethnic data in two ways: by looking at racial identification, whether or not racial identity was selected alone or in combination with others, and by looking at racial identification for respondents who selected only one racial or ethnic category.

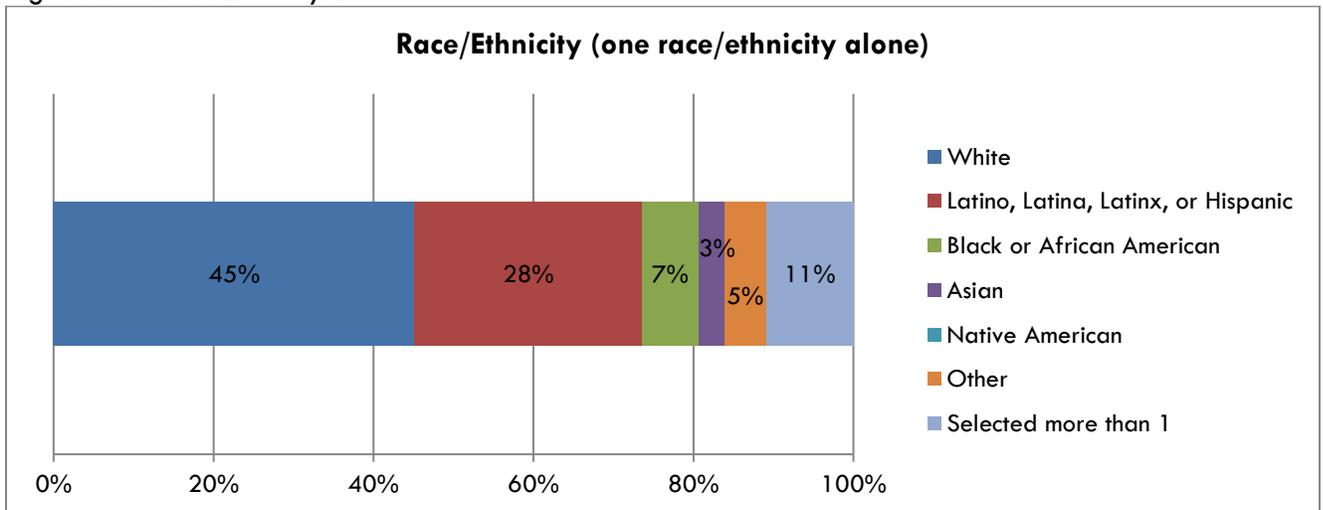
We first assessed racial/ethnic categories selected either alone or in combination with others. Due to respondents with more than one selection, these figures will not sum to 100%. Of the respondents, 55% identified as White; 36% as Latina, Latino, Latinx, or Hispanic; 11% as Black or African American; 4% as Asian; 1% as Native American; and 6% as other. Based on this data, it is likely that white people are overrepresented in the OOH compared to the general population, while people of color (collectively and for each individual racial/ethnic category) are underrepresented. These differences in representation, it should be noted, are not as dramatic as historic urban planning processes generally.

Fig. 6: Race and Ethnicity A



The data can also be assessed by reviewing respondents who selected only one racial/ethnic category. Forty-five percent of respondents selected White alone; 28% selected Latinx alone, 7% as Black alone, 3% as Asian alone, and 5% as other alone. Eleven percent selected two or more racial/ethnic categories. Respondents selecting more than one category most often selected either White and Latinx or White and Black.

Fig. 7: Race and Ethnicity B



## Language

Participants could choose which language to engage with the OOH in via a select menu visible on every page of the OOH. During the first wave of promotion, the activity's default language was English, and the custom URL pointed to the default, English version. During the second wave, promotional materials linked to the OOH in the language of those materials, and there was a second custom URL for the Spanish version. Ultimately, 11% of all participants engaged in Spanish, while the rest opted for English. There does not seem to be meaningful differences in

language choice between the universe of all participants, meaningful participants (those who completed at least 10% of the OOH), and those who completed the OOH.

