

Regional Growth Strategy Indicators Report 2024



Making a difference...together

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The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is a framework developed by municipalities and the regional district to address how communities will work together to enhance regional quality of life and social well-being. It is a requirement of provincial legislation.

The provincial government created the growth strategy legislation to “promote human settlement that is socially, economically and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources”.

The RGS also includes policies, actions and targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy was developed with significant public and stakeholder involvement and responds to the regional vision of a livable community that stewards the environment and natural resources with care.

The RGS Indicator Report

A robust monitoring program helps the region measure progress towards achieving RGS goals and objectives.

Wherever possible, indicators with data available on an annual basis were selected. However, for some indicators, information is only available through census data which is updated every five years.

How to use this report

For each indicator, four key questions are answered:

- What is being measured?
- Why is the indicator important?
- What is the target/desired trend?
- How are we doing?

Indicator performance is described relative to a goal or baseline year. However, it is important to note that changes in year-to-year performance do not always equate to a long-term trend.

While performance in any given year may be positive or negative, it may take many years of data to reliably identify a trend. Where possible, trend lines are included in the graphs to illustrate indicator trends.

Data updated for 2024

This report is based on data available for the 2023 reporting year (January to December 2023). In this reporting year, 13 of the 19 indicators were updated with new data.

This year, four indicators have seen changes to their performance meter (*see page 1*). Waste stream: solid waste disposal (2.2a) and vacancy rate by rental price quartiles (3.2c) have improved. The number of stormwater discharges with a high public health concern (2.1d) and average residential water consumption (2.2b) have worsened.

For this reporting year, the former indicator 3.1a, “Create Safe and Complete Communities”, was removed. This indicator was intended to track the percentage of the region living in complete communities as identified through Regional Context Statements. However, these statements did not contain sufficient quantitative information to develop a meaningful indicator.

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RGS INDICATORS – AT A GLANCE

1.0 Managing and Balancing Growth

1.1 Keep Urban Settlement Compact

1.1a Number of net new dwelling units in areas where more than 42% walk/bike/bus to work



1.1b Hectares added to the Urban Containment Policy Area (UCPA) growth boundary



1.2 Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

1.2a Percentage of net new dwellings built outside the UCPA



1.2b Net new dwelling units in East Sooke and Otter Point Official Community Plan (OCP) areas



2.0 Environment and Infrastructure

2.1 Protect, Conserve and Manage Ecosystem Health

2.1a Total Regional Park land acquired



2.1b Percentage of the Regional Trail Network completed



2.1c Compliance with Source Control Bylaw



2.1d Number of stormwater discharges with a high public health concern*



2.2 Deliver Services Consistent with RGS Objectives

2.2a Waste stream: solid waste disposal*



2.2b Average residential water consumption*



3.0 Housing and Community

3.2 Improve Housing Affordability

3.2a Reduce core housing need



3.2b Average rent for two-bedroom apartment



3.2c Vacancy rate by rental price quartiles*



3.2d Increase supply of affordable housing



4.0 Transportation

4.1 Improve Multi-Modal Connectivity and Mobility

4.1a Percentage of total trips made by walking, cycling and transit in the Growth Management Planning Area (GMPA)



5.0 Economic Development

5.1 Realize the Region's Economic Potential

5.1a Jobs to population ratio



6.0 Food Systems

6.1 Foster a Resilient Food and Agriculture System

6.1a Farm operating revenues in the GMPA



6.1b Average age of farmer



7.0 Climate Action

7.1 Significantly reduce community based greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

7.1a Community GHG emissions



 *indicates previous years performance rating

1.1a Number of net new dwelling units in areas where more than 42% walk/bike/bus to work



What is being measured?

This indicator tracks new dwelling units created in census Dissemination Areas where at least 42% of trips involve active transportation (walking, biking or taking transit).

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to keep urban settlement compact and directs new growth to be located where it can be efficiently serviced by transit and active transportation.

Target/Desired Trend

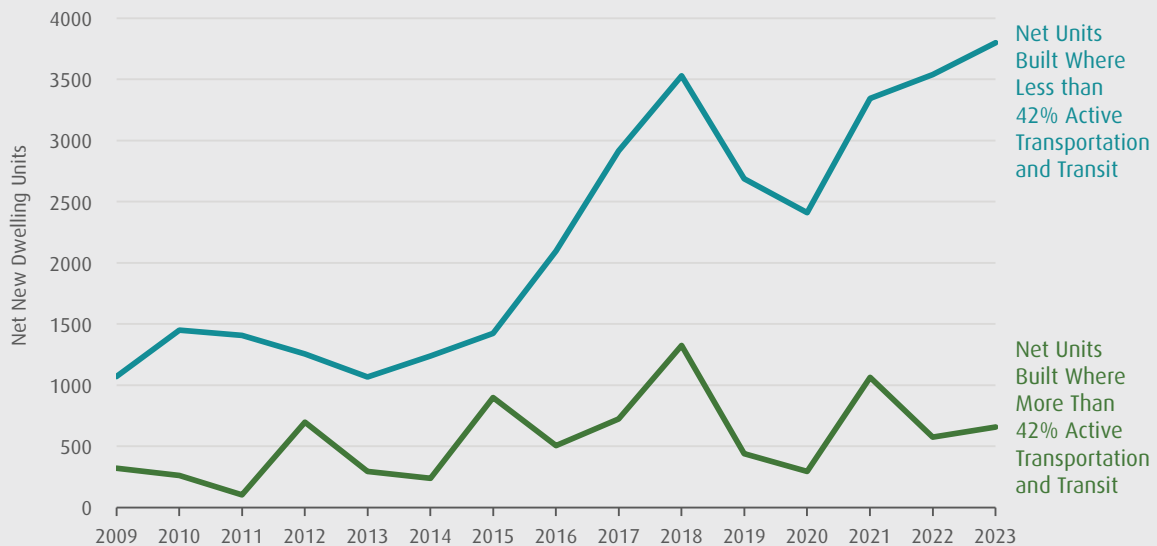
Place growth in areas conducive to walking, cycling and transit.

How are we doing?

Currently, we are not meeting the desired trend.

In the Growth Management Planning Area between 2012-2015, we saw as much as 30% of growth in net new dwelling units in areas with greater than 42% active transportation. In the last five years, 16% of growth in net new dwelling units was in areas with high active transportation.

BC Transit has adjusted its mode share target from 15% to 12%. Our target has been adjusted from 45% to 42% to reflect this change.



Source: CRD Building Permit Database and Statistics Canada Census of Population 2021

Areas with more than 42% walk/bike/bus to work

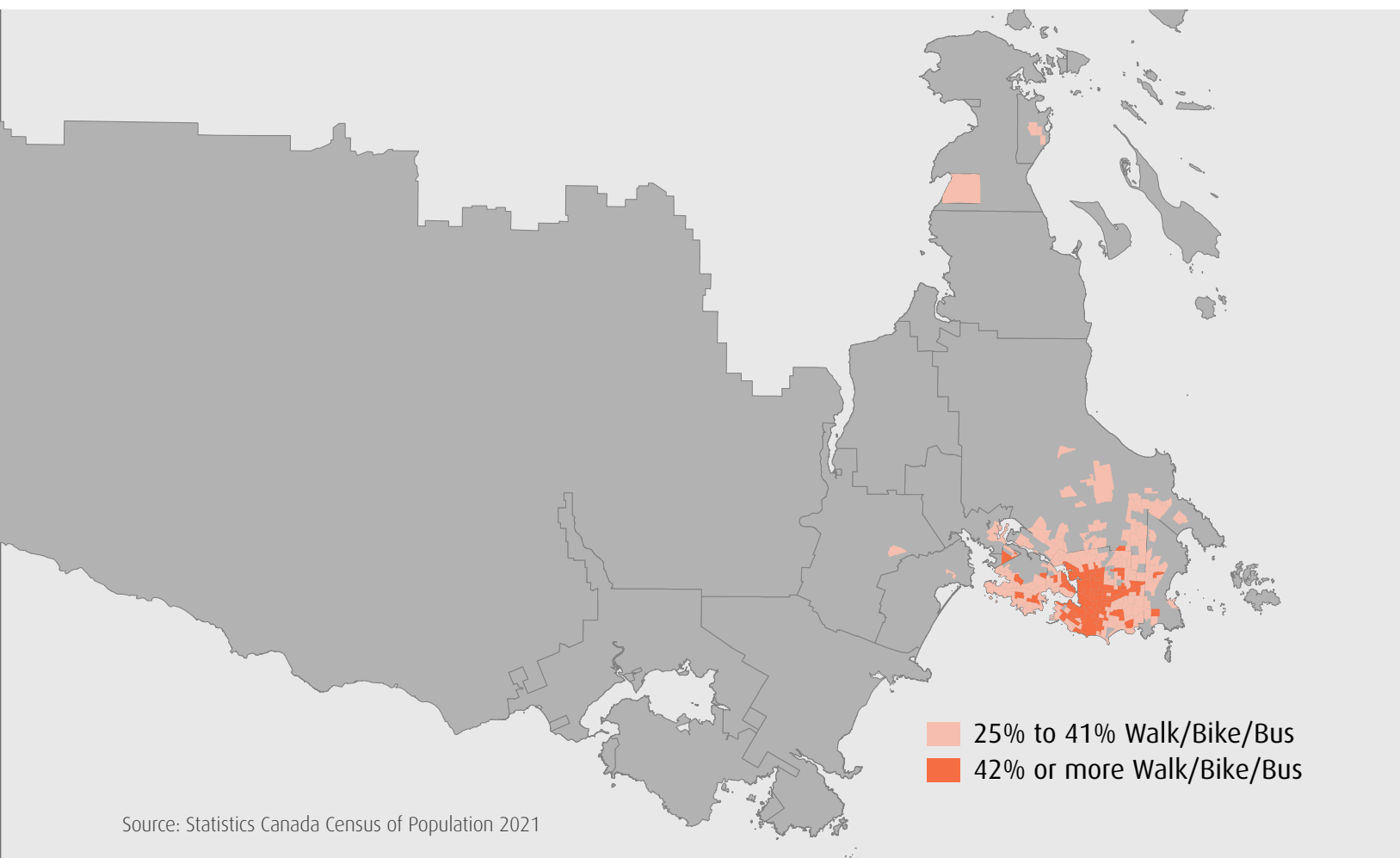
What does the map indicate?

