

2015 Research on Brookings Poverty Rates and Availability of Affordable Housing

City of Brookings Sustainability Council

Morgan T. Vetch

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Abstract

In 2014 the Brookings Sustainability Council organized the Brookings Benchmark Baseline Sustainability Report. The report's purpose was to measure progress toward sustainability that was reliable. It included 58 indicators that fit under one or more of the 11 sustainability principles that include regional economy, community design, community knowledge, native plants and animals, smart energy, green building, reasonable mobility, clean water, smart resource use, healthy local food and healthy air.

The report, under the principle of regional economy, determined that an indicator that measured the percent of residents to be living in poverty was 22.4%. The benchmark report also determined 33% of homeowners and more than 50% of renters are living beyond their means.

The complete benchmark report was presented to the Brookings City Council on July 15, 2014. It was clear from the response of the City Council that more detailed information was needed to better understand the poverty indicator. The Sustainability Council developed a research project to verify the poverty and affordable housing rates in Brookings.

Data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau and many assistance programs throughout Brookings. Correlating the data proved challenging as each organization tracked information differently as they focused on different needs. Similarities were seen in poverty rating, school lunch program and affordable housing. The data all agreed with a 22.4% poverty level. South Dakota State University students influence the community but did not have an adverse impact on the poverty rating. People who live in group settings, such as care facilities, nursing homes, jails and first and second year SDSU students, who live on campus, are not part of the poverty figures by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Poverty Report was put together through the direction of the City of Brookings Sustainability Council with financial support from the College of Education and Human Sciences at South Dakota State University.

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Introduction

The City of Brookings Sustainability Council is invested in the wellbeing and betterment of the city. The population of Brookings is just over 22,000 people. The community is home to South Dakota State University, the largest institution of higher education in the state with about 12,500 students. Of the total enrollment for the fall of 2015, 10,468 students attend class on the Brookings campus. SDSU's methodology for reporting on-campus students is to count undergraduate students taking at least one course on the main campus as on-campus, and to consider all graduate, undergraduate first time students and professional students as on-campus students.

Data collected in the initial Brookings Benchmarks Baseline Report raised concerns about the poverty rate and affordable housing in the city of Brookings. The Sustainability Council developed a research project, which was sponsored by South Dakota State University to review original data relating to poverty and housing in Brookings.

Every household is subject to its own unique circumstance, which is why poverty cannot be defined fully by a salary range even though the U.S. Census Bureau is limited to this incomplete definition. A portion of the population struggles financially to pay for basic needs, but does not qualify to receive financial assistance from state or federal programs because the total family income is too high. The focus of this report has been to understand the poverty level in greater detail and the available programs for people in financial need. The purpose of this report is to evaluate needs and help to assist in finding a solution beyond basic financial assistance.

Data for this report were gathered from local assistance programs to quantify the percentage of people seeking aid. Affordable housing is a major component of this research project because the Sustainable Benchmark Report revealed a lack of available affordable housing. There is a limited availability of housing units in general, and what is available, is not affordable to those seeking it.

It is important to note that the 22.4% originally identified in Brookings Benchmarks does not include the institutionalized population because they are considered to have a place to live and a meal plan (ex: students living in campus housing, people in prison, people in care facilities, etc.). This means more than one in five people living in public housing units are living at or below the poverty level. Though there are many aspects to poverty, income is the most uniform way to measure poverty. This research validated the 22.4% poverty rate determined by the US Census Bureau.

Definitions

Listed below are American Community Survey terms with their respective definitions to provide clarity while reading this report.¹

Housing Unit: A housing unit may be a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied (or, if vacant, intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters.

Gross Rent: Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.), if these are paid by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else).

Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household income: a computed ratio of monthly gross rent to monthly household income (total household income divided by 12). The ratio is computed separately for each unit and is rounded to the nearest tenth. Units for which no rent is paid and units occupied by households that reported no income or a net loss comprise the category, "Not computed."

Vehicle: These data sets show the number of passenger cars, vans, and pickup or panel trucks of one-ton capacity or less kept at home and available for the use of household members. Vehicles rented or leased for one month or more, company vehicles, and police and government vehicles are included if kept at home and used for non-business purposes. Dismantled or immobile vehicles are excluded. Vehicles kept at home but used only for business purposes also are excluded.

