Cochrane

2020 Rural Housing and Service Needs Estimation Project

Community Report

Table of Contents

About This Report

The Rural Development Network recognizes that the 2020 Rural Housing and Service Needs Estimation Project took place on the traditional territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8.

The Town of Cochrane's Estimation Count occurred on Treaty 7 territory, the ancestral home of the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), as well as the Métis. The RDN also recognizes the direct connection between homelessness and colonization[1], and it is our hope that this project provides one small step towards righting wrongs.

Rural Development Network

Lead Data Analyst	Managing Editor	Project Manager	Executive Director
Azam Khattak	Scott Travis	Julia Juco	Dee Ann Benard

Data Specialists

Adam Letal

Alana Tollenaar

Brady Bailey

Daniel Waring

Hashim Khattak

Julia Orlova

Katelyn Paccagnan

Sarah Nocente

Sydni Zastre

Tannis Serben

Victor Eng

Acknowledgement

Lead Coordinators

- Kristen Immel, Community Liaison and Programmer, Town of Cochrane Family and Community Support Services

List of Partner Organizations

Cochrane Big Hill Haven

Cochrane and Area Victim Services

Cochrane Family Resource Network

Cochrane FCSS

Cochrane Pregnancy Care Centre

Cochrane Society for Housing Options

Helping Hands Society of Cochrane and Area

Rockyview and Wheatland Employment Services

This report and the information within was made possible through the efforts of many dedicated individuals and groups. We wish to thank the front line staff at participating service agencies across the Town of Cochrane for their tireless efforts during this challenging time.

Executive Summary

In November 2020, service agencies within Cochrane participated in a large-scale effort to estimate housing and service needs across 24 rural communities in the province

Funded by Reaching Home, the Government of Canada's official homelessness strategy, the Rural Housing and Service Needs Estimation Project (Estimations' Project) was led by the Rural Development Network following the methodology outlined in the "Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness".

This project was an opportunity to better understand the needs of existing residents, as well as complement and improve official data for the Town of Cochrane. Collecting data during this period - where physical access to local establishments have been severely limited/affected by a global pandemic - offers a unique opportunity to examine how residents' needs are exacerbated during a time of crisis.

Cochrane FCSS connected with Cochrane's local community organizations to prepare and coordinate their local count. Service agencies were instructed to invite individuals who visited their agency during a consecutive 30-day period to fill out a 30-question survey.

Surveys were intended to gather a holistic view of the interlocking needs that affect an individual's ability to access/maintain safe, stable housing, which includes their ability to access proper services and resources within the community.

Cochrane's data was collected through paper and online surveys, where

respondents had the choice to complete the survey by themselves, with assistance from staff, or in the comfort of their own homes with the use of online access codes. Collected surveys were examined and analyzed for duplicates and errors by RDN analysts to ensure data integrity and validity. Data was then compiled, reviewed, and consolidated in the final findings outlined in this report

Out of 24 people surveyed, 8 (33.3%) were found to be living in situations defined as homeless or 'housing-insecure'.

An additional 16 dependents were reported to share these living conditions, along with 10 adults. In total, there are 50 individuals within the Town of Cochrane that are either living in insecure housing conditions, or sharing these conditions with respondents.

The most common factors affecting respondents' current living situation were: lack of money, unaffordable rent or mortgage, mental health struggles, medical conditions, and job loss.

Much of the information in this report confirms the findings from a survey conducted in 2019 (page 42). At the time, the top reasons given for why their housing was unstable were "I don't make enough money", and "I can't afford my rent or mortgage payments". When examining high-need respondents (those relying on supported housing/shelter, staying with friends/strangers, or makeshift shelter/public space), the top reasons became "Mental Health issues", "I don't make enough money", "Disability", and "Conflict with landlord/cohabitant". The 2019 survey also identified that 48% of high-need respondents were employed. In contrast, the data gathered in 2020 indicated that

proportion had fallen to 12.5%.

This report breaks down the places of residence, services needed, demographics, housing, employment, and income sources of those experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness. This report also provides a qualitative sample of feedback from those most vulnerable within the community.

"In many instances, there are discrepancies between what people need or want, what service providers can offer and what the provincial or local governments can afford or support as best practices."

–Marybeth Shinn,
International Homelessness:
Policy, Socio-Cultural, and Individual Perspectives[3]

Definitions

"**Homelessness** describes the **situation** of an individual, family or community **without** stable, safe, permanent, appropriate **housing, or the immediate** prospect, means and **ability of acquiring it.**

It is the **result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of** affordable and appropriate **housing**, the individual/household's **financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges**, and/or **racism and discrimination.**

Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing."

–Canadian Definition of Homelessness, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness[4]

Q11. Thinking about your living situation **this past month**, which of these statements apply to you? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ I own the house I'm currently in
- ☐ I rent the apartment I'm currently in
- ☐ I live in accommodations provided by my employer
- ☐ I live in a house that is owned by/rented out by the Band
- ☐ I share a house/apartment with roommates
- ☐ I live in a house/apartment that I share with family/dependents
- ☐ I find it difficult to pay rent and I feel like I spend more than a third of my monthly income on my housing
- ☐ I live in housing that needs major repairs (heating or plumbing problems, mould, leaky roof, etc.)
- ☐ There are not enough rooms for the number of people in the house I'm in
- ☐ I lived in supported housing (e.g. Housing First)
- ☐ I stayed in a medical/detox/rehabilitation facility
- ☐ I slept in a friend's/family's house because I had no other place to stay
- ☐ I stayed in a jail / prison/ remand centre
- ☐ I stayed at a women's / domestic violence shelter
- ☐ I stayed with someone I didn't know because I had no other place to stay
- ☐ I slept in a shelter
- ☐ I slept in a makeshift shelter, vehicle, tent, or shack
- ☐ I slept in a public space (sidewalks, park benches, bus shelter etc.)

Figure 1: table used in 2020 questionnaire to determine respondents' housing security. Refer to Appendix A for full questionnaire.

The accompanying typology[2] identifies a range of housing and shelter circumstances:

Provisionally Accommodated

People who are homeless whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, including interim (or transitional) housing, people living temporarily with others (couch surfing), or living in institutional contexts (hospital, prison) without permanent housing arrangements.

At-Risk of Homelessness

People who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards.

Emergency Sheltered

People who are homeless who stay in overnight emergency shelters designed to provide temporary accommodations.

Unsheltered

People who are homeless who live on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation.

Background

When it comes to homelessness and understanding its causes, the urban experience tends to dominate the conversation due to the "visibility" of individuals experiencing homelessness. The issue of homelessness within rural and remote areas is far less understood or even acknowledged by the wider public because of its "hidden" nature. Individuals experiencing housing insecurity in rural and remote communities are more likely to couch surf, live in overcrowded housing, or own/rent housing that may need major repairs-often leveraging the relationships around them in for support.

RDN initially developed the Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness due to the lack of available, accurate, and current data on rural homelessness. This limits the ability of rural communities to advocate for better resources for their residents in greatest need. The guide is unique in that it tackles the issue of housing insecurity and homelessness from a rural perspective, and recognizes the difficulties that come with conducting standard Point-in-Time (PiT) counts in rural and remote areas.

This tool allows for anyone, including small nonprofits and local front-line agencies, to gather data on gaps in local housing and service needs and has been instrumental in helping rural communities gather credible evidence on homelessness to subsequently improve the kind of services offered within the community.

Methodology & Data Collection

The methodology employed in this Housing and Service Needs Estimate is a modified version of that found in the Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness, published by the Rural Development Network. Methods

for estimating homelessness and housing insecurity in urban centres are not suited to rural and remote ones. Conducting traditional Point-in-Time counts over larger swaths of service area is not always feasible for already under-staffed/-resourced community agencies. This inability to participate in PiT counts translates to no data, which translates into no need within the community. When there's no tangible data, rural and remote communities can't advocate to address service gaps or for an increase in funding.

The model used in this project allows for a variety of service agencies to offer questionnaires to clients in places they already visit and know. This approach leverages existing infrastructure (service agencies such as FCSS, libraries, Friendship Centres, churches, food banks etc.) within the community as opposed to devoting resources to scour the town core for visibly unsheltered individuals. Due to the sensitivity and the associated stigma surrounding homelessness and housing issues, this method relies on the relationships that service providers have established and cultivated over time with their clients to ensure respondents feel comfortable and safe at all times during the survey process.

The current survey was developed in accordance with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness' definition of homelessness and housing insecurity. However the term "homelessness" was not emphasized in the survey, primarily because of the misunderstanding of the term and the stigma associated with it. Instead, the survey was advertised as a better way to understand the housing and support services needed within the community. This builds off feedback from multiple service providers that are committed to minimizing stigma that could cause distress to their clients. By re-framing the language of the survey, service providers were able to encourage all clients to participate, instead of pointedly targeting certain individuals.

In relation to stigma, previous findings suggest that clients are often reluctant to label themselves as homeless or housing-insecure. For this project, respondents were asked whether they consider their living conditions to be

secure, AND to fill out checkboxes that determine their objective housing situation. Subsequent data analysis would determine – based on responses to the latter survey question – which respondents were housing-insecure. As we see in the results, some individuals who don't consider themselves to be either homeless or at-risk actually qualify based on national definitions of homelessness. The majority of the report focuses on the responses of individuals who were living in objectively housing-insecure conditions.

Insecure Housing is when a person experiences difficulty paying rent, spends a major portion of the household income on housing, frequently moves, lives in overcrowded conditions, or doubles up with friends and relatives.

Before the survey period began, RDN provided orientation and training sessions to the Lead Coordinator, and staff at the participating agencies. Emphasis during training was placed on clarifying survey terms, ensuring respondents' confidentiality and privacy, and securing their informed consent. During these training sessions, resources were provided to improve outreach for both community members and potential agency partners, while promoting the benefits of understanding the need of clients. Training also covered various ways to administer the survey in an open, non-intrusive manner, placing extra consideration for meeting individuals' reasons for visiting the service agency before offering the survey.

This report consists of an overview of the primary data collected through

social service agencies in Cochrane from November 1st to 30th, 2020. The lead coordinator for the project was Cochrane Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). After recruitment of participating agencies, the Rural Development Network provided virtual training for those who would be delivering the survey. Two versions of the survey were provided for distribution: a paper version which could be filled out on location, and an online version which could be filled out on location, or accessed with an access code later on.

Two staff from the Town of Cochrane FCSS conducted a point-in-time count on one evening during the 30-day estimation. Public areas and parks were visited during a 2-hour time frame. Staff identified 4 individuals who were visibly homeless on this particular night.

Regardless of the version of survey completed (paper or online) respondents were each assigned a unique ID. This ID is composed of initials derived from respondents' name and birthdate, scrambled in a certain order to maintain confidentiality. This ensures that if the respondent took the same survey at a later date, the data would show further need by the individual without inflating the number of respondents.

The data found in this report is survey data. There are no significance values, p-values, tests, or inferential statistics of any sort within this report. It is therefore not RDN's intention with this report to

- Guarantee that the data provides a complete or all-encompassing depiction of housing instability and service needs within the region;
- Provide any interpretations of the data contained herein;
- Make any recommendations for policy changes or actions to be taken as a result of this data;
- Make any stake/claim about government policies, corporate actions, or externalities.

However, we encourage individual community members and local community

leaders to use this data to inform their own conclusions and policies, and to determine how to best make use of this information. RDN assumes no responsibility or liability for any changes, decisions, or actions made as a result of the interpretation of data outlined in this report.

A note about youth participation: service agencies were instructed to limit survey administration to individuals 14 years of age or older. In compliance with the consent and confidentiality guidelines of the Alberta College of Social Workers, individuals under 14 years of age were required to secure guardian's approval prior to participation.

Finally, it's important to note that due to exclusion of non-responses and skipped questions, subtotals and percentages may not exactly reflect absolute totals. A copy of the actual paper survey used in this project can be found at ruraldevelopment.ca.

Limitations

Despite our best attempts to reduce stigma and increase accessibility of the survey, not all clients who entered participating agencies chose to take the survey. The survey was voluntary, and accessing services was not contingent on their participation. There remains a portion of clients whose voices were not captured.

