



HANNA

2023 Alberta Provincial Housing
& Service Needs Estimation

COMMUNITY REPORT



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Acknowledgements

RDN's physical office is located on the Traditional Territories of Treaty 6 and is home to many Métis and Inuit Peoples. As a national organization, we also acknowledge that RDN staff and the communities we support, live, gather, and organize across Turtle Island.

Inuit, Métis, and First Nations Peoples are experiencing homelessness at disproportionately high rates compared to non-Indigenous people in Canada. Unlike the common, colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not simply defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully understood as a loss or breakdown of relationships between individuals, families, and/or communities and their land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities. RDN recognizes the ways in which settler relationships to both the land and the Peoples of this land have been broken and misused, causing and contributing to Indigenous homelessness. We also recognize the ways in which our presence on this land continues to uphold colonialism and reproduces dispossession and violence for Indigenous people, further perpetuating experiences of Indigenous homelessness.

In an ongoing effort to support Indigenous communities in addressing issues of housing, homelessness, and service needs, we are committed to working to decolonize homelessness research and advocate to funders for Indigenous self-determination in the housing and social sectors.

We share this acknowledgement to reaffirm our responsibility and commitment to reconciliation.

We also recognize that this land acknowledgement is just that, an acknowledgement; it is but one step in our journey. We commit to working to uphold the conditions of the treaties that govern this land.





We thank you.

This report and the information within were made possible through the efforts of many dedicated individuals and groups. We wish to thank the front-line staff at participating service agencies:

- Turning Point Society
- Town of Hanna
- AHS – Hanna Addiction and Mental Health
- J.C. Charyk Hanna School
- Project REACH
- Brooks & County Immigration Services

and the residents in Hanna for their support, dedication, and commitment to this project.

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Canada



About this Report

In 2023, the Rural Development Network (RDN) partnered with 22 organizations representing 45 communities across Alberta to conduct the third iteration of the provincial-wide housing and service needs estimation.

This report outlines Hanna's results within the provincial estimation, highlighting the number of residents who are housing insecure and their experiences with homelessness. This report is complemented by the [Alberta Provincial Report](#), which highlights the combined results of all 45 communities across the province.

This report is intended to support decision-making across organizations, funders, and multiple levels of government around housing and homelessness by providing reliable and up-to-date data on housing and service needs in Hanna. It can also be used and referred to in the community for program and advocacy purposes related to housing, homelessness, and service needs.

Contact info@ruraldevelopment.ca for more information on Housing and Service Needs Estimations.



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Definitions

What Does Homelessness Mean?

Homelessness


According to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (Gaetz et al., 2012), homelessness is the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, and ability to acquire it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, domestic violence, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.

Further, Indigenous homelessness considers the traumas imposed on Indigenous Peoples through colonialism. It is defined as a "human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing...Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews" (Thistle, 2017).

Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful, and distressing. The national definition of homelessness notes that individuals who become homeless experience a range of physical living situations, including:

Unsheltered: Absolutely homeless, living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation (e.g. living on sidewalks, squares, parks, vehicles, garages, etc.).

Emergency Sheltered: People who are staying in overnight shelters due to homelessness as well as those staying in shelters due to family violence.



Provisionally Accommodated: People with an accommodation that is temporary or that lacks security for tenure (e.g. couch-surfing, living in transitional housing, living in abandoned buildings, living in places unfit for human habitation, people who are housed seasonally, people in domestic violence situations, etc.).

At Risk of Homelessness: People who are not yet homeless but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards (e.g. people who are one rent payment missed from eviction, people whose housing may be condemned for health, by-law, or safety violations, etc.).

(Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Canadian Definition of Homelessness, 2012).

Insecure Housing: For this report, the term housing insecure, or insecure housing, will be used to encompass the entire spectrum of homelessness which includes unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated, and at risk of homelessness.



Introduction

When it comes to homelessness and understanding its causes, the urban experience tends to dominate the conversation, mainly due to the “visibility” of individuals experiencing homelessness in urban centres. The issue of homelessness in rural and remote areas is far less understood and acknowledged because of its “hidden” nature. Further, recent data suggests that rural homelessness is prevalent at rates equivalent to or greater than urban per capita rates (Schiff, et al., 2022).

Recognizing this, RDN is conducting a 2023 Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation with 22 organizations representing 45 rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across Alberta in an attempt to better understand what homelessness looks like in each community and across the rural provincial landscape. Specifically, the purpose of this estimation is to:

1. Develop a contextually relevant process for local service providers to engage and collect informed data with those who are at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.
2. Provide a comprehensive picture of housing insecurity and homelessness in Alberta, including demographic information on who is experiencing homelessness, and which services are being accessed, and which services are missing.
3. Help inform service providers and municipal, provincial, and federal policies, practices, and funding decisions on homelessness, housing, and support services.
4. Develop recommendations and next steps for service providers and municipal, provincial, and federal governments.
5. Elevate and incorporate the voices of people experiencing homelessness in the solutions to end homelessness.

This is the third iteration of the Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation; it was also conducted in 2018 and 2020 with 20 and 24 communities, respectively, though Hanna has never participated in the provincial estimation.



Methodology

The methodology employed in this Housing and Service Needs Estimation comes from the [Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness](#), published by the Rural Development Network. 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. A lack of data limits the ability of rural communities like Hanna to advocate for better resources for their residents.

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. It instead uses a service-based population estimation approach, which allows for anyone, including small nonprofits and local front-line agencies, to gather data on gaps in local housing and service needs without adding additional strain to workloads and organizational capacities.

Following the model proposed in the Step-by-Step Guide, RDN worked with communities and academics across Canada to develop a survey that reflected rural and remote community contexts. The survey was developed in accordance with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness' definitions of homelessness. However, the survey itself was advertised as a Housing and Service Needs survey; this is a result of feedback from multiple service providers who are committed to minimizing the stigma associated with homelessness 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.

To further minimize stigma throughout the survey, rather than asking respondents to identify themselves as homeless or housing insecure, they were asked whether they consider their living conditions to be secure or insecure and to fill out checkboxes that determine their objective housing situation. Based on responses to the latter survey question along with subsequent data analysis, RDN was able to determine which respondents were housing unstable. As shown in

the results below, some individuals who don't consider themselves to be homeless or at risk of homelessness actually qualify based on the national definition of homelessness.

