



# Lancaster In One Room:

A Deliberative Forum on Housing in Lancaster County

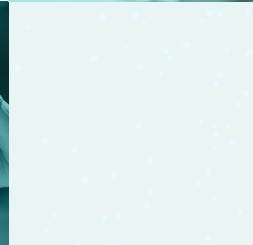
August 19, 2023

Hosted by:



CENTER FOR POLITICS  
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS





### **Report prepared by:**

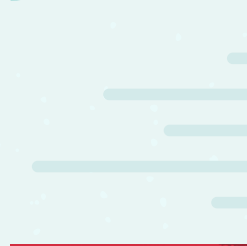
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### **This deliberative forum was generously funded by:**

The Lancaster County Community Foundation  
The High Foundation  
The Steinman Foundation

### **More information on this forum is available at:**

*[HourglassLancaster.org/housing](http://HourglassLancaster.org/housing)*





## Letter from the Executive Director

***It's no secret that Lancaster County, like most of the nation, is facing housing challenges.***

Lancaster is a wonderful place to live, and as our county grows, our housing units are only slightly outpacing the number of households, leaving Lancaster with one of the lowest vacancy rates of any metropolitan area in the U.S. Lancaster County struggles with affordable housing, and 41% of renter households are housing-cost burdened. And then there's the matter of where and how we grow. If we continue to build housing at low densities, sprawl will consume more land than necessary, threatening our farmland and natural lands.

But Lancaster County is filled with resilient problem solvers. On August 19, we brought together a randomly selected group of people that are representative of Lancaster County to deliberate on how we can best address these challenges. On this day we saw a slice of our community all in one room. Men and women, young and old, Republicans and Democrats, from our rural, suburban and urban corners, came together to share what they believe and to focus on solutions. And at the end of the day, not only did the participants learn about housing challenges and offer informed public input on housing policy, nearly 85% of participants said that the people of Lancaster County are alike in more ways than they differ.

Watching this deliberative forum gave me hope in the future of our community. Not only are there tangible ways we can address our challenges, but we'll be most successful if we tackle our problems together, at the local level, using reliable information and the thoughtful exchange of ideas. We've proven time and time again that Lancaster County is a leader in solving problems, and to address our nation's housing crisis, there's no better place to start than in our backyard.

Thank you to all who participated in this forum and made it possible. I hope everyone reading the report finds both the process and the results informative and inspiring.

To our shared future,

Diana Martin  
*Executive Director, Hourglass*



# Executive Summary

A group of 48 randomly-selected residents of who are representative of Lancaster County were brought together on August 19, 2023 to deliberate about housing in Lancaster County.

- Deliberations took place on growth in the county and the state of housing, generally; on ways to increase the housing supply; on ways to address affordable housing; and on local housing priorities, recommended policies/strategies for combatting housing challenges and benchmarks for measuring success.
- In considering the general state of housing in Lancaster County, participants immediately mentioned the need for more affordable housing. They also voiced concerns about growth in the county, including its impact on traffic and the identity of Lancaster County, and expressed the desire for managed growth.
- On balance, participants preferred decisions about housing development be made at the municipal level rather than countywide, and they expressed support for streamlined regulations, for infill development and adaptive reuse, and for mixed-use, multifamily buildings in our Urban Growth Areas as ways to increase housing supply.
- Participants described affordable housing as an urgent problem in Lancaster County and recognized a need to educate the public about affordable housing and those who are in need of it. With respect to strategies for addressing this issue, many participants favored increased government subsidies (though others opposed this approach) and there was widespread agreement on the use of tax and other incentives for developers.

