

ARMSTRONG



Image Source: www.picturebc.ca

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The City of Armstrong is located in the northwest section of the Regional District of North Okanagan, 25 km north of Vernon in the Spallumcheen Valley. Road access is via highway 97a from the north and south. Highway 1 is located to the north allowing easy travel to and from other major centers and provinces. Equidistant to Vancouver, Calgary and Seattle, Armstrong is centrally located in the North Okanagan. The closest urban centres are Vernon, Kelowna and Kamloops, 25, 75 and 100 kilometres, respectively. Armstrong contains approximately 5% of the total population of the RDNO, with a population of 4241. The fertile Spallumcheen Valley is the basis of Armstrong's economy, based primarily on agriculture and resources. Armstrong has a long history and reputation for world class cheese products, but other industries such as forestry and lumber products, plumbing manufacturing, RV construction, and food services make up the varied employers.



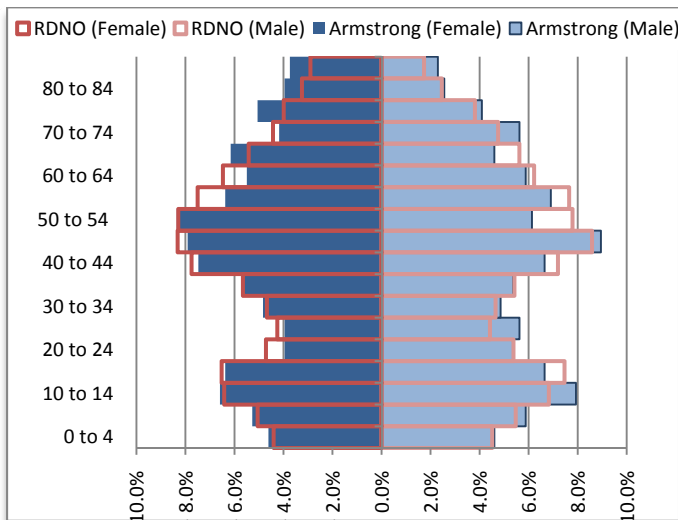
POPULATION

The population of Armstrong has fluctuated slightly over the ten year period from 1996 through 2006 but has seen an overall increase at an average annual rate of 0.9% per year. The population of Armstrong in 2006 was 4,241 up from 3,906 in 1996.

In 2006, the population of Armstrong represented 5.5% of the total population of the Regional District of North Okanagan. The median age of the population was 44.5 years, slightly lower than the RDNO at 44.8 years, but significantly higher than the BC average of 40.8 years.

The following population pyramid illustrates the distribution of the population of Armstrong in 2006 by age and sex.

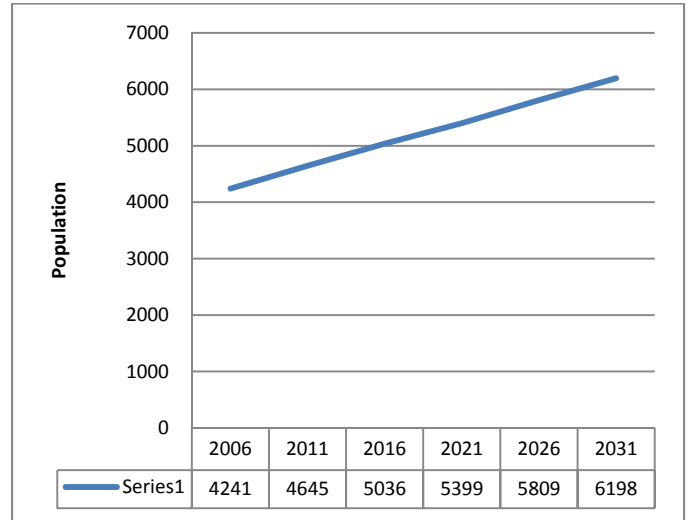
Figure 1: Population Distribution by Age and Sex, 2006 (% of Total), Armstrong and RDNO



As illustrated the population of Armstrong is comprised largely of an older population, with a significant gap in population in the 20-40 year age range. With an increasing aging population and a significantly reduced child bearing population the number of deaths per year will continue to increase at a greater rate than the number of births, resulting in a negative natural increase. This trend will have significant implications for housing, health care services and employment. The distribution of the population in Armstrong closely mimics that of the RDNO.

