Cochrane
Housing Needs Assessment

Council Presentation
June 1, 2026



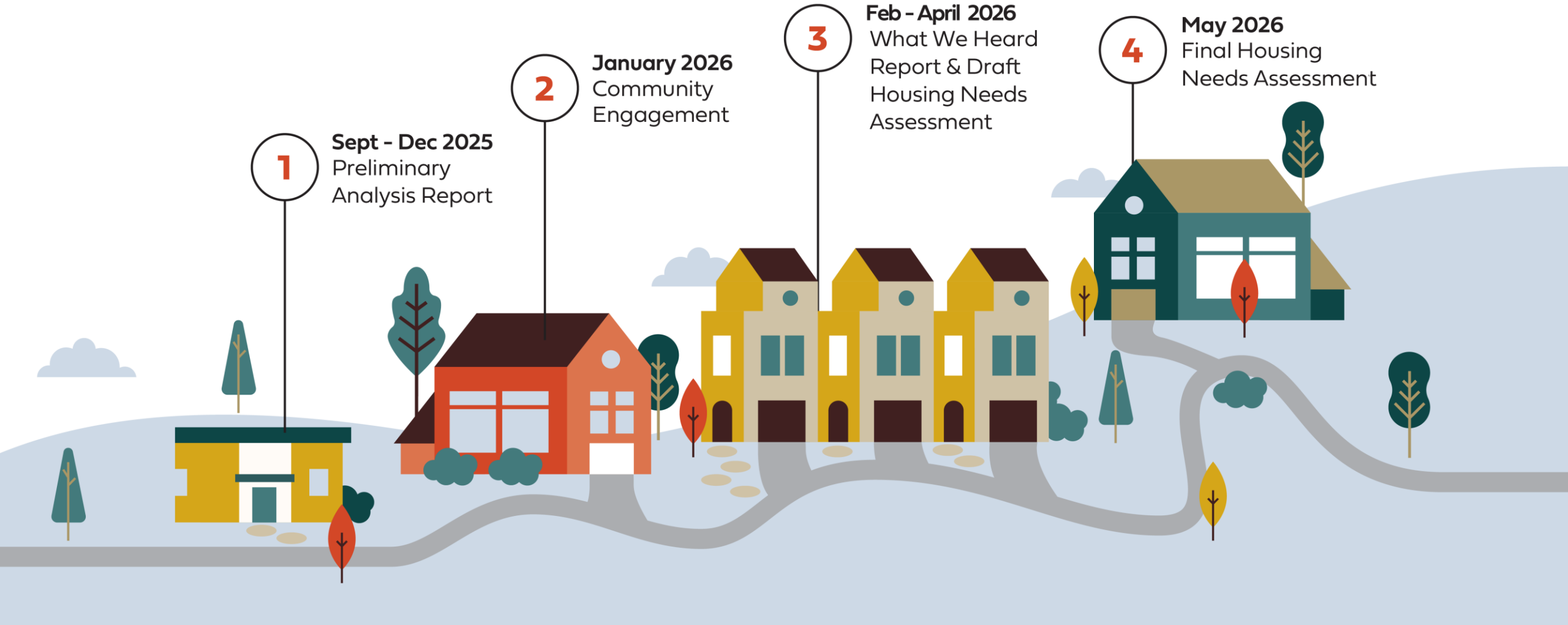
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What's in this Presentation?

1. Project Overview
2. Methodology
3. Key Findings
4. Housing Needs + Estimates
5. Moving Forward

Project Overview





Methodology

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Qualitative Data – Community Voices

More than 676 community voices helped inform the Housing Needs Assessment.

- **Community Survey**
  549 Participants
- **Community Pop-Ups (SLS & Library)**
  35+ Participants
- **Seniors on the Bow**
  43 Participants
- **YAP Group**
  7 Participants
- **School Counsellors Focus Group**
  4 Participants
- **Lived Experience Interviews**
  6 Participants
- **Indigenous Feast & Chat**
  6 Participants
- **Social Service Provider Focus Group**
  11 Participants
- **Developers Focus Group**
  15 Participants



Quantitative Data - Data Sources

1 Municipal

SOURCE:
Town of Cochrane 2024 Municipal Census

INFORMED:
2024 Population Estimates

RATIONALE:
Data only included population counts

2 Provincial

SOURCE:
Alberta Office of Statistics and Information Dashboard

INFORMED:
Yearly population estimates and future projections

RATIONALE:
Updated assumptions based on federal immigration changes and other factors

3 Federal

SOURCE:
Statistics Canada 2021 Census, CMHC, UBC HART Methodology

INFORMED:
Housing Indicators & Federally Mandatory Data Tables

RATIONALE:
Large, comprehensive datasets that can be cross-referenced and tracked over time (highest quality dataset)

Why the Numbers Differ

This HNA references and builds on work to date, including **Cochrane's Growth Study.** However, the HNA is a different tool with a different methodology for estimating need.

- **Different purposes:** Growth Study informs land/infrastructure capacity. While the HNA seeks to understand housing need and affordability.
- **Different assumptions:** Since 2024 population projections have changed with new assumptions, specifically federal immigration targets.

Growth Study
"How much land and infrastructure would be required to accommodate projected population growth?"

Housing Needs Assessment
"What housing tenures and types are needed to meet current and projected housing needs?"



