



FORT ST JAMES
DISTRICT

Moving Housing Forward: From Strategy to Action

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Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

MOVING HOUSING FORWARD: FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

THE DISTRICT OF FORT ST. JAMES
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Prepared for:
THE DISTRICT OF FORT ST. JAMES
January 2018

Prepared by:
Urbanics Consultants Ltd.
Suite 1207- 409 Granville St
Vancouver, BC, V6C 1T2

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1 Introduction

Urbanics Consultants Ltd. has been retained by the District of Fort St. James to carry out a housing needs assessment for the District.

1.1 Main objectives

The main objectives of the study are to:

- prepare an action plan to support affordable, sustainable and culturally appropriate housing development;
- work collaboratively with the First Nations, Regional District and the District of Fort St. James;
- review the current housing availability, suitability and affordability across the entire housing spectrum from non-market housing (shelter services, transitional and supportive housing and social housing) at one end to the market rate rental and for sale housing units;
- Assess the future housing needs of the Region across the housing spectrum over the next 10 years (2016– 2026)
- review policies, bylaws and tools that support affordable housing development;
- work towards establishing a housing fund and/or land bank;
- identify an affordable housing project as part of the action plan; and,
- facilitate housing diversity and affordability across the housing continuum.

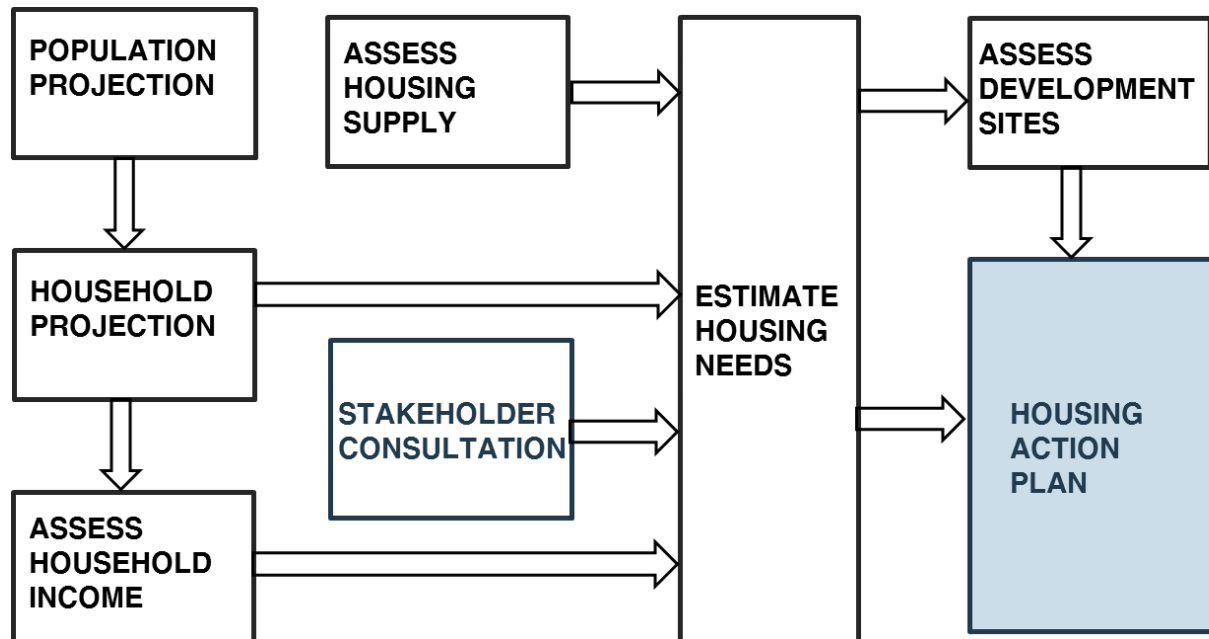


Figure 1: Urbanics approach for the Housing Needs Study
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

1.2 Report structure

In terms of report structure, the following serves as a brief description:

1.2.1 Introduction

The introduction provides the overall objectives of the study, the approach, the report structure and the limitations of the study.

1.2.2 Community context

The section examines the regional and local economies and their impact on the demand for housing, including market rate and non-market rate housing, in the Region. In addition, it develops a demographic and economic profile of the community utilizing the latest census data, information from other research studies and discussions with industry professionals. The section also examines the population and household growth trends over the last few decades and creates a population projection for the District for the period 2017 – 2041.

1.2.3 Housing supply

This section examines the existing housing stock of the District and the First Nation communities. In particular, it provides an inventory of housing units by structure type and tenure (own vs. rent); housing sales and rental activity; the number of market and non-market rate housing units in the community. It also examines the housing suitability, adequacy, affordability characteristics of the District and identifies the proportion of households in core housing needs. The consultant has used a variety of data sources including the 2016 Census data, 2017 property tax roll data and interviews with appropriate stakeholders (namely, housing developers, independent contractors, rental housing operators, etc.).

1.2.4 Housing market characteristics

The section examines the current housing sales activity and rental housing characteristics of the District. The section also examines the affordability of market-rate housing by household type and dwelling type. In addition, the section also examines the housing issues in the First Nation communities and identifies the current housing gaps in the region. The consultant has used a variety of data sources including the 2016 Census data, interviews with housing coordinators of First Nation communities.

1.2.5 Best practices

This section examines some of the proven and effective practices in affordable market rate and non-market housing across municipalities in the country and the province. The section also identifies some of the practices that can potentially be implemented to improve the housing supply and general affordability in the District.

1.2.6 Land utilization

The section examines the detailed 2017 property tax roll data, which includes BC Assessment information, including assessment class, assessed land and improvement value and actual use

category. This information was further supplemented by adding the parcel level zoning information for the District. The resulting dataset was used to assess the level of land utilization in the District and to identify the number of vacant parcel (with no improvement value) and under-utilized parcels (with improvement value less than 50 percent of the land value), by use and zoning type. The section identifies the current land utilization of all residential lands by zoning for the District.

1.2.7 Development analysis

This section examines the seven potential locations for housing development in the District for a variety of housing uses and types. The section assessed the land costs, construction costs and financing to identify the potential housing sales and rental values.

1.2.8 Housing needs projections

The section examines the future housing needs of the community based on the population and household growth projections. The population growth projections are based on the Census 2016 population counts for the District of Fort St. James and the adjusted age cohort and gender-based population growth rates for the Nechako Lakes School District for the period 2017 - 2026 (P.E.O.P.L.E 2017, BC Stats, Aug 2017). The findings from the analysis provide the estimated market rate and non-market rate housing needs of the community.

1.2.9 Findings and focus areas

The section presents the findings from the analyses and the surveys. These findings have been grouped into seven focus areas, namely:

- Address market-rate housing needs
- Address non-market housing needs
- Enhance supply of rental housing
- Enhance housing affordability
- Maintain the quality of current housing stock
- Facilitate development on vacant lands
- Address Housing Needs of the First Nation communities

1.2.10 Housing Action Plan

The final section of the study presents the customized Housing Action Plan for the District. The section identifies the primary objectives, strategies and actions required for addressing the current and emerging housing needs of the community.

1.3 Limitations

Background data for this study was obtained from a variety of public (federal, provincial, regional, and municipal) and private sector sources (including comparable residential sales from the local real estate board), as well as from field work conducted by the consultant during the period May to August 2017.

Similar to other studies of this nature, a number of forecasts and assumptions regarding the state of the economy, the state of future competitive influences, and population projections have had to be made. These assumptions are made with great care and are based on the most recent and reliable information available. Should any assumptions noted in this study be undermined by the course of future events, we recommend that the study's findings be re-examined.

While specific assumptions may be noted throughout the report, the following general assumptions also apply:

- Real G.D.P. growth and other economic indicators for the area will not significantly differ from the projections indicated in the study over the course of the study period.
- No unforeseen economic or political events will occur within the study period on a national, provincial, or local level, which would significantly alter the outcomes of the study's analyses. Short-term fluctuations are likely to occur, but long-term gradual growth rates should prevail.
- Actual population growth rates will be relatively consistent with the historical growth rates in the region.
- The demand and market analyses are based on estimates, assumptions and other information developed from research of the market and knowledge of the industry.
- The study does not speculate on the impact of high net-wealth on the housing needs of low-income senior households and retirees. This is primarily because the net-wealth data as well as the impact of such wealth on housing needs is not well understood.

Study area includes:

Fort St. James ,
Regional District C
and First Nation
Communities of:

- Nak'azdli Whut'en
- Takla Lake First Nation
- Tl'azt'en Nation
- Yekooche First Nation.

2 Community context

2.1 Location

The District of Fort St. James is located at the northern terminus of Highway 27 on the south-eastern shore of Stuart Lake in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. It is easily accessible from major urban centers. By highway, the District is roughly one hour from Vanderhoof (60 km), two hours from Prince George (160 km) and 10 hours from Edmonton, AB (900 km) and Vancouver, BC (900 km). The nearest airport is the Prince George Airport, which offers flights to major cities in British Columbia (Vancouver, Victoria, Kamloops, Terrace, Smithers, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Kelowna and others) and Alberta (Edmonton) as well as Puerto Vallarta, Mexico (seasonal).

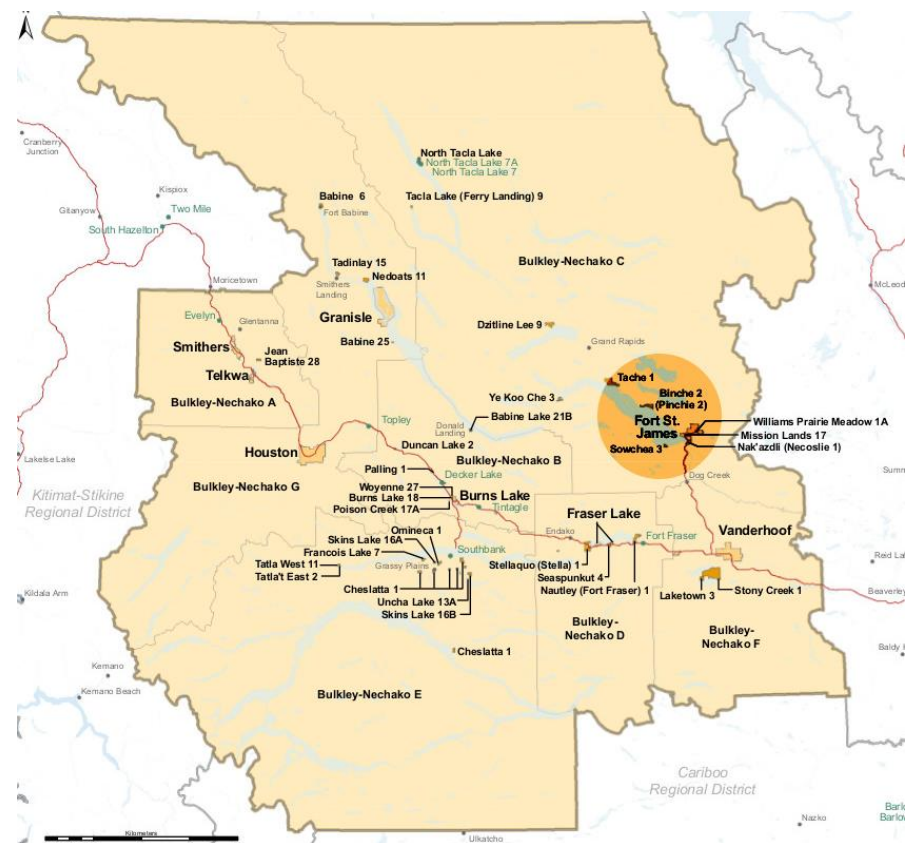


Figure 2: Regional Context: District of Fort St. James
Source: 2011 Census Statistics Canada

2.2 Provincial economy

This section provides a brief economic outlook of the provincial economy. These macro-economic indicators are some of the important drivers of future housing demand at the provincial level.

Economic Indicators		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016F	2017F	2018F
Real GDP (chained)	\$2007 millions	194,987	200,324	206,360	211,427	216,716	223,852	231,299	239,510	247,270	252,216
	% change	-2.4%	2.7%	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	3.3%	3.3%	3.6%	3.2%	2.0%
Nominal GDP	\$ millions	196,250	205,117	216,786	221,414	228,973	240,900	249,981	262,794	277,549	288,195
	% change	-4.0%	4.5%	5.7%	2.1%	3.4%	5.2%	3.8%	5.1%	5.6%	3.8%
Employment	thousands	2,192	2,223	2,228	2,262	2,266	2,278	2,306	2,380	2,463	2,483
	% change	-2.2%	1.4%	0.2%	1.6%	0.1%	0.6%	1.2%	3.2%	3.5%	0.8%
Unemployment	rate %	7.7%	7.6%	7.5%	6.8%	6.6%	6.1%	6.2%	6.0%	5.4%	5.6%
Retail sales	\$ millions	55,288	58,251	60,090	61,343	63,053	67,001	71,614	76,885	82,354	86,122
	% change	-4.3%	5.4%	3.2%	2.1%	2.8%	6.3%	6.9%	7.4%	7.1%	4.6%
Housing starts	units	16,077	26,479	26,400	27,465	27,054	28,356	31,446	41,843	40,100	29,300
	% change	-53.2%	64.7%	-0.3%	4.0%	-1.5%	4.8%	10.9%	33.1%	-4.2%	-26.9%
Consumer price index	2002=100	112.3	113.8	116.5	117.8	117.7	118.9	120.2	122.4	124.8	127.0
	% change	0.0%	1.4%	2.3%	1.1%	-0.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%

Table 1: Economic Indicators: British Columbia

Source: RBC Economics, Provincial Outlook (September 2017)

Note: Figures highlighted in grey are RBC Economics' estimates

The Province of British Columbia is expected to display significant GDP growth in 2017. BC's economy is expected to grow by roughly 3.2%, primarily as a result of strong jobs growth and a robust housing market. According to RBC Economics Provincial Outlook September 2017, BC's Real GDP output grew by an estimated 3.6% in 2016 and is projected to grow by 3.2% in 2017 and 2.0% in 2018 (Table 1).

According to RBC Economics Provincial Outlook September 2017, the Province is expected to display a strong growth in employment in 2017 as compared to the previous year (3.5% in 2017 as compared to 3.2% in 2016). The anticipated growth in employment as well as stronger than expected home price gains are expected to lead to increases in consumer spending in the retail sales in the Province. The Province is expected to display strong growth in retail sales in 2017 (7.1% in 2017) and a slower rate of growth in 2018 (4.6% in 2018). However, housing starts are expected to decline in 2017 and 2018 as compared to the last few years (from 41,843 in 2016 to 40,100 in 2017).

Overall, the Province is expected to display continued economic growth and a strong demand for housing in the near future. However, this also assumes that the impact of wildfires on the economy is localized and the softwood lumber trade conflict with the US does not escalate further. This is especially critical for the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) as its economy is primarily dependent on forestry, mining, agriculture and tourism.

2.3 Fort St. James's Economy

Fort St. James had its beginning as a fur trading post in the year 1806 and came under the management of the Hudson Bay Company in 1821. It continued to function as a fur trading post until its closure in 1952. In recent times the manufacturing sector has displaced the trade services sector as the dominant sector in the local economy. As per the 2016 Census, the manufacturing and innovation sector (41 percent of the total labour force) accounts for roughly three times the labour force associated in comparison to the trade services (14 percent of the total labour force).

Major Economic Sectors	Fort St. James			Bulkley- Nechako			British Columbia		
	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016
Tourism	35 (5%)	60 (8%)	30 (3%)	1,615 (8%)	1,590 (8%)	1,515 (8%)	290,330 (13%)	298,775 (13%)	332,210 (14%)
Business finance and management	30 (4%)	25 (3%)	40 (5%)	640 (3%)	600 (3%)	460 (2%)	138,040 (6%)	149,070 (6%)	153,120 (6%)
Public services	245 (32%)	185 (23%)	290 (33%)	4,945 (24%)	5,420 (27%)	5,230 (26%)	584,795 (27%)	672,885 (29%)	691,215 (28%)
Manufacturing and innovation	350 (46%)	340 (43%)	365 (41%)	8,865 (44%)	8,770 (43%)	8,285 (42%)	614,155 (28%)	596,335 (26%)	645,340 (27%)
Trade services	65 (8%)	160 (20%)	125 (14%)	3,240 (16%)	3,320 (16%)	3,490 (18%)	455,890 (21%)	475,500 (21%)	493,640 (20%)
Other services	40 (5%)	25 (3%)	35 (4%)	890 (4%)	730 (4%)	810 (4%)	109,895 (5%)	112,745 (5%)	112,335 (5%)
	765	795	885	20,195	20,430	19,790	2,193,105	2,305,310	2,427,860

Table 2: Employment by major sectors, 2006 – 2016

Source: Statistics Canada –Census 2006, National Household Survey 2011 and Census 2016

Notes: The 2011 NHS suffers from a fairly high global non-response rate of 37% for Fort St. James. In addition, the total labour force, by industry, adds up to 760 instead of 805 for the District. To address this discrepancy, the consultant has used the 2006 labour force counts for the Wholesale trade, Information and Cultural industries and Real estate and rental and leasing instead of the 2011 NHS counts, which suggested a labour force of 0 in these industrial sectors. Even after using the 2006 Census counts the total labour force is estimated to be 795 instead of 805 in 2011.

- Tourism sector includes: accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment and recreation and information and cultural industries.
- Business, finance and management sector includes: finance and insurance, real estate, rental and leasing and management of companies and enterprises.
- Public services include: healthcare and social assistance, education services, administration and support, waste management and remediation, utilities and public administration.
- Manufacturing and innovation sector includes: manufacturing, construction, professional scientific and technical services, mining, oil and gas and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting.
- Trade services sector includes: wholesale trade, retail trade and transportation and warehousing.

Table 2 provides the labour force distribution for the five major economic sectors for the District, the Regional District and the Province for the years 2006 to 2016. The table suggests that the proportion of the labour force involved in the tourism sector has declined from 5 percent of the total labour force to roughly 3 percent in 2016. The proportion of labour force involved in the business, finance and management sector and the public services sectors displayed modest growth from 4 percent in 2006 to 5 percent in 2016 and from 32 percent in 2006 to 33 percent in 2016 respectively. The manufacturing and Innovation sector experienced decline in the share of labour force in these sectors reduced from 46% in 2006 to 41 percent by 2016. Similarly, the share of labour force involved in the Trade services and other services declined during the same period.

Labour force by industry, 2016	Fort St. James	Bulkley-Nechako	BC	Fort St. James	Bulkley-Nechako	BC
Total labour force	895	20,180	2,471,665			
Industry - not applicable	10	400	43,805			
All industries	885	19,780	2,427,865	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
11 Agriculture; forestry; fishing and hunting	80	2,910	65,205	9.0%	14.7%	2.7%
21 Mining; quarrying; and oil and gas extraction	35	725	25,920	4.0%	3.7%	1.1%
22 Utilities	0	70	12,445	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%
23 Construction	25	1,400	199,985	2.8%	7.1%	8.2%
31-33 Manufacturing	200	2,435	157,560	22.6%	12.3%	6.5%
Goods producing industries	340	7,540	461,115	38.4%	38.1%	19.0%
41 Wholesale trade	10	400	82,105	1.1%	2.0%	3.4%
44-45 Retail trade	65	2,005	283,135	7.3%	10.1%	11.7%
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	50	1,085	128,400	5.6%	5.5%	5.3%
51 Information and cultural industries	5	115	67,225	0.6%	0.6%	2.8%
52 Finance and insurance	40	295	93,805	4.5%	1.5%	3.9%
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	0	155	54,995	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%
54 Professional; scientific and technical services	25	815	196,670	2.8%	4.1%	8.1%
55 Management of companies and enterprises	0	10	4,320	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
56 Admin & support; waste mgmt & remediation	15	460	109,095	1.7%	2.3%	4.5%
61 Educational services	115	1,565	173,820	13.0%	7.9%	7.2%
62 Health care and social assistance	100	1,865	270,855	11.3%	9.4%	11.2%
71 Arts; entertainment and recreation	0	230	57,940	0.0%	1.2%	2.4%
72 Accommodation and food services	25	1,170	207,045	2.8%	5.9%	8.5%
81 Other services (except public administration)	35	810	112,335	4.0%	4.1%	4.6%
91 Public administration	60	1,270	125,000	6.8%	6.4%	5.1%
Services producing industries	545	12,250	1,966,745	61.6%	61.9%	81.0%

Table 3: Employment by Industry (2-Digit NAICS Codes), 2016

Source: Statistics Canada – Census 2016

Further, on taking a more detailed look at the labour force by NAIC codes in 2016, it is evident that the largest share of labour force was involved with the manufacturing (22.6%), educational services (13%), public services (11.3%) and the agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting industries (6.3%). These industries along with the other highlighted industries are likely to be the basic industries of the District; i.e. might be the net exporters of goods and services to the surrounding area and the other regions of the Province.

2.4 Demographic trends

The population of Canada has grown from 30 million residents in 2001 to over 35 million in 2016, or approximately 343,000 people per year at an average annual rate of 1.1 percent. Net immigration added an average of 213,000 new residents annually to the national population, while natural increase added an average of 130,000 people. These national level trends have been driven primarily by low and declining fertility rates and increases in economic activity and immigration.

Similar to the demographic trends across the country, British Columbia's demographic trends point toward slight declines in birth rates, slight increases in life expectancy, growing net inter-provincial migration, and increasing net international migration. These trends, along with the aging of BC's population have resulted in steady population growth in the province from 3.9 million in 2001 to 4.65 million by 2016, which translates into an annual growth rate of roughly 1.16 percent during 2001 - 2016 (Census 2001 and Census 2016).

However, in contrast to the provincial and national population growth trends, the population in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako declined from over 40,870 to 37,895 at an annual rate of 0.5 percent (Census 2001 and Census 2016). Similarly, the population in the District of Fort St. James declined from 1,927 in 2001 to 1,598 in 2016, but at a much higher rate of 1.25 percent as compared to the 0.5 percent for the Regional District.

Figure 3 and Table 4 provide the historical population trend for the District of Fort St. James. It suggests that the District's population grew from 1,990 in 1986 to 2,060 in 1996 and then declined to 1,355 in 2006. The population again grew from 1,355 in 2006 to 1,685 in 2011 before declining to the current population of 1,595 in 2016. The District has displayed a fairly pronounced cyclical growth and contraction in population over the last 30 years, this is indicative of boom-bust economies that are primarily dependent on resource-oriented industries such as mining and forestry. Further, during 1986 - 2016, the share of the senior's population (aged 65 years and over) has grown from 65 to 205, representing an increase in senior population from 3% to roughly 13% of the total population of the District. In contrast the population aged under 15 years declined from 605 in 1986 (30% of the total population) to 320 in 2016 (20% of the total population). However, the share of working age population (15 years to 64 years) in the District has remained largely stable with 1,320 or 66% of the total population in 1986 and 1,070 or 67% of the total population in 2016.

Based on the above-mentioned historical population growth trends, the District is likely to witness a significant growth in the share of population aged 65 years and over, during the next few decades; primarily as a result of aging of its working age population. Further, the declining share of its younger population suggests that fewer younger families are moving to the District. These demographic trends are expected to have strong implications for the housing needs in the District, which will be examined in the latter part of the study.

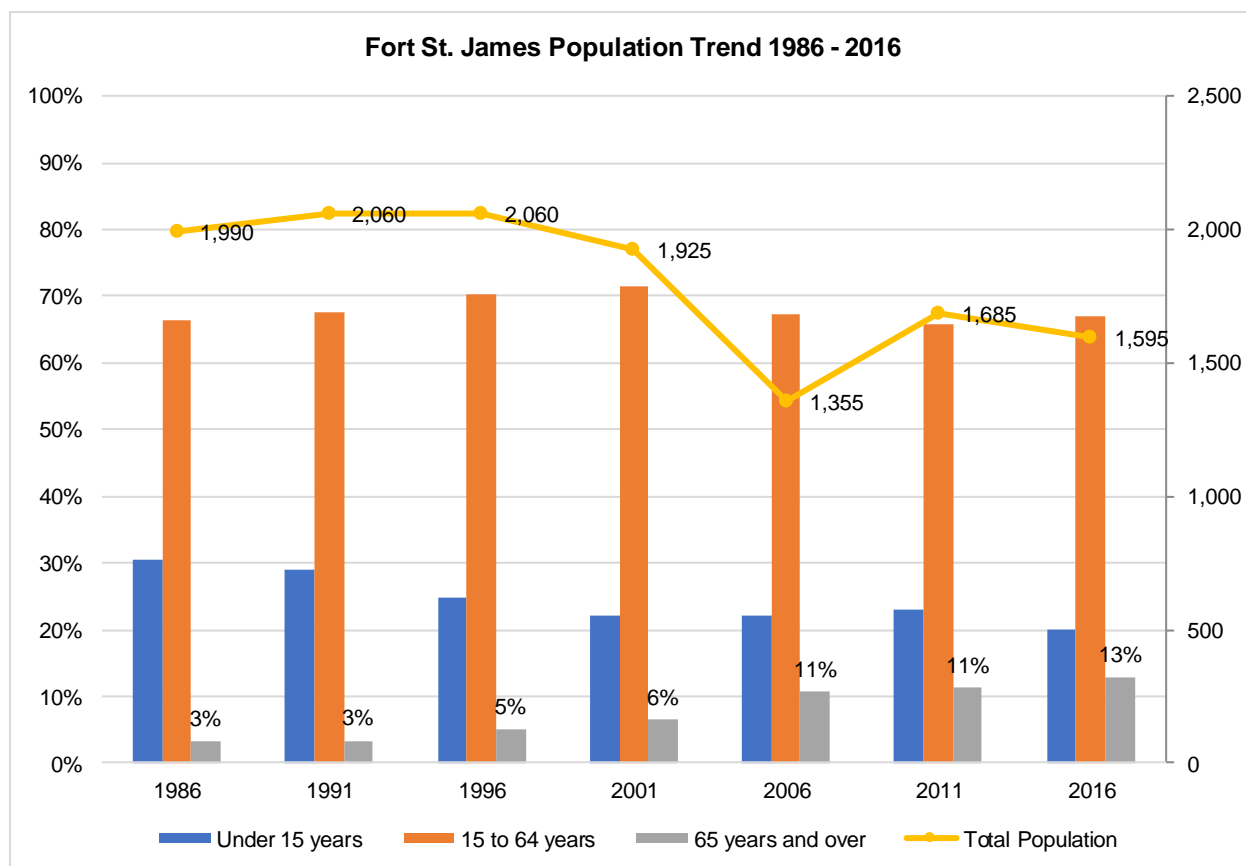


Figure 3: Historical population trends for the District of Fort St James

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 1986 - 2016

Population	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Under 15 years	605 (30%)	600 (29%)	510 (25%)	425 (22%)	300 (22%)	385 (23%)	320 (20%)
15 to 64 years	1,320 (66%)	1,390 (67%)	1,445 (70%)	1,375 (71%)	910 (67%)	1,110 (66%)	1,070 (67%)
65 years and over	65 (3%)	70 (3%)	105 (5%)	125 (6%)	145 (11%)	190 (11%)	205 (13%)
Total	1,990	2,060	2,060	1,925	1,355	1,685	1,595
Population growth rate Period (5 years)		3.5%	0.0%	-6.6%	-29.6%	24.4%	-5.3%
Annual		0.7%	0.0%	-1.3%	-6.8%	4.5%	-1.1%

Table 4: Historical population trend for the District of Fort St. James

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 1986 - 2011

2.5 First Nation Demographic Trends



Figure 4: Location map of First Nation Communities
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

This section explores the population growth trends of the four First Nation communities that are an integral part of this report, including the Nak'azdli Whut'en, Takla Lake First Nation, Tl'azt'en Nation and Yekooche First Nation. Table 5 provides the population counts from the INAC, Indian Registry for the period 1996 - 2016. The table provides two main population count categories, i.e. individuals living on Reserve and Crown Lands and individuals living Off- Reserve (data suppression due to the Privacy Act). The counts suggest that, during 1996 - 2016, the number of individuals living on Reserve and Crown Land grew by 528 individuals or 1.3 percent per year for Nak'azdli Whut'en, while it declined for Takla Lake First Nation, Tl'azt'en Nation and Yekooche First Nation by 70, 111 and 17 individuals respectively. In contrast the Off-Reserve populations increased for all the communities during the same period. Thus, apart from Nak'azdli Whut'en which is located next to the District of Fort St James, all other communities are witnessing a subtle shift of population away from the Reserve and Crown Lands.

	Nak'azdli Whut'en			Takla Lake First Nation			Ti'azt'en Nation			Yekooche First Nation		
	Total	Reserve & Crown Land	Off Reserve	Total	Reserve & Crown Land	Off Reserve	Total	Reserve & Crown Land	Off Reserve	Total	Reserve & Crown Land	Off Reserve
1996	1,406	643	763	537	282	255	1,281	692	589	132	*	*
1997	1,434	554	880	543	291	252	1,304	680	624	145	131	14
1998	1,444	556	888	565	305	260	1,369	715	654	131	117	14
1999	1,512	654	858	573	312	261	1,366	722	644	135	118	17
2000	1,528	689	839	578	311	267	1,374	719	655	158	135	23
2001	1,560	710	850	587	317	270	1,399	560	839	166	137	29
2002	1,597	1,008	589	606	321	285	1,411	569	842	175	137	38
2003	1,626	1,013	613	621	327	294	1,434	584	850	182	140	42
2004	1,640	629	1,011	627	327	300	1,454	610	844	192	145	47
2005	1,674	788	886	632	328	304	1,462	565	897	211	160	51
2006	1,695	775	920	644	325	319	1,499	563	936	211	159	52
2007	1,713	793	920	649	327	322	1,528	595	933	213	143	70
2008	1,721	730	991	672	400	272	1,553	621	932	217	93	124
2009	1,738	736	1,002	681	398	283	1,601	646	955	217	98	119
2010	1,769	741	1,028	689	401	288	1,622	652	970	219	101	118
2011	1,799	750	1,049	705	404	301	1,673	661	1,012	215	96	119
2012	1,831	742	1,089	725	401	324	1,710	571	1,139	220	102	118
2013	1,874	754	1,120	741	421	320	1,726	586	1,140	224	101	123
2014	1,883	753	1,130	765	430	335	1,741	582	1,159	230	106	124
2015	1,910	748	1,162	794	429	365	1,774	578	1,196	233	109	124
2016	1,934	754	1,180	821	212	609	1,781	581	1,200	235	114	121
1996 - 2016												
Population Growth	528	111	417	284	-70	354	500	-111	611	103	-17	107
Annual Growth	2.7%	1.3%	3.8%	3.7%	-2.4%	7.8%	2.9%	-2.2%	5.2%	4.1%	-1.1%	11.8%

Table 5: Demographic trends for selected First Nations (1996-2016)

Source: INAC, Indian Registry, December 31 of selected year,

Notes: These counts have not been adjusted for late reporting of births or deaths. Furthermore, they reflect residency codes for individuals affiliated with these First Nations only. As such, on reserve numbers for each First Nation should not be taken to represent the true population for the following reasons:

- 1) They contain no information on any non-Registered individuals who may be living on reserve or crown lands,
- 2) similarly, they contain no information on any individuals registered to other bands who may be living on reserve or crown lands,
- 3) because the item "Reserve & Crown Land may include counts pertaining to registrants residing on reserve or crown lands belonging to other bands, and may also include individuals living on lands affiliated with First Nations operating under Self-Government Agreements.

