South Central Community Action Partnership

“Building Bridges Toward Self-Sufficiency”

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Helping People • Changing Lives

2024 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR MISSION: To provide a wide range of services in collaboration with community partners in an effort to improve the quality of life for people with an economic disadvantage.

OUR VISION: To eliminate the causes and effects of poverty in the Magic Valley.

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action Agencies change people’s lives, embodies the spirit of home, improves communities, and makes our nation a better place to live. SCCAP cares about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

ROMA CYCLE

To ensure that the work done by SCCAP meets the needs of the people in our region to its maximum capacity possible the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, analysis of results and evaluations to improve outcomes is implemented throughout the agency. This Community Needs Assessment report for 2024 is the first step in SCCAP’s ROMA cycle of managing for results.

This assessment not only informs the future of SCCAP’s work, but it also serves as a tool for developing shared understandings of the issues of poverty, utilizing a shared vision for how to address those issues, and guiding intentionally coordinated and improved responses to needs as identified.

SERVICE AREA

South Central Community Action Partnership serves the 8 counties of South-Central Idaho including Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls. Population information in the following tables under the Heading, “Demographic Data.” Regional poverty information is listed in the tables under Economic Data.

Total Population

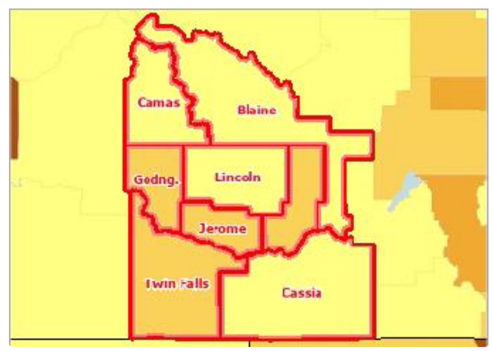
A total of 207,655 people live in the 11,484.52 square mile report area defined for this assessment according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2018-22 5-year estimates. The population density for this area is estimated at 18 persons per square mile, which is less than the national average population density of 94 persons per square mile.

Report Area	Total Population	Total Land Area (Sq Miles)	Population Density (Per Square Mile)
Total area served	207,655	11,484.52	18
Blaine County, ID	24,248	2,637.74	9
Camas County, ID	1,133	1,074.23	1
Cassia County, ID	24,859	2,565.61	10
Gooding County, ID	15,520	729.32	21
Jerome County, ID	24,474	597.54	41
Lincoln County, ID	5,203	1,201.36	4
Minidoka County, ID	21,626	757.00	29
Twin Falls County, ID	90,592	1,921.71	47
Idaho	1,854,109	82,645.14	22
United States	331,097,593	3,533,269.34	94

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Population, Density (Persons per Sq Mile) by County, ACS 2018-22

Over 50
101 - 500
51 - 100
11 - 50
Under 11
No Data or Data Suppressed Report Location



DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Total Population by Combined Race and Ethnicity

This indicator reports the percentage of the total population in the report area by combined race and ethnicity. The percentage values could be interpreted as, for example, "Of all the population in the report area, the percentage of population who are non-Hispanic white is (value)."Note: Some of the combined race/ethnicity groups use acronyms for their names in the following table and chart.
The full names are as follows:
Non-Hispanic NAAN = Non-Hispanic Native American or Alaska Native
Non-Hispanic NPI = Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Non-Hispanic Other = Non-Hispanic Some Other Race

Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic NAAN	Non-Hispanic NPI	Non-Hispanic Other	Non-Hispanic Multiple Races	Hispanic or Latino
Total area served	69.87%	0.33%	0.82%	0.52%	0.02%	0.24%	3.22%	24.98%
Blaine County	71.06%	0.42%	0.42%	1.37%	0.01%	0.19%	3.07%	23.45%
Camas County	79.26%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.12%	3.80%	14.83%
Cassia County	67.64%	0.12%	0.36%	0.16%	0.02%	0.29%	3.45%	27.95%
Gooding County	65.60%	0.10%	0.30%	1.64%	0.00%	0.15%	2.38%	29.83%
Jerome County	58.23%	0.00%	0.05%	0.06%	0.10%	0.20%	3.47%	37.88%
Lincoln County	64.02%	0.48%	0.38%	0.69%	0.00%	0.15%	2.46%	31.81%
Minidoka County	60.77%	0.10%	0.14%	0.80%	0.00%	0.18%	2.23%	35.79%
Twin Falls County	76.43%	0.55%	1.55%	0.25%	0.00%	0.26%	3.55%	17.40%
Idaho	80.06%	0.64%	1.30%	0.87%	0.13%	0.41%	3.51%	13.06%
United States	58.86%	12.13%	5.70%	0.55%	0.17%	0.43%	3.51%	18.65%

Total Population by Age Groups

This indicator reports the total population of the report area by age group.

Report Area	Age 0-4	Age 5-17	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65+
Total area served	13,436	42,827	18,253	26,006	26,624	22,400	24,922	33,187
Blaine County, ID	778	4,177	1,847	2,463	3,017	3,102	3,942	4,922
Camas County, ID	75	267	58	144	203	106	128	152
Cassia County, ID	1,932	5,767	2,305	2,975	3,167	2,501	2,710	3,502
Gooding County, ID	941	3,178	1,350	1,791	1,782	1,853	1,877	2,748
Jerome County, ID	1,849	5,483	2,122	3,205	3,149	2,574	2,977	3,115
Lincoln County, ID	311	1,074	408	673	734	602	654	747
Minidoka County, ID	1,598	4,672	1,904	2,654	2,725	2,186	2,475	3,412
Twin Falls County, ID	5,952	18,209	8,259	12,101	11,847	9,476	10,159	14,589
Idaho	112,576	342,203	187,034	239,996	238,680	209,167	221,910	302,543
United States	19,004,925	54,208,780	31,282,896	45,388,153	42,810,359	41,087,357	42,577,475	54,737,648

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Total Population by Gender

This indicator reports the total population in each county within the report area by gender.

Report Area	Male	Female	Male, Percent	Female, Percent
Total area served	105,223	102,432	50.67%	49.33%
Blaine County, ID	12,648	11,600	52.16%	47.84%
Camas County, ID	559	574	49.34%	50.66%
Cassia County, ID	12,741	12,118	51.25%	48.75%
Gooding County, ID	7,917	7,603	51.01%	48.99%
Jerome County, ID	12,576	11,898	51.39%	48.61%
Lincoln County, ID	2,779	2,424	53.41%	46.59%
Minidoka County, ID	10,930	10,696	50.54%	49.46%
Twin Falls County, ID	45,073	45,519	49.75%	50.25%
Idaho	933,728	920,381	50.36%	49.64%
United States	164,200,298	166,897,295	49.59%	50.41%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

ECONOMIC DATA

Households in Poverty

The number and percentage of households living in 100% poverty are shown in the table below. In 2022, it is estimated that there were 8699 Households, or 11.75% living in Poverty in our service area.

Report Area	Total Households	Households in Poverty	% of Households in Poverty
Total area served	**73986**	**8699**	**11.75%**
Blaine County, ID	9298	512	5.5
Camas County, ID	323	50	7.7
Cassia County, ID	8180	966	11.8
Gooding County, ID	5413	636	11.8
Jerome County, ID	8092	1116	13.8
Lincoln County, ID	1846	233	12.6
Minidoka County, ID	7474	1170	15.7
Twin Falls County ID	33,360	4016	12
Idaho	675,323	73,469	10.9
United States	125,736,353	15,616,265	12.4

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-2022

Population in Poverty by Ethnicity Alone

Total Area Served	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Percent Hispanic or Latino	Percent not Hispanic or Latino
Blaine County	404	1,270	7.13%	6.87%
Camas County	26	50	15.48%	5.18%
Cassia County	1,126	1,140	16.35%	10.31%
Gooding County	734	1,309	15.90%	12.19%
Jerome County	1,862	1,745	19.82%	11.62%
Lincoln County	254	348	15.43%	10.01%
Minidoka County	1,630	1,599	21.07%	11.70%
Twin Falls County	3,246	7,880	20.86%	10.71%
Idaho	37,056	161,732	15.69%	10.31%
United States	10,447,540	30,074,044	17.24%	11.45%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Population in Poverty by Race Alone