Fig. 8: Participant language choice

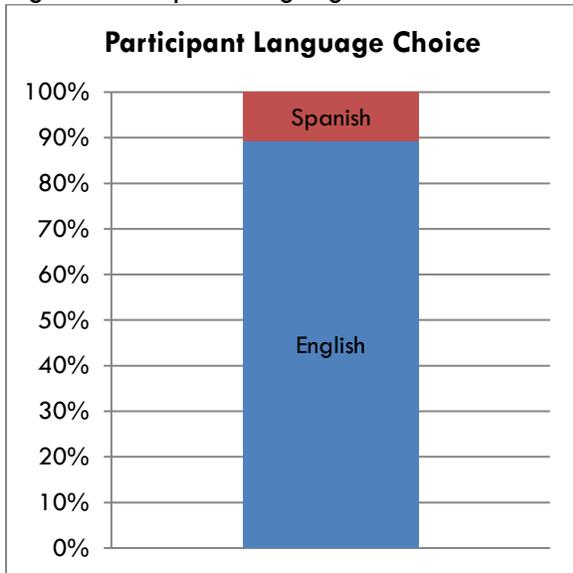


Table 1: Language choice by level of participation

	English	Spanish
All Participants (>0%)	89%	11%
Meaningful Participants (>=10%)	90%	10%
Full Completes (>=80%)	90%	10%
Partial Completes (10-79%)	89%	11%

## Content Responses

This section details participants’ responses to the content of the OOH—draft vision, draft goals, and potential strategies. Respondents were overwhelmingly supportive of the vision, goals, and strategies. A supermajority supported the vision and all goals, and a majority rated each strategy as a priority. There were some nuances in the level of support for different goals and strategies, described below.

### Vision

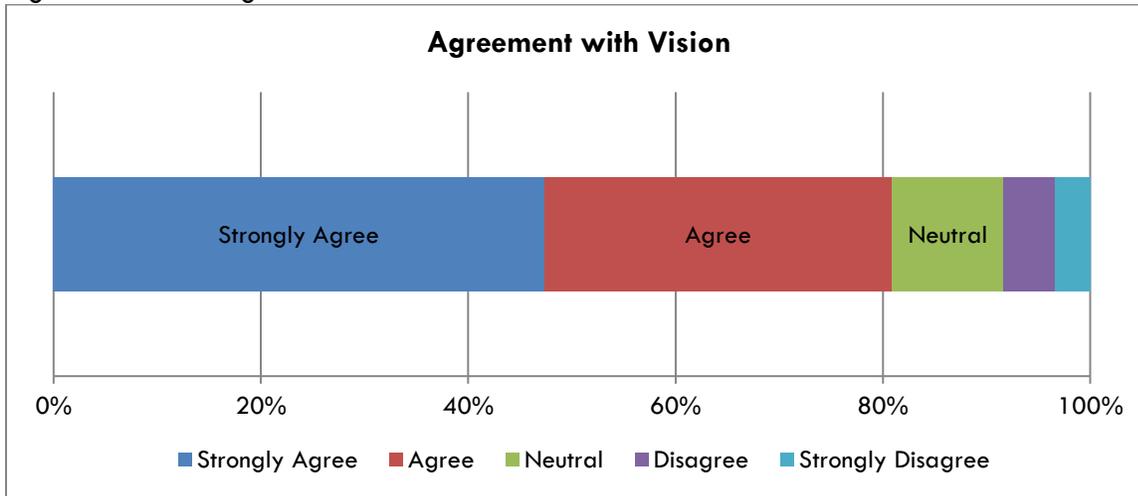
Participants were presented with the following draft Vision Statement for the future of housing in Lynn:

“Lynn’s housing will be safe, affordable, and accessible. New housing will meet the needs of Lynn residents and increase the strength and vibrancy of neighborhoods. Housing will enable everyone to thrive in a community that is inclusive to all.”

