

City of Solvang 2023-2031 Housing Element Update

Housing Needs Survey Summary

In 2021, the City of Solvang kicked off the update to the City’s Housing Element to plan for housing through 2031. The update is scheduled for completion in February 2023, and throughout the process, the City invites the public to be part of the planning process and provide input on how Solvang should provide housing over the planning period (2023-2031).

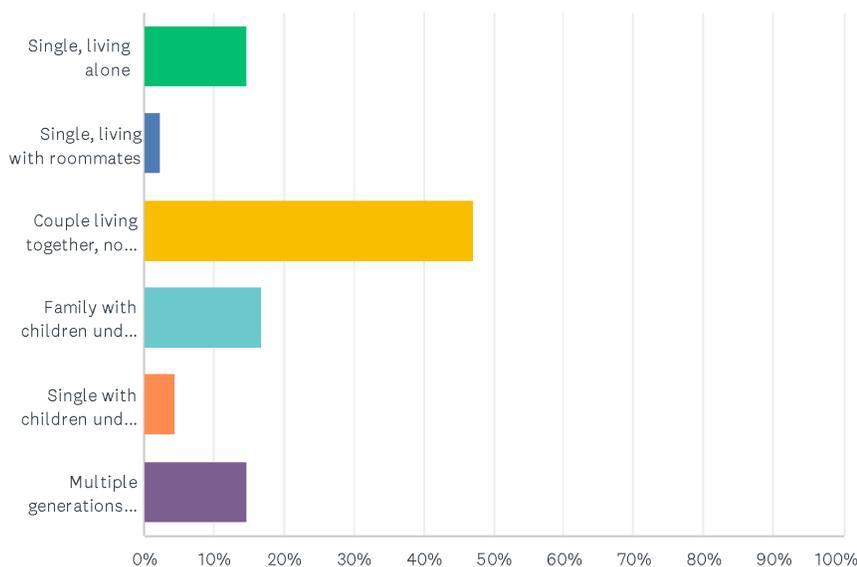
As part of this community input, the City conducted a Housing Needs Survey from April 20, 2022 to May 21, 2022. Presented in English and Spanish, the Housing Needs Survey provided residents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide input on housing needs, issues, and constraints in the community. The survey was broadcasted to the General Plan and Housing Element Update email list and through local stakeholders and made available on the Housing Element website (plansolvang.com/housing). The Survey had 89 respondents; 88 English respondents and 1 Spanish respondent. This document summarizes the responses received for each question.

Question 1: Which best describes your household composition?

Respondents were provided with six household types to choose from. Most respondents described their household composition as “couple living together, no children” (47.19 percent). The second highest category was “family with children under 18 living at home” at 16.85 percent, followed by “single, living alone” and “multiple generations living together” each at 14.61 percent. The category with the fewest responses was “single, living with roommates” at 2.25 percent.

Q1 Which best describes your household composition:

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single, living alone	14.61%	13
Single, living with roommates	2.25%	2
Couple living together, no children	47.19%	42
Family with children under 18 living at home	16.85%	15
Single with children under 18 living at home	4.49%	4
Multiple generations living together (adult children, parents, grandparents, etc.)	14.61%	13
TOTAL		89

Question 2: What are the most critical housing issues in Solvang?

Responses to this question were categorized by issue and a summary is provided below. Respondents identified low availability, low affordability, growth management, owner-city coops, owner requests, bad traffic, increased property taxes, overcrowding, low pet-friendliness, permit processing, high density, low parking, low water availability, short-term rentals, neighborhood compatibility, and low water affordability as critical housing issues in Solvang. The most mentioned issues identified were low affordability (79 percent of responses) and low availability (55 percent of responses), but bad traffic (6 percent of responses) and growth management (2 percent of responses) were also mentioned often.

