

TOWN OF GOLDEN Community Profile

JANUARY 2026



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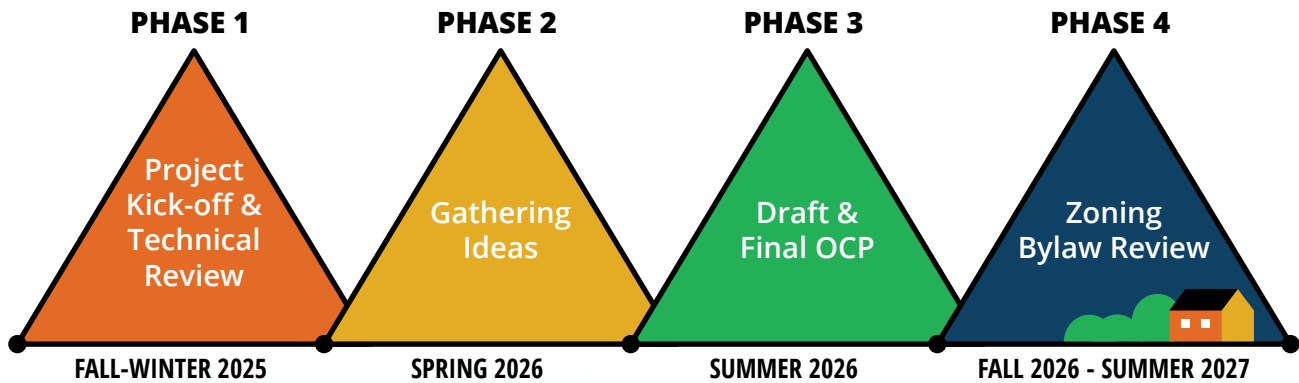


Project Overview

This Community Profile supports the Town of Golden’s Official Community Plan (OCP) update project. Golden is updating its OCP and Zoning Bylaw, as the current OCP was adopted in 2008. Over the past 17 years, some amendments have been made, including policies for short-term rentals, an additional development permit policy for the highway corridor, and a few site-specific land use changes (e.g., Kaur, Francophone School).

The OCP needs to be updated to better reflect current community needs and priorities. The Town is looking to update the OCP in a way that makes it accessible, sensible, and articulates and defines the Town’s next period of growth and development.

The goal is to complete the OCP update and adopt it by summer 2026. The Zoning Bylaw will be updated starting in the fall of 2026.



WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

An OCP is a provincially mandated regulatory document that provides policies on a broad range of topics, including housing, transportation, parks, infrastructure and climate change. OCPs designate land for specific purposes, such as commercial, residential, and parks, and establish general policies that guide land use and development. While an OCP doesn't commit the Town of Golden to proceed with any specific project, all subsequent bylaws and decisions made by Council must be consistent with the updated OCP. It is one of the most important planning documents for a community.

Municipalities in British Columbia are given the authority to adopt an OCP through the Local Government Act (LGA), which describes what must be included in the OCP, what is optional, and what steps need to be followed for the OCP to be adopted. Once adopted, an OCP serves as a foundation for all policies, regulations and decisions pertaining to land use and development in a municipality.

The Town's Zoning Bylaw is a key document that implements the OCP by regulating land use and density. Every property in the Town of Golden has a legal zoning classification specifying the types of uses or activities that can take place on that property. It also outlines the height of buildings, minimum distances separating buildings and property lines, the amount of off-street parking required, as well as other requirements.

RECENT PLANS AND STUDIES

This Community Profile reviewed reports and data from the Town of Golden, provincial sources, and other relevant studies and reports produced by various organizations. Several recent reports and studies from Golden included the following.

- **Development-related Off-site Infrastructure Capital Cost Recovery Guide (2025)**
Development can require construction or upgrade of significant offsite infrastructure and may need alternative financing tools. This Guide describes alternative tools and the circumstances under which their use is appropriate.
- **Town of Golden Housing Needs Strategy (2025)**
Assesses the community's existing housing need, while providing projections for household growth and need over a 20-year period, starting from 2021 and extending to the end of 2041.
- **Integrated Water Strategy (2025)**
This comprehensive report provides an assessment of the existing water system, projections for future growth, and recommendations for necessary upgrades.
- **Sanitary Sewer Model and Master Plan (2025)**
Assesses Golden's existing and future sanitary demands and their impact on the sanitary sewer infrastructure to help manage the Town's sanitary sewer assets and guide decision-making in determining future capital works or operational requirements.
- **Resort Development Strategy 2025-2027 (2024)**
Outlines a three-year strategy and resort municipality infrastructure projects to be supported through resort municipality funding.



- **Tourism Golden Association Annual Report (2024)**
Tourism Golden is a non-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) that represents tourism stakeholders (accommodations, activity operators and attractions) and is funded through the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT). The annual report summarizes the performance of Golden as a tourism destination.
- **Council Strategic Priorities and Municipal Objectives 2024-2026 (2023)**
Council's Strategic Priorities represent the municipal goals and objectives set by Town Council that the Town of Golden will work towards delivering.
- **Golden Area Community Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 (2021)**
Developed by Golden CED and funded by the Province, the strategy is meant to help guide economic development in Golden over a five-year period.



Local Context

LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY

Nestled at the confluence of the Columbia and Kicking Horse Rivers between the Purcell mountain range and the Rocky Mountains to the east, Golden occupies a distinctive place in southeastern B.C.'s Columbia Valley. Its strategic location along the Trans-Canada Highway serves as both a major transportation corridor and a gateway to the Canadian Rockies and six national parks. For residents, this means exceptional access to nature, recreation, and economic opportunities, while for visitors, Golden is a renowned base for outdoor adventures including Kicking Horse ski resort which is located immediately to the east of the town.

HISTORY

Golden sits on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Ktunaxa Nation and is closely connected to the Secwépemc and Métis communities. The Ktunaxa, whose stewardship of the land predates European settlement by millennia, retain profound cultural, spiritual, and ecological bonds with the Columbia Valley.

Métis families, long active in fur trading and transportation, have played a formative role since the 19th century. Today, Golden's local government and community organizations are striving to build relationships with First Nations and seek opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

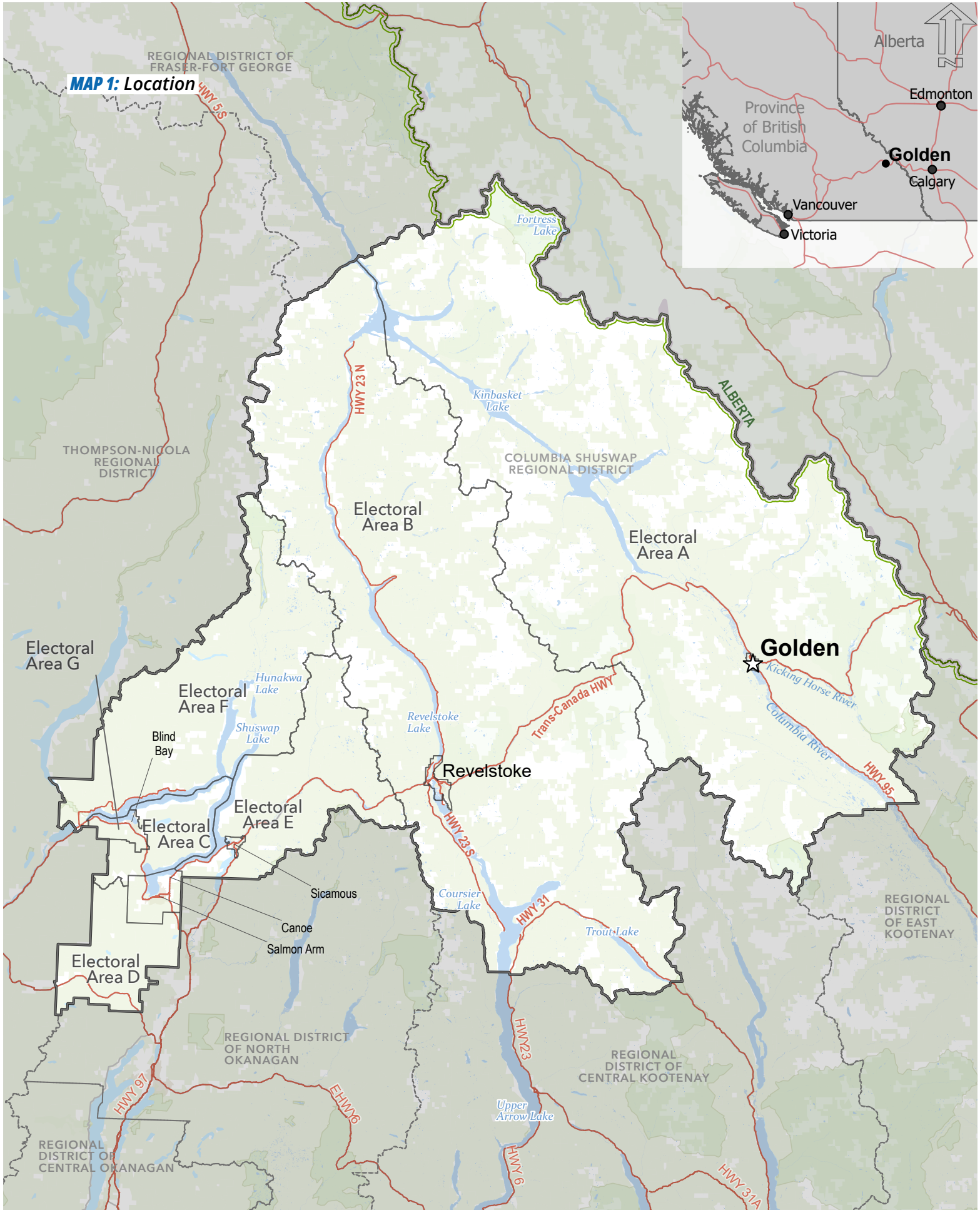
These Indigenous communities utilized the Columbia River and the surrounding valleys for sustenance and cultural activities. Their stewardship and ancestral connections to the land remain an integral part of Golden's heritage.

European exploration commenced in the early nineteenth century, notably with figures such as David Thompson traversing the Columbia River. The area's proximity to key geographic corridors facilitated its emergence as a natural site for settlement and subsequent development.

A pivotal period in Golden's history ensued in the 1880s with the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). In 1882, the CPR established a construction camp at the confluence of the Columbia and Kicking Horse rivers, initially referred to as "The Cache." The settlement was subsequently renamed "Golden City" by William A. Baillie-Grohman, a British entrepreneur intent on rivaling Silver City. The name was later abbreviated to "Golden." The presence of the railway catalyzed population growth, economic diversification, and infrastructural advancement.

MAP 1: Location

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF FRASER-FORT GEORGE



Golden's early economy was predominantly shaped by forestry, mining, and transportation. The town's abundant forest resources supported the proliferation of sawmills and logging operations, while nearby mountains enabled mining activity. The CPR's influence was instrumental in connecting Golden to broader commercial networks, facilitating the movement of goods and people.

