



Regional District of East Kootenay Report Introduction and Regional Summary ELECTORAL AREAS HOUSING NEEDS REPORT

NOVEMBER 2021



Acknowledgments

We acknowledge with respect and gratitude that the land on which this study takes place, is the traditional unceded territories of the Ktunaxa Nation.

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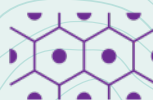
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1 Executive Summary

Safe, affordable, and inclusive housing is vital to societal, economic, and individual health and well-being of residents of the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK). Unfortunately, safe, affordable, and inclusive housing is increasingly difficult to find. To help address housing need, the RDEK has undertaken a Housing Needs Report for the rural areas of the Regional District. Funded by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' (UBCM) Housing Needs Report program, this report is a descriptive analysis of the current housing needs and issues across the RDEK and aims to strengthen local understanding of what kinds of housing are needed, and inform local plans, policies, and development decisions.

1.1 WHAT IS A HOUSING NEEDS REPORT?

The purpose of this work is to develop an understanding of the current and anticipated housing conditions across the electoral areas of the Regional District of East Kootenay. Generally, the work strengthens the ability of local stakeholders and governments to:

- Identify current and future housing needs;
- Identify existing and projected gaps in housing; and
- Identify housing priorities to better understand what kind of dwellings (size and type) are most needed in their community.

This Housing Needs Report fulfills the requirements for Housing Needs Reports as outlined in the Local Government Act. The report can be used by community members, the broader public, service and housing providers, and by local and regional governments to understand current housing needs, projected community growth, and future housing need over the next five years from 2021 to 2026.

1.2 WHY DO WE NEED THIS STUDY?

A thorough assessment of housing needs is a useful resource to support many future initiatives. An assessment of housing need is often a precursor to the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy, which are action-oriented plans to identify and implement solutions. The insights and data generated by a needs assessment can help inform ongoing land use and social planning initiatives at the local level, as well as provide hard evidence in support of advocacy to more senior levels of government. Finally, they are a useful resource for those engaged in, or entering the housing sector. Information contained in a needs assessment can inform the design and configuration of housing projects, as well as assist in the preparation of applications to various funding programs that support affordable housing development.

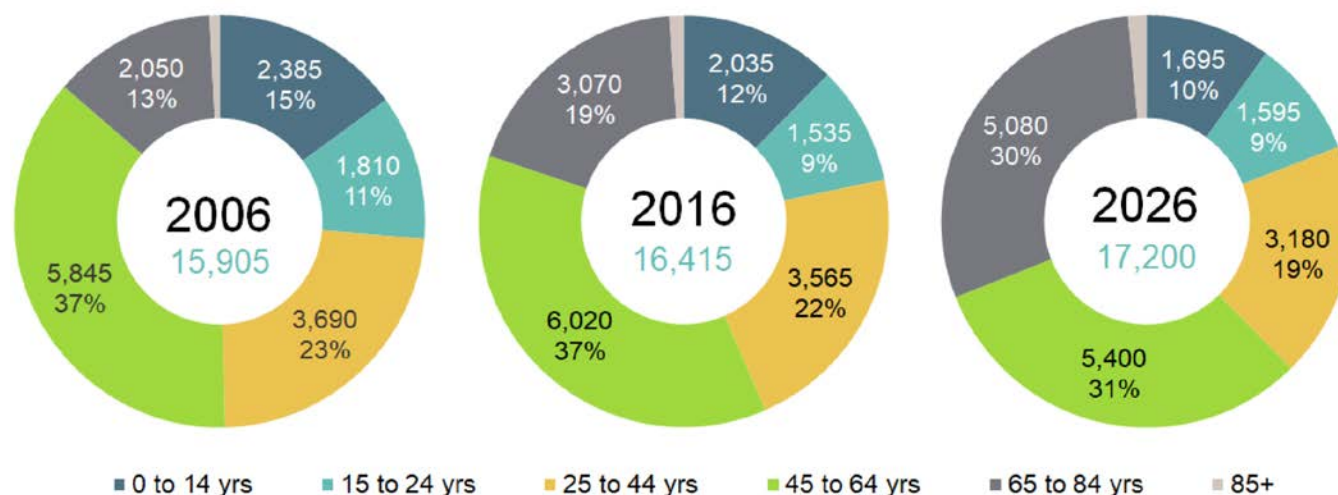
1.3 KEY FINDINGS

Rural East Kootenay's population is expected to grow and age.

The population of East Kootenay Rural grew by approximately 3.2% between 2006 and 2016, from 15,905 to 16,415 people. Population projections anticipate a further increase of nearly 5% between 2016 and 2026 to 17,200 people. Overall, East Kootenay Rural has experienced consistent growth over the past decade.

While consistent, growth is occurring unevenly across age cohorts. Projections anticipate that most younger age cohorts are likely to decrease or remain proportionately stable, reflecting the modest population growth across the RDEK. Older age cohorts are expected to increase dramatically, with seniors growing from 13% of the population in 2006 to as high as 30% in 2026.

Figure 1.3a: Population Growth (Historical & Anticipated)



Source: derived from BC Statistics and Statistics Canada

These findings indicate a need for housing across the RDEK that supports the needs of older residents and younger residents, especially those starting out and young families. Specifically, there is a need for more housing that is affordable and accessible for those on limited incomes, particularly within the rental market. An aging population presents a greater need for smaller housing units that allow for downsizing. Seniors are also more likely to be living with a disability or activity limitation than other age groups and may have to pay for all household expenses on a fixed income. In many parts of the of the study area, older residents may live in an affordable situation, but are increasingly worried about their ability to maintain the house and property.

"At this point I am in my own home but will need to downsize in the next few years & will need looking at rental. I am concerned about availability & cost."

"Lack of affordable rental units for young families. It is also extremely difficult for young people, just starting out, to make a down payment on a home due to the excessive cost of real estate. Wages have not kept up with the increase in housing costs."

"When we look at downsizing and moving closer to the town of Invermere the lack of real estate inventory and cost of a smaller home keeps us in a house perhaps too large now that our children have grown up and moved out."

"Lack of affordable homes to rent or to purchase for young people and families and older people looking to downsize."

"Currently there are many seniors (55+) who are living in their own homes but will need to downsize and live closer to amenities sometime in the future. There is a need for smaller low maintenance housing that is not institutional. Age or loss of spouse are factors in the timing."

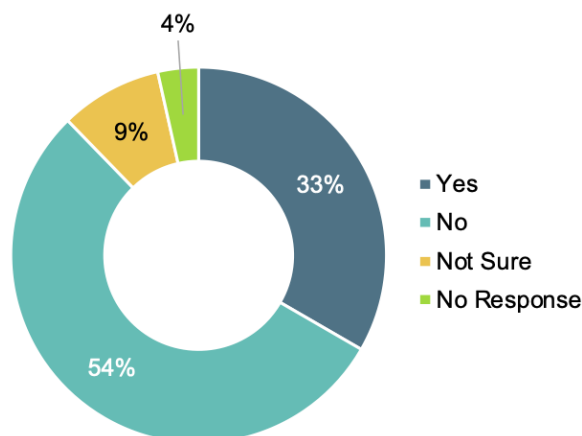
In addition to expressing a desire for smaller, maintainable units (though not necessarily fewer bedrooms), many seniors responded that they would prefer to be located closer to amenities and services or have some services extended to rural areas, especially as they choose to drive less or are unable to operate a personal vehicle. Many senior respondents expressed a deep concern for the inability of their children and younger residents to find rental or home ownership options across the region. Expanding the availability of smaller, multi-unit housing, connected to services or transit options is vital for meeting the needs of an older population looking to downsize. Zoning and land-use decisions that prioritize multi-unit and smaller, denser housing with public and active transportation infrastructure would support the growing needs of seniors, as well as younger population groups.

Addressing seniors' housing not only benefits that demographic, but younger one as well. If seniors move out of their existing accommodations, their homes become available for upcoming generations who may not be able to afford a new dwelling but are willing to invest over time in an older, more affordable home.

Rental housing in increasingly difficult to find, more expensive, and more likely to be in poor condition.

According to the 2016 Census, 21% of households in the RDEK are renter households, in comparison to 79% of owner households. Throughout the engagement process, the cost, availability, and condition of rental units were some of the most common concerns identified amongst participants. Though most people in the RDEK own their home, many residents have friends or family who are struggling to find a stable and affordable rental situation. Fifty-four percent (54%) of renter respondents who responded to the community survey indicated that their current housing costs were unaffordable to them.

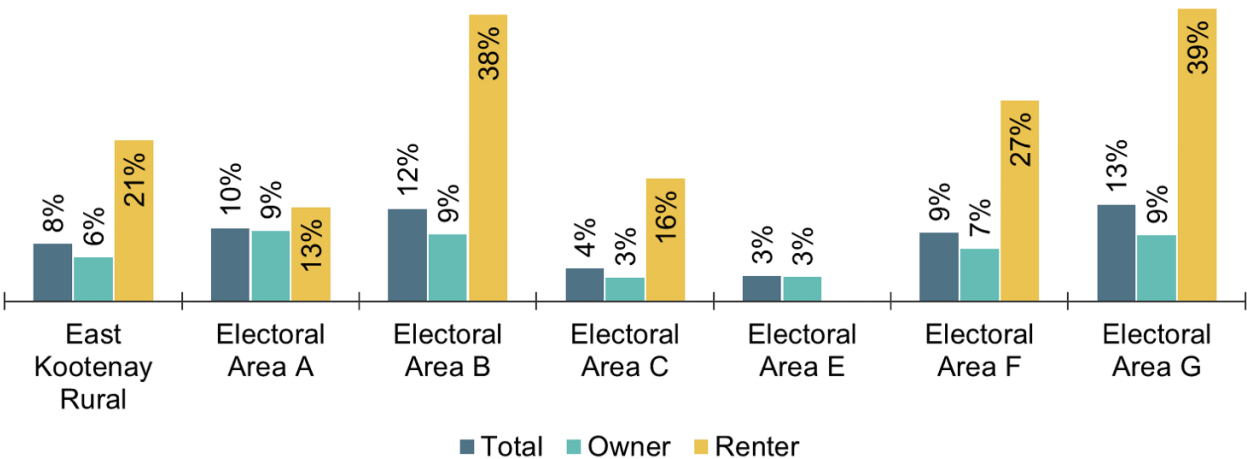
Figure 1.3b: Renters in Unaffordable Living Situations



Renter households earn significantly less income than owner households. Amongst survey respondents, the median owner household earned an estimated annual income of \$84,922, while the median renter household earned \$49,117.

Across the study area, about 21% of all renter households were in Core Housing Need, compared to only 6% of owner households. Housing hardship was most prevalent in Electoral Areas B and G among both owners and renters, but the consensus, confirmed through stakeholder engagement, is that renters face elevated levels of housing hardship across all electoral areas.

Figure 1.3c: Core Housing Need



Source: Statistics Canada

"My income does not allow me to pay rent increases but yet I am forced to pay higher rent and therefore go without other basic necessities like food and expensive personal items that I do not have a choice to buy."

"I am fearful about what will happen when our lease is up in April 2022. There is nothing for rent. There are many families waiting in line to rent. Air BNBs need to be rid of. Locals who work in this town are forced to move. It is a crisis."

"Our daughter, son in law and grandson had the opportunity to move to Invermere after being offered a good job. They turned down the offer because of two reasons: lack of rental housing (until they could sell their home and repurchase) and lack of daycare."

"The places that are for rent in this area are a joke. I can barely afford living where I'm at and I make decent money. Can't imagine trying to live off minimum wage."

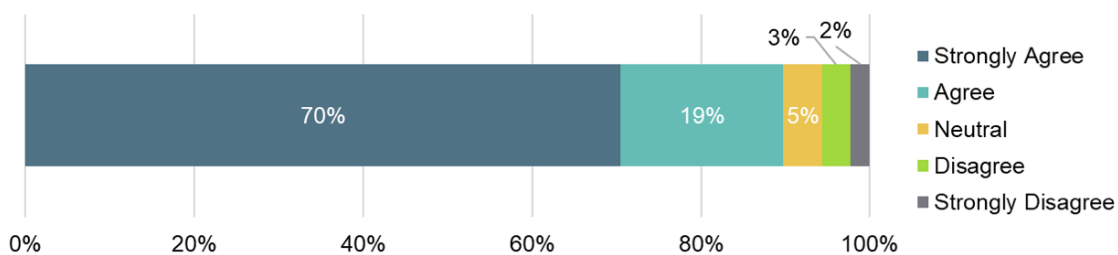
"Would like to move but rents are so high I cannot afford to. Will never save enough for a down payment to own and can only pay minimum amount on credit card debt each month because current "cheaper" rent is still half of my income."

Tourism and hospitality sector employees, especially those in seasonal positions, were identified as a subsection of residents facing disproportionate housing challenges. Many positions are in retail and service, are not full-time, and pay less than other sectors. Staff in this category are in direct competition with short term rentals as communities need the most workers when demand for tourist accommodations are the highest. Many employers attributed staff shortages to the lack of affordable rental supply and 89% percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that is difficult to find appropriate housing in the RDEK.

"We have had to move every year for the past 10 years due to our landlords choosing to sell their home or use it as a short-term rental."

"All the small, contained units for 1 person are Airbnb's and people don't want to rent long term because they can make more money via Airbnb or they are way too expensive for me to afford on my own as a single seasonal worker. The place I am currently in, I need to move out of because they want to Airbnb to make more money."

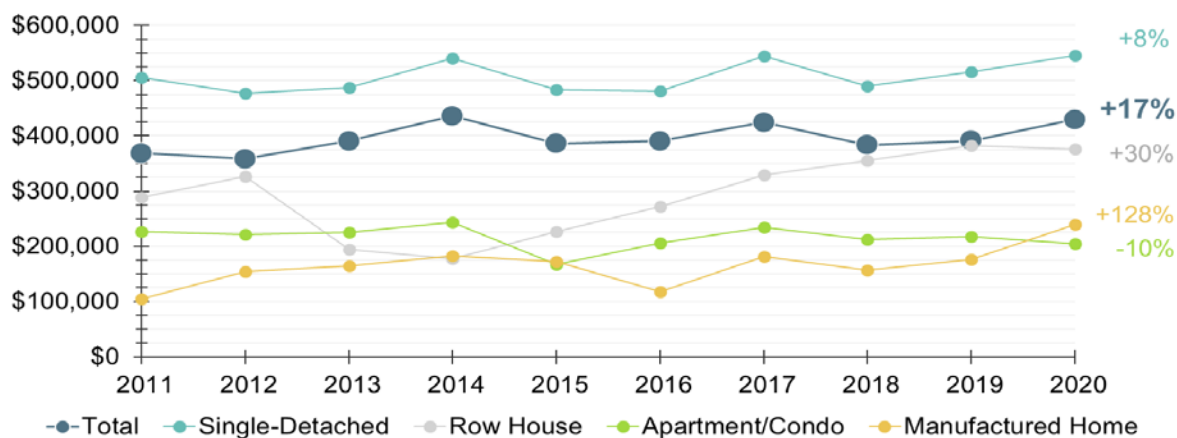
Figure 1.3d: Tourism & Hospitality Respondents, Difficult to Find Proper Housing in the RDEK?



Homeownership costs are rising, and finding housing is becoming more difficult for a larger proportion of the population.

While the availability of affordable rentals remains the most pressing concern for many, owner housing prices have also increased in the last ten years. Adjusted for inflation, median dwelling prices in rural areas are up 17% since 2011. There are many people in the RDEK who, five years ago, may have been able to afford market ownership housing but are now unable to because of the increase in costs. Between 2011 and 2020, the price of row homes has increased by 30%, single detached homes by 8%, and manufactured homes by 128%. The cost of condos decreased by 10% between 2011 and 2020, likely due to a lack of new housing stock.

Figure 1.3e: Housing Prices by Dwelling Type



Source: BC Assessment

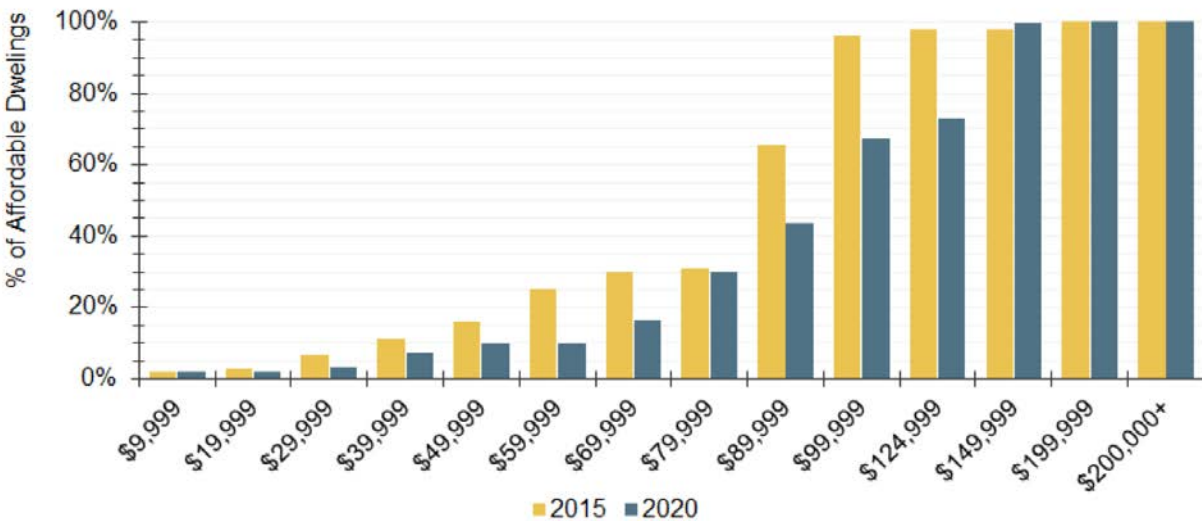
Key informants routinely pointed out that accessing housing is becoming more difficult for everyone, not just those looking for rental units. Anecdotal evidence collected through engagement indicates that some of the increased costs can be attributed to migrants from larger centres moving to the RDEK to take advantage of rural lifestyle options.