*In their final determinations, affordable housing was, by far, the top priority mentioned by participants, followed by “safe, accessible, and fair” housing and the development of housing near jobs, schools, etc. There was less agreement on the strategies and policies participants favored for increasing housing in Lancaster County. The two most commonly mentioned strategies/policies were infill development/adaptive reuse and mixed-use multifamily buildings. Establishing benchmarks was a challenge for participants and they identified a wide range of potential measures such as increasing our vacancy rate, reducing the number of cost-burdened renters, increasing density in our Urban Growth Areas, and increasing the number of affordable units.*

*Pre- and post-forum surveys revealed a change in most attitudes about housing and housing policies as well as in the perceptions of political division in Lancaster County and the need for dialogue with those with whom we disagree.*



# Introduction

*Hourglass and the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin & Marshall College partnered to host a deliberative forum, or “mini-public,” on housing in Lancaster County on August 19, 2023.*

The forum, which was held on the campus of Franklin & Marshall, was funded with generous support from the Lancaster County Community Foundation, the High Foundation, and the Steinman Foundation.

## What is a “Deliberative Mini-Public”?

In recent decades, democracies around the world have been experimenting with, and in some places institutionalizing, a form of public engagement in the policy-making process called a deliberative forum. A deliberative forum, often referred to as a “citizen assembly” or a “mini-public,” is a mechanism for obtaining public feedback on matters of public policy. There are three essential elements of mini-publics that make them particularly valuable when compared to other methods of gathering public input.

First, a mini-public consists of a group of randomly-selected, representative members of the community. Representation of key demographic (and, often, attitudinal) characteristics is accomplished by stratifying the sample of participants to ensure that the mini-public looks like the broader community. Second, participants are provided with a briefing document several weeks in advance of the forum. The briefing document, which is developed with the help of subject-area experts, provides objective information, data, and facts about the topic under consideration. Thus, participants arrive at the forum reasonably well-informed and certainly better informed than the typical citizen. Third, participants at the forum engage in deliberation with one another, guided by trained facilitators, in an attempt to arrive at recommendations for the policy in question. The process of deliberation is not a debate but is an exchange of reasons intended to help constructively move the participants toward decisions.

There is considerable empirical evidence that the deliberative process shifts the views of participants, though there is no consistent movement to the left, right or center of the policy spectrum. Importantly, there is also evidence of positive shifts in attitudes about the possibility for common ground within a community and perceptions of the goodwill of those with whom participants disagree on issues. Though certainly not a silver bullet against political polarization, deliberative mini-publics are a promising antidote to it.



## How Was Our Forum Assembled?

To recruit participants for the housing forum, the Center for Opinion Research at Franklin & Marshall mailed several thousand invitation letters to a randomly-selected group of addresses throughout Lancaster County. From among those who indicated their willingness to participate at the forum, 50 participants were selected based on demographic factors like age, gender, race, education level, and place of residence. Table 1 reports the demographic makeup of those who were originally selected and those who actually attended and participated in the forum. (Four alternates replaced six of the originally-selected participants who failed to show up on the day of the forum.)

Category	Selected (n=50)	Attended (n = 48)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	39	38
Hispanic	6	5
Black	5	5
Asian	3	3
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1
Middle Eastern or North African	1	1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	1
<b>Place of Residence</b>		
Rural	17	15
Suburban	21	20
City	12	13
<b>Education Level</b>		
High School or GED	7	3
Some College	9	6
Associate's or Technical Degree	12	11
Bachelor's Degree	15	17
Postgraduate Degree	7	11
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	27	23
Male	23	25

Category	Selected (n=50)	Attended (n = 48)
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	5	2
25-34	9	10
35-44	8	9
45-54	7	9
55-59	4	5
60-64	4	2
65-74	8	8
75 and over	5	3



- In an attempt to remove barriers to participation, participants were paid a stipend of \$250, and transportation, childcare, and language interpretation services were provided upon request. Participants were assigned to one of ten tables; trained facilitators guided the deliberations and dedicated notetakers captured the conversations at each table. Eight experts on various aspects of housing policy not only helped compile the briefing document participants received two weeks in advance of the forum but were present at the forum to answer any questions participants may have had.

# Background & Education

***An important aspect of the forum was participant education for informed deliberation.*** In advance of the forum, participants received briefing documents that explained not just what a deliberative forum is, but which provided background on Lancaster County's housing challenges.

