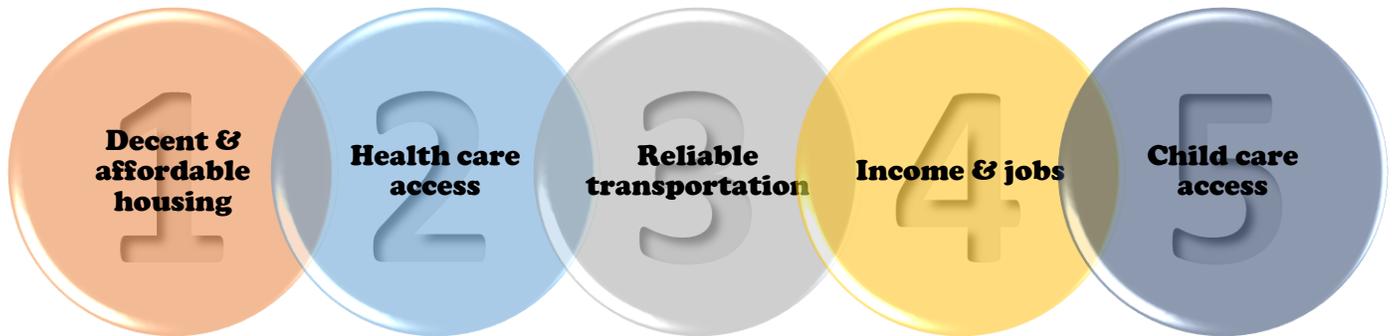


Wabasha County

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.

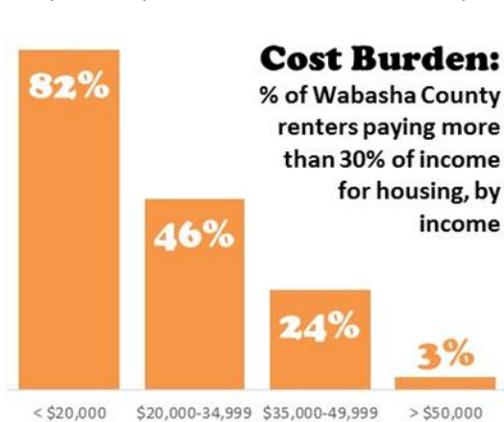
Needs and priorities

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



Decent & affordable housing

Median rents and home values in Wabasha County increased 20% over the past 15 years, but incomes have not kept pace. Median renter income fell 15% and median owner income fell 2% during the same period (American Community Survey). About 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 both prioritized the need for help with rent, utilities, or taxes.



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 primary 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 perhaps only one mental health provider for all 21,000 residents compared to a statewide average of 1 provider per 510 residents (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). In addition, a small number (6%) of Wabasha County residents do not have health insurance (American Community Survey).

Reliable transportation

Survey respondents highly prioritized two transportation needs: affordable car repairs and access to transit to school, work, medical, etc. Residents highly prioritized vehicle repair and purchase along with transit access, 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 Wabasha County.

Income & jobs

Median household income in Wabasha is \$58,865. However, 7.6% of residents (1,616 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.

1 in 13

Wabasha County residents live on income below the Federal poverty guideline

Child care access

With a daycare capacity of 901 in Wabasha County (MN DHS) and 1,203 children under 6 in households where all parents are in the labor force (U.S. Census Bureau), there is a gap of 302 daycare slots in the county. In addition, only 2 of 67 licensed child care providers have late or early hours, none allow part day schedules, and 50% accept MN Child Care Assistance Program payments. In the needs survey, service agency staff prioritized both access to affordable, quality child care and part time child care. Residents surveyed did not place child care in the even the top 20 priorities, so additional analysis of this topic is needed to determine if extended family caregivers are meeting the remaining need.

Subpopulations: Needs to note



Renters

Demonstrated concern about affordability of current housing by prioritizing access to affordable rental housing and having enough money to meet basic needs.



Households with Children

Described greater need than other subgroups for mental health care, mortgage loans to buy a home, and activities for children and families.



Persons of Color

Indicated much greater need for affordable car repairs and for services for children with disabilities than other respondents.



Seniors

Prioritized the need for home delivered meals, but indicated much lower interest in accessing mental health care than other respondents.

Who we learned from

in Wabasha County

61 Residents

from eleven different Wabasha County cities and townships.

- 72% female
- 70% working-age adults
- 42% have children at home
- 36% are/have seniors in their home
- 15% persons of color
- 97% speak English at home
- 36% rent their homes
- 52% own homes

In comparison to Wabasha 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.

63 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.