

TOWN OF VULCAN

20
23

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT



OLDMAN RIVER REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Prepared by



OLDMAN RIVER REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

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Prepared for the Town of Vulcan

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Executive Summary

The Town of Vulcan performed a Housing Needs Assessment in partnership with the Oldman River Regional Services Commission. The final takeaways and recommendations of the assessment are as follows:

01

More affordable housing needed

10.4% of households are unaffordable, and residents are forced to acquire housing that is not suitable because of a lack of supply

02

More smaller units needed

Only 8% of household units are studios or 1-bedroom, but one-person households make up 33% of the total amount

03

More seniors' housing needed

Seniors make up 43% of the overall populace (and rising), but seniors' housing comprises only 8.4% of the total number of units

04

Rental units are in high demand

Residential vacancy rate is 0% as of 2021. Residents are struggling to find rental units and resorting to the Municipal Campground to find short-term accommodation

Introduction

The Town of Vulcan partnered with the Oldman River Regional Services Commission to produce this assessment, which will be used to support the development of affordable and non-market housing in Vulcan and contribute to provincial and federal grant applications.

Vulcan is located in Southern Alberta, approximately 100 kilometres driving distance from the City of Lethbridge and 120 kilometres driving distance from the City of Calgary. The Town sits at the intersection of two major roads, Highway 23, running north and south, and Highway 534, running east and west. The main CPR line running north and south between Lethbridge and Calgary also goes through Vulcan, making the town the hub of a regional transportation and commercial network.

Data was collected from 1996 - 2021 Statistics Canada Community Profile reports (demographic and housing statistics) and the Alberta Regional Dashboard. These sources were analyzed to obtain information on key indicators, demographic profiles (population, households, income, etc.), housing profiles (housing type, size, etc.), projections, and housing need by number of bedrooms. Some total values may not match the sum of individual values due to a random rounding process by Statistics Canada to ensure confidentiality of responses collected. Some values are based on a 25% sample size due to the long-form questionnaire that was given to roughly 25% of households. Italicized terms are defined on page 21.

Engagement activities involved interviews and consultations with representatives from the Marquis Foundation, Vulcan and Regional Family and Community Support Services, and Wheat Country Special Needs Society. This helped to inform of specific needs and non-market housing supply.

Location of Vulcan



Housing Indicators

KEY INDICATORS

Adequacy, suitability and affordability are the three core affordable housing indicators integral to understanding affordable housing concerns



ADEQUACY

Adequate housing refers to housing that isn't in need of any major repairs, including things like defective plumbing and structural issues. 6.2% of Vulcan households are inadequate, down from 9.6% in 2016.



SUITABILITY

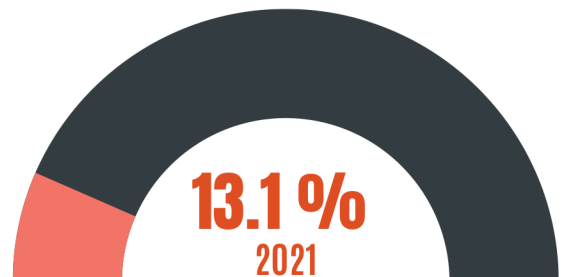
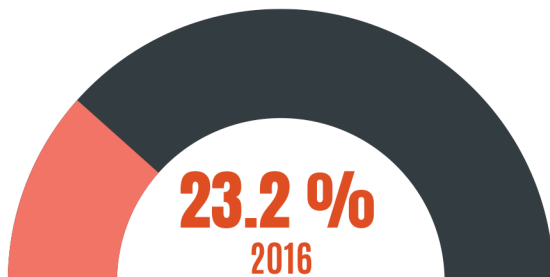
Suitable housing refers to housing that has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household's residents. 1.2% of Vulcan households are unsuitable, down from 3.6% in 2016.



AFFORDABILITY

Housing is considered affordable when it costs less than 30% of before-tax income. 10.6% of households are unaffordable, down from 17.5% in 2016.

Core Housing Need in Vulcan



The most pertinent challenge facing Vulcan is the number of households in *core housing need*, which refers to whether a household has fallen below at least one of the three indicators and obtaining acceptable housing would be unaffordable for that household's income. 13.1% of Vulcan households are in core housing need as of 2021.

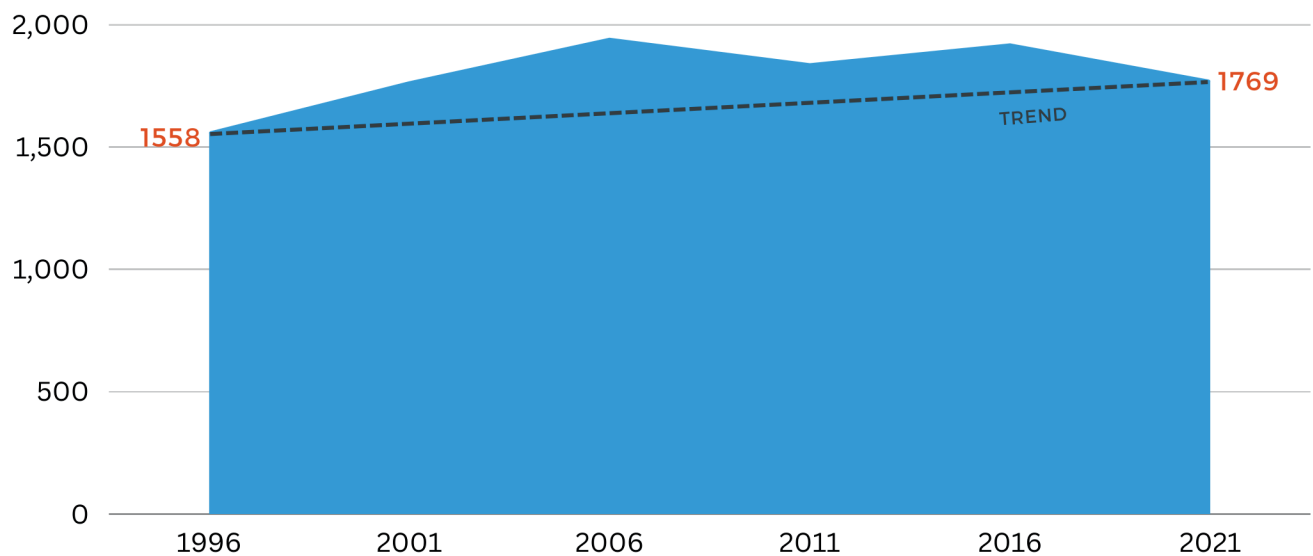
Demographic Profile

Vulcan has a population of 1,769

Understanding who lives in the Town is key in helping determine housing needs and goals. Studying past and present population statistics provides a basis for population projections, and the way in which a population has changed may reveal important municipal trends.

Between 1996 and 2006, the Town experienced a jump in population growth from 1,558 to 1,940 residents - a rate of 2.5% per annum. Despite a dip between 2006 and 2011, the population grew again from 1,836 in 2011 to 1,917 in 2016 (0.88% per annum). It fell again to 1,769 in 2021, but this decrease could be correlated with the high Affordability and *Core Housing Need* indicators from the previous page. Despite the latest dip in population, the overall trend shows promise for potential future growth and development within the municipality.

