



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO



Municipal Census

2008



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

The statistical information summarized in this report by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo has been collected through a partnership between the Planning and Development Department of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, the Population Research Lab at the University of Alberta, and the Workforce Development Department of Keyano College. Anyone requiring additional information is invited to contact:

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Note of Appreciation

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo would like to extend its sincere thanks to the residents of the region for their cooperation during the 2008 Municipal Census. The reporting of this statistical information could not be accomplished without their continued willingness to participate in our annual enumeration. Thank you for counting yourself in. There's power in numbers.

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Introduction

Census 2008

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo conducts a civic census to provide timely statistical data, about the region and its residents. Through the collection of census data the municipality can make informed decisions about land use and development, regional service delivery, and future planning in response to forecasted growth scenarios.

Demographic indicators collected through the 2008 Municipal Census are valuable not only to the municipality for planning and calculating grants from other orders of government, but to other local public sector partners as well. These partners include the Northern Lights Health Region, the Public and Catholic school divisions, Keyano College, and the Fort McMurray Public Library. Private sector businesses, industry, and associations also have an interest in current census data for activities like workforce planning and forecasting.

The unprecedented population growth that accompanies a sustained rapid economic growth requires that government grant funding, allocated on a per capita basis, and capital expenditures reflect accurate population figures. Therefore, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo firmly considers the annual census to be an important municipal asset for the region, taxpayers and residents.

Census Data Collection

Included in this year's regional enumeration are nine rural communities - Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort MacKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Janvier, Mariana Lake, and Sapræe Creek, and the local shadow population in addition to the urban centre of Fort McMurray. Temporary or shadow population means a temporary resident who is employed or will be employed in an industrial or commercial establishment for at least 30 days.

Enumerators canvassed households throughout the region during the census data collection process between April 28th, 2008 and June 27th, 2008. Methods used for the 2008 census data collection process included in-person interviews at residents' homes by enumerators; providing information by phone to the census office; and filling out an online census survey via the Municipality's website. For some population reporting categories - project accommodations, hotels/motels, homeless and campgrounds - statistical data was provided by a secondary source.

Scope of the Report

The information in this report contains quantitative data taken from the 2008 enumeration outcomes. The intent of the information is to provide a starting point for further research to draw specific conclusions about a given indicator.

The census information contained in this report is presented under two broad categories: population and housing. Statistical tables and figures report the enumeration outcomes.

Population

Sustained Regional Growth

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo has seen a sustained economic boom for the past nine years as a result of the abundant oilsands deposits in the region. With increased investment in the oilsands, the population of the region is growing rapidly. The cumulative effect of this pace is a region that experiences substantially higher net migration compared to other regions of Alberta. The connection between population growth and oilsands activity is clearly seen where accelerated development drives migration to fill jobs. This trend continues with the development and construction of new sites and the operation and maintenance of existing projects

Population Growth and Oilsands Investment

This connection between population growth and oilsands activity was evident when regional growth stagnated between 1986 and 1996, before the next major investments in the oilsands. The population change between 1986 (36,810) and 1996 (37,222) was one per cent. Amplified interest in oilsands investment over the past nine-year period has resulted in a population increase of 141.2 per cent from 1999 (42,847) to 2008 (103,334). During this period, the largest proportion of growth occurred in the project accommodation sector, where the population growth from 1999 (3,568) to 2008 (26,284) was 636.7 per cent. Between 2007 and 2008, the project accommodation population grew by 7,712 persons or 41.5% percent, compared to Fort McMurray, which grew by 6,963 or 10.6 percent. This trend has been occurring for several years now, as evidenced by the following:

- **2002-2005** - Fort McMurray accounted for 92% of the population growth and the work camps accounted for 8% (other areas remained fairly constant).
- **2005-2008** - Fort McMurray accounted for 35% of the population growth and the work camps accounted for 53%.

Future Growth

The Urban Service Area (Fort McMurray), has experienced a sustained annual average growth rate of 7.9 per cent between 1999 and 2008. The Region has seen a sustained annual average growth rate of 10.5 per cent between 1999 and 2008. Forecasts from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Long Range Planning and Policy Division indicate that the Region will reach a population of 250,000.

