

What We Heard: Revelstoke Housing Action Plan

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Overview

1.1. Revelstoke Housing Action Plan

The City of Revelstoke is developing the Revelstoke Housing Action Plan as a step in addressing and acting on the current housing crisis. The Housing Action Plan will develop clear and implementable actions to support housing solutions based on identified housing needs. The Housing Action Plan will follow four primary guiding principles:

- Align with ongoing OCP and other planning efforts
- Reflect the local context and needs in Revelstoke
- Prioritize a five-year timeframe
- Ensure an inclusive approach to housing in Revelstoke

1.2. Engagement Activities

Three primary activities were used to engage with organizational stakeholders in the community: a workforce housing survey, stakeholder focus groups, and a public feedback meeting.

The workforce housing survey targeted employers, including both businesses and non-profits of all scales operating with employees in Revelstoke, with the goal of understanding workforce housing challenges in the community and their impacts. The survey was distributed through a number of business and employer networks including to members of the Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures, Revelstoke Tourism, municipal commissions and committees and the Recovery Taskforce. The survey invited respondents to share if housing availability and affordability has impacted their ability to hire and retain staff, and how.

Two stakeholder focus groups were held with the purpose of gathering the perspectives of local businesses and organizations that provide services or employment to Revelstoke residents and otherwise have a perspective on housing needs and demands in the community. The focus groups were two hours long and were hosted virtually using Zoom on February 3rd and 7th, 2022.

Two public feedback meetings were held on May 25th and 26th, 2022. The meetings were two hours long and were open to all residents and stakeholder in Revelstoke. In total, 20 individuals participated in the meetings.

Focus Groups

1.3. Participation and Objectives

A range of organizational stakeholders were invited to take part in the focus groups, including non-profit service providers, private developers, employers and businesses, builders and contractors, the Advisory Planning Commission, the Social Development Committee, the Economic Development Commission, Revelstoke Community Housing Society, and Community Futures. In total, 22 individuals participated in the stakeholder focus groups (see table below).

Focus Group Participants

<i>February 3, 2022</i>		<i>February 7, 2022</i>	
Participant	Association	Participant	Association
Dave Brownlie	Northland Properties	Pam Doyle	Senior Housing Society
Alan Mason	Revelstoke Community Housing Association	Jane McNabb	Community Connections, OCP Focus Group
Connie Brothers	OCP Focus Group and Policy Drafting Group, and Advisory Planning Commission	Lisa Cyr	City of Revelstoke
Kelvin Skoretz	Studio Two73° Research.Design.Build	Peter Nielsen	Revelstoke Mountain Resort
Craig Kovacs	Ministry of Forests, Natural Resource Office	Adrian Giacca	Microhome Initiatives Community, Remote Landscape
Sheena Wells	Community Connections	Cindy Pearce	Freelance Consultant
Gilles Lussier	Parks Canada and Advisory Planning Commission	Jill Zacharias	Tamarac Institute
David Evans	Mackenzie Village	Nikki Lussier	WorkBC
Richard Tuck	SW10	Greg Hoffart	Tree Construction
Nathan Weston	Straight Up Construction and OCP Focus Group	Karlina Alexander-Gourlay	Revelstoke Property Services
Erin Mclachlan	Community Connections	Rosie Denton	Revelstoke Community Housing Society

A presentation at the start of each focus group provided participants with an overview of the role of local government in housing, findings from the Housing Needs Report, dwelling projections, and draft housing targets. Participants were then engaged on following five questions about the state of housing in Revelstoke:

- *What key housing issues do you see in Revelstoke right now?*
- *What is Revelstoke doing well when it comes to housing (local government roles)?*
- *Are there specific populations you think are underserved when it comes to housing (e.g., young families, lone-parents, seniors, etc.)?*
- *What can Revelstoke do to improve housing?*
- *What types of housing and supports would you like to see in Revelstoke?*

The following sections summarize the feedback provided by participants within the five primary questions asked.

1.4. Current Housing Issues Facing Revelstoke

Supply and Development Restrictions

- Participants referenced low supply and high demand for housing as a significant issue, where landlords and owners felt justified in raising rental rates and housing prices.
- Municipal restrictions to density and developable area were noted as contributing to supply issues.
- Concern was voiced that Revelstoke had been deemed an area of high financial risk, impacting the local market.

Capacity in the Non-Profit Sector

- Non-profits were noted as an important force driving the development and operation of existing affordable housing stock in the city. However, non-profits are not receiving the necessary degree of support and resources.
- Participants were concerned about capacity issues in non-profits that rely on volunteers.
- Non-profit staff and volunteers are also being impacted by Revelstoke's housing crisis.

Diversity and Suitability of Housing Options

- Many gaps exist in Revelstoke's housing stock; participants noted a lack of homeownership opportunities, smaller units, homes proximate to amenities and services, and long-term rentals.
- There is a "missing middle" in Revelstoke, defined by participants as medium densities from townhouses to low-rise apartments.
- Participants noted the importance of including a diversity of housing prices and income levels in neighbourhoods.

Incomes not Keeping Pace with the Cost of Housing

- Market rents cannot, at this point, be expected to serve those on income assistance and with low incomes. Maximum income assistance provides \$800 per month for all needs and a renter cannot realistically procure housing within this amount. This leaves a need for affordable, non-market housing.
- Affordable housing does not address the underlying issue of working individuals not being paid sufficient incomes.

Other Socio-Economic Factors Impacting the Housing System

- The commodification of housing was noted as a concern for the provision of suitable, affordable housing.
- Participants were concerned about the impact of second homeowners and foreign investments in the community and noted that it was important to ensure new homes are used by residents of Revelstoke.

1.5. Underserved Demographics

Focus group participants identified eight demographic groups as being particularly underserved by Revelstoke's housing stock:

- Seniors
- Lone parents
- Individuals with diverse abilities (often living in group homes)

- Staff of non-profits
- Essential service workers (e.g. teachers and school support staff, health care workers, first responders, etc.)
- Seasonal and workforce staff
- Single-person households
- Students
- First-time homeowners

Interest was noted in opportunities to simultaneously provide better-suited housing for seniors and open-up existing housing stock through properties becoming available due to downsizing. Participants also noted that housing needs exist across nearly all demographic groups in Revelstoke and that most groups could be considered underserved.

