Community Needs Assessment

ADAMS COUNTY
COLORADO

Prepared by Joining Vision and Action (JVA)
www.joiningvisionandaction.com

For Adams County Human Services
http://www.adcogov.org/human-services

July 7, 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to better understand the needs of low-income residents living in Adams County, along with the potential gaps and barriers in services provided by government and community organizations, Adams County Human Services partnered with Joining Vision and Action (JVA) to conduct a community needs assessment.

The community needs assessment consisted of five primary components. First, a literature review was conducted to better understand the conditions of poverty for low-income Adams County residents. Then, a community resident survey was developed and administered to hear from low-income residents about the services they utilize as well as any challenges or barriers to accessing services they may face. Third, community focus groups were held to facilitate in-depth discussions about the challenges and barriers residents face when accessing services. Additionally, a community inventory was developed to help understand the geographic gaps that may exist in organizations providing services. Finally, a provider survey was developed and administered to gather the perspective of those administering services to low-income residents in Adams County.

Primary causes and conditions of poverty were:

- The increasingly expensive housing market necessitates that minimum wage earners work 2.7 full-time jobs to make ends meet while renting a two-bedroom housing unit.

- High levels of uninsured individuals in Adams County means many do not have access to routine medical care and are one health crisis away from heavy financial burden.

- For the mobility limited, getting to where they need to go is challenging with current public transportation options.

Some of the **key needs identified** in the research were:

- Food assistance is a critical need for the numerous low-income residents experiencing food insecurity.

- Accessible and affordable public transportation options are needed for vulnerable and mobility limited populations.

- Affordable housing is a need for low-income residents as subsidized housing options are limited.

Noteworthy gaps found in the research were:

- A significant gap in Medicaid usage exists with nearly 10,000 residents eligible but not enrolled.

- Approximately one-third of residents expressed difficulty in accessing healthy foods.
- The demand for subsidized housing outstrips current availability.

Identified **barriers to access** were:

- Knowledge of existing services, from both the government and community organizations, was the most frequently cited barrier to access.
- Spanish speakers frequently come across language barriers and challenges with many organizations not offering materials in Spanish.
- Other commonly cited barriers were eligibility requirements and the arduous application process.

With these key findings in mind, the **opportunities for improvement of service delivery** are:

- Improve knowledge of available services and increase accessibility of information about services
- Maintain current partnerships with other organizations, the government and the community served by local resources
- Take steps to mitigate transportation barriers to accessing services
- Strengthen systems for housing allocation and development
- Develop programming providing healthy, fresh food-to-food desert areas

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Over the past few years, the Front Range and Denver metro regions have experienced periods of exponential growth. The rapidly increasing population in these areas is a primary driver behind rising costs of living throughout the region and has applied additional financial pressure for those in need of services and aid. In order to make informed choices about how to best assist those in need, and in an effort to provide better, more efficient services and improved service collaborations, Adams County Human Services contracted with Joining Vision and Action (JVA) to facilitate a comprehensive community needs assessment. The primary purpose of this assessment was to better understand the needs of low-income Adams County community members (defined as those at or below 125% of the federal poverty level or those earning approximately $25,000 or less annually). This report consists of the findings from the needs assessment conducted in spring 2017.

These research efforts are driven not only by the desire of Adams County Human Services to learn more about the community it serves, but also by requirements set forth in the federally funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

This report begins with a description of the evaluation tools utilized to gather the data used in this report, the tests performed and the limitations of the data collected in the "Methodology" section.

Then, participant demographic information is covered in the "Demographics of Research Participants" section.

This is followed by an overview of the needs and challenges sections of the survey that gives readers an understanding of how responses compared with one another.

The data are then broken down thematically across the various areas of interest in the "Findings" section. This section is broken down by "Facts" discovered during the literature review and "Findings" from the community inventory, community survey and provider survey. This is followed by some key information collected during the focus groups as it pertains to each area. Then a summary is provided highlighting the causes and conditions of poverty as it relates to the area, the needs of low-income residents as it pertains to each area, the gaps in services and the barriers experienced by low-income residents.

After this, various special interest populations are examined further in-depth to determine their specific needs as well as specific barriers they face in accessing services.

This is followed by sections highlighting the systemic assets and barriers found in this research.

The conclusion to this report contains a recap of the conditions of poverty, needs of low-income residents, gaps in service and barriers found in this research along with recommendations for improving service deliver and mitigating the barriers and gaps found.

METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Tools

APPROACH	Demographic and document review	Resident survey	Resident focus groups	Provider survey	Community inventory	Final report	Facilitated study session
Identify the causes and conditions of poverty	X	X	X	X			
Determine the needs of low-income persons	X	X	X	X			
Determine how well the needs of low-income persons are being met		X	X	X	X		
Identify organizations and client-based barriers to serving residents		X	X	X	X		
Identify community strengths and assets		X	X	X	X		
Solicit recommendations of solutions to address barriers			X	X	X	X	X
Identify outcomes for development of community action plan						X	X

Demographic and Document Review

In order to inform data collection efforts and better understand the challenges faced by low-income residents in Adams County, JVA reviewed various reports and demographic databases. The focus of this effort was on data that were both current and reliable.

Reports originated from a variety of sources (e.g., Colorado Center on Law and Policy, National Research Center, Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness, Metro Denver

Homeless Initiative, American Community Survey, Adams County, Colorado Department of Public Health, etc.) and were reviewed in the context of Adams County Human Services needs and CSBG goals.

Community Survey

The community survey consisted of a series of questions related to services used by respondents, ease of access to services, barriers and challenges to accessing services, and the overall importance of services. Additionally, the survey collected a few basic demographic data points from respondents.

The primary method for receiving feedback from Adams County residents was through in-person data collection at Adams County Human Services sites. Additional surveys were collected online and through assistance from community organizations, including: Almost Home, Cultivando, Adams County Head Start and Senior Hub.

In order to hear from Adams County residents for whom Spanish is the primary spoken language, the survey was translated into Spanish. Both in-person and online versions of the survey were offered in Spanish. Both versions of the survey can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C.

Focus Groups

In order to better understand the specific needs and challenges of low-income residents of Adams County, a series of six focus groups were held to facilitate in-depth discussions.

- Three focus groups were held in English with residents of Adams County.

- Two focus groups were held in Spanish with residents of Adams County.

- One focus group was held with the Adams County CSBG Community Advisory Board.

Much of the focus group recruitment came through surveying efforts as survey participants were given the opportunity indicate their availability and willingness to participate in a focus group as a part of the survey process.

A total of 21 Adams County residents participated in the Spanish groups and 22 Adams County residents participated in the English focus groups. Each focus group lasted 90 minutes. At each focus group, a meal and an incentive of a $30 gift card to King Soopers was provided for each participant.[1] A copy of the script used for both the English and Spanish facilitations can be found in Appendix D and Appendix E.

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[1] No incentives were given out for the CSBG Community Advisory Board focus group.

Provider Survey

In order to include the perspective of service providers who assist low-income residents throughout Adams County, an online survey was developed. This survey was administered entirely online through Survey Monkey and entirely in English. Questions on this survey were designed to gauge the perceived changes and trends observed by the providers, the perceived challenges of the organization's clients and the perceived greatest assets and needs of low-income residents of Adams County. A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix F.

Community Inventory

In order to examine the county with a geographic perspective with regards to the number and location of nonprofit organizations, a community inventory was developed as an interactive tool for researchers and service providers to identify gaps in services. The inventory takes the form of an interactive spreadsheet that sorts identified service providers within the county by service area and geographic location. The service providers on the list were identified by examining and narrowing down a list of tax-exempt Adams County organizations to include only those providing direct services to residents. The final list includes 121 organizations across 18 service categories.

The organizations included were then mapped out. In addition to the inventory, a service provider map and user guide for both tools have been developed for both researcher and provider use.

Limitations

One limitation within the needs assessment was that not all questions within the community survey pertained to every respondent, so for most of the questions, respondents were given some variation of the option "not applicable." For example, not all respondents have utilized Low Income Emergency Assistance (LEAP) and those that have not utilized this program would be unable to rate LEAP for ease of access, responding instead with "not applicable." As a result, many questions have highly variable levels of response for analysis.

Due to this limitation, the research presented in this report is primarily a combination of descriptive statistics from the surveys and qualitative analysis from the focus groups.

An additional limitation faced is the literacy level of the Spanish and English resident survey (Appendix B and Appendix C). While the survey is written to be methodologically sound, the resulting level of language in Spanish and English is above what many populations may be comfortable with, particularly the lower-income population that has been targeted. As a result, some of those approached may not have completed the survey, fully understood the questions or able to complete the survey in the estimated 10-minute time frame.

As a way of overcoming this limitation, the focus groups allow researchers to hear directly from residents in a conversational format without the need for high-level literacy skills.

Tests Performed

As mentioned, most of the data presented in this report is a combination of descriptive statistics and qualitative data. Where applicable, a few tests were performed in an effort to better understand the nuances of the data set.

- *Independent samples t-tests* were used when comparing mean scores for two groups. A statistically significant result here indicates that the mean scores for the two groups included in the test are not likely to be a random result but a pattern that we can infer would continue should more respondents complete the survey.

- *One-way ANOVA tests* are similar to t-tests in that they compare mean scores, with the primary difference being that this test examines mean scores across multiple groups (e.g., across age groups). A statistically significant result here indicates mean scores between at least two groups are most likely not a random result, but again a pattern we can infer would continue.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Resident Survey

Overall, 326 survey responses, representing 326 different Adams County residents, were included for analysis.[2]

Age

Community survey respondents varied greatly in age, ranging from 18 to 89. Fifty-four respondents chose not to share their age. Of those who did provide their age in the survey, the largest age group was 26-35 years old, with 34.2% of respondents. The smallest age group was individuals 60 years old and over, with only 11.4% of respondents (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Community survey respondents by age group (n = 272)
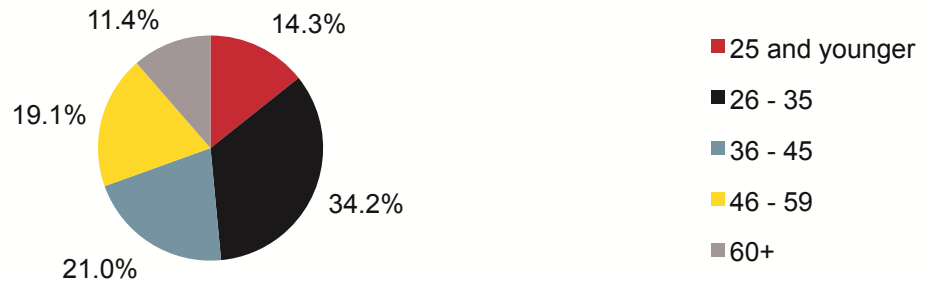
With 7.9% of adults age 65 years or older designated as living in poverty, the sample here is proportional to the number of older adults experiencing poverty in Adams County.[3]

Sex

Community survey respondents were asked their gender. Most respondents (76.5%) to the survey identified as female (Figure 2).

[2] With an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 households living in at or below the 125% of FPG, this sample size allows us to interpret the results with a margin of error of 5.4%. Estimates of households living under that threshold were taken from American Community Survey estimates for Adams County.

[3] American Community Survey data are not disaggregated beyond those ages 65 and older and those 64 and younger. As such, it is difficult to determine how proportional each individual age group is to the actual figures for poverty being experienced by age group in Adams County.

Figure 2. Community survey respondents by gender (n = 298)
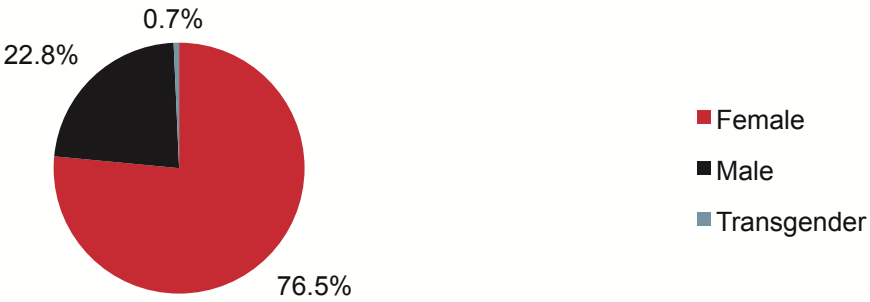
Race and Ethnicity

Mirroring the methodology of the census, community survey respondents were asked two questions regarding their racial and ethnic background. The first question asked survey respondents to identify their racial background; respondents were asked to select all that applied. The most commonly selected option was white or Caucasian, followed by black or African American (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Number of respondents by race[4]
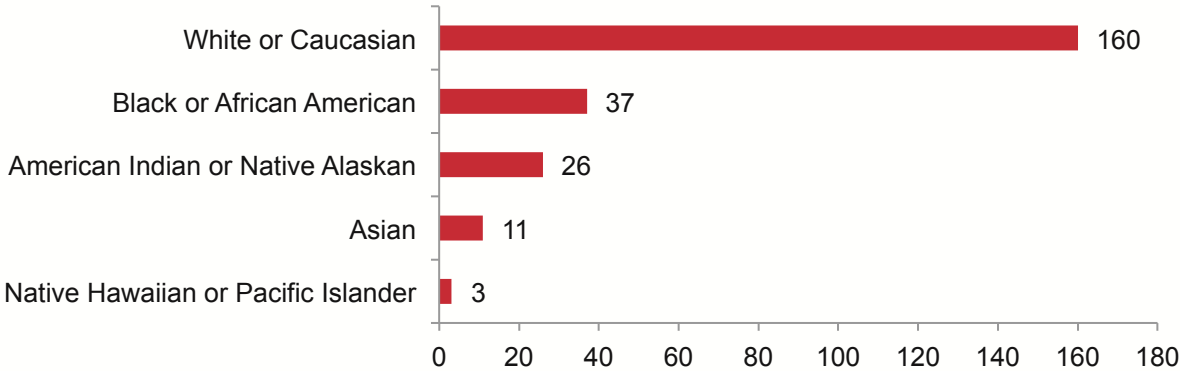
Respondents were also asked if they identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin. The answer options were a simple yes/no. With 64.2% identifying as Hispanic or Latino, this population was well-represented in the survey sample (Figure 4).

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[4] These data are presented as counts and not percentages, as respondents were allowed to select all that apply. As such, these counts do not necessarily consist of exclusive cases (i.e., a respondent may have selected options to indicate they were of both White or Caucasian and Asian ancestry, which would result in each category receiving a count).

Figure 4. Percentage of community survey respondents identifying as Hispanic or Latino (n = 266)

35.8%

64.2%

■ Hispanic/Latino
■ Non-Hispanic/Latino
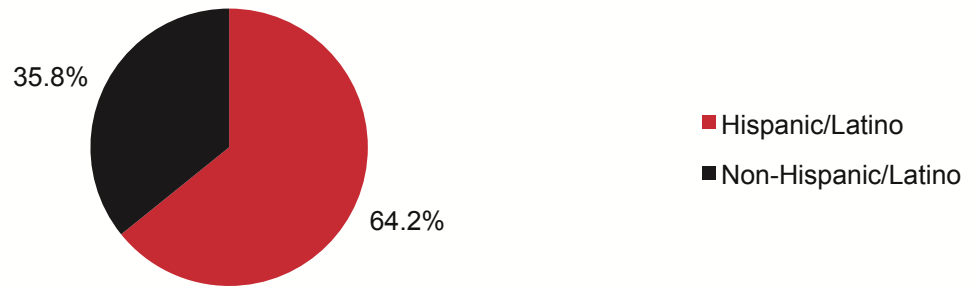
Language

The community resident survey was administered in both English and Spanish. With just over 20% of the surveys being completed in Spanish, the perspective of those whose primary language is Spanish are well-represented in this survey sample (Figure 5). According the ACS survey estimates, approximately 23% of Adams County residents speak Spanish at home.[i]

Figure 5. Language of community resident survey completions (n = 326)

20.6%

79.4%

■ English
■ Spanish
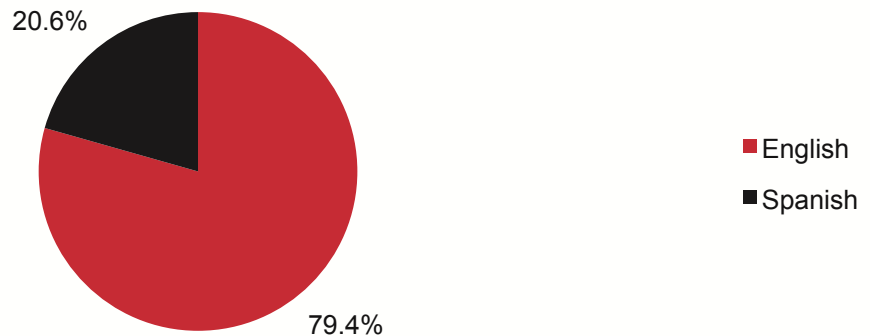
Respondents at 125% of the Federal Poverty Guideline

Community survey respondents were asked to provide both their annual household income and the number of people living in their home in order to determine if they fell within 125% of the federal poverty guidelines. The majority of survey respondents (69.3%) fell below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines (Figure 6)

Figure 6. Percentage of community survey respondents at or below 125% federal poverty guideline (n = 326)

- ■ At or Below 125% of Federal Poverty Guideline
- ■ Above 125% of Federal Poverty Guideline
- ■ Respondent did not provide necessary information

12.0%

18.7%

69.3%
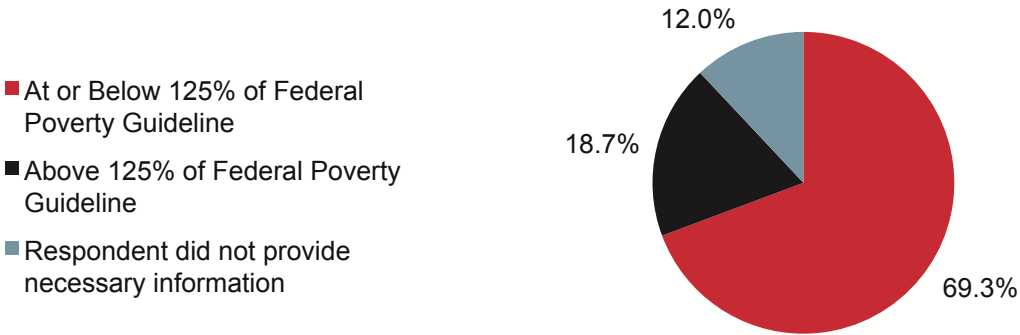
As survey respondents were primarily contacted at Adams County Human Services sites or through community organizations providing services to those in need, respondents who did not meet the poverty guidelines are included in this analysis as most were seeking and receiving services for one reason or another. Where it is relevant in this analysis, differences between those who are at or below the 125% mark and those who did not provide information or exceed the 125% mark will be highlighted.

Homelessness

In order to hear from and address the needs of the homeless persons in Adams County, community survey respondents were asked if they were currently or formerly homeless. With a total of 32.4% of respondents either currently or formerly experiencing homelessness, the needs of that population is well-represented in these results (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Are you currently or have you ever been homeless? (n = 296)

14.2%

18.2%

67.6%

- ■ Never homeless
- ■ Formerly homeless
- ■ Currently homeless
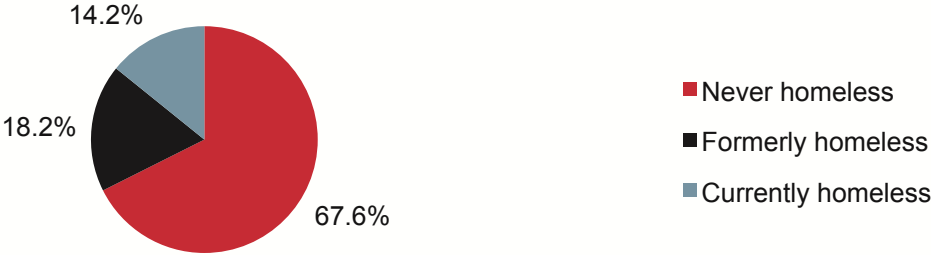
Other Vulnerable Populations

Community survey respondents were given a list of groups and asked to select which, if any, they identified as representative of themselves. Individuals who were immigrants or had a disability are well-represented in the survey sample, but veterans and members of the LGBTQ community were not particularly well-represented (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Other vulnerable populations represented in community survey sample

Disability — 49
Immigrant — 47
Refugee — 12
Veteran — 5
LGBTQ — 5
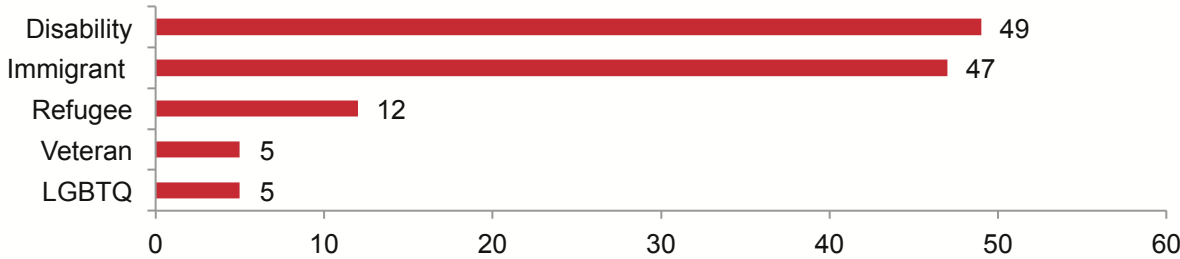
Usage and Familiarity with Assistance Programs and Services

Community survey respondents were asked how often they used assistance programs or services from the government, churches, missions, food banks or other community providers. The most common response was monthly, and most survey respondents utilized services at least once a month (Figure 9).

