



Wainwright REACH Foundation

Wainwright Community Housing Needs Assessment

Final Report



November 2025



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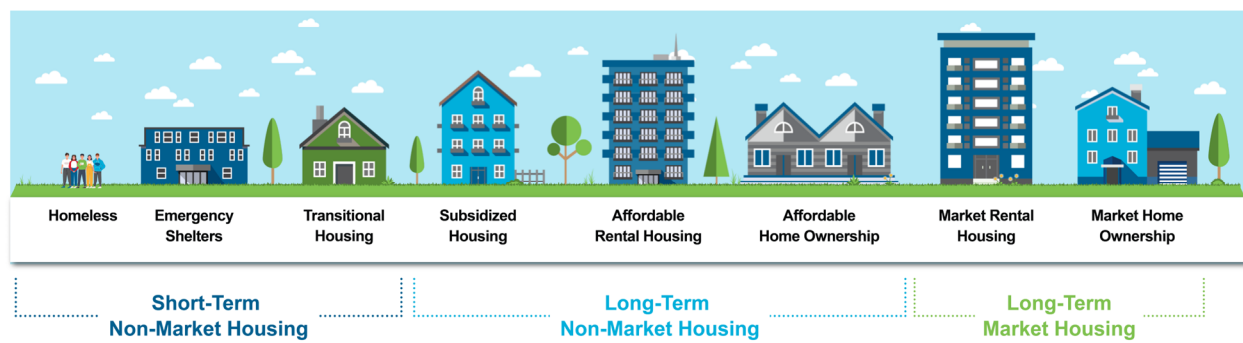
Executive Summary

Introduction

A diverse range of housing options, including affordable rental and ownership housing, are necessary to support inclusive, healthy, and sustainable communities. To effectively understand and address local housing needs, the Wainwright REACH Foundation completed a **Housing Needs Assessment** to inform future action and investment across the housing continuum to improve the overall housing situation in the community of Wainwright.

The housing continuum is a model that depicts the various housing types that can be available in a community to meet the varying needs of residents at different ages, life stages, and situations. It ranges from individuals experiencing homelessness, to those seeking short-term, supportive, or affordable housing options, to those looking to entering the rental or homeownership market.

Figure 1: Traditional Housing Continuum



Source: Adapted from CMHC's housing continuum

Community Context

Located in east-central Alberta, Wainwright is a charming town of 6,606 residents (2021) spanning approximately 12.2 square kilometres. Just 110 kilometres southwest of Lloydminster, it is a vibrant community that offers the amenities of an urban centre, combined with the comfortable characteristics of a rural community.

Denwood, the original townsite in the area, was established in 1907 but the arrival of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (now CNR) in 1908 prompted a new townsite located 4 kilometres west of the Denwood site. Renamed to Wainwright, the area served as a major divisional point with branch lines extending to North Battleford, Medicine Hat, Calgary, and the Peace River area. The area became a major service centre for surrounding communities and the agriculture industry, which prompted growth leading to it becoming a village in 1908, then being incorporated as a town shortly afterwards in 1910.

Bison have played a notable role in Wainwright's history. In 1907, the Government of Canada created Buffalo National Park on land located south of the Town to protect the endangered species. By 1921, the herd had grown enough to warrant annual round-ups and shipping animals elsewhere. In 1939, all animals were removed and the land was turned over to the Department of National Defence (DND). Upon possession by DND, the land was converted into a training establishment for the Canadian Army (known as Camp Wainwright), which has been extensively developed over the years. Today, it is home to the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre, the 3rd Canadian Division Training Centre, and includes approximately 12 lodger units, making it one of the busiest army bases in Canada.

Community Engagement

Feedback from residents and community members played a critical role in the development of the HNA. Hearing firsthand experiences, stories, and community perspectives on the existing housing supply, experiences moving to or living in the community, as well as challenges and potential opportunities provided necessary context to understand the on the ground reality of housing in Wainwright.

Communications

The REACH Foundation used multiple communication challenges to advertise the project and associated engagement opportunities.



Dedicated Project Website



Town of Wainwright Social Media Channels



Community Champions

Engagement Opportunities

The REACH Foundation provided in-person and online engagement opportunities to speak with community members about housing in Wainwright. Opportunities included:



Wainwright REACH Foundation Workshop



External Focus Groups



Community Drop-In Session



Focused Discussions



Organization/Agency Emails

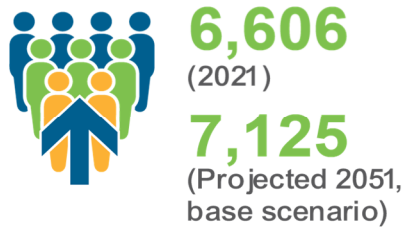


Community Survey

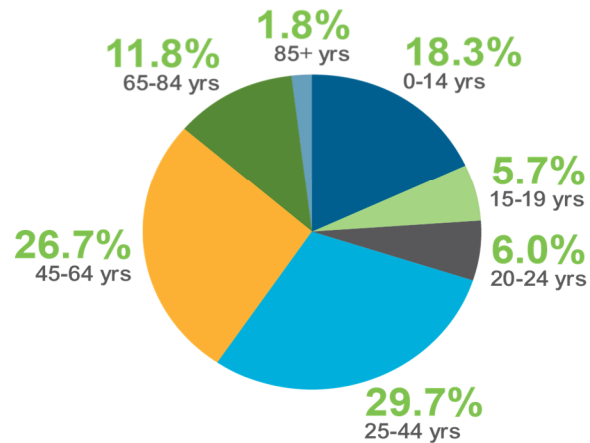
Community and Housing Highlights

The demographic and economic profile of a community shapes its housing needs. Population growth, age, stages of life, household size and type, income, and employment all influence the type of housing units, sizes, tenures, levels of affordability, and support services required to effectively meet the needs of the population now and into the future. The following section highlights key population and housing statistics in Wainwright, with additional details provided within the main body of this report.

POPULATION

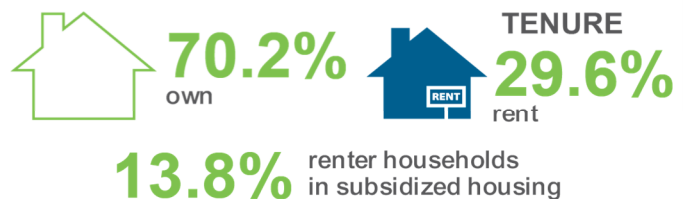
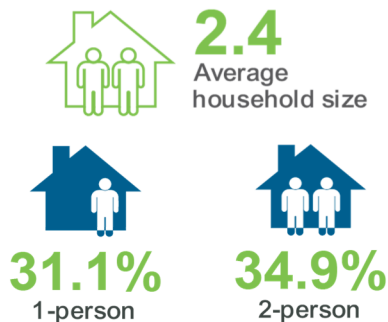


AGE BREAKDOWN

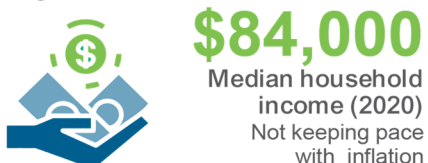


HOUSEHOLDS

SIZE



INCOME



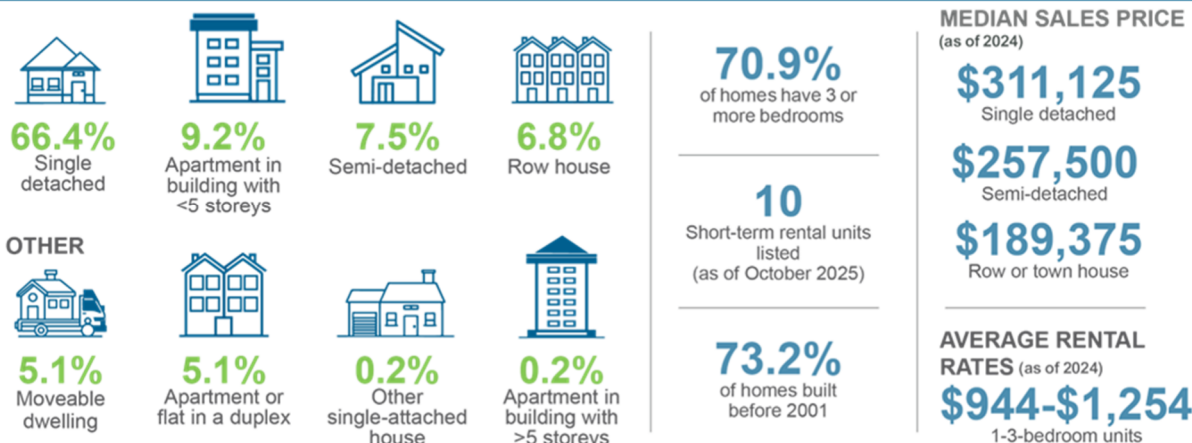
over
1 in 4
households
do not have
acceptable
housing

1 in 5
households
experience
affordability
challenges

CORE HOUSING NEED

3.9%
households in
core housing
need

HOUSING



Current Unmet Housing Needs

Based on the number of households identified to be in core housing need in 2021, the current unmet housing need in Wainwright was estimated at 105 units. Approximately 23.8% of households with current unmet housing needs were owner households, while 76.2% were renter households. Additionally, 33.3% of households with current unmet housing needs were one-person households, while 47.6% are two-person households¹. All households identified as having current unmet housing needs were within the very low income (i.e., households earning <\$17,000 annually) and low income (i.e., households earning between \$17,000-\$42,500 annually) area median household income (AMHI) categories.

Future Housing Needs

Anticipated Population

Wainwright's population reached 6,606 in 2021, stronger growth than anticipated, and is projected to continue increasing moderately to 2036, with the base scenario showing expansion to 6,844 residents. The community's age structure will shift significantly: while the number of children is expected to decline, young adults aged 25–34 will grow and older adults aged 75 and over will increase sharply. These changes will generate new household formation among younger residents and rising demand for age-friendly housing.

Anticipated Households

The number of households in Wainwright is expected to rise to 2,860 by 2036. Growth is expected to remain steady across both ownership and rental tenures, maintaining a 70/30 split.

Table 1: Total Projected Housing Demand in Wainwright by (2026, 2036, and 2031)

Year/Range	Projected Housing Demand
2026	2,614
2026-2031 Change (+/-)	+139
2031	2,753
2031-2036 Change (+/-)	+107
2036	2,860

Source: Statistics Canada Census and consultant projections based on 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

¹ The size of remaining households is unknown due to rounding and suppression policies.

Anticipated Housing Needs by 2036

Current housing choice preferences, along with population projections, were used to predict future housing needs. It is important to acknowledge that local conditions, such as decisions on growth and density, direction from Town policies and bylaws, including the Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw, and market conditions can impact the direction of growth in a community. Additionally, community aspirations and how the Town approaches future growth and development, including addressing housing needs, could result in outcomes that differ from historical trends.

The total demand for housing in Wainwright is anticipated **to increase by 246 homes by 2036**; this anticipates a need of 139 homes by 2031 and a possible additional 107 homes by 2036. Overall, a total of 2,753 homes are projected to be needed in Wainwright by 2031, and a total of 2,860 homes are projected to be needed by 2036.

Additional housing demand over this period will be driven primarily by the need for smaller, more affordable units. One-bedroom homes will account for the largest share of additional demand (up 114 units), followed by two-bedroom units (up 89), while larger three-bedroom homes will see modest growth (45); minimal new need is projected for four-bedroom or larger units. Demand will remain polarized by income, with growth concentrated among low-income households (up 119 units) and high-income households (up 122 units), while moderate- and median-income households remain relatively stable. Seniors' households are projected to increase by 135 units and families with children by 279 units, highlighting the dual need for family-oriented and age-friendly housing. An estimated 38 additional households will require accessible housing for people with mobility disabilities by 2036, alongside incremental growth in the need for supportive housing for people with mental illness or addictions (2-6 units), intellectual disabilities (2 units), and seniors (23 units).

The following table shows these projected housing needs by demand category (i.e., tenure, size, and affordability), where each demand category totals the number of houses projected to be needed (i.e., ~2,753 by 2031 and ~2,860 by 2036, with some minor variation due to rounding).

It is important to note that the summaries of housing needs provided in **Tables 2 and 3** are not mutually exclusive. For example, one housing unit can address the need for several of the demand categories and population groups. It is also important to recognize that some of the identified housing needs can be addressed through existing housing supply, including through affordability as units age or through the provision of housing subsidies, or due to renovating, retrofitting, or repurposing existing spaces.

Table 2: Projected Housing Demand in Wainwright by Demand Categories (2026, 2031, and 2036)

Demand Category	Projected Homes Needed by 2031	Projected Homes Needed by 2036
Tenure (ownership versus rental)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,922 (70%) Ownership units 831 (30%) Rental units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,990 (70%) Ownership units 870 (30%) Rental units
Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,740 (63%) One-bedroom units 775 (28%) Two-bedroom units 237 (9%) Three-bedroom units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,789 (63%) One-bedroom units 814 (28%) Two-bedroom units 257 (9%) Three-bedroom units
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 611 (22%) Units for households earning between \$17,000-\$42,500 annually (i.e., low AMHI) 433 (16%) Units for households earning between \$42,500-\$68,000 annually (i.e., moderate AMHI) 583 (21%) Units for households earning between \$68,000-\$102,000 (i.e., median AMHI) 1,126 (41%) Units for households earning >\$102,001 annually (i.e., high AMHI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 664 (23%) Units for households earning between \$17,000-\$42,500 annually (i.e., low AMHI) 433 (15%) Units for households earning between \$42,500-\$68,000 annually (i.e., moderate AMHI) 584 (20%) Units for households earning between \$68,000-\$102,000 (i.e., median AMHI) 1,179 (41%) Units for households earning >\$102,001 annually (i.e., high AMHI)

In addition to presenting projected housing needs by demand category, we can also present them by population groups with specific housing needs, as shown in [Table 3](#). This information helps us better understand how the existing and future housing stock (e.g., type and size of dwelling) may need to adapt to accommodate needs across different groups as local demographics shift.

Table 3: Projected Housing Demand in Wainwright by Population Groups (2026, 2031, and 2036)

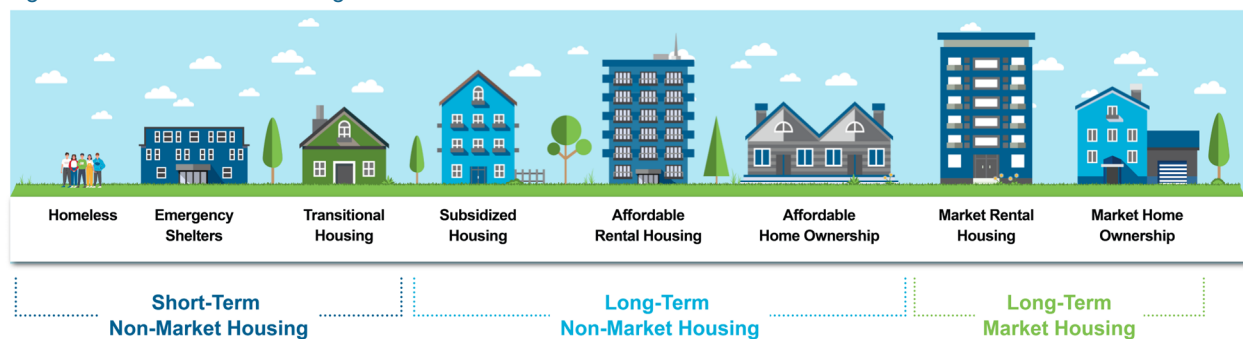
Population Group	2026 Estimate (Total)	Projected Homes Needed by 2031 (Total)	Projected Homes Needed by 2036 (Total)
Seniors	614	710	748
Families	2,029	2,185	2,308
Indigenous Households	247	279	309
<i>Adults with Disabilities</i>			
Accessible housing for people with mobility disabilities	329	351	368
Housing with supports for people with serious mental illness or addiction	21-53	23-57	24-59
Housing with supports for people with intellectual disabilities	16-19	17-20	17-21
Housing with supports for seniors	86	100	109
Total	3,342 - 3,377	3,665 - 3,702	3,883 - 3,922

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

A diverse range of housing options, including affordable and rental housing, is important to support inclusive, healthy, and sustainable communities. The Wainwright REACH Foundation is completing a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) to identify current and future housing needs across the housing continuum. The housing continuum is a model that depicts the various housing types that can be available in a community to meet the varying needs of residents at different ages, life stages, and situations. It ranges from individuals experiencing homelessness, to those seeking short-term, supportive, or affordable housing options, to those looking to entering the rental or homeownership market.

Figure 1.1: Traditional Housing Continuum



Source: Adapted from CMHC's housing continuum

The HNA:

- Provides an overview of the current state of housing in Wainwright (Town);
- Identifies factors that influence housing supply, demand, and provision of housing; and
- Quantifies the amount of housing units that are needed to address identified housing challenges and gaps.

The HNA provides the necessary understanding of the current state of housing in the community. The information and analysis provided in this report is intended to direct coordinated, intentional, and data-informed action to improve current housing gaps and challenges, while addressing community housing needs into the future.