Further, as per the INAC counts of September 2017 the population of the communities is as follows:

Population September 2017	Nak'azdli Whut'en	Takla Lake First Nation	Ti'azt'en Nation	Yekooche First Nation
On own Reserve	710 (36%)	211 (25%)	544 (30%)	101 (43%)
On Other Reserve / Crown Lands	60 (3%)	10 (1%)	47 (3%)	12 (5%)
Off Reserve	1,203 (61%)	608 (73%)	1,205 (67%)	124 (52%)
Total Population	1,973 (100%)	829 (100%)	1,796 (100%)	237 (100%)

Table 6: First Nation population counts, September 2017

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

2.6 Household Growth

Table 7 provides the historical trends in household sizes during the period 1986-2016. The table shows that 1 person and 2 persons households are the dominant household size in the District; they represent roughly 30% and 33% of the total households in 2016. At the same time the share of 3 persons, 4-5 persons and 5 or more persons households have experienced significant declines. Overall, the average household sizes have steadily declined from 3.37 in 1986 to 2.47 in 2016 and this trend is likely to continue in the future.

Household size	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
1 person	100 (17%)	135 (20%)	160 (22%)	165 (23%)	135 (25%)	200 (30%)	195 (30%)
2 persons	125 (21%)	155 (23%)	200 (28%)	240 (33%)	200 (37%)	205 (31%)	210 (33%)
3 persons	105 (18%)	105 (16%)	130 (18%)	130 (18%)	75 (14%)	110 (16%)	95 (15%)
4-5 persons	210 (36%)	225 (34%)	185 (26%)	160 (22%)	120 (22%)	130 (19%)	122 (19%)
5 or more persons	50 (8%)	45 (7%)	45 (6%)	30 (4%)	10 (2%)	25 (4%)	23 (4%)
Total Households	590	665	720	725	540	670	645
Total Population	1990	2060	2060	1925	1355	1685	1595
Average household size	3.37	3.10	2.86	2.66	2.51	2.51	2.47

Table 7: Trends in Household Size, 1986-2016

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 1986 - 2016

The District displays a lower share of one-census-family households (65% for District vs. 70% for RDBN) and a higher share of non-census-family households (i.e. one person living alone or a group of two or more people sharing a private dwelling) as compared to the RDBN (32% for District vs. 29% for RDBN). This also suggests that the District had a higher share of non-census 1 person and 2-person households in 2016 as compared to the Regional District. Thus, the District is experiencing strong demographic shifts towards smaller household sizes, which can be expected to have a large influence on the housing needs of the community.

Private households by household type	Fort St. James	Bulkley Nechako	British Columbia	Fort St. James	Bulkley Nechako	British Columbia
One-census-family households						
Without children	165	4,950	527,700	26%	33%	28%
With children	250	5,545	668,035	39%	37%	35%
Multiple-census-family households	15	240	55,620	2%	2%	3%
Non-census-family households						
One-person households	195	3,920	541,915	30%	26%	29%
Two-or-more person households	15	450	88,705	2%	3%	5%
Total Private households	640	15,105	1,881,975	100%	100%	100%

Table 8: Household Composition (2016 Census)

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

2.7 Household income

This section compares the total annual household income of the District of Fort St. James with the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, based on the 2016 Census. The total household income is the sum of the total incomes of all members of that household before income taxes and deductions. It includes income from:

- employment income from wages, salaries, tips, commissions and net income from self-employment;
- income from government sources, such as social assistance, child benefits, employment insurance, old age security pension, pension plan benefits and disability income;
- income from employer and personal pension sources, such as private pensions and payments from annuities and RRIFs;
- income from investment sources, such as dividends and interest on bonds, accounts, GICs and mutual funds; and,
- other regular cash income, such as child support payments received, spousal support payments (alimony) received and scholarships.

The District of Fort St. James displayed a much smaller proportion of households with an annual total income of lower than \$30,000 in 2015 (Table 9) as compared to the RDBN and the Province. Roughly 13 percent of the total households in the District had an annual total income lower than \$30,000 as compared to 17 percent for the Regional District and 19 percent for the Province.

In addition, the District displayed a lower share of households (19 percent) with annual total income in the range of \$30,000 to \$60,000 as compared to 22 percent for the Regional District and 24 percent for the Province.

However, the District displayed a higher share of households earning more than \$60,000 per year. The District had roughly 68% of the households earning more than \$60,000 per year as compared to 62% for RDBN and only 57% for the Province.

The reader should note that roughly a third of the households in the District earn less than \$60,000 per year. In addition, a significant proportion of these households are likely to be senior households (head of the household is 65 years and over) and retirees, who are more likely to face housing suitability and affordability issues. Therefore, the District is likely to display a higher need for more affordable and lower priced housing products aimed at senior households.

The reader should also note that a significant proportion of senior households and retirees might have sizeable net-wealth but have incomes lower than \$60,000. These households are likely to require market-rate housing as opposed to affordable housing. However, the net-wealth data is not available therefore this study does not speculate on the net-wealth characteristics of low-income seniors.

Household income (2015)	Fort St. James		Bulkley-Nechako RD		British Columbia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under \$5,000	5	1%	260	2%	43,415	2%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	5	1%	180	1%	27,140	1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	10	2%	335	2%	55,745	3%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	15	2%	595	4%	77,565	4%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	50	8%	1,180	8%	151,680	8%
\$30,000 to \$39,999	55	8%	1,235	8%	156,475	8%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	40	6%	1,030	7%	152,635	8%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	30	5%	1,015	7%	143,475	8%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	110	17%	2,090	14%	255,195	14%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	95	15%	1,975	13%	210,770	11%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	90	14%	1,995	13%	198,140	11%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	50	8%	1,300	9%	138,420	7%
\$150,000 and over	95	15%	1,920	13%	271,290	14%
	650	100%	15,110	100%	1,881,945	100%
under \$30,000	85	13%	2,550	17%	355,545	19%
\$30,000 to \$ 60,000	125	19%	3,280	22%	452,585	24%
\$60,000 to \$ 100,000	205	32%	4,065	27%	465,965	25%
\$100,000 and over	235	36%	5,215	35%	607,850	32%
	650	100%	15,110	100%	1,881,945	100%

Table 9: Income Distribution- 2015

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

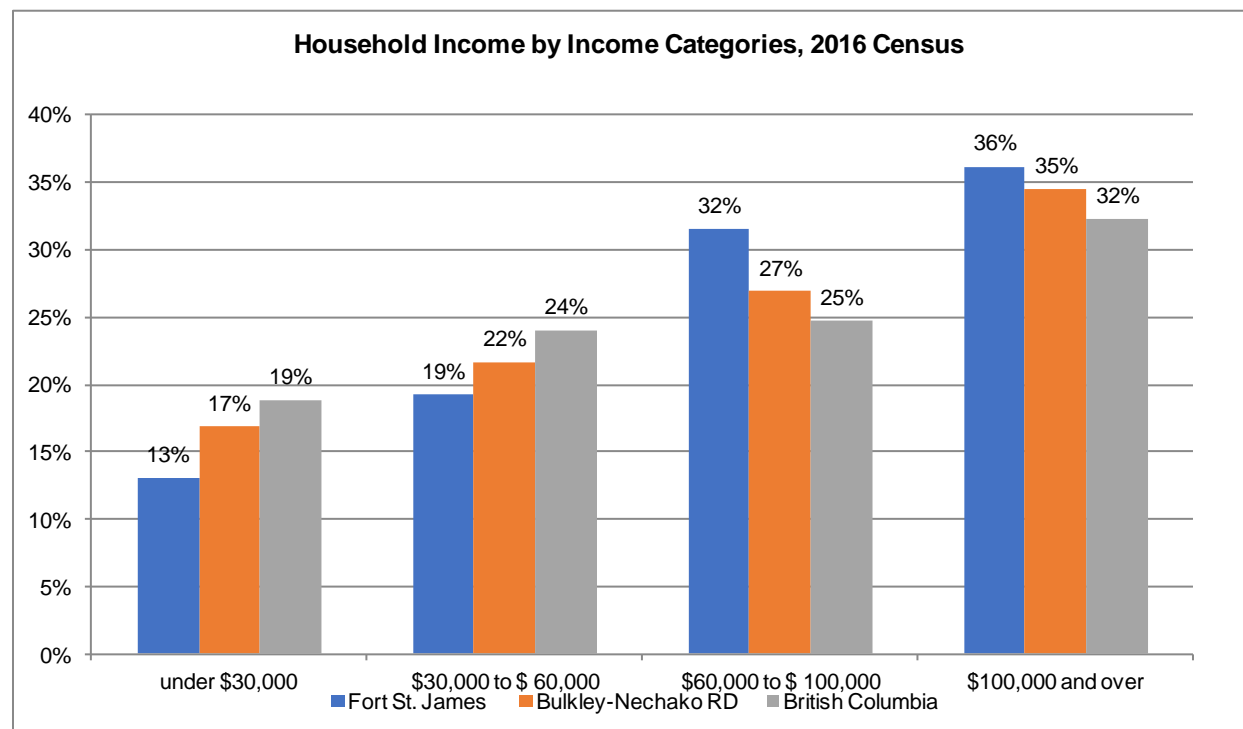


Figure 5: Income Distribution - Fort St. James, RDBN and BC

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

In addition to the distribution of household income, we examined the distribution of median income of economic families and households in the year 2015. The median income is a useful statistic to examine and compare incomes of economic families and households as it provides the middle point in income distribution of each economic family and household group.

Figure 6 provides the graphic representation of the comparative assessment of median incomes for the District of Fort St. James in comparison to the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako and the Province. It is evident from the graph that the District had a higher median income for each of the economic family and household group as compared to the Regional District and the Province.

The data illustrates that the:

- Couple-only families in the District had a median income of \$88,384 in 2015 as compared to \$83,589 for RDBN and \$80,788 for BC
- Couple-with-children families in the District had a median income of \$116,224 in 2015 as compared to \$112,038 for RDBN and \$111,736 for BC
- Lone-parent families in the District had a median income of \$62,336 in 2015 as compared to \$48,000 for RDBN and \$51,056 for BC
- Overall median family income in the District was \$97,152 in 2015 as compared to \$90,536 for RDBN and \$88,451 for BC
- 1-person households in the District had a median income of only \$48,786 as compared to \$36,551 for RDBN and \$35,701 for BC
- 2 or more persons households in the District had a median income of \$97,600 as compared to \$91,415 for RDBN and \$88,466 for BC
- Overall median household income in the District was \$80,896 in 2015 as compared to \$76,008 for RDBN and \$69,995 for BC

Table 10 provides the median income of economic families and households in the District as a share of the overall Provincial median income for each of the categories. The table suggests that the overall median family income in the District is 110% of the Provincial median family income. In addition, the District's median income is:

- 109 percent of the Provincial median income for couple-only families;
- 104 percent of the Provincial median income for couple-with-children families; and,
- 122 percent of the Provincial median income for lone-parent families.

The table also suggests that the overall median household income in the District is 109% of the Provincial median household income. Thus, the median income of economic families and households in the District is significantly higher than both the Regional District and the Province; especially in the case of lone-parent family and 1-person households. Thus, a large proportion of census-families and households in the District is earning better than the Regional District and the Province and can be expected to display a strong demand for market-rate housing products.

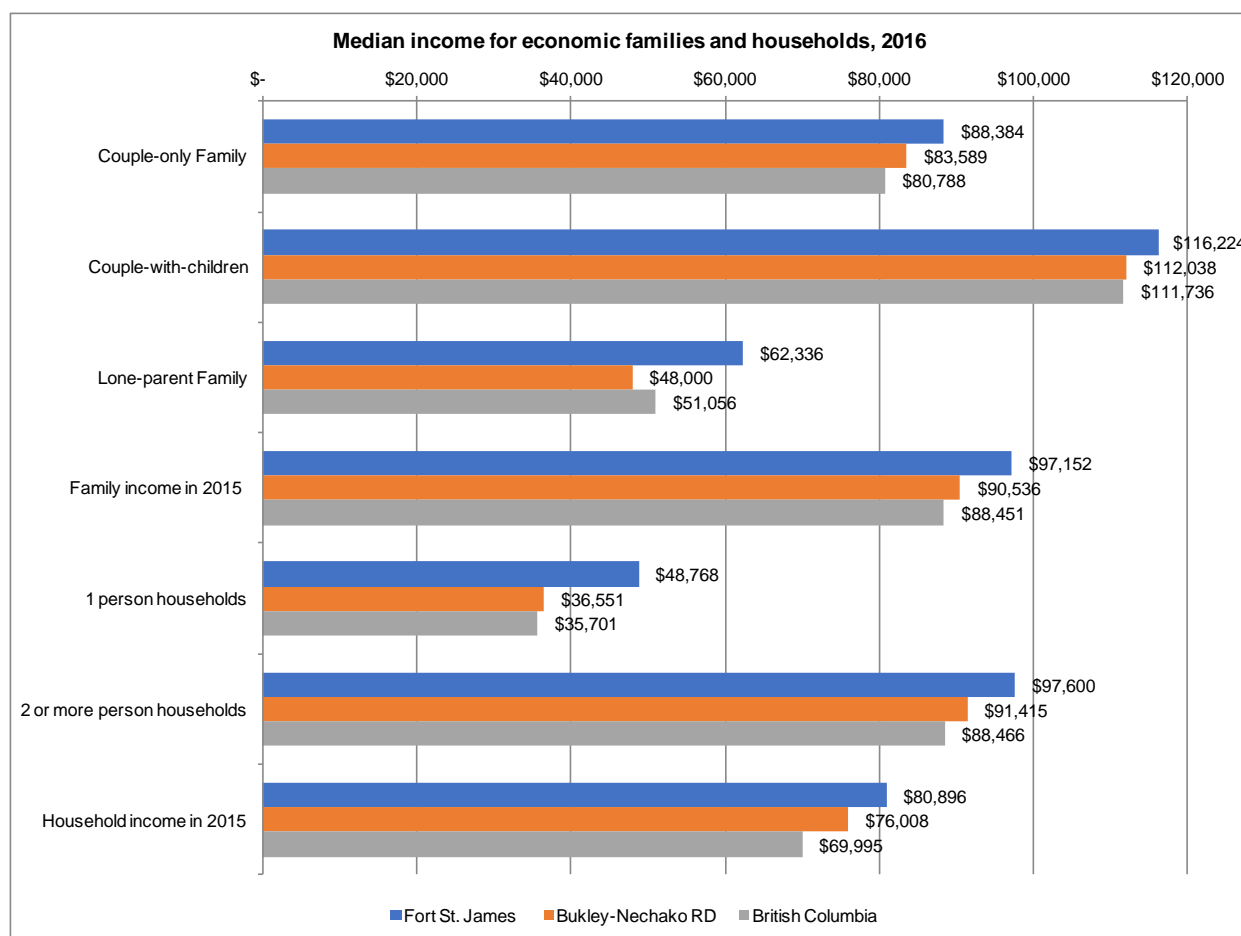


Figure 6: Median Household Income Levels for Selected Household Structures

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

	Median income in 2015			Comparison to BC (%)		
	Fort St. James	Bukley-Nechako RD	British Columbia	Fort St. James	Bukley-Nechako RD	British Columbia
Economic families						
Couple-only Family	\$ 88,384	\$ 83,589	\$ 80,788	109%	103%	100%
Couple-with-children	\$ 116,224	\$ 112,038	\$ 111,736	104%	100%	100%
Lone-parent Family	\$ 62,336	\$ 48,000	\$ 51,056	122%	94%	100%
Family income in 2015	\$ 97,152	\$ 90,536	\$ 88,451	110%	102%	100%
Households						
1 person households	\$ 48,768	\$ 36,551	\$ 35,701	137%	102%	100%
2 or more person households	\$ 97,600	\$ 91,415	\$ 88,466	110%	103%	100%
Household income in 2015	\$ 80,896	\$ 76,008	\$ 69,995	116%	109%	100%

Table 10: Median Household Income Levels for Selected Household Structures

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

2.8 Population projections

Similar to the demographic trends across the country, the Province of British Columbia is expected to experience slight decline in birth rates and slight increases in life expectancy, net inter-provincial migration, and net international migration. These trends, along with the aging of BC's existing population, is expected to result in steady population growth in the province from 4.65 million in 2016 to 6.13 million by 2041, which translates into an annual growth rate of roughly 1.1% during 2017 - 2041 (P.E.O.P.L.E 2017, BC Stats, Aug 2017). Further, based on the BC Stats population projections, the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is expected to grow from 37,895 in 2016 to 91,288 in 2041, at an annual growth rate of 0.7% during 2017 - 2041 (P.E.O.P.L.E 2017, BC Stats, Aug 2017).

The projections used the Census 2016 population counts for the base year (2016) and the age cohort and gender-based population growth rates for the Nechako Lakes School District for the period 2017 - 2041 (P.E.O.P.L.E 2017, BC Stats, Aug 2017) to project the population for the District of Fort St James. These population projections are expected to incorporate all the components of population growth in the region such as fertility and mortality as well as economic migration generated by industrial growth.

However, since the District is such a small population center and displays strong boom-bust cycles, it would be prudent to revisit these projections every 5 to 10 years. Furthermore, for the purpose of this report only the population projections for the first 10 years (2017 - 2026) are presented below and used in the remainder of the report. The projections suggest that:

- The population of the District will grow from 1,595 in 2016 to 1,678 in 2026, at an annual growth rate of 0.5 percent;
 - The share of population under 15 years of age would decline marginally (20 percent to 19 percent) during the projection period;
 - The share of population aged 15 years to 64 years would decline from 67 percent in 2016 to 63 percent in 2026; and,
 - The share of population aged 65 years and over would increase from 13 percent in 2016 to 18 percent in 2026.
- Overall the District is expected to add a total of 83 people or roughly 8 people every year during 2016 - 2026. The population in the age group:
 - 65 years and over will experience the largest net increase of 103 people during the period;
 - 15 to 64 years will experience a net decrease of 12 people during the period; and
 - Under 15 years will experience a net decrease of 8 people during the period.

Thus, much of the population increase during 2016 - 2026 is expected to be in the population aged 65 years and over.

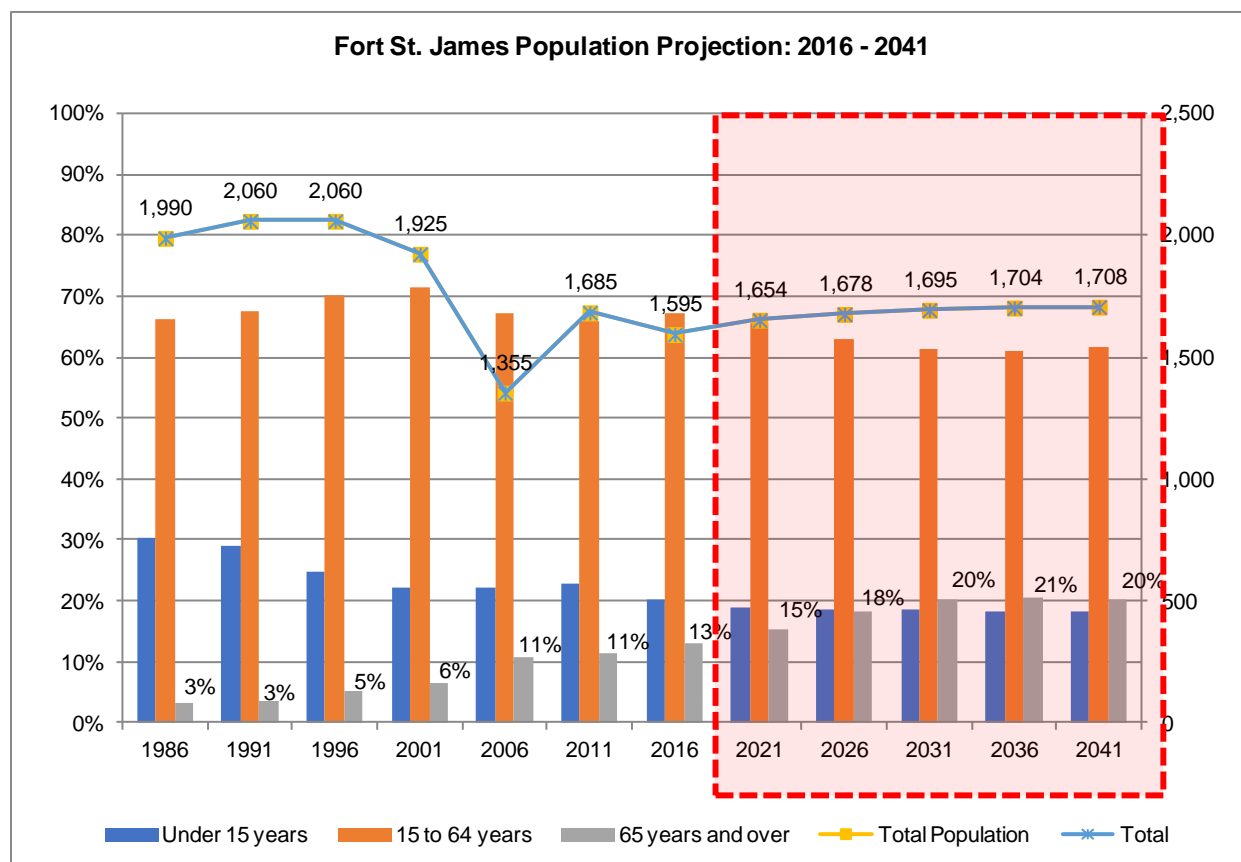


Figure 7: Population projection for the District of Fort St. James

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd and BC Stats Population Projections of Fort St. James LHA

Population	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Under 15 years	605 (30%)	600 (29%)	510 (25%)	425 (22%)	300 (22%)	385 (23%)	320 (20%)	314 (19%)	312 (19%)	313 (18%)	312 (18%)	312 (18%)
15 to 64 years	1,320 (66%)	1,390 (67%)	1,445 (70%)	1,375 (71%)	910 (67%)	1,110 (66%)	1,070 (67%)	1,086 (66%)	1,058 (63%)	1,039 (61%)	1,041 (61%)	1,053 (62%)
65 years and over	65 (3%)	70 (3%)	105 (5%)	125 (6%)	145 (11%)	190 (11%)	205 (13%)	254 (15%)	308 (18%)	343 (20%)	351 (21%)	343 (20%)
Total	1,990	2,060	2,060	1,925	1,355	1,685	1,595	1,654	1,678	1,695	1,704	1,708

Table 11: Population projection for the District of Fort St. James

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd and BC Stats Population Projections of Fort St. James LHA

The District had a significant increase in vacant dwellings or dwellings occupied by temporary residents in 2016 as compared to 2011.

The District had fewer occupied apartment units in buildings with less than 5 storeys in 2016 as compared to 1991.

There is a significant preference for single-family dwelling units in the community.

3 Housing supply

This section examines the housing supply of the District of Fort St. James. The analysis primarily focuses on the occupied private dwellings in the District as it provides a more accurate measure of the housing needs of the community; i.e. housing stock which is occupied by permanent residents and does not include vacant dwellings or dwellings occupied by temporary residents.

Error! Reference source not found. shows the increase in the number and share of vacant dwellings or dwellings occupied by temporary residents from 8 percent of the total occupied dwellings in 2011 to 15 percent of the total dwellings in 2016. These numbers are a representation of a rise in vacant homes of households that have moved away from the District or an increase in vacation homes in the community.

Fort St. James	2011	2016
Total private dwellings	760	761
Total occupied dwellings	674	644
Vacant dwellings or dwellings occupied by temporary residents (as a % of total occupied dwellings)	86 (8%)	117 (15%)

Table 12: Fort St. James's total private dwellings vs. occupied private dwellings
Source: Urbanics Consultants and Census 2011 and 2016 (rounded)

3.1 Housing stock trends

The growth in the number of occupied private dwellings in Fort St. James has followed the population growth cycles during 1991- 2016. The District had 660 occupied dwelling units in 1991, which increased to 725 units by 2001 and declined to 545 units by 2006. By 2011, the number of occupied housing units increased to 680 before declining to 645 units in 2016 (Census 1991 - 2016). During the same period, the number of occupied-dwelling units in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako grew from 12,625 in 1991 to 15,101 in 2016 (annual rate of .7%) and the Province of British Columbia grew from -1,243,890 in 1991 to 1.88 million in 2016 (at an annual rate of 1.7%). Overall, the district had 15 fewer occupied private dwelling units in 2016 as compared to 1991, which represents a decline of .09% per year during 1991- 2016.

Thus, the number of occupied private dwellings in the District declined during 1991 - 2016. This can be further disaggregated into changes in occupied dwelling units by type:

- Single-family dwellings: The share of single-family units has increased from 60 percent in 1991 to 70 percent of the total occupied housing stock in 2016. The District added a total of 55 units at the rate of over 2 units per year during 1991 - 2016.
- Semi-detached, row house, duplex and other single attached house: The share of Semi-detached, row house, duplex and other single attached houses has remained flat at 2% during 1991 - 2016. There has been no increase in the total number of units of this category.
- Apartments, 5 or more storeys: There are no apartment buildings with 5 or more storeys in the District.
- Apartments, less than 5 storeys: The share of apartments, less than 5 storeys, has declined from 17 percent in 1991 to 9 percent of the total housing stock in 2016. There are 60 fewer occupied apartment units in buildings with less than 5 storeys in 2016 as compared to 1991.
- Movable dwellings: The share of movable dwellings have remained at 12 percent in 1991, 2001 and 2016. It is likely that the census data for the years 2006 and 2001 was incomplete.

The historical trend related to the preference for single-family dwellings is expected to continue over the next projection period. However, the District will be well served by addressing the decline in the number of apartment buildings with less than 5 storeys, which are more affordable product types in any community.

Fort St. James Housing Stock	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Single-detached house	395 (60%)	455 (64%)	450 (62%)	395 (72%)	510 (75%)	450 (70%)
Semi-detached house	15 (2%)	10 (1%)	20 (3%)	5 (1%)	15 (2%)	15 (2%)
Row house	40 (6%)	45 (6%)	55 (8%)	25 (5%)	65 (10%)	45 (7%)
Apartment, detached duplex	10 (2%)	10 (1%)	10 (1%)	5 (1%)	40 (6%)	5 (1%)
Apartment building, five or more storeys	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Apartment building, less than five storeys	115 (17%)	125 (18%)	105 (14%)	85 (16%)	45 (7%)	55 (9%)
Other single attached house	5 (1%)	0 (0%)	5 (1%)	5 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Movable dwelling	80 (12%)	65 (9%)	80 (11%)	25 (5%)	5 (1%)	75 (12%)
	660 (100%)	710 (100%)	725 (100%)	545 (100%)	680 (100%)	645 (100%)

Table 13: Number of Occupied Dwellings by Type - 1991-2016

Sources: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Statistics Canada - Census 1991 - 2016

Residential uses (BCA 2017)	Lot Area (acres)	Total # of Lots	Average Assessed Land Value Per Acre	Average Assessed Property Value per Lot
Single Family Dwelling	129	455	\$ 100,966	\$ 174,915
2 Acres Or More (Single Family Dwelling, Duplex)	72	12	\$ 18,427	\$ 297,333
Duplex	3	18	\$ 132,567	\$ 159,017
Triplex	1	2	\$ 110,864	\$ 310,550
Fourplex	3	5	\$ 99,697	\$ 370,500
Multi-family	8	9	\$ 86,010	\$ 599,856
Manufactured Home	13	87	\$ 128,677	\$ 63,955
2 Acres Or More (Manufactured Home)	159	3	\$ 854	\$ 87,067
Total area under use	388	591	\$ 45,611	\$ 168,721
Vacant Residential Less Than 2 Acres	34	101	\$ 87,418	\$ 29,305
Multi-Family (Vacant)	1	2	\$ 109,239	\$ 63,850
2 Acres Or More (Vacant)	2,059	25	\$ 1,075	\$ 88,544
Total Vacant Land	2,094	128	\$ 2,532	\$ 41,415
Total land area for residential use	2,482	719	\$ 9,269	\$ 146,057

Table 14: Total number of lots and assessed values

Sources: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and BCA 2017 (Actual Use Categories)

In addition to the number of occupied-dwelling units in the community, the actual number of lots and their assessed values were also explored. Table 14 provides the findings from the 2017 BC Assessment Rolls for the community. The table suggests that:

- Residential use: Roughly 388 acres of land is being used for residential use in the community. These lands have 591 distinct lots, which include:
 - Single family dwellings: 455 lots with an average assessed land value of \$100,966 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$174,915 in 2017.
 - Duplex: 18 lots with an average assessed land value of \$132,567 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$159,017 in 2017.
 - Triplex: 2 lots with an average assessed land value of \$110,864 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$310,550 in 2017.
 - Fourplex: 5 lots with an average assessed land value of \$99,697 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$370,500 in 2017.
 - Multi-family: 9 lots with an average assessed land value of \$86,010 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$599,856 in 2017.
 - Manufactured home: 87 lots with an average assessed land value of \$128,677 per acre and an average assessed property value (building plus land) of \$63,955 in 2017.
- Vacant land: Roughly 2,094 acres of land is vacant (128 lots).
- Total Residential land: The community has roughly 2,482 acres of land under residential use and includes 719 distinct lots.

3.2 Housing permits

The population and household growth trends suggest that there would be limited development activity in the District. Most of the development activity in the community will be geared towards maintaining and replacing the current housing stock. The BC Stats Permit data for the period 1998 to 2016 also suggests similar trends for the community.

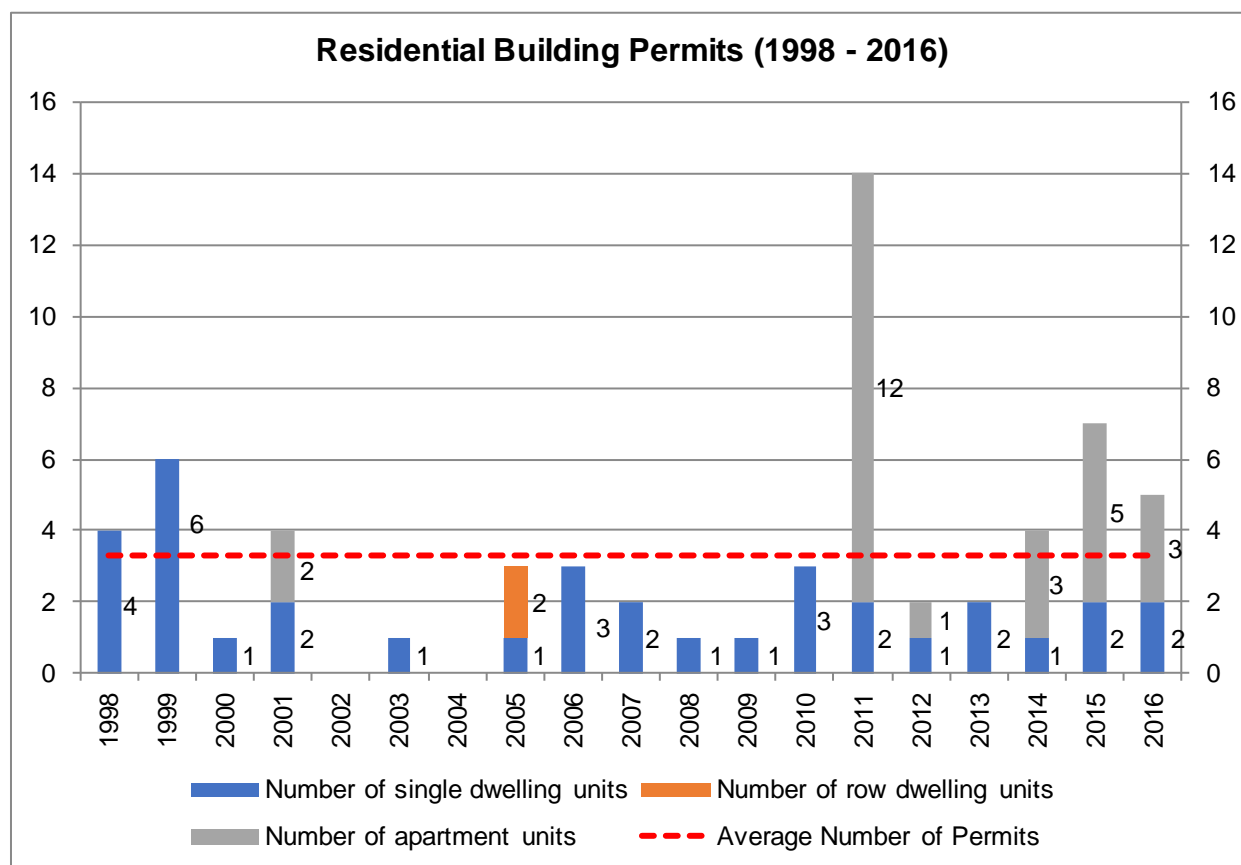


Figure 8: Housing permits- 1998-2016

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and CMHC Starts and Completions Survey

Figure 8 suggests that on an average, only 3.3 units per year have been added during the period 1998-2016. This includes 2 single-family and 1.3 apartment units per year during 1998 - 2016. However, it is evident that much of the development activity since 2011 has significantly picked up and focused on apartment units. During 2011 - 2016 roughly 34 permits were pulled of which 10 were for single family units and 24 were for apartment units, which includes duplex, triplex, fourplex and apartment units in buildings less than 5 storeys. This represents a permit activity of roughly 6 units a year and includes roughly 2 single-family units and 4 apartment units a year. This is indicative of a strong market demand for apartment units or more affordable units in the District. The District is expected to display an elevated demand for more affordable ground oriented multi-family housing types over the study period.

