

# Bamfield Housing Needs Report

2021



**ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT  
REGIONAL DISTRICT**

The Bamfield Housing Needs Report (HNR) was developed by a project team of staff from the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Vancouver Island University's Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute, and RFT Planning and GIS Services.

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### **Contributors**

The Bamfield HNR was led by Amy Anaka, Planner for the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) with the support of Vancouver Island University's Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI), and RFT Planning and GIS Services. A special thanks to Master of Community Planning students, Laura Clark and Annie Girdler who significantly contributed to the development of this project, and to Rebecca Taylor, RFT Planning and GIS Services for her significant work with the data. The ACRD and MABRRI would also like to acknowledge the participation and support of many community members and stakeholders some of which include:

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations
- Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission
- ACRD Regional Board
- Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre
- Bamfield Chamber of Commerce
- Bamfield Community Affairs Society
- The New Bamfielder



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# Table of Contents

## List of Figures & List of Tables

Land Acknowledgement.....	1
Executive Summary.....	1
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Project Overview.....	6
1.2 Study Process.....	7
1.3 Report Organization.....	8
1.4 Housing Continuum.....	9
1.5 Data Limitations.....	11
<b>2 Demographic Profile.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Demographic Trends.....	12
<b>3 Economic Profile.....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Income & Economy.....	19
3.2 Household Income.....	19
3.3 Employment & Labour Force.....	20
<b>4 Housing Profile.....</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Housing Trends.....	22
4.2 Housing Stock.....	22
4.3 Homeownership Market.....	25
4.4 Rental Housing Stock & Short Term Rentals.....	26
4.5 Housing Indicators & Core Housing Need.....	27

<b>5 Housing Need &amp; Community Growth.....</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1 Community Growth Overview.....	29
5.2 Population Growth.....	31
5.3 Household Projections.....	32
5.4 Housing Need.....	32
<b>6 What we Heard.....</b>	<b>33</b>
6.1 Overview.....	33
6.2 Housing Issues & Challenges.....	35
<b>7 Recommendations &amp; Next Steps.....</b>	<b>38</b>
7.1 Moving Forward.....	38
<b>8 Sources Cited.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Appendix A: Provincial Summary Form.....	42
Appendix B: Housing Needs Survey Summary.....	47
Appendix C: Housing Community Forum Summary.....	60
Appendix D: ACRD & BC Snapshot.....	64
Appendix E: Homeless Count 2018 Port Alberni.....	65



# List of Figures

Figure 1: Housing Continuum Model.....	9
Figure 2: The Housing Wheelhouse.....	10
Figure 3: Electoral Area A & Bamfield (unincorporated area) Population, 2006-2016.....	13
Figure 4: Median Age, Electoral Area A, ACRD & BC, 2006-2016.....	14
Figure 5: Population by Age Group, Electoral Area A, 2006-2016.....	15
Figure 6: Population by Age Group, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016.....	15
Figure 7: Private Households by Size, Electoral Area A, 2006-2016.....	16
Figure 8: Private Households by Size, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016.....	16
Figure 9: Private Households by Tenure, Electoral Area A, 2016.....	17
Figure 10: 1-year Mobility, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2015-16.....	17
Figure 11: Median Household Income, Electoral Area A, ACRD & BC, 2006 & 2016.....	19
Figure 12: Commuting Destination, Electoral Area A, 2016.....	20
Figure 13: Participation Rates, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2006-2016.....	21
Figure 14: Unemployment Rates, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2006-2016.....	21
Figure 15: Dwellings by Structure Type, Electoral Area A, 2016.....	23
Figure 16: Dwellings by Period of Construction, Electoral Area A & ACRD.....	23
Figure 17: Dwellings by Number of Bedrooms, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016.....	24
Figure 18: Average Values for Residential Units, Electoral Area A, 2006-2020.....	25
Figure 19: Average Assessed Value for Residential Units by Structure Type, Electoral Area A, 2016-2020.....	26
Figure 20: Housing Indicators by Tenure, ACRD, 2016.....	28
Figure 21: Residential Units Created, Electoral Area A, 2010-2020.....	30
Figure 22: Projected Population, Electoral Area A, 2006-2026.....	31
Figure 23: Projected Age Distribution, Electoral Area A, 2016 & 2026.....	31
Figure 24: Projected Households, Electoral Area A, 2006-2026.....	32

# List of Tables

Table 1: Electoral Area A Assessed Values - Average by Unit Size.....	9
Table 2: Electoral Area A Housing Gap, average household size of 1.6 persons.....	32





# Land Acknowledgement

The unincorporated area of Bamfield is located within the traditional unceded territories of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, neighbouring the Uchucklesaht Tribe Government, and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ First Nation of the Nuuča̱aḥuḥ (Nuu-chah-nulth Nations), which consists of 14 nations located on western Vancouver Island. This land acknowledgement intends to inform readers of the colonial history of Vancouver Island and reminds all of us that the lands and waters are a precious resource that hosts us and sustains our wellbeing.

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## Executive Summary

Safe, affordable, and inclusive housing is an important component of a complete community and contributes to societal and individual well-being. Unfortunately, housing in these formats is becoming harder to find, especially for those most vulnerable. The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) and community of Bamfield have undertaken a Housing Needs Assessment which forms this Housing Needs Report (HNR), funded by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Housing Needs Report Program which supports local governments in undertaking this work. The work strengthens local understanding of what kinds of housing are needed in the region and informs local plans, policies, and development decisions.

The ACRD HNR project includes the development of 10 separate HNRs, and an overall regional summary report for the six ACRD Electoral Areas, and four Maa-nulth Treaty First Nations: Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government, Uchucklesaht Tribe Government, and Toquaht Nation. The development of this HNR was completed through quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, a number of community engagement initiatives such as an online survey (where we heard from almost half of the population of Bamfield), a number of focus group meetings with community members, and a meeting with the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission. Data analysis and community input revealed a number of key data findings and housing issues that are included throughout this HNR.

This HNR identifies what kind of housing is most needed in Bamfield over the next five years, to ensure that local plans, policies, and development decisions can reflect these needs. The upcoming Bamfield Official Community Plan update and current ACRD Zoning Bylaw update are examples of important documents with policies that will be informed by the results of the HNR.

The following five strategies have been proposed to address the housing gaps anticipated for the next five years and beyond in Bamfield:

- Strategy 1: Strengthen policies and regulations to remove barriers to housing and prioritize needed housing types
- Strategy 2: Increase grassroots data collection, and communicate housing needs and success stories
- Strategy 3: Develop and strengthen partnerships and coordinate collaboration
- Strategy 4: Create a housing strategy and action plan
- Strategy 5: Complete ongoing monitoring of housing supply and demand

## Purpose

Housing Needs Reports (HNR) are a way for communities to better understand their current and future housing demands. They help identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information on local demographics, economics, housing stock, and other important factors. A HNR is critical to developing a housing strategy or action plan but is not intended to provide policy direction. This assessment is a tool through which the ACRD, member municipalities, First Nations, partners, agencies, and other stakeholders can begin to meet housing goals and develop policies and actions that address local conditions.

### *HNR Goals*



The goals of the HNR include:

1. **Clarify the problem** – what are the current and projected housing needs?
2. **Identify focus areas/housing themes** – what needs are the most pressing in participating communities and which population groups are finding accessing housing to be the most difficult?
3. **Inform regional action** – a regional housing needs assessment and report gives municipalities, the regional district, the province, First Nations, and community partners the same base from which to work to address housing.

## Requirements

### *Data Collection*

The Province requires local governments to collect approximately 50 distinct kinds of data through a HNR, including current and projected population, household income, significant economic sectors, and currently available and anticipated housing units. Key data sources include a provided custom data set from Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), BC Assessment, and BC Stats.

### *Data Reporting*

HNRs are required to report on the following data:

1. Housing units required currently and over the next five years.
2. Number of households in core housing need.
3. Statements about key areas of local need.

## Community Engagement

BC HNRs are primarily focused on the collection and analysis of statistical data on housing needs. However, stakeholder and community input is important to fill gaps not captured by statistical data (Government of British Columbia). To address these gaps, engagement opportunities were provided through a community housing needs survey, online community forum sessions, meeting with the Bamfield Planning Advisory Commission, as well as many conversations with various community members and stakeholders.

### *Engagement Findings*

The main themes from the community engagement initiatives were as follows, and are expanded on throughout the HNR:

1. Short term rentals and staff housing
2. Long term rentals
3. Seasonal dwellings
4. Infrastructure upgrades
5. Vacant homes
6. Population decline
7. Unique community feel
8. Need for collaboration and partnerships

### *Key Survey Findings*

- 111 respondents, representing almost half (46%) of the population
- 69% of respondents were owners (74 respondents), and 27% were renters (29 respondents)
- 64% of respondents' structure is a single detached house, 7% self-contained unit in a single-family dwelling, and 6% self-contained unit outside a single-family dwelling
- Bedrooms in residence: 37% 2 bedroom, 27% 3 bedroom, 10% 1 bedroom
- 78% of respondents prefer to live in a single detached house, 7% in a self-contained unit in a single-family dwelling
- 50% of respondents plan to live in Bamfield in their current housing for 10 or more years, 23% unsure
- 16% of respondents are living in Bamfield to support a commercial operation or business



Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre

## Key Data Findings

- Bamfield is projected to have a population of approximately 267 and 164 households by 2026, given an annual growth rate of 0.3%.
- Over half (63%) of the population of Electoral Area A are those between 50 and 84 years of age.
  - 50 to 64 year old comprise 38% of the population, while (25%) are between 65 to 84 years.
  - The number of seniors (65 years and older) is expected to continue to increase.
- It is projected that 16 new dwellings will need to be built by 2026 to accommodate the projected population increase, assuming that the average household size stays at 1.6 persons.
  - Note, the projected additional dwellings required are based on the BC Stats Population Projections from the Census Canada Profiles in 2006, 2011 and 2016 and that this number may vary based on market trends and development conditions in the community over the next five years.

## Key Housing Issues

Overall, several key housing issues were identified throughout the housing needs assessment and community engagement, including the need for:

### ***Actions to improve housing stock***

- the maintenance and condition of the housing, mobile home parks, and market rental stock.
- the development of subsidized housing for single adults, families, and Indigenous residents.
- more eco-friendly and energy-efficient housing options.

### ***Actions to improve the housing for the ageing population***

- accessible housing options for seniors and residents with disabilities.
- investments in assisted living and complex care housing to support an ageing population.

### ***Actions to improve and diversify the housing stock to attract entrepreneurs, researchers, professionals, and the next-generation workforce***

- more investments in affordable market rentals and homes.
- development of high-quality rentals and homes to attract the next generation workforce and professionals.
- development of family-friendly housing environments.
- diversity of housing options that reflect the rural and outdoor lifestyle.

### ***Actions to improve long term population decline***

- investments in education to meet the needs of growing families moving to Bamfield.
- development of accessible and affordable housing.
- investments in public amenities.
- improving access and road conditions.

### ***Actions to improve short term rentals and staff accommodations***

- collaborations between developers and local businesses to accommodate individuals looking to relocate for studies, research and work purposes.
- more affordable short term rentals to meet the demand of seasonal work.

## Building Capacity to Move Forward

As a community works to pursue community development initiatives, there are important capacity issues that may need to be considered to support moving housing initiatives forward (BC Rental Housing Coalition, 2015), which include:

### *Building relationships and networks*

- an interagency group to bring economic and social stakeholders together to monitor emerging community and economic development opportunities.
- stronger relationships with landlords.
- stronger relationships with BC Housing and the Residential Tenancy Branch.
- efforts to broadly promote and deliver information workshops on local, provincial, and federal government incentives and programs to support housing renovations and investments.

### *Building stakeholder capacity and increasing housing quality*

- review of property maintenance / unsightly premise bylaws.
- incentives through tax exemptions and grants to develop more accessible housing and rental units.
- recruitment and training incentives for a building inspector.
- expanding the housing coordinator role to support non-profits pursuing non-market housing projects, and help residents access programs or funds to improve their housing conditions.

### *Infrastructure improvements*

- partnerships to explore the use of under-utilized spaces in the community.
- service and land use planning work to ensure the community is positioned to pursue future housing investments.

## COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the economy through widespread layoffs and reduced incomes. The full extent of the impacts may not be understood for years to come. The Bamfield HNR was developed in the early months of 2021, which resulted in all engagement activities being completed virtually.

At this time, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2020) identified the following preliminary areas of concern for the housing system in BC:

1. Some housing providers were not accepting new applications and there were reports that vacant units were not being filled as building managers worked to limit the spread of the virus.
2. Local stakeholders are concerned that there may be an increase in the number of individuals and families that are facing or at risk of homelessness when financial support from the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) program ends.
3. The BC government has introduced a temporary rent supplement to aid renters and landlords. Some jurisdictions are seeing decreases in rental costs. It is not clear yet if rental costs will remain lower or will return to pre-pandemic levels once the economy has reopened.
4. Mortgage deferrals through CMHC and private lenders offered relief for homeowners who lost their jobs. There are concerns that once mortgage deferrals end after six months, that there may be an increase in the number of homeowners struggling to afford their mortgage.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project Overview

Bamfield is striving to ensure that the community has an adequate supply of high-quality housing and that the housing stock includes options that meet the current and future needs of residents. The ACRD and local community is particularly interested in ensuring that the housing stock includes suitable options that consider: the full range of incomes in the community, people at different ages and stages of life, worker and workforce mobility, and the long term costs of maintaining the local government services and infrastructure.

This study was undertaken by the ACRD and MABRRI to collect and analyze data and provide information and knowledge that can inform decisions necessary to develop a robust and diverse housing supply that:

- meets the current and future needs and provides options for the full range of Bamfield residents, property owners and the entire community.
- aligns with economic growth and diversification opportunities.

This housing needs assessment will not only support local government and community initiatives, such as Official Community Plan updates, but will also be important to meet provincial legislative requirements. In April 2019, the Province of British Columbia adopted new legislation that requires all local governments to complete Housing Needs Reports by April 2022 and update them every five years thereafter. As these assessments and reports are developed and refined, it is anticipated that the information will become increasingly useful for individuals, organizations, and communities.

**"Housing needs reports are a way for communities to better understand their current and future housing needs. These reports can help identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information about local demographics, economics, housing stock, and other factors. A housing needs report is critical to developing a housing strategy or action plan."**

Source: Province of BC Housing Needs Reports Overview

Together, BC legislation and regulations specify HNR requirements for local governments. These requirements include:

- Collecting information to identify current and projected housing needs;
- Using that information to prepare and publish an online housing needs report which shows current and projected housing needs for at least the next five years;
- Considering the most recently collected information and housing needs report when amending official community plans and regional growth strategies.

The Bamfield HNR fulfills this legislative requirement and provides information on housing needs, including an estimate of the number, type, and to ensure adequate, affordable, and suitable housing in both the market and non-market sectors. It also articulates the long term housing needs in terms of pricing, location, tenure and in accordance with household types and various social/age groups (Province of BC).






The HNR also aims to:

- Build a positive, informed public attitude to various forms of affordable housing that are vital to the community's future growth and social well-being.
- Maintain diverse housing choices to enable ageing in place.
- Distribute special needs housing strategically throughout the community for a harmonious neighbourhood housing mix, affordability of housing units required to address existing demand, and future growth over the next five years.

This report is intended to be used by the community and the ACRD as well as other community stakeholders, in the planning and provision of housing, including informing local plans, policies, and development decisions. As a public document, the HNR is also intended to provide information to local housing stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the local context and support decision-making around housing.

## 1.2 Study Process

This report was completed between November 2020 and July 2021, and the phases are outlined below.

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	PHASE 5
 <p>PROJECT INITIATION &amp; BACKGROUND RESEARCH</p>	 <p>PUBLIC ONLINE SURVEY</p>	 <p>COMMUNITY FORUM &amp; STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p>	 <p>DATA COLLECTION &amp; ANALYSIS</p>	 <p>DRAFT &amp; FINAL REPORT</p>
Review community plans, policies & other studies.	Community survey & analysis.	Community & stakeholder forums, data collection, transcription & analysis.	Collection & summary of data required under the Housing Needs Report Legislation.	Compilation of all findings, final needs summary & summary needs form.

## 1.3 Report Organization

The Bamfield HNR is organized into the following sections.

### ***Section 2. Demographic Profile***

An overview of the demographic profile of Bamfield. This section is primarily based on census data (2006, 2011, and 2016). The purpose of this section is to provide context for later sections of the report, and to place Bamfield's housing system within a broader understanding of demographic trends.

### ***Section 3. Economic Profile***

An overview of the economic profile of Bamfield. This section is primarily based on census data (2006, 2011, and 2016) and provincial BC Statistics. The purpose of this section is to provide context for later sections of the report, and to place Bamfield's housing system within a broader understanding of economic trends. Unfortunately, low population resulted in limited income data available to complete this section.

### ***Section 4. Housing Profile***

A summary of available quantitative data on Bamfield's housing profile. This section includes information about the number, type, and size of dwellings in Bamfield; homeownership market; rental housing stock; short term rentals; housing indicators; and core housing needs. The purpose of this section is to provide the ACRD, public, and housing stakeholders in the community a full picture of the current state of Bamfield's housing system, based on the information that is available. Along with information from community and stakeholder engagement, the information in this section is used to better understand housing needs.

### ***Section 5. Housing Need and Community Growth***

A summary of projections of population, households, and housing units for Bamfield for the next five years (as required by the *Local Government Act*) and until 2041. The projections are based on 2016 Census population data and BC Statistics population projections. The purpose of this data is to estimate the number of housing units needed, by size, for the next five years.

### ***Section 6. What we Heard***

A summary of findings from the community survey, online community forums, and online engagement with the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission. The purpose of this section is to supplement the quantitative data collection and analysis and to provide insight into housing needs and trends not captured by statistical data. The findings of this section are used together with the findings of Section 2 to 4 to determine housing needs in Bamfield.

### ***Section 7. Recommendations and Next Steps***

This section summarizes the findings of this assessment and suggests a way forward with recommendations to benefit the community of Bamfield.

## 1.4 Housing Continuum

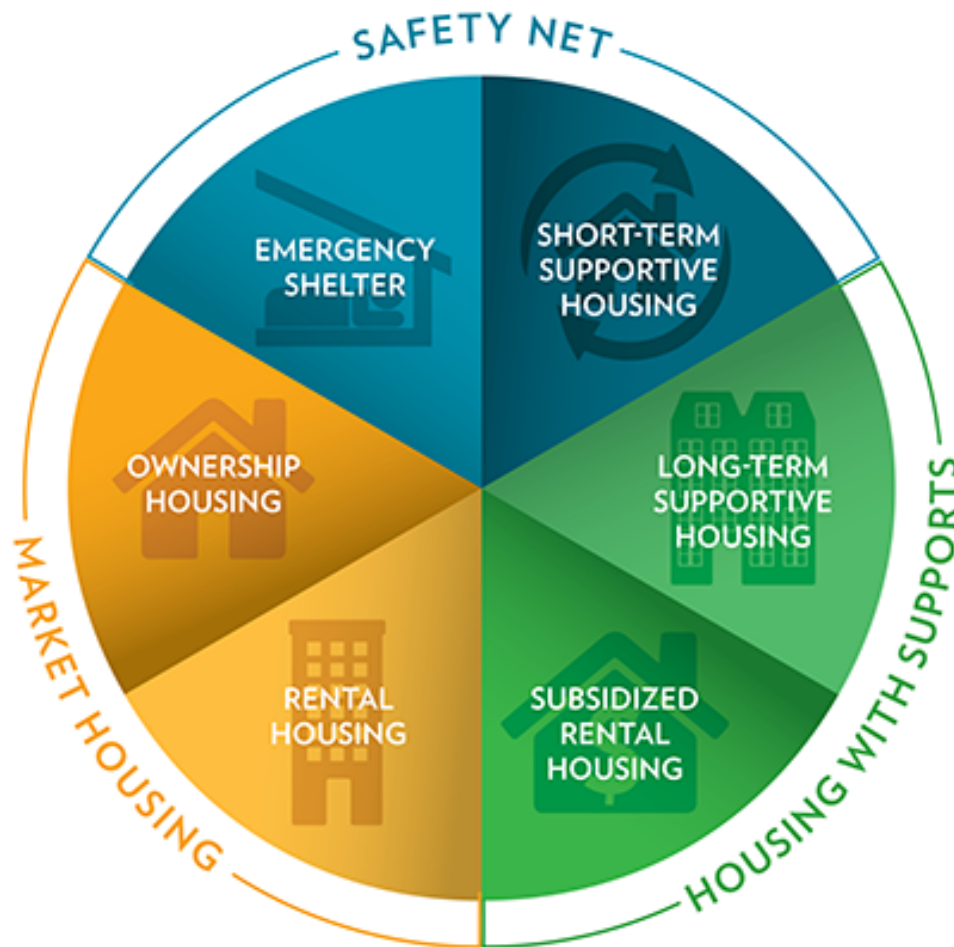
Throughout this HNR, housing needs are often categorized by tenure or the financial arrangements under which an individual or group of individuals in a partnership has the right to live in their home. The most common types of tenure are rental and ownership, but there are many different tenure forms or financial relationships that individuals can have with their homes. These relationships are often organized along the housing continuum as shown in Figure 1. Used as an international model, the continuum typically displays housing as a linear development from homelessness or housing need to homeownership (CMHC, 2018). For many people, housing needs may change as we move through different stages of our lives. The traditional housing continuum model assumes that people will start somewhere on the axis and then move from left to right, with homeownership as the ultimate goal and marker of “success”. While still a useful tool for visualizing the many available housing options, many communities are experimenting with alternative housing frameworks that can account for different cultures, lifestyles, and economic realities.



**Figure 1: Housing Continuum Model**

Source: CMHC

For a variety of reasons, changes to housing needs can occur in different directions along the continuum and many families and individuals may not have the option to choose homeownership as their ultimate goal. If an economic hardship hits your family and you need to move from ownership to rental, you have not failed; rather, your needs have changed. Similarly, if you choose to rent rather than own so you can live closer to work, you are no less successful. The housing continuum promotes a false narrative that moving from left to right, towards a market-oriented relationship to housing is the correct way to navigate the housing system (The Housing Wheelhouse, City of Kelowna, 2017). One of the more innovative alternatives to the continuum model that re-frames housing relationships has been recently adopted in BC. The Housing Wheelhouse as shown in Figure 2, consciously repositions homeownership from the end of the spectrum to just one outcome among three equal outcomes.



**Figure 2: The Housing Wheelhouse**

Source: CMHC

The goal of the transition to an alternative model was to encourage decision-makers, housing providers, developers and residents to understand that all tenures of housing are vital components to creating and maintaining a healthy, sustainable and adaptable housing system. No one level of housing is greater or more important than another.

