



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT  
REGIONAL DISTRICT

# **SPROAT LAKE ELECTORAL AREA 'D' HOUSING NEEDS REPORT**

**ALBERNI CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT (ACRD)**

**OCTOBER 2021**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Sproat Lake Electoral Area 'D' Housing Needs Report (HNR) was developed by a project team consisting of:

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The ACRD recognizes and appreciates that work to develop this Housing Needs Report was conducted in the Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacasath First Nation Territories.

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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# 1. INTRODUCTION

A Housing Needs Report (HNR) is a tool for local governments to use to inform planning documents such as the Zoning Bylaw and Official Community Plan. The report is intended to describe the current housing situation, and to formulate a more complete picture of how the Alberni Valley's changing needs influence housing requirements. The HNR aims to help the Electoral Area residents and property owners, ACRD Board, and others better understand current and future housing needs and identify existing and projected gaps in the housing supply.

A HNR is developed through a Housing Needs Assessment, using the guidelines laid out by the provincial government and guiding legislation. Over 50 distinct kinds of data have been collected, including population (current and projected), housing stock details, household income, and economic sectors. The sections below are intended to summarize the data, analyze any trends, and discuss important findings. Comparisons to the Alberni Valley (not including the City of Port Alberni), ACRD, and the Province of British Columbia (BC) have been made throughout the document to provide context

Refer to the supplementary Alberni Valley Housing Needs Report for a more detailed description of:

- HNR purpose and requirements.
- Process for HNR data collection and community engagement.
- How the Sproat Lake Electoral Area (EA) compares to the other EAs in the region in terms of housing needs and gaps.

## 1.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Stakeholder and community input is important to gain a better understanding of the current and future housing situation, as well as fill gaps not captured by statistical data. To address these gaps, engagement opportunities were provided in late 2020 and into 2021 for the development of the Sproat Lake HNR through a public Alberni Valley housing needs survey, a public online community forum, a joint Advisory Planning Commission meeting with the four Alberni Valley Electoral Areas, and many one-on-one conversations through email, phone and other virtual methods. Community engagement predominantly took place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community engagement in 2020 was completed in collaboration with the City of Port Alberni as part of the development of the City of Port Alberni Housing Needs Assessment and Report. This combined engagement included an online survey targeted at City of Port Alberni and Alberni Valley Electoral Area residents and property owners, and a public online community forum. The survey was hosted on the City's Let's Connect website and promoted through social media and online platforms. A total of 668 responses were received, with 26% of respondents from the Alberni Valley EAs, and 27 individual respondents were from Sproat Lake. All engagement excerpts in this HNR come from responses to the community survey from community members who identified as residents of EA F. A full survey summary for EA F can be found in Appendix B. Key community engagement findings from all engagement methods were used to develop the recommendations in this HNR.

## 1.2 DATA LIMITATIONS

While best efforts have been made to ensure the data within this report are accurate, there are some limitations to consider. These include:

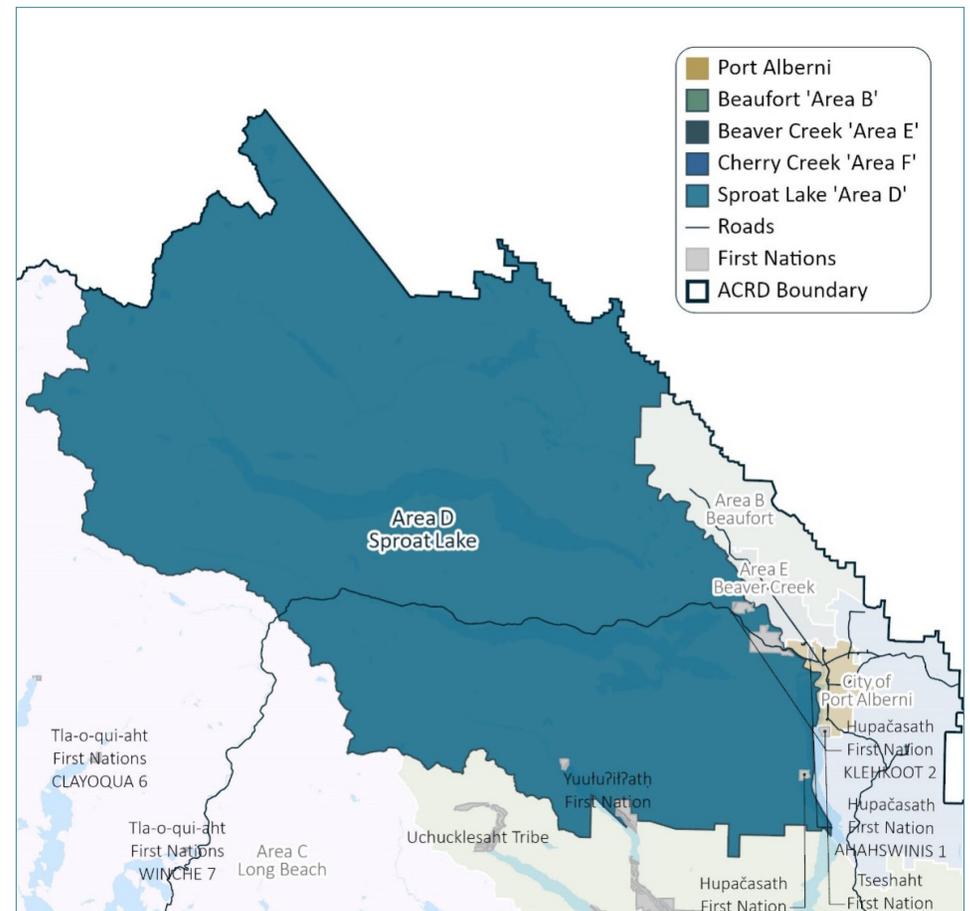
1. The data in the custom Statistics Canada spreadsheet varies slightly from the Community Profile for Sproat Lake because the custom data counts persons in private households, which is usually less than the total population. This means that it excludes those living in commercial, institutional, or communal dwellings (e.g., nursing homes, rooming houses, hotels, etc.). The difference between the total population and the population in private households in Sproat Lake in 2016 is 9 persons.
2. The projections contained in this report were developed using the population projection data from Statistics Canada, which is only provided for ACRD. Projections for Sproat Lake were extrapolated from this data using the best practices available. This should represent a plausible scenario should population changes follow the patterns observed over the years. In addition, the projections data is based on the total population data (and not the population in private households).
3. The data from 2011 is considered less reliable due to the voluntary nature of the 2011 National Household Survey.
4. When applying statistical analysis to small population sizes, changes to a small segment of the population can have a large impact on percentages, averages, and mean values.
5. Statistics Canada suppresses the data where the value is less than 5 for privacy reasons. This means that zero values should be interpreted as a number between 0 and 5.
6. The most recent population and demographic Census data is from 2016. Although this Census was conducted five years prior to the publication of the HNR, it is the most reliable form of data available.



## 2. CURRENT CONDITIONS IN SPROAT LAKE

This section looks at the most recent demographic and economic profile of Electoral Area D (Sproat Lake), based on the 2016 Census. It also analyzes the current housing stock as well as current needs.

Sproat Lake Electoral Area (EA) is 1,536 km<sup>2</sup> and encompasses two large lakes, Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake. Much of the EA is uninhabited forested and mountainous land, with the primary habited areas centered around Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake and along the west side of the Somass and Stamp Rivers. The EA also includes the First Nation reserves of Tsaheh 1 (Tseshaht First Nation) and Klehkoot 2 (Hupacasath First Nation). There are also approximately 120 lots zoned for seasonal recreational dwellings, located mostly along the shores of Sproat Lake.



## 2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

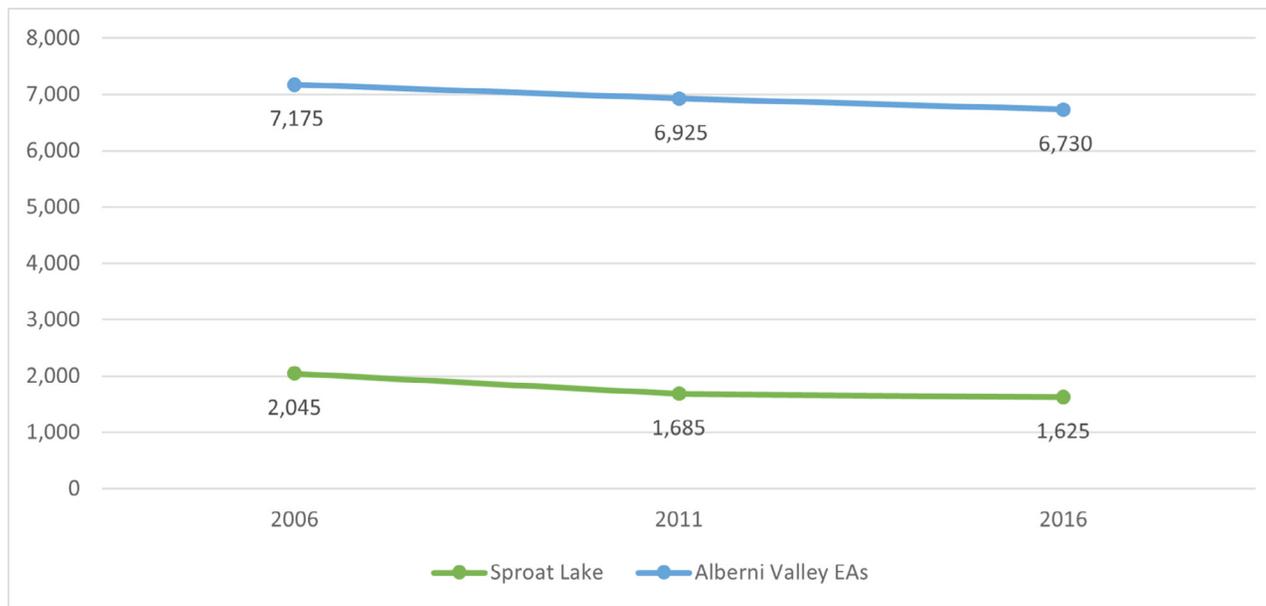
### Subsection Summary

- The population of Sproat Lake decreased slightly between 2006 and 2016.
- The average household size continued to decrease.
- There was a significant increase in the percentage of seniors in the population.

### Population

As illustrated in Figure 1, the population of Sproat Lake was 1,625 in 2016, a decrease of 20.5% from 2006. The population of the Alberni Valley also decreased during this time. This population decrease is likely due to demographic and socioeconomic changes in the area and an increase in non-resident property owners using lakefront residents as recreational properties.

**Figure 1: Sproat Lake and Alberni Valley Population, 2006-2016**



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

## What might cause Sproat Lake survey respondents to move?

“Health”

“Age”

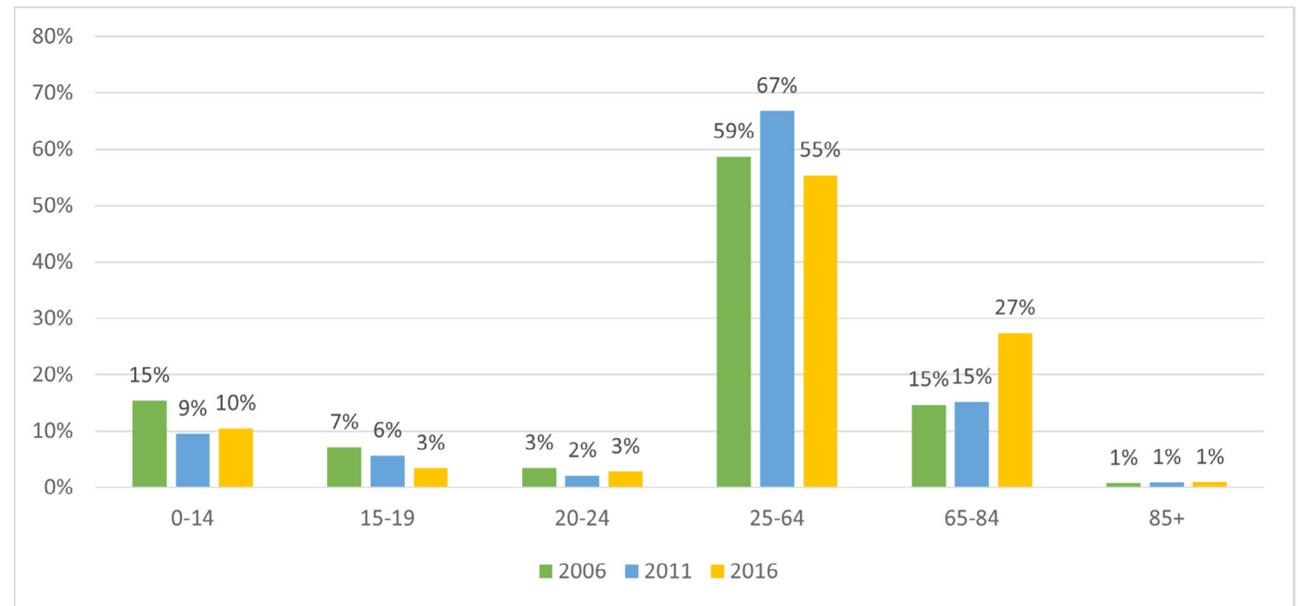
“Not being able to maintain the home and grounds”

“Will have to move if cannot do the slope the house is on and or is unmanageable”

## Age

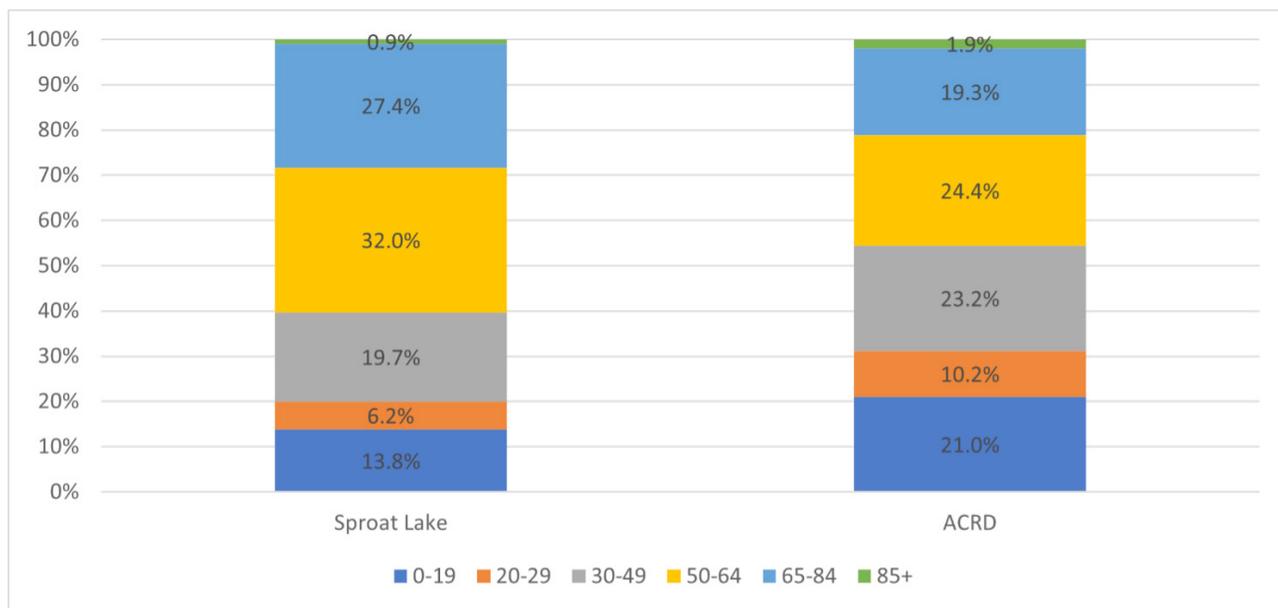
Sproat Lake has seen a significant increase in the percentage of seniors 65 to 84 years since 2006, rising from 15% to 27% of the population. This is a trend that is seen across BC and Canada and is likely to have a serious impact on housing availability. Figure 2 shows how age groups have changed over the last 10 years, with a decreasing portion of children and young adults, while the percentage of seniors steadily increases. The number of people over 85 is low and likely due to the lack of assisted living and long-term care facilities, other services, as well as the rural and remote nature of the EA. The lack of services and other amenities in close proximity also presents challenges for those residents who plan to live independently in their home as they age or age in place. 45.7% of housing needs survey respondents from Sproat Lake indicated their current residence either doesn't allow them to age in place, or they don't know if it does.

**Figure 2: Population by Age Group, Sproat Lake, 2006-2016**



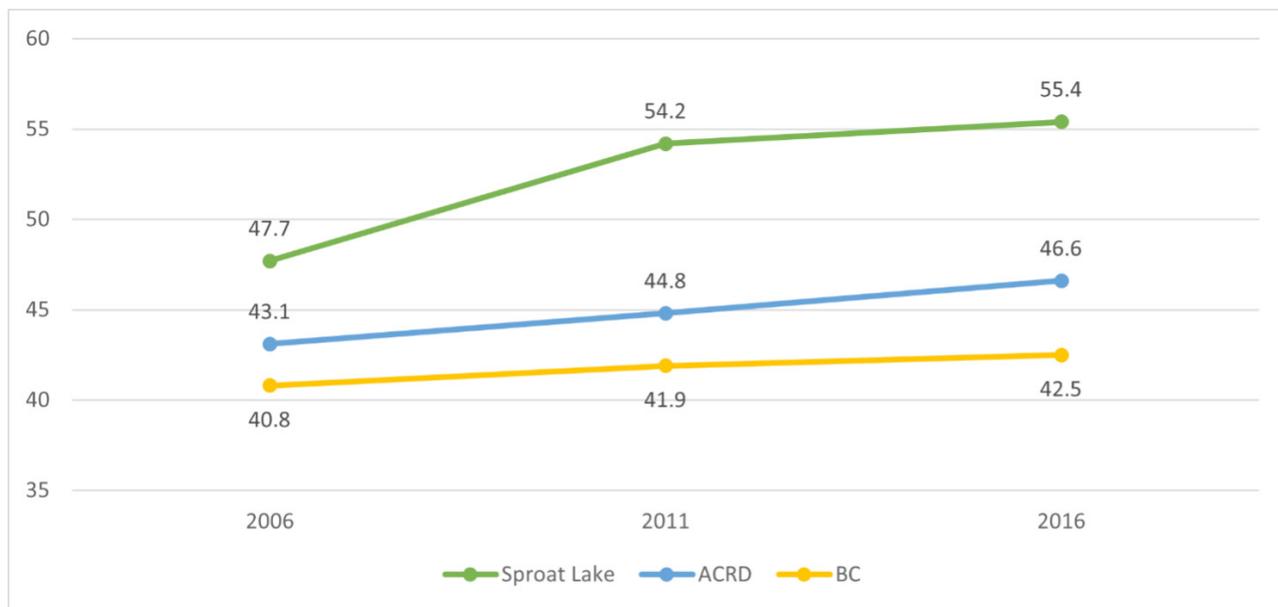
Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016, 2011, 2006

**Figure 3: Population by Age Group, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016

**Figure 4: Median Age, Sproat Lake, ACRD and BC, 2006-2016**



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

The majority (60%) of Sproat Lake residents were over 50 in 2016, which is significantly higher than the ACRD as a whole (45%), shown in Figure 3 below. Additionally, the majority (78%) of housing needs survey respondents from Sproat Lake were between 50 and 84 years, further indicating the high representation of older residents in this EA.

The high percentage of residents over 50 is likely due to the affordability of properties in the area, which may make it difficult for young families to purchase property, as well as a low mobility rate with many Sproat Lake residents remaining in their homes as they age.

The higher percentage of people over 50 is also reflected in the median age of Sproat Lake residents, which was 55.4 in 2016, compared to 46.6 in the ACRD and 42.5 for BC. The median age increased by 7.7 years between 2006 and 2016, which was much faster than the ACRD but is reflective of a similar increase in residential property values.

## Mobility

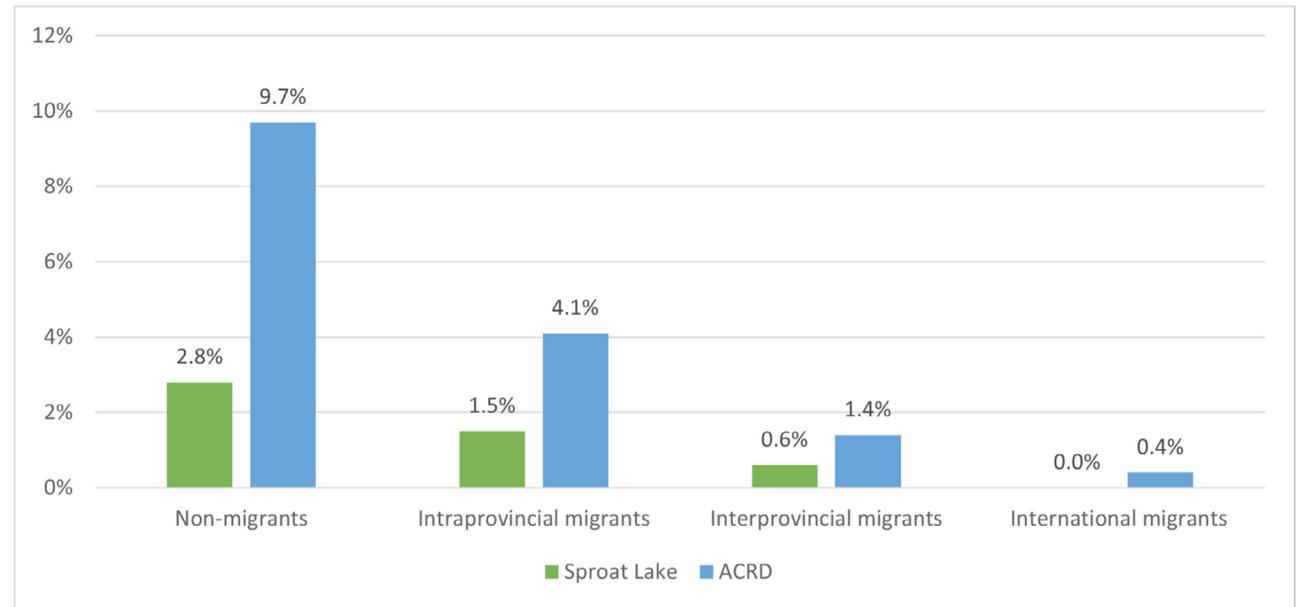
Statistics Canada tracks the movement of people in or within a community as “mobility” which is measured as part of the Census. Sproat Lake had very low mobility between 2015 and 2016, with 94.5% of residents not moving at all. Figure 5 below shows where the remaining 5.5% of Sproat Lake residents moved from. It is important to note that because the population of Sproat Lake decreased between 2011 and 2016, it is likely that more people moved out of the area than into it during 2015.

40.5% of Sproat Lake housing needs survey respondents stated that they have lived in their current place of residence for 20 years or longer. This is followed by 21.6% in their current home for 10 to 19 years. Additionally, 51.4% of Sproat Lake survey respondents indicated that they plan to live in their current place of residence for more than 10 years, and 27% were unsure how long.

## Households

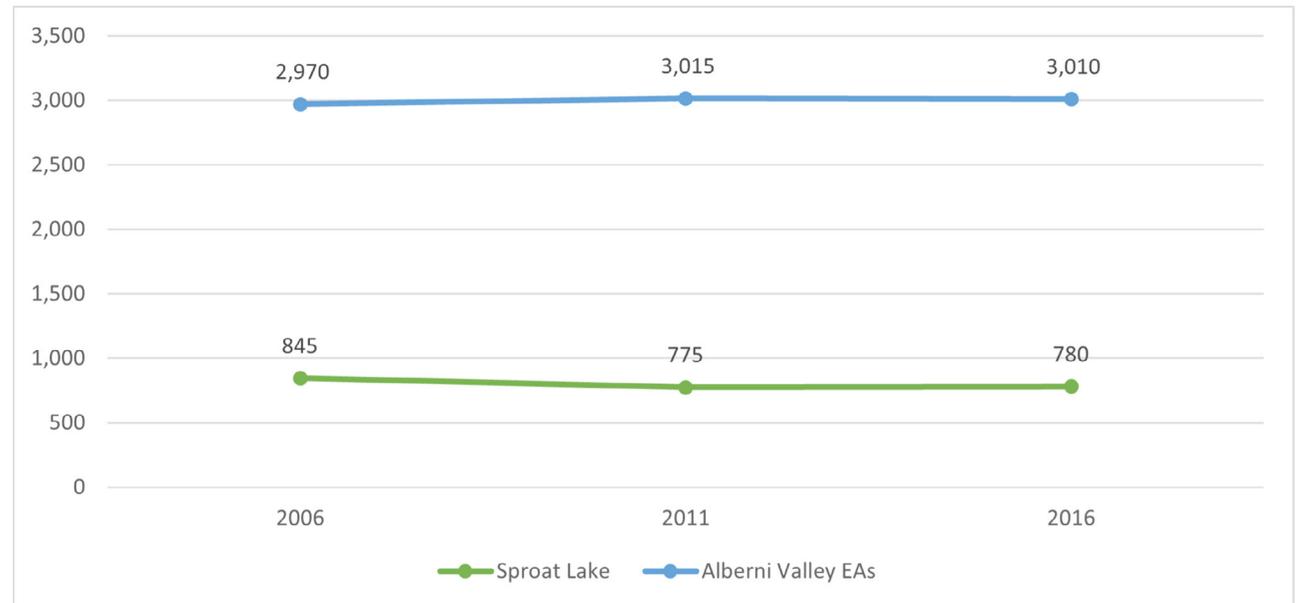
The total number of private households in Sproat Lake was 780 in 2016, which makes up about 26% of the Alberni Valley population (excluding the City of Port Alberni). This was a decrease from 2006 of 65 households. Some of the empty dwellings may have been converted to vacation homes owned by non-resident property owners or short term rental units. Figure 6 shows a comparison between the number of households in Sproat Lake and the four Alberni Valley EAs between 2006 and 2016.

**Figure 5: Mobility, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2015-2016**



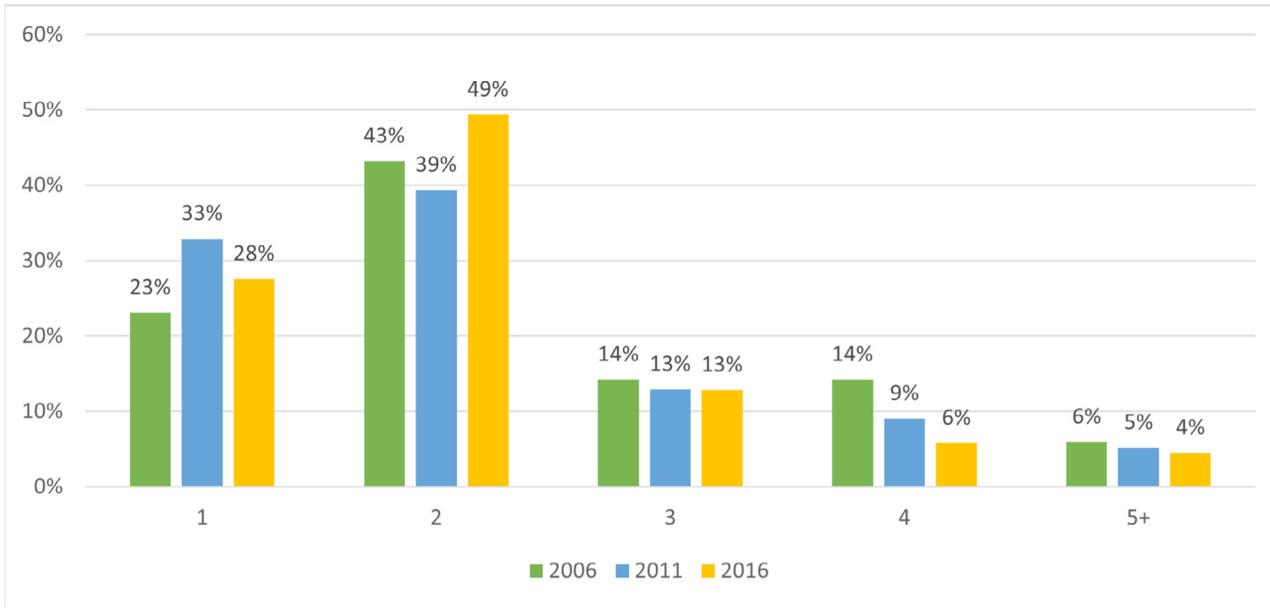
Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016

**Figure 6: Private Households, Sproat Lake and Alberni Valley, 2006-2016**



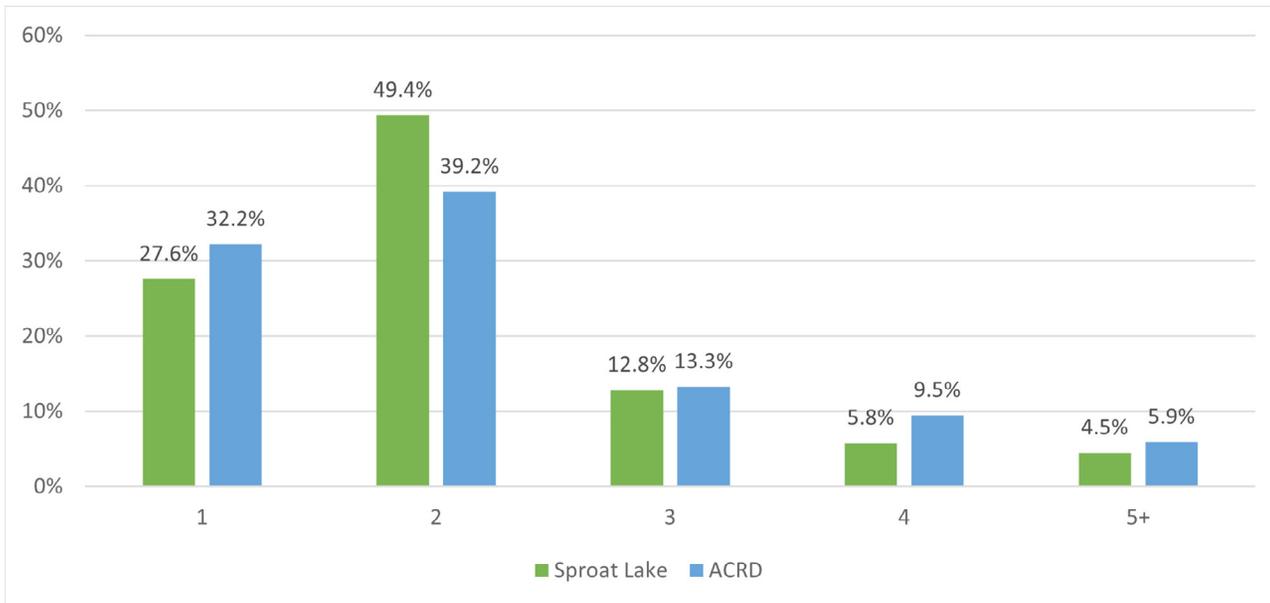
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016, 2011, 2006 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Figure 7: Private Households by Size, Sproat Lake, 2006-2016**



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

**Figure 8: Private Households by Size, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2016**



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

Between 2006 and 2016 the average size of households decreased from 2.4 persons to 2.1 persons, which reflects similar trends across the region. Figure 7 shows that the number of 1 and 2 person households both fluctuated between 2006 and 2016, but ultimately each grew by 5%. The percentage of households with 3 or more people decreased. By 2016, 77% of households were comprised of households with 1 or 2 people.