This map shows census Dissemination Areas where more than 42% of residents walk, bike and bus to work, meeting the Regional Growth Strategy mode share target.

These areas are mostly located in the region's core in Victoria, and portions of Esquimalt, Oak Bay and Saanich.

Also provided for reference are the areas with between 25% to 41% walk/bike/bus to show locations that could meet the Regional Growth Strategy goal if further action was taken.

New growth in these areas is desirable as infrastructure and services are already in place to support high levels of active transportation and transit. As the region develops, the desired trend is to see more areas meeting the 42% target.



1.1b Hectares added to the Urban Containment Policy Area (UCPA) growth boundary



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the net change in the land area of the UCPA. The UCPA is intended to hold a land supply that will accommodate the region’s population and employment growth.

Why is this indicator important?

This indicator aligns with the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) objective to keep urban settlement compact. The RGS includes a policy that generally permits amendment to the UCPA only as an outcome of a comprehensive five-year review of the RGS.

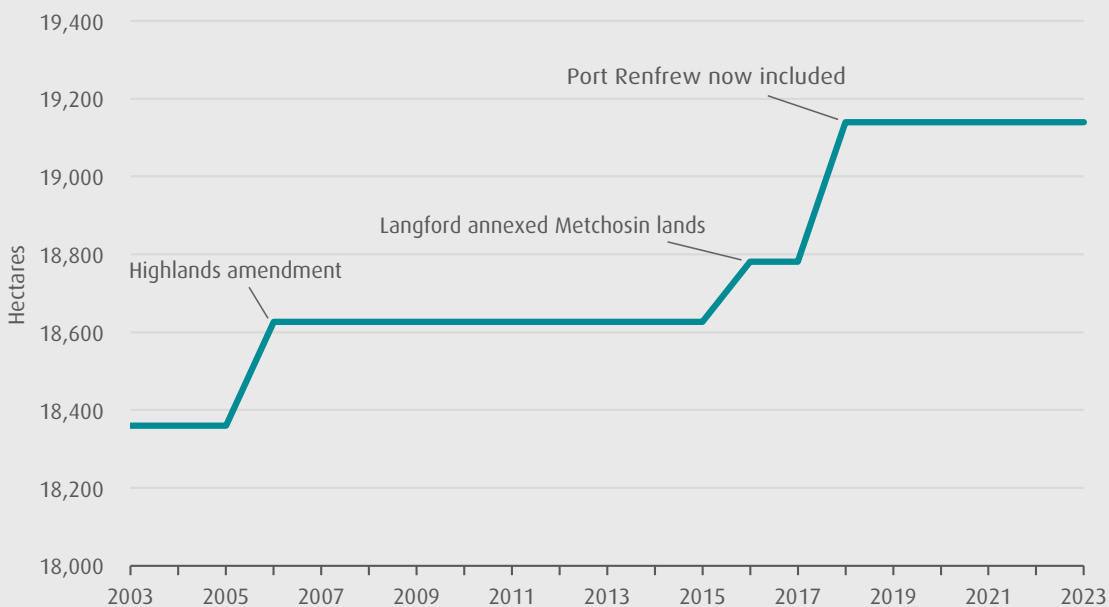
Target/Desired Trend

Minimize change to the UCPA from the date of adoption of the 2018 RGS.

How are we doing?

We are meeting the desired trend.

Since the March 2018 adoption of the RGS, there have been no changes to the UCPA.



Source: CRD Regional Planning



1.2a Percentage of net new dwellings built outside the Urban Containment Policy Area (UCPA)

What is being measured?

This indicator measures the annual share of net new dwelling units located outside the UCPA.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) aims to keep urban settlement compact and protect the integrity of rural communities.

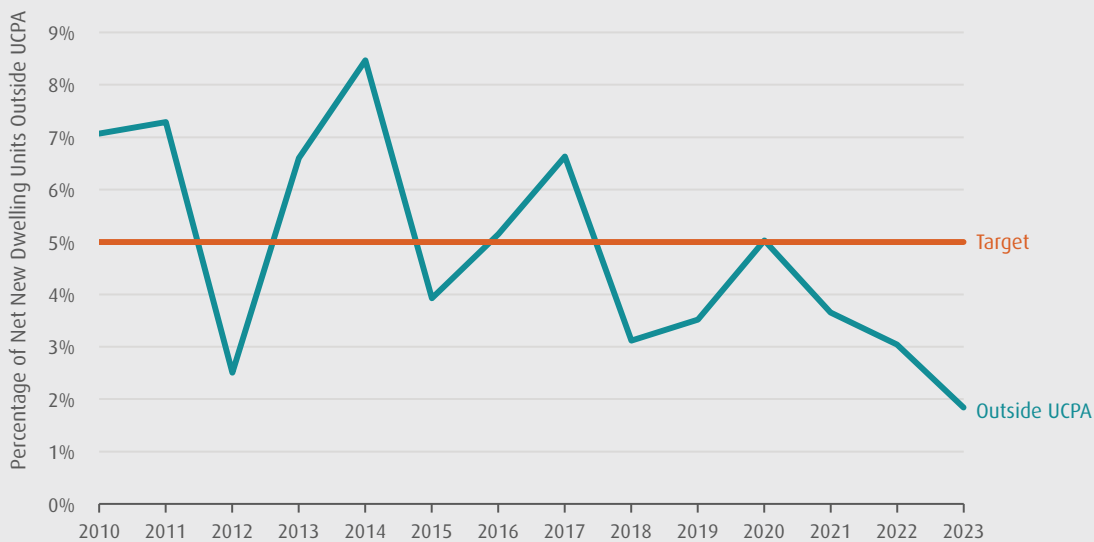
Target/Desired Trend

Accommodate a maximum of 5% of the region’s net new dwelling units outside the UCPA (for a minimum 95% of net new dwelling units within the UCPA, as per RGS target).

How are we doing?

We have exceeded the target.

In the past 10 years, the average percentage growth outside the UCPA has been 4.4%.



Source: CRD Building Permit Database

Net new dwellings built outside the UCPA, by location

What does the graph indicate?

