



2022

WCCA Community Assessment



Wright County Community Action
Board of Directors Approved
10/11/2022

Purpose

As a Community Action Agency, Wright County Community Action (WCCA) is responsible for understanding the changing needs of the communities and people it serves as well as to ensure the voice of low-income peoples in its leadership and service design. In order to accomplish this, WCCA conducts an in depth process of study, listening, and community engagement every three years to understand the needs of community.

While WCCA believes it is in the best interest of the community, this process is also requirements of several governing agencies.

Office of Economic Opportunity

OEO Instructions 6320-1: In developing its strategies and plans, the Community Action Agency shall take into account the areas of greatest community need, the availability of resources, and its own strengths and limitations.

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Section 201(a): To stimulate a better focusing of all available local, State, private, and Federal resources upon the goal of enabling low-income families, and low-income individuals of all ages, in rural and urban areas, to attain the skills, knowledge, and motivations and secure the opportunities needed for them to become self-sufficient.

Head Start Performance Standards

1302.11 Determining community strengths, needs, and resources: (b) Community wide strategic planning and needs assessment (community assessment). (1) To design a program that meets community needs, and builds on strengths and resources, a program must conduct a community assessment at least once over the five-year grant period. The community assessment must use data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources and include, at a minimum:

(i) The number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool age children, and expectant mothers, including their geographic location, race, ethnicity, and languages they speak, including:

(A) Children experiencing homelessness in collaboration with, to the extent possible, McKinney-Vento Local Education Agency Liaisons (42 U.S.C. 11432 (6)(A));

(B) Children in foster care; and

(C) Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies;

(ii) The education, health, nutrition and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including prevalent social or economic factors that impact their well-being;

(iii) Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children;

(iv) Other child development, child care centers, and family child care programs that serve eligible children, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschools, and the approximate number of eligible children served;

(v) Resources that are available in the community to address the needs of eligible children and their families; and,

(vi) Strengths of the community.

Scope

WCCA participates in the Community Health Collaborative which produces a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that evaluates a variety of health-related topics. This assessment is connected with the Wright County Public Health departments survey and will be published in collaboration with Allina and CentraCare healthcare systems. For this reason, WCCA will not investigate many health issues. Some topics that come from the Community Health Collaborative maybe included to help guide the process.

WCCA's focus will be on the conditions and causes of poverty. Most of these elements are also closely connected to the social determinates of health. Using the category outlined on the Community Action National Theory of Change, WCCA will specifically investigate the domains of employment, education, income & asses building, housing, behavioral and social health, and civic & community engagement.

Objectives

1. Collect and evaluate information regarding the perceived needs of the community directly from low-income individuals
2. Create one document that compiles that data showing the need into clearly defined needs statements that are categorized into the areas of individuals/families, agency, and community level needs
3. Prioritize the need statements with help from program leaders and community stakeholders.
4. The WCCA Governing Board and the Head Start Policy Council will formally accept the assessment and the prioritized lists of needs statements.

Methodology

Target Audience

While it is important to include data collected from current customers in the needs assessment, this information alone does not fully reflect the perspectives and interests of the community as a whole. For this reason, WCCA will use methods that draw information from low-income individuals in the broader community to ensure the inclusion of diverse views and a more accurate picture of the community's needs.

Mailing Survey Invitations/Announcements: WCCA will use a direct mailing service to that pulls a report of households based on characteristics. This year, we have selected to target household with incomes less than \$50,000 as it is closely related to the low-income threshold based on the

Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPL). Additionally, \$50,000 per household is below the cost of living for the county. This list generated a total of 6,652 addresses. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints we could not afford to send to all of these households. Instead, the WCCA Leadership team has decided to send to 3,325 of these households (approximately 50%).

Online Promotion of Survey: WCCA will utilize social media and the agency's website to promote participation in the survey. While these venues may collect information from individuals that are not considered low-income, the survey will have a question to determine the income status of the respondent's household. WCCA will track the reach (a Facebook insights measure) for posts to determine how many individuals see the invitation to participate in the survey. Specific emphasis will be placed in the posts to encourage everyone to participate – not just WCCA clients.

WCCA will also use these venues for recruiting individuals to participate in the analysis and prioritization methods outlined below.

Program Communication: WCCA staff will promote the participation in the online survey to our existing clients. While this does limit the reach of non-client individuals, it is important to acknowledge that in FY2021, WCCA served 9,065 which is 132% of the poverty estimates according to the ACS 2020. This suggests a large portion of those living in poverty are engaging in the agency's programs and services.