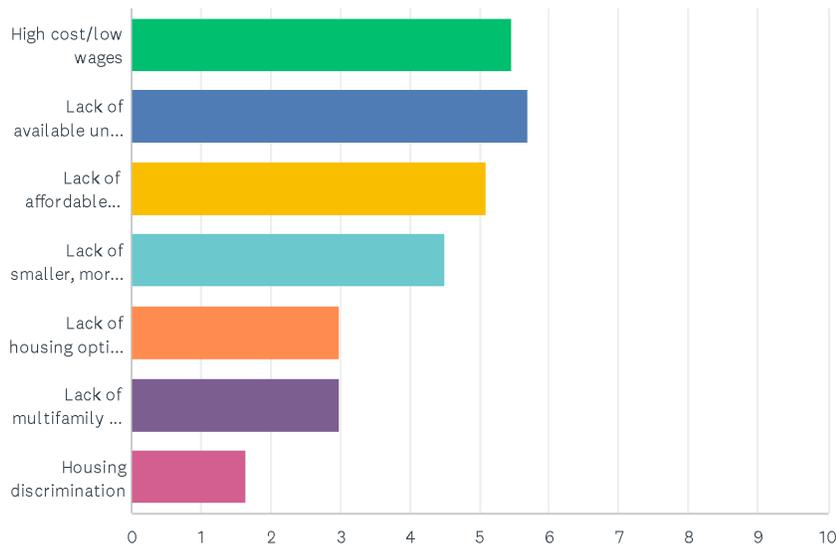
Issue	# of Responses	Percent of Responses
Low availability	48/87	55%
Low affordability	69/87	79%
Growth management	2/87	2%
Owner-City Coop	1/87	1%
Owner Request	1/87	1%
Bad Traffic	5/87	6%
Increased Property Taxes	1/87	1%
Overcrowding	1/87	1%
Low pet-friendliness	1/87	1%
Permit process	1/87	1%
Density	1/87	1%

Individual responses are included as written on page 7.

Question 3: Please rank in order of importance the following housing barriers in Solvang: Respondents were asked to rank a list of housing barriers by order of importance. Overall, respondents felt the most pressing housing barriers were: “lack of available units for rent” (weighted score of 5.69), “high cost/low wages” (5.46), and “lack of affordable homes for purchase” (5.09).

Q3 Please rank in order of importance the following housing barriers in Solvang:

Answered: 88 Skipped: 1



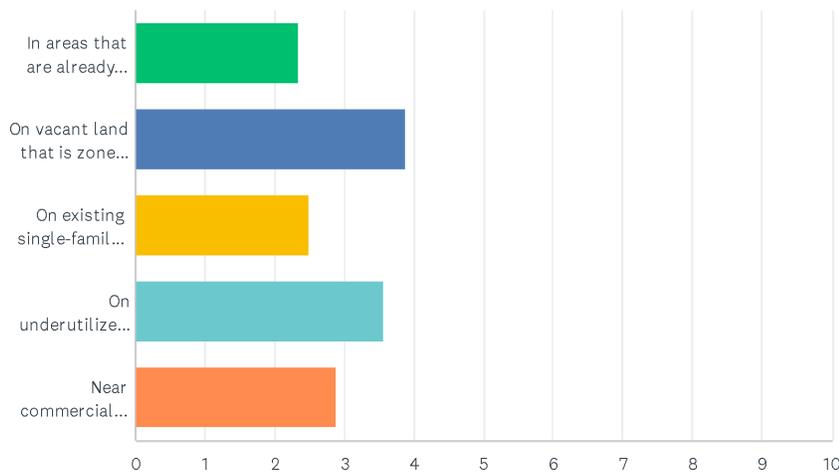
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
High cost/low wages	42.17% 35	14.46% 12	14.46% 12	10.84% 9	13.25% 11	3.61% 3	1.20% 1	83	5.46
Lack of available units for rent	31.40% 27	39.53% 34	12.79% 11	5.81% 5	5.81% 5	2.33% 2	2.33% 2	86	5.69
Lack of affordable homes for purchase	18.29% 15	24.39% 20	25.61% 21	19.51% 16	7.32% 6	1.22% 1	3.66% 3	82	5.09
Lack of smaller, more affordable housing types	4.76% 4	16.67% 14	30.95% 26	28.57% 24	11.90% 10	4.76% 4	2.38% 2	84	4.50
Lack of housing options for large families	1.25% 1	1.25% 1	10.00% 8	17.50% 14	31.25% 25	30.00% 24	8.75% 7	80	2.99
Lack of multifamily or workforce housing	5.00% 4	5.00% 4	6.25% 5	13.75% 11	17.50% 14	41.25% 33	11.25% 9	80	2.98
Housing discrimination	1.28% 1	1.28% 1	2.56% 2	2.56% 2	8.97% 7	14.10% 11	69.23% 54	78	1.64

Question 4: Please rank what you think are the best locations in Solvang for new housing:

Respondents were asked to rank a list of housing barriers by order of importance. Overall, respondents felt the best locations were "on vacant land that is zoned for housing development, but not yet developed" (weighted score of 3.88), "on underutilized commercial sites that can be converted to residential use" (3.57), and "near commercial locations and transportation routes, creating "live-work" opportunities"(2.87).

