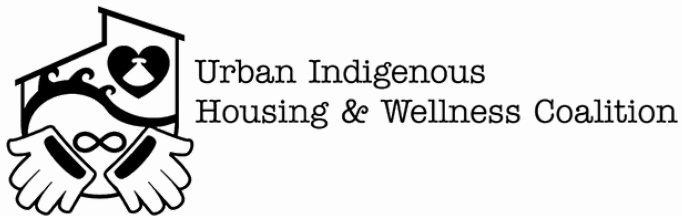




Collecting Stories of Where
You Live: A Strathcona
Regional District Housing &
Service Needs Estimation

*Quadra Island and the Outer
Islands*



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Report Disclaimer

This document is part of a larger housing and service needs project in the Strathcona Regional District called "Collecting Stories of Where You Live".

For more information on the project or to access the full report, please contact info@crhousing.net

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Quadra Island and the Outer Islands received 43 survey responses. 41 responses were from Quadra, one from Maurelle, and one from an outer island. The following results are based on those responses.

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,” “I don’t know,” and “prefer not to answer” to guide their responses.

21 survey respondents indicated “yes” to being housing unstable and 5 respondents indicated “unsure.” Using the national definition, we identified additional four respondents experiencing housing instability at the time of the survey. A total of 30 survey respondents were found to be housing unstable.

An additional 11 dependents under the age of 18 and 27 adults reported as living with survey respondents. Based on survey results, we know that there were at least 68 people living in unstable housing situations on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands.

Respondents who self-identified as housing unstable were then asked to specify why they feel that their housing situation is unstable. Respondents identified a variety of reasons for housing-instability. The top five reasons cited were physical or mental health concerns; inability to afford rent/mortgage; low wages; housing in need of major repairs (i.e., no windows, no heat, water or mould damage, leaky roof); and, domestic/family violence, abuse, and/or rejection. Other responses included job loss, rent increases, death of a family member/partner, conflict with landlord, lack of transportation, struggle finding parking for mobile homes, seasonal housing, and racism/discrimination.

Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

Knowing that homelessness is a complex term that refers housing situations across a spectrum, it is important to better understand what homelessness looks like on Quadra and the Outer Islands. This understanding can be achieved by exploring the experience of the 30 housing-unstable respondents across the homelessness spectrum. In order to accurately place respondents along the spectrum, we used a series of measures to understand their situations, including their self-identified housing stability response, their current housing situation, and the amenities they lack in their current home.

For their current housing situation, respondents were able to choose all situations that applied to them; for example, “I own the house I am currently in”; “I lived in supportive housing”; and “I slept in a public space.” To accurately present what a journey of homelessness might look like for respondents over a year, we have included all responses provided by each respondent.

Table 26

Respondents’ Experience by Housing Situation in the Homelessness Spectrum

Place on the homelessness spectrum	# of experiences along the spectrum
Unsheltered	12
Emergency sheltered	2
Provisionally accommodated	11
At risk of homelessness	22
Not at risk	13

Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

Table 26 demonstrates the diversity of respondents' experiences with housing instability. It demonstrates that homelessness presents itself in more ways than simply sleeping outside. Respondents that have been identified as at risk emphasized their difficulty in being able to afford their rent/mortgages and that their home is in need of major repairs. Many of these respondents also live in overcrowded housing, where there are too many people for the number of bedrooms in the home.

Some respondents noted that they stayed with a friend/family or a stranger, at an emergency weather shelter, or at a domestic violence shelter to be sheltered for the night. Other respondents reported even different experiences of homelessness, staying in their vehicle or short-term seasonal vacation rentals. Importantly, when reading this people experiencing homelessness often fluctuate in and out of their situation, so while it is helpful to understand where survey respondents on Quadra and the Outer Islands fit on the homelessness continuum, it is not guaranteed that this position is where they will all fit next week, next month, or next year.