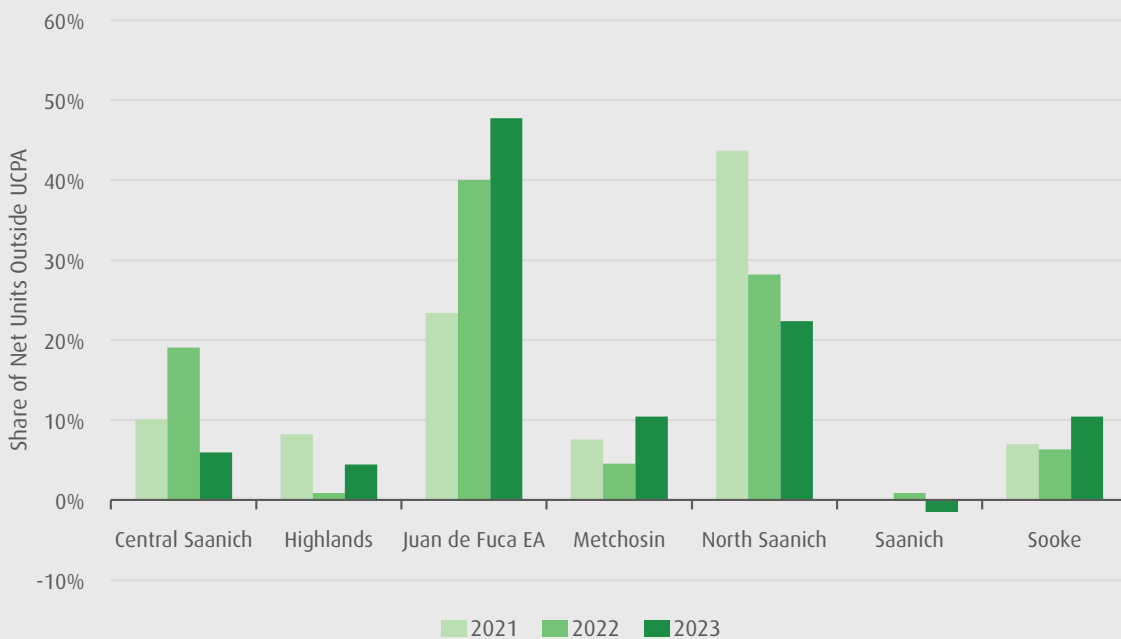
This graph shows the distribution of net new dwellings built outside the UCPA.

Only local governments that have land outside the growth boundary are included. Together these units make up the percentage of new units built outside the growth area.

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to keep urban settlement compact and protect the integrity of rural communities.

Local governments with land outside the growth boundary help achieve this goal through land use policy and decision making that avoids the creation of future urban areas.

Monitoring the distribution of net new dwelling units built outside the growth area provides insight on the performance of local government growth management policies.



Source: CRD Building Permit Database

1.2b Net new dwelling units in East Sooke and Otter Point Official Community Plan (OCP) areas



What is being measured?

This indicator measures annual net new dwelling units located in the East Sooke and Otter Point Official Community Plan (OCP) areas of the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy allows for the possible provision of water servicing in East Sooke and Otter Point and specifies the total number of existing and new units permitted within their OCPs.

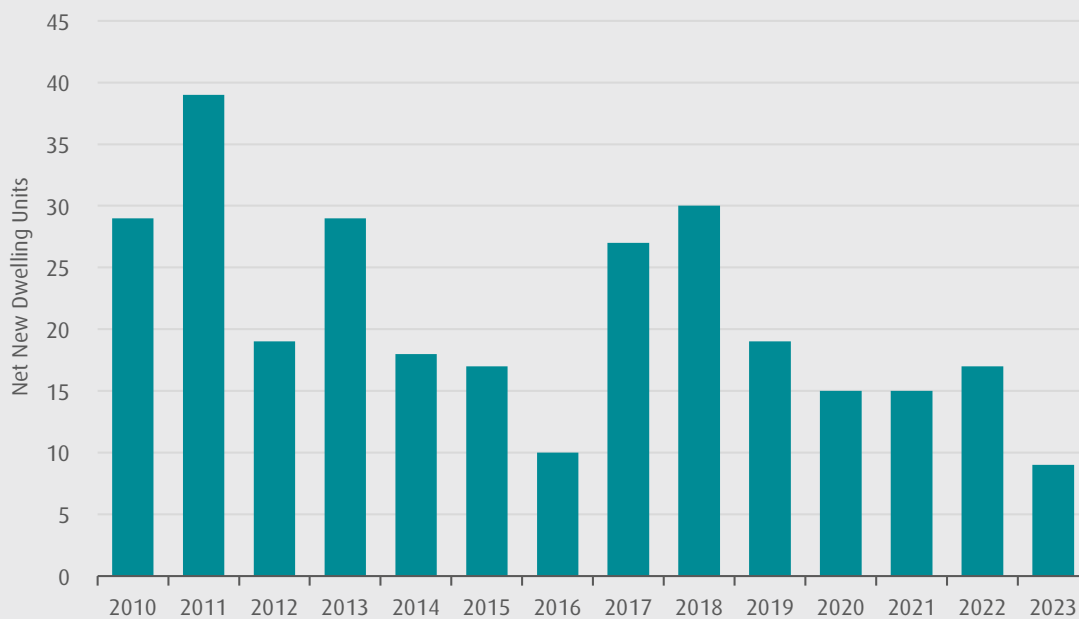
Target/Desired Trend

The total number of units in East Sooke and Otter Point is not to exceed 3,384 units. This includes both existing and new units.

How are we doing?

We are meeting the target.

As of 2023 there are 1,691 dwelling units in East Sooke and Otter Point, with an increase of nine units from 2022. There has been minimal expansion, with an average of 18 net new units per year over the past 10 years.



Source: CRD Building Permit Database

2.1a Total Regional Park land acquired



What is being measured?

This indicator tracks land protected as a Regional Park. Additionally, it shows the types of park land use and the distribution of land for conservation areas, wilderness areas and natural recreation areas. There is currently no land in conservancy areas as protection of natural and cultural features is a new area.

In previous indicator reports, the measure was the percentage of land acquired for the 1997 Sea-to-Sea Green/Blue Belt Strategy, which was largely completed by land acquisitions during 2000-2010.

With the new Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032, measuring the total amount of CRD park land is a better indicator of progress.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health. This indicator is important to show growth of CRD parks and the different types of functions they perform including water catchment, natural recreation and habitat conservation.

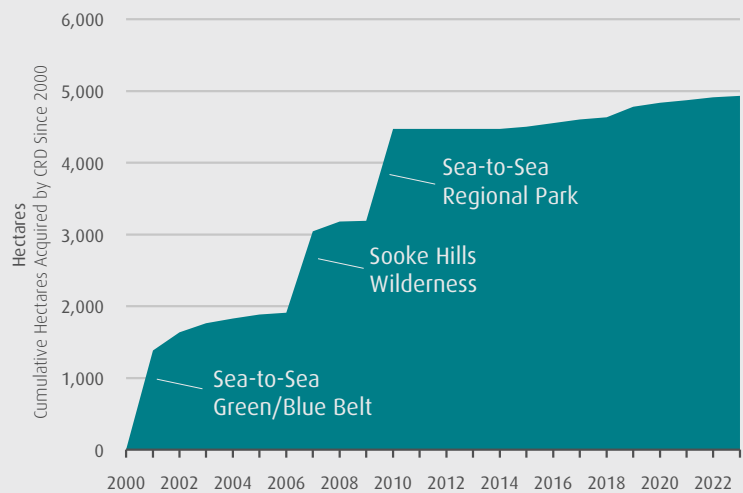
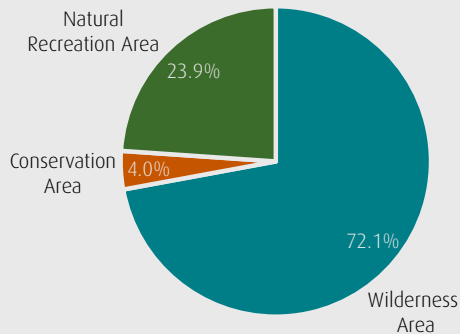
Target/Desired Trend

Continue to acquire park land.

How are we doing?

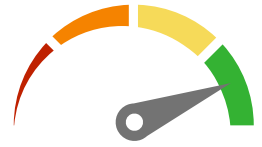
We are making steady progress acquiring regional park land according to CRD's Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy and the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

Total Park Area By Use Classification



Source: CRD Regional Parks

2.1b Percentage of the Regional Trail Network completed



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage of the Proposed Regional Trail Network (Galloping Goose, Lochside and E&N) that has been completed at the end of 2023.

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) targets is drawn from the 2022-2032 Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

Why is this indicator important?

The RGS aims to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health, and it also strives to improve multi-modal transportation connectivity. The Regional Trail Network represents an integrated trail, active transportation corridor and linear park system linking urban areas to rural green space which helps further both of these goals.

Target/Desired Trend

Complete 100% of the Regional Trail Network as identified in the 2022-2032 Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

How are we doing?

We are making good progress towards the target.

In 2023, 1.3 km of connector sections were added to the E&N, bringing the total to 97.5% of the proposed 100 kilometres of the Regional Trail Network have been completed.

In August of 2023, the CRD Board approved the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project. Work is underway on critical below-deck repairs to the Selkirk Trestle, with detailed design planned for 2025 and construction on the remainder of the project corridor set to begin in 2026.

97.5% of Regional Trail Network completed (2023)

Source: CRD Regional Parks

2.1c Compliance with Source Control Bylaw



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage of businesses in compliance with Source Control Bylaw standards. This pollution prevention initiative aims to reduce the amount of contaminants that industries, businesses, institutions and households discharge into the region’s sanitary sewer systems.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health. A high level of compliance reduces contaminants in fresh and marine regional waterways.