Additionally, not every individual requiring help may have entered a participating service agency during the designated 30-day collection period, despite advertising efforts leading up to the survey. Some service agencies may not have been able to fully participate, given the urgency of the services they provide and the length of time required to complete the survey. As a result, although trends and highlights of the data are very informative, this report presents a conservative picture of the service needs and housing insecurity in the community as a whole.

Survey Results

Across participating agencies, 24 people were surveyed. Of those, 2 completed paper surveys, and 22 were referred to an online survey. A copy of the survey questions used can be found on page 36.

Support Services

The results in this section are reported for all respondents who completed a survey, regardless of their housing security. This is to capture the overall needs of clients in the area for services from locations that participated in the Estimation.

All survey respondents (n=24) were asked about where they most often sought services, and what kind of services they needed most often during their visits to local service providers.

Figure 1 shows the responses, weighted by frequency, to the question "In which community do you most often seek services? Primarily respondents sought services in Cochrane, however surrounding communities were included.

Figure 1 – Word Cloud of the community in which respondents most often sought help from service agencies.

Taking into account the nature of interlocking needs, respondents were able to provide multiple responses (see Table 1).

Table 1 Main reason(s) for visiting the office today	# of respondents
Basic Needs	12
COVID-19 assistance	4
Crisis financial support	2
Family/parenting	9
Financial	3
Health and wellness	5
Legal	2
Support services	6
Transportation needs	3
Prefer not to answer	6
Not listed	1

Table 1 – *Table of reasons for respondents' visit to the service agency (multiple responses possible).*

Of the options provided, the top three types of support services sought by survey respondents were "Basic Needs Support" (12), "Family/Parenting Support" (9), and "Support Services" (6).

Respondents were then asked to identify the single most important reason for their visit in an open response field. Due to the freeform structure of the question, answers varied but the most common keywords are listed in Figure 2.

When asked about the perceived socio-economic opportunities available within the community, most respondents felt that the community provided enough recreation and social opportunities and social services, while recreation and social opportunities and affordable housing were not adequately provided (see Table 2).

Figure 2 – *Word Cloud of the most common responses to the "Primary Reason" for visiting the service agency*

Does the community provide enough:	Yes	No	Not Sure
Employment Opportunities?	2	12	8
Free or Accessible Recreation and Social Opportunities?	11	9	2
Sufficient Social Services?	12	5	6
Accessible Affordable Housing?	4	12	7

Table 2 – *Respondents answer the question: "does our community provide enough of the following opportunities?"*

Housing Needs

When respondents were asked whether they considered their "housing situation to be unstable or felt they could easily lose their housing", 6 (25.0%) replied 'Yes'.

Following this question, respondents were asked to identify the current living situation(s) that have applied to them in the past month (Table

3). Respondents were asked to select all options that apply. The options themselves represent a range of physical living situations, from secure to insecure. According to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, any option in Table 3 listed from "I find it difficult to pay rent and I spend more than a third of my monthly income on my housing" to the bottom of the list constitutes housing insecurity and homelessness.

After analysis, there are approximately **8 respondents (33.3% of total)** whose housing conditions are considered to be insecure and/or absent. These respondents are reported as 'objectively housing-insecure', and make up the primary source of data for the remainder of the report (Figure 3).
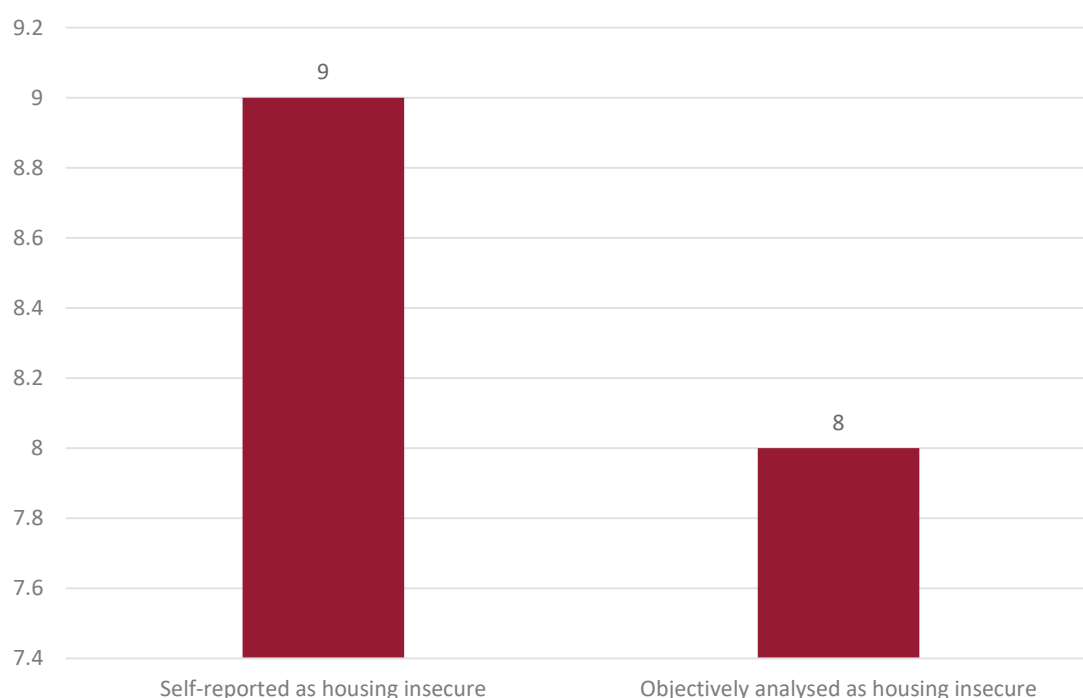

Figure 3 – *Respondents who feel their housing is unstable/insecure vs. respondents who objectively fit living conditions that constitute insecure housing under COH*[1].

1   Some respondents who believed they were living in insecure housing conditions also identified with living situations that constitute insecure housing as defined by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Thus, there may be some overlap between these two indicators as shown in Figure 3.

Table 3 - Current living sitation. "Which of these statements apply to you (thinking about the past month)?" (multiple responses possible)	# of respondents
I own the house I'm currently in	10
I rent the apartment I'm currently in	8
I live in accommodations provided by my employer	0
I live in a house that is owned/rented out by the Band	1
I share a house/apartment with roommates	1
I live in a house/apartment that I with family/dependents	7
I find it difficult to pay rent and I spend more than a third of my monthly income on my housing	5
I live in housing that needs major repairs (heating or plumbing problems, mould, leaky roof, etc.)	3
There are not enough rooms for the number of people in the house I'm in	3
I live in supported housing (e.g. Housing First)	0
I stayed in a medical/detox/rehabilitation facility	0
I slept in a friend's/family house because I had no other place to stay	3
I stayed in a jail/prison/remand centre	0
I stayed at a women's/domestic violence shelter	1
I stayed with someone I didn't know because I had no other place to stay	1
I slept in a shelter	1
I slept in a makeshift shelter, vehicle, tent, or shack	0
I slept in a public space (sidewalks, park benches, bus shelter, etc.)[1]	0

---

1   All 9 respondents who slept in a public space, also indicated they slept in a makeshift shelter during the past month.

Interestingly, there were 3 respondents who self-reported that their housing situation is secure in fact objectively live in an insecure housing situation. This could be due to a variety of factors, including being unaware of how the term is defined, or possibly a shame or stigma towards homelessness and housing insecurity.

Finally, respondents were asked about the length of time they've been in their current living arrangements. Their responses can be seen in Figure 4.
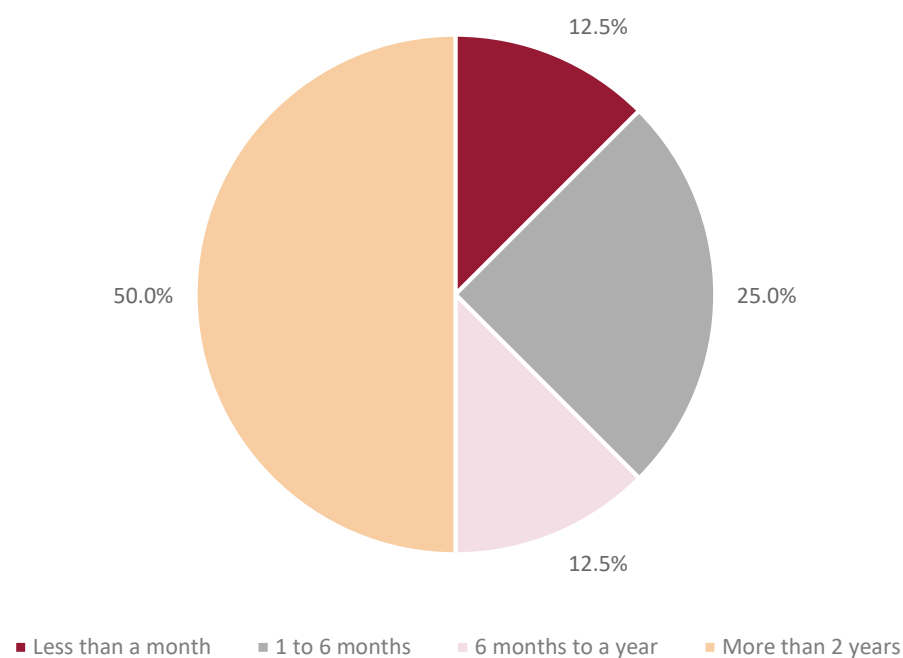

12.5%

25.0%

50.0%

12.5%

■ Less than a month   ■ 1 to 6 months   ■ 6 months to a year   ■ More than 2 years

Figure 4 – Respondents answer the question "how long have you been staying in your current living arrangements?"

Of all surveyed respondents, 2 (8.3%) respondents stated they had once stayed or are currently staying in foster care or youth group home.

Reasons for Housing Insecurity

After identifying the respondents who were found to be without housing, or living in insecure housing situations, we asked whether any of the following options was/were a contributing factor(s) (Table 4).

Table 4 - "Why do you feel your housing situation is insecure?"	Housing Insecure (self-reported)	Objectively housing unstable
I can't afford rent/mortgage payments	5	2
I don't make enough money	2	2
Domestic/Family violence	2	2
Mental health issues	2	2
Relationships	2	2
Illness/Medical condition	2	1
My house needs major repairs (mould, etc.)	2	1
Conflict	3	1
Addictions/Substance use	1	1
I lost my job	0	0
COVID-19-related	1	0
Physical disability	2	0

Table 6 – Respondents answer the question "If you needed a shelter in the past year and didn't access one, what were the reasons?"; Other options that had no responses: My rent went up, I lost my job, Spouse/Partner lost their job, Mental disability, Abuse Family rejection, Racism/Discrimination, Lack of Transportation I was in jail/prison, Prefer not to answer

Respondents who were found to be housing insecure identified the following reasons as main contributing factors to their living situations: "I can't afford rent/mortgage payments"; "I don't make enough money"; "Mental health issues"; "Domestic/family violence", and "Relationships".

Respondents were then asked in an open field question to identify the main factor that affected their housing insecurity, whether from the list they had seen previously, or from their own experience. To compliment the large amount of quantitative data encompassed in this report, we also included some of the qualitative findings that respondents included in their surveys. In addition to respondents providing answers to multiple-choice questions,

some parts of the survey collected responses, to allow respondents to provide additional information.

When asked to provide the main reason why respondents find themselves to be homeless or at-risk, we received the following verbatim replies:

"Cost of housing - we need low income housing **for those who do not make high wages and seniors with companions who live on CPP/OAS**"

"Housing needs major repairs although quite new."

"No ability **to pay mortgage**"

"Renting is generally unstable."

"Not my house. I will have to leave anytime."

"**Lack of funds** to cover high rent, food, medical"

*"I spend too much time alone in isolation **for my physical/mental disabilities.**"*

"Illness or medical condition"

Demographics

The following sections of 'Demographics', 'Household Makeup', 'Shelter Services', 'Community Residency', and 'Employment and Income Sources' report results from those respondents who were found to be housing-insecure.

Age, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

Respondents were asked about their current age. The median age of individuals experiencing housing insecurity was 36.

The reported gender of both housing-secure and insecure respondents can be seen in Figure 5.

