

# **Kodiak Economic Development And Housing Survey**

**January, 2013**



Dedicated to Kodiak's Economic Future



## Summary of the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce Economic Development and Housing Survey

In January 2013, the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce launched an online opinion survey to the community of Kodiak. Over 300 individual email invitations were sent out and 39 community members participated in the survey. A survey link was also posted on Facebook – Friends of Kodiak and Kodiak LEAD, we received 148 individual responses through the Facebook link. With 187 total participants in the survey we had an estimated 90% confidence level with an error rate of  $\pm 6\%$ . The survey results indicated a good cross-section of the Kodiak population. Average longevity in Kodiak was 20.33 years and respondents with 5 or less years in Kodiak amounted to almost 19%, 26+ years was 36% of the participants. 65% of survey responses came from Kodiak home owners, which is close to the U.S. Census Bureau's statistic of 54% owner-occupied housing units in Kodiak Island Borough. Full-time employees and self-employed respondents accounted for 67% and 21% respectively. Industries represented were from Private Business – 35%, Government – 20%, Non-profit – 11% and a good variety of other industries including fishing, education, health care and native organizations. The majority of respondents to the survey owned or managed a business in Kodiak. From the written answers, one could see that the survey brought out individuals from every corner of our island.

Reading through the results, written responses and other comments, you see that the people of Kodiak really enjoy this island. They love the scenery and natural beauty of our environment. *Outdoor activities* and *small town feel* rank high for most respondents. However, respondents were quick to point out that it is expensive to live here, citing cost of fuel, housing, food and transportation as their highest challenges. Housing availability and high cost of living ranked as their top two things they wanted to change about Kodiak. Respondents to the survey said they wanted to preserve Kodiak's small town feel, natural beauty, sense of community, and outdoor recreation. When asked where people purchase most of their goods or services, the survey indicates that the majority purchase most items or services on the island except clothes, automobiles and electronics. Respondents indicated that they would like to keep more big box and chain stores out of Kodiak, but were open to more business options and competition. Kodiak reflects having a foot in the past while looking forward to the future by citing social media as their top pick in best ways to address community concerns, followed closely by newspaper, radio and town hall meetings.

When addressing housing concerns around Kodiak, the majority of people taking the survey indicated that they agree or somewhat agree that the Borough should open more land, we need more incentives for developers, more senior housing, building revitalization, more Coast Guard housing, more low cost housing, more starter homes and multi-family housing units. The majority believe that the housing shortage is not temporary and that we should develop more raw land. Written responses indicate that high costs associated with building, along with the availability of land, are the leading challenges for housing development in Kodiak. When asked if we should create a planned housing development to address the greatest housing need in our community, 66% agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement. Survey indicated that 45% of respondents feel that any available areas should be allowed for housing development, compared to no development or did not answer at 6%. When asked what we should build, respondents listed single family starter homes – 37%, followed by Multi-family/Condos – 22% and Zero-lot/Town-house units – 18% as their top three.

