



**STRATHCONA  
COUNTY**

## **2020 Seniors Housing Survey**



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## **I. Introduction and Purpose of the Survey**

In July 2020, the Strathcona County Seniors Advisory Committee conducted the second of a series of online survey of seniors in order to obtain perceptions toward a variety of topics that potentially could impact seniors either now or in the future. The purpose of the Seniors Advisory committee is to provide advice and recommendations to Council on issues and opportunities related to the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of seniors in Strathcona County. This purpose of this survey was to gain an assessment of the current housing status of seniors; the availability of adequate, accessible and affordable housing, and their needs and options going forward.

Obtaining data directly from residents provides the Seniors Advisory Committee with information to make recommendations to Council of what seniors require from the County based on the perspectives and attitudes of residents. It should be noted that a number of participants and valuable input were not represented in the survey, with no input provided by seniors in assisted living or long-term care facilities. Access and familiarity with technology is a barrier for many seniors and with COVID-19 protocols in place at the time, providing paper surveys and collecting them was not a viable option.

While the survey only represents a fraction of all seniors living within the County the participation level was consistent with other SCOOP surveys. This report provides a comprehensive review of all steps undertaken in the development and implementation of the survey, as well as a detailed summary of the results.

A review of the methodology associated in the development and implementation of the survey can be found in the next section of this report.

## **II. Methodology**

### **A. The questionnaire**

The questionnaire used in this study was newly created specifically for this study. In addition to demographics, a series of questions were asked in this survey pertaining to:

- Aspects of their current home (type of home they currently live in and ownership status)
- Current and possible future housing plans ~~relocation~~)
- Current housing options for seniors in the County
- Housing subsidies
- What specific housing options seniors are looking for

### **B. Sampling design and data collection procedure**

The survey was made available through the Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel (SCOOP). It was tailored specifically to be answered by residents aged 55 or older (age 55 was established as the benchmark for identifying seniors in Strathcona County).

The online survey ran between June 30 and July 25, 2020, during which 323 people took part in the survey. Although poll-based data is based on people who decide to participate and were not randomly selected, and have access to the online poll, the margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is  $\pm 5.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The data was analyzed by Strathcona County's Communications using SPSS for Windows and reviewed by the Strathcona County Seniors Advisory Committee.

### III. RESULTS

This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, will also be highlighted.

#### A. Demographic overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of seniors who completed the survey. In terms of gender, 38.4% were male (♂) and 59.4% were female (♀). The remaining 2.2% preferred not to answer.

A breakdown by age is as follows:

- 39.3% were in the 55 – 64 age group;
- 44.3% were in the 65-74 age group; and
- 16.4% were 75 or older.

The final urban/rural split was close to the actual proportions, with 78.3% of the respondents being from Sherwood Park and 21.4% living in rural Strathcona County. The remaining 0.3% resided outside of the County (but worked here). It should be noted that a significant number of participants and valuable input were unfortunately not represented in the survey, with no input provided by seniors in assisted living or long-term care facilities. Access and familiarity with technology is a barrier for many seniors so being able to sign up for SCOOP to complete the survey was an obstacle to participation, and with the COVID protocols in place at the time providing paper surveys and collecting them was not a viable option.

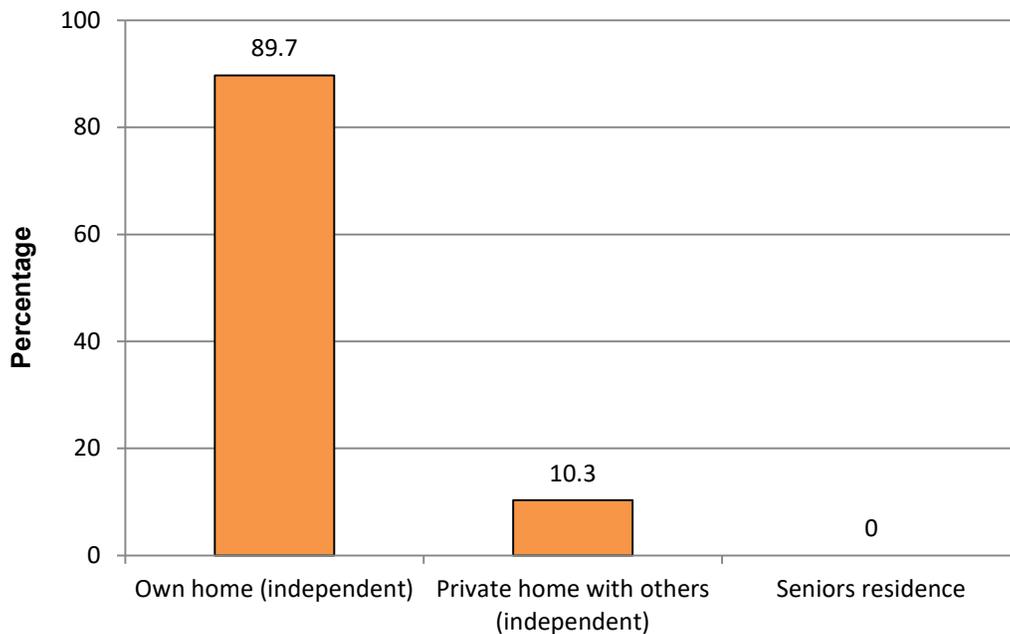
With respect to how long respondents have lived in the County, the breakdown is as follows:

- 0.6% have lived in the County for less than one year;
- 3.1% have lived in the County for 1-4 years;
- 5.6% have lived in the County for 5-9 years;
- 12.7% have lived in the County for 10-19 years; and
- 78% have lived in the County for 20 or more years.

