

# Insights from our Neighbors

JANUARY 2024





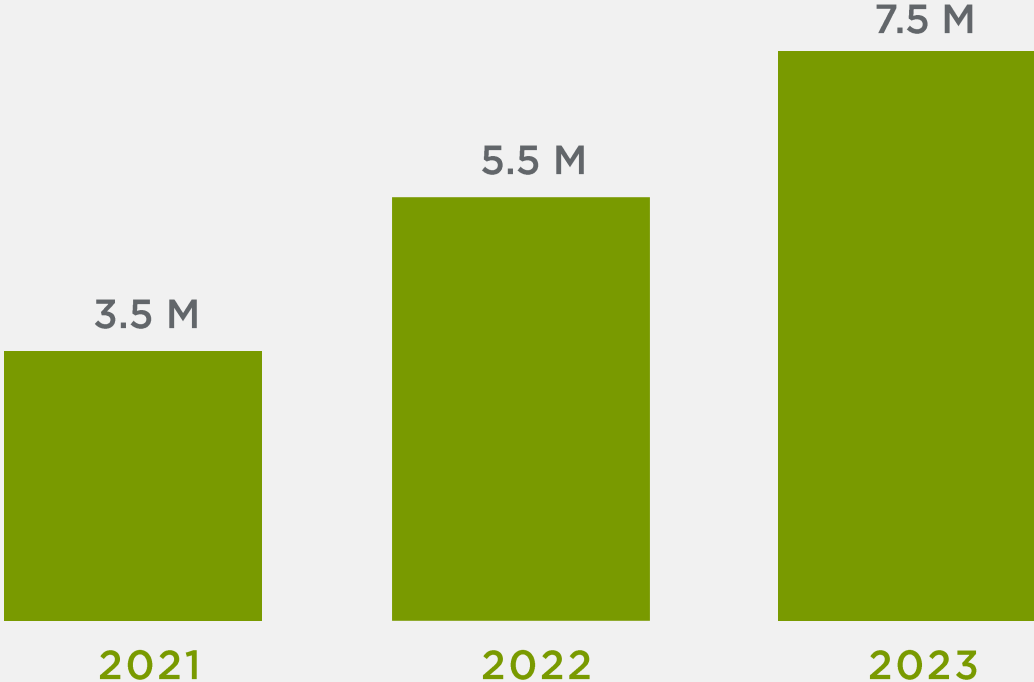
# Today's Roadmap



- Background
- Objectives
- Approach
- Findings
- Questions

The pandemic has changed things, and hunger in our region is far more common than it was just a few years ago.

## FOOD SHELF VISITS



Source: Hunger Solutions/The Food Group, food shelf visits across Minnesota in 2023.

Second Harvest Heartland, in partnership with community organizations, is working to make sure households in need have access to healthy and nutritious food.





# MAKE HUNGER HISTORY

— A CALL TO —  
END FOOD INSECURITY IN MN



Before we can deliver on our mission to end hunger, we need to continue to learn from those with the lived experience, or lived *expertise*, of hunger.

# Project Objective



To gain a clearer understanding of our neighbors' lived experiences and unique journeys related to food insecurity, focused on **the greatest perceived barriers that prevent food security and actionable insights that may help mitigate these barriers.** These insights will support Second Harvest Heartland's advocacy efforts and operational enhancements.





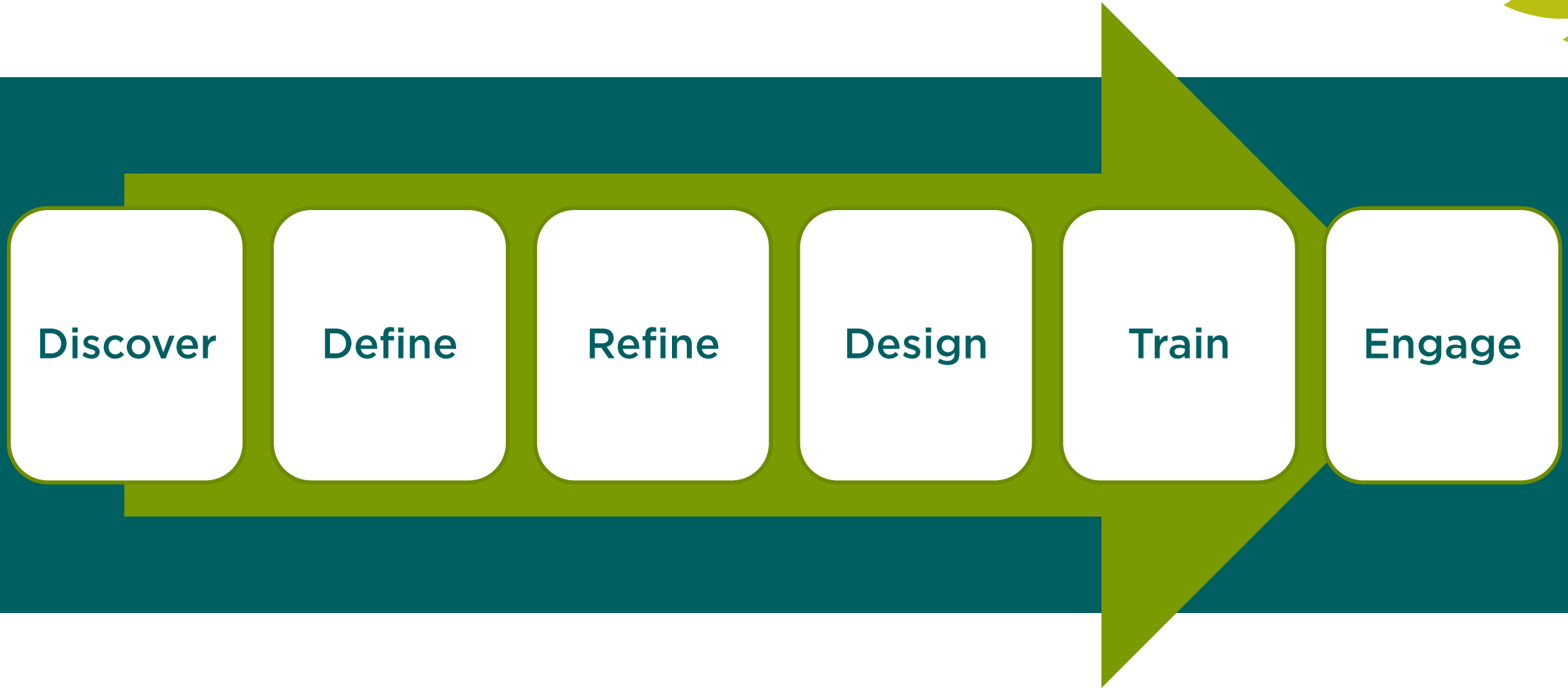
The neighbors surveyed were diverse across various demographic and socioeconomic dimensions based on the randomized systematic sampling approach; however, **the study participants should not be viewed as a representative sample of Minnesota's demographic composition.**

This study was intended to glean actionable insights from our neighbors at a single point in their journey.





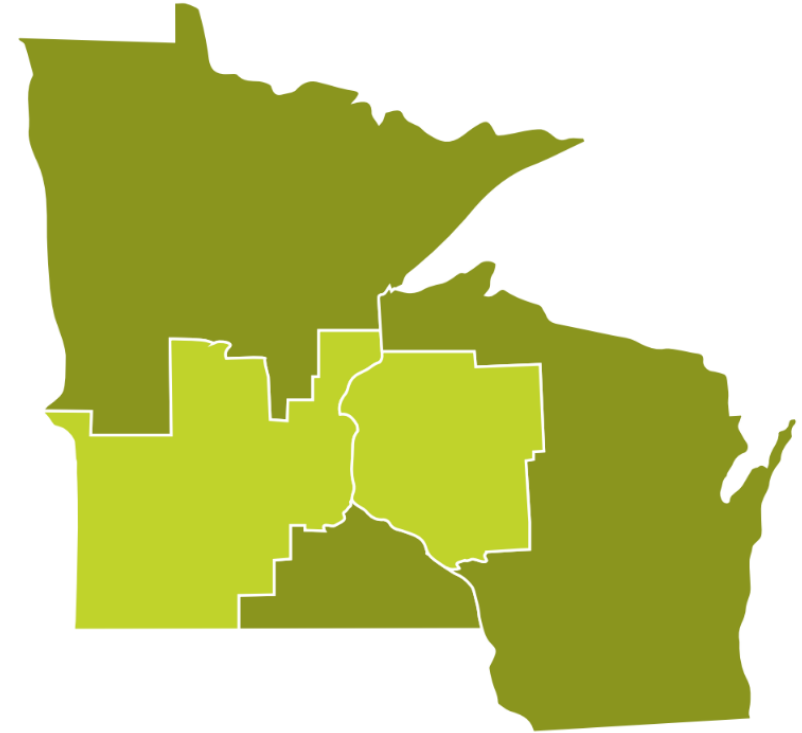
# Project Approach



# Who did we learn from?

251 neighbors from 38 cities within our Urban, Suburban, & Greater MN service area.

See Appendix for city representation.



# How did we learn from them?



We invited neighbors to complete a brief, digital survey between January 2 – 13, 2024.

## Neighbor Intercepts

- Food Shelf
- Kitchen Coalition

## Email Outreach

- Neighbor Advisory Council
- Care Center Outreach



# Who were our Agency Partners?



## Urban

- Neighborhood House, St. Paul
- Salvation Army on West 7th Street, St. Paul
- Waite House Food Shelf, Minneapolis
- Calvary Lutheran Church Food Shelf, Minneapolis
- Source Food Distribution & Simpson Food Pantry, Minneapolis

## Suburban

- People Reaching out to Other People (PROP), Eden Prairie
- The Open Door Pantry, Eagan
- The Open Cupboard, Oakdale
- Kitchen Coalition, Aspire, Huntington Place Apartments in Brooklyn Park

## Greater MN

- United Community Action Partnership (UCAP), Marshall
- Prairie Five Community Action, Chippewa Country Food Shelf, Montevideo



## What did we learn from our neighbors?

### We learned about...



- The greatest perceived **barriers to having reliable access to healthy, nutritious food.**
- **Potential solutions that would mitigate the barriers** that contribute to food insecurity.
- The **primary methods that the neighbors learned about available resources**, as well as **suggested methods to consider when communicating** about food resources and programs.
- **The food resources/programs being commonly accessed**, as well as the **duration that food resource support has been used.**
- The **factors that matter most when choosing** where to go for food resources.
- The **supportive resources, beyond food, neighbors would find beneficial** to have more information about.

