
From: YouGov

To: Maine Affordable Housing Coalition

Re: Survey results on key housing policies in Maine

Date: August 11, 2026

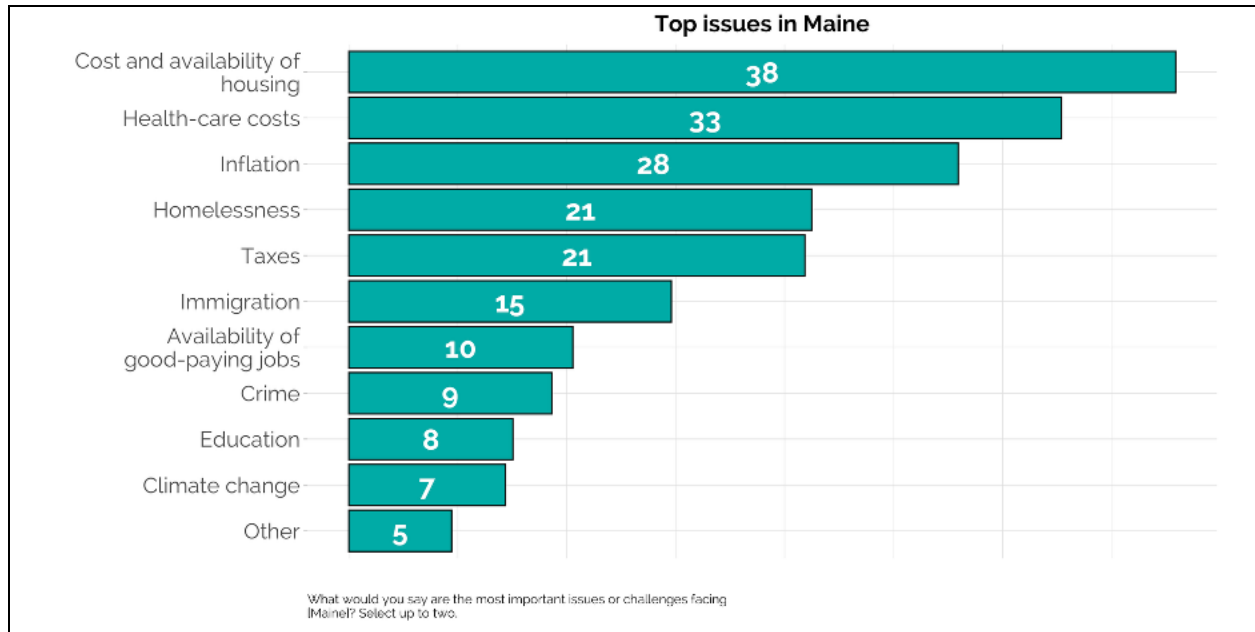
On behalf of Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, YouGov fielded a sample of 425 registered voters in the state of Maine. The survey fielded from July 9 to July 18, 2026. The survey included measures of Mainers priorities, their views toward the current state of the housing market, and their support for new policies that would expand housing availability and affordability in the state. This memo briefly summarizes the results.

Executive Summary

- Maine voters believe that the cost of housing is one of the top issues facing their state – making it the biggest issue Mainers say they are facing today.
- Fully 85 percent of Mainers agree that the state legislature should take action to address Maine's housing shortage and the cost of housing. 90 percent said the next Governor should address Maine's housing shortage and the cost of housing. Even when prioritizing preserving the power of local governments is pitted against building more homes, a majority would rather the state legislators prioritize housing
- Significant majorities of voters support major new housing reforms, including expediting building permit applications and providing ongoing funding for more affordable housing
 - This includes overwhelming support among Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, as well as voters in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Housing is a top concern in Maine

At the beginning of the survey, before respondents knew the survey concerned the issue of housing - respondents were asked about their overall issue concerns. Maine voters said "the cost and availability of housing" was their top issue, rating this issue above healthcare costs, inflation, taxes, and other concerns. Democrats and Republicans overall said the cost of housing was their top issue, and Independents had it roughly tied for their top 3 issues alongside "homelessness" generally.

