

District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Data Report

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout this project, the research team at the Community Development Institute (CDI) at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) engaged with, and received assistance from, many community members. We would like to express appreciation for the advice, feedback, and logistical support provided by members of the Community Partners Group, including Amanda Coulson, Louise Davies, Doug Foerster, Bev Fournier, Ken Klikach, Dick Lekei, Glenn Miller, Barb Schuerkamp, Rose Snyder, Ronke Solomon, Maureen Sywolos, and Dawn Wagner.

In particular, we wish to thank Aleen Torraville, Corporate Officer with the District of Tumbler Ridge, who provided invaluable support by proactively connecting us with so many stakeholders interested in supporting this initiative, providing us with their contact information, and lending other ongoing logistical support.

We would also like to thank Erin Powers, a fourth-year practicum student with the University of Victoria Public Health and Social Policy program, who worked on the early stages of this project. We wish Erin, who lives and works in Fort St. John, all the best in her educational and career endeavours.

It is our hope that the findings from this project provide insightful and diverse perspectives of the state of the housing stock in Tumbler Ridge and the issues that need to be addressed as residents continue to age and enjoy a high quality-of life in the community.

The funding for this study was provided by the District of Tumbler Ridge.

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Prince George, BC
2021

AVAILABILITY

Copies of this report have been provided to District of Tumbler Ridge and to all participants who provided input into this process. The project reports are posted on the website of the Community Development Institute at UNBC: <https://www.unbc.ca/community-development-institute/research-projects>.

The information contained in this report is part of a series of reports completed for the District of Tumbler Ridge Senior's Housing Assessment Study. These include:

- District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Summary Report.
- District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Data Report.
- District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Methodology Report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information about this topic and the project, please contact Marleen Morris or Greg Halseth, Co-Directors of the Community Development Institute.

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INTRODUCTION

Like many communities in Canada, the District of Tumbler Ridge is experiencing population aging, as many long-time residents are choosing to remain in the community. Over the past several years, the community has felt increasingly challenged to provide housing, services, and programs that would enable seniors to age-in-place.

The District of Tumbler Ridge has already taken steps towards understanding seniors' needs in the community. Earlier in 2019, the District Council commissioned and received an Age-Friendly Plan, which provided broad guidance on supporting seniors in the community.

Beyond this general guidance, however, the District of Tumbler Ridge, along with health service providers and seniors' organizations in the community, identified the need to undertake an assessment to determine, at the household level, the housing and health support services that will be required in Tumbler Ridge. For this project, the District of Tumbler Ridge approached the Community Development Institute (CDI) at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). To support this initiative, the CDI worked with the District, local seniors, seniors' organizations, and care service providers to complete an assessment of the housing stock in Tumbler Ridge and its suitability to support aging-in-place. Data was also collected to determine the programs and services required in order to support seniors to age-in-place in Tumbler Ridge. As such, the final reports are strategically designed to identify the housing and health support service needs for seniors in Tumbler Ridge. It also includes information, options, and recommendations that can be used by the District of Tumbler Ridge, seniors' organizations, and service providers in planning and decision-making for addressing these needs.

Project Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the current and future housing needs of seniors in Tumbler Ridge, with particular attention to issues of accessibility.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the current and future support service needs of seniors in Tumbler Ridge.
- Assess the current housing stock occupied by seniors in Tumbler Ridge and its suitability to support aging-in-place.
- Determine the current use and future needs for services to support seniors to age-in-place in Tumbler Ridge.
- Develop options and recommendations for addressing the needs in housing and health support services identified through the research and assessment.

Final Reports

The District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study resulted in three reports:

- ***District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Summary Report*** which presents the key findings, analysis, and conclusions from the study.
- ***District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Data Report*** which presents the data from each question in the assessment in easy-to-read charts and tables.
- ***District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Methodology Report*** which presents information about the design and implementation of the study.

Overview: The Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment

An assessment tool was designed to determine the suitability of the housing stock in Tumbler Ridge to support aging-in-place. As such, the data collected was used to better understand the extent to which the housing stock is suitable "as is" or whether renovations are needed in order to extend the suitability of the existing housing. The assessment tool included a list of questions regarding socio-demographic background information and mobility issues for older residents, as well as issues related to the exterior and interior accessibility (i.e., entrances, living room, kitchen, bathrooms, bedroom, laundry, and stairways), lighting, safety, home repair, and home maintenance.

Another aspect of the assessment tool was designed to explore current and future housing and support services that will be required by senior households living in Tumbler Ridge. Questions explored needs around assistance with home maintenance, yard maintenance, transportation, shopping, banking, housekeeping, laundry, cooking, personal care, and nursing care. This section also explored the use of formal supports through the public and private sector, as well as the use of informal support networks, for example from family and friends. The final section of the assessment then asked about future housing preferences.

The Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment was conducted with a sample of local residents aged 55 and older from September to December 2020. Due to ongoing concerns about face-to-face research during the COVID-19 pandemic, the research team was unable to visit each participating household and data collection protocols were revised to complete the assessments remotely. Participants were recruited to participate through publicly available lists, as well as through self-identification. Awareness of the project was created through recruitment e-mails from seniors' groups and community organizations, recruitment posters that were distributed through key locations in the community (seniors' drop-in, community centre, post office, town hall, etc.), and notices in the local newspaper. For those willing to participate, we arranged to connect at a time convenient for the resident.

Participants were provided with two options for completing the assessment. The participants could connect with a member of the research team through a Zoom video conference meeting. Alternatively, participants could speak with a member of the research team during a scheduled phone meeting. In both cases, the participating household was provided with a copy of the assessment guide ahead of the scheduled meeting, and a member of the UNBC research team filled out a copy of the assessment during the meeting.

In total, 63 participants aged 55 years or older were interviewed. Including the respondents and all members of their households, 101 individuals over 55 years of age were represented in the assessment. In addition, eight individuals under the age of 55 were identified as household members. For each assessment, comments were recorded in a Word document and a copy of the individual assessment was sent by mail or email to each participant for review. Participants were given two weeks to review their assessment and get back to the research team with any clarifications or changes.

After the assessments were completed, responses for closed-ended questions were entered and analyzed in a database. For open-ended questions, qualitative analysis was done to identify, code, and categorize patterns and themes that emerged from the data.

About the Assessment Data Report

The purpose of the ***District of Tumbler Ridge Seniors' Housing Assessment Study: Data Report*** is to present a complete set of data from each question in the assessment. The order of the questions follows the order in the assessment tool. The data is presented using a pie chart format. Each chart is accompanied by a brief description which provides insight into the results.

BC ASSESSMENT DWELLING INFORMATION

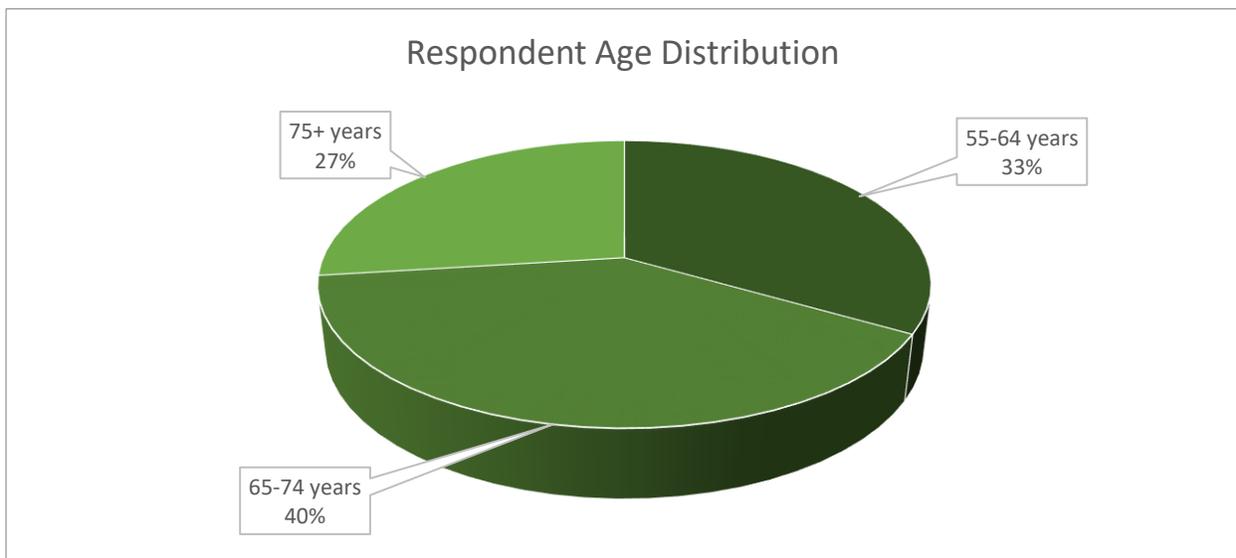
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers were not able to collect information or assess the housing stock in person. In order to provide background information on the participating seniors' housing stock, the assessment collected information from BC Assessment where available. Dwelling value was available for 60 of the 63 assessed homes. The average value was \$135,475. Median dwelling value was \$142,550.

The year when a home was built was available for 59 of the assessed homes. Over 90% of those were built in the 1980s. The number of bedrooms was available for 57 homes. The most common number of bedrooms were three (46%) and four bedrooms (39%) per house. Information on the number of floors in a home was more difficult to obtain, but two floors appeared to be the most common among the sample.

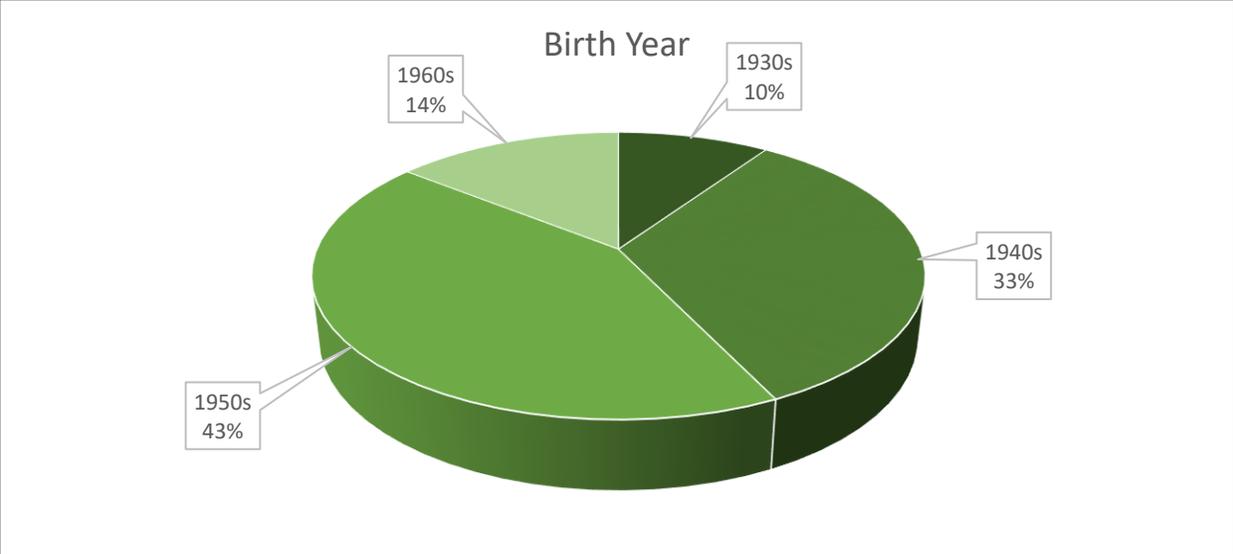
PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The in-home assessment process began by collecting information on interview respondents and their households. In total, 63 participants aged 55 years or older were interviewed. Including the respondents and all members of their households, 101 individuals over 55 years of age were represented in the assessment. In addition, eight individuals under the age of 55 were identified as household members.

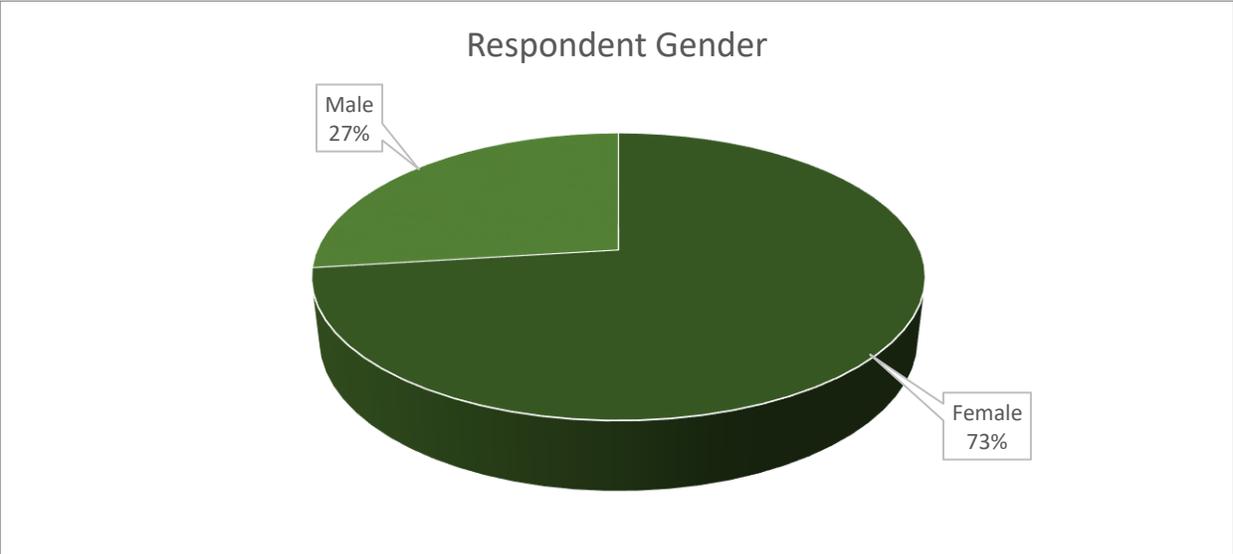
Respondent Profile



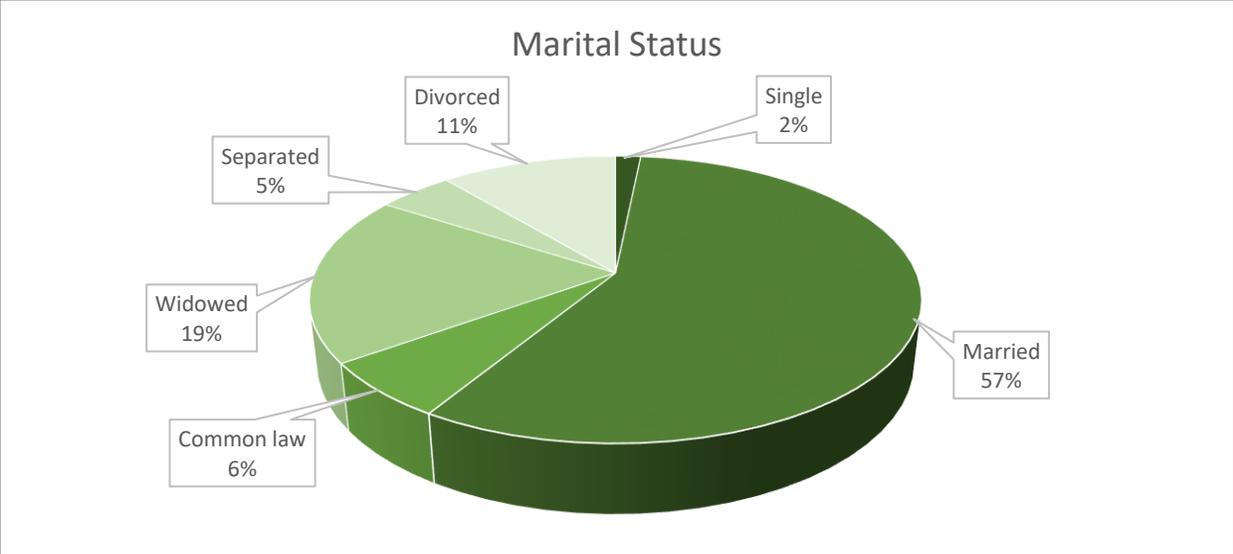
Information about population age is relevant in the context of physical and mental vulnerability, financial security, and expected housing and service needs. While pre-retirement seniors aged 55 to 64 are the largest senior age group in the District of Tumbler Ridge making up over 50% of all seniors aged 55 and over, our sample aimed to represent all senior age groups with ages distributed as evenly as possible. This was to ensure that the needs of all age groups were equally well represented, and allows for more accurate needs predictions as Tumbler Ridges senior population ages. One-third of respondents were in the pre-retirement group aged 55 to 64 years, 40% were in the 65- to 74-year age group, and 27% were aged 75 years and older.



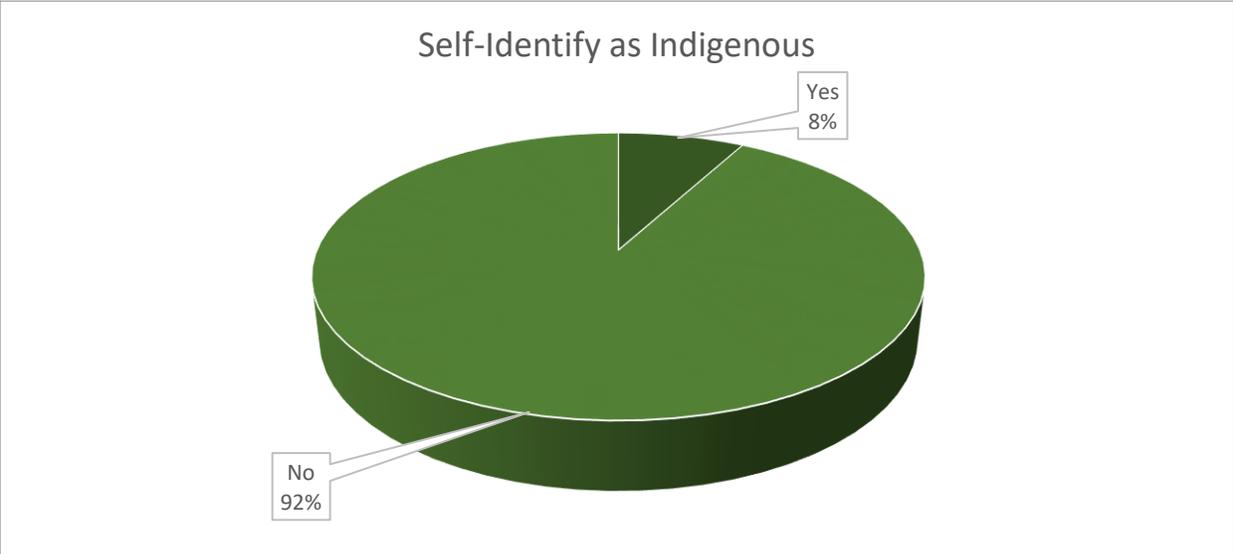
A look at their birth years revealed that the oldest 10% of interview participants were born in the 1930s, followed by 33% in the 1940s, the largest cohort of 43% were born in the 1950s, and the youngest 14% were born in the 1960s.



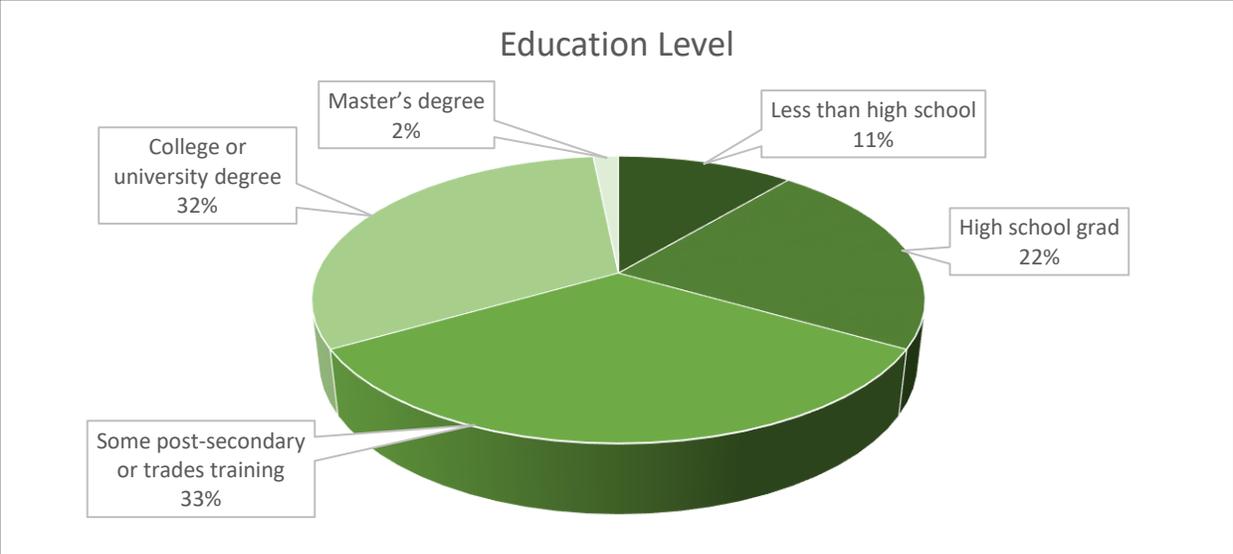
Of all interview respondents, 73% were female and 27% male. However, looking at the respondents and all their household members, the population represented in this assessment was 55% female and 45% male.



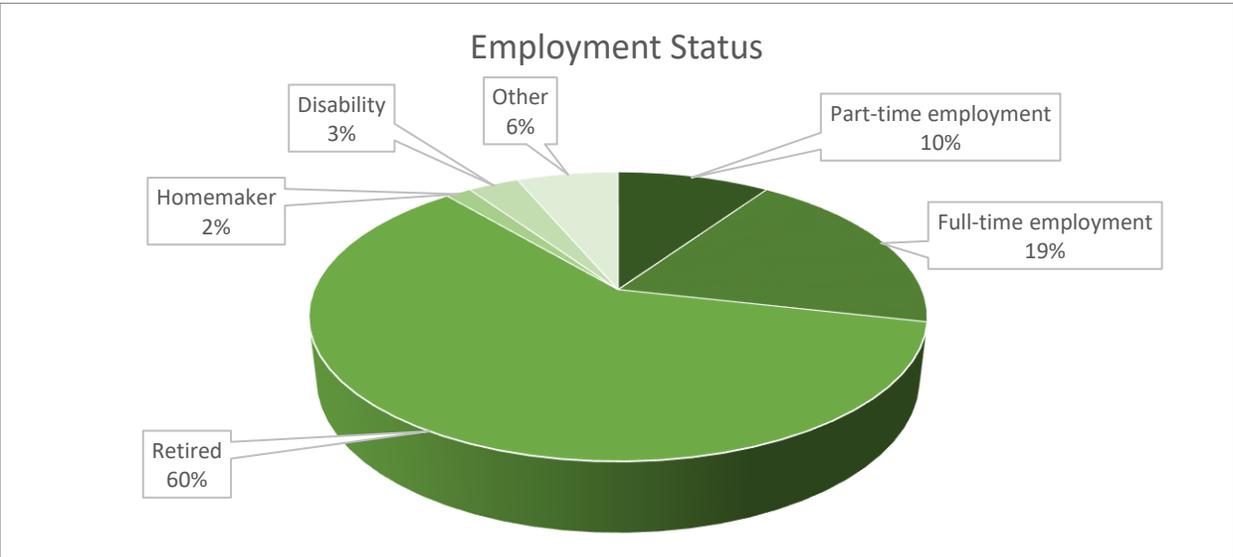
The largest segment of our sample was married (57%), followed by 19% who were widowed. Smaller groups of respondents were divorced (11%), living in common-law (6%), separated (5%), and single (2%).



The prevalence of Indigenous identity in the senior population holds information about cultural diversity and the potential for specific service needs. Eight percent of our respondents self-identified as Indigenous. While those respondents did indicate their nation or band, that information is not included here in order to uphold our confidentiality requirements.

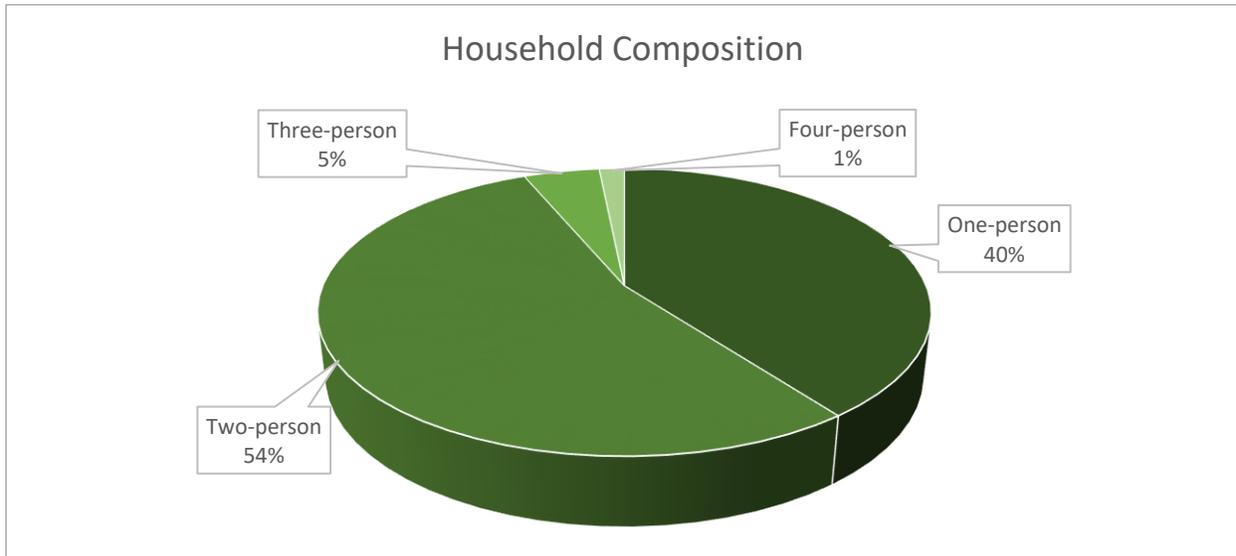


The highest level of education provides some insight regarding the types of capacity within the senior age cohort of a community. The highest educational attainments among the interview respondents ranged from not having completed high school to having obtained a university degree at the graduate level. The largest two segments of our sample, making up one-third each, were seniors with some post-secondary or trades training, and seniors with college or university degrees up to the bachelor level. More than one-fifth of the sample had graduated from high school as their highest educational attainment.

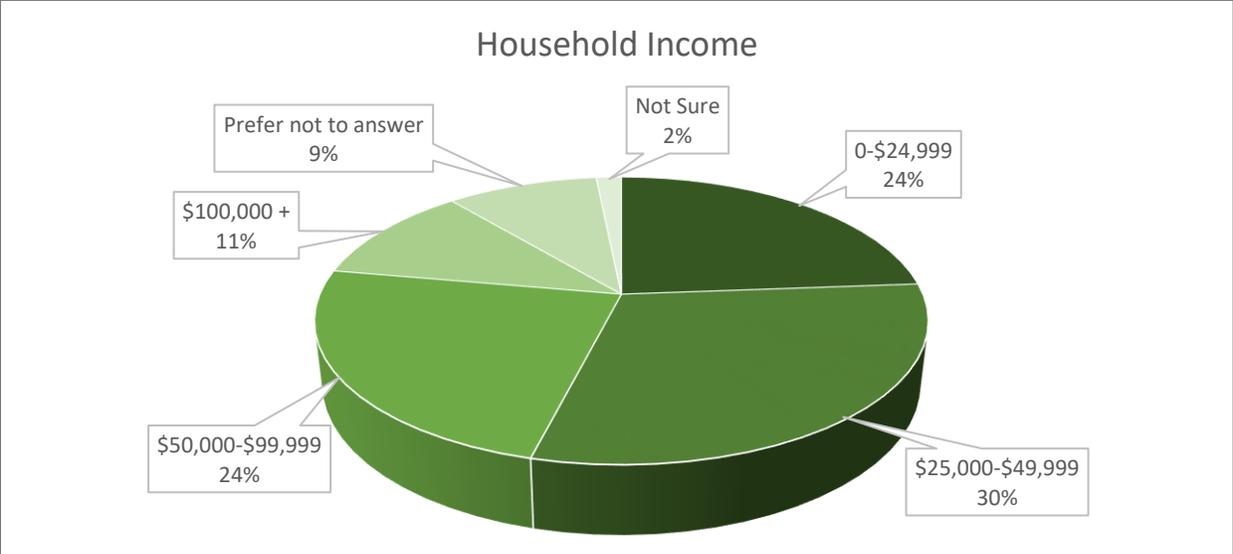


Employment among various senior age groups may be a choice as one way of staying actively engaged and involved in the community, or a necessity due to financial vulnerability as a result of fixed incomes. In our senior sample, of which one-third were of pre-retirement age (55-64 years), 10% worked part-time, another almost 20% worked full-time, and 60% were retired.

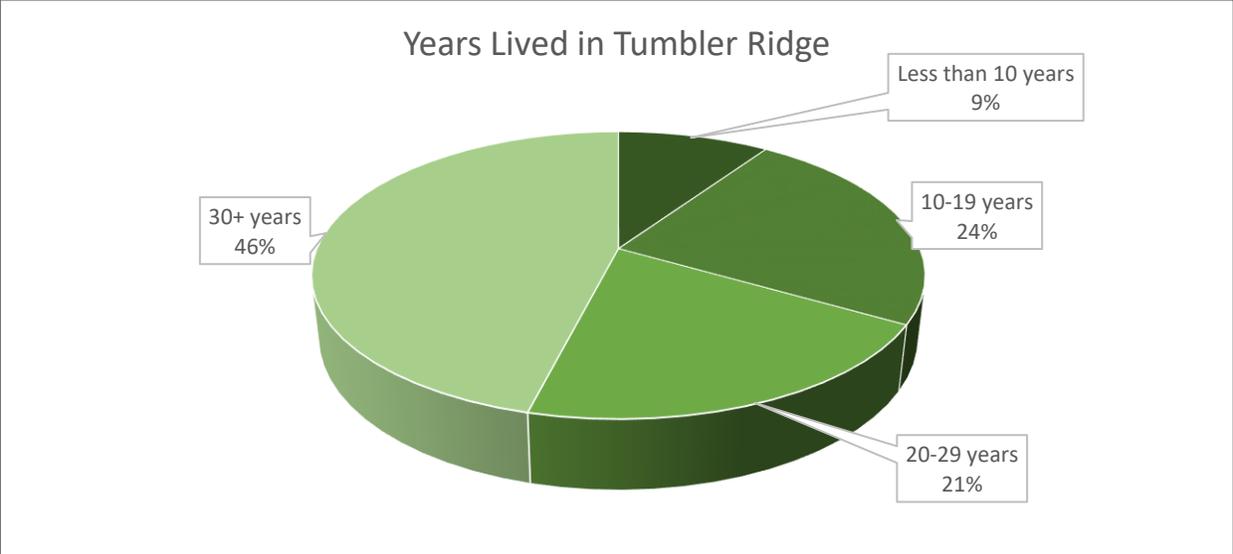
Household Profile



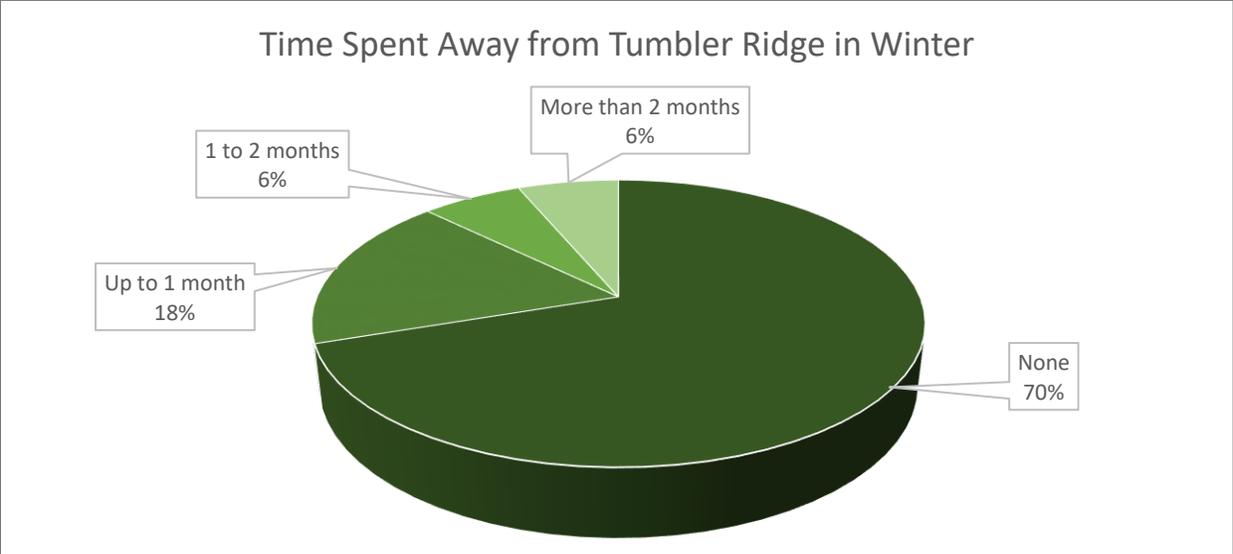
Household size holds information about what level of assistance may be available within a senior's household and allows for preliminary conclusions about the housing needs of a household. Over one-half of households represented in this survey (54%) consisted of two persons. The second most common household size in the assessment were one-person households, making up 40%, while three- and four-person households together only constituted six percent of all households included in the assessment.



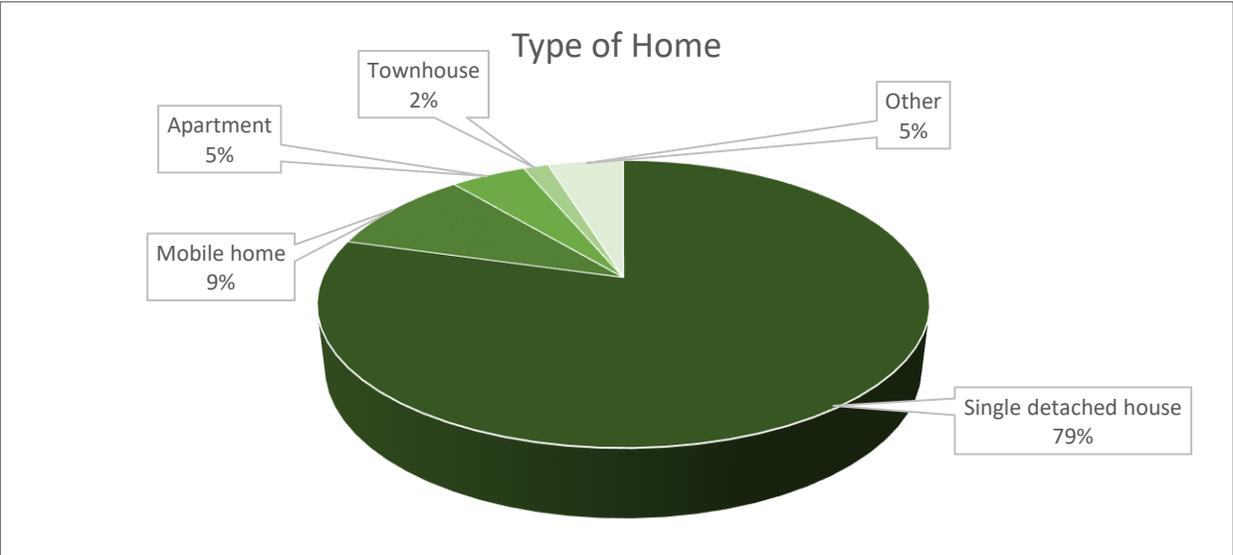
Low household income, especially for seniors on fixed retirement income, can be one of the key barriers to paying for services and assistance when accessibility needs and physical abilities change as residents age. One-quarter of interview respondents reported an annual household income below \$25,000, and one-third had an income between \$25,000 and \$50,000 annually.



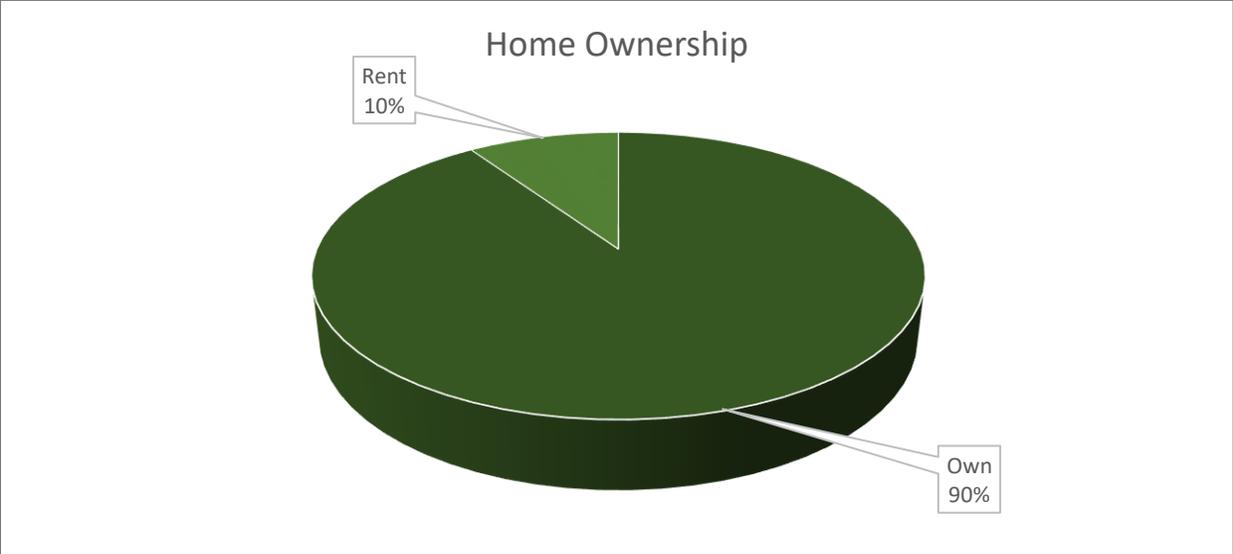
The number of years a senior has lived in Tumbler Ridge holds some information about the nature of their ties to the community. Forty-six percent, or almost one-half, of respondents had lived in Tumbler Ridge for 30 years or longer; one-fifth had been here between 20 and 29 years; one-quarter had been residents of Tumbler Ridge for 10 to 19 years; and fewer than one in ten were recent arrivals of the past 10 years.



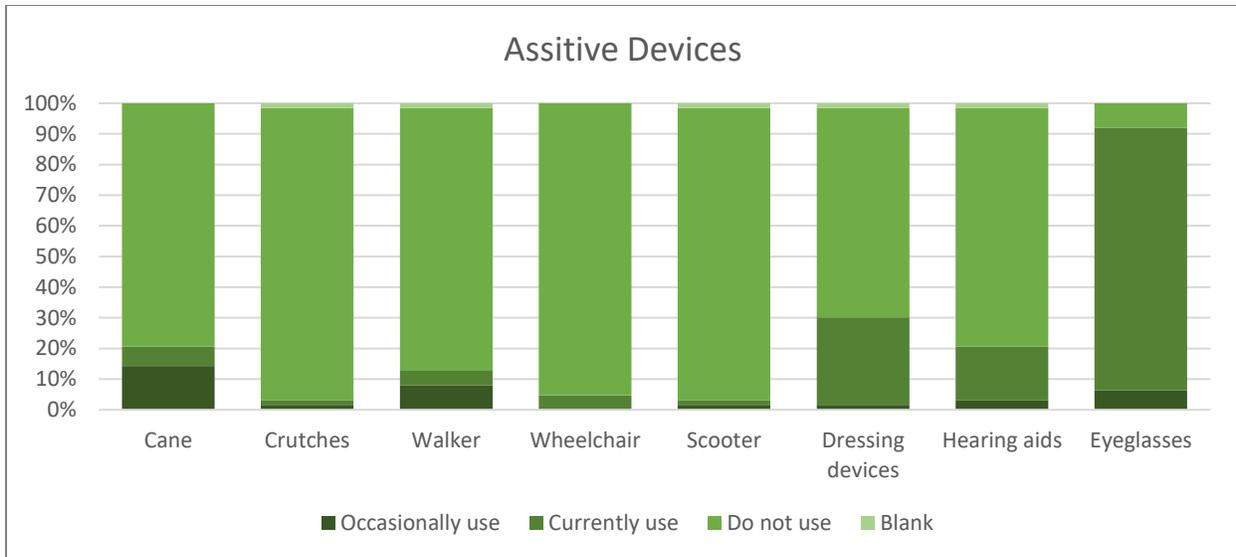
Going south in winter is a common practice for many seniors in northern BC. Given that the need for community services is higher in winter than in summer, the amount of time people spend away during the winter months can have a significant impact on these services. Among our respondent sample, 70% did not spend any significant and regular amount of time away from the community over the winter, while 18% indicated they usually left for up to one month.



Leading from personal and household information to the topic of housing, the housing assessment then explored what types of homes respondents lived in. In accordance with the predominant type of home available in Tumbler Ridge, almost 80% of respondents live in single detached homes. Just under 10% reported living in mobile homes, and five percent indicated they lived in an apartment.



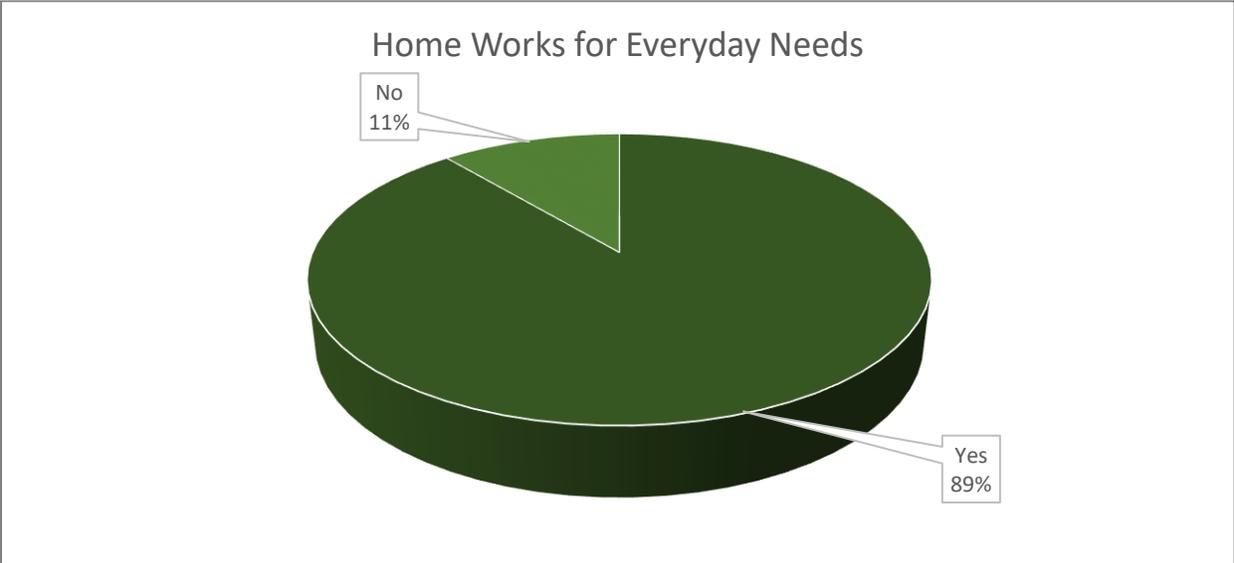
Tenure holds information about a resident’s financial situation, for example the availability of home equity, the level of financial responsibility for home and property maintenance, and capacity in terms of making adaptations for accessibility. Nine out of ten respondents owned their homes.



Assistive devices	Cane	Crutches	Walker	Wheelchair	Scooter	Dressing devices	Hearing aids	Eyeglasses
Occasionally use	14.3%	1.6%	7.9%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	3.2%	6.3%
Currently use	6.3%	1.6%	4.8%	4.8%	1.6%	28.6%	17.5%	85.7%
Do not use	79.4%	95.2%	85.7%	95.2%	95.2%	68.3%	77.8%	7.9%
Blank	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%

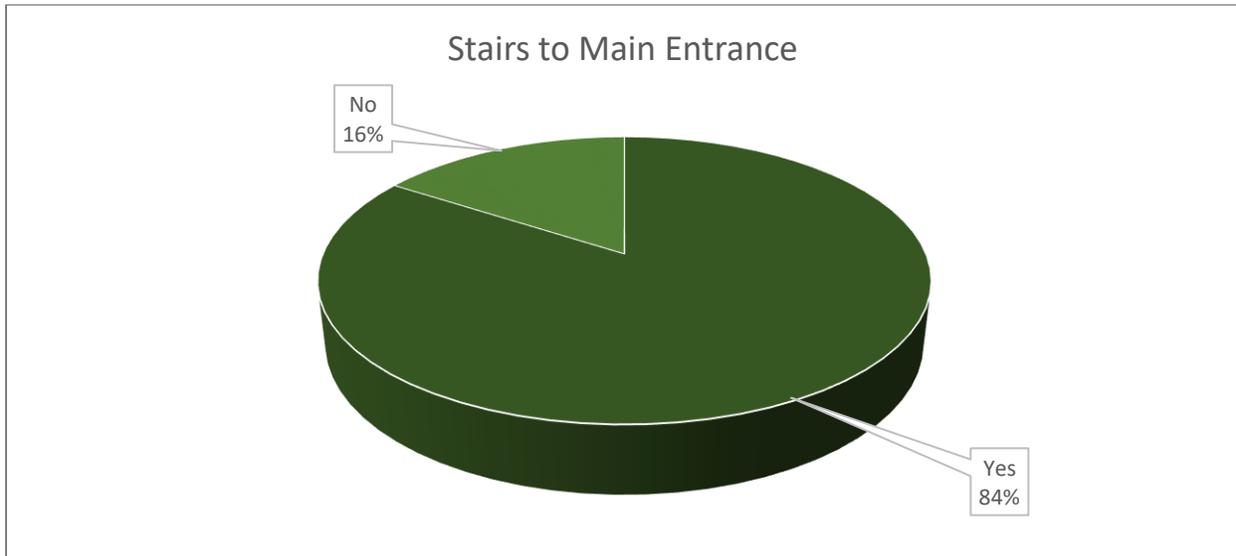
Having established the types of homes our sample lived in and their tenure, Part 1 of the in-home assessment ended by establishing the level of dependence on assistive devices, and limitations in mobility, prevalent in the respondent sample households. Eyeglasses were the only assistive device used occasionally or currently by the majority of the sample (92%). A cane, crutches, or a walker are the assistive devices that indicate a person likely faces mobility limitations within their home. Twenty-seven percent of respondents occasionally or currently used at least one of those devices in their households, meaning over one-quarter of the sample already need accessibility features in their homes, or are at an increased risk of injury within their homes, due to mobility limitations.

PART 2: CURRENT HOUSING AND SERVICE NEEDS

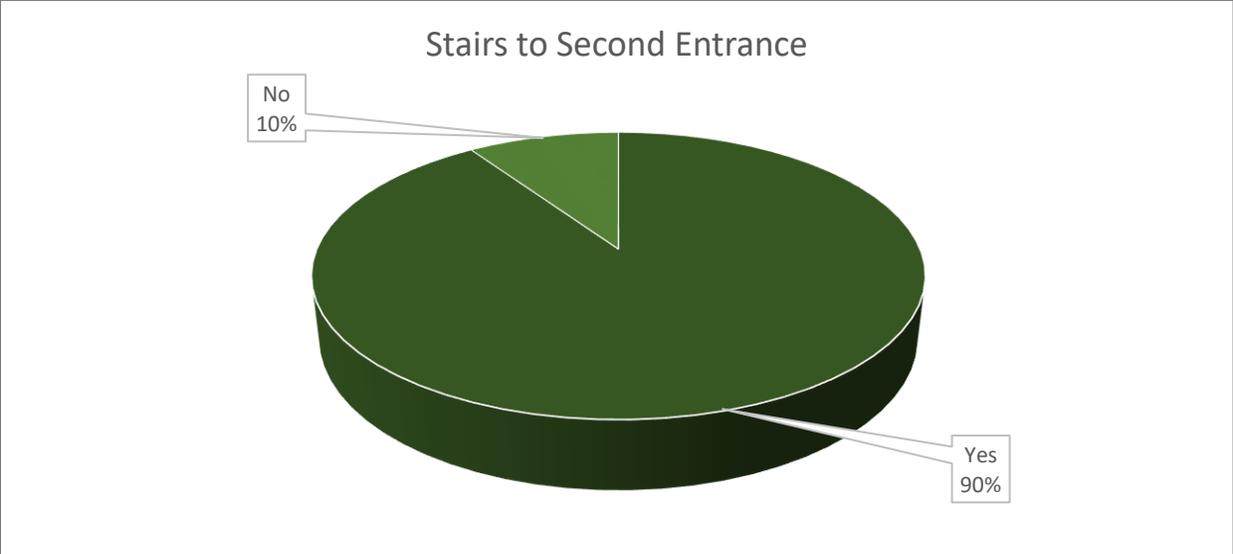


The assessment of housing and service needs began by asking for respondents’ personal judgement of their homes, and how well the dwellings matched the residents’ needs. A total of 89% of respondents declared that they believed their current homes worked well for their everyday needs, leaving more than one in ten who found their homes to not meet their needs.

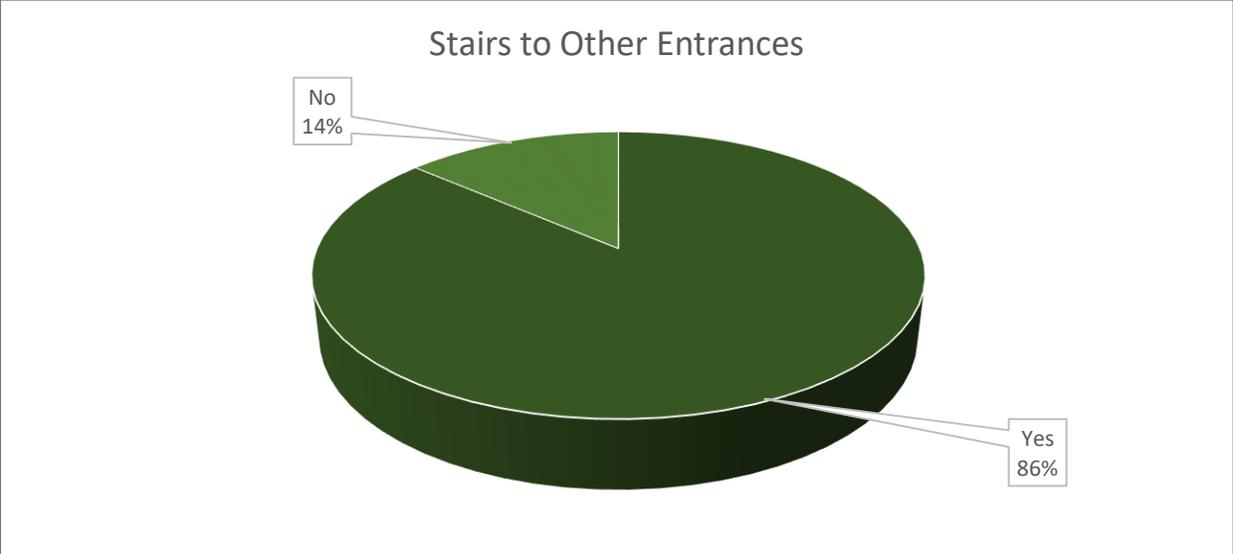
Home Exterior



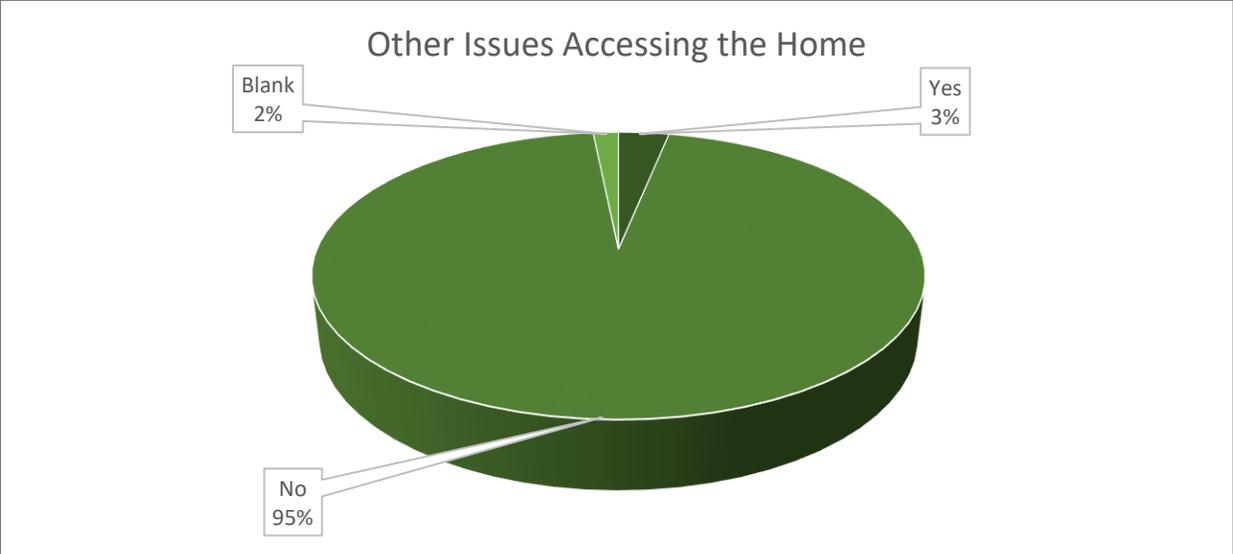
As a first potential barrier to accessing or leaving one's home, the presence of stairs leading up, or down, to the main entrance of a home can already determine whether a home is suitable for its occupants and their particular mobility challenges. The question revealed that 84% of respondents did have stairs at their main entrance. Of those, six percent reported not being able to use those stairs safely. According to comments from respondents, exterior stairs at the main entrance most commonly consisted of two to three steps.



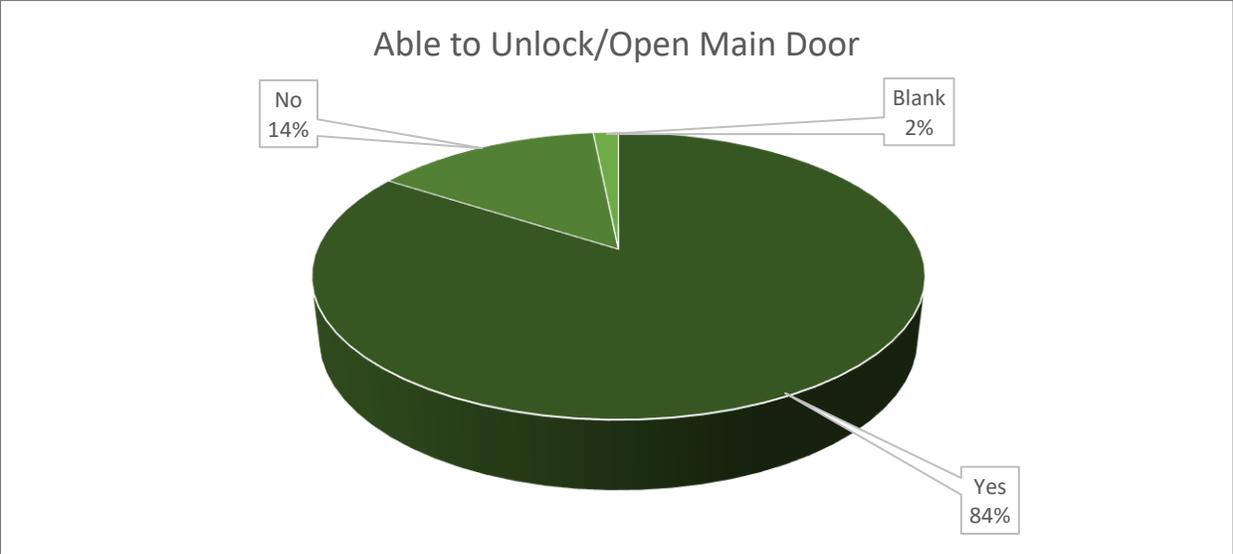
Besides convenience, a secondary entrance may also be an alternative to an unsafe main entrance. Ninety percent of respondents indicated having stairs leading up to a secondary entrance, 14% of which reported not being able to use those stairs safely. Stairs to second entrances tended to contain considerably more steps than main entrance stairs.



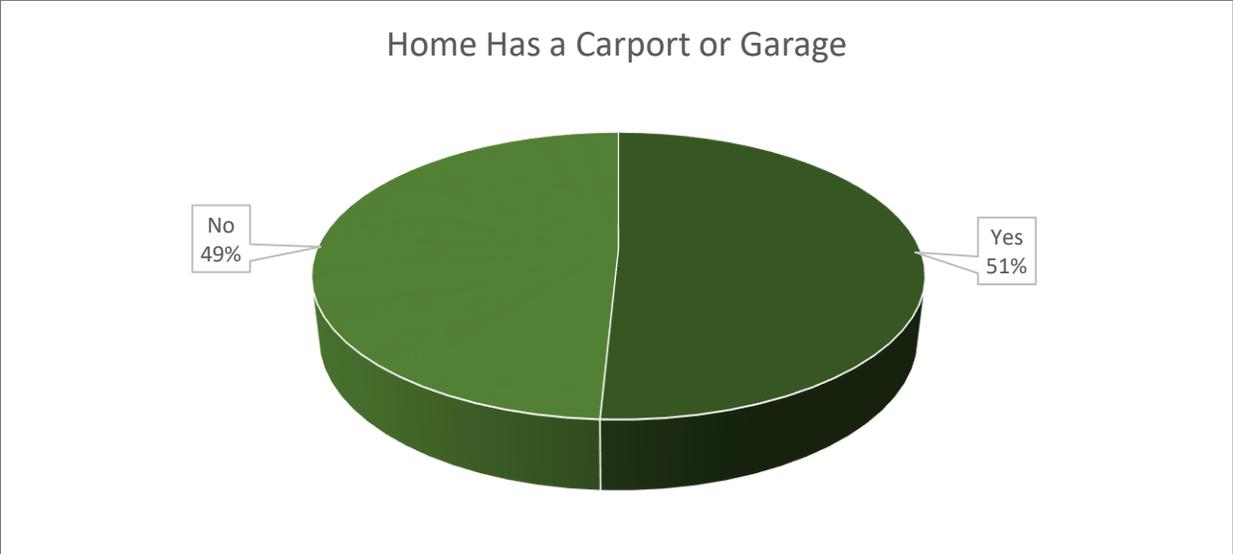
A little over one-third of respondents indicated they had other entrances to their homes. Of those, 86% had stairs leading up to those entrances. No one reported not being able to use those stairs. In total, three percent of respondents had stairs leading up to main and secondary entrances and were not able to use either of them safely. Of those, one-half had a safe third option to accessing their home, leaving around two percent of all respondents with no safe option to access their home.



Only three percent of respondents indicated that they were experiencing other, unspecified, issues with accessing their homes apart from stairs leading to their entrances.

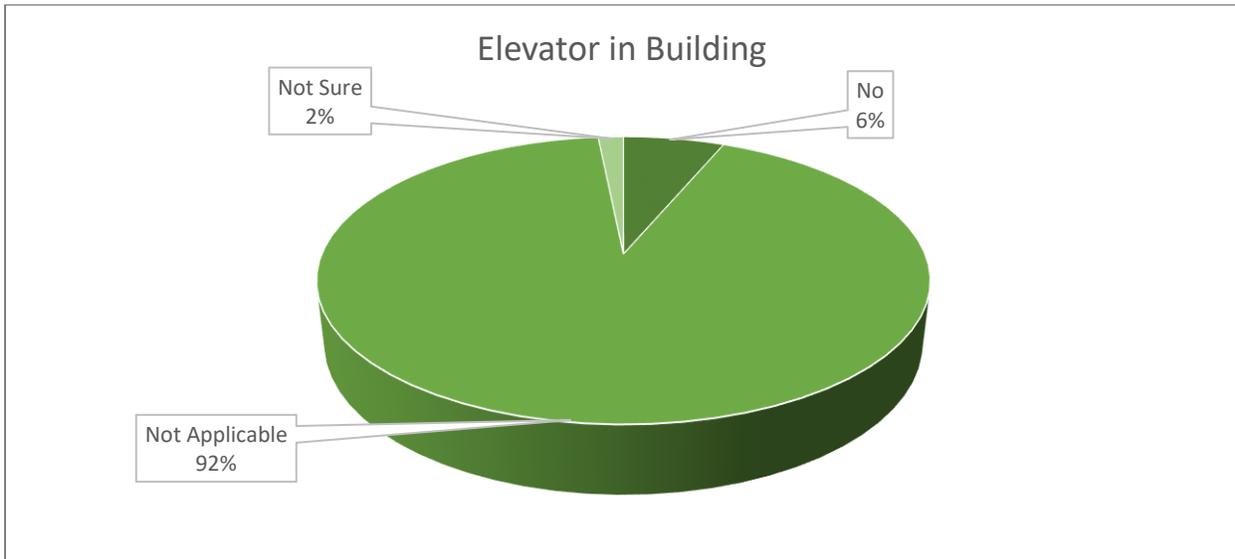


As the next potential barrier to entering a home for someone with decreased mobility, limited vision, or loss of dexterity, the ability to unlock and open the main door was assessed. Fourteen percent of respondents reported not being able to unlock and open their front door.

