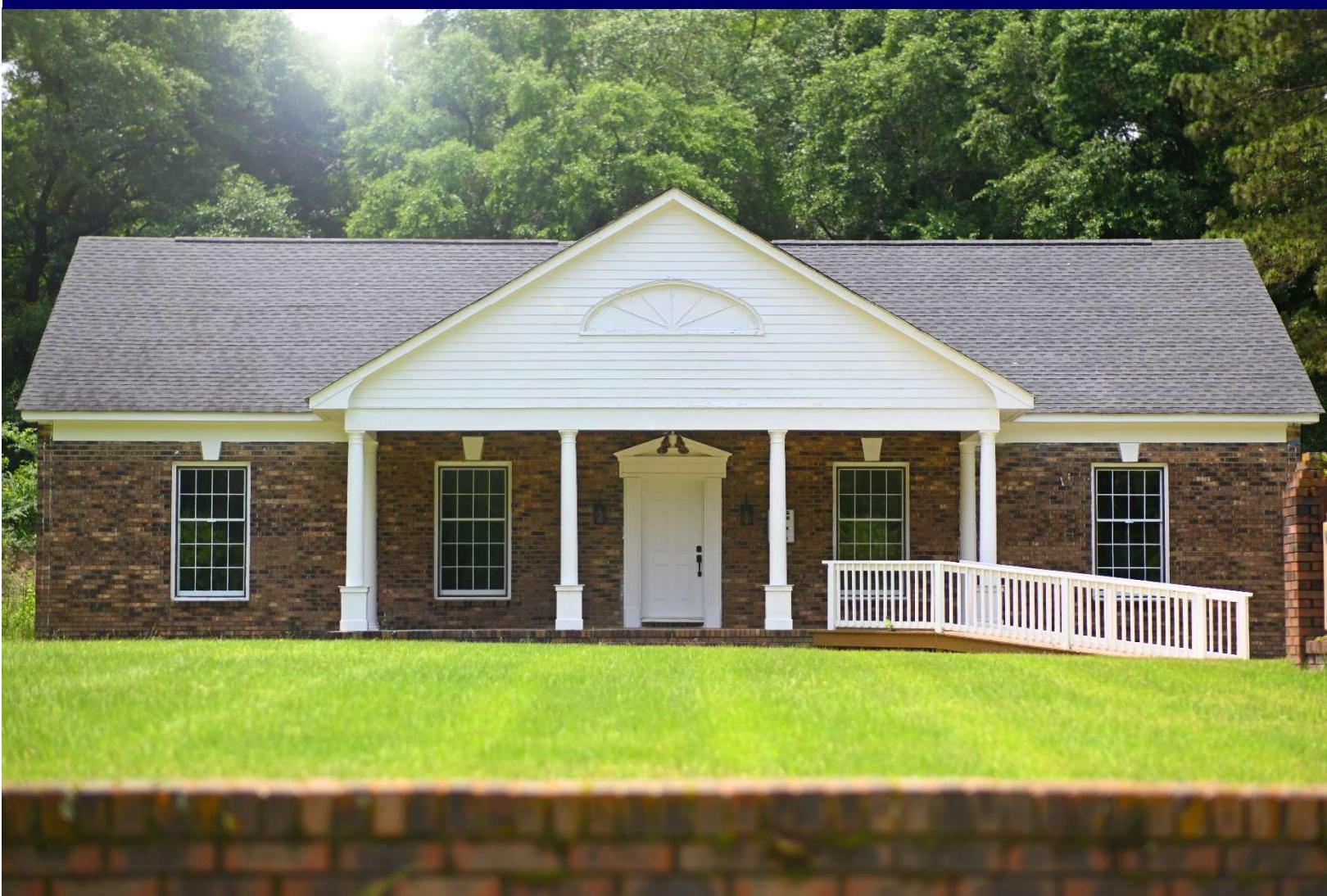


2025 |



Community Assessment

Unity Community Action Council



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2025

Community Needs Assessment

Executive Summary

Purpose

This document has been developed to present up-to-date, accurate information regarding the personal, social, and infrastructural challenges that hinder low-income individuals and vulnerable populations in Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster counties of West Central Georgia from meeting their immediate needs and achieving long-term self-sufficiency.

While this Community Needs Assessment was created in alignment with the Community Action Organizational Standards (refer to Compliance Section) and in partnership with Logic Garden Consulting Group, its significance extends well beyond mere compliance. It serves as a foundational framework upon which all of Unity Community Action Council's programs and services are designed, implemented, and evaluated. It is a strategic roadmap for guiding programs, partnerships, and investments that strengthen families and communities.

More than a compliance tool, this assessment is intended to be a tactical instrument that informs decision-making, drives resource allocation, and fosters meaningful collaboration among community stakeholders. By identifying and prioritizing the most pressing needs faced by our communities, we aim to empower Unity Community Action Council to serve not only as a provider of essential services, but also as a catalyst for systemic change. Our goal is to inspire and guide the coordinated mobilization of local resources in a unified effort to address the root causes of poverty and create sustainable pathways to economic stability and social well-being for all residents.

Methodology

The assessment draws on both quantitative and qualitative methods. More than sixty federal, state, and local datasets were analyzed that included thousands of individual datapoints for individual measures. This assessment spanned across ten domains—including income, employment, housing, health, education,

childcare, transportation, nutrition, family stability, and civic engagement. These data were supplemented with findings from Unity's 2025 Community Survey, which engaged 42 respondents from all eight counties, including low-income residents, staff, board members, partner agencies, and community leaders. Together, these sources provide a robust picture of conditions at the household, county, and regional levels. While the 2025 survey captured input from 42 respondents across all eight counties, Unity CAC acknowledges that this is a smaller sample than prior assessments and has noted plans to expand outreach and integrate GCAA's statewide client satisfaction survey into future cycles.

Key Findings

Analysis confirms that the region faces persistent and interrelated challenges. Poverty rates remain well above state averages in most counties—reaching nearly 30% in Taylor and 26% in Webster—while median household incomes trail significantly behind Georgia overall. Employment is concentrated in a narrow band of industries, leaving the local economy vulnerable to agricultural fluctuations and limited diversification. Educational attainment is improving, with graduation rates exceeding the state average in several counties, but post-secondary completion remains low. Housing affordability, aging stock, and high energy burdens strain families, particularly renters. Health disparities are widespread, including high rates of obesity, chronic disease, and uninsured residents. Food insecurity and limited access to fresh, affordable food persist across the region, with SNAP participation rates reflecting strong reliance on federal nutrition supports.

The community survey findings reinforce these data. Residents identified housing, healthcare, transportation, and employment as their top challenges. Affordable housing, job training, energy assistance, early childhood education, and services for seniors and individuals with disabilities emerged as the highest service needs. Nearly two-thirds of respondents rated local quality of life as "fair" or "poor," while three-quarters reported difficulty accessing services. Yet, respondents also underscored the region's strengths—resilient families, strong local institutions, and a spirit of collaboration among neighbors, churches, and nonprofits.

Concluding Remarks

These findings point to the importance of a dual strategy: addressing immediate crises while building long-term capacity. Programs like Weatherization and LIHEAP simultaneously prevent utility shutoffs and generate lasting household savings. Childcare, youth enrichment, and education supports not only ease present burdens but also reduce risks for the next generation. At the same time, systemic issues—such as transportation barriers, digital inequities, and healthcare access—require expanded partnerships and advocacy.

Unity CAC is uniquely positioned to lead this work. With a comprehensive program portfolio, strong governance, and deep community ties, the agency is both a provider of critical services and a catalyst for systemic change. At the time of this assessment, Unity has already begun some of the work that the community has asked for within their survey results, even without being notified of the results. These items include: additional

partnerships in the community, continued evolution of services, and strengthening the partnerships at their local events. By continuing on with the agency's current work and leveraging the findings of this assessment, Unity can sharpen its focus on the most pressing needs, attract new resources, and continue to drive collaborative solutions that build pathways out of poverty and toward community resilience.

Key Findings Analysis

Prioritized Needs: Method & Findings

The analysis applied a structured rubric to prioritize the most pressing needs identified through data analysis, stakeholder input, and community surveys. Each need was rated across five criteria:

1. Severity – Degree of immediate impact on individuals and families.
2. Incidence – Proportion of households affected across the service area.
3. Trend – Whether the issue is worsening, improving, or stable.
4. Feasibility – Agency and partner capacity to address the issue.
5. Equity Impact – Extent to which historically underserved or disproportionately impacted populations are affected.

Through this framework, Unity CAC was able to objectively rank needs by both urgency and opportunity for intervention. The analysis resulted in the following Top Five Needs by Severity:

1. Affordable Housing & Homelessness

Affordable housing remains the most critical challenge across the service area. Waitlists for vouchers and subsidized housing exceed six months, with inadequate stock to meet demand. Rising rent burdens and an aging housing supply exacerbate conditions, particularly for seniors, single parents, and low-income households.

2. Employment & Workforce Barriers

While unemployment rates have improved, underemployment and low-wage work remain significant. Many residents lack access to higher-wage opportunities due to limited job skills and credentials. Barriers are especially acute for youth, justice-involved individuals, and adults without postsecondary training.

3. Childcare & Early Education Access

The shortage of licensed childcare slots—especially for infants and toddlers—prevents many parents from maintaining steady employment. Costs remain high, and services are concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural families with limited options.

4. Transportation Barriers

Inadequate public and private transportation is a persistent barrier, especially in rural counties. The lack of reliable and affordable transit affects residents' ability to secure and maintain employment, attend healthcare appointments, and access services. Seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income households are disproportionately impacted.

5. Food Insecurity & Nutrition

Food insecurity continues to affect a large portion of the population, with seasonal spikes in need. Rural food deserts, reliance on food pantries, and high demand for SNAP benefits underscore the severity of this issue. Children and seniors are most at risk, especially during school breaks and holiday periods.

This prioritization process not only highlights the most severe and widespread needs but also provides a foundation for aligning agency resources, partnerships, and strategies with the CSBG National Goals and ROMA outcomes. The resulting priorities will guide Unity CAC's upcoming Community Action Plan or assist in revising the upcoming plan to ensure measurable impact in addressing poverty across the service area.

Compliance

As the primary entities designated by the federal government to identify and address the root causes of poverty at the local level, Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are entrusted with a critical mission that involves both the direct delivery of services and the strategic coordination with partner organizations. To ensure the effective fulfillment of this mission, CAAs operate under a rigorous accountability framework outlined in the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act. This legislation mandates that state funding authorities establish and enforce a comprehensive set of "performance goals, administrative standards, financial management requirements, and other requirements" (42 U.S.C. § 9914).

To carry out their oversight responsibilities, state administrators are required to implement processes for adopting, communicating, and annually assessing each agency's adherence to these foundational standards. The following standards are specifically linked to the requirement for developing a robust and data-informed community needs assessment, which serves as a cornerstone of program planning and service delivery.

CSBG Standard 1.2: The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.

We had multiple low-income individuals respond to the Community Needs Assessment Survey either via online survey, in-person interview, or via phone interview to ensure maximum feasible participation of low-income individuals.

CSBG Standard 2.2: The organization utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources, during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions.

Multiple individuals representing community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions were invited to participate in survey completion.

CSBG Standard 3.1: The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.

The Community Needs Assessment was completed in partnership with Logic Garden Consulting Group, LLC, through a contractual agreement, monitored by the organization's Executive Director. The assessment was finalized and approved by the Board of Directors on **September 18, 2025**. The full approval information, including quorum status and total votes are included in the organization's September 2025 board minutes and

are available through request to Unity CAC. This needs assessment will be posted on the organization's website for public review and comment for future revisions and future planning processes.

CSBG Standard 3.2: As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area.

During the process of quantitative research, statistical data was collected that identified the impact of poverty on individuals based on gender, age, and race/ethnicity. This data can be found throughout the document.

CSBG Standard 3.3: The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

Quantitative data, also known as statistical or numerical data, was gathered through an extensive review of over sixty distinct data sources spanning ten key domains related to self-sufficiency. These domains include: Income, Employment, Education, Childcare, Housing, Health, Nutrition, Transportation, Community Engagement, and Family Relationships. The data collected reflects conditions at the local, regional (service area), state (Georgia), and national (United States) levels.

Sources of quantitative data include, but are not limited to: the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as multiple-choice responses from locally administered surveys and internal organizational data.

In contrast, qualitative data, often referred to as descriptive or narrative information, was collected through open-ended survey questions. These were distributed to a diverse group of stakeholders, including low-income residents, general community members, faith-based organizations, local nonprofits, public officials, educational institutions, and staff of the organization.

The comprehensive analysis of both data types was carried out by Logic Garden Consulting Group, LLC. The firm utilized a two-tiered approach, primary and secondary analysis, employing comparative, descriptive, trend-based, and exploratory methodologies. This dual analysis approach provided a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the underlying causes and prevailing conditions of poverty within the organization's service area.

The geographic area served by Unity Community Action Council encompasses the following West Central Georgia counties:

- Crisp
- Dooly

- Macon
- Marion
- Schley
- Sumter
- Taylor
- Webster

CSBG Standard 3.4: The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.

A report of the key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty can be found in this document. Agency (A) level needs will be documented separately upon completion of the SWOT Analysis during the development of the agency's strategic plan.

CSBG Standard 3.5: The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.

The finalized document was presented to the Board of Directors on September 18, 2025. A formal acceptance was approved during this meeting. The final percentage vote, along with quorum information, can be found within the September 2025 Unity CAC board meeting minutes and is available by direct request to the agency.

Community Action

A Brief History of Community Action

In January 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an "unconditional war on poverty," initiating a bold national strategy aimed at eliminating poverty through collaboration across all levels of society. This effort marked the beginning of a new cooperative approach, uniting local residents, community organizations, local and state officials, and national leaders around a shared goal: empowering low-income individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency.

At the heart of this strategy was a new federal initiative called Urban and Rural Community Action. Its mission was to coordinate and leverage local, state, federal, and private resources to equip low-income people, regardless of age or geography, with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed to break the cycle of poverty.

To accomplish this, Community Action Agencies (CAAs) were established and charged with developing both long-term strategies and short-term action plans that responded directly to local conditions. These plans considered the greatest areas of need, available resources, and each agency's unique capacity to address poverty in its community.

A defining feature of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the legislation that created the Community Action Network, was the requirement for "maximum feasible participation" of the low-income individuals being served. This principle ensured that CAAs would remain responsive to community voices and grounded in the lived experiences of those facing poverty.

In 1967, amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act further clarified the role of CAAs through guidance issued in the document *Organizing Communities for Action*. This reaffirmed that CAAs were not to function merely as providers of social services but as leaders in identifying and addressing the root causes of poverty.

The 1970s brought significant challenges. In 1973, President Richard Nixon attempted to eliminate the Community Action network by ordering the closure of all CAAs. The network mobilized a strong legal defense and prevailed, preserving essential services for communities across the country. However, the federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) was later dismantled by the Ford Administration, shifting oversight to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Community Services Administration. Though the network's mission endured, the loss of centralized federal support and the symbolic change from "Economic Opportunity" to "Community Services" marked a period of diminished visibility and political support.

A more severe threat emerged in 1981, when President Ronald Reagan proposed eliminating all funding for Community Action. With bipartisan support in Congress, the threat was real. However, David Bradley, a former student of Community Action architect Sargent Shriver, successfully negotiated a compromise that led to the creation of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). Under CSBG, funding authority was shifted to the states: 5% was allocated for state-level administrative costs, another 5% for discretionary anti-poverty initiatives, and the remaining 90% was distributed directly to CAAs.