In a region featuring explosive economic growth, coupled with unprecedented population growth, accurately gauging the future progression of the region's population is a challenge complicated by many variables such as the timing and size of individual oilsands projects, regional multipliers, in-migration patterns and the shadow population. What is clearly understood, is that the region is intended for further population intensification in the near future, driven by oilsands projects and associated growth in the service support sectors.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Census 2008

1.1 Table: Population in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo by Area from 1999 to 2008

Area	1999	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Fort McMurray ¹	36,452	42,156	47,240	56,111	60,983	61,366	65,400	72,363
Anzac	397	446	548	647	685	711	714	837
Conklin	215	219	213	210	242	338	299	372
Draper	47	60	84	141	148	118	185	267
Fort Chipewyan	1,020	1,036	1,012	1,146	744	915	1,007	1,016
Fort Fitzgerald	-	-	30	4	12	4	2	10
Fort MacKay	262	399	186	218	104	536	737	862
Gregoire Lake Estates	163	206	184	206	180	285	248	253
Janvier	207	185	143	112	141	218	178	194
Mariana Lake	7	15	11	8	5	9	9	4
Saprae Creek	509	659	603	624	754	728	737	864
Hinterland ²	-	122	-	-	-	47	43	8
Shadow Population: ³	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Project Accomodation ⁴	3,568	5,903	8,063	7,678	9,178	10,442	18,572	26,284
Total	42,847	51,406	58,317	67,105	73,176	75,717	88,131	103,334

¹ The work camp, hotel/motel and campground population residing in Fort McMurray are included in the total.

² "Hinterland" means sparsely populated region outside of Urban and Rural Service Areas, and does not include Work Camps and Campgrounds.

³ "Shadow Population" means temporary residents of a municipality who are employed or will be employed by an industrial or commercial establishment in the municipality for a minimum of 30 days.

⁴ Source: The Oil Sands Developers Group.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Census 2008

1.2 Map: Population in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo



1.3 Table: Population in Fort McMurray by Area from 1999 to 2008

Area	1999	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Abasand Heights	3,942	4,649	4,061	4,442	5,860	5,608	5,309	5,775
Beacon Hill	2,253	2,336	2,480	2,604	2,461	2,518	2,481	2,545
Gregoire	2,859	3,188	3,856	4,117	4,358	4,658	4,488	4,771
Lower Townsite	8,191	9,561	11,831	13,652	12,260	11,300	11,721	12,474
Thickwood Heights	14,307	15,995	17,015	18,229	18,087	18,247	18,527	19,160
Timberlea	4,292	5,748	7,336	11,605	14,406	15,579	18,900	24,383
Waterways	608	679	661	472	718	750	722	755
Shadow Population: ⁴	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Project Accomodation ⁵	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	52
- Hotels/Motels ⁵	-	444	517	990	2,024	1,778	1,423	1,421
- Campgrounds	-	-	-	-	577	523	1,334	586
Homeless ⁶	-	-	-	-	232	405	441	441
Total	36,452	42,156	47,240	56,111	60,983	61,366	65,400	72,363

