

A misty forest landscape with evergreen and deciduous trees in autumn colors. The scene is hazy with soft light filtering through the trees, creating a serene and atmospheric mood. The trees are densely packed, and the mist is thick, obscuring some of the details in the background.

Rocky Mountain House

2025 Alberta Provincial
Estimations and Service Needs

Community Report



Mountain Rose Centre

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We Thank You.

This report and the information within were made possible through the efforts of many dedicated individuals and groups. First and foremost, we would like to thank the residents of Rocky Mountain House for sharing their experiences and insights about housing and service needs in the community. We appreciate your time, effort, and knowledge! Additionally, we want to thank the front-line staff at participating service provider locations for their support, dedication, and commitment to this project:

- Rocky Support Services
- Rocky Mountain House Public Library
- Recovery Alberta – Rocky Mountain House



This project is funded in part by the
Government of Canada's Reaching Home:
Canada's Homelessness Strategy

Canada 

About this Report

In 2025, the Rural Development Network (RDN) partnered with 19 organizations representing 64 communities across Alberta to conduct the fourth iteration of a province-wide Housing and Service Needs Estimation.

This report outlines Rocky Mountain House's results within the provincial estimation, highlighting the number of residents who are housing insecure and their experiences with housing insecurity. This report is complemented by the [Alberta Provincial Report](#), which highlights the combined results of all 64 communities across the province.

This report is intended to support decision-making across organizations, funders, and government around housing insecurity by providing reliable and up-to-date data on housing and service needs in Rocky Mountain House. It can also be used in the community for program planning and advocacy purposes related to housing insecurity, housing stock, 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, more recently termed “houselessness,” considers the traumas imposed on Indigenous Peoples through colonialism. Indigenous houselessness is not only defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews, including: “individuals, families, and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identifies” (Thistle, 2017).

Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant and stressful. 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, 2012).

In this report, we will use “housing insecure.” The term will be used to encompass the entire spectrum of homelessness, including unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated, and at risk of homelessness, as well as those experiencing Indigenous houselessness.



Introduction



Housing insecurity is a continued and increasing concern in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across Alberta and the entire country. When it comes to housing insecurity, the urban experience tends to dominate the conversation, mainly due to the visibility of unsheltered individuals experiencing housing insecurity in urban centres. The issue of housing insecurity in rural and remote areas is far less understood and acknowledged because of its hidden nature. Recent data suggests that rural homelessness is prevalent at rates equivalent to or greater than urban per capita rates (Schiff et al., 2022).

In 2023, the Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation identified 2,429 survey respondents as experiencing housing insecurity. An additional 2,354 dependents under 18 and 2,537 adults reported living with housing insecure survey respondents, meaning there were at least 7,320 community members experiencing housing insecurity across the 21 participating communities in rural and remote Alberta (Rural Development Network, 2023). While some housing insecure respondents had experiences of being unsheltered or emergency-sheltered, the majority of housing insecure respondents were provisionally accommodated or at risk of homelessness, further speaking to the issue of visibility, or rather invisibility, of housing insecurity in rural and remote communities.

As rural, remote, and Indigenous communities continue to experience growth amidst a national housing and affordability crisis, it has become more apparent than ever that more evidence is required to support decision-making on housing insecurity, housing stock, and services across the province.

Recognizing this, RDN conducted the 2025 Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation with 19 organizations representing roughly 64 rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across Alberta in an attempt to better understand what housing insecurity looks like in each community and across the rural provincial landscape. Specifically, the purpose of this estimation is to:

1. Provide a comprehensive picture of housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House and across Alberta, including demographic information on who is experiencing housing insecurity and details on service use and gaps.
2. Help inform service providers and municipal, provincial, and federal policies, practices, and funding decisions on housing insecurity, housing stock, and support services.
3. Develop recommendations and next steps for service providers and all levels of government to address housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House and across Alberta.
4. Elevate and incorporate the voices of people experiencing housing insecurity in local, provincial, and federal responses to housing insecurity.

This is the fourth iteration of the Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation. It was also conducted in 2018, 2020, and 2023, with 20, 24, and 21 communities, respectively. Rocky Mountain House has never participated in a previous Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation, though they have conducted two custom Housing and Service Needs Estimations. Table 1 details their participation.

