



REPORT

Peace River Regional District

RURAL AREA OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

AND ZONING BYLAW

Background Report

This report is prepared for the sole use of Peace River Regional District. No representations of any kind are made by Urban Systems Ltd. or its employees to any party with whom Urban Systems Ltd. does not have a contract.

0601.0042.01 / June, 2006

URBANSYSTEMS.

10808 - 100th Street
Fort St. John BC V1J 3Z6
Telephone: 250-785-9697
Fax: 250-785-9691



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION..... 1

2.0 TRANSPORTATION 1

3.0 COMMUNITIES.....2

4.0 RURAL AREA DEMOGRAPHICS3

 4.1 POPULATION GROWTH 3

 4.2 AGE STRUCTURE..... 6

 4.3 FAMILY STRUCTURE & HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS 8

 4.4 DWELLING COUNTS 13

 4.5 AVERAGE DWELLING COSTS 16

 4.6 LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS 16

 4.7 INCOME LEVELS..... 19

APPENDIX A Census Data Tables



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The rural area of the Peace River Regional District is comprised of three rural areas: the North Peace, South Peace, and West Peace. The North Peace Rural Area surrounds Fort St. John, Taylor, Charlie Lake and many other small communities, the South Peace surrounds Dawson Creek, Pouce Coupe and surrounding communities, and the West Peace is located around Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope and the surrounding area.

The rural areas that form part of this Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw span a very large but unpopulated area of the Peace River Regional District (PRRD), encompassing approximately 19,900 square kilometers, approximately 16% of the entire regional district which covers an area of 119,200 square kilometers.

The Rural Area encompassed in this OCP and Zoning Bylaw includes a number of small settlements. These include Farrell Creek, Attachie, Upper Halfway, Clayhurst, Flatrock, Goodlow, Cecil Lake, North Pine, Rose Prairie, Montney, Altona, Prespatou, Buick, Kobes, Wonowon, Pink Mountain, Mile 73, Osborn, Peejay/Milligan, and Mae's Kitchen, Lemoray, Pine Valley, Hasler Flat, East Pine, Lone Prairie, Groundbirch, Progress, Sunset Prairie, Kelly Lake, One Island Lake, Rolla, and Farmington. Each of these areas will be discussed in Section 3.0 below.

The purpose of this report is to discuss some of the demographics and trends present within the Rural Area, including population growth and projections, age structure, family structure, dwelling counts, labour force and income levels. Tables comparing 2001 Census values for the Rural Area, Peace River Regional District and British Columbia are located in Appendix A.

2.0 TRANSPORTATION

The Rural Area in the PRRD contains several major transportation routes. Highway 97 connects Chetwynd, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John to points south and north of the PRRD. Highway 29 (N) runs west from Fort St. John to Hudson's Hope and connects to Highway 97 in Chetwynd. Access to Alberta is provided by Highway 49 and Highway 2, which originate in Dawson Creek, and via the Cecil Lake Road (103 Road), which passes through Cecil Lake and Goodlow north of Fort St. John. The area's transportation network sees a lot of heavy truck traffic and movement of goods, which are vital to the rural area and northeastern BC economies.

Railway service is also a major component of the transportation network in the Rural Area. CN Rail provides bulk shipping services for a variety of products, including grain, coal, and sulphur, to the Port of Vancouver and other major transportation centers.



The Fort St. John Airport, while located within the North Peace Fringe Area, is considered a regional airport serving Northeastern BC. The Fort St. John Airport serves a variety of industries, including farming, oil and gas and mining. It is also a vital component of business in the area, providing daily flights to and from three major Western Canada gateways: Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary. In addition to the regional flight services provided by the Fort St. John Airport, flight services are also provided by the Dawson Creek and Chetwynd airports.

3.0 COMMUNITIES

DONE BY PRRD STAFF

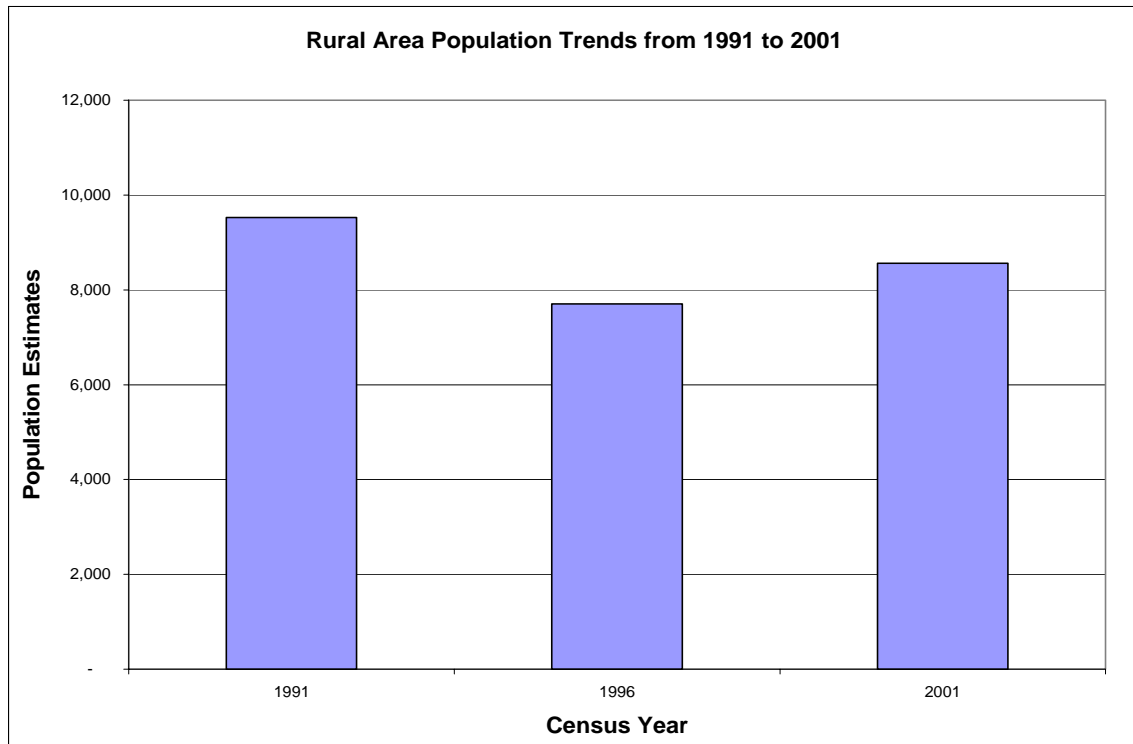


4.0 RURAL AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

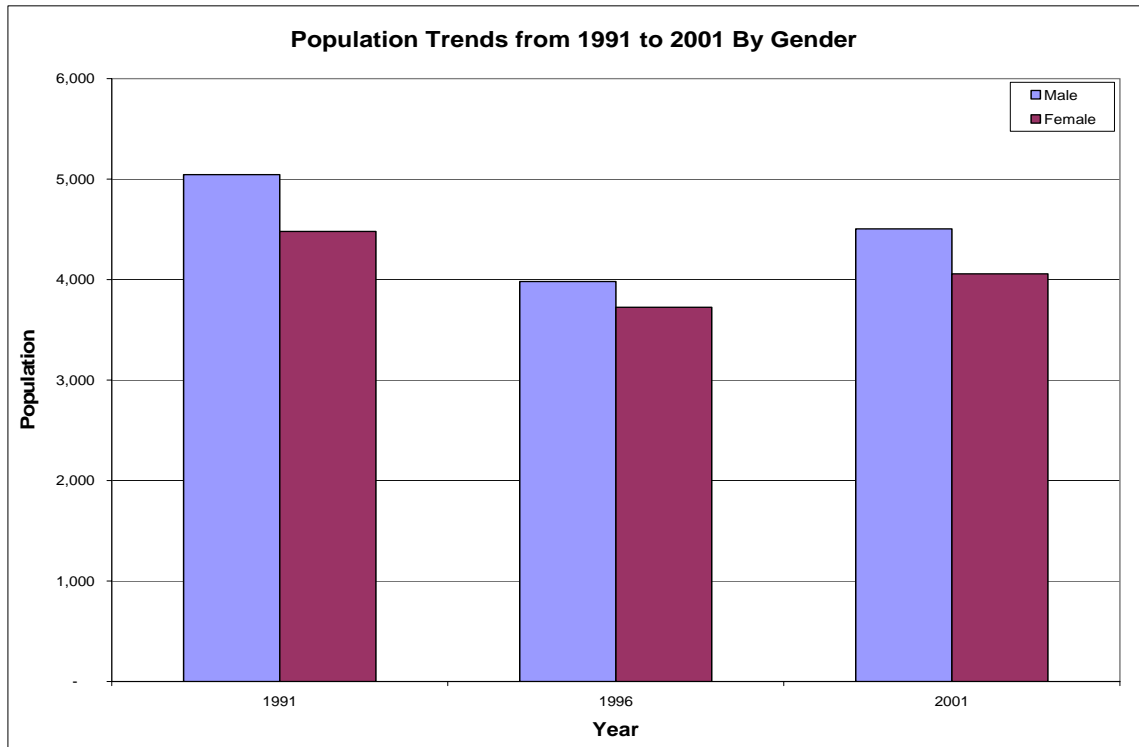
4.1 Population Growth

The 2001 Census identified an estimated population of 8,564 for the Rural Area. From 1991 to 1996, the estimated population of the Rural Area decreased by 19%, from 9,524 to 7,704. From 1996 to 2001, the estimated population increased by 11.2% from 7,704 to 8,564. From 1996 to 2001, British Columbia saw its populations increase by 4.9%, however, the population of the Peace River Regional District declined by -2.5%.