## B. Present housing status

Initially, respondents were asked a series of questions about their current housing status. Overall, it can be seen in Figure 1 that almost all of the respondents live in their own home independently, with 10.3% living in a private residence with friends or family. None of the respondents live in a seniors' residence at this time. Almost all the respondents own their home (96.6%); 3.4% were currently renting. These patterns were the similar for residents in both Sherwood Park and rural Strathcona. Age and gender were also not factors.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Where respondents currently live**

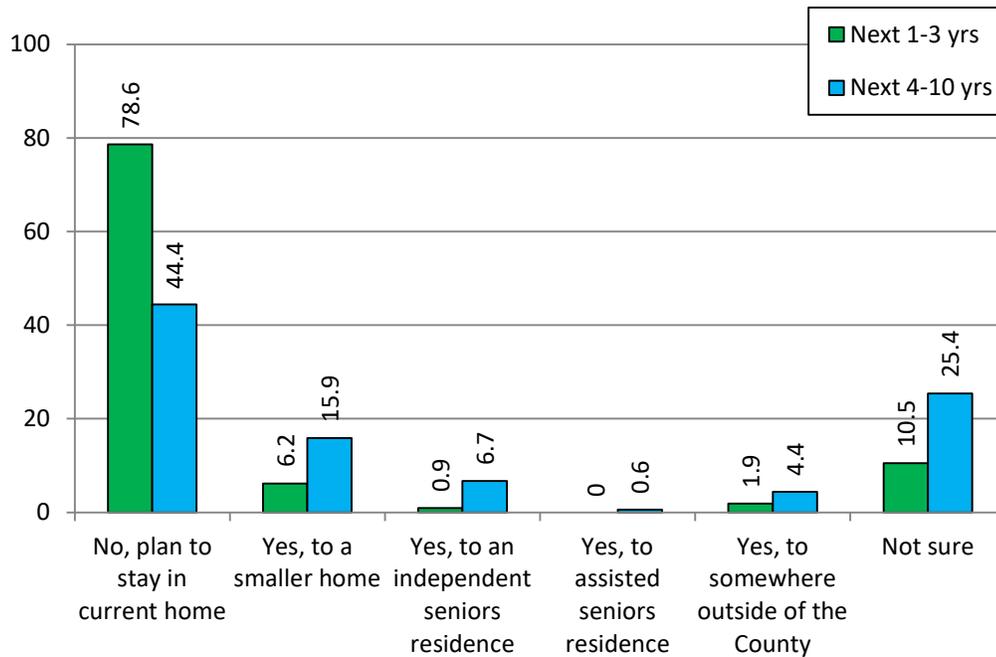


## C. Future housing plans

Respondents were then asked whether they were considering moving into another residence sometime in the future. The majority (78% or roughly 4 out of 5) plan to stay in their current home for the next 1 to 3 years. It can be seen in Figure 2 that in the next 4-10 years, there was considerably more uncertainty, dropping to just 44% (or about 2 out of 5) expecting to be living in the same home.

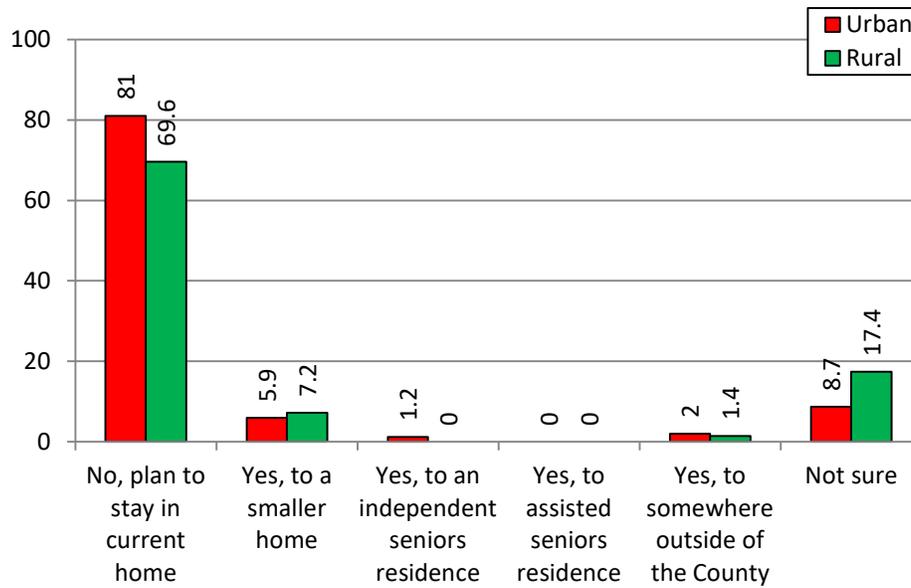
The remaining 56% (the majority of respondents) had now shifted to being uncertain (25% or 1 in 4), 16% would downsize and 7.2% were considering a seniors' residence (either dependent or independent living) but staying in Strathcona County. A little over 4% were planning to move away outside of the County.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Future housing plans**