Collection Methods

Quantitative Data: Quantitative data from federal, state, and local sources will be gathered by the WCCA Data Entry Specialist and entered into a spreadsheet where we can compare data over time. The Data Entry Specialist will make every effort to find the most current and up to date information available.

Qualitative Data: The Agency will collect qualitative data through a survey.

Online Survey: WCCA will leverage the online surveying tool Questionpro.com to collect and to help organize the raw data for analysis. The agency will encourage online participation.

Paper Surveys: For individuals who lack internet access or acumen, paper versions of the same survey will be available upon request. Paper copies can be picked up at the office, emailed, or mailed to any individual who contacts the office or a WCCA staff member. When paper surveys are received, the WCCA Receptionist will be responsible for entering this data into the Questionpro.com database and will destroy the paper survey.

Community Demographics

population
141,337
 +6,972 since 2019 Update

THE COUNTY IS
 67% Urban
 33% Rural



37.1 MEDIAN AGE
 +1.3 from 2019 update

\$87,772 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
 +\$12,067 from 2019 update

6,687 VETERANS
 -373 from 2019 update

ETHNICITY AND RACE

The ethnic composition of the population of Wright County, MN is composed of 93.39 % White residents; 3.1% Hispanic residents, 1.73% Black; 1.3% Asian; 0.28% Native American or Alaska Native; .01% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; 1.09 some other race; 2.21% multiple race.

LANGUAGES

The most common foreign languages in Wright County are Spanish (2,546 speakers), German (504 speakers), and Russian (316 speakers). Wright County also has a relatively high number of Laotian (306 speakers).

TEEN BIRTH RATE

The Wright County 202 teen birth rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15-19) was 2.72. This is down from 2014 when the birth rate was 20.1. The national birth rate in 2020 was 11.33.

Poverty Demographics

5.07% OF Wright County OR

6,841
 People live in poverty
 -309 from 2019 update

2,908
 HOUSEHOLDS LIVE IN
 POVERTY
 -2 from 2019 update

Poverty Rate by Age

Children under the age of 18:	5.3%	(1,988)
Children under the age of 5:	3.7%	(344)
Adults over the age of 65:	6.4%	(1,065)

Poverty Rate by Family Type

Of the households in poverty, female-headed households represented 53% of all households. In our 2019 update, this was 46.6%. Married couples have dropped to 30.5% (45.1% in 2019). Households headed by males, doubled from 8.3% to 16.6%.

Cities with Poverty Rates Above the County Rate:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| • Montrose 14.41% | • Clearwater 6.99% | • Cokato 5.49% |
| • Annandale 8.5% | • South Haven 6.48% | • Rockford 5.37% |
| • Monticello 7.76% | • Maple Lake 6.27% | |
| • Buffalo 7.11% | • Hanover 6.15% | |

Open-Ended Questions Summary

Open-ended questions were summarized into major themes of the statement, then sorted by the number of times the theme was mentioned. The tables on the left show the 10 most common themes that were mentioned in the open-ended comments. The number in parenthesis indicate how many times the topic was mentioned. A full list of the summarized themes can be found in the supplemental data section of these assessment.

What Prevents Well-Being?

1. Not enough money (33)
2. Health (22)
3. Disabilities (20)
4. Time (18)
5. Mental Health (16)
6. Nutrition (13)
7. Housing (13)
8. Inflation (13)
9. Lack of Social Connections (12)
10. Motivation (12)

Interesting Responses Not in Top 10:

- Lack of affordable fitness facilities (10)
- Childcare (7)
- Caregiver (6)
- Overwhelmed as a single parent (4)
- A trusted confidant, mentor, or role model (4)

What other needs do you see in our community?

1. Housing (21)
2. Youth Programs (19)
3. Transportation (15)
4. Community Activities (12)
5. Community Center (10)
6. Walkable/Bikeable Community (9)
7. Child Care (8)
8. Law Enforcement (8)
9. Grocery Store (8)
10. Benefits Cliff * (7)

Interesting Responses Not in Top 10:

- Business Development (6)
- Homelessness (5)
- Aging (5)
- Polarizing political beliefs (5)
- Lack of social connections (4)

*According to The Center for Community Solutions: Benefit cliffs occur when a small increase in earnings means a family no longer can receive a public benefit which was helping them to feed their families, afford medical care, access quality childcare or otherwise balance their budget.

Here are some of the comments that were shared during the survey.

What Prevents Well-Being?