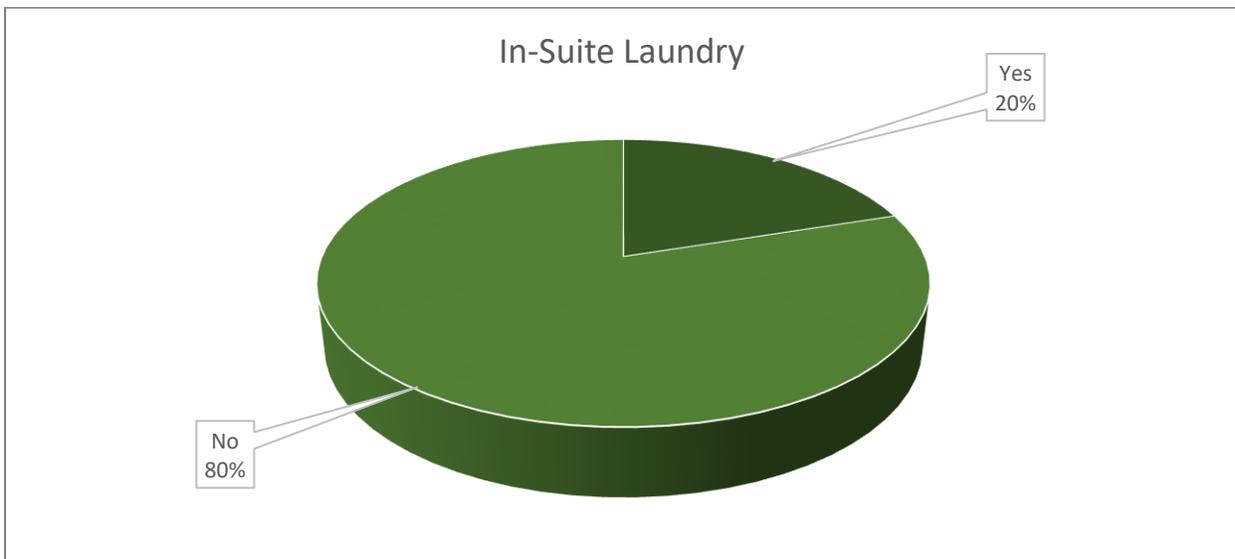


In cold climates in particular, a carport or garage directly attached to the home offers a sheltered space to access one's vehicle protected from the elements. An entrance into the home from that sheltered space increases safe options to access the home. One-half of respondents indicated they had a carport or garage; however, many were separate buildings. Fewer than 20% of garages and carports featured a door for direct access to the home. That means only 10% of all respondents had access to their homes that was sheltered from the elements, especially ice and snow in the winter.

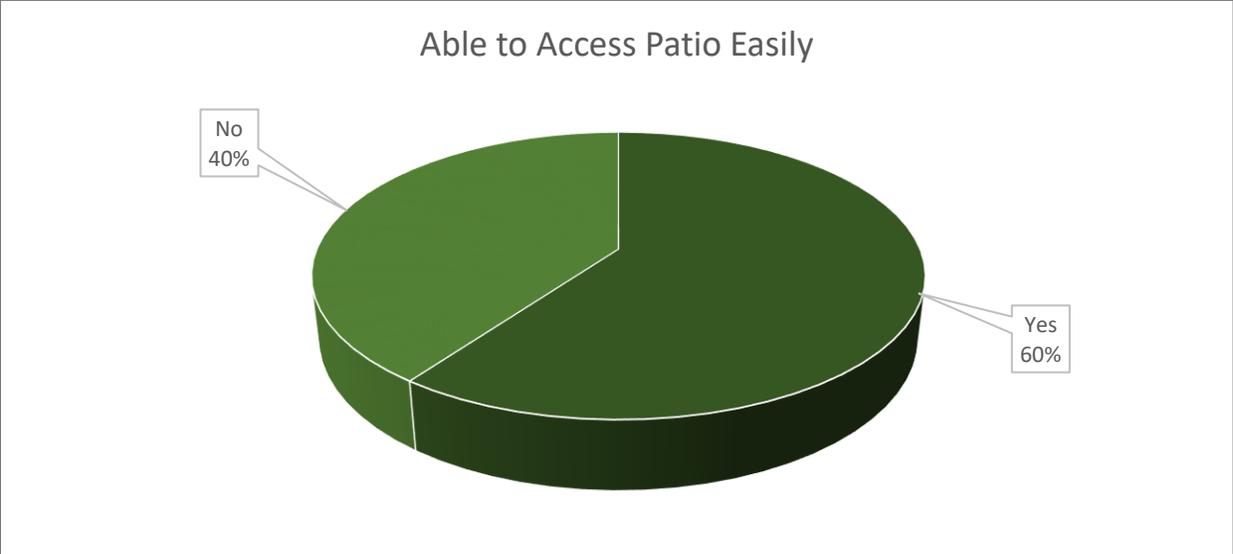
Apartments



In a question aimed at apartment buildings, we asked about the presence of elevators, which would allow seniors with limited mobility to more easily and safely access their homes. No elevators were reported in any buildings.

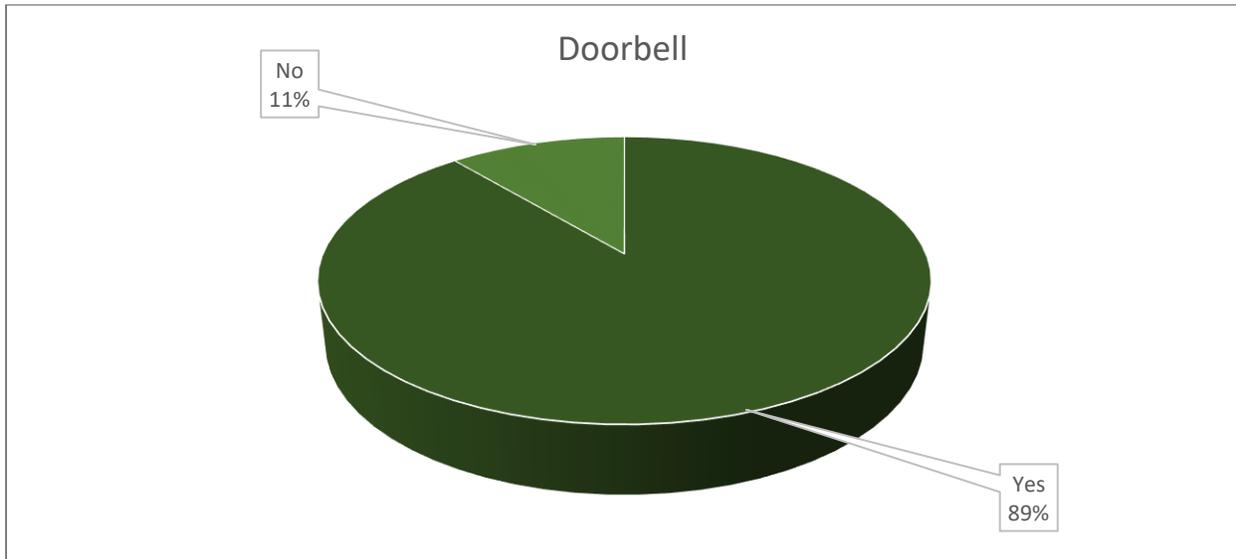


Of the small sample where the question was applicable, 80% related that they no in-suite laundry. All of those had, however, laundry facilities on their floor.

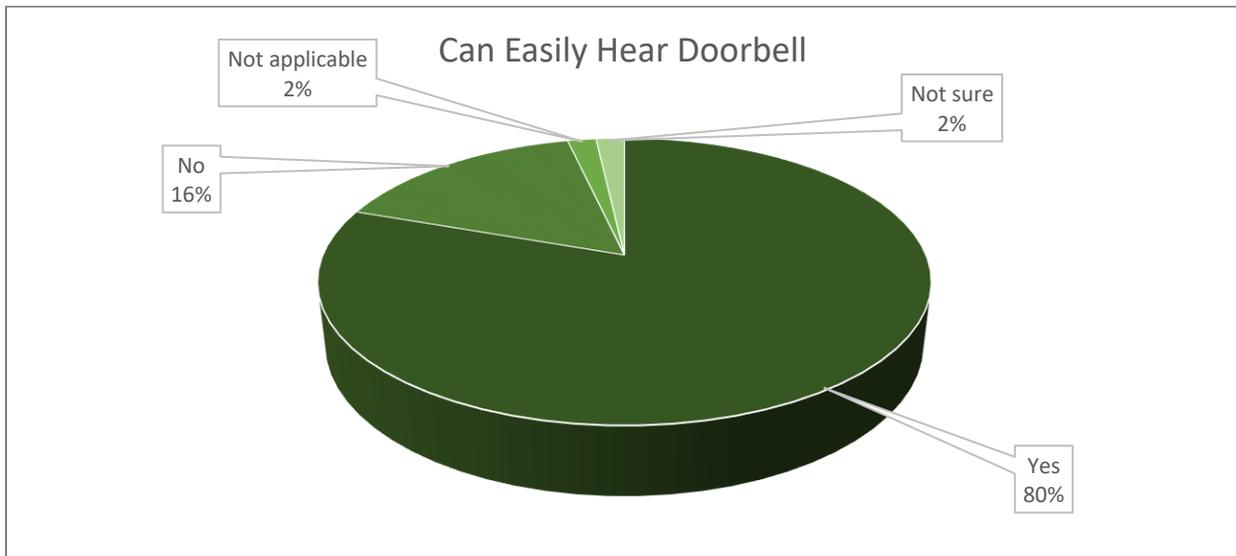


Among the sample responding to the questions aimed at apartments, all had a patio. Since apartment patios and balconies commonly feature a step-up or a tall lip on the patio door, access to their patio was easy for only 60% of respondents living in apartments.

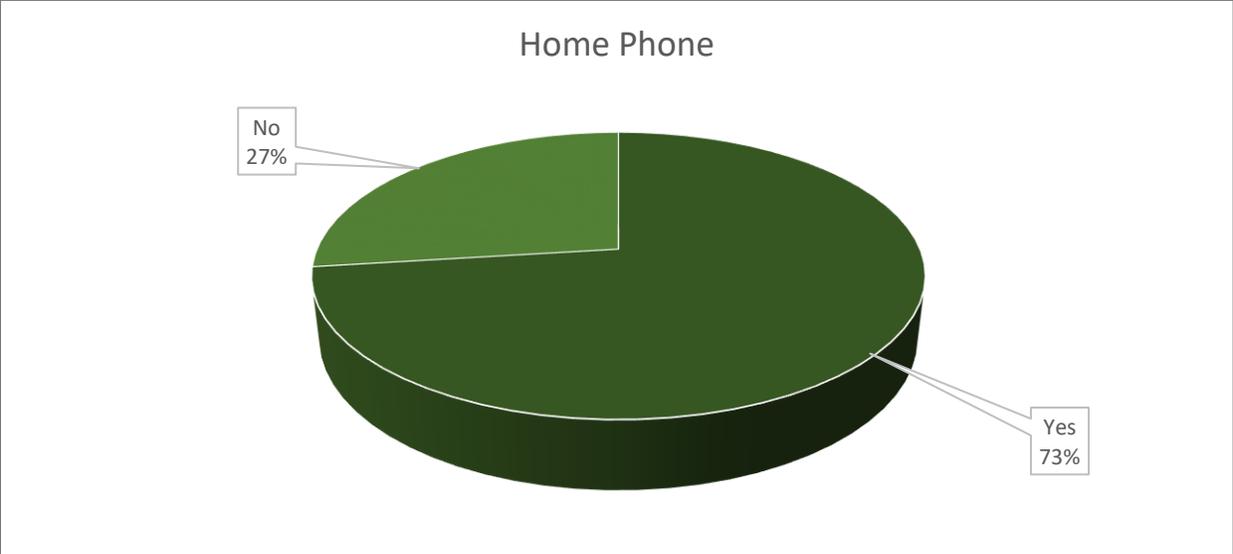
Home Interior



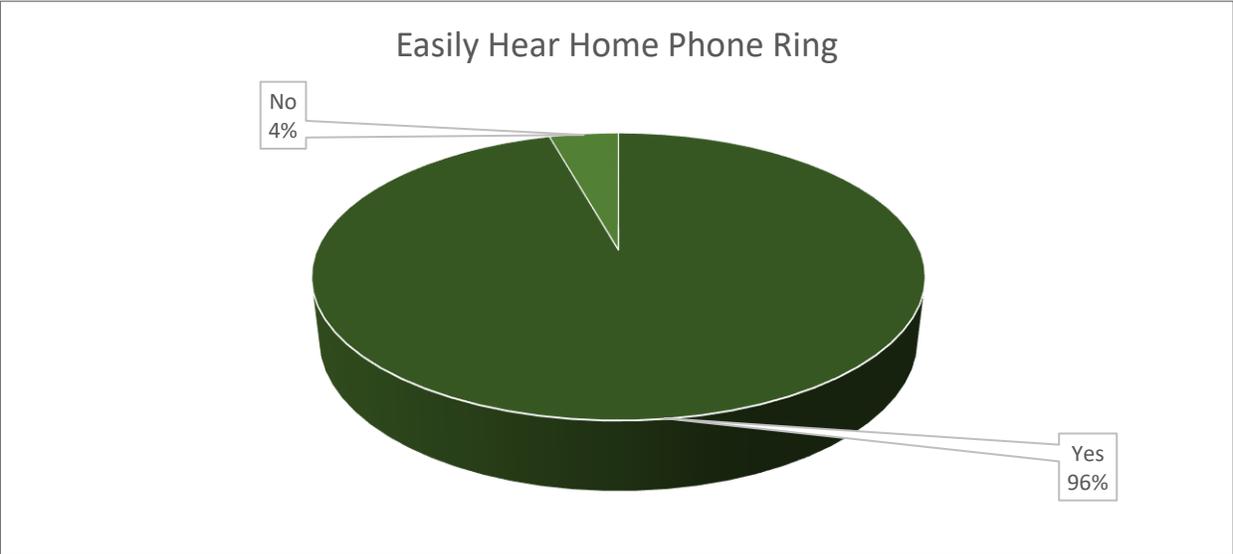
Depending on the technology, having a doorbell can be a security feature of the home, but it is also the most effective way to bring the presence of a visitor to the residents' attention and can be adjusted, for example in volume, to the residents' needs. Roughly 90% of respondents completing the in-home assessment reported having a doorbell.



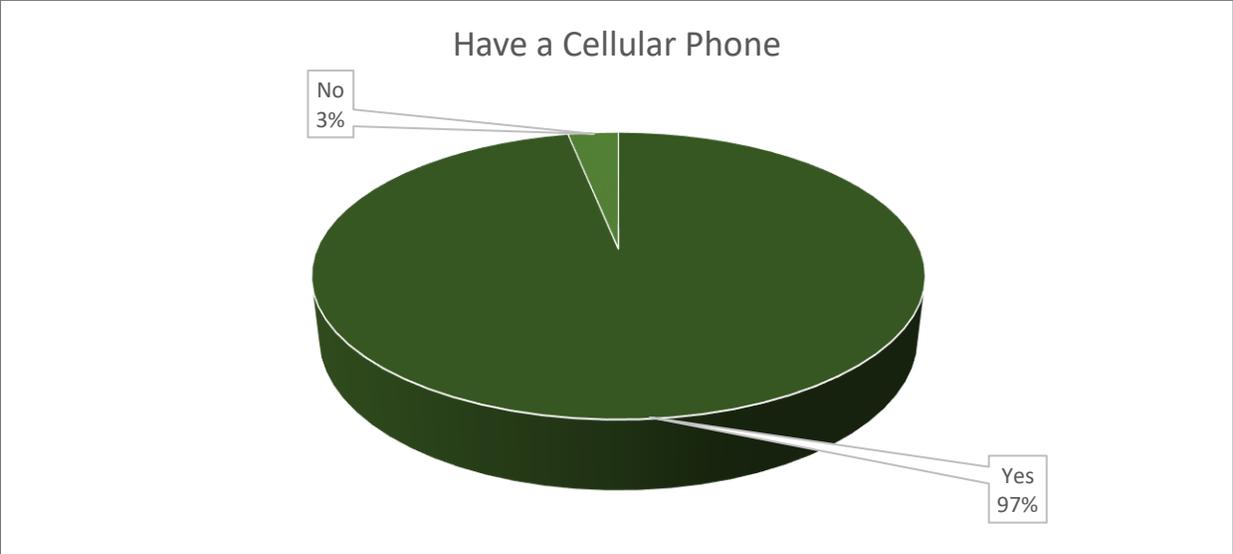
Exploring whether there was a significant level of need to adjust, repair, or replace doorbell technology in the respondent sample, the in-home assessment found that, among those respondents who had a doorbell, 16% could not hear it well enough in all areas of their homes.



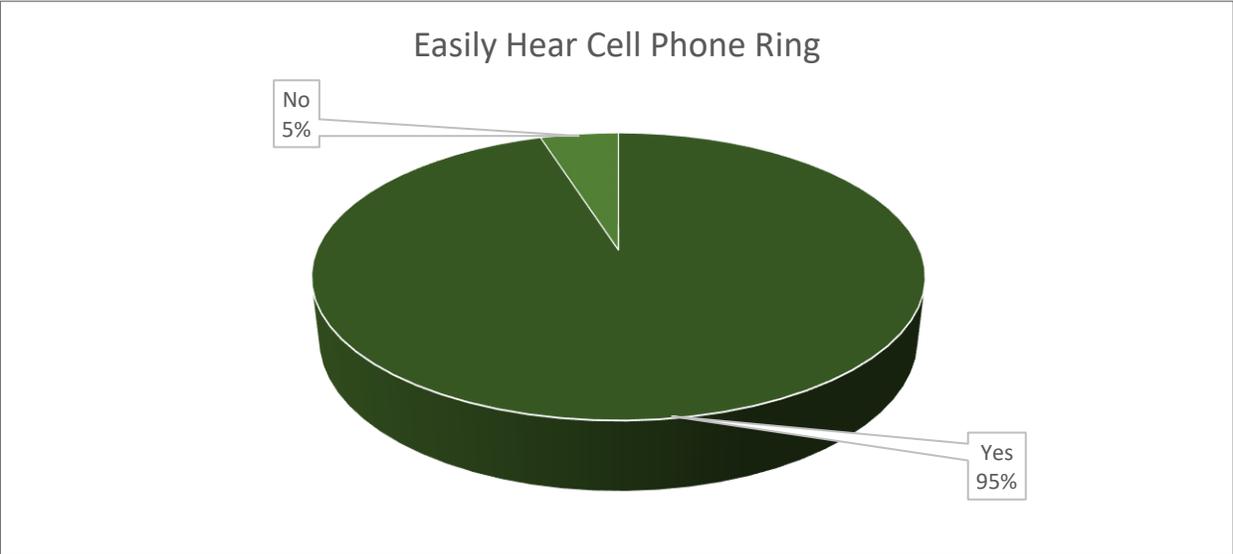
As a means to stay connected and be able to call help, the assessment inquired whether respondents had a home phone. Seventy-three percent reported having a home phone. All respondents who did not have a home phone, had a cellular phone.



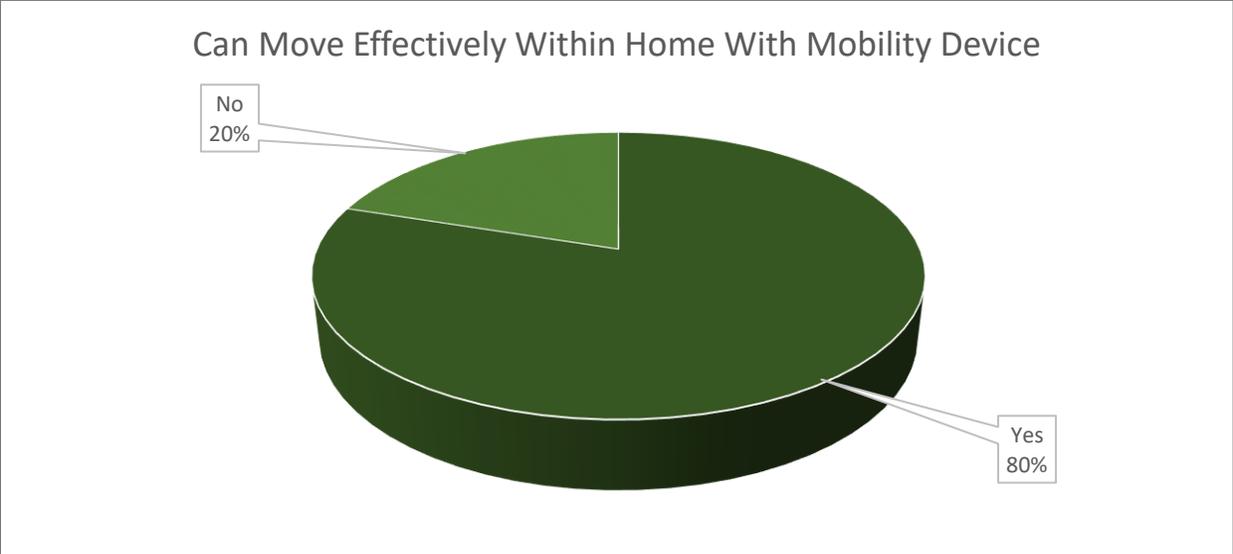
Of those who had a home phone, 96% indicated that they could easily hear it when it rings. A few respondents mentioned that they could not hear their phone in all areas of their home or had trouble getting to it quickly enough before the answering machine picked up incoming calls.



As one of the most common communication devices, the assessment then asked about the use of cellular phones. Ninety-seven percent of respondents indicated they had a cell phone. A small number of those only used their cell phones for emergencies or travel.



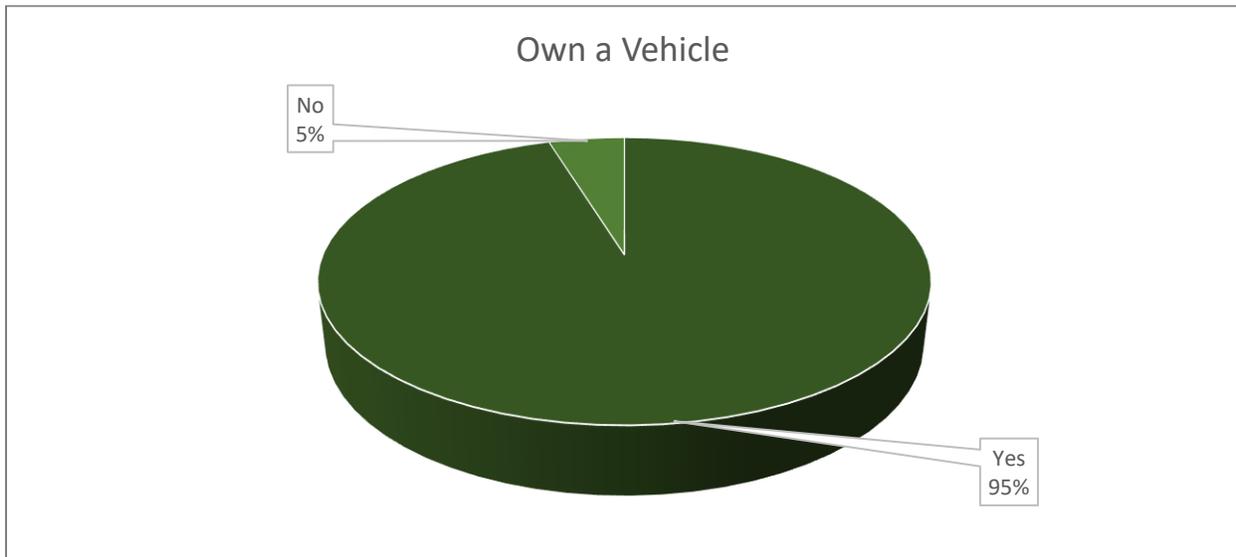
Ninety-five percent of those owning a cell phone reported not having any problems with hearing it ring.



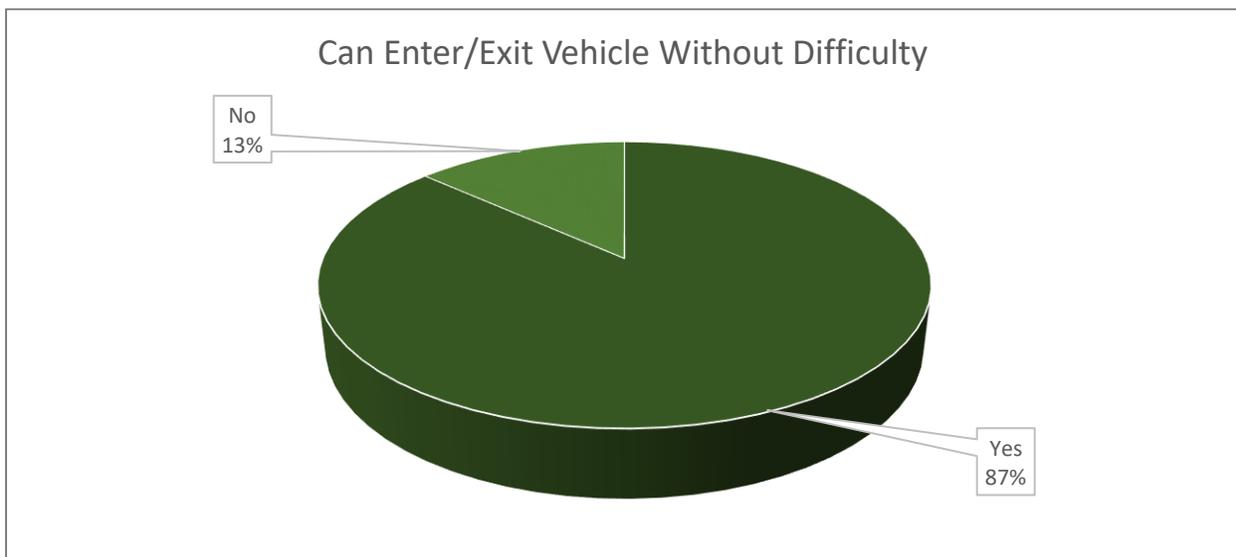
Concluding the assessment of the respondents' own perception of their home interior in Part 2, respondents were asked if those who used mobility devices could move around the home effectively using those devices. Just under one-quarter of respondents found this question applicable. Among them, 20% answered that they could not move around their home effectively with their device. Difficulties for those included not being able to carry items around the house while using their mobility device, or not having enough space to efficiently move around with their device.

Transportation and Social Inclusion

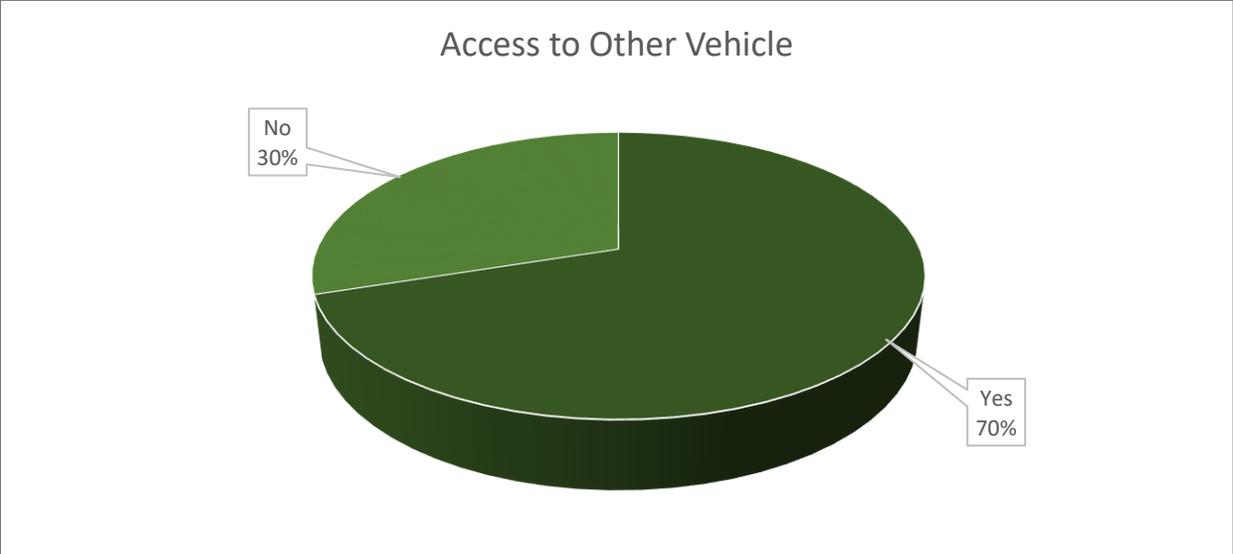
This section assessed respondents' mobility within the community. Having effective means of transportation can be the determining factor whether a senior can participate in community events and maintain an active social network.



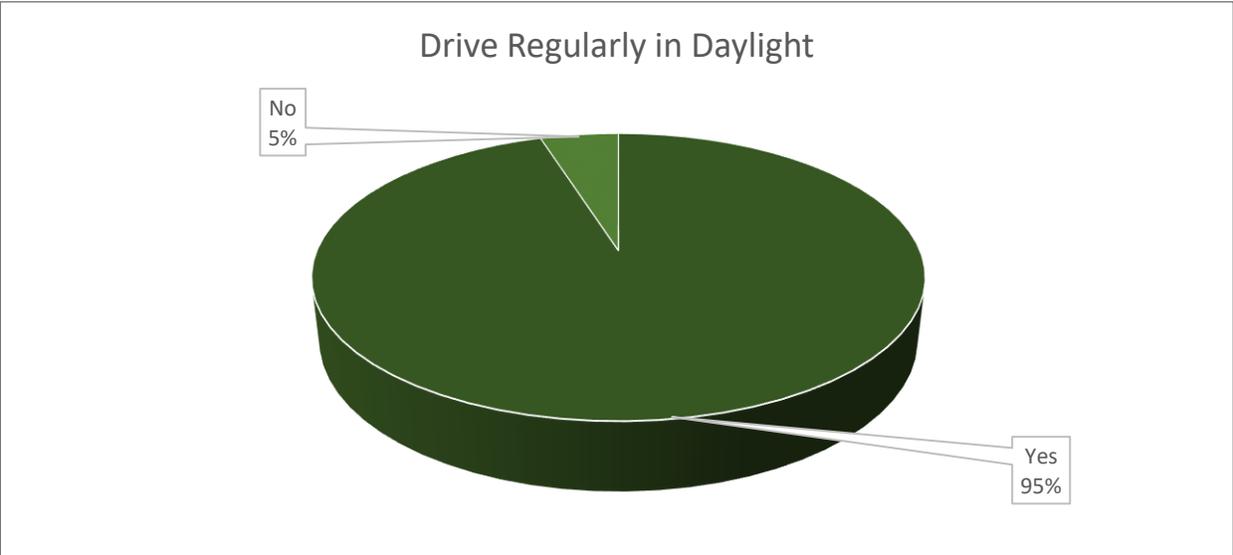
The first question found that 95% of respondents owned a vehicle.



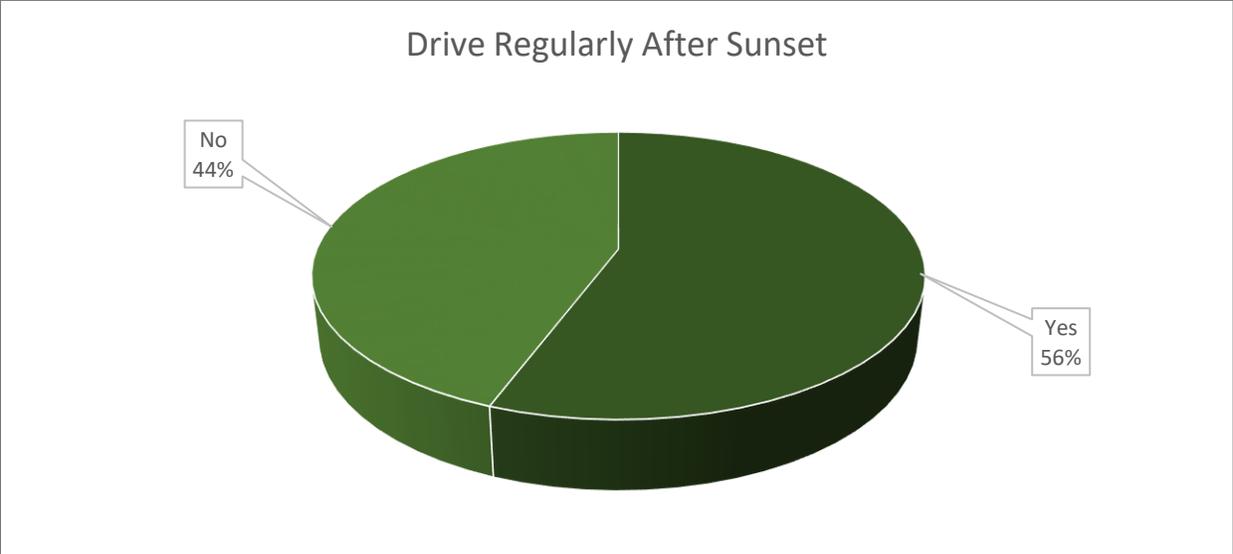
Of those who owned a vehicle, 87% could enter and exit their vehicle without difficulty. Among those with difficulties entering and exiting their vehicles, the height of the vehicle was noted as the main barrier.



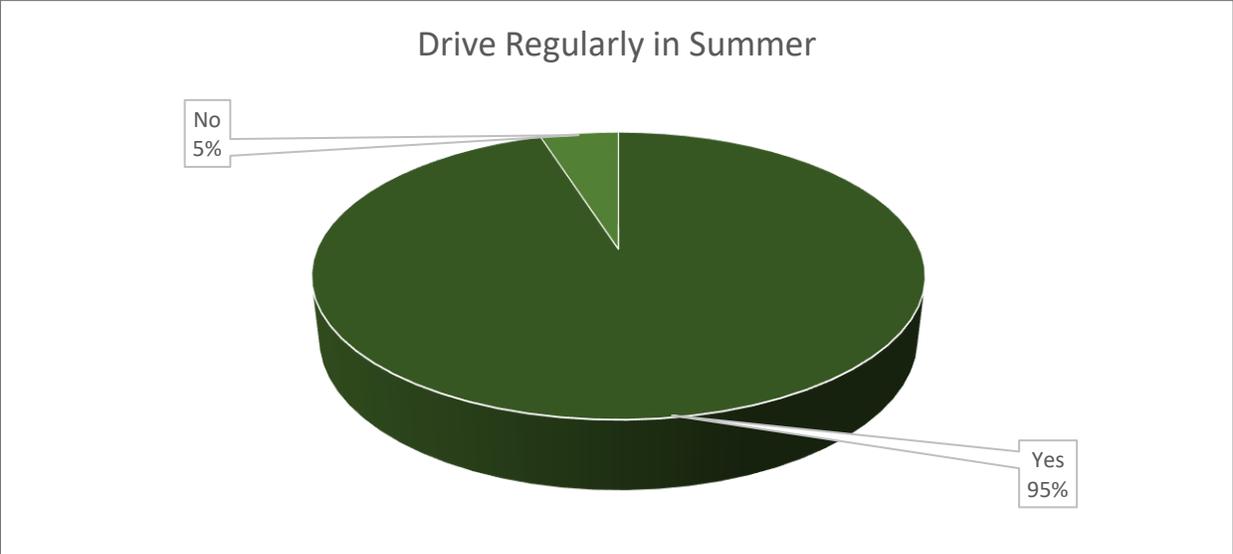
Among the respondents who either did not own a vehicle or had a vehicle they had difficulty getting into and out of, 70% had access to another vehicle. Of those with access to another vehicle, over 70% had difficulty with entering and exiting that vehicle as well. Overall a total of 13% of respondents reported not having access to a vehicle that suited their physical ability to enter and exit a vehicle without difficulty.



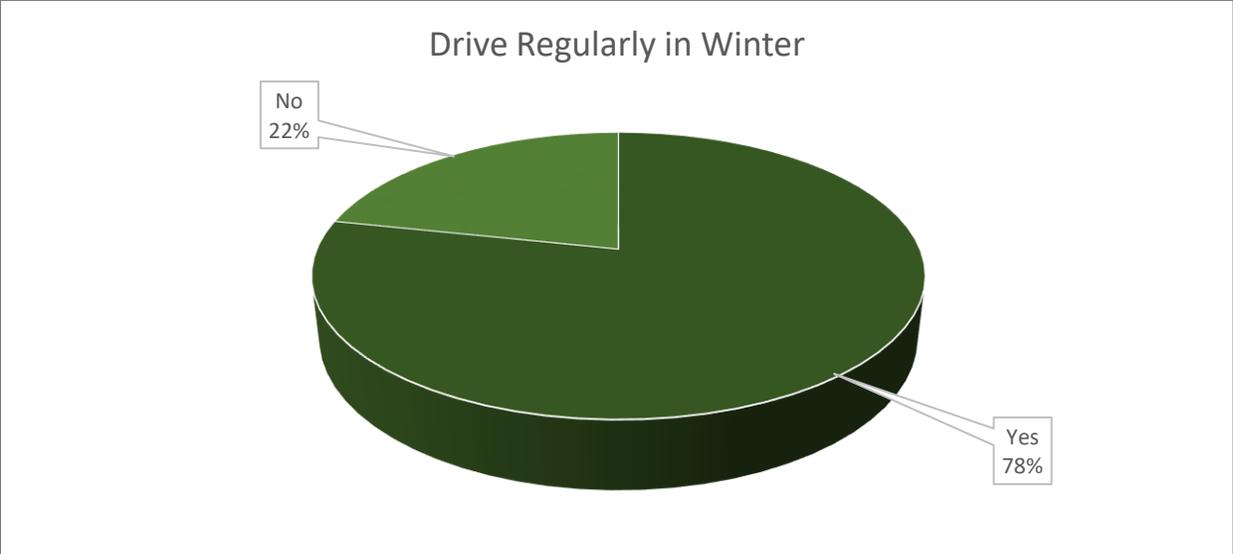
Exploring respondents' comfort level with driving in varying conditions, the assessment found that 95% of respondents drove regularly in daylight. Two-thirds of the five percent who did not drive regularly in daylight were among those respondents who did not have access to a vehicle they could enter and exit without difficulty.



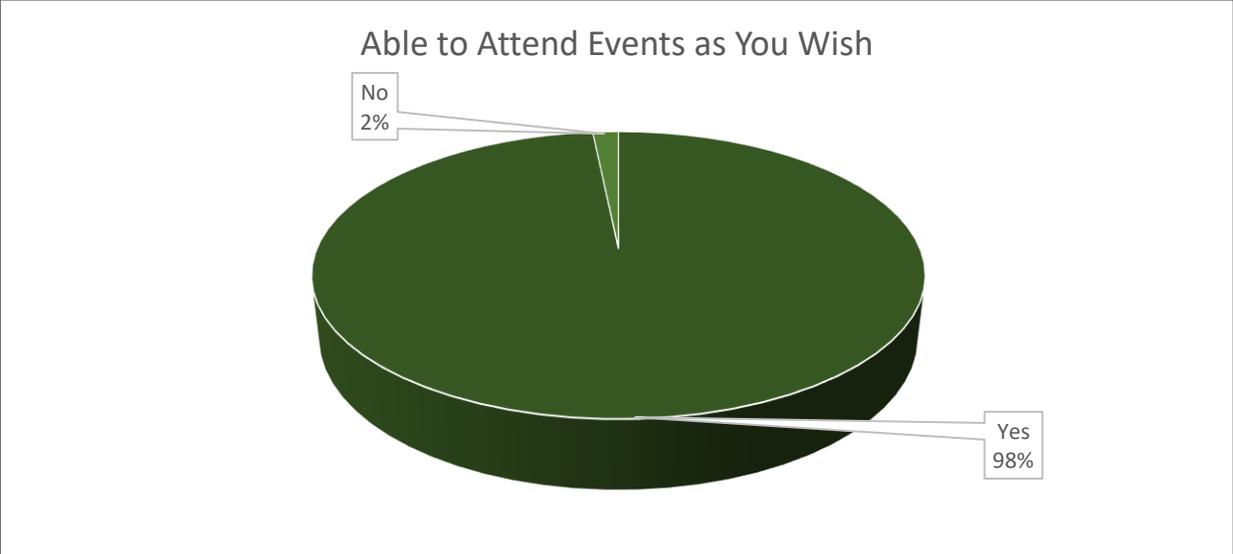
Close to one-half of respondents (44%) reported not driving regularly after sunset, thereby indicating potential limitations to social activities and mobility around the community.



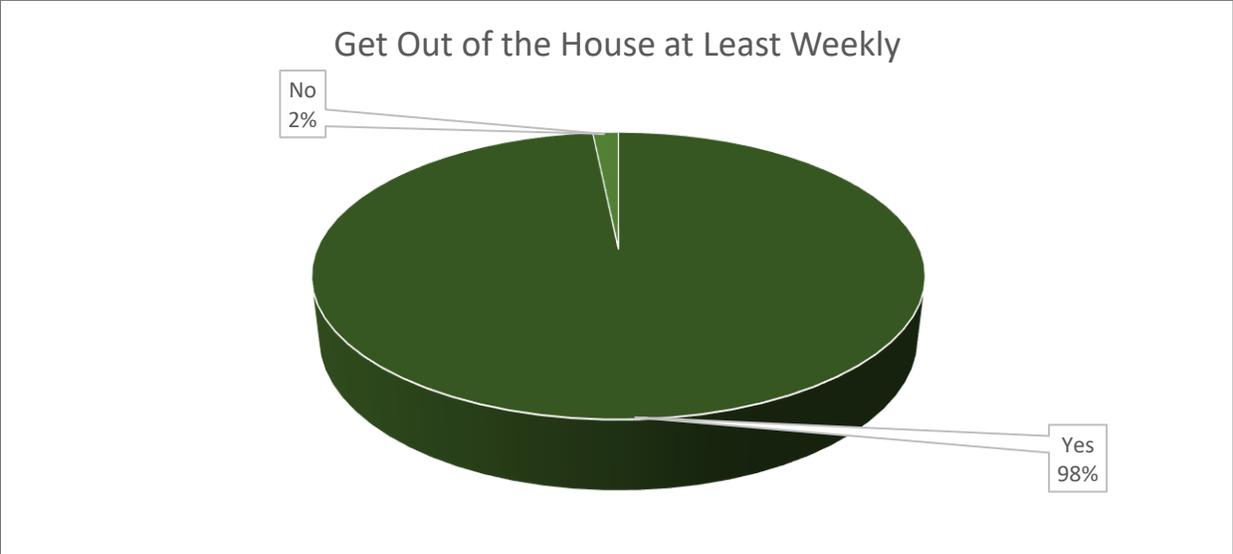
Considered the most favourable season in terms of driving conditions, the assessment identified that 95% of respondents drove regularly in summer. Two-thirds of the five percent who did not drive regularly in summer were among those respondents who did not have access to a vehicle they could enter and exit without difficulty.



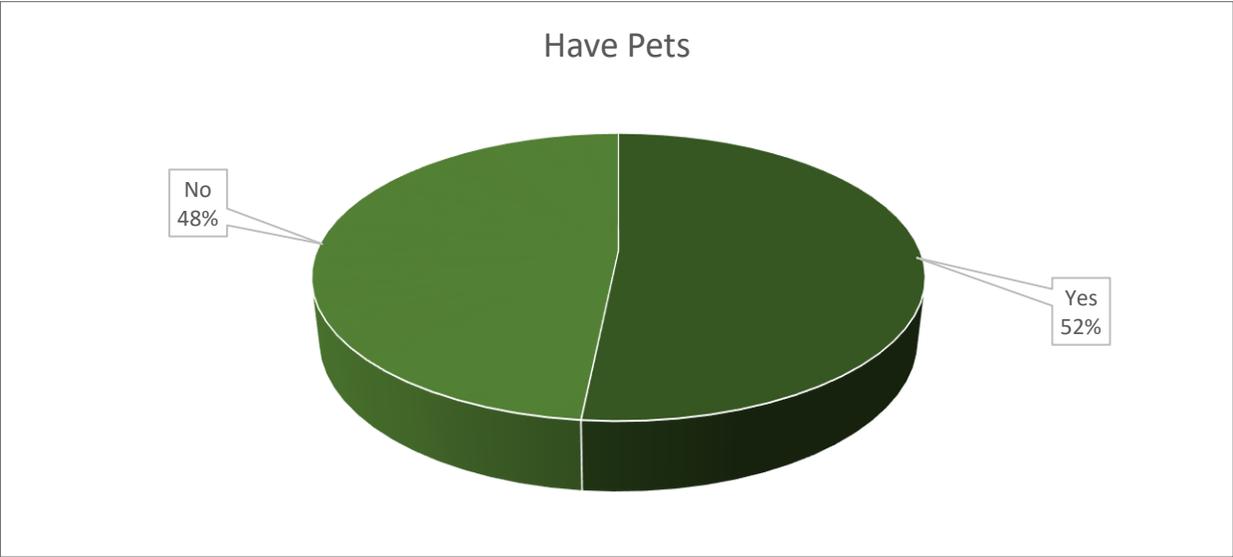
Exploring seniors’ driving habits during the least favourable season for driving, especially in remote northern communities, the assessment discovered that 22% of respondents did not drive regularly in winter. This points at potential limitations to seniors’ social activities for at least four months of the year.



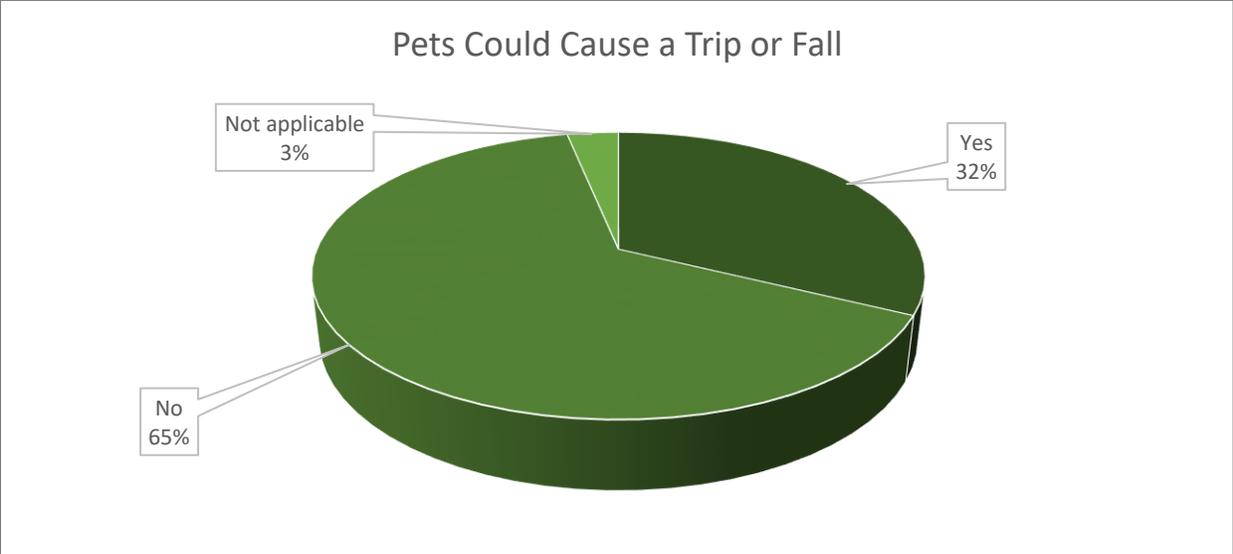
With very few exceptions, and despite the previously noted personal transportation challenges, respondents across the board said they were able to attend events as they wished.



Similarly, almost all respondents indicated that they got out of the house at least once a week.



Pets can play an important social role in a household, especially one-person households. Over one-half of respondents shared that they had pets.



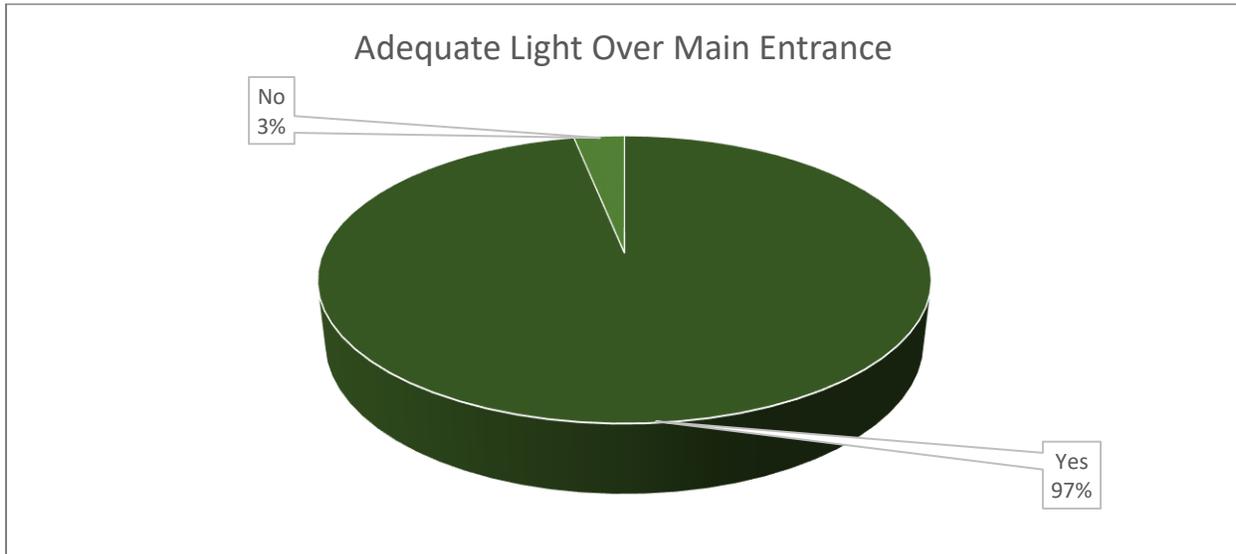
While pets can play an important role in a senior’s social life and activity level, those pets which live inside the home and move around the home freely can also be a potential tripping hazard in the context of home safety and accessibility. Close to one-third of pet-owners conceded that their pets could cause a trip or fall in their home.

PART 3: IN-HOME PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

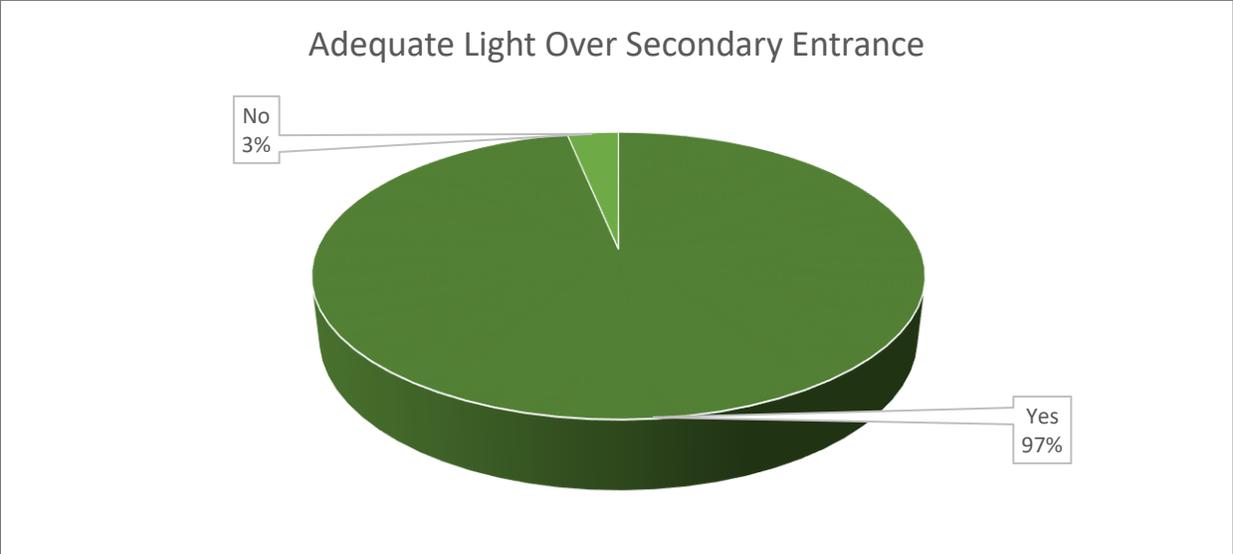
After having explored the basic structural accessibility and livability of the seniors' homes, the assessment went into more detail about potential barriers, safety hazards, and inconveniences for seniors in and around their homes. This part of the in-home assessment was planned to be executed by a member of the research team during an in-person visit. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these questions became part of the interview process, and a team member advised the respondents to gather and relay the information during their phone or video call.

Exterior Spaces

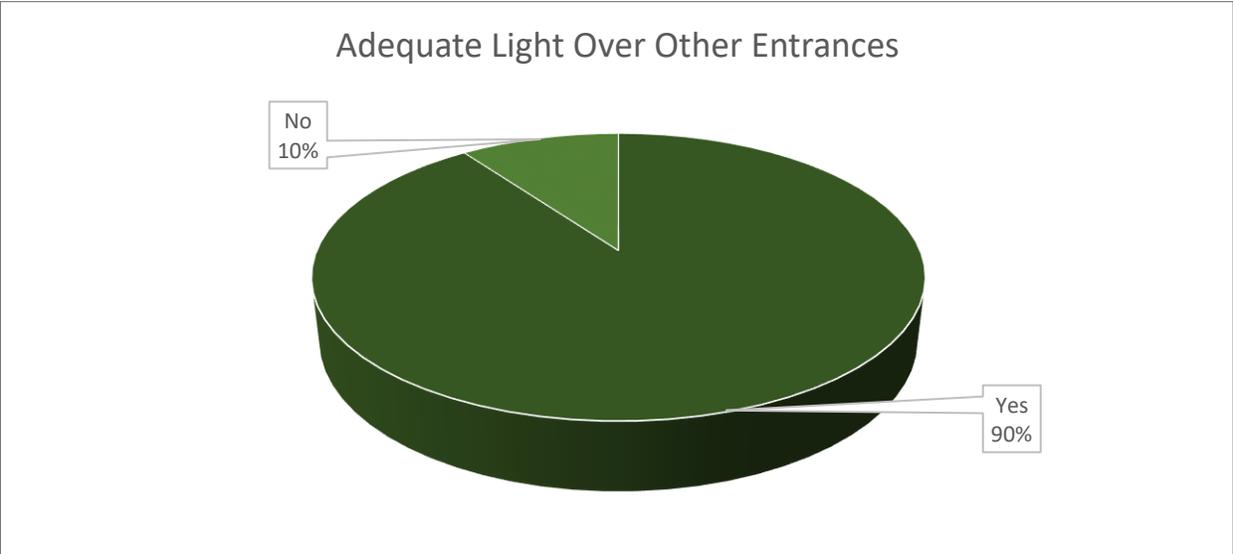
Lighting



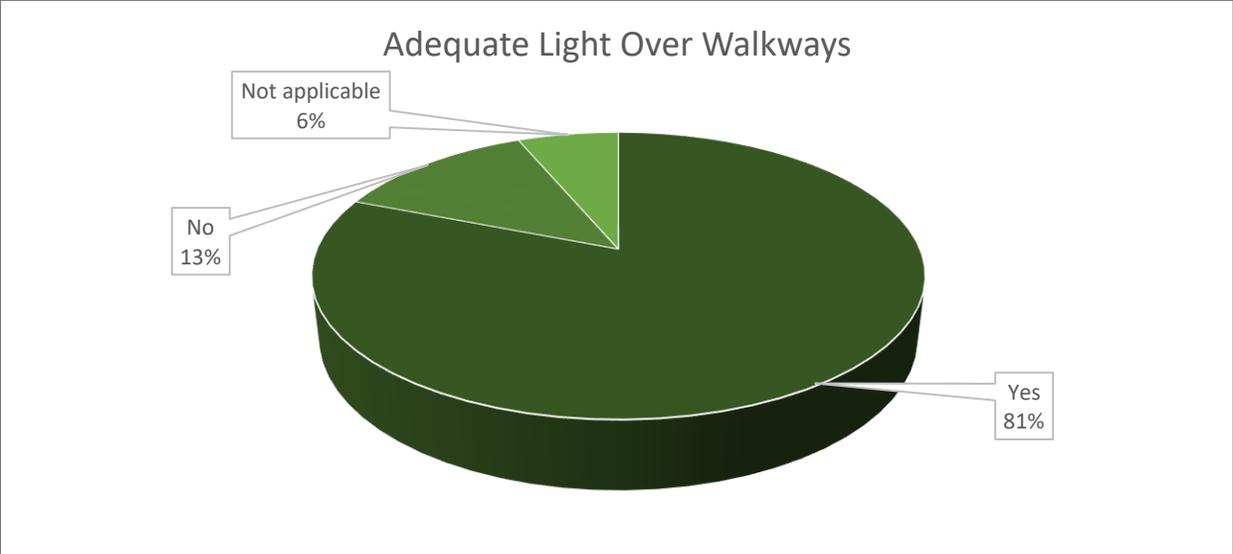
Beginning at the entrance to the home, 97% of respondents indicated that they had adequate lighting over their main entrance. Many of them mentioned that they had motion sensor lights.



The same held true for secondary entrances with 97% finding lighting there adequate as well.



For other additional entrances, which in a few cases were the most easily accessible for respondents, 10% found their lighting inadequate.

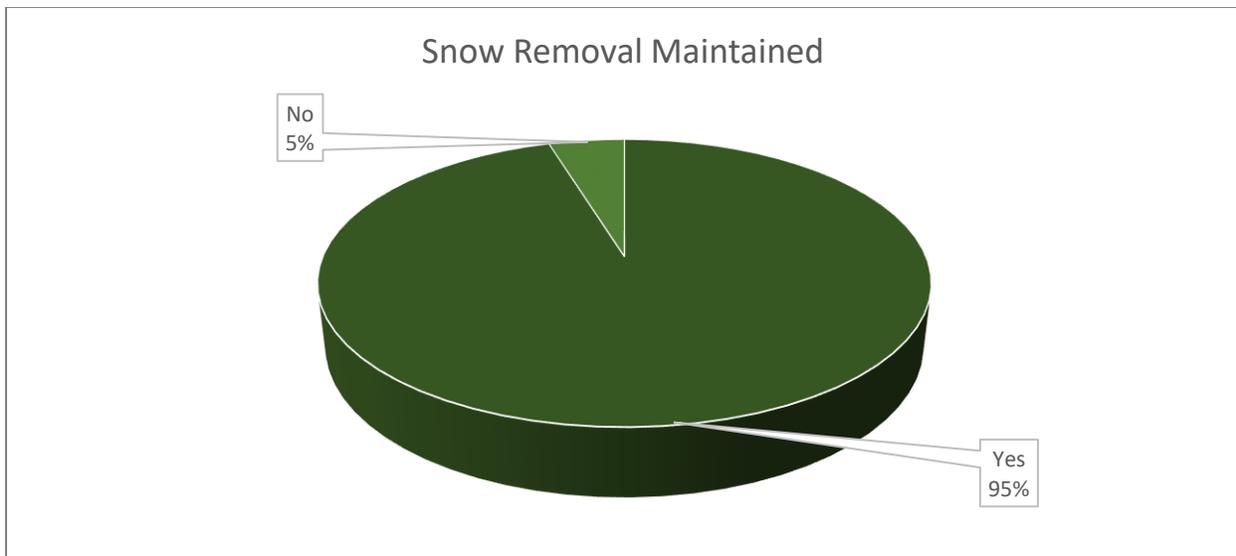


Walkways around the house, for example between a vehicle parking spot and an entrance, or from a sidewalk to the entrance, can pose safety concerns if not designed and maintained adequately. Eighty-one percent of respondents considered their walkways to have adequate lighting, while 13% found their walkway lighting to be lacking. Furthermore, some walkways posed barriers because they were not level or featured stairs or gravel.

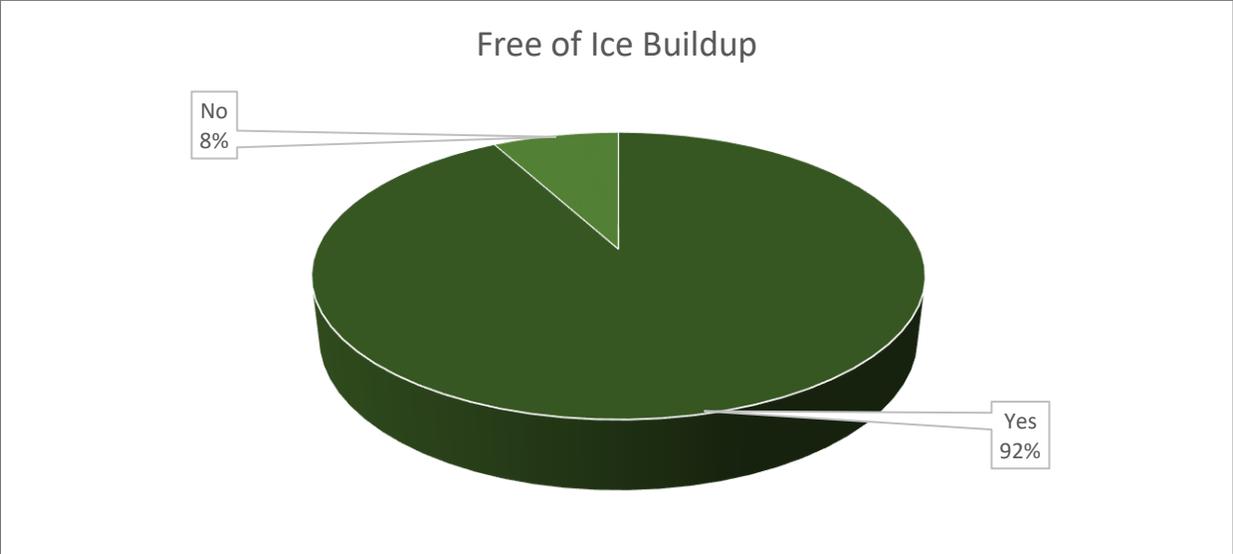
Sidewalks



Getting to and into one's home can start with safe and accessible sidewalks in front of the home. When asked about whether their sidewalks were free of tripping hazards, 92% answered 'yes'.