The same survey was used across all communities participating in the 2023 Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation project, with one exception; each community's survey was customized to meet their location parameters. Figure 1 showcases Hanna's location parameters.

Figure 1: Hanna's Location Question on Survey

Q2. Where do you currently live (or which community do you live closest to)?

- Hanna
- Youngstown
- Delia
- Craigmyle
- Special Areas
- I am not sure
- Other: _____
- Prefer not to answer

RDN worked with Hanna to develop a survey administration process that would ensure the greatest level of participation possible. For Hanna, surveys were advertised at service provider locations and online as an open Survey Monkey link across the community. Surveys were available through these locations and online for a period of four weeks: from March 1 to March 31, 2023.

Before the survey period began, RDN conducted orientation and training sessions with staff from participating agencies. During the training, emphasis was placed on clarifying survey terms, ensuring respondents' confidentiality and privacy, and securing participants' informed consent. During each training session, resources

were provided to staff to improve their understanding of the project and increase comfort in administering the survey. Training and resources also included the various ways to administer the survey in an open, non-intrusive manner, placing extra importance on meeting the individual's reasons for visiting the agency before offering the survey.

Important to note about the survey; to ensure the trust and anonymity of participants, each respondent was asked to give consent at the beginning of the survey and create a unique identifier. The unique identifier allows RDN to maintain the integrity of the data without knowing respondent identities. The unique identifier is a combination of letters and numbers from a participant's name and birthdate.

Figure 2: Unique Identifier Question on Survey

Q1. Anonymous Unique Identifier (ex. John Smith, born on 15th November 1964)

H	N	What are the last two letters of your FIRST name?
T	H	What are the last 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?

Hanna collected 59 survey responses during the four weeks. Of the 59 surveys, 15 were excluded. Surveys were deemed unsuitable and excluded for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Survey respondent(s) declined to give consent.
2. Survey respondent(s) declined to provide the unique identifier or provided improper unique identifier information (i.e. characters instead of numbers, etc.).
3. Survey respondent(s) submitted multiple surveys (determined based on unique identifier(s)).

Based on this, 44 were determined to be suitable for further analysis and will be the focus of the results outlined below.





Limitations

Despite our best attempts to reduce stigma and increase the accessibility of the survey, not all clients who were offered a survey chose to participate. Additionally, staff at participating agencies were informed that participants under the age of 14 years old required guardian consent to participate in the survey. While this is inherently problematic and exclusionary, as most youth experiencing homelessness would not have a guardian present to provide consent, to maintain survey ethics, this requirement is in compliance with the Alberta College of Social Workers. Worth noting here is that not everyone who filled out the survey responded to every question.

As a result, there remains a portion of people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity whose voices and lived experiences were not captured in this project. Therefore, while the trends, highlights, and recommendations made are very informative, it is important to remember that this report presents a conservative picture of the housing and services needs in Hanna as a whole.


Results & Analysis

Objective Housing Situation

As part of the survey, participants were asked the following question: *“Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or feel you could easily lose your housing?”* Respondents were given the options “yes,” “no,” and “I’m not sure” to guide their responses. Of the 44 survey respondents, 14 self-identified as housing insecure, and 4 indicated “I’m not sure.” Through further analysis, it was determined that 25 survey respondents are housing insecure according to the national definitions of homelessness. An additional 29 dependents and 24 adults reported as living with housing insecure survey respondents. Therefore, based on survey results, there are at least 78 community members experiencing housing insecurity in Hanna.

The top three reasons for housing insecurity in Hanna, as reported by survey respondents, are:

1. Low wages
2. Housing needs major repairs
3. Inability to afford rent/mortgage payments



Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness in Hanna

Recognizing that the national definition of homelessness is complex, encompassing various housing situations across a continuum, it is important to better understand what housing insecurity looks like in Hanna. This can be achieved by exploring the experiences of the 44 housing insecure respondents.

To accurately place respondents along the spectrum of homelessness, a series of measures were used to understand their situations, including their self-identified housing stability response, their calculated housing stability, their current housing situation, the amenities they lack in their current home, and others. Early in the survey, respondents were asked to outline their current housing situation and were able to choose all situations that applied to them from a variety of statements that ranged from “I own the house I am currently in” to “I lived in supportive housing” to “I slept in a public space” and more. To accurately present what a journey of housing insecurity might look like for respondents over a month, we have included all responses, as respondents were able to select more than one statement.

An important thing to consider when reading this table is that people experiencing housing insecurity often fluctuate in and out of their situation; therefore, someone who was unsheltered one night might have been emergency sheltered or provisionally accommodated the next night. As a result, we have highlighted every incident of insecurity respondents experienced in the past month to understand the journey of housing insecurity in Hanna.

Table 1: Respondents by Housing Situation in the Homelessness Spectrum

Place on the Homelessness Spectrum	# of Respondents in Each Category
Unsheltered	2
Emergency Sheltered	0
Provisionally Accommodated	12
At-Risk of Homelessness	34

This table demonstrates the diversity of respondents' experiences with housing insecurity in Hanna and outlines that homelessness presents itself in more ways than simply sleeping outside. Respondents that have been identified as "At-Risk of Homelessness" emphasized their difficulty in being able to afford their rent/mortgage and/or staying in a home with unsafe conditions or in need of major repairs such as physical construction hazards, no windows, no electricity, etc., and in over-crowded situations where there are too many people for the number of bedrooms.