Total Area Served	Non-Hispanic White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Some other Race	Multiple Races
Blaine County	1,486	0	0	0	2	156	30
Camas County	71	0	0	0	0	5	0
Cassia County	1,821	7	43	0	1	470	194
Gooding County	1,776	13	22	9	0	65	158
Jerome County	2,592	0	0	59	0	394	526
Lincoln County	550	0	5	0	0	10	37
Minidoka County	1,840	0	62	0	0	686	641
Twin Falls County	7,816	0	29	56	0	1,142	2,083
Idaho	156,845	2,263	4,948	2,799	635	14,038	17,260
United States	21,525,577	8,519,391	608,547	1,897,150	103,050	3,652,060	10,447,540

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Individuals in Poverty by Family Type

Report Area	Total Families	Families in Poverty Total	Married Couples	Male Householder	Female Householder
Total Area Served	**52,323**	4687	2485	392	1810
Blaine County	6098	245	96	56	93
Camas County	209	5	5	0	0
Cassia County	6251	452	231	100	307
Gooding County	3688	351	176	12	163
Jerome County	6228	780	365	108	307
Lincoln County	1317	107	62	7	38
Minidoka County	5436	634	378	18	238
Twin Falls County	23,096	2113	1172	91	850
Idaho	462,093	33,802	17,018	3452	13,332
United States	81,432,908	7,151,167	2,666,469	783,254	3,701,444

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Seniors Living in Poverty

Seniors in Poverty Population and poverty estimates for people age 65 and up are shown for the report area. According to the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year data, an average of 16.1% of people lived in a state of poverty during the survey calendar year. The poverty rate for people living in the report area is greater than the national average of 10%.

Report Area	Ages 65 and Up Total Population	Ages 65 and Up in Poverty	Ages 65 and Up Poverty Rate
Total Area Served	**38,365**	**6078**	**15.8%**
Blaine County	18,909	3045	16.1%
Camas County	4870	241	4.9%
Cassia County	3351	296	8.8%
Gooding County	2705	297	11%
Jerome County	3060	243	7.9%
Lincoln County	699	88	12.6%
Minidoka County	3357	469	14%
Twin Falls County	1414	1399	9.9%
Idaho	294,923	23,923	8.1%
United States	53,352,363	5,309,452	10%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Child Poverty Rate (ACS) Ages 0-17

Population and poverty estimate for children age 0-17 are shown in the table below for SCCAP service area. According to the American Community Survey 5-year data, an average of 35.13% percent of children lived in a state of poverty (household income at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level) during the survey calendar year. The poverty rate for children living in SCCAP service area is greater, almost double, than the national average of 16.7%.

Report Area	Ages 0-17 Total Population	Ages 0-17 living in Poverty	Ages 0-17 % Poverty rate
Total Area Served	**55,713**	**9,787**	**35.13%**
Blaine County	4940	572	11.6
Camas County	342	32	9.4
Cassia County	7672	988	12.9
Gooding County	4038	759	18.8
Jerome County	7204	1572	21.8
Lincoln County	1374	265	19.3
Minidoka County	6103	1247	20.4
Twin Falls County	24,040	4352	18.1
Idaho	448,286	57,535	12.8
United States	72035358	12,002,351	16.7

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The 2024 Community Needs Assessment conducted by South Central Community Action Partnership (SCCAP) received direct feedback from 687 individuals/households. Of that 687, there are 586 individuals that identify as being low income. This feedback is the result of a comprehensive 18 question survey.

Techniques used:
Surveys were conducted with clients in person and/or via Survey Monkey in our offices in Twin Falls and Burley, conducted at SCCAP All Staff Annual Meeting in October, at Community events in Gooding, Twin Falls, and the Mini Cassia area and by several community partnering locations throughout our service area.