Q4 Please rank what you think are the best locations in Solvang for new housing:

Answered: 86 Skipped: 3



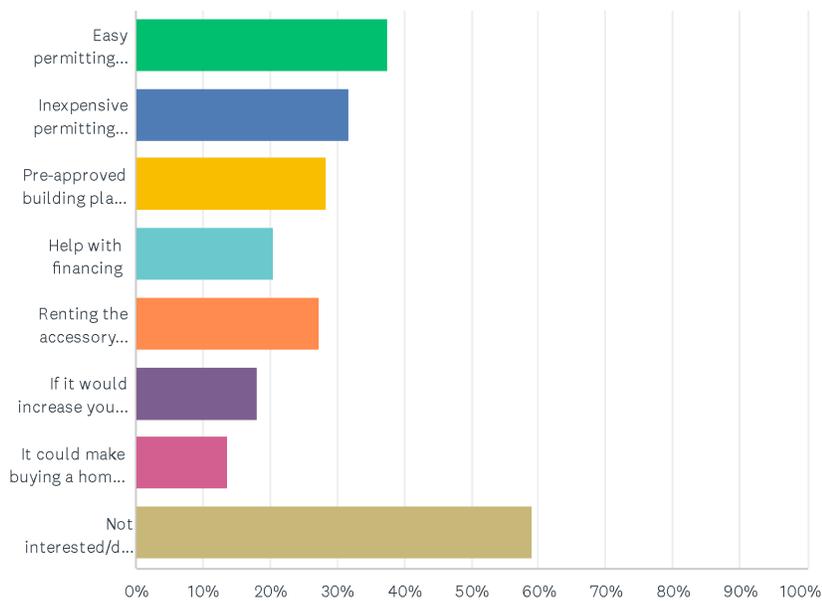
	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
In areas that are already developed with housing but could be made denser by increasing the number of housing units allowed on each lot.	14.10% 11	7.69% 6	14.10% 11	26.92% 21	37.18% 29	78	2.35
On vacant land that is zoned for housing development, but not yet developed.	46.99% 39	18.07% 15	18.07% 15	9.64% 8	7.23% 6	83	3.88
On existing single-family lots as accessory dwelling units (granny flats).	8.86% 7	13.92% 11	21.52% 17	29.11% 23	26.58% 21	79	2.49
On underutilized commercial sites that can be converted to residential use.	25.93% 21	29.63% 24	23.46% 19	17.28% 14	3.70% 3	81	3.57
Near commercial locations and transportation routes, creating "live-work" opportunities.	8.33% 7	33.33% 28	20.24% 17	13.10% 11	25.00% 21	84	2.87

Question 5: What would make you consider adding an accessory dwelling unit (granny flat) to your property? Please select all that apply.

Respondents were asked to select incentives that might be successful in encouraging accessory dwelling unit production. The incentives selected most often include "easy permitting process" (37.5 percent), "inexpensive permitting process" (31.8 percent), "pre-approved building plans provided by the City" (28.4 percent) and "renting the accessory dwelling unit would be a new source of income" (20.5 percent). It is worth noting that 52 respondents selected "not interested/doesn't apply to me."

Q5 What would make you consider adding an accessory dwelling unit (granny flat) to your property? Please select all that apply.

Answered: 88 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Easy permitting process	37.50%	33
Inexpensive permitting process	31.82%	28
Pre-approved building plans provided by the City	28.41%	25
Help with financing	20.45%	18
Renting the accessory dwelling unit would be a new source of income	27.27%	24
If it would increase your property value	18.18%	16
It could make buying a home in Solvang attainable for me	13.64%	12
Not interested/doesn't apply to me	59.09%	52
Total Respondents: 88		

Question 6: What else would you like us to consider when updating Solvang’s housing plan?