Through this Bamfield HNR, there is an opportunity to use the information and knowledge gained through the process, to similarly re-frame conversations around housing. The Wheelhouse is a tool that can be used to collectively envision and build a housing system that includes all forms of housing, rather than focusing solely on homeownership (BC Healthy Communities Society, 2019).



## 1.5 Data Limitations

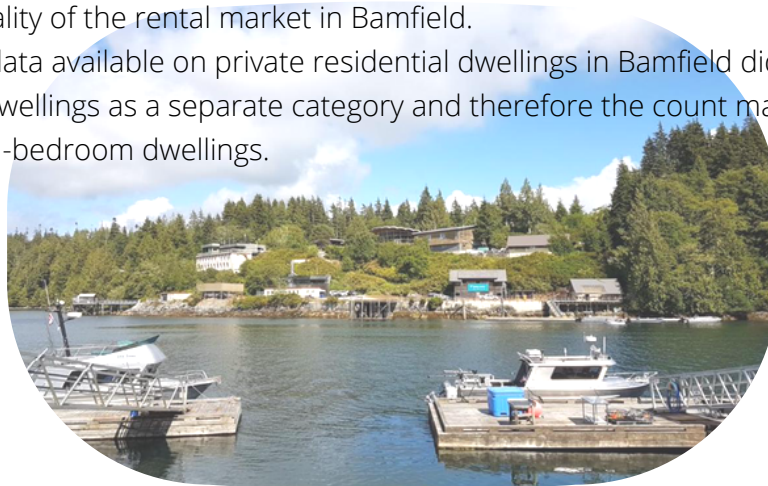
This HNR contains quantitative data from Statistic Canada for 2006, 2011, and 2016 Censuses, BC Statistics, BC Assessment, the ACRD, and Bamfield community. Much of this data was accessed through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing datasets prepared for communities to complete the Housing Needs Reports in BC.

In short, this assessment is subject to external influences beyond the Local Governments' control or ability to foresee, so it is suggested that the results be used as a guide to inform future planning and decision-making, rather than a definitive record of community conditions and housing needs.

### **Limitations**

Although the report aims to maintain consistency in the data it shares and analyzes, there are some notable considerations to keep in mind:

1. All HNR Census data is rounded and therefore might not be exact.
2. Bamfield (unincorporated area) data was only available in the Censuses, not the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's custom HNR dataset. Therefore all data used to compare Bamfield to Electoral Area A was taken from the Censuses (2006, 2011, and 2016) for consistency.
3. The most current Census population data is five years old (2016), and 2021 Census population data will not be available until February 2022.
4. Data on core housing needs, extreme core housing needs, and household income were not available for Bamfield.
5. The 2011 Census is considered less reliable due to the voluntary nature of the 2011 National Household Survey. This may explain why more of the data for 2011 was suppressed compared to the 2006 Census.
6. Given the low population of Bamfield, rental vacancy rates were not available. However, some high-level insight into the rental market was gathered through community engagement initiatives.
7. One key piece of data that was missing was seasonal measures on short term rentals in Bamfield. This data would be considered valuable in providing a holistic picture of the volatility and seasonality of the rental market in Bamfield.
8. Lastly, the data available on private residential dwellings in Bamfield did not have 0 bedrooms "bachelor" dwellings as a separate category and therefore the count may be inaccurate for the number of 1-bedroom dwellings.



Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, housing & Inlet

## 2 Demographic Profile

### 2.1 Demographic Trends

Housing is intertwined with the demographics of a community. Trends in population growth, ageing, and household formation will have a significant impact on the type of housing that is needed in the community and what gets built (Lindh & Malmberg, 2008). Understanding the past, current, and future demographics of a community is crucial to understanding its housing needs. Ages and stages of life are directly related to the types of housing that is needed. This section summarizes the demographic context of Bamfield, using data from 2006, 2011, and 2016 Statistic Canada's Census Profiles where possible, and supplemented by data derived from the public survey and community forums.

#### **About Bamfield**

Bamfield is a small coastal community tucked away in the magnificent Pacific Rim National Park on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Bamfield and Anacla straddle the Cape Beale headlands which are on the south shore of Barkley Sound. Many of Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Citizens reside in and around the village of Anacla. The community of Bamfield is divided by the Bamfield Inlet. West Bamfield (located on Mills Peninsula) is only accessible by boat. The Bamfield boardwalk connects most of the homes, businesses, and docks on the west side. An unpaved logging road connects East Bamfield to the City of Port Alberni. East Bamfield contains most of the commercial businesses and community amenities. (Bamfield OCP, 2014).

Bamfield is located 89 km southwest of Port Alberni and 123 km northwest of Lake Cowichan. It is reached from either of two directions, both of which require several hours of driving on maintained gravel logging roads. You can drive to Bamfield on a paved highway via Highway 4 from the east as far as Port Alberni, and thereafter on gravel roads south of Port Alberni to Bamfield; or along the route west of Lake Cowichan via Nitinat Lake. The M.V. Lady Rose also provides passenger ferry service along the Alberni Inlet from Port Alberni to Bamfield on the Frances Barkley.

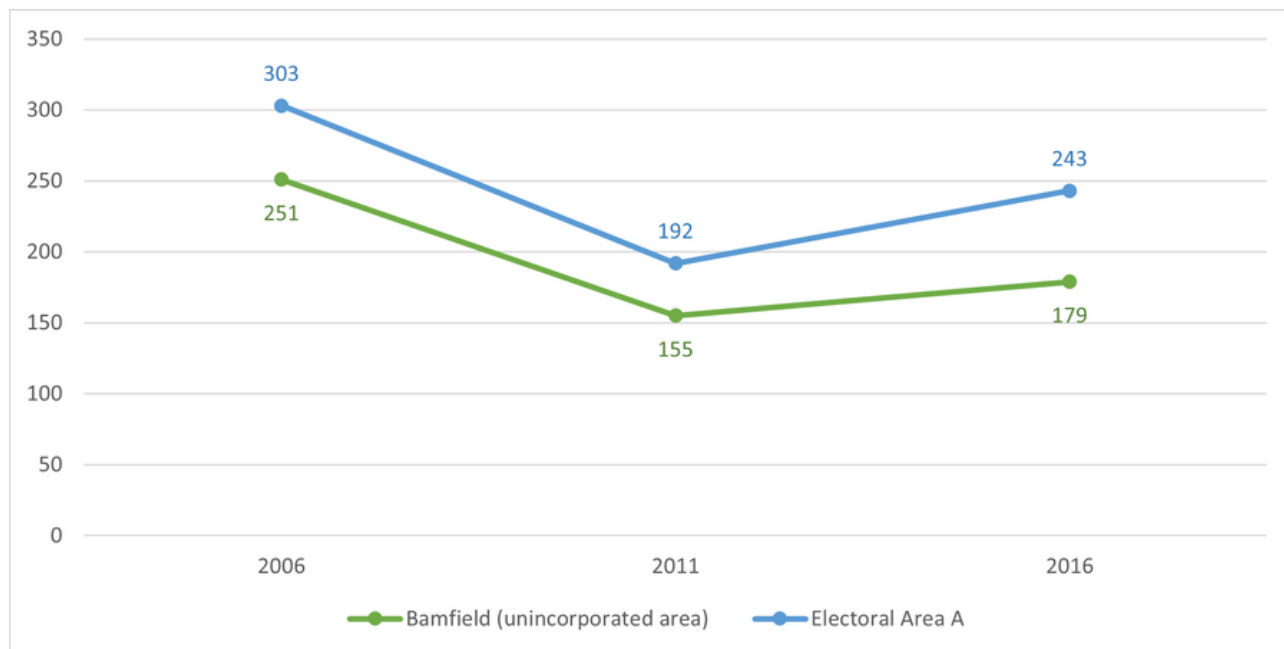


View from Brady's Beach, West Bamfield

## Population

Over the past three census periods, the population of Bamfield has experienced fluctuations, which is similar to the entire ACRD in terms of limited population growth. The community engagement revealed that the population of Bamfield is being impacted by housing issues such as affordability and lack of housing. The projections for the ACRD, provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, were used to estimate Bamfield's potential future projections.

**Figure 3: Electoral Area A & Bamfield (unincorporated area) Population, 2006-2016**



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

Figure 3 shows the population change for Electoral Area A and the unincorporated area of Bamfield between 2006 and 2016. The population of the ACRD grew by 0.3% during this time, although it did decrease slightly between 2011 and 2016.



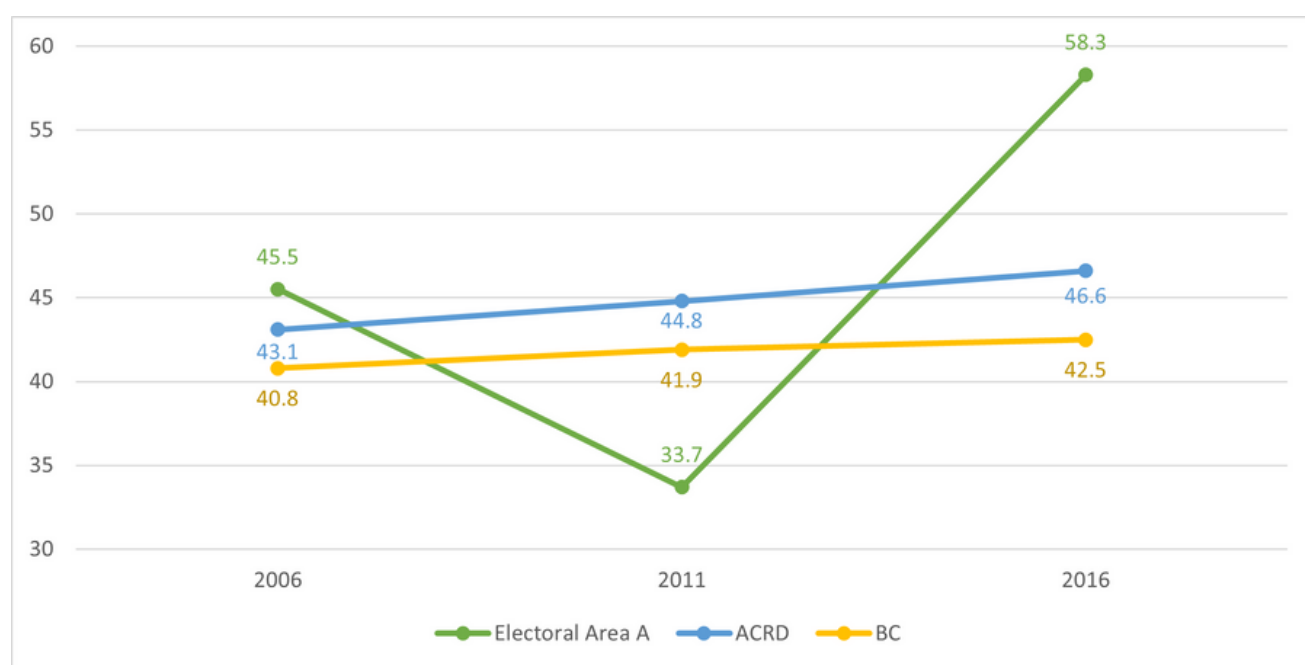
Credit: National Council on Ageing (ncoa.org)

## Age Distribution

The overall median age for Electoral Area A is 58.3, which is higher than the rest of the ACRD, where the median age is 46.6. Due to the small population size of Electoral Area A, small changes in the population have a large effect on factors such as median age. This is highlighted in Figure 2, where the median age fluctuated by more than 20 years of age in only five years.

A question posed during community engagement asked residents what may cause them to move. Bamfield residents were adamant that it would take a big change for them to relocate. Many of the Bamfield residents have lived here for many years and intend on staying for the rest of their lives, which is reflective in the higher median age in 2016, compared to the ACRD and BC. It is a community where many purposefully retire for the small and remote community lifestyle.

**Figure 4: Median Age, Electoral Area A, ACRD & BC, 2006-2016**

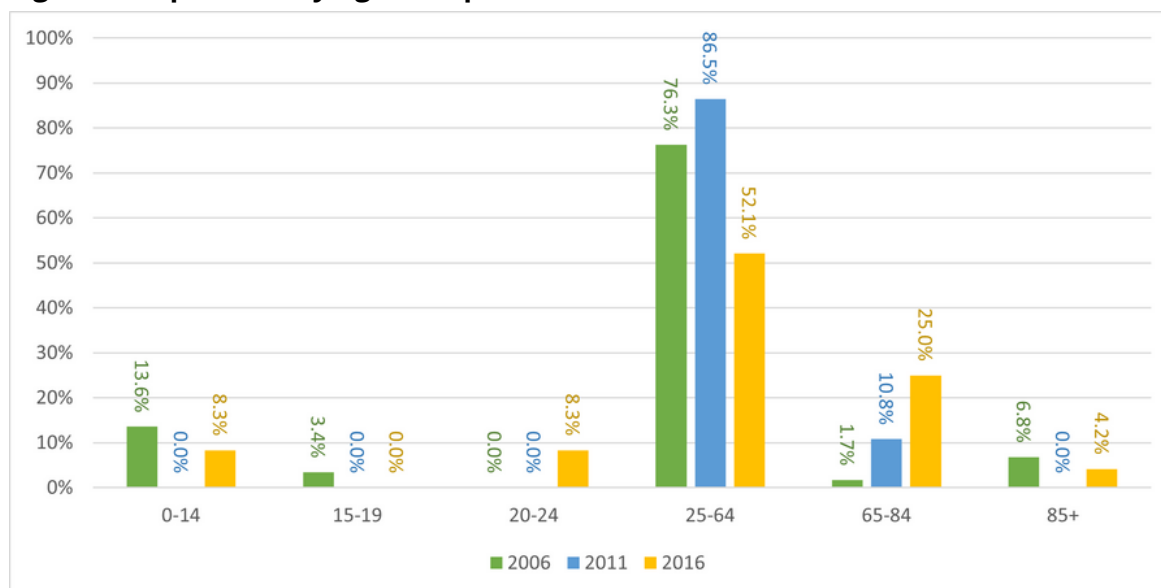


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing



Brady's Beach

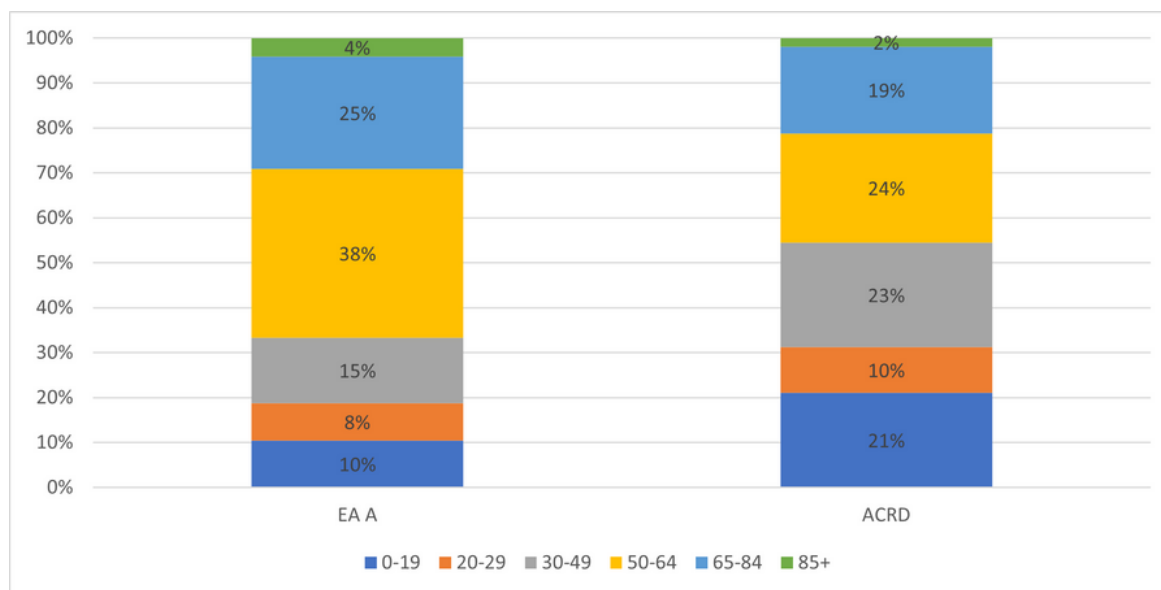
**Figure 5: Population by Age Group, Electoral Area A, 2006-2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 5 shows the age distribution in Bamfield in 2006, 2011 and 2016, based on typical Census reporting categories. Although these years show the highest percentage of the population being between 25 to 64 years, 2016 shows the growth of the 65 to 84 years age group (25% of the population). This growth aligns with the overarching trend impacting most Canadian communities is the ageing of the Baby Boomer generation (born between 1944 and 1964).

**Figure 6: Population by Age Group, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

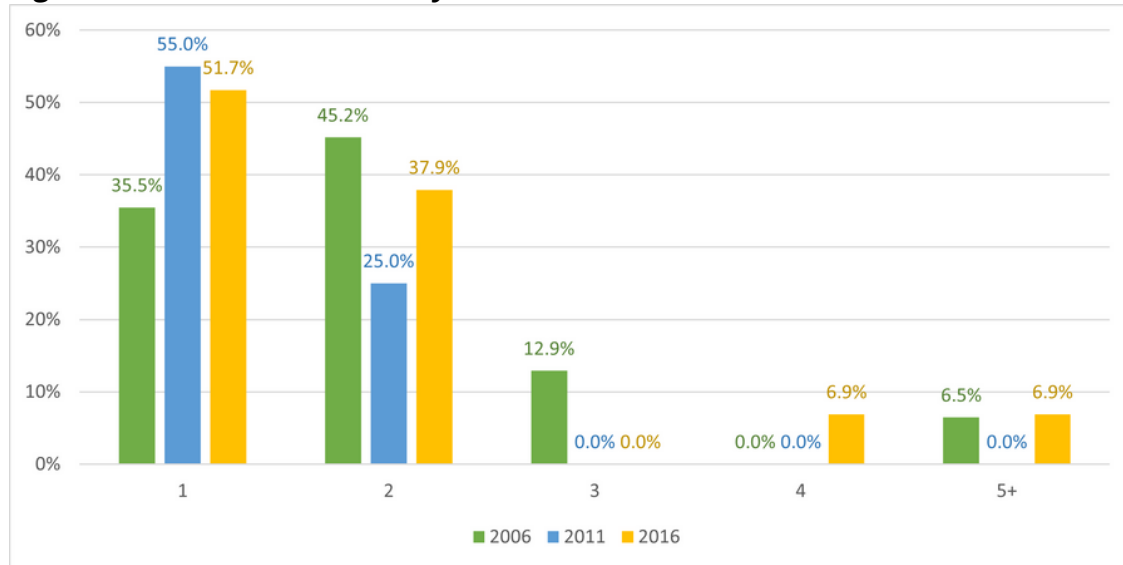
Figure 6 takes a closer look into the population breakdown of Bamfield for the most recent Census (2016), as compared to the ACRD. Both have the highest percentage of the population between 50 to 64 years of age, with Electoral Area A having a higher percentage (38%) as compared to the ACRD (24%). Community engagement highlighted the need to plan for residents entering into or in the retirement stage of life, to ensure they have the ability and support to age in place in their home. Considering there are limited opportunities for employment in Bamfield, many people who move there as fulltime residents are often retirees.



## Households

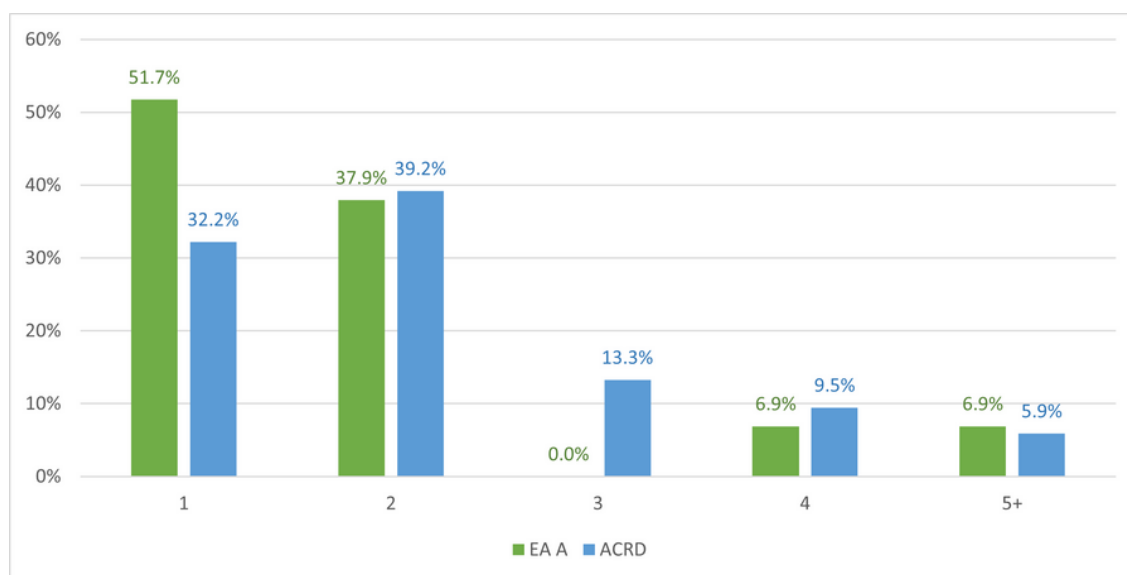
In 2016 there were 145 private households in Electoral Area A, a decrease of 6.5% from 2006. Figure 7 shows the number of households by size for each Census year (2006, 2011, 2016), which highlights the high number of small households with only one or two people. This corresponds with what the community stated throughout the engagement, that there are not many families with children, especially with young children, living in Bamfield. Community members also noted that the range of activities for children and families is limited, and the population of the community school is also in decline.