Figure 9. How often community survey respondents utilize assistance programs/services (n = 313)

Daily — 48
Weekly — 32
Monthly — 108
Several times a year — 43
Once a year — 36
Never — 46
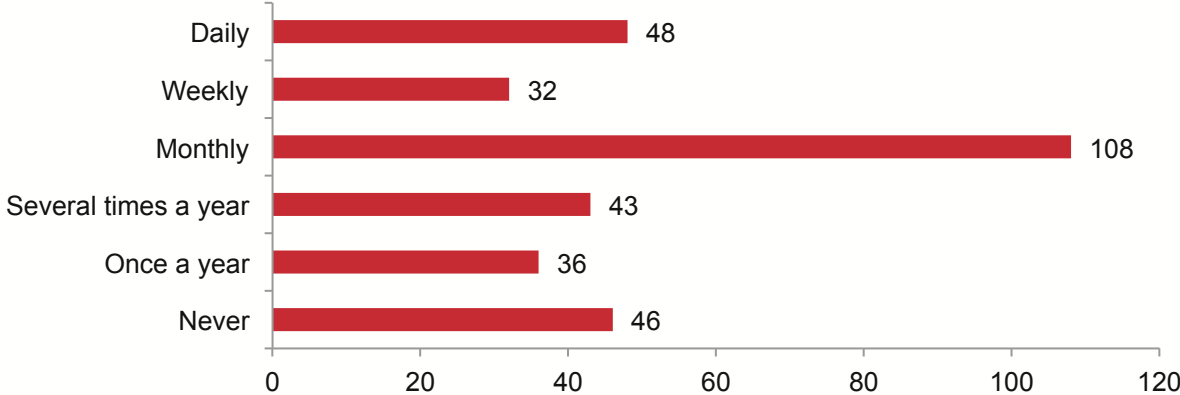
Community survey respondents were also asked about their familiarity with various assistance programs and support services available. Most survey respondents were a little or somewhat familiar with available services (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Community survey respondents' familiarity with available services (n = 305)
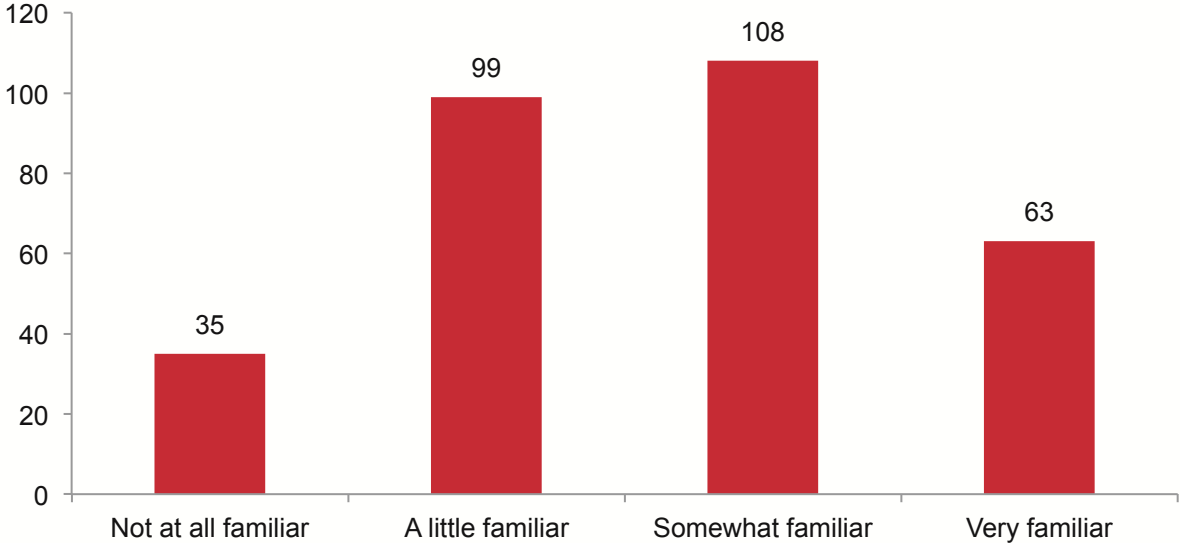
Provider Survey

A total of 47 respondents clicked into the online provider survey. Of those, 36 completed a majority of the survey. Those responses are included in this report.

Organization

Provider survey respondents were asked about the organization they worked for. Responses ranged from housing organizations, employment organizations, childcare providers, medical services, emergency services and legal support. The full list of organizations can be found in Appendix A.

Role

Provider survey respondents were asked about their primary role at their organization. Respondents to this survey tended to be higher up in the organization, with program director/manager and CEO/executive director being the two most commonly selected options. No respondents indicated their involvement with the organization primarily consisting of being a board member (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Number of provider survey respondents by primary role (n = 36)
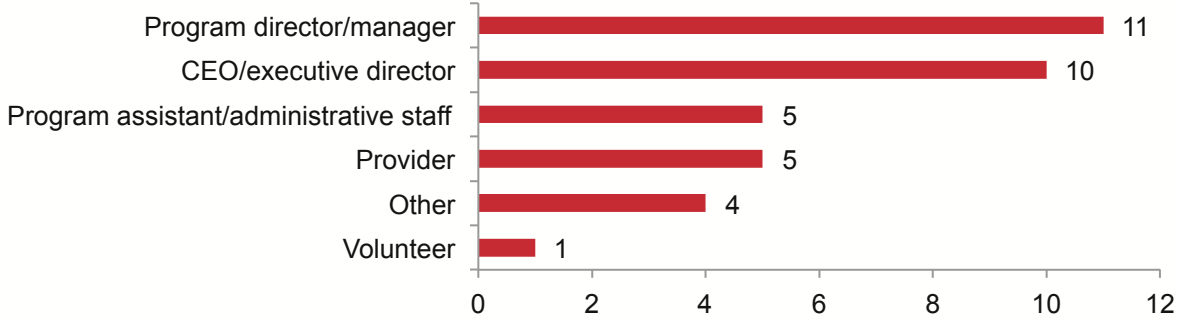
Number of Clients Served

Provider survey respondents were asked how many clients their organization served annually. Both large and small organizations are represented in these findings, as responses varied from 50 to 130,000 clients served annually.

Type of Assistance Provided

Provider survey respondents were asked which types of assistance were most consistent with their organization's core mission. Respondents were allowed to select all that applied. The most common selections were housing and health services with 14 selections each. The option for recreation received only one selection (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Number of respondent selections for types of assistance most consistent with organization's core mission[5]
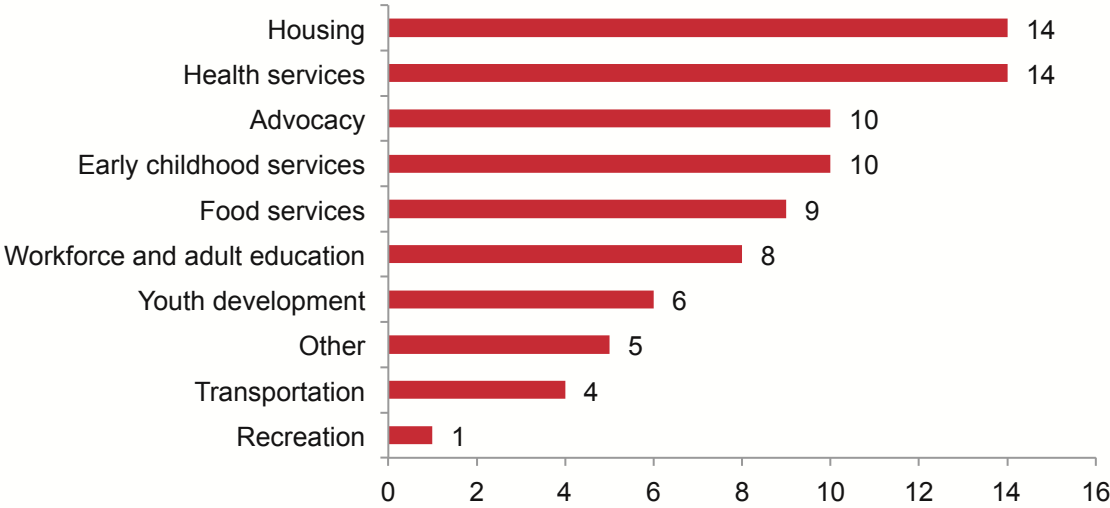
Demographic Groups Served by Providers

Provider survey respondents were asked which groups their organizations typically serve. This question allowed respondents to select all that applied. The most frequently selected options were families, low-income adults, the homeless, youth and seniors or older adults (age 60+), with each receiving at least 20 selections. Former inmates and specific ethnic or racial groups were the options receiving the least amount of selections (Figure 13).

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[5] This question was presented as a check all that apply; as such, these selections do not indicate exclusive cases.

Figure 13: Demographics served by providers

Demographic	Value
Families	27
Low-income adults	24
The homeless	23
Youth	20
Seniors or older adults (60+)	20
People with disabilities	17
Early childhood	15
Teenagers	15
People with mental illness or mental health issues	14
LGBTQ community	12
Veterans	10
Refugees	9
Former inmates	6
Other	5
A specific ethnic or racial group	4
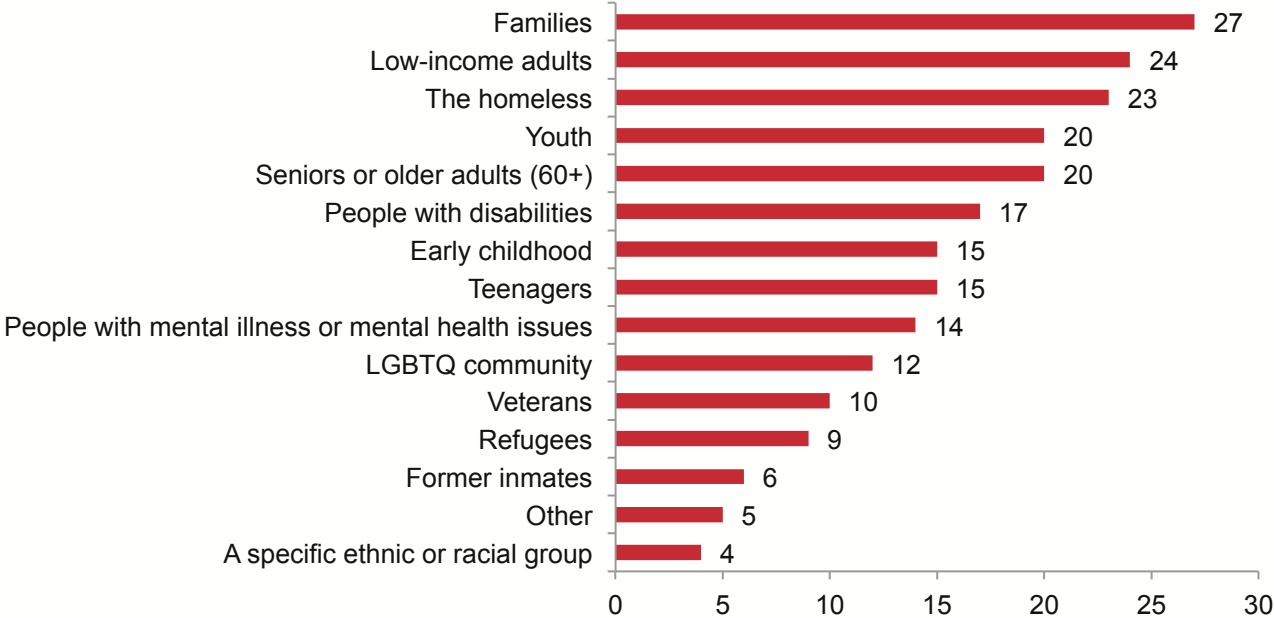
Spanish Language Services

Provider survey respondents were asked the extent to which their organization offered services in Spanish. Very few organizations had no Spanish services whatsoever. Most of the organizations had Spanish speaking staff and just over half provided materials written in Spanish (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Number of provider organizations offering Spanish services

Service	Value
Spanish-speaking staff available	33
Written materials in Spanish	19
No Spanish services	2
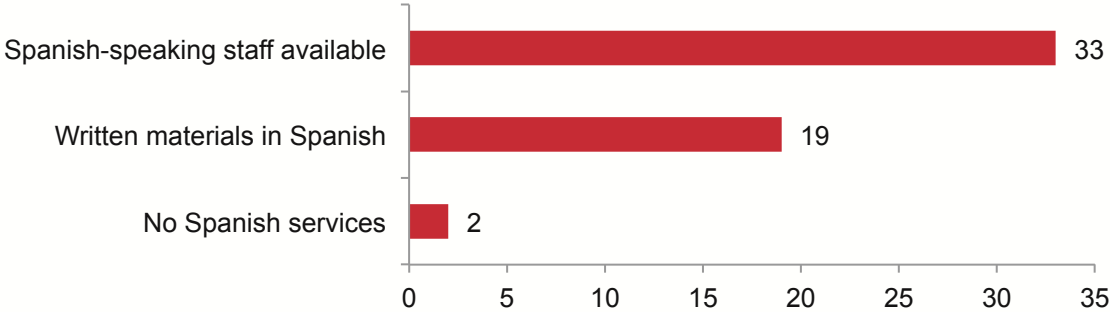
FINDINGS

Resident Survey Findings: Overview

This section contains summary findings from the community survey in order to demonstrate how various items were rated in comparison with one another.[6]

Challenges

Community survey respondents were asked about the challenges faced by them and their families. For each item, respondents were given a 4-point Likert type scale, where: 1 = not at all difficult, 2 = a little difficult, 3 = somewhat difficult, 4 = very difficult. Additionally, respondents were given a not applicable option. Making ends meet day to day received the highest score here, indicating that it was at least a little to somewhat difficult for many respondents (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Mean scores for challenges faced by community survey respondents
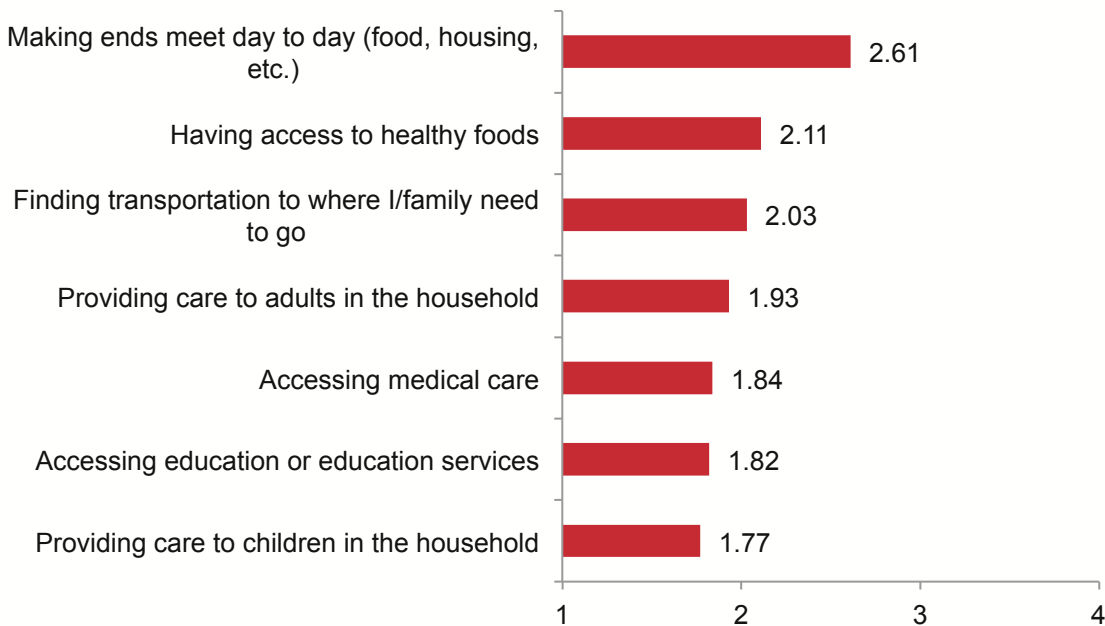
Time to Destination

In order to help gauge the transportation needs of Adams County residents, community survey respondents were asked to rate how long it took them to get to various destinations. The chart below is sorted by the most responses for a destination being 31-60 minutes away. Place of employment along with both community and government services received the most selections for being a 31-60 minutes trip away, while

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[6] Items often received highly variable numbers of responses.

government services also received the most selections for being a trip of 1-2 hours (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Approximate time to various destinations[7]

Legend: ■ 0-15 minutes ■ 16-30 minutes ■ 31-60 minutes ■ 1-2 hours ■ More than 2 hours
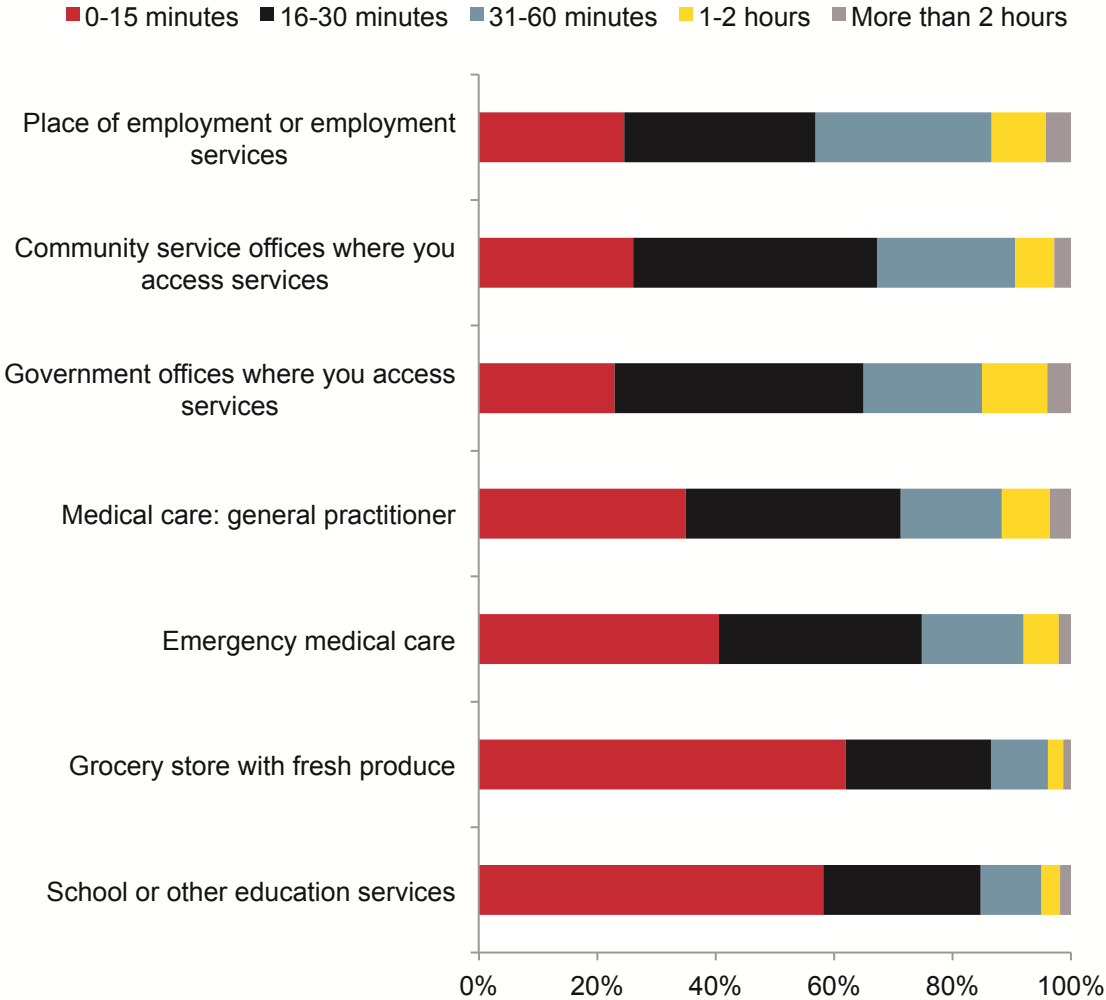
Usage and Ease of Access for Various Government Services

Community survey respondents were also asked about which government services they currently receive via a question that prompted them to check all that applied from a list of services. Additionally, respondents were asked to rate the ease of accessing these various services via a 4-point Likert type scale, where: 1 = difficult to access, 2 = somewhat difficult to access, 3 = somewhat easy to access, 4 = easy to access. Additionally, an option for N/A - have not used was available as well.

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[7] This figure is sorted from top to bottom for most selections of a 31-60 minute travel time.

Medicaid and Food Assistance (SNAP) were the most commonly utilized government services. These were also rated as among the easiest services to access. Aid to Needy Disabled (AND), Home Care Allowance (HCA) and veterans' services were the items rated the most difficult to access. Many more people chose to rate the ease of accessing services than those choosing to indicate having received the services (e.g., only three respondents indicated receiving adult protection, but 44 rated the service for ease of access; Table 1). As respondents were given a response option of N/A – have not used, this is perhaps an indication of the services respondents had previously received or attempted to receive.

Table 1. Number of respondents receiving government services and mean scores for ease of accessing each service

Service	Number of selections for currently received services	Mean score for ease of access
Adult protection	3	2.30 (n = 44)
Aid to Needy Disabled (AND)	9	2.02 (n = 55)
Burial assistance	0	2.45 (n = 38)
Child care assistance	14	2.22 (n =77)
Child support services	23	2.31 (n = 93)
Child protection services	1	2.51 (n = 77)
Colorado Works (TANF)	30	2.47 (n =94)
Food assistance (SNAP or food stamps)	173	2.74 (n = 220)
Home care allowance (HCA)	3	2.14 (n = 43)
Low Income Emergency Assistance Program (LEAP)	33	2.71 (n = 119)
Medicaid	222	2.97 (n = 257)
Medical assistance	45	2.50 (n = 109)
Old Age Pension (OAP)	17	2.40 (n = 45)
Transit program (A-LIFT)	7	2.32 (n = 37)
Veterans' services	2	2.12 (n = 25)

Barriers to Accessing Government Services

Community survey respondents were also asked about barriers to accessing government services. Survey respondents were given a 4-point Likert type scale, where: 1= not at all a challenge, 2 = minor challenge, 3 = moderate challenge, 4 = significant challenge. Therefore, larger numbers indicate a greater barrier. Respondents were also given the option to select a not applicable option.

A lack of services for respondents' particular need, not knowing if they are eligible and knowing about various services offered were the items that rated as most challenging for accessing services. Cultural/language barriers and transportation to government offices were rated the lowest (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Mean scores for barriers to accessing government services[8]

Barrier	Score
Lack of services that meet my particular need	2.45
Eligibility: I do not believe I qualify	2.39
Knowledge: I don't know about services offered	2.36
Application: it's too difficult to apply for services	2.19
Cultural: services are not sensitive to my cultural	2.03
Transportation: getting to a government office	1.93
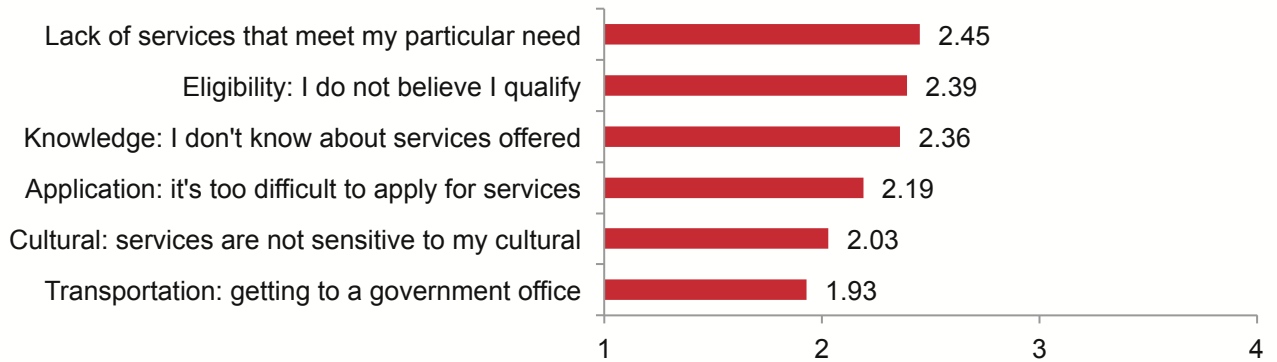
Usage and Ease of Use of Community Services

Similar to how survey respondents were asked about the government services they utilize, survey respondents were asked to indicate which community organization provided services they utilized and to rate each for ease of access.[9]

Again, food assistance and medical assistance were the most commonly utilized services. Housing assistance and emergency assistance rated the lowest, and therefore, the least accessible, while medical assistance and food assistance rated the highest, indicating a more easily accessible service (Table 2).