Poverty Status: poverty is defined at the family level and not the household level, the poverty status of the household is determined by the poverty status of the householder. Households are classified as poor when the total income of the householder's family is below the appropriate poverty threshold. (For nonfamily householders, their own income is compared with the appropriate threshold.) The income of people living in the household who are unrelated to the householder is not considered when determining the poverty status of a household, nor does their presence affect the family size in determining the appropriate threshold. The poverty thresholds vary depending on three criteria: size of family, number of related children, and, for 1- and 2-person families, the age of householder.

Income in the past 12 months: The data on income were derived from answers to Questions 47 and 48 in the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), which were asked of the population 15 years old and over. "Total income" is the sum of the amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.

Per Capita Income: Per capita income is the mean money income received in the past 12 months computed for every man, woman, and child in a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the total population in that area. Note: income is not collected for people under 15 years old even though those people are included in the denominator of per capita income.

¹ [Code Lists, Definitions, and Accuracy](#), these definitions along with many others can be found under the "Subject Definitions" option.

Poverty

A simple definition of poverty is when an individual is unable to meet their basic needs. These needs vary from case to case. For example, poverty can be experienced in terms of affordable access to nutritious food, proper clothing for weather conditions, adequate housing, or medical care. The census bureau developed a more quantitative explanation where poverty is determined in terms of annual income thresholds according to family size before taxes.

Size of family unit	Poverty Thresholds for 2014								
	none	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 or more
1 person per household									
under 65 yrs	\$ 12,316								
65 and over	\$ 11,354								
2 people per household									
under 65	\$ 15,853	\$ 16,317							
65 & over	\$ 14,309	\$ 16,256							
3 people per household	\$ 18,518	\$ 19,055	\$ 19,073						
4 people per household	\$ 24,418	\$ 24,817	\$ 24,008	\$ 24,091					
5 people per household	\$ 29,447	\$ 29,875	\$ 28,960	\$ 28,252	\$ 27,820				
6 people per household	\$ 33,869	\$ 34,004	\$ 33,303	\$ 32,631	\$ 31,633	\$ 31,041			
7 people per household	\$ 38,971	\$ 39,214	\$ 38,375	\$ 37,791	\$ 36,701	\$ 35,431	\$ 34,036		
8 people per household	\$ 43,586	\$ 43,970	\$ 43,179	\$ 42,485	\$ 41,501	\$ 40,252	\$ 38,953	\$ 38,622	
9 people or more	\$ 52,430	\$ 52,685	\$ 51,984	\$ 51,396	\$ 50,430	\$ 49,101	\$ 47,899	\$ 47,601	\$ 45,768

Figure 1. Poverty threshold values by family size and number of related children under 18 years of age for 2014 from the US Census Bureau data.

	Percent of families and people whose income fell in poverty level			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
<i>All families</i>	6.90%	8.60%	8.60%	8.40%
w/Children under 18	10.60%	13.30%	11.30%	9.70%
w/Children under 5 only	30.10%	31.20%	24.60%	18.90%
<i>Married couple families</i>	4.00%	3.40%	4.00%	4.90%
w/Children under 18	4.80%	5.40%	6.50%	9.40%
W/Children under 5 only	18.60%	12.30%	9.40%	12.70%
<i>*Families with female householder and no husband present</i>	19.00%	30.00%	24.60%	20.50%

Figure 2. Percent of families and people whose income fell below the established poverty level calculated by the American Community Survey.

It is important to note income ranges are based on national averages that do not account for cost of living differences among the states or individuals. In addition, the institutionalized population is excluded in all of the US Census and American Community Survey poverty calculations because, again, they are considered to be housed and have a meal plan.

The 2013 American Community Survey Estimate reports a 22.4% poverty rate for the City of Brookings. In other words, more than 1 in 5 people are living at or below the poverty income threshold. This figure is validated due to the high participation in local and federal assistance programs and has decreased significantly from 25.1% in 2010 and less noticeably from 22.5% in 2012.

