Technical Review Memo

Project Name: Area D Community Planning
Date: May 14, 2026
Project No.: 10\5100\20\D_Ainsworth\2026 Project

Project Overview

The Area D Community Planning project follows up on work completed in 2021 to host land use planning discussions for communities in Electoral Area D. The goal of this project is to create new opportunities for community land use discussions between the RDCK and Area D community members – to learn about different planning tools and to listen to communities about their needs regarding land use. With community direction, the RDCK planning department can work towards updating the Area D Comprehensive Land Use Bylaw focusing on updating and expanding planning tools such as zoning to additional communities that want them.

Purpose

Phase 1 of the project includes a technical review which will be used to inform community engagement and as one basis for providing recommendations for zoning options. The technical review includes two tasks:

a. **Background document review** - including the existing Area D Comprehensive Land Use Bylaw and other related policies, bylaws, reports, studies, and information relevant to the project.
b. **Land use and development review** - review and analysis of historic and current land use and development trends that exist within Area D, including key areas of interest for zoning.

This will help better understand what activities may inform and drive the development of future zoning regulations and provide key context needed to support community engagement activities. Results and key findings from the review are summarized into this Technical Review Memo.

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1. Demographics[1]

a. **Population**

- The total population of Area D is 1462 people (2021), which is a +9% change from 2016.
- Most residents have lived in Area D 5 years or longer – 58% non-movers versus 42% movers in the past 5 years.

Table 1.1: Location of Movers as a Percentage of Total Movers

Movers	Percentage of total movers
Non-migrants (moved same town)	25%
Intraprovincial migrants (moved from within BC)	48%
Interprovincial migrants (moved from within Canada but outside if BC)	25%
External migrants (moved internationally)	3%

- The majority of the population are older adults aged 55-74.

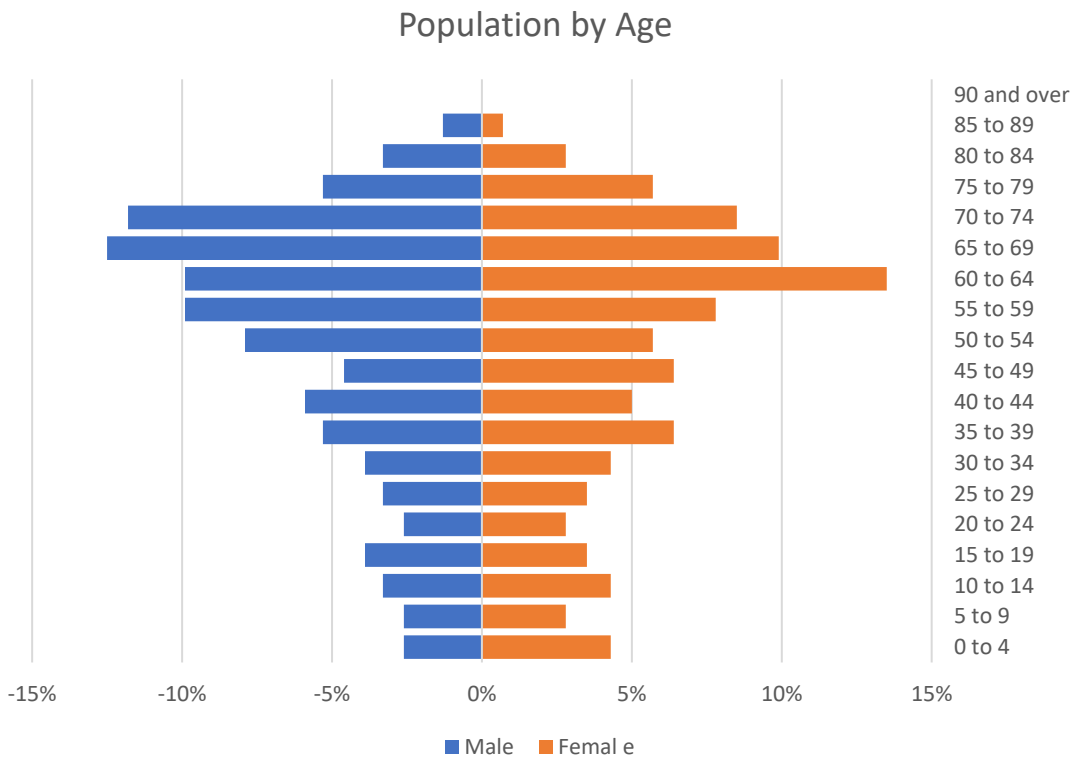


Figure 1.1: Area D Population Distribution by Age, 2021

[1] All data taken from 2021 Census Profile unless cited otherwise.

b. **Growth projections**[2]

- Area D's population is expected to increase 33% from 1460 people (2021) to 1795 (2041) people.

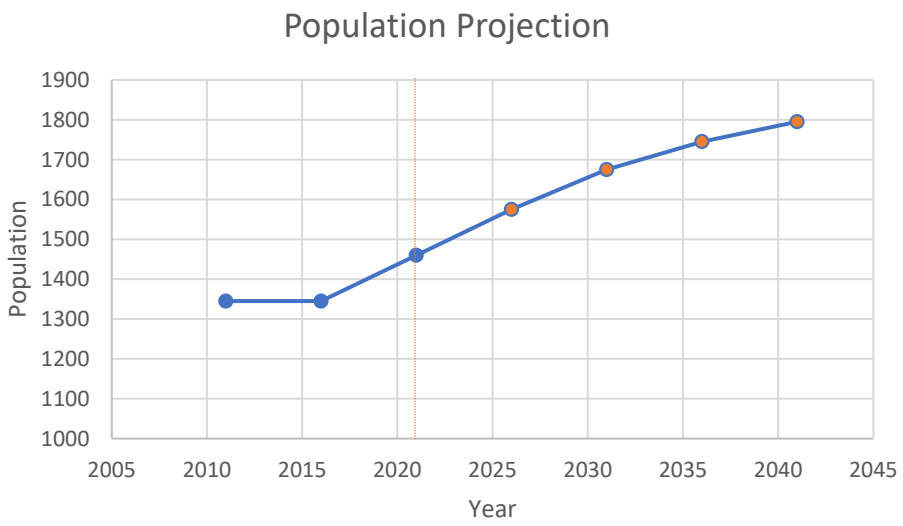


Figure 1.2: Area D Population Projection, 2026-2041

- In the next 20 years it is expected the population of adults 25 years and older will grow with those over 85+ being the largest age range of growth. Young adults and children (0-24 years) are expected to shrink.

Table 1.2: Historical Population Change RDCK-wide, 2016-2021

Age	Total	0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+
% Change	+6%	+2%	-5%	+12%	-5%	+24%	+35%

Table 1.3: Anticipated Population Change RDCK-wide, 2021-2041

Age	Total	0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+
% Change	+23%	-2%	-4%	+38%	+17%	+17%	+398%

c. **Housing**

i. Households:

- The majority of households are owned (83%) versus rented (17%).
- The share of tenant households increased by 2% from 2016-2021.
- The monthly cost of housing is greater for tenants with 29% of tenants spending over 30% of their income on housing (versus 12% for home owners).

[2] Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census, projections derived from BC P.E.O.P.L.E Regional District results

- 29% of tenants are in core housing need - housing that is not adequate, suitable or affordable (versus 16% of home owners).
- The average household size is 2.0 people.

Table 1.4: Housing Costs - Owner Households, 2021

Number of owner households	595
% of owner households with a mortgage	35%
% of owner households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	12%
% in core housing need	16%
Average monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings ($)	$ 752.00
Average value of dwellings ($)	$ 444,000.00

Table 1.5: Housing Costs - Tenant Households, 2021

Number of tenant households	120
% of tenant households in subsidized housing	0%
% of tenant households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	29%
% in core housing need	44%
Average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings ($)	$ 820.00

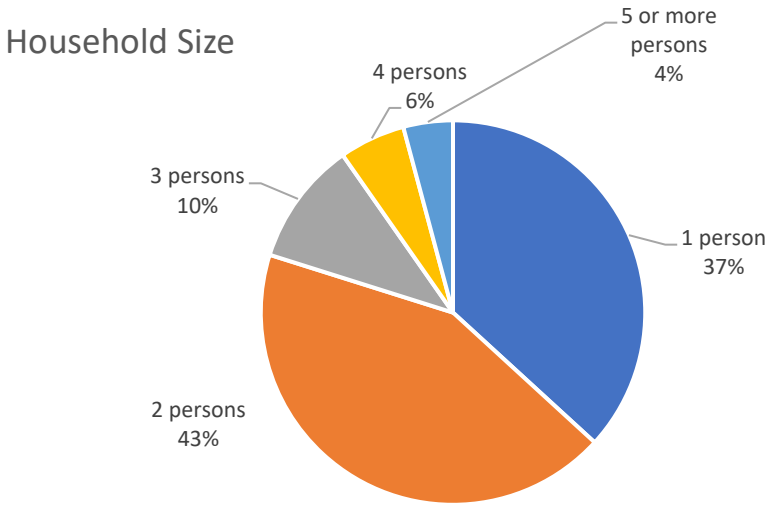


Figure 1.3: Private Households by Household Size, 2021

ii. Dwellings:

- There are 1,029 private dwellings in Area D.
- 715 dwellings (69% of all private dwellings) are being occupied by usual residents. This is the 2nd highest rate of secondary dwellings/ investment properties in the RDCK (34% Area A vs 31% Area D).

- The majority of dwellings are single detached homes (87%) with 10% moveable dwellings.
- The median home price is $565,100 (2022) which is a +63% increase from 2019 (*Source: BC Assessment*).

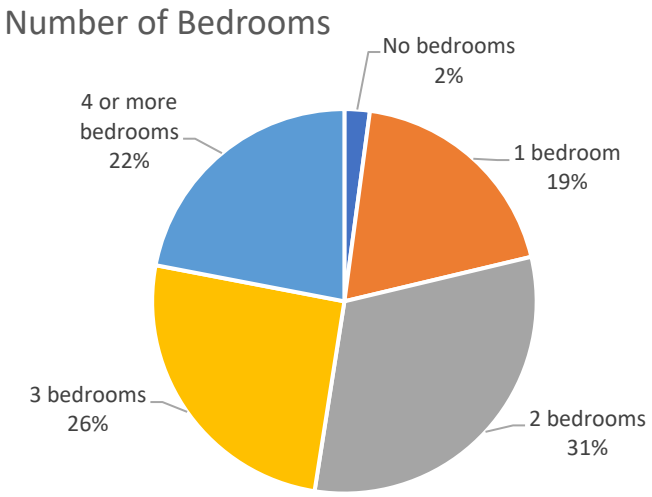


Figure 1.4: Dwellings by Number of Bedrooms, 2021

- 87% of dwellings were identified as needing only regular maintenance and minor repairs, while 13% require major repairs. Most houses (57%) were built post 1980.

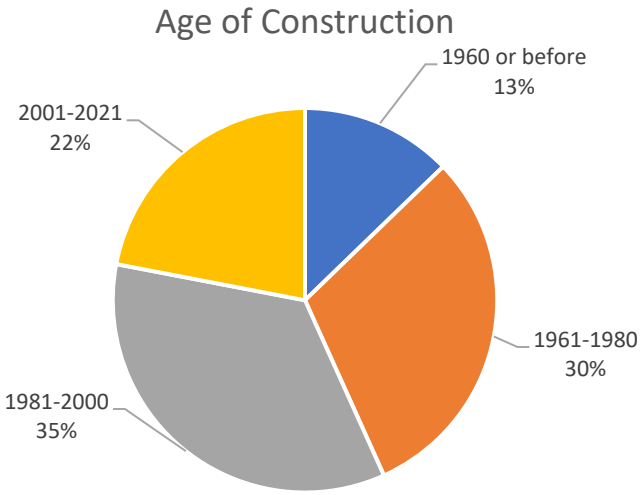


Figure 1.5: Dwellings by Age of Constriction, 2021

d. **Economics**

i. Income and Employment:

- The median before tax household income is $56,800 (2021) which is the lowest of all electoral areas.

- 23% of house holds are designated low income ($14,301-$35,700 annually) and very-low income (<$14,301 annually).
- The unemployment rate in Area D is 15% which is higher than the RDCK rate of 10%.
- The sectors of highest employment in Area D are: Sales and service (23%); Trades, transport and equipment operators (23%); and Business, finance and administration (12%).

