

census2015
the count is done

Executive Summary



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Census 2015 was undertaken between April 1 and June 30, 2015. The goal of the Municipality was to achieve an accurate count of the population and housing to ensure an equitable distribution of grants and funding allocations by the federal and provincial governments. This is the first time that 100 percent of the dwellings across the region have been enumerated in a municipal census without any extrapolation.

Census 2015 used three data collection methods, including self (online) enumeration, door-to-door interviews and telephone/office interviews.

Census 2015 recorded an overall population of 125,032, which is an increase of 7.4 percent over the 2012 population of 116,407. However, the growth rate was somewhat uneven as the Urban Service Area grew by 13.4 percent compared to the rural communities that experienced a decrease of 3.5 percent and project accommodations that decreased by 2.6 percent. The results are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Population by Component and Area, 2012 and 2015

	2012	2015	% CHANGE
URBAN			
Permanent	70,964	78,382	10.5%
Shadow	1,980	4,342	119.3%
Total Population	72,944	82,724	13.4%
RURAL			
Permanent	3,667	3,566	-2.8%
Shadow	525	478	-9.0%
Total	4,192	4,044	-3.5%
PROJECT ACCOMMODATIONS	39,271	38,264	-2.6%
TOTAL	116,407	125,032	7.4%

Census 2015 enumerated eight residential areas in the Urban Service Area (USA), nine rural communities, and a shadow population dispersed through the region. The shadow population has three components according to main locations where temporary residents are found:

- Project accommodations or work camps,
- Non-residential facilities (hotels, motels, campgrounds, homeless shelters and public facilities) and
- Residential areas (traditional housing stock such as apartments, townhouses, single detached housing, etc.).

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the 2015 permanent and shadow population by area within the USA and by rural community.

Table 2: Population in the Urban Service Area and Rural Communities, 2015

AREA	PERMANENT	RESIDENTIAL SHADOW ¹	TOTAL
Abasand Heights	4,752	141	4,893
Beacon Hill	2,144	63	2,207
Gregoire	4,198	28	4,226
Lower Townsite	11,113	590	11,703
Thickwood Heights	17,089	211	17,300
Timberlea	36,008	943	36,951
Parsons Creek	2,444	37	2,481
Waterways	634	33	667
Subtotal	78,382	2,046	80,428
Non-Residential Shadow ²			2,296
Total Urban Population	78,382	4,342	82,724
Anzac	606	157	763
Conklin	333	43	376
Draper	203	12	215
Fort Chipewyan	1,014	0	1,014
Fort Fitzgerald	9	0	9
Fort McKay	51	0	51
Gregoire Lake Estates	226	6	232
Janvier	155	0	155
Saprae Creek Estates	969	8	977
Subtotal	3,566	226	3,792
Non-Residential Shadow			252
Total Rural Population	3,566	478	4,044
PROJECT ACCOMMODATIONS			38,264
TOTAL POPULATION			125,032

1 The residential shadow population refers to the shadow population living in traditional residential areas

2 The non-residential shadow population refers to those individuals living in hotels, motels, campgrounds, shelters and other public facilities in the Urban Service Area.



The share of the total population by component has changed since Census 2012 as follows:

- The Urban Service Area accounts for 66.2 percent of the population compared to 62.7 percent in 2012;
- The rural communities accounts for 3.2 percent compared to 3.6 percent in 2012;
- Project accommodations accounts for 30.6 percent compared to 33.7 percent in 2012.

See Table 3 for more details.

Table 3: Population Share by Component, 2012 and 2015

	MUNICIPAL CENSUS 2012		MUNICIPAL CENSUS 2015	
Urban Service Area	72,944	62.7%	82,724	66.2%
Rural Communities	4,192	3.6%	4,044	3.2%
Project Accommodations	39,271	33.7%	38,264	30.6%
Total	116,407	100%	125,032	100%

HOUSING

The total count is composed of 30,882 residential dwellings that were enumerated during Census 2015, which is about eight percent higher than 2012. A number of new addresses were identified and counted, the majority of their dwelling types are secondary (basement) suites. The majority of the new addresses were found mainly in Parsons Creek and Timberlea (Stone Creek and Eagle Ridge) because these areas were not occupied in 2012.