Table 1: Past Participation in Provincial Estimations

	Total # of Respondents	# of Housing Insecure Respondents	# of Housing Insecure Dependents and Additional Adults	Total # of Housing Insecure Community Members
2017	57	44	-	44
2024	29	26	56	82



Methodology



The methodology employed in this Housing and Service Needs Estimation comes from the Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural, Remote, and Indigenous Homelessness, published by the Rural Development Network (2022). RDN initially developed the Step-by-Step Guide due to the lack of available, accurate, and current data on rural housing insecurity. A lack of data limits the ability of rural communities like Rocky Mountain House 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. It recognizes the difficulties of conducting standard Point-in-Time (PiT) counts in rural and remote areas and 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.

Please note: *As with a PiT count, this estimation is an undercount and represents only those individuals identified during the four-week period. The number of people experiencing housing insecurity is greater than presented in this report.*

Following the model proposed in the Step-by-Step Guide, RDN worked with communities and academics across Canada to develop a survey that reflected the contexts of rural and remote communities. The survey was developed following the definitions of homelessness proposed by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and adopted by the federal government. 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, which could cause distress to their clients. By reframing the language of the survey, service providers were able to encourage all clients to participate, instead of targeting specific 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 considered their living conditions secure or insecure and to indicate scenarios in a “select all that apply” question that determined 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 insecure. As shown in the results below, some individuals who did not consider themselves housing insecure qualify as such based on the national definitions of homelessness.

The same survey was used across all communities participating in the 2025 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 Rocky Mountain House’s location parameters.

Figure 1: Rocky Mountain House's Location Question on Survey

Q2. Can you confirm you live in Rocky Mountain House?

Yes

No

RDN worked with Rocky Mountain House to develop a survey administration process to ensure the greatest participation level possible. For Rocky Mountain House, surveys were advertised at service provider locations and online as an open SurveyMonkey link across the community. Surveys were available through these locations and online for a period of four weeks, from October 1 to October 31, 2025.

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, prioritizing 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 allowed RDN to maintain the integrity of the data without knowing respondent identities. The unique identifier was 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?

Rocky Mountain House collected 26 survey responses during the four weeks. Of the 26 surveys, five 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 (e.g., characters instead of numbers, etc.).
3. Survey respondent(s) submitted multiple surveys (determined based on unique identifier(s)).
4. Survey respondent(s) indicated they were located outside of community boundaries.
5. Survey respondent(s) did not complete enough questions to determine housing stability (e.g., abandoned the survey).

Based on this, 21 were deemed 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 service providers were informed that participants under 14 years old required guardian consent to participate in the survey. We recognize that this is inherently problematic and exclusionary, as most youth experiencing homelessness would not have a guardian to provide consent. However, to maintain survey ethics, this requirement complies with the Alberta College of Social Workers' Standards of Practice.

Additionally, the data does not represent Rocky Mountain House as a whole; rather, it represents only those who accessed services in the region during the four-week enumeration period.

As a result, there remains a portion of people experiencing housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House whose voices were not captured in this project. Therefore, while the trends and highlights discussed in this report are informative, it is always important to remember that this report presents a conservative picture of the housing and services needs in Rocky Mountain House.