The figure below shows the Rural Area population growth trends over the past three Census years. The next Census will be completed in 2006, at which time these growth trends can be further determined.

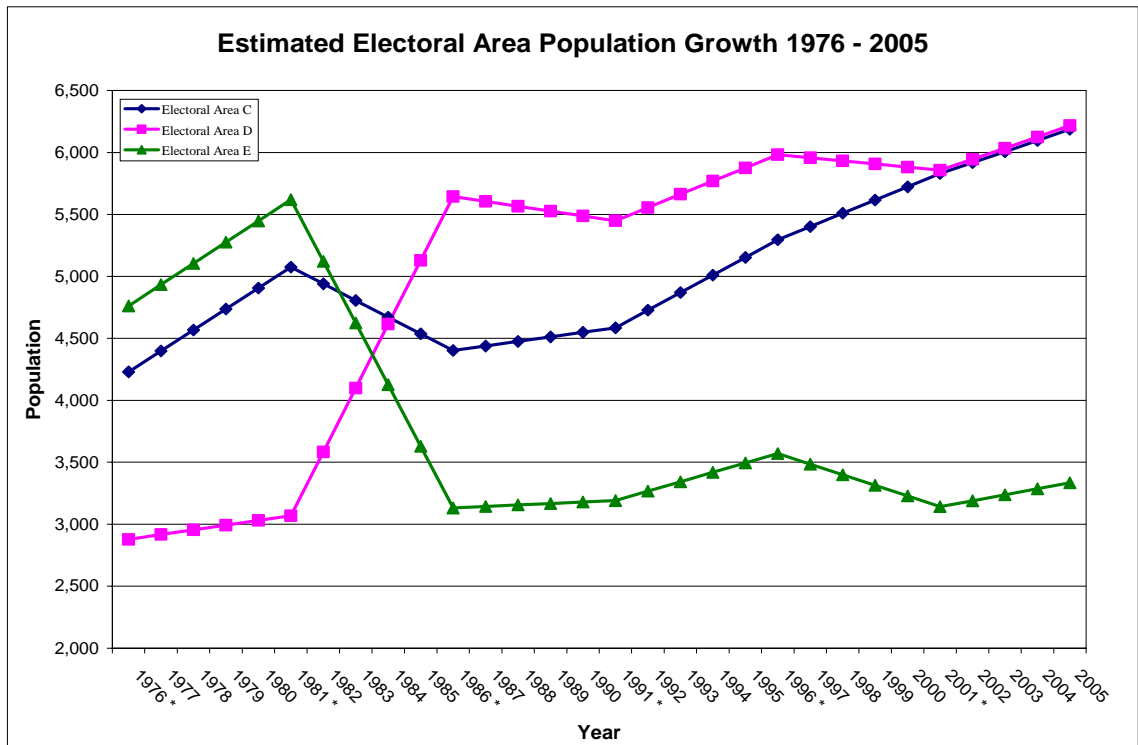


The following figure separates each Census population estimate for the Rural Area into male and female. In all cases, more males were present than females. This is consistent with general figures for the Peace River Regional District, where 51% of the population in 2001 was male and 49% was female.



The population for the Rural Area was determined through enumeration area analysis within the rural area, based on the location of 911 emergency telephone connections within each enumeration area. Proportions were utilized to determine the number of people within an enumeration area residing within the Rural Area.

Because population counts for the rural areas are only undertaken during the Census years, it is not possible to get a true reflection of the population fluctuations experienced in the rural areas during the years between a Census. During the five years between the Census, the population of a rural area may increase or decrease quite dramatically, but this may not always be captured by the Census population counts. The following figure shows estimated population trends for Electoral Areas C, D and E. The population estimates noted with an asterisk (*) represent the Census year population figures. For those years, documented data was obtained from Statistics Canada. The increases and decreases in Electoral Area D and E population counts between 1981 and 1986 may be attributed to the creation of the District of Tumbler Ridge, boundary expansions, and a realignment of electoral area boundaries.



For the years between Census counts, the growth in the electoral areas was estimated by determining the difference between two consecutive Census counts. This figure was divided by five and then added to the lower Census count consecutively. This calculation provided the population estimates for the years between Census counts, and was also utilized to determine population projections for the electoral areas from 2002 to 2005 using an annual growth rate of 1.5%. The next Census will be completed in 2006, at which time the population projections between the 2001 and 2006 Census will be revised to more accurately reflect actual growth trends.

The following growth rates for the Rural Area were:

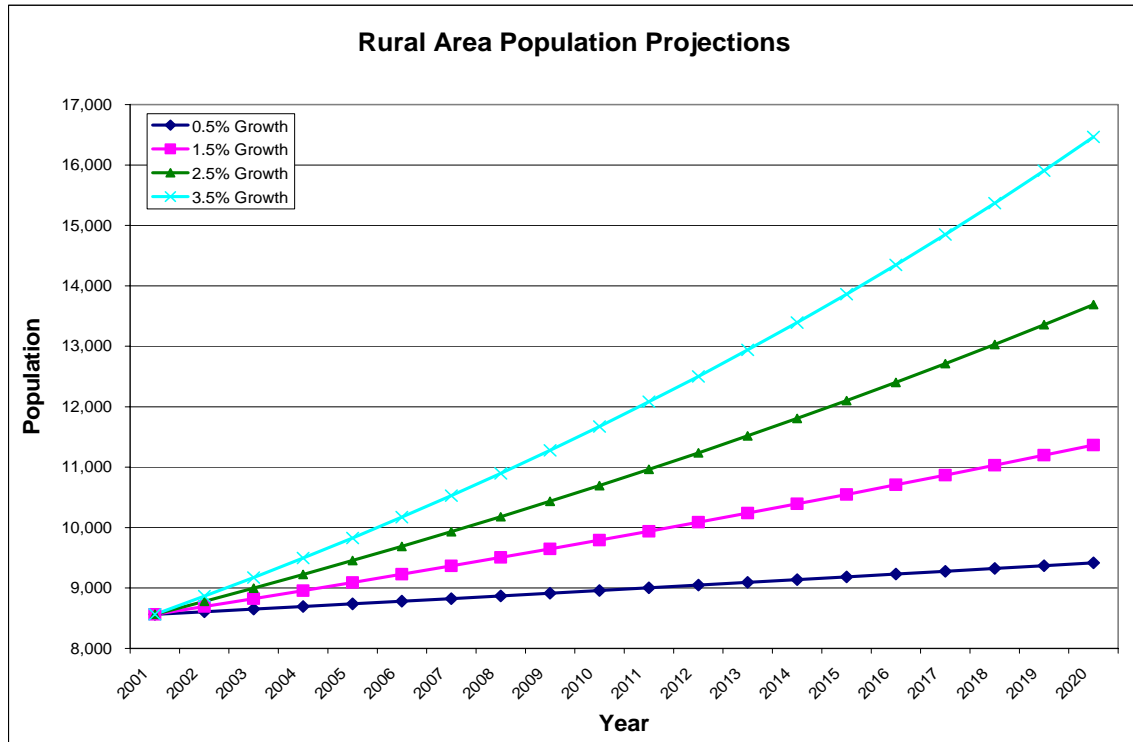
- -4.2% per year from 1991 to 1996
- 2.1% per year from 1996 to 2001

In addition to this, growth rates for each electoral area were:

- Electoral Area C: 2.1% per year from 1996 to 2001
- Electoral Area D: -0.5% per year from 1996 to 2001
- Electoral Area E: 0.9% per year from 1996 to 2001



To reflect electoral area growth, this background report will calculate the population projections resulting from growth rates of 0.5%, 1.5%, 2.5% and 3.5% as shown in the figure below.