1.6. Current Successes in Revelstoke

Existing Housing Policies and Mechanisms

- **Workforce housing requirements** for certain developments requiring the dedication of 10% of beds to workforce housing. Participants were interested in expanding the reach of this requirement.
- **Reduced development cost charges (DCCs)** for affordable rental housing. Participants were interested in further reducing charges in order to support the development of additional affordable units.
- **Creating opportunities for gentle density and infill** through recent bylaw changes. Participants were interested in seeing similar changes to large lots which still only permit low density.

Community Services and Partnership

- Second stage housing development (independent, safe housing for women and their children who are at risk of or have experienced violence).
- Supportive housing to address homelessness.
- Development of staff/worker housing.
- Providing developable land to non-profit housing providers.

Community Buy-in on Housing Issues

- Revelstoke residents and businesses are invested and attentive to housing issues and many are willing to contribute their time (e.g., participating in this meeting). Despite significant barriers, grassroots projects and non-profits were noted as contributing to important advancements and successes.

1.7. Potential Improvements, Supports, and Actions

Suggested Actions: Supply and Development Restrictions

- Encourage and incentivize employers to build year-round workforce housing.
- Investigate mechanisms to quantify the number of homes owned by second homeowners and foreign investors, and discourage this type of ownership.
- Zone for and incentivize different forms of density through reducing setbacks, further allowing infill and creative units, allowing medium density in the downtown core, mandating secondary suites in new builds, and allowing bonus density for affordable units.

- Reduce parking requirements and support lower car use through incentivizing and creating cohousing with shared vehicles and providing shared transit and essential services nearby.
- Avoid sprawl to bring down infrastructure capital and maintenance costs.
- Expand developable area and investigate the extension of infrastructure to South Revelstoke.

Suggested Actions: Building Non-Profit Capacity

- Support non-profit housing by providing incentives and in-kind donations.
- Investigate ways to support the administrative costs of non-profits.

Suggested Actions: Diversity and Suitability of Housing Options

- Provide homeownership grants and a resident mortgage program (looking at other models of successful homeownership delivery).
- Provide supportive housing (in addition to providing subsidized rents).
- Utilize mechanisms to encourage studio apartments and co-ops with some shared living space.
- Investigate opportunities to provide student-focused housing.
- Reduce parking requirements and support year-round shared transit serving the resort.

Suggested Actions: Support Responses that Address Immediate Needs

It was identified that regardless of the potential for long-term improvements to housing availability in Revelstoke, some individuals are living without access to showers, running water, and bathrooms who need these services in the meantime.

- Provide basic services for people living in unstable and mobile housing (e.g., food, clean water).
- Create a hygiene centre for a safe place to shower, use washrooms, and fulfil other needs.

Suggested Actions: Approach and Internal Culture

- Set housing as a high-level priority.
- Identify the needs for housing, create a plan, and stick to it to ensure housing is being provided for populations in need.
- Learn from other cities facing similar issues (participants often referenced initiative undertaken by Whistler).

Public Feedback Meeting

1.8. Participation and Objectives

In total, 20 individuals, including stakeholder representatives and community members, participated in the public feedback meetings. In the public feedback meetings, participants were provided a background summary on the objectives of the Housing Action Plan (HAP), the research and engagement findings that informed the Plan thus far, and an overview of the HAP's proposed strategies. Participants then had the opportunities to provide direct feedback on the Plan's strategies and corresponding actions. Specifically, participants were asked:

- *Where are we headed in the right direction?* Were there specific interests that you were pleased to see reflected in the proposed Strategies
- *What are we missing?* Were there gaps in the Strategies or places you felt the actions did not go far enough?
- *Is there anything else that we should know?*

In addition to feedback provided during the public meeting, three individuals provided written feedback.

The input provided by participants has been summarized below and is organized by the related strategy and action. Where feedback was general, applied to multiple actions or strategies, or was related to missing items, it is summarized in *additional feedback* sections.

1.9. Big Moves

Action 1: Develop suitable density bonusing and/or inclusionary zoning programs across a range of neighbourhoods that yield unit or cash contributions to affordable housing

- **Standardize bylaws and policy** so that contributions to affordable housing are expected.
- **Prioritize methods that promote cohesiveness** and address potential conflicts between ‘affordable units’ and ‘regular units’ in inclusionary zoning projects.
- **Consider different models of financial contributions.**
 - Participants had interest in figuring out how to get developers to contribute to affordable housing rather than placing the burden on homebuyers.
 - Calculate contributions based on square footage of construction as a method of deterring large single-family homes.
 - Funds contributing to affordable housing should be taxed equally from current residents rather than new homebuyers (via developers).

Action 2: Develop an affordable housing reserve that can leverage density bonusing contributions and Online Accommodation Platform (OAP) funds to support a range of housing opportunities

- **Consider other or additional revenues for the affordable housing reserve** such as business tax, employer contributions.
- This action may have been pursued in the past (participant to follow-up).

Action 3: Undertake a review of existing City lands and examine the feasibility of contributing land(s) for the purposes of affordable housing

- **Review provincial and federal lands** in addition to City lands.
- **Structure the action to allow for immediate advancements on priority sites** to allow the City and partners to begin developing needed affordable housing before the Action is complete.
 - Some non-profit housing providers were waiting for the HAP to understand where they could build housing.
 - Non-profit housing providers want direction on where to build housing when the HAP is released.
- Recognize constraints including the City’s minimal land base and the possible implications of a prolonged review – the lands could be lost¹.
- Recognize the importance of this action in procuring funding (such as BC housing provincial emergency shelter funding) which requires municipal land.
- The action should have occurred already and may have been pursued in the past.
 - Some stakeholders felt the action shouldn’t be a major pillar and that the City should simply take immediate action to set aside lands for affordable housing.