NOT ENOUGH MONEY (33 comments)

- ❖ Affordability of everything, rising inflation. Makes it hard or impossible to save money even doing everything "right"
- ❖ I do not have enough money coming in and I do not qualify for SNAP or some other services
- ❖ No money to make a difference. Raising 6 kids between 3 and 21. Diapers and college is hard. Not being able to let them do activities because we can't always afford food. We are always behind on all the bills.

HEALTH (22 comments)

- ❖ I have had multiple failed surgeries in my feet & my lower back.
- ❖ I have on-going medical issues that prevent me from working more.
- ❖ I have on-going medical issues that prevent me from working more.
- ❖ I need a hip replacement so mobility is a struggle for staying active

DISABILITIES (20 comments)

- ❖ Battles with work comp for my husband
- ❖ Being legally blind
- ❖ Finding affordable care for my autistic son so that I can go to events or support my other children.
- ❖ I am sole caregiver to handicapped son 24/7. I have no backup.
- ❖ With a severely disabled daughter, we need to remain on MA. Our sole source of income is paid parent of a disabled minor through the CADI Waiver system in MA, and SSI. If I were to generate income, we'd immediately lose SNAP benefits, lose MA and need to purchase our own unaffordable insurance, which would then require a level of income that would make us lose our income as paid parent, as we'd lose the CADI Waiver, and we would then lose SSI. I'd have to be able to generate \$50-\$75,000 just to start at zero, and if anything went wrong with whatever plan was devised it would be catastrophic to my family.

TIME (18 comments)

- ❖ Busy with work and kids' activities. Work/life balance is extremely difficult
- ❖ Finding time to have down time. Seems like I am always working

MENTAL HEALTH (16 comments)

- ❖ Common anxiety is my biggest hurdle. I also don't have a lot of friendships that go beyond the casual person you know at work. It's also hard to find time to care about my physical well-being
- ❖ Having such bad depression hinders holding a fulltime job
- ❖ Not enough time or money. Other life demands take precedence. Anxiety prevents a lot of things from happening.

What other needs do you see in our community?

HOUSING (21 comments)

- ❖ Lack of transitional and supportive housing for low-income folks. Most services target families not individuals.
- ❖ Absolutely not enough available HUD housing to have options of where to live.
- ❖ Affordable housing and rental options, community resources (food shelves, sheltering)

YOUTH PROGRAMS (19 comments)

- ❖ I see the need for after school or summer programs for youth.
- ❖ Need for places for teens to hang out that is affordable and is not at a church. Not everyone is religious.
- ❖ Youth need healthy options outside athletics. It's also hard to break into social circles since I didn't grow up here.
- ❖ Some sort of kids' clubs...organized activities for the kids that have a hard time making/keeping friendships.

TRANSPORTATION (15 comments)

- ❖ Medical transportation seems to only be available if eligible for MA.
- ❖ Better public transportation for the elderly, especially in evenings and weekends
- ❖ Help with car repairs, more outreach programs for those that don't qualify for assistance but need it.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES (12 comments)

- ❖ Delano needs more social and cultural activities.
- ❖ I find it hard to find activities that are family friendly or that my children can go to that do not cost more than \$100. I also can't commit to 3 months of something when I don't know if my kids will like it or how the autistic son will handle the situation.
- ❖ More social opportunities by bus groups for seniors & low income to fun activities, I realize we had more before covid-19 hit, possible again?

COMMUNITY CENTER (10 comments)

- ❖ We need a local pool or YMCA for people to work out/gather
- ❖ We need an indoor affordable safe playground for kids.
- ❖ Community Center
- ❖ Community center for kids and family
- ❖ Larger community center / event center.

What are the strengths your community?

These are just a few of the responses we received. It's important for us to look at our strengths and remember what makes our communities a wonderful place to live.

ALBERTVILLE

- ❖ Helpful
- ❖ Neighbors are friendly
- ❖ Price
- ❖ Small town feel, everyone seems to care about others in their community
- ❖ Tight-knit, affluent

ANNANDALE

- ❖ A lot of small businesses. A lot of things close by, don't need to travel far.
- ❖ Friendly
- ❖ Generally peaceful & quiet!
- ❖ Proactive citizens that enjoy the outdoors
- ❖ Safe community, a lot of community events.
- ❖ Tight knit

BUFFALO

- ❖ Beautiful, clean, safe, unique shopping
- ❖ Caring for others, outreach, banding together in time of stress
- ❖ Employment for the disabled
- ❖ Everyone is extremely giving and caring
- ❖ Family orientated
- ❖ Friendliness, willingness to help strangers in need
- ❖ Good health care availability, great care centers, thriving churches,
- ❖ I love the Buffalo Community Podcast.
- ❖ Neighbors tend to look out for each other. Peaceful rural setting.
- ❖ Pulling together in tuff times and helping those less fortunate
- ❖ Same small town feel that I remember when my kids were growing up
- ❖ They are excellent at (Law enforcement) keeping neighbors safe
- ❖ We have a lot of community resources available for seniors and low-income groups.

