

# COMMUNITY PROFILE:

Fort St. John, British Columbia

Census Subdivision (CSD)

PHASE 1 | Winter 2018

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
INSTITUTE



**THE FORGE**  
EXCHANGE • INNOVATE • IGNITE



**FORT ST. JOHN**  
*The Energetic City*

## About the Community Development Institute

Established in 2004, the Community Development Institute (CDI) at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) has worked in partnership with more than 50 communities across north and central BC to develop and implement strategies for economic diversification and community resilience. The CDI is dedicated to understanding and realizing the potential of BC's non-metropolitan communities in a changing global economy, preparing students and practitioners for leadership roles in community and economic development, and creating a body of knowledge, information, and research that will enhance our understanding and our ability to deal with the impacts of ongoing transformation. The CDI Office and Research Program in Fort St. John officially opened on 7 June 2017, with the goal of developing and implementing strategies for economic diversification and community resiliency. The CDI will work in partnership with the City of Fort St. John and in collaboration with the community, industry, local business, community organizations, First Nations, and all levels of government with the objective of achieving greater impact of research, planning, and innovation at the community, regional, and program level. This community-based work will focus on enhancing the quality of life and growing a sustainable economy in Fort St. John.

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## Introduction

Fort St. John is located in the Peace River Regional District in northeast British Columbia (BC). Situated in the traditional territory of the Dane-Zaa (Beaver) and Cree, Fort St. John bears its name from the fur trading posts that operated along the shore of the Peace River. The First Nations communities in the Fort St. John area include the Halfway River (Choonache), Doig River First Nations (Taahche Wadane), and Blueberry River. In 1912, the Government of Canada started releasing quarter sections (12 hectares) in the Peace Region to homesteaders. For three decades, Fort St. John remained isolated and sparsely populated. Indeed, the 1941 Census did not record a single person living in Fort St. John. However, the construction of the Alaska Highway by the American Army in 1942 marked a decisive turning point in the community's history as the population of Fort St. John grew from 300 to 2,000 people. When the American army left in 1945, the population of Fort St. John decreased to around 700 people.<sup>1</sup> The Village of Fort St. John incorporated on December 31, 1947.

While the Alaska Highway improved accessibility, Fort St. John continued to be a small farming community. However, in 1951, Frank McMahon of Westcoast Transmission Company struck oil just outside of Fort St. John – the first oil discovery in BC. This prompted a wave of oil and gas exploration and drilling in Fort St. John, which is situated within the Montney formation. The Montney continues to be BC's most active formation for oil and gas drilling.<sup>2</sup>

The population of Fort St. John grew alongside the expansion of the oil and gas industries. Having changed status from a village to a town in 1958, Fort St. John was patented as a City on July 1, 1975. Although oil and gas remain the largest and most important industries, forestry, agriculture, and tourism are also significant drivers of the local economy. Formerly known as BC's "Oil and Gas Capital," Fort St. John now identifies itself as the "Energetic City." The City's population has grown to over 20,000 people.

In 2017, the Community Development Institute (CDI) at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) established an office in Fort St. John. In partnership with the community and the City of Fort St. John, the CDI will identify opportunities to grow a sustainable economy and improve the quality of life for residents.

To build an understanding of the assets, opportunities, and challenges in Fort St. John, a first step is to complete a profile of the community. By highlighting demographic and socio-economic trends, the community profile can provide insights into the dynamics of the population and local economy. The community profile can also be used as a baseline and reference point for future planning initiatives.

Data for the community profile are primarily collected from Statistics Canada. Data are also collected from provincial agencies such as BC Stats, BC Ministry of Education, and BC's Provincial Health Services Authority. Unless otherwise noted, data refer to the Fort St. John Census Subdivision (CSD). Since the community profile draws primarily from census data produced by Statistics Canada, it should be noted that, in 2011, the mandatory long-form census was temporarily replaced by the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS). The change to a voluntary survey

had the effect of decreasing the response rate as compared to previous censuses. In anticipation of this decrease, Statistics Canada took several precautions to mitigate the risks to the NHS data quality.<sup>3</sup> Further, the NHS non-response rate for the City of Fort St. John was 16.8%. This is low when compared with the NHS non-response rates for BC (26.1%) and Canada (31.4%). As Statistics Canada maintains that NHS data is reliable and the non-response rate in Fort St. John was relatively low, NHS data is used in this profile.



## 1.0 Population

Population data provides information about the size of the community at a single point in time. In combination with other socio-economic data, population information can indicate how regional events and economic trends influence the community.

There are some measurement issues to be aware of when reading census population data. First, population counts can be increased through municipal boundary expansions. Since 1981, the City of Fort St. John has carried out four boundary extensions of varying sizes (in 1982, 1989, 2001, and 2014). Second, even though the census is mandatory (with the exception of the 2011 National Household Survey), there is no guarantee that everyone will receive a census questionnaire. A third, related issue with population data is that Statistics Canada does not count temporary and non-resident workers, those who reside locally but maintain their primary residence elsewhere. As a result, there is a net under-enumeration in census population counts, especially in resource-based communities like Fort St. John that have a large “shadow population” of mobile workers. Fourth, it is possible that a small number of people are counted twice.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 1.1 indicates that, as of 2016, 20,155 people lived in Fort St. John. This represents a 45% increase in the population since 1981. Apart from a population decrease during the economic recession of the early 1980s, the population of Fort St. John has grown steadily, averaging 7.0% every five years. The average population growth of Fort St. John is slightly lower than the provincial average of 7.7% every five years.

Figure 1.1 Population, Fort St. John, 1981-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

## 2.0 Age profile

The age profile of a community provides information about the age composition of the population and shows how the population age structure has changed over time. This information is useful for the study of community structure and in determining service needs.

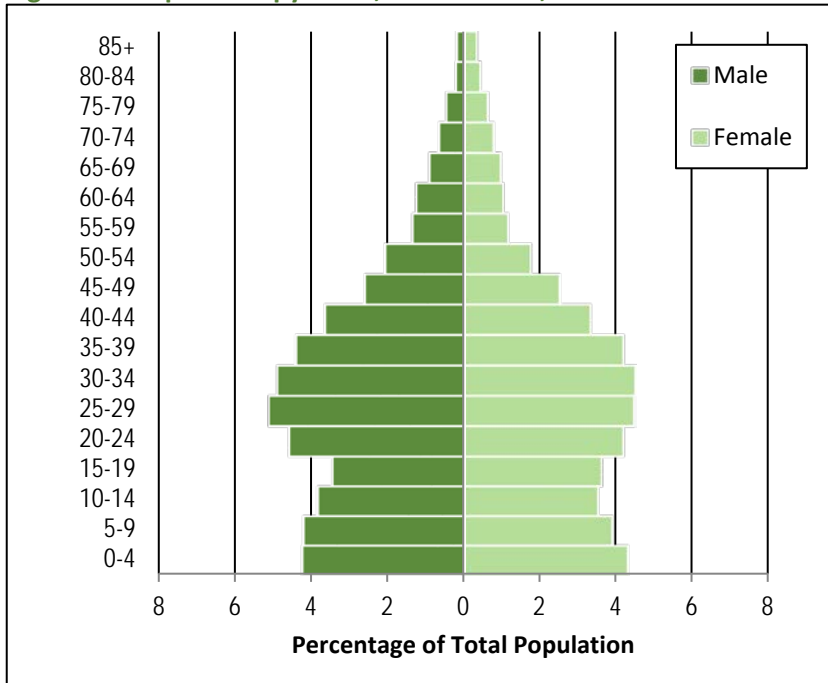
Median age is defined as the exact age where half the population is older and half is younger. In 2016, the median age in Fort St. John was 31.5 years. This is much younger than the provincial median age of 43 years.

In 1981, Fort St. John had a very young population, with 75% of the population being under the age of 35. However, the population is gradually aging. While population pyramids of Fort St. John consistently show that the largest age group is men and women aged 25 to 29 years, in 2016, 57% of the population was under the age of 35.

Figures 2.1, 2.3, and 2.5 indicate that, over the last twenty years, the age composition of Fort St. John has remained fairly stable, with only small changes among age groups. The proportion of people of working age (15 to 64 years) has been consistent over time, averaging 70% of the total population. In terms of the overall size of age groups, the growth of Fort St. John's seniors population is the most pronounced. Between 1986 and 2016, the number of people aged 65 years and over in Fort St. John increased 119%.

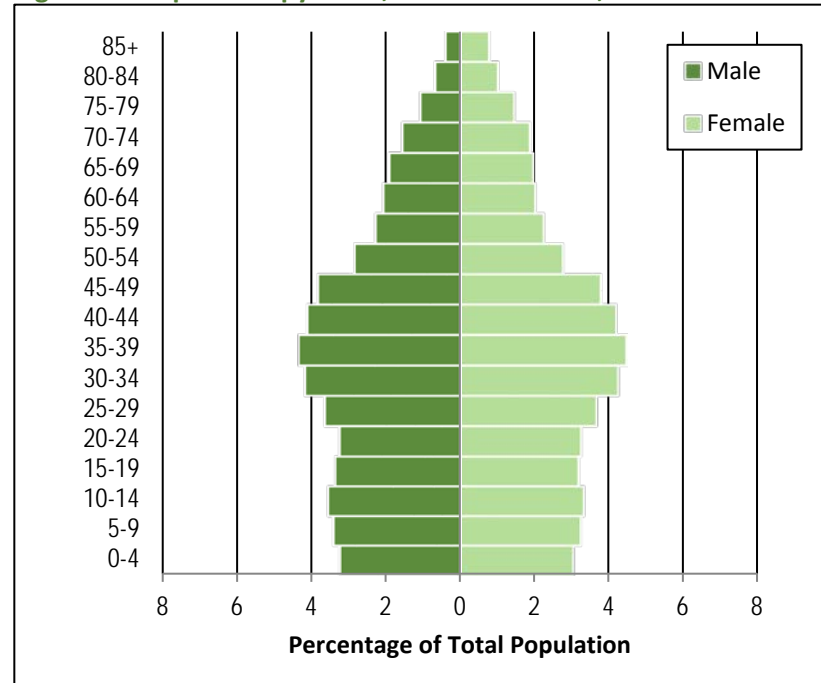
As Figures 2.2., 2.4, and 2.6 show, the age composition of Fort St. John's population is very different from BC's population, which reflects the fact that there are many working age families with children living in Fort St. John.

Figure 2.1 Population pyramid, Fort St. John, 1996



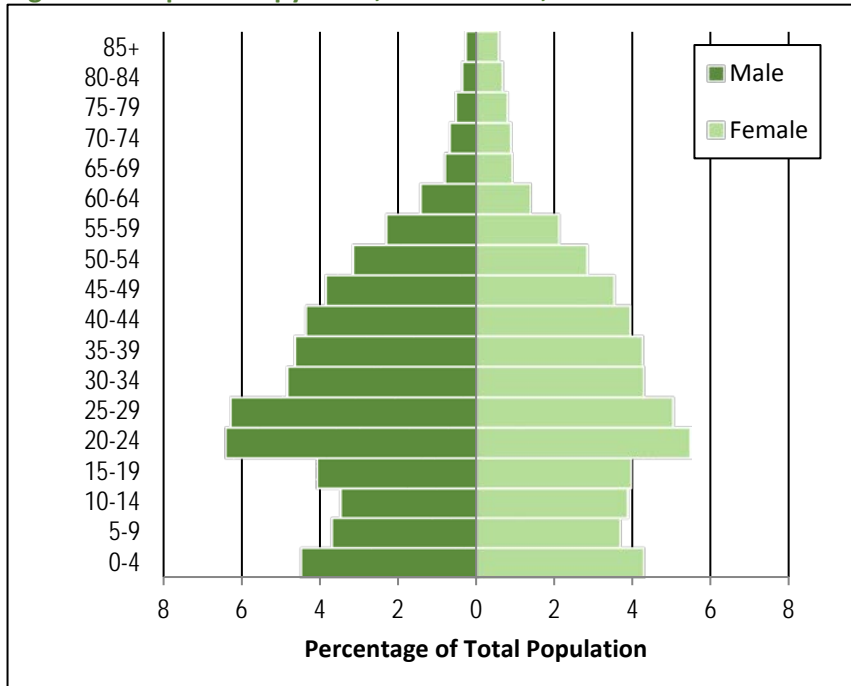
Source: Statistics Canada. 1996. Census Program.