They were then asked whether they agree with that vision statement. Eighty-two percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. An additional 11% reported

they were neutral to the statement. Only 8% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Fig. 9: Vision Ratings



Respondents were given the option to suggest changes to the vision, and 68 respondents wrote a text response. Those responses were categorized based on their sentiment toward development and affordability expressed in the suggested edits:

- a) Pro-affordability / Anti-displacement / Anti-gentrification / Focus on minority communities.
- b) Pro-market rate development / Pro-growth
- c) Anti-development (market-rate or Affordable Housing)
- d) Other (commenting on some other aspect of a potential housing vision, such as design)

Table 2: Vision Text Responses by Category

Response Category	Count
(a) Pro-affordability, etc.	36
(b) Pro-market-rate, etc.	9
(c) Anti-development	2
(d) Other	22

## Goals

The OOH presented respondents with draft goal statements for the plan, and asked respondents to rate each statement as either important, neutral, or not important. For each goal, we also calculated net importance (“important” minus “not important”), which balances the positive and negative sentiments.

Importantly, all goals were marked as important by a supermajority of respondents. There are minor differences among levels of support for each goal, illustrated below, but the strong support for these housing goals across the board is of greater significance.

Fig. 10: Goal Ratings

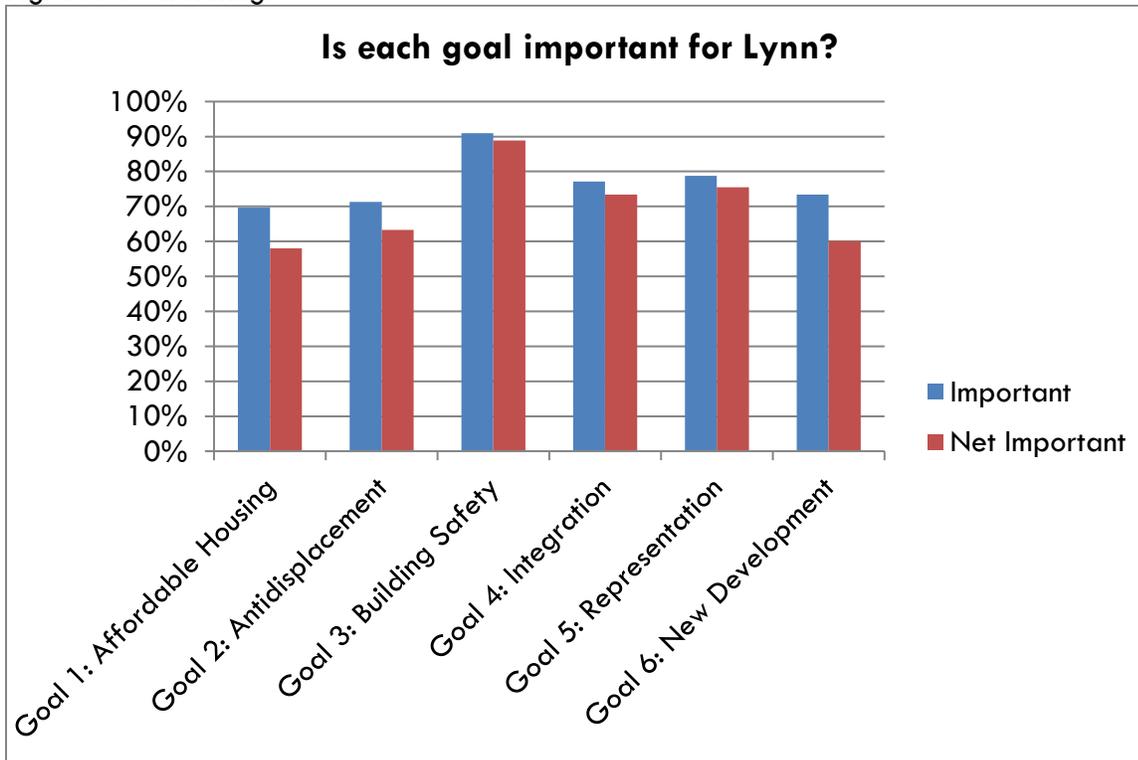


Table 3: Goal Responses

Goal	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Net Important
Goal 1: Affordable Housing	70%	18%	12%	58%
Goal 2: Anti-displacement	71%	20%	8%	63%
Goal 3: Building Safety	91%	6%	2%	89%
Goal 4: Integration	77%	19%	4%	73%
Goal 5: Representation	79%	18%	3%	76%
Goal 6: New Development	73%	13%	13%	60%

(Note that respondents were given a full goal statement, not simply the short title shown here.)