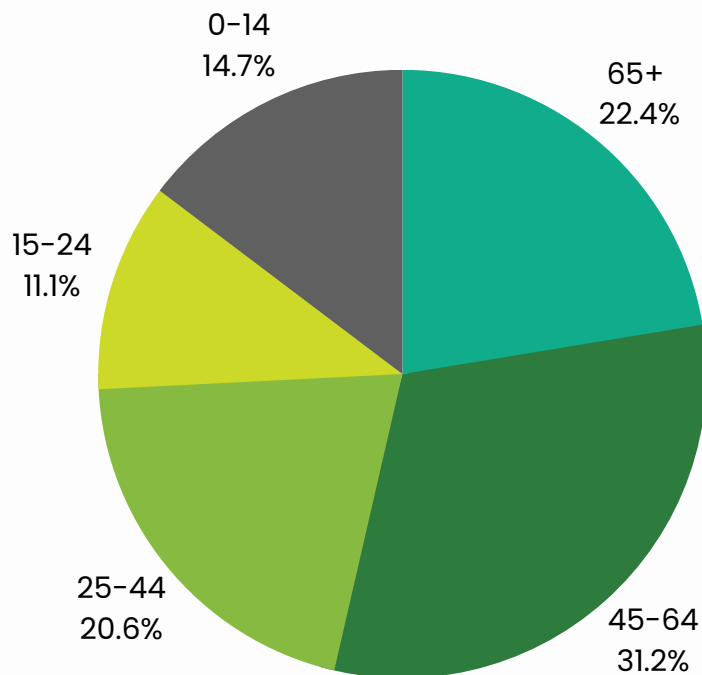
Respondents who indicated they experienced being provisionally accommodated noted stays in jail/prison/remand centre and medical/detox facilities. Some respondents also indicated staying with a stranger because they have nowhere else to go and/or enduring unwanted sexual activity to have a place to stay.


Hanna Population Overview

According to Alberta's Regional Dashboard (Government of Alberta, n.d.), Hanna covers a combined 9.1 square km geographical land base with a population size of 2,658; making up 0.06% of Alberta's total population.

50.8% (1,349) of the population is reported as female, while 49.3% (1,309) reported as male. Additionally, the average age of Hanna's population is 45.9 years old, as seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Hanna Population Age Breakdown (2022)





According to Statistics Canada Census numbers in 2021, 8.6% (200) of the population immigrated to Canada, and 8.8% (205) of the population identified as a visible minority. Further, 4.5% (120) of the population identified as Indigenous; 62.5% (75) of whom are First Nations, and 37.5% (45) of whom are Métis.

The 2021 Census also reports that Hanna has 1,100 private households with an average of 2.1 people per household. Of the 1,100 private households, 74.1% (815) are owned, while 25.9% (285) are rented with the average cost of monthly rent for a two-bedroom unit at \$641. Additionally, 95.9% (1,055) of occupied private dwellings are houses and 4.1% (45) of occupied private dwellings are apartments. Single-family houses make up 78.2% of all private dwellings in the area. Further, 22.3% (245) of households report one or more of the following:

- Spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs,
- That their dwelling is “not suitable”; and/or,
- That their dwelling has “major repair needs.”

The median after-tax income in Hanna is \$36,800 for individuals and \$65,500 for households. Further, the Economic Research Institute (2023) estimates the cost of living in Hanna to be 2% lower than the national average and 7% lower than the Alberta provincial average.

Housing & Service Needs Estimation Survey Respondent Population Overview

44 community members responded to the Hanna survey; 53% (23) of whom identified as female, 44% (29) as male, and 2% (2) preferred not to answer. Additionally, 95% (40) of respondents identified as straight and 2% (1) as unsure. 2% (1) preferred not to answer.

Of the 44 respondents, 26% (11) are between the ages of 20-39, 53% (23) are between 40-59, and 21% (9) are 60 years or older.

79% (34) of respondents were born in Canada (Turtle Island), while 16% (7) reported being born outside of Canada and 5% (2) preferred not to answer. Of the respondents born outside of Canada, 38% (3) immigrated to Canada as economic-category immigrants, 50% (4) are currently in Canada on temporary work visas, and 13% (1) noted "other".

79% (33) of respondents are white, while 12% (5) of respondents self-identified as racialized; 2% (1) noted their identity was not listed among the options and 7% (3) of respondents preferred not to answer. Racialized respondents identified as South and Indo-Caribbean and Black. Additionally, 2% (1) of respondents self-identified as having Indigenous ancestry and 2% (1) preferred not to indicate whether or not they are Indigenous.

7% (3) of respondents stayed in foster care, a youth group home, or under a youth/young adult agreement in the past and 2% (1).

Lastly, in terms of demographics, respondents were asked to indicate if they have ever served in the Canadian Armed Forces/Foreign Military Service, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) or Foreign Police Service, or local or foreign Emergency Services (EMS, Police, Fire Department). Of the 44 survey respondents, 2% (1) indicated they serve(d) in the Canadian Armed Forces or Foreign Military Service, and 2% (1) in local or foreign Emergency Services. 5% (2) preferred not to answer.

Housing Secure vs. Housing Insecure Survey Respondent Population Overview

Table 2: Housing & Service Needs Estimation Survey Population Overview Comparison by Housing Stability

Demographic Characteristic	Housing Secure	Housing Insecure
# of Survey Respondents	19	25
Gender	Male: 6	Male: 13
	Female: 13	Female: 10
	Trans-male: 0	Trans-male: 0
	Trans-female: 0	Trans-female: 0
	Gender non-conforming: 0	Gender non-conforming: 0
	Don't know: 0	Don't know: 0
Sexual Orientation	Straight: 17	Straight: 23
	Gay/Lesbian: 0	Gay/Lesbian: 0
	Bisexual/Pansexual: 0	Bisexual/Pansexual: 0
	Asexual: 0	Asexual: 0
	Two-spirit: 0	Two-spirit: 0
	Don't know: 0	Don't know: 1

Age	0 - 19 years: 0	0 - 19 years: 1
	20 - 39 years: 3	20 - 39 years: 8
	40 - 59 years: 11	40 - 59 years: 12
	60+: 5	60+: 4
Immigration Status	Born in Canada: 16	Born in Canada: 18
	Born outside of Canada: 2	Born outside of Canada: 5
Racial Identity	White: 16	White: 18
	Visible minority: 2	Visible minority: 5
Indigenous Identity	First Nations: 0	First Nations: 0
	Métis: 0	Métis: 0
	Inuit: 0	Inuit: 0
	Other Indigenous ancestry: 1	Other Indigenous ancestry: 0
Time in Foster Care, Youth Group Home, or Youth/Young Adult Agreement	Spent time in care: 0	Spent time in care: 3
Served in Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP, Emergency Services	Canadian Armed Forces: 0	Canadian Armed Forces: 1
	RCMP: 0	RCMP: 0
	Emergency Services: 1	Emergency Services: 0

Based on this survey population overview breakdown, we can determine the following:

- 100% of respondents who spent time in care are housing insecure.
- 74% of housing insecure respondents are 40 years or older.