Figure 2.2 Population pyramid, British Columbia, 1996



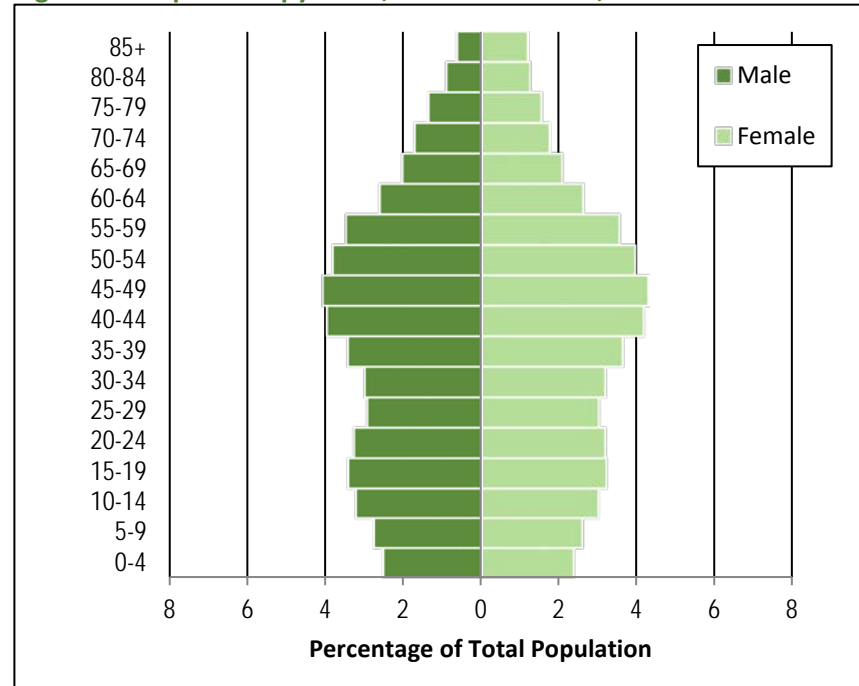
Source: Statistics Canada. 1996. Census Program.

Figure 2.3 Population pyramid, Fort St. John, 2006



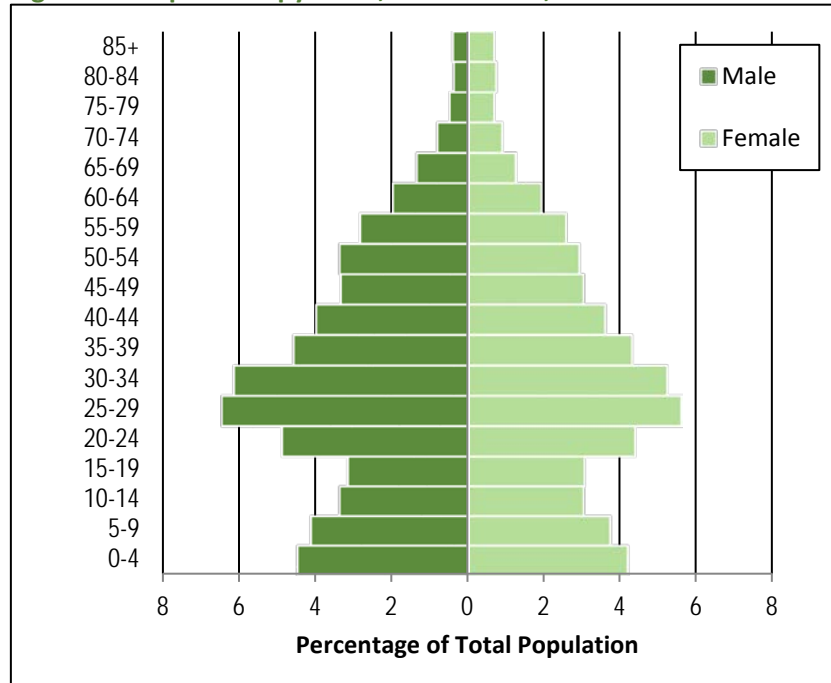
Source: Statistics Canada. 2006. Census Program.

Figure 2.4 Population pyramid, British Columbia, 2006



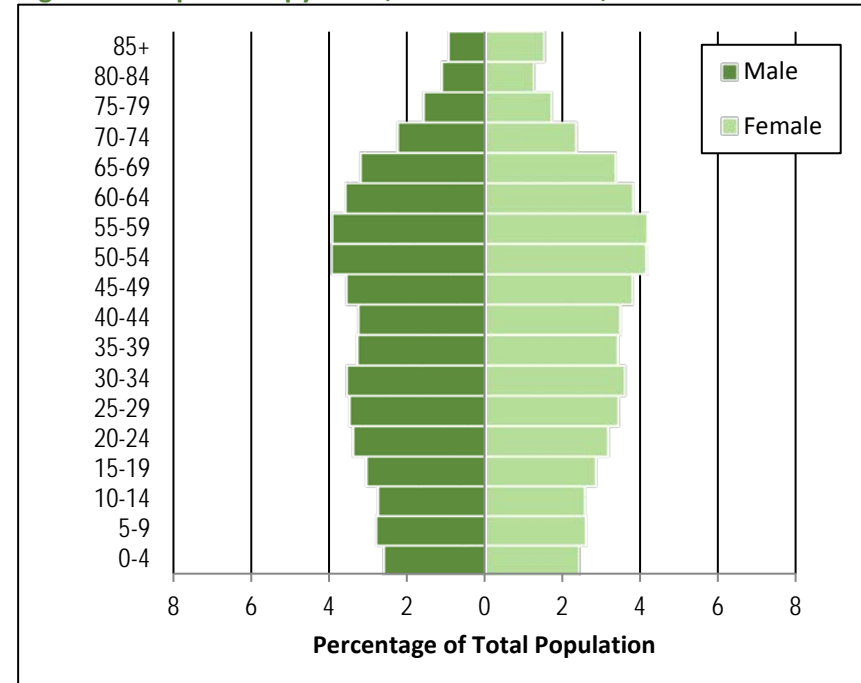
Source: Statistics Canada. 2006. Census Program.

Figure 2.5 Population pyramid, Fort St. John, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

Figure 2.6 Population pyramid, British Columbia, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

### 3.0 Household characteristics

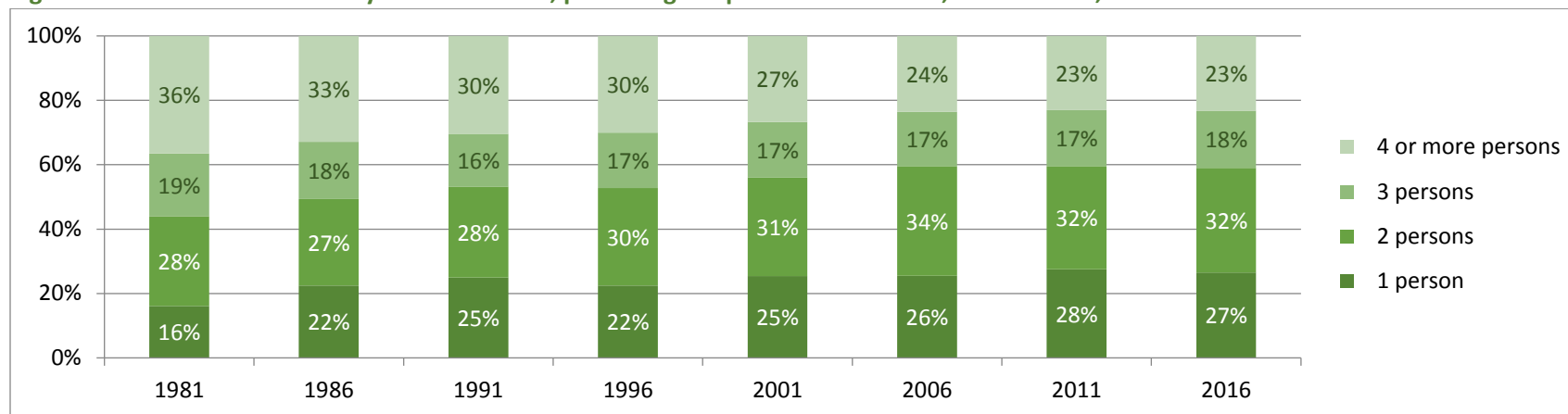
Statistics Canada defines private households as a person or group of persons occupying the same dwelling. Private households include family and non-family members. As shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2, Fort St. John’s household size has shifted considerably. In 1981, households of four or more persons were the most prevalent size at 36%, and one person households were the smallest share of households at 16%. In 2016, households of four or more persons constituted 23% of households, while the proportion of one person households increased to 27%. The shift towards smaller household sizes can be attributed to smaller family sizes, an aging population, and a growing number of “empty-nesters” (families whose children have left the household to form their own families).

Figure 3.1 Private households by household size, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Private households	4595	4745	5180	5490	6155	6870	7480	7940
1 person	740	1065	1290	1235	1565	1755	2060	2105
2 persons	1280	1275	1465	1660	1885	2340	2390	2580
3 persons	895	840	845	945	1065	1165	1300	1410
4 or more persons	1675	1560	1575	1650	1645	1620	1725	1840

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 3.2 Private households by household size, percentage of private households, Fort St. John, 1981-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

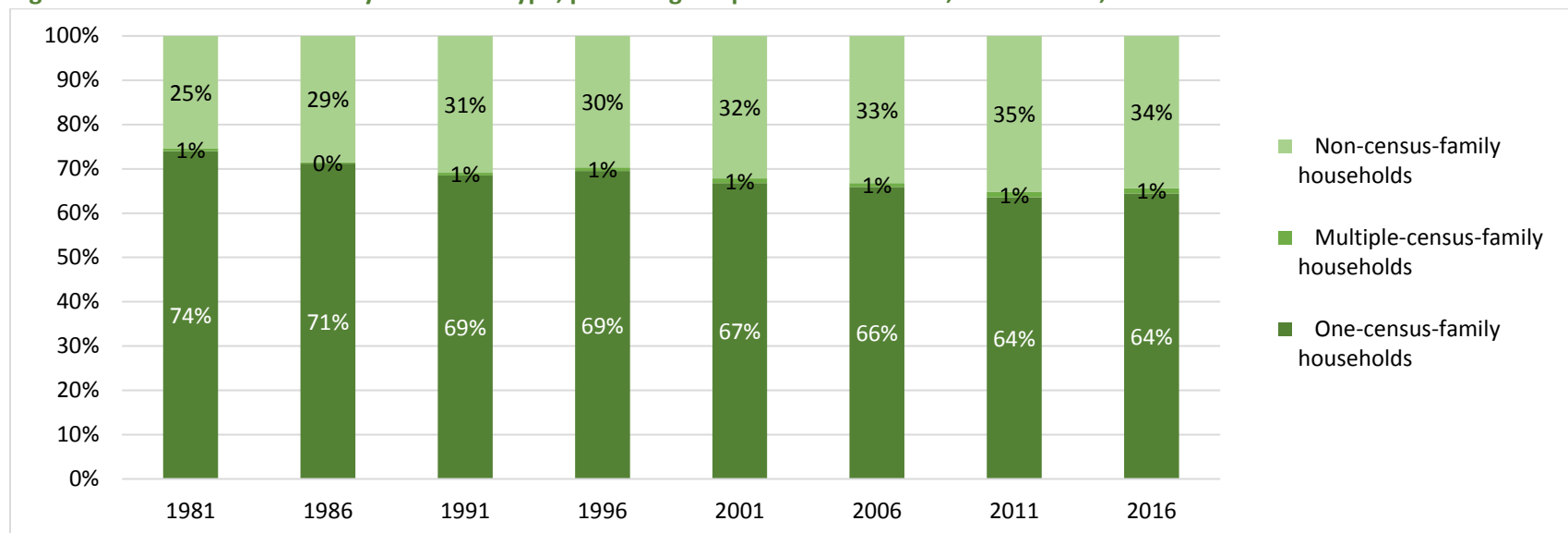
Alongside the shift towards smaller households, Figures 3.3 and 3.4 indicate there has been steady growth in non-census-family households. These are households where the occupants bear no familial relation to one another. In Fort St. John, it is common for co-workers who have moved to town for work to rent a dwelling together. Multiple-census-family households refer to instances where there are two or more census families living in the same dwelling. The definition of a census family is provided in the next section.