1.2 Benefits of Local Housing Action

There are several notable advantages for communities to understand their local housing needs:

- Increased awareness of challenges and gaps, elevating the community's understanding of current opportunities and potential solutions.
- Increased understanding of resources, tools, and partners that together, can help individuals and organizations build the capacity and knowledge to promote positive change.
- Ability to inform targeted housing policy and investments that are grounded in, and directly responsive to, the lived experiences and needs of residents.
- Increased eligibility to apply for grants and funding programs that creates additional opportunities for more investment in the community.
- More thoughtful, informed, and responsive decision-making to address housing needs and promote long-term resilience.

1.3 Process

Developing the Housing Needs Assessment involved completing a background review of the Wainwright REACH Foundation's vision, mission, and values, the Town of Wainwright's existing policies and strategies, collection and review of data from Statistics Canada, real estate associations, and other local data sets, supplemented by direct input gathered from Town Council, residents, community members, and local interested parties including non-profit housing providers, housing and homelessness service providers, local developers, and real estate agents. Together, the data and community input were analyzed to create a demographic profile of Wainwright that provides an in-depth understanding of current housing gaps, barriers, and needs. Then, population and housing projections were prepared to understand anticipated housing needs over the next 10 years.

This report is the outcome of phase 1 of the project, as shown in the figure below. Following completion of the HNA, it is expected that a second phase of work will follow to develop a strategy that includes specific and targeted actions to help the REACH Foundation, Town, and other community partners address housing challenges and meet the housing needs of the community.

Figure 1.2: Housing Needs Assessment Process



1.4 Community Engagement

1.4.1 2025 Engagement Overview

This work included a preliminary round of engagement with the community, featuring multiple opportunities to gather feedback on housing issues, opportunities, and ideas. Input opportunities provided during the first phase of the project included a workshop with the REACH Foundation, two external focus groups with community organizations and interested parties involved in the local housing system, a drop-in community workshop, an online survey, and one-on-one discussions with community agencies and housing representatives.



Online Survey
August 28-October 3, 2025

A survey was hosted on the project website to provide an opportunity to gather feedback from residents and interested parties. **86** responses were received.



Wainwright REACH Foundation Workshop
September 4, 2025

A discussion was facilitated with members of the Wainwright REACH Foundation to learn about housing gaps, opportunities, and priorities they are aware of or are hearing about from community members.



Community Drop-in Session
September 4, 2025

An in-person community drop-in session was held to learn about resident experiences with housing in Wainwright, including any specific challenges they have faced and ideas they have to address local housing needs. Approximately **22** people participated in the session by speaking with project team members.



External Focus Groups
September 23 & 25, 2025

Two virtual focus group discussions were facilitated with housing and support service providers, non-profit housing providers, property managers, and local builders and developers. **Six** distinct organizations participated in the discussions.



Focused Discussions
October 1-November 13, 2025

Three focused discussions (virtual and telephone) were facilitated with key housing and service providers to learn more about local challenges and needs.

1.4.2 Key Housing Themes

Table 1.1 provides a high-level summary of key themes that emerged from feedback provided through the engagement opportunities.

Table 1.1: Key Housing Themes

Key Theme	Description
Supply of Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall lack of affordable housing options within Wainwright. There is a need to prioritize affordable rentals, however, the lack of affordable ownership housing (for purchase) is also a concern.
Availability of Emergency and Transitional Housing and Associated Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no emergency or short-term housing options available within the community. More support is needed for at-risk groups. There is a need for short-term emergency housing and supportive housing.
Housing Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wider diversity of housing options (i.e., dwelling and unit types and sizes) are needed. New dwelling units should prioritize accessibility and affordability. There is desire for more condominiums, apartments, single detached, and semi-detached homes.
Housing Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current quality of housing units (both ownership and rental housing) is a challenge, with reference to poor maintenance and sometimes unsafe conditions. Housing costs are high and do not match the quality of options available.
Cross-Industry Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to understand housing roles and responsibilities within the community, particularly related to community organizations and their knowledge, expertise, and capacity to address local housing needs. There is interest in housing solutions resulting from collaboration between government (all levels), industry, and community organizations.
Influence of Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Wainwright	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFB Wainwright is located within 1 kilometre of the Town. The influx of population and housing options on the base impact housing availability in the Town. It is difficult to quantify the full extent, impact, and influence of military personnel on the local housing system.

1.5 Methodological Approaches

1.5.1 Population Projections

Population projections prepared as part of the Wainwright Regional Growth Study (2022) were used in this report.

1.5.2 Household Projections

Two key datasets were used to examine anticipated household growth to better understand future housing demand in Wainwright. The first dataset was developed using an approach based on the Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART), which provides a business-as-usual scenario using historical trends. The second dataset was developed using an approach based on Government of Alberta projections, which uses 2023 population estimates as a base and considers changing trends from births, deaths, migration, and future changes.

Approach 1: HART

A Housing Research Collaborative led by researchers from UBC has developed a methodology for projecting future housing needs based on historical trends (known as the HART methodology). Household growth projections calculated through the HART methodology are based on trends that existed between 2006 and 2021 and therefore, reflect the context at that time. HART projections do not consider cohort adjustments, which can impact assumptions related to birth and mortality rates, economic development impacts, and effects of regional spillovers into more urban centres. Due to significant demographic and economic shifts since 2006-2021, it is important to note that these projections do not account for these changes; however, they do provide a standardized baseline, demonstrating a “business-as-usual” trend and can be used as a comparison tool.

Approach 2: Government of Alberta

The Government of Alberta population projections build on the baseline model by considering Statistics Canada Census undercounts² and population estimates for 2022-2023 and applies a component/cohort-survival method that grows the population from the latest base year estimate by forecasting births, deaths, and migration by age. They are modelled partially based on historical trends, but also to account for future changes, providing an alternative to understanding future growth needs.

² “Undercounts” refers to individuals who should have been counted in the census but were missed or not enumerated despite being part of the census target population.

1.5.3 Data Interpretation

The following data limitations and assumptions should be considered when interpreting the findings of this report:

- Much of the data used to prepare this report was based on historical data or a point in time from Statistics Canada Censuses (2011, 2016, 2021), Alberta Rental Vacancy Survey, Town data, provincial surveys, and local real estate information. Where possible, namely market rental and sales data from the most current point in time is included for reference.
- The data used in this report, especially the 2021 Statistics Canada Census data, reflects the effects of the
- COVID-19 pandemic which created significant impacts to the economy and housing. The long-term impacts of the pandemic are not yet known and future analysis should consider potential impacts
- Due to the smaller sample size, some data is not available or restricted because of privacy or data reliability concerns.
- The data included in this report comes from a variety of sources and therefore, similar data from different sources may not be identical or directly comparable.
- Some percentage distributions may not equal 100% due to rounding and some number categories may not calculate to the total amount due to rounding from the original data source.
- Historical trends and assumptions are used to inform anticipated housing needs. While housing trends are shifting, they may not necessarily be reflected yet in the anticipated needs.
- Population and housing needs projections are by no means a target or an absolute prediction but are an estimation of future growth based on historical growth and previous housing choices.
- Local conditions, such as decisions on growth and density, direction from Town policies and bylaws, and market forces can impact the direction of growth in a community. Additionally, community aspirations and how the Town approaches future growth and development, including addressing housing needs, could result in outcomes that differ from historical trends.

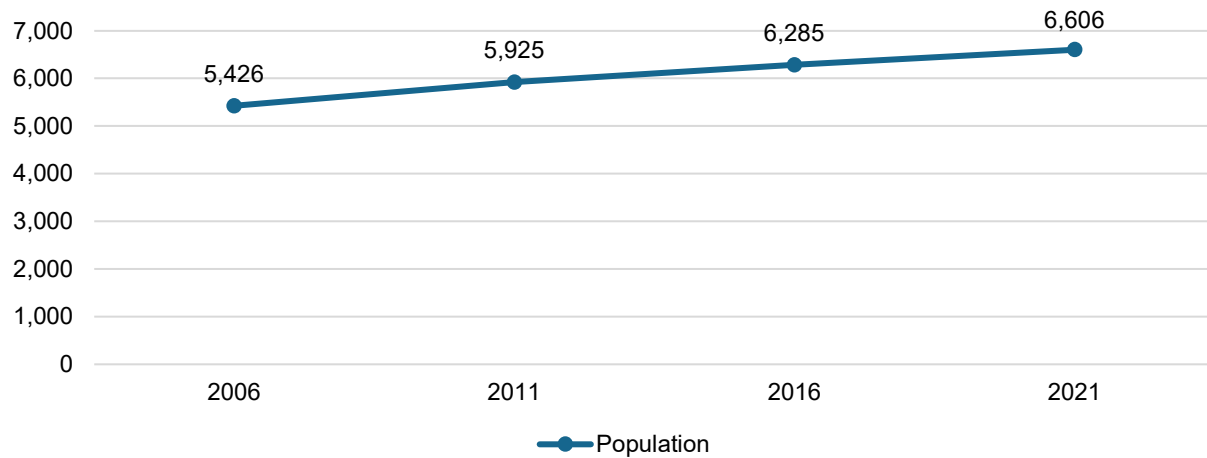
2.0 Community Profile

2.1 Demographic Trends

2.1.1 Population

Between 2006 and 2021, the population of Wainwright increased from 5,426 residents to 6,606 residents, which translates to a total percentage change of 21.75% or an average annual growth rate of 1.32%. The population of the town has been steadily increasing since 2006, with the largest increase occurring between 2006 and 2011 when the population grew by 499 people or 1.78%.

Figure 2.1: Population (2006-2021)

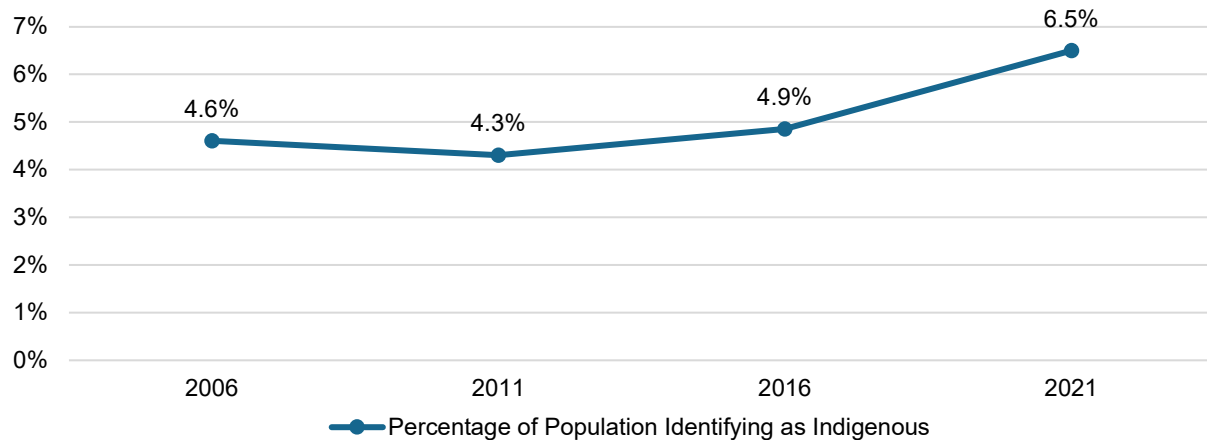


Source: Statistics Canada Census

2.1.2 Indigenous Population

In 2021, 405 residents in Wainwright identified as Indigenous, representing approximately 6.13% of the overall population. Between 2006 and 2016, the percentage of Town residents identifying as Indigenous stayed in the 4% range before increasing to 6.5% in 2021. The Indigenous population in Wainwright has been steadily increasing since 2011 meaning that providing access to culturally appropriate housing and community services will be essential in meeting the needs of Indigenous residents effectively.

Figure 2.2: Percentage of Population Identifying as Indigenous (2006-2021)



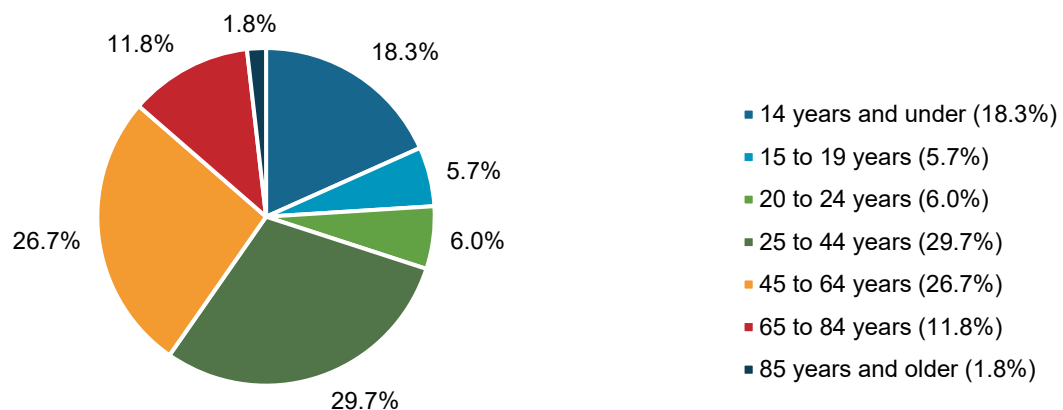
Source: Statistics Canada Census

2.1.3 Age and Gender

In 2021, the median age of residents in Wainwright was 38, which was slightly lower than the Provincial average of 38.4 for the same year. In 2006, the Town's median age was 37.2, decreasing slightly to 37 in 2011, followed by an increase to 37.5 in 2016.

When looking at the percentage of total population by age cohort, 29.7% of residents were aged 24-44 years old, 26.7% were aged 45-64 years, 18.3% were 14 years and under, 11.8% were aged 65-84, 6.0% were aged 20-24, 5.7% were aged 15-19 years, and 1.8% were aged 85 years and older, as indicated in Figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2.3: Percentage of Total Population (2021)

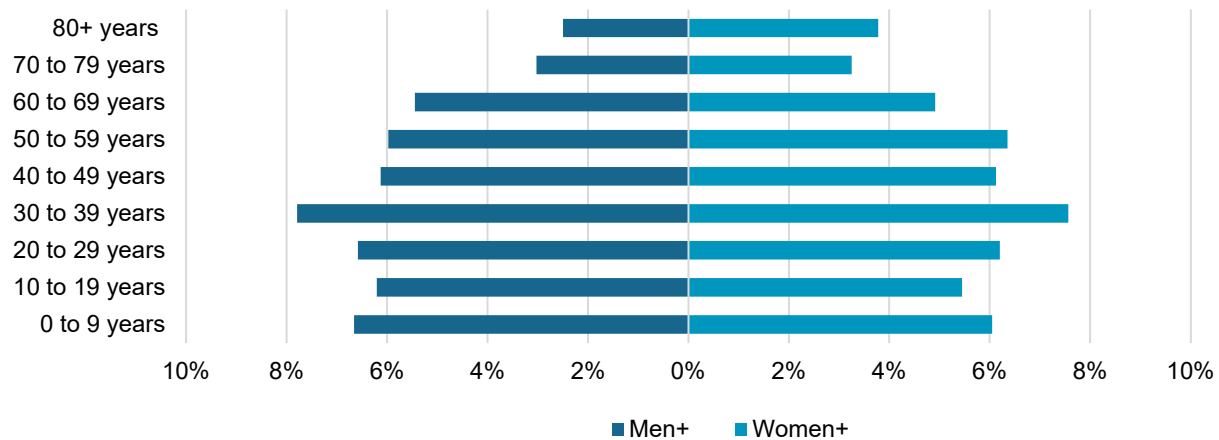


Source: Statistics Canada Census

According to Statistics Canada “gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman). Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided”. Thus, both men and women counts include men/boys or women/girls and some non-binary persons, as the case may be. This is, in some cases, denoted by the use of a “+” symbol, as seen on [Figure 2.4](#).

In 2021, 50.3% (3,325) of residents identified as men and 49.7% (3,285) of residents identified as women. The largest cohort of men was 30-39 (7.8%), while the smallest cohort was 80+ (2.5%). The largest cohort of women was 30-39 (7.6%), while the smallest cohorts was 70-79 (3.3%).

Figure 2.4: Age Cohort by Gender (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

2.1.4 Mobility Status³ (Place of Residence)

Mobility status refers to the status of a person regarding the place of residence on census day in relation to the place of residence on the same date one year or five years earlier. It has two main categories:

- **Non-movers** are persons who lived in the same residence on census day as on the same date one year or five years earlier.
- **Movers** are persons who lived on a different residence on census day as on the same date one year or five years earlier.