*Goal 3: Building Safety* received far and away the most support, with a net important score of 89%. Its high “important” score, low “neutral” score, and very low “not important” score contributed to this. *Goal 4: Integration* and *Goal 5: Representation* formed the next tier of support, each with a net important score in the mid-seventies. The third tier of support comprised *Goal 1: Affordable Housing*, *Goal 2: Anti-displacement*, and *Goal 6: New Development*, each with a net important score in the high fifties to low sixties.

For almost every goal, more respondents rated their feelings as “important” or “neutral” than “not important.” Overall, relatively few respondents rated goals as “not important.” For *Goal 6: New Development*, “neutral” and “not important” had the same level of support. *Goal 1: Affordable Housing* and *Goal 6: New Development* received the most “not important” ratings, at 12% and 13%, respectively.

Similar to the draft vision statement, respondents were able to make comments or suggest edits or additions to the goals through a text input at the end of the goals section. We received 59 comments, which were categorized by their general sentiment or topic. Some comments were placed in more than one category. Just under half (49%) contained sentiments that were pro-Affordable Housing, anti-displacement, anti-gentrification, etc. Roughly 14% of comments expressed pro-market-rate development sentiments. Only one comment expressed sentiments that were against development of any type. Nearly one in four comments (24%) included sentiments not directly about housing, but which impact or are impacted by housing, such as schools, crime, transportation, infrastructure, open space, neighborhood design, and/or master planning. Another 19% of comments concerned other subjects, such as shelters and supportive housing, offering support to landlords, or affirming that they have no further comments.

Table 4: Goal comments categorization

<b>Category</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Pro-Affordable Housing / Anti-displacement	29	49%
Pro-market-rate development	8	14%
Anti-development	1	2%
Non-housing (Schools, crime, transport, etc.)	14	24%
Other	11	19%

## Strategies

The OOH then presented participants with seven potential strategies to achieve draft goals. Each strategy included a list of which goals would be impacted by the strategy, potential pros and cons of pursuing that strategy, and examples of specific actions that would be part of that strategy. Participants were then asked to respond to the following question: “Do you think this strategy should be a priority for the city?”

**A majority of respondents rated all strategies as a priority or high priority** (ratings of four and five). More than 60% of respondents rated all but one strategy as a priority or high priority (the exception was *Strategy 4: Incentives*, with support at 56%). Moving forward with this planning process, the overall support for strategies should be one of this OOH’s key takeaways.

**Strategy ratings were more polarized than goal ratings.** Based on our planning experience, this is not uncommon; people often coalesce around goals more easily than the strategies needed to advance them. For four of the seven strategies, more respondents rated the strategy as a low priority (ratings one and two) than those who rated the strategy as neutral. To better account for negative sentiments, we calculated net priority scores (scores four and five minus scores one and two). Despite the polarization, six of seven strategies had a net priority rating above 50% (the exception was *Strategy 4: Incentives*, with net support at 31%). *Strategy 3: Diverse Municipal Culture*, *Strategy 5: Capacity Building*, and *Strategy 7: Renter Protections* form the top tier of net support, with net priority scores in the high fifties to mid-sixties.

To arrive at more pointed priority ratings, the OOH also asked participants to choose the top three most important strategies for the city to pursue. None of the strategies received more than 50%. In the hypothetical case that all support for each strategy was evenly divided among respondents, we would expect each strategy to be chosen by 43% of respondents. Only two strategies achieved scores of 43% or more, meaning they outperformed generic expectations: *Strategy 2: Use City Resources/Land* and *Strategy 7: Renter Protections*, both at 47%. All other strategies underperformed generic expectations.

These different metrics provide different views on respondent support of strategies (see Table 5 below). When asked if each individual strategy is a priority, some of the strategies that might be considered more anodyne “best practices,” such as building up local government capacity and fostering a diverse municipal culture, rose to the top of the strategy rankings. More polarizing strategies, such as using City resources or rezoning to facilitate development, tended to rank lower. Negative sentiments about the more polarizing strategies pushed those strategies to the bottom of respondent rankings. However, when asked to rank strategies against one another and choose only a subset to support, respondents tended to choose weightier, and consequently more polarizing, options. This makes sense intuitively: given limited resources, respondents wished to pursue what they assessed as the most impactful strategies, though they differed on which strategies those would be.