CLEARWATER

- ❖ A feeling of family
- ❖ A lot of nature to offer and trails.
- ❖ Neighbors look out for one another; willing to help others
- ❖ Our neighborhood Facebook page is very active
- ❖ Outdoor parks, lake nearby, bike trails, snowmobile trails, easy access to freeway/hwy
- ❖ Safety, looking out for each other
- ❖ Small community
- ❖ Well maintained public areas and services. I like parks, food shelf, library and local feel of businesses.

COKATO

- ❖ Close-knit, helpful, kind, generous,
- ❖ Everyone is kind and compassionate
- ❖ Family oriented
- ❖ Lots of opportunity, good housing, good people
- ❖ Roads are good
- ❖ Rural but city
- ❖ single mom support

DELANO

- ❖ Auxiliary, 4th of July Parade, Taste of Delano, Great Stores everything you need, plus a Dollar General. Good people, many know each other.
- ❖ I appreciate the safety of living in Delano. It is a well kept community.
- ❖ I live in the part of town walkable to the library, restaurants, etc.
- ❖ It's growing and businesses have been able to hang on in spite of the Covid and inflation
- ❖ Playgrounds for kids , trying to restore downtown .
- ❖ Small town feel. Close to the city.

HANOVER

- ❖ Caring, small community where people know each other and are happy to help
- ❖ Good people, community events, good schools
- ❖ Little crime, great people, great restaurants
- ❖ Safe, well kept up, low crime. Family oriented.
- ❖ Small town, small town feel

HOWARD LAKE

- ❖ Everyone willing to help each other
- ❖ Friendly, at least on the surface.
- ❖ Good schools, great library, good churches, no traffic, we have the County Fair Grounds, some senior housing but need more
- ❖ Small, beautiful, developing
- ❖ Small, safe community. Helpful, caring neighbors.

MAPLE LAKE

- ❖ Close knit. Neighborly.
- ❖ Connected caring people
- ❖ Friendliness, openness to other cultures, animal friendly, nice lakes
- ❖ Great school system Nice variety of jobs in the area Friendly people
- ❖ I feel we are a fairly safe community. It is great to Be close larger communities for shopping etc
- ❖ Peaceful, quiet, Very beautiful
- ❖ Small Town, Close Knit, Religious, Safe, Country Life
- ❖ This community is good as rallying around its youth.
- ❖ Very rural, which I view as a strength. If you need help, most of the community is willing.

MONTICELLO

- ❖ Commitment to help people when in need.
- ❖ Desire to help support small businesses, active arts community

- ❖ Good city council members, good volunteers in many areas, great art opportunities, lots of growth on the community. Good people making good things happen
- ❖ Good school system, many active churches, lots of restaurants, lots to do in the summer, Walk and Roll, Riverfest, concerts in the park, beautiful medians in downtown that have flowers planted in them every year, the two sides of Bridgepark are well taken care of and beautiful, many playground parks,
- ❖ Helping others, giving to others
- ❖ I like that I can talk with the neighbors
- ❖ It's clean and has many enrichment activities
- ❖ Privacy, quiet, rural feel.
- ❖ River...need to highlight it more.

MONTROSE

- ❖ Community involvement and social communications
- ❖ Community meals and food drops
- ❖ Everyone is friendly & helpful
- ❖ Knowing a lot of people through work, friends, and kids school
- ❖ Lots of parks
- ❖ Safe, clean
- ❖ Small town feel with great schools. Community is very friendly but seems isolated in a way also
- ❖ Vegetable stand in summer and new restaurant.

ROCKFORD

- ❖ Close knit community
- ❖ Everyone helps each other out and supports each other. Whether it's local companies supporting our food shelf and nonprofits, or people volunteering for events, or businesses partnering with other business to serve our community better, there is an awesome sense of community support in Rockford!

- ❖ Small town feel Easy to navigate Easy to find help if needed
- ❖ socializing with neighbors
- ❖ The schools, Small town feel
- ❖ They have a good food shelf and thrift store, and program to help kids with summer lunches. For the most part the area is safe.