The evolution of Golden's tourism industry has been a defining feature of the town's modern history. Encompassed by six national parks—Yoho, Glacier, Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Mount Revelstoke—Golden has established itself as a premier destination for outdoor recreation. The completion of the Trans-Canada Highway in the 1960s markedly improved access, leading to increased visitation and the growth of tourism-related enterprises.

In the early 2000s, the development of Kicking Horse Mountain Resort significantly expanded Golden's appeal to year-round visitors, providing world-class opportunities for skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, and hiking. The community has invested in amenities and infrastructure to support this growth, including accommodations, dining establishments, events, and guided adventure services. Tourism now constitutes a cornerstone of Golden's economy, contributing both to employment and community vitality.

Golden was designated as a Resort Municipality in 2007. This distinction recognizes communities with a substantial commitment to tourism and a demonstrated capacity to attract visitors from both domestic and international markets. As a Resort Municipality, Golden is eligible for additional provincial funding and support earmarked for tourism-related infrastructure, beautification projects, and marketing initiatives.

This designation carries both opportunities and responsibilities. It enables the Town to invest in enhancements to public spaces, transportation networks, and community amenities that serve tourists and residents alike. Furthermore, the status encourages the adoption of sustainable tourism practices and long-term strategic planning to ensure the continued growth and resilience of the local tourism sector.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Golden is located within Electoral Area 'A' of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD). The CSRD provides a range of regional services to Golden, either directly or in partnership with the Town's own municipal government. Key services include:

- **Solid Waste Management:** The CSRD operates the Golden Landfill and provides recycling and waste diversion programs serving both the Town and the surrounding rural area.
- **Recreation:** The CSRD supports regional recreational facilities and programs, including owning the Golden & District Recreation Centre (arena) and contributes to the Mount 7 Rec Plex.
- **Regional Libraries:** The CSRD contributes to the provision of library services in the region, including support for the Golden branch of the Okanagan Regional Library (owns the building).



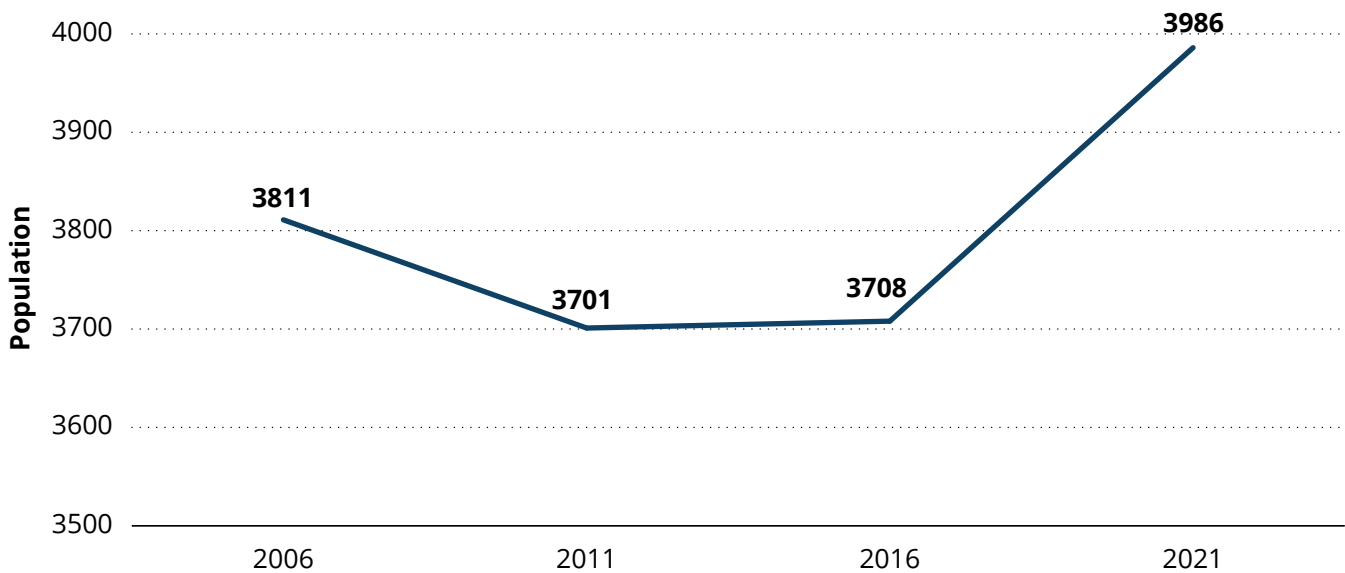
According to the most recent data available from Statistics Canada, Electoral Area 'A' has a population of approximately 3,500 residents (2021 Census). The area's population is distributed among rural households, small communities, and seasonal dwellings. The demographic profile is diverse, with a mix of families, retirees, and seasonal workers, especially those involved in tourism, forestry, and agriculture. Population growth in Electoral Area 'A' has been steady, reflecting both natural increase and migration from other parts of B.C. and Canada. Many residents are attracted by the rural lifestyle, proximity to nature, and access to amenities in nearby Golden.

Many residents of Electoral Area 'A' depend on Golden for employment, shopping, and services. The town acts as the commercial and service hub for the surrounding rural area, including healthcare, education, and recreation facilities. Many students living in the rural area attend schools in Golden, and residents regularly travel to the town for health care and other needs.

Population and Demographics

According to a recently completed Housing Needs Assessment, the population of Golden has remained relatively stable from 2006 to 2021, growing from 3,811 residents to 3,986, which represents a 5% increase over this period. Though the population decreased slightly between 2006 and 2011, the population subsequently increased again from 3,708 to 3,986 between 2016 and 2021.

FIGURE: Total Population, Town of Golden, 2006 to 2021



Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

In 2021, 1,734 of 1,892 housing units (92%) were occupied by usual residents. As a resort municipality that has worked to manage short-term rentals over the years, this illustrates that at least 8% of the housing stock is not occupied by long-term residents. It is important to note that all census data analyzed in the 2025 Housing Needs Report represent responses from households that indicate Golden as their “usual place of residence”. Therefore, the data is not representative of people who own a vacation/second home in Golden.

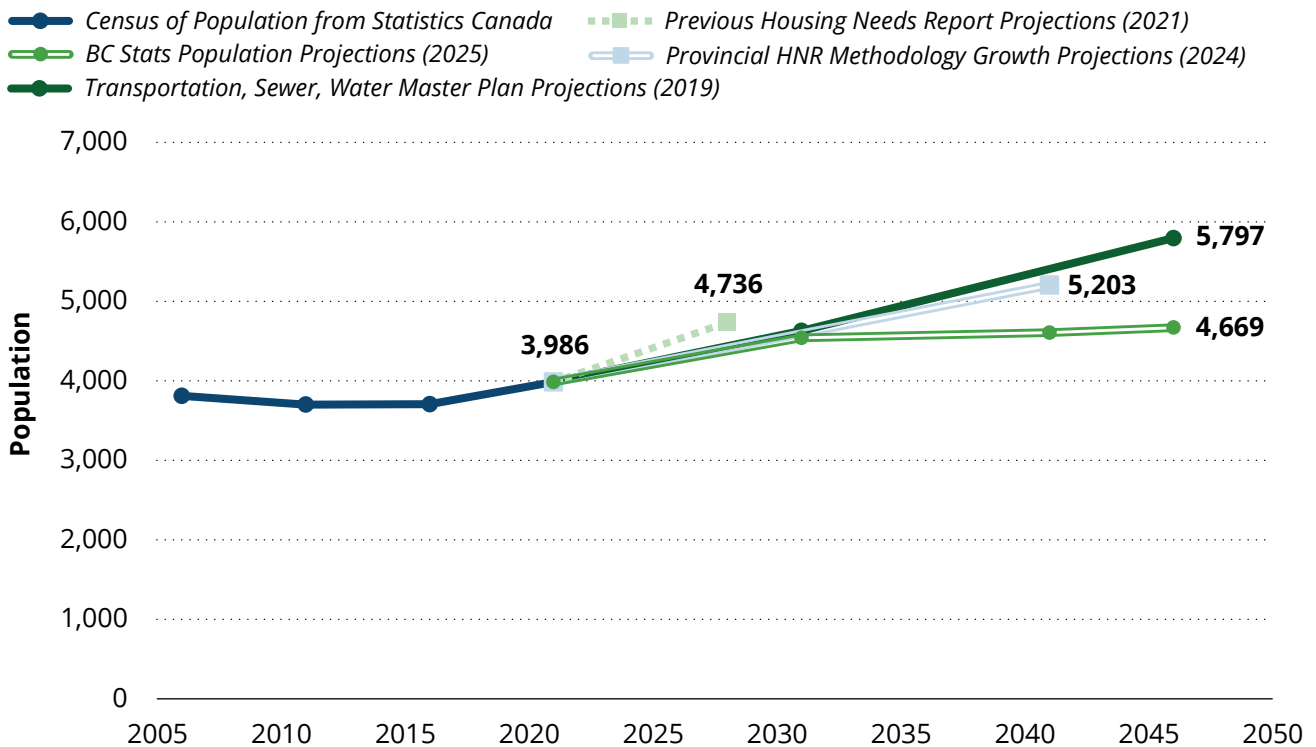
POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The 2025 Housing Needs Report developed a population projection methodology the Province requires local governments use for Housing Needs Assessments. The method uses an average of local and regional household growth projections from BC Stats. In addition to this method, the Housing Needs Report used other methods to provide a range of projections to account for the additional degree of uncertainty that population projections involve for a resort community like Golden that experiences seasonal population fluctuations, which are often not accounted for in population counts such as the Census.

Based on various projections developed between 2019 and 2025, Golden's population is expected to grow to between 4,669 and 5,795 residents by 2041. The difference in projections reflects the range of possibilities for Golden's future growth, which will be impacted by migration, fertility, and economic factors. Recent projections from BC Stats anticipates a population of 4,669 by 2041, a 17% increase from the 2021 Census count. The lower growth scenario is likely due to several changing assumptions, including impacts from recent changes in Canadian immigration policy that have lowered BC Stats population projections for the Town.

All the projections provide insights into possible future population scenarios for Golden that should be considered when planning for housing development to accommodate future population growth.

FIGURE: Population Estimates and Projections for the Town of Golden



Sources: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021; BC Stats Household Projections; Town of Golden 2021 Housing Needs Report; BC Stats Household Projections

The population of Golden is aging, in line with regional and provincial trends. From 2006 to 2021, the median age in Golden increased from 37.3 to 39.6. Despite this increase, the median age in Golden remains lower than that of the region (49.6) and the province (42.8).