At SCCAP we posted notices with QR codes for clients in our lobby, on bathroom mirrors and on the desks of Intake/Case workers. Each employee was asked to complete the Survey in October 2024 at our Annual All Staff Meeting. Board of Directors members were invited to participate as well. They were emailed a notice with QR codes to access the Stakeholder Survey, given a copy of the notice with QR codes and invited a second time via email before the survey closed. (notices available upon request)

We attended community events in the service areas of Twin Falls, Gooding, and Jerome. At our table we had information about services we provide and copies of Community Needs Assessments in English and Spanish for individuals to complete while in attendance. We also had notices with QR codes to Survey Monkey for those that preferred to go paperless. (event invites available upon request)

We reached out to Local Service Providers groups via email and in person. We talked about the importance of a Community Needs Assessment, reviewed the Survey questions, and gave paper copies for organizations to survey the clients they serve. We also gave them invitation letters with QR codes for them to share with their clients, who could then complete the survey through Survey Monkey. (Agenda's available upon request)

As a result of this extensive process the following three needs were identified as the most crucial in South Central Community Action Partnership's 8 county Service Area:

1. Access to Fresh Produce and Healthy Food
2. Unable to afford car repairs.
3. Access to Affordable Housing

Coincidentally, Access to Fresh Produce and Healthy Food along with the inability to make car repairs needed are in the top 5 for all 8 counties.

"**Access to fresh produce and healthy food"**

Families: Families do not have access to fresh produce and healthy food.

Communities: Communities in our total service area lack grocery stores within walking distance. (Food Desert areas)

Agency: SCCAP does not have the physical space or the budget it costs to receive and store fresh produce

"Unable to afford car repairs"

Families: Individuals are unable to afford car repairs.

Communities: The community does not have enough affordable vehicle repair shops available.

Agency: SCCAP does not have established partnerships with vehicle repair shops or entities that can provide vehicle repairs at a reduced and reasonable rate.

"**Access to affordable housing"**

Families: Individuals and families cannot find affordable housing.

Communities: Communities do not have enough safe affordable housing units available for low-income renters.

Agency: SCCAP has limited financial resources and cannot help everyone that is facing eviction or homelessness.

2024 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

In 2024 members of SCCAP'S Board of Directors reviewed, provided input and some completed the Community Survey questions. Board input is essential when assisting in the process of helping identify our community strengths and weaknesses. They offer ideas on how we can promote our programs to focus on removing obstacles families face regarding economic stability, while strengthening our community and agency. The survey consisted of 18 questions covering a wide variety of issues facing many communities.

Here are some key demographics of the survey participants with the number of responses and percentages.

Age Range	# of Responses	Percentage
Under 18 years	24	3.87%
18-24 years	31	5.0%
25-34 years	109	17.58%
35-44 years	113	18.23%
45-54 years	104	16.77%
55-64 years	119	19.19%
65-79 years	107	17.26%
80 years or older	15	2.24%

County in which you reside full time?

Blaine	33	6.93%
Camas	5	1.05%
Cassia	125	26.26%
Gooding	9	1.89%
Jerome	70	14.70%
Lincoln	4	.84%
Minidoka	66	13.86%
Twin Falls	164	28.15

What best describes your ethnicity (check all that apply)

Caucasian/White	451
African American/Black	8
Asian	2
African Descent	1
Pacific Islander	1
Hispanic or Latino	152
Native American	34
Alaskan Native	0
Native Hawaiian	2
Other	18

What best describes your household

Single Adult/no kids	199	32.46%
Single Parent	102	16.64%
Two Parent Household	115	18.76%
Two Adults/No Children	92	11.75%
Multi-Family Household	55	11.9%
Grandparent(s) and Grandchildren	34	5.55%

Gender

Male	193	32%
Female	404	67%
Other	5	1%

What is your household's gross monthly income?