Fig 11: Strategy Ratings

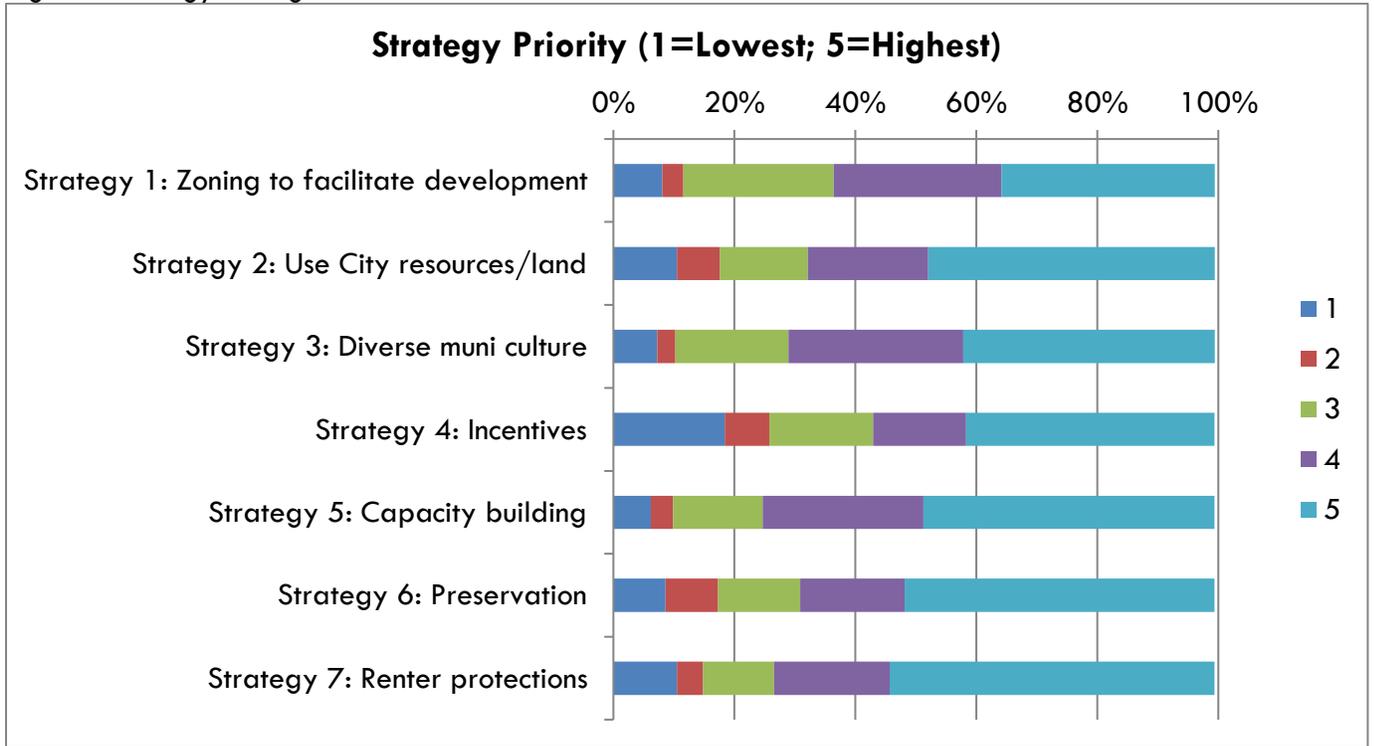


Fig. 12: Key Strategy Metrics

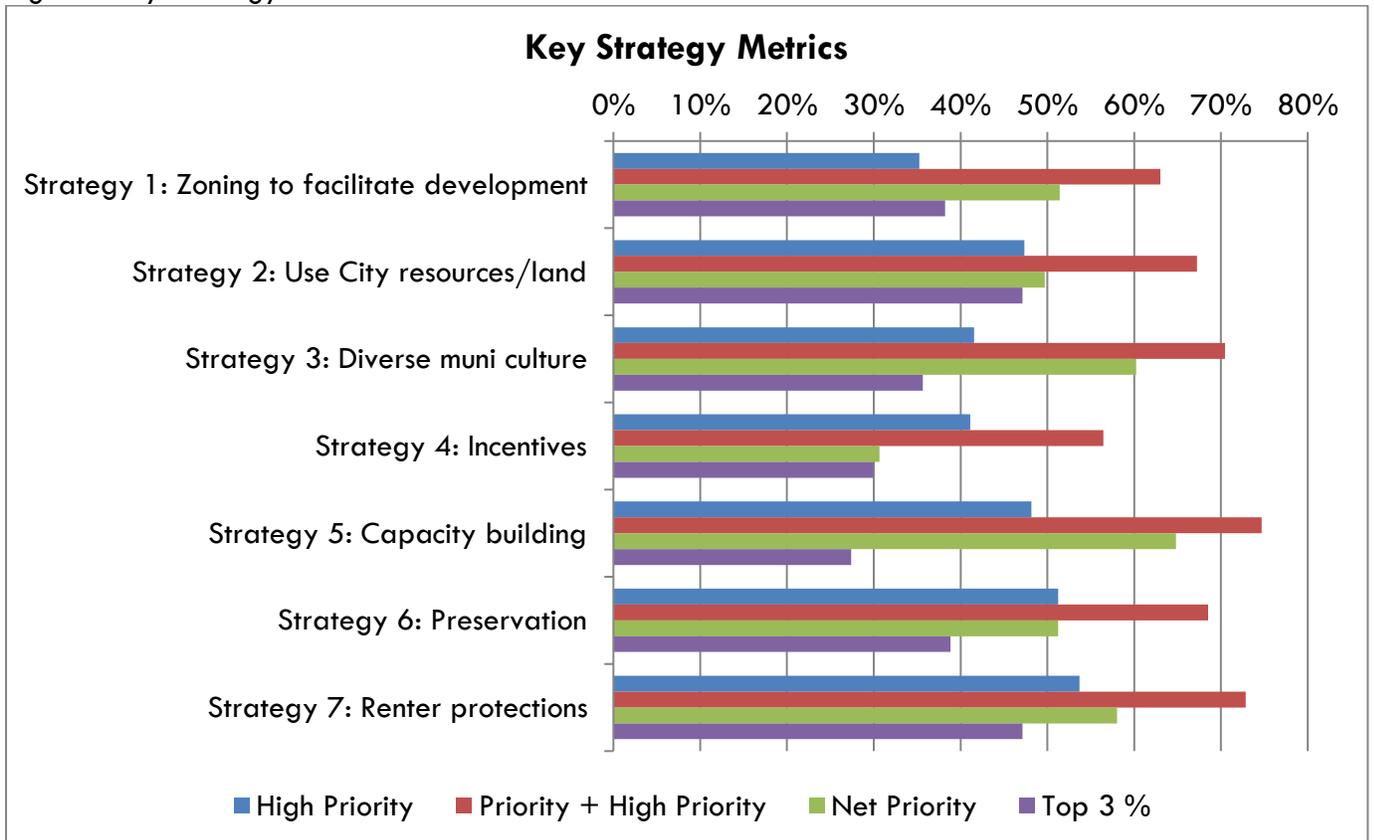


Table 5: Strategy Rankings

High Priority	Priority + High Priority	Net Priority	Top 3 - % Picked	Negative Sentiment
Strategy 7: Renter protections	Strategy 5: Capacity building	Strategy 5: Capacity building	Strategy 7: Renter protections	Strategy 4: Incentives
Strategy 6: Preservation	Strategy 7: Renter protections	Strategy 3: Diverse muni culture	Strategy 2: Use City resources/land	Strategy 2: Use City resources/land
Strategy 5: Capacity building	Strategy 3: Diverse muni culture	Strategy 7: Renter protections	Strategy 6: Preservation	Strategy 6: Preservation
Strategy 2: Use City resources/land	Strategy 6: Preservation	Strategy 1: Zoning to facilitate development	Strategy 1: Zoning to facilitate development	Strategy 7: Renter protections
Strategy 3: Diverse muni culture	Strategy 2: Use City resources/land	Strategy 6: Preservation	Strategy 3: Diverse muni culture	Strategy 1: Zoning to facilitate development
Strategy 4: Incentives	Strategy 1: Zoning to facilitate development	Strategy 2: Use City resources/land	Strategy 4: Incentives	Strategy 3: Diverse muni culture
Strategy 1: Zoning to facilitate development	Strategy 4: Incentives	Strategy 4: Incentives	Strategy 5: Capacity building	Strategy 5: Capacity building