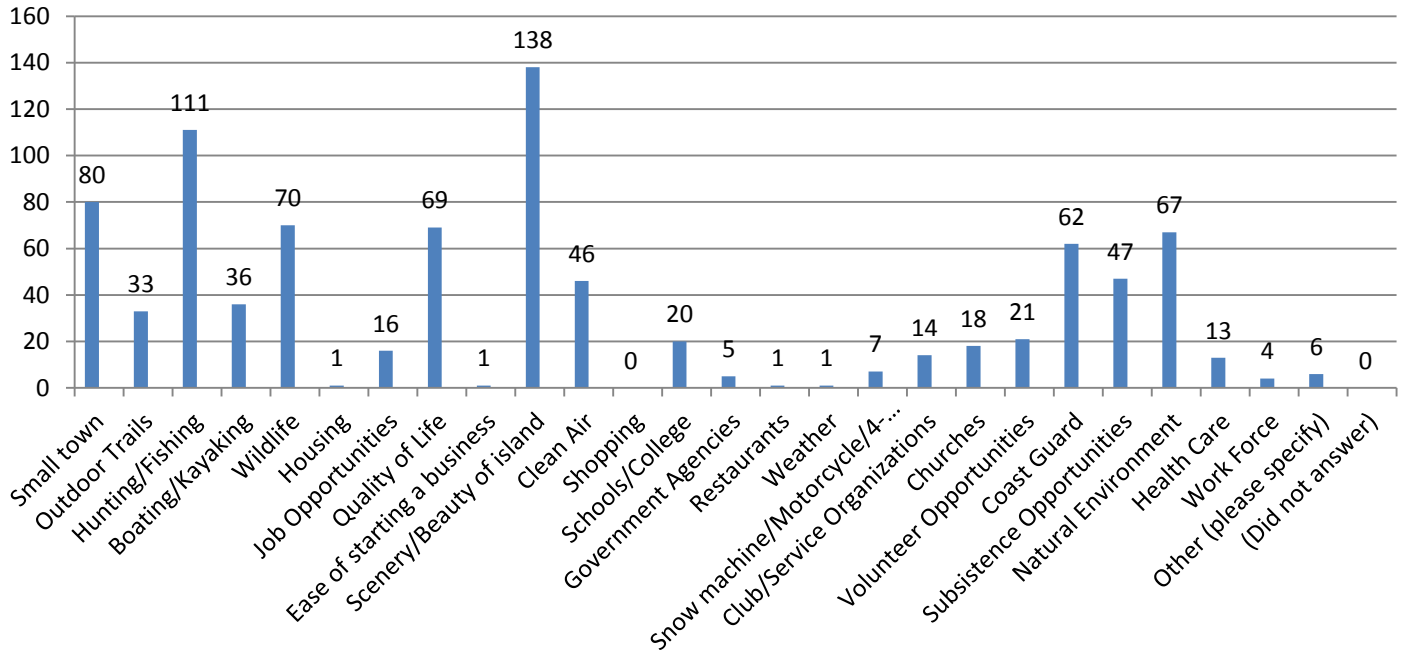
Compiling this survey has provided a sense that the people of Kodiak would like some relief to the housing shortage and the high cost of living on the island. Kodiak would love to have more starter homes, apartments and townhouses for lower income families, but not at the expense of clear-cutting large parcels of raw land. The survey responses indicate that, responsible development of housing targeted towards the entry level work force would satisfy some of the current demand in the market. Further indications support spending more money locally, supporting small local businesses, but some of those options are not available on the island. I did not get the impression that the community was faulting any particular group or body of government, but wanted steady and responsible growth and development in our community to meet our needs. I got the sense that revitalizing residential areas and commercial properties along with cleaning up our community is a priority. Reinvesting some of what we have into the future generation, keeping them here on this great island we know as Kodiak.

Joe Bailor – Economic Development Specialist

Kodiak Chamber of Commerce



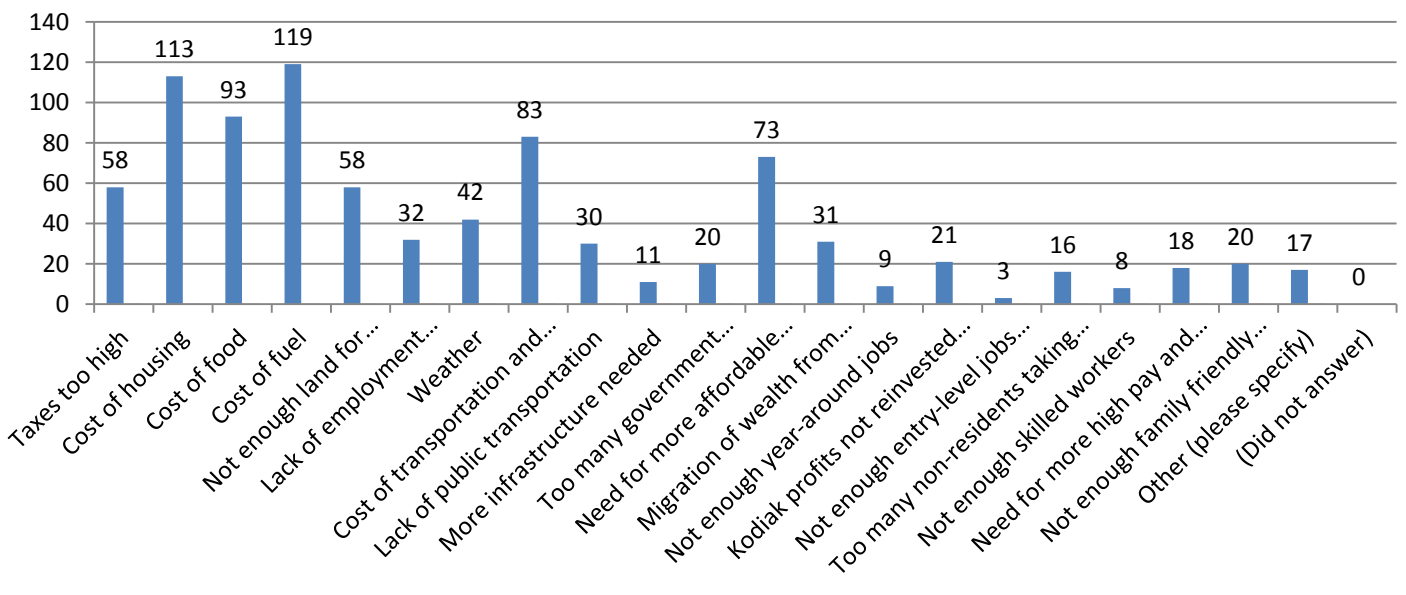
## Q1. What are Kodiak's Strengths? (number of responses)