There were significantly more two person households in Sproat Lake (49.4%) compared to the ACRD as a whole (39.2%) in 2016, as shown in Figure 8. The high number of smaller households in Sproat Lake is further confirmed by the number of housing needs survey respondents from Sproat Lake that include two (67.6%) and three person (13.5%) households. This is likely due to the number of residents of retirement age, who are unlikely to have children in the home. There are also comparatively less four and five or more person households. This may reflect the high cost of housing and the distance to services including schools.

## Indigenous Identity

In 2016, 7.7% of residents in Sproat Lake 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.” 40 people identifying as Indigenous moved out of the Sproat Lake Electoral Area between 2006 and 2016, which is a decrease of 24%. Even though the percentage of Indigenous people living in Sproat Lake is much smaller than the percentage for the ACRD (20% in 2016) it is still more than the provincial percentage of 6%.

## Post-Secondary Students

There is no post-secondary school in Electoral Area D and no information is available regarding the number of Sproat Lake residents who attend the Port Alberni North Island College campus.

## Disability and Health

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) provides information about the number of households that have at least one person with “activity limitations” which is defined as difficulties “carrying out daily activities such as hearing, seeing, communicating, or walking. Typically, these difficulties could arise from physical or mental conditions or health problems.”. Activity limitations are more commonly referred to as disabilities.

Although there is no data on the number of Sproat Lake residents who have at least one activity limitation, the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability found that 22.3% of Canadians aged 15 years and over had at least one disability that limited their daily activities. Findings in this survey included:

- People with disabilities were less likely to be employed, with only 59% of working age adults with disabilities employed compared to 80% of working age adults without disabilities.
- People with disabilities had lower incomes.
- Almost one-third of working age adults with more severe disabilities were living in poverty.

This information should be taken into consideration with regard to municipal policy and accessibility standards. It is likely that in Sproat Lake people with disabilities may struggle to find suitable housing. When the rental vacancy rate is low and the housing market is very active, accessible dwellings can be extremely limited, pushing people with disabilities to live in unsafe conditions or homes with inadequate accessibility. About 5% of people from Sproat Lake who participated in the Alberni Valley’s online housing needs survey said that they had been refused housing or been discriminated against because of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender, etc.

## 2.2 ECONOMIC PROFILE

This subsection highlights the household incomes, employment, and other economic indicators of Sproat Lake residents. The data was gathered from the custom dataset provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The income data has been adjusted for 2015 constant dollars.

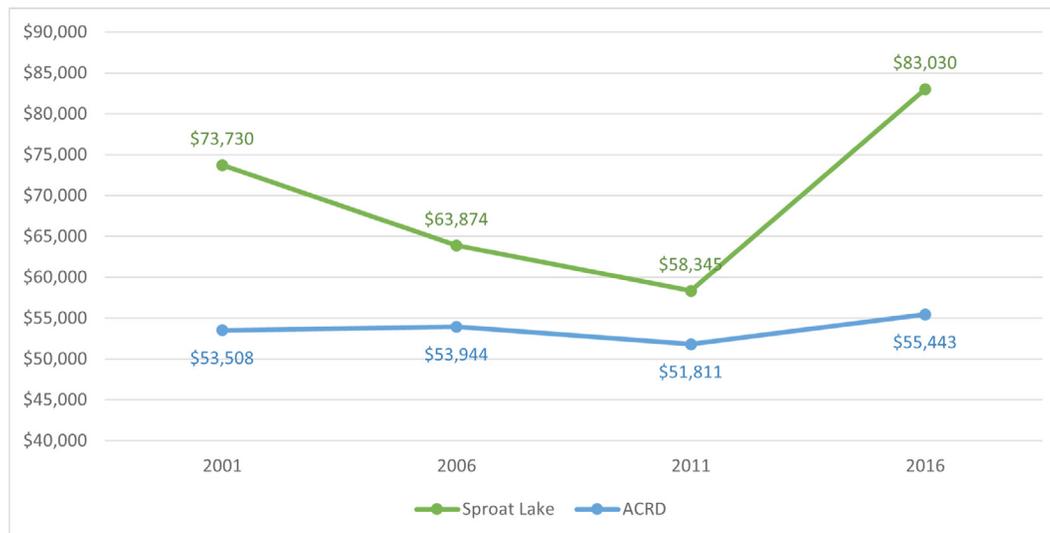
### Subsection Summary

- The median household income increased significantly between 2011 and 2016 after declining for at least 10 years.
- The income gap between renter households and owner households increased, with renter households only making 25% of owner household income.
- The participation rate increased very slightly while the unemployment rate decreased by 0.1%.

### Household Income

The median household income in Sproat Lake and the ACRD has fluctuated significantly since 2001. Census data shows that Sproat Lake residents experienced financial difficulties between 2001 and 2011, with steady decreases in median income, before experiencing significant growth between 2011 and 2016. In total, Sproat Lake residents saw the median income rise by 12.6%, significantly more than the median income growth for ACRD residents as a whole, which was 3.6%, shown in Figure 9. Higher median household income for Sproat Lake residents, as compared to the rest of the Alberni Valley, is indicated in the housing needs survey results with 40.5% of respondents earning \$75,000 or more (29.7% of which earn more than \$100,000).

**Figure 9: Median Household Income, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2001-2016**



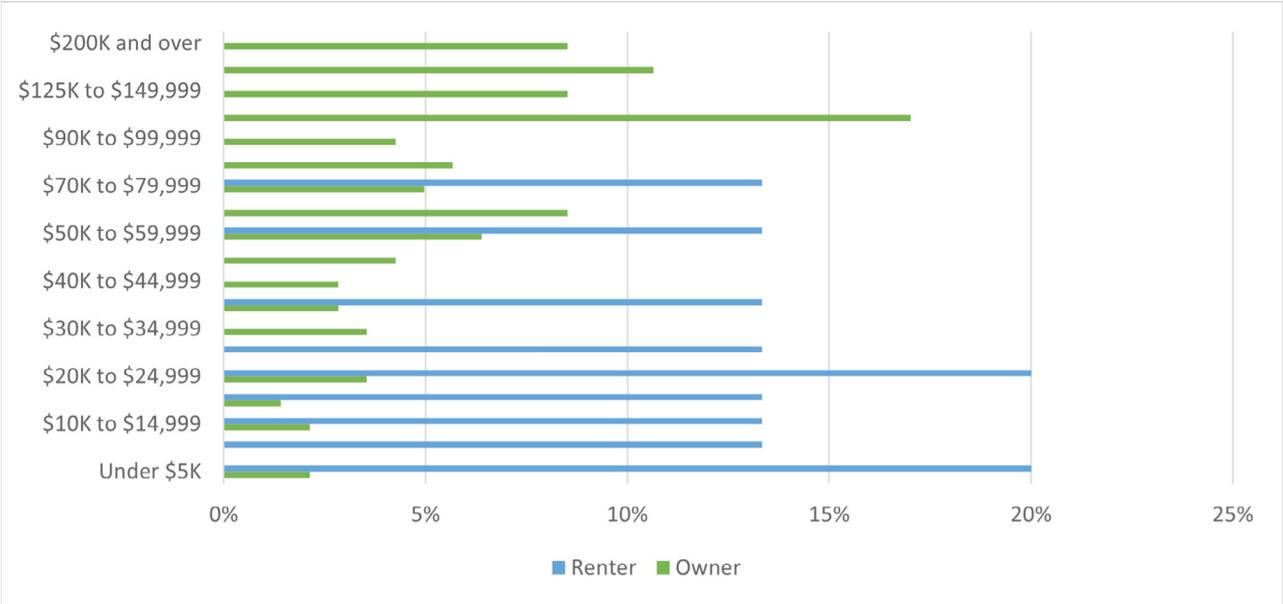
Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016, 2011, 2006, 2001 and NHS 2011

*Note: Household income data is collected for the year before each Census year. The years shown in the charts below are Census years. The median household income identifies the mid-point of household income data.*



In general, owner households have a significantly higher income than renter households, as illustrated by Figure 10 below. Due to the small number of renter households in the Sproat Lake EA (75 in 2016), there are some issues with rounding. Therefore, it is hard to know the exact percentage of renter households that earn less than \$50,000. In 2016, the median household income for owners was \$89,689, compared to \$23,149 for renters. The income gap between renters and owners has widened significantly since 2006, as the median household income for renter households decreased by 33.5% but increased by 34% for owner households. This makes it almost impossible for rental households to afford a home in their community.

**Figure 10: Households by Income Bracket and Tenure, Sproat Lake, 2016**

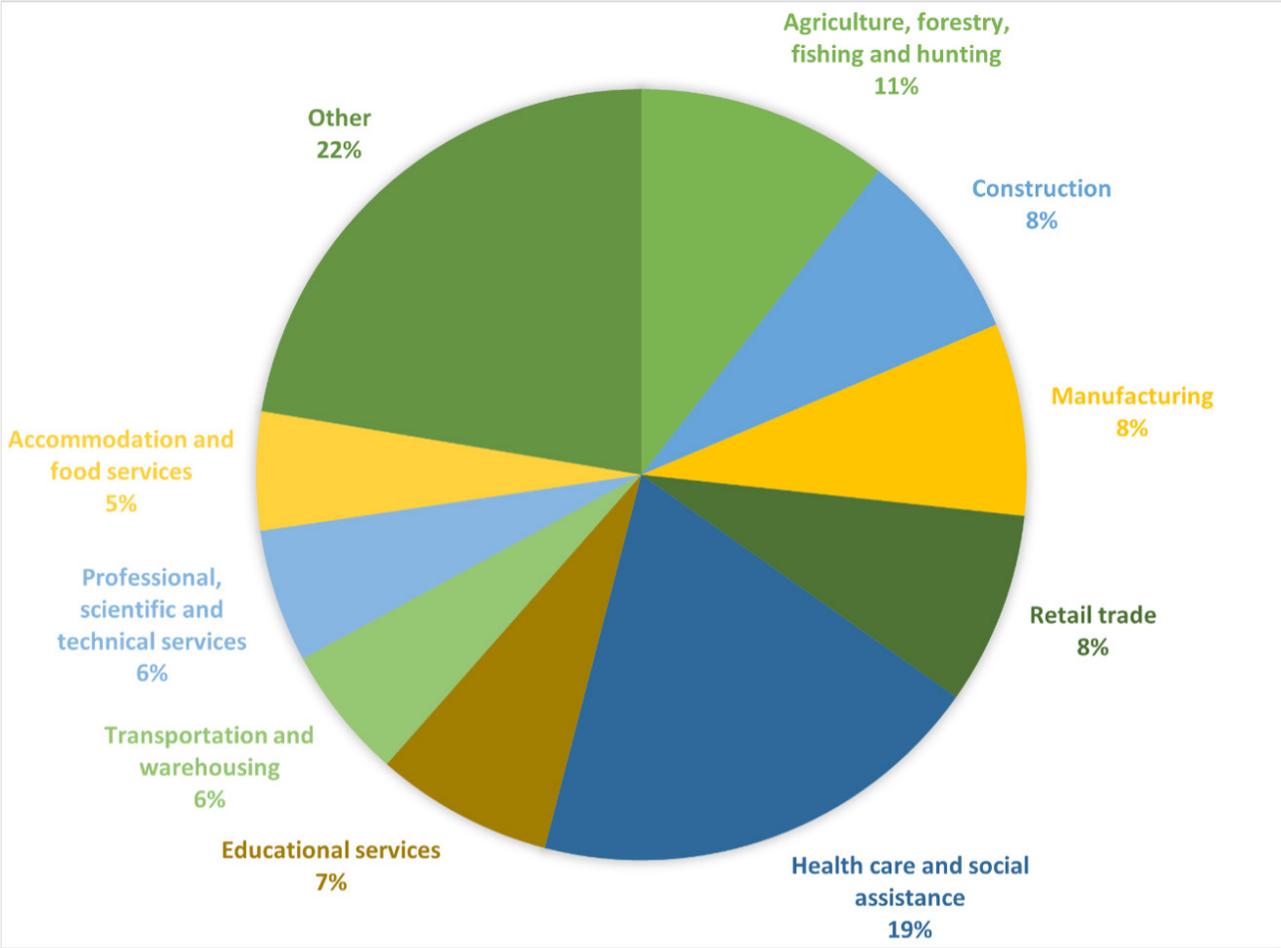


Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016

# Employment

The major industries employing residents of Sproat Lake in 2016 are shown in Figure 11. The “Other” category includes all industries that employ less than 40 people.

Figure 11: Major Industries, Sproat Lake, 2016

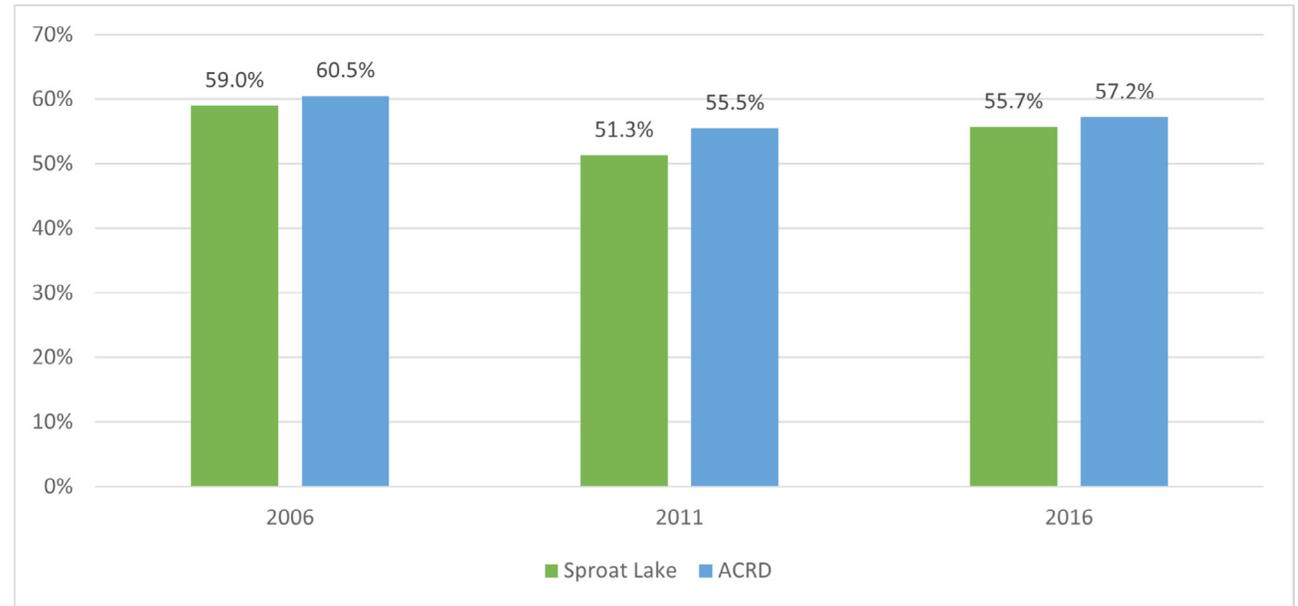


Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016

The labour force participation rate measures the proportion of adults (older than 14) who are actively working or seeking work. The participation rate in Sproat Lake and the ACRD fell between 2006 and 2011 but increased between 2011 and 2016. This primarily reflects the impacts of the 2008 economic recession and is illustrated in Figure 12.

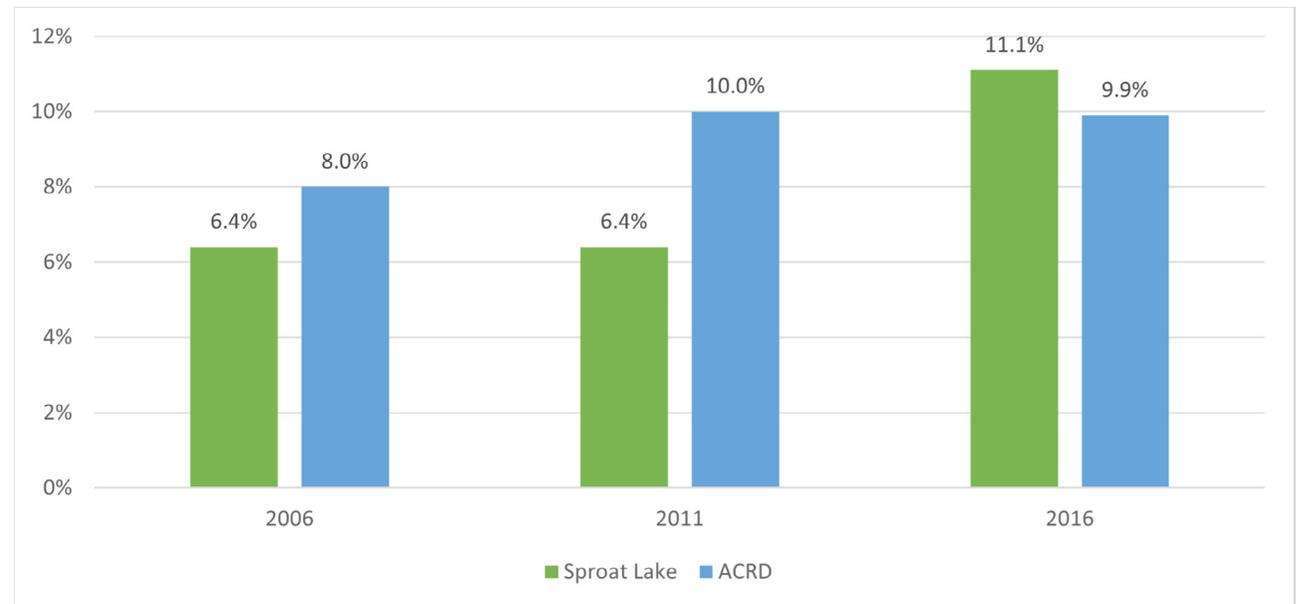
As shown in Figure 13, although the unemployment rate remained at 6.4% in Sproat Lake in 2011, it nearly doubled to 11.1% in 2016, even higher than the rate for the ACRD (9.9%). By comparison, the provincial unemployment rate in 2016 was 6.7%. As well, 40.5% of housing needs survey respondents from Sproat Lake are retired, and 13.5% work part time.

**Figure 12: Labour Force Participation Rates, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2006-2016**



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

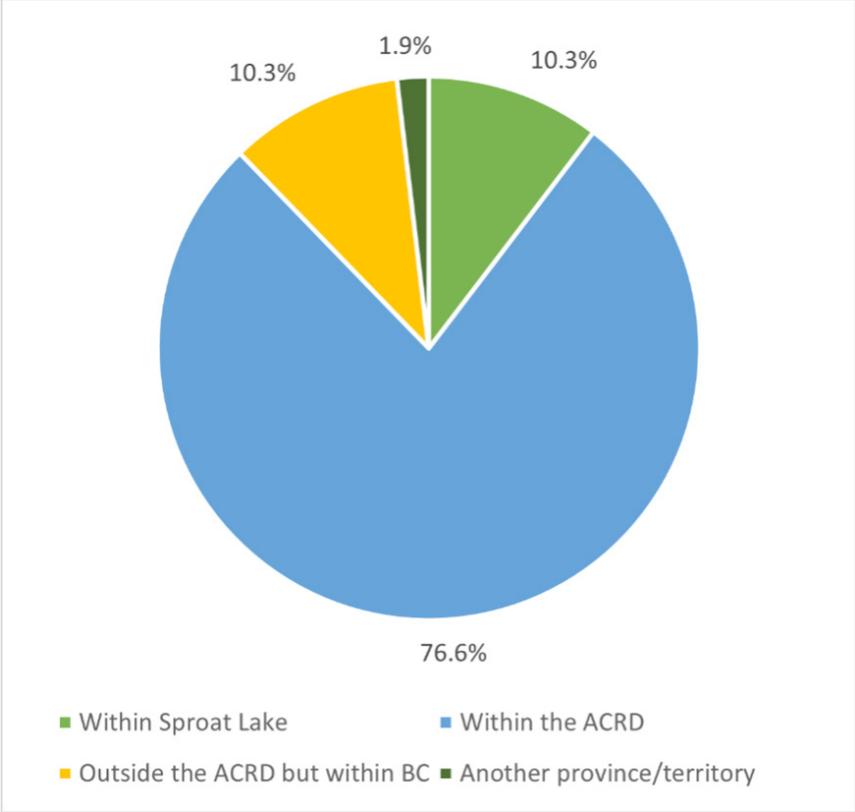
**Figure 13: Unemployment Rates, Sproat Lake and ACRD, 2006-2016**



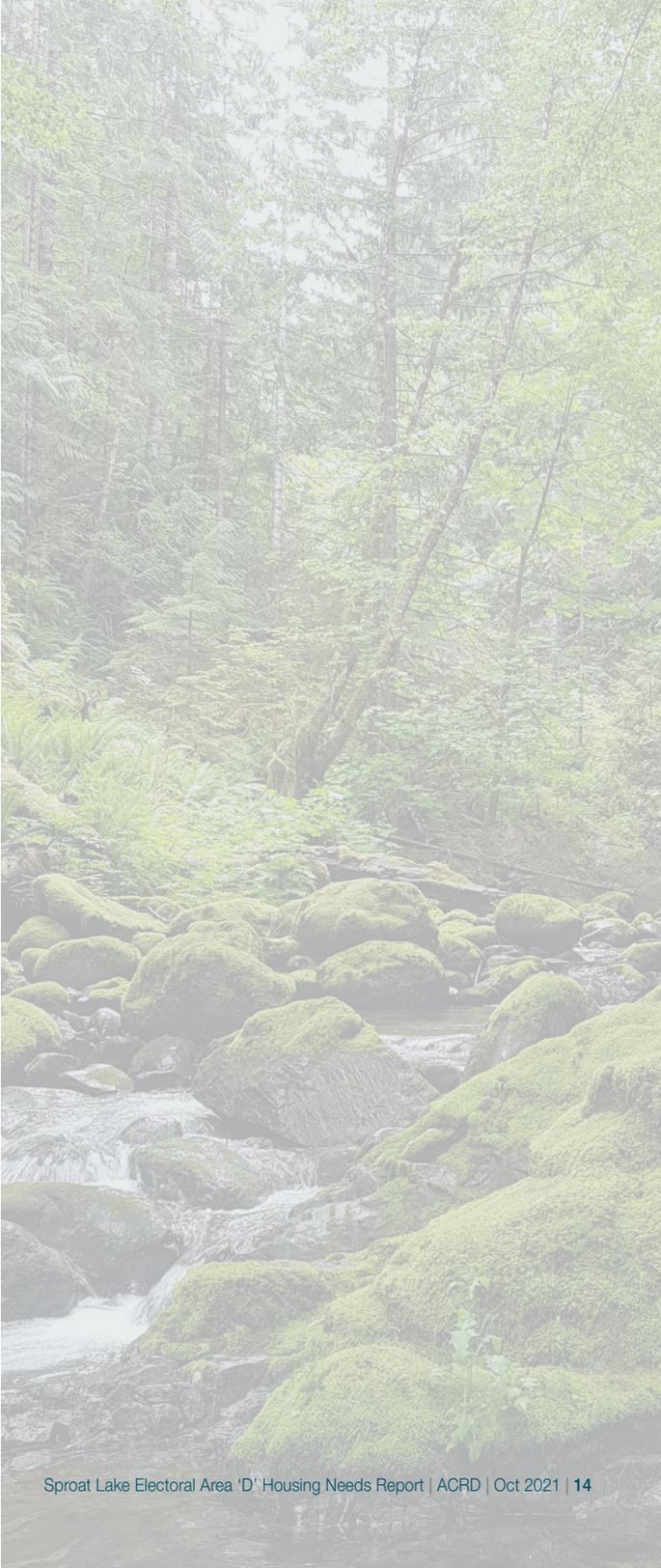
Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles 2016, 2011, 2006, and NHS 2011

Figure 14 below shows the commuting destination for residents of Sproat Lake in 2016. Due to the relatively remote location of the Alberni Valley, most residents (86.9%) commute to a location within Sproat Lake or to another location within the ACRD, likely to Port Alberni, which is the closest commercial and industrial hub. Only 2% of residents commute to a different province or territory.

**Figure 14: Commuting Destination, Sproat Lake, 2016**



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





## 2.3 HOUSING PROFILE

This section presents information about the housing stock, market and non-market rental information, tenure, construction data, and core housing need in Sproat Lake. This information provides context and helps to reveal gaps in meeting community housing needs. This housing profile reveals the most recent history of housing development in Electoral Area D. Like in most other communities in BC, housing and related infrastructure are expensive investments. The housing profile does not always mirror the changes in community profile, and therefore can demonstrate how housing needs are intensifying challenges in the community as demographic and economic conditions change.

### Subsection Summary

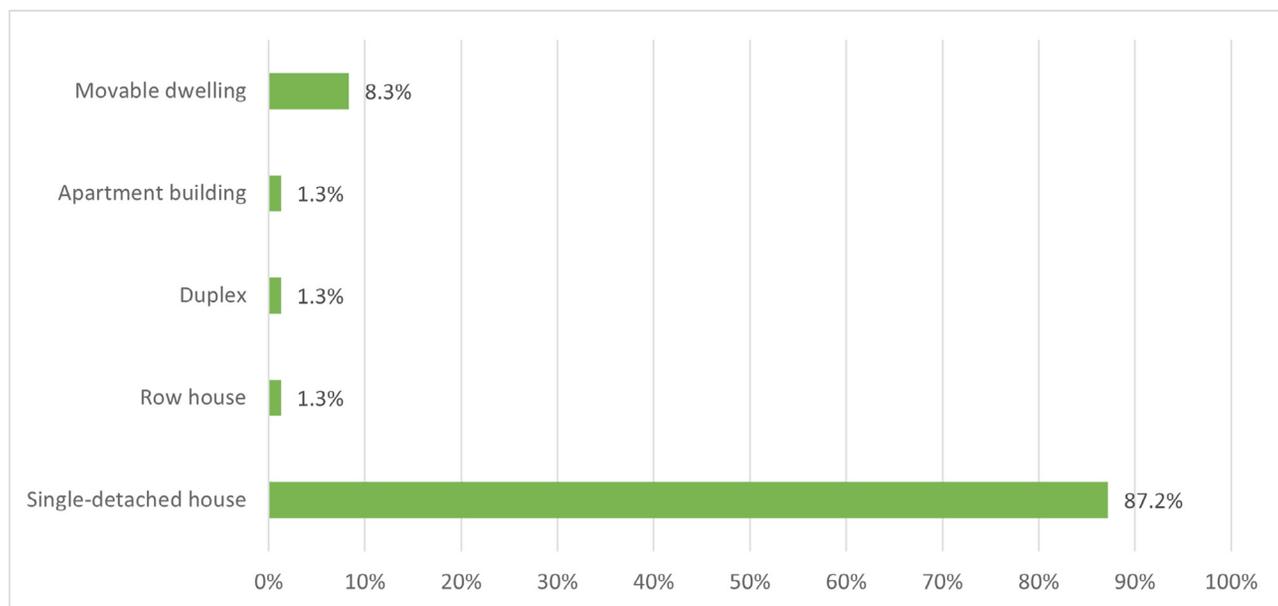
- Single detached dwellings are the most popular housing type.
  - » Movable dwellings are the most common alternative.
- The majority of homes were built before 1980 and have 3 or more bedrooms.
- Assessed values and purchase prices have increased much faster since 2017.
- Sproat Lake residents have generally seen improvements in the affordability, suitability, and adequacy of their dwellings.
  - » More than 50% of rental households are in core housing need.