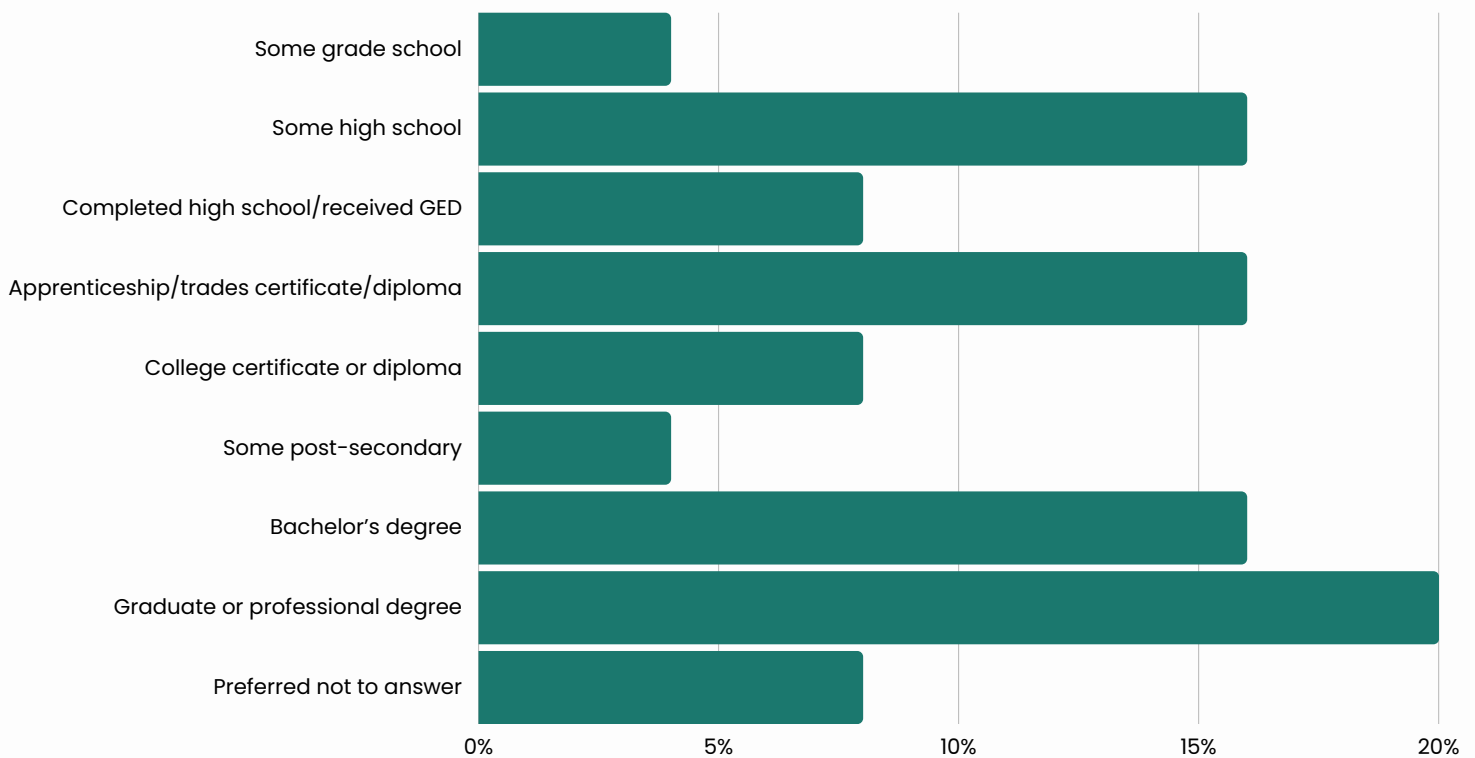
**Note that the rest of the reported results and analysis will focus on housing insecure respondents unless otherwise indicated.*




Education, Employment, and Income Sources

Respondents indicated various education levels when responding to “*What is the highest level of education you’ve completed?*” 4% (1) of respondents have completed some grade school, 16% (4) have completed some high school, 8% (2) have completed high school or received their GED, 16% (4) have an apprenticeship, trades certificate, or diploma, 8% (2) have a college certificate or diploma, 4% (1) have some post-secondary, 16% (4) have a Bachelor’s degree, and 20% (5) have a Graduate or Professional Degree (Master’s, Ph.D., MD, JD, etc.). 8% (2) of respondents preferred not to answer. This can also be seen in Figure 4, below.

Figure 4: Respondents’ Education Levels Breakdown





Additionally, 40% (10) of respondents are employed and 4% (1) preferred not to answer; 73% (8) of those employed are full-time, 9% (1) are part-time, and 18% (2) are employed casually on contract.

Recognizing that many respondents are not full-time employed, we asked them, “*What are your sources of income?*” Respondents were encouraged to check all that apply from the following list of options: *Job-related* (e.g. employment, partner/spouse’s income, alimony/child support, etc.), *Government-related* (e.g. Seniors Benefits, Veterans’ Benefits, Disability Benefits, Employment Insurance, Student loans, etc.), *Tax-related* (e.g. child and family tax benefits, GST refunds, etc.), or *Informal* (e.g. bottle returns, panhandling, money from family and friends, etc.).

Respondents noted 13 times that they receive job-related income, seven times that they receive government-related income, seven times that they receive tax-related income, and five times that they receive informal income. Additionally, respondents noted four times that they have other sources of income including investments, agricultural projects, and rental income and twice that they preferred not to answer.