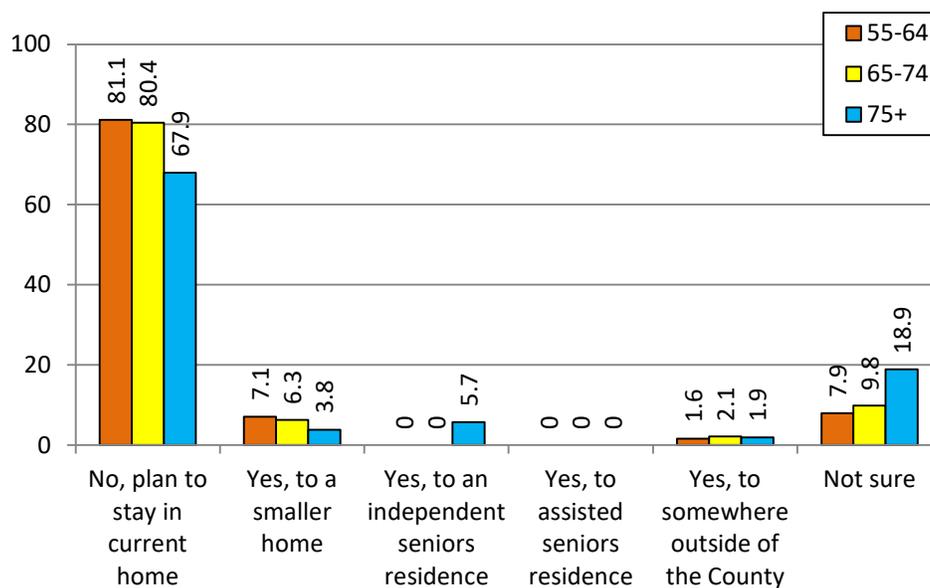
In terms of demographics, for future housing plans in the next 1-3 years, it can be seen from Figure 3 that rural residents were less likely to stay in their current home compared to those living in Sherwood Park, and more of them weren't sure about their future living arrangements. In the longer term (4-10 years), the differences between urban and rural residents were less pronounced, and generally matched what was seen in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 3**  
**Future housing plans for the next 1-3 years: Urban and rural comparisons**



For future housing plans in the next 1-3 years, it can be seen from Figure 4 that age played a factor for any future plans, particularly among those aged 75 or older.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Future housing plans for the next 1-3 years: Age comparisons**

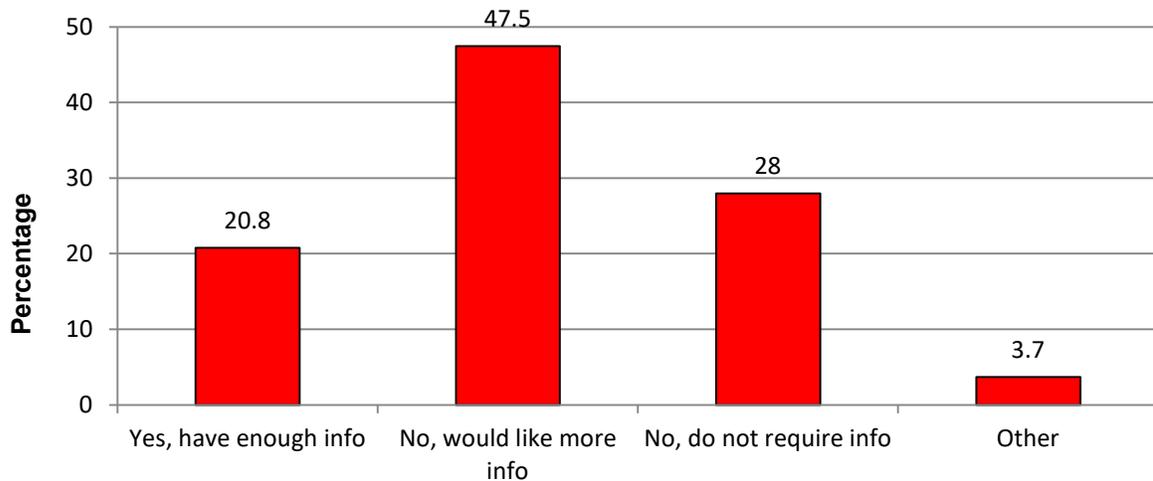


Gender did not play a factor with respect to future housing plans, either in the next 1-3 years or in the next 4-10 years.