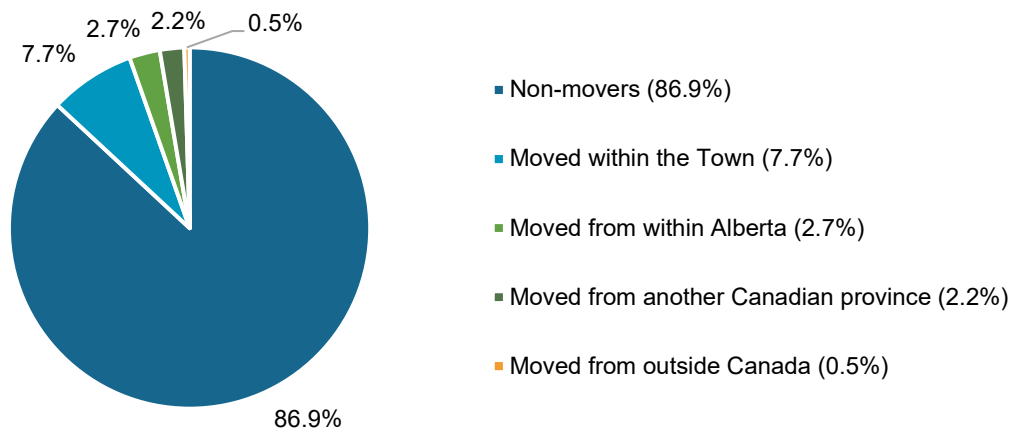
One Year Mobility Status

In 2021, 86.9% of town residents were non-movers. Of the movers (13.1% of the total population), approximately 59.0% (7.7% of the total population) moved from a different address within the town, and the other 41.0% (5.4% of the total population) moved from outside the town. Of the latter, around 56.0% (2.7% of the total population) moved from other communities in Alberta, and 44.0% (2.2% of the total population) moved from another Canadian province. Only 9.0% of those who moved from outside of the town (0.5% of the total population) moved from a different country.

In 2016, the proportion of non-movers was 83.4%, somewhat lower than in 2021 (86.9%). The COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted residents' ability or willingness to relocate within a year of the 2021 census. In contrast, the five-year mobility status provides a broader perspective, less influenced by the mobility dynamics of the pandemic.

³ Mobility status refers to where the person responding to the Census was residing one year prior. For the 2021 Census data, this means where residents were living in 2020. Non-movers are those who lived in the same residence (same address).

Figure 2.5: One-Year Mobility (2021)



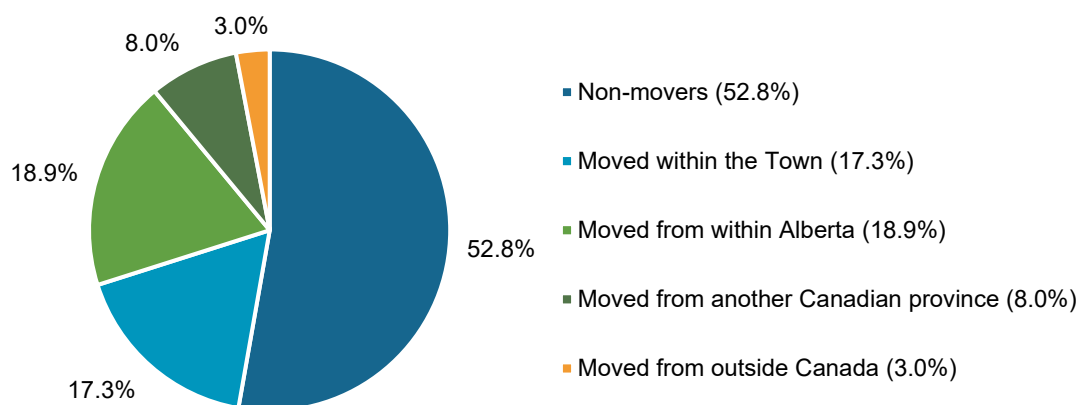
Source: Statistics Canada Census

Five Year Mobility Status

In 2021, 52.8% of town residents were non-movers, which is considerably lower than the 86.9% reported in the one-year mobility status data. Of the movers (47.2% of the total population), around 37.0% (17.3% of the total population) moved from a different address within the town, 70.0% (18.9% of the total population) moved from other communities in Alberta, 30.0% (8.0% of the total population) moved from another province, and 10.0% (3.0% of the total population) moved from outside of Canada.

In sum, the five-year mobility status data shows that nearly half of the population are movers, with most of them moving to the town from other communities in Alberta.

Figure 2.6: Mobility Status within Previous Five Years (2016-2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

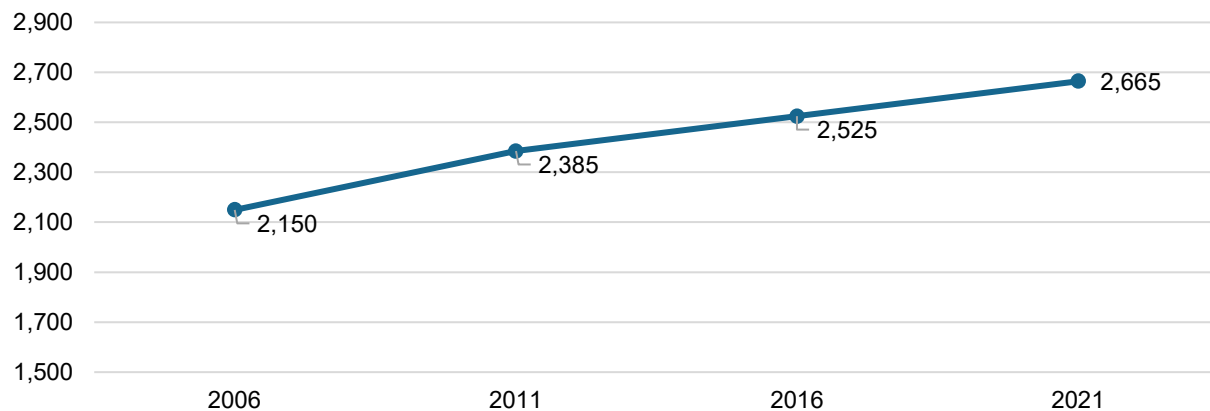
2.1.5 Households⁴

Number of Households

Statistics Canada defines a household as a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family⁵, two or more families sharing a dwelling, a group of unrelated persons, or a person living alone.

In 2021, there were a total of 2,665 households in the town of Wainwright, which was an increase of 140 households (5.5%) from 2016.

Figure 2.7: Historical Trends of Households (2006-2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

Household Type

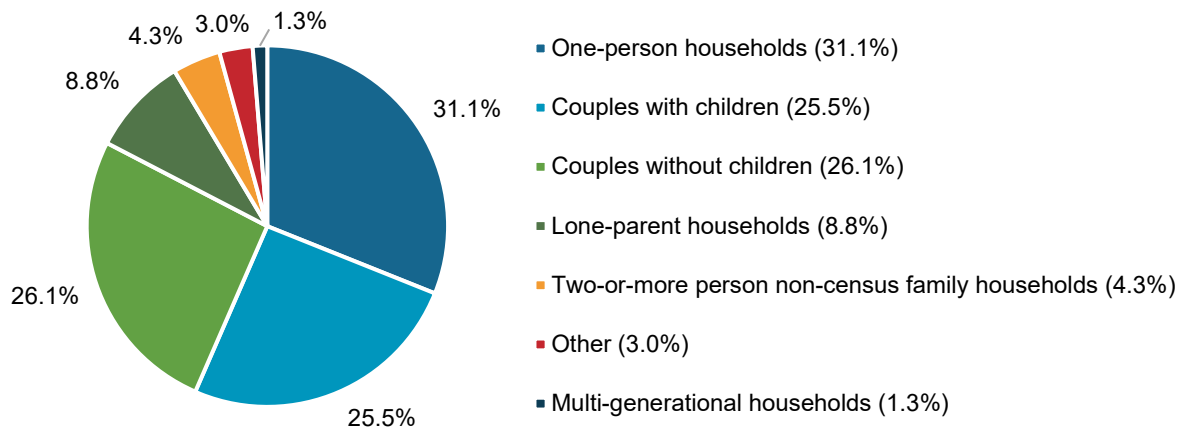
As shown in **Figure 2.8** below, in 2021, 31.1% of households were one-person households, 26.1% of households were couples without children, and 25.5% of households were couples with children. The remaining household types were comprised of:

- 8.8% lone parent households.
- 4.3% two or more-person non-census family households.
- 3.0% other, which includes multiple-census family households and one-census-family households with additional persons.
- 1.3% multi-generational households.

⁴ Statistics Canada defines a household as a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad. The dwelling may be either a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone.

⁵ A census family consists of a married or common-law couple (with or without children), a lone parent with at least one child, or grandchildren living with grandparents without parents present. All members must live in the same dwelling, and children include biological or adopted individuals who are unmarried and childless within the household.

Figure 2.8: Breakdown of Private Households by Type (2021)



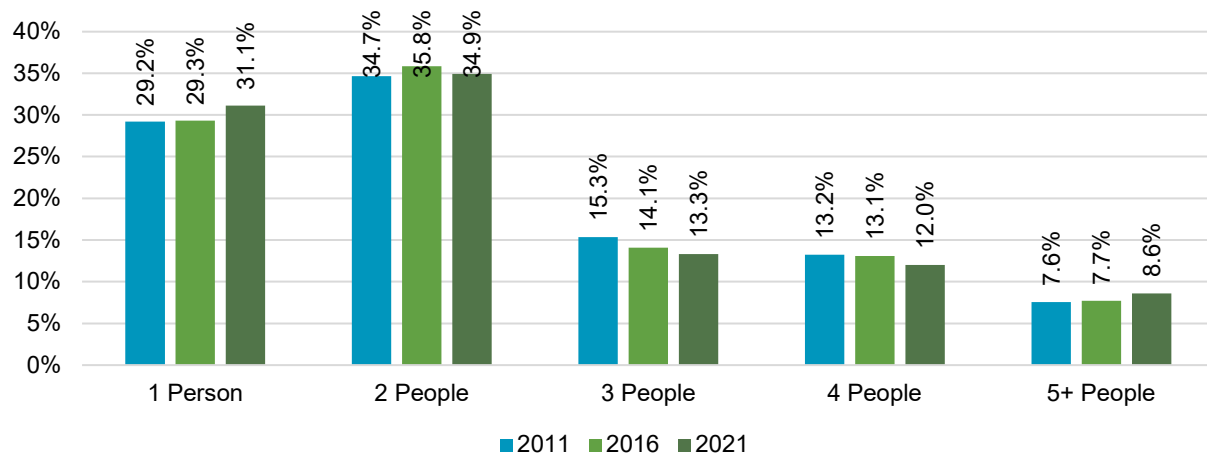
Source: Statistics Canada Census

Household Size

Between 2006 and 2021, the average household size in Wainwright remained consistent at 2.4 people. As shown in the figure below:

- The percentage of 1-person households increased from 29.2% in 2011, to 29.3% in 2016, to 31.1% in 2021.
- The percentage of 2-person households increased from 34.7% in 2011 to 35.8% in 2016 and then subsequently decreased to 34.9% in 2021.
- The percentage of 3-person households decreased from 15.3% in 2011 to 13.3% in 2021.
- The percentage of 4-person households decreased from 13.2% in 2011 to 12.0% in 2021.
- The percentage of 5+ person households increased from 7.6% in 2011 to 8.6% in 2021.

Figure 2.9: Breakdown of Households by Size (2011-2021)

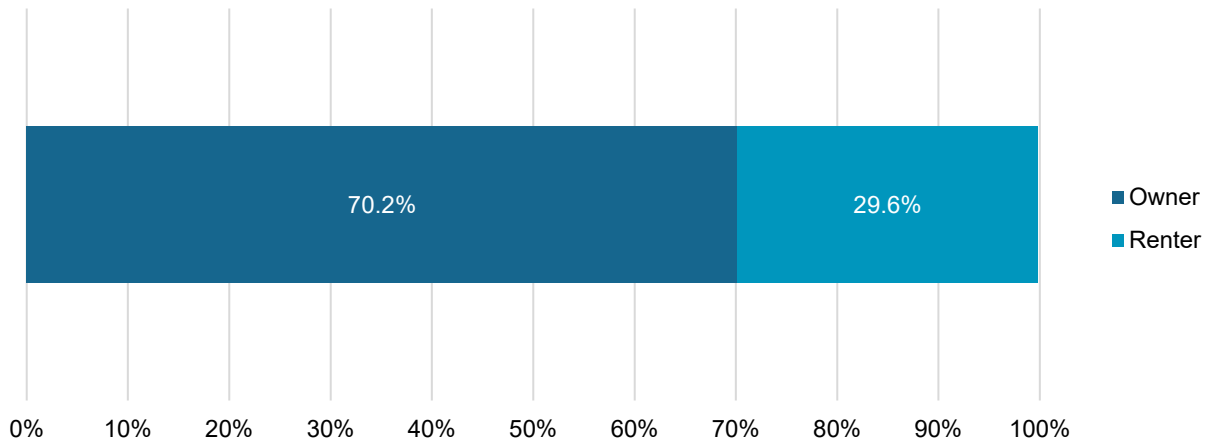


Source: Statistics Canada Census

Tenure

In 2021, 70.2% of households in Wainwright were made up of owner households and 29.6% were renter households. This is comparable to the provincial rate of 70.9% owner households and 28.5% renter households in the same year.

Figure 2.10: Breakdown of Households by Tenure (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

Renter Households in Subsidized Housing

In 2021, 13.8% of renter households living in private dwellings in Wainwright were living in subsidized housing. This does not include households on social assistance who are not receiving subsidized rents, or residents living in collective dwellings, such as seniors houses.

2.1.6 Core Housing Need

Core housing need is a method to identify households that are unable to find and maintain housing that meets their needs. It is an indicator that was developed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and used nationally to collect information on housing needs as part of the Statistics Canada Census.

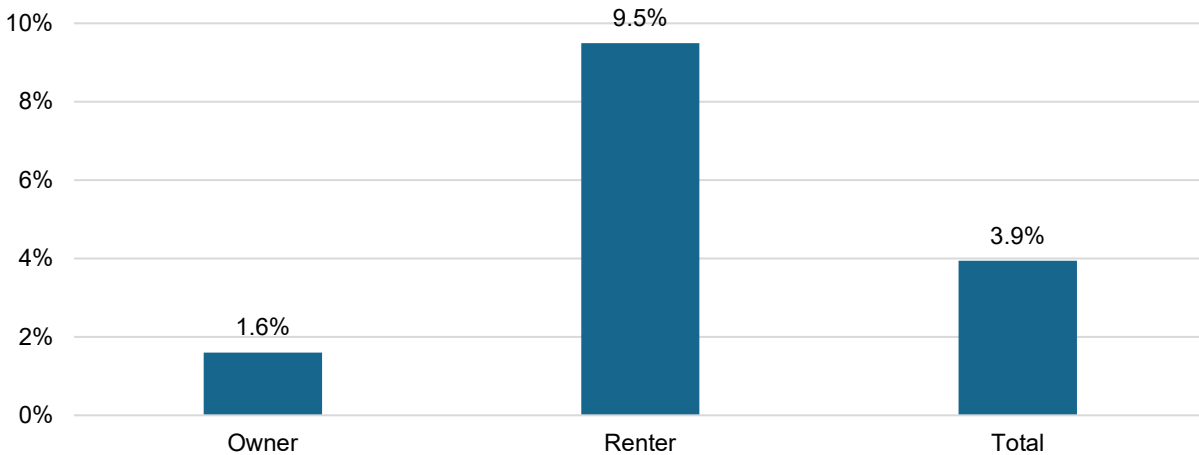
CMHC defines a household as being in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the affordability, suitability, or adequacy standards, and the household would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing option that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards):

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

A household in core housing need is one that is living in housing that does not meet one or more of the housing indicators noted above and would have to spend 30% or more of their total before-tax household income to find alternative housing in the community that meets all three housing indicators (i.e., is affordable, suitable, and adequate).

In 2021, 105 or 3.9% of total households in Wainwright identified as being in core housing need. Of the 3.9% households in core housing need, 71.4% were renter households. 1.6% (30) of all owner households were in core housing need, while 9.5% (75) of all renter households were in core housing need. Core housing need may have been underrepresented in 2021 as a result of temporary increases in household income received from COVID-19 benefits, so there may be a greater need than what is currently represented.

Figure 2.11: Core Housing Need by Tenure (2021)

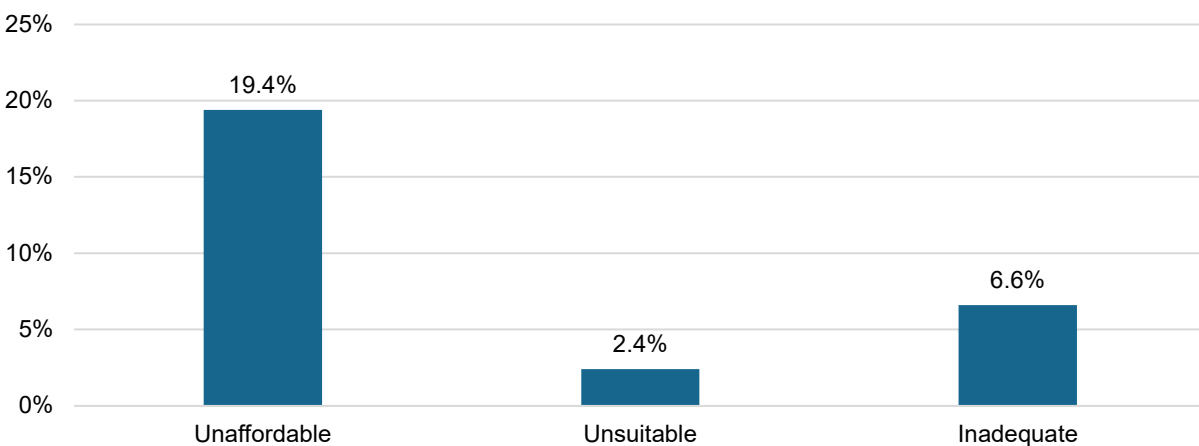


Source: Statistics Canada Census

Housing Indicators

In 2021, over 1 in 4 households (28.4%) in Wainwright did not have access to acceptable housing. When comparing the three housing indicators of affordability, suitability, and adequacy, the biggest challenge impacting housing in Wainwright was affordability with 19.4% (515) of total households spending 30% or more of their income on housing. It will be important to monitor these indicators to determine if they were underrepresented in 2021 due to the temporary financial benefits provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.