Housing and Service Needs Estimation Survey Population Overview

43 individuals responded to the Housing and Service Needs Estimation survey from Quadra Island and the Outer Islands. 31 (72%) of respondents identified as female, 10 (23%) as male, and one (2.5%) as non-binary. No respondents identified as trans-male, trans-female, two-spirit, or unsure, although one (2.5%) respondent preferred not to answer.

60% (30) of respondents identified as straight, 2.5% (1) as gay or lesbian, and 14% (6) as bisexual or pansexual. Four respondents preferred not to answer, and one skipped the question.

Of those 43 respondents, no one under the age of 18 filled out the survey. One (2.5%) respondent indicated they were between 18 and 25, nine (21%) between 26 and 45, 16 (37%) people between 46 and 65, and 17 (39.5%) over 65.

70% (30) of survey respondents reported they were born in Canada, while 30% (13) reported immigrating to Canada.

Housing and Service Needs Estimation Survey

Population Overview

74% (32) of survey respondents were white. 4% (2) respondents preferred not to answer, 7% (3) respondents noted that their identity was not listed in the options provided, and 14% (6) did not answer the question. 7% (3) of total respondents self-identified as Indigenous. Of the three Indigenous respondents, one (33%) identified as First Nations, one (33%) as Métis, and one (33%) as having other Indigenous ancestry.

We also asked survey respondents to note if they have ever served in the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP, or emergency services (EMS, Police, Fire Department). One respondent noted they serve(d) with the Canadian Armed Forces, five respondents indicated they are emergency services. 35 have not served with the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP, or emergency services. An additional two respondents preferred not to answer.



Housing Stable versus Housing Unstable Population Overview

Table 27

Housing and Service Needs Estimation Survey Population Overview Comparison by Housing Stability

Demographic characteristic	Housing stable	Housing unstable
Number of survey respondents	13	30
Gender	Male: 5	Male: 5
	Female: 8	Female: 23
	Non-binary: 0	Non-binary: 1
Sexual orientation	Straight: 11	Straight: 19
	Gay/Lesbian: 0	Gay/Lesbian: 1
	Bisexual/Pansexual: 1	Bisexual/Pansexual: 5
Age	18-25 years old: 0	18-25 years old: 1
	26-45 years old: 1	26-45 years old: 8
	46-65 years old: 3	46-65 years old: 13
	65+ years old: 9	65+ years old: 8
Immigration status	Born in Canada: 9	Born in Canada: 21
	Immigrant to Canada: 4	Immigrant to Canada: 9
Racial Identity	White: 12	White: 20
	Visible minority: 0	Visible minority: 0
Indigenous Identity	First Nations: 0	First Nations: 1
	Métis: 0	Métis: 1
	Inuit: 0	Inuit: 0
	Other Indigenous ancestry: 0	Other Indigenous ancestry: 1
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: 4

Housing Stable versus Housing Unstable Population Overview

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

- 65% of housing unstable respondents were 46 or older.
- Women and non-binary individuals were 4.6x more likely to be housing unstable than men.

N.B.: The rest of the reported results will focus on those respondents that have been identified as housing unstable unless otherwise indicated. Additionally, responses of “None given” (i.e., respondent skipped the question) and “Not applicable” have automatically been excluded from the analysis.

Education, Employment, and Income Sources

Respondents indicated various education levels when responding to the question, “What is the highest level of education you have completed?” 3% of respondents reported they have no formal education, 3% have some grade school, and 10% have a high school diploma or GED. 30% of respondents indicated that they have a college certificate or diploma, 20% have some post-secondary education, 27% have a bachelor’s degree, and 7% have a graduate or professional degree (Master’s, Doctoral, Medical, etc.).

Additionally, 33% of respondents indicated they were employed. 29% of those employed were reported full-time employment, 14% part-time, and 14% casual. 57% of housing-unstable respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey. Further analysis suggests that many of the respondents who were unemployed are either retired or unable to work due to medical conditions and/or physical disabilities.