Table 2. Usage and ease of access for community organization provided services

Service	Number of selections for currently received services	Mean score for ease of access
Cash assistance	62	2.12 (n = 122)
Childcare assistance	40	2.19 (n = 83)
Emergency assistance	20	2.05 (n = 96)
Employment assistance	34	2.36 (n = 83)
Education assistance	30	2.49 (n = 87)
Food assistance	183	2.68 (n = 231)
Household heating/cooling assistance	57	2.49 (n = 113)
Housing assistance	43	2.00 (n = 107)
Medical/health assistance	114	2.84 (n = 181)
Income management	10	2.18 (n = 57)
Public transportation[10]	N/A	2.52 (n = 112)

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[8] Larger number indicates a greater barrier.
[9] For how the scale was set up, please see previous section on usage and ease of access for government services.

Importance of Services

Community survey respondents were also asked to rate the importance of services via a 4-point Likert type scale, where: 1 = not at all important, 2 = a little important, 3 = somewhat important and 4 = very important. Respondents were also provided an N/A – have not used option. Food assistance, medical assistance and housing assistance were rated highest in importance, while income management and childcare assistance were rated lowest in importance (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Mean scores for importance of various services for respondents[11]
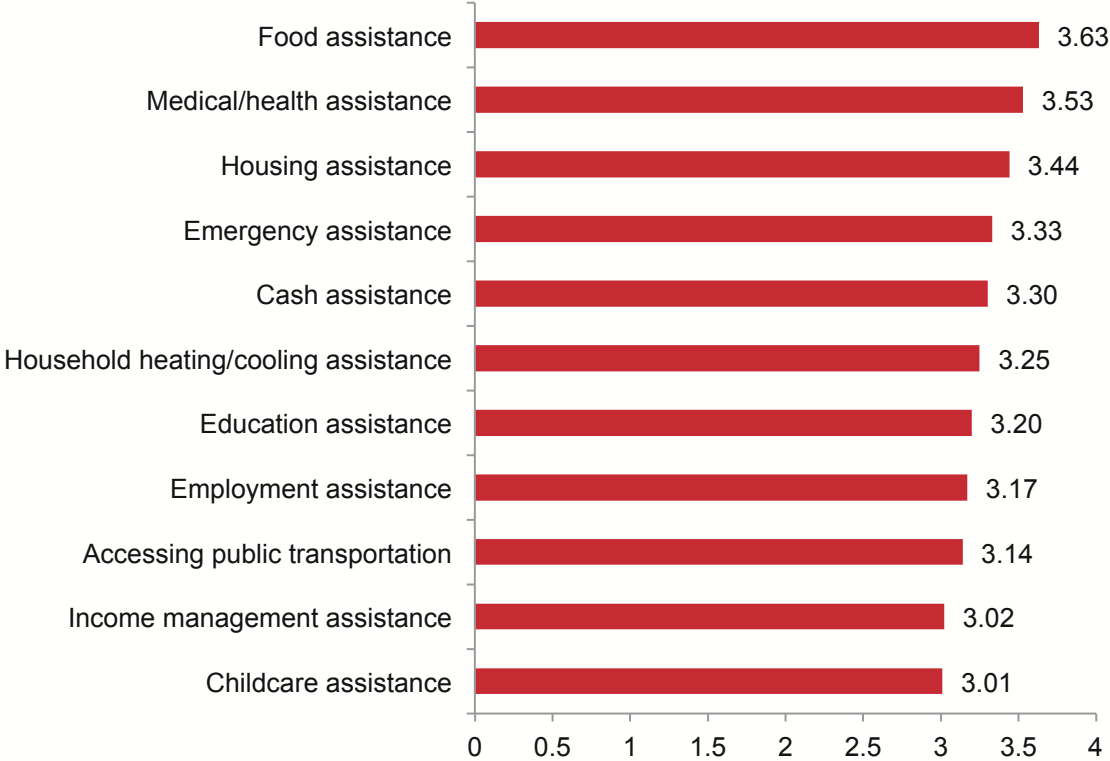
Community Inventory Findings

The community inventory serves as a geo-location resource to determine which types of services are available within the various cities of Adams County. The breakdown of the 121 service providers identified by service category and location can be found in Table 3 below.

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[10] In the select all that apply section, public transportation was not an option to select.

[11] Larger number indicates greater importance.

Table 3. Services available per city in Adams County by category

	Education	Income Management	Health: Alcohol & Drugs	Health: General Health	Health: Disabilities	Nutrition	Housing	Transport	Youth Development: Childcare	Youth Development: Gang Recovery	Emergency Services: Domestic Violence	Emergency Services: Homeless Shelter	Seniors	Veterans	Prisoners/Ex-Felons	Legal Assistance	Community Development	Family Services
Arvada						1			2									
Aurora											2	2						
Bennett						1												
Brighton			2	2	2	6			2	1		2	1		1		1	1
Broomfield				1														
Commerce City	1	2	1	2	1	6	1	1	1		3	1					1	
Denver	4		1	8	1	2	1		3			2	6	2		2		
Eastlake												1						
Federal Heights						1												
Henderson	1	1					1											
Northglenn						1						1						
Strasburg													1					
Thornton	1					1			2									
Westminster			2	3	2	5	2		3			1	2	1		2		
Wheat Ridge												1						
TOTAL	7	3	6	16	6	24	5	1	13	1	6	10	10	3	1	4	2	1

The cities with the most services available to Adams County residents are Denver with 32 organizations, Westminster with 23 organizations, Commerce City with 21 organizations and Brighton with 21. The city with the least number of organizations are Eastlake, Wheat Ridge, Strasburg, Bennett, and Broomfield with only one service organization identified on the tax-exempt registry in each.

The service categories with the most providers available are Health with 28 organizations and Nutrition with 24 organizations. The service categories with the least providers available are Family Services, Transportation, and Prisoner/Ex-felon services with one provider.

Provider Survey Findings: Overview

This section contains findings of what providers perceived as unmet needs for low-income Adams County residents from the provider survey in order to demonstrate how various items were rated in comparison with one another.[12]

Unmet Needs

Provider survey respondents were asked to rate the degree to which various needs of low-income residents of Adams County were unmet. A 4-point Likert type scale was provided for survey takers to rate each item, where 1 = completely unmet, 2 = somewhat unmet, 3 = somewhat met and 4 = completely met.[13] Overall, providers perceived most needs of low-income residents to be at least somewhat unmet (Figure 19). Food and nutrition along with health services were rated highest, indicating these needs were somewhat unmet to somewhat met. The items receiving the lowest scores were long-term housing and emergency services with scores indicating completely unmet needs.

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[12] Providers were also asked about barriers they saw clients experiencing. These findings are covered later on in the report.

[13] Respondents were also given the option of not sure.

Figure 19. Perceived unmet needs of low-income residents by service providers

Category	Value
Food and nutrition	2.33
Health services	2.22
Early childhood services	2.11
Navigating available resources	2.07
Workforce and adult education	2.04
Public transporation	2.00
Youth development	2.00
Financial health	1.89
Civic engagement	1.85
Emergency services	1.70
Long-term housing	1.52
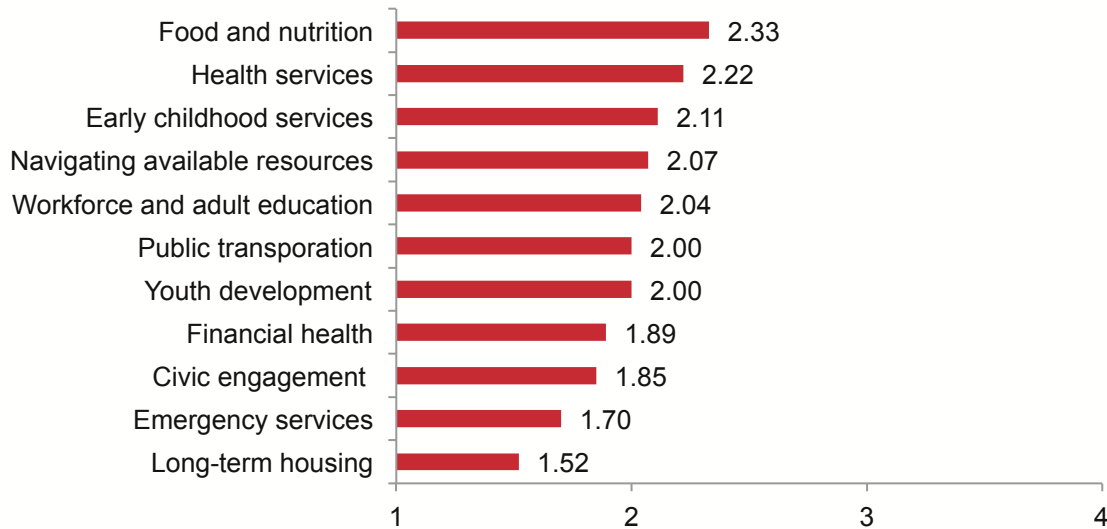
Findings by Need Category

This section addresses the current needs of low-income Adams County community members, discusses the organizations and resources community members reach out to for assistance, and identifies the gaps in these existing services. The findings are organized by need category and presented as "Facts" pulled from the review of existing documents and demographics, "Findings" pulled from the research conducted for this community needs assessment and identified services and gaps from focus groups.

Education

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to education, including early childhood education services, afterschool programs, life skills classes, adult vocational training, ESL and GED courses, and college programs.[14]

Facts

- **Graduation rates are on an upward trend.** Despite graduation rates for 2015-2016 being down to 74% from 79% in 2014-2015, the overall trend has been steadily upward after being down to 64% in 2010-2011, 66% in 2011-2012 and 70% in 2013-2014.[ii]

- **Overall, Adams County residents tend to have a solid education foundation.** In 2015, 82% of residents were high school graduates or higher, while 22.3% of residents had a bachelor's degree or higher.[iii] In

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[14]Note: This section does not include childcare services, which are described in the Childcare section below.

2016, just under 37% of job openings required a bachelor's degree or higher, and another 46.7% required a high school diploma or equivalent. [iv]

Findings

The key findings from the community needs assessment research related to education are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the challenge of accessing education or education services as a 1.82/4, indicating little to no difficulty. This was rated one of the lowest items by survey respondents.

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of education services as 3.2/4.0, indicating placing the perceived importance of education services toward the middle of the overall range (see Figure 18).

- **Community survey** respondents who indicated receiving education assistance services from community providers made up 9.2% of the sample.

- **Community survey** respondents largely did not experience difficulty in accessing education or education services, with 134 indicating accessing education as not at all difficult. However, 61 community survey respondents (18.7%) indicated accessing education or education services was either somewhat difficult or very difficult (Figure 20).

- **Service Providers** Youth development and workforce/adult education were both identified as among the top three unmet needs for low-income residents in Adams County by providers.[15]

- **Service Providers** rated the unmet need for both youth development (primary and secondary education, GED and afterschool programs) and workforce and adult education right around a 2.0/4.0, indicating service providers see this as a somewhat unmet need.

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[15] Providers were given the opportunity to list the top three unmet needs for low-income residents of Adams County.

Figure 20. Response summary for difficulty of accessing education or education services.
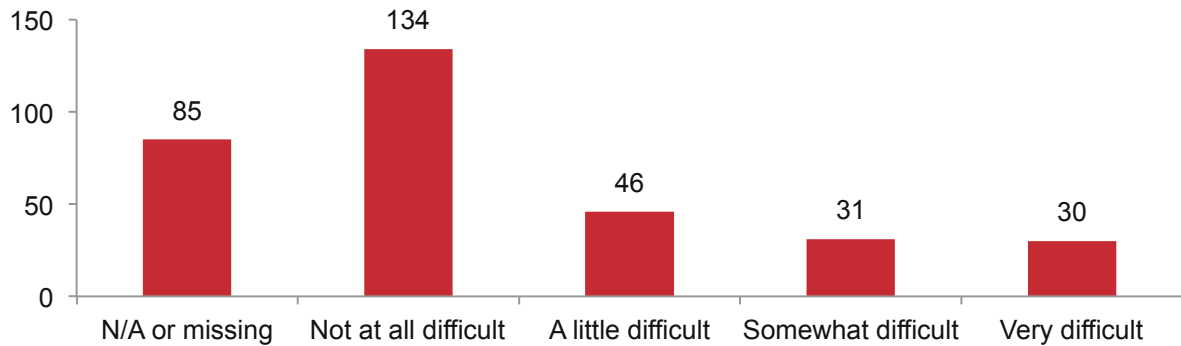
Educational Services and Resources in Adams County
Educational services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetic order:

- Cultivando
- Eloise May Library
- Environmental-Learning for Kids
- Have A Heart Project
- Head Start

Findings from focus groups and community inventory
High cost of vocational training for adults. Some focus group participants expressed that vocational job training programs were too expensive for them to attend and called for free or delayed payment programming.

Need for basic education for adults. During a focus group, one community member described facing a lack of resources for adults hoping to gain earlier or more basic levels of education, specifically kindergarten through high school.

Lack of services in remote areas. According to the community inventory results, education service providers are only present in Commerce City, Denver, Henderson, and Thornton. The remainder of Adams County was not found to have nonprofit education services available.

Education Services Summary
Overall, low-income residents of Adams County rate education as fairly important and the challenge of accessing education and education services fairly low**. However, the need for more resources and affordable resources for adults seeking to educate themselves was discussed a few times during focus groups. Service providers perceived both youth development and workforce and adult education as unmet needs for low-income residents.**

Causes and conditions of poverty: For some of the 18% of Adams County residents with less than a high school diploma or equivalent, the lack of educational attainment is likely to be a driver of poverty and almost certainly a barrier of alleviating poverty.

Needs: As pointed out by providers and focus group participant, there is a need for additional services for residents seeking to increase their education and/or obtain marketable skills. Furthermore, with more jobs requiring a bachelor's degree than there are residents of Adams County with a bachelor's degree, there is a need to prepare residents to compete in the workforce.

Barriers: While survey respondents rated barriers to accessing education rather low, focus group participants noted the high costs of vocational training program.

Community strengths: When asked to identify education resources used by the community, focus group participants identified multiple resources serving children, indicating availability and educational services serving children. Additionally, improving graduation rates will ensure more young people enter the workforce prepared to compete.

Income Management

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to income management, including financial education programs, micro-lending programs, and other income management resources and services.

Facts

- **Poverty is prevalent in Adams County.** The poverty rate in Adams County was estimated to be 13.8% in 2015.[v]

- **Many families living on the edge.** An average of 1,454 households are served by TANF every month. An additional 2,556 household are served by adult financial services every month. When examining the number of households potentially living on the edge of homelessness, households living on government assistance are an important indicator.[vi]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results related to income management are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated income management services at a 3.02/4.0. Along with childcare assistance services, this was among the lowest rated items for the importance of services section of the survey.

- **Community survey** respondents did not commonly receive income management services from community organizations, with only 3.1% having indicated doing so.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated financial health as a somewhat unmet to completely unmet need with a rating of 1.89/4.0, placing it among the highest unmet needs as seen by providers.

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of cash assistance services as a 3.3/4.0.

- **Community survey** respondents were represented of the families accessing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with 9.2% respondents selecting this as a service accessed. Additionally, 19% of respondents indicated receiving cash assistance services from a community organization.

- **Community inventory** findings show only three income management organizations across the county.

Income management and cash services and resources in Adams County

Income management services identified as available resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Moneytree
- Payday Loan Offices

■ Welfare Offices

Findings from focus groups and community inventory

Inability to save money. As community members are highly dependent upon short-term and pay-day loan programs, they find themselves unable to save their assets for the future. An individual described concern for her daughter's future, stating that she is "never able to get ahead…has nothing for her [her daughter's] college."

Lack of financial literacy programs. Focus group residents reported the frequent use of short-term high interest loan programs without a full understanding of the terms associated with these loans. The need for financial education is clear so that residents can identify and avoid scams.

Lack of available income programming. The community inventory, along with reports from community survey and focus group participants, show that there is not a sufficient amount of income management services to the Adams County community.

Income Management Summary

The high rates of poverty in Adams County and significant case load of families accessing government services indicate numerous households are in danger of becoming homeless. Of concern were the multiple payday loan providers identified and discussed as services accessed by low-income residents in the focus groups, perhaps an indication of potential financial literacy needs of Adams County's low-income residents.

Causes and Conditions of Poverty: While perhaps a short-term solution to financial challenges, pay-day loan services do not bode well for long-term financial health.

Needs: For low-income residents who use pay-day lending services, there is an educational need to highlight the long-term impacts of high-interest loans and increased awareness about potential alternatives and about healthy income management practices.

Barriers: With resident survey respondents rating income management services comparatively low, there is a barrier of perception where residents do not appear to see the importance of learning to manage their income.

Community Strengths: With nearly one-fifth of resident survey respondents indicating receiving cash assistance from community organizations, it is clear there are services available for those who need.

Health

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to medical care, including health services for adults and children (e.g., shot clinics, doctors offices, prenatal care), healthcare assistance programs, resources for caretakers of elderly adults, and other health-related resources and services.[16]

Facts

- **Higher than average numbers of uninsured.** In 2015, 11.1% of Adams County residents were uninsured, compared with 8.2% of Colorado residents as a whole.

- **Significant numbers of residents on Medicaid.** In 2016, there were 149,911 Adams County residents enrolled in Medicaid. With approximately 29.8% of the population, this figure is higher than Colorado as a whole at 23.9%. A further 9,694 residents are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid. While not out of line with observed statewide trends, this number is an indication of a gap in connecting residents to services.[vii]

- **Poor mental health.** According to the Center for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 11.1% of Adams County residents have experienced 14 or more days of poor mental health out of the last 30 days.[viii]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results related to medical care are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of medical/health assistance services at a 3.53/4.0.[17] This was the second-highest rated service in terms of importance.

- **Community survey** respondents reported high usage of Medicaid as 68.1%, indicated receiving medical assistance through Medicaid. This was the most commonly selected government service received by survey respondents. Another 13.8% of community survey respondents indicated receiving medical assistance from a government service other than Medicaid, and 35% of respondents indicated receiving medical assistance through a community service provider. [18]

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[16] Note: This section does not include nutrition or food-related services, which are discussed below in the Nutrition section.

[17] On a four-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = not at all important and 4 = very important.

[18] Approximately half of those who indicated receiving medical assistance from a government provider other than Medicaid also received medical assistance from Medicaid.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated health services as a 2.2/4.0 for being an unmet need, indicating a somewhat unmet to somewhat met need. This item scored the second best in terms of being a met need as seen by providers.

- **Community survey** respondents (1%) indicated receiving Home Care Allowance services.

- **Community survey** respondents (14.4%) indicated caring for adults in the household was somewhat or very difficult.

- **Community survey** respondents mostly did not find accessing medical services to be difficult, but a total of 71 (21.8%) did indicate access was somewhat or very difficult (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Summary of responses to difficulty of accessing medical care
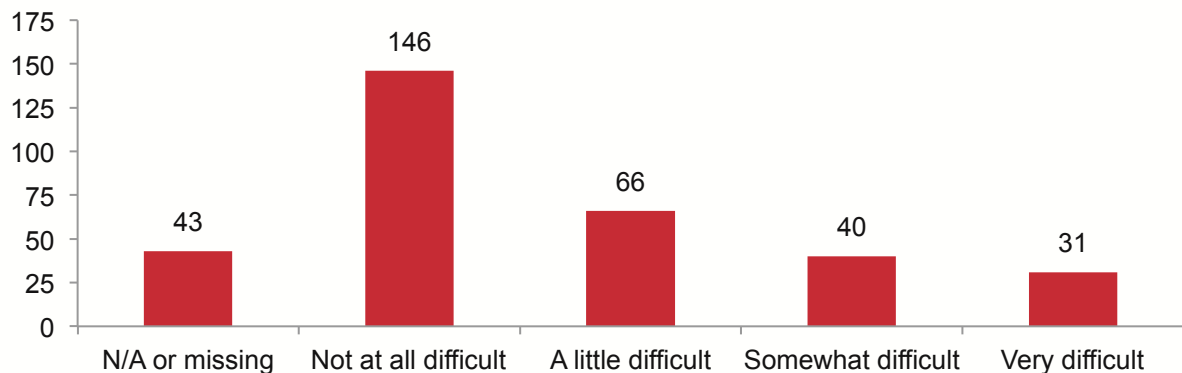
Health services and resources in Adams County

Medical care services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Clinica Campesina

- Community Reach

- El Grupo VIDA

- Medicaid

- Nurse-Family Partnerships

- Rose Medical Center

- Salud Family Health Centers

Findings from focus groups

Difficulty in obtaining medical insurance for Spanish-speakers. Spanish-speaking community members expressed great concern about their lack of medical insurance and knowledge of resources available to them. Those who have insurance or had insurance in the past were deeply concerned over gaps in its coverage. One community member explained, "Sin aseguranza, no sé que va a pasar. Siento inseguro, necesito ayuda o un plan que se permite todo el tiempo."[19]

Need for more specialized services. Community members explained that they were unable to access affordable options for more specialized medical services. Specifically, these included adult eye care and physical therapy.

Lack of accessible appointment times for working adults. Community members repeatedly called for extended hours and appointment times at affordable medical care facilities. Individuals working long hours or at odd times explained that they have been unable to see a doctor, as appointment times are too few.

Stigma of substance abuse prevents individuals seeking treatment. CAB members described the reluctance of individuals dealing with substance abuse to seek treatment as a fear of becoming outcasts from the community around them. One member explained that substance abuse is "[o]ne of those things that are still swept under the rug; it's a stigma."

Medical transportation for seniors living with family members is unreliable. One community member who lives at home to care for his elderly mother explained that he was unable to attend work everyday, as he needed to make frequent trips to the doctor for his mother. He stated that the current medical transportation options were unreliable and could take so long that his mother would miss her appointment times.

Lack of medical services to caretakers. Adults taking care of their aging relatives expressed their desire to access medical resources for their own physical and mental well-being. These community members stated that taking care of aging relatives "takes a toll" on them as caretakers as well.

Health Summary

A sizable number of Adams County residents receive health benefits through Medicaid in Adams County; this is seen in both external resources and in the community survey. Low-income residents see medical assistance as a high priority need, and providers rate medical care comparatively better than other need areas. The higher than average rate

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[19] Translation: "Without insurance, I do not know what is going to happen. I feel insecure, I need help or a plan that is allowed all of the time."

of uninsured and the high number of residents eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid is certainly a gap in need of addressing.