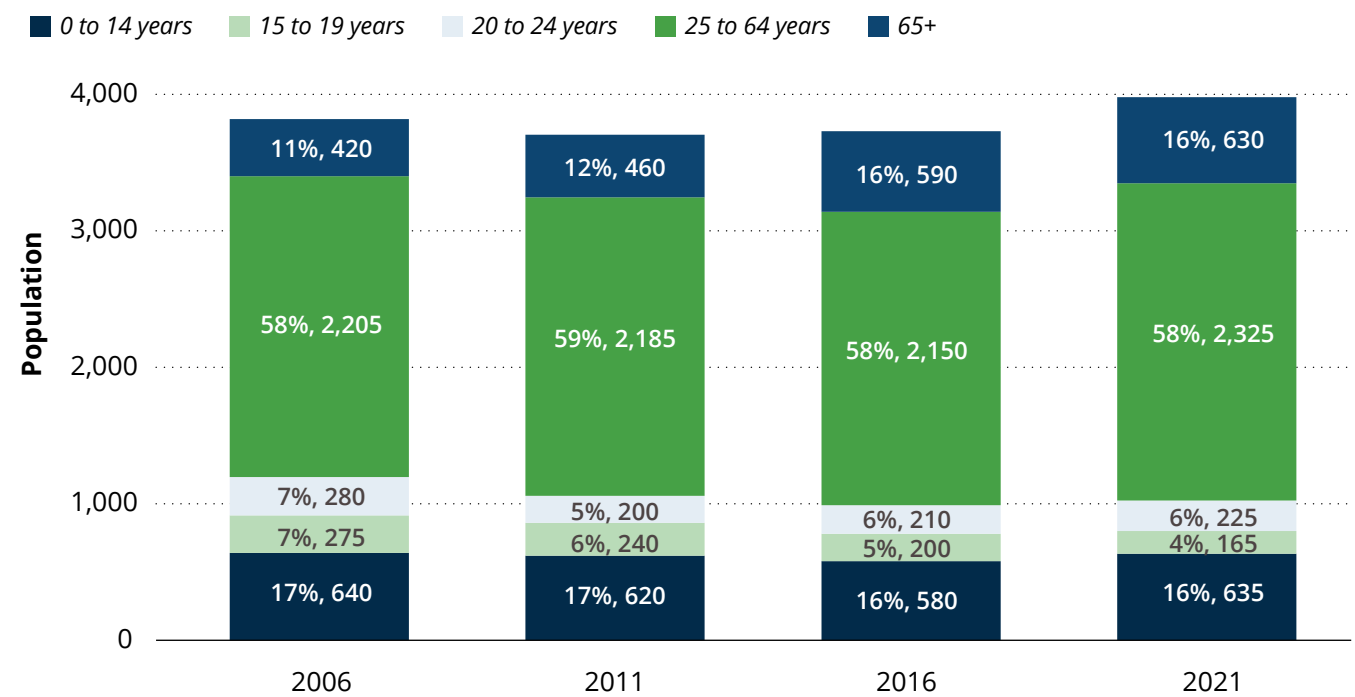
TABLE: Median Age Golden, Columbia-Shuswap Regional District, B.C., 2006 to 2021

	2006	2011	2016	2021
Town of Golden	37.3	38.1	40.2	39.6
CSRD	45.7	48.1	50.5	49.6
British Columbia	40.8	41.9	43	42.8

Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

Golden’s population growth has been primarily driven by individuals aged 25 and over. Between 2006 and 2021, the population in this age group increased by 330 people, while the population under 25 decreased by 170 people. However, the trend of a declining youth population in Golden may be reversing. From 2016 to 2021, both the population under 14 and those aged 20 to 24 experienced growth.

FIGURE: Age Distribution, Town of Golden, 2006 to 2021



Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021



Community Amenities and Services

This section summarizes community facilities and essential services available in Golden.

Educational Facilities

Golden is served by School District No. 6 (Rocky Mountain), which operates several schools in and around the community:

- Alexander Park Elementary School
- Lady Grey Elementary School
- Golden Secondary School
- Nicholson Elementary School (Area A)

School District No. 6 - Conseil Scolaire Francophone operates Ecole la Confluence in Golden.

For post-secondary opportunities, the College of the Rockies – Golden Campus provides access to a range of post-secondary programs, continuing education, and workforce development opportunities. The campus is instrumental in supporting lifelong learning and local workforce training.

Health Care Services

Golden and District Hospital provides emergency services, acute care, and limited surgical and obstetric services. The hospital serves as a central hub for medical care in Golden and the surrounding region. Golden is also home to local family physicians, community health clinics, and visiting specialists support primary and preventive care needs. Dental, optometry, physiotherapy, and mental health services are available within the community.

Emergency Services

- **Golden Fire Rescue:** A well-trained volunteer fire department provides fire suppression, technical rescue, and public education services. The department works in partnership with regional authorities for mutual aid response.
- **Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) – Golden Detachment:** Delivers policing, crime prevention, and community outreach services across Golden and surrounding areas. The detachment is a cornerstone of community safety and engagement.
- **BC Emergency Health Services:** Operates ambulance services and supports paramedical response for medical emergencies in Golden and the surrounding region.

Recreational Facilities and Programs

- **Golden & District Recreation Centre:** Features an arena with ice sports and community events. The centre is a focal point for social and active living. Operated by the Town of Golden for the CSRD.
- **Mount 7 Rec Plex:** A large gymnasium with a stage where the Town hosts a variety of drop-in programs and community events. Non-profit organization and contractors also run events and programs at the facility.
- **Golden Swimming Pool:** Seasonal outdoor pool that provides aquatic programs, swimming lessons, and open swims for all ages.
- **Golden Civic Centre:** A venue for arts performances, cultural activities, and community events.

There are also numerous parks, playgrounds, and playing fields in Golden that support outdoor recreation and a fairly extensive trail networks for hiking, cycling, and cross-country skiing.





Infrastructure and Transportation

WATER AND WASTEWATER

The Town of Golden operates a groundwater-based domestic water system that includes four groundwater wells with a combined capacity of 76 litres per second, and five reservoirs with a total storage capacity of about 6.96 Mega Litres. The four wells are located at 9th Street South, 11th Street South, 11th Avenue North, and Kinsmen Park. A new well (well #7) at Dogwood, designed to serve long-term community growth, is currently out for tender and will be funded by the taxpayer/utility payer.

The 2025 Integrated Water Strategy and Sanitary Sewer Model and Master Plan identified specific infrastructure upgrades required for future growth and categorizes which pipes are surcharging (“red pipes”) and which are near-capacity (“orange pipes”). The Town is currently working with engineering consultants to evaluate options for managing additional development flows into the orange pipes. These high-priority infrastructure upgrades of \$12.5M are estimated to accommodate the 25-year growth projection by 2046 in the following areas.

Townsite/ Downtown

The 12th Street Lift Station and its upstream pipes have reached their operational capacity. The Town of Golden is front ending these upgrades and recovering cost through a specific Sanitary Sewer Connection Fee. A Canadian Housing and Infrastructure Grant application was made to cover 50% of the replacement cost of the 5th Avenue South sanitary pipes, but was not successful.

Southeast Bench (Bear’s Paw / Selkirk Hills / The Sevens)

An upgrade to the Southeast Booster Station to 23 L/s capacity is required, which the developers of The Sevens have committed to conduct if the rezoning for short-term rental is approved.

Northeast Bench

The Pine Drive Alternative Sewer Alignment is currently tendered with construction aimed for Spring 2026 to free up significant sewer capacity. The cost will be recovered with similar approach to the 12th Street Lift Station.

A new facility to replace Northeast Booster Station with rate to 49 L/s is proposed to resolve fire flow deficiencies in this area. A developer is working towards the upgrade, and exploring latecomer and DCC front-ending agreement to support the improvements. Upgrading approximately 860 metres of piping along Lafontaine and Gareb Roads is also of high priority.

To provide financial support for the upgrades, the Town is currently transitioning from the 2012 bylaw to a modernized Development Cost Charge (DCC) program to ensure “growth pays for growth.” The Town has prepared a DCC financial model and draft rates and is now consulting with stakeholders. The first formal engagement event to review the draft rates is scheduled for January 19, 2026. The Town is also looking to secure higher level government to support upgrades, including lobbying the Minister of Municipal Affairs at a recent UBCM meeting.

ENERGY

BC Hydro delivers electricity within the Town of Golden. As there is no natural gas provision in the Town, propane and heating oil are utilized as primary energy alternatives.

According to provincial data, the Town consumed 84,558,251 kWh of electricity in 2022. This consumption was distributed as follows: 67% by commercial and small-to-medium industries, 32% by residential buildings, and the remaining 2% as mixed-use. It is estimated that 746 GJ of heating oil and 3,721 GJ of delivered propane were consumed during the same year.

In early spring 2022, the Town adopted the BC Energy Step Code to incrementally improve the energy performance of new buildings, aiming for all new construction to be “net-zero energy ready” by 2032. Currently, the Town’s requirements for all new Part 9 buildings (small-scale residential) have advanced to Step 3, which targets a 20% improvement in energy efficiency. Part 3 buildings (complex/large-scale) continue to be held to Step 2 standards.



SOLID WASTE

Domestic waste and recyclable waste in Golden are collected via curbside collection, with fees and schedules specified in the Waste Management and Collection Services Bylaw (Bylaw No. 1496, 2025). The waste collection service consists of three main programs:

- Weekly garbage collection,
- Bi-weekly recycling collection, and
- Bi-annual yard waste pickups.