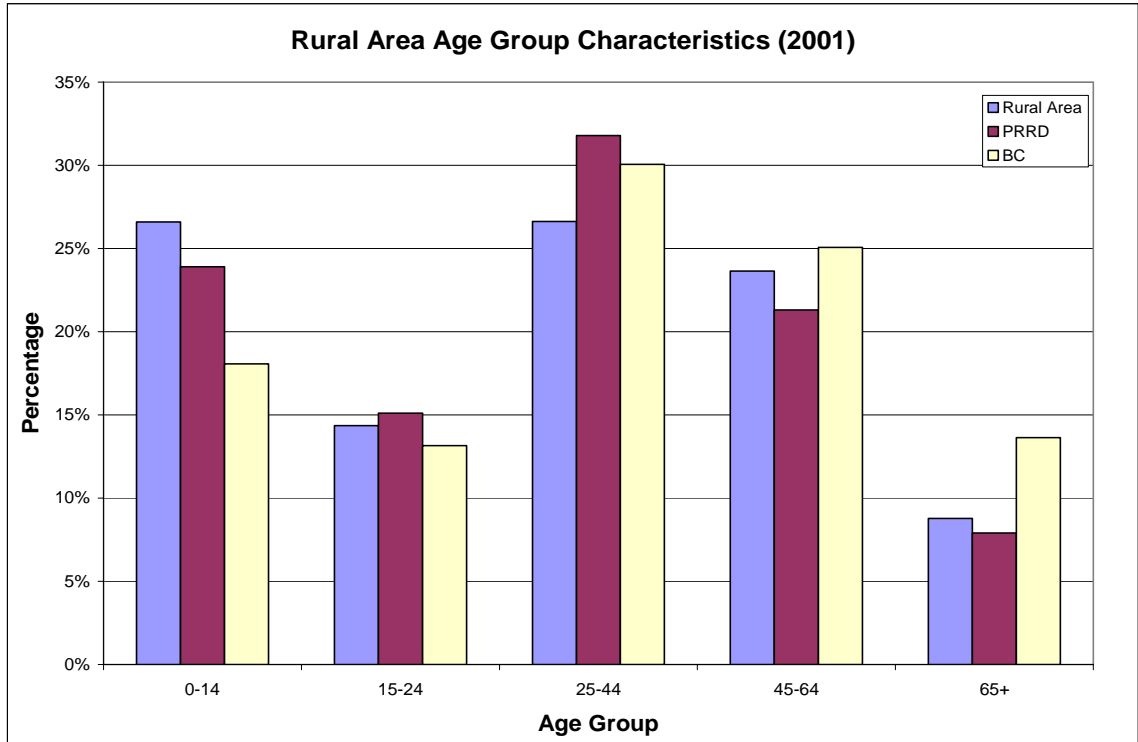


4.2 Age Structure

The age profile of residents within the Rural Area assembled during the 2001 Census raises several points of interest, each of which is discussed below.

- The Rural Area has a significantly higher proportion of its population in the 0-14 age category than both the PRRD and provincial averages;
- The Rural Area has a higher proportion of its population in the 15-24 age category than the provincial average, but a lower proportion than the PRRD average;
- The Rural Area has a lower proportion of its population in the 25-44 age category than both the PRRD and provincial averages. The 25-44 age grouping generally includes families with children; and,
- The Rural Area’s proportion of its population in the 45-64 and 65+ age categories are higher than the PRRD average but lower than the provincial average.

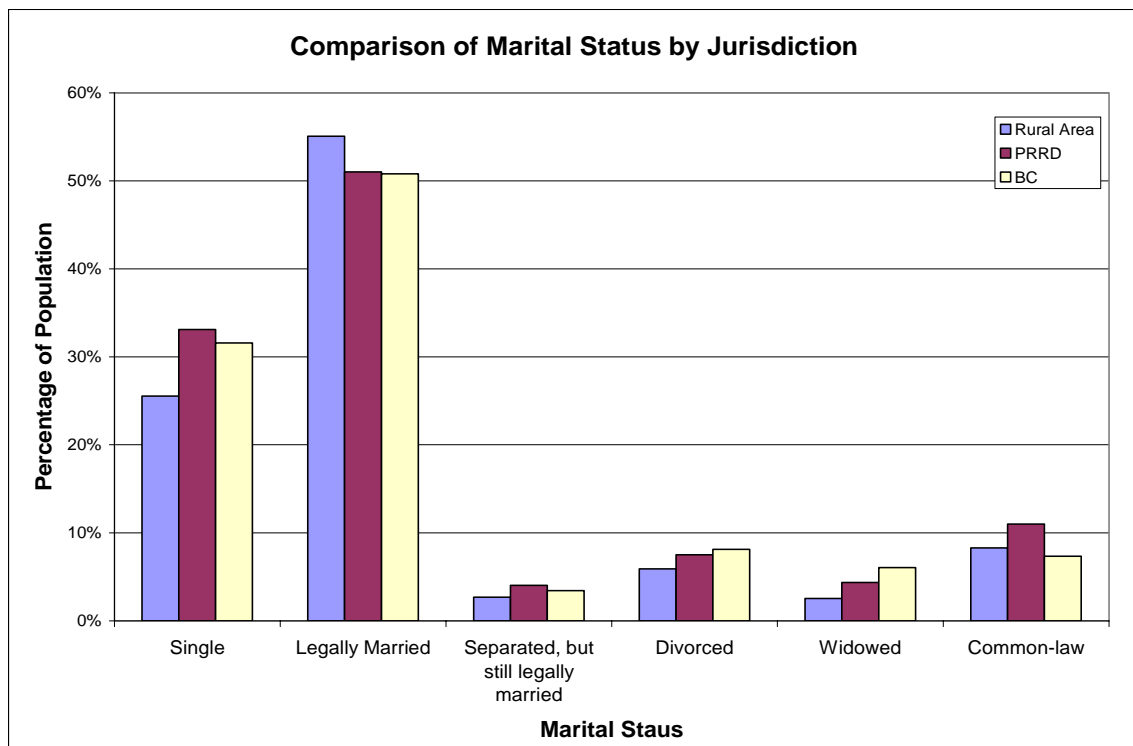
The differences between the three areas are identified in the figure below.





4.3 Family Structure & Household Statistics

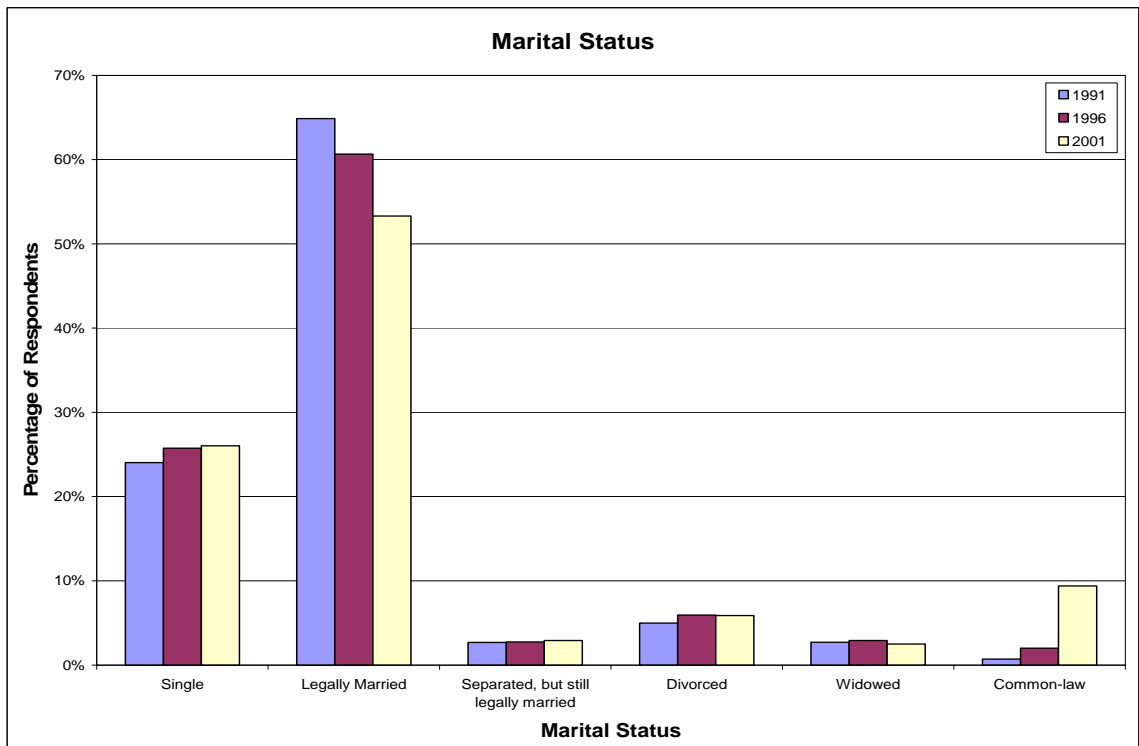
The Rural Area has a higher proportion of married couples compared to the entire Peace River Regional District, and the province, and a lower proportion of single, separated, divorced, widowed, and common-law couples. The figure below depicts the results of marital status analysis based on the 2001 Census, clearly showing the major differences present in the Rural Area with respect to the proportion of the population identified as single or legally married.