"Affordable housing" in this town is a complete joke. Mortgages are out of the question for most people because they are too busy keeping their head above water to save up a deposit... that is if they could even find a home at a reasonable price that isn't bought before it is put on the market."

"I've been working hard and saving for years to buy a home in the area. Right now, \$400k can buy me a 500 square foot trailer 45 minutes out of town. I feel very lucky to have a great relationship with my landlord, otherwise I'd be concerned about having no place to live this year, given the housing market."

An examination of the proportion of renters that could afford a mortgage, otherwise referred to as potential first-time buyers indicated that, in 2015, about 40% of renter households could afford the mortgage costs of the median home. By 2020, estimates suggest that this share has decreased to about 30%. In other words, less than two-thirds of renter households could not reasonably afford a mortgage for a median dwelling in the RDEK Rural. Figure 1.3f indicates that generally, for households earning less than \$125,000, less homes are affordable in 2020 than were affordable in 2015.

Figure 1.3f: Percent of Dwellings for Sale that are Affordable per Income Threshold, '15 vs '20



Source: derived from BC Assessment, & Statistics Canada

Developing New Housing, Especially New Affordable Housing, is Very Difficult

Though not the only solution to identified housing issues, newly built housing is likely to form a critical part of meeting the future housing needs of rural residents. Anecdotal evidence points to increasing trends in the development of luxury condos and single-family homes for short term rentals or secondary homes, and a severe lack of existing and newly development purpose built long-term rental stock. In addition to the lack of rental stock, the existing predominant single-detached stock is not able to evolve to meet the needs of older residents who may be looking for smaller more manageable options.

Throughout the engagement process, residents repeatedly identified challenges with building new dwellings. These challenges included construction costs and labour shortages, unaffordable septic and utility fees, and difficulty navigating policy around secondary dwellings and agricultural uses.

"We have a family ranch, and we have property we would like to give our children (we have eight) so that they can transition into the ranch ownership. But the (Agricultural Land Reserve) ALR refuses to allow subdivisions so that they can get title and collateral to get mortgages to build or purchase homes. It is very frustrating! We worked hard all our lives to get property to be able to help our children have the same privilege and it seems that owning property is only an illusion. The government has all the say in regards to what you can and can't do with property we bought and paid for and have worked all our lives?"

"Approval process for new housing in some Regional districts has a reputation for being unreasonably slow."

"Some rural areas do not have natural gas and therefore are limited in heating methods. Propane and electricity are very costly."

"In-laws having difficulty trying to put a house on a property they already own because of restrictions."

Most new development is likely to be done through the private market, but unless substantial new stock arrives in a short period of time, any new market units are likely to remain at prices that exacerbate concerns around affordability. Purpose-built long-term rental, and low-income and supportive housing options, that are maintained at affordable rates in perpetuity, were also identified as a critical need by respondents.

"This is a problem we can build our way out of; increase the supply to meet or exceed the demand and the market should equalize. Focus on a housing continuum including supportive housing, low-income housing, lower than market rental units, regular units and affordable home ownership options."

"I work in the Mental Health "world" here and see day to day how much people are struggling to secure housing and to have stability. It's awful and we truly need more full-time places for people to have a peace of mind. We need housing for year-round employees as the valley can never hire enough people to meet the tourism needs, in turn burning out the poor staff."

"Lack of affordable housing, renters always have the fear of their rental being put up for sale and being left with no place to rent. Price of houses - even those which are barely habitable."

The RDEK has many housing assets and informed and passionate non-profits and community members.

Throughout the engagement process and across all communities it was clear that housing need in the RDEK is a subject about which people are passionate. Non-profits, health sector employees, local government representatives, tourism and hospitality sectors, and community advocates understand the issues and are working hard to address them. This report is intended to support and supplement the already important work being undertaken and help local governments direct their resources appropriately.

In addition to comments on areas of housing need, many community members and housing actors brought up alternative housing options and tools that could be implemented at the local government level. In addition to general support of increased density and smaller housing styles in appropriate areas, informants suggested cooperative housing models, land trusts, and seniors housing clusters as potential methods of improving availability, affordability, and stabilizing the market.



1.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key recommendations emerged through the Housing Needs Report process. They respond directly to the findings identified in the Report and attempt to recognize the ability and limitations of regional government scope and policy approaches. The RDEK is already supporting some of these recommendations and should continue to monitor progress moving forward. Key recommendations from this study are:

1. Deepen Housing Partnerships and Educate Residents
2. Promote and Protect Housing Affordability in the Market
3. Work with Partners to Expand Non-Market and Supportive Housing Options
4. Address Growth in Population Aged 65 Years and Over
5. Manage Growth

Deepen Housing Partnerships and Educate Residents

Advocacy and education within the RDEK and to other levels of government is an ongoing, and often unsung aspect of addressing affordable housing. Regional policy tools are limited, and the Province and Federal government are primarily responsible for the provision of affordable housing. However, local, and regional governments are routinely the best positioned to address housing need and the most aware of specific needs and service gaps. The Regional District and its municipal partners play a key role in building awareness of need and acceptance of new housing among residents and can continue to coordinate and collectively build on incentives, regulations, advocacy, and education initiatives.

Priority Action	Appropriate Local Government Tools or Policy Levers
Continue to expand regional housing involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore establishing a regional housing working group with members from municipalities and First Nations governments • Encourage regional partnerships for housing studies • Work with municipalities to identify opportunities for resource sharing, site identification, and other land use planning activities
Advocate for increased support from senior levels of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With municipal partners, continue to advocate for increased housing funding and tools for non-profit developers and local and regional governments through Union of BC Municipalities, Federation of Canadian Municipalities • Explore partnering with senior government to make pockets of developable land available for disposal • Maintain awareness of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation research funding that could potentially encourage local innovation
Support non-profits who are bearing much of the cost of housing service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to advocate on behalf of these organizations. • Consider sitting on regional housing tables or networks that include service providers and non-profit housing agencies • Consult with non-profit housing agencies when developing new housing policy
Educate residents on the value of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community partners to address stigma around non-profit and supported housing • Consider supporting the development of education materials and guides <p>Example: Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness, Affordable Housing Benefits Everyone Project - https://www.cvhousing.ca/affordable-housing-benefits-everyone-project/</p>

Promote and Protect Housing Affordability in the Market

Despite quantitative data showing generally affordable conditions for households with moderate incomes across the RDEK, many residents with low to middle incomes are struggling to find adequate housing, especially in the rental market. When appropriately sized units are available, many exceed a price that is considered affordable or are reported to be substandard condition, putting a prospective tenant into Core Housing Need.

Additional rental options will not completely solve housing affordability concerns across the RDEK but, expanding available stock in the market can alleviate immediate issues for many priority populations including seniors hoping to downsize, single-income households, and families unable to find appropriately sized units. Additional stock could slow down increases in the cost of renting, but market rentals are not capable of providing the services, deep affordability, or rent-geared-to-income approaches that many across the RDEK need now or may need in the future.

Priority Action	Appropriate Local Government Tools or Policy Levers
Improve availability of affordable rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify municipal or senior government land that could be used to support these goals and consider disposing of land to non-profit or private entities that can facilitate rental housing or more affordable ownership options Consider working with real estate specialists to advertise available land to external partners or private developers Continue to support education around Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation programs, including rental construction financing initiative
Expand affordable market housing incentive programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentive packages can include parking requirement relaxation, Development Cost Charge waivers, expedited application and permit processing, and property tax waivers (when appropriate)
Regulate short-term rentals (STRs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor spread of STRs in rural areas Consider revising RDEK legislation to require business licensing requirements for all operating short-term rentals, limiting geographies in which STRs are permitted to high-tourism areas, requiring permanent resident to be on-site during STR operations, or further restriction STR development through zoning and bylaw changes. Improve monitoring and tracking of STR to ensure appropriate revenue is being collected and redirected towards affordable housing initiatives
Encourage development of purpose-built rental and smaller and denser units in all residential areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include language that supports purpose-built rentals and appropriate density in Official Community Plans Where appropriate and subject to servicing, consider relaxing restrictions on secondary dwelling units Where appropriate and subject to servicing, encourage row house, townhouse, duplexes and other denser, multi-family options in single family residential zones

Work with Partners to Expand Non-Market and Supportive Housing Options

Though difficult to build and support in many rural areas, non-market and supportive housing options will be critical to providing stable and appropriate options to many residents of the RDEK. Many key informants indicated a need for more supported housing options for those who need or will need housing with integrated health services and especially below-market rental or rent-geared-to-income options for families and seniors who are unable to find housing that meets their needs.

Not all non-market housing options contain supportive elements. Often called secured affordable housing, new units can be secured at affordable rates through covenants or agreements with senior government. These units are typically facilitated by non-profit or senior government providers, but local and regional governments are key facilitators of development. Non-market stock is key to providing safe, affordable, appropriate housing to the residents of the RDEK. Most non-market units will continue to be sited in municipalities, but the RDEK can support applications, coordinate on land acquisition, and even provide support through capacity and expertise.

Priority Action	Appropriate Local Government Tools or Policy Levers
Expand non-market housing options (including units available at the shelter rate and rent geared to income units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and support applications to BC Housing and CMHC funding programs • Take on a more active role in non-profit development by supplying land or supporting pre-development phases • Include supportive language in Official Community Plans and explore allowing non-profit and supported uses in all residential zones
Enhance support for non-profit developers through incentives and reduced regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentive packages can include parking requirement relaxation, Development Cost Charge waivers, expedited application and permit processing, and property tax waivers (when appropriate) • Explore offering tiered incentives where non-profit developers are afforded greater incentives, which often directly impact rent rates • Provide staff support to help non-profits make appropriate incentive requests and navigate development procedures
Facilitate non-market development on underutilized and vacant land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify municipal or senior government land that could be used to support these goals • Consider prioritizing disposal of land to non-profit or private entities that can facilitate non-market housing
Work with Municipalities to expand support for unhoused residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the efforts of local and regional partners to count and provide shelter for unhoused residents • Support emergency housing projects where appropriate

Address Growth in Population Aged 65 Years and Over

Consistent with national trends, the population of the RDEK is aging. The median age rose from 42 in 2006 to 45.5 in 2016. These findings indicate a need for housing across the Region that supports the needs of older residents. Specifically, there is a need for more housing that is affordable and accessible for those on a fixed income, particularly within the rental market. An aging population presents a greater need for at home care options and smaller housing units that allow for downsizing. Seniors are also more likely to be living with a disability or activity limitation than other age groups and may have to pay for all household expenses on a fixed income. Many seniors that participated in the study indicated that if smaller, ground-oriented units became available in their community, they would be able to downsize and open up more single-detached stock for younger families.

Priority Action	Appropriate Local Government Tools or Policy Levers
Enhance support services aimed at seniors and elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to expand partnerships with Interior Health • Advocate for housing that includes wrap-around services • Consider supporting senior clusters or co-housing/co-op initiatives
Support non-profit societies that directly address seniors' housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on non-profit development and ongoing or upcoming projects • Direct seniors' organizations to available resources and organizations like the BC Non-Profit Housing Association
Encourage development of smaller, multi-family, accessible units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include language that supports purpose-built rentals and appropriate density in Official Community Plans • Where appropriate and subject to servicing, consider relaxing restrictions on secondary dwelling units • Where appropriate and subject to servicing, encourage row house, townhouse, duplexes and other denser, multi-family options in single family residential zones

Manage Regional Growth

Though the RDEK is expected to grow in population, growth will be uneven across Electoral Areas. Anecdotal evidence collected from key informants indicates that migration from the higher-value urban markets, like Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver, into the RDEK is occurring at an increased pace, driving up prices and demand for services across the region. As working from home becomes more accessible, the RDEK may also experience growth in "amenity migrants" who are attracted to the area because of the relatively low cost of housing, access to outdoor amenities, and other quality of life factors. Managing new growth while enhancing affordability is key to meeting the needs of and supporting community residents.

Priority Action	Appropriate Local Government Tools or Policy Levers
Align land-use, transportation, and service planning goals to promote affordability and growth in designated areas that are suitable for development and/or located close to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially important when considering disposal of land for affordable housing projects. Land is an important asset but be wary of properties that do not align with long-term transportation and service planning goals as this will increase long-term costs • Align land use decisions with regional growth planning
When possible, keep settlement compact, protect the integrity of rural and resource areas, protect the environment, and increase servicing efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore and encourage denser housing types where appropriate • Encourage siting of new housing along transit or active transportation routes or as close as possible to existing services

1.5 AFFORDABILITY PROFILES

Profile #1: Single Teacher

Teachers and educators are a vital employment sector in the RDEK, accounting for nearly 6% of all jobs and providing a critical service to all residents. A teacher with an appropriate graduate degree and a few years of experience likely earns an annual salary of between \$63,000 and \$70,000 in School District 5 (Southeast-Kootenay).¹ This profile assumes a single teacher, making an average salary and working full time is looking for a place to live in the rural areas.



A teacher earning an annual income of \$67,000 can afford to pay up to \$1,675 per month towards rent and utilities. Under this scenario, a teacher is well within their means to afford a one- or two-bedroom rental unit and could likely stretch themselves to afford a three-bedroom rental unit in the rural areas based on average prices. The key concern for this renter is likely availability. Across the region, rental vacancies were low, and many renters were concerned with the quality and condition of available units.

Affordable Monthly Rent	Median Monthly Rents in RDEK Secondary Market ²					
	Room	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Full House
\$1,675	\$645	\$930	\$1,150	\$1,495	\$1,725	\$1,925

While renting a one- or two-bedroom unit is likely affordable, ownership may not be. If this individual were able to save enough to put together a 10% down payment, they could afford up to \$278,130 (assuming one third of shelter budget goes to utilities and other expenses). A monthly mortgage payment would equate to about \$1,117. Unfortunately, this puts the median home in the RDEK Rural out of reach. If this teacher chose to live in the more rural electoral areas, housing costs would be cheaper, but affordability would still be a challenge.

Affordable Purchase Price	Median Housing Sale Price in RDEK Rural 2020 ³		
		Overall Sale Price	Single-Detached Home Manufactured Home
\$278,130	RDEK Rural	\$429,480	\$546,335 \$239,800
	Elk Valley	\$365,065	\$594,700 \$228,435
	Central	\$477,600	\$522,705 \$265,215
	Columbia	\$415,480	\$564,925 \$179,596

¹ Based on based on review of SD5 Teachers' Salary Grid. Available at: <https://www.bctf.ca/docs/default-source/services-guidance/salary-grids/05-SL-Salary-Grid-2019-2022-revised-as-of-Mar-30-2020.pdf>

² Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

³ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

Given the limited rental stock and very limited primary rental market options, the most likely living situation for this individual would be renting a suite within a single-detached dwelling or purchasing a manufactured home.

"Not only the median entry level worker, even a teacher or doctor has difficulties finding places to rent."

"I'm the perfect tenant. Working professional in late 20's with great credit no pet, no kids, no smoking and still nothing that under 1000 each."

"Lack of quality safe rental properties that are affordable. This is relevant across all economic brackets. Doctors with families, professionals, single parents with low incomes, etc... rental supply is toooooo limited."



Profile #2: Downsizing Senior Couple

Seniors are the fastest growing population cohort in the RDEK. Many seniors have retired and rely on fixed monthly amounts from Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) to pay for all expenses, including housing. This analysis assumes that a senior couple with minor mobility limitations would like to downsize from a large rural home to a smaller, accessible option. The couple is not willing to leave their rural community and would like to remain close to their friends and family.



In this scenario, the couple has sold their single-detached home for \$500,000, just under the 2020 median sale price of \$546,350. They plan to help use the equity to supplement their retirement savings, help a family member pay for university, and invest in a smaller, accessible home.

- Retained for retirement savings: \$150,000;
- Assist family with cost of university: \$50,000;
- Available to allocate towards cost of renting or purchasing: \$300,000

Assuming this couple want to rent over the next 20-years, they have approximately \$1,250 to spend on monthly rent. Assuming no rent increases, it would still be difficult for this couple to find a 2-bedroom rental at that rate. Likely they will need to save more for housing and contribute less to their savings or family.