Unemployment

Brookings County had a 3.9% unemployment rate in March 2015.² This is favorable because it can be assumed that most all of the able-bodied workforce is employed. Brookings County unemployment rate is slightly higher than the South Dakota rate at 3.5%³ and is notably lower than the United States as a whole at 5.5%, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.⁴

SDSU Influence

Freshmen and sophomores are required to live on campus unless that requirement is waived by Student Affairs to allow a student to live at home or off campus based on certain circumstances. The two-year on-campus requirement is within best practices, nationally, where statistics show students that live on campus the first two years of college have a greater opportunity to graduate and graduate on time.

The vast majority of juniors, seniors, and graduate students live off campus. Approximately 4,000 to 4,500 juniors and seniors, roughly 1,700 graduate and professional students attend SDSU each year. The university offers on-campus living space for approximately 750 upper division students, in addition to limited married student housing.⁵

Between December and May each year, remaining students search for housing for the following school year. Due to limited availability of housing in Brookings, those spaces are quickly rented, and in varying conditions. High demand for rentals allows for limited maintenance and landlords are able to rent poorly maintained units for a substantial rate.

According to Jeff Vostad, head of the TRIO Programs at SDSU, 36% of all students are low income TRIO is an SDSU program available to motivate and support underrepresented students. To qualify as underrepresented, students must meet one of the following criteria: first generation student, Pell-eligible, less than 50% of financial need met, ACT of 19 or lower, Veteran, and/or student with a disability. At least 63% of SDSU students fit these criteria.

² The 3.9% unemployment rate is according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics:

<http://beta.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/LAUCN460110000000003>

³ The 3.5% rate available at <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LASST460000000000003>

⁴ The 5.5% rate is available at <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet>

⁵ Data retrieved from SDSU Housing and Residential Life.

Household and Family Income

The City of Brookings has wide range of income levels that greatly affect the average and median income levels. It is notable that Brookings city and county have a similar trend in household and per capita income; city household and per capita income are higher than the county. Brookings County has a 17.8% poverty rate whereas the City of Brookings has a 22.4% poverty rate. Many assumptions can be made by looking at the income and poverty numbers.

	2013 Average Income		
	Household Income	Per Capita Income	Family Income
City of Brookings	\$ 55,592	\$ 21,382	\$ 77,829
Brookings County	\$ 59,474	\$ 23,105	\$ 77,129
South Dakota	\$ 49,495	\$ 25,740	\$ 77,395
United States	\$ 73,487	\$ 28,155	\$ 85,588

Figure 3. Average household, per capita and family income for 2013.⁶

Brookings County is ranked 32nd out of South Dakota's 66 counties for median household income according to the 2013 American Community Survey estimate. Household income in the first 16 counties is less than \$40,000 per year. The poorest county, Shannon, listed at \$25,648 and the richest county, Lincoln, listed at \$74,751, which will affect the overall state average. Five South Dakota counties bordering Brookings had higher household yearly incomes: Hamlin more than \$7,000 per year higher than Brookings; Duel, Kingsbury, and Moody more than \$4,000 per year; and Lake more than \$2,000.

South Dakota State University students have an influence on the per capita and average household incomes but the true impact is uncertain. Students living off campus will most likely live in household units rather than family units and some commute 60 miles or more. An item to consider when evaluating the above income statistics is whether the student population will have more effect on total household income than on family income.

⁶ These values are accessible by searching each respective geography through the census.gov website and then clicking on the QuickFacts link.

City of Brookings: Family Income and Affordable Housing Allowance

Family income	Number of families	Affordable housing monthly cost (\$)
Less than \$10,000	111	< \$250
\$10,000 to \$14,999	157	\$250
\$15,000 to \$19,999	104	\$375
\$20,000 to \$24,999	252	\$500
\$25,000 to \$29,999	185	\$625
\$30,000 to \$34,999	208	\$750
\$35,000 to \$39,999	267	\$875
\$40,000 to \$44,999	174	\$1,000
\$45,000 to \$49,999	228	\$1,125
\$50,000 to \$59,999	470	\$1,250
\$60,000 to \$74,999	467	\$1,500
\$75,000 to \$99,999	546	\$1,875
\$100,000 to \$124,999	397	\$2,500
\$125,000 to \$149,999	284	\$3,125
\$150,000 to \$199,999	192	\$3,750
\$200,000 or more	152	\$5,000
total	4194	

Figure 4. City of Brookings family income for 2013 with estimated affordable housing cost.⁷

Affordable Housing

A person is considered to live in affordable housing when each month’s total rent/mortgage, utility bill, gas, and insurance charges total less than 30% of the total household income.⁸ The above table illustrates what affordable housing situations look like for the measured family incomes for the City of Brookings in 2013.