Key Findings

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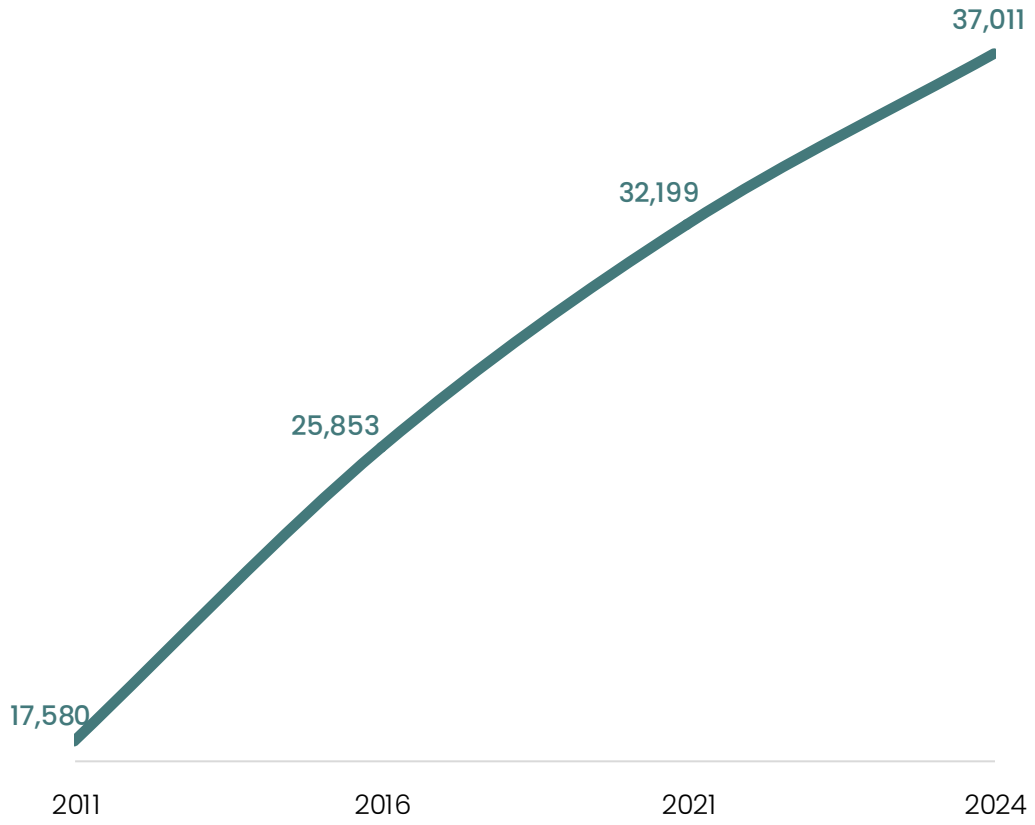


Population Growth & Diversity

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Rapid Population Growth

- Population in Cochrane increased by 83% between 2011 and 2021
- Municipal census data indicates a further increase of 15% by 2024, **with the population increasing to 37,011**



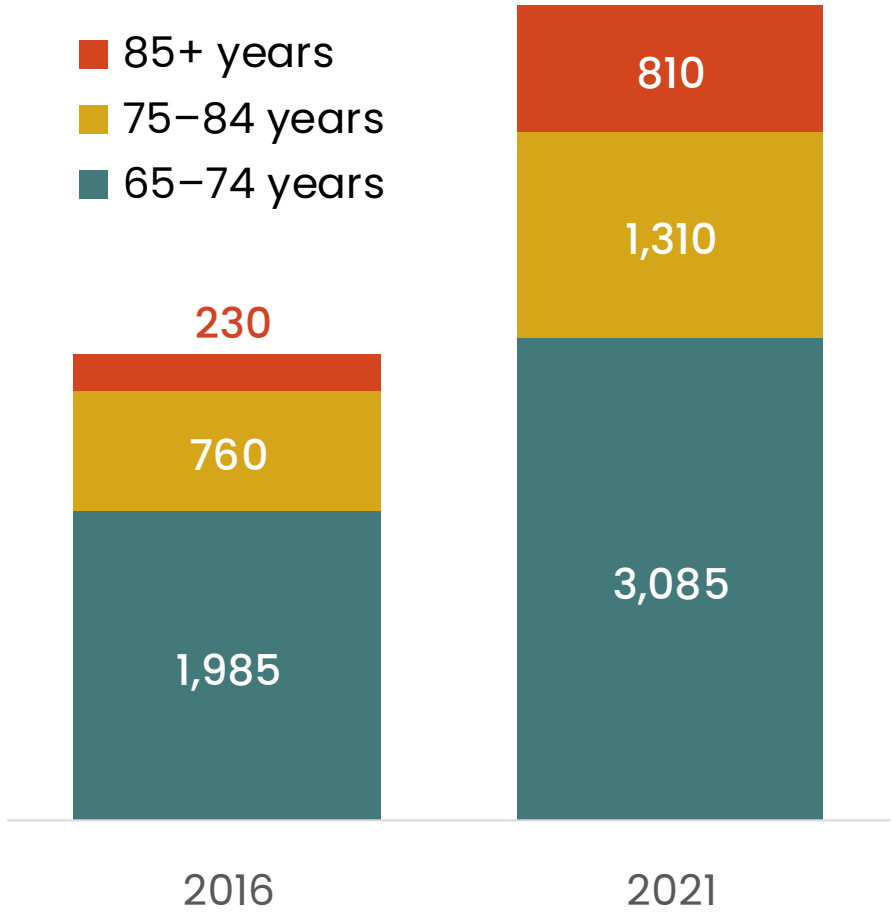
Regional Comparison

- Cochrane experienced the highest population growth among nearby communities between 2016 and 2021