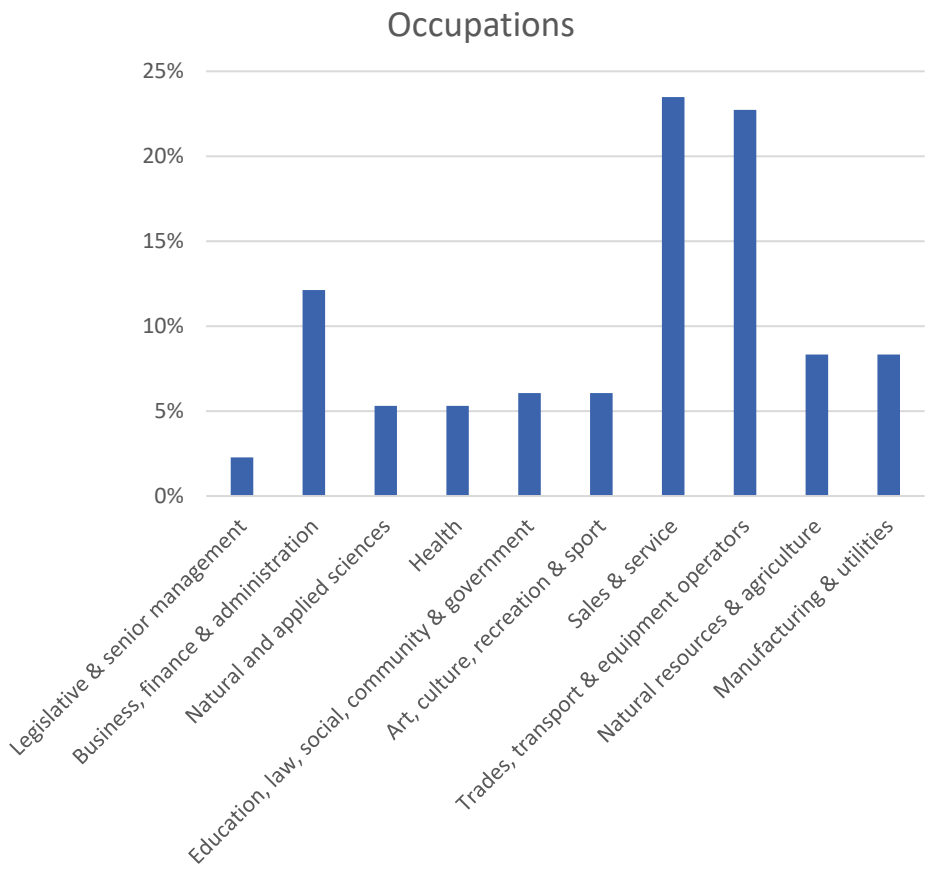


Figure 1.6: Occupations by National Occupational Classification, 2021

ii. Places of Work:

- Most people travel to a usual place of work (63%) with a commute time of less than 15 minutes (55%).
- Most commutes take place by vehicle where the commuter is the driver (79%).
- Kaslo, Shutty Bench, Argenta, Meadow Creek and Cooper Creek are connected by a once daily transit route (BC Transit Route 58 Kaslo-Argenta). However, the 2021 census indicated no public transit use for commutes to work.

2. Land Use Analysis[3]

a. **Crown Land & Private Land**

Area D is RDCK's largest electoral area with a total and area of 5,781.11 km^2 (*Stats Can*).

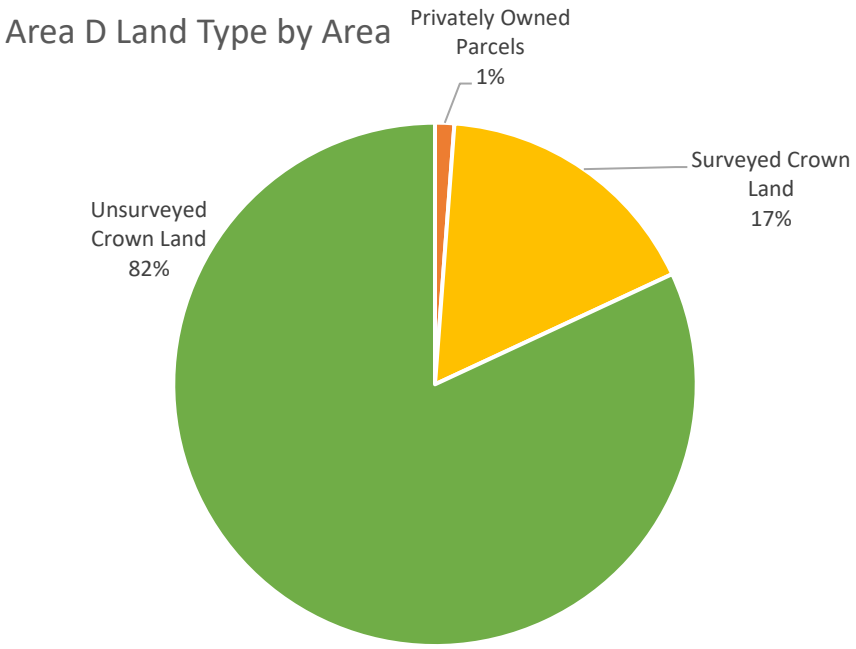


Figure 2.1 Percentage of land by area by ownership type

- There are 2143 privately owned parcels in Area D with a total of 6864 hectares. Of these lands the vast majority is classified as residential lands.

[3] Data taken from BC Assessment Actual Land Use Codes dated April 26, 2026 unless otherwise cited.

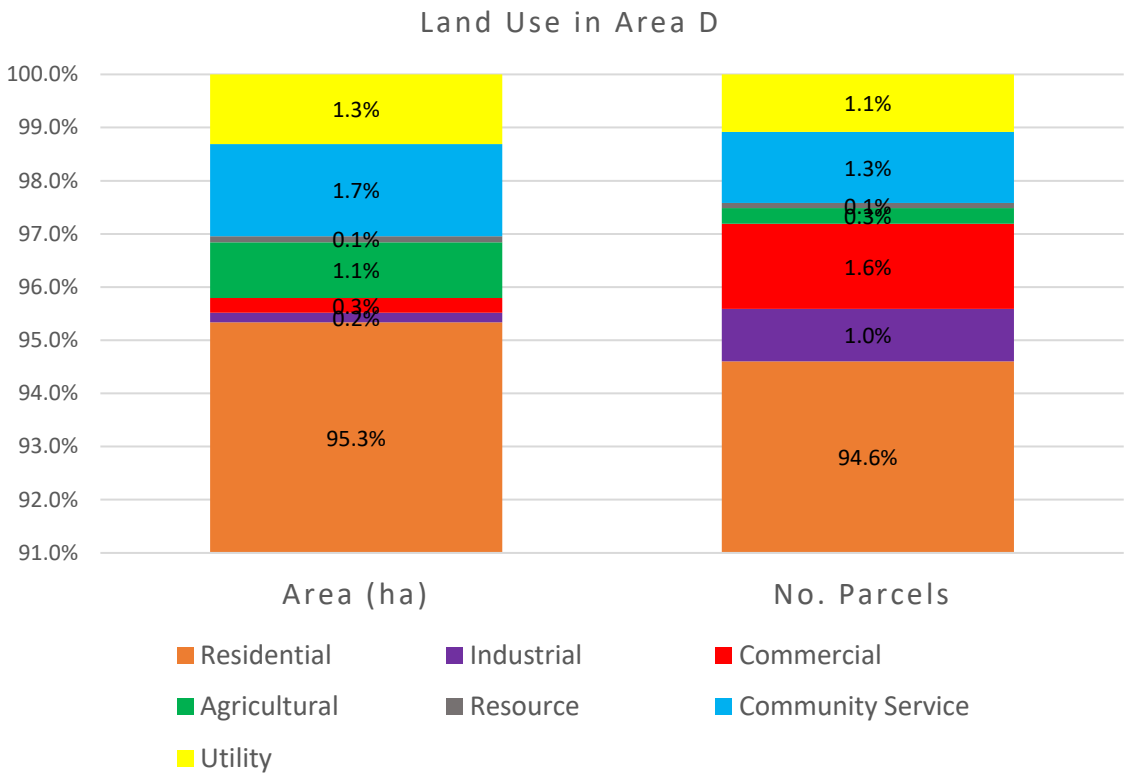


Figure 2.2 Land Use in Area D by Actual Use Codes

b. **Residential Lands**

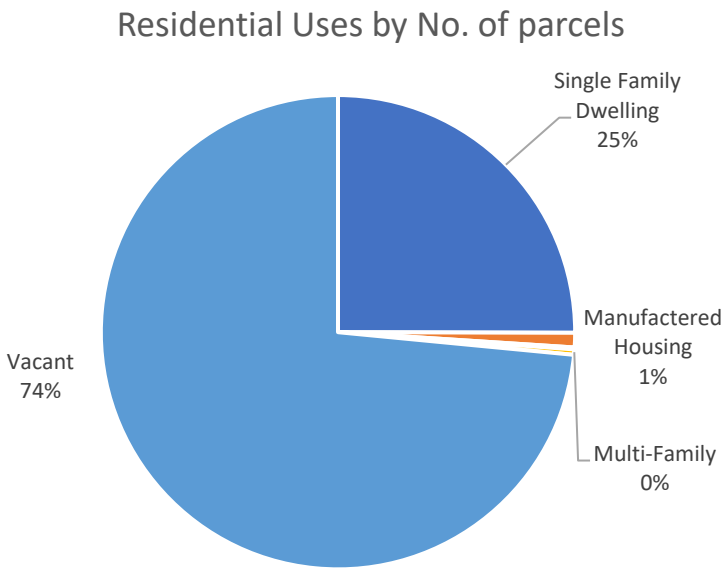


Figure 2.3: Residential Uses by Actual Use Codes

Commercial Lands

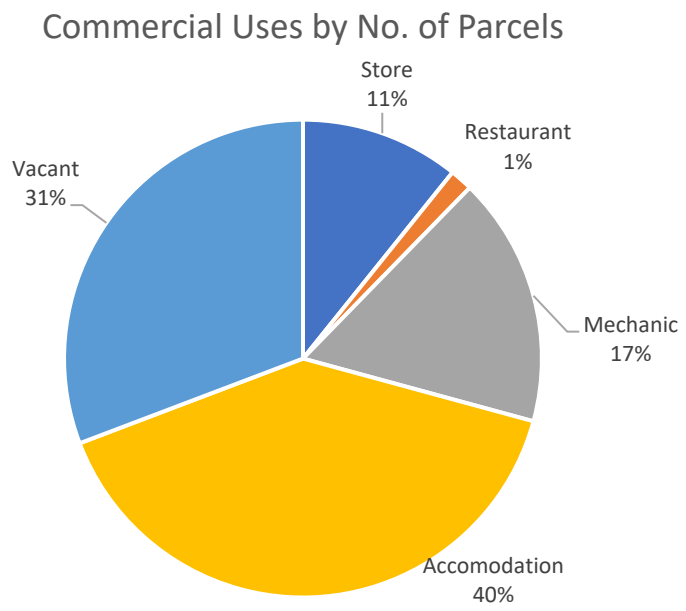


Figure 2.4: Commercial Uses by Actual Use Codes

c. **Industrial Lands**

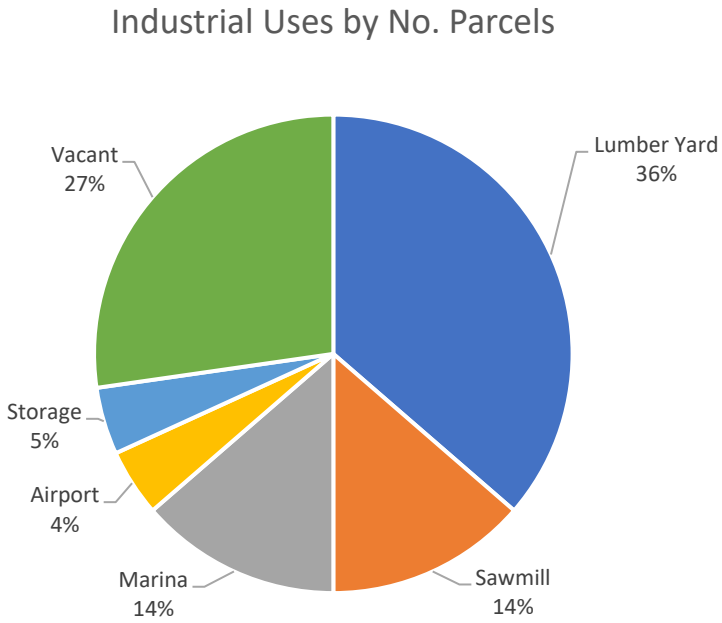


Figure 2.5: Industrial Uses by Actual Use Codes

d. **Agricultural Lands**

- Area D has 7483 hectares of land within the ALR.
- Only 7% or 493 hectares is assessed as farmland.
- SIFT mapping shows most ALR lands have a lesser soil quality rated 5-7 (1 being the best quality and 7 the lowest. The exception would be the valley bottoms and tributaries that have high suitability soil classed 2-4. An example is Duncan river valley and the communities of Meadow Creek and Argenta.
- From 2016-2025 there was 1 ALC subdivision application creating 2 lots and 5 nonfarm use applications.