Monthly Gross Income	# of households	% of Survey respondents
$0-2400	388	66.32%
$2401-$3200	105	17.95%
$3201-$4100	43	7.35%
$4101-$5000	10	1.71%
$5001-$5900	14	2.39%
$5901 or higher	25	4.27%

KEY FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPANT SURVEYS

1. **Access to Fresh Produce and Healthy food** (NUTRITION)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as the lack of "consistent, dependable access to enough food for active healthy living," it is also when individuals do not have enough to eat and do not know where their next meal will come from. The Idaho Food Bank projected that 202,890 or 11.3% of the population to experience food insecurity in 2022. _Condition:_ In 2024, they reported that 11.4% of Idahoans are food insecure. This includes 67,590 of Idaho's Children and 7.3% of Seniors. Projections and results like these are supported by the results of SCCAP's 2024 survey of participants.

Question #8 in the Community Survey asks, "on a scale from 1-5 please rate how important this service is to your household now." 1 being not important and 5 being extremely important.
Condition: Individuals and Families do not have enough food, fruits, and vegetables

- Food (help getting enough food): 72% of respondents indicated, Very or Extremely important.
- Nutritious food (help getting enough fruits and vegetables): 67% of respondents indicated it is very or extremely important.

When asked, "list 3 things that would make your life better." Community Survey participant responses related to food and nutrition include, "lower prices at grocery stores," "more fresh food," "affordable healthy foods," "food stamps."

Causes:
According to Feeding America's 2024 Map the Meal Gap report, ***food insecurity often increases when other economic and financial pressures affect a household***. Between 2020 and 2023, rent in Idaho increased by 41%. The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports that working at the minimum wage of $7.75/hr. a person in Idaho would have to work 103 hours each week to afford a modest 1-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent. The USDA Economic Research Service found that there has been a 12% increase in the cost of at-home food from December 2021 to December 2022 nationwide. Families struggling to make ends meet whose income is 130% of the federal poverty level often qualify for food assistance programs. USDA Economic Research indicates that most people living in poverty are food secure and most people facing hunger live above the poverty line. For example, ***Cause:* 54% of people in Idaho who are food insecure may not qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) due to their income level.** Individuals that are unable to access nutritious food can experience negative health effects like diabetes, depression, high blood pressure and other chronic diseases like congestive heart failure. Proper nutrition at any age is vital to a person's well-being and health outcomes. Chapin Hall reported, "participating in food assistance programs, such as Women, Infants & Children food program (WIC) and SNAP is associated with lower risk for child welfare system involvement."

Johnson-Motoyama et al. (2022) found that states that "adopted policy options to expand access to SNAP had lower rates of Child Protective Services (CPS) and foster care outcomes for all forms of child maltreatment and specifically for neglect." These findings highlight the importance of food assistance programs to promote child safety and family stability. (Chapin Hall.org/project/access-to-food-assistance-programs-increases-child-safety/)

SCCAP is an Emergency Recipient Agency for the USDA. In 2024, SCCAP's The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) distributed 12,469 food boxes throughout our eight-county service area. We provide support to 13 food pantries and 3 soup kitchens throughout the Magic Valley. Local organizations conduct food drives in their communities to support our food pantries. Local businesses donate surplus food products and goods to our organization so we can get it into the hands of individuals and families experiencing food insecurities.

2. **Unable to afford car repairs. (TRANSPORTATION)**

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics the cost of vehicle maintenance and repair has risen 36.2% from January 2019 to January 2024. Since 2021, the average cost per service has gone up 45%. Between August 2022 and August 2023, the cost of repairs rose 17% and maintenance, like oil changes, has risen by 9%. The cost of vehicle insurance rose 22.2% and repairs rose 11.6% between March 2023 and March 2024. When looking at the cumulative impact of rising costs in labor, parts, and operational expenses from 1997 to 2024, there has been a 165.37% increase. In 2023 alone a 17.11% increase in repair prices was recorded. In 2024 AAA reported that consumers spent an average of 10.13 cents per mile on maintenance, repairs, and tire replacement. Consumer Price Index (CPI) February 2024 to February 2025 recognizes notable increases over the last year.

Question #9 in the Community Survey asks, "Rate the following challenges your family faces that might be holding you back from improving your quality of life."