### Q1. What are Kodiak's Strengths?

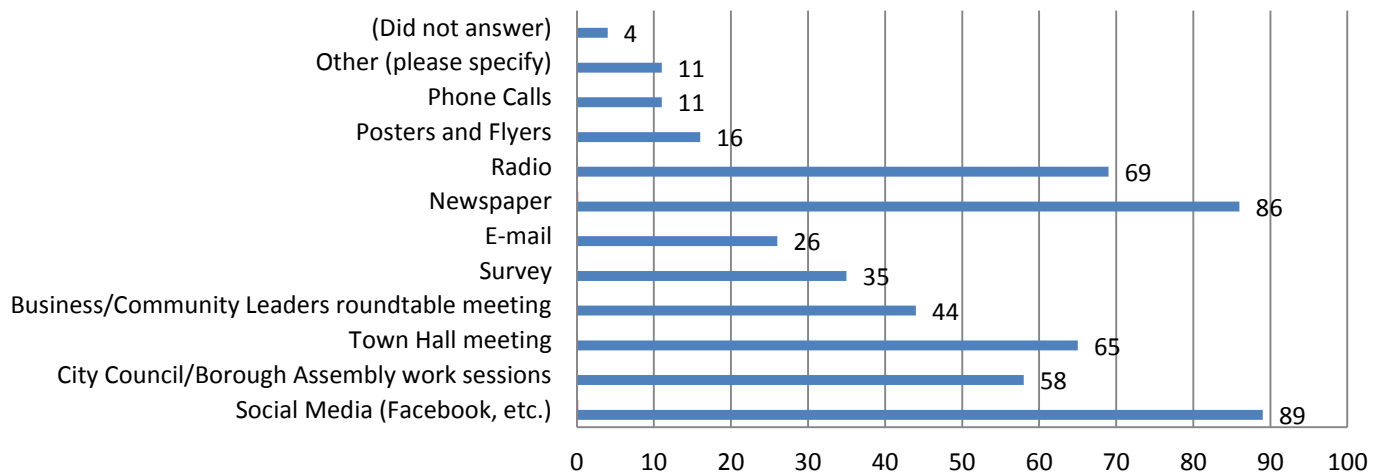
Response	Response Text
1	People support each other, especially during hard times
2	With such a strong focus on fishing and hunting, we are missing the great opportunity for the people who are very interested in whale watching, bear viewing and sightseeing
3	Its people
4	Diversity of economic base (medical, education, unique small businesses, rocket launch, USCG, gov't agencies & research, and fisheries)
5	Commercial Trawl Fleet

