



Housing Needs Report City of Dawson Creek

2021



PEACE RIVER
REGIONAL DISTRICT



Prepared for the City of Dawson
Creek through a joint project
with the Peace River Regional
District.

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Executive Summary

This Housing Needs Assessment provides a detailed report of relevant housing related data for the City of Dawson Creek (Dawson Creek). As of 2019, legislation requirements under the *Local Government Act* require local governments to collect data, analyze trends and present reports that describe current and anticipated housing needs in B.C. communities. The purpose of this report is to establish a baseline understanding of housing needs in Dawson Creek prior to the development of future policy considerations.

Recognizing that the 2016 Census data used throughout this report is already somewhat dated, particularly for a region with a largely cyclical economy, this information nonetheless remains the most reliable data available for the purposes of this type of reporting, as it is collected only through Statistics Canada's Census. The legislative requirements stipulate the use of census data in British Columbia Housing Needs Reports. This data is supplemented by more recent data from sources such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and BC Housing, as well as feedback collected from residents and stakeholders in the community. Report updates are required every five years and can be used to monitor trends.

Community Engagement

Residents of Dawson Creek were invited to participate in an online survey and stakeholders were invited to participate in focus groups and individual interviews. The top four housing challenges identified through community and stakeholder engagement were:

- housing affordability;
- housing supply;
- senior housing; and,

- supportive housing for vulnerable populations.

Population and Age

Since 2006, the population of Dawson Creek increased from 10,994 to 12,178 in 2016 (an increase of 11%). The median age of residents decreased from 35.6 to 34.4 by 2016, which is on par with the median age of the total Peace River Regional District (PRRD) population (34.1). This indicating a younger population compared to all of BC which had a median age of 43 years and Canada (41.2 years).

Shadow Population

The shadow population that exists throughout the region has a significant impact on housing in both rural areas and the municipalities within the PRRD. With mining, hydro, oil and gas, forestry and agricultural industries active in the region, there are significant numbers of work camps situated across the PRRD to house employees that do not live permanently in the surrounding communities. Work camps reduce the impact of large numbers of individuals moving in and out of communities as work is available, and influencing vacancy and rental rates on a large scale.

Households

The number of households increased by 8% between 2006 and 2016, but the average household size remained steady at 2.3 persons per household. The majority of Dawson Creek households are occupied by 1 or 2 persons (64%) and consist mainly of families with and without children, or one-person non-census families. Sixty-one percent (61%) of households own their property and 39% are renter households.

Income

The median household income of owner households increased from \$76,888 to \$97,811 between 2006

and 2016 and were almost double the median household income of renter households (\$53,398).

Current Housing Stock

As of 2016, there were 6,020 dwelling units in Dawson Creek, 64% of which were single-detached dwellings (additional dwellings have been constructed since the 2016 Census). The majority of all dwelling types had three or more bedrooms. The majority of rented dwellings were apartments with less than five stories. In Dawson Creek, 62% of housing units in Dawson Creek were built prior to 1980, and the majority only require regular maintenance (60%) or minor repairs (31%). In 2019, the average sales price for a single-family dwelling (with three or more bedrooms) was \$296,451. In the rental market, the number of available units has decreased since 2016, while rent prices have stayed relatively consistent.

Housing Indicators

Of all Dawson Creek households in 2016, 9% lived in inadequate dwelling units, 6% lived in unsuitable conditions, and 20% spent more than 30% or more of their income on shelter costs indicating issues with affordability. Of senior households, 6% of households experiencing housing need had issues with adequacy of their unit, 26% had affordability issues, and 1% had suitability issues. Additionally, a much higher proportion of renters than owners experienced core housing need¹, having issues with adequacy, suitability and or affordability (30% vs. 5.8%).

Key Areas of Local Need

Rental Housing

Housing affordability in Dawson Creek's rental market was identified as a major challenge. Individuals living alone and single-parent families, especially those on Income Assistance, face the most significant challenges finding and maintaining affordable housing in the community. While rental trends indicate that there are vacancies in the community, they are largely unaffordable for lower income households. Furthermore, senior led households also experience affordability challenges.

Supportive Housing

Stakeholders reported that supportive housing for individuals with disabilities is lacking in the community and that individuals experiencing mental health issues often face barriers when searching for appropriate accommodations.

Homelessness

Stakeholders identified a growing homeless population in the community over the past five years. Service providers are struggling limited capacity and report a need for more emergency housing and shelters to address gaps in the community.

¹ CMHC defines Core Housing Need as a household whose housing does not meet the minimum requirements of at least one of the adequacy, affordability, or suitability indicators. In addition, it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is

acceptable (meets all three housing standards). Those in Extreme Core Housing Need meet the definition of Core Housing Need and spend 50% or more of their income on shelter costs.

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1.0 Introduction

The City of Dawson Creek (Dawson Creek) is located near the eastern edge of the Peace River Regional District (PRRD), close to the Alberta border. As of the 2016 Census, Dawson Creek had a population of 12,178. Dawson Creek serves as the major urban centre for the surrounding Electoral Area D, Electoral E, District of Chetwynd, and farming communities south of the Peace River.

While Dawson Creek residents have a strong sense of community and many families have lived in Dawson Creek for several generations, concerns exist within the community regarding the mobile nature of the 'shadow population' due to seasonal and project-oriented work in the PRRD. Industry in the area is influenced by the cyclical nature of the natural resource economy, which can lead to uncertainty in long-term employment stability.

Dawson Creek residents face unique housing challenges based on their location, community context, and current economic and growth drivers within the community and the PRRD. Across BC, a housing affordability crisis has emerged due to high demand for housing from a growing population, low interest rates, and the attractiveness of housing as an investment. Increasingly, the cost of renting and owning is creating unprecedented financial burdens for households.

In 2019, the Government of BC introduced changes to the *Local Government Act*, requiring municipalities and regional districts to complete Housing Needs Reports to help better understand current and future housing needs and incorporate these into local plans and policies. Each local government must complete their first report by 2022 with updates required every five years thereafter. The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) is providing funding for local governments to support the completion of the first round of reports. The PRRD was awarded funding through this program and retained Urban Matters to complete Housing Needs Reports for four municipalities within its boundaries, including this report for Dawson Creek, as well as reports for Hudson's Hope, Pouce Coupe and Chetwynd. Separate reports have also been prepared for each electoral area within the PRRD. All reports are developed based on the local context, while also providing a regional lens for housing in the PRRD.

The purpose of the PRRD Housing Needs Assessment Project is to:

- Develop an understanding of the current housing availability, suitability, and affordability across the entire housing continuum;
- Make projections and recommendations on future population growth and significant expected changes in housing demand;
- Provide a breakdown of housing units by type, size, condition, and state of repair; and
- Provide recommendations for relevant policy updates for participating local governments.

This Housing Needs Assessment includes relevant housing related data for Dawson Creek and establishes a baseline understanding of housing need prior to the development of full housing needs reports across the PRRD and its partner municipalities in this endeavour.

Recognizing that the 2016 Census data used throughout this report is already somewhat dated, particularly for a region with a largely cyclical economy, this information remains as the most reliable data due to its basis in the

Census. It is required through legislation that this data be used in British Columbia Housing Needs Assessments. The future needs projections and engagement sections are intended to ensure that a more current snapshot of needs is captured. Over time, as future Housing Needs Assessments are produced, it will be important to be able to track trends in both Census data and qualitative data collected through engagement.

1.1 Overview

Dawson Creek is located approximately 75 kilometers southeast of Fort St. John and is surrounded by Electoral Area D. The municipality covers just over 24 km² and had a population of 12,178 as of the last Census in 2016. Dawson Creek comprises almost 20% of the PRRD's total population. Between 2006 and 2016, the median age declined from 35.6 to 34.4, indicating a trend of younger residents in Dawson Creek. Access to the backcountry, recreation centres, and parks offer a unique lifestyle to Dawson Creek residents.

As of 2016, there were 6,020 dwellings in Dawson Creek, 65% of which were single-detached dwellings, which is comparable to the PRRD having 67% single-detached dwellings. The most common housing type for renters in Dawson Creek were apartments with less than five storeys (44%). Most dwellings require regular maintenance only (60% of all dwellings), while 31% require minor repairs and 9% require major repairs.

Like other communities in the PRRD, Dawson Creek is experiencing increasing pressure on its housing market. As the population grows and ages, affordability and changing demographics are shifting the types of housing that can support local needs and development trends; what was once desirable may no longer meet the future needs of the population as well.

through local plans, policies, and the management of development. It is also a public report intended to inform the public and stakeholders to help improve local understanding of housing needs.

This report provides an overview of housing needs based on analysis of this quantitative data from these sources, as well as qualitative data from engagement. This data is used to identify housing units required today and forecast needs for the next five years, determine the number of households in core housing need, and make statements about key areas of local need, in fulfilment of Housing Needs Reports regulations.³

1.3 Data Limitations

This report refers to both the standard Census Profile from Statistics Canada for Dawson Creek, as well as custom data that was prepared for the purpose of completing the Housing Needs Reports. The custom data refers to private households only and figures may be different than what is available through the public Census Profiles.

Recognizing that the 2016 Census data used throughout this report is already somewhat dated, particularly for a region with a largely cyclical economy, this information nonetheless remains as the most reliable data available for the purposes of this type of reporting, as it is collected only through Statistics Canada's Census. The legislative requirements require that it be used in British Columbia Housing Needs Assessments. In order to address this limitation, the future needs projections and engagement sections are intended to ensure that a more current snapshot of needs and issues is captured. Over time, as future Housing Needs Assessments are produced, this tool and approach will be important to be able to track trends in the Census data and qualitative data collected through engagement. This report is intended to provide a baseline against which to assess changes.

The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) was voluntary and as a result had a much lower response rate than the mandatory long-form Census. Because of this, data from the 2011 NHS is of a lower quality than Census data from other years.

The statistical data included in this report was collected prior to COVID-19 and may not entirely reflect current housing trends. The data reported should be considered together with Section 7 – COVID-19 Implications of this report. The findings in the concluding sections consider both available data, desktop research on COVID-19 implications on the housing system, and what was heard from stakeholders during engagement about the on-the-ground implications in Dawson Creek.

³ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/local-governments-and-housing/policy-and-planning-tools-for-housing/housing-needs-reports>

2.0 Community Engagement Findings

2.1 Overview

To better understand local housing needs, community and stakeholder engagement was completed between July and September 2020. This process collected insight on local housing challenges and opportunities from the perspective of Dawson Creek residents, local stakeholders, and neighbouring First Nations. Additional stakeholder interviews were undertaken in December 2020 and January 2021 to ensure stakeholders across the region were well represented in the study. This section provides an overview of the engagement process.

2.1.1 Community Survey

A community survey was available from July 15 to August 13, 2020. It was available through Dawson Creek's website as well as through paper copies by request. The purpose of the survey was to collect information about the housing needs and challenges of residents.

A total of 173 respondents from Dawson Creek responded to the survey, including 25 individuals who identified as First Nations or Metis. Seventy-two percent of respondents were owners (110 respondents), 26% were renters (39 respondents) and three percent did not rent, own, or have a fixed address. The survey received responses from individuals ranging from the ages of 15 to 84 with a wide range of household incomes.

2.1.2 Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

A wide range of stakeholders in Dawson Creek were invited to participate in an interview or focus group, including service providers, housing providers, and other community organizations. The following stakeholders in Dawson Creek participated: Network Ministries, South Peace Community Resource Society, Axis Family Resources, Dawson Creek Salvation Army, Community Living BC Dawson Creek, Cut Thumb Glass (rental property manager), Nawican Friendship Centre, and Dawson Creek Society for Community Living. Interviews were also completed with staff from Saulteau First Nations, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Doig River First Nation, and Kelly Lake Cree Nation to provide insight into Indigenous housing needs in the region.

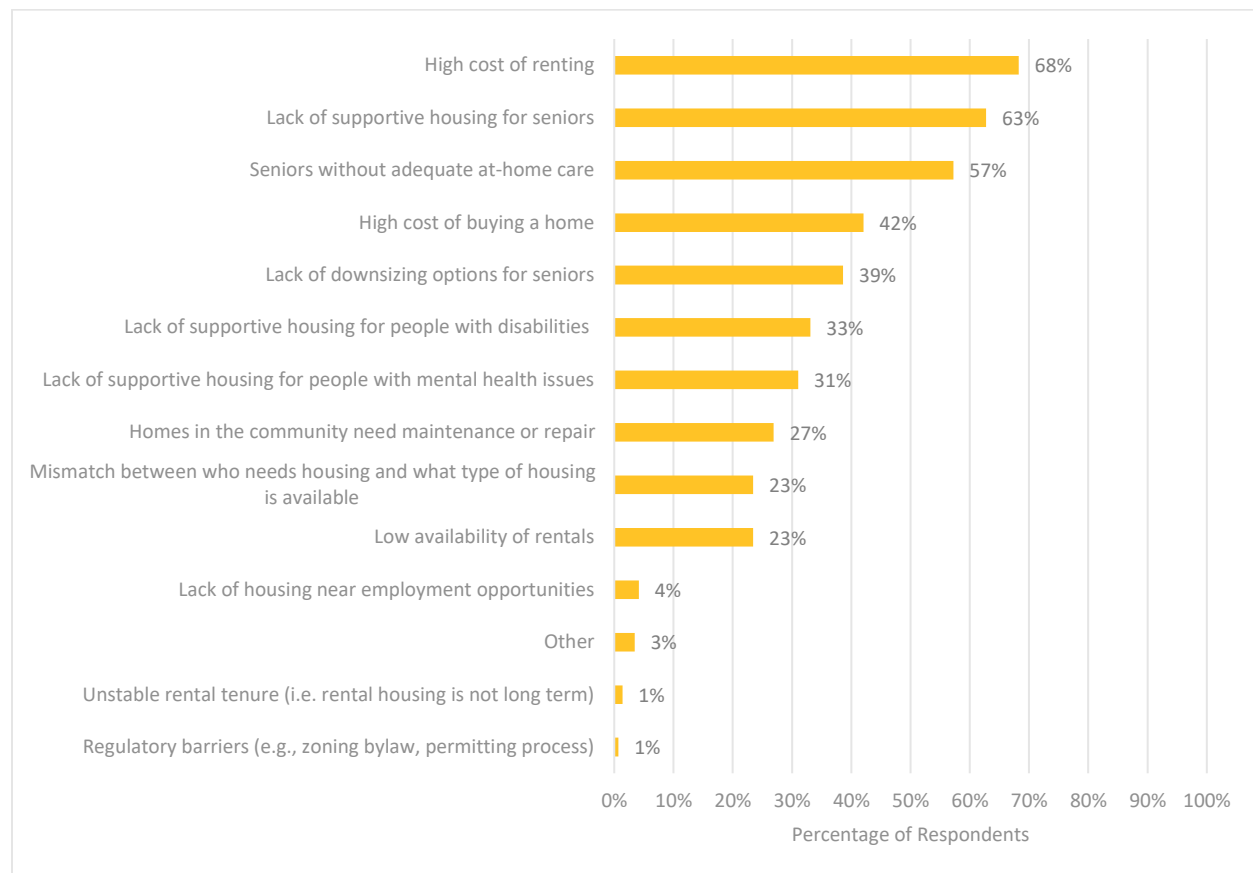
The full results of the survey and focus groups and interviews can be found in Appendix B.

2.2 Findings for Dawson Creek

2.2.1 Housing Challenges

Stakeholders and survey participants were asked about housing challenges and opportunities specific to Dawson Creek. Figure 2 the top housing challenges that survey participants identified for Dawson Creek. The high cost of renting in Dawson Creek was the most common concern. Three of the top five issues for all respondents were related to housing options and supports for seniors in the community, followed by housing options and supports needed for individuals with disabilities and mental health issues. The following sections summarize the challenges shown in Figure 2 and other challenges mentioned by survey participants and stakeholders.

Figure 2 – Top Community Issues in Dawson Creek



2.2.2 Affordability

For survey participants, especially households with low- or moderate-income, cost was a major barrier when searching for a home. Fifty-one percent (51%) of survey participants who were homeowners said the cost of purchasing was too high while 41% of renters said rental costs were too high. However, 71% of survey participants who were homeowners reported that they believe their housing costs are affordable to them, compared to only 15% of renters. This highlights the issue of affordability in the rental market in Dawson Creek and is reflected in the graph above.

Survey participants were also asked to identify any housing challenges that they anticipate experiencing in the next five years. Both homeowners (12%) and renters (23%) anticipate uncertainty about whether or not they will be able to make mortgage or rent payments in the next five years.

Interviewees reported unaffordability especially for single parent families due to high rents and utility costs. There are many rental properties available, however they cater to employed, high earning individuals and families. Especially families with vulnerable children and single people in the 40-59 age categories are falling through the cracks. Stakeholders reported that many people end up living in substandard housing because they can't find affordable housing. The Nawican Friendship Centre indicated that it is difficult for the Indigenous population to find affordable accommodations off-reserve, especially for those on a fixed income. The Dawson Creek Native Housing Association indicated a need for low income and low barrier housing for individuals dealing with

addictions, mental health, or unemployment challenges. Stakeholders identified a need for affordable housing units where rent is geared to income. Additionally, high costs of hydro and gas bills put added pressure on low income households when they can hardly pay rent let alone utility bills.

Developers noted that due to development cost charges and an increase in construction material costs, it has become more difficult to build affordable housing units in the community.

2.2.3 Supportive Housing⁴

In line with regional concerns, the lack of supportive housing in Dawson Creek was identified as a major issue for stakeholders and survey participants. Stakeholders indicated that there are long waitlists with hundreds of applicants waiting to secure a supportive housing unit. Stakeholders and survey participants highlighted the need for a range of supportive housing options in the community for seniors requiring supports, individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities, and homeless individuals, individuals experiencing addictions or behavioural challenges, and other vulnerable populations. Landlord discrimination is also a common experience for individuals with mental health issues. Stakeholders also identified that there is a lack of communication between supportive housing and service providers which results in overlapping services and competition for funding. Interviewees suggested establishing a list of supportive resources in the community to help vulnerable populations find and access the services they require.

Seniors

Housing for seniors emerged as a major area of concern. Stakeholders indicated that it can be very difficult for seniors to find accessible housing options. Survey participants felt that supportive housing (53%), adequate at-home care (57%), and downsizing options for seniors (39%) were missing in the community. Aging in place with closer access to health care services and financial support is seen as a priority.

Homelessness

Over the past five years, stakeholders have reported an increase in the homeless population. Stakeholders indicated that due to limited supportive housing options in Dawson Creek, many individuals are staying in shelters over the long term because they have no where else to go. Stakeholders also indicated that issues with homelessness are often hidden as people aren't staying in tents, they are largely couch surfing. Fifty percent (50%) of survey participants felt that emergency housing or homeless shelters were needed in the community. Stakeholders who are service providers struggle to continue to support those in need and have limited capacity to house individuals. Homeless individuals with substance use are turned away from shelters and experience higher barriers. Homeless youth, ages 15 to 18, are another concern and allegedly live in forests near the community.

Women

Stakeholders noted that more shelters are needed for vulnerable women, including those leaving abusive relationships or fleeing violence. Due to the lack of services in Dawson Creek, women are travelling to Fort St. John to access housing and supports they require.

⁴ The City of Dawson Creek indicated that a 32 unit supportive housing project is being constructed.

2.2.4 Housing Condition and Suitability

One of the top housing issues survey participants currently face (26%) and anticipate in the next five years (29%) is that their homes are in poor condition and need repairs. Survey participants noted in an open-ended comment that local challenges such as flooding or erosion have caused damage to homes in recent times.

Many survey participants had other issues with their homes. Notably, 36% of participants reported that their home lacks adequate storage and 24% said their homes are too small for their needs.

2.2.5 Services and Infrastructure

Stakeholders noted that due to transit budget cuts, there has been a lack of near-by transit options for residents. Marginalized populations and individuals on social assistance have been most affected by the impact of transit cuts. Survey participants also suggested that utility infrastructure in Dawson Creek should be updated to make living in the community more desirable and well-served.

2.3 Housing Opportunities

Stakeholders and survey participants were invited to identify opportunities to build new housing or support groups in need. The following are their suggestions:

- Develop more housing in underutilized areas in Dawson Creek
- Increase clarity around building regulations and ensure stricter building codes
- Build smaller homes that are more affordable
- Increase storage spaces in homes

2.4 Regional Findings

2.4.1 Housing Affordability and Supply

Interviewees observed that there are more housing developments during industry booms which increases the availability of housing. However, these industry booms were also observed to drive housing unaffordability as prices rise due to the influx of workers. For some service providers, it has also been challenging to recruit staff, partly due to housing. Finding affordable housing options is reported to be especially challenging for one-person or single-income households.

2.4.2 Senior Housing

For seniors in the PRRD, interviewees report that there are long waitlists for seniors housing of up to two to three years. Having fixed incomes makes it difficult for many seniors to find appropriate housing and some end up living in sub-standard units. Stakeholders report a need for services to support seniors who choose to age in place in their own homes, for example, support with meals, snow removal, etc. Improved accessibility would also help many remain independent over a longer term. It was also reported that seniors with dementia who do not have access to appropriate housing and supports may be prematurely placed in long-term care. In rural communities with limited services, seniors may find it difficult to access health care services close to home and may move to more urban areas to have access to these services or be closer to family.

2.4.3 Supportive Housing

Stakeholders identified a need for supportive housing for vulnerable populations such as seniors, Indigenous Elders, youth, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with mental health issues. Additionally, some service providers face challenges of recruiting staff.

Youth

Stakeholders point out that youth, under 19, who require medical care are put into long-term care. More youth housing near larger municipalities would ensure that they can attend nearby schools and receive education.

Individuals with Disabilities

Despite recent improvements in housing for individuals with disabilities (such as brain injuries, mobility issues, MS), there is still a need for more housing options for these individuals in new buildings. Individuals who receive disability support face many challenges in finding appropriate housing because of restricted budgets. Interviewees also report a need for additional accessible housing units for individuals with disabilities who are able to live independently. Stakeholders noted that the default accommodations (such as extended hospital stays or long-term care) for individuals with disabilities is not suitable for their needs and prevents them from accessing services. Individuals stay for extended periods of times in hospitals when there isn't proper housing available, which have resulted in over capacity in hospitals.

Individuals with Mental Health Issues

Interviewees pointed out that individuals suffering from mental health issues often face additional barriers when looking for housing. Service providers reported that there is a lack of low barrier housing available for people at different stages of their lives and individuals are often turned away from rentals and shelters due to their conditions, limiting them to access the supports they require. One stakeholder mentioned there is a particular need for increasing programming that serve men with mental health issues.

Vulnerable Population

Interviewees indicated there is a need for supportive housing for individuals leaving abusive relationships and or families fleeing negative or dangerous living situations.

2.4.4 Households with Income Assistance

Housing affordability was a concern for stakeholders, with particular mention of individuals on income-assistance. Despite rental availability, many individuals on income-assistance are unable to afford market housing. The stigma of income-assistance has also resulted in some rental companies discriminating individuals from housing opportunities.

2.4.5 Indigenous Housing

There is a shortage of housing for Indigenous households living both on and off reserve. Interviewees report that Indigenous households need better access to medical services, mental health supports, and safe homes when living off reserve.

One of the major issues influencing the availability of housing on reserve is the lack of funding for repairing existing homes or building new ones. The application process to receive funding is time-consuming and difficult. Additionally, interviewees report that the current minimum building code is unsuitable for meeting the needs of climate conditions (e.g. high snow load). Many homes have not been built to withstand climate conditions and need to be replaced. Materials for replacements are limited locally and must be sourced from communities that are farther away.

Interviewees reported a need for better quality housing suited for the northern climate that serves diverse household needs (e.g. families, singles, Elders). There is also need for more nearby community infrastructure and services to support existing homes (e.g. schools, shops, medical support for Indigenous Elders).

2.5 Opportunity Areas

2.5.1 Collaborations and Partnerships

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of fostering collaborations in the District between communities and First Nations, and pursuing partnerships with service providers, housing providers and BC Housing. Stakeholders identified a need for collaborative conversations between emergency service providers, health care workers and District Officials to better understand the housing needs of vulnerable populations.

2.5.2 Research and Policy

Those involved in housing development indicated a need for the PRRD and municipalities to review development procedures to reduce any unnecessary restrictions on development and incentivize development through tax incentives. Collecting data and conducting assessments were identified as important to addressing current and future housing needs and issues. Stakeholders felt that increasing knowledge of housing needs will support the District in preparing for future funding and investment opportunities.

2.5.3 Continued Support for Senior Housing and Affordable Housing Options

There are currently many initiatives aimed at providing more housing options for seniors and supportive living across the PRRD. Stakeholders highlighted senior housing initiatives, including Heritage, the Mennonite's Elder's Lodge, and Better at Home, that provide house keeping duties, food provisions, and medical care for seniors. Stakeholders noted that providers (e.g. Northern Health) are interested in exploring similar opportunities to build and operate senior housing in the PRRD, while investors are specifically interested in opportunities in Fort St. John. Stakeholders suggested that a database of senior accommodation and support services available across the region should be established to help residents access the services they need.

Stakeholders highlighted other housing initiatives that are aimed towards providing housing options to specific groups including BC Hydro's building for Hudson's Hope's staff and medical workers, BC Housing's passive apartment building with allocation for low-income households, and apartments for medical students at CMHC rates.

2.5.4 Other Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of other opportunities for building new housing or providing supports for specific groups:

- Provide more off reserve housing across the region for First Nations
- Provide mental health housing that allow independence for tenants
- Provide private assisted living facilities to increase options and availability for seniors
- Provide housing options for individuals living in hospital care
- Increase funding for the Homeless Prevention Program
- Repurpose underutilized hotels for affordable housing units
- Utilize underutilized buildings and undeveloped properties to develop housing projects or accommodate support services

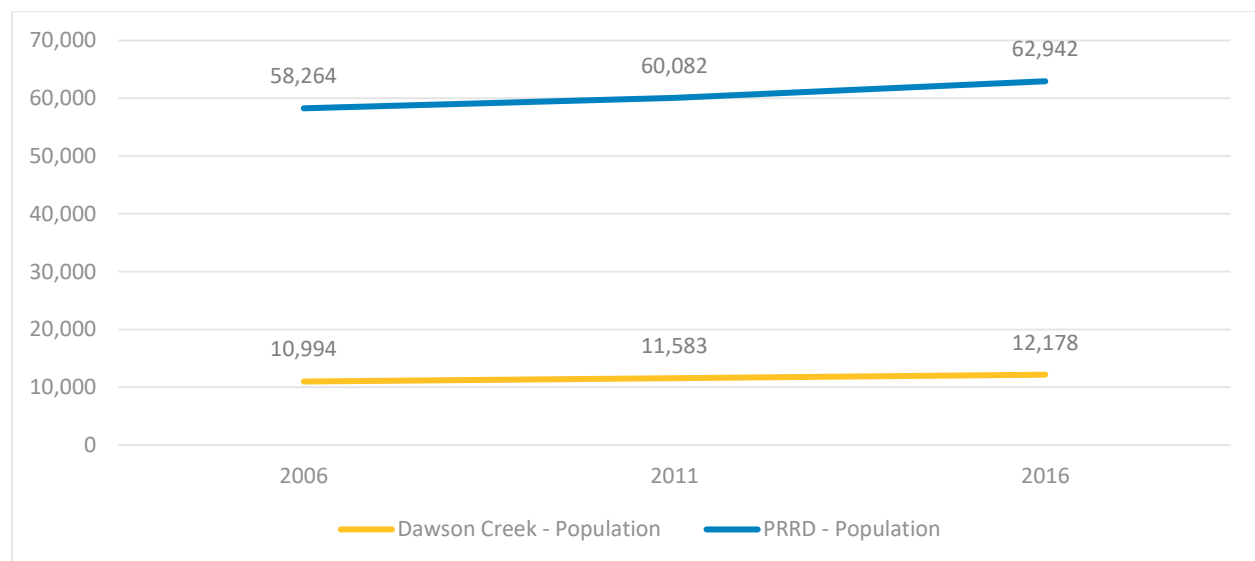
3.0 Dawson Creek Community Profile

The demographic and economic context of a community shape its housing needs. Age and stage of life, household type and size, income, and employment all directly affect the type of housing units, sizes, and tenures needed. This section provides an overview of these factors, using a combination of data from the Statistics Canada Census Profiles and data tables and custom data prepared for Housing Needs Reports.

3.1 Population

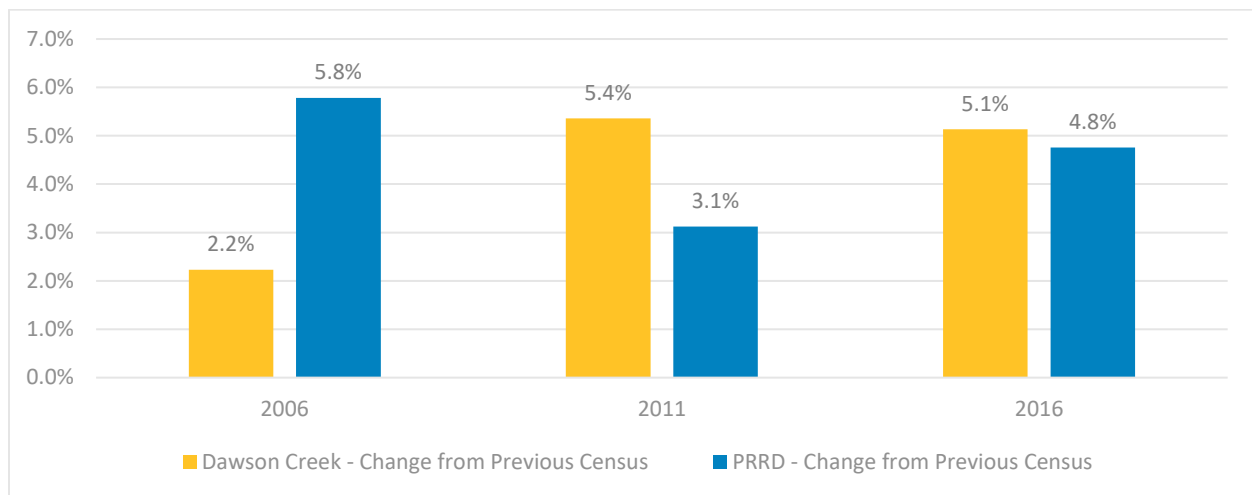
Between 2006 and 2016 Dawson Creek grew by 10% percent from 10,994 to 12,178 residents (an increase of 1,184 residents) (Figure 3). Over the same time period, the PRRD grew by 4.8% (Figure 4). As of 2016, Dawson Creek residents made up 20% of the PRRD's total population.