Affordable Monthly Rent	Median Monthly Rents in RDEK Secondary Market ⁴					
	Room	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Full House
\$1,250	\$645	\$930	\$1,150	\$1,495	\$1,725	\$1,925

If instead of renting the couple were to use the \$300,000 to purchase a home, there are very few smaller options available in their price range. A manufactured home is likely affordable, but many semi-detached homes would not be.

Affordable Purchase Price	Median Housing Sale Price in RDEK Rural 2020 ⁵		
	Overall Sale Price	Single-Detached Home	Manufactured Home
\$300,000	RDEK Rural	\$429,480	\$546,335
	Elk Valley	\$365,065	\$594,700
	Central	\$477,600	\$522,705
	Columbia	\$415,480	\$564,925

⁴ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

⁵ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

If they can find an available home, the most likely housing outcome for this senior couple would be to spend more than they intended on a rental or ownership options. If they were willing to move to a larger centre like Cranbrook options would likely be more plentiful and potentially more affordable. Unfortunately, this means they will need to leave their community and preferred rural lifestyle behind.

"There may be enough housing, but it's not the right type. Older folks in larger homes, with no options to downsize."

"We have really limited housing for moderate income seniors that can't to live in the area but don't want to maintain a property."

"Currently there are many seniors (55+) who are living in their own homes but will need to downsize and live closer to amenities sometime in the future. There is a need for smaller low maintenance housing that is not institutional."



Profile #3: Single, Unionized Worker in Coal Industry

Hourly workers at Teck Elkview and Coal Mountain are a critical workforce in the RDEK. The resource extraction sector accounts for nearly 7.5% of all jobs in the RDEK Rural. A unionized, hourly wage labourer at either of these operations represented by United Steelworkers Local 9346 earns around \$35 per hour (or an annual income of around \$70,000).⁶ This profile assumes a single labourer, making an average salary and working full time is looking for a place to live in the rural areas.

A labourer earning an annual income of \$70,000 can afford to pay up to \$1,750 per month towards rent and utilities. Under this scenario, a labourer should be able to afford most one-, two- or three-bedroom rental units in the rural areas based on average prices. The key concern for this renter is likely availability and appropriate housing. Across the region, rental vacancies were low, and many renters were concerned with the quality and condition of available units. Key informants indicated that apartments and smaller units were simply not available, and many labourers were extending their resources in order to rent a full house.



Affordable Monthly Rent	Median Monthly Rents in RDEK Secondary Market ⁷					
	Room	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Full House
\$1,750	\$645	\$930	\$1,150	\$1,495	\$1,725	\$1,925

While renting is likely affordable if available, ownership in the rural areas would be a challenge. If this individual were able to save enough to put together a 10% down payment they could afford up to \$290,580 (assuming one third of shelter budget goes to utilities and other expenses). A monthly mortgage payment would equate to about \$1,167. Unfortunately, this puts the median home in the RDEK Rural out of reach.

Affordable Purchase Price	Median Housing Sale Price in RDEK Rural 2020 ⁸		
	Overall Sale Price	Single-Detached Home	Manufactured Home
\$290,580	RDEK Rural	\$429,480	\$546,335
	Elk Valley	\$365,065	\$594,700
	Central	\$477,600	\$522,705
	Columbia	\$415,480	\$564,925

⁶ Based on review of USW 9346 collective bargaining agreement. Available at: <http://www.usw9346.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2016-Final-CBA.pdf>.

⁷ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

⁸ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

Key informants indicated that sales prices in Sparwood and Elkford are driven higher because of industry demand. This labourer may also need to drive significant distances to access services. Given the limited rental stock and high cost of ownership this labourer will likely need to purchase a home at an uncomfortable price point, get lucky in the rental market, or share a larger home with roommates.

"Sparwood is one giant trailer park and housing is \$500,000-\$600,000. Driven by industry totally, no art, no bike racks, no parks etc. No culture or infrastructure so people keep to themselves and don't support local businesses. Elkford is the same way, Jaffrey, Elko, etc. No amenities or services so you are forced to go elsewhere."

"Even at a mine wage it's so unaffordable that they can't get a mortgage – a young worker had to cash in his RRSP for a mortgage."

"If you ask a lot of local miners what they do in Sparwood on their days off, they leave – no one stays. It got so weird there a few years back that the Union had to reach out to their members to tell them to shop at their local grocery store or it would go out of business."



Profile #4: Young Couple with Children

Though significant growth in younger age cohorts has not necessarily been reflected in demographic data, many key informants indicated that new residents, often young families, are moving to the RDEK with greater frequency. In this scenario, a young couple with two school-aged children has decided to relocate to the RDEK to take advantage of the rural lifestyle and lower property costs. One partner works in construction (which employs more than 11.5% of the population) and the other stays home to care for their children but picks up shifts in health care and social assistance when they can. Couples with children tend to have higher median incomes, but as this couple is relatively young and has less than two incomes, we are assuming they earn slightly more than the median household income for the RDEK, or about \$90,000.



This household can afford to pay up to \$2,250 per month towards housing costs. Under this scenario, this couple should be able to afford most rental unit in the rural areas based on average prices. The key concern for this renter is likely availability as across the region, key informants reported limited rental vacancies were low and challenges finding units appropriate for families with young children.

Affordable Monthly Rent	Median Monthly Rents in RDEK Secondary Market ⁹					
	Room	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Full House
\$2,250	\$645	\$930	\$1,150	\$1,495	\$1,725	\$1,925

Most ownership options should also be affordable for this couple. In 2020, about 45% of all homes sold in the RDEK Rural should have been reasonable affordable to a household earning \$90,000 per year. In 2015 that number was much higher and 65% of all homes sold would have been affordable to this couple. This is indicative of rising sales costs and increasingly challenging affordability conditions.

Affordable Purchase Price	Median Housing Sale Price in RDEK Rural 2020 ¹⁰			
	Overall Sale Price	Single-Detached Home	Manufactured Home	
\$373,605	RDEK Rural	\$429,480	\$546,335	\$239,800
	Elk Valley	\$365,065	\$594,700	\$228,435
	Central	\$477,600	\$522,705	\$265,215
	Columbia	\$415,480	\$564,925	\$179,596

⁹ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

¹⁰ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

Though this couple could likely purchase a home, limited sales volume likely means they will be looking for a home for an extended period before their offer is accepted. They may need to extend themselves financially to make a successful offer in an increasingly competitive market. In the interim, they will likely be living in a rental unit that may be slightly too small for both them and their children as very few 3-bedroom rental units are available.

"Availability and affordability for younger individuals and families who work in the Valley but struggle to find a place to live is a real concern. We need them here to fill the jobs available, but they can't afford to stay!!"

"Lack of affordable rental units for young families. It is also extremely difficult for young people, just starting out, to make a down payment on a home due to the excessive cost of real estate. Wages have not kept up with the increase in housing costs."

"The cost of rent is skyrocketing... Somehow renting an apartment is way more expensive than a mortgage on a full house here. But you can't get a mortgage because you pay too much in rent to be able to save. It's a bad cycle, and it's just getting worse for young people, trying to start a life and a family. We're seeing an increase in the houseless population, and I think the 2 are directly connected."



Profile #5: Lone-Parent Working in Hospitality

The tourism and hospitality sector are a critical industry in the RDEK. The combined workforce of the retail trade and accommodation and food services sectors employs nearly 20% of the working population, more than any other single industry. Tourism and hospitality are one of the largest employers of female workers, behind only healthcare and social services and educational services. Wages in the hospitality tend to be lower than average and many workers make the Provincially regulated minimum wage. This profile assumes that a lone-parent hospitality worker has advanced in their career to a point where they make above the minimum wage.

A full-time hospitality worker making \$22/hour and working 40 hours a week should earn around \$45,760 annually can afford to pay up to \$1,144 per month towards rent and utilities. Under this scenario, a hospitality worker should be able to afford a room in a shared house or a studio unit but would need to stretch themselves to afford anything over one bedroom. In addition to needing additional bedrooms for children, most lone-parents have the added cost of paying for childcare while they are working.



Affordable Monthly Rent	Median Monthly Rents in RDEK Secondary Market ¹¹					
	Room	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Full House
1,144	\$645	\$930	\$1,150	\$1,495	\$1,725	\$1,925

If this individual were to purchase a home, they could afford up to \$189,955, and may expect a monthly payment of about \$765. This puts nearly all ownership options out of reach.

Affordable Purchase Price	Median Housing Sale Price in RDEK Rural 2020 ¹²			
	Overall Sale Price	Single-Detached Home	Manufactured Home	
\$189,955	RDEK Rural	\$429,480	\$546,335	\$239,800
	Elk Valley	\$365,065	\$594,700	\$228,435
	Central	\$477,600	\$522,705	\$265,215
	Columbia	\$415,480	\$564,925	\$179,596

¹¹ Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

¹² Collected as part of this study. See individual subregional reports for further detail.

Without significant external support, the most likely living situation for this individual is a one-bedroom rental unit within a single-detached dwelling. However, many hospitality sector workers are reporting that short term rentals are directly impacting available rental supply.

"All the small contained units for 1 person are Airbnb's and people don't want to rent long term because they can make more money via Airbnb or they are way too expensive for me to afford on my own as a single seasonal worker. The place I am currently in, I need to move out of because they want to Airbnb to make more money."

Many lone-parents that responded to the surveys reported extreme stress associated with finding accommodation. Most indicated that they would never have found a place if they weren't either very lucky or able to rely on significant support from friends and family.

"My son and I have lived in the Columbia Valley for 20 years, always in a rental unit... Each move has involved hours of phone calls and in-person meetings with potential landlords, and an infinite number of conversations with friends, family, and acquaintances in the search for secure accommodation. Each time that I've had to search for a new home, I've been fortunate to have been able to negotiate the monthly rent to something that is affordable for me. My general experience has been that people are EXTREMELY hesitant to rent to a single parent, for any number of perfectly valid reasons. Each move was ridiculously stressful."

"At the start of the 20/21 winter we started looking for housing rentals... to move into the following summer. We looked at countless homes that had usually 20 to 30 different people looking at renting and we were never successful. A lot of housing was also just too expensive to even consider renting. In the end we managed to rent a cabin halfway through summer from a friend's family which was a good location and affordable, but if we had of been new to the valley, we would have never found this option."

This family would benefit from a non-market housing option that is secured at an affordable rate. Given the competitive rental market and limited non-market options, this family would likely need to put themselves into Core Housing Need to obtain appropriate housing.

2 Introduction

In Spring 2021, M'akola Development Services and Turner Drake & Partners Ltd. were engaged by the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) to complete a Housing Needs Reports for its electoral areas, being East Kootenay A, B, C, E, F, & G.

The report is meant to provide staff, the Regional Board, and community partners with a better understanding of local housing needs and will be used to guide policy formulation, inform land use planning decisions, and direct local and regional housing action.

The overall objectives of this Housing Needs Report project are to:

- Develop a Regional Housing Needs Assessment Report for the six electoral areas of the RDEK as a regional project;
- Develop an assessment that reflects electoral area specific and cumulative regional needs and priorities in relation to housing supply, demands and needs;
- Consider and recognize each electoral areas diverse needs, interconnectivity and relationship with applicable local municipalities;
- Assess current RDEK housing policies and recommend strategies and best practices for future integration in long range planning and priority setting;
- Meet the criteria and obligations for completion of a Housing Needs Assessment as required by the Local Government Act.

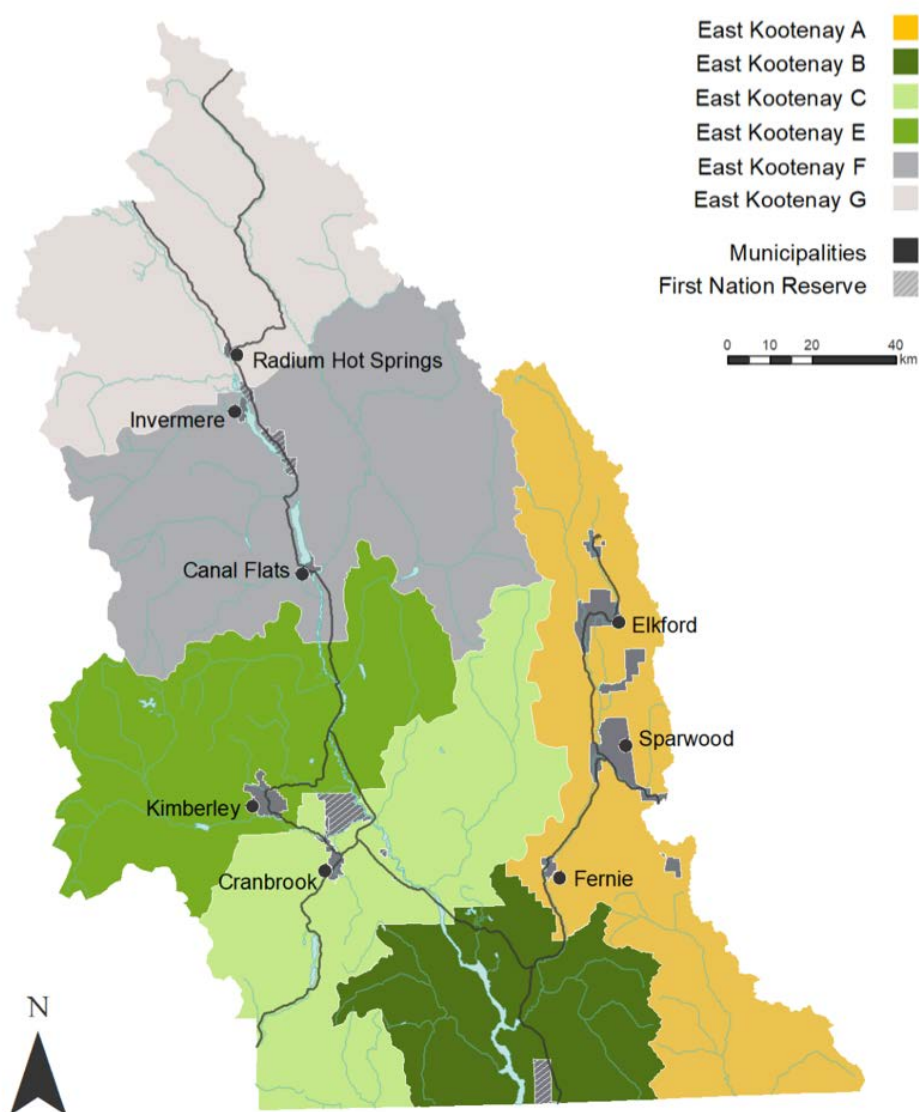


2.1 APPROACH

Study Area

The overall project's scope encompasses all electoral areas within the boundaries of the RDEK Census Division (CD), as defined by Statistics Canada. Given that the scope of work does not include any municipalities, the report elects to refer to the aggregate of the local electoral areas (categorized as Census Subdivisions – CSDs – by Statistics Canada) as the “RDEK Rural.” This aggregation is not an official boundary reported on by Statistics Canada, meaning that its results rely on calculations that use individual CSDs as inputs. Given that each community is subject to Statistics Canada's random rounding process, it is possible that aggregate values may not be as accurate as its parts. As such, please consider any RDEK Rural data (specifically, Census related) as a reasonable estimate of overall rural conditions.

Figure 2.1a: RDEK & Communities Map



Source: BC Geowarehouse, Statistics Canada

Report Organization

This report is organized into four key sections:

1) Executive Summary

A brief overview of the key regional findings and recommendations.

2) Housing Needs Report Introduction

Includes background information on housing policy, local and regional government abilities, and community engagement undertaken as part of this study.

3) Rural Regional District of East Kootenay Housing Needs Report

Brief housing needs summary for all the whole of the Rural Regional District of East Kootenay.

4) Regional District of East Kootenay Subregional Housing Needs Report

Each subregional report contains in-depth information on housing needs for a collection of Electoral Areas. Subregional reports contain both housing data and community engagement feedback collected directly from community members or regional stakeholders with operations in the RDEK.

5) Appendices

Community Housing Profiles

Individual Electoral Area housing profiles that highlight some of the most compelling housing data collected in this study. Profiles lack much of the in-depth analysis included in the full report and are intended to be used for public communication and quick reference.

Community Engagement Summary

A complete summary of Regional District-wide engagement undertaken as part of this study including process, methods, and broad discussion of findings.

Housing Planning Tools for Local Governments

Discussion and examples of various housing policy interventions available to regional and local governments, their applicability, and recommended next steps to address housing.

Housing Indicators and Monitoring Guide

Key indicators and monitoring recommendations are also included to help local staff and stakeholders track housing conditions moving forward.

Community Data Tables

Data tables for each Electoral Area include additional information that meets specific Provincial requirements. They can be used as reference by local staff or stakeholders.

Provincial Summary Form

Provincial Summary Forms for each Electoral Area as required to complete obligations of the funding program.

Data

This report refers to several pieces of data that together contribute to contextualizing the housing conditions experienced by RDEK residents. The following is a comprehensive list of secondary quantitative data sources (meaning, information collected by other organizations but used for this report):

- AirDNA¹³
- BC Assessment¹⁴
- BC Data Catalogue¹⁵
- Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)¹⁶
- Environics Analytics¹⁷
- Statistics Canada^{18 19}

The report uses primary research to challenge/confirm the trends analyzed within the sources above (for instance, high-level Statistics Canada data may not be nuanced enough to truly represent housing hardship for specific household types). Primary research is predominantly from the community survey and stakeholder consultation work, described throughout the report.