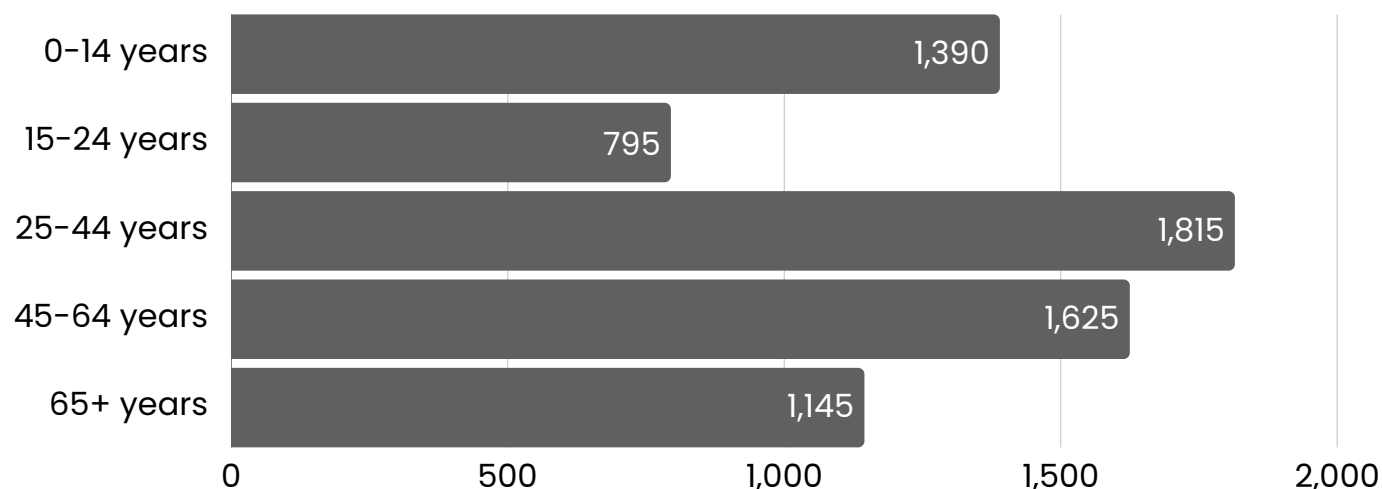
Results and Analysis

Rocky Mountain House Population Overview

According to Alberta's Regional Dashboard (Government of Alberta, 2025), Rocky Mountain House covers 13.3 square km of geographical land base and has a population size of 6,765 (Statistics Canada, 2021).

51% (3,455) of Rocky Mountain House reported as women, while 48.9% (3,310) reported as men (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Figure 3: Rocky Mountain House Population Age Breakdown (2021)



The average age in Rocky Mountain House is 39.5 years.

According to Statistics Canada (2021) Census numbers, 9.1% (595) of Rocky Mountain House's population were immigrants to Canada. Further, 11.4% (745) of Rocky Mountain House's population identified as Indigenous, 6.3% (410) of whom were First Nations and 5.1% (330) were Métis.

The 2021 Census also reported that Rocky Mountain House has 2,690 private dwellings with an average of 2.4 people per household. Of the 2,690 private dwellings in Rocky Mountain House, 70.7% (1,905) were owned, while 29.1% (785) were rented, with average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings reported as \$1,154. Additionally, 60.4% (1,625) were single-detached houses, 14.8% (400) were apartments,¹ 9.8% (265) were moveable dwellings,² 11.7% (315) were semi-detached houses, and 3.1% (85) were row houses.

¹ Includes apartments or flats in a duplex and apartments in both buildings with fewer than five storeys and with five or more storeys.

² According to Statistics Canada (2021), a moveable dwelling includes mobile homes and other movable dwellings such as houseboats, recreational vehicles and railroad cars.

24.5% (660) of households in Rocky Mountain House reported 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 Rocky Mountain House is \$38,800 for individuals and \$72,000 for households. The Economic Research Institute (2026) estimates the cost of living to be 1% higher than the national average and 3% lower than the Alberta provincial average for Rocky Mountain House.

Housing & Service Needs Estimation Survey

Respondent Population Overview

Gender and Sexuality

81% (17) of participants identified as women, 10% (2) as gender non-conforming, and 5% (1) as trans-women. Additionally, 5% (1) of respondents preferred not to answer.

70% (14) of respondents identified as straight, 5% (1) as bisexual/pansexual, and 5% (1) as asexual. Additionally, 20% (4) of respondents preferred not to answer.

Age

14% (3) of respondents were between the ages of 15 and 24, 48% (10) were 25 to 44, 29% (6) were 45 to 65, and 10% (2) were 65 and older.

Household Makeup

8% (1) of respondents noted that they or someone in their home was pregnant, 17% (2) indicated they live in a multi-generational home, and 75% (9) were in single-parent households.

Time Spent in Care

44% (8) of respondents indicated they spent time in foster care, a youth group home, or in a youth/young adult agreement.

Immigration

76% (16) of respondents were born in Canada, while 24% (5) immigrated to Canada. 20% (1) of respondents who immigrated to Canada have lived here between one and three years, while 80% (4) of respondents who immigrated to Canada have lived here for more than ten years.