There were 2,291 vacant dwellings or 7.4 percent of the total count of dwellings. The average number of people per household (pph) in the Municipality is 2.95, which is a slight decrease from 2012 when it was 2.98. The average number of people per household in the USA is estimated at 2.99 persons while 3.11 in the rural communities.

Table 4: Total Count of Dwellings, 2015

	USA	RURAL COMMUNITIES	TOTAL
Occupied Dwelling	27,371	1,220	28,591
Vacant Dwelling³	2,196	95	2,291
Total Count of Dwellings	29,567	1,315	30,882

Municipal Census 2015 found that 61 percent of residents own their dwellings while 39 percent of the population rents, as shown in Table 4. The share of homeownership is declining when compared to previous Municipal Census reports.

Table 5: Tenure by Dwelling Type, 2015

Tenure	NUMBER	SHARE (%)
Own total	13,172	61.2%
Rent total	8,358	38.8%
	21,530	100.0%

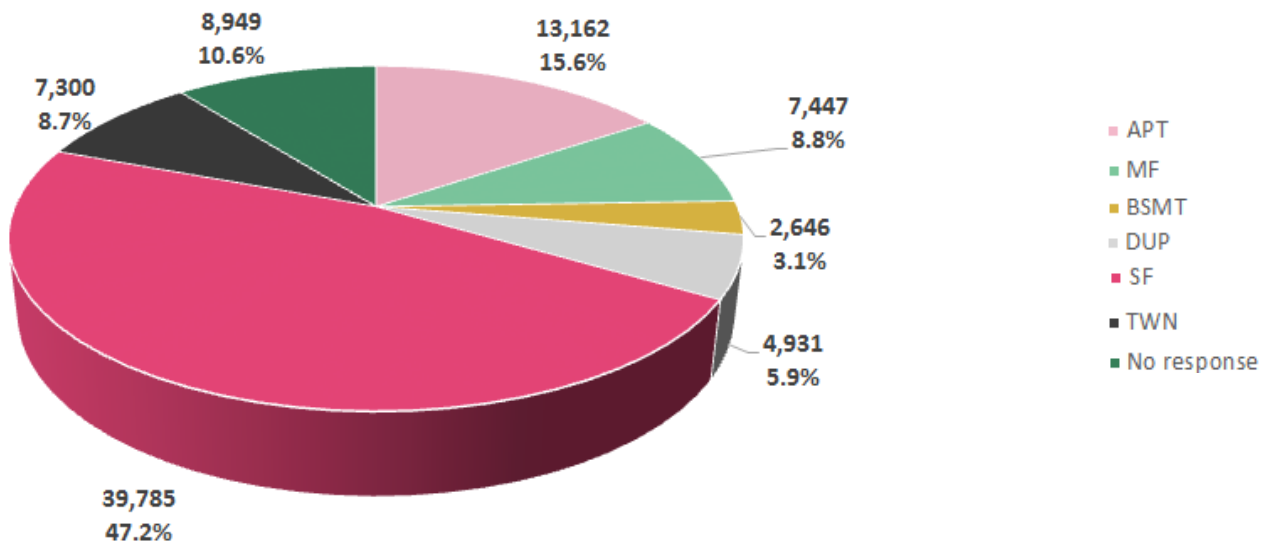
Note: Census enumeration results showed that only residents in 21,530 dwellings out of the 28,591 occupied dwellings responded to question six of the questionnaire (Do you own or rent this dwelling?).