The following figure shows the marital status trends evident from 1991-2001, as collected through the Canada Census. While the majority are legally married, there is a slight decline present in the proportion of the population that is legally married with an increase in the proportion of the population single or living as common-law. Furthermore, there is:

- a very slight increase evident in the proportion of the population identified as separated;
- an increase followed by stabilization in the proportion of the population that is divorced; and,
- an increase present in the proportion of the population identified as single.



Further analysis looked at the actual family structure that exists within the Rural Area. The analysis identified whether or not families had children, family type, and the number of children present. From an analysis of the 2001 Census, the following family types had a higher proportion in the Rural Area than in the PRRD or province:

- Approximately 46% of families within the Rural Area were married and had children at home, higher than the PRRD and provincial proportions of 42% and 41%;
- Approximately 9% of families within the Rural Area were common-law couples with children, higher than both the PRRD and provincial proportions of 7% and 4%; and,

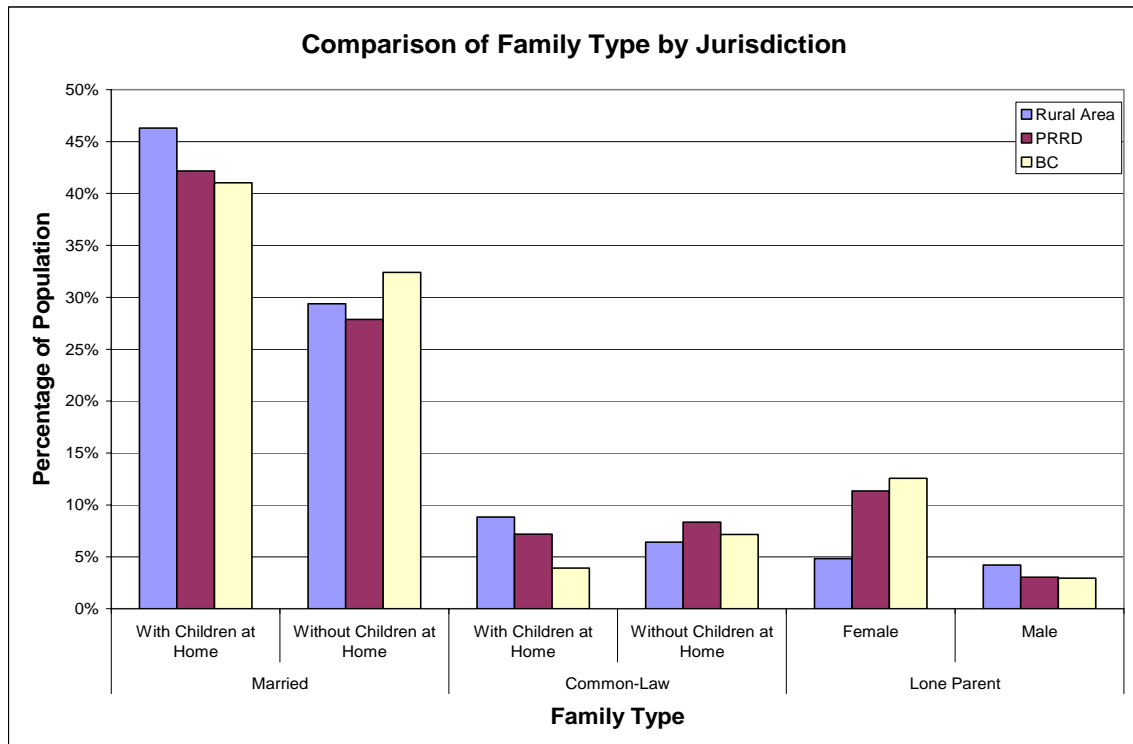


- Male single-parent families comprised 4% of the Rural Area population, higher than the PRRD and province proportions of 3%.

The following family types had a lower proportion in the Rural Area than in the PRRD or province:

- Approximately 6% of families within the Rural Area were common-law couples without children, lower than the PRRD and provincial proportions of 8% and 7%;
- Approximately 29% of families within the Rural Area were married without children at home, less than the province’s proportion of 32%, but higher than the PRRD proportion of 28%; and,
- Female single-parent families with children comprised 5% of the Rural Area population, less than half of the PRRD and provincial proportions of 11% and 13%.

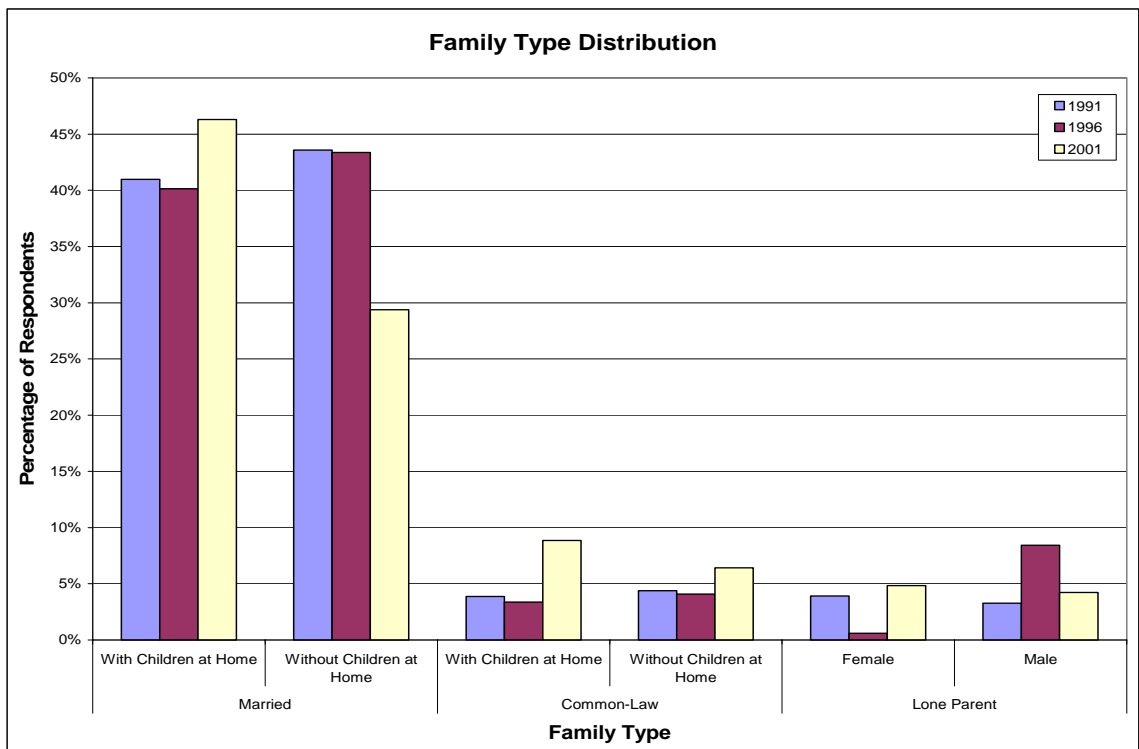
These results are shown in the figure below.



