

# DC Housing Survey Report

A Supplement to the Assessment of the Need for Large Units in the District of Columbia

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

The Lab @ DC

June, 2019



# DC HOUSING SURVEY REPORT

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

A supplement to “An Assessment of the Need for Family Sized Units in the District of Columbia” prepared by the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development and the Urban Institute

In partnership with The Lab @ DC

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## Introduction

In response to residents’ concerns over the stock and affordability of large units in the District of Columbia, the Office of the Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) partnered with the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED) and the Urban Institute to assess the need for large rental units in DC, including those affordable at very low low-income levels. CNHED and the Urban Institute performed a quantitative assessment of this need, outlined in the report “An Assessment of the Need for Large Units in the District of Columbia.”<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, The Lab @ DC, a team in the Office of the City Administrator that uses scientific methods to test and improve policies, became a finalist in the Bloomberg Philanthropies’ 2018 Mayors Challenge. This multi-city competition provided the District an opportunity to develop and test innovative ways to increase civic engagement by creating a platform called SpeakUp DC. Through SpeakUp DC, residents would be able to participate in surveys and share their input on a range of issues. The Lab @ DC and DMPED recognized that a survey could supplement the family-sized unit assessment by providing greater context on the housing experience of DC residents. This survey became a pilot for SpeakUp DC. This report summarizes the findings from the DC Housing Survey.

## Purpose of the DC Housing Survey

Historically, as cities in the United States undergo economic development and achieve higher levels of productivity, job growth, and prosperity, housing costs tend to rise. It becomes harder for low-income residents and families to remain in the city with adequate housing that they can afford. The question that the District wrestles with is how to continue vigorous economic growth while providing the housing and resources necessary to welcome and support the populations who historically face the brunt of negative impacts during times of rapid economic growth: low-income residents, people of color, minorities, and large households.<sup>2</sup>

To best target resources toward retaining and welcoming these populations, it is helpful to have an improved understanding of the drivers that cause people to move or stay. Here, historical context serves us well: Barriers to inclusive growth include predatory and discriminatory lending, rising costs of housing

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<sup>1</sup> Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development and Urban Institute, “An Assessment of the Need for Large Units in the District of Columbia,” June 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Levy, Diane, Jennifer Comey and Sandra Padilla, “Case Studies of Local Efforts to Mitigate Displacement,” Urban Institute, 2006. <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/50791/411294>  
Desmond, Matthew and Carl Gerhenson, “Who gets evicted? Assessing individual, neighborhood and network factors.”

and amenities, the concentration of poverty, and inequities in education, health and other services.<sup>3</sup> It is important to recognize that these and other challenges – which their find roots in histories of inequality – provide the context necessary for accurately identifying the specific issues that residents face today. Cognizant of this underlying context, the District implemented the DC Housing Survey to provide increased information on residents’ housing and moving experiences. With an improved understanding of why people move or stay where they are, the District is better positioned to address specific housing challenges across all eight wards. This data provides context that can inform how new solutions and existing programs are targeted to make DC a more supportive place where families of all income levels can take root in housing and neighborhoods that allow them to thrive.

## Key findings

The DC Housing Survey provides ward-level insights into residents’ attitudes toward future moves. The information collected includes how likely residents feel that they will move soon, their desire to move or stay, and the reasons behind their next move. Analysis of the reasons for past and future moves provide insight into which factors of the DC housing landscape will attract a diversity of residents and encourage them to stay.

**Small households, large households, low-income households and high-income households all want more space.** “More space” was the reason that residents most frequently cited as an important cause of both past and future moves. In a land-limited jurisdiction with a growing population, this pervasive desire for space poses a challenge, and the negative impacts of this challenge fall most severely on large low-income families. Although about one third of the District’s housing supply is composed of large units (3 or more bedrooms), there is an even greater demand for space. The high demand for space in DC is a driver that may cause these units to climb out of reach for most large low-income families. This helps explain why despite the District’s supply of large units, most large low-income households are housing cost-burdened, and over a fifth move repeatedly due to housing costs.

**Over a third of large low-income households face a bedroom shortage.** Over one third of low-income large households have a bedroom shortage, though only 5% of moderate- and high-income large households had a bedroom shortage. Despite the fact that about a third of DC’s housing supply is composed of units with three or more bedrooms, large low-income families are often not the ones occupying these units.

**One fifth of the population in Wards 7 and 8 believe they will need to move due to inability to pay housing costs.** About 20% of respondents from Wards 7 and 8 indicated that they felt it would be likely that they would need to move within the next three years due to inability to pay a bank or landlord.

**Likelihood of moving varies across the District.** Ward 4 residents were the least likely to believe they will move within the next three years. Residents in Wards 1, 2, and 8 were the most likely to believe they will move soon – though the reasons differ by ward. While households across all eight wards frequently indicated that more space is an important reason for a future move, residents in Wards 7 and 8 indicated that safety is an even more important reason for a future move.

**Compared with moderate- or high-income households, low-income households are much more likely to be housing-cost burdened, and to move due to housing costs.** In this analysis, repeated moves due

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<sup>3</sup> Kijakazi, Kilolo, et al. “The Color of Wealth in the Nation’s Capital,” Urban Institute, November 2016. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/color-wealth-nations-capital>

to housing costs indicate residential instability. Low-income households were more likely to face residential instability compared with moderate- or high-income households. Large households were more to face residential instability than small households. Over one fifth of households with children face residential instability. Residential instability varied significantly by ward, with residents in Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4 the least likely to be residentially unstable, and residents in Wards 7 and 8 the most likely.

**Large households with moderate incomes also struggle to meet their housing needs in the District.**

Although few large households above the 80% MFI threshold spent over 50% of their income on housing costs, nearly half of large households spent over 30% of their income on housing costs, classifying them as “housing cost-burdened.” This is further evidence suggesting that the strong demand for large units in DC is pushing market-rate prices out of reach even for moderate-income families. However, only 5% of moderate- and high-income large households face a bedroom shortage, while over a third of low-income large households have a bedroom shortage.

## Methodology overview

In August 2018, 22,888 residents across all eight wards received bright orange postcards and letters inviting them to take a survey on housing in the District (Fig. 1). 2,600 residential households were randomly selected from each Ward from the [DC Master Address Repository](#). Since the purpose of the survey was to supplement the Family-Sized Unit study, the survey oversampled low-income households, which typically have lower response rates, with three or more people. The oversample population consisted of an additional 2,088 households with 3 or more people and with AMI<50%. These oversample households were drawn from the lottery waiting list of households which had completed the initial application for an Inclusionary Zoning housing unit. The survey was both anonymous and confidential. Mailers invited residents were invited to take the survey online, residents were also provided with a paper survey. Survey responses were accepted for one month after they were mailed. By that deadline, 2,547 residents took the 29-question survey either online or by mail. For more information about the methodology, [see the Lab @ DC’s public pre-analysis plan](#).



An interagency team developed the housing survey questions, taking into consideration range of housing research objectives and housing survey questions from national and local surveys, including the American Housing Survey. The team piloted the survey questions at the DC Housing Expo. There, over 50

Figure 1: Mailing sent to DC residents inviting them to take the survey online. A paper survey followed in the mail shortly after.