Figure 3.3 Private households by household type, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Private households	4590	5460	5180	5490	6155	6875	7480	7935
One-census-family households	3395	3380	3550	3815	4110	4530	4345	5115
Multiple-census-family households	30	15	30	45	65	60	95	95
Non-census-family households	1165	1355	1600	1630	1980	2285	2630	2725

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 3.4 Private households by household type, percentage of private households, Fort St. John, 1981-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.



### 4.0 Family characteristics

Canadian attitudes towards marriage have changed considerably since the Second World War. These attitudinal changes are reflected in the national census. Prior to 1981, common-law status was not recognized in Canadian censuses. Common-law status applies to couples who live together, but are not legally married. In the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, common-law unions were included among the “married” population. In the 1991 Census, common-law unions were recognized as a distinct category. Given these changes, this profile combines the two categories in “married or living common-law” to maintain historical comparability.

In 1981, two-thirds of the population aged 15 years and over were married or living common-law. As Figure 4.1 indicates, by 2001, only half the population were married or living common-law, and by 2006 that number dropped to 43%. This translates to a 23% decrease in the proportion of people who were married or living common law, between 1986 and 2006. However, since 2006, the proportion of population married or living in common law has rebounded to 57%.

Figure 4.1 Marital status, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Population aged 15 years and over	10110	9610	10410	11180	12325	13630	14670	15880
Married or living common law	6675	6305	5285	5260	5545	5875	8460	9125
Percent of population (15 years +)	66%	66%	51%	47%	45%	43%	58%	57%
Not married and not living common law	3435	3310	5125	5915	6780	7755	6210	6760
Percent of population (15 years +)	34%	34%	49%	53%	55%	57%	42%	43%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Note: In censuses prior to 1991, married includes separated.

Figure 4.2 shows that, since 1991, the percentage of common-law couples has increased 11% relative to legally married couples. Since 2006, the proportion of married couples to common-law couples has been stable, and suggests that couples in Fort St. John still prefer formal unions.

**Figure 4.2 Marital status, percentage of couple families, Fort St. John, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Married couples	83%	79%	78%	73%	72%	72%
Common-law couples	17%	22%	22%	27%	28%	28%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Statistics Canada defines a census family broadly. The definition of census family encompasses opposite or same sex couples (married and common law) with or without children (by birth, marriage, common-law union, or adoption). A census family also refers to lone-parents with at least one child, as well as grandparents living with their grandchildren and with no parents present in the household.

Figure 4.3 shows that, from 1991 to 2006, the average size of the census family in Fort St. John was larger than provincial and national averages. However, the overarching trend across all three scales is towards smaller families. In 2011, the average family size of Fort St. John aligned with the national average of 2.9 persons per census family.

**Figure 4.3 Average size of census families, 1981-2016**

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Fort St. John	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3	2.9	2.9
British Columbia	n/a	n/a	3	3	2.9	2.9	2.8	n/a
Canada	n/a	n/a	3.1	3.1	3	2.9	2.9	2.9

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 4.4 indicates that there were a growing percentage of couples in Fort St. John without children, a trend that contributed to the decrease in the average size of census families. Between 1981 and 2016, the number of couples with children remains virtually unchanged, whereas the number of couples without children has almost doubled. However, since 2006, there has been stability in the proportion of couples with children at 55% of total couples.

Figure 4.4 Structure of census families, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Couple census families	3455	2895	3100	3305	3530	3955	4150	4440
Couples without children	1025	920	1075	1255	1425	1680	1875	2020
Couples with children	2430	1975	2030	2050	2105	2270	2280	2420
1 child	835	605	655	675	745	835	885	945
2 children	1010	920	905	870	915	940	985	980
3 or more children	585	445	460	510	470	500	420	495
% couples without children	30%	32%	35%	38%	40%	42%	45%	45%
% couples with children	70%	68%	65%	62%	60%	57%	55%	55%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 4.5 shows steady growth in the number of lone-parent families between 1981 and 2016. However, the proportion of lone-parent families to couple families has remained relatively consistent. Further, there has been consistency in the greater proportion of female lone-parent families.

Figure 4.5 Structure of lone-parent census families, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Lone-parent census families	355	520	505	605	705	695	790	875
Female lone-parent families	n/a	420	435	510	535	505	585	655
1 child	n/a	210	240	260	300	320	335	n/a
2 children	n/a	135	125	155	125	150	190	n/a
3 or more children	n/a	75	70	100	105	25	65	n/a
Male lone-parent families	n/a	95	75	95	170	190	200	220
1 child	n/a	50	50	60	110	115	135	n/a
2 children	n/a	35	15	20	35	60	55	n/a
3 or more children	n/a	5	10	20	20	15	15	n/a

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

### 5.0 Aboriginal population

Statistics Canada identifies several factors affecting the ability to compare Aboriginal census data over time: “Users should be aware that point estimates and changes over time are influenced by a combination of natural growth, changes to coverage and to measurement, and other factors affecting how people self-identify.”<sup>5</sup> As a result, this data should be read with caution.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 reveal that, between 1996 and 2016, there was a significant growth of 82.7% in the Aboriginal population. Fort St. John has a higher percentage of self-identified Aboriginal people, 11% of the total population, when compared with BC (5% of total provincial population), which is the province with the most Aboriginal people in Canada.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 5.1 Aboriginal identity, Fort St. John, 1996-2016

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Single Aboriginal responses	955	1745	1545	2070	2180
First Nations (North American Indian)	410	1040	820	1205	1280
Métis	500	705	715	865	885
Inuk (Inuit)	45	0	10	0	10
Multiple Aboriginal responses	10	0	30	35	55

Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

Figure 5.2 Aboriginal identity, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1996-2016

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Single Aboriginal responses	6%	11%	9%	11%	11%
First Nations (North American Indian)	3%	6%	5%	6%	6%
Métis	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Inuk (Inuit)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Multiple Aboriginal responses	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

### 6.0 Visible minority

The population of Fort St. John is becoming more diverse. Since 1996, the size of the visible minority population has grown from 3% to 12% of the total population. The most significant and rapid growth in the visible minority population occurred between 2011 and 2016. In that five-year period, the number of people identifying as Black increased 168%, South Asian increased 272%, and Filipino increased 125%.

Figure 6.1 Visible minority population, Fort St. John, 1996-2016

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population in private households	14920	15940	17290	18450	19810
Total - Not a visible minority	14435	15475	16630	17515	17435
Total - Visible minority population	485	460	660	940	2370
South Asian	80	45	150	160	595
Chinese	170	80	120	205	215
Black	50	90	100	140	375
Filipino	85	100	115	280	630
Latin American	0	15	45	0	90
Arab	10	25	0	10	60
Southeast Asian	10	30	0	10	95
West Asian	0	0	20	25	60
Korean	10	40	70	40	65
Japanese	10	15	20	30	90
Visible minority; n.i.e.	20	15	20	0	10
Multiple visible minorities	40	10	0	35	80

Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

Figure 6.2 Visible minority, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1996-2016

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population in private households	14920	15940	17290	18450	19810
Total - Not a visible minority	97%	97%	96%	95%	88%
Total - Visible minority population	3%	3%	4%	5%	12%
South Asian	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%
Chinese	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Black	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Filipino	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

### 7.0 Immigration characteristics

Statistics Canada began collecting data on citizenship at the Census Subdivision (CSD) level in the 1986 Census. It defines immigrants as persons who are, or have ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. This definition includes immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization.<sup>7</sup>

There has been a recent increase in immigration to Fort St. John. This has contributed to the diversification of the population. Figure 7.1 indicates that 9% of the total population does not have Canadian citizenship, the highest proportion without Canadian citizenship since Statistics Canada started collecting data on citizenship.

Figure 7.1 Citizenship, Fort St. John, 1986-2016

	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population in private households	13280	14055	14920	15935	17295	18450	19810
Canadian citizens	12955	13685	14525	15650	16200	17695	18080
% of population	98%	97%	97%	98%	94%	96%	91%
Not Canadian citizens	325	370	395	290	375	755	1735
% of population	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	9%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1986-2016. Census Program.



Figures 7.2 and 7.3 show that, between 2011 and 2016, immigration increased by 122.1%. As a result, immigrants constitute 11% of the population, the highest proportion since 1986. When Statistics Canada began collecting data on immigration. Similarly, the number of non-permanent residents was highest in the 2016 Census. Non-permanent residents are those persons from another country who have work or study permits, or who are refugee claimants. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 indicate that the number of non-permanent residents increased by 61.3% over the last five years.

Figure 7.2 Immigration status, Fort St. John, 1986-2016

	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population in private households	13280	14055	14920	15935	17295	18450	19810
Non-immigrants	12180	13125	13895	15020	16200	17145	17095
Immigrants	1090	870	985	900	1030	995	2210
Non-permanent residents	n/a	60	40	20	70	310	500

Source: Statistics Canada. 1986-2016. Census Program.

Figure 7.3 Immigration status, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1986-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1986-2016. Census Program.

The period of immigration refers to the time when an immigrant first obtained either landed immigrant status or permanent resident status.<sup>8</sup> Figure 7.4 reflects the recent increase in immigration as 40% of total immigrants in Fort St. John arrived between 2011 and 2016.

Figure 7.5 suggests that families are immigrating together, as 52% of immigrants arrived when they were children/youth, that is, under 25 years of age. 42% of immigrants arrived when they were between 25 to 44 years of age, and only 7% arrived when they were older adults (45 years and over). The fact that immigrants are mostly of working age suggests that employment may be the main reason for choosing to come to Fort St. John.

**Figure 7.4 Period of immigration, Fort St. John, 2016**

	Total	Male	Female
Immigrants	2210	1130	1085
Before 1981	360	185	175
1981 to 1990	200	105	95
1991 to 2000	205	105	95
2001 to 2010	565	275	285
2001 to 2005	195	90	110
2006 to 2010	360	185	175
2011 to 2016	890	460	435

Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

**Figure 7.5 Age at immigration for the immigrant population, Fort St. John, 2016**

	Total	Male	Female
Immigrants	2210	1125	1085
Under 5 years	285	145	140
5 to 14 years	475	290	185
15 to 24 years	380	215	160
25 to 44 years	920	410	505
45 years and over	150	65	85

Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

Figure 7.6 shows that the Philippines and India were the countries of origin for most of the recent immigrants to Fort St. John. It should be noted that, in the 2016 Census, the response rate for this question was relatively low (less than 20% response rate).

Figure 7.6 Selected places of birth for the recent immigrant population, Fort St. John, 2016

	Total	Male	Female
Recent immigrants	890	455	435
United States	30	15	15
Ireland	30	20	10
Ethiopia	15	0	15
Nigeria	25	20	10
South Africa	85	40	40
China	20	15	10
India	145	100	45
Iran	30	15	20
Japan	15	0	15
South Korea	20	10	15
Philippines	355	170	185

Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

Note: Due to rounding by Statistics Canada, totals do not add up to 100%.