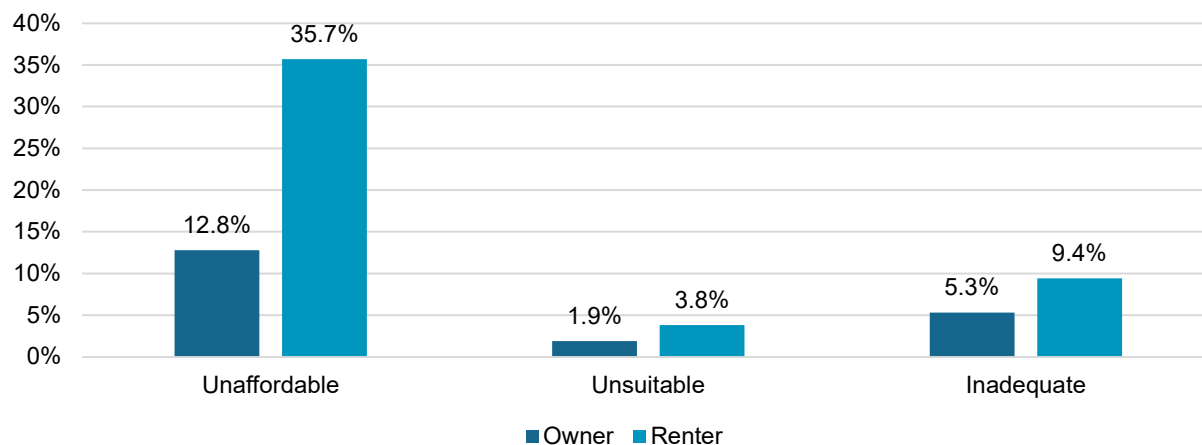
Figure 2.12: Percentage of Total Households in Unacceptable Housing by Housing Indicator (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

There are important differences when looking at the housing indicators by tenure. Significantly more renter households experienced affordability and adequacy challenges compared to owner households. The percentage of owner and renter households who experienced adequacy challenges was more comparable, as depicted on the figure below. Again, while analyses of income data nationally showed that while lower-income populations experienced larger employment income losses during the COVID-19 pandemic, these were offset by COVID-19 economic and recovery benefits and employment insurance, potentially temporarily influencing the affordability indicators.

Figure 2.13: Housing Indicators by Tenure (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

Priority Groups in Core Housing Need

The National Housing Strategy recognizes 13 priority populations⁶ that face disproportionately greater housing needs compared to the general population. However, while these groups are identified at the national level, not all may experience heightened housing challenges in Wainwright. The priority population groups include:

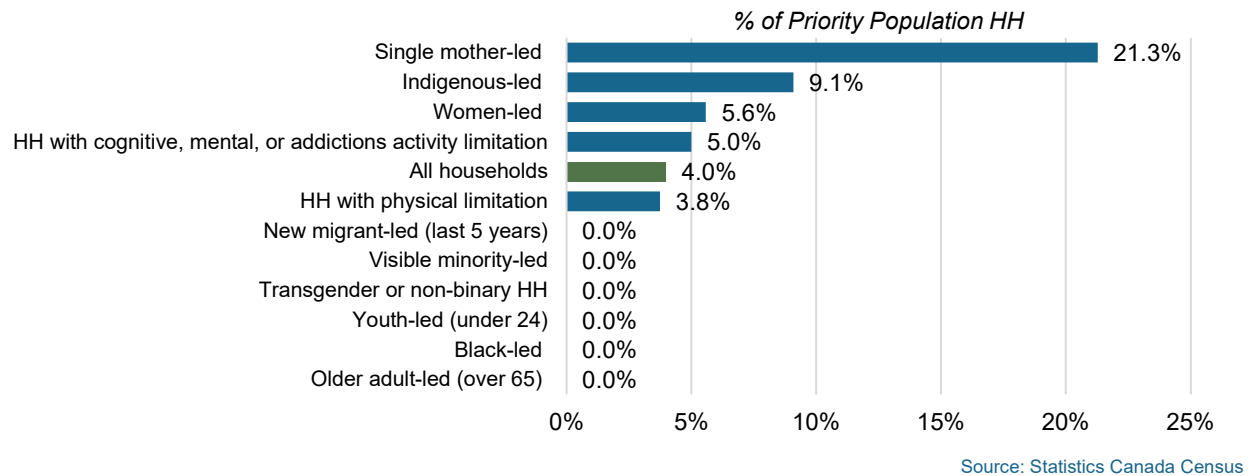
- Women and children fleeing domestic violence;
- Women-led households, especially single mothers;
- Seniors 65+;
- Young adults aged 18-29;
- Indigenous Peoples;
- Racialized people;
- Recent immigrants, especially refugees;
- LGBTQ2S+;
- People with physical health or mobility challenges;
- People with developmental disabilities;
- People dealing with mental health and addiction issues;
- Veterans; and
- People experiencing homelessness.

While Census data does not disaggregate core housing need data by all priority populations, including veterans, individuals who identify as LGBTQ2S+, survivors of domestic violence, and individuals experiencing homelessness, there are several priority population groups where this information is available, which is shown in the following figure. Many households may have members in multiple priority categories, so the totals noted below do not equal 100% of the total households in Wainwright who were identified to be in core housing need.

The priority group with the greatest rate of core housing need in Wainwright was single-mother-led households with 21.3% (50) of households in core housing need. This is followed by 9.1% (20) of Indigenous households, 5.6% (60) of women-led households, and 5.0% (20) of households with a cognitive, mental, or addictions activity limitation.

⁶ When there is no value for a priority population, it means that either there are no households in CHN within that priority population, or that there are too few households to report. The "All households" bar represents the rate of CHN for all households in the community to act as a point of reference.

Figure 2.14: Core Housing Need by Priority Population Group (2021)



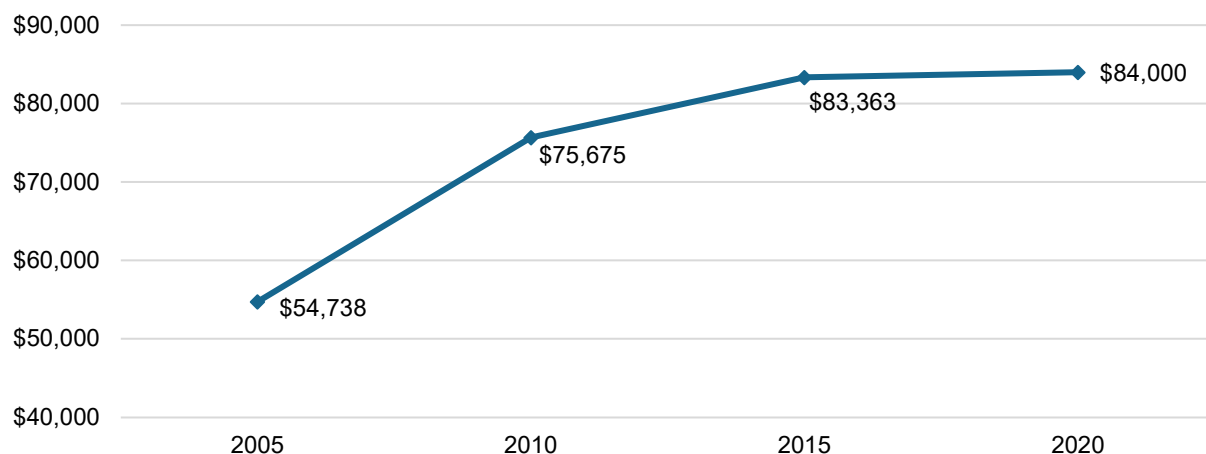
2.2 Economic Trends

2.2.1 Household Income⁷

In 2020, the median household income in Wainwright was \$84,000 before taxes, reflecting a 53.5% increase from \$54,738 in 2005, but only a 0.8% increase from \$83,363 in 2015.

Alberta's inflation rate, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 37.4% from 2005 to 2020 and 11.3% from 2015 to 2020. This suggests that in the long term (2005–2020), household income growth has outpaced inflation, but in the short term (2015–2020), real median household income has declined as wages have not kept up with rising costs.

Figure 2.15: Household Income (2005-2020)



⁷ Household income collected as part of Census data refers to the household's previous year's income (i.e., income data collected as part of the 2021 Census is from 2020). The 2021 Census data related to income also needs to be interpreted with caution because of COVID-19 benefits received by households in 2020. Analyses of income data showed that, while lower-income populations experienced larger employment income losses, these were offset by COVID-19 economic and recovery benefits and EI (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Source: Statistics Canada Census

2.2.2 Employment and Economy

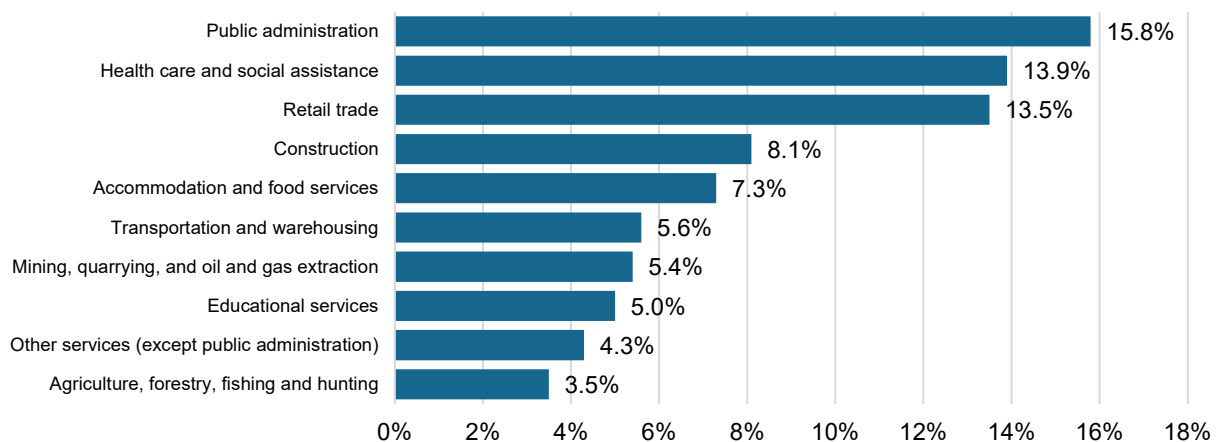
Labour Participation and Unemployment Rates

The labour participation rate shows the number of workers who are currently working or are actively searching for a job as a percentage of the total population aged 15 years or older. In 2021, the labour force participation rate in Wainwright was 71.3%, which was higher than the provincial average of 68%. Census data indicates a fluctuating participation over time, from 73.3% in 2006 to 74.4% in 2016, and 71.3% in 2021. The unemployment rate in Wainwright was 8.2% in 2021. Notably, Wainwright's 2021 unemployment rate was lower than the provincial average of 11.5%, indicating relatively stronger labour market conditions at the local level.

Largest Industries

In 2021, there were 3,510 workers in the Wainwright employed across a range of fields. Based on the North America Industry Classification System (NAICS), the largest industries in Wainwright in 2021 by number of workers were public administration (15.8%), health care and social assistance (13.9%), and retail trade (13.5%). The top ten largest industries are shown in the figure below.

Figure 2.16: Top 10 Largest Primary Industries (2021)

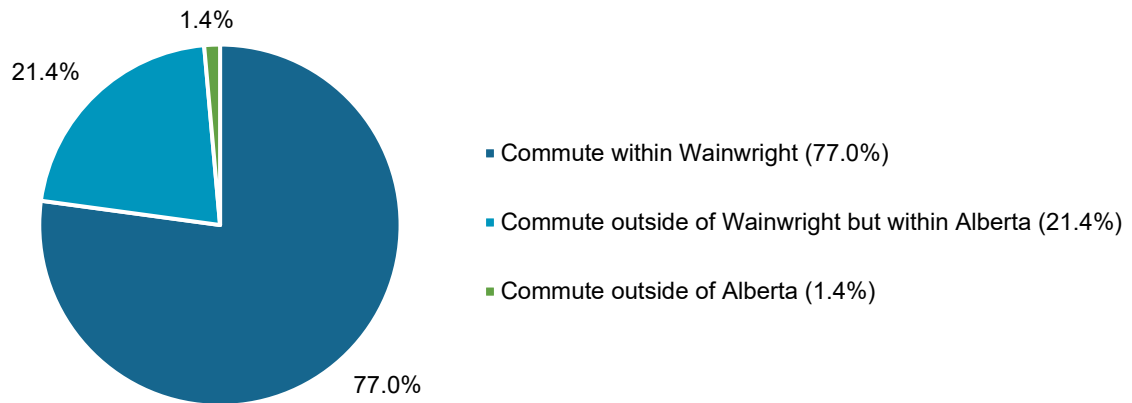


Source: Statistics Canada Census

Commuting

In 2021, most residents (77.0%) commuted to work within Wainwright; this value was significantly higher than the provincial average of Albertans working within their community of residence (71.6%). On the other hand, 21.4% of residents commuted to work outside Wainwright but within Alberta, and 1.4% of residents commuted out of province.

Figure 2.17: Commuting Destination (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

2.3 Community Profile Highlights

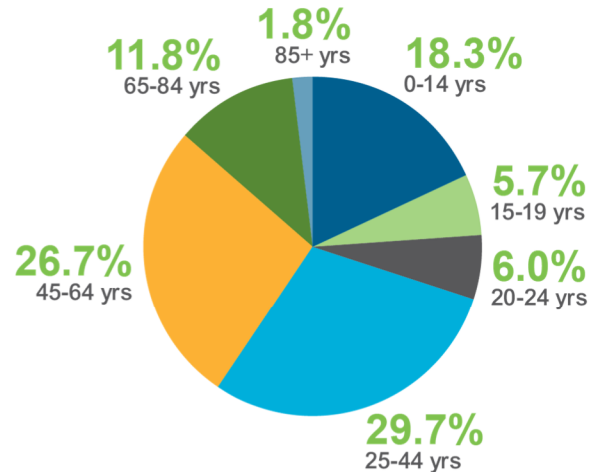
POPULATION



6,606
(2021)

7,125
(Projected 2051,
base scenario)

AGE BREAKDOWN



HOUSEHOLDS

SIZE



2.4
Average
household size



31.1%
1-person



34.9%
2-person



2,665
Households



70.2%
own



TENURE

29.6%
rent

13.8% renter households
in subsidized housing

INCOME



\$84,000
Median household
income (2020)
Not keeping pace
with inflation

over
1 in 4
households
do not have
acceptable
housing

CORE HOUSING NEED

1 in 5
households
experience
affordability
challenges

3.9%
households in
core housing
need

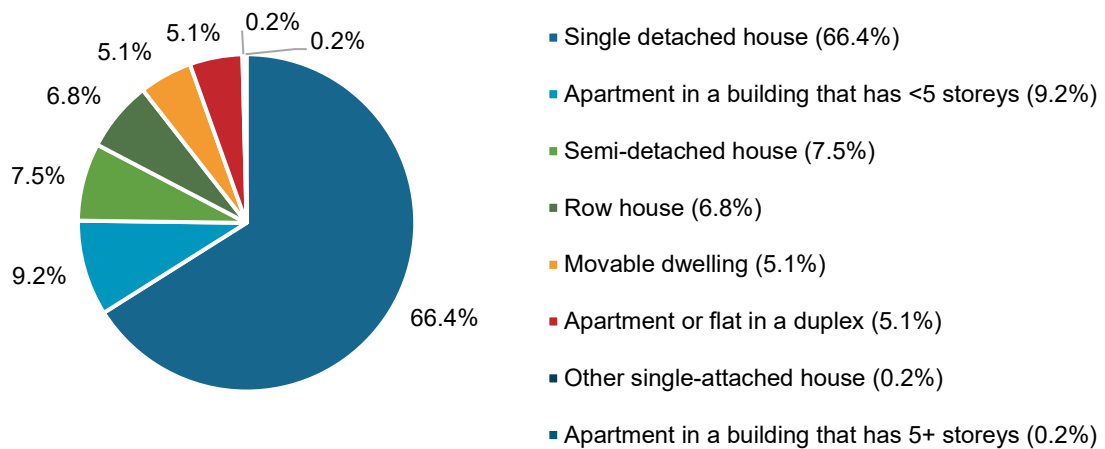
3.0 Current Housing Profile

3.1 Current Housing Stock

3.1.1 Housing Units by Type

In 2021, there were 2,665 total private dwellings in Wainwright. The most common housing form was single detached dwellings, comprising 66.4% of the housing stock, followed by apartments in buildings with fewer than 5 storeys (9.2%), and semi-detached houses (7.5%). Row houses made up 6.8% of the housing stock, and movable dwellings and apartments or flat in a duplex each comprised 5.1% of housing stock. The figure below shows the distribution of the housing units by type in Wainwright.