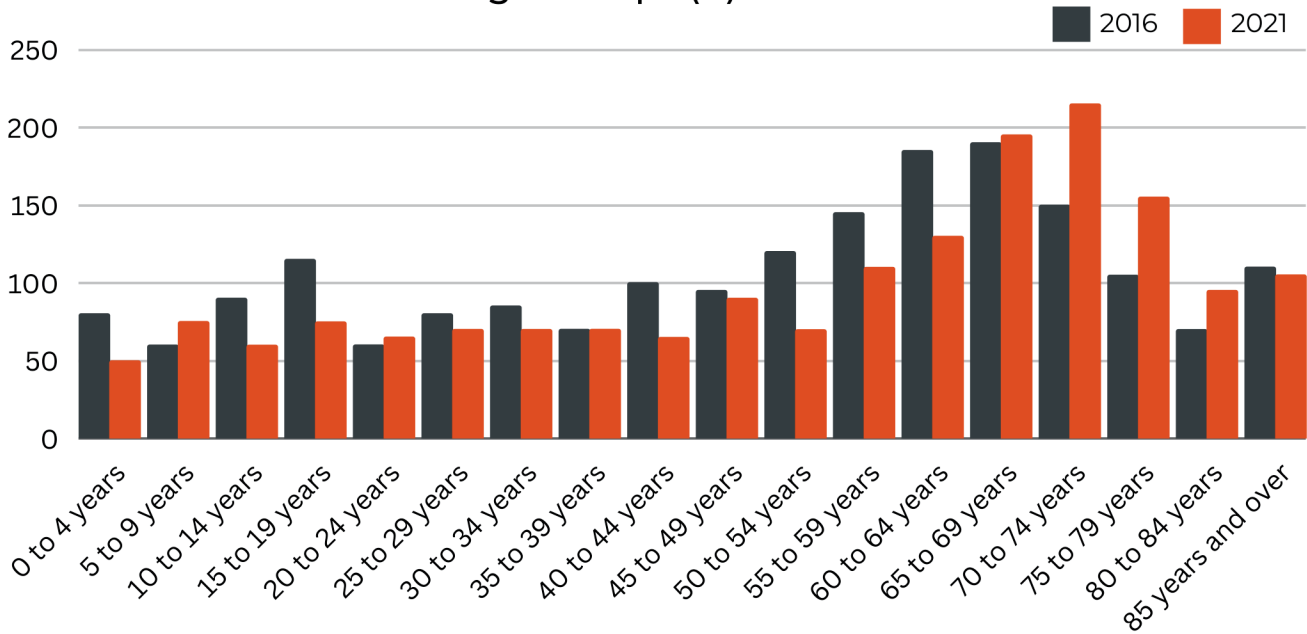
Vulcan Population Growth 1996 - 2021



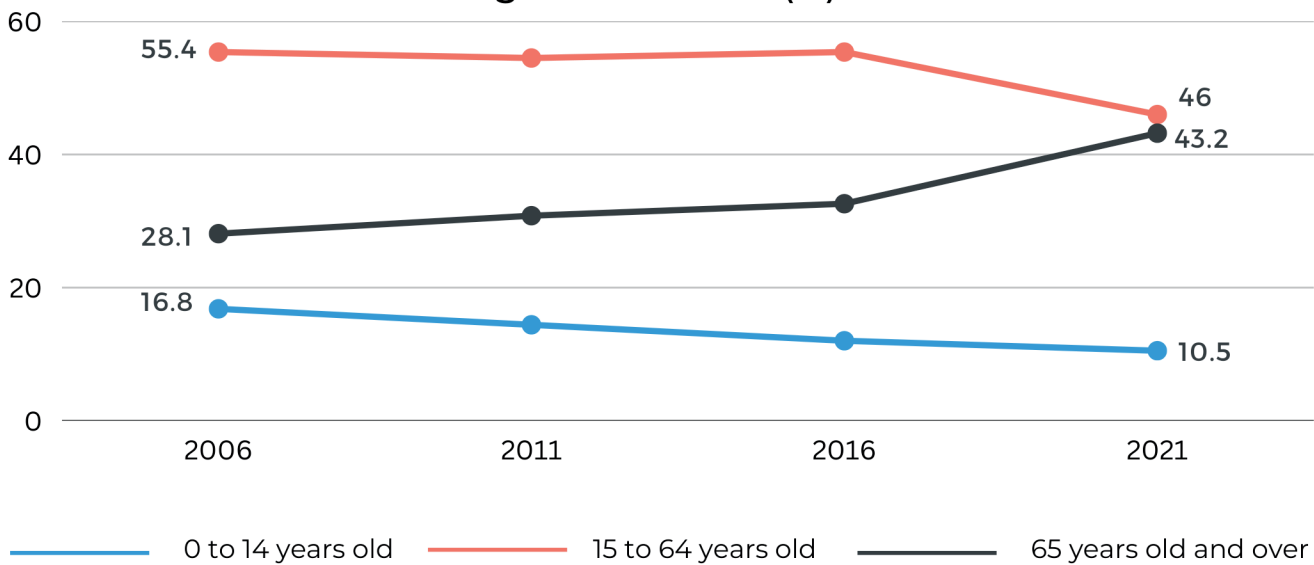
Vulcan is aging

The percentage of children and young teenagers (under 15 years old) has gradually decreased in Vulcan from 16.8% in 2006 to 10.5% in 2021 while the share of residents aged 65 years and over has increased from 28.1% in 2006 to 43.2% in 2021. The median age has increased from 54.8 (2016) to 60.8 (2021).

Vulcan Age Groups (#)



Vulcan Age Distribution (%)



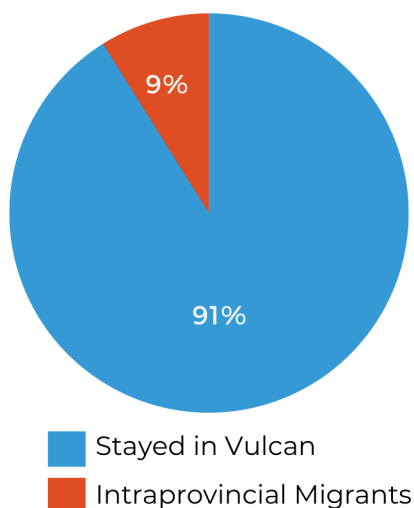
Mobility

Mobility data collects information on a person's place of residence 1 year and 5 years prior to Census Day (May 2021). In Vulcan, 8.9% of residents had moved to the town since May 2020 and 27.6% since May 2016. These numbers are higher than those for Vulcan County, suggesting that Vulcan is an attractive place for potential *movers*. In the table below, *non-migrants* (people who moved from one residence to another in Vulcan) are classified as *movers* as per Statistics Canada.