HUD Fair Market Rent Values for Brookings County

Bed	Efficiency	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Monthly rent	\$ 450	\$ 523	\$ 708	\$ 1,043	\$ 1,254
Monthly income necessary	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,743	\$ 2,360	\$ 3,477	\$ 4,180
Yearly income necessary	\$ 18,000	\$ 20,920	\$ 28,320	\$ 41,720	\$ 50,160

Figure 5. HUD Free Market Rent Values for Brookings County.

⁷ These values were calculated using the equation (example income*30%=housing affordability) to demonstrate the number of Brookings families that can afford on housing expenses per month.

⁸ The US Department of Housing and Urban Development determines the rate at which a house is to be considered affordable which equates to 30% of a person’s income:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing

The Housing and Urban Development Free Market Rent values 372 families cannot afford an efficiency-housing unit in Brookings. 15% of families cannot afford a 1 bedroom housing unit. 809 families could not afford a 2-bedroom housing unit. In 2013, 45.9% of renters spent 35% or more of their monthly income on housing costs alone according to the American Community Survey in Brookings. Brookings has income-based housing where rent is based on family income but availability is limited. Demand for these units is high, therefore they remain full. Family and elderly are given top priority.

Educational Attainment

Education levels are broken down into seven categories by the United States Census Bureau, ranging from less than ninth grade to graduate/professional degree. A majority, 56.1%, of the City of Brookings residents have an associate’s degree or higher. 38.3% for the Brookings residents have a high school diploma and may have taken some college courses. A small portion of the population, 5.5%, did not complete high school.

Educational Attainment

Education Level	% Population
Less than 9th grade	2.1%
9th-12th grade (no diploma)	3.4%
High School Diploma(or equivalent)	21.4%
Some college (no degree)	16.9%
Associate's Degree	8.6%
Bachelor's Degree	29.0%
Graduate or Professional Degree	18.5%

Figure 6. Educational attainment of people over 25 years of age for the City of Brookings in 2013, American Community Survey.⁹

⁹ <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

Age

Brookings residents have a relatively even distribution of people in the various age ranges with the exception of the 15-19, 20-24, and the 25-34 year ranges. Residents in the age range of 15-34 make up 53% of the Brookings population per the 2013 reports the remainder of the population indicates 14.3% are in the range of 0-14 years and 33.2% are in the 35-85 plus age range.

City of Brookings: Age	
5 and under	5.0%
5 to 9 years	4.7%
10 to 14 years	4.6%
15 to 19 years	14.0%
20 to 24 years	26.0%
25 to 34 years	13.5%
35 to 44 years	8.5%
45 to 54 years	7.4%
55 to 59 years	4.6%
60 to 64 years	3.4%
65 to 74 years	4.1%
75 to 84 years	2.7%
85 and older	1.5%

Figure 7. Distribution of Brookings residents by age for 2013 according to the American Community Survey.¹⁰

¹⁰ <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkml>

Challenges

This report recognizes challenges in collecting and evaluating data. The topic covered by this report is very broad which attributes to it having many limitations. The concept of poverty can vary from person to person even organization to organization. The U.S. Census Bureau's definition is based on an income range but does not include cost of living. Data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau is not provided for every year. Lack of yearly data along with the various methods each organization retained data makes it difficult to form direct correlations between organizations. This report focused on the City of Brookings but some data were not available for the city, therefore Brookings County data were used. A lack of transparency is noted as data were collected differently by each source. A completely comprehensive report is impractical; therefore some areas relating to poverty were unable to be addressed such as medical needs. Below is a list of more specific challenges.