## Some of the topics covered in the briefing documents included:

- Demographic data on Lancaster County's population growth, incomes, and rates of homeownership
- Data on Lancaster County's housing stock, including vacancy rates and household composition
- Definitions of and examples of affordable housing models, and data on the # of households locally who are housing cost-burdened
- Information on housing density, and places2040 (Lancaster County's comprehensive plan)
- Smart Growth principles
- The process for building new housing
- Background information on zoning and housing regulations
- Current government funding and subsidies related to housing
- The impact of different housing types on land use, traffic, schools, and more
- How housing impacts issues like workforce development, farmland preservation, transportation, equity and historic preservation
- & more!



**You can access these educational materials at [HourglassLancaster.org/housing](https://HourglassLancaster.org/housing).**

In addition to the briefing documents, subject matter experts participated in plenary sessions throughout the deliberative forum.

## Experts included:

- **Michaela Allwine**, *Director of Housing and Community Development, Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities*
- **Mike Berk**, *Executive Vice President, Lancaster County Association of Realtors*
- **Mary Frey**, *Principal Planner, Lancaster County Planning*
- **Claude Hicks**, *Senior Vice President of Real Estate Development at HDC MidAtlantic*
- **Ben Leshner**, *President & Founder of Parcel B Development Company*
- **Jeb Musser**, *Vice President of Land Protection at Lancaster Farmland Trust and member of Lancaster County Planning Commission*
- **Anna Ramos**, *Executive Director, Lancaster County Workforce Development Board*
- **Douglas Smith**, *Bureau Chief of Community Planning & Design at City of Lancaster*



# The State of County Housing

## Session 1

Four hour-long deliberative sessions were held during the day. The first three sessions were preceded by plenary sessions at which experts introduced topics to be covered during the ensuing deliberation. The final deliberative session occurred before a final plenary during which the tables reported their recommendations.

In the first small group deliberation, participants were asked about the state of county housing. How do they feel about continued growth in the county? To what extent is housing a major concern or priority in our community? What are the county's greatest needs when it comes to housing? What are the participants' greatest priorities and what are their greatest concerns?

The most commonly raised issue with housing in Lancaster County – by a considerable margin – was the lack of affordable housing. Though the term “affordable housing” doesn’t appear in any of the questions in this session, and appears as only one item on a list of potential priorities on a handout used to answer the fourth question of the session, affordability came up immediately in the discussions of the state of housing in Lancaster. The concern about affordability arose not just in calls for more affordable housing but in anxiety about displacement (i.e., people being forced out of their homes or even out of the county).

Though participants expressed the sense that growth in the county was both good and bad, the discussions identified far more negative aspects of growth than positive ones. Some participants recognized the value of having an influx of new ideas and new people, but many were concerned with increasing traffic and with the possibility that the identity of Lancaster County could change. A few participants pointed to big cities, like Philadelphia or Los Angeles, as places “we don’t want to be like.” Regardless of one’s view of growth, participants noted the need for planned, or managed, growth. Interestingly, participants raised the issue of transportation without any prompting. The connection between housing and transportation to get to work, school, stores, and services was very clear to participants. Calls for better transportation options were made often.

Participants also considered priorities and concerns with respect to increasing the housing supply in Lancaster County, and were given a handout with examples of potential priorities and concerns. Affordability was mentioned more than any other priority at this stage of the forum, with no other priority a close second. Nevertheless, participants mentioned the protections of community character and the preservation of farmland (which were related in the minds of some participants) as other priorities. Interestingly, the leading concern voiced by participants was the displacement of people from their homes, and even from the county, because of the cost of housing. The impact of more housing on traffic, schools, and infrastructure was also commonly mentioned.