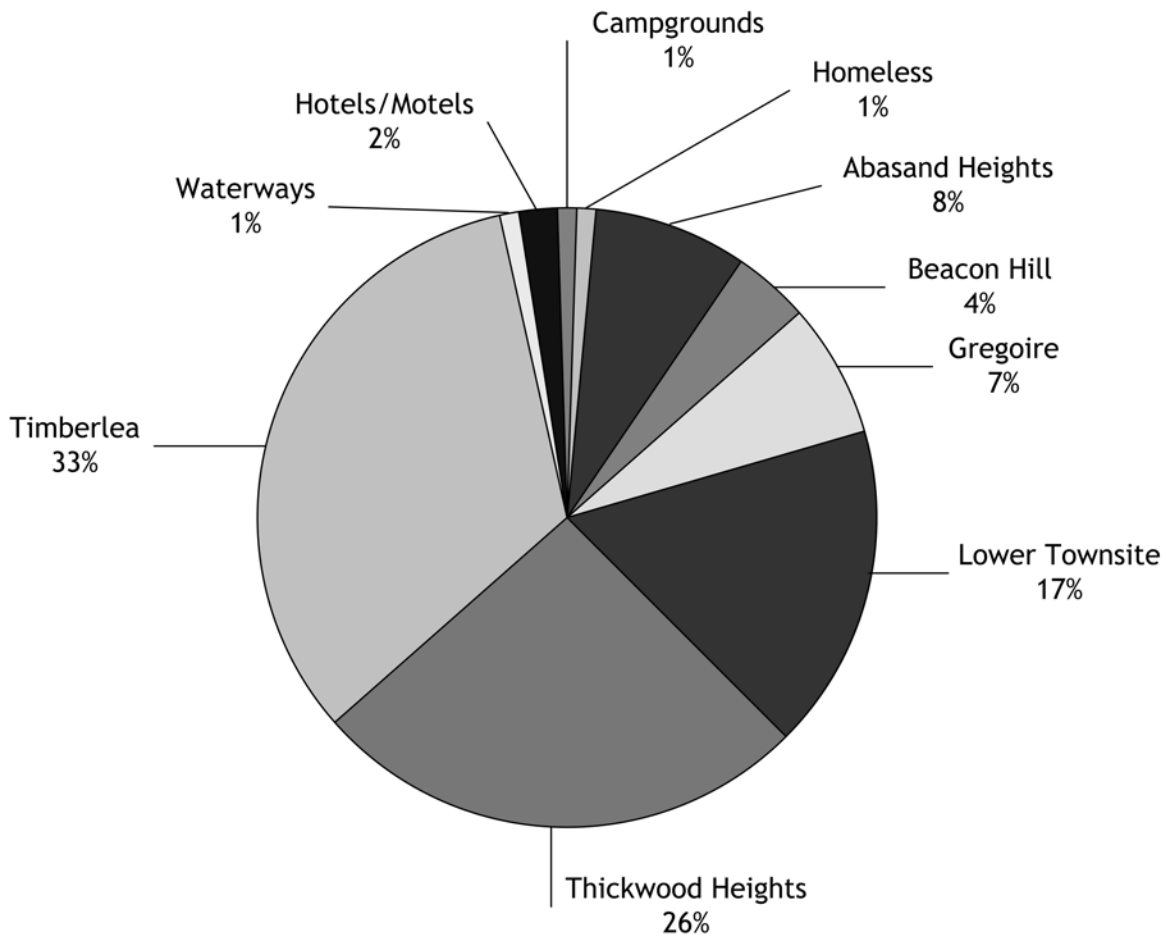
⁴ "Shadow Population" means temporary residents of a municipality who are employed or will be employed by an industrial or commercial establishment in the municipality for a minimum of 30 days.

⁵ Source: The Oil Sands Developers Group.

⁶ Source: Community Services Department, October 2006 (RMWB).