Figure 3 – Population Changes in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2006-2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016

Figure 4 – Population Changes in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2006-2016

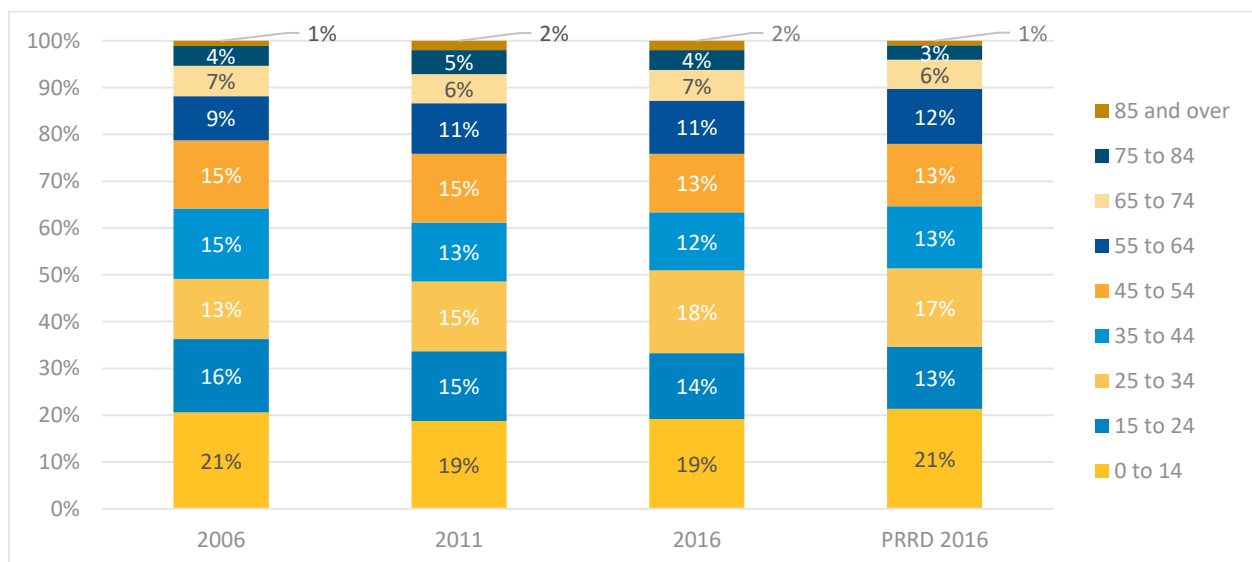


Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016

3.2 Age

From 2006 to 2016, the median age in Dawson Creek declined from 35.6 to 34.4, indicating a trend of younger residents moving into the area, or older residents leaving the community. Age group distribution over the past three Census periods shows a relatively stable population overall. The age distribution in Dawson Creek is comparable with that found within the PRRD. While generally the age cohorts showed little change between Census periods, one age group that does appear to be increasing is young adults (aged 25 to 34) who went from representing 13% of the population in 2006 to 18% of the population in 2016. The relative youthfulness of the Dawson Creek population can largely be attributed to young workers moving to the region for employment opportunities in the natural resource economy.

Figure 5 – Age Distribution in Dawson Creek, 2006-2016

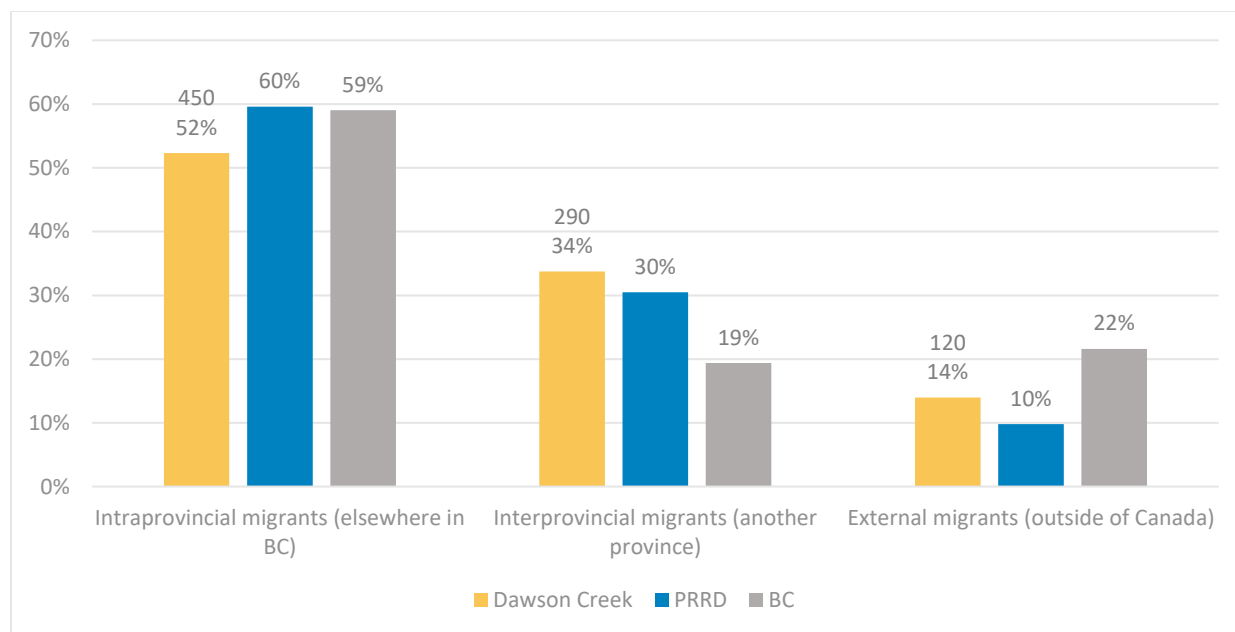


Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016

3.3 Mobility

In Dawson Creek, 7% of the population moved into the municipality between 2015 and 2016, compared to 6% in the PRRD and 7% in BC (Figure 6). Of those who moved to Dawson Creek, 52% were intra-provincial migrants (people who moved from elsewhere in BC), 34% were inter-provincial migrants (people who moved from another province), and 14% are external migrants (people who moved from outside of Canada). Compared to the PRRD, Dawson Creek has a lower proportion of individuals who moved intra-provincially and a higher proportion that has moved interprovincially.

Figure 6 – Mobility Status in Dawson Creek, PRRD and BC, 2016



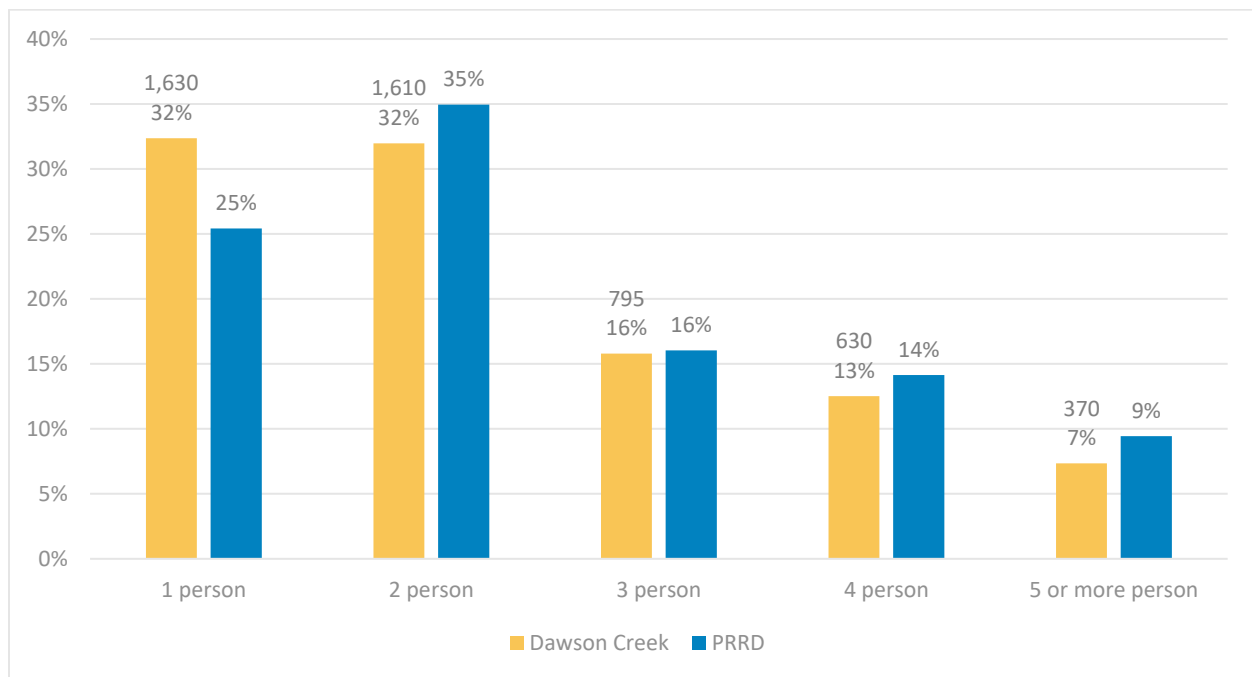
Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

3.4 Households

Between 2006 and 2016, the number of households in Dawson Creek grew by 8% from 4,650 to 5,035 which corresponds with the population growth experienced over the same time period. In addition, the average household size in Dawson Creek has remained the same at 2.3 for all three Census periods. This compares to the average household size of 2.5 in 2016 for the PRRD. In 2016, 36% of households in Dawson Creek were 3 person or more households (i.e. family households), as compared to 39% of PRRD households (Figure 7). Households in Dawson Creek are predominantly one and two-person households (64% collectively).

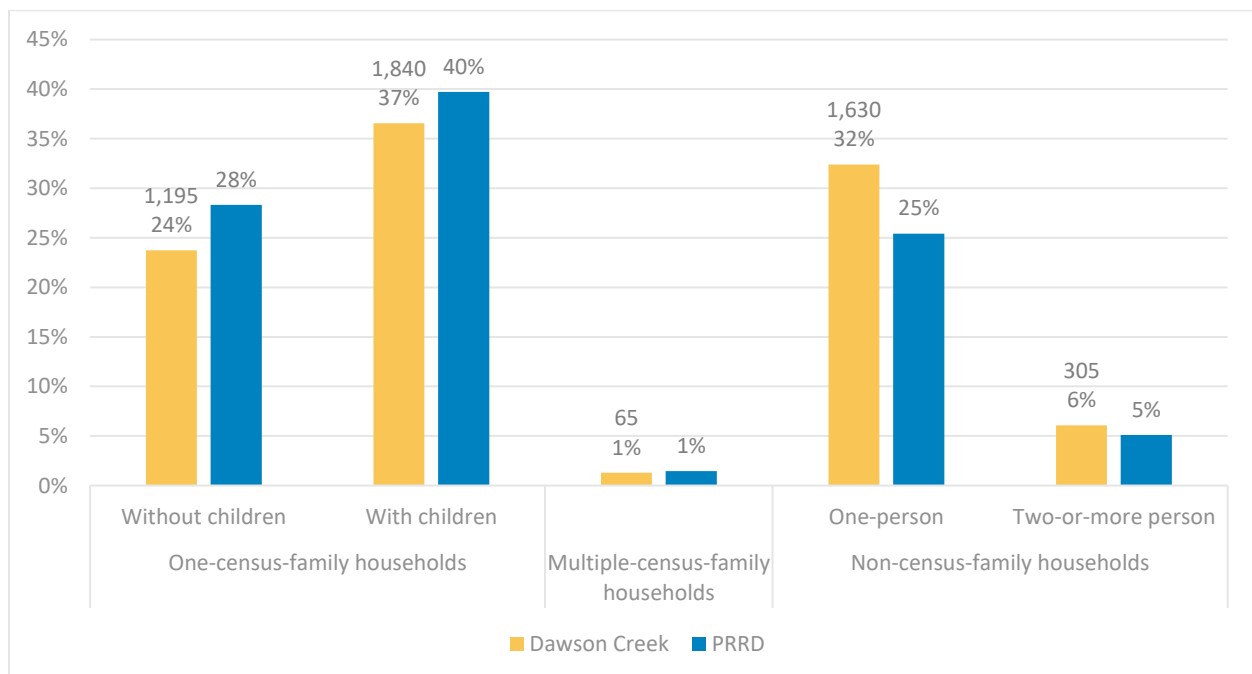
Dawson Creek also has a lower proportion of family households with and without children than the PRRD, and higher portion of one person non-census-family households (households consisting of one person) (Figure 8). Multiple family census households make up 1% of the Dawson Creek households. These figures show that families are somewhat less likely to live in the community than in the PRRD as a whole, and that households in Dawson Creek are more likely to be non-family households (i.e. one person living alone or unrelated roommates).

Figure 7 – Household by Size Comparison in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

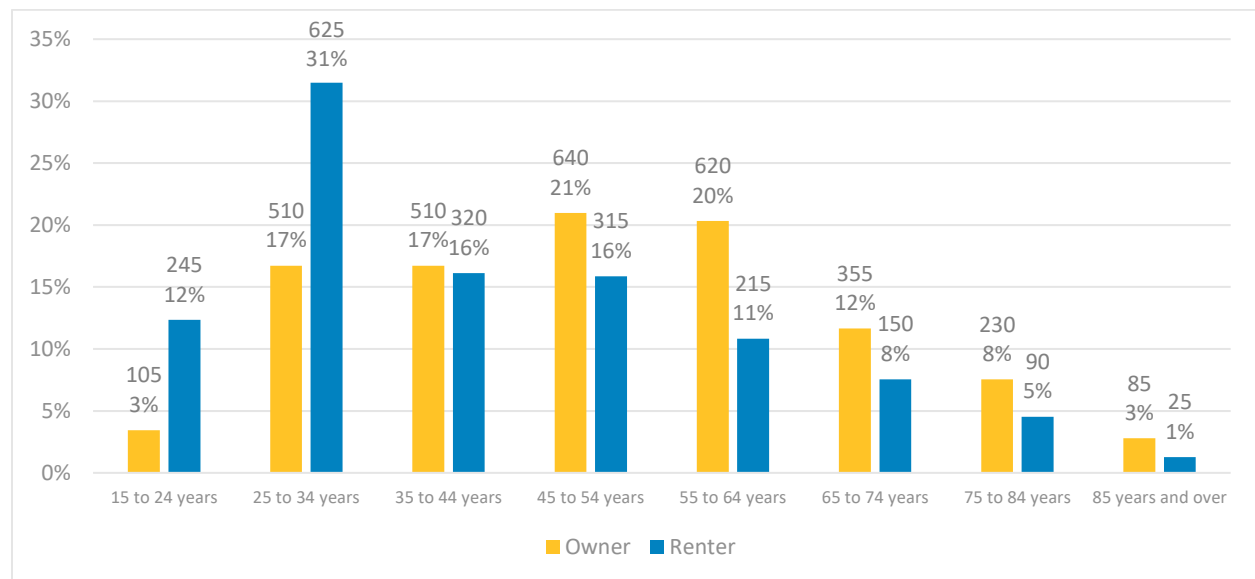
Figure 8 – Households by Type in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

Figure 9 shows the ages of primary household maintainers by tenure, to illustrate the distribution of tenure across age groups in 2016. Primary household maintainer refers to the person leading a household. The Census allows two to be identified per household and the data is based on the first entry. In Dawson Creek, there was a smaller proportion of households headed by the youngest and oldest age groups. Renter households are more likely to be led by a younger age group (75% of renters were under the age of 54), while 25% of owner households were led by individuals aged 55 or older.

Figure 9 – Age of Primary Household Maintainer by Tenure, 2016

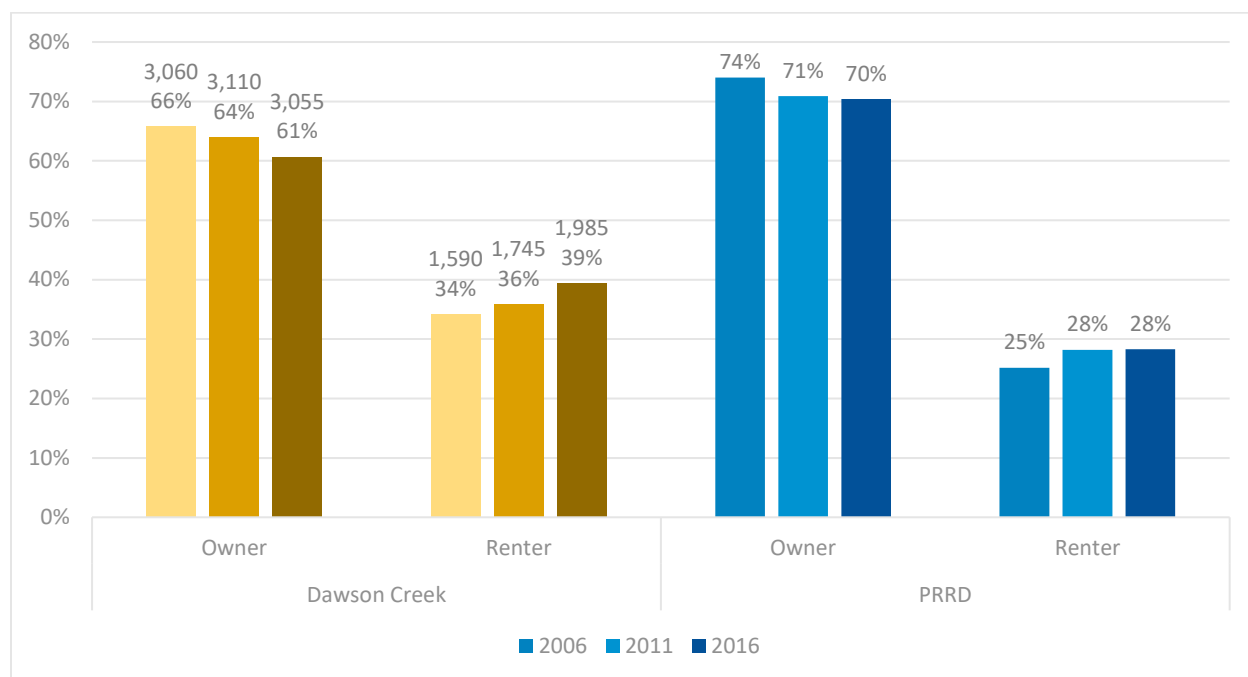


Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

3.4.1 Tenure

Dawson Creek has seen the proportion of owner households decline over the past three Census periods, from 66% in 2006 to 61% in 2016 (Figure 10), while the proportion of renter households in Dawson Creek has increased over the same time period, from 34% to 39%. Between 2006 and 2016, and especially from 2011 onward, a large number of residential units were constructed, the majority of which being rental units (apartments, duplexes with suites, coach houses, etc.) which correspond with the trend of increased renter households. Many single detached dwellings also were constructed with secondary suites. This trend is illustrated in the number of residential building permits approved over this time period (Table 2). For comparison, between 2006 and 2016 across the PRRD, owner households also declined (74% to 70%) and renter households increased (25% to 28%).

Figure 10 – Households by Tenure in Dawson Creek, 2006-2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2016, NHS Profile 2011

3.5 Economy

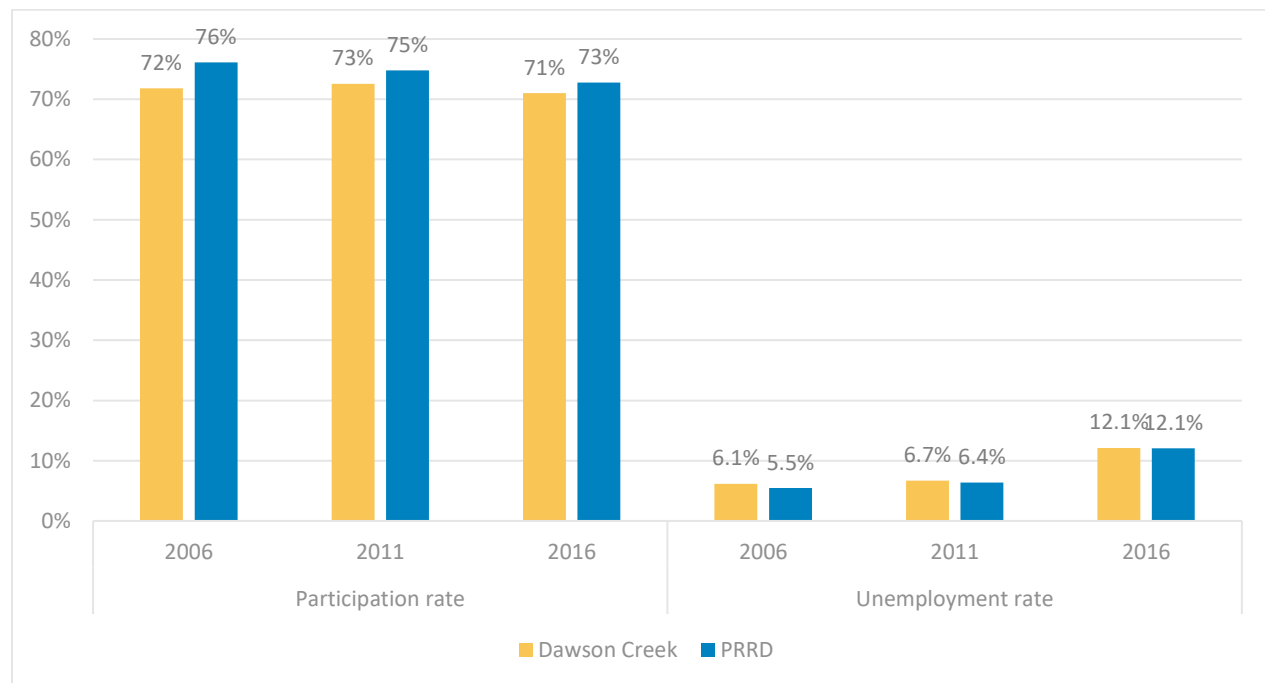
Between 2006 and 2016, Dawson Creek saw a slight decrease in labour participation from 72% to 71% and the unemployment rate in Dawson Creek doubled from 6.1% to 12.1% over the same time period. These changes in labour participation and unemployment rate took place during a period of time where there was a significant downturn in the economy, which was most notably felt in the oil and gas industry in the region, and these numbers reflect that. However, by 2018 an unemployment rate of 5.7%⁵ was reported for North East BC, followed by 6.3%⁶ in 2019 (October YTD). There also have been several large projects initiated in the PRRD in the last few years that would have helped lower the unemployment rates including the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline, Site C construction, Pembina pipeline expansion, and major growth in the Montney region. Many employees working on these projects live in Dawson Creek, although some live in camps as their work moves along the development of the pipelines. Comparatively, between 2006 and 2016, the PRRD participation rate also decreased from 76% to 73% and the unemployment rate increased from 5.5% to 12.1%, which may be related to the 2014-2015 downturn in the oil and gas industry.

In 2016, the top five industries employing Dawson Creek residents included retail trade (14%), health care and social assistance (12%), accommodation and food services (10%), construction (10%), and mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction (8%).

⁵ <https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Information/Regional-Profiles/Northeast#employment-statistics>

⁶ <https://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/business/northeast-b-c-unemployment-holds-at-6-2-1.24001568>

Figure 11 – Labour Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2006-2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006, 2011 and 2016

3.6 Household Median Income

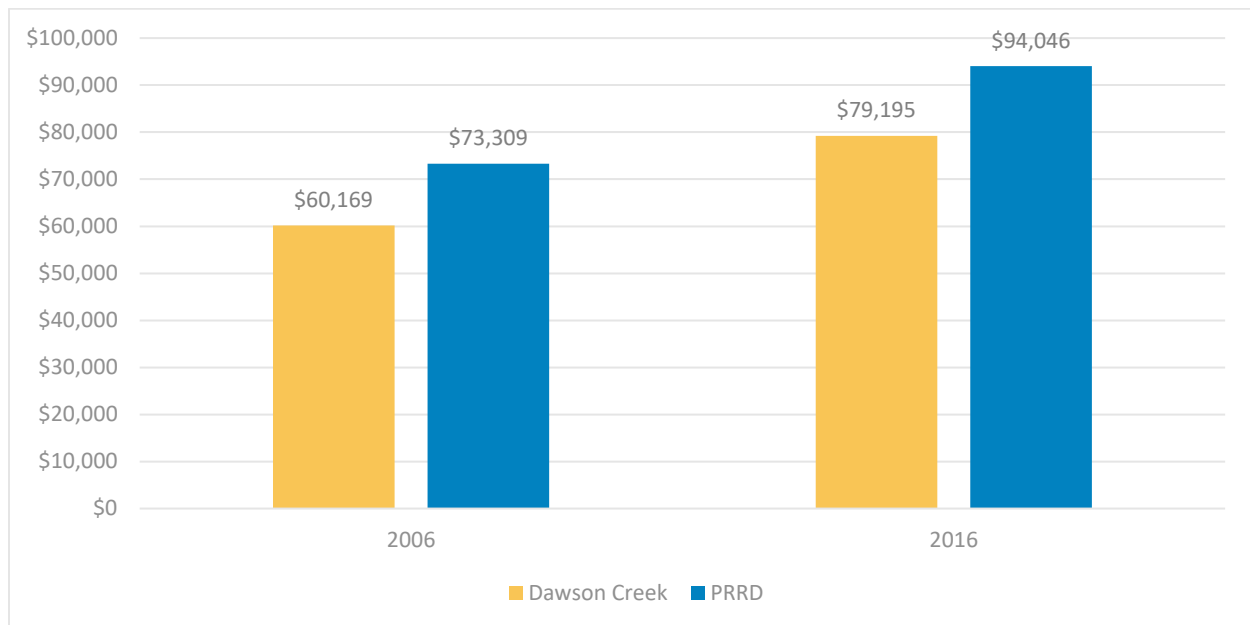
Between 2006 and 2016, median before-tax household income grew by 27% in Dawson Creek, compared to 24% across the PRRD, however Dawson Creek had a lower median household income than the PRRD. In 2016, the median household income in Dawson Creek was \$79,195. This is about \$14,000 lower than, or about 84% of, the PRRD median household income of \$94,046 (Figure 12).

Median household income differs by household type. Non-census family households (individuals living alone, though in some cases with roommates) had the lowest median household income in Dawson Creek followed by female lone parent households. Couples with children had the highest median household income, which is typical as they represent households generally at the peak of their earning potential and may have two-income streams (Figure 13). Couples without children can represent older couples whose children have left and contain both households nearing retirement (who may be high earners) and couples who are retired, who are living off investments and pensions. Households with lower incomes are likely to be more vulnerable to housing issues, as the options for what they can afford are naturally lower.

The median renter household income in a community is typically much lower than the median owner household income, as is the case in Dawson Creek. In 2016, the median renter household income was \$53,398, compared to the median owner household income of \$97,811. Median household incomes of owner households were 45% greater than that of renters (Figure 14). Because median household incomes for renters is significantly lower than owner households, there are also higher levels of core housing need among renter households (30% vs. 5.8%) which creates a level of tenure insecurity. However, secure rental tenure represents an important component of the housing continuum.

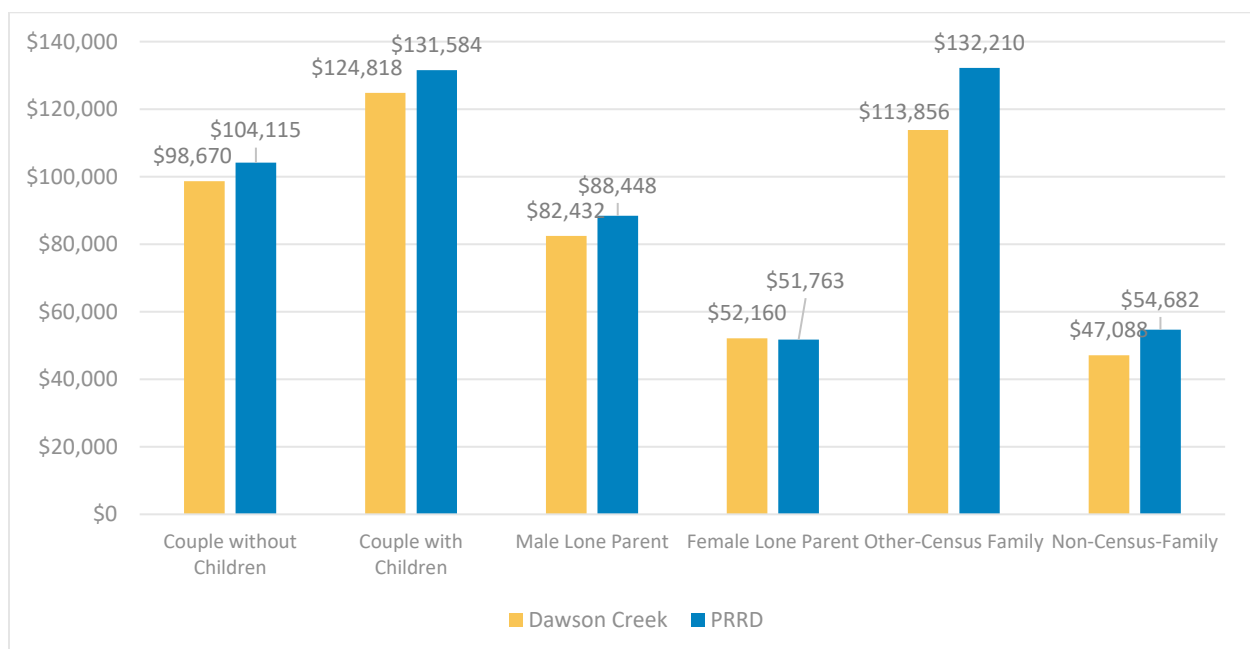
Of renter households, 70% earn less than \$80,000, while 38% earn less than \$40,000. Owner household income is more evenly distributed across income groups (Figure 15). This indicates that renters may not necessarily choose this tenure but rent because they are unable to afford ownership as an option.