Data Limitations

AirDNA (Short-Term Rentals)

Proprietary process

AirDNA's proprietary process involves the scraping of short-term rental information from related websites (e.g. AirBNB), like revenues, availability, reservations, property type, and approximate location. As a private company, their scraping methodology is not publicized. In other words, explaining their methodology in detail is not possible and must be assumed to be appropriate and accurate.

BC Assessment

Grouped Information

BC Assessment provides assessment roll spreadsheets for communities across British Columbia for the years 2006 through 2021. Assessment roll information is not on an individual property level; rather, similar types of properties are grouped together in "folios" based on several factors, such as property type and dwelling type. These folio groups also mean that assessment and sale price values reflect averages, making it more difficult to express community level average and median values.

Unit Counts

For purpose-built rental properties, unit totals within folios are sometimes represented by the value "20+." This limits a user's ability to correctly sum values and determine how many rental dwellings exist within a community. The 20+ category is not an issue for owned (non-purpose built rental) properties.

¹³ AirDNA. (2021). Enterprise Data Solutions. Retrieved from <https://www.airdna.co/custom-vacation-rental-reports>.

¹⁴ British Columbia Data Catalogue. (2020, April 22). Housing Values (2006-2020). Retrieved from <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/housing-values-2006-2020->

¹⁵ British Columbia Data Catalogue. (2021). Housing Needs Reports. Retrieved from <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/group/housing-needs-reports>.

¹⁶ Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. (2021). Housing Market Information Portal. Retrieved from <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/1/1/Canada>

¹⁷ Environics Analytics. (2021). DemoStats. Retrieved from <https://environicsanalytics.com/en-ca/data/demographic/demostats>.

¹⁸ British Columbia Data Catalogue. (2020, June 30). Custom Census Reports (2016, 2011, 2006). Retrieved from <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/custom-census-reports-2016-2011-2006->

¹⁹ Statistics Canada. (2021). Census Program. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm?MM=1>

BC Data Catalogue

Urban focus

BC Statistics helpfully consolidates most data related to complete Housing Needs Reports, like the new homes registry, non-market housing, post-secondary student housing, and homeless count sources. Unfortunately, much of this information is only available for urban areas and thus do not directly apply to rural area reports.

Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)

Reporting landscape

CMHC conducts its Rental Market Survey (RMS) every year in October to estimate the relative strengths in the rental market. The survey collects samples of market rent levels, turnover and vacancy unit data for all sampled structures. The survey only applies to primary rental markets, which are those urban areas with populations of 10,000 and more. The survey targets only privately initiated rental structures with at least three rental units, which have been on the market for at least three months. CMHC only collects data for the City of Cranbrook and East Kootenay C (though there is significant suppression for the latter). CMHC data will mostly be used for discussions about how urban trends may impact rural areas.

Rent calculations

CMHC's average and median market rents are based off the rents of both occupied and vacant (on the market) units. Given the sheer volume of occupied units, some occupied for long-periods with unchanging or marginally changing rents, CMHC numbers often underrepresent what people seeking rental housing may actually be experiencing in the current market. Furthermore, rent data from CMHC will be used mostly for discussion purposes, since the rent figures will not reflect those of the rural areas, but may point to general trends in rents and vacancy.

EnviroNics Analytics

Proprietary process

This industry trusted software is a useful tool in generating demographic, economic, and social data for customized geographies, especially for those that may not be defined or are suppressed by Statistics Canada. Although useful, how they generate the data is not public. In other words, explaining or replicating the entire methodology is not possible, and said methodology must be assumed to be appropriate and usable.

Statistics Canada

Area & data suppression

There are instances where geographic areas are too small to report on, resulting in the deletion of all information for said area. Suppression of data can be due to poor data quality or to other technical reasons. This was not a particular concern for this study but limited the ability to use more granular Census geographies (specifically, Census dissemination areas – see Glossary).

Random rounding

Numbers are randomly rounded either up or down to a multiple of “5” or “10.” When this data is summed or grouped, the total value may not match the individual values since totals and sub totals are independently rounded. Similarly, percentages (which use rounded data) may not reflect the true percentage, but instead a ballpark. Furthermore, the sums of percentages may not equal 100%.

Community Survey

The RDEK Community Housing Survey was designed to fill quantitative data gaps and capture housing experiences from as many residents as possible throughout the region. The survey opened in July 2021 and was available through the RDEK website for approximately eight weeks, closing in August 2021. The consulting team, with significant support from RDEK communications staff, utilized existing local distribution channels, such as social media pages and community newsletters. Promotional material was made available to focus group and interview participants who were asked to share broadly with their networks.

As the survey distribution was not controlled for a representative sample of the population, selection bias creates a limitation for extrapolating the data to draw conclusions about the community overall. Survey results may overrepresent certain cohorts of the population when considering the mandate of the service providers and community partners who helped distribute the survey itself, as well as the fact that as a voluntary open-access survey, respondents in general are likely to self-select for those who are experiencing housing challenges and are therefore motivated to engage with the issue. The survey, therefore, is predominantly a tool for understanding the human experience behind other data analysed in this report and collecting other insights that existing data sources do not address.

Community Survey Response Profile

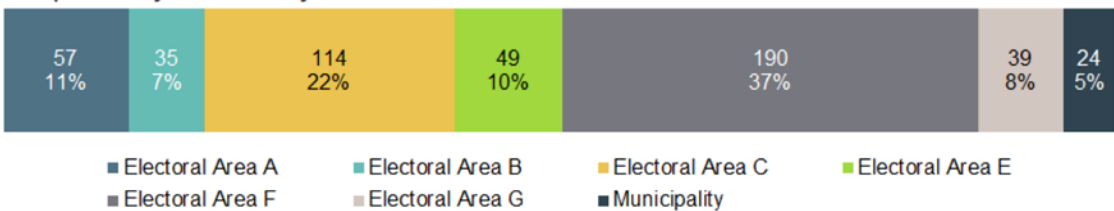
In total, the survey received 508 responses from individual community members throughout the Region. Although this accounts for only 3% of the total population of the study area, it represents an extraordinary response over such a short time. This can be taken as an indicator of the importance and awareness of housing issues across the RDEK.

The following graphs breakdown responses by key topics collected as part of the survey. In some instances, the distribution of responses for topics are reasonably close to those reported by Statistics Canada (e.g. response by dwelling type); whereas, others differ greatly. Please note that these differences mean that other community survey results discussed within this report may not match overall trends.

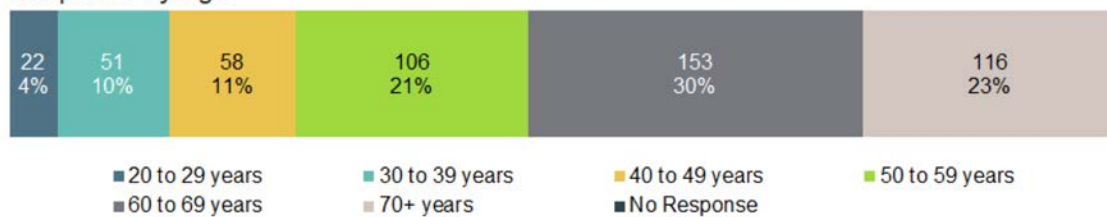
With the above in mind, key results from the self-selecting sample survey include:

- Response rates largely correlated with population in Electoral Areas. Larger population areas produced more responses.
- More than half of respondents (53%) were over the age of 60.
- Only 15% of respondents belonged to a household that earned less than \$40,000 before-tax.
- The majority of respondents (80%) were couples with or without children.
- The majority of respondents (80%) lived in a single-family home.
- The median reported housing cost is approximately \$1,250 per month.

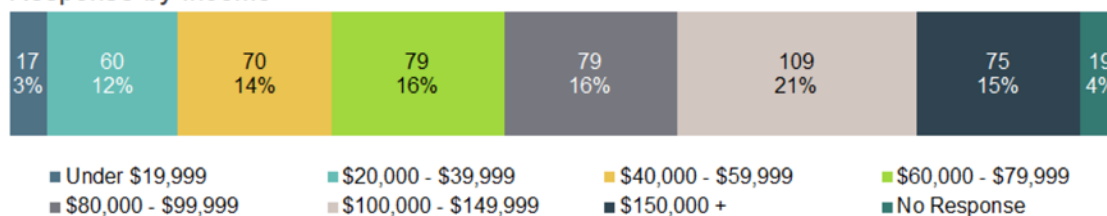
Response by Community



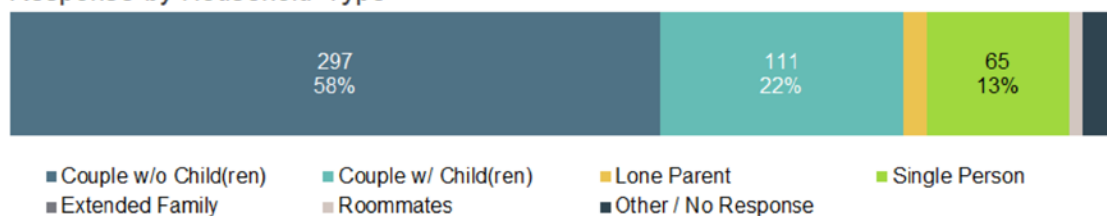
Response by Age



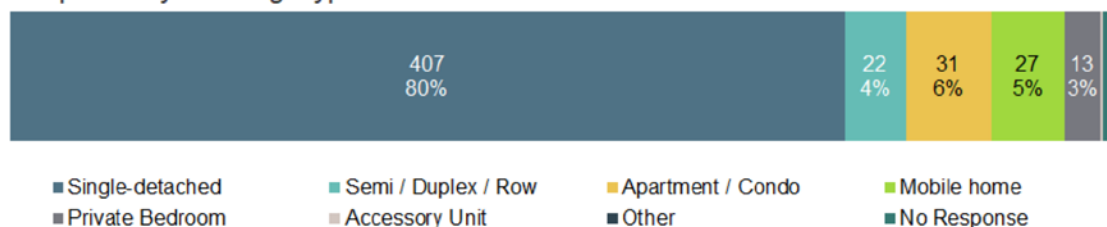
Response by Income



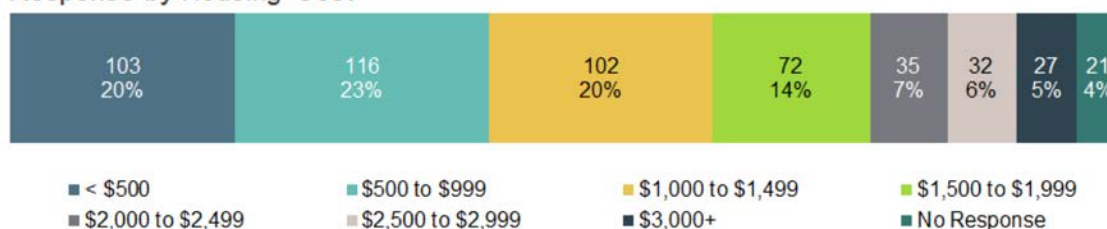
Response by Household Type



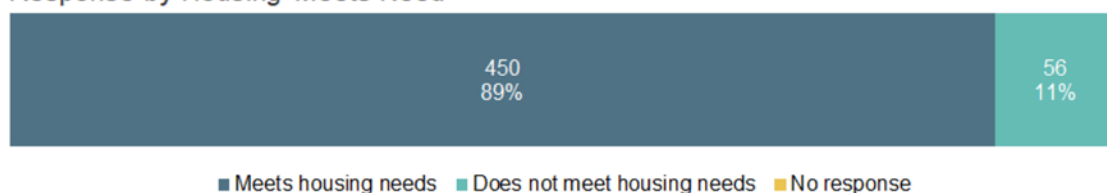
Response by Dwelling Type



Response by Housing Cost



Response by Housing Meets Need



Other Consultations

In addition to the survey-based engagement efforts, a number of key stakeholders were identified and consulted as part of this study. Formats and methods varied, but in general, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with individuals across a broad range of housing-related groups, such as:

- Non-profits and other social service providers involved in providing emergency shelter and housing navigation support, as well as support services to provisionally housed or other at-risk populations
- Municipal staff and elected regional officials
- Housing advocates
- Private sector real estate agents and property developers

The insights and feedback gained through these efforts were used to collect qualitative data on housing need, help inform our interpretation and analysis of secondary data, design and execute other engagement and research efforts, and identify potential solutions. Regardless of stakeholder preference, to encourage frank and honest feedback all discussions were carried out on the basis that any information collected would not be presented in this report such that the stakeholder would not be identifiable.

2.2 BENEFITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Housing Continuum / Wheelhouse²⁰

As per CMHC, the housing continuum model is a linear progression from homelessness or housing need to homeownership. It's the most common approach for visually depicting different housing segments. It assumes that people will start somewhere along the horizontal axis and move from left to right, with market home ownership being the ultimate goal.

Figure 2.2a: The Housing Continuum

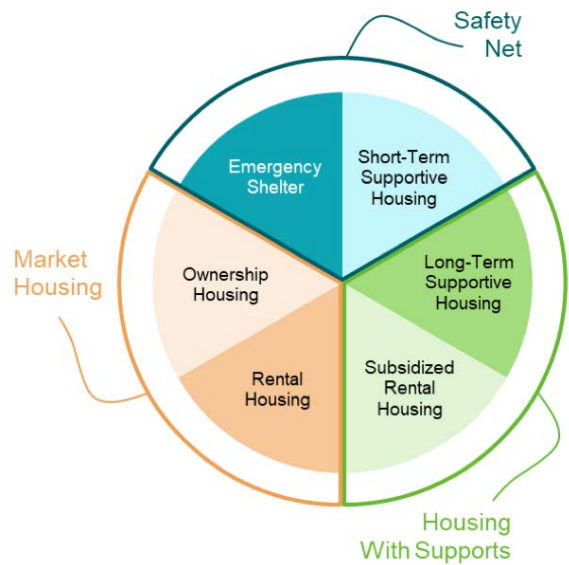


Source: CMHC

The City of Kelowna proposes a new approach to understanding housing, known as the Wheelhouse. Instead of the linear view, the Wheelhouse is a circular model, reflecting that people's housing needs do not necessarily work linearly. Instead, housing needs are fluid based on lifestyle preferences and financial circumstances.

²⁰ Elver, D., Tang, E., & Baynes, S. (2019, August 7). The Wheelhouse: A New Way of Looking at Housing Needs. Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. Retrieved from <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/housing-observer-online/2019-housing-observer/wheelhouse-new-way-looking-housing-needs>

Figure 2.2b: The Housing Wheelhouse



Source: adapted from CMHC & City of Kelowna

The Wheelhouse model allows the user to understand and address resident needs as they move around or across the circle between different types of housing. As such, a healthy housing stock must include diverse housing forms and tenure types to meet needs of different socio-economic backgrounds and life stages.

As part of Kelowna’s own Housing Needs Report, the Wheelhouse helps them address their housing priorities by breaking down housing supply into six key areas:

Figure 2.2c: Wheelhouse Key Housing Areas

Key Area	Description
Emergency Shelters	Temporary shelter, food and other support services, generally operated by non-profit housing providers.
Short-term Supportive Housing	Stable housing along with support services offered by non-profit providers as a step between shelters and long-term housing (with typical stays of two to three years).
Long-term Supportive Housing	Long-term housing offered by non-profit providers, along with support services ranging from supportive care to assisted living and residential care.
Subsidized Rental Housing	Subsidized rental homes operated by non-profit housing providers, government, and housing co-operatives through either monthly government subsidies or one-time capital grants.
Ownership Housing	Includes fee simple homeownership, condominium ownership, multi-unit and single-family homes, and shared equity (such as mobile homes or housing co-operatives).
Rental Housing	Includes purpose-built long-term rental apartments, private rental townhomes, secondary suites, garden suites, and single-family rental homes.

Source: CMHC & City of Kelowna

Defining what is “Affordable”

The topic of housing, and affordable housing in particular, is plagued by fluid and easily misinterpreted terminology which makes communication difficult.

In general, this report uses the long-standing and easily understood metric that housing is affordable when the combination of applicable costs (rent + utilities, or mortgage + insurance + property tax + utilities) are no greater than 30% of a household’s median before-tax income. This measure is a housing indicator tracked by Statistics Canada via the Census.

In quantifying the number of households experiencing affordability challenges, this report also makes use of the Core Housing Need metric established by Statistics Canada and CMHC which modifies the 30% rule to include consideration of affordable alternatives. In other words, data is adjusted to remove households that spend more than 30% of their gross income, but also have a less expensive option available to them. In practice, this tends to reduce the reported rates of housing unaffordability among homeowners as many effectively choose to “stretch” their budgets in order to gain access to the financial benefits of property ownership.

While many owner-occupied households experience affordability challenges, many do have the opportunity to downsize to a less expensive home, or ultimately a rental-tenured home (often in urban areas) if the situation required. In contrast, renter households typically have fewer reasonable alternatives and are more likely to be at risk of homelessness as a result. The use of the 30% indicator, and Core Housing Need helps shed light on both the magnitude of housing affordability challenges, and their severity in terms of alternatives.

