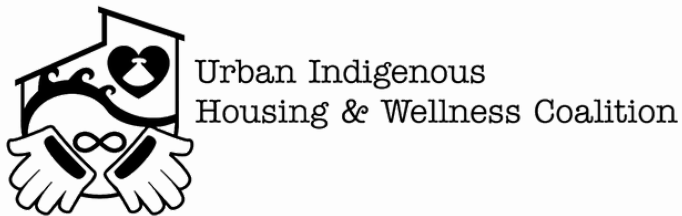




Collecting Stories of Where
You Live: A Strathcona
Regional District Housing &
Service Needs Estimation

Sayward



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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

Table of Contents

Objective Housing Situation	96
Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness	97
Housing Stable versus Housing Unstable Population Overview	99
Education, Employment, and Income Sources	100
Living Situation	102
Community Supports	104
Future Housing Opportunities	106

Sayward received 10 survey responses. 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. Four survey respondents indicated “yes” to being housing unstable. Through further analysis, we were able to identify an additional two respondents experiencing housing instability according to the national definitions. Therefore, a total of six survey respondents are housing-unstable.

An additional six dependents under the age of 18 and three adults reported as living with survey respondents. Therefore, based on survey results, we know that there are at least 15 people living in unstable housing situations in Sayward.

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, though the top three reasons cited were low wages, inability to afford rent/mortgage, and their housing needs major repairs (i.e. no windows, no heat, water or mould damage, leaky roof). Other responses included lack of transportation, cost of living as a single parent, concerns about passing approvals on upcoming mortgage renewals, health/mental health concerns, rent increase, and conflict with landlord, parent/guardian, roommate, or partner.



Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness in Sayward

Knowing that homelessness is a complex term that refers to several housing situations across a spectrum, it is important to better understand what homelessness looks like in Sayward. This can be achieved by exploring the experiences of the six housing-unstable respondents across the homelessness spectrum. In order to accurately place respondents along the continuum, 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 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 homelessness might look like for respondents over a year, we have included all responses provided by each respondent.

Table 48

Respondents Experience by Housing Situation in the Homelessness Spectrum

Place on the homelessness spectrum	# of experiences along the spectrum
Unsheltered	1
Emergency sheltered	0
Provisionally accommodated	0
At risk of homelessness	5
Not at risk	4

Exploring the Spectrum of Homelessness in Sayward

This table demonstrates the diversity of respondents' experiences with housing instability and outlines that homelessness presents itself in more ways than simply sleeping outside.

An important thing to consider when reading this table is that people experiencing homelessness often fluctuate in and out of their situation, so while it is helpful to understand where survey respondents in Sayward fit on the homelessness continuum, it is not guaranteed that this is where they will all fit next week, next month, or next year.

Housing and Service Needs Estimation Survey Population Overview

10 people responded to the Housing & Service Needs Estimation survey from Sayward; seven (70%) of which identified as female and three (30%) as male. 90% (9) of respondents identify as straight and 10% (1) as bisexual or pansexual; no respondents identified as trans-male, trans-female, non-binary, two-spirit or as unsure.

Of those 10 respondents, no one under than age of 25 filled out the survey, though three (30%) people indicated they were between 26-45, six (40%) people between 46-65, and one (10%) person over 65.

90% (9) of survey respondents reported they were born in Canada, while 10% (1) reported immigrating to Canada.

90% (9) of survey respondents are white. One (10%) person preferred not to answer. Further, 20% (2) of total respondents self-identified as Indigenous. Of the two Indigenous respondents, one (50%) identified as Métis and one (50%) as having other Indigenous ancestry.

We also ask survey respondents to note if they have ever served in the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or emergency services (EMS, Police, Fire Department). 40% (4) respondents indicated they are emergency services.

Housing Stable versus Housing Unstable Population Overview

Table 49

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

Demographic characteristic	Housing stable	Housing unstable
Number of survey respondents	4	6
Gender	Male: 1	Male: 2
	Female: 3	Female: 4
Sexual orientation	Straight: 4	Straight: 5
	Bisexual/Pansexual: 0	Bisexual/Pansexual: 1
Age	26-45 years old: 1	26-45 years old: 2
	46-65 years old: 3	46-65 years old: 3
	65+ years old: 0	65+ years old: 1
Immigration status	Born in Canada: 4	Born in Canada: 5
	Immigrant to Canada: 0	Immigrant to Canada: 1
Racial identity	White: 3	White: 5
	Visible minority: 0	Visible minority: 0
	Preferred not to answer: 1	Preferred not to answer: 0
Indigenous identity	First Nations: 0	First Nations: 0
	Métis: 1	Métis: 0
	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: 0
	RCMP: 0	RCMP: 0
	Emergency services: 0	Emergency services: 4

*Note that 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 a variety of education levels when responding to: “What is the highest level of education you have completed?” One respondent has some high school education, one respondent has a high school diploma or GED, three have a college certificate or diploma, and one has a graduate or professional degree (Master’s, Doctoral, Medical, etc.).

Additionally, 67% of respondents are employed. 75% of those employed indicated they were employed full-time, while 25% are employed part-time.

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 six times, government-related income three times, tax-related income four times, and informal income once.