Figure 12 – Median Before-Tax Household Income, 2006-2016



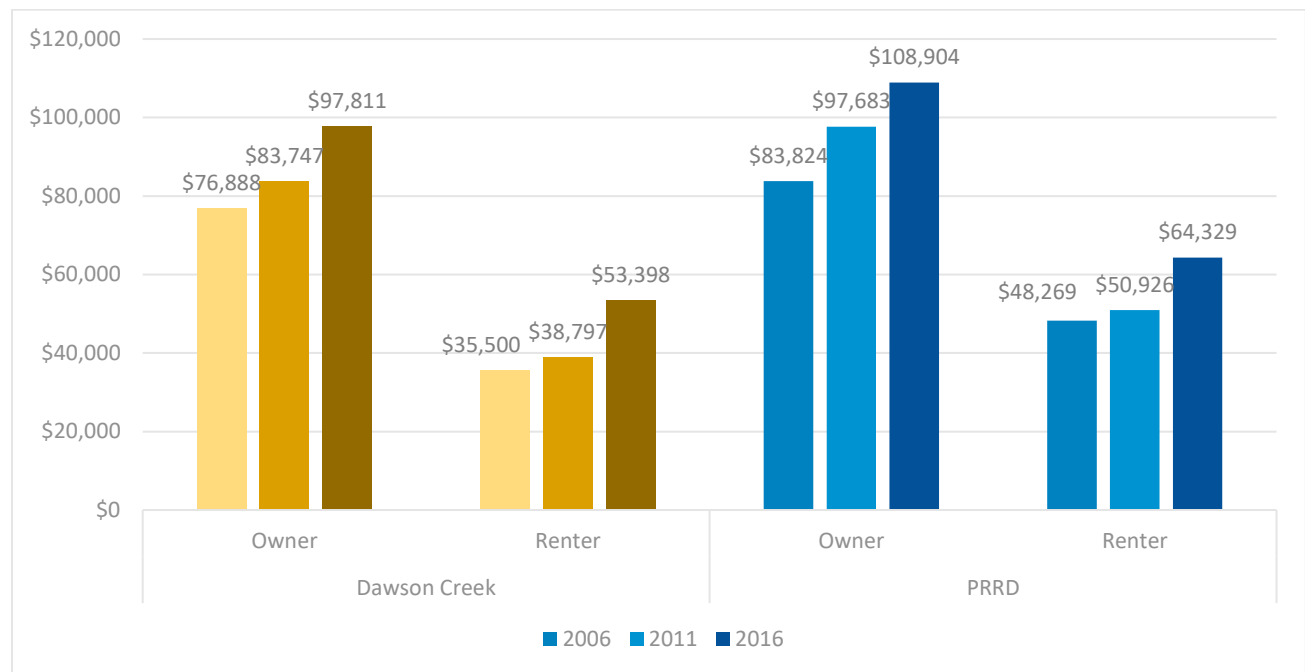
Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006 & 2016

Figure 13 – Median Total Household Income in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016



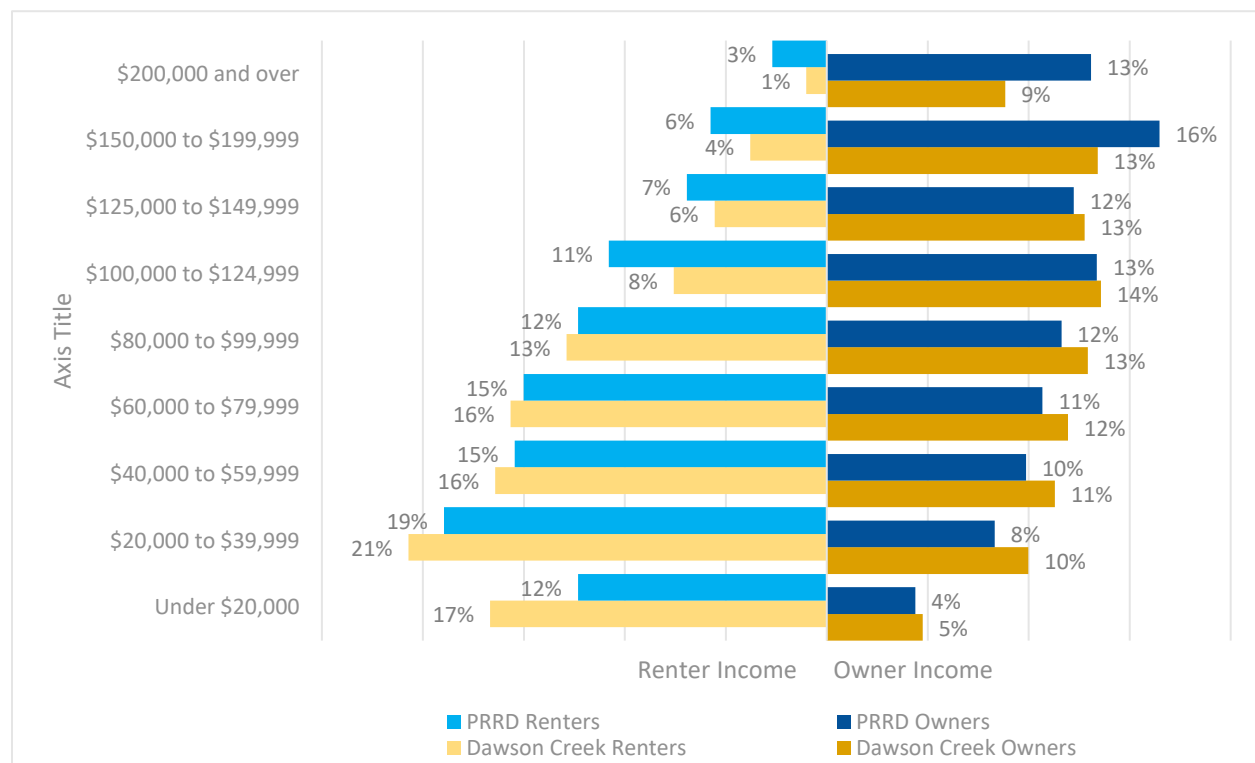
Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016

Figure 14 – Median Household Income by Tenure in Dawson Creek and PRRD 2006-2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006, 2011, 2016

Figure 15 – Renter and Owner Household Income by Income bracket, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016

3.7 Summary

Between 2006 and 2016, the Dawson Creek population increased to reach 12,178 in 2016. The median age of Dawson Creek residents was 34.4 in 2016, which was comparable to the median age of the total PRRD population of 34.1, indicating a younger population compared to all of BC which had a median age of 43 years.

In 2016, Dawson Creek had a total of 860 newcomers move to the community: 450 newcomers came from elsewhere in British Columbia, 290 from elsewhere in Canada, and 120 from outside Canada.

The number of households in Dawson Creek increased by 8% between 2006 and 2016 and the average household size remained steady at 2.3 persons. The majority of households in Dawson Creek are occupied by 1 or 2 people. Compared to the PRRD, Dawson Creek had fewer family households with and without children and a higher percentage of one-person non-census family households.

In Dawson Creek in 2016, 61% of households were owned and 39% are rented. The median household income of both owner and renter households increased from 2006 to 2016, but the owner household median income was almost double that of renter households in 2016. However, the median household income of both owner and renter households in Dawson Creek increased over the same time period. Households with the highest median income in 2016 were couples with children.

Between 2006 and 2016, the unemployment rate in Dawson Creek increased from 6.1% to 12.1% due to global economic conditions felt in the region, and the participation rate also decreased from 72% to 71%.

4.0 Housing Profile

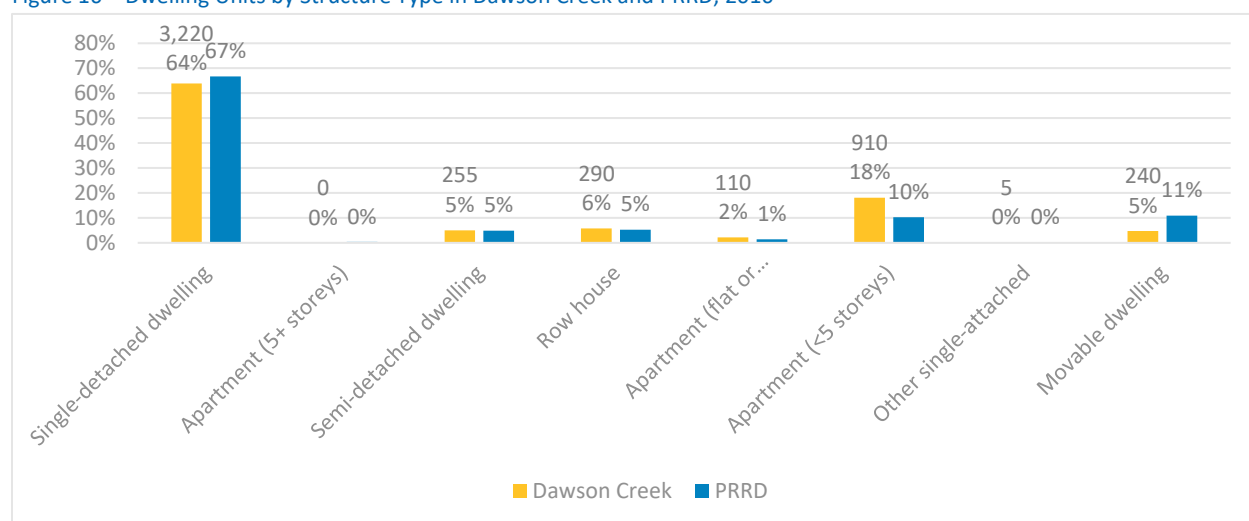
This section provides an overview of community housing stock (dwelling type, size, and age), market and non-market housing trends, and indicators of housing need. The content in this section forms the basis of the statements about key areas of local need provided in Section 8. Throughout this section there are instances where some unit types may not show the number of units and proportions may not add up to 100%. This is due to randomized rounding implemented by Statistics Canada.

4.1 Overview of Housing Stock

4.1.1 Housing Units

As of 2016, there was 6,020 dwellings in Dawson Creek. The dominant form of housing in Dawson Creek is single-detached dwellings (64%), which is comparable to the PRRD (67%). There is also a significant proportion of dwelling units in apartment buildings with fewer than five storeys in Dawson Creek (18%) (Figure 16). The majority of apartment buildings in Dawson Creek have four storeys.

Figure 16 – Dwelling Units by Structure Type in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016^{7 8}



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

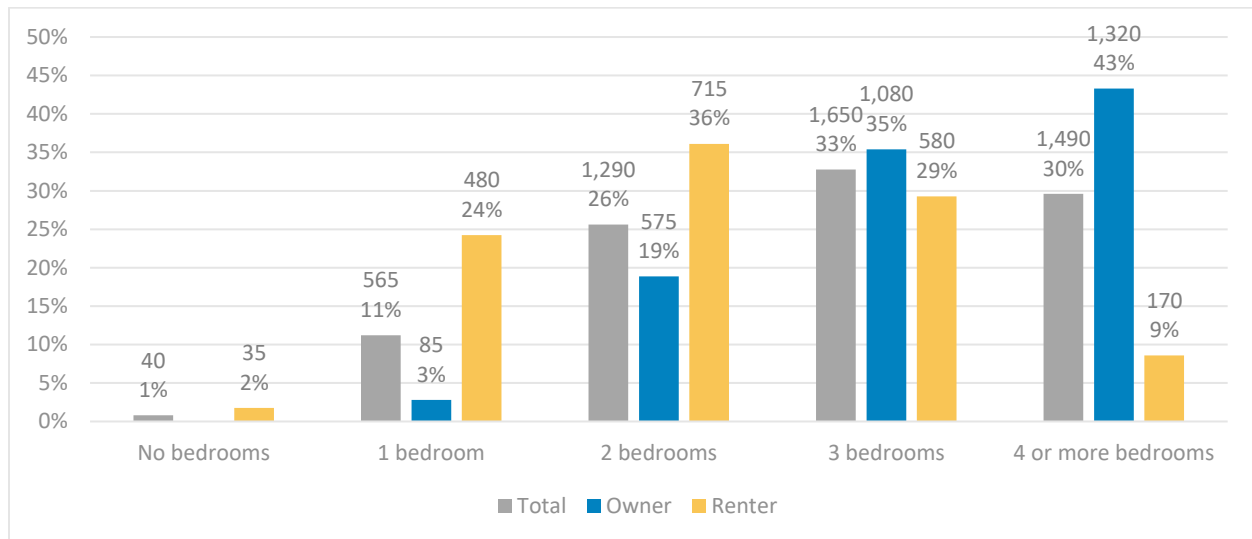
In 2016, 63% of dwellings in Dawson Creek were three bedrooms or more (Figure 17). Most dwellings with three bedrooms or more were owned (78%). Of rental dwellings, only 38% were three bedrooms or more, while 62% of rented dwellings had two bedrooms or fewer.

The most common structural housing type occupied by owners are single-detached dwellings (89%). Renters are more likely to live in a small apartment (44%), followed by a single-detached dwelling (26%). Owner households are significantly more likely to occupy a single-detached dwelling, with only about 11% of owners occupying a form of housing other than a single-detached dwelling (Figure 18).

⁷ Some unit types may not show the number of units. This is due to randomized rounding implemented by Statistics Canada, where small data sets may appear as 0, or in some cases may lead to proportions not adding to 100%.

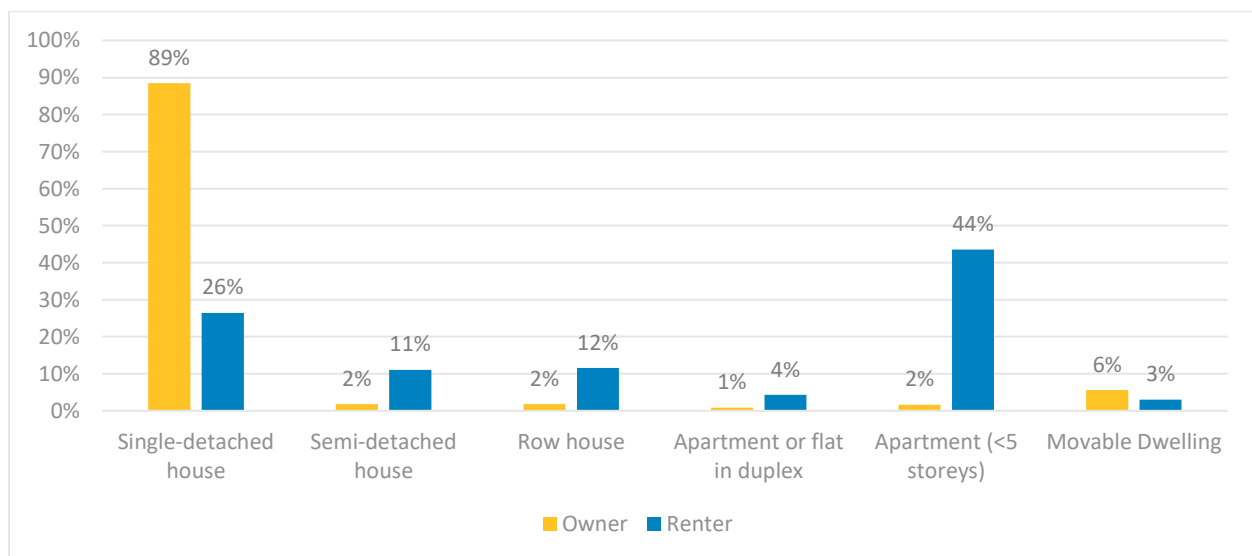
⁸ Side by side duplexes on one parcel are a common dwelling type in Dawson Creek. These units are counted as semi-detached. Fourplex units (or side by side duplexes with suites) are counted as apartments with less than five storeys.

Figure 17 – Dwelling by Unit Size by Tenure in Dawson Creek, 2016⁹



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X201622

Figure 18 – Dwellings by Structure Type and Tenure, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016227

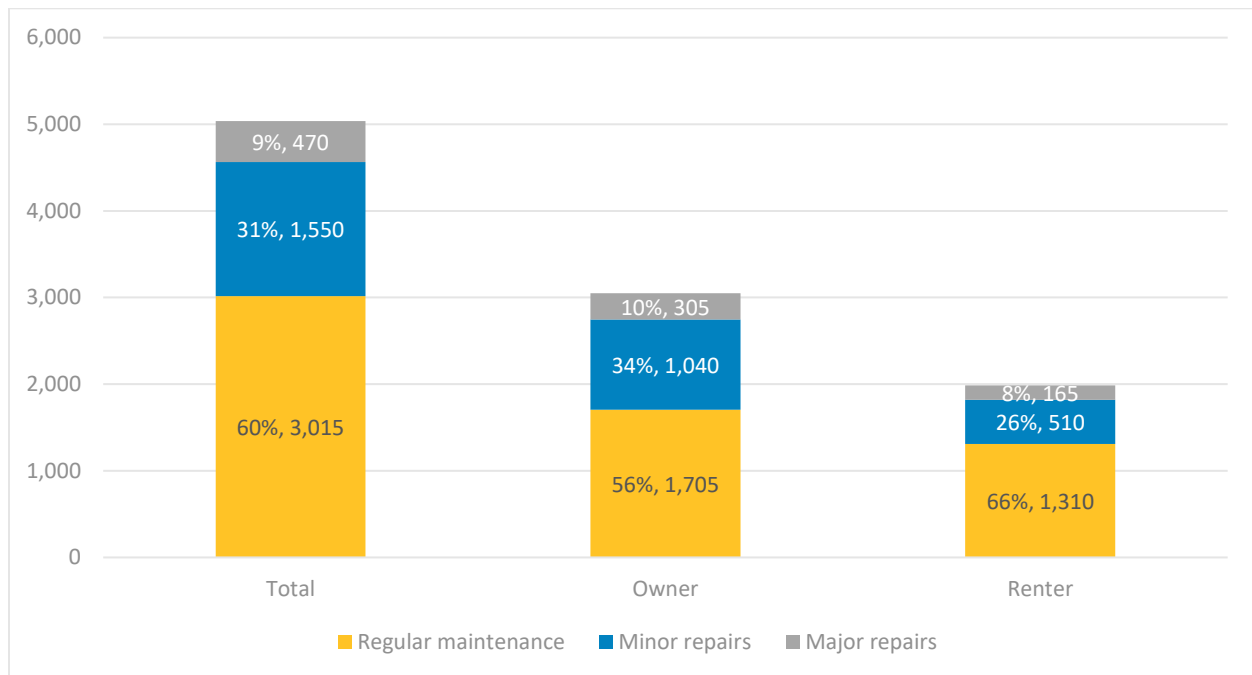
⁹ Some unit types may not show the number of units. This is due to randomized rounding implemented by Statistics Canada, where small data sets may appear as 0, or in some cases may lead to proportions not adding to 100%.

4.1.2 Condition of Housing

Of all dwellings, 31% required minor repairs, while 60% only required regular maintenance and 9% required major repairs (Figure 19). The proportion of renter and owner households living in a dwelling that needed major repairs were comparable (8% and 10% respectively).

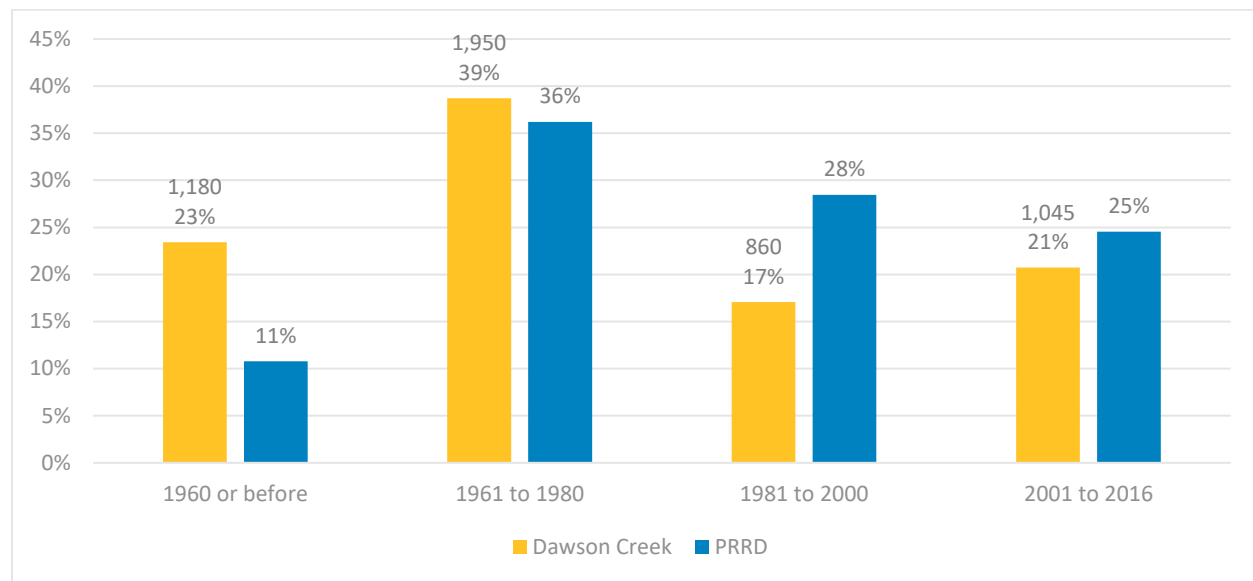
Compared to the PRRD, dwellings in Dawson Creek are older, with 23% of homes being built before 1960, and only 21% between 2001 and 2016. This corresponds with the relatively high rates of housing requiring minor or major repairs. In the PRRD as a whole, only 11% of homes were built prior to 1960, and a quarter of the stock was built between 2001 and 2016 (Figure 20).

Figure 19 – Condition of Dwelling by Tenure, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016, Data Table 98-400-X2016227

Figure 20 – Dwellings by Period of Construction in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016227

4.1.3 Occupied Private Dwellings

Private dwellings that are occupied by usual residents means a house in which a person or household is permanently residing. Dwellings that are not occupied by usual residents usually means that the housing unit is either vacant or rented out on a temporary basis. In Dawson Creek, 84% of private dwellings were occupied and 16% were unoccupied (Table 1).

Table 1 – Occupied Private Dwellings, Dawson Creek, 2016

	Number of Dwellings	Proportion of Total Private Dwellings (%)
Total private dwellings	6,020	100%
Private dwellings occupied by usual residents	5,035	84%
Private dwellings not occupied by usual residents	985	16%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

4.1.4 Recent Changes in Housing Stock

Between 2015 and 2020, the annual number of building permits for new residential dwelling units approved by Dawson Creek have fluctuated along with the economy and resource industry (Table 2). It is clear that due to the economic downturn experienced in late 2015 and into 2016 significantly decreased demand in Dawson Creek for new residential dwelling units. However, with renewed activity in the economy in the region in recent years, the number of residential building permits being approved are increasing again. Note that these figures do not include permits for decks or accessory buildings such as garages and sheds, and only includes permits for residential dwelling units.

Table 2 – Residential Dwelling Building Permit and Demolition Permits, Dawson Creek, 2015-2020

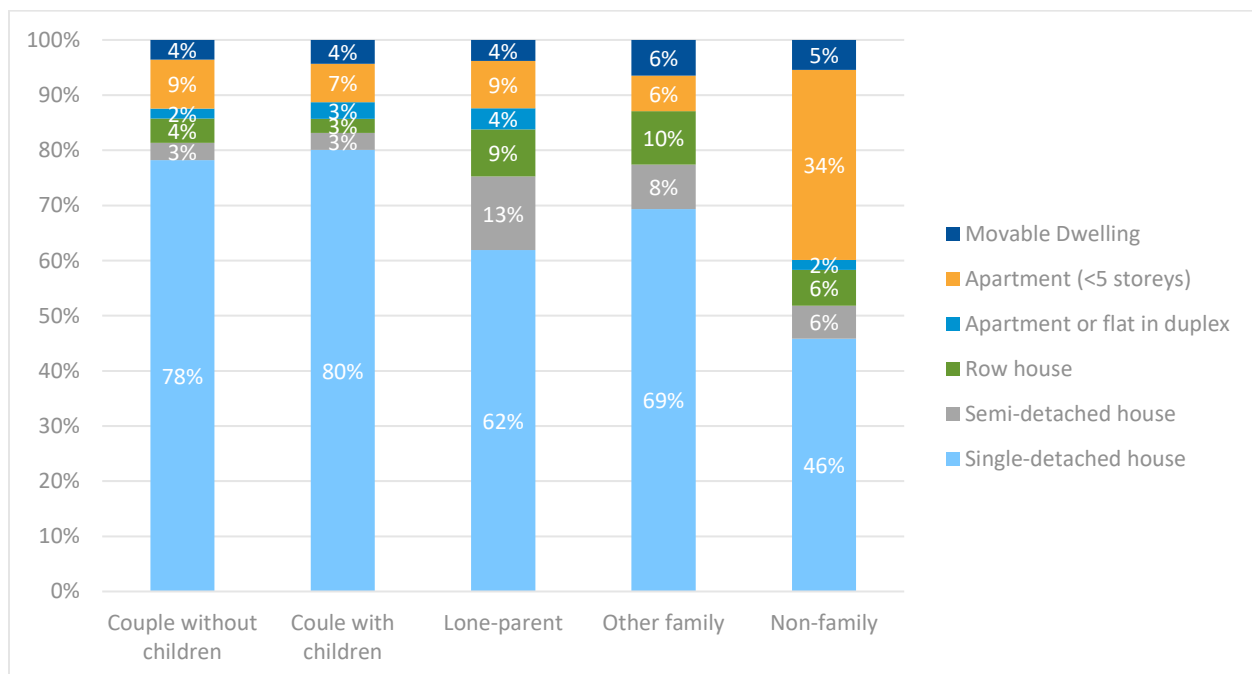
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 YTD	Total
Residential Dwelling Building Permits	77	9	18	37	14	42	197
Demolition Permits	1	2	9	4	1	5	21

Source: City of Dawson Creek, 2020

4.1.5 Households and Structure Types

In Dawson Creek, the majority of all family types except non-families live in a single-detached dwelling. Over 69% of couples with children, couples without children, and other families live in a single-detached dwelling, while 62% of lone-parent families and 46% of non-family live in single-detached dwellings. Thirty five percent (35%) of non-families live in an apartment structure that is less than 5 storeys (Figure 21), which indicates that this housing type is more suitable to these smaller households.

Figure 21 – Households by Structure and Family Type in Dawson Creek, 2016

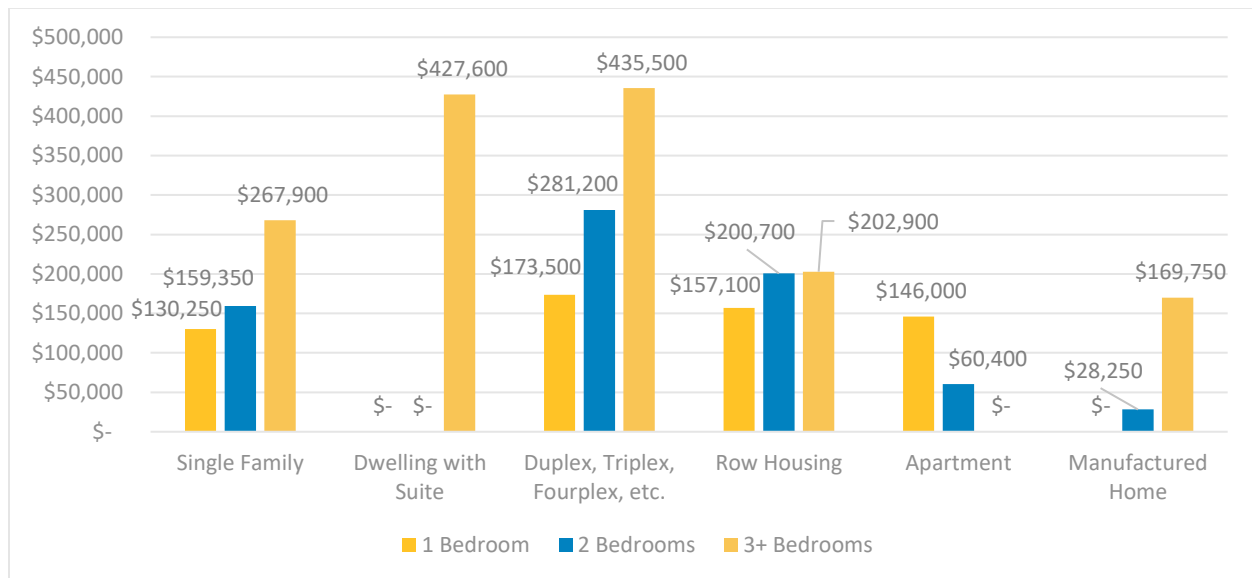


Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016227

4.2 Trends in the Homeownership Market

In the Dawson Creek homeownership market, duplex, triplex, and fourplex dwellings with three or more bedrooms had the highest median residential value in 2019, followed by dwellings with suites with three or more bedrooms (Figure 22).