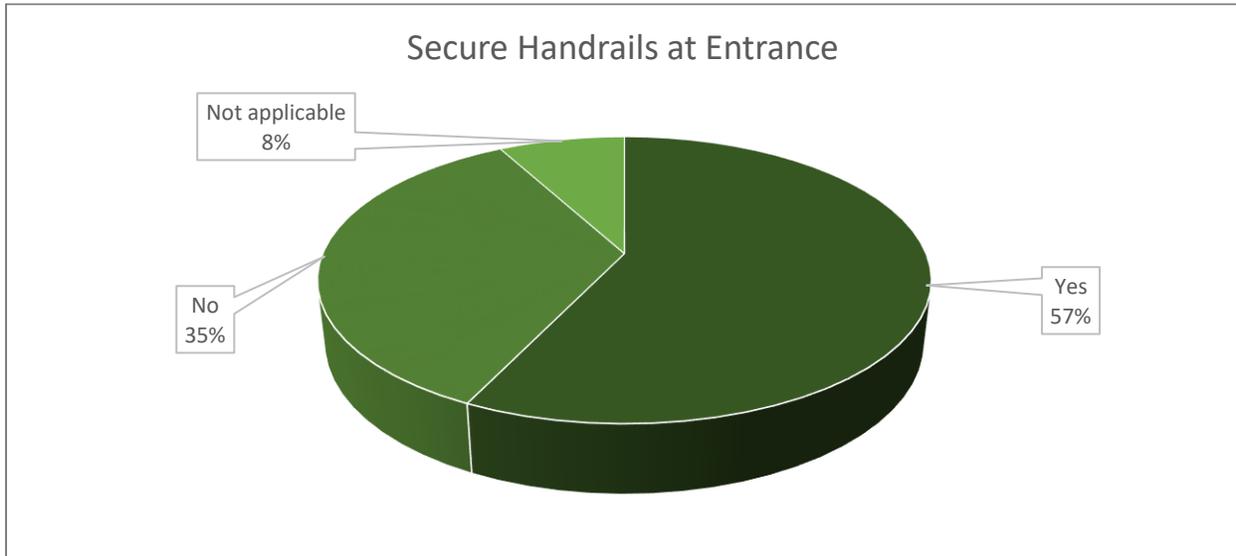


An important part of safe and accessible sidewalks in northern communities is winter maintenance. Ninety-five percent of respondents considered their sidewalks well maintained in terms of snow removal.

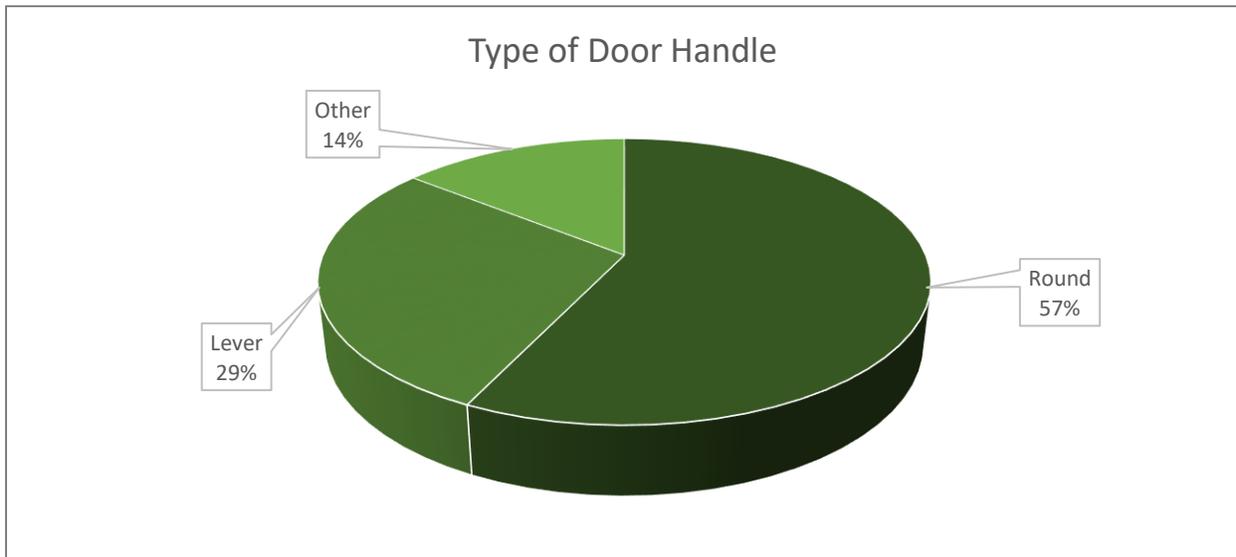


With dangerous ice buildup on sidewalks over the winter being a maintenance issue beyond snow removal, the assessment inquired about it separately and found that 92% of respondents found their sidewalks to be free of ice buildup in winter.

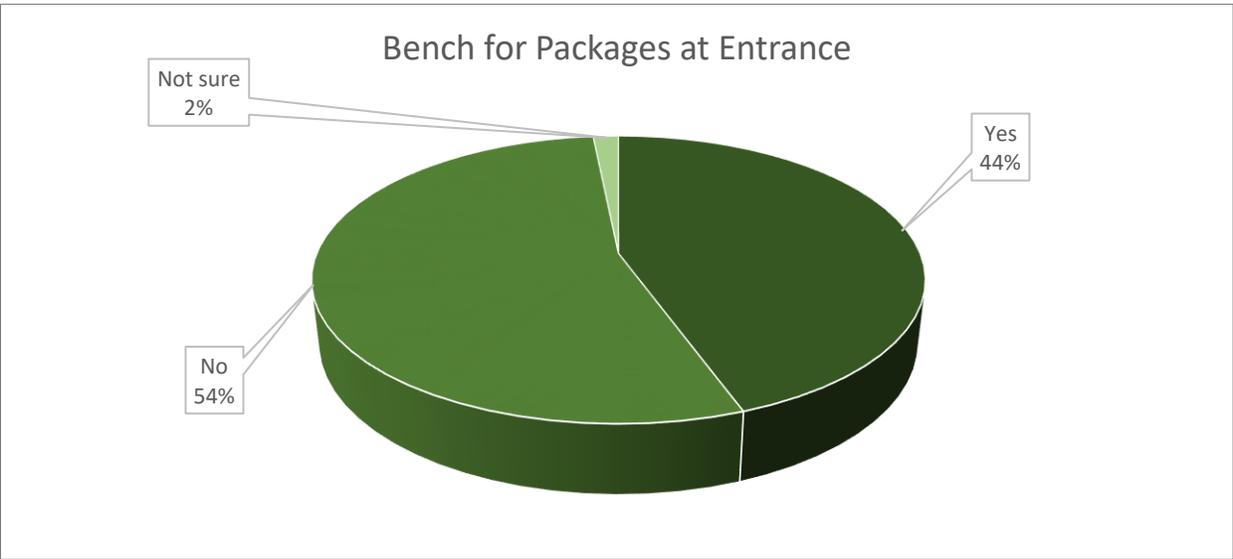
Entrance



Turning the attention back to entering the home safely, the assessment found that over one-third (35%) of the assessed homes did not have secure hand rails at the entrance.



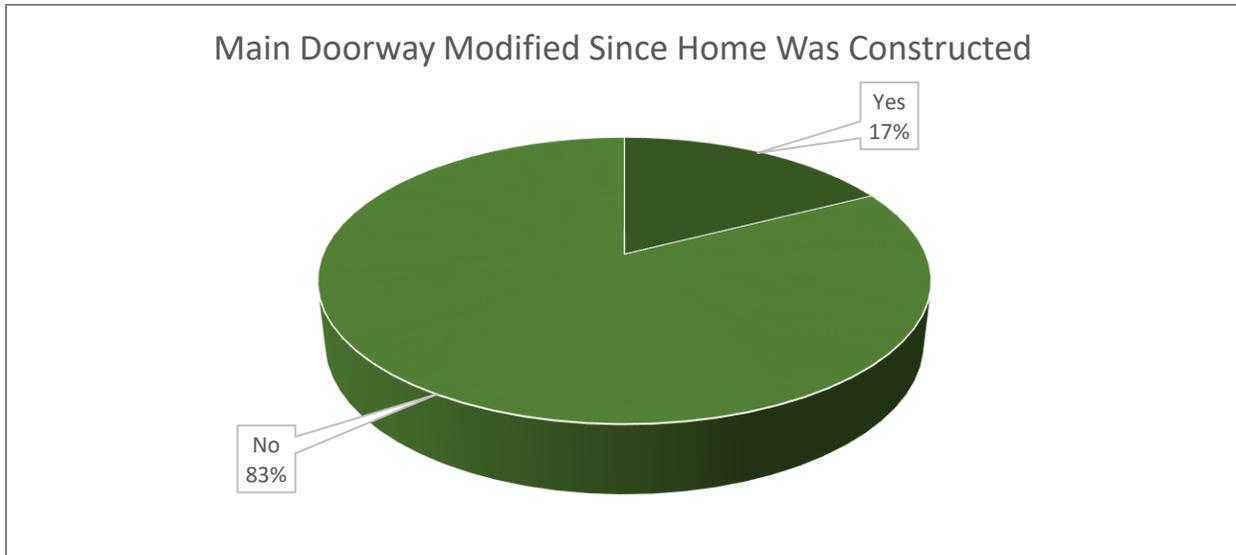
Depending on health conditions, physical strength, and dexterity, certain types of door handles, especially round door knobs, can become challenging to use for seniors. Well over one-half (57%) of assessed households reported having these round door handles at their entrances. Close to one-third featured lever door handles. Other types of door handles included thumb-press handles, non-mechanical handles on sliding doors, and electric door locks with push buttons.



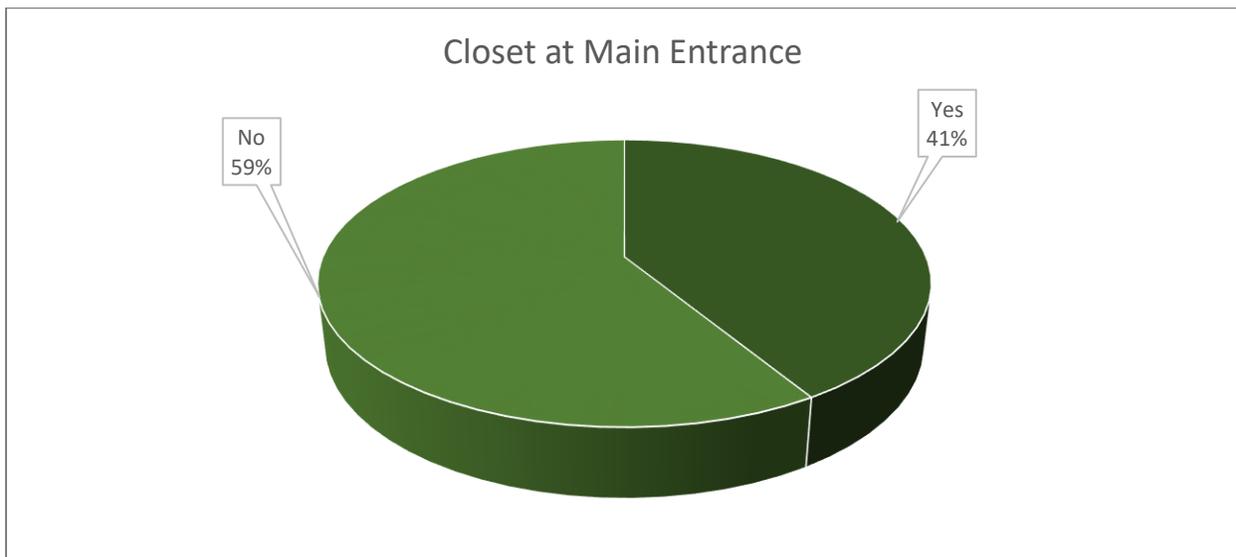
Carrying items, such as grocery bags and packages, while unlocking and opening an entrance door can be difficult for seniors with decreased mobility or strength, as can be putting them down on the ground and picking them up. For that reason, the assessment explored if senior households had a bench, or similar feature, at their entrance that would allow safe and convenient placing of items on an elevated surface. More than one-half answered 'no' to that question.

Interior Spaces

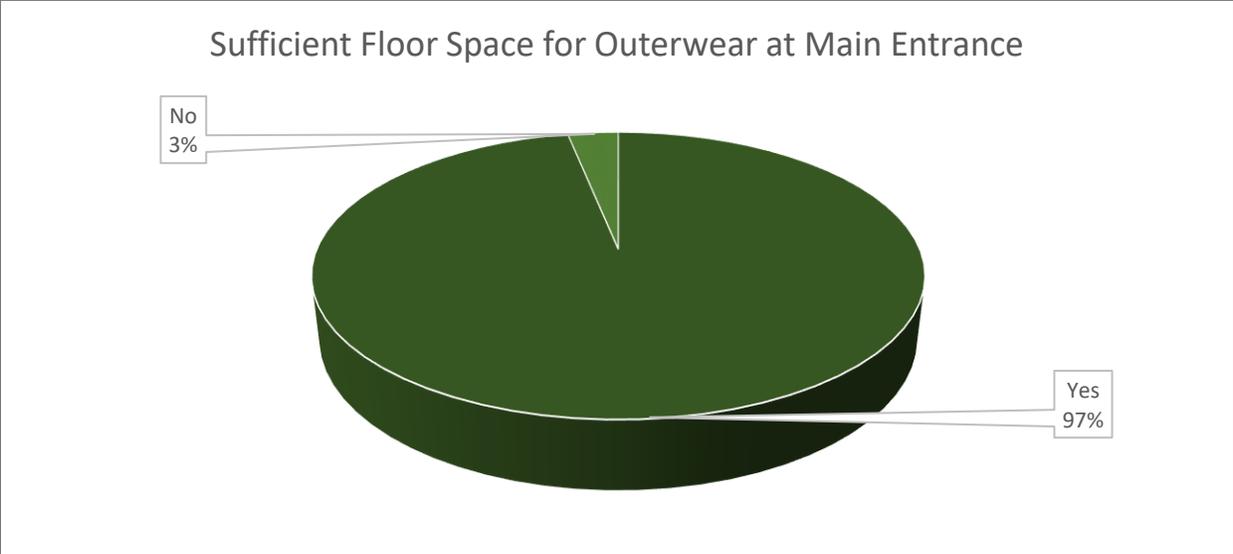
Main Entrance



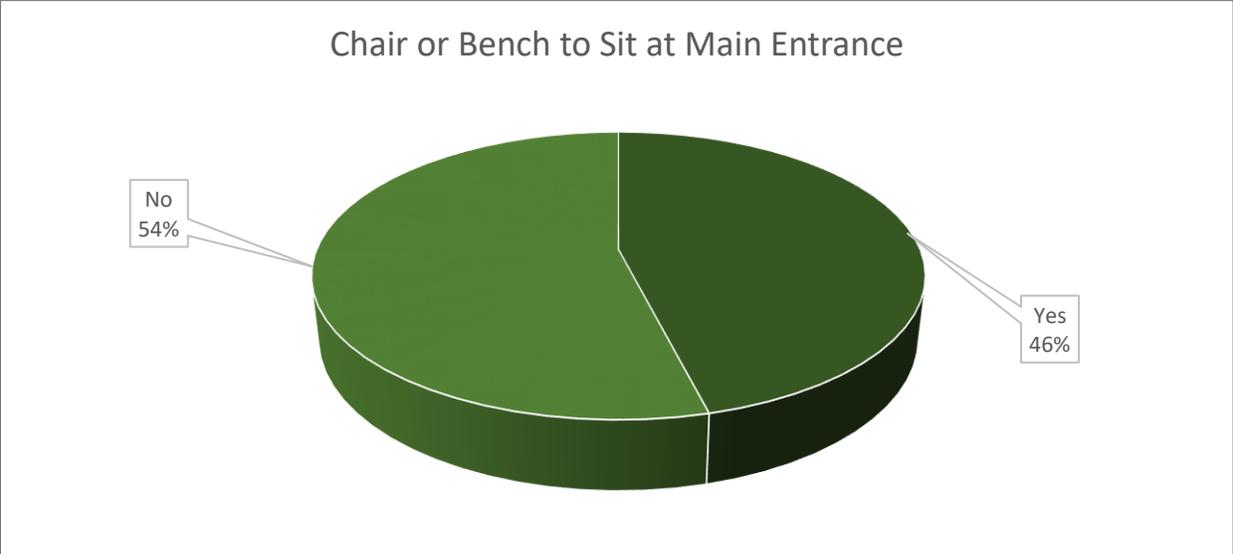
Examining the doorway and likelihood of it being designed up to current accessibility standards, the assessment found that only in 17% of respondents' homes doorways had been modified since the home had been constructed.



Further pursuing the process of a senior entering the home, the assessment revealed that only 41% had a closet at the main entrance, which allowed safe and convenient storage of coats and other outerwear in a manner that avoids tripping hazards.

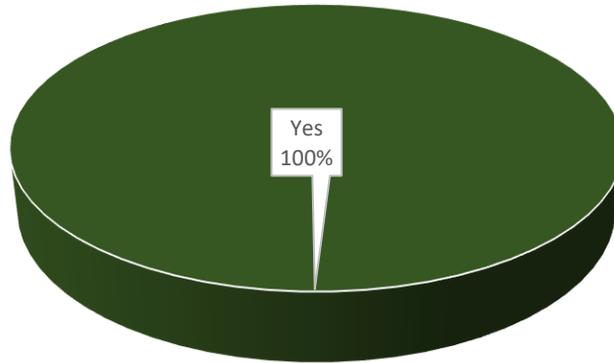


A total of 97%, however, reported having sufficient floor space at their main entrance to store outerwear, for example on coat racks and shoe shelves.



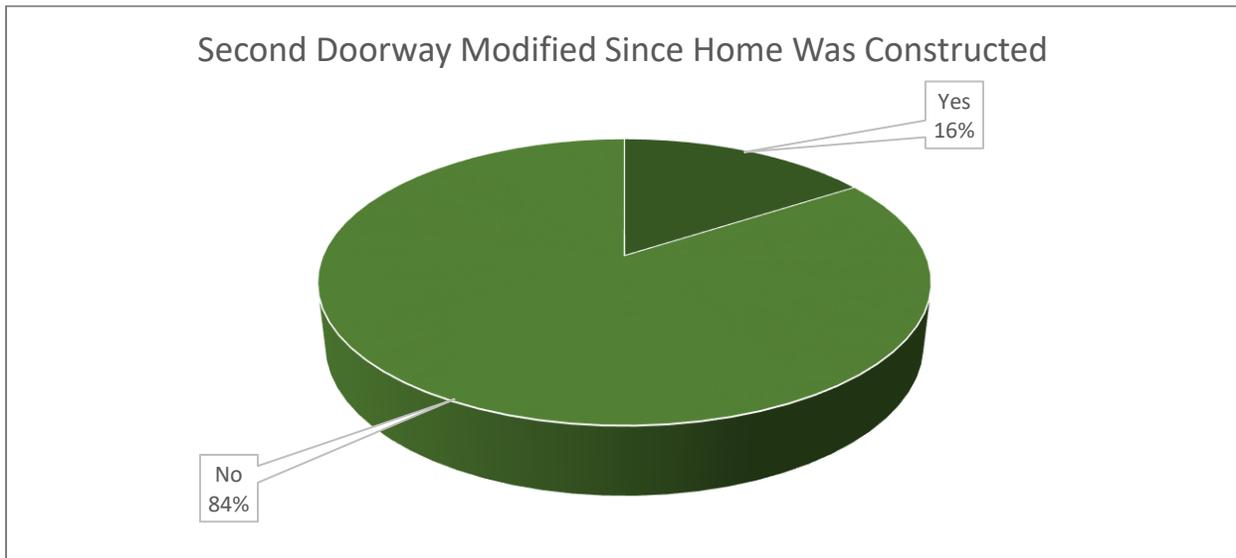
Providing a safe space to put footwear on or off, 46% of respondents had a chair or bench by their main entrance. For some, stairs near their entrance or other seating in nearby rooms had to serve that purpose.

Adequate and Easy to Operate Light Inside Main Entrance

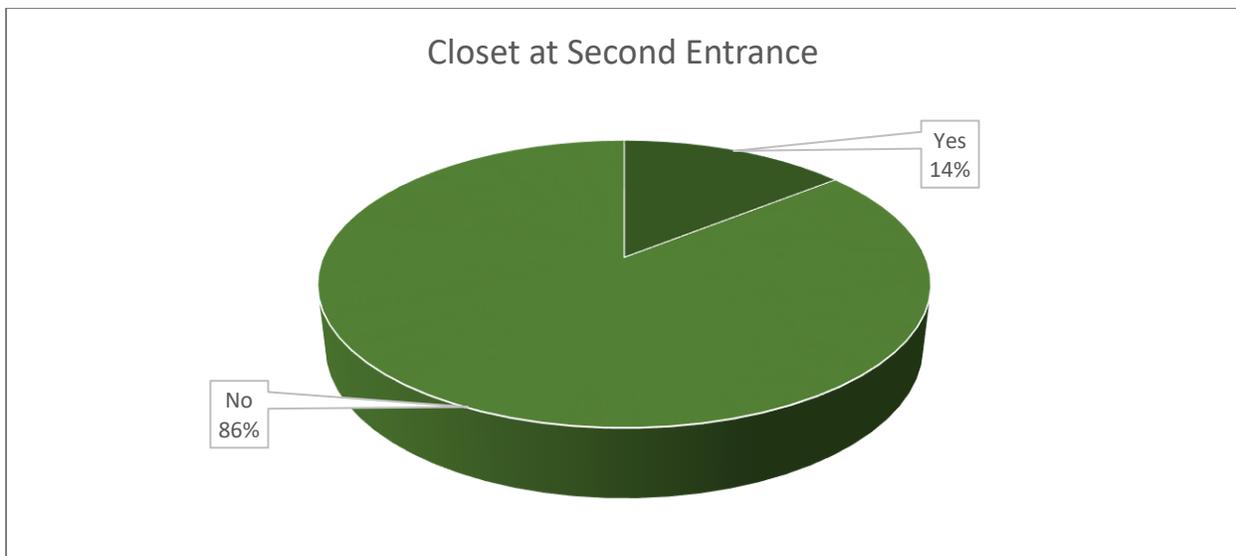


All respondents of this assessment reported having adequate and easy to operate lighting inside their main entrance. Some had additional night lights installed near light switches.

Secondary Entrance

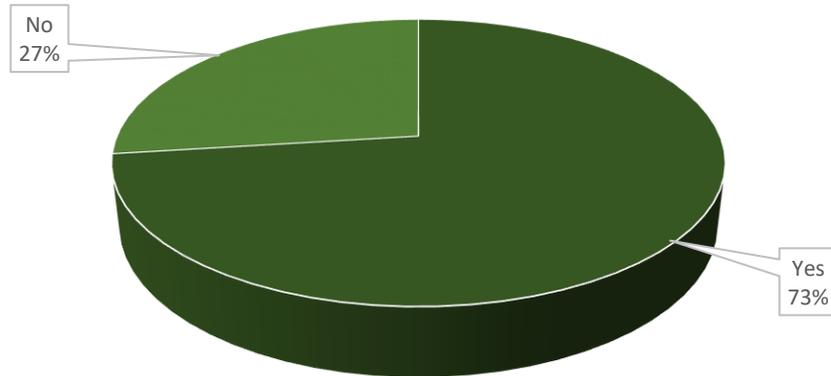


The assessment then turned the attention to secondary entrances, which can often be the more frequently used entrances to one's home. As with main entrances, well over 80% of respondents did not report any modifications to secondary entrances since the construction of their homes.



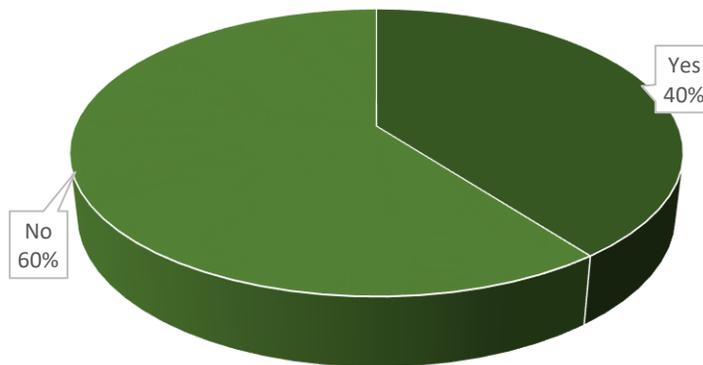
A vast majority of over 85% of respondents had no closet at their secondary entrance.

Sufficient Floor Space for Outerwear at Second Entrance



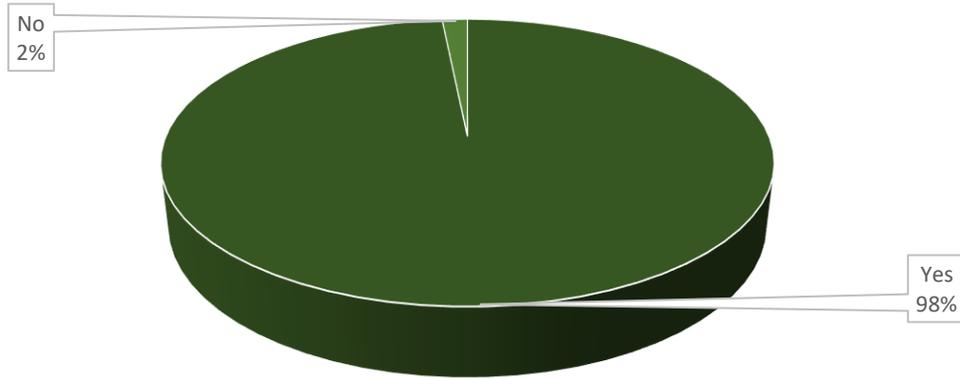
Indicating that secondary entrances were less likely to lead into spacious entrance areas than main entrances, 27% of respondents noted that they did not have sufficient floor space for outerwear at their secondary entrance. This created more potential for tripping hazards.

Chair or Bench to Sit at Second Entrance



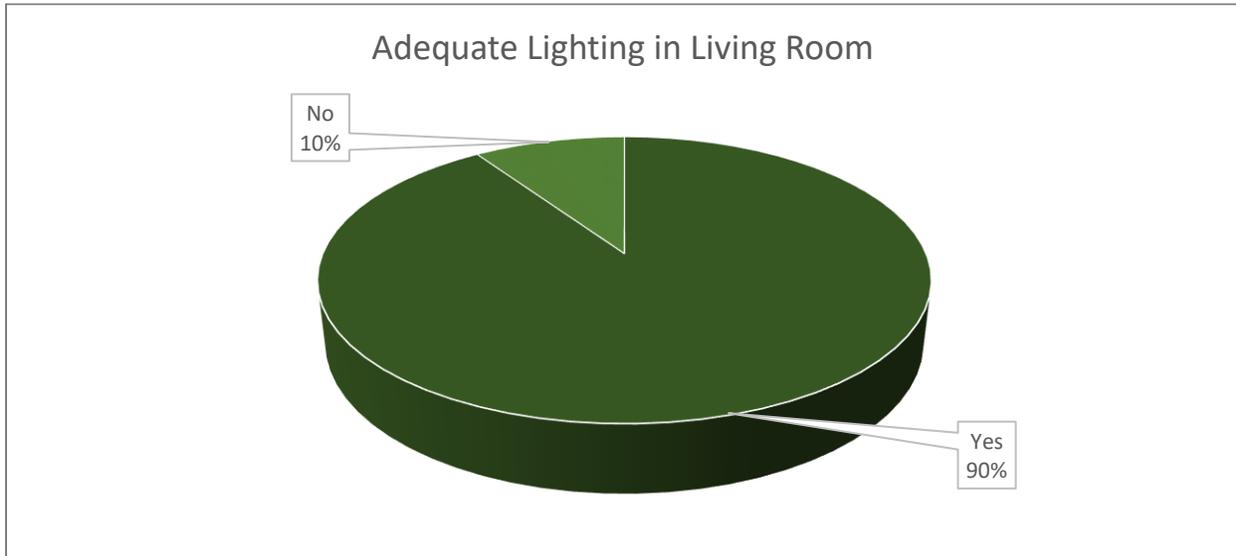
Only 40% of respondents reported having a chair or bench at their secondary entrance that would provide a safe place to put footwear on and off for those with mobility or balance challenges.

Adequate and Easy to Operate Lighting Inside Second Entrance



Finally, while secondary entrances were slightly less likely than main entrances to have sufficient inside lighting, 98% still considered their secondary entrance lighting to be adequate and easy to operate.

Main Living Area



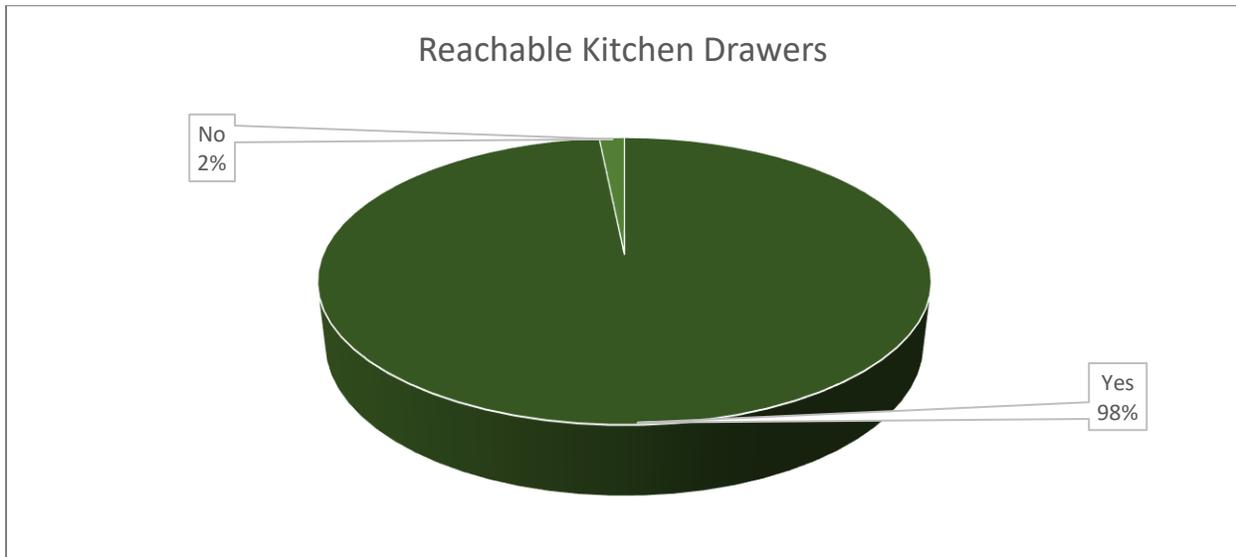
Following the assessment of outside and inside entrance areas, the interior main living areas were examined. Nine out of ten respondents noted having adequate lighting in their living rooms. It was not uncommon among respondents to not have ceiling lights in their living rooms and use lamps instead to light the room. All respondents, where applicable, found their living room light switches easy to operate.



Living room furniture tended to not be considered a challenge or barrier with 97% of respondents indicating that their living room furniture was accessible. This could mean, for example, seat height facilitated easy sitting down and getting up, power lift chairs allowed for adjustments, or furniture was firm enough to effortlessly move in and out of seats.

Kitchen and Dining Area

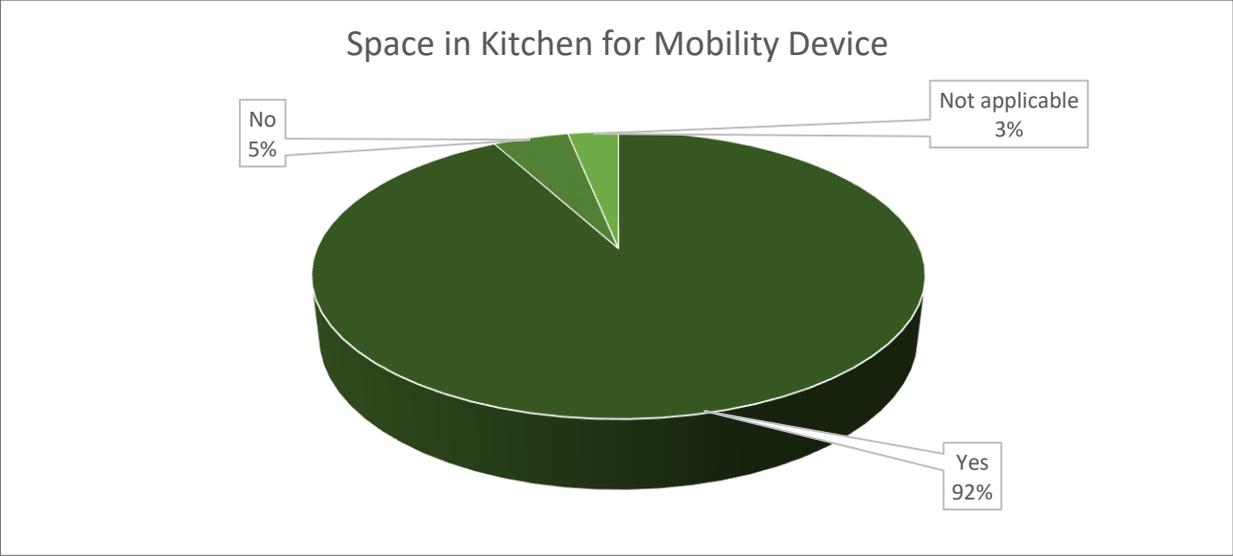
In the kitchen, layout and design of cabinetry and furniture can determine how safe and convenient the use of the kitchen is for a senior, especially those experiencing mobility challenges.



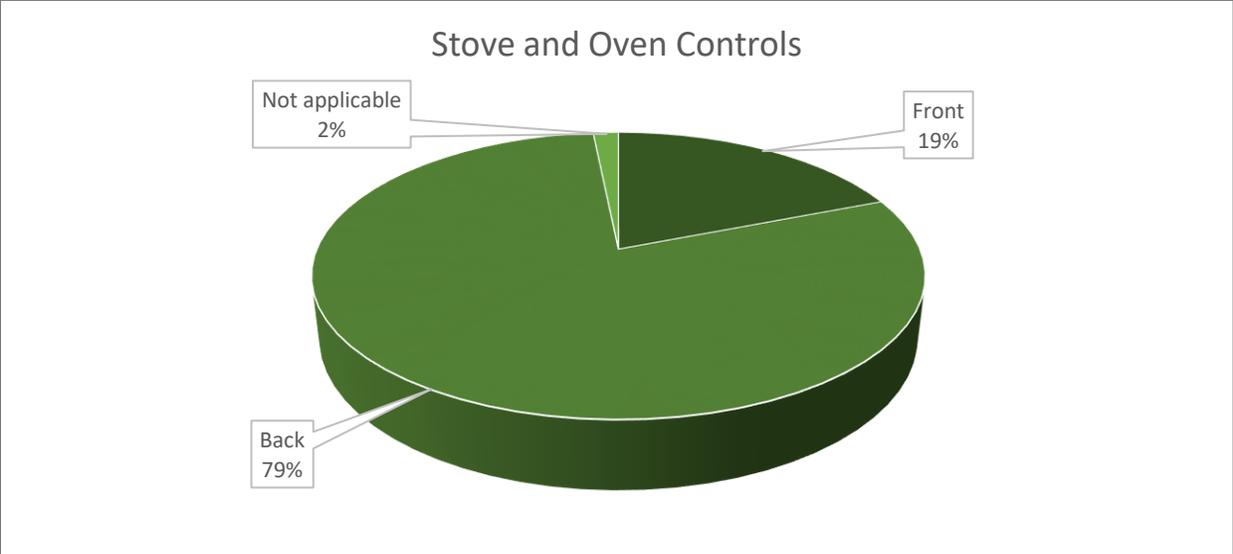
All respondents reported ideal counter height in their kitchens, and 98% found their drawers to be accessible.



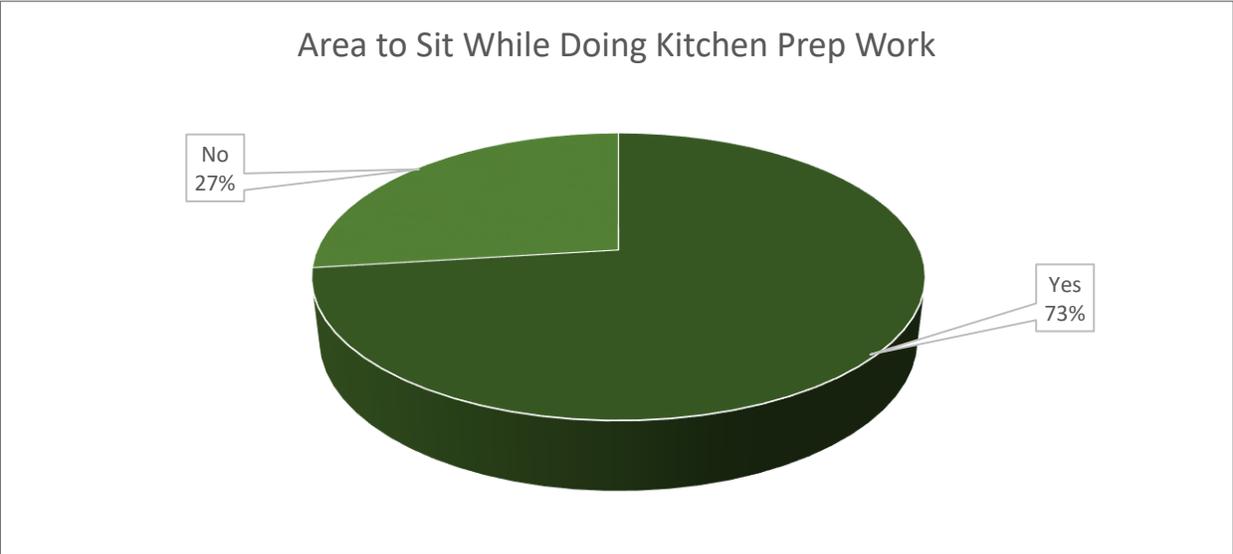
In contrast, only just over 70% found their cupboards to be reachable. This can go beyond an inconvenience and can present a safety concern if seniors have to climb stepping stools or other devices to reach contents of their kitchen cupboards.



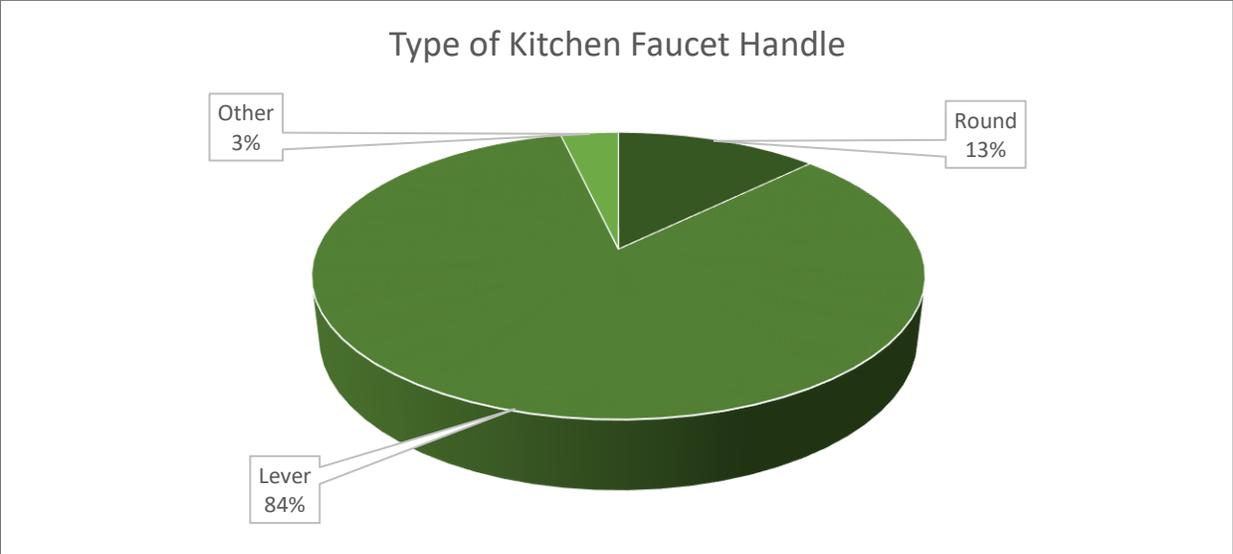
Ninety-two percent of respondents reported that their kitchen had enough room for a mobility device. Layout, for example open concept versus small enclosed rooms, as well as flooring were found to make a difference.



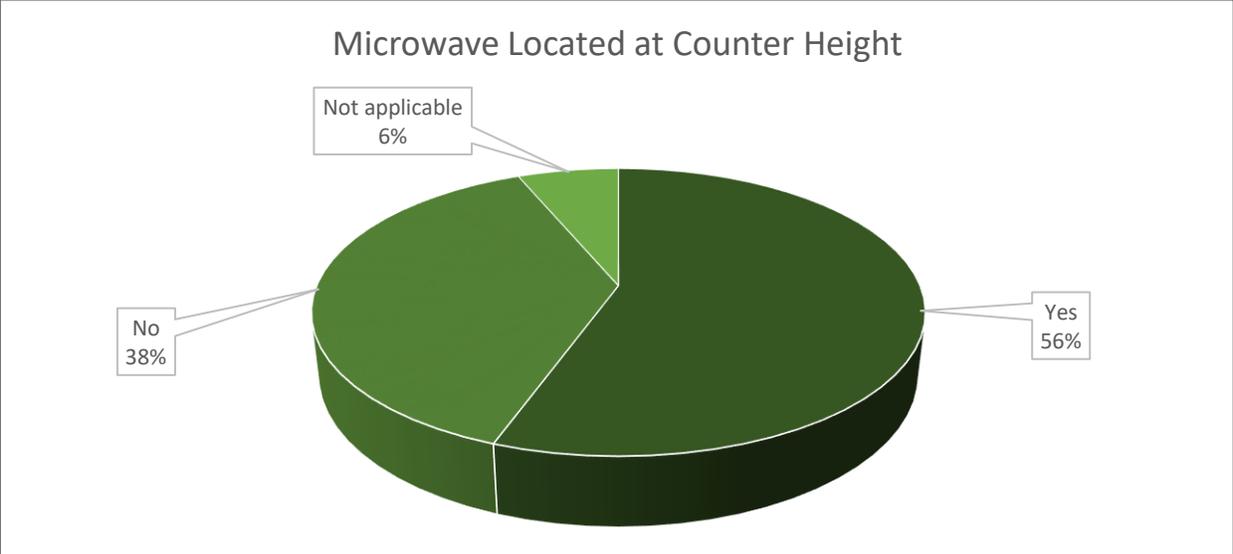
The placement of stove and oven controls can affect accessibility and the risk of burn injuries. Nearly 80% of respondents reported controls placed at the back of their range, which can present a greater risk of burns than controls at the front.



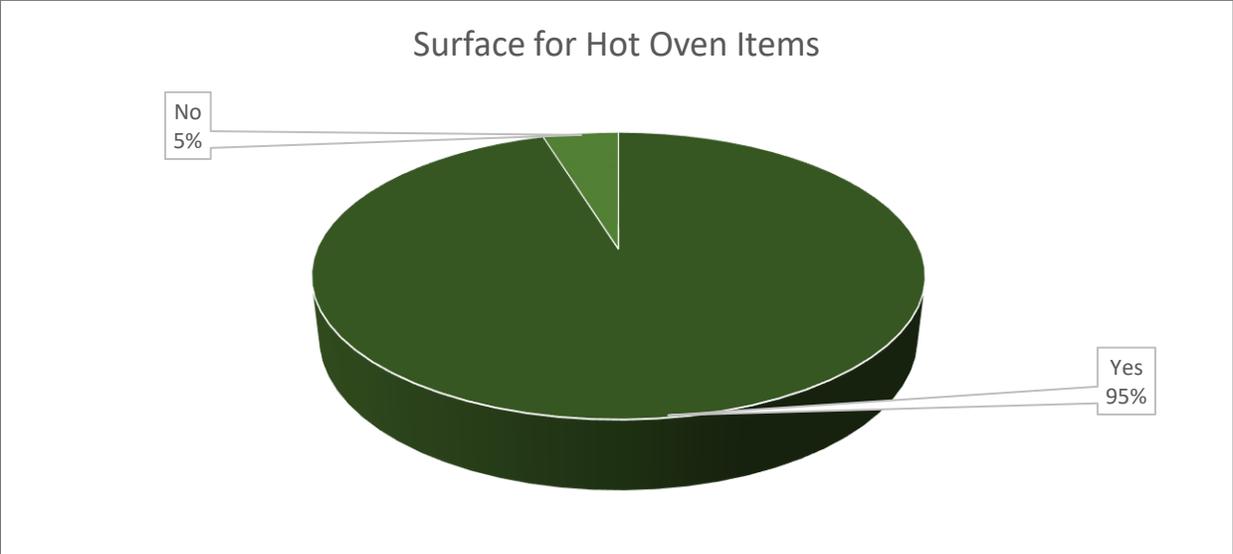
Keeping in mind potential mobility and balance limitation among seniors, having an area to sit down while doing kitchen prep work can make a significant difference in convenience and the risk of falling. Close to three-quarters of respondents indicated they had an area to sit down, including for example kitchen stools or tables with chairs.



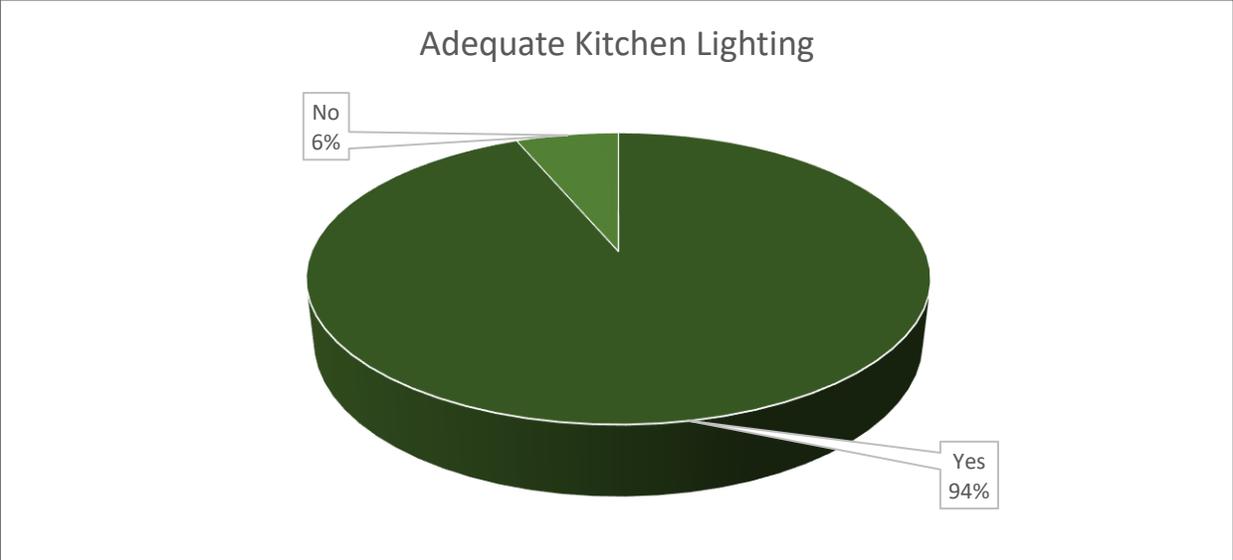
Similar to door handles, different types of faucet handles can be more or less easy to use based on dexterity and strength, as well as reach, of a senior. Lever handles are generally easier to operate than round handles. A total of 84% of respondents had lever type faucet handles in their kitchen.



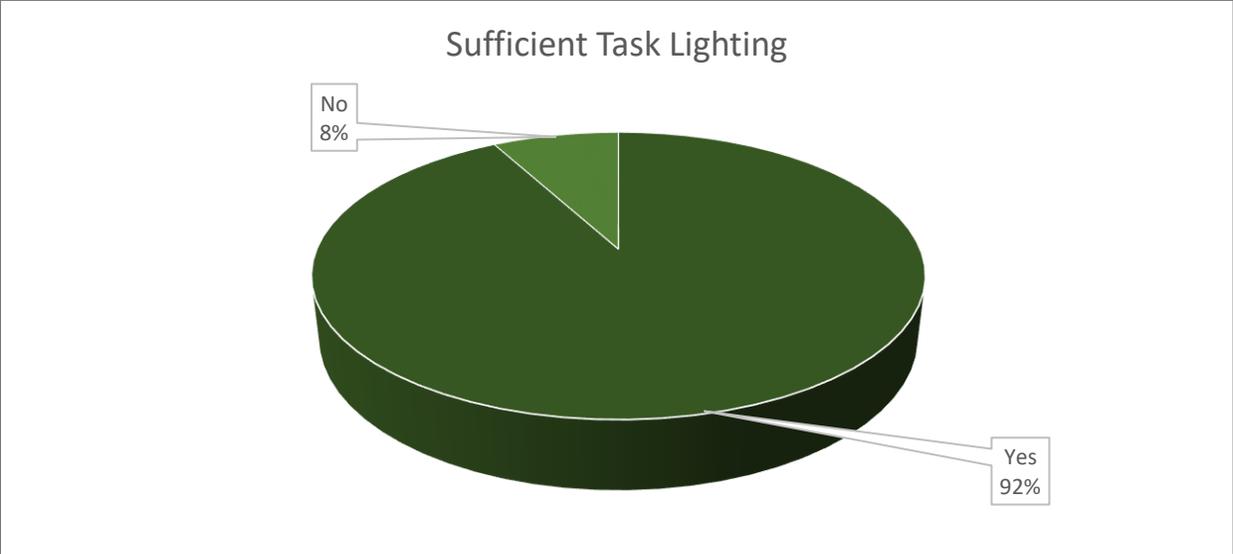
Microwaves are considered more accessible at counter height compared to being placed over a stove or at hanging cabinet height. Fifty-six percent of respondents had a microwave at counter height. Many who did not have it at counter height, had their microwave directly above their stove.



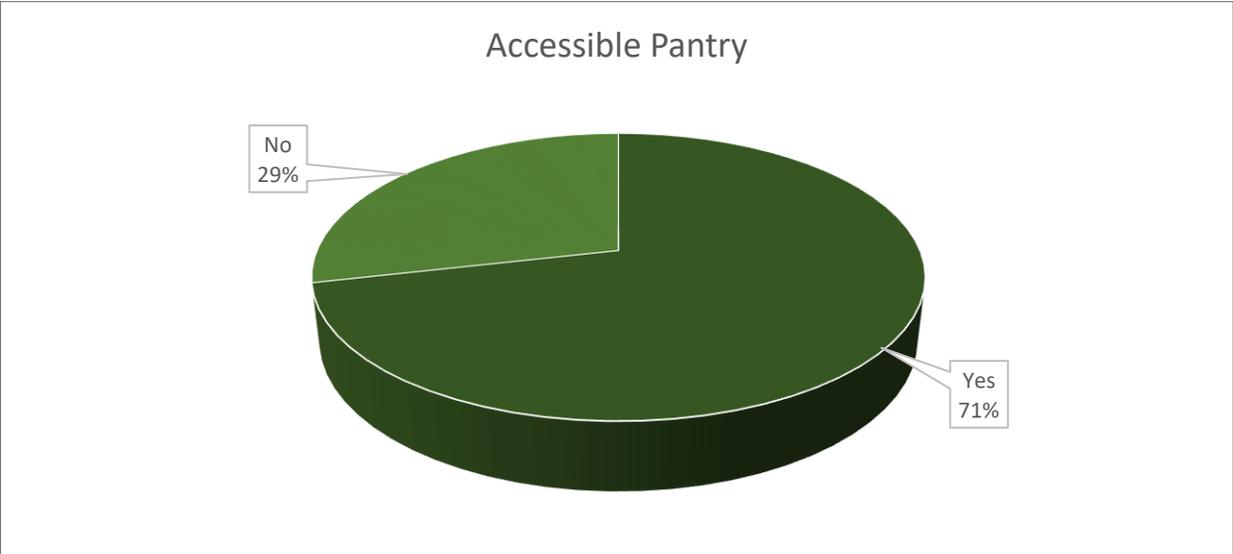
Having a surface to place hot oven items helps reduce the risk of burn injuries and damage to the kitchen, as well as facilitates the handling of heavy oven items without having to walk long distances in the kitchen. At 95%, most respondents had a convenient surface to place hot items.



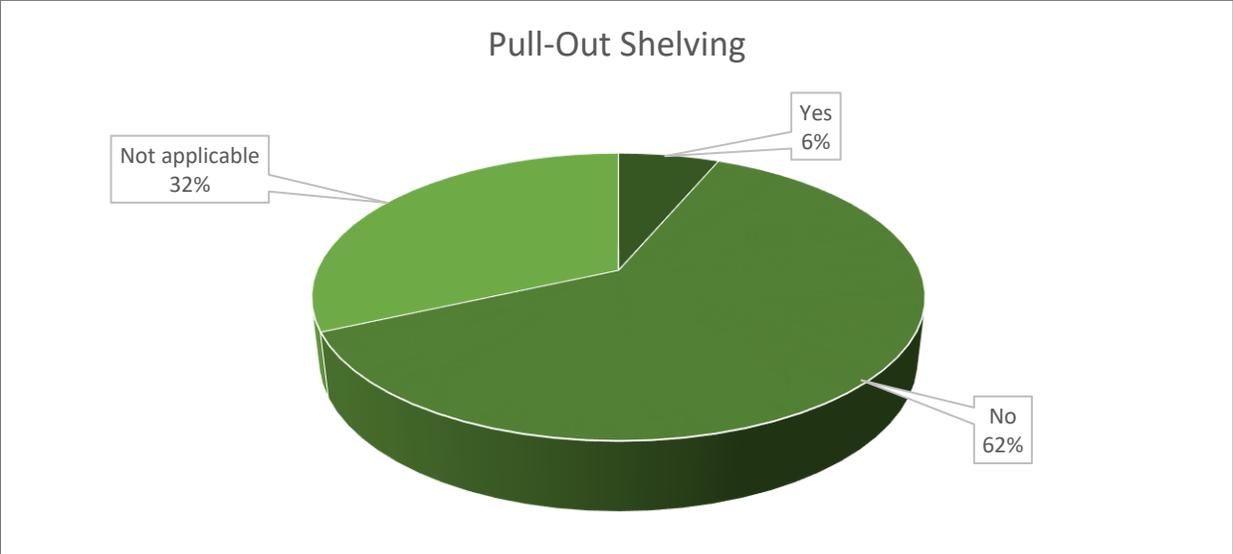
While all respondents found their kitchen light switches easy to operate, 94% of respondents considered their kitchen lighting adequate.



A slightly lower rate of 92% found their kitchen task lighting sufficient.



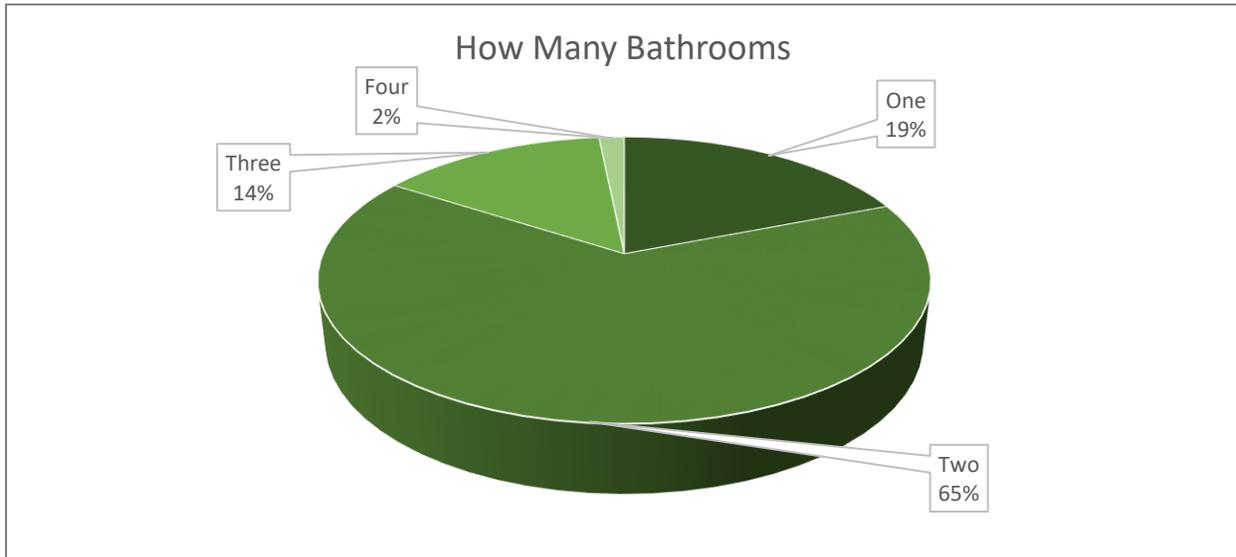
Further assessing kitchen accessibility, the questionnaire inquired about respondents' pantries, finding that almost 30% did not have what would be considered an accessible pantry.



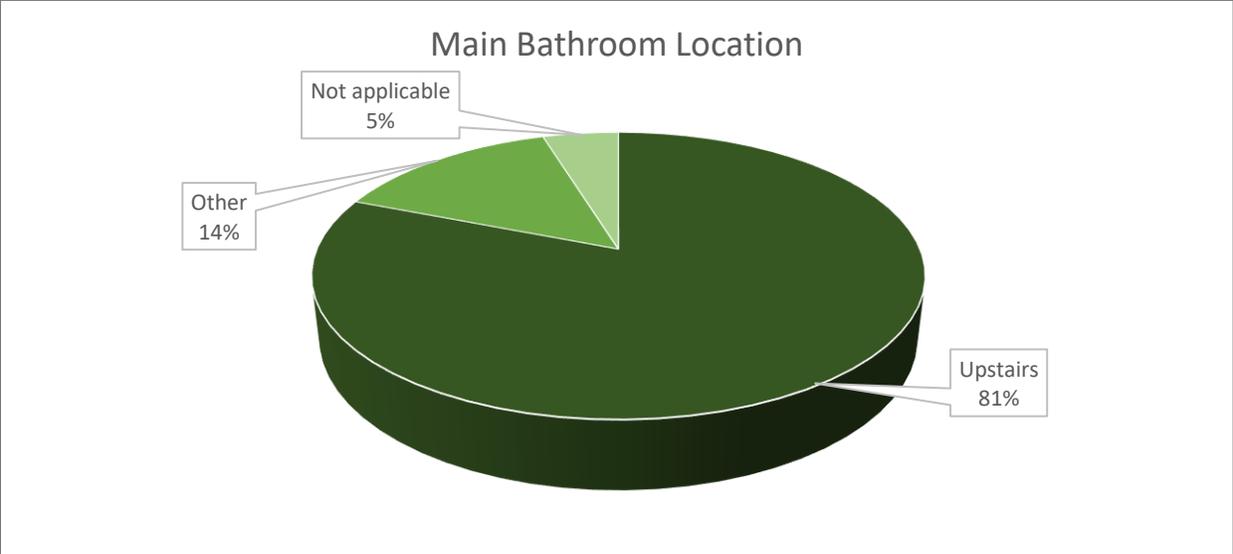
Only six percent of seniors' kitchens featured pull-out shelving, which could make accessing shelf contents much easier, especially for residents with mobility challenges.

Bathrooms

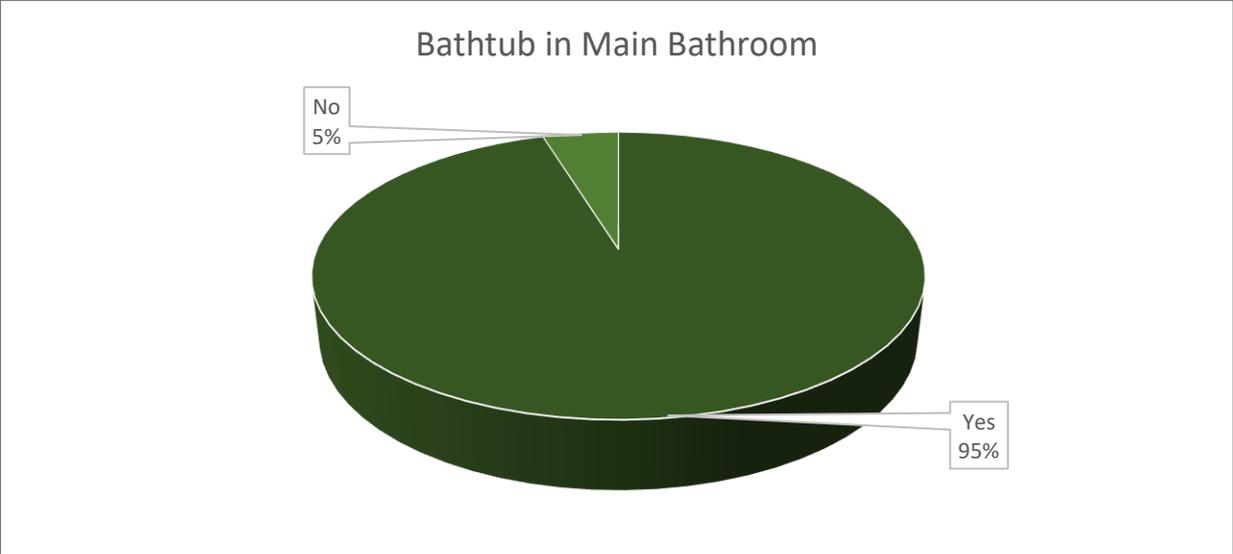
The bathroom, with wet floors, potentially tight spaces, and the difficulties personal care can pose for seniors dealing with limited mobility, can be a place in the home that holds a high risk for falls and injury.