**Figure 7: Private Households by Size, Electoral Area A, 2006-2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

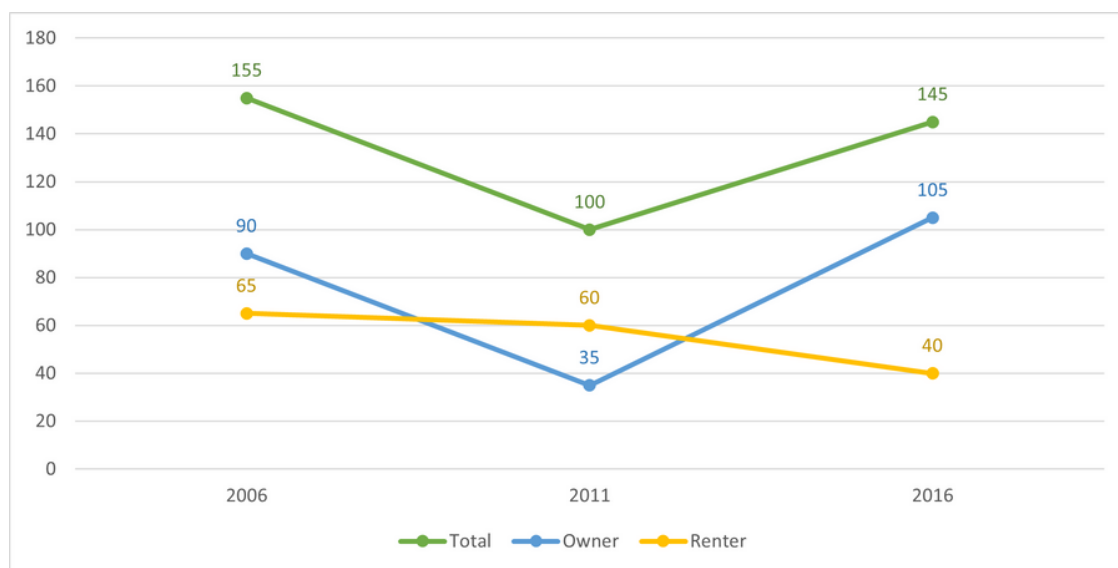
**Figure 8: Private Households by Size, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 8 also shows the high number of one and two person households in Electoral Area A, as well as in the entire ACRD. It's important to note that over half (51.7%) of households in Bamfield are only one person, which can have varying impacts, especially in a remote community with limited services.

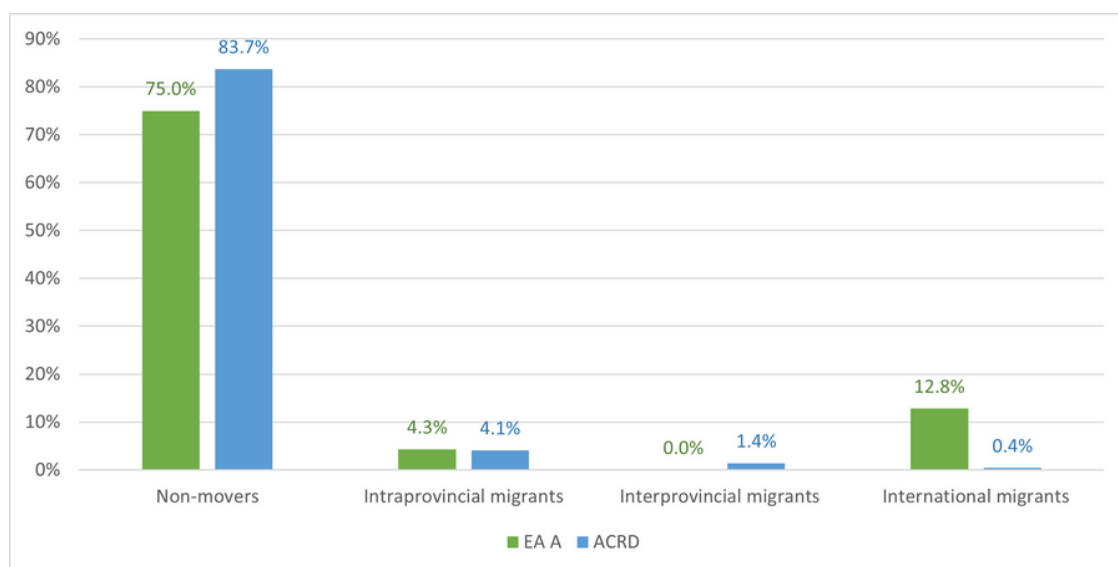
**Figure 9: Private Households by Tenure, Electoral Area A, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Of the 145 households in Bamfield, 105 (72%) are owner and 40 (28%) are renter (2016). This is a trend found throughout the ACRD, which is known as an area with a low vacancy rate for long term rental accommodation. The community engagement survey data revealed that individuals would prefer to live in single-detached housing, and 80% of survey respondents would prefer to own their housing. This leads to a further reduction in the availability of long term rental housing.

**Figure 10: 1-year Mobility, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2015-16**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Statistics Canada tracks the movement of people in or within a community based on their permanent residence (not secondary/vacation home) as “mobility” which is measured as part of the Census. Figure 10 shows that there is higher mobility in Electoral Area A compared to the ACRD. This higher than average number of newcomers, as compared to the ACRD, is likely due to students and employees of the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, as well tourism employees, moving in and out of the area. This higher movement is also likely due to the nature of the coastal community and tourism.

### ***Indigenous Identity***

In 2016, 4.2% of residents of Electoral Area A identified as Indigenous, which is defined by Statistics Canada as including “those who are First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who are Registered or Treaty Indians (that is, registered under the Indian Act of Canada), and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band.” The percentage of Indigenous people living in Electoral Area A increased by about 0.8% between 2006 to 2016. In 2016, about 20% of ACRD residents identified as Indigenous.

Many of Huu-ay-aht First Nations' (HFN) Citizens reside in and around the village of Anacla, the Nation's principal community close to Bamfield, which is undergoing considerable housing development, with more planned in the near future. This additional housing development will likely have a direct impact on the community of Bamfield. Additionally, there are many Huu-ay-aht First Nations' owned properties throughout Electoral Area A and Bamfield (unincorporated area).



Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Anacla  
Credit: Eric Plummer, <https://hashilthsa.com>

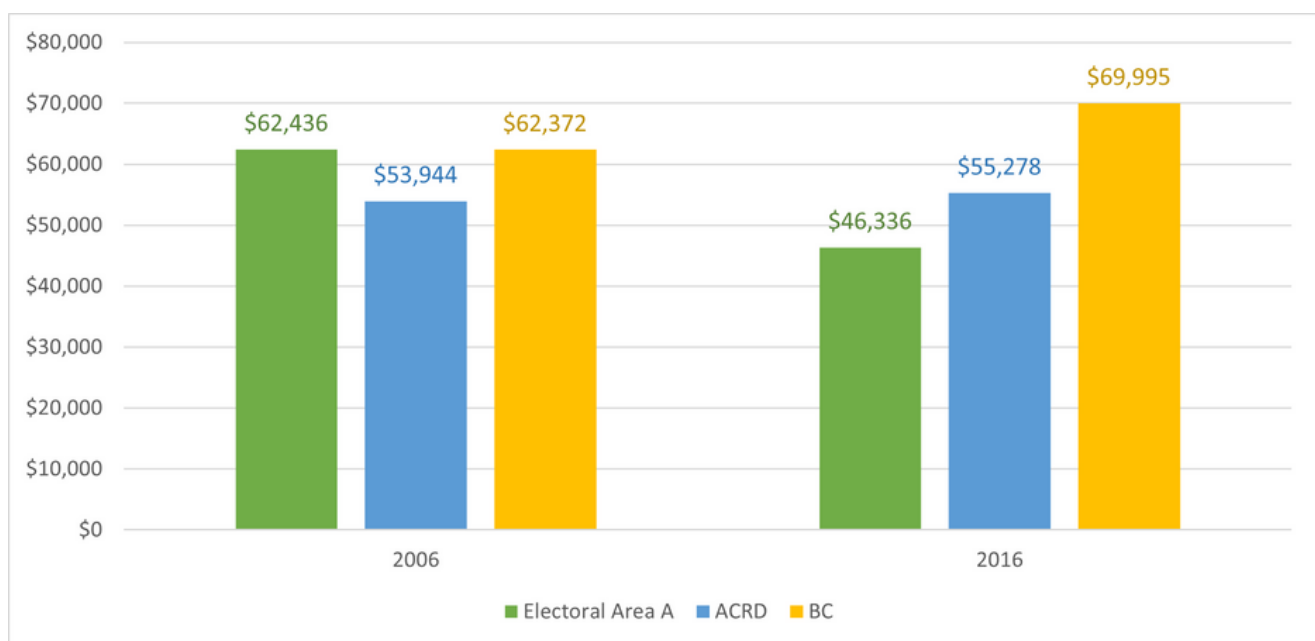
## 3 Economic Profile

### 3.1 Income & Economy

Similar to demographics, income and employment are directly related to the types of housing needed in a community. This section summarizes the community's economic context using data from the standard Census Profiles where possible and supplemented by data from the Custom Census dataset and community engagement.

### 3.2 Household Income

**Figure 11: Median Household Income, Electoral Area A, ACRD & BC, 2006 & 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2006, 2016

Figure 11 shows the median household income in 2006 and 2016 for Electoral Area A, the ACRD and BC. Median income in Electoral Area A has fluctuated the most between 2006 and 2016, decreasing by over \$16,000 (26%), whereas the ACRD and BC have remained more consistent. This significant reduction in median household income can have major impacts on quality of life for Bamfield residents, including being able to secure and maintain housing and other related costs. Additionally, in 2016 the median household income in Electoral Area A was almost \$9,000 lower than the ACRD, and \$23,659 lower than BC. However, it is important to note a number of potential influencing factors such as a low number household responding to the Census, as well as less workers in 2016 compared to 2006. This would result in a higher rate of unemployment, essentially causing the income rate to decrease.

Also note that 2011 Census data for median income isn't available for Electoral Area A, and that household income data is collected for the year before each Census year, and the years shown in Figure 11 are Census years. The median household income identifies the mid-point of household income data.

### 3.3 Employment & Labour Force

#### Workforce and Industry

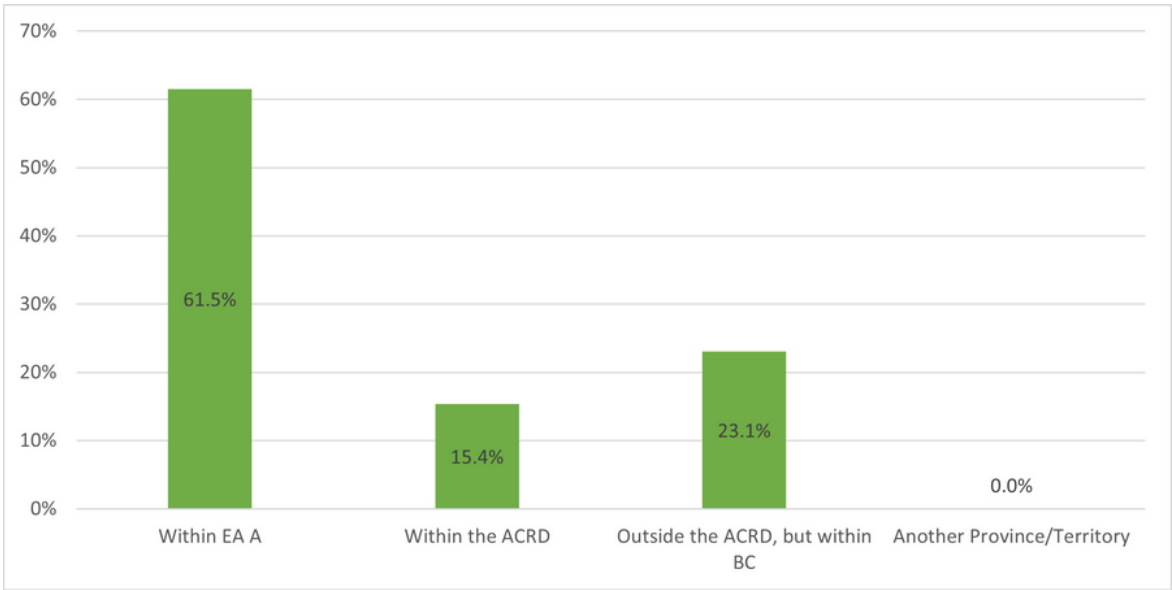
As of 2016, the three major industries in Electoral Area A were:

- Educational Services
- Manufacturing
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation

The total number of people employed in Electoral Area A in 2016 was 115. The Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre plays an important role in contributing to the community, and likely responsible for a large percentage of the 25 employees (22%) in the Educational Services sector.

#### Commuting

Figure 12: Commuting Destination, Electoral Area A, 2016



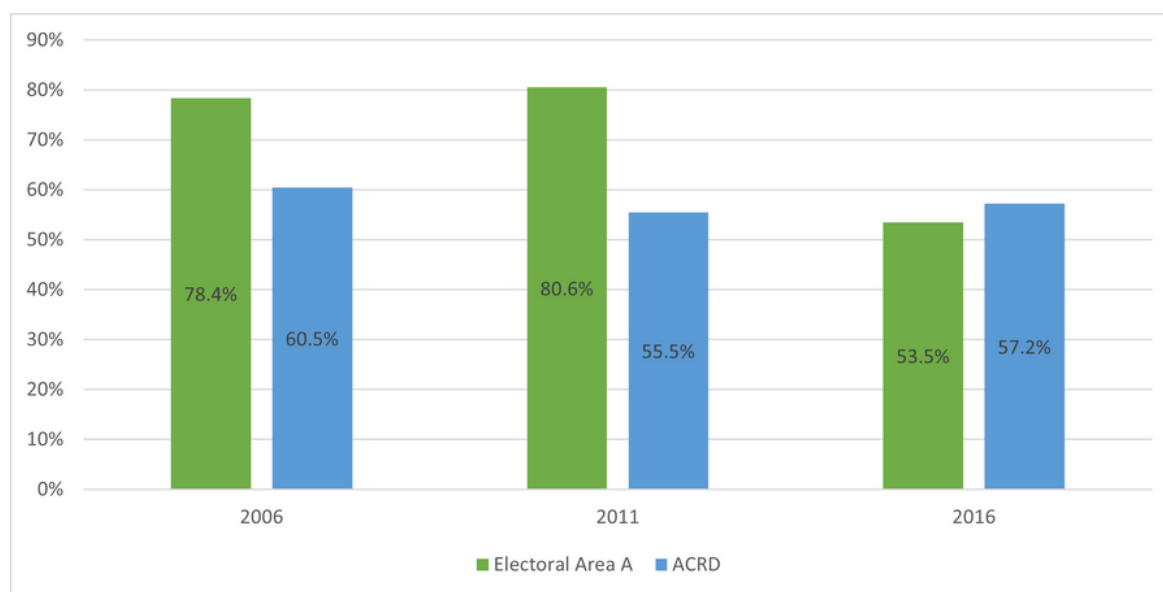
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 12 above shows the commuting destination for working residents of Electoral Area A in 2016. Due to the remote location of Bamfield, the majority of workers in Electoral Area A do not leave the community for work. However, 23% of workers do leave the ACRD for work, likely to work in remote places in forestry or mining. The proposed upgrades to the roads that lead to Bamfield may increase the popularity of commuting destinations outside of Electoral Area A.



## Employment and Labour Force

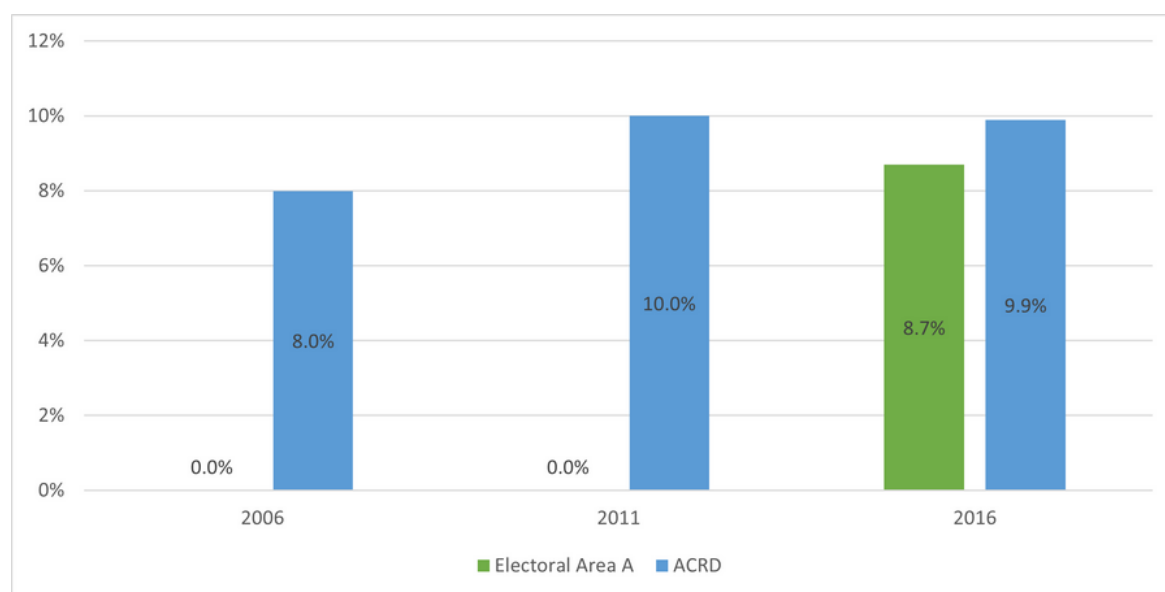
**Figure 13: Participation Rates, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2006-2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 13 above shows the labour force participation rate which measures the proportion of adults (older than 14) who are actively working or seeking work. It was significantly higher than the ACRD as a whole during the 2006 and 2011 Census years, but decreased by almost 30% between 2011 and 2016, possibly due to the increase of retirement aged residents.

**Figure 14: Unemployment Rates, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2006-2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 14 shows the comparison between the unemployment rates for Electoral Area A and the ACRD between 2006 and 2016. In 2006 and 2011, Bamfield had an unemployment rate of zero, although it should be noted that due to Statistics Canada's data suppression requirements, this means that between zero and five people were unemployed at those times. The unemployment rate jumps to 8.7% in 2016, which was still lower than the ACRD rate of 9.9%, but higher than the BC rate of 6.7%.

# 4 Housing Profile

## 4.1 Housing Trends

Housing stock reveals both the history and potential future of a community. Housing and related infrastructure are expensive investments, particularly in the current market conditions. They do not always keep up with changes in demographic and economic conditions (Canada's Long-Term Infrastructure Plan, n.d). This section presents an inventory of housing-related information in Bamfield related to housing tenure (ownership and rental), dwelling type, dwelling size, and dwelling age. This information provides context and helps to reveal gaps in meeting community housing needs. Similar to previous sections, the Housing Profile incorporates datasets from the following sources: BC custom Census data for 2006, 2011, and 2016 (published by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing); and supplemented data from the community engagement.

## 4.2 Housing Stock

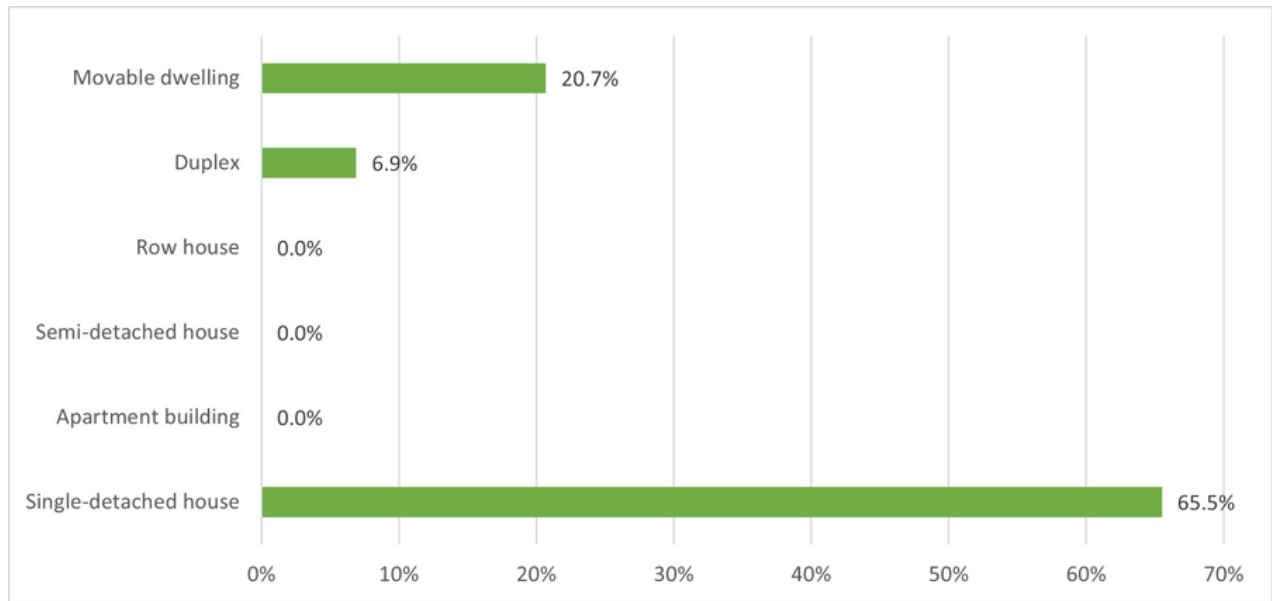
The housing stock of Electoral Area A is mostly comprised of single detached dwellings, which is very common in rural areas. Movable dwellings (mobile/manufactured homes) are the next most popular dwelling type. This is shown in Figure 15. There are no apartment buildings in Bamfield, even though the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre does host university students and employees.

There is also no housing for seniors or those with disabilities in Electoral Area A, which could limit the ability of aging residents to stay in their community if they need specialized care and/or support. There is no subsidized housing in Bamfield, nor is there a shelter for those experiencing homelessness.

Information provided by residents indicated that although the warmer months bring travellers who camp on the beaches for longer periods of time, there are no residents living on the streets. However, there is no information available about the “hidden homeless” such as those who are “couch-surfing”. Providing more affordable and accessible housing should eliminate any need for shelters and transitional housing.