Recognizing that many respondents are not employed full-time, we asked them, “What are your sources of income?” Respondents were encouraged to check all that apply from the following list of income options:

- Job-related (e.g., employment, partner/spouse’s income, alimony/child support, etc.);
- Government-related (e.g., Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit, Seniors Benefits, Veterans’ Benefits, Disability Benefits, Employment Insurance, Student loans, etc.);
- Tax-related (e.g., child and family tax benefits, GST refunds, etc.); and,
- Informal (e.g., bottle returns, panhandling, money from family and friends, etc.).

Respondents likely checked off more than one category, with job-related income checked off by respondents 13 times, government-related income 20 times, tax-related income 11 times, and informal income five times.

Education, Employment, and Income Sources

Table 28

Respondents Household Income in 2021

Total household income in 2021	# of respondents per income level
\$30,000 or less	19
Between \$30,001 and \$50,000	7
Between \$50,001 and \$70,000	6
Between \$70,001 and \$90,000	6
Between \$90,001 and \$110,000	3
More than \$110,001	1

We further broke this down to understand household income level by housing stability status, as seen in Table 29.



Education, Employment, and Income Sources

Table 29

Respondents household income in 2021 by stability

Total household income in 2021	# of housing stable respondents per income level	# of housing unstable respondents per income level
\$30,000 or less	2	17
Between \$30,001 and \$50,000	3	4
Between \$50,001 and \$70,000	1	5
Between \$70,001 and \$90,000	5	1
Between \$90,001 and \$110,000	2	1
More than \$110,001	0	1

Of those unstable respondents, 15% reported a household annual income of less than \$30,000. It is likely that many of these respondents were un- or underemployed at the time of the survey.

Living Situation

To better understand respondents' current living situations, we attempted to determine the number of respondents who rented their homes versus the number of respondents who owned their homes. We were able to determine that 14% (11) of housing-unstable respondents owned their homes, while 72% (13) of housing-stable respondents owned their homes. In comparison, 11% (9) of housing unstable respondents rented their homes, while 0 housing stable respondents indicated that they rent. We also asked respondents who rent to note their current rental price. Reported rental prices varied.

Some respondents seemed to indicate a rental price even though they did not state that they rented their home. This response could represent mortgage payments. Alternatively, they could have missed reporting rentals or they may own and rent different properties.

Living Situation

Table 30

Rental Prices by Housing Stability Status

Rental price	# of housing stable renters	# of housing unstable renters
Less than \$500	0	2
Between \$500 to \$999	0	9
Between \$1000 to \$1499	0	1
Between \$1500 to \$1999	0	3
Over \$2000	0	1
I don't pay rent	9	9

Among those who rent and own, very few respondents lacked in basic amenities need to make their homes considered livable. Less than 7% of respondents do not have sufficient heating in their home, and less than 4% of respondents do not have access to safe drinking water. 100% of respondents have electricity, cooking facilities, and refrigeration.



Living Situation

Table 31

Breakdown of Missing Amenities by Rent/Own Status

Missing amenities	# of home owners missing amenities	# of renters missing amenities
Indoor plumbing/bathing facilities	0	1
Sufficient and affordable heating	4	2
Safe drinking water	3	1
Refrigeration	0	0
Electricity (or equivalent - i.e., solar power)	0	0
Cooking facilities	0	0
Fire protection (smoke alarms, fire extinguishers)	4	1
Home/property insurance	4	3
Air conditioning	4	6
Access to laundry facilities	3	0

Table 31 highlights respondents who reported a lack in basic amenities. Additionally, it is one of the ways in which we were able to calculate how many people fell under the category of “objectively housing unstable.” Some of these respondents self-identified as housing stable; however, using the criteria listed in the Canadian definition of homelessness, respondents lacked essential amenities for their housing situation to be considered stable.

Nine respondents, seven of whom were housing unstable, have always lived in their community. Of those housing unstable respondents who were not born on Quadra or the Outer Islands, 10 moved to the community to look for work or because they accepted a job offer, six followed family to the community, and 11 moved for housing. Additionally, some respondents moved to Quadra Island or the Outer Islands to care for aging family members; manage their substance use; reconnect with their culture, community, and traditions; and, because they could not afford the cost of living anywhere else. Of note, four respondents moved between three and six times in the past 12 months while one respondent moved more than 6 times in the past 12 months.