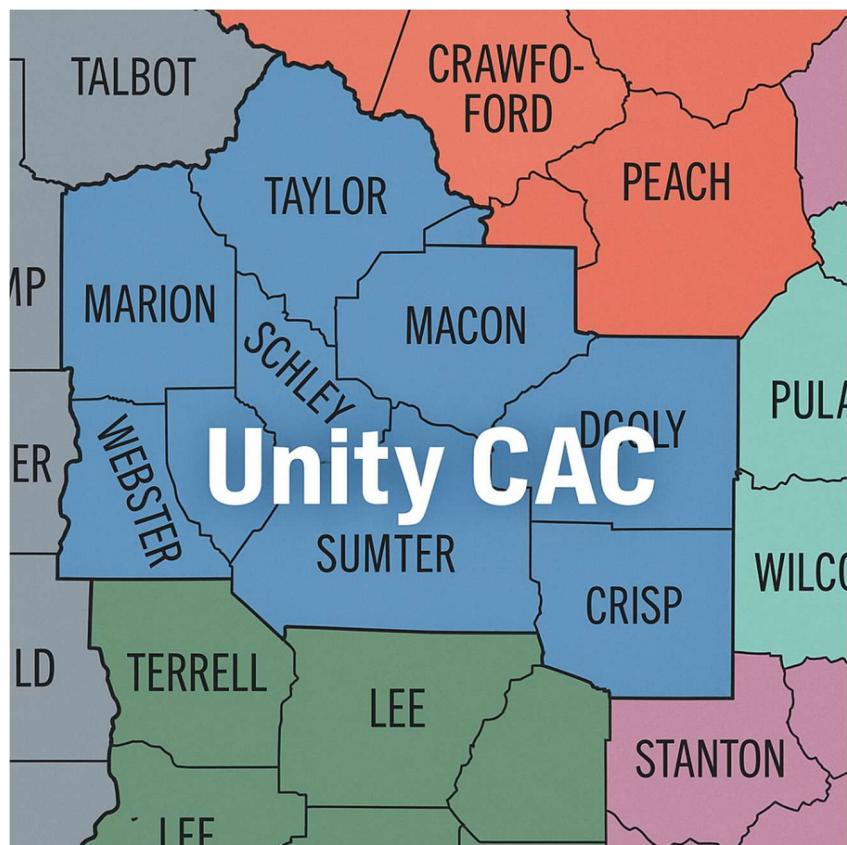
Throughout the 1990s, new laws sought to reform and increase the effectiveness of federally funded programs. One such law, the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), introduced strict performance and accountability requirements. In response, the Community Action Network developed the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) framework, which became the required performance management system for CAAs beginning in 2001.

The 2010 modernization of GPRA emphasized stronger coordination among community partners, improved data quality, and a focus on customer satisfaction. This led to the development of an enhanced performance management framework that included Organizational Standards, State and Federal Accountability Measures, and ROMA: Next Generation. While these updates introduced new oversight mechanisms, they also reaffirmed the network's original mission: to address the causes, not just the symptoms, of poverty, promote meaningful community-level impact, and foster collaboration across service sectors.

Today, more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies across the United States, including Unity Community Action Council, continue this vital work. Together, they remain committed to the founding vision of the Community Action movement: mobilizing communities, empowering families, and creating pathways out of poverty through inclusive, responsive, and results-driven service.

The Agency

Service Area



Unity Community Action Council, Inc. serves a diverse region located along the central-western border of Georgia, encompassing the counties of Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster. This area includes a mix of rural and small-town communities that face unique socioeconomic challenges, including limited access to resources, high poverty rates, and persistent barriers to economic mobility.

Within this eight-county service area, Unity Community Action Council provides a wide range of programs and services designed to address both immediate and long-term needs of low-income and vulnerable populations. From emergency assistance to education, workforce development, housing support, and family services, the

organization's efforts are guided by a commitment to creating sustainable pathways out of poverty. These communities face persistent challenges such as poverty, unemployment, limited educational attainment, inadequate housing, and health disparities. Unity CAC serves as a critical resource, providing programs and services that address both immediate needs and long-term development.

Unity Community Action Council is not only a provider of direct services but also a catalyst for systemic change. Through strategic partnerships and community engagement, the organization works to alleviate human suffering and actively seeks to identify and eliminate the root causes of poverty in the region. Its work is grounded in the belief that lasting change begins with empowering individuals and strengthening communities throughout Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster counties.

Organizational Background

Unity Community Action Council, Inc. (Unity CAC) is a nonprofit, anti-poverty agency dedicated to empowering individuals and families to achieve stability, self-sufficiency, and long-term success. Originally founded as West Central Community Action Council, Inc., in 1964, the organization has a decades-long history of service to rural and small-town Georgia. Just this year, the agency embraced a new name — Unity Community Action Council, Inc. — to better reflect its mission of bringing people together across communities to overcome barriers and build a stronger, more resilient region.

In 2025, the organization formerly known as the West Central Georgia Community Action Council underwent a thoughtful transition and rebranding to become Unity Community Action Council.

Why the Rebrand?

- Modernizing Identity: The new name, *Unity*, reflects a renewed emphasis on collaboration, connection, and shared purpose across the eight-county service area.
- Clarifying Mission: The updated branding aligns the organization's identity more closely with its vision, bringing communities together to eliminate poverty and promote self-sufficiency.

How the Process Unfolded

- **Strategic Planning:**
The Board of Directors, leadership, and community stakeholders engaged in comprehensive strategic planning sessions. These examined current strengths, future goals, and community feedback to guide the rebranding decision.
- **Name Development:**
"Unity" emerged as a name that expresses both the inclusive spirit of the agency and its cohesive approach to addressing systemic challenges like housing, food security, childcare, and workforce development.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
Surveys and forums were conducted with clients, staff, partners, and county officials. The response was overwhelmingly positive: stakeholders appreciated that the new name better represented the agency's collaborative and community-centered approach.
- **Brand Rollout:**
 - ✓ Logo & Visual Identity: Designed to communicate solidarity and interconnectedness, the fresh logo incorporates symbols of unity and regional pride.
 - ✓ Communications Refresh: All external materials, website, social channels, printed publications, have been updated to reflect the new branding.

- ✓ Launch Events: A coordinated presence across each service county celebrated the rebrand, aligning with heightened visibility during National Community Action Month.

What It Means Going Forward

- Strengthened Community Presence: The rebrand reinforces the organization's role not only as a provider of services but as a unifying force, bringing partners together under a shared mission.
- Expanded Outreach & Recognition: *Unity Community Action Council* now has a more distinctive, resonant identity better suited to communicate impact and vision both locally and regionally.
- Consistency Across Services: From weatherization and childcare programs to job training and family support, all initiatives will now be housed under a cohesive brand identity that clearly reflects their interconnected purpose.

This rebranding marks a major milestone in the Council's evolution, building on decades of service while charting a modern path toward collaborative impact and community empowerment across Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster counties.

Mission & Purpose

Unity CAC works to alleviate poverty and promote self-sufficiency in its community by offering supports that help stabilize households, reduce barriers, and build brighter futures.

Programs

Unity Community Action Council, Inc. provides a comprehensive range of programs designed to meet immediate needs while supporting long-term self-sufficiency for low-income individuals and families across its eight-county service area. Each program is carefully tailored to address the unique barriers faced by vulnerable populations and is grounded in a holistic, client-centered approach.

The agency operates a comprehensive portfolio of programs designed to stabilize families, reduce energy and housing burdens, and strengthen economic opportunity. These include the Weatherization Assistance Program, emergency/crisis assistance, educational supports such as GED funding, job readiness training, youth summer enrichment programs, and targeted health and nutrition supports like prescription and diaper assistance. By combining direct services with referrals to community partners, Unity CAC ensures families receive wraparound support tailored to their circumstances.

Unity CAC is funded through a mix of federal, state, and local resources, including the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), energy assistance programs (currently being operated by partner Community Action Agencies), and community donations. The organization is governed by a tripartite board of directors representing public officials, private sector leaders, and low-income community members, ensuring that its programs remain accountable and responsive to the needs of the people it serves.

Through its evolution, Unity CAC has remained committed to its founding vision: empowering individuals, strengthening families, and uplifting communities. By addressing immediate crises while also investing in education, employment, and long-term stability, Unity CAC continues to be a cornerstone of hope and opportunity in West Central Georgia.

1. Community Service Crisis Assistance

The program offers critical financial support to low-income individuals and families experiencing hardship. Services include assistance and rapid help for unexpected life challenges: supports for urgent needs. Includes help with emergencies, prescriptions, diapers, outreach.

2. Resource Referrals

Guiding people to other agencies or programs. Unity CAC relies on a network of support throughout their service area to ensure that the individuals and families reaching out to them get the assistance they need or directed to the agency that may be able to assist.

3. Diaper Assistance Program

Supplies for families with infants/toddlers in need. This helps ease household and child cost burdens.

4. Prescription Assistance Program

Help paying for medicine when cost is a barrier. Ensures health is not sacrificed when a household's ends are not meeting.

5. Educational Supports

Helping people complete their General Education Development diploma, and other educational boost-ups. Unity CAC works with families to have improved options for jobs, income, personal growth.

6. Job Readiness Training

Preparing individuals for work through skills, workshops, resume help to enter or re-enter the workforce with confidence.

7. Youth Summer Camps

Structured summer programs for children & youth. Keeps young people engaged, learning, having fun while parents work.

8. Energy Assistance Programs Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Federal financial assistance for home energy bills. Helps prevent shut-offs, assists with heating/cooling costs. While Unity CAC does not currently operate this program, they work in tandem with the neighboring Community Action Agency to ensure that their service area is taken care of.

9. Weatherization Assistance Program

Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, this program helps low-income households achieve healthier, safer, and more energy-efficient homes. Services may include insulation, air sealing, heating and cooling system upgrades, and other home improvements that reduce energy consumption and utility costs. Making homes more energy-efficient & comfortable. Includes insulation, air/duct sealing, heating/cooling system improvements. Helps reduce bills and improve health/comfort.

Eligibility & Access

- Most services are income-based, meaning households must meet certain thresholds.
- Some services target specific vulnerable populations (e.g. families with young children, low-income renters/homeowners).
- To access services, individuals and families must contact their office (phone, email, or in-person) to find out what programs are currently operating and exactly what documentation or type of intake is required.

Together, these programs reflect Unity Community Action Council's mission to not only meet immediate needs but to break the cycle of poverty through sustainable, community-based solutions.

Impact & Value

These programs collectively serve as a stabilizing force for families by addressing both immediate crises and long-term vulnerabilities. At the most basic level, they help prevent emergencies such as utility shutoffs, eviction, or catastrophic medical debt—events that can quickly spiral into homelessness, unemployment, or family disruption. For households already living on the financial margins, even a single unexpected expense can destabilize the entire family unit. Programs that offset core expenses—such as utility bills, childcare costs, and educational fees—not only provide relief in the moment but also reduce the chronic stress that undermines health, employment, and parenting capacity.

Energy programs like Weatherization and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are particularly impactful when combined. LIHEAP provides short-term relief against heating and cooling crises, while Weatherization improves energy efficiency, lowers recurring bills, and reduces safety hazards such as faulty wiring or poor insulation. Together, these programs offer families both immediate protection and enduring financial benefits, creating safer and healthier living environments that free up limited household income for food, medical care, and education.

Investments in children and youth provide a parallel stabilizing effect. Programs such as summer camps, after-school initiatives, and educational supports reduce risks associated with unsupervised time, including exposure to cyberbullying, delinquency, or exploitation. By offering safe, structured, and enriching environments, these programs foster resilience, build academic skills, and strengthen social development. In the long term, early investments in education and positive youth development not only improve graduation rates and employability but also reduce future public expenditures tied to criminal justice involvement, unemployment, and health disparities. Ultimately, by reducing crises today and equipping families and youth for tomorrow, these services yield a compounding return in community stability, family well-being, and economic resilience.

County Profiles

Crisp County

Crisp County, anchored by Cordele, is a small, rural county in south-central Georgia. The population continues a gentle decline since 2010, with an older median age than the state overall and persistent economic headwinds typical of rural Georgia. Even so, employment remains relatively stable, graduation rates have risen, and commute times are short—giving residents a foundation to build skills, strengthen family well-being, and opportunity.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population (July 1, 2024 estimate): 19,468 (down from 20,130 on April 1, 2020).
- Age: Median age ~40.4 years (2019–2023 ACS 5-year).
- Race/Ethnicity: Crisp remains majority White with sizable Black/African American population and a small but present Hispanic/Latino community.
- Veterans: Vietnam and Gulf War service eras most common among veterans.

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income (2019–2023, 2023 dollars): \$42,745.
- Per-capita income (2019–2023): Available in ACS DP03.
- Poverty: Rate remains higher than Georgia's statewide average.

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment rate: 3.6% (July 2025, not seasonally adjusted).
- Top employing sectors (2023): Health Care & Social Assistance (~1.2k workers), Retail Trade (~1.1k), Manufacturing (~1.0k).
- Highest-paying industries: Professional/Scientific/Technical Services.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- Educational attainment: High school graduation or higher, bachelor's degree or higher (see ACS DP02).
- Broadband/Computer access: Household computer and broadband subscription rates noted in ACS profiles.

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Four-year cohort high school graduation rate (2024): ~86.9% for Crisp County Schools.
- State context: Georgia set an all-time high graduation rate of 85.4% in 2024.
- Detailed indicators: Available in CCRPI & Georgia School Grades Reports.

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Georgia DECAL (Bright from the Start) licenses childcare programs, sets ratios and standards.
- County-level childcare supply can be queried via DECAL resources.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Homeownership, median value, median gross rent, housing cost burden: See ACS DP04.
- Energy burden: Georgia PSC policies affect electricity costs.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Uninsured (under age 65, 2019–2023): Rate available on QuickFacts.
- Chronic disease indicators: Adult obesity ~44.8% (2022); binge drinking ~14.5% (2022).
- Local health assessment: West Central Health District 2023 Community Health Assessment.

NUTRITION

- Food access: USDA Food Access Research Atlas identifies low-access tracts.
- Food insecurity: Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap provides county estimates.
- SNAP participation: Reported in ACS DP03.

TRANSPORTATION

- Average commute: 18.8 minutes (2023).
- Commute mode: ~81% drive alone, 7.9% carpool, 7.7% work from home.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Household structure: Shares of married-couple, single-parent, and non-family households available in ACS DP02.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 2024 General Election results: County-level totals available via Enhanced Voting.
- Early voting (2024): 6,203 ballots cast (~44.2% of registered voters).
- State turnout context: Reported via Georgia Secretary of State dashboards.

Dooly County

Dooly County sits in south-central Georgia with about 11.2K residents, anchored by Vienna and Unadilla, and rooted in agriculture, manufacturing, and logistics. The county's 2024 population estimate is 11,186 (down slightly from 2020), median household income is in the mid-\$50Ks, and health and education indicators reflect the challenges and strengths typical of rural Georgia. Recent labor data show a modest unemployment rate and an industry mix led by goods-producing and service sectors.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population (July 1, 2024 est.): 11,186; 2020 Census: 11,214.
- Age: 23.1% under 18; 20.0% 65+ (ACS 2019–2023).
- Race/Ethnicity: Black/African American ~49%; White ~41%; Hispanic/Latino ~7%; others ~3%.
- Median age: ~46 years.
- Land area: ~392.6 sq. miles.

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income (2019–2023, 2023\$): \$56,545.
- Per capita income (2019–2023, 2023\$): ~\$25K.
- Persons in poverty: ~23% (ACS 2019–2023).

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment rate: Around 4–5% in 2025 (BLS/LAUS).
- Industry mix (Q1 2025): Goods-Producing 39.7%; Service-Providing 34.5%; Government 25.5%.
- Large employers: House of Raeford Farms, UPS, Middle Georgia EMC, Dollar General, Georgia Dept. of Corrections.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- Educational attainment: About 83% high school graduate or higher; ~13–14% bachelor's degree or higher.
- Labor force education distribution: HS/GED 32.5%; some college 23.6%; 4-year degree 13.4%; post-grad 9.4%.

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Graduation rate (state, 2024): 85.4%.
- Dooly County High School reported ~90–93% graduation rate in 2023–2024.

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Licensed programs and Georgia's Pre-K/Quality Rated: Availability searchable via GA DECAL Quality Rated registry.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Owner-occupied housing rate: ~63–65%.
- Median home value: ~\$96K–\$100K.
- Median gross rent: ~\$740–\$760.
- Households with a computer: ~91%; Broadband: ~79%.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Uninsured under 65: ~18–19%.
- County Health Rankings 2025: Indicators include obesity, diabetes, and premature death.

NUTRITION

- SNAP/food assistance: Available in ACS S2201 (household-level estimates).

TRANSPORTATION

- Mean travel time to work: ~24–26 minutes.
- Most residents commute by car; public transit limited.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Households: ~3,900–4,000.
- Average household size: ~2.3.
- Household mix: Married-couple and single-parent households; some grandparent caretaking.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Voter services and turnout data: Available via Georgia Secretary of State's Election Data Hub.
- Dooly County's official Nov. 2024 General Election results certified Jan. 2025.

Macon County

Nestled in west-central Georgia, Macon County (county seat: Oglethorpe) is a small, rural county in the state's historic belt. With a July 2024 population estimate of 11,831, the county has trended modestly downward since 2020, while maintaining a tight-knit community anchored by agriculture, manufacturing, and public-sector employment. Recent American Community Survey (ACS) indicators point to lower median household income and higher poverty than state averages, alongside strengths in social cohesion, short commutes, and expanding digital connectivity.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population (July 1, 2024 est.): 11,831 (down from 12,078 in 2020).
- Age: Under 18: ~17.7%; 65 and older: elevated share vs. state.
- Race & Ethnicity: Majority Black/African American, sizable White population, smaller Hispanic/Latino share.
- Veterans: Present but below state share.
- Foreign-born: Below state average.