- *Poverty as defined by the US Census:* It is important to note that the census income ranges defining poverty are based on national averages that do not account for cost of living differences among the states or for individuals.
- *SDSU students influence on data:* Students are counted in the total population. If they claim Brookings as their residence, they will then be included in housing and income data if they are living in off campus housing units. The total number of SDSU students cannot be accurately subtracted from Brookings' total population.
- *Limited data available:* The last official census was in 2010. The American Community Survey does random samplings and calculates five-year estimates. The American Community Survey 2013 estimate is the most up to date data available for a city the size of Brookings. This was the primary source of information for this report and all data compared to census values were compared to 2013 data sets when available. However, not all of the data are transparent and some data sets cannot be directly correlated due to a lack of a uniform reporting system among the sources.
- *For all data labeled "Brookings County" city data was unavailable:* Because the City of Brookings is not a large metropolitan area, it is not studied as thoroughly as larger and more heavily populated areas in the US. Brookings County data was used when City data was not available.
- *Transparency and availability of data:* All data collected could not be collected consistently from each organization allowing direct correlation from one data set to another.

Conclusion

Poverty can be defined by income limits, but in order to understand poverty, one must look into aspects of affordable housing, nutritious food access, fair work environments, and other region-specific factors. A direct correlation of data is difficult due to the different aspect of the programs evaluated. Correlations were found in the poverty rate, school lunch program, and affordable housing. The poverty rate for the city of Brookings was identified at 22.4%. This rate is similar to the number of free lunches provided in the Brookings Schools; approximately one in four students, or 25%, receive free or reduced school lunches and breakfasts. Affordable housing numbers were lower than both the poverty and school lunch program: approximately 19.3% could not afford a two-bedroom housing unit. Averaging the high and low percentages from the school lunch program and affordable housing numbers calculate to 22.2%, which is very close to the poverty level of 22.4% identified by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Brookings has many assistance programs available for people who struggle financially. Information gathered from the assistance programs in Brookings did not allow for the ability to determine the percentage of the population using each program. Data collected did indicate there is a need for these assistance programs as there is a consistent demand on them through the years.

Summary

This study was conducted on behalf of the City of Brookings Sustainability Council with the financial support from the College of Education and Human Sciences at South Dakota State University. Poverty was researched at the local level with a heavy emphasis on assistance program participation and affordable housing availability.

Many assistance programs and financial aid resources were researched and leaders in these programs were interviewed. There is consistently high participation in these programs and many are growing and routinely running out of funds on a yearly basis. This participation is validation that many people are seeking assistance. It is also important to recognize many programs, including but not limited to the Food Pantry, My Neighbor Program, and Ministerial Association, are sources of once per year aid. Therefore, their numbers accurately represent individuals and family units who have not been able to live within their means at least once in the past year.

Affordable housing is a component of the City of Brookings poverty rate, and this topic needs further investigation. Data regarding affordable housing is not readily available and is not regularly measured. Renters' living conditions would also be a valuable factor to include. According to the American Community Survey, 45.9% of renters spent 35% or more of their monthly income on housing costs alone in 2013. This either indicates that wages are too low to support individuals and families or housing costs are too high for people to afford, or a combination thereof.

Data collected for this report validated the Brookings poverty level rate identified by the U.S. Census Bureau (22.4% in 2013). This rate is justifiable by the free and reduced school lunch program participants and the number of people unable to afford housing is congruent. The school lunch program provided approximately 25% of the students with free or reduced lunches. Affordable housing numbers indicated approximately 19.3% of the Brookings population could not afford adequate housing. Although the poverty level, affordable housing, and school lunch programs compile different data, they provide similar numbers. SDSU contributes to the community numbers but did not influence the overall poverty rating, as the U.S. Census Bureau counts people living in a group setting differently.

The City of Brookings Sustainability Council is committed to the betterment of the community and will be actively exploring avenues to reduce the poverty rate to the best of their ability. With the support of SDSU, further studies will be made to expose and ultimately reduce hardship of the working poor.