3.3 Housing tenure

The District of Fort St. James had a homeownership rate of 72 percent in 2016. It had 645 occupied housing units in 2016 (Census 2016) out of which 465 were owner-occupied and 180 were renter occupied. The District has displayed a sustained increase in homeownership rate from 64% in 1991 to 72 percent in 2016.

Table 15 provides the homeownership rate for the District of Fort St. James and compares it to the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako and the Province of British Columbia, during the years 1991 - 2016. The District displays a lower homeownership rates in all the census years as compared to the Regional District but a higher homeownership rate as compared to the Province. This is likely driven by the differences in the property values and household incomes across these geographical areas. The District of Fort St. James is much more urban as compared to the Regional District and it has higher property values.

Tenure	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Fort St. James						
Owned	420	490	505	425	450	465
Rented	240	225	220	135	225	180
Band housing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total occupied dwellings	660	715	725	560	675	645
Ownership rate	(64%)	(69%)	(70%)	(76%)	(67%)	(72%)
Bulkley-Nechako						
Owned	9,200	10,410	10,960	11,070	11,610	11,580
Rented	3,125	3,350	3,310	3,005	3,085	3,100
Band housing	305	480	555	475	490	420
Total occupied dwellings	12,630	14,240	14,825	14,550	15,185	15,100
Ownership rate	(73%)	(73%)	(74%)	(76%)	(76%)	(77%)
British Columbia						
Owned	793,985	928,990	1,017,485	1,145,050	1,234,710	1,279,020
Rented	446,910	491,540	512,360	493,995	524,995	599,360
Band housing	3,000	4,105	4,485	4,100	4,920	3,590
Total occupied dwellings	1,243,895	1,424,635	1,534,330	1,643,145	1,764,625	1,881,970
Ownership rate	(64%)	(65%)	(66%)	(70%)	(70%)	(68%)

Table 15: Housing Tenure - Fort St. James - 1991-2016

Source: Urbanics Consultants, Census

On further examination, it is evident that the homeownership rate in the District decreases in the years with higher population counts. For example, in the year 1991 and 1996 the population of the District was 2,060 and the homeownership rate was below 70%. Similarly, in the year 2011 the population of the District was 1,685 and the homeownership rate was 67%. This is likely indicative of the increase in the number of temporary employees in the community who prefer rental housing units during these years.

Figure 9 provides a graphical representation of the household tenure by the age of household maintainer in 2016 for the District of Fort St. James. The figure shows a strong lifecycle pattern to home ownership with significant increase in home ownership rates with age, from households with primary maintainer in the 25 to 34 years age group (62 percent) to households with primary maintainers in the 55 to 64 years age group (86 percent) and declines in later years.

In contrast households with primary maintainers under the age of 25 years are primarily renters (100 percent), which declines to its lowest level for households with primary maintainers in the 55 to 64 years age group (14 percent) before increasing for households with primary maintainers in the 75 years and over (20%).

Further, with increase in the senior population the District is likely to display a demand for both owner-occupied as well as rental units. In addition, there will be added demand for rental units from young individuals and families that locate in the District during the study period.

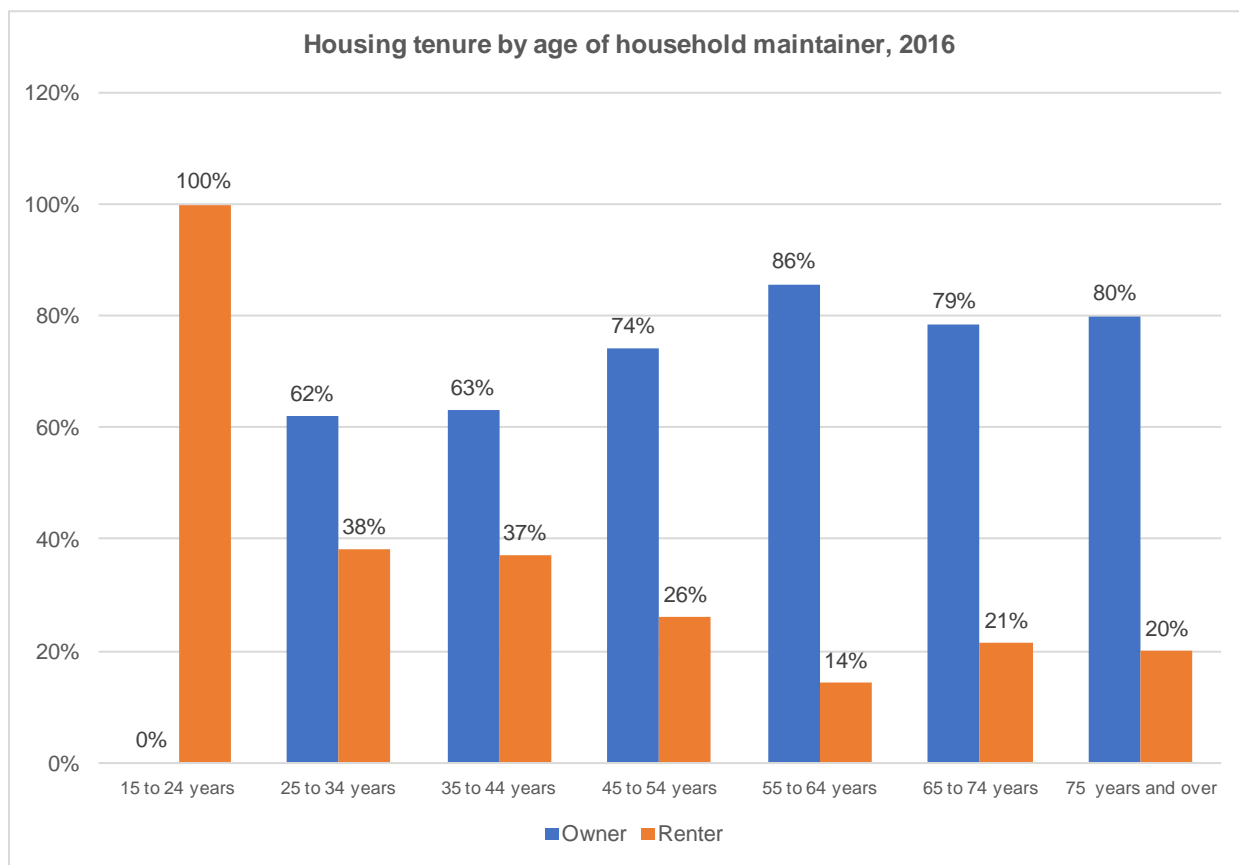


Figure 9: Housing tenure by age of household maintainer, 2016
Source: Urbanics Consultants and 2016 Census

3.4 Non-market housing

Typical inventory of the non-market housing in a community includes:

- **Shelter:** These include year-round shelters and emergency weather response shelters.
- **Transition houses and safe homes:** Provides temporary shelter and services for women and their children who are facing housing crisis issues or fleeing domestic violence. In addition to food and shelter, it also provides support services such as advocacy, information and referral, counselling, and transportation to appointments.
- **Below market rental:** Below-market rental housing is housing with rents equal to, or lower than, average rates in private-market rental housing.
- **Co-operative housing:** Co-operative housing is a type of development where the residents have a share in the corporation (co-operative) that owns/manages the development.
- **Seniors housing:** Housing geared toward single person age 55 or older or a couple where at least one person is age 55 or older.
- **Assisted living:** Assisted living housing are self-contained apartments for seniors and people with disabilities who need some support services to continue living independently.
- **Supportive housing:** Supportive housing provides on-site support and services to residents who cannot live independently, and are not expected to become fully self-sufficient.

The District has very limited supply of non-market housing. It includes:

- Fort St. James Senior Citizens Home Society:
 - Pioneer Place: 12 one-bedroom (wheelchair accessible) affordable housing units for seniors and adults with disabilities.
 - Pioneer Lodge: a two-unit assisted living development for seniors. It is funded under the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program.
- Fireweed Safe Haven Transition House: The Fireweed Collective Society provides a first-stage transition house (4 units) for women and their children who are leaving a violent relationship. There is a need for a similar sized second-stage transition house in the District, which is being proposed in the near future.
- Nechako Valley Community Services: The Nechako Valley Community Services provides homeless outreach services and offers 2 one-bedroom rental units at \$330 and \$400 a month to eligible individuals. There are no plans for any future expansion.
- Cold weather Shelter (222 2nd Avenue): This low-barrier cold weather shelter has recently been opened in the community. The project received funding from BC Housing and was championed by the Nak'azdli Whut'en Capital and Lands Dept, The United Church, the District of Fort St. James, the Food Bank, They KEY and Fort St. James RCMP.
- Stuart Lake Co-op Housing (158 & 174 W 2nd Ave): Currently includes 8 rental units. At completion will include 16 units including 2 three-bed, 12 two-bed and 1 one-bed units.

Thus, the District currently has roughly 20 non-market housing units (3% of the total occupied housing). The District staff has also suggested that there are roughly 30 homeless individuals in the community. For the size of the population the number of homeless individuals is significantly high. Thus, there is an urgent need for roughly 34 units (including beds and dwelling units), which is likely to rise in future with deteriorating affordability.

3.5 Housing suitability and adequacy

"Housing suitability refers to whether a private household is living in suitable accommodations according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS); that is whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household. A household is deemed to be living in suitable accommodations if its dwelling has enough bedrooms as calculated using the NOS. (Census 2016)"

Most of the houses, roughly 95% of the total houses, in the District of Fort St. James had appropriate number of bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households in 2016. Only 5 percent of the occupied dwellings were not suitable for households (Table 16). This is similar to housing suitability in the RDBN and the Province.

Occupied private dwelling characteristics	Fort St. James	Bulkley-Nechako	British Columbia
Number of Private households by housing suitability	645 (100%)	15,105 (100%)	1,881,965 (100%)
Suitable	615 (95%)	14,550 (96%)	1,781,905 (95%)
Not suitable	30 (5%)	550 (4%)	100,060 (5%)
Occupied private dwellings by condition of dwelling	645 (100%)	15,100 (100%)	1,881,970 (100%)
Only regular maintenance or minor repairs needed	555 (86%)	13,205 (87%)	1,763,105 (94%)
Major repairs needed	90 (14%)	1,895 (13%)	118,865 (6%)

Table 16: Housing suitability
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 2016

Nearly all of the residents and stakeholders have identified the advanced age of much of the housing stock and a prevalence of housing adequacy related issues in the District;

The condition of dwelling (2016 Census) includes the following categories:

- The "regular maintenance needed" category includes only regular maintenance such as painting or furnace cleaning is required.
- The "minor repairs needed" category includes repairs such as dwellings with missing or loose floor tiles, bricks or shingles or defective steps, railing or siding.
- The "major repairs needed" category includes repairs such as dwellings with defective plumbing or electrical wiring, and dwellings needing structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings.

Table 16 suggests that roughly 86 percent of the housing stock only needs regular maintenance or minor repairs, while roughly 14 percent of the housing stock in the District needs major repairs. This is significantly higher than the RDBN (13%) and the Province (6%). Thus, the District would benefit from policies that support major repairs to its housing stock. This is primarily because rental units are more likely to require major repairs as compared to single-family units as households have secure tenure, are wealthier and have a greater incentive to maintain the value of their homes.

Occupied private dwelling characteristics	Fort St. James	Bulkley-Nechako	British Columbia
1960 or before	50 (8%)	1,550 (10%)	267,560 (14%)
1961 to 1980	355 (55%)	6,275 (42%)	559,485 (30%)
1981 to 1990	90 (14%)	2,685 (18%)	289,565 (15%)
1991 to 2000	110 (17%)	2,835 (19%)	331,865 (18%)
2001 to 2005	10 (2%)	530 (4%)	125,335 (7%)
2006 to 2010	10 (2%)	690 (5%)	171,945 (9%)
2011 to 2016	20 (3%)	540 (4%)	136,210 (7%)
Total occupied private dwellings	645 (100%)	15,105 (100%)	1,881,965 (100%)

Table 17: Occupied dwelling and period of construction
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 2016

Table 17 provides the housing stock in the District and its period of construction. It shows that in 2016 roughly 63 percent of the total housing stock in the District was built prior to 1980. In contrast, only 52% of the housing stock in the RDBN and only 44% of the housing stock in the Province was built before 1980. This corroborates the general perception related to the quality of housing stock in the District and is in line with the findings from the survey.

The reader should however note that even though 63% of the housing stock was built prior to 1980 it does not mean that all of these homes require major repairs. The reader should also note that the Housing Needs Assessment Survey found that roughly 22 percent of the households had indicated that their homes needed major repairs. However, the higher percentage of households in the survey is likely due to the differences in the way the specific question was framed. For the study we would rely on the Census 2016 data, which suggests that roughly 90 units or 14 percent of the housing stock needs major repairs.

3.6 Shelter-cost-to-income ratio

Shelter-cost-to-income ratio refers to the proportion of average total income of household which is spent on shelter costs. It is calculated for private households living in owned or rented dwellings and is estimated by dividing a household's total annual shelter cost by its total annual income (for households with income greater than zero) and then taking an average of the individual households' STIRs.

Table 18 provides the share of owner and tenant households spending 30 percent or more on housing in the District of Fort St James, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako and the Province.

Shelter-cost-to-income ratios	Fort St. James	Bulkley-Nechako	British Columbia
Owner and tenant households with household income greater than zero	645 (100%)	13,490 (100%)	1,832,420 (100%)
Spending less than 30% of income on shelter costs	570 (88%)	11,775 (87%)	1,320,210 (72%)
Spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs	75 (12%)	1,715 (13%)	512,210 (28%)
Owner households in non-farm; non-reserve private dwellings	465 (100%)	10,595 (100%)	1,242,600 (100%)
Owner households with a mortgage	278 (60%)	5,732 (54%)	728,164 (59%)
Households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	50 (11%)	890 (8%)	257,218 (21%)
Median monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings (\$)	882 (0%)	733 (0%)	1,149 (0%)
Median value of dwellings (\$)	179,557 (0%)	249,861 (0%)	500,874 (0%)
Tenant households in non-farm; non-reserve private dwellings	180 (100%)	2,920 (100%)	592,825 (100%)
Tenant households in subsidized housing	0 (0%)	289 (10%)	74,103 (13%)
Tenant households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	25 (14%)	838 (29%)	256,693 (43%)
Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$)	881 (0%)	751 (0%)	1,036 (0%)

Table 18: Shelter-cost-to-income ratio

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and Census 2016

The table suggests that the households in Fort St. James paid a median monthly shelter cost of \$882 for owner-occupied and \$881 for tenant occupied units in 2016. These shelter costs are higher than the Regional District but significantly lower than the Province.

In addition, the table suggests that the proportion of households spending 30 percent or more of its income on shelter in 2016 was:

- Fort St James: 11 percent of owner-households and 14 percent of tenant households
- Regional District: 8 percent of owner-households and 29 percent of tenant households
- British Columbia: 21 percent of owner-households and 43 percent of tenant households

3.7 Core housing need

A household is considered to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and if it would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its before-tax income to pay the median rent (including utilities) of appropriately sized alternative local market housing.

The proportion of households in core housing needs is not available from Census 2016 or CMHC. However, we can estimate the proportion households likely to be in core housing needs by assuming that the total number of households failing the housing suitability and adequacy tests is equally divided between the owner and tenant households. Thus, the proportion of households in core housing needs in the District would roughly be as follows:

Housing Standards	Total	Owners	Renters
Below suitability standard	5%	3%	8%
Below adequacy standard	14%	10%	25%
Below affordability standard	12%	11%	14%
	18%	13%	29%

Table 19: Estimated proportion of households in core housing needs
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Table 19 provides a rough estimate for the owner and tenant households in core housing need for the District of Fort St. James. The table shows that:

- 5 percent of the households were below suitability standard, 14 percent were below adequacy standard and 12 percent of the households had failed the affordability standard in 2017 (Census 2016).
- Based on the assumption that the total number of households failing suitability and adequacy test were equally distributed among owner and tenant households, the proportion of owner households failing the suitability criteria is 3 percent and failing the adequacy criteria is 10%. Similarly, the proportion of tenant households failing the suitability criteria is 8% and failing the adequacy criteria is 25 percent.
- Further assuming that for the owner households roughly 20 percent of the households that fail the suitability and adequacy test do not fail the affordability test, the overall proportion of owner households in core housing needs can be estimated at 13 percent of the total owner households.
- Also, assuming that for the tenant households roughly 20 percent of the households that fail the suitability and affordability test do not fail the adequacy test, the overall proportion of tenant households in core housing needs can be estimated at 29 percent of the total tenant households.
- Thus, a large proportion of tenant households are expected to be in core housing needs, i.e. pay more than 30% of their household income towards shelter costs or live in homes that need repair or do not live in suitable housing.

4 Housing market characteristics

4.1 Housing sales activity

This section examines the housing sales activity in the District of Fort St. James, by using the active listings and sales data from the BC Northern Real Estate Board. As of 30th October, 2017, there were a total of 21 listings on the market that had been on the market for over 80 days, including 17 single family homes, 2, duplex/triplex and 2 mobile homes (Table 20). The table suggests that on an average:

- Single family units were 34 years old, with an average built-up area of 1,808 sf and average list price of 211,835 or \$124 psf of area.
- Duplex/ Triplex were 46 years old with an average built-up area of 2,293 sf and average list price of 261,950 or \$118 psf of area.
- Mobile / manufactured homes were 44 years old with an average built-up area of 896 sf and average list price of \$61,000 or \$68 psf of area.

Active listings (as of 30th Oct 2017)	# of listings	Avg. Age	Avg. Built-up	Avg. Lot size	Avg. # of beds	Avg. # of bath
Single Family	17	34	1,808	11,479	3.4	2.2
Duplex/ Triplex/ Fourplex	2	46	2,293	12,187	5	3.5
Mobile/ Manufactured	2	44	896	5,000	2	1
	List Price (\$)		List Price (\$/sf)		Days on market	
	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average
Single Family	\$ 199,000	\$ 211,835	\$128	\$124	58	92
Duplex/ Triplex/ Fourplex		\$ 261,950		\$118		82
Mobile/ Manufactured		\$ 61,000		\$68		86

Table 20: Current active listings in Fort St. James
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Table 21 provides the sales data from the BC Northern Real Estate Board for the one year period from October 2016 - October 2017. The table suggests that 25 single family homes and 5 mobile homes sold during the last year. These homes were on the market - for an average of 46 days in the case of single-family units and 53 days in the case of mobile homes. In addition, on an average:

- Single family units were 38 years old, with an average built-up area of 1,855 sf and average list price of 195,400 or \$113 psf of area. Overall the single-family units were priced between \$121,000 for a 3 bed 1 bath home to \$336,000 for a 4 bed 3 bath home.
- No duplex/ triplex was sold during this period. However, several of these units on Carnell Street were sold in 2014 - 2015 for \$130,750 - \$138,500 at \$101 psf of built-up area.
- Mobile / manufactured homes were 36 years old with an average built-up area of 1,244 sf and average list price of \$75,700 or \$59 psf of area. Overall the mobile homes were priced between \$32,000 for a 3 bed 1 bath home to \$160,000 for a 4 bed 2 bath home.

Sold listings (Oct 2016 - Oct 2017)	# of Sales	Avg. Age	Avg. Built-up	Avg. Lot size	Avg. # of beds	Avg. # of bath
Single Family	25	38	1,855	10,554	3.5	1.8
Duplex/ Triplex/ Fourplex	5	36	1,244	6,959	2.6	1.6
Mobile/ Manufactured						
	Sale Price (\$)		Sale Price (\$/sf)		Days on market	
	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average
Single Family	\$ 187,500	\$ 195,400	\$102	\$113	23	46
Duplex/ Triplex/ Fourplex						
Mobile/ Manufactured	\$ 62,000	\$ 75,700	\$59	\$59	42	53

Table 21: Home sales activity Oct 2016 – Oct 2017

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

There were no new home sales in the MLS data for the period. Further, due to the small size of the local housing market there is a fair amount of volatility in pricing and the houses tend to stay on the market for longer periods of time. However, the long-term trend in house prices on a per square foot basis is trending upwards, roughly at an annual rate of 5 percent during 2005 to 2017. Similar trends are expected to continue over the study area.

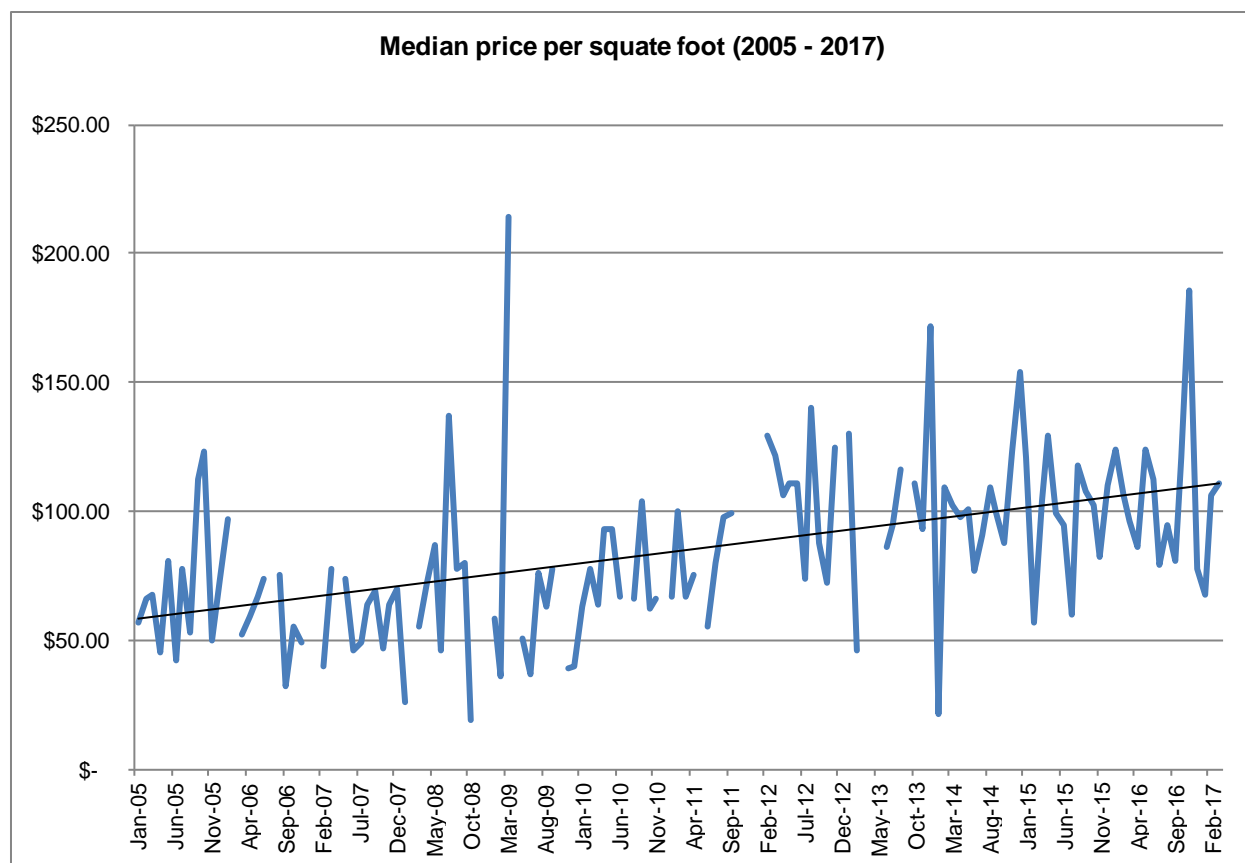


Figure 10: Median sales price per square foot

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and BC Northern Real Estate Board

4.2 Rental housing

The District of Fort St. James is facing an extremely tight rental housing market. The actual vacancy rates are not available but are expected to be below 5%. The consultant conducted a rental market survey (telephone) of landlords, owners of apartment buildings and owners of rental suites, during the month of August 2017. The findings from the survey is largely based on the responses from the landowners of apartment buildings (9 out of 19 apartment buildings) in the District as the survey of landowners of rental suites yielded insufficient amount of data to warrant further analysis.

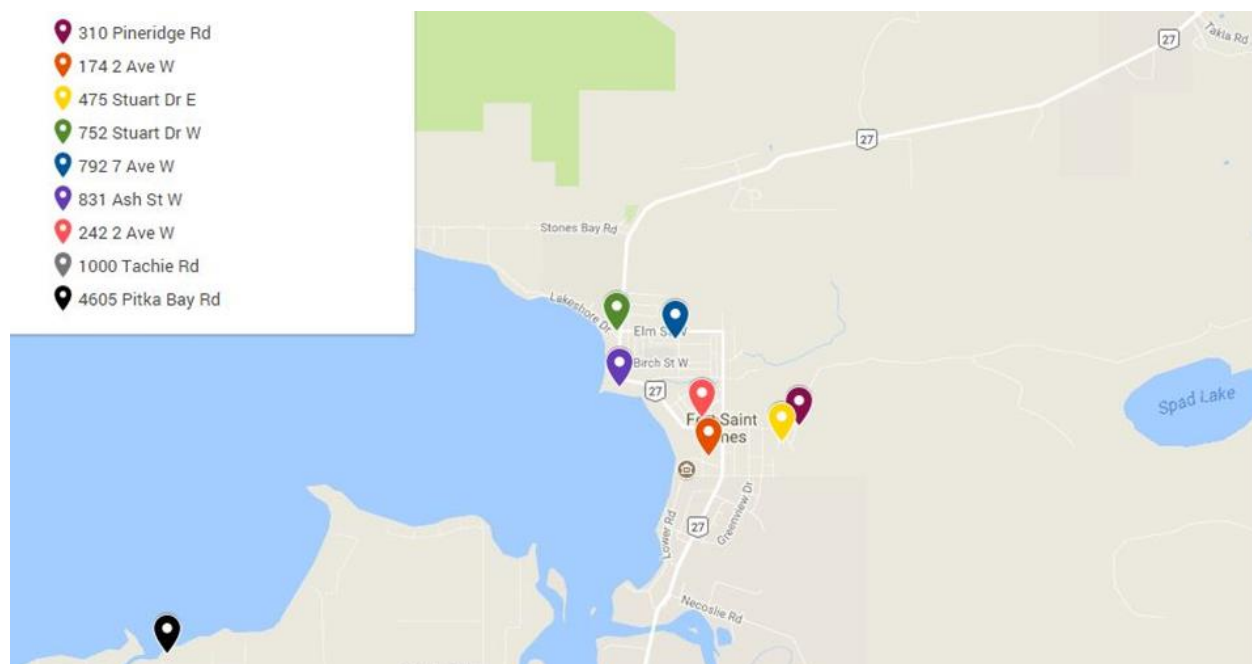


Figure 11: Location of the apartment buildings
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

The surveyed apartment buildings include a total of 118 units or roughly 50% of the rental housing stock of the District, including 3 studio units, 42 1-bedroom units, 55 2-bedroom units and 34 3-bedroom units. The rental units are predominately 2-bedroom units, followed by 1-bedroom and 3-bedroom units. The average rental rates for each unit type is given below:

- Studios: \$717 per month
- 1-bedroom: \$725 per month
- 2-bedroom: \$825 per month
- 3-bedroom: \$1,083 per month

The reader should note that the above rents are average rents surveyed in the housing market. It is likely that the actual rents in the market may be higher depending on the type and quality of housing. For example, a good quality single-family home is likely to go for a much higher rent than the above-mentioned rents.

4.3 Affordability of market-rate housing

This section examines the affordability standard in the District of Fort St. James based on the household's income and mortgage qualification criteria. The analysis identifies the three main property price levels, the highest (75th percentile), lowest (25th percentile) and average sales prices observed in 2017. For each of these prices the corresponding qualifying “affordable” income is determined using a set of assumptions. CMHC defines a property as affordable if the cost of paying for that housing utilizes less than 30 percent of the household's pre-tax income.

Typical shelter costs include the mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services for owners. For renters, shelter costs include rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services.

Other assumptions include:

- 20 percent down payment – Anything less will force the borrower to pay mortgage insurance every month until the borrower has built 20% equity in the property. Also, many lenders require at least this much down payment as part of their lending guidelines;
- 25-year mortgage amortization – This is the longest-term mortgage available, which lends itself to the smallest monthly payment;
- 5% interest rate – This is the currently advertised interest on a 25-year fixed-rate mortgage;
- \$4.87 per \$1000 in home value– This is the current residential property tax rate in the District of Fort St. James; and
- 0.25 percent insurance rate – This is to account for insurance requirements the lender may have.

The analysis uses the household income from the recently released 2016 Census data along with information from a variety of other public and private sources. This analysis focuses on estimating the baseline share of households that are likely to fail the affordability criteria instead of identifying the impact of various types of mortgage instruments on affordability.

Table 22 provides the findings from the housing affordability analysis for owner-occupancy in 2017. The table suggests that in the medium scenario:

- for a median priced single-family home priced at \$187,500 roughly 21 percent of the households will not qualify for a mortgage.
- for a median priced duplex priced at \$140,500 roughly 13 percent of the households will not qualify for a mortgage.
- for a median priced mobile home priced at \$62,000 only 2 percent of the households will not qualify for a mortgage.