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income (2019–2023, 2023 dollars): \$37,177.
- Per-capita income: lower than state average.
- Persons in poverty: 24.3% (above Georgia's overall rate).

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment rate (annual average 2024): 4.6%.
- Georgia statewide (July 2025): 3.4%.
- Employment concentrated in agriculture, manufacturing, education/health, and public administration.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- High school graduate or higher (age 25+, 2023 ACS 5-yr): 76.2%.
- Bachelor's degree or higher (age 25+, 2023 ACS 5-yr): ~11%.

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Macon County School District serves the county.
- Georgia statewide four-year graduation rate: 85.4% in 2024.
- Early literacy/readiness indicators via GaDOE CCRPI and School Grades dashboards.

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Georgia's Bright from the Start (DECAL) oversees licensing, ratios, and quality standards.
- County-level provider counts/capacities available through DECAL resources.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Owner-occupied housing rate (2019–2023): 61.1%.
- Median value (owner-occupied, 2019–2023): \$87,000.
- Median gross rent (2019–2023): lower than state average.
- Broadband subscription: increasing among households.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Uninsured under 65: higher than U.S. average.
- Chronic conditions: elevated obesity prevalence.
- Mean one-way commute: 24.3 minutes (close to state/national norms).

NUTRITION

- Food access challenges identified by USDA Food Access Atlas.
- SNAP participation data available from USDA FNS (Jan 2025).

TRANSPORTATION

- Mean travel time to work: 24.3 minutes.
- Travel dominated by single-occupancy vehicles, limited fixed-route transit.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Household composition reflects higher share of single-parent and multigenerational households.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Indicators: veteran share, broadband adoption, and parental involvement.
- Voting participation data from Georgia Secretary of State.

Marion County

Tucked in west-central Georgia with Buena Vista as its seat, Marion County is a small, rural community in the Columbus GA-AL region. Recent Census estimates put the population in the mid-7,000s, with an older-than-state-average median age, high homeownership, long commute times, and a workforce anchored by manufacturing, retail, and health care. Poverty sits above the national rate, educational attainment trails state averages, and health insurance gaps are notable—common patterns for rural Georgia counties. Still, the fundamentals—low unemployment, affordable housing, and tight community institutions—give Marion County room to grow.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: ~7,635 (July 1, 2024 estimate). Median age 43.9 (2023).
- Race/Ethnicity (2023): White (Non-Hispanic) 57.8%; Black 28.5%; Hispanic 7.9%. Foreign-born 5.8%. U.S. citizenship 95.1%.

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income (2019–2023 ACS 5-yr): \$50,484.
- Poverty rate: 16.9% (2023 point estimate).

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment: 3.8% (annual average, 2024).
- Top employment sectors (2023): Manufacturing (~591 workers), Retail (~389), Health Care & Social Assistance (~347).

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- High school graduate or higher (25+): 76.2%.
- Bachelor's degree or higher (25+): 13.6%.
- Both rates trail Georgia's statewide levels (\approx 89% HS+; \approx 34% BA+).

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Marion County operates L.K. Moss Elementary and Marion County Middle/High School.
- Academic outcomes and enrollment data available via Georgia's School Grades Reports & GOSA dashboards.

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Families can locate licensed and Quality Rated early-learning programs via Georgia's official directory.
- CAPS childcare assistance is administered through DECAL.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Homeownership rate (2023): 77.1%.
- Median property value (2023): \$122,100.
- Severe housing problems (HUD composite): 8.8% of residents (2024).

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Uninsured (all ages, 2023): 17.6% (above U.S. average).

- County-level estimates for obesity, smoking, and inactivity are available via CDC PLACES and County Health Rankings.

NUTRITION

- SNAP participation data are published by USDA FNS and Georgia Data portal.
- Use these for county-level caseloads and benefits trends.

TRANSPORTATION

- Average commute: 33.1 minutes.
- Commute modes: 75.4% drive alone; 17.0% carpool; 6.8% work from home.
- Mean car ownership: 2 vehicles/household.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Rural household mix with majority owner-occupied, family households.
- ACS DP02 provides detailed breakdown by household type and marital status.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Voter registration and turnout data available via Georgia Secretary of State.
- Volunteering and broadband subscription rates (as civic proxies) reported in ACS QuickFacts.

Schley County

Schley County is a small, rural county in west-central Georgia anchored by the city of Ellaville. With just over 4,500 residents and a landscape rooted in agriculture and small-scale industry, the community blends tight-knit social ties with steady labor force participation and standout K–12 outcomes. Recent data show modest incomes, mid-teens poverty, long commutes common to rural life, and an above-average graduation rate.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population (estimate, July 1, 2024): 4,503
- Median age: 41.6 years (ACS 2019–2023 5-year)
- Households: 1,627; 2.8 persons per household
- Race/ethnicity: Predominantly White and Black/African American with a small Hispanic/Latino presence (foreign-born ~0.3%)

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income (2019–2023, 2023 dollars): \$59,647
- Per-capita income (2019–2023): \$30,176
- Poverty rate (all persons, 2019–2023): 13.2%

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment rate: 4.1% (July 2025, not seasonally adjusted)
- Largest employment sectors (residents, 2023): Manufacturing; Health Care & Social Assistance; Educational Services

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- High school graduate or higher (age 25+, 2019–2023): 84.8%
- Bachelor's degree or higher (age 25+, 2019–2023): 19.0%

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Four-year on-time graduation rate (district, Class of 2024): 96.4% (Schley County Schools)

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Early care & learning: Licensed childcare providers and Georgia's Pre-K sites available through DECAL's Quality Rated system.
- Head Start/Early Head Start: Services available regionally through Southwest Georgia Community Action Council.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Housing units (2019–2023): 1,985
- Median value of owner-occupied homes (2019–2023): \$152,900
- Broadband subscription: Reported in QuickFacts; ACS DP04 includes cost-burden and fuel type details.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Uninsured (under age 65): ~12.3%
- County-level health indicators available through CDC PLACES and Georgia DPH chronic disease map galleries.

NUTRITION

- SNAP participation: Household participation shares published in ACS table S2201.
- Local assistance: DFCS office in Ellaville administers SNAP/TANF/Medicaid.

TRANSPORTATION

- Mean travel time to work (workers 16+, 2019–2023): 30.0 minutes
- Commuting mode & vehicle availability detailed in ACS profiles DP03/DP04.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Households: 1,627 total; average household size 2.8
- Veterans (share of population, 2019–2023): ~7.5%

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Voter registration & turnout: Georgia Secretary of State's Election Data Hub provides county-level participation data.

Sumter County

Sumter County, located in Southwest Georgia with Americus as its county seat, blends small-city charm with rich history and a resilient, community. The county is home to significant historical landmarks, including the Jimmy Carter National Historical Park, and demonstrates a dynamic balance of economic challenges and community strengths. Current federal and state data highlight modest incomes, improving graduation rates, short commutes, and ongoing opportunities to enhance health, childcare, and civic participation.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: ~29,174 (ACS 2019–2023 5-year). Median age: 37.0.
- Race & Ethnicity: Black/African American (non-Hispanic) ~14.5k; White (non-Hispanic) ~11.3k; Hispanic/Latino ~6.2%. Foreign-born 3.29%.

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income: \$41,877. Per-capita income: \$24,439.
- Poverty rate: 22.7%. SNAP recipients: 8,748 (2022).

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment rate: 5.3% (July 2025).
- Top industries: Manufacturing, Health Care & Social Assistance, Educational Services.
- Highest median pay industries: Utilities, Mining, Real Estate & Rental & Leasing.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- Educational attainment (25+): 84.3% high school graduate or higher; 21.3% bachelor's degree or higher.
- Local institutions: South Georgia Technical College; Georgia Southwestern State University.

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Graduation rate (district): ~98.6% (2024).
- Georgia statewide graduation rate: 85.4% (2024).
- Public reporting portals: Georgia School Grades & CCRPI dashboards.

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Licensed providers and Quality Rated search maintained by GA DECAL (most up-to-date data available).

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Housing units: 13,499; 55% owner-occupied.
- Median home value: \$122,300.
- Primary heating fuel: Electricity 83.3%; Utility gas 8.2%; LP/bottled gas 7.6%.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- County-level health indicators available via CDC PLACES (2024) and County Health Rankings.
- Local public health agency: Sumter County Health Department (West Central Health District).

NUTRITION

- Food insecurity and cost-of-meal data from Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap.

- Low-income/low-access areas identified via USDA ERS Food Access Research Atlas.

TRANSPORTATION

- Mean travel time to work: 21.1 minutes.
- Most workers drive alone; average household vehicle ownership: ~2.
- No vehicle available in 11.1% of households.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Households: 10,848; average household size: 2.5.
- Veterans: ~5.7% of population.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Election turnout and active voter dashboards available via Georgia SOS Election Data Hub.
- Local oversight by Sumter County Voter Registration & Elections office.

Taylor County

Taylor County sits between Macon and Columbus with the cities of Butler (county seat) and Reynolds. It's a small, rural county with an older median age, long commutes for many workers, modest household incomes, and a housing market with comparatively low home values and rents. Education attainment is below state averages, poverty is higher, and health indicators point to meaningful needs—yet from the data, it shows that the community shows up for its schools and at the ballot box.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: 7,786; land area 376.7 sq. mi. (density ~20.7/sq. mi.)
- Median age: 42.9 (GA 37.4; U.S. 38.7)

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income: \$41,743 (GA \$74,664; U.S. \$78,538)
- Per capita income: \$25,791
- Persons below poverty line: 29.4% (GA 13.5%; U.S. 12.4%)
- Unemployment rate: 4.5% (July 2025, not seasonally adjusted)
- Annual unemployment rate: 4.0% (2024)

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Labor force health is reflected in unemployment above; sector-level detail available via ACS industry tables.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- High school graduate or higher (25+): 77.7% (GA 89.0%)
- Bachelor's degree or higher (25+): 18.2% (GA 34.2%)

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- 4-year on-time graduation rate (Class of 2024), Taylor County High School: 87.3%

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Georgia DECAL maintains the official, continuously updated list of licensed and Quality Rated childcare providers and GA Pre-K classrooms in Taylor County.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Housing units: 3,932; households: 3,061
- Owner-occupied housing rate: 61.6%
- Median value, owner-occupied: \$82,900
- Median gross rent: \$665
- Cost burden data available via ACS DP04 tables

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Health insurance estimates available from SAHIE (2023 release).
- Chronic disease/obesity indicators available from CDC PLACES & CDC chronic disease maps.

NUTRITION

- SNAP/WIC participation indicators available via ACS DP03 and Georgia DPH/USDA dashboards.

TRANSPORTATION

- Mean travel time to work: 31.6 minutes (GA 28.3; U.S. 26.6)
- Commute mode shares available via ACS subject tables.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Households: 3,061; average household size: 2.5
- Veteran status: 6.4% of population

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- General Election (Nov. 5, 2024): 3,982 total presidential votes cast
- Presidential vote shares: 65.3% Republican; 34.3% Democratic; 0.4% other
- Turnout rates available via Georgia Secretary of State Election Data Hub

Webster County

Webster County is tucked in Georgia's west-central belt, this small, rural county brings big character: farms and forests, long commutes to regional job hubs, and a school system that has an impressive graduation rate.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: 2,315 (July 1, 2024 estimate), down from 2,349 in 2020.
- Median age ~42.8 years; low density ~11 people per square mile.
- Older-leaning population compared to Georgia overall (median 42.8 vs. 37.4).

INCOME & POVERTY

- Median household income: \$40,764 (2019–2023 ACS).
- Per-capita income: \$25,407.
- Poverty rate: 26.4%, about double the statewide rate.

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

- Unemployment: 3.7% in 2024 (annual average, LAUS).
- Mean commute time: 32.9 minutes.
- Employment mix: government/education/health care, retail, construction, agriculture/forestry.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- 84.1% of residents (25+) hold a high school diploma or higher.
- 11.3% hold a bachelor's degree or higher (below Georgia's ~34%).

CHILD/YOUTH EDUCATION

- Graduation rate: 100% for Webster County Schools in 2023.
- Statewide graduation rate: 85.4% in 2024.
- District enrollment: ~255–259 students (PK–12).

CHILDCARE & EARLY EDUCATION

- Families can locate licensed and Quality Rated child-care providers via Georgia DECAL's public search and provider data export.

HOUSING & ENERGY

- Housing units: 1,163.
- Median home value: \$92,200.
- Households: 849; average household size 2.8.
- Broadband: 71.1% of households (2019–2023).

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- CDC PLACES data show higher obesity/inactivity/uninsured shares compared to urban peers.
- Georgia adult obesity prevalence ~35% (2023 BRFSS).

NUTRITION

- USDA Food Access Research Atlas shows rural low-income/low-access tracts in Georgia.
- Coordinate with SNAP-Ed, WIC, and summer meals programs for nutrition support.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION

- Commutes are long (32.9 minutes average).
- Limited regional transit options—potential for vanpools, car-repair assistance, and vouchers.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- Households with children under 18: ~17.7%.
- Single-parent households represent a notable share among families with children.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Veterans: 5.6% of residents.
- Broadband subscription at 71% shapes digital civic participation.

Regional Profile

Demographics

The region is distinctly rural, with county populations ranging from fewer than 5,000 in Schley and Webster to just over 20,000 in Crisp County, home to Cordele. Sumter County, with Americus as its county seat, also plays a central role both demographically and institutionally in the region. Overall, population change has been minimal or declining, reflecting broader rural trends of stagnation and, in some areas, out-migration.

The age structure skews older across the counties, a common rural phenomenon, which impacts workforce capacity and service delivery. Racial composition in counties like Webster is nearly evenly split between White and Black residents, with modest representation of other groups. Across the region, racial and ethnic diversity varies, but many counties share a significant Black and African American population, influencing cultural, economic, and equity considerations.

This eight-county region of west-central and southwest Georgia houses just under 95,000 residents combined, with populations ranging from larger Sumter (~29,000) to small Webster (~2,300). The area trends older than Georgia overall, with median ages in the early 40s across most counties. Racial composition varies: Sumter and Macon counties are majority Black; Dooly is nearly half Black and half White; Marion and Schley lean White; Crisp, Taylor, and Webster balance White and Black populations with modest but growing Hispanic/Latino shares. The region is rural, with low population densities and tight-knit community ties.

Income & Poverty

Median household incomes across these counties are well below Georgia's state median, averaging roughly \$34,390, emphasizing pervasive economic hardship. Poverty rates stand high, particularly among children, where proportions eclipse state averages, reinforcing persistent socioeconomic challenges.

Families face layered financial stressors, low incomes constrain basic needs, limit discretionary spending, and reduce local generosity toward nonprofits. The tight economic environment heightens the community's reliance on agencies like Unity for essential services and safety net programming, driving sustained demand.

Median household incomes range from about \$37,000 in Macon County to nearly \$60,000 in Schley County. Several counties—Taylor (29.4%), Webster (26.4%), and Macon (24.3%)—face poverty rates well above state averages, while Marion and Schley trend somewhat lower (16–13%). Sumter, the largest county, shows

a 22.7% poverty rate. Overall, the region struggles with persistent rural poverty, limited wealth-building, and modest per-capita incomes averaging in the low-to-mid \$20Ks.

Employment & Industry

Economically, the region leans heavily on industries like agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, and extractive sectors. Taylor County, for instance, is strongly agro-based, crops like peaches, peanuts, cotton, and timber dominate its economic profile. Sumter County similarly relies on agriculture but also hosts public and institutional employers such as Georgia Southwestern State University, health systems, and industrial firms. These industries are vulnerable, agricultural volatility, mechanization, and shifts in commodity markets can rapidly disrupt local employment and income streams. This economic structure underlines the importance of diversifying local economies and building resilience among workforce populations.

Unemployment in 2024–2025 hovers between 3.6% and 5.3%, close to or slightly above Georgia's state average. Dominant industries include health care, social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, agriculture, and education/public administration. While job opportunities exist, many residents commute long distances—up to 30+ minutes in Taylor, Marion, and Webster counties—highlighting the reliance on regional job hubs.

Skills & Qualifications

Educational attainment across the service area is generally lower than state averages, with fewer adults holding bachelor's degrees and a larger share with high school education or less. Rural constraints such as limited access to higher education and professional training perpetuate this gap.

Compounding these educational limitations is the digital divide, poor broadband infrastructure and limited technological literacy hamper job opportunities, training access, and client engagement with services, making digital equity a critical foundational need.