Community Supports

In an attempt to better understand service needs and gaps on Quadra and the Outer Islands, respondents were asked, “What support services do you access?” The main reasons respondents accessed support services related to basic needs, health and wellness, and legal services.

Table 32

Main Reasons Respondents Accessed Support Services

Services accessed	# of housing-stable respondents who accessed these services	# of housing-unstable respondents who accessed these services
Basic needs - Food, shelter, clothing, etc.	0	9
COVID-19 - PPE, information, supports, etc.	1	7
Crisis financial support - Eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.	0	3
Family/parenting - Child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals etc.	0	3
Financial - Employment, housing, training/education, etc.	0	4
Health and wellness - Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.	2	8
Legal - Separation/divorce/ custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/misdemeanor, etc.	0	7
Support services - Help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.	0	4
Transportation - Access to basic services/ education/employment, medical transportation.	1	2

Community Supports

To further understand respondents' abilities to access the necessary support services, we asked two questions: (1) "Which of these services were you able to access in your community, either in-person or over the phone/online?"; and, (2) "Which of these services did you have to access in another community and how far did you have to travel to access these services?"

Many respondents, both housing stable and unstable, reported traveling to Campbell River by vehicle and/or ferry to access the necessary services. This need to travel to another community, especially by ferry, which can cost anywhere from \$18 to \$30 per trip, is a significant barrier to accessing necessary services. Rising gas prices could make the trip too expensive for housing unstable respondents. Respondents may not have the time nor the money to travel to access services. Additionally, many respondents may continue to cycle through stages of homelessness if they are unable to access necessary services.

Respondents provided several reasons for not accessing shelter services when they needed them. For most respondents, there was no shelter in their community to access.

Table 33

Reasons Respondents Did Not Access Shelter Services When Needed

Reason for not accessing shelter services	# of respondents
The shelter was full	0
There was no shelter in my area	3
No substance use or drinking allowed	0
I didn't feel safe	1
Health concerns (bed bugs, dirty, etc.)	2
Hours of operation	0
Lack of disability accommodations	2
Lack of transportation	1
No pets allowed	3
Separation from family member/partner	0

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

Respondents outlined several things they would like to see more of on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands. Many of the answers aligned perfectly with respondents' answers to a previous question they were asked, "Does your community provide enough... employment opportunities; free/accessible recreational and social opportunities; social services; accessible and affordable housing; public transit services; emergency services; education opportunities; access to food?"

Table 34

Respondents Perceptions of Quadra Island and the Outer Islands' Service Provision

Does your community provide enough:	# of respondents that believe their community provides enough	# of respondents that believe their community does not provide enough
Employment opportunities	19	20
Free/accessible recreational and social opportunities	25	16
Social services	6	26
Accessible & affordable housing	0	38
Public transit services	0	36
Emergency services	30	10
Education opportunities	9	25
Access to food (grocery stores, markets, food banks)	31	9

Based on respondents' perceptions of service provision on Quadra and the Outer Islands, we generated an overall satisfaction score. Housing stable respondents were 50% satisfied with service provision in their communities, and housing unstable respondents were 28% satisfied with service provision. Interestingly, both stable and unstable respondents were equally dissatisfied with the amount of affordable housing units and access to public transportation.

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

Respondents offered many suggestions for improved service provisions in their community. Most suggestions fell into one of three categories: housing, employment, and transportation. Of those who responded to the question of what their community is missing, almost all noted that their community needs increased affordable housing options. Several respondents outlined their desire for senior citizen and disability-accessible housing options at both market and below-market or low income rates, while others simply wished for more housing options in the community. Many respondents also noted their desire to see more employment opportunities within the community, both in the form of jobs and employment training opportunities. Respondents highlighted the need for jobs that pay a living wage and provide benefits. Lastly, respondents mentioned the need for improved and affordable transportation services.