## Structural Type

The housing stock in Sproat Lake is primarily comprised of single detached homes (87%), as shown in Figure 15. This is significantly more than both the ACRD (73.3%) and the province (44.1%). Additionally, 91.9% of Sproat Lake housing needs survey respondents indicated they currently live in a single detached house.

Sproat Lake has very limited higher density housing, with only 3.9% of dwellings having more than one unit per structure (not including secondary suites in single detached dwellings). The majority (89.2%) of survey respondents from Sproat Lake indicated they would prefer to live in a single detached house, and 5.4% indicated they would prefer to live in a low density multi-family development (such as a townhouse). Servicing constraints, topography and a general public interest in maintaining the rural character of the area are some of the challenges hindering the development of higher density housing across the Alberni Valley, which is in general more affordable. There are more diverse housing options with attached dwellings in Sproat Lake than in any other Electoral Area in the Alberni Valley, however attached housing stock in the area is still very limited.

**Figure 15: Dwellings by Structure Type, Sproat Lake, 2016**

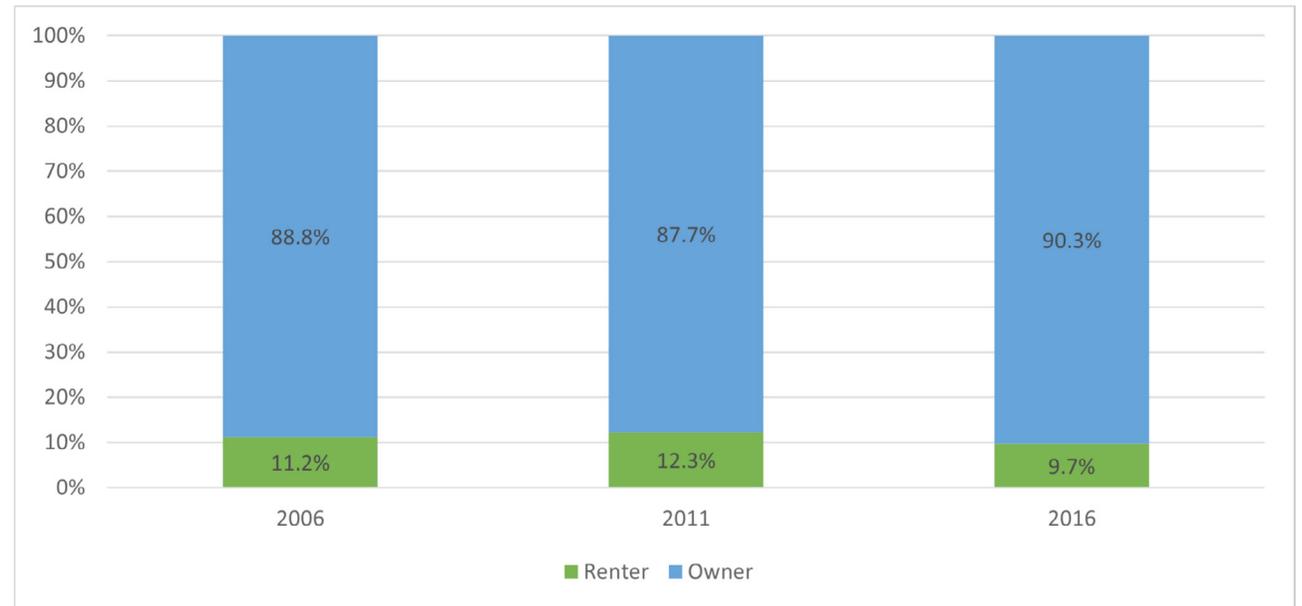


*Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing*

## Tenure

In 2016, the make up of housing tenure was approximately 90% owner households, and 10% renter households. This is further supported with 86.5% of survey respondents from Sproat Lake owning their current place of residence. The gap between owner and renter households has increased slightly since 2006, as shown in Figure 16.

**Figure 16: Household Tenure, Sproat Lake, 2006-2016**



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

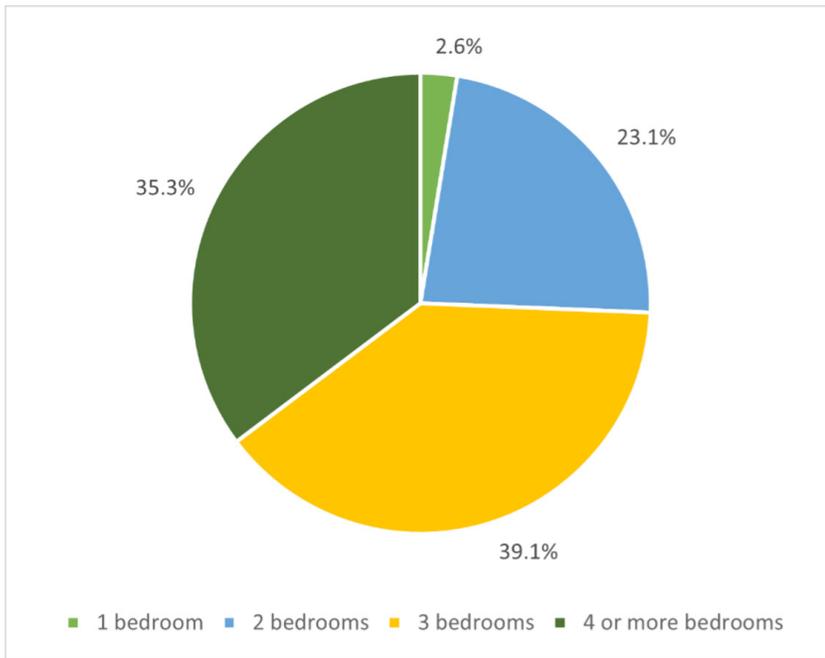
## Number of Bedrooms

As shown in Figure 17, the majority of dwellings (62%) in Electoral Area D are larger homes that have 3 or more bedrooms, that have traditionally provided housing for families. Sproat Lake survey respondents indicated that their current place of residence has 3 bedrooms (24.3%) and 4 bedrooms (37.8%), also supporting the trend of larger homes in EA D.

Many houses have been built to accommodate larger families, but this may no longer meet the modern needs of the community. The information in the demographics section shows that the number of people living alone has been increasing over time, and most recently more than two thirds of households contained only 1 or 2 people. With an aging population in Sproat Lake, it is likely that many older households are aging in place and living in homes that once served larger families but now only serve 1 or 2 people.

Furthermore, the increasingly high cost of housing (which is addressed in following sections) may be pricing out younger households with children, who would have historically lived in larger homes. With a limited number of smaller single family homes, it may be difficult for seniors to downsize from larger homes. If seniors are aging in place in larger homes (even if they would prefer to downsize) this could restrict the supply of housing for growing families.

**Figure 17: Dwellings by Number of Bedrooms, Sproat Lake, 2016**



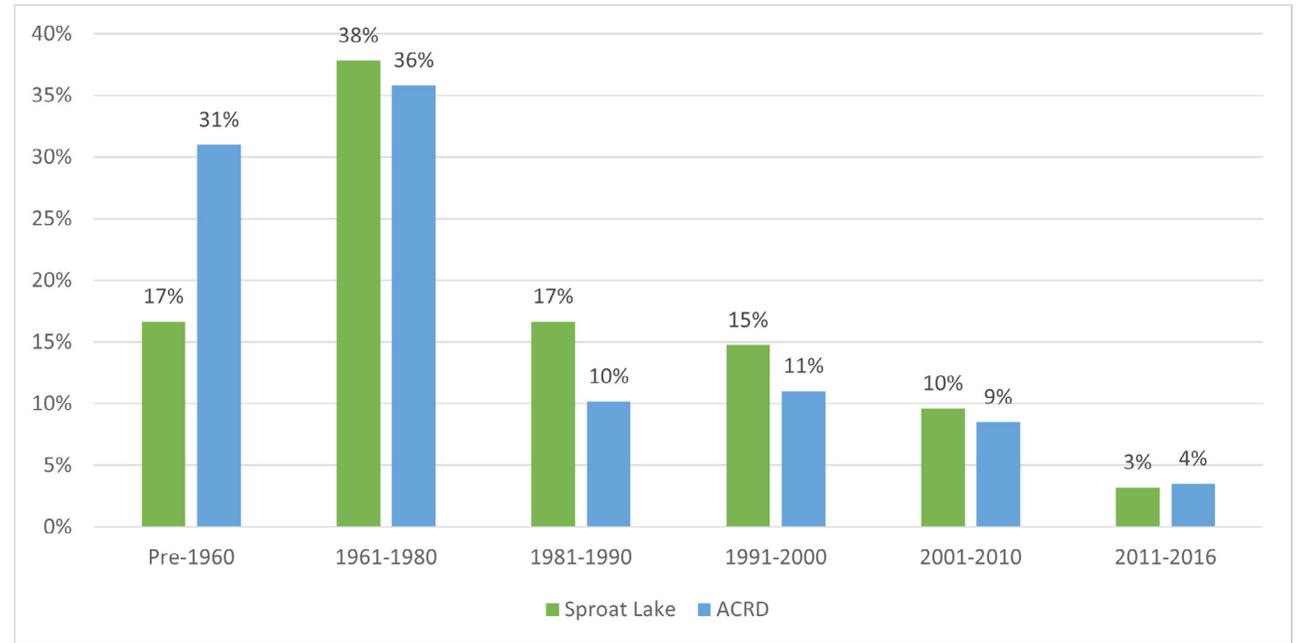
*Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing*



## Period of Construction

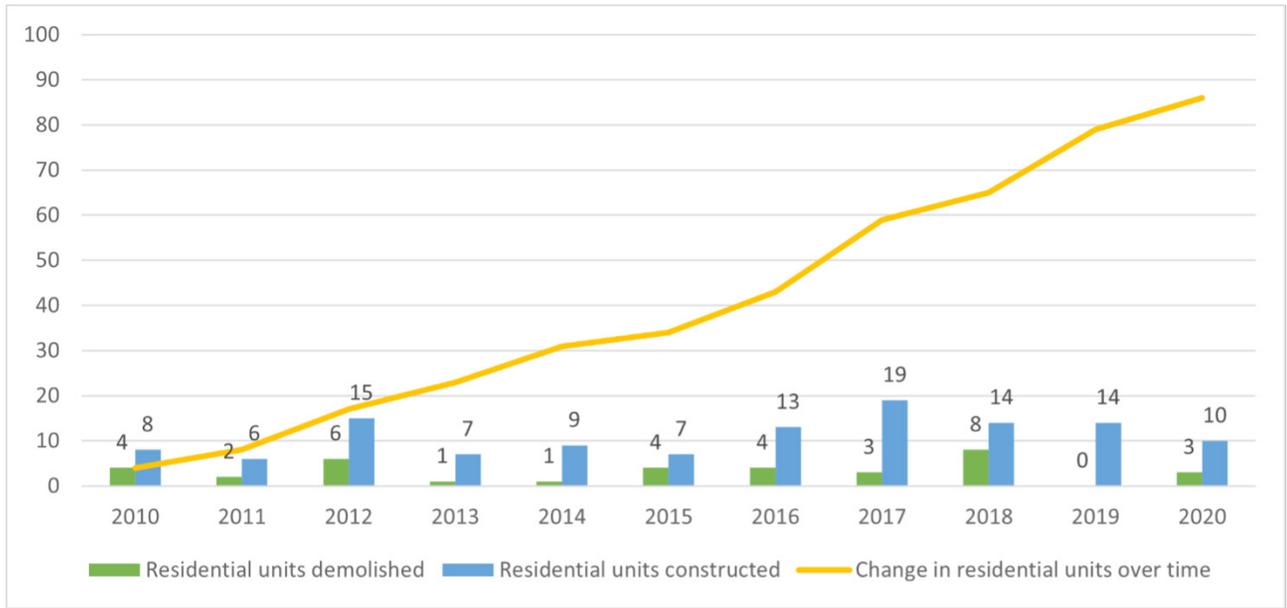
The housing stock in Sproat Lake is newer than the ACRD, with almost half of the homes built since 1980, as shown in Figure 18 below. This likely reflects the development trends in that area as older lakefront cabins were replaced with newer single family dwellings. 55% of homes in Sproat Lake were built before 1980 (only 17% of which were built before 1960), which could decrease the affordability of homes as they start to require major repairs.

**Figure 18: Dwellings by Period of Construction, Sproat Lake and ACRD**



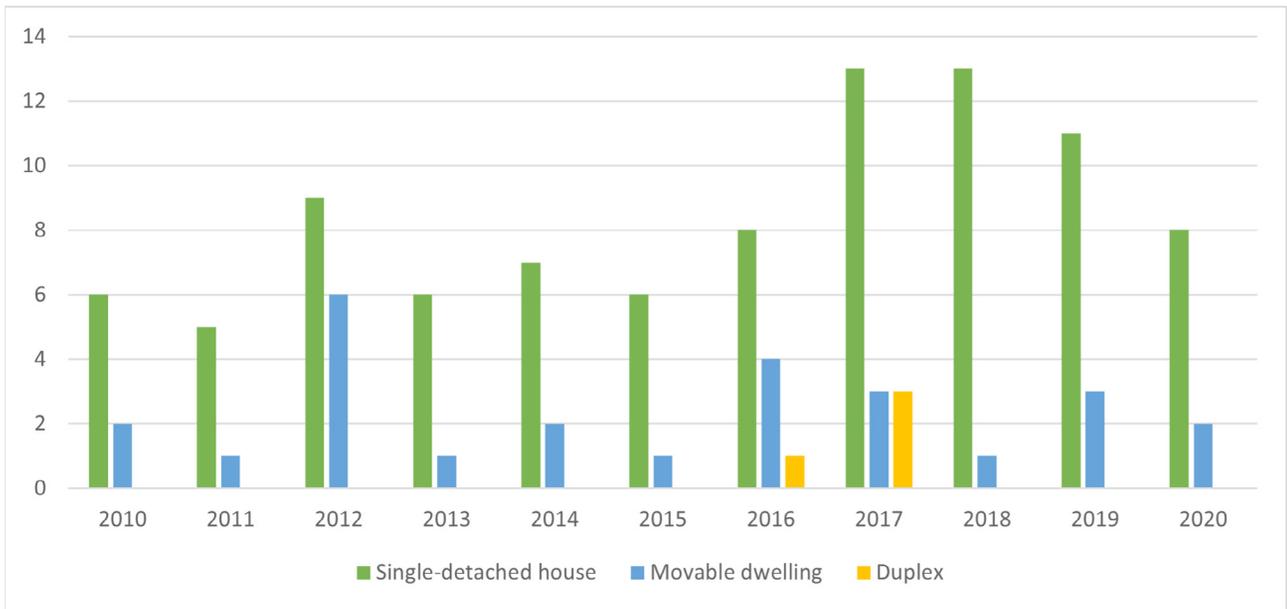
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Figure 19: Residential Building Permits, Sproat Lake, 2010-2020**



Source: Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

**Figure 20: Residential Building Permits by Type, Sproat Lake, 2010-2020**



Source: Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

## New Construction

Figure 19 below shows the number of residential building and demolition permits that were issued between 2010 and 2020. Even though the population has decreased since 2010, Sproat Lake has seen a steady increase in the total number of residential units being constructed within the community. It is likely that a portion of these homes were built as seasonal dwellings, but currently the ACRD does not track this information.

As of October, ACRD has issued 14 residential building permits (10 for single detached dwellings and 4 for moveable dwellings) so far in 2021, indicating another year of steady growth of the community.

More detailed building permit data shows that the most popular residential structure continues to be single detached dwellings, as shown in Figure 20. More affordable options for the area are movable structures and duplexes.

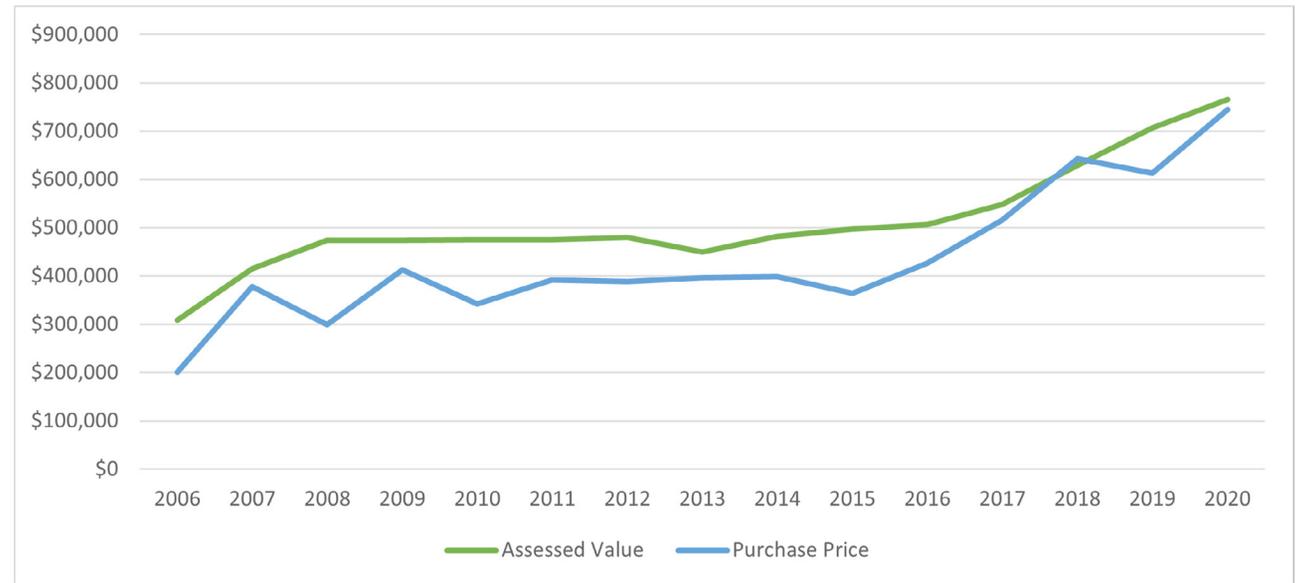


## Home Ownership Market

Sproat Lake has seen a significant increase in both average assessed values and purchase prices since 2016. As of 2020 the average home price was almost \$750,000. This could be attributed to the increasing popularity of the west coast of Vancouver Island, and housing prices impacted by limited supply in the area and a high demand for vacation properties in the Province.

Figure 21 shows the average assessed value and average purchase price for residential units in Sproat Lake between 2006 and 2020. The increased value of housing in Sproat Lake is likely skewed towards older people who have benefited from previously lower housing prices, and thus disproportionately impacts young people who are finding it increasingly difficult to enter into the housing market or relocate to certain areas.

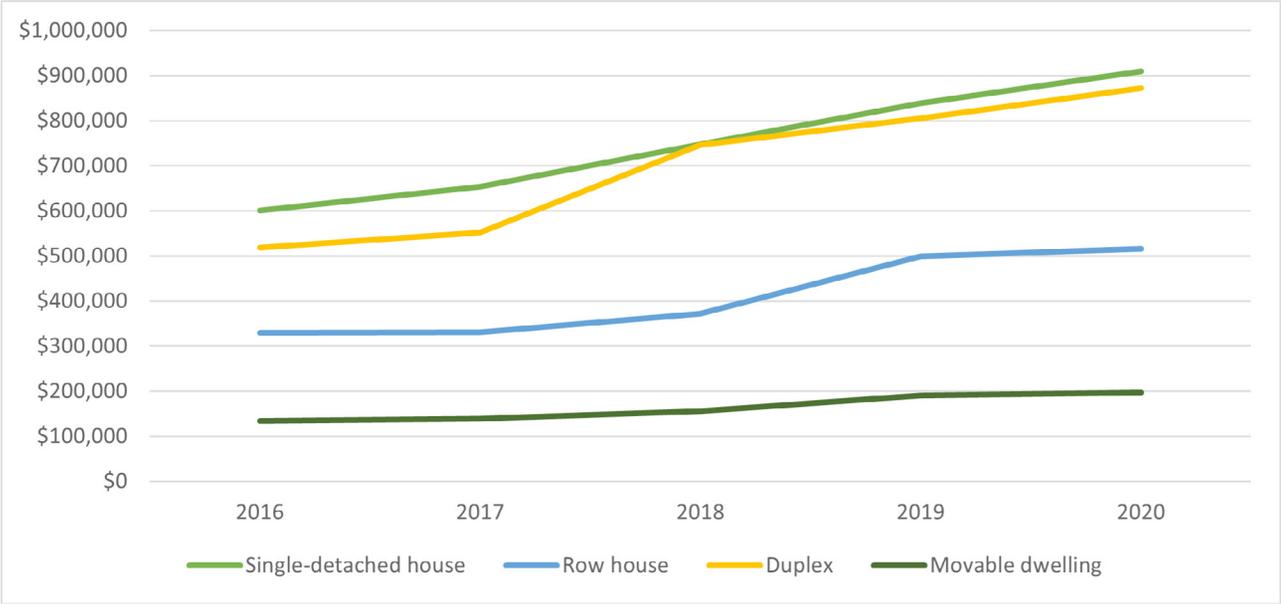
**Figure 21: Average Assessed Value and Purchase Price for Residential Units, Sproat Lake, 2006-2020**



Source: BC Assessment, 2006-2020

Figure 22 shows the average assessed value for different types of residential structures in Sproat Lake between 2016 and 2020. Single detached dwellings are increasing in value at a higher rate than movable dwellings, therefore focusing future development around more affordable housing options such as moveable dwellings may help to provide additional housing. It would be prudent to encourage more movable dwelling developments to increase the affordability of the area.

**Figure 22: Average Assessed Value by Structure Type, Sproat Lake, 2016-2020**



Source: BC Assessment, 2006-2020



## Homelessness

There is no data on the number of people experiencing homelessness in any of the Alberni Valley EAs, but due to the distance from the shelter and other assistance programs in the City of Port Alberni, the number is likely to be very low. A count of people experiencing homelessness in Port Alberni was conducted between April 6 and 7, 2021, with data specific to the Alberni Valley and no other areas of the ACRD. The 2021 count revealed 125 people experiencing homelessness during this time, 42% of which were completely unsheltered (it is noted that this is likely an undercount because it takes place over a 24-hour period). Also note that the City of Port Alberni has 23 beds for people experiencing homelessness, as of March 2020.

Unidentified homeless in the Alberni Valley EAs could be living in unauthorized dwellings in the form of illegal short and long term camping. This dwelling type has been identified as an issue in the ACRD, and has been focused on areas on the West Coast as well as some parts of the Alberni Valley, including Sproat Lake EA. Typically, recreational vehicles are being used as a form of (temporary) housing, which, as previously described is illegal. Refer to the Alberni Valley HNR for more information on homelessness.

## Rental Housing

As previously discussed, the percentage of renters in Sproat Lake is very small and has decreased slightly over time. The rental market is typically divided into two sectors, primary rentals, and secondary rentals. Primary rental units are classified as those that are part of a purpose-built building (e.g., rental units in apartment buildings). The secondary rental market is comprised of all other units, such as secondary suites in single detached dwellings, rented single detached homes, rented condominium units, etc. 2016 Census data shows that the average monthly shelter cost for renter households was \$826. The rental vacancy rate is not known, but due to the desirability of the area, it is likely to be very low.

## Short Term Rentals and RVs

The ACRD regulates short term vacation rentals (STRs) through a Temporary Use Permit (TUP). As of October 2021, there are eight legal short term rentals in Electoral Area D that have an issued TUP. There are five TUP applications for a STR under review in EA D, where an application has been made. These applications are at varying stages of the approval process (i.e. being recently submitted, or waiting for confirmation of sewage capability to support the STR use, etc.). There are a substantial number of other short term rental units that have not gone through the permitting process yet or are only at the inquiry stage. Sproat Lake is a tourist destination, which means there is a demand for these units, especially during the summer. However, short term rentals can limit the availability of permanent rental units, which often leads to increased rental prices.

Additionally, many property owners in Sproat Lake EA are using recreational vehicles (RVs) as a form of dwelling for short and long term use. Dwelling in an RV longer than the permitted 24 hour time period in residential zones is not permitted, unless in a zone that allows this type of dwelling such as a campground, or in a rural zone that permits temporary dwelling in an RV up to 30 days. This longer term use of RVs as a dwelling has been identified as a concern in this rural EA with a lack of services to accommodate this unauthorized use, especially during peak seasonal time periods where the population of the EA tends to see a drastic increase in those residing and visiting.

## Non-Market Housing

There are no subsidized housing units in Electoral Area D, and BC Housing reported that there were only three households receiving rental assistance in March 2020. This is likely due to the small number of renters in Sproat Lake.

## Housing Indicators

Housing indicators were established by Statistics Canada and CMHC to identify common and critical housing issues within communities. These indicators are measured nationally and allow communities to monitor three key housing-related challenges to see how they change over time, and to compare differences between communities. The indicators are measured for both owners and renters, and assesses the following:

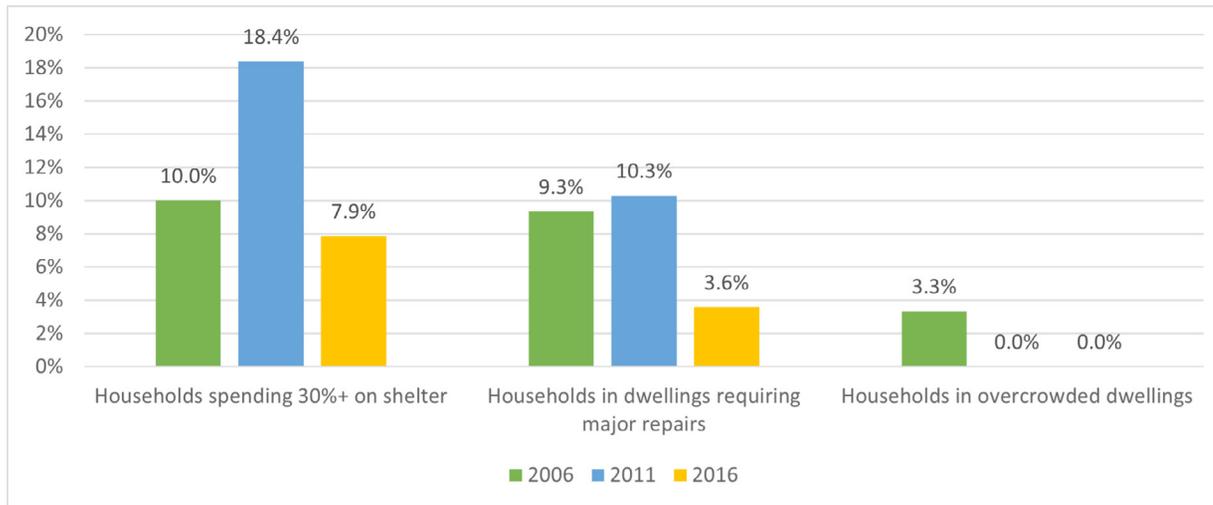
- **Affordability:** shelter costs (including utilities) that are 30% (or less) of total income (before-tax) for the household.
- **Suitability:** the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of residents within a household according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.
- **Adequacy:** the dwelling does not need major repairs, as reported by the residents.

Figures 23 and 24 demonstrate changes in housing indicators between 2006, 2011 and 2016 for both owner and renter households. Comparing this information helps understand the challenges that each group faces when it comes to these three critical indicators.

In Sproat Lake, like many other communities, affordability is the greatest challenge facing households. In 2016 12% of all households (renter and owner occupied) faced housing unaffordability (spent more 30% or more on shelter costs), while only about 5% lived in homes requiring major repairs. Only 1.4% of households were struggling with overcrowded homes in 2016.

45.9% of housing needs survey respondents from Sproat Lake indicated that they spend 30 to 50% of their household income on housing costs (i.e. rent/mortgage, utilities, etc.), and 17 respondents indicated their current place of residence is in need of some minor repairs.