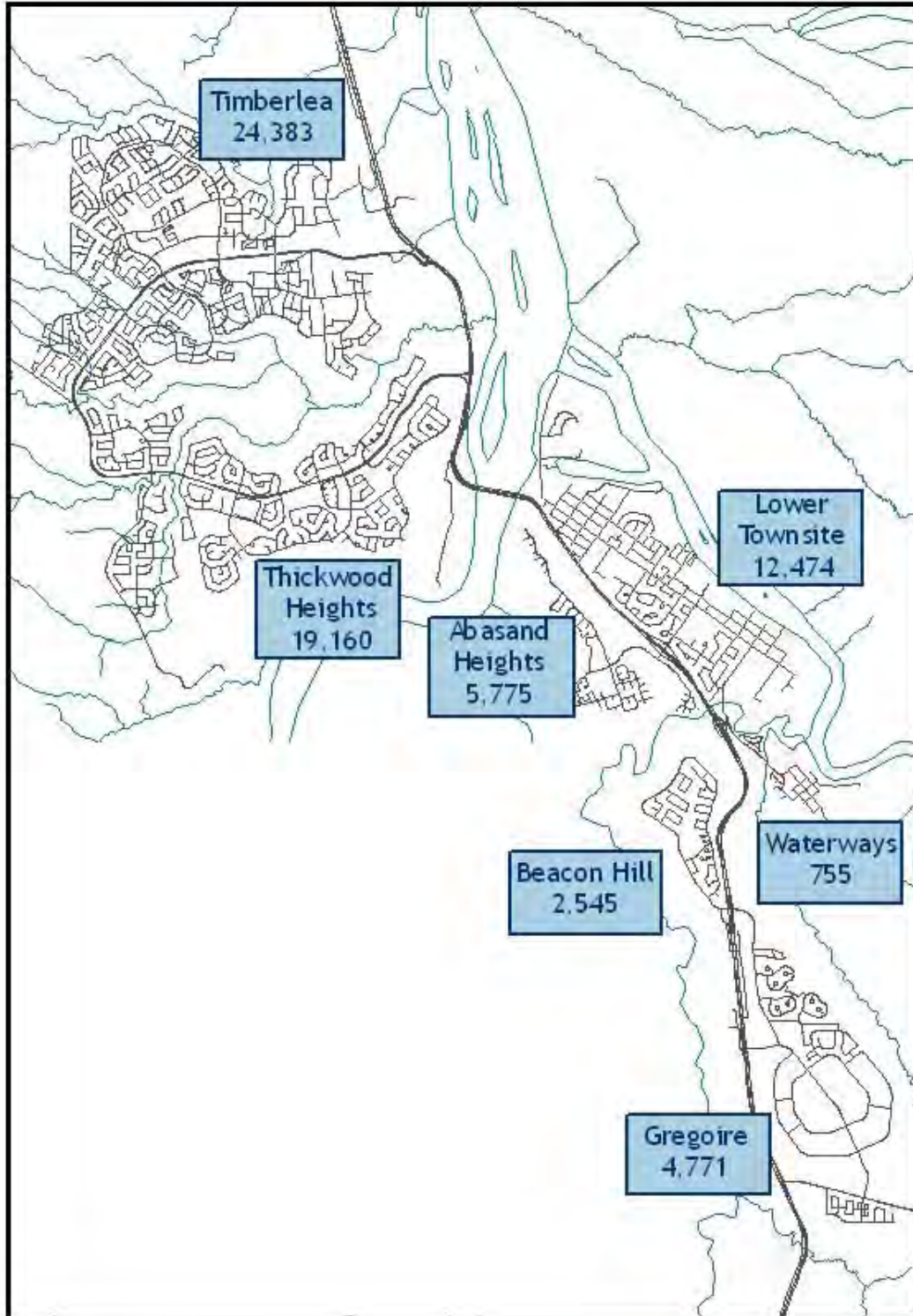
The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Census 2008

1.4 Chart: Population in Fort McMurray by Area



The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Census 2008

1.5 Map: Population Distribution in Fort McMurray



1.6 Table: Percent Population in RMWB by Area and Gender

Area	Male	Female
Fort McMurray	56.9	43.1
Anzac	59.3	40.7
Conklin	55.1	44.9
Draper	59.3	40.7
Fort Chipewyan	51.0	49.0
Fort MacKay	50.0	50.0
Gregoire Lake Estates	53.0	47.0
Mariana Lake	52.4	47.6
Janvier	52.4	47.6
Saprae Creek	53.4	46.6
Average	56.7	43.3

1.7 Table: Comparison of percent population in the RMWB by Area and Gender from 2000 to 2008

Area	2000		2002		2004		2005		2006		2008	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Fort McMurray	53.6	46.4	54.5	45.5	56.8	43.2	55.8	44.2	55.2	44.8	56.9	43.1
Anzac	53.7	46.3	54.3	45.7	54.3	45.7	52.2	47.8	52.9	47.1	59.3	40.7
Conklin	49.5	50.5	-	-	51.9	48.1	55.7	44.3	56.9	43.1	55.1	44.9
Draper	53.3	46.7	-	-	48.6	51.4	53.3	46.7	51.9	48.1	59.3	40.7
Fort Chipewyan	51.3	48.7	49.5	50.5	50.9	49.1	51.6	48.4	50.6	49.4	51.0	49.0
Fort MacKay	50.9	49.1	50.7	49.3	54.3	45.7	53.3	46.7	58.2	41.8	50.0	50.0
Gregoire Lake Estates	54.3	45.7	53.8	46.2	56.8	43.2	54.2	45.8	51.7	48.3	53.0	47.0
Janvier	53.1	46.9	55.1	44.9	59.8	40.2	53.4	46.6	55.8	44.2	52.4	47.6
Saprae Creek	51.9	48.1	51.7	48.3	54.2	45.8	54.9	45.1	53.4	46.6	53.4	46.6
Average	53.6	46.4	53.7	46.3	54.9	45.1	53.8	46.2	55.0	45.0	56.7	43.3