Dwelling types	Sales price	Loan Amount	Mortgage payment (\$ monthly)	PITI (\$ annual)	Qualifying income (\$ annual)	% of households that fail affordability test
Owner-occupied						
Low						
Single-detached	\$ 160,000	\$ 128,000	\$ 748	\$ 10,158.70	\$ 33,862	16%
Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex	\$ 119,854	\$ 95,883	\$ 561	\$ 7,610	\$ 25,366	10%
Movable Dwellings	\$ 52,907	\$ 42,325	\$ 247	\$ 3,359	\$ 11,197	2%
Medium						
Single-detached	\$ 187,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 877	\$ 11,905	\$ 39,682	21%
Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex	\$ 140,454	\$ 112,363	\$ 657	\$ 8,918	\$ 29,726	13%
Movable Dwellings	\$ 62,000	\$ 49,600	\$ 290	\$ 3,936	\$ 13,122	2%
High						
Single-detached	\$ 230,000	\$ 184,000	\$ 1,076	\$ 14,603	\$ 48,677	27%
Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex	\$ 172,290	\$ 137,832	\$ 806	\$ 10,939	\$ 36,463	19%
Movable Dwellings	\$ 76,053	\$ 60,843	\$ 356	\$ 4,829	\$ 16,096	4%
	Monthly rent					
Renter-occupied						
Median rent						
3 bed	\$ 1,083				\$ 43,320	24%
2 bed	\$ 825				\$ 33,000	16%
1 bed	\$ 725				\$ 29,000	12%
Bachelor	\$ 717				\$ 28,680	12%

Table 22: Proportion of households that fail affordability criteria

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

One standard measure of relative housing affordability in a community is the “entry-level” housing market. Entry-level housing is defined as the lowest quartile (25th percentile) of the housing market. Table 22 also suggests that even if the homes were priced at the 25th percentile (low scenario), roughly 16 percent of the households would fail the affordability criteria for a single-family, 10 percent for a duplex/ triplex and 2 percent for a mobile home. Further, a first-time homebuyer would require a before tax income between \$11,200 and \$33,900 in order to purchase an "affordable" entry-level home in the District of Fort St. James.

As of 30th of October 2017, there were only 2 single-family home listings priced below \$160,000 on the market and most of the active listings were priced closer to the 75th percentile or the high end. In addition, housing prices have been steadily trending upwards. Thus, a higher proportion of households are expected to fail the affordability criteria going forward.

Table 22 also provides the findings from the housing affordability analysis for renter-occupancy in 2017. The table suggests that roughly

- 12 percent of the households are currently priced out of the rental market (bachelor and 1- bedroom unit) as their annual household income is below \$29,000.
- 16 percent of the households with income below \$33,000 would not be able to afford a 2-bedroom unit with a rent of \$825 per month in the District.
- 24 percent of the households with income below \$43,000 would not be able to afford a 3-bedroom unit with a rent of \$1,083 per month in the District.

As of the end of October, 2017, anecdotal evidence suggested a shortage of rental housing and a significant increase in rental rates. However, it could not be confirmed.

4.4 Affordability for households by type

This section examines whether census-family and non-census-family households earning median incomes will be able to purchase a median priced home based on the 30 percent affordability threshold. The table provided below shows that all census-family and non-family households earning above the median household incomes will be able to afford all types of median priced housing products in 2017.

Thus, the overall affordability levels of all household types are quite high. Even in the case of lone-parent families and 1-person households earning above the median income for the group, the affordability levels are high enough to qualify for a single-family home priced at the 75 percentile. Moreover, the income characteristics suggest that there is significant purchasing capacity in the District, which is not being realized by the development community.

Households	Median household income	Affordable purchase price	Single-detached (\$ 187,500)	Row house, duplex & other (\$ 140,454)	Movable Dwellings (\$ 62,000)
Couple-only Family	\$ 88,384	\$ 467,130	✓	✓	✓
Couple-with-children	\$ 116,224	\$ 614,270	✓	✓	✓
Lone-parent Family	\$ 62,336	\$ 329,460	✓	✓	✓
Family income in 2015	\$ 97,152	\$ 513,471	✓	✓	✓
1 person households	\$ 48,768	\$ 257,750	✓	✓	✓
2 or more person households	\$ 97,600	\$ 515,838	✓	✓	✓
Household income in 2015	\$ 80,896	\$ 427,554	✓	✓	✓

Table 23: Affordable homeownership

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Next we examined whether family and non-census-family households will qualify to rent a typical rental unit based on the 30 percent affordability threshold. The table provided below shows that all types of census-families and households will easily qualify for all sizes of rental housing.

Households	Median income	Affordable monthly rent	Bachelor (\$ 717)	1 bed (\$ 725)	2 bed (\$ 825)	3 bed + (\$ 1,083)
Couple-only Family	\$ 88,384	\$ 2,210	✓	✓	✓	✓
Couple-with-children	\$ 116,224	\$ 2,906	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lone-parent Family	\$ 62,336	\$ 1,558	✓	✓	✓	✓
Family income in 2015	\$ 97,152	\$ 2,429	✓	✓	✓	✓
1 person households	\$ 48,768	\$ 1,219	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 or more person households	\$ 97,600	\$ 2,440	✓	✓	✓	✓
Household income in 2015	\$ 80,896	\$ 2,022	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 24: Affordable rental rates by household type

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

The reader should note that the above analysis further suggests that most of the housing affordability issues are being faced by households at incomes significantly below the median incomes in each census-family and non-census family household category.

4.5 First Nations Housing

4.5.1 Nak'azdli Whut'en

According to the Nak'azdli Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy Report, the First Nation had a housing stock of 235 in 2016, which included:

- 207 single-family homes
- 2 duplexes
- 2 triplexes
- 2 fourplexes
- 11-unit apartment with 3 1-bedroom and 8 2-bedroom units

In addition to the above, the First Nation is in the process of developing a 20-unit subdivision and had 11 developable lots that are expected to be built up in the next 1- 2 years.

The report identifies several housing issues in the community, including:

- Replacement required (condemned): 5 units required replacement
- Overcrowding: 50 units to address overcrowding issues
- New household growth: 121 units to accommodate projected increases in the number of households

Based on the above the report identifies a need of developing additional 140 lots to meet the above housing needs of 176 units over the next 10 years

4.5.2 Takla Lake First Nation

As per the Housing Manager of the Takla Lake First Nation, Mr. George Richardson, the First Nation currently has a population of 210 people and a housing stock of 87 homes including:

- 80 single-family homes
- 5 duplexes
- 2 triplexes

In addition, the First Nation is in the process of developing 3 duplexes.

The main housing issues faced by the community are related to:

- Long waiting list: There are 70 families on a wait list to get into a new home, half with children and half without.
- The location of the community: Many people work in Prince George for extended periods of time and leave their homes empty while other homes are overcrowded. The First Nation is planning to implement a year-round "maintenance fee plan" so that people pay for the home year-round which would discourage people from maintaining two places of accommodation.
- Problem with rent collection.
- High cost of construction: Construction costs are about \$210-250/ sf to build a new home. He suggested that many of the new homes are built as passive homes but with a wood stove.
- Availability of contractors: Finding contractors to build and renovate homes is an issue.

4.5.3 Tl'azt'en Nation

As per the Tl'azt'en Nation's Housing Intern, Mr. Gordon Anatole, they have recently finished drafting a housing policy that has yet to be adopted by Council. The housing policy document was not provided.

Tl'azt'en Nation had an on-reserve population of 544 in September 2017. However, their total number of housing units and their distribution is not known.

The main housing issues being faced by the community are:

- People not paying their rent on account of low-household incomes. Some people work for the band and they simply get a payroll deduction in the amount of the rent.
- Problems evicting people. They are facing problems in evicting people for non-payment of rent. They are working with Mr. Jeffrey Hubermann (Grant Huberman Barristers and Solicitors) to help them develop an eviction process.
- The last new construction was built in 2009.

4.5.4 Ye-koo-che First Nation

Ye-koo-che had a population of over 100 and only 28 occupied private dwellings, all single-family, in the 2016 Census. The First Nation had the following housing issues:

- Units are too small and need repairs: The main problem is that the units are too small and they are old (meaning not renovated). What they are trying to do is to get funding to renovate and install newer appliances such as washers etc.
- Mold: Many of the housing units have a serious mold problem, which is leading to health issues among kids. They have been trying for the last 4 years to get funding to address the mold problem.
- Housing shortage: The First Nation is facing a housing shortage as well as an overcrowding issue in several of their homes. Cases like 3 families apparently living in one house, and in another there are apparently 2 families.

4.6 Current gaps in the housing market

The District of Fort St. James is experiencing an extremely tight rental market. Conversations with the stakeholders and the municipal staff has found that many potential renters are struggling to find rental units in the District and are frustrated by the lack of units available on the market.

Based on the demographic assessment, the District is likely to experience a significant increase in senior households over the next 10 years. This would result in increased demand for both owner-occupied and rental housing in the District. The District lacks age-appropriate housing for this demographic segment. The built form for such units would also likely be ground-oriented apartments, townhouses, and duplex/triplex/fourplex.

In addition, the District is likely to experience a strong shift towards smaller sized households. However, it lacks appropriate housing for this demographic segment and is likely under-built in bachelor/studio and one-bedroom homes. There might be an untapped demand for smaller, market-priced ownership and rental units targeted toward early-career professionals and young families. The built form for such units would likely be ground-oriented apartments, townhouses, and duplex/triplex/fourplex.

Much of the housing stock of the District is old and requires major repairs. The regular maintenance and upkeep of the current housing stock would provide the much-needed affordable rental and owner-occupied housing in the community.

There is unmet need for social housing in the District, including homeless shelters, transition homes as well as affordable rentals. The District has roughly 30 homeless individuals and a significant proportion of households that are priced out of the owner-occupied as well as the rental housing market.

The District experiences a high degree of variation in its housing needs due to temporary or seasonal jobs in the economy. This instability of occupancy and vacancy make for a difficult investment climate for development of additional rental housing stock. Moreover, due to limited rental stock, the rental rates are likely to trend upwards during period of high economic activity in and around the District.

The First Nations communities are facing housing shortages, over-crowding and mold issues. This has been aggravated by limited construction over the last decade. As a result, all of the four First Nations communities would benefit from additional construction and maintenance of their housing stock.

Main Housing issues:

Significant growth anticipated in senior households

Extremely tight rental market

Need for social housing especially for emergency shelters and transition housing

First Nation housing issues

Shift towards smaller sized households and housing types

Significant proportion of houses need major repairs

5 Best practices

The main objective of examining best practices in affordable market rate and non-market housing across municipalities in the country and the Province is to identify some of the proven and effective practices that can potentially be implemented by the local government in improving housing supply and general affordability in the District.

5.1 Current housing situation

The District of Fort St. James is witnessing continued declines in affordability in both owner-occupied as well as rental housing segments. As a result, households and individuals that are being priced out of the housing market are likely to require less costly housing options. Given the current market conditions, such housing is not economically viable without some form of assistance, subsidies, incentives or grants from at least one or more levels of government as well as active cooperation from the development community and non-profit agencies.

The reader should note that a large proportion of total housing needs in the District are expected to be addressed through market-rate housing. However, even within market-rate housing there is a significant need for low cost housing options. Additionally, non-market housing is primarily for a much smaller proportion of families and individuals who are facing affordability issues, homelessness or mental health or substance abuse issues. The latter sections will examine the relative housing needs in the market as well as non-market housing in the District.

5.2 Potential measures for Fort St. James

The District could potentially ensure an effective response to the declining affordability and limited supply of affordable housing through:

Low cost measures

- **Regulatory measures:** Low cost regulatory measures such as density bonus program, secondary suites, small single-family lot sizes, demolition control and rental loss prevention programs are expected to be effective in increasing the supply of housing in the District.
 - conducting regular housing needs assessments of the community;
 - creating effective land use policies and design guidelines for enhancing supply of affordable housing;
 - creating guidelines for affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing in the Official Community Plan (Section 877, Local Government Act);
 - promoting medium density, ground oriented housing as a way to address affordability;
 - rezoning or up-zoning of a specific site if a certain type of housing is developed;
 - small lot zoning which allows for more affordable single-family units;
 - reduced parking and other requirements;
 - housing agreements (registered in the Land Titles Office) for securing affordable housing over the long term (Section 904, LGA); and,
 - fast-tracking or streamlining development applications and creating guidelines to facilitate development applications involving affordable housing components.
- **Community partnerships:** Developing strong community partnerships with non-profit organizations and the development community would be critical to the success of supportive/transitional and non-market housing in the District. These organizations are knowledgeable about their communities or client group and often act as the operating partner, managing the housing and support services on an ongoing basis.
- **Education and advocacy measures:** The District could enhance the understanding and support for low-cost housing and affordable housing by:
 - building community awareness and support for low-cost housing and affordable housing;
 - helping developers and non-profit groups in accessing funding and support from senior levels of government; and,
 - partnering with the development community, non-profit agencies, community organizations, along with the Federal and Provincial governments in conducting housing research and making policies for enhancing affordable housing in the community

Medium cost measures

- **Create an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund:** The fund could provide capital grants for the acquisition, development, and retention of affordable housing in the District; primarily for households with low to moderate income. The fund could also help in facilitating senior government and private sector investments in affordable housing projects.
- **Housing agreements:** The District could use housing agreements to ensure that affordable housing units remain affordable in the long-term, and this is particularly important when a municipality has made significant contributions in the form of land or capital (from housing funds).
- **Create a Homelessness and Housing Fund:** The District could address homelessness through a Homelessness and Housing Fund which relies on community amenity contributions routed through the District's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund. In addition, the District could set up a non-profit society to oversee the above fund and to raise additional funds from non-municipal funding sources, as a result of its non-profit status (similar to the City of Surrey, BC).

High Cost Measures

- **Partnership with Provincial government:** The District could partner with the Province through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to develop and operate emergency, transitional and supportive housing. Under these MOUs, the municipal partner is required to provide District-owned land on a long-term lease, waive all application and development fees, and consider partial or full property tax exemption for the non-profit operator.
- **Fiscal measures and direct provisioning:** Higher cost fiscal measures would be effective in enhancing the supply of low cost market rate housing and non-market housing in the short run:
 - reducing or waiving development cost charges, building permit fees or property taxes for building owned or held by a charitable, philanthropic or other non-profit corporation (Section 224, Community Charter and Section 933 LGA);
 - creating housing reserve funds for enhancing affordable housing (Section 188, Community Charter); and,
 - donating municipal land or leasing land at/or below market value for developing affordable market and non-market housing in the District.
- **Direct service provision:** The District could also:
 - create a housing corporation that provides housing and supports to low and moderate-income households such as the Bowen Island Housing Authority; and,
 - develop purpose-built rental units and renovate existing buildings.

5.3 Provincial government role

The Provincial government plays a very important role in the provision of affordable housing through BC Housing. BC Housing partners up with non-profit agencies, the private sector and other levels of government to:

- enhance the supply of affordable rental housing for the most vulnerable individuals and households in the Province;
- enhance the overall affordability of market housing through increased supply of higher density and lower priced housing;
- provide rent assistance to eligible housing in the private market; and,
- support programs and non-market housing aimed at individuals with mental health, substance abuse and homelessness related issues.

BC Housing is responsible for affordable housing programs in British Columbia, including:

- Subsidized Housing: It provides subsidized housing for individuals and families that have a low income and meet eligibility criteria.
- Emergency Housing: It provides emergency shelters, drop-in centres (a place to wash, do laundry and use other services), temporary shelters, Homeless Outreach Program and Aboriginal Outreach Program in addition to the Homelessness Prevention Program.
- Transition Houses/Safe Houses/Second Stage Housing: BC Housing supports transition houses and safe homes for women (aged 19 years and older) who are at risk of violence, or who have experienced violence. The programs provide women and children with a temporary place to stay, support services, referrals and assistance in planning next steps.
- Addiction Recovery Program: Stable, short-term housing for individuals participating in a substance use recovery program.
- Supportive Housing: For people who may have mental and physical health conditions, substance use and/or other challenges that puts them at higher risk of homelessness.
- Seniors' Rental Housing:
- Assisted Living Residences: subsidized assisted living residences in British Columbia.
- Independent Living BC Program: A subsidized, assisted-living program that provides housing with support services to seniors and people with disabilities.
- Seniors' Supportive Housing: Seniors' Supportive Housing provides low-income seniors and people with disabilities accessible housing with supports.
- Community Partnership Initiatives (CPI): The Community Partnership Initiatives (CPI) Program provides advice, referrals to partnership opportunities and long-term financing to help non-profit societies create self-sustaining, affordable housing developments.

5.4 Federal government role

The Federal government plays an important role in the provision of affordable housing through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). It enhances homeownership by facilitating low down payment loans and allowing the use of retirement savings plan for down payments. It provides financial assistance to support activities that facilitate the creation of new affordable housing units (CMHC Seed Funding¹) and provides subsidies for ongoing operations as well as repairs of existing social housing developments. In addition, it works with the development community and non-profit organizations to facilitate the research, development, and funding of public and social housing in communities across Canada. Some of the affordable housing programs that are included under the CMHC and the British Columbia Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing include:

Programs to increase the supply of affordable housing

- Affordable Rental Housing Initiative (ARHI): Financial assistance to create new affordable rental units.
- Aboriginal Housing Initiative (AHI): Financial assistance to create affordable rental housing for Aboriginal people living off-reserve.
- Federal-Provincial Housing Initiative (FPH): A program that will assist vulnerable British Columbia families and individuals in need including people at risk of homelessness.

Programs to foster safe independent living

- Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI): Financial assistance to undertake accessibility modifications to housing occupied by seniors or persons with disabilities.

Programs to improve housing affordability

- Rental Assistance Program (RAP): Shelter allowance paid to working families to help make rent more affordable.
- Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER): Shelter allowance paid to elderly renters (60 years of age and older) to help make rent more affordable.
- Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP): Rent supplements for people at risk of homelessness. This program serves renters including youth, victims of family violence, Aboriginal people, people leaving the correctional and hospital systems.

On-reserve housing funds:

- CMHC's On-reserve Non-Profit Housing Program provides funds for construction, purchase and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.
- CMHC's First Nations Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) offers mortgage loan insurance options to buy, build or renovate homes.
- INAC (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) provides funds for housing counts, strategies and lot development.

¹ CMHC Seed Funding is available in the form of a non-repayable contribution of up to \$50,000. Additional funds may be made available in the form of a fully repayable, interest free loan of up to \$200,000.

Moving Housing Forward: From Strategy to Action

Program Name	Program #1 Timber Grove Apartments, Surrey, BC	Program #2 Willowbridge Transitional Housing, Kelowna, BC	Program #3 Chesterfield House, North Vancouver, BC	Program #4 HYAD Place, North Vancouver, BC	Program #5 Commercial Drive Apartments, Vancouver, BC	Program #6 The Cedars, Salt Spring Island, BC
Target Group	Mental health clients, homeless and those at risk of homelessness	People who are homeless or at risk of being homeless and people with health issues	Mental health clients	Young adults with development disabilities	Adults living with mental health challenges	Low-income senior women and women affected by domestic violence
Number & Type of Units	52 units (studio apartments)	40 units (studio apartments)	24 units (10 studio, 8 one-bed and 6 two-bed units)	16 units (one-bed units with 14 units for young adults with developmental disabilities and two for staff)	18 units (affordable rental apartments in a renovated 1960's walkup with a rent of \$375 per month)	Three bedrooms for senior women, eight transitional suites for women and children
Key Municipal Tools Used	Provincial-municipal MOU Long-term lease of District-owned land Waiver of development fees Property Tax Relief	Donated land valued at over \$560,000	Affordable housing reserve fund Increased density Preservation of existing rental units Infill development Reduced parking	Donated land	Housing Grant (\$150,000)	
Project Partners	District of Surrey BC Housing VANOC Fraser Health Coast Mental Health	Government of Canada (CMHC) BC Housing District of Kelowna Canadian Mental Health Association John Howard Society of Central and South Okanagan	District of North Vancouver BC Housing Marineview Housing Society	Government of Canada (CMHC) Government of British Columbia (BC Housing) District of North Vancouver North Vancouver School District Terra Housing Consultants	Government of Canada (CMHC and HRSDC) Province of British Columbia (BC Housing) District of Vancouver	Salt Spring Island Abbeyfield Housing Society Island Women Against Violence Society CMHC BC Housing CRD Salt Spring Lions Club Salt Spring Island Foundation Private donors
Project details	Total capital cost of \$13.2 million. District of Surrey provided land on long-term lease for \$10 (valued at \$2.3 million) and waived fees and taxes (\$306,506). Fraser health provided a \$10.5 million capital grant and BC Housing provided a \$22,835 landscaping grant.	Total capital cost of nearly \$8.4 million, from all three levels of government. CMHC and BC Housing gave matching contributions of \$2.97 million each under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program. The Government of B.C. also provided a grant of \$4.8 million and annual operating funding of nearly \$490,000.	Total capital cost of nearly \$4.34 million, with \$2.50 million for the purchase price of 16 units and land and \$1.8 million for upgrades and addition of 9 units. Of the total, District of North Vancouver Affordable Housing Reserve Fund provided \$1.625 million, BC Housing provided \$1.625 million and Marineview Housing Society provided \$1.050 million.	CMHC provided Seed Funding and BC Housing provided roughly \$5.3 million in provincial capital funding to the project, while HYAD Society provided \$166,000 in equity. The land valued at over \$1.1 million was obtained from the North Vancouver School District, with the assistance of the District of North Vancouver.	CMHC provided RRAP funding of \$800,000 for renovations, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) contributed \$500,000 through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The Province of BC provided over \$1 million in interim financing from its Community Partnerships Initiative. Coast Mental Health provided roughly \$700,000 in equity	The \$1.35 million project received funding of \$280,000 from the federal and provincial governments. Further funding was provided by the Government of British Columbia, the Capital Region District, the Salt Spring Lions Club and the Salt Spring Island Foundation. The two non-profit organizations also provided cash equity of more than \$300,000.

Table 25: Project examples: Non-market housing for vulnerable population

Moving Housing Forward: From Strategy to Action

Program Name	Program #13 Carey Place, Saanich BC	Program #15 Loreen Place, Victoria, BC	Program #17 Second Ave, Smithers, BC	Program #10 Cedar Valley Manor, Mission, BC	Program #11 Langford Home Ownership Program , Langford, BC	Program #12 Whistler Housing Authority, Whistler, BC
Target Group	Moderate- and low-income independent seniors aged 55 and older	Low and moderate families with annual income less than \$65,000	Singles, couples and seniors	Seniors who want to downsize	Households of two or more earning a maximum of \$60,000 annually	Resident employees and retirees
Number & Type of Units	55 one-bed units (27 of the total are for low-income seniors and the rest are rented at slightly lower than the market rate)	52 units (51 two-bed and 1 one-bed rental units)	6 small sized (540 sf.) affordable rental units (Units rent for \$750 per month, lower than most of the surrounding area)	42 units (with life leases)	48 units (40 single-family and 8 multi-family)	1906 units (865 rental and 1,041 owner-occupied units)
Key Municipal Tools Used	Capital Regional District provided land on a long-term lease for \$1 a year and received ownership of six market units Property tax exemption	Capital grants from affordable housing trust funds Increased density Housing agreements Parking variance	Allowed six houses on four lots facing a veranda instead of a sixplex Reducing parking requirements	Waived municipal amenity contribution fees for rezoning Donated land that allows residents to walk to a nearby park	Affordable housing strategy Inclusionary zoning Density bonus Waived DCC & other fees Expedited approval processes	Employee housing service charge Municipal housing authority Municipal housing reserve fund
Project Partners	Government of Canada (CMHC) Government of British Columbia (BC Housing) Capital Regional District of Saanich	Greater Victoria Housing Society Greater Victoria Rental Development Society District of Victoria CRD BC Housing CMHC	Land provided by the Smithers Community Services Association CMHC (Seed Funding)	Mission Association for Seniors Housing (MASH) Terra Lumina Life Lease Housing (private sector)	District of Langford Langford development community	The Whistler Housing Authority CMHC Whistler employers
Project details	The affordable apartments were created with capital funding of more than \$4 million from the federal and provincial governments, including \$2 million in federal funding through Canada's Economic Action Plan.	Seed Funding and an interest-free Proposal Development Funding (PDF) loan from CMHC. Equity contributions of \$370,000 each from the Victoria Affordable Housing Fund and the Capital Regional District Housing Trust Fund. Mortgage financing of \$9.6 million facilitated by the Province through its Community Partnership Initiative.		When selling, the owner gets 95 per cent of the original value. If the unit's value has gone up, then the seller receives up to half of the difference—the exact amount depends on the length of ownership. MASH re-marks the unit with a resale prices no more than half of the market index	The resale price limited to max of \$165,000 in first 5 years; In each year after the first 5 years the owner may increase price by \$2000; after 25 years may be sold at market value.	Whistler uses the Employee Housing Service Charge Fund to fund affordable housing for the community's permanent tourism employees. The charge is levied on projects that increase the number of employees. It uses a housing agreement with the right of first refusal and equity gains tied to Canadian CPI

Table 26: Project examples: Housing for low to moderate income seniors

5.5 Effective measures for Fort St. James

The District of Fort St. James could potentially use a variety of measures to enhance the supply of market and non-market housing in the community, including:

- Acquisition and renovation and reuse of existing motels. Examples:
 - Super 8 Motel in Penticton: Being converted to an emergency shelter and transitional housing complex to help the homeless. Province providing \$4.5 million to purchase the property.
 - Bel Air Motel in Penticton (42 units): The Provincial and Federal governments provided \$3.2 million to buy and renovate the former motel. The suites rents for \$475 a month.
 - Econo Lodge Motel in Kelowna (44 units): The Provincial and Federal governments have pledged \$5 million to buy and renovate the former motel.
- Use Affordable Housing Fund (similar to the City of North Vancouver, BC), Affordable Homes Renovation Fund/ Employee Housing Service Charge Fund (Whistler Housing Authority, BC) to address some of the persistent housing issues in the community. Housing Reserve Funds have been successfully used by a number of other municipalities across the country to tackle housing issues similar to the District.
- Work with large businesses to provide work-force housing (Wood Buffalo Housing & Development Corporation (WBHDC) provides affordable GAP rental housing in Fort McMurray and the rural hamlets of Conklin and Janvier.)
- Execute housing agreements to ensure that affordable housing units remain affordable in the long-term (Cedar Valley Manor, Mission, BC)
- Promote tiny lots /micro- units. Examples: Second Ave, Smithers, BC: Includes six houses on four lots facing a veranda instead of a six-plex and reducing parking requirements. The affordable rental units (540 sf.) rent for \$750 per month, lower than most of the surrounding area.
- Enhancing modular/ manufactured/mobile homes supply.
- Baker Gardens, Cranbrook: It is one of the largest modular housing developments to be built in British Columbia for low-income seniors (55+ years) under Canada's Economic Action Plan (CEAP). It includes 36 one-storey, one-bedroom homes, built in groups of four, with Federal and Provincial assistance of \$4.9 million.
- Incentives: Density bonus, tax exemptions, fee exemptions, expedited approvals, DCC exemptions etc.
- Work with First Nations partners to address the housing needs.
- Gain housing construction skills as part of the housing construction. For example, the Ucluelet First Nation, Vancouver Island: UFN had not built any housing in 18 years. They built 24 units in six-plexes using funds from INAC and CMHC. The band members also received training for using the LOGIX Insulated Concrete Forms (ICF), which is energy efficient, durable and ideal for mold prevention in the wet West Coast climate.

The District has a total of 926 addresses spread out over 4,669 acres of land.

6 Land utilization

This section examines the detailed parcel level dataset provided by the District. The dataset includes information on each of the property addresses including parcel size, zoning and BC Assessment information, including assessment class, assessed land and improvement value and actual use category. The dataset identifies 926 addresses in the District, spread out over 4,669 acres of land.

Property Class	# of Parcels	Lot Size (sf.)	Lot Size (acres)
Residential	740	115,914,406	2,661
Utilities	16	4,239,544	97
Major Industry	5	26,420,621	607
Light Industry	8	19,268,722	442
Business and other	146	37,173,402	853
Recreational property/non-profit organization	11	385,165	9
	926	203,401,861	4,669

Table 27: Parcel level dataset

Source: District of Fort St. James

6.1 Commercial Zones

The District has the following commercial zones as per the Zoning Bylaw No. 738, 2001:

- C1 Commercial- Core: This zone identifies the Central Business District of the Municipality. This zone provides for development of the financial, retail, entertainment, governmental and cultural core of the District. It allows for residential use in conjunction with commercial use.
- C2 Commercial- Highway: This zone provides for a provision of services to highway travelers and tourists. It allows for residential use in conjunction with highway commercial uses.
- C3 Commercial- Lakeshore: This zone accommodates lakeshore commercial services for the users of Stuart Lake. It allows for residential use in conjunction with lakeshore commercial uses.
- CRU Commercial-Rural: This zone accommodates local commercial uses in rural residential areas. It allows for residential use in conjunction with rural commercial uses.

6.2 Residential Zones

The District has the following residential zones as per the Zoning Bylaw No. 738, 2001:

- R1 Residential- Single Family: The purpose is to provide a zone for single detached dwelling housing on serviced urban lots.
- R2 Residential - Duplex: The purpose is to provide a zone for one-family dwelling use and for two-family dwelling use in scattered locations or clustered groupings.
- R3 Residential- Apartment Building: The purpose is to provide a zone for multiple-family dwelling use including group housing, row housing and apartment buildings.
- R4 Residential - Mobile Home: The purpose is to provide a zone for small lots for mobile homes.
- R5 Residential - Mobile Home Park: The purpose is to provide a zone for mobile home parks in locations with full urban services.
- R6 Residential - High Density Multiple Housing: The purpose is to provide a zone for higher density multiple-family dwellings used for apartment buildings and rest homes
- RU1 Rural Residential- Small Holding: The purpose is to provide a zone for small-lot rural residential development.
- RU2 Rural Residential: The purpose is to provide a zone for large-lot rural residential development.
- RU3 Rural Residential: The purpose is to provide a zone for large-lot rural residential development including agricultural use.

Zoning Categories	Min Lot Area (sqm)	Max Lot Coverage	DU per Lot/ Ha	Min Floor Space (sqm)	Height (Principal Building)
R1 Single-family	500	40%	1 Du/ Lot	60	10 m / 2.5 Storeys
R2 Duplex	SFD- 500 Duplex- 750	40%	2 Du / Lot	60	10 m / 2.5 Storeys
R3 Apartment Building	500	40%	Rowhouse- 40 Du/ Ha Apartments- 80 Du/ Ha	60	Rowhouse- 10 m / 2.5 Storeys Apartment - 12 m/ 3 Storeys
R4 Mobile Home	450	40%	1 Du/ Lot	60	10 m / 2.5 Storeys
R5 Mobile Home Park	5,000		27 Du/ Ha		10 m / 2.5 Storeys
R6 High Density Multiple Housing	1,000	45%	100 Du/ Ha	100	12 m / 3 Storeys
RU1 Rural Residential Small-lot	1,300	25%	1 Du/ Lot		10 m / 2 Storeys
RU2 Rural Residential Large-lot	20,000	10%	1 Du/ Lot		10 m / 2 Storeys
RU3 Rural Residential Large-lot with Agricultural Use	100,000	10%	2 Du / Lot		15 m / 3 Storeys

Table 28: Residential zones Bylaw specifications

Source: Urbanics Consultants and the District of Fort St. James

6.3 Residential uses and products by zoning categories

The detailed parcel level dataset identifies 926 addresses in the District spread out over 4,669 acres of land. Of the total addresses and land area, the residential uses represent 687 addresses and roughly 392 acres of land. Table 29 provides a detailed breakdown of the number of parcels and assessed value by zoning categories for the entire District.