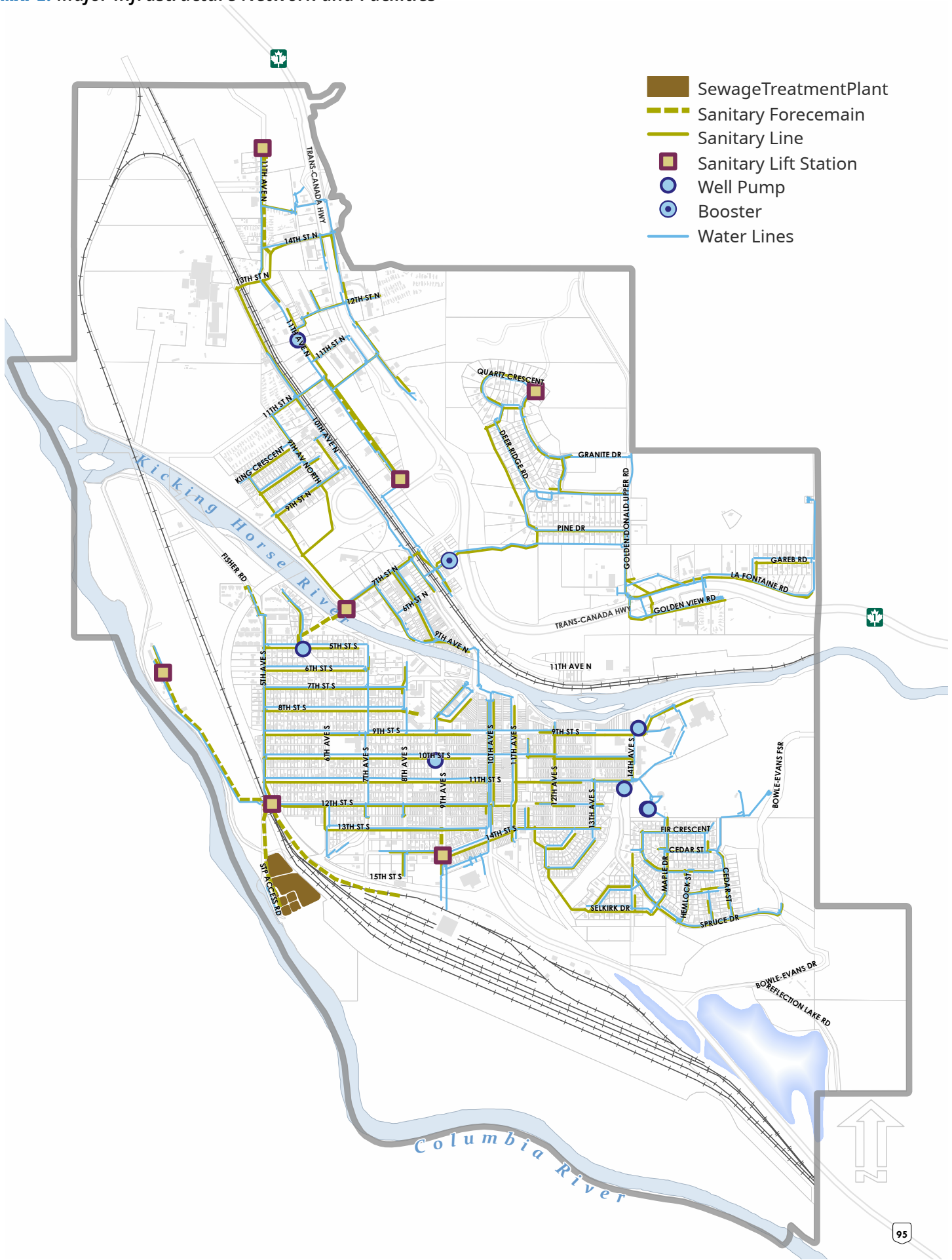
Collected waste is transported to the Golden Landfill at 350 Golden-Donald Upper Road which is operated by the CSRD. The private Golden Bottle Depot at 916-11th Avenue South also provides recycling services to the community. From 2020 to 2024, the waste disposal at Golden Landfill increased slightly from 5,463 tonnes to 5,558 tonnes. In 2024, 3,250 tonnes of solid waste were diverted from landfilling through recycling and beneficial use programmes, representing a 58% diversion rate.

The CSRD recently updated their Solid Waste Management Plan in 2025, which established nine strategies to guide regional waste management, and set disposal targets of 550 kg per capita by 2031 and 450 kg per capita by 2036. One of the key strategies focuses on responsibly managing CSRD landfills and maximizing capacity. To address ongoing compliance issues with groundwater quality exceedance and evolving provincial standards for landfill operation, there are now two expansion options for the Golden Landfill — a full build-out with lateral expansion (41 years of capacity), or a two-phase build-out (11 years of remaining capacity)

Since there is currently no organic waste collection service in Golden, the plan also proposes a diversion program to transport organic waste to the Revelstoke composting facility for processing.



MAP 2: Major Infrastructure Network and Facilities



- Sewage Treatment Plant
- Sanitary Foremain
- Sanitary Line
- Sanitary Lift Station
- Well Pump
- Booster
- Water Lines



TRANSPORTATION

The Town of Golden is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all roads within its municipal boundaries, except for Highway 95 (10th Ave) and the Trans-Canada Highway. These highways are maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit Golden Area Office.

The municipal network consists of more than 55 km of roadways and over 20 km of trails and sidewalks. Ongoing maintenance provided by the Town includes clearing, plowing, sanding, sweeping, and streetlights, except for lights on power poles which are operated by BC Hydro.

A significant provincial project currently underway is the Highway 95 Bridge Replacement. This project involves replacing the aging Kicking Horse River Bridges 1 and 2, which are nearing the end of their service life. The bridges link the north and south sides of the Town of Golden, including a small stretch of road on Gould's Island. The new structures are under construction and scheduled to be completed in 2026. Designed to be more climate-resilient, the new bridges will lower the risk of damage and potential loss of crucial connections due to extreme high water or ice jams. They will also include multi-use paths to enhance active transportation options and integrate with Golden's municipal transportation network.

Transit

Between 2008 and 2011, there was a transit system in the Town that was a partnership between Golden, CSRD, and BC Transit. The bus service provided a morning and afternoon trip to/from the Town to Donald, Blaeberry, and Parson. However, the service was cancelled due to very low ridership and high costs.

Recently, the Town engaged BC Transit regarding re-implementing a transit service in town, not in the rural area. BC Transit's next

step was a consultant study, which estimated the cost per ride would be three times that of comparable paratransit systems (i.e. door to door services). Golden Council closed the discussion on exploring a BC Transit Service Study in 2024.

The Kicking Horse-Golden Connector Shuttle provides service between Golden and the Kicking Horse ski resort. Partially funded through the Resort Municipality Initiative, there were 10,884 riders in 2024, an increase of 74% against the prior season.

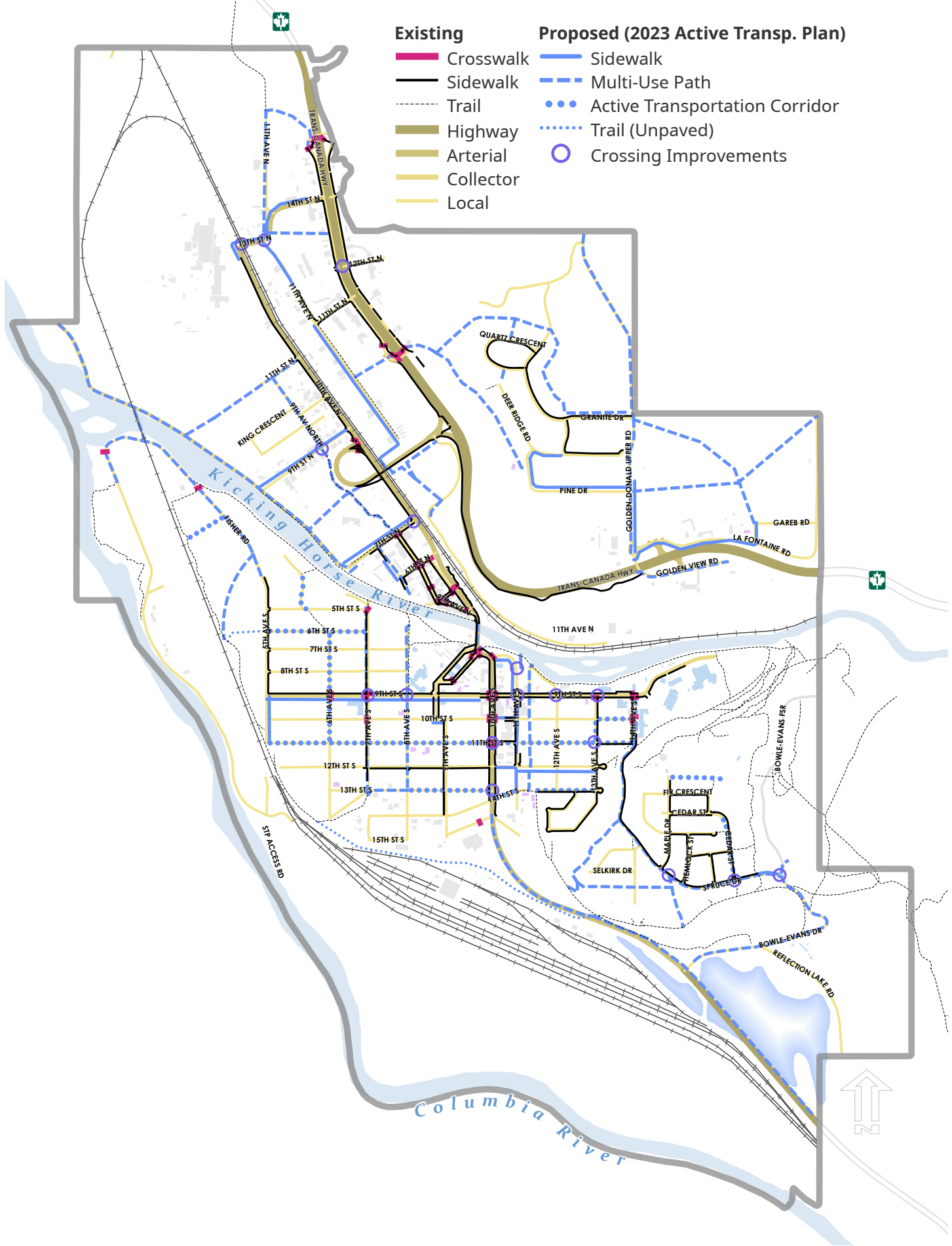
Active Transportation

In 2023, the Town of Golden developed a Transportation Plan and an Active Transportation Network Plan. The two plans outline how Golden will work to connect residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to community destinations, downtown businesses, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort, and other destinations in and around Golden. The plans identified strong community support for investing in active transportation infrastructure and identified several strategies, including leveraging road and active transportation investments during the planning for new development projects. Currently, implementation of these plans is being explored, including use of funds obtained through a new Development Cost Charge bylaw.

Since the development of these plans, Golden has completed three blocks of a new sidewalk/multi-use path connecting the downtown pedestrian bridge to residential areas, including senior's housing. Moving forward, the Town will continue to explore opportunities to support housing near active transportation infrastructure. BC Housing, which is supporting affordable housing projects in the Town, has also prioritized housing that supports pedestrian connectivity.



MAP 3: Transportation Network



Land Use and Development

HOUSING

A majority of Golden’s current housing stock is made up of single-detached homes, homes built before 2000, and homes with three or more bedrooms. All census data analyzed in this report represent responses from households that indicate Golden as their “usual place of residence”. This may partially explain the decrease in the number of units from 2006 to 2011; this is likely not the result of housing units being demolished, but rather a decrease in the number of households that were reporting to the Census.

Since 2006, single-detached homes have continued to be the dominant housing structure in Golden, accounting for approximately 56% of the current housing stock. This is slowly changing, as Golden has seen some development in other housing forms, including row houses, apartments, and moveable dwellings.

