



District of Wells

Interim Housing Needs Report

2024



1. INTRODUCTION

Provincial Guidelines

This interim report outlines a targeted update of the Housing Needs Report (HNR) for the District of Wells. This interim report integrates data from the Statistics Canada Census 2021, BC Stats, and BC Assessment. This update will ensure that the District meets its Provincial Housing Needs Report requirements and has a critical tool to help address the current housing needs in the community.

In 2023, the Province of BC announced changes to the Local Government Act requiring municipalities to prepare Interim Housing Needs Reports by January 1, 2025, which must include:

- The number of housing units required to meet current and anticipated need for the next five and 20 years, as calculated using the HNR Method provided in the Regulation;
- A statement about the need for housing near transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit, or other alternative forms of transportation; and
- A description of the actions taken by the local government since receiving the most recent HNR to reduce housing needs.

By the end of 2025, the District of Wells is also required to review and update its Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw (*currently underway*) to ensure there is enough capacity to accommodate the housing need identified in this Interim HNR.

Interim Housing Needs Update

This interim housing needs report is divided into five sections:

- 1 Housing Actions to Date** – This section outlines the actions taken by the local government since receiving the most recent HNR to reduce housing needs.
- 2 Housing Needs: 2021-2041** – This section outlines the number of housing units required to meet current and anticipated needs for the next five and 20 years, as calculated using the HNR Method.
- 3 Key Areas of Local Need** – This section outlines the District's updated statements of need, including a new statement of need related to housing near transit and active transportation infrastructure. Additional data supporting the key housing statements can be found in **Appendix A**.
- 4 Additional Housing Challenges** – This section outlines external factors that may influence the housing need and demand that may not be fully captured by this Interim update.
- 5 Recommendations & Next Steps** – This section outlines how the District intends to continue its efforts to address the housing needs identified in this Interim Housing Report.



Data Availability & Accuracy

Due to Statistics Canada's privacy-related data suppression practices for areas with small populations, some data required under current legislative guidelines was unavailable in the 2021 Census. Key information on homelessness, rental housing, income and affordability, and core housing need was significantly limited for the District of Wells. Consequently, trends in these categories could not be analyzed and are not included in this Housing Needs Interim Update.

Additional concerns about data accuracy arise due to the District's small population size. This includes challenges associated with the Provincially developed BC Housing Needs Report (HNR) Calculator, created by Housing Assessment Resource Tools to automate the majority of provincial requirements for the Interim Housing Needs Update. As this tool was designed with larger communities in mind, it relies on 2021 Census and regional data, which is often suppressed in smaller communities, leading to challenges in data accuracy.

2. DISTRICT ACTIONS TO DATE

This section outlines housing actions taken to date by the District of Wells to address and reduce housing needs in the community.

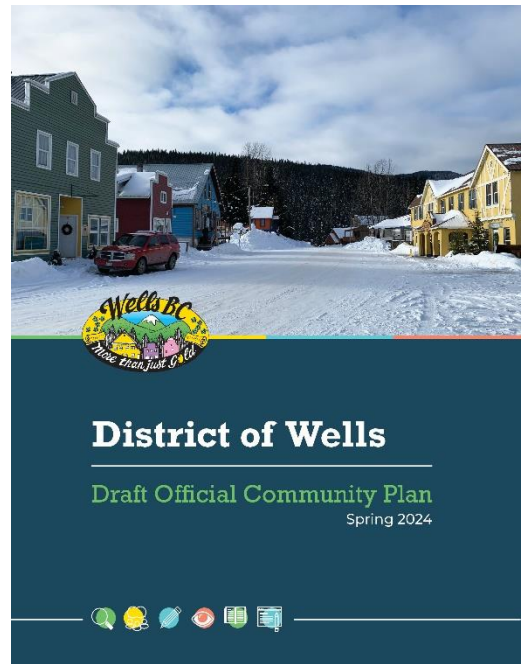
1 Official Community Plan

The District of Wells recently adopted its updated Official Community Plan (OCP) in October 2024.

One of the guiding principles of the OCP is to diversify and add affordable housing options for residents and seasonal workers, developing a range of permanent and temporary housing types and tenures to support the economic and population growth of the community.

The OCP sets out policies targeting this guiding principle to support housing initiatives and action. With a strong focus on diversifying and expanding affordable housing options, the OCP supports the development of secondary suites, favours the increased residential density within the Wells Townsite area, and encourages the development of non-market, affordable and/or rental housing in all residential and mixed-use areas. Moreover, the plan emphasizes the importance of renovating and restoring existing housing stock, as well as developing vacant residential infill lots.

The OCP recognizes the necessity of partnering with BC Housing to explore potential projects on Crown lands, and to collaborate with industry, heritage and tourism organizations, and other government agencies to lead the development of housing that provides an alternative option to work camps, which not only generate long-term community benefits but also enhance community cohesion. On the other hand, if vacation rentals limit housing availability for residents and workers, the District can consider establishing a zone limiting vacation rentals to specific locations.



The District acknowledges that increasing the diversity in the housing stock will be needed to accommodate future economic activity, tourism, and permanent population growth. These policies aim to cater to the needs of both year-round residents and seasonal workers.

A comprehensive list of all housing policies outlined in the OCP is found in **Appendix B**.