Condition: Individuals and families are unable to afford vehicle repairs

- 26%, 135 respondents do not have access to a vehicle at all.
- 23.44%, 120 respondents do not have car insurance.
- 51.95%, 264 respondents indicated inability to afford vehicle repairs was Definitely Seriously a Huge problem.

When asked, "List 3 things that would make your life better?" Community survey respondents provided comments related to transportation such as, "a car," "a working vehicle," "my car fixed," "repairs to fix my car," "fuel," "lower car insurance," and "no car trouble."

Causes:
Factors that contribute to increased vehicle repair costs include ***advanced vehicle technology, supply chain issues caused by the COVID pandemic, labor shortages, increased labor costs, and inflation***. Consumers are also keeping their cars for longer amounts of time, keeping them on the road vs. purchasing a new vehicle. Technological advances in the car industry have significantly improved, offering drivers increased conveniences such as auto seat adjust or side steps that extract and retreat, safety features such as lane assist and back up cameras, and customizations such as enhanced performance boosters or self-driving vehicles consequently causing an increase in the amount of things that can go wrong and maintenance required. During the COVID pandemic small towns, big cities and the entire United States experienced a huge shortage of materials, parts, and workforce. When supply cannot keep up with demand, prices for goods go up. Companies strive to meet demands which require they hire more people to meet the need. Competition among companies looking to hire skilled professionals is now competing for the few skilled workers available, enticing them with increased wages and benefits causing the need for a rise in costs for goods/services. This is inflation. Inflation measures how quickly prices are changing across the US economy.

Services: Currently SCCAP does not provide vehicle repair services. We do refer clients to other agencies that can help with transportation expenses depending on specific criteria.

3. Access to Affordable Housing (HOUSING)

Affordable housing continues to be one of the top needs identified by program participants and other survey takers in SCCAP's service area. Specific Community needs identified are the need for more affordable rental units and the need for housing options for special populations (offenders, poor credit, disabled, etc.).

Question #8 in the Community Survey asks, "on a scale from 1-5 please rate how important this service is to your household now." 1 being not important and 5 being extremely important.

- Help finding housing we can afford: 55.2% of respondents indicated, Very or Extremely Important
- Help finding a way to afford rent or mortgage: 49.6% of respondents indicated it was Very or Extremely Important.

When asked, "List 3 things that would make your life better" Community Survey participants responses were related to housing. Some comments include "help for the homeless," "a home to rent," "lower cost of living," "getting a place," "Being able to afford rent."

Condition:
31.6% (97ppl) of Community Survey ***respondents indicated that they cannot find affordable housing***. 13.68% (42ppl) indicated they were at risk of eviction at the time they took the survey and ***<u>causes:</u>*** 22.8% (70ppl) stated that bad credit makes it hard to find a place to rent. 13.03% (40ppl) reported that criminal history makes it hard to find a place to rent and 13.68% (42ppl) with disabilities indicated that it is a challenge to find accommodations when looking for housing.

Question #11 asks, "Please choose the option that most closely describes your current living situation."

152 or 27.89% of respondents own your residence (your name is on the mortgage)
80 or 14.68% of respondents rent their residence (your name is on the lease)
60 or 11.01% of respondents are living with family/friends (pay rent, not on lease)
295 or 54.13% of respondents living with family/friends (do not pay rent, not on lease)
39 or 7.16% of respondents are living in a Camper/RV/Car
26 or 4.77% of respondents are living in a Shelter/Motel
5 or .92% of respondents are living unsheltered.

Conditions continued: Families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered "cost burdened" and may have difficulty affording other necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical costs. A family with one full-time worker earning minimum wage cannot afford the local fair-market-rent for a 2-bedroom apartment anywhere in Idaho. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition website 66% of extremely low-income renter households are severely cost burdened. Renters are paying more than 50% of household income towards rent in the state of Idaho. The Idaho income threshold for 4-person extremely low-income household is $30,030. The annual income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market rate is $47,969. A minimum wage worker would need to work 127 hours/week to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rate.