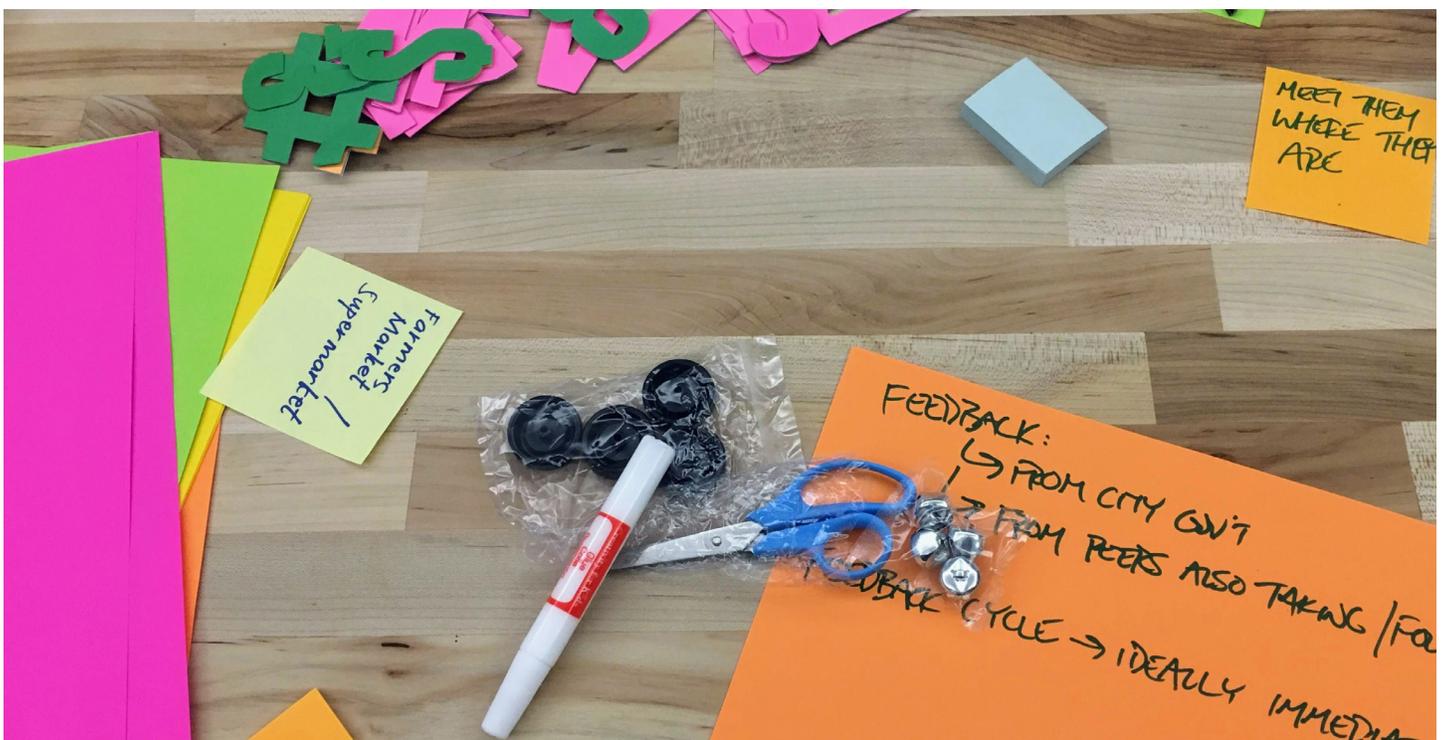
DC residents took the survey and provided question-by-question

feedback on the survey. After analyzing the feedback data, the survey development team revised the survey questions accordingly.

The survey asked residents questions about their experiences with housing and moving, including the reasons they last moved, whether they think they will move soon, and why. The survey also collected basic demographic information including household size, race of the survey respondent, estimated household income, and estimated monthly housing costs.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines “low-income” as any household with an income between 50% - 80% of the Median Family Income for the region. “Very low-income” households are those making between 30% - 50% of MFI, and “extremely low-income” households are those making less than 30% MFI. Survey respondents were asked to share their household’s total income range as well as their monthly housing costs (including rent/mortgage, utilities, and fees). Respondents were categorized as low income, very low-income, or extremely low-income based on their household size and the upper limit of their reported household income range. Those who spent more than 30% of the upper limit of their income range housing costs were classified as “housing cost-burdened” in this report. Those whose housing costs were more than 50% of the upper limit of the income range reported are classified as “severely housing cost-burdened.”

Each survey response was assigned a calculated weight based on the race of the respondent and household size. All analysis in this report is based on the weighted data, which reflect a more representative sample of all District residents. Notable populations that were not part of the sample include previous residents who recently moved away from the District and homeless residents of the District. Although these populations were not the focus of this survey, their experiences are also important for understanding the relationship between residential instability, housing insecurity, and the decision to move to another jurisdiction.



# Results

## Housing costs

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of respondents' income levels by household size, using weighted survey data.

Survey respondents were asked if they had been unable to pay all or part of their rent, mortgage, utilities, or property taxes in the last three months (Fig. 3). Fourteen percent of renters indicated that they had been unable to pay the full rent in the last three months. Ten percent of respondents had missed all or part of a utility payment within the last three months. Three percent of homeowners reported inability to pay mortgage or property taxes within the last three months.

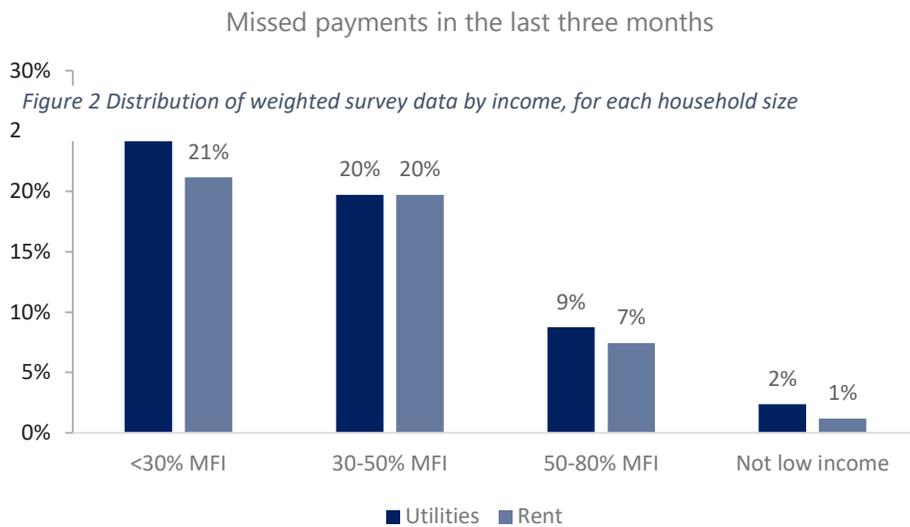
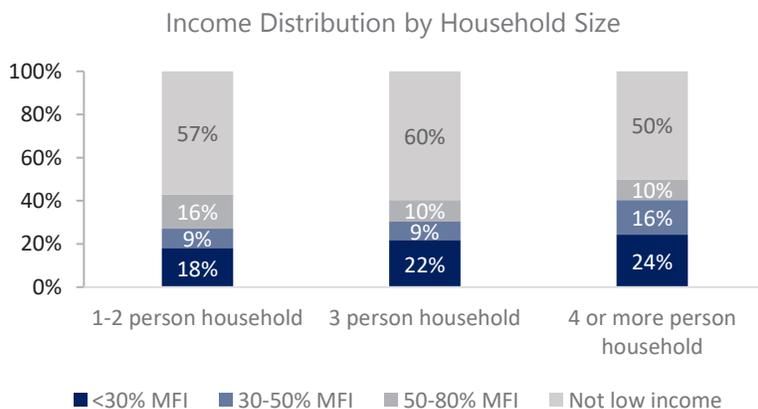


Figure 3: Households below 50% MFI were the most likely to have missed all or part of a rent or utility payment in the last three months. These are also the groups that face the highest residential instability.