¹ The City clarified that there are plans for Comprehensive Master Plans for areas like the Oscar Lands in the draft OCP.

- Contributions of land(s) to affordable housing can be one of the major contributions the City can make.

Additional Feedback

- **Prioritize turning actions and approaches into policy**, where useful coordinated with CSRD, to create a robust regulatory environment and build consistency through personnel changes.
- **Housing Committee of Council** is needed to oversee the HAP and to recognize the importance of the issue. Existing committees' mandates and capacities do not allow them to take this on.
- **Further prioritization of non-profit and affordable housing** in 'big moves'; consider integrating changes to the development approval process (Ex. Victoria).
- **Facilitate dialogue and coordination** between non-profit housing providers and the city to build efficient and collective action.

1.10. Priority Strategy 1: Supporting the City's Vulnerable Populations

Action 1: Continue to partner and support the emergency housing project in partnership with Community Connections

- Multiple stakeholders voiced support for this action.

Action 2: Incentivize deeply affordable housing types

- **Affordable housing can be far out of reach for seniors on fixed incomes.** Make sure the approach and language of the action supports such situations.
- Housing for the most vulnerable needs to be distinguished from "affordable housing"²

Action 3: Prioritize City resources to support affordable housing (land and AHR)

- **Hire a staff person to support the development of affordable housing.** Getting support from City staff is challenging. A staff person could play an important role in pursuing grants, building partnerships.
 - The City has contributed money to administration of a housing society in the past.
 - Contributing money for an administrative staff person could be considered a short-term 'big move'.

Additional Feedback

- **Prioritize needed housing types in the development approval process** such as housing and emergency housing for vulnerable populations, any affordable housing.
 - Relegate zoning changes to staff and waive public hearings for affordable housing.
 - Identify and prioritize specific gaps of non-market housing types such as short- and long-term supportive housing, subsidized rental housing, emergency shelter, etc.
- **Support a local housing authority or merge societies** as a method to decrease duplication of efforts.
- **Create requirements to better support the needs of individuals experiencing barriers to housing**, who can be in more precarious forms of housing, such as:
 - Universal design standards,
 - Education and supports related to radon, specifically for renters in basement units,

² This category can include a range of housing, such as second stage housing for women and children fleeing violence, supportive housing for individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness, group homes for individuals with developmental disabilities (among others).

- Integration of nature, social and community spaces, smoke-free common space, to support mental health and wellbeing.
- **Use less stigmatizing language** for the strategy, such as “supporting people who experience housing barriers”.

1.11. Priority Strategy 2: Increase the Supply of Workforce Housing

Additional Feedback

- **Prioritize specific forms and locations** for workforce housing to ensure employees are close to transit and amenities, and that the right types of housing are being created.
- **Prioritize workforce housing applications in the development application process.**
- **Define workforce housing**, including groups in addition to the very low or low-income workforce that are needed in Revelstoke (nurses, teachers, support staff, first responders, pharmacists, etc.).
 - Consider specific actions to support different parts of the workforce.
- **Consider negative impacts of employer-owned workforce housing** on the community. Workforce housing can displace residents for the benefit of workers when employers buy an existing building.
- Mandate that any commercial enterprise over a certain size provide staff accommodation (e.g. new hotels).

1.12. Priority Strategy 3: Regulate Existing Rental and Mobile Homes

Action 1: Establish regulations to protect tenants and existing purpose-built rental stock (e.g. tenant relocation policies, rental replacement policies)

- **Consider the implications of rental protections** on existing tenancies. Rental stocks aging in areas with significant restriction can lead to them being improperly maintained and becoming derelict as investment is not reasonable.
 - It is almost impossible to provide the same rental price point for rental replacements due to changing factors such as materials.
- Participants voiced their shame towards the conditions some individuals are forced to inhabit in the community.

Action 2: Develop and implement mobile home protection policies

- Update and review mobile home park bylaws.
- Protect mobile home parks through protection of the land and not the individual units.

Action 3: Develop short-term vacation rental regulations that balance the need for short and long-term rental accommodation

- Consider a strategy to tax non-resident houses above a certain size or price.
 - This strategy was employed by the government but has been discontinued.
 - Consider advocacy related to regulations.
- **De-prioritize secondary homeowner applications** in the development application approval process.

- Non-resident homeowners are not all short-term rentals. We need to understand percentage of secondary homeowner permits in the development queue.
- **Limit short term vacation rentals** to areas where there is community servicing to avoid contributing to the load of unserved areas.
- **Consider implications of restrictions** on local residents renting short-term rentals as a secondary source of income.

1.13. Priority Strategy 4: Increase Opportunities for Affordable Home Ownership

Action 1: Rezoning for comprehensive development proposals should include a diversity of denser housing forms

- **Prioritize density in locations that are serviced.**

Action 3: Explore the expansion of gentle density options (garden suites and carriage houses) across all single-family zones in Revelstoke

- Create a funding opportunity to help residents create garden suites or carriage houses, requiring them to be rented to individuals in need of affordable housing and held at a particular rate.
 - Need methods to ensure secondary suites do not get turned into short term rentals.

Additional Feedback

- Supporting homeownership is important to provide security, build equity and wealth.
 - Revelstoke needs to be supporting homeownership as an integral piece through providing staff capacity, advocating to senior levels of government, and procuring funding.

Participants shared differing opinions towards the approach to increase affordable homeownership options. Input on the approach included:

- Disincentivize or limit large single-family homes.
 - Huge homes consume a disproportionate amount of land and other resources for single family dwellings. Many are not the primary residence of the homeowner.
 - Require all homes above a certain square footage to be multi-unit dwellings, by at minimum including a secondary suite (e.g. Whistler), and that one must be occupied by a permanent resident.
- Prioritize supply rather than restrictions.
 - Focus on proven outcomes rather than popular tools.
 - A different municipality put restriction in place for single family homes and the remaining lots that did not have restrictions increased drastically in price.
 - Proposed methods are transferring costs onto homeowners rather than developers.
- Supply hasn't provided us with a solution so far, so we need to think outside of the box and need partnerships.