Causes and conditions of poverty: The high rate of uninsured in Adams County means many families are without routine medical care and unable to financially withstand a health crisis in the family.

Need: There is a need for increased access for the uninsured of Adams County and for those eligible for Medicaid but not enrolled an increase in awareness of available services. Additionally, with over one tenth of residents experiencing poor mental health, there is a need for services to be provided.

Barriers: In addition to the lack of health insurance experienced by many, residents find the limited hours at affordable health clinics to be a challenge. Additionally, residents found specialized medical services unavailable.

Community Strengths: A sizable number of survey residents indicating having accessed medical services through Medicaid or community providers point to the success of these providers in reaching community members in need. While there is still room for improvement, the successes should not go without commendation.

Nutrition

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to food and nutrition, including emergency food providers (e.g., food banks), anti-hunger services and efforts to increase knowledge about healthy eating.

Facts

- **Food insecurity is a concern in Adams County.** In 2015, 41.8% of children in Adams County were recipients of benefits through the WIC program vouchers, and 49.3% of children enrolled in fall 2016 were eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. [ix] Overall, an estimated 41,470 residents of Adams County are considered food insecure. [x]

- **Food costs are higher than national average.** In Adams County, the average meal costs $2.97, higher than the national average meal cost of $2.94.[xi]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results related to nutrition are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of food services as a 3.63/4.0.[20] Out of all the services survey respondents were asked to rate for importance of, food services rated the highest.

- **Community survey** respondents indicated frequently utilizing government provided and community organization provided food services, with 53.1% and 56.1%, respectively, reporting utilizing these services. This was the second most commonly selected government service received by survey respondents and the most commonly selected community service received by survey respondents.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated nutrition for being an unmet need of low-income residents a 2.3/3.0. While this still indicates a certain level of this need being unmet, it was the highest rated item by service providers.

- **Provider survey** respondents pointed to food and nutrition services when asked to identify the top three assets available to low-income residents in Adams County.

- **Community survey** respondents largely rated accessing healthy food as not at all difficult; 99 respondents (30.3%) indicated accessing healthy food was somewhat or very difficult (Figure 22).

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[20] On a four-point Likert-type scale ,where 1 = not at all important and 4 = very important.

Figure 22. Summary of responses for difficulty of accessing healthy food
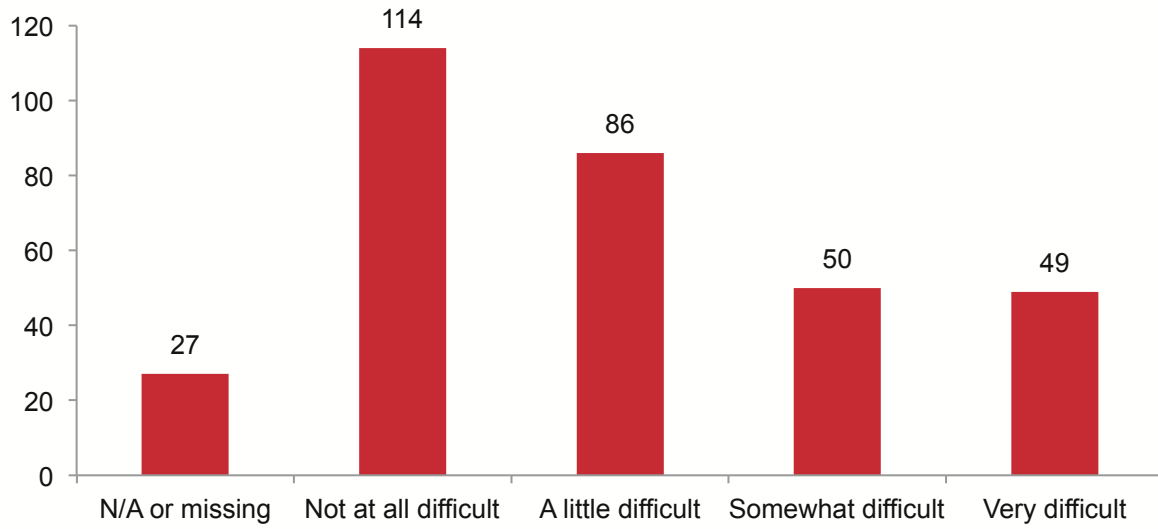
Nutrition services and resources in Adams County

Nutrition services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Adams County Food Bank

- First Presbyterian Church

- Food Bank of the Rockies – various locations

- Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Parish Food Bank

- St. Mary's Food Bank

- St. John's Lutheran Church

- Thornton Community Food Bank

- Thrive Church Food Bank

Focus Group Findings

Lack of fresh, high-quality food for some residents. The term "food desert" refers to any urban area where it is difficult to buy affordable or high quality food. Members of the CAB focus group used this term to describe the southwest Adams County area. They explained that individuals in this area must travel to the Walmart in Thornton in order to access fresh, diverse diet options. According to one CAB member, "The only fresh food people [in southwest Adams County] get are the olives in their martinis."

Nutrition Summary

Through both government and numerous community organizations, many low-income residents are able to acquire or supplement their dietary needs. These providers are

seen as an asset, and the service they provide is rated as very important by those who seek assistance in providing food for themselves and their families.

Causes and Conditions of Poverty: The significant numbers of children benefiting from WIC and free and reduced-price lunch programs paint a picture of widespread food insecurity among low-income Adams County residents.

Needs: For many residents of Adams County, access to healthy foods can prove challenging. Living a healthy life starts with eating a healthy diet; for some this is not a feasible option.

Barriers: The food costs, while only slightly higher than national average, also put added strain on families and individuals living in an increasingly expensive housing market.

Community Strengths: The high number of resident survey respondents receiving food assistance, high ratings from providers for being a met need and the sheer volume of organizations seen in the community inventory providing food services all point to a network working to alleviate food insecurity.

Housing and Household Utilities

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to housing and household utilities, including low-income and transitional housing resources, housing ownership and rental programs, and housing utility and upkeep assistance programs.[21] Ongoing housing costs, such as utility management, are a particular challenge for low-income individuals already struggling to make day-to-day ends meet.

Facts

- **High cost of living in Adams County.** In order to afford a two-bedroom apartment at "fair market rent" in Adams County, a minimum wage earner would need to work 2.7 minimum wage jobs to make ends meet.[xii]

- **Single head of households struggle.** The high cost of housing necessitates low-income households have two wage earners. Households with just one wage earner are much more likely to be in poverty.[xiii]

- **Limited affordable housing for low-income residents.** For low-income residents making only 30% of the area median income ($24,300 for a four-person household), only 3.58% of two-bedroom rental units are affordable in Adams County, and only 2.47% of households in Adams County are subsidized in some way.[xiv]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results and community inventory related to housing and household utilities are as follows:
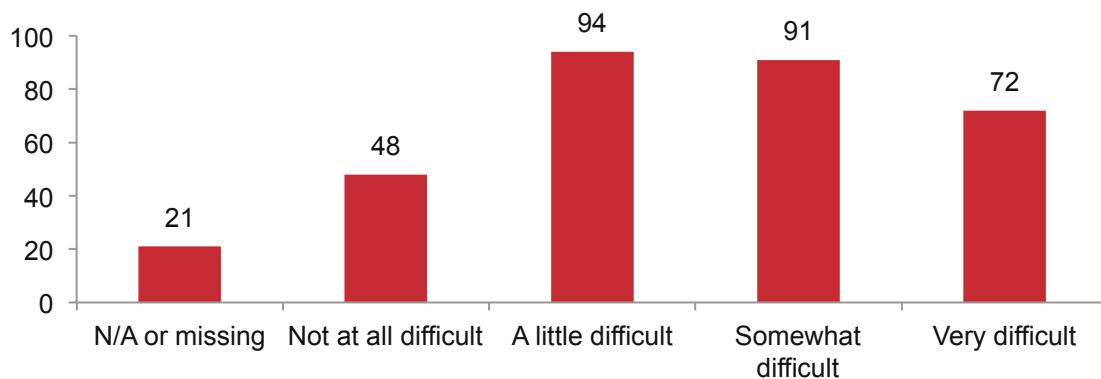
- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of housing assistance at a 3.44/4.0 and the importance of household heating and cooling assistance at a 3.25/4.0, both of which rated in the upper half of items in terms of importance.

- **Community survey** respondents did not utilize services equivalent to how important they rated those items, with 10.1% of community survey respondents indicated receiving Low Income Emergency Assistance Program (LEAP) services and 17.5% of community survey respondents indicated receiving household heating or cooling assistance from a community service provider.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated long-term housing (affordable housing, accessible housing, safe housing, etc.) a 1.5/4, indicating a

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[21]Note: Emergency housing is not included in this section, as it is included below within the Emergency Services section.

completely unmet to somewhat unmet need. This was the lowest rated item from this segment of the provider survey.

- **Community survey** respondents largely indicated challenges in making ends meet day to day, with a total of 163 (50%) community survey respondents indicating this was either somewhat difficult or very difficult (Figure 23). This was the item to receive the most selections for being somewhat or very difficult.

- **Community inventory** findings show there are only five nonprofit housing assistance providers in all of Adams County.

Figure 23. Summary of community survey responses to difficulty of making ends meet day to day

Housing and household utility services and resources in Adams County

Housing and utility services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Almost Home
- Growing Home

Findings from focus groups

Shortage of affordable housing available. Many community members who attended focus groups described a lack of affordable housing available within Adams County. Westminster was described as one of the top five most unaffordable housing areas, and eight of the largest income to housing cost disparities in Colorado are within Adams County, according to the group of Community Advisory Board (CAB) members. According to CAB, "finding building resources is an issue," and there is a need for greater development so that the number of affordable houses meets the needs of the population seeking them. The CAB did describe that 240 affordable homes are "supposed to be coming to the county with the new light rail."

Lack of temporary housing for men and families. One community member stated that he was unable to find high quality temporary housing services suited for single men or families with men in them. He stated that many temporary housing solutions are

specifically for women and children and do not allow men over the age of 18 as residents.

Section 8 lottery system and long wait lists limit accessibility. Community members explained that the current long wait lists and Section 8 lottery system prevent them from feeling that affordable housing is truly accessible. They expressed feeling that they could not "count on" affordable housing within Adams County due to the long and uncertain wait.

High costs of home ownership and rentals. At the Spanish focus groups, community members expressed desires to own their own homes, however, high costs within the county made them unable to achieve this dream. "Estamos buscando fundos para nuestra propia casa, no queremos rentar - pero es imposible."[22] CAB members described individuals hoping to rent as facing "death by 1,000 fees" in reference to the large number of upfront costs required to rent a home in addition to the rent and security deposit. They expressed a great need for cheaper housing options and rental assistance or vouchers.

Housing Summary

Throughout the Denver metro region, the affordability of housing has become an increasing concern over the past few years. The difficulty the rising costs of housing present were clear through all three research methods utilized for this assessment. With limited options available to low-income Adams County residents and the need well-identified, there certainly appears to be a gap in the need for assistance and the number of residents receiving assistance in making ends meet with regards to housing.

Causes and Conditions of Poverty: Increases in housing causes difficulty for residents to make ends meet and afford suitable housing.

Needs: With minimum wage earners needing to work 2.7 full-time jobs to afford housing at fair market value, there is a need for subsidized housing for low-income individuals and families.

Barriers: Growing affordability gap for median income households makes owning a home unlikely for low-income households. With fewer than 5% of housing units affordable for low-income households, there are limited rental options. Excessive demand for subsidized housing has created long waiting lists for receiving housing assistance.

Community Strengths: No community strengths were specifically identified for housing within the research.

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[22] Translation: "We are looking for funds for our own home; we do not want to rent – but it's impossible."

Transportation

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to transportation for low-income community members.

Facts

- **Adams County communities' walkability rated low.** The walkability score for various cities in Adams County range from 31 to 38 (out of 100), indicating that these are "car-dependent" communities.[23] [xv]

- **Adams County communities have limited transit options.** The transit scores for Adams County communities ranged from 29 to 32 (out of 100), indicating these have "some transit."[24] [xvi]

- **Long commute times.** The most common commute time for Adams County residents is 30-59 minutes, with 38.5% of residents commuting as such.[xvii]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results and community inventory related to transportation are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of access to public transportation as a 3.14/4.0. While this still indicates it as being a somewhat important need, it does rank toward the bottom of importance when compared with other services.

- **Community survey** respondents who rated public transportation as being very important made up 24.2% of the sample.[25] Even though public transportation is somewhat limited in Adams County, it is still seen as important and necessary by a significant portion of low-income residents.

- **Community survey** respondents were not likely to have utilized the A-LIFT program, with only 2.1% of community survey respondents indicating having done so.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated the unmet need of public transportation as a 2.0/4.0 indicating a somewhat unmet need.

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[23] The following cities were scored as such: Arvada = 38, Brighton = 35, Commerce City = 31, Thornton = 32 and Westminster 36.

[24] It should be noted that only Arvada and Westminister received transit scores at all, and they received a 29 and 32, respectively.

[25] Respondents were not asked how often they utilized public transportation in the last five years. The best proxy to gauge how many used is how many respondents indicated public transportation was an important service to them.

- **Community survey** respondents did not, for the most part, find accessing public transit to be difficult. However, with 94 (27.6%) community survey respondents indicating finding transportation as somewhat or very difficult, there is a sizable portion of residents who find accessing transit to be difficult (Figure 24). Whether this is availability or costs is difficult to determine.

- **Community inventory** findings show that only one organization in Commerce City is a nonprofit focused on transportation.

Figure 24. Summary of community survey responses to difficulty in finding transportation
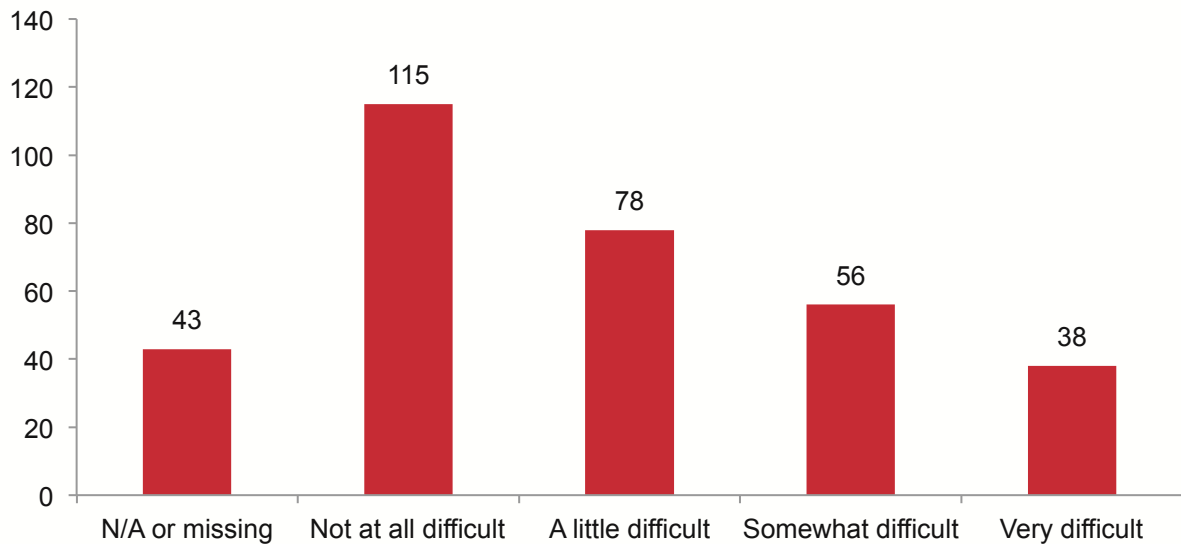
Transportation services and resources

Transportation services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Regional Transportation District (RTD)

Findings from focus groups

Lack of assistance for the maintenance and costs of personal vehicles. One group of community members explained that the high costs of maintaining a personal vehicle often left them without reliable transportation. Individuals who own a car expressed difficulty with keeping up with regularly scheduled maintenance and winter-readiness due to the high costs of local car repair services.

Public transportation unreliable in inclement weather. While many community members were happy to utilize public transportation when possible, they explained that during times of snow and other bad weather, the transportation was unreliable. This often resulted in them being late to work during the winter months as the buses are consistently behind schedule.

High costs of public transportation. Many community members explained that without bus tokens or passes provided to them, they are unable to afford the high cost of public transportation. They praised the existence of a public transportation system but felt that it was inaccessible to lower-income community members because of the costs involved. Seniors and disabled individuals who do not qualify for options such as "Access Ride" (a RTD program) are especially burdened as many explained they are no longer able to hold employment.

Shortage of token resources. Those community members who receive tokens or vouchers for the public transportation services stated that they did not receive enough resources on a monthly basis. These individuals called for an increase in bus pass distribution, rather than tokens, so that they could ride more frequently and avoid walking long distances in areas where they feel unsafe. According to CAB, RTD used to allow for service organizations to purchase monthly passes for their beneficiaries, but due to the high demand, they have discontinued the program.

Light rail services are inaccessible to many individuals without a vehicle. According to members of the CAB, there is no public transportation to the light rail available to community members. As a result, the light rail is largely inaccessible to anyone who does not also own a vehicle or live within walking distance of the station.

Lack of destinations or routes for public transportation. Community members expressed concern over the lack of diverse destinations for the public transportation lines within the county. Often, multiple transfers are required on the bus system to arrive at any destination, and there is a lack of light rail options. According to one CAB member, "There is only one light rail line available, and it only goes downtown." Community members called for an internal bus system or the development of more local transportation options.

Transportation summary

For low-income residents in Adams County who rely on public transportation, the high costs and limited access and destinations available to them present a challenge. For those who do own a vehicle, the necessary costs to maintain and repair vehicles is a challenge. Without many affordable options, low-income residents certainly are negatively affected.

Causes and conditions of poverty: Limited public transportation options are problematic for mobility limited residents. Without access to transportation, this portion of the population has day-to-day difficulties getting to where they need to go and difficulty in accessing needed services such as assistance or medical care.

Needs: Reliable and affordable transit options are need for the most vulnerable populations.

Barriers: For those with access to public transportation in Adams County, the costs can be prohibitive, and those who have a car find the costs of upkeep and maintenance

prohibitive as well. The public transit that does exist often has limited destinations and does not always reach where residents need to go.

Community strengths: No community strengths were specifically identified for transportation within the research.

Childcare

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to childcare for low-income community members, including services related to infant needs, child mental and physical development, and child enrichment and education.

Facts

- **Adams County families are likely to require childcare of some sort.** The Office of Long Range Strategic Planning states that Adams County has the highest number of children per capita in the state, with approximately 30,000 children under the age of 5.[xviii]

- **Head Start operating at capacity.** Head Start in Adams County has a total of 498 available slots across eight locations but enrolled 593 children in 2015-2016.[xix]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results and community inventory related to childcare are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of childcare services as a 3.01/4.0. Interestingly enough, this was one of the lowest rated items in terms of importance.[26]

- **Community survey** respondents did not utilize childcare assistance through CCAP, with only 4.3% indicating having done so.

- **Community survey** respondents did report utilizing community organization provided assistance at higher rates, with 12.3% indicating having done so.

- **Provider survey** respondents rated the need of childcare assistance as being somewhat unmet (2.1/4.0).

- **Community survey** respondents were not likely to have difficulty accessing childcare, with only 39 (12%) community survey respondents indicated providing childcare was somewhat or very difficult (Figure 25).

- **Community inventory** findings show there are 13 childcare organizations across Adams County.

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[26] It is again worth noting the variance in the number of respondents for each item. Here, the majority of respondents indicated childcare assistance was N/A to their situation. This item also saw the highest amount of deviation in responses with a standard deviation of 1.196.

Figure 25. Summary of responses in community survey to difficulty of providing care to children in the household
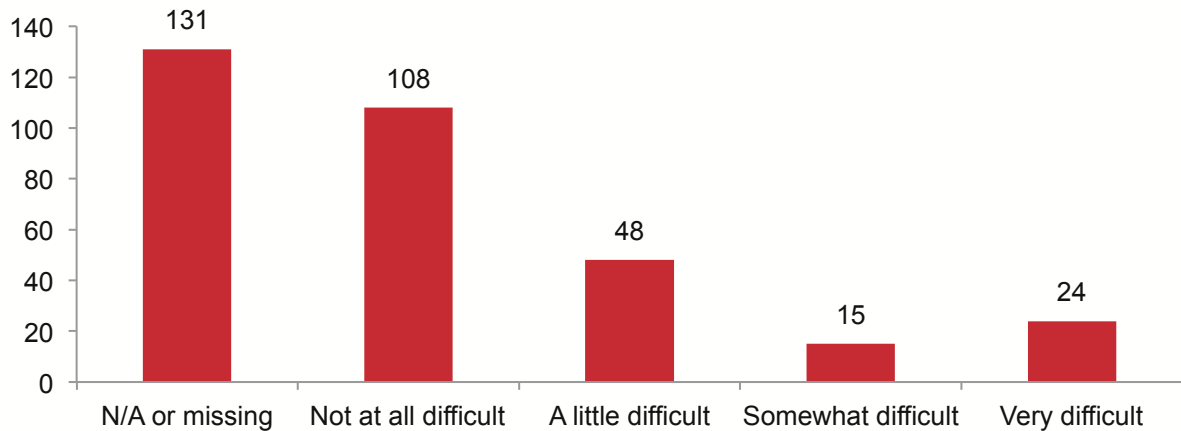
Findings from focus groups

Difficult to find care for special needs children. Parents and family members with special needs children explained that finding affordable, specialized childcare is nearly impossible. They found it difficult to trust their child's needs to traditional childcare resources.

Need for both parents to be accessible. One community member explained that in order for her to receive assistance for her daughter, she needed to contact the child's father and attempt to gain assistance from him first. She explained that single parents who are required to contact absentee partners may not seek services as they do not know where their former partner is located or do not wish to contact them.

Lack of free public pools, parks, and recreation areas for children. Many Spanish-speaking community members called for an increase in publically accessible pools, parks and recreation areas for their children to go and play safely with their peers.

Programs assisting in diaper purchasing needed. One mother in the community explained that she had difficulty affording the volume of diapers needed for her children. She was unaware of any programs providing coupons or vouchers for diapers to parents in the county.

Childcare Summary

With the number of children in Adams County, the county's Head Start program is operating at or over capacity. Community residents largely do not appear to have much difficulty in obtaining childcare for their children despite the high number of them on a per capita basis. During the focus groups some specific challenges were mentioned with regards to difficulties in caring for children and accessing childcare.

Causes and conditions of poverty: Adams County has the highest number of children per capita in Colorado. Providing for a child, or children, would add substantially to any household's costs; for low-income families, these costs can be difficult to bear.

Needs: In order to alleviate some of the costs associated with raising children, many families are in need of assistance with childcare and with offloading some of the costs associated with raising children (like diapers).

Barriers: Focus group participants bemoaned the lack of accessible recreation areas to take their children to. Additionally, the lack of childcare options available for special needs children leaves these parents with few options.