**Figure 23: Housing Indicators of Owner Households, Sproat Lake, 2006-2016**



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

When survey respondents were asked how their current housing situation could be improved, Sproat Lake respondents stated the following was needed:

- Improvements to make the house more energy efficient and environmentally friendly (17 responses)
- Basic home improvements/renovations (13 responses)
- Lower cost of mortgage (9 responses)

### Sproat Lake survey respondents think the most serious housing issue in the Alberni Valley is:

*“Lack of affordable, accessible, convenience, etc., and no transit...”*

*“Lack of affordable rental housing that is safe and secure”*

*“Not enough housing for our elderly/ seniors that is cost efficient”*

*“A shortage of housing and the cost of rent or buying a new house is way to high for younger people to afford”*

*“Shortage of building lots”*

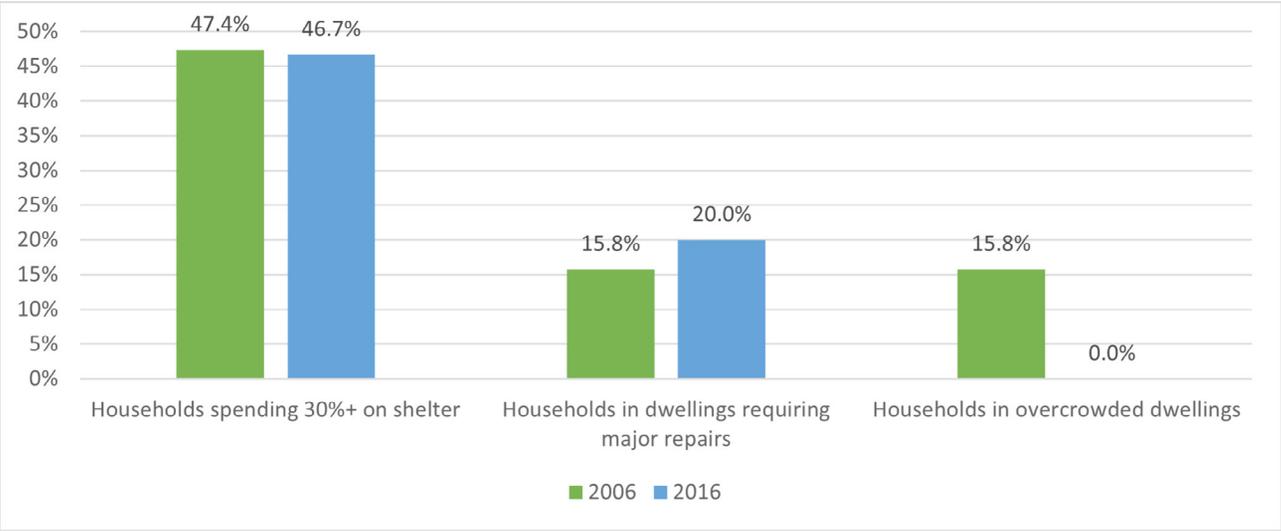


Overall, owner households saw improvements in all 3 housing indicators between 2006 and 2016, especially for overcrowded dwellings. However, nearly 50% of renter households in Sproat Lake exceeded the affordability indicator. As rent continues to increase, more renters will continue to spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Please note that no housing indicator data is available for renter households in Sproat Lake in 2011.

Renters are also more likely to live in dwellings that require major repair. This could be attributed to the lack of autonomy over their place of residence, meaning they must wait on a landlord or property manager to complete home repairs.

Recent increases in the purchase prices of homes in Sproat Lake may put more pressure on the rental market, as landlords may be tempted to sell, which often leads to the eviction of existing tenants. The new owners may either live in the property or rent it out to new tenants at a much higher rate.

**Figure 24: Housing Indicators of Renter Households, Sproat Lake, 2006 and 2016**



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

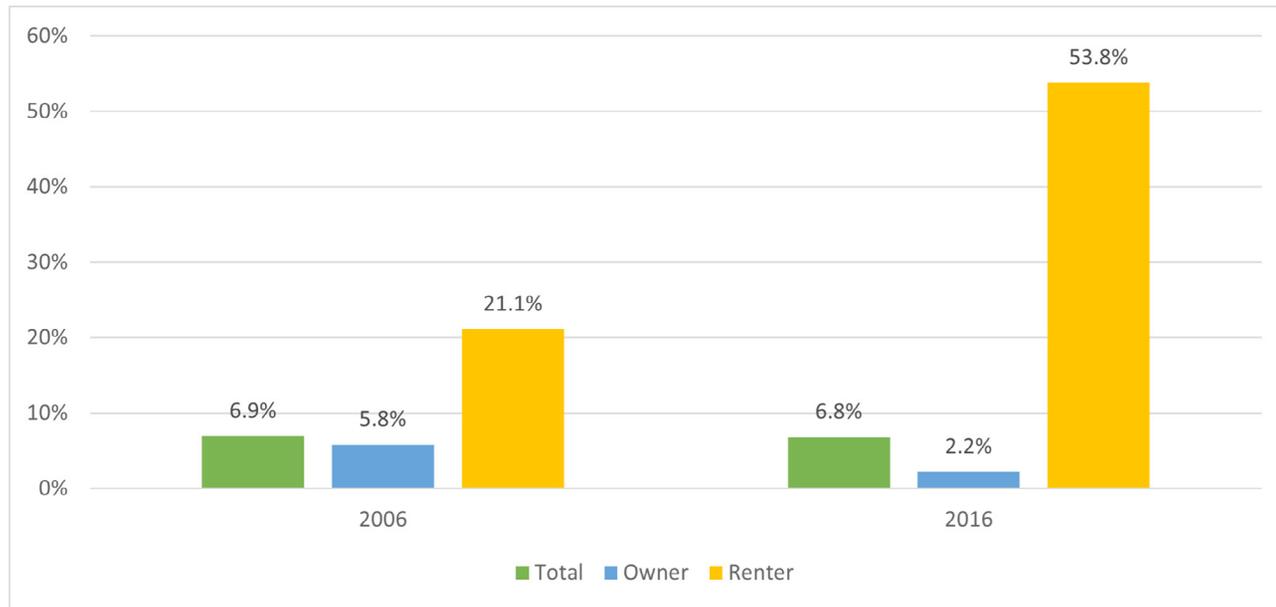
## Core Housing Need and Extreme Core Housing Need

The housing indicators in Figures 23 and 24 show the households facing challenges with the affordability (shelter costs exceed 30% of before-tax household income), suitability (overcrowded), or adequacy (if major repairs are required) of their housing.

Core housing need numbers highlight the households that do not meet one or more of the housing indicators, but also cannot afford the median rent or cost for a unit appropriate to their household size (i.e., they cannot afford to move to an appropriate dwelling unit for their needs). Extreme core housing need is a subset of core housing need, applying the same methodology with one additional adjustment. Extreme core housing need refers to households that are in core housing need and are spending 50% or more of their total income on housing.

While the total percentage of households identified as in core housing need decreased between 2006 and 2016, the number of renter households in core housing need nearly tripled, as shown in Figure 25. The number of renter households did decrease during this time, but not by enough to entirely account for the dramatic increase in core housing need.

**Figure 25: Core Housing Need by Tenure, Sproat Lake, 2006 and 2016**



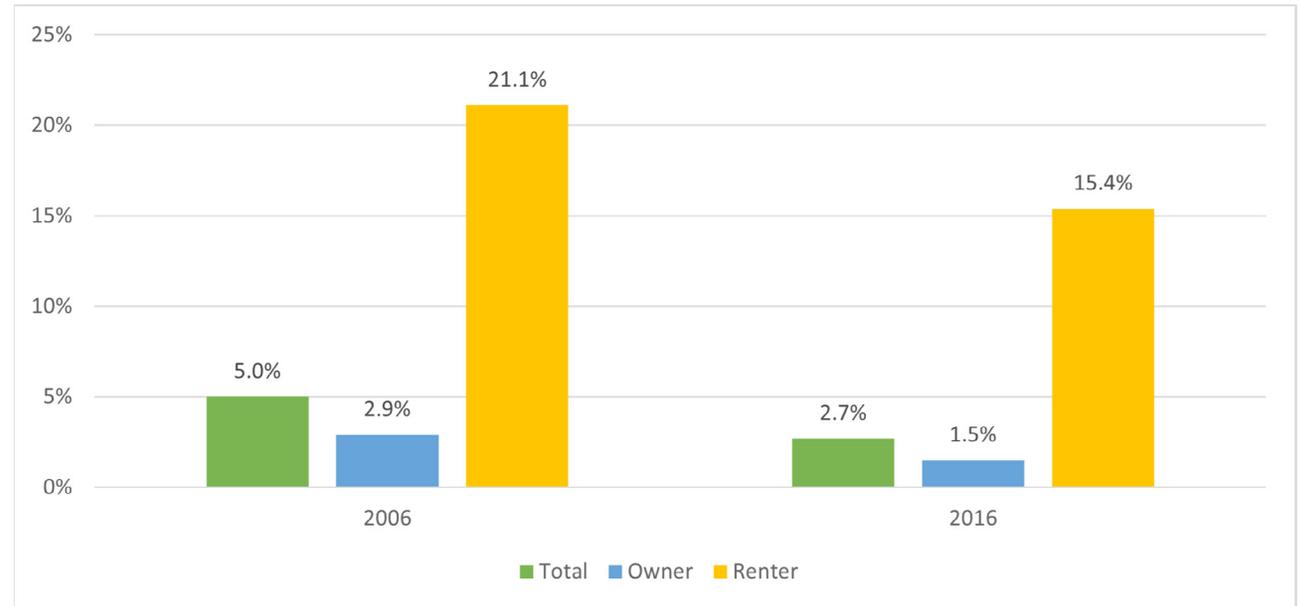
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016, 2006 – Custom Information for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Figure 26 shows extreme core housing need in Sproat Lake. 2.7% percent of households did not meet one or more of the housing indicators and were spending 50% or more of pre-tax income on housing in 2016.

Sproat Lake did experience a drop in extreme core housing need for both owner and renter households, with the percentage of renter households decreasing from 21% to 15%.

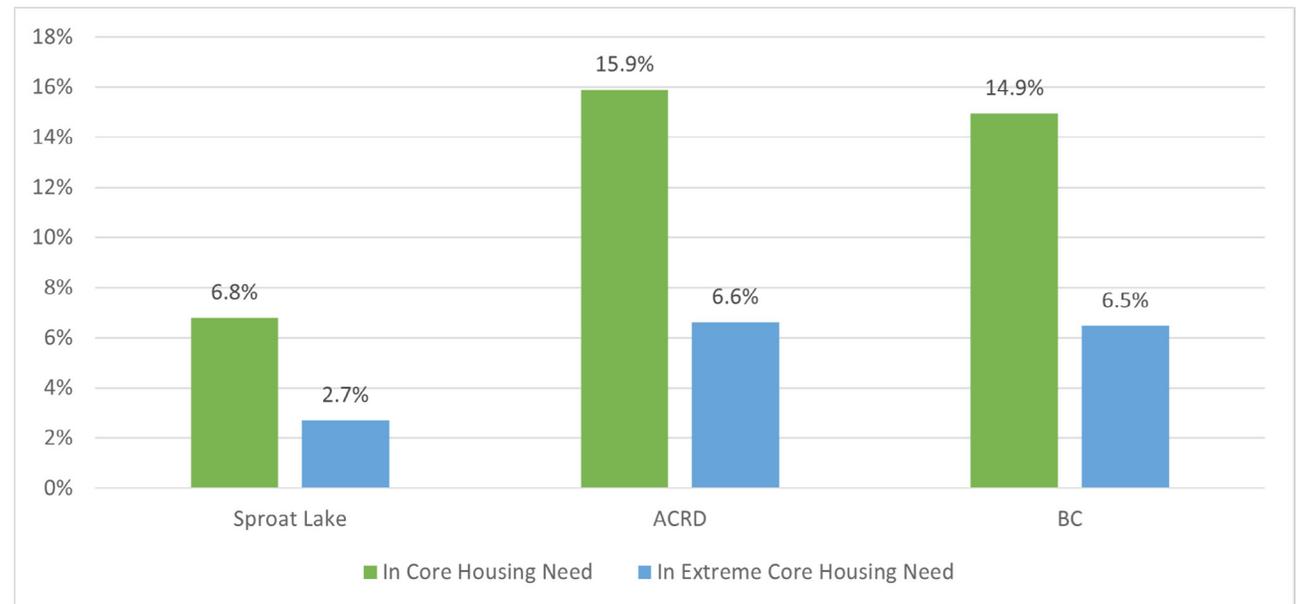
Figure 27 shows a comparison of the percentage of households in core housing need and extreme core housing need in Sproat Lake, the ACRD, and BC. Households in Sproat Lake are much less likely to be in these categories than those in the ACRD or BC.

**Figure 26: Extreme Core Housing Need by Tenure, Sproat Lake, 2006 and 2016**



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

**Figure 27: Core Housing and Extreme Core Housing Need, Sproat Lake, ACRD and BC, 2016**



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



## 3. FUTURE NEEDS

### 3.1 COMMUNITY GROWTH

#### Subsection summary

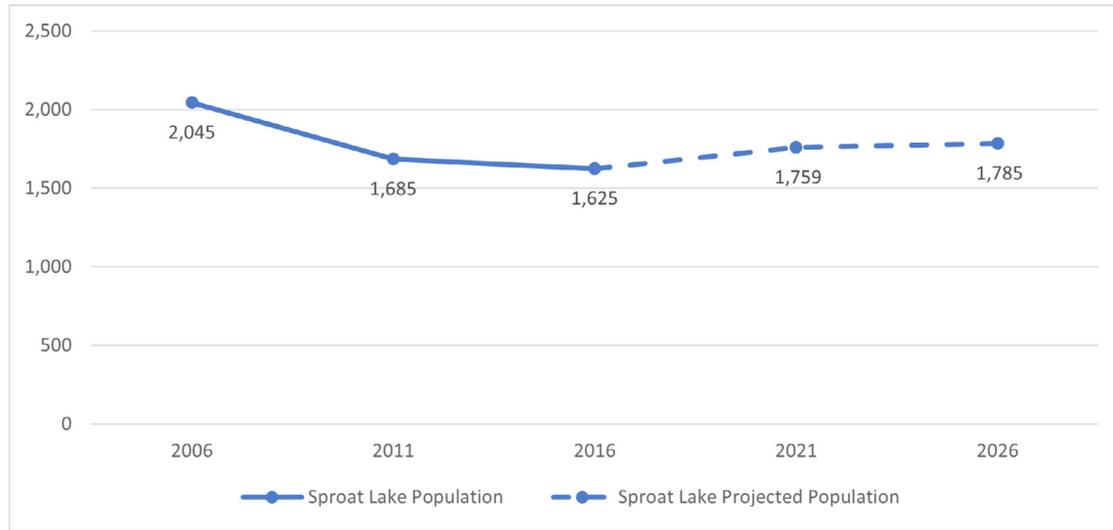
- Sproat Lake is projected to grow by 160 people between 2016 and 2026.
- The population of seniors is likely to continue growing for the next 5 years.
- Projections show that the number of households will start to grow again.
  - » They could even out pace population growth, reflected in a potential decrease in average household size.

To determine future housing needs various population, household, and housing unit projections have been calculated. Population and household projections to 2026 are summarized below. The projections are derived from custom BC Statistics population projections for the ACRD. These forecasts are based on past trends, but the actual growth of the community will be influenced by a variety of factors, including growth in the region, availability of housing, and jobs in the community.

#### Population growth

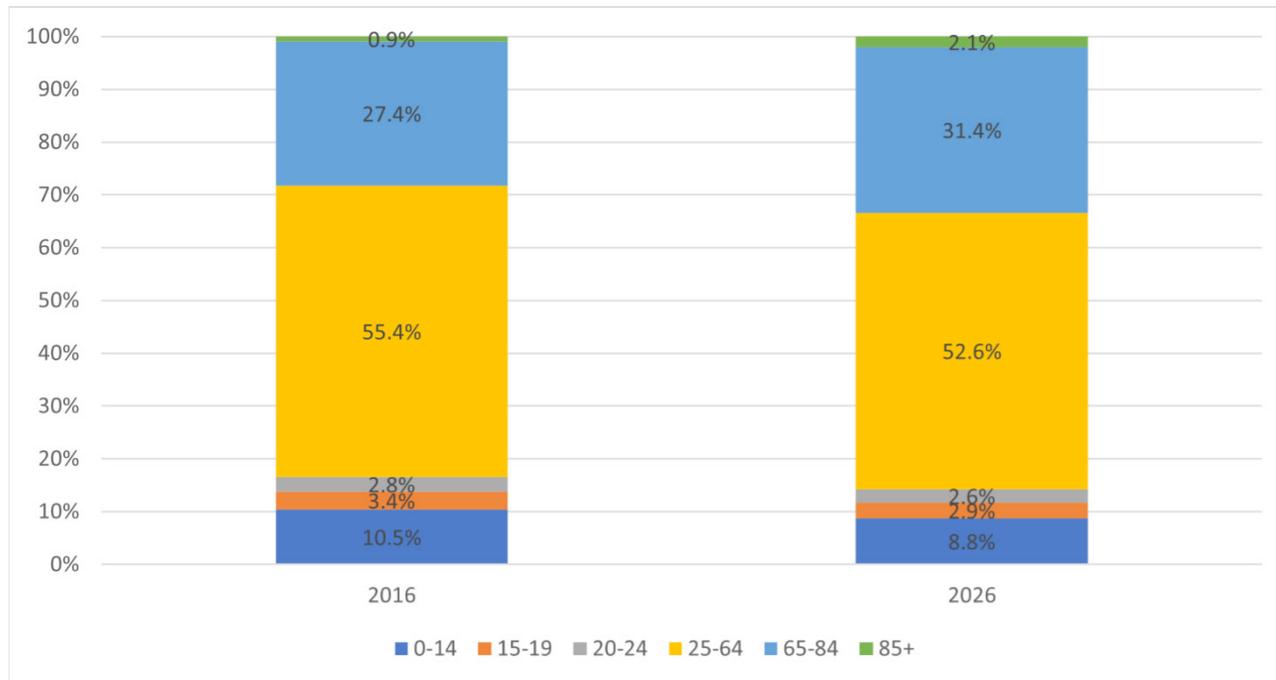
There are many ways to calculate population projections. The projections in this report were developed using Statistics Canada's population projection data which is calculated at the regional district level. The data for the ACRD was used to determine the projections for Sproat Lake. Although the population of Electoral Area D decreased between 2006 and 2016, the number of new residential dwellings built between 2016 and 2021 suggests that the population has grown slightly since the last census. Therefore, the projected annual growth of 0.3% for the ACRD has been applied to Sproat Lake as well. 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.

**Figure 28: Projected Population, Sproat Lake, 2006-2026**



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

**Figure 29: Projected Age Distribution, Sproat Lake, 2016 and 2026**



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

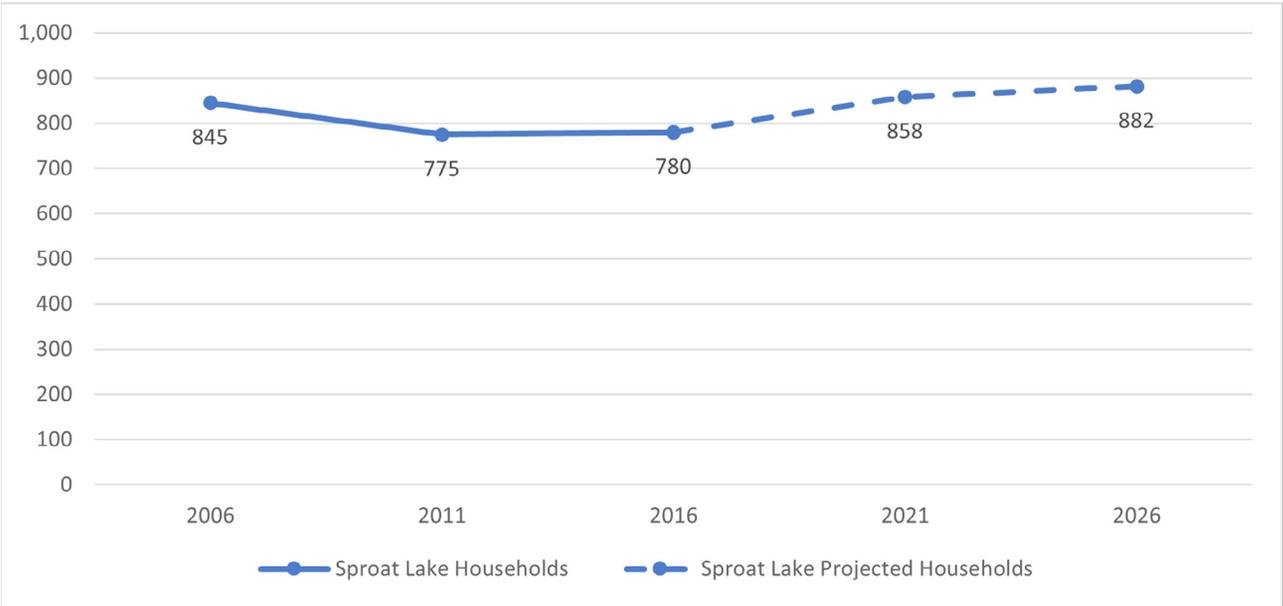
Based on Census data from previous years, population growth in Sproat Lake and the ACRD is expected to be minimal. In Sproat Lake the community is expected to grow from 1,759 residents in 2021 to 1,785 residents in 2026, as shown in Figure 28. Based on recent residential building permit trends, it is possible that the population will increase at a higher rate, although the rising cost of land and building materials, as well as areas of challenging terrain and sensitive ecological areas, may limit the growth of the community.

Figure 29 shows the projected change in the number of people in each age group between 2016 and 2026. The senior portion of the population is projected to grow, while all other segments of the population are projected to decrease. If, as projected, the fastest growth age group is adults over 65 then there will likely be additional strain on affordable and accessible housing for seniors. 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 Sproat Lake in 2026 would be 54.0, which is a decrease from the median age of 55.4 in 2016.

# Household Projections

Statistics Canada also provides household projection data. To calculate the projected number of households for Sproat Lake, it was assumed that the percentage of ACRD households that are in the electoral area would remain the same moving forward, as this number was stable at approximately 6% between 2006 and 2016. Figure 30 shows the growth of households for Sproat Lake between 2006 and 2026. In this scenario, the number of households in the City is projected to increase by 102. It should be noted that Sproat Lake had a higher percentage of households (5.7%) compared to the population (5.2%) of the ACRD. This means that the projected number of households grows slightly quicker than the projected population. This could mean that the average household size will decrease rather than staying at 2.1. The 2016 average household size in the ACRD as a whole is slightly larger at 2.2. The projected average household size is expected to remain at 2.1 for the next 5 years.

**Figure 30: Projected Households, Sproat Lake, 2006-2026**



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

## Projected Dwellings

Given the available projection data and the trends observed for Sproat Lake, calculations suggest that there is no shortage of housing for residents of Sproat Lake, although there may be inconsistencies with the projections given the housing market demands and changing demographics in the area. There is also a shortage of affordable rental housing.

Statistics Canada provides projected population and household numbers for the ACRD, as well as projected average household size. This data makes it possible to calculate the difference between the projected number of households and the projected number of dwellings required, shown in Table 1, based on an average household size of 2.1 persons

<b>Table 1: Sproat Lake Housing Gap</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Population</b>	1,626	1,749	1,785
<b>Households</b>	780	858	882
<b>Additional dwellings required</b>	-5	-25	-32

In 2016, there were 5 additional households (dwellings) than the average household size would indicate were required. It is projected that 850 dwellings will be needed by 2026 to accommodate the projected population increase, assuming that the average household size stays at 2.1 persons. However, Statistics Canada also provides projections for households in the ACRD in 2026, and this number can be used to determine the projected number of households for Sproat Lake, separately from the projected population, based on current trends. This information indicates that the number of households (dwellings) could continue to grow faster than the population, reflected in a decreased average household size.

It is important to note that this number may vary based on market trends and development conditions in the community since 2016 and over the next five years. 66 building permits for new residential units were issued between 2016 and October 2021, which would indicate that either the population is not growing as quickly as projected, or the average number of people per household is increasing, as the projections predicted 78 households would be added between 2016 and 2021.

The impact of seasonal dwellings and short term vacation rentals on the available housing stock must also be considered. There is a higher percentage of dwellings in the Sproat Lake area owned by non-resident property owners and used as either vacation homes or short term vacation rentals.

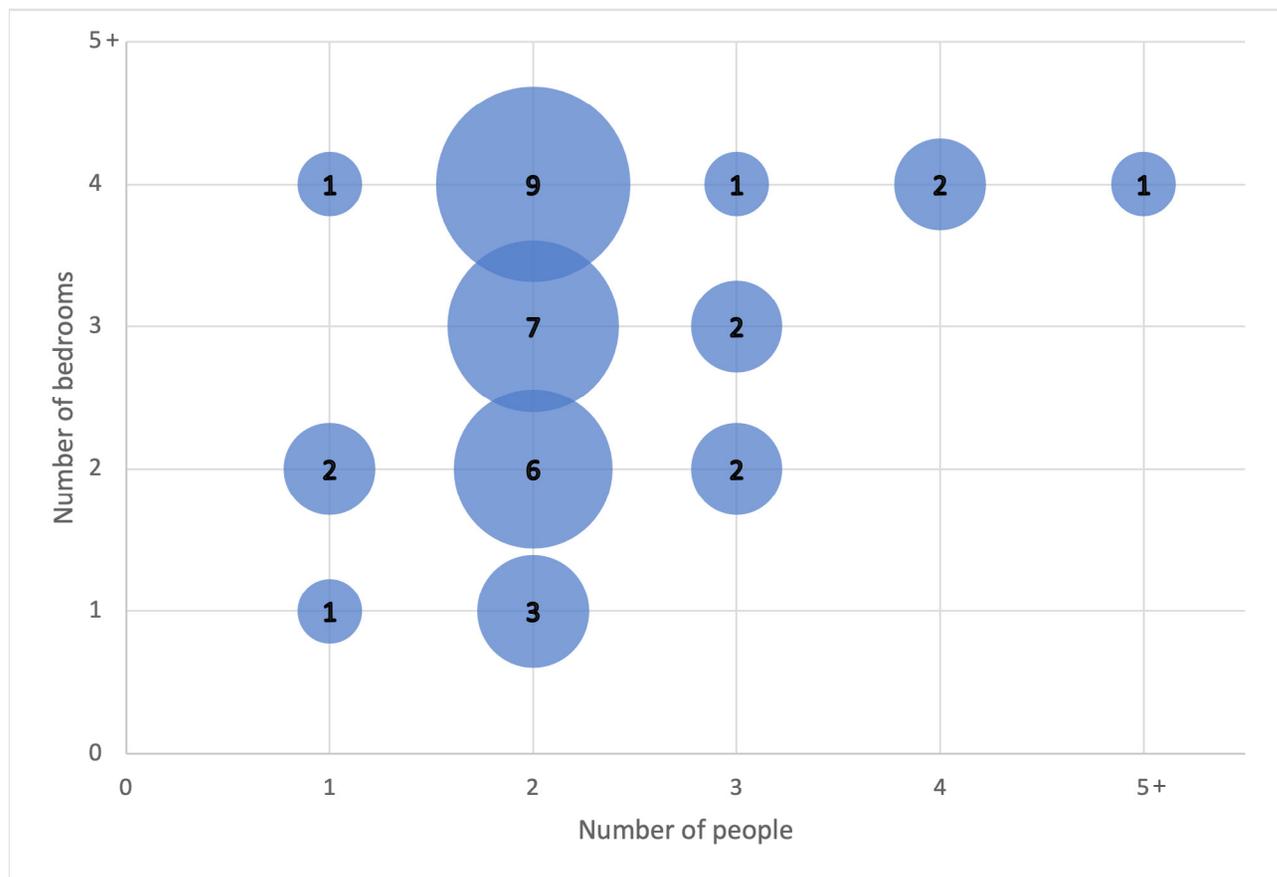
Sproat Lake survey respondent indicated they have experienced the following issues related to housing in the Alberni Valley:

- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income are too far from important amenities (e.g. schools, health care, services) (22 responses)
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income are of poor quality (8 responses)

## Projected Dwellings

Figure 31 below shows the correlation between the number of bedrooms in homes and the number of people living in the home, as reported by Sproat Lake residents who filled out the housing needs survey. The size of the bubbles indicates the frequency of the combinations of bedrooms and number of residents. The most common combination is 2 people living in a home with 4 bedrooms, followed closely by 2 people living in a 3 bedroom home. This could indicate a lack of suitable dwellings for older couples looking to downsize.

**Figure 31: Frequency of Bedroom and Resident Combinations, Sproat Lake, 2020**



Source: Sproat Lake responses to the Alberni Valley Housing Needs Survey

## Developable Land Available

Changes in land use and development activity are typically brought about by the aspirations of land owners. Approximately 15% of all lots in the Sproat Lake EA (within and outside the Agricultural Land Reserve) are vacant (defined as lots without buildings assessed by BC Assessment), and have rural or residential zoning to permit and accommodate residential uses. Property owners of vacant lots with appropriate zoning could apply to construct housing with a building permit. Development would be dependent on building code requirements, as well as health requirements for sewage disposal and potable water, and are subject to Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulations.