Zoning	# of Parcels	Area (acres)	2017 Assessed Value					
			Land	Land Per Acre	Land Per Parcel	Building	Total	Per Parcel
R-1	507	147	\$ 12,553,200	\$ 85,315	\$ 24,760	\$ 62,617,100	\$ 75,170,300	\$ 148,265
R-2	6	2	\$ 219,300	\$ 97,380	\$ 36,550	\$ 1,011,000	\$ 1,230,300	\$ 205,050
R-3	48	26	\$ 2,397,000	\$ 93,282	\$ 49,938	\$ 9,633,200	\$ 12,030,200	\$ 250,629
R-4	78	11	\$ 1,478,300	\$ 137,170	\$ 18,953	\$ 2,926,400	\$ 4,404,700	\$ 56,471
RU-1	45	205	\$ 4,291,800	\$ 20,894	\$ 95,373	\$ 8,241,400	\$ 12,533,200	\$ 278,516
RU-2	3	2	\$ 114,000	\$ 69,186	\$ 38,000	\$ 176,000	\$ 290,000	\$ 96,667
C-1	34	21	\$ 1,849,900	\$ 86,071	\$ 54,409	\$ 12,809,300	\$ 14,659,200	\$ 431,153
C-2	33	14	\$ 1,506,100	\$ 105,623	\$ 45,639	\$ 4,227,200	\$ 5,733,300	\$ 173,736
C-3	8	26	\$ 532,800	\$ 20,643	\$ 66,600	\$ 198,800	\$ 731,600	\$ 91,450
C-RU	1	4	\$ 136,000	\$ 35,696	\$ 136,000	\$ 188,000	\$ 324,000	\$ 324,000
I-1	15	7	\$ 450,600	\$ 63,153	\$ 30,040	\$ 2,408,400	\$ 2,859,000	\$ 190,600
P-1	24	145	\$ 1,826,800	\$ 12,617	\$ 76,117	\$ 9,281,300	\$ 11,108,100	\$ 462,838
P-2	26	56	\$ 2,274,000	\$ 40,958	\$ 87,462	\$ 4,749,000	\$ 7,023,000	\$ 270,115
Blank	98	4,004	\$ 7,703,000	\$ 1,924	\$ 78,602	\$ 44,114,800	\$ 51,817,800	\$ 528,753
Total	926	4,669	\$ 37,332,800			\$ 162,581,900	\$ 199,914,700	

Table 29: Zoning categories and 2017 assessed values

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

The distribution of residential zoned uses and their share of total parcels in the District are provided below:

- R1- 507 parcels or 55 percent of the total parcels in the District.
- R2- 6 parcels or 1 percent of the total parcels in the District.
- R3- 48 parcels or 5 percent of the total parcels in the District.
- R4- 78 parcels or 8 percent of the total parcels in the District.
- RU-1- 45 parcels or 5 percent of the total parcels in the District.
- RU-2- 3 parcels or 0.3 percent of the total parcels in the District.

Apart from the above, 76 parcels or 8 percent of total parcels in the District are zoned commercial and 15 parcels or 1.6 percent of all parcels are zoned industrial. The reader should note that zoning categories were not available for roughly 98 parcels, which account for over 4,000 acres of land. It is likely that some of these parcels along with the commercial, industrial and other zoned lands are also being used for residential use. However, the scale of such residential use is expected to be fairly small in comparison to residential uses on the residential zoned lands.

6.4 Land utilization analysis

The dataset does not include the built-up information on each of the parcels (under residential use) and is not suitable for a detailed land utilization analysis. However, to provide a rough measure of land utilization in the District we have examined the assessed value of improvements in comparison to the assessed value of land and have identified parcels that are:

- Vacant (i.e. have no building values);
- Under-utilized parcels (with assessed value of buildings below 50 percent of the total assessed value); and,
- Adequately-utilized parcels (with assessed values of buildings above the 50% threshold).

Zoning	# of Parcels	Area (Acres)	Land Utilization (acres)			Number of Parcels		
			Vacant	Under -utilized	Adequately -utilized	Vacant Parcels	Under -utilized	Adequately -utilized
R-1	507	147.1	36.9	0.3	109.9	76	1	430
R-2	6	2.3	0.0	0.0	2.3	0	0	6
R-3	48	25.7	6.2	0.0	19.5	9	0	39
R-4	78	10.8	0.5	0.0	10.3	4	0	74
RU-1	49	230.9	20.9	142.4	67.6	13	6	30
RU-2	12	443.9	443.4	0.0	0.5	11	0	1
Mixed Residential	5	216.8	195.0	21.8	0.0	4	1	0
C-1	34	21.5	2.2	1.9	17.4	4	3	27
C-2	34	14.3	2.2	1.8	10.3	13	2	19
C-3	8	25.8	23.5	1.4	1.0	5	1	2
C-RU	1	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.8	0	0	1
I-1	28	158.9	112.7	0.0	46.2	8	0	20
I-2	16	1,085.9	235.6	176.9	673.4	6	1	9
I-3	7	256.6	102.4	138.2	16.0	4	1	2
P-1	34	209.7	163.1	12.2	34.4	23	7	4
P-2	27	61.0	7.0	6.6	47.4	5	2	20
Railway	9	264.5	176.4	81.9	6.2	3	2	4
Road	4	114.9	114.5	0.4	0.0	3	1	0
SROW	1	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	1	0	0
Utility	9	24.3	24.1	0.0	0.2	3	0	6
Water lot	3	3.4	0.7	2.8	0.0	1	2	0
Blank	6	1,342.4	1,342.4	0.0	0.0	6	0	0
Total	926	4,669.5	3,014.6	588.5	1,066.4	202	30	694

Table 30: Land utilization analysis
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

The analysis suggests that 76 parcels or 37 acres (roughly 15 percent) of the R-1 zoned parcels are vacant. These R1 zoned parcels represent a significant opportunity for augmenting supply in the short-run. Roughly 13 acres of R3 and R4 zoned lands are vacant. The table also suggests that most of the R-2 and R-4 zoned lands are adequately utilized and would benefit by additional lands being zoned in these categories. In addition, there are 9 vacant R-3 zoned parcels which might provide opportunities for developing multi-family dwellings. This zoning category has witnessed significant development activity in recent past and has resulted in some of the most affordable housing units in the District.

7 Development analysis

7.1 Potential locations for housing

There are several locations that are undeveloped as of the date of this study. These locations present opportunities for creating a wide diversity of housing types over the next few decades. These locations are identified below:

#	Address	Area	Status	Zoning	2017 Assessed Value		
					Land	Building	Land /acre
	Privately Owned:						
1	Lot 1 Plan 42119	21.82 acres	Vacant		\$ 263,400	\$ 55,500	\$ 12,071
2	Lot 2 Plan 42119	11.46 acres	Vacant		\$ 69,400		\$ 6,056
3	201 & 233 2nd Ave W	1.04 acres	Vacant	R-3	\$ 80,700		\$ 77,596
4	274 & 284 3rd Ave E	0.42 acres	Vacant	R-1	\$ 33,800	\$ -	\$ 80,476
5	294 3rd Ave E & 375 Stuart Drive E	1.03 acres	Unoccupied	C-2	\$ 102,800	\$ 123,900	\$ 99,806
6	295 Stuart Dr E	1.01 acres	Unoccupied	C-2	\$ 72,000	\$ 742,400	\$ 71,287
	District Owned:						
7	980 Douglas Ave	2.92 acres	Vacant	R-1	\$ 47,900		\$ 16,404

Table 31: Potential locations for development

These locations

1. #1 and #2 (Lot 1 & 2, Plan 42119) are the largest available vacant lands (33.28 acres) to the north of Elm Street. They are ideal for single-family subdivision development in keeping with the R1 and R-4 zoned lands to the east.
2. #3 or 201 & 233 2nd Ave W is 1.04 acres of vacant developable land. It is already zoned R-3 and can easily accommodate multiple-family development similar to other planned developments on 2nd Ave.
3. #4 or 274 & 284 3rd Ave E are two R-1 zoned vacant lots. These lots can be potentially developed along with C-2 zoned #5 or 294 3rd Ave and 375 Stuart Dr. (Legion Building) properties (1.03 acres). Together they would represent 1.45 acres of land that would be ideal for a high-density residential development. 375 Stuart Drive or the Legion Building, with a built-up of 12,000 sf is currently on the market for \$149,900.
4. #6 is the currently boarded up Chundoo Motor Inn, which has over 30 motel units. It was built in 1972 and had a 2017 assessed land value of \$72,000 and building value of \$747,000, which suggests that it might be a good candidate for adaptive re-use for affordable/social housing purposes.
5. #7 is the District owned parcel (2.92 acres) on Douglas Road.

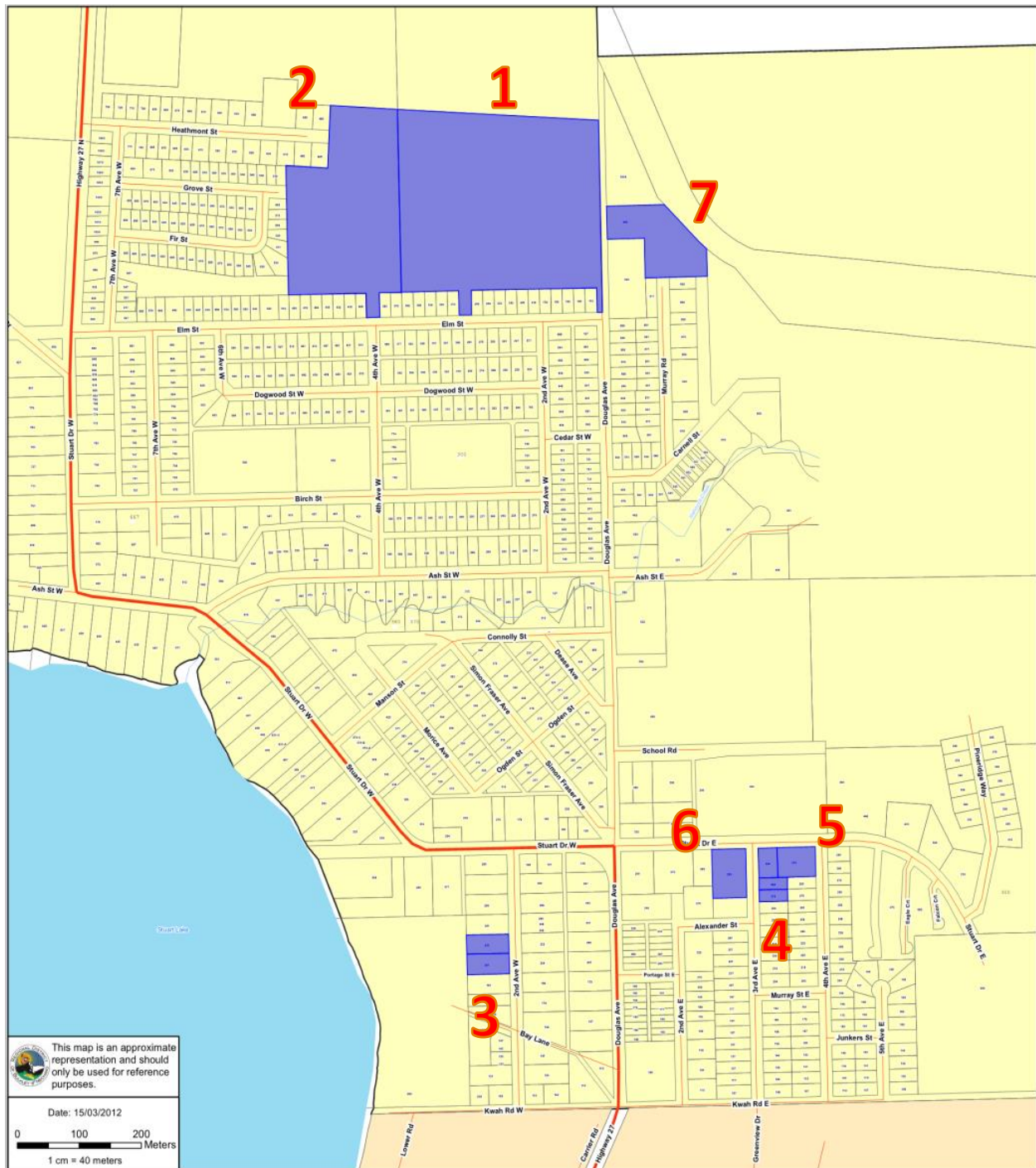


Figure 12: Potential locations for development

7.2 Development issues

The District has a sufficient supply of developable land at reasonable prices. However, it has witnessed limited new housing development as its population is either flat or declining and because the development returns are not high enough to compensate for the development risks. These economic fundamentals are likely to have an even greater impact on the supply of affordable housing for households with low to moderate incomes.

For example, a developer would be unlikely to develop housing when the anticipated revenues are not significantly higher than the total costs of development (land costs, development costs and marketing costs).

Developer's profit = net revenue – costs (land + construction + financing)

In such cases, a municipality could incentivize developers by either enhancing revenues or decreasing costs of development. This can be done by the way of policies such as zoning, density bonusing and/or decreasing costs of development by way of approval costs, DCC's, taxes etc. This is even more critical in the case of affordable housing as the prospect of reduced revenues over the life of the development would further limit development.

The various cost components of a residential development are provided below:

- Land costs
- Site servicing costs: Costs associated with roads, utilities, drainage etc.
- Construction costs
 - Hard costs: Cost of building construction
 - Soft costs: Cost of consultants, permits, fees etc.
- Financing costs

The development analysis contained in the next section is based on the construction costs provided in the Altus Cost Guide 2017. The costs to develop in Fort St. James have been adjusted based on the costs in Northern Interior in the Province of British Columbia, which is 15% higher as compared to the costs in Vancouver.

The next few sections determine the development potential of the land parcels identified in the previous section based on the zoning regulations. In addition, they examine the costs of development and the potential qualifying income for each of the owner-occupied and renter occupied dwelling types. Further, based on the qualifying income for each of the housing types, it identified the proportion of households that will not be able to purchase or rent a particular housing type. The main focus of the analyses is to identify housing types that are more likely to be affordable to a larger proportion of households in the community.

7.3 Lot 1 & 2, Plan 42119

Lot 1 and Lot 2 Plan 42119	Large lot R-1	Small lot R-1	Duplex R-2	Mobile R-4
Land sf	5,382	4,844	4,037	4,844
Built sf	1,800	1,500	1,200	900
Development Costs				
Land cost	\$ 15,322	\$ 13,791	\$ 9,025	\$ 15,254
Building cost				
Hard costs	\$ 259,200	\$ 216,000	\$ 152,400	\$ 67,500
Soft costs	\$ 51,840	\$ 43,200	\$ 30,480	\$ 13,500
Finance cost	\$ 8,159	\$ 6,825	\$ 4,798	\$ 2,406
Developer profit	\$ 48,954	\$ 40,949	\$ 28,786	\$ 14,438
Total Costs	\$ 383,476	\$ 320,764	\$ 225,488	\$ 113,098
Loan Amount	\$ 306,781	\$ 256,611	\$ 180,391	\$ 90,478
Mortgage payment(\$ monthly)	\$ 1,793	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,055	\$ 529
PITI (\$ annual)	\$ 24,348	\$ 20,366	\$ 14,317	\$ 7,181
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 81,159	\$ 67,886	\$ 47,722	\$ 23,936
% of households that fail affordability test	50%	39%	26%	8%

Table 32: Development analysis: Lot 1 and Lot 2

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Altus cost guide

Notes: Hard costs are estimated at \$144 psf for single-detached, \$127 psf for Duplex and \$75psf for mobile home

Finance costs are estimated at 5% per year

Soft Costs are 20% of hard costs except where stated otherwise

Developer profit is 15% of total costs

Lot 1 and Lot 2 can be developed as R-1, R-2 and R-4 subdivision. The development costs would be largely driven by the costs of construction as the land costs are expected to be a small component of the total development costs.

It is also evident that the size of the unit makes a significant impact on the affordability of the dwelling unit. The findings from the above table are:

- 1,800 sf single-detached home built to R-1 zoning regulations will cost roughly \$384,500 and will not be affordable to over 50 percent of the households in the community.
- 1,500 sf single-detached home built on a 450 sqm lot will cost over \$320,000 and will not be affordable to over 39 percent of the households in the community.
- 1,200 sf duplex home built to R-2 zoning regulations, i.e. 375 sqm lot, will cost over \$225,000 and will not be affordable to over 26 percent of the households in the community.
- 900 sf mobile home built to R-4 zoning regulations will cost over \$113,000 and will not be affordable to -8 percent of the households in the community.

Since per-square-foot prices for new construction are largely driven by the costs of land, materials and labour, a market-driven solution to affordability would be to build and sell smaller units. Also, mobile homes are expected to be the most affordable dwelling type in the community.

7.4 201 and 233 2nd Ave. W

201 and 233 2nd Ave W (Market)	1 bed	2bed	3 bed	Total
Distribution	25%	50%	25%	
Number of units	8	16	8	32
Land sf	1,166	1,416	1,666	45,302
Built sf	700	850	1,000	27,200
Development Costs				
Land cost (2017 BCA)	\$ 2,077	\$ 2,522	\$ 2,967	\$ 80,700
Building cost				
Hard costs	\$ 128,800	\$ 156,400	\$ 184,000	\$ 5,004,800
Soft costs	\$ 25,760	\$ 31,280	\$ 36,800	\$ 1,000,960
Finance costs	\$ 3,916	\$ 4,755	\$ 5,594	\$ 152,162
Developer profit	\$ 23,496	\$ 28,530	\$ 33,565	\$ 912,969
Total Costs	\$ 184,048	\$ 223,487	\$ 262,926	\$ 7,151,591
For-sale units				
Loan Amount	\$ 147,239	\$ 178,790	\$ 210,341	
Mortgage payment(\$ monthly)	\$ 861	\$ 1,045	\$ 1,230	
PITI (\$ annual)	\$ 11,686	\$ 14,190	\$ 16,694	
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 38,952	\$ 47,299	\$ 55,646	
% of households that fail affordability test	21%	26%	30%	
Rental Units				
Debt service (monthly)	\$ 613	\$ 745	\$ 876	
Management fee	\$ 204	\$ 248	\$ 292	
Minimum rent	\$ 900	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,285	\$ 419,560
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 35,992	\$ 43,704	\$ 51,417	
% of households that fail affordability test	18%	24%	28%	

Table 33: Development analysis: 201 and 233 2nd Ave W (market rate housing)

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Altus cost guide

Notes: Land costs are based on 2017 BC assessment land value
Hard costs are estimated at \$184 psf for 3 storey apartment buildings
Development finance costs are estimated at 5% per year
Soft Costs are 20% of hard costs except where stated otherwise
Developer profit is 15% of total costs
Minimum rent includes 10% replacement reserve in addition to debt service and management fee
Permanent financing of the rental building is estimated at 4% per year.

The findings from the above table for market rate housing are:

- 700 sf 1-bedroom unit will sell for \$184,000 and not be affordable to 21% of the households. Alternatively, it could potentially rent for a minimum of \$900 per month and will not be affordable to 18 percent of the households in the community.
- 850 sf 2-bedroom unit will sell for \$223,500 and not be affordable to 26% of the households. Alternatively, it could potentially rent for a minimum of \$1090 per month and will not be affordable to 24 percent of the households in the community.

- 1000 sf 3-bedroom unit will sell for \$262,900 and not be affordable to 30% of the households. Alternatively, it could potentially have a minimum rent of \$1,285 per month which will not be affordable to 28 percent of the households in the community.

Thus, rental units are expected to be more affordable to a larger number of households. Further, if the municipality were to subsidize the land costs (\$80,700) and the soft costs of development (offer 50 percent reductions), i.e. a reduction of roughly \$500,000, the overall impact on the affordability is as follows:

- 1-bedroom unit would likely rent for \$814 instead of \$900 per month and will not be affordable to 15 percent instead of 18 percent of the households in the community.
- 2-bedroom unit would likely rent for \$968 instead of \$1,090 per month and will not be affordable to 21 percent instead of 24 percent of the households in the community.
- 3-bedroom unit would likely rent for \$1,163 instead of \$1,285 per month and will not be affordable to 26 percent instead of 28 percent of the households in the community.

Thus, roughly 8 percent reduction in development cost (\$581,000 out of \$7,151,600) results in a 10 percent reduction in monthly rental rates in the above development.

201 and 233 2nd Ave W (Non-market)	1 bed	2bed	3 bed	Total
Distribution	25%	50%	25%	
Number of units	8	16	8	32
Land sf	1,166	1,416	1,666	45,302
Built sf	700	850	1,000	27,200
Development Costs				
Land cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Building cost				
Hard costs	\$ 128,800	\$ 156,400	\$ 184,000	\$ 5,004,800
Soft costs (10%)	\$ 12,880	\$ 15,640	\$ 18,400	\$ 500,480
Finance costs	\$ 3,542	\$ 4,301	\$ 5,060	\$ 137,632
Developer profit	\$ 21,252	\$ 25,806	\$ 30,360	\$ 825,792
Total Costs	\$ 166,474	\$ 202,147	\$ 237,820	\$ 6,468,704
Rental Units				
Debt service (monthly)	\$ 555	\$ 674	\$ 793	
Management fee	\$ 185	\$ 225	\$ 264	
Minimum rent	\$ 814	\$ 988	\$ 1,163	\$ 379,497
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 32,555	\$ 39,531	\$ 46,507	
% of households that fail affordability test	15%	21%	26%	

Table 34: Development analysis: 201 and 233 2nd Ave. W (non-market rate housing)

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Altus cost guide

Notes: Hard costs are estimated at \$184 psf for 3 storey apartment buildings

Development finance costs are estimated at 5% per year

Soft Costs are 10% of hard costs except where stated otherwise

Developer profit is 15% of total costs

Minimum rent includes 10% replacement reserve in addition to debt service and management fee

Permanent financing of the rental building is estimated at 4% per year.

7.5 274/284/294 3rd Ave. E and 375 Stuart Dr. E

274 / 284 / 294 3rd Ave & 375 Stuart Dr Market-rate housing	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed	Total
Distribution	25%	50%	25%	
Number of units	12	23	12	46
Land sf	978	1,369	1,662	63,162
Built sf	500	700	850	32,300
Development Costs				
Land cost (2017 BCA)	\$ 2,115	\$ 2,960	\$ 3,595	\$ 136,600
Building cost				
Hard costs	\$ 92,000	\$ 128,800	\$ 156,400	\$ 5,943,200
Soft costs	\$ 18,400	\$ 25,760	\$ 31,280	\$ 1,188,640
Finance costs	\$ 2,813	\$ 3,938	\$ 4,782	\$ 181,711
Developer profit	\$ 16,877	\$ 23,628	\$ 28,691	\$ 1,090,266
Total Costs	\$ 132,205	\$ 185,086	\$ 224,748	\$ 8,540,417
Rental Units				
Debt service (monthly)	\$ 441	\$ 617	\$ 749	
Management fee	\$ 147	\$ 206	\$ 250	
Minimum rent	\$ 646	\$ 905	\$ 1,099	\$ 501,038
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 25,853	\$ 36,195	\$ 43,951	
% of households that fail affordability test	10%	18%	24%	

Table 35: Development analysis: 274/284/294 3rd Ave. E and 375 Stuart Dr. E (market rate housing)

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Altus cost guide

Notes: Land costs are based on 2017 BC assessment land value
 Hard costs are estimated at \$184 psf for 3 storey apartment buildings
 Development finance costs are estimated at 5% per year
 Soft Costs are 20% of hard costs except where stated otherwise
 Developer profit is 15% of total costs
 Minimum rent includes 10% replacement reserve in addition to debt service and management fee
 Permanent financing of the rental building is estimated at 4% per year.

The 274/ 284/ 294 3rd Ave. E and the 375 Stuart Dr. E properties are located at the intersection of 3rd Ave. and Stuart Dr. E. These properties also include the existing Legion Building which could potentially be reused for amenity space and support services for the multi-family development around it. In addition, the lands could potentially be used to develop the following:

- 500 sf studio unit could potentially rent for a minimum of \$646 per month and will not be affordable to 10 percent of the households in the community.
- 700 sf 2-bedroom unit could potentially rent for a minimum of \$900 per month and will not be affordable to 18 percent of the households in the community.
- 850 sf 3-bedroom unit could potentially rent for a minimum of \$1,100 per month and will not be affordable to 24 percent of the households in the community.

274 / 284 / 294 3rd Ave & 375 Stuart Dr Non-market rate housing	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed	Total
Distribution	25%	50%	25%	
Number of units	12	23	12	46
Land sf	978	1,369	1,662	63,162
Built sf	500	700	850	32,300
Development Costs				
Land cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Building cost				
Hard costs	\$ 92,000	\$ 128,800	\$ 156,400	\$ 5,943,200
Soft costs (10% of hard costs)	\$ 9,200	\$ 12,880	\$ 15,640	\$ 594,320
Finance costs	\$ 2,530	\$ 3,542	\$ 4,301	\$ 163,438
Developer profit	\$ 15,180	\$ 21,252	\$ 25,806	\$ 980,628
Total Costs	\$ 118,910	\$ 166,474	\$ 202,147	\$ 7,681,586
Rental Units				
Debt service (monthly)	\$ 396	\$ 555	\$ 674	
Management fee	\$ 132	\$ 185	\$ 225	
Minimum rent	\$ 581	\$ 814	\$ 988	\$ 450,653
Qualifying income(\$ annual)	\$ 23,254	\$ 32,555	\$ 39,531	
% of households that fail affordability test	8%	15%	21%	

Table 36: Development analysis: 274/284/294 3rd Ave. E & 375 Stuart Dr. E (non-market housing)

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Altus cost guide

Notes: Land costs are based on 2017 BC assessment land value

Hard costs are estimated at \$184 psf for 3 storey apartment buildings

Development finance costs are estimated at 5% per year

Soft Costs are 20% of hard costs except where stated otherwise

Developer profit is 15% of total costs

Minimum rent includes 10% replacement reserve in addition to debt service and management fee

Permanent financing of the rental building is estimated at 4% per year.

If the District were to subsidize the land costs (\$136,600) and the soft costs of development (offer 50 percent reductions), i.e. a reduction of roughly \$594,000, the overall impact on the affordability is as follows:

- Studio unit would likely rent for \$581 instead of \$646 per month and will not be affordable to 8 percent instead of 10 percent of the households in the community.
- 1-bedroom unit would likely rent for \$814 instead of \$900 per month and will not be affordable to 15 percent instead of 18 percent of the households in the community.
- 3-bedroom unit would likely rent for \$988 instead of \$1,100 per month and will not be affordable to 21 percent instead of 24 percent of the households in the community.

Thus, roughly 8.5 percent reduction in development cost (\$730,900 out of \$8,540,400) results in a 10 percent reduction in monthly rental rates in the above development.

7.6 295 Stuart Dr. E

295 Stuart Drive E can be a good example of adaptive reuse for the District of Fort St James. Similar, adaptive reuse of the Bel Air Motel or the Fairhaven in the City of Penticton has resulted in creating a 42-unit affordable housing complex for low income residents.

The Provincial and Federal governments have provided \$3.2 million to buy and renovate the former motel. The governments will own the property, BC Housing will be in charge of day-to-day operations and management. In addition, the suites are expected to rent for roughly \$475 a month, which is about \$200 less than what rental rates cost before the motel closed.

It might be possible to attain a rent level in line with the motel in the City of Penticton and provide roughly 30 social housing/affordable units in the community.

7.7 980 Douglas Ave.

The 980 Douglas Ave. property is zoned R-1 and is in proximity to Lot 1 and Lot 2. It could potentially be developed as single-detached homes with secondary homes, duplex homes and mobile homes. The pricing of the resulting homes will be no different than the homes discussed in the earlier section.

However, since Lot 1 and Lot 2 are expected to represent 200 - 300 single-detached, duplex and mobile home lots at 6-8 units an acre, the 980 Douglas Ave. site is not likely to be developed in the next 20 years.

7.8 Main findings

- Rental housing units are expected to be more affordable to a larger number of households in the community, especially for low-income and wealth-constrained households (households that do have the required down payment).
- The District will be well served by enhancing the supply of smaller sized owner-occupied and rental homes.
- 3 storey multi-family developments offer viable affordable rental housing options for the District. These housing products are unlikely to be desired for owner-occupancy as ground oriented single-detached homes and mobile homes are expected to be preferred for owner-occupancy.
- The District could also potentially use mixed model with part of the units supplied at market-rate and the remainder subsidized through grants and rent supplements.
- Adaptive reuse of the Chundoo Motor Inn would provide the most appropriate social housing for individuals and households that can only afford to pay less than \$600 per month.
- Low land costs and presence of several good parcels for development offers ample opportunities for addressing the housing needs of the community.

8 Housing needs projections

8.1 Housing needs as a result of growth in households

This section examines the future housing needs of the community based on the population and household growth projections. The population growth projections are based on the Census 2016 population counts for the District of Fort St. James and the adjusted age cohort and gender-based population growth rates for the Nechako Lakes School District for the period 2017 - 2026 (P.E.O.P.L.E 2017, BC Stats, Aug 2017). These population projections incorporate age-cohort and gender-based fertility and mortality data and mobility information for the geography to project the future population for the region.

Further, distribution of the households based on the age of the head of the household (2016 Census) have been used to estimate the total number of households over the projection period; assuming that household maintainer rates for each of the age-groups in the population stay constant over the study period.

The household projections show an increase of 26 households every five years or a total of 52 households during 2017 - 2026. The resulting estimates of households by age cohort for the District are shown in the tables below.

Population	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Under 15 years	385	320	314	312	
15 to 24 years	235	215	215	205	
25 to 34 years	195	185	211	226	
35 to 44 years	230	230	234	233	
45 to 54 years	245	230	210	209	
55 to 64 years	205	210	216	185	
65 to 74 years	125	125	155	187	
75 years and over	65	80	99	121	
	1,685	1,595	1,654	1,678	

Households	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Under 25 years	23	20	20	19	
25 to 34 years	105	100	114	122	
35 to 44 years	140	140	142	142	
45 to 54 years	138	130	119	118	
55 to 64 years	137	140	144	123	
65 to 74 years	70	70	87	105	
75 years and over	37	45	56	68	
	650	645	681	698	
Household growth					
5 year period			36	16	26
Annual			7	3	5

Table 37: Population and household projection
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Assuming that tenure preferences rates remain stable, demand for housing, by age cohort and tenure can be estimated as follows:

Owner-occupied	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Under 25 years	12	10	10	10	
25 to 34 years	63	60	68	73	
35 to 44 years	90	90	92	91	
45 to 54 years	101	95	87	86	
55 to 64 years	117	120	123	106	
65 to 74 years	55	55	68	82	
75 years and over	28	35	43	53	
	467	465	492	501	
Housing needs					
5 year period			27	10	18
Annual			5	2	4

Renter-occupied	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Under 25 years	12	10	10	10	
25 to 34 years	42	40	46	49	
35 to 44 years	50	50	51	51	
45 to 54 years	37	35	32	32	
55 to 64 years	20	20	21	18	
65 to 74 years	15	15	19	22	
75 years and over	8	10	12	15	
	184	180	190	196	
Housing needs					
5 year period			10	6	8
Annual			2	1	2

Table 38: Owner and renter household growth projections - 2017-2026

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

The owner and renter household growth projections suggest that the District would add:

- 18 new owner-households every five years or a total of 37 owner-household during the period 2017 - 2026.
- 8 new renter-households every five years or a total of 16 renter-households during 2017 - 2026.

These estimates have been broken down further to estimate the number of households in core housing need by tenure, which is summarized on the next page.

Housing Needs	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Owner occupied	467	465	492	501	
Renter-occupied	184	180	190	196	
Total housing needs	650	645	681	698	
Net housing needs					
Owner occupied					
5 year period			27	10	18
Annual			5	2	4
Renter-occupied					
5 year period			10	6	8
Annual			2	1	2
Core Housing Needs	2011	2016	2021	2026	Average
Core housing needs					
Owner occupied	62	62	66	67	
Renter-occupied	54	53	56	58	
Net needs					
Owner-occupied					
5 year period			4	1	3
Annual			1	0	1
Renter-occupied					
5 year period			3	2	3
Annual			1	0	1

Table 39: Households in core housing needs, 2017-2026

Source: Urbanics Consultants

Table 39 provides the number of households that are likely to experience core housing need. The projections suggest that 5 new owner-households and 5 new renter-households are likely to be in core housing needs during 2017 - 2026.