Survey respondents were asked to share their household's total income range as well as their monthly housing costs (including rent/mortgage, utilities, and fees). Those who spent more than 30% of the

upper limit of the income range they reported on housing costs are classified as “housing cost-burdened” in this report. Those whose housing costs are more than 50% of the upper limit of the income range reported are classified as “severely housing cost-burdened.”

Over three-fourths of households <30% MFI were housing cost-burdened, indicating that very low-income families in the District are not adequately served by the housing stock (Fig. 4).

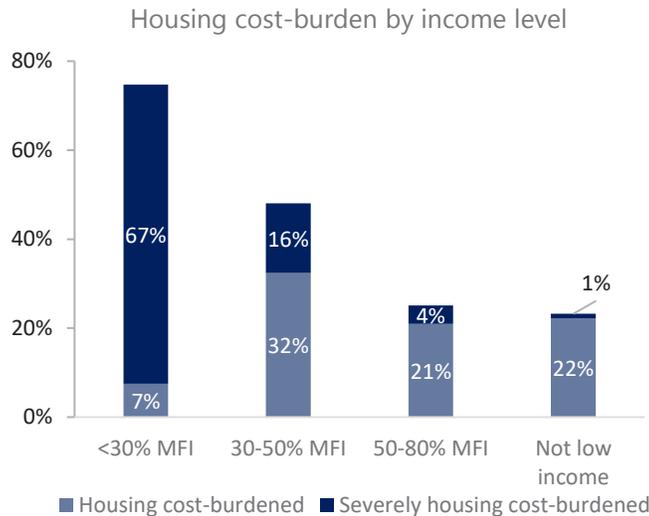


Figure 4: Low income households are more likely to be housing cost-burdened

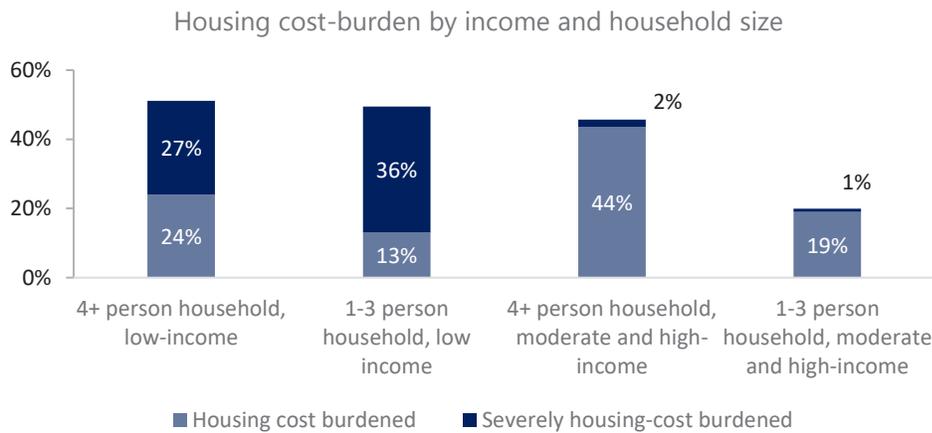


Figure 5: Large households are more likely than small households to be housing cost-burdened

While only 1% of large households above the 80% MFI threshold were severely housing cost-burdened, 44% were housing cost-burdened (Fig. 5). That is more than twice the housing-cost burden that small households above the 80% MFI threshold face. These findings point to the fact that despite the District’s significant supply of large units, the market is such that even moderate-income families face difficulty in comfortably affording their housing.

## Residential mobility

*Residential mobility* refers to how often people move. Sometimes residential mobility is a sign of upward economic mobility – people move to improve their housing situations. However, sometimes circumstances cause people to move frequently due to costs. In this report, that cost-driven movement is referred to as *residential instability*. Residential instability is associated with increased stress and health problems, poorer educational outcomes, decreased community efficacy, and other critical problems for households and communities alike.<sup>4</sup> In this report, residents are classified as residentially unstable if their last move was driven in part by missed housing payments or housing costs, and they also believe it is somewhat likely or very likely that they will need to move for those reasons again within the next three years (Fig. 6). Some respondents who had not moved within the last 5 years due to housing cost reasons believe they will to move within the next three years for housing cost reasons. Those respondents are not classified as residentially unstable, but they do perceive risk of future residential instability.

Ultimately, residential instability is not sustainable for families, and may lead toward negative outcomes, or force them to seek residence in a jurisdiction where they could find greater stability. By growing our understanding of what makes different types of households stay or move in all eight wards, the District will be better positioned to know which policy levers and programs will best help stabilize diverse communities within the District.

There are a wide variety of reasons that people move, many of which are not related to housing. For example, health, education, wealth, and stage of life all have significant influence on residential movement. The results of this survey indicate the housing-related reasons that people move, but they do not capture the many other drivers that influence people’s decision to move or stay. Housing interventions are more likely to increase residential stability when they are integrated with other measures that support the health and wellbeing of households.<sup>5</sup>

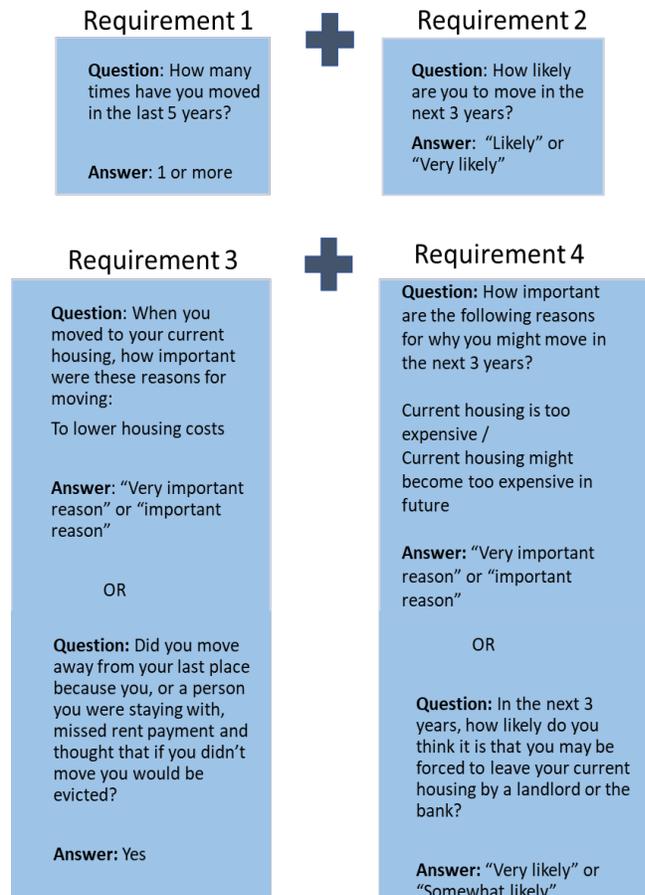


Figure 6: For a survey respondent to be classified as “residentially unstable,” the survey responses had to meet all four of the requirements. Other respondents “perceived risk of future residential instability,” if they met requirements 2 and 4.

