

Summary of Results: Survey of Voter Intent
San Juan County Affordable Housing Real Estate Excise Tax
Presented to the Community Land Trust Alliance of the San Juan Islands
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In November, 2005, professional interviewers surveyed by telephone 401 randomly chosen San Juan Islanders who:

- were registered voters of San Juan County
- had voted in 2 of the past 4 general elections

The voters were questioned about their likely vote for a Housing Bank supported by a Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) in San Juan County which would be used for affordable housing. They were asked about possible influences on their decision and about their priorities for any programs created using the tax.

Results

Voter intention:

- 61% For
- 8.2% Undecided 6.5% leaning toward “For”; 1.7% leaning toward “Against”
- 30.4% Against

Most important considerations in deciding to vote for a REET

- Housing Bank housing would remain permanently affordable
- Most people who rely on wages in San Juan County can’t afford to buy a home
- A core of permanently affordable housing is an investment in the quality of life in the San Juan Island
- We need to start solving this problem now, before prices get any higher

Respondents prefer beneficiaries of affordable ownership housing have limited gains at resale

- 61% of respondents were more likely to vote for a REET, if owners of homes purchased with support from county funds would have limited gains upon selling their affordable housing.

Preferred beneficiaries of a county affordable housing program

Respondents rated the following groups as the highest priorities for support. The five categories were very closely rated.

- Year-round workers in low wage jobs
- Elderly people who can’t afford to maintain their homes
- Families with children at home
- Year-round workers in very low wage jobs
- People who work year round in moderate income jobs

Respondents’ preferred programs

- Help organizations build affordable homes with homeowners providing most of the labor
- Help non-profit organizations develop modest, permanently affordable homes for low-income residents to purchase
- Help find loans for wage-earning families to purchase homes