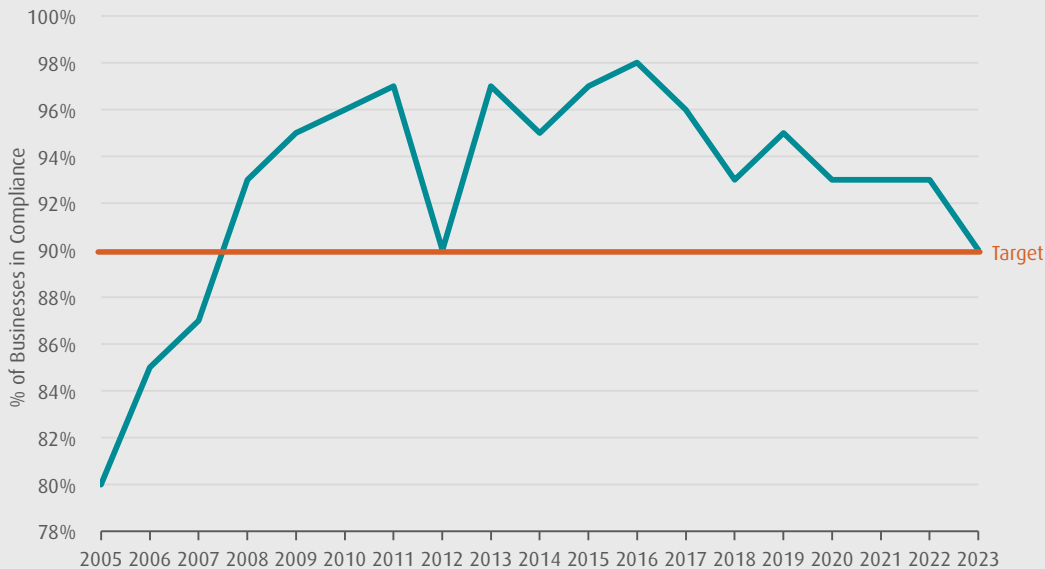
Target/Desired Trend

Maintain compliance of the standards established in the Source Control Bylaw at a rate of 90% or above.

How are we doing?

Though this indicator has dropped by 3% from 2022 to 2023, the rate is at our target of 90%.

We continue to observe high levels of compliance, successfully meeting our goal. Since 2020, inspection rates have steadily increased — rising by 18% between 2020 and 2022, followed by an additional 11% increase between 2022 and 2023. This heightened inspection coverage may have contributed to a slight decline in overall compliance.



Source: CRD Environmental Protection

2.1d Number of stormwater discharges with a high public health concern



What is being measured?

This indicator monitors the number of stormwater discharges with high public health concern.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health.

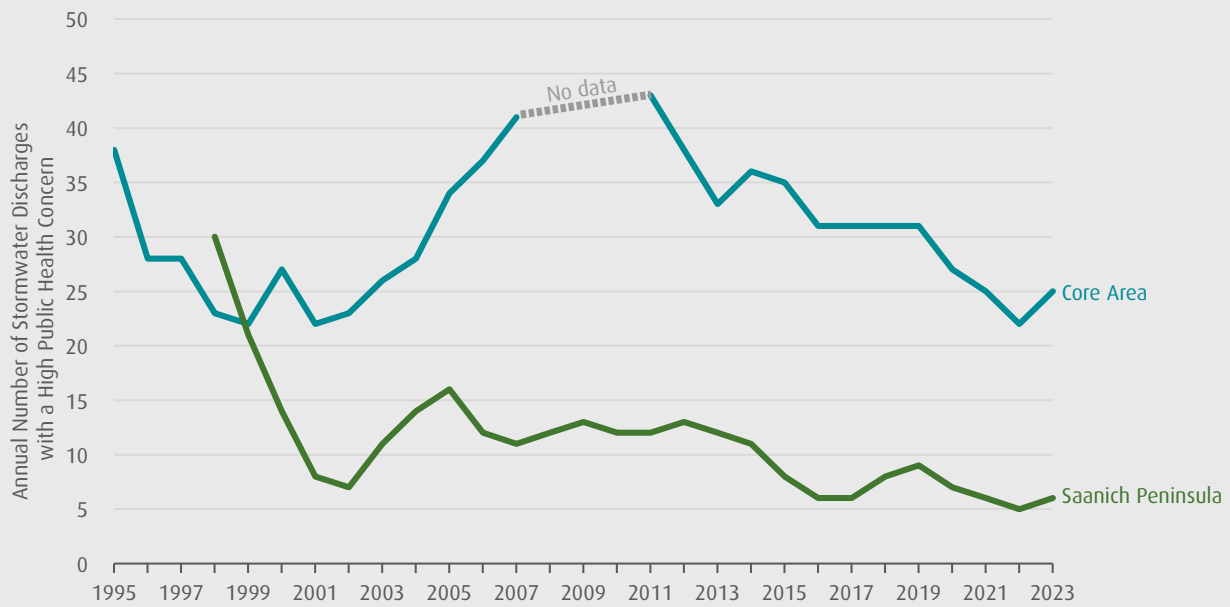
Target/Desired Trend

Reduced bacterial contamination to fresh and marine water bodies.

How are we doing?

The overall number of stormwater discharges with high public health concerns slightly increased from 2022 to 2023 in both the Core Area and the Saanich Peninsula. This marks its first increase in the Core Area since 2014 and on the Saanich Peninsula since 2019.

There were 25 discharges in the Core Area and six in the Saanich Peninsula in 2023.



Source: CRD Environmental Protection

2.2a Waste stream: solid waste disposal



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the per capita amount of solid waste disposed annually from both residential and non-residential sources.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to minimize the consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources through efficient use and responsible management.

Target/Desired Trend

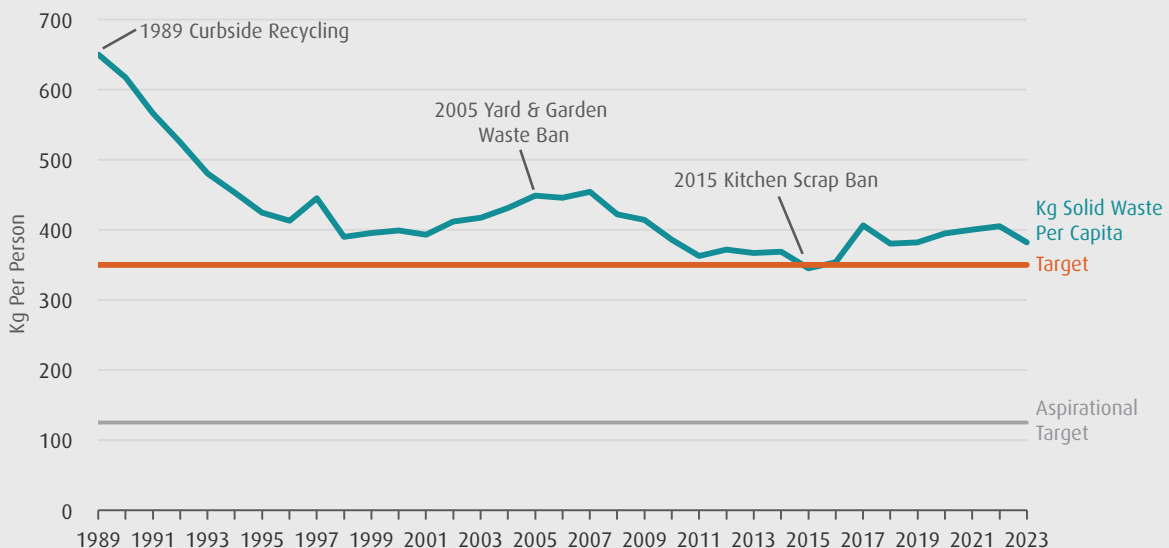
The Province’s guidelines for solid waste management planning require plans to have long-term goals to be achieved as an outcome of the plan.

One of the CRD’s Solid Waste Management Plan goals is to surpass the provincial per capita waste disposal target (350 kg/capita/year) and aspire to achieve a disposal rate of 125 kg/capita/year.

How are we doing?

Currently we are trending towards our goal. In 2023, the solid waste disposal rate decreased from 405 kg/capita to 382 kg/capita, bringing us closer to the 350 kg/capita goal, but not surpassing it.

We are significantly lower than the provincial average of 479 kg/person (2022). In 2023, the CRD Board approved significant Hartland Landfill policy changes. These changes were implemented in 2024 and are anticipated to reduce our per capita waste disposal numbers.