# When asked what the greatest barrier is to having reliable access to healthy, nutritious food, our neighbors said...

- 1** Financial Barriers  
53% (n=109)
- 2** Access Barriers  
42% (n=88)
- 3** Lack of Awareness  
5% (n=10)





# Financial Barriers



The rising cost of food and general financial challenges are the top two themes impacting our neighbors' ability to have reliable access to healthy, nutritious food. Employment-related hardships also pose financial challenges for our neighbors.



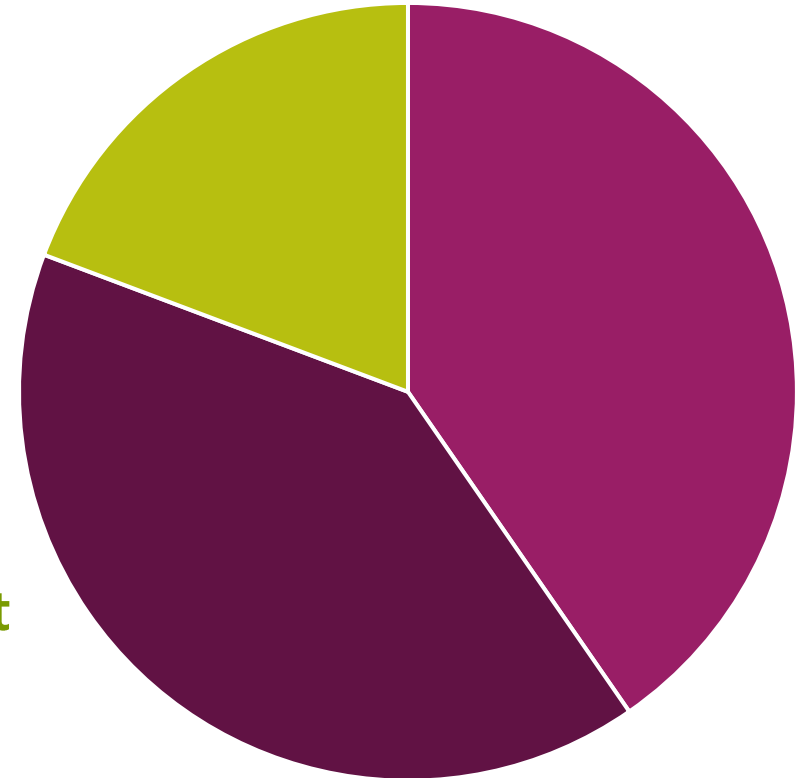
General financial challenges  
40% (n=44)



Rising cost of food  
40% (n=44)



Unemployment/Underemployment  
20% (n=21)







*Cost, inflation!*

*Paying my mortgage, car note, and other bills.*

*Not being financially stable.*

*Prices of nutritious foods cost more.*

*It costs way too much for a low-income family to eat healthy.*

*I had my food stamps reduced from \$170 to \$20 because I am working. I make less than \$1000/month.*

*I don't make enough money.*



# What would help?

The top two recommendations revolve around **employment status** and **reducing the overall cost of food**.

“ *Having a permanent job.*

*Have more job opportunities.*

*Decent pay.*

*Increase in social security benefits.*

*Price controlling necessary food.*

*Reducing the cost of food at the grocery store so I don't need to use shelf.*

*SNAP benefits with a different income scale.*



# Access Barriers



# Access Barriers

Access barriers, specifically **transportation issues** and **availability of nourishing foods**, posed key challenges for our neighbors. Having the **time** to get the food was also noted as a barrier.



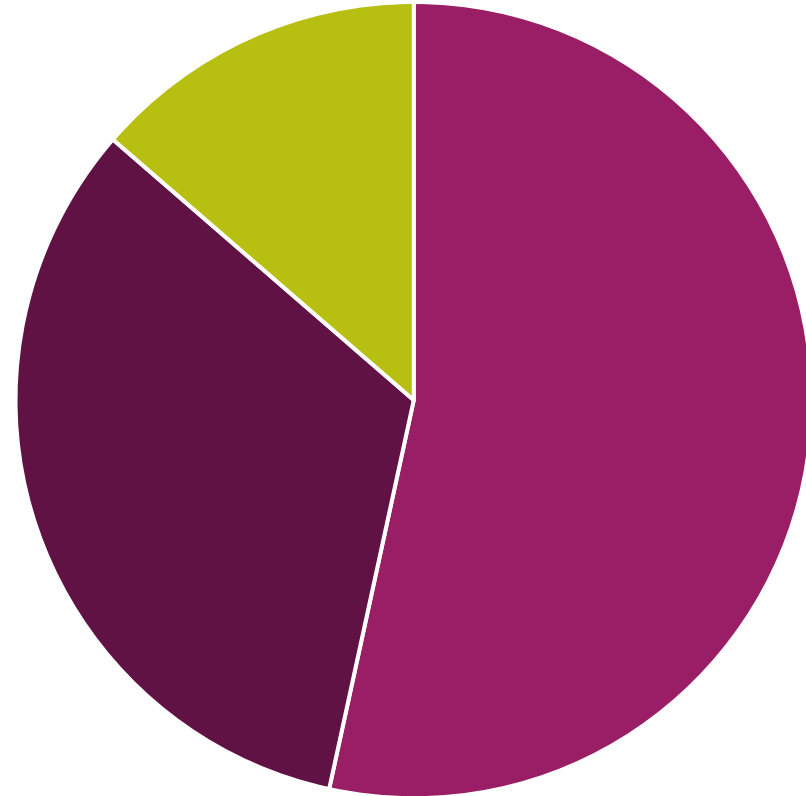
**Transportation**  
53% (n=47)



**Availability of healthy,  
nutritious food**  
33% (n=29)



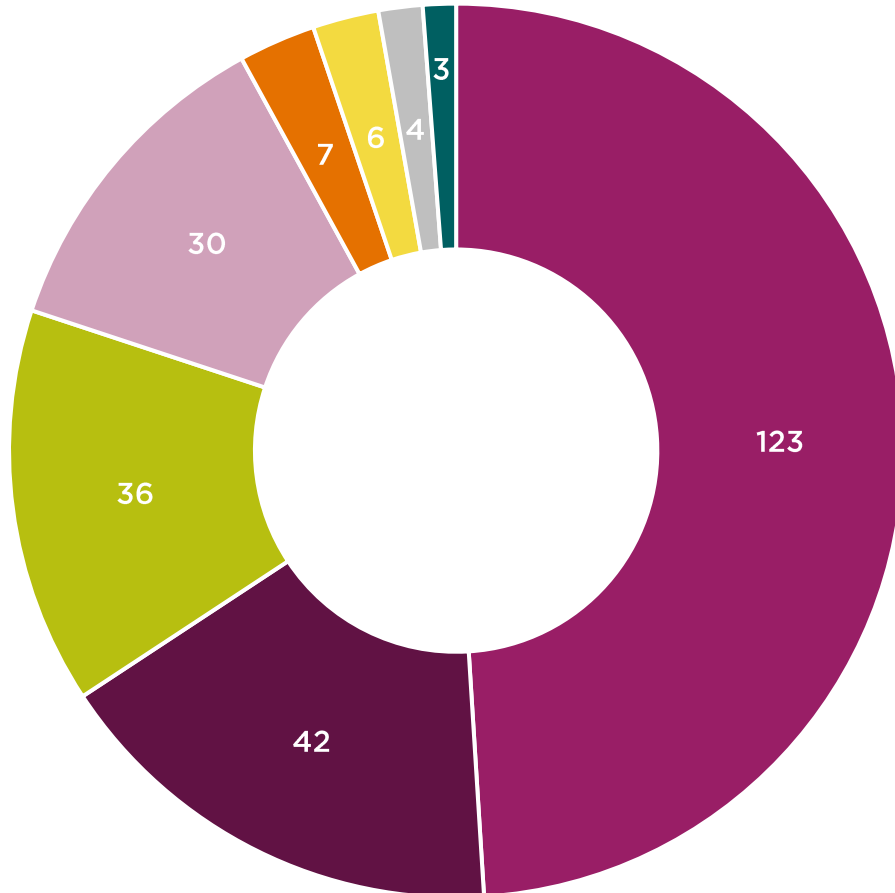
**Time**  
14% (n=12)





# Transportation plays a vital role in food access.

More than 50% of our neighbors do not own a personal vehicle, making it challenging to have reliable access to and from food resources.



- 49% use a personal vehicle
- 17% rely on family and friends
- 15% use public transit (a single bus/train)
- 12% walk
- 3% use multiple forms of public transit (at least 2 buses/trains)
- 2% bike
- 1% Ride Service (Uber, Lyft, Taxi)
- 1% Other

Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. When going to get your food (grocery store, food shelf/pantry, food distribution, etc.) what is your primary method of transportation?, n = 251.



## Transportation Barriers



*Getting to food shelf.*

*Not having a vehicle and having to walk.*

*Getting to the place where nutritious food is available.*

Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. *If you had a magic wand and could change just one thing to ensure you had reliable access to nutritious food, what would it be? Transportation Barrier, n = 47 .*

## What would help?



*Having a bus stop that is closer to my home.*

*Reliable and very easy, affordable transportation.*

*Gas cards*

*Free rides or delivery services.*

*More pickup locations around the city for people who have a hard time getting a ride.*



Even when neighbors were able to secure transportation to and from a food source, 35% of them expressed difficulty getting their food home.

“ *Having to get on the bus with a lot of groceries [makes it difficult]. I often have to limit the amount of groceries I get.*

“ *My disability makes it hard to carry my bags. I also live on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.*

## What would help?

“ *Having a portable shopping cart would help.*

“ *Someone to deliver or someone to help me because I use a walker.*

“ *Having more frequent visits would help.*

Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. *Is it difficult to transport your food to your home?*, n = 251.; Q. *What makes it difficult to transport the food to your home?* n = 89; Q *What would help get your food home?* n = 89.



The second largest access-related barrier expressed was the availability, or lack of, healthy, nutritious food.

Neighbors want **more frequent and reliable** access to the right foods.





## Availability Barriers



*Produce goes bad relatively quickly; it hard to keep produce for those reasons.*

*Organic and healthy options are limited to places like Whole Foods or other places.*

*Some food shelves give bad food.*

## What would help?



*Access to fresh produce anytime.*

*Year-round farmers markets and community gardens in several locations. Teaching families how to grow and take care of those gardens.*

*Having nutritious food prepared, healthy option for diabetics.*

*Making sure produce is going to the food shelf before expired date.*

*Snacks that are healthy and tasty for kids to get rid of processed foods.*

*More nutritious food, less canned food.*



Some neighbors also find it challenging to access the food resources – primary food shelf locations - due to working hours or limited appointment availability.