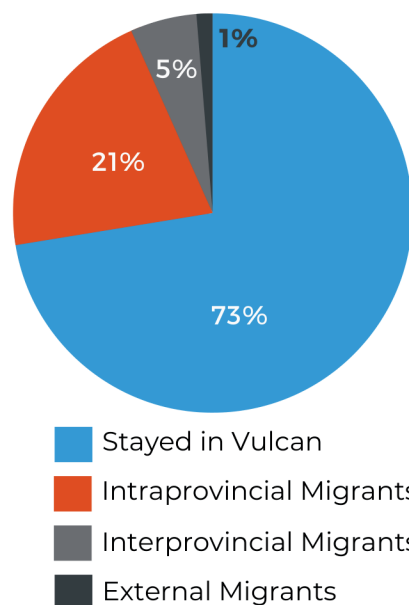
Mobility Status	Vulcan		Vulcan County		Alberta	
	Non-Movers	Movers	Non-Movers	Movers	Non-Movers	Movers
1 Year Ago	87.7%	12.3%	91.6%	8.4%	86.7%	13.3%
5 Years Ago	65.5%	34.5%	71%	29.1%	58.9%	41.4%

There were no interprovincial or external migrants to Vulcan from May 2020 to May 2021, but this is most likely due to the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Vulcan Mobility Status 1 Year Ago

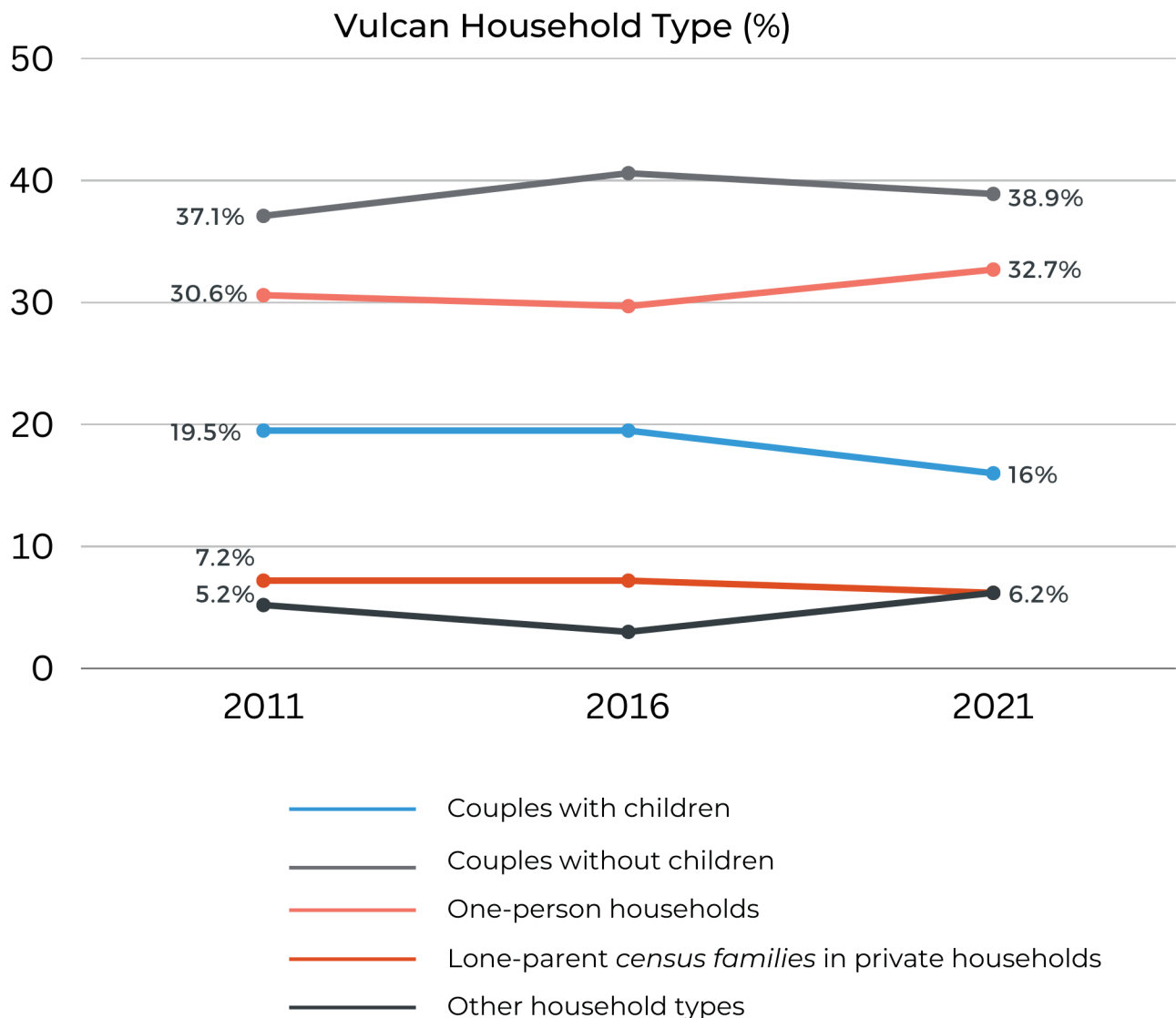


Vulcan Mobility Status 5 Years Ago



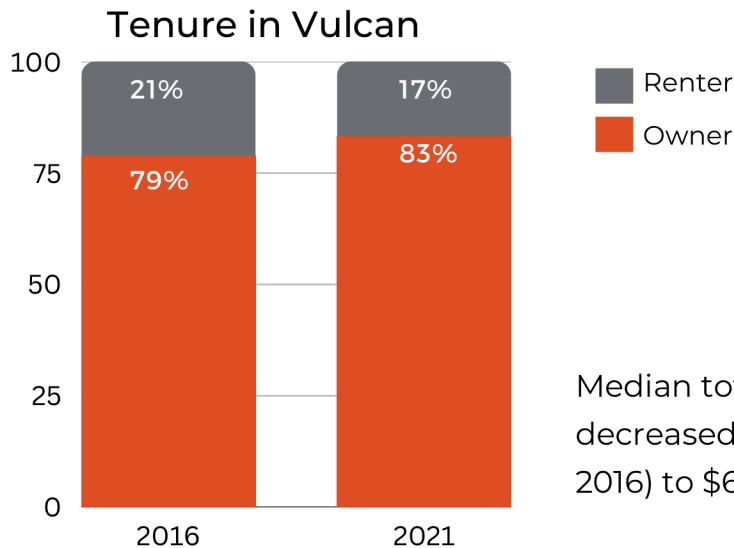
Most households are couples without children

Couples without children are the most common household type in Vulcan (38.9%), but this proportion is slowly declining. The next most common type (one-person households) has increased from 30.6% in 2016 to 32.7% in 2021. Households with children are declining in percentage, suggesting an aging of the population. Other household types have remained relatively stable. As one-person households require less bedrooms and children are moving out, the trend in Vulcan is moving towards more demand for smaller-sized dwellings.