Educational attainment varies. On average, about 75–85% of adults hold a high school diploma or higher, but bachelor's attainment lags behind state levels (10–21% across most counties versus Georgia's 34%). Broadband access is uneven: Schley leads with stronger connectivity, while Webster lags at ~71%. Workforce development remains a regional challenge, with gaps in higher education and technical training limiting mobility.

Child/Youth Education

High school graduation rates and early childhood education outcomes in the region tend to lag behind statewide benchmarks. Data from the Georgia Department of Education (e.g., Cohort of 2024) often places several of these counties below the state average, correlating closely with high child poverty levels.

This educational gap affects both learners and service providers. Under-resourced schools challenge student success, and Unity must respond with wraparound support, from early intervention to youth development, to break the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.

Graduation rates are a regional bright spot. Counties like Sumter (98.6%), Schley (96.4%), and Webster (100%) outperform the state average of 85.4%. Even counties with lower performance, like Taylor (87.3%) and Crisp (86.9%), remain above or near the statewide benchmark. The region's schools provide strong pathways for youth despite economic barriers.

Childcare & Early Education

All counties participate in Georgia's DECAL Quality Rated system and offer Georgia Pre-K, though supply is uneven and access is limited in smaller counties. Families often face challenges finding affordable, nearby childcare. CAPS (Childcare and Parent Services) subsidies and Head Start/Early Head Start are present regionally, supporting low-income families.

Housing & Energy

Homeownership rates are relatively high, but housing affordability remains a challenge, renters often carry burdens exceeding 30% of their income. Aging housing stock and insufficient energy-efficient upgrades further drive up utility costs, underscoring the need for expanded Weatherization and energy-assistance programs. Some counties fall under HUD and Georgia Housing Authority special considerations in funding allocations due to housing market characteristics, a context that Unity can leverage in planning supportive housing and advocacy. Homeownership rates vary: Marion boasts a high 77%, while Crisp and Taylor hover near 61%. Median home values are modest, ranging from ~\$82,900 in Taylor to ~\$152,900 in Schley. Rental housing costs remain relatively low (\$650–\$760 median), but energy burdens are high in rural counties due to older housing stock and reliance on electricity and bottled gas.

Health & Wellbeing

County Health Rankings place Macon, Sumter, and Crisp among counties with elevated adverse health outcome and factor rankings, indicating worse-than-average morbidity and mortality outcomes. Contributing drivers include high rates of smoking, obesity, and limited healthcare access, the uninsured rate in the region typically exceeds state averages.

Compounding these health issues are social vulnerabilities: elevated levels of poverty, isolation, and lack of social support, data that aligns with your earlier risk assessment (e.g., ~32.9% lack social/emotional support; ~35% experience social isolation). Environmental health risks are modest, though particulate matter concerns persist in portions of the region, particularly Macon and Sumter Counties.

The region faces significant health disparities: uninsured rates range from ~12% in Schley to ~19% in Dooly and Marion. Obesity and chronic disease prevalence are consistently above state and national averages, reflecting limited healthcare access and preventative care. Public health support comes through the West Central and Southwest Georgia Health Districts.

Nutrition

Food insecurity is prevalent across the region, reflecting both elevated poverty and rural food deserts. USDA's Food Access Research Atlas identifies "low-income, low-access" zones within the footprint, locations where residents struggle to access healthy, affordable foods due to distance or transportation barriers.

SNAP participation is higher than state benchmarks in many counties, underscoring community reliance on nutrition support programs, and indicating key collaboration areas for Unity to strengthen food security strategies.

Feeding America and USDA data identify pockets of low-income/low-access tracts, particularly in Sumter, Crisp, and Webster counties. SNAP participation is widespread across the region, with Sumter alone reporting nearly 9,000 recipients. Access to fresh, affordable food is often limited to larger towns, forcing many rural families to rely on convenience stores.

Transportation

Transportation is a persistent barrier, long commutes, often exceeding 30 minutes, are common, and a notable share of households lack access to vehicles (ACS data). Public transportation is sparse outside urban centers like Americus, limiting access to employment, services, and medical care. These mobility limitations disproportionately affect low-income households, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, making transportation assistance and decentralized service models essential. The region is highly car-dependent, with commute times averaging 20–33 minutes. Carpooling and remote work are modest, but in some counties (Sumter, Taylor, Marion, Webster), long-distance commuting is the norm. A lack of fixed-route transit leaves residents reliant on personal vehicles, creating barriers for low-income households.

Family Relationships

Single-parent households and multi-generational caregiving arrangements are more common here than statewide norms, placing heightened stress on caregivers. For instance, grandparents responsible for grandchildren and single mothers are prominent demographic groups driving demand for support services. These family structures, both nurturing and vulnerable, call for holistic service designs that address childcare, parenting support, and emotional resilience in family systems.

Household structures are diverse: married-couple families dominate in rural counties, but single-parent households are more common in Macon, Sumter, and Crisp. Average household sizes range from 2.3 (Dooly) to 2.8 (Schley/Webster). Veterans represent ~5–7% of the population across the region, reflecting deep community ties.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement, as measured by volunteering and voter turnout, tends to trail urban counterparts. While concrete turnout data per county across recent elections isn't summarized here, Georgia Secretary of State vote reports consistently show lower participation rates in rural counties.

On the positive side, local civic participation remains rooted in community institutions like churches, nonprofit organizations, and place-based networks, representing a foundation Unity can build upon through inclusive leadership development and outreach efforts. Civic participation varies but is consistently strong in schools and local elections. Early voting turnout in Crisp (44.2%) and Taylor's nearly 4,000 ballots in 2024 highlight active democratic engagement. Broadband access influences digital participation, with rural gaps limiting involvement in some counties. Faith-based organizations and local nonprofits are central to civic life.

This region embodies the story of rural Georgia—rich in resilience, family, and community pride, but challenged by poverty, limited healthcare access, and transportation gaps. Graduation rates shine as a regional strength, while housing affordability and community engagement provide a strong base for Unity Community Action Council to keep lifting families higher.

Data Sources

A comprehensive data analysis was completed using the most accessible and recent statistical data for the region as well as data input from the Community Needs Assessment Survey (blank version and completed copies provided later within this document). While statistical data is available for the generalized region, due to the rural nature, some of the data could not be specifically linked to a specific county.

Statistical Data

The statistical data provided across these sources create a detailed picture of demographic structure and population change at both state and county levels. U.S. Census Bureau products such as QuickFacts and American Community Survey (ACS) profiles supply measures of population size, age distribution, race and ethnicity, housing characteristics, and poverty rates. This data highlights patterns of population decline or growth, aging trends, and shifts in household composition. By establishing these demographic baselines, the statistics reveal how communities are evolving over time and where disparities may exist between counties, regions, and the broader state of Georgia.

Economic indicators are another cornerstone of the data landscape. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and Georgia Department of Labor provide county-level unemployment rates, industry distribution, and labor force participation, often contextualized through FRED time-series datasets. This is complemented by income measures and program participation statistics, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) enrollment from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Collectively, these data illustrate not only the strength or weakness of local economies but also the financial vulnerability of households. Feeding America's meal gap analysis further deepens this picture by quantifying food insecurity and access issues.

Health outcomes and environmental conditions are strongly represented within the data. CDC's PLACES datasets and the County Health Rankings reports provide estimates of chronic disease prevalence, health behaviors, and social determinants of health. The Social Vulnerability Index and EPA's EJScreen data add context by linking population health to structural and environmental risk factors such as poverty, housing quality, and exposure to pollutants. These health-focused statistics emphasize both direct health outcomes (e.g., obesity, diabetes, insurance coverage) and broader contextual variables that shape community well-being and resilience.

Finally, education, childcare, and civic engagement data round out the statistical profile. Graduation rates, school performance metrics, and readiness indicators from the Georgia Department of Education and Governor's Office of Student Achievement provide insight into educational attainment and workforce preparation. Early care and learning data from Georgia DECAL track childcare availability and quality, which are critical for supporting

families and long-term development outcomes. Civic engagement data—including election results, registration figures, and voter turnout statistics—document patterns of democratic participation and representation. Together, these statistics provide a multidimensional evidence base for assessing community strengths and challenges across domains of social life.

Survey Data

Community Survey Results Summary

Unity Community Action Council conducted a community survey to better understand the needs, challenges, and strengths of its eight-county service area. A total of 42 individuals responded, representing a mix of clients, board members, staff, partner agencies, and community members. Respondents spanned all eight counties, with the largest share residing in Macon and Crisp Counties. While this is less than the previous Community Needs Assessment respondents, the percentage mix of respondents appear to be in alignment. While Unity CAC has a Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer on staff, it is recommended to use the ROMA cycle to institute creative and innovative ways to ensure maximum feasible participation amongst the Community Action Agency's footprint, particularly in the space of board participation and client participation within the survey. One possible solution for this in the future is providing the surveys to the board during board meetings and providing the surveys to clients before, during, and after service delivery. Currently, the Georgia Community Action Association (GCAA) is piloting a statewide client satisfaction survey. Unity CAC can use this monthly reported survey data from GCAA as a part of their Organizational Standards data, and also use this model for collecting survey data for the future Community Needs Assessments.

Key Community Challenges

Across the service area, residents consistently identified housing, employment, healthcare, transportation, and poverty as the most pressing challenges. Respondents frequently noted difficulties accessing affordable housing, reliable transportation, and quality healthcare—including mental health and substance abuse services. Many also cited economic instabilities, including low wages, lack of job opportunities, and barriers to training or certification. Education gaps, particularly low literacy and school performance, were highlighted as drivers of generational poverty. Childcare shortages and after-school vulnerabilities were also emphasized as significant barriers for working families.

Service Needs

Survey participants rated a wide range of services as very high need. The top priorities included:

- Affordable Housing (74%)
- Healthcare Access (71%)
- Energy Assistance (73%)
- Job Training and Employment Services (71%)
- Education and Early Childhood Development (69%)
- Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities (71%)
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (65%)

Food assistance, childcare, transportation, financial literacy, and emergency assistance were also rated as critical needs by the majority of respondents. These results reflect a broad spectrum of interconnected challenges that require a holistic approach that Community Action Agencies are specifically trained to meet the needs of.

Quality of Life and Service Access

When asked about overall quality of life, nearly two-thirds rated it as "fair" or "poor," underscoring persistent community hardships. Accessing services was described as difficult or very difficult by three-quarters of respondents, pointing to gaps in awareness, availability, and ease of navigation. While about half of respondents reported being aware of Unity's services, many community members still expressed confusion about available programs and how to access them.

Community Strengths and Collaboration

Despite these challenges, respondents highlighted the region's resilience and sense of community. Themes of neighbors helping neighbors, family closeness, and collaborative partnerships emerged as strengths. Programs like Family Connection, LIHEAP, Weatherization, Meals on Wheels, and youth development initiatives were named as particularly effective. Respondents emphasized the importance of continued collaboration, visibility, and communication from Unity. Suggestions included hosting community-based events, consolidating services in single access points, and strengthening partnerships with local organizations to improve service delivery.

Conclusion

The survey results demonstrate that while the community faces significant barriers—particularly in housing, employment, healthcare, and transportation—it also possesses strong networks of collaboration and mutual support. Unity is seen as a critical provider, but greater visibility, outreach, and partnerships will be essential to ensure that residents are aware of and can access available resources. These findings provide clear guidance for Unity's strategic planning and underscore the urgency of addressing core social determinants of health and economic stability.

The community survey conducted across Unity's eight-county service area reinforced that housing, employment, healthcare, transportation, and poverty are among the most pressing challenges facing residents. Respondents reported frequent difficulty accessing affordable housing, unreliable transportation, and gaps in healthcare services (including mental health and substance abuse treatment). Educational and job training barriers, especially for youth and low-income adults, were also identified. These qualitative findings align closely with recent socioeconomic data for the region, which reveal elevated poverty, low median incomes, and limited workforce metrics that intensify those daily struggles.

For example, in Sumter County, the 2023 American Community Survey (5-year estimate) reports a poverty rate of 22.7%, substantially above both Georgia's average ($\approx 13.5\%$) and national averages. The median household income in Sumter is about \$41,877 which, while improving, remains low relative to state and metro area benchmarks. In Taylor County, the data show a particularly high poverty rate of about 29.4% in 2023, indicating that nearly one in three residents in that county live in poverty. These income and poverty statistics help explain why many community members rated economic-stability services (job training, income assistance, etc.) among their high priority needs.

Regarding SNAP, WIC, and similar nutrition assistance programs: while state-level numbers are available, county-level participation data is not consistently public for all counties in the Unity service area. Georgia's SNAP program reports over 1.5 million participants statewide in FY 2022, with many households living at or below the poverty line. However, the lack of transparent, up-to-date county breakdowns hampers precise estimation of how many residents in each county rely on SNAP, WIC, or EBT/food benefits. Given the high poverty in counties like Sumter and Taylor, and the survey results indicating that food assistance is among the top service needs, Unity should prioritize obtaining or requesting county-level data from state agencies (DFCS, Georgia WIC) to fully map nutrition assistance demand.

In sum, the survey results and external data together paint a picture of a service area with deeply felt economic stress—persistently high poverty, modest median incomes, and structural barriers to stable employment. Unity's strategy should scale up economic stabilization programs (job training, living wage advocacy), ensure nutrition and housing support are integral, and enhance outreach to households likely to be undercounted or underserved by existing assistance programs. Collecting more granular data on SNAP/WIC participation by county will enable better targeting and resource allocation to meet the clearly expressed community needs.

ROMA Planning Bridge

This Community Needs Assessment directly informs Unity CAC's planning and performance management cycle under Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Next Generation.

- Prioritized Needs → Outcomes: Each of the top prioritized needs is aligned with a CSBG National Performance Indicator (NPI).
- Outcomes → Strategies: Unity CAC will design strategies in the Community Action Plan that corresponds to these NPIs, ensuring measurable results.
- Indicators → Data Sources: Progress will be tracked using American Community Survey (ACS) data, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment data, agency management information systems, and client surveys.
- Review Cadence: Outcomes will be reviewed semi-annually, with updates reported to the Board and community stakeholders.

Public Dissemination Plan

Unity CAC will broadly disseminate this Community Needs Assessment to ensure transparency and encourage community engagement. Distribution channels will include:

- Posting the CNA on the agency's website at www.unitycac.org
- Providing briefings to partner agencies, local governments, and key stakeholders

Feedback will be incorporated to refine future planning efforts. The CNA will be updated at least once every three years, as required by the Office of Community Services, with interim refreshes as conditions change or new data becomes available.

Analytics

Unity CAC Needs Assessment

Welcome to Our Community Needs Assessment Survey



Demographics

Which of the following best describes your affiliation with Unity? *

Staff Member

Board Member

Partner Agency Representative

Community Member

Client/Program Participant

Other

What county do you live in? *

Please choose...

What is your age range?

Please choose...

Identifying Community Needs and Challenges

In your opinion, what are the three (3) most significant challenges facing individuals and families in our community today?

How would you rate the overall quality of life in our community?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Affordable Housing

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1

2

3

4

5

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Job Training and Employment Services

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1

2

3

4

5

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Food Assistance (e.g., food banks, pantries)

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1

2

3

4

5

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Childcare Services

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1

2

3

4

5

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Transportation

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Healthcare Access (including mental health)

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
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Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Education and Early Childhood Development

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Financial Literacy and Money Management

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Energy Assistance (e.g., heating/cooling)

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:

Emergency Assistance (e.g., shelter, clothing)

(1) Very High Need, (2) High Need, (3) Moderate Need, (4) Low Need, (5) No Need

Very High Need

No Need

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Are there any other unmet needs or challenges in our community that you think are important? Please list.

Access to and Awareness of Services

How easy do you feel it is for individuals and families in our community to access the services they need?

Please choose...



How aware are you of the services provided by Unity?

Please choose...



If you are a [client/participant](#), how satisfied are you with the services you have received from Unity?

Please choose...



Community Strengths and Resources

What do you see as the greatest strengths of our community?

Are there any existing community resources or programs that are particularly effective in addressing local needs? If so, please provide the program name(s) in the following box.

How could Unity better collaborate with other organizations to address community needs?

Suggestions for Improvement

What specific actions could Unity take to better serve the community?

Do you have any other suggestions or comments for Unity?

Other Comments or Concerns

Do you have any further comments?