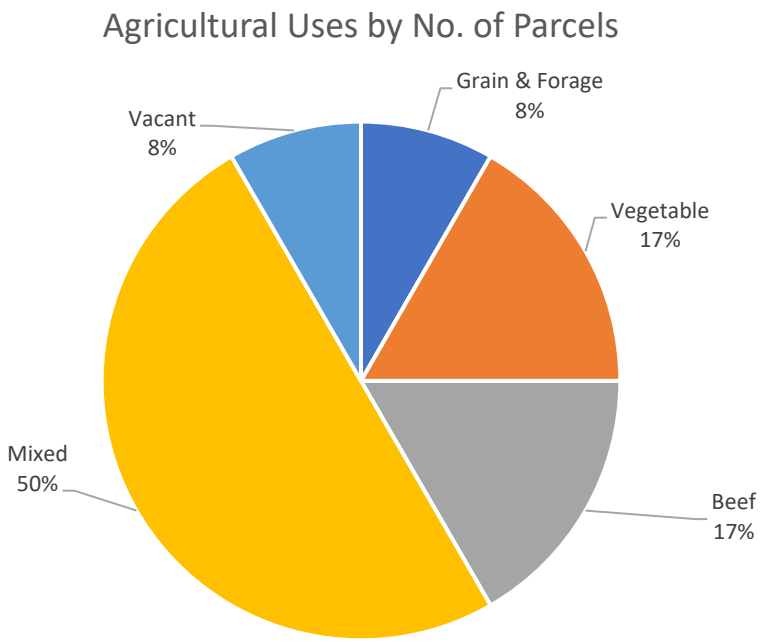


Figure 2.6: Agricultural Uses by Actual Use Codes

e. **Past Growth**

Table 2.1: Subdivisions in Electoral Area D in the past 10 years

Year	No. of applications	Community	No. lots created
2025	1	Allen Subdivision	3
2024	4	Ainsworth Backroad Backroad Meadow Creek	2 2 2 5
2023	1	Meadow Creek	3

Year	No. of applications	Community	No. lots created
2022	1	Fletcher Creek	4
2021	1	Allen Subdivision	2
2020	1	Meadow Creek	2
2019	1	Woodbury	6
2018	0	-	0
2017	1	Howser	2
2016	6	Allen Subdivision Meadow Creek Meadow Creek Meadow Creek Mirror Lake Schroeder Creek	2 2 2 2 2 3

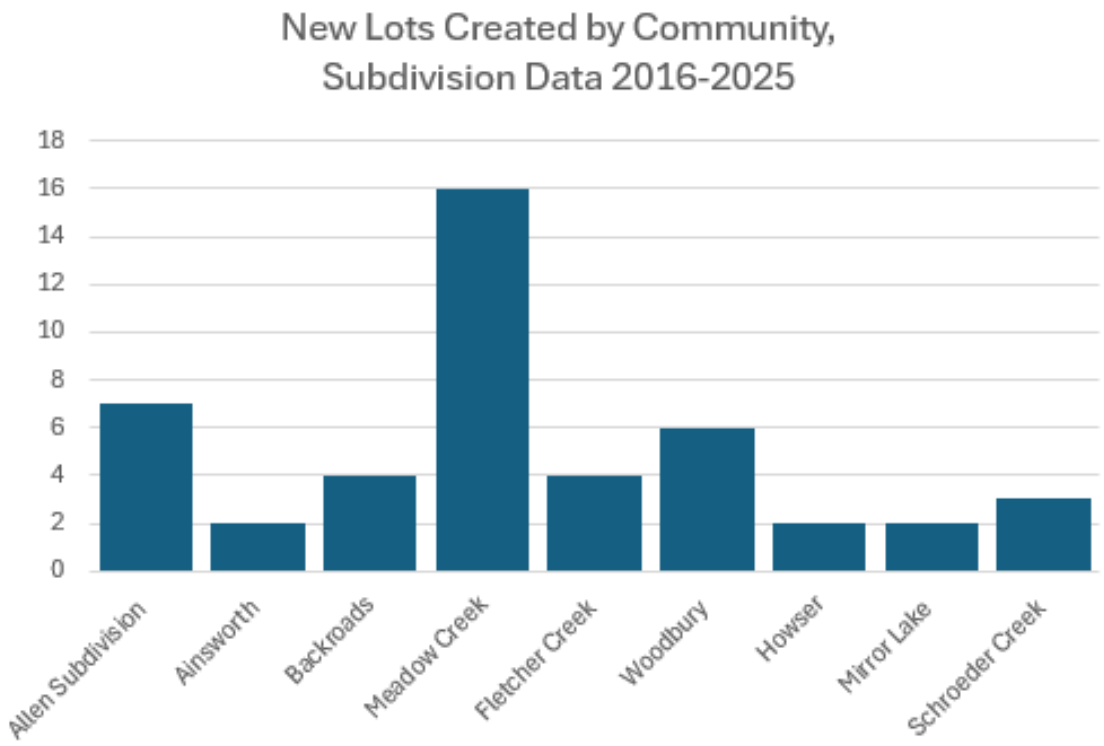


Figure 2.7: New Lots Created by Community

Table 2.2: Building Permits in Electoral Area D in the Past 10 Years

Building Permits	Total Permits	Residential	Residential Addition	Manufactured Home Site	Commercial & Industrial
2025	13	3	10	0	0
2024	21	6	10	0	5
2023	36	13	17	2	4
2022	17	4	10	2	1
2021	29	9	16	3	1
2020	32	8	15	1	8
2019	18	4	11	0	3
2018	26	8	14	1	3
2017	32	6	23	0	3
2016	28	5	19	0	4

Table 2.3: Building Permits for New Builds in Electoral Area D by Community

Year	Community	No. of Residential Permits / New Units	No. of Commercial / Industrial Permits
2025	Allen Subdivision	1	
	Argenta	3	
	Murphy Creek	1	
	Shutty Bench	1	
2024	Cooper Creek	1	
	Lardeau	1	
	Mirror Lake	1	
	Kaslo Corridor	-	1- Industrial
	Shutty Bench	1	
2023	Allen Subdivision	1	
	Johnsons Landing	2	
	Lardeau	1	
	Mirror Lake	1	
	Schroeder Creek	1	
	Shutty Bench	2	
	Woodbury	1	
2022	Cooper Creek	1	
	Kaslo Corridor	1	1- Industrial
	Mirror Lake	3	
	Shutty Bench	3 (4 units)	
	Woodbury	-	1- Industrial

Year	Community	No. of Residential Permits / New Units	No. of Commercial / Industrial Permits
2021	Allen Subdivision	2	
	Backroad	1	
	Mirror Lake	1 (10 units)	
	Johnsons Landing	1	
	Kaslo Corridor	1	1- Industrial
	Meadow Creek	1	
	Schroeder Creek	1 (2 units)	
	Shutty Bench	1	
2020	Birchdale	1	
	Fletcher Creek	2	
	Mirror Lake	1	
	Pine Ridge	1	
	Schroeder Creek	1	
	Shutty Bench	3	
2019	Allen Subdivision	1	
	Fletcher Creek	1	
	Mirror Lake	2	
	Poplar Creek	1	
	Shutty Bench	1	
2018	Allen Subdivision	2	
	Argenta	3	
	Fletcher Creek	1	
	Kaslo Corridor	1	
	Loki Lots	1	
	Poplar Creek	1	3 -Commercial
	Schroeder Creek	1	

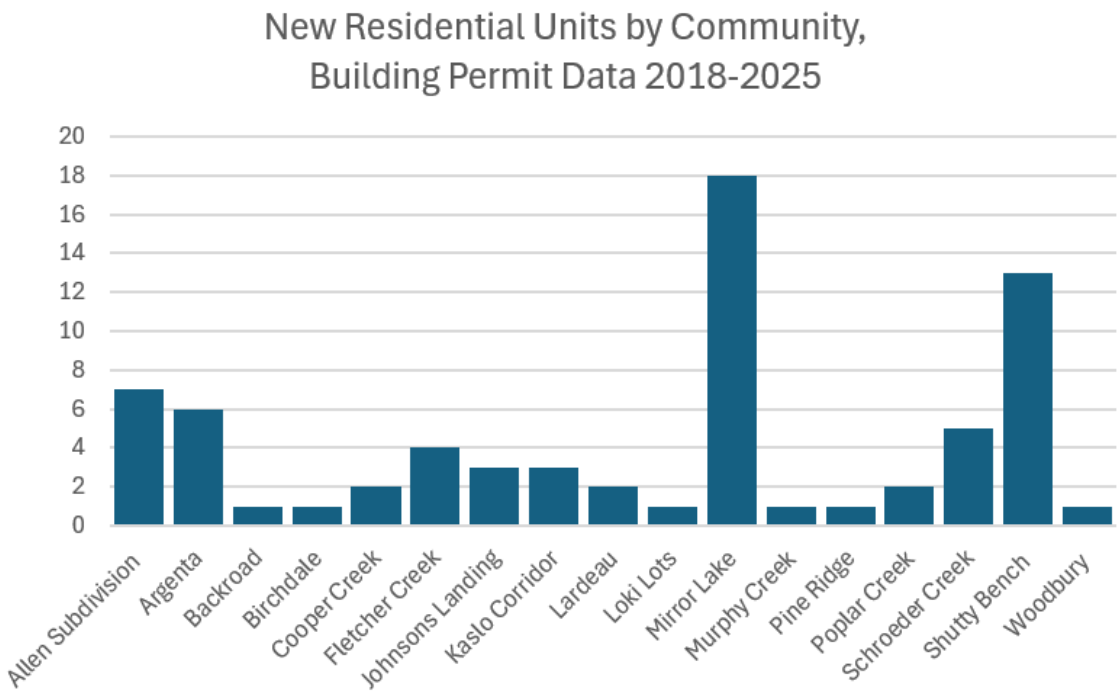


Figure 2.8: New Residential Units by Community, Building Permit Data (2018-2025)

- In total 71 new dwelling units have been built in the last 7 years (2018-2025).

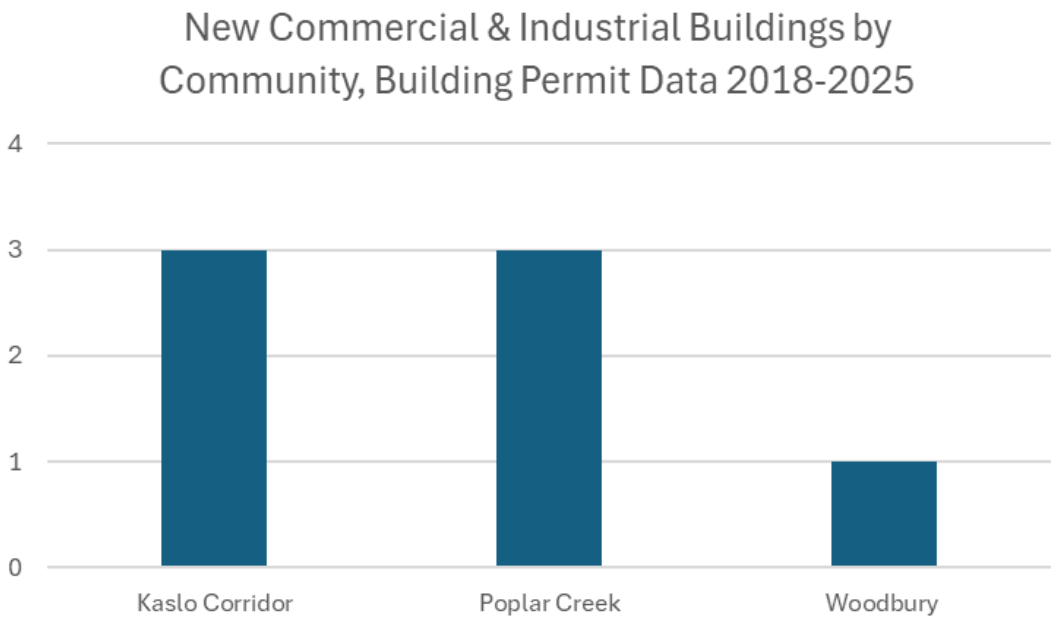


Figure 2.9: New Commercial & Industrial Buildings by Community, Building permit Data (2018-2025)

3. Growth Management

a. **Regional and Local Community Needs Project**

- The Regional and Local Community Needs Project was completed in 2026, and the geospatial data from this project and the regional implementation and recommendations in the final report should be considered when undertaking future land use planning activities.
- The project overlayed 6 indicators to map growth suitability hotspots. These hotspots are location-efficient, have substantial development potential, are already ecologically disturbed and are not in a flood hazard area.