Figure 22 – Median Residential Value by Type and Bedroom Type, 2019



Source: BC Assessment, 2019

4.2.1 Homeownership Affordability Gap Analysis

An affordability analysis was prepared to assess gaps between shelter costs and household incomes. This provides insight into whether households are spending an unaffordable amount of monthly income on shelter costs.

Affordability is defined as spending less than 30% of gross household income on shelter costs.

For ownership housing, shelter costs are primarily driven by housing prices via mortgage payments, but also include other monthly expenses like property tax, utilities, home insurance, municipal services charges, and strata fees.

The values highlighted in green, orange, and red are the difference between what is affordable for each household type and shelter costs per month. Green cells indicate the household is spending less than 30% of monthly household income on shelter costs; orange indicates they are spending 30% to 49%, and red indicates they are spending 50% or more.¹⁰

¹⁰ Statistics Canada considers households spending 30% or more of total before-tax household income to be living in unaffordable housing. This may include households in Core Housing Need. Households spending 50% or more of total before-tax household income may be in Extreme Core Housing Need. These indicators are described in more detail in Sections 4.7 and 4.8.

This analysis represents a scenario where a median income household is buying into the market for the first time and illustrates what they would be able to afford. This analysis does not represent households in the community already experiencing affordability issues.

The figures below the dollar amount are leftover after paying their calculated affordable monthly shelter costs (30% of the monthly median household income). Non-census families in single family dwellings were the only family type projected to have an affordability issue based on median residential values in 2019 (Table 3). Other family types have considerably higher median household incomes than these family types because they can include multi-generational or other family living arrangements with multiple incomes. All other housing types at the average 2019 sales price appear affordable for all other family types.

Table 3 – Affordability Gap Analysis for Owners in Dawson Creek

	Median Household Income (2019)	Affordable Monthly Shelter Costs	Monthly Shelter Affordability Gap	
			Single Family Home (\$262,400)	Rowhouse (\$200,700)
Couples without children	\$152,075	\$3,802	\$1,964	\$2,124
Couples with children	\$192,376	\$4,809	\$2,971	\$3,132
Lone parent families	\$87,001	\$2,175	\$337	\$497
Non-census families	\$72,574	\$1,814	-\$24	\$137
Other census families	\$175,481	\$4,387	\$2,549	\$2,709

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016, BC Assessment, 2019.

	Spending less than 30% of their income on shelter costs
	Spending approximately 30%-49% of their income or less on shelter costs
	Spending 50% or more of their income or less on shelter costs

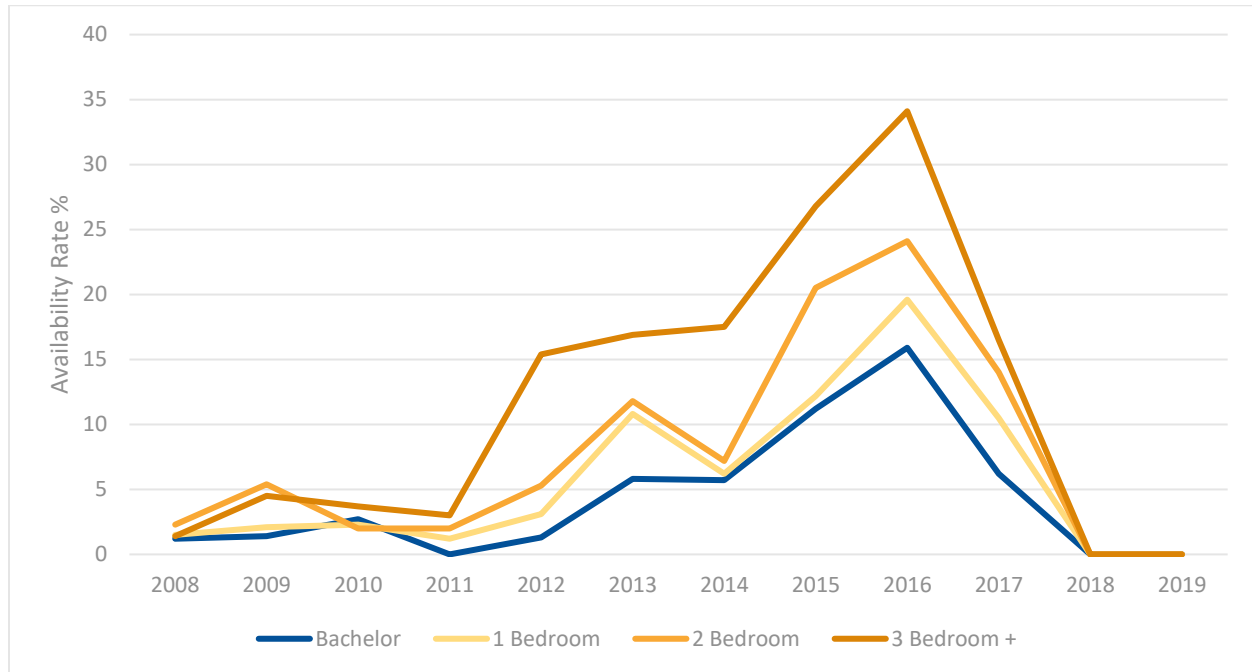
4.3 Trends in Rental Market

The rental market can be divided into primary rental and secondary rental. The primary rental market consists of purpose-built rental buildings with multiple units, while the secondary rental market consists of rented homes, secondary suites, individually rented condominium units, and other dwellings that are not purpose built. Data is currently unavailable through CMHC for rental units in the secondary market in Dawson Creek, however it is known that there is a significant supply of secondary suites available for rent according to Dawson Creek.

4.3.1 Primary Rental

In Dawson Creek, since 2016, availability of units has decreased (Figure 23), and the median rental prices have stayed relatively consistent (Figure 24). Availability of rental units refers to units that are not vacant, but will be in the near term and are marketable. Vacancy rates have increased for 2 and more bedroom homes, while 1 bedroom homes have slightly increased, and bachelor homes have slightly decreased (Figure 25). Vacancy counts units that are currently unoccupied.

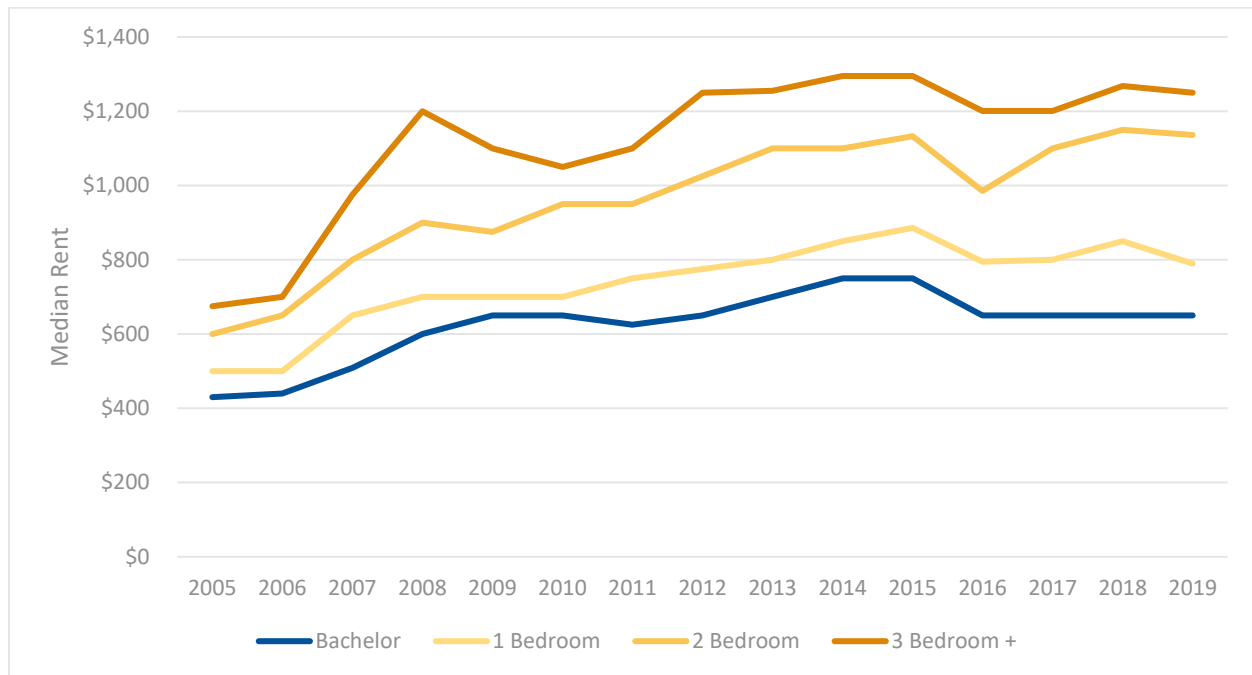
Figure 23 – Historical Availability Rates in Dawson Creek, 2008-2019¹¹



Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey, 2008-2019

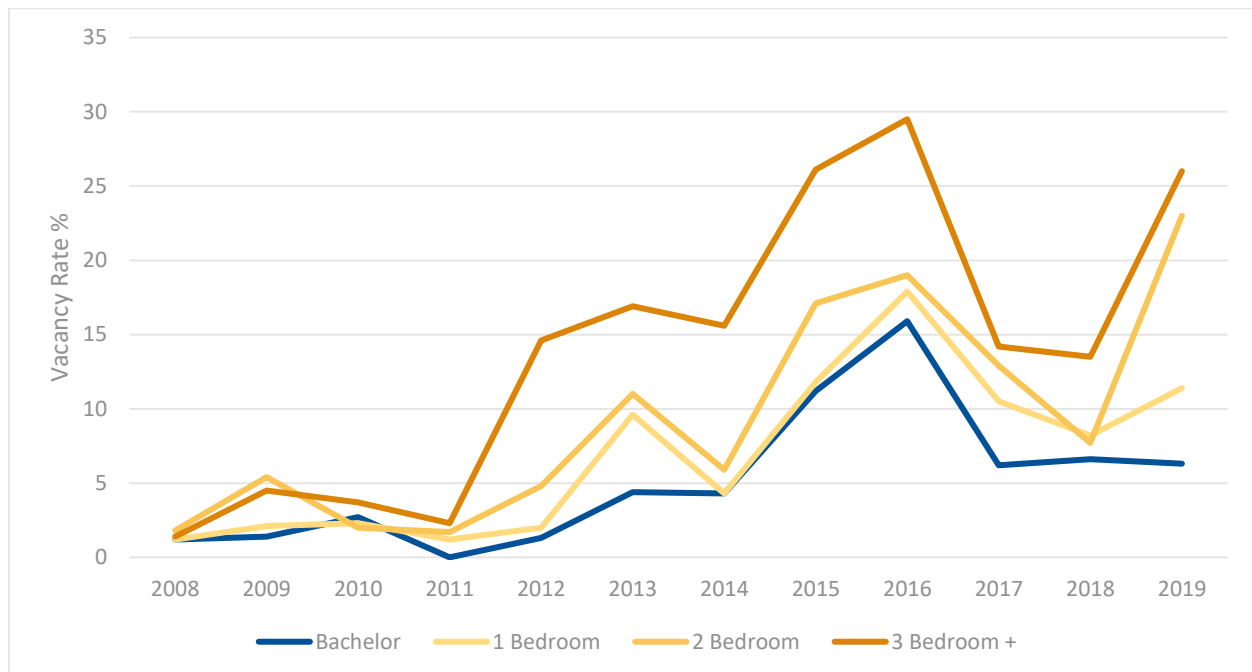
¹¹ Where zero units are indicated, data was suppressed to protect confidentiality or data was not statistically reliable.

Figure 24 – Primary Rental Market, Median Rent, 2005-2019



Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey, 2005-2019

Figure 25 – Vacancy Rates by Bedroom Size, 2008-2019

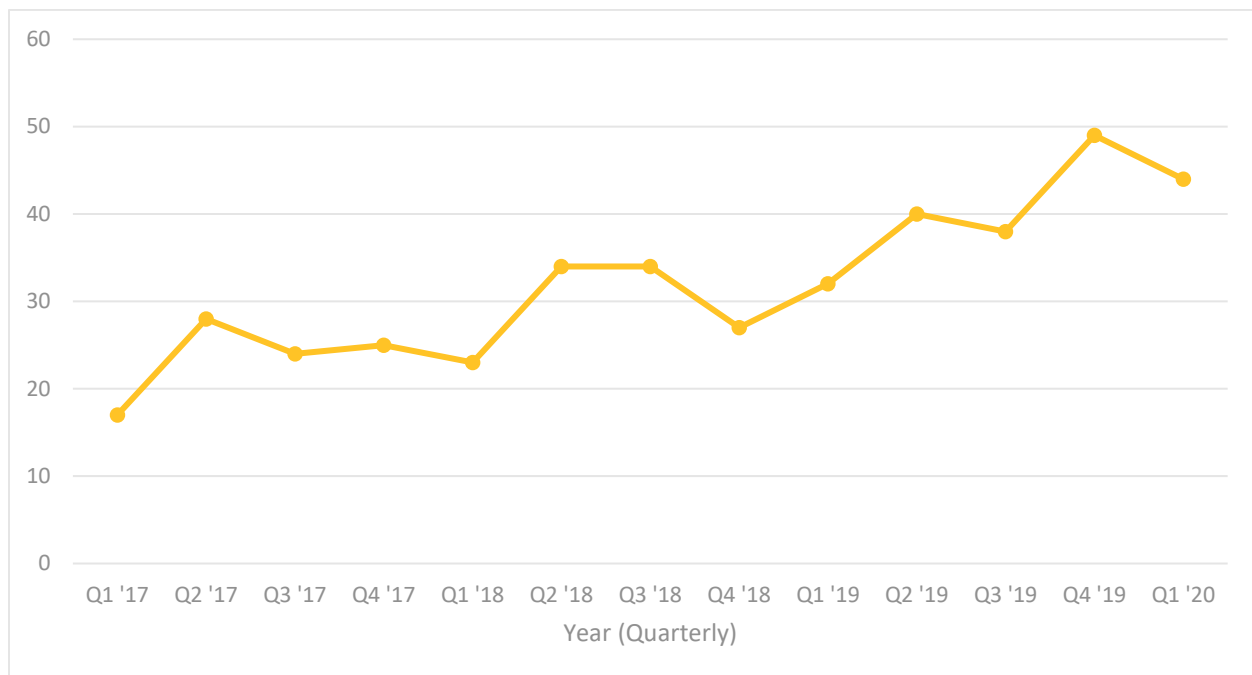


Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey, 2008-2019

4.3.2 Temporary Accommodation Rental Market

Prior to COVID-19 in the beginning of 2020, the number of temporary accommodation rental units located with the municipal boundary of Dawson Creek have increased since 2017 from 17 units to 49 units in quarter 4 of 2019 (Figure 26). The number of units has slightly dropped from 49 to 44 in quarter 1 of 2020. The units are offered through sites such as AirBnb for short stays. City staff indicated that Dawson Creek considers a temporary accommodation rental to be any stay under 30 days.

Figure 26 – Temporary Accommodation Rental Units in Dawson Creek, 2017 to 2020



Source: AirDNA <https://www.airdna.co/vacation-rental-data/app/ca/british-columbia/dawson-creek/overview>

4.4 Non-Market Housing

As of 2019, there were a total of 372 reported non-market housing units, where BC Housing has a financial relationship, in Dawson Creek. All these units were rent assistance in the private market. There were no cooperative units reported for Dawson Creek.

4.5 Homelessness

Through engagement, stakeholders indicated that there has been an increase in the homeless population in Dawson Creek. Stakeholders indicated a need for emergency housing or homeless shelters in the community. Service providers struggle to continue to support those in need and have limited capacity to house individuals and families. Homeless individuals with substance use issues are turned away from shelters and experience higher barriers. Homeless youth, ages 15 to 18, are another concern and allegedly live in forests near the community.

4.6 Student Housing

The only purpose built post-secondary student housing known in the PRRD is at Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek and Fort St. John. Dawson Creek has a 190 bed student dormitory and Fort St. John has a 102 bed dormitory. As of the 2018/2019 school year, there was a total of 599 full-time equivalent enrolments at Northern Lights College across all campuses. Between the 2008/2009 and 2018/2019 school years, the Northern Lights College full-time equivalent enrollments decreased by 37% respectively.

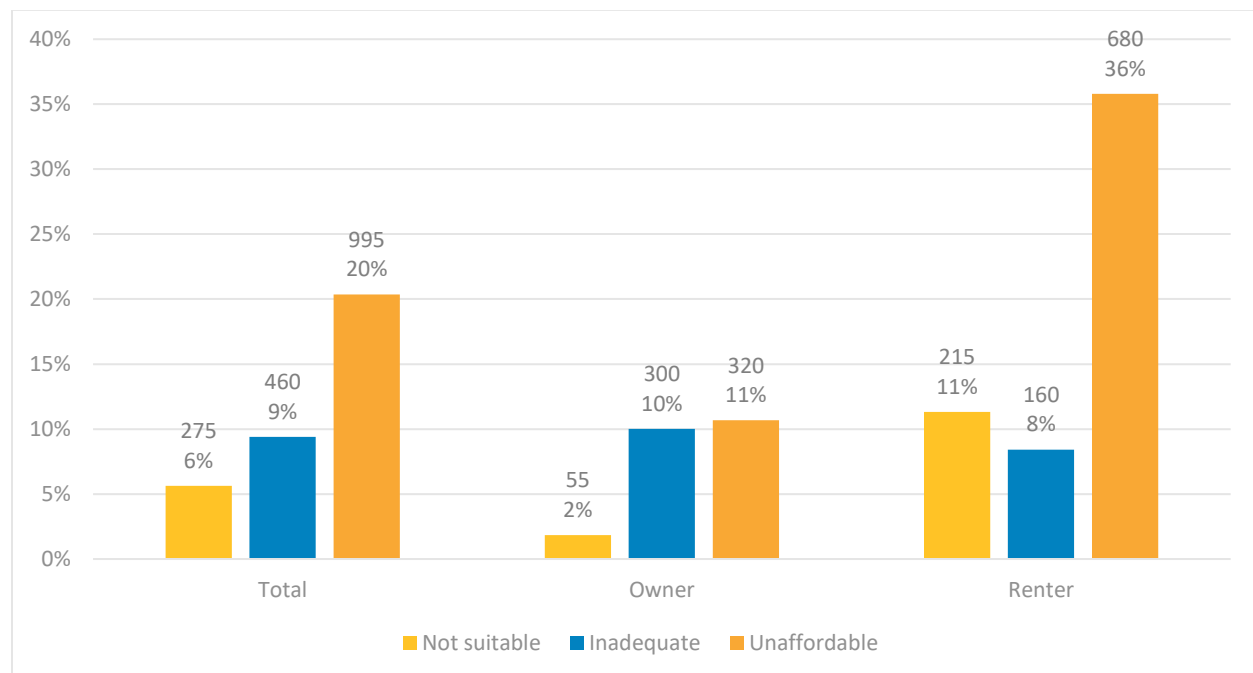
4.7 Housing Indicators

Housing indicators show when households are not meeting one or more housing standards defined as follows:

- Adequate housing is reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs.
- Affordable housing costs less than 30% of total before-tax household income.
- Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and makeup of resident households according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

In Dawson Creek, as of 2016, 9% of households are living in inadequate housing, and 6% are living in unsuitable housing. Affordability is the most common housing standard not met in Dawson Creek, typical of the regional and provincial trends (Figure 27). Twenty percent (20%) of all households in 2016 spent 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, including 36% of renter households and 20% of owner households. This issue is also significantly more pressing for renters than owners as renters are three times as likely to experience affordability issues than owner households in Dawson Creek.

Figure 27 – Unsuitable and Unaffordable Housing by Tenure for Private Households in Dawson Creek, 2016

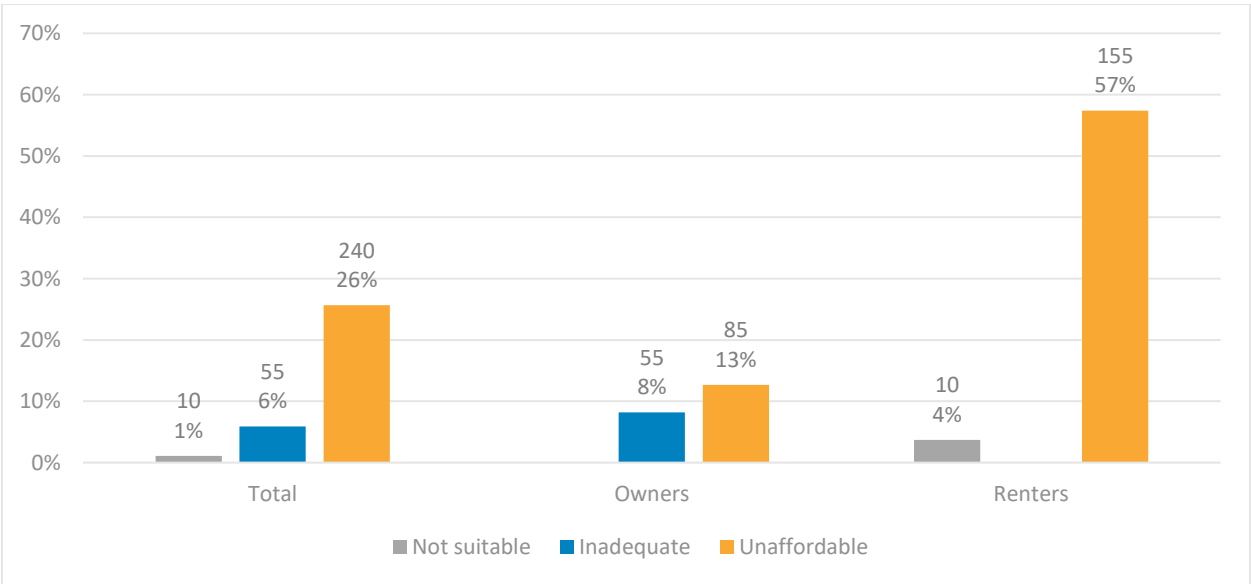


Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016

Seniors housing is an important topic in the PRRD, and a very important topic for Dawson Creek, and therefore, housing indicators for seniors provide an indication of how seniors may differ from the population as a whole with regards to housing issues. Of senior households in Dawson Creek (aged 65 and over), the number one issue identified was the affordability of their housing, with senior renters at a much higher risk of affordability issues than owners. More than half of seniors who rent (57%) are paying more than 30% of their income toward shelter costs, compared to only 13% of seniors who own. However, seniors who own are more likely to be experiencing adequacy issues (8%, vs 0% of senior renters).

Six percent (6%) of all senior households experiencing housing needs had issues with adequacy and 1% had issues with suitability (Figure 28). Figure 28 shows that seniors in Dawson Creek are more likely to be at risk of housing issues than the population as a whole. Seniors are about one and a half times more likely to have an affordability issue than renters as a whole. However, seniors who own are no more likely than owners as a whole to experience affordability issues. Seniors have fewer issues with suitability than the population as a whole in Dawson Creek. This all strongly suggests that a small but important number of seniors households are experiencing housing vulnerability in the community.

Figure 28 – Housing Indicators of Senior Households, 2016



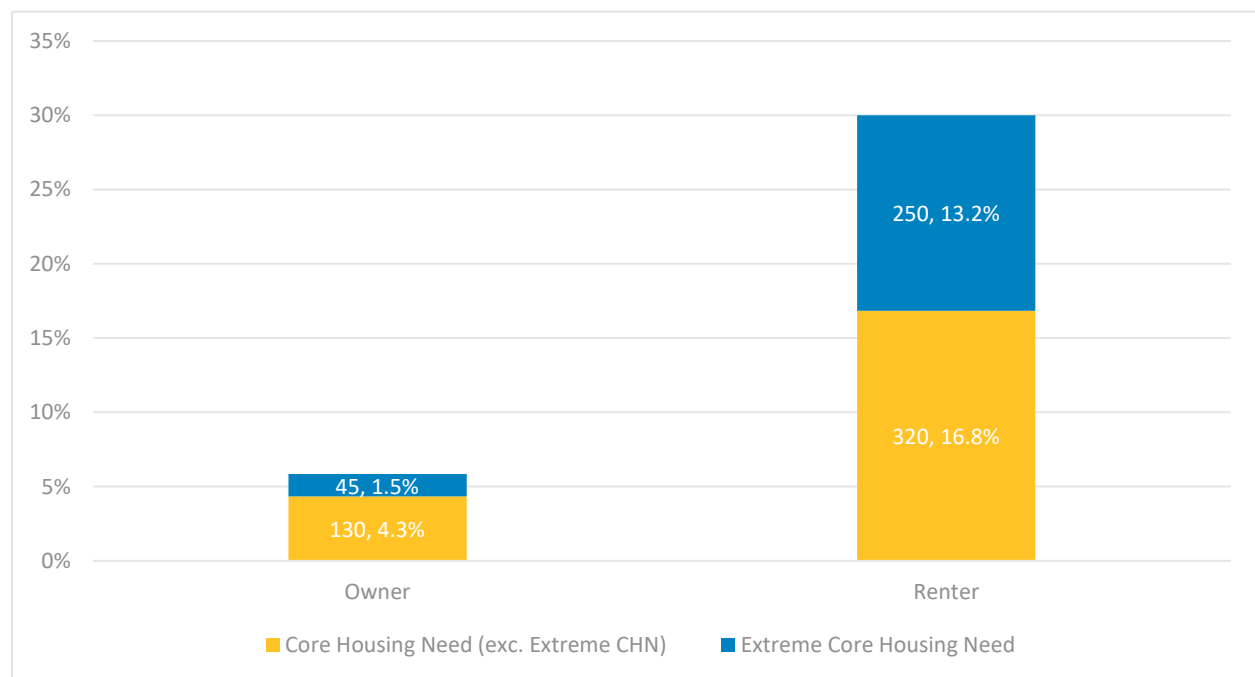
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016231

4.8 Core Housing Need

CMHC defines Core Housing Need as a household whose housing does not meet the minimum requirements of at least one of the adequacy, affordability, or suitability indicators. In addition, a household would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards). Those in Extreme Core Housing Need meet the definition of Core Housing Need and spend 50% or more of their income on housing.

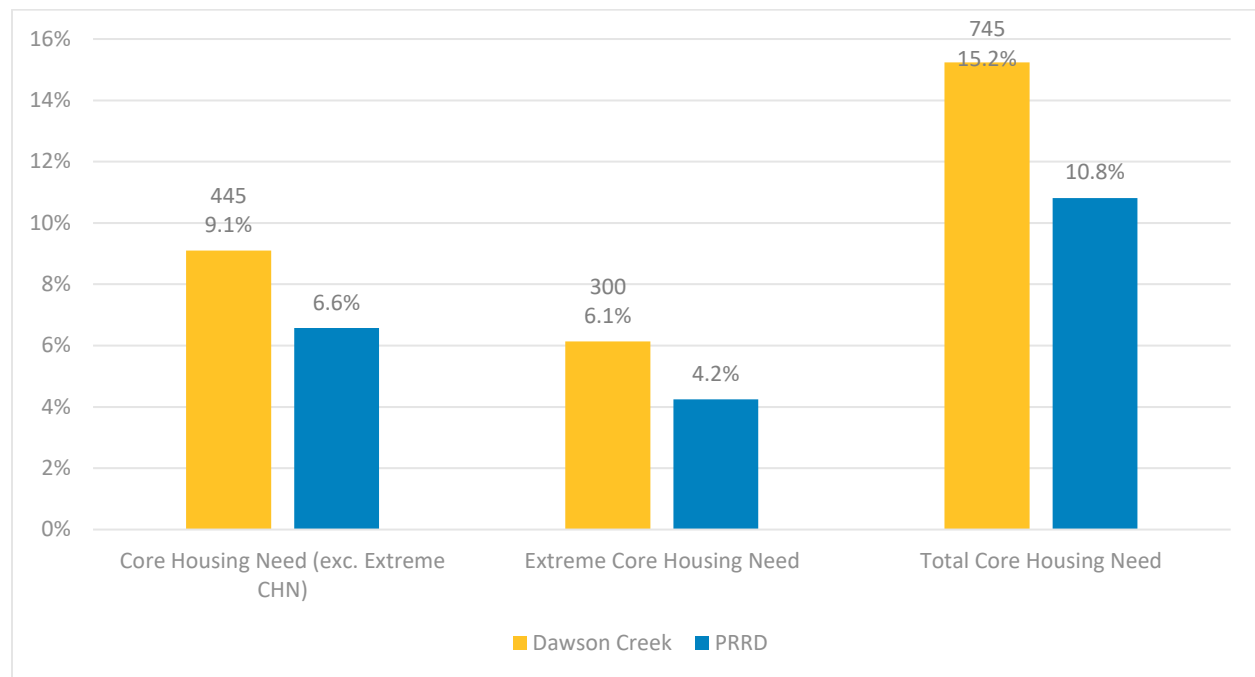
In 2016, Dawson Creek had a much higher proportion of renters than owners experiencing Core Housing Need (30% vs. 5.8%). This is not atypical of BC communities, where renters with lower incomes are more likely to experience housing vulnerability. Of those households in Core Housing Need, a much higher proportion of renters than owners experienced Extreme Core Housing Need (13.2% vs. 1.5%) (Figure 29). As compared to the PRRD, Dawson Creek has a higher proportion of households living in Core Housing Need, and Extreme Core Housing Need (Figure 30).