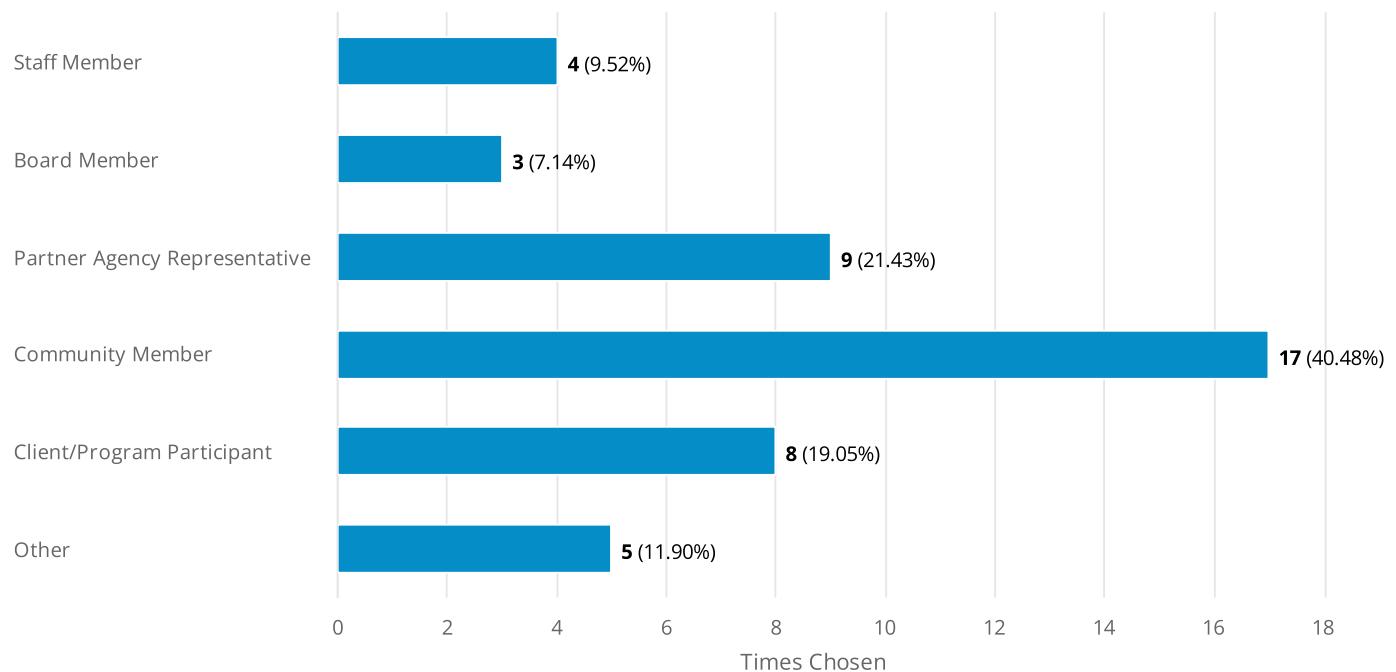
Thank you for participating in our survey!
Your responses will help us to better serve the community.



Unity CAC Needs Assessment

Which of the following best describes your affiliation with Unity?

Number of responses: 42

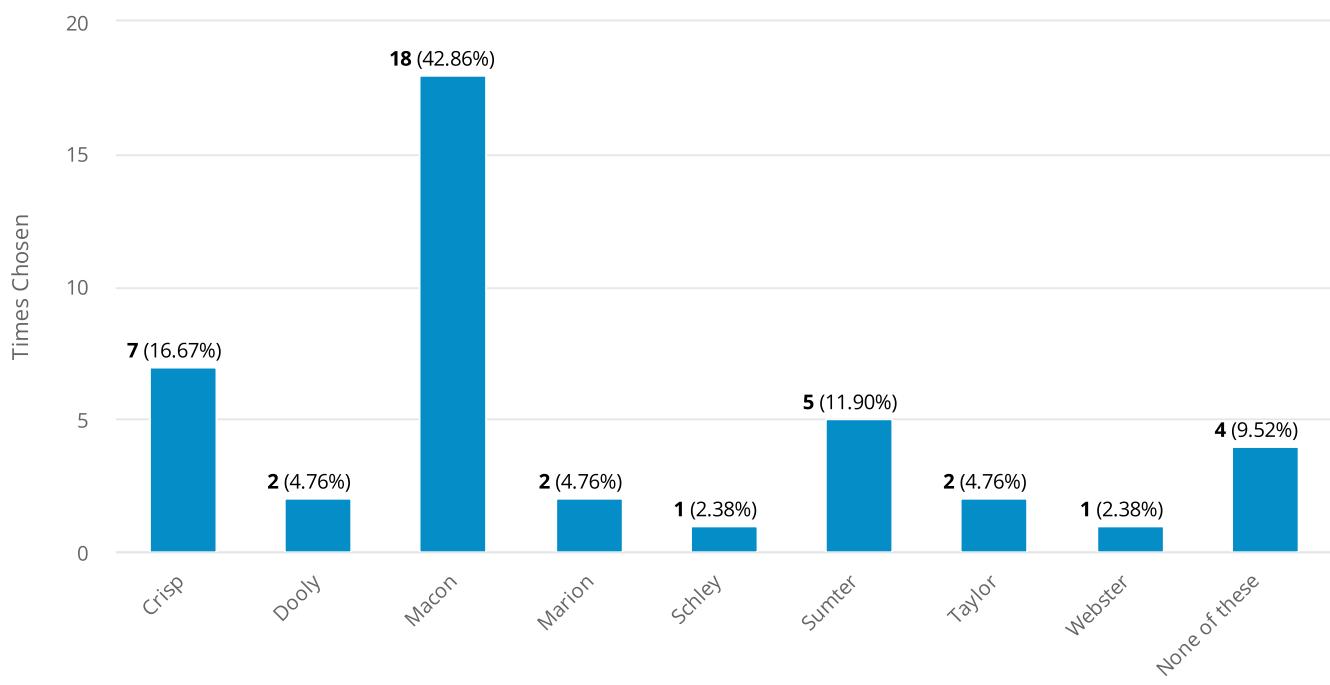


"Other" text answers:

Other
Interview
Community Advancement Manager City of Cordele
Other
Camille's Daughter

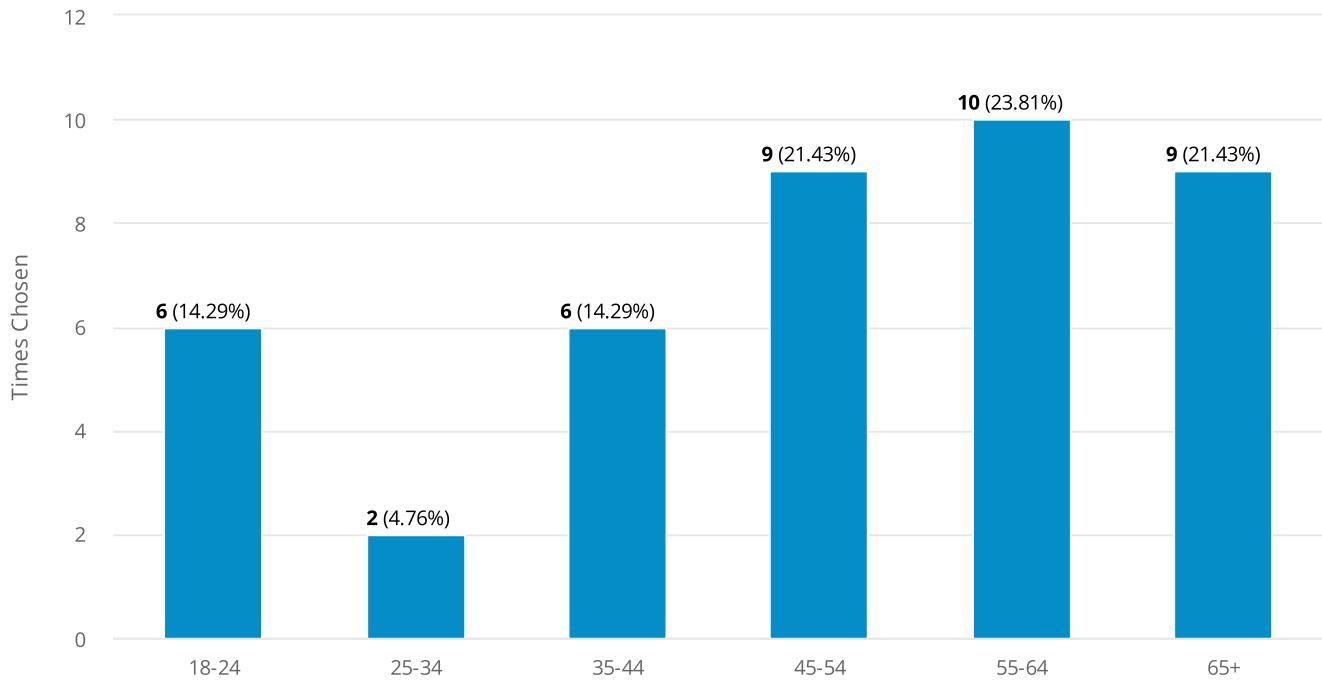
What county do you live in?

Number of responses: 42



What is your age range?

Number of responses: 42



In your opinion, what are the three (3) most significant challenges facing individuals and families in our community today?

Number of responses: 38

Text answers:

Utilities, rent, finding jobs

The lack of resources such as mental health, shelters, poverty, and food needs.

Healthcare Access

Education Inequalities

Economic Hardships

Transportation Barriers

Access to affordable housing

Limited Job opportunities

Transportation

Health Care

Employment

Transportation

Affording

Daycare

Poverty/ low income

Lack of Transportation

Lack of Health services

Poverty

Transportation

Jobs

Lack of work/jobs

Youth programs for kids

More food pantries just once a month Food Valley comes

Roads need to be worked on; internet service

High cost and having a hard time trying to get assistance for elderly low income families

Financial issues , health issues , mental health issues

These communities we serve are facing hardships in area of housing, transportation, and employment.

Education health and child care

Live peacefully Obey and respect the Law. Make sure to respect neighbors.

Poverty, money and jobs

Affordable utilities

Affordable quality groceries

Peace between all community members regardless of political affiliation, race, or religion.

Housing,jobs and education

1. Lack and knowledge of resources

2. Access to health and social resources

3. Transportation

Literacy

Affordable housing

Job skills

Housing

Education

Employment

Educational access(high number of working age individuals without diplomas)

Educational disparities

Generational poverty

Housing, food insecurity, jobs

Not enough funding for needs. Getting through to the agencies for funding. Resource communication.

Every day living cost

Jobs

Housing

Transportation

Money

Trust

Hope

Cost of groceries
Conditions of roads
Working together

Some of the most significant challenges facing individuals and families today include economic stability, access to quality healthcare, and mental health issues. These factors can greatly impact overall well-being and community cohesion.

Top Three Challenges Facing Our Community

Cyberbullying and After-School Vulnerability (3 PM – 6 PM):

Many children in our community are left unsupervised during the critical hours between 3:00 and 6:00 PM. Without structured activities or adult guidance, they often turn to social media for entertainment and connection. This unsupervised digital exposure puts them at risk for cyberbullying, online exploitation, and other harmful behaviors. Increased screen time also reduces opportunities for face-to-face social interaction, negatively impacting their emotional development and social skills.

Low Literacy Rates and Struggling Schools:

Our children are attending schools with consistently low performance ratings and graduation rates. As a result, many students are falling behind in literacy, which impacts their overall academic achievement and long-term educational success. The lack of strong reading and writing skills contributes to a cycle of underachievement and limits future opportunities.

Barriers to Employment and Job Readiness:

A significant portion of our community members struggle to gain employment due to a lack of vocational training and essential job-readiness skills. Many individuals do not possess trade certifications or have difficulty navigating the job application process, including online submissions and resume writing. This gap limits their ability to secure stable, well-paying jobs, contributing to economic instability within the community.

Affordable housing.
mental health care.

Accessible health care.
Jobs

Affordable

Rent, utilities, jobs

Resources that assist with the necessities of individual daily life

Love peace loyalty

Transportation
Resources

Transportation
Education

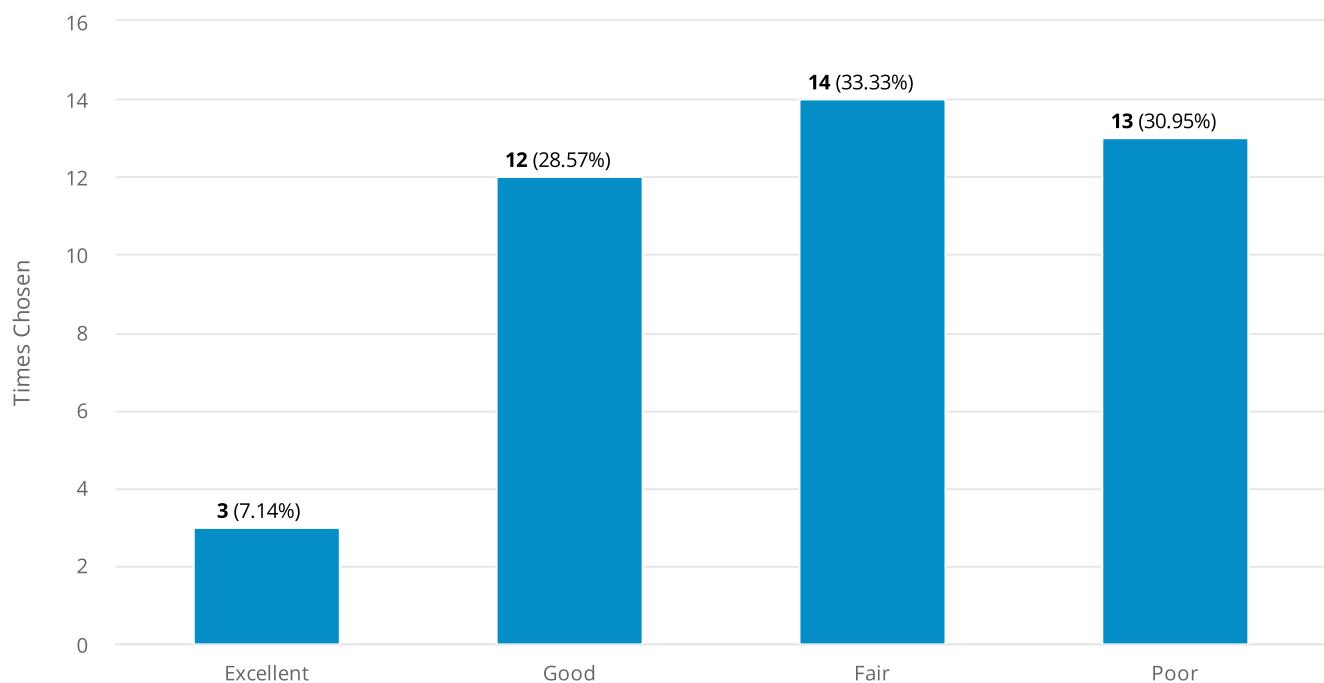
Jobs

Employment
Education
Resources

Education, Employment, and Housing

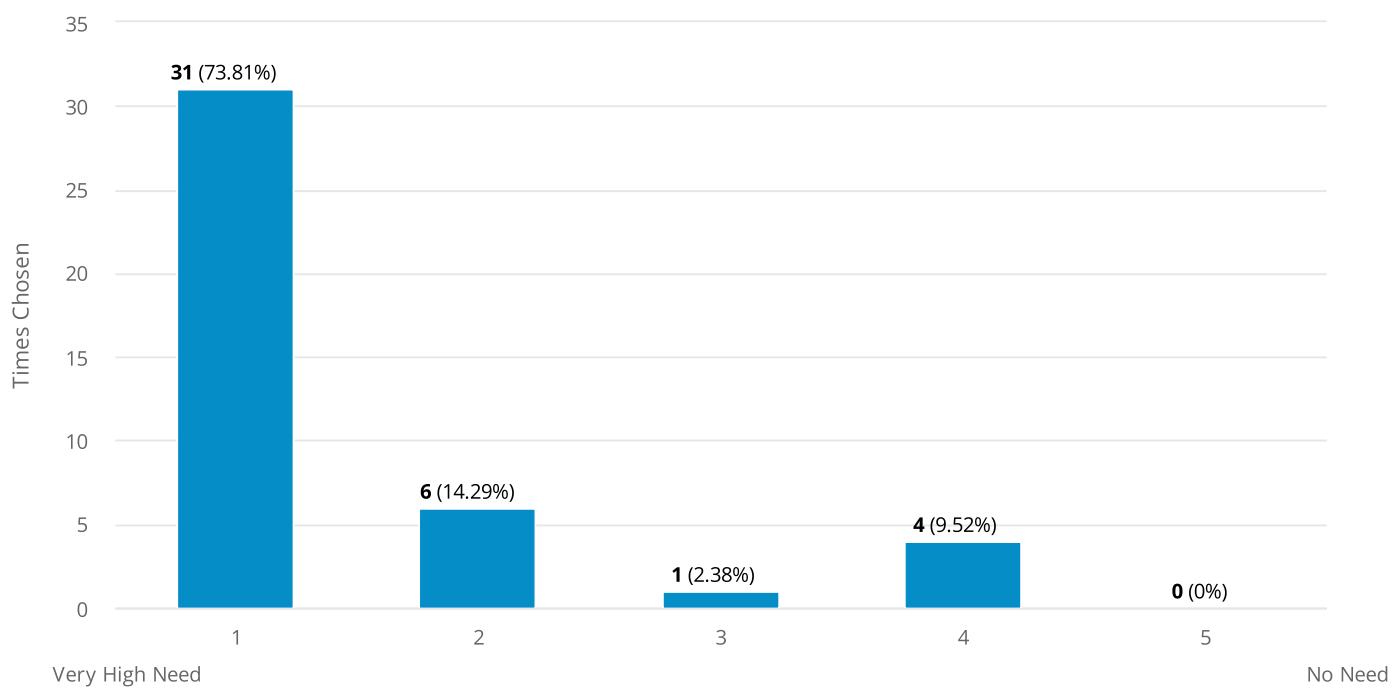
How would you rate the overall quality of life in our community?