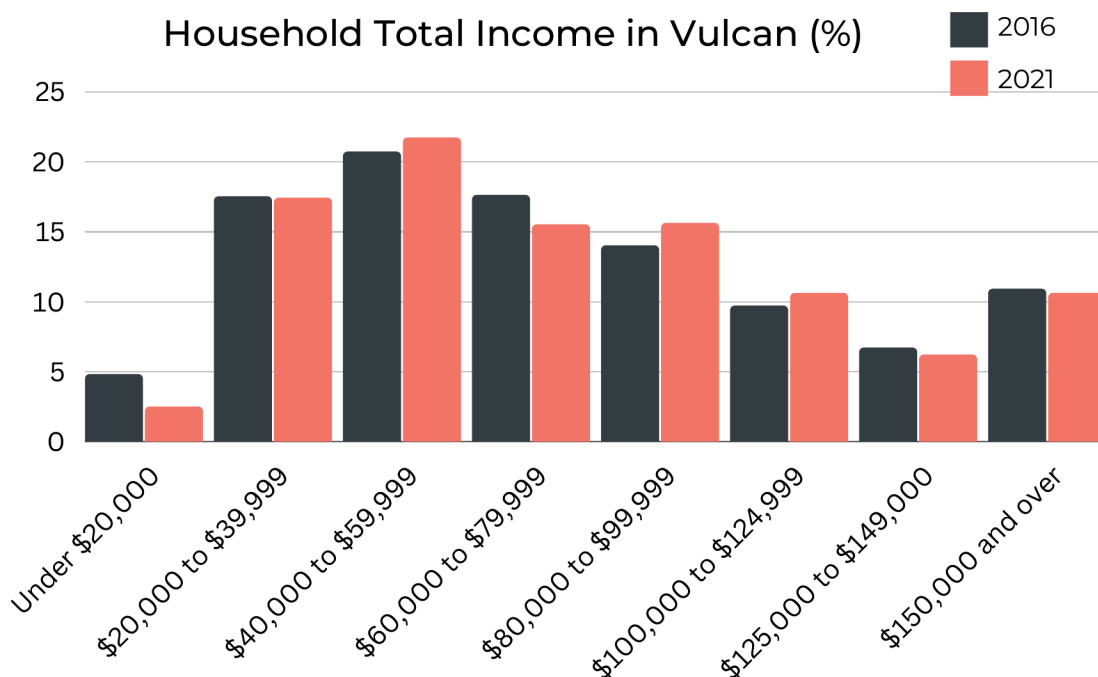


Most households are owners

In Vulcan, 83.2% of households are owned and 16.8% are rented (2021). The share of owners is larger than that across Alberta, where 71% of households are owners and 29% are renters. The average monthly shelter cost for owned households in Vulcan is \$1,042, and just slightly lower for renters at \$800.



Median total household income has decreased from \$69,056 in 2015 (reported in 2016) to \$67,500 in 2020 (reported in 2021).



Non-census families earn less

People not living in *census families* have significantly lower incomes than those living with a partner or a family, and therefore a lower amount of money to spend on housing (just \$940 per month). Lone parents with children also have a lower income, with \$1,480 to spend on housing, especially when considering the size of housing units they require. The overall average household size in Vulcan is 2, down from 2.2 in 2016.

Median Total Income by Household Type in Vulcan, 2021

	Couples with children	Couples without children	Lone parents with children	People not living in census families
# of Households	130	315	50	315
Median total income	\$112,000	\$83,000	\$59,200	\$37,600
Maximum to spend on shelter monthly before it becomes unaffordable (30% of median total income)	\$2,800	\$2,075	\$1,480	\$940
Average family size	3.9	2	2.5	1
Required # of bedrooms for average family size	3	1	2-3	1

Average Monthly Shelter Cost for Owned Dwellings

\$1,042

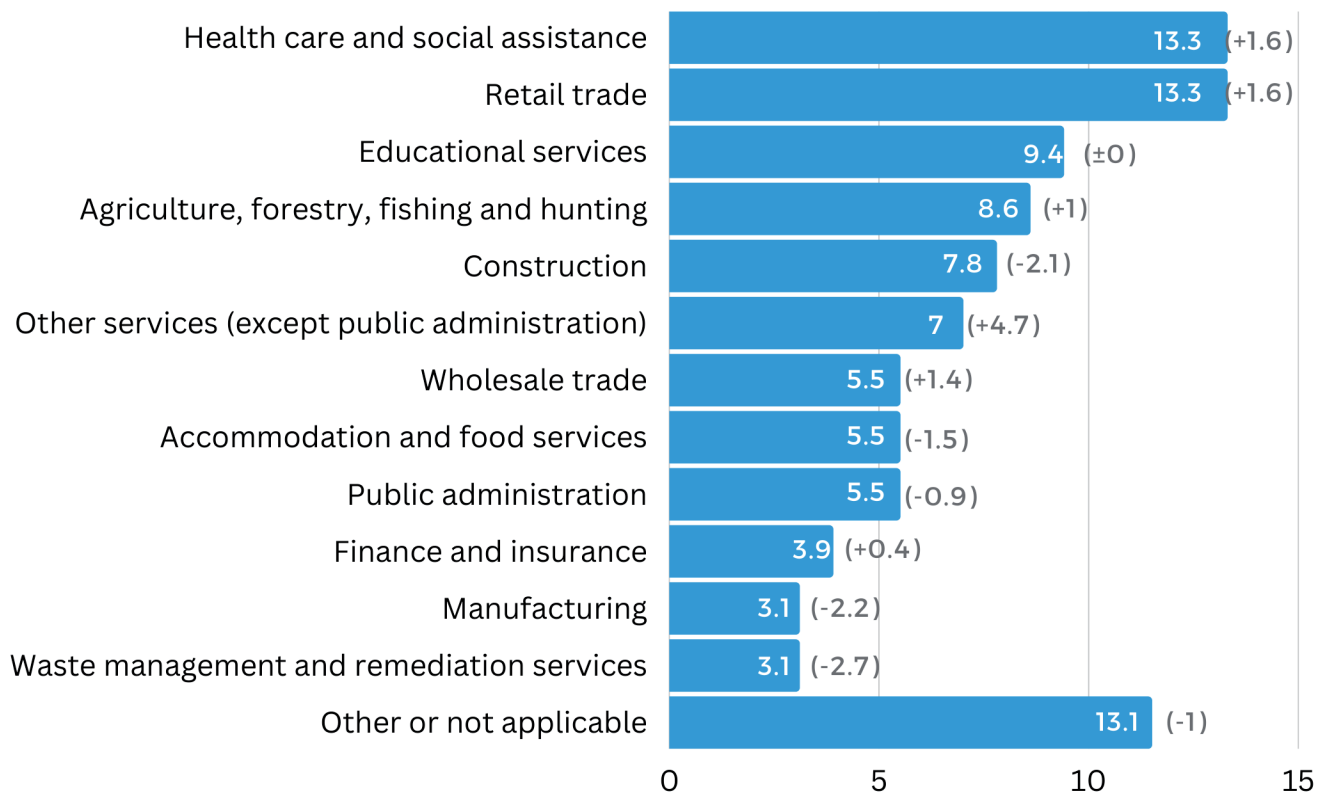
Average Monthly Shelter Cost for Rented Dwellings

\$800

Labour Force

The top industries that people in Vulcan are employed in is health care and social assistance as well as retail trade (13.3% each). Other top industries include educational services (9.4%) and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (8.6%). The "other" category includes mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; transportation and warehousing; real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific and technical services; and arts, entertainment and recreation (each at 2.3%). Statistics Canada used the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2017 to classify industry sectors. Numbers in brackets show % change from the 2016 census results.

Occupation by Industry (%)