2

Zoning Bylaw Update

The District of Wells has updated the Zoning Bylaw to ensure it complies with the new provincial legislation on residential development and addresses the ongoing housing crisis across British Columbia. This includes permitting secondary suites on single family zones. These adjustments aim to streamline the development process and encourage more construction, ultimately fostering growth and improving housing options within the community. The District of Wells is planning to undertake the full update of the Zoning Bylaw in 2025.

3

Shared Building Inspection Services

The District of Wells provides inspection services through a contract with the Cariboo Regional District (CRD). Building inspection services are available within the District via the regional inspection office in Quesnel, which operates three days a week with two staff members. These services ensure that all inspection needs within the District are met, supporting safe and compliant housing development in the community.

3. HOUSING NEEDS: 2021-2041

In June 2024, the Province released a standardized methodology (HNR Method) that outlines how local governments must calculate their total housing need (outlined in Table 1 below). Using this methodology, the Province estimates the District of Wells will need **36 additional housing units by 2041**.

The HNR Method estimates the District's housing needs by combining six components:

Component A

Refers to the number of housing units needed to address extreme core housing need, defined as households spending 50% or more of their total pre-tax income on housing.¹

Component B

Represents the supply of permanent housing units needed to accommodate individuals currently experiencing homelessness.

Component C

Addresses those households that were unable to form between 2006 and the present due to a constrained housing environment.

Component D

Reflects the additional households needed to accommodate for the projected population growth from 2021 to 2041.

Component E

Refers to surplus rental units needed to restore local vacancy rates to levels representing a healthy and well-functioning rental housing market (3% to 5%).

Component F

Represents the additional housing demand within the District that exceeds the minimum units needed to adequately house current and projected residents. It includes the number of units required to maintain a "healthy" market demand specific to each community.

¹ This figure includes all rental households in extreme core housing need, and all owners with a mortgage in extreme core housing need.

Table 1. Total 5-Year and 20-Year Housing Need, District of Wells, 2021-2041

	5-Year Need	20-Year Need
	2021-2026	2021-2041
Component A: Supply of Units to Reduce Extreme Core Housing Need	0	0
Component B: Supply of Units to Reduce Homelessness	1	2
Component C: Supply of Units to Reduce Suppressed Household Formation	5	19
Component D: Supply of Units to Meet Household Growth Over the Next 5 and 20 Years	9	7
Component E: Supply of Units Needed to Meet at Least a 3% Vacancy Rate	0	0
Component F: Supply of Units Needed to Meet Local Demand (Demand Buffer)	2	8
Total Units Needed	17	36

Source: *Housing Assessment Resource Tools, 2024*

4. KEY AREAS OF LOCAL NEED

This section highlights the key areas of local housing need in the District of Wells based on 2021 Census data. As part of this Interim Housing Report, the Province requires the District to add a new statement about the need for housing near transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit, or other alternative forms of transportation. This new statement is outlined below.

Additional data supporting the key housing statements can be found in **Appendix A**.

Housing Needs Summary Statements

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- **In 2021, 25% of total private households fell below affordability standards** (spending 30% or more in shelter. A total of 20 households below affordability standards were owners, comprising 27% of the owner-occupied households. This is an increase from 2011, where 13% of total private households and 20% of owner households were under the affordability standard. This increase is likely related to a rise of owner households with mortgages, where 60% of owner-occupied units were under a mortgage in 2021 compared to 40% in 2011.

- According to recent 2021 Census data, **45 households (39%) are living in housing that does not meet adequacy standards**, with 20 owner-occupied units requiring major repairs. This highlights the pressing need for housing that is in better condition to ensure the safety of residents.
- Between 2006 and 2023, the average assessed value for a residential property increased by \$124,242 (+308%) in the District of Wells, with the current average assessed value for a property at \$164,629 (2023). Conducting an affordability analysis, a census household in Wells spends approximately 30% of its monthly income on single-detached dwellings and 27% of its income for single-detached dwellings on two acres or more. However, for single-detached homes with secondary suites, households spend a higher amount, with approximately 38% of their monthly income spent on shelter costs. Manufactured homes and store(s) and living quarters are considered to be relatively more affordable, with 19% and 11% of income spent on shelter costs, respectively.

RENTAL HOUSING

- **In 2021, 83% of rental households in Wells were constructed before 1960.** This aging housing stock raises concerns about the condition and long-term sustainability of rental units in the community. The OCP survey included questions about housing issues from which many respondents expressed support for renovating and restoring old homes.
- Rental households have continuously declined since 2011, dropping from 70 to 30 households (-57%) in 2021.
- While reliable and comprehensive data on rental housing is lacking in Wells and similar small to mid-sized Canadian communities, the District of Wells is anticipating the potential for a sudden increase in temporary workers when the recently permitted Cariboo Gold mining project in the surroundings of the District begins construction. In addition, recent expansions to tourism draws like the local skill hill could increase the number of seasonal workers in the region looking for housing. These events are likely to occur in the near future, making it difficult to accurately assess rental housing needs, vacancy, and plan for future development, which can further limit long-term rental housing options for the community.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Engagement for the OCP conducted during 2020-2021 indicated that the community is concerned about the lack of housing for seniors and people with disabilities, expressing the need for additional housing with support services to accommodate the needs of different population groups.
- The Province of B.C. has taken several steps to improve accessibility, including updating the 2024 BC Building Code adding new accessibility requirements that help make new buildings more accessible for all people.