## Q2. What are Kodiak's Challenges? (number of responses)



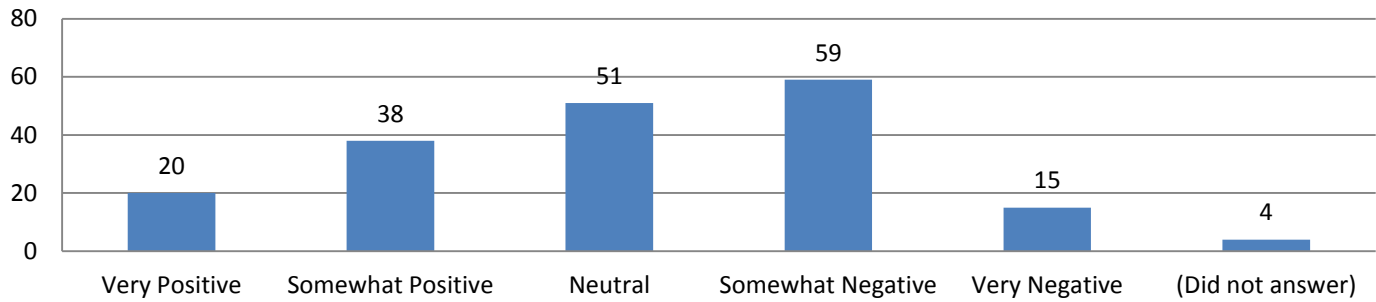
Q2. What are Kodiak's Challenges?	
Response	Response Text
1	People not willing to pay taxes for anything ever.
2	city and borough government are seperate
3	City sales tax cap structure is unfair to the working class; cost of living in general is too high
4	We are Lucky Kodiak's economy. For the size of the town there are an incredible number of govt. jobs here.
5	Cost of living in general - food, utilities, taxes
6	Between the Borough and City too much ballon waste in government
7	Community is largely misinformed, especially re: local economy
8	Too many retired Coast Gaurd
9	No one seems to care about the junk that is piled all over the island, junk cars, dirty downtown, no community pride.
10	Fishing groups working together instead of against one another
11	Government wage and benefit costs are too high. More infrastructure. Cost of transportation. Cost of Fuel and Food. Not enough year round jobs.
12	Run down appearance of business areas. Not appealing to customers/clients. Local business competition with chain retailers.
13	Foreignors who cant drive ruin this town, and Leisnoi
14	Lack of entertainment options for adults other than bar scene
15	All the above come with choices to live in Alaska and rural Alaska. Who developed this list?
16	city taxes - 15 million dollar library? Who uses the library now?
17	Cost to fly off the island.

### Q3. What are the best ways to address community concerns? (Number of Responses)

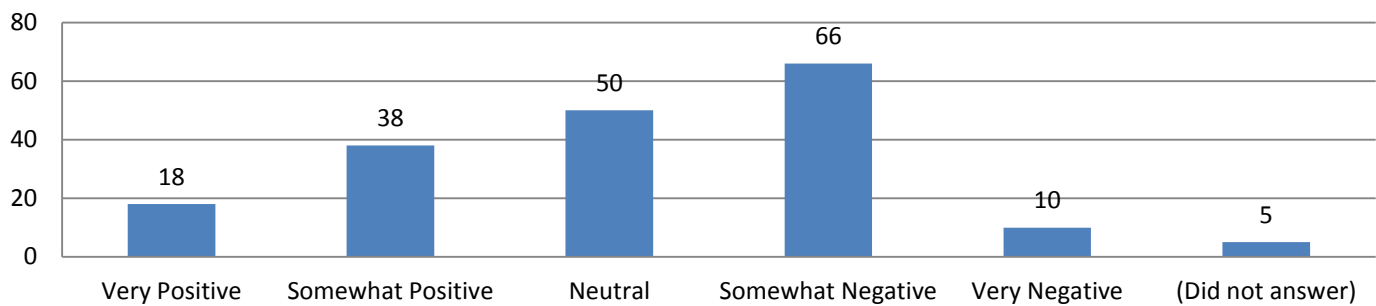


Q3. What are the best ways to address community concerns?	
Response	Response Text
1	Most community concerns generate from a lack of understanding. The city and borough governments, as well as the chamber, need to engage public relations (e.g. press releases) to get the word out and explain issues, regs, and so on. This is extremely vital; critical to thwarting misunderstandings in a community..
2	use of all meida to get information out to public
3	council/assembly MEETINGS. Not allowed to comment at work sessions.
4	Conversations with cultural or civic organizations
5	Newspaper and radio are both good as well, but city council/borough assembly work sessions are absolutely NOT a good way because there is so much hostility among these governing bodies when they actually have to listen to citizens. They treat people badly and don't listen.
6	Local Government transparency! Voting.
8	Crime
9	Snail mail
10	It depends on the issue. We already have access to the items listed above when appropriate.
11	None leaders of the island do as they please and not the voice of the city.