Reference Guide

American Community Survey – <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

Barbara Thompson, Brookings Area Habitat for Humanity Executive Director

Brittany Thompson, Feeding Brookings Representative

Cathy Ching, Project Coordinator for the Brookings Backpack Project

Chris Lilla, Deputy Director of Brookings County Equalization

Dana Whitehouse, Inter-lakes Community Action Partnership: Housing Rehabilitation Program Manager

Dawn Twedt, My Neighbor Service Director

Jeff Vostad, Director of the SDSU TRIO Program

Joyce Dragseth, Director of Brookings County Equalization

Kelsey Stoltenberg, Healthy Lifestyles Coordinator for the Brookings Boys and Girls Club

Kimberlee Davis, Census Bureau Data Analyst

Norma Nusz-Chandler, Instructor of Construction Management at SDSU

Patty Bacon, Brookings City Council Member

South Dakota State University - <http://www.sdstate.edu/>

Trish Jackson, previous Researcher and Professor of Geography at SDSU

Laura Duba, Brookings School Lunch Program Director

United States Census Bureau – <http://www.census.gov/>

United States Housing and Urban Development – <http://www.hud.gov/>

United States Bureau of Labor Statistics – <http://www.bls.gov/>

Vonda Kirkham, Harvest Table Coordinator

Weiwei Zhang, Director of the State Data Center

Assistance Programs and Other Financial Services

Brookings has a wealth of assistance programs and services that are meant to assist and enable individuals and families who are faced with unfavorable circumstances. They include, but are not limited to, affordable housing programs, reduced cost childcare, assistance paying monthly bills, and grocery giveaways. These programs have proved to be successful and are much appreciated by participants. The following is a list of organizations contacted for this report with a brief summary.

Boys and Girls Club of America

The Boys and Girls Club offers three programs: Clubhouse, Traditional Club, and the Teen Center. The Clubhouse has 82 children enrolled from ages three to kindergarten and regular attendance is about 25 children each day. The Traditional Club has 915 children enrolled from grades first through sixth and about 350-400 children attend each day. The Teen Center has 272 teens enrolled from grades seventh through twelfth and approximately 80 teens attend each day. The yearly fee of \$20 is subject to change each year as this figure is based on Brookings median income. The summer meal program costs \$2.75, which includes two snacks and a lunch. During the school year the meal program includes a free supper and snack. Both the yearly fee and the meal program at the Club have scholarships available for qualifying participants. Approximately 60% of families enrolled in the program report low incomes.

Each year the Boys and Girls Club applies for a Payless Shoe Grant. Upon receiving the grant the Club is able to distribute fifty free pairs of shoes, first to children who are participating in the free/reduced meal program, with extra pairs given to other Club members. Shoes are usually distributed in the fall in preparation for cold winter weather.

Boys and Girls Club of Brookings
1126 Southland Lane
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 692-3333
Email: bgcfrontdesk@greatfuturesd.org
<http://greatfuturesd.org/page14422.aspx>

Brookings Backpack Project

The Brookings Backpack Project distributes easy preparation meals to children for them to take home on the weekends. Bags are distributed to children from Head Start age through senior year of high school. From August 29, 2014 to July 23, 2015 a total of 17,189 food bags were distributed to children in the Brookings area. This includes the school year and the summer program.

Brookings Backpack Project
PO Box 8054
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 651-3900
Email: coordinatorbbp@gmail.com
<http://www.brookingsbackpackproject.org/>

Feeding Brookings

Feeding Brookings a Christian organization distributes groceries to those in need. Bakery items, produce, canned goods, hygiene items, and a food item of the month are given every Thursday. In 2014, 16,062 people total were assisted, and from January 2015 until July 2015 9,008 people have been assisted.

Ascension Lutheran Church
2030 3rd Street
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 692-6565
Email: feedingbrookings@brookings.net
<http://www.feedingbrookings.org/>

Brookings County Food Pantry

The Brookings County Food Pantry an emergency food assistance program that limits visits to three times a year in order to help as many people and families as possible. The amount of food given is based on household size and is estimated to last a household about a week. In 2014, over 100 families were served and nearly half were children.

Operating hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1pm-4:30pm.