SAINT MICHAEL

- ❖ Very warm and welcoming neighbors - always willing to help and step in - family focused
- ❖ Catholic Church, grocery store, cornerstone options for women
- ❖ clean, safe, services are easy to access (post office, library, food, etc.), community programs, parks.
- ❖ Entertainment, parks, community events
- ❖ Friendliness, safety, parks, walking trails
- ❖ Safe, diverse community
- ❖ School district, 'small' community feeling, safe area to bike/walk and be outside
- ❖ Convenient to Twin Cities or St. Cloud

SOUTH HAVEN

- ❖ A lot of togetherness
- ❖ Good schools, and decent neighbors

WAVERLY

- ❖ Friendly
- ❖ Neighbors watching out for each other
- ❖ Responsive Fire Dept, Catholic Church community, Waverly Daze
- ❖ Small town life at its best - the community comes together in times of need and celebration
- ❖ Small Town values, patriotic and strong community
- ❖ There seems to be a couple of close-knit community associations.
- ❖ Waverly is an AMAZING place to live with a community I feel blessed to be a part of. I live in a neighborhood surrounded by people that have become not just amazing friends but myself and my kids consider family.

Observations

The words **close-knit** came through a lot throughout the strengths portion of the assessment. One reason may be that Wright county has a long list of individuals who have grown up in the area and have multiple generations of history here. However, comments about how hard it is to break into social circles and the lack of adult friendships appeared frequently throughout the needs sections. Is it possible that newcomers see **close-knit** as *closed off*?

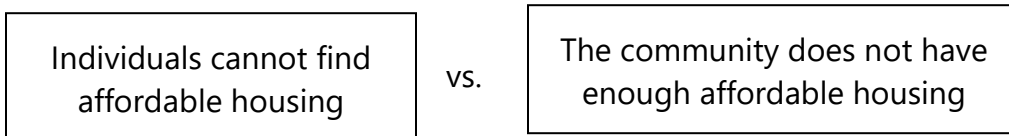
One comment stated: **Not sure there are very many [strengths] for biracial families.** Are we making safe spaces for diverse populations to share the strengths that our communities have to offer?

Needs Statements

The following need statements are subjective and not exhaustive. The analyst looked at the survey data and created a statement to summarize what the data shows. Each statement is supported by the data source that was used to generate the statement.

Some statements are listed from the perspective of the individuals while others are from the perspective of the community. The analyst used the best effort to identify which level should be addressed, however they can be interchangeable.

Example:



It is our hope that you read the statements and the supporting data and evaluate them with your own reference. Please note that this list does not indicate the priorities or objective of Wright County Community Action (WCCA). As our mission indicates, we work in partnership with the community. These statements are used to drive decision-making and advocate the needs of low-income individuals throughout the community.

Community Involvement

Wright County Organizations need to increase awareness of volunteer opportunities.

- 17% of survey respondents (up 3% from 2018) do not know about volunteer opportunities
 - 22% of survey respondents prefer social media to learn about community events, opportunities, and programs.
 - 16% of survey respondents prefer email to learn about community events, opportunities, and programs.
 - 13% of survey respondents prefer community/city websites to learn about community events, opportunities, and programs.

Communities need to increase inclusivity and opportunities for people to gather together.

- 22% of survey respondents (up 7% from 2018) do not feel comfortable having close relationships in their communities.
- 28% of survey respondents (up 8% from 2018) do not feel like they are a part of their community.
- When people use the term "bedroom community" they're usually referring to places where people live, but don't really work. 68.55% of Wright County residents commute outside of the County.
- 12% of survey respondents have a household member that identifies as a member of the

LGBTQIA+ Community. (Question not asked in 2018)

- 4% of survey respondents (down from 8% in 2018) identify as a race other than white.
- Mentioned in open-ended questions (see page 4 of this report).

Communities need to become more bike friendly.

- 17% of survey respondents (up 6% from 2018) do not feel comfortable biking in their communities.
- Mentioned in open-ended questions (see page 4 of this report).

Education

Individuals need support in career exploration or advancing their education.

- 5% of survey respondents (the same in 2018) need help getting started on attending school.
- 68.9% of residents do not have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Specialty Trade Contractor jobs are expected to grow 3.7% between 2020 and 2030. In the Construction and Extraction Occupations category, more than 5,000 openings will happen due to retirements (MN DEED).

Childcare

Communities need more childcare openings for children under the age of 3.