Causes:
The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ***Fair Market Rent rates in our region have increased dramatically***. According to the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-23, the following increases were observed across the region: Blaine County 26.70%, Camas County 28.91%, Cassia County

20.64%, Gooding County 23.73%, Jerome County 21.04%, Lincoln County 23.91%, Minidoka County 19.30%, and Twin Falls County 27.49%.

Causes: The burden on renters comes from the cost of rent increasing faster than wages for the average worker. The COVID-19 pandemic had long-lasting effects with rental increases, meaning rents have not gone down, and the ***current increase in food costs of goods and services*** across the nation makes housing even more difficult to afford.

Available Housing

Causes:
From 2022 to 2024, ***the population in Idaho grew by over 57,000 people***. This equates to a growth of about 1.5% per year. Data USA noted a 2.11% population increase between 2022 and 2023. As noted in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2023 'Residential Vacancy Rates by Quarter' table, each county in SCCAP service area saw ***changes in the number of units available aka, vacant***.

The US Postal Service provides quarterly information to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development on business and residential addresses identified as 'vacant' on a quarterly basis. The data for the 4th quarter of 2023 is what is reported here. A total of 898 residential addresses were identified as vacant in SCCAP's service area at the end of 2023.

Condition:
There is a shortage of affordable and available rental homes, especially to extremely low-income renters. According to National Low Income Housing Coalition, "in Idaho only 34 rental homes are affordable and available for every 100 extremely low-income households." This shortage poses a great threat if families suddenly find themselves experiencing homelessness in that there is not the availability of housing in which to place them. This can potentially increase the likelihood of prolonged periods or frequency of homelessness.

Blaine County reports they have no vacancy data for the 4th quarter of 2023, Camas County reports they have zero vacancies, Cassia County 157 vacancies, Gooding County reports 62 residential vacancies, Jerome County reports having 100 vacancies, Lincoln County reports 0 units available and Twin Falls County reported 479 units available.

Causes:
Based on the most recent Point in Time count data, ***homelessness in the Idaho Balance of State CoC has shown an increase of 28% over the past 5 years (2018-2023)*** including an increase in unsheltered homelessness by 57%. This is happening despite the increased number of individuals utilizing emergency shelters, which rose by more than 22% in the same period. Affordable housing is the biggest barrier to achieving stability.

In 2024 SCCAP helped 36 individuals find temporary shelter, 166 individuals obtained safe and affordable housing, 273 individuals avoided eviction, and 20 individuals/families maintained safe and affordable housing for at least 90 days. 101 individuals received help with rent payments, 57 were helped with rental deposits and the Weatherization program assisted 34 households receive necessary home repairs.

Through SCCAP's Self-help housing program assisted 18 individuals/families purchase and build a home in Heyburn and Buhl. We helped 21 individuals improve their credit score and 23 individuals increase their net worth. 477 individuals received Financial Coaching/counseling, 7 obtained child support benefits and 2 individuals now receive SSI payments.

LIHEAP paid 3651 utility payments for individuals, 787 households in arrears and 57 utility deposits.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data is what helps us tell the story. By capturing what respondents have to say and how they feel about things we gain a deeper understanding of individual, family, community, and agency needs. It is with this information that we paint a picture of what people are experiencing in our local area.

Community survey respondents were asked to "list 3 things that would make your life better."

Respondent comments related to food and nutrition included, "lower prices at grocery stores," "more fresh food," "affordable healthy foods," "food stamps."

Community Survey participants responses related to housing include "help for the homeless," "a home to rent," "lower cost of living," "getting a place," "Being able to afford rent," "lower cost of living."

Community survey respondents provided comments related to transportation such as, "a car," "a working vehicle," "my car fixed," "repairs to fix my car," "fuel," "lower car insurance," and "no car trouble."

Focus group activities included discussions with the Mini-Cassia Service Providers group and the Northside Service Providers group. "What are you seeing with those that you work with?" and "Why do you think that is?" Was asked at each meeting.