Further, respondents were asked to disclose their approximate household income for the previous year. Responses varied widely, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents Approximate Household Income in 2022

Total Household Income in 2022	# of Respondents Per Income Level
\$30,000 or less	12 (48%)
Between \$30,001 and \$49,999	3 (12%)
Between \$50,000 and \$69,999	1 (4%)
Between \$70,000 and \$89,999	1 (4%)
Between \$90,000 and \$109,999	1 (4%)
More than \$110,000	1 (4%)
Prefer not to answer	6 (24%)

This can be broken down further to understand household income level by housing security status, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents' Household Income in 2022 by Housing Status

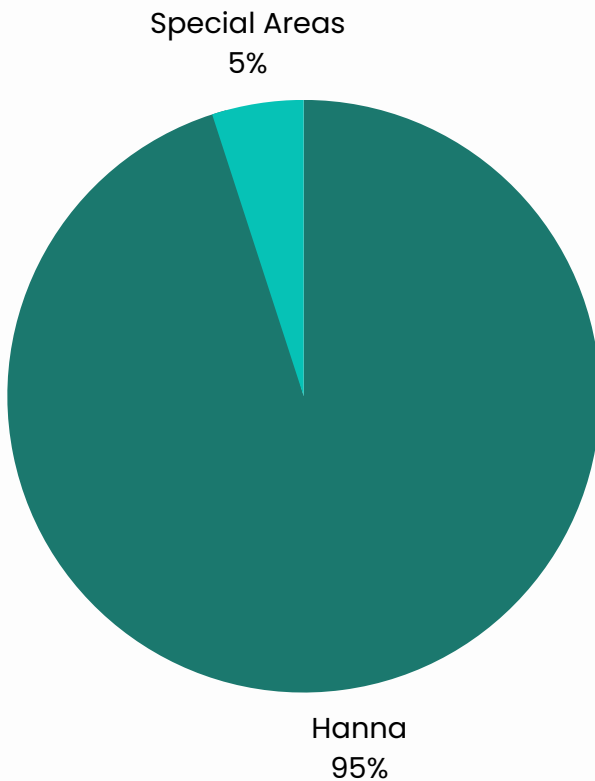
Total Household Income in 2022	# of Housing Secure Respondents Per Income Level	# of Housing Insecure Respondents Per Income Level
\$30,000 or less	1 (5%)	12 (48%)
Between \$30,001 and \$49,999	2 (11%)	3 (12%)
Between \$50,000 and \$69,999	1 (5%)	1 (4%)
Between \$70,000 and \$89,999	4 (21%)	1 (4%)
Between \$90,000 and \$109,999	2 (11%)	1 (4%)
More than \$110,000	7 (37%)	1 (4%)
Prefer not to answer	2 (11%)	6 (24%)

Of the housing insecure respondents, 48% reported a household annual income of \$30,000 or less compared to 48% of housing secure respondents who reported an annual income of more than \$90,000.

Living Situation

Residents from Hanna and Special Areas responded to the survey, as can be seen below, in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Breakdown of All Survey Respondents by Location



To better understand respondents' current living situations, respondents were asked to indicate if they rent or own their home (or if neither is true for them). 28% (7) of housing insecure respondents indicated that they own their homes, 52% (13) indicated that they rent their homes, 16% (4) noted that they neither own nor

rent, and 4% (1) preferred not to answer. Comparatively, 84% (16) of housing secure respondents own their homes and 16% (3) rent their homes. Based on this, it can be concluded that respondents who rent their homes or who neither rent nor own are significantly more likely to be housing insecure than respondents who own their homes.

Further, respondents were asked, “If you pay rent or a mortgage, how much do you pay per month?” Of the responses, rent and mortgage prices varied.

Table 5: Rent or Mortgage Costs per Month by Housing Status


Rent/Mortgage Cost	# of Housing Secure Respondents Paying Rent/Mortgage Costs	# of Housing Insecure Respondents Paying Rent/Mortgage Costs
Less than \$500	1 (5%)	3 (12%)
Between \$500 to \$999	3 (16%)	10 (40%)
Between \$1000 to \$1499	3 (16%)	5 (20%)
Between \$1500 to \$1999	2 (11%)	0
Over \$2000	2 (11%)	0
I don't pay rent or a mortgage	7 (37%)	5 (20%)
Prefer not to answer	1 (5%)	2 (8%)

Among housing insecure respondents, whether they rent, own, or are in a different situation entirely, 19% (6) do not have sufficient and affordable heating and 9% (3) do not have access to safe drinking water.

Table 6: Breakdown of Respondents' Missing Amenities

Missing Amenities	# of Respondents Missing Amenities
Indoor plumbing/bathing facilities	3 (9%)
Sufficient and affordable heating	6 (19%)
Safe drinking water	3 (9%)
Refrigeration	2 (6%)
Electricity (or equivalent - i.e. solar power)	3 (9%)
Cooking facilities	2 (6%)
Fire protection (smoke alarms, fire extinguishers)	4 (13%)

This breakdown highlighted respondents who lack basic amenities and is one of the ways in which respondents' objective housing situation is calculated. Some respondents self-identified as housing stable but lacked amenities that would consider their housing situation stable according to the Canadian definition of homelessness, including indoor plumbing, heat, electricity, and access to safe drinking water.



12% (5) of all respondents, 60% (3) of which are housing insecure, have always lived in and around the area and 4% preferred not to answer. Of the housing insecure respondents who were not born there, 27% (9) have lived in the area for three years or less. Respondents who are not from Hanna were also asked to indicate the reasons why they came to this community. The top three reasons respondents came to the area are:

1. To find housing (15%)
2. To look for work (12%)
3. To start a job (12%)

Other reasons people moved to Hanna include to access services/supports (9%), for the lifestyle the community offers (9%), fear for safety/fleeing from violence (6%), to move in with a spouse/partner (3%), to live with family (3%), to attend school (3%), and to reconnect with culture and community (3%). 3% (1) preferred not to answer and 18% (6) noted other reasons for coming to the community including looking after family property, moving after a divorce, and needing a quieter community after trauma.

Community Supports

In an attempt to better understand service needs and gaps in Hanna, respondents were asked: “Which support services do you access?” The main reasons respondents access support services are to help with health and wellness (20%), support services (17%), and basic needs (16%).