**Figure 15: Dwellings by Structure Type, Electoral Area A, 2016**

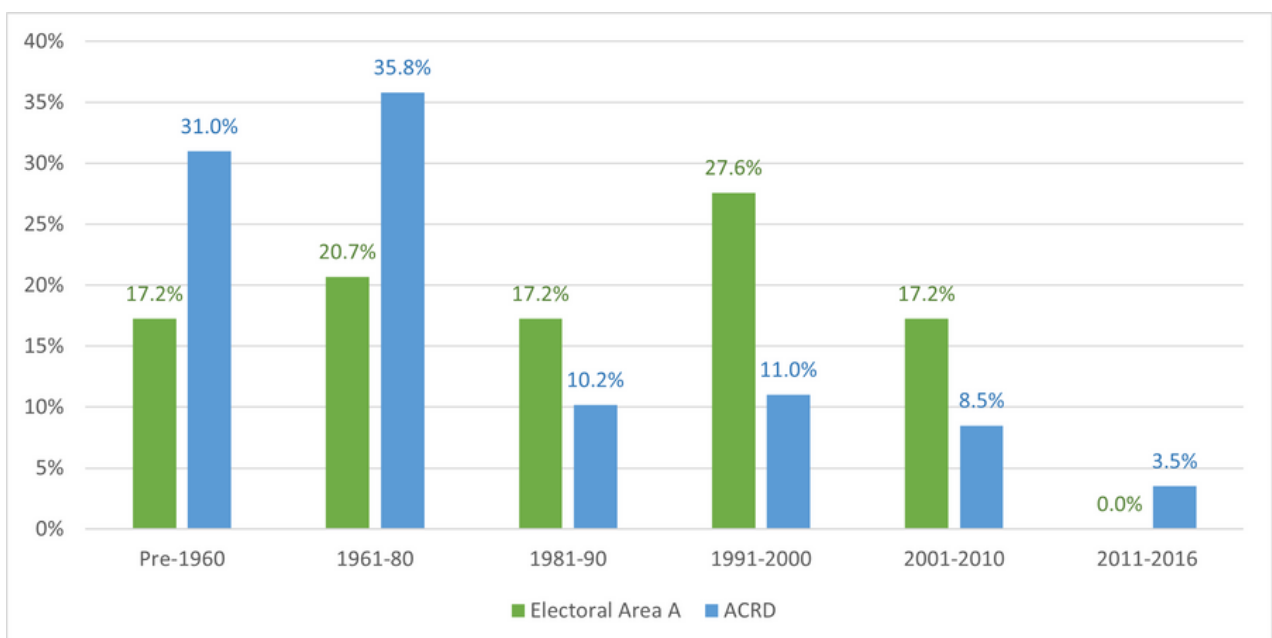


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

### ***Period of Construction***

Figure 16 below shows the ages of the residential dwellings in Electoral Area A compared to the ACRD. It shows that Electoral Area A has a fairly even mix of residential buildings of different construction dates, compared to the ACRD as a whole. This mixture of ages means that there is not the same pressure to repair or replace aging dwellings that there is in communities with a large number of older homes.

**Figure 16: Dwellings by Period of Construction, Electoral Area A & ACRD**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

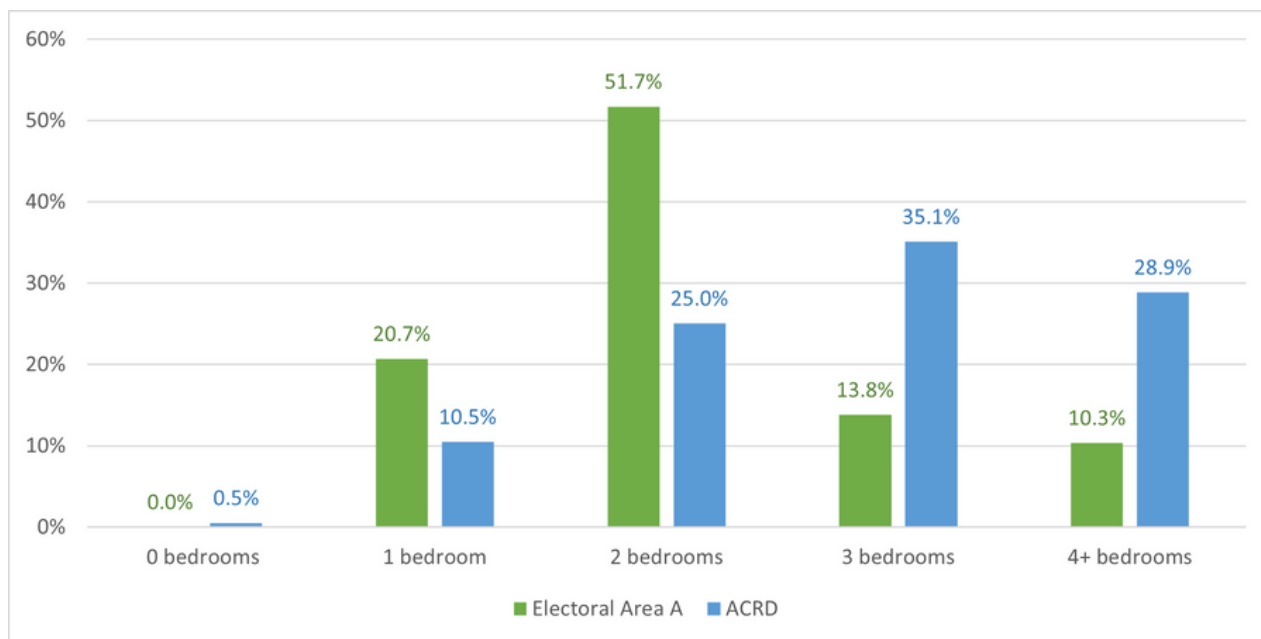
## Housing Condition

In 2016, Statistics Canada reported that 12.7% of households in Canada and 14.9% of households in British Columbia, lived in a dwelling inadequate for their needs. Statistics Canada defines “adequacy” as a structure that requires only minor repair or periodic maintenance (Core housing need, 2016 Census). Accordingly, any unit that requires major repair is “inadequate.” Adequacy is one of the components of Statistics Canada’s definition of Core Housing Need (defined in the Core Housing Need section). Housing adequacy is closely tied to the age of the housing stock. The older the dwelling, the more likely that major repairs are needed. Renter households tend to occupy a greater percentage of older units.

## Dwelling Size

In Electoral Area A, only 21% of residential dwellings have one bedroom, and there are no bachelor units, which means that many of the residents that are living alone in the community are living in units with two or more bedrooms. This can be a factor in the affordability of housing, as smaller units are generally more affordable. However, the average household size of 1.6 persons is reflected in the relatively small percentage (compared to the ACRD) of units with three or more bedrooms, illustrated in Figure 17 below.

**Figure 17: Dwellings by Number of Bedrooms, Electoral Area A & ACRD, 2016**



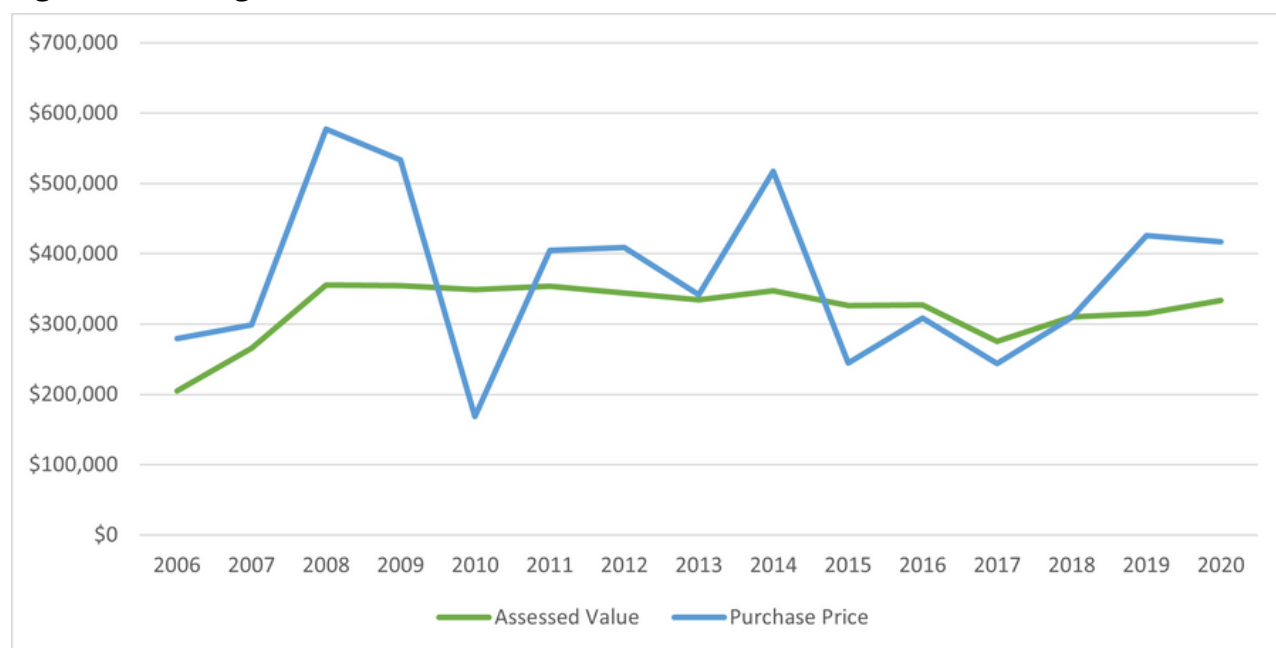
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

## 4.3 Homeownership Market

### Average Values

The average purchase price of a residential dwelling in Electoral Area A has fluctuated quite significantly over the last 15 years, likely due to market conditions and the limited number of sales (between two and 15 per year). This can be seen in Figure 18 below. The average assessed values have generally stayed between \$300,000 and \$400,000, which is more affordable than the ACRD as a whole, where the average assessed value for all residential dwellings reached \$506,703 in 2020. The planned improvements to the roads that lead to Bamfield may lead to increased assessed values, as well as an increased interest from potential buyers.

**Figure 18: Average Values for Residential Units, Electoral Area A, 2006-2020**



Source: BC Assessment, 2006-2020

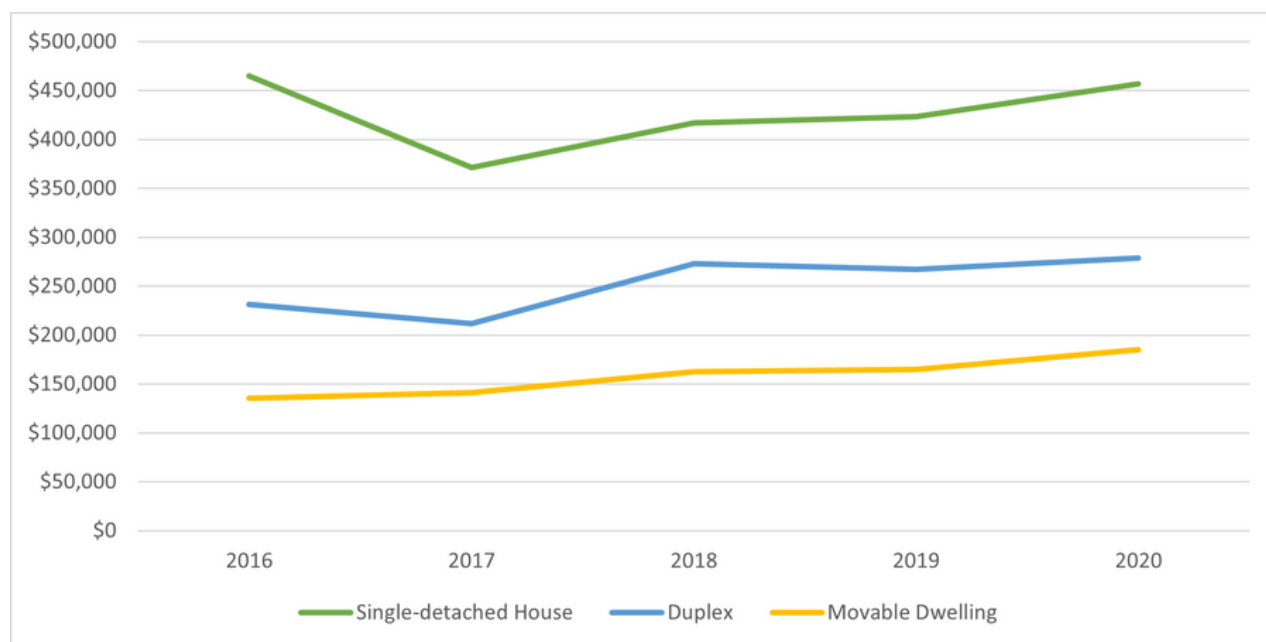
### Assessed Values

**Table 1: Electoral Area A Assessed Values - Average by Unit Size**

Unit size	2018 Average	2019 Average	2020 Average
0 Bachelor	x	x	x
1 Bedroom	\$192,631	\$196,112	\$199,363
2 Bedrooms	\$241,315	\$247,004	\$250,165
3+ Bedrooms	\$346,302	\$350,478	\$358,705

Source: BC Assessment, 2018-2020

**Figure 19: Average Assessed Value for Residential Units by Structure Type, Electoral Area A, 2016-2020**



Source: BC Assessment, 2006-2020

Figure 19 shows the average assessed values for the three different types of housing in Electoral Area A for the last five years. As mentioned above, assessed values have not changed considerably over time, although there was a decline in 2017, which is more pronounced for single detached dwellings.

## 4.4 Rental Housing Stock & Short Term Rentals

In 2016, 28% of households in Electoral Area A rented their homes, as shown in Figure 9. However, as there are a limited number purpose-built rental units in Bamfield, most rental dwellings are part of the secondary rental market, which typically includes secondary suites and rented single family dwellings. There is very limited data available on rental housing in Electoral Area A, although the 2016 Census does indicate that the average monthly shelter costs for renters in the community was \$592, which was \$225 less than the average for all ACRD residents. Shelter costs include rent as well as utilities.

There is no data available on the rental vacancy rate for rental properties in Electoral Area A, but anecdotal evidence from the community engagement process indicates that the vacancy rate is very low. One of the factors that influences this is the increased popularity of short term rentals. A recent review of a popular short term rental website revealed at least eight short term rentals, although some of those appeared to be rooms in an occupied dwelling rather than an entire unit. There are also a significant number of seasonal dwellings (117 were listed in the 2020 BC Assessment data) which are often empty for many months of the year. Seasonal dwellings are not included in the household Census data, which is specific to the permanent address of citizens.



Based on the context provided through community engagement strategy, the short term rental market could be restricting the long term rental units in the community, therefore preventing long term residents from finding secure rental housing. There were also themes of severe seasonality of the community, with many part time residents and tourists wanting to come and stay in Bamfield during the summer months. Short term rental accommodation for seasonal employees and tourists is highly needed in Bamfield.

Additional units are severely needed to relieve some pressure on the market and to add capacity for future residents. The causal factors impacting the availability of rental housing stock include: the small size of the community; isolated location and challenging travel issues decrease the likelihood of individuals choosing to live in Bamfield while working elsewhere; current residents report that, in some cases, properties that had formerly been available as rental stock have been purchased and/or converted to recreational housing that is vacant for a significant portion of the year and then is used in the spring/summer/fall tourism season as short term, high rate rentals.

Additionally, community engagement participants indicated that the current rental stock tends to be ageing, built to lesser standards than current building codes and that the range of housing formats is extremely limited. Overall, the limited supply and lack of options create a challenging current rental environment. It is anticipated that all of these aspects will be exacerbated in the future unless there significant changes in current trends.

## 4.5 Housing Indicators & Core Housing Need

Statistics Canada and CMHC have established national housing indicators based on housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability. Communities throughout Canada use these indicators to identify issues and make improvements related to housing.

A household is in core housing need when it does not meet one of the below indicators and could not afford alternative suitable and adequate housing in their community. Additionally, a household is in extreme core housing need when the affordability, adequacy, and suitability standards are not met and spend more than 50% of their total before-tax household income.

A household meets the nationally defined housing standards when the following conditions are met:



Adequate housing is reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs



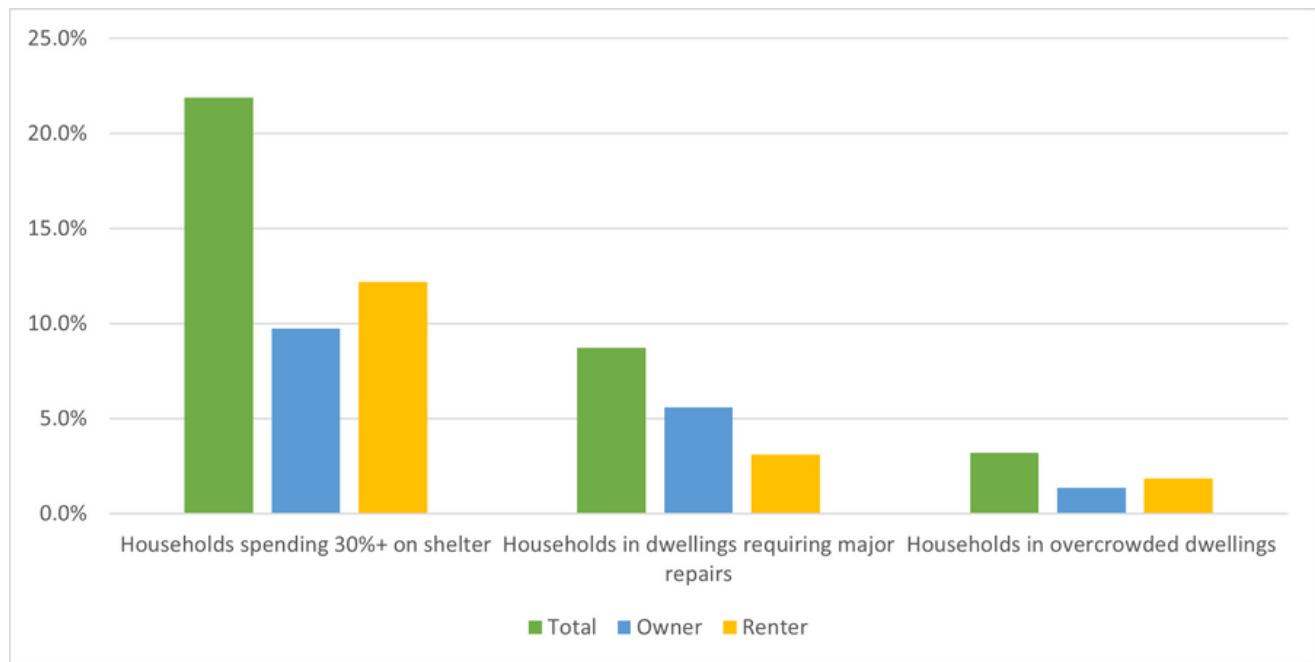
Affordable housing has shelter costs equal or less than 30% of total before-tax household income.



Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of resident households according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

Due to the small population size, much of the data on housing indicators and core housing need has been suppressed to protect the privacy of Electoral Area A residents. This means that there is only data available from the 2006 Census. At that time, approximately 10 households were reported to be living in unaffordable accommodation, approximately 10 households were living in unsuitable dwellings, and approximately 10 households were living in inadequate homes. Figure 20 below shows the data on housing indicators for the ACRD as a whole, which indicates that unaffordability was the most common issue facing residents in 2016.

**Figure 20: Housing Indicators by Tenure, ACRD, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing



West Bamfield housing

# 5 Housing Need & Community Growth

## 5.1 Community Growth Overview

This section summarizes population, household, and housing unit projections for Bamfield for the next five years, as required for HNRs. Population projections such as these provide 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. Bamfield, like other communities in the Alberni-Clayoquot Region, has experienced population fluctuations over the last 20 years, in part due to the availability and affordability of housing, as well as the economic downturn of 2008.

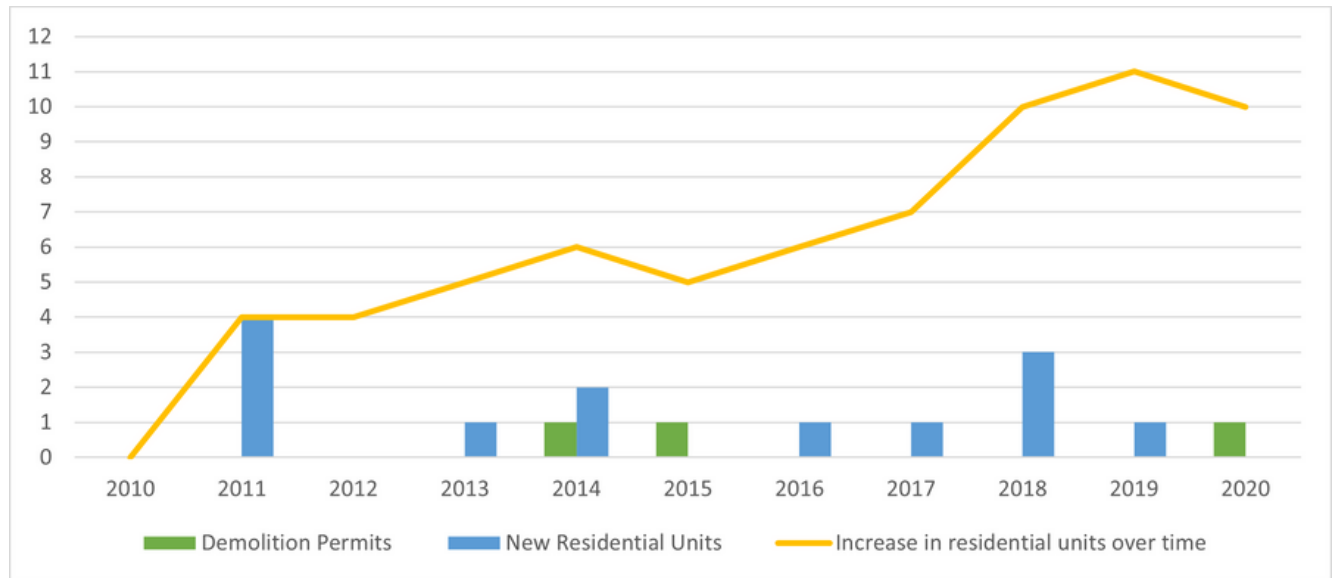
Population projections can be calculated in many different ways. The projections in this report were developed using Statistics Canada's population projection data which is calculated at the Regional District level. The data for the ACRD was used to determine the projections for Electoral Area A. The Statistics Canada projections assume a growth rate of 0.3% per year. Note that the population projections are for the total population, rather than the household population numbers that were used for earlier sections of this report. Based on Census data from previous years, population growth in Electoral Area A, like the ACRD, is expected to be minimal.

There is a major project underway that could greatly impact the future of housing and other development in both Bamfield and Anacla. A new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is being developed by Huu-ay-aht First Nations (HFN). The plant will be located on the BMSC campus and will replace the existing treatment plant, using the BMSC ocean outfall, which will be upgraded and extended further out of the Bamfield Inlet. The initial phase of the WWTP will connect the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre (BMSC), Bamfield Community School, and Upper Anacla to sewage treatment. The immediate goal is to then have all of the Huu-ay-aht businesses connected. The plant is being designed by HFN with growth in mind and is able to treat a large fluctuation of users. When the demand is beyond the plant's existing scope, additional components may be added to double the capacity of the plant. This modular design could allow the connection of the larger community of Bamfield, even if the area experiences growth. This project aims to improve the health of the harbour and the whole community (Huu-ay-aht First Nations, 2018).

### **New Construction**

As building permits are an indicator of economic growth and development, it is important to note that only a few residential building permits have recently been issued in Bamfield, as shown in Figure 21. Recent permits for non-residential development have included those for the construction of the WWTP and associated monitoring building. It is anticipated that additional development may occur once the Bamfield Road improvements are completed. The need for increased access to both East Bamfield (by road), and West Bamfield and other water access only islands (by water), was identified by many throughout the community engagement. Improved access will continue to be seen as a challenge, although some community members may disagree and prefer the remote water access only areas of Bamfield.