# Increasing Housing Supply

## Session 2

In the second deliberative session of the day, participants grappled with ways to increase the housing supply in Lancaster County. They were asked about the benefits and drawbacks of having decisions about new housing projects made at the municipal level and whether regional cooperation in solving our housing challenges might have advantages. They were also asked about regulations related to housing, the density goals from Places2040 (the county's comprehensive plan), ways to address opposition that is sometimes mounted against new development in communities, and how important it is for housing to be located near major activity centers (e.g., jobs, schools, health care, shopping, entertainment).

A number of participants recognized that regional housing goals and countywide housing plans would be beneficial but they also thought that differences between communities meant that localities had to have ultimate decision-making authority. Though a few participants expressed a sense of being torn between wanting more regional cooperation and allowing local decision-makers to make decisions for their communities, more participants expressed a preference for the latter than the former.

Participants recognized that housing regulations are beneficial to communities but many thought current regulations were excessive. They called for streamlining and simplifying approval processes and generally supported more flexibility with respect to housing regulations. With respect to strategies to reach the density goals of Places2040, participants clearly favored infill development and adaptive reuse. They also were attracted to the development of more mixed-use multifamily buildings in our Urban Growth Areas, though there was concern about the size of such buildings.

To address the opposition to new housing developments that often arises in communities, participants thought communities needed more information about such projects and seemed to believe that communities could be educated on the need for more housing. Communication, community engagement, and transparency were watchwords in this discussion.

Finally, participants felt strongly about the importance of putting more housing near activity centers in communities. They liked the idea of transit-oriented development and many of them called for more (and/or better) transportation options. The ability to bike safely from home to various destinations came up surprisingly often.



# Affordable Housing

## Session 3

In the third deliberative session, participants considered affordable housing. They were asked how urgent the need for affordable housing is in Lancaster County; why they thought some people are concerned about having affordable housing in their neighborhoods; what the top considerations should be when it comes to increasing affordable housing in the county; and what funding and development options for affordable housing were most and least appealing.

There was widespread agreement that the need for affordable housing in the county was urgent. A number of participants described the situation as not just urgent but very or extremely urgent, and a few used phrases like “beyond urgent,” a “fire alarm,” and a “crisis.” One concern that was repeated several times was the potential for more people to become homeless if housing wasn’t made more affordable. Participants thought that the reason some people might be anxious about affordable housing in their neighborhoods was because there is a stigma attached to the use of affordable housing and there are stereotypes of the kinds of people who need such housing. Others suggested that some community members may worry about the impact on public safety of affordable housing developments. Several participants identified a need to educate the public and some suggested that misconceptions about affordable housing and those who utilize it could be corrected.

In terms of the top considerations when it comes to increasing the supply of affordable housing, participants most commonly mentioned transportation needs. Several called for locating affordable housing near vital services and employment opportunities. A few participants argued for making affordable housing available throughout the community and not simply isolating it in one area.

Participants were given a handout that listed examples of funding and development options to support affordable housing. With respect to funding options, the two most commonly mentioned mechanisms were government subsidies (to assist with rent or paid directly to low-income families and/or to support the private development of affordable housing) and tax incentives for developers who build affordable housing. Such incentives might include tax credits, exemptions, or deferrals on property taxes, income taxes, or other applicable taxes. Though government subsidies were favored by a number of participants, many others opposed such subsidies. One funding option that produced widespread opposition, and only very limited support, was the use of fees (e.g., as a portion of real estate sales). Some thought philanthropic support for affordable housing was promising but others thought it wouldn’t be a reliable source of funding.

“Developer incentives” (e.g., faster approval of building permits for affordable housing, parking requirement reductions, or density bonuses, etc.) garnered the most support from among the development options. There was also quite a bit of interest in inclusionary zoning, though a few participants voiced some uncertainty about how this mechanism would work. Rent control was by far the most controversial option with many participants supporting it and many others opposing it. One participant found it to be “less appealing [as an option] but better than nothing.”