The Mini-Cassia Service Providers group mentioned they see "a lot of underemployments, a need for emergency housing, transportation and evening hours for food boxes." When asked, "Why do you think that is?" Some felt it could be due to "Generational Poverty, lack of basic life skills and/or not knowing how to budget or pay bills." The discussion that followed identified what resources are available to those seeking assistance and where there was a need. Resources available included area food banks, Interfaith Volunteers help with transportation, and a local church collaborates with volunteers that help teach vehicle maintenance skills like oil changes. Members mentioned individuals needing, "job coaching & mentor programs. So, a person knows when to put the phone down, how to show up to work on time and be responsible." "Evening hours for food box distributions," and "more homeless shelters or hotel help."

The Northside Service Providers group mentioned they have seen, "people struggling with increases in costs everywhere," "individuals are challenged by budgeting. For example, they get food stamps early in the month and spend without budgeting and the money runs out by the end of the month," and "more than half of people we see the number one thing lately is transportation. They either have none or cannot afford to pay for the repairs." Someone felt that a person's "undocumented status keeps them from applying for assistance." Others thought that individual's debt to income ratio was a huge factor. "Food is a low priority when living in the cycle of debt." One member heard from clients that, "food is accessible, 'they can always get food' it is the other costs related to living they can't get help for." The discussion that followed identified existing resources such as area food pantries, Navigators can help with vehicle repairs if the applicant is a parent or paying child support, 6 week Healthy Cooking programs are offered through the Center for Community Health and the University of Idaho Extension office in Twin Falls and community summer lunch programs that are collaborating with the United Way to give kids backpack of food to help get them through the weekend.

Stakeholder Surveys

There were 131 responses from all 8 counties in our service area.

#'s by County	Board	Employee	Public	Education	Faith	Community	Private
Blaine County 3			2			1	
Camas County 1						1	
Cassia County 33	3	7	2	8	1	8	*3
Gooding County 3			1			1	1
Jerome County 9	2	3		2	1	1	
Lincoln County 5		1	2	1		1	
Minidoka Co. 16		3	1	11			1
Twin Falls Co. *60	4	*19	8	2	4	21	2

*1 unknown

Nutrition

Stakeholders were asked to rate key community issues.

Condition: Families are unable to get enough food, fruits, and vegetables.

98.47 % or 128/130 respondents indicated individuals and families in their communities needed help getting enough food and 97.6% or 126/129 respondents indicated individuals and families also need help in getting enough fruits and vegetables.

Stakeholder comments included "recently been seeing families seeking help with food." "More access to fresh vegetables, fruits, and fresh milk," ***cause****-limited access to fresh veggies, fruits, and milk* "increasing the income limit so more families in need could be approved" ***cause****-Federal Poverty Levels (fpl) are too low*.

Housing

Stakeholders were asked "On a scale from 1 to 5 rate how important each service is to people in your community."

C***ondition:*** Families are unable to find affordable housing

98.4% of respondents felt that "Help finding affordable housing" is extremely important in their communities. (127 out of 129)

98.5% of respondents felt that "Help finding a way to afford rent or mortgage" was also extremely important.

Stakeholder comments related to housing include "How to have individuals qualify for affordable housing or renting in the area." ***causes-*** **"**Housing costs and the cost of living are exponentially out pacing the rise of wages" ***cause****-*criminal history prevents individuals from obtaining housing "Housing needed for felons"

Transportation

Stakeholders were asked "Rate the following challenges families could be facing that might be holding them back from improving the quality of their lives."

Condition: Individuals are unable to afford car repairs

89.85% of respondents felt like individuals are unable to afford car repairs. **(**115 out of 128)

Stakeholder comments about challenges families face include: ***causes-*** "Poor/no budgeting experience in general" and "lack of food, money for gas, housing etc."

Misc.

Stakeholders were asked, "What have we not asked you that you feel is important?"

Comments from Stakeholders included, "Community needs more support for children and adults with developmental disabilities," "Mental health services is a big issue in our community," and

"I would like to learn more about the programs, resources, and services that are available at SCCAP."