1.14. Priority Strategy 5: Develop a City-Led Communication, Education and Advocacy Strategy

Action 1: Advocate to senior levels of government for greater resource investment in homelessness and workforce housing

- Consider the best voices for advocacy efforts.
 - Provincial government does not respond well to advocacy from local governments.
 - A housing society communication with BC Housing could be more successful.

Participants identified specific needs for advocacy to senior levels of government:

- Programs and funding for affordable homeownership models.
 - Need the City's support to communicate why different forms of housing are important.
- Allow resort municipalities to implement a vacant dwelling tax.

Action 2: Communicate the need for greater density to achieve affordable housing to the community

- Approaches to address 'NIMBYism' to allow for the successful implementation of the Plan including:
 - Public education campaigns,
 - Reducing stigma through building high quality affordable and social housing,
 - Ex. Ensure sufficient storage so belongings are not stored on balconies.
 - Communicate why it is important for Revelstoke to stay an income-diverse community.
- Lead public education on the importance of directing density to core areas with public amenities and services as an act of reducing GHG emissions, ensuring equity and community belonging lenses are applied to the OCP as well as economy and sustainability.
- Significant money has been invested in promoting Revelstoke for tourism which has led to housing challenges. A similar contribution should be made to solve the problem.

1.15. Additional Comments

Format and Organization of the Plan:

- Include timelines to delineate short-, medium- and long-term actions.
- Make the HAP a community-based action plan rather than a city-specific plan.
 - Reflect this in the Plan's name: *Revelstoke Housing Action Plan* rather than *City of Revelstoke Housing Action Plan*.
 - Be clear about the roles (partners, leads) involved in each action.
- Move priority actions into the 'big moves' section so they are not lost.
- Include an implementation plan in the HAP.

Address and invest in necessary bodies to successfully implement the Plan including:

- Housing committee under council,
- Local housing authority.

Workforce Housing Survey

1.16. Highlights

- **88%** of employers who responded to the survey had experienced a need for more workers in the past year.
- Of employers that reported a need for more workers in the past year, **83%** reported their business or organization experienced economic impacts due to a need for workers.
- **81%** of respondents had experienced staff leaving the business or organization due to housing need.
- Respondents rated below-market long-term rentals followed by market long-term rentals as the highest priority to satisfy workforce needs.
- Respondents rated housing unaffordability (97% of respondents), lack of supply (90%), and the inability to purchase a home (90%) as the most common housing issues facing employees.
- **68%** of respondents identified that they would be interested in, alongside other employers in the community, investing in housing through a collaborative opportunity if one existed.

1.17. Considerations

Percentages are based on the number of respondents to each question. As respondents were allowed to skip questions and pick multiple answers for select questions, the total number of respondents to each question varies. Responses from open-ended questions were reviewed and summarized by the themes that emerged.

1.18. Demographics and Background

Survey respondents were asked a series of demographic questions to gain background information on who took part in the engagement activity.

Respondents were asked to identify what industry or sector their business or organization operated in (Table 1). Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (7 respondents), Retail Trade (5 respondents), and Accommodation and Food Services (4 respondents) were the most represented, respectively. In total, 12 out of the 19 sectors provided in the survey were represented by the respondents. Because of the number of total respondents and distribution across various industries, the industry/sector data was not compared with other aspects of the survey.

Table 1: Number of survey respondents by industry/sector

Industry/Sectors	Number of respondents
Finance and Insurance	1
Information and Cultural Industries	1
Transportation and Warehousing	3
Construction	3
Retail Trade	5
Public Administration	1
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	7
Accommodation and Food Services	4
Manufacturing	1
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	1

Educational Services	1
Healthcare and Social Assistance	2
Other	2

As shown in Figure 1, survey respondents reported that the majority of their workforce (61%) were within the age range of 25 to 44. Respondents employ the majority of their workforce on either a full-time, seasonal/transient (40%), or full-time, permanent/year-round (26%) basis (Figure 2). Respondents employed more of their staff on a seasonal/transient basis (60%) than year-round/permanent (40%, including full-time, part-time, and casual/on-call).

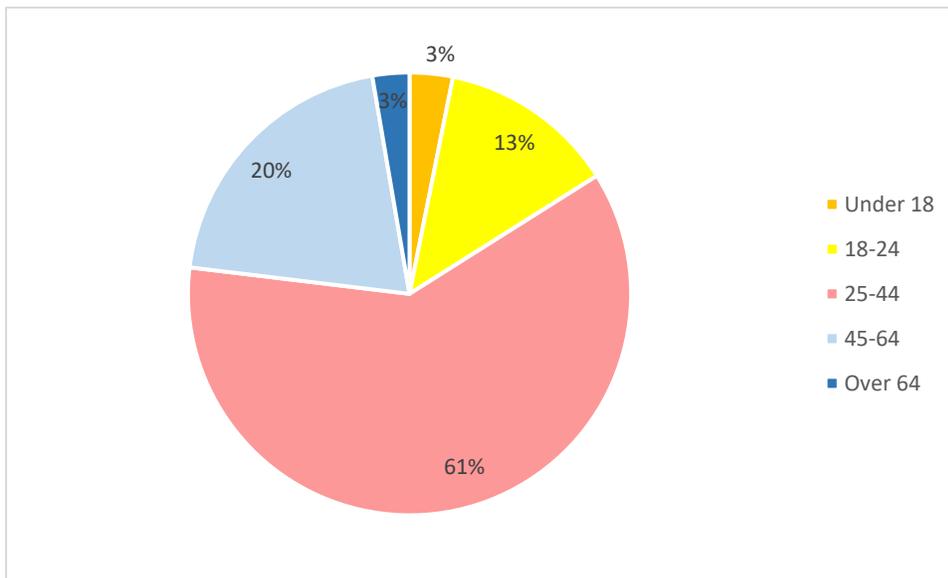


Figure 1: Respondents' current workforce by employee age (%)