Labour Participation Rate



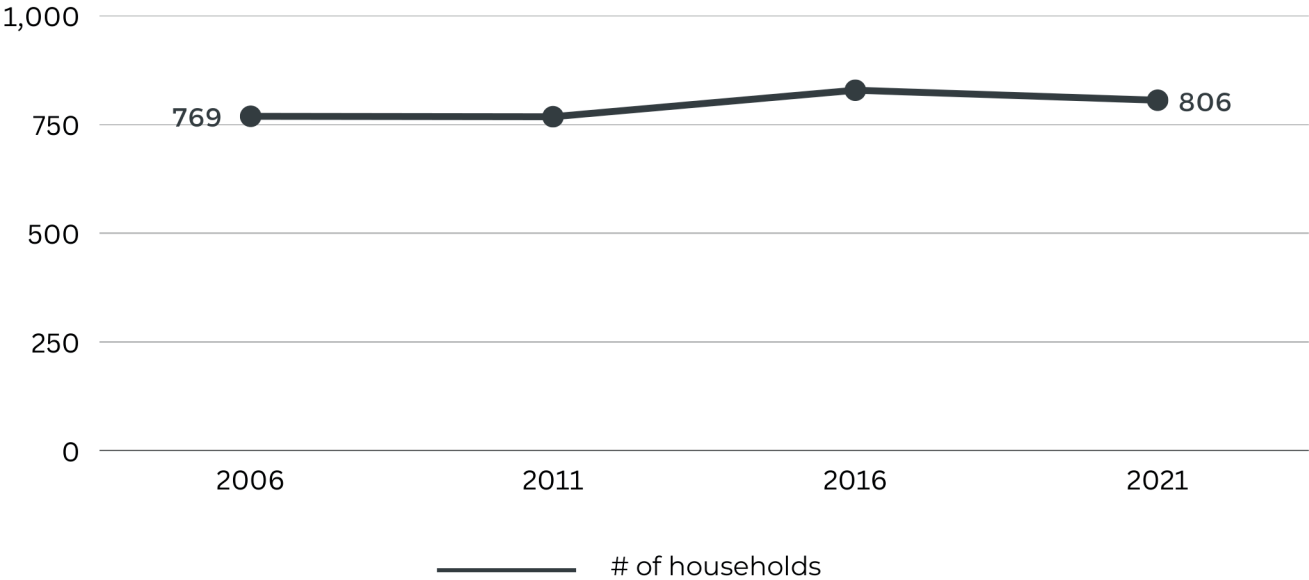
Unemployment Rate



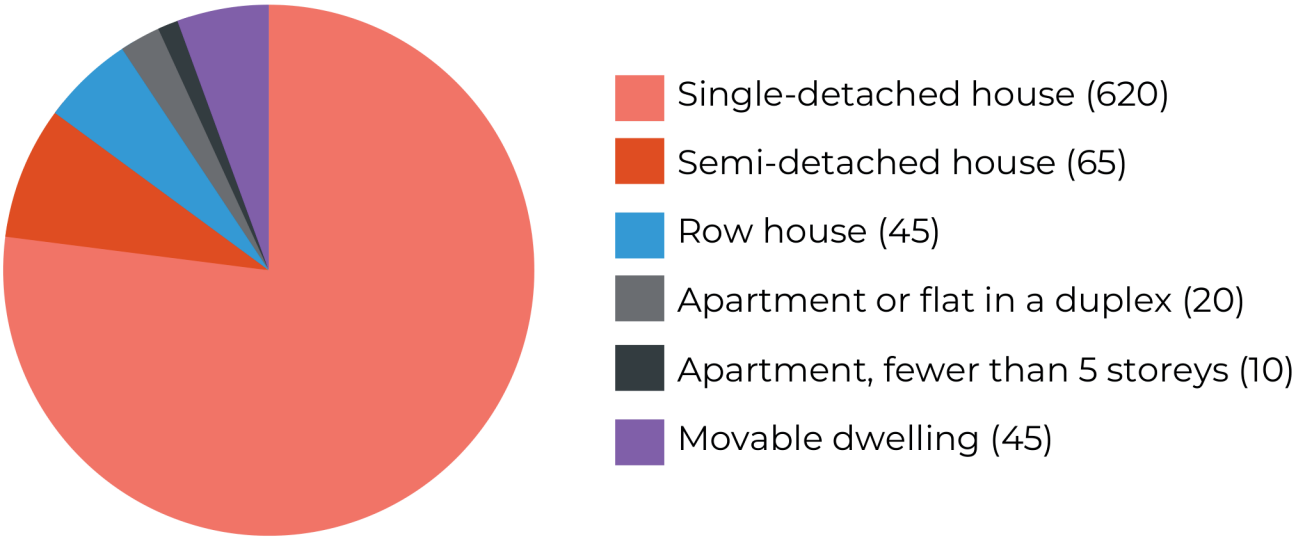
Housing Profile

There has been an overall increase in the number of private occupied dwellings in Vulcan, growing from 769 in 2006 to 806 in 2021. The housing stock in Vulcan is primarily single-detached houses, representing 77% of total units. The next most prominent household type is semi-detached houses (8.1% of total).

Number of Private Occupied Dwellings in Vulcan

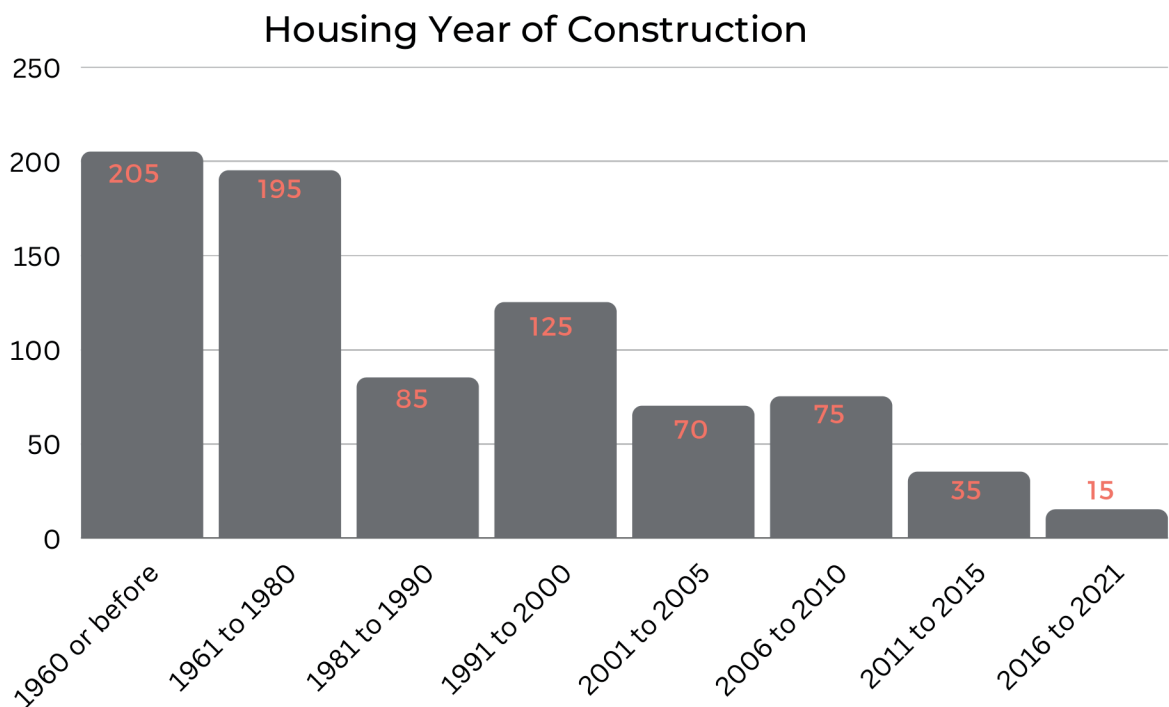
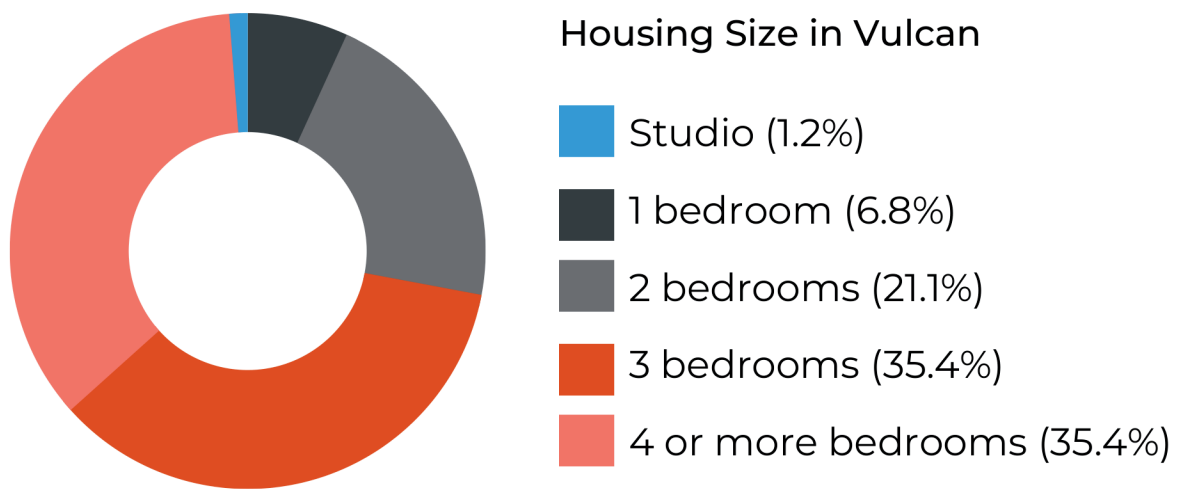