*I work the hours the food shelf is open.*

*Business hours of the food resources.*

*Time to pick up when food shelf is open.*

### What would help?



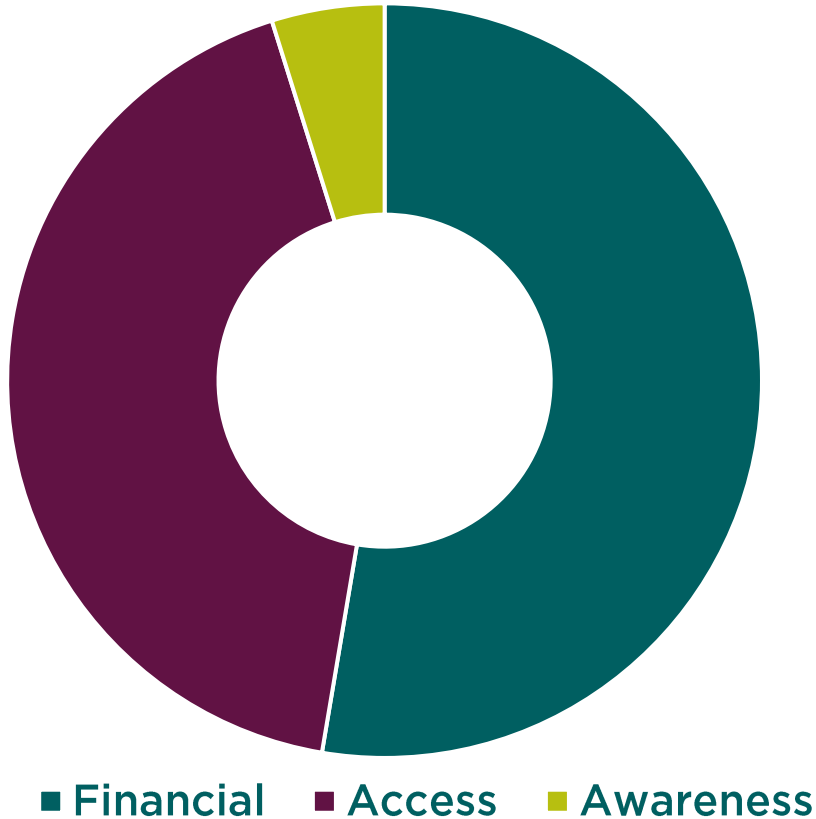
Extended days/hours of operation to allow for more available appointments.



# Lack of Awareness



The third greatest barrier to having reliable access to healthy, nutritious food was a **lack of awareness of available resources.**



*Not knowing where to go.*

*Didn't know where to go and time they were available for distribution.*

*Not sure of qualifications.*

*Didn't know that it was available.*

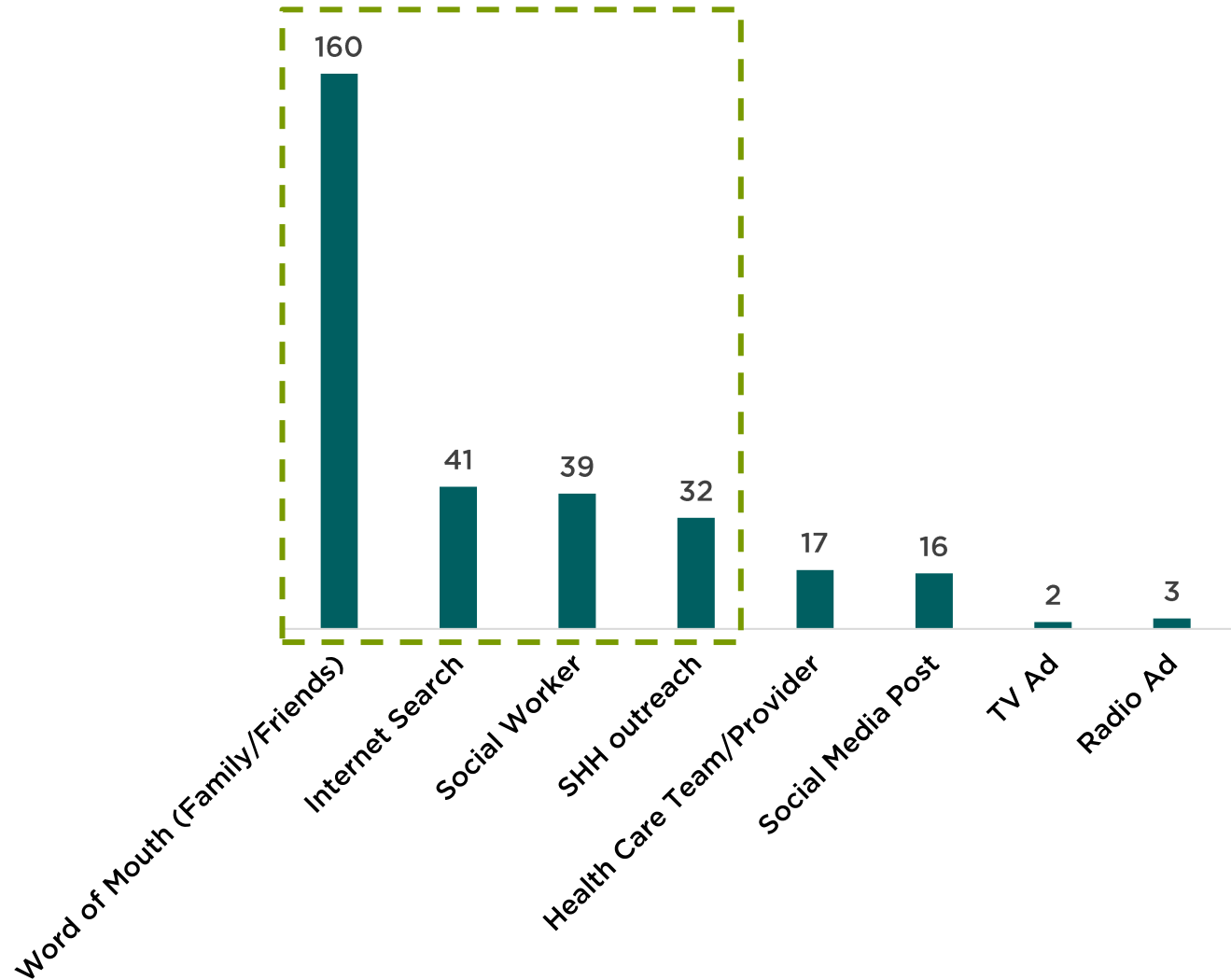
Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. *In your own words, what is the greatest barrier to having reliable access to nutritious food?*, n = 207; Time, n=10 .

# Lack of Awareness




The most common method that neighbors learned about available food resources was through word of mouth. Other primary methods included:

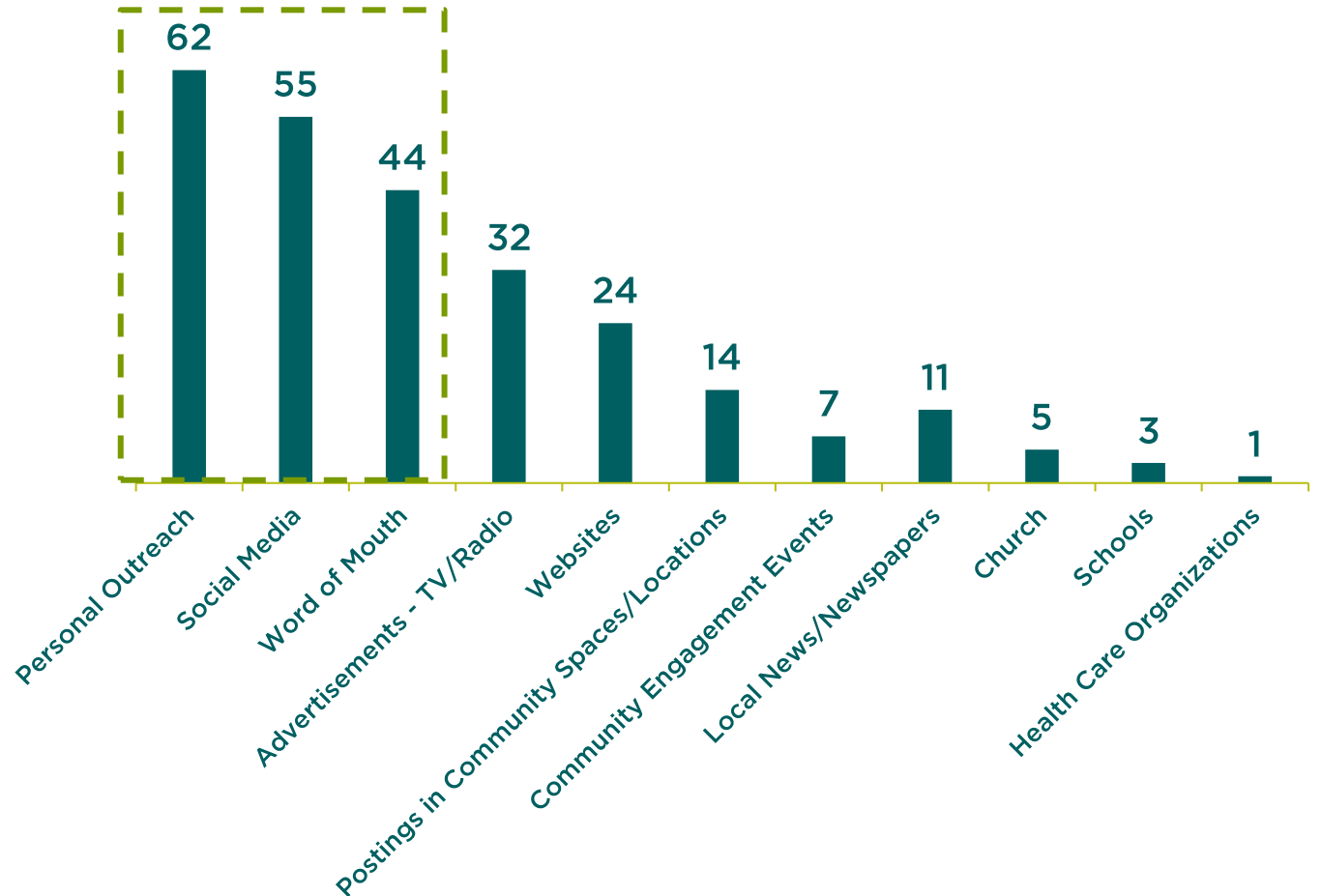
- Internet searches
- Social Worker outreach
- SHH Care Center outreach



While word of mouth was still a preferred communication method, the neighbors also suggested personal outreach and postings on social media platforms.