There are instances where we amend the 30% indicator to 35%; specifically, when performing our affordability gap analysis. The reason for the change is that the latter is grounded in practical use by CMHC and financial institutions when considering a household’s debt load. This is known as the Gross Debt Servicing (GDS) ratio. Note that CMHC amended the GDS ratio to 39% as of July 1, 2020. The 35% is used in calculations to reflect the effective date of available data.

Social Benefits

The stability of an affordable mortgage or rent can have profound social benefits. Through reducing the shelter cost burden of a household, there is an increased stability which can have an impact on a household’s overall wellbeing and life satisfaction. Housing policy in affordable housing developments also has a role to play in facilitating community cohesion, particularly related to social mix and social networks. Habitat for Humanity Canada (Habitat) documented a variety of positive social impacts, including increased employment quality, a reduction in the use of food banks, and increased levels of voluntarism and civic engagement for those living in housing that was affordable.²¹

Affordable housing allows households to access their preferred living arrangements across all stages of their life. This is particularly important for seniors who may lack purchasing power with retirement incomes. The RDEK, like the rest of British Columbia, has an aging population. This aging population leads to a shrinking working class, a problem that will become larger in the future.

²¹ Berz, Kilian. (2015). Transforming Lives: The Social Return on Habitat’s Work in Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.hfh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/BCG-Transforming-Lives-May-2015.pdf>.

While the senior population is diverse, a commonality that exists is the desire to age within their homes and local communities. Alongside this desire is the need for accessibility and availability of home support services. Issues in housing can create barriers and continue to contribute to premature placement into residential care, caregiver burnout, and overuse of acute care services. Research based out of Simon Fraser University (SFU) Gerontology Research Centre finds the value in “aging in community” and explores the needs of seniors and their built environments.²²

The social benefits of affordable housing extend beyond those paying the rent or mortgage for the home, it also affects their families.²³ A stable and affordable home allows for children to establish healthy habits and relationships at school (both with friends and with teachers), promotes engaging in extracurricular activities, and helps children focus on their goals and education. These immediate outcomes lead to generational impacts on economic output, educational achievement, and creating opportunities for residents to give back to their communities.

Health Benefits

A move to affordable or social housing is often correlated with improved health outcomes.²⁴ Although improving housing affordability is no guarantee of improved physical health as underlying factors may exist, the method or policy through which affordability is administered can have a key determining effect.

If affordable housing policies result in access to improved housing quality, such as newer or renovated lodgings that meet minimum standards for safety and condition, then benefits attributed to those policies can include those related to indoor environment quality, air quality, climate conditions, and reduced overcrowding. Improved health has secondary benefits of reduced absenteeism at school and work, thus contributing to an improved performance overall. Additionally, Habitat found that living in affordable housing had positive effects on resident’s physical and mental health. Residents were less stressed about making rent or mortgage payments every month, which made it possible to allocate resources towards purchasing essential medicines, covering services such as dental and vision care, or buying healthier food.²⁵

This carries on in the realms of mental and public health. Unaffordable housing can be a significant source of stress as individuals or families struggle constantly and live with the constant spectre of losing their access to a basic human necessity. Unaffordable housing therefore has a direct link to incidences of mental health issues, suicide, as well as addictions and substance abuse issues. This can become a negative, reinforcing cycle as the issues precipitated by precarious housing can in turn make it even harder for find and maintain stable housing.

Housing unaffordability, as a significant determinant of poverty, can also limit access to proper nutrition as household budgets reallocate spending on groceries to maintain their shelter. According to Food Banks Canada, around one-third of food bank users are children, while seniors make up 6% of food bank users nationally and 10% in British Columbia. Food bank use in Canada and British Columbia has increased by 22% and 27% respectively between 2016 and 2018. In RDEK, the Cranbrook Food Bank gives out food hampers three times a week to about 450 households (800 people) on average – equating to 10,000 clients each year. The food bank was recently awarded \$300,000 towards building a new facility in order to meet the growing need of the region.²⁶

²² Wister, A., O’Dea, E. Fyffe, I., & Wagner, K. R. (2019). Fact Book on Aging in British Columbia and Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.sfu.ca/grc/research/publications/2019.html>.
²³ Habitat for Humanity: Halton-Mississauga-Dufferin. (2019). 6 Benefits of Affordable Housing: Impact on the Family. <https://habitatmh.ca/6-benefits-affordable-housing-family/>
²⁴ Thomas, Matthew A. (2017). On the Benefits of Affordable Housing. <https://tqsoi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/On-the-benefits-of-affordable-housing.pdf>
²⁵ Habitat for Humanity: Halton-Mississauga-Dufferin. (2019). 6 Benefits of Affordable Housing: Impact on the Family. <https://habitatmh.ca/6-benefits-affordable-housing-family/>.
²⁶ Bullock, Corey. “Cranbrook Food Bank Prepares to Move in to New Facility”. Cranbrook Daily Townsman, March 25, 2021. <https://www.cranbrooktownsman.com/news/cranbrook-food-bank-prepares-to-move-in-to-new-facility/>.

Economic Benefits

The economic benefits of affordable housing can be experienced both by residents and the greater community. At the household level, the primary economic benefit is the improved fiscal health of the household. Housing unaffordability disproportionately affects lower income households, and an increase in financial capacity here is more likely to result in additional spending activity than savings in contrast to higher income households where spending is not constrained.

At the community level, unaffordable housing can be a headwind on population growth, and put pressure on employers as hiring becomes more difficult at any given wage level. In smaller communities especially, these tend to be the goods and services that are disproportionately local and would result in further circulation of wealth within the economy. In contrast, spending on groceries, utilities, transportation, and other major necessities tends to flow out of smaller communities to larger centres where the production and corporate management functions are concentrated.

Creation of affordable housing can be a powerful economic development activity in and of itself. Economic stimulus programs often target construction projects as these investments tend to generate more jobs and spin-off effects due to their local labour and material intensity. Housing construction overall is a significant economic sector, and the degree to which this activity can be expanded through investment in affordable housing projects via provincial or federal funding programs represents a net increase of investment driving local economic activity.

Affordable housing also works to enhance local tax revenues – instead of low or no payment of taxes by distressed properties, affordable homeowners and renters contribute to the community.

In British Columbia, the total cost of poverty is estimated to be \$2.2 to 2.3 billion annually, or close to 6% of the provincial budget. The cost to society overall is considerably higher – \$8.1 to \$9.2 billion, or between 4.1 to 4.7% of BC's GDP. This equates to a cost of \$2,100 per person or \$8,400 for a family of four, every year. The amount of income tax that would be generated if those living in poverty were raised to the second lowest income bracket is \$1.7 billion. These resources could be reallocated to better support better meeting a range of unmet health care demands from primary care, to mental health care, and the full spectrum of universal public care services needed – including affordable housing.²⁷

In the RDEK the total average annual investment needed to support the regions current and future affordability and supply needs is estimated at \$12.27 million annually. These funds include \$3.59 million in income support, \$6.00 million in new housing supply, \$1.43 million in non-profit repair, and \$1.24 million to mitigate homelessness.²⁸

²⁷ Ivanova, Iglilka. (2011). The Cost of Poverty in BC. https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2011/07/CCPA_BC_cost_of_poverty_full_report.pdf

²⁸ Housing Central. (2017). Regional Breakdown: East Kootenay Regional District. Retrieved from http://bcnpha.ca/wp_bcnpha/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/East-Kootenay.pdf.

Benefits to Other Service Provisions

A common misconception regarding affordable housing and service programs is that subsidized housing and services lead to a continuous cycle of dependency or represents a direct fiscal transfer from higher income households to those in need. When affordable housing is accessible there is a reduction in spending required in other social services that is typically far greater than the cost of housing action itself, resulting in direct net savings to taxpayer-funded services.

The people experiencing housing challenges do not simply disappear if their need for below-market housing is not supported by society. Those costs instead show up in the healthcare system, the criminal justice system, the social services system, etc. Housing First approaches to homelessness have demonstrated repeatedly that the cheapest way to address the issue is through the direct provision of housing, the significant cost of which is dwarfed by the direct savings accruing to other government and community services.²⁹

Boston Consulting Group's assessment on Habitat for Humanity's home-ownership program found that for every \$1 spent, about \$4 of benefits accrue to society.³⁰ This \$4 is represented in taxes and money freed up from shelter costs and other services, as well as additional local government revenue from tolls, city fees, etc. Increased revenue may mean improved infrastructure, more green space, and other elements of healthy communities that can keep residents healthy and safe.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives developed methodology to establish the cost of poverty in British Columbia. One of these costs, intergenerational, is calculated by estimating the number of children that would escape poverty if the intergenerational transfer of poverty were to be eliminated. Children who grow up in poverty are more liable to be less productive and contribute less in taxes, while also being more likely to contribute to cumulative and enduring remedial costs. Overall, 30% of children who grow up in poverty are expected to remain in poverty in their adulthood. The intergenerational costs of BC show that there would be a substantial benefit to the economy should children be able to climb to the second lowest income bracket. Their combined income would rise by \$440 to \$550 million per year.³¹

It's clear that ending poverty in British Columbia, and Canada would have considerable benefits and a significant return on investment. Current government inaction on poverty is costing the province \$2 billion per year in economic loss, \$1.2 billion in excess on the provincial healthcare system, and \$6.2 to \$7.3 billion in foregone revenue. As a major household expense for any family, housing costs are a significant driver of poverty, and childhood poverty in particular.³²

29 Jadidzadeh, Ali et al. (2020). Cost Savings of Housing First in a Non-Experimental Setting. Retrieved from <https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/cost-savings-housing-first-non-experimental-setting>

30 Boston Consulting Group. (2015). Transforming Lives: The Social Return on Habitat's Work in Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.hfh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/BCG-Transforming-Lives-May-2015.pdf>.

31 Ivanova, Iglika. (2011). The Cost of Poverty in BC. https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2011/07/CCPA_BC_cost_of_poverty_full_report.pdf

32 Ibid.

2.3 GOVERNMENT ROLES FOR THE PROVISION OF HOUSING

Federal Government

Among Canada's different levels of government, the federal government played the most significant role in social housing from the 1940s through to the early 1990s. Since then, its role has varied considerably along with changing perspectives and the priorities of different administrations. In 2017, the federal government recommitted and increased Canada's involvement in housing through the National Housing Strategy, along with \$40 billion in funding over 10 years. This strategy, along with the national homelessness strategy, are the guiding documents for the federal government and the provision of housing in Canada.

Canada's National Housing Strategy (NHS): A Place to Call Home³³

In November 2017, the Liberal government introduced the NHS, a policy document aimed at supporting the provision of housing supply and affordability. The following year, the government passed the National Housing Strategy Act, which commits the government to long-term visions for housing policy. Included among these visions is the priority to focus on those in greatest housing need and the use of public participation as a means of generating and implementing policy.

Section 4 of the NHS Act acknowledges that the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right, central to inherent dignity and well-being of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities. As a response to this claim, the Act has put in place institutions focused on reporting, oversight, and participation in decision-making (i.e. a National Housing Council and a Federal Housing Advocate).

As for funding, the NHS touts a \$70+ billion housing program to build stronger communities and help Canadians across the country access a safe affordable home. In doing so it aims to cut chronic homelessness by half, remove 530,000 families from housing need, modernize 300,000 homes, and invest in up to 125,000 new affordable homes.

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy³⁴

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This program provides funding to urban, Indigenous, rural and remote communities to help them address their local homelessness needs. The federal government committed \$2.2 billion to tackle homelessness across Canada.

Homelessness has an impact on every community in Canada. It affects individuals, families, women fleeing violence, youth, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. In 2016, an estimated 129,000 people experienced homelessness at an emergency shelter.

Reaching Home supports the goals of the National Housing Strategy, in particular, to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by fiscal year 2027 to 2028.

³³ Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. (2021). About the Initiatives. Retrieved from <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/nhs/guidepage-strategy/about-the-initiatives>

³⁴ Government of Canada. (2020, June 9). About Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness.html>

Provincial Government

In contrast to the federal government's role in social housing, the Province of British Columbia's part in housing expanded in the 1990s. BC Housing, first established in 1967, became the appointed agency to fulfill the province's continuing commitment to developing and managing subsidized housing. BC also acts as a liaison to engage local governments in meeting their needs, beginning with an amendment to the Local Government Act, which makes it mandatory to include policies for affordable, rental, and special needs housing in Official Community Plans. The provinces guiding documents for affordable housing are outlined below.

Local Government Act³⁵

The *Local Government Act* forms the foundation under which all municipalities and regional districts operate in British Columbia. This document *sets out the framework for structure and operations, as well as the main powers and responsibilities* of local governments as mandated by the province. The *Local Government Act* also covers important authorities for both municipalities and regional districts, such as planning and land use powers and statutory requirements for administering elections. Through the Act, a local governments involvement in the provision of social housing has taken a variety of forms, including such policy and regulatory measures as:

- the inclusion of affordable housing provisions in regional growth strategies and official community plans (required by the *Local Government Act*);
- the amendment of zoning bylaws to permit such things as increased densities in new or existing residential neighbourhoods, housing above shops, secondary suites, small lot developments, manufactured home parks, comprehensive development zones, density bonusing, housing agreements and the required inclusion of some affordable housing in new developments;
- the adoption of regulatory controls over the conversion of rental housing;
- the adoption of health, safety, and comfort standards for rental housing;
- the provision of social or special-needs housing in some new developments through "housing agreements";
- the "fast-tracking" of approvals for affordable housing proposals; and
- the adoption of policies for special-needs housing.

While not all of the above policies and regulatory measures are required by the Local Government Act, providing the legal jurisdiction to create policies and regulations on the above measures. In summary, The Act gives power to local governments to operate within their boundaries, and implement the above regulations and controls.

³⁵ Province of British Columbia. (RSBC 2015 c 1) Local Government Act. Retrieved on September 8, 2021 from https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/r15001_00.

BC Housing Action Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22³⁶

In June 2018, the Governments of Canada and British Columbia signed the CMHC–British Columbia Bilateral Agreement (the Agreement) under the 2017 National Housing Strategy to protect, renew, and expand social and community housing. The Agreement supports the priorities in “Homes for BC,” the provincial government’s 30-point plan for housing affordability in British Columbia.

Under this Agreement, more than \$990 million will be invested over 10 years. From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2022 a total of \$217.2 million is forecasted to be invested, made up of matching contributions of \$108.6 million from both the Government of Canada and the Province of B.C.

The contributions will be invested into two initiatives, and 5 unique funding programs:

Initiative 1: B.C. Priorities Housing Initiative

- *Home Adaptations for Independence:* financial assistance for home modifications for low-income people with diminished physical abilities. Intended to improve physical accessibility of 1,700 homes for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities.
- *Capital Renewal Funding Program:* used to prevent the deterioration of existing affordable housing stock and to carry out energy performance upgrades. Work includes building repairs, maintenance, critical life safety, seismic and fire safety upgrades.
- *Provincial Rental Supply Program:* funding to support the development of new Community Housing under the Provincial Rental Supply Program.

Initiative 2: Canada Community Housing Initiative

- *Building BC: Community Housing Fund:* Funding under the Canada Community Housing Initiative will be applied to support the development of new mixed-income housing under the Community Housing Fund program.
- *Retention of Social and Community Housing:* A subsidy to extend funding agreements to preserve the affordability of units for low-income households as original agreements expire. These subsidy extensions will include greater operating flexibility for providers to move towards more sustainable operating models, for example, to allow developments to transition towards a mixed-rent or mixed-use model.
- *Capital Renewal Funding Program:* used to prevent the deterioration of existing affordable housing stock and to carry out energy performance upgrades. Work includes building repairs, maintenance, critical life safety, seismic and fire safety upgrades.

Through the programs described within initiative 1 and 2, BC Housing aims to support nearly 40,000 households by maintaining and expanding social and community housing across the province, as well as by supporting needed repairs and adaptations.

³⁶ BC Housing. (2019, July 4). BC Housing Action Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22: The CHMC Bilateral Agreement Under the 2017 National Housing Strategy. Retrieved from <https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Action-Plan-2019-22.pdf>

Table 2.3a: Number of Households Addressed by BC Housing and Canada Initiatives

Initiative	Target (Households)				
	2019/20 Year 1	2020/21 Year 2	2021/22 Year 3	3 Year Cumulative Total	2019/20 – 2027/28 Target
BC Priorities Housing Initiative	1,245	952	870	3,067	7,084
Canada Communities Housing Initiative	2,475	3,166	2,903	8,544	39,740
Canada Housing Benefit	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total	3,720	4,118	3,773	11,611	46,824

Source: BC Housing Action Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22

Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia³⁷

Released in conjunction with the BC Housing Action Plan, the 30-point Homes for BC Plan aims to make affordable housing more accessible and allocates funding to address homelessness across the province.

This plan proposes measures to stabilize housing prices, crack down on tax fraud, build affordable housing, improve security for renters, and build partnerships to preserve affordable housing. As a whole, the plan addresses many of the recommendations identified in UBCM's report (section 3.3.2.4) and is supported by the funding opportunities in the BC Housing Action Plan (section 3.3.2.2).