Race and Indigenous Identity

78% (11) of respondents identified as white, compared to 14% (2) of racially diverse respondents. 7% (1) of respondents preferred not to answer, and 7% (1) self-disclosed as "Irish Canadian."

Further, 38% (8) of respondents self-identified as Indigenous. Of those respondents who self-identified as Indigenous, 88% (7) identified as First Nations and 13% (1) as other Indigenous ancestry.

Veteran Status

5% (1) of total respondents indicated that they served in the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), or emergency services. 100% (1) served in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Objective Housing Situation

As part of the survey, participants were asked: “Do you consider your housing situation 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 21 survey respondents, 17 self-identified as housing insecure and one indicated “I’m not sure,” while three indicated they were housing secure. Using the national definitions of homelessness to guide further analysis, all 21 survey respondents were identified as housing insecure. An additional 25 dependents under 18 and 31 adults were reported as living with housing insecure survey respondents.

Tables 2 and 3 show breakdowns of respondents by housing security status and highlight the number of dependents and adults who reported sharing living conditions with housing insecure respondents in Rocky Mountain House.

Table 2: Breakdown of Respondent Housing Status

	# of Individuals
Housing Secure	0
Housing Insecure	21

Table 3: Breakdown of Dependents & Adults Sharing Insecure Housing Living Conditions

	# of Additional Individuals
Dependents	25
Adults	31

Based on survey results, there were at least 77 community members experiencing housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House.³

³ Note that a participating service provider identified an additional 23 housing insecure community members who did not complete the survey, including six who were unsheltered and 17 who were provisionally accommodated. This would suggest there are at least 100 community members experiencing housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House.

The top three reasons for housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House, as reported by survey respondents, were:

1. Health challenges⁴
2. High housing costs⁵
3. Conflict & violence⁶

Note that the rest of the report will focus entirely on housing insecure respondents.

⁴ "Illness/medical condition," "Mental health concerns," "Mental disability," and/or "Physical disability"

⁵ "My rent/mortgage is too high for my current income"

⁶ "I am experiencing domestic/family violence or abuse," "I am experiencing family conflict/rejection," "I am experiencing conflict with my spouse/partner"

Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness in Rocky Mountain House

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 Rocky Mountain House. This understanding can be achieved by exploring the experiences of the 21 housing insecure respondents.

To accurately place respondents along the spectrum of homelessness, a series of measures were used to understand their situations. These measures included their self-identified housing security response, calculated housing security, current housing situation, and the amenities they lack in their current situation.

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. Statements included, but were not limited to, “I slept in a vehicle,” “I slept in a hotel overnight because I had nowhere else to go,” “I live in supported or transitional housing,” and “I live in housing that needs major repairs.”

Respondents were able to select more than one statement. To accurately represent what housing insecurity might look like for respondents over a month, all responses have been included.

When reading this table, an important consideration is that people experiencing housing insecurity often fluctuate in and out of their situation. Someone who was unsheltered one night may have been emergency sheltered or provisionally accommodated the next. As a result, we have highlighted every incident of insecurity respondents experienced in the past month to understand the complexities of housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House. This means that more incidents of housing insecurity are reported in the table below than the number of housing insecure respondents.

Table 4: Respondents by Housing Situation on the Homelessness Spectrum

Place on the Homelessness Spectrum	# of Incidents
Unsheltered	6
Emergency Sheltered	21
Provisionally Accommodated	39
At Risk of Homelessness	33

The above table illustrates respondents' diverse experiences with housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House, emphasizing that homelessness presents itself in more ways than simply sleeping outside.

Respondents identified as **at risk** reported:

- Difficulty paying their rent or mortgage,
- Spending more than 30% of their monthly income on housing,
- Living in overcrowded accommodations with not enough bedrooms for the number of people staying in the unit,
- Staying in a home needing major repairs (e.g., heating or plumbing problems, mould, leaky roof, etc.), and/or
- Staying in a home with unsafe conditions (e.g., exposed wiring, no railing or banisters, physical hazards, etc.).

Respondents who indicated they experienced being **provisionally accommodated** noted:

- Staying in a hotel overnight because they had nowhere to go,
- Living in supported or transitional housing,
- Staying in an RV/trailer,
- Staying in a medical/detox facility,
- Staying in a jail/prison/remand centre,
- Staying with friends/family because they had nowhere else to go,
- Staying with a stranger because they had nowhere else to go,
- Staying in a home where they experienced violence because they had nowhere else to go, and/or
- Enduring unwanted sexual activity to have a place to stay.