Figure 29 – Private Households by Core Housing Need and by Tenure, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016

Figure 30 – Private Households in Core Housing Needs in Dawson Creek and PRRD, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016

4.9 Summary

As of 2016, there were 6,020 dwellings in Dawson Creek, 64% of which were single-detached dwellings. The remaining units were movable dwellings, apartments with less than five storeys, and a small proportion of semi-detached dwellings, row houses, and other apartment types. Of all dwellings, 63% had three or more bedrooms, with 78% of owned dwellings being of that size. However, 62% of rented dwellings had two or less bedrooms. Owned dwellings consisted of 89% single-detached dwellings while rented dwellings consisted of 44% apartments with less than 5 storeys and 26% single-detached dwellings.

Of all Dawson Creek dwellings, 60% require only regular maintenance and 31% require minor repairs, leaving only a small proportion needing major repairs. The need for repairs also corresponds with the fact that 62% of dwellings in Dawson Creek were built prior to 1980. In 2019 the average sales price for a single-detached dwelling (3 or more bedrooms) was \$296,451.

The number of rental units available in the community has decreased since 2016, however rent prices have stayed relatively consistent.

Of all households in Dawson Creek in 2016, 9% were living in inadequate dwelling units, 6% were living in unsuitable conditions, and 20% were spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs indicating issues with affordability. Of senior households, 6% of households experiencing housing need had issues with adequacy of their unit, 26% had affordability issues, and 1% had suitability issues. Additionally, a much higher proportion of renters than owners experienced core housing need (30%). For senior households, both owners and renters are showing much higher vulnerability to affordability issues than households led by younger age populations.

5.0 Anticipated Population

This section summarizes population, household, and housing unit projections for the next five years, as required for Housing Needs Reports. Population projections such as these offer a glimpse at a possible future scenario. Real community growth depends on many influencing factors, including the economy, housing market, growth in the region, trends in neighbouring communities, locational desirability, and planning and development decisions. The availability, type, and affordability of housing in the community will influence growth and the demographic make up of the community.

The projections presented here use 2016 as the base year, which was the last year of full population counts through the Census. This means that projections are presented for 2016 to 2020, as well as 2020 to 2025. Although the years 2017, 2018, and 2019 have already passed, full population counts were not conducted in these years, which means that data for these years is projected from 2016. The population projections are based on BC Statistics' population projections for the Dawson Creek Community Health Service Area. While the service area boundaries do not align exactly with Dawson Creek's boundaries, it is a close match and the projections provide general trends for how Dawson Creek is anticipated to grow. Appendix C provides a summary of the population projection methodology used in this report.

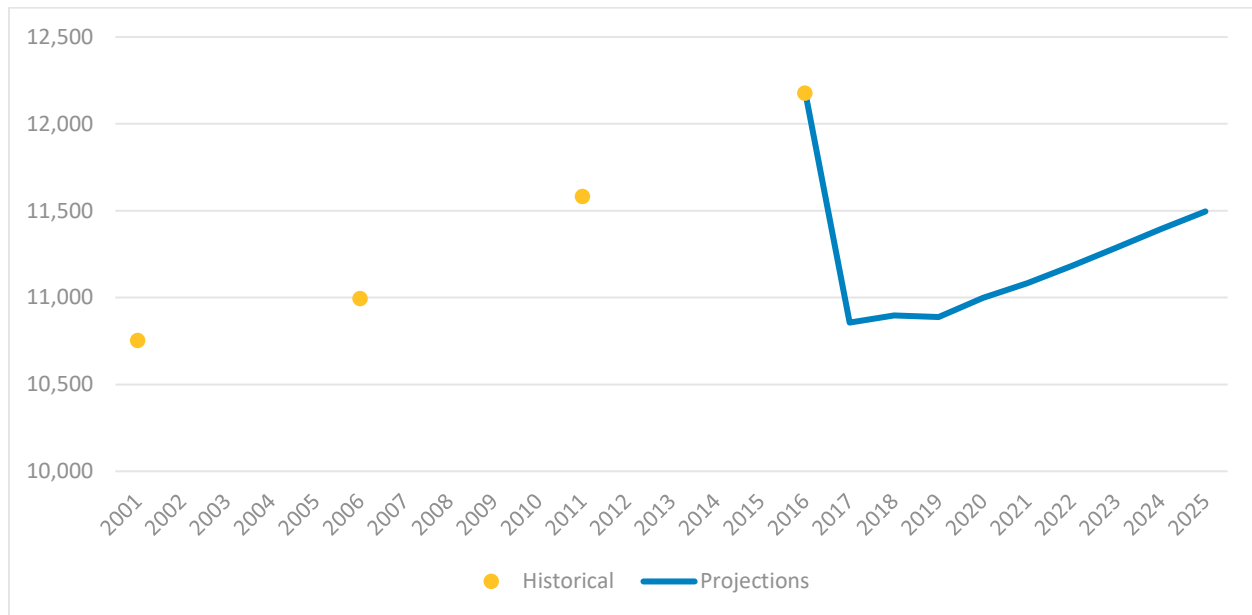
5.1 Population and Household Growth

Traditionally, Dawson Creek has experienced low to moderately stable population growth. However, over the past two decades, Dawson Creek has seen both periods of rapid growth and decline in its population. It is expected with a cyclical economy that there will be population changes that correspond with the current state of local industries.

Between 2001 and 2016, the population of Dawson Creek increased slightly from 10,754 to 12,178. BC Statistics estimates there was a population decrease between 2016 and 2017 for the Peace River South service area which is reflected in Dawson Creek's population projection trend for that time period. This significant decrease can be attributed to the economic downturn the region experienced in 2016 and the resulting impact on oil and gas activities across northeastern BC. The number of building permits for new residential dwelling units indicates very clearly the trend of rapid growth and high demand for housing that existed in 2015 (77 permits approved in one year). In the following years, on average Dawson Creek has approved approximately 20 permits annually demonstrating the decline in demand for new housing units.

Due to renewed activity in the economy of the region, and notably the oil and gas industry, the Dawson Creek population started to increase again over the last few years and is expected to continue growing between 2020 and 2025, but only reach a population of approximately 11,495 (Figure 31). This period of growth is expected to be significantly less rapid than the increase in population experienced prior to 2015 in the community.

Figure 31 – Historical and Estimated Population Projection, 2001-2025



Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom PRRD Population Projections

Table 4 – Projected Population and Population Growth, 2016-2025

	2016	2020	2025	Change from 2016 to 2020	Change from 2020 to 2025
Population Projections	12,178	10,999	11,495	-1,179	496

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

5.2 Age Projections

Between 2016 and 2020, all age categories under the age of 64 years experienced a decline in population. It is projected that between 2020 and 2025, only the 15 to 24, 25 to 34, 45 to 54, and 55 to 64 year age categories will experience decline

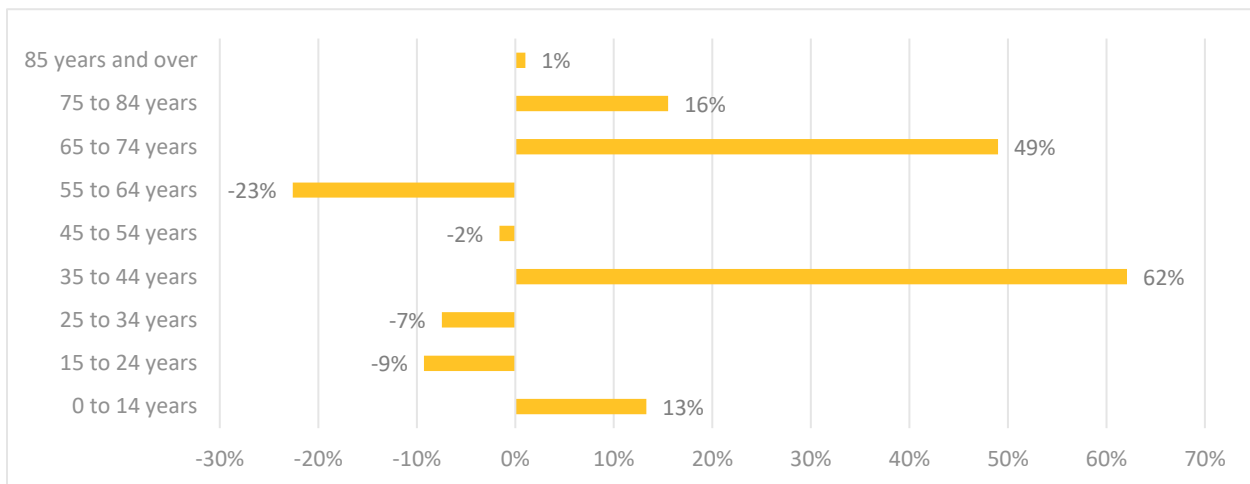
(Table 5). The 55 to 64 age cohort is likely aging out into the 65 to 74 category. The median age in Dawson Creek is expected to increase from 34.4 in 2016 to 36.1 in 2025 (Table 6).

Table 5 – Projected Population Change by Age, 2016-2025

Age Group	2016 to 2020	2020 to 2025
0 to 14 years	-233	66
15 to 24 years	-269	-46
25 to 34 years	-157	-37
35 to 44 years	-75	308
45 to 54 years	-413	-8
55 to 64 years	-141	-112
65 to 74 years	63	243
75 to 84 years	8	77
85 years and over	26	5
Total	-1,191	496

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

Figure 32 – Projected Population Change by Age, 2020-2025



Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

Table 6 – Median and Average Age, 2016- 2025

	2016 Actual	2016 Estimate	2020	2025
Median	34.4	34.4	34.7	36.1
Average	37.2	37.2	38.0	38.8

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

5.3 Household Projections

The number of households in Dawson Creek decreased by 466 between 2016 and 2020 and is expected to increase by 278 households by 2025 (Table 7).

Table 7 – Projected Households Growth, 2016-2025

	2016	2020	2025
Households	5,040	4,574	4,852
Change from prior period	N/A	-466	278

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

The number of households decreased across all family types between 2016 and 2020, most of which is in the non-census family category. The majority of this decrease likely occurred between 2015 and 2016 due to the economic downturn. It is expected that between 2020 and 2025, all household types will increase, again most significantly in non-census families (Table 8). Growth in the couples without children category is likely related to the aging population trend, which can be accompanied by an increase in individuals and couples living alone as adult children age and move out.

Table 8 – Household Projections by Family Type, 2016-2025

	2016 to 2020	2020 to 2025
Couple without Children	-87	59
Couple with Children	-135	61
Lone-Parent	-53	39
Other-Census-Family	-32	15
Non-Census-Family	-159	104
Total	-466	278

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

Table 9 shows estimates of the unit sizes required to house additional households of various types. Note that these are rough estimates based on average family size and number of bedrooms needed. The actual size of units required is dependent on a number of factors, including individual family preference and lifestyle, as well as economic means and affordability. These estimates are used to project the additional units needed by bedroom sizes. About 67% of families with children and other families will require dwellings with 3+ bedrooms and 50% of couples without children households will require 2-bedroom dwellings. The number of unoccupied dwellings in Dawson Creek can also be considered to accommodate any increases in population, however it cannot be assumed that the unoccupied dwellings fit the needs of all households in terms of dwelling type and size.

Table 9 – Household by Family Type to Bedroom Conversion Rates

	Bachelor / 1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3+ Bedroom
Couple without Children	50%	50%	0%
Families with Children and Other Families	0%	33%	67%
Non-Family	60%	30%	10%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

Table 10 provides an estimate of unit sizes required for 2016 to 2020 and 2020 to 2025 based on projected household growth. Based on the population projections for 2016-2020, it is expected that no new housing units will be needed for this period of time. However, looking forward to the 2020-2025 period, based on the population projections, it is anticipated there will be household growth and a need for specific dwelling types and sizes, which are distributed fairly equally across the different unit sizes. Again, the dwellings that are currently unoccupied in the community can also be considered in accommodating an increase in households.

Table 10 – Projected Additional Dwelling Needs by Bedroom Type, 2016-2025

	2016-2020	2020-2025	Cumulative Total
Anticipated Housing Growth	-466	278	-188
Anticipated Housing Units	0	278	278
Bachelor/ 1 Bedroom	0	92	92
2 Bedroom	0	99	99
3+ Bedroom	0	87	87

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

5.4 Summary

Between 2016 and 2025, the population is expected to decrease to 11,495. Accordingly, the number of households is expected to also decrease to 4,852 by 2025. Between 2016 and 2020, all age categories under the age of 64 years experienced a decline in population. It is projected that between 2020 and 2025, only the 15 to 24, 25 to 34, 45 to 54, and 55 to 64 year age categories will experience decline. Due to the decrease in population and number of households, no new units are projected to be needed between 2016 and 2020, however with a small increase in population and households between 2020 and 2025, a total of 278 additional dwellings will be needed. The number of currently unoccupied dwellings in the community should also be considered in accommodating these needs.

6.0 Shadow Population Implications

With mining, hydro, oil and gas, forestry and agricultural industries active in the region, there are significant numbers of work camp developments throughout the PRRD to house employees that do not live permanently in the surrounding communities. This has created a significant shadow population in the PRRD. As a result, there is increased pressure on housing, infrastructure, transportation, and services for health, education, and community support due to the present shadow population. This pressure is somewhat alleviated by housing temporary workers in camps to avoid impacting rental vacancy and rates on a large scale. It is difficult to understand the true impact of the shadow population in the PRRD due to the lack of reliable and accurate data on the number of non-permanent workers living in the PRRD.

The PRRD experiences both benefits and challenges from hosting a shadow population and allowing for work camps. It is important for communities in the PRRD to understand the impact of shadow populations to assist in planning for development and being able to anticipate requirements for community infrastructure, including housing, in the future¹².

6.1 Community and Industry Benefits

Communities can benefit from accommodating a shadow population and permitting work camp developments in that there is the potential for significant job creation and employment opportunities. Specifically, in terms of housing needs, work camps exist to house a set number of people for a determined period of time, so their existence reduces the need to develop new permanent residential areas to accommodate temporary increases in population. This alleviates some housing market pressure within communities by reducing the impact of large numbers of individuals moving in and out of the community as work is available and influencing vacancy and rental rates on a large scale.

Industry benefits from housing employees in work camp developments as there are often fewer start-up costs to get to the operation stage, thus increasing the number of employment opportunities in the PRRD more quickly than trying to find housing units for all employees in surrounding communities. The use of work camps also spreads the risk and impact of economic downturns over many communities where workers may be commuting from as opposed to a singular community. Additionally, the investments in camp infrastructure and accommodations may be reused multiple times in various locations, creating significant efficiencies. Work camps are seen as a lesser expensive option to house employees temporarily, rather than buying or renting units in nearby communities, and there are added benefits to increased safety by not having employees travelling on rural roads every day to get to the job site.

¹² Policy, Communications, Capacity: A Time to Lead – Scoping the Impacts and Benefits of Work Camps in the Peace Region – W. Beamish Consulting (June 2013) http://prrd.bc.ca/board/agendas/2013/2013-15-8827692533/pages/documents/4bPolicyCommunicationsCapacity-AtimetoLead_June25_001.pdf

6.2 Community and Industry Impacts

There is great concern for the negative impacts associated with a shadow population in the PRRD that affect economic, social, environmental, demographic, and cultural factors. In many cases, the presence of work camps creates an increased need for community health services and social services as well as an increase in crime and safety concerns due to the non-permanent nature of the population. There is a great deal of concern around the maintenance of a community's social fabric when the permanent resident workforce is in the minority and there is less of a meaningful commitment to the host community. There are also demographic factors to consider, as male populations in a community are usually larger where there is a large shadow workforce.

The major implications that the shadow population has on housing in the PRRD include a more limited availability of all housing types, shortage of rental properties, shortage of available hotel rooms for tourists, and limited accommodations for students and non-industry workers. In some cases, real estate prices are driven up due to companies and employees working in the PRRD buying up available units, thus decreasing housing affordability for locals. In addition to the homeownership market, this scenario also tends to lead to increased rental prices due to companies renting units for employees, and thus decreasing availability and affordability for permanent residents. Issues have also been identified where lower cost housing units have been renovated and now cost more to rent or own, resulting in fewer affordable units in the community. Overall, where there is a significant shadow population, there are often less affordable housing options available for middle or low income brackets of permanent residents. When demand significantly outpaces supply due to a shadow population in a community, there are also often increases in illegal suites, campground stays, hotel stays, etc¹³.

The waves of economic activity specifically increase use of infrastructure assets such as water, sewage, utilities, and roads directly from industry which brings new workers to the community, and increases the shadow population and its impact on communities. Especially during times of economic downturn, the resulting losses in household income can create increased demand for welfare, education, training, and other support services, in addition to creating strains on physical and mental health and social relationships.

6.3 Managing Housing Pressures

Several communities within the PRRD have been reviewing the impact of the shadow population and work camps in the PRRD for the past decade. As a result, there have been many policies already developed to ensure the permanent populations continue to have access to appropriate and affordable housing units, and the non-permanent populations can still be accommodated. Community responses to housing pressures as a result of a shadow population have included:

- Amending Official Community Plans and Zoning Bylaws to encourage development of legal secondary suites to increase density and available housing;
- Providing additional support for low income permanent residents to retain affordable housing;

¹³ Ryser, L., Markey, S., Manson, D., & Halseth, G. (2014). From boom and bust to regional waves: Development patterns in the Peace River region, British Columbia. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 9(1), 87-111. <https://journals.brandonu.ca/jrcd/article/view/837/185>

- Providing financial incentives such as tax breaks on multi unit developments;
- Encouraging the establishment of long term lease agreements to mitigate constant turnover;
- Encouraging the development of additional hotels, apartments, and condo units; and
- Developing additional social housing units.

7.0 COVID-19 Implications

In March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. Local economies have been, and continue to be, significantly impacted as governments closed international borders, mandated businesses to close, and issued stay-at-home directives for everyone but essential workers.

This section provides an overview of preliminary economic impacts based on the information available during this study process. While there were immediate economic effects due to precautionary measures, the full impact of the pandemic is still emerging and will continue to need monitoring.

7.1 Preliminary Economic Impacts

The economic impact has been and continues to be greatest in industries such as tourism, accommodations, food services, recreation, transportation and retail. The effect on employment and income are significant and the repercussions of reduced incomes—and reduced savings—will be felt for months and years to come. Several key demographics are expected to face significant challenges:

- Students approaching graduation and recent graduates seeking part-time or full-time work will likely see delays in finding work compared to previous years.
- Bars, restaurants, retail, and similar service jobs are unlikely to return to 100% capacity for some time due to social distancing measures.
- Older workers who have lost their jobs and may face difficulties re-entering the workforce.
- Those nearing retirement may be pushed into retiring earlier than planned for or see their savings impacted.
- Those who own their homes are typically in more stable financial positions than renters, particularly long-time homeowners. However, those who recently entered the homeownership market will be facing significant pressures if one or more members of their household has lost their job. As of the end of June 2020, 16% of mortgage holders in Canada have enrolled in mortgage deferrals since the pandemic started and the impact of these will likely not be felt until late 2020¹⁴.
- Owners who rent their properties in the secondary market either long term or short term may find it more difficult to rent their units or see their revenue decrease as renters face job loss.

In the PRRD, the impacts of COVID-19 can be felt by residents, workers, businesses, and industries. As of March 2020, 39,000 individuals were employed in the northeastern economic region of BC, as compared to 35,400 employed in July 2020. As of July 2020, the unemployment rate of the northeastern BC economic region had reached 9.5%, compared to 4.9% at the same time last year. Comparatively, the unemployment rate across BC

¹⁴ Global News (August 2020). Mortgage deferrals will end soon for many Canadians. Then what? Retrieved from <https://globalnews.ca/news/7286008/coronavirus-mortgage-deferrals-end-canada/>.

reached 11% in July 2020¹⁵. As of September 2020, the regional unemployment rate in northeast BC has declined to 7%, making it the lowest rate in all of BC¹⁶.

According to the South Okanagan Real Estate Board (SOREB), sales in the northern region were up by 30% in July 2020 compared to July 2019. Overall sale price also increased by 6% comparing July 2019 to July 2020. The SOREB indicated that the increase in sales has likely been influenced by consumers re-considering their housing needs as a result of COVID-19, with many people making work and lifestyle changes¹⁷.

¹⁵ Alaska Highway News (August 2020). Northeast B.C. adds 1,800 jobs in July. Retrieved from: <https://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/northeast-b-c-adds-1-800-jobs-in-july-1.24182694>

¹⁶ Alaska Highway News (September 2020). 1,700 jobs added in August. Retrieved from: <https://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/1-700-jobs-added-in-august-1.24197903>

¹⁷ <https://www.dawsoncreekmirror.ca/regional-news/prrd/residential-real-estate-market-sees-pent-up-demand-1.24182232>

8.0 Summary of Key Areas of Local Need

This section includes most of the information that is required by the regulations, including the number of units needed by unit size (from Section 5) and statements of key areas of local need (based primarily on the content in Sections 3 and 4). The statements of key areas of local need are interpretations of the data and engagement feedback.

8.1 Number of Units Needed by Unit Size

Table 11 presents the projected housing units needed in Dawson Creek based on population projections. The overall total column indicates that no new units are needed based on the projections. The number of unoccupied dwellings in Dawson Creek can also be considered to accommodate any increases in population.

Table 11 – Anticipated Housing Units Projection

	2016-2020	2020-2025	Total
Anticipated Housing Growth	-466	278	-188
Anticipated Housing Units	0	278	278
Bachelor/ 1 Bedroom	0	92	92
2 Bedroom	0	99	99
3+ Bedroom	0	87	87

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census Program, and BC Stats Custom Dawson Creek Population Projections

8.2 Statements of Key Areas of Local Need

8.2.1 Affordable Housing

Affordability as an indicator of core housing need is one of the most pressing housing issues facing residents of Dawson Creek. Twenty percent (20%) of all Dawson Creek households in 2016 spent 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, including 36% of renter households (680 households) and 11% of owner households (320 households).

Through engagement, stakeholders indicated that it can be difficult to recruit needed employees in the community due to the lack of affordable housing. Lack of supply and unaffordable pricing was attributed to the cyclical economy when there are influxes of workers in the community. It was indicated that finding affordable housing options in the community is especially challenging for one-person or single-income households. Particularly with individuals and families receiving Income Assistance, stakeholders identified difficulties securing housing. The stigma of income-assistance has also resulted in some discrimination from rental companies. A lack of variety in senior housing options is also a concern.

8.2.2 Rental Housing

In Dawson Creek, since 2016, availability of units has decreased, and the median rental prices have stayed relatively consistent. Vacancy rates have increased for 2 and more bedroom homes, while 1-bedroom homes have slightly increased, and bachelor homes have slightly decreased.

In 2016, Dawson Creek had a much higher proportion of renters (30% or 570 households) than owners (5.8% or 175 households) living in core housing need.

Through engagement, stakeholders indicated that high cost and lack of available rental housing was one of their top concerns in the community. Stakeholders indicated a need for additional purpose-built rental units in the community.

8.2.3 Special Needs Housing

Stakeholders indicated through engagement that despite recent improvements in housing for individuals with disabilities in the community, there is still a need for more supportive housing options as many rely on extended hospital stays or long-term care homes that do not provide the services they need. Additionally, stakeholders indicated that individuals experiencing mental health issues often face barriers when looking for housing due to their condition, limiting them access to the supports they require.

8.2.4 Housing for Seniors

Of senior households in Dawson Creek (aged 65 and over) 6% of households experiencing housing need had issues with adequacy (55 households) and 1% had issues with suitability (10 households). Twenty-six percent (26%) of these households experienced issues with affordability (240 households).

8.2.5 Housing for Families

Families in Dawson Creek are generally well served by the housing choices available to them in the community. Over 69% of couples with children, couples without children, and other families live in a single-detached dwelling, while 62% of lone-parent families and 46% of non-families live in single-detached dwellings. Thirty five percent (35%) of non-families live in an apartment structure that is less than 5 storeys.

8.2.6 Homelessness

There has been an increase in the homeless population over the last 5 years. Emergency housing or homeless shelters are needed in the community and service providers struggle to continue to support those in need and have limited capacity to house individuals. Homeless individuals with substance use are turned away from shelters and experience higher barriers. Homeless youth, ages 15 to 18, are another concern and allegedly live in forests near the community.

Glossary

Activity Limitation: “Activity limitations refer to difficulties that people have in carrying out daily activities such as hearing, seeing, communicating, or walking. Difficulties could arise from physical or mental conditions or health problems.”

<https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#TableMapChart/59/2/British%20Columbia> – Core Housing Need, Activity Limitations

Adequate Housing Standard: “[Housing] not requiring any major repairs.”

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage037-eng.cfm>

Affordable Housing Standard: “[Housing with] shelter costs equal to less than 30% of total before-tax household income.”

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage037-eng.cfm>

Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys: A dwelling unit attached to other dwelling units, commercial units, or other non-residential space in a building that has fewer than five storeys.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/001/98-500-x2016001-eng.cfm>

Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys: A dwelling unit in a high-rise apartment building which has five or more storeys. Also included are apartments in a building that has five or more storeys where the first floor and/or second floor are commercial establishments.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/001/98-500-x2016001-eng.cfm>

Apartment or flat in a duplex: One of two dwellings located one above the other. If duplexes are attached to triplexes or other duplexes or to other non-residential structure (e.g. a store), assign this definition to each apartment or flat in the duplexes.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/001/98-500-x2016001-eng.cfm>

Census Family: Census families include couples with and without children, and a single parent with children living in the same dwelling. Census families are restricted to these family units and cannot include other members inside or outside the family (including a grandparent, a sibling, etc.). Grandchildren living with grandparents (and without a parent) would also count as a census family.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/fam004-eng.cfm>

Core Housing Need: “A household is said to be in 'core housing need' if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards).” Some additional restrictions apply.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage037-eng.cfm>

Household Income: The sum of incomes for all household members.

Household Maintainer: A person in a household who is responsible for paying the rent, mortgage, taxes, utilities, etc. Where multiple people contribute, there can be more than one maintainer.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage008-eng.cfm>

Headship Rate: The proportion of individuals of a given age group who are primary household maintainers.

Household Type: “The differentiation of households on the basis of whether they are census family households or non-census family households.”

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage012-eng.cfm>

Income: For the purposes of this report, unless otherwise indicated, income refers to “total income” which is before-tax and includes specific income sources. These specific income sources typically include employment income, income from dividends, interest, GICs, and mutual funds, income from pensions, other regular cash income, and government sources (EI, OAS, CPP, etc.). These income sources typically do not include capital gains, gifts, and inter-household transfers, etc.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop123-eng.cfm>

Labour Force: The labour force includes individuals aged 15 and over who are either employed, or actively looking for work. This means that the labour force is the sum of employed and unemployed individuals. Individuals not in the labour force would include those who are retired.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop056-eng.cfm>

Mobile Home: A single dwelling designed and constructed to be transported on its own chassis and capable of being moved to a new location on short notice. It may be placed temporarily on a foundation such as blocks, posts or a prepared pad and may be covered by a skirt.

A mobile home must meet the following two conditions:

It is designed and constructed to be transported on its base frame (or chassis) in one piece.

The dwelling can be moved on short notice. This dwelling can be easily relocated to a new location, because of the nature of its construction, by disconnecting it from services, attaching it to a standard wheel assembly and moving it without resorting to significant renovations and reconstructions.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/001/98-500-x2016001-eng.cfm>

Multiple Census Families: A **household** in which two or more **census families** (with or without additional persons) occupy the same private dwelling. **Family households** may also be divided based on the presence of persons not in a **census family**.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/ref/dict/households-menage012-eng.cfm>

National Occupancy Standard: Standard for the number of bedrooms required by a household based on household composition. For example, lone parents living with their child would require two bedrooms, one for themselves and one for their child.

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=DEC&Id=100731>

Non-Census-Family Households: Households which do not include a census family. “Non-Census-family households are either one person living alone or a group of two or more persons who live together but do not constitute a Census family.”

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=DEC&Id=251053>

Other Family or Other Census Family: When comparing households one way to distinguish between households is by “household family types.” These types will include couples with children, couples without children, lone-parent families, and non-family households; they will also include “other families” which refer to households which include at least one family and additional persons. For example, “other family” could refer to a family living with one or more persons who are related to one or more of the members of the family, or a family living with one or more additional persons who are unrelated to the family members.

Other Movable Dwelling: A single dwelling, other than a mobile home, used as a place of residence, but capable of being moved on short notice, such as a tent, recreational vehicle, travel trailer, houseboat, or floating home.

Other single-attached house: A single dwelling that is attached to another building and that does not fall into any of the other categories, such as a single dwelling attached to a non-residential structure (e.g., store or church) or occasionally to another residential structure (e.g., apartment building).

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/001/98-500-x2016001-eng.cfm>

Participation Rate: The participation rate is the proportion of all individuals aged 15 and over who are in the labour force.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop108-eng.cfm>

Primary Household Maintainer: The first (or only) maintainer of a household listed on the Census.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage020-eng.cfm>

Seniors: Individuals aged 65 and over.

Shadow Population: Refers to individuals who reside in a municipality on a seasonal basis for a given period of time (30 days or more) but have a more permanent or primary residence elsewhere. Examples of people who make up a shadow population are people residing in temporary work camps and seasonal workers.

<https://www.nadc.gov.ab.ca/Docs/Shadow-Populations.pdf>

Shelter Cost: Total monthly shelter expenses paid by households that own or rent their dwelling. “Shelter costs for owner households include, where applicable, mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of electricity, heat, water, and other municipal services. For renter households, shelter costs include, where applicable, the rent and the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services.”