Source: CRD Environmental Resource Management

2.2b Average residential water consumption



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the average daily consumption of potable water per capita for residential uses.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to minimize the consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources through efficient use and responsible management.

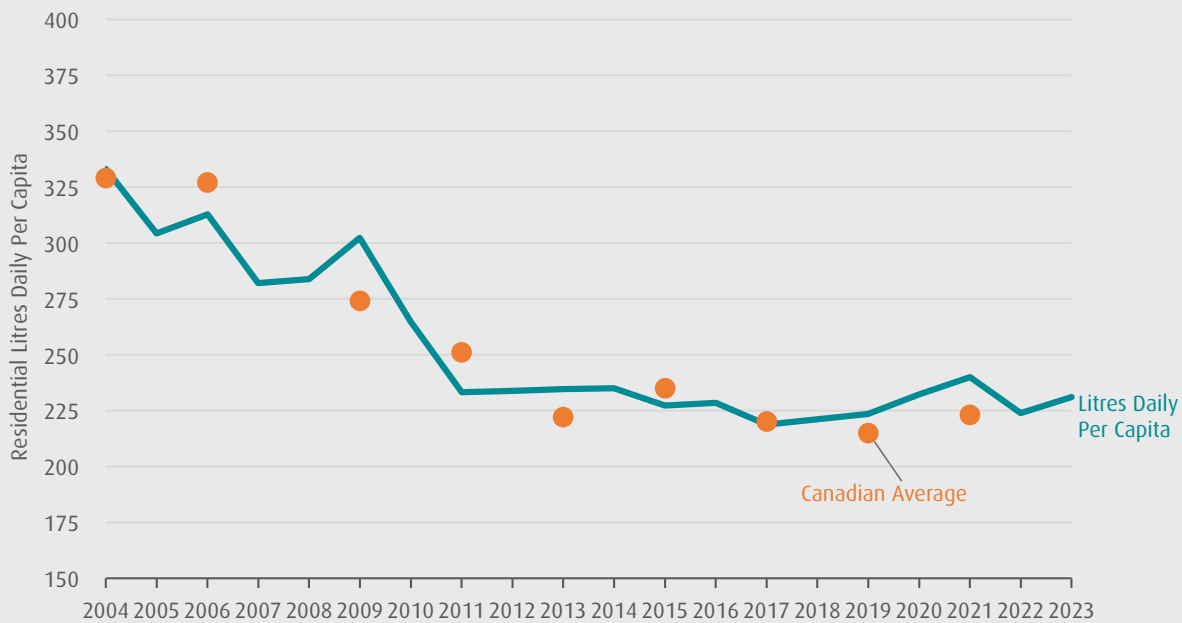
Target/Desired Trend

Decrease per capita consumption of potable water.

How are we doing?

Following a sizable reduction in per capita water consumption between 1995 to 2010 as a result of greater conservation and the introduction of efficient plumbing fixtures and appliances, rates have stabilized in the last 10 years around the Canadian average.

The average residential water consumption has increased from 2022 to 2023 by 7.2 litres daily per capita to a total of 231.1 litres daily per capita.



Source: CRD Integrated Water Services, 2004-2023 Environment Canada Municipal Water and Wastewater Survey 2011-2019 Statistics Canada Survey of Drinking Water Plants

3.2a Reduce core housing need



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage of households in core housing need.

A household in core housing need falls below at least one of the housing standards: adequacy (property does not require major repairs); affordability; or suitability (number of bedrooms match household size) and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent for housing that is acceptable.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to improve housing affordability.

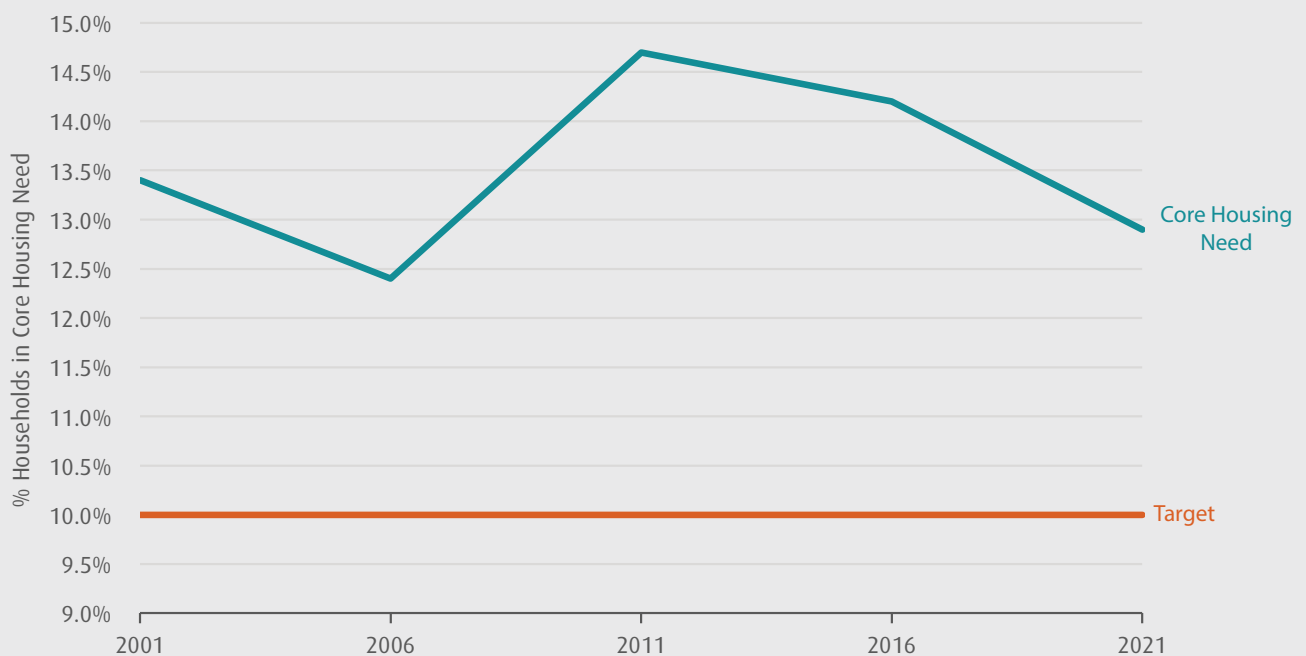
Target/Desired Trend

Reduce percentage of households in core housing need to 10%.

How are we doing?

The income measure used to calculate core housing need was from 2020. The percentage of Canadians living with low income saw the most significant decline in a five-year period since 1976. This was driven mainly by higher government transfers, especially pandemic-related benefits. These benefits primarily benefitted the working-age population, with the Canada Child Benefit helping parents and children (The Daily, Statistics Canada, July 13, 2022).

We are far from our target.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2001, 2006, 2016 and 2021 and National Household Survey, 2011

3.2b Average rent for two-bedroom apartment



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the average cost of two-bedroom rental housing in the Victoria Census Metropolitan Area (CMA).

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to improve housing affordability.

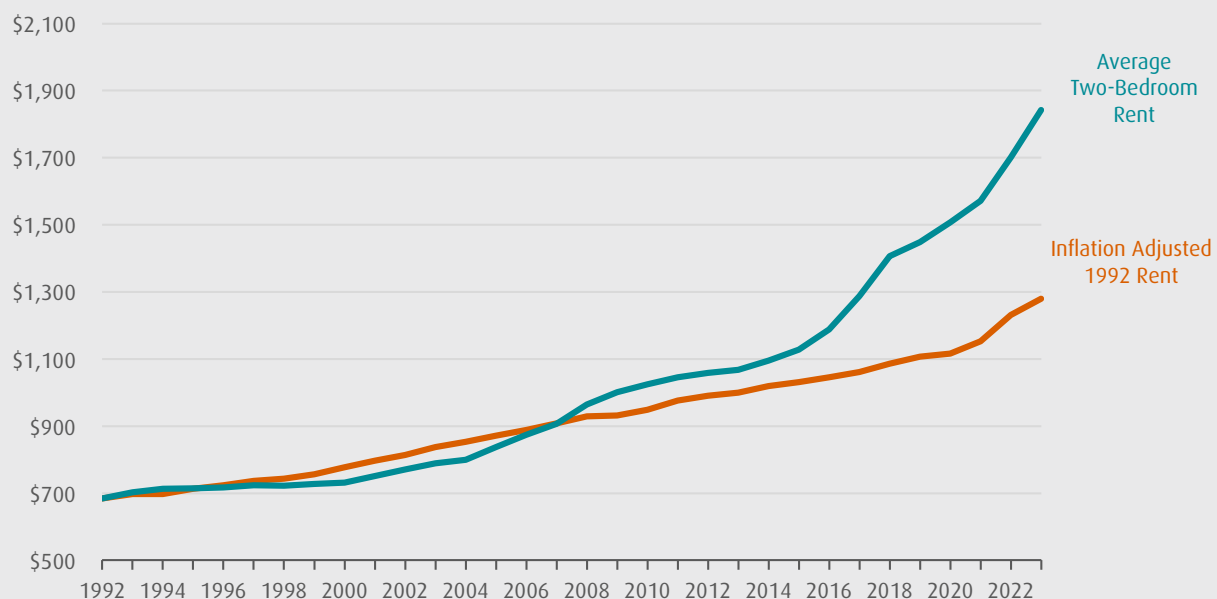
Target/Desired Trend

There is no target for the average cost of rental housing, however, cost increases at or below the level of inflation are preferable.