Looking forward to the year 2031, Armstrong is expected to continue to grow at the moderate rate of 1.52% annually, resulting in an expected total population of 6,198 people in 2031.

Figure 2: Population of Armstrong, 2006 – 2031, 1.52% Annual Growth Rate



HOUSEHOLDS

The average number of persons in a private household within Armstrong is 2.3, slightly lower than the RDNO at 2.4, or BC at 2.5. There are a total of 1,270 census families in private households within Armstrong. A significant portion of these census families are 2 person families (58.1%), comparable to the RDNO (57.7%), but far higher than BC (50.6%). Three person families represent 16.6% of the total, 4 person families 17.4% and five or more persons 7.9%.

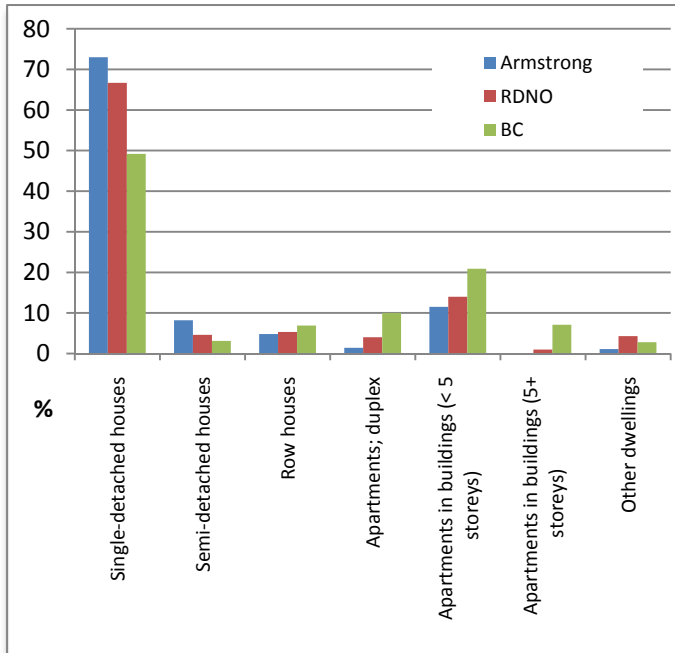
The average value of a dwelling in Armstrong was \$260,457 in 2006. The average gross rent for a private dwelling in Armstrong was \$709 in 2006 and for a home owner the average major payment was \$771. Of the total dwellings occupied by usual residents (full time residents), 35% of tenant occupied, and 20% of owner occupied households spent more than 30% of their household income on housing. This is considered to be above the level of affordability for housing. Of the total number of private dwellings (1,775), 410 households, or 23% of Armstrong residents, are spending more than 30% of their household income on shelter.

HOUSING STOCK

There were a total of 1,775 occupied private dwellings in Armstrong in 2006, 80.0% of which were owned and 20.0% were rented. The percentage of ownership of dwellings is slightly higher than the RDNO at 77.2% and significantly higher than BC at 69.7%.