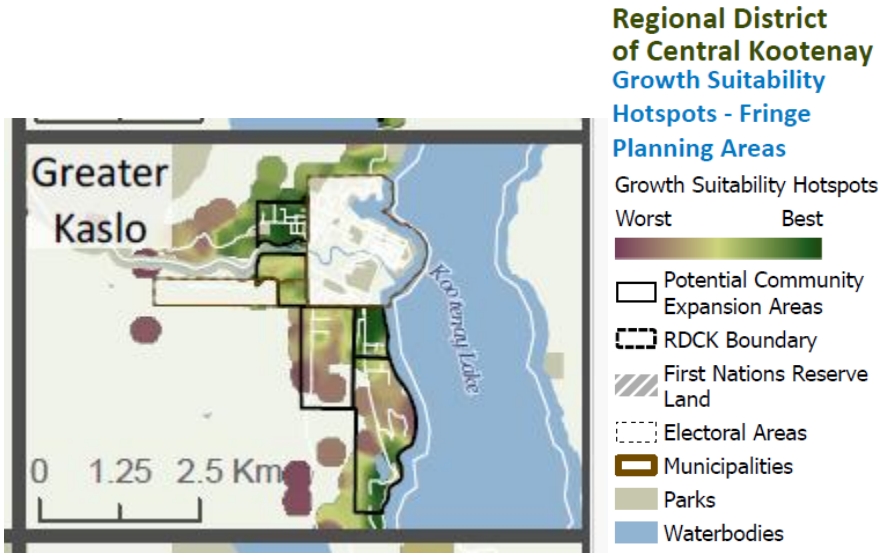


Figure 3.1 Growth Suitability Hotspot

- The project includes recommendations for Official Community Plans, Zoning Bylaws, Development Permit Areas (*report pg. 267-272*).

b. **Case Study - Kaslo Fringe**

- The Allen Subdivision Fringe Planning Area is a location with high suitability for new land uses, with few constraints to development. In particular, there are fewer environmental and hazard constraints as well as strong redevelopment potential. The Allen Subdivision is close to municipal services and the village boundary, and therefore has strong access to amenities and proximity to transit services. The majority of the area is serviced by RDCK's Macdonald Creek Water Service Area with the bulk of the supply provided by the Kaslo municipal system. Allens subdivision relies on onsite disposal. The adjoining area of Kaslo is not serviced by a sanitary sewer system, and extensive upgrades are needed to connect the area.
- Recommendations include:
    - Encourage a strong mix of apartments and townhomes in the Multi-Unit Residential area to address increased housing needs for 1-person and 3-person households in both Electoral Area D and Kaslo. This is especially important on larger properties that can accommodate a mix of housing forms.

- Encourage commercial uses, including a daycare use, in the mixed-use node to increase access to key destinations and amenities for residents.
- Consider the feasibility of acquiring a neighbourhood park adjacent to the proposed mixed-use node.
- Consider the development of active transportation trails connecting the proposed mixed-use node to the Kaslo River Trails.

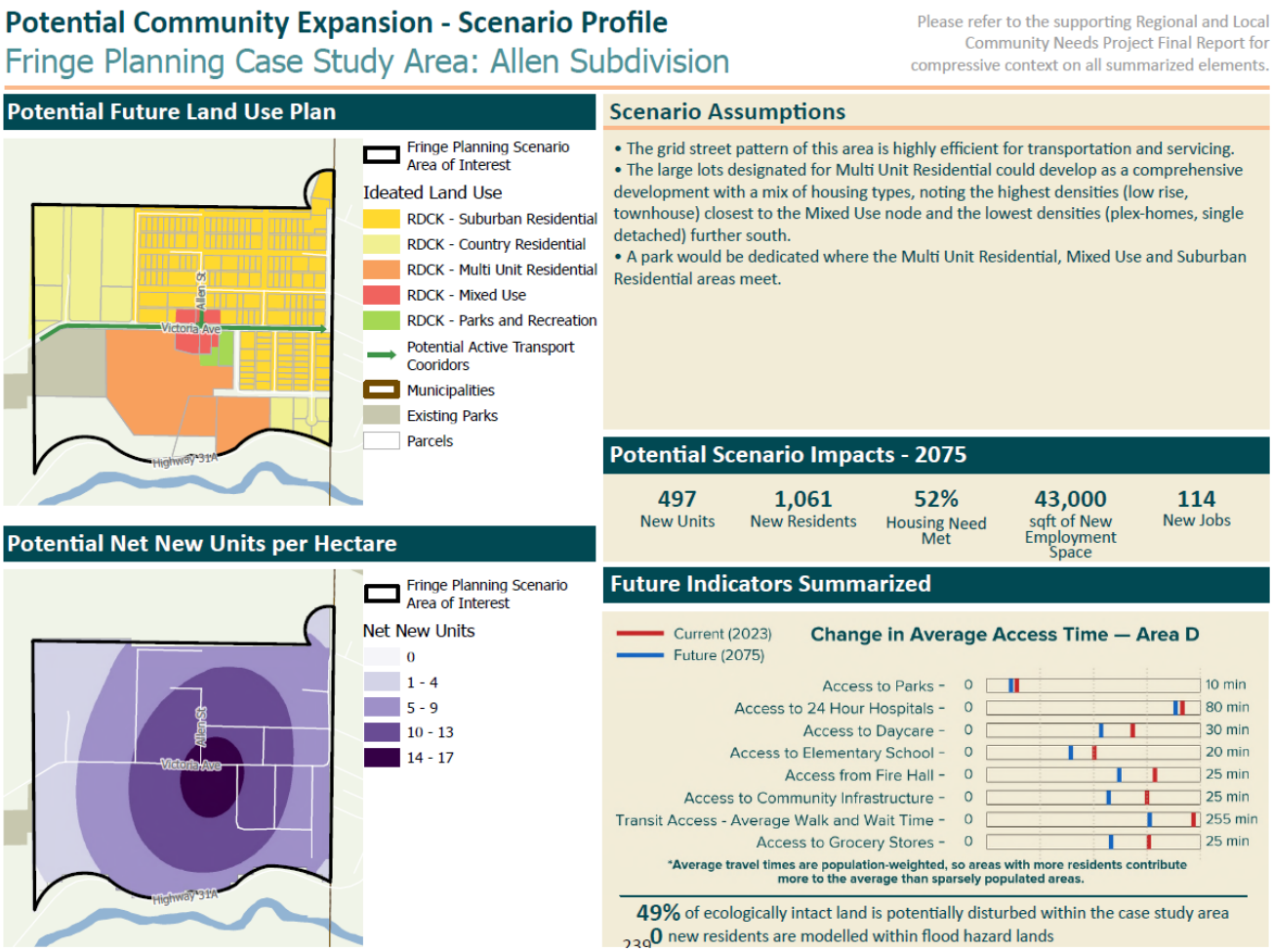


Figure 3.2: Potential community expansion scenario profile within the community of Allen Subdivision

4. Land Use Regulations

Table 4.1: Applicable Land Use Regulations

Communities	Within Official Community Plan (OCP)	Existing Zoning Regulations	Agricultural Land Reserve
Ainsworth	Yes	Yes	No
Allen Subdivision	Yes	No	No
Argenta	Yes	No	Yes

Communities	Within Official Community Plan (OCP)	Existing Zoning Regulations	Agricultural Land Reserve
Backroad	Yes	No	No
Birchdale	Yes	No	Yes
Cooper Creek	No	No	Yes
Duncan Estates	No	No	No
Fletcher Creek	Yes	No	Yes
Hamill Creek	Yes	No	Yes
Howser	No	No	Yes
Johnsons Landing	Yes	No	Yes
Kaslo Corridor	Yes	No	No
Lardeau	No	No	No
Loki Lots	Yes	No	No
Meadow Creek	No	No	Yes
Mirror Lake	Yes	No	No
Murphy Creek	Yes	No	No
Pine Ridge	Yes	No	No
Poplar Creek	No	No	Yes
Retallack	Yes	No	No
Schroeder Creek	Yes	No	No
Shutty Bench	Yes	No	Yes
South Fork	Yes	No	No
Woodbury	Yes	No	No

5. Land Use Conflicts

- From 2024 to 2026 RDCK received 5 official bylaw complaints around land use in Area D – 2 complaints regarding land use bylaws and 3 complaints regarding the unsightly property bylaw.
- Complaints over the last 15 years have included land use topics such as: short term rentals, tree cutting, RV's, livestock, and parking.

6. Housing

- The 2024 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identifies the following key areas of local need: affordable housing, rental housing, special needs housing, housing for seniors, housing for families, shelters to address homelessness, and proximity to transportation (*report pg. 6-8*).
- The HNA predicts an increase in number of Area D households from 715 in 2021 to 940 in 2041.
- Anticipated housing demand in Area D is 188 units from 2024-2029 and 397 units from 2024-2044.

Component	Housing units for:	5 year (by 2026)	20 year (by 2041)
A	Households in Extreme Core Housing Need	2	9
B	Individuals experiencing homelessness	5	10
C	Suppressed households	25	99
D	Anticipated household growth	101	254
E	Increasing the rental vacancy rate to 3%	1	2
F	A local demand buffer	0	0
TOTAL		**132**	**371**

Figure 6.1: Anticipated Housing Demand Calculations, Area D

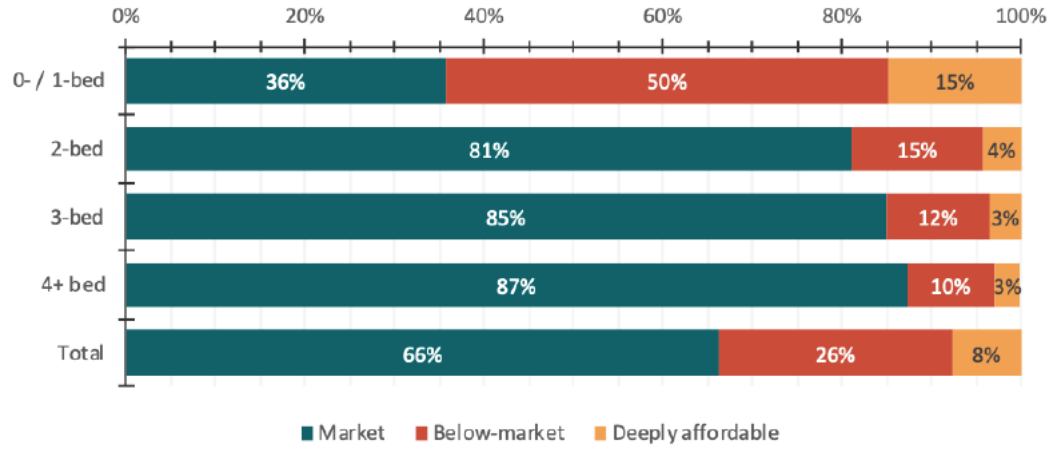


Figure 6.2: Distribution of price model demand by number of bedrooms, RDCK 2041

- Area D has the highest level of energy poverty; energy costs are 10.8% of the average after tax income where the energy poverty rate is >10% (*pg. 35*).

7. Servicing

Table 7.1: Water Users[4]

Community	Water System	Status	Population Served
Ainsworth	Ainsworth Hot Springs Water System	No water advisory	>50
Allen Subdivision	McDonald Creek Water System (RDCK/Kaslo)	Limited connections available	72 connections
Fletcher Creek	Fletcher Creek Improvement District Water System	Boil water notice	51-500
Howser	Howser Water Users	Boil water notice	>50
Johnsons Landing	Gar Creek Water Users Association	No water advisory	>50
Lardeau	Lardeau Water Users Association	Boil water notice	51-500
Loki Lots	Loki Lots	Boil water notice	51-500
Mirror Lake	Mirror Lake Water Users	Boil water notice	51-500
Pine Ridge	Pine Ridge Water Utility Society	No water advisory	51-500
Schroeder Creek	Schroeder Creek Water Society	Boil water notice	51-500
South Fork	Sourdough Water System	No water advisory	>50
Woodbury	Woodbury Village Water System (RDCK)	No water advisory	41 connections

- Argenta Watershed is a case study in the RDCK's Watershed Governance Initiative (2020).
- The Ainsworth Sewer Corporation has been providing sewer services to 11 connections and a 7 room motel for several decades. The system needs upgrades. This service is owned and operated independently of the RDCK.