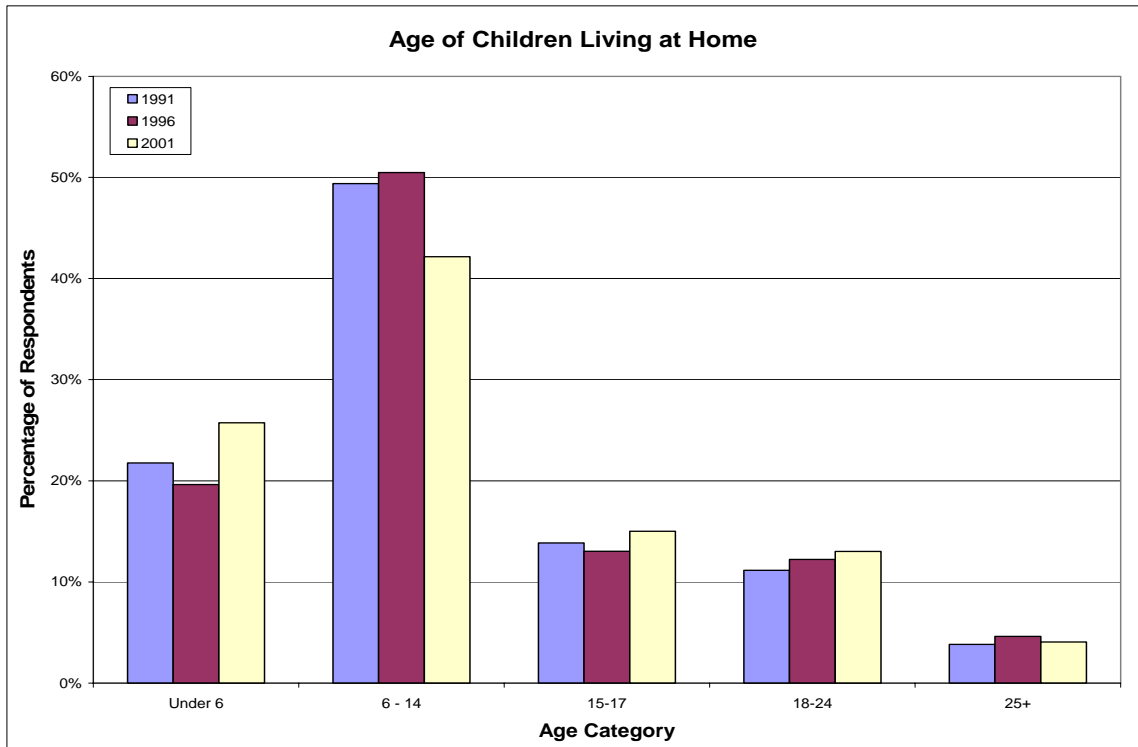
The following figure shows the trends in family type over the three Census counts. The figure shows that the most predominant family type is still married with children at home. However:



- the proportion of married families within the Rural Area with children at home declined slightly from 1991 to 1996, and then saw an increase from 1996 to 2001;
- the proportion of common-law families both with and without children at home declined between 1991 and 1996 and then increased between 1996 and 2001;
- the proportion of female single-parent families saw declines from 1991 to 1996, but an increase from 1996 to 2001, resulting in a net increase over the 10 year period;
- the proportion of male single-parent families saw an increase from 1991 to 1996, and then a decline from 1996 to 2001, but an overall net increase over the 10 year period;



Within the Rural Area, the 2001 Census indicated that the average number of people per household (pph) was 2.8, and of the households with children, there was an average of 1.3 children at home per Census family. The age of children living at home shows a trend towards older children remaining at home longer. This is shown by the increasing trend shown in the 15-17 and 18-24 age categories. In addition to this, from 1996 to 2001, there has been an increase in the proportion of the population with children aged under 6 and a decline in children between the ages of 6-11. Results for children in the 25+ category have remained relatively stable over the 10 year period. The figure below demonstrates these trends.



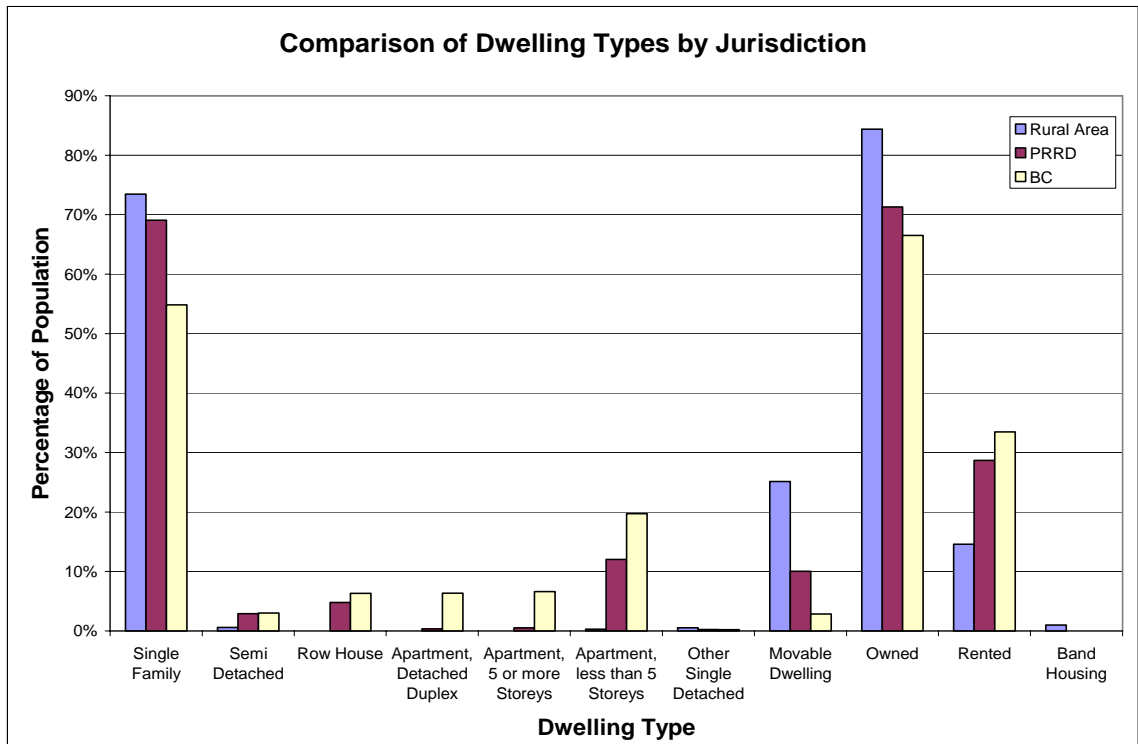


4.4 Dwelling Counts

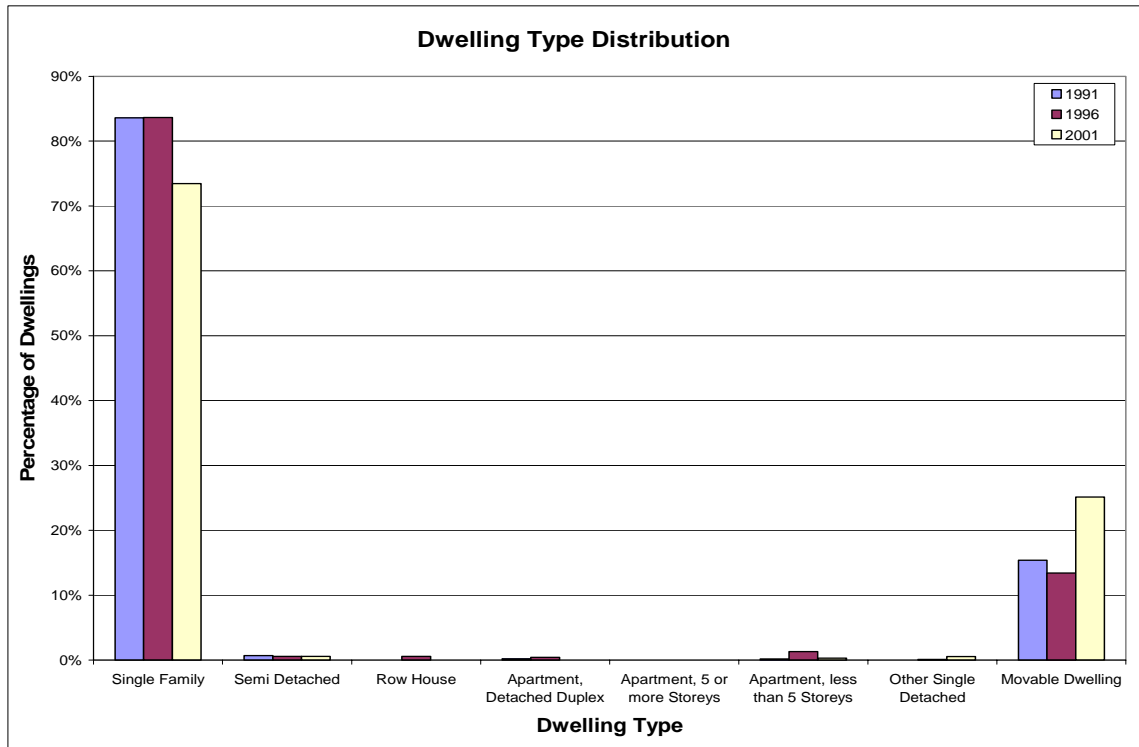
The majority of dwellings located within the Rural Area are privately owned single family dwellings, with 84% of 2,893 dwellings within the Rural Area owned. This is much higher than the proportion of privately owned single family dwellings in other jurisdictions. For example, in the PRRD and the province, 71% and 67% of homes are privately owned respectively.