Community	2016	2021	% Change
City of Airdrie	61,581	74,100	+20%
City of Calgary	1,239,220	1,306,784	+6%
City of Chestermere	19,887	22,163	+11%
Town of Cochrane	25,853	32,199	+24%
Town of High River	13,594	14,324	+5%
Town of Okotoks	29,016	30,405	+5%

Older Adult Population

- Residents aged 65+ increased by 75% between the last two census periods
- **Adults aged 85+ experienced the most significant growth**



Regional Comparison

- Cochrane experienced the highest growth among the older adult population (65+) compared to nearby communities

Community	2016	2021	% Change
City of Airdrie	4,150	6,840	+65%
City of Calgary	138,405	177,405	+28%
City of Chestermere	1,410	2,290	+62%
Town of Cochrane	2,975	5,205	+75%
Town of High River	2,970	3,530	+19%
Town of Okotoks	2,990	4,495	+50%

Population Growth Impacts

- The pace of growth has put pressure on community amenities, infrastructure, social services, and housing supports
- Older adults, especially 85+, represent a fast-growing segment of the population with increasingly diverse housing and accessibility needs
- To accommodate trends, consider accessibility, fixed incomes, and increasing service requirements, which affect housing suitability, affordability, and long-term livability



Without addressing affordable housing and support services capacity constraints, it may increasingly shape who is able to live in Cochrane