### Top 3 Suggestions

-  **Personal Outreach**
  - Text
  - Email
  - Phone call
  - Mailers
-  **Social Media**
-  **Word of Mouth**



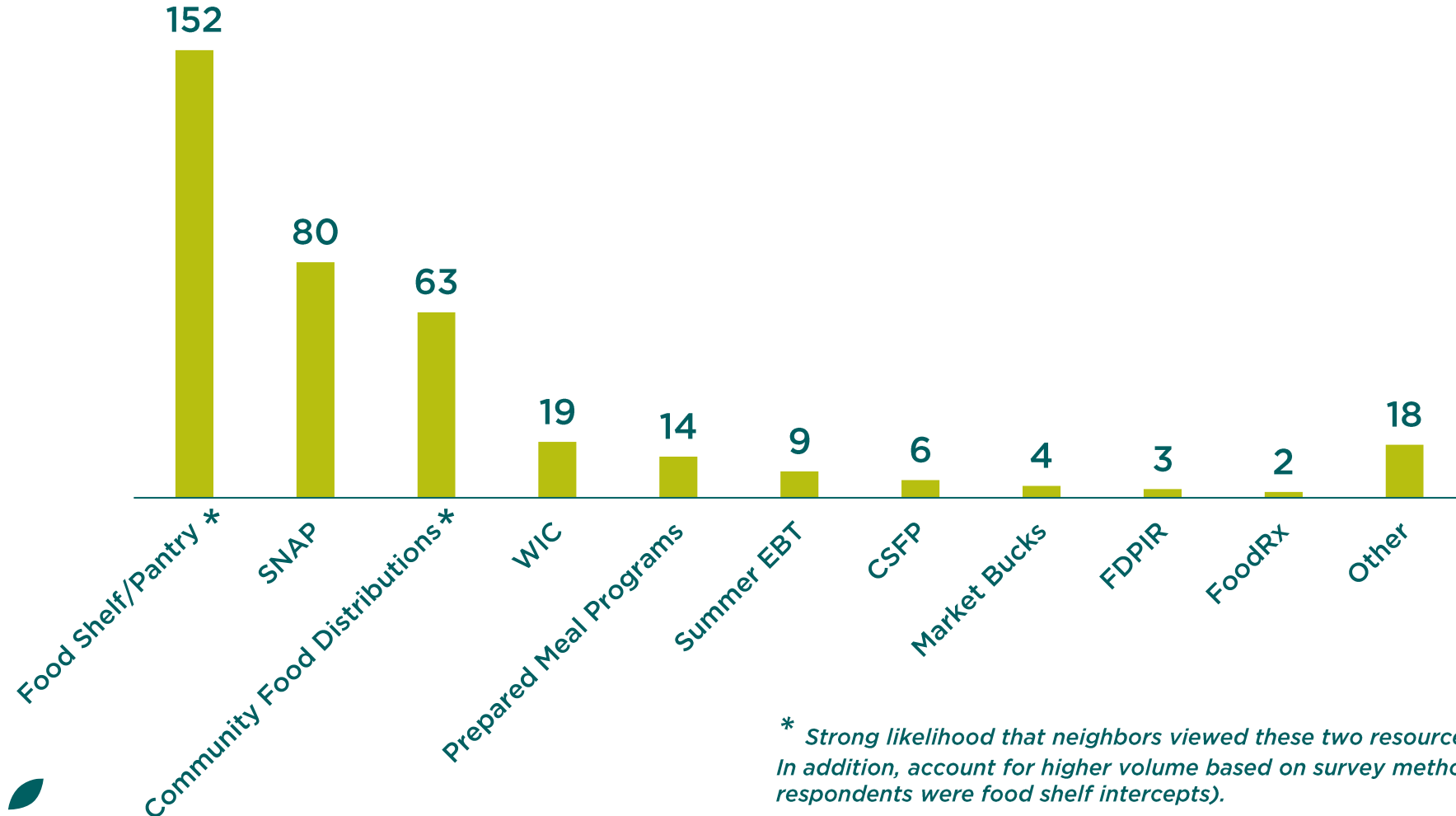


# Food Resources & Programs





# In the last 12 months, the surveyed neighbors used the following food resources and programs.



\* Strong likelihood that neighbors viewed these two resources interchangeably. In addition, account for higher volume based on survey methodology (230 survey respondents were food shelf intercepts).





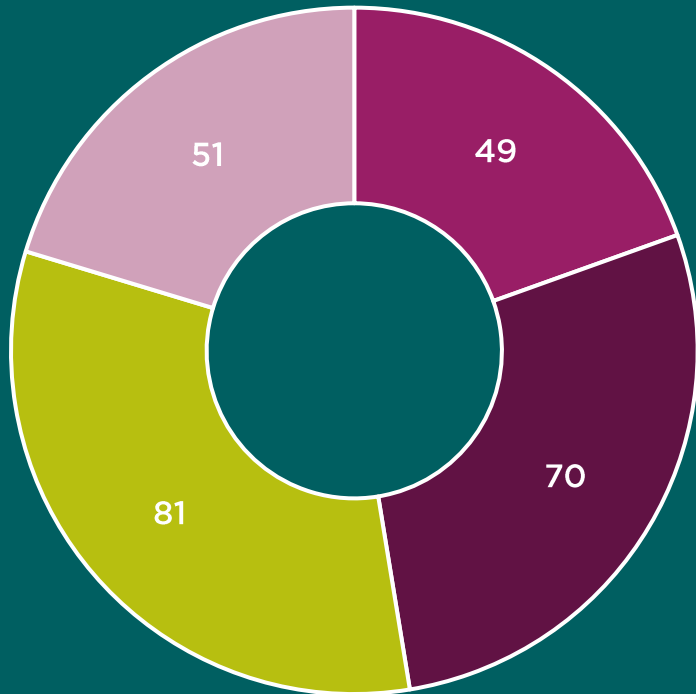


**32%** of the surveyed neighbors accessed more than 1 food resource/program in the last 12 months.

In addition, over **61%** of the SNAP recipients sought food resource support beyond their SNAP benefits.

- 68%** of neighbors have accessed only 1 food resource/program in the last 12 months.
- 21%** of neighbors have accessed 2 food resources/programs in the last 12 months.
- 7%** of neighbors have accessed 3 food resources/programs in the last 12 months.
- 3%** of neighbors have accessed 4 food resources/programs in the last 12 months.
- 1%** of neighbors have accessed 5 food resources/programs in the last 12 months.

# Duration of Food Resource Support



- First time using food resource support
- Use food resource support regularly for less than 1 year
- Use food resource support regularly for more than 1 year
- Use food resource support occasionally, only as needed

**60%** of neighbors use food resource support on a regular basis.

**32%** have used food resource support regularly for > 1 year.

**28%** have used food resource support regularly for < 1 year.

**20%** were using food resource support for the first time.

**20%** use food resource support occasionally, only as needed.



# Choices



# Neighbors prioritized what factors matter most when choosing where to go for food.



1

Distance



2

Reliable  
Transportation



3

Hours of  
Operation



4

Selection  
of Food



5

Confidentiality  
& Privacy



And, if the neighbors didn't have enough money to cover their bills, they prioritized the order in which they would pay their bills.



1 Housing 

2 Food 

3 Utilities 

4 Medical Care/  
Medicine 

5 Transportation/  
Gas 

6 Childcare 

7 Education/Student  
Loans/Tuition 

*Prioritization remained consistent across families with children (n = 150), as well as the neighbors who identified as students (n = 4).*

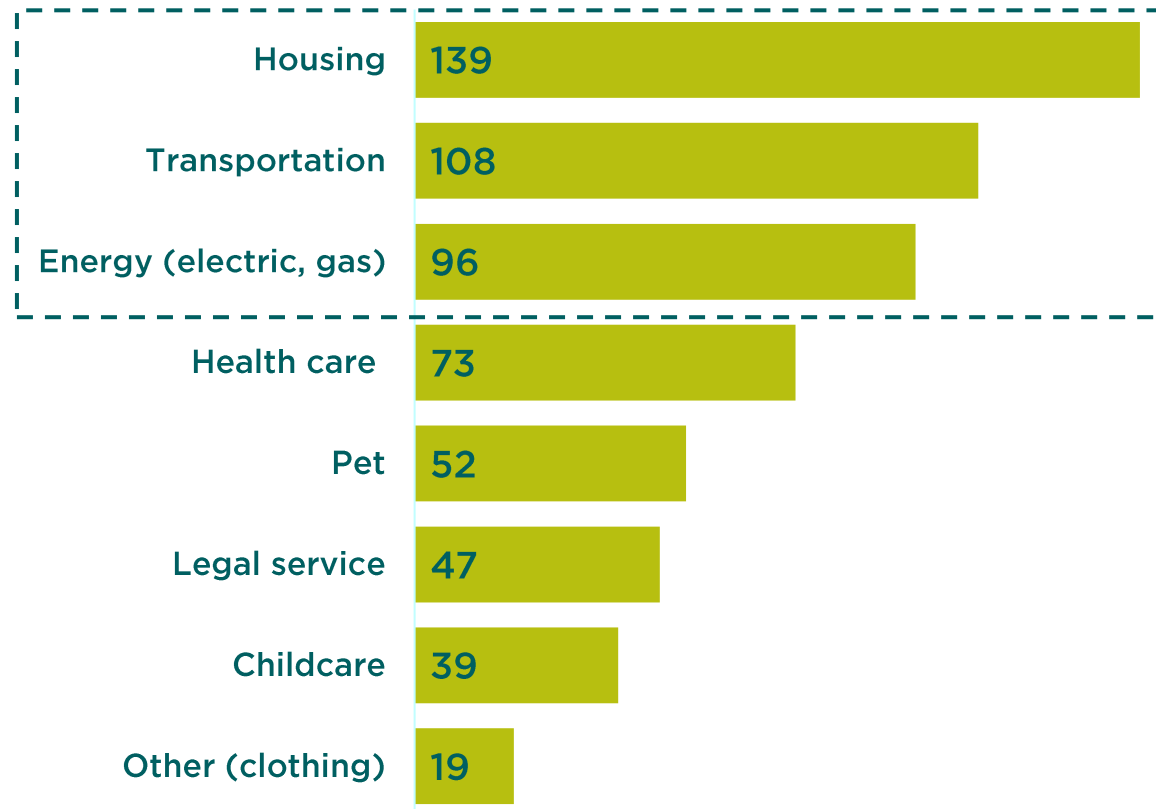




# Additional Support



When neighbors were asked what other resources would be beneficial to them, **housing** and **transportation** rose to the top, with **energy** resources close behind.



Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. *Beyond food resources, what other resources would be helpful to support you and your family?.*, n = 251 (multi-select response, n=573)



# Agency Partner Evaluations





At the conclusion of the neighbor insights project, we sent an evaluation to our agency partners to gain their perspective on the experience.



9 of the 11 partners shared their feedback, and this is what they said...

**100%** of the agency partners would be willing to participate in another project of this nature with Second Harvest Heartland.