HOUSING FOR SENIORS

- Although approximately 18% of the population is aged 65 or older, **there are no publicly subsidized assisted living apartments in Wells.** Given that 25% of households have a primary household maintainer aged 65 and over, there is a critical need for more affordable and accessible housing options for seniors.
- In 2021, 70% of the housing stock in the region consisted of single-detached dwellings. For seniors looking to downsize while staying within the community, the lack of suitable alternatives presents a significant challenge.

- Seniors, more often than other demographic groups, require housing that meets specific standards. For many seniors, living on a fixed-income limits housing option. Additionally, some seniors may need specific accessibility features, such as ramps and other accommodations. Housing with special considerations will be required to adequately accommodate the projected growth of seniors.

HOUSING FOR FAMILIES

- Approximately 21% of households in Wells are families with children. However, the majority of occupied dwellings have two or more bedrooms (70%) and 77% are occupied by one or two people, indicating a potential mismatch between the housing needs of the community and the available housing supply.
- **There has been no new construction in the last 13 years**, and the difficult construction context in Wells makes it increasingly challenging to develop new housing projects. However, temporary buildings (i.e., mobile homes) were added during this time period, which were not accounted for in the data of new housing. This underscores the need for both repair and redevelopment of existing stock, as well as for new housing solutions that are better suited to current community demands.

HOUSING FOR SINGLES

- **Approximately 50% of households in Wells are one-person households.** Despite a high number of one- and two-person households, the majority of occupied dwellings have two or more bedrooms (70%), indicating a potential mismatch between the housing needs of the community and the available housing supply. This disparity presents an opportunity to better align housing types with household sizes, potentially addressing underutilized space and optimizing available units to meet current needs.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING OR AT-RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- Data on homelessness in Wells is limited; however, it is estimated that **two housing units will be needed over the next 20 years to support those experiencing homelessness.**
- There are no emergency shelter beds available in Wells, highlighting a critical gap in services for those in need of immediate housing support.

HOUSING NEAR TRANSIT AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

- Transportation is an essential element of our everyday lives and directly impacts how safe, affordable, and equitable our communities are. The mobility choices our built environments enable affect the physical, mental, and financial health of individuals and the broader community.



- The District of Wells, through its Land Use objectives, supports land development and public investments in transportation infrastructure that allows the District to continue to be walkable, accessible, and safe for pedestrians of all abilities in a growing community. As part of the OCP, **Wells plans to develop an active transportation plan to support future pedestrian-oriented and active transportation infrastructure investments, incorporating the existing trail network.** Within this initiative, the District is setting policies to invest in pedestrian-oriented and active transportation infrastructure, and to maintain and develop the Commercial Areas as “pedestrian-oriented” environments that prioritize pedestrians and other forms of active transportation.
- Public transit is available to District’s residents on a once-weekly return bus that runs between Wells and Quesnel on Thursdays. The cost of the bus is \$5 per one-way trip for adults and seniors and children under the age of 12 are free. There are four informally designated bus stops located around key residential areas in North and South Wells. The District of Wells will continue to ensure public transit and bus stops are accessible and located near established and future residential housing.

5. ADDITIONAL HOUSING CHALLENGES

In addition to housing needs and gaps, other related factors must be considered to understand the current housing need. Here are some additional housing challenges and factors that influence the housing demand in the District of Wells:

Limited Data Available

The limited data presents a significant challenge in accurately assessing housing demand and needs. Although projections indicate a minimal fluctuation in population until 2046 with an anticipated population change of -1%, this does not necessarily reflect a lack of interest in living in the area. Many people may desire to move to or remain in the District of Wells but face barriers that are not captured in the data. Constrained data availability and accuracy limits a comprehensive understanding of the housing needs and potential interest in the area.

High Construction Costs

An aging housing stock and high construction costs contribute significantly to housing challenges. Building new housing is difficult due to the remote location of Wells, which complicates the logistics of transporting materials and finding skilled labour. Development is further constrained by natural boundaries, such as high slopes, wetlands, wildlife tree reserves and critical habitats for old-growth forests and caribou populations, limiting available land. Current market conditions, marked by cost escalations, supply chain disruptions, and high interest rates, are also unfavourable for new development. Consequently, few skilled workers are drawn to the area for construction, and the recent lack of new housing reflects these persistent challenges.

Lack of Industries to Support Year-Round Employment

The District of Wells was originally founded to support the local mining community. Over time, with shifts in resource industries relocating or closing, year-round employment opportunities in the District of Wells are limited. Tourism and the arts, including entertainment and recreation, provide seasonal employment during the summer and winter, but local businesses rely on visitors coming to town, resulting in many residents facing income gaps in off-seasons. Additionally, visitor volumes have been on the decline since 2015, exacerbating employment and income challenges.

Vacant Lots and Homes

The District of Wells has several vacant lots and underutilized lands. These lots could provide sufficient land to accommodate future housing development needs, and the OCP includes policies aimed at encouraging infill development on vacant and underutilized properties.

In addition to vacant lots, feedback from the OCP survey highlighted residents' concerns about homes remaining vacant for large portions of the year. This limits the housing supply and drives up prices due to scarcity. Low turnover in the housing market further exacerbates affordability challenges, making it difficult for potential residents to secure housing. This dynamic also obscures the true housing demand that might emerge if more homes were available to year-round residents.