Table 7: Reasons Why Respondents Access Support Services

Services Accessed	# of Housing Secure Respondents who Accessed these Services	# of Housing Insecure Respondents who Accessed these Services
Basic Needs - Food, shelter, clothing, etc.	0	11 (22%)
COVID-19 - PPE, information, supports	0	2 (4%)
Crisis Financial Support - Eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.	0	1 (2%)

<p>Family/Parenting - Child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals, etc.</p>	0	2 (4%)
<p>Financial - Employment, housing, training/education, etc.</p>	0	2 (4%)
<p>Health and Wellness - Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.</p>	4 (22%)	10 (20%)
<p>Legal - Separation/divorce/custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/misdemeanor, etc.</p>	0	2 (4%)

<p>Support Services - Help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>12 (24%)</p>
<p>Transportation - Access to basic services/education/employment, medical transportation</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>3 (6%)</p>

To further understand respondents' abilities to access the necessary support services, we asked: "Which of these services were you able to access in your community?" and "Which of these services did you have to access in another community?" followed by, "If applicable, how long did you travel to access these services (one-way)?"

Respondents were most likely to access basic needs, health and wellness, and support services in Hanna. Interestingly, health and wellness, legal, and family/parenting were most accessed outside of the community by respondents, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Services Accessed by Housing Insecure Respondents by Location

Services Accessed in Hanna	# of Respondents who Accessed these Services	Services Accessed Outside of Hanna	# of Respondents who Accessed these Services
Basic Needs - Food, shelter, clothing, etc.	16 (17%)	Basic Needs - Food, shelter, clothing, etc.	2 (7%)
COVID-19 - PPE, information, supports	7 (8%)	COVID-19 - PPE, information, supports	2 (7%)
Crisis Financial Support - Eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.	9 (10%)	Crisis Financial Support - Eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.	2 (7%)
Family/Parenting - Child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals, etc.	8 (9%)	Family/Parenting - Child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals, etc.	4 (13%)

Financial - Employment, housing, training/education, etc.	9 (10%)	Financial - Employment, housing, training/education, etc.	2 (7%)
Health and Wellness - Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.	14 (15%)	Health and Wellness - Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.	5 (17%)
Legal - Separation/divorce /custody, wills/estates, employment/ labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/ misdemeanour, etc.	9 (10%)	Legal - Separation/divorce/ custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/ misdemeanour, etc.	4 (13%)

Support Services - Help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.	13 (14%)	Support Services - Help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.	2 (7%)
Transportation - Access to basic services/education /employment, medical transportation	8 (9%)	Transportation - Access to basic services/education/ employment, medical transportation	2 (7%)

Respondents noted traveling an average of 2.5 hours one-way to access services. Time and distance to access services outside of the community were noted as a barrier for some respondents; while 47% of respondents travel by vehicle to get to these services, 16% rely on a family member or friend, and 16% resort to hitchhiking or catching a ride from a stranger to access services.

Worth repeating is that 16% of respondents rely on hitchhiking or catching rides from strangers to access services. This is significant as respondents who are unable to access the necessary support will continue to experience housing insecurity at much higher rates than those respondents who can access the support needed to stabilize their housing situation.

8% (2) of respondents accessed an emergency shelter in the past 12 months and 12% (3) preferred not to answer; 50% (1) an emergency weather shelter (also known as a MAT shelter), and 50% (1) doesn't know what type of shelter they accessed.

Of the respondents who needed shelter services but did not access them, several reasons were provided as to why, as outlined in Table 9. The main reason why respondents did not access shelter services when they needed them was because the shelter was full.

Table 9: Reasons Respondents Did Not Access Shelter Services When Needed

Reason for Not Accessing Shelter Services	# of Respondents
The right kind of shelter wasn't available (for example, I needed a women's shelter and couldn't access one)	0
The shelter was full	0
There was no shelter in my area	2 (50%)
I didn't meet the intake criteria to access the shelter	0
I didn't feel safe	0
The shelter was unclean	0
The shelter did not welcome me because of my gender identity	0
Alcohol/substance use is not permitted on site	0
Lack of disability accommodations	0
Lack of transportation	0

No pets allowed	1 (25%)
Isolation from social support (family, partner, friends, etc.)	0
Prefer not to answer	1 (25%)





Insights on Community Spaces

Wanting to ensure the respondents had the opportunity to reflect on their experiences in the community, they were asked, *"What are two things you love about the community and what are two things you don't love about the community?"* In analyzing responses, it became immediately clear that respondents love the sense of community they feel in Hanna.

Sense of Community: Respondents overwhelmingly spoke of their love for Hanna's community. They love how helpful and friendly community members are, the peace and quiet that Hanna brings, and the sense of security they have in a community where everyone cares. Respondents noted their love of the environment in Hanna and the cohesion among community members; as one respondent put it, "[Hanna] is the group I belong to."

In contrast, when asked what they don't love about the community, respondents spoke of a lack of services and crime.