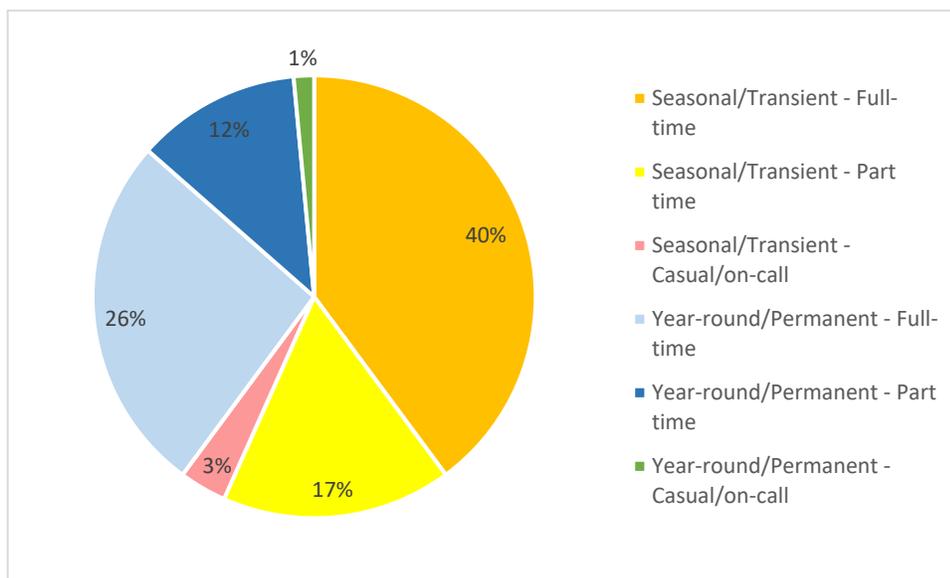


Figure 2: Respondents’ current workforce by type of employment (%)

1.19. Workforce Needs

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions to understand their current need for workers. When asked how long they typically retain staff (Figure 3), responses show that the most common period of retention is three to six months. This aligns with Revelstoke’s seasonal economy and the fact that the majority of staff are employed on a seasonal/transient basis (as reflected in Figure 2). In some cases, this may also be connected with issues of retention. A full 25% of jobs are long-term (retaining staff 5+ years) and 39% retain staff for between 1 and 5 years.

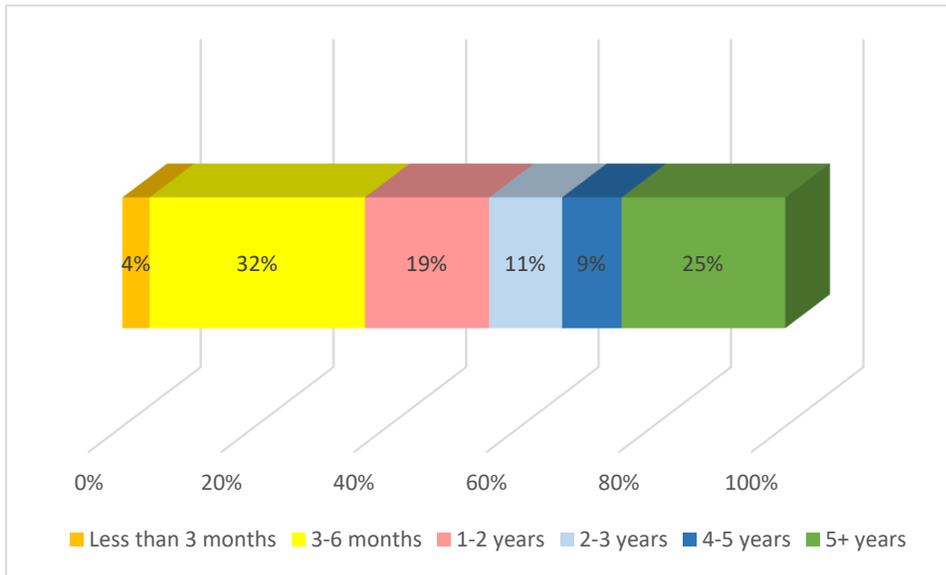


Figure 3: Length of time (months/years) that staff remain at respondents’ business/organization

When asked if they had experienced a need for more workers in the past year, **88%** said yes. The majority of respondents who experienced a need for more workers needed between one to five workers, although some respondents noted needing more than 10 additional workers (Figure 4). On average, employers need six additional workers. The cumulative total among all survey respondents was a need for 175 additional workers. **93%** of survey respondents in need of workers had posted and advertised their positions.

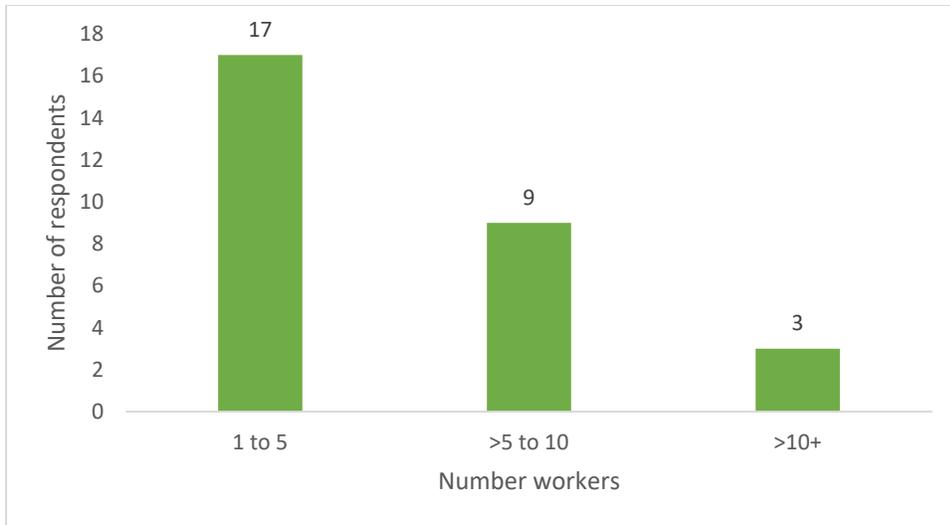


Figure 4: Number of additional workers needed by respondents

1.20. Hiring, Retention, and Housing Need

83% of survey respondents who reported a need for more workers reported their business or organization experienced economic impacts due to a need for workers or unfilled positions. **94%** of survey respondents received interest from qualified applicants located outside of Revelstoke when hiring and **85%** of survey respondents had experienced applicants declining an offer because they were unable to find adequate, suitable, or affordable housing. Of these employers, **41%** of applicants to Year-Round/Permanent positions and **46%** of applicants to Seasonal/Transient positions experienced a housing issue that led to them declining an offer of employment (Figure 5).