Respondents who had experiences of being **emergency sheltered or unsheltered** reported:

- Staying in an emergency shelter,
- Staying in domestic violence/women's shelters, and/or
- Staying in makeshift shelters such as a vehicle, tent, or shack.

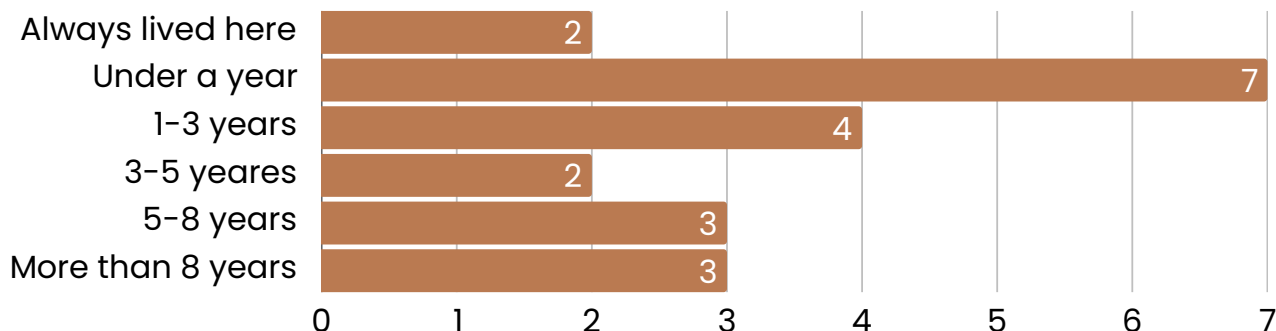
Living Situation

Residents in Rocky Mountain House responded to the survey.

Migration

10% (2) of respondents have always lived in Rocky Mountain House. Figure 4 outlines the various lengths of time respondents have lived in the community.

Figure 4: Breakdown of Respondents' Length of Time Lived in Rocky Mountain House



90% (19) of respondents were not born in Rocky Mountain House. 65% (11) moved from another community in Alberta, 6% (1) moved from a First Nation community in Alberta, 12% (2) moved from another province or territory, and 18% (3) moved from another country.

Respondents were also asked: *“What are the main reasons you came to this community? If you have always lived here, why have you chosen to stay in this community?”*

The top two reasons respondents came to the area are:

- Family-related reasons (to be closer to family, to follow family, etc.)
- Employment-related reasons (look for work, work-related transfer, more work opportunities, etc.)

Other reasons respondents moved to the community included fear for safety/fleeing from violence, housing-related reasons (to access affordable and appropriate housing, etc.), access to emergency shelters, access to services, housing-related reasons (to access affordable and appropriate housing, etc.), for the lifestyle the community offers, education opportunities (to attend school, access better educational opportunities, etc.), and the connection to culture, community, and traditions.

In comparison, the top two reasons respondents stayed in the area are:

- Fear for safety/fleeing from violence
- Housing-related reasons (to access affordable and appropriate housing, etc.)

Other reasons respondents stayed in the community included access to services, access to emergency shelters, employment-related reasons (look for work, work-related transfer, more work opportunities, etc.), family-related reasons (to be closer to family, to follow family, etc.), environmental displacement (flooding, wildfire, lack of clean drinking water, etc.), and and for the connection to culture, community, and traditions.

Noteworthy here is that 33% (5) of respondents have moved between three and six times in the past 12 months and 13% (2) have moved more than six times in the past 12 months.

Housing Situation and Missing Amenities

To better understand respondents' current living situations, they were asked to indicate if they rent or own their home (or if neither was true for them). 9% (2) of respondents indicated that they owned their homes, 47% (10) indicated that they rented their homes, and 42% (9) noted that they neither owned nor rented.

Seven unique respondents, whether they rented, owned, or were in a different situation entirely, indicated that they lacked specific amenities in their current housing situation, many of which are considered necessary for a secure living situation. At the time of the survey, 71% (5) of these respondents did not have cooking facilities in their current living situation.