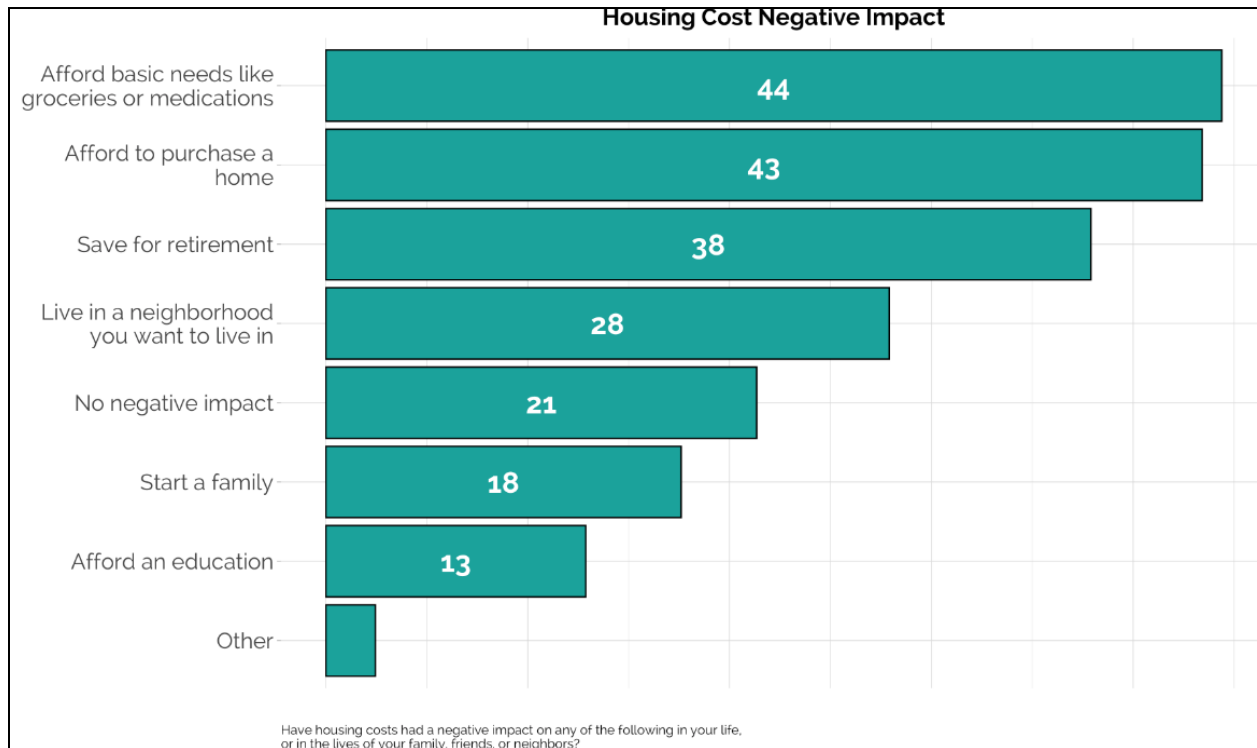


Similarly, the survey asked respondents about various elements of the housing market, including availability, cost, and quality of housing in the state. Nearly 80 percent of respondents said there are not enough homes that are affordable for average people to buy or rent. Regardless of income bracket, Maine voters believe there is not enough housing in Maine. About 84 percent of Mainers earning under \$60k per year say there is not enough housing in Maine. Similarly, about 75 percent of those earning \$60k-100k say there is not enough housing in Maine, as do 80 percent of those earning over \$100k per year.

These results are not driven only by voters in urban areas where housing tends to be the most expensive. About 63 percent of respondents in Northern Maine say the cost of housing is a “major problem” – as do 58 percent of respondents who reside in the rest of Maine. Similarly, 55 percent of voters rated their own area's current efforts to “keep housing affordable” as “poor” or “very poor,” with just 13 percent rating these efforts as “very good” or “good.” Mainers are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with the current housing market.

The results suggest there are few partisan differences in Maine on these key questions. Roughly equal shares of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans agree their local government could be doing more to address the cost of housing. Across demographic factors, Maine voters want to see more being done to address this issue, which they also view as the most important issue currently facing the state.

Nearly 80 percent of Mainers have felt a negative impact on their lives or the lives of loved ones due to the rise in housing costs. Affording basic needs like groceries or medications, being able to afford to purchase a home, and saving for retirement are the top negative impacts felt by Maine voters. Only 21 percent of respondents have felt no negative impacts from housing costs.