How are we doing?

We are currently not meeting the target.

The price of a two-bedroom rental has outpaced inflation since 2008. As of 2023, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Victoria CMA is \$1842, while the inflation adjusted rent would be \$1279.



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Market Survey

3.2c Vacancy rate by rental price quartiles



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the rental vacancy rate by rental price quartiles in the Victoria Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) over time.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to improve housing affordability in the region. The rental vacancy rate by rental price quartiles is an indicator of housing supply and housing affordability in the region.

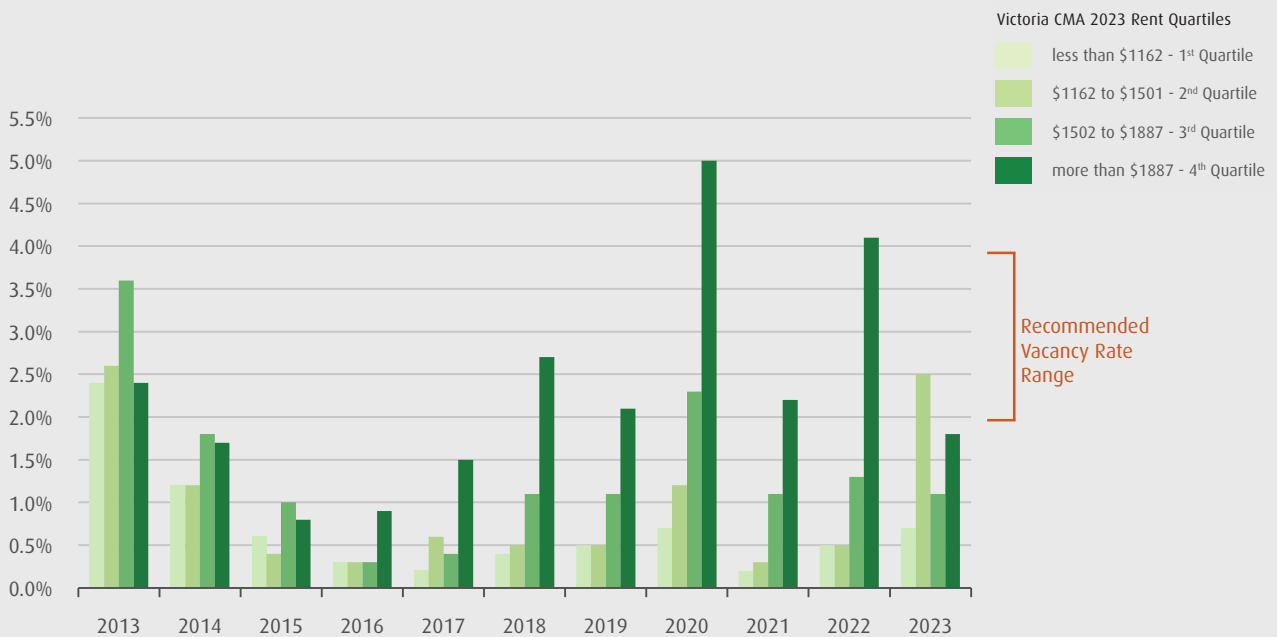
Target/Desired Trend

Higher vacancy rates across all prices are preferable. Recommended vacancy rates range between 2-4%.

How are we doing?

We are currently not meeting the desired trend. There has been a general trend of very low vacancy rates in the region, especially at the lower price quartiles.

However, there have been improvements this year. Data from 2023 indicates that the vacancy rate for Quartile 2, 2.5%, falls within recommended range for the first time since 2013, albeit at the low end. Quartile 1 has shown a modest improvement for three consecutive years.



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Market Survey

3.2d Increase supply of affordable housing



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the cumulative number of subsidized housing units in the Growth Management Planning Area (GMPA) that have a financial relationship with BC Housing. The units include emergency shelters, housing for the homeless, transitional and supported housing and assisted living, independent social housing and rent assistance in the private market.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to increase the supply of affordable housing and to reduce the number of people who are experiencing homelessness.

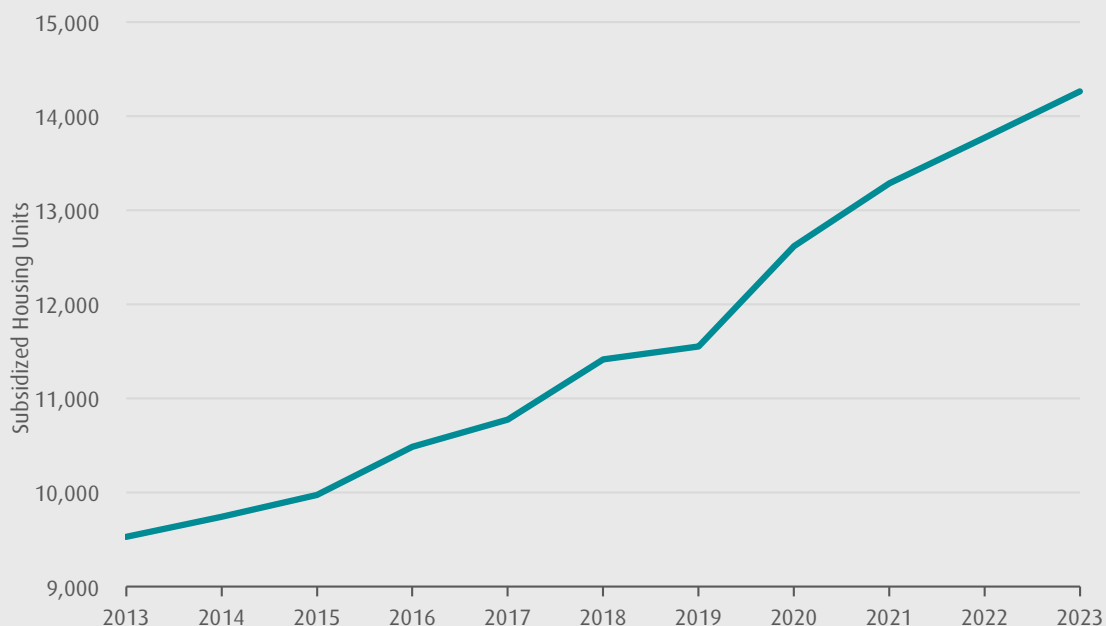
Target/Desired Trend

Increase the cumulative number of subsidized housing units that have a financial relationship with BC Housing.

How are we doing?

Progress continues to trend in a positive direction. As of March 31, 2023 there were 14,262 subsidized housing units in the GMPA, representing an increase of 490 units in this reporting period.

At the same time, despite these gains, a continued increase in the supply of affordable housing is required to meet the needs of the region



Source: BC Housing's Research & Corporate Planning Department Unit Count Report March 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023

4.1a Percentage of total trips made by walking, cycling and transit in the Growth Management Planning Area (GMPA)



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage of total trips made by walking, cycling and transit in the Growth Management Planning Area.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to improve multi-modal connectivity and mobility. Mode share percentages provide the necessary data to track transportation choices over time.

Target/Desired Trend

Achieve a transportation system that sees 42% of all trips made by walking, cycling and transit by 2038.