Less than 5% of the land or approximately 25 km<sup>2</sup> in the Sproat Lake EA is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). This has limited impact on development in the majority of the EA, as any development or use of land for non-agricultural uses, such as housing, is subject to ALC regulations.

Additionally, there have been a number of inquiries regarding development potential for land in Sproat Lake, and ten properties with active rezoning and subdivision application for new development which could result in up to 67 lots, plus over 100 rental or strata housing units. New development in the Sproat Lake EA is constrained by a lack of community water or sewer servicing in the area. Many new development rely on individual water intakes from Sproat Lake or private water systems and communal sewage disposal systems in strata subdivisions.

## Accessory Dwelling Units

Current Zoning Bylaw and OCP regulation permits an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) to a maximum size of 80 square metres in rural and residential zones and land use designations where the principle use is a single family dwelling. Note, the ADU maximum size is proposed to increase to 90 square metres in the updated Zoning Bylaw, with an anticipated adoption date in 2022. An ADU is a secondary dwelling unit either in or added to an existing single family detached dwelling or in a separate accessory building on the same lot as the main dwelling intended for use as a complete, independent living facility. Such a dwelling is an accessory use to the main dwelling, and is commonly referred to as a secondary suite, granny suite, or carriage home and may be constructed in any zone in which accessory residential use is permitted.

Other ADU requirements include the lot size being a minimum of 0.4 ha, and capability of meeting all building code requirements, as well as health requirements for sewage disposal and potable water. On lots 0.8 ha or larger in size, the zoning permits one ADU or one manufactured home in addition to the principal dwelling.

In the Sproat Lake EA, approximately 40% of all lots within the OCP area (including those in the ALR) meet the 0.4 ha minimum lot size requirement and are zoned to permit an ADU, which means an additional form of housing could be constructed by applying for a building permit, subject to the requirements previously outlined. However, as previously noted, this available land area that could be used to construct an ADU or manufactured home is reduced by the land that is in the ALR. Of the lots in the Sproat Lake OCP area that meet the minimum 0.4 ha lot size, and are zoned to permit an ADU, almost 30% are within the ALR.

## Increasing Housing Flexibility in the ALR

As of December 31, 2021, the ALC will have new rules in place to allow property owners in the ALR increased housing flexibility. Options for an additional small secondary home will be added to ALC regulations, allowing farmers and ALR landowners to have both a principal residence and small secondary residence on their property with a streamlined approval process where required. The current ACRD Zoning Bylaw permits this increased residential flexibility, and once the updated ALC regulation is in place this will allow ACRD property owners to be able to provide additional housing in the ALR without having to apply to the ALC.

**Sproat Lake survey respondents indicated the following for ideas to improve housing in their community:**

*“Would love to see young/aspiring farmers connected with currently dormant ALR land.”*

*“Gated community with sufficient parking for two vehicles plus an RV.”*

*“More low cost housing for seniors”*

*“Senior housing complex that has attached garages...not open parking that has to be crossed a sloped road in winter when ice forms.”*

## 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

### Alberni Valley Electoral Areas Recommendations

The following five key recommendations emerged through the HNR process and respond directly to the key findings identified. They are applicable across all Alberni Valley Electoral Areas and provide a higher level approach to address the housing gaps anticipated for the next five years and beyond in the Alberni Valley, as well as across the ACRD. These recommendations are listed below for reference, and outlined in more detail in the supplementary Alberni Valley Housing Needs Report:

1. Formulate regional policy options to address current and future housing needs, and incorporate these policies into future updates of Electoral Area Official Community Plans.
2. Strengthen policies and regulations to improve housing affordability and availability, with a focus on a variety of housing types for all stages in life.
3. Develop and strengthen relationships, and work with partners to coordinate collaboration, advocacy and education on regional housing needs and gaps.
4. Consider creating a housing strategy and action plan that outlines funding opportunities, housing targets and tools to incentivize housing and address housing needs in the region.
5. Complete ongoing monitoring of regional housing supply and demand to adapt to evolving housing needs in the region over time.

### Sproat Lake Electoral Area Recommendations

In many ways, each of the Alberni Valley EAs continue to experience a unique set of housing challenges. Recommendations for approaches to address the housing gap in the Sproat Lake EA for the next five years and beyond expand on the above higher level Alberni Valley recommendations, and include:

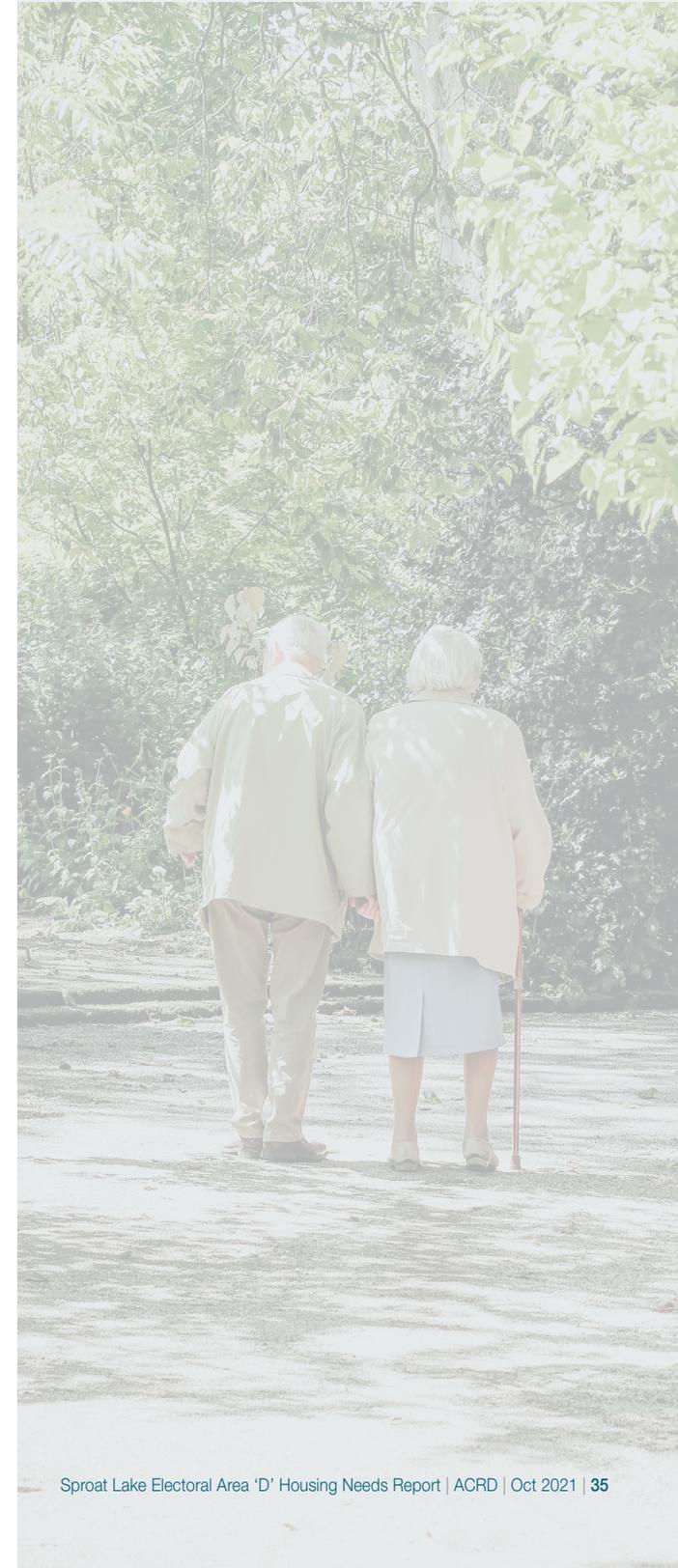
1. **Update Sproat Lake Official Community Plan to incorporate key housing findings from the Sproat Lake Housing Needs Report.**
  - The Sproat Lake Official Community Plan (OCP) was last updated in 2014, and currently includes limited goals, objectives, and policies around housing.
  - This HNR does not include specific new OCP policy but will later be used to support and inform future updates to the Sproat Lake OCP, and other plans and policies related to housing.
  - Include more specific guidelines for affordable and sustainable housing options, and a diversity of housing types, in future OCP updates.
  - Updates could include incentives for affordable, accessible, and adaptable housing, as well as planning for increased housing opportunities.
  - Undertake OCP updates in collaboration with the Sproat Lake community, Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission, Sproat Lake Community Association, as well as other partners and stakeholders.

## 2. Address growth in the population aged 65 years and over.

- In 2016, 60% of residents in Sproat Lake were 50 years and older, 28% were 65 years and older. Suitable supports need to be in place as this population group continues to grow. Additionally, planning housing, supports and services for older residents will also benefit all EA residents.
- Availability of suitable housing and housing affordability for the 65 years and older vulnerable population group must be considered.
- Consider strategies outlined in the 2020 Alberni Valley Age-Friendly Plan, especially to assist the high number of Sproat Lake residents who feel that they will be able to age in place and grow older in their current residence, or those who prefer to seek retirement living in the rural areas.
- Consider partnerships to improve services and other amenities in more rural portions of the EA to improve accessibility and livability for those residents who plan to live independently in their home as they age.

## 3. Encourage the development of a spectrum of affordable housing options.

- Consider including attached housing, universally accessible housing, supported housing, smaller dwellings as additional options for housing in the area. The relocation of seniors and couples looking to live in diverse housing options could make existing larger dwellings available in Sproat Lake for families and/or larger households. The survey of Sproat Lake residents indicated there is a higher percentage of two person households residing in four bedroom homes.
- Encourage development of purpose-built rental, smaller units and diverse housing types in all residential areas, with a focus on properties with communal or community water and sewer services in bare land strata or building strata developments. Focus on areas serviced by communal services and designated as Comprehensive Development Areas in the OCP, such as the lands surrounding Boot Lagoon on Great Central Lake
- Strengthen enforcement of illegal short term vacation rentals that have not received Temporary Use Permits from the Regional District in order to increase the rental stock available for long term or seasonal rental accommodation.
- Educate and encourage development of accessory dwelling units, where permitted.
- Review regulations for dwelling in recreational vehicles on residentially zoned properties. Consider mobile home parks as a safer and better regulated housing alternative to campgrounds and illegal dwelling in recreational vehicles on residential lots.



**Sproat Lake survey respondents indicated the following for ideas to improve housing in their community:**

*“Increase as taxation to improve the community.”*

*“Encourage short term rentals, they create thousands in income in the town for food and liquor, gas etc.”*

*“Lower rent payments to what people can afford.”*

*“Review zoning regulations to make secondary suites easier to legally be provided.”*

*“More legal, secondary suites and carriage houses. More secure, accessible senior housing.”*

**4. Develop and strengthen partnerships to improve collaboration, advocacy, and education around housing needs and gaps.**

- As regional and local policy tools to address housing are limited, partnerships with other levels of government (such as Federal and Provincial), and the region’s member municipalities and First Nations, are essential to increase awareness of specific needs and service gaps.
- Work with all partners (including non-profits and private entities) to continue to advocate for increased housing funding and tools, to leverage grant funding opportunities where possible, and to facilitate potential housing options.
- Collaborate with the Tseshah First Nation, the City of Port Alberni and BC Transit on improved transit access and share service delivery options for the Tsahaheh 1 IR community hub and surrounding lands within the Sproat Lake EA.
- Ensure future collaboration and dialogue with partners is focused on community direction for housing in Sproat Lake.
- Collaborate with all Alberni Valley EA community members (and specifically Sproat Lake EA property owners and residents), agencies, and First Nations, to assist in aligning community goals with housing needed to address demographic change and population growth.
- Strengthen and engage with formal and community groups such as the Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission, Sproat Lake Community Association, and others.

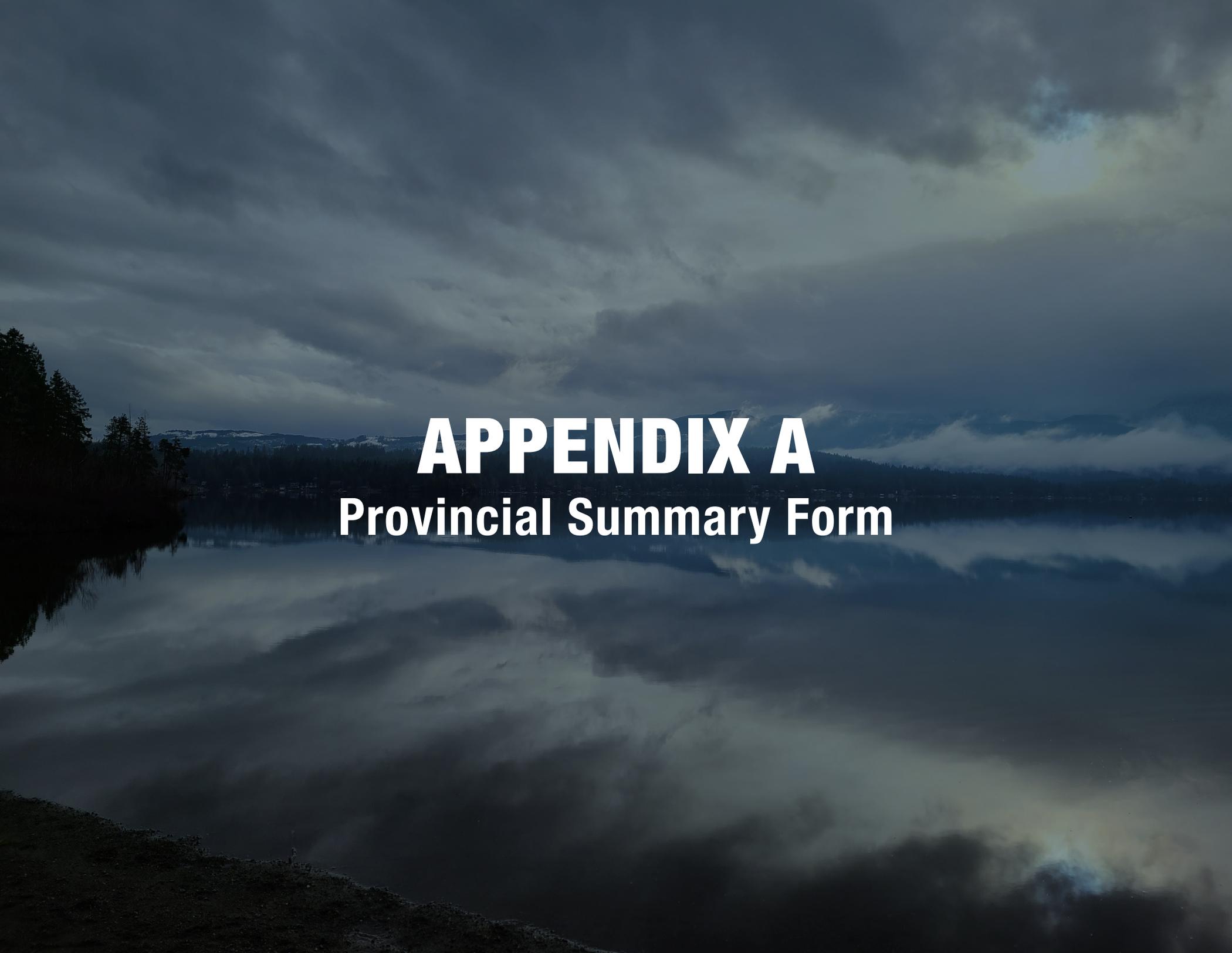


## 4. SOURCES CITED

Refer to the supplementary Alberni Valley Housing Needs Report for a complete list of sources cited, including for the data used for all Housing Needs Reports.

Sproat Lake Official Community Plan, 2014: [https://www.acrd.bc.ca/dms/documents/planning-and-development/ocps/sproat\\_lake\\_ocp.pdf](https://www.acrd.bc.ca/dms/documents/planning-and-development/ocps/sproat_lake_ocp.pdf)

Available: <https://www.acrd.bc.ca/sproat-lake-ocp>

A dark, atmospheric landscape featuring a calm body of water in the foreground that perfectly reflects the sky above. The sky is filled with heavy, layered clouds in shades of grey and blue, with a hint of light breaking through on the right side. In the background, silhouetted mountains and a line of trees are visible, their forms also reflected in the water. The overall mood is serene and somewhat somber due to the low light and dark tones.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Provincial Summary Form**

## Housing Needs Reports – Summary Form

MUNICIPALITY/ELECTORAL AREA/LOCAL TRUST AREA: [Electoral Area D \(Sproat Lake\)](#)

REGIONAL DISTRICT: [Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District](#)

DATE OF REPORT COMPLETION: OCTOBER 2021

### PART 1: KEY INDICATORS & INFORMATION

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

<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Neighbouring municipalities and electoral areas:</b>	ACRD Electoral Areas A, B, C, E, and F, City of Port Alberni,
	<b>Neighbouring First Nations:</b>	Tseshaht, Hupacasath, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and Yuuʔuʔiʔath Government

<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>Population:</b>	1,625	<b>Change since 2006:</b>	-20.5%		
	<b>Projected population in 5 years:</b>	1,785	<b>Projected change:</b>	9.8%		
	<b>Number of households:</b>	780	<b>Change since 2006:</b>	-7.7%		
	<b>Projected # of households in 5 years:</b>	882	<b>Projected change:</b>	13.1%		
	<b>Average household size:</b>	2.1				
	<b>Projected average household size in 5 years:</b>	2.1				
	<b>Median age (local):</b>	55.4	<b>Median age (RD):</b>	46.6	<b>Median age (BC):</b>	42.5
	<b>Projected median age in 5 years:</b>	54.0				
	<b>Seniors 65+ (local):</b>	28.3%	<b>Seniors 65+ (RD):</b>	21.2%	<b>Seniors 65+ (BC):</b>	17.4%
	<b>Projected seniors 65+ in 5 years:</b>	33.5%				
	<b>Owner households:</b>	90.3%	<b>Renter households:</b>	9.7%		
	<b>Renter households in subsidized housing:</b>	0%				

<b>INCOME</b>	Median Household Income	Local	Regional District	BC
	All households	\$83,030	\$55,443	\$69,979
	Renter households	\$23,149	\$32,854	\$45,848
	Owner households	\$89,689	\$66,502	\$84,333

<b>ECONOMY</b>	<b>Participation rate:</b>	55.7%	<b>Unemployment rate:</b>	11.1%
	<b>Major local industries:</b>	Health care & social assistance, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting		

<b>HOUSING</b>	Median assessed housing values:	\$841,968	Median housing sale price:	\$645,199
	Median monthly rent:	Unknown	Rental vacancy rate:	Unknown
	Housing units – total:	780	Housing units – subsidized:	0
	Annual registered new homes – total:	10 (2020)	Annual registered new homes – rental:	0
	Households below affordability standards (spending 30%+ of income on shelter):		12.33%	
	Households below adequacy standards (in dwellings requiring major repairs):		5.48%	
	Households below suitability standards (in overcrowded dwellings):		1.37%	

**Briefly summarize the following:**

**1. Housing policies in local official community plans and regional growth strategies (if applicable):**

- Goal 4 of the Sproat Lake OCP is to “offer residents a healthy lifestyle, a good quality of life, and affordable housing options.”
- Objective 3.1.5 is to “Facilitate the provision of safe, affordable rental housing within the Plan area.”
- Policy 3.2.9 provides guidelines about accessory residential dwelling units.
- Section 10 is focused on residential uses of the land and allows for a range of housing options within the plan area. Options for density bonusing and density averaging and smaller lot sizes are all provided.

**2. Any community consultation undertaken during development of the housing needs report:**

- A public online survey in partnership with the City of Port Alberni (for the entire Alberni Valley including the City of Port Alberni and four ACRD Alberni Valley Electoral Areas (EAs): Beaufort, Sproat Lake, Beaver Creek, and Cherry Creek) with 668 responses received. 26% of respondents were from the Alberni Valley EAs, and 37 were from Sproat Lake.
- A public online community forum for residents, property owners and other community members of the Alberni Valley EAs, where community members could ask open ended questions and provide valuable insight and feedback. Some of the attendees included Alberni Valley EA Directors/Alternate Directors, Agricultural Support Worker, Air Quality Council member, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation representative, as well as others.
- A joint Advisory Planning Commission (APC) meeting with members of the four Alberni Valley APCs (included a presentation and discussion).
- One-on-one conversations through email, phone and other virtual methods.

**3. Any consultation undertaken with persons, organizations and authorities (e.g. local governments, health authorities, and the provincial and federal governments and their agencies):**

- A stakeholder engagement survey (stakeholders included health authorities, provincial government representatives, affordable housing providers, long-term care providers, and many others).
- An online stakeholder focus group meeting.
- A presentation and discussion with the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network, which includes representatives from various organizations and authorities such as Island Health and School District No. 70 (Pacific Rim).

**4. Any consultation undertaken with First Nations:**

- Invitation to participate in the online public survey.
- Invitation to participate in stakeholder survey.
- Invitation to participate in stakeholder focus group meeting.
- Phone conversation with the Manager of the Port Alberni Friendship Centre.

## PART 2: KEY FINDINGS

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

	Currently (2021)	Anticipated (5 years)
0 bedrooms (bachelor)	26	34
1 bedroom	72	80
2 bedrooms	180	188
3+ bedrooms	580	580
<b>Total</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>882</b>

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

Table 2: Households in Core Housing Need

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All households in planning area	795	100	720	100	780	100
Of which are in core housing need	55	6.9	30	4.2	50	6.8
Of which are owner households	40	5.8	15	2.3	15	2.2
Of which are renter households	15	15.8	15	30.0	35	53.8

**Comments:**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census data from 2006, 2011, & 2016

Table 3: Households in *Extreme* Core Housing Need

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All households in planning area	795	100	720	100	735	100
Of which are in extreme core housing need	40	5.0	0	0	20	2.7
Of which are owner households	20	2.9	0	0	10	1.5
Of which are renter households	20	21.1	0	0	10	15.4

**Comments:**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census data from 2006, 2011, & 2016

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

#### 1. Affordable housing:

The number of households in core and extreme core housing need steadily increased between 2006 and 2016, indicating that there is a shortage of affordable housing. The assessed value and purchase prices of residential properties in Electoral Area D has increased significantly since 2016, so it is unlikely that this problem has been resolved since the last census.

Although there is limited data on rental dwelling units for Sproat Lake, the majority of renter households (53.8%) were in core housing need as of 2016, which means there is a significant need for affordable rental housing in the area.

## **2. Rental housing:**

The number of rental households decreased between 2006 and 2016, and no building permits were issued for purpose-built rental housing between 2016 and 2020, which indicates that there is likely still a shortage of rental units. Currently all rental units are part of the secondary rental market.

## **3. Special needs housing:**

There are no special needs housing units in Sproat Lake. Due to the distance from services (medical and others) and the lack of public transportation to Port Alberni, Sproat Lake is unlikely to be a convenient location for this type of housing.

## **4. Housing for seniors:**

Sproat Lake has no long-term care or retirement home facilities. The percentage of the population (both local and national) that is over 65 has steadily increased over the years, and as of 2016 28.3% of Electoral Area D residents were of retirement age. Improving access to services and public transportation would allow more residents to age in place. The development of smaller, single-level homes would also free up larger family homes.

## **5. Housing for families:**

There is no data regarding subsidized or affordable housing for families in Sproat Lake, but due to the rising cost of single detached dwellings, it is likely that most young families would find it difficult to afford a home in this area.

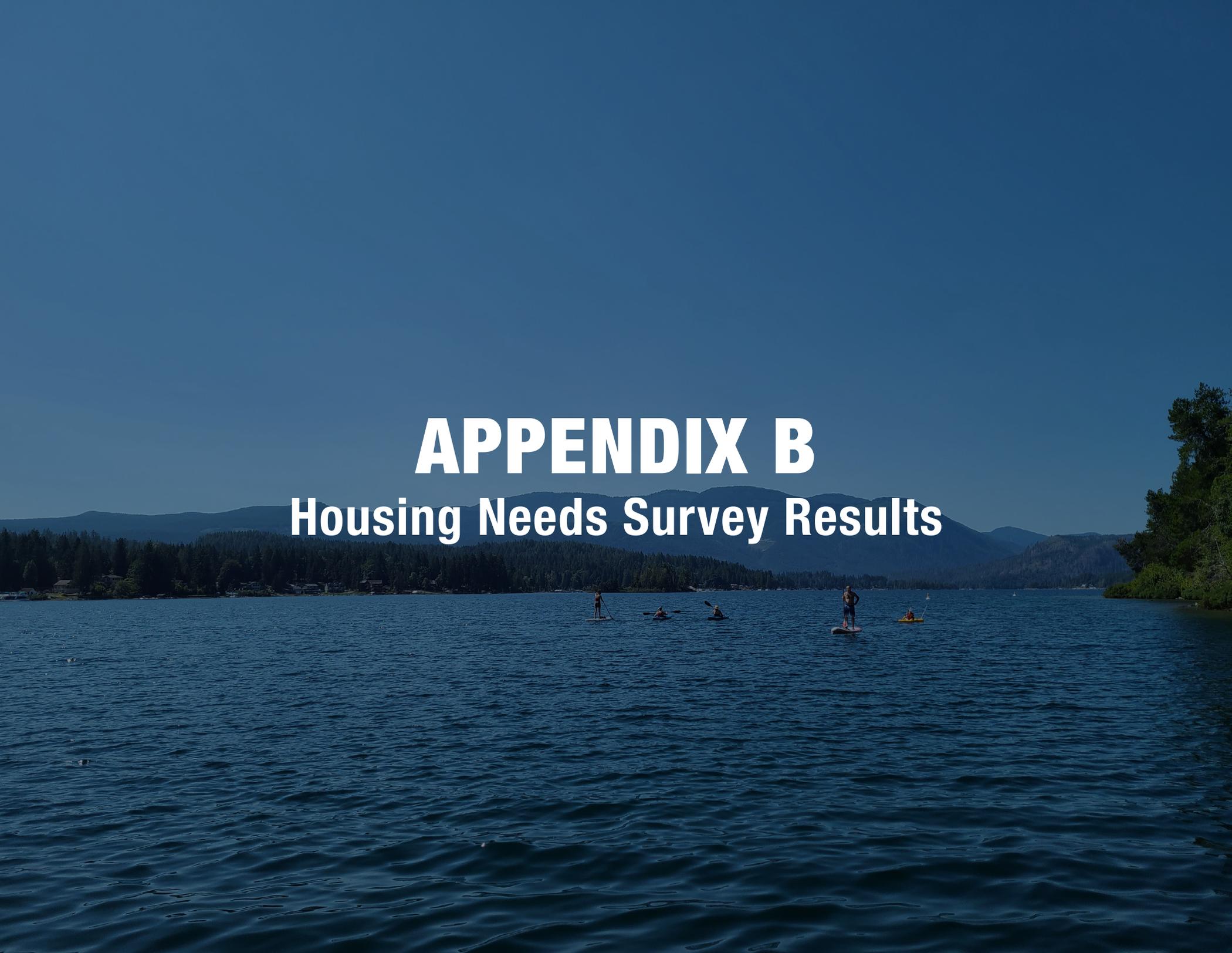
## **6. Shelters for people experiencing homelessness and housing for people at risk of homelessness:**

There are no shelters for people experiencing homelessness, and no data on the number of people experiencing homeless in Sproat Lake. Illegal short and long-term camping has been identified as an issue in the ACRD, and has been focused on areas on the West Coast as well as some parts of the Alberni Valley. Typically, recreational vehicles are being used as a form of (temporary) housing. Dwelling in a recreational vehicle in an unauthorized area (i.e. land that is not zoned for camping, such as a campground) is illegal.

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

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

- Sproat Lake has seen a significant increase in the average assessed value and purchase price of homes, with the average assessed value reaching almost \$766,000 by the end of 2020. This is driving home ownership out of the reach of many families, as the median income for residents of the ACRD only increased by 2.8% between 2006 and 2016, while the average assessed value of Sproat Lake homes increased by 64.4% during this same time period.
- The number of 1 and 2 person households increased between 2006 and 2016, accounting for 79% of households in Sproat Lake by 2016. However, 74% of homes in Sproat Lake had 3 or more bedrooms in 2016, as historically many homes were built to accommodate families. The relative shortage of smaller and easier to maintain homes is potentially leading to a bottleneck where seniors are staying in larger homes, while families are unable to find larger homes to accommodate their needs.



# **APPENDIX B**

## **Housing Needs Survey Results**

# Alberni Valley Housing Needs Survey

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## **SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT**

27 October 2020 - 30 November 2020

### **PROJECT NAME:**

Alberni Valley Housing Needs Assessment

### **FILTER BY:**

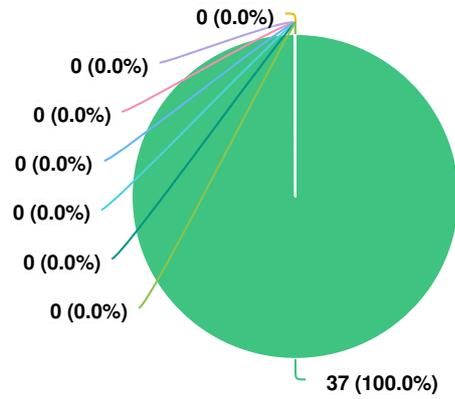
Where is your primary residence located?