TABLE: Housing Units by Structure Type for Private Households, Golden, 2006 to 2021

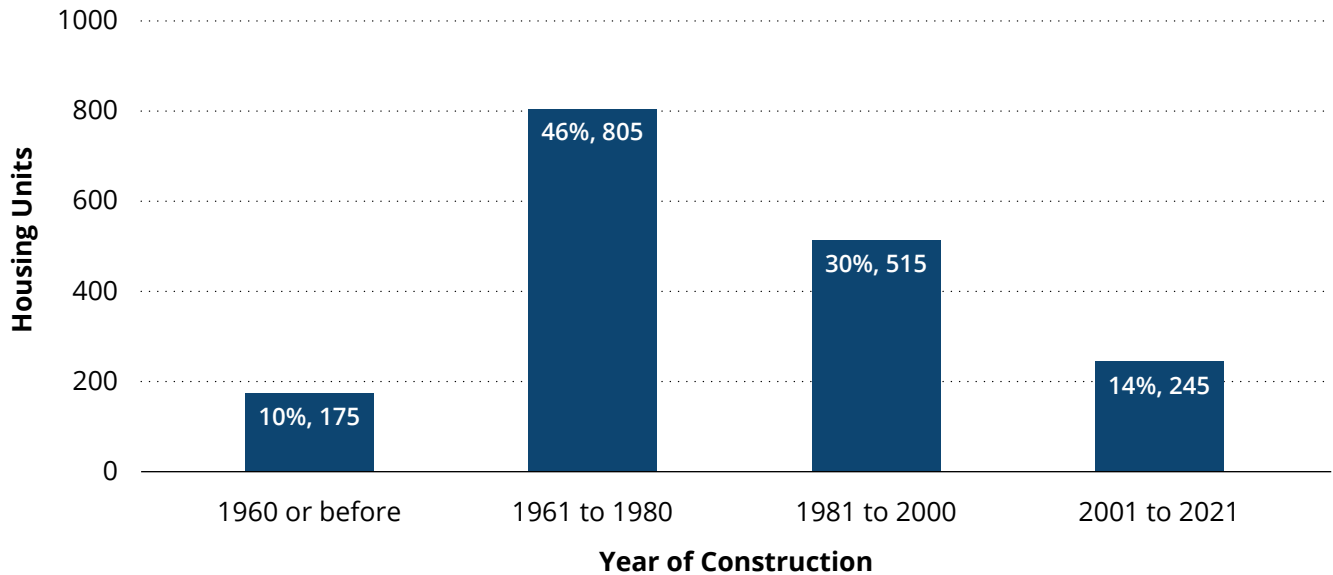
	2006		2011		2016		2021	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Total	1,600	100%	1,555	100%	1,595	100%	1,735	100%
Single-detached house	940	59%	920	59%	900	59%	980	56%
Semi-detached house	50	3%	65	4%	85	3%	55	3%
Row house	90	6%	130	8%	90	6%	130	7%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	90	6%	95	6%	60	6%	60	3%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys	200	13%	125	8%	170	13%	215	12%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other single-attached house ¹	10	1%	0	0%	5	1%	0	0%
Movable dwelling	230	14%	215	14%	285	14%	300	17%

Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

¹ Other single-attached house is defined as a single dwelling that is attached to another building and that does not fall into any of the other categories, such as a single dwelling attached to a non-residential structure (e.g., a store or a church) or occasionally to another residential structure (e.g., an apartment building).

According to the recently completed Housing Needs Report, recent housing development is much lower than what Golden has seen historically, leaving the community with an older housing stock. In 2021, almost half (46%) of the occupied housing units were constructed between 1961 and 1980. Housing built after 2000 makes up only 14% of the total housing stock. Recent initiatives from the Town aim to increase the speed and supply of new housing.

FIGURE: Housing by Period of Construction for Private Households, Golden, 2021

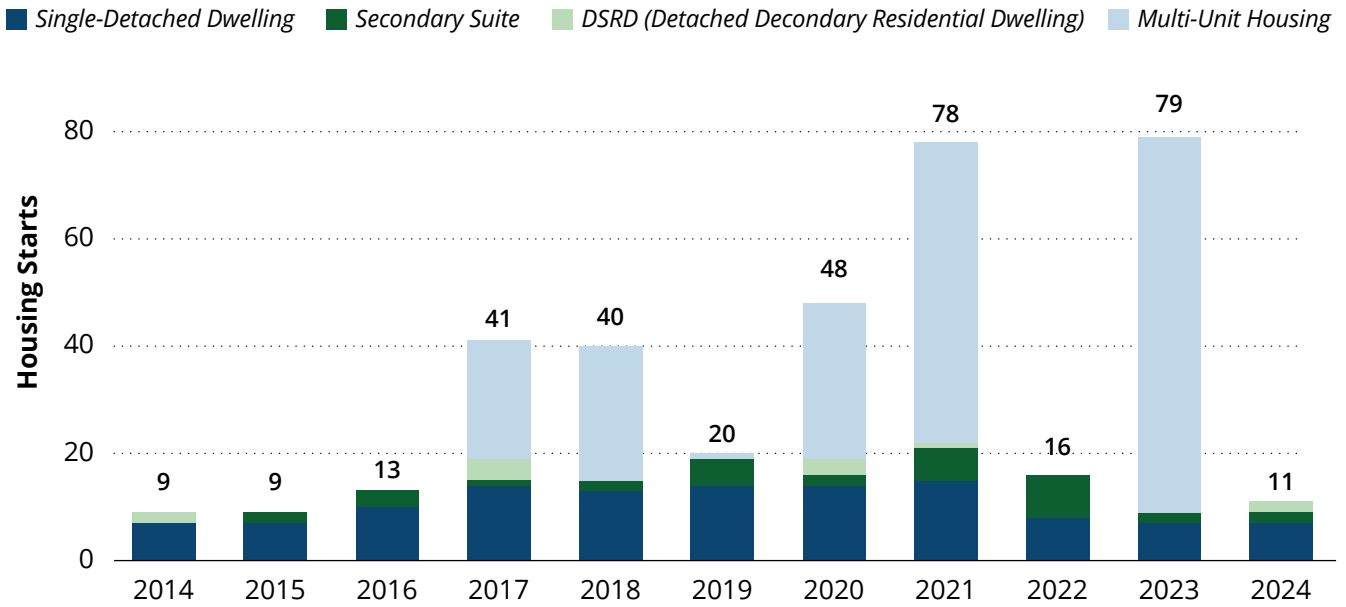


Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Custom Data Organization for BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Census Profiles, 2021

Housing development in Golden has varied substantially from year to year, with recent growth largely driven by multi-unit residential projects. In contrast, the construction of single detached homes has remained steady, averaging about 11 units annually over the past decade. These trends have been influenced by local government policy supporting multi-unit housing, as well as broader market conditions.

Much of Golden’s new development has been driven by short-term rentals. In 2020 and 2023, permits were issued for 606 7th St N OSO and 901 7th St N Riverstone, two mixed use commercial/residential buildings. These developments included 75 dwellings that allow short-term rentals. A review of business license data has also confirmed that approximately 72% of these two mixed use commercial/residential buildings are short-term rentals and it is estimated by Golden staff that approximately 50% of secondary suites being developed during this time are being used as short-term rentals. Within this time, there have been other residential developments including the Rocky Pionte, Vista Lofts, Granite Heights, the Kaur 612 7th St N (OSO - rental) and Timber Ridge.

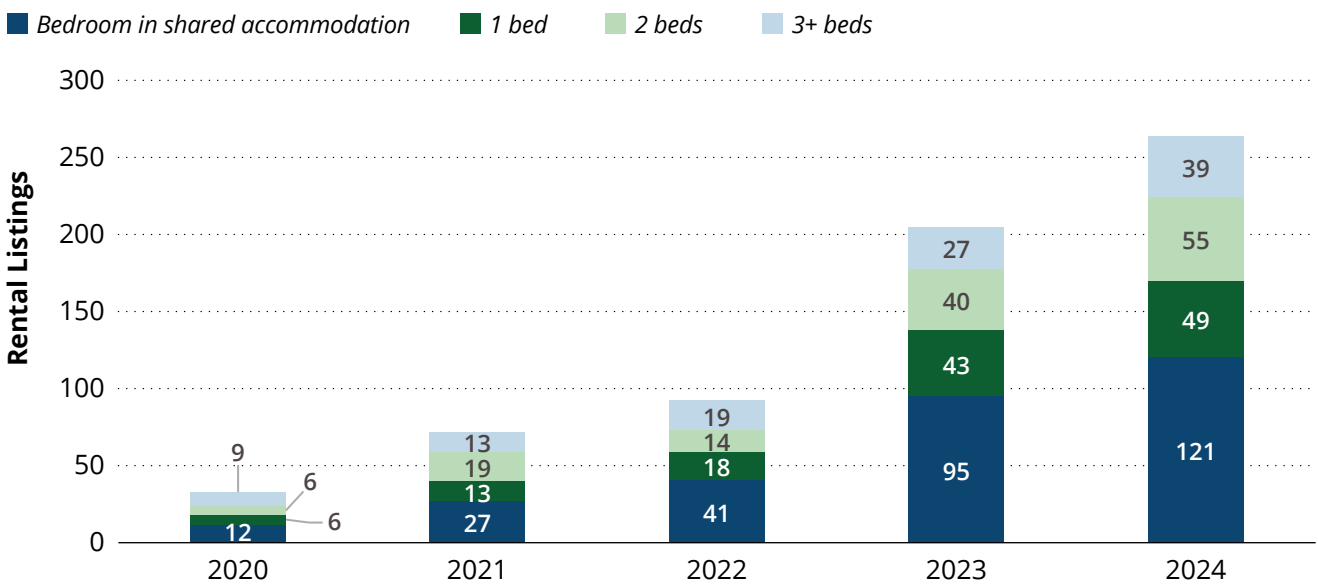
FIGURE: Housing Starts, Town of Golden, 2014 to 2024



Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Town of Golden Housing Starts Data, 2014 to 2024

Based on the Golden Community Economic Development Rental Inventory, the size of the long-term rental market has been growing. From 2020 to 2024, Golden Community Economic Development saw the largest increase in listings for bedrooms in a shared accommodation, rising from 12 listings in 2020 to 121 listings in 2024. It should be noted that Golden Community Economic Development does not include short-term rental listings in its inventory. However, there are several listings that are posted that do not indicate the occupancy length and could potentially be used as a short-term rental unit for a portion of the year.

FIGURE: Market Rental Listings, Golden, 2020 to 2024



Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Golden Community Economic Development Rental Inventory, 2020-2024

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

In 2025, the Province of BC introduced the Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act, which limited short-term rentals in most communities to a host’s principal residence and required registration in a provincial registry. As a resort municipality, Golden is exempt from these requirements, but the Town has its own short-term rental regulations to help protect long-term rental housing while also allowing permanent residents to earn additional income. The Town’s regulations include several provisions that go beyond the Province’s requirements including no short-term rentals in manufactured homes, residential townhouses and residentially zoned apartments, and properties with detached secondary residential dwellings.

Data from Golden’s Host Compliance platform indicates that Golden’s short-term rental market has experienced notable variability between 2016 and 2025. These fluctuations may reflect a range of influencing factors, including changes in tourism demand, local regulatory adjustments, broader economic conditions, and global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite year-to-year changes, the overall trend points to sustained growth in the short-term rental market. The number of reported listings more than doubled over the past decade, from 54 in 2016 to 157 in 2025. The increase also reflects two new mixed-use commercial/residential buildings with 75 dwelling units. A review of business license data has also confirmed that approximately 72% of these two mixed use commercial/residential buildings are short-term rentals and it is estimated by Golden staff that approximately 50% of secondary suites being developed during this time are being used as short-term rentals.