<sup>4</sup> Theodos, Brett, Sara McTarnaghan, and Claudia Coulton. “Family Residential Instability: What can states and localities do?” Urban Institute, May 2018. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/family-residential-instability-what-can-states-and-localities-do>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Analysis of the DC Housing Survey shows that low income households are twice as likely to face residential instability as compared with households that are above 80% Median Family Income (MFI)<sup>6</sup>. While 27% of all low-income households were classified as residentially unstable or as perceiving risk of future instability, only 11% of non-low-income households were. About one third of extremely low-income households (under 30% AMI) that currently live in the District expect to need to move within the next three years due to housing costs or inability to pay rent/mortgage, whether or not they want to move (Fig. 7).

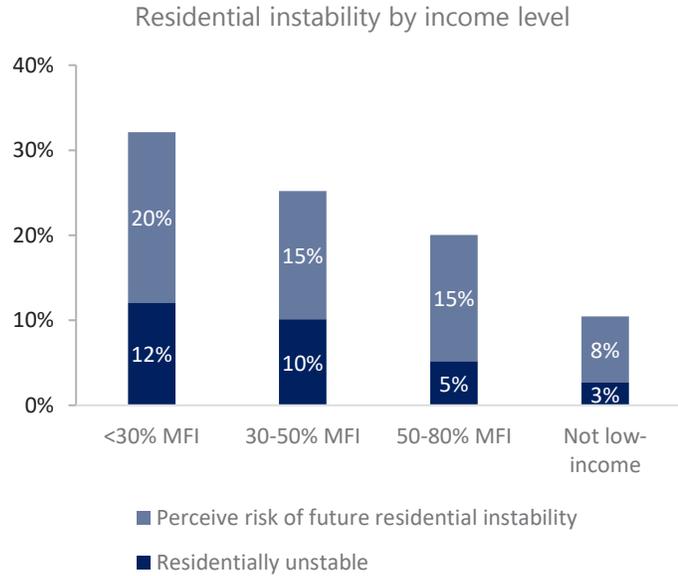


Figure 7: Lower income households are more likely to be residentially unstable. Lower income households are also more likely to perceive risk of future residential instability.

Across all income groups, there are more households that perceive risk of future residential instability than there are households that are currently residentially unstable. This could mean that residentially unstable residents are likely to move out of the District, and thus residents who are residentially unstable are no longer captured in the District. It could instead mean that residents increasingly feel that housing costs will be a primary driver of their near-future moves. Or it may mean that some people who believe they will need to move for cost reasons do not in fact move for cost reasons.

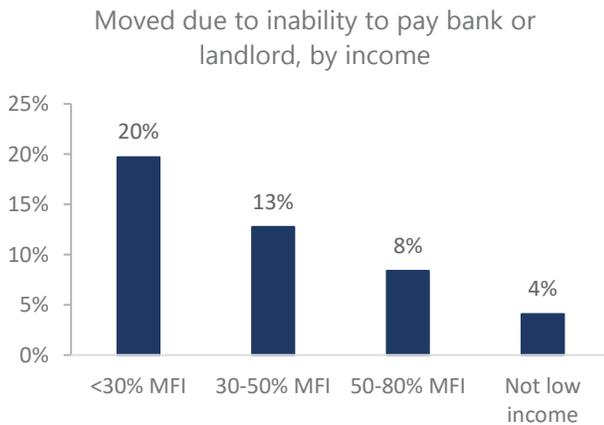


Figure 8: Lower income households more likely to have moved due to inability to pay a bank or landlord.

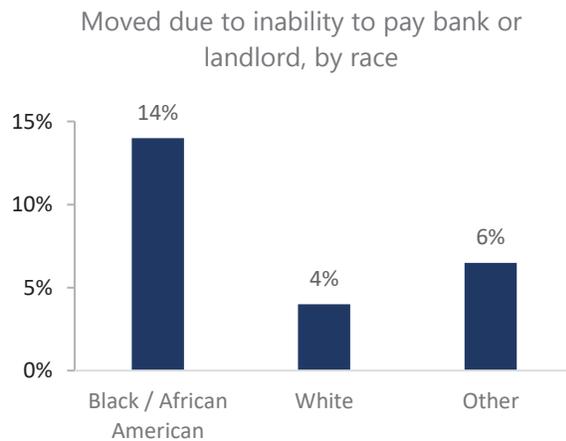


Figure 9: Black residents are more likely to have last moved due to inability to pay a bank or landlord.

Low-income residents were about five times as likely to have moved because they were asked to by the bank (e.g. in a foreclosure or short sale) or a landlord, when compared with residents who are not low-

<sup>6</sup> Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2018. [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/elist/2018-apr\\_10.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/elist/2018-apr_10.html)

income (Fig. 8). Black residents were more than three times as likely to have moved for these reasons, as compared with white residents (Fig. 9).

Compared to white residents, black residents are about 1.5 times as likely to perceive risk of becoming residentially unstable. This means that although they have not moved in the last five years due to housing cost reasons or missed housing payments, they believe they will have to move for those reasons within the next three years.

Residential instability also varies by Ward. Ward 8 has the greatest level of residential instability, while Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate the least (Fig. 10).

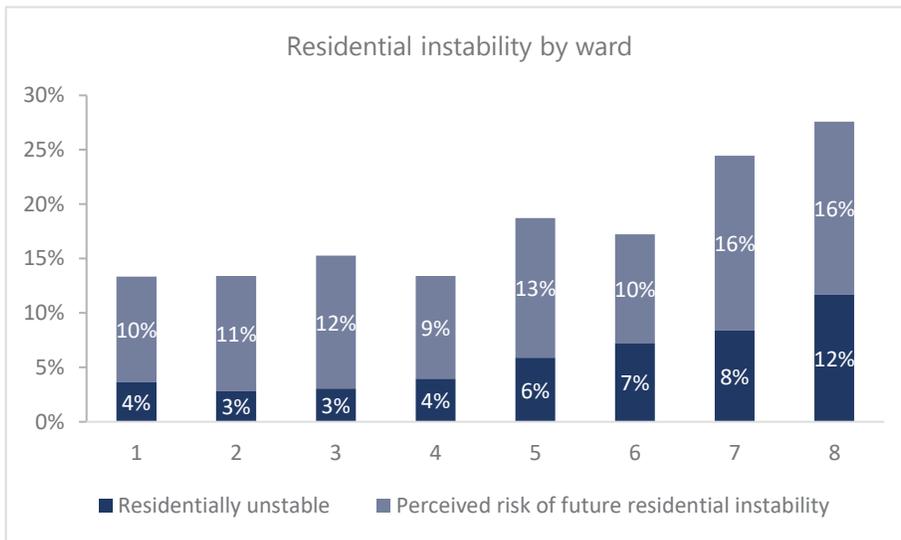


Figure 10: Wards have differing levels of residential instability

Residential instability varies slightly by household size, with large households facing the highest levels of residential instability (Fig. 11). Across household size, there are more residents at risk of becoming residentially unstable, compared with those who have already become residentially unstable. This finding suggests that stabilizing mechanisms may become increasingly necessary in the near future for all household sizes, and especially for large households.