Respondents to this question identified a variety of items for considerations when updating Solvang’s housing plan, from opportunities to pursue (e.g. mixed use development) to community needs (e.g. higher affordability, water). The most cited considerations identified were higher affordability (27 percent of responses) and better traffic (17 percent of responses), but higher availability (13 percent of responses) short-term rentals and neighborhood compatibility (8 percent each) were also mentioned often.

Topic	# of Responses	Percent of Responses
Short-Term Rentals	5/60	8%
Mixed-Use	2/60	3%
Higher Availability	8/60	13%
Higher Affordability	16/60	27%
Better Traffic	10/60	17%
Barriers to Production	1/60	2%
Neighborhood Compatibility	5/60	8%
Growth Management	2/60	3%
More Greenspaces	1/60	2%
More Sidewalks	2/60	3%
Move Low-income Bring in Mid-income	1/60	2%
Land Use Mix	2/60	3%
Residential over Commercial	1/60	2%
ADUs	3/60	5%
Parking	3/60	5%
Lower Density	6/60	10%
Incentivize Higher Density, Smaller Developments	1/60	2%
Community Engagement	2/60	3%
Nonprofit-City Coop	1/60	2%
More Bike Lanes	1/60	2%
More Trails	1/60	2%
No More Affordable Housing	1/60	2%
Water	4/60	7%
Better Routing	1/60	2%
Walkable	2/60	3%
Better Landlord Relations	3/60	5%
Keep Buildings for Affordable Housing	1/60	2%
Better Housing Conditions	1/60	2%
Spread Out Affordable Housing Units	1/60	2%

Individual responses are included as written on page 9.

Individual Responses to Open-ended Questions

Questions #2 and #6 asked participants to provide text responses, rather than select from a list of choices. This section includes the individual responses to these questions. These responses were categorized and summarized in the section above.

Question 2: What are the most critical housing issues in Solvang?

Responses
Not enough rental or home owner housing available. Nothing available for mid to even high level income. Families can no longer afford to live in the area.
Cost
Please no expansion. No changes.
cost of mortgage
Government regulation in easing costs of construction and redevelopment.
Affordable Housing
None
Forty percent of U.S. jobs are low wage jobs! Rents in Solvang are too high for low wages. Business and City Council should work to motivate private property owners to turn empty buildings into housing. With family owned property however, some families will wait until the eldest owner dies in order to get a stepped up basis and not pay taxes and so some properties sit there unused and not maintained.
Lack of rentals
AFFORDABLE units for both families (long term residents- possible buyers) and rental units for employees.
We have a large piece (1.5 ac.) of property and would like to put a second guest house or Granny quarters on it.
Affordable housing needed for teachers and other service areas with low pay without adding traffic. Increased property taxes.
lack of middle income housing
No available rentals
Low inventory and expensive rental units
Affordability
Availability, cost, utility costs
Low income housing
Cost, availability
Not enough and too expensive.
Lack of availability, affordability and not enough units overall to support the local need/demand.
Rent increases are sky high and almost unattainable especially for local residents who have grown up in the SYV and are looking for housing. Rent for a studio is outrageous.
Overcrowding
Need more affordable housing
Price
Affordable and pet friendly
Affordable housing for all! We need more apartment complexes.
Permitting process
Lack of affordable housing
Too high of density causing parking problems
Cost of homes, low inventory
Affordable rentals for low income WORKING people.
Rents are not affordable for single people
lack of affordable housing
not enough rentals at lower prices
Not enough rental housing