Live-Work Zoning

In remote areas like Wells, it is common and often more affordable for residents to live where they work, resulting in many individuals residing on commercially and industrially zoned properties without clear separation between residential and work uses. It is essential to consider how zoning bylaws impact housing and affordability and explore how flexible zoning could help alleviate housing pressures, recognizing that the types of work residents engage in are closely related to industrial and commercial sales and services, compared to knowledge-based activities usually found in urban areas. Current planning initiatives, such as the upcoming Zoning Bylaw amendments, will review zoning uses and examine how multiple-use zoning could help address local housing needs and demands.

Lack of Adequate Infrastructure to Support Housing Development

The District of Wells faces critical infrastructure challenges that limit its ability to support housing development. The existing single-phase power supply from BC Hydro is nearing maximum capacity, creating a significant barrier to accommodating new housing without an upgrade to three-phase power, which was estimated in a 2022 study to cost \$22 million. Similarly, the wastewater treatment facilities lack sufficient capacity for long-term growth, with a Class 3 cost estimate projecting an upgrade at \$26 million. These limitations present major challenges to meeting the District's 20-year housing growth target.



Potential Population Increases

The lack of housing availability in the District is closely linked to the steady population and economy. Since mining activities ceased, the population dropped and part of the economy shifted to tourism and arts, still being closely influenced by seasonal visitors. This resulted in an insufficient rental market to support future booms. Nonetheless, a proposed new mining development presents potential opportunities for population growth and revitalization. The mining project has the possibility to change the demographic makeup of the community and provide new employment opportunities.

The Cariboo Gold Project is anticipated to employ approximately 200 workers during construction and over 500 workers during operation. Projections indicate that the mine project will employ around 460 employees regionally, from which 10% to 20% could relocate to the District of Wells either alone or with families, representing about 45% of the total population. It is expected that many workers will relocate into work camps provided by the mining project. However, it can have spillover effects through indirect and induced employment. Accurate estimates are challenging, as many workers may reside in other nearby communities like Quesnel. This lack of definitive baseline numbers from key industry partners regarding the needed housing capacity poses a concern for future development.



6. RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

The Current and Assessed Housing Need calculation shows that a total of 36 units are required over the next 20 years to support current and future housing need in the District of Wells, as well as any additional local market demand. The primary tool through which municipalities undertake these efforts is their OCP. Previously, local governments were required to accommodate 5 years of growth through their OCPs; however, Bill 44, introduced by the provincial government in 2023, requires OCPs to now accommodate 20 years of growth, and for this growth to be calculated as in **Table 1**.

This means that during the District of Wells' next OCP update, the District must ensure that land in zoned to accommodate a minimum of **36 units** to be compliant with legislation. This must be completed by December 31, 2025.

Given the complex development context, the following seven recommendations are presented to address these challenges moving forward:



1

Conduct Community Engagement (including a “Rental Market Survey”) to Address Data Gaps

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of housing needs in the District of Wells, targeted community engagement should be conducted, with a focus on addressing current data gaps. This process could include conducting a rental market survey to collect information on rental availability, pricing, and demand. Additionally, engagement efforts should seek input on broader housing challenges, such as affordability, accessibility, and suitability for different demographic groups. Gathering this information will help to better inform future housing policies, strategies, and development decisions that align with the community's needs.

2

Plan for Housing Demand Related to the Cariboo Gold Mine Project Workforce

The District of Wells should proactively prepare for potential housing demand arising from the Cariboo Gold Mine Project workforce during both the construction and operation phases. Obtaining the necessary data will likely require actively engaging the mining employer in a process to determine both their temporary and permanent projected workforce needs over the lifespan of the project. This will provide certainty to developers looking to invest in the community and give an accurate projection of the housing need.

Additionally, the District could explore offering incentives to encourage housing development that aligns with future workforce demands. These incentives might include streamlined permitting processes, property tax breaks, or grants to stimulate construction and ensure that the housing market can accommodate the potential influx of workers.

3

Incentivize Development on Vacant and Underutilized Land

To address vacant lots and underdeveloped parcels, the District of Wells can implement policies that encourage landowners to develop or sell their properties. This could include introducing higher property taxes on vacant lots to motivate development or sale. There is also support in the OCP in infilling vacant lots, and priority should be given to infill development on vacant or underutilized parcels in commercial areas to reinforce its position as the heart of the community.

4

Revise Zoning Bylaws to Support Multi-Use Development

The District should update its Zoning Bylaws to allow for increased density in residential areas, particularly on underutilized or vacant lots. Permitting higher-density developments, such as multi-family housing and mixed-use projects, will help address housing needs while maximizing the efficiency of existing infrastructure. Additionally, future zoning bylaw updates should incorporate provisions for multi-use zoning to support live-work spaces, fostering a more flexible and diverse housing stock to meet the community's evolving needs.

5

Advocate for Critical Infrastructure Repairs

To address the critical infrastructure challenges related to power supply and wastewater treatment facilities, the District should prioritize advocacy and collaboration with BC Hydro to advance the power supply upgrade and pursue funding opportunities for both power and wastewater infrastructure improvements. Developing a phased infrastructure improvement plan aligned with housing goals will ensure the community can sustainably accommodate growth while addressing critical capacity constraints.