Table 5: Breakdown of Respondents' Missing Amenities

Missing Amenities	# (%) of Respondents
Cooking facilities	5 (71%)
Electricity	2 (29%)
Sufficient and affordable heating	2 (29%)
Safe drinking water	1 (14%)
Refrigeration	1 (14%)
Indoor plumbing/bathing facilities	1 (14%)
Fire protection (smoke alarms, fire extinguishers)	1 (14%)

This breakdown highlights respondents who lacked basic amenities and is one way respondents' objective housing situation is calculated. Some respondents self-identified as housing secure but lacked amenities required for their housing to be considered stable according to the Canadian definitions of homelessness, including indoor plumbing/bathing facilities, sufficient and affordable heating, electricity, access to safe drinking water, and fire protection.

Education, Employment, and Income

Education

Respondents indicated various education levels when responding to the question, "What is the highest level of education you've completed?"

In Rocky Mountain House:

- 14% (3) of respondents had completed some grade school
- 29% (6) completed some high school
- 19% (4) completed high school or received their GED
- 10% (2) had an apprenticeship, trades certificate, or diploma
- 14% (3) had some post-secondary (college, university)
- 14% (3) had a post-secondary degree (college, university)

Employment

21% (4) of respondents were employed at the time of the survey. Additionally, two respondents indicated they were retired. Of employed respondents:

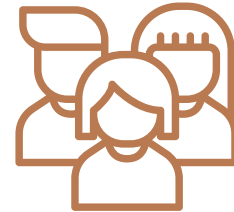
- 75% (3) were full-time (e.g., more than 30hrs/week)
- 25% (1) were part-time (e.g., less than 30hrs/week)

Unemployment Amongst Housing Insecure Respondents

74% (14) of respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey. Based on additional analysis, we know that:

79% identified as women, **14%** gender non-conforming, **7%** trans-women

71% were straight, **7%** were bisexual/pansexual, **7%** were asexual, and **14%** preferred not to answer



Age Breakdown

15-24	21%
25-44	43%
45-64	36%

Indigenous Identity

- 43%** were Indigenous
- **83%** were First Nations
 - **16%** other Indigenous ancestry

Income

Respondents were also asked to disclose their approximate household income for the previous year. Responses varied widely, as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Respondents Approximate Household Income in the Last 12 Months

Total Household Income in the Last 12 Months	# (%) of Respondents
Less than \$22,000	11 (52%)
Between \$22,001 and \$55,000	8 (38%)
Between \$55,001 and \$88,000	1 (5%)
Between \$88,001 and \$132,000	0 (0%)
More than \$132,001 ⁷	1 (5%)
Prefer not to answer	0 (0%)

Interestingly, 5% (1) of respondents reported a household annual income of between \$55,001 and \$88,000. This suggests that respondents who reported moderate income levels were experiencing housing insecurity, and again speaks to the spectrum of housing insecurity - respondents can and were making moderate income while unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated, and/or at risk of housing insecurity.

Further, 47% (10) of respondents indicated they spent more than 30% of their household income on housing (e.g., rent or mortgage payments) in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

⁷ It is important to remember the spectrum of homelessness when considering income rates amongst housing insecure respondents. Someone who is experiencing domestic or family violence, for example, is considered housing insecure no matter their annual household income. Additionally, it is important to remember that people cycle through the spectrum of homelessness regularly and just because some reported an annual household income of \$88,001 or higher in 2024, for example, does not mean they were not experiencing housing insecurity in 2025 - this could have occurred as a result of job loss, a death in the family, increasing interest and utility rates, or any number of reasons.

Community Supports

To better understand service needs and gaps in Rocky Mountain House, respondents were asked: “Which support services do you access and where do you most often access them?”