**Figure 21: Residential Units Created, Electoral Area A, 2010-2020**



Source: ACRD

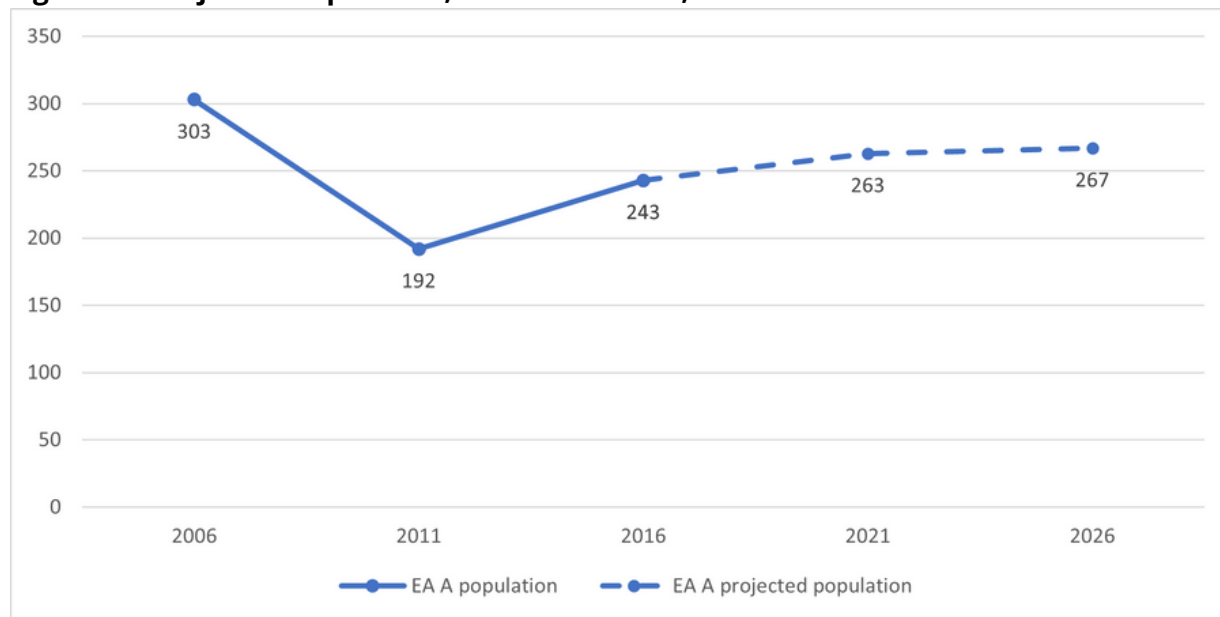


Housing in West Bamfield

## 5.2 Population Growth

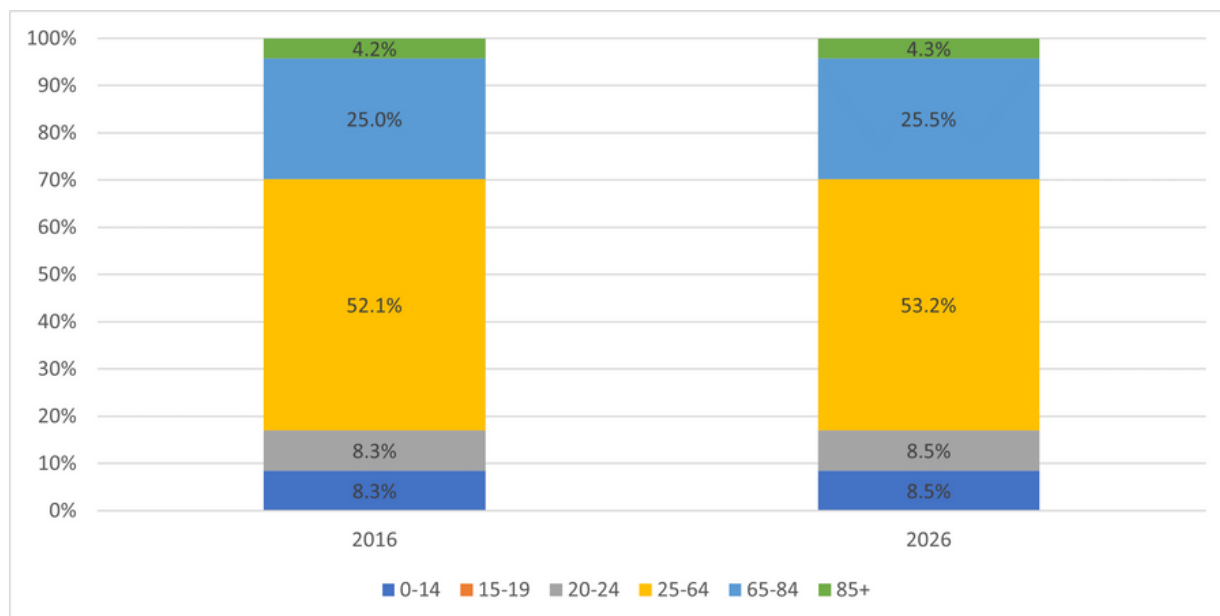
Based on the population projection calculations, Electoral Area A is anticipated to increase from 240 residents in 2016 to 267 residents in 2026, as shown in Figure 22. This is a growth of 10% over 10 years, with a projected annual growth of 0.3% between 2021 and 2026. Population projections for each of the various age groups were also calculated and are illustrated in Figure 23. Although the projections show minimal growth of the 65 years and older age group, it is likely that this group will grow the fastest as an aging population is a concern across Canada and other developed countries. Statistics Canada projects that the average and median ages for ACRD residents will decrease in 2019, before steadily increasing again. Calculations using this data show that the projected median age for Electoral Area A in 2026 would be 56.7, which is a decrease from the median age of 58.3 in 2016.

**Figure 22: Projected Population, Electoral Area A, 2006-2026**



Source: Derived from BC Stats Population Projections, and Statistics Canada Census Profile 2006, 2011, and 2016

**Figure 23: Projected Age Distribution, Electoral Area A, 2016 & 2026**



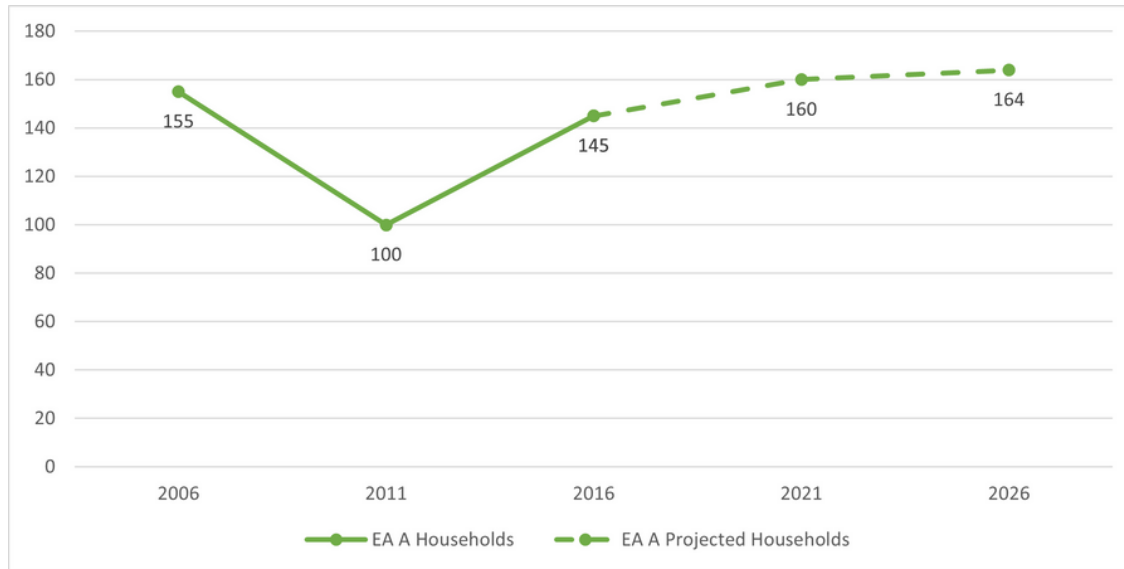
Source: Derived from BC Stats Population Projections, and Statistics Canada Census Profile 2006, 2011, and 2016



## 5.3 Household Projections

Figure 24 shows that the number of households in Electoral Area A is projected to increase from 145 in 2016 to 164 in 2026. The building permit data in Figure 21 shows that six new residential dwellings have been built in the community since 2016, therefore it is likely that the number of households projected for 2021 (160) is slightly high. However, there is the possibility that seasonal dwellings could be converted to long term permanent homes.

**Figure 24: Projected Households, Electoral Area A, 2006-2026**



Source: Derived from BC Stats Population Projections, and Statistics Canada Census Profile 2006, 2011, and 2016

## 5.4 Housing Need

As mentioned above, Statistics Canada provides projected population and household numbers for the ACRD, as well as projected average household size. With this data, it is possible to calculate the difference between the projected number of households and the projected number of dwellings required. This data is shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Electoral Area A Housing Gap, average household size of 1.6 persons**

	2016	2021	2026
Population	240	263	267
Households	145	160	164
Additional dwellings required	5	4	3

Source: Derived from BC Stats Population Projections, and Statistics Canada Census Profile 2006, 2011, and 2016

In 2016, there were five fewer households (dwellings) than the average household size would indicate were required. It is projected that 16 new dwellings will need to be built by 2026 to accommodate the projected population increase, assuming that the average household size stays at 1.6 persons. However, the projected additional dwellings required are based on the BC Stats Population Projections from the Census Canada Profiles in 2006, 2011 and 2016, and this number may vary based on market trends and development conditions in the community over the next five years. Six new residential units were built between 2016 and 2020, which would indicate that either the population is not growing as quickly as the projected population growth, or the average number of people per household is increasing.



# 6 What we Heard

## 6.1 Overview

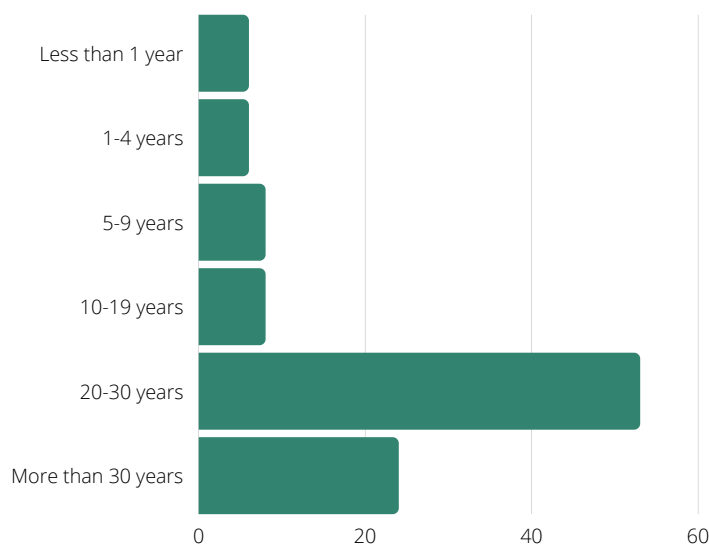
Between November 2020 and February 2021, a series of community engagement opportunities were undertaken to gain a better understanding of local housing challenges and opportunities from the perspective of Bamfield residents and local stakeholders.

### Community Survey

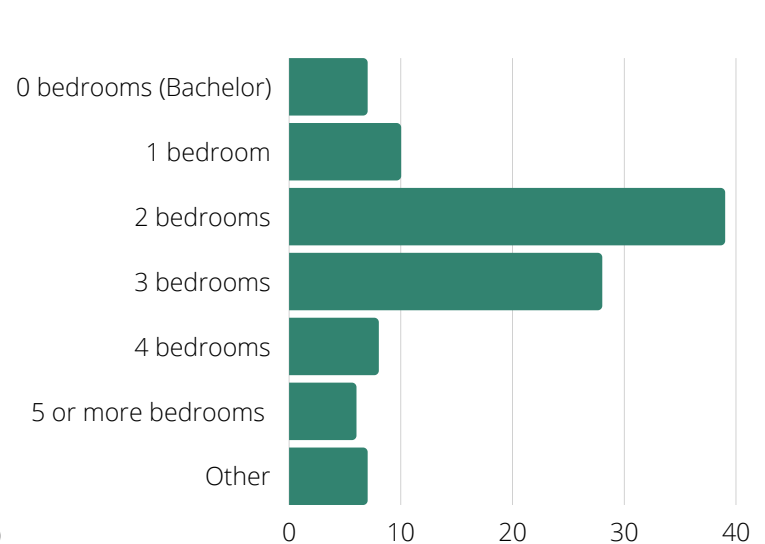
A community survey was launched from November 2020 to January 2021. It was available online through the ACRD website and was advertised throughout the community, via online community sites and through mailouts to dwellings in Bamfield and property owners, including those living in other areas.

The purpose of the survey was to collect information about the housing needs and challenges of residents and property owners. The survey had a total of 111 respondents, representing almost half (46%) of the population. 27% of respondents were owners (29 respondents), and 69% were renters (74 respondents). 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. The full results of the survey can be found in Appendix B, and a few highlights are included below:

#### ***How long respondents plan to live in their current housing in Bamfield, either year round, seasonally or part-time:***



#### ***Number of bedrooms in respondent's Bamfield residence:***



**Three most important issues affecting housing in Bamfield:**



## Community Forums

Two community forums were held online via zoom in January 2021, with a variety of residents, property owners and other community members in attendance. These forums provided additional insight from the community about the housing needs in Bamfield. The forums were also an opportunity to collect any emerging housing trends and attitudes towards community growth and development. The full results of the forums can be found in Appendix C.

## Stakeholder Focus Group

A focus group was held in January 2021 with the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission to further develop emergent themes from the community engagement and provide any additional insight into housing needs, challenges, and potential community collaborations.

## 6.2 Housing Issues & Challenges

In general, there was consensus amongst survey respondents and community forum participants that housing in Bamfield has become more unaffordable over time. Several community members stated that it is getting harder for those on average incomes to find a place to live in Bamfield. Participants were asked about housing issues and challenges that impact employers, workers, young families, seniors, and vulnerable populations. All of the topics raised connected to the high cost of housing and lack of supply.



### **Rentals**

Survey respondents and focus groups noted that the number of vacant homes and seasonal dwellers has created a negative impact on the long term rental stock.

**"There's no question, the biggest issue is the peak season housing. New home buyers ...tempted to rent it out in the summer" - Community member**



### **Vacant Homes**

Bamfield's location, climate and proximity to the ocean make it an excellent place for individuals to purchase summer homes. However, many of these homes remain empty the majority of the year. Some Bamfield community members who participated in the online survey and focus groups expressed concern about this off-season vacancy. There is currently a rental shortage in Bamfield, yet many homes remain empty or are being filled with tenants from September to May. Long term renters are finding it a challenge to find housing in the peak tourist months.

**"They can't get enough housing, and the housing is empty during the year... these don't line up"- Community member**



### **Ageing in Place**

Seniors make up a significant portion of Bamfield's population and this is reflected in the data, and through community engagement focus groups and survey responses. A number of challenges and barriers were raised regarding seniors' housing needs. There are currently no senior care homes available, and many current single family homes do not have the required supports, which makes it difficult for elderly residents who wish to remain in Bamfield as they age.

**"The older folks are looking to retire and wanting a simpler, lower maintenance type of housing so they could stay in town... a lot of people have had to leave and go to retirement homes elsewhere" - Community member**



### **Staff Housing**

The limited rentals offer great challenges and barriers to creating job opportunities in the community. The number of internships and work positions is restricted by the lack of staff accommodation. Community members stated that among the affected population groups the students at the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre and young individuals entering the workforce struggle to find accessible, affordable and suitable housing to meet their needs, as well as the needs of their families.



### ***Housing for Families***

The number and demographic proportion of families continue to decline in Bamfield. This is perhaps most notable in the decreasing number of students attending the local community school. Community members noted that the range of activities and amenities for families is limited, beyond those relating to a west-coast lifestyle.



### ***Supply***

There is a gap between the types of housing and affordability levels needed by local residents and what is provided by the market. There are currently no existing non-market housing units in Electoral Area A, as indicated by the BC Housing data reports. There are also no currently existing cooperative housing units in Electoral Area A. In terms of housing that may be bought and sold at market rates, there is only a small amount of housing types: single-family dwellings, duplexes, manufactured homes, and seasonal dwellings.



### ***Cost and Access to Housing***

The survey and focus groups showed that residents and stakeholders are concerned about the rising cost of housing, land, and construction in Bamfield and the impact of increasing un-affordability on residents.

**"It's pretty much near impossible for a person like myself to... get my foot in the door and purchase a property in Bamfield and that may result someday in you leaving rather than staying" - Renter from the Bamfield community**



### ***Population Growth***

The Bamfield community has experienced a declining population but with the improved road and additional infrastructure improvements, community members worry what these impacts will have on growth. The concerned community members noted that the Official Community Plan requires solidified goals, proactive planning and a focus on affordable housing. There have been improvements to the water system, cell service, internet connection, and future improvements to the sewer system but the capacity of these is still a concern. The focus group also noted that there is a lack of data on traffic/circulation flows, consideration of sustainable development and use of existing land.

**"The current issues.. are just going to get exacerbated with growth."  
- Community member**



### ***Community feel***

Community members reported that the increase of seasonal dwellers and population decline has negatively impacted the rural community feel of Bamfield. Many residents are concerned about the loss of community character. The threat of development without creating projected goals increases these community worries.

**"The expansion of the road and more interest coming to the area... we're at major risk... of becoming a place where people are moving... to make nightly rentals, vacation.. and second homes...A place that is not hosting families and ... a full-time community. "  
- Community member**



### ***Special Needs Housing***

Currently, there is no purpose-built special needs housing in Bamfield. While anecdotal as statistical information is not available, community members were not familiar with local housing that had been built to universal design standards and/or to allow for ageing in place. Renovations/restructurings would be required to amend existing housing stock to achieve these standards. Community engagement participants noted that residents are aware that a high level of self-sufficiency, combined with a recognition that medical and/or assisted living services are of limited availability, is required for Bamfield residents. At the same time, many residents expressed the desire to age in place, which suggests that this topic will need to be re-addressed in the future.



### ***Road Access***

The focus groups noted that the improvements done to the main access road in Bamfield will impact the capacity and growth of the community. The improvements will likely be connected to a potential increase in visitors and residents, as well as an overall increase in development.

**"We have to remember that we have to balance increased density with the services that are available"**

- Community member



### ***Shelters for people experiencing homelessness***

While the current study suggests that there are no homeless individuals in Bamfield, and therefore the a limited need for shelters for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It is not known if individuals are experiencing near homelessness and engaged in unstable housing situations (e.g.: couch surfing, or living in sub-standard temporary accommodations). Residents noted, anecdotally, that transient populations rise in the summer months, and in some cases have been noted as camping on the beaches for extended periods of time when the weather is hospitable. Overall, while the number of visible homeless individuals does not appear to be a current issue, this is an area of focus that requires further investigation.

# 7 Recommendations & Next Steps

## 7.1 Moving Forward

The purpose of the recommendations outlined in this section is to leverage the community's resources toward greater impacts on the housing market. This can be achieved by identifying supports that will facilitate projects through non-profit, private sector, and other agencies, organizations and community partnerships that meet the diversity of Bamfield's housing needs. These include incentives to make projects more feasible, to the exploration of partnerships that will create new housing through the identification of under-utilized land. Paired with stronger infill and density policies, this represents a multi-pronged approach to ensuring that the appropriate range of housing is developed over the next five to ten years in Bamfield.

The following five strategies are proposed to address the housing gaps anticipated for the next five years and beyond in Bamfield:

1

### **Strategy 1: Strengthen policies and regulations to remove barriers to housing and prioritize needed housing types**

This can be completed through:

- The use of this HNR by the ACRD, First Nations, community groups, developers, and other agencies to identify specific gaps in the housing supply that need to be filled.
- A comprehensive review of the Bamfield Official Community Plan (OCP), in collaboration with the community, which is scheduled to be updated in 2021/2022. Information from this HNR will be incorporated into the updated OCP.
  - Community Plan policy discussions to include encouraging affordable housing development, higher density with appropriate servicing, secondary dwellings, density bonusing, incorporating comprehensive development zones, and cooperative housing.
- Zoning amendments to focus on inclusionary policies that remove barriers to housing and allow flexibility in housing types.

2

### **Strategy 2: Increase grassroots data collection, and communicate housing needs and success stories**

- As shown throughout the HNR community engagement, Bamfield residents, property owners, Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and the entire community are the experts when it comes to housing needs.
- Continued collaboration for data collection and communication will be key for addressing future housing needs, including sharing success stories.
  - Collaboration with the community should be focused on stronger communication and engagement on housing data with community members/groups such as: the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission, Bamfield Community Affairs Society, Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and other member First Nations.



3

**Strategy 3: Develop and strengthen partnerships and coordinate collaboration**

Continued and future collaboration will all Bamfield community members, agencies, as well as member First Nations, will assist to align community goals with housing needed to address demographic change and population growth.

- Partnership with Huu-ay-aht First Nations in regional housing needs and shared service delivery opportunities.
- Strengthen connection with community groups such as the Bamfield Community Affairs Society in engaging in dialogue on community direction for housing.
- Engage with Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre as a primary employer in the community to determine opportunities for collaboration in staff and community housing.

4

**Strategy 4: Create a housing strategy and action plan**

While this HNR provides relevant and detailed data about the community and local housing market and needs, the ACRD could use this assessment to develop a regional housing strategy and action plan.

- This could include action-oriented policies and goals to address the housing needs in Bamfield, and the entire ACRD, in a comprehensive Housing Action Plan that includes funding opportunities detailed as an implementation plan, monitoring and performance evaluation, and a communication strategy.