[4] Information taken from Interior Health Authority's Water Advisory Map on April 16, 2026

Hazards

a. **Flooding and Steep Creek Hazards**

i. Floodplain Management Bylaw

Table 8.1 Identified Hazards

Community	Identified Hazard
Ainsworth	Kootenay Lake Floodplain
Allen Subdivision	NSFEA McDonald Creek -Rating E & 1
Argenta	NSFEA Argenta Creek -Rating G
Backroads	None
Birchdale	Kootenay Lake Floodplain
Cooper Creek	Duncan River Floodplain; NSFEA Cooper Creek -Rating E, 1 & 2
Duncan Estates	Duncan Lake Floodplain
Fletcher Creek	NSFEA Fletcher Creek -Rating G
Hamill Creek	Duncan River Floodplain; NSFEA Hamill Creek -Rating E, 1 & 2;
Howser	Duncan Lake Floodplain
Johnsons Landing	NSFEA's Gardner Creek -Rating G, Gar Creek -Rating G & Koot Joe Creek -Rating G
Kaslo Corridor	Kootenay Lake Floodplain
Lardeau	Kootenay Lake Floodplain; NSFEA Davis Creek -Rating E
Loki Lots	Kootenay Lake Floodplain
Meadow Creek	Duncan River Floodplain; NSFEA Lardeau River -Rating E
Mirror Lake	Kootenay Lake Floodplain; NSFEA Bjerkness Creek -Rating G
Murphy Creek	Kootenay Lake Floodplain; NSFEA Clute Creek -Rating E
Pine Ridge	Kootenay Lake Floodplain
Poplar Creek	NSFEA Poplar Creek -Rating E
Retallack	None
Schroeder Creek	Kootenay Lake Floodplain; NSFEA Schroeder Creek -Rating E, 1 & 2
Shutty Bench	Kootenay Lake Floodplain; NSFEA's Wing Creek – Rating G & Shutty Creek -Rating G
South Fork	NSFEA Keen Creek -Rating G
Woodbury	Kootenay Lake Floodplain

Where NSFEA is 'Non Standard Flood and Erosion Area' and rating descriptions can be found on pg. 25 of the RDCK Floodplain Management Bylaw

ii. Johnsons Landing

- The Johnsons Landing Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment was prepared in 2013 after a devastating land slide that occurred July 12, 2012 on the hillside approximately 2 km above Johnsons Landing.
- There is potential for future landslides in the Gar Creek drainage:
    - The likelihood of a landslide and debris flow that is contained within the Gar Creek channel flowing over the Gar Creek fan and into Kootenay Lake is estimated at 1:10 per year. This

landslide would remain confined in the Gar Creek channel with no deposit onto the Johnsons Landing bench. A debris flow would travel to the Gar Creek fan and would potentially impact the public beach and the Argenta-Johnsons Landing road at the Gar Creek crossing.

  - The likelihood of a landslide of sufficient volume to travel onto and near the downslope end of the Johnsons Landing bench is estimated at 1:1,000 per year. Part of this landslide would travel onto the Johnsons Landing bench while part of the landslide (debris flow component) would cross the Argenta-Johnsons Landing Road at the Gar Creek crossing and would impact the beach area near the fan. The landslide would potentially impact 2 houses on the Johnsons Landing bench, the Community Hall, Houston Road, the public beach, and the Argenta-Johnsons Landing road at the Gar Creek crossing (debris flow component).
  - The likelihood of a landslide of sufficient volume to travel onto the Johnsons Landing bench and continue to Kootenay Lake is estimated at 1:10,000 per year. Part of this landslide would travel onto the Johnsons Landing bench and down to the beach while part of landslide (debris flow component) would cross the Argenta-Johnsons Landing Road at the Gar Creek crossing and impact the beach area at the fan. The landslide would potentially impact 3 houses, the Community Hall, Houston Road, the public beach, and the Argenta-Johnsons Landing road at the Gar Creek crossing (debris flow component).

- Restrict further land/house development in the areas identified as having a moderate, high, or very high hazard unless subsequent geotechnical investigations are conducted that supports the development, recommends protective works, and/or reduces the assessed hazard. The investigations would need to consider the macro and micro topography, any updated landslide modelling and slope monitoring information, and any other new or existing information. It is likely that in areas identified as having a high or very high hazard that such an investigation and/or works would be cost prohibitive.

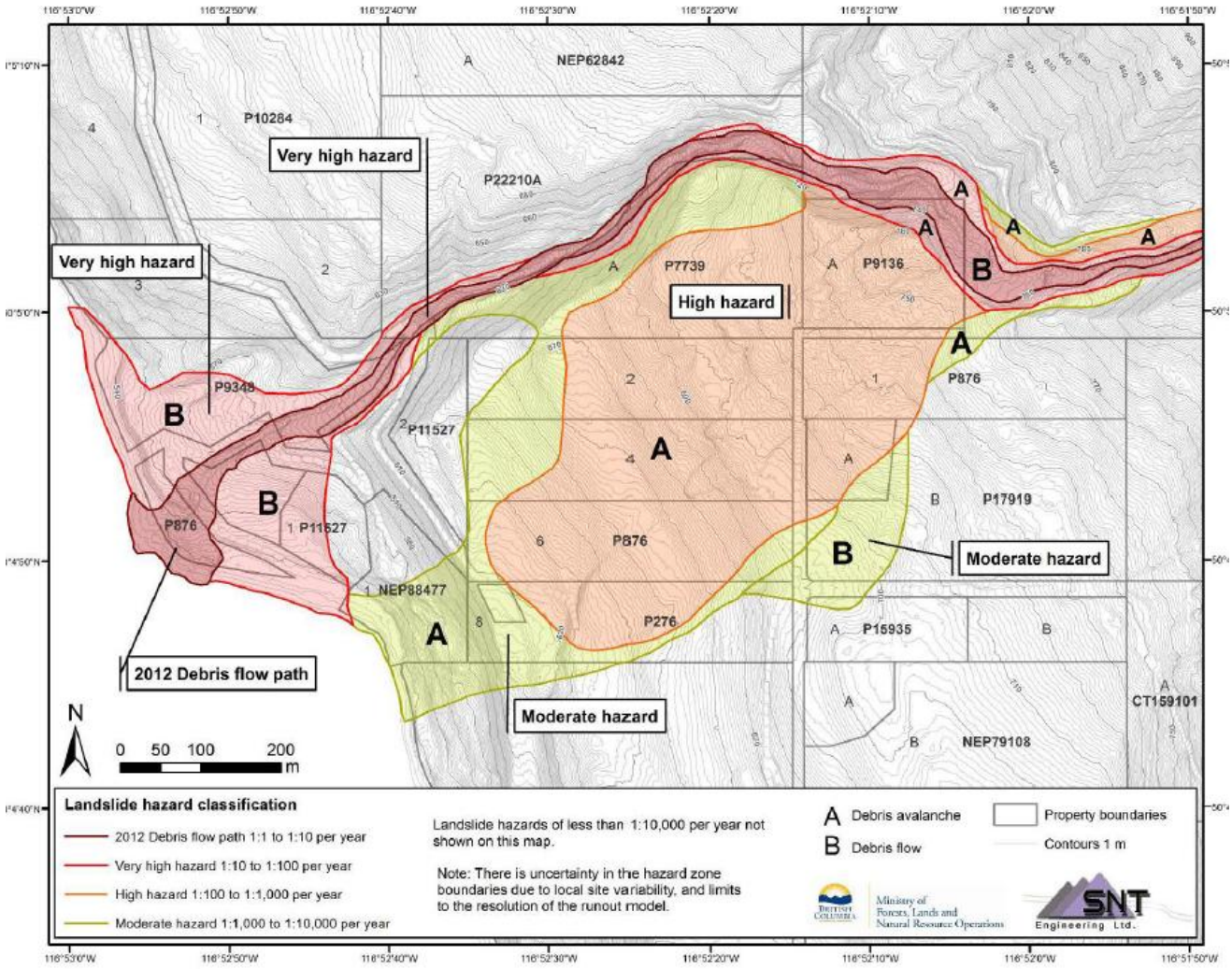


Figure 8.1 Johnsons Landing Hazard Zoning Map

iii. Cooper Creek

- Cooper Creek was 1 of 10 steep creeks chosen for further investigation in the 2020 RDCK Floodplain and Steep Creek Study.
- The composite hazard rating map can serve to guide subdivision and other development permit approvals. It requires discussions and regulatory decisions on which hazard zone is attributed to specific land use prescriptions, covenants, bylaws or other limiting clauses for both existing and proposed development. The current Floodplain Management Bylaw review will provide direction on how to develop in these areas.

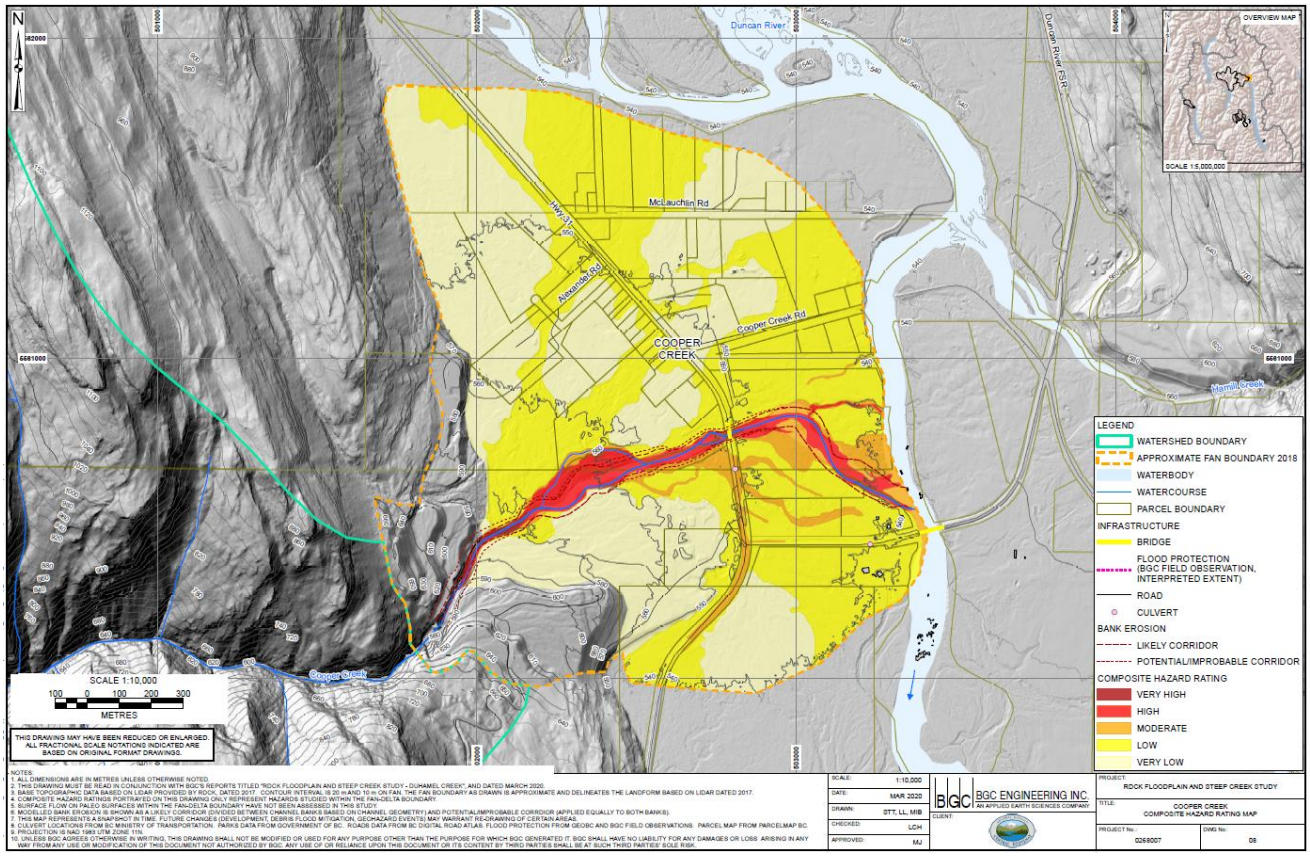


Figure 8.2. Cooper Creek Composite Hazard Rating Map

b. **Wildfire Hazards**

- The Area D Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan, 2023 is both a localized risk assessment and an action plan to improve wildfire resiliency within Area D's Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).
- CWRP recommendations include:
    - Upon the roll-out of the new BC Building Code in 2024, RDCK should review and assess what FireSmart principles are included and compare them to the draft Wildfire Development Permit Areas (DPAs). Update the draft DPAs as required. Initiate a process to implement the wildfire DPAs, if still required, to manage for risks not addressed in the new Code.
    - Update references to "fire risk" within Comprehensive Land Use Bylaw (e.g., sections 14.8, and 14.10) to include referencing the Local Wildfire Risk Analysis developed as part of this plan, as it more accurately reflects current fire risk for EA-D's WUI than currently available provincial data.