- 85.3% of survey respondents with children (up from 74.5% in 2018) find it hard to find care for children under the age of 3.
- Wright County childcare licensing capacity decreased by 2.82% in the last year.
 - Family-based/In-home childcare options decreased by 12.49% in the last year
 - Center-based childcare options increased by 6.43% in the last year
- WCCA Service Area (includes western Hennepin County) increased by 2.35%.
 - In our Hennepin county service area, Family-based/In-home childcare options increased by 11.76% in the last year
 - In our Hennepin county service area, center-based childcare options decreased by 13.93% in the last year

Individuals need non-traditional childcare hours.

- 80.8% of survey respondents with children (up from 58.1% in 2018) find it hard to find childcare during the hours they need.
- 13% of employed survey respondents work 2nd or 3rd shifts.

Individuals need help affording childcare.

- 96% of survey respondents (up from 77.1% in 2018) find it hard to afford childcare.
- 10% of survey respondents (down from 13%) indicated that they are not receiving childcare Assistance, but it is needed.

Income

Individuals need help obtaining noncash benefits.

- 19% of survey respondents (up from 13% in 2018) are not receiving Energy Assistance but feel a need for the program.
 - Note: The Energy Assistance season was closed during the survey period.
- 26% of survey respondents (up from 15% in 2018) are not receiving SNAP benefits but feel a need for the program.

Individuals need help building or opening savings accounts.

- 68% of survey respondents (down from 74% in 2018) do not have at least three months of income saved in a separate account.
- Only 7% of survey respondents want help opening a savings account, this may indicate that individuals have the accounts and need help to build it.

Individuals need help finding ways to save.

- 16% of survey respondents (down from 20% in 2018) want help making a budget.
- 27% of survey respondents (down from 31% in 2018) want tips and tricks on how to stretch their checks (paychecks, social security, etc.)

Housing

Individuals need help making utility payments.

- 51% of survey respondents (up from 40% in 2018) struggle to make utility payments.

Individuals need help with home repairs.

- 55% of survey respondents (up from 41% in 2018) struggle with home repair costs.
- 14.4% of homes are older were built more than 61 years ago. (MN DEED's County Profile)
- 10,796 occupied Wright County Housing units has one or more substandard conditions. (CAPR, p. 91)
 - Downtown Buffalo, Howard Lake, and Waverly are census tracts where over 34% of the houses have one or more substandard conditions. (CAPR, p. 91)
- 33.3% of owned homes are cost burdened. (more than 30% of household income is associated with housing costs) (CAPR, p. 87)

Communities need housing options appropriate for family size.

- 19% of survey respondents (the same in 2018) struggle to find housing large enough for their families.

Communities need affordable housing options.

- 35% of survey respondents (up from 33% in 2018) struggle to find affordable housing.
- 69.6% of owner-occupied housing units are valued over \$200,000 (MN DEED's County Profile)
- 4,063 (or 8.28%) of all households are severely cost burdened (more than 50% of their household income is spent on housing costs) (CAPR p. 88)
- 17.87% of all rental households are in this severely cost burdened data (CAPR p. 90)

Communities need housing options that match the local workforce.

- The median sale price of a home in Wright County was \$364K in August of 2022. (MLS and/or public records)
- Mortgage calculators suggest a salary of \$67,000 in order to purchase a home at the median value.
- The average annual wage for Wright County jobs is \$51,020. (MN DEED)

Individuals with criminal history need access to housing.

- 10% of survey respondents (up from 8% in 2018) struggle to find housing because of criminal history.

Individuals need help keeping their homes energy efficient.

- 49% of survey respondents (up from 42% in 2018) struggle to keep their homes energy efficient.

Communities need support services for homeless individuals.

- 116 students were reported by local school districts as being homeless (CAPR, p. 97)
- 10% of survey respondents (down from 14% in 2018) have needed to live with family or friends due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.
- 3% of survey respondents (the same as in 2018) have needed to live in a hotel or motel due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.
- 3% of survey respondents (up from 2% in 2018) have needed to live in a RV, campground or tent due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.
- 1% of survey respondents (the same as in 2018) have needed to live in an emergency or transitional shelter due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.
 - As Wright County does not have any option for these shelters, these individuals needed to leave their home community to find support.
- 3% of survey respondents (up from 2% in 2018) have needed to live in a vehicle due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.
- 1% of survey respondents (up from 0% in 2018) have needed to live in a park or abandoned building due to a lack of housing or difficulty in meeting the financial aspects of housing.

Transportation

Individuals need access to reliable transportation in order to meet basic needs.

- 34% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to work.
- 15% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to a grocery store.
 - Howard Lake has since closed their grocery store.
- 11% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to their children's school.
- 14% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to their college/university.
- 51% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to a hospital or ER
- 39% of survey respondents drive more than 15 minutes to get to a clinic or urgent care.
- 12% of survey respondents struggle to perform errands without a vehicle.