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage033-eng.cfm>

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

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/dwelling-logements017-eng.cfm>

Suitable Housing Standard: “[Housing that] has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of resident households.”

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage037-eng.cfm>

Supportive housing: A type of housing that provides on-site supports and services to residents who cannot live independently.

<https://www.bchousing.org/glossary>

Supportive Housing for Seniors: This report defines assisted living and long term or residential care options as supportive housing for seniors.

Transitional Housing: “A type of housing for residents for between 30 days and three years. It aims to transition individuals to long-term, permanent housing.” <https://www.bchousing.org/glossary>



Appendix A

Data Appendix

Appendix A - Data Appendix

The Housing Needs Reports requirements list a large amount of data that needs to be collected. Most of it does not need to be included in the actual report. While the proposed Housing Needs Report template includes most of the required data, there are some pieces that we generally put in the appendix for the following reasons:

1. Better data is available through other sources. For example, BC Assessment data is only available for 2019 and does not provide a historical view of trends in the housing market. Instead, we report on data available from local real estate boards.
2. It doesn't add to the understanding of housing needs. Some of the data that is required doesn't help us understanding housing needs. For example, we do include labour participation and unemployment rates because these factor into understanding housing affordability trends. However, we don't include a detailed breakdown of workers by industry because this doesn't illuminate housing needs for workers.
3. To manage the length of the report. Housing Needs Reports can be very long. Reporting on too much data can make the report hard to read and less accessible to both local government staff and other stakeholders who may refer to it. Our approach has been to focus on the data that adds to the picture of housing needs and put anything that doesn't in the appendix.

BC Assessment

Average and median assessed values for all units since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (f) (i)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average	\$115,600	\$156,576	\$185,743	\$187,323	\$200,230	\$214,776	\$221,909	\$233,456	\$247,895	\$254,685
Median	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average	\$260,078	\$258,783	\$260,208	\$258,777	\$253,286
Median	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Information for the median values of individuals units has not been provided. Additionally, given the information available, no estimation approach was identified that would provide a reasonable estimate of the median value across entire types.

Average and median assessed values by structure type since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (f) (ii)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Assessed Value by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$119,986	\$165,141	\$194,047	\$195,845	\$207,280
Dwelling with Suite	\$119,579	\$129,016	\$188,600	\$202,630	\$270,291
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$156,464	\$166,779	\$222,546	\$226,862	\$271,816
Row Housing	\$141,118	\$145,059	\$200,824	\$197,471	\$207,076
Apartment	\$125,267	\$129,850	\$138,894	\$138,894	\$176,444
Manufactured Home	\$34,485	\$44,595	\$57,832	\$58,711	\$71,537
Median Assessed Value by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average Assessed Value by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$221,811	\$228,785	\$237,996	\$253,906	\$256,470
Dwelling with Suite	\$279,709	\$286,008	\$344,191	\$366,382	\$391,645
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$271,152	\$286,880	\$335,794	\$329,936	\$369,077
Row Housing	\$242,871	\$242,788	\$269,900	\$269,559	\$299,261
Apartment	\$192,983	\$193,106	\$194,978	\$197,389	\$196,439
Manufactured Home	\$80,217	\$81,166	\$86,522	\$88,999	\$89,709
Median Assessed Value by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average Assessed Value by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$260,893	\$260,979	\$267,402	\$265,947	\$256,892
Dwelling with Suite	\$406,710	\$389,964	\$394,259	\$398,488	\$383,231
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$375,825	\$357,457	\$342,984	\$334,190	\$324,208
Row Housing	\$301,327	\$296,613	\$253,898	\$247,430	\$247,696
Apartment	\$190,118	\$202,132	\$112,444	\$119,826	\$119,639
Manufactured Home	\$96,200	\$83,470	\$72,354	\$75,346	\$72,971
Median Assessed Value by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Information for the median values of individuals units has not been provided. Additionally, given the information available, no estimation approach was identified that would provide a reasonable estimate of the median value across entire types.

Average and median assessed values by unit size since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (f) (iii)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$57,057	\$78,145	\$101,196	\$103,269	\$131,593
2	\$64,420	\$87,207	\$109,256	\$109,539	\$124,860
3+	\$134,723	\$182,329	\$213,009	\$214,662	\$225,875
Median Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	\$27,800	N/A	\$101,196	\$103,269	\$131,593
1	\$55,500	N/A	\$109,256	\$109,539	\$124,860
2	\$54,200	\$69,700	\$213,009	\$214,662	\$225,875
3+	\$27,800	N/A	\$101,196	\$103,269	\$131,593

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$132,827	\$138,181	\$143,387	\$159,809	\$168,975
2	\$132,717	\$135,593	\$141,659	\$154,445	\$166,248
3+	\$241,723	\$249,572	\$262,550	\$276,749	\$282,317
Median Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$132,827	\$138,181	\$143,387	\$159,809	\$168,975
2	\$132,717	\$135,593	\$141,659	\$154,445	\$166,248
3+	\$241,723	\$249,572	\$262,550	\$276,749	\$282,317

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$174,884	\$175,013	\$156,600	\$155,569	\$149,944
2	\$164,299	\$161,692	\$163,144	\$163,568	\$154,437
3+	\$289,468	\$288,570	\$293,048	\$290,785	\$284,099
Median Assessed Value by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$174,884	\$175,013	\$156,600	\$155,569	\$149,944
2	\$164,299	\$161,692	\$163,144	\$163,568	\$154,437
3+	\$289,468	\$288,570	\$293,048	\$290,785	\$284,099

*Median value is taken from the set of properties of the given type with the highest folio count. Where the highest folio count is a tie, the average of the medians associated with the tied highest folio counts is taken.

Average and median sales prices for all unit types since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (g) (i)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average	\$109,925	\$139,637	\$186,653	\$198,165	\$207,399	\$207,118	\$128,397	\$194,077	\$227,954	\$248,105
Median	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average	\$289,972	\$275,617	\$273,471	\$262,157	\$289,885
Median	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Information for the median values of individuals units has not been provided. Additionally, given the information available, no estimation approach was identified that would provide a reasonable estimate of the median value across entire types.

Average and median sales prices by structural type since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (g) (ii)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Sales Price by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$115,263	\$154,631	\$198,591	\$209,332	\$220,630
Dwelling with Suite	\$90,242	\$92,625	\$169,167	\$149,071	\$318,225
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$175,000	\$177,500	\$236,667	\$235,000	\$341,500
Row Housing	N/A	\$186,250	\$250,000	N/A	N/A
Apartment	\$115,625	\$143,900	N/A	\$151,000	\$198,000
Manufactured Home	\$37,105	\$56,200	\$80,261	\$94,444	\$86,724
Median Sales Price by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average Sales Price by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$223,959	\$228,558	\$260,603	\$276,258	\$273,699
Dwelling with Suite	\$211,076	\$228,032	\$425,522	\$300,935	\$297,188
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$186,657	\$298,550	\$300,409	\$356,407	\$380,022
Row Housing	\$235,000	\$248,000	\$260,100	\$290,000	\$228,054
Apartment	\$189,000	\$234,000	\$198,800	\$230,000	\$215,333
Manufactured Home	\$71,765	\$97,658	\$88,457	\$115,191	\$81,539
Median Sales Price by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average Sales Price by Structural Type					
Single Family	\$291,115	\$281,220	\$282,649	\$279,588	\$304,068
Dwelling with Suite	\$410,683	\$449,014	\$454,725	\$369,500	\$357,667
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.	\$367,490	\$347,460	\$351,560	\$327,500	\$280,125
Row Housing	\$239,622	\$347,500	\$401,250	\$327,714	\$279,750
Apartment	\$205,000	\$216,333	\$220,000	\$230,000	N/A
Manufactured Home	\$104,369	\$57,644	\$54,962	\$65,866	\$79,231
Median Sales Price by Structural Type	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Average and median sales price by unit size since 2005 [Section 6 (1) (g) (iii)]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$30,020	\$41,660	\$114,875	\$138,250	\$176,750
2	\$62,631	\$83,509	\$105,730	\$131,421	\$129,575
3+	\$134,086	\$168,435	\$208,467	\$220,266	\$232,703
Median Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$244,200	\$176,625	\$92,833	\$175,500	\$166,667
2	\$131,198	\$153,702	\$166,451	\$163,651	\$185,266
3+	\$222,543	\$242,216	\$282,125	\$298,581	\$297,876
Median Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms					
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$236,059	\$113,000	\$239,000	\$171,667	N/A
2	\$167,151	\$152,177	\$147,853	\$169,243	\$152,955
3+	\$317,190	N/A	\$309,750	\$291,317	\$318,851
Median Sales Price by Number of Bedrooms	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Information for the median values of individuals units has not been provided. Additionally, given the information available, no estimation approach was identified that would provide a reasonable estimate of the median value across entire types.

Average Residential Category Total Conveyance Price by Type and Bedroom Type*				
	Number of Bedrooms			
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3+ Bedrooms	Total
Single-Detached	\$171,667	\$190,863	\$296,451	\$279,588
Dwelling with Suite			\$331,250	\$331,250
Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, etc.		\$283,333	\$369,375	\$345,909
Row Housing		\$327,714		\$327,714
Apartment (Condo)		\$230,000		\$230,000
Manufactured Home		\$30,947	\$124,066	\$65,866
Seasonal Dwelling				
Other*				
Total	\$171,667	\$169,243	\$291,317	\$262,157

Source: BC Assessment, 2019

Census

Total number of workers over past 3 Census reports [Section 5 (a)]

Workers in the Labour Force for Population in Private Households			
	2006	2011	2016
Workers in labour force	6,185	6,585	6,720

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Number of workers by industry over past 3 Census reports [Section 5 (b)]

Workers by NAICS Sector for Population in Private Households						
	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	6,185	100%	6,585	100%	6,720	100%
All Categories	6,145	99%	6,525	99%	6,580	98%
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	175	3%	65	1%	80	1%
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	220	4%	390	6%	515	8%
22 Utilities	40	1%	45	1%	40	1%
23 Construction	595	10%	845	13%	680	10%
31-33 Manufacturing	360	6%	235	4%	310	5%
41 Wholesale trade	215	3%	235	4%	155	2%
44-45 Retail trade	1,005	16%	1,150	17%	965	14%
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	360	6%	235	4%	360	5%
51 Information and cultural industries	120	2%	80	1%	65	1%
52 Finance and insurance	185	3%	160	2%	135	2%
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	95	2%	120	2%	115	2%
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	130	2%	205	3%	215	3%
55 Management of companies and enterprises	10	0%	0	0%	0	0%
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	245	4%	155	2%	300	4%
61 Educational services	425	7%	340	5%	420	6%
62 Health care and social assistance	675	11%	855	13%	780	12%
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	120	2%	100	2%	95	1%
72 Accommodation and food services	640	10%	560	9%	655	10%
81 Other services (except public administration)	230	4%	340	5%	380	6%
91 Public administration	295	5%	410	6%	320	5%
Not Applicable	45	1%	60	1%	140	2%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Commuting destination in 2016 (within Census subdivision, to different Census subdivision, to different Census division, to another Province/Territory) [Section 7 (d), (e), (f), (g)]

	#	%
Total	4,585	100%
Commute within census subdivision (CSD) of residence	3,790	83%
Commute to a different census subdivision (CSD) within census division (CD) of residence	700	15%
Commute to a different census subdivision (CSD) and census division (CD) within province or territory of residence	20	0%
Commute to a different province or territory	70	2%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Renter and owner household income – average [Section 4 (f), (g)]

	2006	2011	2016
Average	73,656	79,668	91,491
Owner	87,535	95,722	109,630
Renter	46,941	51,035	63,573

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Number of non-movers, non-migrants, migrants over past three Census reports [Section 3 (1) (a) (x)]

	2006	2011	2016
Total	10,720	11,075	11,560
Mover	2,350	1,940	2,720
Migrant	800	815	855
Non-migrant	1,555	1,125	1,865
Non-mover	8,365	9,135	8,840

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Average household income [Section 4 (a), (b)]

Average and Median Before-Tax Private Household Income			
	2006	2011	2016
Average	\$73,656	\$79,668	\$91,491

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Households in specified income brackets [Section 4 (c)]

Before-Tax Private Household Income by Income Bracket						
	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	4,650	100%	4,860	100%	5,035	100%
\$0-\$4,999	85	2%	160	3%	55	1%
\$5,000-\$9,999	95	2%	100	2%	75	1%
\$10,000-\$14,999	155	3%	155	3%	140	3%
\$15,000-\$19,999	310	7%	260	5%	215	4%
\$20,000-\$24,999	245	5%	195	4%	165	3%
\$25,000-\$29,999	210	5%	175	4%	185	4%
\$30,000-\$34,999	185	4%	220	5%	200	4%
\$35,000-\$39,999	230	5%	225	5%	160	3%
\$40,000-\$44,999	180	4%	155	3%	160	3%
\$45,000-\$49,999	245	5%	205	4%	200	4%
\$50,000-\$59,999	380	8%	440	9%	320	6%
\$60,000-\$69,999	340	7%	270	6%	350	7%
\$70,000-\$79,999	220	5%	280	6%	325	6%
\$80,000-\$89,999	315	7%	290	6%	335	7%
\$90,000-\$99,999	270	6%	305	6%	315	6%
\$100,000-\$124,999	505	11%	440	9%	565	11%
\$125,000-\$149,999	315	7%	380	8%	505	10%
\$150,000-\$199,999	275	6%	325	7%	480	10%
\$200,000 and over	85	2%	260	5%	295	6%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Number of units that are subsidized housing [Section 6 (1) (e)]

Subsidized Housing Units	
	2016
Subsidized housing units	N/A

Source: Data Set Published by BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Data from BC Housing

Renter households in subsidized housing [Section 3 (1) (ix)]

Renter Private Households in Subsidized Housing (Subsidized Rental Housing Data Not Collected Until 2011)						
	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Renter households	1,590	100%	1,745	100%	1,985	100%
Renter households in subsidized housing	#N/A	#N/A	330	19%	170	9%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Average rental prices for all units and by unit size [Section 6 (1) (h) (i), (ii)]

Average and Median Monthly Rent by Number of Bedrooms															
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Average	\$ 551	\$ 589	\$ 754	\$ 819	\$ 809	\$ 841	\$ 863	\$ 928	\$ 972	\$ 1,008	\$ 1,026	\$ 961	\$ 989	\$ 993	\$ 980
No-bedroom	\$ 426	\$ 461	\$ 541	\$ 589	\$ 592	\$ 621	\$ 629	\$ 640	\$ 697	\$ 725	\$ 711	\$ 659	\$ 653	\$ 644	\$ 676
1-bedroom	\$ 490	\$ 522	\$ 649	\$ 705	\$ 698	\$ 713	\$ 733	\$ 760	\$ 798	\$ 819	\$ 887	\$ 830	\$ 859	\$ 853	\$ 827
2-bedroom	\$ 596	\$ 640	\$ 821	\$ 886	\$ 889	\$ 948	\$ 974	\$ 1,048	\$ 1,107	\$ 1,136	\$ 1,122	\$ 1,051	\$ 1,089	\$ 1,097	\$ 1,085
3-or-more bedrooms	\$ 671	\$ 721	\$ 1,021	\$ 1,127	\$ 1,035	\$ 1,056	\$ 1,079	\$ 1,242	\$ 1,199	\$ 1,237	\$ 1,281	\$ 1,192	\$ 1,207	\$ 1,227	\$ 1,233

Source: CMHC Primary Rental Market Survey



Appendix B

Engagement Summary

Appendix B – Engagement Summary

1.0 Housing Needs Survey Summary

1.1 Introduction

As part of the PRRD Housing Needs Reports project, a community survey on housing needs was available from July 15 to August 13, 2020 (extended from the original August 5 close date). It was available online through Dawson Creek’s website, as well as through paper copies by request. The purpose of the survey was to collect information about the housing needs and challenges of residents. Survey results for each community have been analyzed and the results for Dawson Creek are presented here.

A total of 173 respondents from Dawson Creek responded to the survey, including 25 individuals who identified as First Nations or Metis. Respondents were allowed to skip questions, submit the survey at any point, and pick multiple answers for select questions. Responses from open-ended questions were reviewed and summarized by the themes that emerged.

Note: Percentages are based on the number of respondents to each question. (N=) in the figure titles provide the total number of respondents that answered the question. The bars on each graph will show the percentage of respondents that selected each answer and the x axis will show the number of respondents that selected each answer.

1.2 Demographic Questions

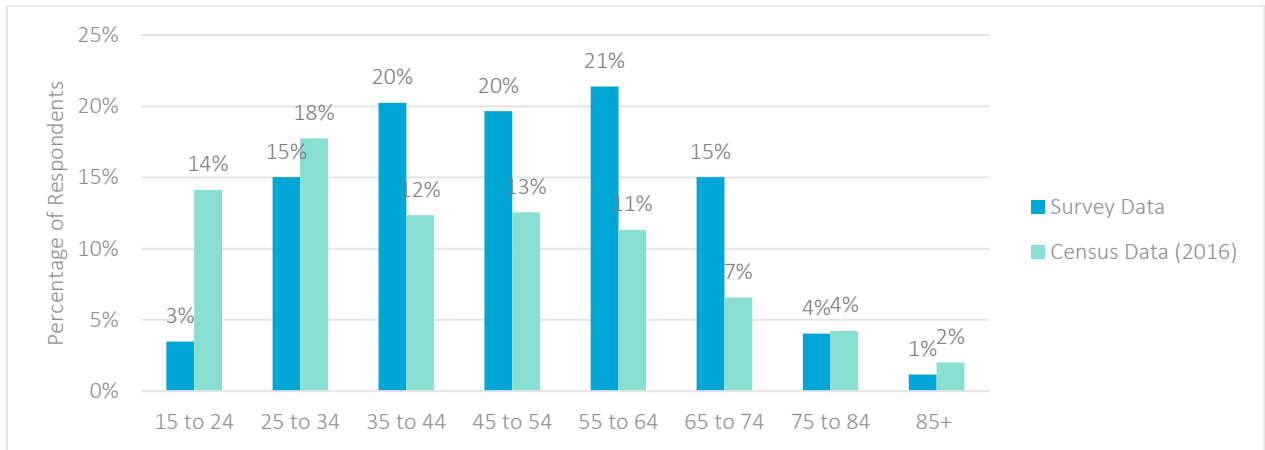
Demographic questions were asked to understand who completed the survey. Responses to these questions are compared to the 2016 Census to show how representative survey responses are in relation to the community.

1.2.1 Age

The survey had higher representation of individuals 35 to 64 compared to Dawson Creek’s total population in 2016¹⁸. The survey received few responses from individuals 15 to 24 and 85 and over which is typical of surveys of this kind.

¹⁸ Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016

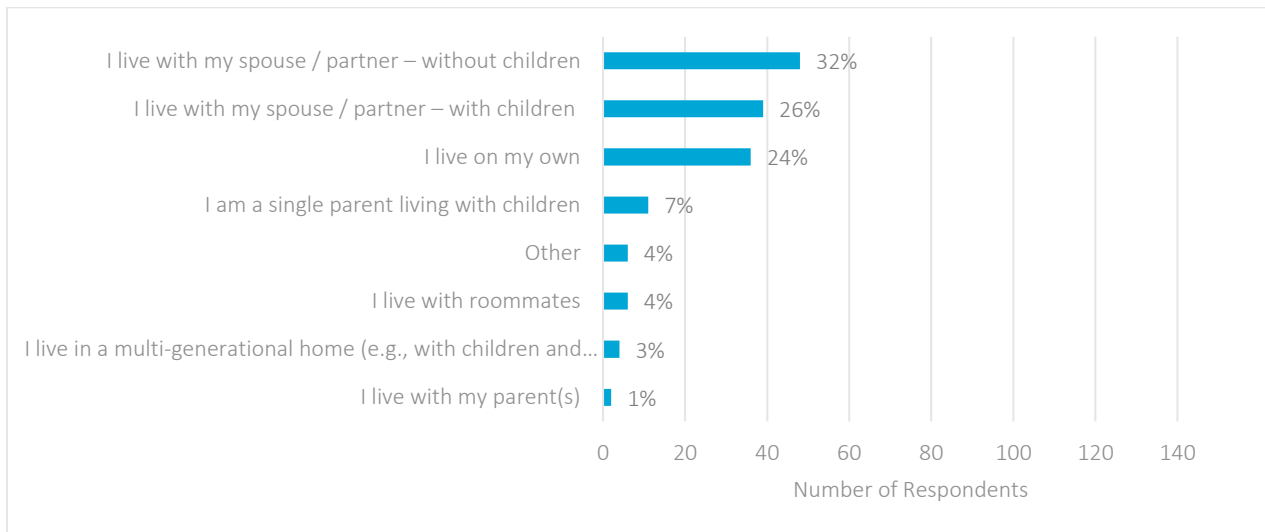
Figure 33 – Age of Respondents (N=173) Compared to 2016 Census



1.2.2 Household Type and Size

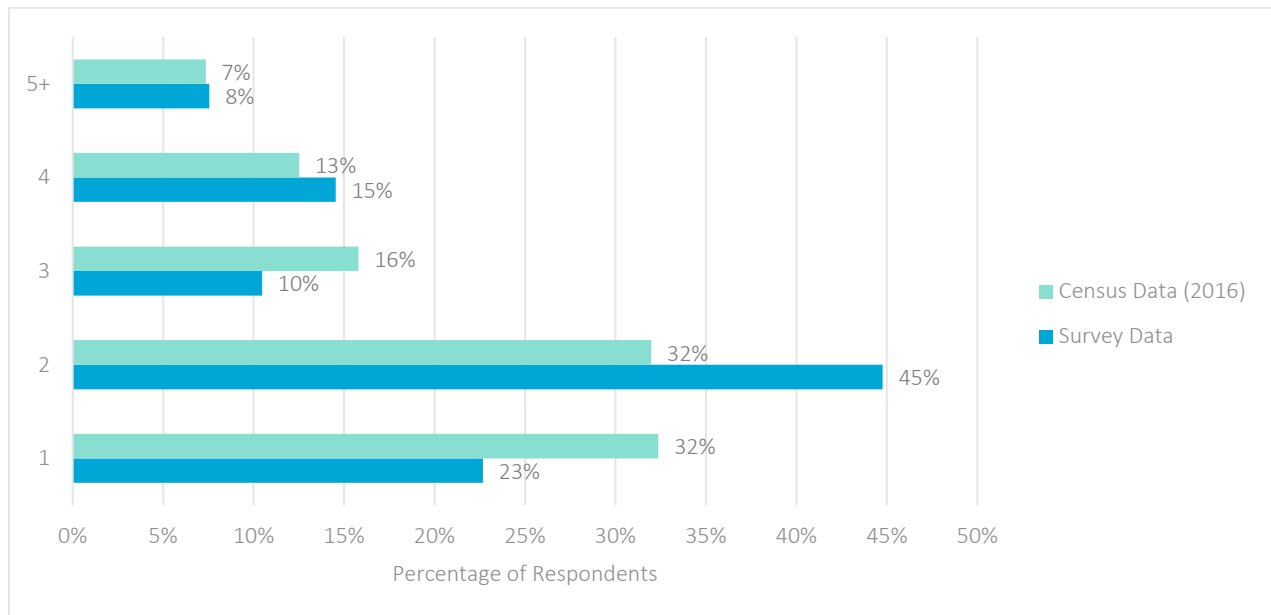
Survey respondents were asked to describe their household (Figure 34). The most common responses were living with a spouse or partner without children (32%) or with children (26%), followed by living on their own (24%). Respondents that identified as 'other' (4%) described living with a family friend or adult children.

Figure 34 – Household Types (N=152)



Respondents were also asked about the size of their household. Compared to the Census data which captures the actual population, the survey had more representation from two-person households and lower responses from one-person and three-person households (Figure 35).

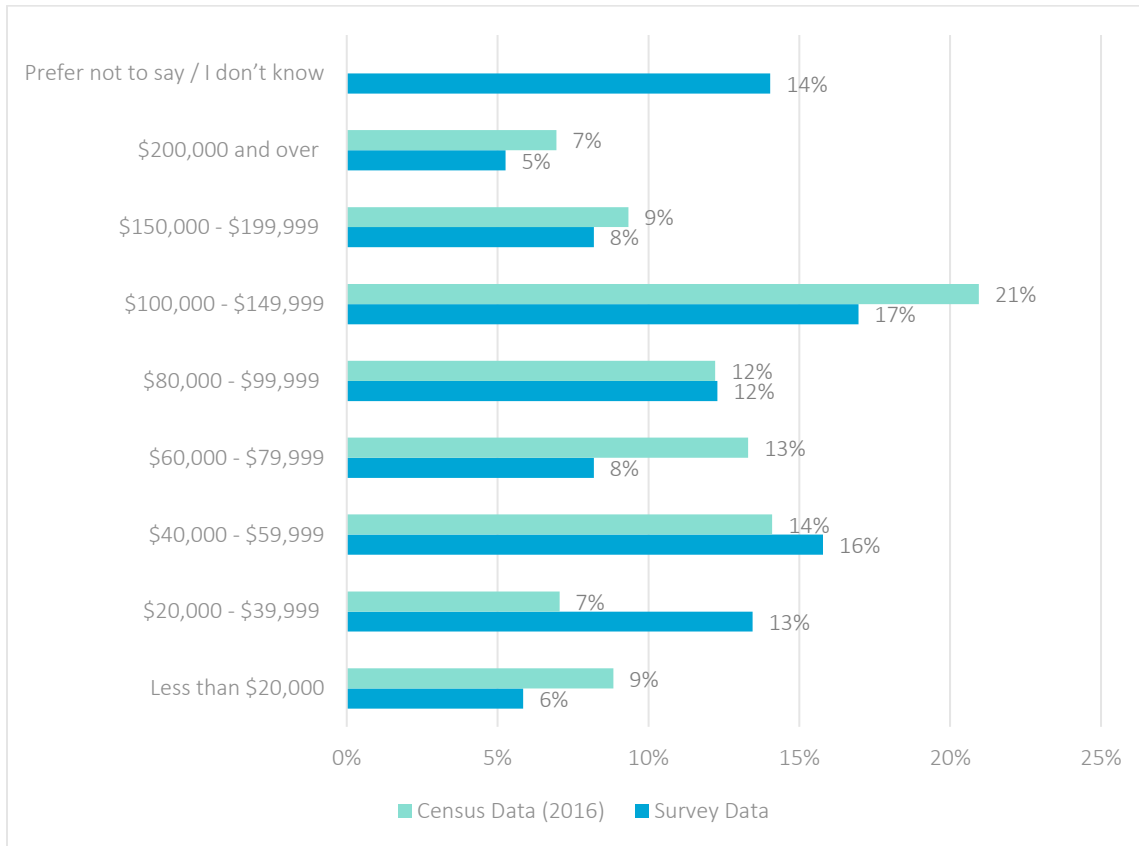
Figure 35 – Number of People in Households (N=172) Compared to 2016 Census



1.2.3 Household Income

The distribution of respondents in other household income brackets was similar to Dawson Creek's overall income distribution. Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents preferred not to disclose their annual household income information.

Figure 36 – Annual Household Income (N=171) Compared to 2016 Census



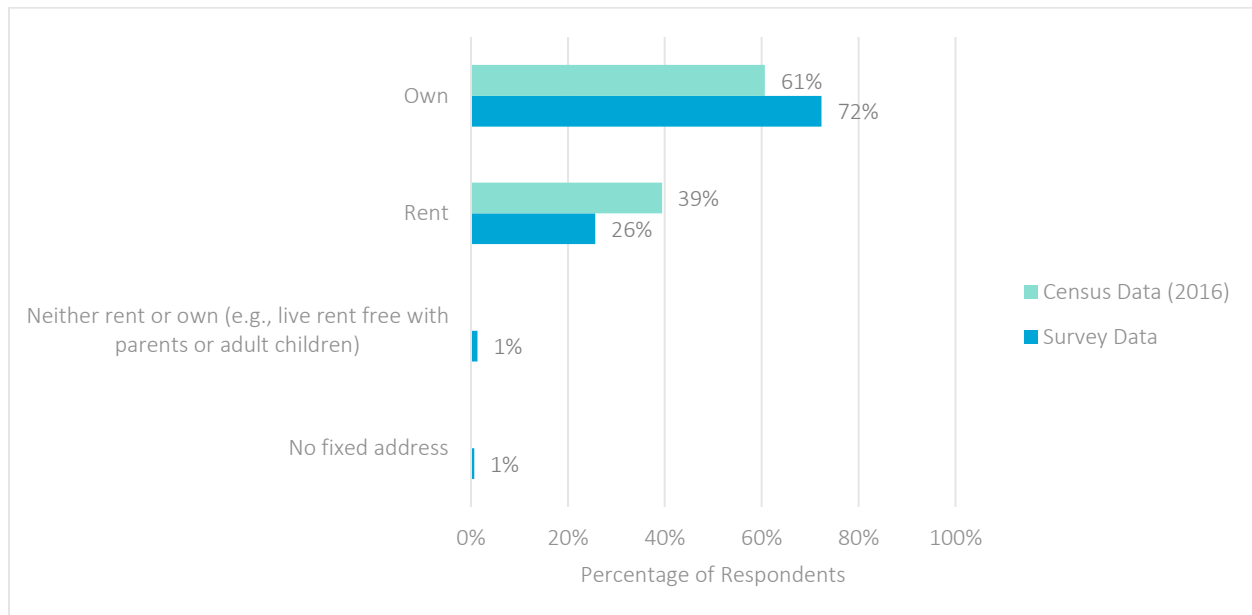
1.3 Housing Experiences

Survey respondents were asked a number of questions about their recent housing experiences.