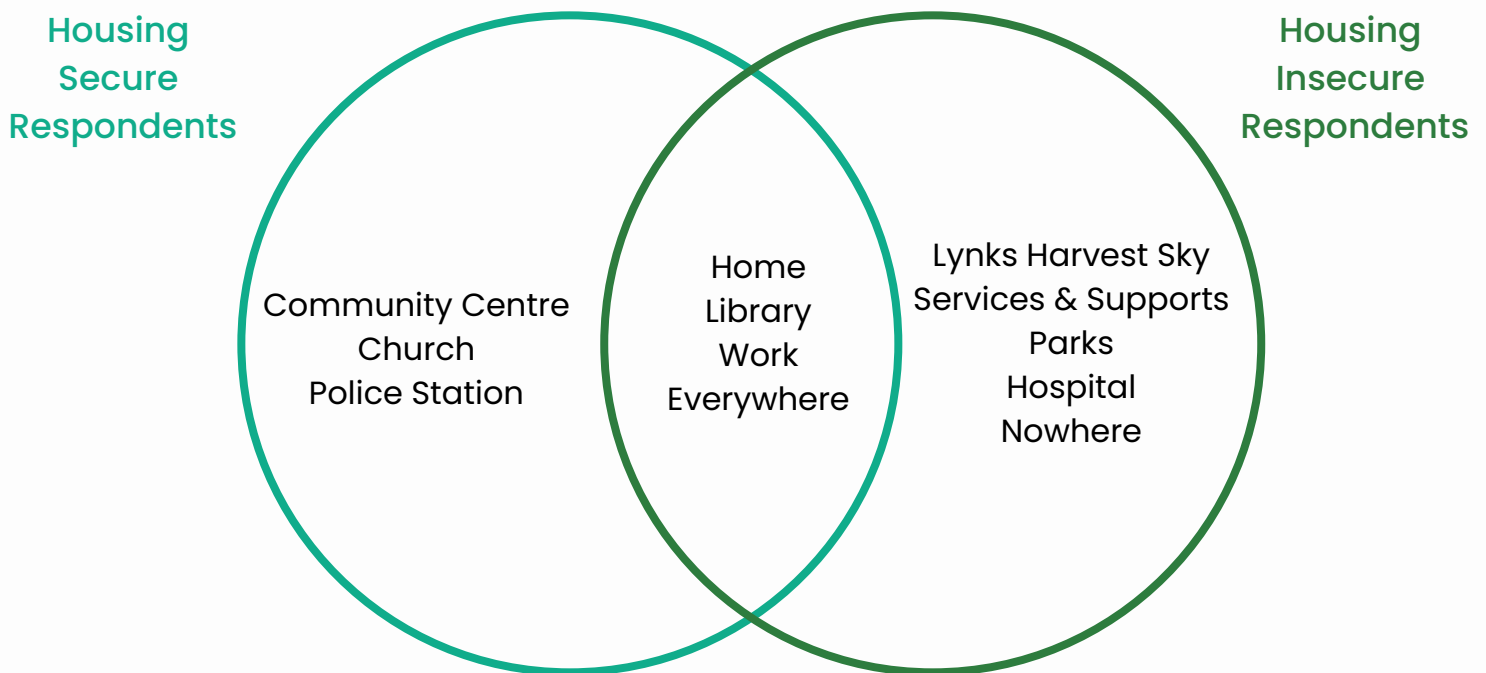
Lack of Services: Respondents noted their frustration with the lack of services available in the community, specifically medical services. Others spoke of the lack of shopping choices (food, clothing, storage, and moving services) in Hanna. Many also emphasized the lack of transportation services and the inadequate availability of resources for seniors, people who are housing insecure, and people with physical disabilities. Several respondents specifically noted that very few buildings, both residential and commercial, are wheelchair accessible.

Crime: A few respondents also noted the high levels of crime in Hanna, specifically in terms of theft and drug use.

Respondents were also asked, *"What are two places that make you feel safe in the community and what are two places that make you feel unsafe in the community?"* There were several overlapping responses between housing secure

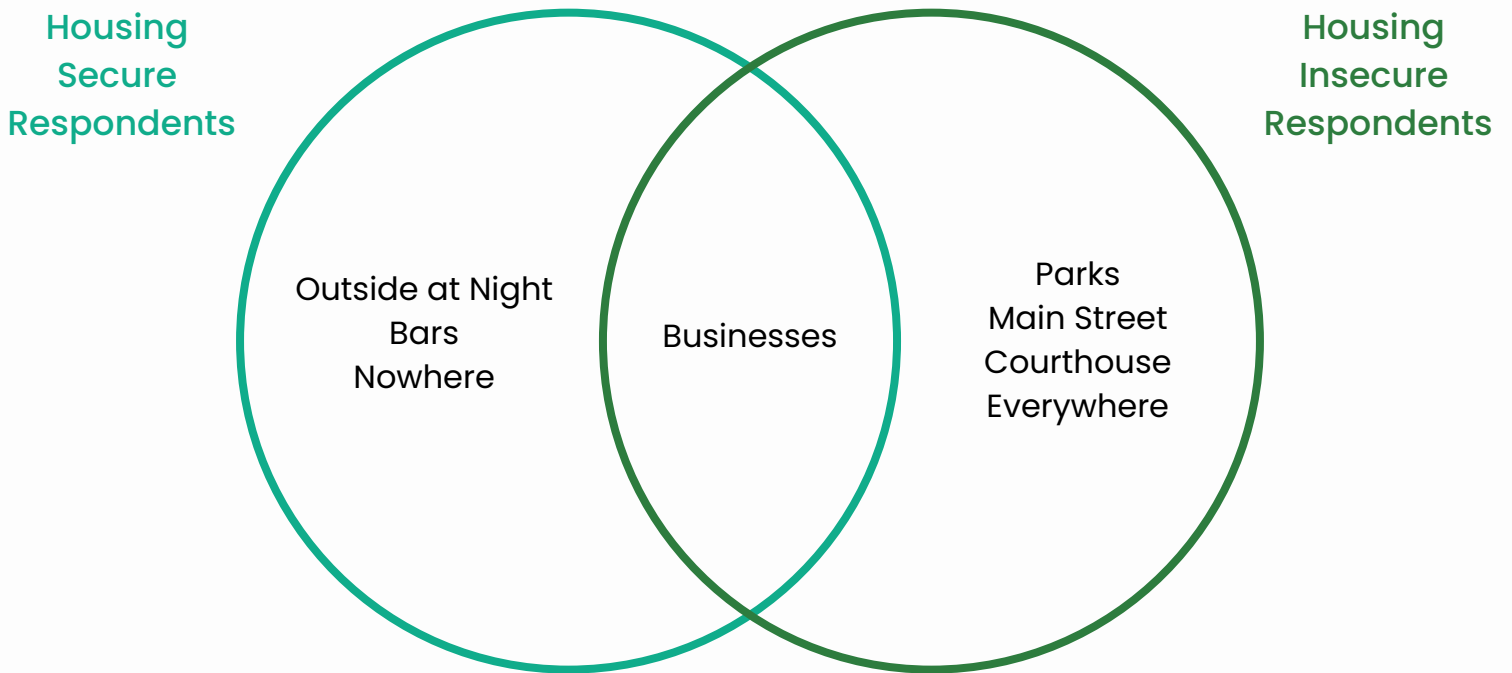
and housing insecure respondents when answering the question of safe spaces, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Venn Diagram of Safe Spaces Responses by Housing Status



In terms of unsafe spaces, responses varied much more between housing secure and housing insecure respondents. The only theme across both groups was feeling unsafe in businesses in Hanna. Figure 7 showcases this below.

Figure 7: Venn Diagram of Unsafe Spaces Responses by Housing Status



What's clear in Figure 7 is the difference in types of spaces housing secure versus housing insecure respondents feel unsafe. Specifically, several housing insecure respondents noted not feeling safe anywhere in comparison to many housing secure respondents who reported always feeling safe.