It is based on the assumption that 13 percent of all new owner-households and 29% of all new renter-households are likely to experience core housing needs over the study period. Thus, overall:

- Out of a total of housing needs for 37 owner-occupied units in the District, 5 households are expected to be in core housing needs.
- Out of a total of housing needs for 16 renter-occupied units in the District, 5 households are expected to be in core housing needs.

The new households in core housing needs can be expected to fail the suitability, adequacy and affordability thresholds in the District. The District will be well served by implementing programs and policies that address the needs of these households, especially by enhancing the supply of affordable rental housing units in the District.

8.2 Development implications

The housing needs in a community are a reflection of the number of households in a community. However, development activity in a community is likely to be in excess of the actual growth in the number of households (permanent residents of the community). This is primarily because development activity in a community would typically include, in addition to new household growth, the following:

- Development activity for replacing of old housing stock. This would include any housing that has reached the end of its useful life and is unfit for human habitation. This typically represents roughly 5% of the total housing stock in similar communities. Further, assuming that roughly 14% of all housing in the District is in need of major repairs, it is likely that at least a third of these homes (or 5%) needs replacement.
- Vacant dwelling units and dwellings used by temporary residents. This would include any structural vacancy in owner-occupied and renter-occupied homes as well as vacation homes and homes occupied by temporary residents (roughly 15% the total housing in 2016).

8.3 Non-market housing needs

The District currently has an inventory of 20 non-market units or roughly 3 percent of the total occupied housing stock (644 in 2016). There is a need for roughly 30 homeless shelters and at least 4 transition homes in the community. The current non-market housing need for the community is anticipated to be roughly 54 units (8.4 percent of the total occupied housing). Further, assuming that the District is able to maintain its future non-market housing at 2017 levels the housing needs of the community will be roughly 59 units (8 percent of 698) by 2026. Thus, the District would be well served by adding roughly 40 emergency, supportive and transitional housing units during 2016 - 2026.

In addition, the District might also require additional affordable rental housing for its low-income household, as roughly 14% of its renter-households are facing affordability issues. At least 25 renter-households are expected to be facing affordability issues in 2016, which is likely to increase to roughly 30 households by 2026.

The reader should note that the rental housing needs estimated above are already included in the housing needs estimate for the District. However, emergency, supportive and transitional housing is not included in the above estimation as these types of housing would typically be identified as collective dwellings (dwellings which are institutional, communal or commercial in nature) in the Census.

8.4 Potential new demand by the age of household maintainer

The District is expected to display the following growth or decline in the number of households (by the age of the household maintainer), during the period 2017 – 2026:

1.	Under 25 years	No growth
2.	25 to 34 years	Total number of households in this group will increase by 22 net new households, with 13 owner-households and 9 renter-households
3.	35 to 44 years	Total number of households in this group will increase by 2 net new households, with 1 owner-household and 1 renter-household
4.	45 to 54 years	Total number of households in this group will decrease by 12 households
5.	55 to 64 years	Total number of households in this group will decrease by 17 households
6.	65 to 74 years	Total number of households in this group will increase by 35 net new households, with 27 owner-households and 7 renter-households
7.	75 years and over	Total number of households in this group will increase by 23 net new households, with 18 owner-households and 5 renter-households

Thus, the primary housing needs are expected to be in the following demographic groups:

Householders 25 - 34 years

This group represents young households with maintainers in the 24 – 35 years age group. This household group is more inclined towards home ownership, especially entry-level homeownership. Typically, these householders have stable careers and are either already married or planning to get married. This demographic segment would prefer more affordable small single-family units and multi-family units. This segment is expected to display a housing need for 13 owner-occupied housing units and 9 renter-occupied units.

Householders 65 + years

This demographic segment includes empty nesters, retirees and seniors and can include households with low income and net wealth (requiring social housing) as well as households that were well off and have sizeable wealth. This segment is expected to display a housing need for 45 owner-occupied housing units and 12 renter-occupied units. This demographic segment includes two distinct categories:

- independent elderly (singles and married couples in good health): Independent elderly exhibit market characteristics more similar to that of the primary market, but with certain adjustments (e.g. a preference for generally smaller, lower-maintenance units, with a preference for greater access to certain amenities and facilities such as health care and convenience retail, to name just a few).
- elderly in need of assistance (singles and couples with lower incomes and health concerns): These households require a wide variety of seniors housing and care options, including congregate care units and assisted living units.

Focus areas:

- Address market-rate housing needs
- Address non-market housing needs
- Enhance supply of rental housing
- Enhance housing affordability
- Enhance the quality of current housing stock
- Facilitate development on vacant lands
- Address Housing Needs of First Nation Communities

9 Findings and focus areas

The District of Fort St. James faces significant challenges in meeting its present and projected housing needs. Our findings from the analyses and the surveys suggest the following seven major themes:

9.1 Address market-rate housing needs

Overall the District is expected to display an additional housing need for 36 owner-occupied and 16 renter-occupied housing units during the period 2017 – 2026. This housing need is likely to be distributed between two demographic segments, i.e. with household maintainers in 25 – 34 years or young households and households with maintainers in 65 years and over or senior households.

The study finds that young households (with maintainers in 25 - 34 years) are expected to display a housing need for 13 owner-occupied housing units and 9 renter-occupied units. Also, senior households (with maintainers in 65 years or over) are expected to display a housing need for 45 owner-occupied housing units and 12 renter-occupied units.

These demographic segments are more likely to display demand for entry-level owner-occupied housing and affordable rental housing.

9.2 Address non-market housing needs

There is an unmet need for roughly 30 homeless shelters and at least 4 transition homes in the community. In addition, the District is expected to need at least 5 additional social-housing units by 2026. Thus, the District is expected to have a pressing need for roughly 40 emergency shelters, supportive and transitional housing during 2017 - 2026.

These housing needs will also require support services related to homeless outreach and homelessness prevention, women and children at risk of violence or who have experienced violence, individuals with addiction and substance use problems, individuals with mental and physical health conditions and/or other challenges that puts them at higher risk of homelessness. The reader should note that government sponsored and subsidized housing is important to serve people with special needs, but can only address a small portion of the total affordable housing demands.

9.3 Enhance supply of rental housing

The District of Fort St. James is facing an extremely tight rental housing market. Interviews with the stakeholders and municipal staff has also suggested that there is a limited supply of rental housing in the community. As a result, rents have also significantly increased and several households are facing significant difficulty in securing appropriate housing.

The District had 644 occupied housing units in 2016, of which 180 units were renter-occupied (2016 Census). Much of the rental units are in apartments in buildings less than 5 storeys (55 units), row houses, duplexes and other homes (50 units) and mobile homes (5 units). The remainder are expected to be located in single-family and semi-detached homes (70 units, or 15 percent of total single-family occupied units).

Further, the District has added only 24 apartment units during 2011 – 2016, which is expected to be insufficient for addressing the pent-up demand from previous years. In addition, the District has significant unmet need for housing of temporary or seasonal employees in and around the District. Often such employees live in work camps or live in motels for an extended period of time.

9.4 Enhance housing affordability

The study finds that single-detached homes (median priced), priced at \$187,500, will not be affordable to 21 percent of the households in the community. In contrast, duplex, and other attached apartment units will not be affordable to 13 percent of the total households. The most affordable product type is the mobile home, which is affordable to over 98 percent of the households in the community.

The households who are unable to afford to buy their primary home are likely to rent and put additional pressure on an already tight rental market, creating additional upward pressure on rental rates. This would create a domino effect on renter-households and more vulnerable populations, including seniors and low-income households, who are already frustrated by the lack of units available on the market. These affordability issues are further exacerbated for the more vulnerable populations, including homeless and people with addictions and mental health issues.

The District will be well served by working with developers to facilitate a diverse mix of affordable owner-occupied dwelling units going forward.

9.5 Maintain the quality of current housing stock

The study finds that roughly 14 percent of the housing stock in the District needs major repairs. This is significantly higher than the RDBN (13%) and the Province (6%). This is not surprising considering that roughly 63 percent of the total housing stock in the District was built prior to 1980. In contrast, only 52% of the housing stock in the RDBN and only 44% of the housing stock in the Province was built before 1980. This is also in line with the findings from the survey and feedback from stakeholders.

Thus, the District would benefit from policies that support major repairs to its housing stock, especially lower-income households needing help repairing and maintaining their homes. In addition, the District would benefit by closely monitoring and even assisting owners providing affordable rental housing in maintaining the condition of existing rental stock. This is especially important as rental units are more likely to require major repairs as compared to single-family units.

9.6 Facilitate development on vacant lands

The study finds that 76 parcels or roughly 15 percent of the R-1 zoned parcels are vacant. This represents roughly 37 acres of land. These R-1 zoned parcels represent opportunities for augmenting supply in the short-run. Also, roughly 13 acres of R-3 and R-4 zoned lands are vacant.

The findings also suggest that most of the R-2 and R-4 zoned lands are adequately utilized and would benefit by additional lands being zoned in these categories. However, there are 9 vacant R-3 zoned parcels which might provide some opportunities for developing multi-family dwellings in the short run. This zoning category has witnessed significant development activity in recent years and has resulted in some of the most affordable housing units in the District. The District will be well served by creating a greater diversity of dwelling types on vacant and under-utilized lands.

9.7 Address Housing Needs of the First Nations Communities

The study finds that First Nations communities are facing several housing issues, such as overcrowding, poor quality of housing, mold, limited supply, and housing affordability. Poor credit quality and limited earning capacity also hampers housing affordability on First Nations lands.

The District could potentially collaborate with the First Nations communities to address some of the issues that are of concern to both.

10 Housing Action Plan

Over the past few months the consultant has analyzed the demographic, socio-economic and housing characteristics of the District and the First Nations communities. In addition, the consultant has conducted comprehensive stakeholder consultation and a survey of the study area, including the District, the First Nations communities and households living in Electoral Area C in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako to identify some of the pressing housing needs of the community. The findings from the above analyses and consultation was then used to develop a comprehensive Housing Action Plan (HAP) for the community.

The over-arching objective of the HAP is to examine and provide a series of actions that could potentially be used by the District of Fort St. James in addressing the housing challenges faced by the entire community. The HAP is mindful of the limited resources available to the local government and focuses on enhancing the community's ability to offer a wide variety of housing types, sizes, tenures and prices across the housing continuum, instead of just subsidizing units.

The HAP acknowledges that addressing the housing challenges faced by the community would require active engagement with non-profit partners, private sector development partners, major employers, the Regional, Provincial and Federal government agencies and other public agencies.

The HAP is also mindful of the current challenges faced by the entry level homeowners, renter-households, senior households, and low-income households in the community and focuses on enhancing the housing choices that are available to such households in the housing market. In addition, it is mindful of the fact that no single strategy can meet all affordable housing needs of the District of Fort St. James; i.e. a combination of all the strategies will be required to address the housing issues faced by the community.

The HAP builds upon the seven focus areas identified in the previous section, namely:

1. Address market-rate housing needs
2. Address non-market housing needs
3. Enhance supply of rental housing
4. Enhance housing affordability
5. Maintain the quality of current housing stock
6. Facilitate development on vacant lands
7. Address housing needs of First Nations communities

The resulting strategy represents a proactive approach to addressing the housing issues being faced by the District of Fort St. James, while staying within the resources and authority of the District.

10.1 Objective 1: Address market-rate housing needs

The District should periodically re-assess residential supply and demand characteristics every 3-5 years. The District will be well served by using the findings from these studies to guide new housing developments within the District. This will not only identify pressing housing issues in the community but also help in achieving a diversity of housing types and price points in the community.

10.1.1 Strategy 1: Enhance density in existing urban properties

Detail: There is an opportunity to allow the owners of existing urban properties to increase density, for example, by converting a garage or basement into a rentable suite, adding a storey, or replacing single-family with multi-family housing. In addition, a significant amount of affordable housing can easily be added by promoting cheaper ground-oriented wood-frame construction multi-family (two- to five-storey) buildings. This strategy is expected to be the most cost effective overall, because it enhances density in existing neighbourhoods, provides additional income to residents, and provides more affordable housing options for residents. However, such development can create local impacts (construction noise and dust problems), which lead to neighbourhood resistance.

Suggested Actions:

- Allow secondary suites and garden suites in existing single-family home zones, subject to neighbourhood context, parking and design considerations.
- Consider the use of lock-off, secondary and micro-suites in multi-family developments as part of neighbourhood plan updates.
- Allow smaller parcel sizes and subdivisions as well as cooperative ownership structures.
- Promote tiny lots /micro-units. Examples: Second Ave., Smithers, BC: Includes six houses on four lots facing a veranda instead of a six-plex and reducing parking requirements. The affordable rental units (540 sf.) rent for \$750 per month, lower than most of the surrounding area.
- Allow higher densities and building heights.

Success Measures: Number of dwelling units; number of housing completions; rent affordability; vacancy rates; assessments.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning and homeowners.

Priority: High

10.1.2 Strategy 2: Enhance the supply of entry-level housing and senior housing

The District will be well served by working with the home builders in reducing the costs and the risks associated with developing in the District. This is especially important because the housing market displays significant risks related to the development returns and fluctuating occupancies. Thus, the District will be well served by providing incentives to developers of affordable entry-level housing and seniors housing in the community to reduce their front-end costs as well as the anticipated risks in the development. This strategy is expected to be very effective in addressing the housing needs for senior households and younger households in the community. This would create dwelling types that are needed in the community and at an affordable price.

Suggested Actions:

- Use municipal entitlements and incentives to direct growth within appropriate locations in the District.
- Potential incentives could include reducing fees, density bonuses etc.
- Work with developers on reducing their front-end costs, especially in developments that are in line with the HAP, i.e. market-rate affordable housing units.
- Use the zoning and permit approval process to guide home development.
- Monitor progress quarterly. Reassess this strategy at least every five years.

Success Measures: Number of market-rate entry-level housing units, seniors housing units; number of units, sales prices, rent affordability and vacancy rates.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, and home builders

Priority: High

10.2 Objective 2: Address non-market housing needs

Detail: Affordable housing, refers to a wide spectrum of housing types, including homeless shelters and transition housing, subsidized social housing for people with special needs, and various housing types that low- and middle-income households can rent and purchase.

10.2.1 Strategy 1: Work with other levels of government, community agencies, and the development community to address housing affordability issues

The District will be well served by working with the non-profit sector and Provincial and Federal agencies to create and implement programs and policies to address the high rate of mental health, substance abuse and homelessness issues in the community. In addition, the District would have to ensure that an adequate number of affordable rental housing is available to support the increase in low-income singles, families and seniors going forward.

Suggested Actions:

- Explore opportunities for innovative multi-agency cooperation with other levels of government, the development community and non-profit housing providers.
- Promote the creation of special needs housing projects that are managed by community agencies and non-profits, including seniors housing, shelters and housing for the homeless and people with mental health and addiction issues.
- Review the use of District resources for housing affordability projects, in conjunction with Council's financial plan, business plan and capital funding processes.
- Advocate, in collaboration with others, for increased senior government support of local housing affordability initiatives.
- Enhance the supply of seniors housing through the Housing Reserve Fund, donating District-owned land, grants-in-aid, and waiver of property taxes or development charges for non-profit housing projects to facilitate development of much needed seniors housing.
- Partner with non-profit agencies to enhance the support services for the homeless population.
- Facilitate adaptive reuse of 295 Stuart Drive E or the Chundoo Motor Inn, which has over 30 motel units, for affordable/social housing purposes.
- Pursue funds from the BC Government's modular housing program, which seeks to invest \$291 million towards building 2,000 modular housing units for homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. The Province is expected to work with local governments and community groups in order to create a homelessness action plan through permanent housing and services, starting with Prince Rupert (\$3.6 million for 44 units), Terrace (\$8 million for 52 units) and Vernon (\$11 million for 53-unit supportive housing project).

Success Measures: Number of non-market-rate housing units, including shelters, transition homes, seniors housing etc. and rental rates offered.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, BC Housing, CMHC, non-profits and home builders

Priority: High

10.2.2 Strategy 2: Assist residents in assessing programs aimed at improving housing adequacy, suitability and affordability.

Suggested Actions:

- Create and maintain an inventory of affordable and accessible housing in the District.
- Identify non-market housing and rent supplement opportunities or other types of subsidies for low income tenants in co-operative and non-profit housing projects.
- Provide support for temporary homeless shelter initiatives.
- Explore provisions of rent supplements (Rental Assistance Program and Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters) or other types of subsidies for low income tenants in co-operative and non-profit housing projects.
- Create a Homelessness and Housing Task Group.
- Provide ongoing support to non-profit housing providers to help them best serve their client groups and be good neighbours to adjacent residents and businesses.

Success Measures: Number of affordable and accessible housing units, rent supplements opportunities, and rental rates offered.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, non-profit groups, residents and home builders

Priority: Medium

10.2.3 Strategy 3: Undertake research and education to support innovation

Suggested Actions:

- Research housing affordability programs and development models used in other locations, to foster innovation in housing affordability and communicate best practices.
- Collect, analyze and provide housing data to non-market housing providers, other municipalities, community agencies, government agencies and the media, as needed, and to support housing affordability initiatives.
- As part of the ongoing implementation of this strategy, Council may consider funding of additional staff resources if required to implement and deliver all elements of this strategy action or a portion of a staff position funded through the AHRF.

Success Measures: Collaborate with community agencies and non-market housing providers in identifying current housing needs of the community.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning; Dept. of Social Planning; private home developers.

Priority: Medium

10.3 Objective 3: Enhance supply of rental housing

Detail: Enhance the supply of multi-family rental housing in the District. One of the obstacles faced by the District is the cost of developing rental housing and corresponding affordability of the rental products. Residents in the District must be willing to embrace denser built forms and live in multi-family buildings, including duplexes, fourplexes and apartment buildings.

10.3.1 Strategy 1: Facilitate rental housing supply

Suggested Actions:

- Recognizing shifting housing market dynamics, encourage the development of designated market rental units.
- Enhance rental supply through the creative use of municipal incentives, density bonus, DCC discounts, reduced parking requirements and other programs. The District could also potentially enter into a partnership with developers to develop and operate rental apartment units on District owned land parcels.
- Review the Zoning Bylaw and consider amendments that support purpose-built rental unit development.
- Exempt rental floorspace from maximum density allowances, in cases where maximum density has been achieved according to the Zoning Bylaw, subject to servicing, parking, traffic, urban design, building height/massing review.
- Encourage the development of building designs with a variety of innovative unit types (studios, lock-off suites, micro suites, accessible/special needs suites) and tenures, subject to detailed design review.
- Encourage the development of purpose-built rental building(s), units with below-market rents, significant strata rental covenants, secured by a housing agreement for the life of the building they are contained within.

Success Measures: Number of rental units, rental rates, vacancy rates.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning and developers.

Priority: High

10.3.2 Facilitate workforce housing

Much of the apartment vacancy is likely influenced by short term seasonal work, particularly with logging activities and other forestry and mining related work. The District could potentially enhance the supply of work-force housing in the community by either working with some of the largest employers in the region or by creating a workforce housing fund to assist in the development of workforce rental housing solutions in the community.

Suggested Actions:

- Work with large employers on the provision of workforce housing in the District. Use municipal incentives, density bonus, DCC discounts, reduced parking requirements and other programs to facilitate workforce housing.
- Explore the creation of a Workforce Housing Fund in collaboration with large employers in the region, including those that employ seasonal employees.
- The fund could potentially be created in line with Whistler's Housing Service Charge Fund that is levied on projects that increase the number of employees to fund affordable housing (for sale as well as rental units) for the community's permanent tourism employees. In addition, the District could use housing agreements to keep these units affordable for the life of the building.

Success Measures: Number of workforce housing units created, sales prices, rental rates, vacancy rates.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, major employers and developers.

Priority: Medium

10.4 Objective 4: Address declining affordability

Overall the housing prices are trending upward and there is a significant growth in one or two-person households in the region. Further, due to the tight rental housing market, and increasing number of renter-households are paying more than 30 percent of their household incomes in shelter costs. As a result, the housing affordability in the region is declining, especially for younger and low-income households.

Over a longer-term, initiatives that enhance the local economy and attract a range of high-quality jobs and educational opportunities to the District can help to improve ability to pay. However, over the next ten years (short-term) the District will be well served by leveraging its regulatory capacity and encouraging innovation in the housing market. The District can play a leadership role in facilitating affordable home ownership and rental housing solutions in the community by updating its land use policies, bylaws, zoning and development processes.

10.4.1 Strategy 1: Promote the development of more affordable entry-level housing units

Suggested Actions

- Create higher housing densities through secondary suites, garden suites etc. and a broader variety of dwelling types in existing neighbourhoods.
- Facilitate the development of duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and low-rise multi-family wood-frame apartment buildings, which are more affordable as compared to other dwelling types.
- Enhance the supply of mobile homes, i.e. the development of R-4 and R-5 zoned lands. This would be the most efficient way of enhancing the affordable housing supply in the community.
- Encourage the development of smaller units in line with the projected increase in one-person and two-person households in the community. This is expected to create demand for studio, one and two-bedroom units going forward. The District could facilitate this by developing guidelines for purpose built smaller sized units as well as secondary suites, laneway homes and accessory apartments in ancillary structures within the large homes already in the housing supply.

Success Measures: Number of entry-level housing units created, sales prices and number of mobile homes.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning and developers.

Priority: High

10.4.2 Strategy 2: Examine the creation of an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (AHRF)

Detail: The District could potentially use a housing reserve fund to promote developments that produce more affordable housing products in the District. In addition, the District could use housing agreements to ensure that these units remain affordable even after resale. The AHRF could provide the much-needed seed-funding to initiate the development of affordable units in the District, in partnership with the Federal and Provincial governments.

Suggested Actions

- Fund AHRF with the proceeds from the sale of District owned lands and any other acceptable funding mechanism. These could include philanthropic contributions, contributions from large employers, density bonuses etc.
- Monitor the growth of the AHRF and reviews its use and performance in facilitating affordable housing every year.
- Attract development partners that will leverage the AHRF contributions to facilitate rental housing, seed funding to initiate developments and/or purchase land for affordable housing development.
- Develop the 201 and 233 2nd Ave. W properties as a pilot housing affordability project, in partnership with other levels of government.

Success Measures: Number of units funded and number of units created.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning and developers.

Priority: Medium

10.5 Objective 5: Maintain the quality of current housing stock

Detail: A large proportion of the current housing stock is very old and in need of major repairs. These housing units if properly maintained could provide an ample supply of older but still functional houses. Thus, the District will be well served by helping low-income households repair and weatherize their homes to keep them safe and reduce utility bills. This may require subsidies or low-interest loans.

Suggested Actions:

- Help homeowners maintain older housing stock. It is a relatively inexpensive way to provide safe and affordable housing, especially in the case of the District which has an abundant supply of inexpensive but deteriorating housing stock.
- Monitor the condition of housing annually, especially housing stock built prior to the 1980's.
- Work with landlords that provide affordable rental housing to access funds for maintaining their properties.
- Solicit feedback from residents for identifying properties that need major repairs or require demolition.

Success Measures: Number of units renovated and amount of funding.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, landlords and homeowners.

Priority: High

10.6 Objective 6: Facilitate new development on selected parcels

Detail: The District will be well served by facilitating new development on vacant and under-utilized parcels in the community. Survey findings suggest that newcomers to the community face significant difficulty in finding appropriately priced housing in the community. Improved utilization of land will increase the housing options available to newcomers to the community and also increase the tax base of the community.

Suggested Actions:

- The parcels identified in the Section 6 can be developed as per the following priority:
 - 295 Stuart Drive E: Can be rehabilitated and reused for roughly 30 social/affordable housing units in the community.
 - 201 and 233 2nd Ave. W: Can be developed as a market-rate rental apartment building with 32 units.
 - Lot 1 & 2, Plan 42119: Can be developed as a combination of single-family with secondary suites, duplexes and mobiles homes to create 200 – 300 units.
 - 274/284/294 3rd Avenue E and 375 Stuart Drive E : Can be developed as an affordable seniors and low-income household apartment building for up to 46 units
 - 980 Douglas Ave.: Can be developed in line with Lot 1 & 2.
- Use municipal entitlements and incentives to direct growth within appropriate locations in the District.
- Work with developers on reducing their front-end costs, especially in developments that are in line with the HAP.
- Create capital funding options for achieving affordable housing on the selected parcels.
- Advocate to other levels of government for specific measures to address funding gaps for low-to-moderate income housing (e.g., CMHC seed funding, capital funding, subsidies and tax incentives or other measures).
- Monitor progress quarterly. Reassess this strategy at least every five years.

Success Measures: Number of market-rate and non-market rate housing units created, sales prices and rental rates, affordability and vacancy rates.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning, property owners and home builders

Priority: High

10.7 Objective 7: Address Housing Needs of First Nations Communities

Detail: The study finds that First Nations communities are facing several housing issues, such as overcrowding, poor quality of housing, mold, limited supply, and housing affordability. Poor credit quality and limited earning capacity also hampers housing affordability on First Nations lands.

The District could potentially collaborate with the First Nations communities to address some of the issues that are of concern to both.

Suggested Actions:

- Collaborate on enhancing economic activity in the region, especially related to attracting new investments in manufacturing and tourism industries.
- Collaborate and share housing information and best practices with First Nations communities.
- Collaborate on addressing homelessness on the First Nations lands.
- Identify common issues that require collaborative approaches.
- Solicit feedback from First Nations communities and residents for identifying properties that need major repairs or require demolition.
- Monitor the condition of housing annually.

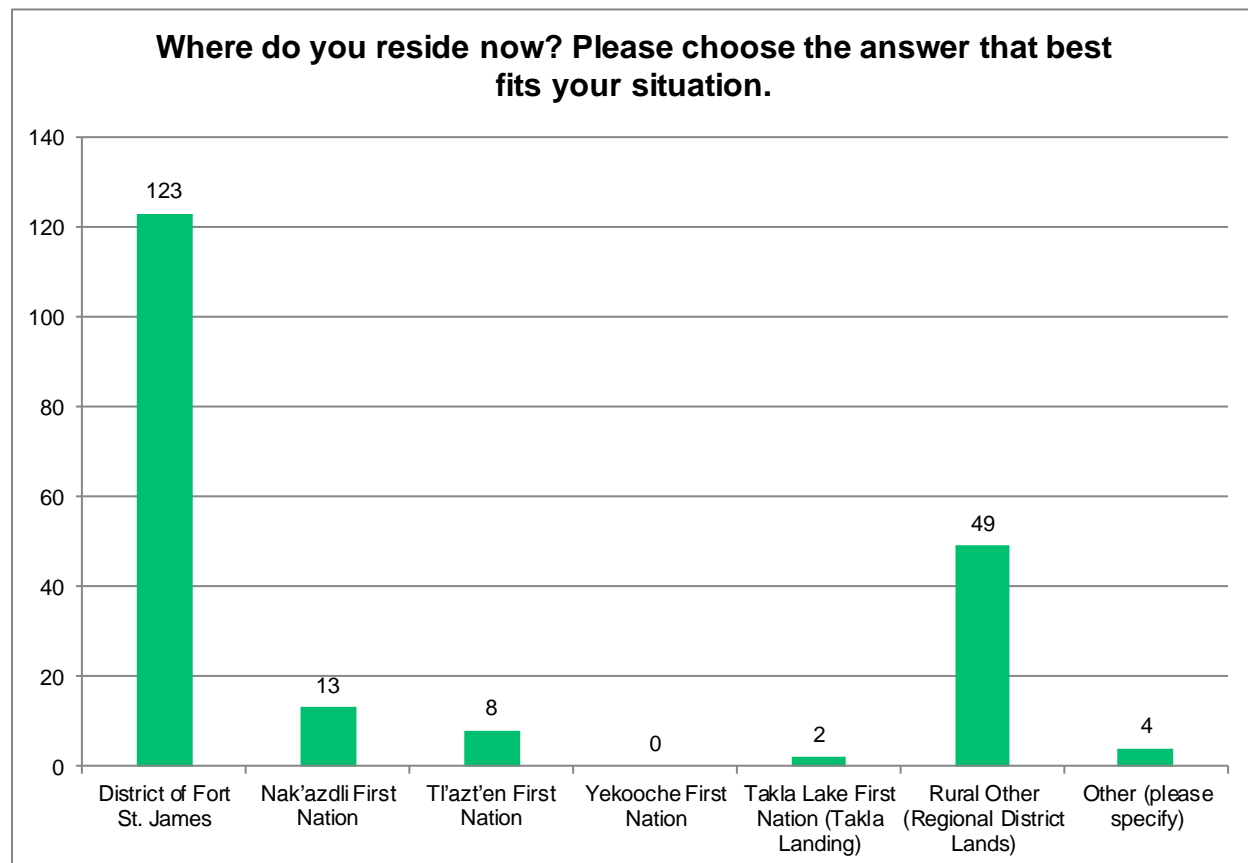
Success Measures: Economic development measures, data collection and sharing measures.

Strategic Partners: Dept. of Planning and First Nations partners.

Priority: High

Appendix 1: Online Survey Findings

Urbanics conducted an online survey of the residents to gain additional insights related to housing needs in the District of Fort St James, neighbouring Electoral Area C lands and the First Nations communities. The survey received a combined total of 199 responses out of a population of roughly 4,000 in the study area. This represents a statistically significant sample size with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 6.75%. Thus, findings from the survey can be expected to be representative of the housing needs in the study area.



Q-1 Where do you reside now?

The geographical distribution of 199 survey respondents is given by:

1. 123 respondents or 62% of the total respondents live in the District of Fort St. James.
2. 13 respondents or 7% of the total respondents live on Nak'azdli First Nation lands.
3. 8 respondents or 4% of the total respondents live on Tl'azt'en First Nation lands.
4. No responses from Yekooche First Nation.
5. 2 respondents or 1% of the total respondents live on Takla Lake First Nation lands.
6. 46 respondents or 23% of the total respondents live on Regional District C lands.
7. 4 respondents or 2% of the total respondents used to live in Fort St James but now live in Terrace, Burns Lake and Prince George.