Figure 3.1: Housing Units by Type

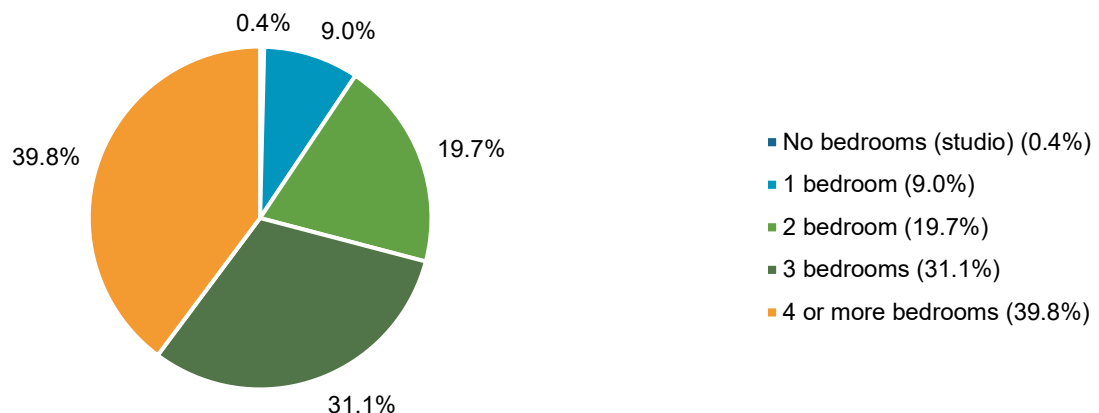


Source: Statistics Canada Census

3.1.2 Housing Units by Size

In 2021, 39.8% of housing units in Wainwright had 4 or more bedrooms, followed by 31.1% having 3 bedrooms, and 19.7% having 2 bedrooms. Only 9.0% of housing units had 1 bedroom and 0.4% of units had no bedrooms (studio).

Figure 3.2: Housing Units by Size



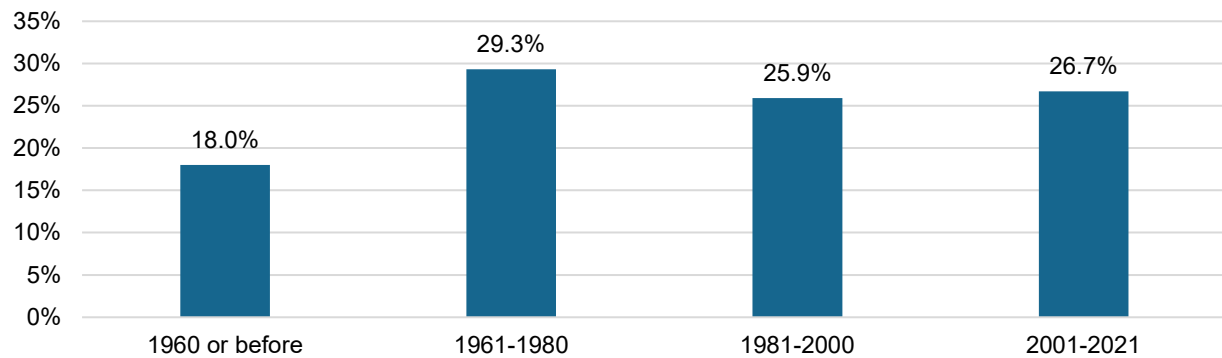
Source: Statistics Canada Census

As noted previously, in 2021, 28.7% of households were either 1- or 2-person households, while 70.9% of dwellings had 3 or more bedrooms. Smaller households may prefer larger homes to have guest bedrooms and/or home offices, but it is important to note that larger housing options may be less affordable or unattainable for households with lower incomes, such as single parent households, residents on fixed incomes, young people and professionals, and couples who are just starting out, among others. Additionally, it is important to consider that larger housing options may not be desirable for smaller households.

3.1.3 Housing Units by Date Built

The age of homes in Wainwright is relatively evenly split with 47.3% of units built in 1980 or earlier and 52.6% of units built after 1981. While older homes are likely to be more affordable, there is a higher likelihood of health and safety concerns with homes potentially not meeting new building code requirements or needing significant maintenance and repairs. **Figure 3.3** below shows the distribution of dwelling units by date built.

Figure 3.3: Housing Units by Date Built



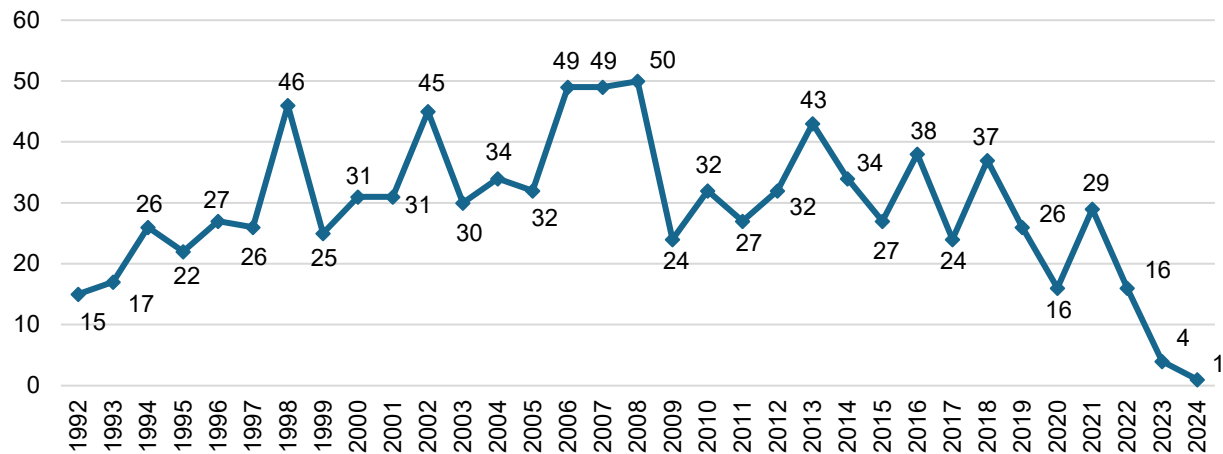
Source: Statistics Canada Census

3.2 Changes in Housing Stock

3.2.1 New Home Construction

According to provincial records, 965 residential building permits were issued in Wainwright between 1992 and 2024. The most active year was 2008, accounting for 50 permits (5.2% of the total). The most active period was from 2006 and 2008, accounting for 148 permits (15.3% of the total). Since 2008, the number of permits issued has decreased overall, with minor fluctuations, being higher one year, and lower the next, with the cycle repeating. The number of permits issued has steadily declined since 2022, as shown in [Figure 3.4](#).

Figure 3.4: Residential Building Permits by Calendar Year (1992-2024)



Source: Alberta Open Government, Building Permits by Municipality

Despite the data referenced above, municipal records indicate that only 40 residential building permits were issued in Wainwright between 2020 and 2025 (i.e., 26 less permits than noted in the provincial data). Out of the 40 permits noted, 67.5% were for single detached dwellings, 15.0% were ready to move homes, 12.5% were multi-unit dwellings, and 5.0% were secondary suites/modular homes.

3.2.2 Replacements and Demolitions

Between 2020-2025, there were 27 demolition permits issued for single detached homes, and one issued for a multi-family home. Monitoring the number of residential building permits compared to the number of residential demolition permits is important to determine if there is a net loss of housing units. Residential replacements and demolitions should continue to be tracked to monitor impacts on the overall housing supply and availability in Wainwright. Additionally, continuing to track detailed information about the rationale for demolition permits is helpful to understand and differentiate issues related to the age or state of the housing stock versus one-time isolated events (e.g., house fire).

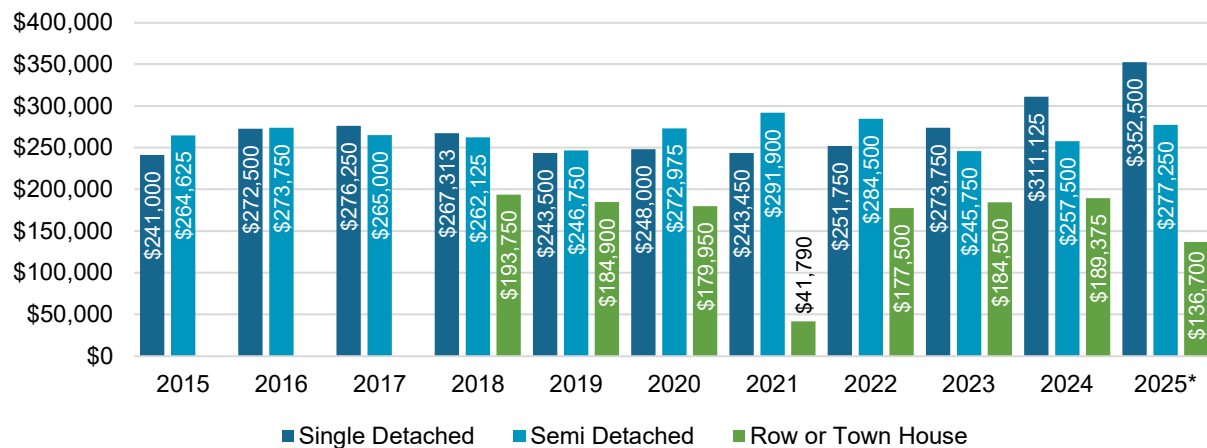
3.3 Homeownership

3.3.1 Sale Prices

In 2024, the median residential sales price for single detached homes in Wainwright was \$311,125, and the median residential sales price for semi-detached and row or town houses were \$257,500 and \$189,375, respectively. Generally, median prices for single and semi-detached dwellings have fluctuated over the last ten years, rising for a few years before dropping slightly, with the cycle repeating. Since 2023, median prices for single and semi-detached dwellings have been increasing consistently; a trend that has continued into 2025 (as of September).

Median prices for row or town houses decreased slightly between 2018 and 2020 before dropping significantly in 2021, returning to more normal (i.e., pre-2021) median prices between 2022 and 2024. Trends in 2025 are showing a more significant decrease in median prices compared to 2024 (as of September).

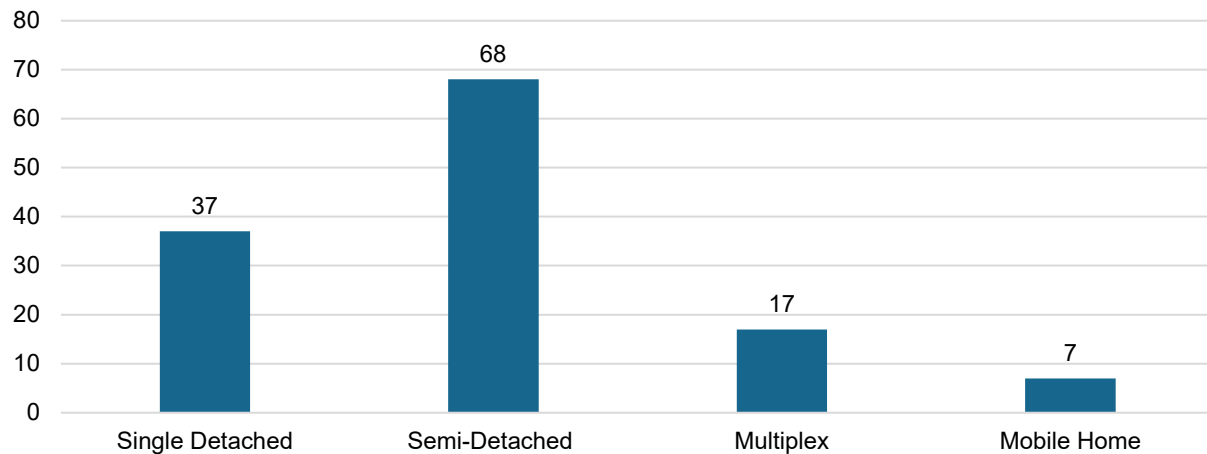
Figure 3.5: Median Residential Sale Prices (2015-2025)



Source: Local area realtors
*Only includes data up to September 2025

In 2024, there were a total of 129 residential real estate sales in Wainwright. 68 (52.7%) were for semi-detached dwellings, 37 (28.7%) were for single detached dwellings, 17 (13.2%) were multiplex dwellings, and 7 (5.4%) were mobile home dwellings.

Figure 3.6: Total Number of Residential Real Estate Sales (2024)



Source: Statistics Canada Census

3.3.2 Homeowner Affordability

To better understand current affordability challenges related to homeownership, an affordability gap analysis⁸ was completed. Although the median household income (2021 Census) was temporarily inflated due to COVID-19 financial assistance programs, it remains the most current and available data for household income in 2025, forming the basis of the affordability analysis.

In 2021, the median household income for owner households in Wainwright was \$84,000 annually. Using CMHC's affordability threshold of 30% of gross income, the *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost* (i.e., what would be considered affordable to a household, spending less than 30% of median income on housing) was calculated at \$2,093. The *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost* was then compared to *estimated monthly shelter costs* (i.e., the sum of monthly mortgage, property insurance, and utility amounts) for homeowners in Wainwright.

Monthly housing costs were calculated using the following assumptions⁹:

- Mortgage payments were based on two down payment scenarios (20% and 5%) with a 5.2% interest rate¹⁰ and 25-year term.
- Applying a range of \$894-\$1,044¹¹, depending on housing type, to account for property taxes, home insurance, and utilities.

Table 3.1 shows estimated shelter costs for the different housing types and the difference between the *estimated monthly shelter costs* and the *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost*.

⁸ Affordability analyses are intended to provide a high-level overview of affordability based on current assumptions. They do not account for all individual resident experiences and should not be interpreted or applied as guidance for specific personal circumstances.

⁹ These scenarios do not consider the household's Gross Debt Service ratio and Total Debt Service ratio which are two ratios used to determine if a person can afford to buy a home.

¹⁰ Calculated using the Bank Rate Data from January to August of 2025. Source: CANNEX Financial Exchanges Limit Cannex.com

¹¹ The estimated monthly housing costs was calculated using an average monthly house insurance, monthly property tax payment, and monthly utility payment. Source: Town of Wainwright Relocation & Investment Guide.

Table 3.1: Homeownership Affordability Analysis

Owner Household Affordability Gap Analysis						
2020 Median Owner Household Income	\$84,000					
Affordable Monthly Housing Cost	\$2,093					
	Single Detached Dwelling		Semi-Detached		Row/Town House	
2024 Median Sales Price	\$311,125		\$257,500		\$189,375	
Estimated Monthly Housing Costs with 20% Down Payment	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap
	\$2,520	-\$427	\$2,200	-\$107	\$1,792	\$301
Estimated Monthly Housing Costs with 5% Down Payment	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap
	\$2,797	-\$704	\$2,395	-\$302	\$2,004	\$89

Source: 2021 Statistics Canada Census

Based on this analysis and the applied assumptions, owner households earning the median household income who are putting either a 20% or a 5% down payment are generally not able to afford single detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings in Wainwright. Under both down payment scenarios, buyers are likely able to afford row/town houses, but with little savings leftover under the 5% scenario.

Households in Wainwright are generally *not* able to afford the median sale price of single detached and semi-detached dwellings.

3.4 Rental Housing¹²

3.4.1 Primary and Secondary Rental Market

The primary rental market refers to units that are constructed for the purpose of being rented. The primary rental market is often defined as occupied rental units in privately initiated, purpose-built rental structures of three units or more that can be in apartments or row houses.

The secondary rental market consists of all other rental-occupied housing units that are not considered part of the primary, purpose-built market. This includes rented single detached and semi-detached houses, rented condominium units, apartments as part of a commercial structure, and rented units attached or secondary to a primary dwelling unit (e.g., a secondary suite, garden suite, etc.).

The Province of Alberta conducts an annual survey on primary, purpose-built rental units, which indicates that in 2024, Wainwright had approximately 350 rental units in the primary rental market (Province of Alberta Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey, 2024).

¹² The Province of Alberta conducts an annual survey, Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey (AVS), of rural communities, collecting data and information on market rental multi-unit dwellings (i.e., not subsidized or affordable). Eligibility to be included in this survey include communities that: have a population between 1,000 and 9,999, have 30 or more rental units, and are not included in CMHC's bi-annual Rental Market Survey. The buildings also must have four or more rental units to be counted.