UBCM A Home for Everyone³⁸

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has released a new housing strategy that calls upon all levels of government to diversify supply, manage demand, and prevent homelessness. UBCM considered potential federal and provincial actions and supports, in addition to opportunities for voluntary local government action, recognizing that local governments cannot tackle the housing crisis alone. The strategy entails 32 recommendations structured around four policy shifts:

1. A Rental Housing Strategy to help address a deficit in rental housing built up through decades of policy priority on homeownership.
2. A Demand Management Strategy with taxation measures to stabilize prices and restore affordability.
3. A Comprehensive Homeless Strategy to substantially reduce the number of people who are homeless.

³⁷ Province of British Columbia. (2018, February) Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia. Retrieved from https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_homes_for_bc.pdf.

³⁸ Union of British Columbia Municipalities. (2018, January). A Home for Everyone: A Housing Strategy for British Columbians. Retrieved from <https://www.ubcm.ca/sites/default/files/2021-08/UBCM%20Housing%20Strategy.pdf>.

An All-Government Approach towards Housing Affordability, through which all orders of government collaborate at a community level to bring about community appropriate change.

Local Government

Where the provincial government plays a large role in providing services to support those in need of housing (e.g. rent supplements, public housing, and emergency shelters), regional districts have the power to regulate, prohibit, or impose requirements on certain activities that affect people and property.

Regional districts were formed in BC during the 1960s when there was no efficient way to manage community issues that took place outside of existing municipalities. Since a significant percentage of BC's population lived outside of municipalities in unincorporated areas of the province, regional districts provided residents with necessities like fire protection, water supply, and shared community resources like arenas and museums. Today, regional districts have three main roles:

1. providing regional governance and services;
2. providing a framework for region-wide services that may span multiple local governments (water systems, waste management, cultural facilities, etc.); and,
3. functioning as a local government and providing services like building regulation, street lighting, and nuisance regulation.

While regional districts have limited regulatory authority compared to municipalities, they can still decide where and how housing can be built. Land use controls directly effect the housing supply and permitted housing types. It is these controls that makeup the basket of tools with which a regional government and its electoral areas can support shelter affordability.

The role of local governments to support and encourage affordable and appropriate housing has become increasingly important, especially so with recent jumps in the costs to both own or rent shelter that often go unmatched by dollar increases to wages. Overall, its role includes creating affordable housing policies, protecting the affordable housing stock, encouraging a greater mix of residential uses, and encouraging affordable housing development.

Modern urban and rural planning approaches to affordable housing do require that local governments have the capacity to push for and support initiatives. Regional district's need funding, staff, and/or land to meaningfully contribute to the cause. Many regional districts do not have this capacity, especially in comparison to municipalities.

Local governments have an increasingly important role to play in facilitating the creation of affordable market and non-market housing through policy, zoning, partnerships, financial incentives, and staff capacity and resources. Their authority comes from Provincial legislation – the Community Charter, the Local Government Act, the Strata Property Act, and the Local Government Statutes (Housing Needs Reports) Amendment Act.

Non-Profit Organizations

The non-profit housing sector builds and manages housing units that are typically priced at the low-end of market or below market rates and may include support services. Non-profit organizations typically receive some form of financial assistance from senior levels of government to enable them to offer affordable rents, reduced-rate mortgages, capital grants, and ongoing operating subsidies. Sometimes an organization will manage a portfolio that includes market units as a means of subsidizing rents for other units or properties. As senior government responsibilities have changed, and as other levels of government have stepped back from providing affordable housing directly, non-profits have become the most active provider of affordable housing across British Columbia.

Private Sector

Including developers, builders, investors, landowners, speculators, and landlords, the private sector is the most common provider of housing in British Columbia. Responsible for development, construction, and ongoing management of a range of housing forms and tenures the private sector is an important partner in addressing housing goals. However, the private sector has limitations as investors expect their developments to earn profits. Although important, private sector development is only one housing tool in an increasingly diverse toolbox.



2.4 COVID-19 AND HOUSING

Discovered in 2019, COVID-19 is a coronavirus and infectious disease that causes respiratory illness. Among those who develop symptoms, most recover from the disease without needing hospital treatment. About 15% become seriously ill and require oxygen and 5% become critically ill and need intensive care.³⁹ Because COVID-19 can be easily transmitted, governments have taken measures to reduce physical interactions, encourage physical distancing, and reduce the spread of the virus. In British Columbia, this has included travel restrictions and closed borders, social lockdowns and business closures, and encouraging working-from-home whenever possible. As a result of safety measures, many communities and economies have been dramatically impacted.

In BC, economic impacts have been most felt in tourism, accommodation, food services, recreation, transportation, retail, and similar industries. Nearly 90% of all job losses were in the service sector which commonly employs young people and renters.⁴⁰ It has also impacted older populations who weren't considering retirement but may be unwilling or unable to work under new circumstances or who now have to work longer because their economic situation has changed. Effects of the pandemic on employment, income, and savings are already significant and are expected to persist for months to years. In addition to the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) program, a number of programs have been put in place for students, Indigenous communities, low to moderate income households, and seniors. Various agencies in BC have implemented measures to help protect housing security, such as deferring payments for mortgages and utilities, banning evictions, freezing rental rates, and offering rental supplements for workers with reduced incomes.

Considerations for Housing in the Regional District of East Kootenay

Though many programs have been established to support Canadians effected by Covid-19, including the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and measures to help protect housing security, such as deferring payments for mortgages and utilities, eviction bans, and rental freezes, it is expected to have a dramatic impact on housing in many communities, including those in the RDEK Rural.

According to CMHC, housing starts are likely to slow down in metro Vancouver and other major urban centres as a result of decreased employment, market uncertainty, and limited mobility and international migration.⁴¹ Real estate agents are reporting that demand for rural properties has skyrocketed amongst urban residents who want access to recreation activities and outdoor amenities.⁴² With increased unemployment and reduced incomes, urban residents may also be searching for more affordable options in smaller, rural areas.

Anecdotally, many residents of the RDEK were concerned increased "amenity migration" is driving up already high housing prices. Migration from larger urban areas with higher purchasing power may be an unexpected consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Rising ownership costs and increased reports of competitive real estate markets seem to be direct impact of increased migration from urban centres.

³⁹ World Health Organization. 2020. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

⁴⁰ CTV News. 2020. Available at: <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/these-groups-were-the-hardest-hit-by-the-coronavirus-pandemic-b-c-s-finance-minister-says-1.4988852>

⁴¹ CMHC. 2020. Available at: <https://assets.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/sites/cmhc/data-research/publications-reports/housing-market-outlook/2020/housing-market-outlook-canda-summer-61500-2020-en.pdf?rev=ee98fa7e-3704-4e5f-9c43-95f04113558f%0D>

⁴² Carlito, P. 2020. Available at: <https://www.straight.com/news/bugging-out-covid-19-concerns-in-urban-centres-fuel-interest-in-rural-and-recreation-properties>

3 Rural Regional District of East Kootenay Housing Needs

The following section summarizes housing need across the overall RDEK Rural. Totals and trends refer to the aggregate of Electoral Areas A, B, C, E, F, and G. Readers should view the following trends as best estimates and not absolute fact based on the following: 1) the RDEK Rural is not a defined Statistics Canada geography and is thus subject to the accuracy of its individual components, and 2) Statistics Canada's random rounding practices at the individual community level may cause further discrepancy when all subject communities are combined.

3.1 DEMOGRAPHY

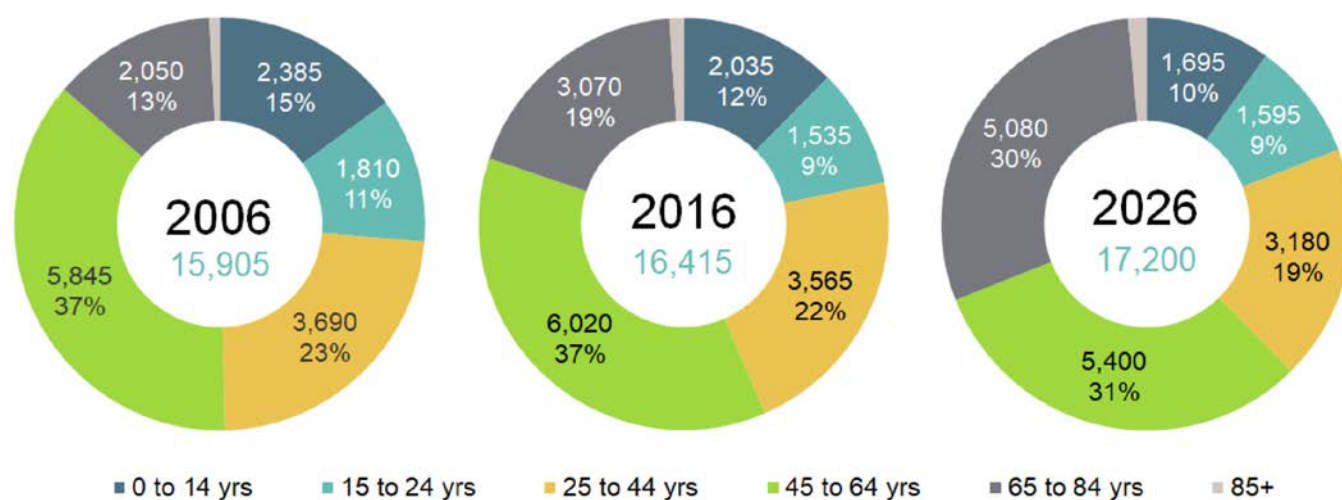
Age Distribution & Growth

BC Statistics reports that the RDEK Rural combined for about 16,415 residents in 2016, representing a decade growth of approximately 3%. Population projections suggest that the rural study area may somewhat accelerate its growth, possibly rising 5% between 2016 and 2026 to 17,200 people.

Generally, total senior age cohorts (those aged 65+) grew and are likely to continue growing for the foreseeable future. By 2026, seniors may make up over 30% the total population, up from about 15% a decade prior.

Total youth cohorts (younger than 25 years old) contracted between 2006 and 2016, and projections anticipate that this trend could continue, particularly for younger children. Consequently, their share of the total population should decrease due to the foreseen expansion of senior residents. Total working age persons (approximately 25 to 64 years old) may also contract during the same period.

Figure 3.1a: Population Age Distribution (Historical & Anticipated)

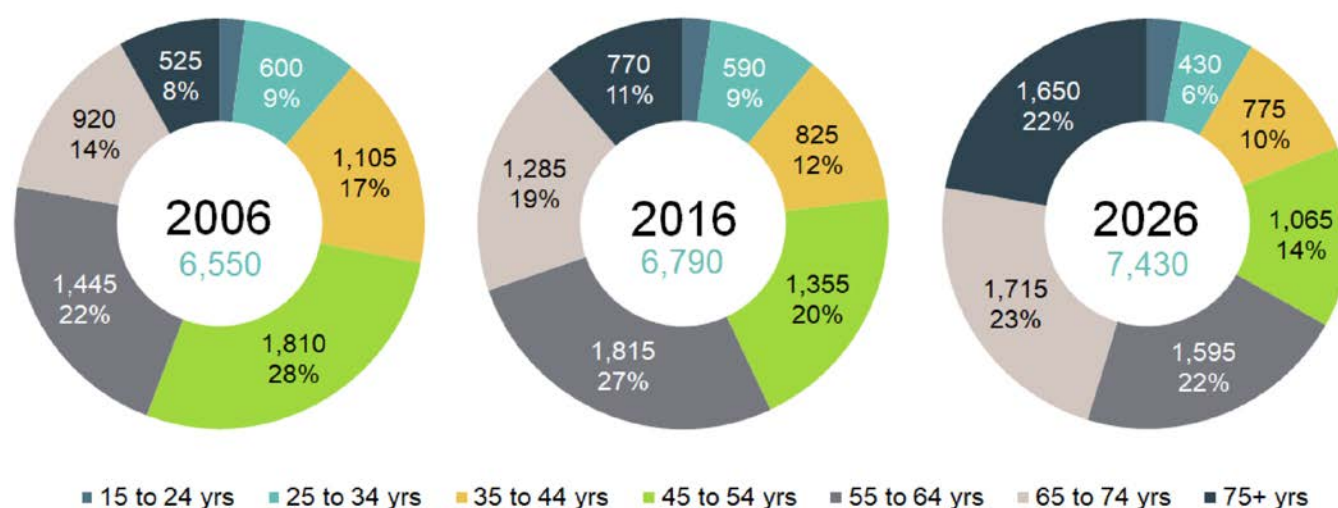


Source: derived from BC Stats & Statistics Canada

Total permanent households (HHs) occupied by a usual resident grew just shy of 4% between 2006 and 2016, slightly faster growth than population over the same period. The small discrepancy in their decade changes comes from a declining average household size, attributed to the expansion of senior households who are typically only 1 to 2 persons large. In other words, the number of households per capita increased.

Household projections suggest that magnitude of household growth could reach 9% between 2016 and 2026, noticeably faster than population growth during the same period. Consequently, the average household size may decrease, while the number of households per capita increases.

Figure 3.1b: Household Maintainer Age Cohort Distribution & Change (Historical & Anticipated)



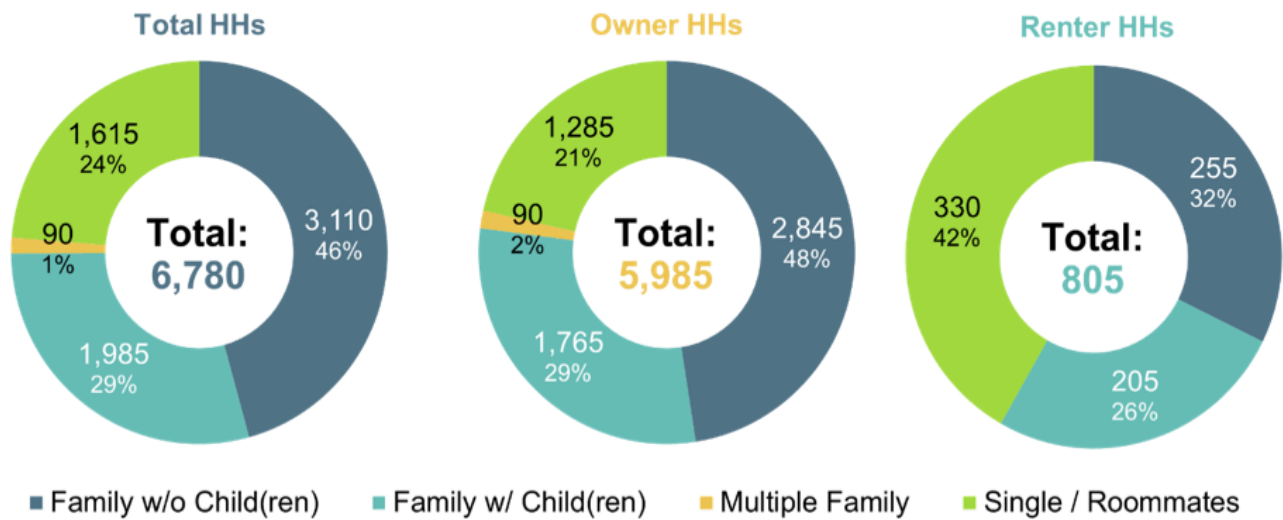
Source: derived from Statistics Canada

Household Type

Between 2006 and 2016, total permanent households increased almost 4%. During the same period, owner and renter households both grew by 4% and 3%, respectively.

In 2016, households were predominantly made up of households without children (like senior couples), followed by families with children and single persons / roommate households. Renter households demonstrated higher prevalence of single / roommates (42%) compared to owner households (21%). Owner households reported being more likely to be made up of families without children.

Figure 3.1c Household (HH) Type by Household Tenure, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada

Since 2006, total families without children grew 21%, single persons / roommate households grew 4%, and total families with children contracted 8%. Losses of families of children (children became independent and move out) was most apparent among owner households.



3.2 ECONOMY

Labour Force

In 2016, the rural labour force totalled 13,645 people (those working or actively seeking work), equating to a 62.7% participation rate. A growing senior population often impacts labour statistics. Labour force participation dropped from 2006's 68.3% due in part to the growth of retired persons.

Total unemployed persons jumped 52% over the decade, accompanied by a decrease in the total labour force (6%). This resulted in a higher unemployment rate (7.5%) than 2006 (4.7%). No local data existed at the time of this report to demonstrate the local impacts of COVID-19.

The male labour force experienced a faster decrease over the decade (7% versus 5% for women). Men also reported higher growth in unemployed persons and their unemployment rate. Female participation fell by half as many points as for males, bringing their participation rate to 59.0% (versus 66% for men).