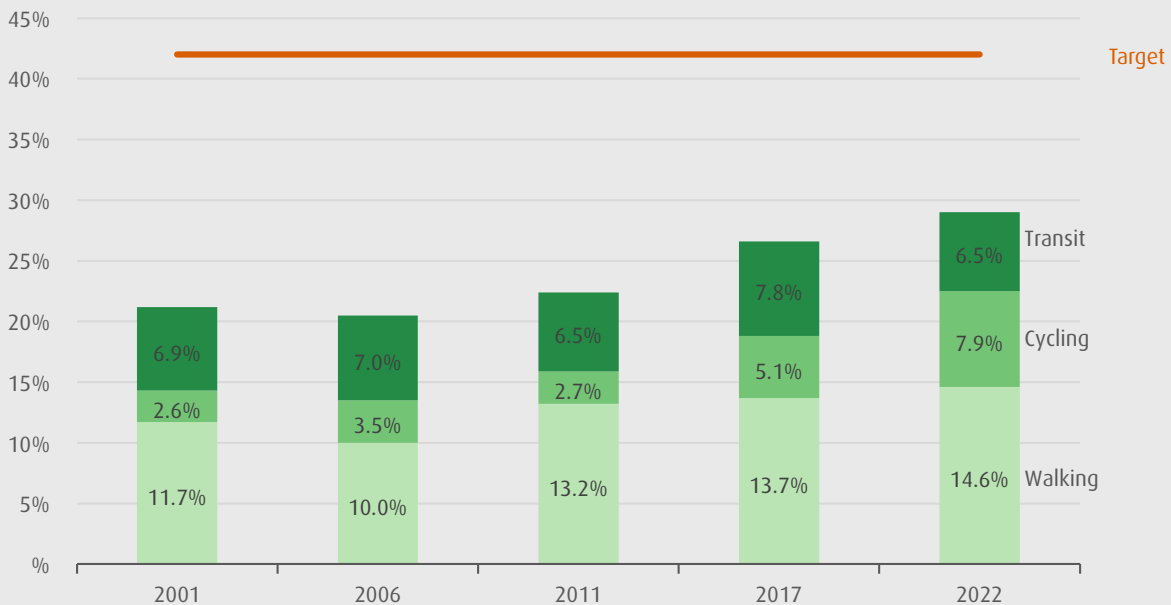
This target has been revised from 45% to 42% of all trips to align with BC Transit's revised 12% mode share target from 15%.

How are we doing?

Progress is being made toward the target.

The overall active transportation mode share has increased due to a sizeable increase in cycling trips and a steady increase in walking.

There is no data update for this year, as the Origin Destination Household Travel Survey will not be updated until 2027.



Source: CRD Origin Destination Survey 2001, 2006, 2011, 2017, 2022

Percentage of total trips made by walking, cycling, and transit in the GMPA

What does the graph indicate?

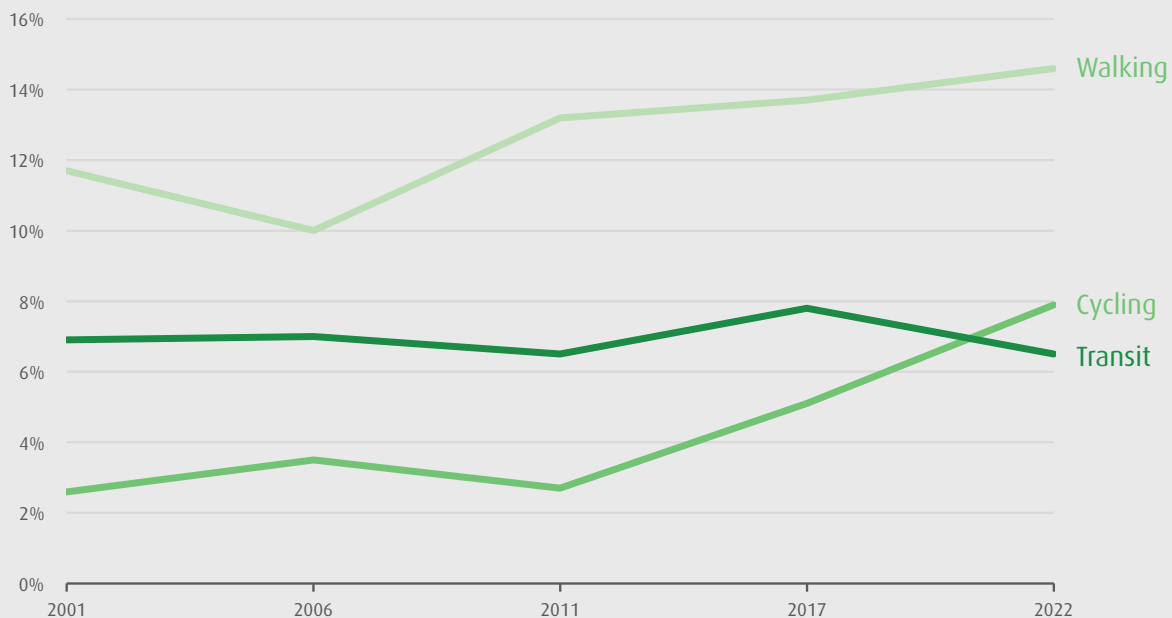
This line graph is another way to visualize the information presented in the stacked bar chart.

Rather than depicting the combined total of each mode, this graph depicts the individual contributions of walking, cycling, and transit towards achieving our goal.

The GMPA's walking and cycling mode shares have improved significantly over time. Cycling has increased threefold since 2001, particularly accelerating between 2011 and 2022.

Walking mode share has also seen a positive trend over time and has increased by 46% since 2006.

Transit mode share has remained largely static the past 20 years. It should be noted that the latest survey was conducted in 2022 and the pandemic impacted ridership. We will be closely monitoring the transit mode share in the 2027 Origin Destination Household Travel Survey.



Source: CRD Origin Destination Survey 2001, 2006, 2011, 2017, 2022

5.1a Jobs to population ratio



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the ratio of employment to population in each Capital Regional District sub-region.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to realize the region’s economic potential. A balanced distribution of employment and jobs indicates economic opportunities spread across the region.

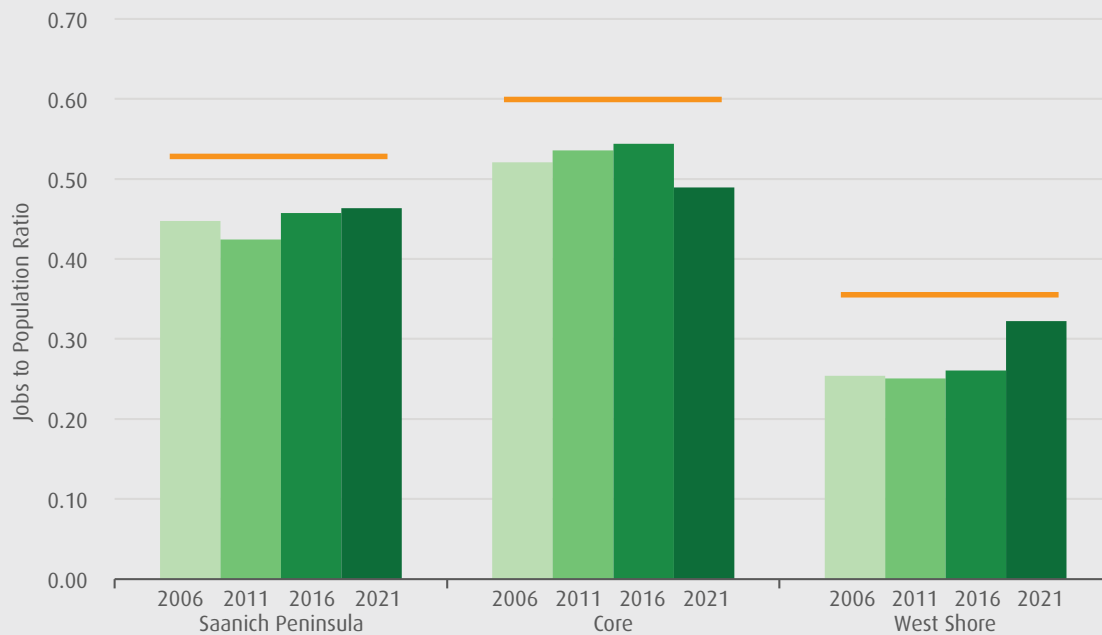
Target/Desired Trend

Achieve a jobs to population ratio of:

- 0.53 in the Saanich Peninsula
- 0.60 in the Core Area
- 0.36 in the West Shore

How are we doing?

Data from the 2021 census show a pattern of employment shifting from the core, which has historically maintained the highest job to population ratio to the West Shore which has had the lowest ratio. This trend may be influenced by the shift to working from home brought about due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no data update this year as the next Census will be conducted in 2026.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of population, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021, Place of Residence and Place of Work Tables

6.1a Farm operating revenues in the Growth Management Planning Area (GMPA)



What is being measured?

Incorporated farms and communal farming organizations with total farm operating revenues equal to or greater than \$25,000, as well as unincorporated farms with total farm operating revenues of \$10,000 and over. As of 2020, a farm is defined as an operation that produces at least one agricultural product and reports revenue and expenses to the Canada Revenue Agency. Prior to 2020, a farm was defined based on its intention to sell agricultural commodities.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) aims to foster a resilient food and agricultural system. Tracking operating revenues is a way to report on the productivity of the region's farms.