Number of responses: 42



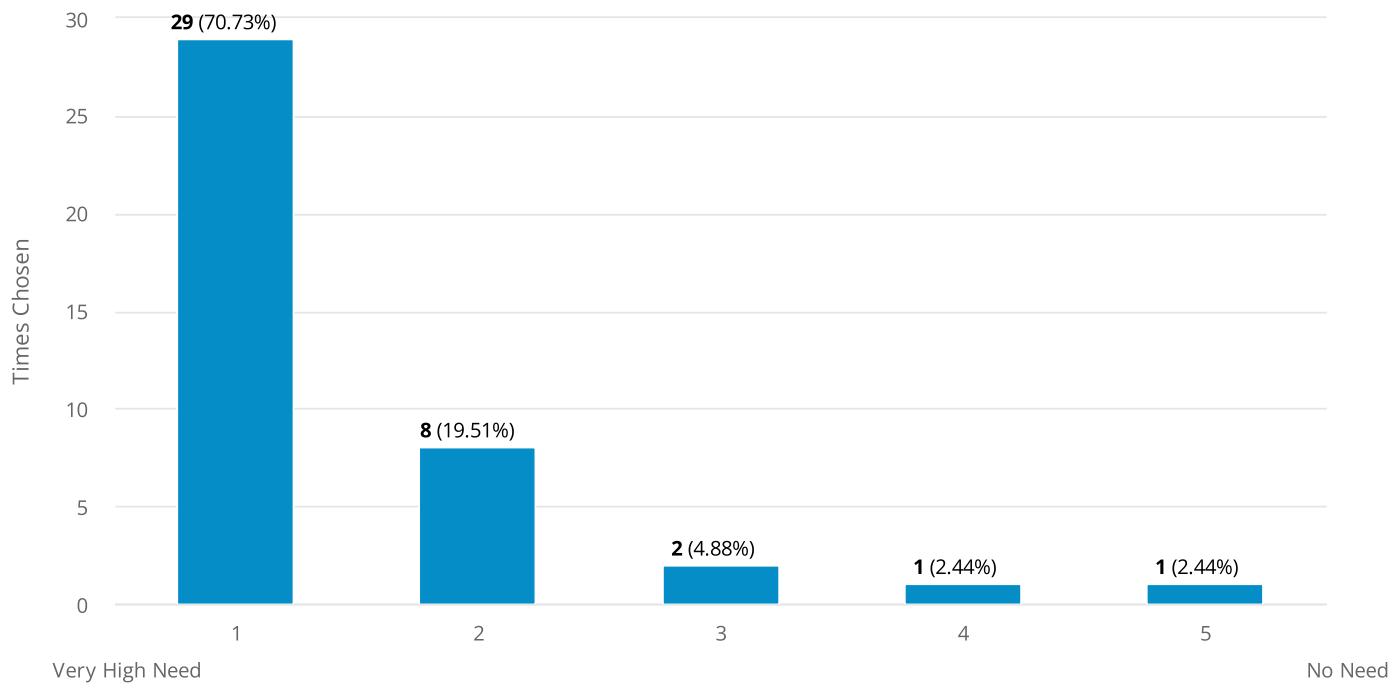
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Affordable Housing

Number of responses: 42



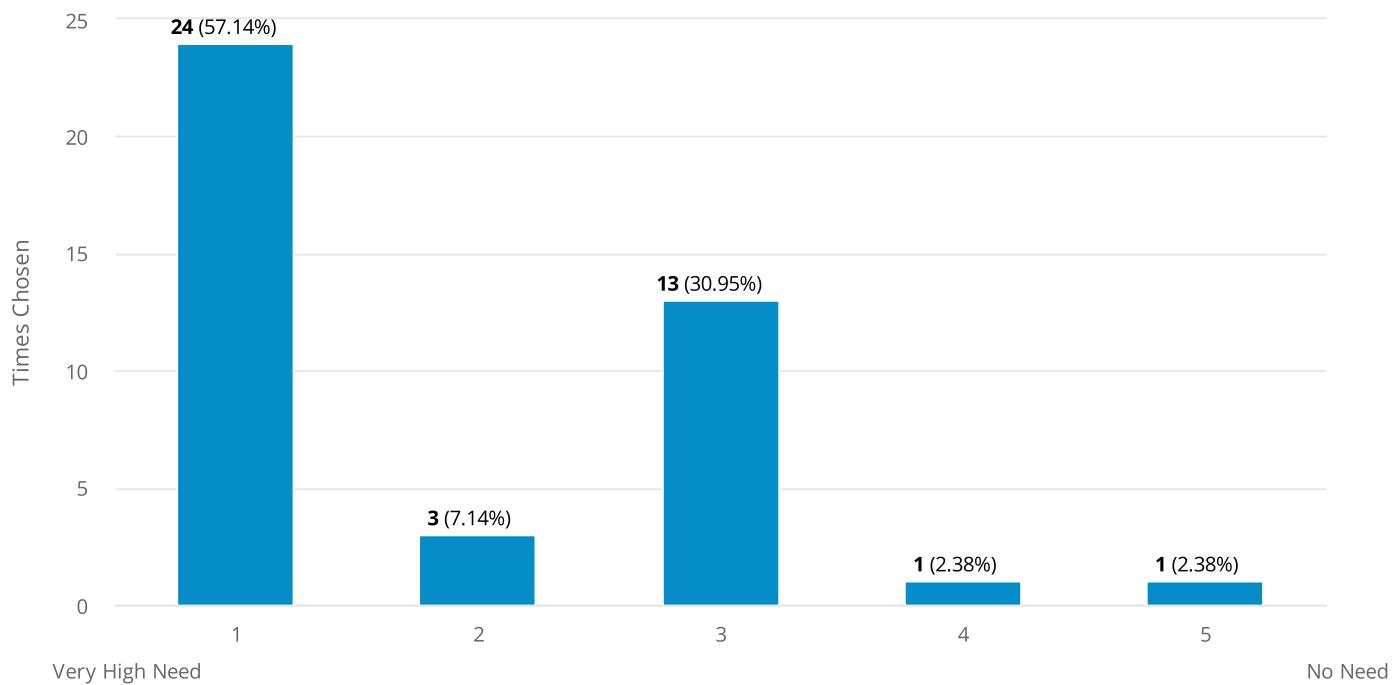
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community: Job Training and Employment Services

Number of responses: 41



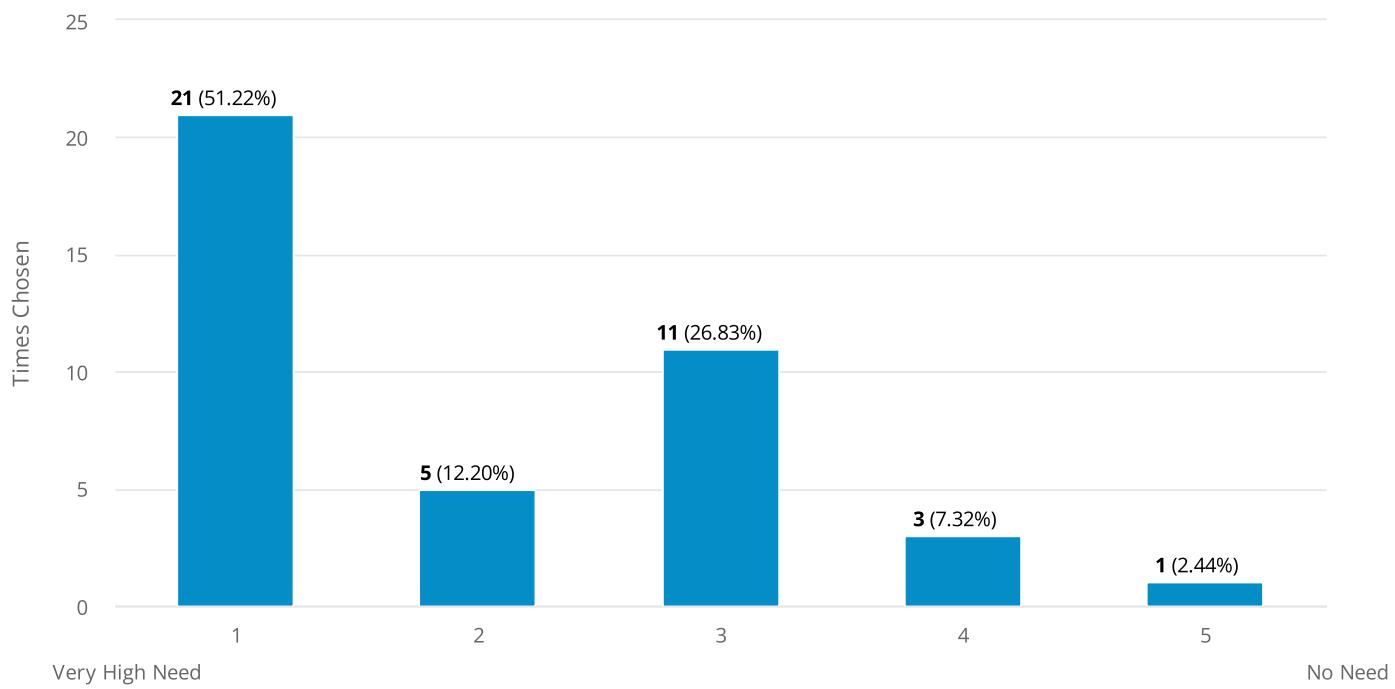
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community: Food Assistance (e.g., food banks, pantries)

Number of responses: 42



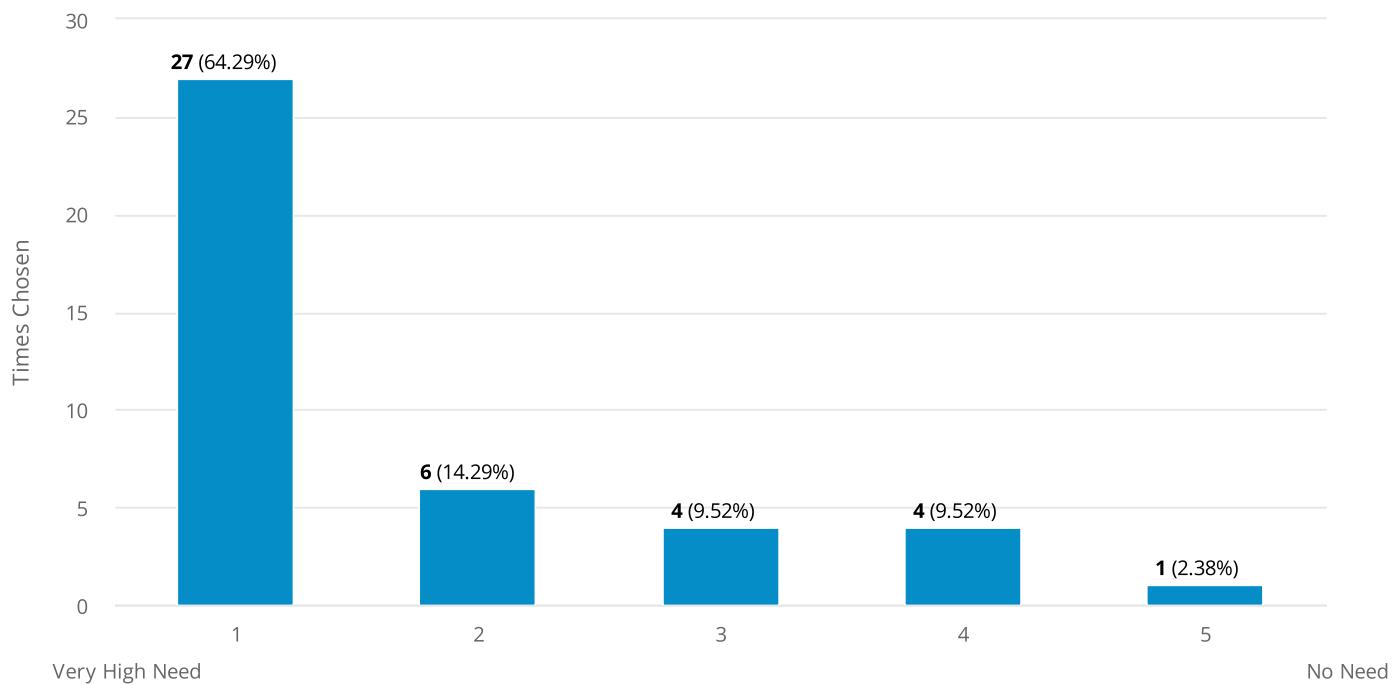
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community: Childcare Services

Number of responses: 41



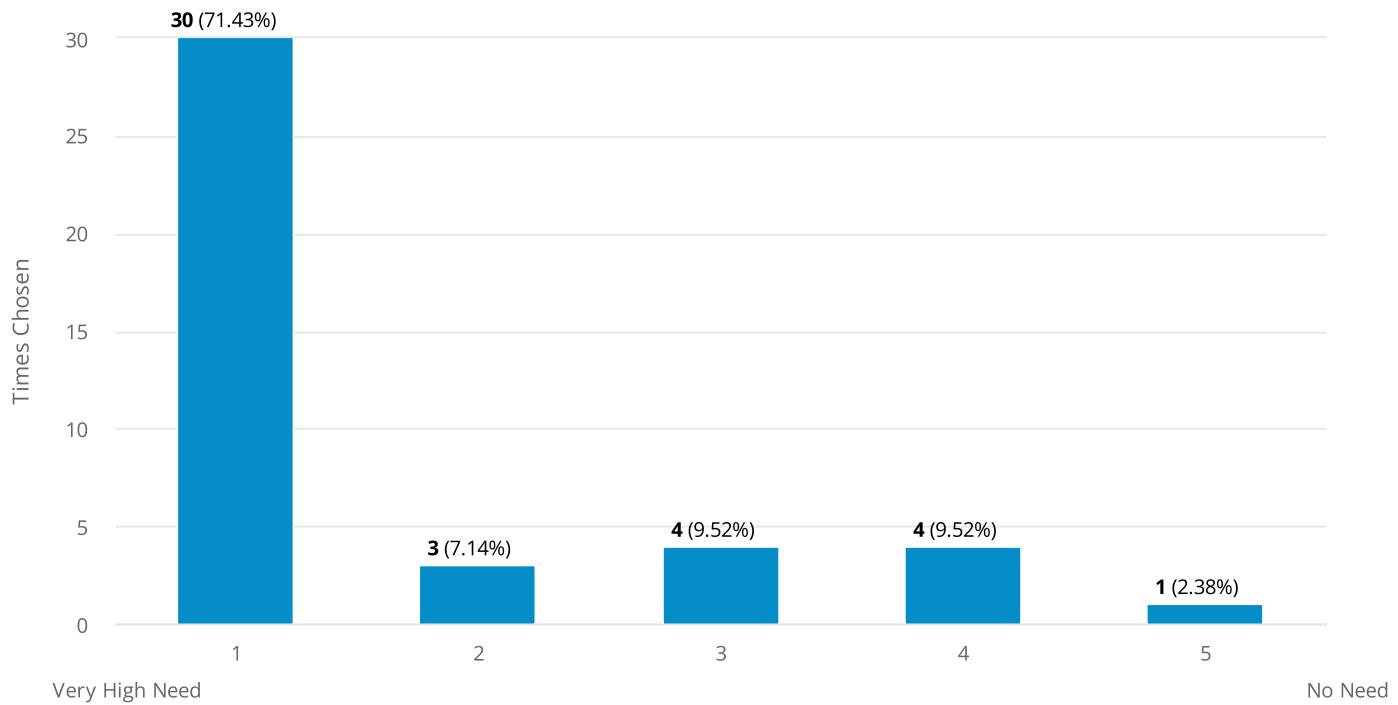
**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Transportation**