5

**Strategy 5: Complete ongoing monitoring of housing supply and demand**

- Although provincial requirements are that HNR data is updated every five years, keeping the data up to date will allow the ACRD to have a better and more accurate understanding of the housing needs, which in turn will benefit the entire community.
- A change in development and market trends in the community over the next five years, facilitated by improved road access, connectivity and servicing, may warrant ongoing monitoring of housing supply and demand.
- Coordinate with the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission to maintain dialogue with community stakeholders on emerging housing supply and demand trends.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Provincial Summary Form

### Housing Needs Reports – Summary Form

**MUNICIPALITY/ELECTORAL AREA/LOCAL TRUST AREA:** Electoral Area A Bamfield

**REGIONAL DISTRICT:** Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD)

**DATE OF REPORT COMPLETION:** July 2021

#### PART 1: KEY INDICATORS & INFORMATION

*Instructions: please complete the fields below with the most recent data, as available.*

LOCATION	<b>Neighbouring municipalities and electoral areas:</b>	City of Port Alberni, District of Ucluelet, ACRD Electoral Areas C, D, & F, Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Areas F & I
	<b>Neighbouring First Nations:</b>	Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Uchucklesaht Tribe Government, and Yuułu?it?ath Government

POPULATION	<b>Population:</b>	240	<b>Change since 2006:</b>	-18.64%
	<b>Projected population in 5 years:</b>	267	<b>Projected change:</b>	10.04%
	<b>Number of households:</b>	145	<b>Change since 2006:</b>	-6.45%
	<b>Projected # of households in 5 years:</b>	164	<b>Projected change:</b>	13.1%
	<b>Average household size:</b>	1.6		
	<b>Projected average household size in 5 years:</b>	1.6		
	<b>Median age (local):</b>	58.3	<b>Median age (RD):</b>	46.6
			<b>Median age (BC):</b>	42.5
	<b>Projected median age in 5 years:</b>	56.7		
	<b>Seniors 65+ (local):</b>	29.2%	<b>Seniors 65+ (RD):</b>	21.2%
			<b>Seniors 65+ (BC):</b>	17.4%
	<b>Projected seniors 65+ in 5 years:</b>	29.6%		
	<b>Owner households:</b>	72.4%	<b>Renter households:</b>	27.6%
	<b>Renter households in subsidized housing:</b>	0%		

INCOME	<b>Median Household Income (2006<sup>1</sup>)</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional District</b>	<b>BC</b>
	<b>All households</b>	\$62,436.00	\$53,944	\$62,372
	<b>Renter households</b>	\$62,377.00	\$30,146	\$39,548
	<b>Owner households</b>	\$69,768.00	\$64,158	\$75,243

<sup>1</sup>2016 values not available for Electoral Area A. All units are in 2015 Canadian Dollars.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016, 2011, 2006 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

<b>ECONOMY</b>	<b>Participation rate:</b> 53.5%	<b>Unemployment rate:</b> 8.7%
	<b>Major local industries:</b> Educational Services, Construction, Arts/Entertainment/Recreation.	

<b>HOUSING</b>	Median assessed housing value (2020):	\$446,216	Median housing sale price (2020):	\$201,333
	Median monthly rent:	\$592 <sup>2</sup>	Rental vacancy rate:	unknown
	Housing units – total (2020):	280	Housing units – subsidized:	0
	Annual registered new homes – total:	0 (2020)	Annual registered new homes – rental:	0
	Households below affordability standards (spending 30%+ of income on shelter): 6.45% (2006)			
	Households below adequacy standards (in dwellings requiring major repairs): 6.45% (2006)			
	Households below suitability standards (in overcrowded dwellings): 6.45% (2006)			

<sup>2</sup> There is limited rental data available for EA A, therefore this value is the average monthly shelter cost for renters from the 2016 Census. It includes utilities.

Briefly summarize the following:	
<b>1. Housing policies in local official community plans and regional growth strategies (if applicable):</b>	OCP: Protect the existing sense of place in the community that results from the form and character of housing (13.1 Residential Objectives). A mix of housing types with different target populations (elderly, young workers, affordable housing, and families) shall be supported for development proposals in CDAs to meet changing demographics and a mix of income levels (Policy 14.2.7). Facilitate the provision of safe, affordable rental housing within the Plan area (Objective 3.2).
<b>2. Any community consultation undertaken during development of the housing needs report:</b>	A community survey with 30 questions was sent out to Bamfield residents and property owners. 111 responses were received, which represents just less than half (46%) of the total population. Additionally, 2 virtual community forums were held where community members could ask open ended questions and provide valuable insight and feedback. There were also many one-on-one conversations through email, phone and other virtual methods.
<b>3. Any consultation undertaken with persons, organizations and authorities (e.g. local governments, health authorities, and the provincial and federal governments and their agencies):</b>	The Alberni Clayoquot Health Network, which includes representatives from various organizations and authorities such as Island Health and School District No. 70 (Pacific Rim), were consulted throughout the development of the Bamfield Housing Needs Report. The Bamfield Community School Coordinator participated in the community forums, and is a member of the Bamfield Planning Advisory Committee.
<b>4. Any consultation undertaken with First Nations:</b>	Huu-ay-aht First Nations (HFN) members were invited to attend the virtual community forums, 2 identified HFN members attended. As well, ACRD staff had many conversations with HFN staff regarding the development of the Bamfield HNR. The report will form the basis for the upcoming HFN HNR.



## PART 2: KEY FINDINGS

**Table 1: Estimated number of units needed, by type (# of bedrooms)**

	Currently	Anticipated (5 years)
0 bedrooms (bachelor)	6	6
1 bedroom	33	34
2 bedrooms	83	85
3+ bedrooms	39	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>164</b>

Comments:

**Table 2: Households in Core Housing Need**

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All households in planning area	155	100	100	100	140	100
Of which are in core housing need	10	6.45	x	x	x	x
Of which are owner households	10	6.45	x	x	x	x
Of which are renter households	0	0	x	x	x	x

Comments:

There is no data available on core housing need from the 2011 and 2016 census.

**Table 3: Households in *Extreme* Core Housing Need**

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All households in planning area	155	100	100	100	140	100
Of which are in extreme core housing need	0	0	x	x	x	x
Of which are owner households	0	0	x	x	x	x
Of which are renter households	0	0	x	x	x	x

Comments:

There is no data available on extreme core housing need from the 2011 and 2016 census.



**Briefly summarize current and anticipated needs for each of the following:**

**1. Affordable housing:**

There is currently a limited supply of affordable housing in Bamfield. This limits the ability of major employers to fill entry-level positions, creating an economic/housing conundrum. Additionally, housing unaffordability is perceived as a detractor for attracting young families or potentially seniors who may want to relocate to Bamfield or Electoral Area A. Through community engagement, Bamfield residents noted that housing unaffordability is also exacerbated by the trend toward housing being acquired as recreational and/or vacation rental properties.

The average purchase price of a residential dwelling in Electoral Area A has fluctuated quite significantly over the last 15 years, likely due to the limited number of sales (between 2 and 15 per year), but the average assessed values have generally stayed between \$300,000 and \$400,000, which is more affordable than the ACRD as a whole, where the average assessed value for all residential dwellings reached \$506,703 in 2020.

**2. Rental housing:**

Purpose-built rental housing supply is in limited supply in Bamfield. Additional units are needed to provide options for those who cannot afford to buy a home. The factors impacting the availability of rental housing include the:

- small size of the community;
- isolated location;
- increased popularity of short term rentals.

Additionally, community engagement participants indicated that the current rental stock tends to be ageing, built to lesser standards than current building codes and that the range of housing formats is extremely limited.

Overall, the limited supply and lack of options create a challenging current rental environment. It is anticipated that all of these aspects will be exacerbated in the future unless there is intervention from the province or federal government and/or significant changes in current trends.

**3. Special needs housing:**

Currently, there is no purpose-built special needs housing in Bamfield. These dwellings tend to be located in major centres, close to the services that residents may require.

While anecdotal (as statistical information is not available), community members were not familiar with local housing that had been built to universal design standards and/or to allow for ageing in place. Renovations/restructurings would be required to amend existing housing stock to achieve these standards. Promoting the use of universal design for new residential buildings will make Bamfield more accessible to those with mobility limitations.

**4. Housing for seniors:**

Currently there is no purpose-built seniors housing in Bamfield. This means that older residents may be required to leave the community if higher levels of assistance or medical care are required as they age.

**5. Housing for families:**

The number and demographic proportion of families (defined as households with one or more adults and one or more youth under 18) continues to decline in Bamfield. This is perhaps most notable in the decreasing number of students attending the local community school.

There are no subsidized housing units for families in Electoral Area A.

**6. Shelters for people experiencing homelessness and housing for people at risk of homelessness:**

There are no shelters for people experiencing homelessness or housing for people at risk in Electoral Area A. Information provided by residents indicated that although the warmer months does bring travellers who camp on the beaches for longer periods of time, there are no residents living on the streets. However, there is no information available about the “hidden homeless”. Providing more affordable and accessible housing should eliminate any need for shelters and transitional housing.

**7. Any other population groups with specific housing needs identified in the report:**

Housing accommodations for seasonal workers has been noted as a specific housing concern. There is limited availability of seasonal housing, and residents note that this will impact the potential to attract tourism and service activities in the future.

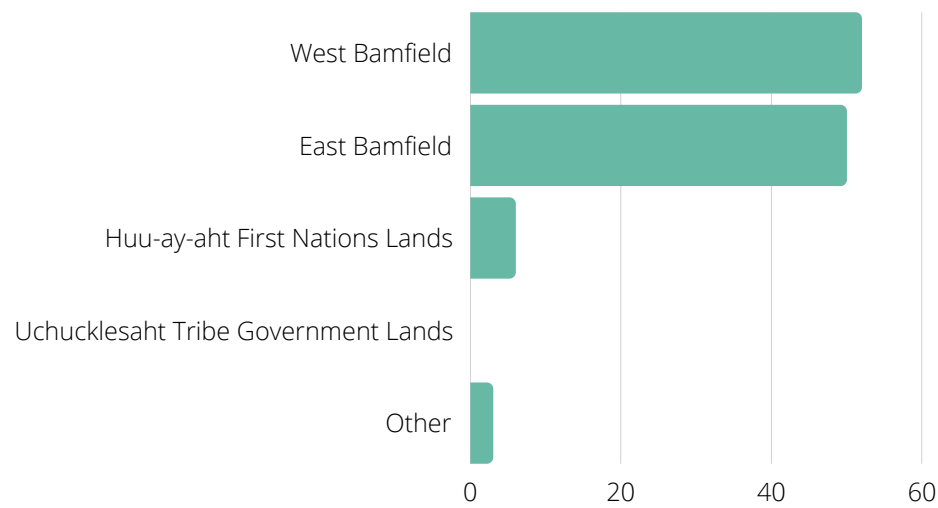
The Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre also creates a specific housing need in the community. While there is some housing available for staff, students, and visiting researchers, the increasing profile of the Centre and the importance of marine research may require the development of additional housing in the future.

**Were there any other key issues identified through the process of developing your housing needs report?**

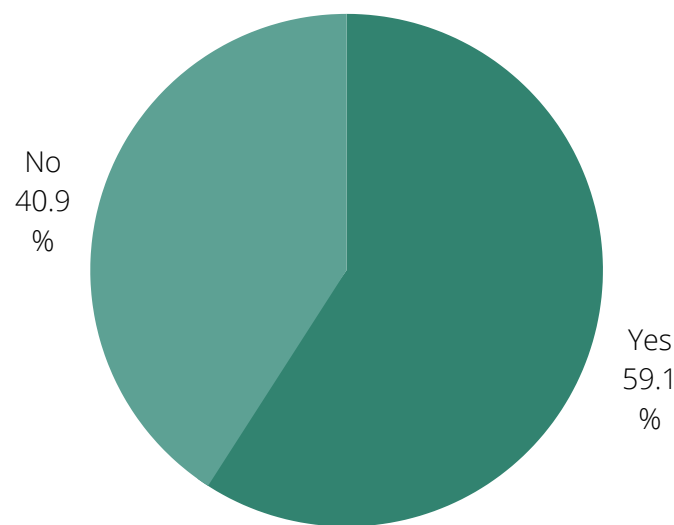
There is a shortage of housing for fulltime residents in Bamfield because many of the households are only occupied for a few months of the year as recreational properties. Although there is a shortage of housing, there are also many houses sitting empty for many months of the year. Housing for seasonal workers and students, and staff of the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre are also severely needed.

# Appendix B: Housing Needs Survey Summary

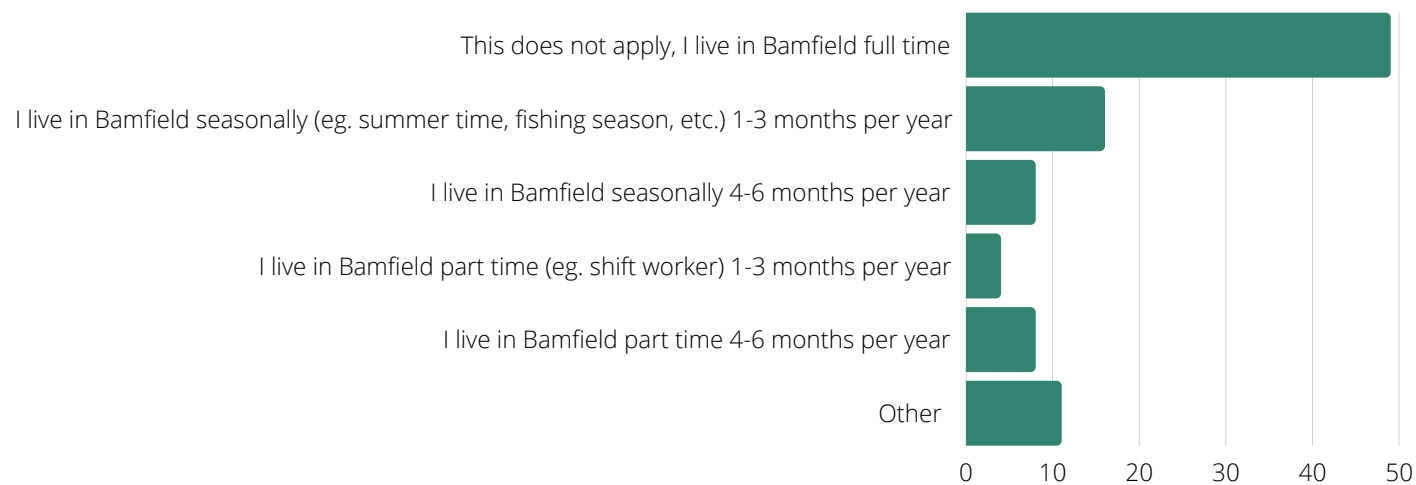
## 1.What part of the Bamfield community is your residence located in?



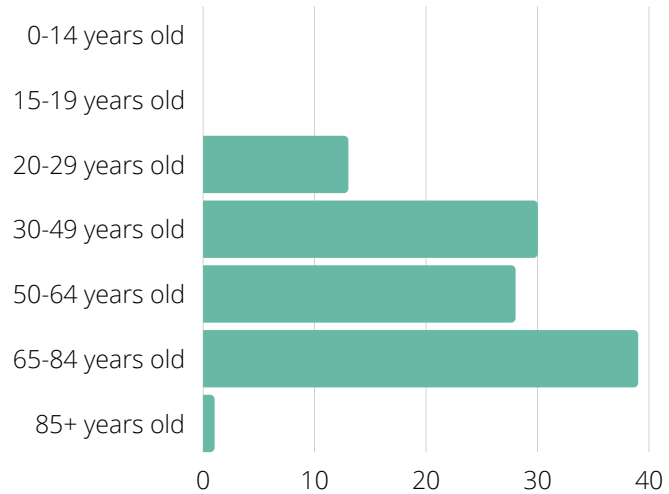
## 2. Do you live in Bamfield Year round?



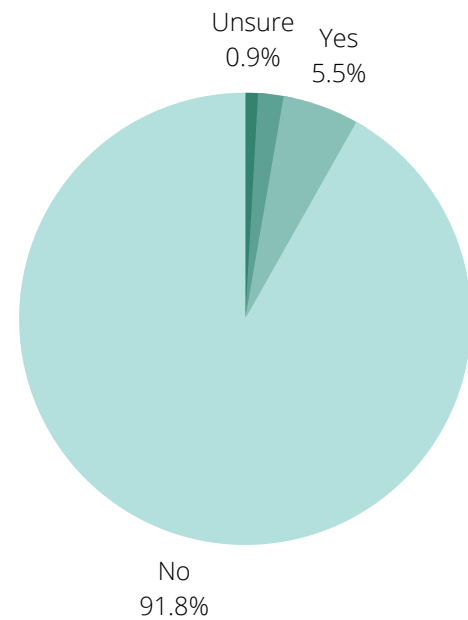
## 3. Please respond to the following question if you live in Bamfield seasonally or part time.



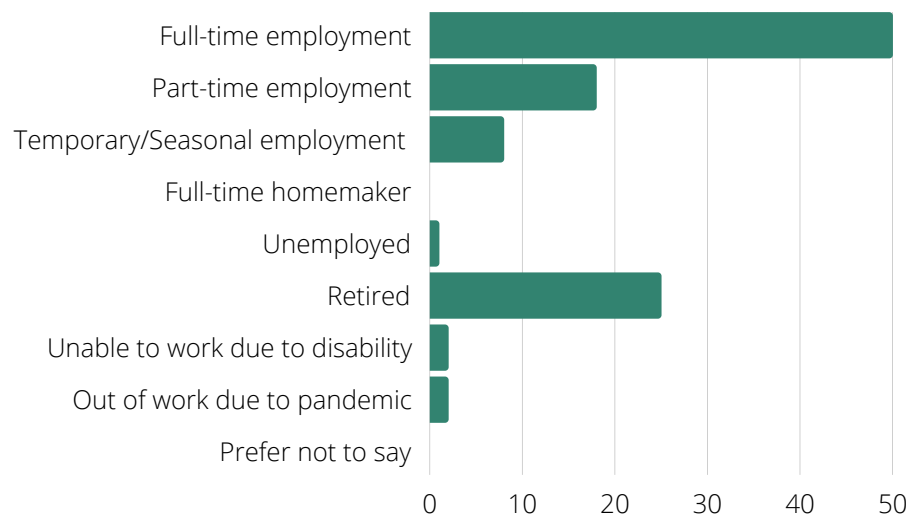
#### 4. What is your age?



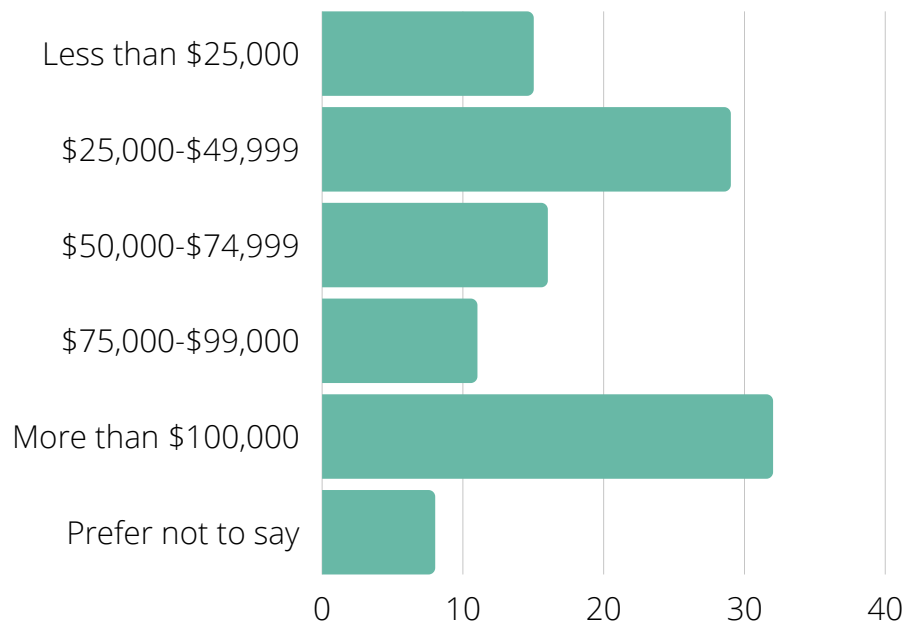
#### 5. Do you identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Metis?



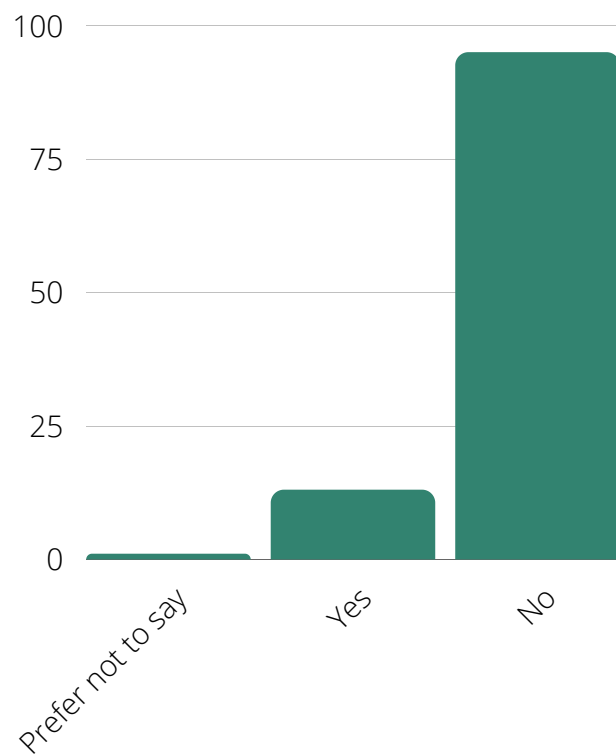
#### 6. What is your employment status?