### 8.0 Education

Education is linked to community well-being in many ways, including employment, community capacity, income, and health.<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada conceptualizes educational attainment according to a hierarchy that progresses, in ascending order, from elementary school to secondary school, college, and university. For instance, if a person has a trade certificate and a bachelor's degree, the latter is considered their highest educational attainment.

The historical comparability of educational attainment is limited because of changes to definitions and the addition of categories. For instance, prior to the 2001 Census, Statistics Canada enumerated for the category "Other non-university education only", which included trades certificate and college diploma. Separate categories for trades certificate and college were introduced in the 2001 Census. Further, starting in the 2006 Census, the category "No certificate, diploma, or degree" was introduced, where previously there were more nuanced categories such as "Less than grade 9" and "Grades 9 to 13, without secondary certificate." In addition, in the 2006 Census, Statistics Canada began enumerating for university degrees above the bachelor level, with categories for different graduate and medical degrees. However, the 2011 National Household did not include these advanced degrees, which were reintroduced in the 2016 Census. Given the difficulties with historical comparability, the data presented below are for the 2006 to 2016 period, covering the working age population (25 to 64 years).

Figures 8.1 and 8.2 compare the educational attainment of Fort St. John residents with the province as a whole over the previous three Census periods. Between 2006 and 2016, Fort St. John closed the gap with the province in the proportion of population without a certificate, diploma or degree from 20% to 12% of the population compared to 10% of BC’s population. As an industrial city, Fort St. John has a higher proportion of people with apprenticeship or trades certificates, 15% compared with 9% of BC’s population. Fort St. John hosts a Northern Lights College campus that also runs UNBC programs. A smaller proportion of Fort St. John residents (17%) have a bachelor’s degree compared with 20% for the provincial average; however, there is a similar proportion of college graduates, 19% and 21% for Fort St. John and BC respectively.

**Figure 8.1 Educational attainment for the population aged 25 to 64 years, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 2006-2016**

	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population aged 25 to 64 years in private households	9325	10525	11425
No certificate, diploma, or degree	20%	16%	12%
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	28%	30%	33%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	15%	17%	15%
College, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma	21%	21%	19%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	3%	4%	3%
University certificate, diploma, or degree at bachelor level or above	12%	13%	17%
Bachelor's degree	8%	10%	13%
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	1%	3%	1%
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, or optometry	0%	n/a	0%
Master's degree	2%	n/a	3%
Earned doctorate	0%	n/a	0%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2006-2016. Census Program.

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% given the subcategories for “University certificate, diploma, or degree at bachelor level or above”.

Figure 8.2 Educational attainment for the population aged 25 to 64 years, percentage of population, BC, 2006-2016

	2006	2011	2016
Total - Population aged 25 to 64 years in private households	2284465	2451615	2532975
No certificate, diploma, or degree	12%	10%	10%
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	26%	25%	26%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	12%	11%	9%
College, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma	20%	20%	21%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	6%	6%	4%
University certificate, diploma, or degree at bachelor level or above	24%	27%	30%
Bachelor's degree	15%	17%	20%
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	2%	n/a	2%
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, or optometry	1%	n/a	1%
Master's degree	5%	n/a	6%
Earned doctorate	1%	n/a	1%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2006-2016. Census Program.

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% given the subcategories for “University certificate, diploma, or degree at bachelor level or above”.

The six-year completion rate is an indicator of the success of a school system. Six-year completion rate refers to “the proportion of students who graduate, with a British Columbia Certificate of Graduation or British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma, within six years from the first time they enroll in Grade 8, adjusted for migration in and out of British Columbia.”<sup>10</sup> Fort St. John belongs to the North Peace School District. Figures 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5 compare the six-year completion rate for students in North Peace, South Peace, and the province, respectively. The average total six-year completion rate for the North Peace (68.4%) is lower than both the South Peace (76.6%) and the provincial average (83.4%). Figures 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5 also indicate that the six-year completion rate for Aboriginal students is lower in the North Peace (44.8%) than both the South Peace (65.1%) and the provincial average (60.9%).

Figure 8.3 Six-year completion rate, North Peace School District, 2011-2016

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total - Students	68.5%	71%	66.5%	67.6%	68.4%
Female	70%	75%	70.7%	68.7%	67.5%
Male	66.8%	67.2%	62.3%	66.4%	69.2%
Aboriginal	47.4%	43.8%	33.8%	54.9%	44%
English Language Learner	53.8%	52.2%	39.5%	50.2%	53.6%
Special Needs	41.7%	30.5%	41%	33.9%	41.2%

Source: BC Ministry of Education.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 8.4 Six-year completion rate, South Peace School District, 2011-2016

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total - Students	76.2%	72.7%	74%	77.6%	82.6%
Female	77.3%	72.4%	81.8%	85.3%	88.3%
Male	75.2%	73%	67.7%	70%	77.9%
Aboriginal	58.4%	59.2%	61.8%	68.4%	77.5%
English Language Learner	49.8%	43.3%	51.7%	62.8%	48.5%
Special Needs	59.1%	53.7%	57.4%	47.5%	55.7%

Source: BC Ministry of Education.

Figure 8.5 Six-year completion rate, Province of British Columbia, 2011-2016

Six-year completion rate	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total - Students	81.8%	83.6%	84.2%	83.9%	83.6%
Female	83.9%	85.4%	86.4%	86%	85.8%
Male	79.7%	81.9%	82.1%	81.9%	81.4%
Aboriginal	56.4%	59.4%	61.6%	63%	63.8%
English Language Learner	83.3%	86.1%	86.6%	86.2%	87.1%
Special Needs	55.6%	58.7%	62.2%	65.9%	67%

Source: BC Ministry of Education.



### 9.0 Health

Data on health indicators are not collected at the Census Subdivision (CSD) level, but at the regional level. Fort St. John belongs to the Peace River North Local Health Area (LHA). Figure 9.1 shows that 55.6% of people in the Peace River North LHA perceive their general health as very good or excellent, compared to 59.9% of the BC population. Whereas women in the Peace River North LHA were less likely to rate their general health as very good or excellent (49.6%), they perceived their mental health more favourably, and were most likely to report very good or excellent mental health (72.5%).

**Figure 9.1 Perceived health and mental health, percentage of population, 2013**

	Peace River North LHA	BC
Total - Perceived health, very good or excellent	55.6%	59.9%
Male	61.2%	62.9%
Female	49.6%	57.9%
Total - Perceived mental health, very good or excellent	71.5%	68.7%
Male	70.6%	70%
Female	72.5%	67.5%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2013. Health Profile.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 9.2 indicates that people in the Peace River North LHA generally have higher reported incidence of unhealthy lifestyle habits than the province. The proportion of people overweight or obese is 14.1% and 13.2% higher for men and women, respectively, in the Peace River North LHA as compared with the province as a whole. There are also higher rates of smoking and heavy drinking in the Peace River North LHA.

Figure 9.2 Lifestyle habits, percentage of population, 2013

	Peace River North LHA	BC
Total - Overweight or obese	60.8%	46.6%
Male	68.9%	54.8%
Female	51.5%	38.3%
Total - Current smoker, daily or occasional	24.7%	15.1%
Male	29.8%	16.3%
Female	19.2%	14%
Total - Heavy drinking	22.6%	16.3%
Male	30.4%	22.4%
Female	14.4%	10.2%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2013. Health Profile.<sup>13</sup>

The effects of these lifestyle habits are reflected in Figures 9.3 and 9.4. There is a higher incidence of cancer, particularly for women, in the Peace River North LHA as compared with the province. There is a higher incidence of heart attacks, particularly for men, in the Peace River North LHA as compared with the province. Figure 9.4 indicates a life expectancy of 76 years for men, and 82.5 years for women in the Peace River North LHA, which are 3.8 years and 1.6 years shorter for men and women respectively than the provincial life expectancy.

Figure 9.3 Chronic diseases, per 100,000 population, 2013

	Peace River North LHA	BC
Cancer incidence	395.6	367.9
Male	419.8	420.5
Female	376.4	325.5
Hospitalized acute myocardial infarction event rate	213	165
Male	321	239
Female	103	97

Source: Statistics Canada. 2013. Health Profile.<sup>14</sup>

Figure 9.4 Life expectancy in years, 2007-2011 average

	Peace River North LHA	BC
Total	78.9	82
Male	76	79.8
Female	82.5	84.1

Source: Provincial Health Services Authority. 2014.<sup>15</sup>

### 10.0 Mobility and migration

Mobility and migration provide insight into the movement of the population within the Census Subdivision (CSD) and into movement outside the community. Since 1991, Statistics Canada has been enumerating for mobility status, with respondents indicating whether they lived in the same residence as five years before. Those who remained at the same addresses as the one at which they resided five years earlier are classified “non-movers.” Those who are living at a different address than the one at which they resided five years earlier are classified “movers.” Movers are further broken down to reflect their movement within or outside the CSD. “Non-migrants” are movers who are living in the same CSD, but who have moved to a new residence within the last five years. “Migrants” are movers who were residing in a different CSD five years earlier. Migrants are further broken down; “internal migrants” refer to movers who lived in a different CSD within Canada five years earlier. “External migrants” are movers who were living outside Canada five years earlier. Internal migrants are further broken down into “intraprovincial migrants” – those living in a different CSD but in the same province five years earlier – and “interprovincial migrants” – those who were living in a different CSD in a different province five years earlier.<sup>16</sup>

Figures 10.1 and 10.2 indicate that there is considerable mobility within Fort St. John when compared with mobility within BC, which is shown in Figures 10.3 and 10.4. Between 1991 and 2016, a majority of the Fort St. John population had moved within the last five years. However, over that same period, the prevailing trend is a decrease in moving, with a 10-percentage point increase in non-movers. This downward trend in moving is similar to that experienced by the province as a whole, as shown in Figures 10.3 and 10.4.

**Figure 10.1 Mobility status 5 years ago, Fort St. John, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Mobility status 5 years ago	12590	13555	14670	15895	16795	18215
Non-movers	3920	5005	5580	5985	7300	7450
Movers	8670	8550	9090	9910	9490	10760

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

**Figure 10.2 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Non-movers	31%	37%	38%	38%	43%	41%
Movers	69%	63%	62%	62%	57%	59%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Figure 10.3 Mobility status 5 years ago, British Columbia, 1991-2016

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Mobility status 5 years ago	3011335	3456245	3661945	3871915	4104195	4339960
Non-movers	1320285	1570905	1967855	2067790	2349525	2490535
Movers	1691045	1885340	1694080	1804125	1754670	1849420

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Figure 10.4 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of population, British Columbia, 1991-2016

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Non-movers	44%	45%	54%	53%	57%	57%
Movers	56%	55%	46%	47%	43%	43%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Figure 10.5 shows that the ratio of non-migrants to migrants has remained fairly even since 1991. Figure 10.6 shows a similar trend in BC. In 2016, non-migrants accounted for 51% of movers, with 49% of movers from another CSD. The province had an identical proportion of non-migrants to migrants.

**Figure 10.5 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of movers, Fort St. John, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Movers	8670	8550	9090	9910	9490	10760
Non-migrants	54%	50%	49%	52%	55%	51%
Migrants	46%	50%	50%	48%	45%	49%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

**Figure 10.6 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of movers, British Columbia, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Movers	1691045	1885340	1694080	1804125	1754670	1849420
Non-migrants	45%	47%	50%	50%	51%	51%
Migrants	55%	53%	50%	50%	49%	49%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% given the subcategories for “Internal migrants”.

Figure 10.7 breaks down the composition of migrants to Fort St. John, revealing two notable trends. First, there has been significant recent growth in external migrants. Between 2005 and 2011, the proportion of external migrants doubled, and then, between 2011 and 2016, it doubled again to 20% of total migrants. The second notable trend is the decreasing proportion of interprovincial migrants, with a 16-percentage point decline, from 43% to 27%, of migrants. This means that Fort St. John is increasingly attracting international migrants.