### Q4. How do you feel about Residential Growth and Development around Kodiak? (Number of Responses)



### Q5. How do you feel about Commercial Growth and Development around Kodiak? (Number of Responses)



### Question #6 – What would you like to preserve in Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme

Number of Mentions

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Small Town Feel   | 42 |
| 2. Natural Beauty and Resources, Wildlife                            | 35 |
| 3. Sense of Community, People, Traditions and Uniqueness             | 29 |
| 4. Outdoor Recreation  | 16 |
| 5. Trees and Green Spaces  | 10 |
| 6. Small Businesses  | 8  |
| 7. Safety and Low Crime Rate   | 8  |
| 8. Quality of Life and Lifestyle                                     | 7  |
| 9. The Communities Infrastructure                                    | 7  |
| 10. Smaller Government and Lower Taxes                               | 7  |
| 11. Affordable Living/Housing, More Apartments, Land for Development | 7  |
| 12. Fishing Industry   | 6  |
| 13. Public Access to Beaches and Trails                              | 5  |
| 14. Clean Environment  | 5  |
| 15. Inclusive and Ethnic Diversity                                   | 4  |

## Question # 7 – What would you like to change in Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. Housing Too Expensive, More Affordable Housing, Open More land for Development	48
2. Cost of Living Too High: Fuel, Groceries, Utilities, Airfare, etc.	42
3. Lower Crime & Drug Abuse, Increase Prosecution & Enforcement	27
4. Clean up Community: Homes, Businesses, Commercial Gear, Enforce Codes	18
5. Revitalize Downtown, Increase Tourism Promotion & Shop Local Promotion	18
6. Consolidate Local Governments, Limit Spending & Infrastructure Growth	17
7. More Job & Business Opportunities, Available Skilled Employees	13
8. Taxes Should Not be Raised, Taxes Too High	12
9. More Family Events & Activities, Improved Youth Activity Programs	10
10. Issues Regarding: Roll Carts, Transfer Stations, Illegal Dumping, Recycling	7
11. Access to Beaches, Trails and Areas on or Through Private Land	5
12. Improve and Greater Support for Education & Career/Technical Training	4

## Question # 8 – What additional Businesses, Services, Organizations or Infrastructure is needed in Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. More Shopping Options: Clothing, Vet, Building Supplies, Groceries, Boat Repair Support Businesses	51
2. More Youth and Adult Activity programs, Community Recreation Center, Boys & Girls Club	29
3. Revitalize Downtown, Tourism Support, Business Development, Parking	26
4. More Restaurants: Seafood, Fast Food, Ice Cream, Wine Bar	16
5. Affordable Housing, Land for Development, Expanded Utilities, RV Park	13
6. Public Transportation	10
7. Homeless Day Shelter, Detox/Treatment Center, Programs for Troubled Kids, Transitional Housing, New Mental Health Center & Housing	7
8. Less: Government, Infrastructure and Taxes	6
9. Better Roads, More Bike Paths	5
10. Increased Daycare Facilities	3
11. Increased Law Enforcement	3
12. Shipyard Building for Sheltered Boat Repairs	3

## Q9. Please tell us where you Purchase most of your Goods or Recieve the following Services

	On-Island		Off-Island		Internet		No-Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Groceries	181	96.79%	1	0.53%	3	1.60%	2	1.07%
Clothes	22	11.76%	72	38.50%	90	48.13%	3	1.60%
General Houshold supplies	166	88.77%	11	5.88%	8	4.28%	2	1.07%
Banking Services	163	87.17%	9	4.81%	14	7.49%	1	0.53%
Pet Supplies	107	57.22%	12	6.42%	26	13.90%	42	22.46%
Legal Services	89	47.59%	49	26.20%	11	5.88%	38	20.32%
Insurance	116	62.03%	43	22.99%	25	13.37%	3	1.60%
Medical	149	79.68%	32	17.11%	0	0.00%	6	3.21%
Dental	153	81.82%	27	14.44%	0	0.00%	7	3.74%
Car/Truck Purchase	42	22.46%	129	68.98%	7	3.74%	9	4.81%
Ofiice/School Supplies	116	62.03%	22	11.76%	37	19.79%	12	6.42%
Salon/Beauty service or supplies	136	72.73%	18	9.63%	17	9.09%	16	8.56%
Tools and Hardware	120	64.17%	29	15.51%	32	17.11%	6	3.21%
Appliances	83	44.39%	70	37.43%	25	13.37%	9	4.81%
Electronics	37	19.79%	44	23.53%	98	52.41%	8	4.28%



## Question # 10 – Are there Businesses or Industries you would like to keep out of Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. Nothing – Competition is Good	25
2. Big or Expanded Box Stores, Chain Stores and Restaurants	20
3. Adult Themed Businesses, More Bars, Casinos, State Lotteries, Illegal Drugs	17
4. Heavy Industry, Oil, Refinery, Logging, Mining, Haz-Mat Storage, Soil Remediation, Nuclear Plant	16
5. Any Business that would Threaten: Environment, Quality of Life, Tourism	5
6. Government, Politicians, Expansion of City and Borough Government	4
7. No Additional Cruise Ships, Shops owned by Cruise Lines, Tourists	4
8. Native Owned Businesses	3