Number of responses: 42



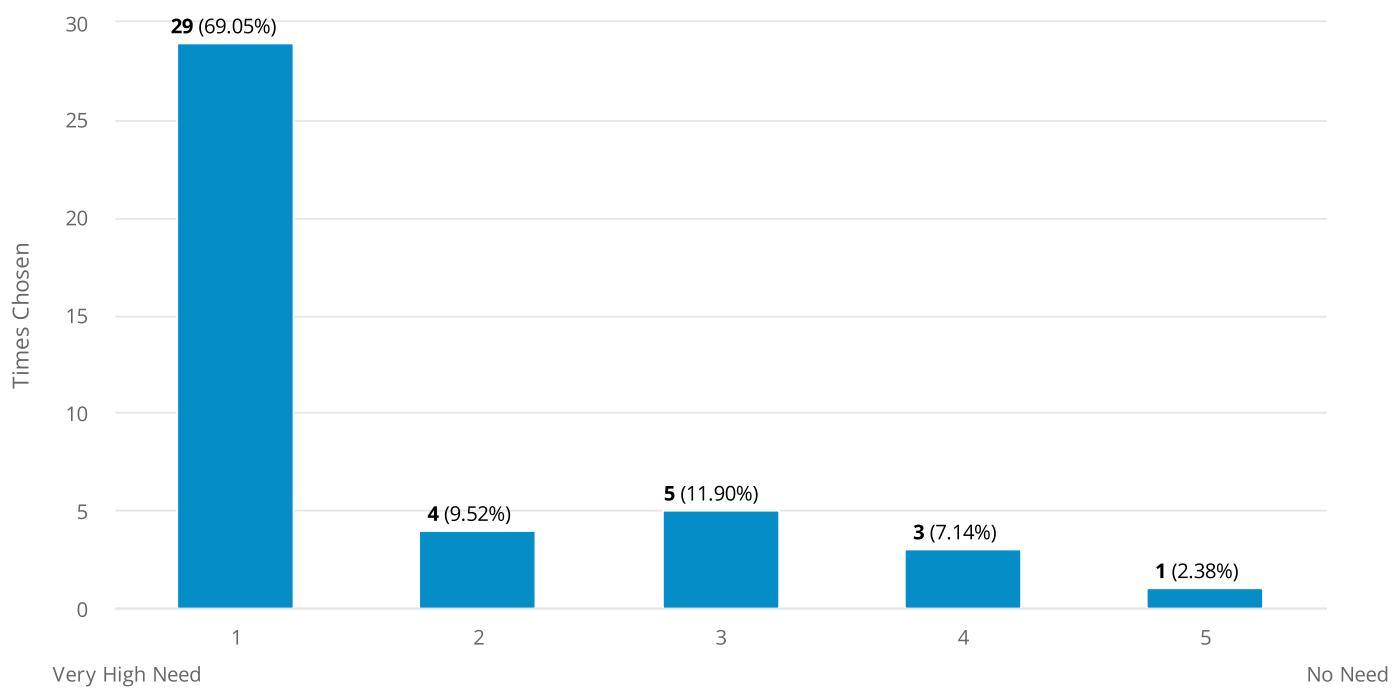
**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Healthcare Access (including mental health)**

Number of responses: 42



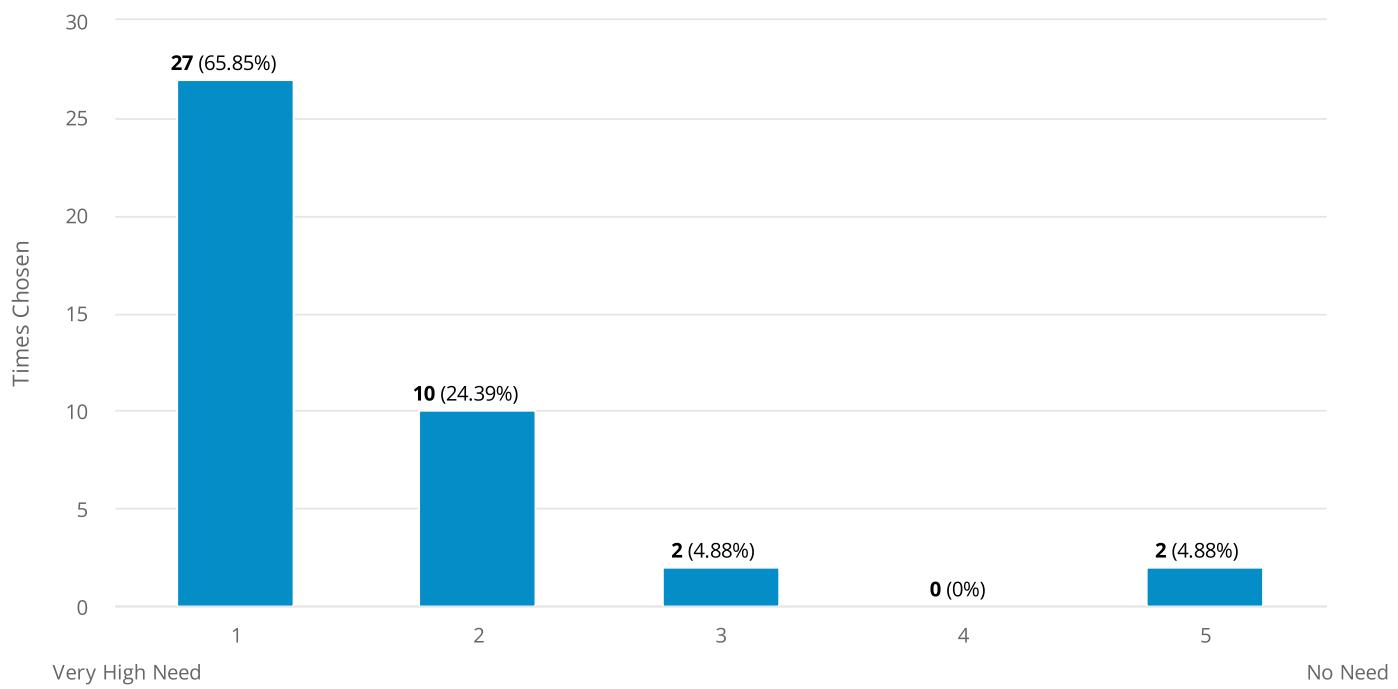
**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Education and Early Childhood Development**

Number of responses: 42



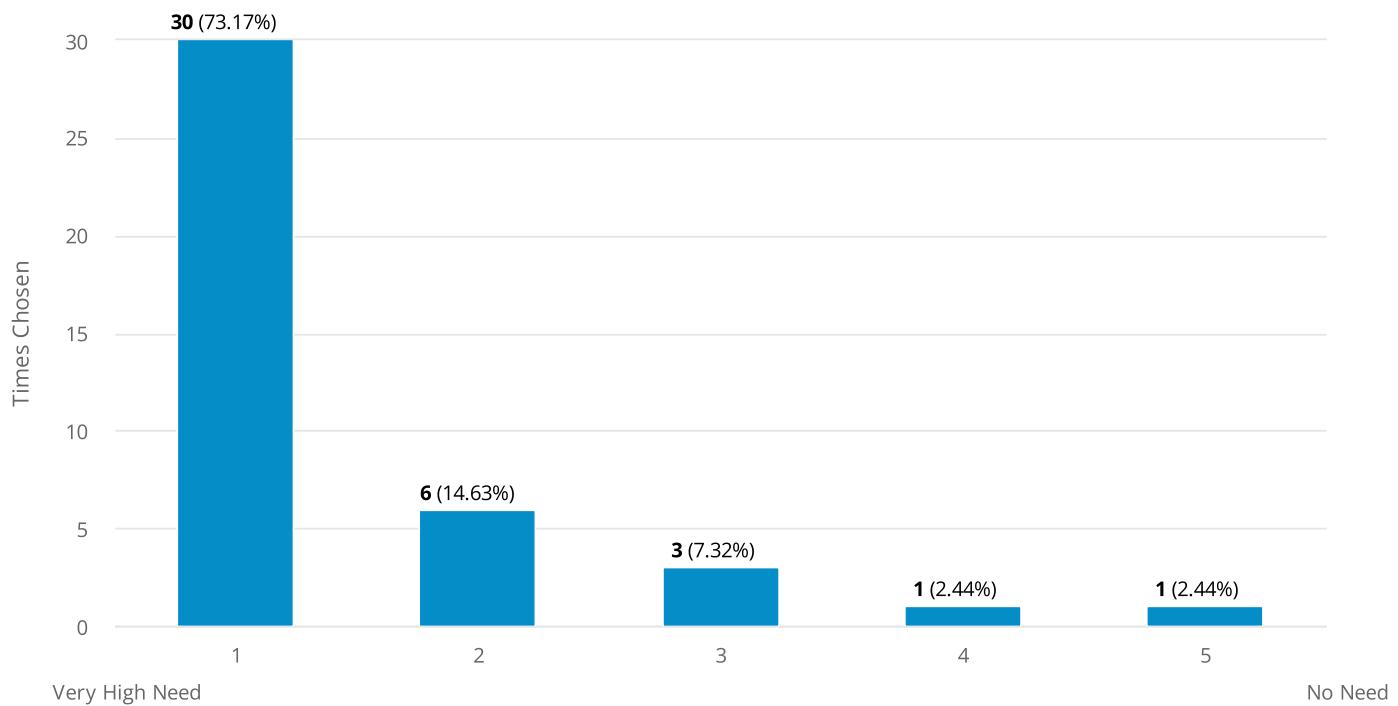
**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Financial Literacy and Money Management**

Number of responses: 41



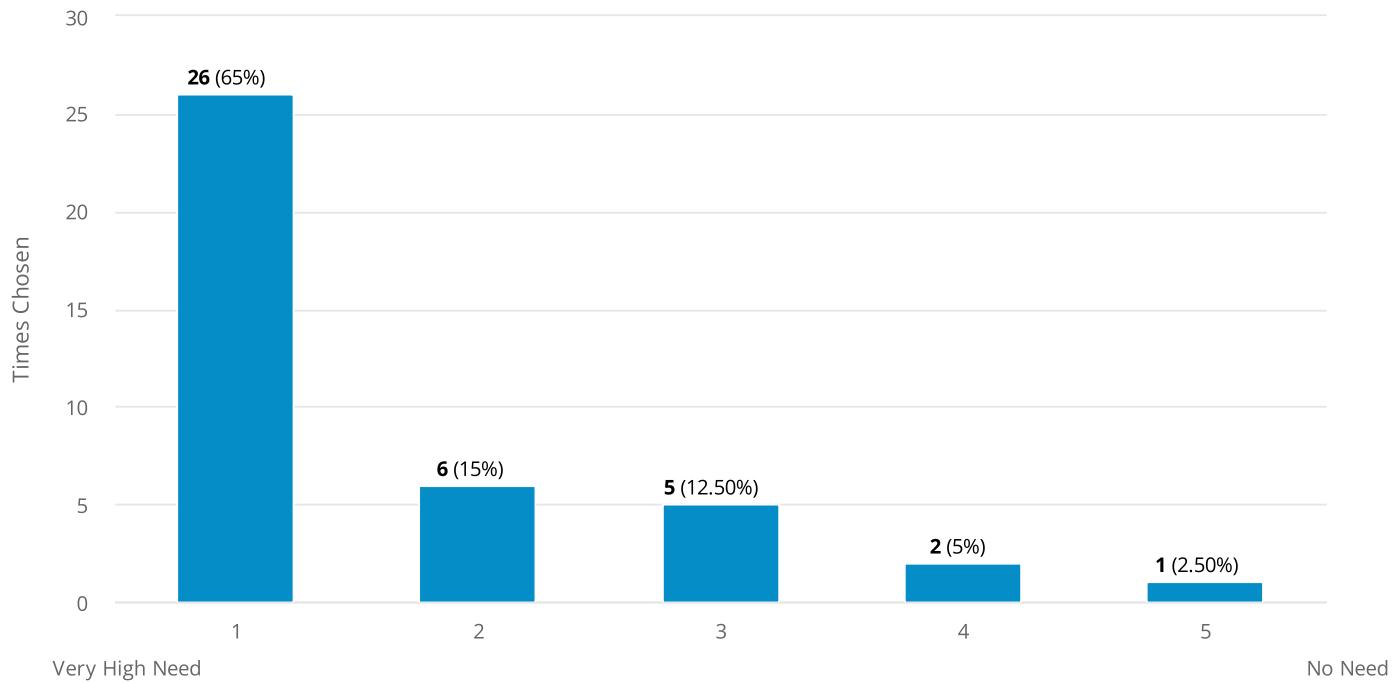
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community: Energy Assistance (e.g., heating/cooling)

Number of responses: 41



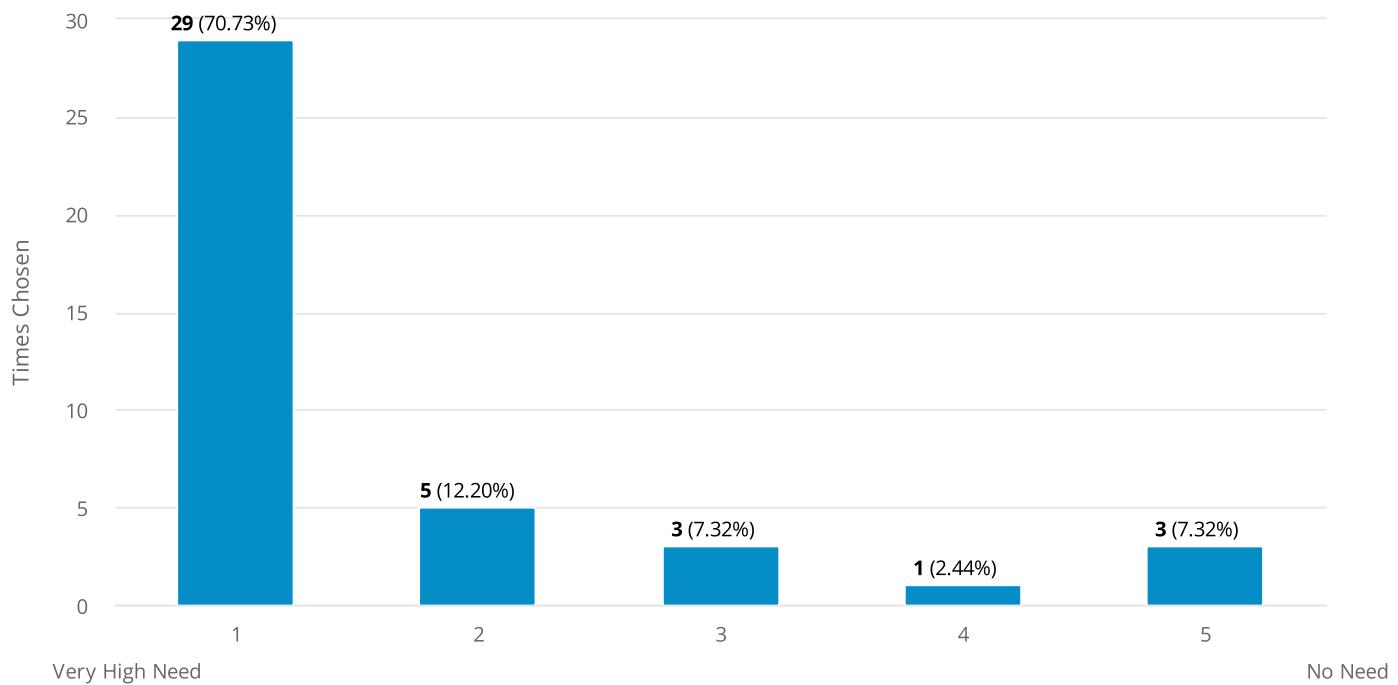
Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community: Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Number of responses: 40