Figure 10.8 shows the composition of migrants to BC to offer perspective into the changing migration patterns to Fort St. John. Historically, Fort St. John has had a higher proportion of interprovincial migrants and a smaller proportion of external migrants.

**Figure 10.7 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of migrants, Fort St. John, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Migrants	3980	4235	4590	4725	4245	5270
Internal migrants	96%	96%	98%	95%	89%	80%
Intraprovincial migrants	53%	51%	59%	57%	54%	53%
Interprovincial migrants	43%	45%	40%	38%	35%	27%
External migrants	4%	4%	2%	5%	11%	20%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% given the subcategories for “Internal migrants”.

**Figure 10.8 Mobility status 5 years ago, percentage of migrants, British Columbia, 1991-2016**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Migrants	933160	1008170	842605	899420	866335	908530
Internal migrants	84%	79%	77%	77%	75%	74%
Intraprovincial migrants	59%	54%	59%	59%	56%	55%
Interprovincial migrants	26%	25%	18%	18%	19%	19%
External migrants	16%	21%	23%	23%	25%	26%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% given the subcategories for “Internal migrants”.

### 11.0 Housing

Housing data describes the tenure, characteristics, and conditions of the housing stock in a community, as well as the dynamics of the local housing market.

Figure 11.1 indicates that 61% of private dwellings in Fort St. John are owned, with the remaining 39% rented to tenants. The share of owners to renters has remained stable since 1981. This is a lower rate of ownership when compared to the provincial average. According to the 2016 Census, 68% of private dwellings are owned in BC, with 32% rented to tenants.

**Figure 11.1 Housing tenure, Fort St. John, 1981-2016**

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Occupied private dwellings	4590	4745	5180	5495	6155	6875	7480	7940
Owner	59%	52%	56%	60%	58%	63%	61%	61%
Renter	41%	48%	44%	40%	43%	37%	39%	39%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.



Figure 11.2 details the costs of home ownership in Fort St. John. Since 1981, the average value of homes has increased 446%. Between 2011 and 2016, the average value of homes increased 29%. However, the recent economic downturn tied to the drop in oil and gas prices has negatively affected property values. According to BC Assessment, between 2017 and 2018, there was an average 9.32% decrease in the value of residential properties in Fort St. John.<sup>17</sup> Figure 11.2 also shows that owner households have become more financially resilient since 2011. At that time, approximately 1 in 5 owner households were spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs. In 2016, approximately 1 in 10 owner households were spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs.

Figure 11.2 Costs for owner households, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Owner households in private dwellings	n/a	1935	2225	2465	3535	4325	4540	4830
% of owner households with a mortgage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	74.1	77.1
% of owner households spending 30%	n/a	11.6	9.7	9.3	14	15.6	19.2	9.4
Average monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings (\$)	516	550	685	696	879	1118	1327	1622
Average value of dwellings (\$ 000)	71	55	72	103	128	223	301	388

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.3 shows the provincial figures for home ownership costs. Comparing Figures 11.2 and 11.3 indicates that Fort St. John has a higher proportion of owner households with mortgages, 77.1%, compared with the provincial rate of 58.6%. This can be partly attributed to the younger population of Fort St. John. In 2016, the average value of private dwellings in BC was 60% greater than in Fort St. John. The average monthly shelter costs of homeowners in Fort St. John was 15% higher than the provincial average. Despite this, homeowners in Fort St. John are more financially resilient. In 2016, only 9.4% of owner households spent 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, whereas the provincial rate was 20.7%.

Figure 11.3 Costs for owner households, British Columbia, 2011-2016

	2006	2011	2016
Total - Owner households in private dwellings	1118160	1202000	1242600
% of owner households with a mortgage	n/a	57.3	58.6
% of owner households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	22.7	23.8	20.7
Average monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings (\$)	1119	1228	1387
Average value of dwellings (\$ 000)	419	545	721

Source: Statistics Canada. 2006-2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.4 shows that renters in Fort St. John are more financially vulnerable than owners. In 2016, 29.5% of tenant households were spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs.

Figure 11.4 Costs for tenant households, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Tenant households in private dwellings	n/a	1150	1030	1035	2620	2545	2940	3105
% of tenant households in subsidized housing	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9.8	8.9
% of tenant households spending 30%	n/a	33.5	26.2	n/a	31.3	32.2	35.8	29.5
Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	936	1205
Average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$)	458	425	496	584	694	857	1015	1275

Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.5 provides the provincial data for tenants households. Renters in Fort St. John are more financially resilient than the province as a whole, even though they have slightly higher rents.

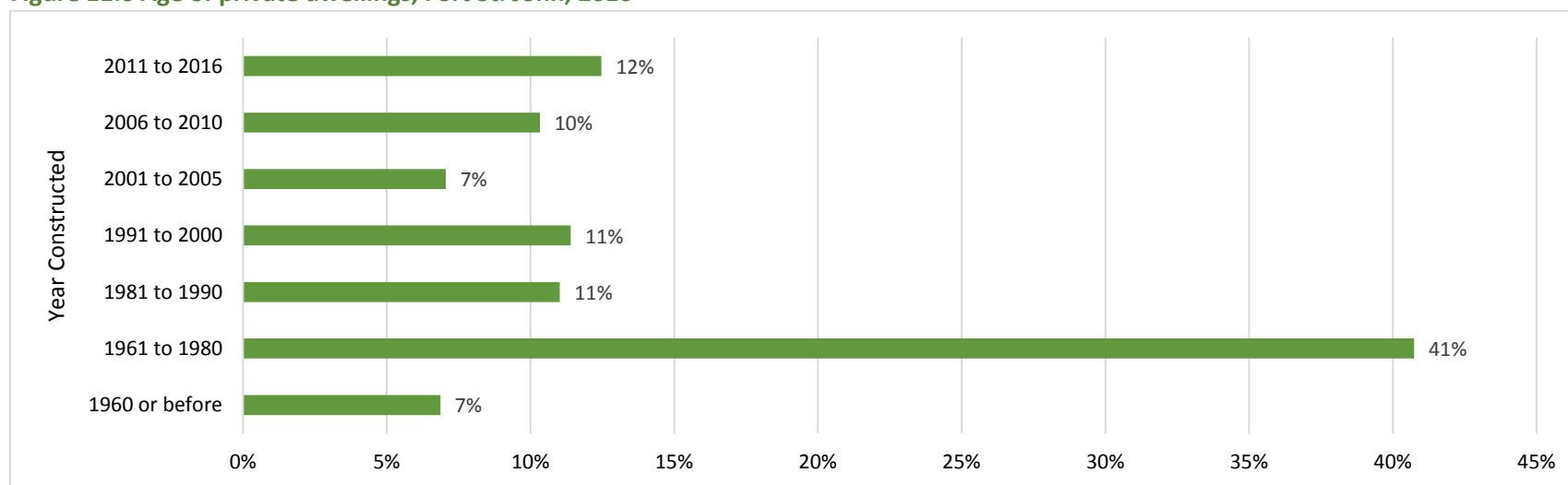
**Figure 11.5 Costs for tenant households, British Columbia, 2006-2016**

	2006	2011	2016
Total - Tenant households in private dwellings	488715	519855	592825
% of tenant households in subsidized housing	n/a	13.5	12.5
% of tenant households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	43.4	45.3	43.3
Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$)	n/a	903	1036
Average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$)	828	989	1149

Source: Statistics Canada. 2006-2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.6 indicates that 48% of the total housing stock in Fort St. John was built over 35 years ago. Fort St. John experienced small residential construction booms in 2010 and 2015.<sup>18</sup> The proportion of newer homes has been on the increase. As of 2016, 34% of the housing stock was built after 2001. To put the construction booms in Fort St. John into perspective, 23% of the BC's house stock was built after 2001.

Figure 11.6 Age of private dwellings, Fort St. John, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.7 suggests that the proportion of dwellings in need of major repair has remained fairly constant, averaging 8% since 1991. In comparison to other regions, Fort St. John housing stock is fairly new and in average to good shape.

Figure 11.7 Condition of private dwellings, Fort St. John, 1991-2016

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total - Occupied private dwellings	5185	5495	6155	6875	7480	7940
Only regular maintenance or minor repairs needed	94%	91%	91%	93%	92%	93%
Major repairs needed	6%	9%	9%	7%	8%	7%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

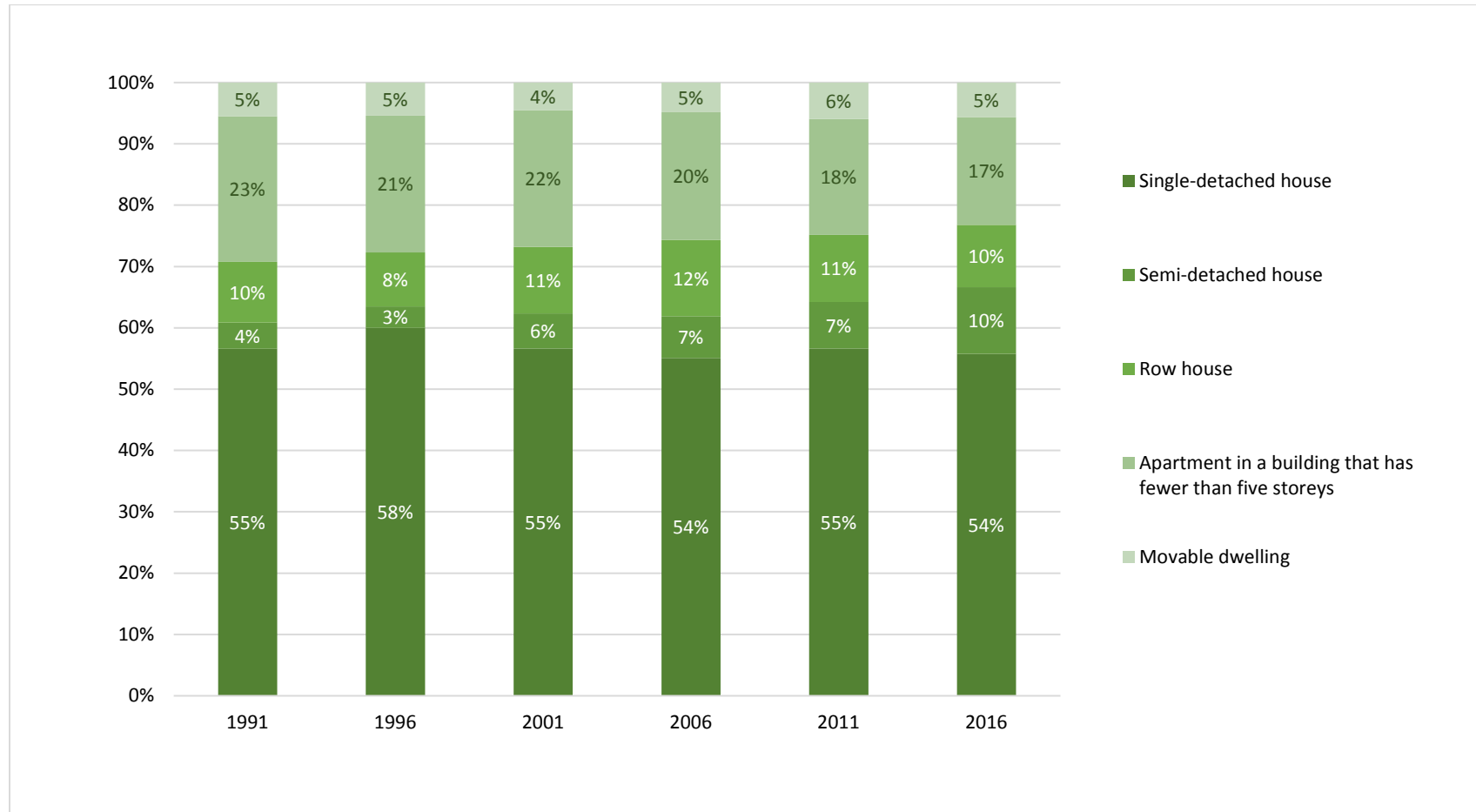
Figures 11.8 and 11.9 show the prevalence of the single-detached homes in Fort St. John. In 2016, single-detached homes represented 54% of the housing stock. Figure 11.8 shows that, between 1991 and 2016, the number of single-detached homes grew by 50%. However, the housing stock of Fort St. John has diversified. Between 1991 and 2016, the supply of semi-detached houses increased by 286%, and apartments in duplexes increased by 169%. In 2016, semi-detached homes, row homes, and apartments constitute 39% of Fort St. John’s housing stock.