Community strengths: Childcare is an area with a variety of nonprofit resources across Adams County, making it an accessible resource for many low-income families.

Emergency Services

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to emergency services, including emergency assistance, emergency housing (e.g., homeless shelters) and other emergency resources.

Facts

- **Limited availability of shelter beds.** Between five service providers in Adams County, there are 62 year-round beds at shelters for families with children and 139 year-round beds at shelters for individuals and families.[xx]

- **Unknown number of homeless persons in Adams County**. The latest point-in-time report from Metro Denver Homeless Initiative shows a dramatic decrease in the counts of those experiencing homeless from 2015 to 2016. It is believed this is due to a serious undercount.[xxi] In 2016, Colorado experienced an overall increase in homeless people, with 721 more in 2016 than 2015.[xxii]

- **Loss of job most frequent reason given for why individuals are homeless**. When asked how they ended up homeless, the most common reason was the individual had lost their job. Other common reasons given were housing/rental costs being too expensive and a family/relationship break up.[xxiii]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results and community inventory related to emergency services are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of emergency assistance services at a 3.33/4.0, putting it toward the higher end of items rated for importance.

- **Community survey** respondents did not commonly utilize emergency services with only 6.1% of community survey respondents indicated receiving emergency assistance services from a community service provider.[27]

- **Provider survey** respondents When asked about the unmet needs of low-income Adams County residents, provider survey respondents rated emergency services (shelter, rent/mortgage/utility payment assistance, etc.) a 1.7/4.0, indicating a completely unmet to somewhat unmet need. This was the second lowest rating given for that segment of the provider survey.

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[27] Survey participants were given the prompt of "domestic violence, burial, etc." for this item.

- **Community inventory findings** show there are 10 nonprofit emergency shelters across Adams County and six additional emergency resources specifically for those escaping domestic violence.

Emergency services and resources

Emergency services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Aurora Warms the Night
- Catholic Charities
- Denver Rescue Mission
- Mile High United Way's 2-1-1 Service

Identified gaps in emergency services

Locations of emergency housing are far from transportation options. Community members who are dependent upon emergency housing explained that they are often simultaneously trying to seek employment, but the locations of temporary housing make it difficult to access other locations. One informant described, "People in halfway houses are having to walk two miles to get to work or home."

Emergency Services Summary

With community members stating the importance of emergency services and providers seeing an unmet need, there certainly appears to be a need for increasing the offerings of emergency services in Adams County.

Causes and conditions of poverty: The most common reasons given for why individuals end up homeless is a loss of a job, an inability to pay rent and a breakup of a family or relationship.

Needs: The most recent count of homeless individuals in Adams County puts the figure at approximately 157 individuals. Between the five major providers, there are just over 200 beds available to the homeless. However, it is believed that counts of homeless individuals are severely undercounted, which if true, would mean there is a need for more beds and services to the homeless in Adams County.

Barriers: Many emergency service providers are not located near public transportation. This is problematic for individuals who may not otherwise have a mode of transportation to access these services.

 Community Strengths: Emergency shelters are dispersed across Adams County, with resources in most cities serving those in need.

Employment

This section describes needs, resources and gaps in services related to employment, including economic development programs, job training classes, job placement services and other employment resources.

Facts

- **Unemployment is low.** Like much of the Denver metro region, Adams County is experiencing low unemployment, with the unemployment rate for May 2017 at 2.6%.[xxiv]
- **Household income lower in Adams County.** In 2015, median household income in Adams County was $58,946, which is about 10% lower than the median household income for the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA of $65,614.[xxv]

Findings

The key findings from the survey results related to employment are as follows:

- **Community survey** respondents rated the importance of employment assistance services as a 3.17/4.0; this put it toward the lower end of items when ranking them by score.
- **Community survey** respondents use employment assistance services sparingly, with 9.2% of community service respondents indicated receiving employment assistance through Colorado Works (TANF), and10.4% of respondents indicated receiving employment assistance through a community service provider.
- **Community survey** respondents commonly indicated a lengthy commute to work, with 23.6% of respondents indicating their commute was 31 to 60 minutes long.
- **Provider survey** respondents rated workforce and adult education as being a somewhat unmet need in Adams County with a 2.0/4.0 rating.

Employment services and resources

Employment services identified as beneficial resources by low-income focus groups and community survey respondents include, in alphabetical order:

- Colorado Works-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Employment First Job Fair
- Salvation Army
- WorkForce

Identified gaps in employment services

Need for increased interview preparation services. One focus group of community members found interview preparation services to be a high-priority issue in the county. They explained the need for interview clothing and available showers in addition to resume and response preparation services.

Employment Services Summary

Overall, employment services were not rated as pressing a need or as important as other areas. However, with the job growth seen in the region, there is an opportunity to

help ensure low-income residents are able take advantage of the job market through preparation services and assistance with interview clothing and showers.

Causes and conditions of poverty: Compared with the rest of the Denver metro region, Adams County has a lower median income. This would suggest more residents in Adams County work jobs on the lower end of the pay scale.

Needs: As stated previously in the education section, the number of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree outstrips the number of Adams County residents who currently have a bachelor's degree. There is a need to prepare residents to be prepared for the workforce.

Barriers: Whether it is due to jobs being worked in other counties, traffic issues or inefficiencies in public transportation, more residents indicated a travel time of 31-60 minutes than any other item. Long commute times are a real barrier for some Adams County residents.

Community strengths: Colorado and the Denver metro area are currently experiencing economic growth. While this can be a double-edged sword for numerous reasons, it does present an opportunity to those able to prepare themselves for the workforce.

Special populations

This section describes needs and gaps in services related to four special populations of low-income community members: adults adults age 60 and over, formerly incarcerated individuals, Spanish-as-a-primary-language speakers and homeless individuals. The primary gaps in service for each special population is explained below.

Older Adults 60+

Older adults (ages 60+) comprise approximately 13.8% of the total population in Adams County.[xxvi] Overall, older adults' rates of poverty are lower than younger age groups, with approximately 7.8% of Adams County residents ages 65+ experiencing poverty. However, as older adults are more often on a fixed income, this population's ability to alleviate the conditions of poverty are often very limited.

Findings

Due to the combined factors of the 60+ age group having the smallest number of respondents and numerous respondents skipping sections or indicating items were not applicable to their situation, analyses using t-tests or ANOVA tests are more prone to "false positive" errors. Therefore, what is presented here are descriptive statistics.

Barriers to accessing services

Community survey respondents age 60+ consistently had higher ratings (indicating a greater barrier) than younger respondents for barriers to both government and community organization provided services. There are a few instances where this is prominent.

Challenge in knowing what services are available. Differences between the 60+ age group and those younger are particularly noticeable when examining knowledge of available services offered by government agencies (Figure 27). This finding is consistent with those of the National Research Center's Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults, where it was found that over two-thirds of older adults had difficulty knowing what services were available.

Transportation difficulties. While not as prominent as the barrier of knowing what services were available, the 60+ age group also rated transportation barriers to government services higher than respondents younger than them (Figure 27). Again, this is consistent with findings from research conducted by the National Research Center, where one-third of older adults reported difficulty with safe transportation and with utilizing public transportation.

In the focus groups, one theme that emerged when discussing older adults was the dearth of available transportation services. Whether they are living at home, with family or in a nursing home, community members described a lack of transportation services for senior citizens in the county. RTD does not provide services directly to senior housing, and medical transportation to shuttle older adults from their homes to various appointments was described as unreliable.

Figure 26. Barriers to accessing services, 60+ compared with rest of sample
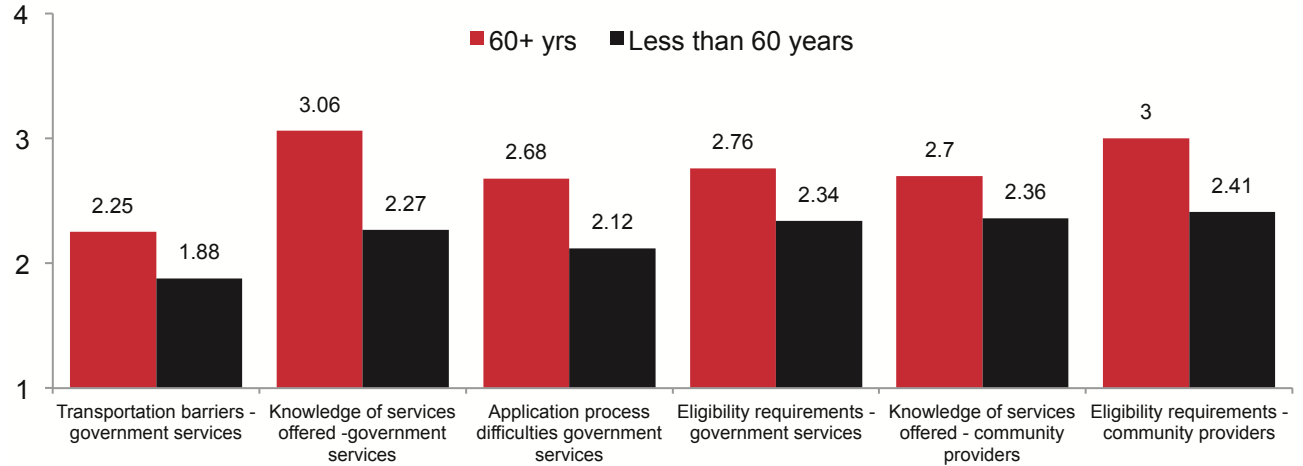
When examining mean scores between the 60+ age group and the rest of the sample for differences in how they rate the importance of various services and the difficulty to access specific community services and specific government services, no salient differences appear.

Former Felons

With only 27 respondents indicating having been convicted of a felony, this point of comparison does not lend itself well to inferential statistical tests. What are presented here are simple comparative descriptive statistics between those who indicated having been convicted of a felony and those who indicated not having ever been convicted of a felony.[28]

Challenges Experienced

When community survey respondents were asked about the difficulties they experience for various tasks, those who indicated having been convicted of a felony rated numerous items higher than those who had never been convicted of a felony. However, when examining ratings for making ends meet day to day, finding transportation, having access to healthy foods and accessing education or education services, we can see sizable differences (Figure 33).

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[28] It is worth mentioning that 39 respondents did not answer this question. Those responses are not included here.

Figure 27. Difficulty in accessing various services/items[29]
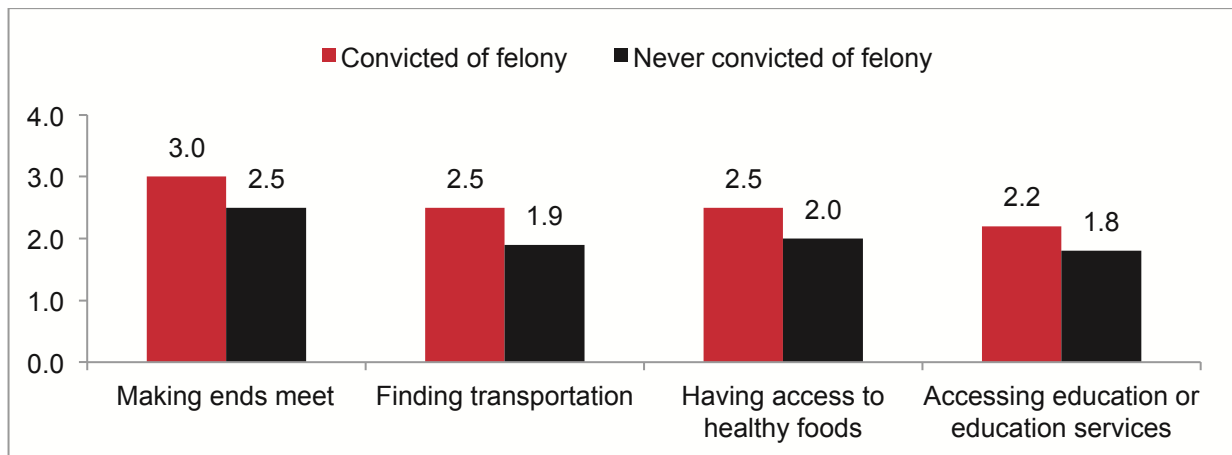
Barriers to Service

When examining the barriers to accessing both government and community provided services for those who indicated having been convicted of a felony compared with those who have never been convicted, a few items stand out. For accessing government services, transportation and knowledge of services were noticeably higher for those convicted of a felony than those who had not been convicted of a felony. For accessing community services, a lack of services for the respondents' specific needs was noticeably higher for those convicted of a felony vs. those who were never convicted of a felony (Figure 34).

Figure 28. Barriers to accessing services (higher number indicates greater barrier)
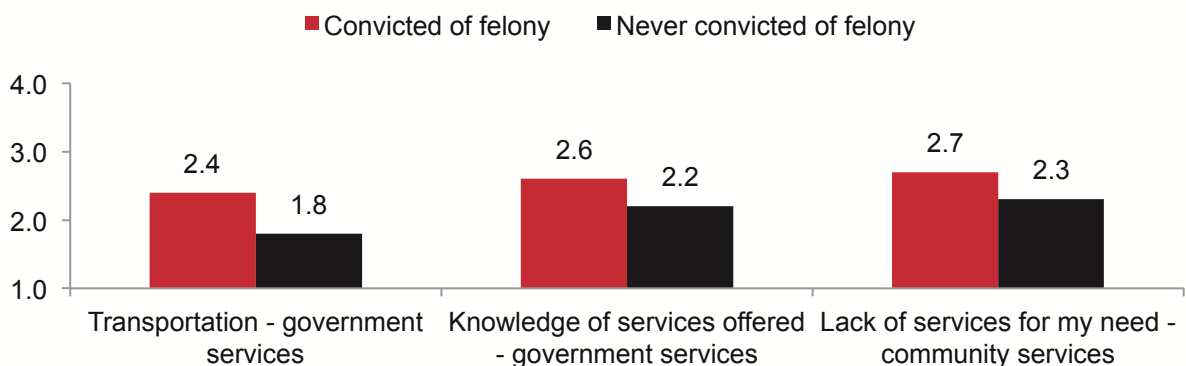
Reintegration Challenges. In the focus groups, the primary takeaway for felons was the struggles to reintegrate upon exiting the criminal justice system. Formerly incarcerated individuals described the difficulties they had finding employment and

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[29] Higher number indicates greater difficulty.

reintegrating into a community they feel sees them as dangerous. In light of this stigma, former inmates suggested the implementation of programming to help reintegrate them into the local community as peers rather than felons. Opportunities for interaction through community services, such as performing yard or automotive work, were suggested for young offenders in particular.

Lack of specific programming. The community inventory found only one nonprofit organization focused on providing programming to former felons in the county. Former felons often have specific needs and concerns when it comes to housing, employment and other service needs. As a result, the lack of tailored programming available is a major gap for services to former felons.

Spanish as a Primary Language

A total of 67 community surveys were filled out in Spanish. This represents approximately 20% of the total number of surveys completed. Differences in scores between Spanish and English survey takers were particularly prominent when examining barriers to accessing both government and community organization provided services

Cultural and linguistic barriers found more challenging. Spanish survey takers rated cultural and linguistic barriers to be a great challenge than did English survey takers (Figure 30). [30] With a mean difference of a point or more, this is the difference between barriers experienced by Spanish survey takers compared with English survey takers was the difference between a minor challenge and a moderate challenge.

Application process found to be difficult. Spanish survey takers rated the application process as a more difficult challenge to accessing services for both government and community providers (Figure 30). With provider survey respondents mostly indicating the availability of Spanish speaking staff to assist but just over half providing written materials in Spanish, there appears to be a gap between where Spanish speakers cannot always access Spanish language materials.

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[30] Unfortunately, due to the much lower number of respondents to the items related to cultural barriers, the results of the t-test are more prone to type 1 error and not reported here as statistically significant.
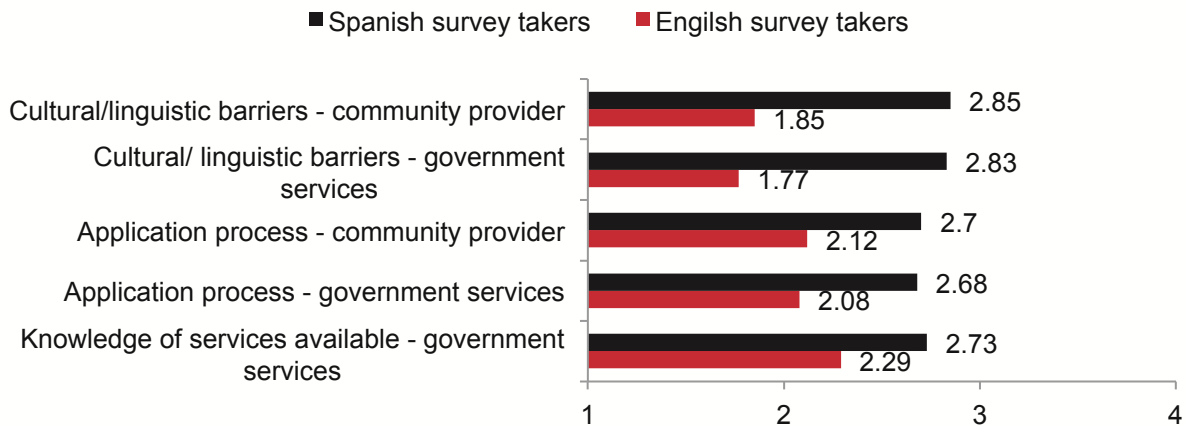
Current political climate fuels uncertainty in Spanish speakers. In the focus groups, Spanish-speakers expressed that there are a lack of resources available to them due to their language barrier and, for many, immigration and status concerns. Many fear accessing services due to concerns about immigration enforcement, according to CAB members. Additionally, Spanish-speaking community members expressed desire for English as a Second Language classes, legal advisors and medical insurance so that they can fully function in the community without living in fear.

Homeless

Gauging the number of homeless individuals in Adams County is a difficult task for numerous reasons. The Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) serves as one of the primary resources on homelessness in the Denver metro region. If one were to gauge by their numbers, it would appear that homelessness is on the decline in Adams County, as the latest count in 2017 has 157, down from a high of 1,531 in 2011. However, there are reasons to believe the reduction is due to the combined factors of incomplete counts and a change in how MDHI counted homeless individuals.[xxvii]

Based on the last two years of data, here is what we do know about the homeless in Adams County: [xxviii]

- **They come from all age groups.** In MDHI's 2016 count, the most common age group were those under the age of 18 and the mean age was 28. In MDHI's 2016 count, the most common age group were those ages 25-34 and the mean age was 42.

- **Roughly even split between men and women.** Women made up 46.5% and 47.2% of all homeless in Adams County in 2016 and 2017, respectively. In comparison, for the entire seven-county Denver metro region, women made up 38.6% in 2016 and 33.7% in 2017, of the homeless persons counted.

- **Most homeless in Adams County are not chronically homeless.** When asked how many times they had been homeless in the previous three years, most individuals in the study stated they had been homeless once.

- **Most homeless in Adams County are homeless for an extended period.** When asked how long they had been homeless, the most common response was one to 12 months for both 2016 and 2017. Furthermore, the second most common response was one to three years for both years.

- **Even split between homeless identifying as either non-Hispanic and Hispanic.** In 2016, 53.5% of homeless individuals counted in Adams County identified as Hispanic. In 2017, 41.4% of individuals identified as Hispanic.

- **Inability to pay rent/mortgage leading cause of homelessness.** When asked about the contributing factors that lead to their homelessness/home instability, the most frequently cited reason was the inability to pay rent or mortgage.

- **Mental health issues most common disabling condition.** When asked about the disabling conditions they would like to receive assistance for, the most common response was mental health, with just over half of homeless respondents requesting assistance with this issue.[xxix]

Findings

In order to examine differences between community survey respondents who identified as currently homeless, formerly homeless and those who have never been homeless, a series of one-way ANOVA tests were conducted. Numerous differences emerge, particularly between those who have never been homeless and those who are currently and previously homeless.

Challenges of making ends meet, transportation and education greater for current and formerly homeless. When examining responses to the question of the difficulties of accessing services or doing various tasks, statistically significant differences were found for the following items: making ends meet day to day, finding transportation and accessing education or education services. Those who were never homeless rated these items as less challenging than the currently and formerly homeless, and these differences were found to be statistically significant.[31]

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[31] Making ends meet day to day: $F(2,279) = 24.075$, $p < .01$; transportation: $F(2,255) = 15.745$, $p < .01$; accessing education or education services: $F(2,219) = 4.825$, $p < .05$.

Figure 30. Difficulty for you and your family by homelessness status[32]
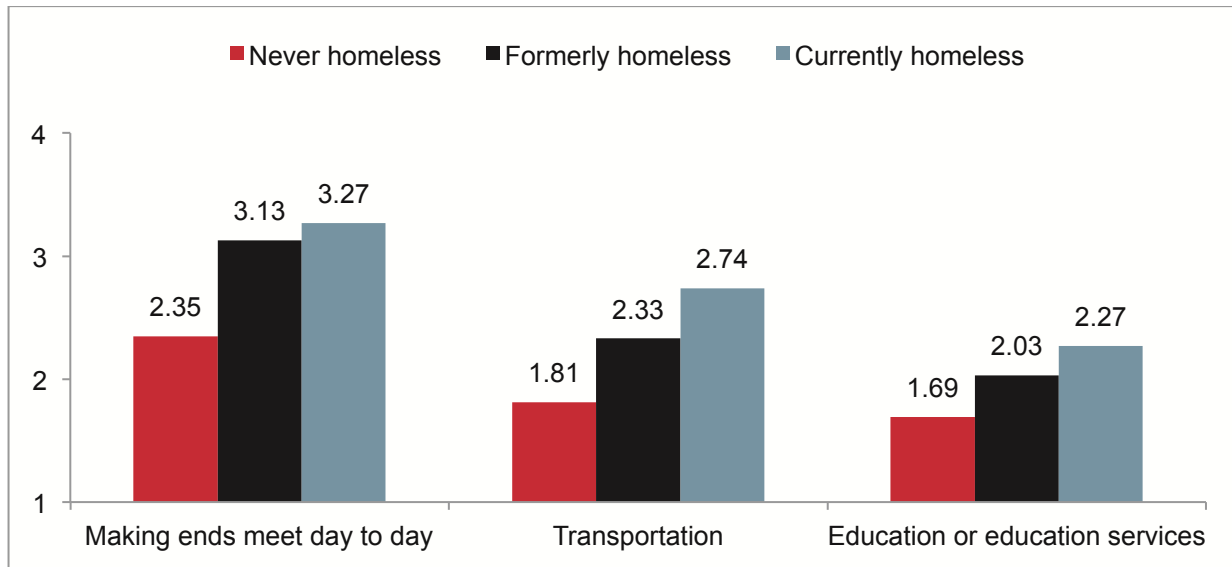
Greater barriers to access for the currently and formerly homeless. When examining barriers to accessing both government services and community organization services, a number of differences emerge. Again, those who have never been homeless rated various barriers as being less of a challenge than those currently homeless (Figure 32). [33]

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[32] Larger number indicates greater challenge.