The reported sexual orientation of respondents can be seen in Figure 6.
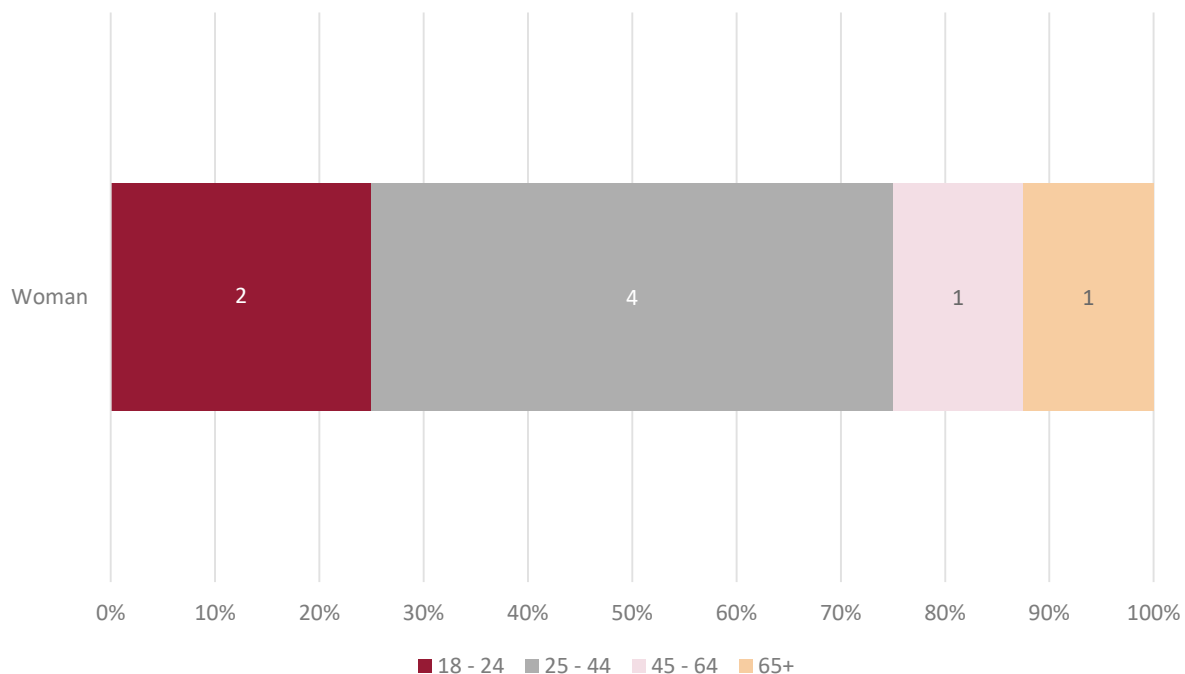

Figure 5 – *Respondents answer the question "how do you describe your gender identity?"*
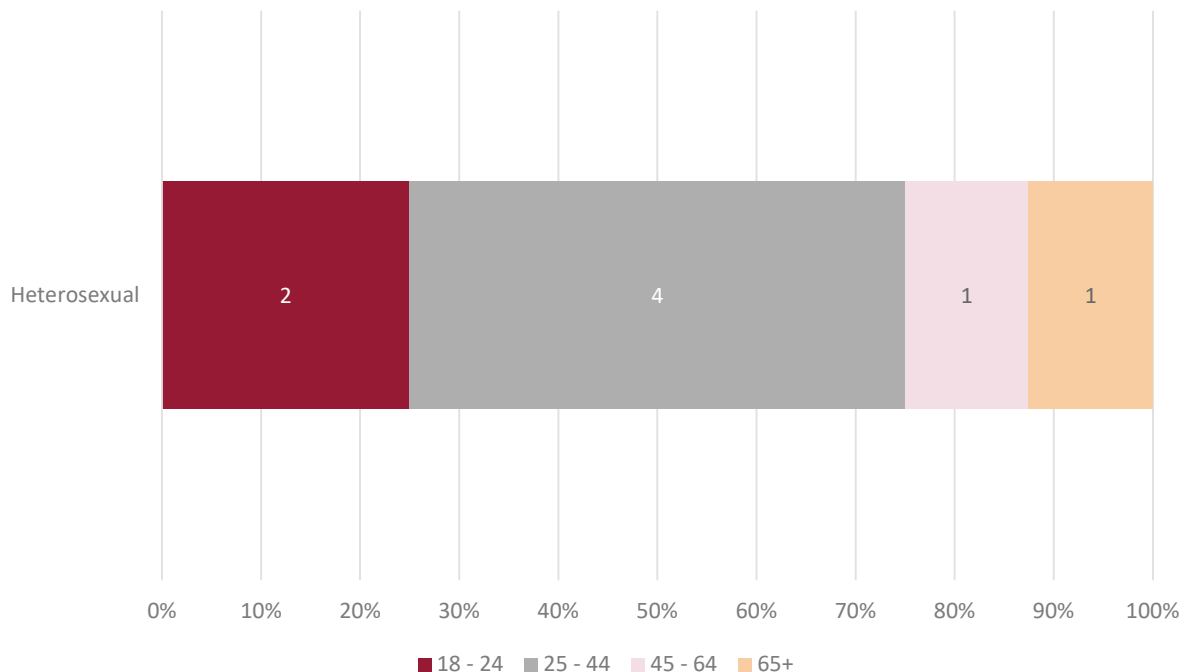
Figure 6 – *Respondents answer the question "How do you describe your sexual orientation?"*

Ethnicity and Migration Status

Of housing-insecure respondents surveyed, 1 identified as Asian, 3 as Caucasian, 3 as Indigenous (First Nations), and 1 identified with other ethnicities.

The majority (62.5%) of respondents experiencing housing-insecurity were born in Canada. 3 indicated that they migrated to Canada at some point, including 2 who came as a Landed Immigrant, and 1 as Temporary Foreign Worker. The majority (83.3%) of housing-insecure respondents were Canadian Citizens, as shown in Figure 8.
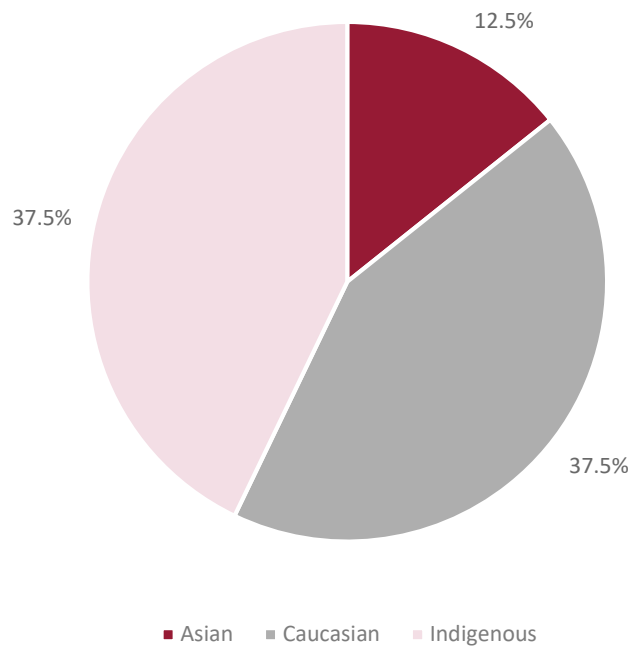
- ■ Asian
- ■ Caucasian
- ■ Indigenous

Figure 7 – *Respondents answer the question "what ethnicity do you identify with?"; Other possible options with no responses: African, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern, Prefer not to answer.*
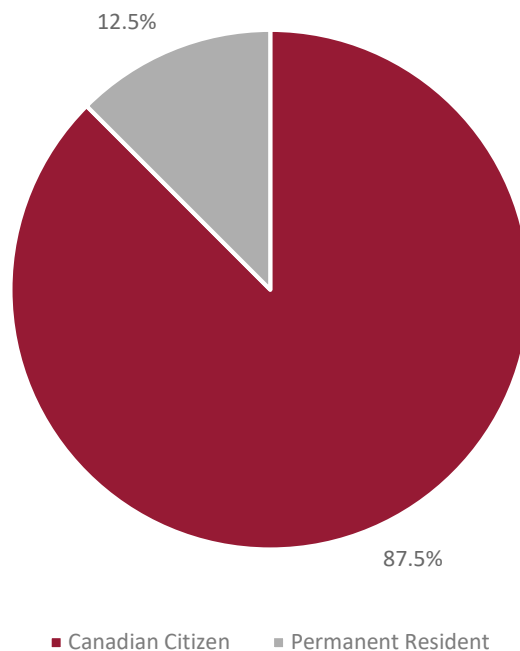

- ■ Canadian Citizen
- ■ Permanent Resident

Figure 8 – *Respondents answer the question "what is your current migration status?"; Other possible options with no responses: Economic Migrant Worker, Landed Immigrant, Refugee/Claimant, Student Visa, Temporary Foreign Worker, Prefer not to answer.*

Education

Of all survey respondents, the majority (29.2%) indicated that the highest level of education they've completed is a college certificate or diploma. This is closely followed by 16.7% respondents who obtained a post-secondary degree, and those who finished some grade school (16.7%). Detailed responses can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5 – "What is the highest level of education you've completed?"	# of respondents
College certificate or diploma	7
Some grade school	4
Post-secondary degree (bachelor's)	4
High school diploma or GED	3
Some post-secondary	2
Prefer not to answer	2
Apprenticeship, trades certificate, or diploma	1
Graduate/Professional Degree (Master's, PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	1

Table 5 – Respondents answer the question "What is the highest level of education you've completed?"; Other possible options with no responses: No formal education, Some high school, Don't know

Household Makeup

The survey included questions regarding household or family members who are currently sharing accommodations with each respondent.

No housing-insecure respondents reported that either they or someone in their household was pregnant, and 2 said that they were currently a single-parent household.

All housing-insecure respondents were living with dependents under the age of 18. Of those, 1 had one dependent, 2 had two, 1 had three, 2 had four

or more, and 2 responded "other", for a total of at least 16 dependents in the community. For respondents that listed out the number of dependents staying with them, 38.9% of listed dependents were between 0 and 4 years of age, 16.7% were between 5 and 9, 33.3% were between 10 and 14, and 11.1% were between 15 and 17. There was slightly more boys (55.6%) than girls (44.4%).

Some housing-insecure respondents reported that they had other adults living with them. The total number of adults sharing respondents' living situation was 10, an average of 1 per respondent. The relationships of these cohabitants can be found in Figure 9.
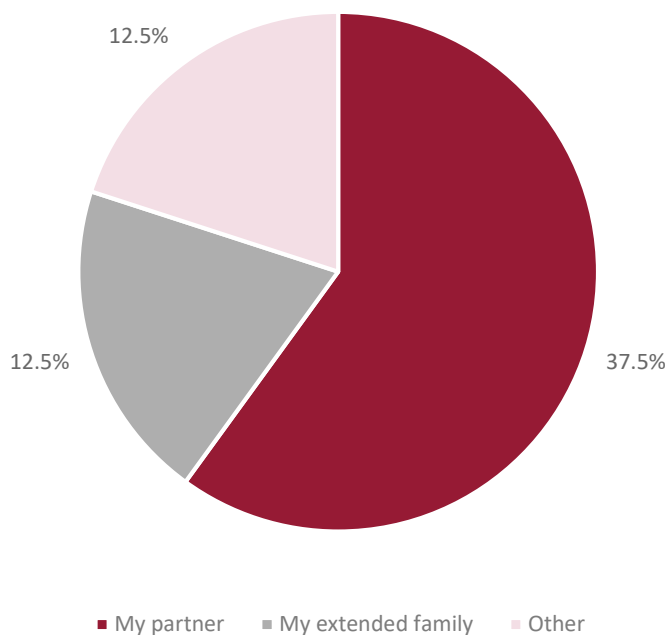

Figure 9 – *Co-habitant relationships to housing-insecure respondents. Other possible options with no responses: My parent(s), My adult children, My co-workers, There are no other adults staying with me, Prefer not to answer*

Shelter Services

Of respondents experiencing housing insecurity, 12.5% reported accessing a shelter within the past year. Of respondents who needed a shelter but did not access shelter services within the past year, the following reasons were provided: Table 6.

Table 6. "If you needed a shelter in the past year and didn't access one, what were the reasons?"	# of respondents
I didn't need shelter services	3
No shelters in my area	2
Reason not listed	2
I didn't feel safe	1
No pets allowed	1
Prefer not to answer	1

Table 6 – Respondents answer the question "If you needed a shelter in the past year and didn't access one, what were the reasons?"; Other options that had no responses: The shelter was full, Health concerns (bed bugs, dirty, etc.), Hours of operation, Lack of disability accommodations, Lack of transportation, Separation from family member/partner

Community Residency

Respondents were asked to indicate where they currently reside. Figure 10 displays those responses, weighted by frequency.

