

# Goodhue County

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. conducted a community needs assessment between May 2017 and August 2017. The needs assessment was designed to meet the agency's funding requirements and inform decisions about programs and services offered by Three Rivers in its service area. The needs assessment included three key activities: 1) Focus groups for clients, Head Start parents, and community partners (agency staff); 2) Surveys of clients and community partners; and 3) Review of publicly available data on needs and resources in the counties and communities served by the agency.

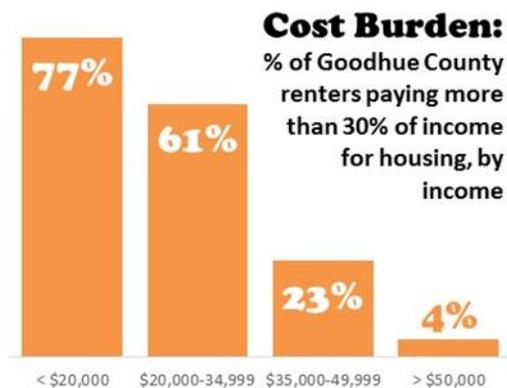
## Needs and priorities

Analysis of survey responses and publicly available data on health, housing, education and other topics led to identifying five priority needs in Goodhue County. These are:



### Decent & affordable housing

Housing costs in Goodhue County vary by community, but median rents (including utilities) are estimated at \$705 per month, beyond what is affordable at median renter income (American Community Survey). Nearly 60% of housing in the county was built before 1980, and many older homes are occupied by older adults. In the needs survey, residents and service agency staff surveys agreed that access to affordable housing was the top priority, and that many households need help with rent,



utilities, or taxes to remain in their homes. Homeowners also prioritized home repairs. Providers suggested a need for emergency shelter, but homeless counts and best practices in homeless response do not support the providers' prioritization.

### Health care access

In surveys of residents and providers, both access to health care and ability to pay medical bills were identified as concerns. Providers also suggested that access to mental health care was a significant problem (ranked #2 overall). These priorities are backed up with data showing half as many mental health providers per capita in Goodhue County compared to Minnesota (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) and one in five residents delaying or not getting primary care when they thought they needed it (2017 Goodhue County Community Health Survey). In addition, a small number (7%) of Goodhue County residents do not have health insurance (American Community Survey).

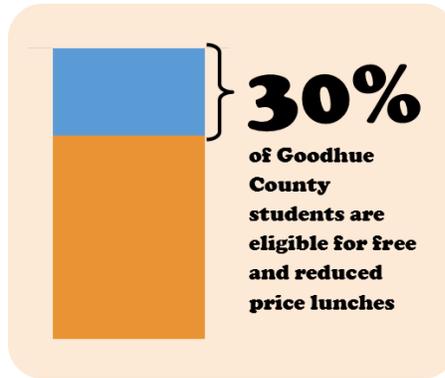
## Income & jobs

Median household income in Goodhue is \$57,062. However, 11.2% of residents (5,228 people) live in households with income below the poverty line. For a household of four, the poverty guideline is \$24,600. In the needs survey, residents and providers alike identified having enough money to meet basic needs as a top priority. Providers also identified needs for job opportunities with higher wages.

## Food & nutrition

According to the University of Minnesota Extension, 24% of Goodhue County residents experience “low access to food stores”. In addition, 30% of students in Goodhue County qualify for free/reduced price lunches according to the Minnesota Department of Education. In the needs survey, residents highly prioritized access to good food, but partner agency staff did not rank any food or nutrition-related service as a

critical need in the community, indicating a gap to evaluate. Specific needs residents prioritized were local access to healthy food, access to a food shelf, and home-delivered meals. (Providers instead prioritized child care needs over food and nutrition.)



## Reliable transportation

Survey respondents highly prioritized two transportation needs: affordable car repairs and access to transit to school, work, medical, etc. Residents prioritized vehicle repair and purchase, while community partner agencies placed access to transit as the highest ranked transportation need. This difference points to lack of knowledge of the efficacy of public transit in Goodhue County.

## Subpopulations: Needs to note



### Renters

Highly prioritized access to mental health care and assistance to purchase a reliable car more than other subgroups.



### Households with Children

Described greater need than other subgroups for local job opportunities and affordable, quality daycare.



### Persons of Color

Indicated much greater need for transit, caregiver support, and community activities for children, youth, and families.



### Seniors

Prioritized home-delivered meals and indicated low interest in financial education, compared to other subgroups.

## Who we learned from

in Goodhue County

### 122 Residents

from fifteen different Goodhue County cities and townships.

- 76% female
- 52% working-age adults
- 45% have children at home
- 40% are/have seniors in their home
- 15% persons of color
- 99% speak English at home
- 49% rent their homes
- 46% own homes

In comparison to Goodhue County as a whole, the respondents are older, more female, much more likely to rent their home, and slightly more likely to be a person of color.

### 107 Local Partners (agency staff)

representing over 20 types of services and programs including primary health care, homeless assistance, local government services, real estate, employment programs, senior services, and schools. Most respondents identified as white and female between ages 45 and 64.

### 6 Focus Groups

of residents and service providers in the Three Rivers service area.