TABLE: Number of Short-Term Rental Listings, Golden, 2016-2025

Date of Count	Short-Term Rental Count
June 2016	54
November 2017	81
July 2018	138
July 2019	201
June 2020	193
July 2021	78
August 2021	72
October 2021	77
July 2022	54
July 2023	127
July 2024	149
July 2025	130
September 2025	157

Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Host Compliance Monthly Reports, 2020-2024

Beyond the Host Compliance Monthly Reports, the Town has access to other data sources to understand the local short-term rental impact to understand its size and impact on the broader rental and housing markets, including AirDNA real estate data. As of July 2025,

there were 111 active short-term rental listings on AirBnB. Some of these listings may be geared at longer-term rentals, but 76% of those listing with minimum stays under a week indicating these are mostly geared at very short stays.

It should also be noted that this analysis does not necessarily reflect the full scope of community concerns. During community engagement sessions, respondents indicated that short-term rentals such as Airbnb have significantly impacted long-term rental availability and pricing. This analysis does not factor in the difficulty households can have trying to find long-term rental units. In previous consultation with the community, operators of short-term rentals and bed and breakfasts noted they would not want to operate a long-term rental. They noted they could charge more for short-term, they preferred increased flexibility, and they had concerns with having to deal with problematic tenants.

HOUSING NEEDS

In June 2024, the Province released a standardized methodology (HNR Method) that outlines how local governments must calculate their total housing need (outlined in table below). Using this methodology, the Province estimates the Town of Golden will need 798 housing units by 2041. This new calculation of housing need replaces Golden’s previous estimate from the Town’s 2021 Housing Needs Report, which projected a need for an additional 307 units between 2016 and 2028.

TABLE: Total Five-Year And 20-Year Housing Need, Town of Golden, 2021 to 2041

Component	Five-Year Need	20-Year Need
Component A Supply of Units to Reduce Extreme Core Housing Need	9	35
Component B Supply of Units to Reduce Homelessness	6	13
Component C Supply of Units to Reduce Suppressed Household Formation	25	100
Component D Supply of Units to Meet Household Growth Over the Next 5 and 20 Years	213	542
Component E Supply of Units Needed to Meet at Least a 3% Vacancy Rate	2	9
Component F Supply of Units Needed to Meet Local Demand (Demand Buffer)	25	100
TOTAL UNITS NEEDED	281	798

Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Housing Assessment Resource Tools, 2024

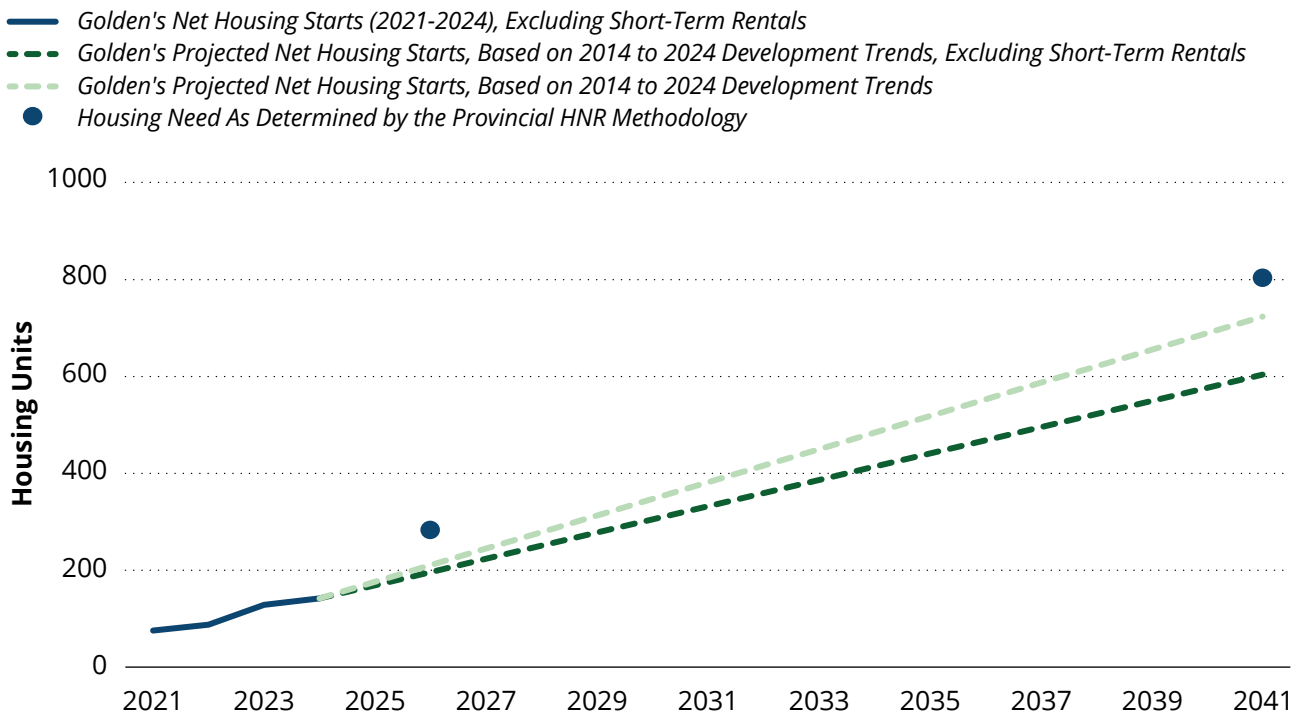
To understand Golden’s five-year and 20-year housing needs, it is essential to consider the current rate of housing development. The analysis below (see Figure 17) compares current development trends with the community’s total need. This analysis is not meant to provide an accurate prediction of future development. Instead, it serves as a tool to help the community understand how close Golden could come to meeting its housing needs if current development patterns continue.

A notable portion of Golden’s recent housing development has been driven by short-term rentals. While these units support local economic activity and help some households manage mortgage payments, they do not directly increase the supply of housing available to residents.

If Golden continues to develop housing at the same pace as the past decade, and a portion of new units are used for short-term rentals², the Town will fall further behind its housing targets than if all new units were available for long-term occupancy. Under this scenario, where some units are diverted to short-term rental use, Golden is projected to be short by 86 units relative to its five-year housing need by 2026, and by 198 units below its 20-year target by 2041.

Both scenarios, which outlined the units with and without short-term rentals, highlight a need to further accelerate the speed and scale of housing production in the community to meet housing needs.

FIGURE: Comparing Housing Development Projections with Housing Need, Golden, 2021 to 2041



Sources: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Town of Golden Housing Starts Data; BC HNR Methodology

² This analysis assumes 21% of new housing development in Golden will be used for short-term rentals and would not count toward meeting Golden’s housing need. The 21% assumption is based on business license (up to September 2nd, 2025) and development data (from 2014 to 2024) from the Town of Golden. This analysis is not meant to provide an accurate prediction of future short-term rental development. Instead, it serves as a tool to help the community understand how close Golden could come to meeting its housing needs if current trends continue.

LAND USE

Land use management in Golden is primarily structured by the OCP which articulates the municipality's long-term vision, objectives, and policy directions for growth and development. The OCP delineates specific land use designations, including residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and environmental protection areas, and sets forth guiding principles for sustainable development, housing, transportation, and economic initiatives.

Golden has a small commercial centre subdivided by the Kicking Horse River which is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and commercial and light industrial areas. The industrial area includes a small airport close to Golden's commercial centre. Other commercial land uses follow the Trans-Canada highway that runs north-west through the community.

Golden's 1,125 hectares of land (calculation includes ROWs) is largely designated for future uses by ten different land use categories. The following table lists the designations and their respective areas.


TABLE: Future land use designations in the current OCP, by area

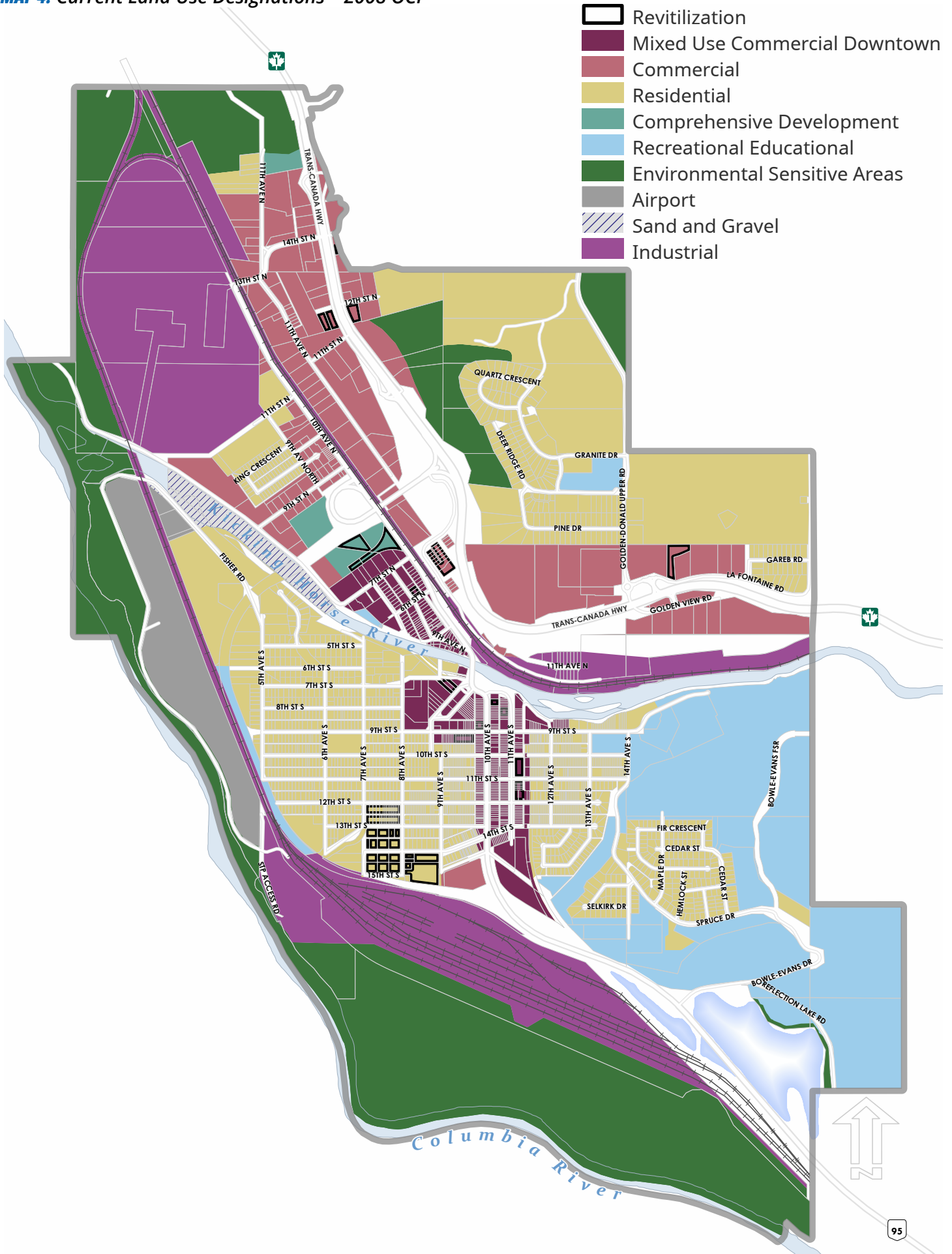
Land Use Designation	Hectares	% total
Mixed Use Commercial Downtowns	30.14	2%
Commercial	209.30	13%
Industrial	201.29	12%
Comprehensive Development	77.74	5%
Residential	498.55	30%
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	394.92	24%
Recreational Educational	151.36	9%
Revitalization	13.44	1%
Airport	29.09	2%

Map 4 shows current land use designations.