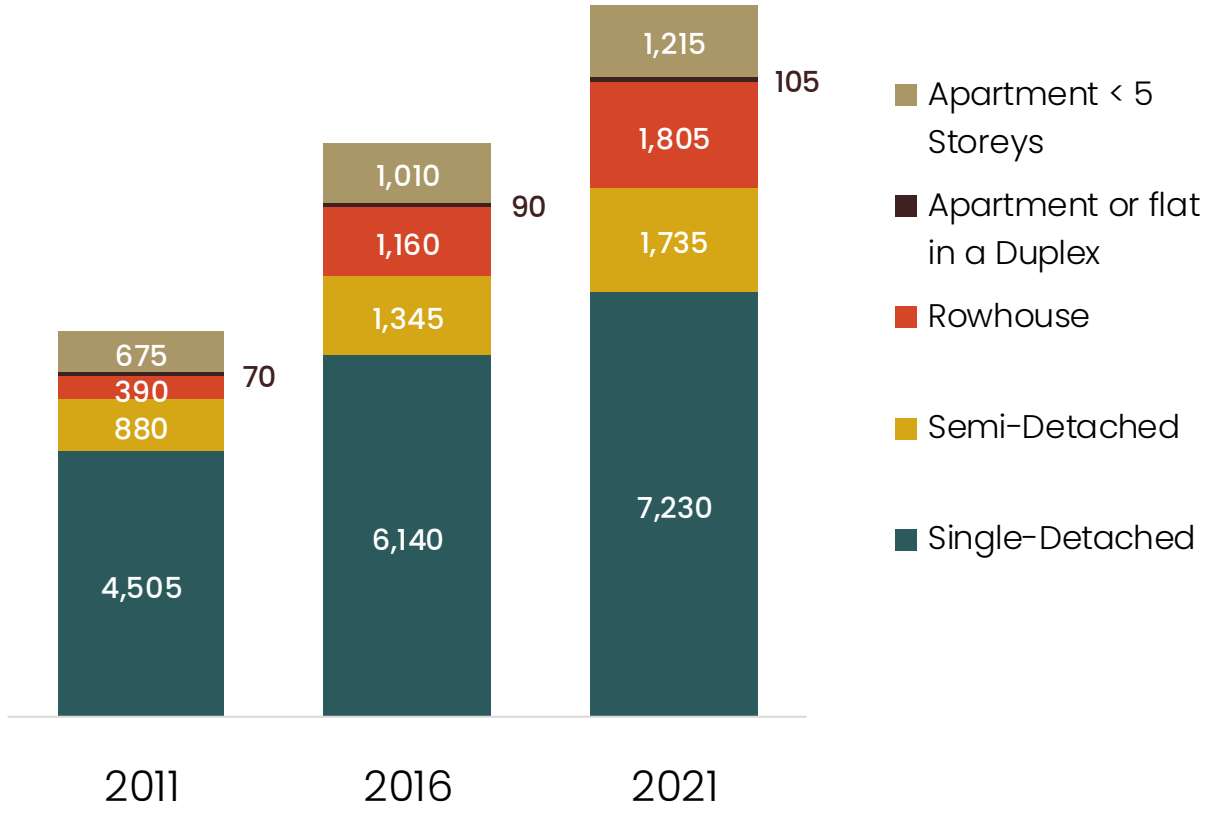


Housing Supply & Demand

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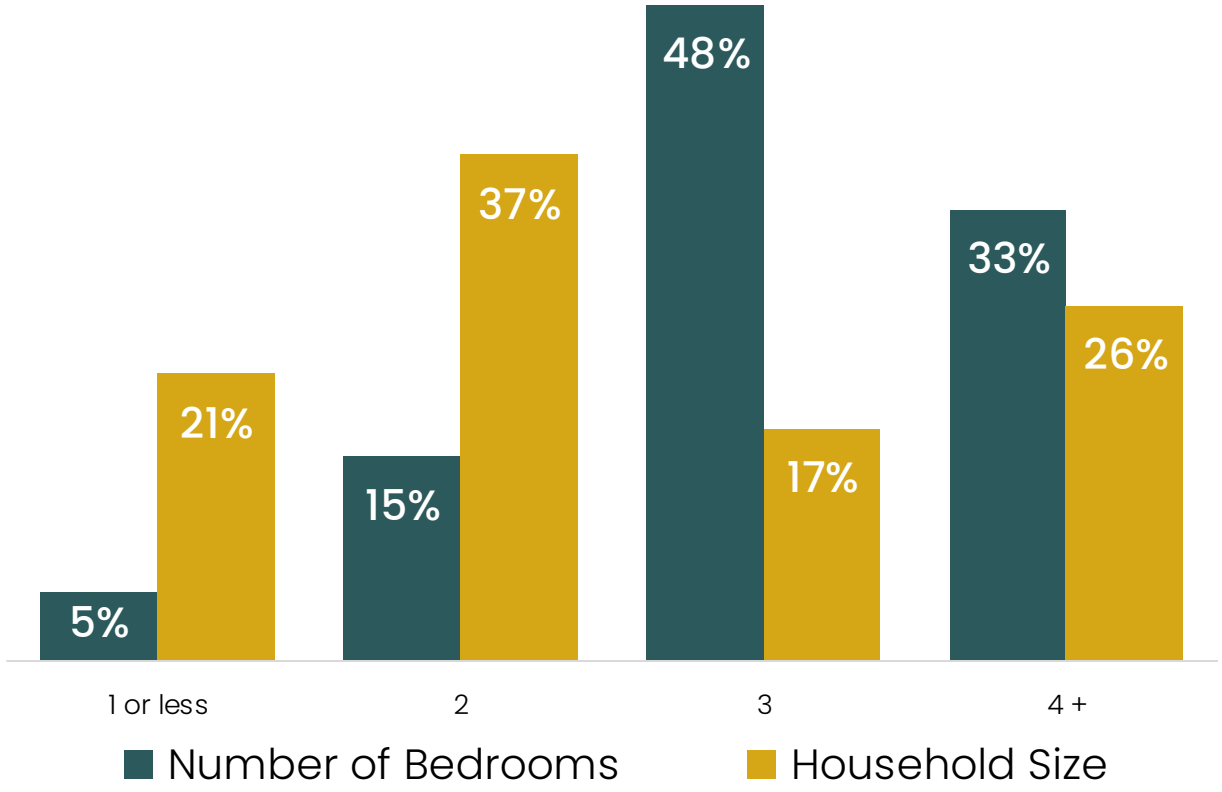
Housing Stock

- 45% of homes were built in the past 10 to 15 years
- **Nearly 60% of the housing stock consists of single-detached homes**
- Row housing has experienced the largest growth, increasing by 362% since 2011