In the Municipality, over 47 percent of the population lives in single-detached houses and 16 percent live in apartments and condominiums. Only three percent of the population lives in 1,429 secondary suites or basements. In the USA, 46 percent of the population lives in single detached houses while 16 percent lives in apartments or condominiums. In the rural communities, 66 percent of population lives in single-detached dwellings while 13 percent live in manufactured housing.

³ Vacant dwellings are not occupied dwellings at the time of the census date. Enumerators visited the dwellings three times but could not get a reply. In those cases when a response was not forthcoming and no information was available from a neighbour, the occupancy status was recorded as vacant.



Figure 1: Population by Dwelling Type in the Municipality, 2015

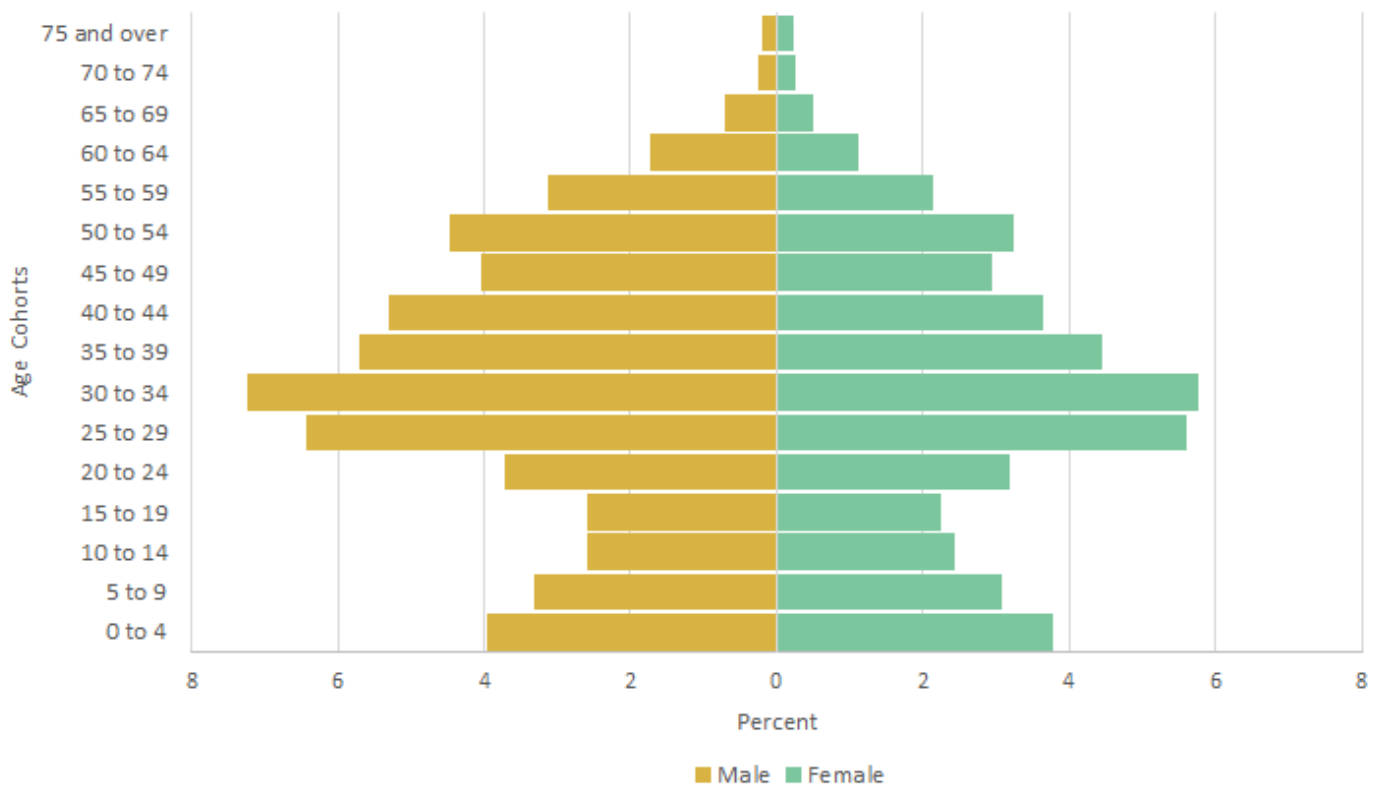


Note: APT - Apartment/condo, MF - Manufactured /mobile home, DUP - Semi-detached/duplex, SF - Single-detached dwelling/single family dwelling, TWN - Town/row house, BSMT - Basement and secondary suite.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The age and gender pyramid shows the largest proportion of the population is in the combined 25-34 year age cohorts, which together represent over 25 percent of the population. The 35-39 and 40-44 year age cohorts represent the second largest group at 19 percent of the population. Together, the 25-44 year age cohorts account for over 43 percent of the population. The proportion of children in the 0-14 age cohort increased from 18 percent to 19 percent and the proportion of seniors (65+) increased from 1.8 percent in 2012 to 2.1 percent in 2015.