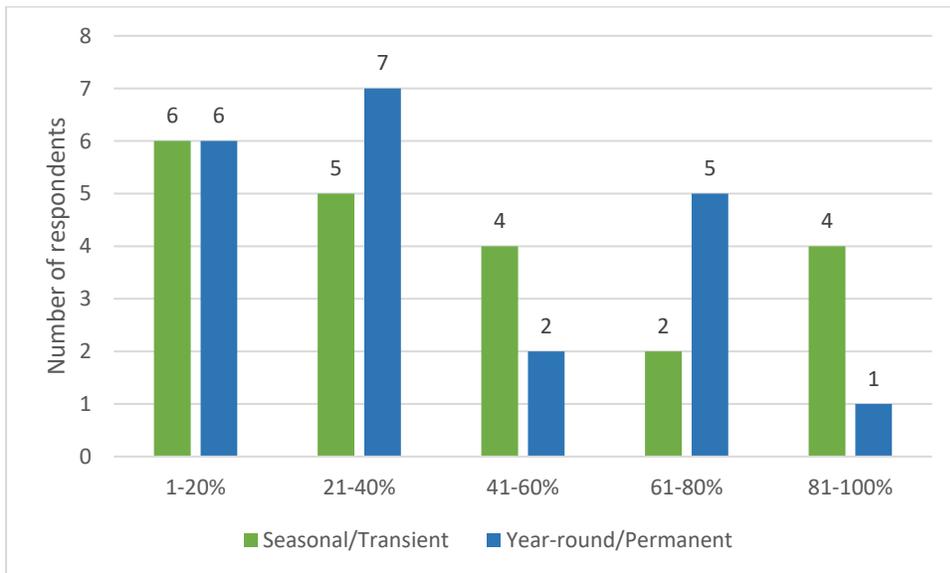


Figure 5: Percentage (%) of applicants to year-round/permanent and seasonal/transient positions that declined an offer due to housing issues

81% of survey respondents had experienced staff leaving the business or organization due to housing need. One participant who responded that they had not experienced this clarified that “it’s been close, but so far no – [but it is an] ever present stress”. Respondents were asked to specify the percentage of seasonal/transient and year-round/permanent workers that experienced a housing issue leading them to leave work or the community (Figure 6). Seasonal/transient workers were marginally more likely to experience a housing issue leading them to leave (44%) in comparison to year-round/permanent workers (41%).

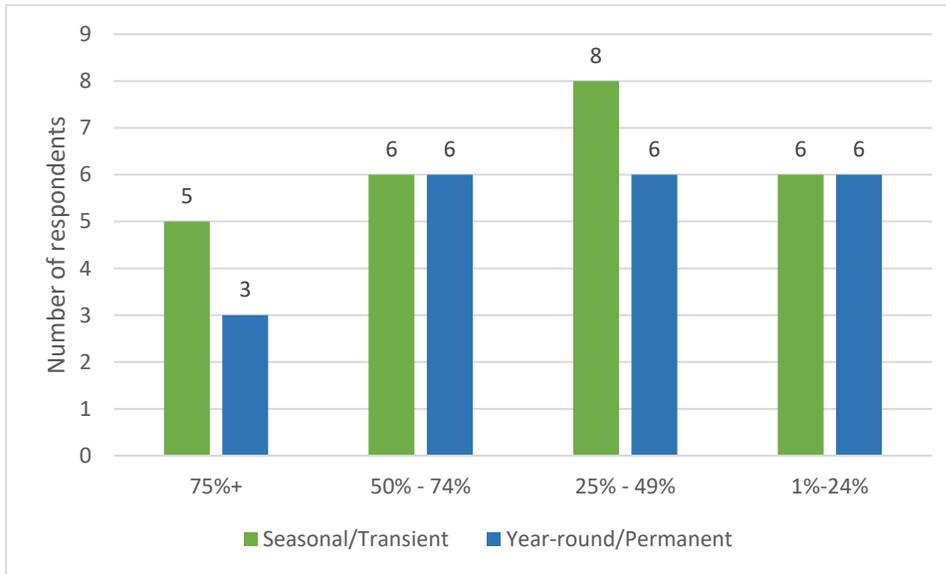


Figure 6: Percentage (%) of seasonal/transient and year-round/permanent workers that have experienced a housing issue that led to them leaving work or the community

In an open-ended question, survey respondents were able to expand on how housing issues affect their business or organization. The following themes emerged from respondents’ answers. Where relevant, further information is provided below the emerging themes. The number of respondents that referenced each theme is listed in parentheses.

Lack of suitable applicants to positions (3)

- Lack of qualified applicants for skilled positions; employees do not stay

Need to increase housing supply (2)

- Through policy and zoning, through infill and densifying

Need short term housing for workers (2)

- Need short-term housing from November to April; workforce is available but needs short-term housing in Revelstoke

Significant impacts to business (2)

- Will not be able to operate at full capacity; may need to move the business from Revelstoke

Regulation of Short-Term Rentals and/or secondary homeowners (2)

Need for investment in housing (2)

- City should be investing/subsidizing
- Landlords/developers/businesses should not be subsidizing their own housing

Need for below-market/subsidized housing (1)

No need for more below-market housing (1)

Economic impacts of large employers procuring market housing options (1)

Require large employers to provide housing (1)

1.21. Housing Needs

Survey respondents were asked about their level of familiarity with their employees’ housing needs. **91%** of survey respondents consider themselves very familiar with the housing needs of their employees, with the remaining **9%** considering themselves somewhat familiar. Very familiar was described to respondents as "I know when staff face housing shortages and am aware of the types of housing they need".