1.8 Table: Percent Population in Fort McMurray by Area and Gender

Area	Male	Female
Abasand Heights	58.3	41.7
Beacon Hill	57.0	43.0
Gregoire	55.7	44.3
Lower Townsite	58.6	41.4
Thickwood	57.5	42.5
Timberlea	55.5	44.5
Waterways	57.3	42.7
Average	56.8	43.2

1.9 Table: Comparison of Percent Population in Fort McMurray by Area and Gender from 2000 to 2008

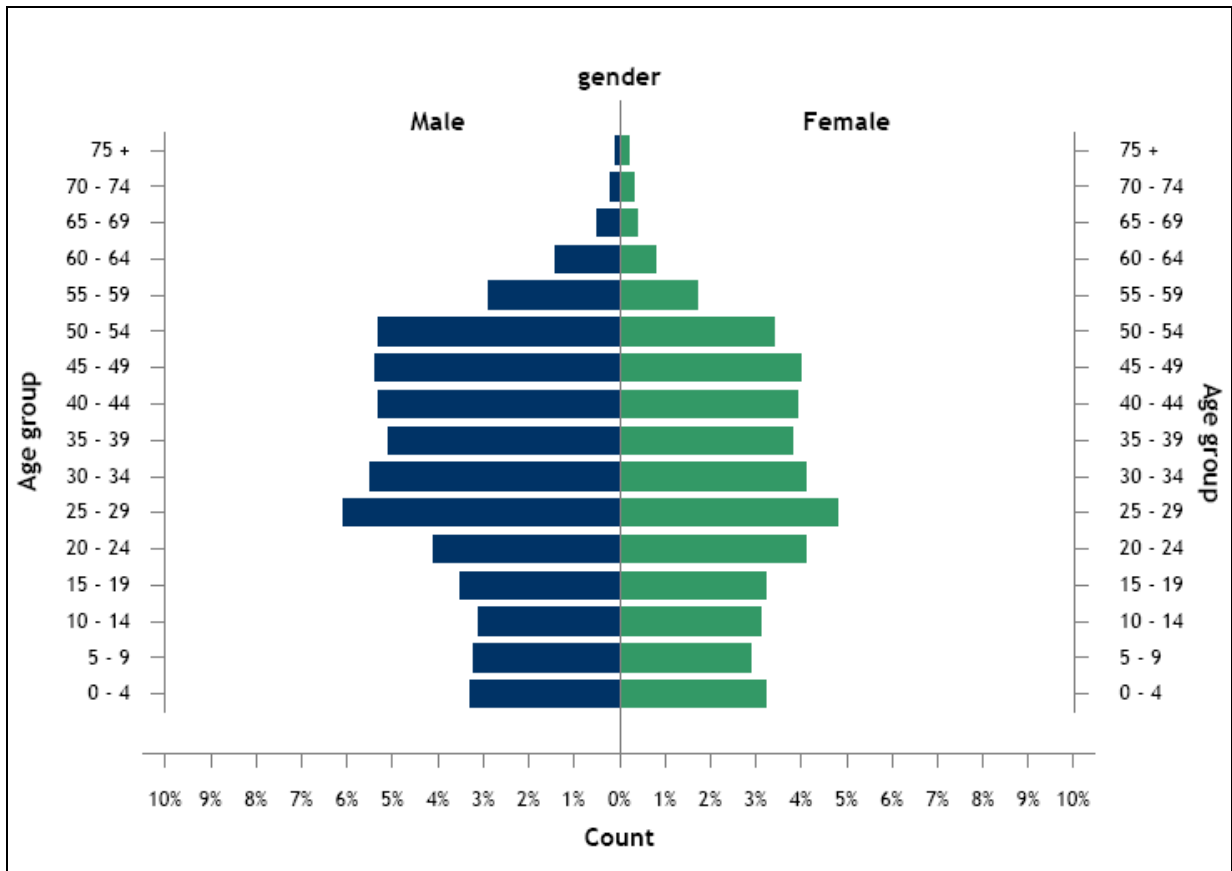
Area	2000		2002		2004		2005		2006		2008	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Abasand Heights	53.9	46.1	55.5	44.5	59.5	40.5	57.1	42.9	55.7	44.3	58.3	41.7
Beacon Hill	51.7	48.3	53.4	46.6	60.4	39.6	54.2	45.8	52.2	47.8	57.0	43.0
Gregoire	53.5	46.5	57.6	42.4	57.2	42.8	55.2	44.8	55.0	45.0	55.7	44.3
Lower Townsite	57.9	42.1	59.1	40.9	53.3	46.7	59.2	40.8	57.9	42.1	58.6	41.4
Thickwood	51.8	48.2	52.3	47.7	54.7	45.3	55.4	44.6	55.2	44.8	57.5	42.5
Timberlea	51.8	48.2	52.1	47.9	53.8	46.2	53.9	46.1	53.7	46.3	55.5	44.5
Waterways	56.7	43.3	59.0	41.0	59.1	40.9	60.9	39.1	60.5	39.5	57.3	42.7
Average	53.6	46.4	54.5	45.5	56.8	43.2	55.8	44.2	55.2	44.8	56.8	43.2

