

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **COLLECTING STORIES OF WHERE YOU LIVE: A STRATHCONA REGIONAL DISTRICT HOUSING AND SERVICE NEEDS ESTIMATION PROJECT**

The Rural Development Network (RDN) was commissioned by the Campbell River & District Coalition to End Homelessness (CRDCEH) and the Urban Indigenous Housing and Wellness Coalition (UIHWC) to conduct a housing and service needs estimation in the Strathcona Regional District. The purpose of the project, “Collecting Stories of Where You Live”, was threefold:

1. Provide a comprehensive picture of housing instability and homelessness in the SRD
2. Inform service providers and municipal, provincial, and federal policies, practices, and funding decisions on homelessness, housing, and support services.
3. Elevate and incorporate the voices of people experiencing homelessness in the solutions to end homelessness.

The project saw 427 community members respond, 311 of which were identified as “housing unstable”. An additional 304 dependents under the age of 18 and 311 adults were reported as living with survey respondents. Based on this project, we know there are at least 801 people experiencing homelessness across the Strathcona Regional District.

"The Coalition felt that it was important to get a picture of what housing insecurity and service access looks like in the region. This data is meant to answer questions such as: Who is experiencing housing insecurity? Why are they experiencing this? And what are people's service needs? This can help us and community agencies or governments to advocate for funding, service expansion, affordable housing, and to help inform policy decisions." (Stefanie Hendrickson, Coordinator for the Campbell River & District Coalition to End Homelessness)

This project collected data for communities all across the Strathcona Regional District. The final report outlines overall results for the Strathcona Regional District as well as regional results (based on survey responses). The regions highlighted in the report are:

- Campbell River, We Wai Kai (Quinsam), Wei Wai Kum First Nation, and SRD Area D
- Cortes Island and T'oq (Klahoose First Nation)
- Quadra Island and the Outer Islands
- Gold River, Tahsis, and Tsaxana
- Sayward

The top five reasons for housing instability across the Strathcona Regional District are:

1. Inability to afford rent or mortgage payments
2. Low wages
3. Housing needs major repairs
4. Increasing rent prices
5. Illness or medical condition

Surprisingly, 47% of housing unstable respondents reported a household annual income of less than

\$30,000 despite 65% of respondents being employed.

“The data provided by Strathcona Regional District residents is foundational. It will help service providers advocate for much-needed funding, municipalities prioritize housing and service needs in the community, and community members better understand what homelessness looks like in their community.” says Emma Wallace, Project Manager of Community Development and Homelessness Estimations.

Based on the findings outlined in the report, RDN has identified six opportunities for action to address housing and homelessness in the Strathcona Regional District:

1. Protect and Develop Accessible Housing Opportunities
2. Foster Community Awareness and Housing Education
3. Support Growth and Services for Aging Population
4. Elevate and Increase Accessible and Affordable Community Services
5. Encourage Community Engagement and Growth Management
6. Promote and Adapt Short-Term Housing Solutions

“Collecting Stories of Where You Live” is a fundamental step in addressing homelessness in the Strathcona Regional District.

**For more information on the project please visit:** <https://www.crhousing.net/newprojects>  
**To access the full report, contact** [info@crhousing.net](mailto:info@crhousing.net)

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<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1t30mpcbVBVa2VLHCUMOddeMDH82VwNgfNEHvgELs7k/edit?usp=sharing>