“

We are **happy to support efforts that help our shared community**, especially when **we don't have the capacity to take on similar efforts ourselves.**

**I can't wait to hear what the clients say** and **how we can better serve them.**

**Ease of partnering** - Second Harvest covered all the needs.

**We always value these surveys** and **use the results in how we plan for the future.**

**We're always interested in gathering more feedback from our clients** and **want to support your advocacy efforts** at the Capitol.

**Our participants loved engaging** and **it was little work for us.**

**100%** of agency partners felt that the Second Harvest Heartland volunteers did their best to minimize the impact on their site's daily operations.

“

Upon welcoming the volunteers, **they asked about our operations and how they could best fit into systems for the day.**

[The volunteers] operated out of our Board Room and **did not impact the flow of the Food Mart.**

[The volunteers] **positioned themselves in the location we suggested.**

**Minimized the number of people on the shopping floor.** Utilized the space we set aside for them for the survey process.

**Collaborations** with recruiting the families...

# Opportunities

When asked what could have been done to improve the surveying experience for their neighbors, 3 of the 9 agency partners suggested having multi-lingual volunteers.

# Highlights

“ It was a **fun experience.**

**Everyone was great** – please thank them for us!

Everybody that participated **did a phenomenal job.**

**We appreciate your efforts.**  
**Thanks for reaching out to us!**



**END**  
**HUNGER**  
together



# Thank you

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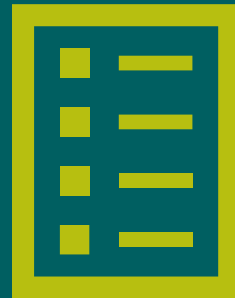
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# Appendix



- Demographics
- Additional Insights
- Project Approach
- Agency Partner Evaluations
- Volunteer Evaluations







# Demographics



The neighbors surveyed were diverse across various demographic and socioeconomic dimensions.



Race & Ethnicity

City/Region

Age

Household Size & Composition

Employment Status

Yearly Income

Disability Status

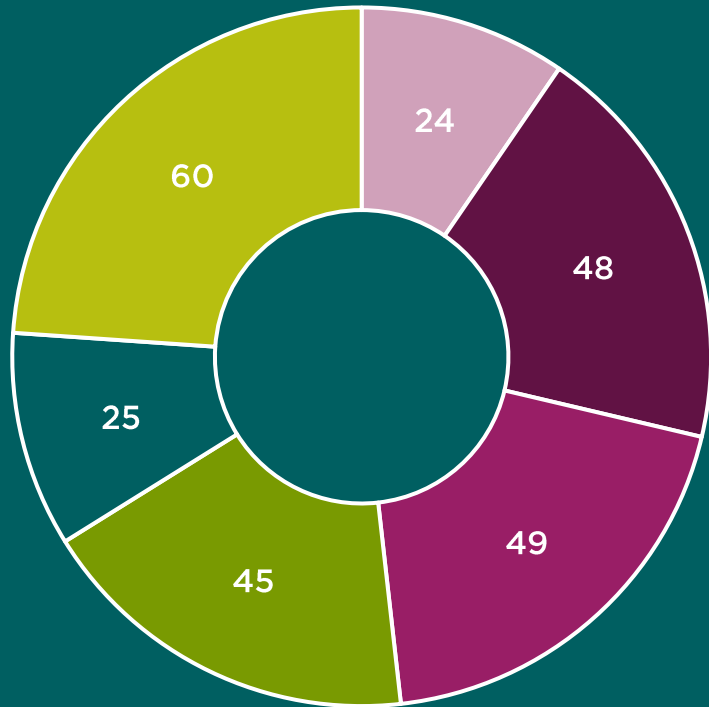
Housing Type

Primary Transportation Mode

Food Resource Usage & Frequency

The neighbors were selected at random using a systematic sampling approach.

# Age Distribution of Neighbors



- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-59
- 60 and over

24% of neighbors were 60 years of age or older

19% of neighbors were 35-44

19% of neighbors were 25-34

18% of neighbors were 45-54

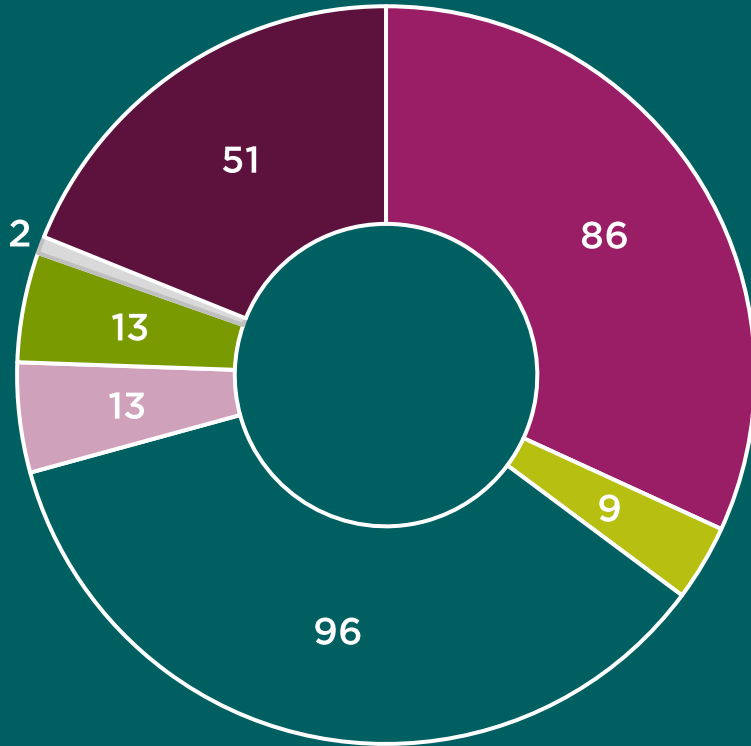
10% of neighbors were 55-59

10% of neighbors were 18-24

Almost 25% of the neighbors were 60 years of age or older, with an additional 10% aging into that segment over the next 1-5 years.

# Self-identified Race & Ethnicity

- White
- Prefer not to say
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Black or African American



**35%** of neighbors identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

**32%** of neighbors identified as White

**19%** of neighbors identified as Black or African American

**5%** of neighbors identified as Asian

**5%** of neighbors identified as American Indian of Alaskan Native

**3%** Preferred not to say

**1%** of neighbors identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

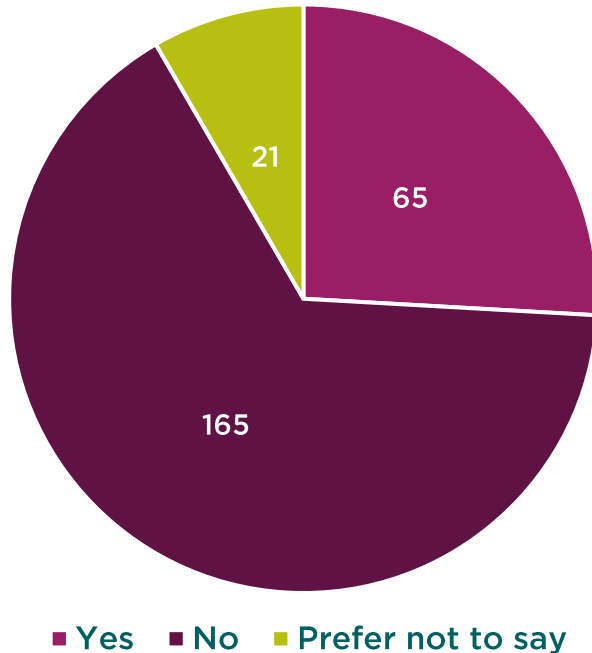


# Disability Status

65% of neighbors stated that do not have a disability

25% of neighbors self-reported having a disability

10% of neighbors preferred not to say



Of the 25% of neighbors who have a disability, 38% of them feel that their disability impacts their ability to access food resources.

The main challenges revolve around:

## Accessibility

- Transportation challenges
- Physical layout/space at food shelves

## Efficiency/Time

- Duration of shopping & long waits

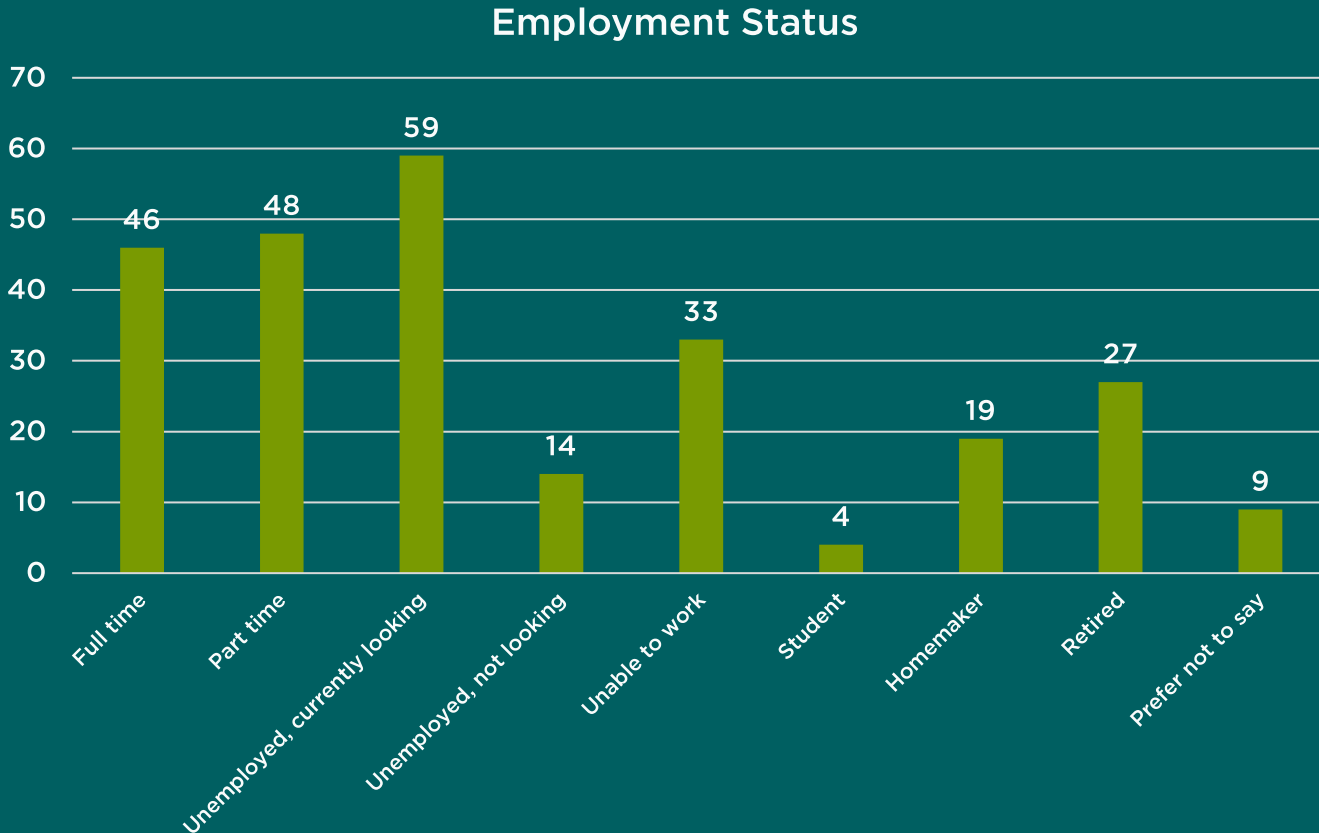
## Frequency of Access

- Physical restriction for large volumes of food

Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?, n = 251; Q. Do you feel that your disability has impacted your ability to access food resources?, n = 65; Q. What would make it easier for you to access food resources with your disability? n = 65.