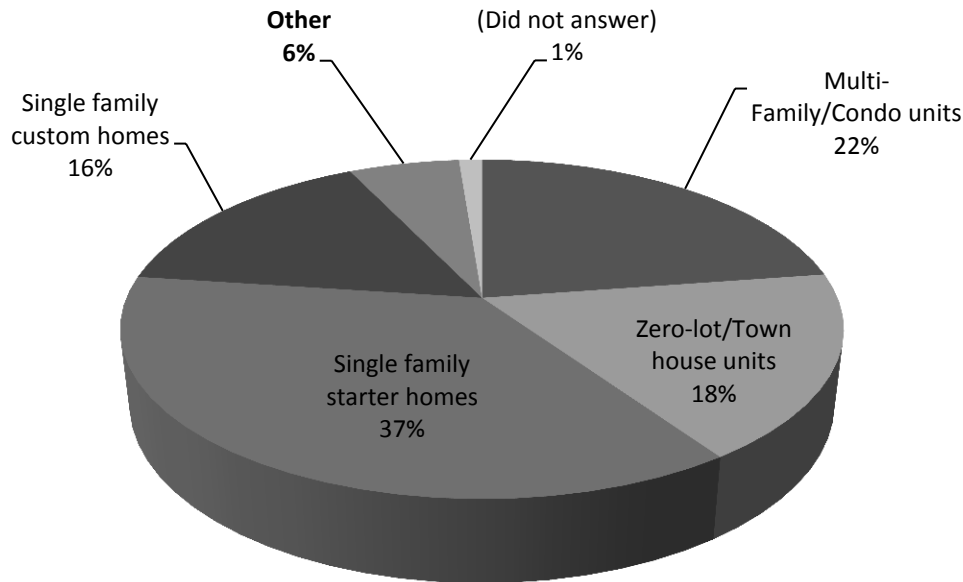
## Q11. Tell us how you feel about the following Housing Statements about Kodiak

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	No Answer
The Borough should open more land	58.8	18.9	13.5	6.1	2.0	1.4
We need more incentives to private housing developers	31.8	18.9	24.3	10.1	12.2	2.7
We need more Senior housing	36.5	21.0	30.4	6.1	4.7	2.0
There are areas in the community that need housing revitalization	56.3	23.2	12.1	2.6	2.1	3.7
Coast Guard needs more housing	39.6	11.8	28.9	8.6	7.5	4.3
We need more low cost housing	45.5	20.3	17.1	7.0	7.5	2.7
We should revitalize the housing we have	41.2	31.1	16.2	6.1	2.0	4.1
The housing shortage is only temporary	3.7	11.2	20.2	19.2	40.4	5.3
Housing costs are too high	64.6	16.9	9.5	2.7	2.1	4.2
We need more \$200-250K starter homes	49.7	26.2	11.8	3.2	4.3	4.8
We need more multi-family housing units	31.0	19.8	27.3	9.1	8.0	4.8
We should not develop any more raw land	7.5	8.6	21.4	17.1	41.7	3.7

## Question # 12 –What are the Challenges for Housing Development in Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. High Cost of Land, Supplies, Labor, Engineering, Shipping, Utilities	97
2. Availability of Buildable land, Utility availability to Land, Lot Development Challenges	53
3. Issues with Coast Guard Housing Allowance, USCG rebuild Nemetz Housing	19
4. Government Control of Land, High Assessments, Restrictive Codes & Inspections	15
5. Development Controlled, Public Input on Development, Green Spaces, Reduce Density	15
6. Need for Affordable Single Family Homes	10
7. Property Taxes too High, Taxes too High	9
8. Community Leaders, Builders and Businesses have a Monopoly on Land, No Incentives to Develop Land, No Concern for Working Class	9
9. No Answer	5
10. Availability of Loans, Funding for Revitalization, More Restrictive Lending	4