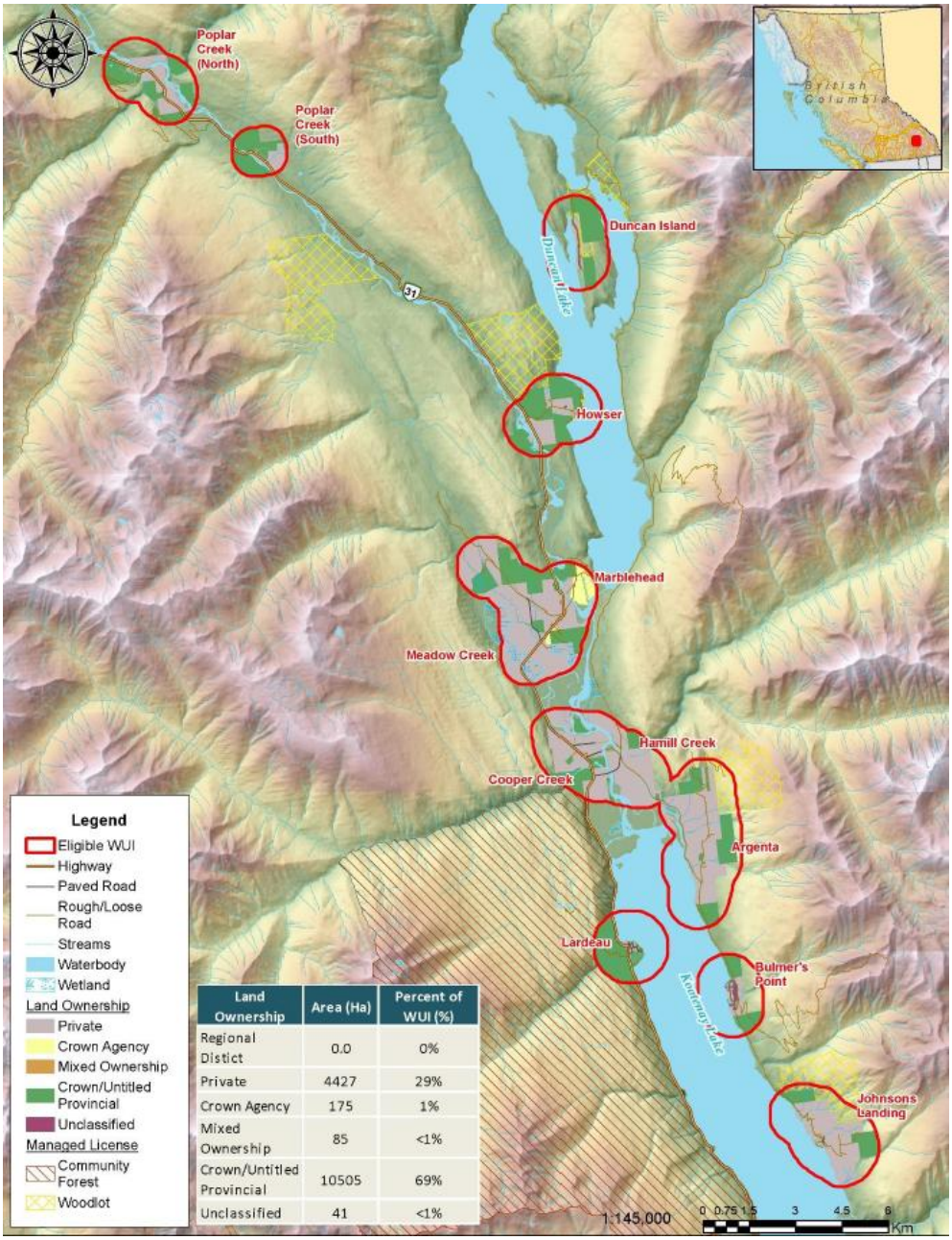
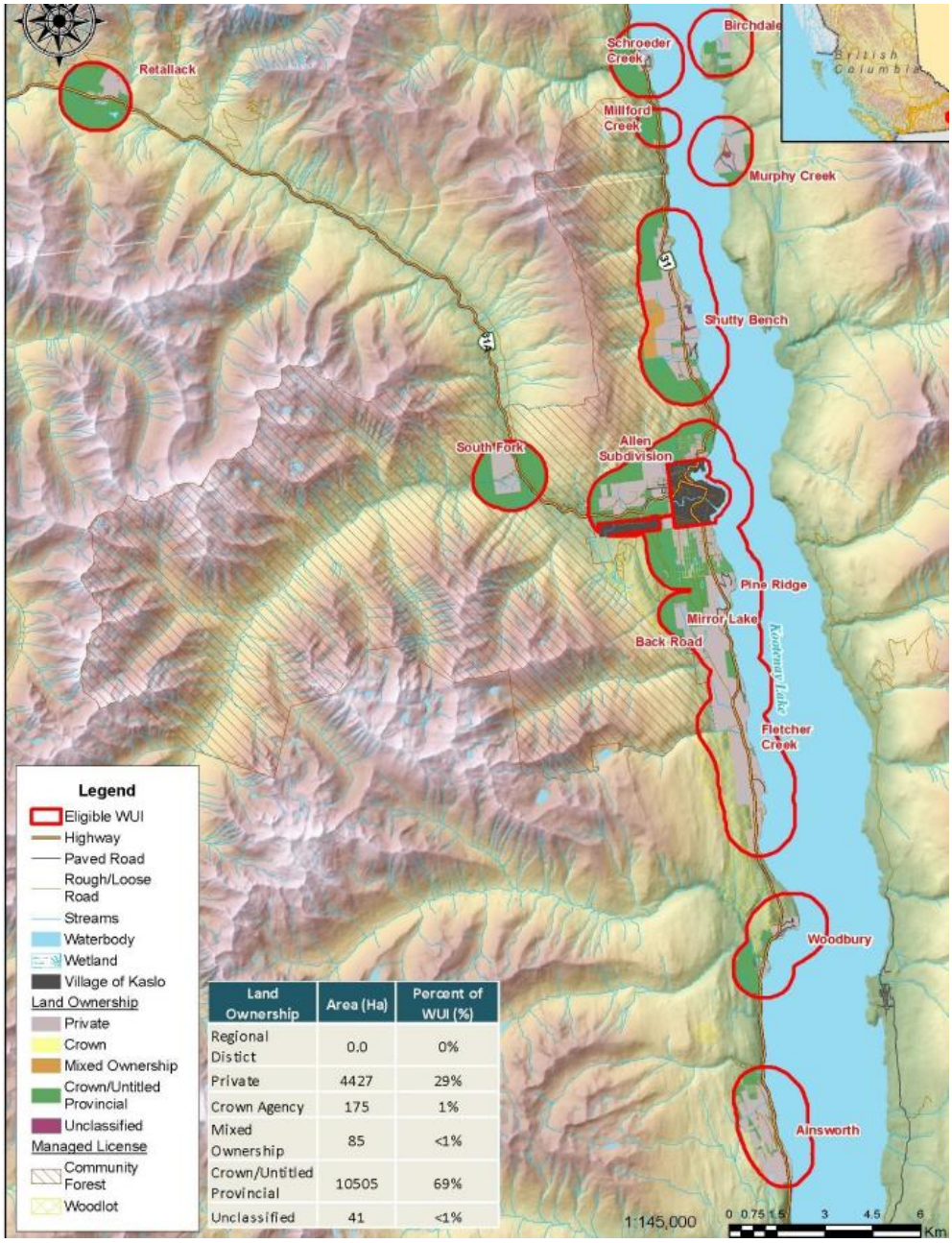


Figure 8.3: Overview of Area D's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) – North



Land Ownership	Area (Ha)	Percent of WUI (%)
Regional Distict	0.0	0%
Private	4427	29%
Crown Agency	175	1%
Mixed Ownership	85	<1%
Crown/Untitled Provincial	10505	69%
Unclassified	41	<1%

Figure 8.4: Overview of Area D's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) – South

Table 8.2: Wildfire Threat Summary for Wildland Urban Interface

Wildfire Threat			
Threat Class	**Hectares**	**% of WUI**	**% of Assessable Public Land (excluding water)**
Extreme	925	6%	14%
High	1925	13%	29%
Moderate	3368	22%	51%
Low	427	3%	6%
Very Low/No Threat (Water)	4132	27%	-
No Data (Private Land)	*4458*	*29%*	-

Associated spatial data on maps pg. 84-87 of CWRP

8. Environment

a. **Kootenay Lake**

- The Kootenay Lake Shoreline Guidance Document is a result of a comprehensive Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping project (updated with 2022 FIMP data) that involved an inventory and assessment of ecological, archaeological and Ktunaxa cultural values along the shoreline of Kootenay Lake. The resulting Shoreline Guidance Document directs shoreline development such as docks, retaining walls, or dredging activities in an effort to protect high value shoreline habitats.
- Draft Kootenay Lake Development Permit Area guidelines and Development Permit Enforcement work have been created and were placed on hold pending an in-depth review of Area D Land Use planning.

b. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

- The Kootenay Conservation program has identified the Duncan River Valley as a high value wildlife corridor that supports rare and critical habitat for species at risk and is preferred habitat for nearly all species of local wildlife in this otherwise rugged, high elevation landscape. The valley also serves as the first east-west “land bridge” north of Creston, for large and small wide-ranging mammals, forming a vital movement linkage between the large wilderness areas of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy to the east and Goat Range Provincial Park to the west.

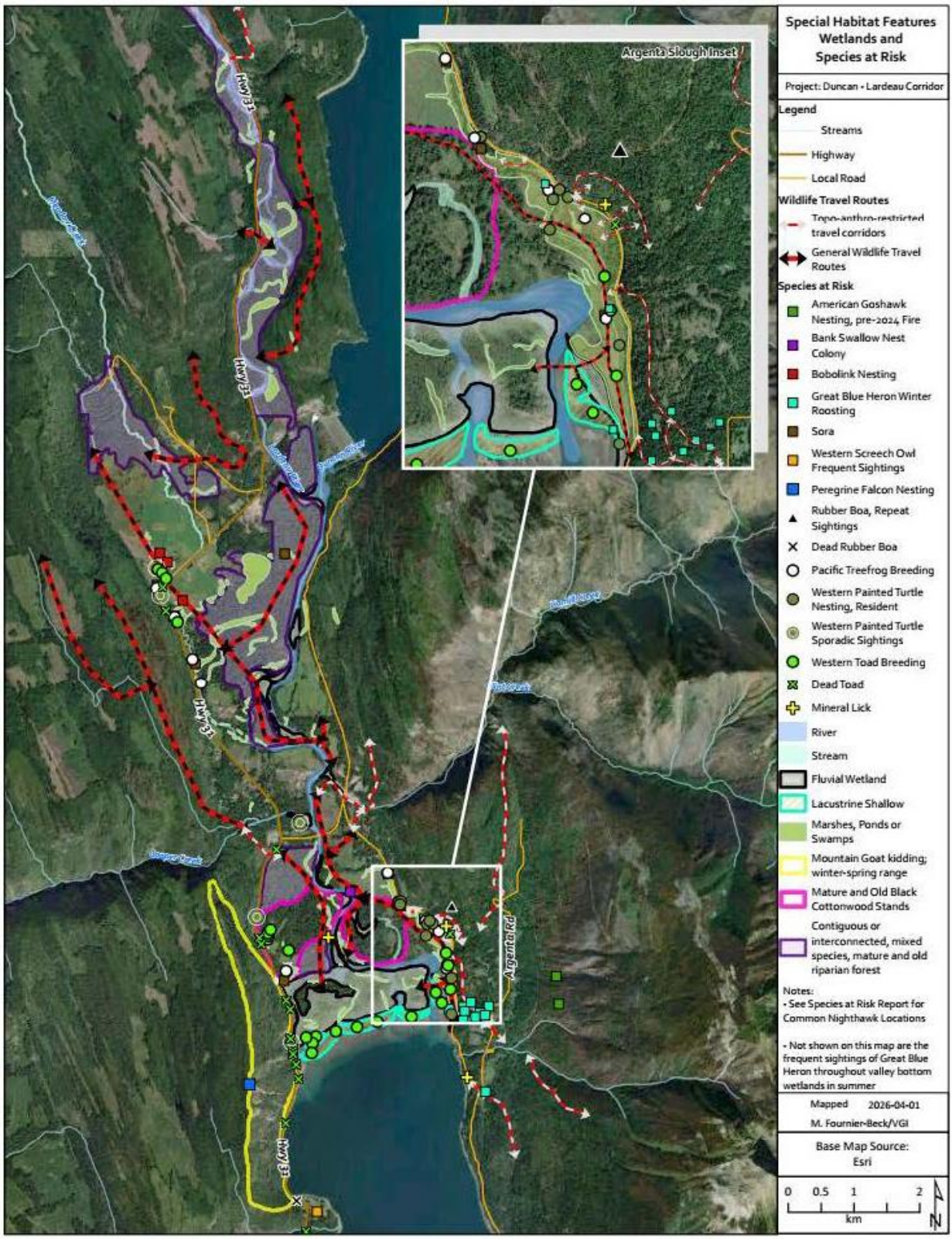


Figure 9.1: Special habitat features, Species at Risk, and surveyed species locations in the Duncan Lardeau Corridor

9. Parks

Area D has three regional parks:

- **Lardeau Regional Park** (Lardeau): a 2.3 hectare waterfront day use park is on the western shore of Kootenay Lake in the community of Lardeau in Area D of the Regional District of Central Kootenay. Lardeau Regional Park is primarily used by local residents for day-use public recreation opportunities, including boating (there is a boat launch and parking), picnicking and beach related activities.
- **Glacier Creek Regional Park** (Duncan Lake): located along the eastern shore of Duncan Lake, north of Meadow Creek. The park is approximately 20.1 hectares in size and, with the exception of roads, campsites and picnic areas, the site is tree covered. The park is designated as a Waterfront Access regional park and includes, outdoor recreation opportunities including camping, boating, fishing, swimming, picnicking and nature interpretation.
- **Historic Ainsworth Wharf Regional Park** (Ainsworth): situated in the community of Ainsworth on Kootenay Lake approximately 48km north of Nelson. The park is designated as a Waterfront Access regional park and provides day-use recreation opportunities including boating, swimming, picnicking and nature appreciation. The park also preserves the historic concrete wharf for public use.