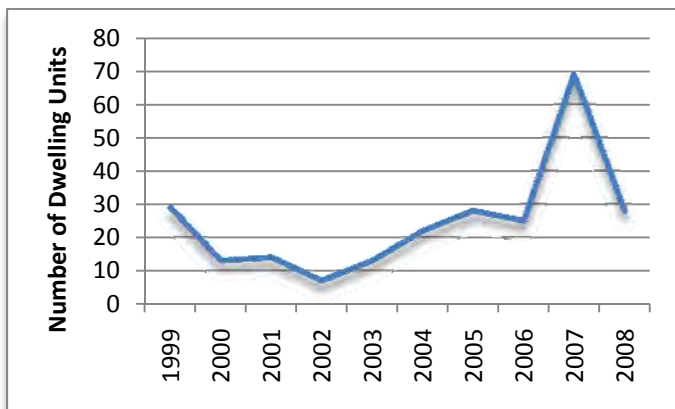
Armstrong has a very high percentage of single-detached houses, making up 73.0% of the total housing stock. This is higher than the RDNO at 66.7% and significantly higher than BC at 49.0%.

Figure 3: Dwellings by Structural Type (As a % of Total Occupied Dwellings), 2006



Building permit activity has fluctuated in recent years, but in the period for 1999 through 2008, an average of 25 residential units were created. The highest building permit activity was seen in 2007 with 69 residential units being created.

Figure 4: Residential Building Permits, Number of Dwelling Units Created, 1999-2008



Looking forward to the year 2031 the total number of new dwelling units expected in Armstrong is 857. This represents

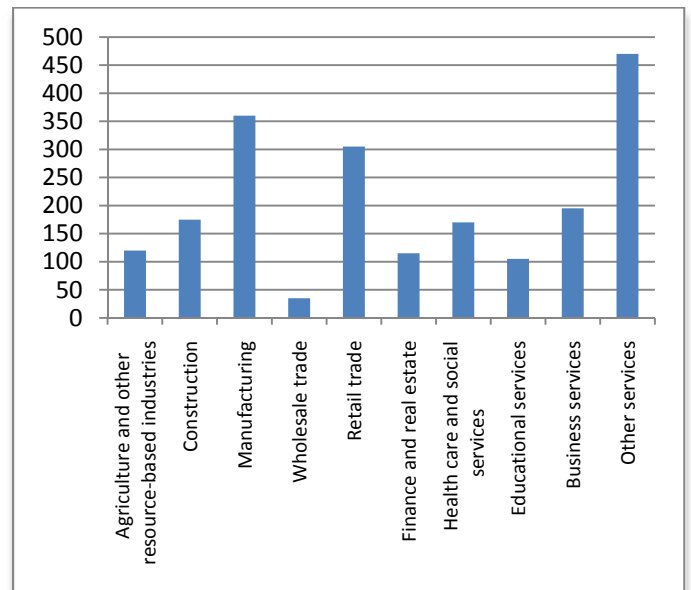
an average of 37 units per year. While slightly lower than the average building permit activity in recent years, given the moderate population growth the demand for increased residential units is not expected to increase dramatically.

ECONOMY

Armstrong's employment rate is 55.6%, lower than the RDNO at 58.1% and BC at 61.6%, and likely influenced by the numerous retirees and population over 65. The participation rate of the labour force within Armstrong is 60.1%, slightly lower than the RDNO at 61.9% and significantly lower than BC at 65.6%. The median income of an individual over 15 in 2005 was \$22,400, similar to the RDNO at \$21,833, but lower than the BC average of \$25,722. The median income of a family in 2005 was \$53,544, lower than both the RDNO at \$57,637 and BC at \$65,787.

The Armstrong economy is similar to many of the other North Okanagan communities with the main industries being manufacturing and construction, retail trade and health and social services and business services. Agriculture and resource extraction play a large role in the economies of all north Okanagan communities, including Armstrong, but generally do not employ as many as these other industries.

Figure 5: Distribution of Labour Force by Industry, Armstrong, 2006



The total experienced labour force in Armstrong was 2,121 in 2006, or 50% of the total population.

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Amended by the Regional District of North Okanagan

This profile has been prepared as a supplement to the Regional District of North Okanagan Population, Employment and Housing Forecast, 2008-2031. For further information on data sources, assumptions, limitations and methodology please refer to the full report.