1.3.1 Current Home

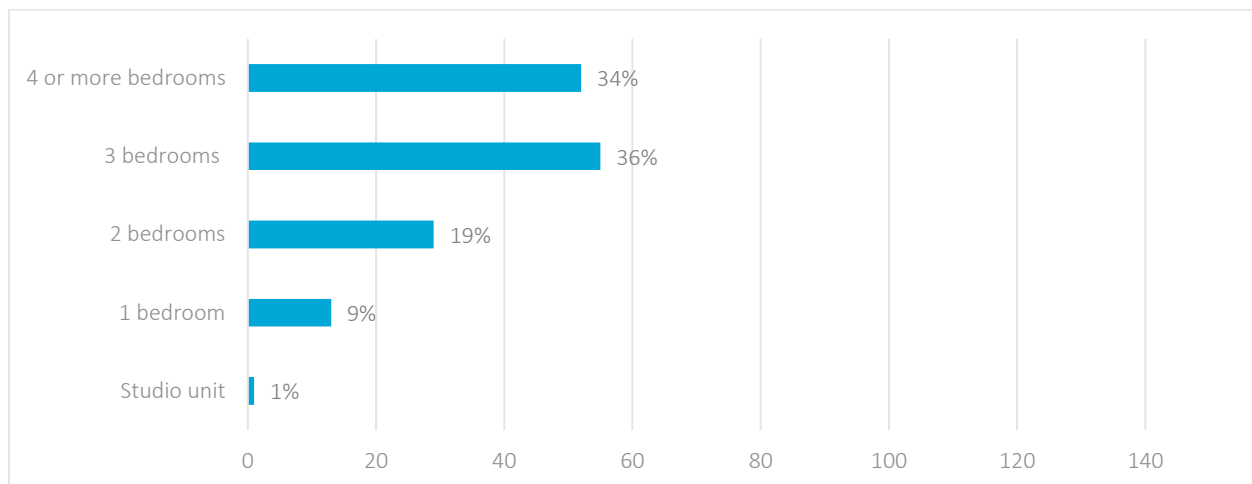
Compared to the 2016 Census, the survey had a slightly higher representation of owners and slightly lower representation of renters. Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents reported that they own their home, 26% that they rent. Only one percent (1%) of respondents reported that they do not rent or own their home or have no fixed address.

Figure 37 – Tenure Type (N=152) Compared to 2016 Census



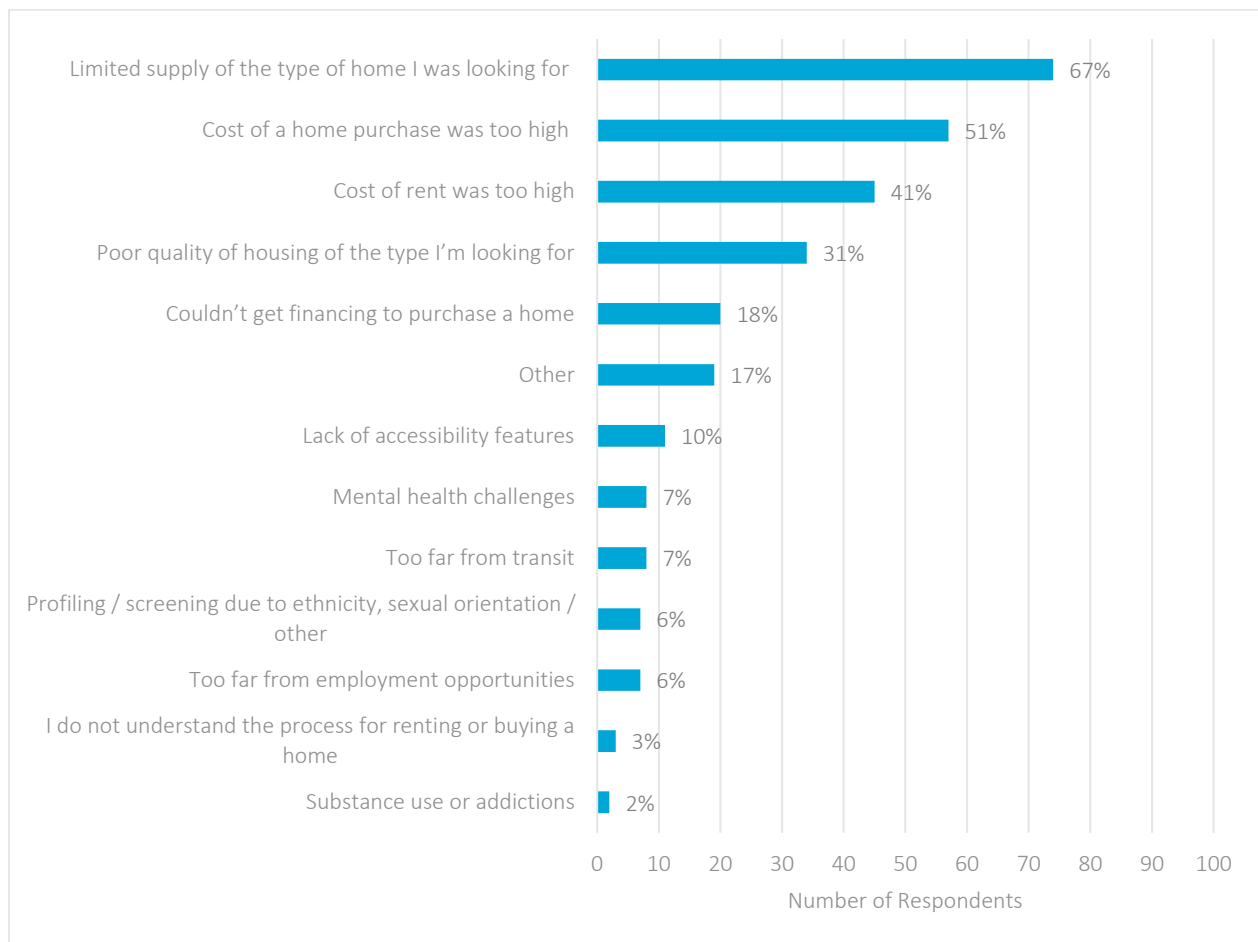
A majority of respondents live in home with three or more bedrooms. Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents live in homes with two bedrooms and nine percent (9%) of respondents live in homes with one bedroom.

Figure 38 – Number of Bedrooms in Current Home (N=151)



Respondents were asked to identify any barriers they faced when searching for their current home. The top barriers experienced were the limited supply of type of home they were looking for (67%), the cost of purchasing (51%) or renting (41%) a home, and the poor quality of desired housing type (31%). Respondents that selected 'other' described specific purchasing challenges (4 respondents) and barriers such as a lack of senior housing, lack of accessibility ramps, infrastructure issues, lack of pet-friendly properties, and concerns about neighbourhood safety.

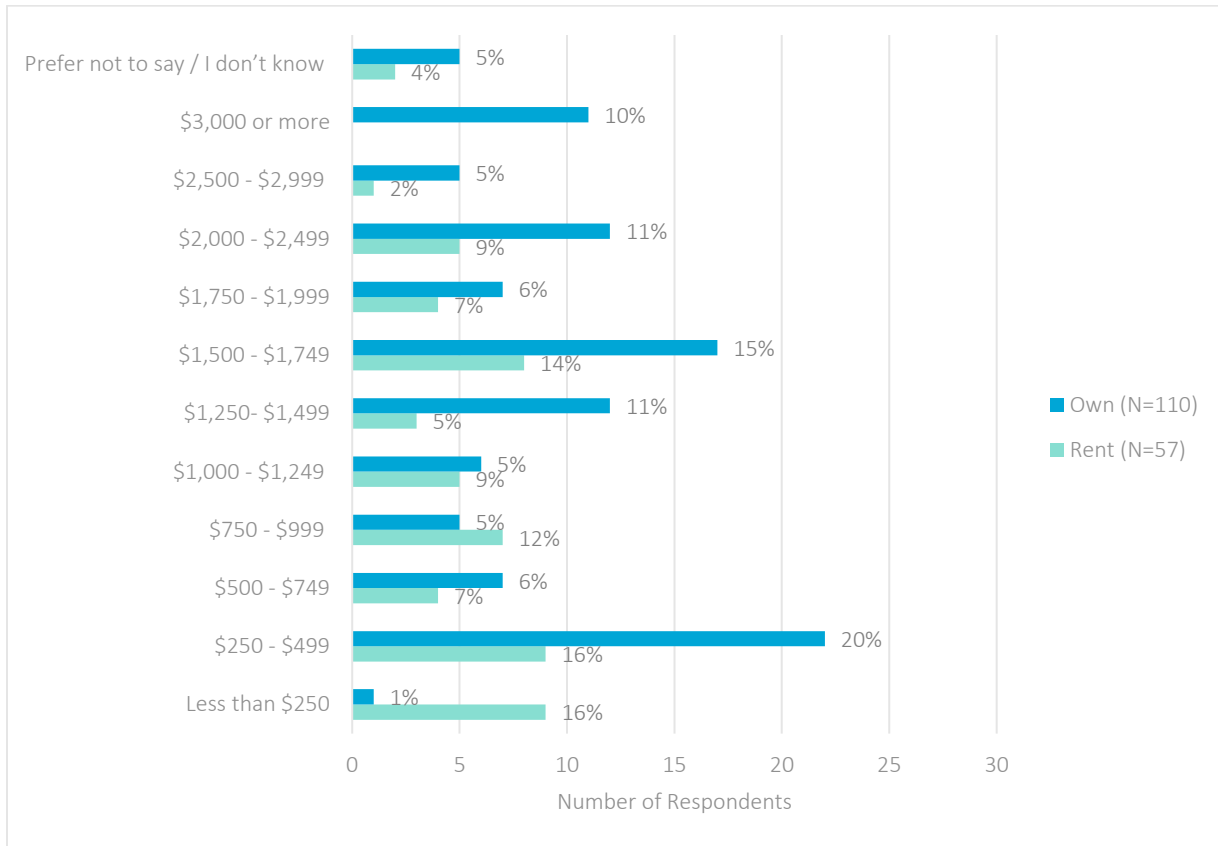
Figure 39 – Barriers During Search of Current Home (N=111)



1.3.2 Current Housing Costs

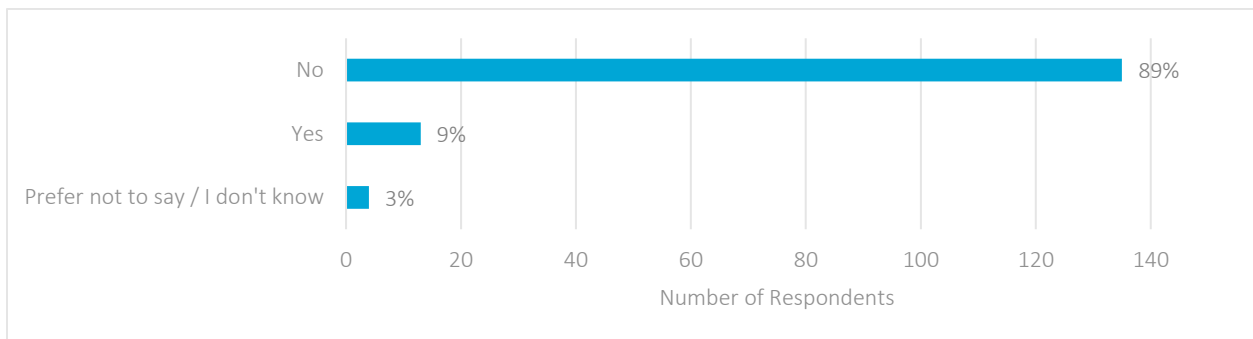
Respondents were asked about their housing costs each month, including rent, mortgage payments, condominium fees, and utilities. A wide range of rent and ownership costs were reported. A higher proportion of owners than renters spend more than \$1,250 per month on their housing costs.

Figure 40 – Housing Costs Compared by Renters and Owners



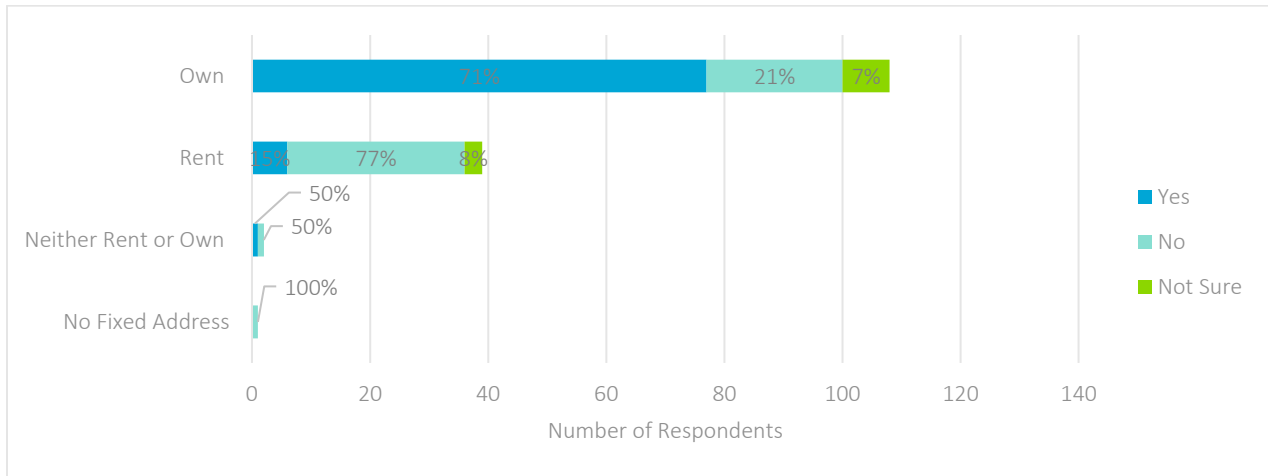
Nine percent (9%) of respondents reported that they receive financial assistance to support their housing costs. Respondents reported receiving financial assistance from disability payments (5 respondents), SAFER payments (2 respondents), family or friends (2 respondents), and BC Housing (1 respondent) or government grant / loan (1 respondent).

Figure 41 – Financial Assistance (N=152)



Seventy-one percent (71%) of homeowners believe their housing costs are affordable to them compared to only 15% of renters, highlighting issues of affordability among renters. While the number of respondents who don't have a fixed address or neither rent nor own is small, most reported that their housing costs are unaffordable (2 respondents).

Figure 42 – Housing Costs Affordability Compared by Tenure Type



1.3.3 Current and Anticipated Housing Issues

Respondents were asked about challenges they are currently facing or anticipate facing in the next five years. Figure 43 shows the top five housing issues for all households. Respondents were able to select as many issues that applied to them. The percentages shown in the bars are based on the total number of respondents for each tenure type. The most common housing issue for renters is the lack of adequate storage (64%), followed by homes being too small (62%) and uncertainty of being able to purchase a home (56%). The most common housing issue for homeowners is that their homes are in poor conditions and in need of repair (22%), followed by the lack of adequate storage (17%). Respondents who neither rent or own reported similar concerns as homeowners and renters. Respondents who have no fixed address were concerned with the uncertainty of being able to purchase a home.

Figure 43 – Current Housing Issues Compared by Tenure Type

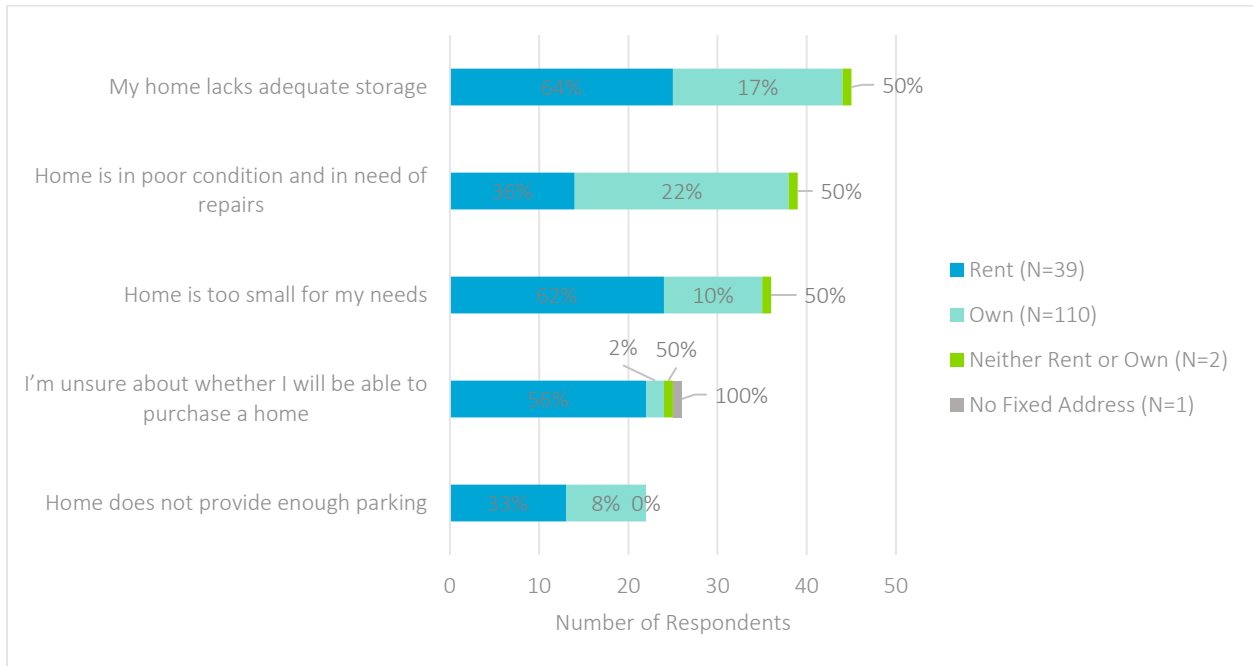
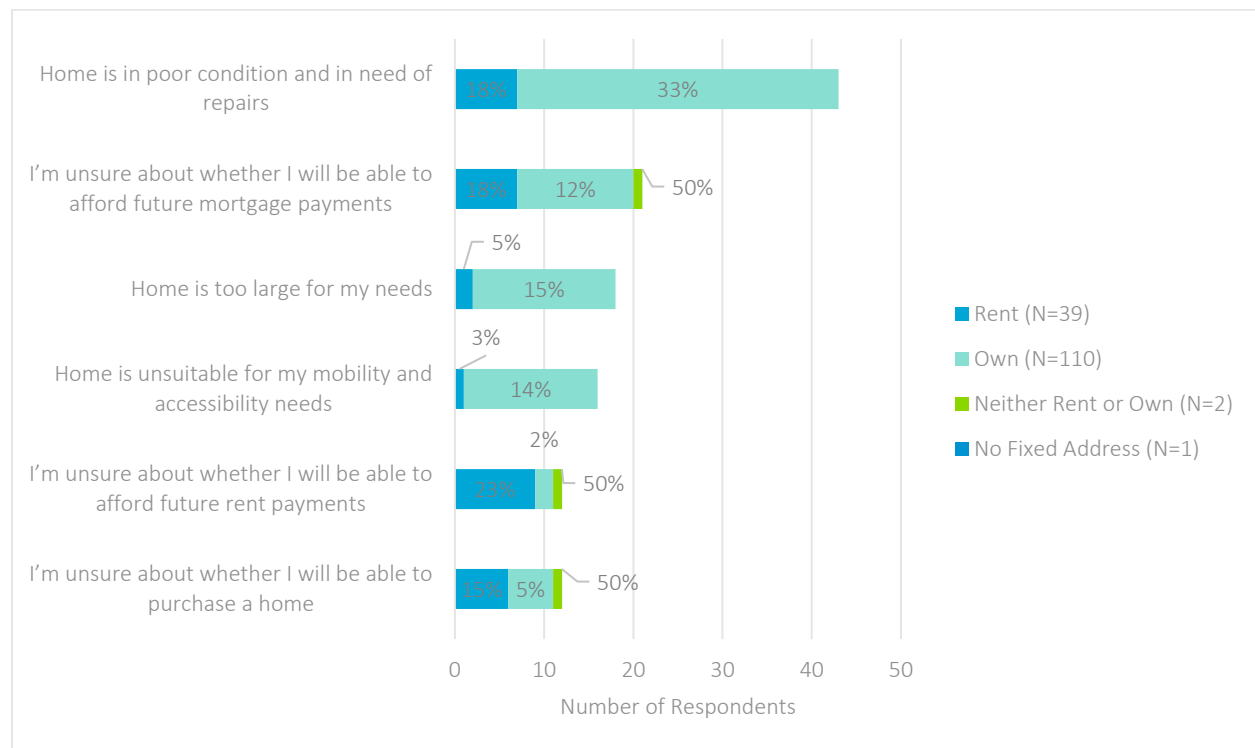


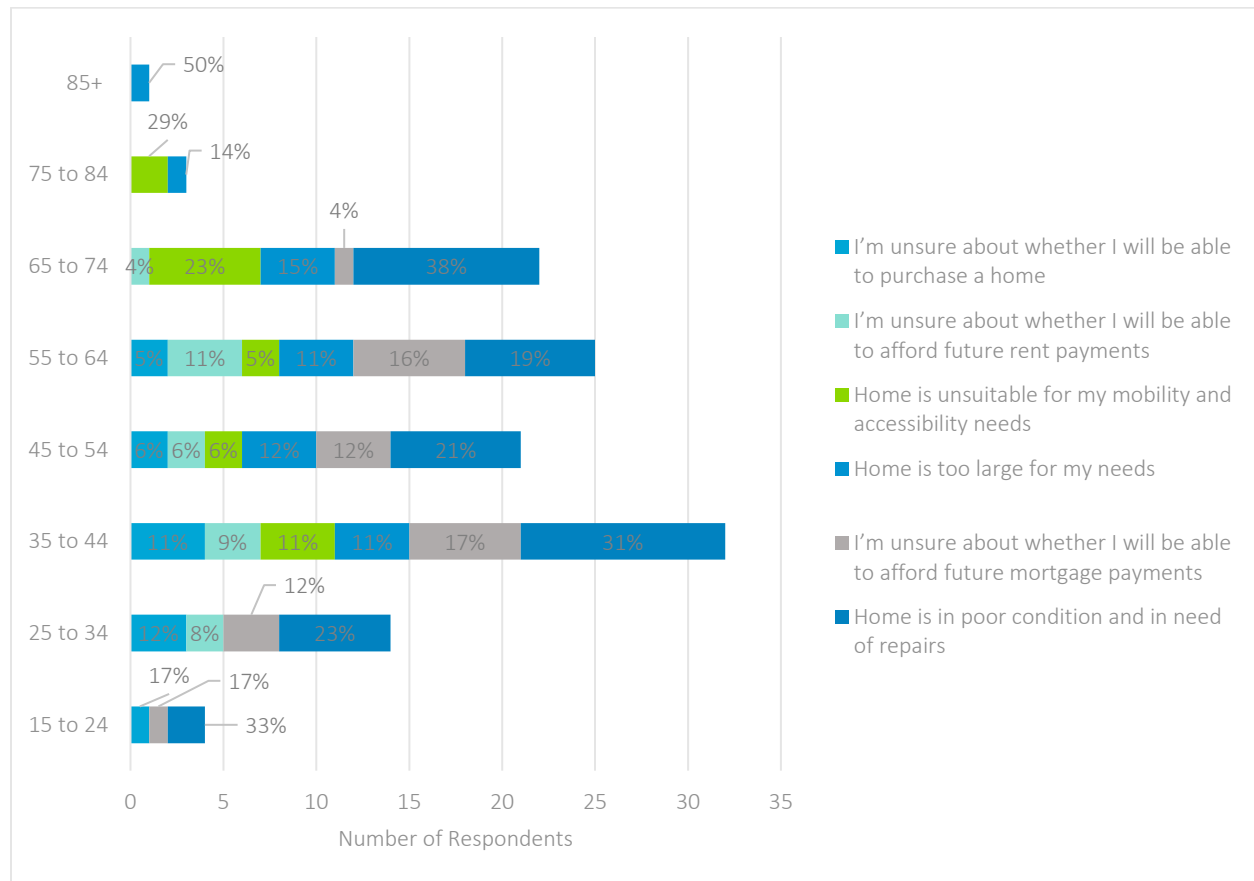
Figure 44 shows the top housing issues respondents anticipate in the next five years. Respondents were able to select as many issues that applied to them. The percentages shown in the bars are based on the total number of respondents for each tenure type. The housing issue most commonly anticipated was that the respondents' homes would be in poor condition and in need of repairs. Both homeowners (12%) and renters (23%) were anticipating uncertainty about whether or not they will be able to make mortgage or rent payments. Homeowners also anticipated that their homes will be too large for their needs or unsuitable for mobility or accessibility needs in the next 5 years.

Figure 44 – Housing Issues Anticipated in the Next 5 Years Compared by Tenure Type



Among survey respondents, those between 65 and 74 and those between 35 and 44 were much more likely to report that their home is in poor condition and requires major repairs. Differences in housing challenges by age group are shown in Figure 45.

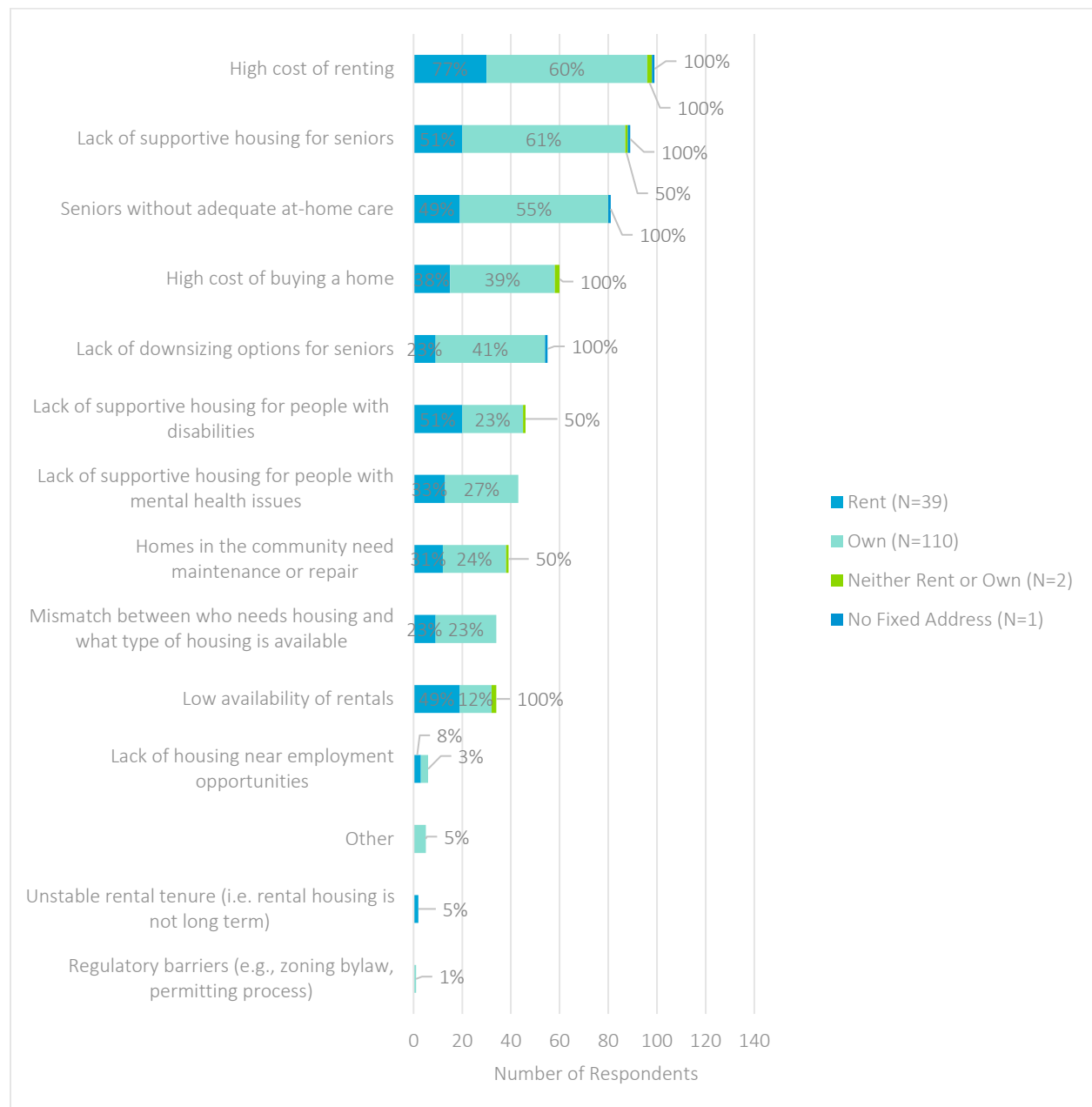
Figure 45 – Housing Issues Anticipated in the Next 5 Years Compared by Age Groups



1.4 Community Issues

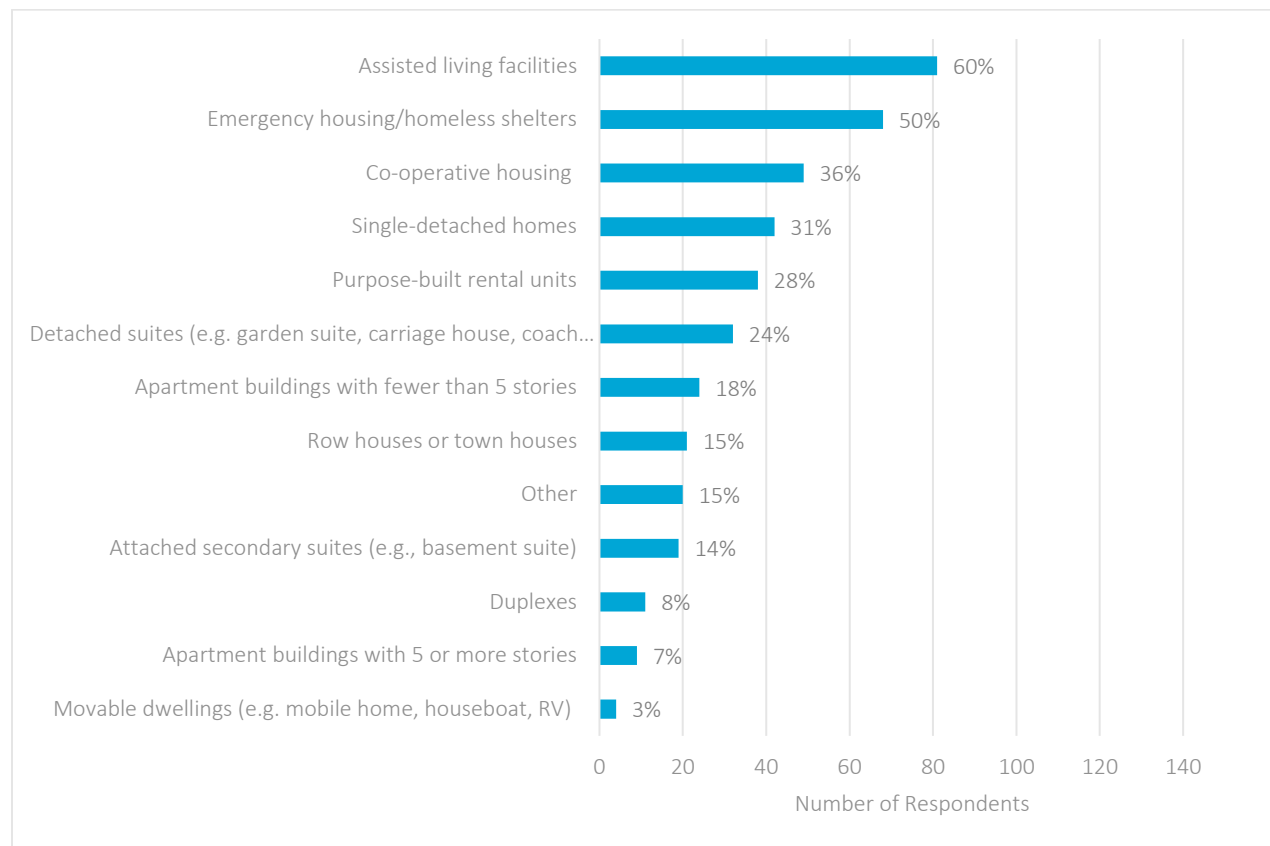
Figure 46 shows the community issues reported by respondents in Dawson Creek. Generally, renters and homeowners reported similar community issues. The high cost of renting in Dawson Creek was the most common concern. Three of the top five issues for all respondents were related to housing options and supports for seniors in the community.