There is infill redevelopment potential in existing neighbourhoods in addition to significant development potential for lands surrounding central Golden based on current designations and zoning.

MAP 4: Current Land Use Designations – 2008 OCP

-  Revitalization
-  Mixed Use Commercial Downtown
-  Commercial
-  Residential
-  Comprehensive Development
-  Recreational Educational
-  Environmental Sensitive Areas
-  Airport
-  Sand and Gravel
-  Industrial



DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

The Town of Golden has eight Development Permit Areas (DPAs). This is a relatively large number of DPAs for a small community. Currently, the entirety of the community is under an existing DPA.

DPA #1 - Historical Downtown

This development permit area includes the historical downtown area and core town centre site. The purpose of the DPA is to ensure development character of this area reflects the heritage of Golden.

DPA #2 - South Town

This development permit area includes the downtown south area, roughly from the river south to Kootenay Columbia highway, along 10th and 11th Ave and long the river from 8th Ave to 12th. The DPA focuses on pedestrian, form and character, connectivity and parking for new development in the area.

DPA #3 - Creative Residential

This development permit area includes most residential areas of the Town. The purpose of this DPA is to achieve liveable intensive residential development.

DPA #4 - Corridor

This development permit area includes areas along the TransCanada Highway corridor. The purpose of this DPA is to ensure the Town is recognized and presents a friendly and attractive face along the highway.

DPA #5 - Service Commercial/Industrial

This development permit area includes areas between 11th Ave North and the River and along 10th between 13th St. and Station Ave. This DPA emphasis is on parking and the overall form, character and connectivity of new development in service commercial and industrial areas. This DPA is very similar to the working town industrial DPA.

DPA #6 - Working Town Industrial

This development permit area includes areas to the north, northeast and south of the town. The purpose of this DPA is to regulate form and character of industrial and commercial development. This DPA is very similar to the service commercial/industrial DPA.

DPA #7 - Golden Landing (Airport)

This development permit area includes the Golden airport area development. The purpose of this DPA is to regulate airport and related uses to minimize conflict with neighbouring areas and environmental concerns.

DPA #8 - Riparian

This development permit area includes all riparian areas along the Kicking Horse and Columbia Rivers. The purpose of this DPA is to protect riparian areas and application of riparian areas regulations.

HAZARDS

Flood

The Town of Golden is subject to flooding from three watercourses: the Columbia River, the Kicking Horse River, and Hospital Creek during high water events and ice jams. Golden has experienced periodic flooding, most recently during high runoff years. These events have prompted emergency response actions, temporary road closures, and ongoing investments in flood protection infrastructure, including recent upgrades to the Kicking Horse River dike system.

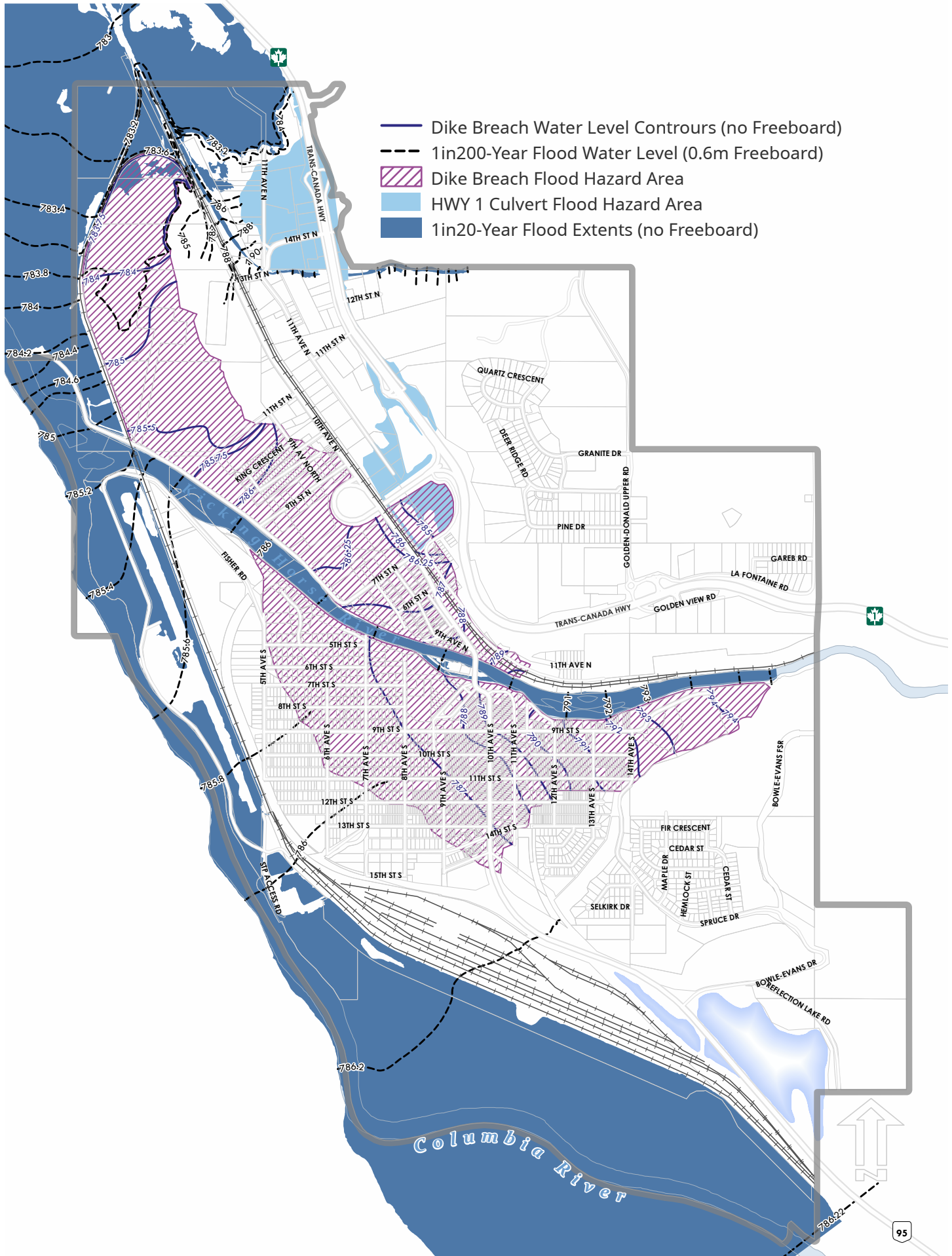
In 2018, the Town of Golden received a \$5.87 million, the community's largest single infrastructure-based grant, to upgrade the most vulnerable sections of the Kicking Horse River dike. Completed in 2021, the Kicking Horse River Dike Improvement Project transformed the riverfront space between Golden's downtown and the Kicking Horse River into The River Walk, a place where residents, visitors and businesses come to work, play and connect. The project's beautification component, valued at approximately \$1.2 million, was funded through the Province's RMI program.

In 2022, additional work was completed to raise, reshape and armour remaining earthen dike sections along the Kicking Horse River. During the same year, Golden completed repairs to an embankment erosion on Hospital Creek to improve 30 metres of earthen dike along the creek.

Golden updated flood mapping in 2020 and is planning to update its outdated Flood Management Bylaw (1995) in 2026/2027. Recognizing that effective flood management uses Flood Management Bylaws along with specific Development Permit Areas (DPAs) alongside Zoning and OCP policies for a layered approach, the updated OCP will likely include a new flood hazard DPA to manage specific site impacts (like setting building elevations) with the updated flood bylaw setting broader rules (like setbacks and FCLs) within a designated floodplain.



MAP 6: Flood Hazard Area



Wildfire

Golden is classified as a “wildland-urban interface” community, where developed areas meet extensive forests. This setting, combined with extended dry seasons and changing climate conditions, elevates the risk of wildfire.

The BC Wildfire Service and provincial hazard mapping identify Golden and its periphery as “high” to “extreme” risk during the summer wildfire season, especially on forested slopes and in rural subdivisions.

TABLE: Town of Golden Wildfire Risk

Area	Relative Risk
South Benchlands	High
Neighborhoods bordering Crown forests	High
Downtown/Urban Core	Moderate