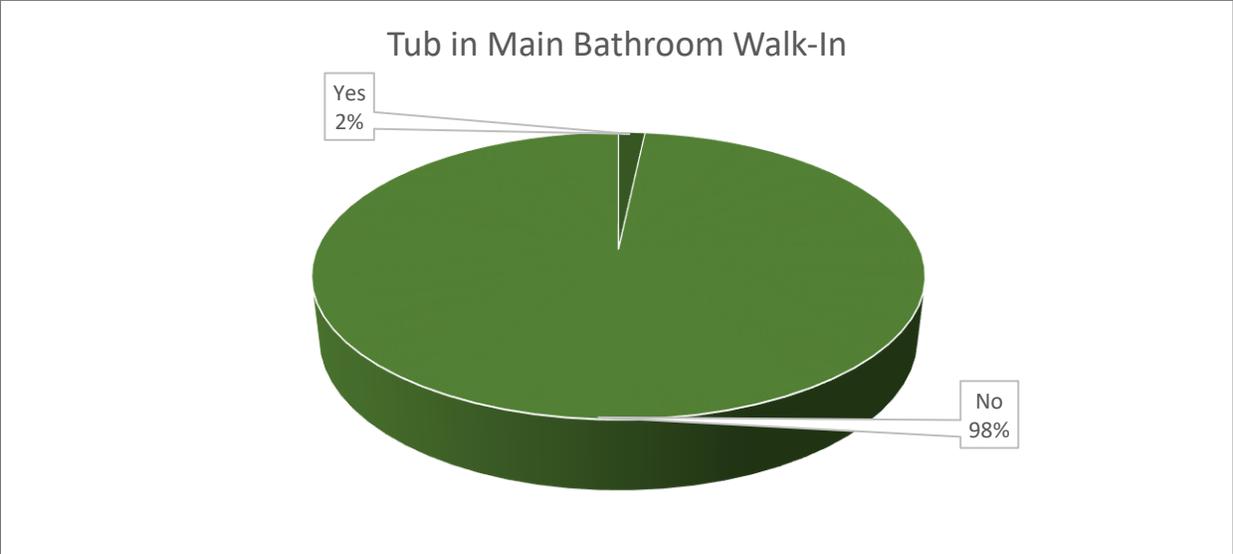
The number of bathrooms present in a home can determine the variety of accessible options household members may have. It also impacts the likelihood of single floor living being an option in the house. The majority of respondents had two bathrooms in their house (65%). Another close to 20% had only one bathroom.



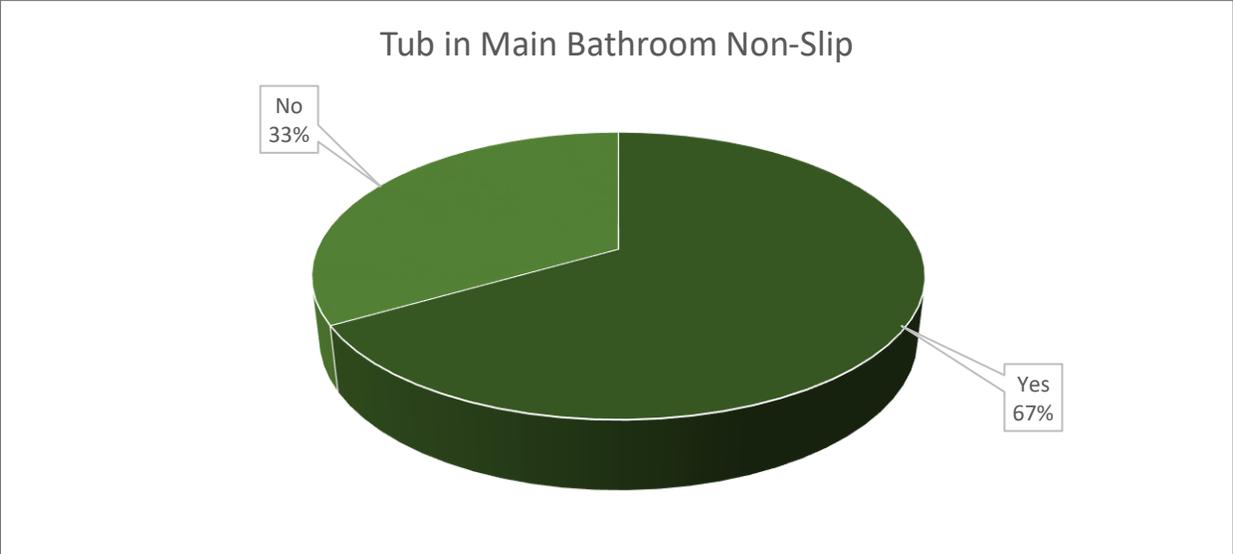
The main bathroom, which was also the only bathroom for one in five respondents, was reported to be predominantly located upstairs (81%).



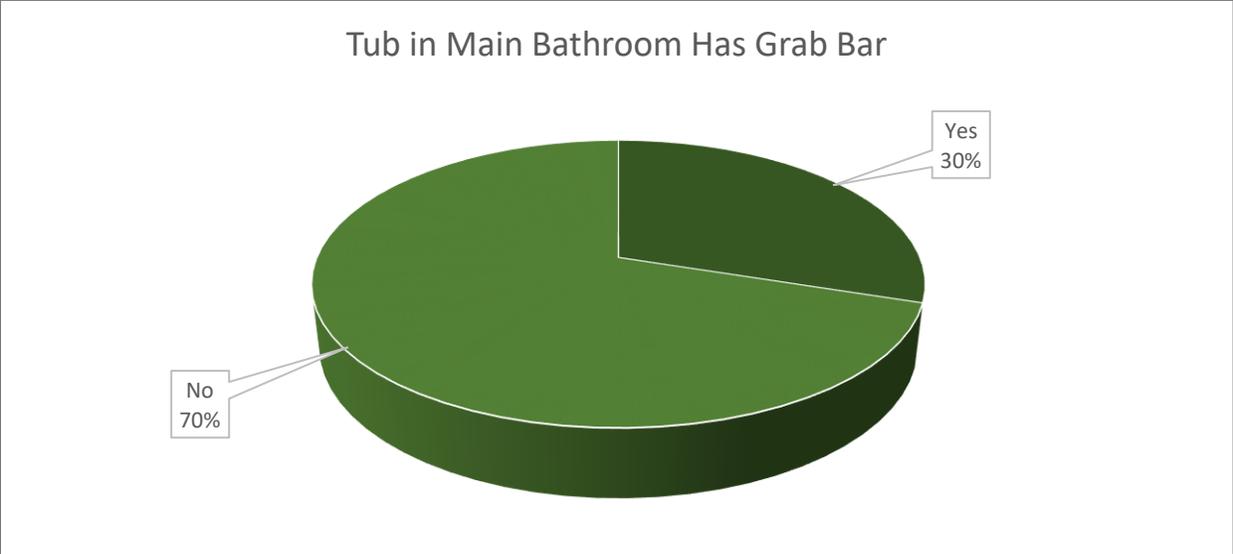
Ninety-five percent of respondents had a bathtub in their main bathroom.



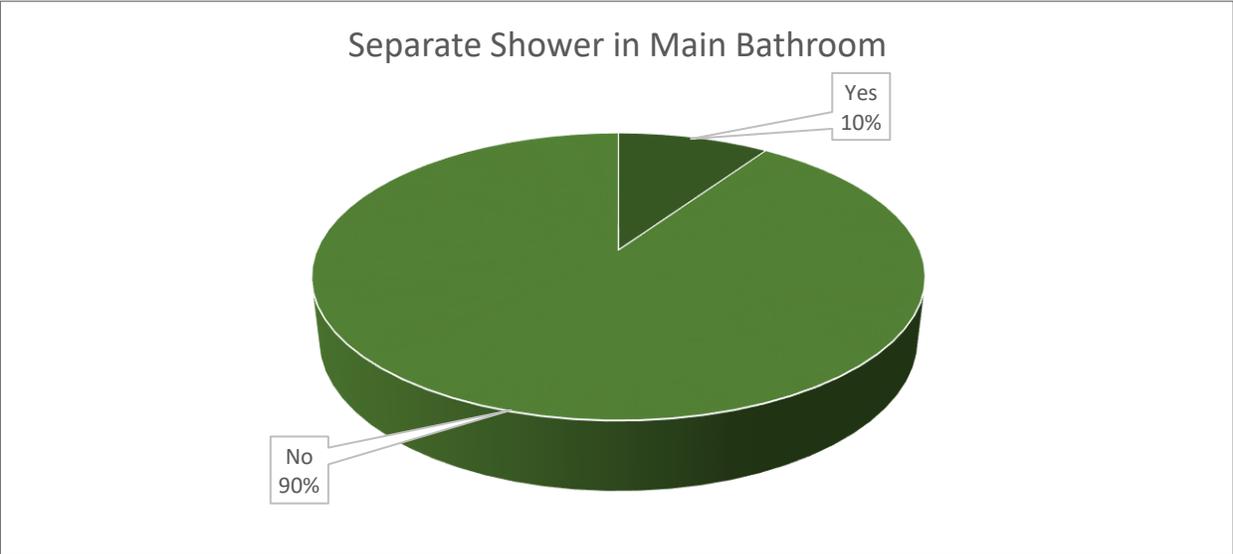
Climbing into high-edge bathtubs can easily lead to slips and falls. Of the bathtubs in main bathrooms, 98% were not accessible walk-in tubs.



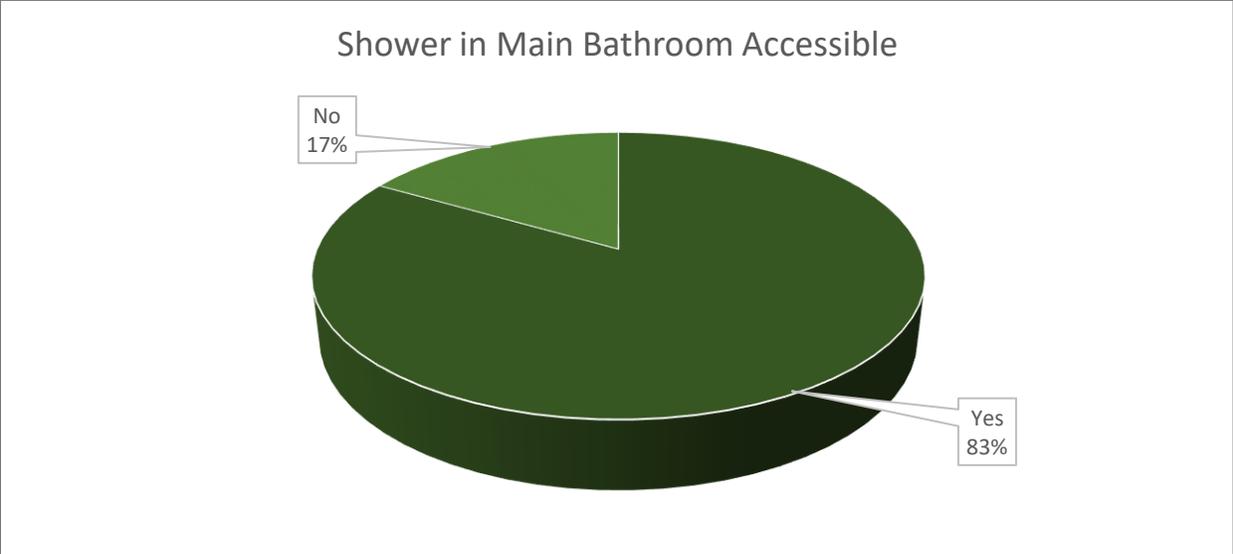
Two-thirds of the bathtubs in main bathrooms featured non-slip surfaces.



While bathtub replacements or redesign can be a costly undertaking and a major renovation, grab bars are a safety measure on a much smaller scale. Less than one-third of bathtubs in main bathrooms were outfitted with grab bars.



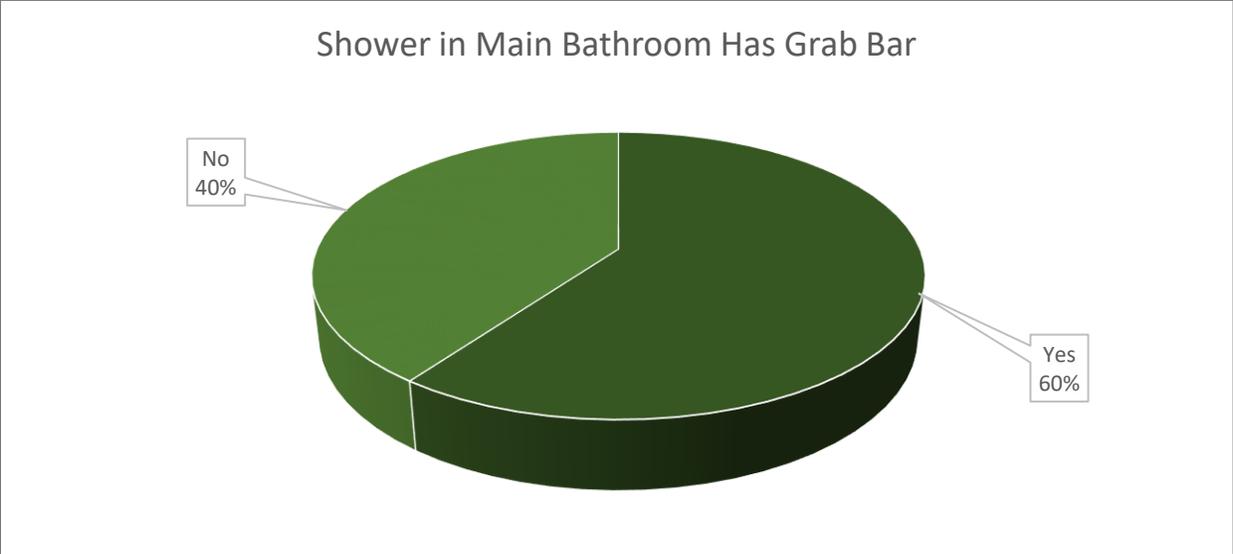
When asked about a separate shower, 10% of respondents indicated that they had a separate shower in their main bathroom.



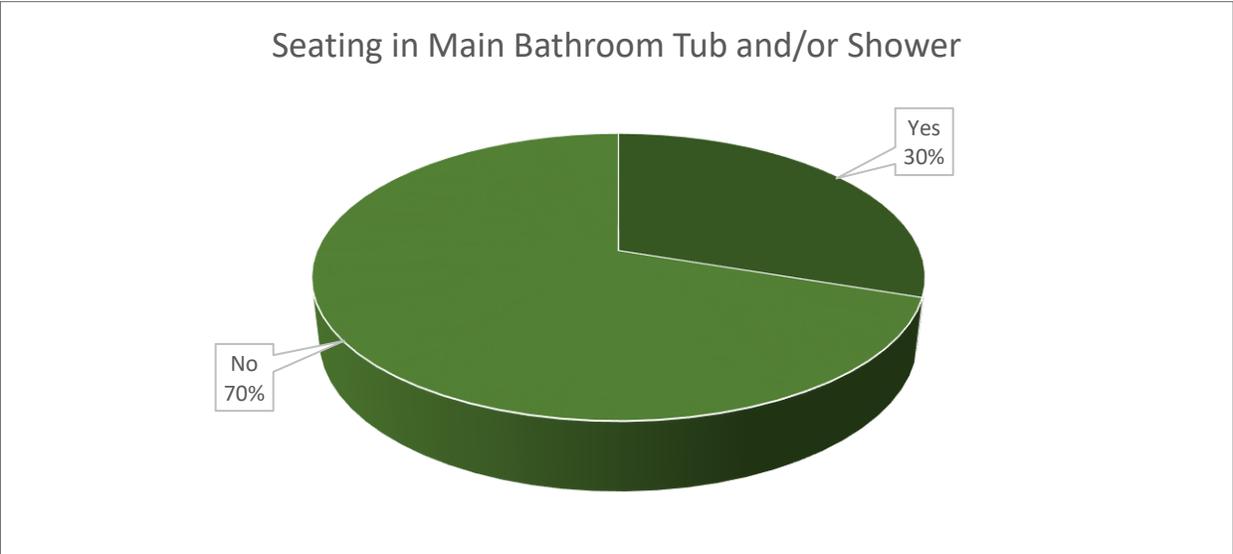
Of those separate showers in the main bathrooms, 83% were reported to be accessible. While most showers are easier to walk into than bath tubs, a lip around the shower tray can also pose a barrier.



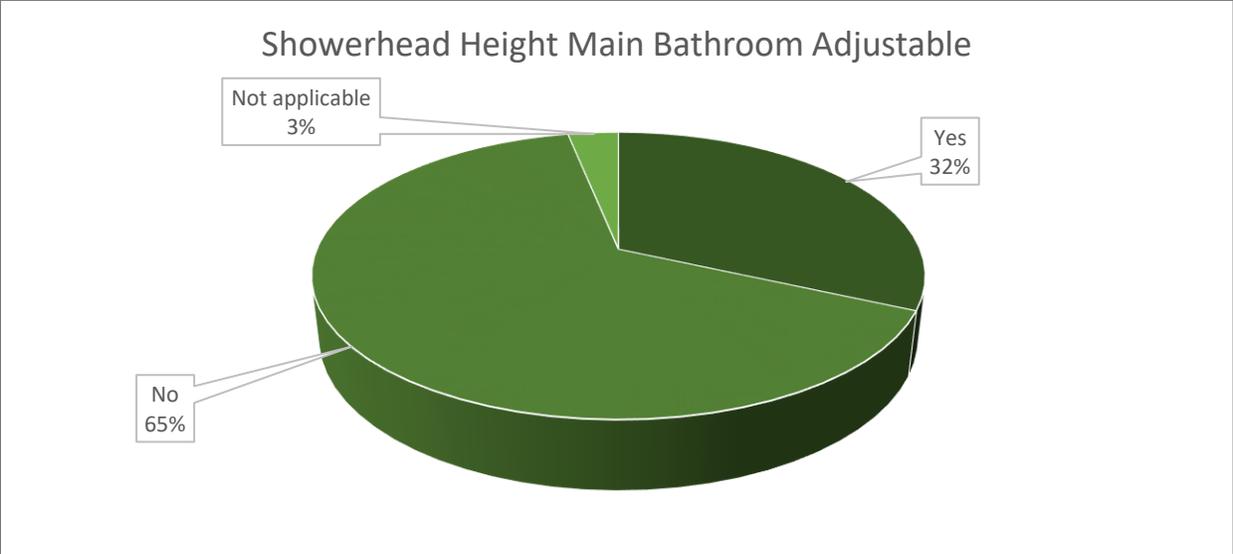
Two out of five showers in main bathrooms did not have non-slip surfaces.



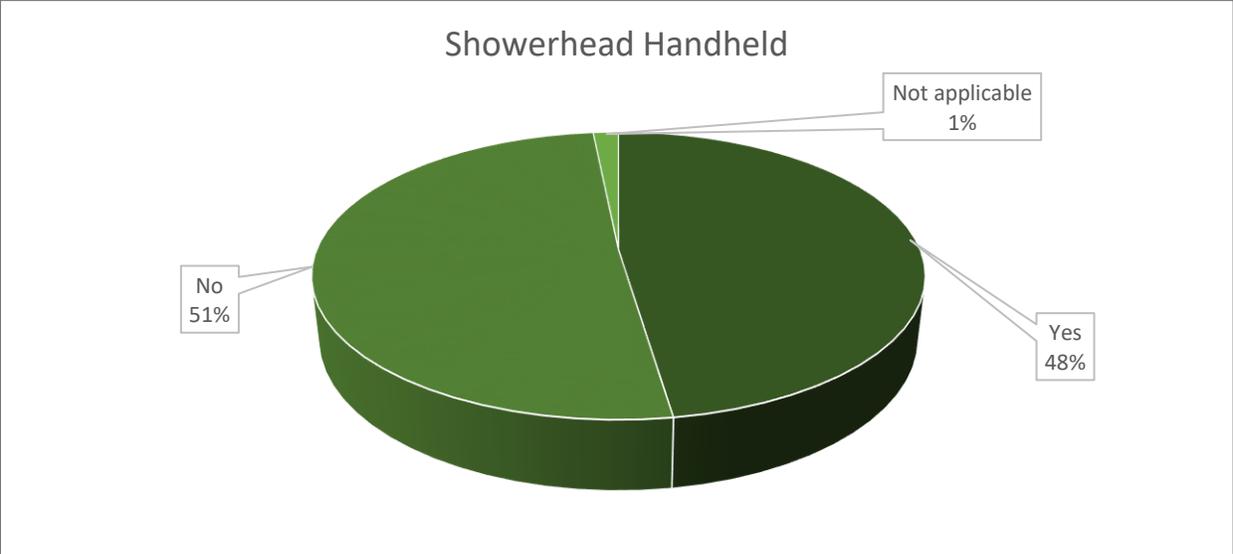
Similarly, two in five showers in main bathrooms did not feature grab bars.



Keeping in mind the increasing likelihood of mobility and balance limitations, as well as decreasing strength as seniors age, the assessment inquired about the availability of seating in the main bathroom bathtubs and showers. Thirty percent of respondents had seating available.



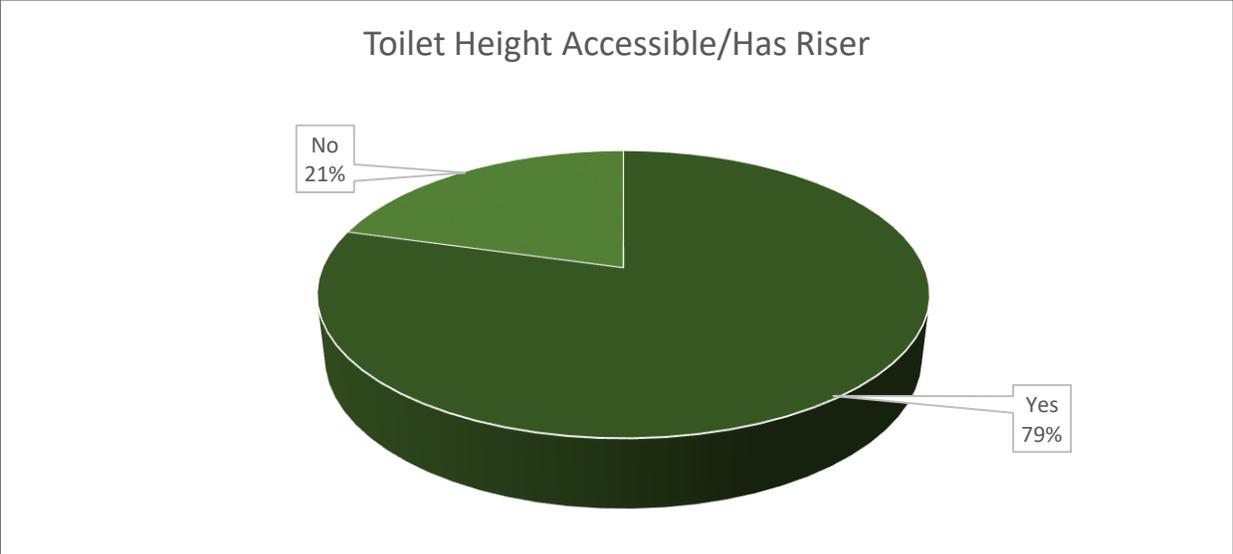
Roughly one-third of respondents had a showerhead with adjustable height in their main bathroom bathtub or shower.



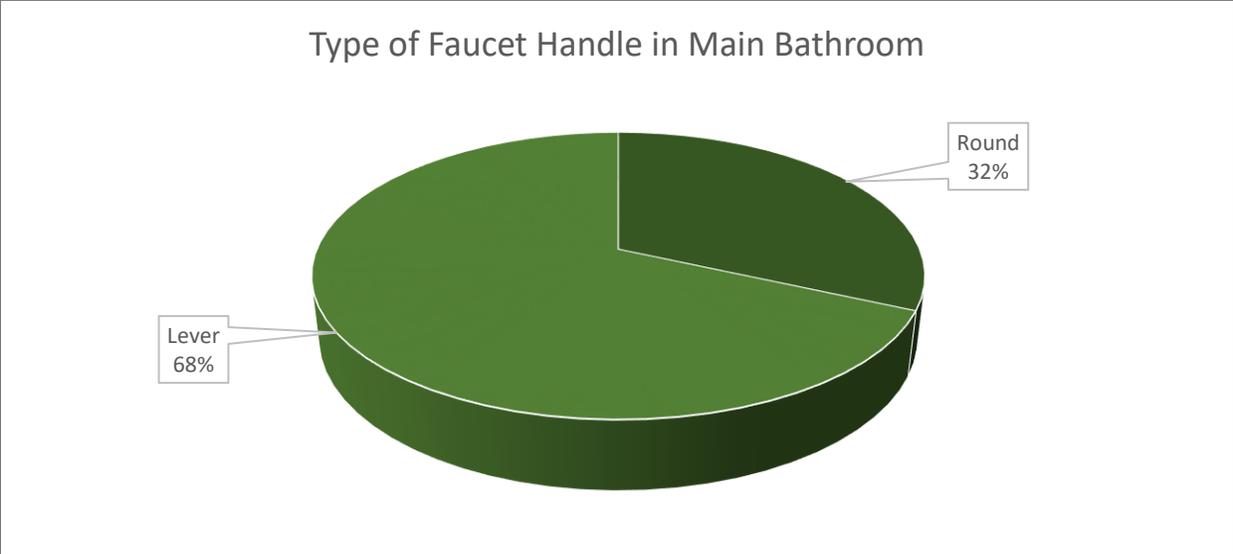
Only around one-half of the assessed senior households had a handheld showerhead in the bathtub or shower of their main bathroom.



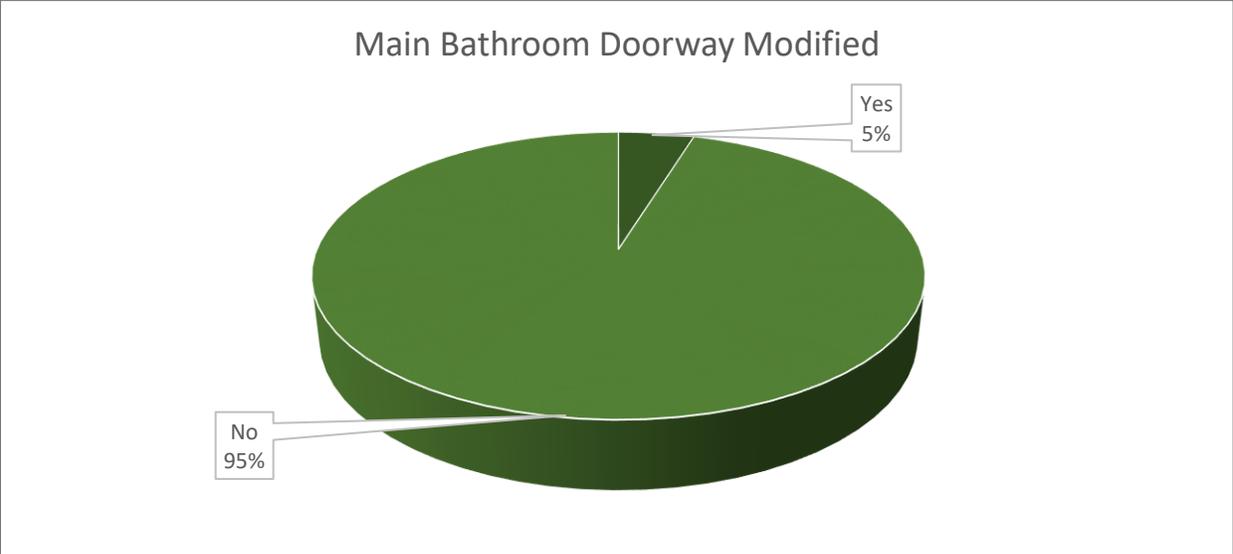
Continuing the inquiry about grab bars, 84% reported that they did not have grab bars at the toilet in their main bathroom. Toilet grab bars are a feature that can greatly increase bathroom safety for seniors. Some respondents found that close-by counters could be used as support, while not all bathroom layouts would allow for the installation of a toilet grab bar.



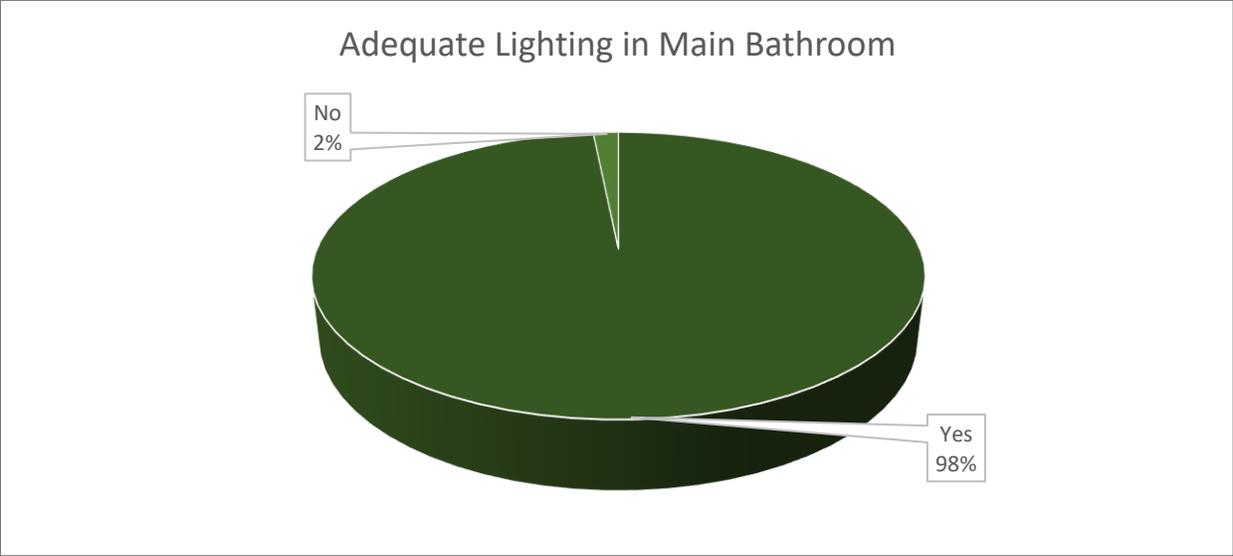
Establishing the prevalence of toilets with a height that accommodates seniors with declining mobility, balance, or strength, the assessment found that over 20% of respondents had a main bathroom toilet with a height that was not considered accessible.



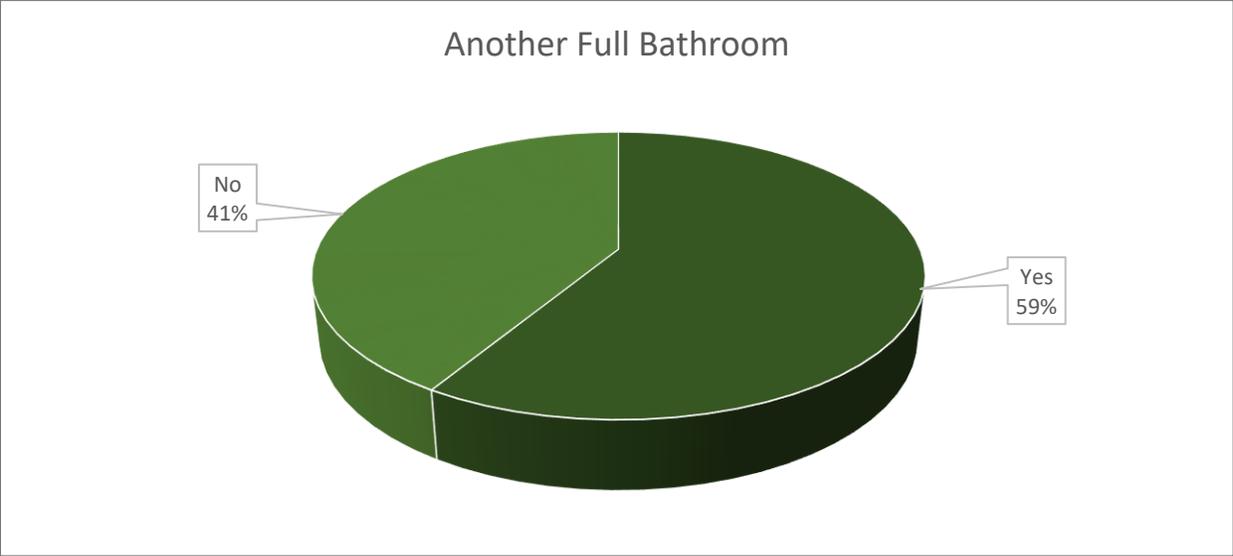
The assessment found that over two-thirds of respondents had lever-type faucet handles in their main bathroom.



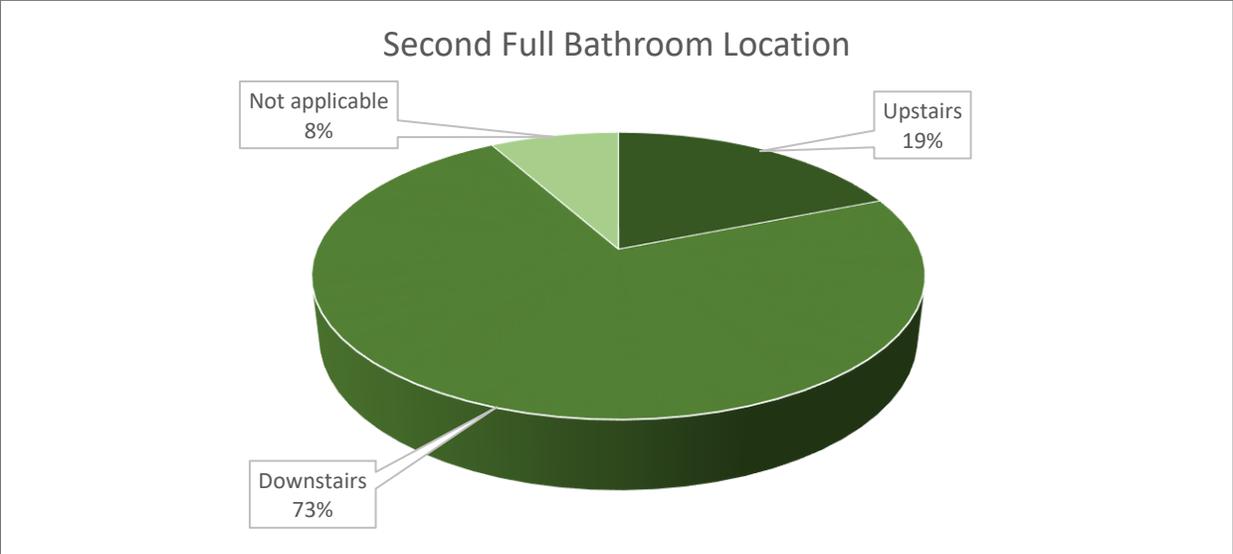
In a community with mostly older homes, doorways that have not been altered since a home was built are not likely to feature the width and design that are part of current accessibility standards. Only five percent of respondents indicated that their main bathroom doorway had been modified since the home was built, and narrow doorways constituted a barrier for some respondents.



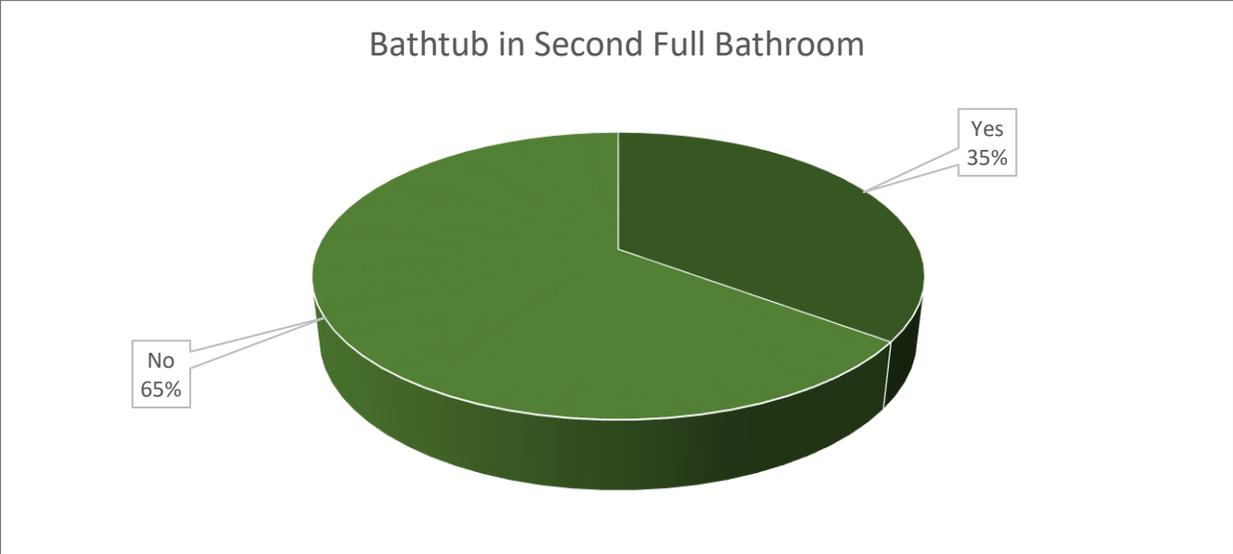
Main bathroom lighting was considered adequate in almost all assessed senior households, and all respondents considered the main bathroom light switches easy to operate.



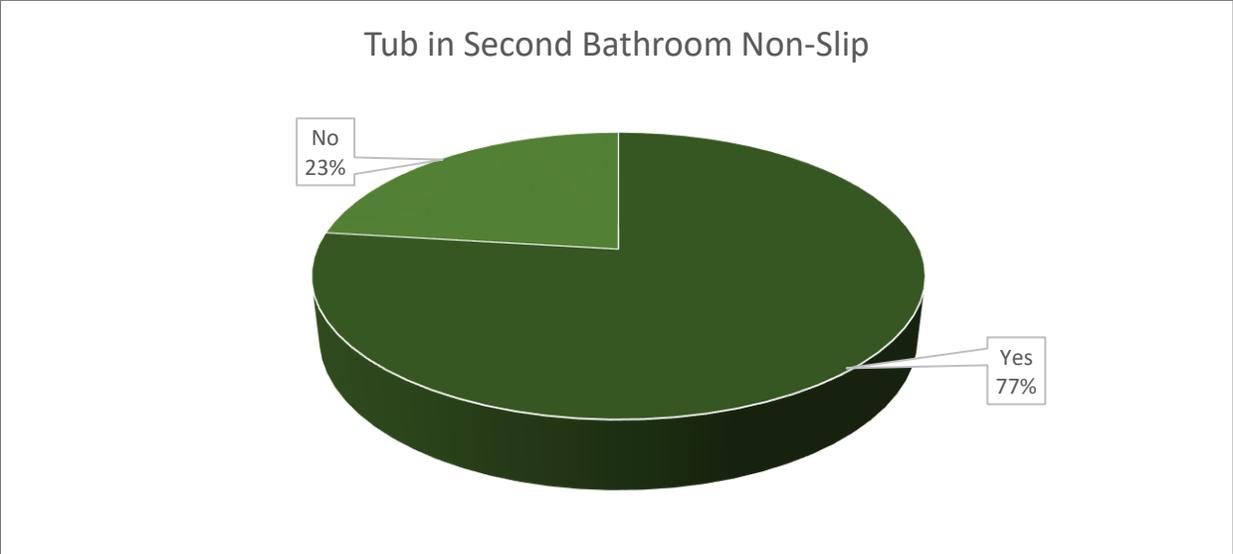
Exploring how many senior households had a second bathroom, which might be an alternative to the main bath in cases where accessibility and safety of use presented challenges, the assessment found that 81% had a second bath. Close to three-quarters of those were full baths, meaning that almost 60% of all respondents had second full bath in their homes.



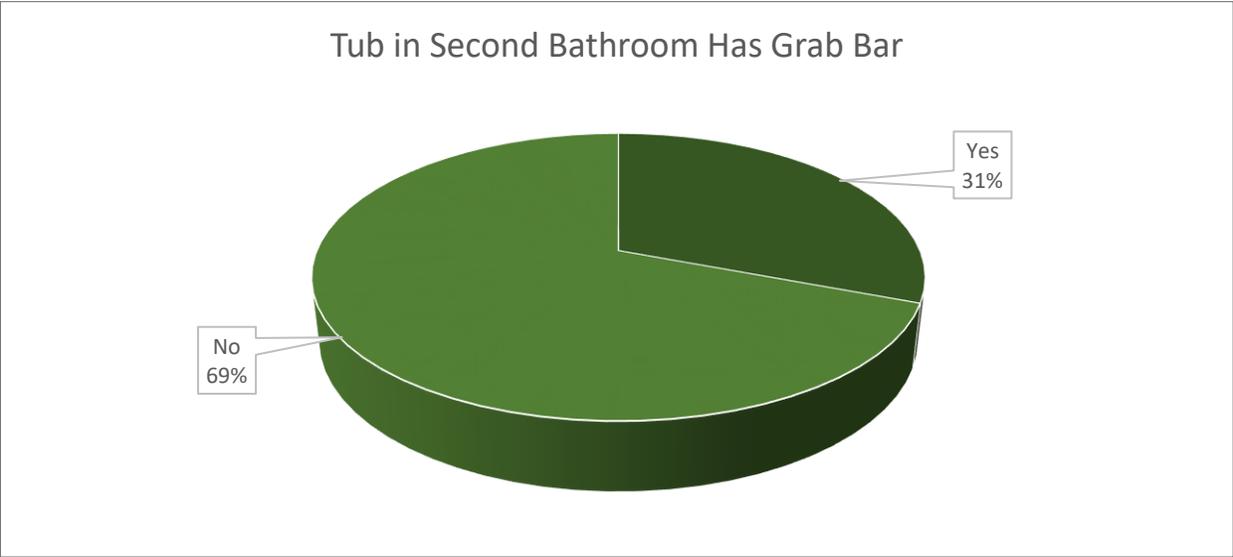
When asked about the location of a second full bath, 73% of those with another full bath in their homes indicated the location of the second bath was downstairs.



Roughly one-third of all full second baths had a bathtub. None of those bathtubs were accessible.



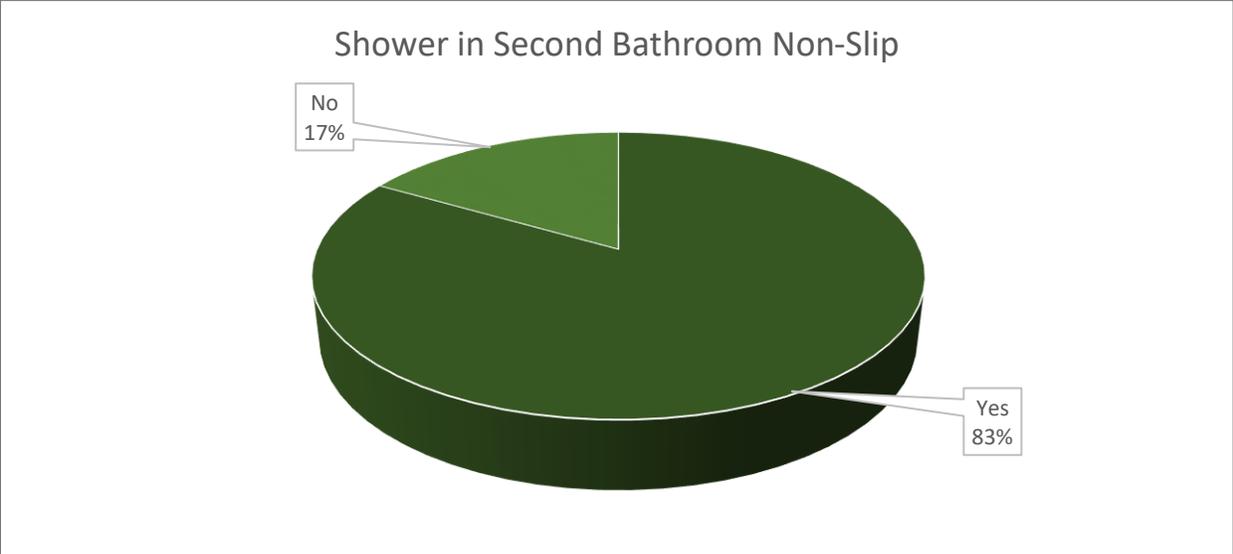
Seventy-seven percent of the second bathtubs had non-slip surfaces.



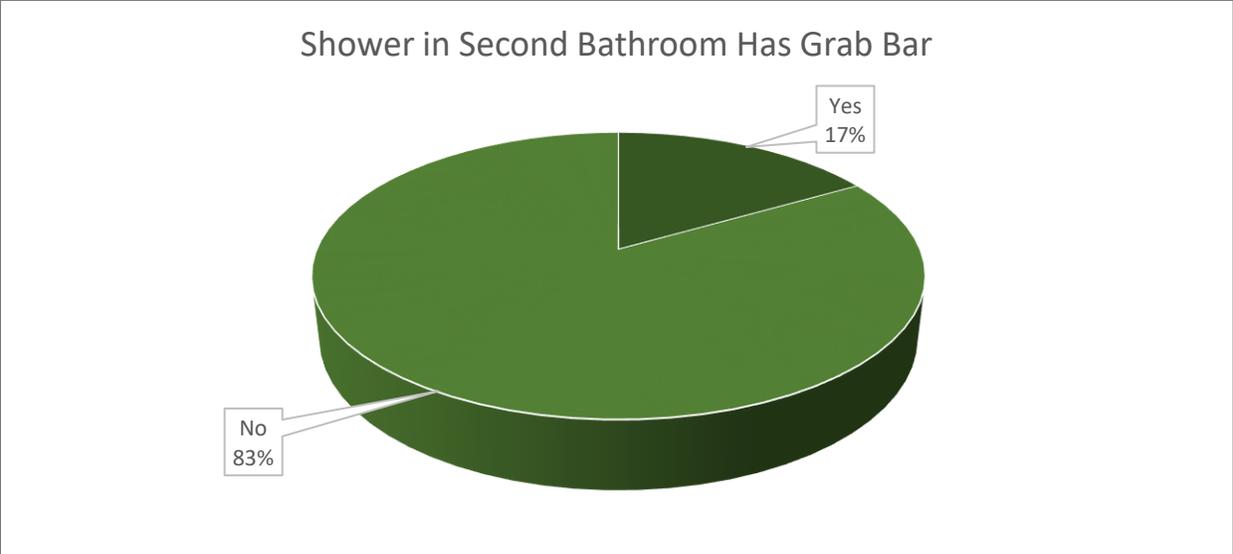
However, close to 70% of bathtubs in second bathrooms were not outfitted with grab bars.



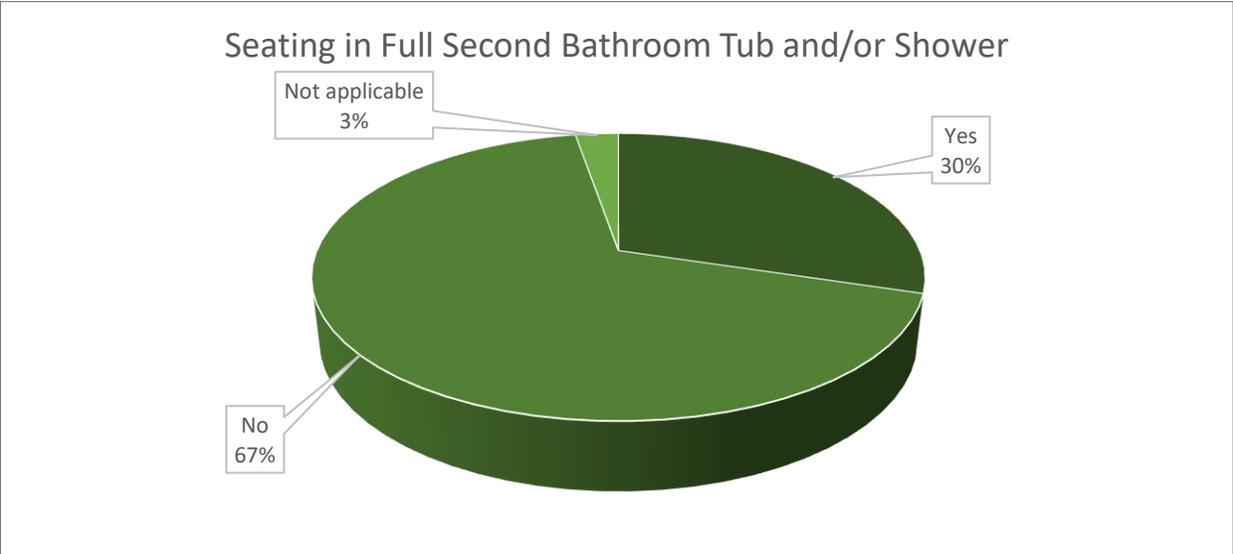
Of those respondents with a full second bath, over 80% had a separate shower in their second bath. All of those showers were considered accessible.



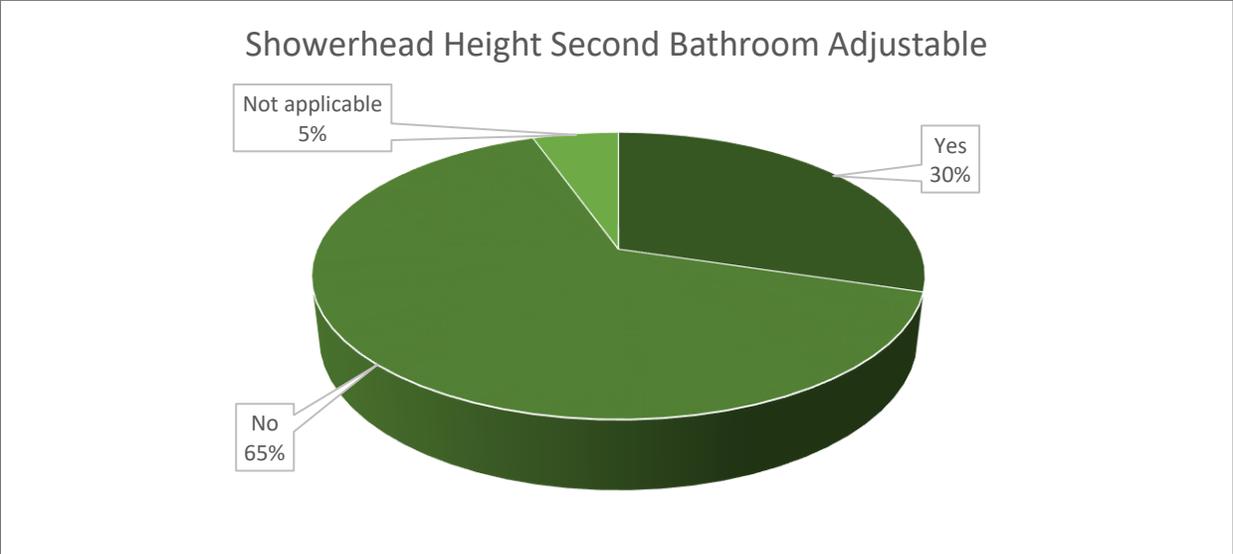
Over 80% of the second bathroom showers were reported to have non-slip surfaces.



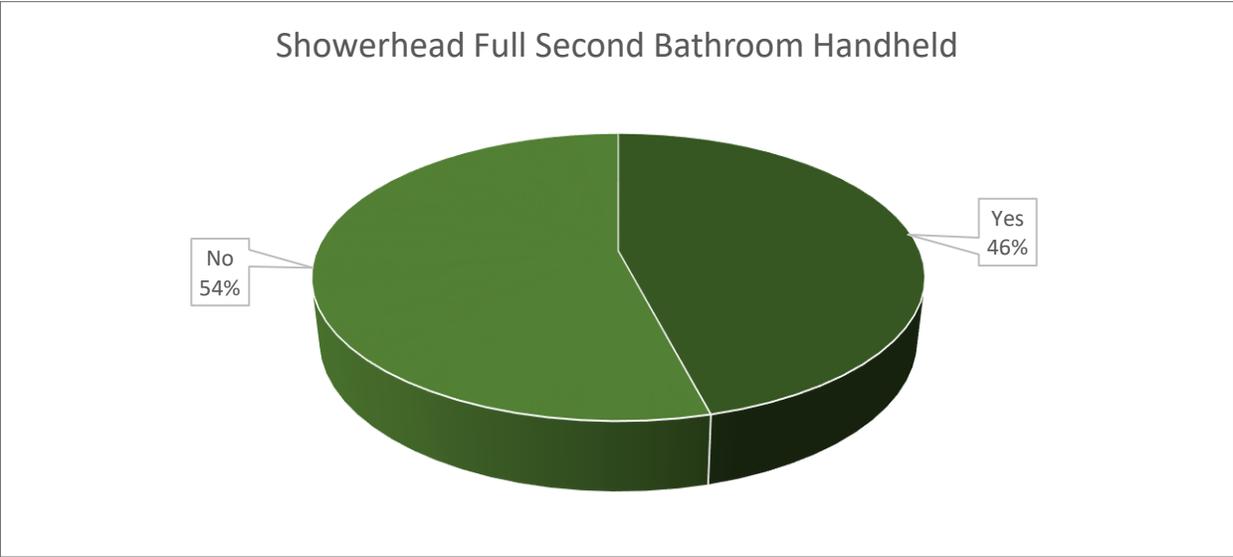
However, 83% of second bathroom showers were not outfitted with grab bars.



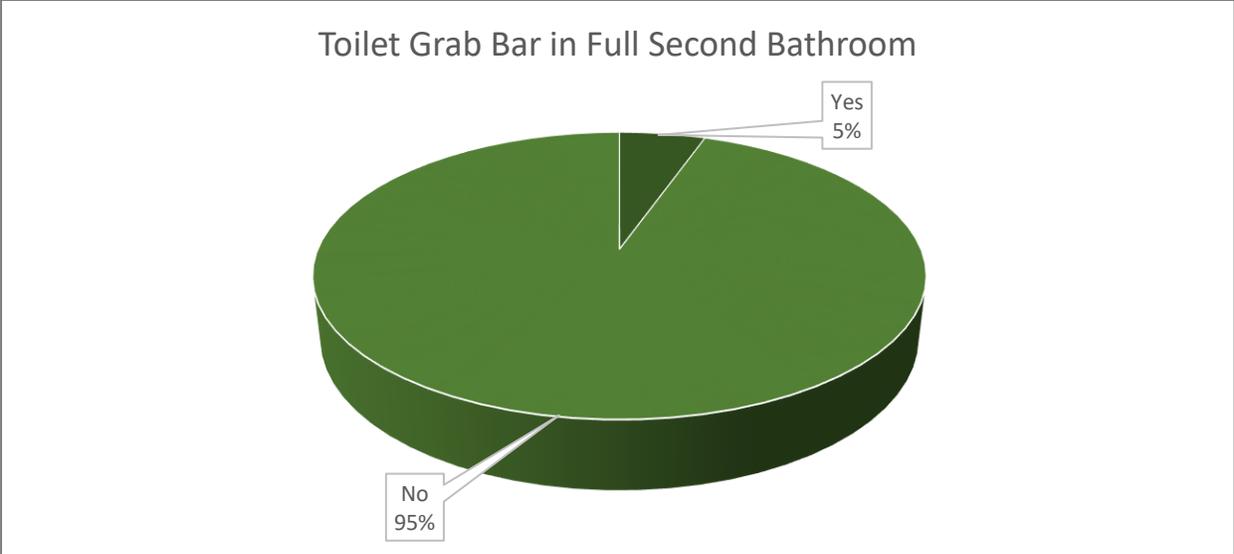
The assessment demonstrated that 30% of full second bathrooms featured seating in the bathtub or shower.



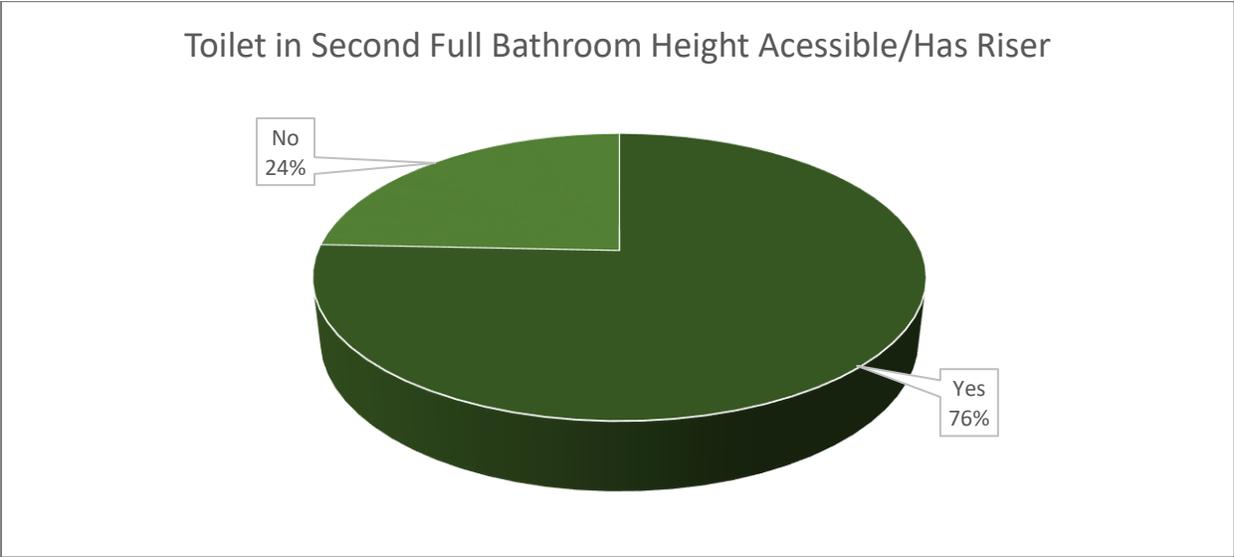
Similarly, 30% of second full baths had a bathtub or shower with adjustable showerhead height.



At 46% of full second baths, handheld showerheads were more common in second bathrooms than height adjustable showerheads.

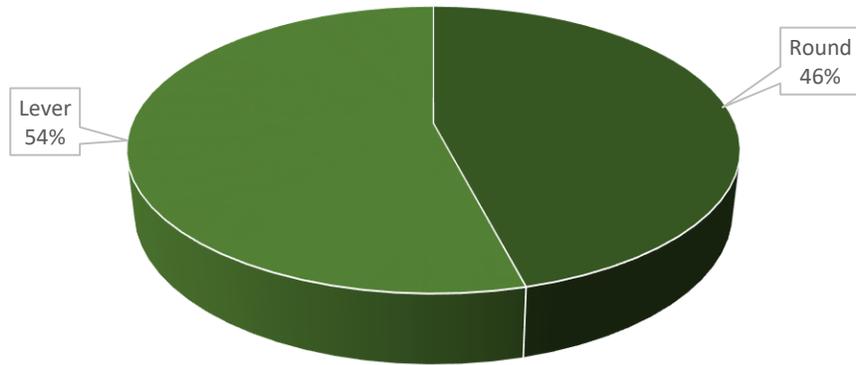


Only five percent of all second full bathroom toilets were outfitted with grab bars.



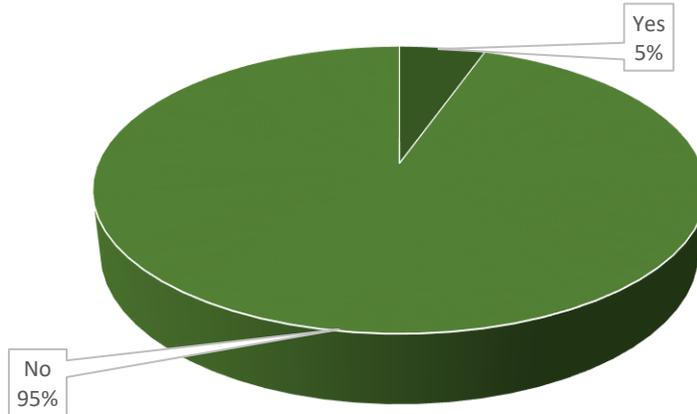
Three-quarters of toilets in full second bathrooms were at an accessible height or featured a riser.

Type of Faucet Handle in Second Bathroom



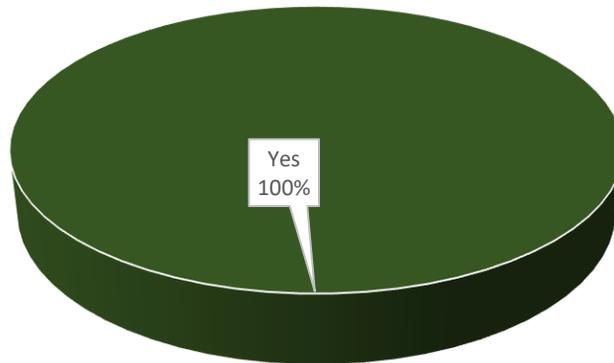
At 54%, lever faucet handles were only marginally more common in second full bathrooms than round style handles.