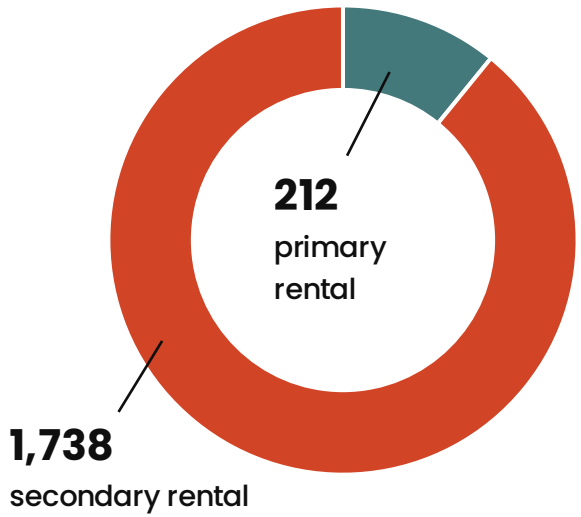
Household Composition

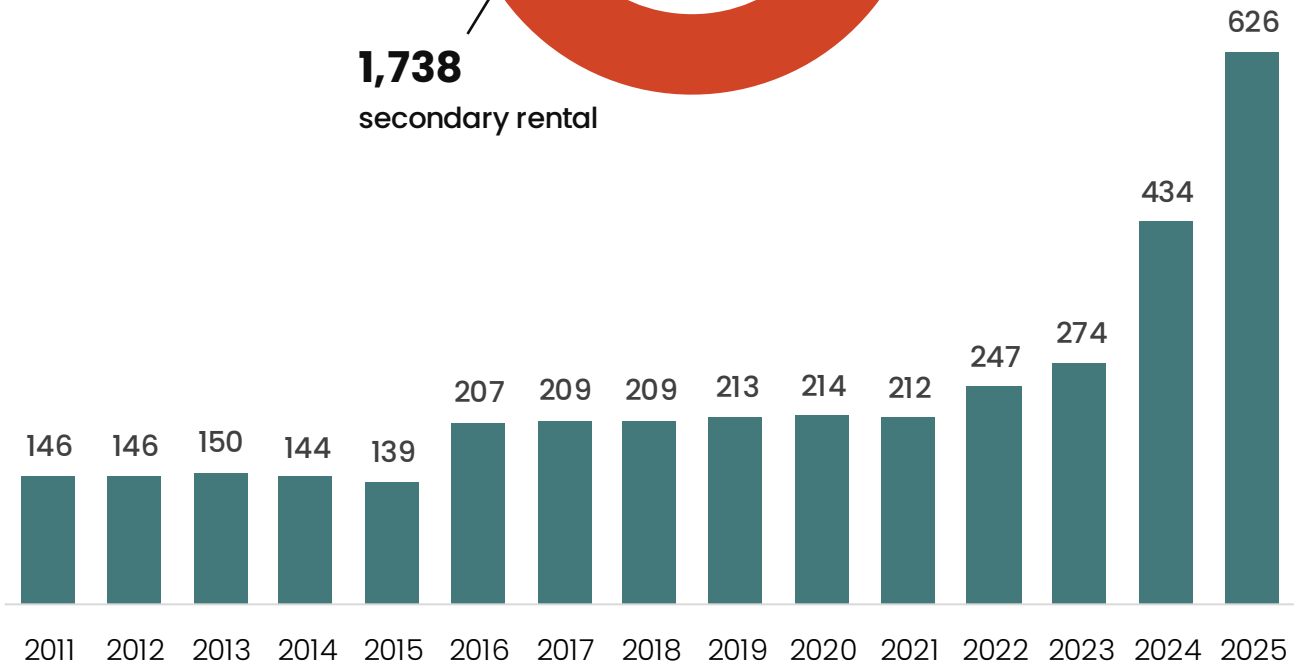
- Over half (58%) of Cochrane's households consist of 1 or 2 persons, while the majority (81%) of housing units have 3 or more bedrooms
- This highlights **a mismatch between available homes and household needs**



Rental Market

- In 2021, Cochrane's rental market consists of 1,738 (89%) secondary rentals and only 212 (11%) primary rental units
- Since 2021, the primary rental supply has grown, **rising by 195%, increasing from 212 to 626 units**





Subsidized Housing

Data Source	Total Rental Units	Subsidized Housing	
		#	%
Self-Reported on Federal 2021 Census	1,950	95	5%
Service Providers		57	3%

Housing Supply & Demand Impacts

- There is a need for more diverse housing options (smaller and more affordable homes)
- Limited options affect young adults, older adults, one-person households, low-to-moderate-income individuals and families, working professionals, and newcomers
- Reliance on secondary rental units creates instability for renters with a greater risk for displacement
- Short-term rentals can further limit options for long-term tenants



If housing supply continues to be dominated by larger, ownership-oriented units, Cochrane may face increasing challenges attracting and retaining a local workforce, affecting essential services and overall economic development



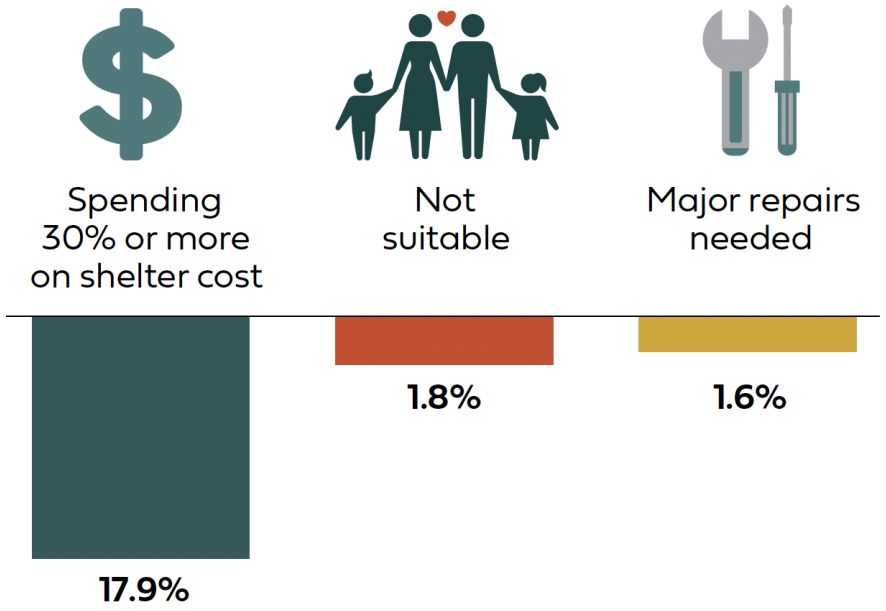
Housing Affordability

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Core Housing Need (CHN)

CHN is a concept that tests for the acceptability of a households current housing against 3 standards of affordability, adequacy, and suitability and would have to spend more than 30% of its income to access acceptable housing

- 6.8% of households in Cochrane are in CHN
- 22% of households experience at least one of the standards, with affordability as the most common issue