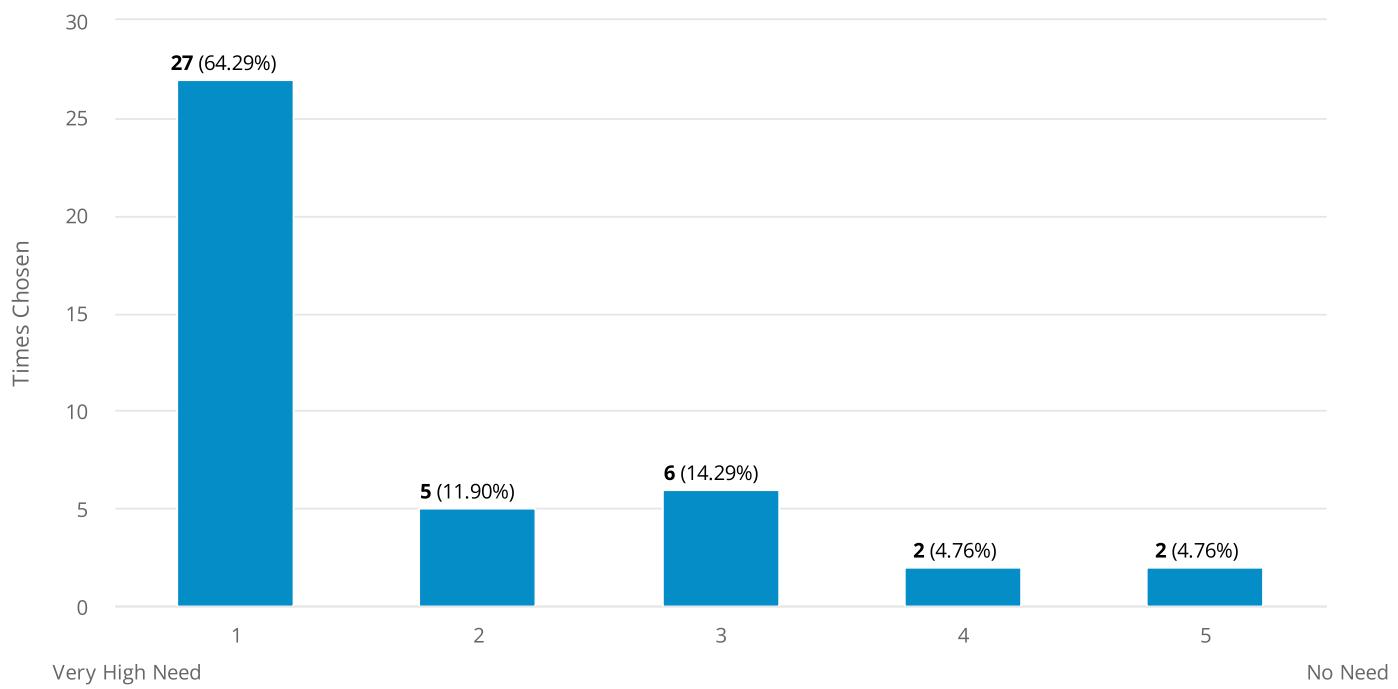
**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities**

Number of responses: 41



**Please indicate the level of need for the following services in our community:
Emergency Assistance (e.g., shelter, clothing)**

Number of responses: 42



Are there any other unmet needs or challenges in our community that you think are important? Please list.

Number of responses: 19

Text answers:

Grocery stores, employment opportunities, mental health providers, and more transportation needs.

affordable childcare , limited youth programs , mental health and substance abuse help

Daycare Assistance

Medicaid

Medicare

Macon County needs Healthcare bad.

A community based Healthcare program. We need a shelter and wrap a round services for displaced citizens. We need services for veterans in our community.

Senior center needs funding for activities

Job/ education programs for the upcoming youth

City limits have easier access than the outskirts of the county such as transportation and senior services

n/a

No

Street lighting is very poor in and around the cities of Montezuma and Oglethorpe

I think all is at a moderate level there is a concern for all needs and they are met .

Yes seeing that the citizens are taking care of before. The heir family members.

N/A

"Another major challenge is transportation. Additionally, there is no access to emergency medical care in the area, and there are no nearby shopping centers or activities available for youth."

The unhoused in our community.

For the Elderly who do not receive SSI or Medicaid there are no extra health. Individuals are receiving assistance of \$23 in food stamps and are not eligible for flex card amounts.

N/A

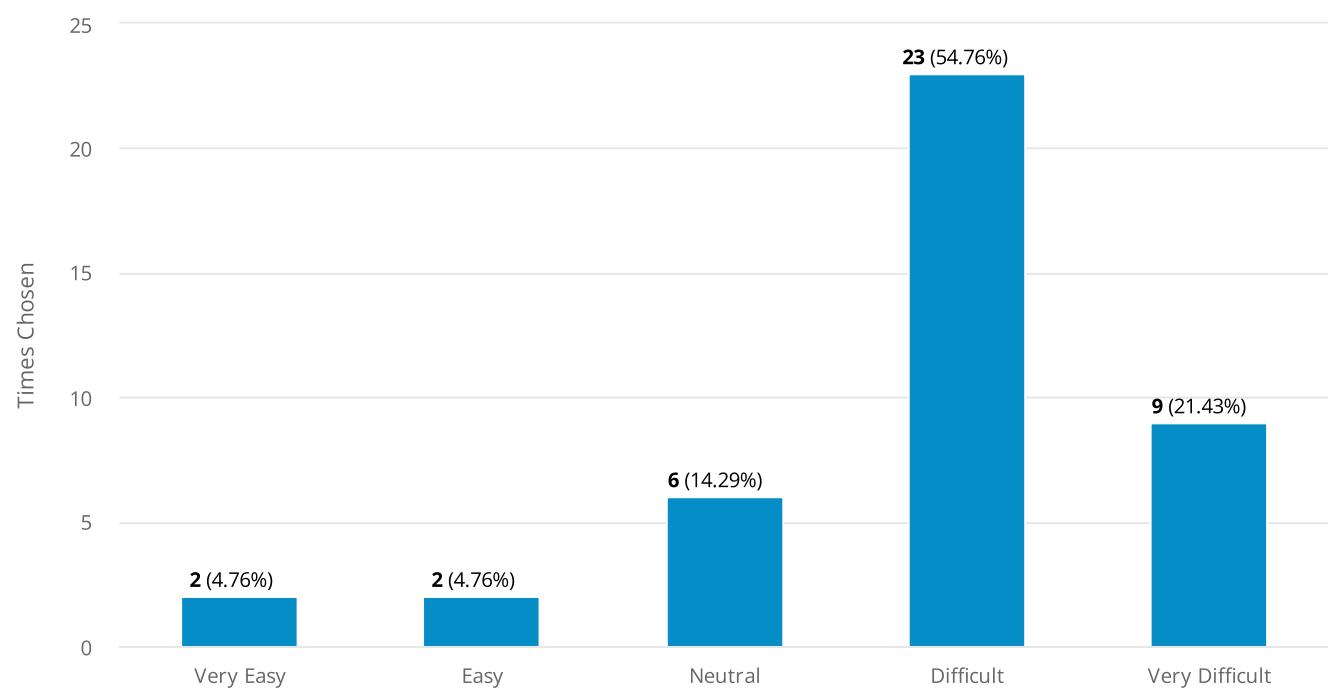
Together in

Most have been covered by previous questions

N/A

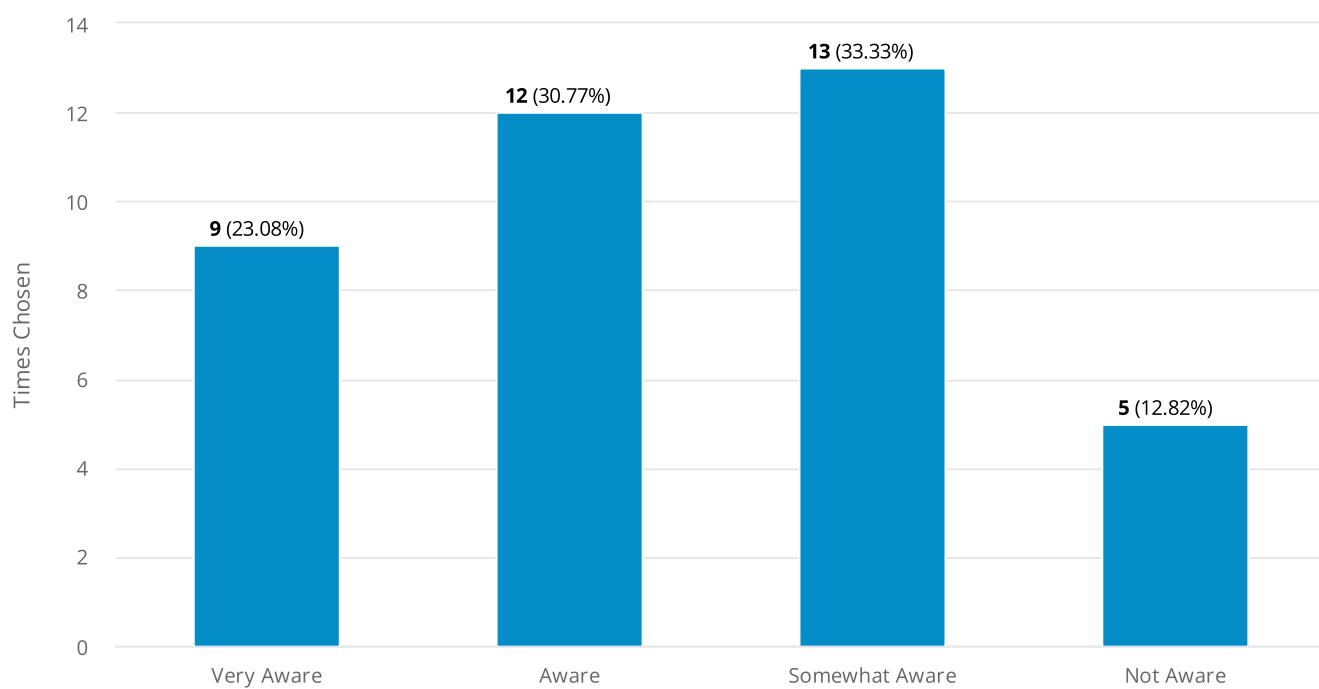
How easy do you feel it is for individuals and families in our community to access the services they need?

Number of responses: 42



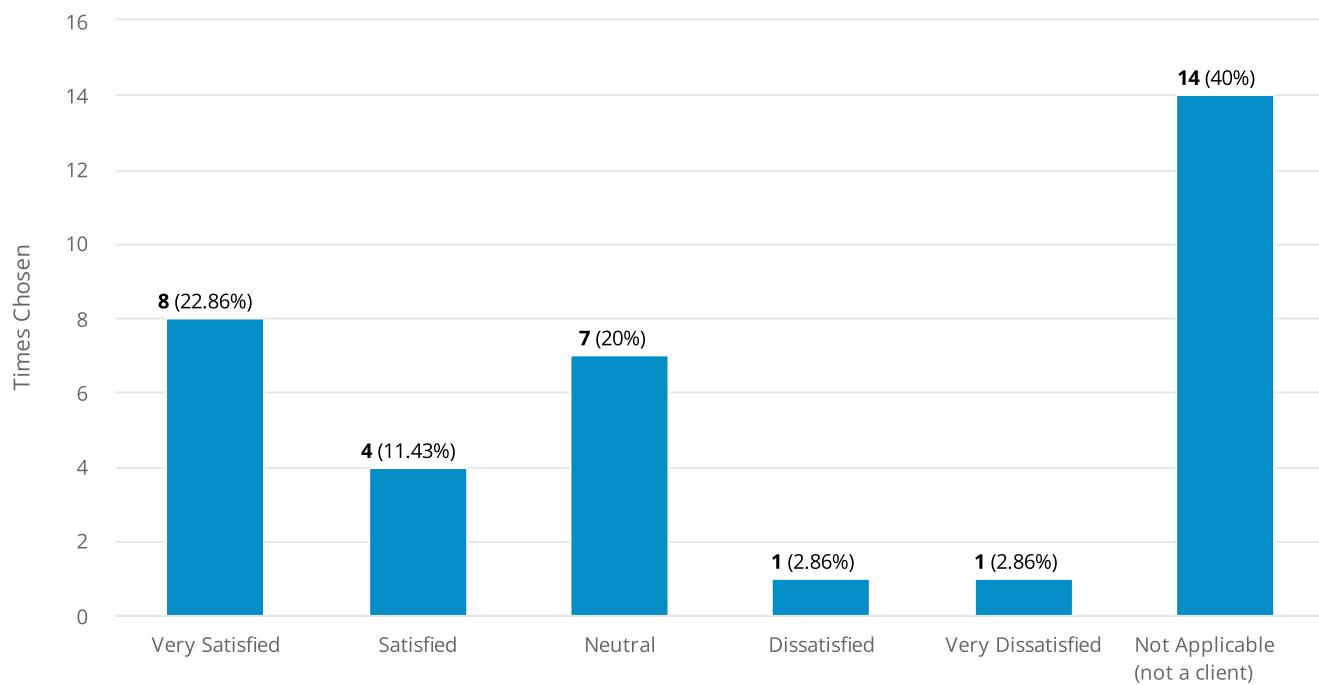
How aware are you of the services provided by Unity?

Number of responses: 39



If you are a client/participant, how satisfied are you with the services you have received from Unity?

Number of responses: 35



What do you see as the greatest strengths of our community?

Number of responses: 24

Text answers:

Small town, not too developed

Nothing honestly.

neighbors helping neighbors

Youth potential, Family and Neighborhood help

Family Closeness

Collaborative partnerships

It's a small community.

It has a strong partnership in Family Connection.

The community helping each other.

The community engagement; neighbors take care of each other and watch out for everyone.

Helping low income and elderly people the necessary services they need

Community members pulling together to make things happen.

Community Engagement

N/A

To work together with all concerns for others.

Nothing

Passionate individuals who work tirelessly to serve in whatever capacity that they can.

Our ability to work together

Community involvement

Togetherness our schools. People wanting to help

People travel to and through our city giving us profit

Community partners do come together to work with each other. The turnout of community support is very noted and shows that the community wants to do better.

None by communication

Family

Continue to create opportunities

Are there any existing community resources or programs that are particularly effective in addressing local needs? If so, please provide the program name(s) in the following box.

Number of responses: 21

Text answers:

No

No

no

Family Connections

Macon County Family Connection
Macon County Board of Education
Police Department Montezuma

LIHEAP
Weatherization

Meals on wheels
Transportation for free through health insurance
Local office for schools that are distant
Affordable housing available

No.

none tnat I'm aware of at this time

There are many

Youth programs are prevalent, as well as mental health services.

N/A

West Central Community Center.

Business classes and classes on Finance

Macon County Chiefs' Diploma Program helps dropouts and struggling students get a high school diploma

Senior Weatherization

Despite the challenges we face, one of our community's greatest strengths is the willingness of local partners to come together and collaborate. Community organizations, leaders, and residents consistently show up and support joint initiatives. The strong turnout and engagement at community events reflect a shared desire for positive change. This level of involvement demonstrates that the community is not only aware of the issues but is also committed to working collectively toward solutions.

Not many

N/A

Collaboration.

None at this time

How could Unity better collaborate with other organizations to address community needs?

Number of responses: 19

Text answers:

Bring services all in one place a few days a month so we can go to one place to get help instead of all over the county.

Hosting community events , while getting law enforcement involved as well to build trust.

There is no one to collaborate with really to my knowledge

Unity is all we really have that I know of so they do most for us.

Through email
Literature

Continue attending meetings

Attend community meetings and put out information on social media and local churches

Everything seems sat and in place !

Providing a community closet with food and clothes. Finding shelter for displaced community members would be a plus.

By keeping the public informed on what they are doing to help

By knowing the information concerning community needs.

Networking functions and other opportunities to collaborate

Help Family Connection keep community informed

"Unity has undergone a name change and reintroduced itself to the community with a renewed commitment to collaboration and service. This transformation has had a tremendous impact, and the community has responded with overwhelming positivity and support."

Throug research and communication

Networking

Work in progress.

Working together to provide greater support

Have all resources available in one place several times per month.

What specific actions could Unity take to better serve the community?

Number of responses: 18

Text answers:

Work with other places to get everyone together so we can get help all in once place a few times a month.

Community based events with implementing resources.

N/A

Stay Visible

Seem to be doing great job.

Continue to get information out to the communities

None

Community closet and home ownership class. Classes to keep the community informed.

Neighbor hood watch program

Make sure to know information concerning all needs

Jobs and help with hosing and hills

Collaboration with companies that can do home repairs, build houses, transportation, computer literacy.

Jobs

Continue to bring in services to help the low income.

By getting information about services offered out to the community. (The elderly, unhoused)

Announcements and updates

Availability

Building partnership

Do you have any other suggestions or comments for Unity?

Number of responses: 14

Text answers:

No

No

N/A

Remain Visible

Please locate additional funds for rent assistance and light bills.

No.

no

No

No

Just be aware.

None

What is Unity, what services it provides and location. Hold meetings where the people are who need the services.

Awareness of what is happening

Nope

Do you have any further comments?

Number of responses: 13

Text answers:

No

No

no

N/A

Stay Visible

No.

No

No

Not at this time

From what I see and know there's a great concern in the community for others.

None

No

Doesnt have any

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