Figure 10 – Word Cloud of responses to "where do you currently reside?"

Respondents to the survey varied in terms of how long they've been a part of the community (Figure 10).

Of those who moved to the community at some point, Table 7 describes the primary reasons for the move.
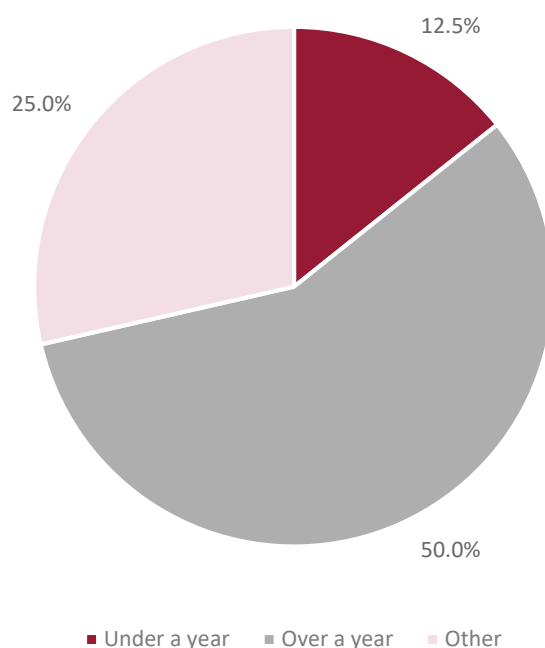
Figure 10 – Respondents answer the question "How long have you been living in this community?"; Other possible options with no responses: Always lived here and Prefer not to Answer

Table 7 – "What is the main reason you came to this community?"	# of respondents
Other	3
Fear for safety	1
To access emergency shelters	1
To access services/supports	1
To move in with spouse/partner	1

Table 7 – Respondents answer the question "what is the main reason you came to this community?" Other options that had no responses: COVID-19 treatment or supports, Environmental displacement (flooding, wildfire, lack of clean drinking water, etc.), To look for work, To start a job, To attend school, To find housing, To visit family/friends, My family moved here, Prefer not to answer

Of those who had moved to the community at some point, Figure 11 describes where they had resided previously.

Respondents were asked about the number of times they had moved in the past year; frequent moves can be an indicator of insecurity and precarious housing.

37.5% of those facing housing insecurity have not moved in the past year. Of respondents who had moved in the past year, 25.0% had moved 1-2 times (Figure 12).

Respondents were also asked if they would have stayed in their previous community if they had better access to services or programs.

12.5% of respondents said "Yes", while 25.0% said "No".

- A First Nations Community
- Another Community in the Province
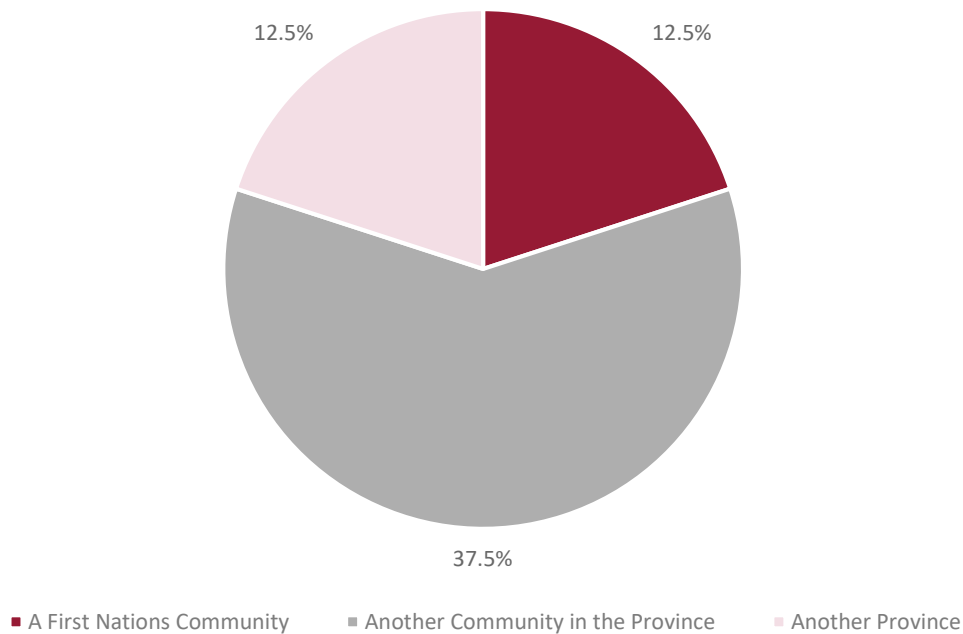- Another Province

Figure 11 – *Respondents answer the question "Where did you live before you came to this community?"; Other possible options with no responses: Another Country, Prefer not to answer Does not apply to me, A Métis settlement, an Inuit Community.*
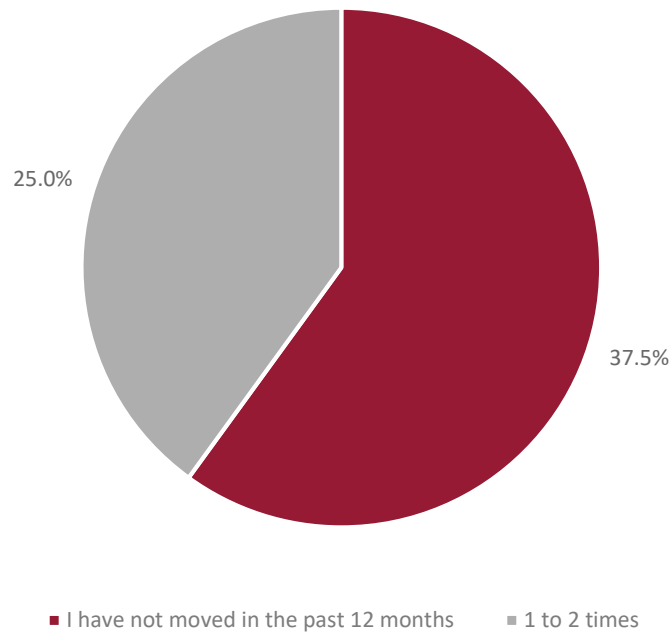
■ I have not moved in the past 12 months   ■ 1 to 2 times

Figure 12 – Respondents answer the question "How many times have you moved in the past year?"; Other possible options with no responses: 3 to 6 times, More than 6 times, Prefer not to answer, Does not apply to me, Other.

Employment And Income Sources

Of respondents who are experiencing housing insecurity, 12.5% reported being employed in some capacity. Respondents were asked about the industries they currently work in, due to no responses, data is unavailable.

Military/Emergency Service

As with the National Point-in-Time Count, respondents are asked about their veteran service. However, none of the current respondents identified as veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), or Emergency Services.

Sources of Income

Identifying sources of income can provide a better snapshot to the personal situations of respondents needing increased supports. For employed individuals, it can also provide insight into the disparity between wages and costs-of-living in the community.

1 person facing housing-insecurity reported employment as their main source of income. Sources of income varied though, and respondents were encouraged to select all that apply as shown below (Table 8)

Table 8 - "What are your sources of income?"	# of respondents
Child and Family Tax Benefits	5
GST refunds	3
My partner/spouse's income	2
Income assistance	2
Informal income (e.g. bottle returns, panhandling, etc.)	2
Employment	1
Seniors Benefits (CPP, OAS, GIS, etc.)	1
Disability Benefits	1
Employment Insurance	1
Money from family and friends	1

Table 9 – *Respondents answer the question "What are your sources of income?" Other possible options with no responses: Alimony/Child Support, Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB), Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), Veteran's Benefits, Student loans, Prefer not to answer, Not Listed*

What Does Homelessness Look Like?

In a report that is ostensibly composed of data and graphs, it is possible to overlook the humanity behind the numbers. Using the most common responses from the survey, we were able to compile a profile of a "typical" respondent facing housing insecurity.

In the case of Cochrane, this turns out to be a woman, about 40 years old, who has lived in the community for over a year or more. She finds it difficult to pay rent and feels like she spends more than a third of her monthly income on housing. She is unemployed, and there is an 4-out-of-5 chance she has at least one dependent sharing her living situation.

The true diversity of the respondents is of course illustrated in the Survey Results section, but this serves to highlight what someone in-need might look like within Cochrane.

Exploring Next Steps

This report refrains from offering concrete recommendations for Cochrane because in-depth dialogue between RDN, decision-makers, and administrators within the locale have not informed the findings within this report. It is the goal of the report to support decision-making at all levels by providing a credible, evidence-based document that can be used and referred to in the community. In the past, local organizations and governments have used information gathered using the methods outlined in the Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness to explore new programs and initiate new collaborations, such as:

- Establishing an overnight shelter
- Growing awareness within communities about homelessness and housing instability
- Highlighting the need for an affordable housing project and other economic development
- Increase dialogue with neighbouring communities and First Nations' groups
- Starting an emergency mat program in the community
- Starting the development of coordinated community response programs

Conclusion

This report provides a summary of primary data collected by service agencies in Cochrane from November 1st to the 30th. It is an overview of the needs and factors that affect housing security for individuals who accessed services during the survey period.

This project was coordinated in the midst of a global pandemic where in-person services offered by organizations has been severely reduced. Cochrane's participation represents a unique set of data that provides insight into the resiliency and strength of individuals even in times of crisis.

This project confirms that housing insecurity exists in rural and remote communities, presenting concrete data from respondents in 26 participating communities. This supports previous qualitative research which examined the pervasiveness of housing issues across the province[5].

The intention of this report is to provide means for agencies and leadership to determine their community's needs. It is the first step to understanding homelessness and housing instability in Cochrane.

Disclaimer

The data and information in the data set provided here are intended for use by persons possessing technical skill and knowledge in data management and analysis. While the data is provided in good faith and to the best of RDN's knowledge, RDN does not commit to it being updated.

While every effort is made to ensure data quality and integrity, the data is provided "as is". The accuracy of any external user's statistical analysis and any reported findings are not the responsibility of RDN. Nothing arising from the data should be taken to constitute RDN's professional advice or as a formal recommendation.

Endnotes

1   Thistle, J. (2017.) Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

2   Gaetz, S.; Donaldson, J.; Richter, T.; & Gulliver, T (2013): The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press

3   Shinn, M. (2007). International Homelessness: Policy, Socio-Cultural, and Individual Perspectives. Journal of Social Issues 63(3): 657–677.

4   Gaetz, S.; Barr, C.; Friesen, A.; Harris, B.; Hill, C.; Kovacs-Burns, K.; Pauly, B.; Pearce, B.; Turner, A.; Marsolais, A. (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press

5   Schiff, JW.; Schiff, R., & Turner, A. (2016): Rural Homelessness in Western Canada: Lessons Learned from Diverse Communities. Journal of Social Inclusion 4(4): 73-85.

Housing and Service Needs Estimation Survey

PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY
- This survey was created to help our community gain a better understanding of the needs of our residents and the services required to improve and enhance community well-being.
- Your answers will help us identify the type of services that are currently being accessed and which ones are currently seeing the most use, and what needs in the community aren't being met. We will use the information gathered from this survey to take steps to increase and/or improve the services offered within our community.

PROCEDURE
- Time required: 6 – 10 minutes.
- This survey contains questions regarding your current/past living situations, employment, and citizenship/immigration status.
- If the questions make you feel uncomfortable at any point, feel free to skip that question or stop the survey.
- Staff members are available to answer any questions regarding the survey.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION
- By continuing with this survey, you consent to the collection, use, and disclosure of your personal information for the purposes described above.
- A unique identifier will be assigned to the information you provide in this survey and your full name will not be used anywhere on the questionnaire.
- Physical and electronic copies of the data (where available) will be stored and protected using adequate safeguards like password-protected computers.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW
- Your participation is completely voluntary.
- You can skip questions if you wish. If you skip questions, your responses to other questions will still be recorded.
- You can stop at any time without affecting your access to services. If you stop the survey at any point, none of your information will be used.

Knowing the information above, are you willing to take this survey right now?