Answered : Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-



SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Q1** | Where is your primary residence located?



**Question options**

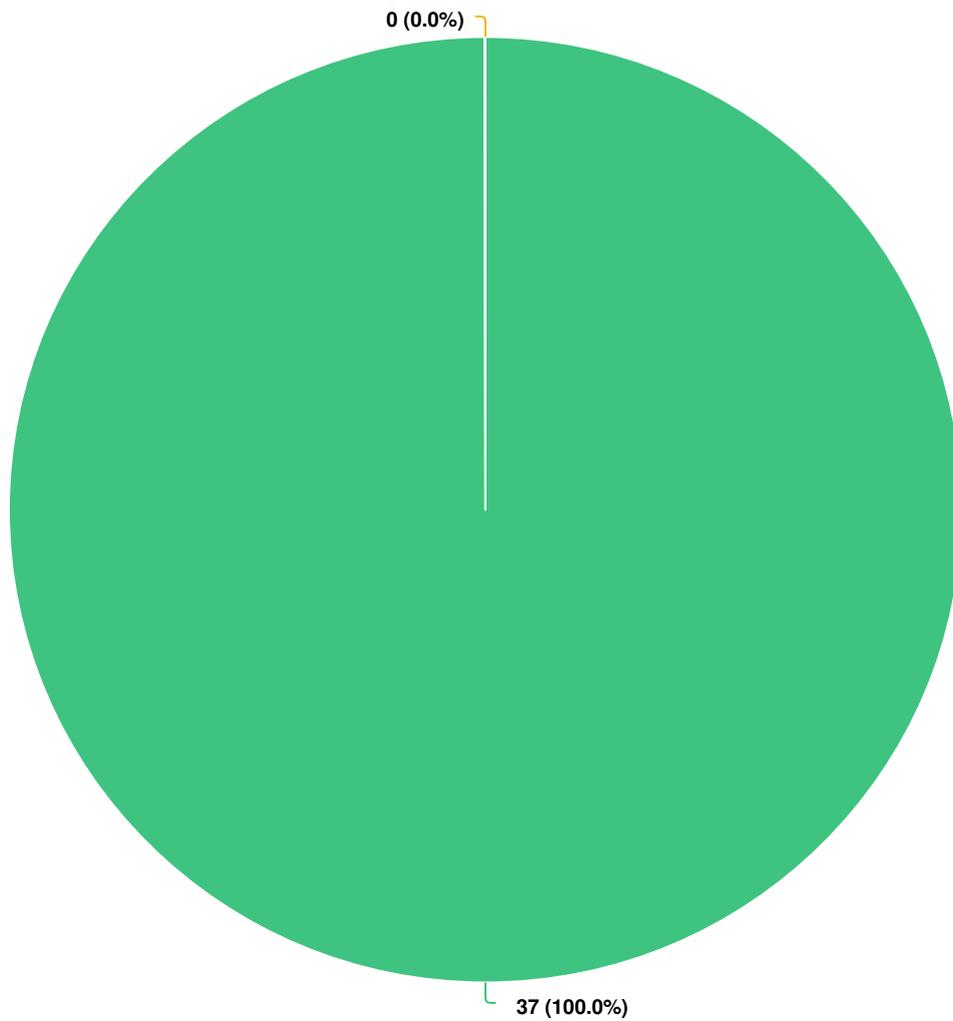
- Sproat Lake Electoral Area
- City of Port Alberni
- Beaufort Electoral Area
- Beaver Creek Electoral Area
- Cherry Creek Electoral Area
- Tseshahst First Nation
- Hupacasath First Nation
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (37 response(s))

Question type: Dropdown Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q2** | Do you live in this community year-round?



**Question options**

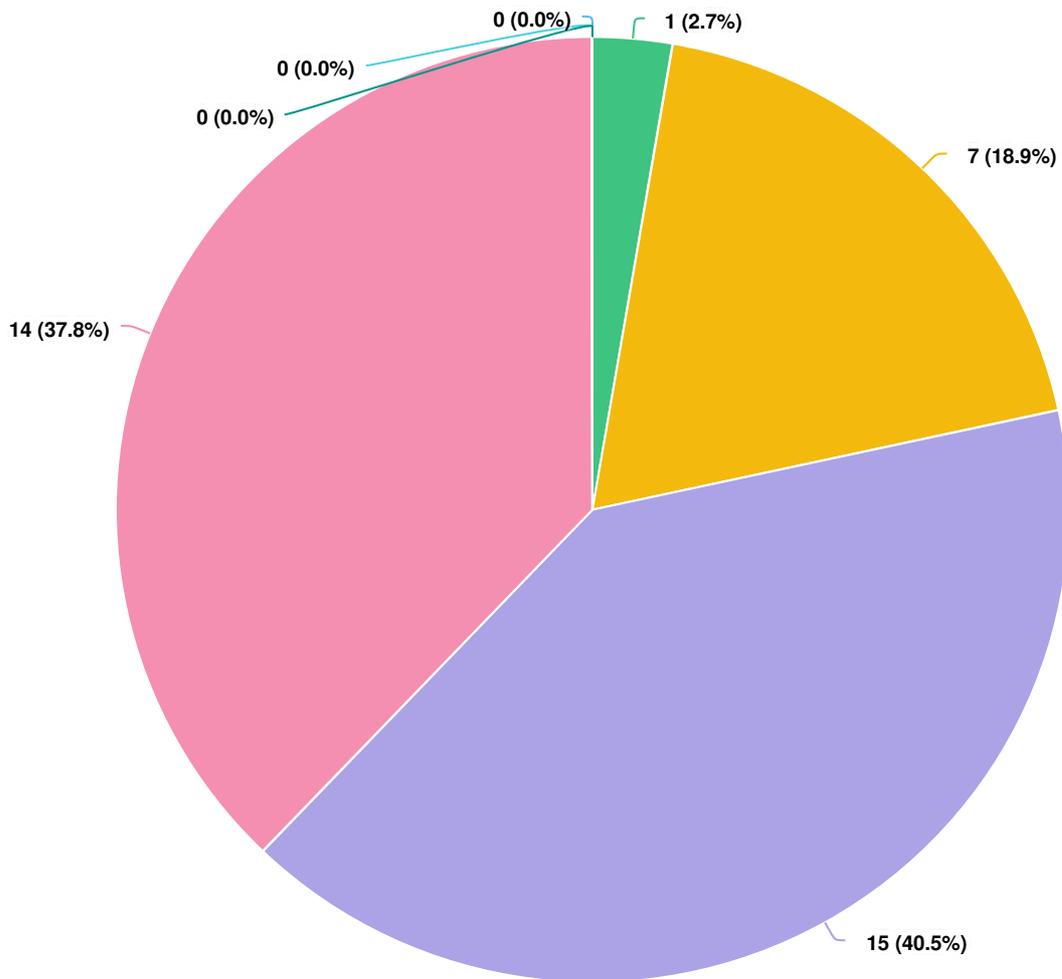
- Yes
- No

Mandatory Question (37 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q3** What is your age?



**Question options**

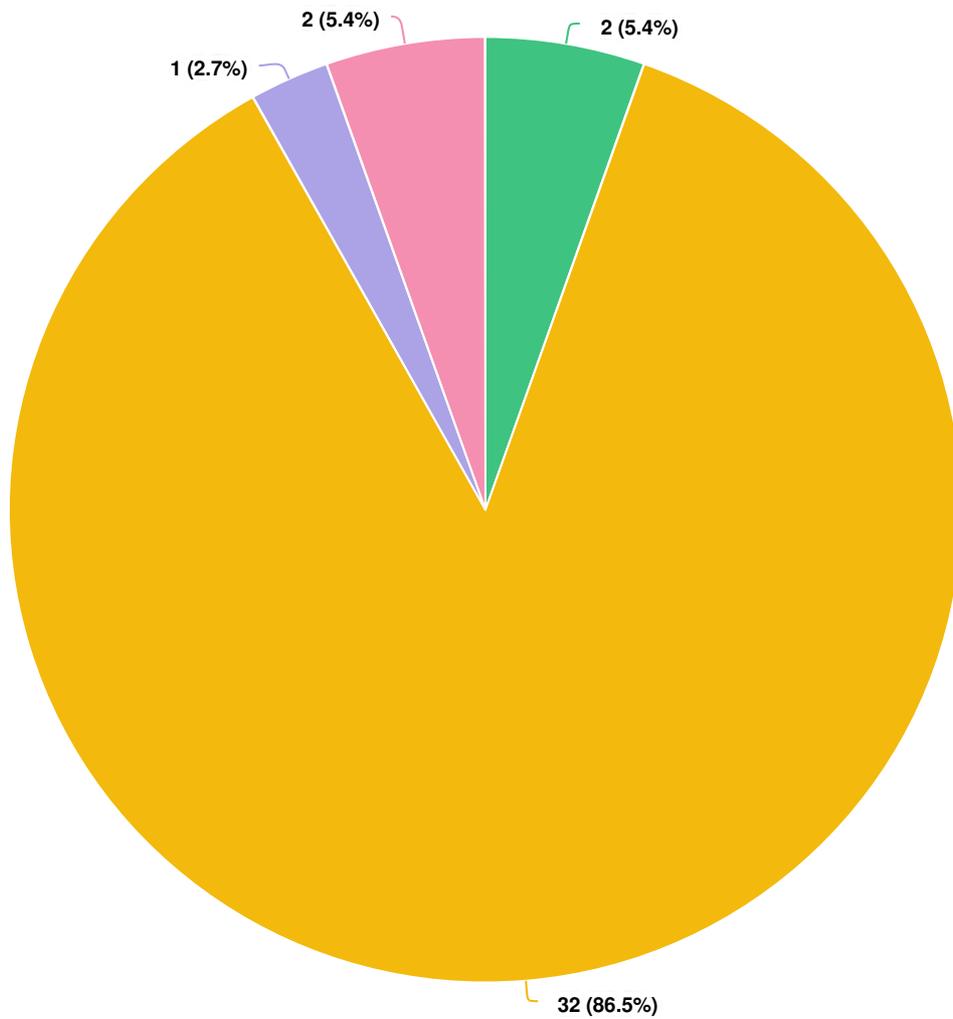
- 20-29 years
- 30-49 years
- 50-64 years
- 65-84 years
- 0-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 85 years or older

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q4** Do you identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Metis?



**Question options**

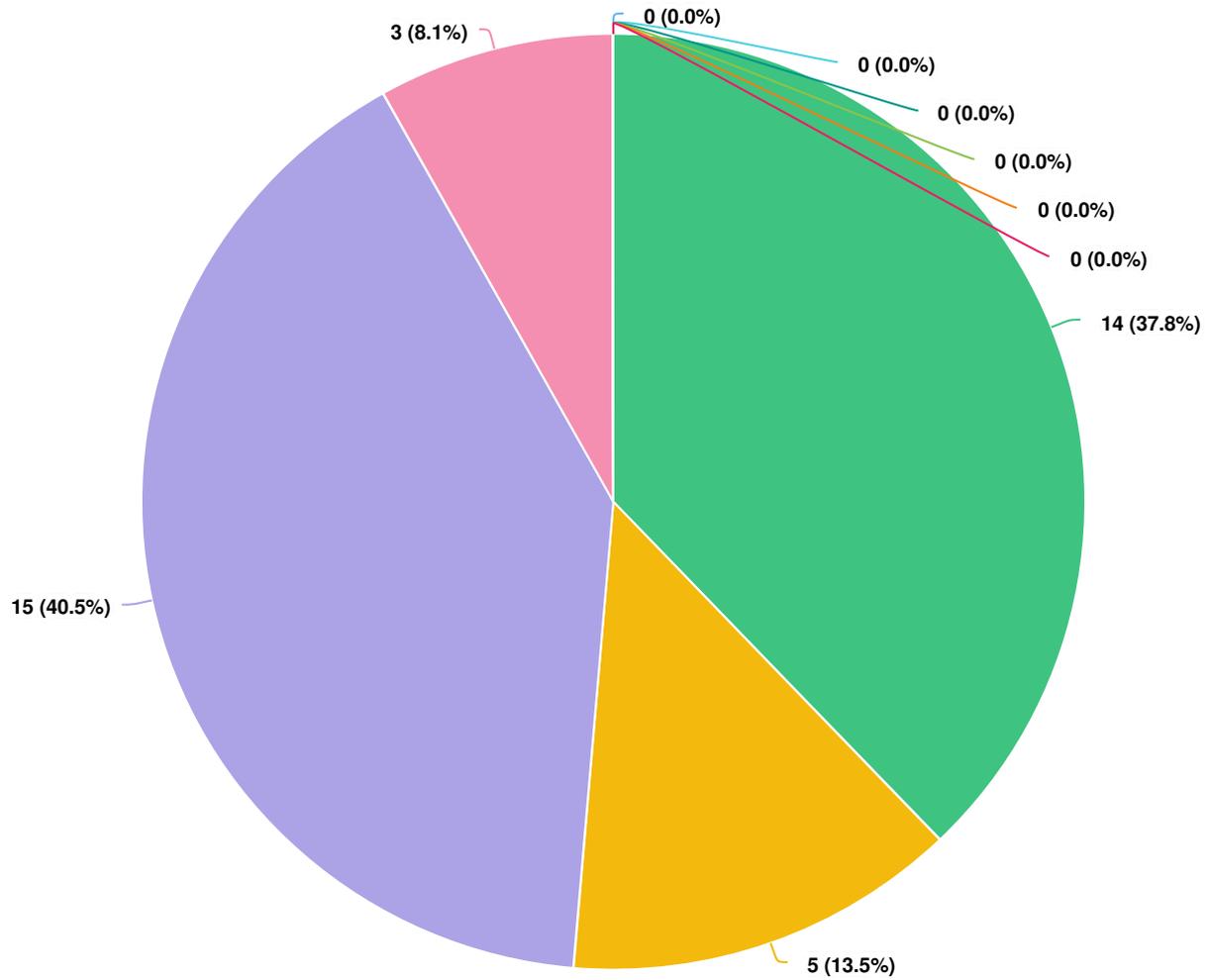
- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Prefer not to say

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q5 | What is your employment status?**



**Question options**

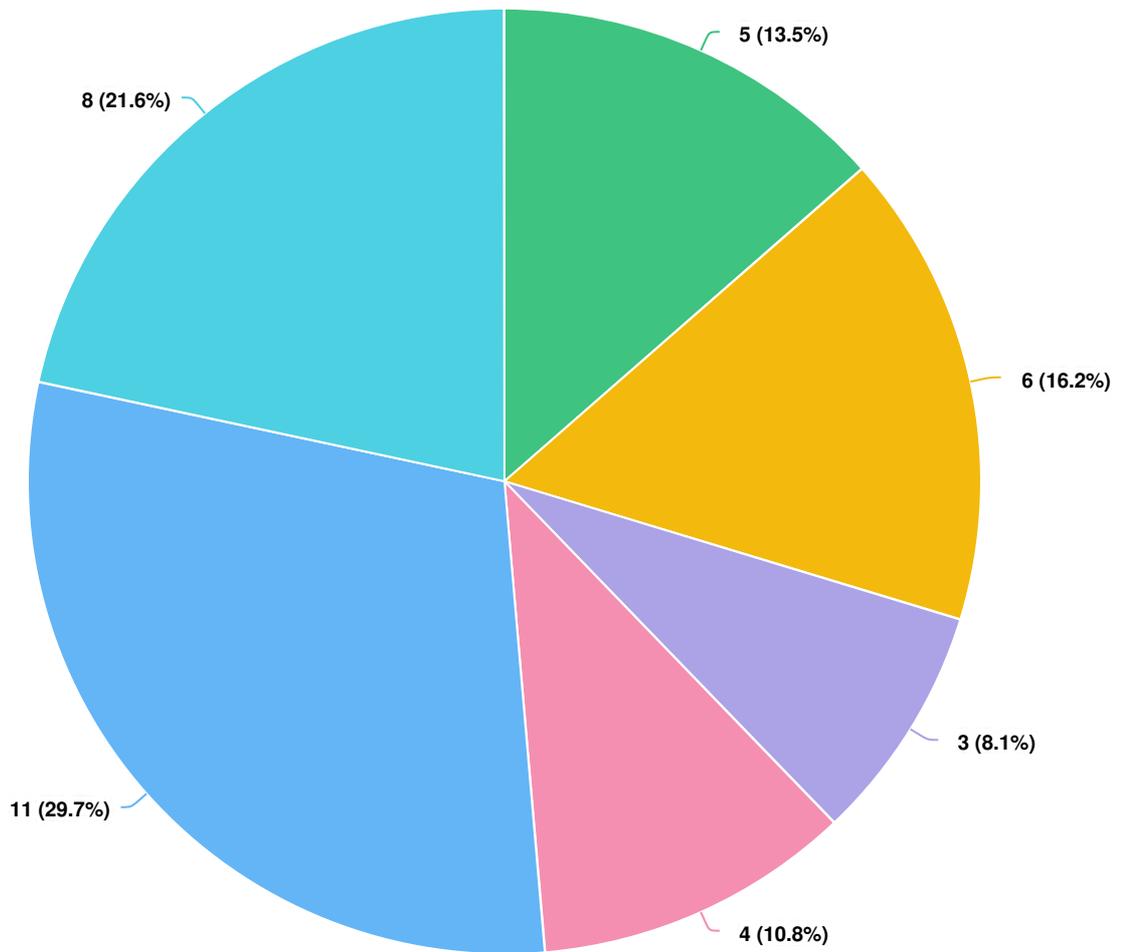
- Full-time employment   
 ● Part-time employment   
 ● Retired   
 ● Unable to work due to a disability
- Temporary/seasonal employment   
 ● Full-time homemaker   
 ● Unemployed   
 ● Out of work due to pandemic
- Prefer not to say   
 ● Other (please specify)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q6** What is your total household income per year before deductions?



**Question options**

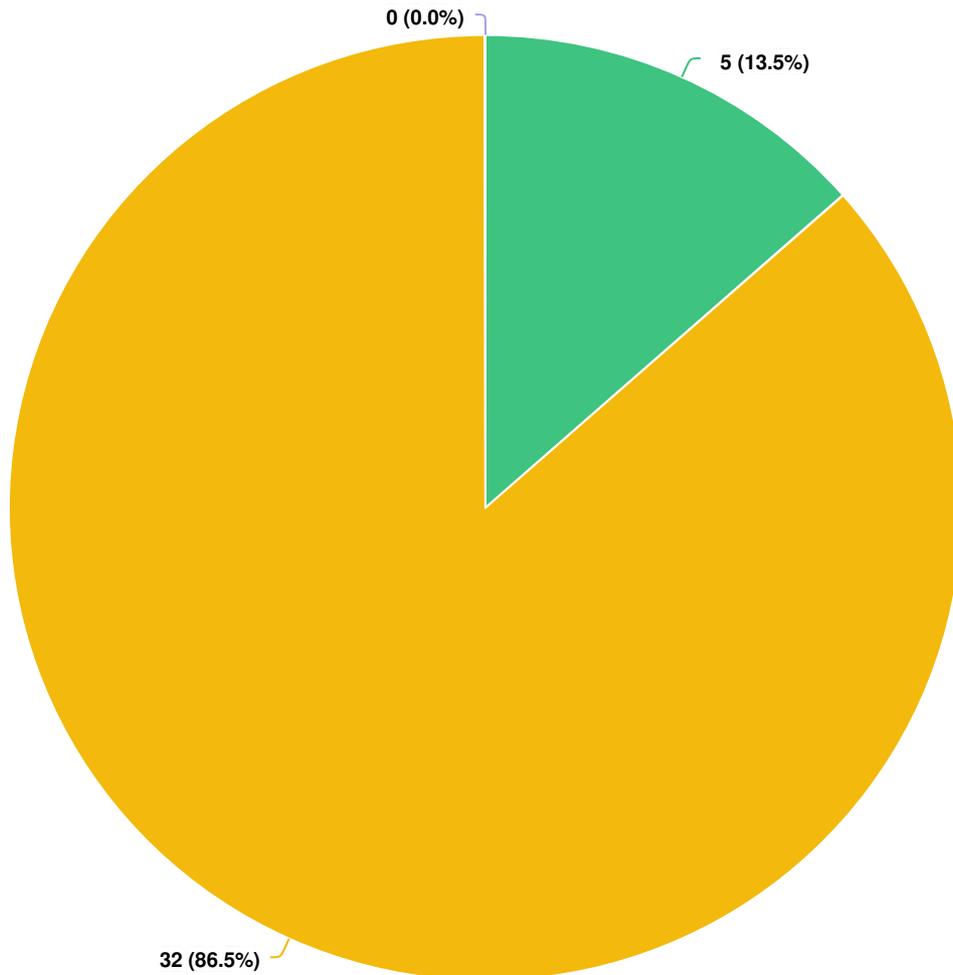
- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- More than \$100,000
- Prefer not to answer

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q7 | Are you currently receiving any government financial assistance, excluding COVID-19 related assistance?**



**Question options**

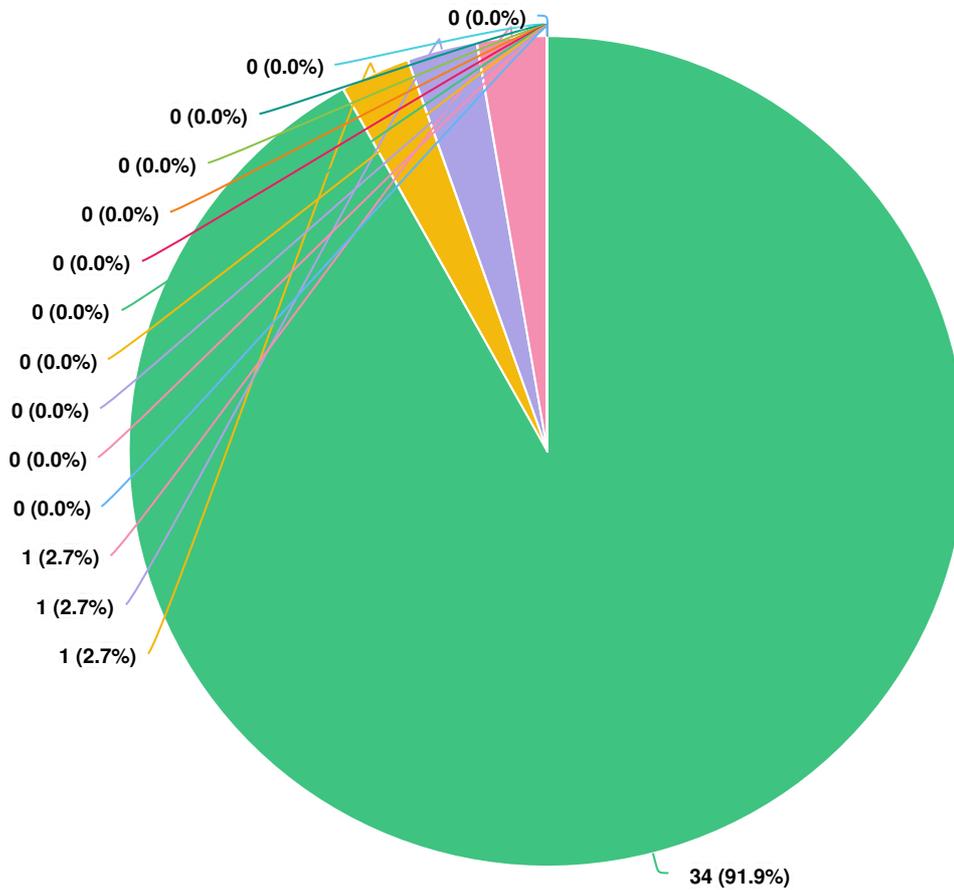
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q8 What kind of structure is your current place of residence?**



**Question options**

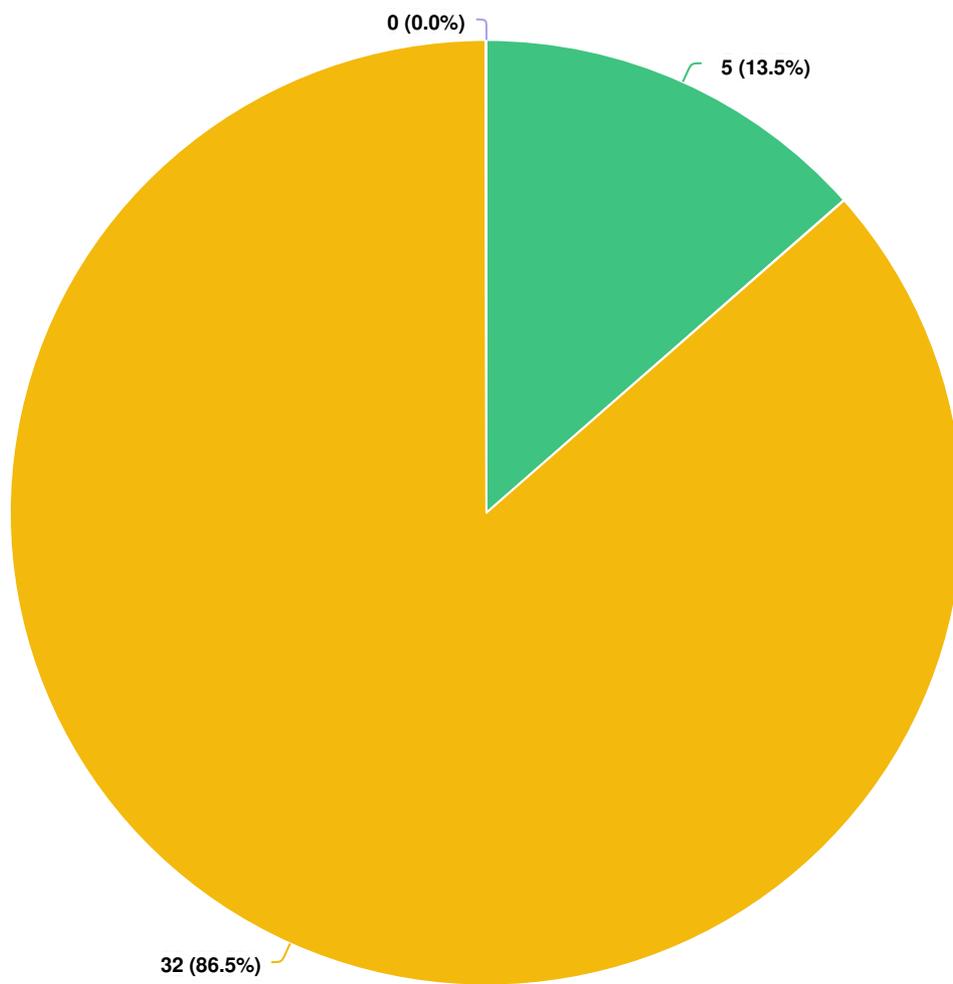
- Single detached house      ● Permanent mobile or manufactured home (permanently fixed to a foundation)
- Non-permanent mobile home (designed and constructed to be moved and placed on blocks, posts, or a prepared pad)
- Other movable dwelling (e.g. RV, tiny home on wheels, float home, tent)
- Self contained unit within a single detached house (e.g. basement suite)
- Self contained unit outside of a single detached house but on the same property (e.g. carriage home or laneway home)
- Semi-detached house or duplex      ● Row house or townhouse (3 or more dwellings joined side by side)
- Apartment or condo building with less than 5 storeys      ● Apartment or condo building with 5 or more storeys
- Co-operative housing      ● Care home      ● Private bedroom with shared kitchen and living spaces      ● Homeless shelter
- Currently without a home

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q9** Do you rent or own your current place of residence?