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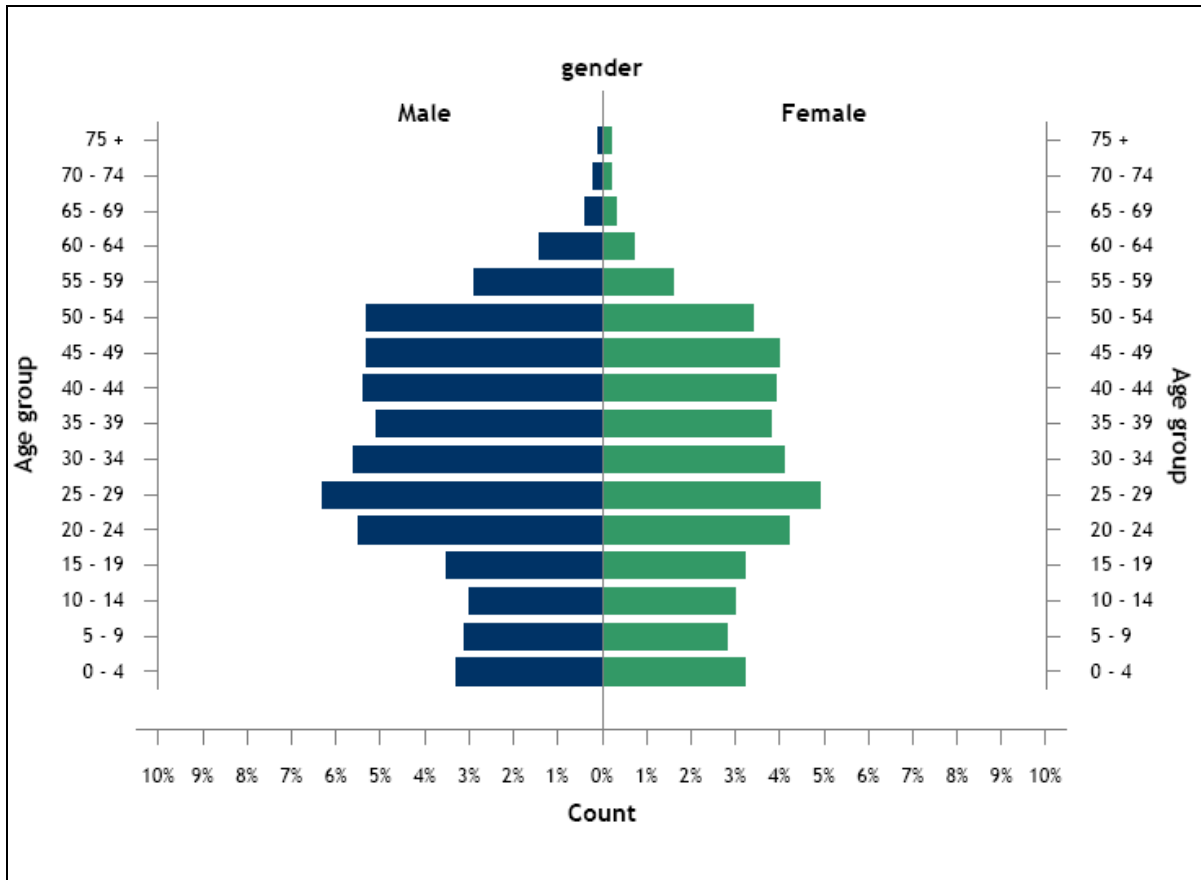
1.10 Table: Comparison of Percent Population in the RMWB by Age from 2000 to 2008