Individuals need help affording expenses due to owning a vehicle.

- 52% of survey respondents (up from 39% in 2018) struggle to afford insurance.
- 66% of survey respondents (up from 38% in 2018) struggle to afford gas.
 - The average cost of regular gasoline was \$4.063 during the 2022 survey.
 - The average cost of regular gasoline was \$2.605 during the 2018 survey.
 - 50% of Wright County residents have a commute time of more than 30 minutes. (enter source)
 - 11.42% have a commute greater than 60 minutes. (enter source)
- 73% of survey respondents (up from 60% in 2018) struggle to afford unplanned auto repairs.
- 58% of survey respondents (up from 46% in 2018) struggle to afford regular auto maintenance.
- 1,390 Wright County households do not have a motor vehicle (CAPR, p. 98)

Employment

Communities need jobs that fit the qualifications of the local work force.

- 27% of survey respondents believe they are not qualified for the jobs available.
 - 2.7% of workforce between the ages of 25-64 (2,867 individuals) do not have a high school diploma. (MN DEED)
- 31% of survey respondents believe they are overqualified for the jobs available.

Communities need jobs that fit the career path of the local workforce.

- 32% of survey respondents believe that there are not jobs that fit within their career path.
- 54.7% of Wright County workforce work outside of the county (MN DEED).
- MN DEED Report of Most Common Jobs:
 - Retail Trade - 6,860 total jobs (15.2%) with average annual wage of \$31,089
 - This wage does not meet the cost of living for an individual without children in the county which is \$37,636.

- Manufacturing – 6,246 total jobs (13.8%) with average annual wage of \$65,166
- Healthcare & Social Assistance – 5,696 total jobs (12.6%) with average annual wage of \$53,362

Communities need more jobs that pay a living wage.

- Page 46-48 of the CAPR.

Wright County-based employers need to support career advancement.

- 50% of survey respondents (up from 42%) believe that their employers do not support career advancement.

Health

WCCA participates in the Wright County Community Health Collaborative. This is a partnership between Public Health, Allina Health and, CentraCare – Monticello. The Collaborative works together to build a Community Health Need Assessment (CHNA). The entire report can be found online. This collaborative identified three areas of need and build the following goals.

PRIORITY 1: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Goal: Provide education on activities that protect mental wellness and build resilience and healthy coping skills.

PRIORITY 2: DENTAL CARE

Goal: Reduce the rate of dental care delay in Wright Count

PRIORITY 3: MISUSE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

Goal: Support local prevention, treatment and recovery efforts and policy changes to address substance misuse and substance use disorders in Wright County

Because of the extensive work completed through the Collaborative, this WCCA assessment did not complete an in-depth assessment of the health conditions of the community. The following are items that have been discussed in focus groups or were found in our State and National Comparison Scores.

Individuals need support to quit smoking.

- 15.7% of adults are current smokers (CAPR, p. 105)
- 47.3% respondents who reported smoking want to make making a change.

Individuals need more physical activity.

- 19.3% of adults have no leisure time physical activity (CAPR, p. 105)
- 52% of total survey respondents need more physical activity and want to change.
- Mentioned in open-ended questions (see page 4 of this report).

Communities need more Health Care Providers

- Wright county has less than half of the state and nearly half of the national levels of primary care providers (CAPR, p. 112)
- Wright county has less than half of the number of dental care providers than both the state and nation (CAPR, p. 113)
 - Note: The newly opened Community Dental Clinic was not included in the data
 - 27.4 of Wright County adults did not go to the dentist in the past year.
- Wright county has less than half of the number of mental health providers than both the state and nation (CAPR, p. 113)
 - 66% of survey respondents (increased from 56% in 2018) indicated they receive mental wellness care.

Communities need more grocery stores.

- 15.3% of adults reported that they worried about food running out during the past 12 months. (WC Public Health Survey)
- Wright county has 9.2 grocery stores per 100,000 people, while the state has 17.31. The national rate is 18.79. (CAPR, p. 90)
- Wright County has 4.78 SNAP-Authorized Retailers per 100,000 people, while the state has 6.19. (CAPR, p. 70)

Individuals need education on how to select, store, and prepare nutritious foods.

- 37% reported consuming 5 or more servings of fruits/vegetables day yesterday. (WC Public Health Survey)

Individuals need easy to read nutritious recipes.