Figure 2.5 Age and Gender Population Pyramid for the Municipality, for 2015



The gender distribution was 55.4 percent males and 44.6 percent females in 2015. This is an improvement over recent years when the distribution was about 57 percent male to 43 percent female since Census 2008.

SHADOW POPULATION

Census 2015 enumerated a shadow population of 43,084 people, which is an increase of 9.7 percent since 2012. However, when the results from a count completed in 2014⁴ were considered, the shadow population decreased by 15.7 percent.

Project accommodations are the dominant form of housing for the shadow population, which accounted for 89 percent of the shadow population enumerated in 2015. The urban shadow population accounted for 10 percent while the rural communities accounted for about one percent. The residential shadow population accounts for 5.3 percent of the total shadow population. Table 6 contains a detailed breakdown of the components of the shadow population.

Table 6: The Components of the Shadow Population, 2015

	URBAN SHADOW		RURAL SHADOW	
	DWELLINGS	POPULATION	DWELLINGS	POPULATION
Hotel/Motel/Campground	25	2,139	11	239
Homeless/Shelters	9	130	2	13
Public Facilities/Hospital/Jail	2	27	--	--
Non-Residential Shadow Population	36	2,296	13	252
Residential Shadow Population		2,046		226
Subtotal	36	4,342	13	478
SUMMARY				
Urban Shadow	4,342	(10.1%)		
Rural Shadow	478	(1.1%)		
Project Accommodations	38,264	(88.8%)		
Total Shadow Population	43,084	(100%)		