Respondents were asked what types of housing they believe are most needed in Revelstoke to satisfy their workforce needs (Figure 7). Below-market long-term rentals were rated as the highest priority, followed by market long-term rentals. Short-term rentals (below-market and market) were overall rated as lower priority. In this context, short-term housing is considered housing rented on daily, weekly, or monthly basis and long-term housing is considered housing rented for a minimum of six months.

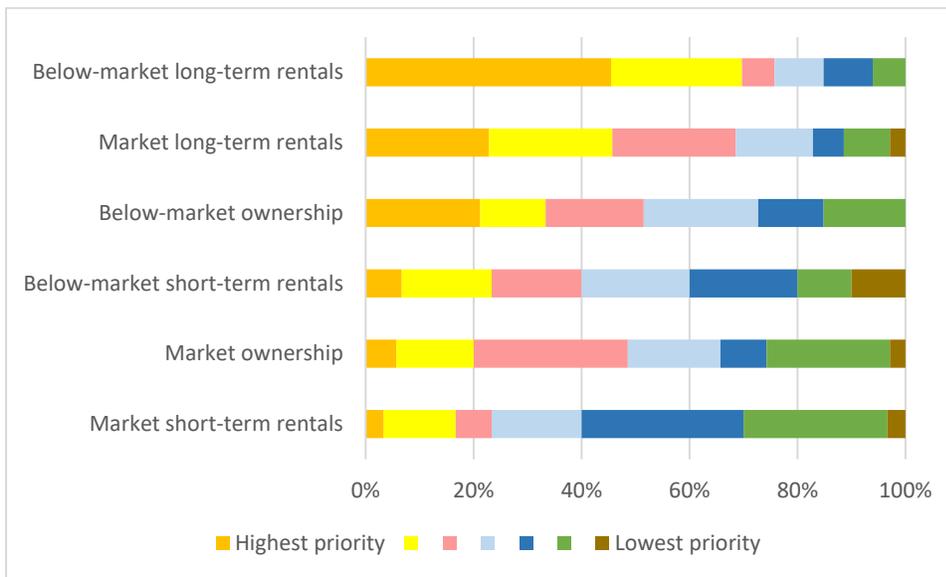


Figure 7: Type of housing most needed in Revelstoke to satisfy respondents’ workforce needs

Survey respondents whose staff had experienced housing issues were asked to specify the issues that their staff faced (Figure 8). Housing unaffordability (97% of respondents), lack of supply (90%), and inability to purchase a home (90%) were rated as the most common issues.

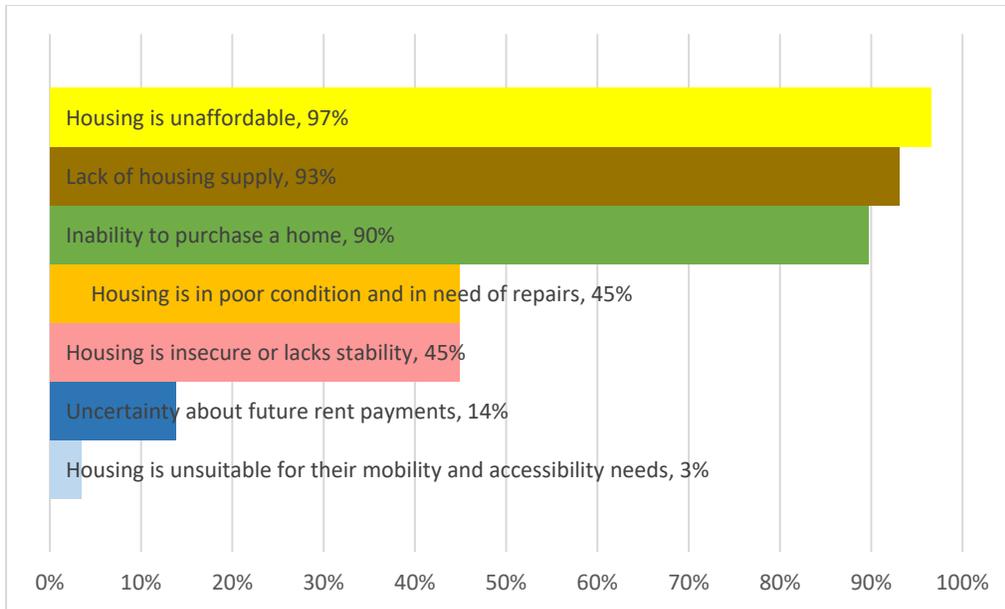


Figure 8: Housing issues employees experience

1.22. Investing in Employee Housing

Employers were asked a series of questions about subsidizing and investing in employee housing in Revelstoke, including to understand whether they currently subsidize housing or would be interested in investing in housing. **26%** of survey respondents currently subsidize the cost of their employees’ housing. **68%** of respondents identified that they would be interested in, alongside other employers in the community, investing in housing through a collaborative opportunity if one existed.