None. Stop building.
As a senior, trying to stay in your home with increasing property tax, water rates utilities ext.
Need for low income housing. DO NOT overdevelop Solvang and turn it into Santa Maria or Buelton.
High rents and lack of affordable housing
Affordable housing and more of it
Water availability.
Low income housing
Affordable housing and traffic.
High costs.
Water, traffic, lack of affordable housing, lack of rentals
I am writing this as a former professor of marketing research. It is a common mistake in surveys to ask questions about general needs, not personal ones, such as rank importance of following. The problem is people will think "well other people need affordable housing, so I'll say that" when they do not need affordable housing. This leads to what I call the swimming pool fallacy. Asked if the community needs a swimming pool, everyone says "yes," but no one needs it for themselves and will not use it ending in a waste of money. Your questions should specifically relate to the person that is answering or perhaps their immediate family or friends. IE, in question 3: rank in order of importance to you personally, to your immediate family, to your friends. Also, you need demographics - are the people responding residents of Solvang? if not where? are they renters or owners? What is their approximate family income <50,000; 50,000 to 100,000; 100,000; 100,000 to 200,000; >200,000. I don't know how many responses you've gotten, but you might still be able to revise for more useful data. Sharyne Merritt PhD 805.266.8722
available housing for low-medium income individuals and families
That they conform to the area. Our roads in Solvang are not designed for high density. We already have an issue with the westbound traffic on Hwy 246 after the Alamo Pintado traffic lights. Vehicles enter the left hand turn lane as early as Pine Street in order to avoid the que. The actual law on turn lanes is you don't enter one before the last 200 feet to the light. Traffic also uses Pine Street to get to 5th Street and avoid the center of town all together. This is all because we have more traffic volume than the roads, lights and intersections can handle.
Lack of affordable housing to rent or buy
NO low income housing!!
Unavailable
There are too many vacation rentals and too much traffic in Solvang, these short term rentals could have been used for long term rentals.
High Cost, low supply, but any increase in supply must maintain Solvang's character as a village of single family homes.
rentals
Housing for the employment force of the city. It is not affordable for even teachers to live locally
Cost of water
Cost and availability
No affordable rental houses for growing families.
Affordable housing at all levels.
Severe lack of affordable & available rentals. What is available is ridiculously overpriced for what they offer!
Affordable Workforce Housing
Too expensive and no available
Lack of affordable long term rental for families and employees. Lack of affordable housing.
Price and availability
Rent prices and lack of availability
The rent is way to high, and water costs are over priced as well. And no one accepts pets.
Outrageous rent price even buying prices & absolutely no low income landlords
Housing that is affordable
Unaffordable rent
Housing for lower income families and people.
There is no affordable rentals for people who work in solvang. The price of renting anything does not equate with the price of most of the local jobs.

rent costs
No rentals. Rental prices for a 2 bedroom are very high. No homes for sale under or around 1 million. Nothing affordable for middle class.
Priced out
No affordable housing.
Lower income housing
Not enough affordable housing
too high and no availability
Rentals
Affordable market rate housing. Even if I have money, the prices have gone up so much that I am now priced out. California government assistance doesn't care about the middle class, but it certainly burdens us with higher housing prices by creating more competition for affordable homes.
Need more apartments or condos that are affordable.
Rent and house prices are too high, also there's no availability anywhere
Stock & Affordability. There are 1 or 2 homes for rent at any given time and that's just crazy. There is ZERO affordable, semi-affordable, or even almost-affordable housing in the valley. Rent is currently well over 50% of the standard take-home pay for anyone working in retail, construction, food/bev, etc. Common jobs. I think it's a multi-critical issue.
Not even semi-affordable housing available to rent or buy in the SY valley.
low and middle income housing. Smaller starter homes for couples, families, Fewer McMansion style homes that do not fit on a lot or fit in to the neighborhood
El alto costo de renta en el valle, no hay vivienda, no los arreglan y si lo hacen te ahuyentan mucho de renta (The high cost of rent in the valley, there is no housing, they do not fix them and if they do they drive you away [with high rent])

Question 6: What else would you like us to consider when updating Solvang’s housing plan?

Responses
No changes.
the rental unit being offer to non -residents of the Valley housing
Mixed use in commercial areas
Increase required number of low income units in any multi-family development project.
Increased traffic which is already bad and streets already present are designed for rural life
Instead of City Council concentrating on new hotels and TOT taxes, talk to all the property owners of the locations identified above (except for SF zones) as potential home building or business to dwelling converting sites so you understand the obstacles to building on those infill sites. Work on the obstacles. Ask the Chumash if they'd like to own Solvang City infill housing real estate.
I don't want a two-story ADU allowed in my housing development or anything that changes the nature of the neighborhood, such as additional traffic and cars parked on street. Wouldn't a zoning law have to be changed to allow this?
Easy vehicle access to dwellings that does not cause traffic congestion. Appearance of housing that does not conflict with current aesthetics (no block housing). Find larger areas that have not been developed, rather than cram more housing into already existing area.
Plan to handle population and housing density. Streets, services, and general space will have issues as density increases.
Keep fancy high-price visitor rentals out of Solvang and surrounding areas. There are enough of those and traffic will become worse than it already is.
Preserving the danish character of the TRC and maintaining the rural atmosphere of the area
Cost to rent & availability.
Cost of living and availability.
We do NOT need increased population. This degrades quality of life in multiple ways.
Create more affordable housing for locals who work and want to stay in the valley