6

Foster Partnerships Between Stakeholders

To ensure the success of new housing initiatives, the District of Wells should actively engage with builders or developers, non-profit housing organizations, and other industry professionals when developing new policies and bylaws. Collaborative partnerships between the private sector, non-profit developers, and the District can help leverage resources, reduce development costs, and increase the feasibility of affordable housing projects. Creating a clear framework for such partnerships will streamline development processes and ensure a range of housing options are available to meet the diverse needs of the community.

7

Enhancing the Resilience of the Current Housing Stock

With the majority of the housing stock in Wells dating back to before 1960, there are significant concerns regarding the age of the buildings and potential fire hazards. As a historic community, many buildings are constructed from wood, increasing vulnerability to fires. Combined with the impacts of climate change and the surrounding forested environment, these factors contribute to a heightened risk of wildfires.

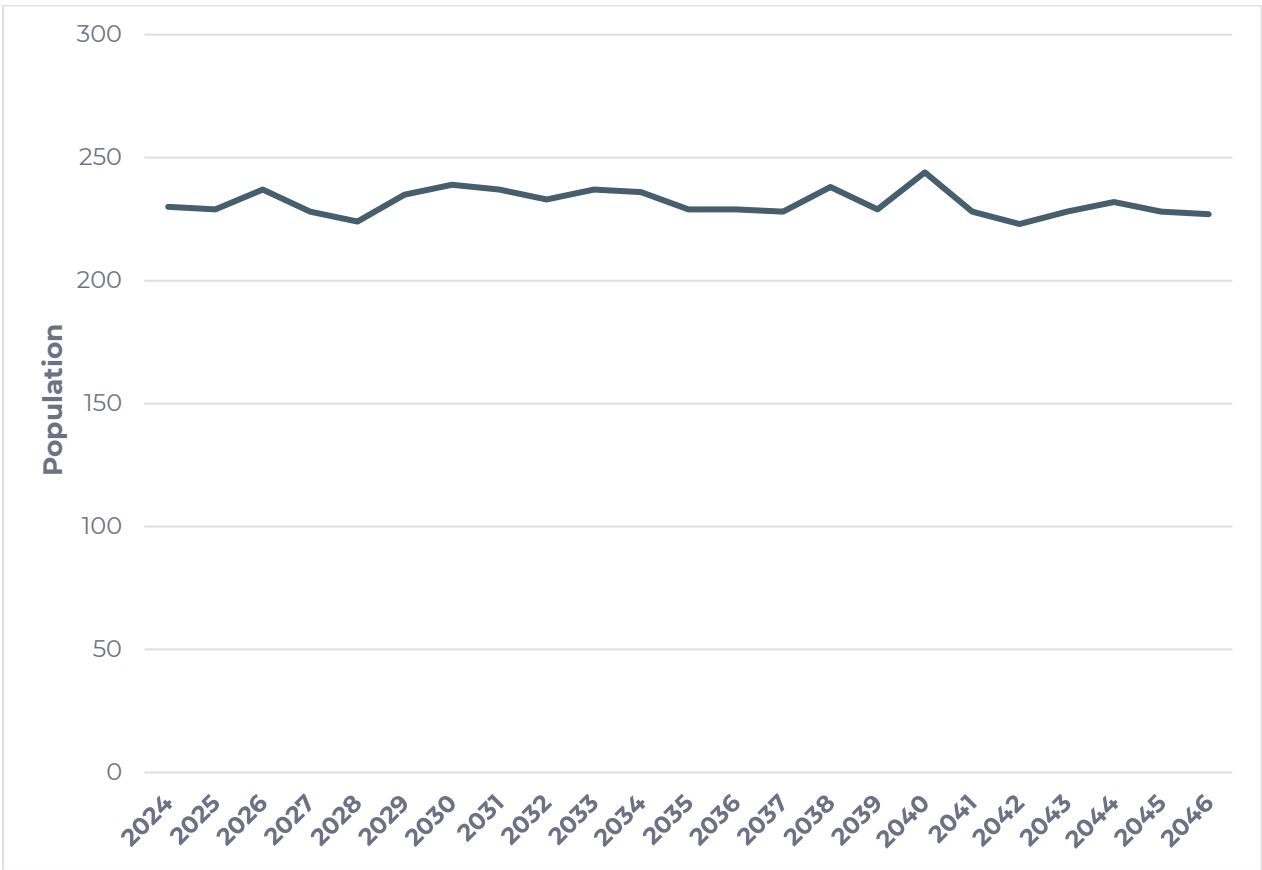
To mitigate these risks, the District of Wells should develop and implement initiatives to support the improvement of the existing housing stock, such as offering grants or incentives to retrofit homes, facilitating access to funding for retrofits, promoting FireSmart practices, and conducting housing assessments for structural vulnerabilities and recommend improvements. By prioritizing the resilience of its housing stock, the District can reduce wildfire risks, preserve its historic character, and ensure the safety and longevity of its homes.

APPENDIX A - GRAPHS TO SUPPORT HOUSING NEEDS STATEMENTS

Population Projection

The population of the District of Wells is expected to fluctuate minimally over the next 20 years, ranging between 223 to 244 residents. The projected average annual population change for the 2024 to 2046 period is expected to be -1%.