Age	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006	2008
0-4	7.3	7.1	7.4	7.1	6.8	6.5
5-9	8.8	7.8	7.5	7.3	6.8	6.1
10-14	9.3	8.6	8.6	7.2	7.0	6.2
15-19	9.2	8.3	8.2	7.6	7.4	6.7
20-24	7.3	8.5	7.9	8.3	9.0	9.5
25-29	7.8	8.7	8.3	9.0	9.5	10.9
30-34	8.4	8.8	8.3	9.1	9.1	9.6
35-39	9.8	9.0	8.9	8.6	9.0	8.8
40-44	10.4	10.2	10.1	9.6	9.3	9.2
45-49	8.6	9.1	9.5	9.9	9.8	9.4
50-54	6.6	6.9	7.5	8.0	8.0	8.7
55-59	3.3	3.8	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.6
60-64	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.2
65-69	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8
70-74	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5
75+	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3

1.11 Figure: Population Pyramid RMWB



1.12 Figure: Population Pyramid Fort McMurray



Housing

Housing Trends

Strong employment and population growth in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, coupled with land availability constraints and low rental vacancy rates, has made housing within the Urban Service Area (Fort McMurray) one of the most expensive in the province. Despite prohibitive housing costs, the majority of residents within the region own their home (81.6 per cent), as compared to those renting or leasing (18.4 per cent). Since 1999, the general trend has been one of increasing home ownership as compared to renting or leasing.

1.13 Table: Average Number of People per Dwelling Type in RMWB

Area	Single Family Dwelling			Manu-factured Home	Semi-detached
		Townhouse	Apartment		
Fort McMurray	3.58	3.09	2.26	3.03	3.29
Anzac	3.73	1.50	11.0	3.19	-
Conklin	4.26	-	-	2.33	-
Draper	4.14	-	-	9.0	-
Fort Chipewyan	3.23	3.89	3.33	3.6	2.42
Fort MacKay	3.80	-	-	-	-
Gregoire Lake Estates	2.87	-	-	2.0	-
Janvier	2.0	5.0	-	3.0	3.0
Marianna Lakes	2.0	-	-	-	-
Saprae Creek	3.86	-	-	2.77	-
Average	3.58	3.10	2.27	3.05	3.28

1.14 Table: Average Number of People per Dwelling Type in Fort McMurray

Area	Single Family Dwelling	Townhouse	Apartment	Manu-factured Home	Semi-detached
Abasand Heights	3.63	3.26	2.60	4.0	3.16
Beacon Hill	3.60	3.57	-	3.30	3.83
Gregoire	3.56	2.66	3.0	3.13	3.13
Lower Townsite	3.48	2.94	2.28	3.25	3.55
Thickwood	3.57	3.13	2.57	2.49	3.30
Timberlea	3.64	2.99	2.06	3.02	3.09
Waterways	3.16	-	-	2.60	-
Average	3.58	3.09	2.26	3.03	3.29

1.15 Table: Percent Tenancy Distribution in the RMWB

Area	Own	Rent/Lease
Fort McMurray	73.1	26.9
Anzac	79.8	20.2
Conklin	78.0	22.0
Draper	91.7	8.3
Fort Chipewyan	52.6	47.4
Fort MacKay	100	-
Gregoire Lake Estates	90.3	9.7
Janvier	70.5	29.5
Saprae Creek	100	-
Average	81.8	18.2

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1.16 Table: Comparison of Percent Tenancy Distribution in the RMWB from 1999 to 2008