Traffic issues
We need more affordable rental units.,
Consider traffic increase in areas proposed for development.
What about water? More green areas. More sidewalks.
Move section 8 and free housing back to Lompoc where there are resources for them. That would open up housing for working people.
Rents are not affordable for single people
consideration and concern for present property owner rights
Don't allow any more hotels to be built, focus on rental housing development.
Listen to the residents, not the businesses.
ADUs are a huge mistake. Eliminates single family zoning, adds to parking problems and increases density where we don't want it.
The people who work here should be able to afford to live here. As a senior on fixed income I want some assurance that I won't simply be priced out of the rental market
Incentivize high density smaller developments for affordable housing and ADU's. Do workshops for homeowners and builders on ADU's and the process with pre-approved plans (many other California communities have done this) Keep engaging the community for input into this. Work with nonprofits to solicit additional community members.
Traffic, sidewalks, bike lanes.
Any ADU that could be made possible
Walking and bike paths, easements
water and traffic
Please don't make congestion a worse problem. By building high density units with out thinking about the traffic concerns (driving, walking, bicycles, crosswalks) just lowers our quality of life.
In Q4, would rank underutilized commercial sites higher if it included using commercial as mixed use rather than conversion to residential.
No low income housing!!
Parking is part of development planning
Keep Solvang a low density neighborhood. I
PLEASE DO NOT INCREASE HOUSING DENSITY OR REQUIRE LOW COST HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS.
Q7
traffic
Updating and adding more R-2 to R-4 lots. Annexing new land to increase housing areas and growing the property tax income
Water availability
Housing for lower income individuals and young families.
Find a forward thinking way to resolve traffic and parking issues for houses and to handle tourist traffic and growth. Need ability to get to work and back without the backlog of massive traffic jams, or having to divert routes to try to move forward.
Affordable workforce housing should be located near downtown businesses to encourage a walk to work, no car lifestyle.
The cost of living and what solvang wages are paying
A ban on short-term rentals or Air-BnB. Or limit it to X% of housing. Short-term rentals are killing availability. Support development of multi story rental unit complex.
Landlords do not provide a service, they hold homes hostage. Vacation rentals should be illegal until everyone is housed.
Not to tear down buildings for example the Vets hall etc in the name of "progress" . We need more affordable Family housing. I manage a store in Solvang, graduated from SY High and there is no way in Hell my small family can live in Solvang or the valley due to the insane prices. Maybe consider rent caps like larger cities as to minimize the greed.
There are no landlords that participate in low income housing.
Please find a way for people to be able to afford to live and work here

Consider full time minimum wage families on one income. I went to college and have a good paying job unfortunately got divorced and was left raising Two kids by myself. I could not afford to live where I work.
That the lower income homes and apartments are well kept up.
Solvang thrives on tourism. But the people who work in those industries can no longer afford to live in solvang which is why every where is so short staffed. If you want the tourism to thrive you need to make it affordable for its residents.
Airbnb’s have become out of control. They need to go back to limiting the amount in town.
Community involvement
There’s no way to support our tourist industry if there’s no one to work our hotels and shops
When creating affordable section 8 housing, spread it around the city, rather than putting it all in one place. Larger complexes tend to increase crime and decrease property values.
More places that except low-income programs like Section 8
Discuss what affordable housing really is and base it upon the common wage here in the valley and not just some theoretical number handed out by bigger cities with different needs. A person making 50k gross per year cannot afford a \$2,500 1-br apt. Top that off with a car, insurance, utilities... it's impossible.
limited water resources, walkability, keeping the community and neighborhood feeling, more within the TRC
Que los precios de propiedades sean accesibles a los trabajadores y asi como están construyendo casas los ricos hicieran para los que trabajamos (That the prices of properties are accessible to the workers and just as the rich are building houses for those of us who work)