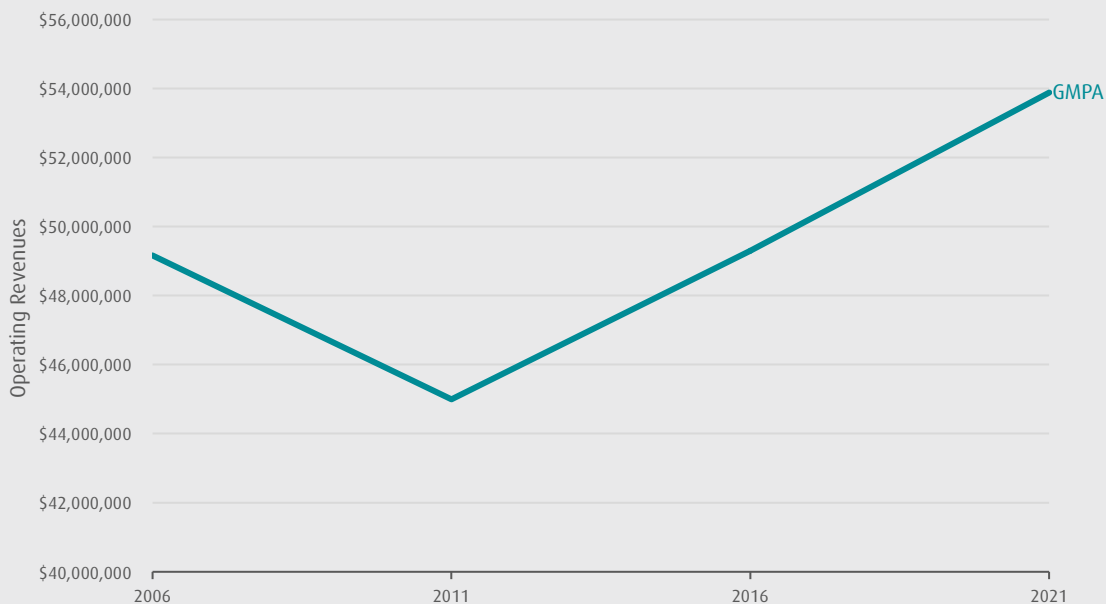
Target/Desired Trend

Increase the operating revenues.

How are we doing?

Food systems were added to the RGS in 2018. This indicator initially tracked hectares of farmland in the GMPA, however the 2021 census data wasn't available for our region due to poor data quality.

This new indicator on operating revenues from the Census of Agriculture is derived from administrative records. Caution should be used when comparing data from 2021 with prior years as operating revenues and expenses use an updated definition and different sources than previous Censuses of Agriculture. There is no data update this year as the next Census will be conducted in 2026.



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation of Census of Agriculture 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

6.1b Average age of farmer



What is being measured?

This indicator measures the average age of farm operators.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to foster a resilient food and agricultural system. A higher average age of farmers represents a warning sign for the future of food production in the region.

Target/Desired Trend

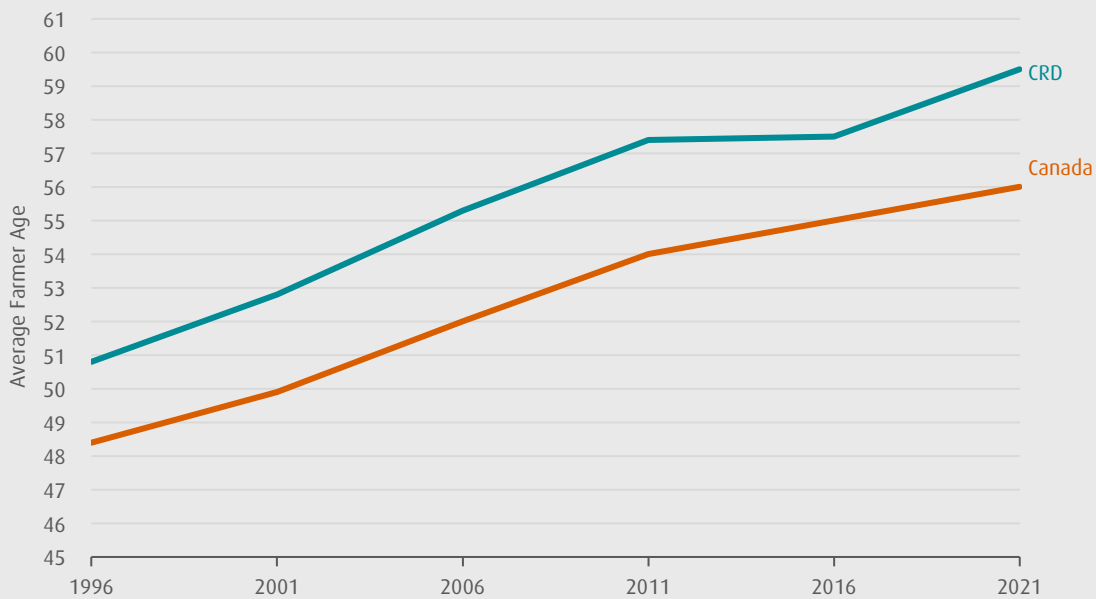
A lower average age of farmers is desirable.

How are we doing?

Progress toward this target remains static. The average age of farmers in the region remains higher than the Canadian average.

In February 2025, the Regional Foodlands Access Service was established with the goal of supporting new and young farmers entering the field.

There is no data update this year as the next Census will be conducted in 2026.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

7.1a Community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions



What is being measured?

Community GHG emissions.

This GHG inventory represents the best available information. Following the BASIC+ Global Protocol for Community-Scale GHG emissions (GPC), the scope of emissions includes: stationary energy (e.g., buildings, construction, energy industry), transportation, waste, industrial process and product use, agriculture, forestry and other land use.

Why is this indicator important?

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to significantly reduce community GHG emissions.

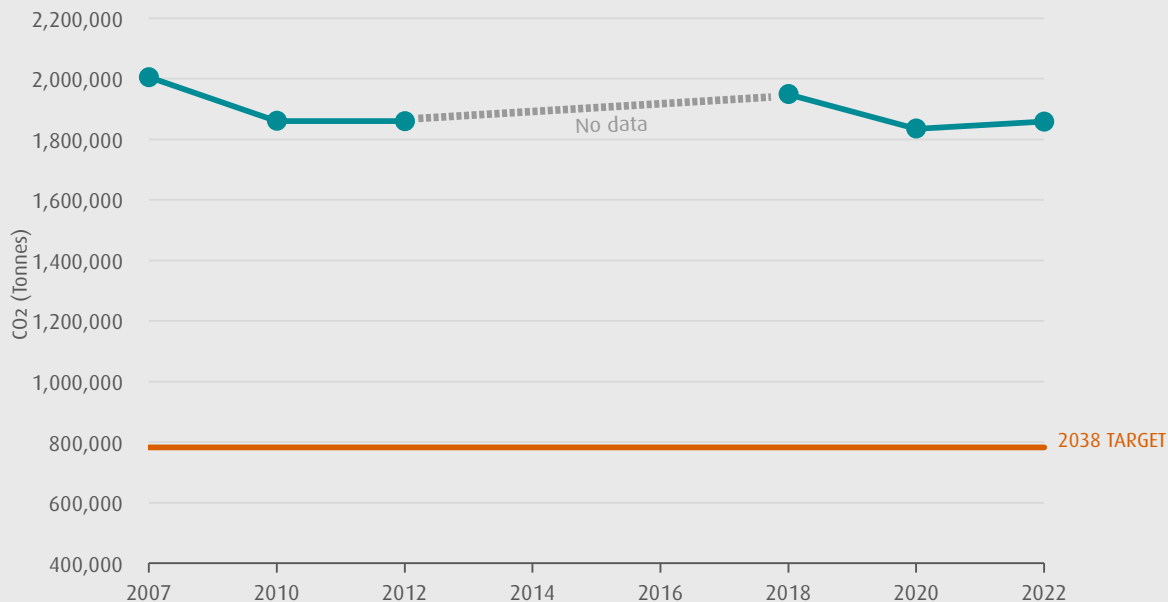
Target/Desired Trend

Decrease community GHG emissions by 33% from 2007 levels by 2020 and 61% by 2038.

How are we doing?

In 2022, the Capital Regional District's (CRD) annual GHG emissions totalled approximately 1.86 million tonnes, which represents a 7% decline from the 2007 base year GHG emissions, and a 1% increase from 2020.

Together, building and transportation-related carbon pollution continue to be the largest sources of the region's carbon pollution, (approximately 75%) in 2022. On a per capita basis there has been a decline of 25% between 2007 and 2022. This speaks to the efforts the CRD, local, provincial and federal governments have made to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions. However, the current trend suggests that we will not meet the target by 2038 unless greater effort is made. CRD Climate Action is conducting an update in 2025.



Source: CRD 2022 Greenhouse Gas Protocol BASIC+ Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report



CRD

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