We also asked respondents to identify their approximate household income for the previous year. Responses varied widely as seen in Table 50.



Education, Employment, and Income Sources

Table 50

Housing Stable & Unstable Respondents Household Income in 2021

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

We further broke this down to understand household income level by housing stability status, as seen in Table 51.

Table 51

Respondent's 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	0	3
Between \$30,001 and \$50,000	0	0
Between \$50,001 and \$70,000	1	0
Between \$70,001 and \$90,000	1	0
Between \$90,001 and \$110,000	0	3
More than \$110,001	2	0

Living Situation

To better understand respondents' current living situations, we attempted to determine the number of respondents who rent their home versus the number of respondents who own their home. We were able to determine that one housing-unstable respondent owns their home while two housing-unstable respondents rent their home. We also asked respondents who rent their home to note their current rent price. Of the respondents who rent their home, rent prices vary.

Please note here that some respondents seem to have indicated a rental price even though they did not state that they rented their home. This could be because respondents provided previous rental prices that they have paid, because they included their mortgage payment amount, or because they did not indicate they rent but did note their rental price.

Table 52

Rent 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	0
Between \$1000 to \$1499	0	1
Between \$1500 to \$1999	0	0
Over \$2000	0	0
I don't pay rent	4	2

Among those who rent and own, several respondents are lacking in basic amenities that would make their homes more stable. Specifically, four respondents do not have home or property insurance and two respondents don't have fire protection.

Living Situation

Table 53

Breakdown of Missing Amenities by Rent/Own Status

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

No survey respondents were born in Sayward; all having moved to Sayward for a specific reason. Some came to Sayward for housing options, noting housing prices were cheaper than in other communities, while others came to Sayward for the lifestyle it offers.



Community Supports

In an attempt to better understand service needs and gaps in Sayward, respondents were asked: “What support services do you access?” The main reasons respondents access support services are to help with basic needs, health and wellness, and legal support.

Table 54

Main reasons respondents access 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	2
COVID-19 - PPE, information, supports, etc.	0	0
Crisis financial support - Eviction notice, utility bill problems, damage deposits, etc.	0	0
Family/parenting - Child care, parenting/family issues, relationship issues, child developmental assessment tools/referrals etc.	0	1
Financial - Employment, housing, training/education, etc.	0	1
Health and wellness - Addictions, mental health, physical health care, spiritual/cultural, etc.	0	5
Legal - Separation/divorce/ custody, wills/estates, employment/labour standards, landlord/tenant issues, immigration issues, criminal/misdemeanor, etc.	0	2
Support services - Help with government forms, help with accessing government/other programs or services, access to technology, etc.	0	0
Transportation - Access to basic services/ education/employment, medical transportation.	0	0

Related to basic needs, only one respondent didn’t access a shelter service when they needed, and they cited safety concerns as the reason they did not access the shelter.

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

The survey also captured respondents' perceptions of service delivery in Sayward when they were asked: "Does your community provide enough...employment opportunities; free/accessible recreational and social opportunities; social services; accessible; affordable housing; public transit services; emergency services; education opportunities; access to food?".

Table 55

All Respondents Perceptions on Sayward's Provision of Services

Does Sayward provide enough:	# of respondents that believe their community provides enough	# of respondents that believe their community does not provide enough
Employment opportunities	3	5
Free/accessible recreational and social opportunities	7	1
Social services	3	5
Accessible & affordable housing	2	7
Public transit services	2	7
Emergency services	10	0
Education opportunities	3	6
Access to food (grocery stores, markets, food banks)	7	3

Further, when asked what they would like to see more of in their community, responses can be themed into three categories: housing, public transportation, and business. More specifically, respondents believe Sayward needs more affordable housing and seniors-specific affordable housing. Respondents would also like to see more businesses open in Sayward to help increase the economy and provide access to more goods and services that are currently missing in the community.

Future Housing Opportunities in Sayward

In an attempt to gauge interest in supporting housing opportunities moving forward, we asked respondents about two additional questions. 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?”

Table 56

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	0
My property cannot hold a secondary suite or separate dwelling	2
I’m not interested in having a rental unit on my property	3
Zoning changes (I would like to but my property is not zoned for a secondary dwelling)	1
Financial support to build or renovate	3
Tenant with their own tiny home	0
Right person to share the land with	1
Rental agency to help me manage the renting	0
I don’t know	1
Other	0

Future Housing Opportunities in Sayward

We also asked respondents “What do you think might help stabilize the housing situation in your community?” Respondents were encouraged to choose all options that apply to them.

Table 57

Respondents opinions of factors that could stabilize the housing situation in Sayward

Factors that would stabilize the housing situation	# of respondents who believe this factor would stabilize the housing situation:
An empty homes tax	2
Different development processes	1
More housing options (e.g. tiny homes, carriage houses, etc.)	6
Greater housing density	1
Income-based affordable rental units	6
Education and/or incentives for landowners to create secondary rental dwellings on their property	3
Supportive or complex care housing	5
A safe/transition home so that victims of domestic abuse have a safe place to go	1
Restrictions on landowners using secondary dwellings as vacation rentals	1
I don't know	0
Prefer not to answer	1
Other	1



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