# Priorities, Strategies, and Benchmarks

## Session 4

In the final session of the day, each of the ten tables was asked to generate their top three to five housing priorities for Lancaster County, three to five strategies or policies for addressing housing challenges, and three benchmarks for tracking progress by 2040. Often there was consensus at a table around priorities, strategies, and benchmarks but not always (and consensus was not required).

All ten tables included affordability among their top priorities and all but one mentioned it first. In deliberating about their priorities, one participant suggested that a new term for affordable housing should be created and suggested calling it “attainable housing.” Eight tables included “safe, accessible, and fair” housing among their top priorities and wanted to see housing built near jobs, schools, etc. As one participant put it during deliberations, we should have a “village concept” in mind as we develop new housing. Other top priorities (named by five tables each) were environmental protection and the preservation of community character. Preserving farmland was mentioned by four tables, either independently or as part of the preservation of community character. As one participant put it, we shouldn’t build “a high-rise in the middle of a cornfield.” Other priorities (mentioned by one or two tables) included access to transportation, historic preservation, maintaining or increasing home values, and offering a variety of affordable housing options.



The strategies and policies recommended as ways to address the housing challenges faced by Lancaster County were varied and some tables expressed a difficulty in ranking the options. The two most commonly identified strategies (mentioned by seven and five tables, respectively) were infill development/redevelopment/adaptive reuse and mixed-use multifamily buildings in our Urban Growth Areas. Increased government subsidies and educating communities to reduce the stigma of affordable housing were mentioned by four tables each. (As part of the process of educating the public, one table suggested rebranding “affordable housing.”) Three tables recommended tax incentives for developers and another three called for increasing density or upzoning. A number of other policies were mentioned by two tables, including offering developer incentives (i.e., non-monetary incentives such as faster approvals), increasing community engagement in the development process, encouraging inclusionary zoning, streamlining/modernizing zoning, utilizing transit-oriented development, and expanding public transportation. Two tables even suggested that municipal supervisors participate in a deliberative forum on housing! Despite its appeal to some participants during the third deliberative session, only one table recommended rent control. One table suggested the development of “cooperative housing,” a model not mentioned in the briefing documents or during expert presentations.

## Session 4 Continued...

Participants were asked to recommend benchmarks for measuring success by 2040, and they offered a wide range of possibilities. Four tables called for an increase in vacancy rates, either in general or to a rate of anywhere from seven to ten percent. Six tables mentioned reducing the number of cost-burdened renters either in general, by half, or to 20 percent of the population. One table included cost-burdened homeowners in their benchmark (and called for the number to be reduced to 12 percent of homeowners) and another table recommended helping the most cost-burdened people before others. At least three tables wanted to track increasing density (and wanted average density to increase to either 6.5 or 7.5 dwelling units per acre in our Urban Growth Areas). Four tables recommended an increase in affordable units either in general or by several specific amounts (including 500 more units per year, a 20 percent increase, and building 75 percent of the 21,000 units needed). Other recommended benchmarks, identified by a single table each, included providing affordable housing options in 100 percent of the municipalities in the county; decreasing homelessness and the number of evictions and foreclosures; reducing commuting times and distances; a decline in the number of fair housing/ADA complaints; an increase in multifamily units (by a very specific 17.6 percent annually!); creating an “inventory” of available properties for redevelopment/reuse; a better alignment of available housing types with housing needs (e.g., more 1-2 bedroom rental units); redeveloping some percentage of properties (suggestions were ten and 50 percent) into new housing units; increasing the number of sidewalks and bike lanes; and a goal of 30-40 percent of new housing taking the form of cooperative housing. There were multiple suggestions that data collection (e.g., of crime statistics, property values, and neighborhood demographics) be enhanced and one table recommended an annual, county-wide housing satisfaction survey.

***Find a full list of the priorities, strategies, and benchmarks reported by each group (along with other documents from the forum such as the briefing documents and handouts for participants) at [HourglassLancaster.org/housing](https://HourglassLancaster.org/housing).***

## Conclusions

The sentiment most commonly expressed throughout the forum was the need for more affordable housing in Lancaster County. Interestingly, public transportation received a great deal of attention even though the issue was not a focus by the forum organizers. Tax incentives to encourage the development of affordable housing was a prominent policy consideration while the preservation of community character and access to safe housing were among the top goals.