Figure 46 – Community Housing Issues Compared by Tenure Type



Respondents were asked what forms of housing were missing in the community. Respondents suggested that the most needed forms of housing in Dawson Creek were assisted living facilities (60%), emergency housing / homeless shelters (50%), and co-operative housing (36%).

Figure 47 – Forms of Housing Needed



Respondents were asked if they had any additional comments. Themes from these comments are summarized below. Many comments reiterate the results of the previous questions. Comments that do not have the number of respondents in parentheses are mentioned by one respondent.

- Additional forms of housing are needed seniors needing care (8 respondents) or wanting to downsize, individuals needing assisted or transitional living supports (2 respondents), larger homes for families, singles or couples, young adults, or homeless individuals
- Cost of living is unaffordable (8 respondents), specifically for low- to moderate-income singles or families, seniors, or vulnerable populations, and more government funding should be available
- Homes have been damaged through flooding or erosion and require repairs (3 respondents)
- Dawson Creek should update infrastructure and plumbing to make the community more desirable to live in (2 respondents)
- New buildings should have stricter building codes
- Contractors should build smaller homes that are more affordable
- High taxes and interest rates make costs unaffordable
- Rentals should have rent control and hold renters accountable for damages
- Homes do not have adequate storage space

2.0 Interview and Focus Group Summary

This section summarizes the findings from the stakeholder engagement completed through individual interviews and focus groups. Focus group discussions and the first round of stakeholder interviews were held in August and September 2020. After a low response rate from stakeholders in Fall 2020, a second round of interviews were undertaken in December 2020 and January 2021 to ensure stakeholders across the region were well represented in this study. Interview and focus group questions focused on identifying gaps in housing and housing-related services across the housing continuum. Interviews were completed with staff within neighbouring First Nations, regional elected officials, service providers and housing providers. The questions also sought to uncover the broader community and economic context of housing issues. While questions varied depending on the stakeholder's expertise, they followed three major themes:

- Challenges, barriers and unmet needs in housing and housing-related services
- Potential opportunities
- Potential best practices and strategies to help address housing needs

Stakeholder engagement provides important housing context not captured by statistical information. Each key stakeholder brings important insight and individual perspectives. Some information may be anecdotal or based on personal perspectives. The information in this section should be considered in conjunction with other parts of this report.

Results from the interviews are summarized thematically below. Numbers in parentheses indicate how many interviewees mentioned each statement or topic. In some sections, there was only one interview. In this case, there are no parentheses. Note, these numbers are provided for context, but low numbers do not necessarily indicate that the statement or topic is less relevant. In some cases, one or a few interviewees had specialized knowledge or context that were not provided by others.

2.1 Participants

Representatives from the following organizations were interviewed:

Peace River Regional District		
Name(s)	Organization	Description
First Nations or Indigenous Organizations		
Starr Acko	Doig River First Nation	A First Nations community of the Peace River area, which is signatory of Treaty No. 8. The community is comprised of Dane-zaa traditions and language.
Jim Fast	McLeod Lake Indian Band	A community of the Tse'Khene Nation (People of the Rocks), located near the unincorporated village of McLeod Lake.
Cindy O'Brien, Niki Ghostkeeper	Saulteau First Nation	A First Nations community located in the Peace River area, which is signatory of Treaty No. 8. The community is comprised of the Saulteaux (Anishinabe),

Peace River Regional District		
Name(s)	Organization	Description
		Nehiyaw (Cree) and Mountain Dunne-Za (Beaver) people.
Cliff Calliou	Kelly Lake Cree Nation	The As'in'i'wa'chi Ni'yaw Nation, also known as Kelly Lake Cree Nation (KLCN), is a community of over 800 members, located in the Peace River region.
Service Providers		
Donna Ward, Angela De Smit	Northern Health	An organization that focuses on providing support and services relating to mental health, substance use and elder care.
Jim Collins	Save Our Northern Seniors	An organization that works on extended care for seniors.
Cameron Eggie*	Fort St. John Salvation Army	The Fort St. John branch of the international Christian organization.
Lisa Jewell* (also participated in a stakeholder interview)	Fort St. John Women's Resource Society	A women's resource organization that strives to empower women and girls and people of low income with the tools to improve the quality of their own lives.
Patricia Taylor*	Fort St. John Association for Community Living	A non-profit organization that has contracts with Community Living BC to provide services to adults with developmental disabilities.
Housing Providers		
Liane McNeil and Linda Kennedy	Fort St. John Community Bridge	An organization that provides counselling and housing assistance, including the North Peace Community Housing (a 24-unit complex), the Homeless Prevention Program and the Transition House.
Public Service Agents		
Amber Vieweg* and Kristen Danczak*	Peace River Regional District	The governing body, established in 1987, for the Peace River area that provides regional, sub-regional and local services to residents.

**Focus group participants*

Dawson Creek		
Name	Organization	Description
Service Providers		
Jacqueline Janssen	Networks Ministries	An organization that provides support to people experiencing homelessness

Linda Studley*	Better at Home – South Peace Community Resource Society	A non-profit organization dedicated to meeting the social, educational and personal needs of the community by providing services that develop skills for living.
Arden Smith* (also participated in a stakeholder interview)	Housing and Safety – South Peace Community Resource Society	A non-profit organization dedicated to meeting the social, educational and personal needs of the community by providing services that develop skills for living.
Jodi Cousins*	Axis Family Resources	Provides specialized support services – both residential and non-residential – to children and youth, families and adults throughout many communities in the North and Interior Regions of British Columbia.
Deris Fillier	Dawson Creek Salvation Army	Provides provide food, clothing, network support, and a listening ear to those in need.
Linda Walker	Cut Thumb Glass	Rental property manager.
Laurabel and Michelle	Community Living BC Dawson Creek	Provides housing support services for individuals with disabilities and complex needs such as addiction, mental health, history of trauma, etc.
First Nations or Indigenous Organizations		
April McEwen	Nawican Friendship Centre	A non-profit organization that provides services to Aboriginal People in the Dawson Creek and south Peace River area; designed to encourage, enhance, and promote the traditional values, culture, and well-being of Aboriginal people by strengthening individuals, family, and community.
Jenn Selby-Brown	Dawson Creek Native Housing/Aboriginal Housing Management Association	Supporting Indigenous and Metis individuals who are homeless or at risk persons who face barriers in the community.
Housing Providers		
Marla Reed	Dawson Creek Society for Community Living	Provides services for adults with disabilities and social housing for individuals with disabilities, families, and seniors.

*Focus group participants

Hudson's Hope		
Name	Organization	Description
Service Providers		
Bill Lindsay	Hudson's Hope Health Care and Housing Society	A society providing health care and housing supports.

Hudson's Hope		
Name	Organization	Description
Patti Campbell	Friend's of Hudson's Hope	Provides food bank services, Christmas hampers, elder care services, outreach services, and support for medical travel expenses.
Shellie Howard	Hudson's Hope Library	Local library resource centre.

Chetwynd		
Name	Organization	Description
Service Providers		
Sara Hoehn and Jason Farquharson	Chetwynd Mental Health & Addictions Community Program	Operates under Northern Health – an interprofessional team providing mental health and medical services to the community.

Pouce Coupe		
Name	Organization	Description
Service Providers		
Sukrit Parmar	Pouce Coupe Food Bank	A non-profit organization dedicated to providing free food to people within the Village of Pouce Coupe and rural area.
Cory Lizotte	Pouce Coupe Community Church	Community church.

Electoral Area B		
Name	Organization	Description
Elected Officials		
Karen Goodings	Peace River Regional District Board	The governing body, established in 1987, for the Peace River area that provides regional, sub-regional and local services to residents.
Housing Providers		
Trevor Bolin	Re-Max	A full-service real estate broker that supports much of the PRRD, specifically Fort St. John and Electoral Areas C and B.
Service Providers		
Glen Longley	Prespatou School	A school with approximately 300 students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 with 34 staff members.
Pat Lang	Wonowon Elementary School	An elementary school in Electoral Area B.
Herman Klassen	Prespatou Farmer's Institute	A regional organization that helps farmers be more efficient and effective and services as a liaison between farmers and government to resolve issues.
Melody Braun / Susan Gilmour	Upper Pine School	Elementary and Secondary School in Rose Prairie.

Electoral Area C		
Name	Organization	Description
Elected Officials		
Director Brad Sperling	Peace River Regional District Board	The governing body, established in 1987, for the Peace River area that provides regional, sub-regional and local services to residents.
Service Providers		
Joseph Lang	Fort St. John Association for Community Living	A non-profit organization that has contracts with Community Living BC to provide services to adults with developmental disabilities.
Lisa Jewell	Fort St. John Women's Resource Society	A women's resource organization that strives to empower women and girls and people of low income with the tools to improve the quality of their own lives.

Electoral Area D		
Name	Organization	Description
Elected Officials		
Director Leonard Hiebert	Peace River Regional District Board	The governing body, established in 1987, for the Peace River area that provides regional, sub-regional and local services to residents.
Service Providers		
Judy Seidl and Art	Tomslake Cultural Community Association	The Association operates a local community hall that hosts regular activities, meals, and events.
Ernie Hiller	Swan Lake Enhancement Society	Volunteer group that works to ensure the community is an enjoyable place to live. They organize events such as community clean ups, trail development, and monitoring the lake.
Jennifer Critcher	Tower Lake Community Centre	The Community Centre hosts a variety of community events and private gatherings.
First Nations or Indigenous Organizations		
Norman Calliou, Shannon Dunfield and Barbara Bolli	Kelly Lake Indigenous Coalition	The Kelly Lake Indigenous Coalition was formed to provide leadership and support collaborative efforts to achieve cultural, social, and economic wellbeing on behalf of the community of Kelly Lake.

Electoral Area E		
Name	Organization	Description
Service Provider		
Linda Garland	Moberly Lake Community Association	A registered society made up of Moberly Lake residents and stakeholders.
Elected Officials		

Director Dan Rose	Peace River Regional District Board	The governing body, established in 1987, for the Peace River area that provides regional, sub-regional and local services to residents.
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2.2 Peace River Regional District

A number of participants worked in multiple communities of the PRRD. This section summarizes the engagement findings for the PRRD as a whole or subregions that include more than one project partner community.

2.2.1 First Nations or Indigenous Organizations

Representatives from four First Nations were interviewed: Doig River First Nation, Saulteau First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Kelly Lake Cree Nation. All nations have some housing on-reserve, ranging from 50 to 150 housing units.

- Saulteau First Nation has 150 units, including three tri-plex units, ten Elder units, and many single-detached homes. There are 30 households on the Nation's waitlist.
- Doig River First Nation has 55 units with recent approval to build five tiny homes for Elders and 20 households on its waitlist.
- McLeod Lake Indian band has 56 units and 25 on its waitlist. Almost all units are single-detached dwellings, with one multi-unit building, which has six units. There are about five houses offered off-reserve as well. The band is about 60 homes below the Canadian average for on reserve housing stock.
- Kelly Lake Cree Nation has 36 houses in the community, including 8 rental homes that the Nation is managing through the Westkagen Housing Management. Twenty-two houses are owned by the Nation, and the rest are owned by the community. The Nation is not included in Treaty 8, resulting in exclusion from many funding opportunities.

Challenges / Needs

Off Reserve

Two nations have off-reserve housing units (Doig River First Nation has three units in Fort St. John and McLeod Lake First Nation has five units off-reserve). Interviewees reported that members living off-reserve in PRRD (including Fort St. John and Dawson Creek) often find that rental units are expensive, limited and often poorly maintained (3). Finding affordable rental is difficult, especially when industry is in a strong economic condition and rents are driven up by an influx of workers. Off-reserve community members need affordable rental units that are closer to services. There are also limited services or supports for those living off reserve, including medical services and mental health supports (1). There is a need for supervised or safe homes for members with mental illness (1).

On Reserve

There is a shortage of housing on reserve—all nations have a waitlist of community members who wish to move back to the reserve (5). Elder housing is limited and more single-detached dwellings are needed (1). Multiple interviewees discussed the shortage of land for building new housing (3).

More housing is needed on reserve to allow for off-reserve members to move back (4). Saulteau First Nation has 30 households on the waitlist. Doig River First Nation has about 20 on its waitlist, and McLeod Lake First Nation has

25 on its waitlist. Interviewees also reported that there is a need for more housing diversity on reserve to serve a wide range of household needs, including families, singles, and Elders.

There is very limited funding to build new houses or repair existing ones (3). The application process for funding is time consuming and tedious (2). The cost to repair and maintain existing homes is high (4). One interviewee reported that they go to Fort St. John for all supplies, which increases costs. Funding for repairs is limited, making it difficult to adequately maintain the existing housing stock (3). One nation is currently trying to repair 10-15 houses and replace the roofs (1).

One interviewee discussed the importance of housing that meets the needs of the climate, including the high snow load. The 'cookie cutter' approach to housing does not meet the needs of the community or climate. Many homes that were poorly built need to be replaced altogether (1). This interviewee reported that the Nation lost funding for six houses because the community wanted to build homes that varied from the traditional 'box style' homes typically seen on-reserve. This minimum building code, said the interviewee, is not enough to withstand the harsh climate. It can also be hard to find materials for repairs that are appropriate for the climate.

There is limited infrastructure to support the existing housing (2). Central heating, water provision and road maintenance are key infrastructure challenges (1). Community members have to travel at least 45 minutes to attend school and access shops and services (1). One Nation is hoping for a new Community Hall (1).

Projects / Opportunities

Interviewees identified the following opportunities for addressing housing in the PRRD:

- One community is building tiny homes, while another is building ten timber homes for Elders. Another reported plans to build more single-family homes and units for individuals over the next five years.
- Data gathering and needs assessments (such as this study) were identified as important to addressing housing needs (1).
- Work with PRRD to provide housing (1)
- Provide off-reserve housing in PRRD towns (1)
- Increase investment and interest in the North in general (2)
- Build and maintain strong relationships with municipalities, including Electoral Area C, Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Doig River First Nation has a strong relationship with Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. (1)
- Build more awareness for people with mental health concerns and addictions (1)
- Provide mental health housing that offers a supervised setting, providing independence for tenants (1)

2.2.2 Service Providers, Housing Providers, Public Service Agents

Challenges / Needs

The cyclical nature of local industries impacts the district's housing market. When the industry is strong, more housing is developed, which increases the availability of housing. One of the major challenges the district faces is housing those who have been in the hospital. In Fort St. John, there is a policy where people will not be discharged into the streets. As a result, many folks stay in the hospital for longer than needed, because there isn't proper housing available. This impacts the ability for service providers to provide support to community members.

From the experience of housing providers, housing needs have increased and despite rental availability, many residents still cannot afford market housing. Additionally, single people on Income Assistance cannot afford what is offered.

Interviewees identified the following housing needs:

Supportive Housing

- Mental health supports are needed (2). One interviewee sees many people, particularly men, with mental health issues who are not adequately cared for. People suffering from mental health issues are often turned away from rentals and shelters, due to mental health struggles.
- The default accommodation for people with disabilities is the hospital or long-term care, which is not suitable. People often stay in the hospital for extended periods of time because there isn't the proper housing available. This limits the ability to provide adequate care in hospitals for acute care, resulting in over-capacity in hospitals. It is costly and ineffective to keep folks in the hospital, but there is often nowhere else for them to go (1).
- Despite the recent improvements in disability housing, there is a need for at least 10% of new housing to have rooms for disability. Particularly, there is a need for people with brain injuries, mobility issues, or MS, according to one interview. Individuals who receive disability support are often on restricted budgets which makes it difficult to find appropriate housing (2).
- Housing is needed for young adults (under 19) who need medical care—until they turn 19, they are put into long-term care (1). Youth housing in the larger municipalities would enable youth to attend school.

Senior Housing

- Despite a recent increase in supply, senior housing supply is low (2). The waitlist for senior housing is two to three years.
- Having fixed incomes makes it difficult for many seniors to find appropriate accommodations and as a result there are many who live in sub-standard units (1).
- Dementia friendly housing is needed, as there is none in the area. As a result, people are prematurely placed in long-term care (some live in long-term care for 10-15 years) (1).
- Seniors tend to leave rural areas to move to towns closer to services or back with family, according to one interviewee. These seniors often move into a North Peace Senior Housing Society unit (there is one apartment in Fort St John that caters to seniors). Yet, there are about 80-100 people on the waitlist for units with the North Peace Senior Housing Society. It is important to consider the specific needs of rural seniors (1).
- There is a need to bring Elders from nearby nations closer to medical support (1).

Other Challenges and Needs

- Some service providers face challenges recruiting staff, due partly to housing challenges (1).
- The district needs better transportation connections from the more affordable communities (which are more remote) to the economic centres (1).
- The projects provided by Fort St. John Community Bridge need more maintenance that the organization cannot afford (1).
- Physical housing provision has unsustainably high maintenance costs.
- The lack of low barrier housing is a major concern (2). People need a place no matter their life stage or circumstance.
- There is limited housing choice, and the housing that is available is generally unaffordable (2).
 - Limited affordable housing units for one-person and single-income homes (1). Single people on Income Assistance cannot afford what is available.
- One interviewee discussed the stigma towards rental assistance. The Homeless Prevention Program has been working with rental companies to rebuild the relationship between the companies and renters on Income Assistance (1). Rental companies have become cynical about who they support because of the challenges they have experienced. If potential tenants are applying and are on Income Assistance, rental

companies automatically do a criminal record check. Some of the rental companies have stopped taking people who are on Income Assistance.

- There is a need for supportive housing for individuals and families leaving abusive relationships.
- The temporary workforce creates challenges for determining housing needs.
- There is a need for accessible housing to support individuals with disabilities and allow seniors to age in place.
- It is difficult for seniors living in rural areas to access health care services. Virtual doctor support is becoming more common but can be a challenge for seniors to access and use. There is a need for dedicated doctors to service rural areas and support those aging in place.

Projects

Various housing initiatives exist in the community, and other opportunities are being explored. The following projects were identified in the interviews:

- Mennonite's Elder's Lodge which provides meals and housekeeping for seniors in Prespatou. Service providers are working with BC Housing to develop further initiatives (1).
- Heritage, an assisted living facility, has 24 suites and provides meals and medical care to residents (1).
- According to one interviewee, there is opportunity to provide private assisted living, which could provide more options and availability (1).
- BC Hydro built an apartment in Hudson's Hope for staff and medical workers, who can stay there for free (1).
- BC Housing built a passive apartment building (50 units) which includes an allocation for low income housing (1).
- There are two apartments for medical students who can rent at CMHC rates.
- Northern Health is working on a proposal to build a space for long term/mild dementia, and which community is best suited for that (1)
- Northern Health is exploring opportunities to build and operate senior housing in the PRRD. Private investors are interested in Fort St. John (1).
- Northern Health recently opened a tusher house with four beds (1)
- The Better at Home initiative provides support with house-keeping duties and food provision, servicing 150 people (1).
- Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek provides Northern Health staff with housing.

Opportunities

The following opportunities were discussed in the interviews:

- Collaboration between government, industry, Treaty 8 and the community has the potential to provide improved services and housing across the PRRD. Northern Health is very interested in pursuing partnerships (2).
- Use of hotels for temporary housing (as seen in Victoria) or repurposing hotels into affordable housing units (2).
- It is important to have an overarching plan for the PRRD to identify the core issues and needs (1). PRRD should prepared for future funding announcements from the province. If proposals are ready when funding is announced, PRRD will be better suited to receive the funding (1).
- Provide housing for those leaving the hospital.
- Additional funding is required to support the Homeless Prevention Program (2).
- Pursuit of BC Housing Funding for services (2).

- There are many unused buildings and undeveloped sites in rural areas and municipalities that could be repurposed for housing projects or accommodate support services.
- Encourage development by providing tax incentives or property tax extensions.
- PRRD should implement a Development Service Bylaw.
- Review development application procedures to understand any road blocks to development.
- Collaborative conversations need to take place between emergency services, District Officials, and healthcare workers to understand need and possible housing solutions.
- Establish a database of senior accommodations and support services across the region.

2.3 Dawson Creek

This section summarizes engagement results from interviews and a focus group. Participants included service providers, housing providers, and First Nations or Indigenous organizations.

2.3.1 Challenges / Needs

The interviewees identified the need to provide more housing options (including low barrier shelters, affordable housing, supportive housing and social housing) that are well-maintained and are managed by people who treat tenants with respect (2).

Homelessness and Shelters

In the past five years, homelessness has become an increasing concern (2). More people are accessing services, and homelessness is more visible on the street. Service providers, such as Networks Ministries, struggle to continually support those in need (1). There are limited shelter options in Dawson Creek and many individuals are staying in shelters over the long term because they have no where else to go. The shelter for men in Dawson Creek is high barrier and in poor condition (1). If people have been using alcohol or drugs, they won't be accepted at the Dawson Creek shelter and must go to Fort St. John (1). People need safe places to sleep in the winter. Some people sleep in their vehicles in the winter, but this is a safety concern, and has led to casualties (1).

Housing for Women

There is a need for more housing for vulnerable women, including those leaving abusive relationships (2). In Dawson Creek, the women's emergency shelter at the transition house is only for women fleeing violence. Shelters and services are also needed for women who are not fleeing abuse (1). Due to the lack of services in Dawson Creek, women in need often go to the shelter in Fort St. John (1).

Housing for Seniors

Assisted living options are needed in Dawson Creek (2), particularly for people with specific needs such as dementia (1). Financial support would also be useful for seniors—many seniors struggle to afford the cost of living (2). It can be difficult for some seniors to find accessible housing. Many seniors in Dawson Creek move to Fort St. John to be closer to health care services, but an increase in assisted living options could allow seniors to age in place (2).

Housing for Youth

Youth homelessness is a concern in Dawson Creek—some youth (15-18 years old) allegedly live in the forests near the community (1). Stakeholders indicated that there are challenges with youth aging out of the government support system and having limited choices of where to live once they are independent. The Nawican Friendship Centre indicated that there are many Indigenous youth that live in Dawson Creek that have no place to go, indicating a need for additional supportive housing options for youth.

Landlords

Many rental companies do not treat tenants well. They have a reputation of avoiding maintenance or not being responsive (1). One interviewee said that landlords share information about tenants with each other, making it hard for a tenant to have a second chance with a new landlord. If a tenant has mental health issues or poor behaviour, the landlords discuss the behaviour, making it very difficult for the tenant to find another suitable place to live (1).

Affordable Housing

Interviewees indicated affordability issues especially in single parent families due to high rents and utility costs. Where there are issues with finding affordable housing, stakeholders indicated that many people end up living in substandard housing. The Nawican Friendship Centre indicated that it is difficult for the Indigenous population to find affordable accommodations off-reserve, especially for those on a fixed income. Rental rates are always increasing, but the rent portion of income assistance hasn't changed which makes it even more difficult to afford housing. Stakeholders identified a need for affordable housing units where rent is geared to income.

Supportive Housing

There are very few housing options in the North for individuals who face barriers to being housed such as having high needs, mobility issues, behavioural challenges or experiencing addictions (2). There is a need for supports to be attached to housing and for people to be sensitive to high need and vulnerable tenants. In addition to securing appropriate housing, stakeholders indicated a need to help people retain their current housing. Interviewees also identified that there is a lack of communication among supportive housing and service providers which results in overlapping services and fights for funding. Interviewees suggested establishing a full list of supportive resources including agencies, funds and services available in the community. Housing providers and supportive agencies need to work together collaboratively to provide effective services.

Transit system

The bus system was underused and experienced budget cuts. The lack of transit options makes it very difficult to access services, increasing the vulnerability of marginalized people. For people on social assistance, financial support would be needed for the bus pass (1).

Building Regulations

One interviewee discussed the need for clearer building regulations. The complexity of the current regulations can cause confusion for those looking to develop or renovate. Developers noted that due to development cost charges and an increase in construction material costs it has become more difficult to build affordable units in Dawson Creek.

2.3.2 Projects / Opportunities

The following opportunities and projects were identified in the interviews:

- Networks Ministries recently purchased a former school (40,000 square feet) which will be repurposed to provide multiple services (including a food bank, support groups and social work services). The building will include spaces for events and a makerspace for the community. This space will help create opportunities for people leaving challenging lifestyles to have opportunities to build communities (1).
- Bultrey's House is a positive addition to the community, providing support to the emergency shelter.
- Funded by BC Housing, a 32-unit building will start construction in the fall. This project will support those who have trouble maintaining housing (1).
- The Heritage Heights housing complex is an excellent model for 55+ housing (1).
- There is undeveloped land in Dawson Creek, providing the opportunity to develop more housing in these areas (1).



Appendix C

Population Projections Methodology and Limitations

Appendix C – Population Projection Methodology

The population projections presented in this report are based on BC Stats population projections developed for the PRRD and the municipalities therein. These population projections are based in large part on historical fertility, mortality, and migration for the PRRD, adjusted where possible to take into account expected changes in the PRRD.

The household projections presented within this report are the result of combining the population projections presented above with headship rates by age of primary household maintainer, household family type, and household tenure. These headship rates describe the proportion of individuals within a given age group who “head” a household of a given type (defined by a combination of maintainer age, household family type, and tenure). In general, for simplicity, and due to the relatively consistent headship rates observed over time, the headship rates in Dawson Creek are assumed to remain constant (by age group) over time.

The household projections are arrived at by combining the population projections and the headship rates in the following way: if population projections indicated there would be an additional 100 individuals between the ages of 45 and 54, and the headship rates in 2016 suggested that 20% of individuals aged between 45 and 54 led couple households without children, and owned their homes, then we would project that there would be an additional 20 couple households without children where the occupants owned their home, and the where the head of the home was between the ages 45 and 54.

Simplistic projections of the number of units by bedroom required to house these households are based on an assumed distribution of bedroom-needs by household family type.

Limitations

The population projections presented here are limited by the fact that they are, by necessity, based on historical patterns of growth. Implicitly, these population projections assume that conditions will generally remain the same.¹⁹ Of course, this may not be the case – it may be that economic factors will change the pattern of growth, that preferences will change substantially, or even that the supply of housing will lead to changes in the factors that make up population change.

The household projections are limited inherently by their reliance on their major inputs: in so far as population projections are limited, so too are the household projections as they rely on these.

Similarly, the household projections are limited by the assumption of constant headship rates over time.

In general, the direction of the projections presents a conceptual limitation. While “population demand” (interest in moving to, or staying in Dawson Creek) certainly will impact the formation of households and the development of housing in Dawson Creek, in an attractive and growing region, the provision of housing may determine

¹⁹ Or will continue to change in the same manner as they have been changing in the past.

household and population growth. In summary, the actual provision of housing over time may invalidate the population and household projections presented within this report.

Due to Dawson Creeks' relatively small population (for the purposes of projections) detailed household projections by household family type, tenure, and age of primary maintainer are not presented in this report. The smaller community size leads to poorer data quality for the necessary inputs.