☐ Yes

☐ No —— **If no,** for which reasons?

    ☐ I don't have time today
    ☐ I have taken the survey before
    ☐ The survey is too long
    ☐ The survey is too personal
    ☐ The survey doesn't relate to me
    ☐ Other

Q1. Anonymous Unique Identifier
[ex. John Smith, born on 15th November 1964]

J **O** What are the first two letters of your FIRST name?

S **M** What are the first two letters of your LAST name?

1 **5** What is the DAY you were born?

6 **4** What are the last two numbers of the YEAR you were born ?

Q2. How do you describe your gender identity?

- ☐ Male/Man
- ☐ Female/Woman
- ☐ Two-Spirit
- ☐ Trans Male/Trans Man
- ☐ Trans Female/Trans Woman
- ☐ Non-binary (including genderqueer & gender fluid)
- ☐ Don't Know
- ☐ Identity not listed:
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q3. How do you describe your sexual orientation

- ☐ Straight
- ☐ Lesbian
- ☐ Gay
- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Two-spirit
- ☐ Queer
- ☐ Questioning
- ☐ Don't Know
- ☐ Identity not listed:
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

DEMOGRAPHICS

Q4. Were you born in Canada?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (if no, please answer **Q4a**. to **Q4c**.)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q4a. *If no, how long have you lived in Canada?*

- ☐ _#_ days / weeks / months / years (underline) OR
- ☐ _MM_ / _DD_ / _YYYY_ (date of arrival)
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q4b. *Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, or refugee claimant?*

- ☐ Economic Migrant Worker
- ☐ Landed Immigrant
- ☐ Permanent Resident
- ☐ Refugee/Claimant
- ☐ Student Visa
- ☐ Temporary Foreign Worker
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q4c. *What is your current migration status?*

- ☐ Canadian Citizen
- ☐ Economic Migrant Worker
- ☐ Landed Immigrant
- ☐ Permanent Resident
- ☐ Refugee/Claimant
- ☐ Student Visa
- ☐ Temporary Foreign Worker
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q5. Which ethnicity do you identify with?

- ☐ African
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ Indigenous
  - ☐ First Nations
  - ☐ Métis
  - ☐ Inuit
  - Middle Eastern
- ☐ Identity not listed:
  _____

Q6. Have you ever served in the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), or any Emergency Services? *(check all that apply)*

- ☐ Canadian Armed Forces
- ☐ RCMP
- ☐ Emergency Services (EMS, Police, Fire Dept.)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q7. Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or feel you could easily lose your housing?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure
☐ Prefer not to answer

Q8. Thinking about your living situation **this past month**, which of these statements apply to you? *(Check all that apply)*

☐ I own the house I'm currently in

☐ I rent the apartment I'm currently in

☐ I live in accommodations provided by my employer

☐ I live in a house that is owned by/rented out by the Band

☐ I share a house/apartment with roommates

☐ I live in a house/apartment that I share with family/dependents

☐ I find it difficult to pay rent and I feel like I spend more than a third of my monthly income on my housing

☐ I live in housing that needs major repairs (heating or plumbing problems, mould, leaky roof, etc.)

☐ There are not enough rooms for the number of people in the house I'm in

☐ I lived in supported housing (e.g. Housing First)

☐ I stayed in a medical/detox/rehabilitation facility

☐ I slept in a friend's/family's house because I had no other place to stay

☐ I stayed in a jail/ prison/remand centre

☐ I stayed at a women's/domestic violence shelter

☐ I stayed with someone I didn't know because I had no other place to stay

☐ I slept in a shelter

☐ I slept in a makeshift shelter, vehicle, tent, or shack

☐ I slept in a public space (sidewalks, park benches, bus shelter etc.)

Q9. Why do you feel that your housing situation is unstable or why do you feel you could lose it ? *(please choose up to 5 answers)*

☐ Does not apply to me

Financial
☐ I can't afford rent/mortgage payments
☐ I don't make enough money
☐ My rent went up
☐ I lost my job
☐ Spouse/Partner lost their job

Health & well-being
☐ Addictions/Substance use
☐ Illness/Medical condition
☐ Mental health issues
☐ Mental disability
☐ Physical disability

Relationships
☐ Abuse
☐ Domestic/Family violence
☐ Conflict with: landlord, parent, guardian, room-mate, spouse/partner *(underline)*
☐ Family rejection due to: gender identity/expression, or sexual orientation *(underline)*

Other
☐ My house needs major repairs (mould, etc.)
☐ Racism/Discrimination
☐ Lack of Transportation
☐ I was in jail/prison
☐ Prefer not to answer

Q10. If you had to **choose only one main reason** why you feel that your housing situation is unstable, which one would it be? *Please write your answer in the box below:*

RECENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Q11. Have you stayed in an emergency shelter this past year?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q12. If you needed a shelter in the past year and didn't access one, what were the reasons? *(select all that apply)*

- ☐ I didn't need shelter services
- ☐ The shelter was full
- ☐ No shelters in my area
- ☐ I didn't feel safe

Operations Concerns

- ☐ Health concerns (bed bugs, dirty, etc.)
- ☐ Hours of operation
- ☐ Lack of disability accommodations
- ☐ Lack of transportation
- ☐ No pets allowed
- ☐ Separation from family member/partner
- ☐ Reason not listed:

  _____

- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q13. How long have you been staying in your current living arrangements?

- ☐ Less than a month
- ☐ 1 to 6 months
- ☐ 6 months to 1 year
- ☐ 1 to 2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Q14. As a youth, were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q15. Are you or anyone in your household currently pregnant?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

Q16. Are you currently a single-parent household?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q17. How many dependents under 18 years old are staying with you tonight?

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q18. *Please list out the ages/gender of the dependents staying with you:*

> *e.g. 12-year-old boy, 5 year-old girl*

- ☐ Does not apply to me
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q19. How many adults are staying with you?

- ☐ None
- ☐ __#___ total number of adults
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

The adults staying with me are:

- ☐ My parent(s)
- ☐ My partner
- ☐ My adult children
- ☐ My extended family
- ☐ My co-workers
- ☐ Not listed: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

COMMUNITY LIVING

Q20. How long have you lived in this community?

- ☐ Always lived here
- ☐ Under a year
- ☐ Over a year ⎤— (please answer **Q20a.** to **Q20d.**)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

COMMUNITY LIVING (CONTINUED)

***Q20a**. Where did you live before you came to this community?*

☐ A First Nation Community
☐ A Métis Settlement
☐ An Inuit Community
☐ Another community in the province:
_____
☐ Another province:
_____
☐ Another country:
_____
☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ Does not apply to me

***Q20b**. How many times have you moved in the past 12 months?*

☐ I have not moved in the past 12 months
☐ 1 to 2 times
☐ 3 to 6 times
☐ More than 6 times
☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ Does not apply to me

***Q20c**. What is the main reason you came to this community?*

☐ Environmental displacement (flooding, wildfire, lack of clean drinking water, etc.)
☐ Fear for safety

Financial
☐ To look for work
☐ To start a job
☐ To attend school

Services
☐ To access emergency shelters
☐ To access services/suppports
☐ To find housing

Family
☐ To visit family/friends
☐ To move in with spouse/partner
☐ My family moved here
☐ Other:
_____
☐ Prefer not to answer

***Q20d.** Would you have stayed in your previous community if you had access to better services/programs?*

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure
☐ Prefer not to answer

EMPLOYMENT

Q21. Are you currently employed?

☐ Yes (please answer **Q21a**. to **Q21b**.)
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to answer

***Q21a**. If yes, is your position: (check all that apply)*

☐ Casual
☐ Part-time
☐ Full-time
☐ Not listed:
_____
☐ Prefer not to answer

***Q21b**. If yes, which area do you work in?*

☐ Agriculture
☐ Education
☐ Finance
☐ Forestry
☐ Food and Beverage/Restaurant
☐ Health
☐ Human Services
☐ Hunting/Trapping
☐ Marketing
☐ Oil and Gas
☐ Retail/Personal Services
☐ Technology
☐ Tourism
☐ Not Listed:
_____
☐ Prefer not to answer

Q22. What is the highest level of education you've completed?

☐ No formal education
☐ Some grade school
☐ Some high school
☐ High school diploma or GED
☐ Apprenticeship, trades certificate, or diploma
☐ College certificate or diploma
☐ Some post-secondary
☐ Post-secondary degree (bachelor's)
☐ Graduate/Professional Degree (Master's, PhD, MD, JD, etc.)
☐ Don't know
☐ Prefer not to answer

EMPLOYMENT (CONTINUED)

Q23. What are your sources of income? *(check all that apply)*

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ My partner/spouse's income
- ☐ Alimony/Child Support

Govenment-related

- ☐ Seniors Benefits (CPP, OAS, GIS, etc.)
- ☐ Veterans' Benefits
- ☐ Disability Benefits
- ☐ Employment Insurance (EI)
- ☐ Student loans
- ☐ Income assistance

Tax-related

- ☐ Child and Family Tax Benefits
- ☐ GST refunds

Informal

- ☐ Informal Income (e.g. bottle returns, panhandling, etc.)
- ☐ Money from family and friends
- ☐ Not Listed:

  _____

- ☐ Prefer not to answer

SUPPORT SERVICES

Q24. What is the main reason(s) for visiting the office today? (choose as many options as it applies to you)

- ☐ Basic needs
  food, shelter, clothing, etc.
- ☐ Crisis Financial Support
  eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.
- ☐ Family/Parenting
  child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals etc.
- ☐ Financial
  employment, housing, training/education, etc.
- ☐ Health and Wellness
  addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.
- ☐ Legal
  separation/divorce/custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/misdemeanor, etc.
- ☐ Support Services
  help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.
- ☐ Transportation Needs
  access to basic services/education/employment, medical transportation
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ Not listed:

  _____

- ☐ Prefer not to answer

SUPPORT SERVICES (CONTINUED)

Q25. Of the areas listed in **Q24.**, which ones do you feel you need the most help with? (*List as many options as it applies to you*)

┌───┐
│   │
│   │
│   │
│   │
│   │
│   │
│   │
│   │
└───┘

Q26. Does our community provide enough...

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Employment opportunities	☐	☐	☐
Free/accessible recreation/social opportunities	☐	☐	☐
Sufficient social services	☐	☐	☐
Accessible affordable housing	☐	☐	☐

Q27. Knowing the information you've shared, do we have your consent to use this information to estimate the resources needed to better support people in our community?

As a reminder, no identifying information will be used; all data will be treated securely and with respect; and saying "No" will NOT affect your ability to access services.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

END SURVEY

Thank you for your time!

Survey Details

Survey was: ☐ Administered by Staff Member   ☐ Filled out by Client   ☐ Other:

Date Completed: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y

Location Name: City, Town, Hamlet, etc.

Service Agency Name: e.g. FCSS, Friendship Centre

Unique Identifier
Please fill in the unique identifier with the info on page 2 as well as the guidelines below.

UNIQUE IDENTIFIER GUIDELINES

To safeguard and protect the respondents' identity and ensure their anonymity, the unique identifier must be filled in based on the following guidelines:

e.g. John Smith, Male, born on November 15th, 1964

J	O	S	M	0	6	6	4	M
A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	E

e.g. John Smith, Gender Unknown, born on November 15th, Year Unknown

J	O	S	M	0	6	#	#	#
A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	E

(A1, A2)	(B1, B2)	(C1, C2)	(B1, B2)	(E)
First two letters of first name	First two letters of last name	Sum* of the numbers of birth day	Last two numbers of birth year	'M' for male, 'F' for female, and 'X' for non-binary

* If the sum of the numbers in the Birth Day of the individual is less than 10, add a '0' in front of the final sum, and if the resulting sum is greater than or equal to 10, record it as is. Refer to the examples above. This is done to keep the overall unique identifier length consistent among all survey participants with a total of 9 characters.

** In the case of any missing information to develop a 'Unique Identifier', please use "#" for the character representing the information that is missing.

Cochrane Society for Housing Options:

HOMELESSNESS SURVEY DATA REPORT

Contents

Figures

1   Introduction

In Fall-Winter 2019, Cochrane Society for Housing Options (CSHO) completed a process to estimate housing and service needs. The process involved the delivery of a survey through Survey Monkey, which contained 45 questions. The majority of the questions were taken from the Alberta Rural Development Network's Homelessness Estimation Guide (2019), with some modified slightly to fit the Town's context. The survey was made available to the public at a variety of locations including service agencies, public institutions, and online.