Respondents primarily accessed services in Rocky Mountain House for:

- Basic needs (95%)
- Shelter services (63%)
- Health and wellness services (47%)

In comparison, those accessing services outside of Rocky Mountain House did so primarily for:

- Financial supports (67%)
- Crisis financial supports (50%)
- Health & wellness services (50%)

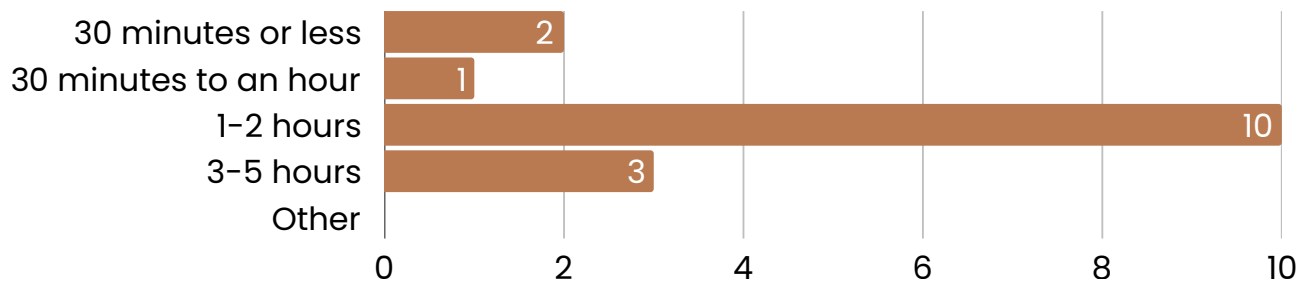
Table 7: Reasons Respondents Accessed Support Services

Services Accessed	# (%) of Respondents who Primarily Accessed Services in the community	# (%) of Respondents Primarily Accessed Services Outside of the community
Basic needs (Food bank, clothing donations, public washrooms, etc.)	18 (95%)	0 (0%)
Shelter (Emergency shelter, domestic violence shelter, transitional housing, affordable housing, etc.)	12 (63%)	1 (17%)
Financial (Rental assistance, non-market housing, financial life skills training/education, etc.)	8 (42%)	4 (67%)
Crisis financial support (Eviction notices, utility shutoffs, damage deposits, etc.)	3 (16%)	3 (50%)
Family/Parenting (Child care, parental resources, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals, etc.)	6 (32%)	0 (0%)

Health and wellness (Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual or cultural well-being, etc.)	9 (47%)	3 (50%)
Legal (Separation/divorce/custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/misdemeanour, etc.)	4 (21%)	1 (17%)

Of the services respondents accessed outside of Rocky Mountain House, most travelled between one and two hours to access them, as seen in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Distance Travelled by Respondents for Services Outside of the Community



To access these services, 44% (7) respondents travelled by car or truck, 19% (3) took an e-bus, 25% (4) took public transportation, 13% (2) relied on a family member or friend, 19% (3) took a taxi or ride-share service, 44% (7) had a service provider arrange a ride for them, and 6% (1) hitchhiked to get to the services they needed.

It is important to consider that respondents who are unable to access supports and services are more likely to continue experiencing housing insecurity than those who can access the necessary supports and services to stabilize their housing situation.

Shelter Use

12 unique respondents reported staying in a shelter in the past year. Among them:

- 85% (11) stayed in an emergency shelter.
- 8% (1) stayed in an extreme weather space or shelter.
- 92% (12) stayed in a women’s/domestic violence shelter.

Additionally, 14% (3) of housing insecure respondents reported stays in transitional housing.

10 unique respondents reported needing emergency shelter services at some point in the 12 months before completing the survey, but did not access them. Several reasons were provided for this, as outlined in Table 8. The main reason these respondents did not access shelter services when needed was because the shelter was full.

Table 8: Reasons Respondents Did Not Access Shelter Services When Needed

Reason for Not Accessing Shelter Services	# (%) of Respondents
The shelter was full	7 (70%)
I exceeded my stay at a shelter	4 (40%)
I didn't feel safe	4 (40%)
I didn't meet the intake criteria to access the shelter	3 (30%)
The right kind of shelter wasn't available (for example, I needed a women's or family shelter where I could stay with my kid(s) and couldn't access one)	3 (30%)
Lack of transportation	3 (30%)
No shelters in my area	1 (10%)
No pets allowed	1 (10%)
Alcohol/substance use is not permitted on-site	1 (10%)
The shelter was unclean	1 (10%)
The shelter was too far away from my family and/or friends	1 (10%)
The shelter did not welcome me because of my gender identity	0 (0%)
Lack of disability accommodations	0 (0%)

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

To gain more insight into respondents' perceptions of service provision in Rocky Mountain House, they were asked: *“Does your community provide enough...accessible and affordable housing; access to food; addictions and mental health supports; employment services; free/accessible recreation/social opportunities; public transportation services; social services?”*