While there was widespread agreement on the issues identified in the previous paragraph, there were also some issues over which there was considerable disagreement. Rent control, for instance, had a number of proponents and opponents, as did government subsidies to address affordable housing.

## Pre- and Post-Forum Survey

Participants were asked to complete a survey before the forum (just prior to receiving the briefing document in the mail) and the same survey immediately after the forum. Though generating movement in the opinions of participants is not the main point of a deliberative mini-public, deliberation very often generates such movement. The purpose of the pre- and post-forum surveys was simply to capture any changes in views that may have occurred as a result of deliberating at the forum.

Two sets of questions were asked of participants. The first attempted to gauge the importance of housing as an issue and measure the attitudes of participants on various policy aspects of housing. The second attempted to understand levels of trust among participants as well as how participants view political disagreement in Lancaster County and the need to engage in dialogue with those with whom we disagree.

In terms of the first set of questions, the survey shows considerable movement from the pre-forum version to the post-forum version on nearly all questions (see Table 2). In general, the results show that after the forum, participants viewed housing as a more important issue and as more of a major problem (as opposed to minor problem) than before the forum, and they were more willing to have more houses, condos, and apartments built in their area, including more affordable houses, condos, and apartments. After the forum, more participants named “providing enough affordable housing” as their top goal with respect to housing supply than had done so before the forum and more included “providing enough housing at all price points” in their top three goals. Though attitudes changed on most questions, they did not change with respect to where housing decisions should be made. About half the participants preferred the county level both before and after the forum and half preferred the township or borough level.

Following the forum, more participants believed that people in Lancaster County are alike in more ways than they differ and slightly more believed that most people can be trusted (though the level of trust was quite high to begin with). Slightly fewer thought there was a “great deal” of polarization after the forum than before and slightly more thought there was “not much” polarization. Though the number of participants who were “very interested” in hearing perspectives that are different from their own was initially quite high, the number was even higher after the forum. The same is true with respect to those who think it is “very important” to have discussions with people we disagree with on important issues.





Question	Pre-Forum	Post-Forum
<i>Top issues facing Lancaster County today (% first choice)</i>		
Housing	42.5%	60.0%
Inflation	20.9%	22.5%
Civil Rights	10.0%	10.0%
Jobs & the Economy	7.5%	2.5%
Health Care	7.5%	0%
Crime	7.5%	0%
Environment	2.5%	0%
Taxes & Government Spending	0%	5.0%
<i>Top issues facing Lancaster County today (% in top three)</i>		
Housing	83.3%	89.7%
Inflation	51.4%	51.7%
Civil Rights	13.6%	18.7%
Jobs & the Economy	28.5%	25.1%
Health Care	35.9%	34.8%
Crime	14.3%	9.0%
Environment	16.0%	17.8%
Taxes & Government Spending	21.0%	18.4%
<i>Agree or disagree that Lancaster County needs more housing?</i>		
Strongly Agree	42.9%	90.5%
Somewhat Agree	47.6%	7.1%
Somewhat Disagree	9.5%	2.4%
<i>Favor or oppose building more houses, condos, or apartment buildings in your area?</i>		
Strongly Favor	31.0%	59.5%
Somewhat Favor	42.9%	35.7%
Somewhat Oppose	26.2%	4.8%
<i>Would you prefer to live in a community where the houses are...</i>		
Larger and farther apart, but schools, stores, and restaurants are several miles away	50.0%	33.3%
Small and closer to each other, but schools, stores, and restaurants are within walking distance	50.0%	64.3%
<i>Prefer Lancaster County make housing decisions at...</i>		
County level	50.0%	52.4%
Township or borough level	47.6%	47.6%
<i>Support flexible residential zoning in more populated areas that would allow increased housing options (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, above-garage apartments) or restricting zoning in those areas to single-family houses...</i>		
Flexible zoning for increased housing options	92.9%	95.2%
Restricting zoning to single-family houses	7.1%	4.8%
<i>How much is affordable housing a problem for Lancaster County?</i>		
Major Problem	76.2%	92.9%
Minor Problem	21.4%	7.1%
Not a Problem	2.4%	0%
<i>Favor or oppose building more affordable houses, condos, or apartments in your area?</i>		
Strongly Favor	47.6%	66.7%
Somewhat Favor	40.5%	31.0%
Somewhat Oppose	9.5%	2.4%
Strongly Oppose	2.4%	0%
<i>Realistically, how much can be done to solve the problem of affordable housing?</i>		
A Great Deal	21.4%	50.0%
A Fair Amount	71.4%	31.0%
Not Much	7.1%	14.3%