Second Full Bathroom Doorway Modified



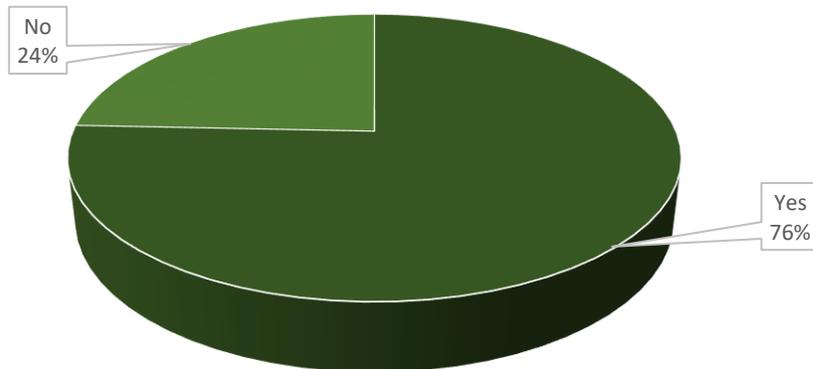
With only one in 20 second full bathroom doors reported as having been modified, the width and design of the majority of second bathroom entrances in respondent homes remained unchanged since the homes had been built.

Adequate Lighting in Second Full Bathroom



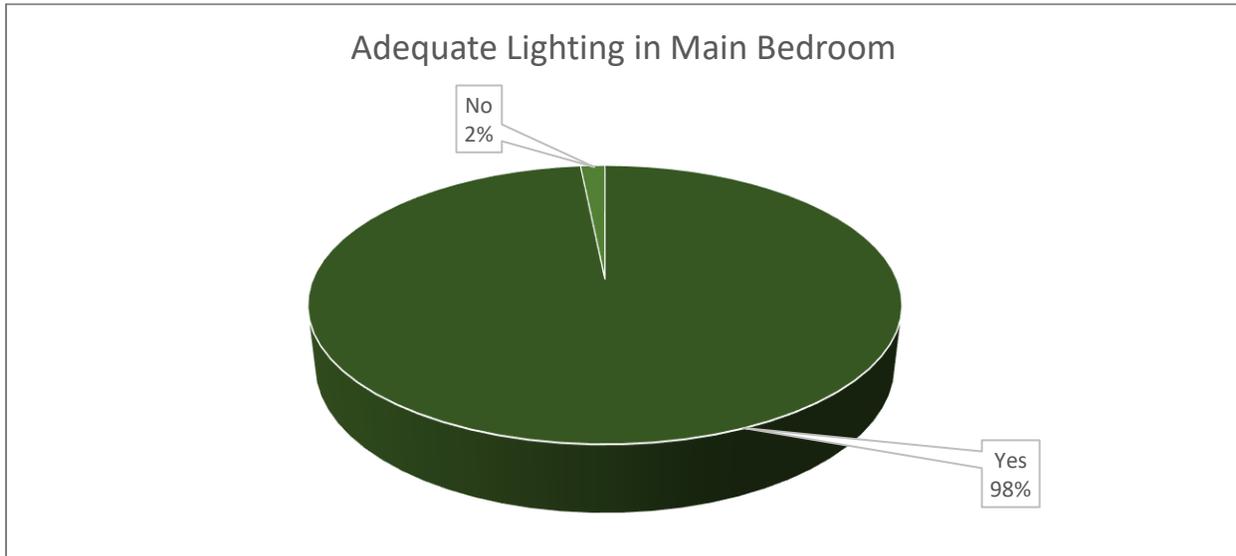
All respondents with second bathrooms considered their bathroom lighting adequate and found light switches easy to operate.

Second Full Bathroom More Accessible for Bath, Shower, Toilet

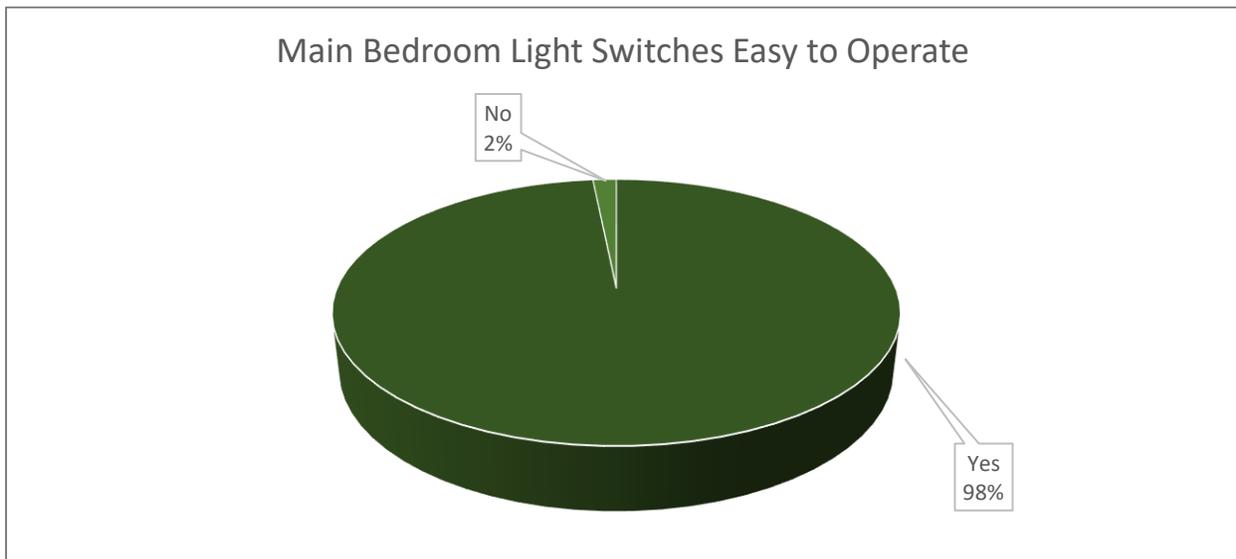


The bathroom assessments concluded with the question whether second full bathrooms were more accessible for baths, showers, and toilet use. This consideration is particularly meaningful in combination with the location of the second bathrooms and the possibility of single floor living in a respondent's home. If the main bath is not accessible enough for a senior resident, an accessible second bath on the same floor as a bedroom, kitchen, and living room can make the difference between being able to stay in one's home or having to move to more accessible accommodation. A total of 76% of all full second bathrooms were more accessible than the main bathrooms.

Main Bedroom

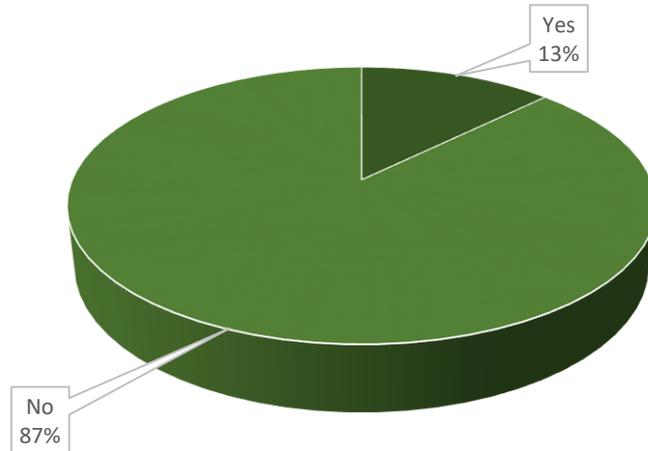


Almost all respondents found their bedroom lighting to be adequate.



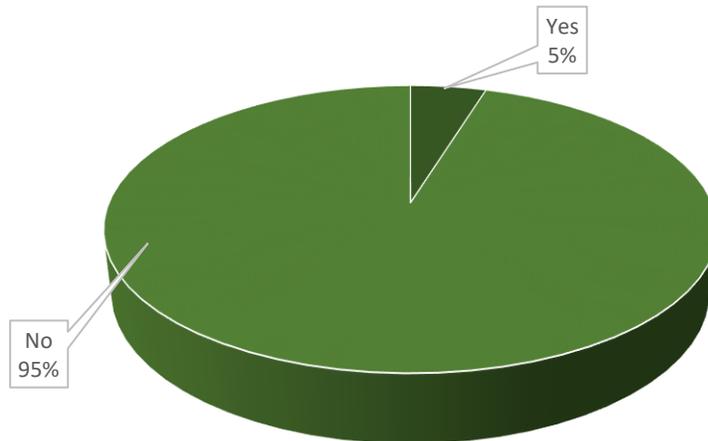
Equally, all but two percent considered their bedroom light switches easy to operate.

Changes to Electrical Outlets in Main Bedroom

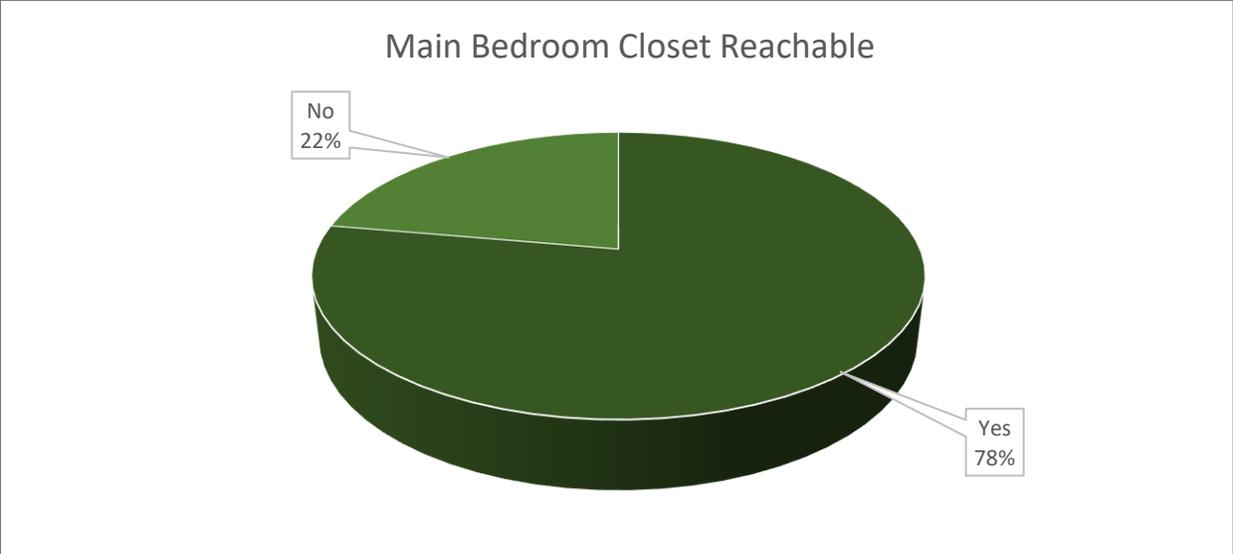


Changes to electrical outlets in the bedroom can be made to improve, for example, safety, accessibility, and the capacity for added electrical items and gadgets. When asked about changes to electrical outlets in their bedroom, 13% of respondents indicated that they had made changes since the home had been built.

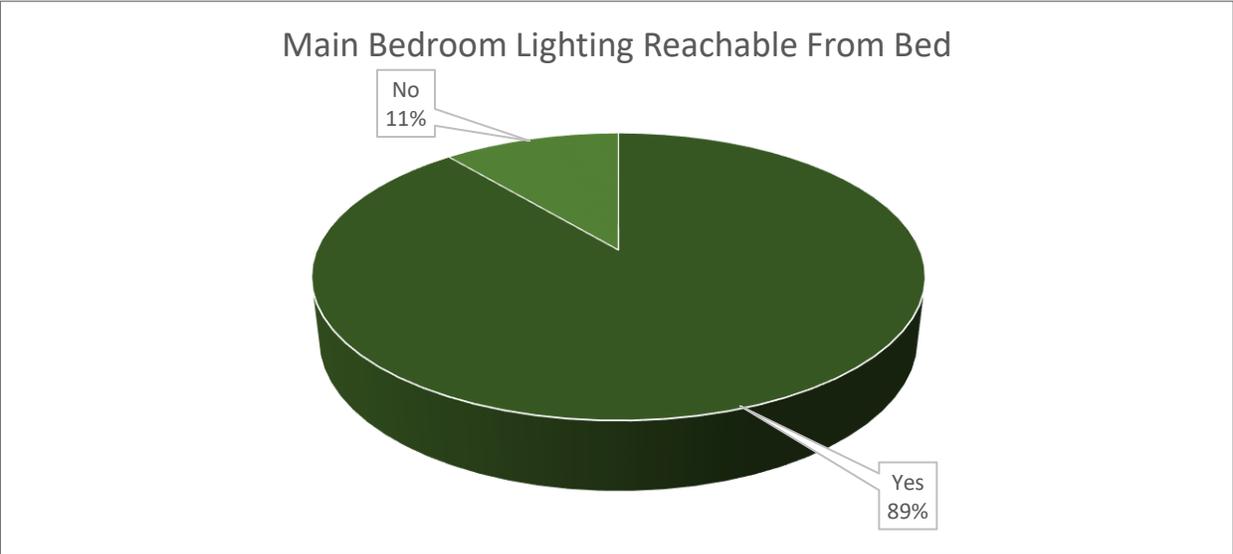
Doorway Modified in Main Bedroom



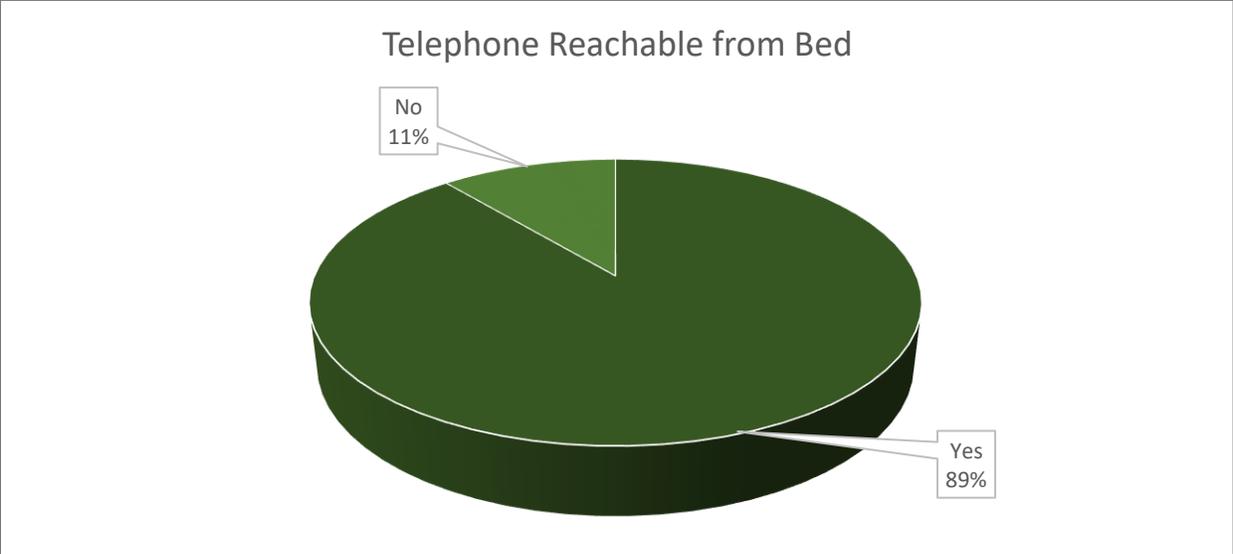
However, only five percent had made changes to their bedroom doorways, while 95% of bedroom doorways remained the same width and design since the homes had been constructed.



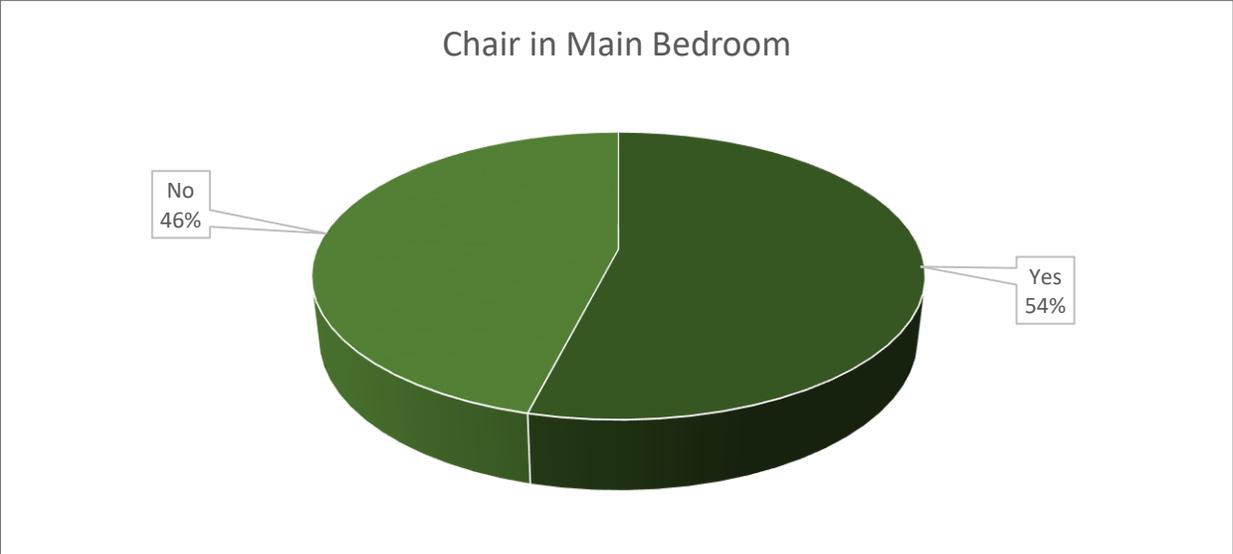
More than three-quarters of assessment respondents had their closets organized for reachability; however, a number of respondents could not reach upper shelves without the use of a stepping stool.



Having adequate lighting is important for avoiding in-home accidents and injury. While 98% of respondents felt they had adequate lighting in their main bedrooms, more than one in ten could not reach their light switches from their beds.



Another safety concern for seniors is the ability to call for help in case of a medical or other emergency. Eleven percent indicated they could not reach their telephone from their beds.

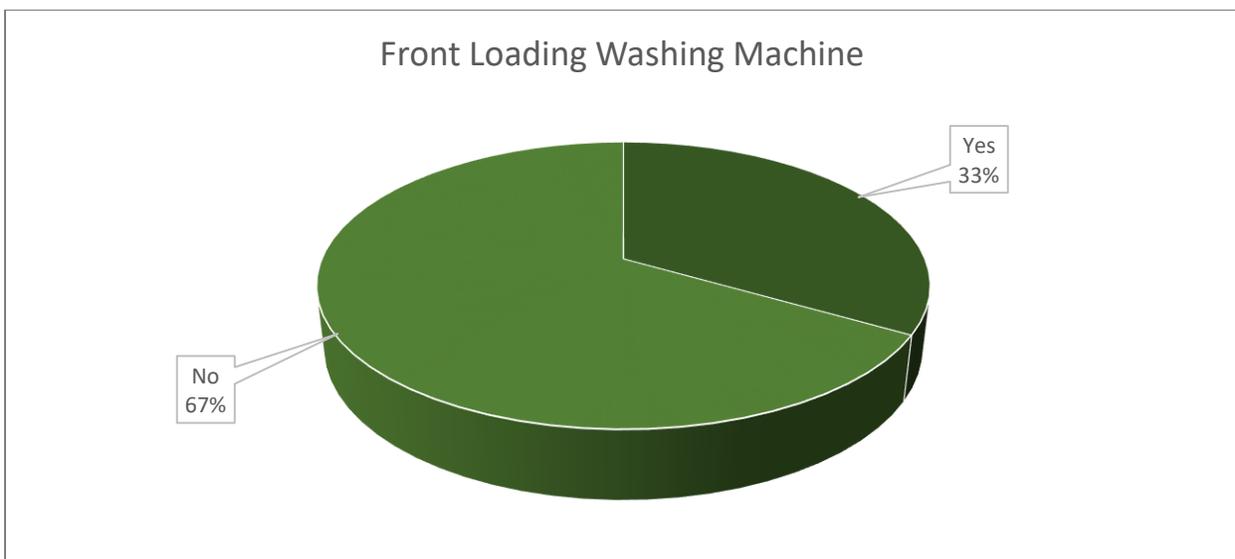


A stationary chair, or other seating, in the bedroom can aid seniors with declining mobility or balance get dressed safely. Fifty-four percent of respondents reported having a chair in their bedrooms.

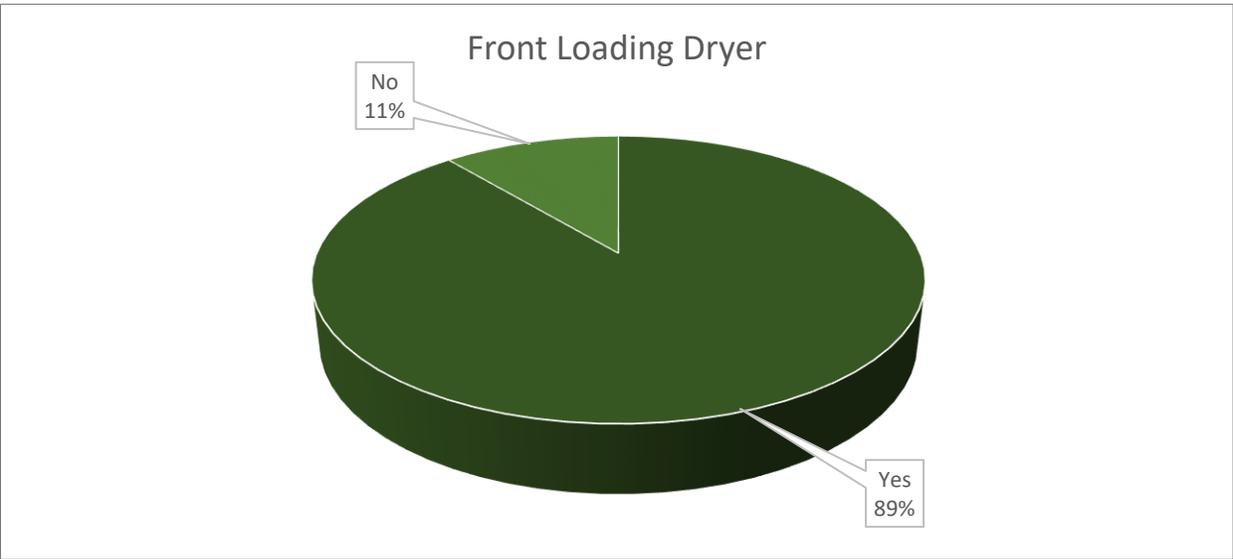
Laundry



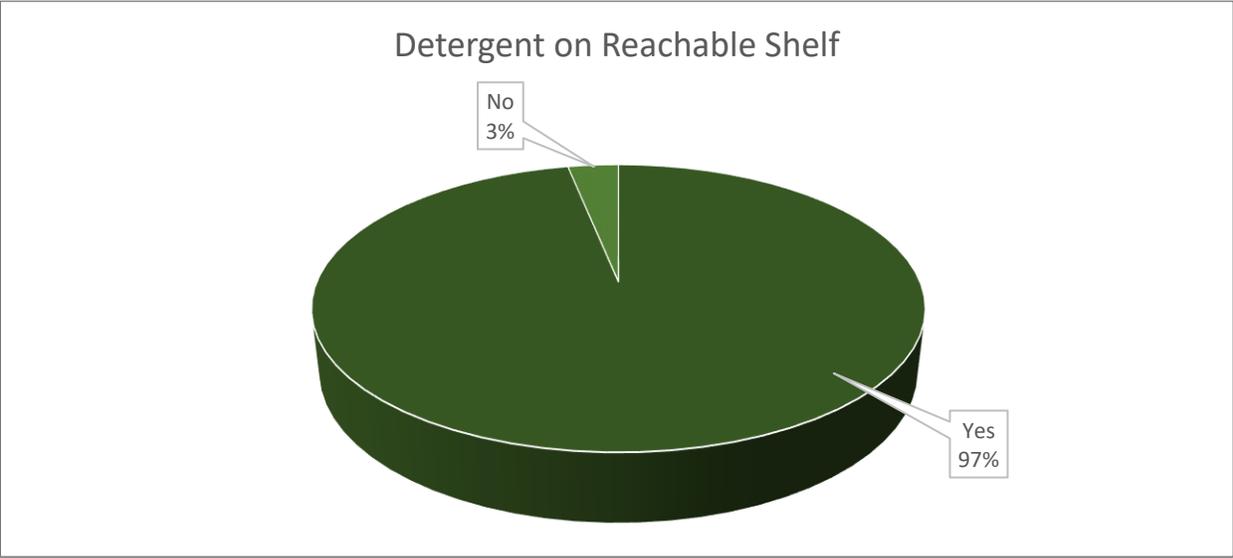
Considering that doing laundry often involves carrying large and/or awkward loads and baskets, the location of the laundry facilities in a home can be a safety concern or barrier. Most household laundry, clothes and bedlinens, are generated on the bedroom level. The assessment inquired whether the washing machine was located on the same level of the house as the bedroom, and 30% of respondents answered affirmatively.



The design of a washing machine and dryer can influence the ease of operation for seniors with declining mobility or balance. One-third of assessment respondents indicated they had front loading washing machines.



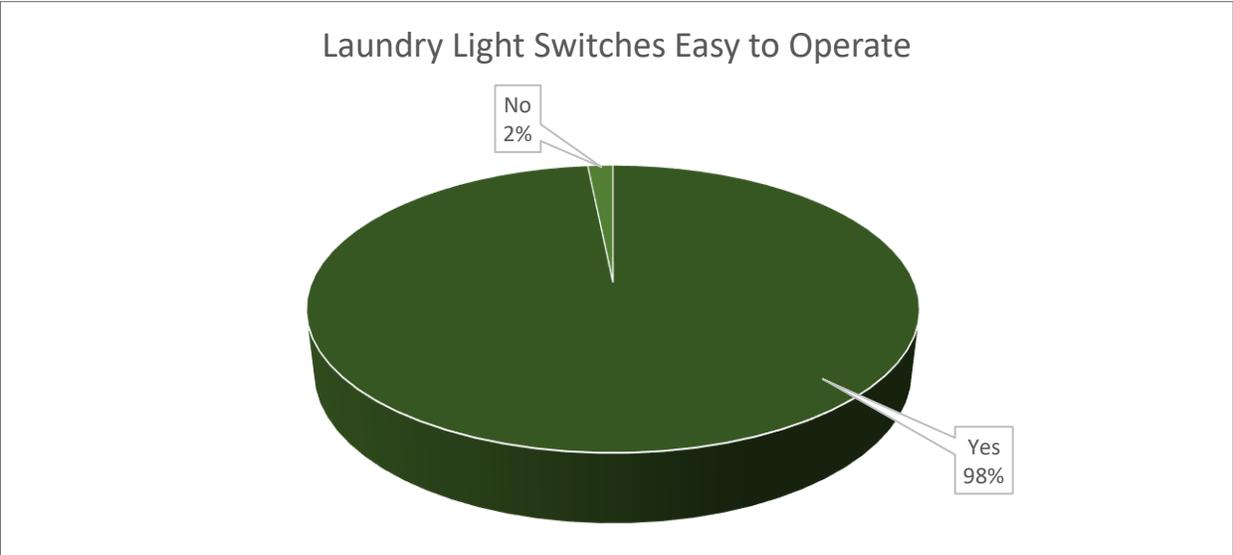
Most likely a reflection of the most commonly available style of dryer, almost 90% of respondents had a front-loading dryer.



At 97%, almost all respondents had their laundry detergent on a reachable shelf.



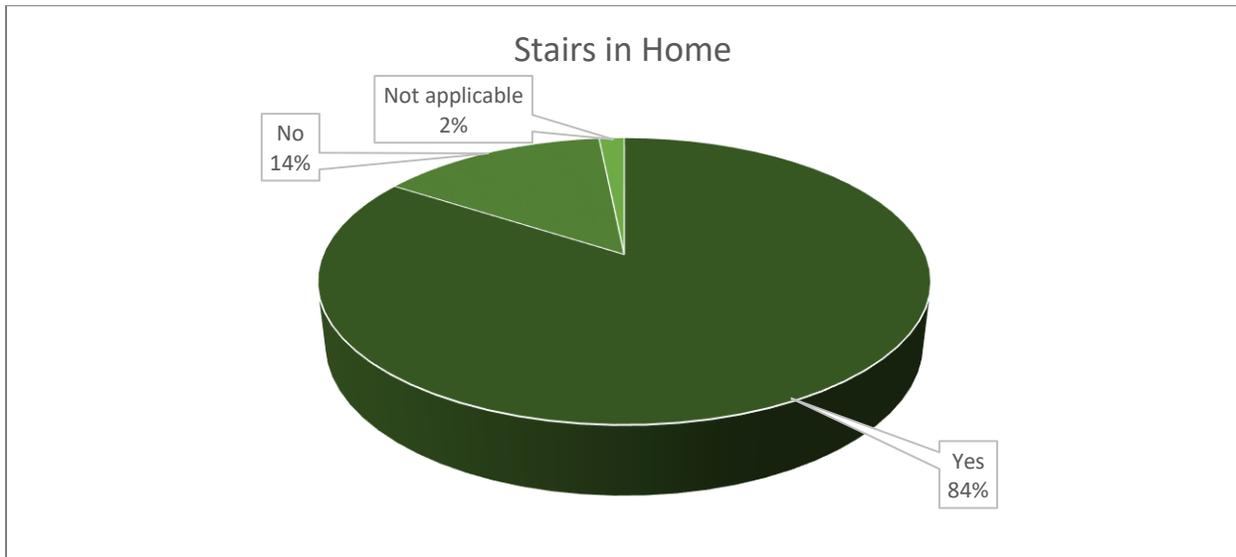
Lighting in 94% of seniors' laundry rooms was considered adequate.



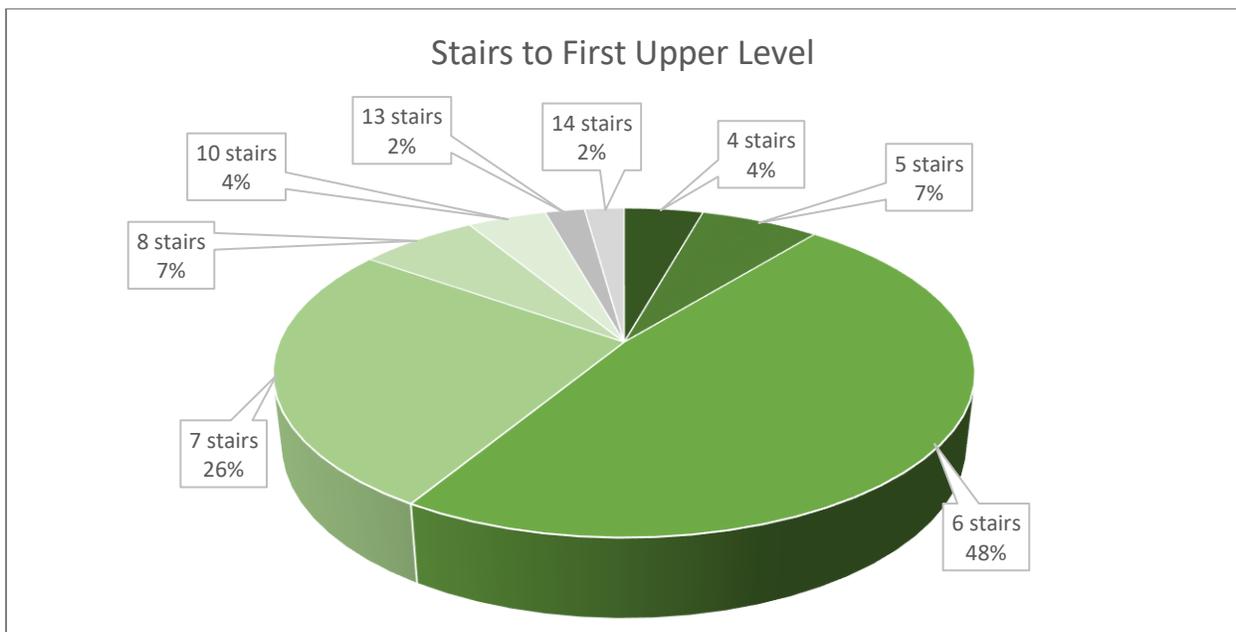
In alignment with light switches in other areas of the home already explored in the assessment, 98% of respondents found their laundry light switches easy to operate.

Stairways

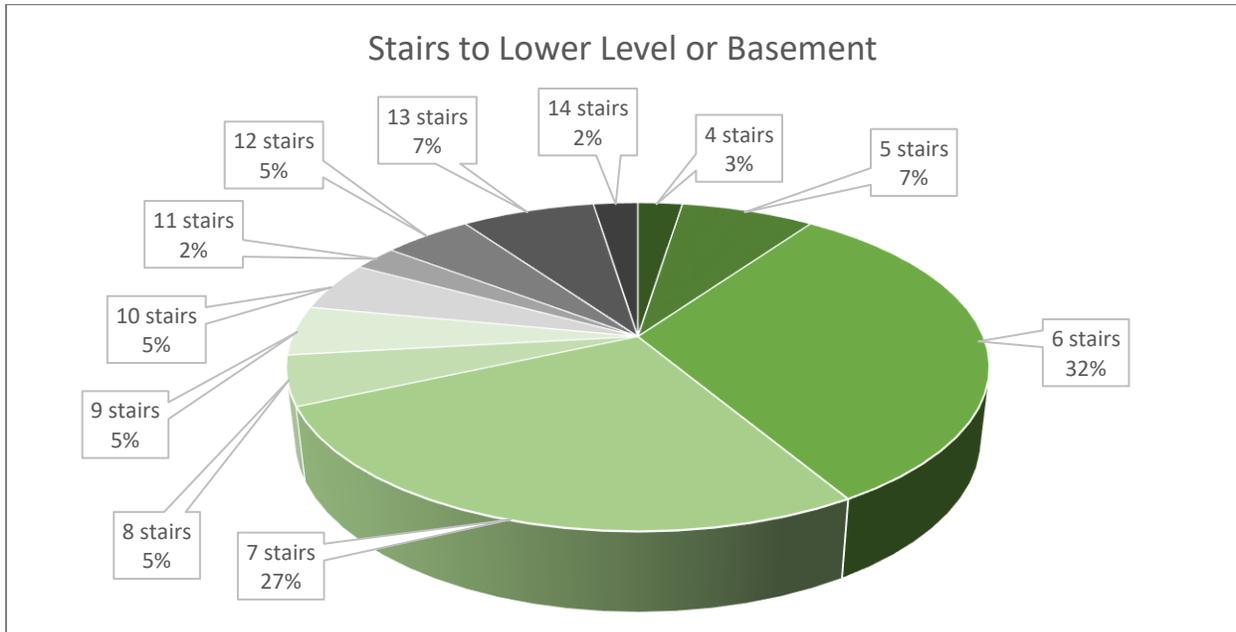
Stairs inside the home can be a significant barrier for seniors, especially those with mobility challenges, and pose a risk for falls and injuries. This section of the assessment explored in detail the various safety concerns around interior stairs and their design.



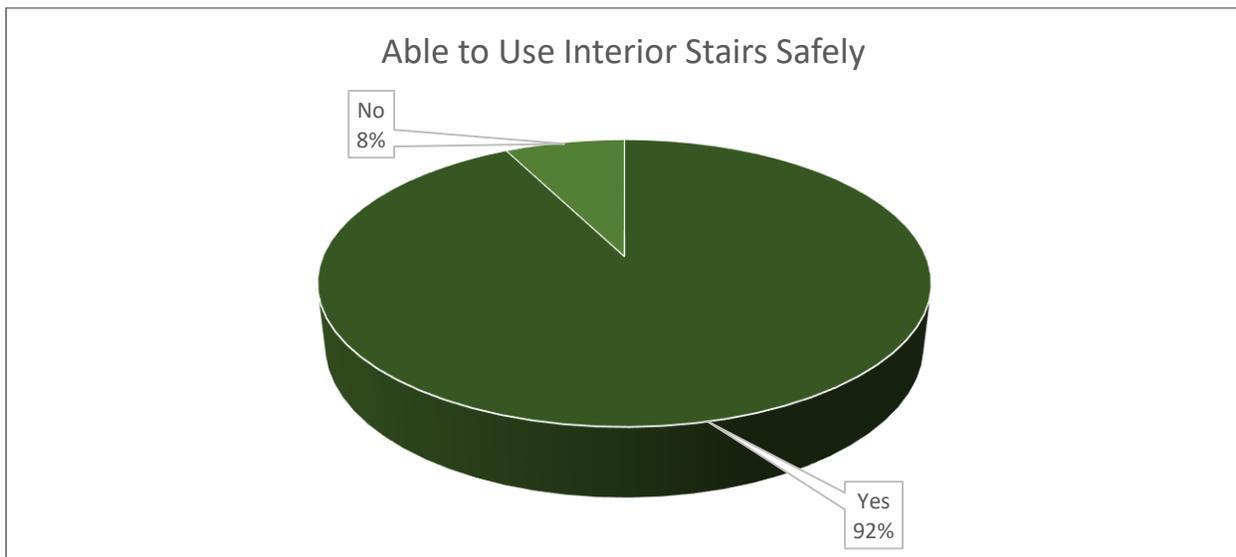
A total of 84% of respondents reported having stairways inside their homes.



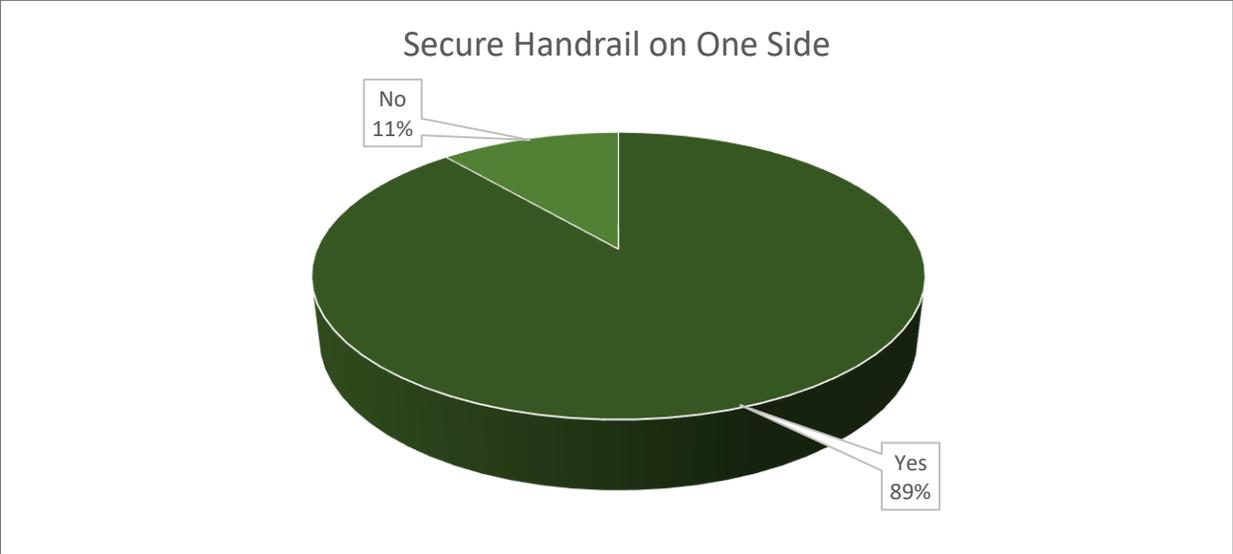
The number of steps per interior stairs hinted at split-level design as one of the most common types of homes for seniors in Tumbler Ridge. For example, more than one-half of assessed households noted between six and seven steps to their first upper level.



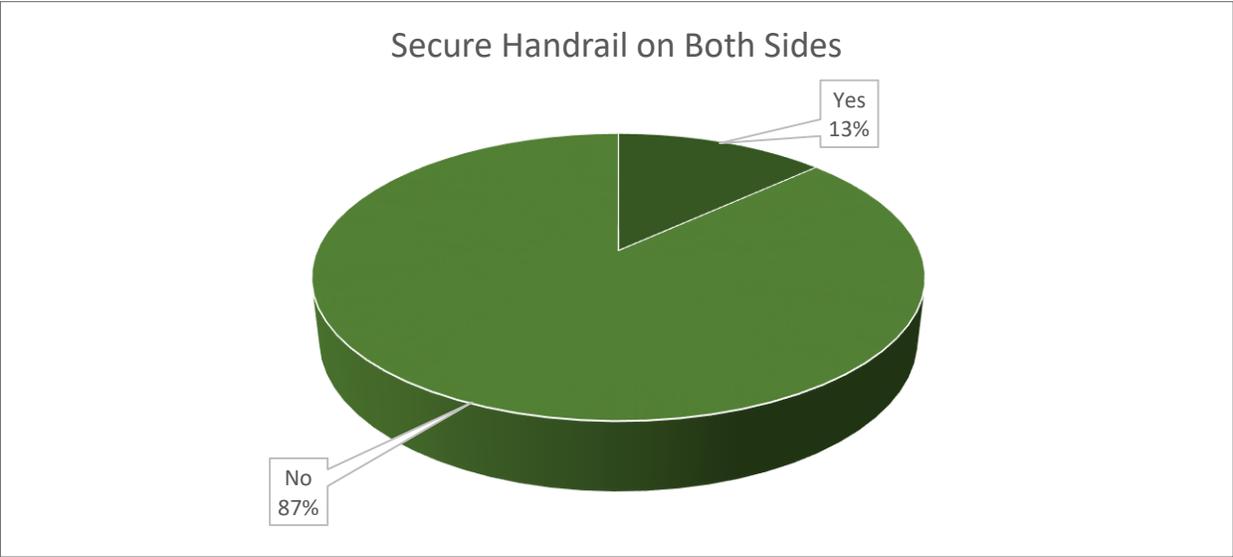
Again, the most common number of steps leading to the lower level in assessed homes were six to seven steps, as can be found in split-level types of dwellings.



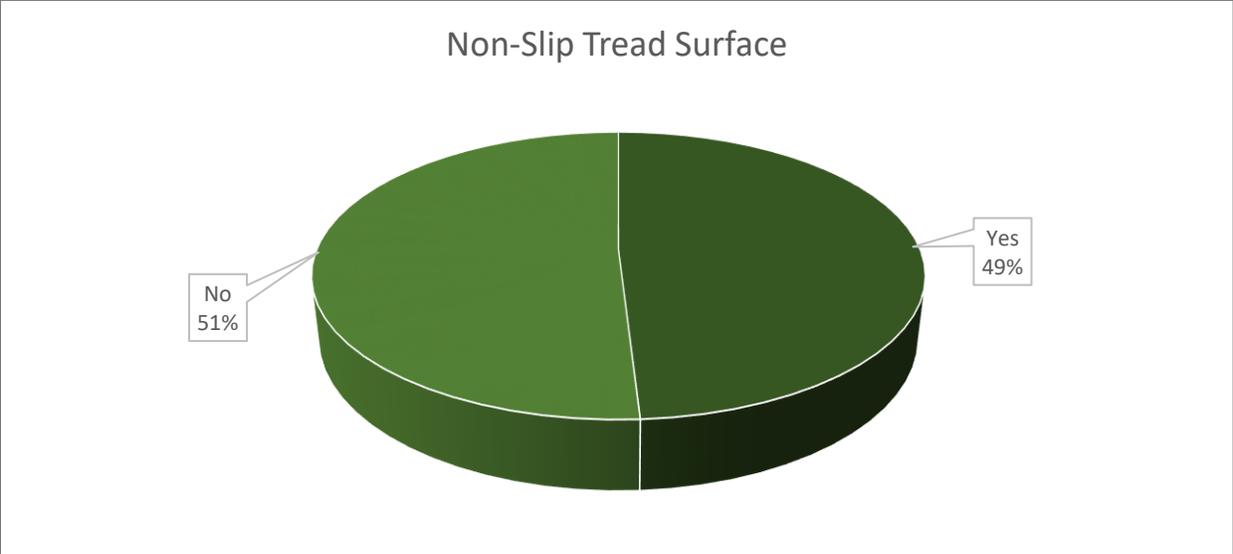
Of those with interior stairways, 92% could use them safely.



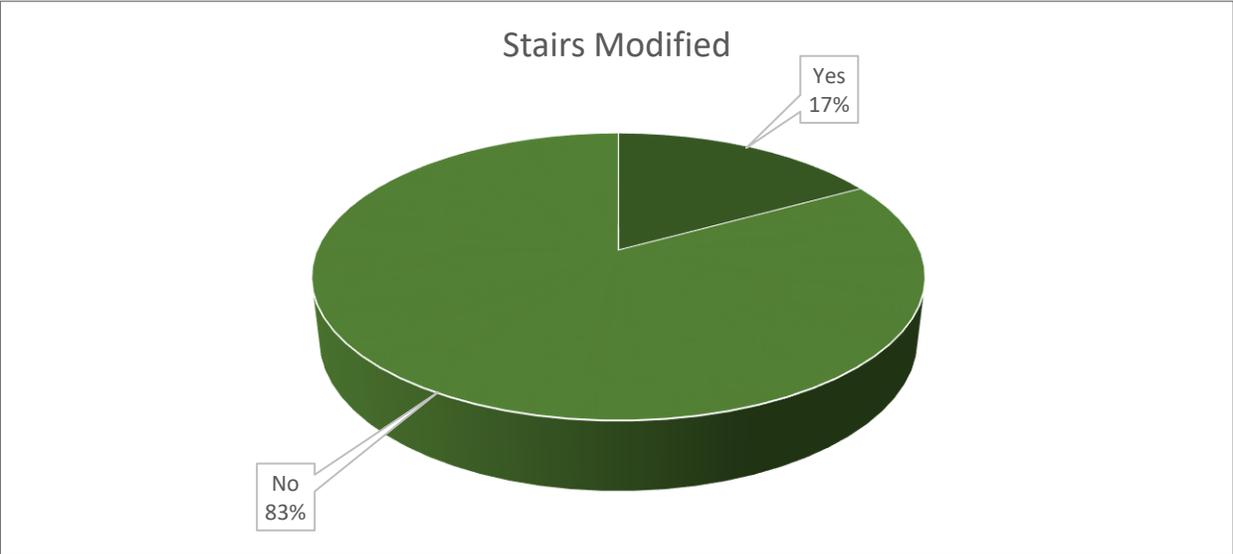
Almost 90% of those interior stairs featured secure handrails on one side.



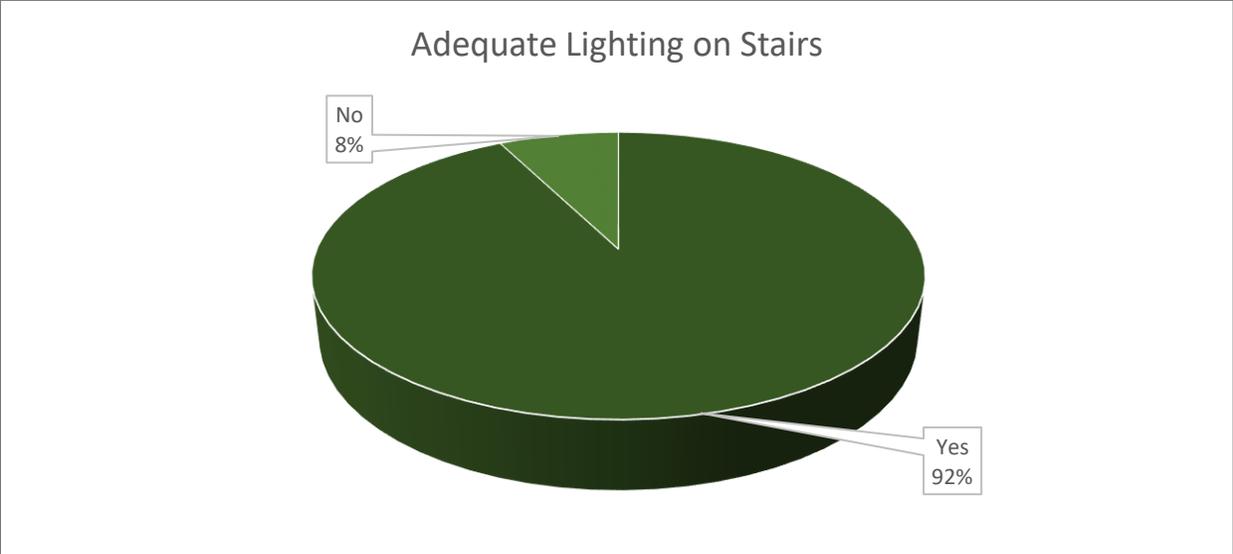
Thirteen percent had interior stairs with secure handrails on both sides.



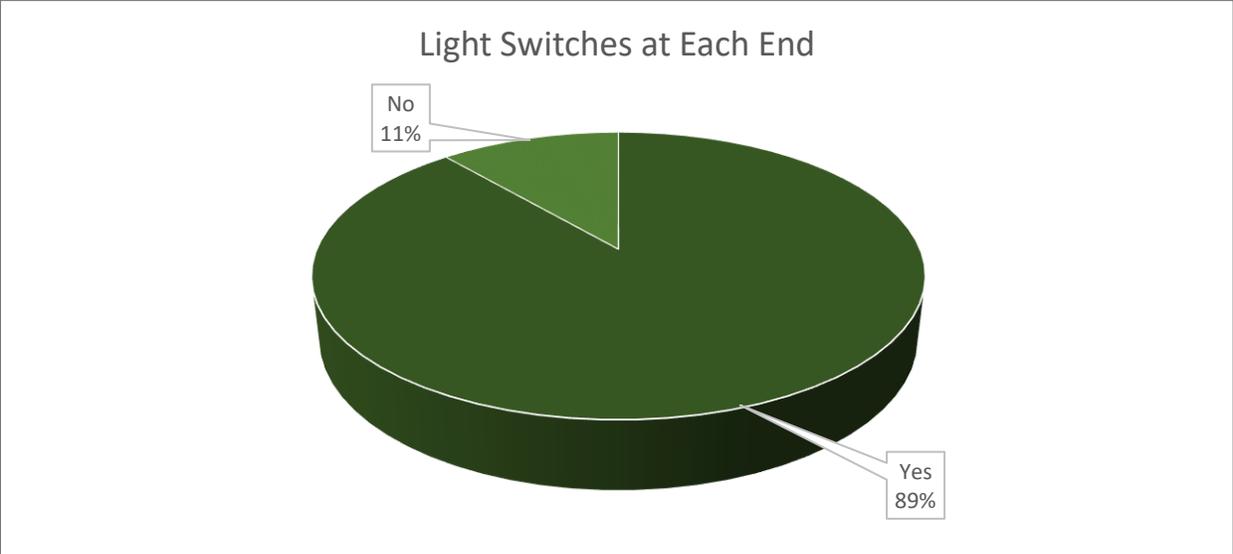
The prevalence of non-slip tread surfaces, including carpeting or dedicated non-slip features, was around one-half. The other half of interior stairs posed a potential risk for slipping on hard, smooth surfaces.



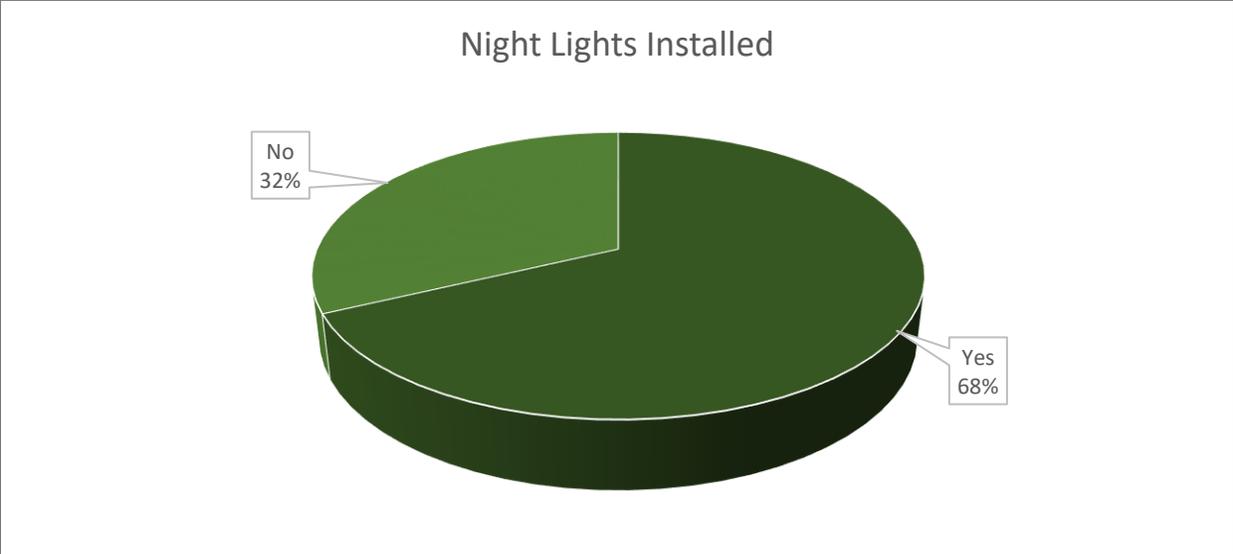
Modifications to stairs over time could include a number of safety measures, for example, resurfacing treads, redesigning the shape of stairways or size of treads, changing or installing handrails, or numerous other measures. Well over 80% of interior stairs had reportedly not been modified since the homes had been built.



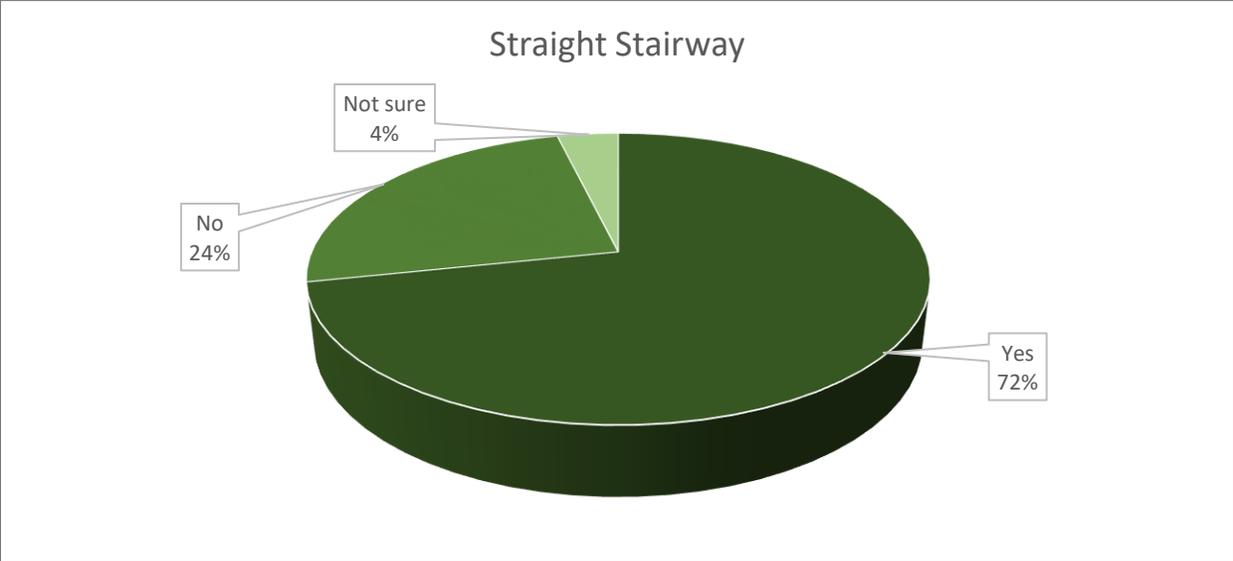
Adequate lighting on stairways is important to avoid tripping, falls, and injuries. Over 90% of respondents with interior stairs considered their lighting adequate.



Ideally, stairways have light switches at both ends, so that a resident can safely navigate well-lit stairs from the bottom or the top. More than one in ten respondents with interior stairways did not have switches on both ends.

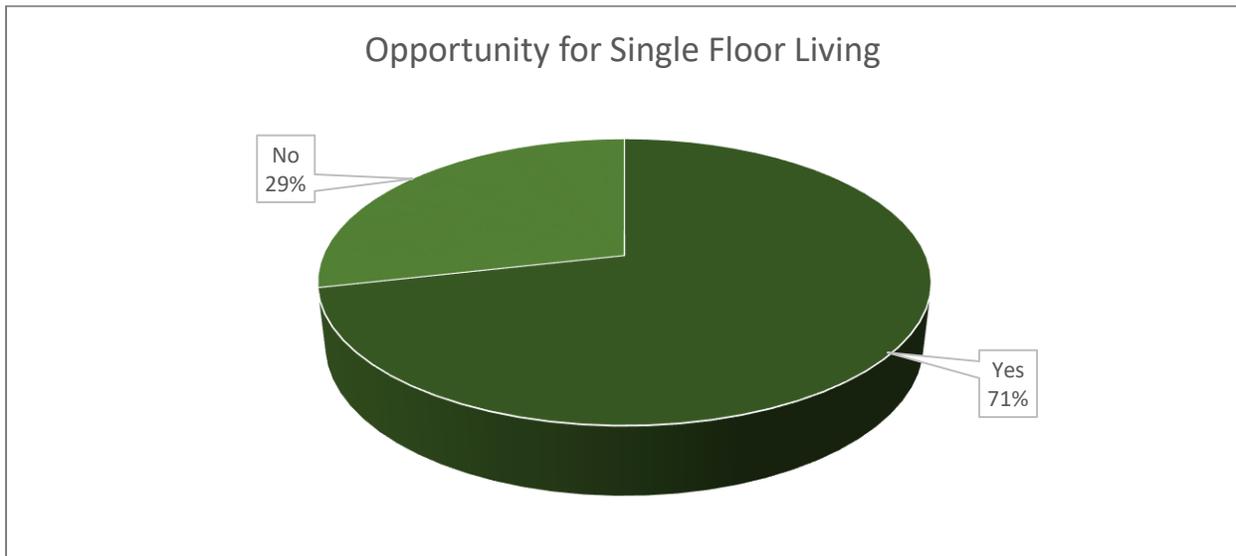


Nightlights are an additional measure to minimize the risk of tripping and falling on stairs in the dark. About one-third of respondents did not have nightlights installed on their stairways.

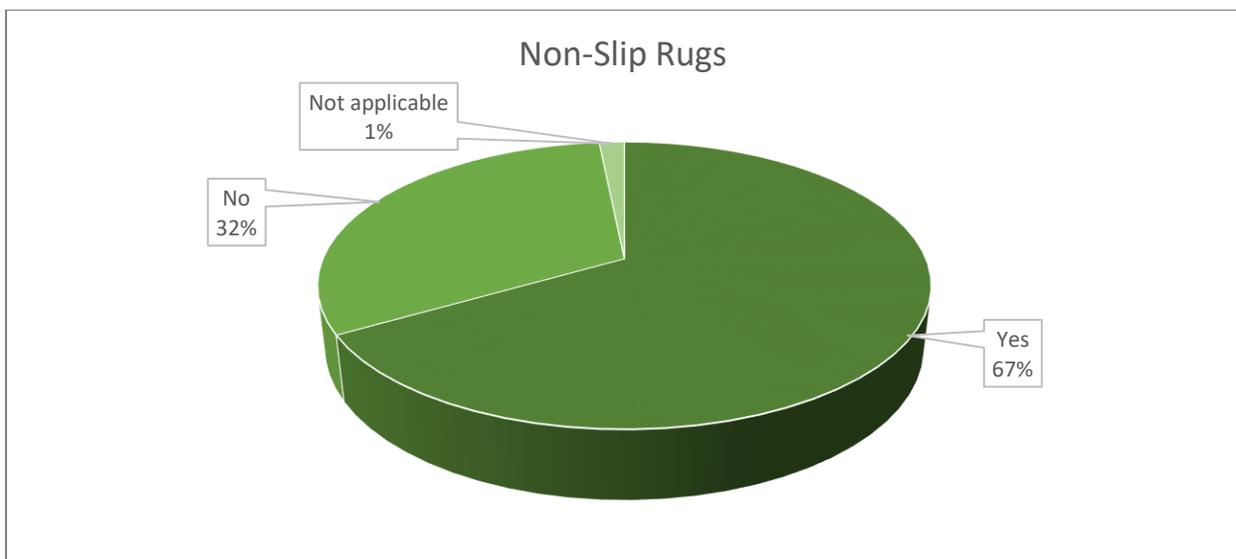


The shape of interior stairways determines the potential for stair lifts. When mobility challenges make safe navigation of stairways impossible, a stairlift can mean the difference between being able to stay in one’s home or having to move to more accessible accommodation. A total of 72% of senior respondents with interior stairways indicated their stairs were straight, and consequently would accommodate a stair lift if necessary. However, some respondents noted that a lack of space would make such measures difficult.