**Question options**

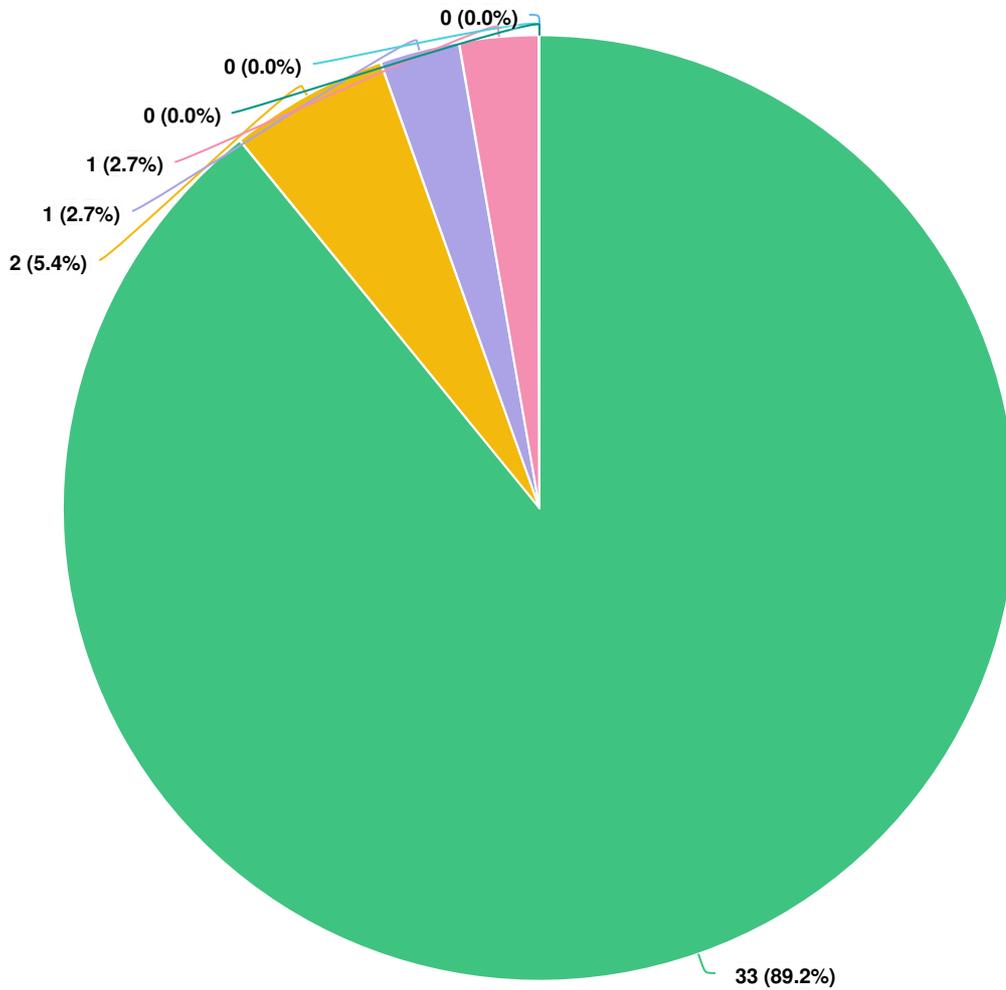
- Rent
- Own
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q10** What type of housing would you prefer to live in?



**Question options**

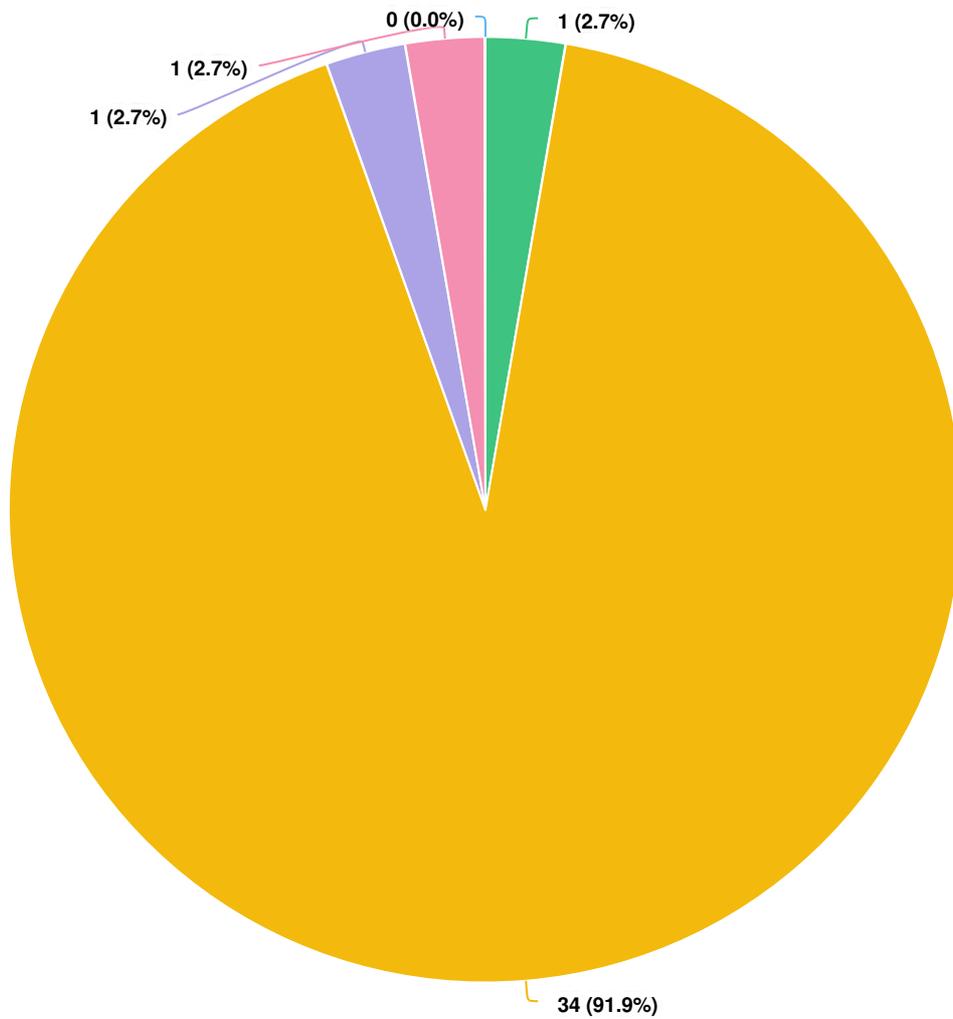
- Single detached house
- Low-density multi-family development (townhome, rowhome, etc)
- Mobile home or other moveable structure (tiny home on wheels, float home, etc)
- Other (please specify)
- Self-contained unit within a home that belongs to a friend/family member
- Medium density multi-family development (a building with up to 4 storeys)
- High-density multi-family development (a building with 5 or more storeys)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q11 | Would you prefer to rent or own?**



**Question options**

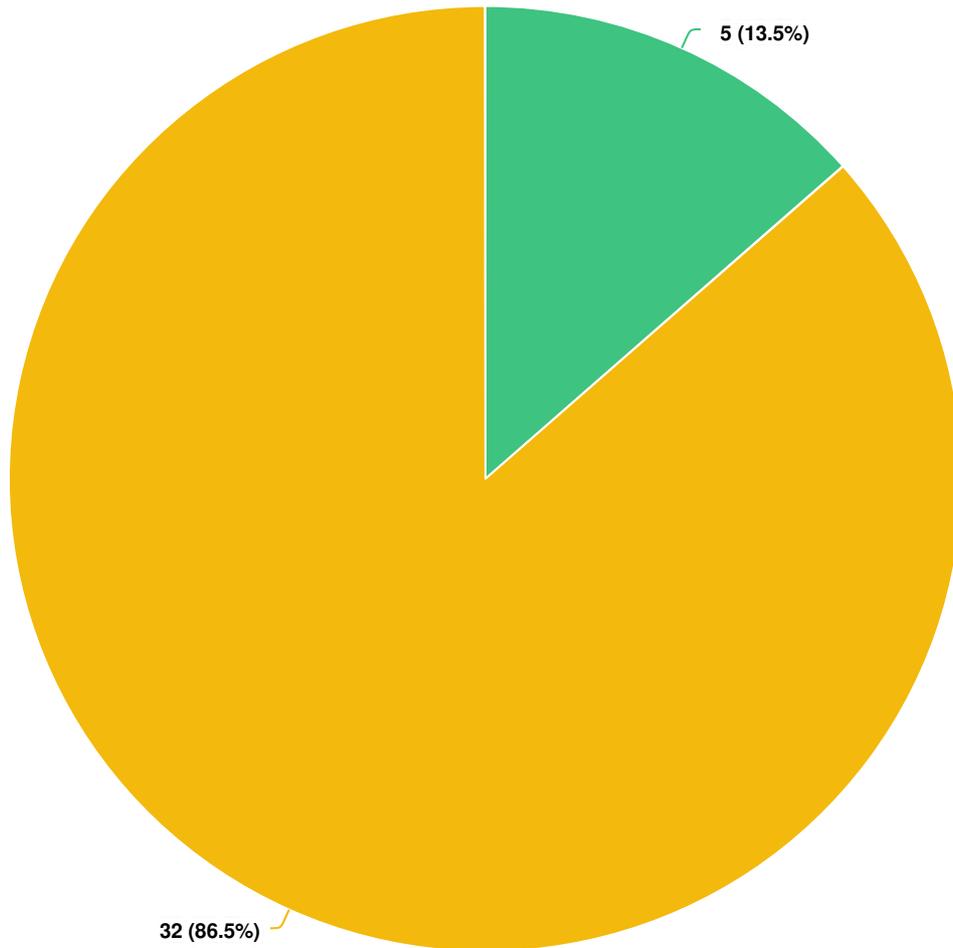
- Rent
- Own
- Co-operative/shared/group
- Not sure
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q12 | Have you ever rented a home you own, or a room in your home, as a short-term vacation rental?**



**Question options**

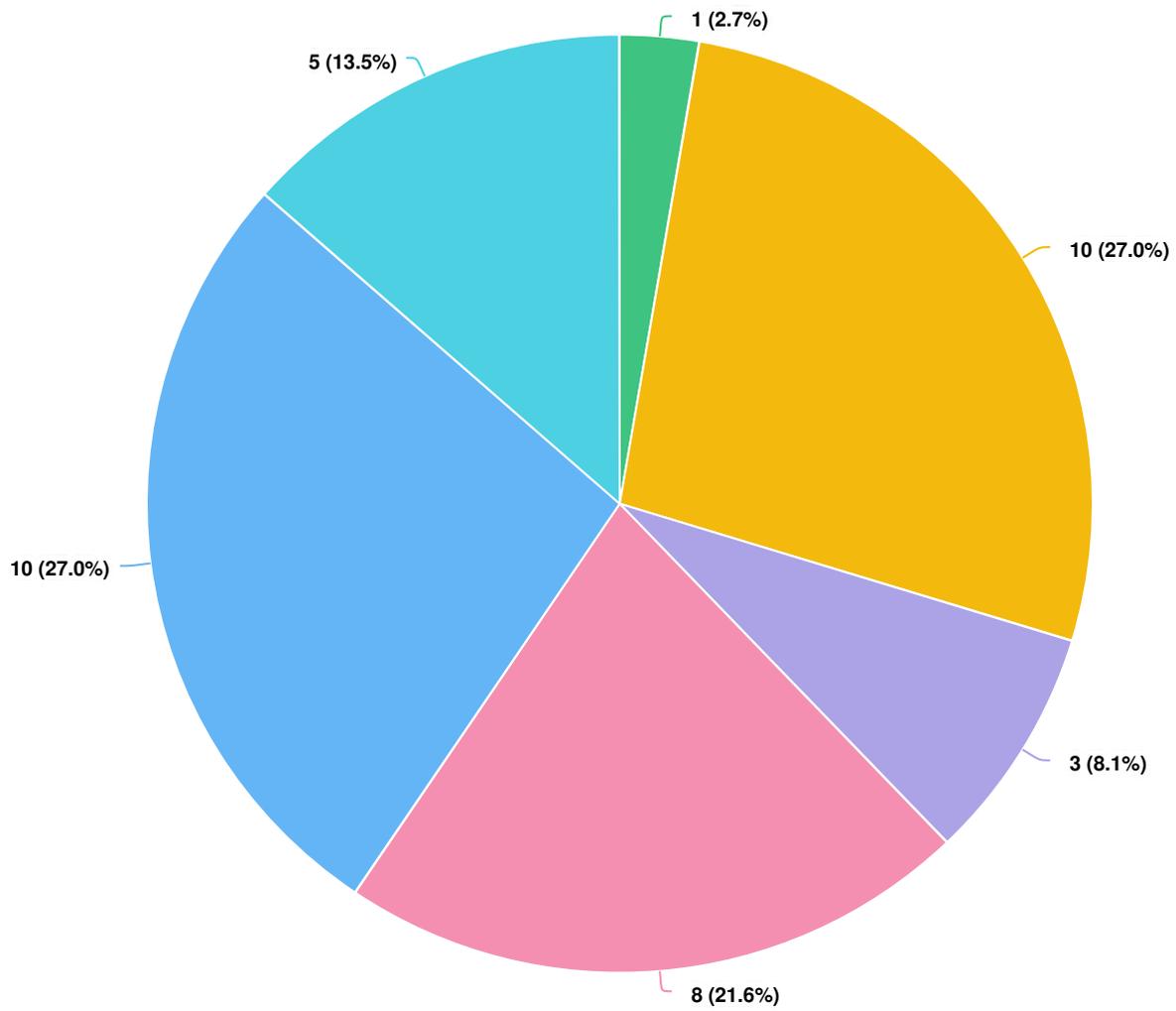
- Yes
- No

*Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

*Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-*

**Q13** How long have you lived in your current place of residence?



**Question options**

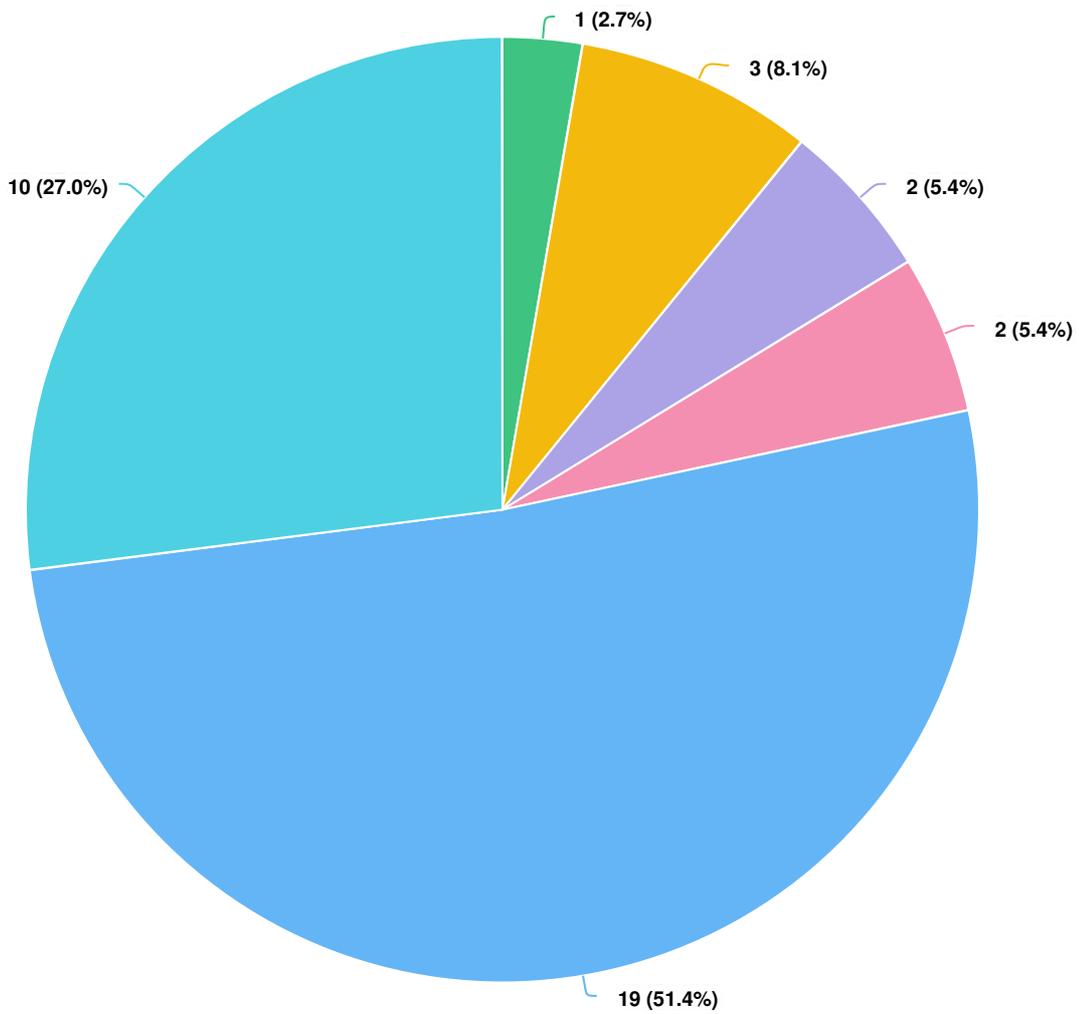
- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 4 years
- 5 to 9 years
- 10 to 19 years
- 20 to 30 years
- More than 30 years

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q14 | How much longer do you plan to live in your current place of residence?**



**Question options**

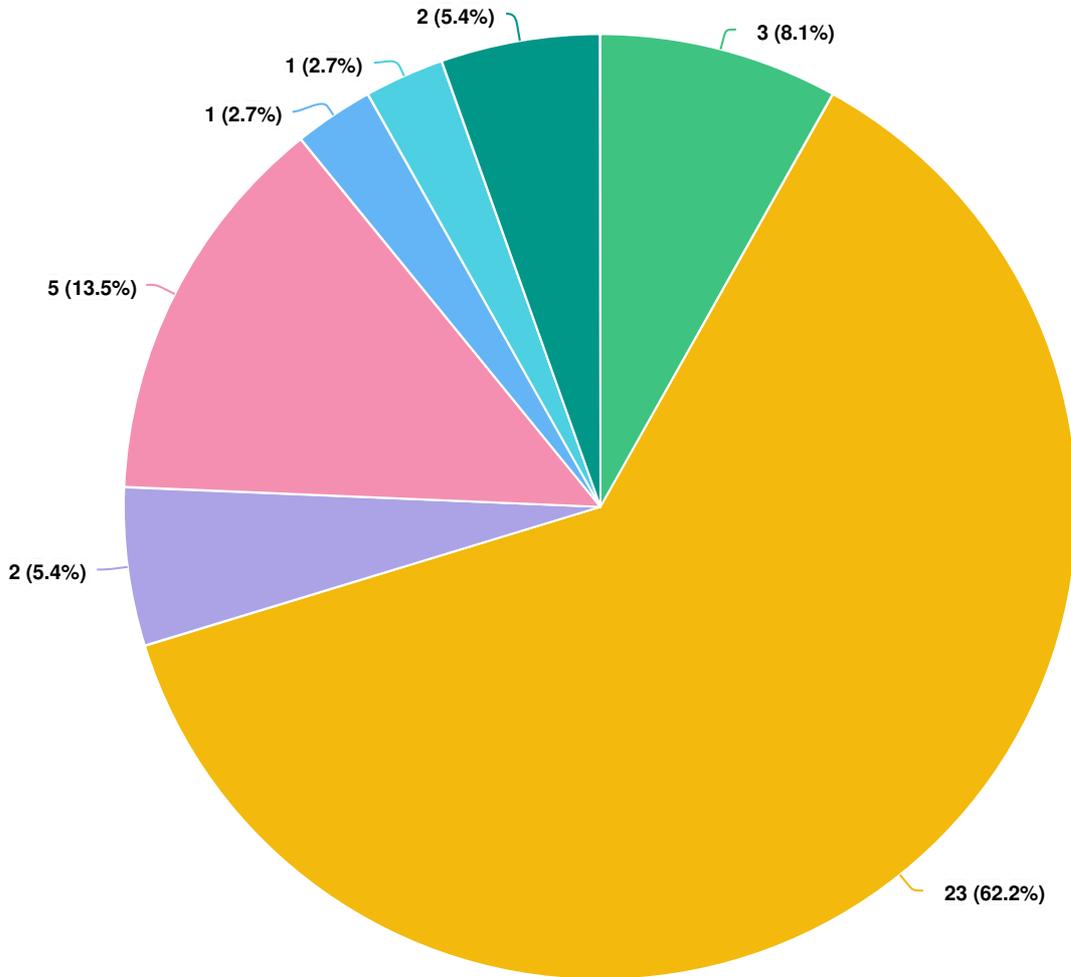
- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 2 years
- 3 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- More than 10 years
- Unsure

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q15 | Which of the following best describes your current household situation?**



**Question options**

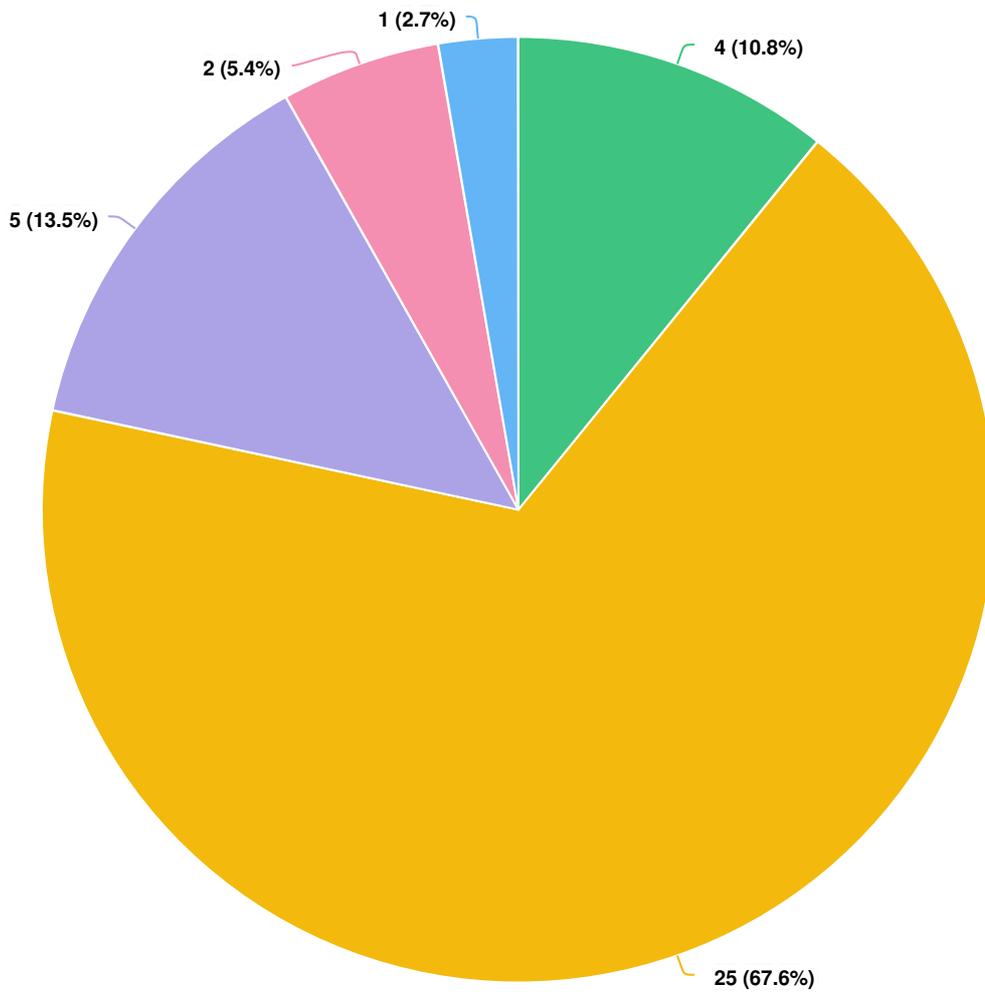
- I have a spouse and children in the home
- I have a spouse but no children in the home
- I am a single parent with children in the home
- I live by myself
- I live with 1 or more people with whom I'm not related
- I am temporarily staying with friends/family
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q16** How many people (including you) currently share your place of residence?



**Question options**

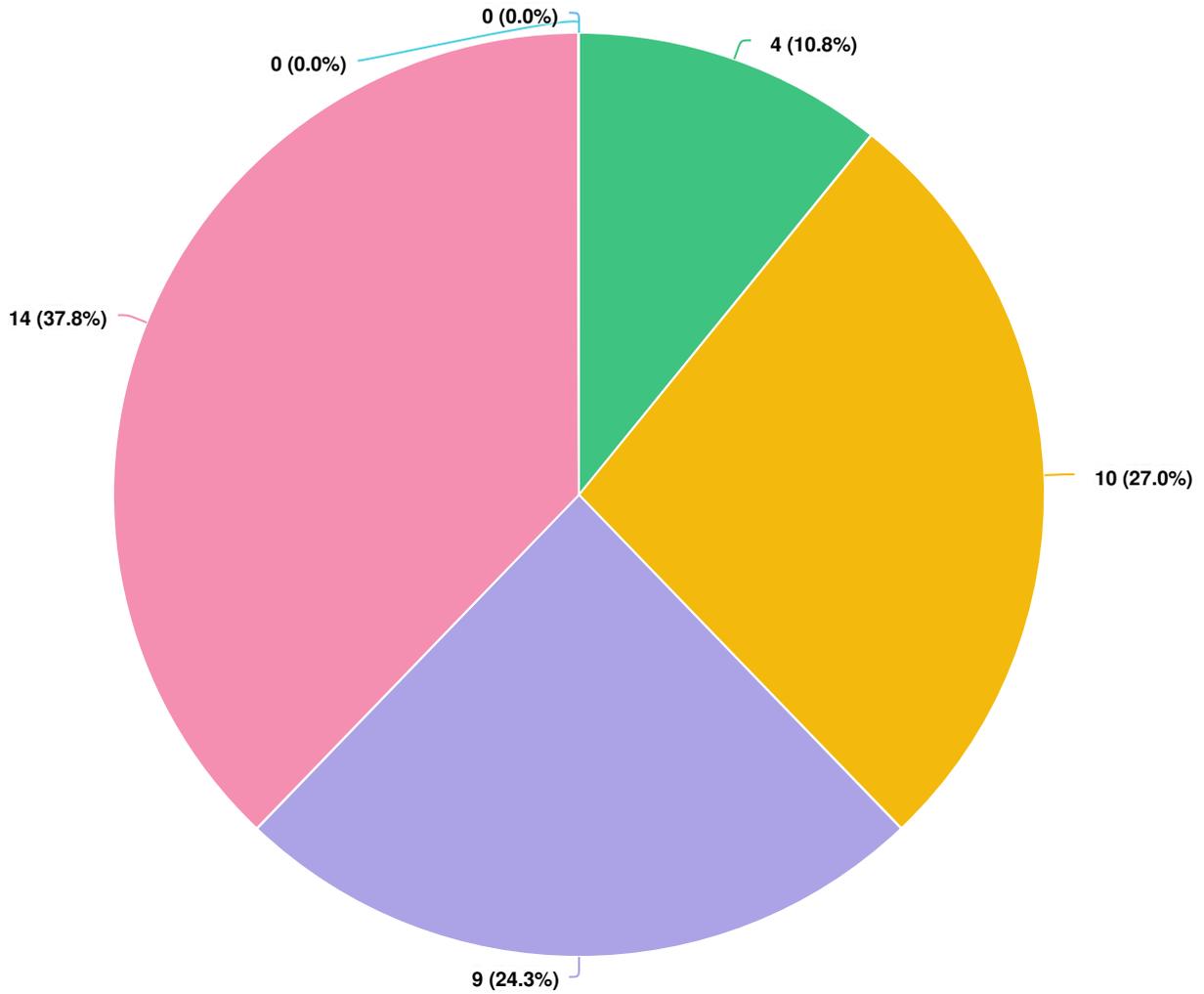
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q17 | How many bedrooms are there in your current place of residence?**