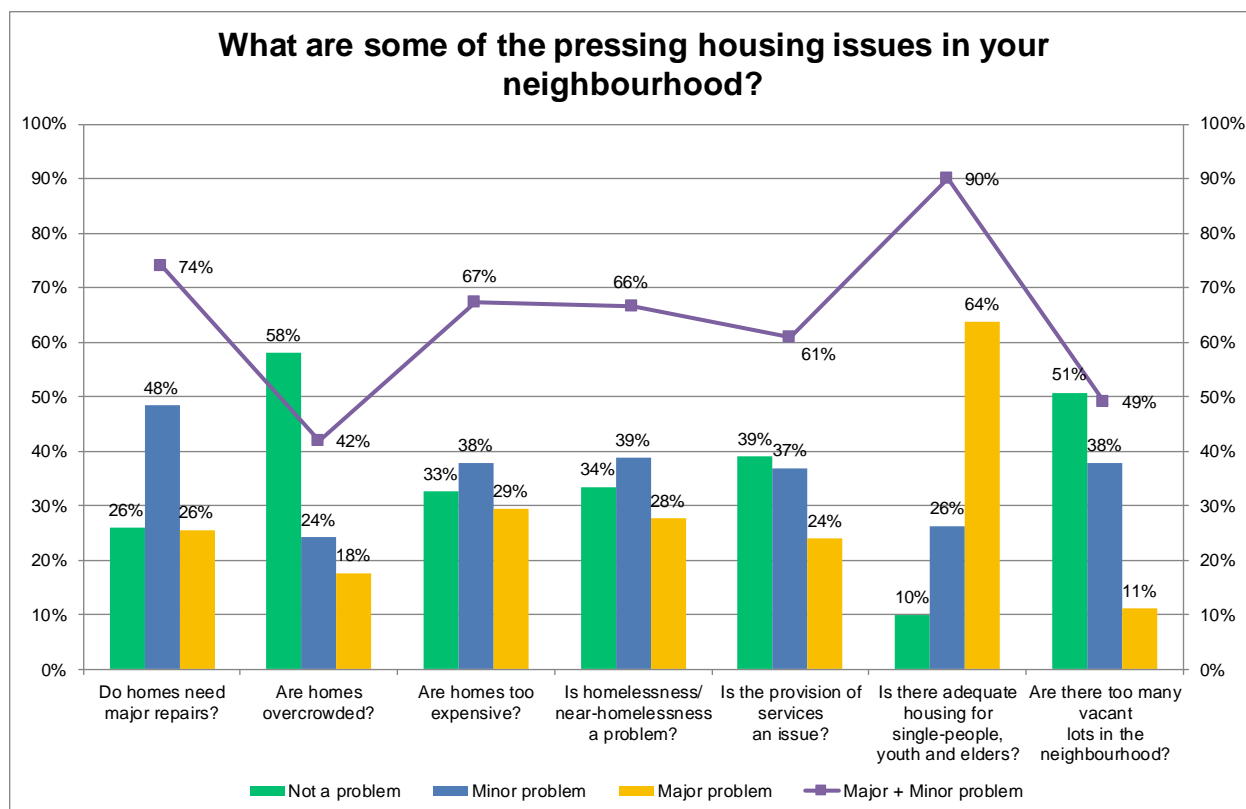


Figure 13: Current housing issues in the District

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Housing Issues	Not a problem		Minor problem		Major problem		Total	Major + Minor
Do homes need major repairs?	26%	49	48%	91	26%	48	188	74%
Are homes overcrowded?	58%	108	24%	45	18%	33	186	42%
Are homes too expensive?	33%	62	38%	72	29%	56	190	67%
Is homelessness/ near-homelessness a problem?	34%	63	39%	73	28%	52	188	66%
Is the provision of services an issue?	39%	75	37%	71	24%	46	192	61%
Is there adequate housing for single-people, youth and elders?	10%	19	26%	50	64%	121	190	90%
Are there too many vacant lots in the neighbourhood?	51%	95	38%	71	11%	21	187	49%

Table 40: Current housing issues in the District

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Q-2 What are some of the pressing housing issues in your neighbourhood?

The survey finds four major housing issues in the study area:

1. Adequate housing for single people, youth and elders.
2. Homes need major repairs.
3. Homes are expensive to purchase or rent.
4. Homelessness/near-homelessness is a problem.

Some of the other comments related to this issue were:

- Lack of affordable, long-term rental units.
- Rental units are hard to find and the rent is too high.
- Not enough pet friendly rentals.
- Need for group homes for senior citizens who can't live at home alone.
- Shortage of low income housing for seniors (especially pet friendly housing).
- Not enough accessible rentals for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Significant proportion of homes need to be renovated and there is a lack of funding for renovations.
- Not enough housing for households that might be looking to relocate to the District.
- Maintenance and enforcement of bylaws is an issue. Several homes have unsightly premises in spite of repeated complaints.
- Young families have difficulty finding suitable homes in the District.
- A large number of individuals are homeless, and live on the streets.
- There are safety concerns due to too many drug dealers in the District.
- Several dwelling units have maintenance issues, including mold, electricity and heating.
- Multiple families living in a single dwelling on First Nations lands.
- The District has an extreme shortage of affordable and low-income family housing.
- Housing prices and the cost of living is very high but the wages are low.
- Roads are poorly maintained, have no sidewalks and have potholes and cracks.
- Maintenance not adequate in terms of cleaning of storm drains and ditches, road sweeping, removal of snow on walkways and roads.
- Long power outages cause huge problems for homeowners with sump pumps.
- Supports might be required to assist individuals to maintain their housing.
- Lack of rental housing for single people and single parent households.
- The District has very low housing vacancy rates and the rental rates are quite high.
- Too many landlords (slumlords) are taking advantage of desperate people.

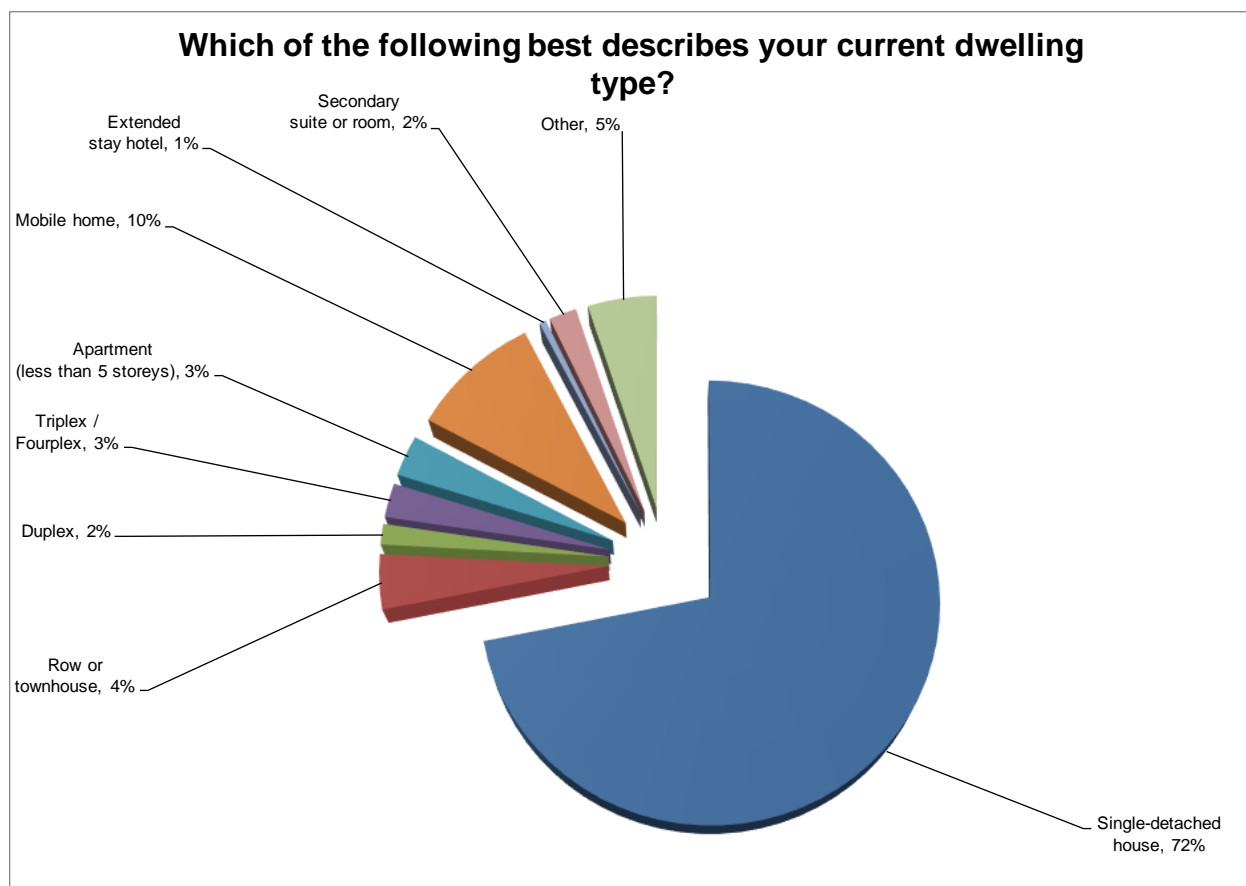


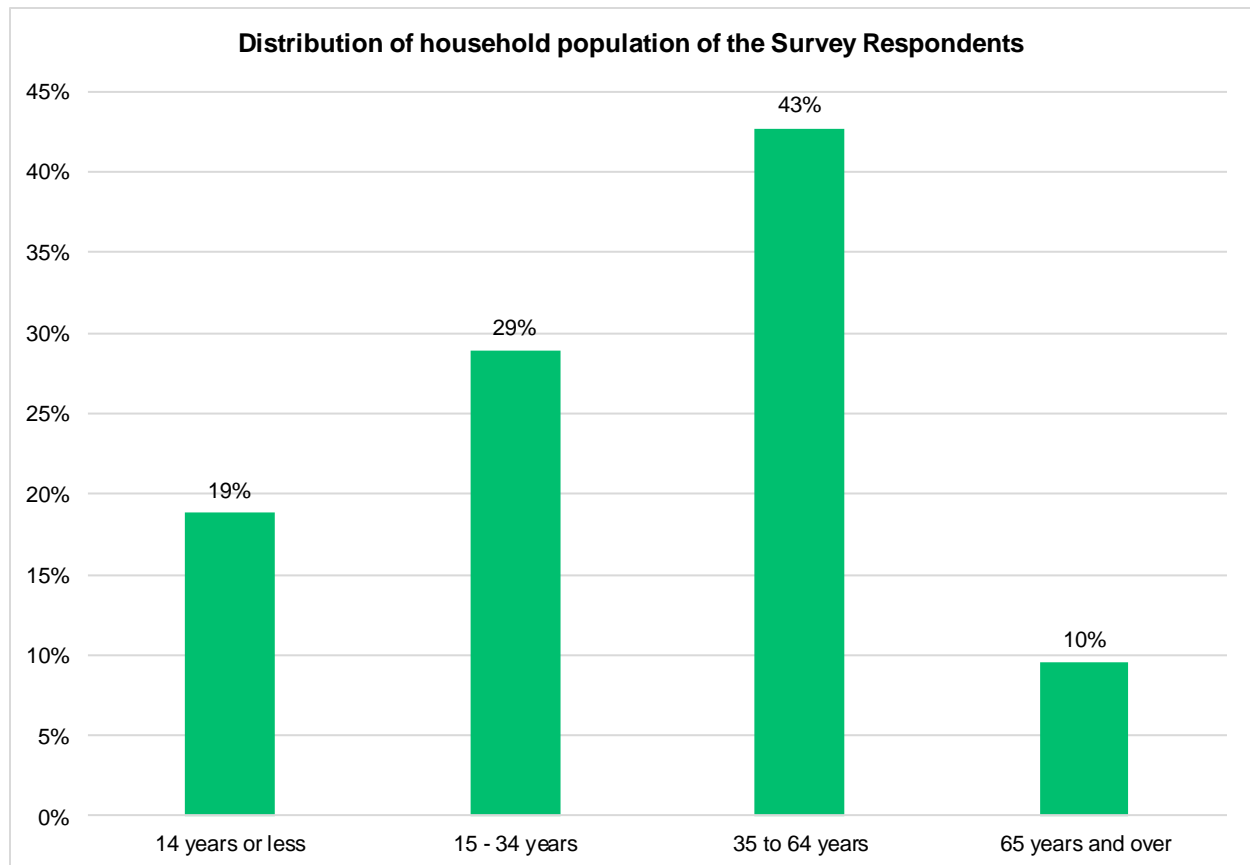
Figure 14: Current dwelling-types of the respondents

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Q-3 Which of the following best describes your current dwelling type?

Roughly 72 percent of the respondents live in single-detached homes, 4 percent in row or townhouses, 2 percent in duplex, 5 percent in triplex and fourplex units, 3 percent in apartments in buildings with less than 5 storeys, 10% in mobile homes and the remainder in extended stay hotels (1%), secondary suites (2%) and other living arrangements (5%).

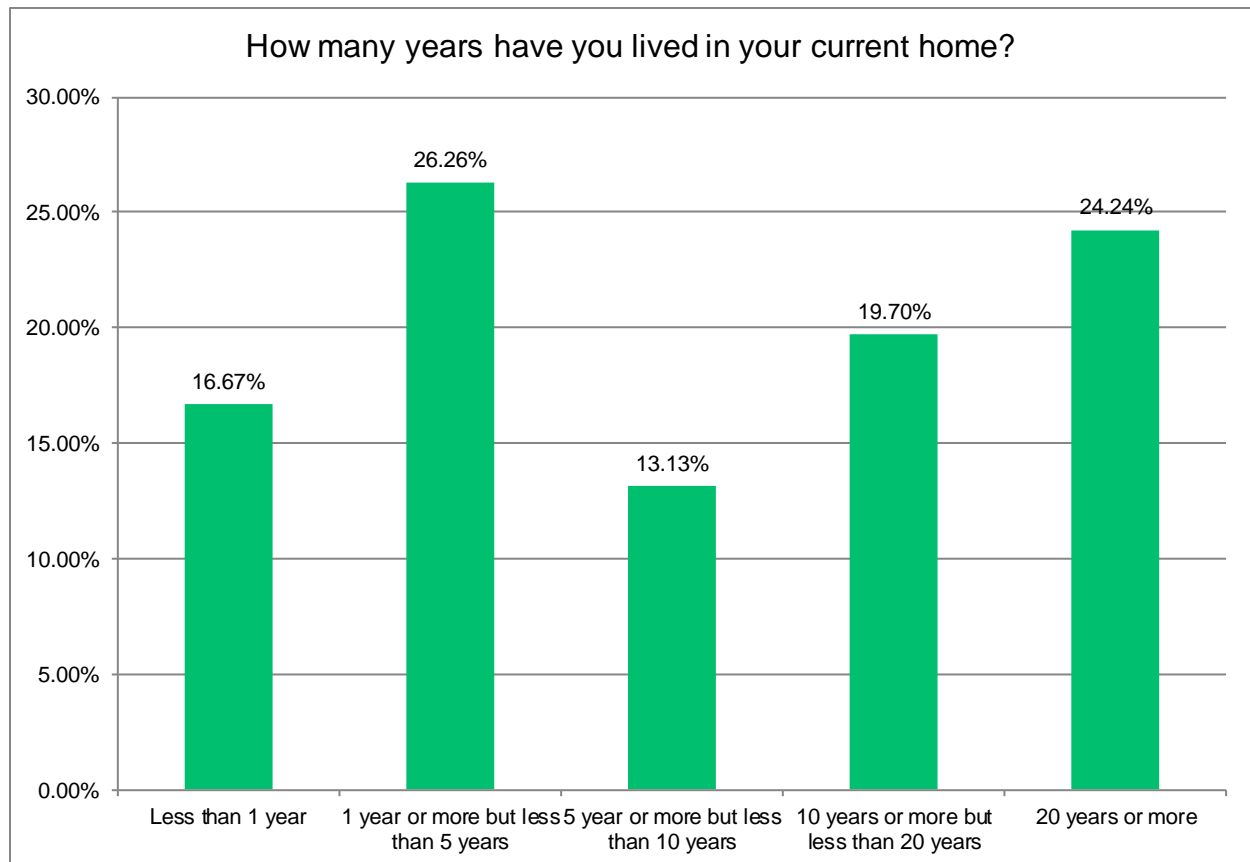
It should be noted that responses from people living in single-family units are overrepresented while those living in townhouses, duplex/ triplex and fourplex units and apartments in buildings with less than 5 storeys are underrepresented in the survey as compared to their shares in the Census 2016 dwelling counts. However, respondents living in mobile homes are not too dissimilar from their share in the Census 2016 dwelling counts.



Q-4 How many people, including you, currently live in your household?

On average the household size of the survey respondents was 2.8. The distribution of the surveyed population by age groups is provided below:

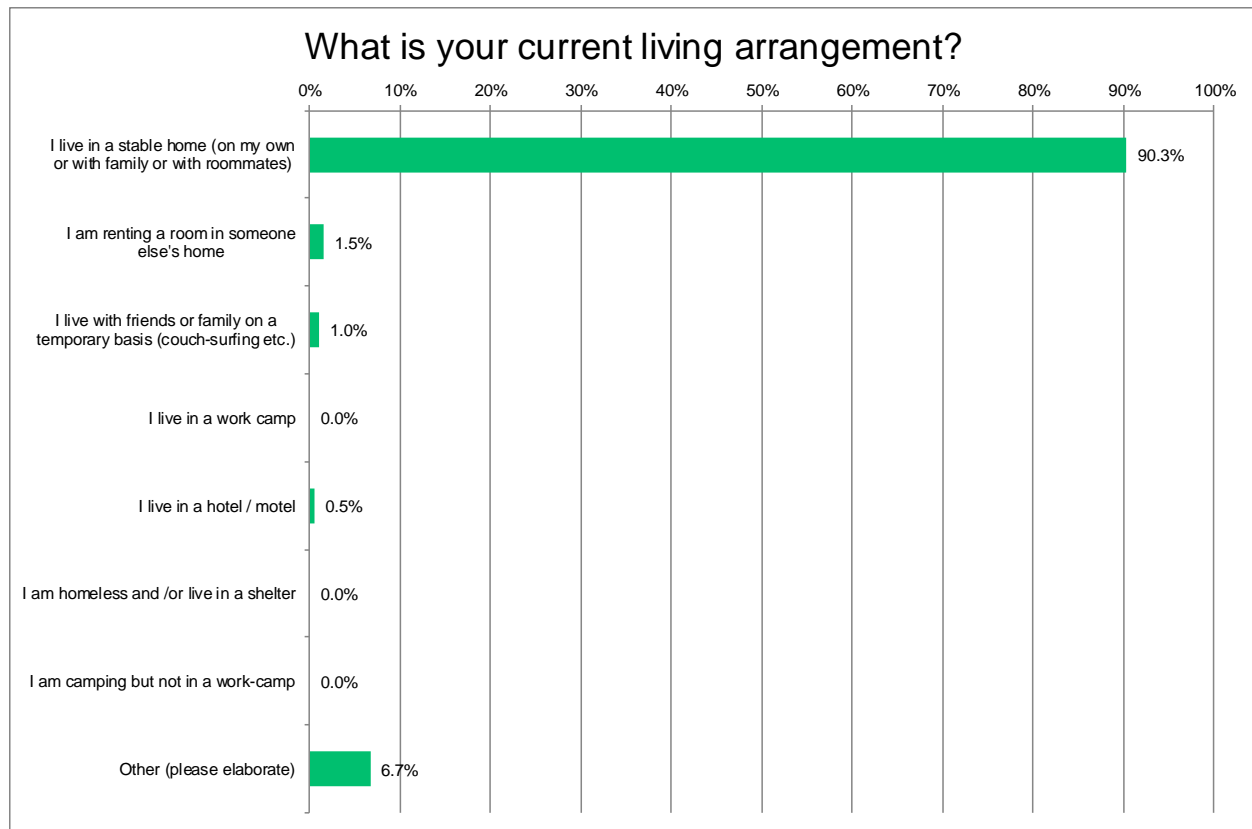
- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------------|
| 1. 14 years or less | 19% | (106 people) |
| 2. 15 - 34 years: | 29% | (163 people) |
| 3. 35 to 64 years | 43% | (241 people) |
| 4. 65 years and over | 10% | (54 people) |



Q-5 How long have you lived in your current home?

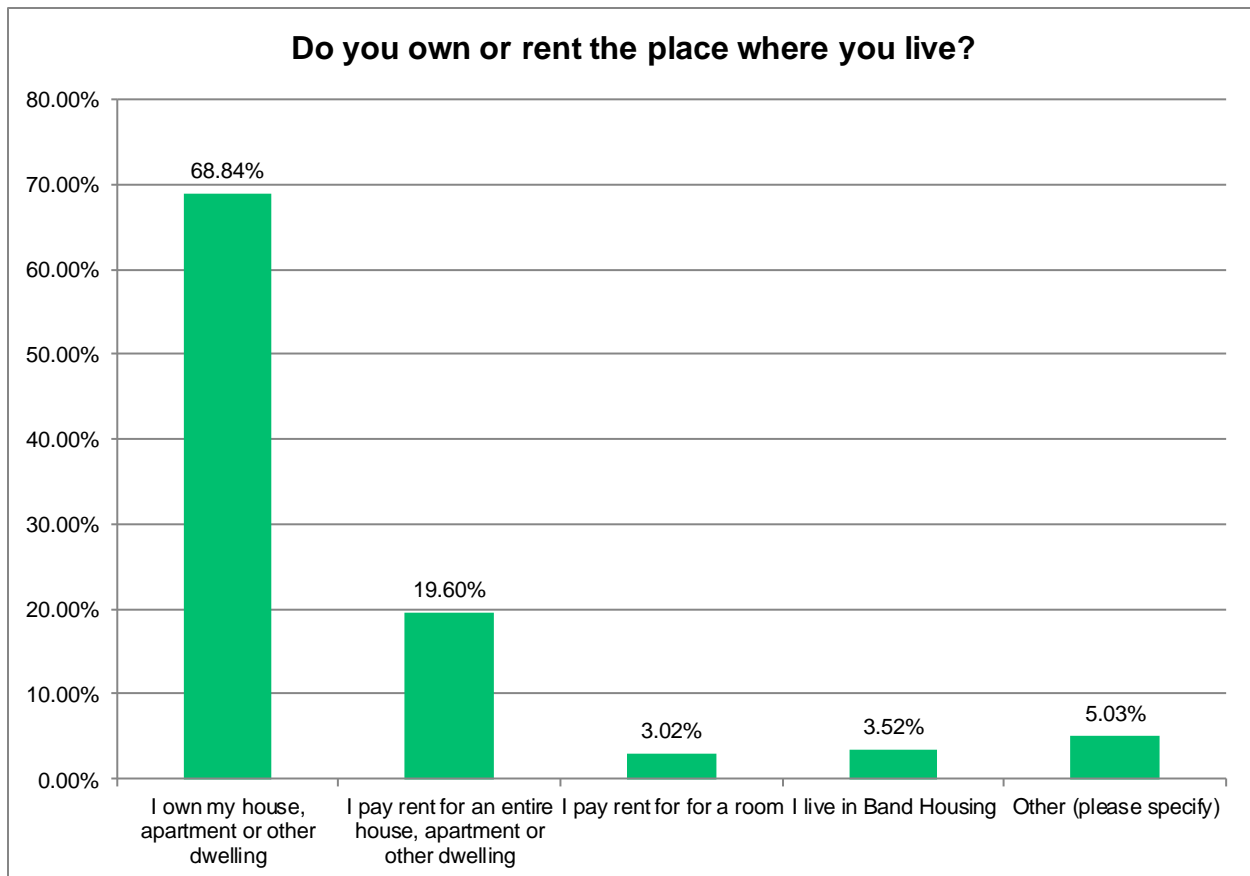
The survey finds that most of the respondents are long-term residents:

1. Less than 1 year: 17%
2. 1 year or more but less than 5 years: 26 %
3. 5 years or more but less than 10 years: 13%
4. 10 years or more but less than 20 years: 20%
5. 20 years or more: 24%



Q-6 What is your current living arrangement?

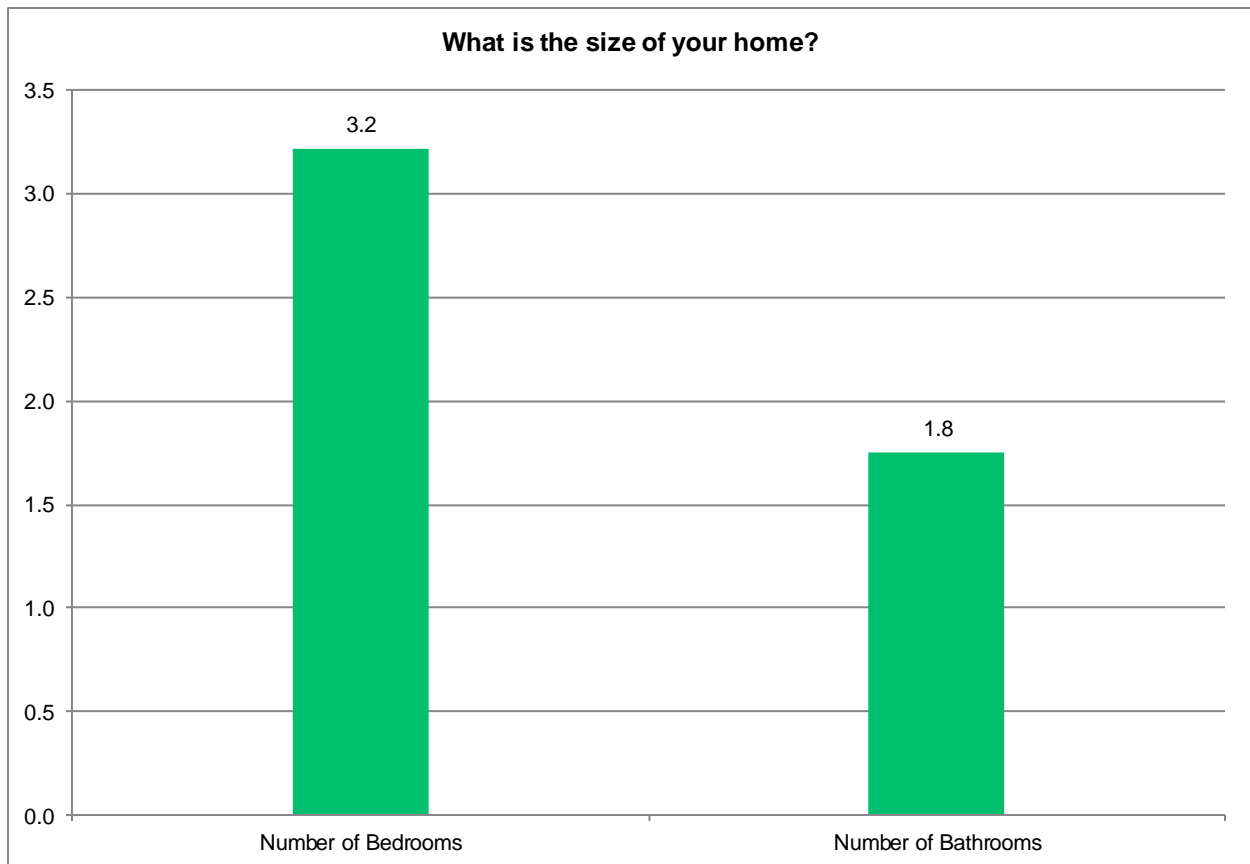
The survey finds that most of the respondents (over 90%) live in a stable home, on their own, with family or with roommates. Roughly 2.5% of the respondents either rent a room in someone else's home or live with friends or family on a temporary basis (couch-surfing).



Q-7 Do you own or rent the place where you live?

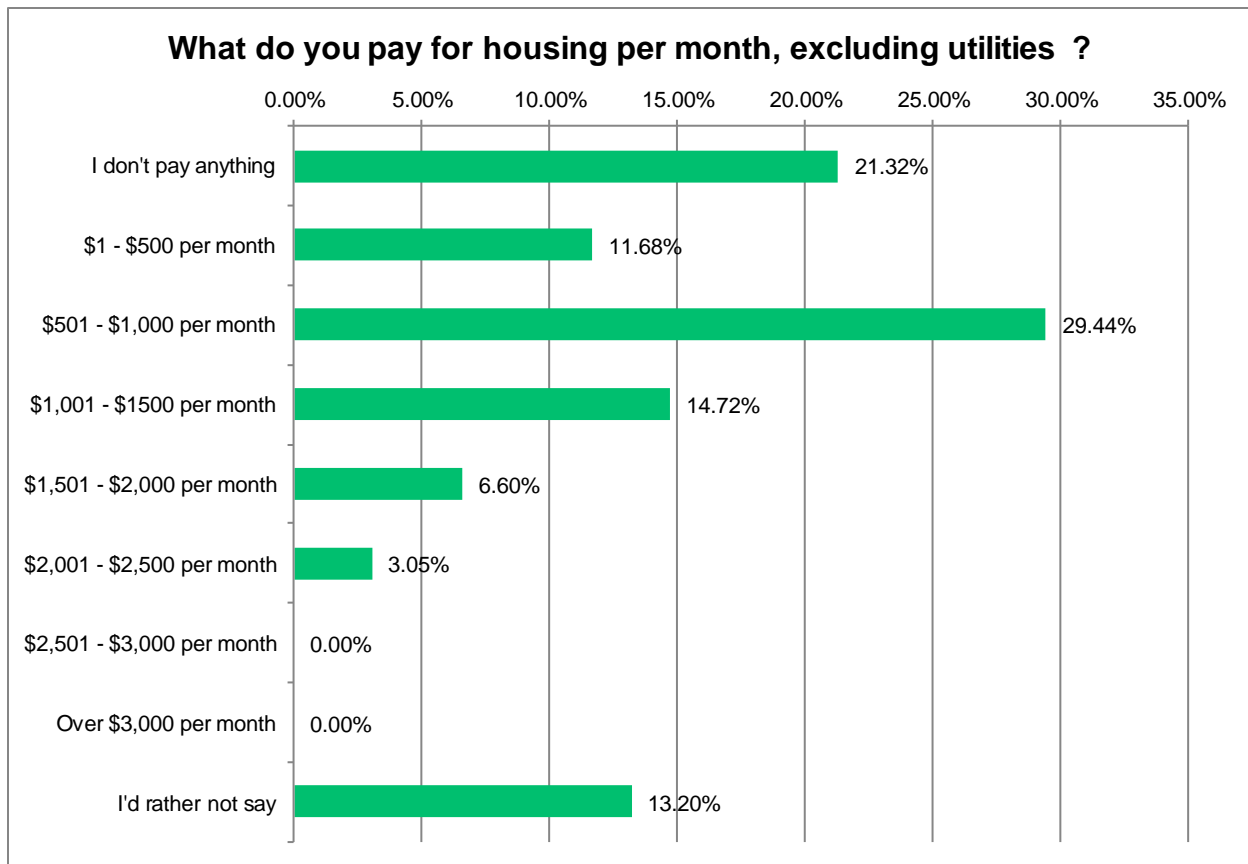
Roughly 69 percent of the respondents were homeowners and only 20 percent of the respondents were renters. This is representative of the tenure distribution in the study area.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. I own my house, apartment or other dwelling: | 69% |
| 2. I pay rent for an entire house, apartment or other dwelling: | 20% |
| 3. I pay rent for a room | 3% |
| 4. I live in Band Housing | 4% |
| 5. Other (please specify) | 5% |



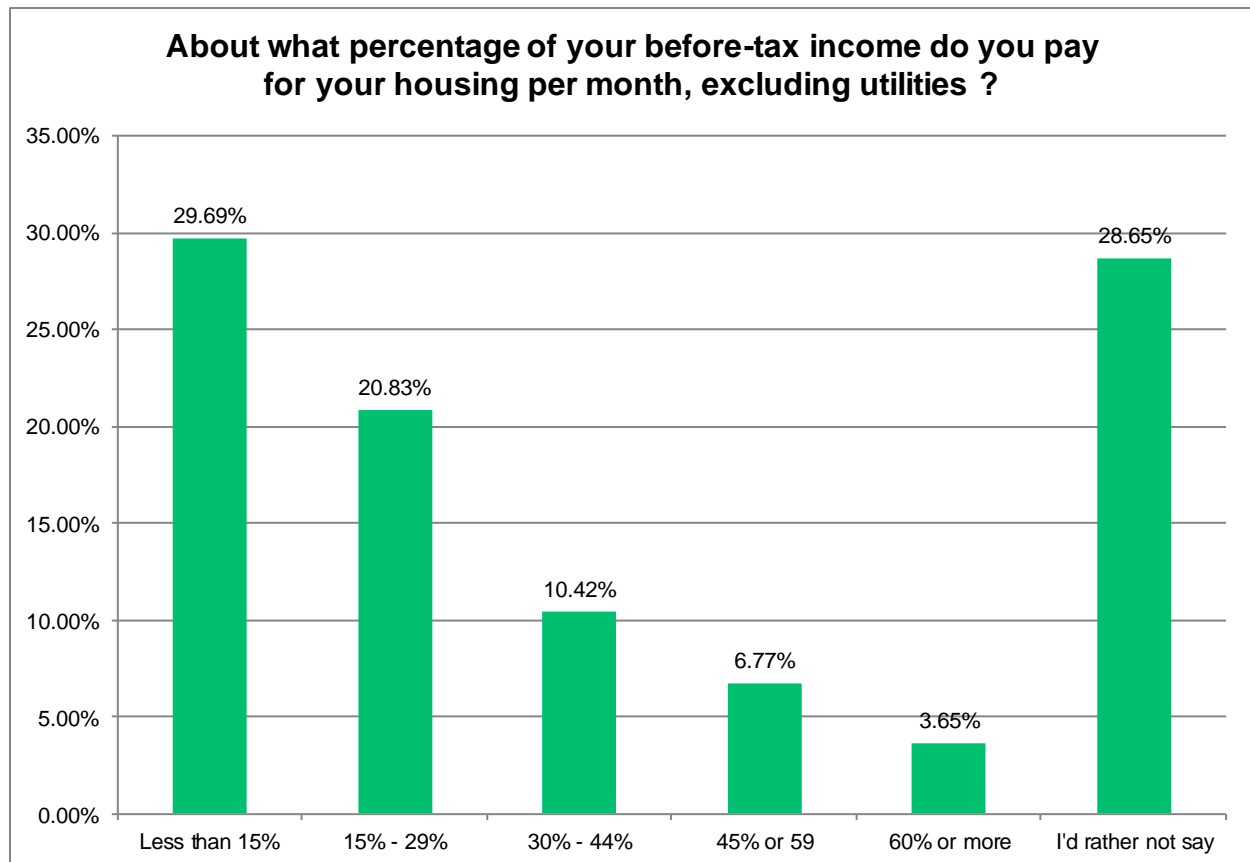
Q-8 What is the size of your home?