Table 3.2: Primary Rental units by Unit Size (2024)

Unit Size/Type	Number of Primary Rental Units
Bachelor	9
1 Bedroom	88
2 Bedroom	162
3 Bedroom	91
4+ Bedroom	0
Total	350

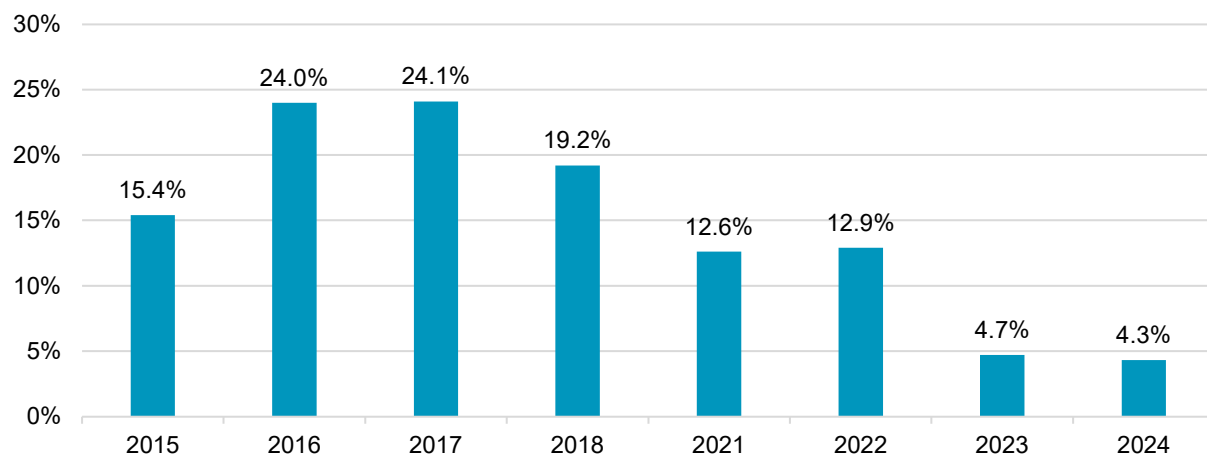
Source: Province of Alberta, Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey (AVS), 2024

Since there were 790 renter households in 2021, and 350 primary rental units identified through the provincial survey in 2023, most rental units in Wainwright were part of the secondary rental market, which includes homes that were not built for the purpose of being rented and typically consists of single detached homes, semi-detached homes, rented condominiums and dwellings within secondary suites, which are not captured in the primary rental market data. Based on the number of primary rental units, it is estimated that approximately 56% of the rental market in Wainwright consists of units in the secondary rental market.

3.4.2 Rental Vacancy Rates

Between 2015 and 2024 (excluding 2019 and 2020 because there was no data available), rental vacancies in Wainwright fluctuated from a high of 24.1% in 2017 to a low of 4.3% in 2024, a total decrease of 19.8%. The rental vacancy rate in Wainwright is likely to fluctuate over time due to economic influence from public administration sector employers, such as the Canadian Forces Base (CFB), which can prompt shifts in employment and housing demand.

Figure 3.7: Historical Rental Vacancy Rates (2015-2024)

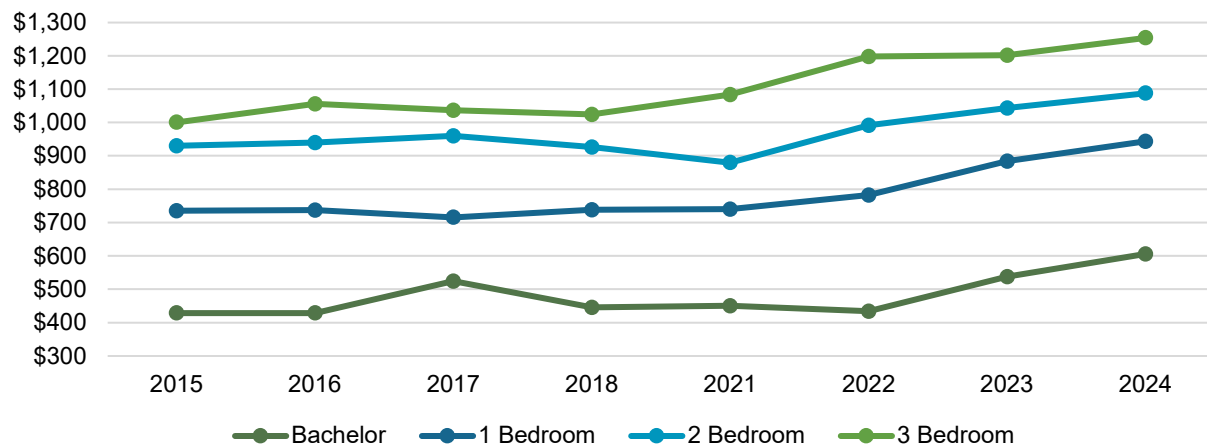


Source: Province of Alberta, Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey (AVS), 2024

3.4.3 Average Rental Rates

When looking at historical average rental rates by number of bedrooms (data collected as part of the AVS), rental rates increased steadily between 2015 and 2024, with some minor fluctuations. There was a notable increase in rental rates for bachelor units in 2017, where the rental rate increased from \$429 to \$524, decreasing again the following year to \$446. Between 2023 to 2024, the average rental rates for bachelor and 1-bedroom increased by 12.6% and 6.8%, respectively, and the average rental rates for 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units increased by 4.3% each.

Figure 3.8: Average Rental Rates by Unit Size (2015-2024)



Source: Province of Alberta, Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey (AVS), 2024

3.4.4 Rental Affordability

To better understand current affordability challenges related to rental units, an affordability gap analysis¹³ was completed for renter households. Although the median household income (2021 Census) was temporarily inflated due to COVID-19 benefits in 2020, it remains the most current and available approximation of renter household income in 2024, forming the basis of the affordability analysis.

In 2021, the median renter household income was \$58,800 annually. Using CHMC's affordability threshold of 30% of gross income, the *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost* (i.e., what would be considered affordable to a household, spending less than 30% of median income on housing) was calculated to be \$1,465. The *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost* was then compared to the *estimated monthly shelter cost* (i.e., the sum of monthly rent and utility amounts) for renters in Wainwright.

Monthly housing costs were calculated using the average rental rates by unit size and an estimate of a range of \$200-\$350 per month for utilities (depending on the size of the unit), noting that estimated monthly shelter costs are likely to vary differently between households depending on individual circumstances and housing expenses.

Table 3.3 shows the estimated shelter costs for the different rental unit sizes and the difference between the *estimated monthly shelter costs* and the *estimated affordable monthly shelter cost*.

¹³ Affordability analyses are intended to provide a high-level overview of affordability based on current assumptions. They do not account for all individual resident experiences and should not be interpreted or applied as guidance for specific personal circumstances.

Table 3.3: Renter Household Affordability Analysis, (2024)

Renter Household Affordability Gap Analysis								
2021 Median Renter Household Income	\$58,800							
Affordable Monthly Shelter Cost (Less than 30% of renter household income)	\$1,465							
	Bachelor		1-Bedroom		2-Bedroom		3-Bedroom	
2024 Average Rent	\$606		\$944		\$1,088		\$1,254	
Estimated Monthly Housing Costs*	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap	Costs	Gap
	\$806	\$659	\$1,194	\$271	\$1,388	\$77	\$1,604	-\$139

Sources: Province of Alberta, Apartment Vacancy and Rental Cost Survey (AVS), 2024 and Statistics Canada Census (2021)

*Includes costs such as utilities and insurance

Based on the analysis and the applied assumptions, renter households earning the median renter household income:

- Should be able to afford bachelor units and 1-bedroom units without affordability issues.
- Are likely able to afford 2-bedroom units, but with little leftover savings.
- Cannot afford 3-bedroom units.

3.5 Short-Term Rentals

In the past decade, short-term rentals (STRs) have become very popular, offering alternatives to traditional accommodation when travelling. This has resulted in an increased supply of travel accommodation, increasing interest in visiting smaller communities that previously had limited accommodation options.

While there are clear benefits for travelers, hosts, and the local community with the potential for increased local business activity, the influx of short-term rentals can result in several issues. Property damage, noise and nuisance issues, safety concerns, etc., are often raised by neighbours and property managers. STRs also significantly impact the rental market as a whole and broader affordable housing supply in a community because rental units are being removed from the long-term rental market and instead used as STRs. Property owners may choose to have STRs because there are higher value and income to be earned from short-term rental properties. For example, the number of STRs in a neighbourhood result in increased rental rates and housing prices which impacts affordability¹⁴. STRs also have the potential to remove units that could otherwise be available for long-term housing¹⁵. This is not to say that all short-term rentals would automatically be assumed to be part of the long-term housing market; however, it could be assumed that many would, especially if they are not currently the primary residence of the homeowner and they are currently available for rent for more than 180 days of the year¹⁶.

Based on a review of data available from AIRDNA, a website that collects short-term rental data from Airbnb and VRBO, as of October 2025, there were ten STRs available. Based on this, it is not likely that STRs are removing a significant number of homes from the long-term rental market.

¹⁴ Barron, K., Kung, E., and Proserpio, D. (2020). The Effect of Home-Sharing on House Prices and Rents: Evidence from Airbnb (March 4, 2020). Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3006832 on September 22, 2024.

¹⁵ Arbenser, L., Bernard, M.C., Dormer, A., and Vipond, O. (July 30, 2024). Short-term rentals in the Canadian housing market. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-621-m/11-621-m2024010-eng.htm> on September 22, 2024.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada has defined a subset of STRs that could be considered potential long-term dwellings. Their definition of these housing units that have the potential to move back to the long-term housing market include STRs that are entire home rentals, are available to rent for more than 180 days a year, and the property type is not defined as a category that could be considered more of a vacation-style home (e.g., houseboats, yurts, houseboat, farm stay, etc.). Source: Arbenser, L., Bernard, M.C., Dormer, A., and Vipond, O. (July 30, 2024). Short-term rentals in the Canadian housing market. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-621-m/11-621-m2024010-eng.htm> on September 22, 2024.

3.6 Affordable and Subsidized Housing

Based on data from Statistics Canada, there were 109 subsidized rental units in Wainwright in 2021. While there was no dedicated social/community housing in Wainwright, Vermilion and District Housing Foundation was providing 97 rent subsidies in Wainwright through funding from Alberta Government Assistant Benefit program; this includes 62 single individuals (including 4 seniors), and 35 families. Rental subsidies are rent-gear-to-income (RGI). They also provide a child income subsidy of \$50/month per child. Staff noted that generally, people did not need to wait long for a unit.

3.6.1 Supportive Housing

Seniors

BATTLE RIVER LODGE

Battle River Lodge is non-profit supportive living care home in Wainwright that contains 98 single occupancy units, however, there are adjoining rooms available for couples. As of October 2025, there were five (5) single individuals waiting for rooms, and one vacancy for an adjoining room.

A reduced rental fee is provided for individuals making less than \$34,700/year. Smaller unit sizes at the lower rate are currently \$1,365 (for 266 square feet), or \$1,400 (for 288 square feet). Rental fees include housekeeping and meals. Alberta Health Services Homecare Support is available for individuals who need additional supports.

POINTS WEST LIVING

Points West Living operates the following seniors housing units in Wainwright, which are private rental units with no dedicated affordable/RGI units:

- 59 dedicated supportive living suites
- 16 choice rental suites
- 80 one or two bedroom independent living apartments

The building is barrier-free and pet friendly, and includes on-site designated supportive living and has designated memory care available.

SELF-CONTAINED

In addition to housing subsidies, Vermilion and District Housing Foundation also provides 60 self-contained, affordable, housing units for seniors. This includes:

- Frontier Manor: 24 one-bedroom units
- Heritage Manor: 18 one-bedroom units
- Pioneer Manor: 18 one-bedroom units

Currently, they do not have anyone waiting for units. They are generally full, with one vacancy currently.

Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities

Wainwright Association for Community Living currently owns and operates 6 homes (3 duplexes) for persons with developmental disabilities. They provide housing and 24/7 supports to 22 individuals. They also provide supports to 16 individuals through their Supported Independent Living Program. The waiting list for these programs is maintained by The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program. Currently individuals must be assessed as urgent or critical to be able to access services. Discussions with local staff highlight that there are long waiting lists for services across the province.

Catholic Social Services (CSS) also owns and operates two 24/7 support homes in Wainwright providing housing for 10 individuals with disabilities. One of the homes also has an additional transitional housing unit which can accommodate up to two individuals. Clients include adults with cognitive or developmental disabilities, complex behavioural issues, or pervasive physical or medical disabilities.

Currently the homes are full. CSS did have to close a home a couple years ago as they were finding it difficult to fill. Compatibility can be a challenge and/or individuals may not want to relocate to a more rural community.

Catholic Family Services also provides supports to adults and families through their Supported Independent Living program where they are currently supporting 20 individuals, and their Support Home program which is currently supporting 2 individuals. The Support Home Program is a program where a 'host' family will provide accommodation and a small amount of support for individuals in their own home. CSS also supports about 25 families through their FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) program. This program supports families in their own homes. In addition, CSS provides in home and respite supports to families with children with disabilities.

3.7 Emergency and Transitional Housing

There are no emergency or transitional housing options within Wainwright. Armor of Light Recover did operate some temporary emergency beds during the winter of 2023. They provided up to 20 beds of nightly emergency shelter. Armor of Light no longer operates an emergency shelter yet is seeking to open a residential treatment home for individuals who are homeless and seeking support for substance use. Currently, Armor of Light helps find stable housing and appropriate treatment services for individuals in need. The organization also provides Narcotics Anonymous programming and support programs for women.

There are some emergency housing options in surrounding areas.

- Spark Foundation of Lloydminster operates Interval Home, a 12-bedroom emergency shelter, accommodating up to 33 women and children experiencing family violence or other life crisis, and operates Dol-Mar Manor, 5 apartment units for women and children leaving a shelter.
- The Lloydminster men's shelter operates 28 emergency beds and has 8 transitional units. Both the shelter and transitional housing units are currently full. Staff have noted turning away 1-5 individuals per night.
- The Capella Centre, in St. Paul, provides 20 shelter beds for women and children who have experienced family violence or other urgent crisis. Capella Centre also offers transitional programming, 2 individual apartment units, where families can stay for up to two years.

3.8 Ongoing Community Housing Support

In absence of a coordinated framework, local non-profit organizations have started responding to community housing needs. While various aspects of housing across the continuum are being addressed on an as-needed basis, the roles and responsibilities of all levels of government, non-profit organizations, and other community groups/agencies who are involved in the housing should be clarified to increase awareness of roles, responsibilities, areas of expertise, and capacity, and effectively align resources to areas of need.

At the time of completing this report, the following organizations were involved in responding to housing needs in Wainwright:

Table 3.4: Ongoing Community Housing Support (2025)

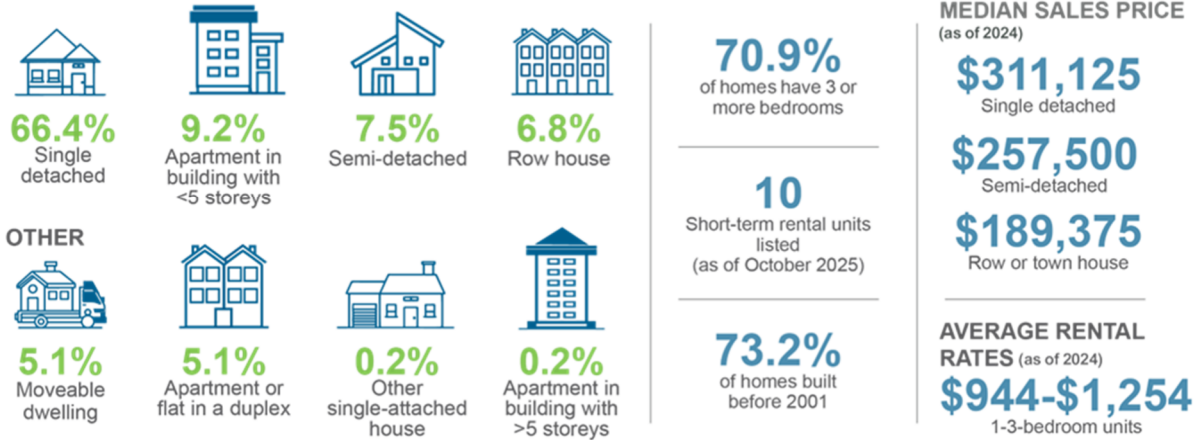
Organization Name	Purpose/Mission	Core Functions	Programs, Initiatives, and Achievements
Armor of Light Recovery Society	To walk alongside individuals in Wainwright and the surrounding communities as they face challenges of alcoholism and addiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access to emergency resources for those in immediate need (i.e., food, clothing, essential winter attire) • Finding stable accommodation with appropriate treatment facility services • Accessing detox facility and sober living accommodation • Obtaining identification • Advocating for governmental benefits • Accessing mental health services • Providing job search support • Providing job related expenses for certifications and training • Providing allowances for appropriate work attire and footwear • Providing application assistance for employment insurance, income assistance, and treatment facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmpowerHer – 12-week course for fostering strength, resilience, and confidence in women (annual) • Healing Hearts – 15-week course for perpetrators of domestic violence (annual) • Winter survival backpacks with essential supplies • Rent payment support to help individuals maintain stable housing (last resort) • Damage deposit subsidies to facilitate housing stability (last resort) • Utility cost coverage to avoid disconnection of essential services (last resort) • Emergency accommodation during crises (hotel stays for up to two nights) • Cold Weather Emergency Shelter (2024)
IMPACT Wainwright & Area	To work collaboratively to enhance the well-being of community members and create healthy opportunities for citizens of all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating collaboration across agencies to work on addressing and filling gaps • Initiating wellness activities within the community • Understanding and improving the social determinates of health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wainwright Housing & Service Needs Estimation: A Community Report (2024)
Wainwright REACH Foundation	To responsibly support individuals by addressing housing insecurity in Wainwright	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading housing analyses to define and understand local housing needs <p>Aspirational Core Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leading/supporting housing related funding applications</i> • <i>Distributing materials to increase education and awareness and reduce stigma</i> • <i>Managing housing projects</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wainwright Community Housing Needs Assessment (2025)

Sources: Organization websites and focused discussions

*Table 3.4 is not intended to serve as an exhaustive list of all ongoing community housing support; it is limited to information that was relayed through engagement opportunities conducted as part of developing the Housing Needs Assessment. Other groups or organizations who are completing local housing initiatives and would like to be acknowledged in Table 3.4 are encouraged to contact the Wainwright REACH Foundation.