[33] Transportation – government services: $F(2,199) = 15.118$, $p < .01$; lack of services – government services: $F(2, 181) = 3.038$, $p < .05$; transportation – community services: $F(2, 183) = 10.219$, $p < .01$; knowledge of services – community services: $F(2,173) = 11.268$, $p < .01$; application process – community services: $F(2,188) = 3.800$, $p < .05$; lack of services – community services: $F(2,158) = 7.876$, $p < .01$; eligibility requirements – community services: $F(2,155) = 4.619$, $p < .05$; cultural/linguistic barriers: $F(2,93) = 7.368$, $p < .05$.

Figure 31. Barriers to accessing services by homelessness status[34]

Legend: Currently homeless | Formerly homeless | Never homeless

Barrier	Currently homeless	Formerly homeless	Never homeless
Cultural/linguistic barriers - community services	2.58	3.00	1.87
Eligibility requirements - community services	2.95	2.74	2.27
Lack of services - community services	3.00	2.69	2.14
Application process - community services	2.5	2.51	2.07
Knowledge of services - community services	3.25	2.53	2.15
Transportation - community services	2.65	2.08	1.74
Lack of services - government services	2.41	2.58	2.22
Transportation - government services	2.55	2.25	1.65

Increase in homeless individuals. A few providers noted observing an increase in homeless individuals in Adams County; others anticipated the number of Adams County residents experiencing homelessness to increase. Providers also noted the increasingly bleak outlook for homeless individuals as the housing market and gentrification trend putting additional pressure on the already scarce resources for homeless individuals.

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[34] Larger numbers indicate greater difficulty.

Changing Needs

This section addresses the changing needs of Adams County community members over the course of the past year. Specifically, it addresses the changes that local service providers have identified which have affected their services in the past 12 months.

Observed Trends from Providers

Decrease in funding for providers. When survey providers were asked about the observed trends, funding was the item where the most respondents observed a decrease. With a new administration in power, uncertainty around the federal budget is something providers anticipate seeing over the next year.

"While individual contributions have increased in the last year, we are significantly concerned about our government funding given the proposed federal budget cuts."
— *Community Service Provider*

 Increase in number of service requested. The items where most providers have seen an increasing trend is the number of requests for services and the number of clients served (Figure 33.

Figure 32. In the past 12 months, has your organization seen an increase or decrease in the following?
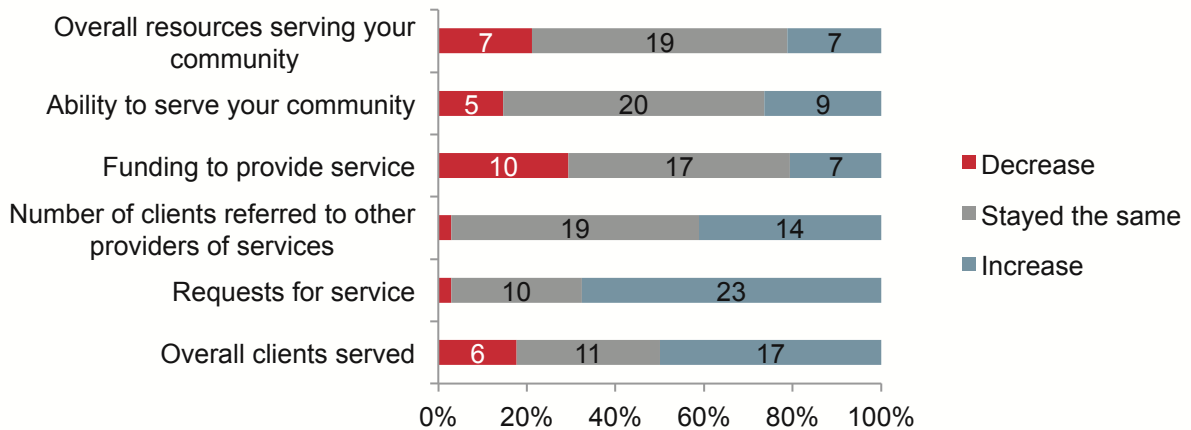
Numerous providers are maintaining waitlists. Provider survey respondents were also asked if their organization maintained a waitlist. Sixteen organizations indicated having a waitlist for their services; this represents approximately 44% of providers and can perhaps be seen as reflective of the observed trend of an increase in requests for services. When asked why their organization maintained a waitlist, responses most often centered around issues of capacity. Other reasons given included being able to maintain contact with homeless families and being required to maintain a waitlist by the state.

Widening housing affordability gap. The affordability gap is the difference between the median sales price in an area and what is affordable to residents at different income levels. In 2006 the, affordability gap in Adams County for a household making the

median household income was $23,275; by 2015, this affordability gap had grown to $72,352, an increase of 211%.[xxx]

Identified Systemic Assets

This section identifies the strongest assets of the service provider community within Adams County, including the strongest services and the greatest strengths of local services, as identified by service providers and community members.

Provider Identified Assets

Provider survey respondents were asked about the top three greatest assets currently in place for low-income residents of Adams County, and the reasoning behind their rankings. For each asset respondents identified, an opportunity to provide the reason for the selection was given (Table 3). Early childhood services, food and nutrition services, health services and workforce development were identified most frequently. The reasons given varied, but for each one, awareness and support from either the government or community were specifically called out as reasons the asset was identified as being among the greatest assets.

Table 4. Assets identified by provider survey respondents and the reasons given

Asset identified	Reasons given
Early Childhood Services	- High degree of coordination - Sufficient resources - Community awareness and support
Food and Nutrition Services	- Government awareness and support - Community awareness and support - Sufficient funding - Sufficient resources other than funding
Health Services	- Quality staff or service providers - Effectiveness of service among current providers - Sufficient funding - Community awareness and support
Workforce development	- Sufficient resources other than funding - Government awareness and support

Assets identified in focus groups

Community service providers with knowledgeable, dedicated staff who believe in what they stand for and provide effective service. Community members in focus groups repeatedly praised the staff at the various service organizations they utilized. They passionately described staff members' kindness, politeness, positive attitude, courtesy, knowledge and ability to provide emotional nourishment to those they serve. Focus group participants stated that staff members make them "feel like there is hope," are dedicated to "go above and beyond" and "always have their doors open."

Friendly and dedicated staff was a crucial element of service providers for community members as staff helped them navigate the complicated assistance system during some of the hardest points in their lives. One focus group had multiple members who had worked with the same caseworker and lauded her friendliness and dedication to getting everyone the help they needed. Community members emphasized the importance of friendly staff, as dealing with people who had a "bad attitude" would lead them to stop seeking services.

Clean and safe facilities with plenty of resources. Many community members praised the cleanliness and comfort of the offices service providers within the county operate. A high level of organization and professionalism presented through the surroundings at these locations made them feel that they were going to be well taken care of and have their needs met. Community members praised the flexible hours of service providers and the walkability of their locations, making access much easier.

Resources were said to be plentiful with community members stating they "give you enough of what you need, like food." The quality of the resources available was also praised by focus group attendees.

Communication with the community and other service providers. Community members found that having the service providers communicate directly with the local community in order to "busque que la comunidad necesita"[35] is a key factor in the success of the services themselves. Organizations that were described as "trying to continually improve through brainstorming and partnerships with other organizations" stood out to community members as innovative and helpful.

Communication between clients and organizations was also praised. Many Spanish speakers expressed that they felt comfortable with the confidentiality of their meetings with service providers. They were glad that the providers understood their need for privacy and that they do not ask for the legal status of those they help.

Identified Systemic Barriers

This section discusses the various levels of accessibility and barriers to accessing services described by community members and service providers. The barriers are divided into categories based on whether or not the service is governmental or community-based. The initial sections discuss the quantitative survey results, followed by a discussion of the barriers mentioned throughout community focus groups.

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[35] Translation: "find what the community needs."

Barriers to Accessing Government Services

Community survey respondents were asked to rate a series of items representing potential barriers that present a challenge to accessing government services. Respondents were given a 4-point Likert type scale to rate each item.

Community survey participants find lack of specific services to be common barrier. With a rating of 2.45/4.0, lack of services for specific needs was found to be the highest rated barrier when accessing government services. (Figure 37).[36] When survey participants were asked what programs they felt should be offered housing assistance, childcare assistance and more transportation options were cited as services that should be offered.

Lack of knowledge seen as barrier. The second highest rated item for perceived barrier was knowing about government services offered. With a rating of 2.39, this would indicate knowing about available services is a minor to moderate challenge.

Figure 33. Barriers to accessing government services[37]
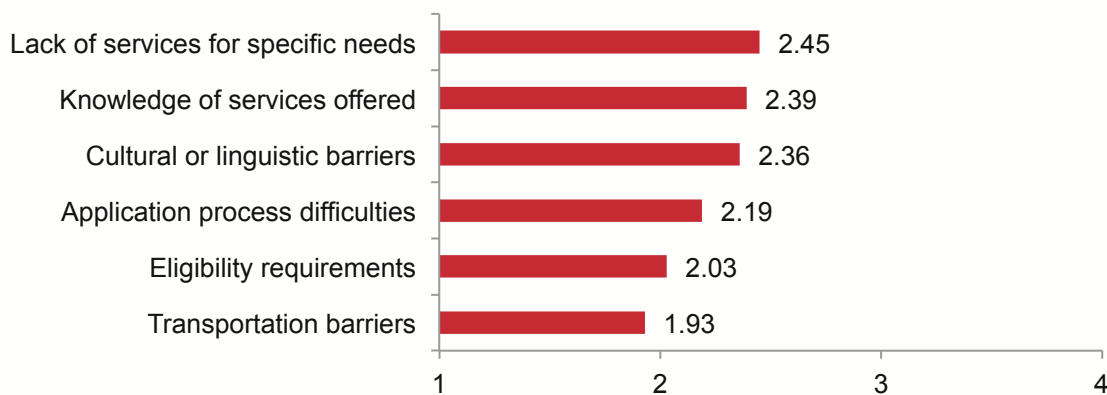
Barriers to Accessing Services from Community Providers

Community survey respondents were asked to rate a series of items representing potential barriers that present a challenge to services from community providers. Respondents were given a 4-point Likert type scale to rate each item.

Eligibility requirements seen as barrier. Community survey respondents indicated knowing if they are eligible to be the most pressing barrier to accessing services from

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[36] The Likert scale options were (from lowest to highest) not at all a challenge, minor challenge, moderate challenge and significant challenge. Additionally, respondents were given the option to select not applicable.

[37] Larger number indicates greater barrier.

community providers. Perhaps a reflection of community organizations having separate requirements than government services (Figure 30).[38]

Figure 34. Mean scores for barriers to accessing services from community providers
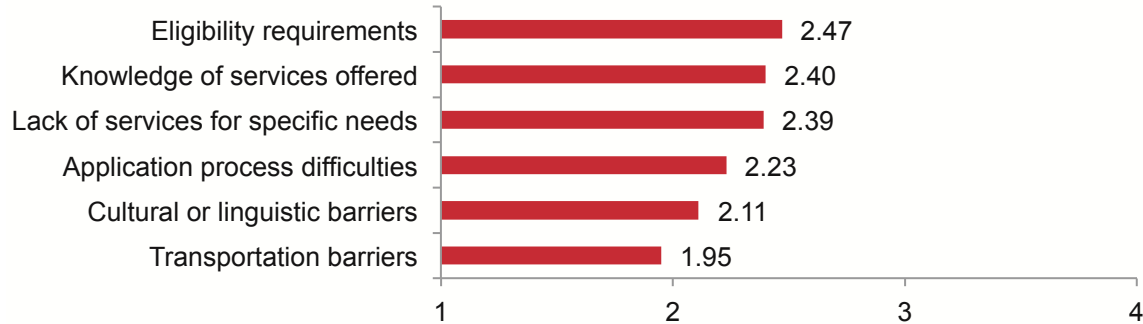
Provider Observed Barriers

Respondents to the provider survey were also asked about barriers they perceive to prevent clients from accessing services. Respondents to the provider survey were given a 4-point Likert type scale, from not at all a barrier to frequently a barrier.[39]

Lack of knowledge again seen as barrier. Providers rated a lack of knowledge about services as one of the most frequent barrier for clients to access services with a 2.9/4.0, indicating an occasional barrier (Figure 39).

Transportation also seen as barrier. Providers rated transportation equally as frequent a barrier as knowledge of services with a 2.9/4.0. This certainly does not match the ratings from community survey respondents who rated transportation barriers much lower; perhaps this can be seen as a reflection of the number of providers (23) who indicated serving homeless populations and others who may specifically have transportation issues Figure (39).

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[38] The Likert scale options were (from lowest to highest) not at all a challenge, minor challenge, moderate challenge and significant challenge. Additionally, respondents were given the option to select not applicable.

[39] The full scale was not at all a barrier, seldom a barrier, occasionally a barrier and frequently a barrier.

Figure 35. Provider perceived barriers to accessing services [40]

Barrier	Rating
Lack of knowledge about services offered	2.9
Location/transportation	2.9
Hesitance to ask for help	2.8
Lack of support from family/friends/work	2.7
Confusion over eligibility requirements	2.5
Lack of time	2.4
Cultural barriers	2.4
Services do not meet their needs	2.3
Misunderstanding of program goals/purposes	2.3
Language barriers	2.3
Immigration status	2.3
Lack of money to pay for services	2.2
Mistrust of organization or program	2.2
Lack of childcare	2.2
Application process is too difficult	1.8

Interestingly enough, respondents from the community survey and provider survey do not appear to agree on the degree to which transportation presents a barrier; while provider survey respondents rated transportation as tied for the highest barrier, community survey respondents rated transportation as the lowest barrier to accessing community provided services. Respondents from both surveys appear to agree that knowledge of resources prevents a sizable barrier to accessing services.

Focus Group Identified Barriers

Transportation
Community members stated that finding transportation to the offices of service providers to be a major barrier to their use of services. Individuals within focus groups stated the need for more offices, lower cost transportation, more accessible locations and more convenient bus schedules. According to CAB members, individuals living in suburban areas of Adams County have little to no public transportation access. Spanish speakers expressed the need for more frequent bus stops so that they do not arrive too late to receive services.

Knowledge
Community members expressed a lack of information and awareness about the types of services available. Many felt that due to their own lack of access to a phone or a

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[40] Larger numbers indicate greater barrier.

computer, they are unable to look up resources and need a booklet that explains what assistance is available to them.

One Spanish speaker stated, "No se como pedir la ayuda que necesito. No sabía que tantos de tipos de ayuda había."[41]

Application process

Community members frequently used the word "overwhelming" to describe their views on the application process. The amount of paperwork needed and the difficulty of the paperwork were cited as major barriers to services, particularly for individuals with low literacy levels. Those without access to the internet or a computer struggled with handling online paperwork as they lack transportation to locations with public computers.

Community members also struggled with contacting service providers to ask questions over the phone. Many stated that they would hold for long periods of time, receive no calls back or end up speaking with a machine. Spanish speakers struggled to reach individuals who also speak Spanish to ask application questions.

Lack of services

Many community members expressed frustration over a lack of adult education, childcare, transportation, veterans and housing services within the community. While these services are available in other areas, those who need them the most are unable to relocate in order to access them.

Eligibility requirements

Understanding and meeting eligibility requirements was a key struggle for many community members. They described difficulty in proving their disabilities and health issues. Many understood they would immediately lose eligibility for services once they had access to another source of income and feared they would then be unable to sustain themselves.

Spanish speakers found citizenship and legal status to limit their access to services overall and many felt helpless.

Cultural or linguistic barriers

Non-English speaking community members described their struggles to access materials in their own language, finding caseworkers who speak their language and time wasted on miscommunications. They reported facing cultural barriers as well, dealing with stigma against immigrants and discrimination.

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[41] Translation: "I do not know how to ask for the help I need. I did not know how many kinds of help there were."

CONCLUSION

This section will briefly review the findings of the research as it pertains to the causes and conditions of poverty in Adams County along with the greatest needs and barriers experienced by its lower income residents. Then, this section will present guidance on next steps Adams County can take to assist agencies, nonprofits and community members in improving service delivery to residents. Many of these recommendations were made by local residents and service providers driven by a desire to better their communities throughout Adams County.

One key conclusion that emerges out of this needs assessment is that most factors within the assistance system do not operate in isolation; many needs, gaps and barriers are interconnected issues. The key then becomes determining the connection between these actors in order to make the necessary changes to improve the system overall. For example, the difficulty community members have making ends meet, or having sufficient income, likely directly affects their ability to have reliable transportation, sufficient food, secure housing and medical care.

Taking a system-view approach can help ensure that changes made reflect the overarching needs of the population as well as their immediate struggles. Continual research and learning should be encouraged to determine the underlying socioeconomic factors driving certain needs as well as regular assessment of services to ensure that the intentions of the service carry over into concrete results.

Causes and Conditions of Poverty

Cost of housing putting pressure on low-income residents.
The economic improvements seen across Colorado and in the Denver metro region—a positive trend for those above the poverty line—has put low-income residents in a difficult situation. Increasing rental costs creates a decreasing pool of rental units that are affordable for the county's low-income residents. With housing assistance programs more often than not receiving more requests for assistance than they can handle, vulnerable low-income residents have few options to turn to.

> *"Housing should be more available. I'm terminally ill and living in a beat-down motel where I pay out the nose to rent. Because all the housing lists are closed."*
>
> *—Community resident*

Minimum wage earners unable to make ends meet. While unemployment is low in Adams County, the high costs of living—particularly those resulting from housing—creates an untenable situation for low-income residents earning minimum wage. Needing to work 2.7 minimum wage jobs to afford a two-bedroom apartment at minimum wage could present challenges for two earners in a household; needing to make ends meet with a single head of household earning minimum wage would leave a household in a precarious position financially.

High levels of uninsured in Adams County. In 2015, just over one-tenth of Adams County residents were uninsured. Without insurance to help mitigate the costs of a

potential health crisis, many low-income residents are one illness or accident away from unmanageable financial stress.

Limited and expensive transit options presents challenges for the most vulnerable populations. Public transit options are limited throughout much of Adams County, and this creates challenges for vulnerable populations such as the elderly and the homeless. Whether it is visiting a doctor or other health provider or seeking services to help with making ends meet, mobility limited populations have few options to seek assistance from community and government providers.

Needs, Gaps and Barriers Experienced by Low-Income Residents

Needs

Help making ends meet. Rising costs of living in Adams County place increased financial burden on low-income residents. This burden creates a need for many low-income residents to seek assistance in satisfying the basic needs of food, medical care and shelter. All three items rated highest in importance of all services offered by government and community providers.

Affordable housing. For low-income households, the number of units that are affordable are very limited.

Food assistance critical service to many. Rated as one of the more important services received by many survey respondents, food assistance provides needed nutrition and helps low-income families make ends meet. The high caseload for food assistance and number of children eligible for free and reduced-price lunches are indicative of high levels of food insecure households within the county.

Options for mobility limited populations to get where they need to go. Mobility limited populations, such as older adults and the homeless, experience difficulty in finding transportation to where they need to go.

"Not knowing what to apply for to get the help needed as well as how to fill out the paper work such as claiming child support and to request more money as my son gets older he gets more expensive."

—Community resident

Gaps

Access to medical insurance. Adams County has both a high number of residents who do not have medical insurance and residents who are eligible for Medicaid but not registered. Closing this gap would increase the number of low-income residents' access to medical services.

Education levels on job requirements outstrip obtained education for many. The rate of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree is greater than the rate of residents with bachelor's degrees.

Lack of healthy food options for many. When asked about the difficulty of accessing healthy foods, approximately one-third of community survey respondents indicated this was somewhat to very difficult, and another third indicated accessing healthy food was a little difficult. Focus group participants identified a few areas, such as southwest Adams County, as being food deserts. The need for healthy food is something in need of examination for sizable portions of low-income residents of Adams County.

Limited availability of subsidized housing. With fewer than 5% of housing units affordable for low-income households, there are limited rental options. Excessive demand for subsidized housing has created long waiting lists for receiving housing assistance. Low-income households are left with few options.

Public transportation destinations lacking and fares too expensive. Many low-income households have few transportation options. Public transportation throughout Adams County often lacks necessary destinations. Further compounding the problem is the cost of fare. A round trip using public transportation is $5.20, a cost that many find prohibitive for their day-to-day needs.

Childcare options for parents of special needs children lacking. One identified gap in childcare was the lack of options for parents raising children with special needs.

Availability of beds for homeless may be lacking. While recent counts by MDHI appear to roughly align with the number of available beds at shelters in Adams County, it is believed these figures represent an undercount of the actual numbers of homeless individuals currently in the county.

Barriers

Knowledge of available services. Both community and provider survey respondents rated knowing of available services to be one of the most common barriers to accessing services. Many low-income residents may be without reliable phones, computers or Internet access to help them identify what services may be available to them and where to go to access the services.

Spanish language materials lacking at some providers. While most providers indicated the availability of Spanish speaking staff, approximately half indicated that Spanish language materials were not available. As a result, Spanish speakers experienced greater barriers in accessing services.

Limited and unaffordable options for acquiring marketable skills. For those most in need of vocational training and education, the costs associated with these organizations can be prohibitive.

Application process can be challenging. Many low-income residents struggle with the amount of paperwork required to access services. Some focus group participants recalled stories of being unable to seek clarification on some applications they found to be particularly confusing.

Most all barriers magnified for homeless individuals. Across the board, nearly every barrier rated by homeless or formerly homeless respondents was rated much higher than the rest of the sample. Without their basic needs being met and access to basic resources limited, the challenges experienced by low-income residents are magnified for those experiencing homelessness.

Opportunities for Service Improvement

Improve knowledge of available services and increase accessibility of information about services. Many community members expressed difficulties related to their lack of knowledge of available services and lack of resources that direct them to the services they need. Some community members recommended to Adams County to recognize and take advantage of locations where lower-income individuals congregate and use these areas as ways to disseminate information and encourage word-of-mouth service information sharing.

Another recommendation was the development of a resource database listing the available services by category along with their eligibility requirements and where to go to access these resources in an online and hardcopy format along with a phone line for residents without the internet or literacy skills. Dissemination of the information in a number of formats is key to ensuring the diverse residents of Adams County are able to access the resources equally. Additionally, ensuring frequent information updates across all formats will be a necessity as the system ad eligibility requirements change over time.

Where possible, standardize the application for similar services across agencies. Community members expressed frustration and feeling overwhelmed with the amount of paperwork required to access services. The development of a standardized application that covers similar services across agencies would prevent individuals from getting lost in the amount of paperwork needed by the system overall. Similar agencies would have to effectively collaborate to generate the standardized application and develop a means of sharing the applicants' information, either through a shared database or by making copies of documentation.

Maintain current partnerships between organizations, the government and the community served by these entities. In all of the identified assets or strengths of the service community within Adams County, partnerships and communications with community members and the government were listed as reasons for the item being identified as an asset. Maintaining partnerships and open dialogues between service providers, partner organizations, governmental bodies and community members are key to continual development and understanding of changing needs.