In total, 224 people responded to the survey. **Please note** that this report summarizes the results of the survey but does not provide an in-depth analysis of the findings. Caution should be exercised when drawing conclusions from the statements contained within the report, as in many cases the response rate did not generate significant respondent group sizes. This may skew results and not be consistent with realistic circumstances in the broader general population. The findings from this report are intended to be read as part of a larger effort to identify and understand housing needs in Cochrane, as discussed below in Section 11.

2   Identification of Housing Need

- To facilitate an analysis and some crosstabulation of survey responses, answers to the question, "Thinking about your living situation this past month, which of these statements apply to you?" were grouped, based on level of need as indicated by the responses. Duplicates were removed through a simple filtering process.

- The categories are defined as:
    - <u>Low-Need</u>
        - "I own the house I'm currently in"
        - "I rent the apartment I'm currently in"
        - "I live in accommodations provided by my employer"
        - "I live in a house that is owned by/renter out by the Band"
        - "I share a house/apartment with roommates"
        - "I live in a house/apartment that I share with family/dependents"
    - <u>Moderate-Need</u>
        - "I find it difficult to pay rent and I feel like I spend more than a third of my monthly income on my housing"
        - "I live in housing that needs major repairs (heating or plumbing problems, mold, leaky roof, etc.)"
        - "There are not enough rooms for the number of people in the house I'm in"
    - <u>High-Need</u>
        - "I lived in supported housing (e.g. Housing First) in the past month"
        - "I stayed in a medical/detox/rehabilitation facility in the past month"
        - "I slept in a friend's/family's house because I had no other place to stay in the last month"
        - "I stayed in a jail/prison/remand centre in the past month"

- "I stayed at a women's/domestic violence shelter in the past month"
- "I stayed with someone I didn't know because I had no other place to stay in the past month"
- "I slept in a shelter in the past month"
- "I slept in a makeshift shelter, vehicle, tent, or shack in the past month"
- "I slept in a public space (sidewalks, park benches, bus shelter etc.) in the past month"

- Of the 224 survey respondents, 192 answered this question.
  - 126 are identified to be in 'Low-Need'
  - 43 are identified to be in 'Moderate-Need'
  - 23 are identified to be in 'High-Need'

In the rest of the report, we will refer to these three groups in relation to the other questions.
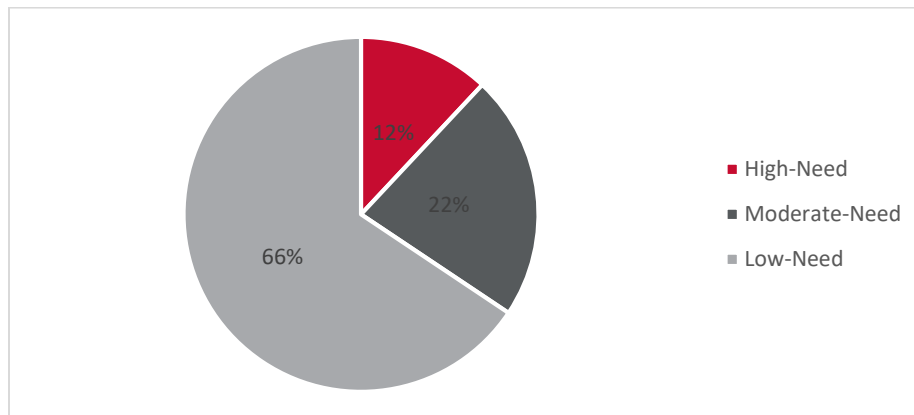

Figure 1: Housing Need Categories

3   Housing Situation

- Of the respondents, almost equal numbers felt that their housing situation is unstable or that they could easily lose their housing (70 respondents answered yes, 73 respondents answered no). There were 40 respondents who were not sure, and 9 who did not answer the question.

"Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or you feel you could easily lose your housing?"	Total
Yes	38%
No	40%
Not Sure	22%
Subtotal	**100%**

Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or you feel you could easily lose your housing?
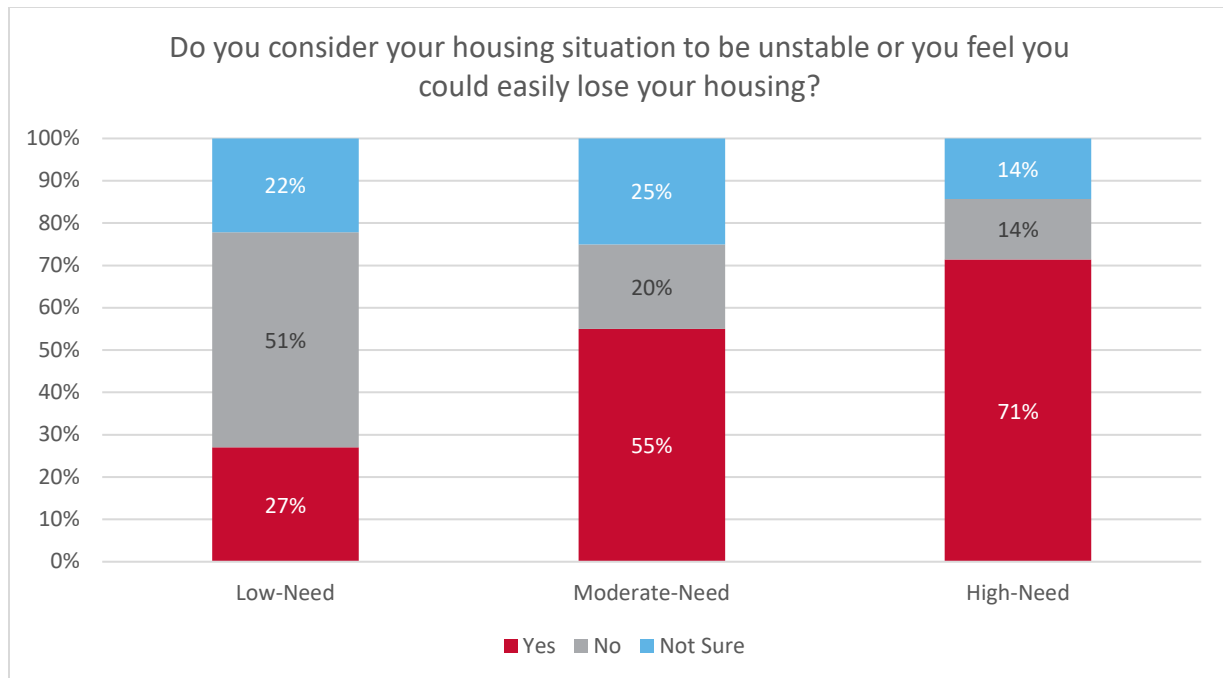
Figure 2: Housing Stability

- Among all respondents, the top reasons for feeling that their housing is unstable or could be easily lost were:
    - "Does not apply to me" (39%, 74 people)
    - "I don't make enough money" (27%, 51 people)
    - "I can't afford my rent or mortgage payments" (20%, 38 people)

- Among Low-Need respondents the top reasons were the same as the total group, but with different percentages:
    - "Does not apply to me" (52%, 66 people)
    - "I don't make enough money" (15%, 19 people)
    - "I can't afford my rent or mortgage payments" (12%, 15 people)

- Among Moderate-Need respondents the top reasons were:
    - "I don't make enough money" (58%, 25 people)
    - "I can't afford my rent or mortgage payments" (44%, 19 people)
    - "I lost my job/ spouse lost their job" (16%, 7 people)

- Among High Need respondents the top reasons were:
    - "Mental health issues" (35%, 8 people)
    - "I don't make enough money" (30%, 7 people)
    - "Disability, mental or physical" (22%, 5 people)
    - "Conflict with: landlord, parent/guardian, roommate, spouse/partner" (22%, 5 people)

4   Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

4.1   Gender Identity

Gender Identification	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
Male/Man	44	9	9	62
Female/Woman	70	33	11	114
Non-binary (including gender-queer & gender-fluid)	3	1	0	4
Trans Male/ Trans Man	1	0	0	1
Trans Female / Trans Woman	0	0	2	2
Two-Spirit	2	0	0	2
Identity not listed	0	0	1	1
Don't Know	1	0	0	1
Prefer not to answer	5	0	0	5
Total Number of Respondents	**126**	**43**	**23**	**192**

- The highest number of respondents identified as "female/woman" (61% in total)
- 94% of respondents identified as either "male/man" or "female/woman"
- All respondents that "preferred not to answer" were in the Low-Need housing category

4.2   Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
Straight	99	39	14	152
Gay	4	0	0	4
Lesbian	3	1	3	7
Bisexual	6	1	3	10
Queer	1	0	0	1
Two-Spirt	1	0	1	2
Asexual	1	0	0	1
Identity not listed	4	1	1	6
Prefer not to answer	6	0	1	7
No Answer/Error/Other	1	1	0	2
Total Number of Respondents	**126**	**43**	**23**	**192**

- In total, just over 16% of respondents that answered the survey question identified with a non-straight sexual orientation
- Almost 80% of respondents identified as "straight", with 4% choosing not to answer
- Across the housing needs categories, the proportion of respondents identifying as "straight" varied:
    o Low-Need: 83%
    o Moderate-Need: 93%
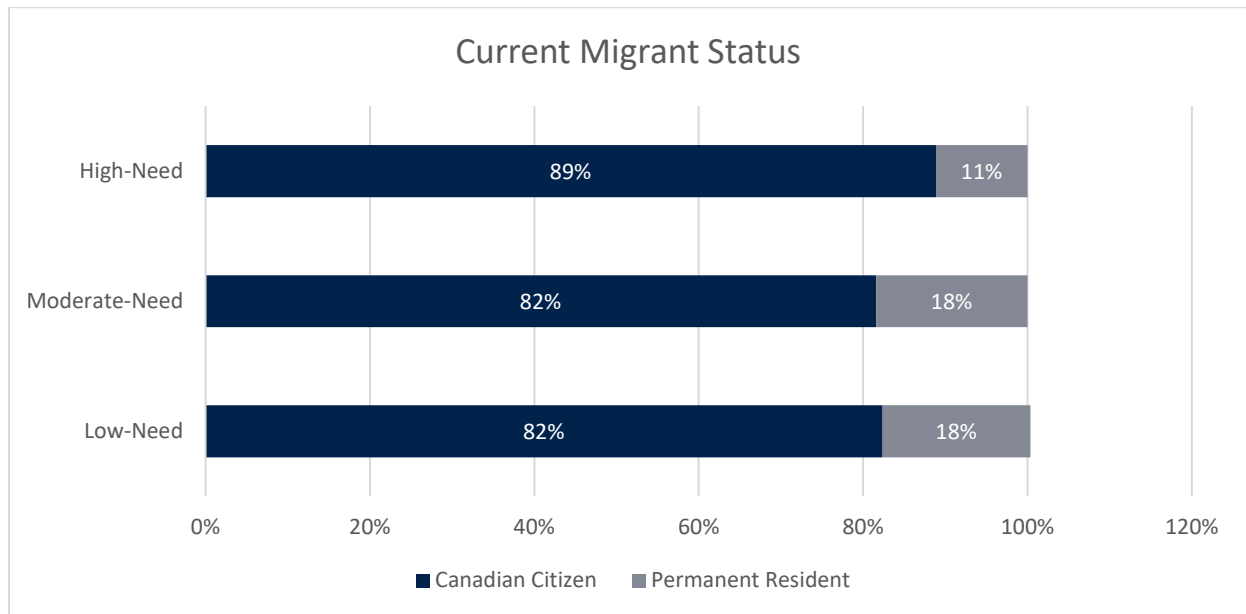   o High-Need: 64%

5 Citizenship & Immigration Status

Figure 3: Current Migrant Status

	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
Canadian Citizen	84	31	16	131
Permanent Resident	18	7	2	27

- The High-Need category had a slightly higher proportion of respondents that were Canadian citizens, and the lowest proportion of permanent residents/ landed immigrants
- Note: although Landed Immigrants and Permanent Residents were both offered as selections in this question, they are interchangeable terms and have been combined (the Low-Need category was the only category in which a single (1) respondent identified as "Landed Immigrant")
- 33 total respondents (all housing need categories) had an error in their answer; 1 respondent preferred not to answer the question

6 Ethnicity

- Across all categories of housing need, the majority of respondents identified as Caucasian (72%)
- The High-Need category had the lowest proportion of respondents that identified as Caucasian (68%), and the highest proportions of respondents that identified as "First Nations" and "Multi" (5% and 9% respectively)
- The Moderate-Need category had the highest number that identified as Caucasian (79%)

	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
Caucasian	70%	79%	68%	72%
African	2%	0%	0%	1%
Latino/ Hispanic	2%	5%	5%	3%
Asian	11%	9%	9%	11%
First Nations	2%	2%	5%	3%
Inuit	1%	0%	0%	1%
Metis	5%	0%	0%	3%
Middle Eastern	0%	0%	0%	0%
Multi	2%	2%	9%	3%
Not Listed	6%	2%	5%	5%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Number of Respondents	**122**	**43**	**22**	**187**

7   Pregnancy & Dependents

7.1   Pregnancy

Are you or anyone in your household currently pregnant?