#### D. Housing options

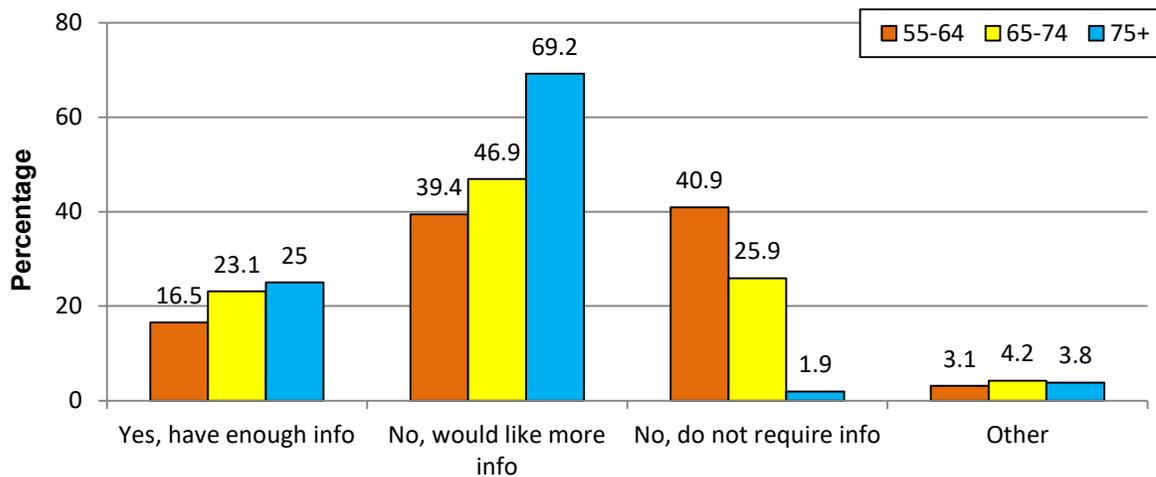
Respondents were asked about awareness of housing programs and other options available for seniors, such as subsidies and information sessions. It can be seen in Figure 5 that just over 20% knew about the programs and felt they had enough information, while over 75% were unaware of the programs. (47.5% would like more information, while an additional 28% were not interested in finding out more about them at this time).

**FIGURE 5**  
**Awareness of housing programs for seniors**



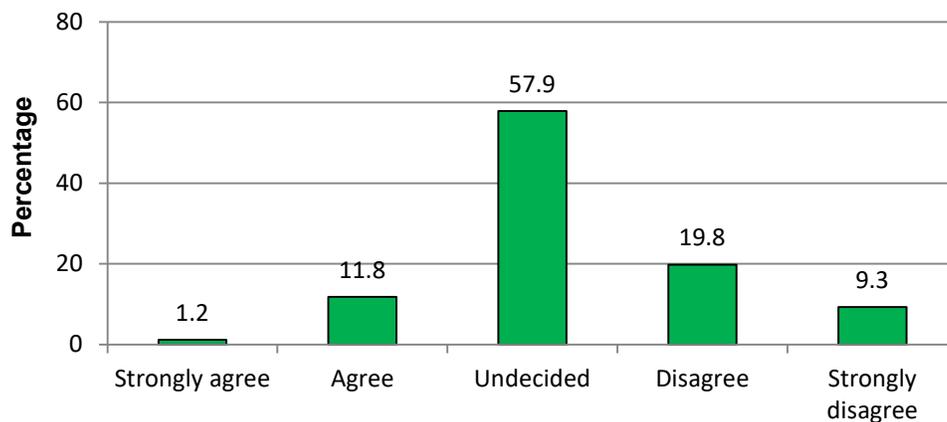
There were no differences in awareness patterns of seniors housing programs between urban and rural residents, or between males and females. With respect to age groups, however, the percentages of respondents who either had information about this or did not and would be interested in acquiring more increased as the age of the respondent increased. This pattern can be seen in Figure 6.

**FIGURE 6**  
**Awareness of housing programs for seniors: Age group comparisons**



Respondents were then asked to indicate if there were presently adequate housing options for seniors in Strathcona County. It can be seen in Figure 7 that the majority of respondents were undecided about this at the moment, with more people disagreeing than those who were in agreement. Only 1 in 8 agreed there are adequate housing options for seniors.

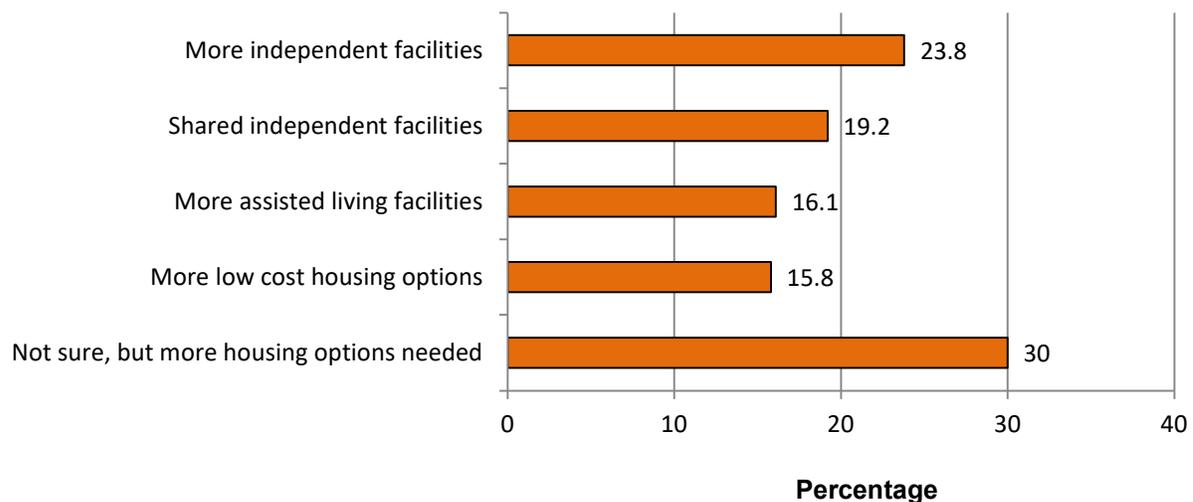
**FIGURE 7**  
**Are there adequate housing options for seniors in the County?**