Figure 11.8 Occupied dwellings by type, Fort St. John, 1991-2016

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	%change
Total - Occupied private dwellings	5180	5490	6160	6875	7480	7935	53%
Single-detached house	2835	3165	3400	3695	4105	4265	50%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	100	90	100	90	90	90	-10%
Other attached dwelling							
Semi-detached house	215	185	345	455	550	830	286%
Row house	495	465	650	835	795	780	58%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	65	120	45	70	130	175	169%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five	1190	1175	1340	1400	1370	1345	
Other single-attached house	10	10	15	10	5	15	50%
Movable dwelling	275	285	270	320	430	430	56%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Figure 11.9 Composition of housing stock, Fort St. John, 1991-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

### 12.0 Labour force

The strength and diversity of the local economy are reflected in the labour market. Shifts in the oil and gas industries have pronounced impacts on Fort St. John’s economy. For instance, in April 1980, the price of crude oil peaked at USD\$120/barrel. The price subsequently plummeted, reaching its lowest at USD\$20/barrel in March 1986.<sup>19</sup> During this period, the unemployment rate in Fort St. John doubled, from 8.9% to 18.9%. Figure 12.1 indicates labour force participation for both sexes aged 15 years and over in Fort St. John. It shows that the participation rate for women is consistently lower than men. In 2016, 86.1% of males 15 years and over were in the labour force, while only 71% of females were in the labour force. Nevertheless, since 1981, there has been a 10% increase in the participation rate of women.

**Figure 12.1 Labour force participation, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1981-2016**

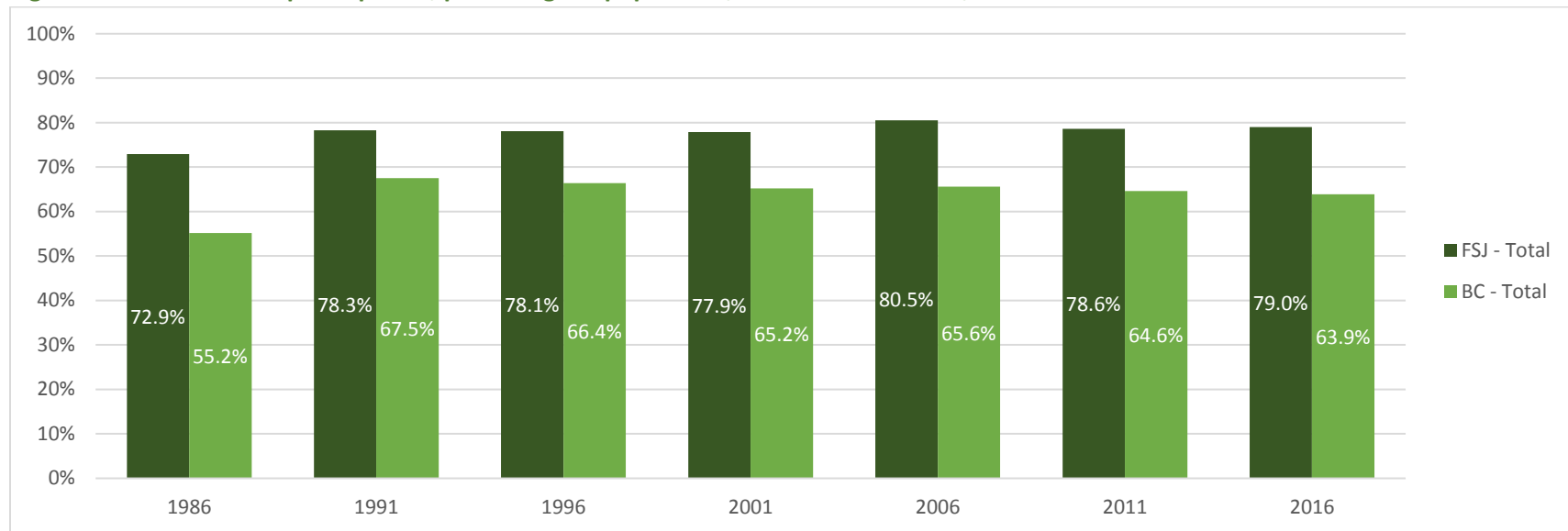


Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Note: Census 1981 does not provide data for total labour force participation.

Figure 12.2 reveals that there has been higher labour force participation in Fort St. John as compared to the province as a whole.

Figure 12.2 Labour force participation, percentage of population, Fort St. John and BC, 1986-2016

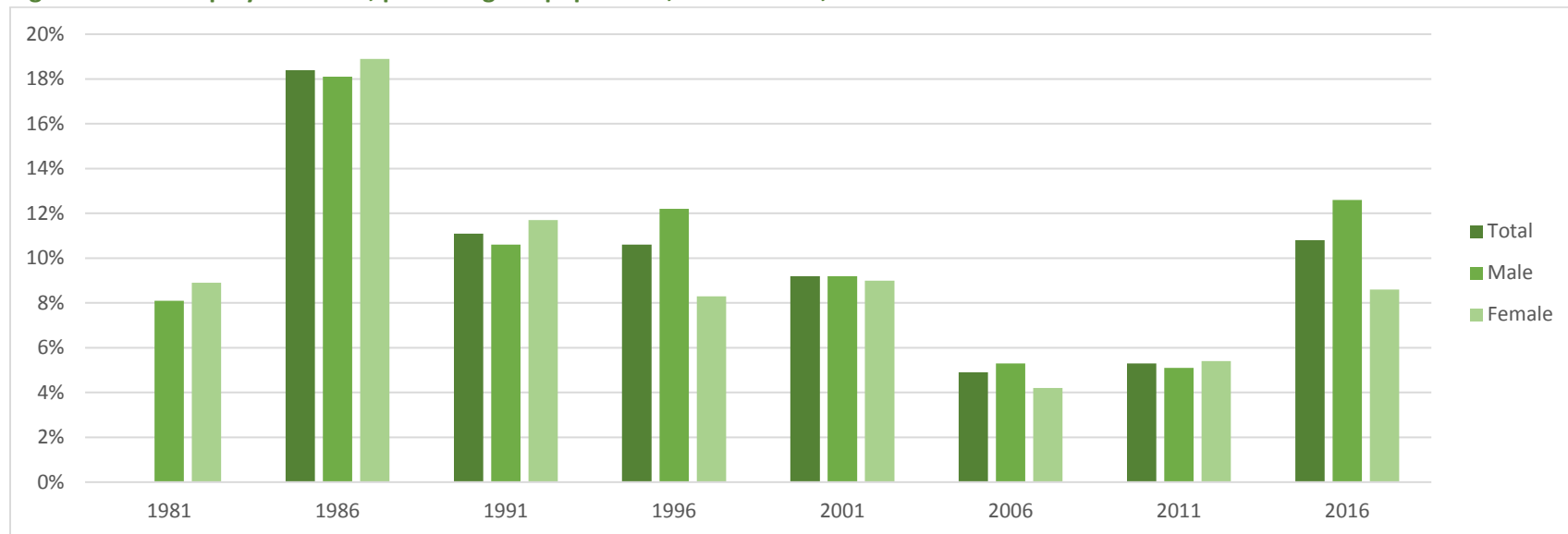


Source: Statistics Canada. 1986-2016. Census Program.



Figure 12.3 indicates that, over the last 35 years, the unemployment rate in Fort St. John averaged 10.2% for males, and 9.3% for females. The recent downturn in the local economy – driven by a drop in oil and gas prices – doubled the unemployment rate, though the recent downturn is not as significant as that which occurred in the early 1980s.

Figure 12.3 Unemployment rate, percentage of population, Fort St. John, 1981-2016

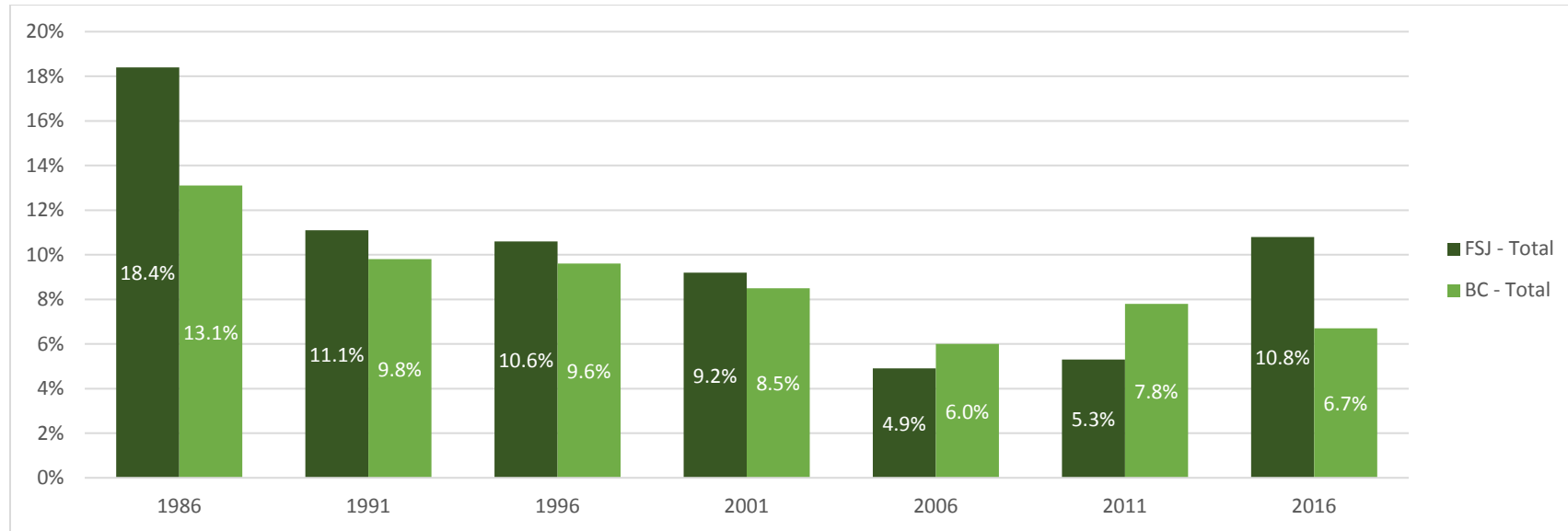


Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Note: Census 1981 does not provide datum for total unemployment rate.

Figure 12.4 shows that, with the exception of the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, Fort St. John’s unemployment rate tends to be higher than the provincial unemployment rate.