Brookings County Food Pantry
217 4th Street
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 692-5007
<http://www.brookingscountyfoodpantry.org/>

Free and Reduced School Lunch Program

For the 2014-2015 school year, 25% of all Brookings public school students were receiving free or reduced school lunches and breakfasts. In other words, one in four students, approximately 819 kids participated in this program in the Brookings School District alone.

Brookings School District 5-1
Child Nutrition Director: Laura Duba, RD, LN
2130 8th Street
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 696-4713
Email: laura.duba@k12.sd.us
<http://www.brookings.k12.sd.us/education/district/district.php?sectionid=1>

Brookings Area Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a national nonprofit program that enables qualifying families to have affordable and decent housing. Along with building houses, Habitat assists with other necessary home improvements through “A Brush with Kindness” and neighborhood revitalization programs.

Habitat for Humanity aids homeowners in purchasing their houses at an affordable monthly mortgage rate. Homebuyers are able to purchase their houses at a 0% mortgage rate. Qualifying participant’s income must fall between the 50% and 80% median area income ranges. In 2015, they helped paint and upgrade approximately 40 homes and built three new homes in Brookings.

Brookings Area Habitat for Humanity
321 9th Street
PO Box 412
Brookings, SD 57009
Phone: (605) 697-2540
Email: bahfh@brooking.net
<http://brookingshabitat.org/>

Harvest Table

The Harvest Table is a free meal served at the First United Methodist Church every Monday night. There are no qualifications, anyone in need may come. In 2014, approximately 8,600 guests were served which averages to about 185 meals per week. The Harvest Table also distributes groceries and diapers. An average of 140 households each month received groceries also about 100,000 diapers total were given in 2014.

First United Methodist Church
625 5th Street
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 692-4345
Email: communitylife@brookingsmethodist.org
<http://www.brookingsmethodist.org/web/index.php?siteid=279&pageid=2339>

Inter-lakes Community Action Partnership: Mutual Self-Help Housing

The Inter-lakes Community Action Partnership (ICAP) is a nonprofit organization that distributes grant and donated monies to 14 counties in East Central South Dakota, including Brookings. The focus of this program is to assist low-income families and elderly persons reach self-sufficiency.

In Brookings County there is a Sweat Equity Home Building Program where applicants do 65% of the work building their house under supervision. There is no down payment or closing cost and clients purchase the home at an average loan of \$115,000 when the appraised value of the home is \$160,000. The houses are three star energy rated to ensure affordable utilities. 28 homes have been/are being built in the city of Brookings in 2015.

Housing Rehabilitation Programs Manager: Dana Whitehouse

601 4th Street, Suite 108

Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 692-6391

Email: dwhitehouse@interlakescap.com

<http://www.interlakescap.com/web/index.php?siteid=242&pageid=808>

My Neighbor

The Brookings My Neighbor program is a derivative from the Ministerial Association. This program places a strong emphasis on empowering people to overcome their current challenges. My Neighbor is unique because there are no income limits on assistance. This is beneficial as people often make just over the income limitations of other programs and are turned away. More people are able to be assisted due to the flexible individual assessing process. Financial advising and budget plans are required before funds are given as the program is crisis centered. Money is meant to be given on a one time basis. However, Dawn Twedt (My Neighbor Service Director) encourages people to call for free advice and in some cases exceptions are made.

Most of the funding goes to housing assistance which is expected to total \$35,000 in 2015. In 2014, 400 different individuals and families contacted My Neighbor in search of assistance. Of those 117 were assisted through My Neighbor: \$23,500 was given for housing and \$6,200 was given for utility bills. The remaining 283 were referred to other programs.

My Neighbor

Service Director: Dawn Twedt

1310 Main Avenue, Suite 113

Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 691-3225

Email: info@myneighborbrookings.net

<http://www.mynighborbrookings.net/2.html>

Brookings Public Housing Authority

The Brookings Public Housing Authority (PHA) manages the low income and Section 8 Housing programs for Brookings, Deuel, Hamlin, Kingsbury, and Moody. The PHA gives vouchers to qualifying persons enabling them to live in section 8 inspected housing units. The wait list is based on preferences; victims of domestic abuse, elderly or disabled persons, working families, working singles, and non-working or homeless persons are ranked respectively. Some clients remain on the waiting list for over a year. As of August 2015, the waiting list has ranged from 45 people in January to 120 people in July. The waiting list tends to increase in summer and decrease in winter as people tend to prefer to move in the summer months. The number of vouchers given each month depends on the available funds for the PHA and often fluctuates. In 2014, there were 2,764 vouchers given in Brookings County.