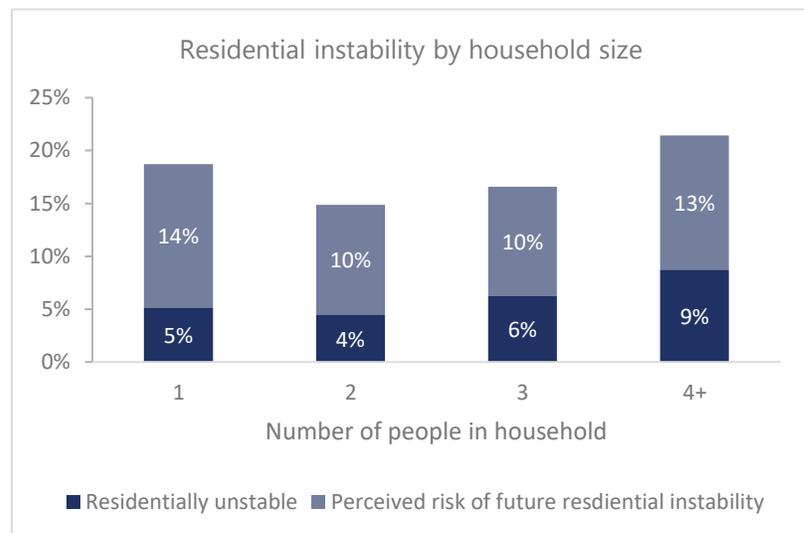


Figure 11: Residential instability is greater for large households (4 or more people)

Over one fifth of households with children face residential instability (Fig. 12). Sixteen percent of single-female headed households with children are residentially unstable, and another 21% are at risk of residential instability. Residential instability has been linked to educational outcomes<sup>7</sup>, so addressing the disparity in housing instability for these households may impact educational outcomes for DC students.

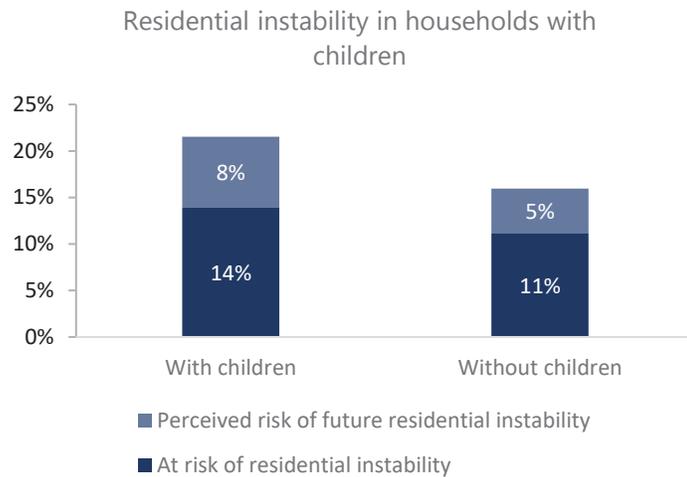


Figure 12: 22% of DC households with children either experience residential instability or perceive a future risk of residential instability.

When asked how likely they were to move within the next three years, 61% of Ward 8 residents said they were somewhat likely or very likely to move (Fig. 13). 56% of Ward 1 and Ward 2 residents were also likely to move. Only 34% of Ward 4 residents said they were likely to move in the next three years. The survey results indicate a high level of residential mobility throughout most of the District, though that mobility is driven by different reasons, as discussed in the next section.

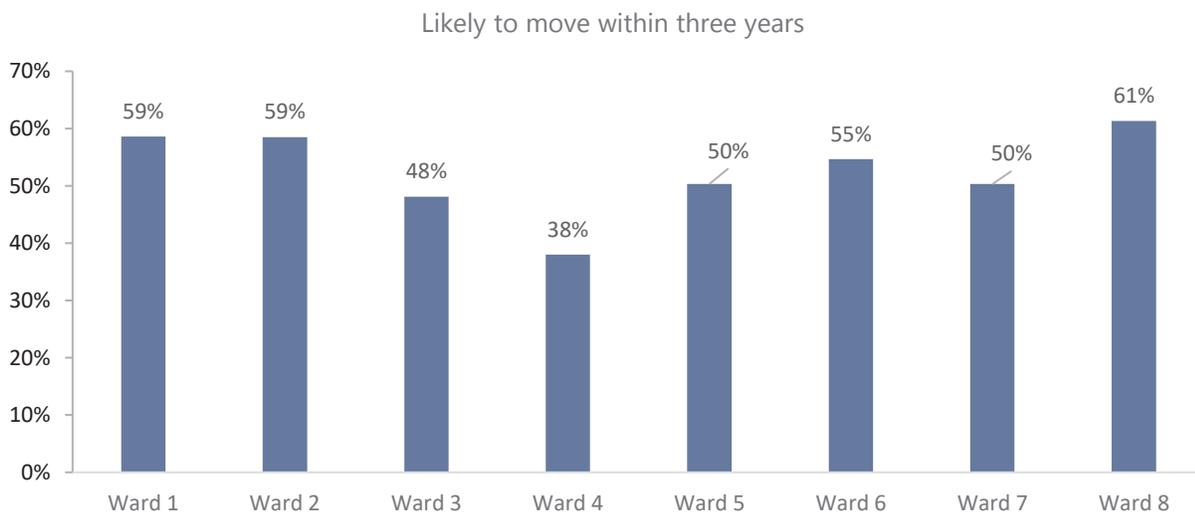


Figure 13: Residents in Wards 1, 2, and 8 are the most likely to move within the next three years. Ward 4 residents were the least likely to feel that they will move within the next three years

<sup>7</sup> Theodos, Brett, Sara McTarnaghan, and Claudia Coulton. "Family Residential Instability: What can states and localities do?" Urban Institute, May 2018. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/family-residential-instability-what-can-states-and-localities-do>

## Why people move

The DC Housing Survey provided respondents with a list of reasons that they last moved and another list of reasons they might move in the future (Fig. 14).

Respondents were asked to rate each of these reasons for moving as: Very Important, Important, Not too important, Not at all important, or N/A		
When you moved to your current housing, how important were these reasons for moving?	How important are the following reasons for why you might move in the next 3 years?	How important are the following reasons why you might <u>not</u> move?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To lower housing costs</li> <li>Wanted to own your own home, not rent</li> <li>Last home foreclosed</li> <li>Force to leave last home by landlord</li> <li>Rent increased at last home</li> <li>To form own household</li> <li>Wanted more space</li> <li>Wanted a safer neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current housing is too expensive</li> <li>Current housing might become too expensive in the future</li> <li>Want to own, not rent</li> <li>Want more space</li> <li>Want a safer neighborhood</li> <li>Want housing in better conditions</li> <li>Want to be closer to good schools</li> <li>Want to be closer to grocery stores</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am satisfied with my current housing</li> <li>Cannot find affordable housing that is large enough</li> <li>Cannot find affordable housing in a neighborhood I would like to live in</li> </ul>

Figure 14: Reasons for moving included in the DC Housing Survey

Respondents marked how important each of those reasons were for causing their last move, and for causing their next move. These lists did not provide a comprehensive set of reasons that people move. Therefore, the results are useful in comparing the relative importance of the different reasons that were included in the survey, but there may be other important factors that were not included. The following results summarize the reasons that respondents marked “Important” or “Very Important” for past and future moves.

The reasons that low-income residents most frequently marked as “important” or “very important” for their last move were: to lower housing costs, improve housing conditions, have better safety, and gain more space (Fig. 15). More space was also an important reason for moderate- and high-income households’ last move. In contrast, however, the second most common reason that moderate and high-income residents last moved was to own rather than rent.