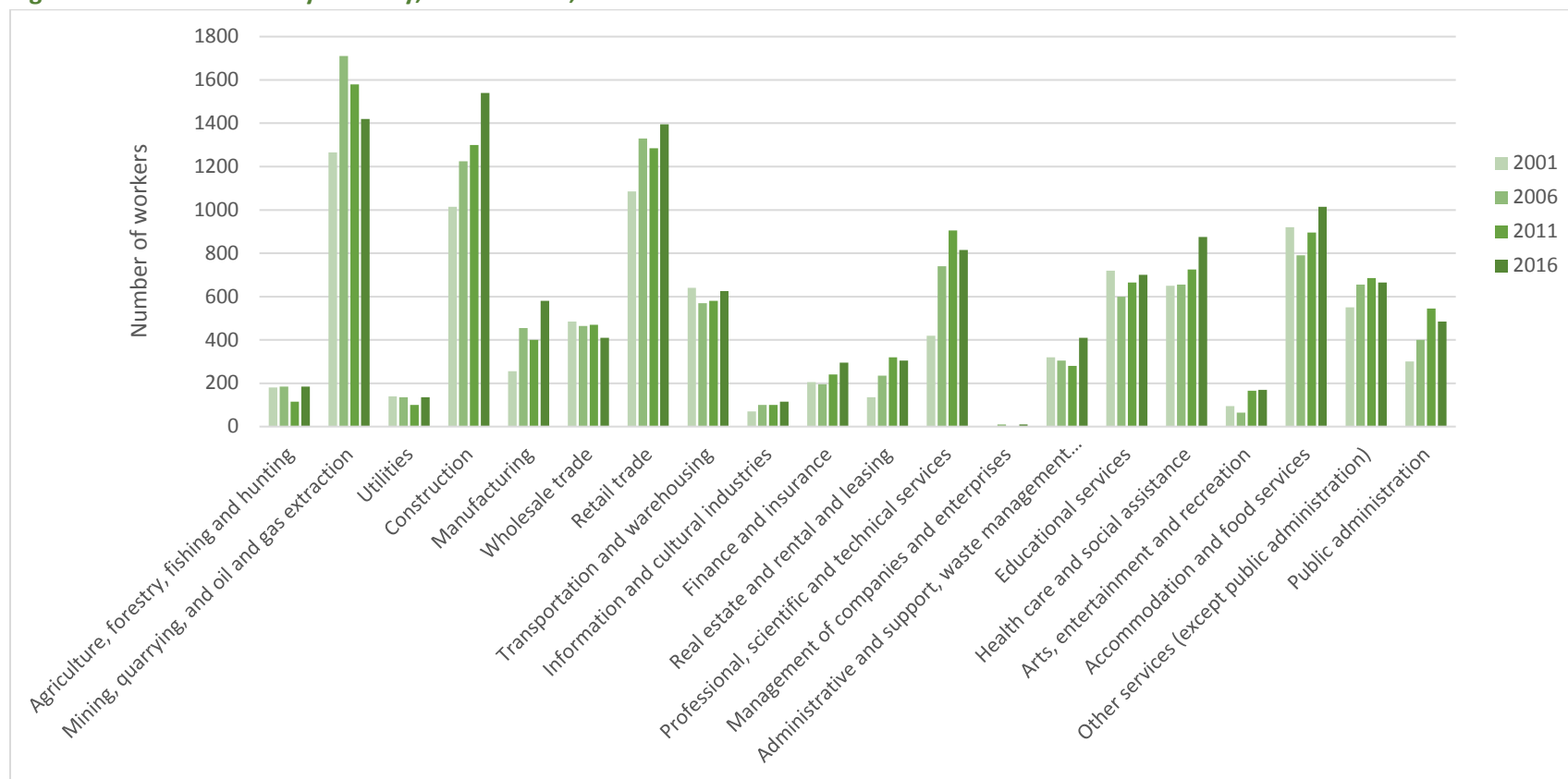
Figure 12.4 Unemployment rate, percentage of population, Fort St. John and BC, 1986-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 1986-2016. Census Program.

Figure 12.5 underscores the significance of oil and gas to the local economy as the energy sector is the largest employer. Employment in this sector fluctuates with boom and bust cycles of global commodity prices. A boom in the oil and gas occurred in 2006, when 1,710 workers were employed. The number of workers in oil and gas industries have since dropped to 1,420, spurred by the drop in oil and gas prices in 2015. Despite this, other industries have been expanded between 2001 and 2016. The construction industry steadily grew from 1,015 to 1,540 workers. The number of workers employed in manufacturing more than doubled from 255 to 580 workers. Health care and social assistance grew from 650 to 875 workers. Employment gains were also made in retail trade and real estate industries as well as professional, scientific and technical services and accommodation and food services.

Figure 12.5 Labour force by industry, Fort St. John, 2001-2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2001-2016. Census Program.

Figures 12.6 and 12.7 show that “Trades...” and “Sales ...” were the most common occupations for males and females respectively. Whereas the proportion of men in trades remained constant, the proportion of women in sales and service occupations has been declining, from 44% in 1996 to 31% in 2016. In that same period, there was a 6% increase in the proportion of women working in occupations related to education; law; and social, community, and government services.

**Figure 12.6 Employment by occupation, labour force population aged 15 years and over, males, Fort St. John, 1996-2016**

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Management occupations	11%	11%	10%	8%	9%
Business, finance and administration occupations	6%	4%	5%	7%	5%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	8%	7%	9%	12%	10%
Health occupations	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	4%	4%	3%	4%	5%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Sales and service occupations	15%	15%	14%	14%	16%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	36%	38%	40%	39%	38%
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	11%	12%	11%	9%	8%
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%

Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

Figure 12.7 Employment by occupation, labour force population aged 15 years and over, females, Fort St. John, 1996-2016

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Management occupations	7%	6%	7%	6%	8%
Business, finance and administration occupations	27%	27%	31%	27%	27%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	1%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Health occupations	7%	7%	6%	7%	9%
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	8%	11%	10%	15%	14%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Sales and service occupations	44%	40%	36%	31%	31%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

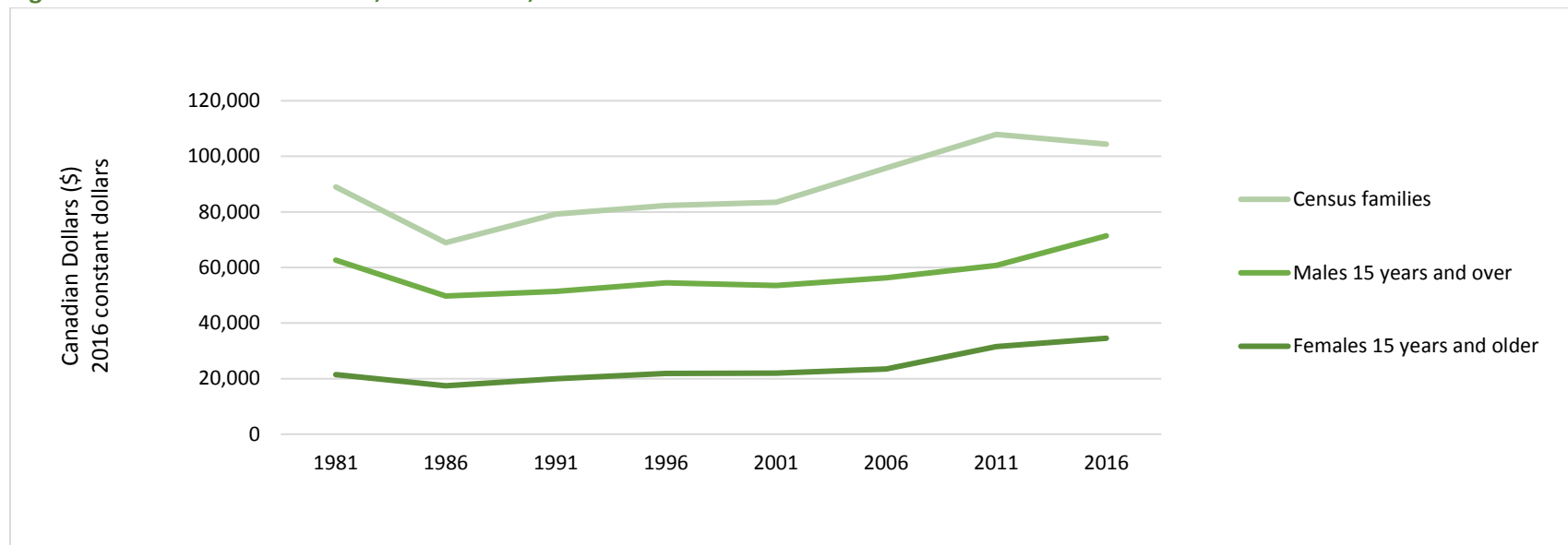
Source: Statistics Canada. 1996-2016. Census Program.

### 13.0 Income

Income data reveals not only the wealth of a community, but also how that wealth is distributed among the population. Median income is the measure most often used because it is less likely than average income to be skewed by extremes. Median income refers to the midway point in the income distribution of a population. That is, exactly half of the reported incomes are below and the other half are above the median income. The data below are adjusted to 2016 constant dollars using the Consumer Price Index.

Figure 13.1 shows the median total income for Fort St. John from 1980 to 2015. Reflecting broader social trends, there is an income disparity between males and females. In 2015, there was a 69.6% difference between the median incomes of males (\$71,378) and females (\$34,528). One of the factors contributing to the larger difference in Fort St. John is the prevalence of women in lower paying industries.

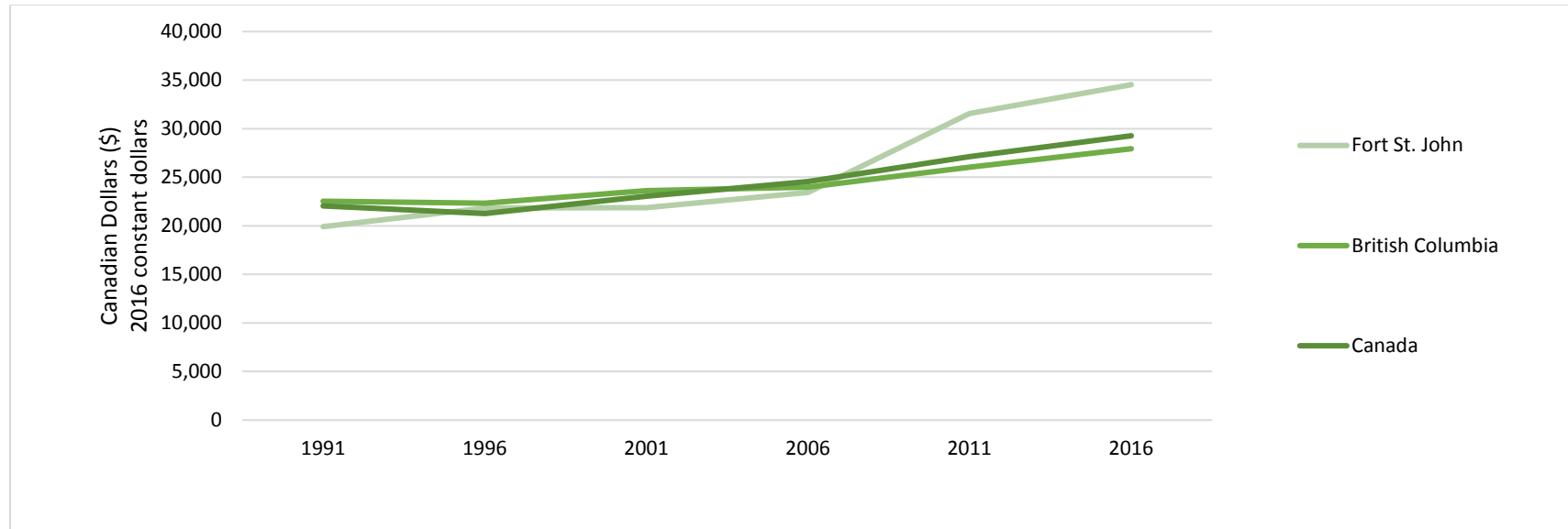
**Figure 13.1 Median total income, Fort St. John, 1980-2015**



Source: Statistics Canada. 1981-2016. Census Program.

Despite the gendered income disparity, Figure 13.2 indicates that the median total income of women in Fort St. John has recently risen above that of women in British Columbia and Canada.