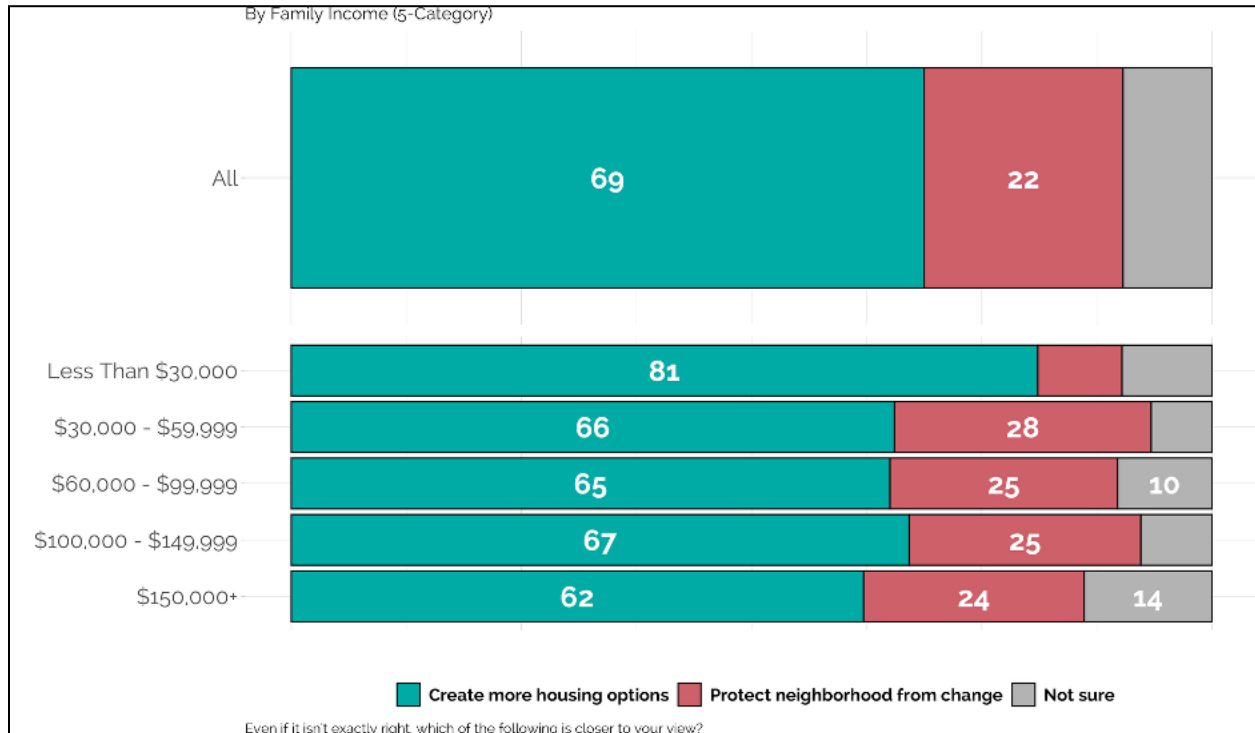
Across Maine, voters are unhappy with the state of housing and the overall cost of living. Later in the survey, respondents were randomly assigned to say whether they believed “the state legislature” or “the next Governor” should be doing more to address housing costs. In either version of the question, voters overwhelmingly said their government should be doing more about this issue, with 85 percent wanting the state legislature to do more and 90 percent wanting the Governor to do more. Maine voters were asked if they would be more or less likely to vote for a candidate that is working on solving housing affordability issues in Maine. 85 percent would be likely to vote for a candidate focused on affordable housing.

Voters say housing is a top concern of theirs even when the goal of new housing is pitted against other key priorities such as protecting the character of Maine’s neighborhoods. Later in the survey, voters were asked about these priorities:

Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?

- *It is more important to build more homes in my neighborhood so that people who work in my community can afford to live here, than it is to protect the neighborhood from change*
- *It is more important to protect my neighborhood from change than it is to build more homes that working people can afford*
- *Not sure*

Specifically, this ordering of priorities is shared by Mainers across income brackets.