Graph 1. District of Wells Population Projection (2024 to 2046)

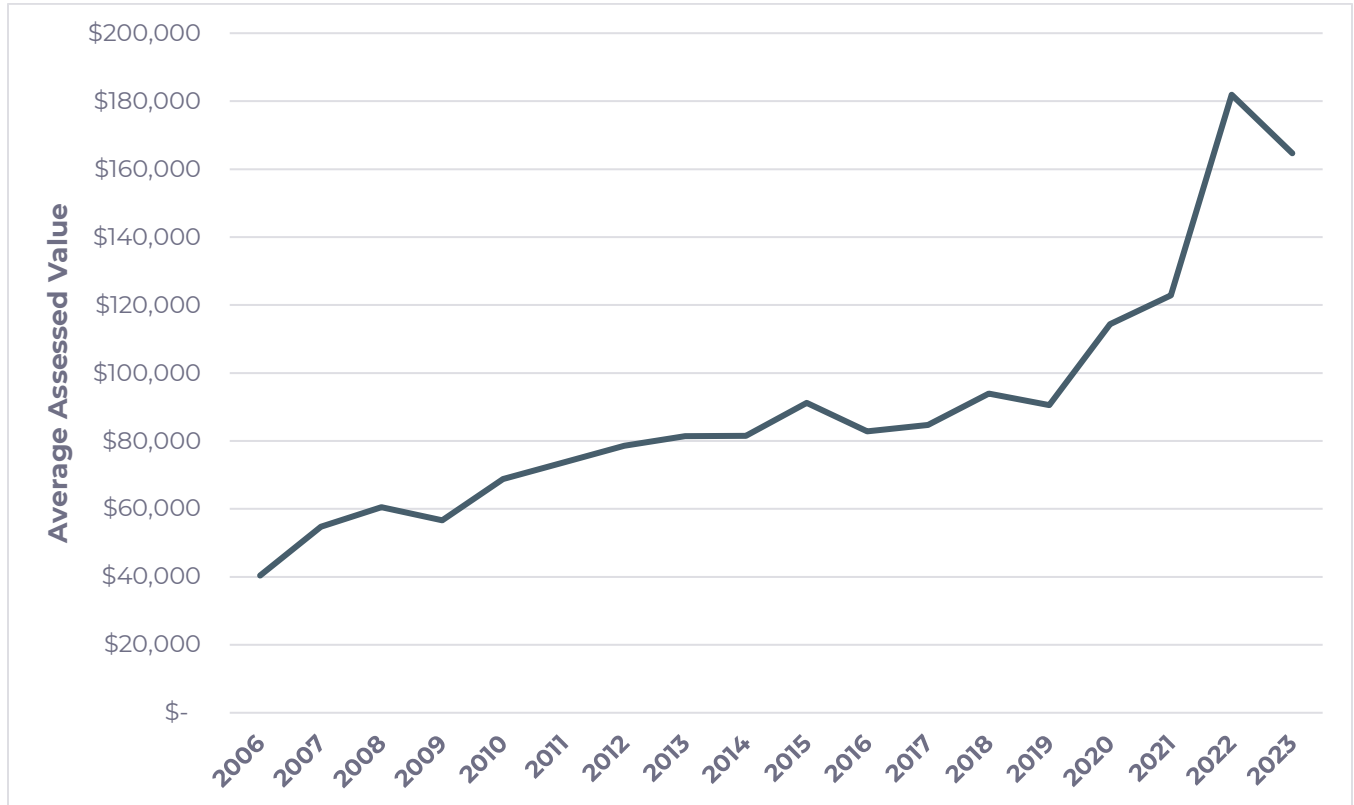


Source: Derived from BC Stats Population Projection and Statistics Canada, Census 2021

Cost of Ownership

Between 2006 and 2023, the average assessed value for a residential property increased by \$124,242 (+308%) in the District of Wells. The most recent spike in homeownership cost occurred in 2022, perhaps influenced by external factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, but has since started to come down in 2023, where the current average assessed value for a property is \$164,629.

Graph 2. Average Assessed Value (All Dwellings), 2006 to 2023



Source: BC Assessment, Assessment Roll, 2006-2023

The overall cost of homeownership in the District has increased for all housing typologies between 2006 and 2023, as seen in the table below. There were increases in all housing typologies, with a notable increase in single-detached dwellings.