Housing in Vulcan - by Type (#)



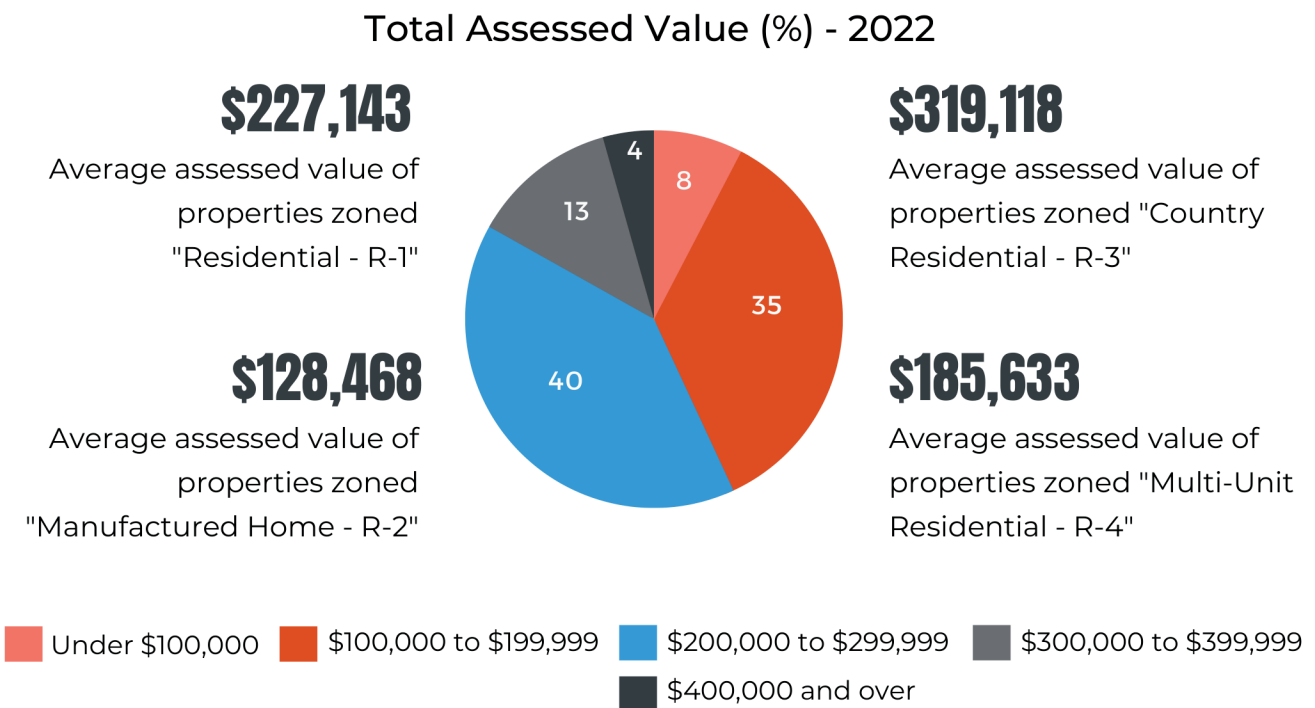
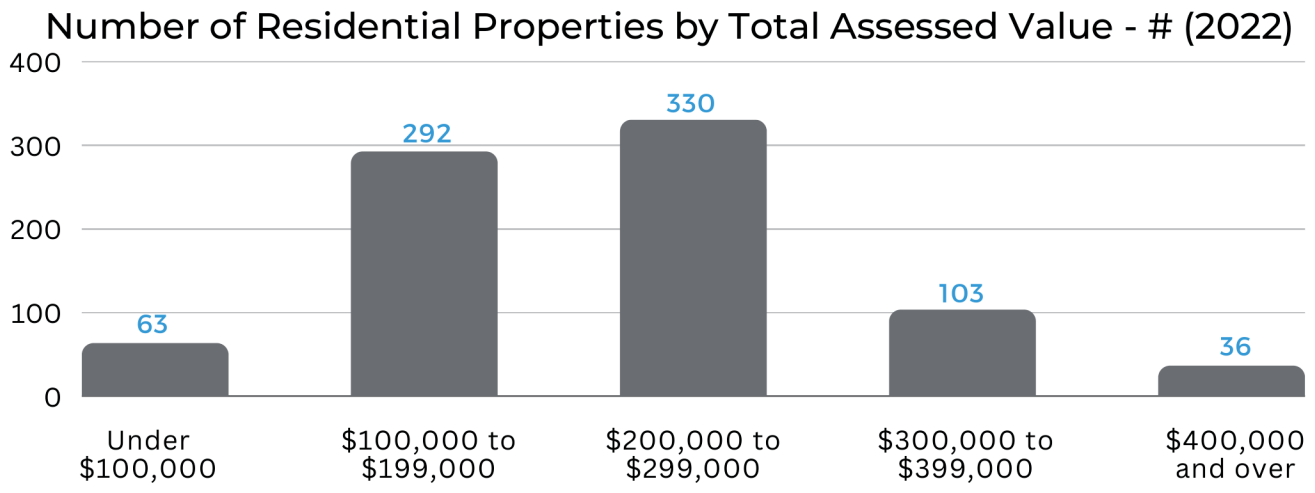
3 and 4 or more bedroom units dominate

In Vulcan, almost three quarters of households have three (35.4% in 2021) or four or more bedrooms (35.4%). One fifth have two bedrooms (21.1%), and very few have one bedroom (6.8%) or are studio units (1.2%). Almost half of the housing stock was built prior to 1980, with 25% of units being built before 1960 and 24% between 1961 and 1980. Construction has slowed since 2011, with 50 new units being built between 2011 and 2021.



Residential Assessed Property Values

In Vulcan, the average *assessed residential property value* with improvements is \$221,901. This number includes both the land value of the property, as well as the improved value (taking into account things like buildings, landscaping, and other enhancements that increase the overall value). The four residential zones highlighted below are from the Town of Vulcan's Land Use Bylaw No. 1437-15.