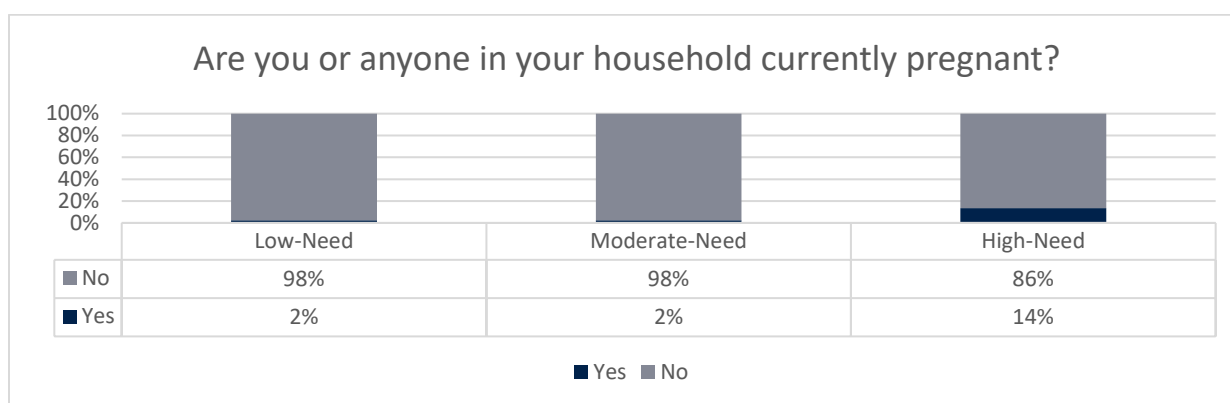|	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need
No	98%	98%	86%
Yes	2%	2%	14%

Figure 4: Pregnancy in Household

- In total, seven (7) respondents answered "yes" that someone in their household was pregnant
- 14% of respondents in the High-Need category (3 respondents) answered "yes", versus 2% in the Low- and Moderate-Need categories (3 and 4 respondents, respectively)
- One (1) respondent in each of the High- and Low-Need categories answered "prefer not to answer"
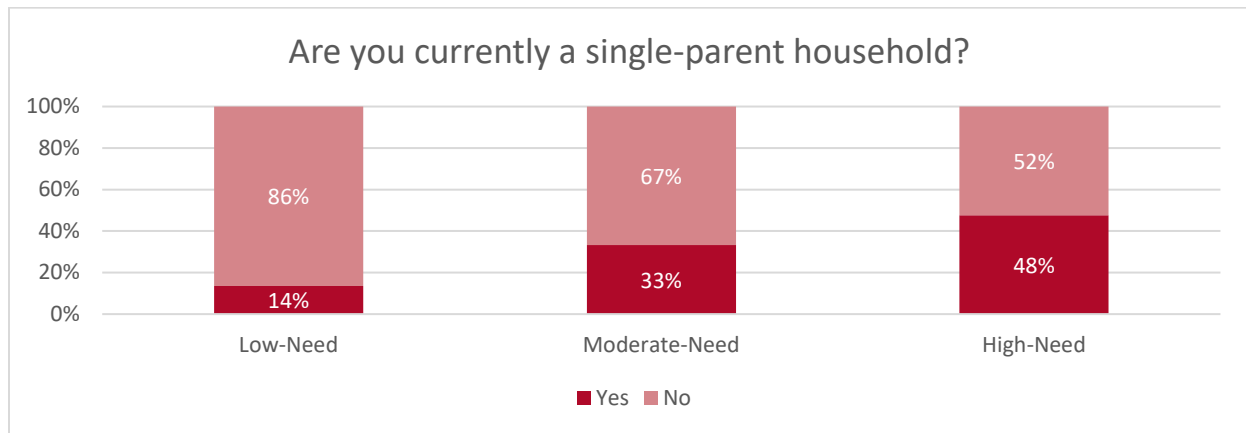
7.2 Single-Parent Households

Are you currently a single-parent household?

Category	Yes	No
Low-Need	14%	86%
Moderate-Need	33%	67%
High-Need	48%	52%

Figure 5: Single-Parent Households

	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
Yes	17	14	10	41
No	108	28	11	147
Subtotal	**125**	**42**	**21**	**188**

- The number of respondents who were in a single-parent household increased with the housing need category- fewer Low-Need respondents answered that they were in a single-parent household, and almost half of High-Need respondents answered they were in the same situation
- In total, 41 respondents answered that they were in a single-parent household
- 10 of those respondents were in the High-Need category (17 in the Low-Need and 14 in the Moderate-Need categories)
- 2 respondents in the High-Need category answered "prefer not to answer" (1 respondent in each of the Moderate- and Low-Need categories responded the same)

7.3 Household Dependents

- Across the housing need categories, the proportion of respondents with no dependents is relatively similar
- In comparison with the other housing need categories:
    - A larger proportion of Low-Need respondents had one dependent
    - A larger proportion of Moderate-Need respondents had "Other", potentially indicating more than three dependents per household
    - A larger proportion of High-Need respondents has two dependents
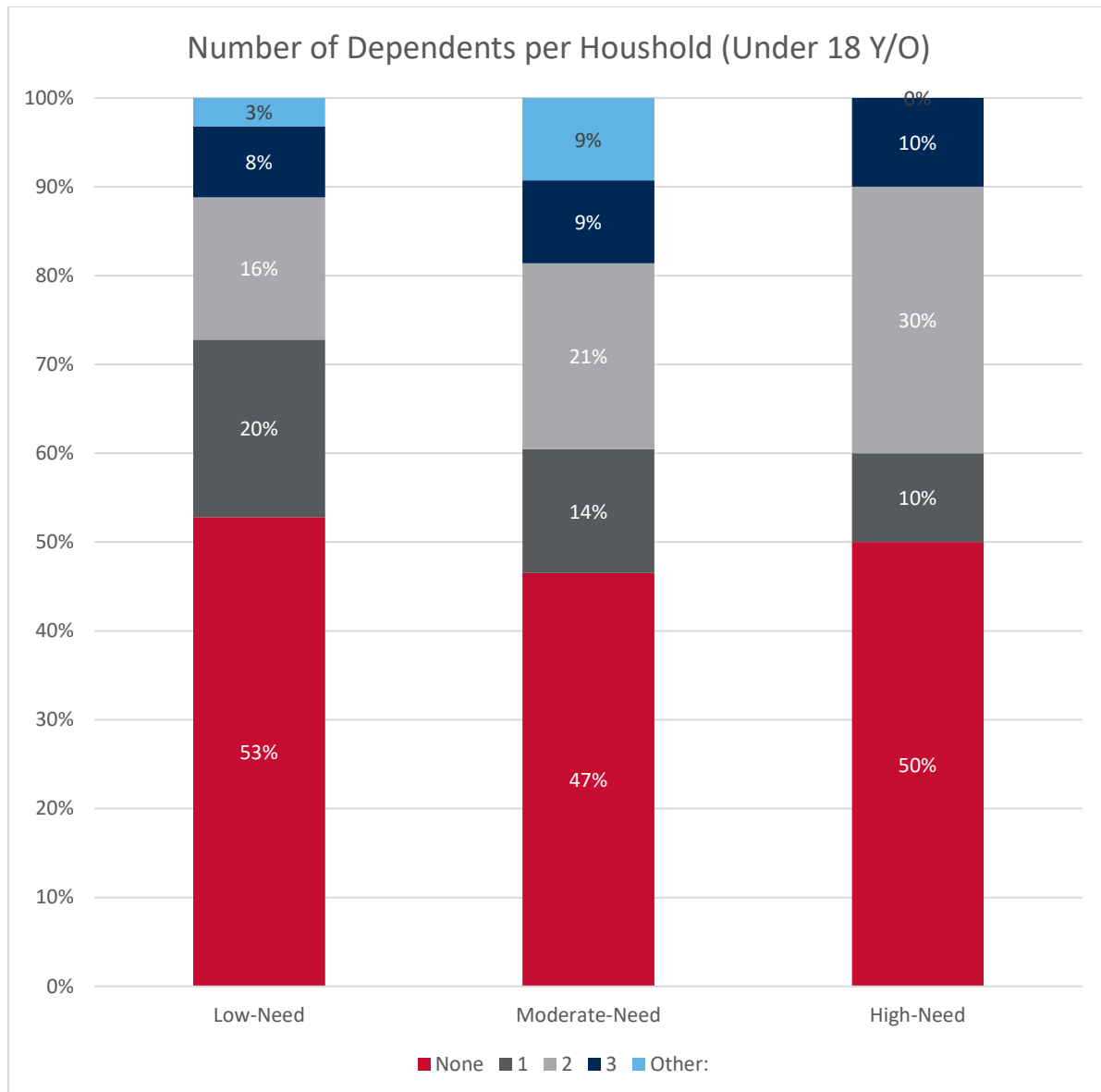
Figure 6: Dependents Under 18 Y/O in Household

Number of Dependents Under 18	Low-Need	Moderate-Need	High-Need	Total
None	66	20	10	96
1	25	6	2	33
2	20	9	6	35
3	10	4	2	16
Other	4	4	0	8
Prefer not to answer/ no answer	1	0	3	4
Total	**126**	**43**	**23**	**192**

8   Other Associations

8.1   Youth Care
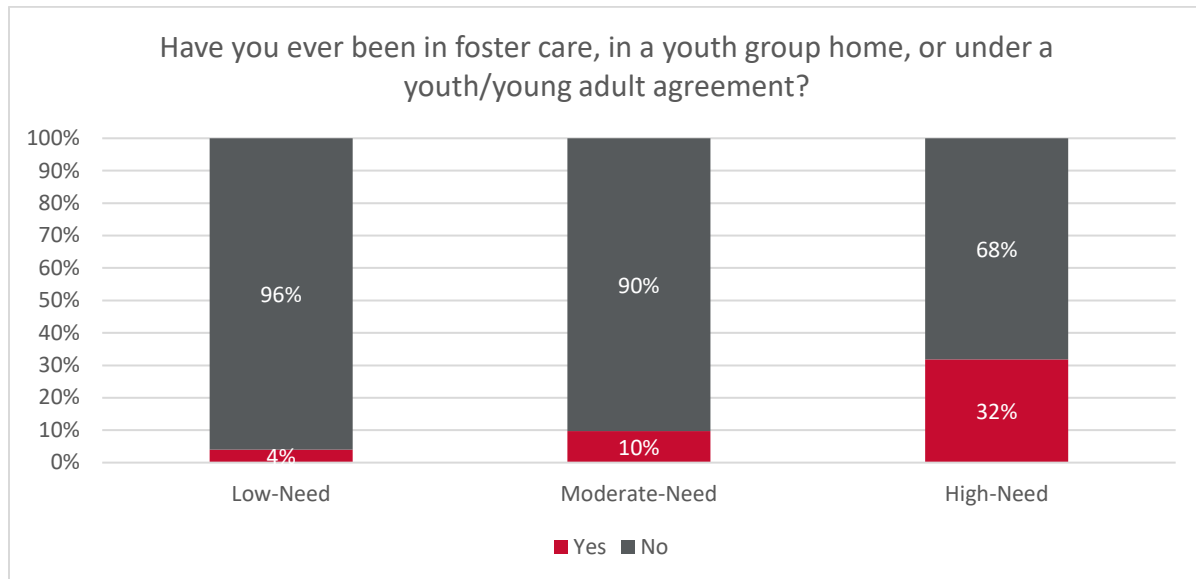
Figure 7: Youth Care

- In total, just over 8% of all respondents had been in foster care, a youth group home, or under a youth/ young adult agreement
- The proportion of respondents who had been in foster care increased with the housing need level of respondents; Low-Need respondents had the lowest instance of being in youth care previously (4%), with an increased rate for both Moderate-Need and High-Need respondents (10% and 32% respectively)