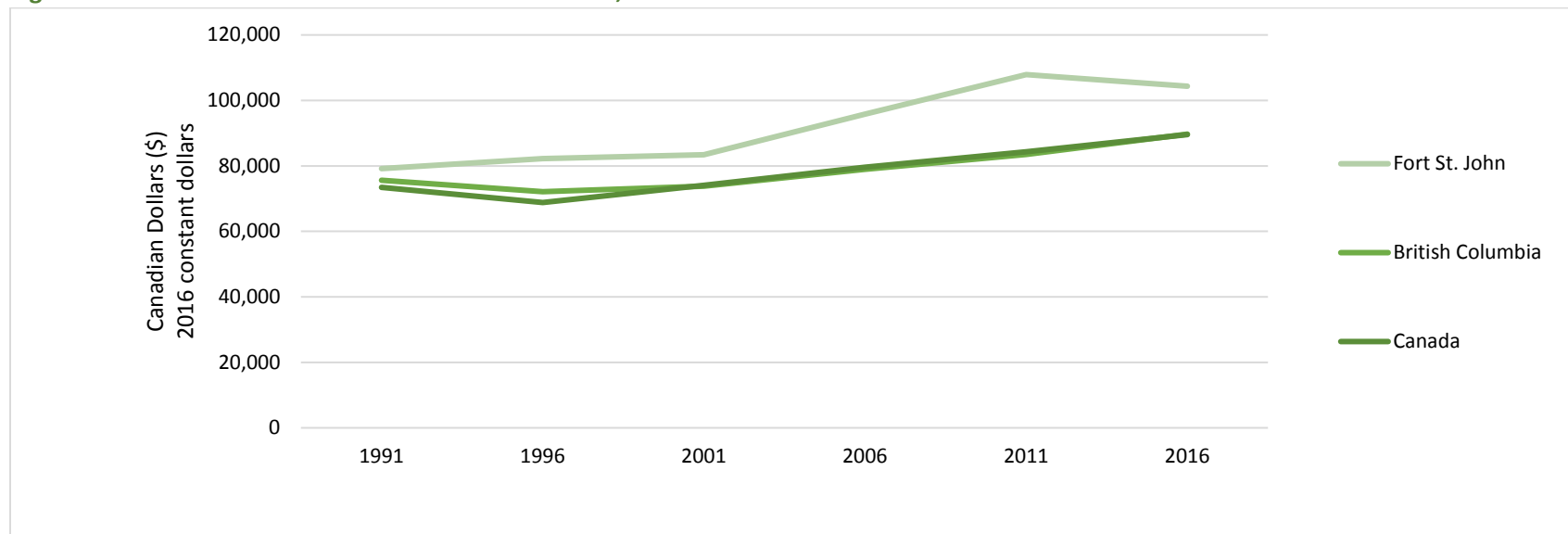
Figure 13.2 Median incomes of females, 1990-2015



Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.

Figure 13.3 provides a comparison of the median total income of economic families in Fort St. John with those of British Columbia and Canada. Statistics Canada defines an economic family as “ a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law, adoption or a foster relationship.” The median income of families in Fort St. John has been consistently higher than that of families both provincially and nationally.

Figure 13.3 Median total income of economic families, 1990-2015

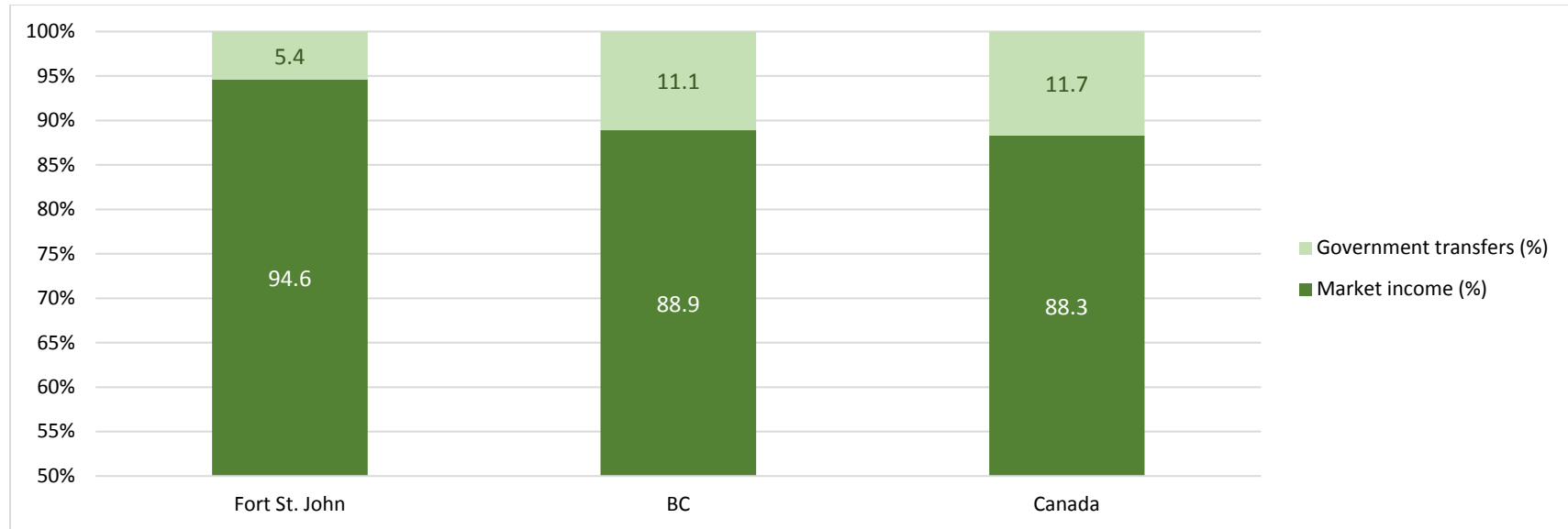


Source: Statistics Canada. 1991-2016. Census Program.



Another measure of the local economy is the percentage of income that comes from government transfers. Figure 13.4 shows that the population of Fort St. John depends less on government transfers than provincial and national averages.

Figure 13.4 Composition of total income, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

Statistics Canada defines Low income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT) as the thresholds representing “income levels at which these families or persons were expected to spend 20 percentage points or more of their after-tax income than average on food, shelter and clothing.”<sup>20</sup> Figure 13.5 shows that seniors in Fort St. John are more financially resilient than the rest of the population, with 2.4% LICO-AT compared to 4.2% for the working age population and 4.8% for children. Figure 13.5 furthermore shows that low income is much less prevalent in Fort St. John than in British Columbia.

Figure 13.5 Prevalence of low income based on LICO-AT, Fort St. John and British Columbia, 2015

	Fort St. John	British Columbia
0 to 17 years (%)	4.8	12.1
0 to 5 years (%)	4.7	11.2
18 to 64 years (%)	4.2	12.0
65 years and over (%)	2.4	6.0

Source: Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Program.

### 14.0 Business counts

Business registrations are an indication of employers and the sources of income in an area. As shown in Figure 14.1, the number of businesses in Fort St. John has increased since 2007. The largest increase occurred in 2012-2013. However, Figure 14.2 indicates that, during that same period, Fort St. John’s two largest employers either downsized or moved. In 2016, there were 30 large businesses, each employing over 100 people.

**Figure 14.1 Business counts, Fort St. John, 2007-2016**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of	2284	2397	2529	3182	3231	3962	4928	5386	6282	6309
No employees	1013	1119	1237	1917	1943	2610	3329	3644	4296	4386
With employees	1271	1278	1292	1265	1288	1352	1599	1724	1986	1923

Source: BC Stats.<sup>21</sup>

Note: Businesses with “no employees” do not maintain an employee payroll, but may be operated by contracted workers, family members of business owners.

**Figure 14.2 Number of businesses by employees, Fort St. John, 2007-2016**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1 to 4	670	702	715	704	699	722	894	976	1162	1129
5 to 9	252	230	234	228	242	255	266	296	320	307
10 to 19	195	199	190	189	180	202	232	225	251	242
20 to 49	102	93	98	92	106	106	137	142	158	149
50 to 99	36	36	35	30	38	40	45	55	63	66
100 to 199	11	11	13	15	16	19	16	19	24	19
200 to 499	4	5	5	5	5	6	7	9	6	10
500 to 999	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
1,000 to 1,499	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
1,500 to 2,499	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total with employees	1271	1278	1292	1265	1288	1352	1599	1724	1986	1923

Source: BC Stats.

- <sup>1</sup> Alaska Highway News. 1974. *Fort St. John and District*. Fort St. John: Alaska Highway News, p. 2.
- <sup>2</sup> BC Oil and Gas Commission. 2017. *2016 Oil and Gas Reserves Production Report*. Victoria: BC Oil and Gas Commission, p. 7.
- <sup>3</sup> Smith, W.R. 2015. “The 2011 National Household Survey—the complete statistical story.” Available at <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/blog-blogue/cs-sc/2011NHStory>
- <sup>4</sup> BC Stats. “About Population Estimates.” Available at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates/about-population-estimates>
- <sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. “Definitions and concepts.” *Aboriginal Peoples Reference Guide*, Census of Population, 2016. Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/009/98-500-x2016009-eng.cfm>
- <sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. 2016. “Aboriginal Peoples: Fact Sheet for British Columbia.” *Aboriginal Peoples Fact Sheets*, 89-656-X. Available at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-656-x/89-656-x2016011-eng.htm>
- <sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. “Immigrant.” *Dictionary*, Census of Population, 2016. Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop221-eng.cfm>
- <sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. “Year of immigration.” *Dictionary*, Census of Population, 2016. Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop221-eng.cfm>
- <sup>9</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. 2013. “What Makes Canadians Healthy or Unhealthy?” Available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health/what-makes-canadians-healthy-unhealthy.html>
- <sup>10</sup> BC Ministry of Education. “Six-Year Completion Rate.” *Glossary*. Available at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/glossary.php?initLetter=All#sycr>
- <sup>11</sup> BC Ministry of Education. “Peace River North (60).” *District Reports*. Available at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/district.php?mode=District&report-school-district=Peace+River+North+SD%23060&district-index=39>
- <sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada. 2013. “Health Profile: Northeast Health Service Delivery Area.” Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/health-sante/82-228/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=HR&Code1=5953&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Rate&SearchText=Northeast%20Health%20Service%20Delivery%20Area&SearchType=Contains&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&B2=All&B3=All>
- <sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada. 2013. “Health Profile: Northeast Health Service Delivery Area.” Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/health-sante/82-228/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=HR&Code1=5953&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Rate&SearchText=Northeast%20Health%20Service%20Delivery%20Area&SearchType=Contains&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&B2=All&B3=All>
- <sup>14</sup> Statistics Canada. 2013. “Health Profile: Northeast Health Service Delivery Area.” Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/health-sante/82-228/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=HR&Code1=5953&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Rate&SearchText=Northeast%20Health%20Service%20Delivery%20Area&SearchType=Contains&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&B2=All&B3=All>
- <sup>15</sup> Provincial Health Services Authority. 2014. *Fort St. John*. BC Community Health Profiles. Available at <http://communityhealth.phsa.ca/HealthProfiles/HealthReport/Fort%20St%20John>
- <sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada. 2001. “Mobility 5: Mobility Status – Place of Residence 5 Years Ago.” *2001 Census Dictionary – Internet Version*, 92-378-XIE, p. 112-113.
- <sup>17</sup> BC Assessment. 2018. *Average change by property class by jurisdiction*. Available from <https://eforms.bcaassessment.ca/MarketMovement2018-2017.pdf>
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- <sup>20</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. “Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT).” *Dictionary*, Census of Population, 2016. Available at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/fam019-eng.cfm>

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<sup>21</sup> BC Stats. 2016. Number of Businesses & Employment by Industry. Available at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/business-industry-trade/number-of-businesses-and-employment-by-industry>