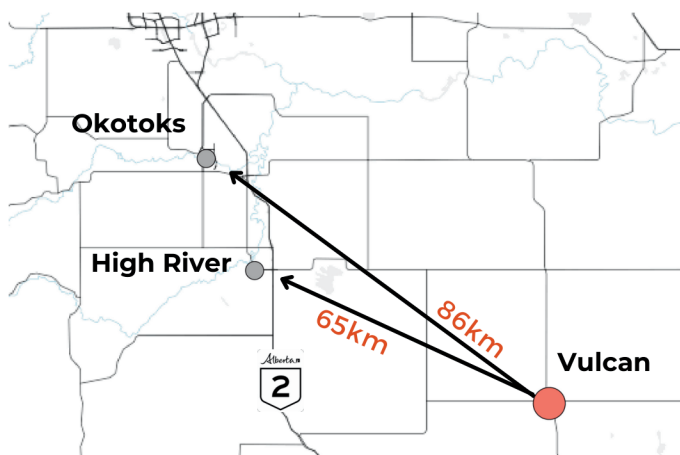
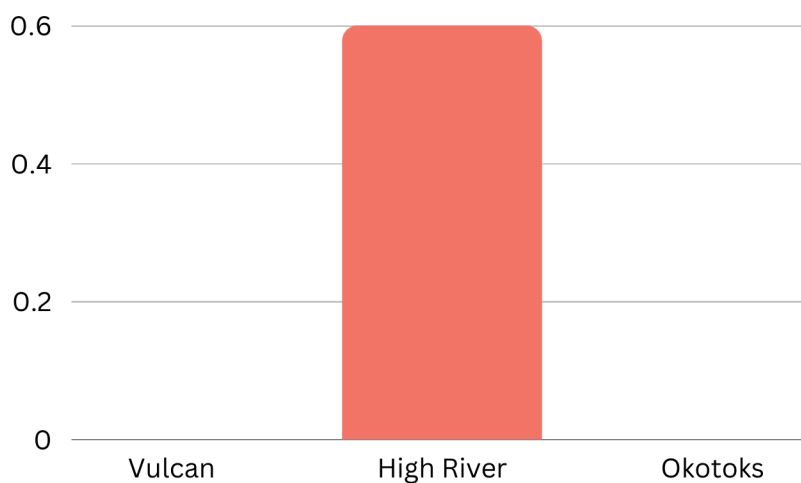


Housing Supply & Demand

Residential vacancy rates are extremely low

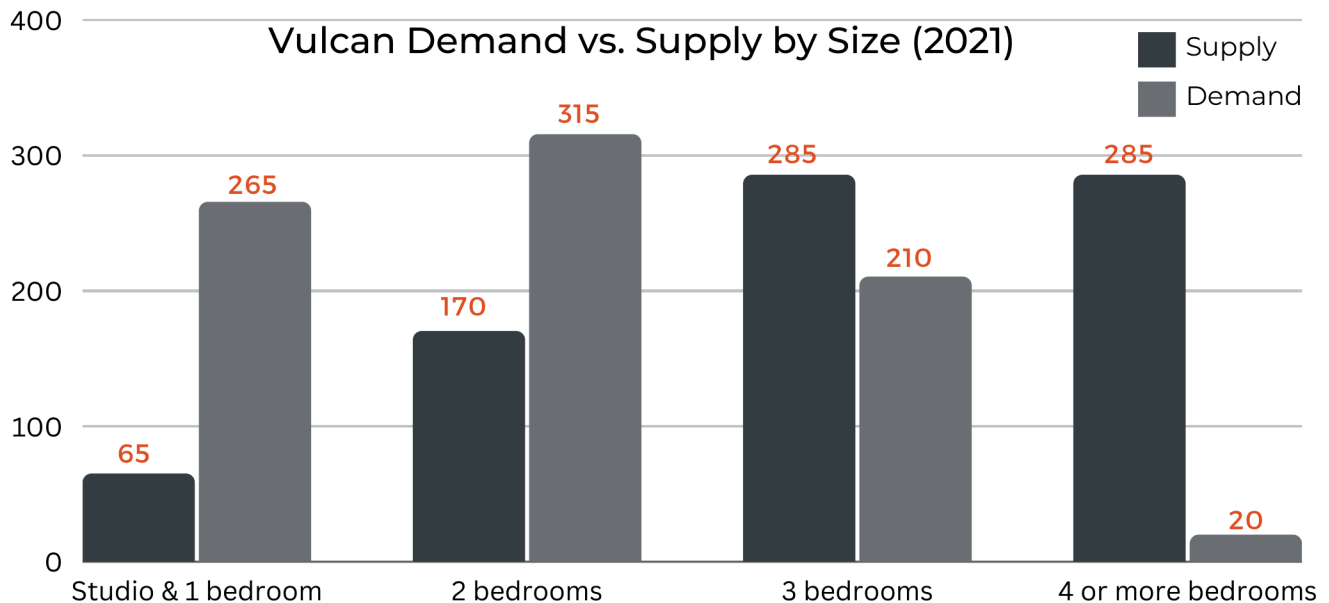
According to the Alberta Regional Dashboard and local realty companies, Vulcan has a rental vacancy rate of 0%. Because there is no housing available, residents are reportedly residing in the Vulcan Municipal Campground which offers three (3) free consecutive nights per six-month period.

Vacancy Rates in Vulcan and Neighbouring Municipalities (%)



Data from the Regional Dashboard has not been available for the Town of Vulcan since 2021, but the closest municipalities with data, High River (65km driving distance away) and Okotoks (86km driving distance away), have vacancy rates of 0.6% and 0% respectively.

There aren't enough 1 and 2-bedroom units



Housing demand was calculated using the following assumptions:

- Studio and 1-bedroom units: demand calculated to be all one-person households
- 2-bedroom units: demand calculated to be all couple households without children
- 3-bedroom units: demand calculated to be the sum of all couples with children, one-parent families, and two-or-more person *non-census-family* households
- 4-bedroom units: demand calculated to be the sum of all *multigenerational family households* and one-*census family* households with additional persons

Due to the nature of assumptions, it is important to note that this calculation primarily offers a broad overview of significant disparities in housing availability, rather than reflecting the specific preferences or needs of individual households.

These assumptions generally allocate more space to a household than the minimum required to meet suitability standards. These assumptions also imply that many households might desire additional space; for instance, couples may require only one bedroom, but they are assumed to desire two-bedroom units. The main factor limiting the size of units is typically affordability, meaning that people would ideally prefer larger units but can only afford smaller ones. Furthermore, households may seek more space to accommodate remote work, particularly in the context of the increased prevalence of virtual and flexible work arrangements following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Housing Supply & Demand

According to Alberta Seniors' Housing Directory, the Marquis Foundation and Westwinds Communities, the Town of Vulcan only has 5 household units covered under a Rental Assistance Benefit and 68 seniors' units through Peter Dawson Lodge and Villas. Currently, there are plans in place for a new 60-unit facility to replace the Peter Dawson Lodge. Unit and waitlist numbers are accurate as of October 2023.

Housing Type	Existing Units	Waitlist	Notes
Rental Assistance Benefit	5	0	Provided through Westwinds Communities
Seniors' Self Contained (Peter Dawson Villas)	18	7	Provided through the Marquis Foundation
Seniors' Other (Peter Dawson Lodge)	50	0	Provided through the Marquis Foundation. Some units don't meet Alberta guidelines for suitable senior living
Specialized Needs Housing	14	0	Managed by Wheat Country Special Needs Society. 13 supportive living units and 1 semi-independent unit
Other Supportive Living (Extendicare)	37	0	Managed by Vulcan Extendicare. 9 double units and 28 single units
Community House (R&N House)	1	1	Provided through the Marquis Foundation

Projections

Vulcan's population is projected to stabilize

Using the linear regression model with a line-of-best-fit, the population of Vulcan is projected to plateau at 1,842 in 2026 and stabilize in the decades ahead, and have 939 households by the year 2046. This model assumes that counts change by a regular amount over each time period and all else remains equal.