8.2   Public Safety & Military Service

- While some respondents in all housing need categories had served in public safety (Emergency Services or RCMP) or military services, the highest proportions were in High-Need respondents (27% had served, as opposed to 6% of Low-Need and 2% of Moderate-Need respondents)
- Of the High-Need respondents that had served, the majority had been with the RCMP (18% of High-Need respondents). Approximately 9% had served in the Canadian Armed Forces. None had served in Emergency Services.
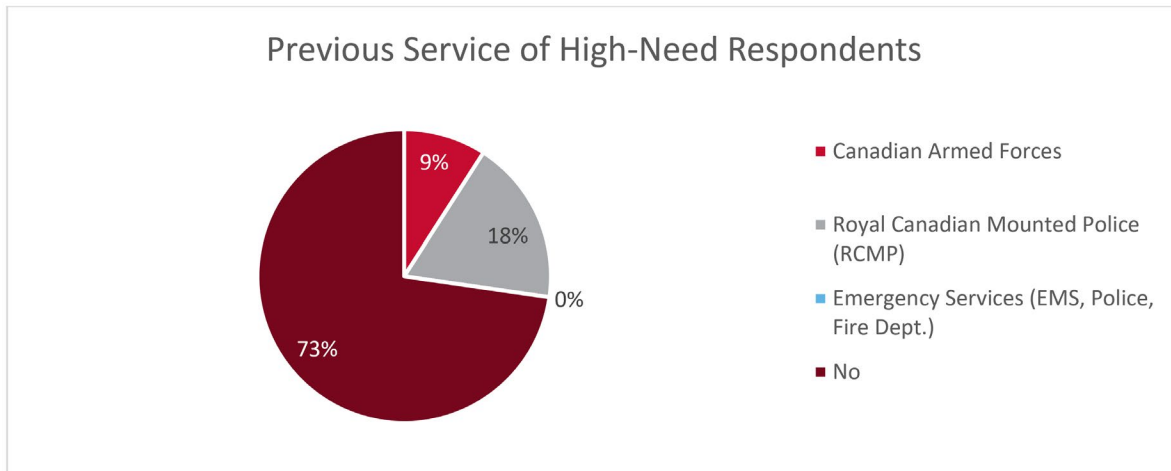
Figure 8: Previous Service of High-Need Respondents
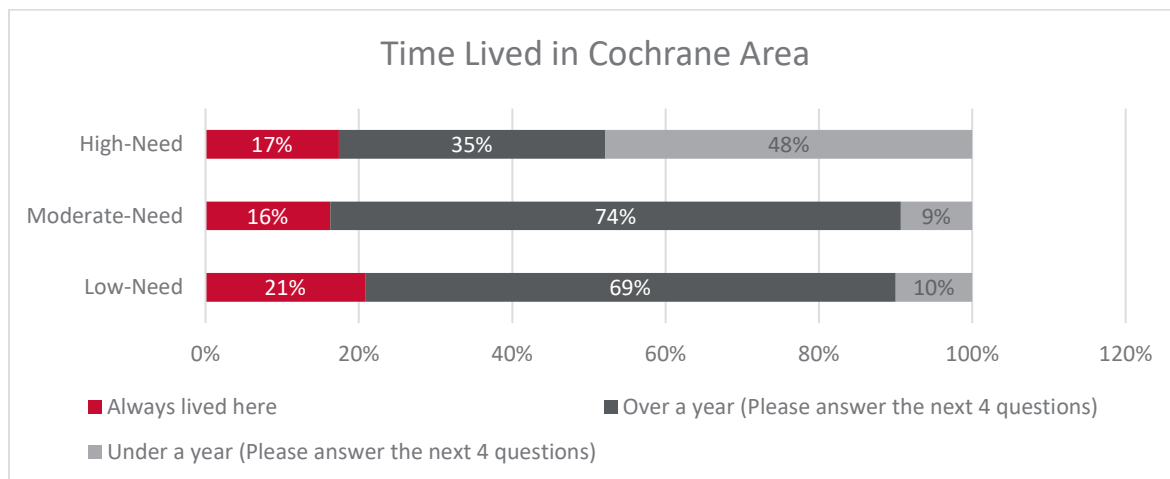
9   Time in the Community

Figure 9: Time Lived in Cochrane Area

- The proportions of respondents in each housing need category who have 'always lived here' is relatively similar
- The greatest differences are between Moderate-Need and Low-Need respondents versus High-Need Respondents; compared to Moderate- and Low-Need respondents, roughly half as many High-Need respondents had lived in the Cochrane area for over a year, with almost five times as many having lived in the area for under a year
- Of all High-Need respondents, almost half had lived in the Cochrane area for under a year

10 Employment

- Across the three housing need categories, the proportion of respondents who are employed and not employed were relatively similar
  - Low-Need: 54% employed, 40% not employed
  - Moderate-Need: 56% employed, 44% not employed
  - High-Need: 48% employed, 48% not employed
- High-Need respondents had the highest instance of not being employed and the lowest instance of being employed, although by small percentage points compared to the other categories
- The greatest number of respondents who preferred not to answer were in the Low-Need category

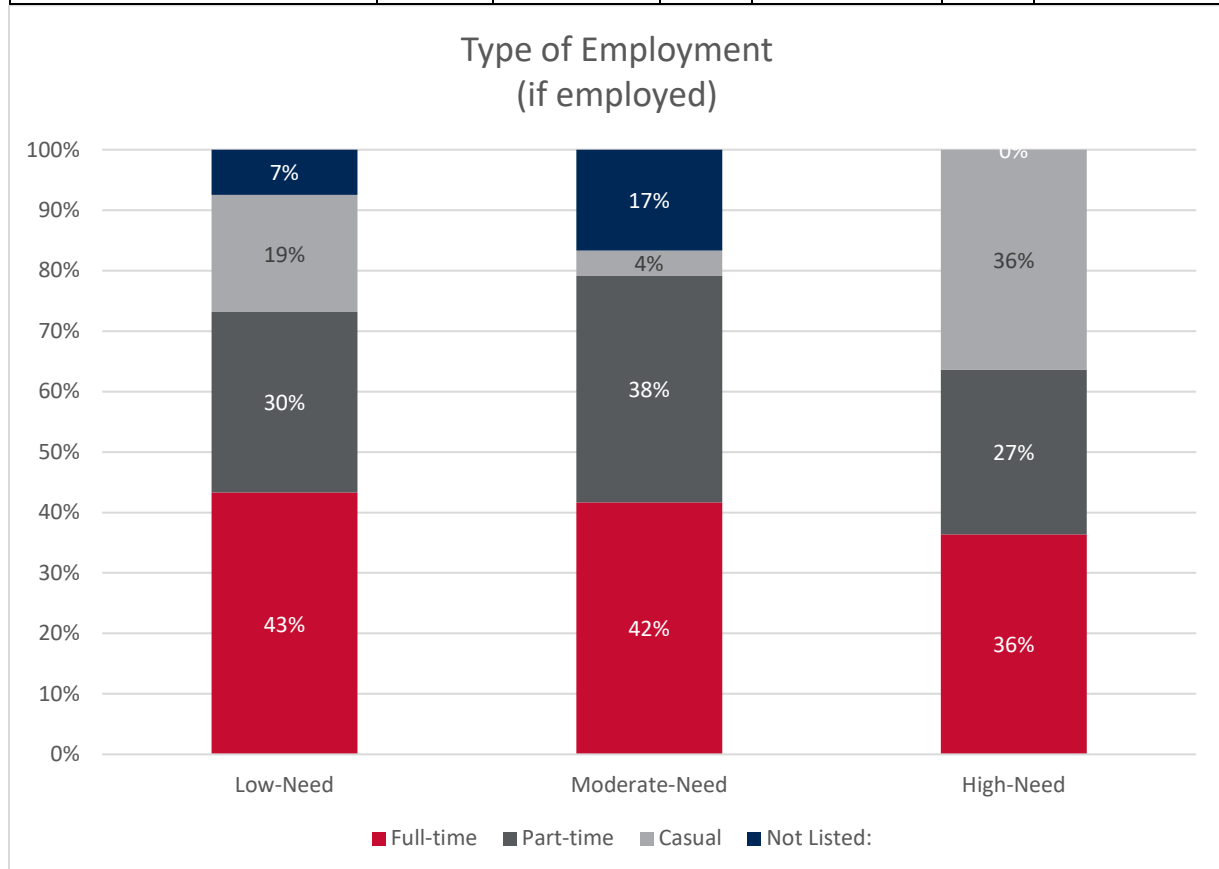| ARE YOU EMPLOYED?	Low-Need		Moderate-Need		High-Need	
Yes	68	54%	24	56%	11	48%
No	51	40%	19	44%	11	48%
Prefer not to answer	7	6%	0	0%	1	4%
Total	126	100%	43	100%	23	100%

Figure 10: Type of Employment (if employed)

- The types of employment vary for respondents who are employed across the three housing need categories
- The proportions of full-time or part-time did not vary greatly across the three housing need categories, but the proportion that are employed casually was significantly higher for respondents in the High-Need category (36% versus 19% for Low-Need respondents and 4% for Moderate-Need respondents). A total of four (4) out of 11 respondents worked casually in the High-Need category.
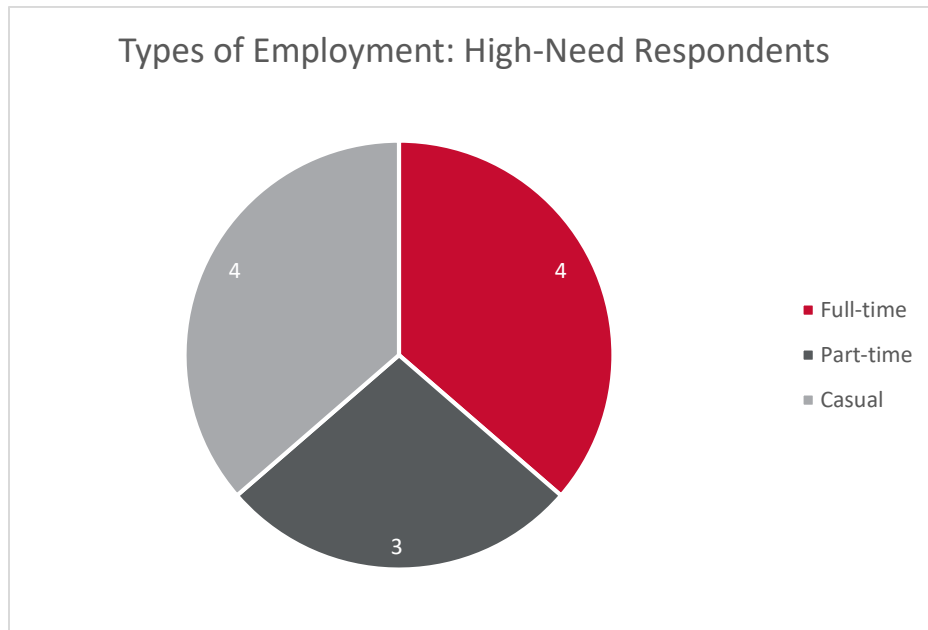

Types of Employment: High-Need Respondents

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Casual

Figure 11: Types of Employment- High-Need Respondents

- Respondents in the Moderate-Need category had the highest proportion of answering that their type of employment was "not listed" (17%, or 4 out of the 9 total respondents who answered the same in all categories)
- The highest proportion of respondents working in part-time employment was in the Moderate-Need category (9 out of the 24 total respondents)

11 Next Steps

As noted, the findings from this survey are part of a larger effort to assess Cochrane's housing needs. As that process continues, the findings contained in this report will be analyzed with other data collected through the Housing Needs Assessment and related public or stakeholder engagements. Collectively, the analysis and data will help guide the direction of future housing programs and services in the Town.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

April 2021

info@ruraldevelopment.ca
11443 - 143 Street NW Edmonton, AB