### Q13. If we had land available with utilities, what type of housing should we build?



Q13. If we had land available with utilities, what type of housing should we build? (Check all that apply)	
Response	Response Text
1	one level units to accomidate disabled and elderly
3	a new hotel/motel on near island
4	"We" should not build. Private enterprise would build if land was available.
5	What ever the LAND OWNER chooses.
6	Affordable apartments for folks who are not able to keep up or maintain a home .
7	There is no We. It's individual preference by landowners. The KIB/City should allow owner preference for building within reason however
8	I think it is up to the land owner. I do not want to see anymore government housing competing with private ownership
9	Carefully thought out planned unit developments integrating green space, trails and views.
10	Planned developments integrating paths, pocket parks, garden space, hoop houses
11	RETIREMENT APARTMENTS
12	I think that's a question for private enterprise.
13	boat houses
14	A little bit of everything would go a long way.
15	Senior Housing and APPROPRIATE housing for assisted living.
16	All
17	We have a need for ALL types of housing in Kodiak.
18	small farms and ranches
19	All are areas of need.
20	Maybe a combination of these types of housing opportunities would be beneficial to keep neighborhoods diverse.
21	The IF is too big and too far in the future to even respond to
22	Co-housing developments.
23	Would need to determine what's most needed by a professional or specialist,
24	Listen, with oil running out we need to develop in a sustainable manner. People will need yards and gardens. Cheap small homes with yards. Big homes are irresponsible and a passing fad. They cost a fortune to heat, but hold only one family. Our community needs an eye to the future.

<b>Q14. We should create a planned housing development to address the greatest housing need in our community?</b>		
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Agree	70	37.43%
Somewhat Agree	53	28.34%
Neutral	31	16.58%
Somewhat Disagree	17	9.09%
Disagree	12	6.42%
(Did not answer)	4	2.14%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	

<b>Q15. Where should more housing development be allowed?</b>		
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Monashka area	20	10.70%
Swampy acres/Buskin River area	13	6.95%
Bells Flat area	13	6.95%
Pillar Mountain- town side	20	10.70%
No development should be allowed	2	1.07%
Any available areas	85	45.45%
Other (please specify)	25	13.37%
(Did not answer)	9	4.81%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	

<b>Q15. Where should more housing development be allowed?</b>	
<b>Response</b>	<b>Response Text</b>
1	The housing in Aleutian homes needs some incentive to be updated, it is atrocious.
2	Govt should give Nemetz park to KIB. Already existing infrastructure. Both CG and Kodiak win.
3	All the land that has been transferred to Lesnoi is the best land available.
4	Best places for infrastructure to be put into the ground cheaply.
5	In-fill in town sites, if there are any. Do not allow development on mountainsides or other areas that would impact view shed. Careful consideration to existing landowners should be given. Folks live in certain areas for a specific quality of life and they should not have to suffer because there is a housing shortage.
6	Existing areas in town need to be developed first. We should not infringe on existing housing areas and make their quality of life go down for development.
7	Dog bay
8	Coast guard should expand it on their land
9	New development should not encroach on wildlife habitat nor should it alter the quality of life for families who chose to live outside of town because they don't want the congestion and noise of town.
10	All of the above where appropriate and salmon creek as well potentially. The key is to keep access to trails and open space even while developing.
11	what happened to the lots at near island?
12	Pillar Mountain-town side and Monashka area
13	We do not want to limit access to our beaches and rivers but I do believe there is land available on the road system that will not limit access.
14	Buy land out the road, chiniak, American river area.
15	In place of delapidated buildings about town.
16	Take out the Gnarly old apartment buildings make them more cost efficient Save space, or use open land stop cutting down our forests, Makes me want to leave.
17	Extend Murphy Way into Kana fields. 50 residential lots gained.
18	The first four choices sound good.....as does the last one.
19	I don't know.
20	Revitalize existing neighborhoods.
21	Only where utilities can be installed and site drainage guaranteed. Doubt low income people able to live a distance away from work & grocery stores if don't have transport.
22	Don't develop residential and industrial near each other. Have some quality of life standards.
23	Preferably in a place where we wouldn't be destroying a wooded area. Buskin or Bells Flats seems better than the Monashka for this
24	Destroy old, crummy houses and rebuild housing there.
25	Where there is land available and a developer willing to develop it

<b>Q16. Do you own or manage a business in Kodiak?</b>		
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	102	54.55%
No	83	44.39%
(Did not answer)	2	1.07%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	

### Question # 17 – What makes Kodiak a good Place to do Business?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. Friendly People, Customers and Service, Personal Relationships, Community well engaged with each other, People are accessible, Great Customers, Supportive Community	44
2. Great Community, Small Town Feel	19
3. Limited Competition, Captive Audience, Monopoly	15
4. Fishing Industry, Tourism, Coast Guard	13
5. Many Opportunities, Demand for Business offered	11
6. Kodiak Not a Good Place to Do Business, Challenge to be in Business	11
7. Natural Environment and Resources, Kodiak Location	7
8. Word of Mouth Advertising	5
9. Customer Loyalty, Buy Local	5