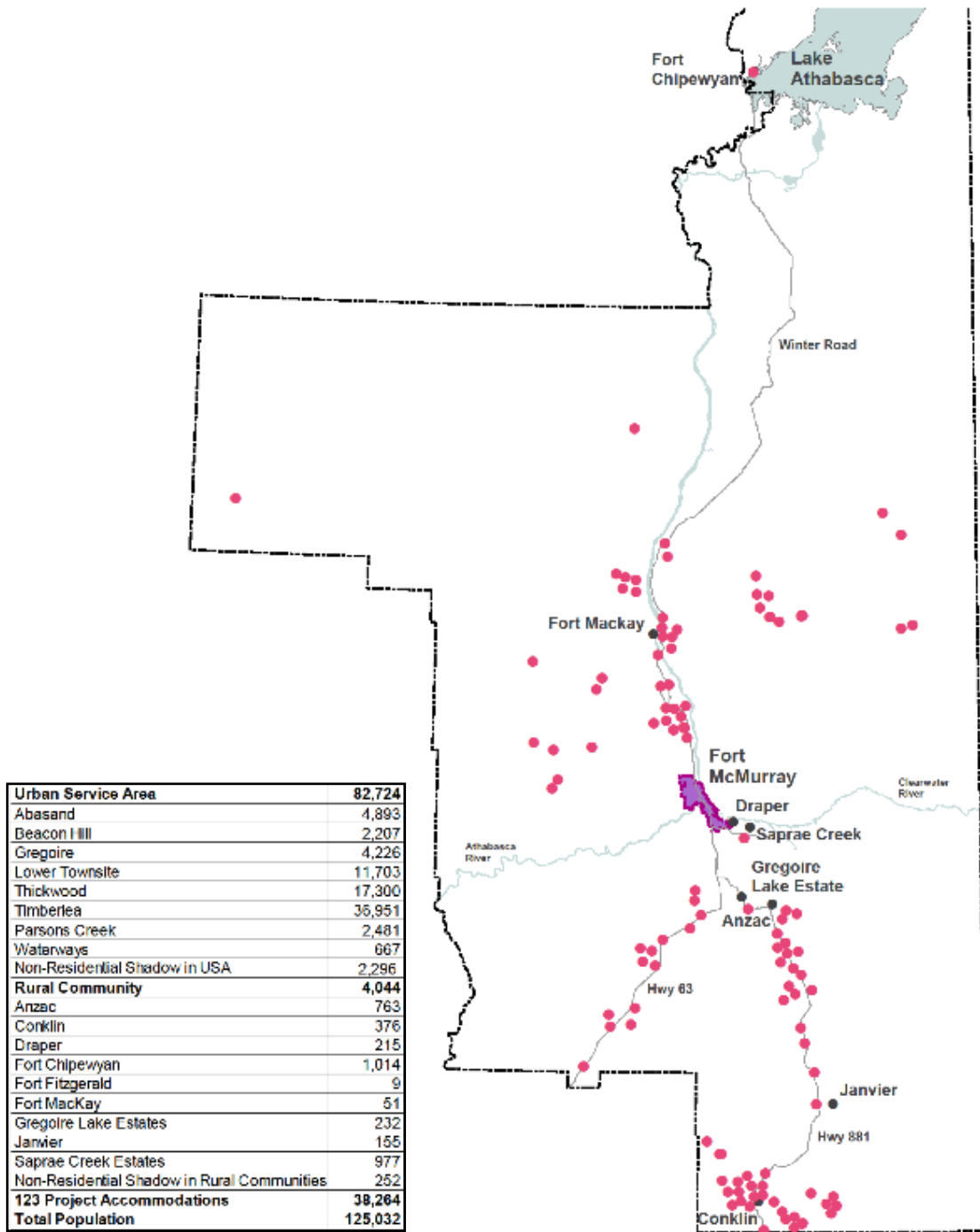
⁴ The shadow population count in 2014 was only used for internal information and not submitted officially to Alberta Municipal Affairs as there was not a Municipal Census that year.

KEY FINDINGS



1. The population in the USA experienced an increase while the population living in project accommodations and the rural communities experienced a decline. This reverses a trend that was occurring over the past four or five years whereby more and more of the share of the population was becoming shadow population because of the rapid growth of on-site project accommodations.
2. Census 2015 is the first time the shadow population living in the residential areas of the Municipality was enumerated. A number of company owned/leased housing complexes were discovered in the USA and were enumerated as shadow population.
3. The majority of the population growth since 2012 occurred in the newer neighbourhoods of Parsons Creek and Timberlea (Stone Creek and Eagle Ridge).
4. Census 2015 identified 2,291 dwellings as vacant, which translated into 7.4 percent of the total dwellings counted.
5. The gender mix is becoming more balanced – 55 percent males compared to 57 percent in 2012.
6. Children (ages 0-9), youth (ages 10-19) and seniors (65+) increased as a share of the total population, although the age cohorts 0-9 increased their share of the population at a much higher rate than the other two age groups. These changing demographics demonstrate the evolution of the community toward a more balanced and sustainable composition.

MAP 1: Population Distribution in the Municipality, 2015



Legend

- Project Accommodations
- Rural Community
- Fort McMurray (Urban Service Area)
- Municipal Boundary

Census 2015

(Project accommodations locations are approximate for this map)



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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT

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