- 9.9% of the population between 16-74 have a literacy level at or below 1.
 - Those reported as Level 1 are at risk for being able to understand printed material. Those at the upper end of Level 1 can read and understand the text well enough to be able to perform small task, but might have difficulty understanding or drawing inferences from multiple forms of text. Those at the lower end may struggle with basic vocabulary or even be functionally illiterate.

State and National Comparison Scores

In the supplemental data, there is a 138-page report from that Community Action Partnership’s community needs assessment data tool. This tool occasionally shows a meter to the right of the data to show how our local county data compare to the state and national statistics. The following are data points in which Wright County received a red indicator on the meter, meaning that our scores were less favorable than the state or national levels.

The following sections highlights the areas that have not been addressed by the community identified needs above.

- | |
|---|
| <p>Areas of Concern when Compared to State and National Levels</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Poverty Rate Change2. SNAP Authorized Food Stores3. Unemployment Rate Change4. Access to Head Start5. Preschool Enrollment6. Grocery Stores7. Broadband8. Social Associations9. Smoking Status10. Physical Activity11. Access to Primary Care Providers12. Access to Dental Care Providers13. Access to Mental Health Providers14. Access to FQHC15. Confirmed COVID-19 Cases16. COVID-19 Fully Vaccinated Adults |
|---|

Poverty Rate Change

Found on pages 51-52 of the Community Action Partnership Report

On the national level, the Child Tax Credits make historical progress on reducing the rates of poverty in 2021. These changes are to be celebrated. However, Wright County had a relatively low poverty rate of 5.8%. The poverty rate change of -1.2% is smaller than the national change rate, however, our poverty overall is significantly lower than both the state and national averages.

Unemployment Rate Change

Found on page 74 of the Community Action Partnership Report

Similar to the Poverty Rate Change listed above, the unemployment rate was low to begin with.

Access to Head Start

Found on page 78 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This indicator looks at the overall number of children under the age of 5 and does not look at the eligibility of those children. Because Wright County has a lower than average poverty rate, fewer children are qualified for Head Start programming. Furthermore, WCCA operates three Hennepin county-based centers in Mound, Delano (across the county line), and in Rogers. It is not uncommon to have children from boarder cities like Saint Michael and Albertville attend the Rogers center. The Wright county children from Delano and Rockford are usually enrolled in the Delano center which is just over the county line. *Note: The Rogers center is now closed and a new center was opened in Saint Michael in September 2022.

Preschool Enrollment

Found on page 79 of the Community Action Partnership Report

Wright County sees more children enrolled in preschool on the eastern half of the county. Communities toward the west, have fewer options available as the population is lower.

Broadband

Found on page 102 of the Community Action Partnership Report

While this does show a red indicator, Wright county is only .15 of a percent point behind the state level and 1.68% ahead of the national level. However, we still have 4,689 households without an internet subscription.

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Found on page 135 of the Community Action Partnership Report

Wright County's rate of COVID cases is only 72.6 cases above the state average, both of which are more than the national rates. However, the Wright County has fewer COVID related deaths than the national and state levels, found on page 136.

COVID-19 Fully Vaccinated Adults

Found on page 137 of the Community Action Partnership Report

The rate of fully vaccinated adults is significantly lower than the state and national levels. However, the estimated rate of adults hesitant about receiving the COVID-19 vaccination is between the two.

Social Associations

Found on page 103 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This report looks at social associations such as membership organizations such as civic organizations, bowling centers, golf clubs, fitness centers, sports organizations, political organizations, labor organizations, business organizations, and professional organizations. Wright county is in alignment with the national rate, however, well below the state averages. Contrary to the WCCA's Leadership Teams assumption, rural counties have the higher rates in this indicator and the metro areas have lower rates.

Grocery Stores

Found on pages 98-100 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

SNAP Authorized Food Stores

Found on pages 70 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Smoking Status

Found on pages 105 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Physical Activity

Found on pages 105 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Access to Primary Care Providers

Found on pages 112 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Access to Dental Care Providers

Found on pages 113 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Access to Mental Health Providers

Found on pages 115 of the Community Action Partnership Report

This need was addressed above.

Access to Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers

Found on pages 118 of the Community Action Partnership Report

Minnesota has a total of 70 Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers. 52 of them are located in the Twin Cities Metro. A majority of MN counties will show a zero for this indicator.

Resources for Supplement Information

Must include:

- Survey Data with summaries for open ended questions
- MN Deed Community Program
- Community Action Data Tool Summaries
- Community Resources
- Data spreadsheet of childcare rates
- Cost of living spreadsheet