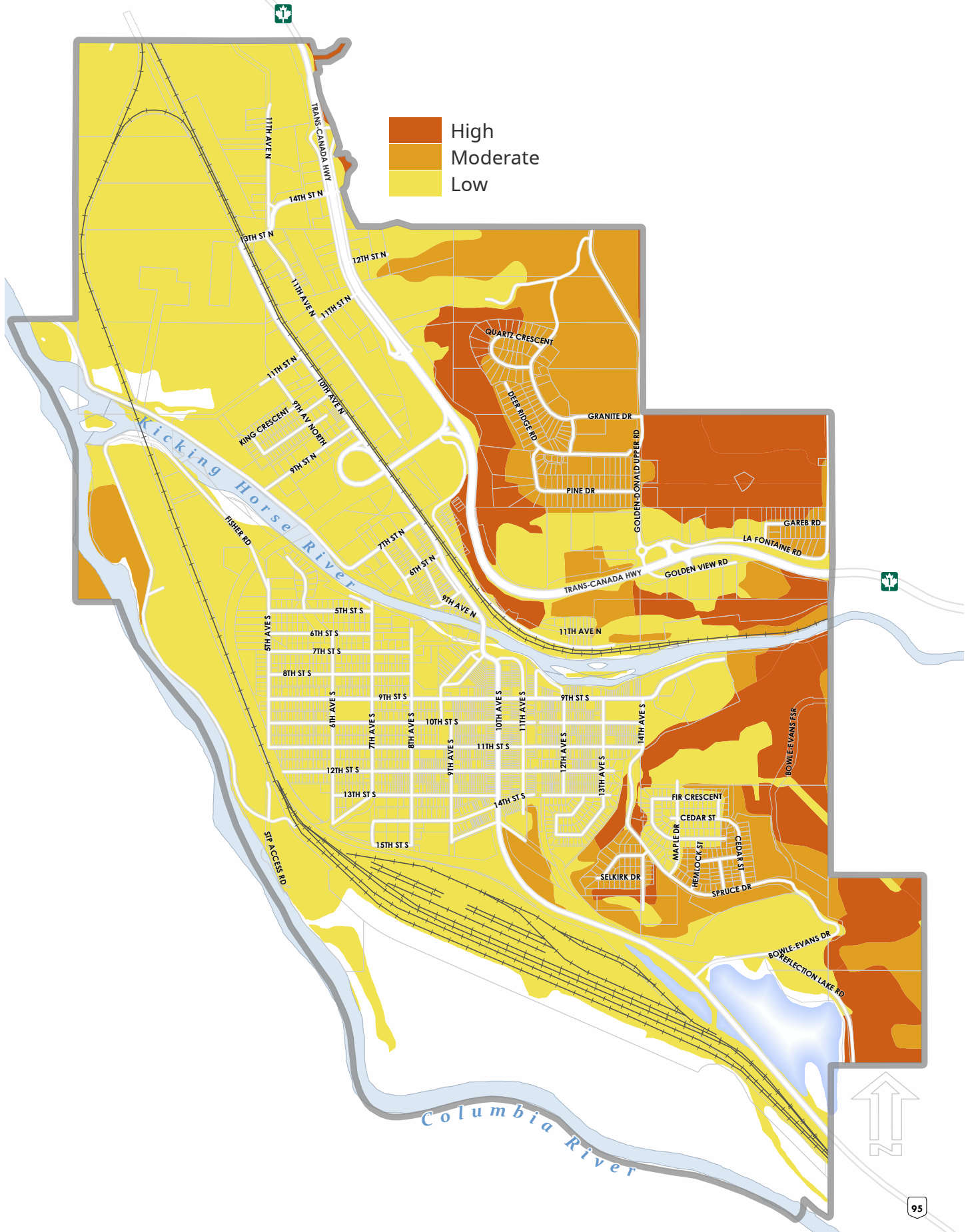
Golden’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) guides risk assessment and reduction. Strategies include fuel management (removal of underbrush and deadwood), FireSmart building practices, community education, and maintaining defensible space around structures. Golden had grant funded FireSmart Coordinator for two years.

Golden Fire Rescue and regional emergency coordinators conduct annual wildfire preparedness drills and public education, and the town participates in provincial emergency notification systems.

A Wildfire DPA will be included in the updated OCP.



MAP 7: Wildfire Hazard Area



Steep Slopes

Steep slopes, prevalent along the western and southern edges of Golden, pose risks of landslides, slope instability, and erosion, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall or rapid snowmelt.

Provincial terrain stability mapping and local geotechnical assessments delineate zones with moderate to high slope hazard. These are often located along escarpments, above the Kicking Horse River, and near recent development corridors.

TABLE: *Town of Golden Steep Slopes Risk*

Location	Relative Risk
Southwest Perimeter (adjacent to Kicking Horse)	High
Residential areas near escarpments	Moderate
Upland Parks and Trails	Moderate



Local and Regional Economy

Key local economic sectors include tourism, forestry, and service industries. Statistic Canada's 2021 Census shares that the community's employment rate is 65.1%, the unemployment rate is approximately 7.2%, with a labour force participation rate of 70.2%. This is considerably higher than that of the Columbia-Shuswap Regional District and British Columbia as a whole, and the Town of Golden also has a lower unemployment rate than the CSRD or the province.

TABLE: Town of Golden Participation Rates, Employment, Unemployment

	Golden	CSRD	BC
Participation	70.2%	58.3%	63.3%
Employment	65.1%	52.8%	57.9%
Unemployment	7.2%	9.5%	8.4%

The median household income in Golden is approximately \$62,000 CAD per annum, subject to variation by occupation and economic sector.

The total number of workers has been slightly increasing in Golden and the surrounding rural area (CSRD Electoral Area A), rising from 4,110 in 2006 to 4,195 in 2021. The sectors that experienced the most growth between 2006 and 2021 were health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services. The sectors that experienced the most decline during this period were accommodation and food services; agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting; and construction.

The size of the local construction sector is a key factor that can support or inhibit new housing development. The number of workers in the construction sector dropped from 2006 to 2011, and while it has been slowly increasing since then, it has not recovered to 2006 levels.

TABLE: Workers by NAICS Sector Golden and CSRD Electoral Area A, 2006 to 2021

	2006	2011	2016	2021
Total	4,110	3,750	3,915	4,195
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	295	175	190	205
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	55	65	70	70
22 Utilities	0	0	10	0
23 Construction	600	320	360	540
31-33 Manufacturing	430	225	340	395
41 Wholesale trade	65	65	45	55
44-45 Retail trade	380	280	400	360
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	375	440	370	355
51 Information and cultural industries	20	0	25	20
52 Finance and insurance	70	80	50	60
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	60	85	85	35
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	115	140	130	175
55 Management of companies and enterprises	0	0	0	0
56 Administrative and support, waste management	140	105	200	215
61 Educational services	175	195	215	220
62 Health care and social assistance	220	340	220	355
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	145	345	295	280
72 Accommodation and food services	695	470	585	480
81 Other services (except public administration)	105	115	145	165
91 Public administration	155	205	155	160
Not Applicable	15	0	10	15

Source: Housing Needs Report (2025) from Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021

EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Tourism and Hospitality

Tourism is Golden's leading economic pillar, sustained by its Resort Municipality status and its renowned outdoor amenities. The town has capitalized on its proximity to Yoho, Banff, Glacier, Jasper, Kootenay, and Mount Revelstoke National Parks, offering hospitality services, guided tours, eco-adventures, and cultural experiences. Kicking Horse Mountain Resort is a cornerstone, providing year-round employment and attracting skiers, snowboarders, mountain bikers, and hikers. Investments in tourism infrastructure—such as the celebrated Kicking Horse Pedestrian Bridge, the Golden Skybridge, and expanded trail networks—enhance Golden's reputation as a premier destination. Special events, including music festivals, mountain sports competitions, and cultural celebrations, further support tourism and inject vitality into the local economy.

In Golden and CSRD Area A, the tourism industry continues to play a significant role, and in contrast to both the provincial and regional contexts, has more than recovered from the Covid pandemic. A 2023 Value of Tourism study indicates that direct tourism revenue of \$169.4 million represents an increase of 36% since the 2019 study. When adjusted for inflation the real growth is 18% which outpaces the provincial tourism industry which experienced in real terms only a slight increase of 0.5% over the same period.

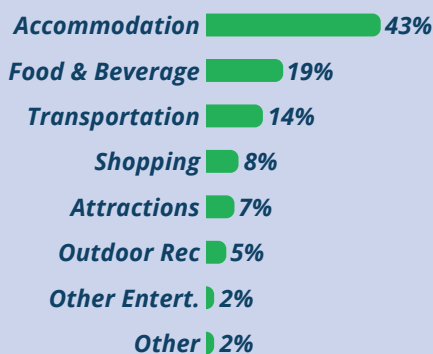
In 2023, the Golden tourism industry generated:

\$146.5 million in GDP

\$234.6 million in domestic output

\$58.6 million in tax revenue

2023 Direct Spending

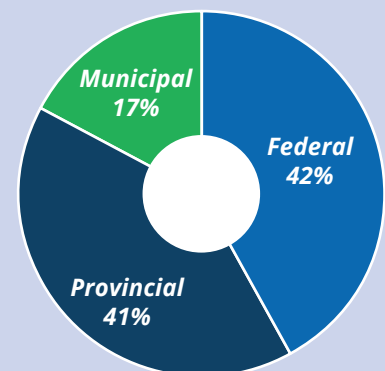


Employment

2,386 jobs
1,805 full-time equivalents



2023 Tax Revenue Paid (\$58.6 million)



Sources: Resort Development Strategy 2025 – 2027, Tourism Golden

In the same period, the number of tourism-related jobs in Golden and CSRD Area A has also increased by almost 28% reflecting the growth of the visitor economy and visitation.

The breakdown of overnight visitors to the Golden area in 2023 differed somewhat from the regional breakdown, reflecting Tourism Golden's focus on geographic areas. Of the total 624,170 overnight visitors 81% were Canadian, primarily from Alberta (43%) and BC (37%) followed by Ontario (10%). 16% were primarily from US states of California, Washington, Texas and New York. The remaining overnight visitors primarily originated from the UK, Germany and France.

Forestry

Forestry remains central to Golden's industrial base, though it has diversified with changes in market demand and environmental standards. Sawmills and wood products manufacturing contribute stable, well-paying jobs. Sustainable forestry practices, certification programs, and partnerships with Indigenous communities are increasingly emphasized to ensure ecological resilience and long-term viability.

Transportation and Logistics

As a regional logistics hub, Golden leverages its location on the Trans-Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway. Warehousing, freight forwarding, and supply chain logistics serve local and regional businesses, while the town's small airport caters to industrial, commercial, and recreational aviation. These assets make Golden a critical link in supply routes for the Columbia Valley and beyond.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

A thriving small business scene underpins Golden's economic diversity. The town's entrepreneurs operate outdoor guiding companies, restaurants, specialty retail, creative studios, and professional service firms. The Golden Chamber of Commerce, Golden Community Economic Development, and business support networks provide resources, mentorship, and marketing tools to foster innovation and resiliency.

RESORT MUNICIPALITY

Given the proximity of Kicking Horse Mountain to the community, Golden is one of 14 designated resort municipalities in the province. Golden receives provincial funding through the provincial Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) to help build and diversify Golden's tourism infrastructure and enhance visitor experiences. In Golden funding has supported beautification projects, trail construction and maintenance, event programming, and visitor amenities projects. As part of the RMI network, Golden participates in province-wide best practices, research, and advocacy for sustainable resort communities.

RMI supported development of a guiding 2025 – 2027 Resort Development Strategy that outlines 14 projects to be implemented over the strategy's timeline.



Zoning

The Zoning Bylaw is a key document that provides the regulatory means to implement the objectives and policies of the OCP. The Town of Golden Zoning Bylaw No. 1294 was adopted in 2011. The Zoning Bylaw contains 10 residential zones, of which include single detached and single detached with secondary suites, flexible residential, twin residential and twin residential sensitive, multi flex residential, one high density, residential reserve and two mobile home park categories (park and subdivision - where lots are own individual homeowners). There are six commercial zones, five industrial zones, three community zones, three parks, recreation and environment zones, two comprehensive development zones, crown lands and agriculture.

The Zoning Bylaw also includes general development regulations and regulations for landscaping and screening, parking and loading, and specific uses (bed and breakfast, childcare, home based business and secondary residential dwellings).

As the Zoning Bylaw was adopted well over ten years ago, a major review and resulting changes are anticipated. The Zoning Bylaw will also be reviewed for any required updates and revisions that may be as result of the OCP update including amendments that may have not been accounted for in the past.



MAP 8: Current Zoning (Not Consolidated)