The patterns seen in Figure 7 did not vary considerably when demographic factors were inspected.

All respondents (regardless of their answer to whether or not there were presently adequate housing options for seniors in Strathcona County) were then asked to indicate what additional housing options were needed in Strathcona County from a list of options. It can be seen in Figure 8 that shared independent facilities, assisted living facilities and more low-cost housing were selected by about 1 in 4 (roughly 25%). Over 1 in 3 (35%) indicated more independent facilities specifically for seniors (condos, apartments, etc.) were required. Over 40% weren't sure of the specifics but indicated more were required.

**FIGURE 8**  
**What additional housing options are needed in Strathcona County**



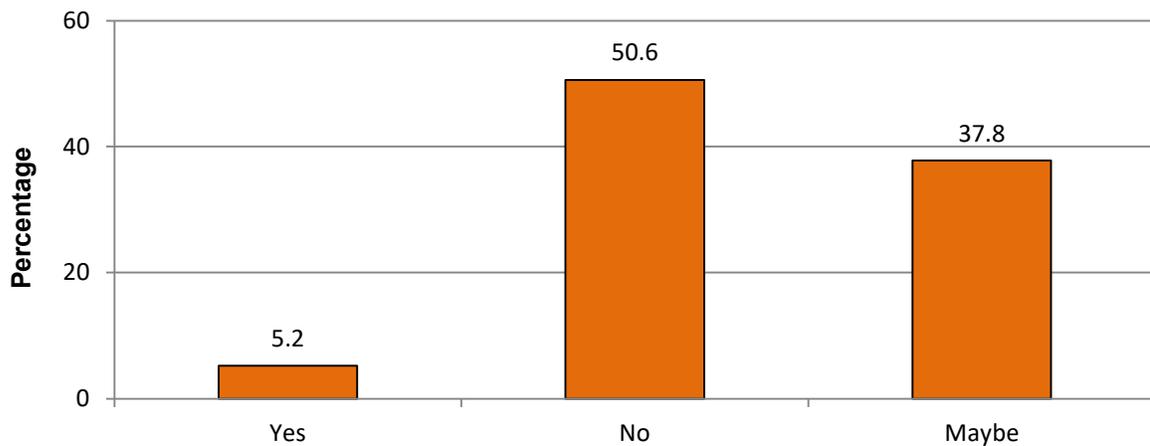
A further analysis of the data presented in Figure 7 revealed that although 58% of respondents (n=188) were initially undecided, when presented with a list of housing options, almost all of these undecided respondents (n=177) selected at least one of the possible options to consider.

When including all respondents, approximately 2/3 of them (66.9% - 216 out the 323 total) specifically noted deficiencies in what currently exists. While one person may indicate more independent living is needed and another believes more assisted living is required, etc.

The patterns seen in Figure 8 did not vary considerably when demographic factors were inspected.

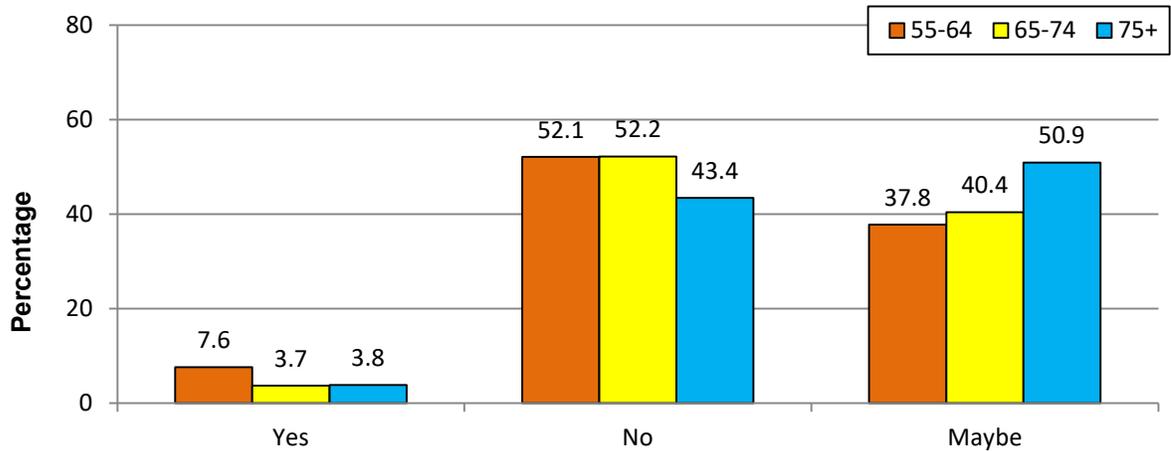
Housing is typically recommended to consume no more than 30% of income (not including utilities, etc.). Given this information, respondents were asked whether they required a subsidy for housing now or in the future. It can be seen in Figure 9 only about half of respondents (50.6%) said no and 44.1% thought they might have need of this, either now or in the future. Very few of them indicated that they did need a subsidy right now (5.2%).