Area	1999		2000		2002		2004		2005		2006		2008	
	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent
Fort McMurray	64.1	35.9	62.7	37.3	75.5	24.5	76.2	23.8	76.2	23.8	76.3	23.7	73.1	26.9
Anzac	82.3	17.7	74.1	25.9	82.9	17.1	64.2	35.8	64.2	35.8	82.8	17.2	79.8	20.2
Conklin	66.7	33.3	81.5	18.5	-	-	81.0	19.0	67.8	32.2	70.6	29.4	78.0	22.0
Draper	66.7	33.3	90.5	9.5	-	-	96.0	4.0	72.7	27.3	95.0	5.0	91.7	8.3
Fort Chipewyan	65.1	34.9	64.6	35.4	60.2	39.8	93.5	6.5	59.9	40.1	51.3	48.7	52.6	47.4
Fort MacKay	58.5	41.5	66.7	33.3	48.8	51.2	94.9	5.1	84.6	15.4	83.3	16.7	100	-
Gregoire Lake Estates	98.2	1.8	97.3	2.7	95.4	4.6	85.5	14.5	95.0	5.0	97.5	2.5	90.3	9.7
Janvier	77.4	22.6	63.3	36.7	71.4	28.6	80.6	19.4	86.8	13.2	80.7	19.3	70.5	29.5
Saprae Creek	100	-	100	-	98.8	1.2	90.2	9.8	100	-	98.8	1.2	100	-
Average	64.8	35.2	63.7	37.3	77.4	22.6	76.9	23.1	70.9	29.1	81.8	18.2	81.8	18.2

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1.17 Table: Percent Tenancy Distribution in Fort McMurray

Area	Own	Rent/Lease
Abasand Heights	68.7	31.3
Beacon Hill	85.3	14.7
Gregoire	83.1	16.9
Lower Townsite	44.9	55.1
Thickwood	76.7	23.3
Timberlea	74.3	25.7
Waterways	78.6	21.4
Average	73.1	26.9

1.18 Comparison of Percent Tenancy Distribution in Fort McMurray from 1999 to 2008

Area	1999		2000		2002		2004		2005		2006		2008	
	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent
Abasand Heights	51.7	48.3	48.9	51.1	67.4	32.6	67.6	32.4	69.9	30.1	67.5	32.5	68.7	31.3
Beacon Hill	86.7	13.3	90.5	9.5	88.2	11.8	90.7	9.3	89.1	10.9	88	12.0	85.3	14.7
Gregoire	85.5	14.5	94.6	5.4	94.0	6.0	76.8	23.2	87.7	12.2	90.6	9.4	83.1	16.9
Lower Townsite	30.3	69.7	24.9	75.1	37.8	62.2	89.1	10.9	36.6	63.4	38.8	61.2	44.9	55.1
Thickwood	75.9	24.1	77.3	22.7	81.9	18.1	83.9	16.1	78.4	21.6	80.3	19.7	76.7	23.2
Timberlea	97.6	2.4	96.9	3.1	97.2	2.8	89.1	10.9	79.8	20.2	81.5	18.5	74.3	25.7
Waterways	85.7	14.3	86.2	13.8	85.2	14.8	84.8	15.2	86.6	13.2	87.7	12.3	78.6	21.4
Average	64.1	35.9	67.2	37.3	75.5	24.5	76.2	23.8	70.3	29.7	76.3	23.7	73.1	26.9

Official Population

The results of the 2008 Census were not accepted by the Department of Municipal Affairs, and the Government of Alberta advised the Municipality it will use the 2007 census number of 88,131 as the official population number for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

Recognizing that it is logistically impossible to enumerate every dwelling within the Municipality, the Municipality has used an extrapolation methodology for several years in order to generate an accurate population count. However, Municipal Affairs will only support door to door enumeration, and views extrapolation as a deviation from this practice; therefore, they have not accepted the Municipal results.

Other Municipalities do not follow Municipal Affairs approved methodology. The Municipality is seeking ministerial approval for the manner in which we conduct a census.

Clearly conducting a Municipal Census in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is more difficult than other communities for the following reasons:

- It is extremely challenging to hire and retain enumerators;
- It is very difficult to enumerate respondents due to shift work and shift changes;
- It is problematic to enumerate respondents due to their travelling out of the region on days off work; and
- The high number of unreported boarders living in private residences.