Figure 3.2a: Labour Force Statistics by Tenure & Age, 2016

	2016			% Change '06-'16		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total Pop (15+ yrs old)	13,645	7,065	6,570	2.9%	4.0%	0.6%
In Labour Force	8,555	4,665	3,875	-5.6%	-7.1%	-5.1%
Employed	7,905	4,235	3,675	-8.5%	-11.6%	-5.9%
Unemployed	645	430	215	51.8%	79.2%	19.4%
Not in Labour Force	5,100	2,410	2,695	21.3%	36.5%	10.2%
Participation Rate (%)	62.7	66.0	59.0	-5.6	-7.8	-3.6
Employment Rate (%)	57.9	59.9	55.9	-7.2	-10.5	-3.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.5	9.2	5.5	+2.8	+4.4	+1.1

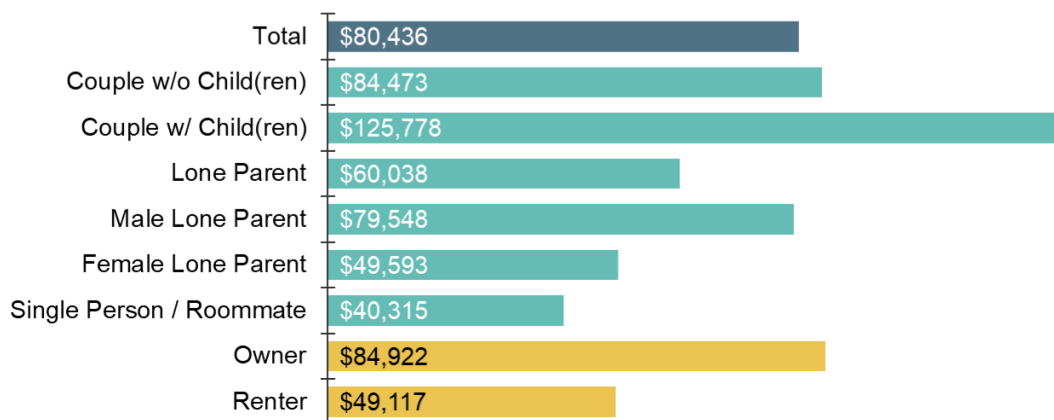
Source: Statistics Canada

Median Household Incomes

Overall, the RDEK Rural's median before-tax household income grew 17% from 2005 to 2015, to approximately \$80,436. The median owner household earned \$103,843 and the median renter household earned \$49,330, representing 19% and 5% growth since 2005, respectively.

The median couples with children earn the greatest income (\$125,778) among household types, due to the increased likelihood of having dual non-retirement incomes in the household. The median lone parent earned about \$60,038 in 2015, with median male and female lone parents earning \$79,548 and \$49,593, respectively.

Figure 3.2b: Median Before-Tax Household Income by Household Type & Tenure, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada

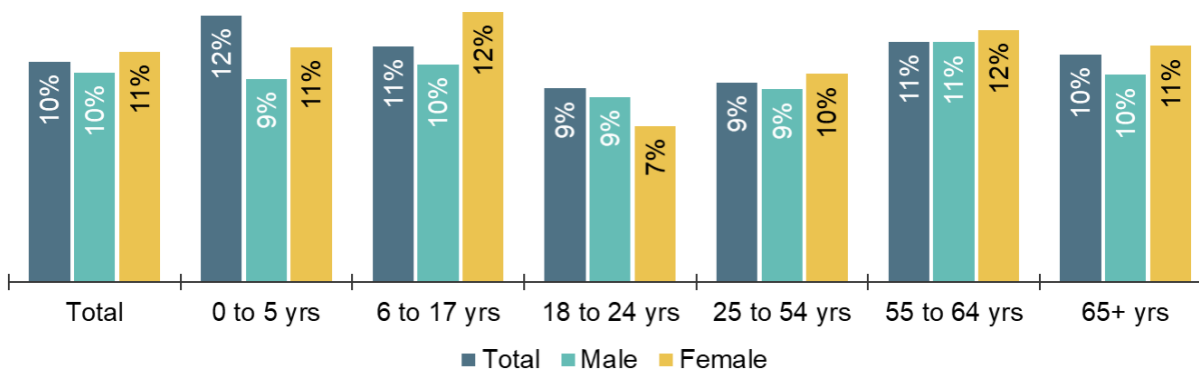
Income data for Indigenous households is sparse among rural areas. For the RDEK overall, an Indigenous household earned about \$70,000. Indigenous owner households earned about \$92,950 versus \$44,100 for those that rented. Lone parents earned the least among Indigenous household types (\$31,000).

Low Income Measure (LIM)

The Low-Income Measures (LIM) is a set of thresholds calculated by Statistics Canada that identifies Canadians belonging to a household whose overall incomes are below 50% of median adjusted household income. "Adjusted" refers to the idea that household needs increase as the number of household members increase. Statistics Canada emphasizes that the LIM is not a measure of poverty, but that it identifies those who are substantially worse off than the average.

About 10% of RDEK Rural residents fall below the after-tax LIM. Overall, children between 0 and 5 years old demonstrate the greatest likelihood (12%) of belonging to a household below the measure. The greatest low income prevalence for male and female residents was among residents aged 55 to 64.

Figure 3.2c: Low Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) Prevalence by Age Cohort, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada

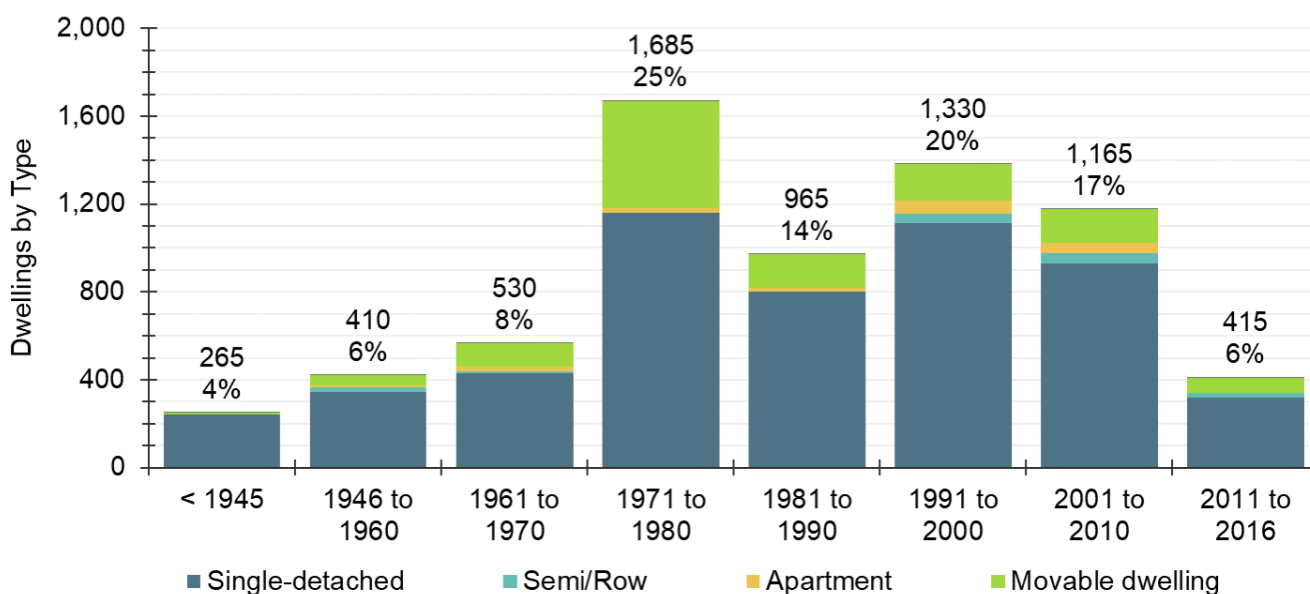
3.3 HOUSING

Building Stock

The RDEK Rural residential building stock is predominantly single-detached (79%), a common trend across all electoral areas. The study area built the greatest share of its stock (occupied by usual residents) in the 1970s (1,685 units, or 25%). About 1,205 dwellings were built prior to 1970 (18% of the inventory).

The 1970s were immediately followed by a drop in construction activity, averaging about 115 new units annually until 2010. From 2011 onwards, the RDEK Rural averaged 99 new construction starts per year, slightly lower than the average of the last 30 years.

Figure 3.3a: Total Dwellings by Year of Construction & Type, 2016



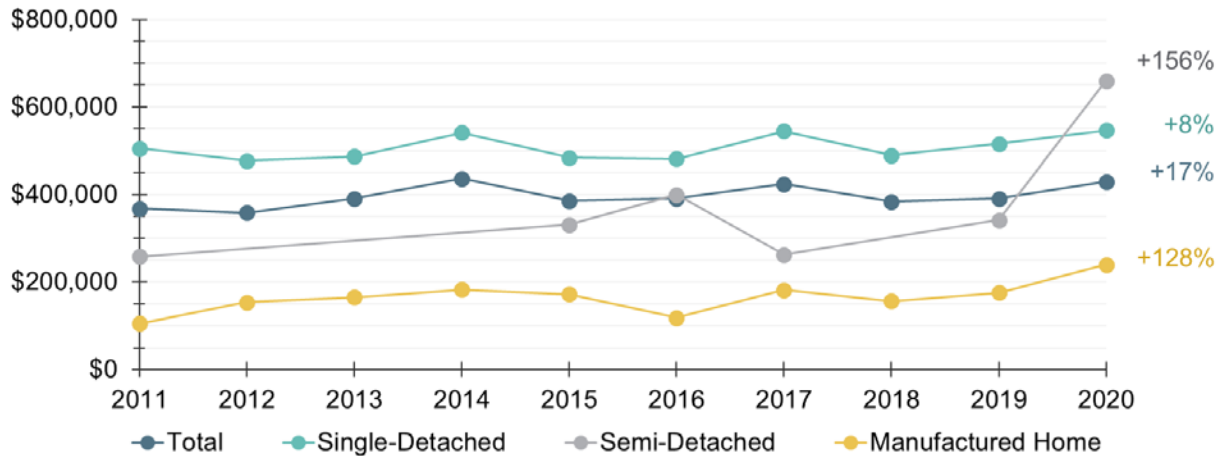
Source: Statistics Canada

Purchase Price

In 2020, the median single-detached home cost about \$546,350 across the RDEK Rural, up 8% since 2011 (prices are in 2020 dollars). Overall prices grew 17%. Semi-detached home prices experienced the greatest decade appreciation at 156%, though the annual sample size is maximum 2 units. Manufactured homes, the second most prevalent housing type in the study area, experienced 128% growth over the decade to \$240,800. Note that manufactured home prices often include land sold with the home.

Adjusting prices for inflation to reflect 2020 dollars allows the reader to understand the actual overall appreciation or depreciation in housing that does not simply come from the general rise in prices across the Canadian economy. Generally, unadjusted dwelling price appreciation makes up about 80% of growth.

Figure 3.3b: Dwelling Prices by Type (2020 dollars) & Percent Change '11-'20



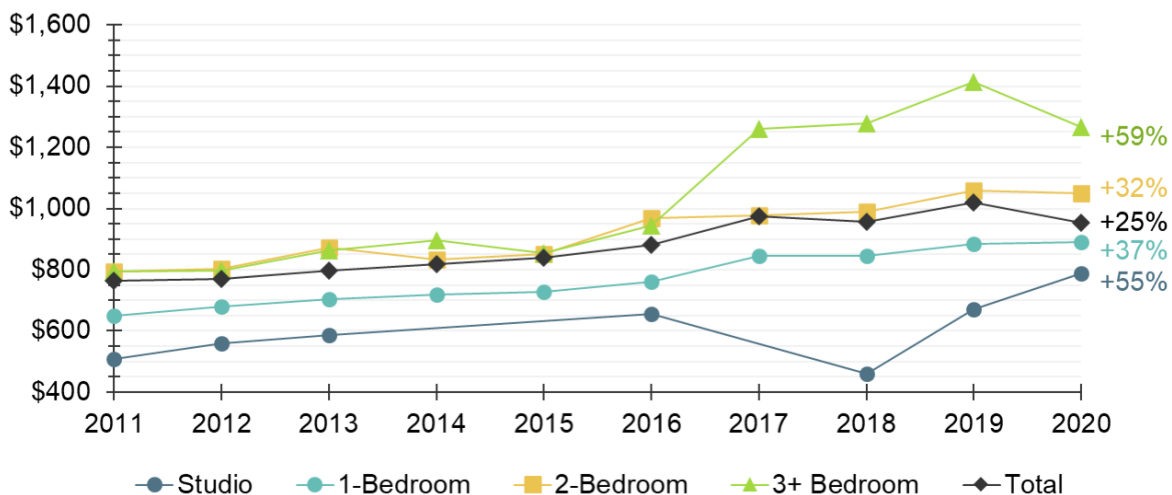
Source: BC Assessment

Primary Rental Market Prices

The Canadian Housing & Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) conducts an annual Rental Market Survey to estimate rental market strength (the most readily available rental market data). Readily available primary market data is only obtainable for the City of Cranbrook. While actual price and vacancy levels may not exactly reflect conditions for renters outside of Cranbrook, trends in these rental market characteristics can be instructive of the broader rental market throughout the rest of the regional district.

CMHC does differentiate between occupied and available rental prices in larger survey areas (Census Metropolitan Areas), which can help estimate what differences may be present locally. The rents reported below estimate the cost of a vacant rental using the CMA differences between the two rental price types.

Figure 3.3c: Adjusted Median Rent, Cranbrook (2020 dollars) & Percent Change '11-'20



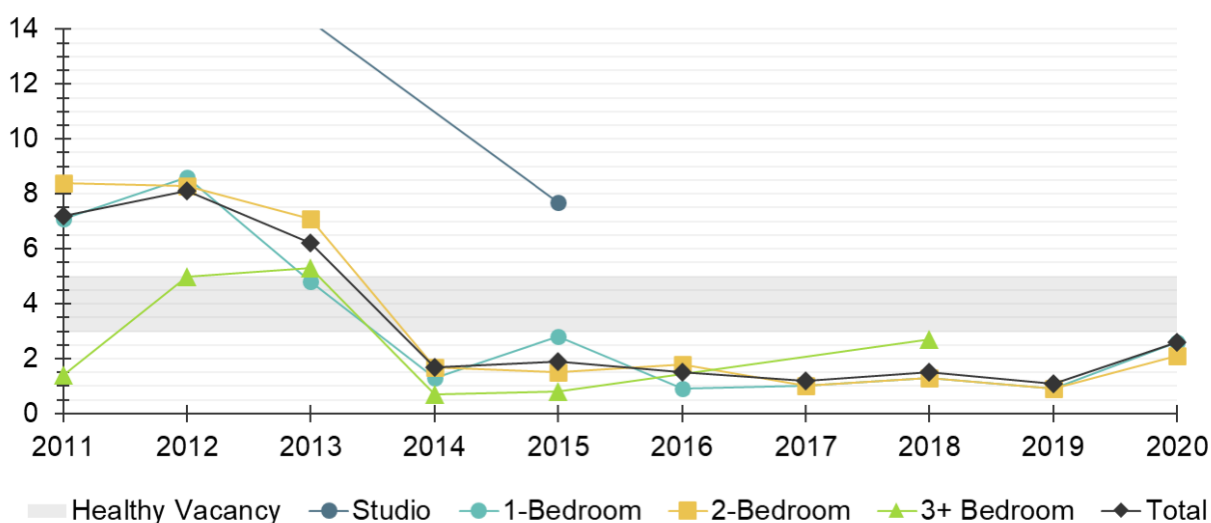
Source: CMHC

In 2020, the median unit within the primary rental market rented for \$954, a 25% increase since 2011 (adjusted for inflation). Studio apartment rents grew 55% to \$789, 1-bedrooms grew 37% to \$891, 2-bedrooms grew 332% to \$1,051, and 3+ bedrooms grew 59% to \$1,265.

Primary Rental Market Vacancy

Cranbrooks' overall vacancy rate remained below the generally accepted healthy vacancy range of 3% to 5%, and has been below this threshold since 2014. All rental unit sizes demonstrate unhealthy low vacancy rates (except studio apartments which do not have enough information to report a conclusion).

Figure 3.3d: Primary Rental Market Vacancy Rate (%), Cranbrook



Source: Statistics Canada

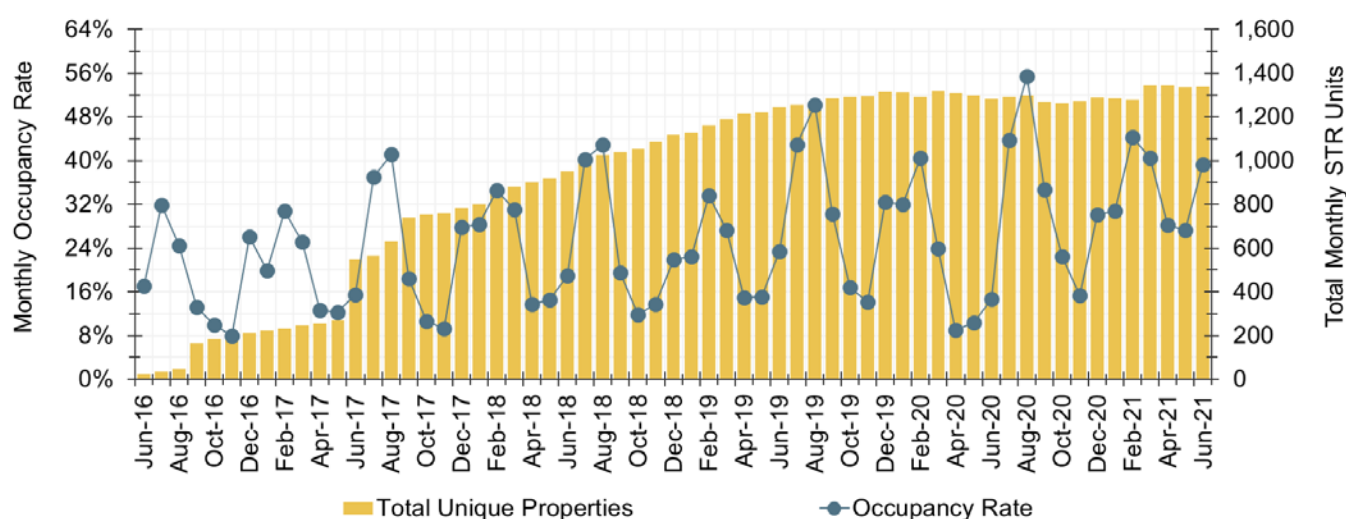
Primary market trends impact those of the secondary market, both in the City of Cranbrook and across the RDEK. For example, with a growing renter population and declining vacancy, demand for rental tenured housing will be on the rise. As renters find little to no stock available in the supply of purpose-built rental dwellings, they will begin to find alternatives, moving to secondary market units. In other words, declining urban vacancy rates induce demand for substitutes, thereby decreasing secondary market vacancy rates. Unfortunately, the specific rate and how it may change cannot be determined.