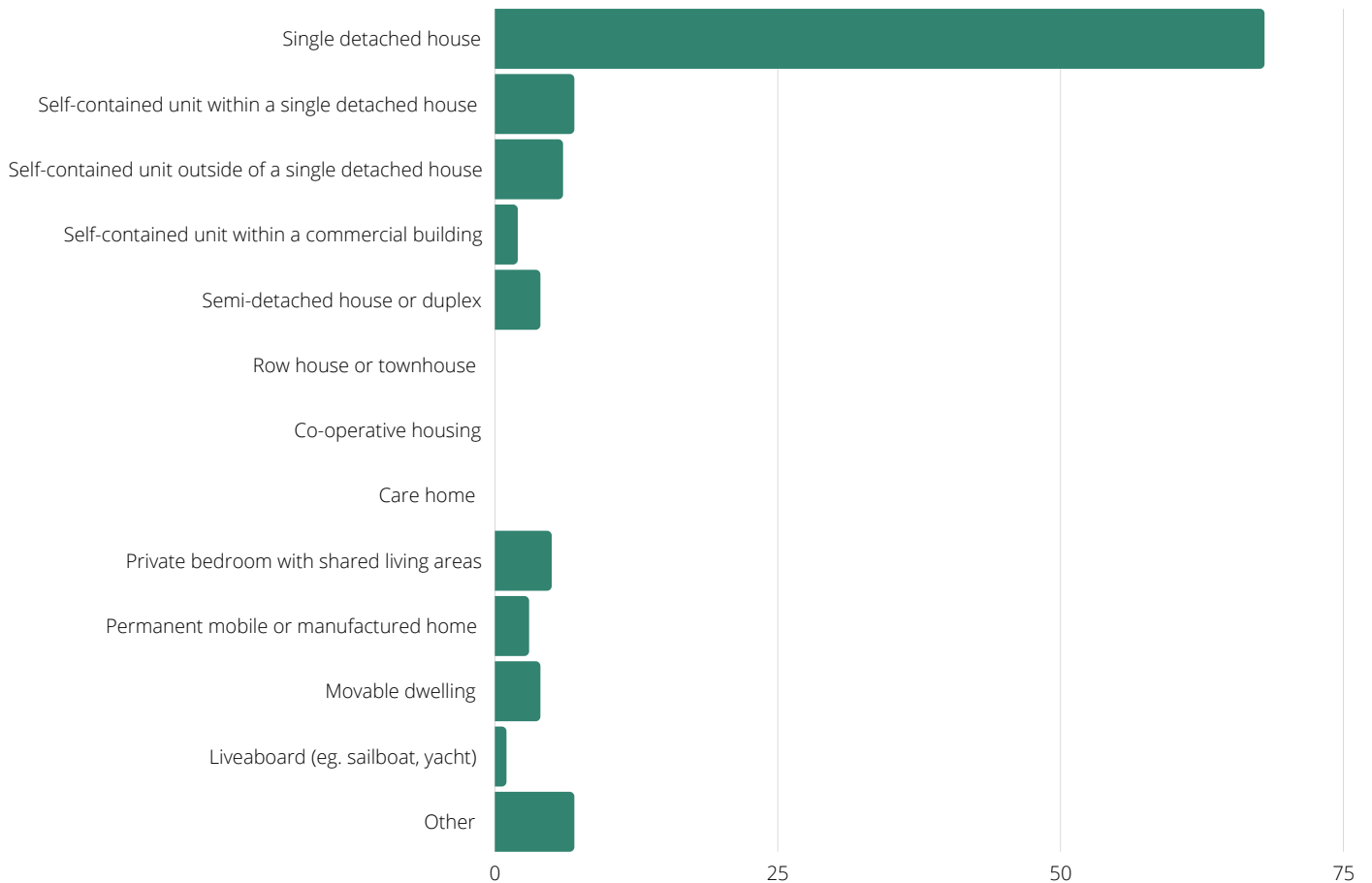
**7. What is your total household income per year before deductions?**



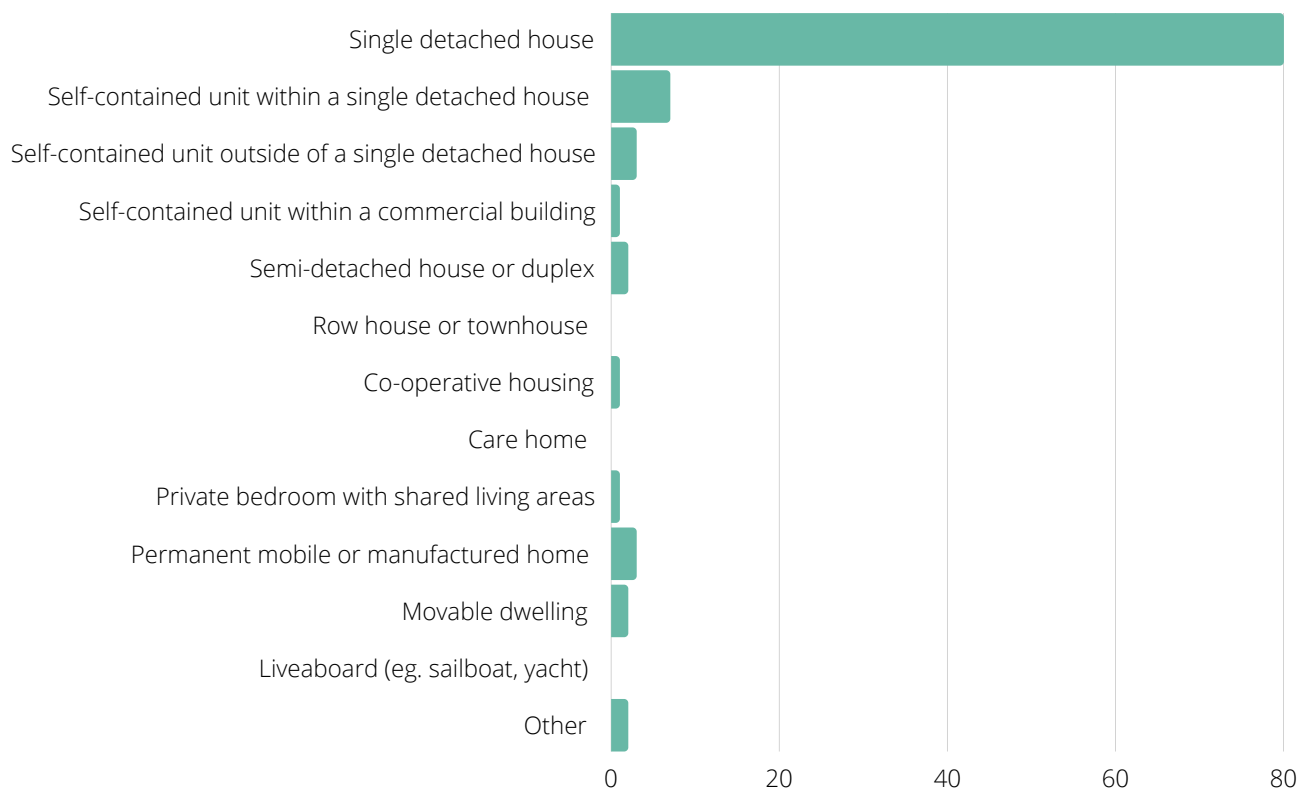
**8. Are you currently receiving any government financial assistance?**



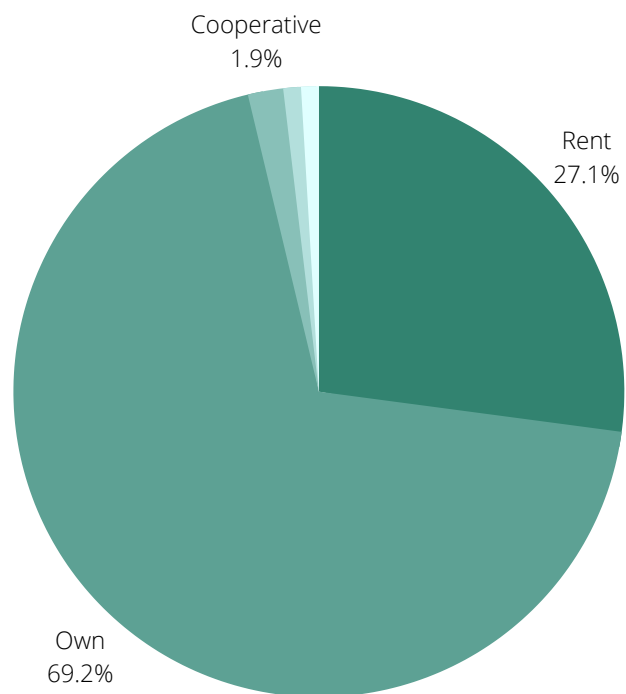
### 9. What kind of structure is your housing in Bamfield?



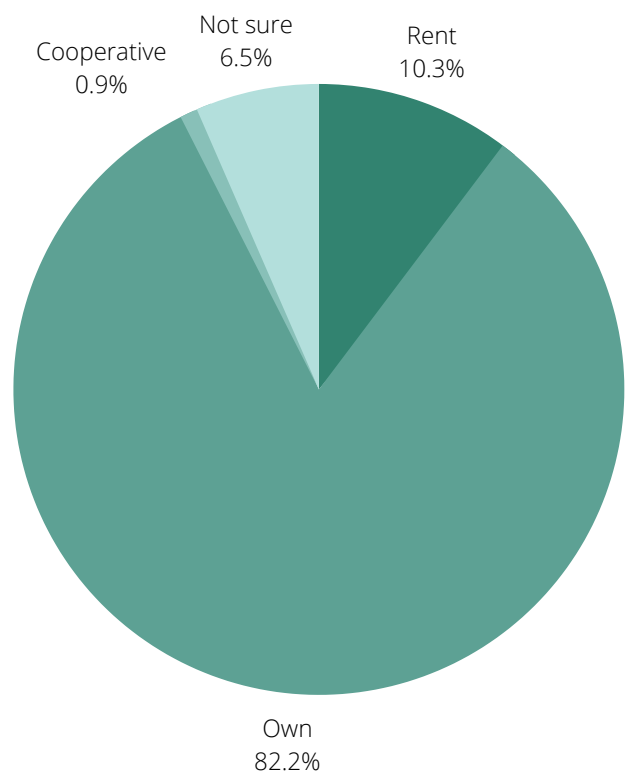
### 10. What type of housing would you prefer to live in Bamfield?



**11. Do you rent or own your housing in Bamfield?**

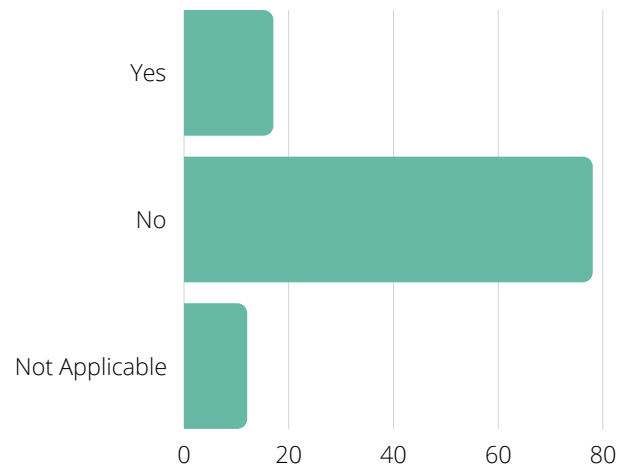


**12. Would you prefer to rent or own?**

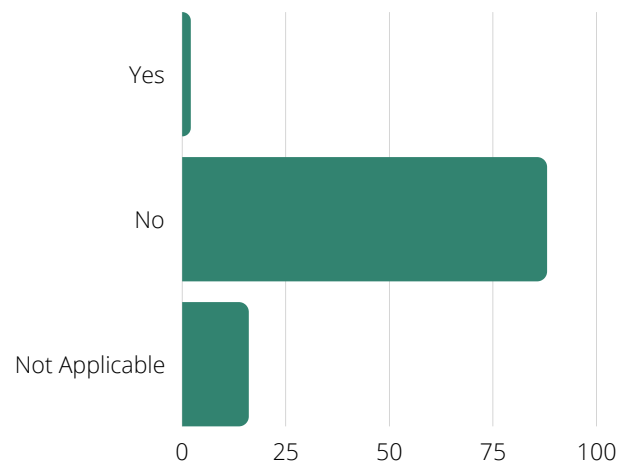




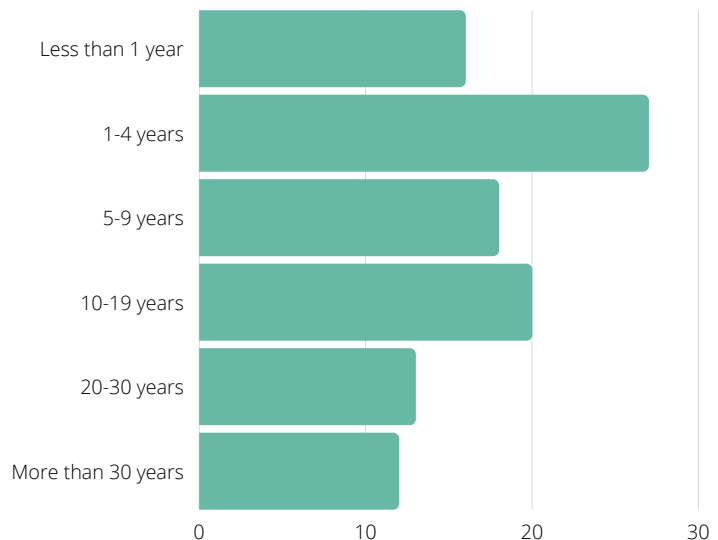
**13. Have you ever rented part of or the entirety of your housing in Bamfield as a short term vacation rental (eg. commercial accommodation, such as renting a suite within the house or a separate dwelling on the property, not a Bed and Breakfast)?**



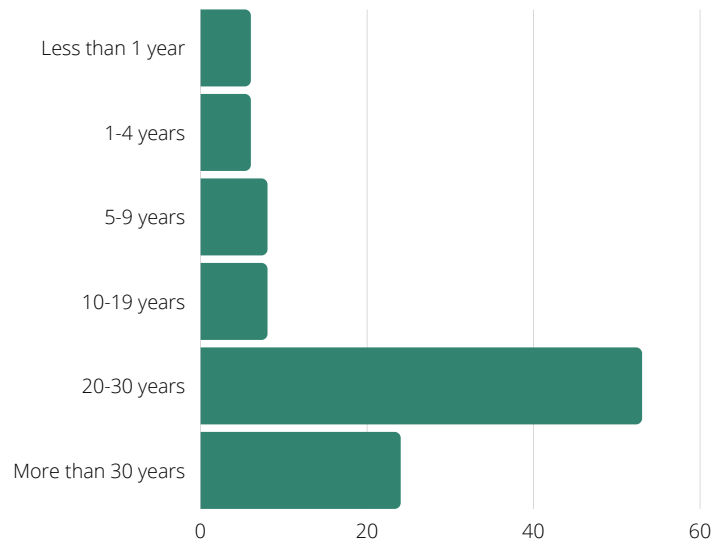
**14. Have you ever rented individual bedroom(s) in your house in Bamfield as a Bed and Breakfast (eg. commercial accommodation with common kitchen facilities provided)?**



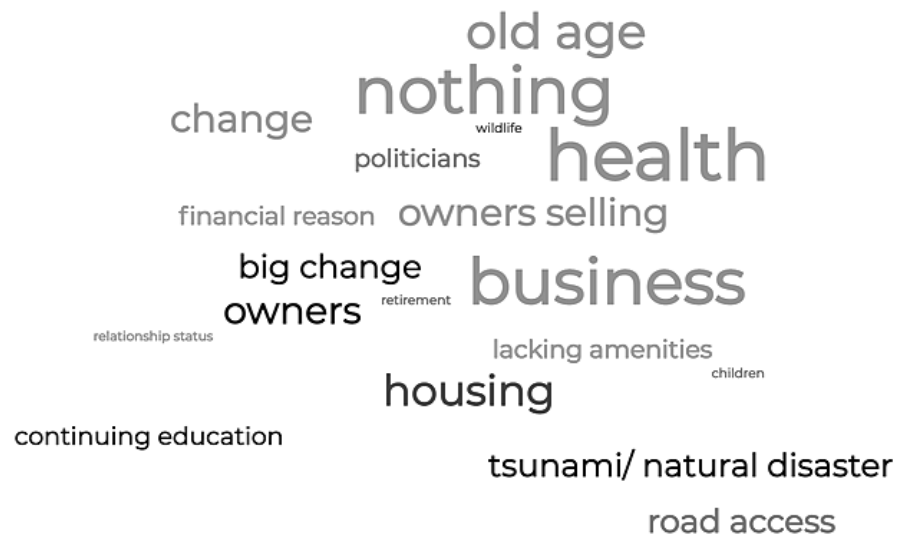
**15. On a year-round, seasonal, or part time basis, how long have you lived in your current housing in Bamfield?**



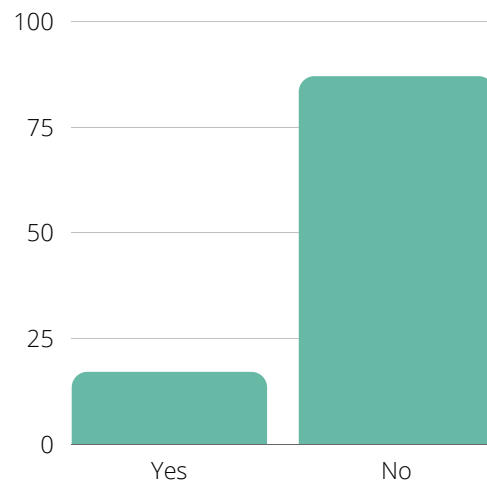
**16. How much longer do you plan to live in your current housing in Bamfield, either year round, seasonally or part-time?**



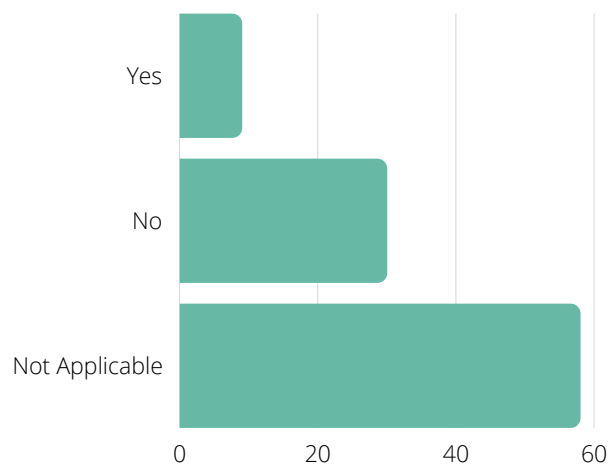
**17. What might cause you to move?**



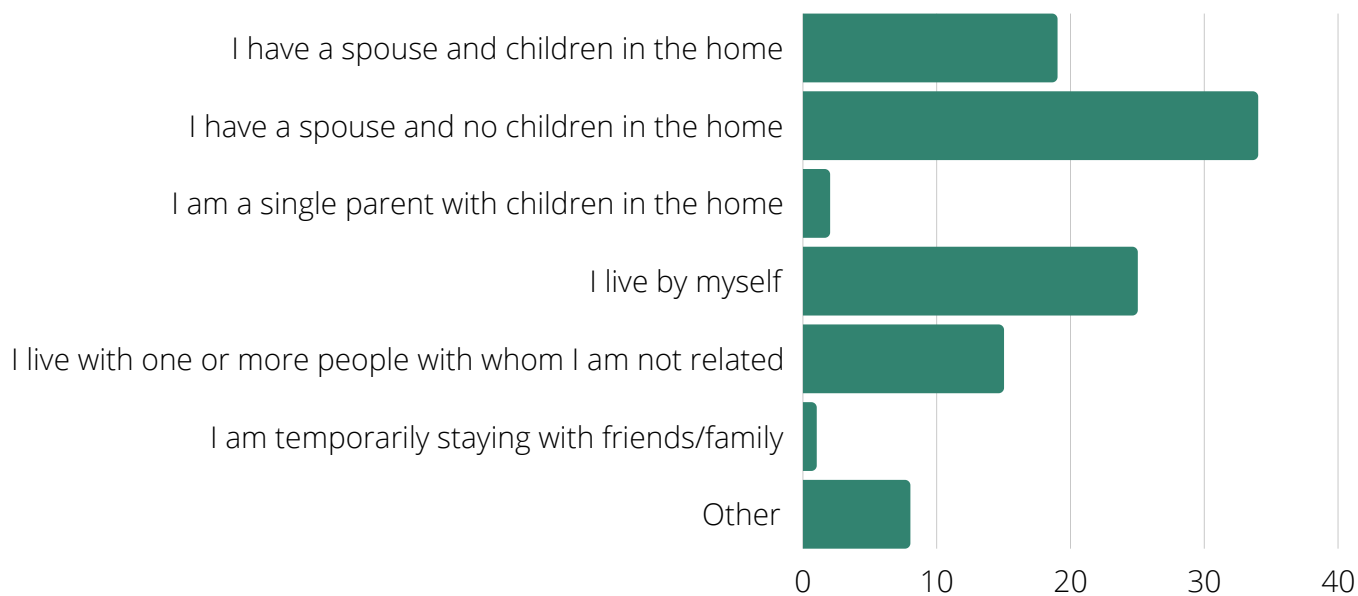
**18. Are you living in Bamfield to support a commercial operation/business?**



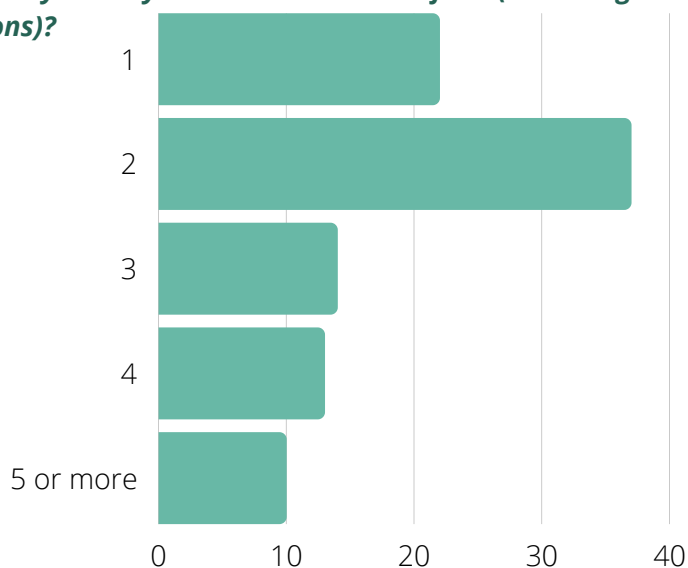
**19. If yes, do you operate the business from the same property as your primary residence?**



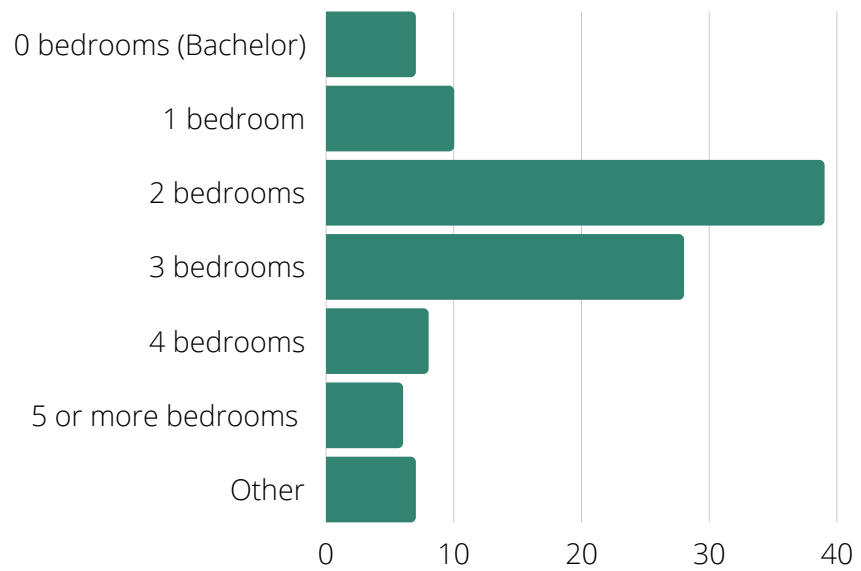
**20. Which of the following best describes your current household situation?**