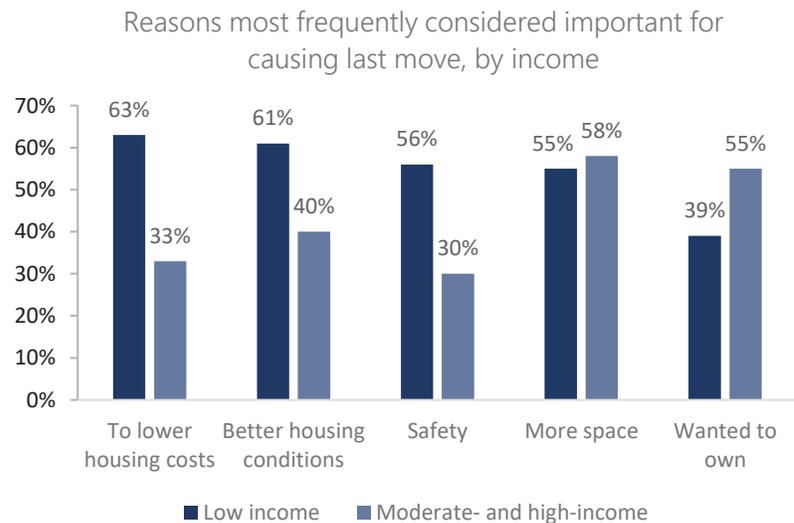


Figure 15: Of the reasons listed in the survey for causing residents’ last moves, low-income households most frequently marked lower housing costs, better housing conditions, safety, and more space as important reasons. For moderate- and high-income households, the reasons most frequently marked as important causes of the last move were more space, the desire to own, and better housing conditions.

This pattern suggests that moderate and high-income residents were more likely to move to achieve positive circumstances, finding housing that provides the household room to grow. Low-income residents, in contrast, were more likely to have last moved to mitigate negative circumstances – such as poor housing conditions, lack of safety, and unaffordable housing costs. It is worth noting that across income levels, the desire for space was a driver for more than half of all moves.

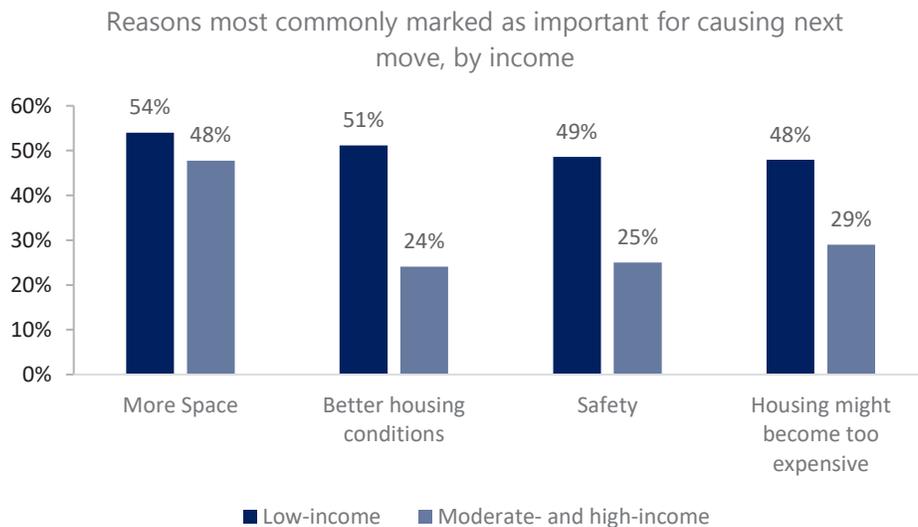


Figure 16: For low-income households, the most important reasons for their next move are more space, better housing conditions, better safety, and rising housing costs. Except for space, these reasons are less important to moderate- and high-income households.

For low-income households, the reasons most commonly listed as important for their next were more space, better housing conditions, and safer neighborhoods (Fig. 16). This suggests that increased financial assistance, improved safety, and improved housing conditions in units with adequate space could help stabilize low-income families.

63% of 1-3 person households reported that more space is a very important or important reason for moving in the future (Fig. 17). Of the reasons listed in the survey, the next most important reasons for 1-3 person households to move was for improved safety, to be closer to schools, and to have better housing conditions.

For large households, the most important reason for wanting to move was also more space. 63% of large households that wanted to move said that more space was important or very important. Nearly half of large households that wanted to move also listed rising housing costs, proximity to schools, and better housing conditions as important reasons for moving.

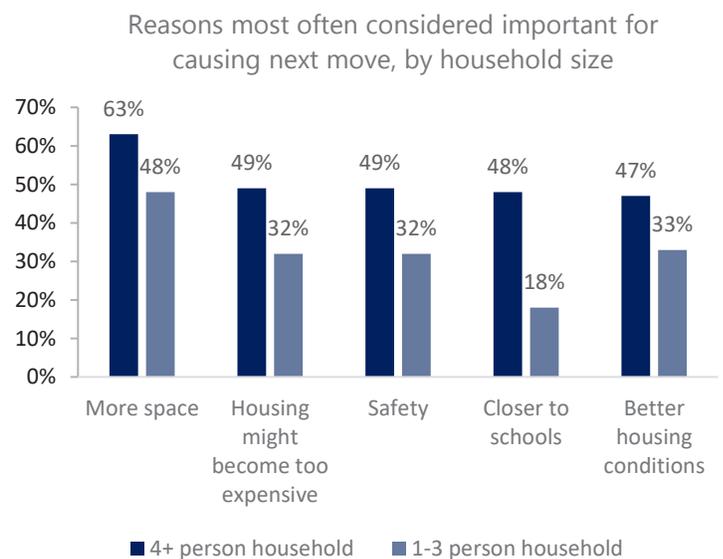


Figure 17: Of the reasons listed in the survey for causing residents' next moves, large households most frequently marked more space, rising housing costs, safety, proximity to schools, and better housing conditions as important reasons. For moderate- and high-income households, the reasons most frequently marked as important causes of the next move were more space, better housing conditions, rising housing costs, and safety.

Of the 1-2 person households that live in housing with 3 or more bedrooms, only 21% reported that they wanted to move in the next 3 years, while 79% said they did not (Fig. 18). This further indicates that space is important to many 1-2 person households. It may also indicate that they have future plans for that space, such as children.

Nineteen percent of survey respondents aged 65 or older who owned and lived in a unit with three or more bedrooms indicated that they were somewhat or very likely to move within the next three years, though most did not think it likely they would move within three years.

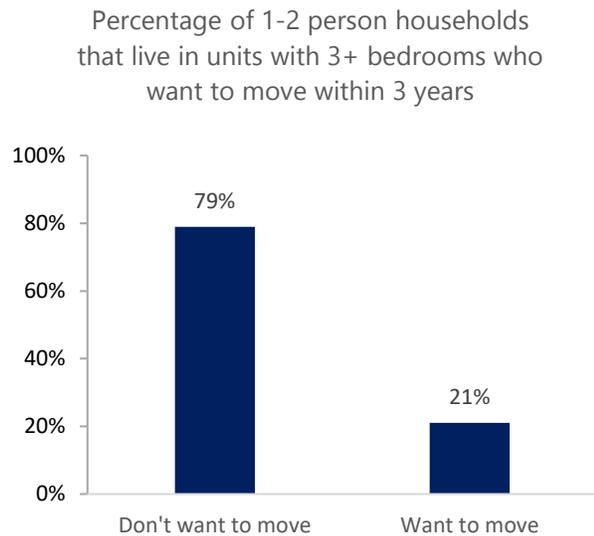


Figure 18: Most of the 1-2 person households currently occupying units with 3 or more bedrooms do not want to move in the near future.

When respondents were asked how likely they thought it was that a bank or landlord would have them move within the next three years, 21% of residents in Ward 8 and 19% of residents in Ward 7 marked “very likely” or “somewhat likely” (Fig. 19). In Wards 2 and 3, only 5% of respondents indicated that likelihood.