Within the Rural Area, 73% of all dwellings are identified as single family homes. Again, this is much higher than within the PRRD and the province, where the figures are 69% and 55%.

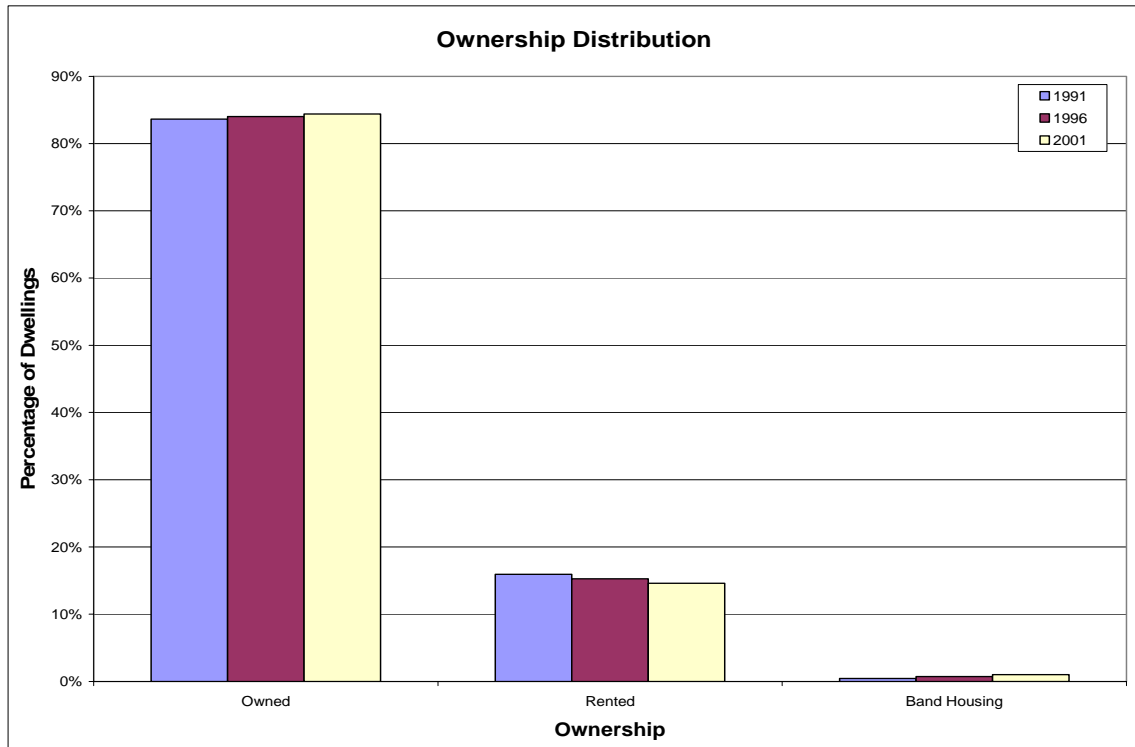
The Rural Area also has a higher proportion of movable dwellings than in other jurisdictions, with 25% of homes are identified as movable dwellings, compared to 10% and 3% in the PRRD and province respectively. A complete breakdown of the composition of dwellings within the Rural Area, PRRD and province is shown below.



While single family is by far the most predominant dwelling type, the trend from 1991 to 2001 shows a decrease in the proportion of single family dwellings and an increase in moveable dwellings. Mobile homes are included by Statistics Canada in the definition of moveable dwellings in the table below.



As previously mentioned, home ownership within the Rural Area is high, with 84% of homes being owned. Over the past three Census years, the proportion of homes privately owned has been relatively stable, with only a slight increase occurring during the 10 year period, while the proportion of homes being rented has decreased accordingly. This is shown in the figure below.

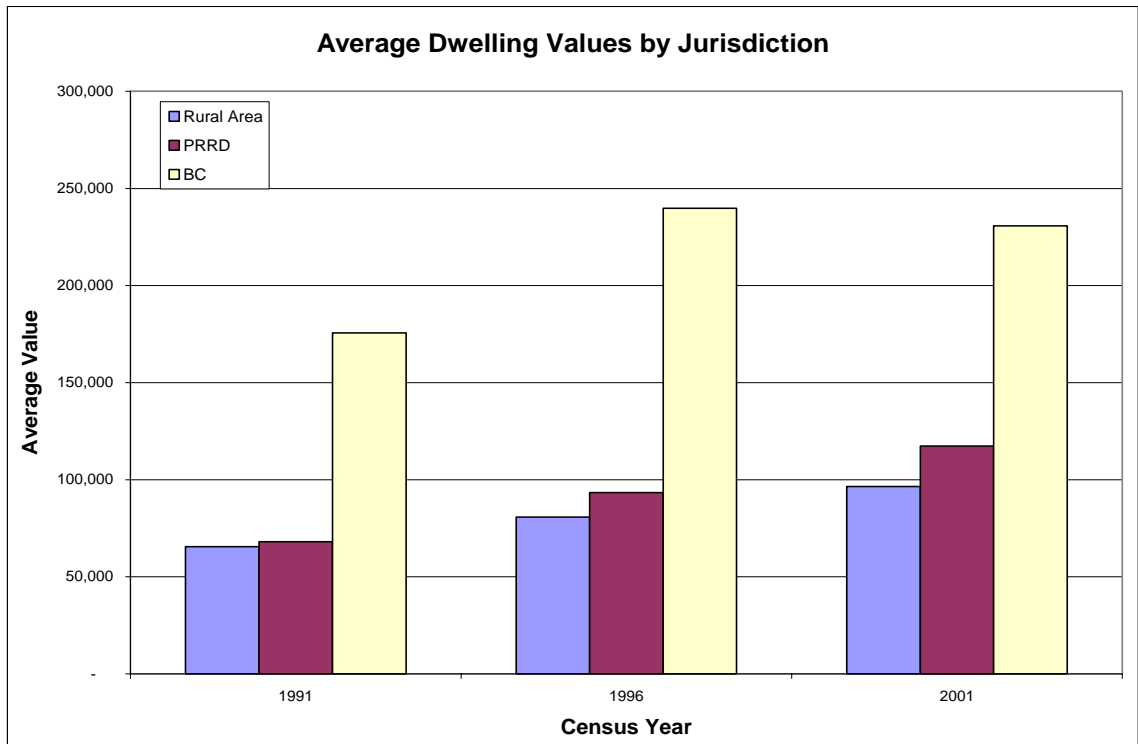




4.5 Average Dwelling Costs

The figure below identifies the trends present in the average value of dwellings within the Rural Area, PRRD and BC. In all jurisdictions, the average dwelling value has increased. Since 1991:

- The average dwelling value for residences within the Rural Area has steadily increased; and,
- The average dwelling values within the Rural Area and PRRD remain much lower than the average dwelling values for BC.



Average dwelling costs as per the 2001 Census were \$96,506 for homes within the Rural Area. This is less than the averages for the PRRD (\$117,363), and the province (\$230,645). With current housing trends, it is expected that averages in all jurisdictions has increased significantly since 2001.