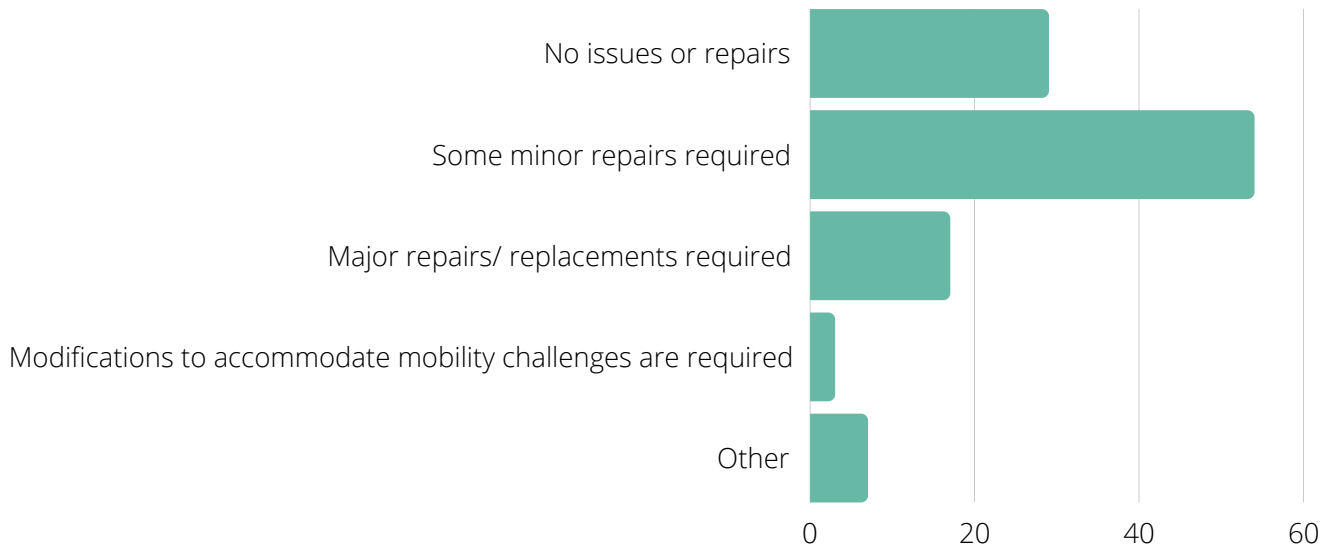
**21. How many people (including you) currently share your residence in Bamfield (excluding customers/ guests of commercial operations)?**



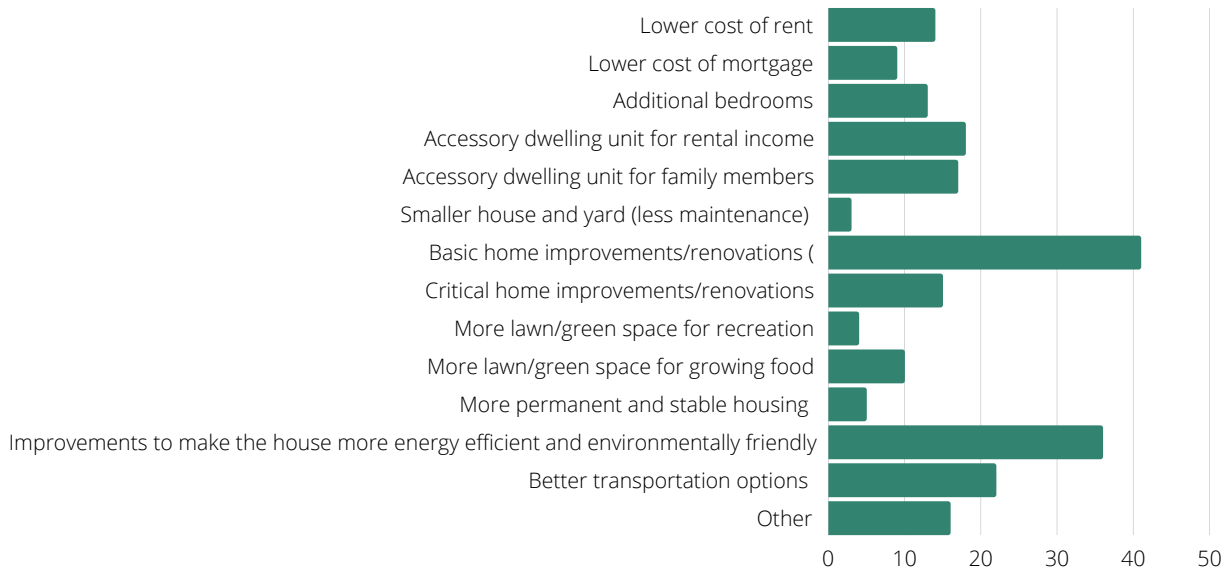
**22. How many bedrooms are there in your Bamfield residence?**



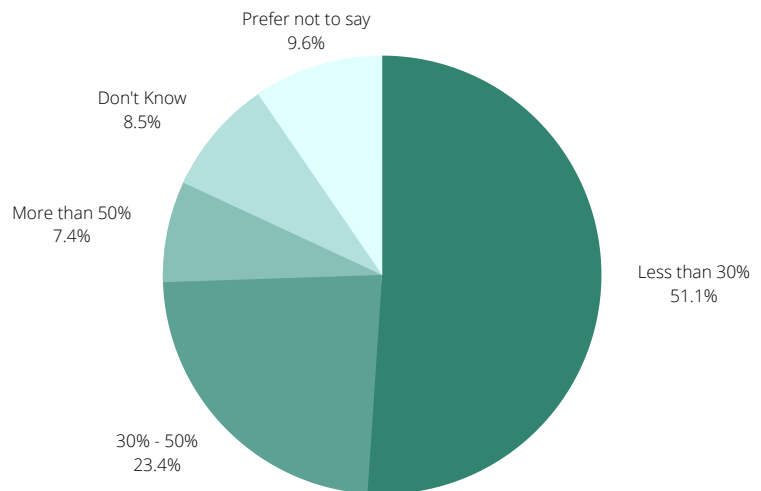
**23. How would you describe the current condition of your residence in Bamfield? (Choose all that apply)**



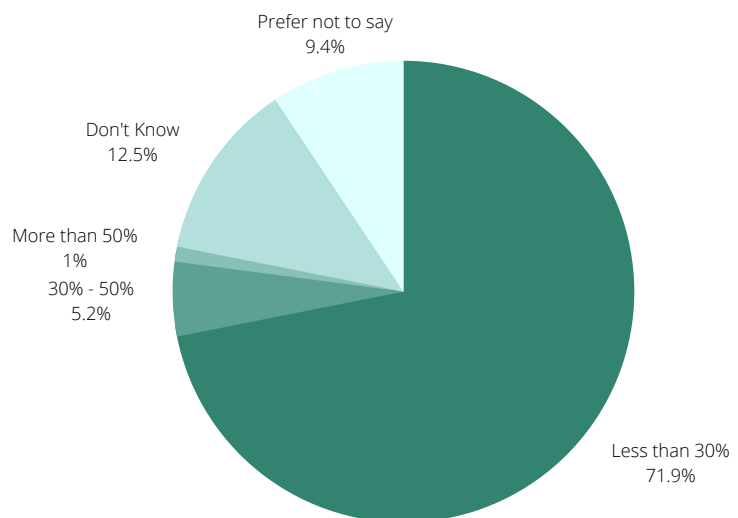
**24. How could your current housing situation in Bamfield be improved? (Choose all that apply)**



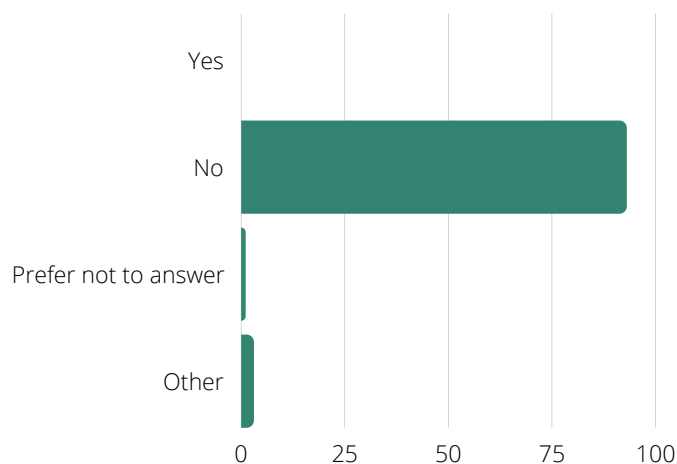
**25. Approximately how much of your household income do you currently spend on housing expenses (rent/mortgage, utilities, etc.) for your Bamfield residence?**



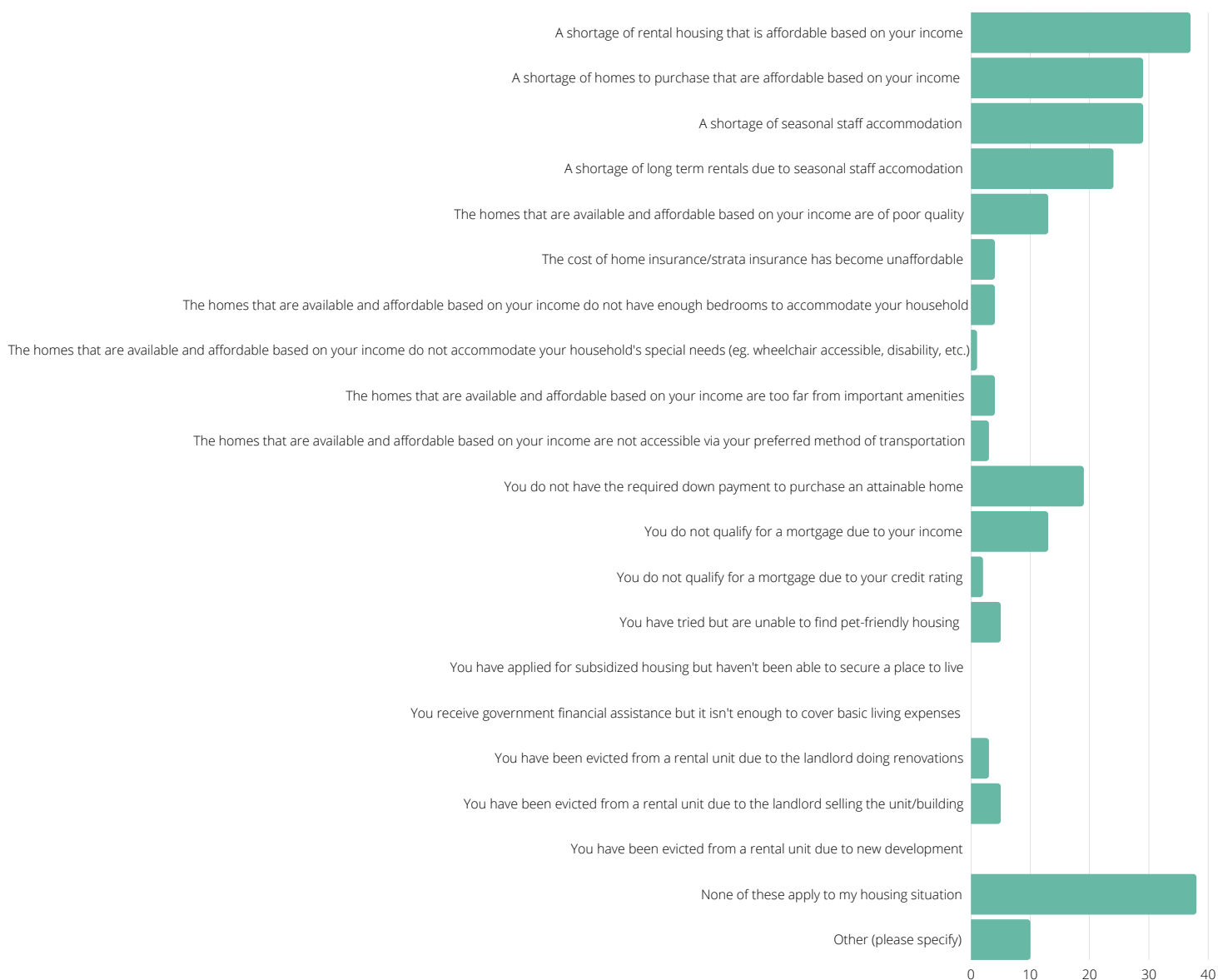
**26. Approximately how much of your household income do you currently spend on utilities for your Bamfield residence (heat, electricity, gas, water)?**



## 27. Have you ever applied to live in subsidized housing in Bamfield?

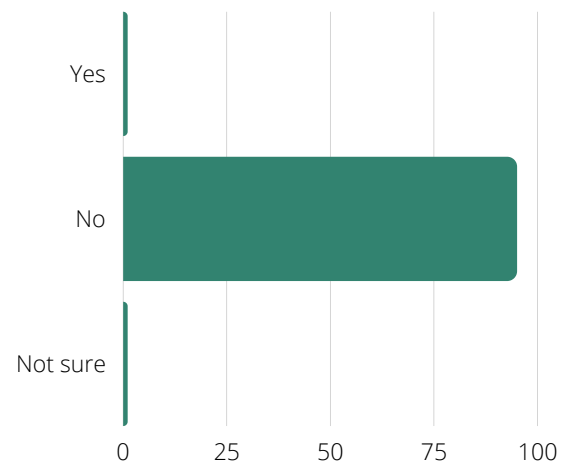


## 28. Have you ever experienced any of the following issues related to housing in Bamfield? (Choose all that apply)

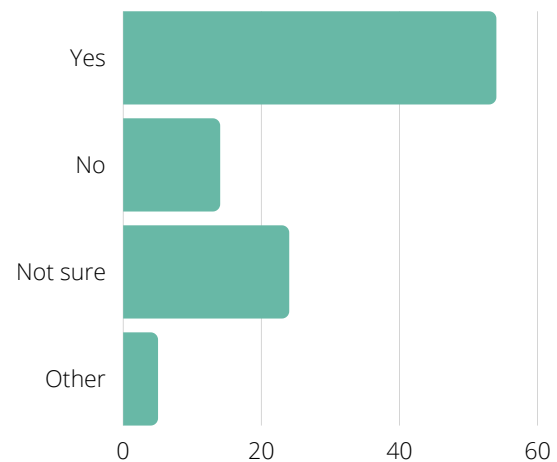




**29. Have you ever been refused housing in Bamfield or been discriminated against because of your ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender, etc?**



**30. Does your Bamfield residence allow you to live independently as you age or age in place?**





### *Discussion Question 1: Based off Current Housing Needs*

#### **In your opinion, what are the most pressing housing needs issues in Bamfield?**

- A lack of housing
  - Unaffordable for young individuals and families
  - Can't accommodate new staff or increase team size
  - Slow growth
  - Vacant homes during off season
  - Decline of community population due to lack of housing and opportunities
  - Limitations from the school only offering k-8
- The need for collaboration between nonprofits and cooperatives
  - Year round/ long term rentals
  - Appropriate housing (safe, clean, environmentally friendly)
  - Water and moorage access

“ It's a combination of a lack of housing with the lack of opportunities that stem from not having ... access in the community. ”

## **What population groups are finding it the most challenging to access housing in Bamfield?**

- Young individuals
- Individuals with entry level jobs
- Seasonal workers (i.e., fishing guides)
- New families
- People who are looking to retire
- Potential employees
- Marine center staff
- Individuals looking to age in place
- Tourists

“ ...most places are just too expensive for a young person or a young family to become established and do what they want to do in Bamfield ”

## **What type of housing needs to be addressed? (seasonal work, temporary housing needs, rental options)**

- Cooperative housing
- Intergenerational housing
- Duplexes
- Apartments
- Tiny homes
- Staff accommodation on/off site
- Subsidized housing
- Unregulated housing

“

... affordable housing is definitely something that needs to be considered for the future of the community to ... allow growth that will see families and people that want to age in place, safely, have a home for the future.

”

## What are your future concerns regarding Bamfield housing needs?

- Road access
  - Tourism
  - Current housing issues exacerbated with growth
  - Affordable housing
  - Growth and the impact that will have on the community
  - Turning into a resort community (i.e., Tofino vs Ucluelet)
  - Lack of full time residents
  - Increased property values
- Environmental responsibility
  - Population decline
  - Declining community feel
  - No incentive for the development of rental housing

“

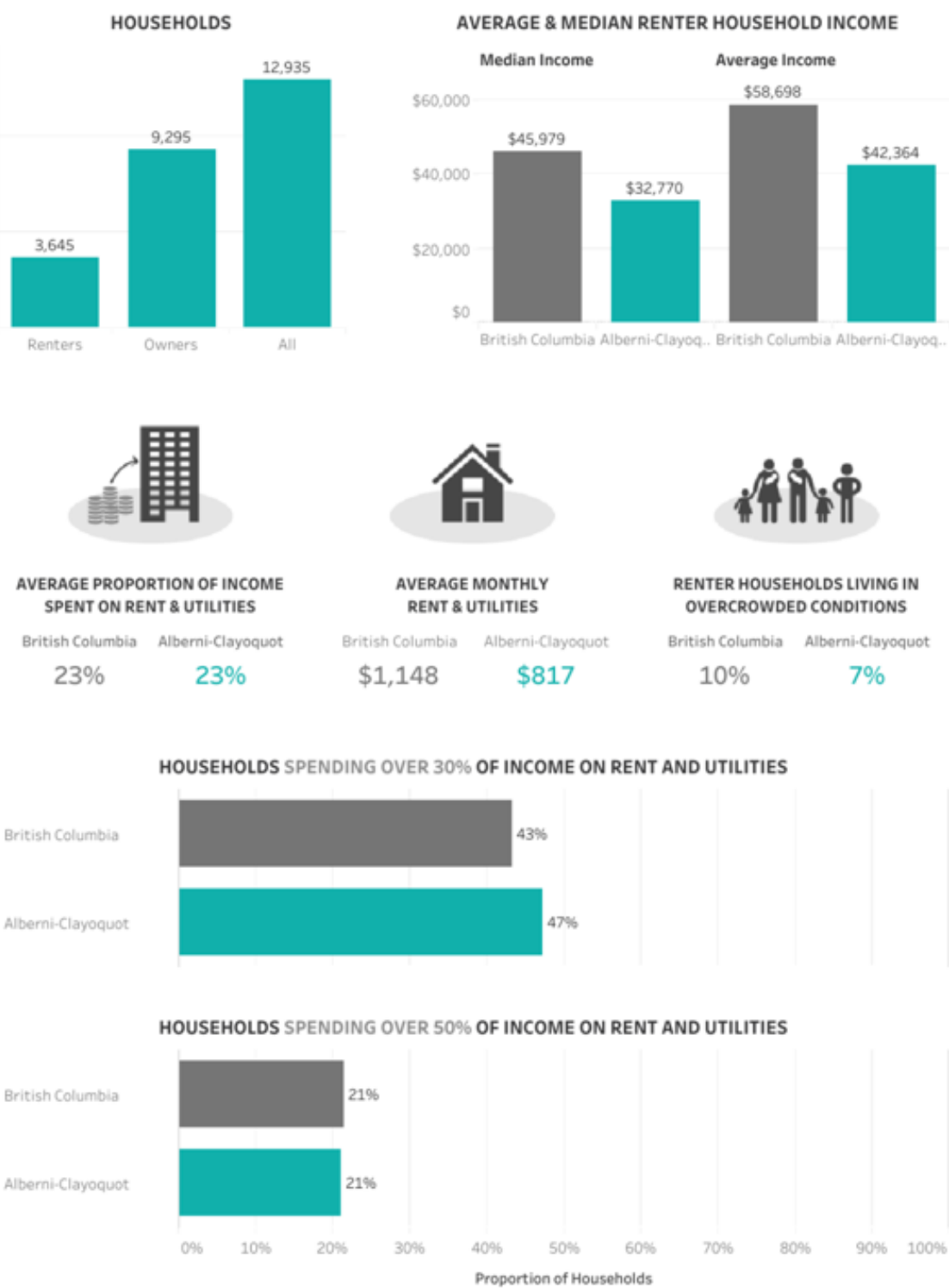
... it's kind of ironic that there's a lot of space here that's sitting empty...but it's kind of the way it is.

[Referring to seasonal residents]

”



A Snapshot of Renters in Alberni-Clayoquot & British Columbia



## Community Profiles - Port Alberni 2018 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C.\*

### Highlights

This infographic includes data from the Port Alberni homeless count conducted on the evening of April 10 and during the day of April 11. This data provides an overall snapshot of homelessness in Port Alberni, informs B.C.'s Homelessness Action Plan, and will provide a baseline to measure progress.



People were identified as experiencing homelessness



### GENDER IDENTITY



### AGE BREAKDOWN



### INDIGENOUS OVERREPRESENTATION



### MAIN BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HOUSING



### SOURCES OF INCOME



### LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS



### HEALTH CONDITIONS



### LENGTH OF TIME LIVED IN COMMUNITY



## Limitations and Methodological Considerations

Please note the following considerations in reviewing the data in this infographic.

In the spring of 2018, the Province of British Columbia funded homeless counts in 12 B.C. communities. The Homelessness Services Association of BC, Urban Matters and BC Non-profit Housing Association coordinated these counts and prepared this report. This report will inform B.C.'s Homelessness Action Plan and provide a baseline to measure progress.

Data from counts in the 12 B.C. count communities constitutes a benchmark to measure progress made to reduce homelessness over time but does not allow for any current longitudinal comparisons.

- Point-in-Time (PIT) homeless counts provide a snapshot of people who are experiencing homelessness in a twenty-four-hour period, their demographic characteristics, service use and other information.
- For the purpose of counts conducted in the 12 provincially funded B.C. communities, an individual was defined as experiencing homelessness if they did not have a place of their own where they paid rent and could expect to stay for at least 30 days. This included people who:
  - Stayed overnight on the night of the count in homeless shelters, including transition houses for women fleeing violence and youth safe houses, people with no fixed address (NFA) staying temporarily in hospitals, jails or detox facilities (defined as "sheltered"); and,
  - Stayed outside in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles or were staying temporarily at someone else's place (couch surfing) and/or using homelessness services (defined as "unsheltered").

- During the count, we conduct surveys with people who identify as experiencing homelessness. In areas where surveys are not possible, and to support the PIT count, we collect additional information from shelter operators, hospitals, jails and BC Housing.
- PIT counts are an undercount and represent only those individuals identified during a 24-hour period.
  - This is because not everyone experiencing homelessness can be found and not everyone who is found is willing to be surveyed.
- While PIT Counts are an accepted methodological tool, the numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are experiencing homelessness on a given day in that community.
- A companion report ("2018 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C.") is available separately.
- In addition to data from the 12 B.C. funded counts, the report includes data from six federally funded 2018 homeless counts, two other independent 2018 counts, data from four counts conducted in 2017 and shelter data from other B.C. communities (collected by BC Housing).
- The approach provides a general picture of homelessness in B.C. with coverage of more than 85% of the province by population.



HSABC  
Homelessness Services  
Association of BC

urban  
matters



BCNPHA  
BC Non-Profit Housing Association



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT  
REGIONAL DISTRICT



VANCOUVER ISLAND  
UNIVERSITY

MA&RRI