The largest segment of neighbors identified as **employed**.

Only 6% of surveyed neighbors were unemployed, and not actively looking for work.



**37%** of neighbors were employed

- Part-time (19%)
- Full-time (18%)

**23%** of neighbors were unemployed

- Unemployed, actively looking for work

**37%** of neighbors were not working

- Unemployed, not actively looking for work (6%)
- Unable to work due to a disability (13%)
- Retired (10%)
- Homemakers (7%)
- Student (1%)

**3%** of neighbors preferred not to say

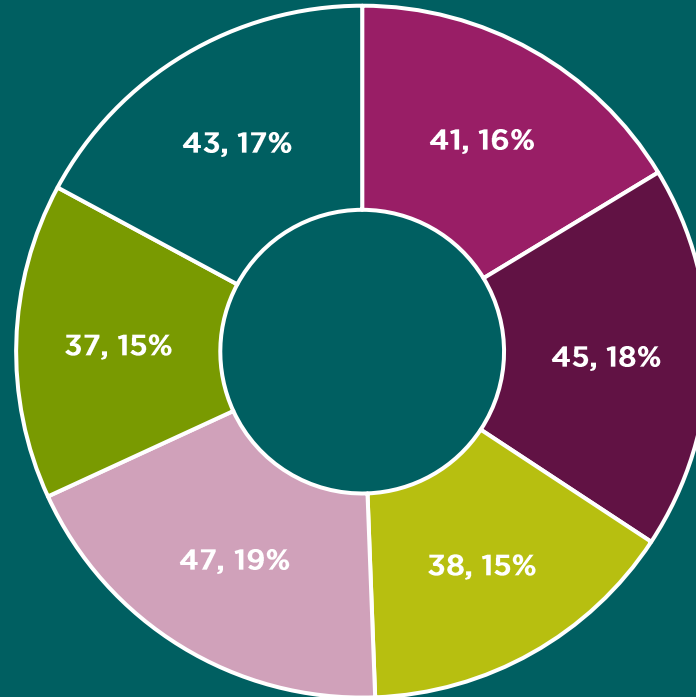
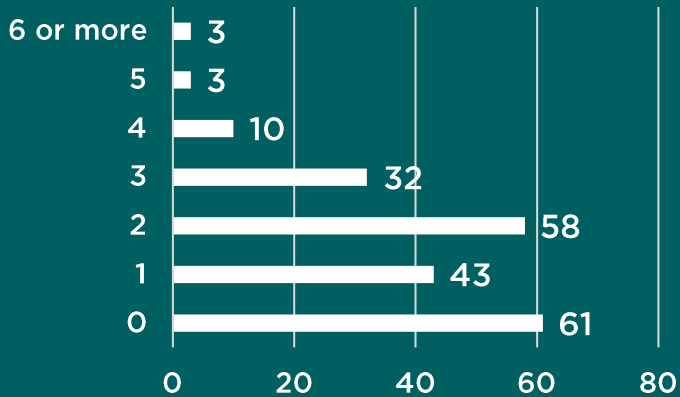
Source: Second Harvest Heartland's Neighbor Insights Research Survey; Survey Collection Dates 1/2/2024-1/14/2024, Q. *What is your current employment status?*, n = 251 (8 neighbors identified as more than 1 status).

# Number of Household Members

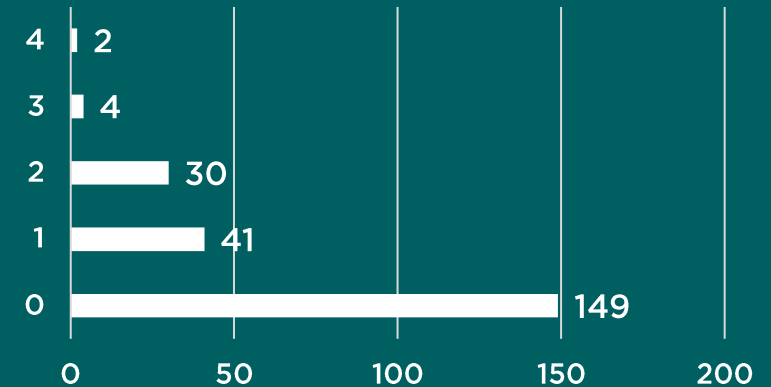


■ 1 person ■ 2 people ■ 3 people ■ 4 people ■ 5 people □ 6 or more people

Number of Household Members under 18 years of age

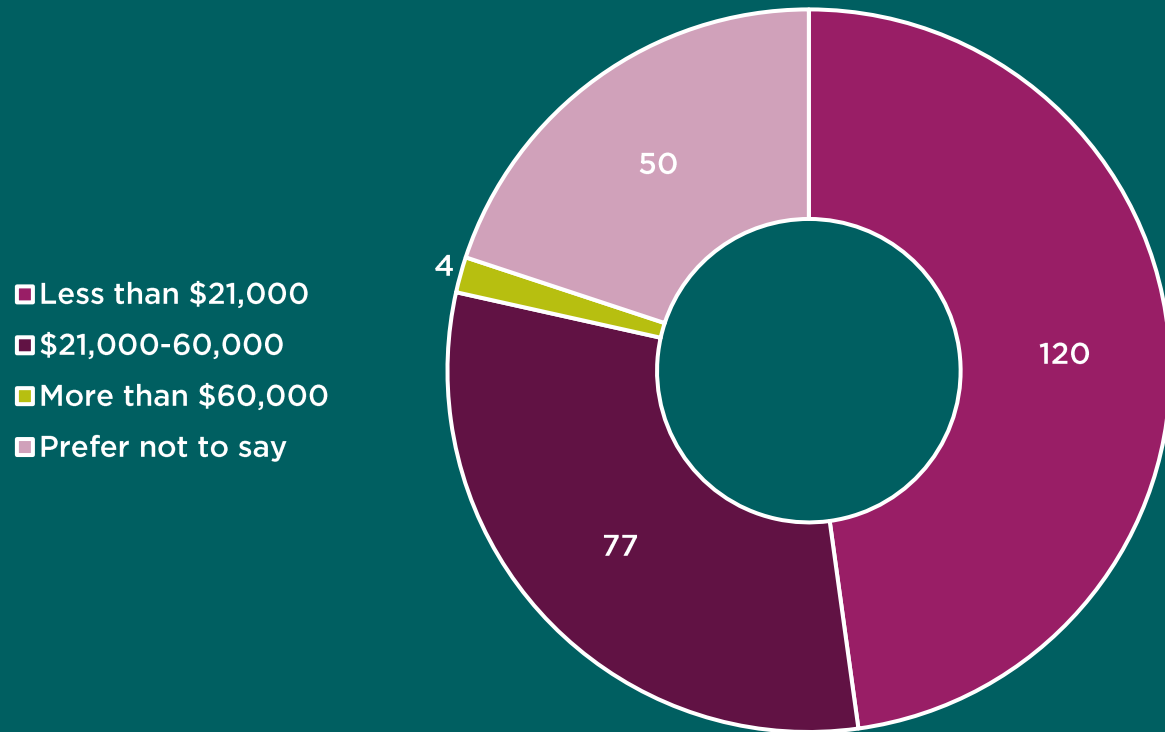


Number of Household Members 60 years of age or older



Household size was similar across segments, which infers that the need for food resource support is widespread across all household sizes – from single households to those with 6 of more members.

# Almost half of the neighbors identified as making less than \$20,000 in total annual household income.



48% of neighbors made < \$20,000

31% of neighbors made \$21,000-\$60,000

1% of neighbors made > \$60,000

20% of neighbors preferred not to say

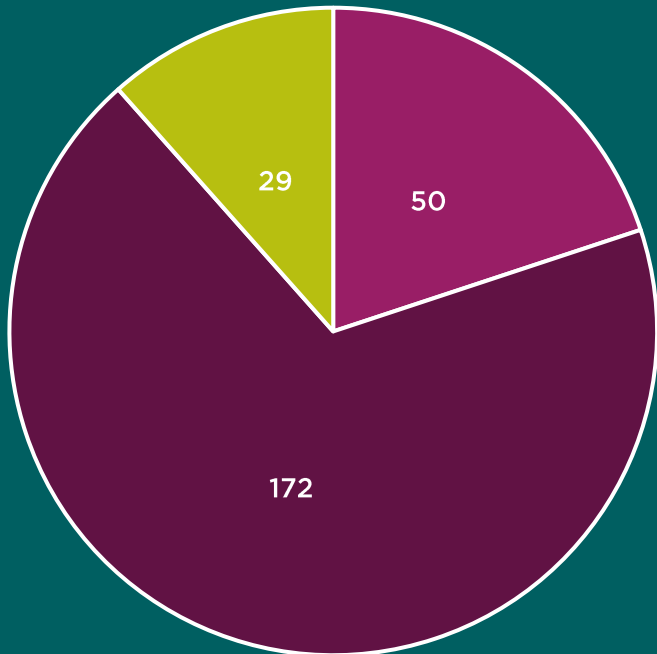
Also, many neighbors – 50 individuals – preferred not to indicate their income on the survey.



# Housing Type



A significant percentage of neighbors using food resource support rent a home or apartment.