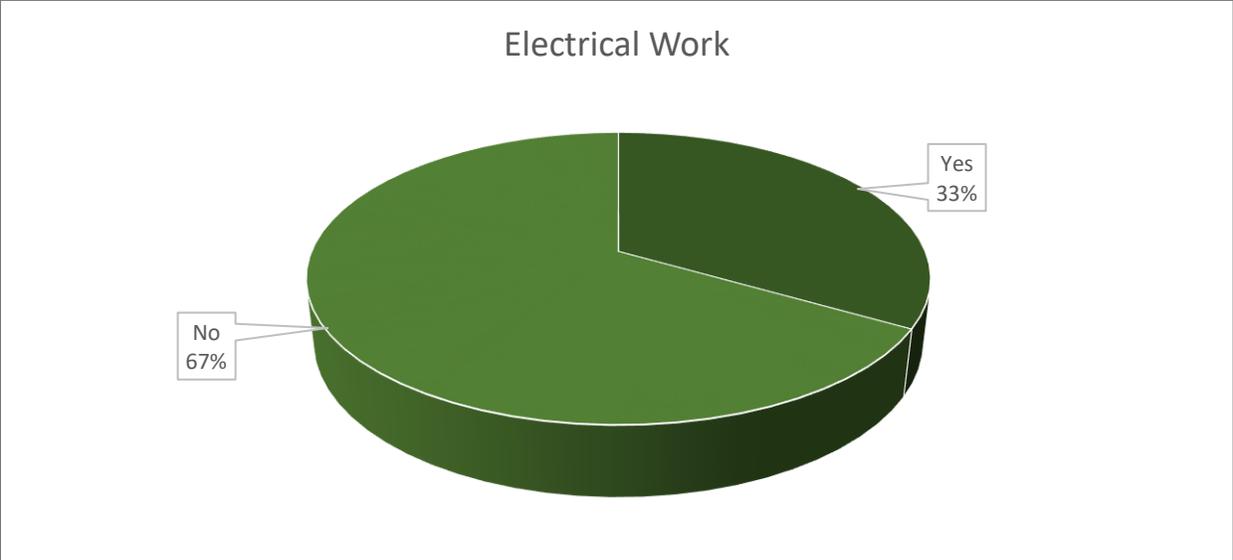
General



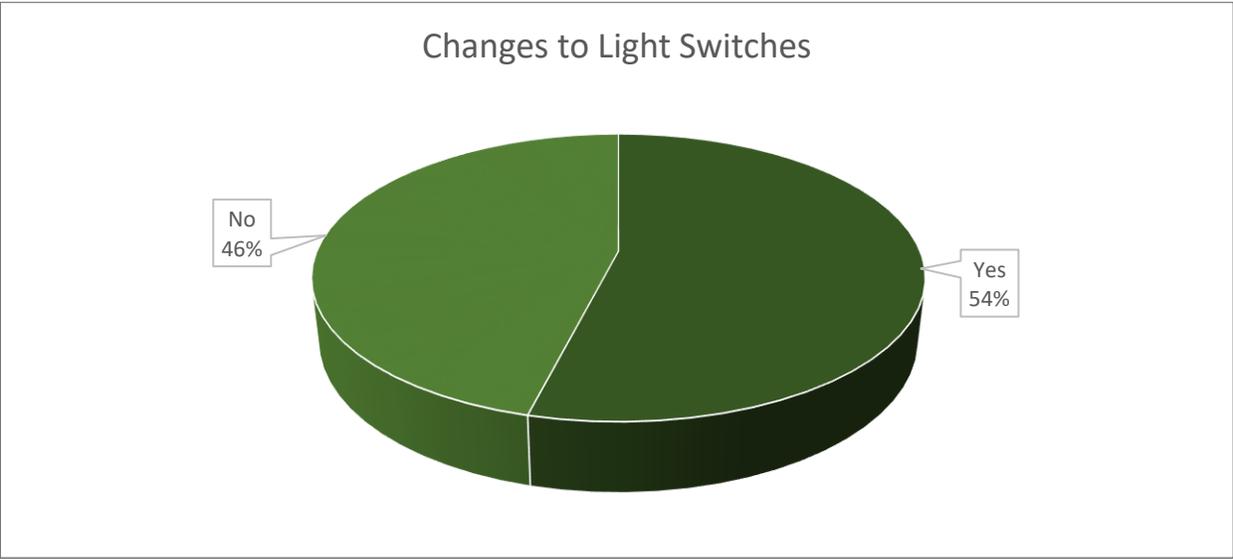
As alluded to in previous sections, the in-home assessment inquired whether single floor living was an option in respondents' homes. Single floor living means that all essential areas of a home, the bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, and living area, are available on one floor. Over 70% of respondents' homes offered the opportunity for single floor living. However, amenities such as laundry facilities, or alternatives, would also have to be considered.



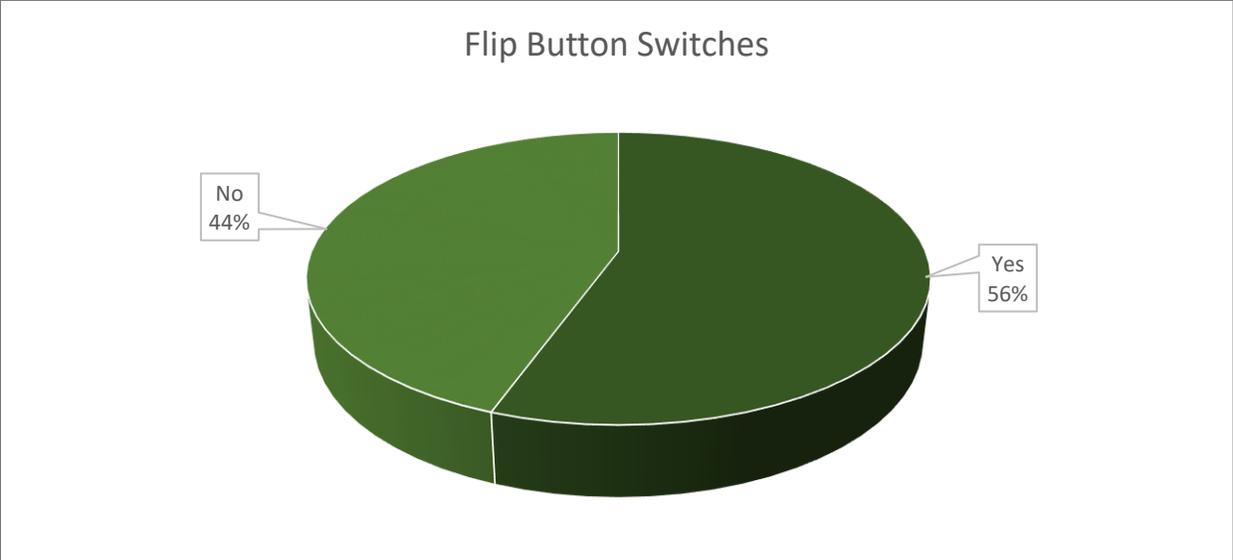
Two-thirds of respondents indicated they had non-slip rugs in their homes. For some respondents, especially those using mobility devices, rugs posed a tripping hazard or barrier.



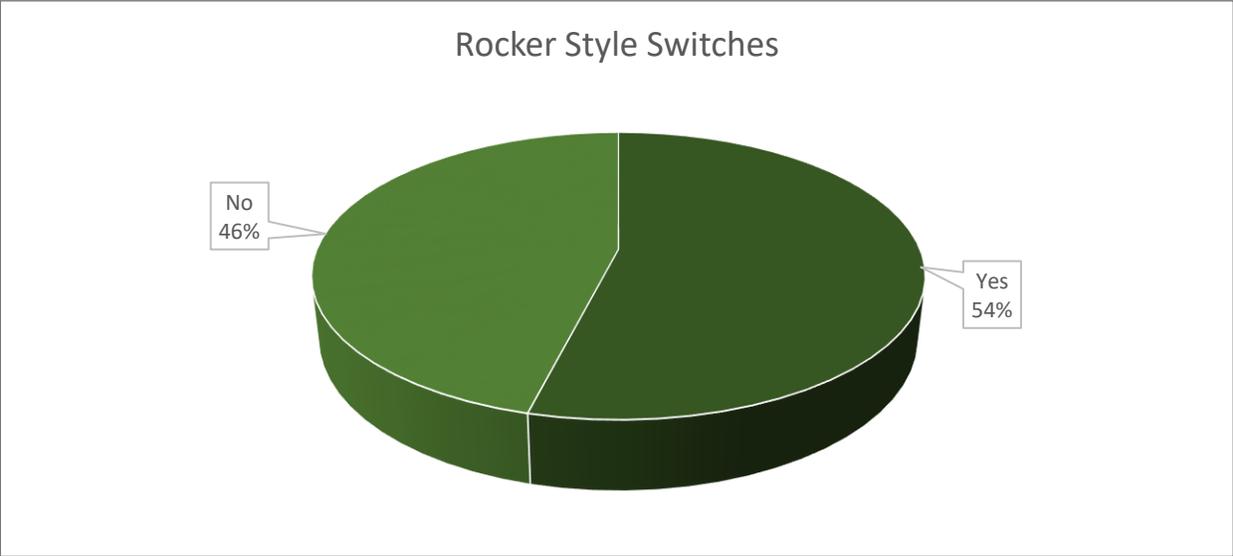
One-third of the assessed homes had had some electrical work done since they had been constructed.



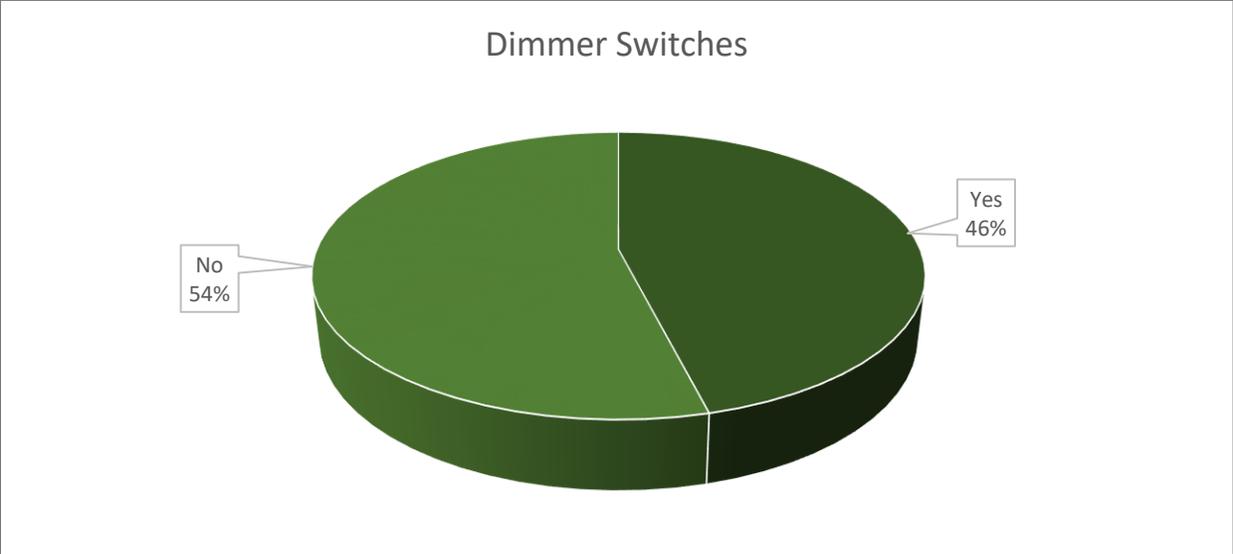
At 54%, a little over one-half of seniors who participated in the assessment had changed their light switches since their homes had been constructed.



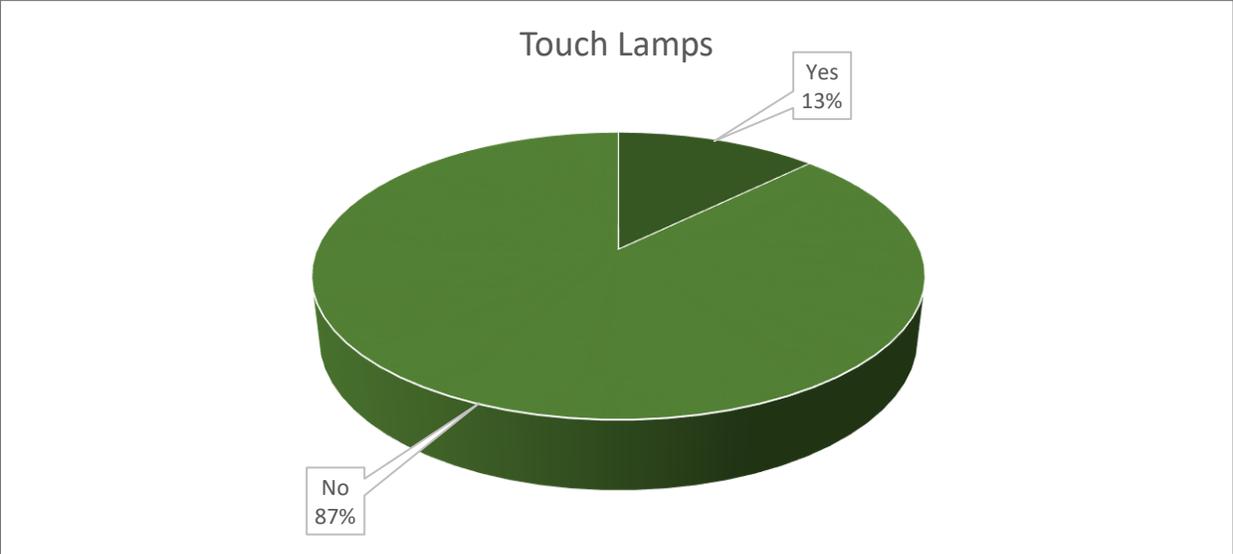
Different styles of light switches can facilitate easy operation or pose a barrier for people with mobility, balance, or dexterity challenges. Going through specific rooms in previous sections, the assessment inquired about whether respondents could easily operate their light switches. In this general section about features of the homes, 56% of respondents said they had flip button switches in their homes.



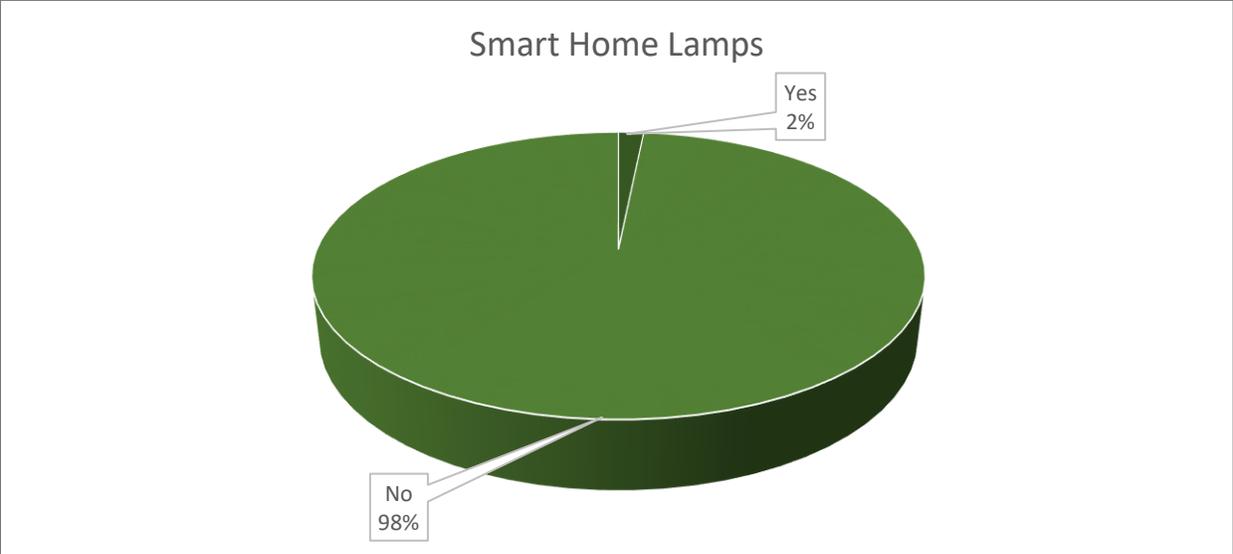
A total of 54% had rocker style light switches in their homes. Multiple answers were possible since homes may feature a variety of styles.



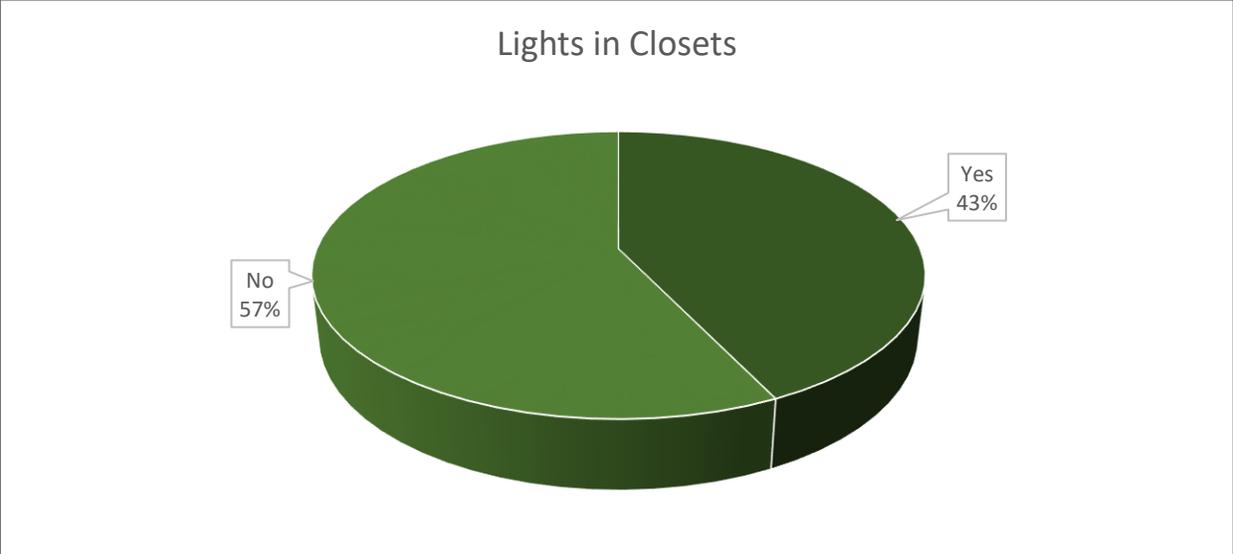
Dimmer switches were marginally less common as they were featured in 46% of respondent homes.



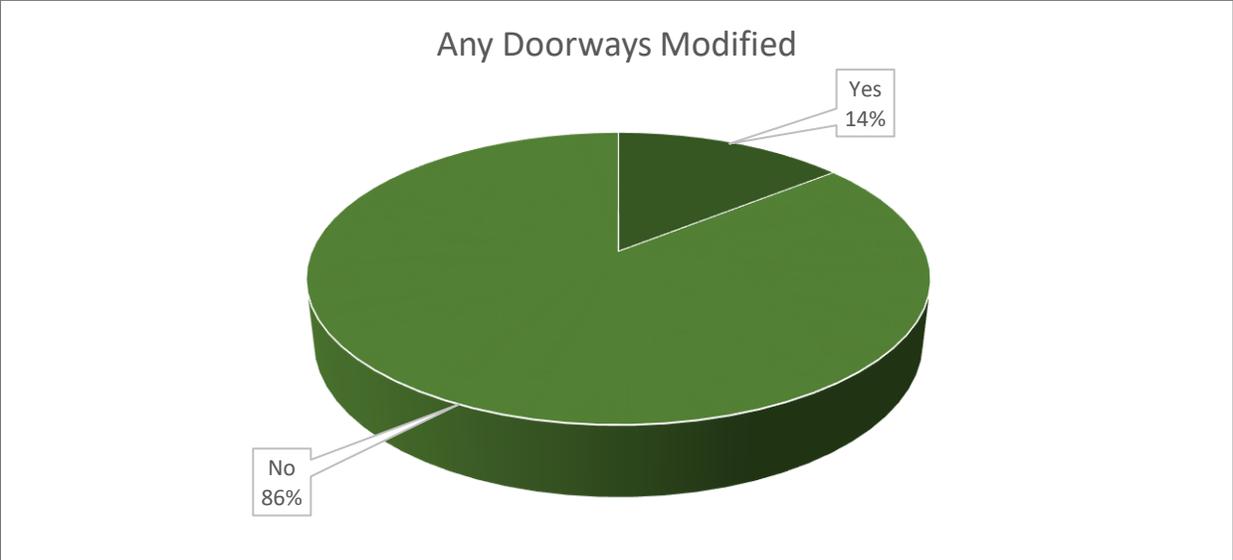
Touch lamps were used in 13% of respondent homes.



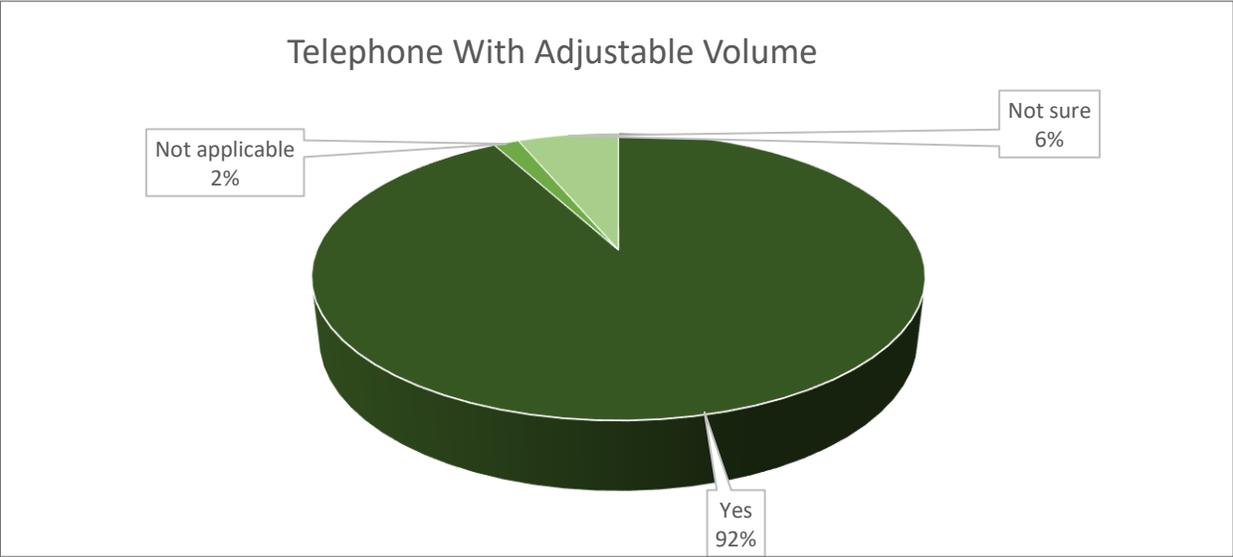
Smart home technology can offer solutions for some accessibility barriers within the home; however, the installation and operation also requires familiarity with this newer technology and a certain comfort level with the premises of smart home solutions, and can therefore pose a barrier in itself. Only two percent of respondents had smart lights installed in their homes.



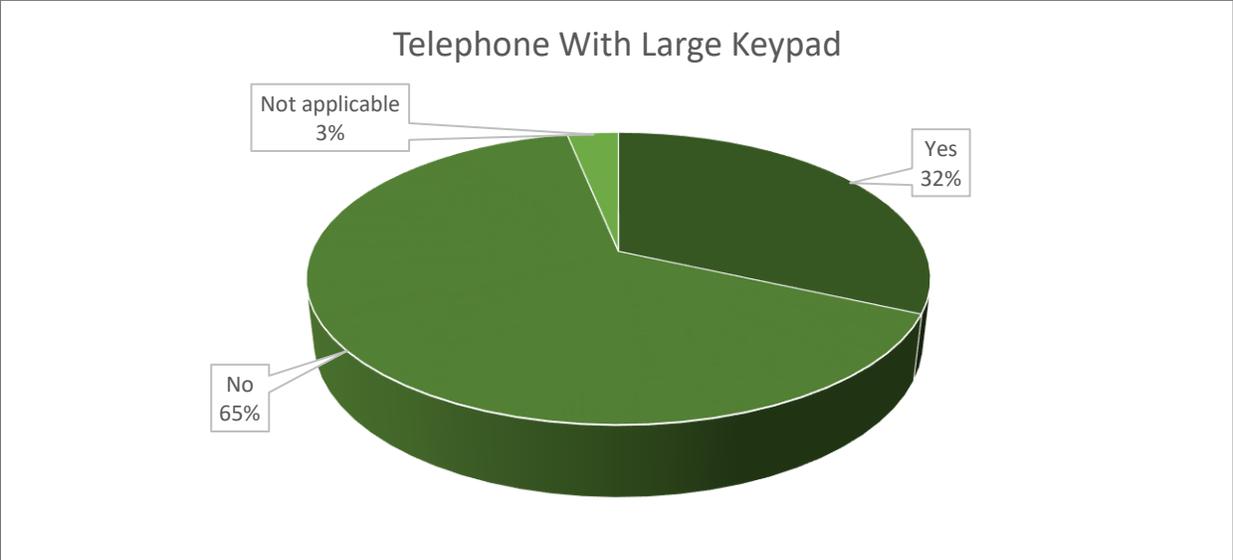
Generally, as people age, more light is required to see clearly. However, well over one-half of respondents did not have lights installed in their closets.



While specific doorways have been explored previously in this assessment, the overall occurrence of any post-construction modifications made to any entrances or doorways in the home was at 14%.



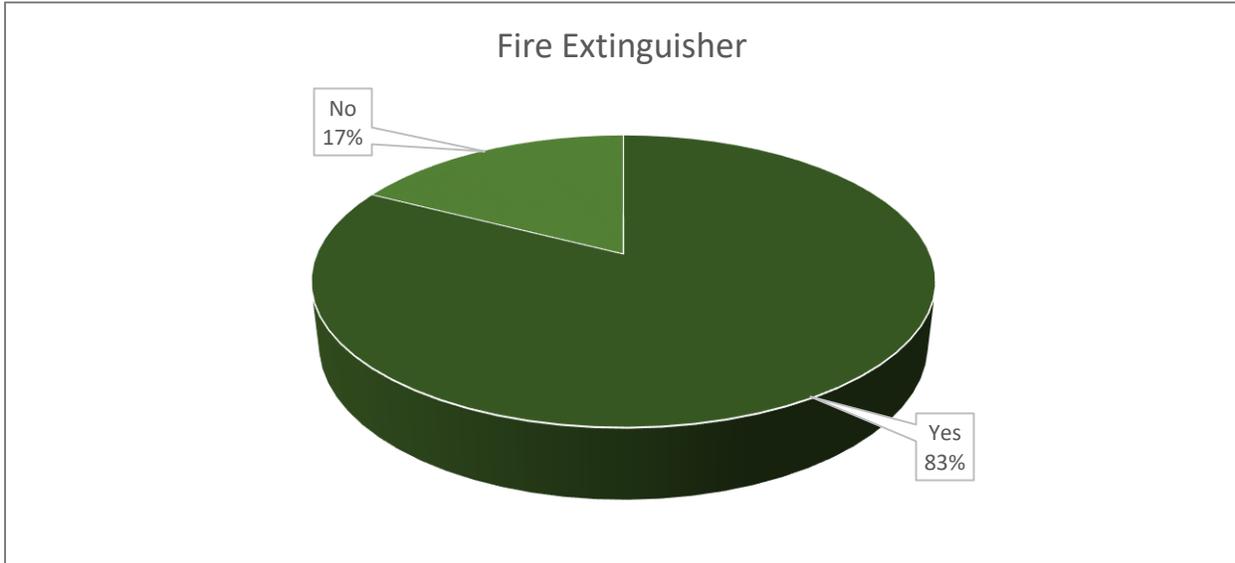
Deteriorating hearing is not uncommon in seniors, therefore the volume of the telephone and other electronics and communication devices around the home can determine how useful these devices are for the residents. Over 90% of respondents had telephones with adjustable volume. The six percent who were not sure, while a small portion of the sample, may indicate that some seniors would benefit from some assistance with setting up their household electronic devices.



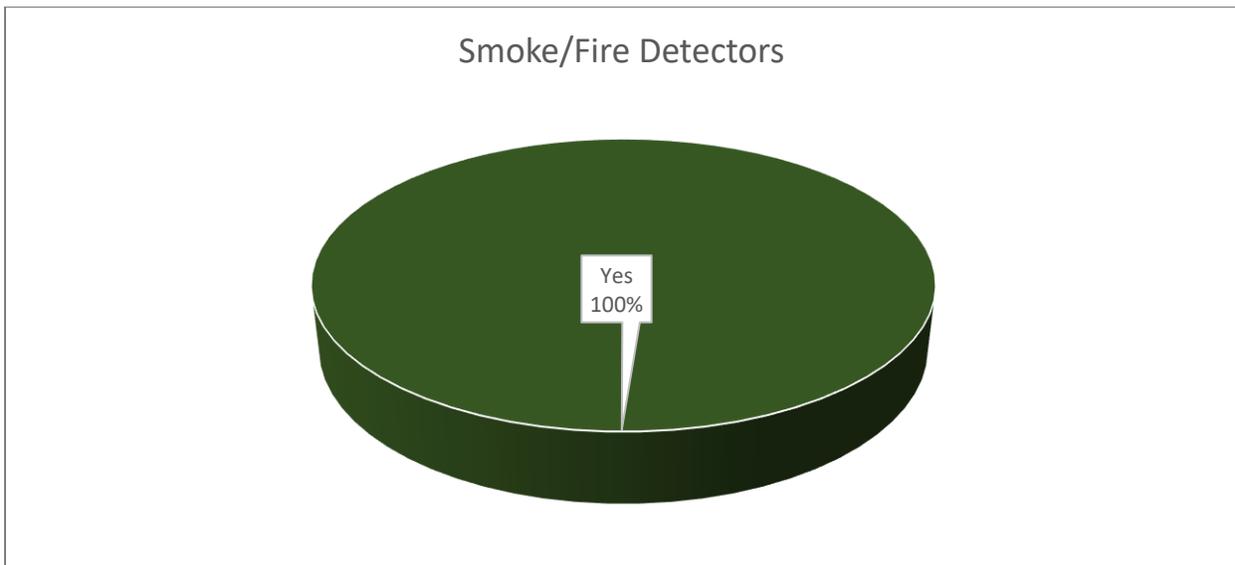
One-third of respondents had telephones with large keypads.

Fire/Emergency Safety

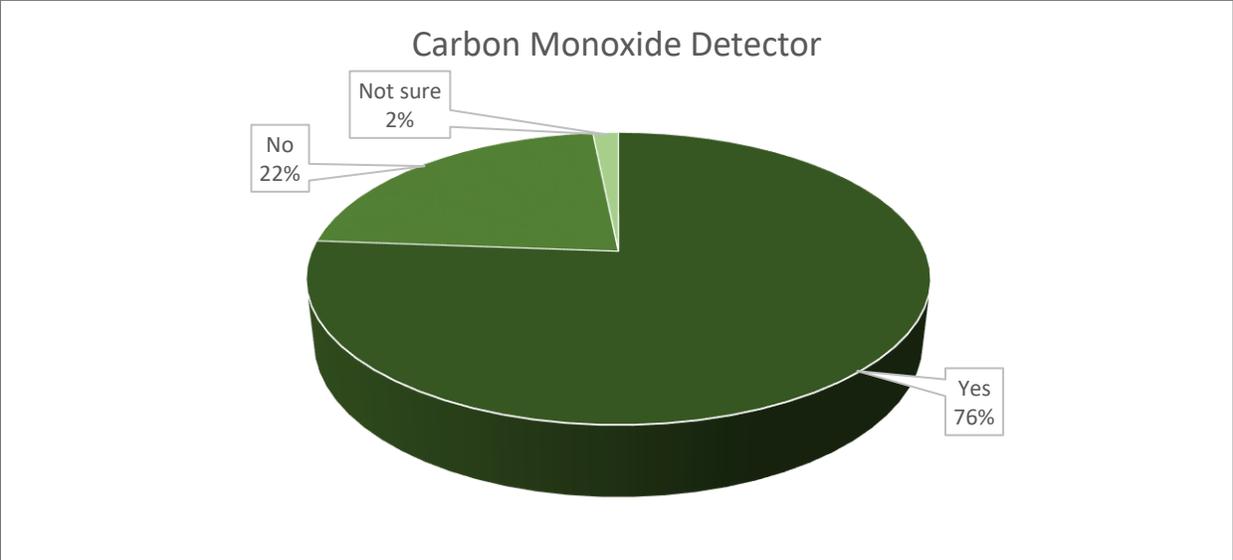
Standard safety measures around the home are important for senior households, particularly when residents of a home have mobility challenges.



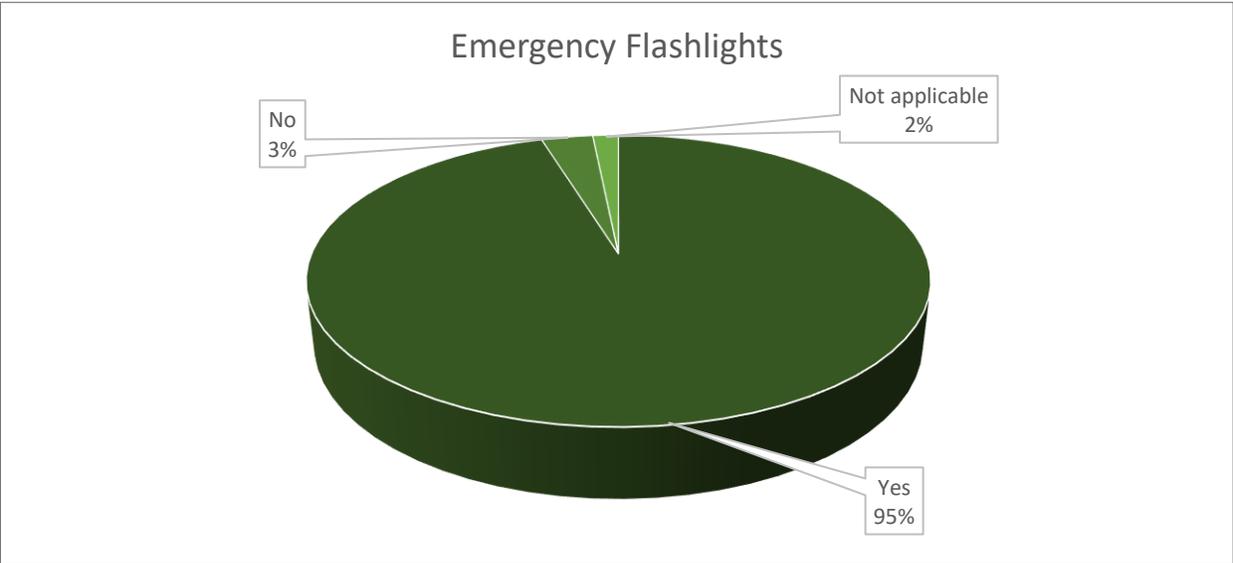
Of all respondents, 83% had a fire extinguisher in their home.



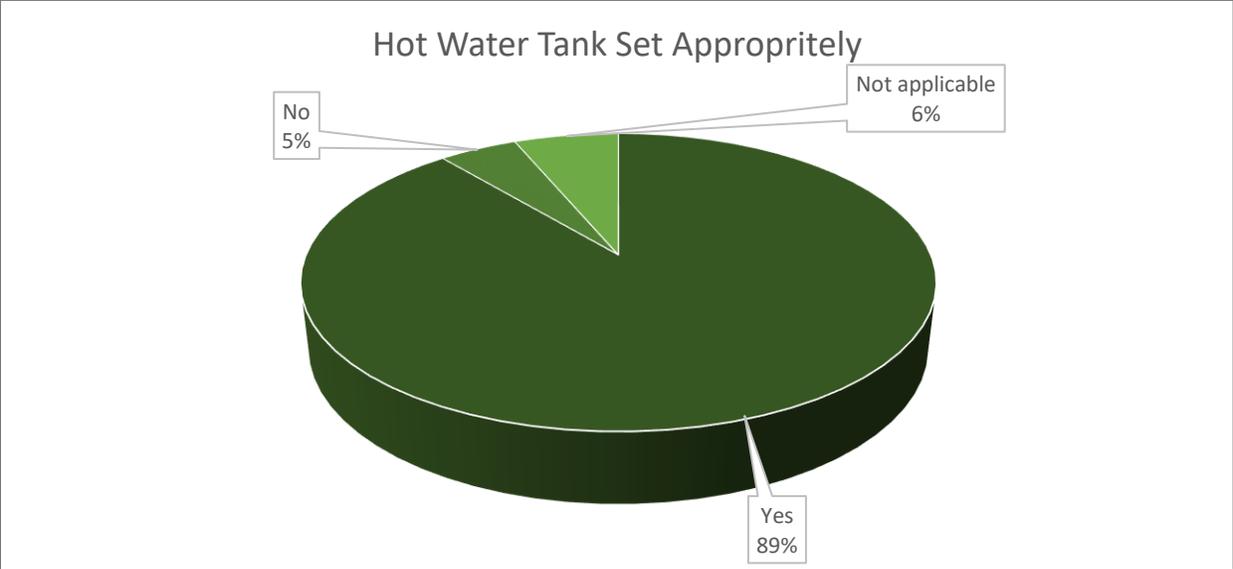
All respondents had smoke detectors installed in their homes.



Showing more room for improvement regarding safety in senior households in Tumbler Ridge, three-quarters of respondents had carbon monoxide detectors.



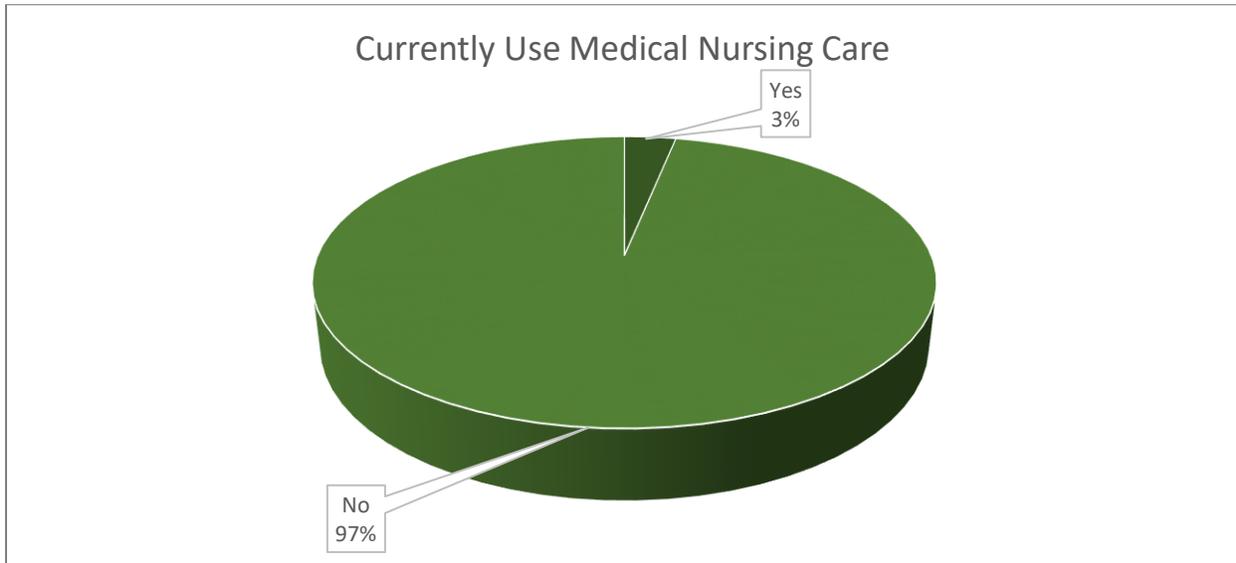
In a remote community where power outages can occur regularly, having emergency flashlights within easy reach can be an important measure to avoid risking falls and injury among seniors. Ninety-five percent of respondents indicated they had emergency flashlights ready in case they needed them. Some respondents mentioned backup generators as additional safety measures.



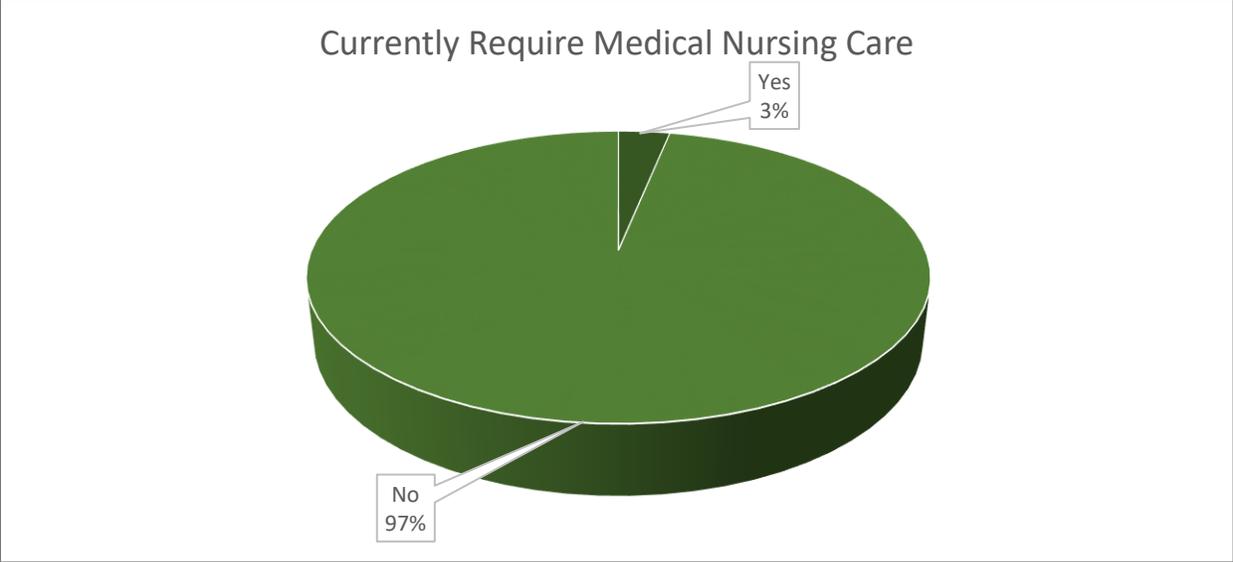
Almost nine in ten respondents had their hot water tanks set to appropriate temperature settings to avoid the risk of burns.

PART 4: CURRENT AND FUTURE SERVICE NEEDS

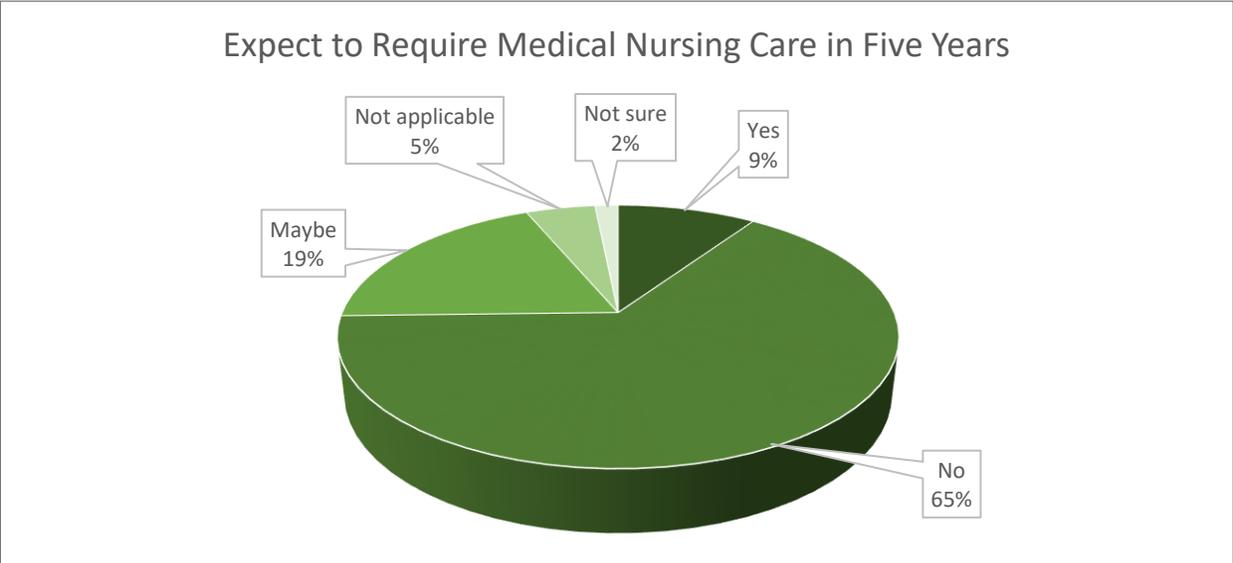
Part 4 of the assessment directed its focus to the service needs senior households in Tumbler Ridge are experiencing now or may experience in the future, and how and how well those needs were currently met.



Only three percent of respondents indicated that they were currently using medical nursing care. All of that care was provided by an agency. There may have been some disruptions to services due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

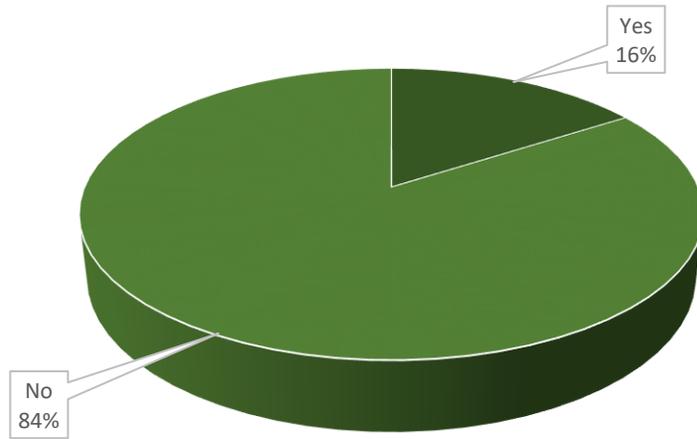


Upon inquiring about who currently required medical nursing care, respondents confirmed that those who received care were the only ones who required it.



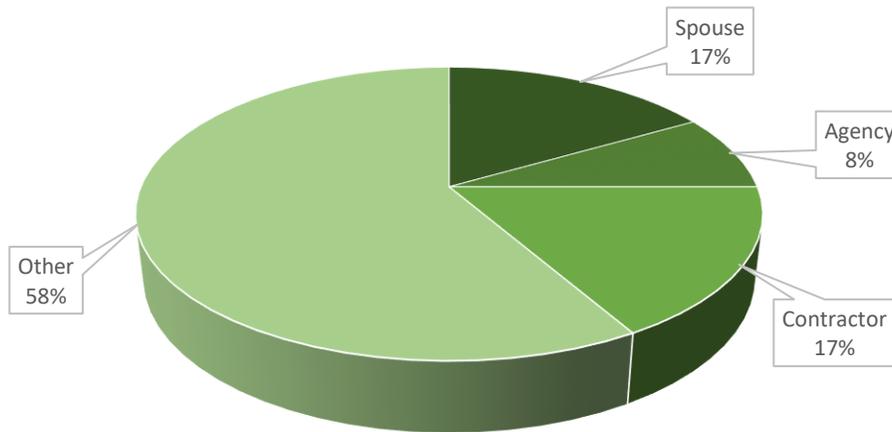
When asked whether they expected to require medical nursing care five years into the future, two-thirds of respondents indicated they did not expect to need care. Fewer than one in ten affirmed with certainty that they expected they would need medical care services. While that may not be a large proportion, it is an expected three-fold increase within five years. Over 20% indicated uncertainty or the possibility of needing it.

Currently Use Medication Management Service



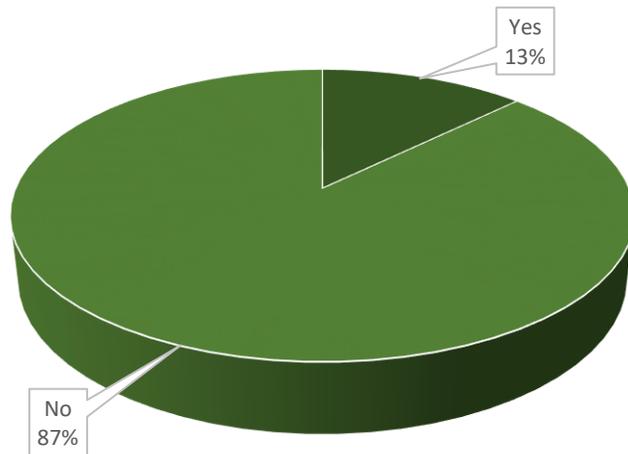
A total of 16% of respondents currently used services to manage their medications or prescriptions.

Medication Management Provided By



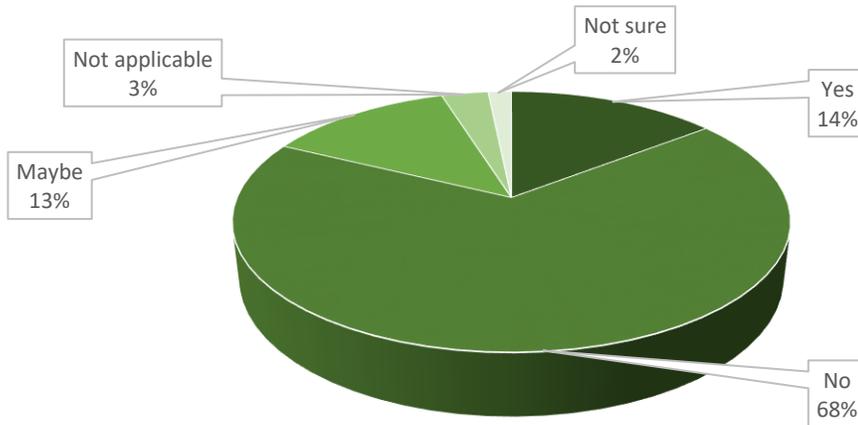
Among the service providers were spouses, contractor services, service agencies, and others, which included pharmacies and doctors.

Currently Require Medication Management Services

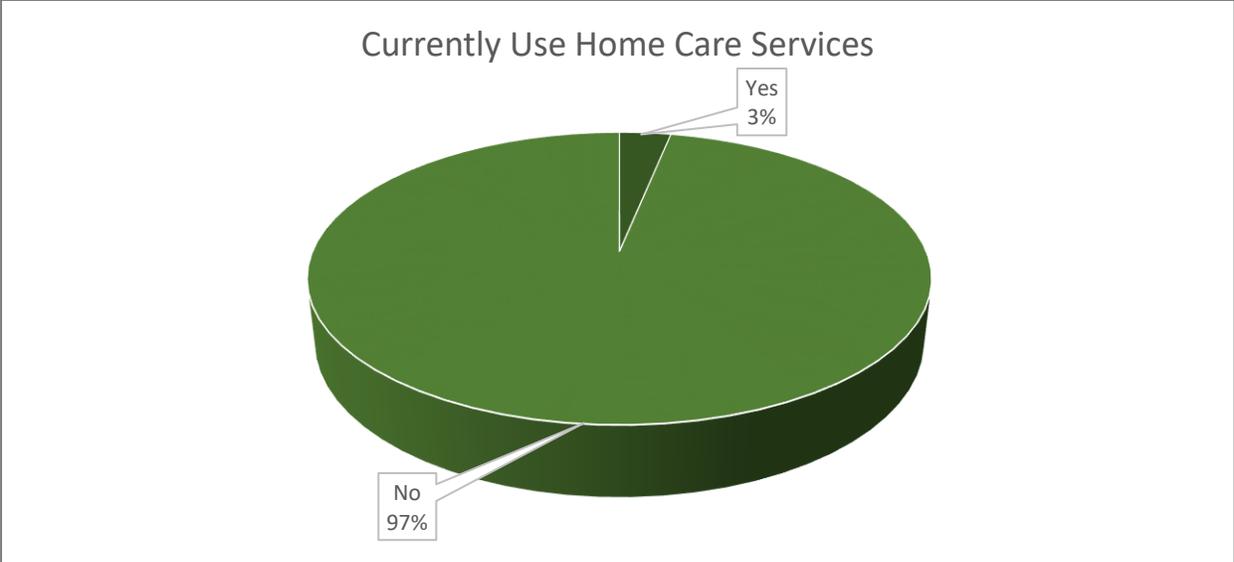


With 13% requiring assistance with medication and prescription management, the assessment indicated that not everyone currently using such services felt they needed them.

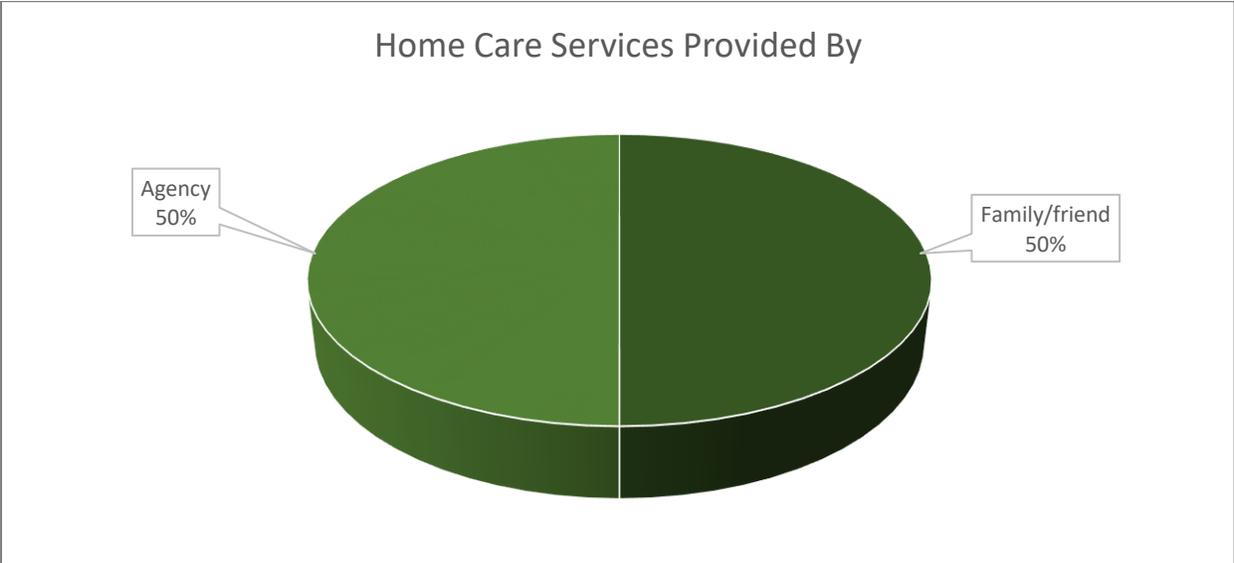
Expect to Require Medication Management Services in Five Years



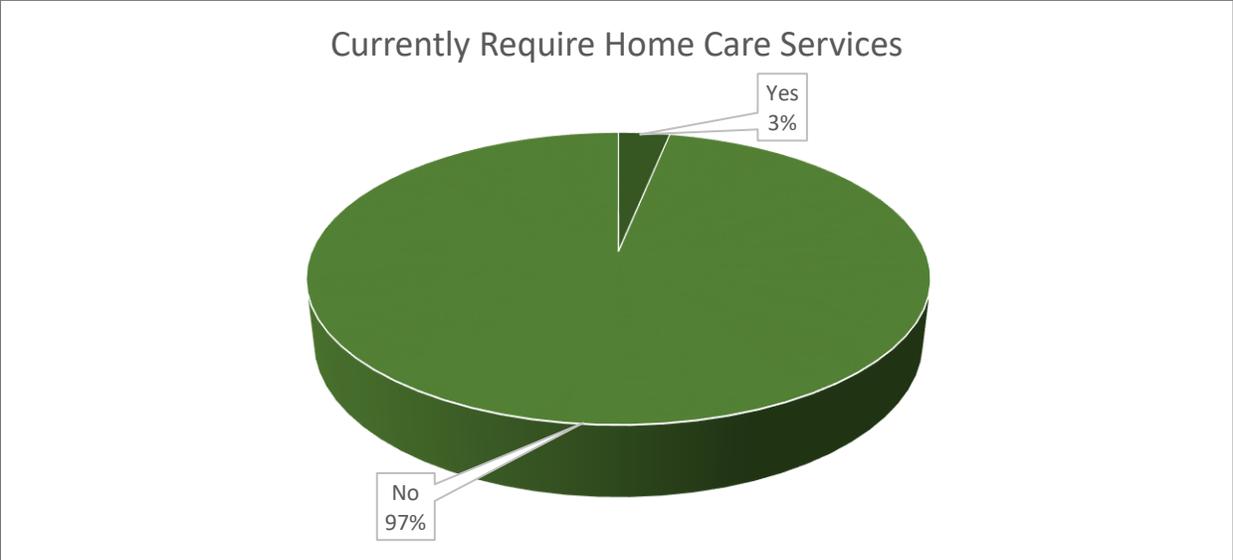
Over two-thirds of respondents did not expect to require medication and prescription management services in the next five years, while 14% expected to need them, and a total of around 15% were uncertain. This indicated no great expected increase in medication and prescription management needs.



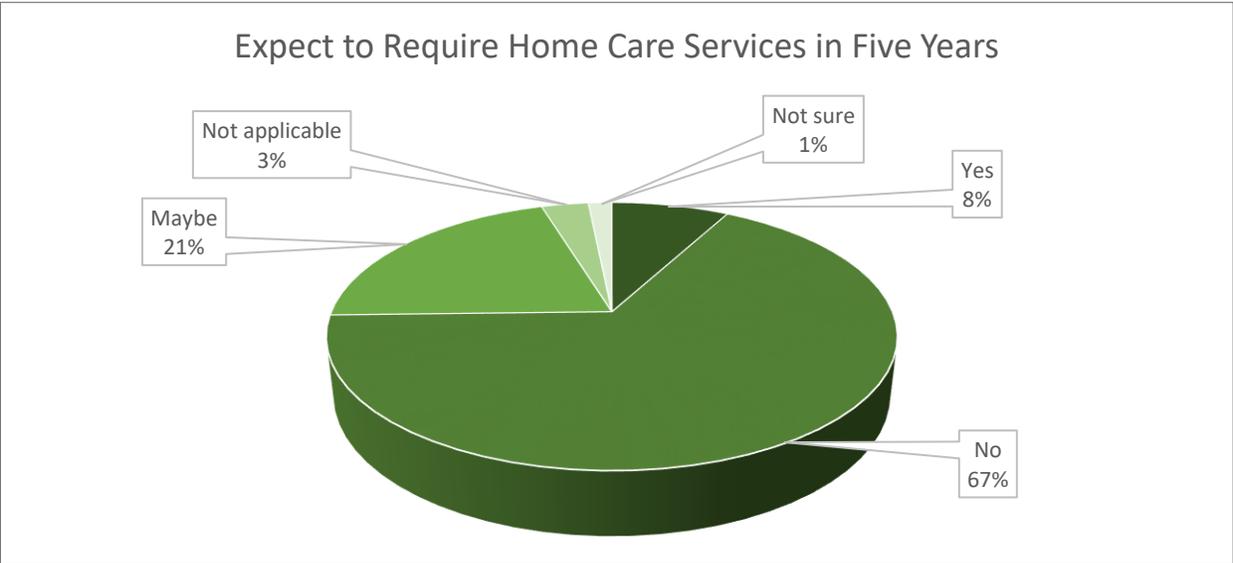
Three percent of respondents currently used home care services.



Those services were provided by agencies, or family members and friends.

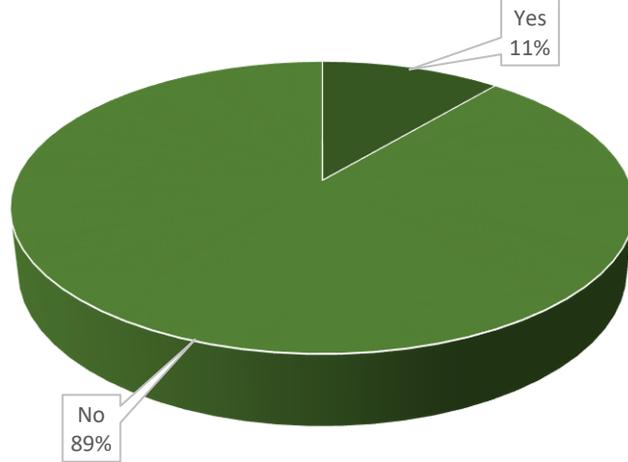


The assessment found that the need for home care services was currently congruent with the services provided.



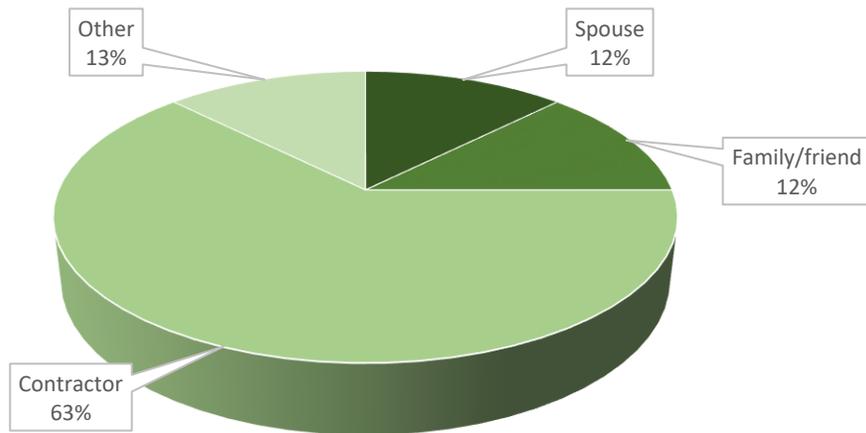
Two-thirds of respondents did not expect to need home care services, but over one in five considered it a possibility, and eight percent were certain they would need it. This could more than double the current need within five years.

Currently Use Cleaning and Laundry Services



Over 10% of respondents currently used cleaning and laundry services.

Cleaning and Laundry Services Provided By



Those services were mostly provided by contractors (63%), such as hired cleaners, but also by family members or friends, spouses, and others.