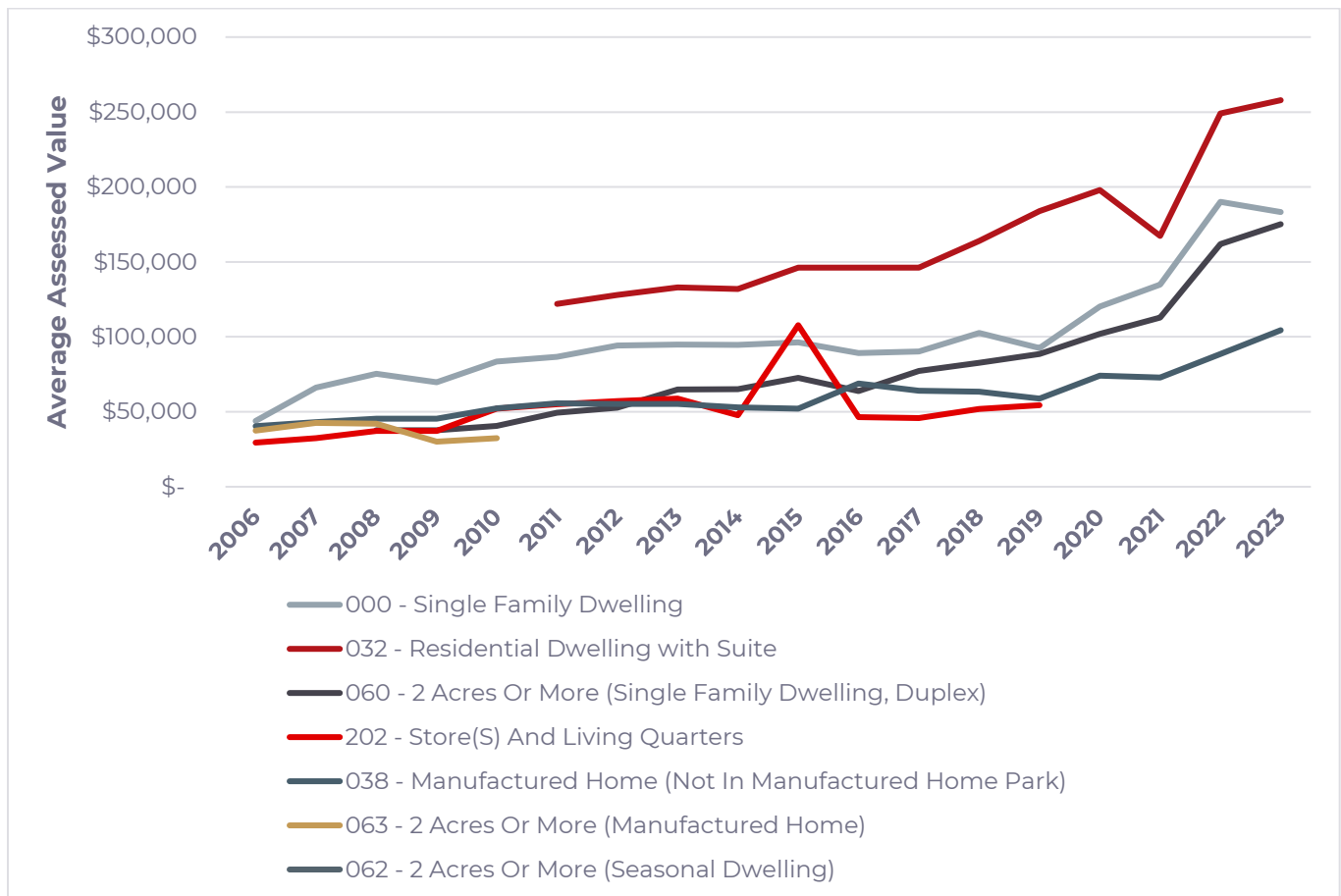
Table 2. District of Wells Increase in Average Assessed Property Values (2006-2023)

Housing Typology	Average Assessed Value (2006)	Average Assessed Value (2023)	% Change
Single-Detached Dwelling	\$43,914	\$183,247	317%
Single-Detached Dwelling with a Suite	\$122,000 (2011)	\$257,900	111%
Single-Detached Dwelling or Duplex (2+ Acres)	\$37,700 (2008)	\$175,175	365%
Store(s) and Living Quarters	\$29,450	\$47,550	61%
Manufactured Home	\$40,407	\$104,434	158%
Manufactured Home (2+ Acres)	\$37,500	\$32,400 (2010)	-14%
Seasonal Dwelling	N/A	\$141,500	N/A

Source: BC Assessment (2006-2023).

For the most part, all types of dwellings experienced a steady increase in assessed value since 2006. However, there was a significant jump in average assessed values between 2021 and 2023, during which they reached their peak. Residential dwellings with a suite had the highest assessed value among all property types, measured at \$257,900 in 2023. While most housing typologies reached their highest assessed values in 2023, single-detached dwellings experienced a decline after 2022.

Graph 3. Average Cost of Homeownership by Dwelling Type (2006-2023)



Source: BC Assessment, Assessment Roll, 2006-2023

Owner Affordability Analysis

The affordability analysis reveals that housing costs are on the cusp of what is considered affordable (i.e., 30% of the household income) in the District of Wells.

Table 3 presents the owner affordability analysis by proportion of income spent on shelter cost. For census households, the median annual household income is \$49,031, allowing for affordable monthly shelter costs of \$1,226. These census households spend approximately 30% of their income on single-detached dwellings and 27% on single-detached on 2 acres or more, indicating a moderate affordability level. Single-detached homes with secondary suites are less affordable with higher assessed values, coming in at 38% of income spent on shelter costs. Manufactured homes and store(s) and living quarters are considered to be relatively more affordable, with 19% and 11% of income spent on shelter costs, respectively.

Table 3. Owner Affordability Analysis – Proportion of Income Spent on Shelter Cost (2024)

	Median Household Income	Affordable Monthly Shelter Costs ²	Proportion of Income Spent on Shelter Costs				
			Single-Detached Dwelling	Single-Detached with a Suite	Single-Detached (2+ acres)	Store(s) and Living Quarters	Manufactured Home
Census Household	\$49,031	\$1,226	30%	38%	27%	11%	19%

Table 4 below presents the monthly shelter affordability gap for various household types, illustrating how much their actual housing costs exceed or fall below affordable shelter costs.