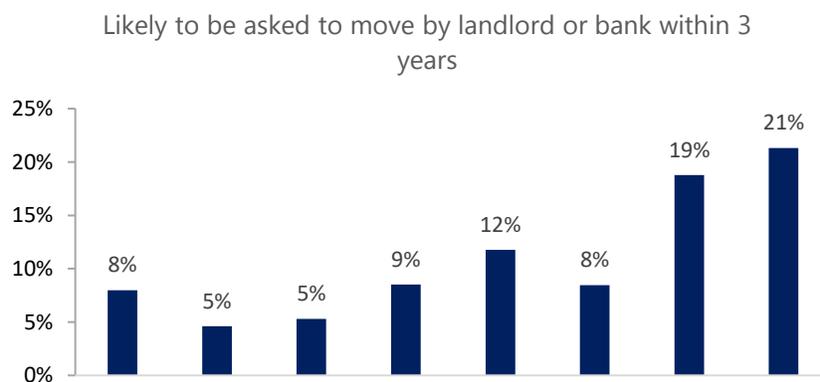


Figure 19: About one fifth of residents in Wards 7 and 8 feel that it is likely they will need to move within three years due to inability to pay the bank or landlord.

The frequency with which residents marked different reasons as important for future moves varied across wards (Fig. 20).

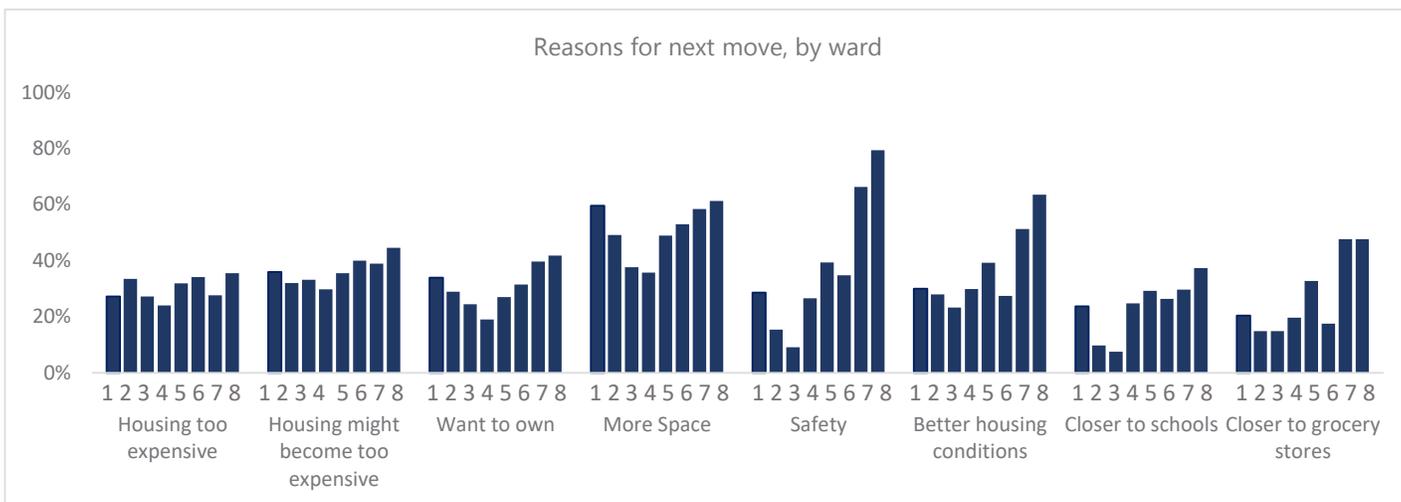


Figure 20: Percent of residents from each ward that indicated that the specified reason for their next move was “important” or “very important.” More space is important for residents across wards, while safety, better housing conditions, and proximity to grocery stores stand out as important drivers for residents in Wards 7 and 8.

### Housing conditions

The survey asked residents whether they were currently experiencing a series of housing issues. The issues included on the survey are listed in Table 1.

Broken stove, refrigerator, or other appliance
Broken window
Broken door to the outside, or broken lock on a door to the outside
Mice, rats, cockroaches, bedbugs, or other household pests
Exposed electrical wires
Peeling paint
Broken toilet

Table 1: Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were currently experiencing any of the above issues.



Ward 8 residents reported the greatest number of housing condition issues, with 31% of respondents indicating two or more of the listed problems, and another 34% listing one of the problems (Fig. 21). Ward 7 had the next most issues reported. Wards 3, 6, and 2 had the smallest percentage of respondents indicate housing issues.

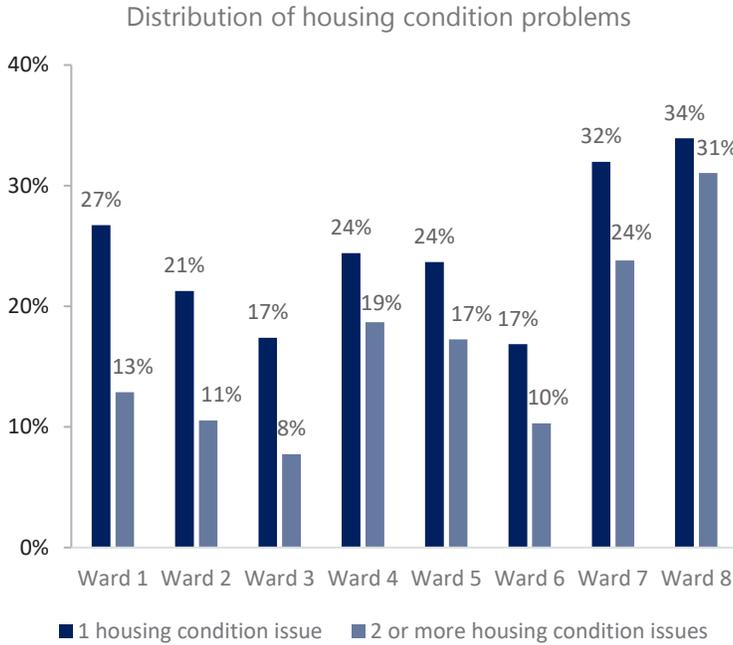


Figure 21: Wards 3 and 6 reported the fewest housing condition issues, from those listed on the survey. Wards 7 and 8 reported the most.

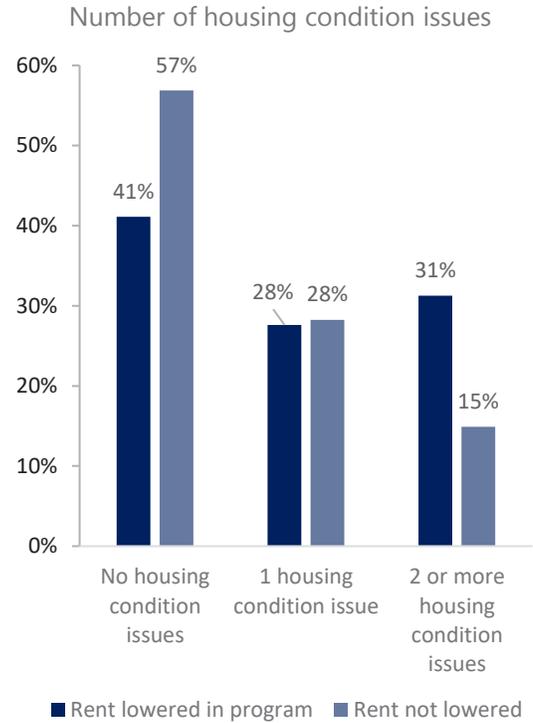


Figure 22: Residents that reported a subsidized rent were twice as likely to have two housing conditions issues from those listed on the survey, as compared with residents that did not report a subsidized rent.