10. Heritage

The following Area D sites are listed in the RDCK Community Heritage Register:

- **J.B. Fletcher Store** (Ainsworth): a late 19th Century single-storey wood-frame mercantile structure with an above ground stone-walled basement, built into a slope. The J.B. Fletcher name is displayed on a prominent parapet on the highway side of the building, which is located at the northwest corner of Sutton Street and Highway 31, on the shores of Kootenay Lake in Ainsworth, BC.
- **Cooper Creek Gold Field** (Cooper Creek): the site is located at Cooper Creek, 30 km north of Kaslo and 3 km south of Meadow Creek. The property is immediately west of Highway 31 about 2.5 km north of Kootenay Lake.
- **Billy Clark Cabin** (Meadow Creek): a pioneer log cabin with shingled gables originally built on the shore of Duncan Lake, BC and moved to its current location at the Lardeau Valley Museum in 2009.
- **Lardeau Valley Museum Building** (Meadow Creek): a two-storey wood-frame, hip roof house situated along Highway 31 North in the community of Meadow Creek, in the West Kootenays region of British Columbia. It is one of several salvaged historic buildings relocated from within the Lardeau Valley area to this site to make up the open-air Lardeau Valley Museum. The Gerrard Hatchery Residence functions as the museum building and office.
- The **Places that Matter Database** also lists many Area D heritage resources.
- Archaeological site records and information can be accessed through the **RAAD Database**.

11. Other

Other relevant RDCK reports, plans, policies and/or studies include:

- 2011 Agriculture Plan (includes land use planning recommendations);
- 2020 Regional Watershed Governance Initiative (includes best practices);
- 2023 Housing Action Plan (includes land use planning recommendations); and,

- 2024 Ideas for Climate Action (includes land use planning recommendations).

Appendix 1: Backgrounders

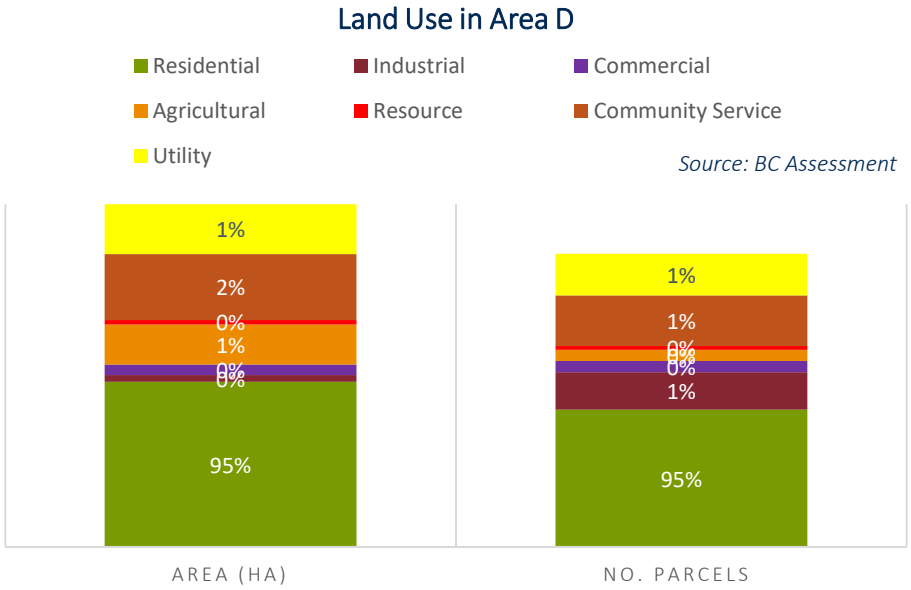
- Land Use & Growth
- Housing
- Employment Lands Backgrounder
- Agriculture
- Natural Hazards
- Natural Environment

Area D Community Planning

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: LAND USE & GROWTH

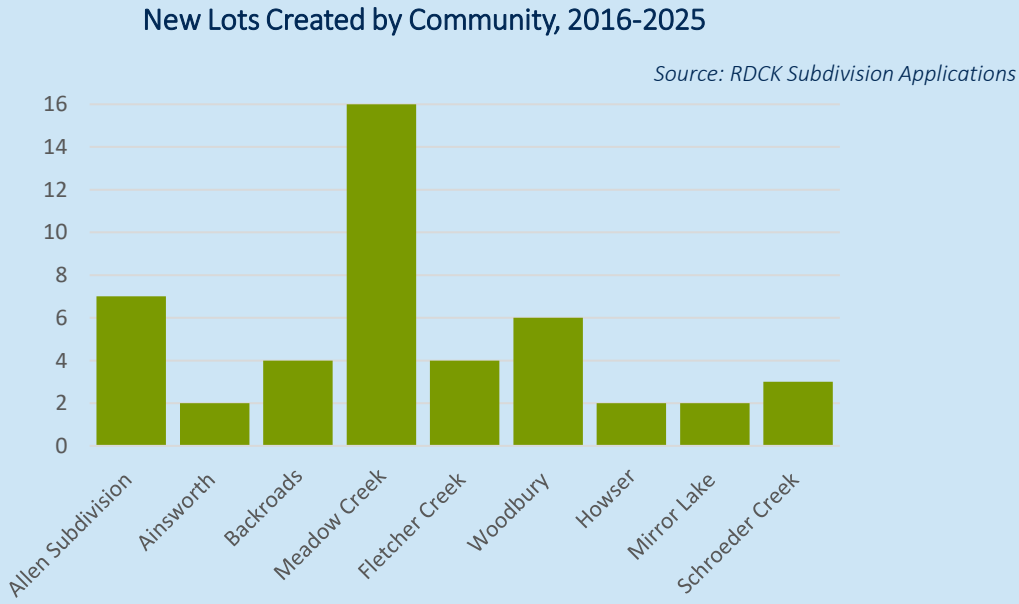
What Do We Know About Land Use in Area D?

- Area D is RDCK's largest electoral area with a total land area of 5,781.11 km^2.
- There are 2,143 privately owned parcels in Area D with a total of 6,864 hectares or 1% of the land base. Of these lands the vast majority is classified as residential lands.



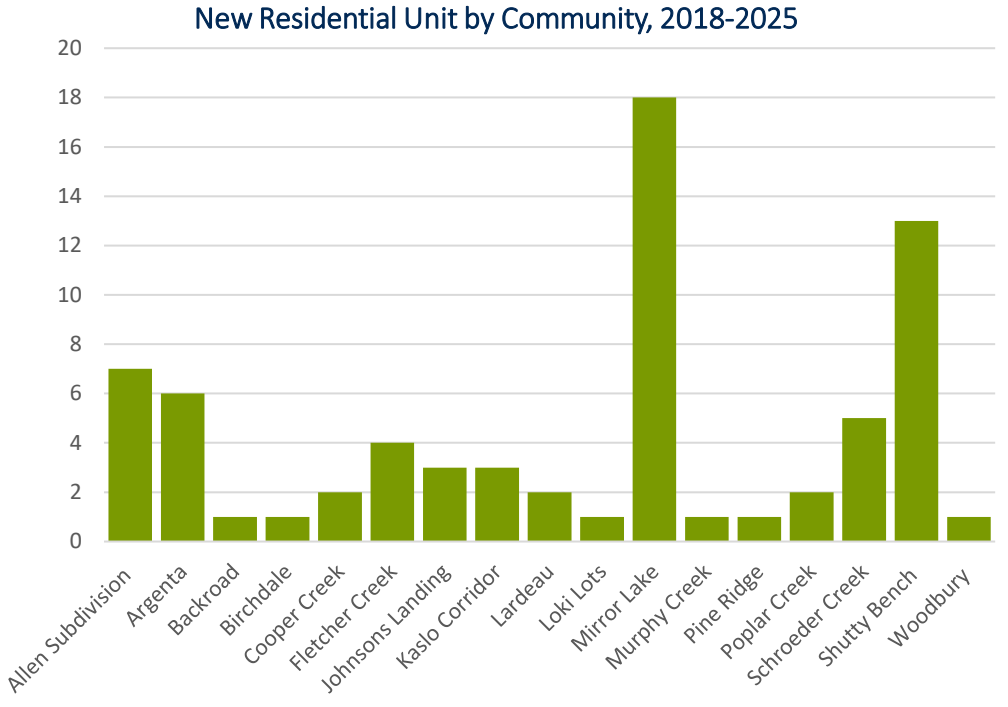
Where is Growth Happening?

- In the past decade subdivisions have created 46 new lots in Area D.



Where is Building Happening?

- From 2018-2025 71 new residential dwelling units were built in Area D.
- In that same time frame 7 building permits were issued for new commercial or industrial buildings – 3 in Kaslo Corridor, 3 in Poplar Creek and 1 in Woodbury.



Source: RDCK Building Permit data

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning is the most impactful tool for managing growth in alignment with community values. Zoning works by dividing a community into different zones with different uses. RDCK zones include residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas just to name a few.

Zoning can:



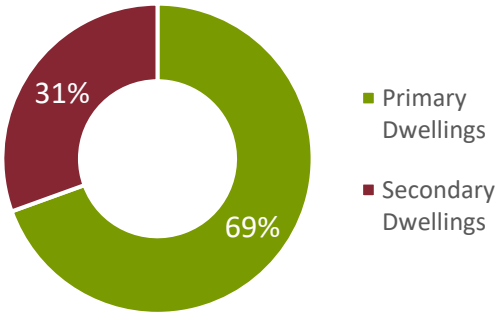
- Separate incompatible uses
- Zone dense and intensive uses away from natural hazards, important ecosystems, and farmland
- Zone uses together to create complete communities with housing, schools, shops and services nearby

Area D Community Planning

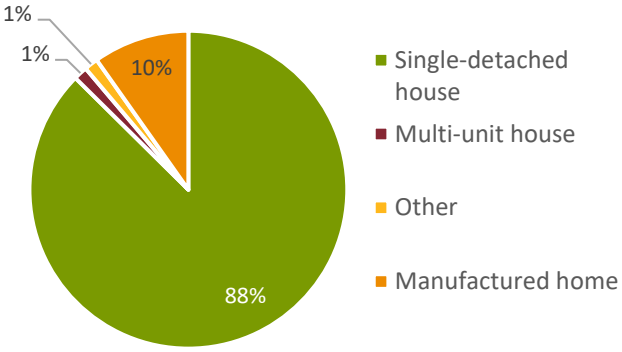
COMMUNITY CONTEXT: HOUSING

What Do We Know About Housing in Area D?

There are 1,029 private dwellings in Area D.

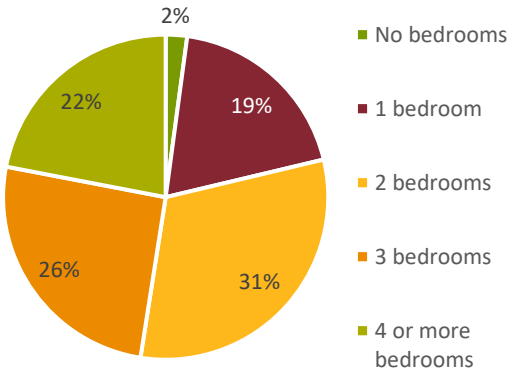


Occupation Type

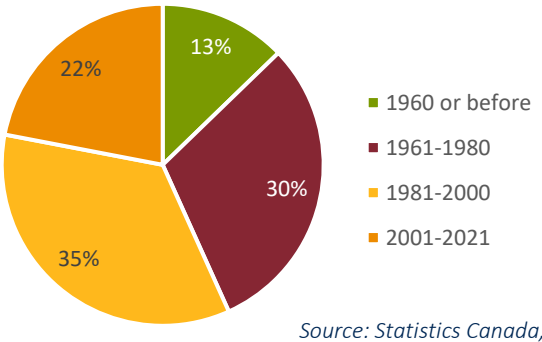


Housing Form

Number of Bedrooms



Age of Construction



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021

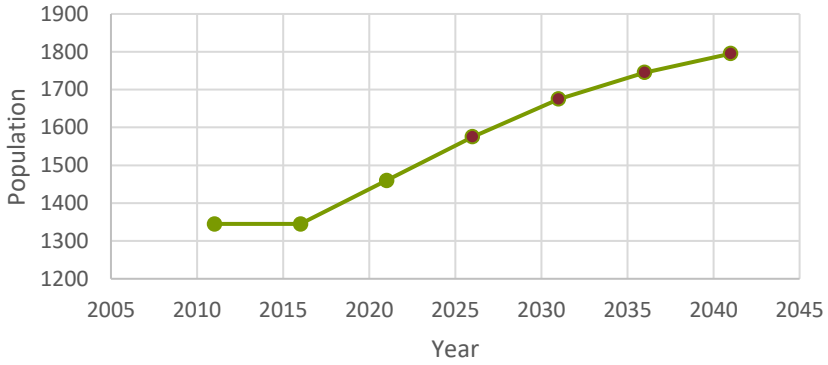
Who is Housing For?