Question	Pre-Forum	Post-Forum
<b>How important is it for elected officials in Lancaster County to address problems related to people's ability to buy or rent housing that meets their needs?</b>		
Very Important	71.4%	88.1%
Somewhat Important	26.2%	9.5%
<b>Top three goals when it comes to increasing housing supply (% first choice)</b>		
Providing enough affordable housing	34.9%	46.5%
Providing enough housing at all price points	16.3%	20.9%
Ensuring safe, accessible and fair housing for all	14.0%	16.3%
Preserving community character	9.3%	9.3%
Preserving farmlands/natural lands	7.0%	2.3%
Preserving historic buildings	4.7%	0%
Increasing/maintaining home values for existing homeowners	4.7%	0%
Limiting the growth of Lancaster County	2.3%	2.3%
Providing housing close to jobs, schools, stores	2.3%	2.3%
<b>Top three goals when it comes to increasing housing supply (% in top three)</b>		
Providing enough affordable housing	62.9%	63.7%
Providing enough housing at all price points	46.8%	63.1%
Ensuring safe, accessible and fair housing for all	62.6%	76.5%
Preserving community character	32.5%	31.8%
Preserving farmlands/natural lands	40.3%	28.0%
Preserving historic buildings	7.3%	0%
Increasing/maintaining home values for existing homeowners	12.6%	6.5%
Limiting the growth of Lancaster County	7.4%	5.4%
Providing housing close to jobs, schools, stores	20.5%	24.8%
<b>Regardless of where they live, do you think the people of Lancaster County are alike in more ways than they differ or do they differ in more ways than they're alike?</b>		
Are alike in more way than they differ	61.9%	83.3%
Differ in more ways than they're alike	35.7%	16.7%
<b>Generally speaking, would you say that most people in Lancaster County can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people here?</b>		
Most people can be trusted	73.8%	83.3%
You can't be too careful	23.8%	16.7%
<b>There's a lot of talk of political disagreements and polarization today. How much polarization do you think there in Lancaster County at the moment?</b>		
A Great Deal	31.0%	23.8%
A Fair Amount	64.3%	61.9%
Not Much	0%	11.9%
None at All	2.4%	2.4%
<b>When it comes to the major issues of the day, how interested are you in hearing perspectives that are different from your own?</b>		
Very Interested	61.9%	76.2%
Somewhat Interested	33.3%	23.8%
Not Very Interested	2.4%	0%
<b>How important is it to have discussions with people we disagree with on important issues?</b>		
Very Important	78.6%	85.7%
Somewhat Important	16.7%	14.3%
<b>How useful is it to have discussions with people we disagree with on important issues?</b>		
Very Useful	71.4%	73.8%
Somewhat Useful	23.8%	26.2%
Not Very Useful	2.4%	0%



**Thank you to the forum participants, experts, facilitators, notetakers, funders and organizers for your support of this initiative.**

For more materials related to the forum, including the briefing documents, facilitators guides, handouts, and full recommendations produced by each small group, visit [HourglassLancaster.org/housing](https://HourglassLancaster.org/housing).



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