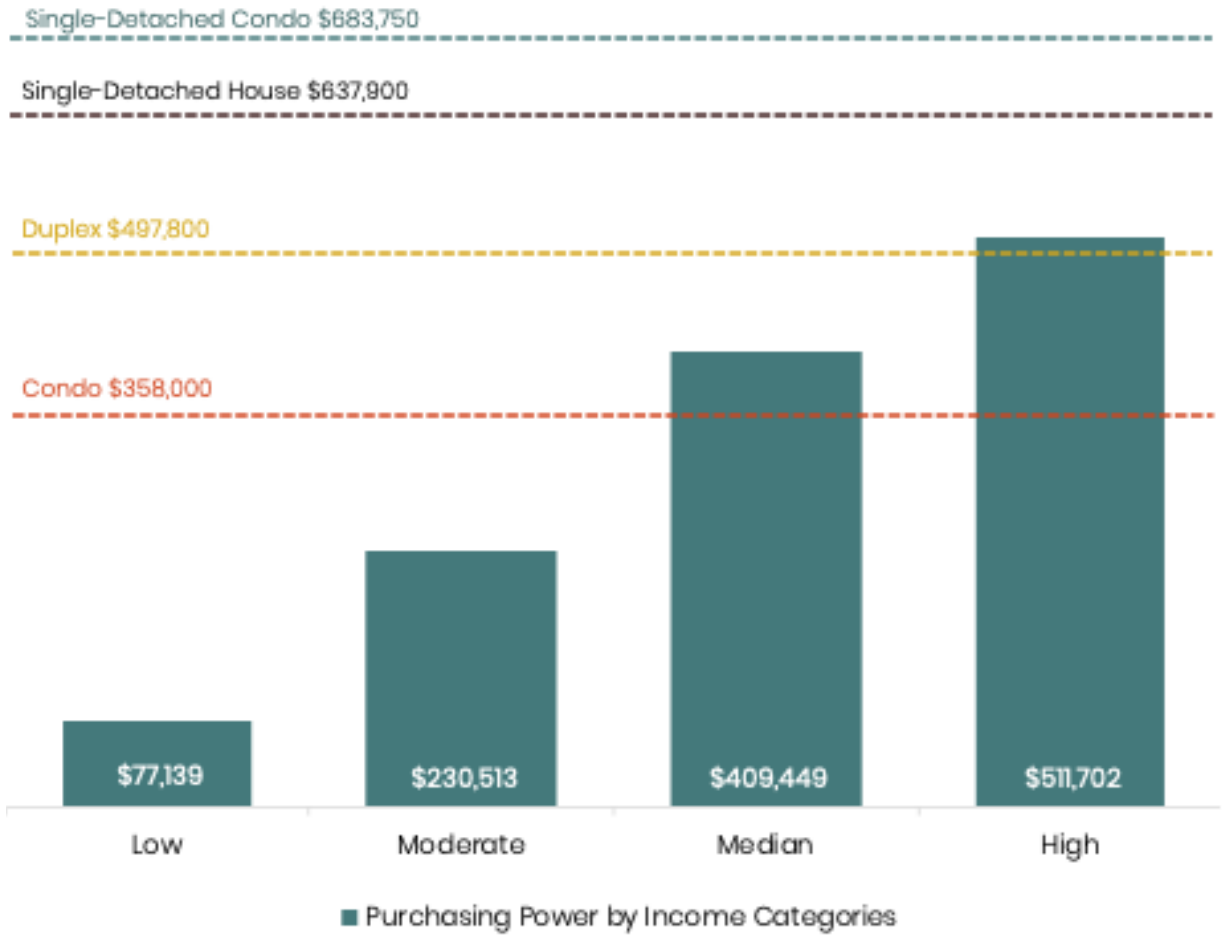
Housing Affordability

- Income categories are calculated using the Area Median Household Income (AMHI), which is $113,000 for the town

Income Category	Annual Household Income	% Total Households
Very Low	< $25,000	2%
Low	$25,000 – $54,999	15%
Moderate	$55,000 – $89,999	21%
Median	$90,000 – $134,999	24%
High	> $135,000	38%

Housing Affordability

- When comparing purchasing power to median assessed value, **only households in the median and high-income categories are estimated to afford to buy a home** in Cochrane's current market



Housing Affordability Impacts

- Housing affordability is the driving concern in Cochrane
- Housing affordability affects a broad range of demographic and socio-economic groups (young adults, older adults, low-income)
- Service providers noted increasing demand and shifting demographics of people seeking support (ie. middle income families)



Without intervention, ongoing pressure on housing affordability can contribute to worsening housing insecurity, strain on social services, and risk overall community well-being



Priority Populations

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Hidden + Visible Homelessness

- Between 2019 and 2026, estimates indicate approximately **20 to 113 people experiencing housing insecurity** in Cochrane
- Estimating homelessness is challenging because traditional methods mainly capture ‘visible’ homelessness while much of Cochrane’s housing insecurity is ‘hidden’

Hidden Homelessness refers to individuals in the community who may be temporarily living with friends and families, in personal vehicles or RVs, hotels, motels, campgrounds, private property, abandoned buildings, or garages.

Populations in Core Housing Need

- All households in CHN have **low- or very low-incomes**
- Almost half (48%) are **1-person**, and another 27% are **2-person** households, totalling 75%
- 27% are **single-mother households** and 22% are **over 85 years old**

Renters in Core Housing Need

- **24% of renter households** are in CHN, compared with only 4% of owner households
- **Between 2016 and 2021, the number of renter households in CHN increased by 56%,** while owner households in CHN decreased by 20%

Household Type	2016 #	2021 #	Change %
Owner-occupied	450	360	–20%
Tenant-occupied	285	445	56%

Older Adult Households

- 55% of **renters aged 85+** spend more than 30% of their income on housing
- 92% of suppressed households are estimated to have a primary household maintainer aged 75 or older

Suppressed Households refers to households that are unable to form due to a lack of affordable or available housing.