On average the home of survey residents had 3.2 bedrooms and 1.8 bathrooms.



Q-9 What do you pay for housing per month, excluding utilities?

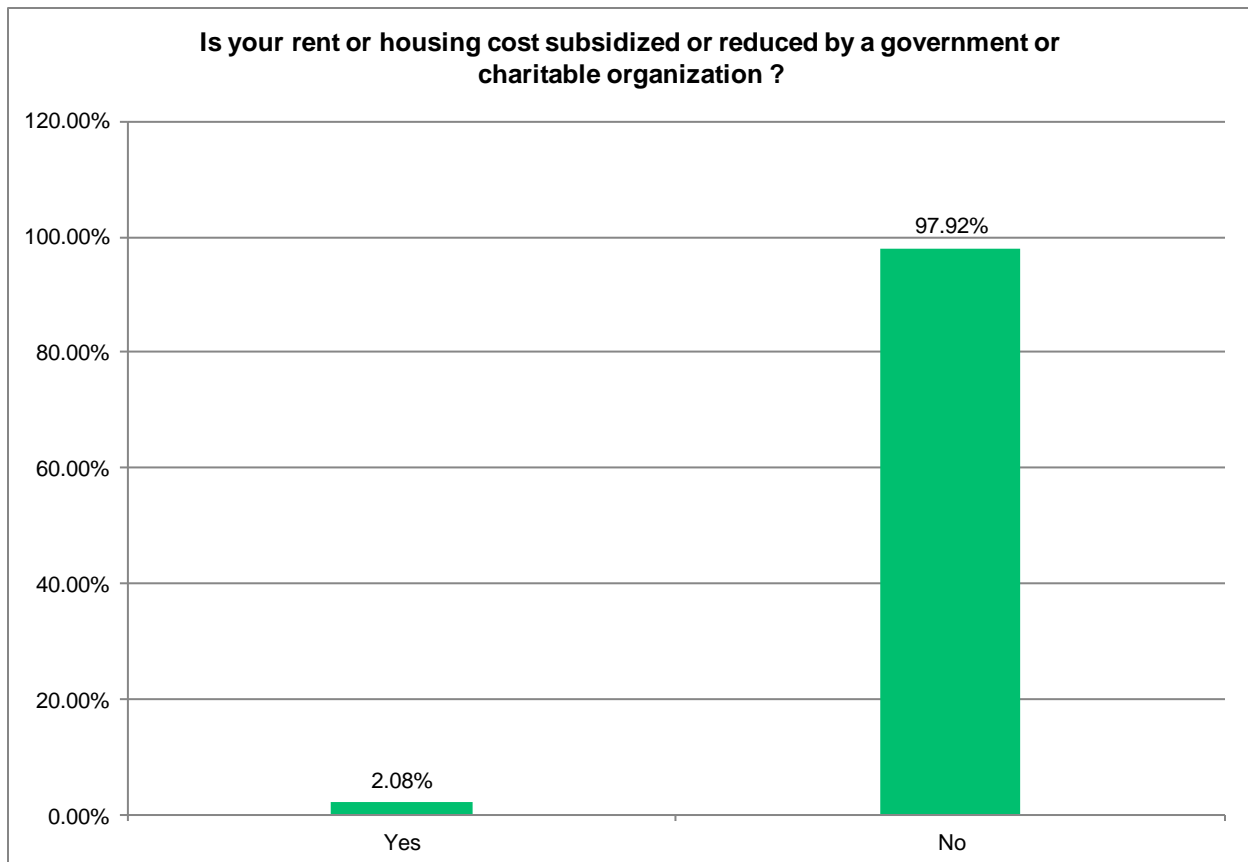
1. I don't pay anything 21%
2. \$1 - \$500 per month 12%
3. \$501 - \$1,000 per month 29%
4. \$1,001 - \$1500 per month 15%
5. \$1,501 - \$2,000 per month 7%
6. \$2,001 - \$2,500 per month 3%
7. \$2,501 - \$3,000 per month 0%
8. Over \$3,000 per month 0%
9. I'd rather not say 13%



Q-10 About what percentage of your before-tax income do you pay for your housing per month, excluding utilities?

Further, roughly 21 percent of all respondents spend more than 30 percent of their income on mortgage or rental payment.

51 percent of the total respondents spend less than 30 percent on mortgage or rental payment.



Q-11 Is your rent or housing cost subsidized or reduced by a government or charitable organization?

Only 2 percent of the total survey respondents indicated that their rent or housing costs were subsidized by government or a charitable organization.

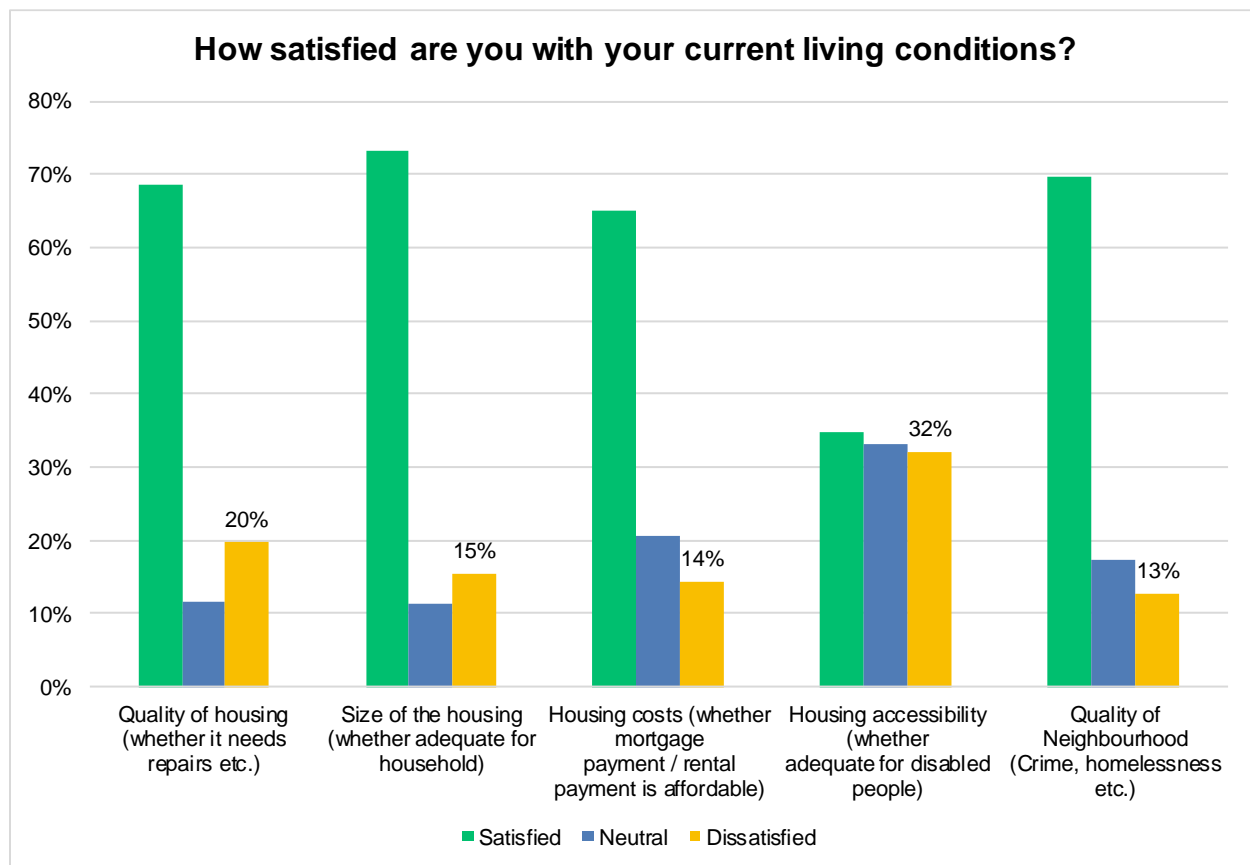


Figure 15: Reasons for dissatisfaction with current housing
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Q-12 How satisfied are you with your current living conditions?

Four primary reasons for dissatisfaction among the respondents are (respondents could choose multiple options);

1. 32 percent of all respondents cited housing accessibility as their primary reason for dissatisfaction.
2. 20 percent of the respondents cited quality of housing in the neighbourhood.
3. 15 percent of the respondents cited inadequate housing size.
4. 14 percent of the respondents cited housing affordability as their main reason for dissatisfaction.

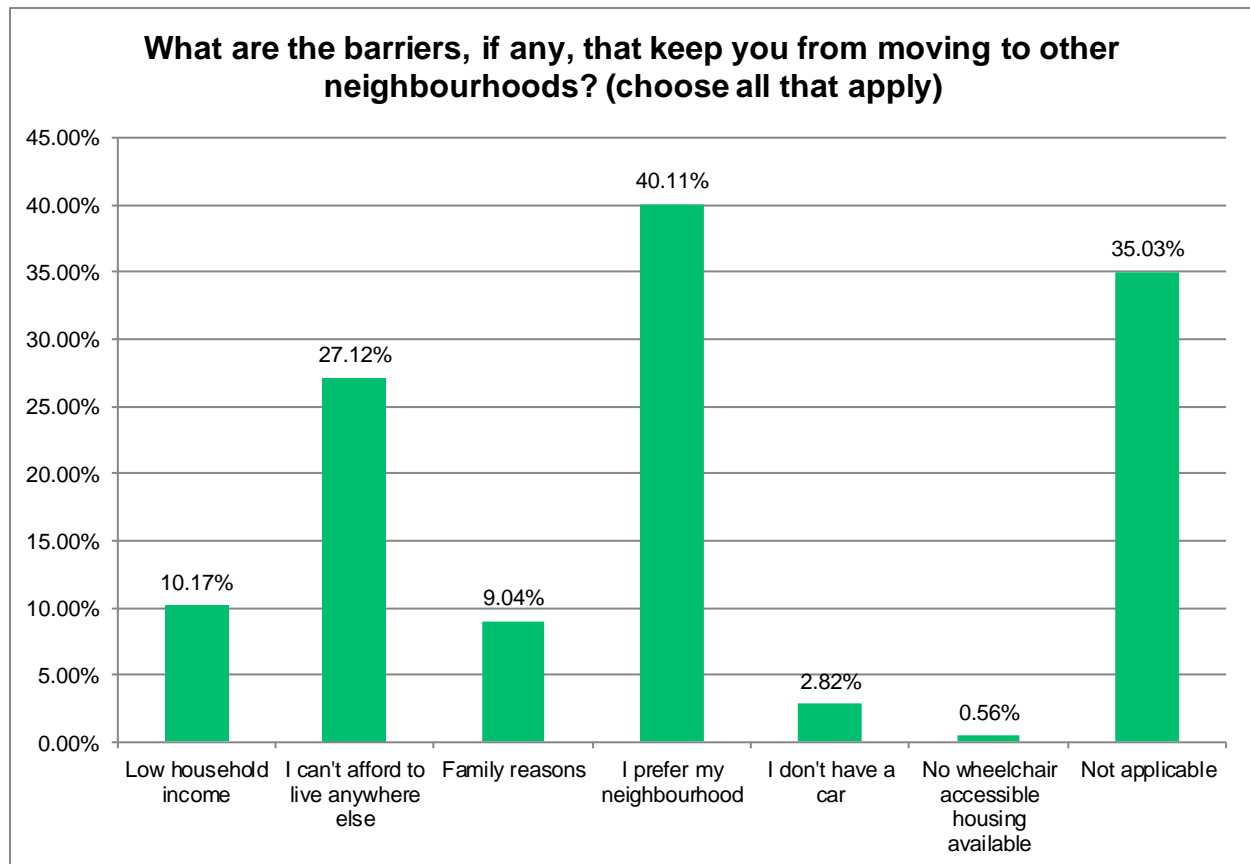


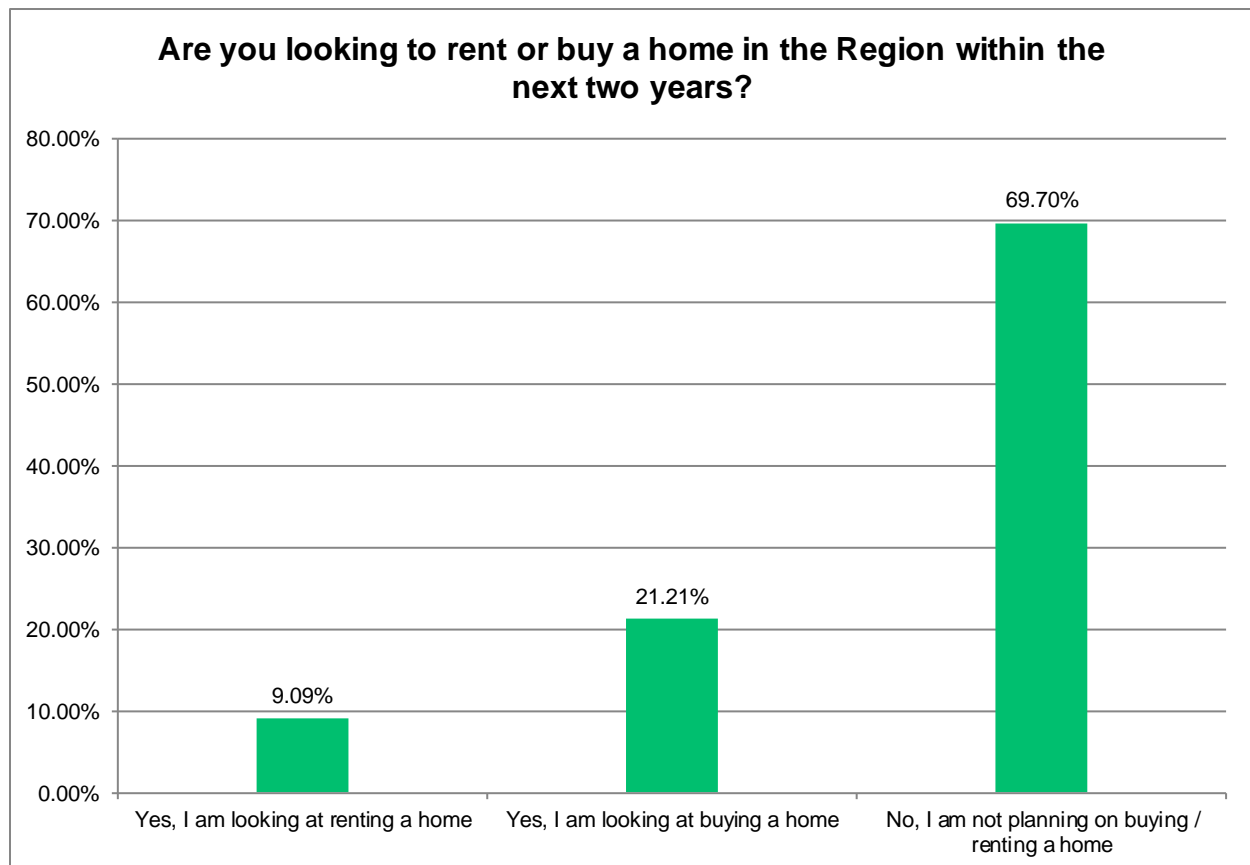
Figure 16: Barriers to moving to other neighbourhoods

Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd.

Q-13 What are the barriers, if any, that keep you from moving to other neighbourhoods?

Four primary barriers to moving to other neighbourhoods among the respondents are (respondents could choose multiple options);

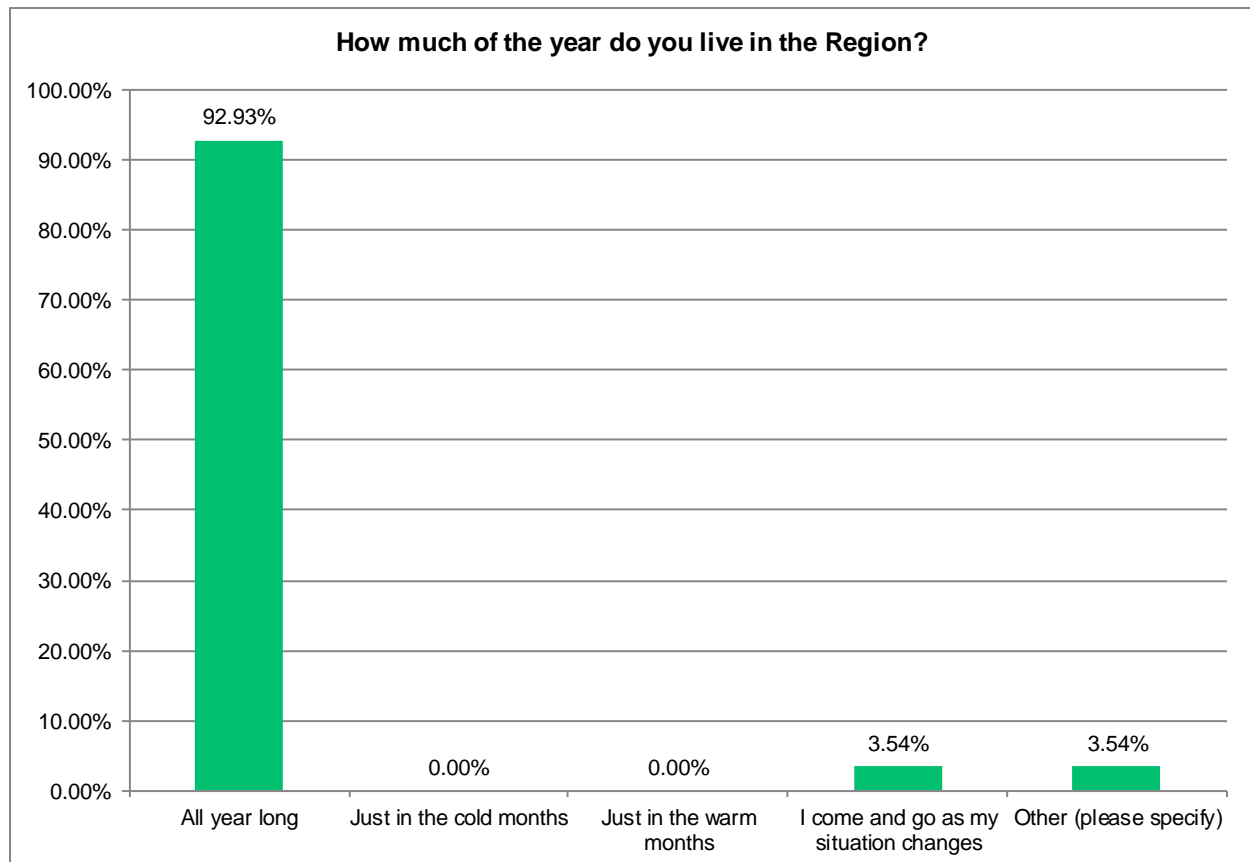
1. 40 percent of all respondents cited preference for their current neighbourhood.
2. 27 percent of the respondents cited housing affordability as a major barrier.
3. 10 percent of the respondents had low household incomes.
4. 9 percent of the respondents cited family reasons.



Q-14 Are you looking to rent or buy a home in the Region within the next two years?

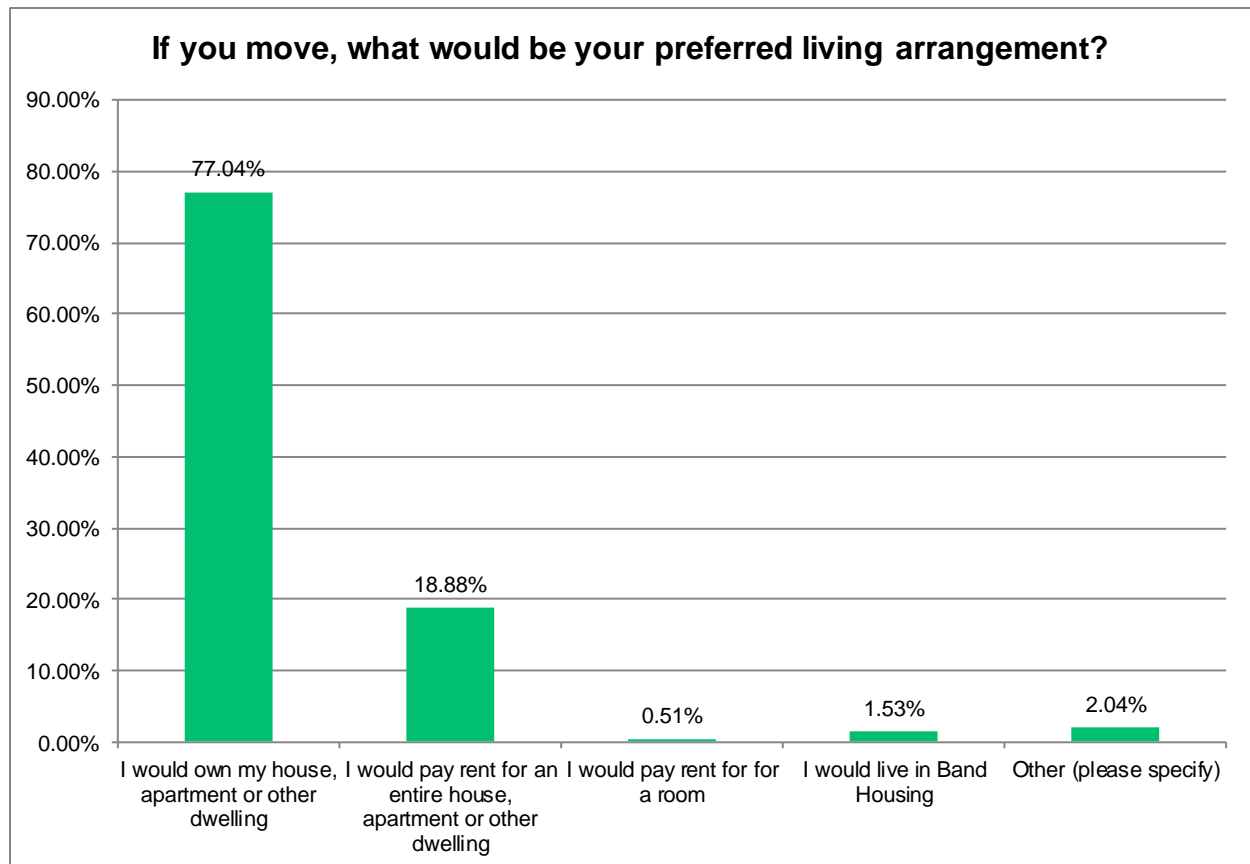
The likelihood of renting or buying a home within two years is given by:

1. 21 percent of the households are likely to buy.
2. 9 percent of the households are likely to rent.
3. 70 percent of the households are not at all likely to move.



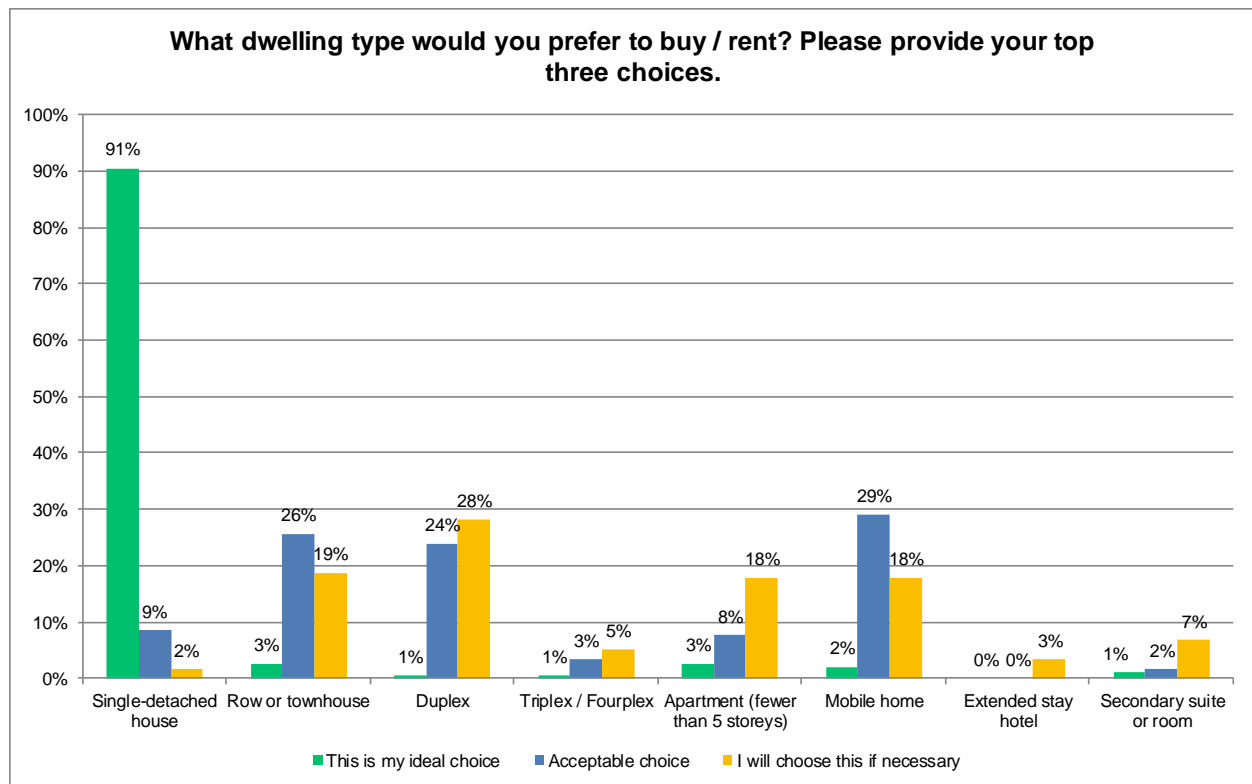
Q-15 How much of the year do you live in the Region?

Roughly 93% percent of the total survey respondents indicated that they live in the region throughout the year. Only 3.5% of the study area's population is not living permanently in the region.



Q-16 If you move, what would be your preferred living arrangement?

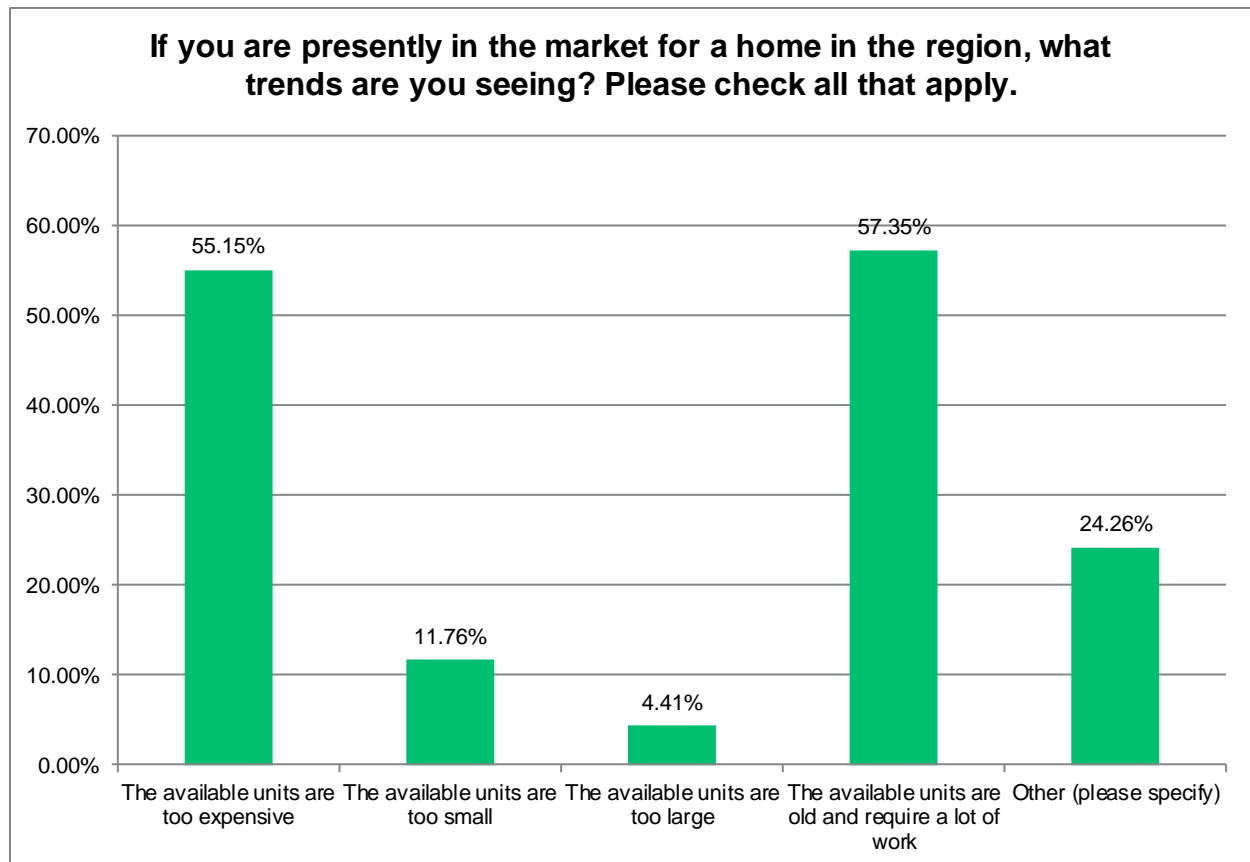
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. I would own my house, apartment or other dwelling: | 77% |
| 2. I would pay rent for an entire house, apartment or other dwelling: | 19% |
| 3. I would pay rent for a room: | 1% |
| 4. I would live in Band Housing: | 2% |
| 5. Other (please specify) | 2% |



Q-17 What dwelling type would you prefer to buy / rent? Please provide your top three choices.

Four primary dwelling type choices of the respondents are (respondents could choose multiple options) and their order of preference;

1. Single-detached house
2. Duplex
3. Mobile home
4. Row or townhouse



Q-18 If you are presently in the market for a home in the region, what trends are you seeing?

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. The available units are too expensive | 55% |
| 2. The available units are too small | 12% |
| 3. The available units are too large | 4% |
| 4. The available units are old and require a lot of work | 57% |
| 5. Other (please specify) | 24% |