**FIGURE 9**  
**Do you need a housing subsidy?**

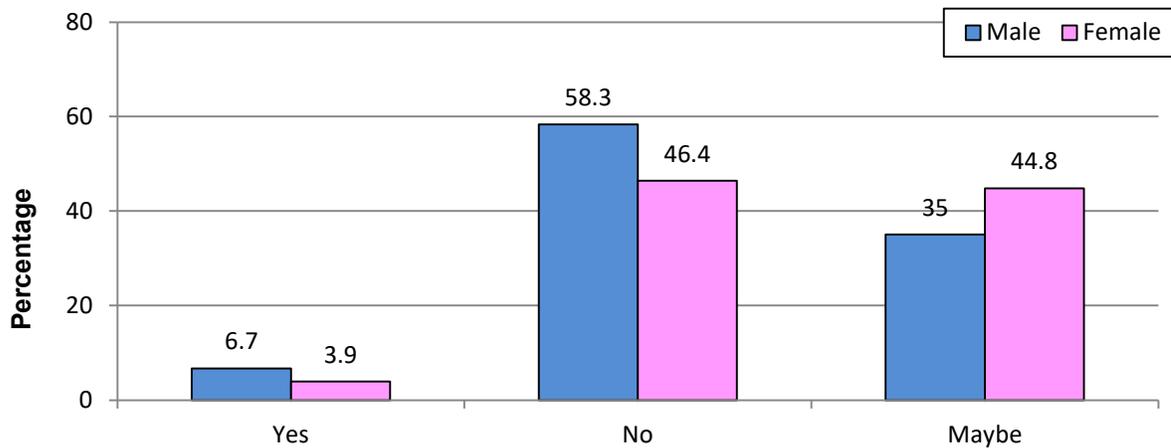


With respect to demographics, the percentage of people who thought they might need a subsidy in the future increased as the age of the respondent increased (Figure 10). More females thought they could possibly use the subsidy in the future compared to males (Figure 11).

**FIGURE 10**  
**Do you need a housing subsidy: Age group comparisons**



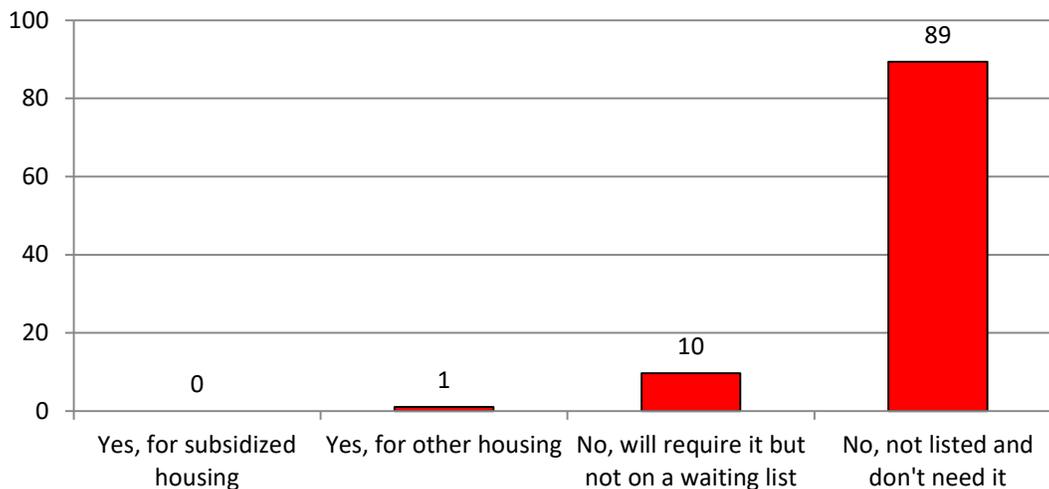
**FIGURE 11**  
**Do you need a housing subsidy: Gender comparisons**



Respondents were asked what they would be looking for if they decided to change their housing situation. A significant number of specific ideas were put forward by 43.7% of the respondents, with the terms *affordable*, *smaller*, and *independent* being frequently mentioned. The type of housing often gravitated to bungalows or dwellings that were on one level. Something that was pet-friendly was also mentioned by a few of the respondents. The original comments are collected in Appendix A. These comments have not been broken down by demographics.

A follow up question asked whether respondents were on a waiting list for some sort of seniors housing in the next 1 to 3 years. It can be seen from Figure 11 that almost all of the respondents are not on a waiting list and have no need for seniors housing in this timeframe.