Priority Population Impacts

- Households in CHN are predominantly 1- and 2-persons, requiring access to smaller, subsidized housing options
- Renters face heightened housing instability with limited rental supply
- Older adults face growing waitlists and concerns about essential services
- Housing insecurity is increasing and affecting middle incomes and older adults



Without targeted action to improve rental supply and affordable options, existing housing challenges are likely to intensify for renters, older adults, lower-income households, and those experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness.



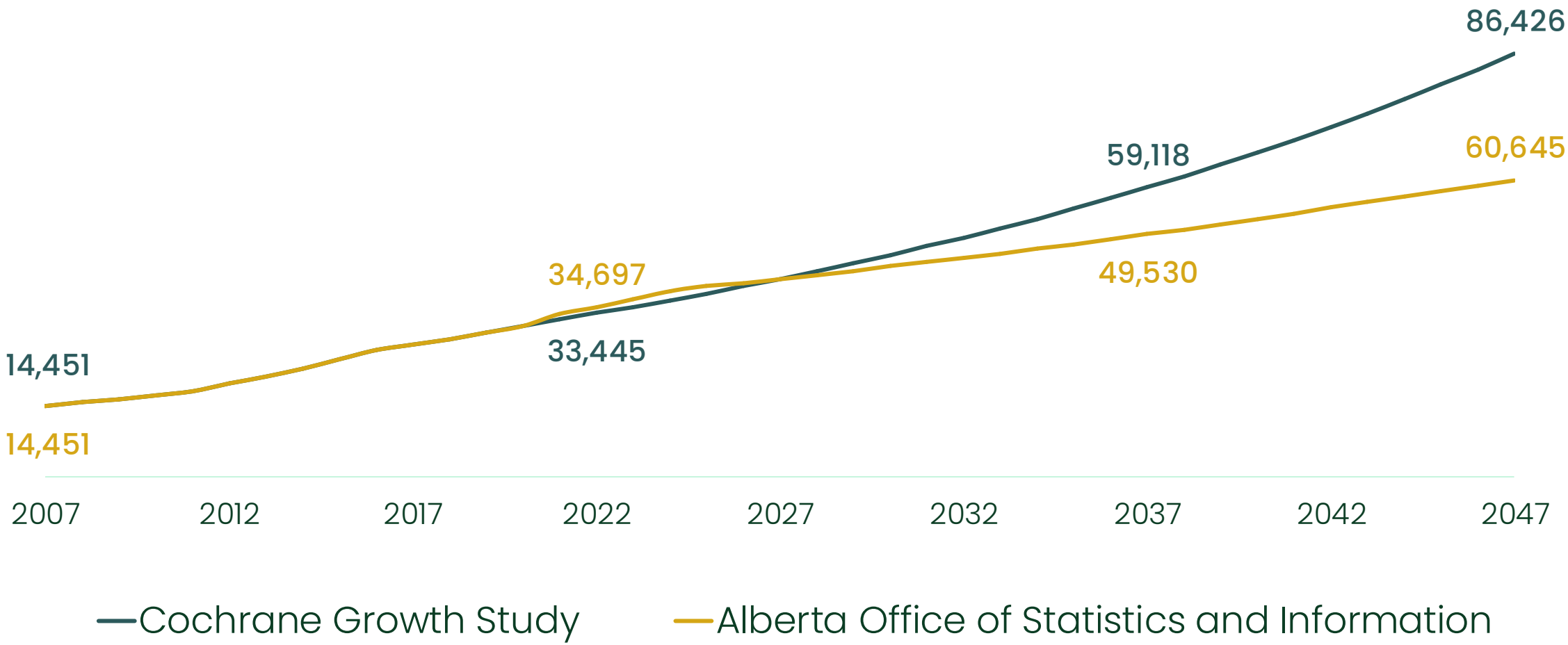
Population Projections

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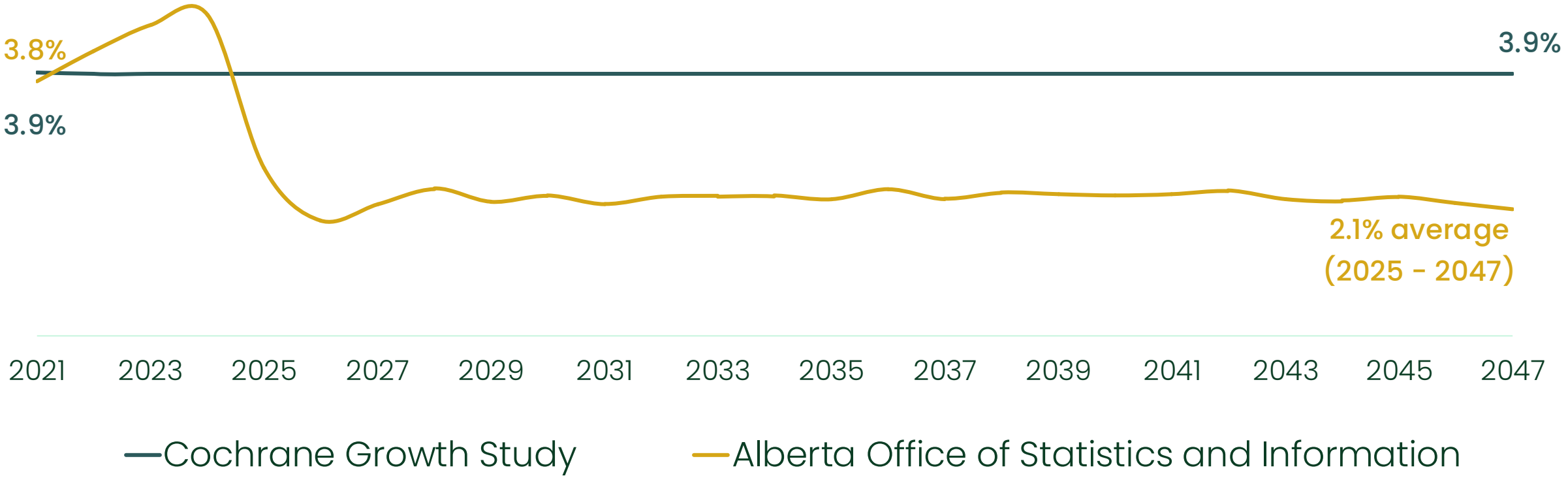
Projection Accuracy