Of the respondents that answered “yes” to the question “Was your rent lowered because you are in a Federal or DC government housing program, or because your income qualified you for lower rent?” many reported multiple housing condition issues (Fig. 22). 31% of these residents were experiencing two or more of the issues listed, while only 15% of those not in a housing program reported two or more issues. While 57% of the population not in a housing program reported none of the listed issues, only 41% of those in a housing program reported none of the issues.

The survey asked residents how many adults and children live in the unit, as well as how many bedrooms the unit has. In this analysis, “bedroom shortage” means that there are fewer bedrooms for every 2 adults and every 2 children. In this calculation a household of 1 adult and 1 child would require 2 bedrooms. A household of 2 adults and 2 children would also require 2 bedrooms. The bedroom shortage is not an exact depiction of how many bedrooms are needed for all surveyed households, but it does provide an indication of which population may have less space than would typically be required. White respondents were the least likely to have a bedroom shortage (Fig. 23). Wards 4, 5, and 6 had the lowest percentage of respondents with a bedroom shortage (Fig. 25).

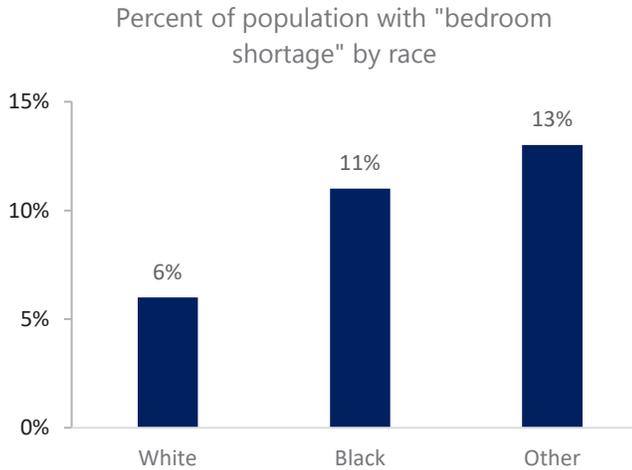


Figure 23: Non-white residents are more likely to have a bedroom shortage

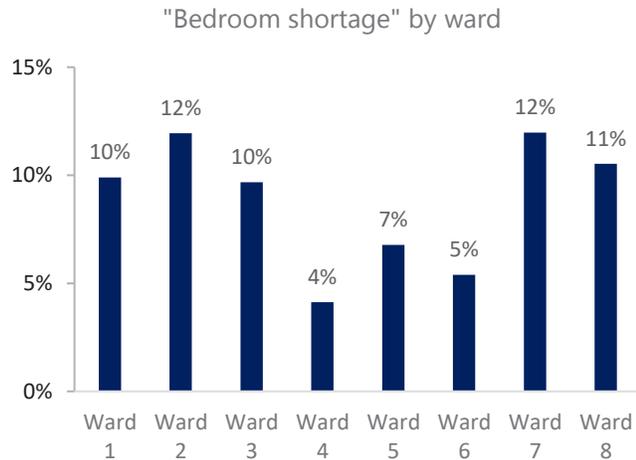


Figure 24: Residents in Wards 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 are more likely to have a bedroom shortage than residents in Wards 4, 5, and 6.

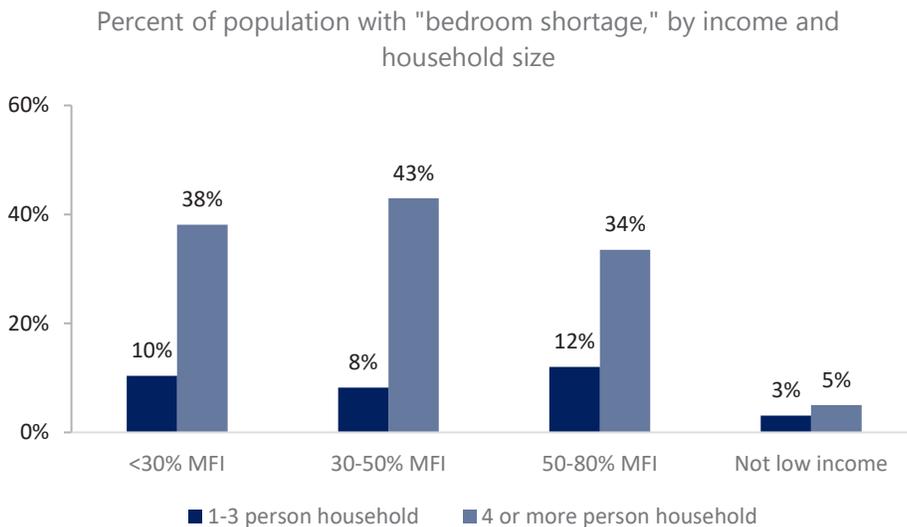


Figure 25: Large low-income households are most likely to experience a bedroom shortage.

## Conclusion

The DC Housing survey highlights that there are a variety of housing-related factors that could contribute to residential stability, and demonstrates that these factors vary across wards, household size, and income level.

The desire or need for space is a frequent driver of residential mobility in the District. Across household size and income level, space surfaced as an important reason for moving. When households of all income levels and sizes desire more space, the residents least able to compete for that limited space are large low-income households. Although the District has a substantial supply of 3+ bedroom units (about 1/3 of DC's housing stock)<sup>8</sup>, the widespread demand for space in DC causes the housing costs of these units to remain out of reach for most large low-income families. This helps explain why despite the District's supply of large units, most large low-income households are housing cost-burdened, and 27% experience or fear residential instability. Given the high demand for space and high costs for large units, the number of low-income families that live in the District is determined largely by how many affordable units are made available directly to them.

For instance, nineteen percent of survey respondents aged 65 or older who owned and lived in a unit with three or more bedrooms indicated that they were somewhat or very likely to move within the next three years. When these large units enter the market, they will likely go to moderate- and high-income households, since many of them want to move for more space within the next three years. These units will not go toward large low-income families unless some of the units are allocated to them.

Moderate-income large households also struggle to meet their housing needs in the District. Although only 2% of large households above the 80% MFI threshold were severely housing-cost burdened, 44% were housing cost-burdened.

While addressing housing-cost burden for low-income families is critical to help them stabilize, there are other components of residential stabilization. This survey indicates that improved housing conditions and safety are key reasons that many low-income families move.

This analysis is a further step in understanding movement and stability patterns across race, income level, ward, and household size. It is notable that most residents who feel that costs are an important reason for moving also feel that improved safety, proximity to schools, and improved housing conditions are important reasons for moving. This underscores the importance of providing housing options for residents in a range of neighborhoods. In the "Assessment of the Need for Large Units in the District of Columbia," the Urban Institute and CNHED note that there is demand for large rental units in every ward, and that to maintain a diversity of households, affordable large and small units are needed in every part of the District. The Assessment further notes that large rental units affordable to low-income renters are currently geographically constrained, with the greatest affordability for these families in neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River.

The DC Housing Survey provides the District with a unique, ward-level perspective on the needs, desires, and mobility expectations of different household types. Continued attention to diverse household

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<sup>8</sup> Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development and Urban Institute, "An Assessment of the Need for Large Units in the District of Columbia," June 2019.

needs, ongoing competition for desirable housing and neighborhood characteristics, and differential impacts of housing costs on households of varying sizes and income levels will help DC in its path toward stabilizing diverse and thriving communities.