Brookings Public Housing Authority
1310 Main Avenue South
PO Box 432
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 692-1670
Email: sdbhrc@brookings.net

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is a national Christian organization with a simple mission to meet people's basic needs. Both residents and transients have been given voucher checks for gas, rent, hotel stays, and utility bills. Every year the Brookings Salvation Army hosts a Back to School program that provides 400 children with school supplies, and a Share the Warmth program that provides approximately 400 children with winter clothing.

Salvation Army volunteers can be contacted via the My Neighbor Program.

My Neighbor
Service Director: Dawn Twedt
1310 Main Avenue, Suite 113
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 691-3225
Email: info@myneighborbrookings.net

SNAP

The federal government funds the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as “food stamps.” This program is meant to aid families in meeting their nutritional needs. The amount of aid received is dependent on the size of the household, income, and allowable expenses.*

From January-June 2015, approximately 833 households were helped on average each month in Brookings County. This equates to 1,849 individuals each month: 938 of which are 18 years or older and 912 who are younger than 18 years old.

*Allowable expenses include a percentage of rent and utilities up to a maximum amount, child care/support, and for the elderly/disabled out of pocket medical expenses.

Brookings Social Services
1310 Main Avenue South, Suite 101
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 688-4330
<http://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/snap/>

SDSU TRIO Program

TRIO is a federally funded organization comprised of programs that are meant to encourage academic success for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Disabled, low income, and first generation students are eligible for this program and this population includes over 63% of the SDSU student population, though not all participate. Many of the participants meet a combination of the requirements.

TRIO
SDSU Larson Commons #104
PO Box 2806
Brookings, SD 57006
Phone: (605) 688-6653
<http://www.sdstate.edu/trio/index.cfm>

Brookings County Welfare and Veterans Services

Brookings County Welfare Office aids people in emergent situations. The program covers mostly medical, housing, and utility bills. The Welfare Program differs from other assistance programs in that all of the money borrowed must be repaid.

The Welfare Program assists approximately 20 families with utilities, and 35-40 families with rent. In 2014, a total of \$264,882 was paid out: \$142,943.17 towards Brookings County medical costs; \$93,749.00 towards county mandated medical expenses; and \$28,189.83 was paid towards rent and utility costs. * The amount reimbursed by clients totals \$40,975.74. This drastic difference is because many clients unfortunately expire before their debt can be repaid. In those cases the debt falls to the client's estate and sometimes is transferred to family members.

Most veterans are assisted through the County Welfare program. There is a small fund which is used for approximately two client veterans a year. The money is conserved because it is funded strictly by donations and is much smaller than the Welfare Program.

*Please note that the County Welfare Office aids with other expenses that were not explored for this research project and that the \$40,975.74 reimbursement was for all monies borrowed from the welfare program.

Brookings County Human Services

520 3rd Street, Suite 220

Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 696-8260

<http://www.brookingscountysd.gov/Index.aspx?NID=256>

WIC

Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a supplemental nutrition program specifically for women, infants, and children. In Brookings County an average of 515 people are assisted each month totaling \$381,998.00 worth of redemptions annually. Brookings County has the 9th highest WIC participation in the state and redeems the 10th most money annually. Brookings population ranks fifth in South Dakota.

Brookings County WIC Office

1310 Main Avenue South, Suite 105

Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 688-5805

<https://doh.sd.gov/family/wic/>

United Way

United Way is an organization that supports over 40 different agencies and assistance programs in Brookings County. Funds are divided among education, health, and income assistance programs. Programs within Brookings city limits include but are not limited to: the Boys and Girls Club, ICAP, Habitat for Humanity, Brookings Backpack Project, Feeding Brookings, the Harvest Table, My Neighbor, and the Salvation Army.

Brookings Area United Way

PO Box 750

Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 692-4979

Email: uw@brookingsunitedway.org

<https://www.brookingsunitedway.org/>