Community members suggested that service providers hold "community meetings" or "town halls" where their voice can be directly heard by the organization on a regular basis. Spanish speakers also encouraged this idea but cited the need for interpreters to be present for linguistic assistance.

Additionally, developing connections between providers of similar services and synthesizing a tracking system for individuals across services can improve inter-organizational information-sharing to better track changing needs in the community as well as determine gaps in services to individuals.

Mitigate transportation as a barrier to accessing services. While transportation was not listed as a major challenge or need by many Adams County residents, it certainly is a barrier for mobility limited populations such as older adults. The lack of reliable public transportation networks keeps community members from arriving on time for service or medical appointments and can prevent them from finding reliable employment. Where residents can access public transportation, the costs make frequent trips difficult.

Many residents called for an increase in tokens or passes given to lower-income individuals as well as programming for the upkeep and maintenance of personal vehicles. Programs such as a "community car shop," where neighbors share car skills and parts, and programs for mechanical students and ex-offenders to work on community vehicles have all been suggested within the focus groups.

Strengthen systems for housing allocation and development. Housing is one of the greatest needs reported by Adams County residents. Their frustration with the lack of available housing, lack of affordable housing and the locations of current temporary housing options was clear throughout the survey and focus groups. Residents have suggested the remodeling of old buildings to create affordable housing as well as new construction projects to increase available homes within the area. Additionally, the development of temporary and transitional housing that is accessible to public transportation or walkable areas was another strong suggestion.

The long waitlists for affordable housing as well as the Section 8 lottery system were also points of frustration for residents. Many suggested going through current waitlists to weed out individuals no longer in need of the affordable housing and developing a need-based system to be implemented in the future.

Develop programming providing healthy, fresh food-to-food desert areas. Areas within Adams County lack any means of purchasing fresh, healthy food. These food desert areas should be provided with programming that connects them to the produce and healthful options available throughout the rest of the county. The survey found that "food assistance" is one of the greatest needs for the area, while focus group participants described the need for diverse healthy diets. Improvements to food assistance should include providing fresh options. One recommendation is a food recycling program, where perfectly healthy food from supermarkets that is set aside to be thrown away is brought to food distribution areas within food deserts to give to the local community.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Provider Survey Response Organizations

Table 5. Organizations heard from through the provider survey.

Arapahoe House	Family Tree	Goodwill of Brighton
Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Student and Family Outreach Program	Almost Home, Inc.	Brighton Shares The Harvest
Rainbow Center/Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.	Growing Home	Adams County Housing Authority
Project Angel Heart	Colfax Community Network	Centura Nurse-Family Partnership
Pennock Center for Counseling	Community Uplift Partnership (CUP)	ACCESS Housing, Inc.
CASA of Adams and Broomfield Counties	Clinica Colorado	Seniors Resource Center, Inc.
Center for People With Disabilities	Growing Home	Disability Law Colorado
Shelter	Adams County	MCPN
Boys & Girls Clubs/serving Adams County	Tri-County Health Department - WIC	The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County
ALIFT	Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver	Adams County Sheriffs Office - Victim Services Unit

Appendix B: Community Resident Survey, English

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey

We need your valuable feedback to help make Adams County a great place to live. Please take a few minutes to complete this **confidential survey**. It gives you the opportunity to share your opinion about services offered throughout Adams County. Your participation will **help improve services available in your community**. If you have any questions about the survey please contact Esther Ramirez at ERamirez@adcogov.org.

Remember, this is a confidential survey. Please **do not** share any personal information such as your name, social security number or address. Please submit completed surveys by May 9th in one of the following ways:
- MAIL: Attn: Aaron Schonhoff, Joining Vision and Action, 2465 Sheridan Blvd, Edgewater, CO 80214
- DROP OFF: Return completed survey to the location you received it.
- E-MAIL: Take clear photos of each page with your smart phone and send them to aaron@joiningvisionandaction.com

INCOME LEVEL & KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICES

1) **Often, household income level is used to determine what assistance programs residents are eligible to participate in. Please let us know your household income to help us match your answers with programs provided for your household income level.**

Yearly Household Income Before Taxes
(include income for all adults living in household)

$_____a year

Number of People Living in Your Home
(include children, roommates, friends and relatives)

_____ people living in my home

2) **In general, how often do you use assistance programs or services? These could be programs offered by the government, churches, missions, food banks or other community organizations.**

☐ Daily   ☐ Weekly   ☐ Monthly   ☐ Several times a year   ☐ Once a year   ☐ Never

3) **In general, how familiar are you with the various assistance programs and services available to provide support services to you and/or your family?**

☐ Very familiar   ☐ Somewhat familiar   ☐ A little familiar   ☐ Not at all familiar

CHALLENGES

4) **Using the provided scale, please indicate how difficult it is for you and your family to do the following things.**

Challenges	Not Applicable	Not at all difficult	A little difficult	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult
Making ends meet day-to-day (food, housing, etc.)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Finding transportation to where I and/or the members of my family need to go	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Having access to healthy foods	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Providing care to adults in the household	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Providing care to children in the household	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Accessing medical care	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Accessing education or education services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

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Resident Survey
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ADAMS COUNTY

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

5) **Using the provided scale, please indicate how long it takes you to get to the following destinations. Please use the approximate time for the method of transportation you use most often. If you do not utilize the service at the listed destination, please leave it blank.**

Destination	0–15 minutes	16–30 minutes	31–60 minutes	1–2 hours	More than 2 hours
Grocery store with fresh produce	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Medical care: general practitioner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emergency medical care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
School or other education services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government offices where you access services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community services offices where you access services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Place of employment or employment services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

6) **What <u>GOVERNMENT</u> assistance do you currently receive?** *(Check all that apply)*

Assistance Program	
☐ Adult Protection	☐ Aid to Needy Disabled (AND)
☐ Burial Assistance	☐ Child Care Assistance (CCAP)
☐ Child Support Services	☐ Child Protection Services
☐ Colorado Works (TANF)	☐ Food Assistance (SNAP or Food Stamps)
☐ Home Care Allowance (HCA)	☐ Low Income Emergency Assistance (LEAP)
☐ Medicaid	☐ Medical Assistance
☐ Old Age Pension (OAP)	☐ Transit Program (A-LIFT)
☐ Veterans' Services	☐ Other cash service programs
☐ Other:	

7) **Please provide your opinion on how easy it is to ACCESS these government programs.**

Service Area	N/A - Have not used	Difficult to access	Somewhat difficult to access	Somewhat easy to access	Easy to access
Adult Protection	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Aid to Needy Disabled (AND)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Burial Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Child Care Assistance program (CCAP)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Child Support Services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Children and Family Services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Colorado Works (TANF)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Food Assistance (SNAP or Food Stamps)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Home Care Allowance (HCA)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey
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Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

GOVERNMENT SERVICES continued					
	N/A - Have not used	Difficult to access	Somewhat difficult to access	Somewhat easy to access	Easy to access
Low Income Emergency Assistance (LEAP)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Medicaid	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Medical Assistance other than Medicaid	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Old Age Pension (OAP)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Transit Program (A-LIFT)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Veterans' Services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Other Cash Service programs	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

8) Use this space to tell us about other GOVERNMENT assistance programs NOT listed and how easy or difficult they are to access.

9) Using the provided scale, please indicate how much of a challenge each of the following are when accessing various GOVERNMENT services.

	Not Applicable	Not at all a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Significant challenge
Transportation: Getting to a government office	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Knowledge: I don't know about services offered.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Application: It's too difficult to apply for services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Lack of services that meet my particular need	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Eligibility: I do not believe I qualify for services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Cultural: Services are not sensitive to my cultural heritage or language	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Other: Please use this space to list any other challenges you have that prevent you from accessing government services.					

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

COMMUNITY SERVICES

10) Below is a list of common support services offered by <u>COMMUNITY</u> organizations; please check the services you have used in the past five years. *(Check all that apply)*

Community Service Area	
☐ Cash Assistance *(household bill support, phone bill support, disability support, etc.)*	☐ Food Assistance Services *(food banks, free or reduced summer/school lunch programs, etc.)*
☐ Childcare Assistance *(free or reduced child care services and summer camps, etc.)*	☐ Household Heating/Cooling Assistance *(utility bill assistance, appliance repairs)*
☐ Emergency Assistance *(domestic violence, burial, etc.)*	☐ Housing Assistance *(eviction assistance, first month rent/deposit, shelter, transitional housing, senior housing assistance, etc.)*
☐ Employment Assistance *(resume lab, job training, work clothes, transportation, etc.)*	☐ Medical/Health Assistance Services *(Mental health, substance abuse treatment, public health clinics, school-based clinics, etc.)*
☐ Education Assistance *(ESL classes, scholarships, computer skills, parenting classes, financial literacy classes, etc.)*	☐ Income Management *(representative payee, tax assistance programs, etc.)*
☐ Other: Please list other services you have used.	

11) Provide your opinion on how readily available these COMMUNITY services are for you to ACCESS.

Service Area	N/A - Have not used	Difficult to access	Somewhat difficult to access	Somewhat easy to access	Easy to access
Cash Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Food Assistance Services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Childcare Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Household Heating/Cooling Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Emergency Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Housing Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Employment Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Medical/Health Assistance Services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Education Assistance	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Income Management	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Public Transportation	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

12) Using the provided scale, please indicate how much of a challenge each of the following are when accessing various COMMUNITY services?

	Not Applicable	Not at all a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Significant challenge
Transportation: Getting to a government office	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Knowledge: I don't know about services offered	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Application: It's too difficult to apply for services	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey
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Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Gender: ☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Transgender   **Age:** _____   **What is your 5-digit ZIP code?** _____

Race (Please check all that apply)	Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? (Please check all that apply)	Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native	☐ Immigrant	☐ Yes
☐ Asian	☐ Refugee	
☐ Black or African American	☐ LGBTQ Community	☐ No
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	☐ Veteran	
☐ White	☐ Individual with a disability	

Ethnicity	
☐ Hispanic/Latino(a)	☐ Not Hispanic/Latino(a)

Have you ever been or are you currently homeless?		
☐ Yes, currently homeless	☐ Yes, formerly homeless	☐ No

Thank you for completing this survey! The information gathered will be used for the primary purpose of informing the Community Services Block Grant committee about how to improve services for low-income people and families.

Appendix C: Community Resident Survey, Spanish

ENCUESTA PARA RESIDENTES
SOBRE LAS NECESIDADES DE LA COMUNIDAD

Necesitamos sus comentarios y opiniones para hacer del Condado de Adams un gran lugar donde vivir. Favor de tomarse unos minutos para completar esta **encuesta confidencial**. Esta encuesta le da la oportunidad de compartir su opinión sobre algunos servicios ofrecidos en el Condado de Adams. Su participación **ayudará a mejorar los servicios disponibles en su comunidad**. Si tiene alguna pregunta acerca de esta encuesta, favor de contactar a Esther Ramírez al correo electrónico ERamírez@adcogov.org.

Recuerde que esta encuesta es confidencial. Favor de **no** compartir información personal confidencial, como su nombre, número de seguro social o dirección. Favor de entregar las encuestas completadas antes del 9 de mayo en una de las siguientes maneras:
- CORREO POSTAL: Attn: Aaron Schonhoff, Joining Vision and Action, 2465 Sheridan Blvd, Edgewater, CO 80214
- EN PERSONA: Regresar la encuesta completada a la ubicación o con la persona donde la recibió.
- CORREO ELECTRÓNICO: Tome fotos de buena calidad con su teléfono celular y mándelas a la dirección de correo electrónico aaron@joiningvisionandaction.com

NIVEL DE INGRESOS Y CONOCIMIENTO DE SERVICIOS

1) **A menudo, el nivel de ingresos se utiliza para determinar para qué programas de asistencia cumplen los requisitos para participar los residentes. Por favor háganos saber sus ingresos para ayudarnos a relacionar sus respuestas con los programas disponibles para su nivel de ingresos.**

   <u>Total de ingreso anual antes de impuestos</u>   <u>Número de personas que viven es su hogar</u>
   (incluir los ingresos de todos los adultos que viven en el hogar)   *(debe incluir niños, compañeros de cuarto, amigos y parientes)*

   $_____ por año   _____ personas viven en mi hogar.

2) **En general, ¿con qué frecuencia utiliza servicios o programas de asistencia? Estos podrían ser programas ofrecidos por el gobierno, iglesias, misiones, bancos de alimentos u otras organizaciones comunitarias.**

   ☐ Diariamente ☐ Semanalmente ☐ Mensualmente ☐ Varias veces al año ☐ Una vez al año ☐ Nunca

3) **En general, ¿cuál es su nivel de conocimiento de los diversos servicios y programas de asistencia disponibles para proveer servicios de apoyo a usted y/o a su familia?**

   ☐ Alto nivel de conocimiento ☐ Nivel intermedio de conocimiento ☐ Bajo nivel de conocimiento ☐ Ningún conocimiento

RETOS

4) **Usando la escala señalada, por favor indique que tan difícil es para usted y su familia hacer las siguientes cosas:**

Retos	N/A - No aplica	Nada difícil	Un poco difícil	Algo difícil	Muy difícil
Cubrir las necesidades básicas (comida, vivienda, etc.)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Encontrar transportación para ir a donde yo y/o los miembros de mi familia tenemos que ir	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Tener acceso a alimentos saludables	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey
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Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

RETOS					
Retos	N/A - No aplica	Nada difícil	Un poco difícil	Algo difícil	Muy difícil
Proveer suficientes cuidados a los adultos en el hogar	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Proveer suficientes cuidados a los niños en el hogar	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Acceso a cuidados médicos	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Acceso a educación o servicios educacionales	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

5) **Usando la escala señalada, por favor indique cuanto tiempo le toma llegar a los siguientes lugares. Por favor use el tiempo aproximado en el medio de transporte que utiliza con más frecuencia.**

Lugar	0–15 minutos	16–30 minutos	31–60 minutos	1–2 horas	Más de 2 horas
Supermercados con productos frescos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Servicios médicos: médico general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Servicios médicos de emergencia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escuela u otros servicios educacionales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Oficinas de gobierno donde tiene acceso a servicios	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Oficinas de servicios comunitarios donde tiene acceso a servicios	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lugar de empleo o servicios de empleo	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SERVICIOS GUBERNAMENTALES

6) **¿Qué asistencia del GOBIERNO recibe actualmente?** *(Marque todos los que correspondan)*

Programa de Asistencia	
☐ Protección para adultos (*Adult Protection*)	☐ Asistencia para personas discapacitadas o con necesidades especiales (*Aid to Needy Disabled*)
☐ Asistencia para servicios funerarios (*Burial Assistance*)	☐ Asistencia para el cuidado de niños (*CCAP*)
☐ Servicios de Manutención de Menores (*Child Support Services*)	☐ Servicios de protección al niño (*Child Protection Services*)
☐ Asistencia temporal para familias necesitadas/ Colorado Works (*TANF*)	☐ Programa de Asistencia de Nutrición Suplementaria/SNAP (*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program o Food Stamps*)
☐ Subsidio para cuidado en casa (*Home Care Allowance*)	☐ *LEAP* (Asistencia para servicios de calefacción)
☐ Medicaid	☐ Asistencia medica diferente a Medicaid
☐ Pensión para personas mayores (*Old Age Pension*)	☐ Programa de transito (*A-LIFT*)

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey
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Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

SERVICIOS GUBERNAMENTALES	
☐ Servicios para veteranos	☐ Otros programas de servicio de dinero en efectivo
☐ Otro:	

7) Por favor dennos su opinión acerca de que tan fácil es TENER ACCESO a estos programas gubernamentales.

Área de servicio	N/A - No lo he utilizado	Difícil de acceder	Algo difícil de acceder	Algo fácil de acceder	Fácil de acceder
Protección para adultos (*Adult Protection*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para personas discapacitadas o con necesidades especiales (*Aid to Needy Disabled*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para servicios funerarios (*Burial Assistance*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para el cuidado de niños (*CCAP*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Servicios de Manutención de Menores (*Child Support Services*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Servicios para niños y la familia (*Children and Family Services*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia temporal para familias necesitadas/ Colorado Works (*TANF*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Programa Asistencia de Nutrición Suplementaria/SNAP (*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* o *Food Stamps*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Subsidio para cuidado en casa (*Home Care Allowance*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
LEAP (Asistencia para servicios de calefacción)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Medicaid	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia medica diferente a Medicaid	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Pensión para personas mayores (*Old Age Pension*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Programa de transito (*A-LIFT*)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Servicios para Veteranos	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment
Resident Survey
Page 3

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

8) Utilice este espacio para contarnos sobre otros programas de asistencia GUBERNAMENTAL que NO están en la lista e indique que tan fácil o difícil son de acceder.

9) Usando la escala señalada, por favor indique el nivel de reto que implica acceder los diferentes servicios GUBERNAMENTALES.

	N/A - No aplica	No es un reto	Reto menor	Reto moderado	Reto mayor
Transporte: Llegar a una oficina gubernamental.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Conocimiento: No conozco los servicios ofrecidos.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Proceso de solicitación: Es muy difícil solicitar los servicios.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Falta de servicios que ayuden con mi necesidad en particular.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Cumplimiento de requisitos: Creo que no cumplo los requisitos para recibir los servicios.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Cultural: Los servicios no toman en cuenta mi patrimonio cultural ni mi idioma.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Otro: Por favor use este espacio para enlistar cualquier otro reto que usted tiene que le previene acceder algún servicio gubernamental.

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

SERVICIOS COMUNITARIOS

7) **A continuación se encuentra una lista de servicios ofrecidos por organizaciones de la COMUNIDAD; favor de marcar los servicios que ha utilizado durante los últimos cinco años.** *(Marque todos los que correspondan)*

Servicios para la comunidad	
☐ Asistencia de dinero en efectivo *(apoyo para cuentas del hogar, Apoyo para cuentas de teléfono, apoyo para personas con alguna discapacidad, etc.)*	☐ Asistencia con servicios de alimentación *(bancos de alimentos, programas de alimentos de escuela/verano gratuitos o reducidos, etc.)*
☐ Asistencia para el cuidado de niños *(servicios de cuidado de niños y de campamentos de verano gratuitos o de menor precio)*	☐ Asistencia para servicios de enfriamiento/ calefacción del hogar *(asistencia con las cuentas de servicios públicos, reparación de aparatos electrodomésticos)*
☐ Asistencia de emergencia *(violencia doméstica, servicios funerarios, etc.)*	☐ Asistencia para vivienda *(asistencia para el desalojo, depósito/alquiler del primer mes, alojamiento, viviendas para personas en transición, asistencia con viviendas para personas de tercera edad, etc.)*
☐ Asistencia con empleo *(taller de curriculum vitae, entrenamiento para trabajos, ropa de trabajo, transporte, etc.)*	☐ Servicio de asistencia médica/para la salud *(Salud mental, tratamiento para el abuso de sustancias, clínicas de salud pública, clínicas en escuelas, etc.)*
☐ Asistencia educacional *(clases de inglés como segundo idioma, becas, habilidades computacionales, clases para padres, clases de finanzas, etc.)*	☐ Administración de ingresos *(representante beneficiario, programas de asistencia con impuestos, etc.)*
☐ Otro: Favor de indicar otros servicios que ha utilizado:	

11) **Indique su opinión sobre su nivel de ACCESO a estos servicios COMUNITARIOS.**

Área de servicio	N/A - No lo he utilizado	Difícil de acceder	Algo difícil de acceder	Algo fácil de acceder	Fácil de acceder
Asistencia de dinero en efectivo	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Servicios de asistencia de alimentación	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para el cuidado de niños	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para servicios de enfriamiento/calefacción del hogar	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia de emergencia	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia de vivienda	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia con empleo	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia con servicios médicos/de la salud	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia educacional	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Administración de ingresos	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Transporte público	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

12) Usando la escala señalada, por favor indique el nivel de reto que implica acceder los diferentes servicios COMUNITARIOS.

	N/A - No aplica	No es un reto	Reto menor	Reto moderado	Reto mayor
Transporte: Llegar al lugar del servicio	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Conocimiento: No conozco los servicios ofrecidos.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Proceso de solicitación: Es muy difícil solicitar a los servicios.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Falta de servicios que ayuden con mi necesidad en particular.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Cumplimiento con requisitos: Creo que no cumplo con los requisitos para recibir los servicios.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Cultural: Los servicios no toman en cuenta mi patrimonio cultural ni mi idioma.	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Otro: Por favor use este espacio para enlistar cualquier otro reto que usted tiene que le previene acceder algún servicio comunitario.					

IMPORTANCIA DE SERVICIOS

13) Al pensar sobre sus necesidades del día a día, favor de INDICAR EL NIVEL DE IMPORTANCIA de los siguientes servicios para usted marcando la mejor respuesta para cada área de servicio.

Área de servicio	N/A - No lo he utilizado	Nada importante	Algo importante	Bastante importante	Muy importante
Asistencia de dinero en efectivo	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Servicios de asistencia de alimentos	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia con el cuidado de niños	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia para servicios de enfriamiento/calefacción del hogar	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia de emergencia	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia de vivienda	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia con empleo	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia con servicios médicos/de la salud	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Asistencia educacional	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Administración de ingresos	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Acceso a transporte público	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

Community Needs Assessment - Resident Survey (Continued)

14) Favor de describir hasta tres servicios o programas de asistencia que usted siente QUE SE DEBEN OFRECER o QUE DEBEN SER MEJORES para cumplir de mejor manera con las necesidades de su comunidad, su familia o de usted mismo.

CUÉNTENOS SOBRE USTED

Sexo: ☐ Masculino ☐ Femenino ☐ Transgénero   **Edad:** _____   **Cuál es su código postal?** _____

Raza (Favor de marcar todos los correspondientes)	**¿Se identifica con alguno de los siguientes grupos? (Favor de marcar todos los correspondientes)**	**¿Alguna vez ha sido condenado por un delito grave?**
☐ Indígena Americano o Nativo de Alaska	☐ Inmigrante	☐ Sí
☐ Asiático	☐ Refugiado	
☐ Negro o Afroamericano	☐ Comunidad LGBTQ	☐ No
☐ Nativo de Hawái o Isleño del Pacífico	☐ Veterano	
☐ Blanco	☐ Persona con alguna discapacidad	

Ethnicity	
☐ Hispano/Latino(a)	☐ No Hispano/Latino(a)

¿Alguna vez has estado, o está actualmente, sin vivienda?		
☐ Sí, actualmente estoy sin vivienda	☐ Sí, antes estaba sin vivienda	☐ No

¡Gracias por llenar esta encuesta! La información que se ha reunido se utilizará para el propósito principal de informar al comité de la Subvención en Bloque de Servicios Comunitarios (*Community Services Block Grant*) sobre cómo mejorar los servicios para las personas y las familias de bajos recursos.