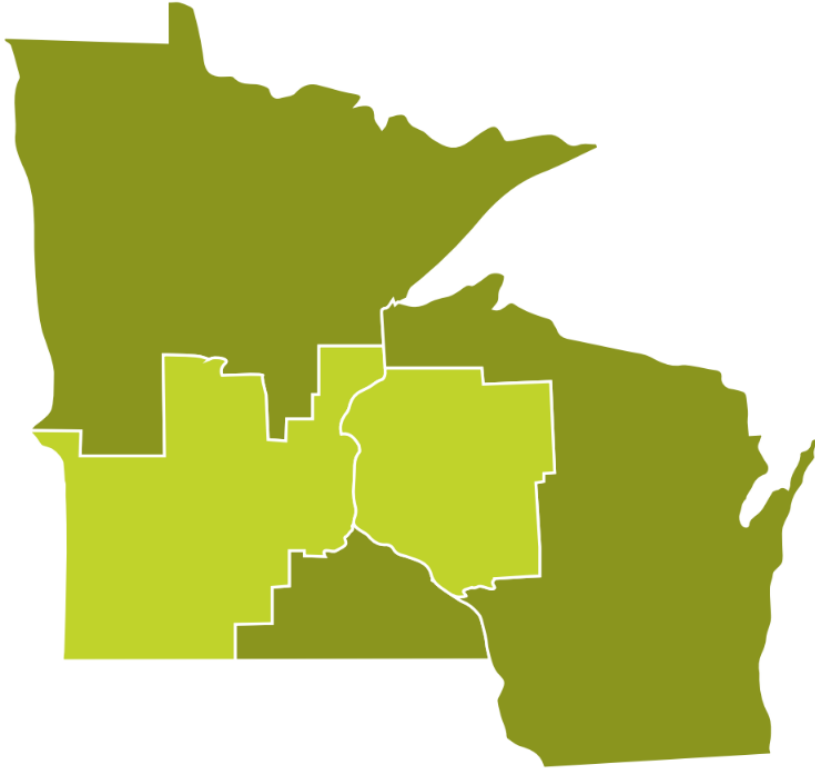
Own/Mortgage      Rent Home/Apartment  
Temporary or No Housing

**69%** of neighbors rent a home or apartment

**20%** of neighbors own a home or have a mortgage

**11%** of neighbors are in temporary housing or are without housing

# Neighbor Count by City



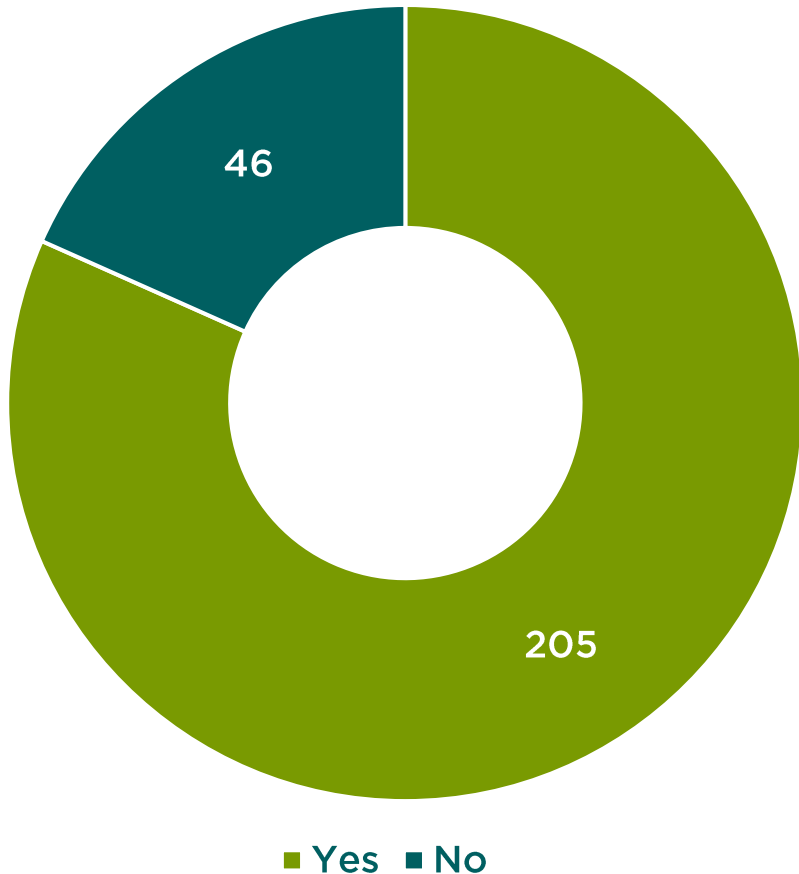
Apple Valley	5	Lakeville	1
Bloomington	2	Mankato	2
Brooklyn Center	2	Maplewood	7
Brooklyn Park	18	Marshall	6
Burnsville	4	McGrath	1
Chanhassen	1	Minneapolis	54
Clara City	2	Montevideo	12
Columbia Heights	1	New Hope	2
Cygnus Grove	1	Oakdale	8
Eagan	2	Pine City	1
Eden Prairie	12	Plymouth	4
Edina	3	Ramsey	1
Fairmont	1	Richfield	1
Farmington	1	Rochester	1
Fridley	2	Rosemount	1
Hastings	1	Roseville	7
Inver Grove Heights	2	St. Paul	77
Lake Elmo	2	Stillwater	1
		Vadnais Heights	1
		Woodbury	1



# Additional Insights



# 82% of neighbors surveyed reached out for food assistance as soon as they were in need.



## What helped them seek resources?

### Awareness of resources available

- “ The knowledge of where to get it.
- “ Knowing that there was a food resource available for my family that was not income based.

### Financial Need

- “ Financial budgeting issues so my mom saw resources that will handout food.

### Direct Outreach

- “ Second Harvest Heartland outreach
- “ Ramsey County social worker

**Lack of awareness** and information about available food resources was the primary reason neighbors didn't reach out for food resource support as soon as they were in need.

**Stigma and shame** were also both drivers of reluctance in reaching out for food resource support.

*“ Didn't know that it was available.*

*“ Not sure of qualifications.*

*“ Didn't know where to go and time they were available for distribution.*

*“ Feeling embarrassed.*

*“ Pride.*

*“ Shame. Not wanting others help.*

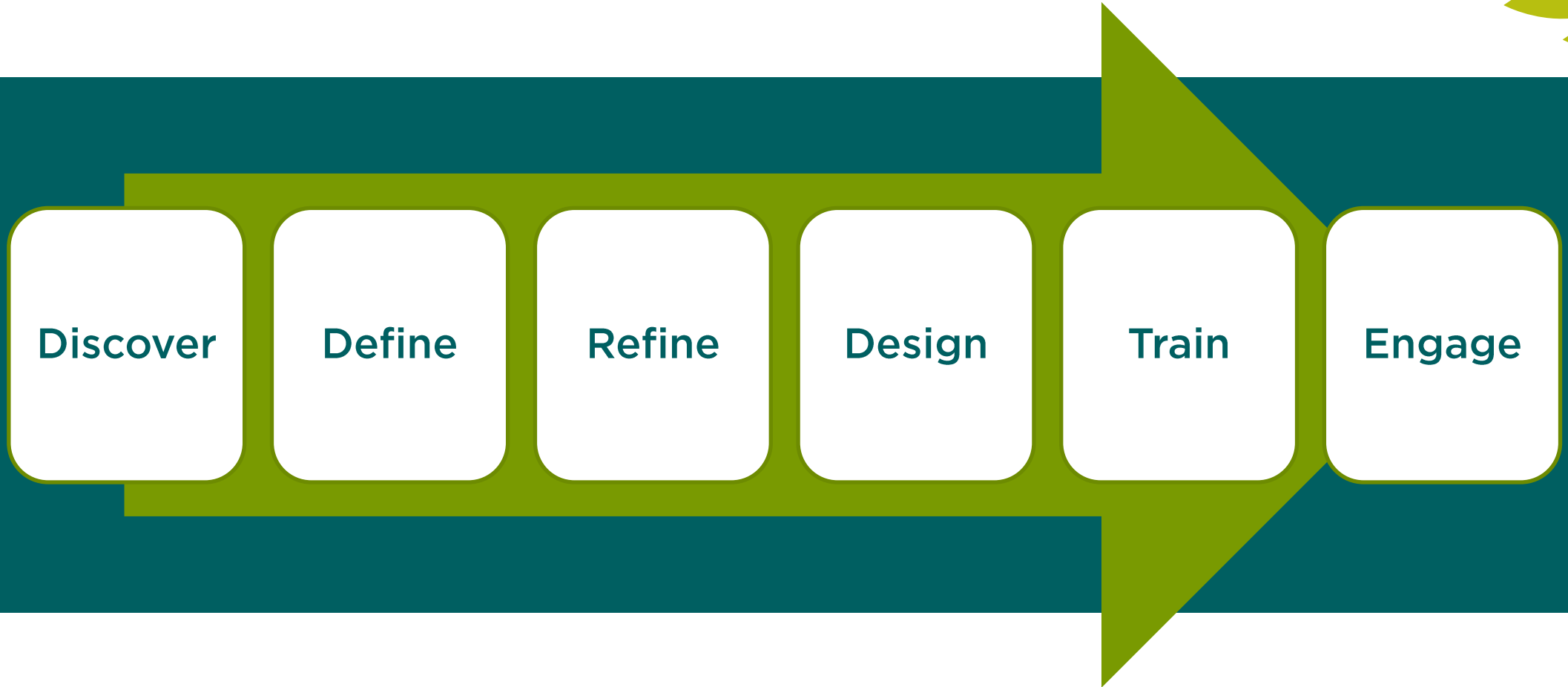




# Project Approach



# Project Approach





Initial discovery sessions were held with cross-functional leaders throughout the organization to review existing background, including any work that may have been completed to date.





Next, the cross-functional leaders completed an intake form to identify the key needs (knowledge gaps or valued insights) that they wanted to learn from their neighbors' lived experiences with food insecurity.

Discover


Define

Refine

Design

Train

Engage

  
DRAFT VIEW: Neighbor Insights Survey  
(English) [↗](#)

Hunger can happen to anyone. More than 31.1 million people - 1 in 6 of your neighborhood - reached our food help last year, and the need is even greater today. Successful removal of barriers to participating with community organizations is needed to make our households in need have access to healthy and nutritious food. In support of this mission, we invite you to complete a brief 6-minute survey so we can better understand your personal experiences with food assistance. Your views will help to inform our public policy initiatives and operational decision-making to better serve you and your neighborhood, and advance our mission to end hunger in Massachusetts. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, and you will be given a \$10 gift card for your participation.

1. What city do you live in? \*

2. How do you describe yourself? Select all that apply. \*

- American Indian or Native Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- I prefer not to say
- Other

3. What is your age? \*

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65 years of age or older

4. How many people live in your household and share food? Please include yourself in this count. \*

- 1 person
- 2 people
- 3 people
- 4 people
- 5 people
- 6 or more people

The cross-functional group further collaborated to refine the neighbor insights content that was most critical for their upcoming strategic work. Based on the needs, a digital survey methodology was chosen.