### Question # 18 –What are the Challenges of doing Business in Kodiak?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. High Costs: Shipping, Air Travel, Utilities, Internet, Solid Waste, Supplies and Cost of Goods	82
2. Limited Selection and Competition, Limited Market, Isolated Market, Weather	37
3. Motivation and Availability of Skilled Workers, Turnover, Customer Service	26
4. High Cost of Rent and Leased Space	22
5. Taxes, City Sales Tax	20
6. Competition with Internet and Off-Island Business, Ease of Internet purchase	15
7. Cost of Living, Lack of Land for Development, Housing Availability	9
8. Seasonal Business, Struggling through Slow Months, Keeping Prices Affordable when Expenses are so High, Higher Margins	9
9. Reduced Consumer Discretionary Funds	7
10. Downtown and Business Revitalization, Downtown and Business Parking, Cleaner City	7
11. Government Regulations and Codes	5

### Question # 19 –Additional Comments?

Answer groups by mentioned theme	Number of Mentions
1. No More Infrastructure, Remodel What we Have, Flat Funding for School District, Inflated Assessments for Increased Government Revenue, Lack of Confidence in Government, High Property Taxes, Seniors Should Not get Tax Exemption, No Sales Tax Increase, Government Paying too Much for Workers Health Insurance Benefits	17
2. Cost of Housing, Housing Shortage, Cost of Utilities and Solid Waste, Cost of Living too High, Wages and Benefits Too Low, Airfare Too High	17
3. Revitalize Downtown and Other Buildings, Improve Customer Service, Businesses Stop Complaining about Lack of Local Support, Clean up Litter Around Businesses, Work to Increase Tourism	7
4. Builders Held Accountable for Development, Develop with Plan for Sidewalks, Parks, Etc. Open Land for Development, Landlords Not Getting Rich, Near Island Shouldn't be a Native Business Park but Restaurants, Hotels, amusements, etc.	6
5. Small town, Natural Environment, Community Work Together for Change	4
6. City, Borough and Chamber must Focus on Economic Development, More Effort towards Economic Development, Chamber more Involved in Community	3
7. Coast Guard Housing Allowance Inflates Rent Prices, Coast Guard Should Provide Housing for Personnel	2

Q20. What is your employment status?		
Responses	Count	%
Full time	125	66.84%
Part time	8	4.28%
Self employed	40	21.39%
Unemployed	4	2.14%
Retired	4	2.14%
Student	2	1.07%
(Did not answer)	4	2.14%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	

Q21. What industry do you work for?		
Responses	Count	%
Government	37	19.79%
Fishing	13	6.95%
Fish Processor	2	1.07%
Private Business	65	34.76%
Health Care	6	3.21%
Native/Tribal Association	6	3.21%
Non-Profit Organization	20	10.70%
Other (please specify)	27	14.44%
(Did not answer)	11	5.88%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	

Q21. What industry do you work for?	
Response	Response Text
1	Education
2	Education
3	Legal services
4	Education/Child Care
5	Tourism and at Kodiak College
6	ssdi
7	Tourism, Sport fishing
8	visitor industry, non-profit, Pvt Business
9	Education
10	Borough
11	KIBSD
12	College student at Kodiak College
13	Part time health care and private contractor
14	service
15	remote lodge tourism
16	space does not allow for 2 industries - wk for Gov & non profit
17	I work for a private business and a nonprofit organization. Like many Kodiakans, I need to have 2 jobs
18	Work full time for Fish and Game and own my own art gallery
19	SAHM
20	Real Estate
21	Native Housing Corporation KIHA
22	Construction
23	Education/fishing/private business. Yes all three.
24	Homeschool mom, husband works for Clarion Construction
25	Education

**Q22. How many years have you lived in Kodiak?**

**174 people responded to the question**

**13 people did not respond**

**Average Response = 20.33 years**

**Number of Responses: 0 to 5 years = 32**

**6 to 15 years = 44**

**16 to 25 years = 35**

**26 + years = 63**

**Q23. Where do you Live?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Own Home	121	64.71%
Rent Home	25	13.37%
Rent Apartment/Condo/Zero-lot	25	13.37%
Mobile Home	3	1.60%
Other (please specify)	9	4.81%
(Did not answer)	4	2.14%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>187</b>	