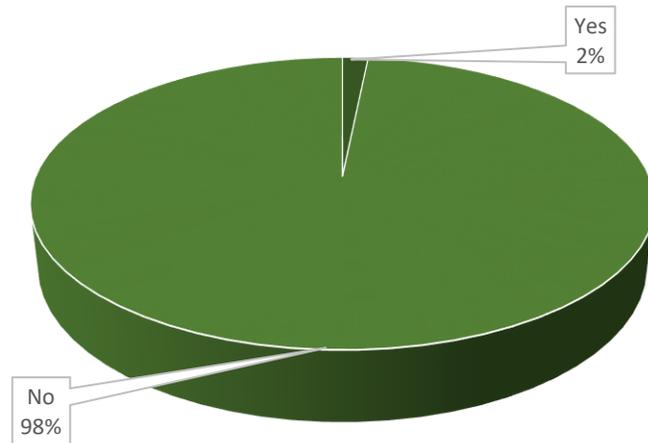


At the time of the assessment, slightly more respondents indicated they currently needed cleaning and laundry services (13%) than actually used them (11%), showing an unmet need.



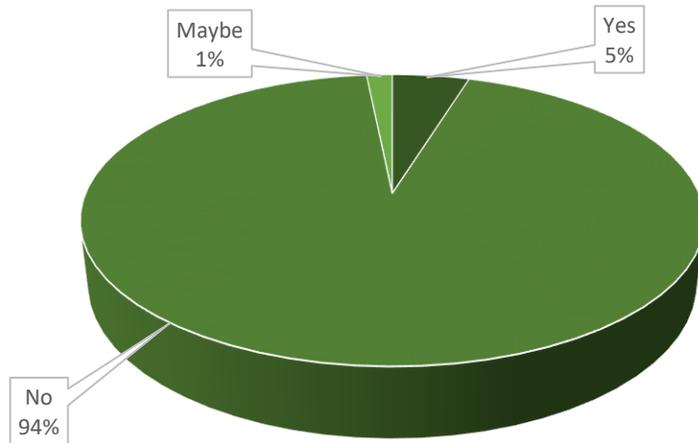
While close to 60% did not expect to need help with cleaning and laundry within the next five years, almost 20% confirmed they would need cleaning and laundry services, thereby indicating an increase in need in Tumbler Ridge of around 50%. An additional 21% of respondents considered the need for help within five years a possibility.

Currently Use Meal Prep and Cooking Services

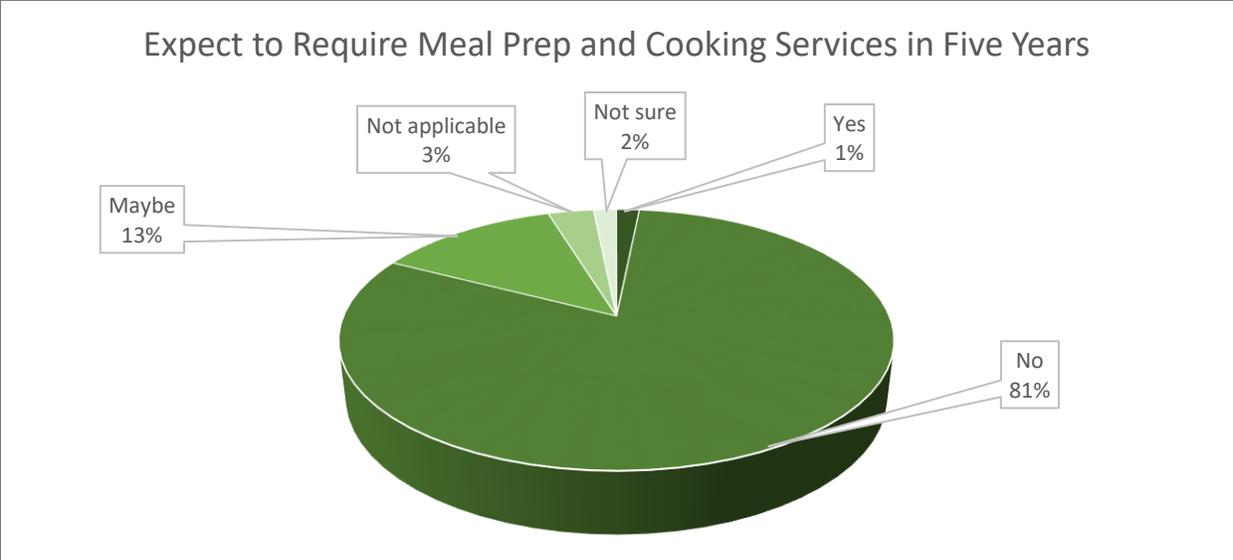


Ninety-eight percent of respondents indicated they did not use meal preparation and cooking services. Not all who took advantage of such assistance provided information about who fulfilled the need for the service, but commentary revealed that family members and paid services were among them.

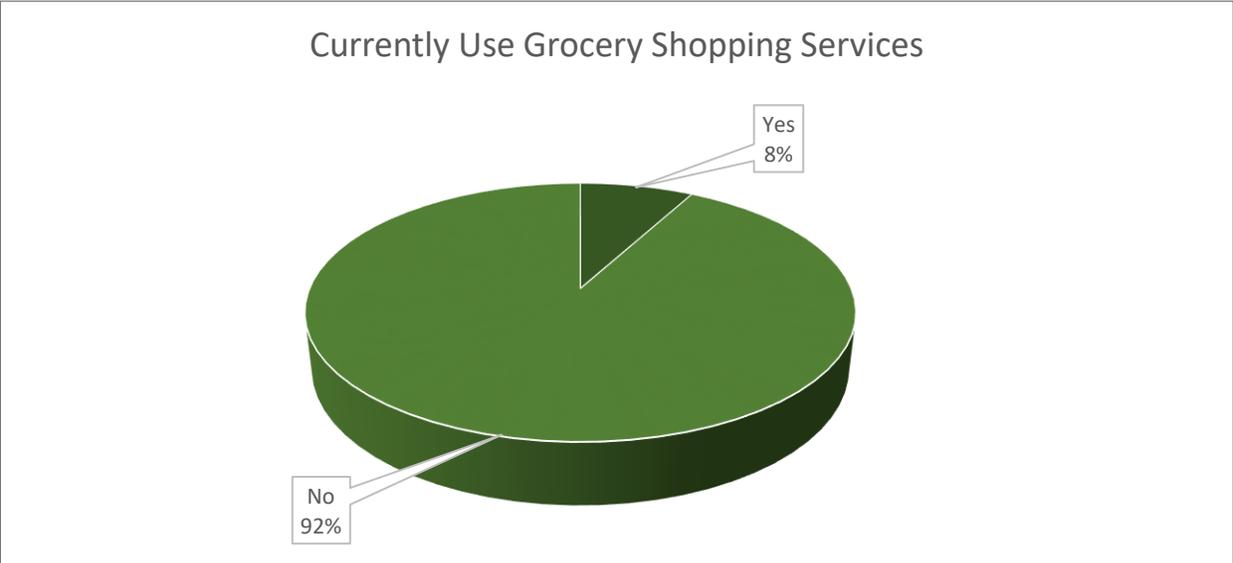
Currently Require Meal Prep and Cooking Services



With six percent of all respondents saying they currently needed help, or may need help, with meal preparation, the current need for this service was not met in the community.

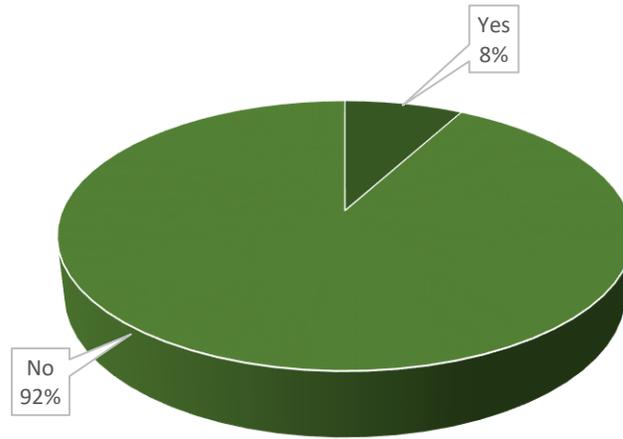


A total of 16% thought they would, or more commonly may, need the service in five years. This would mean an almost three-fold increase in the need for meal preparation and cooking assistance for seniors in Tumbler Ridge in the near future.



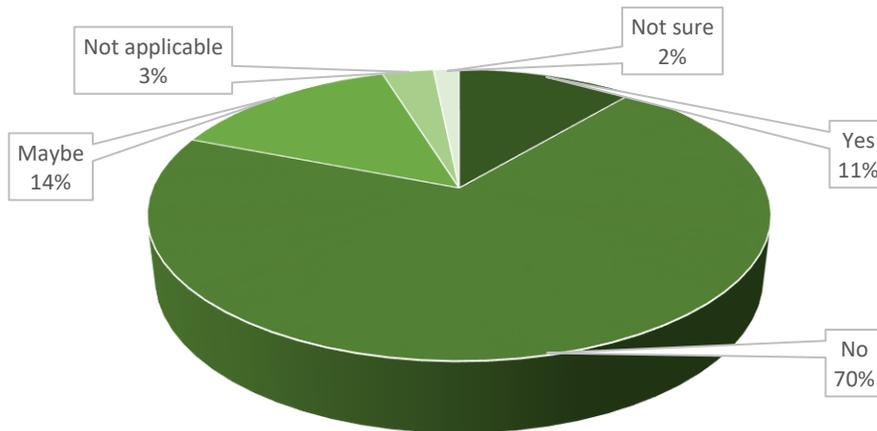
Help with grocery shopping was used by eight percent of respondents at the time of the assessment. That help was predominantly provided by family members or friends, but local stores also offered curbside pickup or delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently Require Grocery Shopping Services



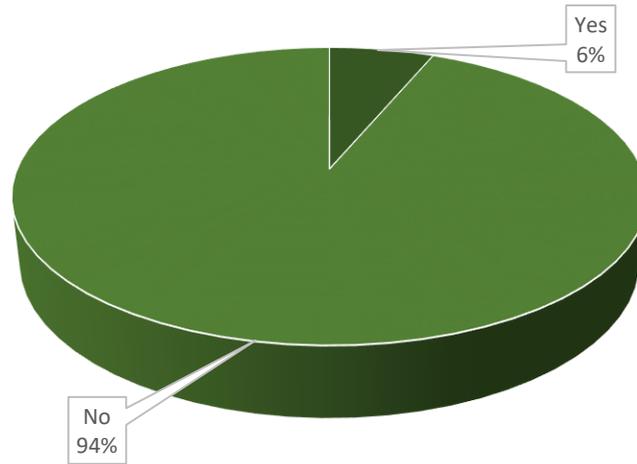
The need for grocery shopping help identified in the assessment was also around 8%; however, not all individuals who indicated they needed help currently used it, and vice versa, some respondents who did not currently require the help used it at the time of the assessment. The pandemic may have influenced the need as well as the wish to employ help with grocery shopping.

Expect to Require Grocery Shopping Services in Five Years



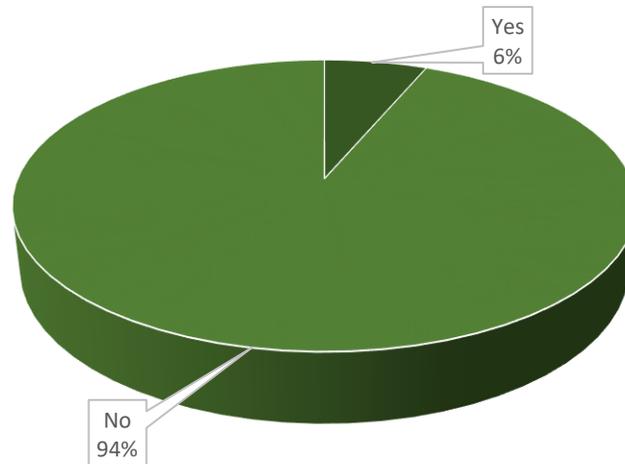
While 70% of respondents did not expect to require help with grocery shopping in five years, one-quarter indicated they would, or may, need the help. This would more than triple the need for assistance with seniors' grocery shopping in the next five years.

Currently Use Banking and Bill Paying Services



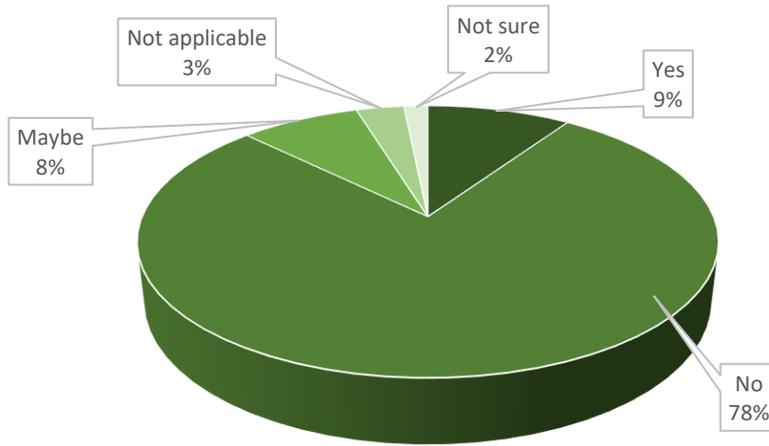
Six percent of respondents currently used help with banking and bill paying. The majority of that help was provided by family members or friends, and could be received, for example, in the form of family members assisting with online banking options for seniors.

Currently Require Banking and Bill Paying Services



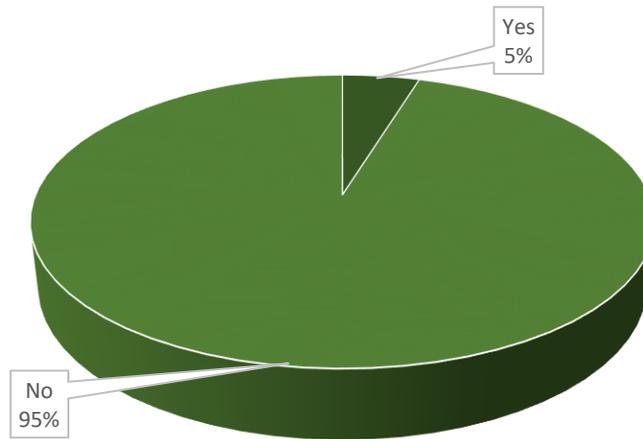
The current use of help with banking and bill paying covered the current need for such services among Tumbler Ridge seniors.

Expect to Require Banking and Bill Paying Services in Five Years



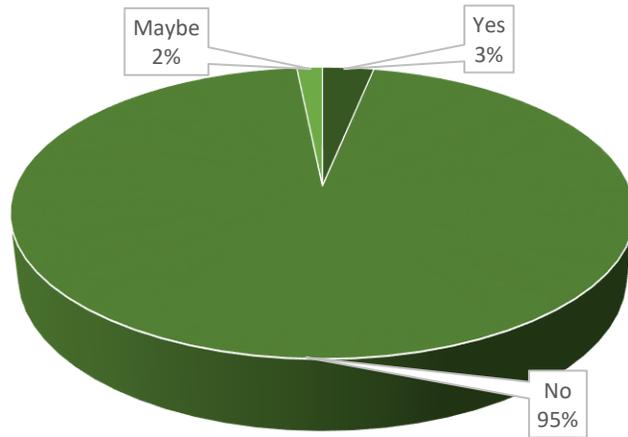
With 16% of respondents indicating they would, or may, need help with banking and bill paying in five years, the need for such services should be expected to more than double.

Currently Use Home Mail Delivery Services



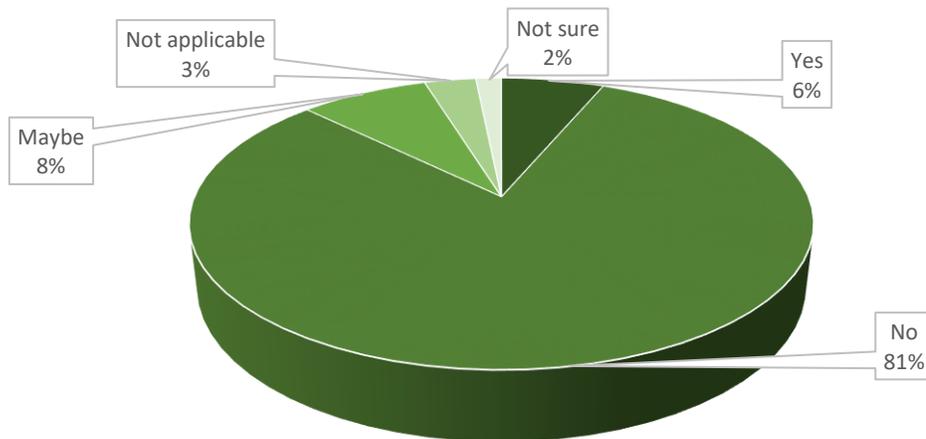
With mail commonly delivered to post office boxes or community mailboxes, five percent of respondents indicated they used services to have their mail delivered to their homes. This service was mostly provided by family members or friends.

Currently Require Home Mail Delivery Services



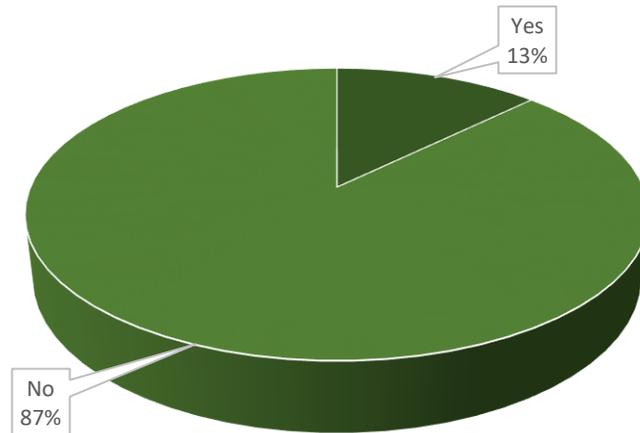
Not everyone who used help with home mail delivery confirmed that they needed it; however, some who did not use it, thought they may need it.

Expect to Require Home Mail Delivery Services in Five Years



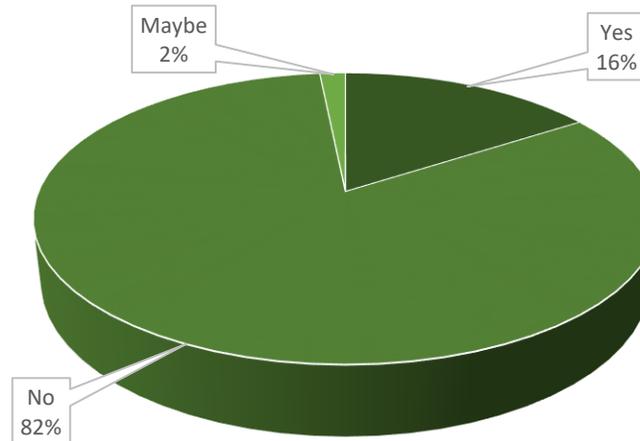
Since a total of 14% of respondents answered that they would, or may, need help with home mail delivery in five years, the need for this service among seniors can be expected to almost triple in that time.

Currently Use Meal Delivery Services



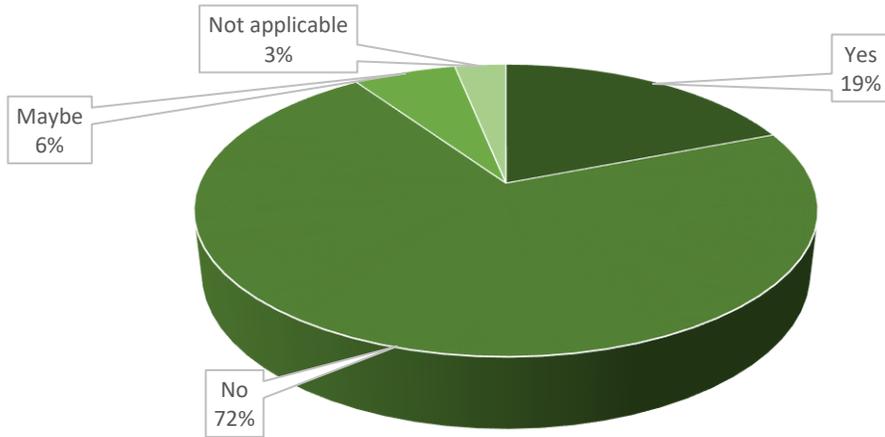
Thirteen percent of respondents indicated they currently took advantage of meal delivery services. Commentary showed that meal deliveries could include local restaurant services or meals on wheels.

Currently Require Meal Delivery Services



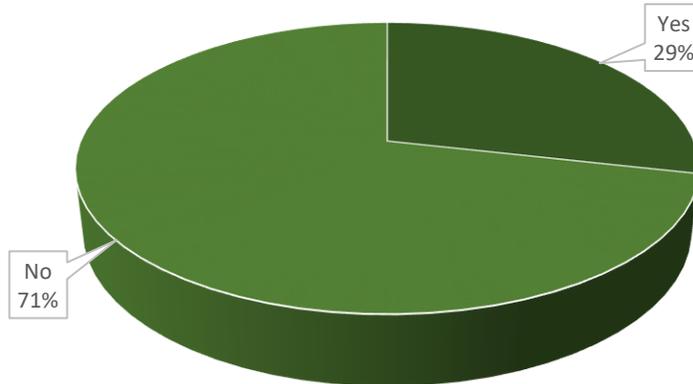
A total of 18% currently required, or thought they might require, meal delivery. This indicates an unmet need among Tumbler Ridge seniors at the time of the assessment.

Expect to Require Meal Delivery Services in Five Years

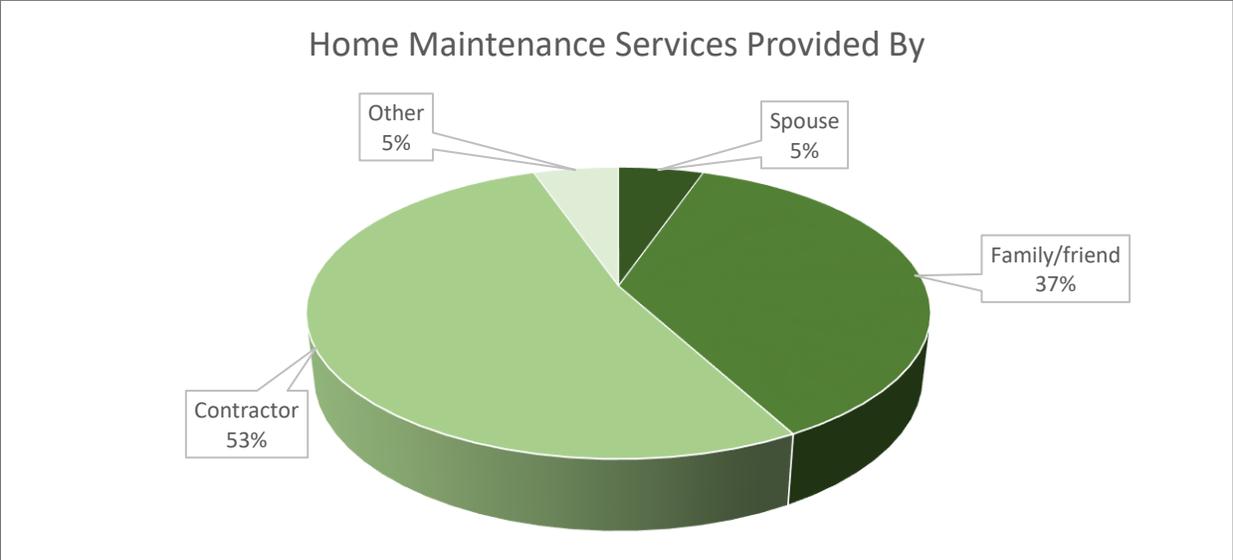


One-quarter of respondents expected to require, or maybe require, meal delivery in five years.

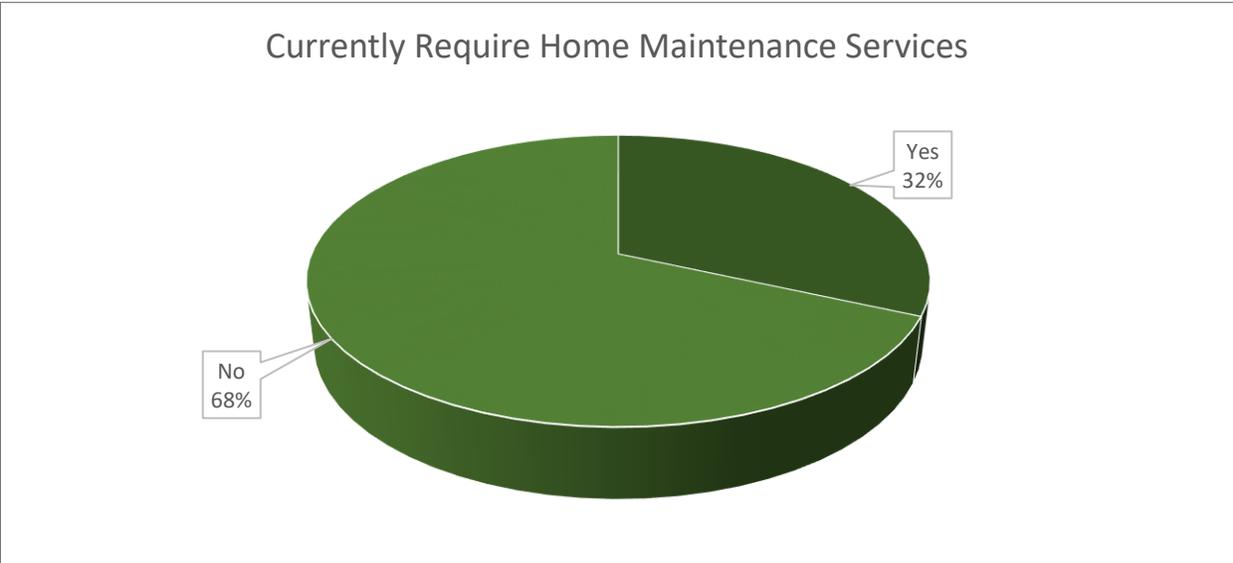
Currently Use Home Maintenance Services



Home maintenance services were currently used by 29% of respondents.

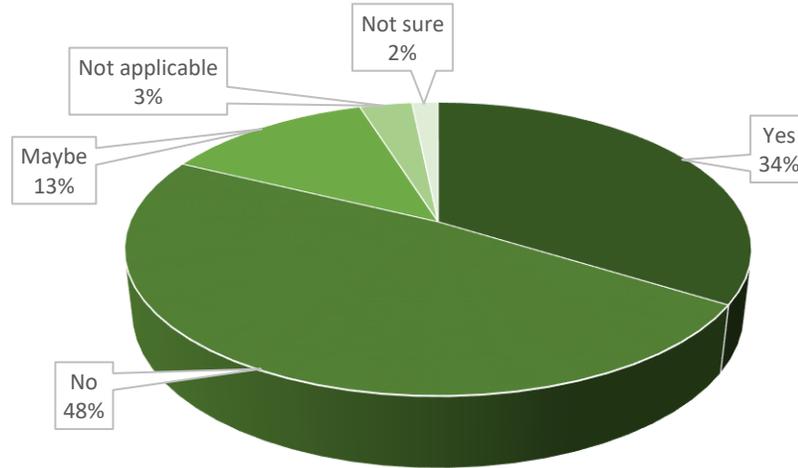


The most common provider of home maintenance services were contractors (53%), followed by family members and friends. Five percent each were provided by spouses and other help.



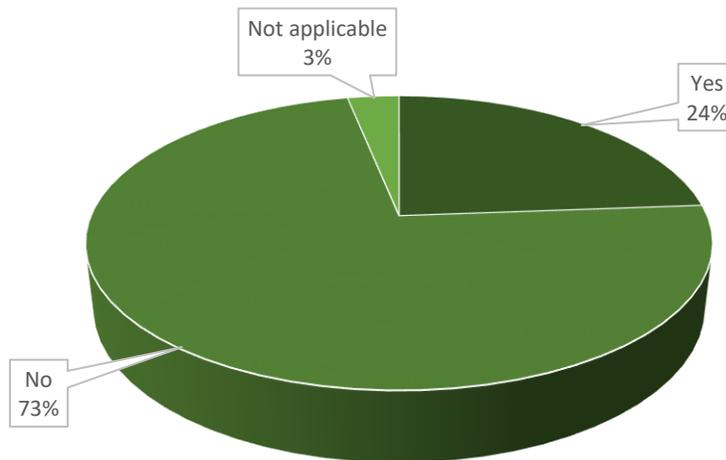
At 32%, more respondents currently required home maintenance services than actually employed help.

Expect to Require Home Maintenance Services in Five Years

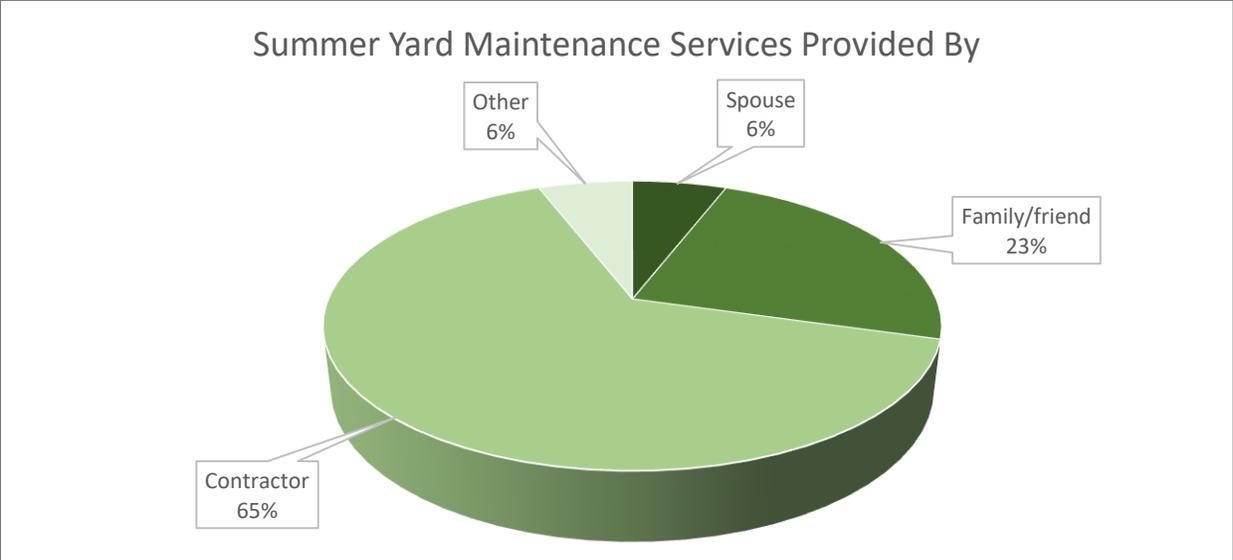


When asked about their expectations five years into the future, almost one-half of respondents answered they would, or may, need help with home maintenance. This would be an increase of almost 50%.

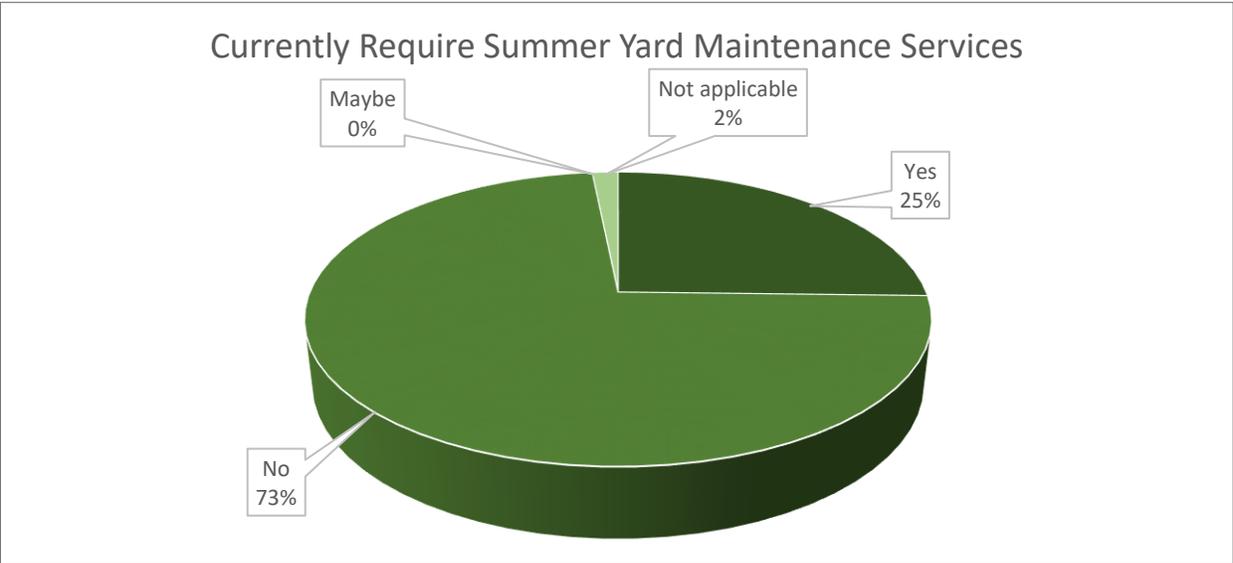
Currently Use Summer Yard Maintenance Services



Close to one-quarter of respondents used services to help with at least some of their summer yard maintenance.

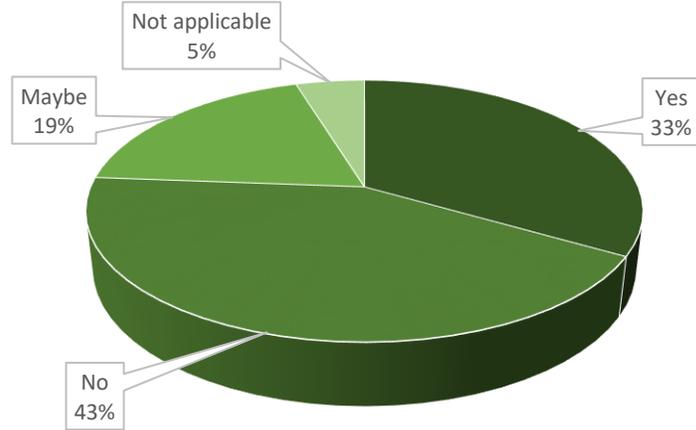


Service providers helping with summer yard maintenance included contractors (65%), family members and friends (23%), spouses (6%), and others (6%).



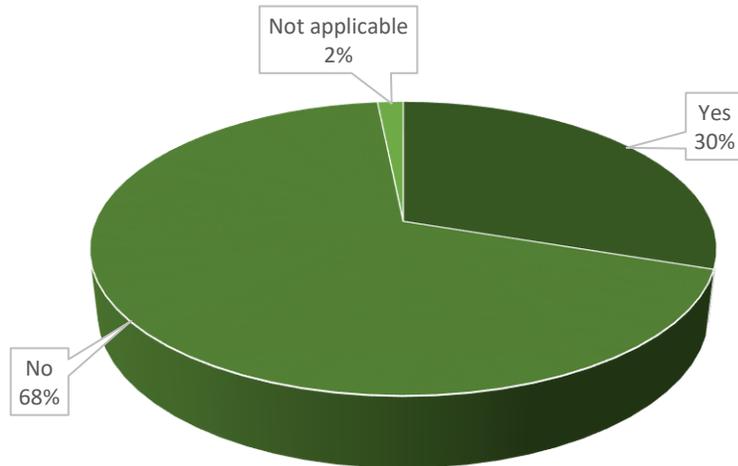
Given that 25% indicated they currently required help with summer yard maintenance, there was a small part of the senior population who did not get the help they needed.

Expect to Require Summer Yard Maintenance Services in Five Years

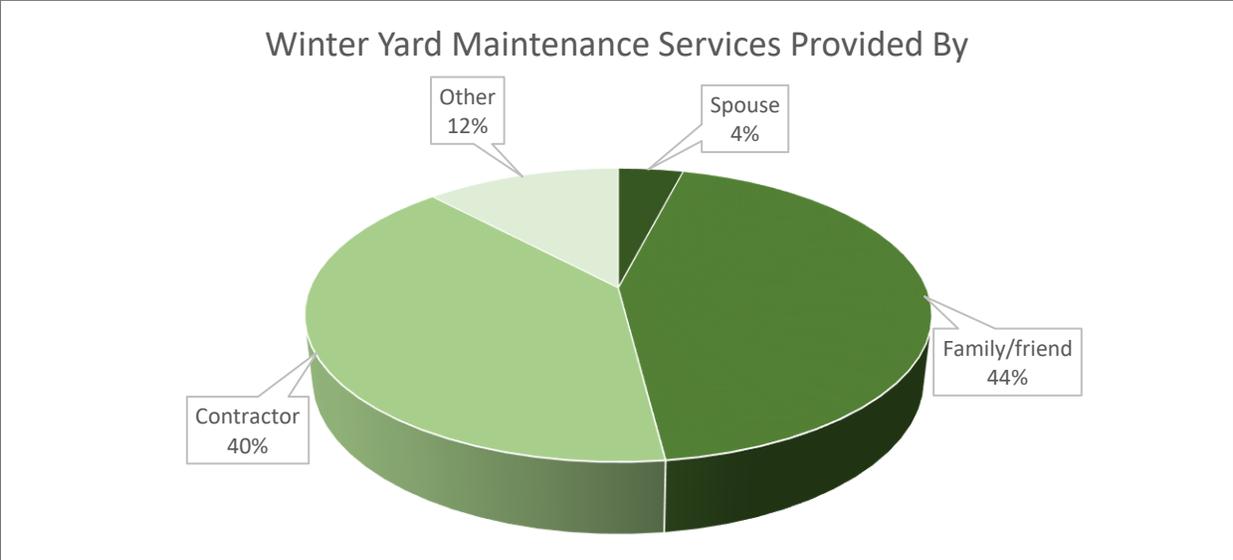


Over 50% of respondents considered it likely, or possible, that they would need summer yard maintenance services in five years, thereby more than doubling the current demand for such services.

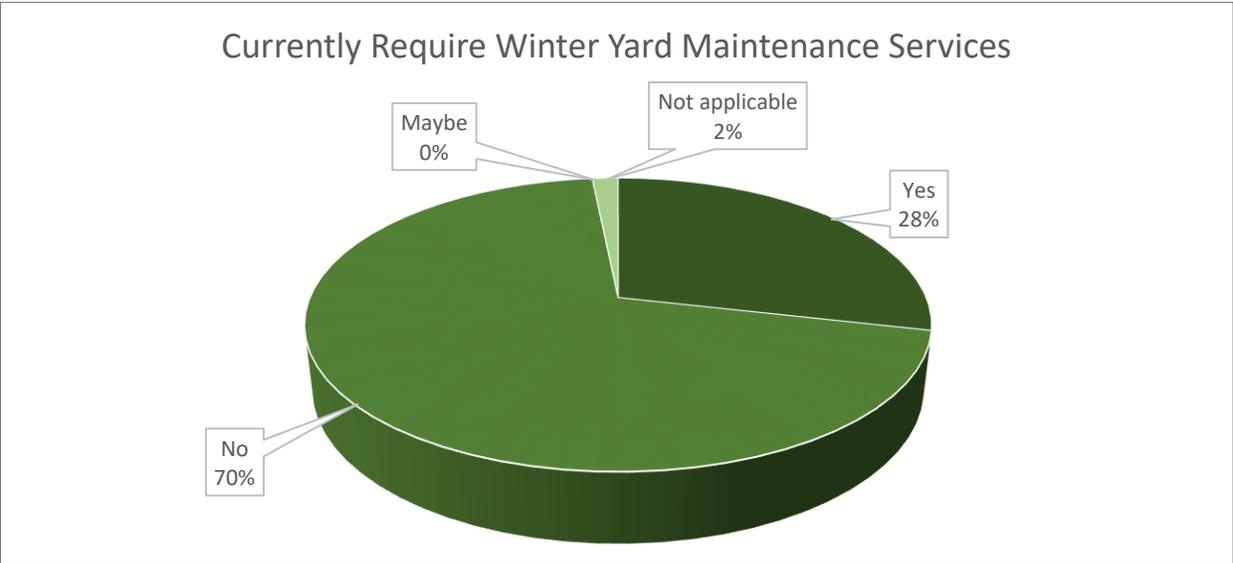
Currently Use Winter Yard Maintenance Services



Thirty percent of respondents employed help with winter yard maintenance.

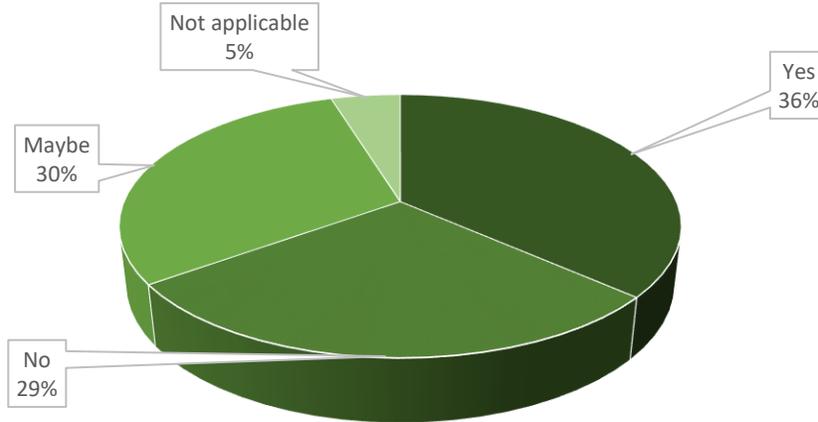


Those services were mostly provided by family members and friends (44%), and contractors (40%).



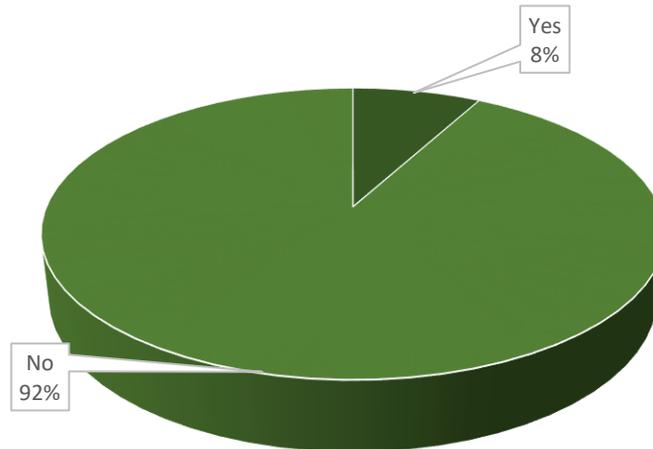
At 28% reporting they required winter yard maintenance help, the need was slightly below what was used. But it should be noted that not all respondents who required it were using help, while some who did not urgently need it chose to employ help.

Expect to Require Winter Yard Maintenance Services in Five Years

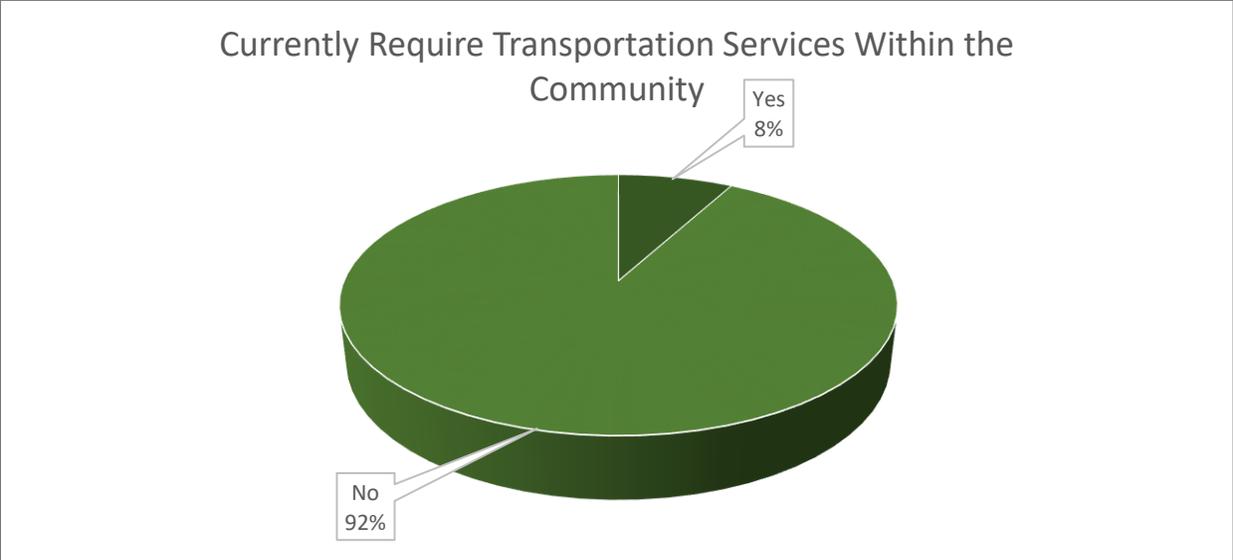


Two thirds of respondents believed they would, or may, need winter yard maintenance services in five years, more than doubling the need in that service area in the near future.

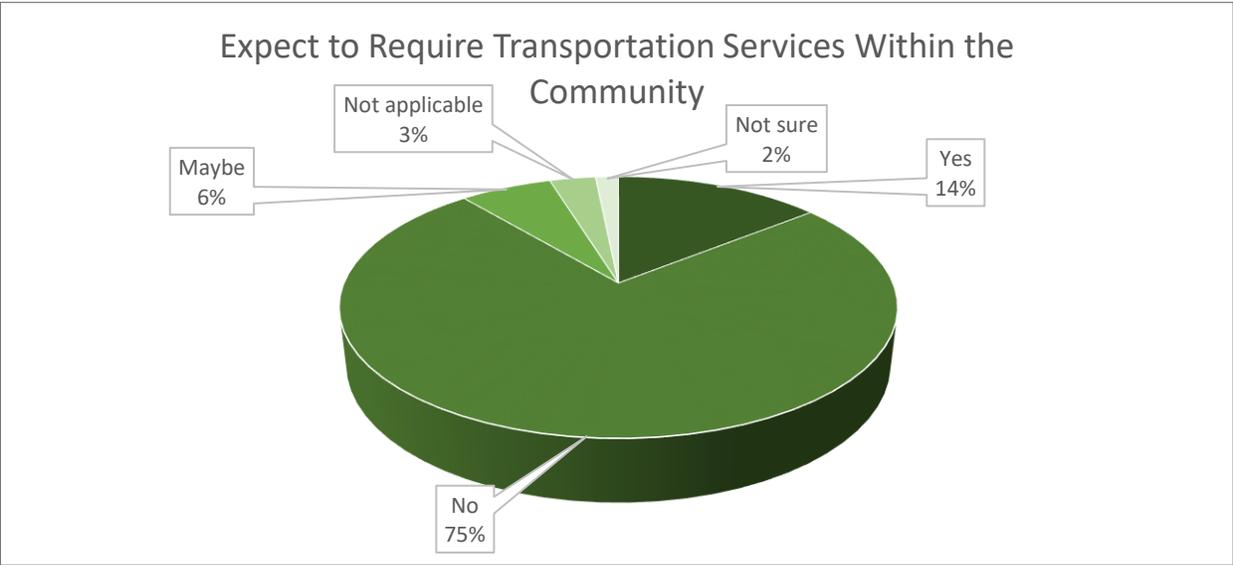
Currently Use Transportation Services Within the Community



Eight percent of respondents currently used some form of transportation services within the community. Most of those services were provided by family members and friends, suggesting that the nature of the services was mostly informal.

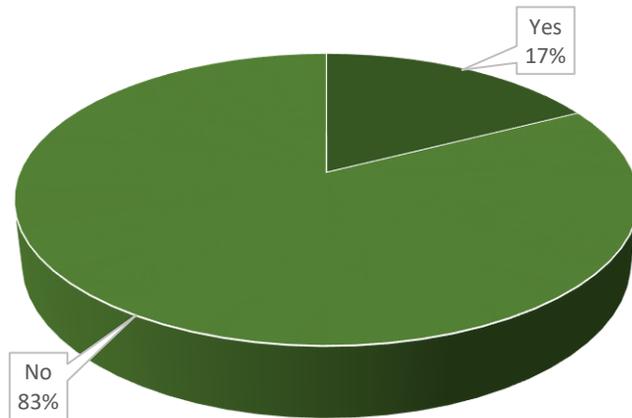


The respondents who used help with transportation within the community were identical with the ones who required it. This means needs were met at the time of the assessment.



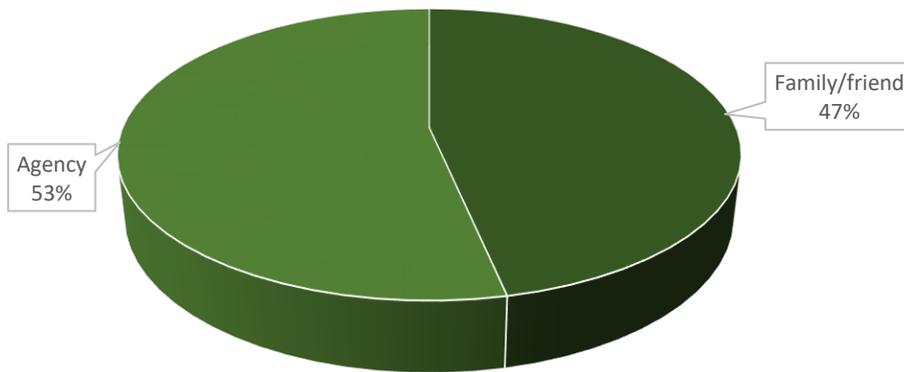
The proportion of respondents expecting they would, or may, require transportation services within the community in five years was 20%. This would more than double the demand for such services.

Currently Use Out-of-Town Transportation Services



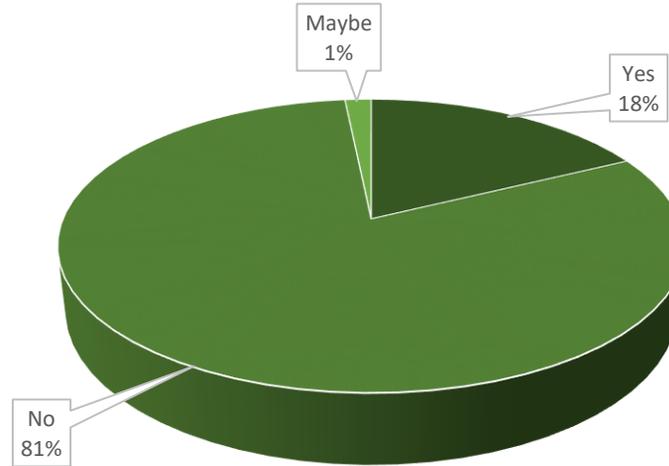
Given Tumbler Ridge’s remote location, it can be expected that travel out-of-town is a greater barrier to seniors than transportation within the community due to longer distances and weather-dependent road conditions. A total of 17% of respondents indicated they used transportation services to travel outside of the community.

Out-of-Town Transportation Services Provided By



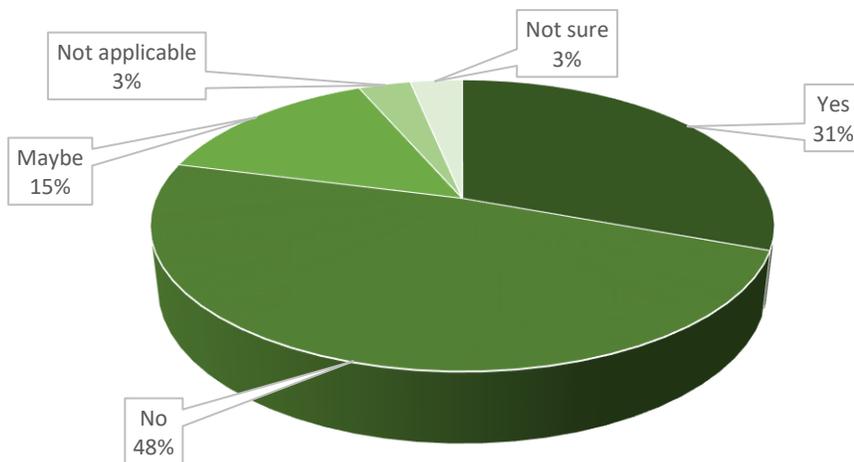
Roughly one-half of those transportation services were provided by family members and friends. For the other half, seniors took advantage of agencies.

Currently Require Out-of-Town-Transportation Services



The current need for out-of-town transportation services was very close to the current use; it should be noted, however, that some respondents who used such services stated that they did not require them, while others required them but did not currently use them.

Expect to Require Out-of-Town Transportation Services



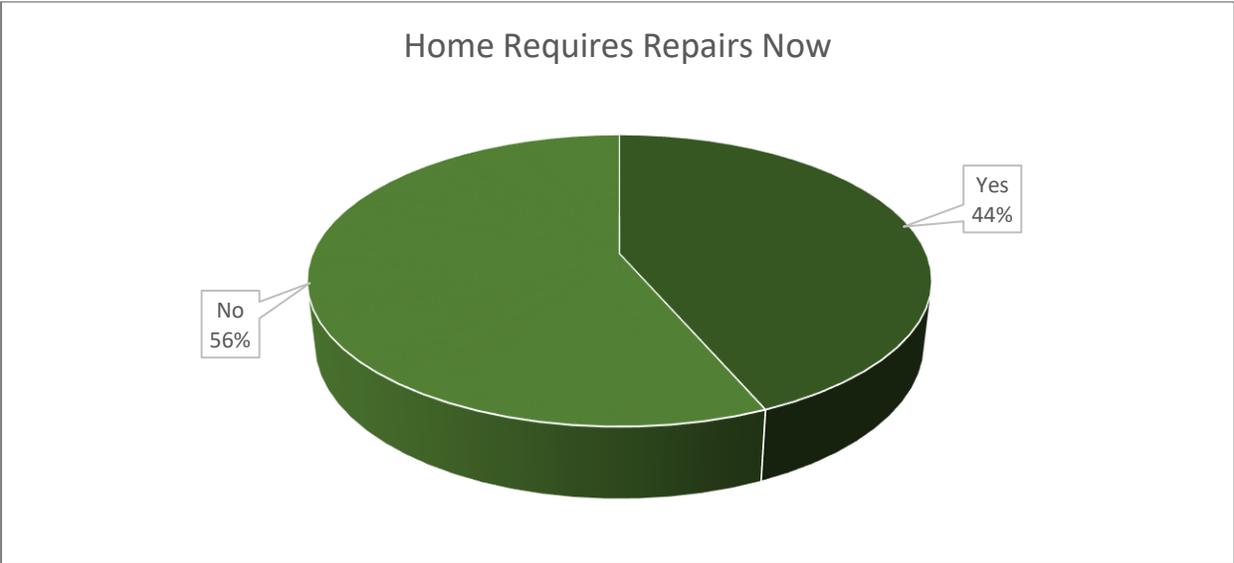
The expected demand for out-of-town transportation services among Tumbler Ridge seniors in five years more than doubled considering over 30% expected to need that help in five years and another 15% thought they may need it.

Additional Comments from Respondents

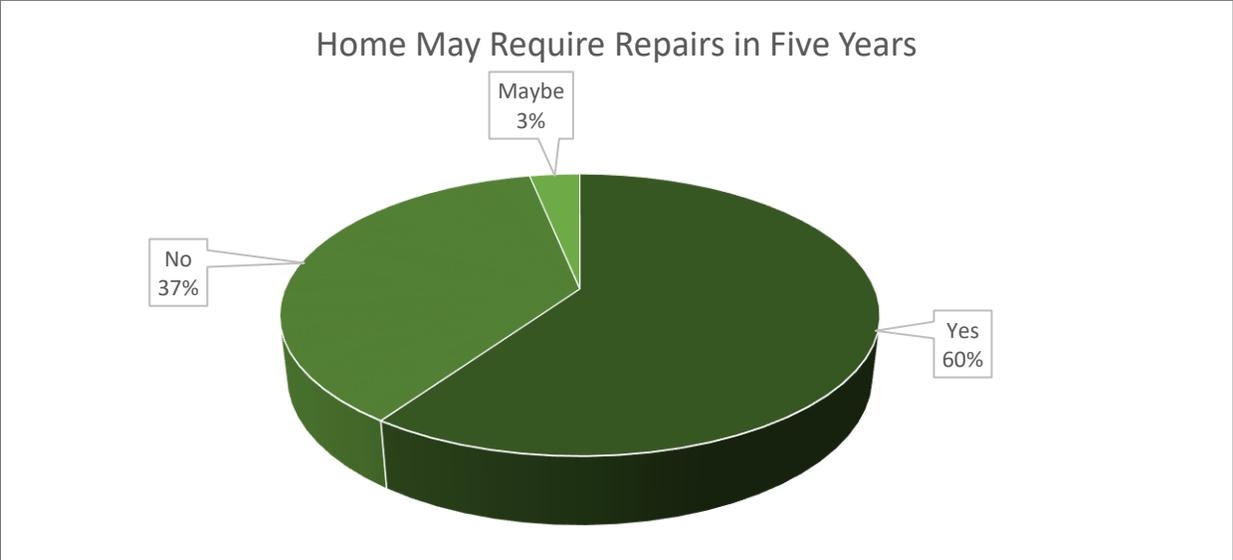
At the end of this section of the assessment, respondents had an opportunity to indicate whether they used, needed, or expected to need other, not previously mentioned, services. A small number of respondents shared that they currently used additional services provided by agencies. Some indicated that they needed, or would soon need, more personal and medical care services.

PART 5: FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

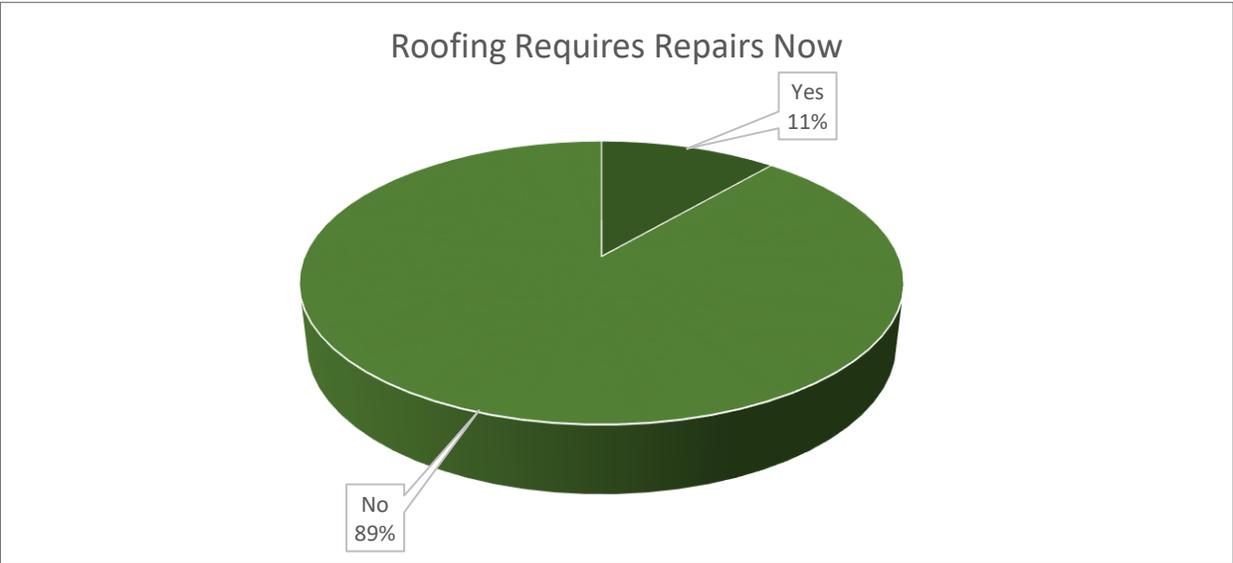
In the last section, the in-home assessment moved on to questions about the condition of seniors' dwellings. This was structured to inquire about specific areas of the home that are generally subject to regular maintenance or replacements, and find out if repairs were needed at the time of the assessment or were expected to be necessary in five years. Some barriers to renovations that came up in commentary were financial limitations, lacking availability of replacement parts for features in older homes, and a lack of trades people in the community and the resulting high cost of hiring contractors from out of town.



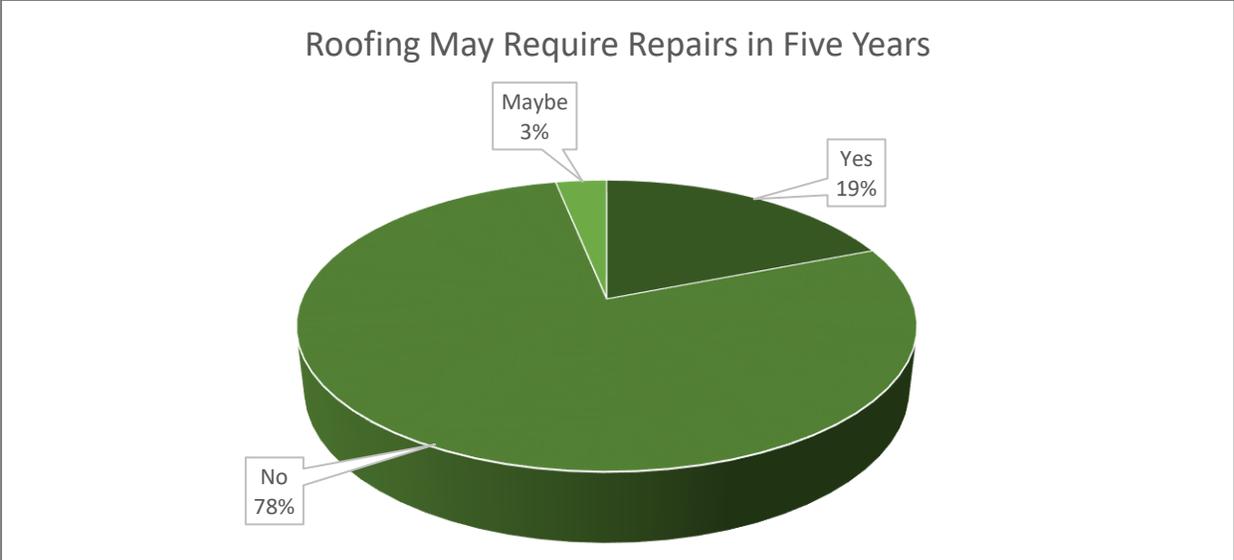
A total of 44% of respondents found that their homes were in need of repairs.