Table 4. Owner Affordability Analysis - Monthly Shelter Affordability Gap (2024)

	Median Household Income	Affordable Monthly Shelter Costs ²	Monthly Shelter Affordability Gap				
			Single-Detached Dwelling	Single-Detached with a Suite	Single-Detached (2+ acres)	Store(s) and Living Quarters	Manufactured Home
Census Household	\$49,031	\$1,226	\$8	-\$399	\$133	\$757	\$461

Legend

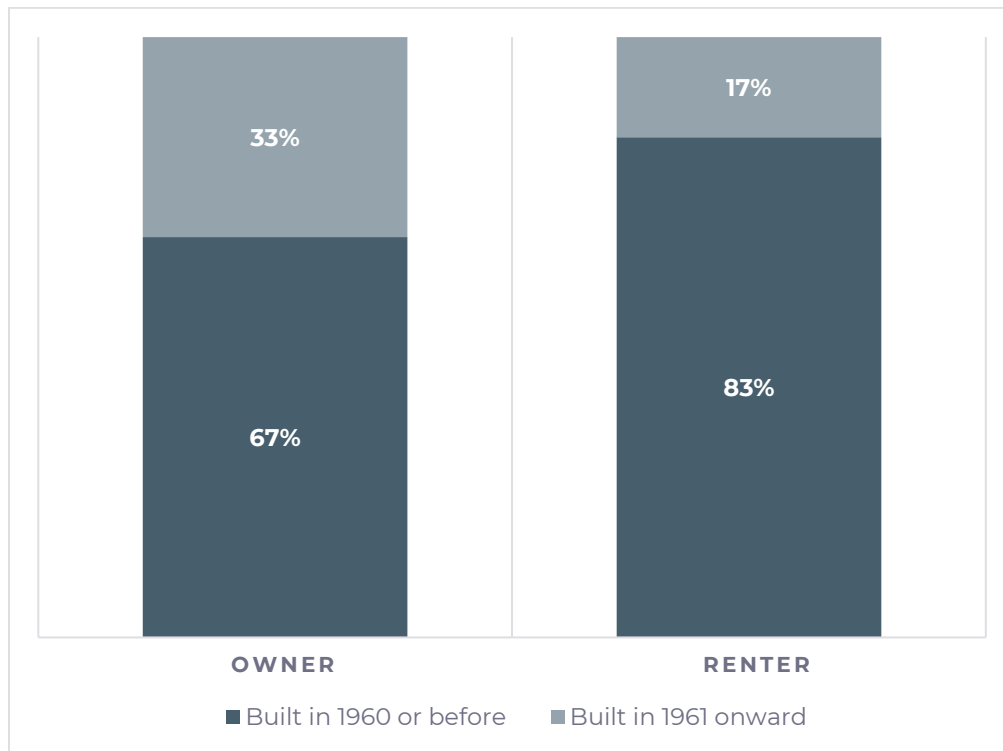
	Spending less than 30% of their income on shelter costs
	Spending approximately 30-49% of their income on shelter costs
	Spending 50% or more of their income or less on shelter costs

² Shelter costs include, as applicable, mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. For the purposes of this exercise mortgage payments are calculated using a 25-year amortization, with 4.74% 5-year fixed interest rate (November 2024), and a 10% downpayment. Mortgage costs do not include any other shelter costs.

Aging Housing Stock

The majority of housing units in Wells were built when the mining industry was peaking, and not many new housing has been developed since the 1960s. **Graph 4** reveals the proportion of older housing units from the total housing stock both owned and rentals.

Graph 4. Age of housing stock per tenancy type



APPENDIX B: OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN HOUSING POLICY STATEMENTS

As the province requires outlining actions taken by the local government to address and reduce housing needs in the community to date, this provides a list of housing-related policies recently adopted in the Official Community Plan (OCP), covering a range of housing types, from low- to medium-density residential developments, as well as policies related to commercial uses.

Low Density Residential

1. New Low Density Residential development will be developed in a style and scale similar to existing residential development in the District of Wells. Considering Low Density Residential Areas will permit a variety of other housing forms, such as duplexes, secondary suites, carriage houses, and tiny homes, as permitted by the BC Building Code.
2. Permit triplexes and fourplexes in Low Density Residential Areas.
3. New subdivisions in Low Density Residential Areas should achieve an overall density of five to eight units per acre.
4. Allow for a variety of tourism accommodation uses such as bed and breakfasts, short-term rentals, or home conversions to small-scale boutique hotels.

Medium Density Residential

1. The development of vacant and underutilized lots in Medium Density Residential Areas is a priority and will be supported.
2. The development of workforce housing will be strongly encouraged in Medium Density Residential Areas.
3. Allow the development of multi-family homes, including row houses, townhomes, and apartments, up to a maximum density of 65 units per hectare (26 units per acre).
4. Permit triplexes and fourplexes in Medium Density Residential Areas.
5. Allow the development of multi-family homes up to a maximum of two storeys.
6. Prioritize infill development in Medium Density Residential Areas.
7. Allow for a variety of tourism accommodation uses such as bed and breakfasts, short-term rentals, or home conversions to small-scale boutique hotels.

Commercial Residential

1. Allow residential uses as accessory uses above commercial uses.
2. Encourage the development of tourism accommodations such as hotels, motels or short-term rentals in new and existing buildings.