Short-term Rentals

Short-term rentals (STRs) have grown as a more fluid and flexible use of residential dwelling space for temporary accommodations that blur the line between rental housing and a commercial hospitality use.

RDEK Rural's market hit a maximum 1,346 units listed on an STR website in March 2021. From January to June 2021, 1,150 units were actually active across the study area, meaning it had been booked or made available at least one day during that period.

Figure 3.3e: Total Monthly STR Units vs. Average Monthly Revenue



Source: derived from AirDNA

The RDEK Rural demonstrates cyclical rates of occupancy over time, with highs in the late summer and winter holidays, and lows in the off-season. In 2020, the average monthly occupancy rate was 28%, with peak occupancy occurring in August 2020 (55%). The emergence of COVID 19 looks to have hit activity in Spring 2020, but did not have long lasting impacts on bookings since then.

In August 2019, average monthly revenue per STR unit hit its highest value since data records were available (\$3,865 per unit). In 2020, average monthly revenues were about \$1,515 per unit, totalling just over \$16,000,000 over the course of the year.

Non-Market Housing & Programs

As of March 31, 2021, the RDEK provides emergency shelter or homeless housing for 108 people. Higher totals exist for transitional housing and assisted living (178 units) and independent social housing (565 units). In March, 296 individuals or households received rental assistance for private market dwellings, 62% of whom were seniors.

The City of Cranbrook's non-market housing contributions make up 52% of RDEK services, with the other municipalities making up an aggregate 43%. The remaining 5% share is distributed across the electoral areas.

Figure 3.3f shows how many people/households benefited from non-market housing across the RDEK and the RDEK Rural. Units for the all service allocation subgroups are marked with an 'XX' notation if one of the subgroups has 5 or fewer units.

Figure 3.3f: Non-Market Housing Facilities & Programs, March 31 2021

Regional District of East-Kootenay															
Emergency Shelter & Housing for the Homeless				Transitional Supported & Assisted Living				Independent Social Housing			Rent Assistance in Private Market				TOTAL
Homeless Housed	Homeless Rent Support	Homeless Shelters	Subtotal	Supportive Seniors Housing	Special Needs	Women & Children Fleeing Violence	Subtotal	Low Income Families	Low Income Seniors	Subtotal	Families	Seniors	Canada Housing Benefit	Subtotal	
68	40	0	108	128	20	30	178	287	278	565	86	183	27	296	1,147

RDEK Rural															
Emergency Shelter & Housing for the Homeless				Transitional Supported & Assisted Living				Independent Social Housing			Rent Assistance in Private Market				TOTAL
Homeless Housed	Homeless Rent Support	Homeless Shelters	Subtotal	Supportive Seniors Housing	Special Needs	Women & Children Fleeing Violence	Subtotal	Low Income Families	Low Income Seniors	Subtotal	Families	Seniors	Canada Housing Benefit	Subtotal	
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	18	35	XX	XX	XX	23	58

Source: BC Housing

As of June 2021, the BC Housing wait list had 161 total applications from RDEK residents that had not yet been fulfilled, including: 40 families, 34 residents with disabilities, and 58 seniors. The greatest visible demand comes from Cranbrook (49% of applications). Based on available information, 12 rural applicants were unserved.

The totals provided only reflect active applications with BC Housing and do not represent the true total of people who can or should be accessing services but are not, either due to stigmatization of accessing services or feeling disheartened by long wait list numbers or times. The unavailability of options in rural communities also serves as a deterrent to applying to urban services, especially when social (family and friends) supports may not be in these urban centres or if residents simply wish to remain in their community (like seniors aging in place).

3.4 CORE HOUSING NEED

A dwelling's housing condition is normally described using Statistics Canada's three criteria of "Core Housing Need:" suitability, adequacy, and affordability. A quick guide is that inadequate means a need for major repair, unsuitable means overcrowded, and unaffordable is when shelter costs exceed 30% of before tax household earnings. If a household is in Core Housing Need, it means that they experience at least one of the aforementioned hardships with one major difference: affordability is not only whether expenses surpass the 30% threshold, but also whether an affordable, alternative dwelling exists in the market (given a household's needs).

From 2006 to 2016, the rate of Core Housing Need decreased from about 10% to 8%, mirrored by a decline in total households in need (650 to 485). Mostly 1 and 2 person households experienced core need in both periods, generally tied to available income.

Renter households demonstrated the greatest prevalence of Core Housing Need compared to owner households; 21% versus 6%, respectively. Renters also exhibited greater shares of households in need that were 3 or 4 persons large.

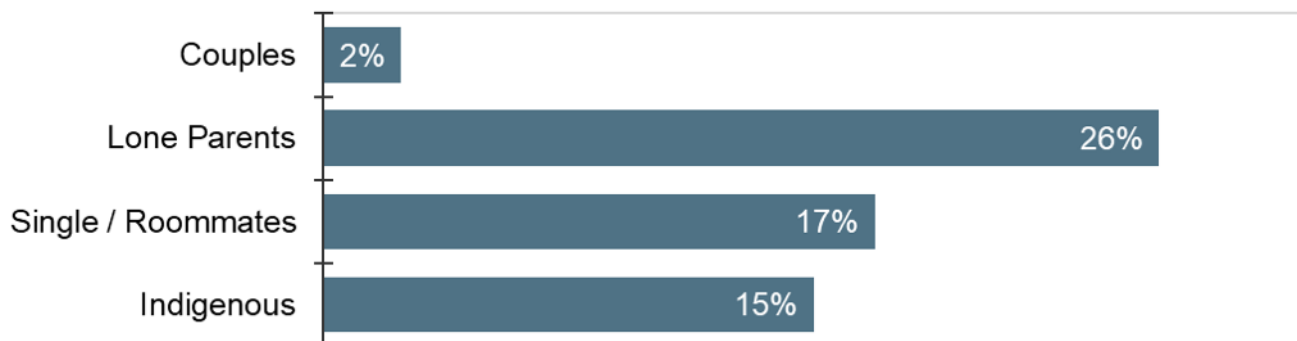
Figure 3.4a: Core Housing Need (CHN) by Type & Total Households (HHs) in CHN by Size, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada

Electoral area data related to Core Housing Need related household types and Indigenous identity is scarce due to small population sizes that result in greater impacts from Statistics Canada's random rounding. Nevertheless, data does exist for the entirety of the RDEK, shared below.

Figure 3.4b: Core Housing Need by Household Type & Indigenous Identity, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada

Across the RDEK, lone parents demonstrated greatest prevalence of Core Housing Need at 26%, meaning about 1 of every 4 lone parents faces financial, spatial, or quality hardship as they relate to housing. About 15% of Indigenous households are also in core need. Couples, who often benefit from being dual income earning, experience the lowest prevalence of hardship.

4 Glossary

“activity limitation” refers to difficulties that people have in carrying out daily activities such as hearing, seeing, communicating, or walking. Difficulties could arise from physical or mental conditions or health problems;

“bedrooms” refer to rooms in a private dwelling that are designed mainly for sleeping purposes even if they are now used for other purposes, such as guest rooms and television rooms. Also included are rooms used as bedrooms now, even if they were not originally built as bedrooms, such as bedrooms in a finished basement. Bedrooms exclude rooms designed for another use during the day such as dining rooms and living rooms even if they may be used for sleeping purposes at night. By definition, one-room private dwellings such as bachelor or studio apartments have zero bedrooms;

“census” means a census of population undertaken under the Statistics Act (Canada);

“census agglomeration (CA)” Area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a core. A census agglomeration must have a core population of at least 10,000;

“census dissemination area (CA)” is a small, relatively stable geographic unit composed of one or more adjacent dissemination blocks. It is the smallest standard geographic area for which all census data are disseminated. DAs cover all the territory of Canada;

“census dissemination block (DB)” is an area bounded on all sides by roads and/or boundaries of standard geographic areas. The dissemination block is the smallest geographic area for which population and dwelling counts are disseminated. DBs cover all the territory of Canada;

“census division (CD)” means the grouping of neighbouring municipalities, joined together for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services (e.g. Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District);

“census family” is defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either and/or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either and/or both partners; or a lone parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex;

“census subdivision (CSD)” is the general term for municipalities (as determined by provincial/territorial legislation) or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes;

“child” refers to any unmarried (never married or divorced) individual, regardless of age, who lives with his or her parent(s) and has no children in the same household;

“commuting destination” refers to whether or not a person commutes to another municipality (i.e., census subdivision), another census division or another province or territory. Commuting refers to the travel of a person between his or her place of residence and his or her usual place of work;

“components of demographic growth” refers to any of the classes of events generating population movement variations. Births, deaths, migration, marriages, divorces, and new widowhoods are the components responsible for the variations since they alter either the total population or the age, sex, and marital status distribution of the population.:

“emigrant” refers to a Canadian citizen or immigrant who has left Canada to establish a permanent residence in another country.

“immigrant” refers to a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities;

“interprovincial migration” refers to movement from one province or territory to another involving a permanent change in residence. A person who takes up residence in another province or territory is an out-migrant with reference to the province or territory of origin and an in-migrant with reference to the province or territory of destination;

“intraprovincial migration” refers to movement from one region to another within the same province or territory involving a permanent change of residence. A person who takes up residence in another region is an out-migrant with reference to the region of origin and an in-migrant with reference to the region of destination;

“non-permanent residents” refers to persons who are lawfully in Canada on a temporary basis under the authority of a temporary resident permit, along with members of their family living with them. Non-permanent residents include foreign workers, foreign students, the humanitarian population and other temporary residents;

“core housing need” is when housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that meets all three housing standards;

“adequate housing” means that, according to the residents within the dwelling, no major repairs are required for proper use and enjoyment of said dwelling;

“affordable housing” means that household shelter costs equate to less than 30% of total before-tax household income;

“suitable housing” means that a dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of resident households according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements;

“dissemination area (DA)” refers to a small, relatively stable geographic unit composed of one or more adjacent dissemination blocks with an average population of 400 to 700 persons based on data from the previous Census of Population Program. It is the smallest standard geographic area for which all census data are disseminated. DAs cover all the territory of Canada;

“dwelling” is defined as a set of living quarters;

“dwelling type” means the structural characteristics or dwelling configuration of a housing unit, such as, but not limited to, the housing unit being a single-detached house, a semi-detached house, a row house, an apartment in a duplex or in a building that has a certain number of storeys, or a mobile home;

“single-detached house” means a single dwelling not attached to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). A single-detached house has open space on all sides, and has no dwellings either above it or below it. A mobile home fixed permanently to a foundation is also classified as a single-detached house;

“semi-detached house” means one of two dwellings attached side by side (or back to back) to each other, but not attached to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). A semi-detached dwelling has no dwellings either above it or below it, and the two units together have open space on all sides;

“row house” means one of three or more dwellings joined side by side (or occasionally side to back), such as a townhouse or garden home, but not

having any other dwellings either above or below. Townhouses attached to a high-rise building are also classified as row houses;

“duplex” (also known as apartment or flat in a duplex) means one of two dwellings, located one above the other, may or may not be attached to other dwellings or buildings;

“apartment in a building that has five or more storeys” means a dwelling unit in a high-rise apartment building which has five or more storeys;

“apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys” means a dwelling unit attached to other dwelling units, commercial units, or other non-residential space in a building that has fewer than five storeys;

“mobile home” means a single dwelling, designed and constructed to be transported on its own chassis and capable of being moved to a new location on short notice. It may be placed temporarily on a foundation pad and may be covered by a skirt;

“economic family” refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law union, adoption or a foster relationship. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. By definition, all persons who are members of a census family are also members of an economic family;

“employment rate” means, for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.), the number of employed persons in that group, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that group;

“equity seeking groups” are communities that face significant collective challenges in participating in society. This marginalization could be created by attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc. Equity-seeking groups

are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation;

“extreme core housing need” has the same meaning as core housing need except that the household has shelter costs for housing that are more than 50% of total before-tax household income;

“family size” refers to the number of persons in the family;

“full-time equivalent (FTE) student” represents all full-time and part-time enrolments, converted to represent the number of students carrying a full-time course load. One student whose course load is equal to the normal full-time number of credits or hours required in an academic year would generate 1.0 Student FTE. A student taking one-half of a normal course load in one year would be a 0.5 Student FTE;

“household” refers to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad;

“owner household” refers to a private household where some member of the household owns the dwelling, even if it is still being paid for;

“renter household” refers to private households where no member of the household owns their dwelling. The dwelling is considered to be rented even if no cash rent is paid;

“household maintainer” refers to whether or not a person residing in the household is responsible for paying the rent, or the mortgage, or the taxes, or the electricity or other services or utilities. Where a number of people may contribute to the payments, more than one person in the household may be identified as a household maintainer. In the case of a household where two or more people are listed as household maintainers, the first person listed is chosen as the primary household maintainer;

“household size” refers to the number of persons in a private household;

“household type” refers to the differentiation of households on the basis of whether they are census family households or non-census-family households. Census family households are those that contain at least one census family;

“Indigenous identity” refers to whether the person identified with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. This includes those who are First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who are Registered or Treaty Indians (that is, registered under the Indian Act of Canada), and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band;

“labour force” refers to persons who, during the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2016, were either employed or unemployed;

“living wage” means the hourly amount that each of two working parents with two young children must earn to meet their basic expenses (including rent, childcare, food, and transportation) once government taxes, credits, deductions, and subsidies have been taken into account;

“low-income measure, after tax,” refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects the fact that a household’s needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases;

“migrant” refers to a person who has moved from their place of residence, of which the origin is different than the destination community they reported in. Conversely, a non-migrant is a person who has moved within the same community;

“mobility status, one year” refers to the status of a person with regard to the place of residence on the reference day in relation to the place of residence on the same date one year earlier;

“NAICS” means the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada 2012, published by Statistics Canada;

“NAICS industry” means an industry established by the NAICS;

“participation rate” means the total labour force in a geographic area, expressed as a percentage of the total population of the geographic area;

“primary rental market” means a market for rental housing units in apartment structures containing at least 3 rental housing units that were purpose-built as rental housing;

“precarious housing” means housing that is not affordable, is overcrowded, is unfit for habitation, or is occupied through unstable tenancy;

“Rental Market Survey” refers the collection of data samples from all urban areas with populations greater than 10,000 and targets only private apartments with at least three rental units. Among the information provided are median rental prices for units within the primary rental market;

“secondary rental market” means a market for rental housing units that were not purpose-built as rental housing;

“shelter cost” refers to the average or median monthly total of all shelter expenses paid by households that own or rent their dwelling. Shelter costs for owner households include, where applicable, mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services. For renter households, shelter costs include, where applicable, the rent and the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services;

“short-term rental (STR)” means the rental of a housing unit, or any part of it, for a period of less than 30 days;

“STR – commercial market” refers to all short-term rental units that were active within a given time period, but are available and/or reserved more than 50% of the days that they have been active. The 50% cut off is meant to separate residents using the service to generate supplemental income from non-resident STR operators operating income/investment properties. The commercial market only considers entire homes or apartments, not listings that are hotels, private rooms, or other;

“STR – total market” refers to all short-term rental units that were active (meaning, reserved or available at least one day in a month) within a given time period. The total market only considers entire homes or apartments, not listings that are hotels, private rooms, or other;

“subsidized housing” refers to whether a renter household lives in a dwelling that is subsidized. Subsidized housing includes rent geared to income, social housing, public housing, government-assisted housing, non-profit housing, rent supplements and housing allowances;

“tenure” refers to whether the household owns or rents their private dwelling. The private dwelling may be situated on rented or leased land or be part of a condominium. A household is considered to own their dwelling if some member of the household owns the dwelling even if it is not fully paid for, for example if there is a mortgage or some other claim on it. A household is considered to rent their dwelling if no member of the household owns the dwelling;

“unemployment rate” means, for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.), the unemployed in that group, expressed as a percentage of the labour force in that group;

“vacancy” means a unit that, at the time of the CMHC Rental Market Survey, it is physically unoccupied and available for immediate rental.



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