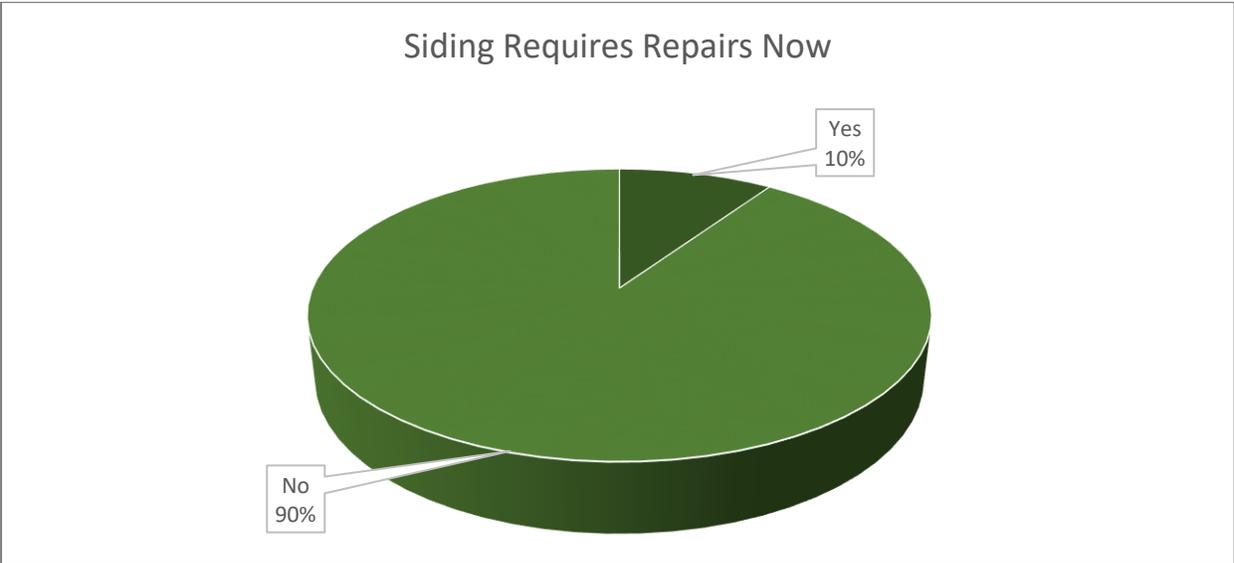
Almost two-thirds of respondents expected their homes to be, or possibly be, in need of repairs in five years.



Since many of the assessed homes were built in the 1980s, a number of them had already replaced their roofs over the years. However, more than one in ten of the seniors' homes needed roofing repairs.

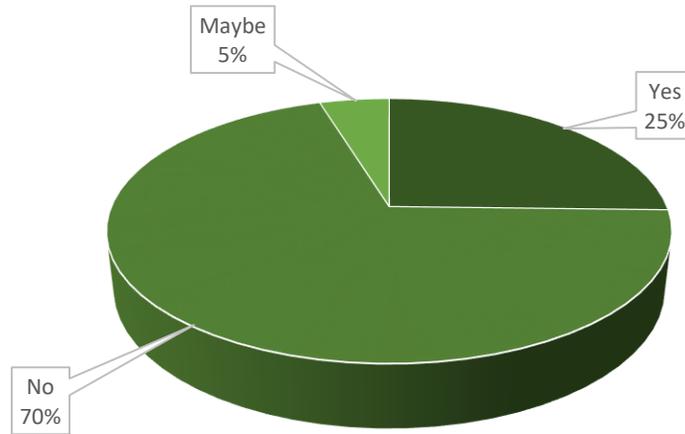


Twice as many expected the need for roofing repairs to come up, or maybe come up, in five years.



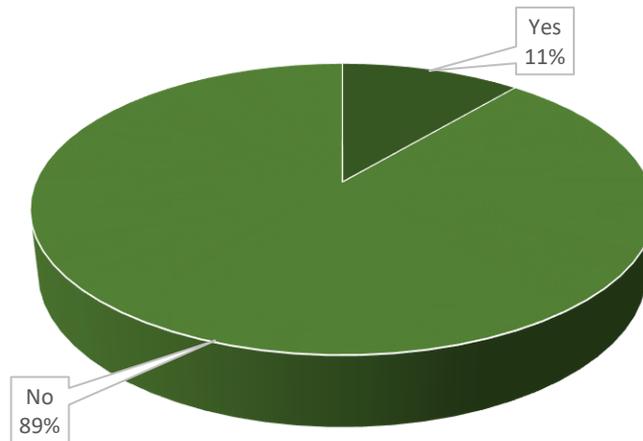
The sample featured different siding types and materials, including wood and vinyl. Some repairs, such as paint or stain, were covered in a later question about exterior paint work. Nonetheless, 10% of respondents found their siding in need of repairs at the time of the assessment.

Siding May Require Repairs in Five Years



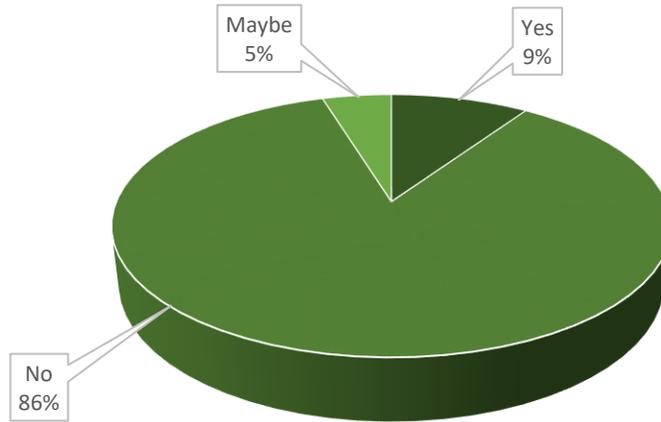
Three times as many expected to need, or maybe need, siding repairs in five years.

Plumbing Requires Repairs Now



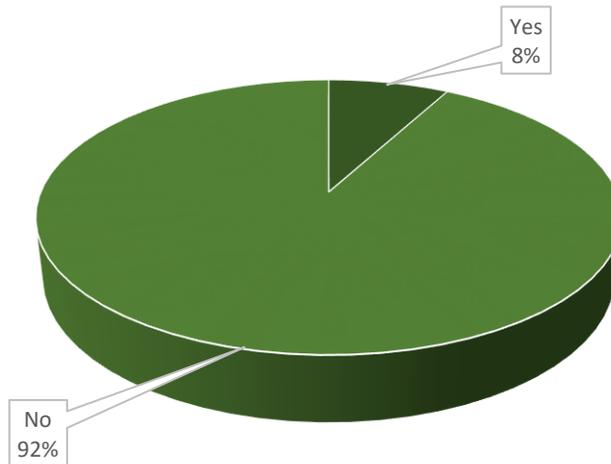
The prevalence of plumbing in need of repair was comparable at 11%. These repairs ranged from fixture replacements in the house, to protecting water lines from cold temperatures, and updates and upgrades in the home.

Plumbing May Require Repairs in Five Years



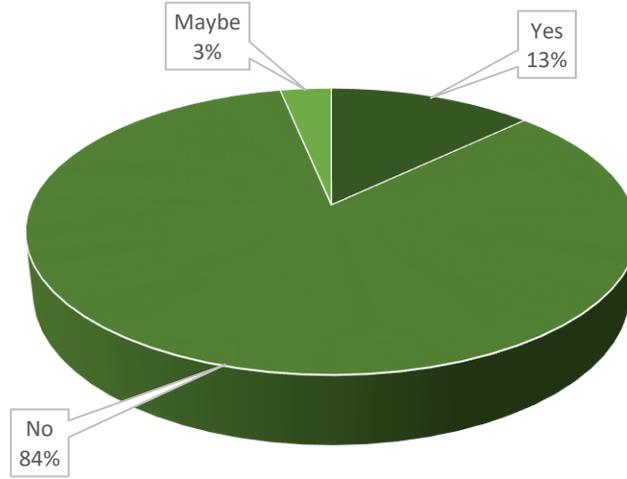
However, with 14% expecting, or maybe expecting, the need for repairs in five years, the future need was less pronounced in this particular area of the homes.

Electrical Requires Repairs Now



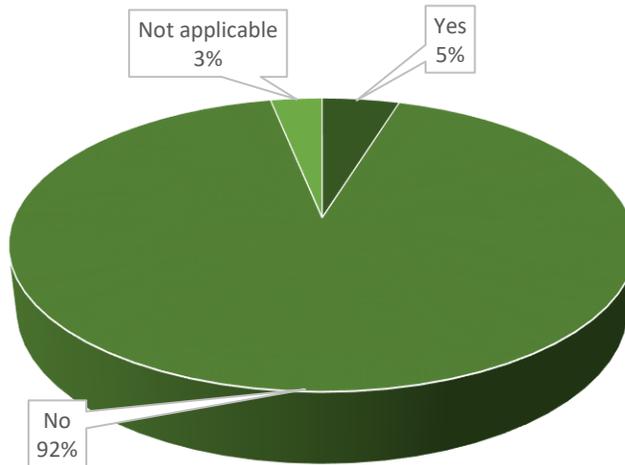
Representing another major system of a home, electrical repair needs at the time of the assessment were less prevalent at eight percent. The needs here included improvements to lighting, light switches, and electrical outlets, as well as other updates and upgrades.

Electrical May Require Repairs in Five Years

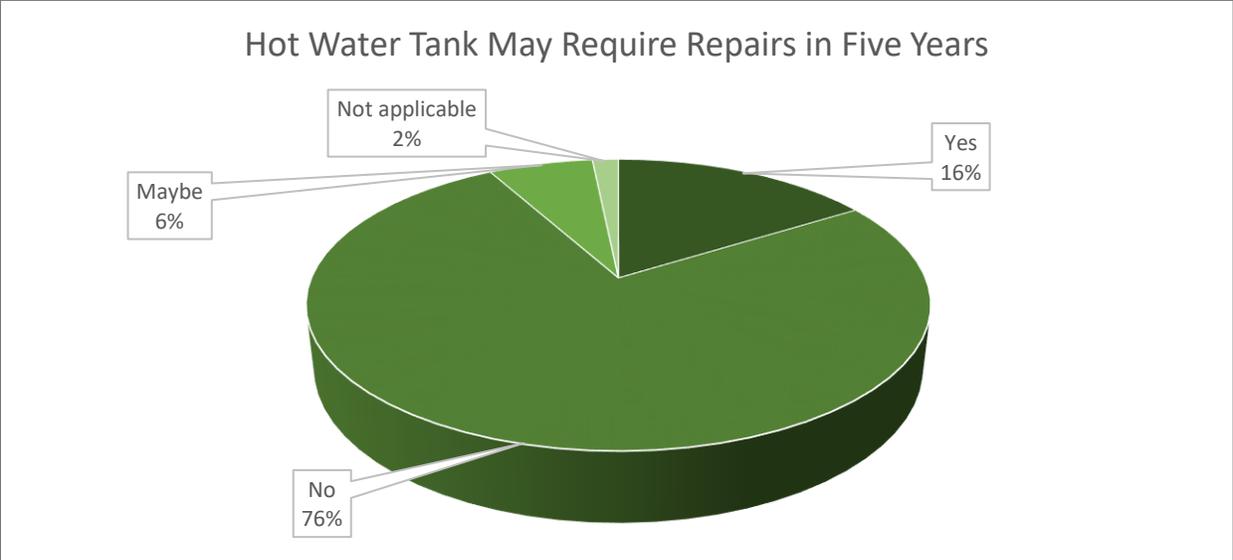


Future expectations of needing, or maybe needing, electrical repairs were at 16%, effectively doubling current needs.

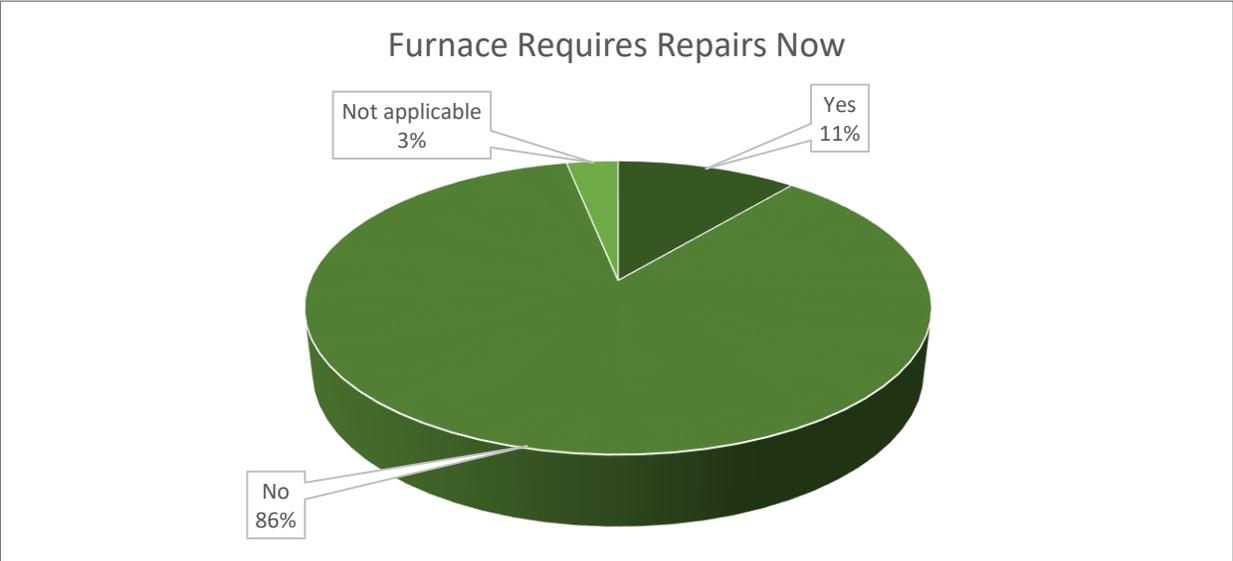
Hot Water Tank Requires Repairs Now



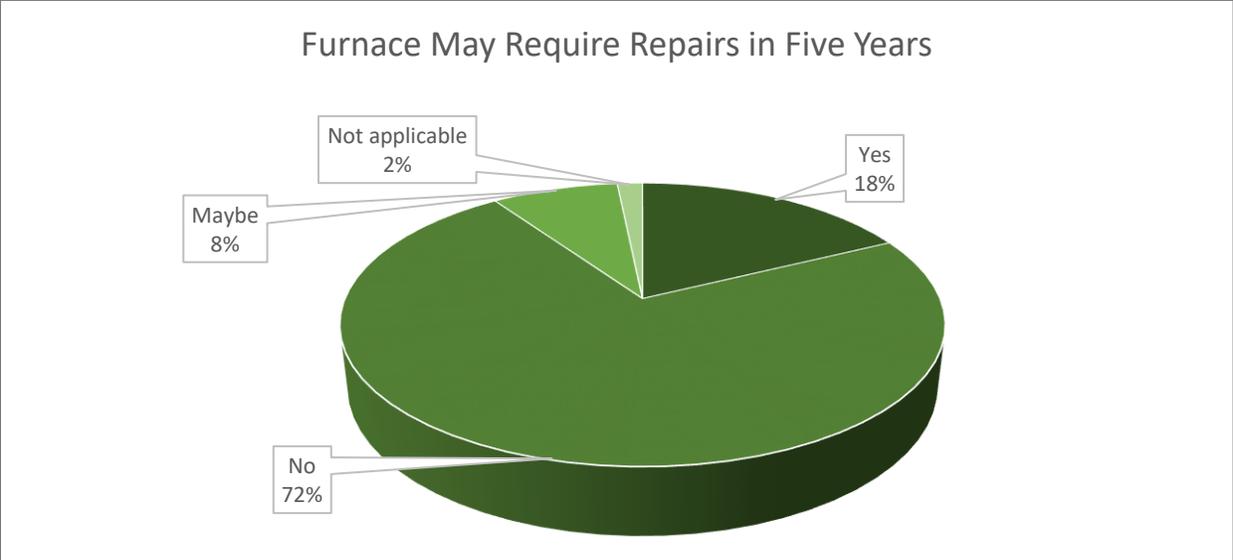
Hot water tanks fulfill a basic need in a home and are commonly expected to last roughly a decade. Many respondents had already replaced the hot water tank in their aging homes. Five percent of respondents stated that their hot water needed repairs or replacements.



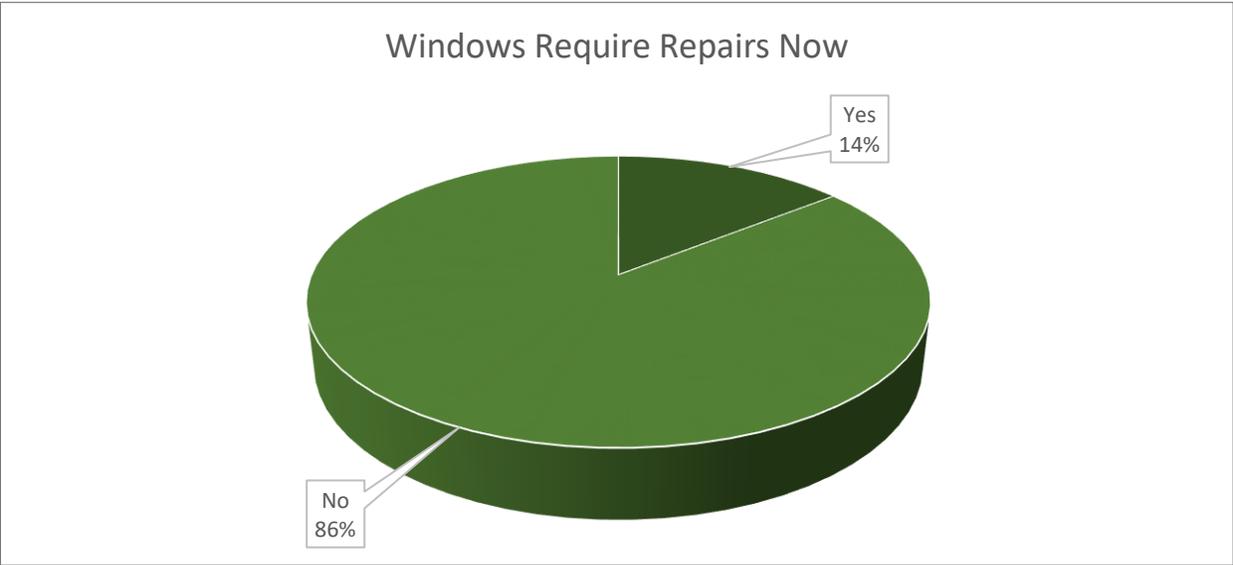
Given that hot water tanks have a limited life span and are crucial to households, unsurprisingly, four times as many respondents were expecting, or maybe expecting, repairs becoming necessary in five years.



Similar to hot water tanks, a furnace has a limited life span and requires regular service. A furnace is a basic need in every home, and is particularly important in cold winters. A number of respondents had already replaced their furnaces. More than one in ten respondents needed furnace repairs.

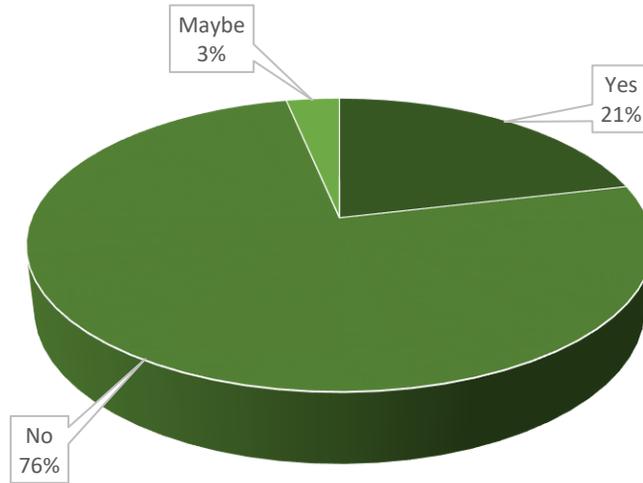


A total of 26%, or over one-quarter, of respondents expected to need, or maybe need, furnace repairs in five years.



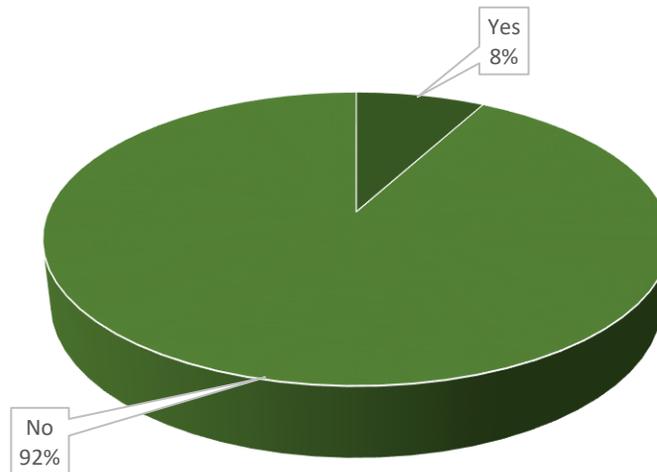
Windows that need repair or replacement, especially in an older home, can have financial implications not only because of a relatively high cost of new windows but also in terms of energy costs of windows that do not meet current energy efficiency standards. A total of 14% of respondents considered their windows in need of repair or replacement at the time of the assessment.

Windows May Require Repairs in Five Years

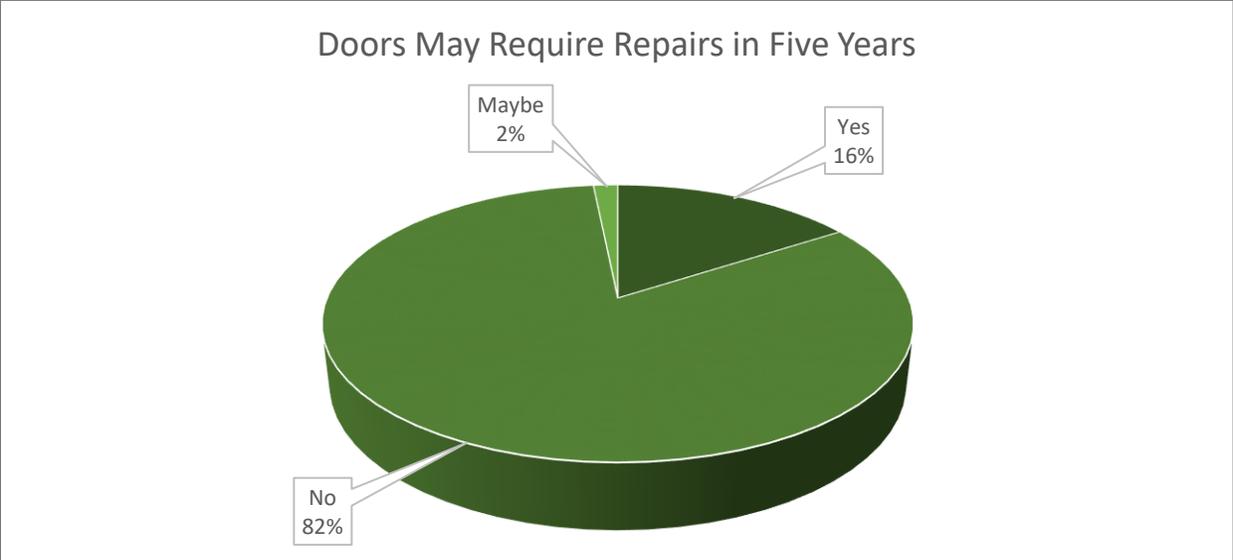


Five years into the future, that need was expected to be even higher at almost 24% of assessed homes stated to need, or maybe need, work done on their windows.

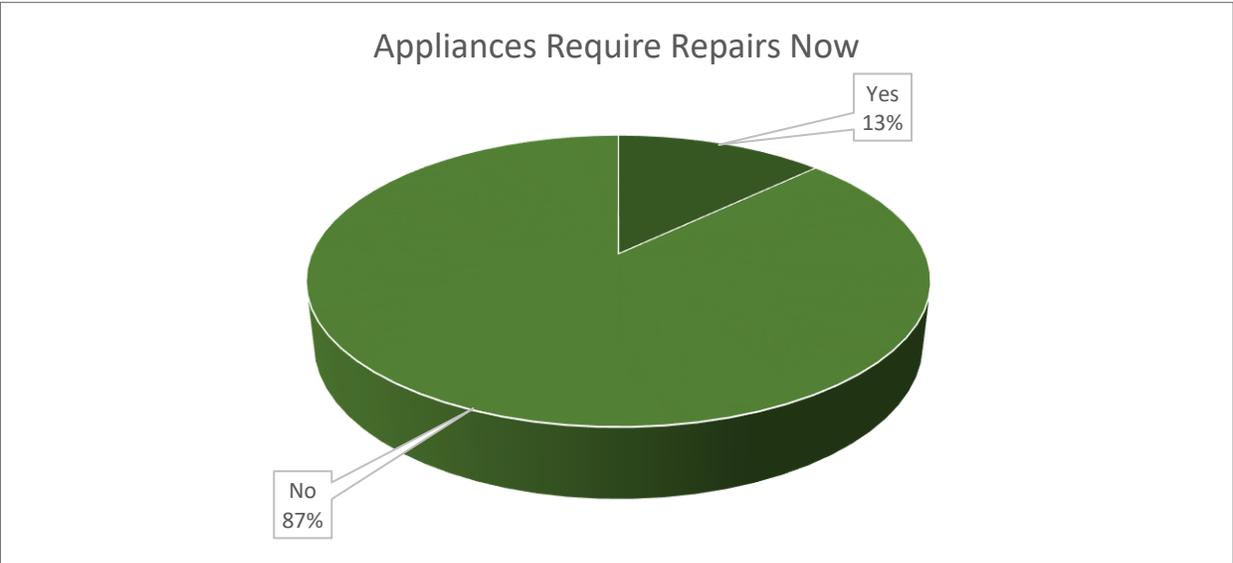
Doors Require Repairs Now



Older doors can also have an impact on the energy efficiency of a home. Furthermore, they can also have security implications, or be more difficult to operate for seniors with mobility or dexterity challenges. Eight percent of respondents indicated their doors required repairs.

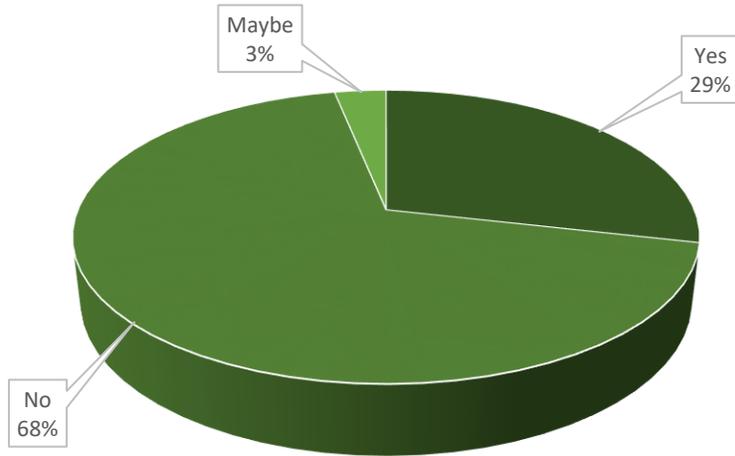


Five years from the time of the assessment, the need for door repairs was expected to more than double.



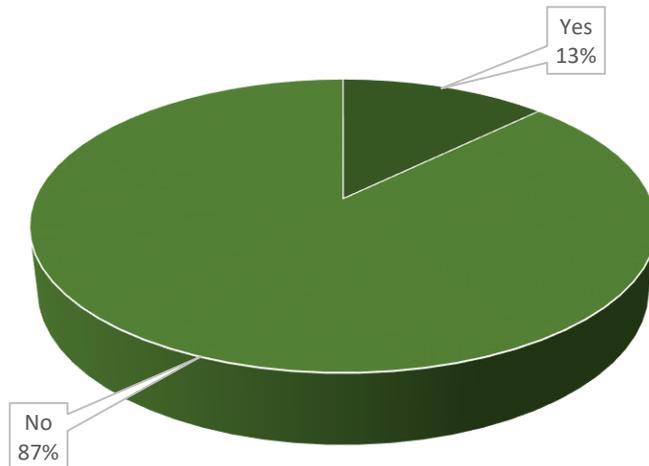
Another potentially costly feature of the home with safety and accessibility implications, appliances in need of repair were reported by 13% of respondents. Respondents mostly reported needing replacements for older appliances, but also mentioned the need to get more accessible appliances.

Appliances May Require Repairs in Five Years

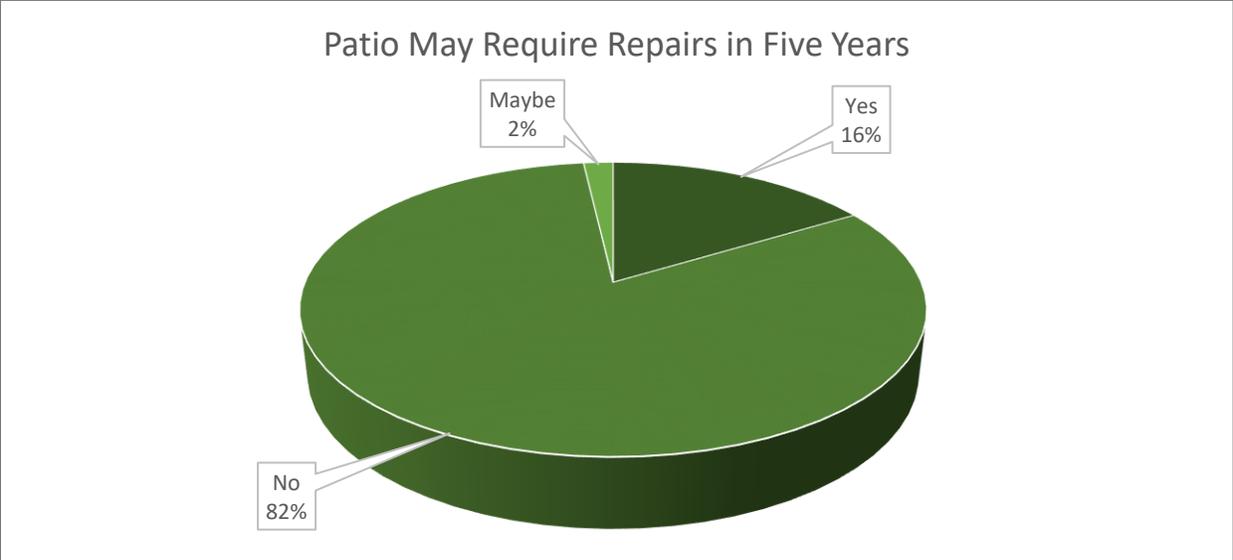


Five years later, the prevalence of households with appliances in need, or maybe in need, of repair was expected to more than double to almost one-third of all respondents.

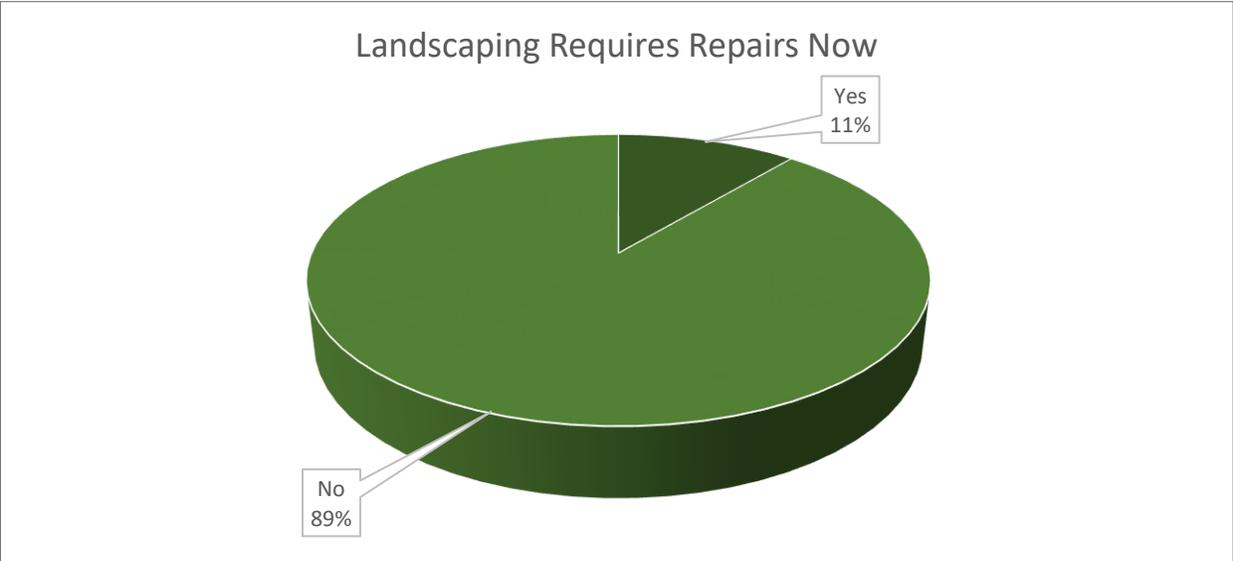
Patio Requires Repairs Now



Depending on design and building material, weathered patios can pose a safety risk, especially to seniors. Thirteen percent of respondent households had patios in need of repair. The specific needs included complete or partial replacements, the addition or replacement of safety features, and paint.

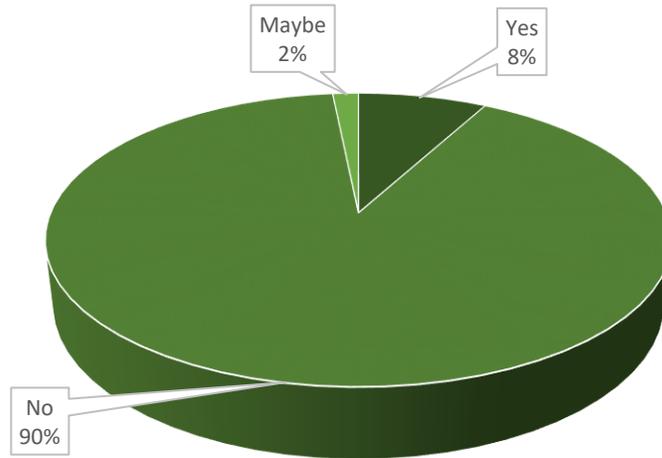


That need was expected to stay relatively constant over the next five years.



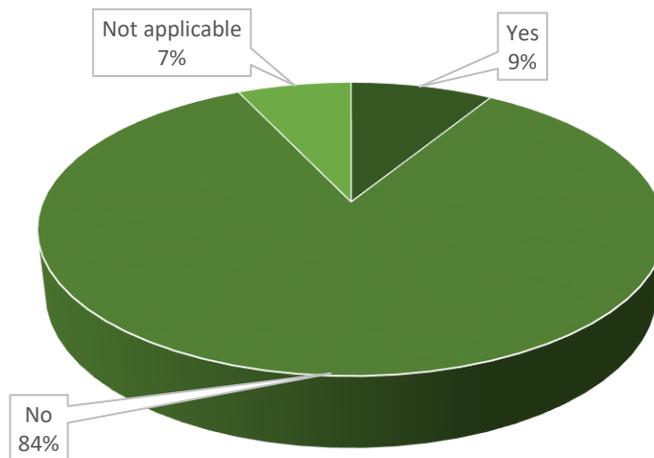
Landscaping repairs can include aesthetic changes and upgrades, but also accessibility and safety features to make walkways or backyards safer and easier to walk on. This can include, for example on level, non-slip, well-lit ground without tripping hazards. Tree removal is another example of a larger landscaping project that may occasionally be required. A little over one in ten respondents considered their landscaping in need of repair.

Landscaping May Require Repairs in Five Years



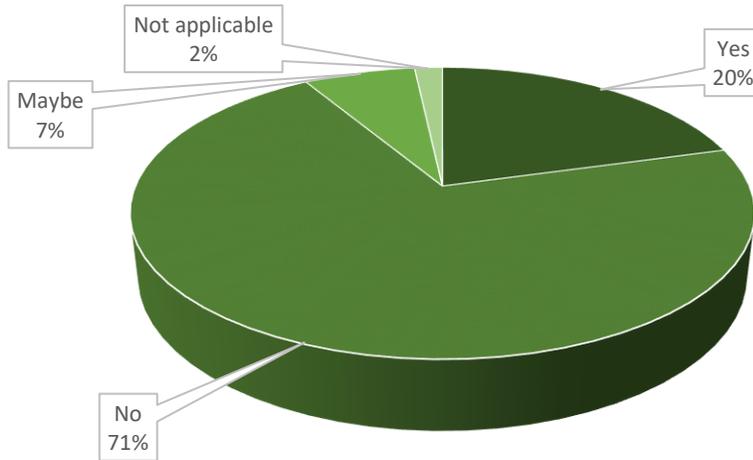
Similar to other exterior features, like patios, this need was expected to stay relatively constant.

Exterior Paint Requires Repairs Now



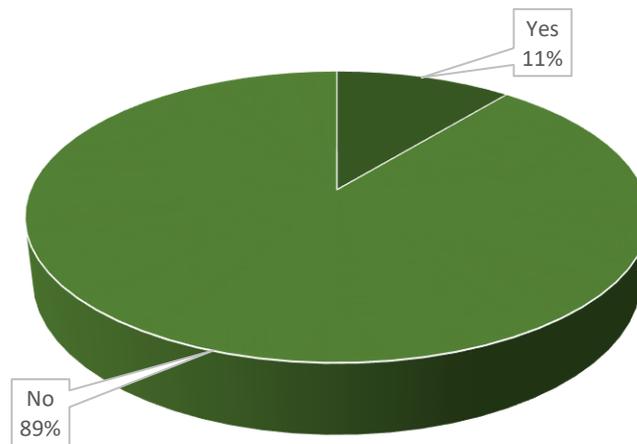
Exterior paint is not just a matter of aesthetics both for the residents and the neighbourhood, it also protects siding and other exterior building materials on the house and extends their lifespan. While exterior paint work was not applicable to all respondent households, close to 10% required repairs at the time of the assessment.

Exterior Paint May Require Repairs in Five Years



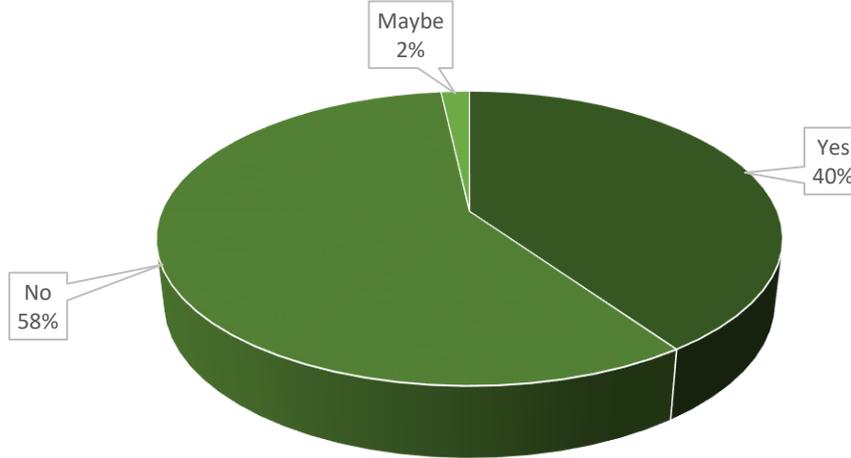
Including those who expected to need exterior paint work and those who maybe needed it, the need was predicted to almost triple in five years.

Interior Paint Requires Repairs Now



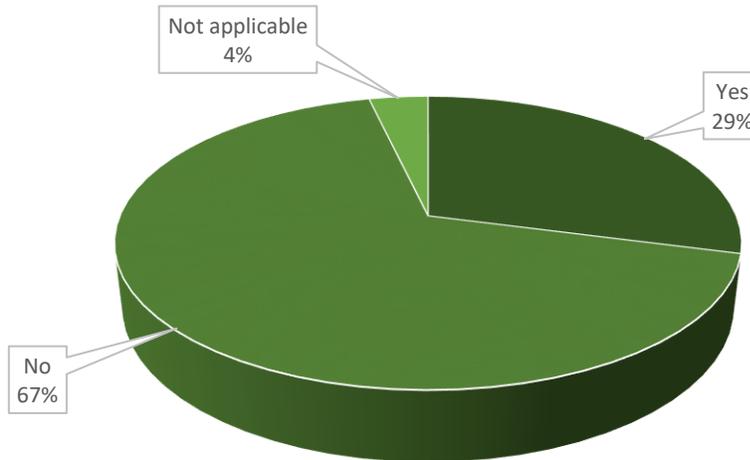
The need for interior paint repairs was reported by 11% of respondents.

Interior Paint May Require Repairs in Five Years

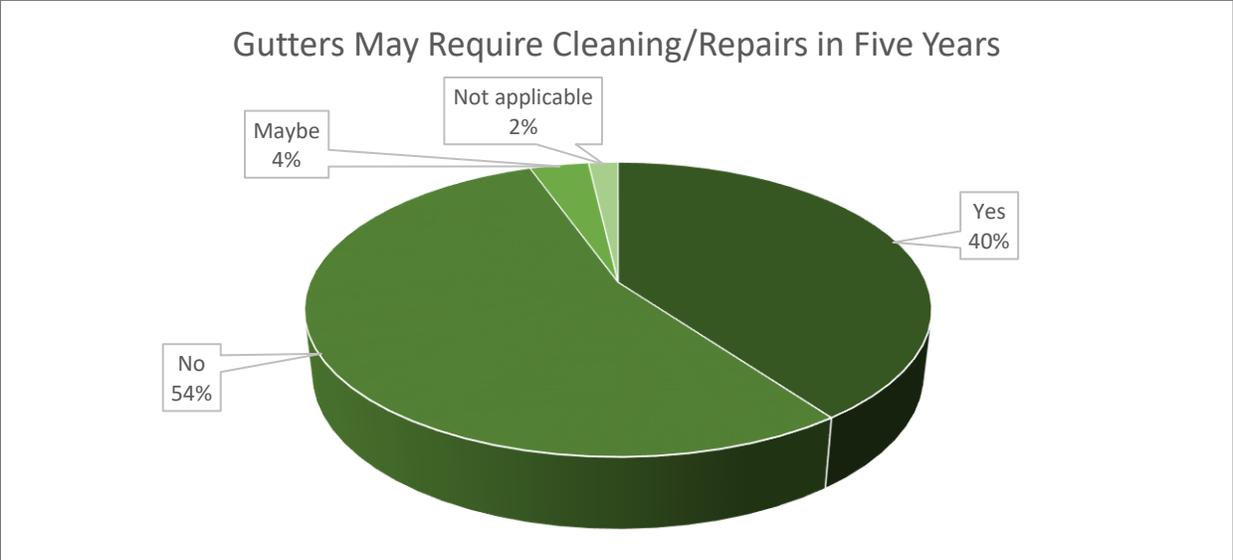


This need was expected to quadruple over five years.

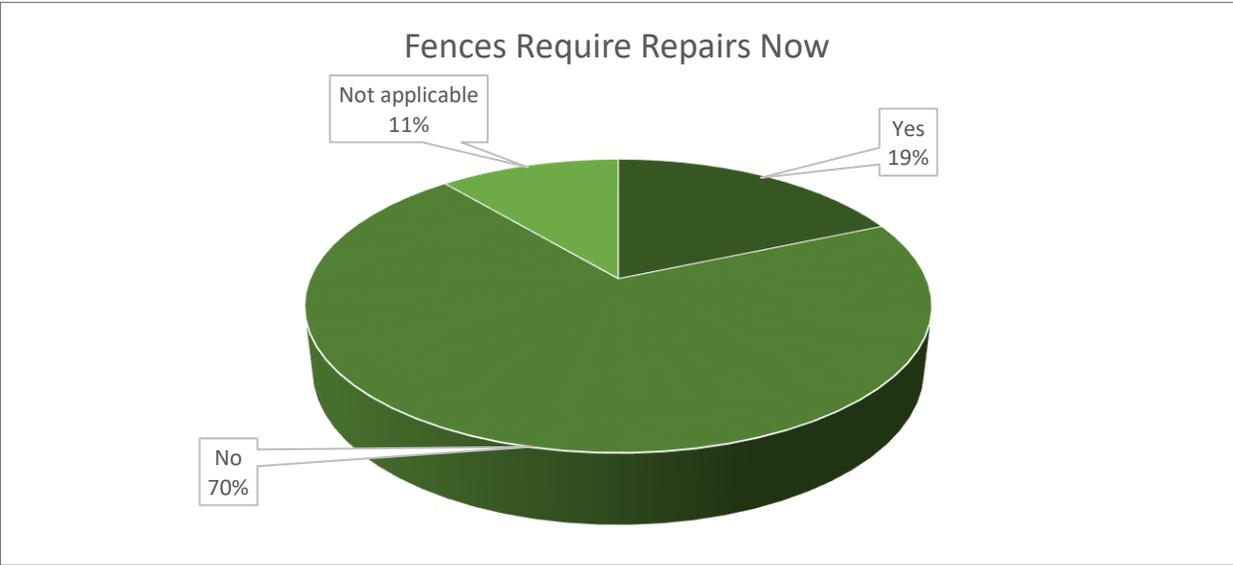
Gutters Require Cleaning/Repairs Now



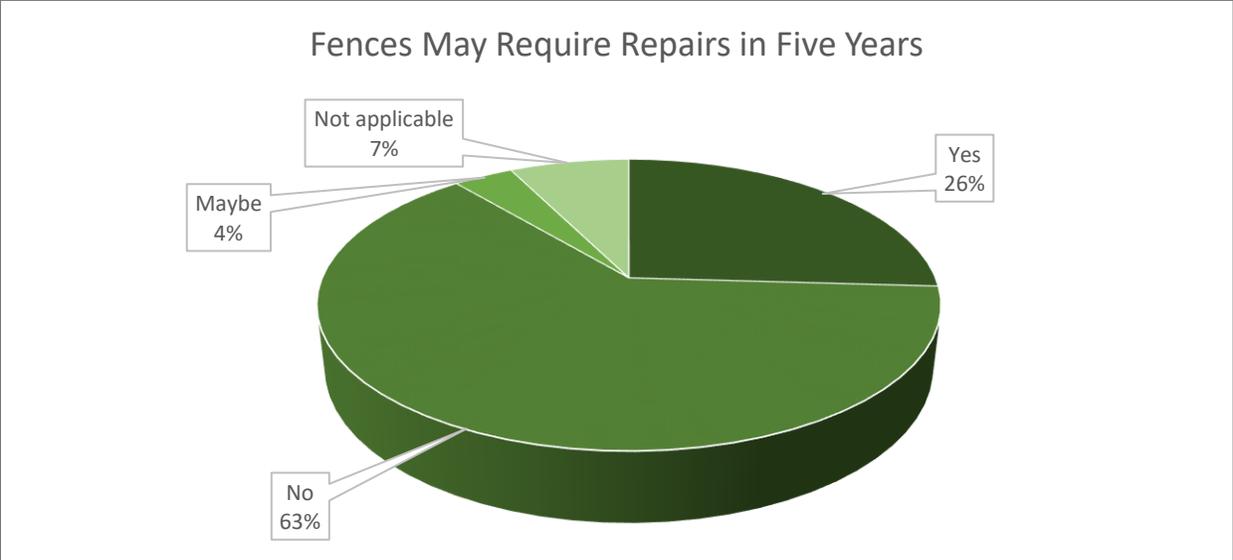
Keeping gutters and downspouts free from debris and well repaired can be important for avoiding ice buildup or wet slippery sections around the house. Close to one-third of respondent households stated they needed repairs.



In five years, the need, or possible need, for gutter and downspout repairs was expected to increase to 44%.



For reasons such as neighbourhood appeal, security, and safety from tripping hazards, for example, the need for fence repairs can be an important one. A total of 19% of respondents reported having fencing in need of repair.



In five years, this was expected to increase to up to 30%.

A total of 13% of households reported the need for other repairs, some of them multiple areas of their properties. Five years later, the need for other repairs not mentioned previously in the assessment was expected to be at 16%.

Respondents were invited to leave additional comments on the difficulties repair and maintenance needs can pose. Throughout their commentary, a number of barriers, and solutions to barriers, emerged. The following table summarizes those insights.

If your home needs repairs and/or maintenance, what is preventing this from happening?

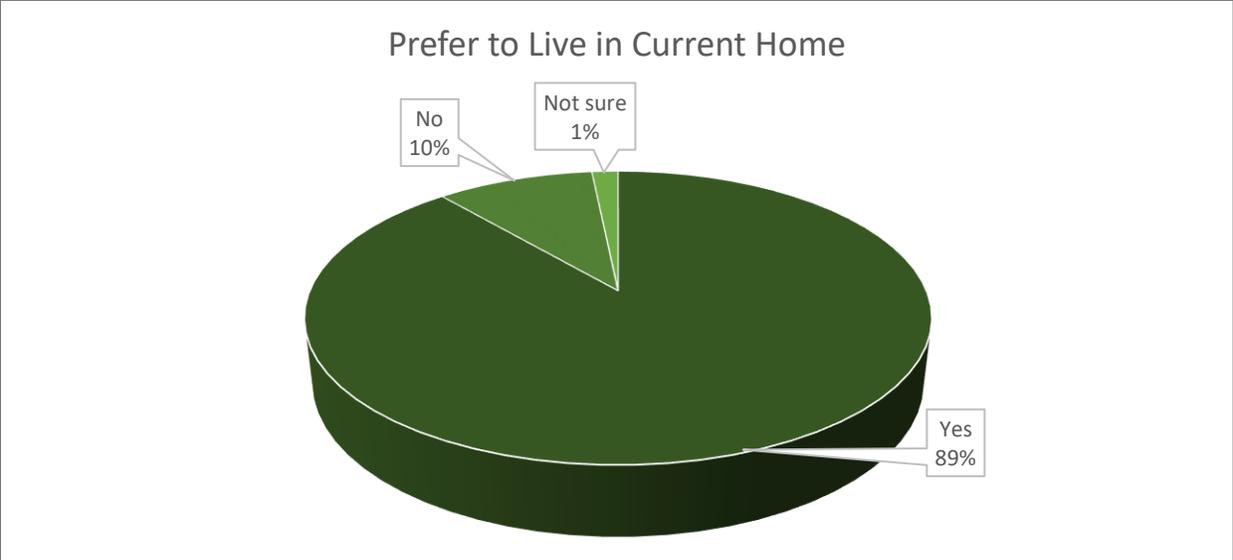
Barriers (64)

- Costs (21)
- Difficult to access contractors/tradespeople (19)
- Contractors have other priorities (4)
- Contractor timelines (4)
- Just has not got around to it yet (3)
- Appliances/appliance installation not available in town (2)
- Covid-19 has made it difficult (2)
- Strata consultation and agreement (2)
- Caretaker unable to complete repairs or maintenance (1)
- Contractor unable to finish job (1)
- Have to decide with spouse (1)
- Housing prices are a consideration when deciding to spend money on repairs (1)
- Need bank's permission (1)
- Stubbornness (1)
- Waiting to pay off mortgage before pursuing repairs/renovations (1)

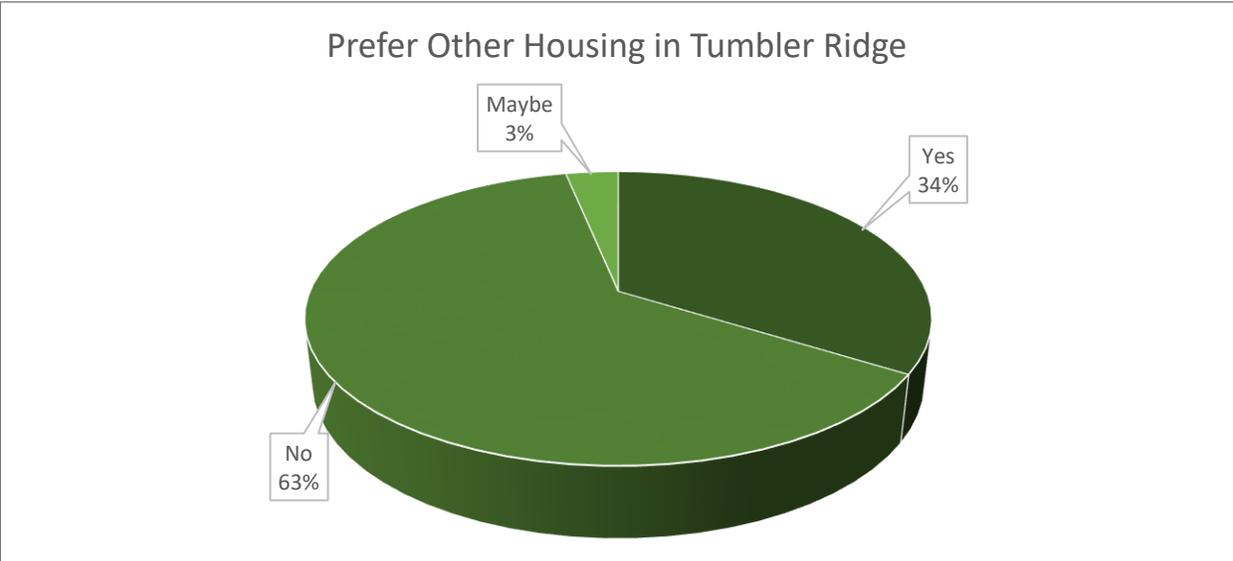
No Barriers (17)

- Repair/maintenance/renovation work was recently done (5)
- Able to do own maintenance work (4)
- Repairs/maintenance not needed right now (4)
- Always able to find people to assist with repairs and maintenance (1)
- Homecare services take care of repairs (1)
- Landlord looks after things (1)
- Was able to hire a friend for repairs (1)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Seniors Assessment 2020.



To establish what the demand for aging-in-place was among participants, and what their ideal dwelling would be, the assessment inquired about a number of options. When asked about their preferred living situation, almost 90% of seniors taking part in the assessment stated that they would like to continue to live in their current home.



Roughly one-third indicated that they would prefer to stay in the community but move to different housing.

The following tables summarize what those housing preferences might be and why respondents would prefer to stay in the community.

Would you prefer other housing in your current community? IF YES: what type of housing?

Housing Needs (17)

- Need everything accessible on one level (8)
- Smaller home (5)
- Housing with more amenities for independent living (3)
- Space for vehicles and pets (1)

Preferred Type of Housing (12)

- Mobile home (4)
- Seniors housing complex (3)
- Hartford Court (1)
- Log cabin (1)
- Recreational property (1)
- Room rented from friend (1)
- Tiny home (1)

Other Comments (10)

- Would consider buying a lot to build housing (3)
- May move into a condo owned in town (2)
- Wants to remain in home as long as possible (2)
- Split-level homes are not good for aging (1)
- Tumbler Ridge Hospice maintains 3 wheelchair accessible units for BC Housing (1)
- Would renovate before downsizing (1)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Seniors Assessment 2020.

What would be your main reasons to remain in your current community?

Relationships (58)

They like/know the people (17)
Friendships (13)
Family member(s) are here (12)
Closer to family in nearby regional communities (5)
They are engaged in community groups (4)
They raised children here (3)
Community is supportive (2)
Good neighbors (1)
Spouse is happy here (1)

Recreation (24)

Access to outdoor activities (15)
Access to community recreation (9)

Environment (23)

Beautiful/scenic surrounding environment (19)
Weather (2)
Clean air (1)
Clean community (1)

Safety (21)

It is safe/crime free (11)
It is quiet (10)

Small Town Living (20)

It is small/has small town atmosphere (15)
No traffic (2)
Things are within walking distance (2)
Know their way around town (1)

Housing (11)

Affordability (5)
Cannot sell their home (2)
They have a mortgage (2)
They own their home (2)

Employment (6)

Employment (6)

Services (5)

Access to good healthcare services (5)

Accessibility (2)

Able to be independent (1)
Community is great for seniors (1)

Community Maintenance (2)

Municipal services are well-managed (2)

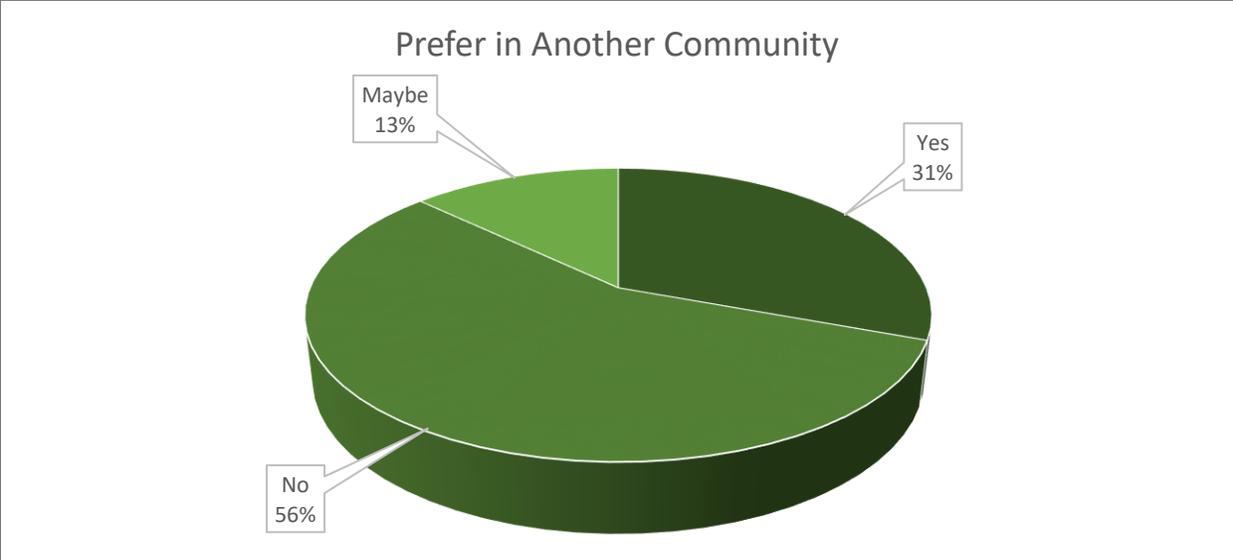
Location (2)

Close to larger communities in the region (2)

Other (24)

It is home for them (11)
They have lived here for a long time (6)
Able to have animal close by (1)
COVID-19 free (1)
Happy with the stores in town (1)
Insulated from bad news (1)
No homelessness (1)
Own too many things to move (1)
Want to see the town succeed (1)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Seniors Assessment 2020.



Finally, around one-third felt that moving to another community would be in their best interest.

To get a better understanding of the context of having to, or wanting to, leave the community, the following table summarizes respondents' reasons to leave Tumbler Ridge.

What would be your main reasons to leave your current community?

Health (37)

Deteriorating health (19)

Access to specific medical care needs not available in Tumbler Ridge (18)

Relationships (17)

To stay closer to family (15)

Beginning a new relationship (1)

If spouse passed (1)

Housing (12)

Lack of retirement housing, extended care, or assisted living in Tumbler Ridge (11)

To avoid doing home maintenance work (1)

Environment (6)

Moving to a warmer climate to avoid winter (6)

Services (5)

Lack of service amenities such as restaurants and shopping (5)

Transportation (3)

If they were no longer able to drive (3)

Economy (2)

Changes to taxation (1)

Only if the town folds (1)

Other (1)

Retirement (1)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Seniors Assessment 2020.

Finally, the last table summarizes additional concluding comments from respondents on seniors' needs in Tumbler Ridge.

Other Final Comments

Healthcare Services (15)

- The quality and accessibility of homecare services is insufficient (7)
- Need more healthcare staff / services in Tumbler Ridge (2)
- Not clear where to go to purchase health equipment (2)
- It is unclear who to contact about homecare needs (1)
- Loss of emergency services in town is a problem (1)
- Need a community bathtub to providing bathing for seniors (1)
- Northern Health needs to improve healthcare access in small communities (1)

Housing (12)

- Need assisted living facilities in Tumbler Ridge (4)
- Seniors' access to winter home maintenance is insufficient (3)
- Bylaws for mobile homes should be adjusted (1)
- Find ways to support group living for widows (1)
- Low-income seniors unable to afford repairs and renovations (1)
- Too many rules for residents living within their complex (1)
- Tradespeople should be able to support community repair/renovation needs (1)

Transportation (4)

- Need more transportation options for seniors, both in town and out of town (4)

Recreation (1)

- Senior's center provides supports for only some seniors, but not all (1)

Other Supports for Grandparents (1)

- More supports needed for grandparents raising grandchildren (1)

Source: Tumbler Ridge Seniors Assessment 2020.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE at the University of Northern British Columbia

The Community Development Institute (CDI) at UNBC was established in 2004 with a broad mandate in the areas of community, regional, and economic development. Since its inception, the CDI has worked with communities across the northern and central regions of British Columbia to develop and implement strategies for economic diversification and community resilience.

Dedicated to understanding and realizing the potential of BC's non-metropolitan communities in a changing global economy, the CDI works to prepare students and practitioners for leadership roles in community and economic development, and to create a body of knowledge, information, and research that will enhance our understanding and our ability to deal with the impacts of ongoing transformation. The Community Development Institute is committed to working with all communities – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – to help them further their aspirations in community and regional development.



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