**FIGURE 11**  
**Waiting list for seniors' housing for the next 1-3 years**



The patterns seen in Figure 11 did not vary considerably when demographic factors were inspected.

**APPENDIX A: POTENTIAL CHANGES TO ONE'S HOUSING**

- 1 bedroom condo (lease for life) near public transit
- 1 BR apt, some storage, 1 parking space
- 2 bedroom, 1 level home within own washer/dryer, some green space to get outside would be a must
- 2 bedrooms handicap access indoor parking and ability to alter needs i.e. assisted living etc. My wants would be a facility for crafts and hobbies such as woodworking, card room, library etc. And the ability to have guests in separate facilities.
- 2 bedrooms, small kitchen, main floor, underground parking
- 2 bedrooms/storage/parking/access to groceries, transportation, walking trails, pharmacies, church, medical services
- 55+ no children duplexes. low condo fees
- A bungalow or duplex bungalow would be best without being part of a condo situation with all its practical and political downsides.
- a bungalow with attached garage, near amenities
- A nice neighbourhood with nice homes not cookie cutter planning
- A pleasant seniors' residence with good food and caring workers
- A small house or duplex that costs no more than \$300,000. Absolutely NO CONDO FEES. OR RULES!
- A small outdoor space
- A work or hobby space and parking.
- Access to amenities such as health care, shopping, trails and parks.
- Access to meal services, with personal meal preparation possible in-suite. available health services (nurse) but not necessarily full time in-house
- Accessibility, privacy,
- Accessible, staff to check on living accommodation occasionally so not completely up to family.
- Adequate closet space, adequate laundry facilities, flexible meal times, exercise equipment geared for seniors, larger rooms
- Adequate space, exterior snow removal and garden maintenance.
- Affordability & space
- Affordability, access to public transport, vicinity of green space and nature walking trails, indoor secure parking, independent living,

- Affordable & closet to amenities
- Affordable access to a seniors facility
- Affordable accommodation. It's cheaper to rent or win a condo in Edmonton than in the county!
- Affordable housing
- Affordable housing
- Affordable transportation, easier access to healthcare and if long term care is needed! I should be able to stay in the park
- An apartment condo age restricted, mostly seniors living there, air conditioning, underground parking, social room, guest suite, very close to a bus stop.
- An independent living home in the community - several seniors can live together with occasional visits from nurses, physio, etc. Funded privately or publicly - 15 years in the future
- An opportunity to move through the aging steps in one facility. Independent, assisted, long term care.
- At home help
- Bungalow
- Bungalow, condo style
- bungalow, low maintenance or condo/HOA, green space (I don't want to feel like a sardine),
- close to all shopping
- close to medical ease of entry and exit
- Close to shopping/church
- Comfortable independent housing
- Comfortable, safe, modern, walkable location
- Comfortable, secure, privacy, parking, nature (green space), lever handles, modern wiring, internet access, walk to shopping
- Country living, smaller lot
- Duplex
- duplex bungalow, attached garage, wheelchair accessibility in and out, easy care finishes, appropriate fixtures and appliances, security
- Easy access, etc.

- Easy accessibility, mail assistance in winter, garbage assistance. Both mail and garbage require more mobility and strength than I often have.
- elevator, potential for meals & light housekeeping, access to transportation,
- everything on 1 level
- Gardens
- Good amenities, trained health workers, reasonable costs where one is not charged for every extra
- Have access to senior housing in hamlets
- Heated garage, One story, 2 bedroom
- heated garage; 2 bedrooms; den/office; 1300 sq. ft.; close to amenities like food stores, cafes, doctors;
- Housing options that were going to be offered in the Hillshire development, if the county wasn't as usual being contrary - except of course to their friends""
- I am looking for smaller independent housing similar to Horizon Village concept.
- I am planning to move to a senior's residence (independent living) in the next 4-5 years. Unfortunately, the ones in Sherwood Park are too expensive for me. I don't qualify for subsidies and don't make enough money for the private ones. There is no middle of the road facilities. so I will have to move out of the county.
- I haven't thought about it in any detail. It will depend on what my needs will be in terms of my health.
- I will be looking in the near future for living options for my parents.
- I would like independence as much as possible, dignity and good quality of care, with not too many seniors per employee.
- I would like the option to cook my own meals or eat in a common dining room, I would like to have a good-sized walk in shower instead of a tub, I would like to have a nice view, I would like to have an option for activities outside of the facility at a reasonable cost, I would like a pet friendly location
- I would want home care so to stay in my own home
- If I were going to go into a senior's apt. it would have to be safety equipped.