3.9 Current Housing Highlights

HOUSING



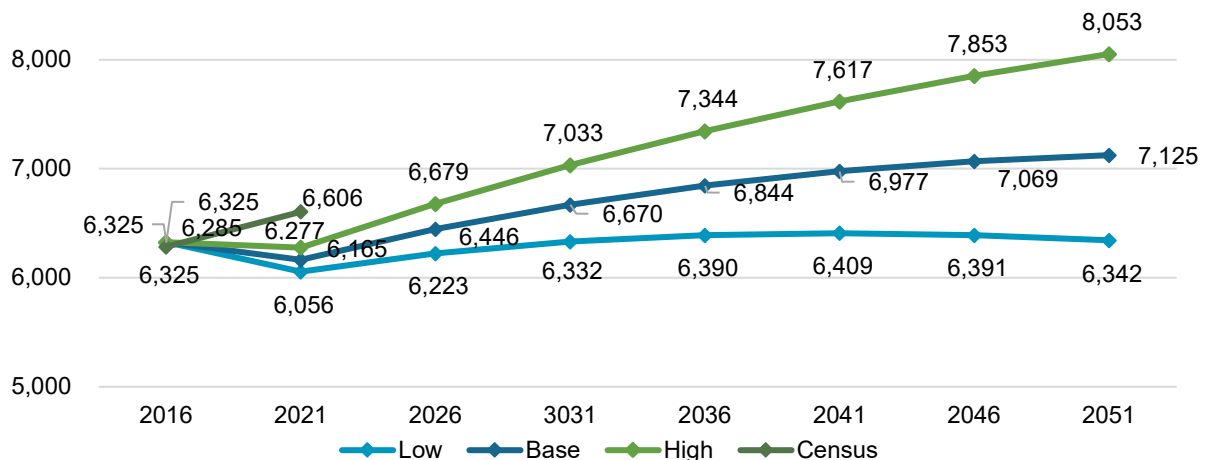
4.0 Community Growth

4.1 Anticipated Population

The population projections used in this project were based on those from the Wainwright Regional Growth Study (2022). Looking to the future, population projections for Wainwright indicate a wide range of potential futures, reflecting uncertainty in long-term growth patterns. While the 2016 Federal Census population count (6,285) aligned closely with these projections, the 2021 Census population count recorded 6,606 residents, significantly higher than anticipated population across all projected growth scenarios, suggesting stronger-than-expected short-term growth.

Looking ahead, the low-growth scenario projects relative stability, with the population remaining around 6,200–6,400 through 2051. In contrast, the base scenario anticipates moderate growth to 7,125 by 2051, while the high-growth scenario projects more substantial growth to over 8,000 residents. The divergence between the low and high scenarios, nearly 1,700 residents by 2051, highlights the importance of flexible planning. Should growth track closer to the higher projection, Wainwright will require notable expansions in housing supply, infrastructure, and services, whereas the low-growth path would suggest more stable demand with limited new housing pressures.

Figure 4.1: Projected Population (#) (2016-2051)



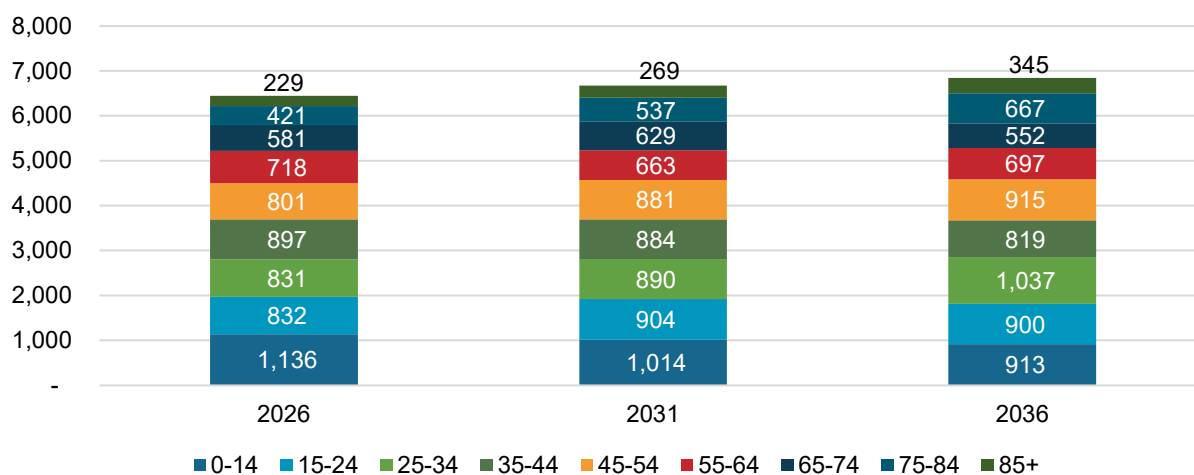
Source: Statistics Canada Census and 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

4.2 Anticipated Age

A cohort-component share adjustment method was used to develop age-specific population projections for Wainwright by borrowing age-group change patterns from the Government of Alberta's population projections for the broader Census Division (Division 7), anchoring them to Wainwright's total population projections (base scenario), and then adjusting proportionally to ensure alignment between age distributions and totals. This approach balances local accuracy with broader demographic trends.

Population projections for Wainwright show notable shifts in the age structure between 2026 and 2036. The number of children aged 0–14 is projected to decline steadily from 1,136 in 2026 to 913 by 2036, while the youth and young adult population (15–24) is expected to remain relatively stable at around 900. The 25–34 age group is projected to grow from 831 in 2026 to 1,037 in 2036, emerging as a key driver of household formation and housing demand. Middle-aged cohorts show mixed trends, with the 35–44 group declining from 897 to 819, while the 45–54 group increases from 801 to 915 over the same period. Older adult populations are expected to grow significantly: the 75–84 group increases by nearly 60% (421 to 667), and those aged 85+ rise from 229 to 345. In contrast, the 65–74 age group peaks in 2031 before declining. These trends point to both a growing demand for housing suited to young adults and families, and a rising need for age-friendly and supportive housing options to accommodate an expanding senior population.

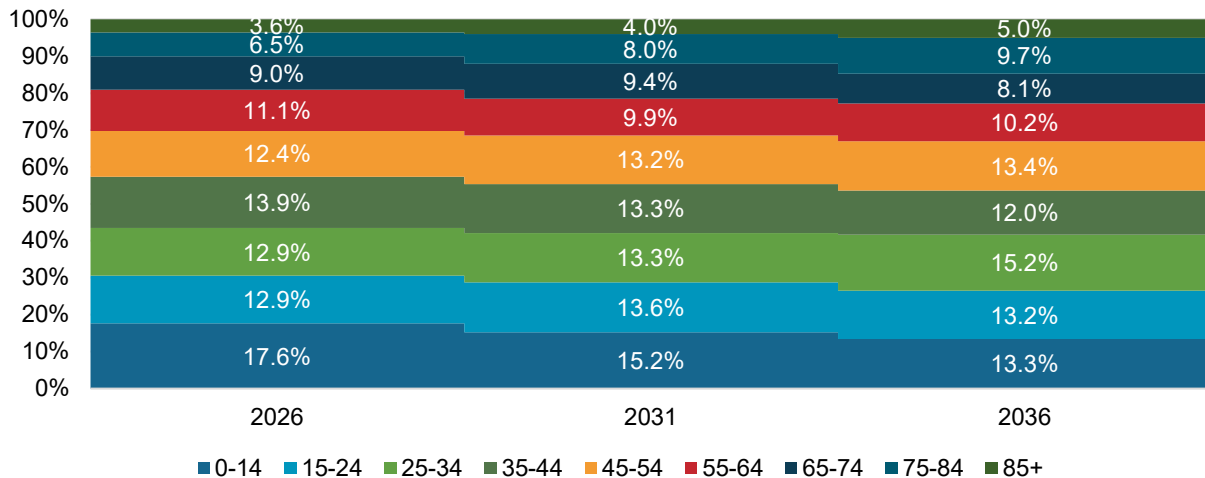
Figure 4.2: Projected Distribution of Population by Age Group (#) (2026-2036)



Source: Consultant projections based on Government of Alberta Population Projections, Statistics Canada Census and 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

The age distribution of Wainwright's projected population highlights both a gradual aging of the community and a relative decline in the share of children. The proportion of residents aged 0–14 is expected to decrease from 17.6% in 2026 to just 13.3% by 2036, while the 25–34 age group grows from 12.9% to 15.2%, becoming a larger share of the population and an important driver of household formation. The middle-aged cohorts (35–54) are projected to remain relatively stable at about 12–13% each, maintaining their role as a core part of the population base. By contrast, older adults are projected to represent a growing share: those aged 75–84 increase from 6.5% to 9.7%, and the 85+ population from 3.6% to 5.0% over the same period. Together, these shifts underscore a dual challenge, meeting housing needs for younger adults seeking to establish households, while also expanding options for an increasing proportion of seniors who may require smaller, age-friendly, or supportive housing.

Figure 4.3: Projected Distribution of Population by Age Group (%) (2026-2036)

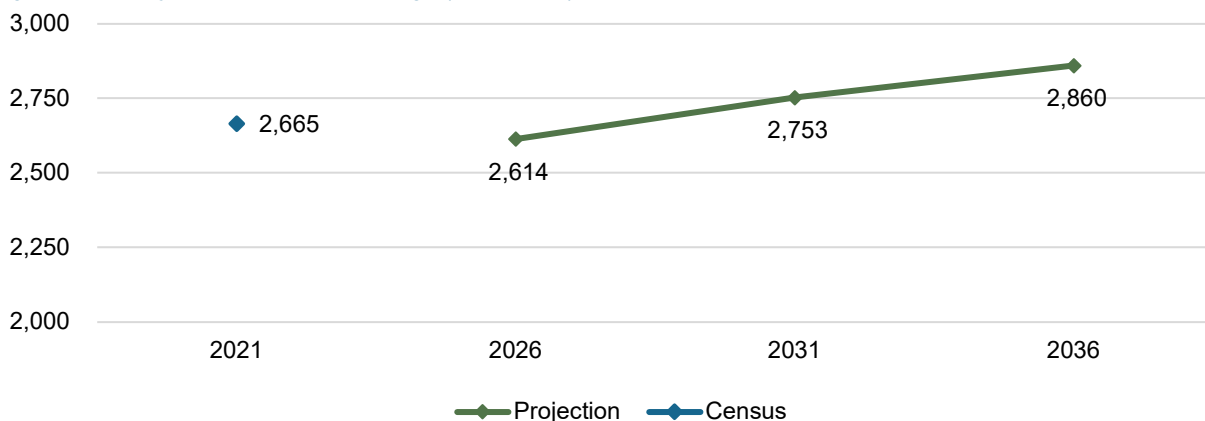


Source: Consultant projections based on Government of Alberta Population Projections, Statistics Canada Census and 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

4.3 Anticipated Households

Household projections were prepared based on the above population projections by age and 2021 headship rates for Wainwright by age. Household projections for Wainwright suggest modest but steady growth over the next 15 years. In 2021, the Federal Census recorded 2,665 households, slightly higher than the projection baseline of 2,614. Looking ahead, the number of households is projected to increase to 2,753 by 2031 and reach 2,860 by 2036. This represents overall growth of about 9% from 2021 to 2036. While the pace of household growth is moderate, the incremental increase underscores the importance of a sufficient and diverse housing supply to meet demand, particularly given shifts in age structure identified in the population forecasts.

Figure 4.4: Projected Household Change (2026-2036)



Source: Statistics Canada Census and consultant projections based on 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

5.0 Future Housing Needs

Housing needs can be categorized into two primary types: current unmet needs and future anticipated needs. Both types of housing needs must be addressed concurrently to support long-term sustainability and inclusivity.

Current unmet need refers to the immediate demand for housing that is not currently being met.

Future anticipated need refers to housing needs that are expected to occur within the community in the upcoming years.

As Wainwright continues to grow, it will be critical to make sure that housing supply aligns with demographic shifts, affordability challenges, and evolving household needs. The following sections quantify the current unmet housing needs and future anticipated housing needs.

5.1 Indicators of Current Unmet Housing Need

Income categories based on Wainwright's AMHI have been developed through the HART project¹⁷ to help assess housing needs. HART's approach allows for a standardized comparison of affordability across different communities in Canada. The following table shows the range of household incomes and affordable housing costs that comprise each income category in 2020 dollar values. It also shows the portion of total households that fall within each category.

Table 5.1: Income Categories and Affordable Shelter Costs in Wainwright, 2021

Income Category	% of Total Households	Annual HH Income	Affordable Shelter Cost
Very Low Income (20% or under of AMHI)	1.7%	<= \$17,000	<= \$425
Low Income (21% to 50% of AMHI)	17.7%	\$17,000 - \$42,500	\$425 - \$1,063
Moderate Income (51% to 80% of AMHI)	17.9%	\$42,500 - \$68,000	\$1,063 - \$1,700
Median Income (81% to 120% of AMHI)	22.9%	\$68,000 - \$102,000	\$1,700 - \$2,550
High Income (121% and more of AMHI)	39.8%	>= \$102,001	>= \$2,551

Source: HART based on Statistics Canada Census data

5.1.1 Core Housing Need

As of 2021, an estimated 110 households in Wainwright were in core housing need. Of these, the majority were concentrated among smaller household sizes; one-person households represented the largest share (45), followed by two-person households (30). Larger households represented less of the total households in core housing need, with 35 households in the four-person category and no three-person or five-or-more-person households identified.

When looking at households in core housing need by income category, households in the low-income range (21%–50% of AMHI) accounted for 50 households and households in the moderate-income range (51%–80% AMHI) accounted for 55 households. No households in very low, median, or higher-income categories were identified to be in core housing need.

This distribution highlights that core housing need was primarily an issue for low- and moderate-income households in Wainwright. It was also most pronounced among single- and two-person households, though a notable number of four-person households were also impacted. These findings point to a need for both smaller, deeply affordable units to meet the needs of individuals and couples, and modestly priced family housing options to support households in the moderate-income range.

¹⁷ The HART project is a research group out the University of British Columbia that works towards data on housing needs

Table 5.2: Core Housing Need by Income Category and Household Size in Wainwright (2021)

Income Category	One-person household	Two-person household	Three-person household	Four-person household	Five+ person household	Total
Very Low (up to 20% below AMHI)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low (21% – 50% AMHI)	20	25	0	0	0	50
Moderate (51 – 80% AMHI)	0	0	0	25	0	55
Median (81% - 120% AMHI)	0	0	0	0	0	0
High (>120% AMHI)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	45	30	0	35	0	110

Source: Statistics Canada Census (HART Custom Order)

5.1.2 Suppressed Household Formation

Suppressed household formation refers to households that were unable to form due to a constrained housing environment. Households make housing-related decisions based on the choices available to them; for example, young people may have difficulty moving out of their parents' homes to form households of their own, while others may choose to merge households with roommates due to lack of available and affordable housing supply.

To estimate suppressed household formation, we used 2006 Federal Census data, the earliest available data for a time when housing supply was less constrained, to determine headships rates by tenure and age group. 2026 headship rates were then applied to population data from the 2021 Federal Census to estimate how many additional households might have formed under more favourable housing conditions. Based on this estimation, there were approximately 242 suppressed households in 2021.

Suppression was most evident in older adults. The 75 and older age group accounted for the largest share, with 80 suppressed households, reflecting barriers related to downsizing, affordability, and the limited availability of accessible and age-friendly housing. The 45 to 54 age group also showed a notable level of suppression (66 households), while the 65 to 74 age group contributed 35 suppressed households. Suppression is present but less pronounced among younger adults, with 42 suppressed households in the 25 to 34 age group and 19 among those aged 15 to 24, pointing to affordability pressures and limited rental or ownership options for young adults trying to form independent households. By contrast, the 35 to 44 and 55 to 64 age groups show no suppression, indicating that household formation in these brackets has kept pace with or exceeded expectations.

Table 5.3: Population, Households, and Headship Rates Used to Calculate Household Suppression (2006 and 2021)

Age Group	2006 Population	2006 Households	2006 Headship Rate	2021 Population	2021 Households	2021 Headship Rate
15-24	785	150	19.1%	780	130	16.7%
25-34	680	365	53.7%	945	465	49.2%
35-44	845	455	53.8%	915	585	63.9%
45-54	750	480	64.0%	775	430	55.5%
55-64	485	225	46.4%	850	520	61.2%
65-74	360	240	66.7%	495	295	59.6%
75 and older	455	235	51.6%	600	230	38.3%

Source: HART based on Statistics Canada Census data

Table 5.4: Estimated Household Suppression in Wainwright by Age Group (2021)

Age Group	2006 Headship Rate x 2021 Population	2021 Households	2021 Suppressed Households (only if Potential Households > Actual Households)
15-24	149	130	19
25-34	507	465	42
35-44	493	585	0
45-54	496	430	66
55-64	394	520	0
65-74	330	295	35
75 and older	310	230	80
Total Suppressed Households			242

Source: HART based on Statistics Canada Census data

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

5.2 Future Need to Meet Anticipated Changes

5.2.1 Projected Demand by Tenure

Household projections by tenure indicate steady growth in both ownership and rental demand in Wainwright over the next 15 years. In 2026, ownership households are projected to make up about 70% of all households (1,833 of 2,614), while rental households account for 30% (781). By 2031, ownership remains dominant at 69.8% (1,922 of 2,753), with rentals representing 30.2% (831). This balance is projected to hold through 2036, with ownership at 69.6% (1,990 of 2,860) and rentals at 30.4% (870). Between 2026 and 2031, ownership households are expected to increase by 89 while rental households grow by 50, followed by an additional 68 ownership and 39 rental households from 2031 to 2036. Overall, while ownership will continue to represent the majority of households, the consistent 30% share of rental demand underscores the importance of ensuring sufficient rental housing options to meet ongoing community needs.