- Projections rely on available datasets and are intended to forecast future population scenario(s) based on historical data trends or other assumptions
- Projections constantly change as assumptions shift
- Absolute accuracy is neither possible or expected
- Encourage reexamining assumptions as conditions evolve

Population Projection Differences



Population Growth Rate Differences





Housing Needs + Estimates

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Housing Need Estimates – 10-Year Need

Component	**2.1% Growth Rate** OSI 2025	**3.9% Growth Rate** Growth Study – High	
Unmet Housing Need	570		
Anticipated Household Growth	4,985	6,260	
Total	5,555	6,830	
Completions (2021-2025)	3,144		
Net Housing Need	**2,411 - 3,686**		+1,275
Average Annual Housing Need	**241 - 369**		+53%

Housing Need Estimates – Income + Bedroom

INCOME GROUP		VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE	MEDIAN	HIGH	TOTAL	%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME		<$25,000	$25,000–$54,999	$55,000–$89,999	$90,000–$134,999	$135,000+		
HOUSING UNIT SIZE	1-BED	335	735	705	590	525	2,890	52%
	2-BED	15	135	195	265	670	1,280	23%
	3-BED	5	105	140	225	460	935	17%
	4+BED	0	40	70	115	225	450	8%
	TOTAL	**355**	**1,015**	**1,100**	**1,195**	**1,880**	**5,555**	
	%	6%	18%	20%	22%	34%		

Housing Need Estimates – By Type

Housing Type		Deep Subsidy + Supportive Rental	Non-Market Rental	Market Rental	Ownership	Total
Monthly Affordable Housing Cost		<$625	$625 - $1,375	$1,376 - $3,500	>$3,500	
10-Year	#	290	590	575	4,100	**5,555**
	%	**5%**	**11%**	**10%**	**74%**	100%
20-Year	#	515	1,135	1,080	7,650	**10,380**
	%	**5%**	**11%**	**10%**	**74%**	100%



Moving Forward

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Housing Priorities

Priority 1: Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing	Address high levels of core housing need among low- and very-low-income households, particularly smaller households
Priority 2: Expand the Supply of Rental Housing	Address limited rental availability and reliance on secondary suites, contributing to instability among renters
Priority 3: Support Aging-in-Place + Housing Options for Older Adults, aligned with the Town's Age-Friendly Initiative	Address limited accessible, affordable, and supportive housing for an aging population
Priority 4: Address Housing Instability + Hidden Homelessness	Address increasing housing insecurity, both supports and limited pathways to acceptable housing
Priority 5: A More Balanced + Diverse Housing Mix	Address the mismatch between housing types being built and household sizes, considering income and life stages

Municipal Role in Housing

- Policy and regulatory tools
  - Municipal development plans and land use bylaws
- Incentives to support affordable housing
  - Streamline permitting process
  - Site relaxations, fee waivers, additional density, tax exemptions
- Municipal Partnerships
  - Partner with non-profit organizations, Indigenous groups, senior governments and/or private sector
  - Use of municipal land (land lease, donation, co-location with municipal facilities)

Affordable Housing

City of Airdrie Multi-Unit Incentives Pilot

Various incentives, including streamlined permitting to reduce delays and associated costs, as well as direct approval by a Development Officer to shorten decision timelines.

The program specifically targets four-storey mixed-use buildings and five-or-more-storey residential buildings.

Missing Middle

City of Red Red Deer Gentle Density

The City of Red Deer, AB recently amended its *Land Use Bylaw* to enable a broader range of gentle density housing forms, including duplexes.

These are now considered discretionary uses in low-density zones and permitted uses in medium-density zones.

Seniors Housing



City of Edmonton Kensington Village

Shephard's Care Kensington Campus comprises of a mix of continuing care spaces, independent senior rental units, privately owned condominiums.

Moving Forward

- The HNA focuses on key housing gaps to support residents at all stages of life
- The report provides a baseline that can be monitored over time as population trends shift and new data becomes available (federal Census to be released 2027)
- The HNA provides a strong evidence-based foundation for the Town's forthcoming Housing Strategy and Action Plan

Town of Cochrane Next Steps

- June 2026 - Council workshop to identify affordable housing priorities and strategic focus areas
  - Outcomes will inform the development of a Housing Strategy and Action Plan
  - Administration will continue advancing immediate housing initiatives and opportunities
- Q4 2026 – Tentative release of the Housing Strategy and Action Plan
  - Continue updating Council on progress of its implementation
- Q3 2027 - Housing Needs Assessment will be updated using 2026 Census data
  - Updated data will validate growth trends and future housing needs to support informed policy decisions



Thank You

Questions and Comments?

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