Projected Population and Households in Vulcan
(2011 to 2046)

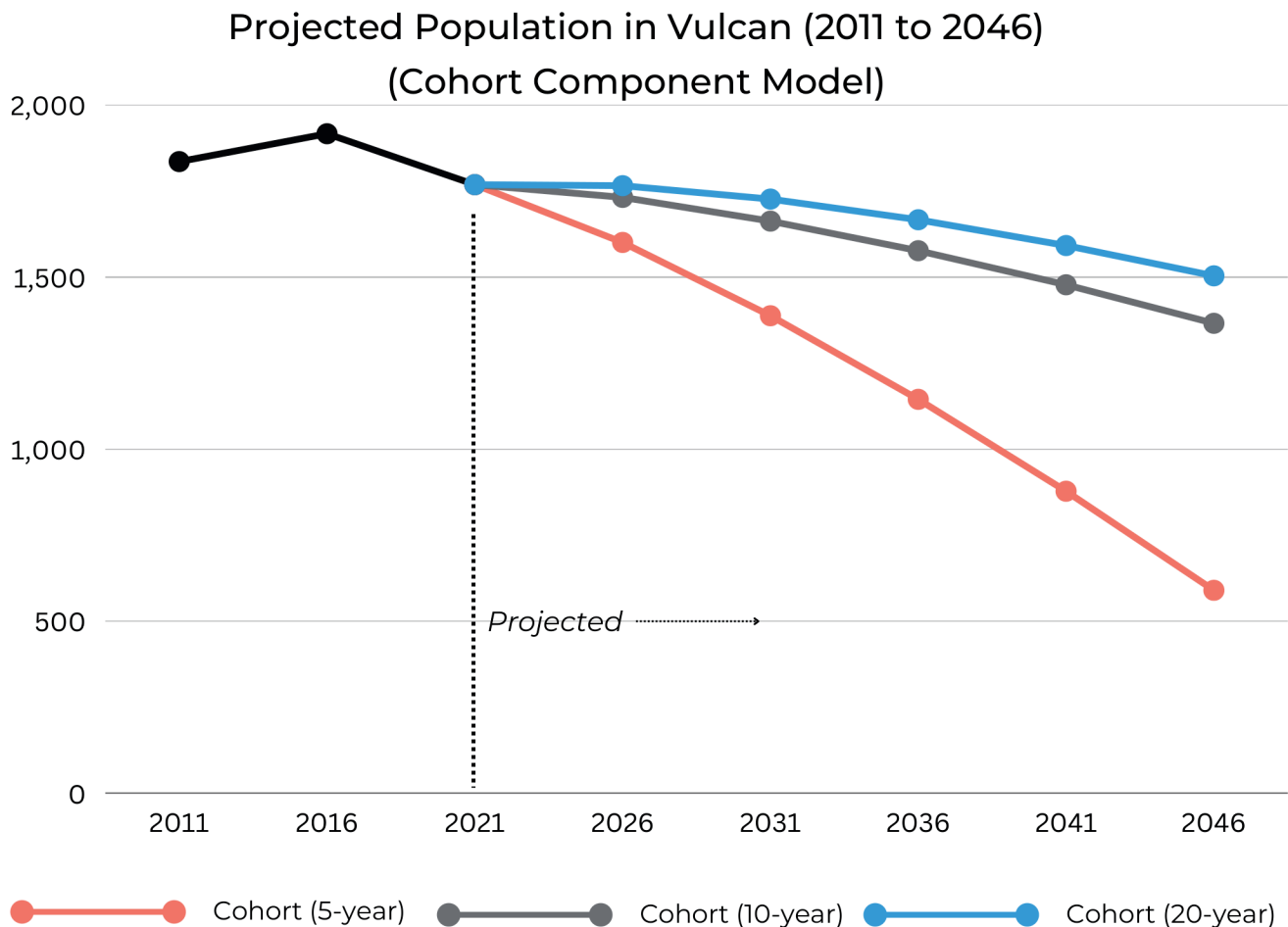
Year	Population	Households
2011	1836	768
2016	1917	829
2021	1769	806
2026	1842	848
2031	1841	870
2036	1840	893
2041	1839	916
2046	1839	939

Projected

Projections

Other population projection models

One of the drawbacks of projections is that not all models are the same, and may produce different results. Another model to use when calculating population projections is the cohort component method, which takes into account trends of fertility, mortality, and mobility over specific past time periods. Vulcan’s population is projected to decline when using the cohort component model. Below, projections are shown using data from the past 5-, 10- and 20-year time periods. For example, the trend using data from the past 5 years shows a steeper projected population decline in Vulcan than the trend produced from data over the past 20 years, suggesting that more recent trends could result in further population decline.



Projections

Up to 217 new dwelling units are needed

The number of new dwelling units required in Vulcan is dependent upon present consumption and future population growth. The current density for all types of residential land uses in Vulcan is 9.9 housing units per hectare, with 91.9 hectares of total residential land. The table below shows the land area requirements for two population projections over the next 20 years. Projections are calculated using the linear regression model as the high rate of growth and the 20-year cohort model as the low rate. The number of persons per dwelling (currently 2.0) has also been varied as this may change over time. The density of dwellings is held constant at 9.9 units per hectare. According to the analysis below, the town will require a high of 217 dwellings at 1.8 persons per dwelling over the next 10 years.

Vulcan Residential Land Requirements With Population Increase

Year	Population		Assumed Persons Per Dwelling Unit (Current In Bold)	Total Required Dwelling Units		Existing Dwelling Units	New Dwelling Units Needed		New Land Area Required (Hectares)	
	High	Low		High	Low		High	Low	High	Low
2026	1842	1766	2.2	837	803	806	31	0	3.1	0
			2.0	921	883	806	115	77	11.6	7.8
			1.8	1023	981	806	217	175	21.9	17.7
2031	1841	1727	2.2	837	785	806	31	0	3.1	0
			2.0	921	864	806	115	58	11.6	5.9
			1.8	1023	959	806	217	153	21.9	15.5
2036	1840	1667	2.2	836	758	806	30	0	3.0	0
			2.0	920	834	806	114	28	11.5	2.8
			1.8	1022	926	806	216	120	21.8	12.1
2041	1839	1592	2.2	836	724	806	30	0	3.0	0
			2.0	920	796	806	114	0	11.5	0
			1.8	1022	884	806	216	78	21.8	7.9

Definitions & Key Terms

Assessed Residential Property Value

The dollar value assigned to a property to determine applicable taxes which includes both land value and improvement value (buildings, landscaping, and other enhancements)

Census Family

A married couple (with or without children), a common-law couple (with or without children) or a one-parent family

Core Housing Need

Refers to whether a private household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (attains all three housing indicator thresholds)

Labour Participation Rate

The total labour force (persons who are working or are actively looking for work) relative to the working age population

Movers

Persons who have moved from one residence to another

Multi-Generational Household

Households where there is at least one person who is both the grandparent of a person in the household and the parent of another in the same household. They also represent all households where there is at least one person who is both the child of a person in the household and the grandchild of another person in the same household

Non-Migrants

Persons who moved but remained in the same city, town or village

Non-Movers

Persons who have not moved residences

Unemployment Rate

The percentage of the total labour force that is unemployed