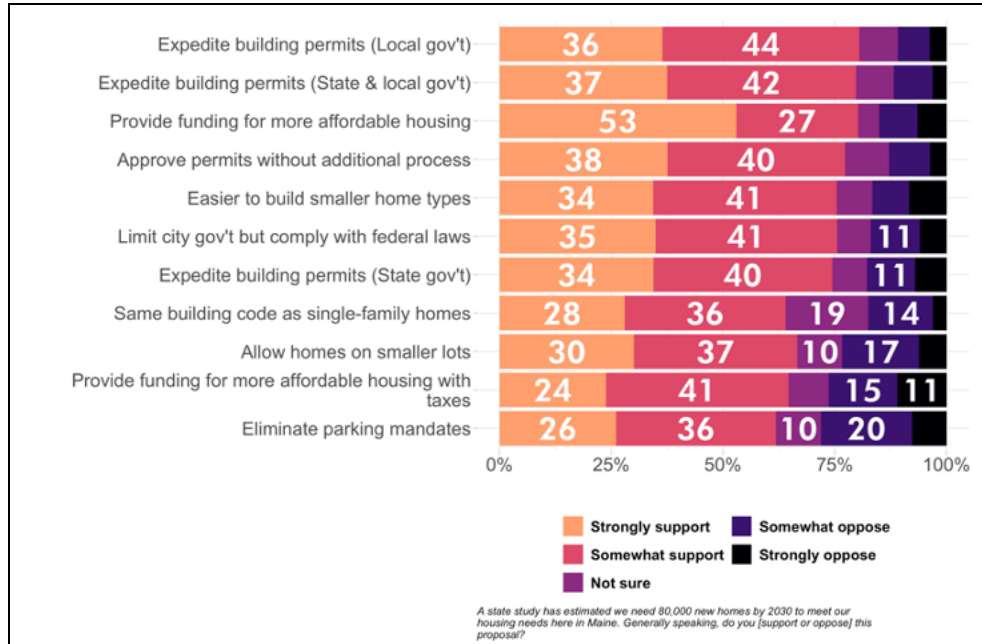
Key new housing policies are popular

The survey also asked voters about several key new policies proposed in Maine to address housing costs. In the item, respondents were given information about the state of housing in Maine. Specifically, voters were shown:

- *Make it easier to build smaller home types like triplexes, quadplexes, and townhomes that are a similar scale of the homes around it. The proposal would allow these smaller homes types to be built on all residential lots anywhere there are existing homes*
- *Allow homes to be built on slightly smaller lots. This would mean a new home could be built on a lot of 5,000 square feet or greater in communities across Maine*

- *Require residential buildings that include three or four homes to follow the same building code as single-family homes, rather than under the same building code as office buildings and large apartment buildings*
- *Limiting how much city governments can control how buildings look, focusing only on public health, safety, and compliance with federal laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act*
- *Cities and towns usually mandate that a specific amount of parking is constructed to go with any building, whether it will be used or not. A state legislative proposal would eliminate some of these parking mandates, and instead allow more flexibility for homebuilders, businesses, and property owners to determine how much parking is needed for their property*
- *Require local governments to make decisions on building permit applications within a set amount of time - 90 days, and only reject applications if they don't meet the rules*
- *Require the state government to make decisions on building permit applications within a set amount of time - 90 days, and only reject applications if they don't meet the rules*
- *Require state and local governments to make decisions on building permit applications within a set amount of time - 90 days, and only reject applications if they don't meet the rules*
- *Requiring city staff to approve new housing permits that comply with all existing rules without additional process*
- *Providing ongoing funding to build more affordable homes for Maine people*
- *Allow faith institutions - churches, synagogues, and other faith communities - to build affordable homes on land they own with a simplified permit process, so long as they still follow all applicable rules*

Each of these policies proved to be popular among Maine voters. Overall support for each policy met or surpassed 62 percent support among Maine voters, and all of them drew opposition from less than 28 percent of Maine voters.



Notably, these policies are popular across key subgroups of voters. Each of these policies are popular across various key demographics, including Democrats, Independents, and Republicans overall strongly support these policies. This support was outside of the margin of error, i.e., the results provide a high level of confidence that these key policies are popular across partisanship in Maine.

Voters throughout the state, controlling for a variety of other key demographic and political factors, are concerned about the availability of housing in Maine. They support a variety of reforms that would make housing more abundant and affordable.

Conclusion

Voters across Maine say housing availability and affordability are serious issues for the state. These concerns are felt among voters across partisanship, racial background, and other factors. Perhaps not surprisingly, these same voters also say they support a variety of key reforms that would help address the housing crisis in Maine. Support for these policies remains high even controlling for key factors like region and partisanship.

Mainers want a state legislature who takes action to address the housing shortage votes to allow more reasonably priced homes to be built across the state. Voters are more concerned about being able to afford to live and own a home in Maine even

with that trade off that city governments would have less authority to decide what homes are legal to build.

Methodology Statement

This survey is based on 425 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of Maine registered voters. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and Maine state geography based on voter registration lists, the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and the U.S. Census Current Population Survey, as well as 2020 Presidential vote and approximate 2024 Presidential vote based on available results, and party identification estimates based on Pew Research Center's National Public Opinion Reference Survey. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of registered voters. The weights range from 0.19 to 4.23 with a mean of 1 and a standard deviation of 0.49.

The margin of error (a 95% confidence interval) for a sample percentage p based upon the subsetting sample is approximately 5.3%. It is calculated using the formula:

$$\hat{p} \pm 100 \times \sqrt{\frac{1 + CV^2}{n}}$$

where CV is the coefficient of variation of the sample weights and n is the sample size used to compute the proportion. This is a measure of sampling error (the average of all estimates obtained using the same sample selection and weighting procedures repeatedly). The sample estimate should differ from its expected value by less than margin of error in 95 percent of all samples. It does not reflect non-sampling errors, including potential selection bias in panel participation or in response to a particular survey.