4.6 Labour Force Statistics

Labour force statistics were compiled from Census information from 1991, 1996 and 2001. The Census compiles labour force statistics into ten major occupations. Occupation types were



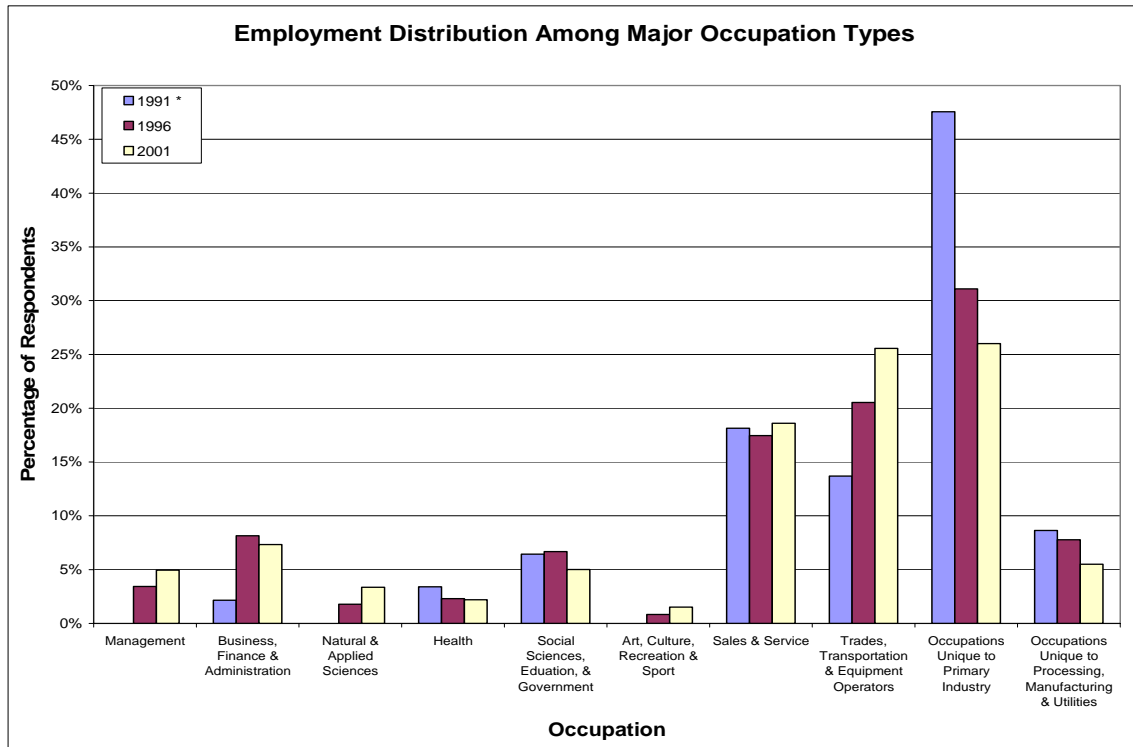
identical in the 1996 and 2001 Census, but differed in 1991. In order to facilitate comparisons, the job types listed in 1991 were therefore grouped into the same eight major occupation types used in 1996 and 2001.

From the data collected between 1996 and 2001, we can see the following:

- The proportion of respondents employed in management, natural and applied sciences, arts, culture, recreation and sport, sales and service, and trades, transportation & equipment operators increased between the 1996 and 2001 Census;
- The largest increase between 1996 and 2001 occurred in the trades, transportation & equipment operators category;
- The largest decrease between 1996 and 2001 occurred in the occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities;

Between 1991 and 1996, we can see the following:

- The largest increase between 1991 and 1996 occurred in the trades, transportation & equipment operators category, quickly followed by the business, finance and administration category
- The largest decrease between 1991 and 1996 occurred in the occupations unique to primary industry;
- Other decreases occurred in the occupations unique to processing, manufacturing & utilities, sales and service, and health categories; and,
- Another decrease occurred in the social science, education and government category.



The interesting element in the figure above is the apparent declines evident in occupations unique to primary industries and in occupations unique to process, manufacturing and utilities. However, this decline may simply be a result of a shift in the classification of labour. For example, many of these occupations may now fall in the "Trades, Transportation & Equipment Operators" category, or in "Natural & Applied Sciences". Furthermore, with the economic boom occurring in the area, many of these categories may see increases upon the collection and analysis of 2006 Census data.

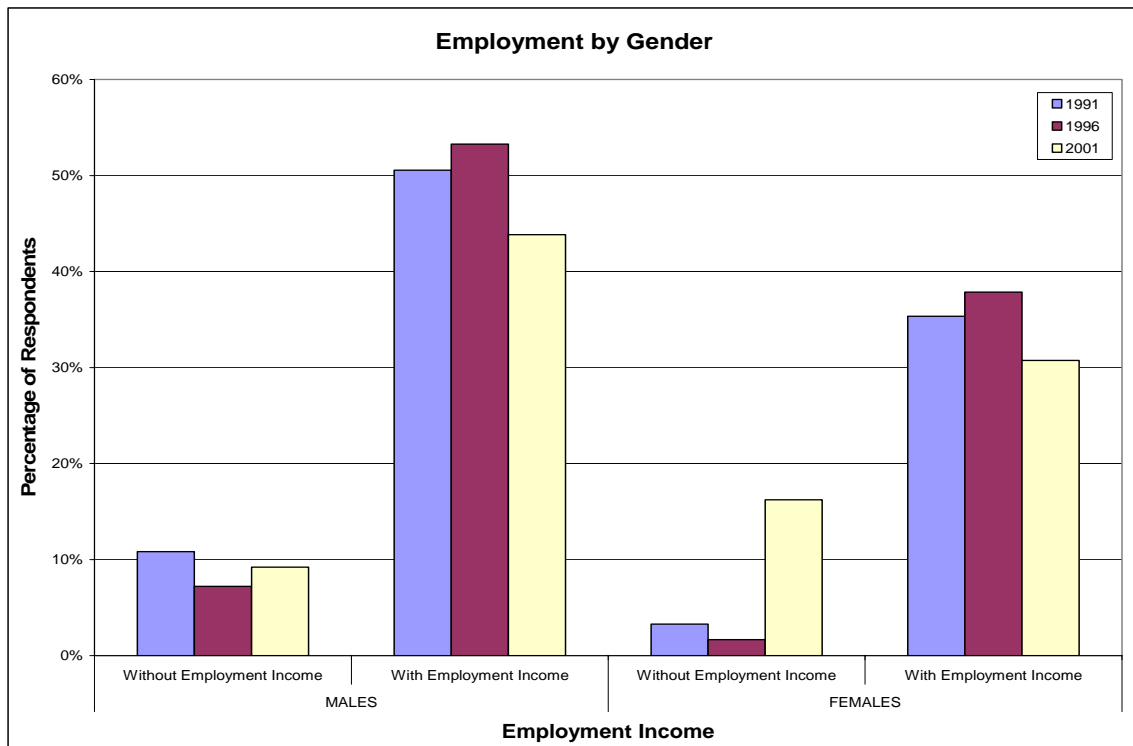


4.7 Income Levels

From 1991 to 1996, the Rural Area saw a decrease in the proportions of males and females without employment income. The proportion of males without employment income decreased from 11% to 7%, and females decreased from 3% to 2%. This decrease subsequently resulted in an increase in both male and female employment rates.