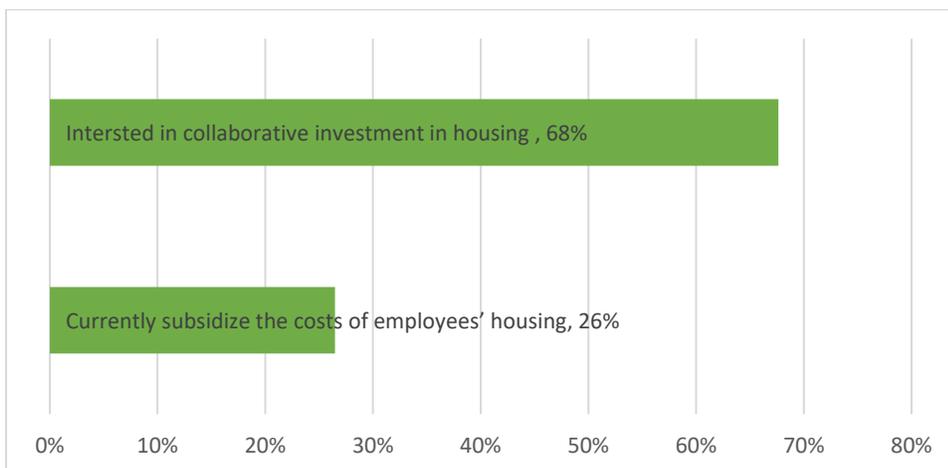


Figure 9: Employers currently subsidizing or interested in investing in employee housing

Appendix A: Workforce Housing Survey

1.23. Survey Questions

1. What types of housing do you believe are most needed in Revelstoke to satisfy your workforce needs? (Please order from (1) most important to (7) least important) In this context, short-term housing is considered housing rented on daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Long-term housing is considered housing rented for a minimum of six-month terms.
2. Does your business/organization currently subsidize the costs of employees' housing? (Y/N)
3. Has or would your business/organization consider purchasing housing stock to rent to employees? (Select any that apply)
4. Would your business/organization be interested in, alongside other employers in the community, investing in housing through a collaborative opportunity if one existed? (Y/N)
5. How long does your business/organization typically retain year-round/permanent staff? (Specify percentage for each range)
6. How familiar are you, as an employer, with the housing needs of your employees?
7. Within your knowledge, have you had staff leave your business/organization or the community due to housing issues (Y/N)?
8. If yes, what percentage of SEASONAL/TRANSIENT workers experienced a housing issue that led to them leaving work or the community? (%)
9. If yes, what percentage of YEAR ROUND/PERMANENT workers experienced a housing issue that led to them leaving work or the community? (%)
10. If you have had knowledge of staff leaving due to housing issues, which of the following housing issues have your employees experienced (select all that apply)?
11. In the past year have you had a need for more workers? (Y/N)
12. If yes, how many additional workers did you need? (#)
13. If yes, were open positions posted/advertised? (Y/N)
14. When hiring, do you receive interest from qualified applicants located outside of Revelstoke? (Y/N)
15. When hiring, have you had applicants decline an offer due to the inability to find adequate, suitable, or affordable housing for your employees (Y/N)?
16. If yes, what percentage of YEAR ROUND/PERMANENT workers experienced a housing issue that led to them declining an offer of employment? (%)
17. If yes, what percentage of SEASONAL/TRANSIENT workers experienced a housing issue that led to them declining an offer of employment? (%)
18. Did the business/organization experience economic impacts due to a need for workers/unfilled positions? (Y/N) (For example, the business could not open, had to limit hours, had limited capacity/service, or had to pay higher wages.)
19. What industry/sector is your business or organization from?
20. How many employees do you currently have?
21. What age are your employees? (List number of employees in each age range)
22. Do you authorize your email address to be shared with third party local organizations that are working on collaborative staff housing initiatives? This would allow us to forward emails to business organizations that are leading workforce housing projects.
23. Is there anything else you would like us to know about how housing issues affect your business/organization?

1.24. Open Ended Responses (Question 23)

it is not up to landlord to lower the cost of their rental to help this situation. low income housing need to be invested into by the city instead of giving green light to investor builder promising low income housing but saling at 800k and up property. Real low income housing project are badly needed in this town

There were no staff to hire, and a few that come in had to be hired even though they were not good. We paid for that, these people had no loyalty and just left when something better came along. Lot's of "ghosting". The main thing was/is very few applicants.

There is lots of non market housing coming, we don't need to create more with tax \$

We all know this, but RMR needs to get on their staff housing ASAP. They should be made to build it before other projects if there's any way to do that. The staff housing coordinator for RMR is seeking every bedroom he can get his hands on as they need housing for all the workers coming this summer to build the golf course and hotel. And they'll pay just about any amount for it. They've needed staff housing for years, now it's somehow going to get worse. I'm very worried about housing and gas prices for this summer - it's going to be terribly difficult for us to find staff. Thanks for providing this survey.

Will not be able to continue to operate fully at the current service levels needed.

Our Tasting Room/Kitchen struggles the most with employees, really difficult to find Chefs - want committed people who will stay long term but it's unaffordable/hard to find housing & everyone is hiring kitchen staff...its a battle

The fundamental questions at the start of this survey indicate a lack of general business concepts. I have an MBA, and significant economics experience. Subsidizing housing and shared ownership only increases demand, which in turn increases market prices. What needs to be lobbied for is (greatly) increased taxation of secondary home owners and reducing short term rentals. If anyone should be subsidized, it should be developers. We need more supply to deal with the current issues. Because this is a supply issue, stimulus on the demand side will only worsen the problem.

Town policy, zoning, infill, medium density (2, 4 plex) will increase market availability. The alternative is sky high housing prices and/or a requirement to create subsidized/non free market alternatives. If subsidized housing is desired, high density similar to the facility in Lake Louise (common bathrooms, kitchen etc) may be a good alternative.

Get rid of short term rentals. Tourists should be staying in hotels, not in houses built for residents. The housing issues in this town will most likely lead me to move my business to another area. It is becoming completely unaffordable in Revelstoke which is a shame.

we would benefit from short term rental options available for workers from Nov - end of April for our business that has guests fr Dec - April 7

The employee counts do not show the 2 bodies we are chronically short. Our growth needs longer term committed and more skilled employees. We pay a living wage for work that is fun to do and still can not recruit to meet our needs. Most of the time those that want to commit to the job and the community are over 30 and yet our housing stock is completely wrong or unavailable for that demographic.

We have many workers from out of town who work but with the cost of hotels we cannot bring them in. With the lack of short term rentals we cannot bring them in