Appendix D: Focus Group Guide, English

Adams County Human Services – Focus Group Guide

Goals:

1) Assessment of current needs of low-income Adams County residents: characteristics, key issues and challenges faced, and services and supports currently provided (accessed and utilized). Special focus on federal CSBG requirements*

2) Assessment of unmet needs of low-income Adams County residents: The gaps in meeting needs, and the extent to which current services are meeting or not meeting their needs.*

3) Assessment of future needs of low-income Adams County residents: Potential community partnerships to address the gaps of unmet needs*

*Note. Focus is on CSBG requirements and NOT explicitly on what Human Services provides. This is not about assessing how Human services is doing. It is about learning more about community needs and gaps in service.

Materials:
- Flipcharts for note taking
- Markers
- Quarter sheets, various colors
- Stick Screen
- Blue painters Tape
- Sticky dots
- Gift cards
- Sign-in sheet

INTRODUCTION

Hello. Thank you all for participating in this focus group discussion. My name is _____ and this is my partner _____, and we will be helping to facilitate the discussion. This focus group is part of a community assessment that the Adams County Human Services is conducting.
 Adams County is interested in better understanding the needs of the communities that they serve in order to ensure the long-term wellbeing of individuals and families in their community. This focus group represents one part of this assessment, and it will give you an opportunity to share important information, opinions and experiences. You have been asked to participate in this group because you are a representative of your community in the Community Services Block Grant Advisory Council and have been identified as someone who can provide valuable insight on the topic.
Joining Vision and Action is conducting this focus group in partnership with Adams County. The information you share today is confidential. We will combine all the

responses from our discussion into the report. However, no identifying information such as your name will be associated in any way with your comments and feedback.
Guidelines:

1. **Confidentiality / Vegas Rule:**

   No personally identifying information will be shared outside of this room, and I would ask that each of you not share this information outside of this room as well.

2. **There are no right or wrong answers – be honest:**

   Our discussion today will be informal. There are no right or wrong answers. We simply want to know what you think and why. We aren't from Adams County , so feel free to share your honest opinions.

3. **Ask questions:**

   I will help guide our conversation, but I encourage each of you to ask questions if any of my questions are not clear.

4. **Respect others' opinions / Don't speak over each other:**

   It is important that wide ranges of ideas are expressed. If you would like to add to an idea, or if you have an idea that is different from others, please speak up. I do ask that you try to respect each person's opinions or experiences, even if you don't agree with them. You are encouraged to speak with each other and not just to me.

My colleague _____ is taking notes from the discussion today. They will be writing down what you say on these flip charts, and also taking typed notes on her computer.

Our discussion today should take about an hour.

Thank you for your participation. Do you have any questions before we get started?

[INTRODUCTIONS and Icebreaker:]

1. Could you please introduce yourself by telling us:
   a. Your Name,
   b. How long you've lived in Adams County
   c. Favorite place to view sunsets or your favorite park

[BACKGROUND USAGE and BARRIERS:]

Answer the questions based on your experience or what you have heard/know of from friends, family, neighbors, etc.

2. Think about the **reasons** you have sought out assistance from area (within Adams County) organizations, churches, government agencies, or family members (or think about reasons that you might in the future).
   Write those reasons on the scraps of paper you were given (Reasons are passed in to the facilitator. Facilitator will paste on sticky board, arranging by topic).

   a. Looking at this list of needs, **where _can_** you, or people you know, turn to for help with these things? [Note taker can record on flipchart,

flipchart divided into two columns Where can people go, where do people go]

    b. Now, where do you, or the people you know, **actually**, go to for help? [Notetaker write in other column of flipchart]

    c. Did we leave any need or any place off these lists?

3. Thinking of the places/organizations/agencies you visit most often: **What do you like** about the organization(s) or **what keeps you going back** (besides the immediate service)? [Note taker writes key words on a flipchart].
    a. Examples: near your home, near a job, trust the people who work there, efficient, fast, type of organization?
    b. PROBE: What would you do without these services?

4. **What stops you from using more assistance programs** or reaching out to more organizations for help?
    a. PROBE: **What frustrates you** about receiving public assistance?
    b. PROBE: **Is one type of assistance easier to receive than others?**

[NEEDS]

1. Ensure each participant has quarter sheets
    a. On the sticky screen have one side devoted to community needs and one for family needs with space in the middle for those that qualify as both (think a Venn Diagram using the sticky screen). The facilitator(s) will act as a note taker to record what is said in order to summarize easily.

2. Have participants write down the greatest needs (each need on a separate quarter sheet). Collect them and ask if they are family specific, a broader community need, or both.
    a. PROMPT: What are the greatest needs in your broader community? For your family and friends?
    b. PROMPT: Have these changed in the last 2–5 years? Do you think these will change in the next 2–5 years?
    c. PROBE: Why? What makes that a need more today than five to 10 years ago?
    d. PROBE: How might these change in the next five years?
    e. Did we miss any urgent needs?

3. Keeping in mind the needs, organizations, and barriers we just discussed, we now need to reflect on what is most important and urgent in your community overall. On a quarter sheet of paper write down what you believe is the most urgent need in your community overall.

4. Collaboratively identify the most important needs overall.

Hand out three dot stickers to each participant. Review the list of important needs. Ask participants to place stickers on the associated sticky screen to indicate where they feel the greatest needs are.

There is not a limit to one sticker per item, participants can choose to put all three on one item if that is what they believe is the greatest need.
Stress that there will be different views of whether a need is being met or not, and that we are interested in hearing both.

    a. PROBE: X,Y, and/or Z have <u>a lot of</u> stickers. Why do we feel this is an important need? Does everyone agree?
    b. PROBE: What could help to address the needs that aren't currently met with services (i.e., specific programs, aid, money, community/caseworker support)?
        i. PROBE: Is there something current providers could do more of or improve upon to address these needs?
    c. PROBE: Whom would you like to be responsible for those services? (local organization, the state, etc.)
        i. OR Whom would you like to deliver those services? Why?
        ii. Is this something currently being address by organizations? Which organizations

[CLOSING]

5. What else do we need to know about the services that you currently use, the services that you would like to see more of, and the services you are concerned about for the future?

6. Is there anything else you want to share? (The extra paper can be used to write down any other thoughts that you would like to share, or you are welcome to stay after).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR THOUGHTS THIS MORNING/AFTERNOON/EVENING

Appendix E: Focus Group Guide, Spanish

Departamento de Servicios Humanos del Condado de Adams:

Guía para Grupo de Enfoque

Metas:

1) Evaluar el estatus de los residentes de bajos recursos del Condado de Adams: características, problemas y retos clave que enfrentan, y los servicios y apoyos que se ofrecen (a los que tienen acceso y los que utilizan). Enfoque especial en requisitos federales de CSBG*

2) Evaluar las necesidades no satisfechas de los residentes de bajos recursos del Condado de Adams: Los huecos para satisfacer las necesidades y el grado al que los servicios satisfacen o no satisfacen sus necesidades*

3) Evaluar las posibles necesidades a futuro de los residentes de bajos recursos del Condado de Adams: Potenciales asociaciones comunitarias para atender los huecos de las necesidades no satisfechas*

*Nota: El enfoque es en los requisitos de CSBG y NO explícitamente en lo que el Departamento de Recursos Humanos (DHS) provee. Este ejercicio no es para evaluar como esta cumpliendo su función DHS. Es para aprender mas acerca de las necesidades de la comunidad y los huecos en los servicios.

Materiales

- Rotafolios para tomar notas
- Rotafolios marcados para las mesas redondas
- Marcadores
- Tela adhesiva
- Etiquetas para nombres
- Estampas de puntos

INTRODUCTION

Hola, Buenos días/buenas tardes. Gracias a todos por participar en este grupo de enfoque. Mi nombre es _____ y este(a) es mi compañero(a) _____, y nosotros estaremos facilitando esta sesión. Este grupo de enfoque es parte de una evaluación comunitaria que el Departamento de Servicios Humanos del Condado de Denver dirige.

El Condado de Adams esta interesado en entender las necesidades de las comunidades a las que sirve para asegurar el bienestar de sus residentes y familias a largo plazo. Este grupo de enfoque representa una de las partes de esta evaluación, y le dará la oportunidad de compartir sus opiniones, experiencias, y otra información importante. Se les ha invitado a participar en este grupo por que ustedes fueron identificados como participantes que pueden aportar valiosa información acerca de este tema.

Joining Vision and Action, LCC (o JVA por sus siglas en ingles) esta dirigiendo este grupo de enfoque en asociación con DHS. La información que usted comparta el día de hoy es completamente confidencial. Combinaremos todos los comentarios de nuestra discusión en el reporte. Ninguna de su información personal será asociada de ninguna manera con sus comentarios y opiniones.

Reglas:

1. **Confidencialidad / Regla Vegas**
   Ninguna información personal reveladora se compartirá fuera de este salón, y les voy a pedir que ninguno de ustedes comparta nada de esta información tampoco.

2. **No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas – sean honestos**
   Nuestra discusión el día de hoy será informal. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas. Simplemente queremos saber lo que piensan y por que. Nosotros no somos parte del Condado de Adams, así que siéntanse cómodos de compartir sus opiniones honestas.

3. **Hagan preguntas**
   Yo ayudare a guiar la conversación, pero les pido a cada uno de ustedes que hagan preguntas si lo que yo digo o pregunto no es claro.

4. **Respeten las opiniones de otros y no interrumpan la conversación**
   Es importante que todo tipo de ideas se expresen. Si usted quisiera agregar algo a una idea o si usted tiene una idea que es diferente a las demás, por favor dígalo. Le pido que trate de respetar las opiniones y experiencias de cada uno de los presentes, aun si usted no esta de acuerdo con ellas. Les animo a que también tengan conversaciones entre ustedes y no solamente conmigo.

Mi compañero _____ estará tomando notas durante la discusión de hoy. El estará escribiendo lo que ustedes dicen en estos rotafolios y tomara notas en su computadora.

Nuestra discusión de hoy debe de tomar aproximadamente una hora.

Gracias por participar. ¿Alguien tiene alguna pregunta antes de que empecemos?

[INTRODUCTIONS Y ROMPE HIELO:]

1. Podría presentarse con el grupo compartiendo:
   a. Su nombre
   b. Por cuanto tiempo ha vivido en Adams, y
   c. Su lugar favorito para ver el atardecer o su parquet favorito en la ciudad

[USO Y OBSTACULOS:]

Responda las siguientes respuestas basándose en su experiencia personal o en lo que ha escuchado o sabe de familia, amigos, vecinos, etc.

2. Piense en las **razones** que tiene por las que busco asistencia de organizaciones, iglesias, agencias del gobierno dentro del Condado de Adams, o de miembros de la familia (o piense en las razones por las que necesitaría pedir asistencia en el futuro). Por favor escriba estas razones en los pedazos de papel que se le dieron. (Los papeles se les pasan al facilitador. El facilitador las pondrá en la tela adhesiva, acomodándolas por tema).

   a. Viendo esta lista de necesidades, ¿**a donde o con quien** *PUEDEN* ir para recibir ayuda con estas cosas? [El tomador de notas puede apuntar las respuestas en rotafolio]
   b. Ahora, ¿**a donde o con quien** *VAN* para recibir ayuda con estas cosas? [El tomador de notas escribe las respuestas en otra columna en el rotafolio]
   c. ¿Hay alguna otra necesidad o lugar que se puede agregar a esta lista?

3. Considerando los lugares/organizaciones/agencias que usted visita mas seguido: **Que es lo que le gusta** acerca de esta(s) organización(es) **o que es lo que lo hace regresar** (además de recibir el servicio que necesita)? [Tomador de notas escribe palabras clave en el rotafolio]
   a. EJEMPLOS: ¿esta cerca de su hogar, cerca del trabajo, confía en la gente que trabaja ahí, son eficientes, rápidos, el tipo de organización?
   b. EXPLORAR: ¿Qué haría sin estos servicios?

4. **¿Qué lo detiene o limita a utilizar mas programas de asistencia** o a pedir ayuda a otras o a más organizaciones?
   a. EXPLORAR: ¿**Qué lo frustra** acerca de recibir asistencia pública?
   b. EXPLORAR: ¿Hay algún tipo de asistencia que es **mas fácil o difícil** de recibir que otra?

[NECESIDADES:]

5. Asegúrese de que cada participante tenga un cuartos de hoja
   a. En la tela adhesiva dedica una mitad a necesidades comunitarias y la otra a necesidades familiares, dejando espacio en medio para aquellas que califiquen como parte de las dos categorías (estilo Diagrama de Venn usando la tela adhesiva). El facilitador participara como tomador de notas para apuntar lo que se dice y resumir puntos clave mas fácilmente.

6. Pida a los participantes que escriban su mayores necesidades (cada una en un cuarto de hoja). Recolecte las hojas y pregunte si son necesidades familiares, comunitarias, o las dos.
   a. EXPLORAR: ¿Cúales son las mayores necesidades en la comunidad? ¿y para tu familia y amigos?
   b. EXPLORAR: ¿Han cambiado estas necesidades en los últimos 2-5 años? ¿Cree que cambien en los siguientes 2-5 años?
   c. EXPLORAR: ¿Porqué? ¿Por qué ha aumentado esta necesidad en los últimos 5 o 10 años?
   d. EXPLORAR: ¿Como cree que cambien estas necesidades en los próximos 5 años?
   e. ¿Nos falto mencionar alguna necesidad urgente o mayor?

7. Pensando en las necesidades, organizaciones, y obstáculos que acabamos de discutir, vamos a reflexionar ahora acerca de que es lo mas importante y urgente en su comunidad en general. En un cuarto de hoja escriba la necesidad que usted cree es la mas urgente en su comunidad.

8. De manera colaborativa, identifique las necesidades mas importantes.

   Reparta tres estampas de puntos a cada uno de los participantes. Revise la lista de las necesidades mas importantes. Pida a los participantes que pongan las estampas bajo la necesidad(es) que ellos consideren mas grandes pegadas en la tela adhesiva.

   Los participantes pueden poner todas sus estampas bajo una necesidad o dividirlas como prefieran. Especifique que todos pueden tener puntos de vista diferentes y queremos oír las opiniones de todos acerca de esto.

   a. EXPLORAR: X,Y y/o Z tienen muchas estampas. ¿Por que creen que esta es una necesidad importante? ¿Están todos de acuerdo con esto?
   b. EXPLORAR: ¿Qué podría ayudar a atender las necesidades que ahora no se satisfacen? (programas específicos, ayuda, dinero, apoyo de la comunidad o ayudantes sociales)

        i.   EXPLORAR: ¿Hay algo que los proveedores de servicio pudieran hacer para mejorar la manera en la que se atienden estas necesidades?

    c.   EXPLORAR: ¿Quien quisiera que fuera responsable por el manejo de estos servicios? (organizaciones locales, el gobierno estatal, etc.)

        ii.   O ¿quien quisiera que diera estos servicios? ¿por que?

       iii.   ¿Es esto algo que alguna organización ya esta hacienda? ¿Que organización(es)?

[CIERRE]

9.   ¿Qué más necesitamos saber acerca de los servicios que usted usa ahora, los servicios que le gustaría ver mas, y los servicios que le preocupan para un futuro?

10. ¿Hay algo más que nos quisiera compartir? (El papel extra se puede usar para escribir cualquier otra cosa que quisiera compartir, o también los invitamos a quedarse mas tiempo para compartir).

¡GRACIAS POR SUS OPINIONES Y EL TIEMPO QUE LE HA DEDICADO A ESTA DISCUSIÓN!

Appendix F: Provider Survey

Background

You received this survey because you were identified by Adams County Human Services as someone associated with an organization that provides services to low-income residents of Adams County and therefore able to provide insight into the existing issues and gaps facing service providers and the populations they serve.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your participation! Your feedback will contribute to enhancing the well-being of the various communities throughout Adams County.

If you have questions about this survey, please contact Aaron at Joining Vision and Action. He can be reached directly via email at aaron@joiningvisionandaction.com.

Click "next" to start the survey.

Thanks again!

Services in Adams County

* 1. Does your organization provide services within Adams County?

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

Please tell us about your organization

2. What is the name of the service organization you are primarily affiliated with?

[   ]

Please use this organization as a reference for the remainder of this survey.

3. What is your primary role in this organization?

○ Board member

○ CEO/executive director

○ Program director/manager

○ Program assistant/administrative staff

○ Volunteer

○ Provider

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

4. Approximately how many clients does your organization serve annually?

[   ]

Services your organization provides

5. Which of the following types of assistance are MOST consistent with your organization's core mission? (check all that apply)

☐ Advocacy education (raising awareness or educating about a specific issue or topic, serving as a voice for a specific population)

☐ Housing (emergency and non-emergency, household utility payment assistance, weatherization, energy conservation, homeless assistance, housing locator services, housing counseling, rent or mortgage payment assistance, etc.)

☐ Early childhood services (Head Start, early childhood education, child development, childcare, parenting assistance, etc.)

☐ Youth development (primary and secondary education, higher education, GED, afterschool programs, summer camps, etc.)

☐ Workforce and adult education (GED, adult continuing education, workforce training, skill training, job retraining, computer literacy, English as a second language, literacy, etc.)

☐ Food services (food assistance for the needy, healthy eating education, food pantry, etc.)

☐ Health services (mental health services, substance abuse services, counseling, health care, health insurance services or assistance, health issue awareness, etc.)

☐ Recreation (parks and recreation facilities or activities for youth, seniors and families, etc.)

☐ Transportation services (rides for the elderly or mobility limited, grocery delivery for the mobility limited, rides to medical appointments for families in need, etc.)

☐ Other (please specify)

6. Which of the following groups does your organization typically serve? (check all that apply)

☐ Early childhood

☐ Youth

☐ Teenagers

☐ Families

☐ Low-income adults

☐ Seniors or older adults (60+)

☐ A specific ethnic or racial group

☐ Former inmates

☐ The homeless

☐ People with disabilities

☐ People with mental illness or mental health issues

☐ Refugees

☐ Veterans

☐ LGBTQ community

☐ Other (please specify)

7. To what extent does your organization offer services in Spanish?

☐ No Spanish services

☐ Written materials in Spanish

☐ Spanish-speaking staff available

Trends

8. In the past 12 months, has your organization seen an increase or decrease in the following?

	Decreased	Stayed the same	Increased
Overall clients served	◯	◯	◯
Requests for service	◯	◯	◯
Number of clients referred to other providers of services	◯	◯	◯
Funding to provide service	◯	◯	◯
Ability to serve your community	◯	◯	◯
Overall resources serving your community	◯	◯	◯

9. Please tell us about any other general trends you are seeing in relation to those you serve.

Barriers

10. To what extent do you perceive the following as barriers that prevent clients from accessing your services?

	Not at all a barrier	Seldom a barrier	Occasionally a barrier	Frequently a barrier
Location/transportation	○	○	○	○
Application process is too difficult	○	○	○	○
Confusion over eligibility requirements	○	○	○	○
Immigration status	○	○	○	○
Language barriers	○	○	○	○
Cultural barriers	○	○	○	○
Lack of childcare	○	○	○	○
Lack of time	○	○	○	○
Hesitance to ask for help	○	○	○	○
Lack of knowledge about services offered	○	○	○	○
Lack of support from family/friends/work to participate in services	○	○	○	○
Mistrust of organization or program	○	○	○	○
Misunderstanding of program goals/purposes	○	○	○	○
Lack of money to pay for services	○	○	○	○
Services do not meet their needs	○	○	○	○

Please use this space to describe other barriers not listed and/or to clarify your answers.

11. What barriers have become more problematic in the past two years?

12. What barriers do you anticipate becoming more problematic over the next five years?

Waitlist

* 13. Does your organization maintain a waitlist of clients waiting to be served?

○ Yes

○ No

Waitlist details

14. Why does your organization maintain a waitlist?

15. Approximately, how many people are currently on your waitlist?

General partnerships and engagement with Adams County Human Services

16. Adams County Human Services provides the services listed below. Please check any services that your organization also provides (left column), AND indicate if you feel you could benefit from a partnership with Adams County to support these services in the future (right column).

	We currently provide this type of service (or a closely related service)	We could benefit from working with Adams County Human Services to provide this in the future.
Childcare assistance	☐	☐
Adult protection	☐	☐
Disability assistance	☐	☐
Burial assistance	☐	☐
Child protection services	☐	☐
Child support services	☐	☐
Food assistance	☐	☐
Emergency assistance	☐	☐
Long-term care services	☐	☐
Medical or health assistance	☐	☐
Veterans' services	☐	☐
Senior services	☐	☐
Transit programs	☐	☐
Workforce development/adult education	☐	☐

Are there any other services you provide that would benefit from a Adams County collaboration?

17. If you do not currently collaborate or partner with Adams County Human Services to offer a particular service, please briefly explain why.

Last page! The needs of the individuals that your organization serves

18. Overall, to what degree do you think the needs of low-income residents in Adams County are currently being met in the following areas?

	Completely unmet	Somewhat unmet	Somewhat met	Completely met	Not sure
Financial health (financial literacy, savings, budgeting, income tax assistance, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Early childhood services (Head Start, early childhood education, child development, childcare, parenting assistance, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Youth development (primary and secondary education, higher education, GED, afterschool programs, summer camps, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Workforce and adult education (GED, adult continuing education, workforce training, skill training, job retraining, computer literacy, English as a second language, literacy, financial literacy, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Long-term housing (affordable housing, accessible housing, safe housing, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Emergency services (shelter, rent/mortgage/utility payment assistance, eviction assistance, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Public transportation (roads, mass transit, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Food and nutrition (access to healthy food, food assistance for the needy, nutritional education, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Health services (mental health services, substance abuse services, victims assistance, counseling, health care, health insurance services or assistance, health issue awareness, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Navigating available resources (case management, connecting to available assistance, etc.)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Opportunities for civic engagement and community involvement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

(Other: please specify)

19. Of the categories above, please identify the top three greatest ASSETS currently in place for low-income community members in Adams County and define the primary reason why you think each asset is a success.

	Asset	Primary Reason for Success
#1 Asset		
#2 Asset		
#3 Asset		

Are there other important reasons that these assets for low-income residents are successful?

20. Of the categories above, please identify the top three greatest UNMET NEEDS among Adams County low-income community members at the current time and define the primary reason why you think each need is unmet.

	Need	Primary Reason Unmet
#1 Unmet Need		
#2 Unmet Need		
#3 Unmet Need		

Are there other important reasons that these needs are not being met?

21. What changes do you think need to be made to improve the current services and programs available to lower-income community members in Adams County?

22. Is there anything else you would like to share about the communities you serve, their current needs and their unmet needs?

Thank You!

Thank you so much for your time and help with this important initiative. Your feedback will play an important role in ongoing efforts to meet the needs of Adams County community members.

If you are done with the survey, and comfortable with your answers, click 'next' below.

Disqualification page

We are looking to hear from organizations that provide services in Adams County CO. As you indicated you do not provide services in Adams County you have been disqualified from the survey. Thank you for your time.

ENDNOTES

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