Table 9: Respondents Perceptions of Rocky Mountain House’s Provision of Services

Does the Community Provide Enough:	Yes	No	Unsure
Accessible, affordable housing	2 (10%)	16 (80%)	2 (10%)
Access to food (grocery stores, markets, food banks, etc.)	16 (80%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)
Addictions and mental health supports (counselling, treatment, post-treatment support, etc.)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
Employment services (resume writing, job searching, etc.)	9 (47%)	3 (16%)	7 (37%)
Free/accessible recreation/social opportunities	14 (67%)	5 (24%)	2 (10%)
Public transportation services	1 (5%)	18 (95%)	0 (0%)
Social services (libraries, emergency services, outreach programs, etc.)	15 (75%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)

In Table 9, there is a significant discrepancy in respondents who, at the time of the survey, believed there was enough accessible and affordable housing in Rocky Mountain House (10%) versus those who believed more housing was needed (80%) or were not sure if more housing was needed (10%). Additionally, 95% of respondents believed there was enough public transportation services in Rocky Mountain House compared to 5% of respondents who believed more public transportation services were needed.



**Opportunities Moving
Forward**

Based on the findings outlined in this report, RDN has identified two opportunities to address housing insecurity moving forward. They are:

- Foster community awareness and understanding of housing insecurity.
- Encourage sustainable housing growth in Rocky Mountain House.

Foster community awareness and understanding of housing insecurity.

Implementing a community engagement strategy is crucial to addressing housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House. The purpose of implementing a community engagement strategy is to support community learning on issues related to housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House. More specifically, this will help inform residents about the spectrum of housing insecurity and the different experiences and realities of housing insecurity in their community. In addition, community conversations will aim to shift public perceptions of housing insecurity, ensuring that residents experiencing housing insecurity and any projects specific to addressing housing insecurity are met with understanding, empathy, and support.

With at least 77 residents experiencing housing insecure living conditions, public perceptions of housing insecurity must be met with understanding and empathy to successfully address housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House.

Recommendations:

- Host community conversations on housing insecurity.
- Host community conversations and opportunities to learn about emergency shelters and transitional housing developments.
- Promote programs and service offerings that support residents experiencing housing insecurity widely.
- Encourage inclusive and welcoming events that bring the whole community together.
- Identify and share community initiatives that focus on community connection.
- Offer orientation and training sessions around housing insecurity to support elected officials in leading the community to address housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House.

Encourage sustainable housing growth in Rocky Mountain House.

It is critical to highlight the need for accessible, affordable, adaptive, and appropriate housing projects to increase housing options in Rocky Mountain House. One of the top three reasons for housing insecurity in Rocky Mountain House was reported as high housing costs. Additionally, 80% of respondents believed there was not enough accessible and affordable housing in Rocky Mountain House. Further, 33% of housing insecure respondents have moved between three and six times in the past 12 months while 13% of housing insecure respondents have moved more than six times in the past 12 months.

57% of respondents reported staying at an emergency shelter, extreme weather space, or women's/domestic violence shelter and 14% in transitional housing units in the past twelve months. Importantly,

It is also important to consider that 47% of housing insecure respondents reported needing emergency shelter services at some point in the 12 months before completing the survey, but did not access them. The two main reasons respondents did not access shelter services when needed were because: (1) the shelter was full and (2) they had exceeded their allowed stay at the shelter. Further, the two most accessed services in Rocky Mountain House were basic needs (accessed by 95% of respondents) and shelter services (accessed by 63% of respondents). Given this, it is critical to encourage the expansion of emergency shelter and short-term housing options in Rocky Mountain House while working towards long-term sustainable housing growth.

Recommendations:

- Conduct a housing needs and demands assessment in Rocky Mountain House to better understand housing need.
- Work with all levels of government to develop a model to deliver expanded short- and long-term housing solutions in the community (e.g. emergency shelter, transitional housing, and affordable/below-market rate housing). This model should include wraparound supports (including basic needs supports) typically associated with a Housing First Program.
- Conduct community engagement sessions to address concerns and misconceptions around housing development.
- Implement a Housing First philosophy into service delivery in Rocky Mountain House.

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