**Question options**

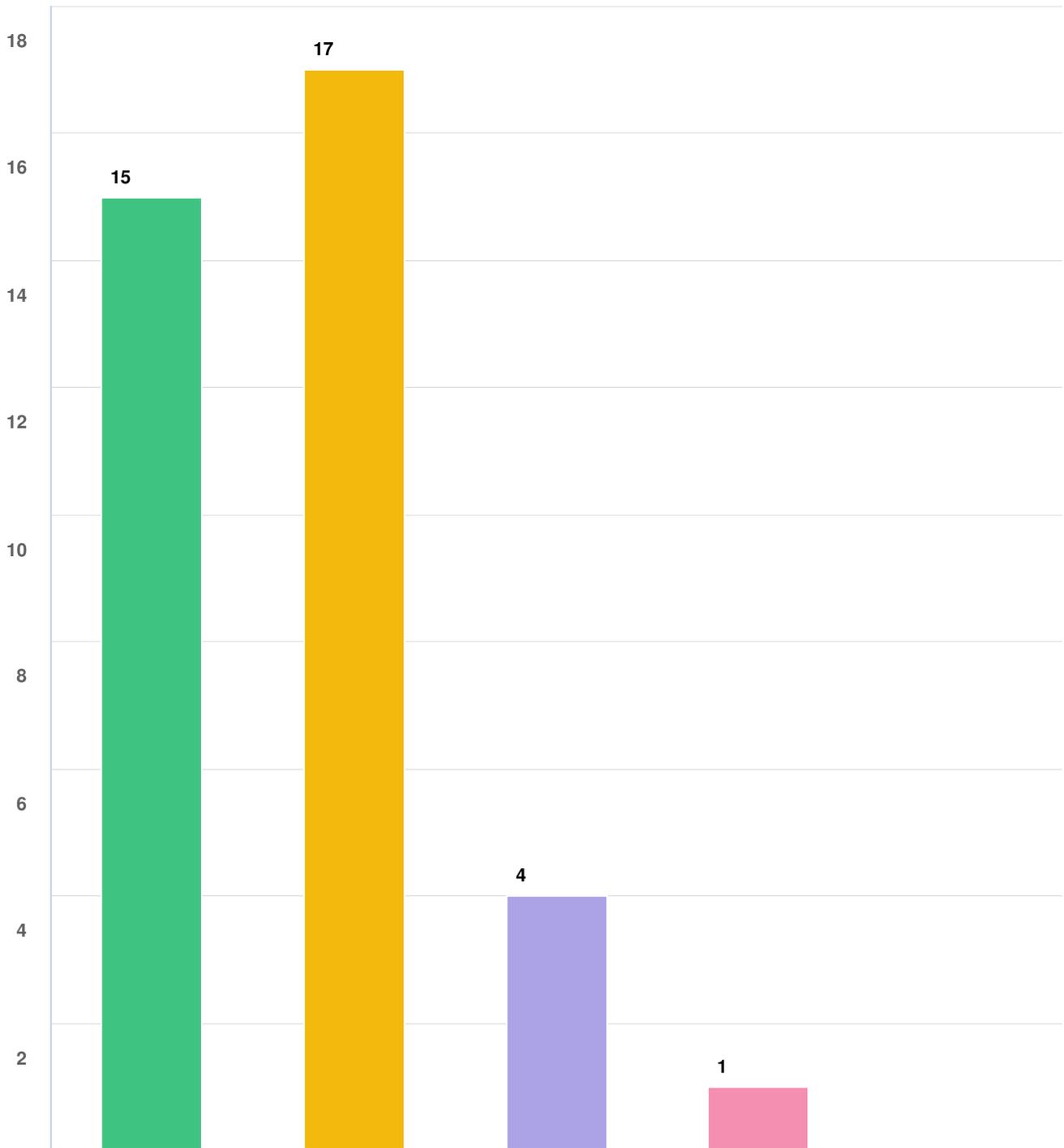
- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 bedrooms
- 0 bedrooms (Bachelor dwelling)
- 5 or more bedrooms

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q18** How would you describe the condition of your current place of residence? Please select all that apply:



**Question options**

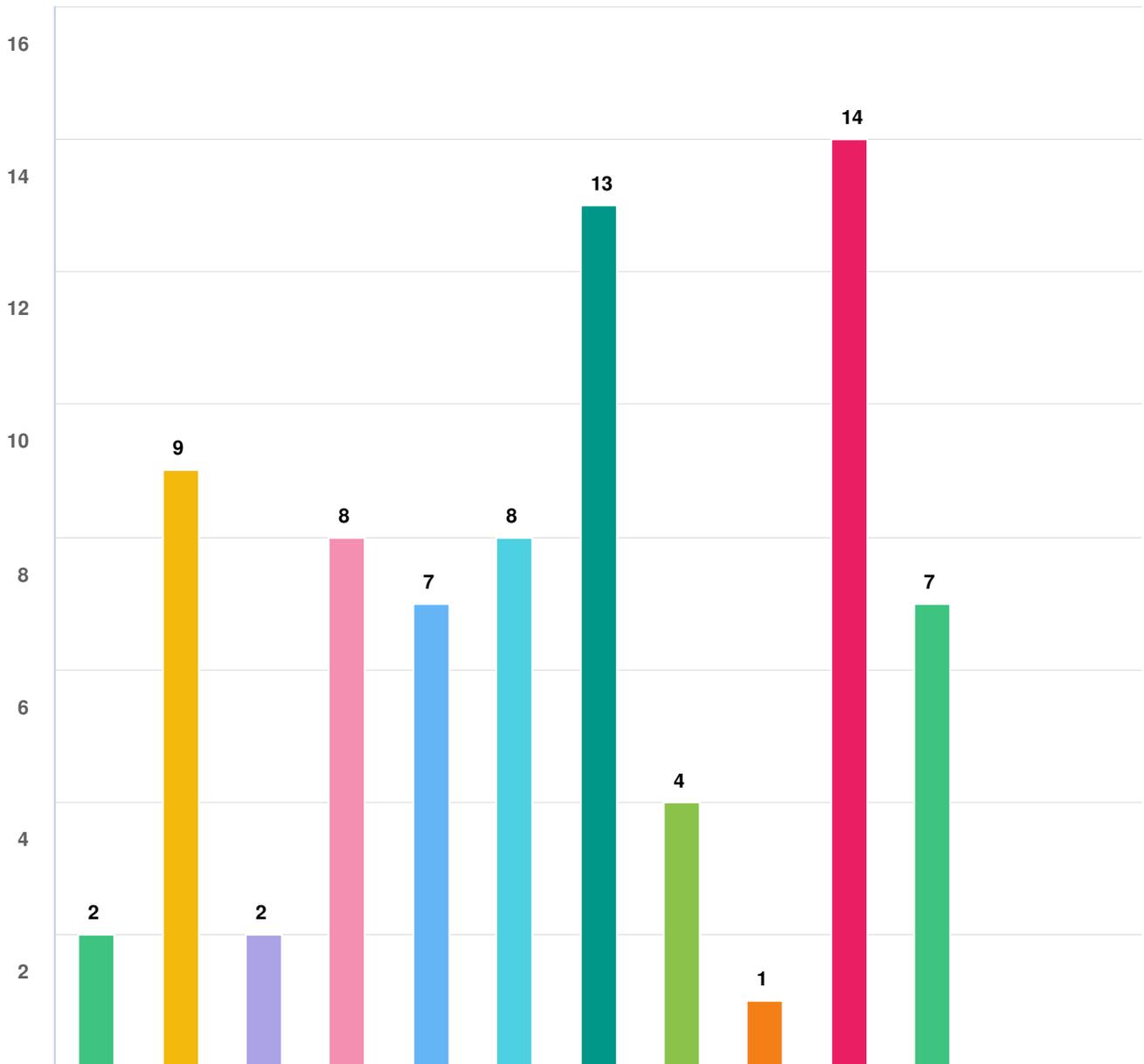
- No issues or repairs required
- Some minor repairs required
- Major repairs/replacements required
- Modifications to accommodate mobility challenges are required
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q19 How could your current housing situation be improved? Please select all that apply:**



**Question options**

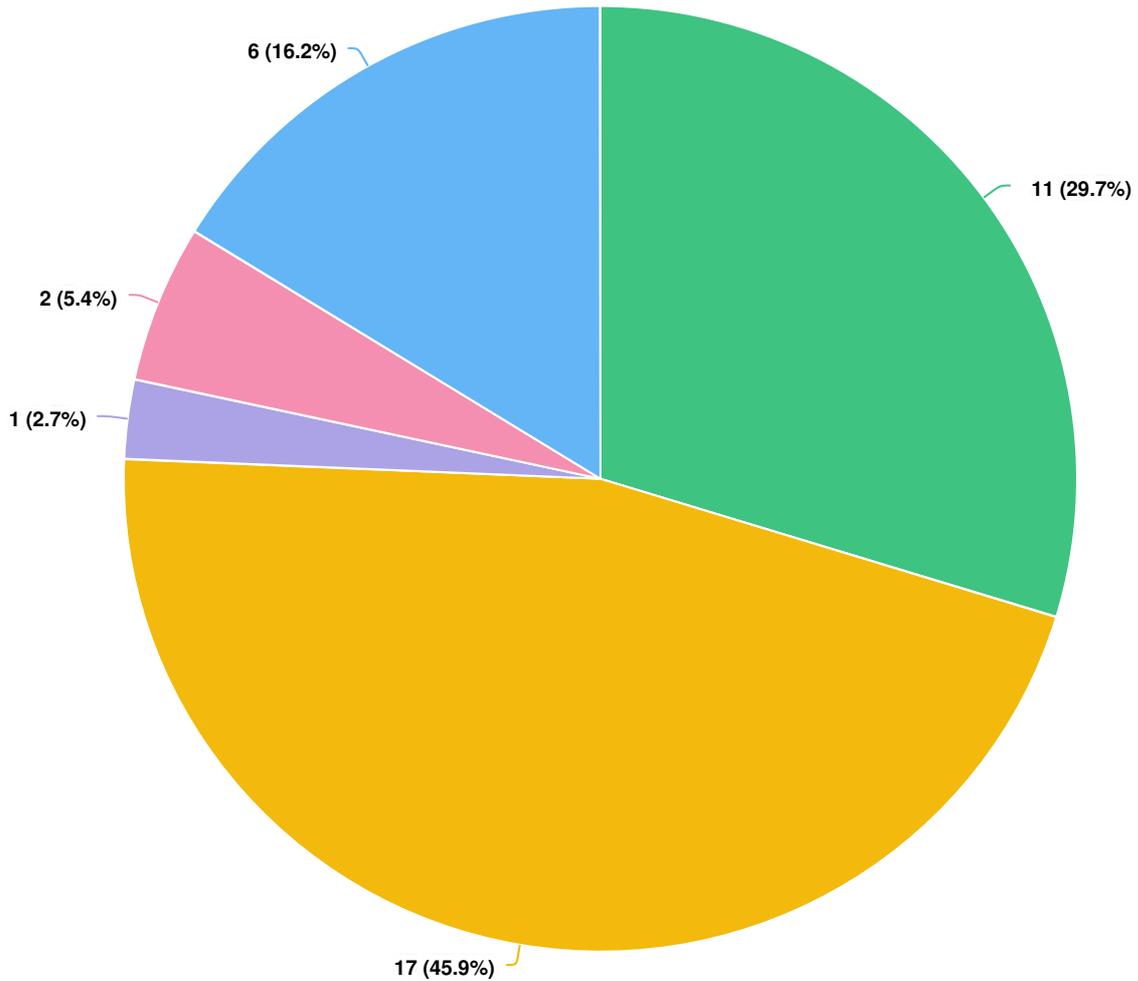
- Lower cost of rent    ● Lower cost of mortgage    ● Additional bedrooms for family members
- Accessory dwelling unit for rental income (mortgage helper, like a secondary suite)    ● Accessory dwelling unit for family members
- Smaller house and yard (less maintenance)    ● Basic home improvements/renovations (appearance or minor updates)
- Critical home improvements/renovations (deteriorating house, new roof, electrical issues, windows)
- More lawn/greenspace for growing food    ● Improvements to make the house more energy efficient and environmentally friendly
- Better access to active transportation or transit routes    ● More lawn/greenspace for recreation
- More permanent and stable housing (e.g. move from shelter to rental unit)

Optional question (31 response(s), 6 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q20** | Approximately how much of your household income do you currently spend on housing expenses (rent/mortgage, utilities, etc.)?



**Question options**

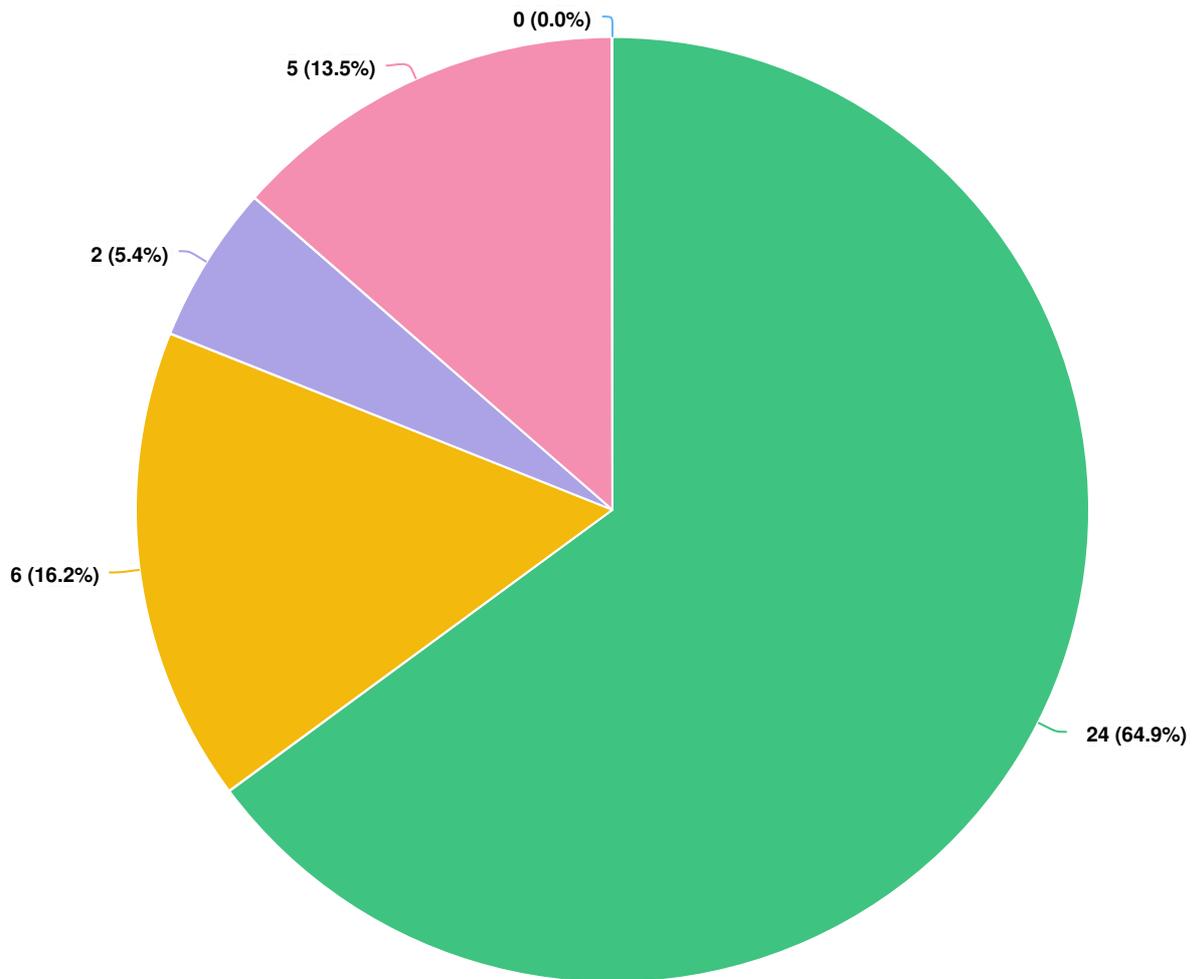
- Less than 30%
- 30% to 50%
- More than 50%
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q21** | Approximately how much of your household income do you currently spend on utilities (heat, electricity, gas, water)?



**Question options**

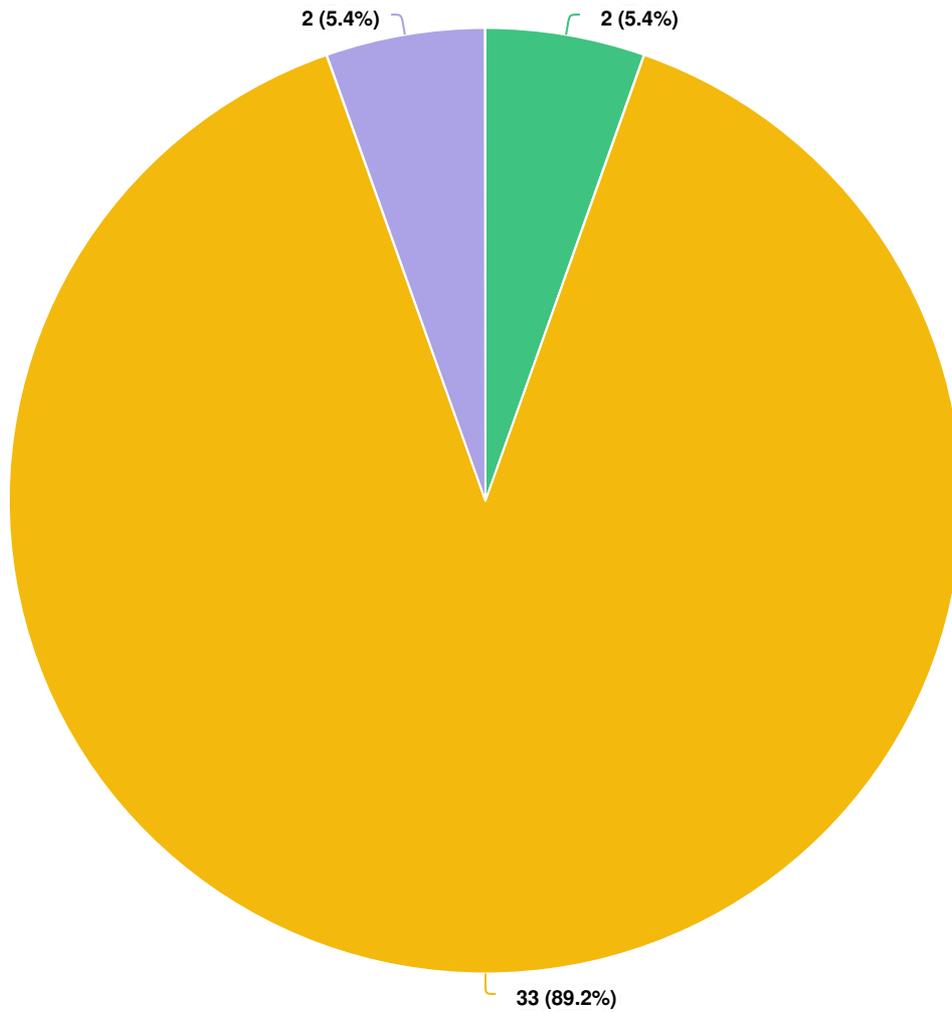
- Less than 30%
- 30% to 50%
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer
- More than 50%

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q22** Have you ever applied to live in subsidized housing?



**Question options**

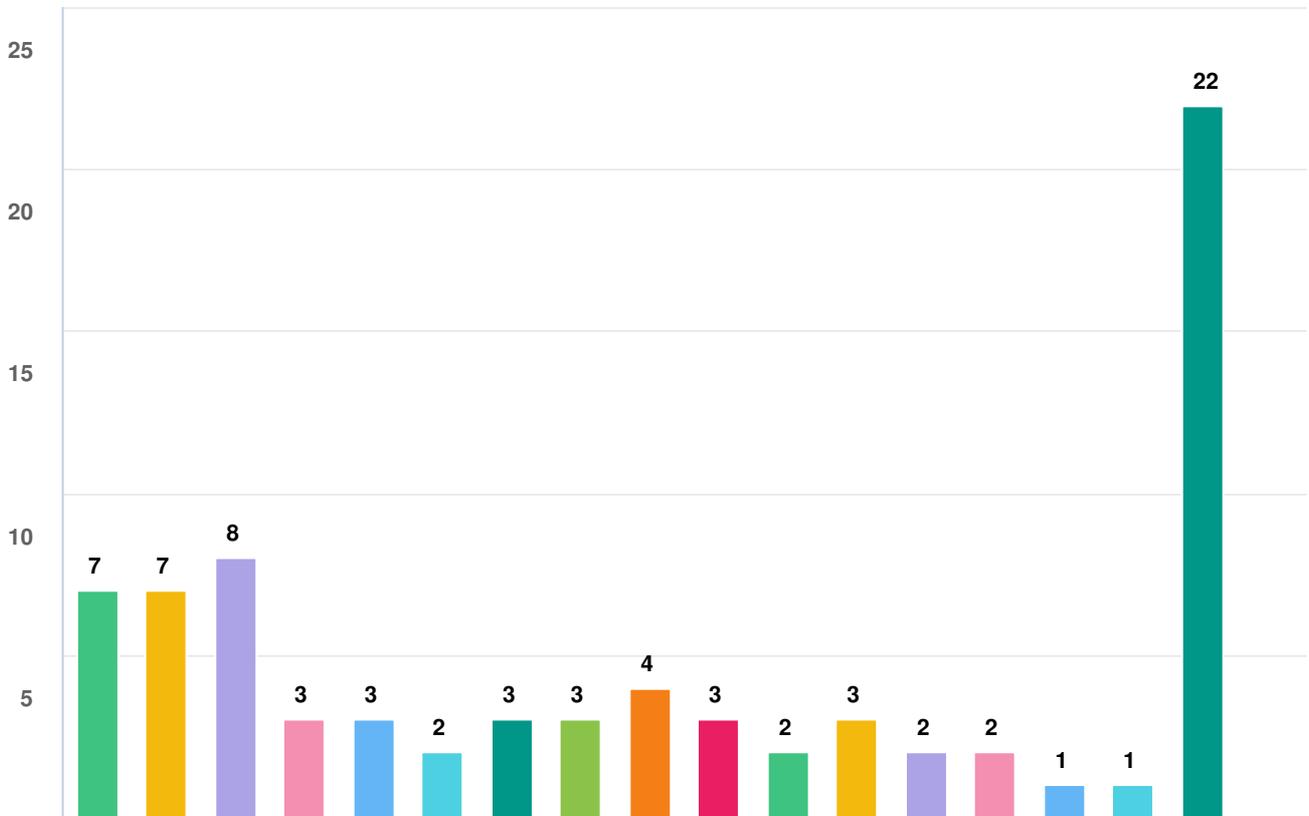
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q23** Have you experienced any of the following issues related to housing in the Alberni Valley? Please select all that apply:



**Question options**

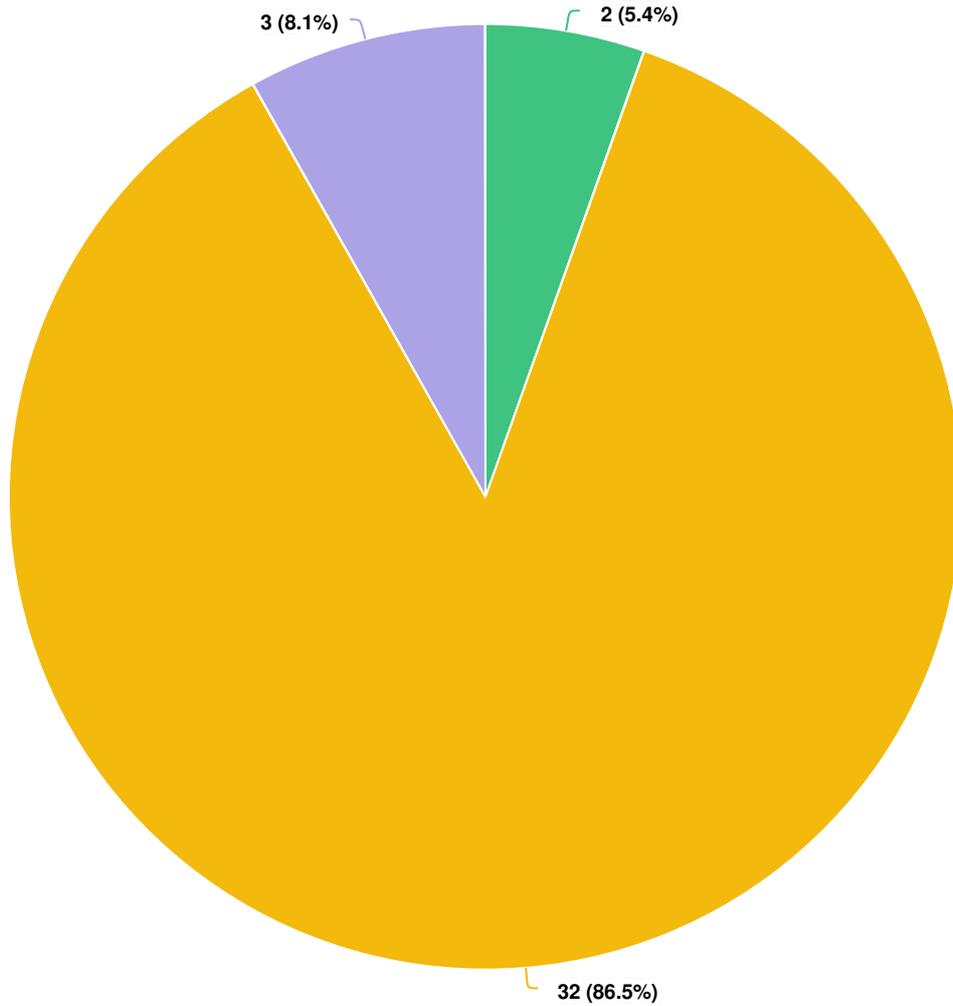
- A shortage of rental housing that is affordable based on your income
- A shortage of homes to purchase that are affordable based on your income
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income are of poor quality
- The cost of home insurance/strata insurance has become unaffordable
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income do not have enough bedrooms to accommodate your household
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income do not accommodate your household's special needs (e.g. wheelchair accessible)
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income are too far from important amenities (e.g. schools, health care, services)
- The homes that are available and affordable based on your income are not close to public transportation routes
- You do not have the required down payment to purchase an attainable home
- You do not qualify for a mortgage due to your income
- You do not qualify for a mortgage due to your credit rating
- You have tried but are unable to find pet friendly housing
- You have applied for subsidized housing but haven't been able to secure a place to live
- You receive government financial assistance but it isn't enough to cover basic living expenses
- You have been evicted from a rental unit due to the landlord doing renovations
- You have been evicted from a rental unit due to the landlord selling the unit/building
- None of these apply to my housing situation
- You have been evicted from a rental unit due to new development

Optional question (36 response(s), 1 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-

**Q24** | Have you ever been refused housing or been discriminated against because of your ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender, etc.?



**Question options**

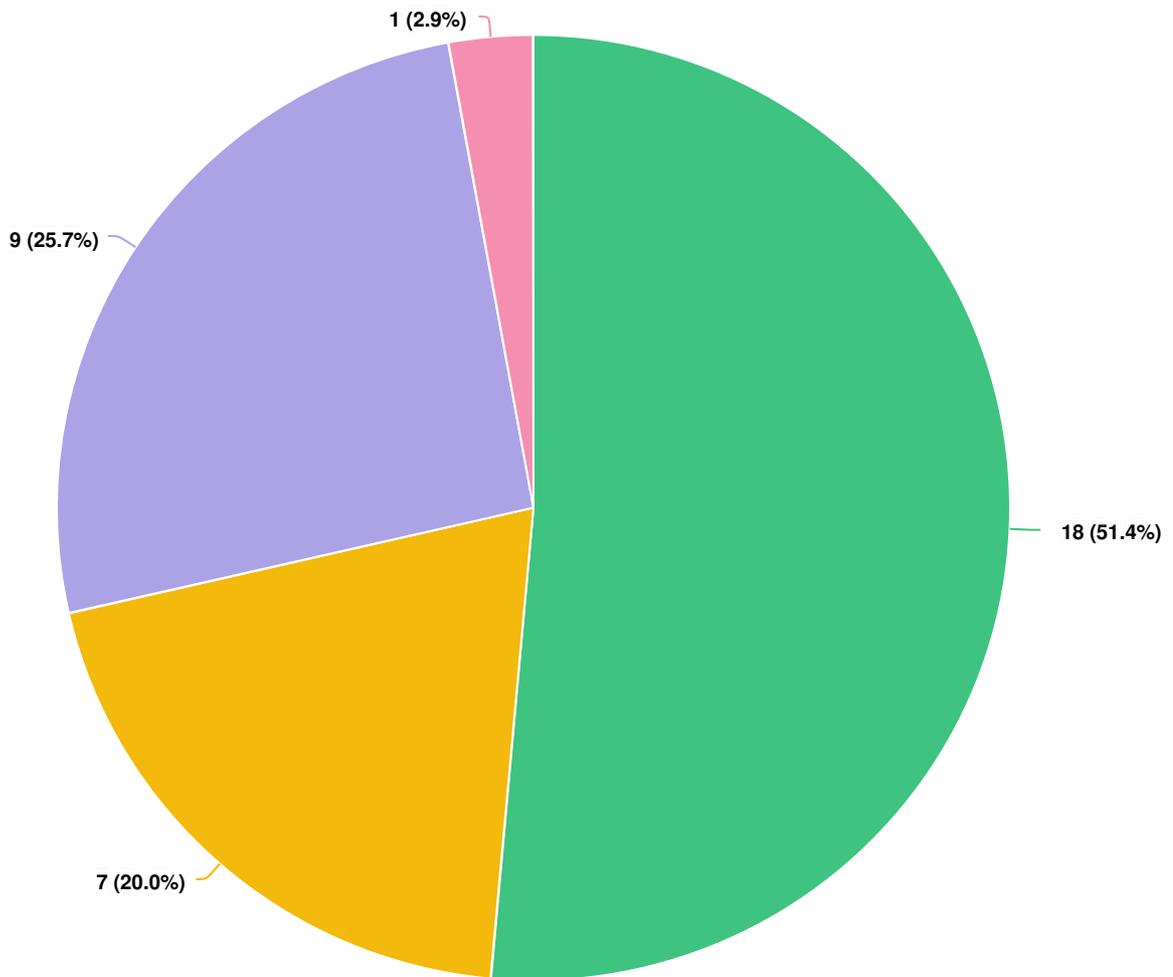
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

*Optional question (37 response(s), 0 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

*Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-*

**Q25** Does your current residence allow you to live independently as you age or age in place?



**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (35 response(s), 2 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Filtering by: Where is your primary residence located? Sproat-Lake-Electoral-Area-