- The total population of Area D is 1,462 people (2021), which is a +9% change from 2016.
- The majority of the population are older adults aged 55-74.
- The average household size is 2.0 people.
- The majority of households are owned (83%) versus rented (17%).
- The monthly cost of housing is greater for tenants with 29% of tenants spending over 30% of their income on housing (the threshold for affordability) versus 12% of home owners.
- 29% of tenants are in core housing need (housing that is not adequate, suitable or affordable) versus 16% of home owners.

How Can Planning Tools Help With Housing Challenges?

Planning for Future Needs.

Area D's population is expected to increase 33% from 1,460 people (2021) to 1,795 (2041) people.



Source: projections derived from BC P.E.O.P.L.E Regional District results

In the next 20 years it is expected the population of adults 25 years and older will grow with those over 85+ being the largest age range of growth. Young adults and children (0-24 years) are expected to shrink.

Age	Total	0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+
% Change	+23%	-2%	-4%	+38%	+17%	+17%	+398%

The Housing Needs Assessment (2024) predicts an increase in the number of Area D households from 715 in 2021 to 940 in 2041. Anticipated housing demand in Area D is an increase of 397 units from 2024-2044.

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning can help ensure the types of housing needed are built in the right spot:

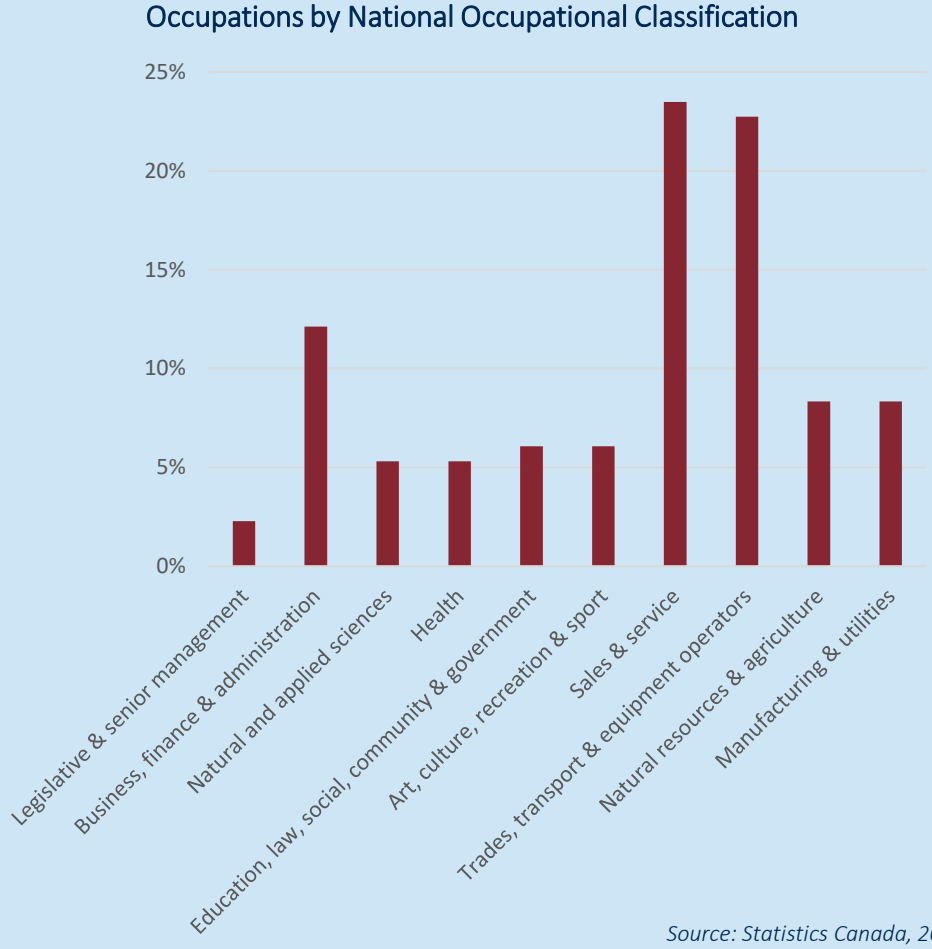
- Zoning enough land for residential use to meet future needs
- Co-locating residential lands with social and physical infrastructure like shopping, schools, places of work and transit
- Ensuring diversity of housing forms to meet communities' current and future needs e.g. rentals, senior's housing, space for families
- Aligning of long-term water and servicing requirements with housing needs for future sustainability

Area D Community Planning

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: EMPLOYMENT LANDS

What Do We Know About Income & Employment in Area D?

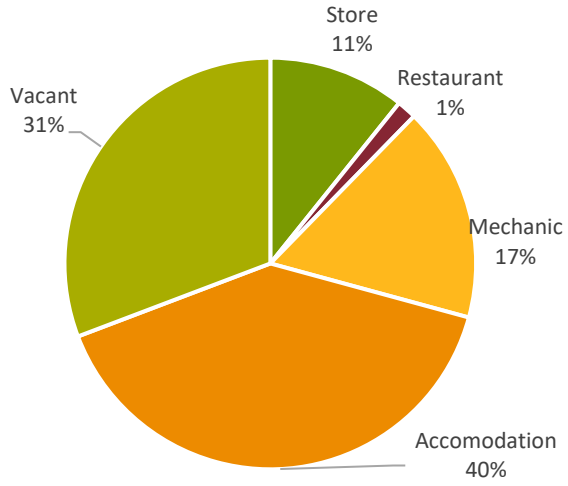
- The median before tax household income is $56,800 (2021) which is the lowest of all electoral areas.
- 23% of households are designated low income ($14,301-$35,700 annually) or very-low income (<$14,301 annually).
- The unemployment rate in Area D is 15% which is higher than the RDCK rate of 10%.
- The sectors of highest employment in Area D are: Sales and service (23%); Trades, transport and equipment operators (23%); and Business, finance and administration (12%).
- Most people travel to a usual place of work (63%) with a commute time of less than 15 minutes (55%).



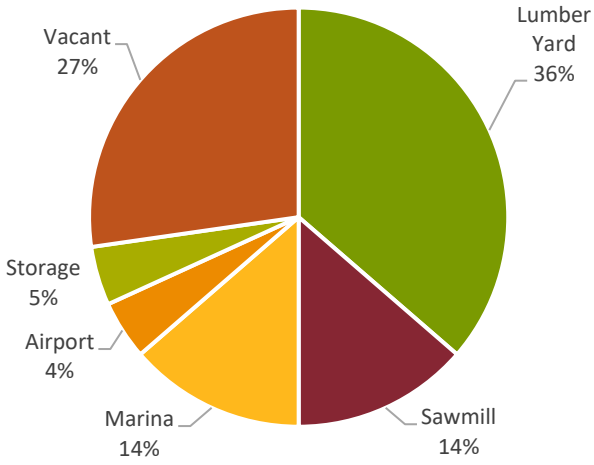
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021

What Types of Commercial & Industrial Land Uses Are in Area D?

Commercial Uses by No. of Parcels



Industrial Uses by No. of Parcels



Source: BC Assessment

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning can help ensure enough employment lands and community services are built in the right spot:

- Stores and services near the people who live there
- Places for people to work
- Placing incompatible uses away from each other or not permitting some types of undesirable uses

Zoning can also mitigate land use conflicts that can pop up between these uses and residents:

- Preventing sprawl development along highways
- Having adequate setbacks between different uses
- Requiring landscaping, fencing and/or other buffers
- Capping height and floor area to fit the rural community
- Requiring paving and proper drainage for parking areas

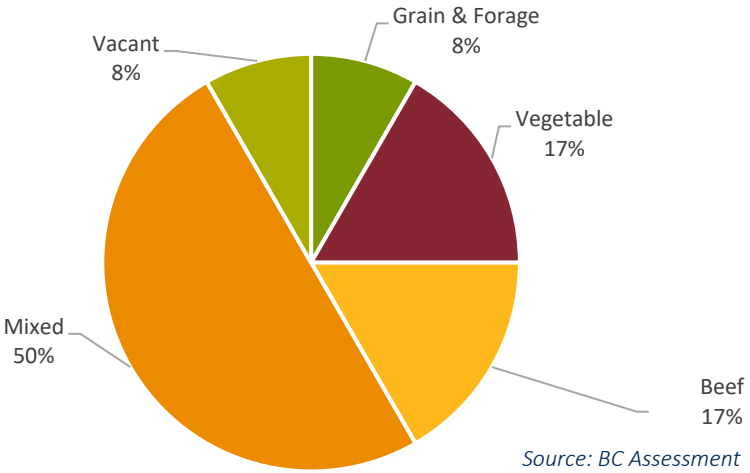
Area D Community Planning

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: AGRICULTURE

What Do We Know About Farming in Area D?

- 7,483 hectares or 1.3% of total lands in Area D are within the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- ALR lands are present in Shutty Bench, Birchdale, Johnsons Landing, Argenta, Howser, Meadow Creek, Cooper Creek and Poplar Creek.
- Only 7% or 493 hectares of ALR land is actually assessed as farmland.
- In the past decade 6 applications have been made to the Agricultural Land Commission resulting in 2 new lots in the ALR & non-farm uses.
- 8% of the labour force works in the natural resources and agriculture industry – the 4th largest sector.

Agricultural Uses by No. Parcels



Source: BC Assessment

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning can help preserve farmland and support farmer's by:

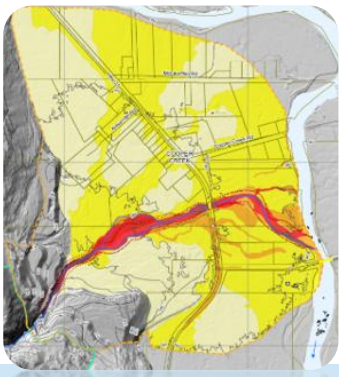
- Zoning agricultural land where the best soils are
- Protecting large lot sizes to keep farms viable
- Regulating non-farm uses on agricultural land to keep land costs low for future farmers
- Siting non-farm uses in a way to maximize farmable area
- Allowing uses that support farmer's income

Area D Community Planning

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: NATURAL HAZARDS

What Do We Know About Flood and Erosion Hazards in Area D?

- Some of the most frequent and damaging natural hazards that the region faces are flood and steep creek hazards - including a fatal landslide at Johnson's Landing in 2012.
- The RDCK Floodplain Management Bylaw applies everywhere, whether you have an OCP or zoning or not. It designates the floodplain with mapping and delineation of natural hazards and regulates setbacks from watercourses and flood construction levels for building.
- Further detailed mapping of flood hazards around Cooper Creek and Gar Creek (Johnsons Landing) have been completed.



What Do We Know About Wildfire Hazards in Area D?

- Wildfires are also a present hazard. Large fires are becoming more frequent – in 2024 the Argenta Creek fire burned 19,150 hectares.
- The Area D Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan is both a localized risk assessment and an action plan to improve wildfire resiliency within Area D's Wildland-Urban Interface.

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning can mitigate risk from natural hazards by zoning dense or intensive land uses away from known hazards.

Other tools such as Development Permit Areas (DPAs) for the protection of development from hazardous conditions can be used where lands are within the boundary of an Official Community Plan. DPAs are areas where development activity must follow certain guidelines to protect developments from hazardous conditions such as flooding, erosion, land slip, rock falls, and fire hazards.

Other RDCK Electoral Areas have a Wildfire Development Permit Area. Guidelines include subdivision design, fire-resistive building materials, and landscaping guidelines to limit development's vulnerability to the risks of wildfires.

Area D Community Planning

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

What Do We Know About Ecosystems in Area D?



- Area D has a rich natural heritage and a diversity of habitats and wildlife. Significant natural assets include forest, valley and riparian habitats. However, the area has a history of resource development, dams and settlement, and today there are many unprotected sensitive ecosystems with existing habitat facing fragmentation.
- The Kootenay Lake Shoreline Guidance Document is a comprehensive Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping project that involved an inventory and assessment of ecological, archaeological and Ktunaxa cultural values along the shoreline of Kootenay Lake.
- The Kootenay Conservation Program has identified the Duncan River Valley as a high value wildlife corridor that supports rare and critical habitat for species at risk.
- Community grassroots groups have identified North Duncan Lake and the Argenta-Johnsons Landing Face as important areas for protecting.

In the Planning Toolkit

Zoning can help protect sensitive ecosystems on private land by creating environmental reserve zones permitting limited low impact land uses and large lot sizes.

Other tools such as Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas (EPDPAs) can be used where lands are within the boundary of an Official Community Plan. EPDPAs are areas where development activity must follow certain guidelines to ensure it will not negatively impact the natural environment, including sensitive ecosystems and biodiversity.

Area D's Official Community Plan has an EPDA for protecting riparian areas. Guidelines include requiring Qualified Professional recommendations and oversight.