Discover

Define

Refine

Design

Train

Engage



END HUNGER TOGETHER

WHAT WE DO

GET INVOLVED

GET HELP

## SHARE YOUR VOICE

We need your voice in the fight against hunger.



Hunger can happen to anyone. 1 in 6 neighbors reached out for food assistance last year, and the need is growing.

Second Harvest Heartland, in partnership with community organizations, is working to make sure households in need have access to healthy and nutritious food. We invite you to complete a brief, 8-minute digital survey to help us better understand your personal experiences with food resource needs and support. Your voice will help to inform our public policy advocacy and operational decision-making to better serve you and your neighbors, and advance our mission to end hunger in Minnesota. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential, and you will be given a \$10 gift card for your participation.

Thank you for helping us feed our neighbors.

Visit the links below to access the digital survey in other languages.

- [English](#)
- [Hmong](#)
- [Karen](#)
- [Russian](#)
- [Somali](#)
- [Spanish](#)

A digital survey was programmed and made available in the 6 most spoken languages served in Second Harvest Heartland's service area.

# Survey Question Code Sheet



DRAFT VIEW: Neighbor Insights  
Survey (English)



View the survey questions by accessing the [Survey Question Code Sheet](#), or take the survey (*this is an open draft form of the survey and data will not be reviewed*) by scanning the QR code.





**30 valued volunteers and staff members** stepped up to support the survey administration process, which included **a 90-minute training session** in advance of the survey deployment.

[Training for in-person encounters](#)

[Training for telephone encounters](#)

Discover

Define

Refine

Design

Train

Engage



The volunteers were provided survey toolkits that included content related to:

- Sampling methodology and tracking
- Engagement best practices and suggested language
- Recruitment materials

Discover

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**Volunteers, in collaboration with 11 agency partners, contributed > 160 hours across 19 survey shifts.**



# Agency Partner Evaluations





At the conclusion of the neighbor insights project, we sent an evaluation to our agency partners to gain their perspective on the experience.



9 of the 11 partners shared their feedback, and this is what they said...

**100%** of the agency partners would be willing to participate in another project of this nature with Second Harvest Heartland.

“

We are **happy to support efforts that help our shared community**, especially when **we don't have the capacity to take on similar efforts ourselves.**

**I can't wait to hear what the clients say** and **how we can better serve them.**

**Ease of partnering** - Second Harvest covered all the needs.

**We always value these surveys** and **use the results in how we plan for the future.**

**We're always interested in gathering more feedback from our clients** and **want to support your advocacy efforts** at the Capitol.

**Our participants loved engaging** and **it was little work for us.**

**100%** of agency partners felt that the Second Harvest Heartland volunteers did their best to minimize the impact on their site's daily operations.

“

Upon welcoming the volunteers, **they asked about our operations and how they could best fit into systems for the day.**

[The volunteers] operated out of our Board Room and **did not impact the flow of the Food Mart.**

[The volunteers] **positioned themselves in the location we suggested.**

**Minimized the number of people on the shopping floor.** Utilized the space we set aside for them for the survey process.

**Collaborations** with recruiting the families...

# Opportunities

When asked what could have been done to improve the surveying experience for their neighbors, 3 of the 9 agency partners suggested having multi-lingual volunteers.

# Highlights

“ It was a **fun experience.**

**Everyone was great** – please thank them for us!

Everybody that participated **did a phenomenal job.**

**We appreciate your efforts.**  
**Thanks for reaching out to us!**



# Volunteer Evaluations



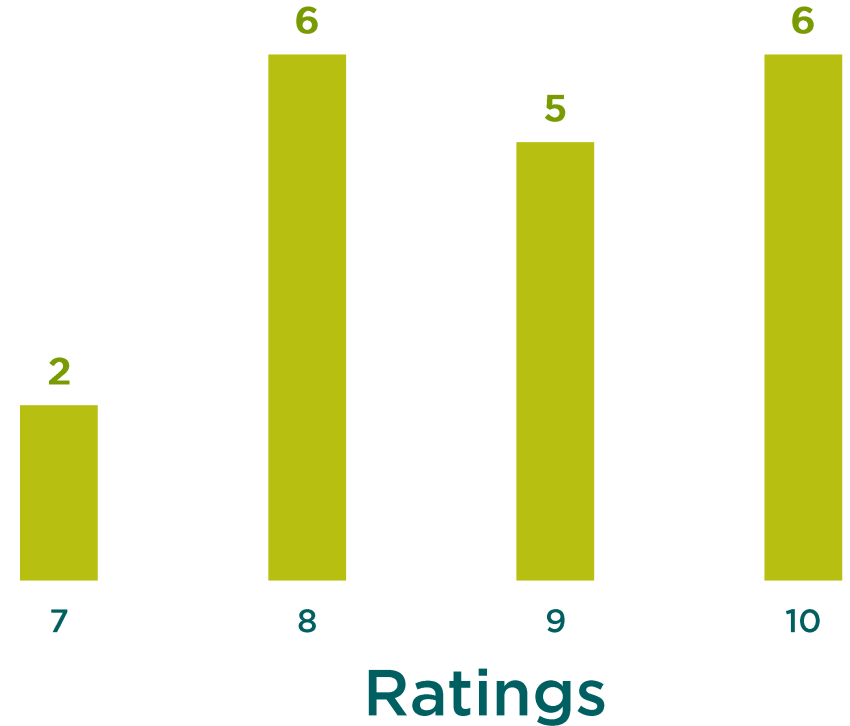
At the conclusion of the neighbor insights project, we sent an evaluation to our volunteers to gain their perspective on the experience.



19 of the 30 volunteers shared their feedback, and this is what they said...

# 8.79

The average rating of the volunteer experience.



# Experience Themes

- Training & Education
- Connection: Purpose & People



The **training was concise and thorough**. It was **nice to meet other volunteers as well as employees during the process**.

The **training was immensely helpful** and **having 3 people there was a great format**. Both of my volunteer shifts were a bit slow, so we had to pivot mid-shift; Sarah's **on-call support was very helpful!**

Educational. Direct contact with clients/people in need. Important project. Excellent coworkers.

Excellent training; clear expectations; **on site empowerment**.

**Very good training and communication**, which helped the volunteer time to go well.

**Usefulness of questionnaire.**

The **data collection was well organized; directions were clear and the ability to communicate with survey staff as needed** worked very well.



# Experience Themes

- Training & Education
- Connection: Purpose & People



We received **excellent training** for this survey project along with **helpful tools** AND **great communication from the staff.**

It was **a great learning experience to be a part of** and **it feels good to play a small part in making positive changes happen.**

**I felt well prepared** and **enjoyed connecting with neighbors.**

It was great **to visit the food shelves, talk with people, and learn about each food shelf.** **People** were so appreciative and wanted to share this with us.

My own **learnings about hunger in my community.**

**The facility I surveyed at was very accommodating** and **assisted the team in several ways.** They facilitated the selection of participants, spent time to translate and assist the participants.

**The wonderful fellow volunteers and clients.**

**100%** of volunteers felt the training session prepared them for their volunteer shift.



The training itself and **being provided a copy of the information afterward to review.**

**Understanding the need for the survey and why we were seeking this feedback.**

Explanation of **the science behind the survey process.**

Going through **the best practices for the survey and how to ask follow up questions that are not leading** towards one answer or another.

**How to explain the survey** to others.

Info on **how to conduct the study**, especially **the importance of sticking to the selection criteria.**

It was **very thorough which left one feeling confident** and enabled to do the job.

Talking about **the reasoning behind the surveying** and **what you hoped to accomplish. The tools were also great.**

**Advice on being understanding of the clients' challenges.**

I think just **the platform itself, to come together and ask questions** was the most helpful.

**Setting the tone for interviews and how to interact with the neighbors** using our service.

**Explanation of the process/roles.**

# Taking it up a notch

- Multilingual Language Support
- Survey-related
- Agency Partner Reminders



I enjoyed the experience, the only reason it wasn't higher is because all the neighbors spoke Spanish so **I wasn't able to communicate in a way I had hoped to.**

There were **a couple of questions that gave the participants issues and seemed to not translate particularly well when translated out of English.** There were also some **mechanics within the survey** (drag and dropping answers/ranking priorities) that people were not familiar with and gave them some issues for answering those questions.

The training was adequate. **It would have been helpful to understand the full survey before getting to the site.** The other team members had worked at other sites so gave detailed guidance on the survey and questions that were problematic for participants.

Perhaps some **role play during training as to best ways to introduce the survey to recipients**

It was a good experience but **the foodbank forgot we were coming so it was a little hectic at first.**

There were a couple of times that **it did not seem like the food shelf knew that we were coming on that day.** So **maybe additional reminders in the days leading up to let them know that we will be coming.** Though I am sure this is something you already did and have no control of if people are actually reading emails.

**100%** of the volunteers would be willing to participate in another volunteer activity of this nature with Second Harvest Heartland.



I know **the impact our results will have on our work, and the community members and neighbors were very glad for SHH to have a presence in their space.**

**More convinced than ever of need for programs to reduce hunger.**

It's a **rewarding experience**, and **reminds me of the difficulties so many face** just trying to feed themselves

I think as someone working in the hunger relief system, **it is important to see what that looks like on the ground level. I wanted to gain a better understanding of what food distributions at food shelves look like and get to know the people who are receiving the food.** It is also good to hear their feedback outside of anything said in the survey **just to hear what would be beneficial for them, and what other services they are looking for/would be helpful.**

It was **a very meaningful, insightful experience.**

I think **it's critical to hear from the neighbors who use the food shelf rather than making decisions for them.**

**Commitment to the mission of Second Harvest and desire to assist.**

It was **grounding to work with our partners and directly with neighbors.**

Love **being a part of positive change**, and **helping directly in the community.**

More neighbor interaction - **it felt good to see partners operations and interact with the public - don't get to do that often as staff.**

**Enjoyable to get out into the community and engage with both neighbors and SHH partners.**

**To be out in the community and be a good ambassador of SHH that helps to build trust.**

Honestly, for my **personal growth in learning more about the important work of SHH.**

# Closing Thoughts



**Extremely valuable. Everyone should experience the world of hunger** at least this closely, if not more closely, to understand what this is like.

**Second Harvest makes it easy to volunteer!**

There were many people **both neighbors receiving food and people working/volunteering at the food shelf who seemed thankful that we were in the community with them and gathering the information.** I think **they appreciated that Second Harvest was trying to learn more about how they could be a better partner for both,** and what other services we could connect them to/advocate for.

It was **a great experience for me being new to volunteering at Second Harvest.**

**I'm so impressed by the work of Second Harvest, and its staff is excellent.** I'm humbled by all those who work in the non-profit world.

**Thank you for this opportunity!**

It was **a great experience,** and **I am glad I was able to participate.** Definitely **a highlight of my work week.**