The OOH also allowed respondents to offer text comments on strategies. Similar to the vision and goals sections, we categorized these text responses according to their broad sentiments. Roughly 38% of comments were broadly pro-Affordable Housing or anti-displacement, 12% were pro-market-rate development, 10% focused on the needs of existing housing stock (particularly safety and landlord practices), 21% on related topics, and 11% addressing other concerns. No comments reflected broad anti-development sentiments.

Table 6: Strategy Text Response Categorization

Category	Count	Percent
Pro-Affordable Housing, Anti-displacement	16	38%
Pro-market-rate housing	5	12%
Anti-development	0	0%
Existing housing needs (Safety, landlord practices)	4	10%
Non-Housing (Schools, crime, transport, fiscal, etc.)	9	21%
Other	11	26%

## OOH Input Conclusions

Input received from participants in the OOH largely affirmed the general direction of the plan thus far, while adding nuance and qualifications that MAPC, LHAND, and the City of Lynn can use moving forward.

### Participation

- Participation was robust numerically, diverse demographically, and broadly representative of Lynn. Given the level of participation, input on the plan content should be taken seriously.
- Future engagement activities will work to increase participation overall and specifically to increase participation from people of color, renters, low- and moderate-income people, and non-English speakers to mirror Lynn's population more closely and elevate those most impacted by the housing crisis. Attention should also be paid to representative distribution of participation by neighborhood.

### Vision

- Respondents overwhelmingly supported the vision.
- The planning team will review qualitative input on the vision and incorporate emergent themes either in a revised statement or in other parts of the plan as appropriate.

### Goals

- Respondents overwhelmingly supported each of the goals.
- *Goal 3: Building Safety* received the most support, while goals related to development received *relatively* negative sentiment. Still, all goals received support from at least 70% of respondents, so Housing Lynn will move forward with these general plan goals.
- The planning team will review qualitative input on the goals and incorporate emergent themes either in revised goal statements or in other parts of the plan as appropriate.
- Future engagement will reinforce the importance of each goal, including those related to development, in educational materials. It will be important to note that development will happen whether it's planned for or not; planning appropriately will increase the likelihood it's of a type beneficial to the community. Meanwhile, other goals can be advanced intentionally according to the resources needed to support them.

### Strategies

- A majority of respondents supported each of the strategies.
- Some strategies were more polarizing than others, attracting stronger positive support from some respondents but also more negative sentiment from others. Less polarizing strategies attracted little negative sentiment, but positive support for them was relatively weak. *Strategy 4: Incentives* is an exception; it generated weak positive support and lots of negative sentiments.
- Less polarizing strategies are those "best practices" the City ought to be undertaking, while more polarizing strategies may be viewed as more impactful agents of change. More polarizing strategies often concerned protecting renters, use of city resources, and/or new development.
- When asked to choose three priority strategies, respondents generally selected the more polarizing strategies. Though these strategies were not supported by the most respondents, support for these strategies was the strongest. Less polarizing strategies

were less likely to be chosen, indicating that while they were generally supported by the most respondents, that support was not as strong.

- The planning team will review qualitative input on the strategies and incorporate emergent themes either in revised strategy statements or in other parts of the plan as appropriate.
- When crafting action recommendations, the planning team will combine the insights from respondents' strategy input with information on potential impact, feasibility of adoption, implementation requirements, and interactions with other potential actions.
- Future engagement will emphasize how some of these actions can work together to advance plan goals. (For instance, the City would need to build capacity to properly enforce renter protections.) With reference to respondents' strategy input, future engagement will also work to reduce negative sentiments toward actions that are both particularly impactful and feasible.