“What Would You Like to See More of in Your Community?”

Respondents, both housing secure and housing insecure, outlined many things they would like to see more of in the community. Upon further analysis, they can be categorized into two main themes: housing and support services. Interestingly, one of these themes seems to oppose respondents' answers to a previous question they were asked: *“Does Hanna provide enough...employment opportunities; free/accessible recreational and social opportunities; social services; accessible and affordable housing; public transportation; access to food?”*

Table 10: Respondents’ Perceptions of Hanna’s Provision of Services

Does Hanna Provide Enough:	# of Respondents Who Believe Hanna Provides Enough...	# of Respondents Who Believe Hanna Does Not Provide Enough...	# of Respondents Who Aren't Sure if Hanna Provides Enough...
Employment opportunities	17 (41%)	14 (34%)	10 (24%)
Free/accessible recreational and social opportunities	27 (66%)	10 (24%)	4 (10%)
Social services	37 (86%)	5 (12%)	1 (2%)

Accessible & affordable housing	10 (24%)	18 (43%)	14 (33%)
Public transportation	4 (9%)	37 (86%)	2 (5%)
Access to food (grocery stores, markets, food banks, etc.)	34 (81%)	4 (10%)	4 (10%)

Of note in Table 10 is the significant discrepancy in respondents who believe there is enough public transportation across Hanna (9%) versus the number of respondents who believe more public transportation is needed (86%). The majority of respondents both housing secure and housing insecure, indicated there are enough social services (86%) and enough free/accessible recreational and social opportunities (66%) in Hanna. This is particularly interesting because when asked what they want to see more of in the community, respondents spoke of the need for more support services.

Housing: Respondents overwhelmingly highlighted the need for affordable and accessible housing options in Hanna. Specific emphasis was put on housing options that are accessible for wheelchair users and people with mobility challenges as well as designed for seniors. Respondents also noted the need for transitional housing options for residents who aren't in need of emergency shelter but aren't yet ready for a full-time independent rental option. One respondent noted their desire to see modular housing units and other creative and smaller housing options in Hanna.

Support Services: Respondents spoke of their desire to see more businesses and business opportunities in Hanna. Similarly, respondents spoke on the need for increased public transportation options within the community.

Lastly, respondents expressed interest in more affordable and available childcare services.

Upon further analysis, an overall satisfaction score was generated to better understand respondents' perceptions of service provision in the community. It was determined that housing secure respondents are 60% satisfied, while housing insecure respondents are just 44% satisfied with service provision in Hanna, which are very high scores in comparison to many rural and remote communities in Alberta. It's important to note here that the satisfaction rates calculated above speak to the lack of available services in the area rather than satisfaction with currently available services in the community.



What Does Homelessness Look Like in Hanna?

In a report that is composed of mainly quantitative data, it can be easy to overlook the humanity behind the numbers reported. 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 Hanna, this is a single man between 40-59 years old who rents his home for between \$500-\$999/month. Because he is currently unemployed with an annual income of less than \$30,000/year, he finds it difficult to consistently pay his rent. He accesses basic needs and health and wellness services regularly, both inside and outside of Hanna, and has always lived in the community.

The true diversity of respondents is illustrated in the Results & Analysis section, but this highlights what someone experiencing housing insecurity might look like in Hanna.




Opportunities Moving Forward

Based on the findings outlined in this report, RDN has identified three opportunities to support housing insecure respondents moving forward. They are:

1. Conduct an accessibility audit of current housing options and services in Hanna. Respondents overwhelmingly highlighted the lack of wheelchair-accessible housing options and service provider locations in the community. Without housing or services that are physically accessible to respondents, they will be unable to stabilize their housing situation. It is critical to conduct an accessibility audit in Hanna to identify the percentage of housing options and service provider locations that are currently inaccessible. Once the audit has been completed, it is important to begin addressing the lack of accessibility within the community by updating bylaws and building permit requirements, renovating currently inaccessible locations to improve accessibility, and reaching out to community members to let them know the work that is ongoing to address accessibility concerns.

2. Consider developing and implementing seniors-specific support services. 74% of all housing insecure respondents are over the age of 40; with an aging housing insecure population. It is critical that supports and services are designed and offered specifically to reach older adults struggling with their housing situation. People experiencing housing insecurity age physiologically and psychologically at much higher rates than people who are housing secure. Most 40+ year-olds experiencing housing insecurity are considered seniors, as their physiological and psychological health match or surpass that of a 65+ year-old person who is housing secure; this is called “functionally geriatric” (Campbell et al., 2017; Demallie et al., 1997; Rota-Bartelink and Lipmann, 2007; McDonald et al., 2007). Moving forward, it is important to promote and increase awareness of current senior support services and to consider implementing new support services designed specifically for older adults experiencing housing insecurity. These could include things like lawn and property care services, seniors-focused transportation, delivery services, health and wellness supports, and/or social




activities. Additionally, consider developing an Age-Friendly Action Plan by first conducting an Age-Friendly Assessment which will review outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation and housing, respect and inclusion, social participation, civic participation and employment opportunities, communication and information, and community support and health services for their age-friendliness.

3. Consider public transportation options in Hanna. Respondents indicated a lack of transportation as prohibitive to accessing support services, recreation opportunities, and shelter in the community. Respondents average 2.5 hours of driving one way to access services; 16% of respondents rely on family or friends to access these services and 16% resort to hitchhiking to get the support they need. Additionally, many respondents indicated that transportation and business infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, and storefronts are inaccessible to community members with mobility challenges, pushing a stroller, or pulling a wagon. To ensure respondents are able to get the support they need to stabilize their housing situation, whether that be access to medical or mental health supports, accessing the employment centre, getting a job, or even finding housing, accessible transportation is a must. Public transportation is often very difficult to provide in rural communities due to lack of infrastructure and costs associated with operations. Consider creative and/or alternative options to public transportation such as car share programs, taxi credits, volunteer ride share programs, or other options to ensure community members, specifically housing insecure community members, can get around the community. Additionally, conducting an accessibility audit across the community to identify infrastructure that is not currently accessible is a great starting point to understand how to support respondents who need accessibility support.

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