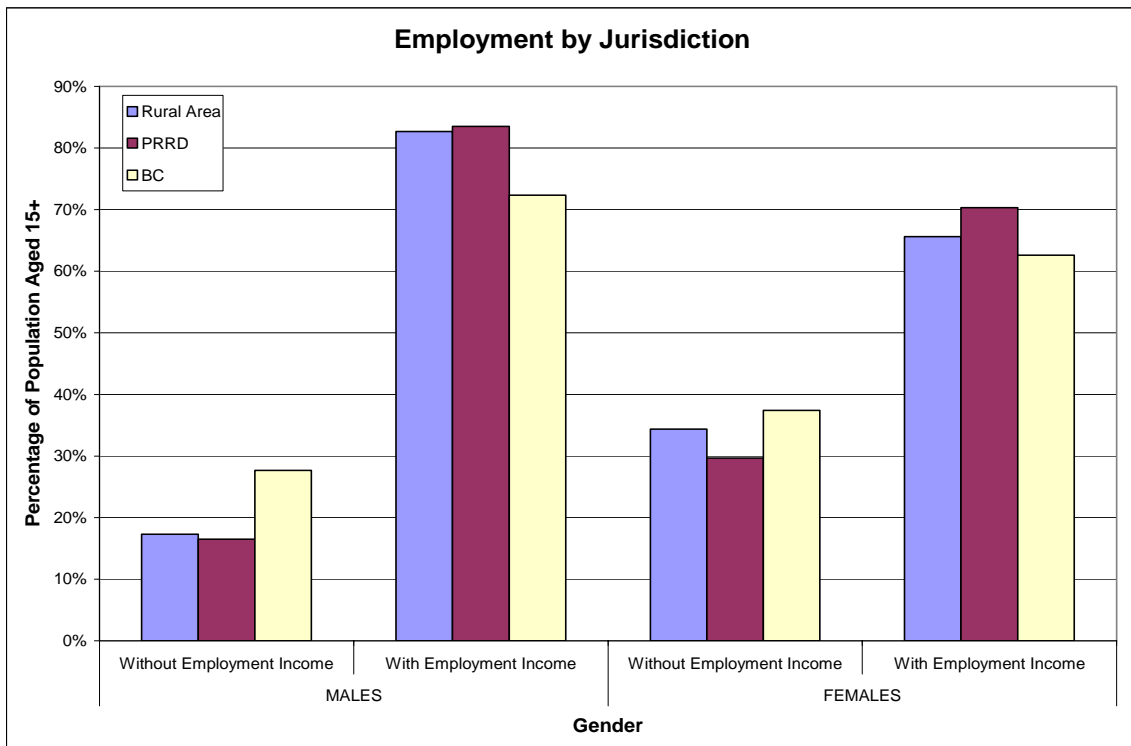
From 1996 to 2001, the proportion of males without employment income increased from 7% to 9%. The proportion of females without employment income saw a substantial increase from 2% to 16%. While this resulted in a corresponding decline in males and females with employment income, this decline was larger in males than in females.

The figure below shows the trend from 1991 through to 2001. It should be noted that the proportion of the population without employment income includes people that are currently unemployed, as well as retirees, stay-at-home parents, students, and those choosing not to work; the proportion of the population without employment income is not identical to the unemployment rate.





The following figure shows the 2001 figures for males and females with or without employment income in the Rural Area, PRRD and BC. In employment income comparisons to these other jurisdictions, the Rural Area has more males and females with employment income than the province, but less than the PRRD. With respect to unemployment income comparisons, the Rural Area has more males and females without employment income than the PRRD.



Income levels within the Rural Area were analyzed from all three Census years. Average income figures in the 2001 Census are based on 2000 income figures and thus are several years behind and may not reflect current industry trends. The 2006 Census will provide new figures for future analysis.

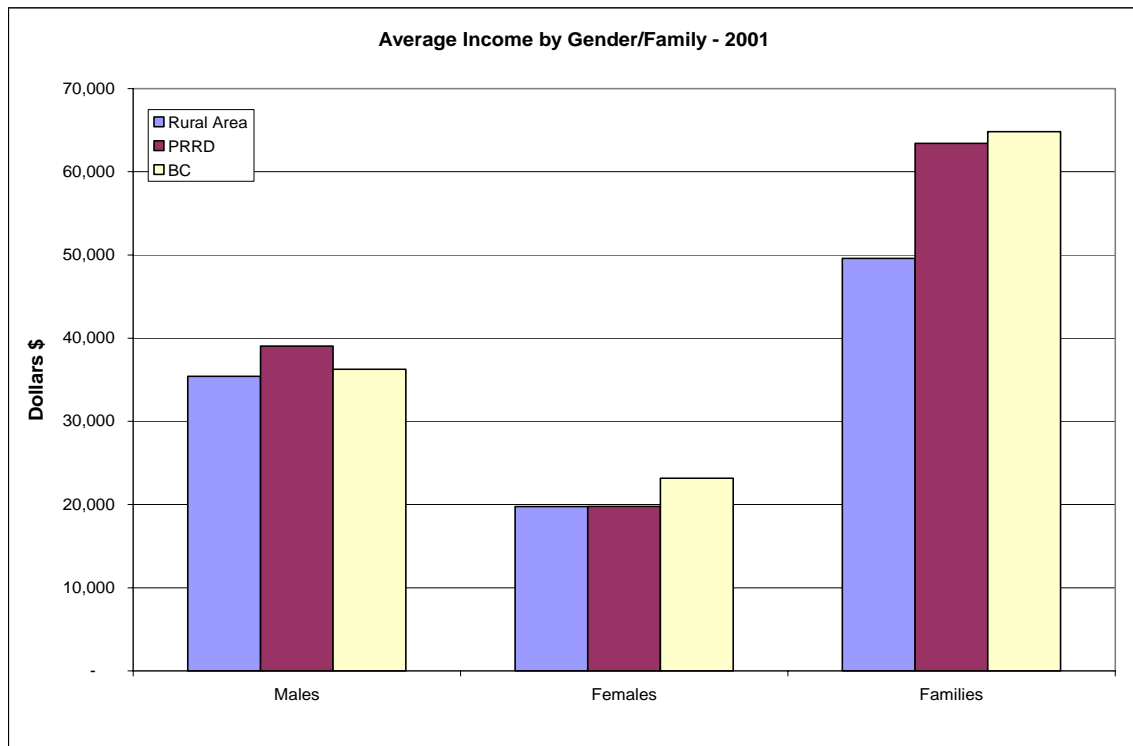
Average annual incomes as collected in the 2001 Census (based on 2000 figures) depict a discrepancy between males and females. The average income for males in 2001 within the Rural Area was \$35,410 while the average income for females was \$19,760. The average family income in 2000 was \$49,602.

In comparing average incomes for males among the jurisdictions, the Rural Area has the lowest average incomes for males. In comparing average incomes for females among the jurisdictions,



the Rural Area again has the lowest average income, but the PRRD has a similarly low average female income.

With respect to families, the Rural Area had the lowest average family income when compared to the PRRD and province.



Over the three Census counts, average incomes for males, females and families have all increased. Average incomes for families saw the largest increase between the 1991 and 1996 Census before leveling off between the 1996 and 2001 Census. The average incomes for males remained relatively constant between the 1991 and 1996 Census but the average income for females increased during this timeframe. Between the 1996 and 2001 Census, the average income for males within the Rural Area increased, while the average income for females also increased again.



**APPENDIX A – CENSUS DATA TABLES****Population Trends (1991-2001)**

Census Year	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
1991	9,524	53,317	3,282,061
1996	7,704	56,447	3,724,500
2001	8,564	55,080	3,907,738

Marital Status – 2001

Marital Status	% of Population		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Single	26	33	32
Legally Married	53	51	51
Separated, still legally married	3	4	3
Divorced	6	8	8
Widowed	3	4	6
Common-law	9	11	7

Family Type – 2001

Family Type	% of Population		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Married – children at home	46	42	41
Married – no children at home	29	28	32
Common-law – children at home	9	7	4
Common-law – no children at home	6	8	7
Single parent – female	5	11	13
Single parent - male	4	3	3

Dwelling Proportions – 2001

Dwelling Type	% of All Dwellings		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Single-detached house	73	69	55
Semi-detached house	1	3	3
Rowhouse	-	5	6



Apartment/detached duplex	-	-	6
Apartment, ≥ 5 storeys	-	1	7
Apartment, < 5 storeys	-	12	20
Other single-attached house	1	-	-
Movable dwelling	25	10	3

Home Ownership – 2001

Ownership	% of All Dwellings		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Owned	84	71	67
Rented	16	29	33

Labour Force – 2001

Occupation Type	% of Workforce		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Management	5	8	11
Business, Finance & Administration	7	13	18
Natural & Applied Sciences	3	4	6
Health	2	4	5
Social Sciences, Education & Government	5	7	8
Art, Culture, Recreation & Sport	2	1	3
Sales & Service	19	23	26
Trades, Transportation & Equipment Operators	26	23	14
Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	26	12	4
Occupations Unique to Process, Manufacturing & Utilities	5	5	5



Employment by Gender – 2001

	% of Population 15+		
	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Males without employment income	17	16	28
Males with employment income	83	84	72
Males Total	100	100	100
Females without employment income	34	30	37
Females with employment income	66	70	63
Females Total	100	100	100

Average Dwelling Value Trends (1991-2001)

	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
1991	\$65,518	\$68,074	\$175,559
1996	\$80,761	\$93,368	\$239,745
2001	\$96,506	\$117,363	\$230,645

Average Income – 2001

	Rural Area	Peace River Regional District	British Columbia
Males	\$35,410	\$39,029	\$36,256
Females	\$19,760	\$19,780	\$23,154
Families	\$49,602	\$63,407	\$64,821