Table 5.5: Dwelling Unit Projections by Tenure (2026-2036)

Year/Range	Ownership	Rental	Total
2026	1,833	781	2,614
2026-2031 (+/- from 2026)	+89	+50	+139
2031	1,922	831	2,753
2031-2036 (+/- from 2031)	+68	+39	+107
2036	1,990	870	2,860

Source: Consultant projections based on Government of Alberta Population Projections, Statistics Canada Census and 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study

Note: Numbers do not sum to totals due to suppression of Statistics Canada data used to develop the projections

5.2.2 Projected Demand by Number of Bedrooms

Projections based on minimum bedroom requirements for household composition indicate that most of Wainwright's future housing requirements will be for smaller units. Between 2026 and 2036, one-bedroom units accounted for the largest share of projected need, growing by 114 households to reach 1,789 by 2036. Projected need for two-bedroom units also increased steadily, rising from 726 units in 2026 to 814 in 2036, while three-bedroom needs expanded more modestly, from 213 to 257 over the same period. No additional need was projected for four- or five-bedroom units, reflecting the community's shifting household structure and the growing importance of smaller, more affordable units for seniors, young adults, and smaller households. While these figures represent minimum bedroom requirements and some households may choose larger homes, the trend clearly underscores the need to prioritize smaller unit types in future housing development.

Table 5.6: Dwelling Unit Projections by Number of Bedrooms (2026-2036)

Year/Range	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom	Five+-Bedroom	Total
2026	1,675	726	213	0	0	2,614
2026-2031 (+/- from 2026)	+65	+50	+25	0	0	+139
2031	1,740	775	237	0	0	2,753
2031-2036 (+/- from 2031)	+49	+39	+20	0	0	+107
2036	1,789	814	257	0	0	2,860

Source: Consultant Projections based on Government of Alberta Population Projections and Statistics Canada Census data
Note: Numbers do not sum to totals due to suppression of Statistics Canada data used to develop the projections

5.2.3 Projected Demand by Income Category

Projected dwelling unit demand in Wainwright between 2026 and 2036 shows that most new households will fall within the low- and high-income categories. From 2026 to 2031, low-income households are expected to increase by 66 units, followed by an additional 53 units between 2031 and 2036, bringing the total to 664 households by 2036. High-income households are also expected to see steady growth, increasing by 69 units in the first period and 53 in the second, reaching 1,179 households by 2036. In contrast, moderate-income households remain stable at around 433 units, while median-income households increase marginally from 578 in 2026 to 584 by 2036. No growth is projected in the very low-income category. These projections highlight a polarization in income distribution, with demand concentrated at the lower and higher ends of the income spectrum, underscoring the need for both deeply affordable housing options and market-level supply.

Table 5.7: Dwelling Unit Projections by Income Category (2026-2036)

Year/Range	Very Low (up to 20% below AMHI)	Low (21% – 50% AMHI)	Moderate (51 – 80% AMHI)	Median (81% - 120% AMHI)	High (>120% AMHI)	Total
2026	0	545	433	578	1,057	2,614
2026-2031 (+/- from 2026)	0	66	1	4	69	139
2031	0	611	433	583	1,126	2,753
2031-2036 (+/- from 2031)	0	53	-1	2	53	107
2036	0	664	433	584	1,179	2,860

Source: Consultant Projections based on Statistics Canada Census (HART Custom Order)

5.3 Anticipated Housing Demand for Key Areas of Need

5.3.1 Housing Demand for Seniors and Family Households

Between 2026 and 2036, housing demand in Wainwright is projected to grow for both seniors and family households, though at different rates. Demand for seniors' households is expected to increase from 614 units in 2026 to 748 by 2036, representing growth of 134 units over the 10-year period, with the most significant increase occurring between 2026 and 2031. Demand for family households (with children) are also expected to show steady growth, rising from 2,029 households in 2026 to 2,308 in 2036, an increase of 279 units. While the absolute demand is higher for family households, the proportionate growth in seniors' households is projected to be more pronounced, highlighting the dual need to plan for both family-oriented housing supply and age-friendly options that can support an aging population.

Table 5.8: Projected Dwelling Unit Demand for Seniors and Families (2026-2036)

Year/Range	Seniors	Families
2026	614	2,029
2026-2031 (+/- from 2026)	97	156
2031	710	2,185
2031-2036 (+/- from 2031)	38	123
2036	748	2,308

Source: Consultant Projections based on Government of Alberta Population Projections, Statistics Canada Census and 2022 Wainwright Regional Growth Study
Families refers to families with children without additional persons

5.3.2 Housing Demand for Indigenous Households

Based on the Indigenous population in 2021 and Statistics Canada's population projections for Indigenous peoples off reserve in Alberta, it is estimated that there will be approximately 247 Indigenous households in Wainwright by 2026. This number is anticipated to grow by 32 households between 2026 and 2031 and another 30 households between 2031 and 2036, to reach a total of 309 households by 2036.

5.3.3 Housing Demand for Adults with Disabilities

Housing needs for people with disabilities varies widely depending on the severity and type of disability, as well as individual preferences. For the purpose of this report, housing needs for people with disabilities have been grouped into four categories:

- Accessible housing for people with mobility disabilities;
- Housing with supports for people with serious mental illness or addiction;
- Housing with supports for people with intellectual disabilities; and
- Housing with supports for seniors.

It should be noted that housing needs of the identified groups are not mutually exclusive; some people with mobility issues may also have an intellectual disability and require both accessible housing and housing with supports.

There are few, if any, studies that have analyzed the determinants of demand for accessible housing. The analysis in this report follows the lead of some studies that produce projections based on the number of households where a member of the household has a disability, particularly a long-term mobility disability.

Some studies have identified a strong association between requiring support with everyday activities and the need for home accessibility features among people with mobility disabilities. As such, the following projections are based on the number of households where a member of the household has a mobility disability and requires support with everyday activities.

The following indicators have been developed based on estimated gaps and prevalence rates for each of these three categories of need, primarily at the national level:

- The Canadian Disability Survey reported that 6.2% of people 15 and over have mobility disabilities and require support with everyday activities¹⁸.
- The Wellesley Institute estimates the prevalence of need for housing with support for persons with severe mental illness or addiction to be between 0.4% and 1.0% of people 15 and over¹⁹.
- The Canadian Association for Community Living estimates that between 100,000 and 120,000 adults with intellectual disabilities across Canada face a housing and supports gap²⁰.
- Data from Statistics Canada's 2007 General Social Survey showed that about 7% of seniors live in supportive housing²¹.

Based on the estimated gaps and prevalence rates noted above, current estimates of need and future projections are presented in **Table 5.9**.

Table 5.9: Projected Dwelling Unit Demand for Adults with Disabilities (2026-2036)

Disability Group Category	2026	2026-2031 (+/- from 2026)	2031	2031-2036 (+/- from 2031)	2036
Accessible housing for people with mobility disabilities	329	21	351	17	368
Housing with supports for people with serious mental illness or addiction	21-53	1-3	23-57	1-3	24-59
Housing with supports for people with intellectual disabilities	16-19	1	17-20	1	17-21
Housing with supports for seniors	86	14	100	9	109

¹⁸ Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012, accessed at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2016005-eng.htm>

¹⁹ Sutter, Greg. Supportive Housing in Ontario: Estimating the Need accessed at: <https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Supportive-Housing-Estimating-the-Need.pdf>

²⁰ Canadian Association of Community Living as reported in Meeting Canada's Obligations to Affordable Housing and Supports for People with Disabilities to Live Independently in the community: Under Articles 19 and 28, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities And under Articles 2 and 11, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights accessed at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Housing/Disabilities/CivilSociety/Canada-ARCHDisabilityLawCenter.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors-forum-federal-provincial-territorial/report-seniors-housing-needs.html>

5.4 Source: Consultant Projections Future Housing Need Highlights

The following is a summary of future housing needs:

Population Trends

Wainwright's population grew more strongly than expected between 2016 and 2021, reaching 6,606 residents. Future projections show uncertainty, with population ranging from about 6,300 in a low-growth scenario to over 8,000 by 2051. The community is aging, with the share of residents aged 75 and older projected to grow significantly, while the proportion of children is projected to decline.

Current Unmet Housing Needs

In 2021, an estimated 110 households were in core housing need, concentrated among one- and two-person households. The majority were in low- and moderate-income categories, underscoring the demand for deeply affordable small units and modestly priced family housing. An additional 242 households were suppressed, most notably among older adults and, to a lesser extent, younger adults, reflecting affordability pressures and limited housing choice.

Projected Demand for Dwellings

Household projections indicated steady growth from 2,614 in 2021 to 2,860 in 2036, a 9% increase. Growth is moderate but consistent, reinforcing the need to expand housing options in line with demographic changes, particularly for seniors and young adults.

Unit Sizes

Household projections indicated an increase in demand for primarily smaller units. Between 2026 and 2036, demand for one-bedroom units is projected to rise by 114 units and two-bedroom units are projected to increase by 89 units, while the projected need for three-bedroom units is expected to increase more modestly (45 units). No needs are projected for four- or five-bedroom units, however, it is important to note that some households may prefer to live in homes that have more bedrooms than they need to accommodate their household composition.

Tenure Trends

Household projections indicated that ownership will continue to account for the majority of household tenures (around 70% of households), while rentals are projected to account for a stable 30% through to 2036. Growth is expected to occur in the overall number of ownership versus renter households, with an additional 89 ownership and 50 rental households projected by 2031, followed by 68 ownership and 39 rental households by 2036.

Affordability by Income

Households projections indicated that future demand is focused at the low- and high-income ends of the spectrum. Low-income households are projected to grow from 545 in 2026 to 664 by 2036, while high-income households rise from 1,057 to 1,179. Moderate-income households remain stable, and no growth is projected in the very low-income category.

Seniors and Families

Household projections indicated that demand for seniors' households are projected to increase by 135 units between 2026-2036, and households for families with children are expected to increase by 279 units. While families will continue to make up the larger share of projected demand, the faster growth rate among seniors highlights the need for age-friendly and supportive housing alongside family-oriented options.

Housing for Adults with Disabilities

Household projections indicated that an estimated 368 households will require accessible housing for people with mobility disabilities by 2036, an increase of 38 households over the 10-year period, while demand for housing with supports will also increase: 2-6 households for those with serious mental illness or addiction, 0-1 for those with intellectual disabilities, and 23 for seniors. These needs highlight the importance of incorporating both accessibility features and supportive housing options into the housing system.

6.0 Next Steps

Developing a Housing Needs Assessment is the first step in a multi-phased approach to understanding and addressing local housing challenges. With a comprehensive understanding of existing barriers, gaps, and opportunities, the Wainwright REACH Foundation is now well-positioned to develop a Housing Strategy that will define clear goals, actionable steps, and implementation measures — providing a roadmap for consistent, collaborative, and targeted housing efforts.

A future Housing Strategy should provide strategies and actions to address several key needs, including but not limited to:

- [Improving affordability of existing units.](#)
- [Encouraging and supporting development of new affordable units.](#)
- [Diversifying the housing stock.](#)
 - 66% of the housing stock was comprised of single detached dwellings (2021), and 81% of real estate sales in 2024 were for single or semi-detached dwellings.
 - Community feedback indicated that the existing housing stock is not providing suitable, affordable, or accessible opportunities for all community members.
- [Increasing the supply and quality of rental units.](#)
 - 44% of rental units are estimated to be purpose-built rentals.
 - Available rentals are not affordable for those who need them,
 - In some cases, the quality of available units does not align with rental prices.
- [Clarifying the roles, responsibilities, expertise, and capacity of community organizations.](#)
 - Support identified housing needs and improve coordination and collaboration.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

The following is a list of commonly used terms that are often referenced in housing policy.

Accessible: In reference to a type of housing unit, accessible refers to units that are designed to promote accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This sometimes includes physical elements such as low height cupboards or light switches, wide doorways, and adapted bathrooms.

Adequate Housing: Dwellings not requiring any major repairs, as reported by residents. (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC))

Affordable Housing: Communities often set their own definition of affordable housing to best reflect the local context. Affordable housing means that residents are spending less than 30% of their before-tax income on housing and housing related costs such as mortgage, rent, utilities, etc. (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC))

Apartment or Flat in a Duplex: One of two dwellings, located one above the other, that may or may not be attached to other dwellings or buildings. (Statistics Canada)

Assisted Living (Supportive Living): A type of housing for seniors and people with disabilities that includes on-site hospitality and personal care support services. (Alberta Health Services)

At Risk of Homelessness: Refers to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness)

Cohousing: Private self-contained residences that are also centred around shared common spaces such as kitchens and dining areas.

Cooperative Housing: A co-op is a type of housing that residents own and operate as part of a membership. (BC Housing)

Coordinated Access: A coordinated access system is the process by which individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness are directed to community-level access points where trained workers use a common assessment tool to evaluate the individual or family's depth of need, prioritize them for housing support services and then help to match them to available housing focused interventions.

Chronic Homelessness: Refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness and who have been homeless for six months over the past year.

Core Housing Need: A household is in core housing need if its housing does not meet one or more of the adequacy, suitability, or affordability standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its before-tax income to access local housing that meets all three standards.

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

Cultural Competency: The ability of systems to provide care to people with diverse values, beliefs and behaviours, including tailoring delivery to meet a person's social, cultural and linguistic needs. (HomelessHub)

Emergency Housing: Immediate, short-stay housing for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Episodic Homelessness: Refers to individuals who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (episodes are defined as periods when a person would be in a shelter or

place not fit for human habitations, and after at least 30 days, would be back in the shelter or inhabitable location. (Built For Zero Canada)

Homelessness: Describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness)

Housing First: Is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centres on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing and then providing additional supports and services as needed. There are five core principles of Housing First:

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Recovery orientation
4. Individuals and client-driven supports, and
5. Social and community integration

Housing Secure: Refers to security of tenure; not having to worry about being evicted for having your home or lands taken away. (National Women's Association of Canada)

LGBTQ2S+: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirited, and additional identities.

Market Housing: Market housing is housing which the private industry provides without requiring any subsidies or incentives.

Mixed Income Housing: Any type of housing development (rent or owned) that includes a range of income levels among its residents, including low, moderate and/or higher incomes. (National Housing Strategy)

Mobile Home: A single dwelling, designed and constructed to be transported on its own chassis and is capable of being moved to a new location on short notice. It may be placed temporarily on a foundation pad and may be covered by a skirt. (Statistics Canada)

Non-Market Housing: Non-market housing is housing that typically requires additional subsidies or supports from other organizations and government bodies.

On-Site Supports: Services offered to households in order to maintain their optimal level of health and well-being. These services may take a variety of forms and may vary in intensity based on people's needs. A few examples include case management, counselling, supervision/monitoring, assistance with medication, psychosocial rehabilitation, childcare, meal services, personal care, housekeeping, and other forms of support that help people to live independently and remain stably housed. (National Housing Strategy)

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

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

Primary Rental Housing Units: Rental housing units that were built for the primary purpose of being rented.

Row House: One of three or more dwellings joined side by side (or occasionally back to back), but not having any other dwellings either above or below. (Statistics Canada)

Rent-Geared-to-Income: A type of subsidized housing where the housing provider matches your rent to how much you earn. (BC Housing)

Secondary Rental Housing Units: Housing units that were not purpose built for the rental market but have been added to the rental market by the owner, such as rental condominiums.

Semi-Detached House: One of two dwellings attached side by side (or back to back) to each other, but are not attached to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). (Statistics Canada)

Single Detached House: A single dwelling not attached to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). (Statistics Canada)

Social Housing: Social housing is subsidized housing that generally was developed under federal and provincial programs during the 1950s – 1990s, where ongoing subsidies enable rents to be paid by residents on a 'rent-geared-to-income' (RGI) basis (i.e., 30% of gross household income). Social housing is also called subsidized, RGI, community, or public housing.

Subsidized Housing: A type of housing which government provides financial support or rent assistance.

Suitable Housing: Housing with enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of residential households. (CMHC)

Supportive Living: A type of housing that provides on-site supports and services to residents to help them remain as independent as possible, but with access to services to meet their changing needs (e.g., mental health supports, life skills training). (Alberta Health Services)

Tenure: Refers to whether a household owns or rents their home.

Transitional Housing: Housing that is intended to offer a supportive living environment for its residents, including offering them the experience, tools, knowledge, and opportunities for social and skill development to become more independent. It is considered an intermediate step between emergency shelter and supportive housing and has limits on how long an individual or family can stay. Stays are typically between three months and three years. (National Housing Strategy)