Future Housing Opportunities on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

In an attempt to gauge interest in supporting housing opportunities moving forward, we asked respondents about two additional questions. First, as shown in Table 35, we asked, "If you own property that could have a secondary suite or separate dwelling on it but does not currently, what would encourage you to have a long-term/year-round rental unit on your property?"



Future Housing Opportunities on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

Table 35

Respondents' Reasons for Creating/Not Creating Rental Units on their Property

Reasons for creating/not creating rental units on respondents' properties	# of respondents who share this reason
I don't own property	16
My property cannot hold a secondary suite or separate dwelling	2
I'm not interested in having a rental unit on my property	4
Zoning changes (I would like to but my property is not zoned for a secondary dwelling)	4
Financial support to build or renovate	9
Tenant with their own tiny home	2
Right person to share the land with	2
Rental agency to help me manage the renting	1
I don't know	0
Other	9

Secondly, we asked, “What do you think might help stabilize the housing situation in your community?” Respondents were encouraged to choose all options that apply to them, which are listed in Table 36.

Future Housing Opportunities on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

Table 36

Respondents' Opinions of Factors That Could Stabilize the Housing Situation on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands

Factors that would stabilize the housing situation	# of respondents who believe this factor would stabilize the housing situation:
An empty homes tax	28
Different development processes	22
More housing options (e.g. tiny homes, carriage houses, etc.)	36
Greater housing density	14
Income-based affordable rental units	33
Education and/or incentives for landowners to create secondary rental dwellings on their property	21
Supportive or complex care housing	22
A safe/transition home so that victims of domestic abuse have a safe place to go	14
Restrictions on landowners using secondary dwellings as vacation rentals	28
I don't know	2
Other	10

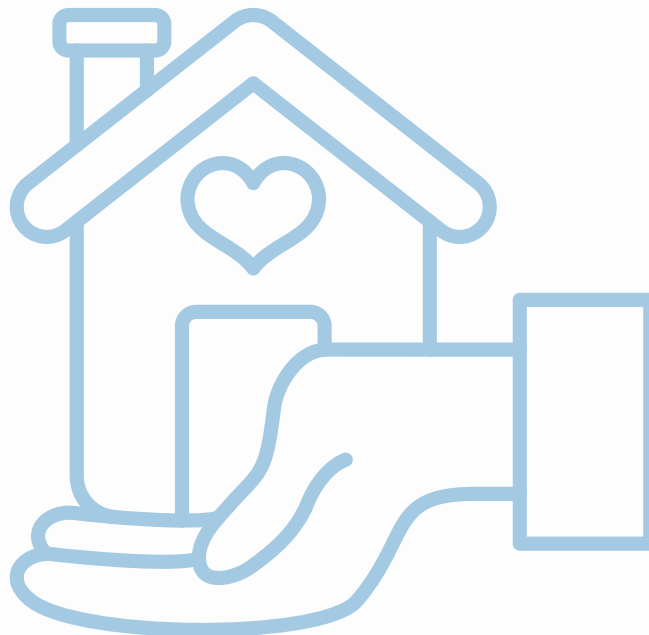
Results show that 27% of housing stable respondents either have no interest in having a secondary rental unit on their property or their property cannot hold a secondary suit/separate dwelling.

What Does Homelessness Look Like for Someone on Quadra Island and the Outer Islands?

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 instability.

In the case of Quadra and the Outer Islands, this profile is a woman, between the ages of 45 and 65, who lives with her partner. Their rental unit does not have air conditioning, and the heating is insufficient for the temperatures they experience in the colder months. She has a medical condition that affects her ability to maintain stable employment. It is difficult for them to pay rent. They are spending more than a third of their combined income on housing, which is between \$500 and \$999 per month.

She has lived in the community for over a year and enjoys the lifestyle the area offers, but she finds it difficult to access health and wellness services, often travelling outside their community to receive necessary support.





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