- independence
- Independence
- Independent living
- Independent living in a one level house, with garage, appliances and small yard.
- independent living with options of meals and cleaning would like own entrance and a small outdoor space
- Independent living, possibly townhome or duple
- In home services
- It so much depends on my health, but I would like a studio apartment. The ability to make a cup of coffee or tea, perhaps make my own lunches and participate in a communal dinner. There should be activities for residents is varied capabilities, there should be a video room, exercise room, library. There should be a variety of field trips. One size does NOT fit all.
- It would be lovely to live in a seniors shared acreage where we could share in gardening, yard care, to have a community meeting place for celebrations etc. on this property. The option to have some animals. And have a community barn. With areas for chickens, or a few horses etc. With the necessary ramps and other accessories needed to assist those with physical restrictions. A bonfire area etc.
- Less land
- less square footage, yard work area for some gardening; bungalow, garage, street parking
- Lots of/easy parking (for self and visitors), easy access for deliveries, easy access to amenities, air conditioning, close to a hospital.
- Low maintenance housing with unique living arrangements such as small seniors duplexes; four plexes, perhaps gated like Escalabur Estates.
- Low maintenance yard/home. Bungalow style with main floor access to all the house major amenities. With a small low maintenance yard to enjoy outside.
- more access to transportation out of the hamlet of Sherwood Park
- More cost effective. 30% is a bit high for fixed income
- More reasonably priced duplex bungalows

- more senior only community housing
- Multi story building, indoor parking, 2 bedroom, 2 bathrooms with den, walk in closet, elevator.
- Must have 2 bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms
- need to be close to Sherwood Park / Ardrossan
- No outside maintenance; parking for two vehicles; 2 bedroom 2 bathroom; elevator; one level; square footage 1050 or greater; secure;
- no stairs
- No stairs, garage
- not currently looking for a change
- Not looking at changing housing situation in the near future
- Not looking for a change in housing at his time. Probably will depend on my health.
- Not sure - dependent on age at the time - e.g. accommodation close to shopping
- Not sure at this point as I am basically totally independent.
- One floor living
- One level home (with possible basement) and activities for active seniors.
- One level living space and owning my residence
- One level, likely. A small yard would be nice. Walking/bus riding distance to local amenities (groceries, hair salons, other stores, etc.). I need neighbours!
- one level, minimal stairs
- Outdoor spaces
- Over 55 rental apartment/condo
- Pet friendly; within close distance to grocery store
- Pet(s), access to shopping, entertainment, parks etc.
- Pets allowed and affordable. Most housing cost upwards of 3000.00 a month. Need to be affordable and pet friendly ( small dog or cat )
- Places for activities like walking indoor and outdoor. Close to grocery store. Social setting to gather for games etc. Walk in condo style.

- Pretty much a living space on one floor, garage, independent living situation.
- Privacy is VERY important to me and moving into a group setting, that privacy is removed as everyone will want to know everything. I never want to go there.
- privacy, access to meals, laundry, own bathroom, small kitchen to make breakfast and maybe lunch
- Probably a one level apartment that is publicly owned and has services available as we age.
- Quiet affordable housing.
- Quiet bldg., AC, properly heated, energized parking, elevator, no kids in bldg., professional property management company, smoke-free, and marijuana-free bldg.
- Quiet neighborhood (less traffic, playgrounds, sports fields, schools, etc.)
- Reasonably priced house
- recreation/exercise facilities
- safety, affordability, privacy option
- Security (locked entrances & exits). Being close to bus stops and grocery stores; options of 1 or 2 bedrooms. Must be affordable (subsidies available to at least 15-20% of residents) and sustainable, meaning reasonable increases to rent/fees. Would prefer having the basic living options available to me verses the current luxury options such as swimming pools & other fancy add ons. I would prefer to use & support the county recreation facilities.
- Senior's accommodations should offer a full spectrum of living arrangements along a continuum that allows for aging in place for individuals as well as couples. With advancing age, independent living arrangements can be negatively impacted in short order- calling for new level(s) of accommodations and care.
- Single floor, few stairs. Independent as possible.
- Single story, no stairs, garage or under brown parking for vehicle
- small group situation with private room and assistance with medical needs
- Small house/duplex
- Smaller house

- Smaller unit that is on one level
- Somewhat modern facilities to live in.
- Support for daily tasks - shopping, cleaning, snow clearing, garden maintenance, etc.
- Taxes and housing too expensive in this county
- The biggest wish is affordable housing and assistance we r both heathy at this point and have no extra \$ for holidays new vehicles. Just living an existence life style
- There needs to be more housing in Sherwood Park which is all on one floor - most houses are 2-3 stories and steps are a problem for most seniors
- things? not sure what that means in this survey. I want good health, privacy, convenience, programs/services, a safe and a caring community,
- To be able to move from independent living to assisted living to long term care within the same facility
- Transportation
- Underground parking
- Upgrades example new furnace, windows, fence siding
- Walkable options for shopping, recreation, parks
- Walkability to nearby amenities and services.
- Walkable location, transit, food stores, rec facilities
- We have recently downsized into a condo duplex and anticipate that our future needs (in more than 10 years) will relate to a combination of assisted living with independent living. Options around in-house dining, transportation assistance and recreational programming will be important.
- wheelchair access, ability to have 2-3 people in 1 unit to care for loved ones personally
- wheelchair access, ground floor, wide hallways
- When needed it would be a place where I can get meals
- Will see at the time, hopefully in the far future
- Would like a senior's apt. that has a balcony and two bedrooms.

- Would like to be able to rent rather than purchase a home, would like to be close to essential services like grocery stores, banking, bus routes, library.
- Would require electric chair for different floors, washer and dryer on main floor and sufficient room for a freezer upstairs